

to be derived from the study of history are fully appreciated by all, and it is anything but creditable to McGill College that while providing efficient teaching in most other branches of learning, it yet passes over this without any compunction. This state of affairs has existed for some time, and the college authorities seem to be labouring under the impression that there is an adequate amount of history taught, because hitherto there have been no very loud complaints. Perhaps they think that in providing a "Professor of History" they have done all that is necessary. In these days, when the searching eye of public criticism rests upon all matters connected with the general weal, it is a daring thing for a college or any other institution to disregard the voice which tells them of a defect in the system. I have ventured to intrude upon your space with the hope that this matter will be remedied, and both in the interests of the college and its students what cannot be regarded as other than a fatal error in its course of study may be rectified.

Yours, &c.,

C.

CANADIAN CHARACTERISTICS.

We're "a little too late" in so many things—
The Americans call it "slow";
We're reminded too often that "riches have wings,"
As "over the line" they go!

We shake our heads doubtfully; hesitate long
Over new projects and plans,
Forgetting that *youth* is the time to grow strong;
That *age* will prohibit the banns.

Why should we grow rusty? refuse to progress,
With such *pushing* neighbours as ours,
Who boast of their wisdom, superior *finesse*,
And speak with contempt of the *powers*

Which govern, direct us, and hold us in check,
A slow, ambling joy to maintain,
Which is warranted safe for both limbs and neck
If a firm hold is kept on the *rein*?

For our *rulers* think it unsafe to adopt
New measures and policies *bold*
Which, pungent and fresh from sane *thinkers'* brain crompt,
So, lay them aside to grow cold!

If we nothing venture, we shall nothing have,
A proverb we *should* bear in mind,
For we may have occasion to feel very grave,
And wonder why we were so blind!

Why should we do as our ancestors did,
If there is a "more excellent way"?
And why should its light "'neath a bushel be hid,"
If on us has dawned a new day?

Grave questions are these; we should ponder them well,—
Resolved to win honour and fame;
Be bold, independent; make the strokes *tell*,
And make for our country a name!

Then "God save the Queen" we can cry,
And say with an honest pride:
"We have done what we could as the years roll'd by;
Our influence is felt far and wide."

And our Sovereign the Queen need not be ashamed
Of her subjects over the sea;
If we've "fought a good fight," and the victory gain'd,
To our God will the glory be.

Montreal, October 29, 1880.

H. R.

We have received from Dawson Bros. "Bricks Without Straw," a new work written by Judge Tourgee, the author of "A Fool's Errand." This new work describes accurately Southern life, and gives a realistic picture of the coloured people. It also strives, and in a great measure successfully, to explain the feelings and thoughts of educated Southern people—striving also to increase the friendship which ought to, if it does not, exist between the North and South. All the characters are truthfully drawn, and the shades of thought and feeling delineated with a true artist's skill; the work is pleasantly written and is extremely interesting—no marks of carelessness or haste are evident, and the plot is well worked out. It should be read by all who desire instructive reading in a palatable shape, and, as there is so much trash published at present, it is a pleasure to read works like these, and by these a better literary taste will be cultivated.

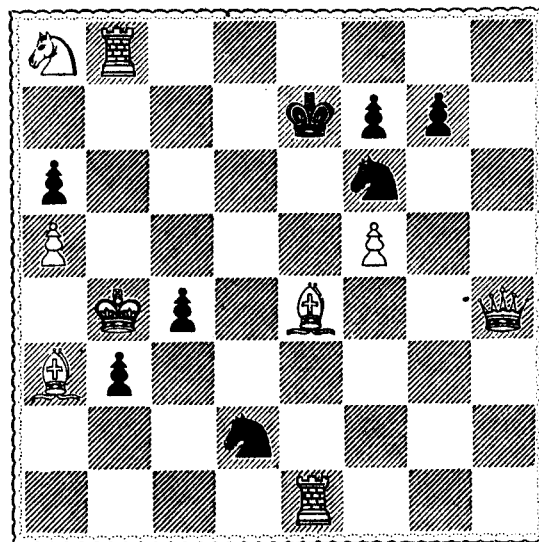
Chess.

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

Montreal, November 13th, 1880.

PROBLEM NO. CXIII.

By Mr. James Pierce. From *The Field*.
WHITE.

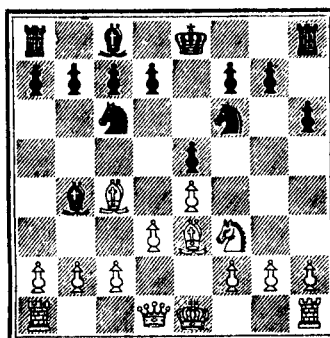


BLACK.

White to play and mate in two moves.

CHESS INTELLIGENCE.

Mr. H. N. Kittson, Hamilton.
BLACK.



WHITE.

Mr. J. W. Shaw, Montreal.

Position after Black's 8th move,
when the Conductor of the Tourney
confirmed Black's claim, requiring
White to mate him in 50 moves.

THE LAW OF COUNTING 50 MOVES.—The operation of this law has been invoked and supported in a game between two players in the Hamilton Chess Correspondence Tourney under circumstances which, if it were maintained, would, to say the least, reduce every game to a draw in which one player succeeded in winning the exchange, unless he could mate his adversary within fifty moves. The game commenced and proceeded as follows:—

White.

- 1 P to K 4
- 2 Kt to K B 3
- 3 B to B 4
- 4 Kt to Q B 3
- 5 Kt to Q 5
- 6 Kt takes Q (ch)
- 7 P to Q 3
- 8 B to K 3

Black.

- 1 P to K 4
- 2 Q to K B 3
- 3 Kt to B 3
- 4 B to Q Kt 5
- 5 B to B 4
- 6 Kt takes Kt
- 7 P to K R 3
- 8 B to Kt 5 (ch)

The diagram shows the position of the game at this point. Black intended his second move to read Q Kt to B 3, and only discovered his error when White captured his Q on the 6th move. Having thus lost the exchange, Q for a Kt, he announced his demand that White should mate him within 50 moves.

This strange request was, of course, referred to the Conductor of the Tourney as being an outrageous interpretation of the Law, but stranger still, the Conductor gave it as his decision that the case came within the operation of the Law and ruled accordingly, submitting the case to the Chess Editor of the Toronto *Globe* as referee. But can it be believed? that gentleman also maintained that the Law, as laid down in Staunton's Praxis, by which the Tourney is governed, became operative in this case, and the game is now proceeding, under protest, it is true, but still in accordance with the ruling of these two chess authorities. On October 30th we devoted our entire column to the publication of two letters from Mr. A. P. Barnes, of New York, who fully exposed the specious arguments of the *Globe's* Chess Editor. The Law, as applied in this case by Black, amounts simply to a punishment for White in being so lucky as to win his opponent's Q for a Kt. The Law cannot be invoked in any way as a punishment. The *Globe's* Chess Editor has certainly peculiar notions of what constitutes an end-game, when he says that it certainly has become an end-game when one player has so early obtained such an advantage, and classes as end games such positions as the one in the above diagram. He also propounds the query, "is it too much to ask that the superior force shall finish the game in 50 moves?" The use of the word *finish* is one of those specious expressions by which the absurdity of the argument is cloaked. It may not be too much to ask that the superior force shall reduce the game to such a position as that Black might honourably resign, as he would do under ordinary circumstances, but it may be altogether too much to compel him to *mate* his adversary within that number of moves. The application of the Law in this case is denounced in the *Chess Monthly* as "certainly preposterous." The whole of the Law in Staunton's Praxis has but one interpretation. It was framed on laws which had been known and used for centuries, adopted by Lopez, Gianutio and Salvio, and in later times by Jänisch and Van der Laza. In all these no reference is made to any but end-games which *appear to be drawn or can be forced*. To these only does it apply, and any attempt to class such a position as the one above as an end-game is absurd. The Conductor of the Tourney and his Referee split on the rock contained in the clause, Praxis, p. 21: "And whenever one player considers that one side can force the game," &c. This clause is simply that addition which Staunton made to cover end-games in which there were uncomplicated pawns, the law having previously excluded them, and the cases are enumerated in which they may form an additional element. The word "whenever" does not mean at the whim of an opponent who may have lost the exchange, but it is "the pound of flesh" to our friends in Ontario, who have a funny knack of interpreting Staunton's Chess Laws in a manner peculiar to themselves. In the first paragraph on page 49, of Praxis, Staunton clearly enunciates both the theory of the Law and its practical effect, and with such a lucid explanation staring both the Conductor and his Referee in the face, we can only wonder at the lack of common sense which can so distort the plainest language into something so opposite to its meaning. To show the absurdity of such an interpretation, we may ask what would be White's position supposing he now lost his Q for Black's Kt? Would our friend, the *Globe's* Chess Editor, still consider it an end-game, or would there be a game with two ends? For the honour of Canadian Chess, we hope the Conductor of the Tourney will see fit to reconsider his interpretation of the Law and reverse his decision. Unless he do so, we expect to see nearly every game in the Tourney drawn in consequence. Certain it is that every chess journal, or authority of any standing, will be arrayed against him, and the paltry minority who may hold the same view will only render his position the more ridiculous and untenable.