

KING CHRISTMAS!

Huzza! for old Merry King Christmas!
All hail to the jovial King!
In giving old Christmas a welcome,
Let's lighten our bosoms and sing.
Huzza! for old Merry King Christmas!
There's joy in his crown of green holly—
We love the bright berries of red;
And he driveth away melancholy—
Then hail to his holly-crown'd head!
Huzza! for old Merry King Christmas!
All hail to the jovial King!
In giving old Christmas a welcome,
Let's lighten our bosoms and sing.

He brings with him life's greatest treasures,
In happiness, peace, and good-will;
And from out his overflowing measures,
Our spirits all brimming we'll fill.
Huzza! for old Merry King Christmas!
He rallies such forces to mingle
In song, in the dance, and good cheer,
Let voices in harmony jingle.
Our Christmas, the King of the year!
Huzza! for old Merry King Christmas!
All hail to the jovial King!
In giving old Christmas a welcome,
Let's lighten our bosoms and sing.

No matter how humble the dwelling,
He gladdens each home with a smile;
And hearts with delight are all swelling
To greet him in time-honour'd style.
Huzza! for old Merry King Christmas!
Let Mirth reign supreme while he's with us—
May Charity flow while he's here.
There's none like King Christmas can give us—
The one happy time of the year.
Huzza! for old Merry King Christmas!
All hail to the jovial King!
In giving old Christmas a welcome,
Let's lighten our bosoms and sing.

Let customs of old be prevailing,
When nobles sat down with the poor;
When, as equals, each other were hailing
The birth of the Lowly and Pure.
Huzza! for old Merry King Christmas!
Let those who have plenty, be giving
Throughout this glad time of the year!
Huzza! for old Merry King Christmas!
All hail to the jovial King!
In giving old Christmas a welcome,
Let's lighten our bosoms and sing.

AN ADVENTURE AT CHRISTMAS.

Towards the close of December, 1867, the British corvette "Sirius," belonging to the squadron for the suppression of the African slave trade, lay anchored within a few fathoms of the coast of Congo, Lower Guinea. I was the sailing-master; and I was leaning on the bulwark looking at the current rushing past, and thinking of Christmas festivities and rejoicings in England—for this was the 24th of December, and consequently the day preceding the holy anniversary of the Saviour's birth. Preparations were being duly made for the festal observance of Christmas Day on board the man-of-war; but no one could dream of the terrible adventure which was destined to mark it.

As I was leaning on the vessel's side, Mr. Winslow, the first lieutenant, touched me on the arm, and directed my attention to an enormous serpent dangling from the branch of a tree not far off. The monster was at least thirty feet in length, with shining scales all over the body; and as it hung there, seeming to take a survey of the vessel, with flat head projecting, and tongue thrust out, it was certainly a frightful object to behold. Just as we were about directing the attention of others to the unwelcome spectacle, the monster, uncoiling itself from the tree, disappeared with a suddenness which gave to its scaly body, as it darted into the shrubbery, the appearance of a flash of lightning.

As it seemed probable that the serpent, if not destroyed, would contrive, by means of the vessel's projecting yards, to get aboard, the first lieutenant signified his intention of soliciting permission of Captain Morrill, who commanded, to seek the monster and despatch it.

I could perceive, however, that Winslow's chief concern was for Clara Morrill, the daughter of the captain, and the young man's betrothed. The captain had taken her aboard at Cape Coast, where, for several months, the young lady, fond of foreign travel, had been staying with her uncle, a functionary belonging to the colonial Government. At Cape Coast, Clara had been a good angel among the blacks. Men, women, and children had loved her deeply; and when she departed, it had been a mournful sight to see them gathered on the shore sobbing and weeping as if their hearts would break. In Clara the charm of the beauty *spirituelle* was singularly blended with the physical. Her broad, white brow, charming brown eyes, and classic features expressed intellect, while nothing could exceed the beauty of her figure.

She was in the cabin when Winslow made his request to her father, and obtained the required permission. Although terrified at what she heard, she begged her lover not to go on the hunt for the monster, which, with the peculiar sensitiveness of her nature, she felt a strong presentiment would be the means of fearful injury to the young man.

Clara's pleadings were unavailing. The first lieutenant was determined to kill the serpent, while the captain could not think of getting under weigh to avoid the peril, as he was carrying on an important negotiation with one of the native chiefs.

So Winslow, this time disobeying the gentle orders of the young girl, went ashore with a party of five, myself among the number, all armed to the teeth. Into the woods we all plunged, searching for the serpent, and soon were deep in the mazes formed by the thick growth of trees, among which the boobah was seen, seeming to bury its lofty top in the very clouds.

The warning notes of a squall now resounding through the woods, our leader gave orders for us all to return at once to the vessel. We endeavoured to obey, but soon discovered we had lost our way. Meanwhile, the squall came down, howling and screaming fearfully. The tall trees shook and roared like thunder; a darkness like that of night settled round us. Groping about for hours, we came in sight of the ocean at sunset, and finally reached the spot we had left, to find our corvette stranded, yet uninjured, upon the beach.

She lay far over on her beam-ends, with her yards and masts among the branches of the trees. The captain and his men had erected some tents—one of which was for the use of Clara—until he could get the vessel off into deep water, which he expected to do on the following morning.

Pale and trembling, Clara stood by her father, her eyes fearfully turned towards the wood, when her lover arrived. At sight of him, she uttered a glad cry, and half sprang towards him, when the consciousness that many observers were present made her pause, her cheeks all aglow.

We soon learned that the captain and his party had been more fortunate than ours. They had seen the serpent after they were stranded; but it had disappeared again before a hand could be raised against it. That night a strong guard was kept around the tents.

Just at daylight, on that memorable Christmas morning, I was waked by a fearful cry, that pierced my heart like a knife.

Up I sprang, rushing from the tent, to behold a sight which was truly appalling. Right ahead of me was Clara, pursued by the serpent, which, in its turn, was being chased by the men.

It seemed that the young girl, waking, had seen upon the tent the shadow of the fearful creature, which had suddenly darted among the guard; and, mistaking that shadow for the serpent itself, she had rushed forth, only to confront the reptile, against which the men were levelling blow after blow with their hatchets and cutlasses. Somehow, none of these blows took effect, owing to the rapid writhing and rolling of those scaly folds, and, perhaps, to the alarm of the startled guard. Seeing the monster so near, Clara had fled towards the woods, when, by instinct, the serpent, turning from the assailing party, had glided off in pursuit of the retreating form.

I had hardly time to hear the hurried explanation, when a tall form bounded past me with the speed of a thunderbolt—the agonized father, Captain Morrill, calling upon the men to save his child!

The usual coolness of the sailors seemed to have deserted them. All was hurry and confusion, the pursuers running with a speed which from their constant contact with brambles and thick clumps of shrubbery, only impeded their movements, causing them to lose more time than they gained. One person alone seemed to preserve his self-possession—Winslow, the first lieutenant, who made his way forward with a celerity which carried him ahead of the others.

Soon we saw poor Clara glide into an opening—a sort of hollow—in the trunk of a huge tree, where she crouched, white and trembling, her wild eyes turned upon her hideous enemy, approaching with threatening velocity.

Lifting and arching its head at the same instant, the serpent turned its flaming eyes upon Winslow, near it with uplifted cutlass; then, with a strange kind of cunning, it wound itself round the tree in three seconds of time, almost closing with its scaly folds the opening occupied by Clara! Then, seemingly aware that it had secured its prey, the hideous monster, with downward hanging head, glared upon those approaching. Appalled we all stood, our hearts beating thunder, our brains whirling. There, behind those stony folds, was the terror-stricken Clara, unable to escape, and projecting outward, the head of the serpent, as if threatening death to him who should advance a step nearer. What could we do?

To dart hatchet or cutlass, or to fire at our hideous enemy, might ensure the death of Clara, who could hardly escape being struck by blade or bullet, as she was in range.

"Save her! save her!" moaned Captain Morrill. "Oh, my child!"

He would have dashed recklessly forward but for the strong detaining arm of the first lieutenant.

"You will die without benefitting your child; nothing can be done in that way."

"What shall we do, then?"
The question passed from lip to lip. There were brave and willing hands among the men, but the fact that they could do nothing almost drove them mad. Clear and high above their shrieking voices rang the steel-like tones of Winslow, steady, strong, unquavering. "Bring me a rope!"

Back to the tent was but a few yards; a rope was brought. While his companions were wondering what he intended doing, the lieutenant, who had thrown off his shoes, climbed, with one end of the rope between his teeth, to the trunk of an adjoining tree, and "laid out" upon a branch projecting about twenty feet above the serpent. Straddling the limb, he formed a bowling hitch, or noose, in the end of the rope; then, quickly lowering it, dexterously threw it far over the head of the serpent, and hauled taut. The hitch firmly held the creature, which, now enraged, darted up towards the lieutenant.

As it was first obliged to uncoil itself from the trunk, however, this gave Winslow time to secure several turns round the branch, pulling

upon them until the monster's head was within a few feet of him, when, fastening the rope to the branch, he descended the trunk of the tree. "Now, men! now is your time!" he shouted, as the angry serpent writhed and twisted to escape from the rope.

In a moment the men were upon the monster, chopping to pieces its scaly folds, which, from the serpent's head being secured, were now at their mercy. The movements of the animal were frightful to behold. In its dying agony, it lashed the tree again and again, scattering the bark and making the leaves fly in every direction, while a fearful sort of gurgling, hissing sound continually escaped its throat. Clara was soon drawn forth from her dangerous position, when, half-fainting, she sank upon the bosom of her preserver.

Meanwhile, several of the men ascending the tree, lowered what remained of the dying monster to the earth, when a dozen hatchets soon extinguished every spark of life.

In the afternoon we had our vessel aloft with the high-tide, and were all aboard, Clara smiling upon her father's arm, while the men cheered the gallant Winslow in voices that rolled up to the very skies. Then, the remaining portion of that Christmas Day was spent, first in devout thanksgiving, and afterwards in festivity.

A few months after, I saw Mr. Winslow lead to the altar the beautiful bride whom he had so nobly earned, and who, but for his courage, self-possession, and dexterity, must have perished horribly in that far-away African forest.

ENGLISH OPERA.

Want of space, unfortunately, prevents us from expressing freely our sense of the imposition practised upon the public of Montreal by the so-called Boston Opera Company. We are the more dispensed from doing it, as the daily press has accomplished its duty in this respect. But we cannot let the occasion pass without informing the public that Mr. DeZouche's responsibility should in justice be detached from these performers. He was their agent only—not their impresario, and his good faith was as much deceived as was ours. Mr. DeZouche is a fastidious and severe critic and would never have engaged these people, if he had not been led, by what he deemed the best authority, to regard them as far other than what they proved to be. We understand that he will redeem his pledges to the Montreal public by striving to bring on a genuine company like Kelloggs', and a sterling orchestra like Theodore Thomas'.

THE BASTONNAIS.

We understand that Belford Brothers, of Toronto, are on the point of putting forth in book form *THE BASTONNAIS*, which first appeared as a serial in these columns, where it was received with much acceptance. Combining history with romance, and illustrating a stirring episode in Canadian annals, it will doubtless enjoy some share of attention. As a Christmas or New Year's present no volume could be more suited for Canadians throughout the Dominion.

SCIENTIFIC.

The proposal to submerge a portion of North Africa by means of a canal from the Gulf of Valat, letting the water of the Mediterranean westward over the lake regions of Djerd, seems, from the facts just detailed by MM. Hudaire and Duguis, to be not only practicable, but also likely to turn out a remunerative undertaking.

PROF. HUXLEY, having, at a London lecture, the other night, given some striking instances of the ill effect on public health of neglect of drainage shown by the case of the town of Salisbury, that consumption, which was more fatal than all the rhyndic diseases combined, might be diminished as much as fifty per cent. by thorough drainage of the subsoil.

The musk ox is one of the most remarkable quadrupeds to be found in the Arctic regions. It is about the height of a deer, but is much stouter and appears larger than it really is from the great profusion of long matted woolly hair which covers the body, and conceals a thick coat of extremely fine wool. The head is large and broad, and the horns, very broad at the base, are about two feet in length.

WALNUT trees sometimes attain prodigious size and great age. An Italian architect mentions having seen at St. Nicholas, in Lorraine, a single plank of the wood of the walnut twenty-five feet wide, upon which the Emperor Frederick III. had given a sumptuous banquet. In the Balder Valley, near Balaklava, in the Crimea, stands a walnut tree at least 1,000 years old. It yields annually from 50,000 to 100,000 nuts, and belongs to five Tartar families, who share its produce equally.

RECENTLY there died at the Jardin des Plantes an old parrot, aged 116 years. It once belonged to Admiral Lord Nelson. One of the peculiarities connected with the life of this remarkable bird was this, that while on board the *Victory*, during the battle of Trafalgar, the continuous firing of the cannon had such an effect as to destroy all the acquisitions which previously distinguished it, and it was incapable afterward of uttering anything but "Bomb! Bomb! Bomb!"

OUR CHESS COLUMN.

Solutions to Problems sent in by Correspondents will be duly acknowledged.

All communications intended for this department to be addressed Chess Editor, Office of CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS, Montreal.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

M. J. M., Québec.—Solution of Problem No. 91 received. Correct.

We may fairly come to the conclusion that now that winter is well set in, evening amusements are occupying, to some extent, the attention of the old and the young.

There can be no objection to this so long as the pastime is of a nature to make home happy; and should it be instructive and scientific, so much the better.

Chess is becoming every day, more and more, a home recreation, and its character is such, that two equal players, who may have but little knowledge of the "openings" and their analyses, will feel as much pleasure in a friendly contest, as two of the most accomplished professionals of the day.

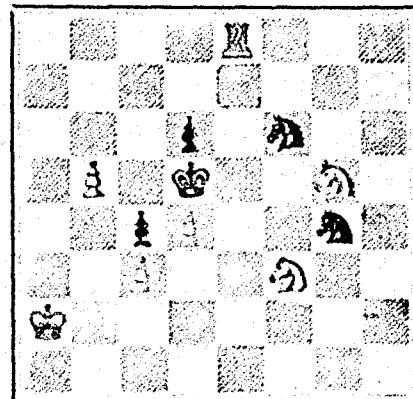
The Chess Clubs of the Dominion are in full play, and local Tourneys are testing the skill of amateurs who are impatient of the dullness of accidental encounters. Already there are rumours of Telegraphic Tourneys, and we have good authority for stating that the Montreal Chess Club has received a challenge, for a fight over the wires, from the Club of Seaford, Ontario. There is no doubt the challenge will be accepted, and the Secretary of the former club has been requested to write for further information with reference to preliminaries which have always to be well arranged before beginning a match of this nature. The Seaford Club can boast of some excellent players, and the contest cannot fail to be an interesting one.

We shall not fail to give further particulars as they come to hand.

PROBLEM No. 101.

By "SISU."

BLACK



WHITE

White to play and mate in three moves.

CHESS IN AMERICA.

GAME 1470.

Played between Messrs. Bird and Mason in the New York Centennial Tourney.

(French Opening.)

WHITE—(Mr. Bird)	BLACK—(Mr. Mason)
1. P to K4	P to K3
2. P to Q4	P to Q4
3. K to Q B3	K to K B3
4. P takes P	P takes P
5. K to K B3	B to Q3
6. B to Q3	Castles
7. Castles	P to K R4
8. R to K sq	K to Q B3
9. K to Q K5	B to Q K5
10. P to B3	B to R4
11. K to B3	B to K K4
12. K to B2	Q to Q2
13. P to K4	B to K3
14. P to K R3	B to K R4
15. K to K3	K to K sq
16. P to K15	K to K2
17. P to K4	B to K3
18. K to K5	Q to B sq
19. P to Q R4	P to B3
20. P takes P	P takes P
21. B to R3	K to K5
22. Q to B2	K to K4
23. B takes K	B takes B
24. B takes B	P takes R
25. Q takes P	K takes P (ch)
26. K to R2	K to B5
27. Q to B5	K to K3
28. K to K2	Q to R2
29. P to R5	B takes P
30. R takes B (ch)	B to K B sq
31. R to R6	R takes Q
32. P takes R	K to Q sq
33. K to B4	Q to B sq
34. K to B4	R to K sq
35. K takes Q B P	Q to R2 (ch)
36. K to B4	Q takes P
37. R to K4	Q to Q7
38. K to K2	Q takes Q P
39. P to B6	P takes P
40. R takes P	K to K3
41. R to K3	K to K4
42. K to K4	K to K2
43. K to B4	Q to K5 (ch)
44. K to R2	K to R2
45. K to R5 (ch)	Q to R sq
46. B takes P	K to B4
47. K to R6	R to K2
48. K to K2	P to Q5
49. K to K5	Q to B sq
50. K to K (ch)	K to K2
51. K takes R (ch) and wins.	

NOTE.

(a) The beginning of a series of moves which are given with the study of the Chess student, and which are brilliant as they were successful.

SOLUTIONS.

Solution of Problem No. 99.

WHITE.	BLACK.
1. R takes B P	K to R4
2. P to K R5	K takes P
3. R to R7 (ch)	K moves
4. R to R4 mate	

Solution of Problem for Young Players, No. 97.

WHITE.	BLACK.
1. K to K4	K to Q4
2. R to Q B2	P moves
3. R to Q2 mate	

PROBLEMS FOR YOUNG PLAYERS NO. 98

WHITE.	BLACK.
K to K3	K to K4
K to Q R7	R to K R5
B to K B8	Pawns of K K2, K
K to Q B7	R3, K K4 and Q
Pawns at K B3, K K1	B4
4. K K4 and Q B2	
White to play and mate in three moves.	