Our Chess Corner

The initial step for an international chess masters' tournament during the world's fair here in 1915 has been taken. James A. Baer, manager of the bureau of conventions and societies of the Panama-Pacific Exposition company, wrote to J. J. Dolan, president of the Mechanics' Institute Chess club, as follows: "I have just received a new announcement in The Call regarding a proposed meeting of chess masters here in 1915. Knowing your interest in such matters, I shall hope to hear from you in regard to same at your convenience. This falls in nicely with the plans discussed by the machers of the Mechanics' Institute, and the whole subject of a great chess tournament during the exposition will be taken up with the directors of the P.-P. I. E. in the near future.

San Francisco is widely known as a cosmopolitan city, and the various "colonies" of foreign born residents are noted for the high class and character of their individual citizens. A few months ago, to the stirring strains of martial music, we saw hundreds of Greeks marching down Market street to the ferry building—the first stage of their long journey back to their native land. The imaginative onlooker's first thought probably was, "Where did they all come from?" Then, perchance, the great lines of Byron would occur to him (for the poet and his beloved Greece are inseparably bound together):

Must we but weep o'er days more bless'd?
Must we but blush?—our fathers bled.
Earth! render back from out thy breast
A remnant of our Spartan dead!
Of the three hundred, grant but three,
To make a new Thermopylae.

But not all the Greeks returned, for there are very costly and some must stay behind to furnish the necessary sinews. Last week we received a very interesting letter from Mr. V. Fermann, a local cigar merchant (who inclined solutions to The Call problems). He remarked: "There are about 50 chess players in the Greek coffee houses here, and all of them are interested in your problems." There is a story that during the closing years of our civil war a big, husky peddler approached an old house and asked of a young lady (the men were all in the army) if she wanted any pins, etc. Measuring the vendor from head to foot, she scornfully asked: "Why aren't you at the front?" To which the pin peddler replied: "Why, do they need pins here?" However, any such innuendo at the expense of the Greek who remained in San Francisco is amply answered by the above explanation.

An exchange is authority for this tale of Capablanca. We pass it along, without vouching for its truth:

A lawyer, at a luncheon at Narragansett, told a story about the famous chess player, Jose Capablanca.

"On an Atlantic liner," he said, "Capablanca and I once sat down to a game of chess together. I played my best, though, of course, I had no hope of beating Capablanca; still I played my best, and I flattered myself was putting up a very stiff game, indeed.

"Once, after a certain well pondered move, I heard Capablanca sigh. A long time passed without his playing. Three, four, five, ten minutes went by. Could it be that I had him? Was I going to beat the great Capablanca? In joyous excitement I looked up from the board to find Capablanca asleep.

"I woke him up and he checkmated me. It was the worst case of punctured vanity I ever underwent."

According to latest advices, Marshall and Capablanca are tied for first place, after eight rounds, in the pending masters' tournament at Havana. Kupchik is third. Press reports from the Cuban city are to the effect that the people are very enthusiastic in regard to the tourney. La Discussion, a Havana journal, devoting a whole page to the records of the competing chess masters. A reception was held by the mayor and other officials in honor of the players. Janowski not added to his popularity by his defeat of the Cuban champion in the fifth round.

More than any other game, the terminology of chess peculiarly lends itself to the illustration and elucidation of other subjects. David Starr Jordan (undoubtedly a chess player), in his recent address in this city on "The War Against War," recalled how Napoleon, almost exactly 100 years ago, led the flower of the French army to Russia, where it eventually perished in the retreat from Moscow. Only a mere handful of that splendid body of men returned. Leaning over, in a conversational tone, and with a deprecatory way of the hand, Mr. Jordan said: "But it was nothing—nothing. Merely a pawn had been advanced too far into the enemy's country and been cut off." The metaphor was perfect. According to Mr. Jordan, the Corsican cared as little for the fate of his soldiers as a chess player minds the loss of a pawn! The Stanford university president also said that there never was a victor in a war. The result is like a stalemate at chess—neither side wins; both pay the tremendous costs.

Are chess lovers reading The Call's "chess corner"? Well, here is one enthusiast who couldn't wait till he got out of bed to purchase a copy. The gentleman's room opens on a courtyard where the acoustic properties are such as to play upon pranks with one's voice. Hearing a newsboy shrieking his wares, our friend hastily jumped up, ran to the window and, clutching his fluttering robe de nuit about his portly form, hailed the passing youth. Partially hid from his gaze behind the shutters, the boy mistook the flapping nightgown for lingerie, and politely, oh, SO politely!—inquired: "Yes, ma'am; what paper?"

In connection with our announcement in last week's "Corner" of a proposed correspondence match between northern and southern California, the following games are of interest. They can be stamped with the Home Industry league's diamond shaped products, for they were "made in California." Mr. T. H. Martin, who won both games, is a resident of San Francisco, is very skillful at this style of play, a member of three or four correspondence leagues, and has entered his name as a contestant in the above mentioned match. His opponent in the first game was the Rev. E. R. Adams of San Diego, former chess champion of Yale university, and the holder of the championship of the Cabrillo club, and the Stough trophy.

In the second game, Mr. A. G. Pearsall whose forte also is correspondence chess, essayed the so called "Marshall" defense to the Ruy Lopez—3½ P—KB4. "Marshall, in his book on the openings, declares a 'screamer' after the P—KR4 move, but has abandoned the defense in serious play. These masters! Marshall demonstrates its weakness. Mr. Pearsall is also a member of the Cabrillo club. Both games were played in the preliminaries of the Illinois State chess association correspondence tournament, and are here printed for the first time:

Game No. 11

KING'S GAMBIT DECLINED

White—E. R. Adams	Black—T. H. Martin
1 P—K4	P—K4
2 P—KB4	B—B4
3 Kt—KB3	P—Q3
4 Kt—B3	Kt—KB3
5 B—B4	Kt—B3
6 P—Q3	B—KKt5
7 Kt—QR4	B—Kt3
8 KtxB	RPxKt
9 P—KR3	B—R4
10 P—KKt4	KtxKtP
11 PxKt	BxP
12 B—K3	Kt—Q5
13 Q—Q2	P—B3
14 O—O—O	Q—K2
15 KR—Kt1	O—O—O
16 KtxKt	PxKt
17 BxQP	KR—Kt1
18 Q—R5	B—Kt3
19 BxB	RPxB
20 Q—R6	R—Q2
21 RxP	Resigns

Game No. 12

RUY LOPEZ

Martin	Pearsall	Martin	Pearsall
White	Black	White	Black
1 P—K4	P—K4	9 KtxP!	KtR
2 Kt—KB3(a)	Kt—QB3	10 Kt!	PxB(c)
3 B—Kt5	P—KB4(b)	11 Q—R5ch	P—Kt3
4 Castles	Kt—B3	12 Q—K2	P—K5
5 P—Q4	PxQP	13 KtxP	P—Q4
6 P—K5	Kt—K2	14 QxPch	Kt—Kt3
7 KtxP	B—B3	15 Kt—R5	Resigns(d)
8 B—K1ch	B—B(b)		

NOTES

(a) Apost Black's move of P—KB4, ex-champion Blackburne says it has not been demonstrated that it leads to a lost game. Authorities differ as to white's fourth move. P—Q3, Kt—B3 and castles are all good.

(b) PxB would be bad because of 9 BxKt, PxB; 10 Q—R5 ch, interposes; 11 PxKt, etc. Probably better than the text move, however, was Kt—Q4. But black appears to have a lost game then early.

(c) Fatal! P—Q4 was about the only chance.

(d) Because of 15½ K—Kt; 16 Kt—Q6, Kt—Kt2; 17 Q—Q6 ch, K—K12; 18 Kt(Q4)—B5 ch, and 18 Kt—K4 mate!
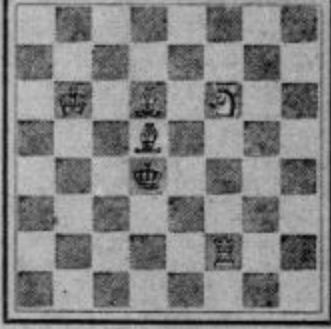
PROBLEMS

(Composed especially for The San Francisco Call.)
PROBLEM NO. 9. BY WILLIAM E. ARNOLD (New York city).
Black—5 Pieces.
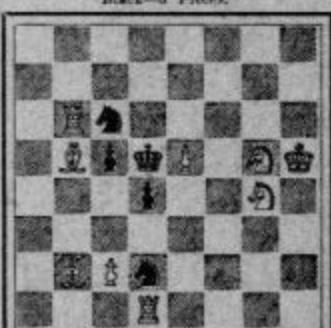
White—9 Pieces.
White to play and mate in two moves.

(Composed especially for The San Francisco Call.)
PROBLEM NO. 10. BY WILLIAM E. ARNOLD (New York city).
Black—1 Piece.

White—5 Pieces.
White to play and mate in three moves.

SOLUTIONS

Problem No. 5: R—K4.
Problem No. 6: Q—R8.

Solvers' List

The following solved both problems printed February 16 (Nos. 5 and 6), except Messrs. Higgins, Silvius and "O," who fell down on No. 5:

J. H. Orleary, Vallejo; W. D. Pennycook, Valencia street; David Higgins, Oakland (6); R. J. McLeay, Presidio; F. R. Rodolph, Oakland; "Ray Lopez," city; "O," city; E. S. Silvius, city (6); V. Fermann, city; J. Pafis, Santa Clara; Murray Markle, Worcester, Mass.; F. W. Huber, city; A. M. Strohmeier, city; O. Califton, city; "O. E. F.," city; W. D. Moore, Alameda; J. C. Schroeder, Veterans' Home.

Sam Loyd Memorial Tourney

William E. Arnold of New York city offers a prize of $10 for a direct two-move problem containing the following pieces on both sides: K, Q, P and King. Address Chess Editor, Pittsburg Gazette-Times, in which the Sam Loyd memorial tourney is now pending.

CALL SOLVING CONTEST

Commencing March 9, The Call will inaugurate a problem solving contest. Through the generosity of Mr. Alain C. White, whose interest in the problem field is too well known whenever chess is played, we are able to offer four books on the art of problem composition, etc., which, being autographic copies, will be well worth the winning. First prize (two books), "White Rooks" and "More White Rooks." Second prize, "Chess Melodies." Third prize, "The Theory of Pawn Promotion." The following rules as to problems, points, etc., will govern the contest. If there is anything not clearly stated, further explanation will be made upon request between now and March 9:

1. This tourney will consist of 15 original problems.

2. The 15 problems are divided into: Four two-movers; nine three-movers; two four-movers.

3. Two points will be given for the key-move in a two-move problem, and one point for each different mate. Do not send in black's play; just state the number of different mates. One point to be taken with this, for if you send in a greater number of mates, one point will be deducted for each one in excess.

4. Three-movers—All that is required of the three-move problem is the key move, for which three points will be given.

5. Four-movers—Four points will be given for the key-move and three points for the main line of play.

6. Cooks—Two points will be given for each cook, and one point may be deducted by a solver sends in a cook that is not a cook.

7. Duals—Duals will not be dealt with.

8. If there are no cooks in any of the problems, 75 will be the highest possible.

9. The two-ers will be published first, then the three-ers, etc.

10. Solvers can not send in corrections to their first solutions.

End Game Study

Here is a rather neat king and pawn ending by H. Rink, white to play and win:

White (4 pieces)—K at K2; pawns at K2, K6, KKt4.
Black (6 pieces)—K at Q1; pawns at Q2, QB5, KKt3, KB2.