

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.

COMIC OPERA AT THE ACADEMY.

This season has been replete with operatic performances, French and English, Serious and Comic, we have also had the novel experience of listening to creditable performances given, if not altogether by local talent, by companies containing several local soloists, and a purely local chorus and orchestra. For the last few evenings the attraction has been the latest work of those renowned caterers for public entertainment, Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan. We have before us a review of the work by the London *Musical Times*, the New York *Tribune* and other journals, which, strange to say agree in almost every particular. They aver that the work is not so taking as "Pinafore," but is more meritorious; well, with the "Policeman's Chorus" and the "Patter Song" still ringing in our ears, we still hold to "Pinafore" as the master piece of both Dr. Sullivan and his witty collaborateur; and although the latter has even out-Heroded Herod by the absurdities introduced in "The Pirates," we feel confident that ere long it will sink into oblivion, while the sister opera will be revived again and again for years to come.

So much for the work; we will now speak of its performance. The scenery, dresses and general stage setting was excellent. The acting was for the most part above the average the principals being worthy of the highest praise. Musically, however, the company might be improved upon; the Prima Donna (Miss Conson) had neither voice nor method adequate to the performance of the part, Miss Laura Joyce (contralto) made such an abrupt change from the lower to the upper register that her otherwise excellent impersonation of the character of Ruth failed to make the impression it would have done, the Tenor (Mr. St. Armand) was fair, but seemed to suffer from a cold or huskiness of some kind, and as for the rest, to class them as vocalists would be to use the word in its *most liberal* sense. The chorus was numerically strong and the dressing and acting of the members was uncommonly good; however, as they sang out of tune almost invariably the effect of the performance was, to those possessing a tolerably musical ear, completely lost. Many of the soloists sang out of tune, and it was painful to hear the pianist (who acted as conductor) thump the notes in octaves in order to keep the singers fairly in tune. The playing of the gentlemen who composed the orchestra was beyond criticism, but after the large orchestra of the Operatic Society (which by the bye few people went to hear) the small band of 10 performers seemed miserably thin and ineffective. Musically we think our local performers were far ahead of those comprising Mr. Carte's Company, and as the affair was advertised as a "Musical Event" we cannot help acknowledging the superiority of our own vocalists, particularly, in the choral and orchestral departments, and wondering why our citizens will neglect first-class musical performances by local artists, while they rush in crowds to hear second rate foreign companies.

We sincerely hope that the result of a trial which recently took place in Paris will not embolden the lesses of the Opera-houses in this country to imagine that they are more at liberty than ever to disregard their pledges to the public. M. de Grandsagne, the gentleman who paid the expenses of the journey of a number of artists engaged in an operatic establishment with which he was connected, to witness the performance of "La Favorita" at the Grand-Opera, as an artistic lesson, felt himself so aggrieved at the fact of an air and *divertissement* being cut that he entered an action against the Director of the Opera-house, not only claiming damages for this omission, but urging his right to a hearing of the work as the composer wrote it, under an additional indemnity of 1,600 francs. The verdict was given against him; yet we cannot but think that M. de Grandsagne was an ill-used man. Of course it is not likely that any benevolent and artistic individual, who has an interest in the management of a provincial opera-house, will send the entire company of vocalists to one of our London lyrical establishments at his own cost, just to see how an Opera ought to be performed; but really a person who engages stalls, and takes perhaps the whole of his family at great expense to hear a certain work in its entirety, has a right to some sort of compensation when he finds that a large portion of it is cut out, or that interpolations are introduced which utterly destroy the intention of the composer. Again, when subscriptions are gained on the strength of certain promises in the prospectus of the season, and these promises are unfulfilled without any explanation being given, we can scarcely believe that persons should be expected to bear the disappointment without protest. M. de Grandsagne is a bold man, and deserves the thanks of the opera-going public. Although unsuccessful, he may have done good by mooted the question; and who knows but that some day he may be quoted as a martyr in the cause of operatic reform?

THE QUEEN'S SHILLING.

The many conjectures concerning this much-talked-of work will be set at rest on Tuesday evening, when it will be produced in the Academy of Music on a grand scale. It is certainly something unprecedented in Montreal to hear an Opera composed by a resident musician; but, apart from all questions of authorship, we must congratulate Dr. MacLagan on the fact that he has organized a chorus and orchestra which (numerically at least) is such as cannot be found attached to any travelling company. In addition to the large chorus and orchestra, the band of the Sixth Fusiliers will participate in some of the heavier marches and choruses, and to aid in the military attacks and tableaux, several members of the Scots Fusiliers, Victoria Rifles, and other corps have volunteered to take part.

Miss Laura Schirmer (the Prima Donna) is spoken of very highly by both the Boston and New York press, while Mr. Fritsch is well known to us as one of the finest Tenors in America. So far as we can judge from the rehearsals, the performance is likely to be a success, as besides the intrinsic merit of the composition, many people will be drawn by curiosity to see what it is like. The libretto reads well, and is the subject of much discussion by musical people.

The Cincinnati Festival was a great success both musically and financially. A movement is on foot to organize a permanent orchestra, with Mr. Thomas as conductor, one gentleman having subscribed \$8,000 for that purpose.

Chess.

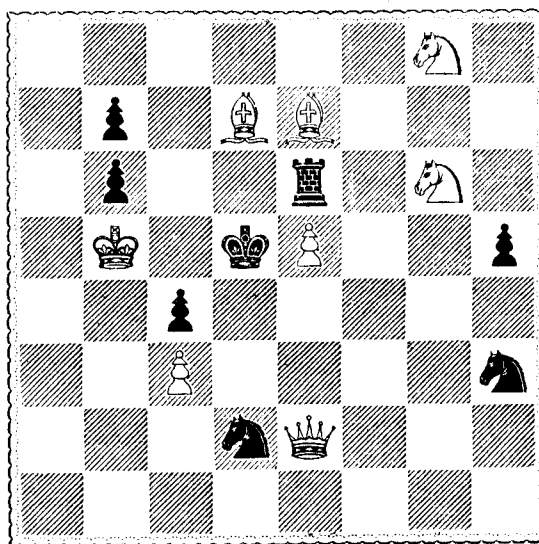
All Correspondence intended for this Column, and Exchanges, should be directed to the CHESS EDITOR, CANADIAN SPECTATOR Office, 162 St. James Street, Montreal.

Montreal, May 29th, 1880.

PROBLEM NO. LXXIII.

By Victor Abraham, of Cincinnati. From the *New York Era*.

BLACK.



WHITE.

White to play and mate in two moves.

SOLUTION TO PROBLEM NO. LXX. By Mr. W. A. Shinkman.

| | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|
| <i>White.</i> | <i>Black.</i> | <i>White.</i> | <i>Black.</i> | <i>White.</i> |
| Kt at Kt sq to B 3 | P queens (ch) | 2 Kt to Q sq (dis ch) | Any | Mates. |
| | If P takes Kt | 2 Kt to R 4 | Any | Mates. |

Correct solution received from:—C.H.W.

GAME NO. LXVIII.

MR. SHAW'S CORRESPONDENCE TOURNEY

Played between Mr. M. J. Murphy, of Quebec, and Mr. H. N. Kittson, of Hamilton, Ont

QUEEN'S GAMBIT.

| WHITE. | BLACK. | WHITE. | BLACK. | WHITE. | BLACK. |
|-------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Mr. Murphy. | Mr. Kittson. | 10 P takes B | K to R sq | 20 Q takes P | Kt takes B |
| 1 P to Q 4 | P to Q 4 | 11 Castles | Q to K sq | 21 R takes Kt | Kt to K 4 |
| 2 P to Q 4 | P takes P | 12 Q to K 2 | Q to Kt 3 | 22 Q takes P | R to K B sq |
| 3 P to K 4 (a) | P to K 4 (b) | 13 P to B 3 | K P takes B P | 23 R takes P | B takes R |
| 4 P to Q 5 | P to K B 4 (c) | 14 R takes P | Kt to Q B 3 | 24 Q takes B | Kt to Q 6 |
| 5 B takes P | Kt to K B 3 | 15 B to K 3 | P to K 5 | 25 Q to Kt 3 | Kt to B 7 (ch) |
| 6 Kt to K B 3 | P to Q 3 | 16 R to K 3 (e) | Kt to K Kt 5 | 26 K to Kt sq | Q takes P |
| 7 Kt to Q B 3 (d) | P takes P | 17 R to R 4 | R to B 6 (f) | 27 R to K B sq | Kt to R 6 (ch) |
| 8 Kt to K Kt 5 | Castles. | 18 P takes R | Kt takes B (ch) | 28 Q takes Kt (g) and the game was | drawn by consent. |
| 9 Kt to K 6 | B takes Kt | 19 K to R sq | P takes P | | |

NOTES.—(a) The *Handbuch* says Q Kt to B 3; or P to K 3 is a little stronger.
 (b) The best play, according to the same authority.
 (c) What is the advantage of surrendering this Pawn? The regular continuation is 7 P takes P—B takes P; 8 Castles—Castles; 9 Q Kt to B 3—Q Kt to Q 2, and the game is dismissed as even.
 (d) An interesting combination here commences. There is a refreshing vigour about the following moves which may recall the saying of the French General on witnessing the Balaclava charge: "*C'est tres magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la guerre.*"
 (e) See last move.
 (f) We do not see why White should agree to a draw. His Kt and two Pawns on the Q's side should ultimately, we think, prove victorious.

CHESS INTELLIGENCE.

ROSENTHAL vs. ZUKERTORT.—Latest score: Zukertort, 1; drawn 4. By far the most interesting event that has taken place almost since the days of Staunton and St. Amant is the match now being played by these two representatives of French and British Chess respectively. The match has resulted from the plucky determination of Mr. Rosenthal to assail the position of Dr. Zukertort, who has, by his successes at various tournaments, come to be looked upon as the European champion. Mr. Rosenthal's position in the Paris Congress, and his present challenge to the winner of the Grand Tourney on that occasion, not only makes the present encounter a match of skill between the two players, but directly aims at the principles of all tourney play. It has long been thought that a championship position ought to be obtained by the hard work of set matches, and not by a general scramble with all the chances and vicissitudes of a couple of games with each opponent as occurs in tournaments. And this is no doubt correct. This was exemplified in both the Paris and N. Y. Congresses. There is no Champion Challenge Cup in the chess arena, and we would like to see the idea carried out by a union of the Paris, London, Leghorn, Berlin, Copenhagen and New York chess circles, and a really valuable and handsome prize obtained which should be held by the winner against all-comers in single-handed matches, similar to the one now being played, for, let us say, the space of ten years, after which it might become the property of the holder. A code of laws, rules and restrictions to govern the matches and to regulate the holding could be easily drawn up. It will be said that this involves the question of amateur and professional chess, which we are not at present inclined to discuss, but our present opinion is that amateurs owe a great deal to the professionals, and that much of the real interest in chess, all the new modes of attack or defence, and the relative chess strength of any two nations, all centre round the professionals. It should be as easy to designate an amateur or a professional in chess as in boating, cricket, &c.

THE CHESS PLAYERS' CHRONICLE.—We have received the May issue of this excellent periodical, which is second to none of the many which now minister to the wants of the chess community. The number opens with an instalment of "Useful End Games," which are really useful. If we said a short time since that all books and periodicals cultivated the "Openings" to the exclusion of "Endings," Chess Editors have hastened to remove the soft impeachment. We wish to draw especial attention to the excellence of the Game and Problem departments. The former are admirably selected and annotated, and the latter leaves nothing to be desired. Gentlemen who may not have received the index for the last volume can obtain it by addressing W. W. Morgan, 23 Great Queen street, W. C. London. Rev. Mr. Ranken informs us that he had duly sent it to the publishers, but that it was accidentally omitted by them in making up the February number.

ITEMS.—The Canadian Correspondence Tourney, under the direction of Mr. J. W. Shaw, is concluded. Particulars next week.—Montreal vs. Quebec.—The game between Dr. Howe and Dr. Bradley was resumed last Wednesday evening, by telegraph, and after refusing a draw, Quebec had to submit to a defeat. Score: Quebec, 4; Montreal, 3; drawn, 5.