

E.B.U.'s FIRST PRESIDENT

By EWART KEMPSON

BERNARD WESTALL, C.B.E., has accepted the English Bridge Union's invitation to become its first President.

The English Bridge Union is to be warmly congratulated.

Bernard Westall became managing director of The De La Rue Company in 1931 and chairman of that great Company in 1944. Recently, after 41 years with De La Rue, he decided to retire, but has been persuaded to remain in touch with the Company as its President.

In 1933 he founded the British Bridge World and was, for a time, an active member of the B.B.W. team which toured the country, playing matches in many cities.

I played for the British Bridge World team on three or four occasions and had the opportunity of studying Bernard Westall, a man of many talents, at first hand. He was, for those days, a player of considerable ability, indeed I found in one of my old clippings a tribute to him which was sincere and, I believe, accurate. "If he took up bridge as a profession he would become the greatest player in the continent of Europe within twelve months."

As a team mate, he was in the highest class; always ready to take the blame for a partnership error (his partner in the early matches was Hubert Phillips), he would nevertheless criticise himself and the other

three players with tact, understanding and authority. In those early days of Contract Bridge I was given to experimenting with all manner of bids, one of which was an opening bid on a three-card minor suit. Writing on this, Bernard Westall said "Kempson's occasional bids of one club on three to the ace can only emanate from an ebullient cheerfulness of heart." How charmingly worded was that criticism, and how just!

Later Bernard Westall and Kenneth Konstam developed a very good, and gay, partnership on the hell-for leather basis; they were very difficult to play against, but it was always the greatest fun to try.

The Book of Indoor Games and Two Hundred Hands from Match Play are two of the books written by Bernard Westall in collaboration with Hubert Phillips.

The subject of this small appreciation is one of the most charming men I have met in the world of playing cards, and that he will be an excellent English Bridge Union President goes without saying.

Long may he reign.