

which we move, and the laws by which we are moved, and who it is that places us on the board in due order and rank, unless there be a Power above us and an Intelligence superior to our own?"

Thus the King thought to recall the skeptical Pawn to the faith of Chessdom. But the Pawn, in nothing daunted by this formidable array of questions, made instant reply: "Who made us and our board, and ranks us on it? Why, of course, the very laws that govern us when we are here. As for the variety that enters into our life, and the changeful course through which we run, and the unlike ends we reach, all that results simply from the variety and subtlety of these laws, which are capable, no doubt, of producing far more numerous and surprising combinations than any we have hitherto seen; laws that, unaided, have already evolved us from the vegetable cells in which our species had its origin, and that in the future will probably develop from us species which will rank still higher in the scale of being.

And as for the touch we sometimes feel, or think we feel, and the sounds we sometimes hear, or fancy that we hear, well, of course, these must be mysteries in a world so large and complicated as ours. No one will undertake to explain everything. Every hypothesis leaves some 'transcendental element' or 'unexplained remainder' of the problem untouched. But, because we cannot explain the whole mystery of our existence, I, for one am not going to believe that which I cannot understand, and that contradict what I do understand. The laws of our movements, and that we are invariably controlled by them, this I can see for myself. But this Superior Intelligence which is said to use us and our laws freely for ends of its own, who ever saw that?"

What the King would have replied to this last outbreak of doubt and unbelief, I am unable to report, for, at this moment, a large, strong hand passed over the board, and swept all the pieces into a green bag, where they lay down in the dark together.

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### CAISSA'S HADES.

BY ROBERT H. SEYMOUR.

#### *The Bottomless Lake.*



BOUT one mile from the village of Fayetteville, N. Y., on passing through a meadow field, you enter a beautiful forest. You descend for a mile this valley of trees, when you come unexpectedly upon a small lake—not over five hundred feet in width, circular in form, with no outlet or inlet. The water is of an intensely deep green tinge, and the forest trees grow close around the lake; the broken and decayed branches on the water's edge are covered with sulphur, and the water has a sulphurous taste. The sides of ordinary lakes gently descend from the shore until the bottoms are reached; this lake has no beach or inclined sides, but from the shore perpendicular walls go straight down into unknown depths, and are as unsoundable as its very center. No one has as

yet been able to ascertain the depth of this wonderful freak of nature, the duplicate of which lies not far away in another just such valley.

Chittenango Springs, with its inexhaustible supply of sulphur water flowing from the sides of a solid rock are but a few miles away.

#### CHAPTER I.

##### *Confessions of a Chess Enthusiast.*

At the age of about twelve, it was my misfortune to learn the game of Chess, by watching my older schoolmates engaged in the pastime, or laborious pleasure. From that age until I became about thirty, I had little opportunity to practice or even play over the games of others.

To the *Danbury News* of eight years ago, which contained a Chess column conducted by Mr. B. M. Neill, I am first indebted for hours, days, weeks, and I may say years of time actually wasted in solving and composing problems. If the time thus spent had been employed in the

study of languages, I might have been the master of several! I also would have saved myself many hours of intense pain from that worst of all head twisting monsters, neuralgia. How absorbing this passion became in a problematic way, is revealed by the fact, that at dining hours, I turned the tea and coffee sets into Chess forms. Often have I endeavored to accomplish a mate in three moves with the tea pot, tea cups and sugar bowls, supplemented by the plates.

I even had the temerity to edit a Chess column in our local paper, for over three years, the agonies of which, the fates forbid, I may never undergo again; but when I had wiped that out of existence, the passion would not down, and I still wasted time for nearly a year in composing and solving the head racking monsters. Thank my good angel, that even is ended, by a most remarkable trance, which has forever cured me. Chess periodicals will hear from me no more in the future.

## CHAPTER II.

### *The Unfathomable Lake Again.*

Once more some unknown power drew me to the North, where this fathomless curiosity lay. It was one of July's quiet days of intense heat as I reclined by the side of the lake. I had heretofore, always resisted the inclination to bathe in these waters, for the feeling of perhaps sinking into unknown depths, never to return, restrained me from ever making the venture. The heat of the day and the dark tempting coolness of the water at my feet, were too much for me to resist, so I yielded to the impulse of the moment, and disrobing myself, plunged into the lake, striking out boldly to cross its waters; but half of the distance was accomplished, when I felt myself seized and dragged downward with great velocity, depriving me of all knowledge or sensibility.

## CHAPTER III.

### *The Chemical Chamber.*

How many hours I remained in an unconscious state is unknown to me. My restoration was as sudden as the deprivation of my senses. I found myself reclining upon a divan of remarkable upholstery, the supports of which represented finely engraved Chessmen, the material covering the divan had embroidered upon it in every part novel forms of my favorite

game. Every article in the apartment was embellished in a like manner. The hangings of the walls were covered with beautiful designs of Chess-boards; upon which on close examination, I found to be problems of two to one thousand moves, some five thousand in all. The ceilings were frescoed with heads of kings and queens most exquisitely painted. Upon one of the tables a Chess-board was inlaid with innumerable jewels, each square composed of a kind of precious stone, beautiful beyond description. A set of solid engraved gold and silver Chessmen were upon the board—some life-like figures, the eyes of which were sparkling with diamonds.

Upon one side of this large apartment a dais was constructed, ornamented with the prevailing designs, only still more elaborate.

At the foot of this throne an enormous Chess-board was inlaid in the floor, the squares of which, were of polished malachite and red jasper. This board was large enough for games with living Chessmen.

As I turned towards the opposite side of the room, I at once saw approaching me a figure which gave me a shock of terror, as it appeared to be a walking skeleton. Drawing nearer, I found an actual skeleton confronting me, the bones composed in every part of engraved Chessmen resembling polished ivory, every alternate joint of red and white hues, the skull having engraved upon it various Chess notations, which I afterwards discovered to be games of the noted masters. I lifted my arms to prevent its approach, when the skeleton did likewise, and my every movement was imitated, then suddenly it dawned upon my bewildered senses that it was a reflection of myself in a mirror. I was the skeleton, a Chess one at that, and I was now in the Chess-player's Hades.

I rushed from this appalling reflection, endeavoring to find an opening of escape; nothing but four solid walls rewarded my search. I sought the divan and sinking upon it, endeavored to bring my skeletonish thoughts to solve the hardest problem yet presented to my mind. Here I was in the Chess player's Hades, to receive punishment for my foolish waste of time in years gone by. Was it to be perpetual? Already I began to loathe the sight of Chessmen; no matter which way I turned they met my view, and seemed to be possessed

with demoniacal faces mocking me in my misery. Sleep I could not, hunger I felt not, feeling was nothing but the touch or sound of bone to bone.

The torture of punishment such as this exceeded anything ever conceived of, but I soon was to be awakened to yet more, of a different nature, through forms similar to my own.

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### *The Demon Chess King Appears.*

While in this conscience-stricken mood, a noise like thunder burst upon my ears, and flashes of brilliant electrical light appeared from the ceiling directly over the dais.

Descending from an opening above, came thirty-two skeletons similar to myself, only representing the different pieces used in Chess play, robed in red gold, and silver gauze, sixteen of each. These novel Chessmen arranged themselves in rows on each side of the dais in proper Chess order.

Immediately after this imposing array, another skeleton form of gigantic stature descended and seated himself upon the dais. It was the Demon Chess King. His face was fearful to contemplate, although entirely chemical in construction.

The next move was soon made apparent to my now terrified skull.

The Chess Demon summoned me to appear at the foot of his throne, and kneel in his presence, and to keep perfect silence until he made known to me his will and pleasure. He addressed me as follows:

“Sinful Chess-playing mortal, your fate is that of all those who waste time in playing this absorbing game of Chess in the upper world. Your punishment is to play with me daily five games of your entrancing favorite upon the board, and with the men you have already noticed on yonder table. We will also play five games with the living Chessmen now arranged upon each side of the throne, and upon the board which you are now kneeling upon. You are furthermore to solve the five thousand problems upon the walls of this room. When you accomplish this task and vanquish me in a majority of five thousand games, I will forever vanish and you will be free. As this is impossible you will doubtless see that your imprisonment is perpetual.”

I was then commanded to arise and take

my position at the table. This sentence was indeed a never ending one, for if the Demon King possesses any supernatural skill, I, as an inferior player, stood no chance whatever.

The King quickly placed himself opposite me, giving me invariably the opening move; the five games were quickly played, the Demon winning with ease. At my discomfiture the red imps of Chessmen upon the dais gave a hideous triumphant yell, while to my astonishment the silver men on the right, wept and moaned as in sympathy with me in my defeat. At this moment two more skeletons dressed as heralds descended from above, one approaching me by order of the King, conducted me to the dais whither the Demon had preceded me.

The living game at once commenced, the King commanding the red forces, assigning to me the silver warriors. The moves were made in a similar manner to such games in the world above, except that the pieces had been trained to place themselves upon the squares, as announced by the heralds, after the combatants had decided upon their respective moves. It is needless to say that I lost all the five games. The triumphant yell and sympathetic weeping were again repeated.

The King informed me that every day, the same programme would be carried out, and commanded me on their departure—which took place at once—to spend all my time in solving the mysteries of the problems upon the walls. This I proceeded to attempt, but I found a task before me impossible of completion. The two-movers were exceedingly difficult, faultless in construction and beauty, far surpassing the prize problems of by-gone days. Many of the three movers I could not unravel, and as to all the others it was needless to try them.

#### CHAPTER V.

##### *The Escape.*

The days rolled on, each one a duplicate of the other, except occasionally the Demon would allow me the odds of a Rook and Knight allowing me to win a few games out of many hundreds. This leniency proved my deliverance in an unexpected manner.

In one of the living games, upon passing the Queen as she stood upon her square, on my way to the Dias, I heard a soft whisper in the following words. “An-

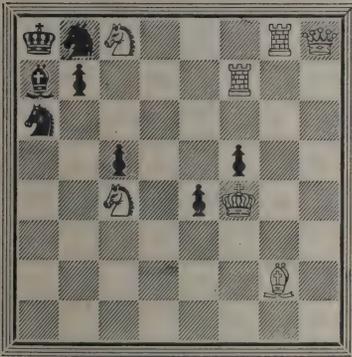
nounce mate, moving your Queen first, in two moves in any game, then, when we retire, destroy the mirror and your deliverance will be accomplished.

New hopes were raised, but many days elapsed; repetitions of the others; I won a few games with announced mates when the King gave odds of Rook and Knight but in the days that followed, never with the Queen. At length to banter me the Demon King gave me the odds of his Queen.

I now felt that this was my opportunity and I bent all my energies to the end in view, passing by many temporary mates with other pieces. Finally I was rewarded and announced mate in two moves, the key opening with the Queen. The following is the position:

Dedicated to the Chess editors of the world.

MOTTO. "FAREWELL."



White mates in two moves.

SOLUTION.

Q to Q R sq

Kt (a 6) moves.

Kt (b 8) moves.

B moves.

P to Kt 3.

P to K 6.

Q takes B. mate.

Kt to K 6. "

Kt takes B. "

R takes B. "

B takes P. "

As the assembly retired, the usual mocking laughter was missing, but the silver gauze party sang a song of triumph. My opportunity had come although I had little faith in my Queen's information. Seizing a bronze Chess statue, I dashed it against the mirror, it rebounded as if thrown on rubber; again and still again I repeated my efforts, but all in vain. I was about to turn away in despair, when the figure of my Queen appeared in the mirror, and upon a scroll over her crown stood out in letters of electrical brilliancy, the following:

"Try the diamond-eyed Chess Queen."

"Diamond cut diamond" at once flashed through my mind and I immediately seized the piece, and with the diamond eye cut the diamond glass in squares sixty-four in number to represent a Chess board, then pressing with all my strength against the glass it broke into sixty-four fragments. A mighty rush of waters followed, filling the room, and as my senses were departing, I was seized as before, and borne rapidly upward. When consciousness returned I found myself as it were awakening from a deep slumber on the shores of the fathomless lake, with the diamond-eyed Queen in my hand to corroborate this marvelous story.

