



***JOHN PETCH
HEWBY***

***WHIST; OR,
BUMBLEPUPPY?
THIRTEEN
LECTURES
ADDRESSED
TO CHILDREN***

John Petch Hewby

Whist; or, Bumblepuppy? Thirteen Lectures Addressed to Children

EAN 8596547368229

DigiCat, 2022

Contact: DigiCat@okpublishing.info



TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE.

LECTURE I. — INTRODUCTORY. —

LECTURE II. — THE LEAD. —

LECTURE III. — THE PLAY OF THE SECOND, THIRD, AND
FOURTH HAND. —

LECTURE IV. — DISCARDING, AND ITS DIFFICULTIES. —

The Principles of Discarding.

Resumption of ,.

LECTURE V. — THE DISCARD FROM THE STRONGEST SUIT.

—

Part I.

Part II.

LECTURE VI. — THE ELEVEN RULE (by desire). —

LECTURE VII. — THE PETER AND ITS PECULIARITIES. —

LECTURE VIII. — FALSE CARDS, LOGIC, LUCK. —

LECTURE IX. — WHIST AS AN INVESTMENT. —

LECTURE X. — ON THINGS IN GENERAL. —

LECTURE XI. — THINKING. —

LECTURE XII. — TEMPER. —

LECTURE XIII. — DETERIORATION OF WHIST, ITS CAUSES
AND CURE. —

SPECIMEN OF BUMBLEPUPPY IN EXCELSIS.

THE DOMESTIC RUBBER.

DOUBLE DUMMY.

EPILOGUE I. —

EPILOGUE II. —

PREFACE.

[Table of Contents](#)

— —

THESE remarks are addressed to the young, in the hope that when they arrive at man's estate they will use their best endeavours to do away with [Law 91](#).

To the present generation, already acquainted with "the Game," I should no more presume to offer advice than I should presume to teach my lamented Grandmother to suck eggs, if she were still alive.

"To instruct them, no art could ever reach,
No care improve them and no wisdom teach."

PROVERBS, *chap. 27, v. 22*.

=====



=====

LECTURE I.

— —

INTRODUCTORY.

— —

[Table of Contents](#)

"Vacuis committere venis
Nil nisi lene decet."—*Eton Grammar*.
"Those that do teach young babes

Do it with gentle means and easy tasks.”—*Shakespeare*.

As, humanly speaking, you will probably play something for the next fifty years, should you select either Whist or Bumblepuppy,[\[1\]](#) it will be as well for your own comfort—the comfort of others is a minor consideration[\[2\]](#)—to have some idea of their general principles; but first you must decide which of these two games you intend to play, for though they are often confounded together, and are both supposed to be governed by the same ninety-one laws and a chapter on etiquette, they differ much more distinctly than the chalk and cheese of the present day. Professor Pole in his “Theory of Whist,” Appendix B, has made a very skilful attempt (by modifying the maxims of Whist) to make the two games into a kind of emulsion. I was rather taken with this, and having been informed that the most incongruous materials will mix, if you only shake them together long enough, I have given this plan a fair trial, and failed.

It may be that I had not sufficient patience and perseverance, but the principal cause of failure I found to be this: the Bumblepuppist, like Artemus Ward’s bear, “can be taught many interesting things but is unreliable;” he only admires his own eccentricities, and if a person of respectable antecedents gets up a little pyrotechnic display of false cards for his own private delectation, the Bumblepuppist utterly misses the point of the joke, he fails even to see that it is clever: if such a comparison may be drawn without offence, he doesn’t consider that what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander.

In the face of this difficulty, I should recommend you to treat them as separate games: as you go down in one scale and up in the other they closely approximate; that extremes

meet is a law of nature, and between the worst Whist and the best Bumblepuppy it is almost impossible to draw the line.

Other elementary forms, protozoa for instance, are often so much alike that it is difficult to decide whether they are plants or animals; but representative specimens of each game, beyond being found at the same table, (in scientific slang, having the same habitat,) have scarcely one point in common, you might just as reasonably mistake horse-radish for beef.

If you elect Whist (I shall refer to the laws later on) begin by learning the leads, and the ordinary play of the second, third and fourth hand, which you will find in any Whist Book; [3] this can be done in a few days; then after cutting for partners (see [note](#) to [Law 14](#)) as soon as the cards are dealt, *not before* (see [note](#) to [Law 45](#)),

- (1) Take up your hand;
- (2) Count your cards (see notes to Laws 42 & 46);
- (3) Sort them into suits;
- (4) Look them over carefully;
- (5) Fix firmly in your memory not only the trump suit but the trump card, then

(6) Give your undivided attention to the table, *it is there and not in your hand the game is played*;

(7) *See every card played in the order it is played*;[4]

(8) When you deal, place the trump card apart from the rest of the suit, that you may know at once which it is.

N.B.—Knowing is always better than the very best thinking, and generally much more easy: by these simple means you get rid at once and for ever of all such childish

interruptions as “draw your card!” “who led?” “what are trumps?” “show me the last trick!” and so *ad infinitum*, which, by their constant repetition, not merely worry and annoy the rest of the table, but tend to destroy any clue to the game that you yourself might otherwise possess.

It is a good plan to sit clear of the table, and then if you are constrained to drop a few cards, they at any rate fall on the floor, where they cannot be called.

So far, I have assumed your object to be Whist; if your end and aim is Bumblepuppy, you need do none of these things; you can learn the leads and the recognised play—more or less imperfectly—in a few years by practice, or you can leave them unlearned;

“Build by whatever plan caprice decrees,
With what materials, on what ground you please.”

Cowper.

ignorance imparts variety to the game, and variety is charming. You can set all laws at defiance, and if any one objects—after much wrangling—you can refer the matter in dispute to the Westminster Papers,[\[5\]](#) and hang it up for a month certain: (this is a better plan than writing to the *Field*, for there you only get a week’s respite).

Should you be in any doubt whether Whist or the other game is your vocation, the first half-dozen times you play make it a rule never to look at the last trick—

“Things that are past are done with.”—*Shakespeare*.

and if at the end of that time you find the difficulty insuperable, give up, as hopeless, all idea of becoming a Whist player.

Notes on some of the Laws.

Table of Contents

“Vir bonus est quis?

Qui consulta patrum, qui leges jaraque servat.”—*Eton Grammar*.

I have mentioned that there are ninety-one laws. The wording of the first is not strictly accurate; it ought to be “The rubber is *generally* the best of three games,” for though I myself have never seen more than four, it may consist of any number, as the following decisions show:

DECISION A.—The rubber is over when one side has won two games and remembers it has done so: this memory must be brought to bear before the other side has won two games and remembers it has done so.

DECISION B.—If a game is forgotten, it is no part of the losers’ duty to remind the winners of the fact.

LAW 5.—This law is clear enough; still the first time you revoke and are found out, if your opponents hold honours and you have nothing scored—however many you have made by cards—they will claim a treble: you should be prepared for this. The claim is wrong, but in spite of that—possibly because of it—“they all do it.”

LAW 7.—DECISION.—You must call your honours audibly, but you are not obliged to yell because your adversaries are quarrelling.

LAW 14.—Always get hold of the cards before cutting, and place a high card at one end of the pack and a low one at the other, then cut last and take either card you prefer: by this means you select your partner, this is an admirable coup and tends to the greatest happiness of the greatest number ([Note A, page 2](#)) but it must be executed with judgment, for if you are detected your happiness will not be

increased, rather the reverse. Some purists, anxious to be on the safe side, only keep an eye on the bottom card, and take it when it suits them.

LAW 34.—Until the last few years, after you had cut the cards into two distinct packets, if the dealer thought fit to knock one of them over, leave a card on the table, or drop half-a-dozen or so about, it was a mis-deal on the ground that these proceedings were opposed to one or other of the next two laws, 35 and 36, but the latest decision is that the dealer can maltreat the pack in any way he likes and as often as he likes, and compel you to keep on cutting *de die in diem*.

OLD DECISION.—“You cannot make your adversary cut a second time; when you left a card on the table it could not be said that there was a confusion in the cutting, it is a mis-deal.”

NEW DECISION.—“There is nothing in the laws to make this a mis-deal. The play comes under the term ‘Confusion of the cards,’ and there must be a fresh deal.”

If you see a potent, grave, and reverend seignior carefully lubricating his thumb with saliva, don’t imagine he is preparing it for deglutition, he is only about to deal. Even if he should swallow it, why interfere? he will not hurt you; it is not your thumb. Should you suffer from acute hyperæsthesia you can follow the example of an old friend of mine, who once rose from the table in his terror, and returned armed with a large pair of black kid gloves which he wore during the remainder of the *seance*: though the effect was funereal—not to say ghastly—it was attended with the best results in this case, but it is just as likely to

lead to ill-feeling, and therefore to be deprecated. Leave the matter to time! Apart from the cards being glazed with lead, a single pack has been found to contain a fifth of an ounce of arsenic, and there is no known antidote. Even if not immediately fatal, the practice must be very deleterious. A whist enthusiast with a greater turn for mathematics than I can lay claim to, has counted from six to seven thousand bacteria on each square centimetre of a playing card, and makes this ghastly deduction: "it is really dreadful to reflect upon the colony of microbes which a person who moistens his thumb before dealing may convey into his mouth, and thence into his system."—*Standard*, Nov. 2nd, 1893. "Everything comes to the man who can wait," and while you are waiting *always sit on the dealer's right*.

LAW 37.—An incorrect or imperfect pack is a pack containing duplicates or more or less than fifty-two cards, but it is neither incorrect nor imperfect because you think fit to place any number of your own cards in the other pack, or to supplement them with one from it. *Vide* Laws 42, 46.

LAW 42.—If you take *one* card from the other pack, it is clear that you subject yourself to a penalty; if you take more than one the matter is not so clear; possibly you may gain by it; should you wish to have the point settled, any time you have a bad hand add the other pack to it; then complain that you have sixty-five cards, throw them up, claim a new deal under Rule 37, and see what comes of it.

LAW 45.—Taking up your cards during the deal has one advantage, that if you can get your hand sorted and begin to play without waiting for the dealer, you save time, and time is reported to be money. To counter-balance this there

are two attendant disadvantages, you prevent the possibility of a mis-deal, and any card exposed by your officiousness gives the dealer the option of a new deal.

LAW 46.—Under this law it is manifest that—the other hands being correct—your hand may consist of any number of cards from one to thirteen, and if you once play to a trick—however many you may be short—you will have to find them or be responsible for them. See Law 70.

LAW 91.—If this law, which is the main cause of inattention and innumerable improper intimations, were abolished, Whist would be greatly improved; and I have never met with a good Whist player who was not of the same opinion.

The chapter on etiquette is good sense and good English, and is worthy of much more attention than is usually given to it.

In addition to their ambiguity and sins of commission, there is also a sin of omission; there is no limit as to time, and it seems desirable there should be; I would suggest—as allowing the hesitating player reasonable latitude—one of those sand glasses, supposed to be useful for boiling an egg; there is no sense in giving him time enough to addle his egg.

Though these laws appear more difficult of access than I had imagined, they are not the laws of which the only copy was destroyed by Moses; I have seen them myself in Clay, Cavendish, and the “Art of Practical Whist,” and if you are unable to get any of these works from Mudie’s, there are copies of each in the British Museum, Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury.

Before or immediately after breakfast is the best time to play; then, if ever, the intellect is clear, the attention undistracted; in the afternoon you are exhausted by the labours of the day, and your evenings should be devoted to the morrow's lessons or a quiet nap (not the round game of that ilk).



LECTURE II.

THE LEAD.

[Table of Contents](#)

"Dux nobis opus est."—*Eton Grammar*.

"I pray thee now lead."—*Shakespeare*.

THE play of the entire hand often depends upon the very first card led, and the confidence your partner has that your lead is correct; whatever then your original lead may be, let it be a true and—as far as you can make it so—a simple lead: never lead an equivocal card—that is one which may denote either strength or weakness—if you can, lead a card about which no mistake is possible.[\[6\]](#) With the original lead, follow the books and lead your strongest suit; if you have nothing at all, do as little mischief as you can; in this