

CRITICS AND SINGERS.

O list to me, ye amateurs,
While on music I dilate,
For style and tone and feeling are
Fit subjects for debate—
Professionals, pray lend your ears
And pity my sad woes,
For I've been and gone and done it,
And trod on some one's toes.

I have no degree in music,
Though I can define a rest,
I wish we had more of 'em,
It would soothe the public breast—
But my head is full of crotchets,
Like pebbles in a river,
For to see some people's style in art
Is enough to make one shiver.

When I see a piece of music
I can always tell the key
According to the sharps and flats
Which on the page I see;
But theory's a different thing
To practice now-a-days,
For those who sing most out of tune
Expect to get most praise.

Bad colds, sore throats, excuses are
According to the rule
Of opposites which now prevail
Within our modern school.
It's enough to make one fairly run
And seek for absolution,
After witnessing, as I have done,
Some artists' "execution."

"Ah me," I hear some lady say,
"Those critics are severe."
Is only envy which they feel;
They have no soul, no ear.
Dear Madam, you, of course, are right,
They say so but to vex,
While as for you, sweet lady fair,
You take refuge in your sex.

Of course it isn't policy
To say what may be true
At all times and at all places,
For you'll catch it if you do.
Especially when concerts are
For worthy objects given,
But the "strains divine" as rendered
Seldom lead our thoughts to heaven.

Now, gentlemen, I have a word
Or two to say to you,
And if I over-shoot the mark—
Which I don't intend to do—
You really must admit the fact
That singing in one's throat
Is not conducive to good taste,
When you cannot hear a note.

Italian vowels and German airs
Are useful in their way,
But like the good old Saxon,
And I mean just what I say,
If you'd only give your mouths a chance
To shape the words you sing,
Your singing would be much more clear
And quite a different thing.

"Rendition," that much hackneyed word
Which off the puppets used,
Hath of late been badly treated
And, by custom, much abused,
Though I'm not well up in music,
Yet I know by erudition
That the verb "to render" doesn't mean
To send one to perdition.

Conscientious merit where 'tis found
Should always be extolled,
For those who are most ignorant
Are those who are most bold.
They are the ones who take offence,
Where no offence is meant,
And their judgment, brains and music
Are of limited extent.

So pray accept this faulty rhyme
In a just and kindly way,
And if the critics are severe,
Take the good of what they say.
We are not all Brignolis;
But there's no reason I can see
Why we cannot go ahead and try
Brignolis all to be.

Montreal.

PAUL FORD.

BURLESQUE.

A COMFORTABLE PROSPECT.—A husband and wife were having one of those arguments which occasionally interrupt the harmony of married life. He grumbled because there was not a better fire in the room, and declared that she always was just so stingy in regard to the use of fuel. She rather admitted her general partiality for economy in the direction referred to, but at the same time she asserted that she was the subject of a great improvement in the specific point then under discussion. For proof on her part she went on to state that when her first husband was very sick (he did not recover), she really felt some reluctance to having a fire of sufficient capacity to make things entirely comfortable. "But," said she, "when my second dear departed was in his last sickness, I had such a fire as no reasonable man could find any fault with. And," she continued, "when your time comes to lie in that bed, with no hope of ever rising from it, I shall have a first-rate fire, as hot as—why, so hot that you will hardly know the difference when you're dead."

FILIAL RESPECT.—The other day one of the clerks in a Washington street store found the porter jammed among the boxes down cellar, with pen, ink, and paper before him.

"Writing a letter, eh?" queried the clerk.

"Yes; writing to the old man in Buffalo."

He handed up the half-written letter for inspection, and presently the clerk remarked:

"I see you spell 'jug' 'g-u-g'; that isn't right."

"Of course not," replied the porter, "but you see I am writing to the old man, and he always spells that way. If I put the other 'g' to it, he would think I was putting on style over him and forgetting that I was his son. He's good-hearted, and I don't want to hurt his feelings."

The letter went off with only one "g" at the end of "gug."

MARK TWAIN AND THE WONDERFUL CLOCK.

A New Haven jeweller has a remarkable watch of foreign make, which is described by Mark Twain as follows: "I have examined the wonderful watch made by M. Matile, and, indeed, it comes nearer to being a human being than any piece of mechanism I ever saw before. In fact, it knows considerably more than the average voter. It knows the movements of the moon and keeps exact record of them; it tells the day of the week, the date of the month, and the month of the year, and will do this perpetually; it tells the hour of the day and the minute and the second, and even splits the seconds into fifths and marks the division by 'stop' hands; having two stop hands, it can take accurate care of two race horses that start, not together, but one after the other; it is a repeater wherein the voter is suggested again and musically chimes the hour, the quarter, the half, the three-quarter hour, and also the minutes that have passed of an uncompleted quarter hour—so that a blind man can tell the time of day by it to the exact minute. Such is this extraordinary watch. It ciphers to admiration. I should think one could add another wheel and make it read and write; still another and make it talk; and I think one might take out several of the wheels that are already in it and it would still be a more intelligent citizen than some that help to govern the country. On the whole I think it is entitled to vote—that is if its sex is the right kind."

IN THE CELLAR.—The Danbury News says: "Mrs. Porteous has a nail in a beam in the cellar for hanging the ham on. She drove the nail herself, with much tribulation, last fall. It was not a successfully driven nail, of course, and Mrs. Porteous had several times suggested to her husband that he make it more secure—a service he readily promised to perform. The other morning he was in the cellar contemplating something, when the ham, which unfortunately hung just above him, suddenly lost its hold and came down like a shot, taking him across the bridge of the nose and precipitating him backward over a tub. The ham not having been used in several days had contracted an ooze on its surface, which, together with the sudden and unexpected descent, left the impression on Mr. Porteous' mind that a meat axe had dropped on him and sliced off the entire front of his face. Under this awful conviction Mr. Porteous flew up stairs, shrieking aloud at every jump, and rushed into Mrs. Porteous's presence in such an awful state of feature and mind that that horrified lady dropped dead away in a faint. Thus left alone Mr. Porteous in the extreme of his terror flew into the next house, where bursting open the door, he cried—

"I am a dead man."

And sank senseless upon the floor. Aside from a small slip of court plaster running along the bridge of his nose there is nothing to indicate the extent of the accident, but had the result been fully as bad as he thought he could not be more subdued by it than he is. He will not even stay where the subject is being discussed.

ROUND THE WORLD.

THE French Government has dismissed several mayors for attending masses in memory of Napoleon III.

THE Austrian Budget Committee has rejected the grant of six hundred thousand florins for participation in the Paris Exposition.

A DENIAL is given to the statement that Spain is negotiating with the Cuban insurgents with a view to granting them autonomy.

THE United States Supreme Court has adjourned until the middle of February, owing to the impending withdrawal of five of the Judges, who are to serve on the Electoral Commission.

PRESIDENT GRANT is reported as expressing his belief that the time has arrived for the resumption of specie payments, and that the present Congress cannot do better than take legislative action with that object.

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

J. W. S., Montreal.—Letter received. Many thanks. J. B., Montreal.—Letter and game received. The letter shall appear very shortly.

M. J. M., Quebec.—Correct solution of problems, No. 104 and 105, received.

J. H., Montreal.—Problem and game received. The problem, as you will perceive, appears in this week's Column.

The chess-players of Montreal show a great inclination to make the most of the visit of Mr. Bird to Montreal, and he is just as willing to make any arrangements which his friendly opponents may suggest before he leaves the city. In consequence, a number of contests took place between him and a large number of players on Saturday, the 27th inst. The following results we copy from the Montreal press:—

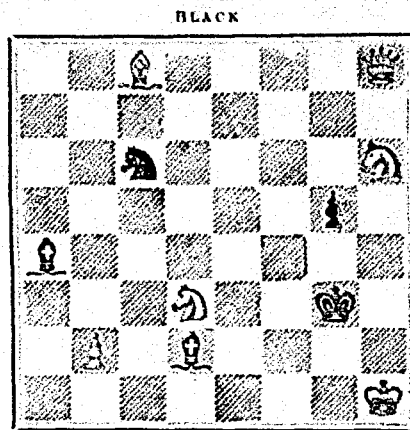
CHIEF.—The second contest between Mr. Bird and the members of the Montreal Chess Club, which was commenced on Saturday evening last and adjourned at midnight, was resumed and concluded yesterday evening. Mr. Bird was still more successful than in his first tourney, and his skill and rapid conception won the admiration both of his antagonists and of numerous spectators present. Out of seventeen games played simultaneously the English Master won twelve, drew two and lost three. Mr. Bird leaves to-morrow on a visit to the chess-players of Sherbrooke, who have invited him to their town. He will, on his return to this city next week, engage in a third contest with the Montreal Club, before his final departure for England via New York. The seventeen games above referred to were contested by Mr. Bird against Messrs. Howe, Hicks, Ascher, Atkinson, Workman, Saunders, J. Barry, Henderson, Shaw, Popham, Hall, Watkins, Bazin, G. Barry, Skulke,

Mackenzie and Marcuse. The winners against him were Messrs. Hicks, Ascher and Atkinson. He drew the games with Messrs. Workman and G. Barry. Consultation game, Board A, was also resumed, and, after some obstinate fighting, a draw was proposed and accepted. The players were Messrs. Howe, J. Barry and Saunders.

PROBLEM No. 108.

(Prize Problem)

By J. HENDERSON, Montreal.



White to play and mate in four moves.

GAME 155TH.

Played in 1831 between Messrs. Anderssen and Bird.
(From Bird's Chess Masterpieces.)

Ruy Lopez.

WHITE.—(Mr. Bird.) BLACK.—(Mr. Anderssen.)

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. P to K 4 | P to K 4 |
| 2. Kt to K B 3 | Kt to Q B 2 |
| 3. B to Q Kt 5 | Kt to K B 3 |
| 4. P to Q 4 | Q Kt takes P |
| 5. Kt takes Kt | P takes K 5 |
| 6. P to K 5 | Kt to K 5 |
| 7. Castles | Q to K R 5 (a) |
| 8. P to K Kt 3 | Q to K R 6 |
| 9. K B to K 2 | P to Q 4 |
| 10. P takes P (en passant) | K B takes P |
| 11. Q takes P | Q B to K B 4 |
| 12. Q Kt to B 3 | Castles Q (side) |
| 13. Q takes Q R P | Kt takes Kt |
| 14. P takes Kt | P to Q B 3 |
| 15. Q B to K 3 | B to K 5 |
| 16. Q to R 8 (ch) | K to Q 2 (b) |
| 17. Q takes P (ch) | K to K sq |
| 18. P to K B 3 | B takes K Kt P (c) |
| 19. R to K B 2 | B takes R (ch) |
| 20. B takes B | B to Q 4 |
| 21. P to Q B 4 | B to K 3 |
| 22. Q takes Q B P (ch) | K to K 2 |
| 23. Q B to R 5 (ch) | K to B 2 |
| 24. Q to Q B 7 (d) | K to Kt 3 |
| 25. K to R sq | P to K R 3 |
| 26. R to K Kt sq (ch) | K to R 2 |
| 27. R to K Kt 3 | Q to R 4 |
| 28. B to Q 3 (ch) | B to B 4 |
| 29. Q to K 5 | P to K Kt 3 |
| 30. Q to K B 6 | K R to K Kt |
| 31. Q takes B P (ch) | R to K 2 |
| 32. Q to K B 6 | Q R to Q 2 |
| 33. B to Q 4 | Q R to K 2 |
| 34. P to Q B 5 | B takes B |
| 35. P takes B | P to K Kt 4 |
| 36. P to Q B 6 | R to K 8 (ch) |
| 37. B to K Kt | R to K B 2 |
| 38. Q to Q 8 | R takes K B P |
| 39. P to Q B 7 | R takes R |
| 40. Q to Q 7 (ch) | K to Kt 3 |
| 41. Q to Q 6 (ch) | K to B 2 |
| 42. Q takes R | R to K sq |
| 43. Q to B 2 (ch) | K to Kt sq |
| 44. Q to K B 5 | Resigns. |

NOTES.

- (a.) This premature and unsound attack involves Mr. Anderssen in difficulties; the game, however, continues critical and interesting to the finish.
(b.) If K to Q B 2; then B to Q Kt 6 (ch.) would be decisive.
(c.) Attempting to draw the game.
(d.) The best move.

SOLUTIONS.

Solution of Problem No. 106.

- | | |
|-------------|--------------|
| WHITE. | BLACK. |
| 1. Q to K 7 | 1. Anything. |
| 2. Mate. | |

Solution of Problem for Young Players, No. 104.

Owing to inadvertence this problem is incorrectly printed; the W R should be at K sq, and a W B at K Kt 2, instead of P at Q 3, and then the solution is in three moves by checking with B &c.

PROBLEMS FOR YOUNG PLAYERS NO. 105.

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| WHITE. | BLACK. |
| K at K 7 | K at K 4 |
| B at K R 5 | B at Q R 5 |
| Kt at K B 4 | Kt at Q H 5 |
| Pawns at K Kt 2 | Pawns at K B 4, |
| K B 2, K 3, Q 2 and Q | K 5, and Q B 6. |
| B 2 | |

White to play, and mate with Queen's Bishop's Pawn in four moves.

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