

"Yes, I have brought it, and of course, master, you'll be agreeable to your promise?" and from underneath the folds of the plaid she brought out the skull.

Old Donald was somewhat taken aback by the sudden sight of it. He had the superstitious fears of his neighbors, and he shrank from looking upon that grinning relic, much less from contaminating himself by laying so much as a finger upon it. "Take it away!" he cried; "take the horrid thing away! I was never too fond of dead men's bones."

She folded it again in the end of her plaid, and as they passed into the house, she dropped wearily upon a seat, spent out by her long night of fatigue and excitement. Old Donald had a passing gleam of kindness and sympathy for the maiden, and said to her: "This is Hogmanay morning, my lass, and you're the first foot in the house. It's a pity that you brought nothing better with you than that—that thing that I went you to Suddell for. But it was all my doing your going there, and you've brought what I sent you for: so I ought to take your New Year's gift and be pleased with it. And you must have been wearied with the getting of it, and you must be almost worn out, my lass, with your long walk; and you'd better taste a drop of whisky." Old Donald Macbane must have been in a charitable mood thus to offer a sup of his precious whisky to his servant girl; but Mary refused it, and going to the peat fire, over which a large iron pot, suspended by a great chain, was kept in a state of perpetual simmer, she returned, as it were, to the ordinary duties of her daily life, and made herself a bowl of porridge, with which, and a bannock cake, she refreshed herself after her late fatigue. The intelligent Louth looked on with the greatest delight, and kept her company during this New Year's morning breakfast. Then, when she had finished her meal, and changed her wet clothes for dry ones, she took a couple of hours' sound sleep, and then awoke refreshed, and went about her ordinary household duties.

Meanwhile old Donald had been out of doors seeing to his own work with the beasts, and about the farm buildings, and when he returned to the house his habitual cautiousness seemed to have returned with him. "You had the skull, Mary?" he asked.

"Yes, master. I have put it aside, in a safe place; but I can bring it to you."

"I don't want to see it again. But you're sure it's the same skull, Mary? I'm thinking that it might be one from elsewhere."

"It's the one that you bid me fetch you, Mr. Macbane, and it's from the Macdonald's tomb in the old church at Saddell. I took it from under the arch, and I carried it all the way here." And then she told him the circumstances under which she had obtained it, and the mysterious sounds that she had heard in the old church.

"It's a strange tale," said old Donald. "I'm doubting the facts, Mary."

"If ye'll go there," she replied, "ye'll find all the facts, Mr. Macbane."

Then he said, "I'll take ye at your word, Mary: it's broad daylight now, and the storm is blown over. I thought that Jock MacPhail—this was his farming man—might have been keeping Hogmanay; but he's come to his work, and I'll go away to Saddell, and he shall go with me, for an eyewitness of the facts. And we'll prove your words, Mary Morrison; and we shall see if these are your tracks in the snow right up to the old church; and I'm thinking, my lass, that as likely as not we shall find the true murderer's skull on the great Macdonald's tomb."

"I took the skull from there, Mr. Macbane; and it's all true that I've told you."

"Ay, ay, we'll see, Mary; we'll see!" said old Donald. And soon after she saw him in company with Jock MacPhail, plodding up the hillside, and taking that snowy path to Saddell along which she had so bravely labored during the long hours of the preceding night.

It was afternoon on that New Year's Day before old Donald returned to Glenbarr, for, vigorous though he was, yet the elasticity of youth was past, and he had been compelled to rest several times by the way. Not only did his man Jock MacPhail return with him, but his son Donald also, greatly to Mary's surprise. Her lover soon explained it to her: "I met them, quite accidentally, between here and Saddell. I learnt what they were after, and I went with them to see fair play."

"But, Donald," she said, "you are back from the fair a day earlier than you expected?"

"Yes," he replied, "I sold the beasts, and I did all the business that I wanted. And besides—I had a dream, a bad dream; it was about you, Mary. I thought you had gone down into some dreadful charnel-house, though you were not dead; and I was disturbed that greatly that nothing would pacify me but to hasten back to Glenbarr, and know that you were safe, and that my evil dream was an empty vision."

And then, between those soft nothings that lovers delight in after an absence however brief—and this parting had, for them, been a long one—she told him how very near his dream had been of coming true; and that she, during the night, had been really among the graves and relics of the dead.

Yes, he knew all about it. That casual meeting with his father, so unexpectedly, had led to the needed explanation, and he had retraced his steps with them to the old ruined monastery at Saddell, to be a witness, on his true love's behalf, to what they saw there. "And," continued young Donald, "when we got to the old church, and found the door shut, just as you

had left it, and burst it open, what do you suppose we found there?"

"Not ghosts?" she faltered.

"Well," replied young Donald dubiously, "certainly they may have been called something else than ghosts, for they had hoofs, and not a few of them had horns. Yet, they were not uncanny creatures for all that. They were deer, a number of wild deer, who had evidently pushed their way into the old church to seek shelter from the snow-storm, and then, when they had well frightened you, my poor darling, with their moanings and rushings about, they tried to make their escape; but you effectually stopped them by slamming the door in their faces. There, at any rate, we three found them, and very pleased they seemed when we let them out."

"And did you find that skull on the old tomb?"

"No! we found your footmarks there, and the place where your plaid had swept the snow from the slab; but the skull was gone."

"And here it is," she said triumphantly, as she produced it from the place where she had put it for safety. It's a strange thing for a love-token, Donald, or for a New Year's gift, but I went through all I did to gain it for your dear sake."

Then her lover took her in his arms. "And I have brought a Hogmanay gift for you, dear," and from a dainty little box he produced a cairngorm brooch, with which she might fasten her shawl or plaid when she went to kirk on the Sabbath; and from a still smaller box—which, in her eyes at least, looked far daintier than the other—he showed her a plain gold ring, which just fitted the third finger of her left hand, "for," as he said, "there's no knowing what may happen, and how soon we may want to use it." Then he vowed to her, amid many kisses, that he needed not such a cruel test to have been put upon her affection by his father's stern will; and that, come what might, he would marry her as soon as their bands or spurrings could be put up, without waiting for May-day.

And he did so, she being quite agreeable to the same, and no longer bound to Mr. Macbane as his servant; for the stern old father, taking a lesson by the events of that well-remembered night on the last day of the old year, and thankful for his escape from any evil that, through him, might have befallen Mary Morrison, gave his consent to her marriage with his son, and, with the promise that they would still continue to live with him at the farm, divided his fortune with them. On the wedding-day, Janet Baillie, who was her bride-maid, told Mary, in strict confidence, that it would not be many months before she followed her example, for that she had promised to be married to the young miller at Muxdale who had been so long paying her attention. And, to add to the events of the happy day, the Laird of Saddell, who had been told of that midnight visit of Mary Morrison to the old church, slaughtered a fine buck that had played his part on that occasion, and sent him over as a gift to Mary, in order that a haunch of venison might grace the wedding-feast of the Brave Girl of Glenbarr.

TRICKS OF PICTURE DEALERS.

Many pictures have been made to acquire the appearance of age, even to a complete deception; and I remember, at the commencement of my collecting, having purchased some. They were offered at a price which induced me to buy; and as the very canvas on which they were lined, to prevent their falling into decay, appeared old, what-yeer uncertainty I might have been in as to their originality, I had none as to their antiquity. I sent for a picture dealer, who made use of spirits of wine; and in a moment that which he worked upon was totally ruined, which made the dealer say those pictures had been in the Westminster oven. He then informed me that there was in Westminster a manufactory, where several persons were employed making copies, which, after being soiled with dust and varnish, were thrown into an oven built on purpose, and moderately warmed; when, in the course of an hour or two, they became cracked, and acquired the appearance of age, and a certain solidity the pictures I had bought did not possess, which made me conclude that they had not been baked long enough. I will venture to assert, that many of our superficial connoisseurs have been caught as I have been with this snare, and have preferred to the best modern productions those of the Westminster oven."

HOW HE SENTENCED HIM.

A good story is told of Judge Kent, the well-known jurist. A man was indicted for burglary, and the evidence on the trial showed that his burglary consisted in cutting a hole through a tent in which several persons were sleeping, and then projecting his head and arm through the hole, and abstracting various articles of value. It was claimed by his counsel that, inasmuch as he never actually entered into the tent with his whole body, he had not committed the offence charged, and must, therefore, be discharged. Judge Kent, in reply to this plea, told the jury that, if they were not satisfied that the whole man was involved in the crime, they might bring in a verdict of guilty against so much of him as was thus involved. The jury, after a brief consultation, found the right arm, the right shoulder, and the head of the prisoner guilty of the offence of burglary. He sentenced the right arm, the right shoulder, and the head

to imprisonment with hard labour in the State prison for two years, remarking that as to the rest of the man's body he might do with it what he pleased.

OUR CHESS COLUMN.

The chessplayers of Canada must have been startled lately by seeing the announcement in one or two of the English papers of the death of Paul Morphy. It was well known that for a long time his mind had been affected, and that the game in which he excelled had become so distasteful to him that he refused to speak of it, but hopes were entertained by those around him that ultimately the cloud would be removed, and that he would again astonish the world with his skill as he had done in days gone by. The news of his death, however, seemed to be the ending of a sorrowful tale. We are now happy to be assured by those who are the best able to give us information, that he is still living among his friends, and that all that kindness can do, is being done, in order to restore him to his former strength of mind and body.

We see from the Glasgow Herald that Mr. Blackburne has been on a visit to the Glasgow Chess Club, the members of which, no doubt, have done their best to win games from the great English player. Of six simultaneous games which he contested with an equal number of the players, he succeeded in winning five, but he lost the one he played with Mr. Crum. Mr. Blackburne, during his stay in Glasgow, gave an exhibition of his wonderful powers as a blindfold player. The public were admitted to this exhibition on the payment of an entrance fee of a quarter of a dollar. As we have remarked on a former occasion, it is a good sign of interest in chess when people will willingly pay to see what a first-rate player can do.

The annual meeting of the Canadian Chess Association, which takes place on Tuesday, December 20th, will, we feel certain, be interesting to our readers, and we shall not fail to give full particulars in our Column.

The games of the annual tourney will be played during the whole time of the Congress, and as representatives are to be sent from some of the best clubs in Canada, some lively contests may be expected.

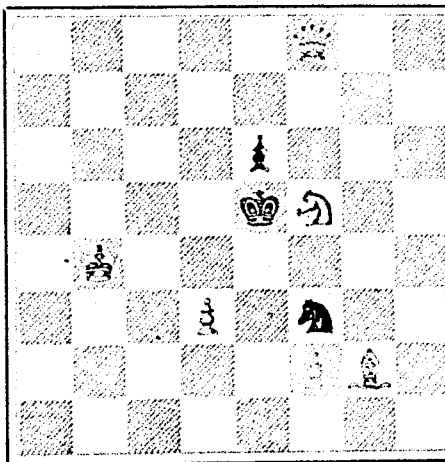
In the second match between Mr. Steinitz and Mr. Martinez the former player was again victorious. The match was one of seven games, and the score at the close was Steinitz 3; Martinez 1; and 3 draws.

Mr. Steinitz, besides playing a number of games with others, has played two with Mr. J. D. Thompson, who had the first move in both games. Evans gambits; it is needless to say what the result was. The Philadelphia Times states that the champion has perfected a four weeks' engagement with the New Orleans Club, with \$500 for his expenses. He is also negotiating with other societies, and will probably make a general tour throughout the United States. Two hundred dollars will meet all his expenses in visiting St. Louis. If eight liberal patrons of the game in the city will subscribe \$25 each, the greatest chess-master of the world will spend two weeks among us. Those willing to subscribe can make known their willingness by addressing a note to the chess editor of this paper. Every player here would like to play a game with him, if for no other reason than to say, "I played one game with the champion chess-player of the world—but lost it."

PROBLEM No. 412.

By J. P. Taylor.

BLACK.



WHITE.

White to play and mate in two moves.

SOLUTION OF PROBLEM No. 411.

White. Black.

1 Kt to K B 3. 1 Arb.

2 Mates acc.

GAME 540th.

(From Land and Water.)

BLINDFOLD CHESS.

The following very pretty blindfold game was one of the eight played by Mr. Blackburne at Derby, on October 20th.

(Sicilian Defence.)

WHITE. BLACK.

(Mr. Blackburne.)

(Mr. J. S. West.)

1 P to K 4
2 Kt to K B 3
3 P to Q 4
4 Kt takes P
5 P to Q B 3
6 B to Q 3
7 Castles
8 Q to K 2
9 P to K 5
10 P to K 6
11 B to K 5 ch

1 P to Q B 4
2 P to K Kt 3 (c)
3 P takes P
4 B to K 1 2
5 Kt to K B 3
6 P to Q Kt 3 (c)
7 B to K 2
8 P to Q 4 (c)
9 K Kt to Q 2
10 Kt to K 1
11 K to B sq

12 P to K B 4
13 P to B 5
14 B to B 4
15 P to Q Kt 3
16 Q B takes Kt (c)
17 P takes P dis ch
18 Q to B 3
19 P to K 7
20 Q to R 5 (f)
21 R to B 7
22 Kt to B 5

12 Kt to Q B 5
13 P to B 3
14 Kt to R 3 (d)
15 Kt to K 4
16 P takes B
17 K to Kt sq
18 B to B 3
19 P to R 3
20 B takes P
21 R to R 2
22 Kt to B 2

White mates in four moves (g.)

NOTES.

- (a) Formerly a favorite defence of Mr. W. N. Potter. After being introduced by him, it was taken up by Mr. Blackburne, who adopted it with success at the Vienna International Tournament of 1873. Its demerit is that Black's K B 3 sq becomes a weak spot.
(b) Not advisable until the necessity of developing the Q B in this way becomes evident. Casting, notwithstanding elements of embarrassment, is his best, as it reserves the possibility of beneficently pushing on the centre Pawns two squares in certain cases.
(c) This introduces further discomfort. 3 P to K 4 is a good as anything, notwithstanding its dangers.
(d) Early conceived, Kt to Q 3 is the best resource.
(e) His quarry is the King, and minor victims are left alone.
(f) Very deep and also very sound.
(g) This mate, foreseen by Mr. Blackburne among other things, when declining lesser gains, commences with R takes B ch.

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Wednesday, February 7th, 1883,

at 2.30 o'clock, p.m., for the election of Directors and transaction of other business.

By order of the Board,

F. B. DAKIN, Secretary.

Montreal, Dec. 20th, 1882.

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