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CARD GAME.

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Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.

Fig. 3.

Fig. 4.

Fig. 5.

Fig. 6.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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CARD GAME.

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To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, GEORGE S. PARKER, a citizen of the United States, residing at Salem, in the county of Essex and State of Massachusetts, have invented an Improvement in Card Games, of which the following description, in connection with the accompanying drawings, is a specification, like characters on the drawings representing like parts.

My invention consists in improvements in card games, and more particularly in those games which embody the principle of playing appropriately-designated cards in sequence.

By my invention I provide one or more groups of cards suitably designated each by numbers, spots, or other symbols, so that the cards of each group are related to each other in sequence, forming thereby one or more definite series. These cards after distribution in the usual way to a number of players are intended to be played to the table in sequence in the following manner: The initial play having been made with any card of any particular group, all the succeeding cards of that particular sequence must ordinarily be played before the card of a different sequence can be played, the play in each case being made by and, if necessary, passing to the player holding the next succeeding card. In addition to the sequence-cards are one or more cards suitably marked, and which I herein term "brake-cards," although the precise designation is not important. One of these may be played from that hand playing the preceding card, with the effect of breaking or terminating the sequence then being played before its natural termination is reached, permitting the player of such a brake-card to continue his play by playing a card or cards from some other sequence or group which he may hold in his hand. Combined with the sequence-cards and brake-cards I also preferably provide one or more value-cards which if played to the table during the hand count to the credit of the player playing them, but if held at the close of the hand count to the credit of the winner of that hand.

My invention will be best understood from a description of a pack of cards and the preferred mode of playing the same, such as constitute the best embodiment of the said invention, it being understood, however, that the invention is not limited to the specific embodiment herein, the latter being submitted wholly for illustrative purposes.

The accompanying drawings illustrate the particular embodiment of my invention referred to, as selected for illustrative purposes.

Figure 1 shows the cards of one group, herein the A group, having a naturally-broken sequence. Fig. 2 shows the cards of group B, which has an unbroken sequence. Fig. 3 shows the brake-cards; and Figs. 4, 5, and 6 show the cards of the C, D, and E groups, respectively.

Referring to the drawings, my invention comprises one or more groups of cards. The particular number of groups and number of cards in each group may of course be varied within wide limits, as well as the precise designation borne by the cards or the groups of cards; but in the preferred and described form there are provided five groups, (designated by the letters A, B, C, D, and E,) each of which, except the A group, has eleven cards designated by the numbers 1 to 11, inclusive. A pack so marked and comprising such a number of cards and of sequences is well adapted to be played by from three to six persons. The cards of the B group are shown in detail in Fig. 2, the individual cards of this group being marked B-1, B-2, and so on to B-11. The remaining groups, with the exception of one, which herein is the A group—namely, the C group shown in Fig. 4, the D group in Fig. 5, and the E group in Fig. 6—are similar in their arrangement and numerical designation to the cards of the B group. By reference to Fig. 1, which shows in detail the cards of the A group, it will be seen that I have omitted card A-4 and card A-9, so that there are in reality three distinct minor sequences in this group—one consisting of the cards A-1, A-2, A-3, another of the cards A-5, A-6, A-7, A-8, and the third of the cards A-10 and A-11. The pack therefore has not only the four natural major sequences of eleven cards each in the B, C, D, and E groups, respectively, but also the natural minor sequences in the A group, which are occasioned by omitting the two A cards. For convenience in play, so that the final or

terminating card of a natural sequence may be recognized by other means than its numerical designation, I preferably mark the terminating cards, both of the major and minor natural sequences, with some suggestive word or symbol, such as the word "High," which in the drawings is shown applied to the cards A-3, A-8, A-11, B-11, C-11, D-11, and E-11. This word of itself immediately suggests that a card bearing it, whether held in the hand or played to the table, is the highest card of that particular sequence to which it applies. The card A-5, which heads or leads the second minor sequence in group A, is given the special value of five, and the card A-10, which heads the third minor sequence in group A, is given the value of ten. Under the mode of playing preferably adopted these cards if played during the hand will score the player five and ten points, respectively; but if held until the close of the hand they will instead count the winning player a corresponding number of points. The cards referred to constitute a pack of fifty-three. To these I add one or more, preferably three, brake-cards, so that the complete pack, as described, comprises fifty-six cards. The brake-card may be marked in any desired way—such, for example, as is illustrated in Fig. 3. Its relation to the game will be better understood from a description of the preferred mode of playing.

The object of the game is to play out as quickly as possible all cards held. The player who succeeds in first exhausting his hand scores one point for every card then held by each opponent and an additional score of five points for the value-card A-5 and ten points for the value-card A-10 if the latter are among the cards remaining unplayed. The score of a value-card, however, if played during the hand is placed immediately to the credit of the player so playing it. After the count the cards are redealt for playing a new hand and the play continued until the game is won by some player reaching some agreed number of points—as, for example, one hundred.

The game is best played with the pack described by from three to six persons. The cards are dealt in the usual way, and the player at the left of the dealer opens the play by laying a card from his hand face upward before him on the table. On opening, any desired card may be played. Unless the high or terminating card of a sequence has been played the next card to be played is the next succeeding card of the same sequence, and the play passes to the player holding it or is continued by the original player if he possesses that card. The cards may be played to the table in a single pile or in any other desired manner; but it will be found most convenient for each player to play his cards to an individual pile immediately before him, each card being laid face upward and so as to conceal all but the top card of the pile. Each player should also, preferably, announce the group and number of the card as he plays it. The play ordinarily continues until the high or terminating card of the sequence under play has been completed, whereupon the player playing the high card is entitled to play any card which he may hold. The card so played may be at the beginning or the end or the middle of a sequence, but when played must be followed by the next succeeding card, as before, until the terminating card of that sequence has been played. Any player playing a card which is not a high or terminating card, wishing to continue his play and not holding the card which is next in sequence relation to that already played, may terminate that sequence at the card already played by playing a brake-card if he holds one in his hand. The play of a brake-card artificially breaks or terminates the sequence, being played exactly as if the succeeding card had already been played or as if there were no succeeding card and the sequence had reached its natural end by the play of the high card of that sequence.

It will be noticed that as the play progresses the major natural sequences of groups B, C, D, and E and the minor natural sequences of group A become split or broken up into subordinate groups in sequence relation. For example, if the card E-5 is the first one played the E group becomes split into two separate sequences, one consisting of the cards E-1 to E-4, inclusive, and the other of the cards E-6 to E-11, inclusive. As soon as formed a subordinate sequence is treated as a unit, and in the above example the first sequence would thereafter be terminated by the play of the card E-4, which has become the high card of its subordinate sequence and the second sequence by the play of the card E-11. While it aids in the ready comprehension of the game to have the minor natural sequences fall in a single group—herein the A group—they may obviously be replaced by a plurality of sequences grouped as desired. For example, instead of the three natural sequences of the A group there might be an F group of three cards in sequence, a G group of four cards, and an A group of two cards, the precise number of cards in these odd or unnatural sequences being of course immaterial.

As an illustrative example it may be supposed that with four players the player to the left of the dealer is dealt cards E-3, E-5, E-6, E-9, and E-11, C-4, C-5, C-7, C-9, A-5, A-11, B-3, and two brake-cards. He may open the play by laying E-3 upon the table. The play then passes to the holder of the card E-4, back to the leader, who plays E-5, and so on. Unless the sequence is broken by an opponent playing the outstanding brake-card (which the opponent may do after playing, say, E-7) the leader will have the final play upon the sequence by playing the high card E-11. He may then play any other card in his hand. If it be assumed that

he plays C-4, the play may continue as before through the C group until the leader plays C-9. He has now remaining in his hand cards A-5, A-11, B-3, and two brake-cards. After playing C-9 he may break the sequence by playing a brake-card. This again gives him the privilege of playing any card in his hand, and he may play the A-11 card, which is the high or terminating card of the third sequence of the A group. If he now plays the B-3 card and then breaks that sequence by playing his remaining brake-card, he may then play his A-5 and last card, scoring five points for playing that card and winning the count of that hand, which in the supposed case will amount to one point for each of the thirty-six cards and ten points for the A-10 card which remain unplayed in his opponent's hands, or a total of forty-six points. This, with the five points already scored for the play of the A-5 card, gives him a total score for the hand of fifty-one points.

Various modifications may be made in the mode of play, if desired, and other features may be introduced to increase or vary the factors of skill or luck; but the game as described will serve to illustrate the principles of my invention.

It will be seen that while the mode of play and the rules of the game are extremely simple and easily mastered it calls into service great skill and judgment. There are great possibilities of strengthening a weak hand or quickly playing a strong hand by opening the right sequence at the right point, both in the opening play and in changing to a new sequence after terminating or breaking another. The play will also have to be governed by the presence or absence of the brake-cards and the value-cards. The selection of the most effective time for playing a brake-card calls for considerable skill, and good judgment in playing a value-card is also required.

A card which terminates any sequence is of especial importance to hold, for, as set forth, its play gives the player the privilege of playing any remaining card in his hand; but since the natural sequences are being constantly split into subordinate sequences during the play and high or terminating cards are being played to the table without the play of the preceding cards of the sequence cards which previously were not terminating cards are constantly becoming such by the play. As a consequence the game not only calls for skill, but requires acute observations of the play and the exercise of powers of memory to note the cards played and their relation and effect to the cards held and to remember the constituency of the continually-altered remaining sequences.

It is to be noticed that the value-cards head their respective sequences. This acts somewhat to deter the holder of a value-card from playing it immediately to the table, as he might if it were at the end of the sequence. If it were the high card of that sequence, it could be played and act to break the sequence, the player losing nothing by the operation. As the leading-card of a sequence, however, a player can play a value-card only at a sacrifice. He must follow it by a brake-card or permit the play to pass to his opponents if he himself does not happen to hold the high card of that sequence. Not only, therefore, is the selection of a sequence-card to act as a card of special value a feature of novelty and advantage, but also the selection of a leading sequence-card to act in that capacity. It is needless to state that cards in other groups than the A group and in other sequences than the minor sequences may be chosen and marked as value-cards and that additional value-cards or those of different value may be selected, if desired. In this respect, however, as with regard to the selection of the number of sequences, number of cards in each sequence, and number of brake-cards, I believe the game as I have here described it is best adapted for ready mastery by all, while at the same time affording an unlimited field for skill and experience.

Any desired modification may be made in the system of scoring. For example, a player holding cards at the close of the play may be penalized to the amount of the score which the winner makes from that particular player's hand. Thus if a player hold A-3, A-10, C-5, D-6, and a brake-card at the close of the play, not only would the winner score fifteen points in addition to his score derived from the cards held by other players, but an equal number of points would be deducted from the score of the player holding the cards mentioned.

I have described with particularity one embodiment of my invention and mode of playing the same; but it is to be understood that my invention relates only to the broad principles involved and not to the minor details set forth.

I claim—

1. A game apparatus comprising a pack of cards composed of one or more groups, the cards of each group being suitably designated for play in sequence, and one or more cards in addition to and independent of said sequence-cards having designations thereon to indicate a termination in sequence of play.

2. A game apparatus comprising a pack of cards composed of one or more groups, the cards of each group being suitably designated for play in sequence, one or more of said sequence-cards in addition to its sequence value being marked with a special scoring value, and one or more cards in addition to and independent of said sequence-cards having designations thereon to indicate a termination in the sequence of play.

3. A game apparatus, comprising a pack of cards composed of a plurality of sequence-

cards marked each with its sequence value and having one or more of their number also marked with a special scoring value, and one or more break-cards in addition to and independent of the sequence-cards having designations thereon to indicate a termination in the sequence of play.

4. A game comprising a plurality of groups of cards designated for play in major sequence, a group split by omission of one or more cards into a plurality of minor sequences, the last card in each constituting thereby a sequence-terminating card, and one or more break or sequence-terminating cards in addition to and independent of said sequence-cards and having designations thereon to indicate a termination in sequence of play of any major or minor sequence.

In testimony whereof I have signed my name to this specification in the presence of two subscribing witnesses.

GEORGE S. PARKER.

Witnesses:
WILLIAM F. ADAMS,
GRACE C. GROVE.