

Protoria, South Africa, and is the service now used on the submarine line between London and Paris.

After some time spent at the gold fields, during which he made and lost considerable money, Mr. Wright was engaged by the Transvaal Government to erect telegraph lines. In that business he has been engaged for some years, and when he returns from his leave he will again push into the Transvaal to take up the work. He has built across Southern Africa, from one point to another, many thousand miles of both the telegraph and the telephone. In this connection he has had many strange adventures and not a few thrilling experiences. The building of a telegraph line in Africa is a more difficult task than it is in this country. The redeeming feature is that men can be procured in large numbers to assist in the work. These men are all blacks, but as they are hired from the chiefs of their tribes they work diligently and faithfully. As towns are few and far between the telegraph lines are all strung in straight lines, or as nearly straight as possible. Rivers, lakes and mountains are crossed. From many of the mountains Mr. Wright says the poles can be seen stretching in an unbroken line as far as the eye can see even through a powerful field glass. One of the difficulties against which the builders of the telegraph have to contend is the ravages of the ants. They eat up the hardwood telegraph poles and now the authorities are putting down iron poles. These are imported from England and are hauled to their destination with the tools and supplies of the construction party in great ox teams. On some of the teams loads aggregating 7,000 pounds are placed and as many as eighteen oxen engaged to pull it. These patient animals are the chief carriers of the country. The telegraph lines are built with forty posts to the mile. Mr. Wright has strung wires in Natal, the Orange Free State, Cape Colony and the Portuguese territory, and the work of building new lines is being kept up. As fast as new places are opened to settlement by the whites the telegraph is run to them and they are thus kept in touch with the outside world.

Mr. Wright has been an intelligent and observant traveller, and during his eight years' residence in Africa has become thoroughly familiar with the manners and customs of the native tribes, and has a great fund of information about the country as well as enough stories of adventure to fill a library. He can talk the language of the Zulu, Basuto, Swazi, Tumbi, Fingo and Mafosa tribes quite fluently, and says the Zulu is the key to them all. In 1886, when on the survey in Bechuanaland, H. Rider Haggard was with Mr. Wright and his party for several weeks. They took him from Barclay to Mafeking, where Mantiwe, king of the Bartlepins, resided. Like other African travellers, Mr. Wright pronounces Haggard's descriptions of African scenery as absolutely perfect. The great writer, he says, is a very pleasant travelling companion.

As regards the general management of the native countries, Mr. Wright says British rule has been the curse of South Africa. The British are too lenient in their treatment of the natives. He thinks they would have got along better with the natives if they had treated them in the same stern way the Boers of the Transvaal have. In that country the blacks cannot own property and are not allowed to live in the towns, though they are permitted to carry on business in them. They cannot walk on the sidewalks, and in many other ways are kept in subjection and have absolutely no redress in cases of ill treatment. In the British possessions, however, the conditions are exactly the reverse. Laws for the protection of the native are more severe than those for the protection of the whites, and an employer of and punishing a disobedient servant is liable to a severe penalty, no matter how great the provocation.

All the native tribes in Southern Africa are despotic monarchies. The kings keep large standing armies and rule with an iron hand. All who in any way incur the royal displeasure are killed and their property confiscated. Polygamy is practiced among the natives and some of the chiefs have several hundred wives. The tribes are very superstitious and witchcraft is believed in. Whenever a member of a royal family dies a great commotion is raised. A grand smelting-out match is held to see who is responsible and the witch doctor, after working himself into a great frenzy, declares the names of some of the people. They are at once put to death. In this way all who show evidence of rising in power are got out of the way. Sometimes the natives hear of their fate and fly. If they can reach a white man the natives abandon the pursuit. The fugitive then becomes the personal property of his protector. Being unable to return home, he literally becomes the slave of the man who saved his life. Mr. Wright has two such servants or slaves. Almost all the native kings now have white men as advisors, but many of these, Mr. Wright says, are little better than the natives whose bounty they enjoy. When disease of a malignant nature breaks out the native chiefs adopt heroic measures to stamp it out. Last winter small-pox developed in a certain kraal at Swaziland. The king heard of it and sent an impi, who completely annihilated the kraal. Men, women and children were all killed, together with all their animals. Their homes with all their contents were burned. The disease however, broke out in an adjoining kraal and it also was totally wiped out. In this way about three thousand people were killed in a few days. Similar treatment is resorted to whenever disease appears.

As already stated Mr. Wright has been up to the southern borders of Matabeleland, and few white men, he says, have been further. Old King Lobengula rules his country with an iron hand and does not allow either the whites or anybody else to traverse it. The present difficulties in the country have been brooding for a long time, and though they have culminated since Mr. Wright left Africa he does not take any stock in the reports telegraphed to the outside world that Col. Rhodes has been successful in defeating the king. It will be years to come, he says, before the English can hope to fight this great monarch. His country is away up in the interior and most difficult of access. Approach by the Zambesi River would be the easiest way, but on that stream Lobengula could so harass a party as to make their efforts unavailing.

From the south it is next to impossible to enter his territory. A march of about twelve hundred miles would be necessary from the last railway station, and much of it through the country infested by the tsetse fly, that great pest. Neither horses nor oxen can be got to go where this fly abounds, and it would be almost impossible for any large force of men to tramp the distance on foot. Lobengula, Mr. Wright says, has been preparing to war with the English for about ten years. He has a well equipped standing army of about 30,000 men and can immediately enrol many thousands more. The Matabeles are a fine, powerful race of men, and splendid fighters. The force under Col. Rhodes is only a few hundred, and therefore Mr. Wright did not believe it had been successful. That the news from the country was unreliable might be taken for granted, as the nearest telegraph station, Fort Salisbury, was over four hundred miles from the borders of Matabeleland, and to reach it an almost impassable country would have to be traversed.

Mr. Wright told the reporter many more interesting things about the country and the people. It is a great hunting territory and a great country for fakirs, who grow rich fleecing the natives. On one occasion two men who were strapped went around and vaccinated a whole tribe with a can of condensed milk. They pocketed a large sum of money, and the poor natives considered themselves safe from small-pox. Some whites were fooled by these clever rascals.

When Mr. Wright started for home in June last he made his way from the Transvaal to the coast at Delagoa Bay. There he contracted the fever, but soon recovered and secured passage in a steamer but had to leave it at Mozambique, the disease having returned. When better he started again, but was forced to give up at Zanzibar. From there he got to Aden and thence to India, where he spent some weeks with relative ease. He went down to Tuticorin, the southern point of India, a place where it never rains, and then went up to Madras and Bombay. At the latter place he took a steamer and, going through the red sea, went on to Antwerp and from there to London, where he took a steamer for New York. Mr. Wright reached here on Tuesday. It is about four months since he left his African home. Anybody interested in South Africa will find Mr. Wright a veritable encyclopedia. The land is very fertile. Anything put in the soil will grow.

—St. John Globe.

A QUESTION.

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DRAUGHTS-CHECKERS

All communications to this department must be addressed directly to the Checker Editor, Mr. W. Forsyth, 36 Grafton St.

SOLUTION

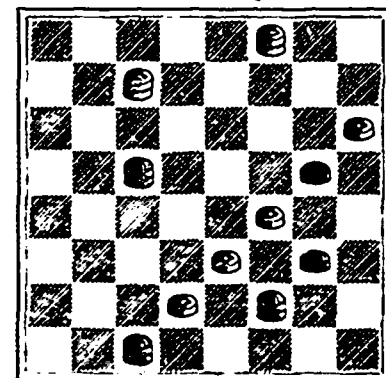
PROBLEM 362.—The position was: black men 3, 20, 23, 25, king 24; white men 6, 15, 19, 22, 29, 31; white to play and win.

22 17 15 10 2 27 31 27
25—30 14—7 3—7 10—14
29 25 6 2 27 32 27 24
30—14 24—15 7—10 w. wins

PROBLEM 364.

Another of the problems sent in to the Liverpool Mercury annual competitions. We hope that Nova Scotia will not be unrepresented in the contest.

Black men 16, 24, kings 14, 27, 30



White men 12, 19, 23, 26, kings 3, 6.

White to play and win.

Our solvers should be able to discover the win without moving a piece.

TO CORRESPONDENTS

O. McGill, Yarmouth.—Your favor received. Thanks for your criticism of the solution of problem 360. Will attend to it next week.

S. Ross, Worcester, Mass.—Many thanks for your letter and enclosed games. Yes. Games of local players are always acceptable.

A. Whyte, New York.—Yours received and reply mailed. Try that single corner.

GAME 243—"KELSO."

One of 14 games recently played by C. H. Freeman at Worcester, Mass., simultaneously. In this game S. Ross was his opponent playing the white. Of the 14 games Freeman won 10, the rest being drawn.

10—15	10—17	2—6	23—27
22 18	19 15	8 4	6 1
15—22	11—16	7—10	18—14
25 18	20 11	4 8	11 7
9—13	7—16	6—9	27—31
24 19	23 19	16 11	15 10
11—15	16—23	10—14	14—18
18 11	26 19	19 15	10 6
8—24	3—7	14—23	12—16
28 19	32 27	26 19	6 2
4—8	17—22	25—22	16—20
27 24	27 24	11 7	1 6
6—10	13—17	9—14	20—24
29 25	24 20	7 2	6 10
8—11	17—21	14—18	24—27
24 20	20 16	8 11	10 15
5—9	22—25	18—23	drawn
25 22	15 11	2 6	
9—14	25—29	1—10	
22 18	11 8	15 6	
14—17	29—25	22—18	
21 14	31 26	19 15	

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