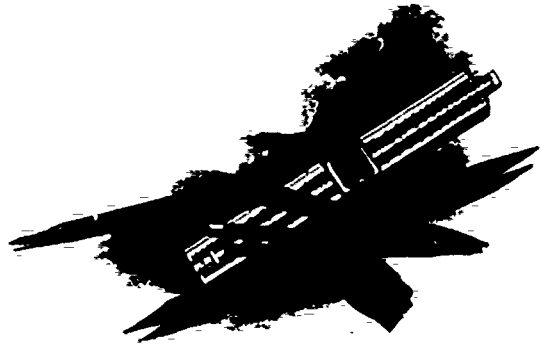


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BRIDGE PARTIES.

By Mrs. Robert Tennant.

To make a bridge party thoroughly successful, the host or hostess must devote a certain amount of time and thought to the arrangement of the tables. These should not be placed too close to each other, and all should be thoroughly well-lighted. Some people seem to think that, if they have got electric light in their rooms, they have done all in that way that can possibly be required, but how many card parties are spoilt by the bad arrangement of this light! On one side it sometimes falls on the exposed hand with a glare that makes the cards look blurred and indistinct, and on the other dim shadows obscure everything. The hostess should see that the light is really sufficient, and, if not, supply a pair of candles. The names of the players at each table should be written on a slip of paper and put in the middle, so that everyone can see at a glance where he or she is to play.

Four bridge-markers should be provided, so that everyone can keep their own score, and some of those little 'win and lose' cards, which are very convenient, as they obviate the necessity of settling after every rubber. The two packs of playing-cards should be alike in size and

shape, though of contrasting colors. Those new, thin, rather long-shaped ones are the pleasantest to play with, and I do like gilt-edged cards. I have played at houses where the cards were of every variety, and at a table where one pack was thin and clean, and the other very thick and somewhat the worse for wear; it gave one a positive shock to pick up a handful of those clumsy, shady cards, which seemed to intensify the horrors of a spade-hand!

In arranging the guests, not only a certain uniformity of play is required, but temper and manners should also be taken into account. A player inclined to domineer over his partner and to lay down the law generally, should not be put at the same table with three gentle people who will bear his tyranny meekly; but their number should include someone capable of keeping this truculent person in his proper place.

Perhaps you will say that it would be a simpler plan to exclude him from the party altogether, but this is not always possible, as I am sorry to say that there are many people in the bridge circle who cannot be said to behave well—they show their temper in a way unheard of in polite society, and say rude things to their partner that would not be tolerated for a moment in other circumstances.

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