

JUDGMENT.

(Continued from page five.)

"Will you give me your word of honour, Mr Chase, that Mr Foster is safe in a foreign land?"

"On my word of honour, he is at this moment safe across the seas," replied the man earnestly.

"And, if I marry you, will you swear that you will use all your wealth and power to prevent any harm coming to him?"

"I swear it!"

"Then, Mr Chase, I will be your wife whenever you choose," said the girl.

"Kitty!" he cried, springing forward.

But she raised her hand and motioned him back.

"Not now," she said. "Please let me go; I want to be alone."

Abashed, he drew back, and Kitty, turning from him, passed out of the room on to the terrace, bathed in the morning sunshine.

"Poor child!" he said to himself. "I have frightened her. I am a fool to force matters like this, but patience was never one of my virtues. How splendid she is!"

Meanwhile, Kitty passed from the terrace on to the lawn, and then made her way to the solitudes of the rose avenue at the further end.

He stopped, breathless, in front of her, and she perceived it was one of the stable men.

"What is the matter?" she exclaimed.

"Please, miss, there's been an accident!" gasped the man breathlessly. "He's nigh on killed! We've taken him to the summer-house yonder, and Parker has gone for the doctor. But I'm feared it won't be no good. His skull is stove in."

"But who is it?"

"That old gardener, ma'am, what Mr Pelham Webb brought."

"Poor fellow! In the summer-house, you say? I will go and see him," said Kitty.

To be Continued.

SOUTH SCHOOL COMMITTEE.

The usual meeting of the South School Committee was held on Tuesday, May 18. Present: Mr A. W. Jones (in the chair), Messrs C. S. Longuet, Gardiner, C. Paton, T. D. Lennie, G. Dyer, and Mesdames Parkins, McGregor, and Garrett. The Headmaster's report was read and received. The report stated the roll number as 670, with an average attendance of 625. Since 1919 the roll number has dropped considerably. This has been due almost entirely to families removing from the district, the number who have left for other reasons not exceeding ten. Attached to the Headmaster's report is a tabulated statement showing the results gained during his six years as Headmaster and those of six years previous. This shows that the average number of certificates, proficiency and competency gained per year during Mr Hain's term of office was 70, during the previous six years 48. For three years Mr Hain had only one male assistant, this when the average attendance was running to 800.

Mr Lennie reported that the Committee had visited the school and found the school organised and the work done by the children all that could be desired.

The Chairman reported having interviewed Mr McCaw re new South School. Mr McCaw stated definitely that the new school would be commenced in two months' time.

It was moved that a letter of appreciation be sent to the teaching staff congratulating them on the excellence shown by the scholars in marching and drilling.

A sub-committee was formed to carry out the resolution passed at the house-holders' meeting, that Mr J. Stead's long and faithful service be suitably recognised. With him were coupled the names of Mr McCulloch and Mr W. Stead.

The tabulated statement is as follows:-

SIX YEARS, 1908-1913.

Year.	Average.	Proficiency.	Competency.	Passes.	Total
1908	690	39	7	46	
1909	692	50	3	53	
1910	742	40	2	42	
1911	761	61	1	62	
1912	756	42	1	43	
1913	919	62	1	63	
Totals	4510	274	15	299	
Average	752	45	2 1/2	49	

SIX YEARS, 1914-1919.

Year.	Average.	Proficiency.	Competency.	Passes.	Total
1914	971	71	6	77	
1915	792	71	15	86	
1916	833	53	12	65	
1917	763	58	8	66	
1918	733	53	11	64	
1919	660	53	8	61	
Totals	4752	359	60	419	
Average	792	60	10	70	

Scholarships gained, 14.

In 1916 and 1917 a South School pupil headed the list for Southland in the Scholarship Examination.

The Nature Column.

(By "Student.")

"Student" will be pleased to receive notes on any branch of Natural History. Observations on birds, insects, plants, etc., will be equally welcome. If using a pen-name, will correspondents please enclose real name and address.)

Niagara.—Your enquiries will be dealt with next issue.

The Bluff hill—though most of those who visit it consider it more from the standpoint of a convenient place to consume picnic dainties—is of more than passing interest to the naturalist. Here we have a hill made up of practically one homogenous piece of rock. Expelled from the bayass in a semi-liquid state aeons ago and forming as it were a gigantic blister at a great depth in the earth. Long continued cooling has produced the tough handsome granite rock called *norite* which we have to-day. We know it cooled at a great depth because of the character of the crystals. It varies in appearance, the grain being fine in some places and coarse in others. As a general rule it is coarse grained and speckled black & white. The black mineral is mostly hornblende and the white constituents feldspars. A microscopic analysis shows the rock to contain feldspar, augite, hypersthene and hornblende. Even the molecules of the chemical constituents in rocks "flow from form to form," just as much as do "the solid lands." In the Bluff rock the growth of a different crystalline gradually taking the seen. Hornblende gradually taking the place of augite and hypersthene. Augite crystals from this region have in some cases completely changed to hornblende though retaining former crystalline shape. Rocks like other things change with age and fall to dust. The *norite* is showing the passing of time, but is a tough sturdy rock still. In point of lasting quality and beauty, there is probably nothing in New Zealand much better.

A greenish tint in a rock is often a sign of age. The rocks at Greenhills (our local road metal), and at Howell's Point, Riverton, owe their green colour to the decomposition of the minerals in them.

When the Bluff hill welled up it caused some commotion in its neighbourhood. There was much crushing and squeezing and intense heating. This probably happened in the jurassic period when New Zealand rose from the waters to take on continental dimensions, a time long anterior to man or his immediate ancestors. Some geologists say thirty million years ago.

The effects of this disturbance can be seen in the older rocks which fringe the shore from Henderson street, round some distance towards the Point. It will be noticed that the rocks here are of a thin platy character. They are noticeably different from the round boulders met with about the Point. They have taken on a schistose character and having been altered belong to the metamorphic rocks. The strip of rocks so altered is a hornblende schist. The rock on the quarantine station side also much altered, is a porphyry and together with the hornblende schist form part of the metamorphic aureole surrounding the Bluff hill.

These older rocks are also probably igneous in origin, for they appear to be a continuance of the dykes which outcrop towards Greenhills.

Long ages of erosion by water and weathering gradually removed the rocks which covered the hill, and left it standing like a lone sentinel on the outskirts of civilisation. Looking at it from the north we see at intervals flat steps on the sides. These are no doubt raised beaches which stand witness to the fact that the hill was probably formed before these islands were submerged till little of them remained above the waters. Then as the land rose again the beaches were formed.

If you climb the hill on a fine day and look towards Fortrose, you will notice that Awarua Bay and Waituna Lagoon make a long strip of water just inside the beach line. Probably Bluff harbour was formed somewhat in this fashion. The currents sweep along the south and up the east coast of the South Island, forever carrying with them their load of sand and gravel. Behind the shelter of the hill the sand would be dropped and gradually a spit would be built which in time would reach to Fortrose. The sand and gravel would be piled up highest at the Fortrose end, and the swelling waters of the rivers would break through at the weakest spot close to the Bluff. By and by lateral spits would divide the lagoon off and it would form its own outlet. The same type of spit can be seen at many places on the East Coast of the South Island. A glance towards Riverton will show that the Oreti has also been driven along the coast till it reached solid rock.

A lot of interesting things can be seen from the Bluff hill, but to these we will return another day.

DRAUGHTS.

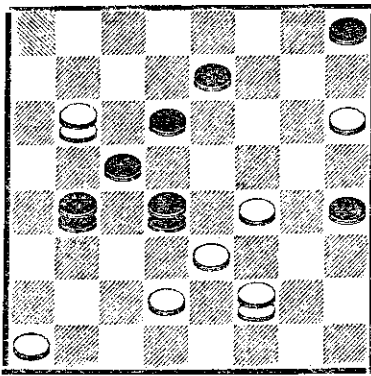
(Conducted by F. Hutchins.)

Draughts Club meets in Athenaeum Wednesday and Saturday evenings. Visitors welcome.

PROBLEM 10.

(By A. Rattray, Cabrach.)

BLACK.



WHITE.

Black to play and win.  
Black 4, 7, 10, 14, 20, Kings 17, 18.  
White 12, 19, 23, 26, 29, Kings 9, 27.

The finish is very pretty.

The above is an exceptionally good stroke from the "Draughts World" and should prove interesting to young and old. Solutions should be sent in to "Draughts Editor," 28 Biggar street.

In the Australasian championship held in Brisbane (says the "Western Mail"), in his seventh game with Evans, Egan gained a fine win with the black forces in an Ayrshire Lassic attack (11—15 24—20) the visiting expert continued his attack down the centre of the board by the exchange made by the move 11—15, etc., and Evans adopted the less favoured but nevertheless strong defence on the double corner side of the board, arising from the move 32 to 28. Egan made the unorthodox reply of 7—11, a move from which, however, he developed a powerful attack which he maintained by exact manoeuvring. He won by forcing a capture and then, with a king as convoy steering down the board two men, which otherwise would have been open to the attacks of his adversary's two kings. The eighth game was drawn, the set thus went to Egan by one win and seven draws. At the close of the hard fought round the Southerner described Mr Evans as being one of the finest crossboard players he had ever met.

The following is a game played between the first and second prize-winners in the recent Victorian championship.

DENNY.

10.14	8.12	19.24	6.9
23.18	22.18	28.19	7.2
14.23	6.9	6.10	9.14
27.18	25.22	18.15	2.6
12.16	4.8	2.6	14.18
32.27	24.19	22.18	23.14
16.20	1.6	13.22	16.32
26.23	19.15	26.17	6.10
11.16	7.10	9.13	32.27
30.26	14.7	18.14	31.24
9.13	3.19	13.22	20.27
18.14	21.17	14.7	14.9

Drawn.

Below is a good stroke in what is known as the slip cross opening:—

11.15	18.11	4.3	19.15	16.20	32.23
23.18	16.20	25.22	3.8	28.19	6.24
8.11	24.19	8.11	22.17a	9.14	Black
27.23	7.16	29.25	20.24	18.9	Wins
11.16	22.18	10.14	17.10	11.27	

(A) Play 31.27, 2.7, 22.17, 7.10, 17.13, 10.19, 26.22, 19.26, 30.23, and black now appears to be in trouble, the solution is instructive, continue: 11.15, 18.4, 14.17, 21.14, 9.13, 23.14, 6.9 13.6, 1.26, and draw.

Our readers will peruse the following not only with interest, but with amusement:—The lovers of the game of draughts have doubtless taken part in many a curious game (says the Glasgow "Evening News"), but I question if the ancient and honourable "dambro" has ever supported queerer men than it does every day in a boot and shoe factory near Glasgow. The dinner hour is just rather long for those of the hands who do not return home for that meal; and the management, disapproving of the aimless loafing which was apt to result, were only too glad to take a hint from two of the men who always spent the extra twenty minutes or so in playing draughts. They instituted a draughts league among their workers and offered prizes. The draughts boards were supplied, but the men were made by the players out of odd scraps of leather, the different sides in this case being "square" and "round," instead of "black" and "white." So far the experiment has been a great success, and several players of no despicable calibre have developed among the "Dinner Hour League."

Passing Notes.

BY JACQUES.

Laugh where we must, be candid wherever we can.—Pope.

The most astonishing thing about the Prince of Wales' visit is our astonishment at discovering that he is a gentleman after all.

A Sydney lady recovered £20 damages from a hair specialist for turning her golden hair green, instead of red.—S. Times, May 17.

Perhaps she's anti-Irish altogether in her views.

Perhaps she's merely Orange, with a taste for yellow hues;

But be the reason what it may, one thing is clearly seen,

She has a strong aversion to the wearin' of the green.

Professor Chilton says the time will come when we shall ask not how many pounds a man has, but how he got them, and what he is doing with them. That is the worst of these scientific fellows; they are always trying to see the other side of the millennium.

It may be salutary, but it is not always pleasant to hear the truth about ourselves, especially such (if truths they, indeed, be), as Mark Prentiss, the American financial authority, has been uttering lately. According to him, Great Britain is practically bankrupt at the present moment, and, failing something like a miracle, actual repudiation is an easy and early possibility. He admits that it seems like sacrilege to talk of British repudiation, but the facts are there, and to ignore them is not to change them. Great Britain's plight is such, according to this expert, that any banker, asked to lend money on such securities as she has to offer, "would reach a very quick and positive decision." Her foreign investments have shrunk by 75 per cent; her interest charges have risen enormously (amounting to £30 annually per man against an average earning capacity of £125), her expenditure, even now that the war is over, is vastly in excess of her income; and industrial and political disturbances have lowered her productivity to a startling degree. Mr Prentiss does not mince matters. He says that England's seemingly favourable Budget depends on figure juggling. In other words, it is a "cooked" balance sheet. Altogether, if his statements are trustworthy, our financial outlook just now is a very bleak one. Only two things can save us, he thinks. American help (this he favours for his own country's sake. "America," he says, "cannot exist, the only prosperous nation in a world of bankrupts") and a resolute endeavour on our own part to produce more and consume less. The first condition is possible, of course, but, judging by the present chaotic state of industrial Britain, it seems a far cry to the attainment of the second.

The passion for whist and dancing has entered into many of the Sunday schools in England, and is causing the ministers and officials an anxious time. In some of the Sunday schools there whist and dancing have been permitted for many years.—Recent par. "Southland Daily News."

Our Sunday school is booming—we are roping every sinner in; The penitents are coming till they overflow the place;

Our hearts are filled with gladness, for we surely backed a winner in Discovering in dancing such a potent aid to grace.

The meetings that we used to have were lacking in variety,

And so we changed our methods and brought 'em' up-to-date;

For we found that turkey trotting gave a stimulus to piety,

While tangos and Missouris solved the problem of the plate.

We've done with gloom and prudery, for ever we've discarded 'em;

We've felt the fascination that the light fantastic has;

Our services are nicer, now that we have interlarded 'em

With two step and maxina, with the bunny hug and jazz.

No longer through an hour or more the preacher drives drearily

About the flesh's frailty, and the sinner's horrid fate;

A sermonette (a little one) and then we caper cheerily

In polka or mazurka—then we pass around the plate.

'Tis sweet to see the brothers and the sisters all embracing in

The waltz, and tasting all its little titillative thrills;

'Tis sweet to hear their laughter, as they're riotously racing in

Time gallop, or cavorting through the mazes of quadrilles.

'Tis sweet to see the older folks, the gouty and rheumatical,

At whist, or crib, or other pastimes sober and sedate;

But sweeter far than all it is—our joy is quite ecstatical,

To hear the bobs and tanners as they jingle in the plate.

The saddest truth in the world to-day is that the terrible struggle from which we have just emerged has proven almost barren of beneficent result. It is true that we have clipped the claws and pinions of the German eagle, but beyond that we cannot be said to have achieved anything worth the while. The aims and ideals for which our sons gave their lives in hundreds of thousands seem as far off realisation as ever. We were told by our leaders that to conquer Germany was not the sole object of the war; that that was, in fact, only a means to great ends. First, it was said, war must vanish from the earth, and this war was to end war. Our boys fought that those who came after them might live in peace—yet we see to-day on every hand, feverish preparations for the next struggle. The nations were to dwell together in commercial amity, yet, now that the bond of common danger is dissolved, they are again grappling in deadly rivalry with each other. Political meddling was to cease—yet France seems bent on shaping the politics of all Europe (a dangerous course, as history has frequently shown). The world was to be safe for democracy—yet Lloyd George has declared open war on the most democratic element in British politics, the Labour party. The right of small people to self-determination was to be held sacred, yet we have already seen that right repeatedly abrogated where its exercise might clash with the interests of the more powerful nations. And so on, right down a far lengthier list than can be stated here. The world is no better to-day for the war; nor does it show any promise of becoming so. We are cheating our heroic dead out of what they paid for with their lives.

The health authorities move in a mysterious way their blunders to perform. Wherever the 'flu appears they promptly close the picture theatres and other places of entertainment; not to all alike, but to children under fifteen years of age. The logic of it is rather obscure. The danger lies in congregation rather than in juvenility; therefore picture theatres, churches, and other places of amusement should be closed to all, old and young alike, during an epidemic. It is rather tough on the kiddie to be cheated of his fun, and then to catch the 'flu at home after all from the picture loving elders of the family.

There are stars which are said to race around their orbits at the rate of 400 miles a second. Arcturus, which can be seen clearly, is declared to get over 300 miles in a second, and Groombridge 200 mile in the same brief period of time.