

The Bronze Bishop.

A bold move, Monsieur Dawitt, but, fatal. See here—I call 'check,' and in four moves monsieur is mated.

It was even so. Once again, when almost, as I thought, within an ace of winning, my friendly opponent, the old concierge, had, by an adroit manoeuvre, completely turned the tables on me and secured an easy victory.

During my stay at Dinant some few years since I spent many a pleasant hour over the chessboard in friendly contests with Pierre Baptiste, the concierge of the old citadel, whose battlements still tower upon the lovely Meuse beneath. I found Pierre a most civil and well-informed old fellow. He was a capital raconteur. His English was excellent, and his skill as a chess-player was, to me, little short of marvellous.

It was a curious, not to say an odd, set of chessmen with which Pierre and I did battle on these occasions. The white pieces were formed out of solid ivory, beautifully carved, whilst the black pieces were represented by quaintly moulded bronze figures, which at one time had apparently been gilded. This latter set was, however, imperfect, a leaden substitute fashioned by the concierge replacing one of the bishops which was missing.

I had often mentally remarked upon the loss of this piece, but now, prompted by some sudden motive of curiosity, as we were arranged the board for a fresh game, I questioned my companion respecting the lost concierge.

For a few moments Pierre was silent, then turning to me he said, gravely, 'If monsieur would care to hear it, there is a strange story associated with the loss of that bishop.'

For reply I pushed aside the chessboard, handed him my cigar-case, crossed my legs comfortably, and prepared to listen.

With a polite, 'Merci, bien,' the concierge selected a cigar, lit it, and, after a few preliminary puffs, began his story.

'Forty years ago, monsieur, I fell in love with the sweetest girl that ever trod the soil of France. You smile, monsieur, but it is as I have said.

'Gabrielle Joubert—for that was her name—was not handsome, as you English would say, but a pretty, winsome creature with an indescribable charm about her that captivated my heart the moment I first stepped into the sunshine of her presence.

'But, alas! even as one who, though he may back in the sunshine, may never approach the orb of day itself, so I—miserable I—might bask afar off in the light of her sunny smile and yet never hope to lessen by one hair's breadth the gulf—the social gulf—that cruelly divided us.

'In short, monsieur, I was a junior clerk in a large and influential mercantile establishment at Orleans, of which Monsieur Joubert—Gabrielle's father—was the chief.

'Picture then, if you can, my delirious delight when, a few months later, I discovered that my love glances, far from being lost upon the charming demoiselle, were being unmistakably reciprocated. After that I threw discretion to the winds, and, as you may imagine, lost little time in cultivating a closer acquaintance with my fascinating charmer. Fanned by the breath of mutual love our acquaintance quickly kindled into friendship, and so rapidly did our affaire-d'amour progress, that before three months had elapsed we had sworn eternal fidelity in a lovers' embrace.

'Ab, mon ami, those were happy days. And no one was more contented or lighter hearted than I.

'Of our tete a tete, however, M. Joubert was totally unaware, and perhaps it was as well, for had he known our secret I doubt not that I should have received instant dismissal.

'But monsieur is wondering what this has to do with the missing bishop.

'One morning I received a most agreeable surprise in the form of a billet from my chief inviting me to join him in a game of chess at his residence the same evening.

'Of course, I accepted the invitation, and, thanks to Gabrielle, spent a quite enjoyable evening with M. Joubert. But I was no match for my esteemed host at the chess table, for he was a veteran player, having, as I afterwards learned, taken part in international contests.

'Following this unexpected invitation came another and yet another, until at last my calls became so frequent, that I might almost have been regarded as a member of the household.

'During these visits, Gabrielle and I often found ourselves alone, and needless to say, when such occasions presented themselves our happiness was indeed almost indescribable.

'The concierge paused a moment to remove the ash from his cigar, and then continued:—

'Two years passed away, for me—two years of pleasurable toil varied by many an exciting encounter at chess with M. Joubert, and as many a clandestine interview with my chere Gabrielle.

'But now, daily and with ever-increasing significance, there came the intrusive reminder that sooner or later M. Joubert would have to be told that I, poor and insignificant, had aspired to the hand of his daughter.

'Ah, that interview! How instinctively I dreaded it!

'A dozen times did I set out resolved to face the ordeal, and a dozen times I slunk back again with 'to-morrow'—always—'to-morrow'—upon my lips. But the morrow came and went as before.

'You smile, monsieur. Naturally you would consider that each visit to my master's house would have rendered him kinder disposed toward me, and therefore have made my task all the easier. But it was not so. True, in entertaining me as a visitor, his manner was always marked by extreme courtesy and politeness, but his interest in me centered rather upon my abilities as a chess-player than upon any other qualifications which I may have possessed. Moreover, I had sound reasons to believe that he had far higher aspirations in the bestowal of his motherless daughter's hand than any I could ever hope to attain.

'At last there came a day. Ah, well I remember it, when, with thumping heart, I found myself striding dazedly across the lawn behind the mansion towards a table, at which, engrossed in a chess problem, sat M. Joubert.

'Never did culprit quake before a judge as did I that sweltering July afternoon, as with downcast eyes and in faltering accents I began the oration I had a hundred times previously rehearsed.

'What I said I scarcely know, for my head was speedily in a whirl; but long ere I had finished I had read my verdict in the stern-set visage before me.

'Still, I was not prepared for what followed.

'As soon as I had done M. Joubert motioned me stiffly to a chair. Then, after regarding me coldly for a few moments, he said, with a sneer: 'Of course you are prepared to do anything to prove your love for Mlle Gabrielle?'

'Anything, monsieur,' I assented, eagerly.

'He laughed ironically. 'Eh bien! You shall prove it by your skill against me here'—he indicated the chessboard between us. 'If you win Gabrielle shall be yours. If you lose—' He shrugged his shoulders significantly.

'You mock me, monsieur,' I cried, starting up distractedly at this cruel proposal. For, alas, I knew only too well what the result would be if I dared to accept that challenge. In all my encounters with M. Joubert I had never yet succeeded in vanquishing him, and I certainly could not hope to do so then.

'I will give you a minute to decide,' he said, pulling out his watch.

'A minute? Monstrous! Was it possible that he could be so cruel? I glanced at his face. Alas, not the faintest sign of his relenting was exhibited there.

'Then came the harrowing thought of losing Gabrielle, and that rendered me well-nigh frantic.

'I appealed to him. I protested. I raved. But it was all in vain.

'At last, in despair, I sat down.

'Ah! So you decide to play for Gabrielle?' he said. 'C'est bien. Ivory or bronze, Pierre?'

'Play for Gabrielle! My whole soul revolted at the thought. And yet, what could I do? Ah, what, indeed? The ivory pieces were nearest me, and—well—as a pretext for prolonging the interview, I selected them. I knew I couldn't win. And so we commenced.

'It was on this board, monsieur, and with these identical pieces that we played. 'Ah! that game. Shall I ever forget it? For my part, my object was, as I have said, to protract the interview. Accordingly, my opening moves were made with caution and deliberation, for I knew that the slightest slip on my part at the outset would speedily end the game.

'My adversary, quickly perceiving this, plied me incessantly with alluring baits, but I would not accept them. Merely to break up my position he placed his knights, bishops, and castles indiscriminately at my disposal, but I refused them all, even when I might have taken them with impunity.

'Meanwhile, stronger and stronger grew my defence, until at length I had made it practically impregnable, and I felt prepared to resist him at all points.

'Hour after hour passed, but there was no material change in our respective positions. The sun had now become obscured by ominous-looking clouds which threatened before long to terminate our outdoor contest. Nevertheless we held on—the besieger, I the besieged. Mon Dieu! how he bombarded me! Time after time I thought it was all over. But my defence was sound, and his shots, terrible as they were, somehow never penetrated home.

'At length, whether my persistent defensive tactics rendered my opponent reckless I know not, but suddenly, in an apparently unguarded moment he left his queen unprotected. How my heart leapt! That was no ruse, I knew. The next moment my trembling hand had borne it off in triumph.

'The unexpected had happened, and now, thanks to my partner's oversight, there rose before me a prospect of victory hitherto undreamed-of. Ah, if I could only win! Dare I hazard a change of tactics? Why not? Why should I not win? I thrilled at the thought. Then the image of Gabrielle came before me, and I hesitated no longer.

'Quickly assuming the aggressive, I swooped down upon my adversary, capturing in rapid succession a rook and two knights, and sustaining only trivial loss myself. Then, slowly but surely, I bore down upon him, cutting off his retreats one after another, until at length I had him fairly at bay. And yet even then I hesitated to strike, fearing his terrible fangs.

'Ma foi! how magnificently he fought! How cool! and yet, how keenly alert to avail himself of any momentary advantage. In his very death-struggles, as it were, he contested every inch of ground he possessed.

'But at last I made the move—the first of a series by which I should vanquish him.

Oh! What an unconsciously long time he was. I glanced up at him covertly. As I did so a sinister smile passed across his face. Instantly my heart misgave me. 'Again my eyes swept the board to reassure myself of my position. Mille Diabes! what had I done? Oh, fool that I had been!

'In my seemingly irresistible attack I now discovered for the first time a flaw—a flaw which, if detected by my formidable rival, would place me entirely at his mercy. To a thousand casual observers it would have been indiscernible. But to him—Ah! Would he see it? Had he already seen it? Why did he smile? Why didn't he move? Why—Ah! misery!—even as the questions traversed my heated brain his hand was already upon the bishop with which he was to deal the fatal stroke.

'An involuntary groan escaped my lips. It was his turn now, and for several moments, that seemed ages, he toyed meditatively with the bronze piece twirling it round and round with his fingers. Mon Dieu! the agony I endured. Once I essayed to rise, but some fascinating influence riveted me to my chair.

'At last he looked up and smiled grimly.

'You may bid Gabrielle adieu,' he said.

'Those were the last words he uttered! Scarcely had that sentence passed his lips when—merciful heavens!—even as he was in the act of moving to the fatal square, there came a blinding flash of lightning! For an instant it played upon the mitre of the bronze bishop, and then the hand which held it twisted convulsively, the bishop was whirled through the air like a stone from a catapult, and M. Joubert fell forward upon the table, scattering the chessmen in all directions. He was dead!

The concierge paused, and for a while we were both silent.

'That is the story of the missing bishop,' he said at length.

'And Gabrielle?' I inquired.

'Ah, monsieur, it was a terrible shock to the poor girl, but she survived it. Twelve months later I persuaded her to marry me, and all though many heavy misfortunes have since befallen us, we have never ceased to be happy in each other's love.

A Princess's Post-Cards.

The Duchess of York has one of the most interesting collections of post cards on record. It has been contributed to by the Sovereigns of every land where post-cards are used, the German relations of Her Royal Highness supplying by far the greatest number, many of which are very picturesque and artistic. Post-card albums are for the moment out of both stamp and autograph albums from favor, and have the advantage in both respects, inasmuch as they supply the stamp of various nationalities as well as the autograph of some friend or distinguished individual—and, furthermore, a dainty bit of scenery.

BORN.

Pictou, to the wife of John McVicar, a daughter.
Fredericton, Mar. 18, to the wife of A. Boyd, a son.
Albert, Mar. 20, to the wife of John Dunlop, a son.
Pictou, Mar. 12, to the wife of Jno. T. Condon, a son.
River Hibbert, Mar. 15, to the wife of J. R. Gay, a son.
Shulee, Mar. 15, to the wife of Harry Watson, a son.
Sydney, Mar. 21, to the wife of Charles McIsaac, a son.
Digby, Mar. 17, to Mr. and Mrs. T. Farnsworth, a son.
Torbrook, Mar. 14, to the wife of Arthur Goucher, a son.
Joggins, Mar. 13, to the wife of James Kennedy, a daughter.
Truro, Mar. 17, to the wife of J. W. Lepper, a daughter.
Campbellton, Mar. 20, to wife of J. C. Miller, a daughter.
Campbellton, Mar. 4, to the wife of W. J. Russell, a daughter.
Torbrook, Mar. 15, to the wife of Arthur Wheelock, a daughter.
Middleton, Mar. 22, to the wife of Charles Harris, a daughter.
East Torbrook, Mar. 19, to the wife of Martin Uhlman, a son.
Barrington, Mar. 17, to Mr. and Mrs. Tupper Sanford, a son.
Halifax, Mar. 22, to Mr. and Mrs. Henry A. Landers, a son.
Joggins, Mar. 12, to the wife of Arthur Miller, a son.
River Hibbert, Mar. 7, to the wife of James Hennessy, a son.
Moncton, Mar. 20, to the wife of Samuel H. Steeves, a son.
Beaver River, Mar. 20, to the wife of Newton Wyman, a son.
Joggins, Mar. 14, to the wife of Chas. D. Phillips, a son.
Lower Canada, Mar. 12, to Mr. and Mrs. Leander Burdige, a son.
North Brookfield, Mar. 13, to the wife of E. F. Morse, a son.
North East Margaree, Mar. 7, to the wife of John J. Crowder, a daughter.

MARRIED.

Oxford, Mar. 15, by Rev. C. Munro, Gussie F. Izzie to David W. Dunn.
Halifax, Mar. 17, by Rev. W. J. Arms, one, John Smith to Jennie Purcell.
Truro, Mar. 11, by Rev. A. L. Geggie, Richmond Peters to Lucy Caudwell.
Yarmouth, Mar. 8, by Rev. N. B. Dunn, Byron Bower to Ophelia Roberts.
Windsor, Mar. 8, by Rev. A. A. Shaw, John A. Spencer to Hallie M. Dickie.
Kentville, Feb. 1, by Rev. B. N. Nobles, Chas. C. Vealand to Mattie Benjamin.
Napan, Mar. 18, by Rev. D. Henderson, Ernest F. Escuminac to Isabel A. Wilson.
Waterville, Feb. 23, by Rev. E. O. Read, Wilfred E. Stillman to Gertrude Peterson.
Acadia Mines, Mar. 14, by Rev. James McLean, Fred Dunlop to Annie MacAloney.
Rockland, Mar. 21, by Rev. A. H. Hayward, Frank S. Lewis to Ella V. Estabrooks.
Rooft Point, Mar. 22, by Rev. H. A. Hartley, Mr. Geo. Winchester to Mrs. Susie Dittmar.
Lower Bayville, Mar. 21, by Rev. A. W. Mahon, B. D. Harry Wiley to Miss McCracken.
Bridgetown, Mar. 18, by Rev. F. M. Young, Ingram B. Bohak to Mrs. Minnie Dagoley.

DIED.

PARROBOTO, Howard Homes 16.
Halifax, Mar. 20, John Churchill.
Halifax, Mar. 22, Peter Pierce 68.
Milton, Mar. 19, Catherine Burrill 82.
East Boston, Mar. 19, David Frizzen.
St. John, Mar. 23, Ethel B. Williams.



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Ba to, Mar. 16, George W. Blaney 59.
Halifax, Mar. 21, Jeremiah Murphy 66.
Carleton, Mar. 25, John B. Beattie 67.
St. George, Mar. 16, Peter McVicar 73.
Graham, Mar. 16, Anthony Spurr 65.
Semerest, Mar. 9, Dr. Frederick Best 69.
Greenhead, Mar. 25, Thomas Murphy 80.
Winnipeg, Feb. 8, James W. Murray 22.
Wenworth, Mar. 8, Sarah Ann Beebe 72.
Meteghan, Mar. 7, Maude V. Comeau 71.
St. John, Mar. 19, Jeremiah McCarthy 65.
Beaver Harbor, Mar. 12, Leveret Bates 19.
Windsor Forks, Mar. 11, Wm. Benedict 59.
Tupperville, Feb. 18, David S. Chipman 55.
Acadia Valley, Mar. 20, John H. Warr 44.
Sen I. Rawdon, Mar. 14, John McLaren 76.
St. John, Mar. 27, Miss Dorothea Murphy.
Upper Kennetcook, Mar. 11, John Clark 74.
Onslow Station, Mar. 19, R. Turner Blair 75.
Halifax, Mar. 23, Thomas P. O'Donoghue 27.
Halifax, Mar. 22, Rosalita B. Macklin 66.
French River, Mar. 5, Mrs. John Robson 76.
Beaver Bank, Mar. 16, Thomas B. Grove 54.
Mainadieu, Mar. 8, Daniel, son of John Brown.
Pictou Road, Mar. 22, Elizabeth J. Fielding 89.
Gull Cove, Gabarus, Mar. 15, Reuben Hardy 73.
Roxbury Mass., Mar. 20, Edward J. Sweeney 30.
Tidnish Mar. 11, Bessie M., wife of Bliss Wells 24.
Greenfield, Colchester, Mar. 16, Ralph McCabe 72.
Halifax, Mar. 20, Sarah, wife of Wm. Shadbolt 45.
Salem, Mass., Mar. 15, Ira M., son of E. P. Hughes.
St. John, Mar. 25, Elizabeth, wife of Edward Walsh.
St. Peter's C. B., Mar. 1, Mrs. Mary Catherine 35.
Sydney Mines, Mar. 1, the wife of Ephraim Colley.
James River, Mar. 1, son of Hugh McGee 14 months.
Berwick, Mar. 16, Prudence, wife of Isaac North 69.
Port Morien, Feb. 20, Sarah, wife of David Peppitt.
Maple Ridge, Antigonish, Mar. 4, Donald Fraser 55.
St. John, Mar. 25, Gussie, daughter of James Barry 17.
Bea River, Mar. 15, Cassie, wife of W. W. Wade 40.
Halifax, Mar. 19, Ronald, son of E. Budd Rogers 2.
Halifax, Mar. 17, Margaret, wife of late Patrick Ryan 60.
Upper Tidnish, Mar. 8, Annie C. wife of Elmore Webb 31.
St. John, Mar. 20, Eliza, widow of the late William Rogers 73.
Nauwigewunt, Kings Co., Mar. 12, Charlotte H. Clark 72.
Mill Brook, Mar. 13, Viola G., daughter of John J. B. aton 14.
Peterswick Harbor, Mar. 17, the relict of Geoffrey Gilbert 72.
Westmorland Point, N. B., Mar. 22, Thomas E. Oulton 55.
Richibucto, Mar. 24, Lizzy T., daughter of Chas. J. Payne 23.
St. John, Mar. 16, Henrietta A., wife of Moses T. Kimball 67.
Litchfield, Mar. 10, Sadie J., daughter of William Woodworth.
Granville Ferry, Willett D. infant son of William H. Stanfield.
Pictou Island, Mar. 4, Annie, widow of Alex. F. Campbell 83.
Plymouth, Mar. 11, Amelia, wife of the late Sydney O'Neill.
Halifax, Mar. 15, John, infant son of Ernest How-McLellan 70.
Central Economy, Mar. 17, Jane, widow of Samuel McLellan 70.
Truro, Mar. 17, Avis M., daughter of J. W. Angwin 5 months.
Pomquet Cove, Catherine, daughter of late John John Lyne 37.
Haverhill, U. S., Mar. 23, Mary, widow of the late James Willett.
Stamford, Connecticut, Mar. 14, Clara, wife of Capt. C. W. Gilliat.
St. George, Mar. 15, Mary Ann, relict of the late John O'Neill 2 months.
Brookline, Mass., Mar. 17, Alretha E., widow of Norman Mullen.
Bridgetown, Mar. 21, Wm. Stephen, son of Harry Ruggles 3 months.
St. John, Mar. 23, Frank C., infant son of A. J. MacLellan 2 months.
Central Economy, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles R. Taylor 16 months.
Fredericton, N. B., Mar. 17, Jane relict of the late C. A. Story Hooper 87.

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New Glasgow, Mar. 17, Annie C. widow of the late William L. Graham 85.
Barrington, Mar. 17, Mary A. daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joshua Atwood 30.
South Portland Maine, Mar. 20, Donald H., infant son of Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Howard.
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Lve. Digby 1.30 p. m., ar. Yarmouth 3.35 p. m.
Lve. Yarmouth 9.00 a. m., ar. Digby 11.43 a. m.
Lve. Digby 11.55 a. m., ar. Halifax 5.45 p. m.
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