

Musical.

All correspondence intended for this column should be directed to the Musical Editor, CANADIAN SPECTATOR Office, 162 St. James Street, Montreal.

OPERA IN MONTREAL.

One among the many proofs of our musical advancement in this city during the past decade is that we are visited every season by one or more first-class opera companies; not provincial troupes of worn-out artists, performing threadbare works in a meaningless way, but the best companies from the Metropolis of America, sometimes composed of singers who have been endorsed by the most critical audiences in Europe. The short season of opera given here by Mr. Strakosch last winter served to show that we know how to appreciate first-class performances, and we are glad to hear that through the enterprise of Mr. DeZouche we will shortly have an opportunity of hearing the Emma Abbott Opera Company, which will perform in the Academy of Music during the second week in November. Miss Abbott is in the front rank of American vocalists, and associated with her are Mrs. Seguin, Mr. Tom Karl, and others who have had great success as exponents of English opera. We understand that a full orchestra and an efficient chorus will take part in the performances, and that each piece will be produced here in as complete a manner as it is represented in New York.

According to general request, Mr. DeZouche has promised to give us the best operas in the repertoire of the company, leaving out "Trovatore," "Lucia" and others, which, though admirable works of their kind, are giving way, the world over, to more solid and substantial compositions. The following works will probably be given:—"Chimes of Normandy," "Mignon," "Faust," "Paul and Virginia," "Carmen," and "The Rose of Castile," the ever fresh and popular "Pinafore" being announced for the Saturday matinee. It will be seen that these works are nearly all of the modern French school, that being the prevailing style at present. Bizet's "Carmen" is not unknown to our musical people, and "Paul and Virginia," by Victor Massé, has been performed with great success at the leading opera houses in both London and Paris. The prices will be made as low as is consistent with first-class representation, and we hope the company may meet with sufficient encouragement to induce both them and others to visit us again.

MR. BOUCHER is about to form an amateur orchestra for the private performance of instrumental music.

NORDHEIMER'S HALL is nearly completed. It is to be opened by the Barnabee troupe, of Boston, about the end of the present month.

THE Mendelssohn Choir will shortly re-assemble for practice, under the able direction of Mr. Joseph Gould. No more public performances will be given, but the organization will be maintained as a strictly amateur one.

A LARGE volunteer choir is being formed for Christ Church Cathedral. Already a number of applications for membership have been received, and about forty voices are expected, which, when well trained, will make a very efficient choir.

In the sixth of a series of articles on worship music which are appearing in the *London Church Bells*, Mr. John Crowdy makes a noteworthy suggestion, the realization of which might obviously have interesting and important results. It is that a band of instrumental players should be formed in connection with each cathedral, and orchestral accompaniments be made the rule for the principal Sunday service. Mr. Crowdy evidently thinks this the direction in which church music should now be developed.—*Music Trade Review*.

THE practice of singing "Amen" after every hymn, as is done in some churches, is rather the result of habit than of a conviction of its necessity, for oftentimes the word is entirely out of place, and forms an absurd close to the words that have gone before. At the end of every prayer or supplication and thanksgiving, whether in verse or prose, its *raison d'être* is plainly evident; but aside from such entreaties for mercy, etc., its use is absolutely to be forbidden. This assertion is so self-evident that it is not necessary to adduce instances in order to substantiate it. Give it but one thought.—*Music Trade Review*.

PROPOSED SCHOOL OF MUSIC FOR LIMERICK.—A largely attended meeting of the citizens, presided over by the Mayor, Mr. Michael O'Gorman, was held this week in the Athenæum, with a view to making arrangements towards the formation of a school of music in Limerick on the Cork principle, save that while the Cork school is maintained by a tax of a halfpenny in the pound, the one to be established in this city shall be formed and kept up by voluntary subscriptions. The proceedings were of a very unanimous character, the project being warmly approved, and a committee was appointed to arrange the necessary details.—*Irish Times*.

MAKE our young men musicians, musicians in the true sense of the word, and the rum shop, the billiard saloon, and other questionable resorts, will be cheated out of the greater part of their customers. Unfortunately, as experience has taught me, it is a widespread opinion among our business men, lawyers, bankers, etc., that it will incapacitate a boy for business, make him volatile, and unfit to meet the exigencies of this hard, matter-of-fact life if we teach him music. Nothing could be more erroneous. As sure as the thorough study of the classic writers of ancient and modern times will benefit a young man by elevating his mind, giving him moral strength and a proud consciousness of his manhood, unknown to the common herd, just as sure will the thorough understanding of the words of the immortal masters in music ennoble his passions and take a most earnest and beneficial hold of his soul and heart. Look at Germany. The statesman, the soldier, the grave jurist and magistrate—they all delight in the sweet "recreation-work" (Erholungs-Arbeit) of music; not in the fantastic polka, the sensational operatic air, or the empty and showy "morceau de salon." No! in the worthy renderings of the immortal works of the masters, whom they have been taught to venerate, to love, and to understand. It is this good, this intellectual music which draws the different members of the family circle together in kindlier feelings, and which makes hearth and home appear more cheerful and attractive. Could not this immense power which true music has over the human mind be employed with some benefit to our young men. —*Cor. Philadelphia Ledger*.

Chess.

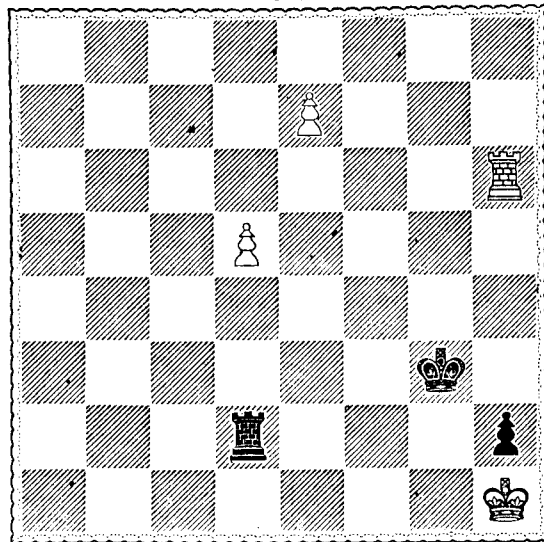
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Montreal, Sept. 6th, 1879.

PROBLEM No. XXXVII.

(End-game.) By Mr. John Watkinson, Huddersfield, Eng.
From Miles' "Chess Gems."

BLACK.



WHITE.

White (Mr. Watkinson) having to play, won the game.

SOLUTION TO PROBLEM No. XXXIV.

White. Black. White.
1 K to Kt 6 Any move 2 Mates accordingly.

THE GAME OF CHESS.

CANTO V.

ARGUMENT OF THE FIFTH CANTO.—The black Queen enters into the heat of the engagement. The white troops give way. Their Queen is busy in another part of the field: she forces her way to the royal tent, puts the sentinels to the sword, and gives check to the King. The black Queen comes to his relief; she throws herself between him and the enemy. The white Queen falls. The King revenges her death. The black trooper is slain. Two foot-warriors and an archer are all that remain. Mercury musters the Moors. The black Queen meditates the destruction of the adverse King. She hews down all before her. The white archer and the two soldiers are put to the sword. The King now stands alone; he will not abdicate his crown. He flies, and baffles the enemy. The black King pursues him. After passing through various defiles, the white King halts upon his first line. The black Queen takes post on the second line and hems him in. The black King wishes to gain the honour of the day, but in vain; one square is always between him and his adversary. The black Queen gives the finishing stroke. The white King dies in the field of battle. Mercury exults and triumphs. Jupiter rewards him. Mercury instructs a nymph in the game of chess. He meets her on the banks of the river Serio. His amour is related. He gives the nymph a chess board as a token of his love. The nymph teaches the game to the people of Italy. The poem concludes.

From the Moor's camp, meantime, in armour bright,
The fierce Virago animates the fight.

At glory's call she presses on with speed,
Where the war glows, and where the bravest bleed.
With the bold Amazon none dare engage,
Nor the white Queen attempt to check her rage.
Through paths far distant the white Queen proceeds,
Prompt in design, and bold in generous deeds.
Round the Moor's camp each avenue she tries,
In his pavilion where the Monarch lies.
The picket guard, the sentinels around,
Fall by surprise, and bite the checker'd ground.
Each post obtain'd, each fastness of the place,
Towards her design she moves in silent pace,
There hopes to triumph by resistless might.
And at one blow conclude the ling'ring fight.

This from afar beheld the sable Queen,
Her eye quick glancing o'er th' embattled scene.
She sees the plan by bold ambition form'd,
Her King besieg'd, and the entrenchments storm'd.
With rage her bosom heaves, now sinks with grief.
What shall she do? where turn? how bring relief?
O'er vulgar lives she scorns her sword to wield,
And leaves unguerd the harvest of the field.
Swift as the wind, she measures back the plain,
And darts and glitt'ring swords oppose in vain.
Between her King and the proud foe she stands,
And bravely there defies the hostile bands;
On her, on her their fury dares invoke
And lays her bosom naked to the stroke.
Hermes exults; and now, with brandish'd blade,
The white Queen's life a trooper dares invade.
Ill-fated princess! she resigns her breath
In Honour's cause, and seeks the shades of death;
While, poor atonement for so great a prize!
By the King's hand the sable trooper dies.

Two soldiers only in the ranks appear,
And one bold archer, still untaught to fear;
To shield their King, undaunted they repair;
Their hope of safety fix'd in brave despair.
Ah! gallant warriors! check your ardent course;
Not your weak aid, nor such unequal force,
The time demands; o'er all the checker'd ground,
Lo! Hermes storms, and calls his Moors around.
The Moors obey: the Queen her aid combines,
Braves ev'ry danger, and lays waste the lines.
The King she seeks: the King, where'er she flies,
Burns in her soul, and flashes from his eyes.
Aloud she calls, "What ho! young Monarch, oh!
'Tis the black Amazon, thy mortal foe."
Him low in dust her vengeance pants to lay,
And where she rushes ruin marks her way.
She shakes her crimson steel; the shatter'd foes
Her crimson steel no longer can oppose;
An undistinguish'd prey their lives they yield,
Till man by man they perish on the field.
The helpless King bemoans his slaughter'd host,
And troops of friends he now no more must boast.
He mourns a ruin'd, solitary reign,
His guards, his people wett'ring on the plain.

As when the morn has chas'd the shades of night,
And purpled o'er the east with orient light,
The stars withdraw their ineffectual fires,
And one by one the heav'nly host retires;
Thy orb, fair Venus, still emits a ray,
Awhile to gleam alone, then fade away.
Deserted, helpless, thus the King remains,
But still th' unconquerable mind retains;
He scorns to abdicate, though numbers press,
In ruin brave, majestic in distress.
Exploring ev'ry path, he stands at bay,
And through th' embattled phalanx wins his way,

Secure of life while none his passage meet,
And the field opens still a safe retreat.
Till fate has stretch'd one monarch on the plain,
Of all their toil the warriors boast in vain.
For this the snowy King his flight renews;
And where the sable monarch bends his course,
The white King flies, and still eludes his force;
Seizes each post the vacant lines afford,
Retreats, advances, flies, and skims along the board.
But who from destiny can hope to fly?
The inevitable hour of fate draws nigh;
For now the limit of the checker'd ground
His steps have reached—his fortune's utmost bound!
There, as he moves, the sable Queen from far
Darts o'er the plain, and rushes through the war:
The captive monarch eager to confine,
She plants her standard on the second line.
Her King exults, as with experience'd eyes
He views the field, and to the conquest flies;
Pursues the foe, by love of glory led,
And now he lays, or thinks he lays him dead.
Vain the pursuit; where'er they tread the scene,
One square still leaves a vacant space between.
The sable Amazon beholds with pain
The ling'ring labour of the long campaign.
Forward she springs, and on the farthest land,
With rage insatiate, takes her fatal stand.
Unhappy Prince! which way the danger shun,
Fate calls thee hence; thy race of glory's run!
Thirsting for blood, the heroine gives the blow;
Th' indignant monarch seeks the shades below.
On the bare earth his limbs extended lie;
The gods applaud, and rend with shouts the sky.
Hermes in triumph sees his labours o'er,
And lo Pean rings along the shore.

The matchless chief with pæsure Jove surveys,
Approves his toil, and crowns his deeds with praise;
Then gives the wand, the magic wand, whose aid
Draws from the realms of night th' unbodied shade;
Whose unrelenting power to endless pain
In Stygian lakes can send the guilty train;
Can quench in slumber the unwilling sight,
Or call the fleeting spirit back to light.
Such was the gift to grace the victor's claim.
The victor taught th' Italian swains the game,
What the god taught, th' Italian swains obey,
And their sons celebrate the mimic fray.
These sports (if aught of truth old bards relate),
These festive sports to Love first owed their date.
For where through arching bowers the Serio glides,
And with his silver stream the lawn divides,
A train of virgins haunt the flow'ry plain,
Their feet responsive to the vocal strain;
With these a nymph appeared, surpassing fair,
Of heav'nly feature, and majestic air.
Hermes, the yielding fair one to requite,
With fond remembrance of the dear delight,
Bestow'd, still gazing on that heav'nly face,
The checker'd board, and party-colour'd race;
Explains'd the laws by which the troops engage,
And taught the nymph the various war to wage.
The nymph well pleas'd, and of the present vain,
Display'd Love's trophy to her sister-train;
Taught them the art, the manners of the game,
And bade the mimic strife retain her name.
Her name the nymphs record in ditties sweet,
And oft at eve the wondrous tale repeat.
Oft have I heard them, in my vernal day,
Oft has attention listened to the lay,
What time I first essay'd the sylvan strains,
And with the Muse walk'd o'er my native plains.

THE END OF "THE GAME OF CHESS."