

## Musical.

All correspondence intended for this column should be directed to the Musical Editor CANADIAN SPECTATOR Office, 162 St. James Street, Montreal.

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.

### CHURCH CONCERTS.

Anyone residing for a time in Montreal, cannot fail to be struck with the multiplicity of musical entertainments given in connection with the various churches with which our city is so bountifully supplied. Is an addition to the spire of the church contemplated, a new parsonage to be erected, or any improvement made in connection with the edifice or its appointments, the means taken to raise money is almost invariably a concert, to which all those interested are expected to go, whether or not they appreciate the performance *per se*. In vain do those importuned to purchase tickets plead that they neither understand nor care for music, or that they understand it too well to feel comfortable at the performance; *the object* of the entertainment is pictured vividly before their imagination, and social ostracism awaits all those who resist the pathetic appeal.

One would think that a more straightforward mode of procedure would be to ask directly for a contribution towards effecting the desired object, but somehow or another people seem to imagine that the concert ticket is a sort of *quid pro quo*, which relieves the importunate seller from assuming altogether the position of a mendicant. Many poor victims would gladly pay the price of a few tickets were they exempted from the painful duty of attending these performances; but their absence would be construed as a slur on the reputation of the performers, and so they are forced *volens nolens* to endure what is to many not only a bore, but a species of refined torture.

In Montreal we are blessed with many churches, and nearly every one of these has its annual, semi-annual, or monthly concert; yet (with the exception of the surroundings) we would defy a person attending these entertainments to distinguish any of them from another. St. Mark's Church gives a concert, and borrows the principal members of St. Mathew's and St. Luke's or St. Swithin's; St. Matthew's in turn is famous with the assistance of the members of St. Swithin's and St. Marks, Miss Jones of St. Luke's, Miss Smith of St. Mark's and Mr. Robinson of St. Swithin's being the principal soloists on every occasion. The programmes, too, vary but little, solos and choruses being in every case taken from Haydn's *Creation* or Handel's *Messiah* interspersed with "How lovely are the Messengers" and "Rocked in the cradle of the deep."

Some church choirs, more enterprising than others, engage artists to give an air of (musical) respectability to their concerts, demanding, as a matter of course, a reduction of fees in consideration of *the object* of the entertainment, a reduction which we are sorry to say, many artists foolishly submit to, unconscious of the fact that they are, figuratively speaking, cutting their own throats by appealing at such concerts at all, as persons who have listened to an artist repeatedly *ex officio*, are hardly to be expected to rush to hear him voluntarily again, those outsiders who pay twenty-five cents to hear an artist at a church concert, can hardly be expected to give a dollar to hear the same pieces by the same performer.

If the members of a choir feel that they have not sufficient scope for the exercise of their talents on Sunday, let them by all means perform on Monday or any other day, charging if they please a fee for admission, but let it be understood that the performance is to be judged on its merits, and that no artist is to be importuned to enter into competition with himself and his brother musicians on account of a *worthy object*, in which he is no more interested than any other citizen. The Corporation does not supply water to churches *gratis*, neither does the Gas Company supply them with gas free of charge on account of any worthy object they may further, yet a musician is supposed to play or sing at a low rate (or perhaps for nothing at all) for those who systematically and perpetually ruin his business. Shopkeepers cry out (and we think with some reason) against the bazaars and sales of merchandise carried on by church people who pay neither license nor taxes; but the baneful effect of this kind of traffic on trade is not to be compared to the effect of church concerts on the musical profession and the advancement of art, and we certainly think that when churches are used as, and come into competition with, music halls, they should cease to be exempt from taxation. How are our concert halls to pay if every one of our many churches is devoted to the music-trade? How are our musicians to earn a living if every church-choir exercises the functions of a concert-troupe?

We have no hope that our Corporation will act justly and tax all churches used as concert-halls, neither do we expect that church people will cease to inflict their ever-recurring concerts on the public; but we do hope that the members of the profession will for once unite in setting their faces against them, refusing to take part in any but purely musical entertainments. As regards amateurs, no ladies or gentlemen worthy of the name would (after reflection) wilfully work against the advancement of that art they profess to love, either by attending or taking part in any such performances.

### PIANO RECITAL.

Miss Zulime Holmes gave a piano recital in the rooms of the New York Piano Co. on Saturday afternoon, which was largely attended. The programme was well selected and admirably performed, serving not only to display a finished *technique*, but also to exhibit the various excellent qualities of the *Weber "Baby Grand,"* an instrument which that enterprising firm have made a speciality.

### MADAME CARRENO.

This accomplished Artist contemplates giving a series of piano recitals in the Queen's Hall early in January. The subscription list is now open, and we earnestly advise all students of piano music not to miss a single performance. Madame Carreno has few equals as a pianiste, and a recital by her is worth a host of lessons.

WE have received letters from Musicians and Amateurs concurring in the views expressed in our article of last week. We are sorry we have not space to publish them, but are glad we have awakened public interest in the matter, and hope much good may result to all.

## Chess.

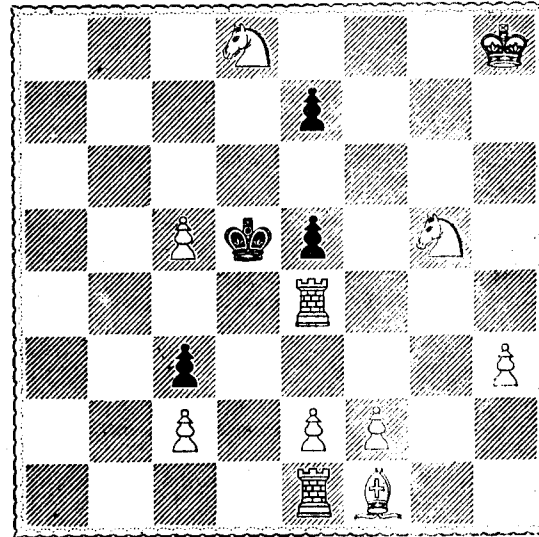
Montreal, December 25th, 1880.

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### PROBLEM NO. CXVII.

By Mr. J. Thursby, Trinity College, Cambridge. For the CANADIAN SPECTATOR.

BLACK.



WHITE.

White to play and mate in three moves.

### CHESS INTELLIGENCE.

To the Chess Editor CANADIAN SPECTATOR:

SIR,—A position has been submitted to me as occurring in a game in the Hamilton Chess Correspondence Tourney, where, after the eighth move of Black, who had lost a Queen for a Knight (through incaution in transmitting a move), the Conductor of the Tourney appears to have confirmed Black's claim that White should mate in fifty moves or the game be drawn. The Tourney, as I am informed, was held under the rules laid down in Staunton's Chess Praxis.

The "counting fifty moves" rule found in the Praxis published in 1860, and in the Theory and Practice of Staunton and Wormald published in 1876, contains a clause enabling either player who considers that his adversary can "force the game," to submit the case to the Umpire, who is to decide whether the rule shall apply.

Considering the galling blunder that he had committed, one cannot be so much surprised that Black should seek to avail himself of any technical escape, and if he were unaware of the history and meaning of this rule he may have appealed to the Umpire in good faith. To my mind, however, it is astounding that the Conductor should have admitted such a claim. The Commentary of Staunton upon the law is clear with respect to the origin and intention of the rule. It is true that such Commentary is not of equal force with the rule itself, however weighty the Stauntonian observations may be.

Putting aside the Commentary, the rule must be interpreted in connection with the context, from which it is evident that the words "force the game" do not refer simply to acquirement of a winning position. The rule applies to end-games, which the case before me certainly does not fall within. The construction of the rule to be true must be based on considerations of the old law, the previous mischief and the intended remedy, and due regard being had to these, no experienced chess-player could, in my opinion, fail to perceive that the case in question was *not* one for counting.

The law should also have been regarded with respect to the usage of chess-players. My library contains thousands of recorded games fought at home and abroad. My membership of the St. George's Chess Club dates back twenty years. I have watched games at the London and Westminster Chess Clubs, The Divan, Gattis, Pursells, and at resorts now closed, such as the Philidorian, in Rathbone Place, formerly the rendezvous of Campbell, Wormald, Brien, and the first chessists of the day. I have played with (or, rather, been played with by) such men as Anderssen, Blackburne, De Vere, G. Macdonnell, Boden, Steinitz, Harrwitz, Bird, Lowe, Zytogorski, Kling, Kolisch, Lindehn, Cochrane, Zukertort, &c. &c.—witnessed tournaments in the Metropolis and in the Provinces—and had a quarter of a century's experience in the Club of Norwich, of which I am President—but never have I met with, or heard of, any such a claim as that above—nor I believe has any British or foreign player of standing ever dreamt of making such a claim.

It were easy to show by reduction to absurdity the inapplicability of the rule and the ruin of all pleasure issuing from its misapprehension. It is contrary to principle also that a rule which involves a penalty upon success should be strictly construed. And the case I now proceed to quote seems to settle what Staunton's own decision would have been. The Book of the Chess Tournament of 1851 was published by Staunton. It contains a game between Messrs. Brien and Boden, in which the latter lost his Queen for a Knight at the 11th move. Staunton appends the following note:—"After this astounding oversight White, of course, surrendered." Fancy my dear old friend Boden claiming the application of the Counting Rule! No! No! No!!!

The rules of Chess were made for gentlemen, and not for professional prize fighters, and directed neither to the punishment nor delectation of tricksters, and least of all enacted to promote chicanery instead of chivalry. Stick not to the letter of such laws, but read them in their spirit. So interpret them as to be reasonable and beneficial, and not to stab the heart of our royal recreation, by the encouragement of mean dodges and sharp practice.

The Conductor of the Tourney has, for a player of intelligence and integrity, arrived, in my humble judgment, at the most extraordinary and deplorably ridiculous decision ever brought before the Chess World.

Pine Banks Tower, Thorpe, next Norwich, England, }  
29th November, 1880.

J. O. Howard Taylor.

Mr. Howard Taylor's letter seemed to place the whole of this stupid 50 move dismission in its most forcible light and we accordingly published it. The mass of evidence against the ruling of the Conductor of the Tourney and his referee, the Chess Editor of the *Globe*, is so overwhelming that nothing but the most perverse obstinacy could prevent them from being convinced of their error, and acknowledging it. The *Globe* thinks we were abusive; we only intended to heap ridicule on their absurdity. Argument there is none in the matter. The Conductor writes that if the whole world were opposed to him he would still hold to his decision. We can only wonder and lament at such perversity.