

Our Chess Corner

(Address All Communications, Solutions, Etc., to CHESSEditor, SAN FRANCISCO (ALL))

This column recently contained an article on the teaching of chess to beginners, in the form of a letter to the chess editor of the State Journal of Lincoln Neb., by W. R. Ellis of that state. Since its publication in "Our Corner" we have received several letters on the subject from Californian devotees of Chess, who commented very favorably on his suggestions and promised to reveal the mysteries to those that now sit in darkness. Mr. Ellis has met with so much encouragement that he has elaborated his ideas in further letters to the Journal.

This matter is highly important. Fraternal organizations, insurance companies, etc., are keenly alive to the necessity of constantly instilling new blood into their concerns. It should be the same with lovers of chess. There is not a more fascinating, delightful, beautiful pastime in the world. It is far too good to keep. And now that our Methodist friends have cast into the limbo of disused and inappropriate hymns, that once popular missionary song, "From Greenland's Icy Mountains," I suggest that we rescue one verse, understanding the sentiment to refer to chess and its blessings:

"Small we on whose souls are lighted with wisdom from on high.

Shall we to men benighted the lamp of life give?

Instruction! Oh, instruction! the joyful sound proclaim.

The earth's remotest nation has learned Chess's name."

Following is the first installment of Mr. Ellis' methods of teaching beginners:

Hints on Teaching Chess

By W. R. ELLIS

Since my former letter has been published it has occurred to me that perhaps I might aid those chess players—and I hope there are many of them—who will try to put the suggestion into practice and instruct some one else in the mysteries of chess.

I find that nearly every person who undertakes to learn the game is of the opinion that chess is very difficult and each doubts his ability to master it to any degree. I therefore start out to overcome this feeling in the student and proceed somewhat along these lines: First I set up the men and explain the moves or powers of each, showing first how the pawns move and capture; that a capture is not compulsory as in checkers, but optional; the moves of the bishop along diagonals and of the castles along ranks and file, showing that it is possible for both to attack or bear on the same point from different angles. Then I explain that the queen combines the moves of both castle and bishop and show how she can be placed to co-operate in attack upon same point with other pieces. Then I show the peculiar vaulting move of the knight, his ability to leap over rows of pawns or other pieces; and lastly, the move of the king, including castling, and explain that the object of the game is to checkmate the king, and I give illustrations of check by different pieces and of the different methods of escape from check by capture, intervention and moving king. When these moves have been fully explained, making use of the board and men for the purpose, I select several of the short published games called "Brillianta" in which mate is effected in from 10 to 15 moves—I keep clippings of all such for the purpose—and I play these over with the amateur student, letting him play the winning color and pointing out to him the reason for each move, either as a developing, combining for attack or defense, sacrificing for position, etc. This practice for a few games familiarizes him with the printed notation, which I deem one of the most important things for a student to learn. As he begins to see that he is really "learning" something, nothing looks more like Greek to the uninformed than the printed notations of a game of chess, but when the student can follow these understandingly and play a game through he feels that he is learning—and he is. Then as a little further practice I clear the board of all pieces except the kings and two white rooks, which I let the student play and show him how to effect mate, repeating the operation several times by returning my king to the center of the board and letting him keep at it until he can mate in practically the fewest possible moves. Then I remove one castle and teach him how to mate with king and rook alone. What I have enumerated above is all I give the student the first evening and it is enough to tire him. I arrange for another session.

GAME DEPARTMENT

"Our Corner" of March 31 contained a promise of publication of the match game between the local expert, Dr. W. R. Lovegrove, and Lasker, in 1902, and his game against Pillsbury in 1904, with reminiscences by the gentleman who officiated as referee. Following are the two memorable contests, and a sketch of Lovegrove's chess career:

(By the Referee)

Before proceeding with my recollections of these famous chess battles it may be of interest to briefly review the remarkable record made by my friend, Dr. W. R. Lovegrove, against the foremost players of the world. For one who has followed chess as a recreation and pastime rather than a profession, it is indeed a noteworthy performance. Lovegrove at the age of 15 years was able to hold his own with the best players in San Francisco. In 1899 he defeated Gossip, the Australian champion. In 1900 he won several games from J. W. Showalter, who held the American championship. He defeated Lasker in an exhibition game in 1902, and followed this by winning a match from Max Judd, five out of eight games. During Pillsbury's visit to San Francisco, following the Cambridge Springs tourney, Lovegrove worsted him in a hard fought game in 30 moves. However, those who know the playing strength of the late S. Lipschutts, one time American champion, will probably agree that Lovegrove's greatest chess achievement was his defeat of Lipschutts at Los Angeles in 1894 by a score of two games won and two drawn out of four encounters.

When World's Champion Lasker visited this city in 1902 he delivered a lecture on the "Ray Lopez," in the edifice of the Mechanics' Institute, which was destroyed in the fire of 1906. After the lecture a match game took place between San Francisco's best player and the champion. Clocks were brought out and at Lasker's request it was agreed to play 30 moves an hour. Lovegrove won the choice of colors and, of course, selected the white pieces. I go into details because I understand the impression gained ground in eastern chess circles that this game was not a guerre a mort. On the contrary, as the score, I think, will show, the champion was out to win. In discussing the game after its conclusion, however, he admitted that, despite his efforts, at no time was there more than a draw in sight. Indeed, in his endeavor to score, Lasker made a miscalculation on his fifty-first move, which lost him the game. The score follows:

RAY LOPEZ

Lovegrove (White) vs. Lasker (Black).

WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK
1 P-K4	P-K4	20 R-K5	R-B2
2 Kt-KB3	Kt-KB3	20 R-K5	K-B3
3 R-K1	P-QB3	21 K-K3	R-B7
4 B-B4	Kt-K5	22 P-K3	R-K1
5 Castles	Kt-K5	23 B-K3	P-K12
6 P-Q4	P-Q4	24 B-K4	R-K12
7 R-K2	R-K2	25 P-KK4	K-K12
8 P-K3	B-K3	26 R-K5	K-B3
9 P-QB2	B-K3	27 R-K5	K-B3
10 QK1-Q2	Castles	28 R-K	R-K3
11 Q-K2	Kt-K5	29 R-K8	B-K3
12 R-K1	P-B3	30 R-K	B-K3
13 Q-K	Kt-K5	31 R-K8	B-K3
14 Kt-K1	P-K1	32 R-K8	P-B4
15 Q-K1	Q-Q3	33 P-R5	P-B4
16 Q-K2	R-K2	34 P-R5	K-K3
17 R-K	K-K2	35 R-K5	K-K3
18 B-K3	P-QB3	36 R-K5	R-KK1
19 R-KB2	QR-K	37 R-K5	R-K3
20 P-QB2	B-KK5	38 R-K	R-K3
21 P-B5	B-K2	39 R-K5	K-K4
22 K-B2	R-K2	40 R-K5	P-Q5
23 P-K3	R-K1	41 R-K5	P-Q5
24 R-K1	K-K1	42 R-K5	P-Q5
25 R-K	P-K5	43 P-R5	P-Q5
26 R-Q2	P-K1	44 P-R5	K-K3
27 B-R	B-K2	45 R-K5	K-K3
28 B-B4	B-QB	46 R-K5	R-KK1
		47 R-K5	R-K3
		48 K-Q3	R-K3
		49 R-K5	R-K4
		50 R-K5	P-Q5
		51 R-K5	P-Q5
		52 R-K5	P-Q5
		53 R-KK1	R-K5
		54 R-KK1	R-K5
		55 R-K5	K-B5
		56 R-Q6	P-B5
		57 R-K5	R-K5

NOTES

The fight for the most part is concerned with

the imprisoned bishop, after white's daring 53 R-K1. With 50 1/2 P-Q5 Lasker sacrifices a rook, with apparently a queen in sight. The champion evidently had figured on 53 1/2 K-R3, but the following variation shows that also would lose: 53 1/2 K-R3; 54 K-B6, K-B2; 55 R-K1ch, K-B (if K-R3, R-K12) wins; 56 R-Q7, P-B6; 57 K-K5 and wins.

During Pillsbury's engagement at the Institute in 1904 an exhibition game was arranged with Dr. Lovegrove. Before the contest I took the then American champion aside and frankly told him just what kind of chess he might expect from Lovegrove. I recalled the latter's victories over Lasker, Lipschutts, Showalter, Judd and others. Pillsbury replied: "Well, it will be different this time!" But the game was played, and after it was over Pillsbury spent much time endeavoring to show that happier results would have followed (for himself) "if he had gone here." But for every "might-have-been" (after Pillsbury's twenty-third move) Lovegrove demonstrated a winning line of play. Pillsbury was plainly discomfited and it was easy to see that he took his defeat somewhat to heart. The score:

Game No. 22

PETROFF DEFENSE

Lovegrove (White) vs. Pillsbury (Black).			
WHITE	BLACK	WHITE	BLACK
1 P-K4	P-K4	16 KR-K4	P-KK1
2 Kt-KB3	Kt-KB3	17 KR-Q5	Q-Q2
3 Kt-K1	P-Q3	18 Q-R3	R-QB5
4 Kt-KB3	Kt-K1	19 R-K1	Q-B5
5 P-Q4	P-Q4	20 KR-KB4	Kt-K14
6 R-Q1	R-K2(a)	21 Q-R5	R-R2(e)
7 Castles	Kt-QB3	22 Q-K4	Q-Q7
8 P-QB3	Kt-B2	23 KR-K7ch	Q-K12(f)
9 Kt-QB3	Castles	24 P-KK1(g)	K-R2
10 Kt-K5	Kt-K1(b)	25 QK1-Q3	QR-Q
11 R-K1	Kt-B	26 QR-K1	Q-Q5
12 QK1	P-K1	27 R-QB1	P-KK1(h)
13 Q-K1	R-K3	28 Q-R	R-K1
14 Q-K2	R-Q7	29 Q-R	K-R
15 B-B4	KB-K	30 R-KK1	Resigns

NOTES BY A. B. S.

- (a) Among the masters since Pillsbury, Marshall has most persistently adapted the Petroff. But here the American champion plays B-KK1.
- (b) Pillsbury considered the Q-R move valuable than his R-K1.
- (c) Giving black the theoretical advantage of three pawns in two on the Q side.
- (d) Black threatened to win a piece by P-KB1. Lovegrove prepares for it.
- (e) Instead of 21 1/2 R-K1, followed by Q-K1, and white must draw by perpetual check. Pillsbury saves the draw, but his game quickly deteriorates.
- (f) Probably the losing move. This allows the white rook to enter the fray, with fatal effect.
- (g) With the black queen out of play, white initiates a winning attack.
- (h) Not 27 1/2 R-K1, because of 28 R-K1, winning in all variations.

PROBLEMS

TOURNEY PROBLEM NO. 12. BY A. J. FINK.

Black—10 Pieces.

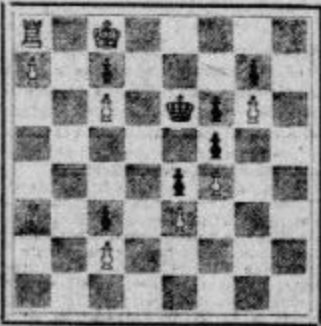


White—10 Pieces.

White to play and mate in three moves.

TOURNEY PROBLEM NO. 14. BY A. J. FINK.

Black—7 Pieces.



White—9 Pieces.

White to play and mate in four moves.

SOLUTIONS

Tourney Prob. No. 9: 1 Kt-R3, 2 Kt-K4, 3 B-K1 mate. Tourney Prob. No. 10: 1 Q-Q1ch, 2 Kt-B5, 3 Kt-K7 mate.

SOLVERS' LIST

Name and residence—	Total points	Name and residence—	Total points
Hall, San Jose.....	25	McCracken, Vacaville..	22
Church, city.....	25	Pennycook, Vallejo..	22
Woods, Winnemucca..	25	Halle, Oakland.....	21
Easton, city.....	25	Rodolph, Oakland..	20
"D. N. P. E., city.....	26	Moore, Alameda.....	19
Norman, city.....	20	"O. N., Berkeley....	18
"Ignoramus," city....	24	Chilton, city.....	18
Darling, Carmel.....	24	Falls, Santa Clara..	18
"Ray Lopez," city....	23	Herrington, city....	8
Huber, city.....	25	Ellis, Los Gatos.....	8

End Game Study No. 7

The following diagram shows a companion piece to the "Immortal," printed last week, composed by the same unknown artist. Black has a preponderance of material and threatens mate, but white, by ingenious sacrifices, draws. Solution published herewith:

Black—14 Pieces.



White—10 Pieces.

White to play and draw.

SOLUTION

1 Kt-QB5ch, 2 Kt-K7ch, 3 Q-K7, 4 P-B4, 5 Kt-R5ch. 4 Kt-R5ch, 5 P-R3ch, 6 P-Ktch, 7 P-Nch, 8 Draw.

(a) If K-K1, white mates in four.

(b) If K-B5, white mates in five, by Q-B5ch, etc.

Owing to unforeseen difficulties it has been found necessary to postpone hostilities in the northern California vs. southern California correspondence match for a few days. Contestants will be paired and notified as soon as possible.

Correspondence

H. H. Presidio, City—Mechanics' Institute, 57 Post street, is the headquarters for chess in San Francisco. Library membership (\$1.50 quarterly) includes privileges of the chess room, chess library, etc. Mason's "Art of Chess" and "Freeborough's Openings" are among the best books for a thorough study of the game.

J. R. E. Los Gatos—The variation you mention (Problem No. 8) is probably the neatest: 1 Kt-K5, Kt-P; 2 Kt-Q7ch, K-B5 (or Q5); 3 Q-Q2 mate. If 2 1/2 K-Q4, 3 Q-B5 mate.

A. G. P. San Diego—Letter received. Thanks for your interest in the North vs. South match. Hope to start at once.

W. D. M. Alameda—Both of your queries are answered in this column. Sorry we overlooked your score.