

## THE RIVAL AUTOMATA

### A TALE OF TWO TURKS

**M**R. Charley Johnston, familiar to every inhabitant of L— as the exhibitor of the wonderful Chess Automaton, Ty-Foo, was sitting in the ticket office of the Musée des Arts, which was his headquarters while in that city. The Automaton had been on exhibition for three weeks and had not yet lost a game, a feat which was the cause of Mr. Johnston's present elation. Every blank wall in L— was covered with the announcement in many colors and various styles of lettering that "Ty-Foo, the Inexplicable and Mysterious marvel gives Exhibitions every Afternoon and Evening at the Musée des Arts." Further statements in smaller type told the public that the Automaton was the only one of the kind on Exhibition, that its manufacture had cost twelve hundred dollars, that it had been exhibited at twenty-one World's Fairs, and a multitude of other facts likely to attract the curious to the daily performances.

A colored lithograph, which was to be seen in many of the shop-windows, gave a picture of the famous Automaton. An elderly Turk was seated upon a cushion and before him was a table with an inlaid Chess board, upon which were arranged the white and black men. The left hand held the stem of a water pipe, the right was extended over the board with the evident intention of making a move. A card below read to the effect that Charles Johnston, Manager of Ty-Foo, would back the figure at Chess or Checkers against all comers and for any amount. All of which had produced the desired effect and the daily exhibitions of Ty-Foo were

I witnessed by hundreds. Half a dozen to twenty victories were scored by the invincible Ottoman daily, and a match at Checkers had been won by the silent Turk.

The manager, although a young man, had reason to be proud of his success. He was talking it over with another young fellow, whose relation to him can easily be inferred from the manner in which he was addressed.

"It's just as you say, Jim," said the manager to his companion, as they both tilted their chairs back against the wall in the office of the Musée des Arts, "we're having a great run of luck just now, and we can keep it up until winter. The managar has had something to do with that, I take it. Why there's one man has been in half a dozen times, that told me he came only to hear my speech and not to see you play, Chess, or Checkers either. We've each done our shares, I on the outside and you in the box."

"That's just what I think," returned the intricate machinery of the Automaton, for such was the second personage of the Dialogue, "we have the best attraction in the country, and we've struck it rich accordingly. What time is it?"

Johnston held up a finger and a thumb.

"Half past one? Well, I'll get ready for work."

The silent member of the firm left the room and went up stairs, the manager called the door-keeper, had him open up, and then followed his assistant. What their happened is a mystery, suffice it to say that twenty minutes later, as the crowd entered the room to the

left on the second floor, no one was to be seen except the stolid figure of the Turk, Ty-Foo, and the less picturesque of the enterprising manager.

"Ladies and gentlemen, Ty-Foo on being wound up plays the game of Checkers or the game of Chess with any spectator who desires to try his skill, and defies the best Chess or Checker player in the world to win a game or a majority of games. The figure was made in Europe at a cost of twelve hundred dollars and subsequently brought to America, where it has been on exhibition for twelve years, having lost but one game in all that time. It is the only Chess Automation in the world and has never been explained or duplicated. We open the figure to satisfy you, and close it again to mystify you."

Here the manager paused in his speech and wheeling the figure a foot or two back (it was on the same level as the crowd, but separated from them by a light railing), opened simultaneously two doors, one in the breast of the figure and the other in the table on which the Chessmen stand. Springs, cog-wheels and wires were disclosed, seemingly filling up entire space within the figure. After everybody had seen the machinery which operated the elegant play of the Automaton, the doors were closed and locked. The manager continued his address:

"You see for yourselves the contents of the figure, and are left to draw your own conclusions as to how the Automaton works. I will now wind up the figure." A voice from the crowd interposed, "are you winding him up for Chess or Checkers now?" The crowd laughed, but the manager smil-

ingly averred that the figure was at present being wound up to play Checkers.

An opponent was found, and Ty-Foo scored an easy victory.

"Is there any gentleman present who wishes to try a game of Chess with the Automaton?" asked the manager; several offered to try their chances, and finally an opponent was selected. After being carefully wound up, Ty-Foo raised his right arm with a slow motion, lifted his King's Pawn between his jointed wooden fingers, and placed the man upon the fourth rank. The player of the Blacks, a stranger who seemed to be entirely unknown to the rest of the spectators, coolly did the same.

The score has not been preserved, but a strange feature of the game was observed by all who were near enough to watch the play move by move. Black defended himself with accuracy and gradually managed to secure a powerful attack. Finally, when victory seemed absolutely in his grasp (some even averred that he had a mate in sight) he made an incautious move which cost him the game. He left the hall, while the exhibition continued as before.

Several hours latter, when the manager and his partner were at supper, the latter remarked, "Unless I'm badly off the track, the stranger that I beat in that second game this afternoon, had some object in losing, for he had me regularly beaten and then threw away the game. Just wait a few days; the man thinks he is a better player than I am, and will turn up with a challenge. But put up all you're worth on me; we'll give him some lessons, or my name is not what it used to be.

*(To be continued.)*

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There was no hesitation about Cook, the operator of Ty-Foo's rival, or his manager. The next morning found in every newspaper of L— the announcement that Azrael, the most marvelous of all Chess Automata, and the only one ever made which was entirely mechanical, would be on exhibition the following week at Allen's Museum (another popular place of amusement in the city) and was ready to play a match for five hundred dollars with the Automaton at present on exhibition at the Musée des Arts, terms to be known

on application to T. T. Smith manager.

The challenge was immediately accepted by Charles Johnston, manager of Ty-Foo. The amount of the wage was deposited at the Third National Bank of L—, in charge of the treasurer of the L— Chess Club. The match was to consist of three games, or in case the scores should then be even, the next game was to decide the match. Each game was to be played out to an actual mate. Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday evenings of the next week were named as the times for play. The match was to take place at the Musée, on the stage. The usual admission prices were doubled. The president of the L— Chess Club, a good player and a noted problematist, consented to act as referee, and two of its members were made-umpires.

Excitement ran high among the Chess players of that city. Everybody who knew the difference between a Rook and a Knight was to be heard discussing the remarkable match. The general expectation among the players was that the new-comers, whoever they might be, stood small chance of escaping defeat.

Monday night at last arrived and an hour before the time, every seat in the auditorium of the Musée was filled. The great crowd waited impatiently until finally the curtain rose and disclosed the parties to the match. On one side of the stage was the familiar Automaton of the Musée in its

habit of dark red and with its Chessmen before it, ready to begin. On the other side was a figure precisely similar in shape, but clad in brown. In the centre of the stage was a large table, with a Chess board of great size and men to correspond, placed at an angle so that it was plainly visible to all. The referee and his two assistants sat at the centre table while the two managers wound up the Automatic combatants. Then in order to insure the impossibility of the managers directing or altering the moves made, they took their places at the table and the two umpires stood one by each figure, in readiness to call out the moves as made, and make upon the board before them the moves of the opposite side. The moves were then to be displayed to the spectators upon the large board in the centre. Everything being now prepared, the referee stepped forward and briefly described the conditions of the match. Lots were then drawn for the first move. Azrael was announced as the winner. The umpires, directed by Smith and Johnston, turned the two boards so that the black men were toward Ty-Foo and the white toward Azrael. The latter raised his arm and moved his King's Pawn forward. The match was begun.

A mere description of a game at Chess is generally well nigh unintelligible, and a full score would be out of place here, so to cut a long story short, it will be sufficient to say that the game was won by the black side, after a close contest. The score was then 1 to 0 in favor of Ty-Foo. But the following evening fortune transferred her allegiance, and amid great

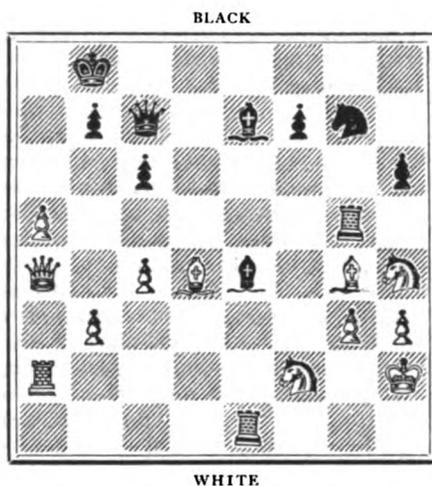
excitement, Azrael won the second game of the series.

### III

The score was now one to one, and as the attendance had been so great at the first two games, it was decided to have the third and last in a place which could hold a larger crowd than had yet been present. By good fortune, the dramatic season was still some weeks off, so that it was an easy matter to secure the Athenæum, the largest theatre in L—. The new departure was hurriedly announced, and the stage made ready for the accommodation of the parties to the great match. Two small dressing rooms on either side of the stage were assigned to the two managers and their figures. Smith was busied the whole day with various necessary preparations and it was after seven when he took a hasty supper, and as he left the hotel, called out to Cook, whom he left there, "You'll have to get in without my help to-night, I am not done with business yet. Our figure's in the small dressing room to the right of the stage. Get in without making a light in the room if you can, for there's no use of leaving any indication that anybody has been in the room since I was there this noon. Everything is ready: all you have to do is to get in and when the time comes, they will push the figure out on the stage. I'm going now. You have twenty minutes left to get over there."

Cook finished his supper and hurried over. He went directly to the room on the right side of the house, but found to his surprise that the door was locked. Knowing that Smith must have

meant the room on the right to one facing the audience, he crossed the stage, which was yet empty, and found a similar room on the other side. This was open and he found the Automaton awaiting him. He got in as best he could in the dark and in a few moments time, he heard some men enter the room and he was pushed upon the stage. To his surprise, when the men were placed before him, he was given the black men, but he understood at once that some agreement must have been made between Johnston and Smith, so he took the second move. As this was the decisive game, he gave his best endeavors to the game and by careful and yet bold play, he was soon on the road to a win. A fierce attack resulted in the loss of the exchange for White and a much superior position for Black. The interest of the audience was unbounded. Every move, good or indifferent, was greeted with applause. The game progressed. White made an ineffectual attempt at a new attack upon the Queen's wing where Black had stationed his King, but White's King's side was disordered and weak and seemed to be completely at the mercy of Black's pieces. Cook retained all his care, and instead of playing for an end game, manœuvred for a mate. White struggled in vain to escape and finally, on the thirty-second move, Black checked with his Rook, the first move of an easy mate in four. White had nothing to interpose, and was obliged to move his King, making the somewhat curious position shown below:



Cook did not hurry himself and was allowing the spectators the pleasure of gazing upon the position, when suddenly some one saw the catch, the simple move of Queen takes Pawn, check, and Cook to his surprise heard a voice call out "Hurrah for Ty Foo! He's got a win!"

To say Cook was thunderstruck would be a mild expression to describe the state of his mind upon hearing this. A glance at the position showed him that Black of course had the win, and the slow arm moved over the board and Black played Rook takes Pawn. A murmur of surprise ran through the building, but the surprise at this move was as nothing to the bewilderment which ensued when after White had snapped up the proffered Rook, Black proceeded to follow up his last startling stroke with

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36 B interposes	36 B×B ch.
37 Q×B mate.	

And Black, having forced mate upon himself, knocked the pieces from the board with a single sweep of his arm.

A yell of indignation rose from the spectators and those in front tried to get on the stage, but the management was too quick for them and the curtain fell and hid from the eyes of the world the sequel to the great match.

Before the whole crowd of umpires and stage hands, Johnston walked up to Ty-Foo. "You scoundrel," he exclaimed, apparently addressing the unhearing mechanism, "I'll have your life for throwing that game." And before he could be stopped, he jerked open the back of the sui-mated champion. In the fear that he would attempt an assault upon the unknown operator of the Automaton, the bystanders held him back. A derisive laugh was heard from the interior

of the figure and a second later out stepped, not the man whom Johnston had believed was inside, but the smiling form of Cook! The two players had been playing in the wrong figures by some strange mishap, but Cook had been the first to find it out and White, by taking the Rook, had allowed himself to be forced to defeat Ty-Foo, his own Automaton.

There was of course a dispute, but the referee awarded the match to Azrael. "You may doubt the value of sui mate problems," he would occasionally say in after-times, "but I can tell you of a case where one of them came in handy. It was about five years ago, when the two Automata——"

We have heard the story before, we answer, and return to our new number of the CHRONICLE.

FINIS

## THE VOYAGE OF LIFE

"One by one the sands are falling."

O! and O! cried a marry maid  
To-day I am just eighteen!  
And I am the fairest maiden  
That the world has ever seen!  
Of course I never can marry  
Anything less than an Earl  
For it would be very wicked  
To cast before swine this pearl!  
O! O! cried a pensive maid,  
To-day I am twenty-one;

Affairs are looking gloomy now,  
Something will have to be done!  
I think I almost could marry  
A man of some lower rank—  
A millionaire, or a viscount,  
Or the owner of a bank!  
O! and O! said a mournful maid,  
A man with his Clubs, I guess  
Is better than no man at all,  
Even if he does play Chess.

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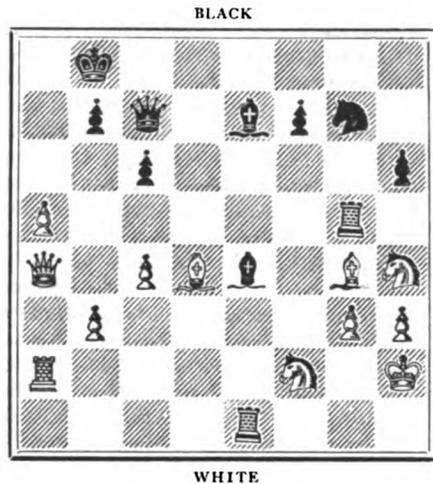
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