

HOW TO PLAY BACKGAMMON.

'EVENING STANDARD' ARTICLES
BY LEADING AUTHORITY.

THE GREAT CRAZE.

BACKGAMMON, one of the oldest games in the world, is daily becoming more and more popular since its recent revival, and leading London stores say that sets are in greater demand than for almost any other indoor game.

West End restaurants are having to provide boards, and the game is raging in the clubs.

America has succumbed completely to backgammon. A prominent club in New York is devoted wholly to the game; a chain of clubs has been formed throughout the country.

In the organisation of these the leading part has been taken by Mr. Grosvenor Nicholas, who is acknowledged to be the chief authority on the game and whose book, "Modern Backgammon," published in 1928, was the first book on the new backgammon.

"I want to know all about this backgammon; where can I find out?"—one hears it asked daily.

The "Evening Standard" has invited Mr. Grosvenor Nicholas to tell its readers everything about the game.

In a special series of articles he will explain how it is played and how, by the introduction of modern developments, it has attained the exciting possibilities of a game of poker.

The first article will appear to-morrow.



Mr. Grosvenor Nicholas.

The First of a Series of Articles Telling You

HOW to PLAY BACKGAMMON

By **GROSVENOR**

NICHOLAS, *the leading authority.*

Which Modern Developments Have Made a Present-day Craze.

BACKGAMMON is probably the most ancient game in the world. At the same time, with its new developments or elaborations, it is the very latest, as well as the most spirited and sociable, of all of our pastimes.

The origin of the game is hidden in the distant past. The Persians tell us that thousands of years ago India sent them chess. When they had mastered that game they invented and, in return, sent to India backgammon. It

is said that backgammon existed in Japan two thousand years ago; that in the Scandinavian countries it was found in the tombs of Vikings; and that in America it was known to the Aztecs of Mexico long before the arrival of Cortez.

From the tomb of Tutankhamen, Mr. Howard Carter recently brought to light a game described as "primitive chess." However, as it was played with dice it could not have been that. Most probably it was backgammon, for at that time, in countries of nearby Asia Minor, the game had been known for centuries.

At Ur, of ancient Chaldea, in tombs of much greater antiquity than those of the Pharaohs, the expedition of the British Museum and University of Pennsylvania has unearthed the paraphernalia of backgammon in primitive form—highly decorated boards, dice and playing pieces.

EMPEROR AN ADEPT.

In fact, in all of the countries of the Near East backgammon has been played generally and extensively from time immemorial. It is from those countries that the are brought today beautifully inlaid boards and tables in designs of perhaps thousands of years ago.

In her march to empire Rome conquered the Near East. Whether or not, as a kind of amiable reprisal, backgammon in her turn also conquered Rome we cannot say. However, dicing certainly did, for in Rome during the Empire, dicing was tremendous. One of the Emperors devoted a room in his palace to it, and the Emperor Claudius wrote a book on the subject. The Emperor Domitian was an adept and Caligula a cheat.

The Romans called the game the *ludus duodecim scriptorum*, or "twelve-line game."

Eventually backgammoning and dicing in Rome must have become intemperate, for it was decided that prohibitory laws were an imperative, as well as an imperial, necessity.

It is not essential that one shall have lived at a particular time or in a particular country to know something of it. It requires, for example, only the briefest of visits to the United States to know precisely how effective prohibition legislation is. And, with this notable experiment in temperance as our guide, shall we not conclude that the Roman laws against dicing had a similarly inspiring effect upon the Roman legions, psychologically and practically? At all events, in addition to their military achievements, the legions must surely have spread backgammon through Western Europe, for it has existed there ever since.

REJUVENATION.

In Spain it became known as *tables real*, royal tables, attesting an association with aristocracy, which it seems still to retain. In France it is known as "tric-trac," a name obviously onomatopoeic, while in England "Tables," as the game was known to Chaucer, was superseded by the name "backgammon," probably from the Saxon, and signifying a game in which the draughtsmen are liable to be sent back.

It has remained for our century, the twentieth, to add to old backgammon, always in itself an excellent game, two new elaborations which apparently are proving themselves to be all that was required to rejuvenate it, just as most of us would like to be rejuvenated, and to give it the speed which to-day we all seem to wish so tremendously to attain.

In this series of articles I propose to give for beginners a description of how the game is played—from which they will learn very readily, as it is by no means difficult to describe the new elaborations—and to follow with suggestions and a consideration of certain principles which should help those who play to win.

To-morrow.—EQUIPMENT.

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HOW TO PLAY BACKGAMMON.

By **GROSVENOR NICHOLAS,**
The Leading Authority.

IN backgammon we have something which has endured for fifty centuries. Supplementing this background of antiquity, we have the new developments which have so tremendously increased the possibilities of the game that in the United States it has swept the country, is described as a veritable "social menace" and has culminated, we hope, in one game being played in New York for the preposterous sum of 1,800,000 dollars.

A matter of first importance to this game is the equipment or paraphernalia. Backgammon is played upon a specially constructed board with draughtsmen and dice.

Supplies of these are available almost everywhere, and with any such equipment the game may be played, and played correctly. However, for the full enjoyment of the game, the equipment should be of sufficient size, and satisfactory in certain other respects.

The men should be at least an inch and a half in diameter; if they are a little larger, better still. The boards, of course, must fit the men, or vice versa. Not too loose a fit, as that might make the position of the men uncertain, and not too tight a fit, as that would interfere with rapid play.

It is important, also, that the boards shall be sufficiently deep to permit at least five men to be placed upon opposite points without stacking them, and, at the same time, not so deep that one has difficulty in reaching across and moving men which are on the opponent's side.

In addition, it is better to have boards made with surfaces of cork, felt, padded leather, or some other material upon which the dice will fall without bouncing and with little noise.

The larger three-quarter inch dice are preferable. The numbers upon them are more readily seen by the players and by the spectators also. In like manner it is better that the sides of the boards be not too high. Half an inch is sufficient.

It is not merely for the benefit of spectators as such that these things are important, although backgammon is, no doubt, a great game for spectators. It is also because of the recent addition to the game known as Chouette (which I will describe later), in which certain of the spectators are also inactive partners, interested in the result, and desirous of seeing readily every position of the men and each throw of the dice.

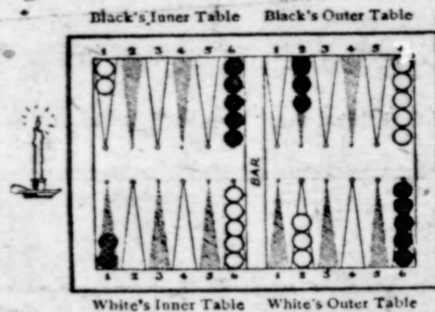
To-morrow: Elementary Principles.

GROSVENOR NICHOLAS tells you HOW to PLAY BACKGAMMON

No 3.—Elementary Principles.

A BACKGAMMON set consists, in addition to the board, of thirty men, two dicecups and two pairs of dice.

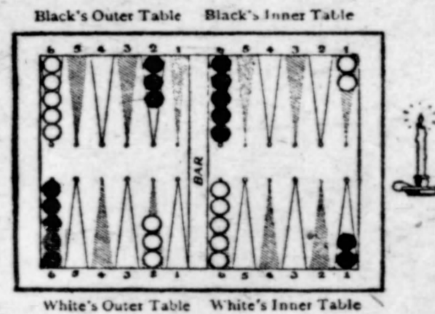
The men are of two different colours or, let us say, Black and White, and there are fifteen of each. One player selects the black and the other the white, and each provides himself with one of the dice cups and one of the pairs of dice. The men are then set up or placed upon the board in the position indicated in the following diagram:



In this position the white men move clockwise, that is, across the top from left to right,

then down and across the bottom from right to left.

Instead of this, the men may be set up also in the following position:



It will be observed that this second position is the reverse of the first. When the men are so placed, the white men move in the reverse direction, that is, counter-clockwise or right to left across the top and then down and across the bottom from left to right.

NEARER THE LIGHT.

It does not make a particle of difference in which one of these positions the men are originally placed, nor does it make any difference, in either case, if the black men are placed where the white men appear in these illustrations, and *vice versa*. It is an old-established custom, however, in setting up the men, to adopt whichever of these positions will place the inner or home tables nearer the light, as indicated by the candle in the illustrations.

For the purposes of these articles we shall consider that the men are always originally placed as in the first of the illustrations, with the light and inner tables upon the left, and we would recommend beginners, in learning the game, to play at first, and until they have made a little progress, one of these positions as the starting point of each game.

This will avoid unnecessary confusion while they are learning. Later on, they will have little difficulty in playing with the other position as the starting point and will find themselves equally proficient with either, for the game, excepting that it is reversed, is precisely the same.

SIX POINTS.

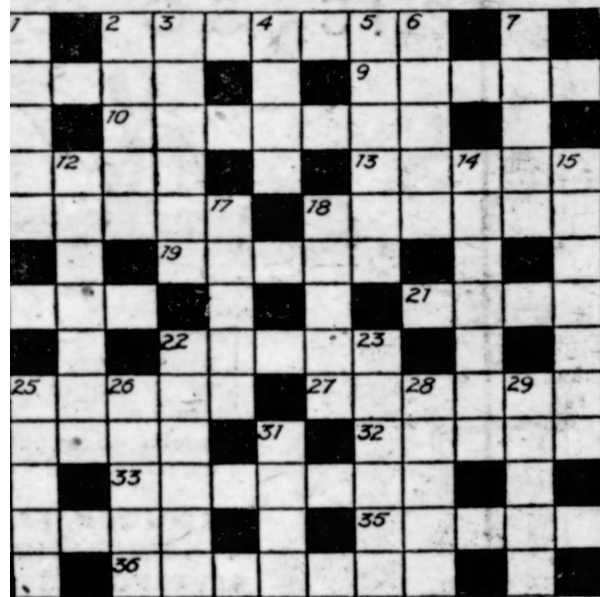
From the illustration it will be seen that the board includes four "tables," two inner and two outer, and these are separated by what is known as the "bar." These tables, it will be observed also, are each marked with six points. Twelve of these project from White's side and twelve from Black's side, and they are made more distinct by being of alternate colours. These points are known by the numbers indicated, that is, from 1 to 6, and, while the numbers of the points never appear upon actual boards, it is important to be familiar with them.

The single points in both outer tables are known also as the "bar" points. Upon Black's side this point is Black's bar point and upon White's side it is White's bar point.

There is nothing very complicated or difficult about a backgammon board. However, thorough familiarity with it is important, and careful observation of it at the outset is of assistance in learning to play.

To-morrow: First Steps.

ning Crossword.



- 22—"May" and "can" are often mixed up, the one in the other, that's the beast of it.
- 23—Things are often different for those who go in head first.
- 25—A famous Cheshire seat. (Sounds scholarly, doesn't it?)
- 26—French, no doubt, and hence a study in harmony.
- 28—Mere cyphers in business, but inherently poetic.
- 29—Straight from the horse's mouth, and the answer's in the negative.
- 31—As a final measure, we should suggest a "swindle."

THURSDAY'S SOLUTION.

- ACROSS.—1, Guards. 4, Flagon. 7, Iteration. 9, Kiss. 10, Eels. 11, Swede. 14, Elsie. 15, Pages. 16, Romeo. 17, Avenu. 18, Caber. 20, Match. 23, Blew. 25, Furs. 26, Soda water. 27, Truths. 28, Sprint.
- DOWN.—1, Grable. 2, Rats. 3, Screw. 4, Fated.

we will go!

GROSVENOR NICHOLAS tells you
HOW TO PLAY
BACKGAMMON

BEGINNING with the original set-up illustrated above, the object of each player is to move all of his men into his inner table and then remove them from the board. The men are moved and also removed according to throws of the dice.

To determine who shall play first each player throws a single dice, and the one throwing the higher number adopts both of the numbers thrown as his throw and makes the opening play accordingly. When both numbers are the same the players must throw again, and, after the opening play has been made, each player in turn throws two dice.

There are other methods of starting the game, but this is the best.

The men are moved from point to point according to the throws of the dice. White moves from Black's inner table to Black's outer table, then across to White's outer table and thence into White's inner table. Black moves in the same manner, but in the opposite direction—from White's inner table to White's outer table, then across to Black's outer table and thence into Black's inner table.

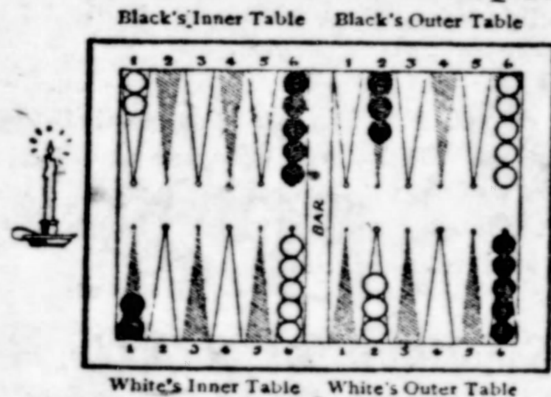
COLOURS GUIDE.

A player may move any of his men the number of points corresponding to the numbers thrown by him. He may move one man both of the numbers thrown or he may move two men, one according to one of the numbers and the other according to the other number.

In moving a man, the point from which the man is moved is not counted. Therefore, a move of six will always carry a man into the next table. In making moves, beginners usually find it necessary to count. Later on they will learn to see at a glance to what point any number will carry a man. They will be assisted in this by observing at the outset that, because the points are of alternate colours, a move of any even number will always carry a man to a point of the same colour, while a move of an odd number will always carry a man to a point of a different colour. Another matter of great importance for beginners is always to think of their dice throws as of two distinct numbers, and never as the sum of the numbers thrown.

that you out.

No. 4. First Steps.



The game proceeds in this way, White moving in one direction and Black in the opposite direction, until all of the White men and all of the Black men are moved into their own inner or home tables. As soon as all of the White men or all of the Black men are home, the player then proceeds to remove them from the board. This is known as "bearing" or "throwing off," and is done by removing men from points of the inner table which correspond to the numbers thrown.

OFF THE BOARD.

If a number is thrown and the corresponding point is unoccupied, a move must be made, if there is room for it, and a move may always be made, if desired, instead of removing a man. If a number is thrown which is higher than any point that is occupied, a man must then be removed from the next highest occupied point. For example, if the six point is empty and six is thrown, a man must be thrown off from the five point or next point occupied.

This may seem to be a little difficult to understand. It will be of assistance, perhaps, to beginners to observe that a man upon the six point is removed because, if moved instead of thrown off, it would be moved beyond the inner table or off the board. In like manner, when the six point is empty, a move of six from the five point would carry a man off the board.

The player who is first in removing or throwing off all of his men wins the game. It will be seen, therefore, that backgammon is primarily only a simple race of fifteen draughtsmen in opposite directions. If it were only this, the player throwing the larger numbers would win. There are, however, other factors and these we shall consider in the article following.

MONDAY.—"Blocks" and "Blots."

GROSVENOR NICHOLAS tells you HOW to PLAY BACKGAMMON

No. 5.—“Blocks” and “Blots.”

AS we have seen, backgammon is primarily a simple race of fifteen draughtsmen in opposite directions, but with other elements or complications. There are two of these, and they are known as “blocks” and “blots.”

A block is a point occupied by two or more men. When a point is so occupied the adversary may not move any of his men to the same point. Such a move is blocked, and in playing backgammon this blocking of certain moves by the adversary is of tremendous importance.

Whenever a player has been able to move two of his men so that they occupy the same point it constitutes such a block. This is called “making a point,” and may be an effective obstacle to the adversary’s progress. In addition to this, a block of two or more men in the player’s inner table prevents the entering of an opponent’s man which has been taken up.

“HIT.”

A blot is a single man upon any point. In backgammon such a man is unprotected and vulnerable. When a player throws a number which enables him to place a man upon a point occupied by an adversary’s blot, the blot is said to be “hit,” or “taken up.” The man so hit is then placed upon the bar separating the inner and outer tables.

The adversary must then first enter this man in the player’s inner or home table before he is permitted again to move or to throw off. This sets the man back, and it may very considerably retard the adversary’s progress, for the adversary must first enter this man, and he may do this only by throwing a number that corresponds to the number of an unblocked point in the player’s inner table.

As we have seen, the points of the inner tables are numbered from one to six, from the side of the board to the bar. If the five and the three points are unblocked and the throw is five and three, the man upon the bar may be entered upon the five point and a move made of three, or he may be entered upon the three point and a move made of five.

AN ADVANTAGE.

It is generally an advantage to hit and take up blots, because the men taken up must enter and start anew and this, as we have seen, retards the opponent’s progress. Furthermore, as the opponent may not move or throw off any of his other men while he has one or more men

upon the bar to enter, it is generally an advantage to make points in one’s own inner table, so that the adversary, if one of his men is taken up, cannot enter. One may then continue throwing and making progress while the adversary is unable to move.

In playing backgammon it is generally impossible to avoid making blots, that is, leaving single men that are exposed to some extent. When one is obliged to expose a single man, there is always a question as to which man should be exposed and, in determining this, certain general principles are applicable.

The first of these is that a blot which may be hit by any number from one to six is a greater risk because it is exposed to either of the two numbers that the adversary may throw. If it is exposed to a number higher than six, requiring a combination of the numbers thrown by the adversary, the risk is naturally much less. The second is that that exposure of an advanced man is a greater risk because, if hit and obliged to re-enter, the player’s progress will be so much more retarded.

While it is important for beginners to understand these general principles, they are, no doubt, elementary. The first must be supplemented later on by a further knowledge of the chances in backgammon, and both are subject to exceptions due to other considerations.

Generally speaking, in playing backgammon the matters of first importance are progress and position. Since the game is a race of the draughtsmen, to progress more rapidly than the opponent is the primary object. However, as, independent of relative progress, games are so frequently won by positions which effectively block the adversary, it is difficult to say that position is not of greater importance.

TO-MORROW.—Important Points.

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GROSVENOR NICHOLAS tells you HOW to PLAY BACKGAMMON

No. 6.—Points and Position.

IT is a rule of backgammon that plays must be made, if possible, for both of the numbers thrown. The plays may be either moves or, when all of the men are home, bearing or throwing off men. Either number thrown may be played first. If either one of the two numbers thrown can be played, but not both, the rule is that the higher number must be played.

As backgammon is always a game of dice, luck is always a factor of tremendous importance. However, it does not follow that skill is not also a factor, but, as in so many of the more definitely recognised arts, practice must precede perfection.

There are three points which are of greater importance than any of the others. These are respectively the player's five point, the player's bar point, and the five point of the opponent's inner table. The making of any of these three points at the start of the game is of so much importance that the accomplishment of all of these things, or of any one of them, is a primary objective.

While all agree that these points are the most valuable, there is a difference of opinion as to which one is the best. Many players prefer the bar point—and, it is true, possession of one's bar point blocks an adversary's six. As this is the largest single number, it is, therefore, the most effective block.

Notwithstanding this, I prefer the player's five point, for the bar point loses most of its importance whenever the adversary advances in the player's inner table, making perhaps an advanced point therein, and may be of no importance at all after the adversary has moved out. The player's five point blocks a four and prevents an adversary's man that has been taken up from entering with a five.

In addition, possession by the player of his own five point makes it impossible for the adversary to occupy that point and, as this is one of the adversary's primary objectives, this is a consideration of great importance.

The five point in the adversary's inner table is also a position of importance. With that point established the player commands every open point of the adversary's outer table in which blots are so frequently unavoidable. Furthermore, when the player's two hindmost men have been advanced to the adversary's five point, it is difficult for the adversary to block them effectively. A further important consideration, as in the other case, is that possession of this point makes it impossible for the adversary himself to make what is perhaps his most valuable point.

In my preceding article I intimated that, although backgammon is a race of the draughtsmen, it is a race in which position is frequently of more importance than speed. An excellent illustration of this is in the throw double ones, or, as it is sometimes called, double aces. Although this is one of the smallest of throws, it is the best in backgammon. It is always played to make the player's five point and bar point. The result, together with the six point which is already occupied, is three consecutive blocks of all of the adversary's higher numbers, that is, four, five, and six.

I might add, if only for the purpose of emphasizing the importance of the three points which we have been considering, that possession of any two of them, unless the adversary's position is equally strong, is a sufficient advantage to justify an immediate double of the stake.

To-morrow: Chouette.

GROSVENOR NICHOLAS tells you
HOW TO PLAY
BACKGAMMON

No. 7—Doubling.

WHEN one considers that backgammon and dicing have existed in so many countries of the world and since such remote times it is difficult to escape the conclusion that they are inherent in us. And, of course, whenever anything is inherent in us, it never really dies.

There may be periods during which such things are quiescent—so quiescent, perhaps, that we are hardly conscious of their existence. Nevertheless, they recur and, whatever may be the immediate cause of these periodical recurrences, we content ourselves usually with the trite and rather shop-worn generalisation that "everything runs in cycles." Like most generalisations this is inaccurate. However, it sounds wise and satisfies us.

RETURN TO FAVOUR.

For two or three centuries we have had card playing as a principal indoor diversion, vice, or accomplishment—however it may be regarded. Backgammon and dicing, excepting, perhaps, among unregenerate dice-shooters, have been obscured, in recent years at all events, by clouds of the more serious minded whist and bridge. Now, fortunately, the sun is again shining, and backgammon and dicing have returned.

That the return of backgammon was inevitable must have been apparent to anyone who knew the game and had studied its history. It had not only charmed the rulers of antiquity, and, many years later, the emperors of Rome, but, during the Middle Ages and for two or three centuries afterwards, the royalty and aristocracy of all of Western Europe.

However, neither its illustrious past nor its aristocratic association is the immediate cause of the present revival of backgammon. Backgammon has been revived, just as old whist was revived, by recent developments or elaborations. The most important of these is what is known as "Doubling."

EXCITING POSSIBILITIES.

This development, said to be the invention of the Grand Duke Dmitri, now a resident of Paris, has given to this ancient game the exciting possibilities of a game of poker, in which the sky is literally the limit, together with perfect protection for the conservative.

Backgammon has been always a game in which the advantage may shift suddenly and frequently. By giving the players the right alternately to double the stake, there has been given to the stake the possibility of an increase in geometrical progression which may reach the stars. At the same time, the right to surrender and decline doubles affords perfect protection.

Practically, this doubling is done in the following way. At the beginning of each game a single counter is placed beside the board. This counter represents the initial amount for which each game is played, and it may be almost anything.

IN STRIKING COLOURS.

In the Travellers' Club, of Paris, where this doubling originated, and in the Racquet and Tennis Club, of New York, where it has been played enthusiastically for some years, ordinary wooden matches have been used for counters.

There are now available what are known as "backgammon matches." While these will not strike, they are in striking colours, denoting different values, after the manner of the chips used at poker or roulette and, of course, ordinary chips would serve the same purpose.

To-morrow: More About Doubling.

GROSVENOR NICHOLAS tells you HOW to PLAY BACKGAMMON

No. 8.—More About Doubling.

AFTER a game has been commenced either player may, at any time before he throws his dice, double the stake for which the game is played. He does this practically by taking a second counter from the general supply, placing it beside the first and moving the two counters a few inches towards his opponent's side. The opponent may then, at his option, decline the double, surrender the stake and begin a new game, or he may accept the double and proceed with the game.

When the opponent accepts the double, he has the sole right to double the stake a second time, and he may do this before any of his throws. Practically he does this in a similar manner by placing two additional counters beside the others; the four counters thus assembled are then moved towards the side of the player who made the first double.

This second double in like manner gives the initial doubler the option of surrendering the stake, already once doubled, and commencing a new game, or of accepting the second double and continuing the game.

SOLE RIGHT.

When the initial doubler accepts this re-double he has in like manner the sole right to double the stake a third time. Continuing in this way there may be a fourth double, a fifth double, and so on indefinitely whenever the player who has accepted the last previous double thinks the advantage has shifted to him and wishes accordingly again to double the stake.

As I have indicated, the privilege of doubling is first with either player. It then alternates, being always with the player who has accepted the last double. During the play of the game the one entitled to offer the next double is always indicated by the position of the counters, which are, as we have seen, always moved slightly toward the side of the player who accepts the double.

Whenever a game is concluded, either by being played to a finish or by one of the players declining a double and surrendering, the winner takes the counters which represent the stake, not including, of course, those added when a double is declined, and keeps these as a record of how much he is ahead.

DOUBLING CUBE.

About a year ago the writer originated and introduced what is known as the "doubling cube." This is a cube resembling a large die, but, instead of the numbers 1 to 6, the six surfaces are marked with numbers in geometrical progression, 2, 4, 8, and so on up to 64.

These doubling cubes are generally obtain-

able and are used to keep track of the doubles. The cube is moved towards the player who accepts a double, and at the same time the surface is turned up which indicates the amount of its stake. Its position serves also to show whose turn it is to make the next double. However, as counters provide also a ready means of keeping a record of the score, they are perhaps more satisfactory.

As will be readily appreciated, this new voluntary doubling of the stake has given to backgammon new and interesting features. It has not only tremendously increased the possibilities of the game from the standpoint of results—and in this connection it is only necessary to mention that twenty doubles would exceed a million—but it has dispensed also with the necessity of playing to a conclusion many of the games which are too one-sided to be interesting.

In addition, it has added to the game something entirely new, that is, the ability to estimate correctly the strength or weakness of any given position and to know when it is advisable to double, and, when doubled, whether it is advisable to accept or to decline and surrender. These questions require quite as much skill and judgment as any question of play and are generally of much greater importance in their effect upon the score.

To-morrow: Another New Development.

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GROSVENOR NICHOLAS tells you

HOW to PLAY BACKGAMMON

No. 9.—Chouette.

IN addition to the doubling of the stake a further recent addition to backgammon is what is known as Chouette. By means of this, backgammon need no longer be limited to two players, but may be played by three, four, five or any reasonable number.

There is nothing really new about Chouette. The name, which, strangely enough, is the French word for screech-owl, has been known for many years in connection with the French card games *ecarté* and *piquet*, which are played by two players. In those games, one of the players sometimes made a side bet with one or more of the spectators, or, as we sometimes express it, "took an extra." When this was done the one playing single-handed, risking to win or lose with certain of the bystanders as well as his opponent, was said to be playing *la chouette*.

The name of this dolorous bird perhaps suggested itself when some combination of bad cards and the taking of "extras" with too many bystanders produced an agony which no ordinary human speech could express.

MAN IN THE BOX.

In describing the playing of Chouette at backgammon it is simpler to begin by illustrating with a game for three players. To begin such a game, each of the three players throws one die and the one who throws the highest number is *la chouette*, or in the language of modern backgammon players, the "Man in the Box." The player throwing the next highest number is known as the "Captain," and the first game is played by him with the Man in the Box.

During this game the third player, who has thrown the lowest number, sits to one side and is temporarily inactive. However, the third player, although inactive, is the partner of the Captain, having the same interest against the common adversary in the box. If the player in the box loses the game, he loses to the Captain whatever the stake may be and, at the same time, loses also an equal amount to the third player who has been inactive. In like manner, if the Man in the Box wins the game, he wins the amount of the stake from each of the others.

It will be readily understood from this that, in a three-handed game, the Man in the Box wins or loses double the amount of the stake. In addition to this, there is an orderly rotation in the position of the players.

If the Man in the Box wins the game, the Captain, who has been conducting that game against him, withdraws and sits to one side, while the third player, who has been inactive, then becomes the Captain and plays the next

game for himself and partner against the player in the box.

The game proceeds in this way, the players not in the box each in turn being Captain and playing games alternately against the Man in the Box, until one of them defeats him. When this happens the one defeating him becomes the Man in the Box and continues in the same way to play against the other two, who are now partners, until he is defeated by one of them.

During the play, while the Captain is the final arbiter and may make whatever moves he pleases, he may at all times consult with his inactive partner and the latter, of course, may offer whatever suggestions he pleases. Too many of these, it might be added, are only confusing and prejudicial.

In regard to the doubling of the stake, while it has been always a matter for the Captain alone to decide when such doubles shall be made for his side, there have been differences of opinion as to the extent to which the Captain should be permitted to bind his inactive partner by the making or acceptance of doubles which the inactive partner considers unwise.

INDEPENDENT AGREEMENT.

When these differences of opinion arise a convenient means of disposing of them has been by independent agreement between the partners. The partner who did not wish to accept a double was permitted to withdraw, losing to his partner the amount of the stake at that time, while his co-partner continued the game and assumed individually the risk of a double loss or the possibility of a double profit.

This arrangement made no difference at all to the Man in the Box, for the result to him was precisely the same.

In the United States this subject has been disposed of recently in a somewhat different manner by the "Laws of Backgammon," in which Chouette is included, adopted by the Racquet and Tennis Club of New York and other leading clubs.

These rules provide that any partner may refuse any double. When he does this, he forfeits to the Man in the Box the amount of the stake at the time the double is proposed. If it is the Captain who has rejected a double and his partner wishes to accept it, the Captain loses his position also and the inactive partner takes his place.

For more than three players Chouette is played in the same manner, the additional players being additional inactive partners, ranking below the Captain in order according to the numbers which they have thrown at the commencement of the game, progressing in that order and in turn playing the Man in the Box until he is defeated.

To-morrow: Opening Plays.

GROSVENOR NICHOLAS tells you HOW TO PLAY BACKGAMMON.

10.—Opening Play.

It is now the general practice to begin each game by having the winner adopt for his opening play the two numbers thrown which determine the right to play first.

As I pointed out in an earlier article, this is the best method, for it makes the start of each game as fair as it can be made. One player has the advantage of the first play, which, when this method is employed, can never be a doublet, while the other player, starting last, is compensated for this by having a one to five chance of throwing a doublet.

In considering the opening plays we are necessarily limited to a consideration of what the first player should do. It may be, of course, that, in many cases, what would be the best moves for the first player would be also the best moves for his opponent, who plays last.

ASSOCIATED NEWSPAPERS, LIMITED.

(Continued from preceding column.)

that we, as a nation, are too modest. He is to-day the chief apostle of advertising. "Advertise, advertise, advertise your goods" is the lesson he has learned, and has set himself to teach the manufacturers and traders of these islands. Some have already learned the lesson and, consequently, are in a happier position to-day than those to whom the Prince appeals to tell the world, and sell their goods.

Clearly the Prince believes that if we set to work with a will the tide will turn. We do not know when that will be, but when it does this Company, by reason of its strong financial position, keen and unrivalled personnel, liquid resources, and its magnificently equipped buildings, is ready to cope with any development or any competition that may arise.

STRONG FINANCIAL POSITION.

This business, as you know, is not burdened with Debentures or prior charges. As I have mentioned before, the amount required to pay our Preference and Ordinary dividends is only £67,000 per annum, and on last year's figures this sum is covered some fifteen times, which I think you will agree is a very happy position to be in.

The Resolution for the adoption of the Report and Accounts was carried unanimously.

The retiring Directors were re-elected and the Auditors (Messrs. Lever, Honeyman and Co.) were reappointed.

The proceedings closed with a cordial vote of thanks to the Chairman, Directors, and Staff.

This would be true, no doubt, whenever the first player's opening moves had not so changed the original position of the men that their new position had to be taken into account. However, it is not safe to assume this would not be the case. Accordingly, we shall consider first only opening plays made by the one who actually plays first and, as these cannot be of doublets, I shall later on return to that subject.

Eliminating for the present doublets, the best opening throws in backgammon are three and one and six and one. The former of these is always played to make the five point in the player's inner table while the latter is always played to make the player's bar point. Either one of these throws establishes one of the three best points which, as I explained yesterday, are the primary or immediate objectives.

Of the other throws, exclusive of doublets, there is none which will enable the player to make immediately any one of the three principal points. Some of these remaining throws, however, are by no means bad, for they can be played advantageously to accomplish results, which, although not of the first importance, are nevertheless helpful.

For example, an opening throw of four and two is always played to make the four point in the player's inner table. While this is not a point of the first importance, it is frequently of considerable value.

Another opening throw that is not bad is a six and five. This is invariably employed to accomplish the escape of one of the player's two hindmost men which is moved across the board to safety. In certain circles this play is affectionately described as "The lover's leap," the origin of this name being attributed to a Mrs. Curtis, one of New York's many fair backgammonists.

A six and five also has the advantage of being a large throw. While it accomplishes nothing in position, excepting the escape referred to, it does accomplish something in progress.

It may be well to mention here that the average throw in backgammon, counting doublets double, as we do in playing, amounts to eight and one-sixth.

Monday: More about Opening Plays.

GROSVENOR NICHOLAS tells you HOW to PLAY BACKGAMMON

No. 11—Opening Plays.

In the preceding article we considered the opening throws six and one, three and one, four and two and six and five. The other opening throws, exclusive of doublets, are all either indifferent or bad. Alone and independently of throws which may follow, nothing of much value or importance can be accomplished with any of them.

Some players would perhaps make an exception to this of the five and three and possibly also of the six and four. For no doubt many experienced players employ these opening throws to make the three point and even the two point in their inner tables, and we must assume that they believe that they are accomplishing something advantageous.

Now it is perfectly true that playing the opening throws of five and three and six and four to make the lower points of the inner table are safe plays. Not a single blot is exposed, and, with these throws, no other plays can be made without leaving one or more blots.

Because this method of playing an opening five and three or six and four is so safe it is probably best for beginners. Beginners should exercise greater caution until they are more familiar with the game. Later they will learn that timely departures from conservatism, or the taking of chances at certain opportune times, is an essential and most important part of the game.

I shall, in a subsequent article, return to the subject of taking chances for the full consideration which it merits, but at this point will clarify my comments upon opening plays with some further general observations.

The first of these is that in backgammon risks are practically inevitable. They are so inevitable that one may always assume at the start that some risk must be run before a game is finally concluded.

The second is that it is better to run the risks early.

NUMERICAL SUPERIORITY.

In addition to these two elementary ideas or principles there is a further principle of backgammon that, when a throw is not good and nothing advantageous can be accomplished immediately, one should consider the future.

In making the moves which such a throw requires, one should consider what moves can be made which, in conjunction with the throws which follow, may be advantageous to oneself or disadvantageous to one's opponent. Unless the risk of such moves is too great, one should not, merely for the sake of a present absolute security, which may be but temporary, make moves which will prejudice the future and place one probably at a permanent disadvantage.

With these considerations in mind, excepting for beginners, I cannot recommend playing an opening five and three or six and four to make one of the lower points. The objection to these plays is that they advance two men so far at the start of the game that they are practically out of play. The two men are virtually out of the game for its entire duration and this gives the adversary, in effective playing pieces, a numerical superiority which is generally a decided advantage.

If anyone has misgivings as to the advantage which this numerical superiority is to an adversary, he has only to attempt a few games, with two or three of his men removed before the start, and observe the results.

For all excepting beginners, I recommend playing a five and three by bringing over one man from the adversary's other table and advancing it to the five point of the player's inner table. This leaves the man exposed to a four, but the chances against a four are twenty-one to fifteen, and, if the man is not hit, the player has many chances, upon his next throw, of covering this blot and making his valuable five point.

Those who desire to be more conservative may play this throw by bringing over two men

from the adversary's table, leaving the blot in the outer table, where it is safer, but where it still may be helpful, upon the next throw, in accomplishing something of value.

An opening throw of six and four should be played by advancing one of the hindmost men as far as it will go. This is the play recommended by Hoyle and there is nothing better. While other plays have been suggested, they are either no more constructive and more hazardous, or else they are too hazardous to be considered.

PLAYING FIRST.

These openings, I must emphasize, are only for the player who actually plays first. They can be recommended for the second player only when the first player's opening moves have not placed certain of his men in positions which must be taken into account.

For example, if the opponent has already played a six and four to advance one of his hindmost men, it would be a mistake for the second player, having the same throw, to make the same moves, for his blot would be exposed then to two, instead of one, of the opponent's men and his risk doubled.

In like manner, if the opponent has already made an additional point in his inner table, or advanced one of his hindmost men a point or two, it would not be advisable for the second player to play a five and three as we have recommended. In such circumstances, the risk is considerably increased and is too great.

It would be better, then, because of this increased risk, to make the point in the inner table. As we have seen, this advances two men further than it is advisable to advance them at the start of a game; nevertheless, taking into account the extra hazard of the opponent's position, it is then the best play.

In the opening moves, as well as during the game, risks for position are frequently not only justifiable but advisable. That is because in backgammon it is position which so very frequently wins games. However, while risks of this kind are, often advisable, there are always certain reasonable limitations beyond which it is unwise to venture.

TO-MORROW.—Opening Plays Continued.



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GROSVENOR NICHOLAS tells you

HOW to PLAY BACKGAMMON

No. 12—More Opening Plays.

THE other opening throws, exclusive of doublets, are six and three, six and two, five and four, five and two, five and one, four and three, four and one, three and two and two and one.

Everyone agrees that, as opening throws, these are all bad. While there is much difference of opinion as to how most of them should be played, so much depends upon the throws which happen to follow that it is difficult to say anything very illuminating as to the merits of the various views advanced.

With an opening throw of six and three it is probably best to advance one of the two hindmost men as far as it will go. The blot exposed can only be hit with a three or a two and one, and the throw necessitates at least one blot in any event.

Six and two should be played by bringing over one man from the adversary's outer table and advancing it to the five point in the player's inner table. It would be less of a risk, of course, merely to advance one of the two hindmost men. The single man then exposed would be not as far advanced. However, in either case, the blot could be hit by a four, and the former play has the advantage, provided the adversary does not throw a four, of affording the player an excellent opportunity of making his five point upon his next throw.

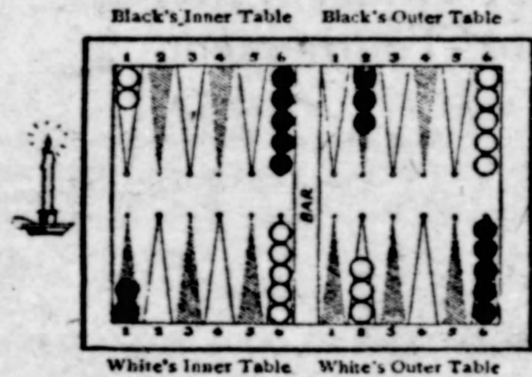
EMBARRASSING.

A five and four may be played, as a six and three is played, by advancing one of the two hindmost men a total of nine points. This leaves the blot in the same position and it is exposed only to the same throws. However, a five and four also may be played by bringing over two men from the adversary's outer table, leaving the blot in the player's outer table, where it is safer but further advanced, or it may be played by bringing over only one man with the five and, with the four, advancing one of the hindmost men to the adversary's five point.

All three of these plays are correct. Practically, the relative merits of each depends upon what the adversary's next throw happens to be. I like the last play because it may embarrass the adversary more and also may aid the player, upon his next throw, in securing the five point in the adversary's inner table. However, in the event of a three and one by the adversary, or of double ones, threes or fours, disastrous consequences may follow.

Five and two is very generally played by bringing over two men from the adversary's outer table. The blot left is exposed only to the single combination of a six and four and, upon the next throw, may serve the player as a useful "builder."

Five and one, four and one and two and one



may all be played by bringing over one man from the adversary's outer table with the higher number and then, with the one, moving another man from the six point to the five point in the player's inner table.

These plays all expose an advanced man to a four by the adversary and this increased risk can be avoided. However, the chances against the adversary's throwing a four are 21 to 15 and, if the adversary fails to do this, the player, upon his next throw, has many chances of covering the blot and making his five point.

For experienced players the possibility of securing at once this advantageous point is worth, no doubt, the increased risk involved.

For beginners, and others who wish to be more conservative, the one should be played in the opponent's inner table by advancing one point one of the player's two men there. The exposure of these hindmost men, who are already so far back, is virtually no risk at all.

QUESTION OF RISK.

Four and three and three and two are also throws which may be played correctly either in an extra hazardous manner, for the possibility of position, or more conservatively.

When the first method is adopted the three is used to advance one man from the player's outer table to his inner table, risking this advanced man for the possibility that it may escape and that the player, upon his next throw, may be able to make his five point. The four or the two is then played by bringing over one man from the adversary's outer table.

A beginner, or other player wishing to be more conservative, should bring over two men from the adversary's to his own outer table, or else bring but one man over and, with the remaining number, advance one of his men in the adversary's inner table. In the latter case it is better to use the smaller number to bring the man over into the player's outer table and the larger to advance the man in the adversary's inner table.

This makes the risk to the single man in the outer table something less, while the other man, further advanced in the adversary's inner table, is a greater menace to the adversary.

TO-MORROW: Play of the Doublets.

GROSVENOR

NICHOLAS tells you

HOW to PLAY BACKGAMMON. No. 13.—Plays of the Doublets.

AS I have already pointed out, it is now usual to begin each game by having the winner of the throw determining the right to play first adopt for his first play the numbers so thrown that, properly speaking, there never can be an opening play of a doublet. The second player, however, may have a doublet upon his first throw, or the first player upon his second throw and, as certain moves are usual and best for doublets at this early stage of the game, I will here set them forth.

In describing these moves, I shall assume that the moves already made have brought about no material change in the original position. Otherwise, the new and changed position resulting would have to be taken into account in determining what moves would be best.

Double sixes is always played by bringing over two men to make the player's bar point. The two sixes remaining are played by advancing the two men in the adversary's inner table and making also the adversary's bar point. The value of this last point is always uncertain.

Later on, if one is behind, it may have a

defensive value of importance as an obstacle and source of embarrassment to the opponent. On the other hand, if one is ahead—and after a double six one is likely to be ahead—one may be obliged to move from this point before that can be done with safety.

The two men can only advance and escape without risk by means of some appropriate doublet. For this reason, the possession of the adversary's bar point by this play may become a source of embarrassment to the player. Nevertheless, it is the best play that can be made.

Double fives is always played by bringing over two men from the adversary's outer table and advancing them both ten points to make the player's three point. This advances these two men further than it is desirable to do at the commencement of a game, but there is no other play worth considering and at least much progress has been made.

DOUBLE FOUR.

There are two excellent ways of playing a double four. The first is by bringing over two

men from the adversary's outer table and advancing them both eight points to make the player's five point. The second is by advancing these two men four points, instead of eight, to make a point in the player's outer table, and then, with the two remaining fours, advancing the two hindmost men to make the five point in the adversary's inner table.

If the adversary's opening throw has been a six and one and he has made his bar point, the latter play of a double four is preferable, for it destroys most of the value of the adversary's bar point. This is an excellent illustration of the importance, to which I have referred, of taking into account moves already made which have brought about a material change in the original position.

Double threes is played by advancing two men three points to make the player's five point. The two threes remaining are then played to make either the three point in the player's inner table, an additional point in the player's outer table or the four point in the adversary's inner table. Which one of these three alternative plays is best depends upon the throws that follow.

Another excellent play of a double three is to bring over two men from the adversary's outer table and advance them both six points to make the player's bar point.

Here, again, it may be important to take into account moves which already have been made. If one of the adversary's men in the player's inner table has been advanced one point, it would be better to play a double three to make the player's bar point than to expose to a six the blot left in the outer table by one of the other plays.

DOUBLE TWO.

The best play of a double two probably is to advance two men two points to make the player's four point and, with the two remaining twos, to bring over two men and make an additional point in the player's outer table.

Another excellent play of a double two is to advance both hindmost men four points to make the five point in the adversary's inner table. If the adversary has already established his bar point, the latter play is preferable, and it would be better in any event provided one could be sure of throwing a large doublet and outrunning one's opponent.

The play of double ones has been given in Article Nine. This throw is always played to make the player's bar point and five point. Although it is one of the smaller throws, it is the best in backgammon.

To-morrow.—The Chances.

Best of the Wireless.

NATIONAL PROGRAMME—193 Kc. (1554.4 Metres).

6.15.—Weather and News; London Stock Exchange Report and Fat Stock Prices. (Time Signal at 6.30.)

6.40.—Lutenist Songs, sung by MARY OGDEN and HERBERT HEYNER.

7.0—7.20.—Talks on Business—10, by Mr. A. P. L. GORDON.

7.25.—Chemistry in Industry, 1—Chemistry and Industry, by Sir WILLIAM J. POPE.

7.45.—The WIRELESS MILITARY BAND, conducted by A. WALTON O'DONNELL; ELLEN WATTEYNE (soprano), with guitar accompaniment.

8.30.—Dr. Abernethy—His Book, a play in one act by Alicia Ramsey and Rudolph de Cordova, adapted by Dulcinea Glasby, produced by Howard Rose.

9.0.—Greenwich Time, Weather and News.

9.15.—Shipping Forecast; New York Stock Market Report.

9.20.—Mr. NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN, representing the Conservative Party: The Effect of Tariffs on Employment—3.

9.35.—SYBIL CRAWLEY (soprano); The INTERNATIONAL STRING QUARTET: ANDRE MANGÉOT (violin), WALTER PRICE (violin), ERIC BRAY (viola), JACK SHINEBOURNE (violoncello), ANNE WOLFE (viola).

11.0—12.0.—BILLY MASON AND HIS CAFE DE PARIS BAND.

LONDON NATIONAL PROGRAMME—1,148 Kc. (261.3 Metres).

6.15.—National programme.

9.15.—New York Stock Market Report.

9.20—11.0.—National programme.

LONDON REGIONAL PROGRAMME—842 Kc. (356.3 Metres).

6.15.—Weather and News.

arranged by the H.I.R.O. 7.40.—Gramophone Records. 8.10.—Gramophone Records. Concert by the Ons Genoegen Mixed Double Quartet of Zaandam. 9.10.—Concert. 9.50.—Selections by the Mixed Doubles Quartet. 10.15.—Concert (contd.).

LANGENBERG (473 metres), 17 kw. and AACHEN, COLOGNE and MUNSTER (227 metres).—8.0.—The World on Gramophone Records—The Chinese Theatre in New York.

MILAN, Call 1 MI (501 metres), 8.5 kw. Relayed by TURIN (296 metres) and GENOA (312.8 metres).—7.10.—Concert of Light Music. 7.35.—Gramophone Records. 8.45.—The Geisha—Operetta (Jones).

Giornale Radio and Concert from Cova Restaurant. **MUNICH (533 metres), 563 k.c., 1.7 kw.—7.25.—**Orchestral Concert. 10.—Concert and Dance Music.

OSLO (1071 metres), 280 kc., 75 kw.—7.30.—Song Recital. 8.30.—Orchestral Concert. 10.35.—Gramophone Dance Music.

PARIS (Eiffel Tower), Call FLE (1445 metres), 207 kc., 15 kw.—6.45.—Le Journal Parlé. 8.30.—Programme for Young people. 9.—Symphony Concert.

PARIS (Radio Paris), Call CFR (1725 metres), 17 kw.—8.—Literary Readings: Poems of Sully-Prudhomme and Leconte de Lisle. 8.35.—Fashion Review. 8.45.—Les Neiges d'Antan—Play (Mouézy-Eon), by M. Francœur and his Company. 10.—Gramophone.

TOULOUSE (Radiophonie du Midi) (395 metres), 779 kc., 8 kw.—6.15.—Chansonnettes. 6.45.—Viennese Music. 7.—Song Recital. 7.15.—Violin Recital. 7.45.—Light Music. 8.—Operetta Selections. 8.15.—Song Recital. 8.45.—Solo Selections. 8.55.—Fashion Notes. 9.—Orchestral Concert. Chansonnettes in the interval. 10.45.—Operetta Songs. 11.—Light Music.

VIENNA (517 metres), 581 kc., 20 kw.—7.40.—From the Dafais Songs (Arno Holz) for Vocal Soloist and Piano. 8.20.—"Red Oleander Blossom"—Drama (Rabindranath Tagore), on the author's 70th birthday. 10.10.—Light Music.

GROSVENOR NICHOLAS
TELLS YOU

HOW to PLAY BACKGAMMON

No. 14—
The Chances.

CONCERNING the chances in backgammon, there is much exaggeration as to the importance of anything which may be regarded seriously as a part of the science of mathematics. Fortunately, one is involved in no difficult problems of any kind. They are mathematical, no doubt, in the sense that they are estimated and stated in figures, but this requires little more of mathematical knowledge than to be able to count correctly.

The basis for estimating the chances in backgammon is that, with two dice, there are always thirty-six possible throws. First there are the six doublets. Then there are fifteen other throws which are not doublets. As the latter may occur in either one of two different ways there are actually thirty of these, and this makes a total of thirty-six.

LIST OF THROWS.

For convenience I give here a list of these throws. With this before us it is a very simple matter to ascertain all of the chances in backgammon.

Double Sixes	1	5 and 4 or 4 and 5...	2
Double Fives	1	5 and 3 or 3 and 5...	2
Double Fours	1	5 and 2 or 2 and 5...	2
Double Threes	1	5 and 1 or 1 and 5...	2
Double Twos	1	4 and 3 or 3 and 4...	2
Double Ones or Aces	1	4 and 2 or 2 and 4...	2
6 and 5 or 5 and 6...	2	4 and 1 or 1 and 4...	2
6 and 4 or 4 and 6...	2	3 and 2 or 2 and 3...	2
6 and 3 or 3 and 6...	2	3 and 1 or 1 and 3...	2
6 and 2 or 2 and 6...	2	2 and 1 or 1 and 2...	2
6 and 1 or 1 and 6...	2		

In this list the six doublets have each been counted only once, because a doublet can be thrown only in one way—that is, both of the dice must show the same number. The chances against any particular doublet, therefore, are thirty-five to one.

The throws other than doublets have each been counted twice because, as stated, they may be thrown in two ways. For example, one die may be six and the other five, or the dice may come up conversely—that is, five and six. As this is the same throw, and as there are two ways in which it may occur, we must conclude that the chances against

any particular throw other than a doublet are thirty-four to two or seventeen to one.

In order to ascertain the chances of any particular number being thrown with two dice, it is only necessary to count the throws in which the number occurs, bearing in mind, of course, that the doublet in which it occurs is counted only once and the other throws twice. For example, one occurs in eleven of the thirty-six possible throws, and does not occur in the remaining twenty-five. It follows from this that the chances of a one are twenty-five against to eleven for.

With the numbers other than one there is a further fact to be considered. The chances of actually throwing any of these other numbers are precisely the same as the chances of throwing a one. However, in connection with blots, it is necessary to consider also that a blot exposed to any of the other six numbers is exposed not only to an actual throw of that particular number, but also to any combination which is its equivalent. For example, while there are only eleven chances of actually throwing a six, a blot six points away may be hit also with double threes, double twos, five

and one or four and two, which, counted as we have indicated, means that there are six additional chances of hitting the blot.

Therefore, including in our count also these other throws with which a move of six can be made, the chances of throwing a six are found to be nineteen against to seventeen for.

Generally speaking, when a blot must be exposed to a six or to a number lower than six, the lower the number the fewer are the additional throws which are its equivalent and the less the chances of its being hit. On the other hand, when exposed to a number over six, of either of these different numbers are the safer it is, because there are fewer combinations which will equal it.

The exceptions to this are four and five and also seven and eight. In each case the chances of either of these different numbers is the same. The explanation is that, while doublets of an odd number enable one to play an even number of points, the converse of this is never the case.

While I recommend readers to estimate the chances for themselves, for those given are so frequently inaccurate, nevertheless, again for

convenience I include here the chances against the numbers from one to twelve inclusive.

25 to 11 against a	1
24 to 12 against a	2
22 to 14 against a	3
21 to 15 against a	4
21 to 15 against a	5
19 to 17 against a	6
30 to 6 against a	7
30 to 6 against a	8
31 to 5 against a	9
33 to 3 against a	10
34 to 2 against a	11
33 to 3 against a	12

This table assumes that the board is open for every possible throw. Whenever an established point intervenes, making it impossible to play a certain throw, that fact must be taken into account in estimating the chances.

While it is interesting to know the chances in backgammon, it is a mistake, I believe, to overestimate their importance. In actual play it is the mathematically improbable that so frequently occurs, and this, no doubt, is one of the charms of the game.

To-morrow—THE STRATEGIES.

Best of the Wireless.

NATIONAL PROGRAMME: 193 Kc. (1554.4 Metres).
6.15.—Weather and News; London Stock Exchange Report and Market Prices for Farmers. (Time Signal at 6.30.)

6.40.—Lutenist Songs, sung by HERBERT HEYNER.
7.0-7.20.—New Novels, by Mr. MICHAEL SADLEIR.
7.25.—The World and Ourselves, 7—Holland, by Mr. J. W. ROBERTSON SCOTT.

7.45.—B.B.C. ORCHESTRA, conducted by VICTOR HELY-HUTCHINSON; ARTHUR CATTERALL (violin).
9.0.—Time Signal, Weather and News.
9.15.—Shipping Forecast; New York Stock Market Report.

9.20.—The PRINCE OF WALES speaking at the banquet given by The London Executive Committee of the British Empire Trade Exhibition, Buenos Aires, relayed from The Dorchester Hotel.
9.45.—A Recital for two pianofortes by ETHEL BARTLETT and RAE ROBERTSON.

10.25-12.0.—JACK PAYNE and his B.B.C. DANCE ORCHESTRA, and perhaps, the song of the nightingale. (Time Signal at 11.30.)

LONDON NATIONAL: 1148 Kc. (261.3 Metres).

6.15.—National Programme.
9.15.—New York Stock Market Report.
9.20-10.25.—National programme.

LONDON REGIONAL: 842 Kc. (356.3 Metres).

6.15.—Weather and News.
6.40.—REGINALD KING'S ORCHESTRA; MARGARET BISSETT (contralto).

7.30.—Lohengrin (Wagner): Prelude and Act I, with MARGARETHE TESCHEMACHER, MARIO OLCEWSKA, WILLI WORLE, HERBERT JANSSEN, IVAR ANDRESEN and VIKTOR MADIN, conducted by ROBERT HEGGER, relayed from The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

8.35.—A. J. ALAN in Mr. Pappas.

STARRED TO-NIGHT.

☆☆☆ 9.20 The Prince's Speech
(National),

☆☆ 7.30 Lohengrin (Regional).

☆ 10.25 Perhaps the Nightingale,

9.5.—The Gypsy Princess, a musical play; book by ARTHUR MILLER; lyrics by ARTHUR STANLEY; music by EMMERICH KALMAN; arranged and abridged for broadcasting; produced by GORDON McCONNEL.

10.20.—Weather and News. **10.35.**—Regional News.
10.40-12.0.—National programme.

MIDLAND REGIONAL: 752 Kc. (398.9 Metres).
6.15.—Weather and News.
6.40.—THE MIDLAND STUDIO ORCHESTRA, directed by FRANK CANTELL.

7.30.—London Regional programme.

10.20.—Weather and News.

GROSVENOR
NICHOLAS
tells you

HOW to PLAY BACKGAMMON

No. 15 The
Strategies.

IN backgammon there is an almost infinite variety of games; rarely, if ever, are two precisely alike. However, there are certain types of games with which one becomes familiar and, while these different types not infrequently blend to some extent one with another, they each require a distinct strategy or method of play.

There are three types of games which are forward games and in these there are always the usual considerations of progress or position, or both. A fourth type is the back-game. This is something totally different requiring a strategy that, in its initial stages, is totally different and, indeed, quite the reverse of any forward game.

Of the first three types the simplest is the running game. This is generally attempted after a player has succeeded in moving his two hindmost men safely out of the adversary's inner table. He has made perhaps equal or greater progress than his adversary and concludes that his best chance of winning is to run for his inner table. His strategy or method of play then is to get all of his men into his inner table and remove them as rapidly as possible, at the same time avoiding, whenever he is able to do so, even a remote chance of being hit.

"SHUT-OUT" GAME.

Another of the three types of forward games we shall call the "shut-out" game. This usually occurs after a player has made one or more additional points in his inner table and the adversary has split or separated his two men in that table.

The player perhaps throws a doublet or some other throw which enables him to take up one of the adversary's men and make a further point. The adversary's man then may fail to enter and, if there are enough "builders" available, the player may make the remaining points until his inner table is filled and both of the adversary's men are shut out upon the bar.

This type of game is generally a most decisive victory. It is frequently a double game and can be concluded frequently without any risk at all. In this respect it differs from those games which are concluded with the adversary's two men upon the player's one point and in which, at any time, one bad throw may result in one or two blots. In fact, this type of game is so likely to be a double game and is so secure against mishap that, provided the adversary's table is reasonably open, the player is justified in risking blots in his inner table whenever there is a chance of bringing it about.

I might mention here that the double game referred to is the old gammon. Whenever a player wins a game, if the adversary has not thrown off a single man, it is a gammon, or double game, and counts double. If the adversary has not thrown off a single man and also has one or more men left in the player's inner table, or upon the bar, it is a backgammon, or triple game, and counts triple.

In the modern game of alternate doubling of

the stake the gammon, or double game, is always included. At the close of such a game the stake, whatever it may then amount to, is again doubled. While it has not been usual, in playing the new game, to include also the backgammon, or triple game, recently in the United States club rules provision has been made for it.

While the two types of forward games already described occur quite frequently, the most usual type of forward game is that of preventing the escape of the adversary's men from the player's inner table. This is known as the blocking game, and the blocking is done, of course, by making the points which will most effectively obstruct or block the adversary.

The immediate objectives are usually the

player's bar point and five point. After these are secured, the player endeavours to make additional points until he has established what is known as a "side prime." This is accomplished when the player has made six consecutive points, which constitute a perfect block and which, until it is broken, makes impossible the escape of the adversary's men.

In this blocking style of game, while a "side prime" is perfection and is always the objective, it is not often that this can be achieved. However, in order to win it is not generally necessary to establish so perfect a blockade. A blockade of three or four of the adversary's higher numbers will generally accomplish the same result.

Monday.—The Back-Game.

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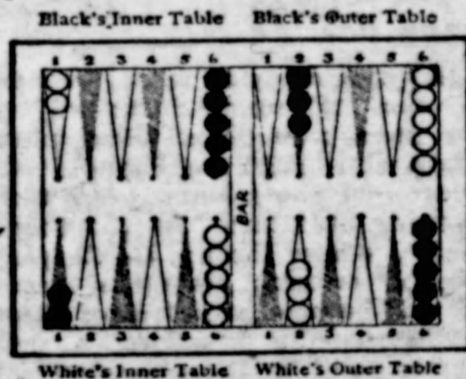
GROSVENOR NICHOLAS tells you HOW to PLAY BACKGAMMON

No. 16.—The Back-Game.

THE strategy of the Back-Game has added much to the play of Backgammon, and a knowledge of it can only increase one's pleasure and interest.

Before the discovery of the Back-Game the player with the better dice for progress and position always won. Games in which the dice were very unequal, therefore, were inevitably dull. Even to the winner they must have been uninteresting, while to the loser they were hopeless.

The discovery of the Back-Game changed this. For the strategy of the Back-Game applies to Backgammon that ancient and seemingly paradoxical teaching—the first shall



be last and the last shall be first—and enables one to win some of the games in which one's dice at the outset are decidedly inferior to those of one's opponent.

In playing a Back-Game the greatest difficulty, as well as the first essential, is to get back far enough. To get back sufficiently is the only safeguard against being "ahead of one's game" later on (which with a Back-Game generally means failure), and in order to accomplish this one must set about it early.

The best method is to leave blots in the player's inner table when an adversary's man is upon the bar. This man in entering may hit one of the blots, and, if again taken up, may hit another in entering. The player should continue this until he has a sufficient number of men back.

THREE POINTS.

In order to establish a perfect or ideal Back-Game, three things must be accomplished: First, the player must have in the opponent's inner table at least one other point in addition to the one point which he already has. For this purpose, the best additional point is the two point, although the three point is also very satisfactory. When a higher point is occupied the danger to the opponent is less.

The strategy of the Back-Game has for its immediate objective going backward, instead of forward, getting one's men back, instead of

advancing them, and making one or more additional points in the opponent's inner table instead of in one's own.

It must be borne in mind that the Back-Game is a definite strategy or method of play. It is not merely being behind. When both of the games are Forward games, one of the players generally is behind. In such games the advantage may always shift from one player to the other, and this is characteristic of Backgammon.

Second, the player must have a sufficient number of additional men back. While the adversary is moving into his inner table and throwing off, this is the only protection possible against being obliged to move out of the adversary's inner table or to advance one's men too far into one's own inner table, where they will be out of play.

It is difficult to have too many men back. It is better to have too many than too few, as this is a safeguard against unusually large dice. These additional men back, moreover, must be in some position from which they can be played, as, for example, in the outer tables or upon an advanced point of the opponent's inner table.

Third, none of the player's men must be out of play. That is, none of the player's men must be advanced beyond the four point of the player's inner table. Of course, a Back-Game may sometimes be brought to a successful conclusion with one or even two men out of play. However, in the later part of the game, the more men the player has available the better.

BETTER CHANCE.

When such a game has been established, the opponent, in throwing off, is obliged frequently to expose one or more of his men. From the two points in the opponent's inner table the player then has slightly better than an even chance of hitting this blot. If the opponent is obliged to expose two men the player's opportunity is, of course, tremendously increased.

When one or more of the opponent's men have been captured their escape must be prevented if possible. This is best done by scattering certain of the players' men in the outer tables, and, at this time, another wise precaution is to block large doublets.

A Back-Game is always a last hope or additional opportunity to a player who, at the commencement of a game, has decidedly inferior dice. Whatever may be one's opinion of it generally, against a good forward game a Back-Game has a better chance of success than another Forward-Game which is decidedly inferior in progress and position.