

Musical.

A LITTLE MUSIC.

At many of our social gatherings it is customary to have "a little music" by way of entertainment. None of the guests may have the slightest pretensions to musical ability, nor may they even care to hear music of any kind under the most favourable circumstances, yet they are compelled by custom to sing or play if possible, or at any rate to listen to those who have learnt to "execute" the compositions of Beethoven or Mendelssohn. It appears an understood thing that every lady shall be seated in turn at the piano; what she may do when she is there, matters little, as every one begins to talk on hearing the first chord. When she concludes, the conversation ceases, and the hostess thanks her and says it was "very pretty," although she has been conversing loudly the whole time, and has not the faintest idea whether the performer played well or badly. Only last week we heard a lady ask a musician whom she had invited to her house to play something "in order to set them talking."

In the vocal department there is this difference that a respectful silence is maintained by the guests, whether the singing be good or bad, but in other respects it is the same. The hostess asks everybody to sing, without knowing whether they have a voice, talent, or education; and, as it is a comparatively easy thing to sing a melody by ear, the infliction is sometimes almost beyond endurance. The strangest part of this custom is that no one is benefitted and few pleased by it. Most of those who are pressed to perform would rather be excused, the "listeners" would rather enjoy their conversation uninterruptedly, and the hostess would rather not be under the necessity of telling her guests what they know to be false. The trouble arises simply from want of thought.

All persons are not qualified to entertain company; it is an art that is only acquired after much thought and some practice. Many people think that if they invite a certain number of ladies and gentlemen to their houses they can be left to entertain each other, and as custom decrees that each one shall be insisted to play or sing whether she be capable or not, "a little music" is the ordinary form of entertainment, especially with those who eschew dancing and card-playing. Were the guests selected with a view to their tastes and proclivities this, perhaps, would not be so bad, but as a rule no such selection is made.

Music of a certain kind forms an excellent accompaniment to conversation, and may be found useful at large and formal gatherings; but this music should be light and rhythmical, and should be supplied, not by a guest, but by a hired performer or band of performers. The compositions of the masters, or indeed concert pieces of any kind, should not be performed as an accompaniment; waltzes, marches, and light overtures are better adapted for this purpose and require but little attention in order to their full enjoyment, while they enliven a dull evening and inspire, as it were, the flow of conversation. Only those who understand or really enjoy music should be invited to musical parties, and then strict silence should be absolutely enforced in all polite circles. We think that should any person be invited who did not really care for music, it should not be thought rude or impolite for him to say so, instead of undergoing a temporary martyrdom; and at all parties other than those specially called musical, neither singing nor playing should be introduced except as an adjunct to dancing, conversation or card-playing. If a man does not play cards we do not usually invite him to a card party, nor do we expect our friends at a large gathering to remain silent whilst the initiated take part in a game of chess; why then should we not deal with music as with any other special subject, and, whilst giving those who care for and enjoy it every scope both for listening and performing, avoid compelling others through courtesy to pretend to enjoy what is in reality an inveterate bore?

To the Musical Editor of the CANADIAN SPECTATOR:

SIR,—It is not generally known, I presume, that McGill University, with a commendable interest in music, has undertaken to organise a Musical Association, which, if the results aimed at can be attained, will be a most desirable thing for the city, and give a material impetus to the growth of musical taste here. An item respecting this scheme in your last issue intimated that an orchestra is to be formed among the students of McGill for the study of the higher class of music. Feeling an interest in the matter, when I first heard it mooted some weeks since, I made inquiries on the subject, and from what I then learned I am sure that your item is not quite correct. As I understand it, the University Musical Association has for its object the presentation of the best music, performed by the best executants that can be had, whether in the College or out of it, by means of a series of concerts to be given every year. As orchestral music has thus far received the least attention in Montreal, the development of a competent orchestra and the introduction to our public of symphonies, overtures, concertos, and similar compositions, will, for a time at any rate, engage the attention of the Association. The first concert will be given in the William Molson Hall on Thursday evening, March 4th, Mr. Couture's orchestra being the principal performers, and I think that those who attend it will hear the best orchestral playing we have yet had.

Beethoven's First Symphony, the Minuet and Trio from Mozart's Symphony in G minor, the First movement of the Violin Concerto of Beethoven, (with Leonard's *cadenza*) to be played by Mr. Deseve, the Overture to Don Giovanni, and a Reverie by Vieuxtemps (scored for orchestra) form the chief features of the programme, and, as you will readily admit, constitute a kind of entertainment to which we, in Montreal, are not much accustomed. The orchestra has been under careful training for more than two months, and as I have been privileged to attend some of the recent rehearsals, I feel warranted in saying, that a performance may be expected of which neither the Association nor the able conductor will have cause to feel ashamed.

As I am in nowise connected with this Association, and as the tickets for the concerts will, for the greater part, be sold by private hands, this communication cannot possibly be construed into an advertisement. I am so delighted at the thought of our having a veritable orchestra created in Montreal capable of playing a Beethoven symphony, and so grateful to McGill University for this practical recognition of music as an art worthy of the most intelligent fostering, that I am constrained to speak thus heartily of an enterprise which can hardly be too highly commended or too liberally supported. I am sure, Sir, it will receive at your hands all the encouragement it merits.

I am, dear Sir, yours respectfully,

J. G.

The programme of the initial performance of the celebrated pianist and composer Gustave Satter, contains a selection of pieces evidently culled with a view to suit the varied tastes of a large audience, though there is not a single number of a meretricious character. The Raff Polonaise, that graceful *morceau* "Les Sylphes," by Hector Berlioz, and Mendelssohn's difficult "Variations Sérieuses," are well calculated to exhibit the marvellous execution and wonderful power, combined with a rare delicacy of touch, which Mr. Satter is noted for. The piano selected by the artist is a magnificent Weber "Grand," and we confidently look for a large attendance of our musical *virtuosi* at Nordheimer's Hall on yesterday evening.

PROVINCIAL NOTES.

TORONTO.—"St. Andrew's Choral Society," Toronto, gave its first concert on Thursday, 19th February. The Hall was filled with an attentive and critical audience, and this young Society has made its *début* in a way that does credit to its conductor, and augurs well for its future as a power in the cultivation of high-class music in this city. Mendelssohn's part-songs—"The Nightingale" and "The Lark"—were very beautifully rendered, as also "The Caravan," by Pinsuti. This latter is a somewhat difficult piece, and was given with great precision and effect, the delicate lights and shades being markedly brought out. Gounod's motet, "Gallia," while showing great study and care on the part of the chorus, wanted a fuller development of the idea of the composition. Of the orchestra and soloists we do not deem it necessary to speak, as they are not, strictly speaking, the Society, but accessories to it. We congratulate the Society on the success of its first effort, and accord to it a hearty welcome to the musical circle of our Dominion.

Chess.

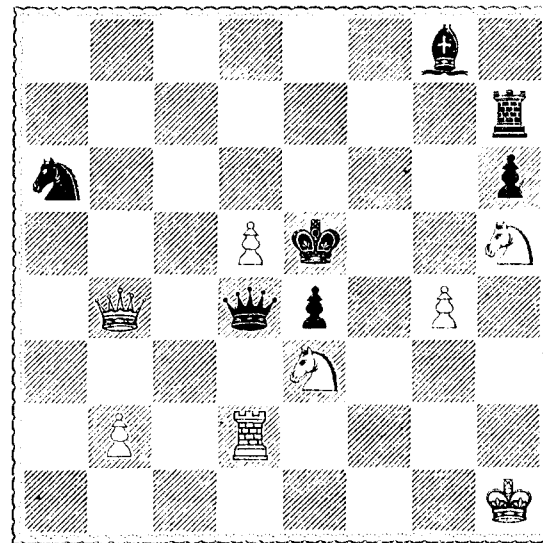
All Correspondence intended for this Column, and Exchanges, should be directed to the CHESS EDITOR, CANADIAN SPECTATOR Office, 162 St. James Street, Montreal.

Montreal, Feb. 28th, 1880.

PROBLEM NO. LXI.

By Mr. D. Klark, of Siberia. From *La Stratégie*.

BLACK.



WHITE.

White to play and mate in two moves.

SOLUTION TO PROBLEM NO. LXIII. By G. Chocholou. Q B to B 7.

Correct solution received from J.H.; G.P.B.; J.W.S., "A master-piece, a 'daisy,' and no mistake."

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

G.P.B.—Try Problem No. 59 again.

PAN.—Glad to hear from you again. You are correct in the initial move to No. 59, but have failed to effect mate. Try again.

GAME NO. LVII.

Played at the Divan, Strand, London, in February, 1877, between Mr. B. and Mr. H., two well known metropolitan amateurs. From *The British Empire*.

RUY LOPEZ.

WHITE.	BLACK.	WHITE.	BLACK.	WHITE.	BLACK.
Mr. H.	Mr. B.	9 Q Kt to B 3	Castles (K R)	18 R tks K B P (i)	R takes R
1 P to K 4	P to K 4	10 P to K R 3	Kt to Q sq (e)	19 Q takes P (f)	Q to K B 7
2 K Kt to B 3	Q Kt to B 3	11 Kt to K R 4 (d)	P to K Kt 3 (e)	20 Q takes B P	B to Q B sq
3 B to Q Kt 5	P to Q R 3	12 B to K R 6	R to K sq	21 B takes R (ch)	Q takes B
4 B to R 4	P to Q Kt 4 (a)	13 K to R sq	Kt to K 3 (f)	22 Q takes K B	B tks K R P (k)
5 B to Kt 3	B to Q Kt 2	14 P to K B 4	Kt tks K P (g)	23 Kt to Q 5 (l)	Q to K 3
6 P to Q 3	B to Q B 4	15 P takes Kt	Q takes Kt	24 R to K B sq	Resigns.
7 Castles	Kt to K B 3	16 B to Kt 5	Kt takes B (h)		
8 B to K 3	Q to K 2 (b)	17 P takes Kt	R to K 2		

NOTES.—(a) This line of defence is often adopted by good players, and we believe Herr Paulsen played it at the last German Congress; but it is not approved by the authorities, and if the result of this game is any test of its merits the authorities are not far wrong. As we have previously remarked on this opening K Kt to B 3 is the correct move.

(b) We should prefer exchanging Bishops followed by castling.

(c) An odd looking move, and one that certainly does not tend to the speedy development of his game. Taking the B continued by P to Q 3 is preferable.

(d) A powerful move, the full force of which will appear as the game proceeds.

(e) Black could not afford to let the Kt in at B 5th, nor could he safely take the K P with Kt, as the following line of play will show:

12 P takes Kt
13 Kt to B 5, winning a piece.
(f) Black's game is cramped, the weak point evidently being the Q P, and we think the time has come for its being played to its 3rd sq. Even now taking the K P with Kt would be injudicious, as will be seen as follows:—

14 Kt takes Kt
15 P takes B
16 Q takes Q P
17 Q to Q 5
18 Q to Q 2, keeping Black's game cramped, for should he play Kt to K 3 White replies with Q to Q B 3.

(g) As we have endeavoured to show in previous notes, this resource was always unsound; and is even more so now than before, as White can force the opening of the K B file for the action of the R.

(h) This move is compulsory.

(i) An interesting combination. After this move we doubt if Black's game can be saved.

(j) This pawn falls at last, and with its fall the game.

(k) In *articulo mortis* he catches at a straw, which, of course, avails him nothing.

(l) After this all is lost. Black gets a check or two, but the R is never able to come into play.

CHESS INTELLIGENCE.

THE *Huddersfield College Magazine* for February occupies no fewer than twenty pages with its chess department, which is exhaustive and entertaining to the fullest extent. A special article on the American Chess Congress, from the pen of Mr. A. P. Barnes, carries the story of that event up to January 15th. The consultation game between Mr. Judd and others against Mr. Delmar and his allies is given with notes by the editor, who characterises the game as "one of the finest specimens of consultation chess we have seen for many a long day." We have to thank the editor for his notices of the CANADIAN SPECTATOR Problem Tourney, and would draw the attention of readers to the beautiful poem on the Tay Bridge disaster, by Rev. J. A. Mills, author of "Chess Gems."

THE *Brighton Herald* publishes the conditions of the CANADIAN SPECTATOR Problem Tourney in full, and wishes us success. He, however, rates us soundly for forbidding solutions in the Anglo-German notation, and characterises it as "the impulse of a national prejudice without a shred of reason in support." We have scarcely room to follow the talented editor through all his arguments, but are pleased to have dragged his inner sentiments to the light of day when he says that "to foreigners the English notation must be as complicated and ugly as their various styles are to us." We refer the editor to the reply in our last issue to the *Ayr Argus and Express* for our reasons for this stipulation, seeing no valid reason why composers of problems should inflict on us the discomfort of analysing their solutions when couched in a dialect unfamiliar and inconvenient to rapidly decipher. There is no more national prejudice in such a condition than there is, we presume, in the *Brighton Herald* championing the Anglo-German notation.