

(For the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.)

CHESS APOTHEOSIZED.

I.

Half anble Chess!—Thou mystic One
Whence arising, when born, no record shows;
Diller than exist when Parth's warm sun
Melted the glacial period snows!

II.

Remoter in the bygone time,
Then when tradition's tale began;
Or poet first commenced to rhyme,
Or pen historic wrote of man.

III.

Then hadst the wiles for human mind
And gave it off a happy hour,
And when for bliss the brain first pined,
The transport reached it by thy power.

IV.

The incarnated Vishnu played
With Siva, the Beneficent,
And Brahma, the Creator, made
Thy game the heart's supreme content.

V.

When culking Adam cried "I miss
The old sib from my shrunken side,"
He in his wrath forgot his bliss
And "Stale-Mate" called his blithless bride.

VI.

And Eve, perchance, with folding arms,
Pressed to his breast her welcome weight,
Linked to his bearded lips her charms,
And whispered "Dear old Smothered Mate."

VII.

Methueelah that rare old man,
It may be loved thy friendly strife,
And in thy pastime found the plan
To lengthen out his matchless life.

VIII.

The Hindoo, indolent, sang a
Whole lot of strophes to thy fame,
He knew thee as "Chaturanga,"
And deftly learned thy wondrous game.

IX.

The languid Persian, fond of ease,
Of Parnassus or of Sappho kind,
Dreams that in "Schachmatt" he sees
A solace for the human mind.

X.

Addressing thee, the turbaned Turks
As "Hecceba!" love to term thy game,
The circumcised Hebrew works
His tongue round "Schach" for thee the same.

XI.

The swarthy Moor, of stalwart frame,
And ceaseless predatory ken,
Sees in his "Schach" the only game
That suits freebooting gentlemen.

XII.

The thirsty Tenton, when besought,
To see what idol he holds dear,
Will grunt out "Schach,"—date him, meth Gott,
Then draws the grunt to larger tier.

XIII.

For world wide adaptation thou,
Through times the early forms efface,
Men's been in cycles past—as now,
The benefactor of our race.

XIV.

Alone thou art, and ever dost
All shades of friendship disclaim,
Thy royal nature could not lost
For partnership in deathless fame.

XV.

Yet some, with bold, pretentious aims,
Will ape the poor relations' style,
And to support their pseudo claims,
Adduce their nomenclatures vile.

XVI.

First Chess Om comes, a cad, well known,
To spring from out the mellow earth,
With him thy nature dare not own
A consanguinity by birth.

XVII.

Vain Chess Apeaks, that limpid thing
Colours his thirsty coast—may be
Thou wilt not own,—thou canst not bring
Thyself to favour watery ways.

XVIII.

And Chess Ible, who urges kin,—
Is but a new hyle at best,
Spurn him,—thy purer origin
Wants no cross, badge, or priestly vest.

XIX.

Then Chess Apple rings at thy door,
Pray keep it shut,—he nothing loath,—
His tread would desecrate thy floor,
He only is of wild plant growth.

XX.

And Chess, the Persian, low and mean,
Thrust from thy side, lest he defile,—
Thy faultless nature, shrinka I ween
From contact with a thing so vile.

XXI.

Then Chess Lip comes, with vermin air
And tempts thy pity with her moans,
Discard her presence,—let her share
Her consort's homestead under stones.

XXII.

See Chess Tree now thy steps ascend
A marine monster,—emulowen,
Chase him,—for he and all his friends
Turn human stomachs upside down.

The following are among the terms employed by some nationalities to designate the game of Chess.

* Chaturanga.—Four members of an army, viz: elephants, horses, chariots and foot soldiers.

† Schachmatt.—Name of a supposed inventor of the game.

‡ Urochess.—Famous robbers.

§ Schach.—Check.

|| Schach.—Lord, King or Prince.

¶ Schach.—Theft.

XXIII.

The cream-complexioned Chess El brings
Her form hyaline now to view
Disown her, for around her elings
The worst nightmare sleep ever knew.

XXIV.

Next Chess Terfield,—that false old beau,
Whose graces mask a villain heart,
Comes bowing in, oh, let him go!
He is of thee no counterpart.

XXV.

So pass into oblivion's night,
Each false and counterfeiting way;
Nothing is sure but what is right;
Pretence but ends in sad dismay.

XXVI.

But thou shalt be while time shall last,
Not to attempt nor disown prone,
Thy reën shall be where thought is cast,
With man's great intellect thy throne.

JOHN BARRY.

THAT NIGHT IN JUNE.

"What a charming day, grandmamma!" says Mr. Wilding, walking into the small morning-room in Penwyn road, South Kensington, and directing a genial glance at the faded remains of what once was beauty, reposing in an antiquated arm-chair. It is a charming day. Outside, the sun is beating heavily on road and house and such luckless beings as must walk abroad. The whole earth is bowing before its majesty, going humbly and imploring with faint gasps a breath of air. Inside, the blinds are all pulled down as though to exclude it, and in the grate a fire—an actual, roaring, maddening fire—is burning.

"Charming, is it?" says grandmamma, declining to see the geniality of her visitor. "Can nature produce a charming day in this age? I think it chilly." She is sitting with her knees well into the fire, and with the grim expression that usually greets her grandson's approach upon her withered lips.

"Why not try a foot-warmer and a fur cloak?" says Mr. Wilding, furtively wiping his brow. "You don't take half care of yourself; and really during the present inclemency—"

"May I ask what has brought you here to-day?" interrupts she, with an amount of ungraciousness difficult to combat. But he is accustomed to her incivility; and as Hecuba is nothing to him and he is less to Hecuba, he hardly takes it to heart.

"An overpowering desire to see you," he replies indolently, but with an admirable assumption of amiability.

"Pray spare your gibes when addressing me," says the old lady tartly. "Keep them for your unfortunate clients, if you have any. Something besides a dutiful consideration for my welfare has brought you here to-day. What is it?"

"What an intelligent person you are, grandmamma!" murmurs he languidly, with what is meant for enthusiasm, but ends in sarcasm. "Concealment with you is impossible. Another—but, of course, a very secondary—motive has brought me here this morning. The fact is, I have some stalls for the opera, and I thought perhaps Brenda might like to hear Patti again."

"And to hear her with you alone? Certainly not! Nothing of the sort," says Lady Molyneux with emphasis. "If that is your mission, George, it is to be unsuccessful. I shall never give my consent."

"I never dreamt you would," replies the prudent George, who had dreamt it fondly, nevertheless. "Josephine will come with us. You can scarcely object to trusting her with her married sister."

"Humph, Jose! I always say Jose is only half married, that man makes such a fool of her."

"And even if Jose were not in question, why should she not come with me alone?" pursues he, his foot on the fender, his eyes on the repellent old face, so lined and seared with age and querulous discontent. "Surely a cousin may count as a brother any day."

"May it! I don't think so. I can't say how society may regard it in these indolent days, but in my time, one relative was never mistaken for another. Besides, there are cousins and cousins."

"And which am I?" asks he, with so much careless indifference as stings her.

"You are your father's son," replies she bitterly. "No one of the blood ever came to good."

"I can't say you are over civil," returns he with a little insolent shrug; and then the door opens, and Brenda herself enters quickly, and with the unpremeditated manner of one who anticipates an empty room. Seeing George she starts perceptibly, smiles involuntarily and blushes beautifully.

She is a very pretty girl, of middle height, with large dark eyes shaded by lengthy lashes, a riant mouth, and the dearest little nose in the world.

"Ha! Brenda," says grandmamma, looking round—the blush and ready smile have faded by this time, and are a secret between her and her cousin—"come here!"

The girl, having shaken hands with George in a calm, orthodox fashion, goes up to Lady Molyneux's chair, and, standing before her, leans on the top of it. So standing, her face is hidden from grandmamma.

"I have some tickets for to-night. I want grandmamma to let you come and hear Patti," repairs Wilding coolly.

Miss Molyneux is preparing to go into ecstasies over this news, when she is stopped by a vigorous gesture of the hand and a frown from her

cousin. Changing her role on the spot, she says indifferently:

"I have seen Patti so often. It is good of you, George, to think of me; but really—"

"Eh!" says grandmamma, making a praise-worthy but utterly hopeless effort to turn her neck so as to see the flower-like face bending over her chair. "What is it you say? Not care? I beg, Brenda, you will not try to copy the *blase* airs that distinguish, and render obnoxious the youth of to-day. I think you ought to go. The tickets are bought, and I object to extravagance. Certainly you should go, if it were not for Disney. Is it that you think he would object?" anxiously.

"I was not thinking of Lord Disney," says the girl proudly.

Wilding is staring very hard at her, and she lowers her eyes, and flushes hotly—she scarcely knows why. Perhaps she fears he may see the repugnance and detestation, and deep grief that disfigure the beauty of her face.

"Even if Brenda is to marry Lord Disney," says Wilding calmly, carefully particular about giving him his formal title, "I do not see—"

"If," interrupts the old dame fiercely; "if indeed!"

"Dost thou answer me with 'ifs'?" says Wilding in a low tone to his cousin, who returns his glance with a faint, a very faint smile.

"Of course she will marry him," goes on grandmamma shrilly. "What! throw even a doubt upon an engagement that has lasted since Brenda was fifteen! an engagement so admirable, so suitable, so splendid with regard to settlements! It is like you, George, to disregard its importance. A girl without a penny; like father, like son; reckless—reckless!"

"Do you think he will break this suitable engagement if Brenda goes to the opera with her sister?" asks Wilding in an impassable tone.

"I don't know, I'm sure, what he may think of it," says grandmamma perplexed. "You see Disney in many ways is—eccentric."

"He would be, you know, at his age," says Wilding slowly.

"What do you mean, George?"

"I mean eccentricity generally accompanies old age," says Wilding obstinately.

"He is not old. Certainly not old. He is just in his prime."

"So difficult to define that word 'prime,'" murmurs he provokingly. "But of course I erred. He can't be old. He is even younger than you, grandmamma!"

"Perhaps, after all, I may as well see Patti again before the season closes," put in Brenda lightly. "As you seem to advise my going, grandmamma, I shall accept George's offer."

"Well, be sure you take my latch-key; I can't have my servants kept up all night," says Lady Molyneux, determined to sustain her up to an ability to its dreary end. "Half-past ten is my hour. And as Jose will be with you, you can let yourself in and go to bed, for one night, without assistance. Core hates late hours." As Core, her ladyship's maid, is virtually mistress of the house, tyrannizing even over the tyrant grandmamma, every one sees the sense of this remark.

"I shan't forget, dear," says Brenda, straightening Lady Molyneux's cap, which has gone somewhat awry during the heat of argument.

"Then I suppose the matter has arranged itself," says Wilding quietly. "Good by, grandmamma. I shall see you to-night, Brenda," holding out his hand. She gives him hers, and raises, to his, eyes luminous and glad. She does not care to conceal from him the satisfaction that warms her heart as she dwells upon the pleasure that lies before her. Perhaps she hardly knows how dangerously sweet that pleasure is. Is it indeed Patti, or George Wilding's voice, she likes best to hear? She has promised to marry Disney, and she will marry him; of course that is quite settled. Nothing can alter that; but just now—now—for a little while out of all her life, why not be happy?

And Jose will be with her. Dear Jose! Nothing can be sweeter than Jose! Once or twice before she has gone to the opera with her and George, and she has always been so engrossed with the music and so deaf to all other sounds, and so absolutely determined not to enter into conversation of any sort, with any one, that Brenda and George might as well have been alone.

"Yes, to-night," she says softly, and smiles at him again, and sends him away outwardly calm; but with a heart that curses fate and grandmamma, and, above all, Lord Disney.

At the appointed hour he calls for her, and at his command she descends the stairs beneath the gaslight, clad in her prettiest gown, with a soft blue cashmere cloak around her, and on her head the daintiest of swansdown hoods, from which her eyes look out, dark and misty and loving. Her hair is roaming at its own sweet will across her low, broad forehead, her colour is somewhat heightened, altogether she looks distractingly pretty as she steps into the night brougham, and they drive away to Cromwell road to take up Jose.

Alas! Jose is not to be taken up! (the expression of sorrow is all my own); upon the stairs, with a huge, white fleecy shawl twisted around her unhappy head, she stands, "like Niobe, all tears."

"It is toothache," she explains in muffled tones. That fiend amongst pains has laid hold of her, and having her safely in his clutches, refuses to release her without a heavy fine. Fred

—her husband—has gone for a dentist to extract this fine.

"And of course it is dreadful, darling, really quite too dreadful, but you see I can't go; so George must have sole charge of you to-night."

Grandmamma will be so angry," says Brenda, nervously.

"Why need she know? Grandmamma is an old bore," says Jose, with heartfelt meaning. She is very young, and is a person of undeniable spirit; and, as a fact, regards grandmamma with irreverence and Lord Disney with disgust and openest disdain. "She will never find it out," she goes on as cheerfully as the fiend in possession will permit her. "If I had listened to all her crotchets and world-worn theories, a year ago, I shouldn't be married to Fred now. Oh! dear, oh! dear, will he never come! This pain is maddening. There, go away, you two; and take great care of her, George, and bring her home directly, you know; and I shall tell Fred to suppress all about the dentist to-morrow."

"It sounds very deceitful, doesn't it?" says poor Brenda.

"It is nothing when you are used to it," replies the married sister.

"And I am sure to be found out; I always am," says Brenda.

"Well, it is all grandmamma's own fault. On her head be it," says Jose, who seems to enjoy the situation far more than the other two. Never be a bugbear, Brenda; you see what awful mischief accrues from making one's self a bogey. Oh, I shall be out of my mind if this hateful pain continues much longer. Go away, do. And come and see me to-morrow and tell me all about it."

The opera is charming, and Patti excels herself; but time flies and bright things fade, and soon the curtain drops and Spanish castles fall; and Brenda, with a sigh, places her hand upon her cousin's arm, and soon they have made their way through the fashionable throng and are speeding homeward through the deserted streets.

As they arrive at No. 7 some clock in the distance chimes twelve. They run up the steps, and Brenda puts her hand in her pocket to draw out the latch-key.

"Be sure you don't commit yourself about Jose's detection," says Wilding; and then he stops short, struck by the change in her face.

"George, did I give you the key?" she asks in a frightened tone.

"No. It was on the sideboard when we came out. I told you to remember it. Have you not got it?"

"I have not. I never brought it at all. I must have given it to you," desperately.

"I am sure you did not."

"Nonsense! try. Try your pockets. Try every pocket you have," says Brenda, miserably.

He does try every pocket, one after the other, but in vain, no key is rays itself anywhere.

"Well, never mind," says George, "we must only put a good face on the matter, and ring up the servants."

"Ring! You might ring until morning! You might ring until you were black in the face!" exclaims Brenda with the impudence of despair, "and nobody could hear you. Why, they all sleep at the very top of the house, beyond all hearing; and grandmamma never will get a bell put to their rooms. What is to be done?"

"Come to Jose!"

"Jose has no servants' bell either, and they all go to bed early," replied Miss Molyneux on the verge of tears.

"Good gracious," says Mr. Wilding at last, thoroughly roused to a sense of the awfulness of the situation, "what on earth are we to do?"

It is a dark and gloomy night. The "Chaste Diana" has sailed and gone to bed; the stars are nowhere. Not a sound disturbs the silence that envelops the quiet road, except an occasional cough from Fennmore, the coachman, who is waiting with the brougham to convey Wilding home, and who sits upon the box the very model of propriety, and never so much as glances in their direction. Perhaps he is wrapt in fond dreams of days gone by when he and Mrs. Fennmore were "acourting," and has a secret sympathy for the two on the door-step.

A huge black cat, hideous as a gnom, springs from some dark corner and with a weird yell rushes across the road and disappears down some area at the opposite side.

"This all comes of doing what I knew was wrong," says Brenda presently, finding her companion silent. "I wish," ungratefully, "you had never asked me to go to that horrible opera."

"I thought she sang very well," alluding to Patti. "And I certainly couldn't be expected to know how things were going to turn out," says Mr. Wilding, somewhat aggrieved.

"You shouldn't have listened to Jose; you should have brought me straight home. It is all your fault," says Brenda, most unfairly.

"Well, it wasn't I forgot the latch key, anyhow," says Mr. Wilding, unwisely incensed.

At this unlucky speech his cousin, seeing at last a good opening, gives way to bitter reproach.

"Yes, that is just like you," she says, large tears gathering in her lovely eyes. "To upbraid me now, when I am most unhappy. If you were in trouble, George, I would not treat you so."

"Don't speak to me like that," says Wilding, miserably. "I am far more upset about this unfortunate matter than you can be."