

**FOSTER'S BRIDGE MANUAL: A
COMPLETE SYSTEM OF
INSTRUCTION IN THE GAME: TO
WHICH IS ADDED DUMMY
BRIDGE AND DUPLICATE BRIDGE**

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Foster's Bridge Manual: A Complete System of Instruction in the Game: To Which Is Added
Dummy Bridge and Duplicate Bridge by R. F. Foster

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R. F. FOSTER

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A Complete System of Instruction
in the Game

TO WHICH IS ADDED
DUMMY BRIDGE AND DUPLICATE BRIDGE

BY
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"Brentano's Pocket Library Series," etc.*



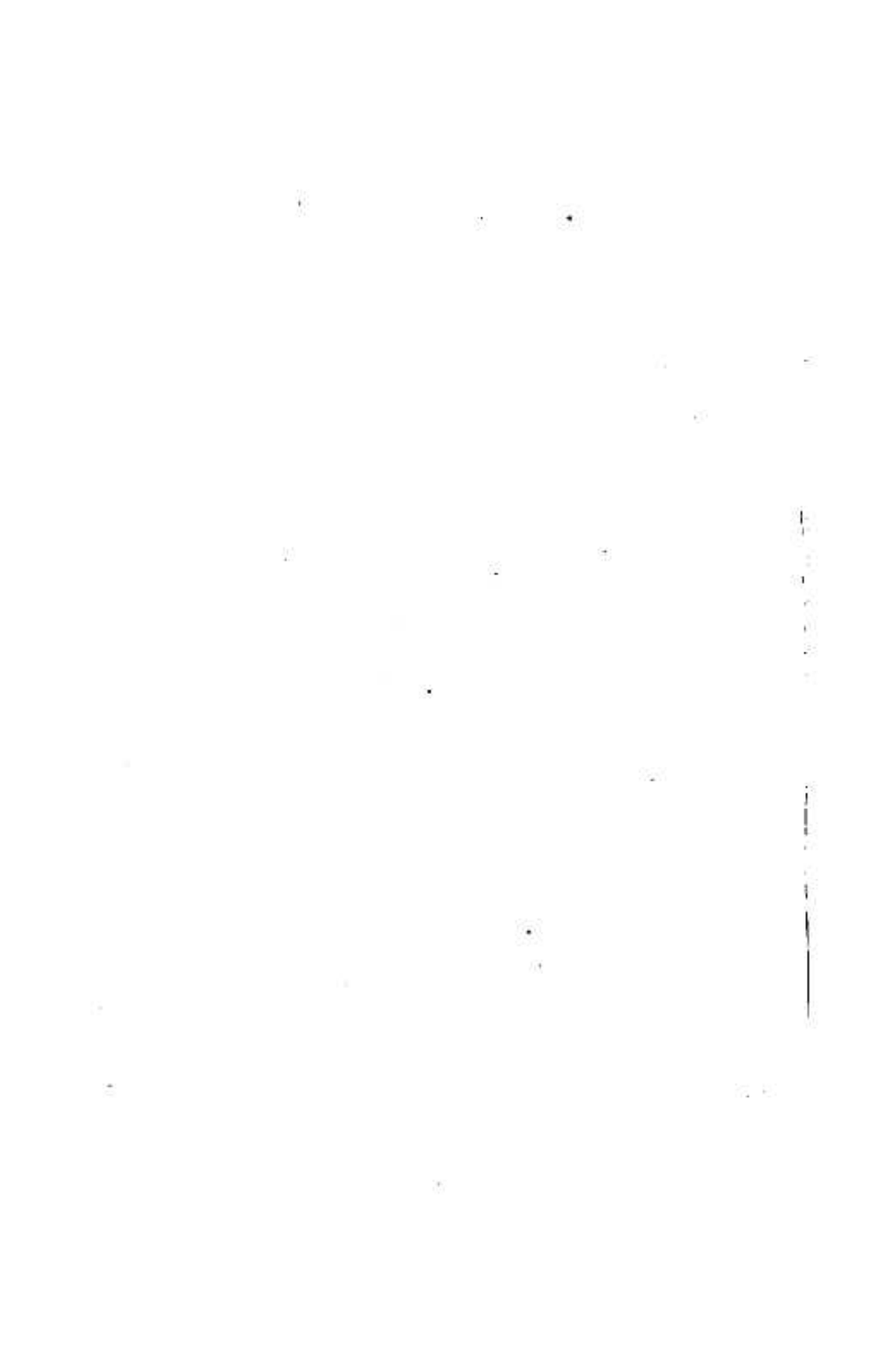
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PREFACE.

BRIDGE, although now very widely known and played, is still in its infancy as a scientific game, and there are many points about its minor tactics and its laws which are matters of dispute among the best players. Quite a number of text-books have already been published on the subject of bridge, but they do not agree to such an extent that any one of them might be taken as a guide to a system of play that would be intelligible to any partner in any part of the world.

This should not be so, as there should be no difficulty in selecting the methods which are best suited to the purpose in all such matters as opening leads, second-hand play, returns, echoes and discards. All text-books should agree in their instructions on these points, and in such matters as the correct play of certain combinations of cards held between dealer and dummy. It should be only when we come to the finer points of the game, which are largely mat-

ters of individual judgment and temperament, that we should find it necessary to drop the text-book and depend upon the best of all teachers—practical experience at the bridge table.

It would be very nice if the game could be reduced to an exact science, with a rule to fit every possible case; but, unfortunately, the character of the game is such that it is extremely difficult to lay down any general rule without being compelled immediately to cover it up with so many possible exceptions that the original statement is practically lost sight of. So much depends upon a number of minor considerations, infinitely varied, and there is so much of the element of luck running through it all, that it is dangerous for any text-book to venture further than a statement of general principles, the application of which must be supplemented by long practice at the table before one can hope to become an expert.

In the following pages the author has avoided all the little details which lead to such differences of opinion, and has endeavored to confine himself to setting forth the outlines of a sound and conservative game, which, if carefully studied and followed, will give the student a very decided advantage over any player not equally familiar with the subject.

In the arrangement of the opening leads at no-trumpers, as distinguished from those made against trump declarations, and in the classification of the various combinations of cards in one suit which may be held between the dealer and his dummy partner, and which must be played in certain ways in order to obtain the best results, the author has followed very closely along the lines laid down by Mr. J. B. Elwell, of New York, whose reputation as a successful teacher and player is second to none in this country, and to whom the author is indebted for many valuable suggestions.

AUGUST, 1900.

INTRODUCTION.

Of all games of cards, bridge has undoubtedly enjoyed the most sudden rise in popular favor, and has taken a greater hold upon the affections of the more intelligent class of card players than any game which has hitherto engaged their attention.

There seems to be something in the development of the race, in the condition of society, or in the state of public morals, which induces a nation to take up certain games at various periods of its history. Before and after the war, when people did not have very much confidence in one another, and life was a game of big risks and bluff, poker was the favorite. During the era of carpet bags and credit, when individuals started to do a big business with very small capital, and everyone tried to get the best of every one else, euchre very properly expressed the popular idea of the game of life, in which the best bower was held by the man with some advantage in the way of freight rates or patents. After that we come to the