

## ODD TITLES OF BOOKS.

Victor Hugo tells us that, being behind-hand with his publisher in his agreement to write "Notre Dame de Paris," he locked up his clothes, bought a knitted woollen suit, and shut himself up in the house for a few months until his work was completed. He had also on the first day prepared a bottle of ink, the last drop of which was finished with the last line. This gave him the idea of naming the book "The Contents of a Bottle of Ink," which, however, he did not carry out, considering the title he had already chosen more to the purpose. Some years after, his friend Alphonse Karr, who thought the idea a charming one, begged it of him, and published under this name several novels—among others, his master-piece of wit and emotion, "Genevieve."

In every age it has been a matter of great consideration with authors as to the title under which they shall issue their works; publishers agree with them in the importance they attach to this point, as the public are easily attracted by a taking title. Pliny remarks that the Greeks showed admirable taste in this way. Some called them "A Hive," by which their readers were to understand that they would enjoy a rich piece of honeycomb; "others," "The Horn of Abundance;" or the "Meadow," the "Picture," the "Violet;" while the Latins, in their vulgarity, were content with the ordinary names of "Antiquities," "Examples," or "Arts." The more witty gave the title of "Lucubrations," as did the author who called himself Bilibulus, and who passed the night in drinking. Varro named his satire "A Movable Picture;" while Diodorus, among the Greeks, disdaining these puerilities, entitled his work "The Library." Aulus Gellius tells us that it was during the long winter nights in the country of Attica that he amused himself in writing his work, which he therefore denominated "The Attic Nights."

The Oriental and Jewish nations, on the contrary, sought for the most obscure and ridiculous titles. Who could imagine that "The Heart of Aaron" was a commentary on the prophets; or "The Bones of Joseph" an introduction to the Talmud? "The Garden of Nuts" and "The Golden Apples" are theological works; a ritual is the "Pomegranate in Flower;" and a catalogue of rabbinical writings passes under the name of "The Lips of the Sleepers," alluding to a passage in Solomon's Song. There is also "The Royal Wardrobe," divided into Ten Coats, by Mardocheus; "The Book of the Druggist," by Eleazer, a work which is nothing more nor less than a treatise on the love of God; and "The Two Hands," the hand of the poor and the hand of the king, each section being divided into five fingers. "The Perfume of Damascus Roses" is the poetical title of the history of some of Mohammed's companions who lived to the age of a hundred and twenty years. "The Spring-time of the Just," by Zamakhshari, is a collection of fables; and there are two works on law by the celebrated Turkish juriconsult Ibrahim, entitled "Precious Stones," and "The Confluence of the Seas."

When we reach the Middle Ages, authors in the West seem to have adopted the Eastern fashion, and tried to make their titles as enigmatical and fantastic as those of the East. Sometimes they are so long as to be a sort of prospectus of the whole work, as, for instance, the following:—"The Great Shipwreck of Fools, who are in the Hold of Ignorance, swimming in the Sea of the World; a Book of great Effect, Profit, Utility, Value, Honour, and Moral Virtue, for the Instruction of Everybody; which Book is adorned with a great Number of Figures, the better to demonstrate the Folly of the World." Or this: "The Blazon of Dances, where may be seen the misfortunes and Ruin arising from Dances; from which no Man ever returns the Wiser, or Woman the more Modest."

It would seem as if the writers of works of devotion had a particular preference for strange titles—perhaps to counteract the unattractive dryness of their subject matter. A priest taking for his meditations the anthems which are sung in Advent and before Christmas, entitles them: "The Sweet Marrow and Tasty Sauce of the Savory Bones of the Saints in Advent." A canon of Riez, in Provence, writes: "The Royal Post to Paradise, very useful to those who wish to go there; a Collection of the Works of Pious Doctors who have curiously treated the Subject." In it there is a chapter on the post established by Satan to go to hell; and another to reach purgatory, which is the suburb of heaven, and the outer court of paradise. An ascetic gives us "The Scraper of Vanity; a Spiritual Pillow necessary to extirpate Vice and to plant Virtue"—a strange use for a pillow, certainly. Philip Bosquier, a Flemish monk, published a tragedy entitled "The Little Razor of Worldly Ornaments." We have "The Spiritual Snuff-box, to lead devoted Souls to Christ," and "The Spiritual Serrano, for Souls steeped in Devotion," in which the author thus strongly apostrophises those of the fair sex who are addicted to painting their cheeks. "Vile carcasses, masses of infamy, have you no shame in turning yourselves round and round in the furnace of love, and blushing like boiled lobsters, to secure for yourselves admirers."

In the 16th century we find the greatest extravagance displayed in the titles of books. These may be taken as examples: "The Pious Lark, with its Trill—the little Body and Fathers of our Lark are Spiritual Songs," by Father Autome de la Cauchie; "Bread cooked on the Ashes, brought by an Angel to the Prophet Elijah, to comfort the Dying;" "The School of the Eucharist, established on the miraculous Respect that the Beasts, Birds, and Insects have shown on different Occasions to the Holy Sacrament of the Altar;" "The Lamp of Saint Augustine, and the Flies that sit around it;" "The Silver Bell, the Sound of which will, by the Grace of God, make of a Usurer a perfect Christian"—a work which we may hope fulfilled its purpose. The following would prove very attractive: "Some Beautiful Biscuits, cooked in the Oven of Charity, and put aside carefully for the Fowls of the Church, the Sparrows of the Spirit, and the Swallows of Salvation;" or this: "A Bouquet of Delicious Perfume prepared for the Saints of the Lord." A work on Christmas charity is entitled "Buttons and Button-holes for Believers' Breeches;" and we have also, "High-heeled Shoes for those who are Dwarfs in Sanctity;" and "Crumbs of Consolation for the Chickens of the Covenant."

A Quaker who was suffering in prison published "A Sign for the Sinners in Zion, coming from a Hole in the Wall, by an Earthen Vessel, known among Men under the name of Samuel Fish." Abraham de Sainte Claire, an author of the seventeenth century, chose this extraordinary title: "Judus, Archicoquin; Fi du Monde; Attention Soldat." A work on the consideration of the name taken by the popes, "Servus Servorum Dei," has the title of "A Hunt after the Stag of Stags,"

and, not unnaturally, it has been classed in a recent catalogue among works relating to hunting.

Sometimes, in the midst of political quarrels, works have been announced, the satirical titles of which were the only portions of them that ever appeared. Brantome tells us that when the Duke of Espernon was made governor of Provence, a book was made in mockery of him, and cried before the palace and through the streets, as "The Great Deeds, Works, and Valor of M. D'Espernon in his journey to Provence." This was printed in large characters; but on turning over the leaves every page was blank, and nothing printed on them. The public, friends as well as enemies of the duke, ran to the criers and bought eagerly; but when they looked within and saw nothing, they returned in anger to the vendors, and accused them of their deceit. They, however, excused themselves in this way: "Why, sir, the duke has done nothing; how can we print any thing about him?" In the early years of the reign of Louis XVI. some works of this kind were advertised, but never appeared, as, "A Treatise on Pleasure," dedicated to the Queen; "The Living Catafalque," dedicated to the Princess of Conde; "French Politeness," dedicated to the Countess of Ossuna; "The Necessity of Shaving," dedicated to the Duchess of Orgia. This paper shall be closed by the title of a work published in 1870, and containing a collection of poems: "I do not know what it is; by whom I know not; the price? I know not how much; it is sold I know not where; by a bookseller whom I know not."

## LITERATURE AND THE DRAMA.

An Englishman has written and published an "Ornithology of Shakespeare."

Forty thousand books—some of them very valuable ones—have been sent from the Royal Library at Konigsberg to replenish the Strasburg Library.

A Persian manuscript of great beauty, containing sixty full-page miniature illuminations, and profusely ornamented throughout in gold and colours in the highest class of ancient art, was recently sold in London for \$1,625.

With a view to promote newspaper production, the Government of Peru has issued a decree exempting printers from service in the National Guard.

An interesting relic of Beethoven has just come to light in Germany. It is the programme of a concert at which Beethoven made his first appearance, and is as follows: "On the 26th day of March, 1778, the Court tenor of the Elector of Cologne (the aforesaid Court tenor being Beethoven's father) will present to the public, at the Musical Academy, two of his scholars—Mlle. Averdone and his own son of six years. Mlle. A. will sing several fine airs, and the younger pupil will perform a variety of concertos and trios on the piano." Beethoven was, at that time, really about eight years of age, having been born in 1770; but his father found it convenient to exaggerate his remarkable precocity by representing him to be younger than he really was.

## SCIENCE AND ART.

When a diamond is used to cut hot glass, the diamond will only last for one day, and it assumes a milky appearance. The diamonds in constant use for cutting cold glass last about three months. Each diamond costs from \$8 to \$12, and is about the size of an ordinary glazier's diamond. Hot glass is cut more readily than cold glass.

A gigantic railway line is now under consideration in Russia, with which it is intended to traverse Siberia throughout its entire length from west to east. The length of the line, which will have its starting-point at Nischni-Novgorod, will be 5600 versts, or 3310 miles.

"COMPOSING" MACHINE.—Under this name the New York Tribune describes a new apparatus which is operated as follows: "The letters of the alphabet are arranged in regular order in a type-head two inches square, and are operated upon by keys, as in a piano. When the keys are touched, the type-head moves to its position, and action is had upon whatever letter is touched, the type moving downward a prescribed distance, and making a printed impression on transfer paper. The platen on which the paper is laid is moved by a feed-wheel, and the spaces between the lines are produced by lateral motion by means of a ratchet-wheel. The impressions are finally transferred to a zinc plate, and printed by a lithographic press. In place of transfer paper a mould of clay or wax may be used to receive indentations, from which a stereotype cast can be obtained."

## VARIETIES.

In Philadelphia there is a small blacksmith's shop, the bellows of which is operated by dogs. The bellows is connected with a wooden wheel box, which is kept revolving by the motion of the dog, something after the manner of a treadmill.

It is well known that by a stupid blunder—which, however, has so far prevailed that it would be a piece of pedantry to ignore or to combat it—we talk of St. Helena, not of St. Helenna. Following the mispronunciation, very many persons speak of the "Princess Helenna." It happens that Her Majesty has a very correct ear, and much dislikes a "false quantity" in pronunciation. Accordingly, not long since, she was pleased to send to the editor of "Lodge's Peerage," through her late librarian, a message—or, rather, we suppose we ought to say, a command—that a mark denoting a short syllable should be placed over the second vowel in the name of her daughter, the Princess Helenna. It is needless to add that the command was scrupulously obeyed by the editor, and it is to be hoped that our countrymen and countrywomen will follow suit.

The Louisville Courier Journal tells the following:—"A man named Southworth, living in lower East Tennessee, has just ejected from his stomach a frog which had been living there for fifteen years. Mr. Southworth has had a great deal of trouble with that frog. It used to begin to croak at the most unreasonable hours. When Southworth would go to church, for instance, the frog would remain quiet until the congregation engaged in silent prayer, and then it would set up such

a terrific yowl that the sexton would rush in and collar Southworth, and drag him out to quiet down in the graveyard. Sometimes the frog would give a nocturnal serenade after Southworth was fast asleep in bed, and then Southworth would rise, as mad as anything, and seize the stomach-pump and try to draw the frog up. But the subtle reptile had had that trick played on it too often during those fifteen years, and it always shinned up the tube a piece, out of the draught, and waited until Southworth exhausted himself. Southworth never fooled that frog a great deal. And when frogs were in season, Southworth used to fish for this one with a fly; but it always refused to rise, and the fly buzzed around so in Southworth's alimentary canal that it nearly tickled Southworth to death. So Southworth had to wait until the other day, when the frog thought he would come up and go and see a friend; and, when it did come, Southworth killed it with a fork. He says the frog used to eat twice as much as he did; but we have been thinking it over, and it seems to us the statement must be exaggerated somehow."

A few days after the occupation of the Paris forts by Germans, the Emperor William, the Crown Prince, and Generals Von Roon, Von Moltke, Von Blumenthal, Prince Hohenlohe, the Siege Artillery Director, and the imperial staff yesterday inspected the outworks and the interior defenses of Fortress Mont Valerien. It is said that a critical examination of this famous fortress shows that its constructors committed the blind folly of leaving this important work, the key to Paris, destitute of casemates or bombproofs, showing that terrible slaughter would have ensued had the Prussians opened fire from the second parallel, or the formidable batteries of St. Cloud and Bussanval, which is understood to have been in contemplation, about the 1st inst., to cover a grand assault, but which design was frustrated by the negotiation of an armistice, the Prussians coming into possession of a work which would have cost the captors and the garrison an enormous loss of life.

## CHESS.

J. V. N. Correct; the position is altogether faulty.

A game lately played in Quebec between two of the leading members of the Chess Club.

## IRREGULAR OPENING.

- |                               |                       |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| White.—Mr. J. Walker.         | Black.—Mr. P.—        |
| 1. P. to K. 4th.              | P. to K. 4th.         |
| 2. P. to K. B. 4th.           | P. takes P.           |
| 3. K. Kt. to B. 3rd.          | P. to Q. 4th.         |
| 4. P. takes P.                | Q. takes P.           |
| 5. Q. Kt. to B. 3rd.          | Q. to K. 3rd, ch.     |
| 6. K. to B. 2nd.              | K. Kt. to B. 3rd.     |
| 7. B. to Kt. 5th, ch. (a)     | K. to Q. sq.          |
| 8. K. to K. sq.               | Q. to Q. Kt. 3rd, ch. |
| 9. P. to Q. 4th.              | B. to Q. 3rd.         |
| 10. K. to B. sq.              | Q. B. to Q. 2nd.      |
| 11. K. B. to Q. B. 4th.       | K. R. to B. sq.       |
| 12. P. to K. B. 3rd.          | P. to K. R. 3rd.      |
| 13. K. Kt. to K. 5th.         | B. takes Kt.          |
| 14. P. takes B.               | Kt. to K. sq.         |
| 15. Q. B. takes P.            | P. to K. Kt. 4th.     |
| 16. B. to K. R. 2nd.          | Q. to K. Kt. 3rd.     |
| 17. Q. to K. B. 3rd.          | B. to Q. B. 3rd.      |
| 18. Q. R. to Q. sq. ch.       | K. to Q. B. sq.       |
| 19. Q. to K. B. 2nd.          | Q. Kt. to Q. 2nd.     |
| 20. B. to Q. 3rd.             | P. to K. B. 4th. (b)  |
| 21. P. to K. 6th. (c)         | Q. Kt. to Q. Kt. 3rd. |
| 22. P. to K. 7th.             | R. to B. 2nd.         |
| 23. B. takes P. ch. and wins. |                       |

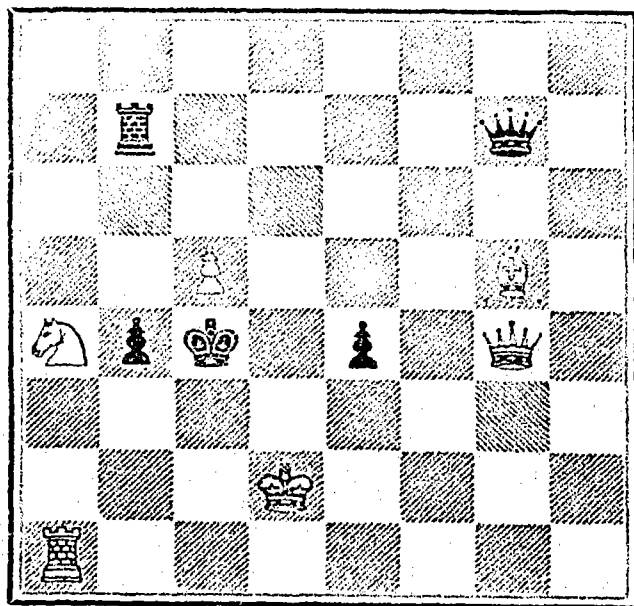
(a) The defense should have provided for this formidable check which prevents his castling, and leaves him in an awkward position.

(b) Retiring the Queen would have been far preferable.

(c) The winning move: play as Black may, his game is broken up irrevocably.

## PROBLEM No. 20

## BLACK.



## WHITE.

White to play, and mate in three moves.

## CHARADES.

NUMBERED CHARADE,  
(No. 4.)

Composed of twenty-nine letters.

My 25, 28, 8, 4, 14, 21 is synonymous with to give.  
My 19, 6, 13, 29, 2, 18, 10, 26 is a great English Statesman.  
My 3, 7, 17, 12, 15, 4, 11 is what we should all be.  
My 1, 16, 8, 2, 29, 25 is a false report.  
My 28, 14, 17, 7, 22, 16 is the capital of a British colony.  
My 23, 18, 5, 2, 20 is a place lately surrendered by the French.  
My 5, 9, 20, 3, 24, 15 is what all should take daily.  
My 2, 12, 8, 27 is a near relative.  
And my whole will have seen this before you.

JOHN UNDERHILL.