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HOYLE'S GAMES.

CONTAINING ALL

THE MODERN METHODS OF PLAYING THE LATEST
AND MOST FASHIONABLE GAMES.

BY

THOMAS FRERE.

WITH A BRIEF HISTORY OF PLAYING CARDS.

IMPROVED EDITION.

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Vingt-un.

VINGT-UN, or Twenty-one, is a very interesting game, and may be played by two or more people. It is essentially a family game, and when played as such, the stakes are usually represented by counters, which may be of any value—say sixpence the dozen, or more. It is common to limit the stakes to be laid to a dozen of counters, or the amount in money which they represent. As the deal is advantageous, and often continues long with the same person, it is usual to determine it at the commencement by the first ace turned up, or any other mode that may be agreed upon.

The deal is retained by the person who commences, until a natural Vingt-un occurs, when it passes to the next in rotation.* (The old mode of play, however, is, that in the case of a natural Vingt-un the deal passes to the holder, and many still adhere to this custom. This item of the game must, therefore, be regulated by the custom of the table, or be previously agreed.) The poney or youngest hand should collect the cards that have been played, and shuffle them together ready for the dealer against the period when he shall have distributed the whole pack.

The dealer begins by giving two cards, one at a time, face downwards, to each player, including himself. After the first card has been dealt round, each places his stake upon it (which may, if he chooses, be as low as a single counter), and then receives the second card; but the dealer, upon the stakes being all laid, and before proceeding with the deal, looks at his own card, and if he thinks proper (having perhaps an ace, ten, or court-card), he may double the stakes, which he announces by crying "double." He then distributes a second card to each, and lastly to himself. Should he chance to have a natural Vingt-un, he declares it at once, before any more cards are dealt, and collects the stakes (which, by a Vingt-un, are doubled), but should he have drawn less than 21, the game proceeds thus: The dealer inquires of each player in rotation, beginning with the eldest hand on the left, whether he stands, or wishes for another card, which, if required, must be given from off

* Should a natural Vingt-un occur in the first round it does not put out the dealer being allowed a *misericorde*.

the top (face upwards) of the pack, and afterwards another or more, if requested, till the points of the additional card or cards, added to those dealt, exceed or make 21 exactly, or such a number less than 21 as the player may choose to stand upon; but when the points exceed 21, the player is technically said to have overdrawn, and his cards are to be thrown up forthwith, and the stake laid on them, paid to the dealer. When the dealer has gone the round of the table in this manner, he turns up his own cards to the view of the company, and should he have any number of points between, say from 17 to 20, he usually "stands," that is, pits his cards against the other players. Those under his number, as well as ties,* pay—those above it, receive.* If the dealer should have only 14 or 15 points in his first hand, the chances would be against him were he to stand on so small a number. He would therefore draw another card, and should this be a very low one (an ace or a deuce), and he have reason to suppose, by the extra cards dealt round, that he had to contest high numbers, he would draw again, and if he obtained 19 or 20 points would then probably win on more than he loses, the average of chances being in his favor; if by drawing he should happen to make up 21, he would receive double from all, excepting from the ties and those who had already thrown up; if more than 21, he would have to pay all who stand, paying the Vingt-uns double.

Should either the dealer or a player happen to turn up two cards of the same denomination, for instance, two aces, deuces, or any other number, or two kings, two queens, &c., he would have the choice of going on both, and should the next card he draws be a triplicate, he may go on all three. If the cards happen to be aces, which count either as 1 or 11, at the option of the player, and if by great luck he should successively draw three tens, or court-cards, thus making three natural Vingt-uns, he would obtain double stakes upon each, therefore six times as much as the stakes placed on the various hands; and should he, on laying his first card, have cried "double," the stakes payable would, in such case, be twice doubled, therefore upon the three cards twelve-fold. This is an extreme case, cited merely to show the nature of the game. It commonly happens, however

* Ties are the principle advantage of the dealer

that when either dealer or player "goes" on several cards, he loses on one or more, and thus neutralizes his gains. Players, as already intimated, have the same right of "going" on several cards, as the dealer.

When any player has a Vingt-un, and the dealer not, then the player wins double stakes from him; in other cases, except a natural Vingt-un happens, the dealer pays single stakes to all whose numbers under 21 are higher than his own, and receives from those who have lower numbers; players who have similar numbers to the dealer pay; and when the dealer draws more than 21, he overdraws, and has to pay to all who have not thrown up, as already stated.

Twenty-one, whensoever dealt in the first two cards, is styled a natural Vingt-un, and should be declared immediately. Hoyle says that this entitles the possessor to the deal, besides double stakes from all the players, unless there shall be more than one natural Vingt-un, in which case the younger hand or hands so having the same, are exempted from paying to the eldest. But this rule, like that mentioned at page 73, is nearly obsolete. It is not now customary to allow any except the dealer to take double stakes from the company, in respect to his natural Vingt-un.

One of the first thoughts of the dealer, after the cards have been cut, should be to look for *brulet*, which is a natural Vingt-un formed by the bottom and top card, when they happen to be an ace and tenth card. The card or cards looked at must be thrown out, and mixed with those collected by the poney. *Brulet* either clears the board of the stakes laid (usually one or two counters levied on each player, at the commencement of every game, and collected into a tray), or takes the amount of the limit from each, as may be agreed.

The deal, it should be observed, may be sold to the best bidder, and, as it is undoubtedly of some advantage, a buyer will generally be found. But should a timid player object to the deal, and no buyer be found, he may decline it, and so let it pass to the next.

[N. B. An ace, as already intimated, may be reckoned either as 11 or 1; every court-card is counted as 10, and the rest of the pack according to their points.]

The odds of this game merely depend upon the average quantity of cards likely to come under or exceed 21: for

example, if those in hand make 14 exactly, it is 7 to 6 that the one next drawn does not make the number of points above 21, but if the points be 15, it is 7 to 6 against that hand; yet it would not therefore always be prudent to stand at 15, for as the ace may be calculated both ways, it is rather above an even bet that the adversary's two first cards amount to more than 14. A natural Vingt-un may be expected once in seven coups when two, and twice in seven when four people play, and so on according to the number of players.

All Fours.

This game, usually played by two people, sometimes by four, with a complete pack, derives its name from the four chances therein, for each of which a point is scored, namely, *high*, the best trump out; *low*, the smallest trump dealt; *jack*, the knave of trumps; *game*, the majority of pips reckoned from such of the following cards as the respective players have in their tricks, viz.: every ace is counted as 4; king, 3; queen, 2; knave, 1; and ten for 10. Low is always scored by the person to whom it was dealt; but jack being the property of whoever can win or save it, the possessor is permitted to revoke and trump with that card and when turned up as trump the dealer scores; it is also allowable for the player who lays down a high or low trump to inquire at the time whether the same be high or low.

After cutting for deal, at which either the highest or lowest card wins, as previously fixed, six cards are to be given to each player, either by three or one at a time, and the thirteenth turned up for trump; then if the eldest does not like his card, he may, for once in a hand, say, *I beg*, when the dealer must either give a point or three more cards to each, and turn up the seventh for trump; but if that should prove of the same suit as the first turned up, then three cards more are to be given, and so on did a different suit occurs. The cards rank as at Whist, and each player should always strive to secure his own tens and court-cards, to take those of the adversary, to obtain which, except when commanding cards are held, it is usual to play