

Musical.

A NATIONAL HYMN FOR AMERICA.

Mr. Gilmore (of Boston Jubilee fame) has undertaken to compose a hymn for America, which is intended to supersede "Yankee Doodle," "The Star Spangled Banner," and other airs which have for some time past done duty on all state occasions. He is reported to have stated that the angels sang it to him as he lay on his couch, but we are inclined to think, judging from the composition itself, that what he imagined was a choir of angels, was in reality a band of Sunday-school children rehearsing "Rule Britannia" at a very slow tempo. We consider the music superior to the words, in which "prayer and awe" is made to rhyme with "America," and the Deity is besought to bless and "save," not the President, nor the people, but the country!

The hymn was publicly performed in New York by an immense choir and orchestra, Miss Thursby singing one verse as a solo, and the entire audience joining in the last verse. It is not every city in which thousands could be made to spend an entire evening and pay an admission fee in order to hear sixteen bars of commonplace music sung to words which are not only meaningless, but totally devoid of rhyme. However, as Mr. Elijah Pogram used to say, "we are a great people, and a mighty nation!"

THE NEW OPERETTA BY MESSRS. SULLIVAN AND GILBERT.

The Pirates of Penzance were the most ruthless and accomplished cut-throats who ever scuttled a White Star steamer. Their lair was a rocky place on the coast of Cornwall, remote enough for quiet and yet convenient business. With equal ease they could swoop from their hiding upon the Liverpool and New-York mail-packets, or cut out the full freighted argosies which ply between Boulogne and Folkestone in connection with the tidal trains of the South-Eastern Railway. Yet, as their Chief mournfully observed, somehow they never could make piracy pay. This unfortunate failure was due to the tenderness of their hearts. They were far too ready to spare the weak; and when they attacked the strong they always got thrashed. It was their rule to have mercy upon orphans. "Though we are Pirates," said the Chief, "we are not insensible to the promptings of humanity; we are orphans ourselves, and we know how it feels." The trouble was, it got about that they always spared orphans, and as a consequence every ship they captured was found (if the captives told the truth) to be manned and officered entirely by that interesting and afflicted class. Yet, as one of the Pirates remarked, it is certain that the British mercantile marine is not recruited exclusively from orphans.

It is with the picturesque ruffians of Penzance that the new comic opera by Messrs. Sullivan and Gilbert has to do. The hero of the piece is a young man named Frederic, who was intrusted to a nurse in early childhood to be apprenticed to a Pilot. The good woman made a slight mistake, and the boy was firmly indentured to the band of Pirates—an error for which the nurse could hardly be blamed, since the words are so much alike.

The opera is in two acts. The first takes place in the Pirates' Lair, and when the action begins Frederic is within a few hours of the end of his apprenticeship. At 12 o'clock he will be twenty-one years of age. He informs the band that he is about to leave them forever. He loves, admires, reveres them as comrades; he detests them as Pirates, and it is his purpose to devote the remainder of his existence to their extermination. Of this resolve, since it is prompted by a sense of duty, the Pirates find it unreasonable to complain, and at the end of the act the separation accordingly takes place. Not, however, until there have been some stirring scenes. A bevy of charming girls, looking, in their high-waisted and short-skirted gowns, and their broad-hats, as pretty as a picture by Gainsborough, come tripping over the rocks, and prepare to amuse themselves by paddling in the water. They are caught with one shoe off, and their alarm is piquantly expressed in a hopping chorus, to which the Pirates contribute, being determined to get married immediately through the instrumentality of

A doctor of divinity
Located in the vicinity.

The discovery that all these girls are "Wards in Chancery and the daughters of a Major General" is quickly followed by the appearance of their military papa. This personage has been supplied with a rattling "patter-song" which can hardly fail of a great effect. Studded thick with scientific terms of tremendous length and difficulty, it recounts the accomplishments of the distinguished officer who seems to be thoroughly versed in astronomy, mathematics, natural history, and nearly all branches of science except, indeed, in military affairs. The rapid delivery of this song is occasionally interrupted in a highly, ludicrous manner by the General's hesitation for a rhyme. We shall not take the edge off the public enjoyment by disclosing the denouement of the first act; it is excessively droll; the music is brisk and taking; and we shall be surprised if the curtain does not fall amidst roars of laughter.

The second act, which passes in a Ruined Chapel by Moonlight, is full of surprises and of ludicrous incidents. The Nurse, Ruth (represented by the lady who has recently been playing *Little Buttercup*) divulges a dreadful secret, which places Frederic in the most deplorable of dilemmas. Far be it from us to tell the distressing story prematurely, or to describe the behaviour of the most excellent young man when a stern sense of duty suddenly obliges him to dash the cup of happiness from his lips. Without indiscretion, however, we may call attention to one or two scenes which are likely to provoke a great deal of amusement. There is a chorus of policemen, dressed in the uniform of the British "Bobby," and armed with clubs, upon which, being drawn up in line across the stage, they perform, as a refrain to a song, a sort of taran-ta-ra, a trumpet-call before marching to battle with the Pirates. The song itself is excessively funny, and the tooting business ought to be a great addition to the effect. There is an admirable burlesque upon serious opera in a scene where the Pirates are hidden in one aisle of the chapel and the policemen in another, while the Major-General with his daughters occupy the nave. An elaborate concerted number is sung here, strophe and antistrophe alternating in strict order, and the music presumably (we have not heard this portion of it) proceeding by an intricate interweaving of parts, although the separate groups of personages are supposed to be unaware of one another's presence, and deaf to one another's swelling voices. The perfect solemnity of this performance blinds you at first to the wild impossibility of the situation. You must stop and think a moment before the full absurdity of it strikes you.

The characteristic charm of the work of these two English gentlemen is the preternaturally sober countenance with which they utter the rankest absurdities and show us the most ludicrous situations. The personages of their dramas are little exaggerated. They are familiar types, using familiar language and wearing a familiar dress. The music follows the familiar forms, and copies the devices of grand opera with conscientious care. Of course the contrast between the comicality of what is done and the serious manner of doing it immeasurably heightens the spectator's enjoyment. The essence of wit lies here. "Pinafore" is spoken of as amusing nonsense. It has always seemed to us something of a much more valuable quality than that. With "The Sorcerer," "The Pirates of Penzance," and other productions from the same accomplished pens, it constitutes a class of operetta entirely unique in English, and unknown in French. No writers for the musical stage understand so well as Messrs. Sullivan and Gilbert how to combine a graceful and pleasant wit, and a delicate good-natured satire, with the spirit of pure fun and the humour of incongruity. It is notoriously unsafe to predict from the reading of a piece how it will act; but if Mr. Sullivan has been as fortunate with his score as Mr. Gilbert has been with his text, "The Pirates of Penzance" ought to give us many a delightful evening.—*N. Y. Tribune.*

Chess.

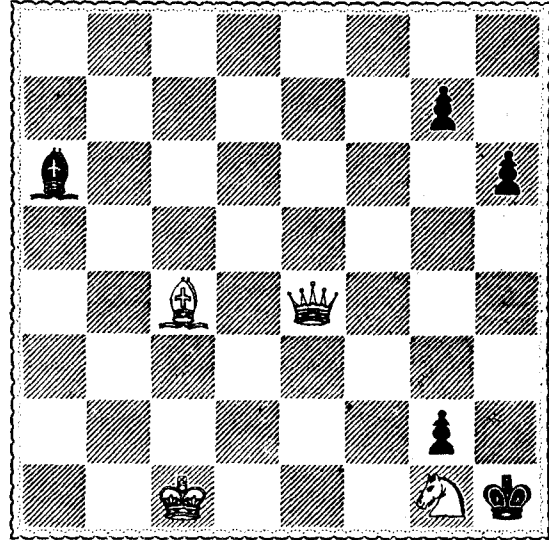
All Correspondence intended for this Column, and Exchanges, should be directed to the CHESS EDITOR, CANADIAN SPECTATOR Office, 162 St. James Street, Montreal.

Montreal, Jan. 17th, 1880.

PROBLEM NO. LV.

By Mr. Harry Boardman, Melrose, Mass. From *The Era*.

BLACK.



WHITE.

White to play and mate in three moves.

SOLUTION TO PROBLEM NO. LII.—British Chess Problem Association. Motto: *Chess is the Monarch, &c.* Kt to R 5.

Correct solution received from G.P.B., J.W.S.; "Black's helpless situation is rather suggestive of the first move."

GAME NO. I.

The first game in the Fifth American Chess Congress, played January 5th, 1880, by Messrs. Judd, Sellman and Ware in consultation against Messrs. Delmar, Mohle and Grundy. From *Turf, Field and Farm.*

PETROFF'S DEFENCE.

WHITE.	BLACK.	WHITE.	BLACK.	WHITE.	BLACK.
Mr. Judd and allies.	Mr. Delmar and allies.	13 R to Q B sq	P to Q R 3	27 R P takes P	P takes P
1 P to K 4	P to K 4	14 P to Q R 3	B to Q 3 (d)	28 P takes P	Q to K B 6 (l)
2 K Kt to B 3	K Kt to B 3	15 Q to Q 2	Kt to K 2	29 B to K Kt 3	B takes Kt
3 Kt takes P	P to Q 3	16 P to K R 3 (e)	B to K B 4	30 B takes B (m)	Q takes P
4 Kt to K B 3	Kt takes P	17 P to K Kt 4	Kt to K 5	31 R to K 3	B to B 6
5 P to Q 4	P to Q 4	18 Kt takes Kt	B takes Kt	32 B to R 7 (ch) (n)	K takes B
6 K B to Q 3	Kt to K B 3 (a)	19 Kt to K 5	Kt to Q 4	33 Q to Q 3 (ch)	K to Kt sq
7 Castles	B to K 2 (b)	20 P to K B 4 (f)	Q to K R 5 (g)	34 R takes B	R to K sq
8 P to Q B 4	P takes P (c)	21 K to R 2	Q R to Q sq (h)	35 R to K Kt sq	Q to K 3
9 B takes P	Castles	22 B to B 2	Q to K 2 (i)	36 B to B 6	Q to Q 3 (ch)
10 Kt to Q B 3	B to K Kt 5	23 B to B 4 (j)	Kt to Kt 3	37 K to Kt 2	Kt to Q 4
11 B to K 3	Q Kt to B 3	24 K R to K sq	B to Q 4	38 Q to K R 7 (ch)	K takes Q
12 B to K 2	P to K R 3	25 B to Q 3 (k)	Q to B 3	39 R to K R sq (ch)	Resigns.
		26 P to K R 4	P to K Kt 4		

NOTES, by Ch. Ed. Can. Spec.—(a) There is no occasion for this retreat, nor is it usual. It appears to leave the field open for White's advance, and B to K 2 or Q 3 at once keeps up the spirit of the opening.
(b) B to Q 3 is to our thinking quite as good, though not so orthodox. See *Wormald's Openings*.
(c) Castling seems to us better, for if P takes P, Kt or Q may take P, and White's isolated Q P can only be a source of weakness; and if P to Q B 5, though Black's K B may thereby be confined in its range, White's is almost equally so. The move made brings White's K B into powerful action.
(d) See note b.
(e) We believe White had a thoroughly sound game here by B takes K R P, for if P takes B, 17 Q takes P, and if Black capture the Kt, Kt P takes B, and the K R on Kt file must prove disastrous. The variations are instructive.
(f) A fine move and much better than P to B 3, though his game is thereby rendered hazardingly open.
(g) This was to be expected, but little can result from it. Black scarcely appears to feel the strength of White's Bs and Kt. If 20 Kt takes B, 21 Q takes Kt—B takes Kt, 22 B P takes B—B to Q 4, and, though White's game may be deemed preferable, Black's position is secure.
(h) This loses much valuable time. If either R is to be moved, would not K R to K sq be better?
(i) If Q to K B 3, B to K Kt 5 would render White's position unassailable.
(j) A very subtle move. If Black reply with P to Q B 3, White plays 24 K R to K sq, and if B move, White uncovers on the Q by Kt to Kt 6.
(k) The ramifications of this position are extremely beautiful, but we would certainly have played Kt to Kt 6 instead of the move in the text.
(l) Putting their hands on the cockatrice's den.
(m) Best, still keeping their K B P pegged down.
(n) From this point the termination is exceedingly interesting, and the mate beautifully conceived. The whole game is very instructive.

CHESS INTELLIGENCE.

WE HAVE received the *Huddersfield College Magazine* for January, and its contents are of a very interesting character. The leading article is from the pen of the veteran Alphonse Delannoy, on "The Literature of Chess," and it should commend itself to all chess players whose brains are not sodden with games and problems. The two sketches of himself and Arnous de Riviere are wittily and gracefully drawn, and are introduced as samples of how chess magazines may be made more attractive to general readers—which seems to be the object of the article. Mr. Delannoy admits "that to speak of others with impartiality and yet without wounding their self-esteem, is a very delicate task; but the very difficulty of it is a test of the talents of the author, and it is from this difficulty, successfully overcome, that his work acquires its value." * * * "Life is a game of chess," says Cervantes—an admirable saying which opens up alike to the philosopher and the moralist an unlimited sphere of observation and reflection. It affords the writer an opportunity of displaying the exactness of his insight, and of employing for its development and illustration all the resources of his mind, all the ornaments of which his style is capable, and all the poetical ideas which his inspirations may suggest. Addressing himself chiefly to lovers of the game, he will be sure to please them by skillfully touching those sensitive chords which vibrate in unison amongst them all. Records of the past, narratives, recollections, and fiction, ought all alike to turn in some way upon chess. The framework should have relation to some interesting game, some problem or scientific details, calculated to captivate the attention of the reader. At the same time due consideration must be had not only for the tastes and habits of the honourable fraternity of chess-players in general, but also for the variations in these which depend on the nationality of those immediately addressed in any particular composition."

FIFTH AMERICAN CHESS CONGRESS.—The play in the Grand Tourney is proceeding rapidly, and has created much excitement and interest by the success of Mr. Grundy of Manchester, who has defeated Mackenzie, Judd and Delmar. The score on Wednesday morning stood: Cohnfield, won 0, lost 7; Congdon, won 1½, lost 5½; Grundy, won 6, lost 1; Delmar, won 3½, lost 3½; Judd, won 5½, lost 1½; Mackenzie, won 5, lost 2; Mohle, won 5½, lost 1½; Ryan, won 1, lost 6; Sellman, won 5½, lost 1½; Ware, won 1½, lost 5½.