

A WOMAN TAKES THE HELM.

Elsewhere in this issue of the Bulletin it is noted that a woman has been elected president of the Correspondence Chess League of America. In view of the elevation of members of the "weaker sex" to high offices in all walks of our political and business life, this gives no occasion for any particular surprise. In these days it is taken as a matter of course. There is no reason why chess should not follow suit. At any rate, chess is in line and Miss Clara E. Cameron of Pomona, Cal., long an enthusiastic devotee of chess by mail, is now the chief executive in that sphere of the game in this country. As we were about to go to press, it was our good fortune to receive a reply to our request for a photograph and with it came autobiographical material of exceptional interest.

MISS CAMERON'S CAREER.

Pomona, Cal., Jan. 29, 1927.

Dear Mr. Helms:

In reply to your request for a few biographical facts in regard to myself, I was born in Elkader, Iowa, of poor but honest parents. I arrived on a Christmas day, 'oh! ever so long ago, and as at that season of the year, the angels sing of "Peace on earth, good will to men," I early imbibed the principle of pacifism, which has grown stronger with the years.

"Good will to men" was also emphasized in my harmonious home, the head of which was a Methodist minister. As a child, I used to deplore the fact that the more forlorn and unpromising the specimen of humanity, the more my father seemed to love and honor him; now I see nothing but beauty in such an interpretation of brotherhood.

My mother, also, had a character I can never hope to equal, her sickroom being the sunny spot in the home where her brood of girls congregated, sure of un-failing love and sympathy.

Most of my life, after the age of eighteen, was spent in teaching little boys and girls to read, and, now that I have retired from the schoolroom, I am trying to teach grown-up boys and girls how to play chess; fortunately they are generally able to teach me more than I teach them; this makes them happier, while it makes me wiser.

After I became tired of freezing, eight months out of twelve, in the middle west, I came to live in the land of sunshine. Here I met some of the joys and wonders that only the followers of Caissa know. Through Stasch Mlotkowski's chess column in L. A. Examiner I became interested in problems and even tried a little composing in a tyro tourney. This editor's never-failing patience, kindness and skill made my novitiate a pleasure. He induced me to join the late Good Companion's International Club, and thus I became acquainted with J. F. Magee and Alain C. White, the two men who have probably done more to encourage the art of problem composing than anyone else in the world.

Mlotkowski also secured me my first chess correspondent, Howard Seelye of Ontario, Cal. Mr. Seelye in turn induced



me to join the C. C. L. A., which has been my chief joy in life ever since. Through this organization, I have made the most delightful friendships imaginable with men and women in many walks of life and with many shades of opinion and character and ages ranging from 16 to 74.

I have been uplifted and inspired by the courage and sunny spirit of many of our members who are living under tremendous physical handicaps, bed-ridden invalids, wheel-chair men and victims of our late war in sanitariums.

And speaking of heroes, several years ago I joined the happy family of E. P. Sharp's chess column in the Neb. State Journal, and nothing could induce me to leave that charmed circle, presided over by one of these heroes.

I have acquired quite a little chess library, of which I am inordinately proud, a shelf of books, many of them prizes and gifts, and several years' files of different magazines, "Good Companion Folder," "British Chess Magazine" and last, but

not least, "American Chess Bulletin," of which I have seven years' complete files and broken files of the three years previous.

So, in a quiet, happy home, shared with the "twin of my heart," the only sister left me out of five, amid idyllic surroundings, I pursue the study of my beloved game, carrying between forty and fifty games most of the time; acquiring a host of friends, who discuss books, politics and religion as well as swap games and analyze fine points in analysis which occur to the student.

Our club numbers several hundred. Its success is largely due to the ability, tact, and tirelessness of our tourney director, A. T. Leise, and, on the financial side, to our treasurer, Z. L. Hoover.

I am not unappreciative of the high honor bestowed upon me by my recent election to the presidency of the league. I sincerely hope I may be of some service in building up the league. May it never drop below its present high standard of efficiency. Let's all boost!

Yours fraternally,

CLARA E. CAMERON.