

THE HISTORY OF CATS.

A man's sentiments with regard to cats are a kind of token of his age. In boyhood we are apt to hate cats, regarding them as "higher vermin." A dog which, like poor dog Tray in the poem, "is uncommon good at cats," is our favorite companion. We do not weary of contrasting the sterling merits and straightforward character of the dog with the sly and slinking habits of the cat. But as age draws on we begin to see redeeming features in the quiet, undemonstrative cat. We admire the sagacity with which it passes a double life—a sleek domestic favourite all day, a wild animal of unbridled impulse in the darkness of night. If the cat is not a robust animal like the Newfoundland or bull terrier, it is an unaffected one. It does not wag its tail at every chance corner, but purrs only when it has good reason to be pleased. The undemonstrative cat takes a human interest in her own comfort, disturbs no one (except occasionally at night), and really deserves protection from the worse than Bulgarian atrocities of fiends in the shape of boys. This animal, so essentially hypocritical and civilised, has a history and a folk-lore of her own, which we now propose to examine. In the new number of the Gentleman's Magazine, Mr. Thistleton Dyer tells us a few things about the history and folk-lore of the harmless, persecuted cat. He remarks that the chariot of the Goddess Freya, "the Teutonic Venus," was drawn by cats, and for his authority he refers us to Kelly's "Indo-European Folk-Lore." But this does not advance us much, as we wish to know whence Kelly derived his information. But he who asks for first-hand references is born to be disappointed. It is not easy to see how Freya's chariot came to be drawn by cats, if cats were not introduced into Europe till the middle ages, by which time Freya had ceased to be adored. Probably Freya's were the tall, brindled, wild cats which thirty years ago were common enough in the West Highlands. This wild cat, Mr. Lenormant says, was hunted and even eaten (we regret to learn) by the dwellers in the Swiss lake-cities in the age of Stone. Mr. Lenormant is convinced that not Egypt, but Africa further south, is the cradle of the cat as a domesticated animal. The Egyptian wild-fowl hunter in the monuments took his cat with him in his boat, and the cat acted as a retriever. Cats, as a rule, dislike cold water; but they are fond of fish, and there used to be a cat in a mill on the Yarrow or Ettrick (we forget which) which would dive after trout and seize them even in deep pools. This cat did not illustrate the Latin proverb "Catus amat pisces sed aquas intrare recusat." The Egyptian cat's fondness for birds doubtless enabled him to overcome his aversion to wetting his feet. All the world knows through Herodotus how the Egyptians revered the cat, though, indeed, there was scarcely any animal which some of them did not ignorantly worship. The remarks of Herodotus about the personal habits of the cat seem to prove almost to demonstration that the domesticated animal was no more known in Greece in his time than in the country where Dick Wittington introduced it. On this topic, some years ago, Mr. Mahaffy entered into controversy; Mr. Mahaffy believing in Greek cats, while Mr. A. S. Murray was sceptical about their existence. If any Egyptian voluntarily slew a sacred animal, death was his punishment; and Diodorus tells us that a Roman soldier who had accidentally killed a cat scarcely escaped the fury of the people. Yet the Egyptians had probably a still higher respect for dogs. When a cat died in a house, the people shaved their eyebrows; but when a dog died, they shaved the whole head and all the body. Dead cats were embalmed, and buried in the city of Bubastis, the sacred city of Bast, or Pasht, the divine cat. Mr. Lenormant finds that the Egyptians still respect cats, and in Cairo serve up a copious banquet every day to the cats of each quarter, "in the court of the house of the Cadi." In one of the picture galleries was lately exhibited a study of cats on a pilgrimage in Egypt; they had a camel all to themselves, under the direction of an old pilgrim, and were perched most comfortably on the animal's shoulders. The cat, like so many other animals, played a considerable part in Egyptian religion. But, if Mr. Lenormant is right, cat-worship is comparatively late in Egypt. He finds no trace of the animal among all the many monuments of the ancient Empire. Under those early dynasties the cat-goddess, Bast or Pasht, was a lioness goddess. Not till the Twelfth dynasty, and the conquests in le pays de Koush, does the cat come to the front in Egypt. We may therefore regard the cat as a Cushite animal, derived from the felis maniculata, found wild in Upper Nubia and the Soudan. Our cat, on the other hand, is thought to be descended from the felis catus, the wild cat which gave a name to Clan Chattan, and to the Duchess of Sutherland a Gaelic title, said to mean "The Great Lady of the Cat." The Spanish cat is regarded as a hybrid, dating from the Arab invasions. The late introduction of domesticated cats among Semitic peoples seems to be proved by the absence of cats in the Bible. We do not remember a single mention of cats in Holy Writ. The Assyrians and the Babylonians are said to have been equally ignorant of this charming animal. There appear to be no Greek or Roman pictures or other representations of the mau, or "mew-cat," of the Egyptians. Perhaps one exception should be made; for Mr. Longpérier has encountered a cat on a Tarentine coin, struck shortly before the wars of Pyrrhus. Another archaeologist mentions a Roman tombstone, that of Calpurnia Felicula (pussy) on which a cat was

engraved; but the monument is lost, and its date was post-Christian. The Indo-Aryans of the Vedic age seem to have lived and died ignorant of cats. The Sanskrit names of the cat mean "the animal of the house," "the house-wolf," "the rat-eater," "the enemy of mice." The name of the wild cat in many languages seems to be related to our puss. The Persian is puschkak; Afghan, pischik. Even the fanatic Kurd keeps his psig; the Lithuanian is attached to his domestic pijsie, and the Turk has a kindly feeling for the puschkik. Mr. Pictet, that audacious philologist, is inclined to connect those words with the Sanskrit, putchha—that is, "tail;" and so we should find in "puss" the same idea as in the Greek—, the creature with the waving tail.—Saturday Review.

OUR CHESS COLUMN.

All communications intended for this Column should be addressed to the Chess Editor, CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS, Montreal.

THE GRAND VIENNA TOURNEY.

Now that the greatest chess match in the world's history has terminated, we may expect to see in the chess journals of the day full particulars of the contest. These will all be welcome to every one who takes an interest in a battle which no doubt has called forth the energies of our great players more than any previous event of a like nature. The prizes were of a value sufficient to excite attention, but we are inclined to believe that the contestants thought more of maintaining a high standing at the close, than of any benefits they were likely to derive in any other way.

There is still much speculation as to the result of this tie, which before now has been played off; but the general opinion is that Steinitz will come out at the head of the list.

Winawer, however, will not lose his chance of the proud position for want of skill, and knowing as we do that the least slip on either side will decide the encounter between these redoubtable chess heroes, it is not well to speak with too much assurance of the final result.

The same may be said to a certain extent of the game between Mackenzie and Zukertort.

Our American cousins have much cause to be pleased with the position in the Tourney which Mason has taken. He has exhibited skill of the highest order. No doubt the whole of the games in the Tournament will be published at an early date, and the collection will be invaluable not only to the chess student, who is anxious to improve his play, but also to him who is only desirous of enjoying the intellectual treat which is to be obtained by playing carefully over the moves in the most brilliant of the encounters.

We have been informed that Mackenzie and Zukertort have agreed to divide the fourth and fifth prizes. If such is the case, we shall lose an opportunity of seeing what these two great players would do in a contest, which would call for all the skill at their command.

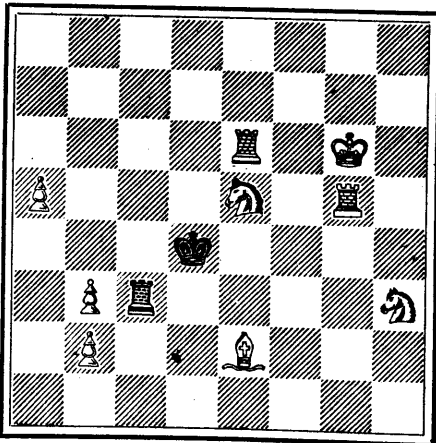
Considering, however, the amount of mental labor they have recently undergone, it would not be surprising if they should endeavor, by an arrangement of this nature, to bring the affair to a conclusion.

The Brighton Circulating Game is remarkable not only for egregious errors on the part of one or two of the players, but also as the medium for gentle admonitions and caustic reproofs, the latter conveyed in well-known aphorisms. These (it may be stated for general benefit) are not aimed at the quality of the play, but refer to the state of the book and the comments thereon. It is not in our power to give an authoritative reason for the present deplorable condition of the book, but we will take the liberty of inflicting upon our readers the conclusion which its appearance suggests. The assumption one would take is that the book has arrived by post just as the player is sitting down to breakfast, with the result that his attention is divided between the one and the other. This supposition is the more tenable as the pages of the book bear traces of a colored substance, strongly suggestive of the yolk of an egg. There is an amusing illustration of the "biter bit." Some one having requested that the book be "kept clean," and, in doing so, smeared his own writing, a wag facetiously draws attention to the fact by an asterisk, and the old axiom, "Example is better than precept." But, undoubtedly, the best service has been done by the gentleman who strengthened the covers of the book (seeing they were becoming dilapidated by reason of the continual transit through the post) and added the appropriate inscription, Bis dat qui cito dat.—Brighton Guardian.

PROBLEM No. 386.

By J. Paul Taylor.

BLACK.



WHITE.

White to play and mate in two moves.

SOLUTION OF PROBLEM No. 386.

- White. 1. Q to K Kt sq. 2. B to Q B3 (ch) 3. Q to Q4 mate. Black. 1. P to Q Kt 4 2. K takes B 1. P Queens 2. K Any

GAME 515TH.

VIENNA TOURNEY.

(From Land and Water.)

Played in the eighteenth round between Blackburne and Steinitz. Mr. Blackburne appears to advantage in

this game, playing in a bold, free style which, having regard to its success, contributes a powerful protest against the mincing excellence of the modern school. For a real master we want Blackburne without his defects—someone who besides hitting strongly and conceiving deeply also sees clearly and keeps a firm grasp of position.

(Ray Lopez.)

- White.—(Mr. Blackburne. 1. P to K4 2. Kt to KB3 3. B to Kt5 4. B to R4 5. P to Q4 6. Kt takes P 7. Q takes Kt 8. B to Kt3 9. P to Q B3 10. Q to Q sq 11. Castles (e) 12. R to K sq 13. B to B2 14. Kt to Q2 15. Kt to B sq 16. Q to R5 17. Kt to Kt3 18. Kt to B5 (e) 19. P to QR4 20. P takes Kt P 21. B to K3 (f) 22. KR to Q sq 23. Q to R3 24. R to Q7 25. Kt to R6 ch 26. Q takes Q 27. B takes RP Black.—(Mr. Steinitz.) 1. P to K4 2. Kt to QB3 3. P to QR3 4. K Kt to K2 (a) 5. P takes P 6. Kt takes Kt 7. P to Q Kt4 8. P to Q3 9. P to QB4 (b) 10. B to Kt2 11. Q to Q2 (d) 12. P to B5 13. Kt to Kt3 14. B to K2 15. Castles KR 16. QR to K sq 17. B to Q sq 18. P to B3 19. P to Q4 20. RP takes P 21. P takes P 22. Q to Q B2 23. R to K4 (g) 24. Q takes R 25. P takes Kt 26. B to Q4 (h) Resigns.

NOTES.

(a) This is the Cozio proceeded and to that extent varied by P to QR3. One's sympathies are with any attempt to introduce a square and fair defence in the Ray Lopez, but the text line must be had having regard to the rapidity of White's development.

(b) If this be necessary, his defence stands at once condemned, for the game is lost on principle on account of the weak Q P. See our notes in issue of April 29 last. The Minor Principle therein set forth is not invalidated by the fact that the unhappy Q P can be some time or other pushed forward and exchanged, for there will then be an undue exposure.

(c) Bold, but the position apparently justifies him. This course was evidently intended on his last move.

(d) If 11 B takes P then 12 R to K sq, and Black, however playing, will be dreadfully looked up.

(e) Here the nineteenth Minor Principle (Bland's Annual) comes in.

(f) Audaciously played. He cares nothing for the Pawn, relying upon the powerful augmentation of force that accrues to him.

(g) A dreadful blunder. He should play 23 B to B sq, 24 R to R7, B takes Kt, though White keeps a fine game.

(h) Evidently demoralized. If wanting to struggle the move in that behalf is R to K2, though of course he would have no chance.



TRENT NAVIGATION.

Notice to Contractors.

THE letting of the works for the FENELON FALLS, BUCKHORN and BURLEIGH CANALS, advertised to take place on the fifth day of July next, is unavoidably postponed to the following dates:—Tenders will be received until Wednesday, the second day of August next. Plans, specifications, &c., will be ready for examination (at the places previously mentioned) on Saturday, the Fifteenth day of July next.

By order, A. P. BRADLEY, Secretary. Dept. of Railways and Canals, Ottawa, 20th June, 1882.

British American Bank Note Company.

NOTICE is hereby given that a Special General Meeting of the Shareholders of this Company will be held in the Company's Offices, St. John Street, Montreal, on

Saturday, 8th July next,

at Three O'clock, p.m., for the purpose of taking into consideration and voting upon a By-Law passed by the Board of Directors, to increase the Capital Stock of the said Company.

By order, G. J. BOWLES, Secy.-Treasurer.

Montreal, 26th June, 1882.

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By order of the Board.

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