

# **Whist - A Monthly Journal Devoted to the Interests of the Game**

## **The Rotary Discard**

### **Prize Article by John C. Meredith**

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This discard was first suggested by P. J. Tormey in an article published in the January, 1895, number of "Whist," the idea having been taken by him from a Mexican game.

The first step in the use of this discard is for the partners to arrange their cards in the following rotation, from left to right: Spades, Hearts, Clubs and Diamonds - this being the rotation published by Mr. Tormey in the article referred to above. Any other would be a private convention, unless published.

In order to show strength in any suit, the discard is from the suit ahead of your strong suit, in the rotation; thus, the discard of a spade would show strength in hearts, or if hearts were trumps or there were no hearts in the hand, the discard of a spade would show strength in clubs; the discard of a diamond would ordinarily show strength in spades.

A glance at your own hand would always give the key to the discard, whereas it would have to be figured out by the adversaries, unless they arranged their hands in like rotation. If we compare this discard with some of the other well-known discards, such as the Hamilton, Ames (discard to suit your hand), weak-suit discard, or suit you don't want led, we will find that in the aggressive game, trump strength being with partner, it has no equal.

The fall of a single card gives your partner exact information so that he can lead to you the highest card of the suit, and goes on no fishing excursion with little cards to be caught by the adversaries. Thus, by striking at once

into the best suit in either hand, valuable re-entry cards are saved and the opportunity to discard losing cards is given.

In the defensive game, this discard does not contain the folly of the weak-suit discard, does not point out the weak spot when being attacked, for the suit discarded may be almost as strong as the suit that the discard shows. Even the Hamilton show of strength on the adversary's lead of trumps, which is, of course, far better than showing weakness, too often points out a place of attack in showing the suit to be avoided.

The empirical character of the discard may occasionally leave unguarded a King or Queen, or blank an Ace, but you have doubtless noticed how often in actual play these cards fall to advantage, even where the suit has been abbreviated.

I believe that the combination of the Rotary and the Ames discard would be the best possible discard - the Rotary in the offensive game, and the Ames, or entire concealment of strength or weakness, in the defensive game; but as I have never seen this suggested as a discard, it should not now be considered.

Should the discard be unknown or not remembered (that is, the rotation) after being asked, it is a difficult discard to figure out by the fall of the cards; and while this, perhaps, should not be taken into consideration, we all know how often good players rely upon solving your game by the fall of your cards when no questions are asked concerning their own play.

The tendency of the age in Whist is to show as much as possible by the fall of a single card, such as the Invitation lead, "Force-Me" or "Don't-Force-Me" discard, etc., to say nothing of the plays of our wandering-in-the-wilderness- friends, the short suiters, the rotary discard is in line with this tendency.

*(Contributed by a Whist player from) Kansas City, Mo.*