

Chess.

All Correspondence intended for this Column, and Exchanges, should be directed to the
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THE STORY OF THE FIFTH AMERICAN CHESS CONGRESS.

The Fifth American Chess Congress has been brought to a termination, except as respects the Problem Tourney, and we may now sum up the results and venture our own impressions accordingly. The First Congress was held in 1857, when Morphy made his debut and electrified the whole Chess World. For thirteen years subsequent to that date no move seems to have been made towards holding another Congress, but since 1870, no fewer than four have been held, and there will, no doubt, be another in 1883. We do not stay to enquire whether they were National or International. In Cleveland in 1870, Chicago in 1873, Philadelphia in 1877, New York in 1880 have Chess Congresses been held, and, in our opinion, this triennial arrangement does not conduce to the advancement of the game or the success of the meetings. Their frequency damps the enthusiasm.

The Congress just concluded originated in the spirited action of the Manhattan Club of New York, and their handsome donation to the fund, and the business-like arrangements and management of the whole affair stamp that Club as the finest and most enterprising organization on this Continent. When in New York, last summer, and the question was only being mooted, we ventured the hint that the time had not yet arrived for holding a Congress, and, to our thinking, the sequel supports the view we then expressed. The call for funds has not been liberally, or even generally responded to, several large cities contributing mere mites, and many others nothing at all. With the exception of Holyoke, which sent \$80, owing, we believe, to the indefatigable exertions of our friend Mr. R. H. Seymour, not a single city in the Union contributed anything like its proper quota. Not only this, but \$100 promised by the New York Club was withdrawn because some premature guarantee could not be given that the Congress would not assemble in the Manhattan Club-Room. This mean-spirited action on the part of the oldest Chess Club in New York has brought its own well-merited punishment, for most of its influential members have since resigned, and the Club now exists in little more than name. Undertakings started by any body of men are sure to excite jealousy in kindred societies, and especially if a superimportance is arrogated by the first promoters. All the hard things we have seen said of the Congress Committee have been dictated by this sentiment, and we have been unable to see a shadow of reason for it.

The entries for the Grand Tournament, also betokened a lack of unanimity and general enthusiasm. Ten players only entered for the Grand Prizes, of whom five, at least, belong to New York. Such strong players as Elson, Maurian, Hosmer, Orchard, Galbraith, Neill, Richmond, Reichhelm, were conspicuous by their absence. The Programme, as issued, limited the contestants to North American nationality, but at one time rumours were afloat that some strong players from Europe would visit New York, and we have no doubt the regulations would have been so far amended as to permit them to play in the Grand Tourney had they done so.

Play in the Grand Tournament commenced between the ten entrants punctually on January 6th, and was continued regularly, one game each player per day, according to the programme. Each player had to contest two games with every other player, thus making a total of ninety games, extending over eighteen days. Five prizes were offered, the 1st Prize being \$500 in cash and a Gold Medal, worth \$50. The 2nd Prize was \$300, the 3rd \$200, the 4th \$100, and the 5th \$50.

Great interest was raised in the contest, when, at the close of the second round, James Grundy was found to have defeated both Capt. McKenzie and Mr. Max Judd, who were considered the most formidable opponents on the list. He maintained his advantage to the end, ultimately tying with McKenzie for first prize, when in playing off the tie he was defeated. Grundy was a comparative stranger in New York chess circles, having only appeared there from Manchester in England last May, and when it is remembered that in the Manhattan Club Tourney, which had been concluded but a few days before his entering the Congress Tourney, he had been defeated by Capt. McKenzie two straight games at the odds of Pawn and move, scoring but 72.92 per cent. against Mr. McKenzie's 83.33 per cent., his success in the Grand Tourney may readily be understood as creating considerable astonishment. We believe Capt. McKenzie was suffering from indisposition and playing far below his strength, besides which we are led to think that except in such Tourney encounters, the greater number of the Captain's games are contested at odds, and the variations of the even game so become less familiar until a little practice has rubbed off the rust. As respects the other contestants, the positions held by Mr. Max Judd, who just escaped losing a prize, and Mr. Delmar, who just escaped the reverse, are different to our opinions of their play before the Tourney commenced. We congratulate Mr. Möhle on his well-earned third prize, though he has our sincere sympathy that he failed to get the second.

One of the regulations of the Committee of Management prevented the publication of any of the games, which are retained as the property of the Committee, and are to be published in a Book of the Congress, to be issued when the Problem Tourney is decided. The advisability of this course may well be questioned. It is to be remembered that all subscribers of \$5 and upwards receive a copy of the book gratis, and we are led to believe that the issue will be limited to those subscribers only. In a few months much of the interest in the Congress will have abated and Chess Editors and others will feel little encouragement to publish games copied from a book, and which had been played many months before. Had a selection, or say a dozen games a week, been made public, we think much good would have resulted, both in continued interest in the Congress and in \$5 subscriptions. From the few published positions at critical points in some of the games, we believe that the play in the Grand Tourney has been of a very high order, and many of the games masterpieces of strategy and brilliancy, and the book will, no doubt, be a valuable repertoire for either reference or study.

The last game in the Tourney, between Grundy and Ware, was brought to a termination on the evening of Monday, Jan. 26th, and was won by Grundy. Immediately on its conclusion Ware preferred complaints to the Committee that Grundy had cheated him, and afterwards handed in a written statement to the effect that they had both agreed to draw the game, Grundy promising to pay Ware \$20 to do so, for if the former were defeated, which seemed probable, his chance of first prize would be gone and he might not even win third prize. It appears that on the previous day, Sunday, they had met and made a compact to move backwards and forwards and then propose a draw. This was carried out until Grundy, perceiving an opening, went in and won the game from Ware. The two men were called in and closely questioned in private by the Committee; but while the sullen, downcast demeanour of Grundy, lacking all that manly indignation which charges of such a character would rouse in any innocent man, left no moral doubt of his guilt, his persistent denial, pitted against Ware's assertion, placed the Committee in such a position that, without further corroboration on one side or the other, they had no alternative but to permit Grundy to play off the tie with Capt. McKenzie. The three lower prizes were paid to the winners at the banquet on Tuesday evening, Jan. 27th, and when it was discovered that such grave charges hung around any winner, we cannot absolve the Committee from severe censure for so precipitately permitting the tie to be played off and the prize money paid. This might have been indefinitely postponed till further developments rendered their course of action clear. Scarcely had the matter been settled when another case came to light, and it is now known that this same man Grundy had offered Mr. Ryan a money bribe to lose a game to him. All this, however, Grundy steadfastly denied, and it was not till he was threatened with expulsion from the Manhattan Club and had received his \$300, that he called on the chairman of the Committee, Mr. H. C. Allen, and fully confessed the truth of all that had been charged against him and the whole of his attempts to bribe the players, begging Mr. Allen at the same time not to expose him any further, as it would injure him in his business relations—though what these are no one seems clearly to understand—and he then and there wrote his resignation to the Manhattan Club. Having thus far mollified the chairman, this

man then returned to the Club, button-holed his one or two adherents, impressed them with the belief of his innocence and vilified Mr. Allen and the rest of the Committee, declaring he was "bull-dozed" into resigning from the Club or else he would not get his prize money. This behaviour at once absolved Mr. Allen from any reticence, and the whole of his machinations have now been published in *Turf, Field and Farm*. Grundy at once left New York, and we have no doubt has been ventilating his grievances during the past week throughout the chess clubs of Ontario. We expect his resignation to the Manhattan Club will not be accepted, but that he will be otherwise removed, and trust never again to hear his name coupled with American chess. In Grundy's extreme poverty alone can some palliation for his conduct be found, but even this is wanting in the case of Ware. How a man advanced in years, in a good social position and hitherto respected in chess circles could so far forget his duties to his own honour and the public as to barter them for \$20 baffles our comprehension. Mr. Ware, with an effrontery as difficult to understand as his conduct, coolly informs the public that he considered himself or any other player at perfect liberty to buy or sell a game in the absence of any agreement to the contrary, or in other words to play ducks and drakes with public subscriptions and divert them into any channel that inclination or cupidity might dictate. It is difficult to conceive what document would sufficiently bind Mr. Ware's conscience as to secure his best endeavours in a chess tourney. He must know that money is subscribed in these and similar cases to reward the best player, not the man with the easiest conscience or the longest purse, and that the public require and demand his utmost exertions to secure the highest position in the contest of which he is capable. Such principles as are avowed by Mr. Ware strike at the root of all competitive contests, and to them may be traced the disputes that have marred so many American matches in other departments. Ware avers in his letter to the *Boston Globe* that he reported Grundy to the Committee in order to see, as he himself expresses it, if they had any backbone. This is only arrant rubbish and impertinence. The truth seems to be that Mr. Ware considers it quite right for him to defraud the public, unless he is pledged not to do so, but he himself must not be so treated. Part of the business of the Congress was the establishment of the American Chess Association, and we are astounded to find this man admitted a member, while Mr. Grundy is not. True it is that a Committee has been appointed to thoroughly investigate this Ware-Grundy business, and we hope, for the honour of American chess and for the sake of the disavowal of such principles as Mr. Ware's, that a lasting example will be made by the Association and the whole chess atmosphere purified of these heresies. Nothing short of his expulsion from the Association will satisfy the chess world. We have every confidence in the gentlemen at the head of the Association, and the outspoken condemnation of both these men by the whole American Press should strengthen their determination to restore by every means in their power the good name of American chess. Unless they do so they will meet with their own condemnation in 1883. For our part we see little difference between Grundy and Ware, but of the two the latter is the worse, and he ought to retire from chess and never again obtrude his name before the Chess World.

A Minor Tourney was inaugurated after the termination of the First, the chief prize being \$100, contributed by Mr. Frank Queen, of the *New York Clipper*. There were four teen entries, each player having to contest one game with every other. Mr. N. Gedalia proved the winner. Mr. Leon Bloch retired before the conclusion of the tourney, thereby bringing forward the complicated question of determining the score of a retiring player. This has been recently discussed by Mr. Steinitz in *The Field*, and by Mr. James Pierce in the *Brighton Herald*. Without needless labour, and yet with sufficient accuracy, the rule adopted by the Congress answers all purposes, namely, "that the games of the absentee stand generally; but are cancelled in comparing the scores of any pair, if one of the parties has not played with the defaulter." This, however, leaves the general score on paper very deceiving.

The American Chess Association was organized with Colonel Fellows as President, thirteen Vice-Presidents, being one each for as many States in the Union, Mr. H. C. Allen as Secretary, and Mr. J. D. Beugless as Treasurer. The subscription is \$2 per annum, which goes to a fund for a Grand International Congress in 1883. The Association has also drawn up a Code of Laws, but as they at present stand, they contain many points to which we take exception. They are not, however, finally settled, but we may venture to point out that Correspondence and Consultation Games are somewhat mixed, and a Pawn on reaching the 8th rank may be exchanged for a piece or removed altogether from the board.

Except that the course of events has been disturbed, first by the disaffection of the New York Club, and secondly by the Ware-Grundy matter, the Congress has passed off smoothly and successfully, and the Committee of Management deserve great praise for the careful, steady and business-like way in which they have conducted it from first to last.

Musical.

Notices of Concerts in Provincial towns, &c. are invited, so as to keep musical amateurs well informed concerning the progress of the art in Canada.

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DR. SATTER'S CONCERT.

The concert, or rather recital, given by Dr. Satter in Nordheimer's Hall on Friday evening seems to have given unbounded gratification to all who attended it. Without going so far as to assert that Dr. Satter is equal to either Rubinstein or Von Bulow, we may say that he performed an excellent programme in a thoroughly artistic manner; and, without offending the most cultivated of his hearers, took the masses completely by storm. The programme, says the *Gazette*, "was not too classical;" in fact the only classical piece in it was Mendelssohn's "Variations Serieuses" which fell comparatively flat, although performed with a smooth and finished technique. Most of the pieces were operatic selections and popular compositions, and to this judicious selection must be attributed in a great measure the success of the entertainment. The piano, a Weber "Grand," was the theme of general admiration; it is certainly a very fine instrument.

THE "Mendelssohn Choir" is about to give the public another treat. Mr. Prume will play the Max Bruch concerto, with piano and quartette accompaniment, and the choir will give many of the part-songs which gave so much pleasure at the last concert. We trust Mr. Prume will have better luck this time.

THE next concert of the Philharmonic Society is expected to surpass even the last performance. It is rumored that His Excellency the Governor-General and H.R.H. the Princess Louise will be present on the occasion.

THE Marquis of Lorne has written a "Canadian National Anthem," and Dr. Arthur Sullivan has undertaken to set it to music. With such distinguished parentage we may expect a song worthy of our great Dominion, and one which will soon become popular throughout the land.

DR. SULLIVAN sails for England next week.