

THE MONKEY AND THE GASCON CHESS KNIGHT.

" *Al ajedrez la fuerza es relativa.*"

It times gone by there dwelt in the good city of Bourdeaux a chess-player, whose skill in the royal game had gained him the universal cognomen of the "Chevalier de l'Echiquier." No rival had he met with in all his native province of Gascony; and to contest a game at all with him, or even to merit his approbation, was deemed high honor by the most illustrious in the game. In all chess matters his word was law, and he could not touch a pawn without eliciting bursts of applause from the by-standers.

Our Gascon was enjoying the plenitude of all this glory, when there chanced to pass through Bordeaux a certain Spanish Cavalier, who hearing of our hero's great skill, sought an opportunity of judging of his prowess in the game. He accordingly was presented, and having premised his wish to be admitted to the honor of contending with the renowned professor, by stating that the best player in Spain usually gave him the odds of the Rook, and played without seeing the board, our knight unhesitatingly bowed assent, removed his Queen's Rook from the board, retired to an opposite corner, and addressing his opponent, Sir Cavalier, said he, I give you the Rook, the move is mine; *King's Pawn two sq.* . . . May I inquire whether you have many very strong players in Spain?

— Many Sir. . . . *King's Pawn two sq.*

— *K. B. to Q. B. 4th sq.* Please name them.

Since the death of our celebrated Ruy Lopez, Don Diego de Luceña, whose grandsire was one of our earliest writers on the game, has not degenerated from the parent-stock. He is unquestionably a fine player, but he cannot compare with . . . *K. B. to Q. B. 4th.*

— With whom, pray? *Q. to K. 2d sq.*

— With Don Gabriel de Rojas. . . . *Q. to K. 2d sq.*

— De Rojas? . . . I never heard the name. . . . *Q. Kt. to B. 3d sq.*

— *Q. B. P. one* . . . Can it be that his fame has never reached you!

— Never, his residence? . . . *K. B. P. two sq.*

— Seville, and the finest players in Spain have all visited him in turn. . . *Q. Kt. P. two. (a)*

— *K. B. to Q. Kt. 3d.* (musingly) *Rojas! Rojas!* . . . and do they never win?

— Alas! no, they all leave him crest-fallen, and forced to acknowledge no chess player in the universe can compete with Don Gabriel de Rojas. . . *Q. R. P. two sq.*

— You inspire me with the greatest desire to make his acquaintance; and if we ever meet, despite the opinion of your Castilian players, I may not unworthily maintain the honor of our escutcheon of Gascony. . . *Q. R. P. two.* In this manner they continued playing and conversing, the game meanwhile running thus:

White (The Gascon).

8. *Q. Kt. to Q. sq.*
9. *R. takes B.*
10. *Q. P. one.*
11. *K. B. P. one.*
12. *P. takes P.*
13. *Q. to K. B. 3d.*
14. *Q. B. to K. Kt. 5th.*
15. *K. B. to Q. R. 2d.*
16. *Kt. to K. B. 2d.*
17. *K. Kt. P. two.*
18. *Q. to K. 3d.*
19. *Q. B. takes K. Kt.*
20. *K. Kt. P. one.*
21. *K. Kt. P. one.*
22. *Q. to K. Kt. 5th.*

Black (The Castilian).

7. *Q. Kt. P. one.*
8. *K. B. takes K. Kt.*
9. *K. Kt. to B. 3d.*
10. *Q. P. two.*
11. *P. takes P.*
12. *Q. B. to R. 3d.*
13. *Q. Kt. to Q. 2d sq.*
14. *Q. Kt. to Q. B. 4th.*
15. *Castles on K.'s side. (b)*
16. *Q. R. to Q.*
17. *Q. to Q. 3d.*
18. *Kt. takes Q. R. P. (c)*
19. *Q. takes Q. B.*
20. *Q. to Q. 3d.*
21. *Kt. takes Q. Kt. P. (d)*
22. *Q. to K. B. 3d.*

(a) *Q. P. two sq.* would have been better play

(b) He would have lost at least a piece by taking the King's Pawn with Queen's Knight, because the first player, after capturing King's Kt. with Bishop, upon Black's taking the Bishop with his Knight, could then have taken *Q. B. P.*, checking, and winning a Rook.

(c) With so much advantage in force, our Castilian should have professed to exchange Queens at *Q 5th sq.*

(d) Badly played.—By moving *K. to R. sq.* he might probably have saved the game.

*White.**Black.*

23. Q. to K. R. 5th. (a) 23. K. R. P. one.
 24. K. Kt. P. takes K. B. 24. K. to R. 2d.
 P. (check) (b)
 25. R. to Kt. 6th. 25. Q. to K. 2d.

At this point our hero rose saying, "You have lost Señor: the mate is now forced in exactly three moves."

After this conversation the Chevalier de l'Echiquier became an unhappy man. The idea that he had a rival, and perhaps a master, embittered every triumph, and the laurels of the Sevillian Miltiades banished sleep from the lids of this new Themistocles. This state of uncertainty became finally so insupportable that he resolved to end it, and having made his arrangements he departed for Seville. No sooner had he reached that city than he hastened to the residence of Don Gabriel de Rojas. He found the great man intent upon a game of chess; a monkey with a grave phiz occupying the seat opposite him, and looking for all the world like an adversary. "Señor," said the French champion, "drawn hither by the renown of your skill in the noble game of chess, I dare present myself as an aspirant to compete with you on the chequered field, if you will admit me to so great an honor. In Bordeaux I enjoy some reputation, and I may even venture to say that no players in that city can dispute the palm with me."—"Come sir," replied the Spaniard, smiling, "be seated, I shall endeavor to prove worthy of the favor you confer."

The two champions fairly "*en présence*," the game began; but hardly had a dozen moves been played, when Don Gabriel rose suddenly and said to the astonished Frenchman, "It is useless, Sir, to continue; you cannot play with me. . . . You are at most a match for my monkey." "What!" replied the Chevalier; "do you mean to insult me?"—"By no means," answered the Spaniard; "know that Monito is a finished player, and you need feel no humiliation in being placed on a level with him. I should even bet against you."

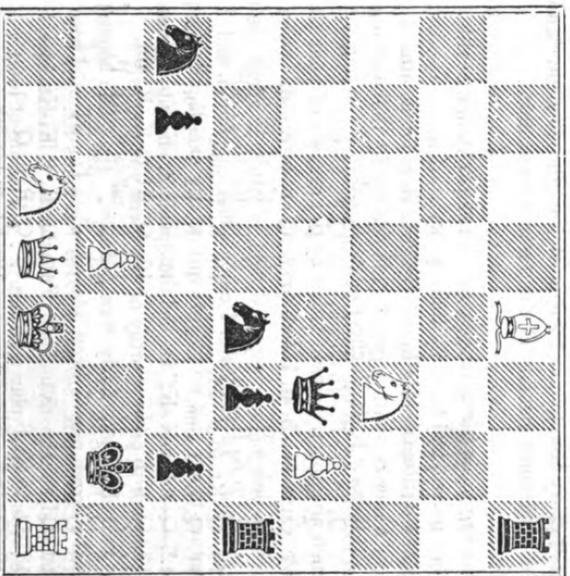
(a) The best mode of winning.—Instead of this move, had White ventured to take K B. P. checking, Black could not have moved King to corner without losing his Queen. The student will easily discover why.

(b) Had the first player attacked the adverse Queen with his Knight he would have lost the game.

—"Since you insist," rejoined the astounded Frenchman, "I consent to your proposal, were it only for the singularity of the thing. We shall see whether this brute can contest the victory with me."

Montio was soon in Don Gabriel's seat, and continuing his master's game with the gravest countenance in the world, he played move after move, until having reduced the game to the following position, and it being his turn to move, he uttered a most indescribable

LE CHEVALIER (Black).



MONTIO (White).

chatter, displaying at the same time his left paw with the fingers extended, as if to indicate check-mate in four moves. As the successive moves developed the mate, the Chevalier, overcome with shame and mortification, lost all control over himself, and striking the poor animal a violent blow, he sent him reeling into the middle of the room. The Spaniard, much displeas'd, interposed, and addressing koen reproaches to our hero for his brutal conduct, the latter ap-
 pto-

gized, but inwardly stung to the quick, he falteringly demanded his "*Revanche.*"

"Monito," replied Don Gabriel, "will hardly consent to play another game with you after such severe handling; I will try nevertheless what persuasion will do." With much coaxing, and more especially by promises of better treatment, the Spaniard succeeded in bringing him back to the chess-board, and Monito commenced another game, but not without evident signs of fear and distrust. The move was the Chevalier's, and notwithstanding his recent defeat he made bold to retort on Monito the opening of the preceding game, a variation of the Bishop's game. The battle proceeded thus:—

Black (Le Chevalier).

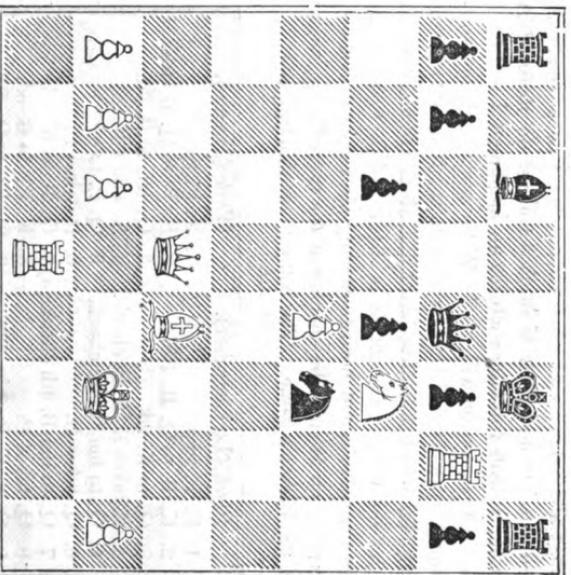
White (Monito).

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|--|------------------------------|
| 1. K. P. two. | 1. K. P. two. |
| 2. K. B. to Q. B. 4th. | 2. K. B. to Q. B. 4th. |
| 3. Q. to K. 2d. | 3. Q. Kt. to B. 3d. |
| 4. B. takes K. B. P. check. | 4. K. takes B. |
| 5. Q. to her B. 4th check. | 5. Q. P. two. |
| 6. Q. takes B. | 6. P. takes P. |
| 7. Q. to her B. 4th check. (a) | 7. Q. B. to K. 3d. |
| 8. Q. takes P. | 8. K. Kt. to B. 3d. |
| 9. Q. to K. R. 4th. (b) | 9. Q. Kt. to Q. 5th. |
| 10. Q. Kt. to R. 3d. | 10. K. P. one. |
| 11. Q. B. P. one. | 11. K. Kt. P. two. |
| 12. Q. takes K. Kt. P. | 12. K. R. to K. Kt. sq. |
| 13. Q. to K. 3d. | 13. Q. Kt. to K. B. 4th. |
| 14. Q. to K. 2d. | 14. R. takes K. Kt. P. |
| 15. Q. Kt. to B. 2d. | 15. Q. to her 3d. |
| 16. Q. Kt. to K. 3d. | 16. Kt. takes Kt. |
| 17. Q. P. takes Kt. | 17. Q. R. to K. Kt. sq. |
| 18. Q. to K. B. sq. | 18. Q. R. to Q. sq. |
| 19. Q. to K. 2d. | 19. Kt. to his 5th. |
| 20. Kt. to R. 3d. | 20. Kt. to K. 4th. |
| 21. Kt. to K. B. 4th. | 21. Kt. to K. B. 6th, check. |
| 22. K. to his B. sq., and the game presented the following position: | |

(a) Black wins the Pawn, but by so doing he loses moves and allows his adversary to deploy all his force.

(b) In this position Black may play Q. to six different sq., either of which will give him a bad game. Of these he selects the best, as offering the longest resistance.

LE CHEVALIER (Back).



MONITO (White).

At this point, Monito, with the same queer chatter as before, darted away with all the nimbleness of his tribe, and in an instant he was perched on the top of his master's cabinet. The Gascon looked around inquiringly at Don Gabriel.—“Do you not see,” said the latter, “that your game is irretrievably lost?” Play as you will you are checkmated in exactly six moves, and most assuredly you need not be surprised at Monito's feeling some apprehension for the consequences of his victory.” Then with a tone, betokening somewhat of superiority, he added in his own noble language, “*Mi amigo, en nada es la fuerza mas relativa que en el juego de ajedrez.*” “My friend, nothing exemplifies more forcibly than the game of Chess, that strength is relative. Seldom do I now experience defeat, but know that the time was when from our much lamented Ruy Lopez de Siquera, I usually received the odds of Pawn and move.”

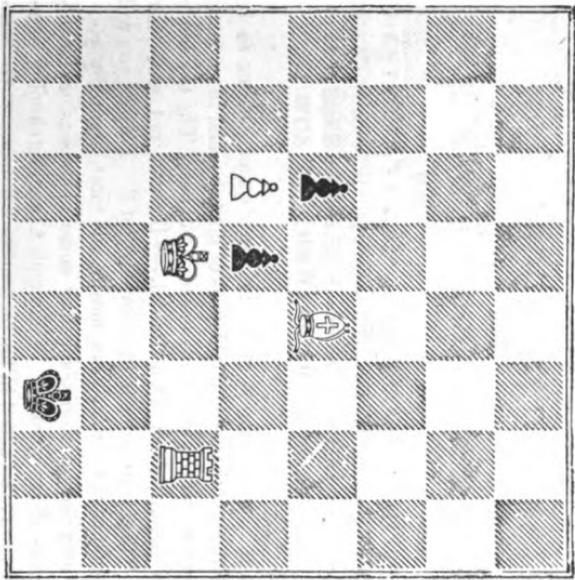
After his discomfiture, our hero deeming it useless to prolong his

THE MONKEY AND THE GASCON CHESS KNIGHT. 195

day in Seville, sadly wended his way back to the scene of his former triumphs ; and when, upon his arrival, his Chess-friends eagerly inquired whether he had won of Don Gabriel de Rojas ; " Ah, ! " replied he, " I could not even win of his monkey."

BY H. R. A.

BLACK.



WHITE.

White has the move, and engages to give mate without moving his K. once, or capturing any of the adverse Pawns. In how many moves can he effect this ?