

half-witted wretch's desperate efforts to understand me. You shall have a specimen. I have been out of spirits, while you were away—I haven't told her a story for weeks past; I will tell her one now. Don't suppose it's any effort to me! My invention is inexhaustible. You are sure to be amused—you are naturally serious—but you are sure to be amused. I am naturally serious too; and I always laugh at her."

Ariel clapped her great shapeless hands. "He always laughs at me!" she said with a proud look of superiority, directed straight at me. I was at a loss, seriously at a loss, what to do. The outbreak which I had provoked in leading him to speak of the late Mrs. Eustace warned me to be careful, and to wait for my opportunity, before I reverted to that subject. How else could I turn the conversation, so as to lead him, little by little, towards the betrayal of the secrets which he was keeping from me? In this uncertainty, one thing only seemed to be plain. To let him tell his story, would be simply to let him waste the precious minutes. With a vivid remembrance of Ariel's "ten claws," I decided nevertheless on discouraging Dexter's new whim, at every opportunity and by every means to my power.

"Now, Mrs. Valeria!" he began, loudly and loftily. "Listen. Now, Ariel! Bring your brains to a focus. I improvise poetry; I improvise fiction. We will begin with the good old formula of the fairy stories? once upon a time—"

I was waiting for my opportunity to interrupt him, when he interrupted himself. He stopped, with a bewildered look. He put his hand to his head, and passed it backwards and forwards over his forehead. He laughed feebly. "I seem to want toasting," he said.

Was his mind gone? There had been no signs of it, until I had unhappily stirred his memory of the dead mistress of Glenloch. Was the weakness which I had already noticed, was the bewilderment which I now saw, attributable to the influence of a passing disturbance only? In other words, had I witnessed nothing more serious than a first warning to him, and to us? Would he soon recover himself, if we were patient, and gave him time? Even Benjamin was interested at last: I saw him trying to look at Dexter round the corner of the chair. Even Ariel was surprised and uneasy. She had no dark glances to cast at me now.

We all waited to see what he would do, to hear what he would say, next.

CHAPTER XL. (continued).

NECESSITY AT LAST!

"My harp!" he cried. "Music will rouse me." Ariel brought him his harp. "Master!" she said wonderingly. "What's come to you?" He waved his hand, commanding her to be silent.

"Invention," he announced loftily, addressing himself to me. "Poetry and music improvised by Dexter. Silence! Attention!"

His fingers wandered feebly over the harp-strings; awakening no melody, suggesting no words. In a little while, his hand dropped; his head sank forward gently, and rested on the frame of the harp. I started to my feet, and approached him. Was it a sleep? or was it a swoon?

I touched his arm, and called to him by his name.

Ariel instantly stepped between us, with a threatening look at me. At the same moment, Miserrimus Dexter raised his head. My voice had reached him. He looked at me with a curious contemptive quietness in his eyes, which I had never seen in them before.

"Take away the harp," he said to Ariel, speaking in languid tones, like a man who was very weary.

The mischievous half-witted creature—in sheer stupidity or in downright malice, I am not sure which—irritated him once more.

"Why, Master?" she asked, staring at him with the harp hugged in her arms. "What's come to you? where is the story?"

"We don't want the story," I interposed. "I have many things to say to Mr. Dexter which I have not said yet."

Ariel lifted her heavy hand. "You will have it!" she said, and advanced towards me. At the same moment, the Master's voice stopped her.

"Put away the harp, you fool!" he repeated sternly. "And wait for the story until I choose to tell it."

She took the harp submissively back to its place at the end of the room. Miserrimus Dexter moved his chair a little closer to mine. "I know what will rouse me," he said confidentially. "Exercise will do it. I have had no exercise lately. Wait a little and you will see."

He put his hands on the machinery of his chair, and started on his customary course down the room. Here again, the ominous change in him showed itself under a new form. The pace at which he travelled was not the furious pace that I remembered; the chair no longer rushed under him on rumbling and whistling wheels. It went, but it went slowly. Up the room, and down the room, he painfully urged it—and then he stopped, for want of breath.

We followed him. Ariel was first, and Benjamin was by my side. He motioned impatiently to both of them to stand back, and to let me approach him alone.

"I'm out of practice," he said faintly. "I hadn't the heart to make the wheels roar, and the floor tremble, while you were away."

Who would not have pitied him? Who would have remembered his misdeeds at that moment? Even Ariel felt it. I heard her beginning to whisper and whimper behind me. The malignant who alone could rouse the dormant sensibilities in her nature, had awakened them now by his neglect. Her fatal cry was heard again, in mournful moaning tones.

"What's come to you, Master? Where's the story?"

"Never mind her," I whispered to him. "You want the fresh air. Send for the ardenor. Let us take a drive in your pony-chaise."

It was useless. Ariel would be noticed. The mournful cry came once more.

"Where's the story? where's the story?" "The sinking spirit leapt up in Dexter again. "You wretch! you fiend!" he cried, whirlin-

his chair round, and facing her. "The story is coming. I can tell it! I will tell it! Wine! You whimpering idiot, get me the wine. Why didn't I think of it before? The kingly Burgundy! that's what I want, Valeria, to set my invention alight and flaming in my head. Glasses for everybody! Honour to the King of the Vintages—the Royal Clos Vougeot!"

Ariel opened the cupboard in the alcove, and produced the wine and the high Venetian glasses. Dexter drained his goblet full of Burgundy at a draught; he forced us to drink (or at least to pretend to drink) with him. Even Ariel had her share, this time, and emptied her glass in rivalry with her master. The powerful wine mounted almost instantly to her weak head. She began to sing hoarsely a song of her own devising, in imitation of Dexter. It was nothing but the repetition, the endless mechanical repetition, of her demand for the story. "Tell us the story, Master! master! tell us the story!" Absorbed over his wine, the Master silently filled his goblet for the second time. Benjamin whispered to me, while his eye was off us, "Take my advice, Valeria, for once; let us go."

"One last effort," I whispered back. "Only one!" Ariel went drowsily on with her song. "Tell us the story, Master! master! tell us the story."

Miserrimus Dexter looked up from his glass. The generous stimulant was beginning to do its work. I saw the colour rising in his face. I saw the bright intelligence flashing again in his eyes. The Burgundy had roused him! The good wine stood my friend, and offered me a last chance!

"No story!" I said. "I want to talk to you, Mr. Dexter. I am not in the humour for a story."

"Not in the humour?" he repeated, with a gleam of the old impish irony showing itself again in his face. "That's an excuse. I see what it is! You think my invention is gone—and you are not frank enough to confess it. I'll show you you're wrong. I'll show you that Dexter is himself again. Silence, you Ariel, or you shall live the room! I have got it, Mrs. Valeria, all laid out here, with scenes and characters complete."

He touched his forehead, and looked at me with a furtive and smiling cunning, before he added his next words. "It's the very thing to interest you, my fair friend. It's the story of a Mistress and a Maid. Come back to the fire and hear it."

The Story of a Mistress and a Maid? If that meant anything it meant the story of Mrs. Beauty and her maid, told in disguise. The title, and the look which had escaped him when he announced it, revived the hope that was well-nigh dead in me. He had rallied at last. He was again in possession of his natural foresight and his natural cunning. Under pretence of telling Ariel her story, he was evidently about to make the attempt to mislead me, for the second time. The conclusion was irresistible. To use his own words—Dexter was himself again.

I took Benjamin's arm as we followed him back to the fire-place in the middle of the room. "There is a chance for me yet," I whispered. "Don't forget the sign."

We returned to the places which we had already occupied. Ariel cast another threatening look at me. She had just sense enough left, after emptying her goblet of wine, to be on the watch for a new interruption on my part. I took care of course that nothing of the sort should happen. I was now as eager as Ariel to hear the story. The subject was full of snares for the narrator. At any moment, in the excitement of speaking, Dexter's memory of the true events might show itself reflected in the circumstances of the fiction. At any moment, he might betray himself.

He looked round him, and began. "My public, are you seated? My public are you ready?" he asked gaily. "Your face a little more this way," he added, in his softest and tenderest tones, motioning to me to turn my full face towards him. "Surely I am not asking too much?"

(To be continued.)

PARLIAMENTARY.

MONDAY, 8.—In reply to Mr. Delorme, the Minister of Militia said it was the intention of the Government to make provision for the surviving veterans of 1812.

In reply to Mr. Wood, Hon. Mr. Mackenzie said it was not the intention of the Government to depress the Welland Canal to 11 feet capacity, the lake harbors not warranting such expense.

Mr. Masson asked for the papers relating to Lepine's trial and the commutation of his sentence, protesting against the term "for murder" in Lord Dufferin's letter.

Hon. Mr. Mackenzie introduced the following resolution regarding Amnesty, which will be discussed on Thursday, the 11th.

"That in the opinion of this House it is not for the honor or interest of Canada, that the question of amnesty should remain longer in its present shape, that facts developed in the said evidence cannot be ignored by the people or Parliament of Canada, but the question must be disposed of; that it would be proper in view of all this that a full amnesty should be given to all persons concerned in the North-West troubles, Riel, Lepine and O'Donoghue excepted; that it would be proper in view of said facts that an amnesty should be given to those three, in consideration of five years banishment from Her Majesty's dominions.

THURSDAY, 9.—Mr. Van, Minister of Militia, introduced a bill to amend the Militia Act, by providing that Volunteer Militia should be placed under the control of the Major General, and to abolish the office of Deputy-Adjutant-General.

Mr. Fournier also introduced a bill to extend the provisions of the Foreign Enlistment Act of 1870, so as to prevent enlistment in the service of a Foreign State under any circumstances.

Mr. Mackenzie made the explanations concerning the changes in the Cabinet.

ASH WEDNESDAY, 10.—Recess. THURSDAY, 11.—Debate on Amnesty. Speeches by Messrs. Mackenzie, Bowell, Sir John A. Macdonald and Mr. Blake. FRIDAY, 12.—Debate on Amnesty. Speeches by Messrs. Wallace, Ryan, Masson, Devlin, Gordon and Moussem. The latter moved in amendment, "That the last three paragraphs of the Premier's resolution be struck out, and a general amnesty granted to all concerned in the troubles." Lost on division, 23 ayes, 152 nays. The Government motion was then carried, 129 ayes, 50 nays. Majority 79.

SATURDAY, 13.—Recess.

HISTORY OF THE WEEK.

FEB. 9.—A steamer leaves Cadix for Cuba to-day with 400 troops.

The reported capture of Estella by the Royalists is denied by the Carlists, who declare that they have regained lost ground. Alfonso has given up the chief command of the army to General Jovellier, and has retired to the security of the capital.

FEB. 10.—Telegrams to the London Daily News say the Alfontists lost 500 killed and wounded in the recent check they received near Estella.

The German authorities have seized the copies and forbidden the publication of a charge by the Bishop of Strasbourg to his clergy, in which his Lordship avers that the Church is persecuted.

General Sheridan states that the number of persons who have been killed or wounded in the State of Louisiana since 1867, on account of their political opinions, is—killed 2,141; wounded, 2,115; total, 4,256.

FEB. 11.—The new Tariff Bill, reported to the Washington House from the Committee of Ways and Means yesterday, imposes a tax of 2 1/2 per gallon on all distilled ale and spirits on which the tax has not been paid at date of the passage of the Bill, and an increase of 15 cents per gallon on all spirits in warehouses, &c., on which the present tax shall be paid between now and the passage of the Bill. The tax on imported vapors is to be \$2.50 per gallon; the tobacco duty to be increased to 24 cents per pound; the 10 per cent reduction on manufactured goods is to be repealed, and the stamp tax on letter matches abolished.

FEB. 12.—The last instalment of the Khivan war indemnity has been paid to the Russian Government.

Hon. Mr. Plunkett has been returned to Parliament without opposition, for the University of Dublin.

A bill has been introduced into the Imperial House of Commons to comprise the entire metropolis of London under one municipal Government.

A despatch from Berlin to the London Times says Bismarck has no intention whatever, of resigning as long as his health permits him to carry on the duties connected with his position.

The President of the Union Pacific Railroad, proposed to clear off the Government mortgage on the road by an annual payment to the Treasury of \$70,000 for 20 years, and \$750,000 after that, till the mortgage is cancelled.

FEB. 13.—The importation of American potatoes into Germany has been prohibited.

The Baltimore and Ohio Railway are carrying freight at 15 cents per 100 lbs. from Baltimore to Chicago.

The motion for the third reading of the Senate Bill was defeated in the French Assembly, yesterday, by a majority of 12 votes.

A member of the Imperial House of Commons is to be called to account for having described the Home Rulers as a "disreputable Irish band."

The estimated receipts and expenditure for the U. S. for the next fiscal year are so nearly equal, that there is thought to be danger of a deficit at the end of the year, with no means whatever of providing for the sinking fund.

President McMahon has informed the French Assembly, through General De Cassy, that he cannot agree to the resolution passed by that body, on Thursday, in connection with the Senate Bill, and thinks it advisable to inform the Assembly of his opposition before the resolution is made final. In spite of this announcement, which created a profound sensation, an additional amendment, to the effect that each Department elect three Senators, was carried.

FEB. 15.—Marshal Bazaine left Santander on Saturday, for Madrid. The protection of the police on his way to the station was necessary to secure him from violence from the crowd.

A fatal accident occurred at L'Islet, about noon yesterday, to the Riviere du Loup train, just before reaching Trois Saumons, two engines and a baggage car being precipitated into the river; three people were killed.

In reply to England's refusal to join the St. Petersburg International Code Conference, Prince Gortschakoff says the way will always be open to her to give in her adhesion to all measures that may be agreed upon by the Conference.

Pending the action of the United States Congress with regard to the increased taxation on whiskey, ten distilleries in Cincinnati district have been producing over 40,000 gallons daily, and during the past week 356,529 gallons were taken out of bond.

OUR CHESS COLUMN.

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

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

H. P. P. Whitby.—Letter received, and solution of Problem No. 4.

Frederic Lafleur, Montreal.—Correct solution of Problem for Young Players, No. 3.

O. Trempe, Montreal.—Correct solution to No. 3 of Problems for Young Players.

SOLUTIONS.

Solution of Problem No. 5.

WHITE. 1. K Kt P one (ch) 2. Q to K Kt 4th (ch) 3. Q to K B 5th (ch) 4. Q to her B 8th (ch) 5. Q to her 7th (ch) BLACK. K takes P (best) K to R 2nd, or (A) K to K 5th, or (B) K to B 2nd. If the Queen takes Queen, White's mate is mated, and if the King moves, White gives perpetual check.

(A) 2. K to B 2nd 3. Q to her 7th (ch) &c. as above. (B) 3. K Kt P one 4. Q to her 7th (ch) &c. as above.

Solution of Problem for young players, No. 3.

WHITE. 1. Kt to Q 7th ch 2. B to Q 5th ch 3. B takes Kt ch 4. Q takes K R P ch 5. K to his Kt 5th (discovering ch) Mate BLACK. K to his Kt sq Kt to K B 2nd K to R sq K takes Q.

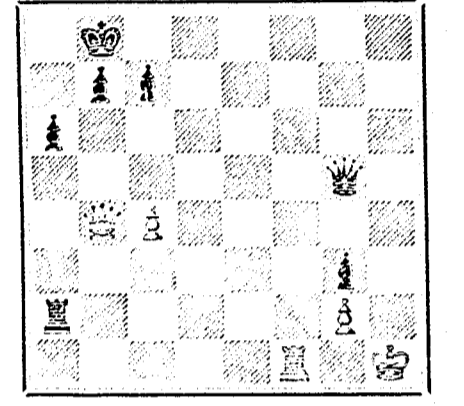
Solution of Problem for Young Players, No. 4.

WHITE. 1. K to B sq 2. R takes Kt (check-mate.) BLACK. 1. Kt to K 6th (check) If Black plays otherwise the R mates at Q sq.

PROBLEM No. 7.

From an old work on Chess.

BLACK.



WHITE.

White to play, and draw the game.

PROBLEMS FOR YOUNG PLAYERS.—No. 5.

WHITE. K at Q R sq Q at Q 7th R at Q 4th B at K Kt sq B at Q R 2nd Kt at K Kt 5th Pawns at K Kt 3rd and K R 6th. BLACK. K at K Kt sq Q at Q B 7th R at Q B sq R at Q Kt 3rd B at K B 4th Kt at K 3rd Kt at K R 4th Pawns at K 5th K B 2nd, K R 2nd, and Q R 2nd. White to play, and mate in five moves.

GAME 11th.

Played by Correspondence, a short time ago, between Dr. R., of Hamilton, and Mr. J. A. R., of Toronto.

King's Gambit.

WHITE.—Dr. R. BLACK.—Mr. J. A. R. 1. P to K 4th 2. K Kt to B 3rd 3. B to Q 4th 4. P to Q K 4th 5. P to Q B 3rd 6. P to Q 4th 7. Castles P 8. P takes P 9. Q Kt to B 3rd 10. Q to Q Kt 3rd 11. B takes K Kt P (ch) 12. Q to Q B 2nd 13. P to K 5th 14. P to Q 5th 15. B to K sq 16. K Kt to K R 4th 17. Q to K R 7th 18. Q Kt to K 4th 19. Kt to K Kt 5th 20. Q Kt to K B 6th (ch) 21. P to K 6th (ch) 22. B to Q Kt 2nd (ch) 23. P to K R 4th (ch) 24. B takes K Kt P 25. Q takes K R P (ch) 26. P to K 7th P to K 4th Q Kt to B 3rd B to Q 4th B takes P P to Q 4th P takes P P to Q 3rd Q to Q Kt 3rd Kt to Q 4th K to B sq K takes B P to K R 3rd B to K Kt 5th Kt to K 2nd B to K B sq K to K sq K R to K Kt sq Q B to K B 4th K to B 2nd K takes Kt at K B 3rd K to K R 4th K to K R 4th Kt takes K Kt to Kt 5th Resigns.

JOHN DATE, PLUMBER, GAS AND STEAM FITTER, Copper Smith, Brass Founder, Painter and Manufacturer of Diving Apparatus. 637 AND 639 CRAIG STREET, MONTREAL. 118 52 102

HOPKINS & WILLY ARCHITECTS AND VALUERS, 235 ST. JAMES STREET, MONTREAL. 118 52 091

PATENTS: F. H. REYNOLDS, SOLICITOR OF PATENTS, 235 St. James Street, Montreal. 118 52 100

MR. PARKS, PHOTOGRAPHER, HAS RECEIVED a very fine collection of STEREOGRAPH VIEWS of Zeosonite Valley, Scranawala Mountain & Niagara Falls. 118 52 101

JOSEPH GOULD, Importer of PIANO-FORTES AND CABINET ORGANS, 211 St. James Street, Montreal. 118 52 098

PARLOR BOOT & SHOE STORE, 375 Notre-Dame Street, One door East of John Aitken & Co.

Have always on hand a choice selection of LADIES WHITE GOODS, in Satin, Kid and Jean. 10-25-52-61 E. & A. PERRY.

MERCHANTS—SEND TO HICKS FOR SHOW CARDS 116 52 88. at every kind—Montreal.