

JUDGMENT.

(Continued from page 5.)

"Those whom God hath joined let no man put asunder."

The old priest's words, like a death-mell, rang in her ears.

And then at that moment the closed door of the church was burst open, and an old man strode into the sacred edifice.

Without ceremony, he came striding down the aisle, his hands upraised.

"Stop!" he cried excitedly. "Stop this! I forbid the ceremony!"

Beaumont Chase was the first to turn.

His mouth was set in a firm line, and there was an ugly look in his eyes.

Swiftly, he put one strong arm about Kitty, and held her helpless at his side.

He was about to speak, but the clergyman was before him.

The old priest stepped forward, and faced the intruder.

"Who are you?" he demanded sternly.

"I am Sir John Millbank, a judge of the High Court. I am the father of that child—that is, I stand in the place of her father. I am her legal guardian. She is not yet of legal age, and I forbid this marriage!"

The old clergyman raised his hand protestingly.

"I beg of you to be calm, Sir John," he said. "If you will come into the vestry, I will speak to you. I may say at once, however, that your protest comes too late."

"Too late!" cried the judge furiously. "What do you mean by that, sir?"

"I mean, Sir John, that a father's authority over a daughter ceases at the hour she becomes a wife."

"A wife! Bah! She is no wife! I forbid the marriage, it cannot take place!"

"You are mistaken, Sir John," replied the clergyman gravely; "the marriage has already been solemnised. That man and that woman are now man and wife, and no power on earth can put them asunder."

(To be continued.)

SOLDIERS!

The Invercargill Municipal Library are anxious to have a complete file of all publications on transports, or others published by the soldiers. It is fitting and in the interest of all concerned that this file should be obtained, and copies from soldiers will be greatly appreciated. All copies should be accompanied by the sender's full name and address, and will be acknowledged through the columns of "The Digger." We have undertaken to help the librarian in this matter and would appreciate the action of returned men in helping to bring it to a successful issue. Copies can be forwarded to "The Digger," Box 310, Invercargill, or to the Public Library direct.

A NIGHT OUT AT WAIMAHAKA.

At "Waimahaka" one winter night,
The youths from all around,
Foregathered in the Social Hall
A social club to found.

A digger chap from Palestine,
Whose pen runs true and fleet,
Soon gathered all the money in,
The rent and light to meet.

There's crib, five hundred, draughts and chess
For all who care to play,
And make the fleeting moments pass
In pastime light and gay.

A veteran from Borderland
Who occupies the chair,
Keeps the meetings well in hand,
And all their dealings square.

There's Oliver, whose anvil rings,
There's Mack who minds the sheep,
There's Ted who owns the spotted cow
That makes the mud so deep.

There's Jack, who pays the butter tax,
And Bill, who keeps the books,
Down where the train goes rushing past
To reach some babbling brooks.

There's Loo who drives the fatted calf
To meet its cruel fate,
And Bain who makes the 'tatics' grow,
And grows them "up-to-date."

All these and more contrive at least,
A social hour to spend,
And the games they love the best
Their prowess they defend.

Now may this club extend its sphere,
Its membership increase,
And may its members spend their years
In comfort and in peace.

"SODA WATER."

The first experiment in long-distance radio telephoning was made in 1914.

The Nature Column.

("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.)

Mr Smith in his little booklet on "Plant Intelligence" says: "Most animals inhale oxygen and exhale dioxide, the reverse of the usual process of plants." The editor of "Conquest" in answer to a correspondent says this is a very loose definition. Green leaves are usually said to absorb carbonic acid gas in the light and oxygen in the dark. Without going into details, it can be shown experimentally that in the leaf at the same time. One is the breathing in of oxygen, and the other is the feeding on carbonic acid. The breathing organs are always at work, always taking oxygen and giving off carbonic acid gas, but the feeding only takes place in daylight. The feeding is greatly in excess of the breathing. The proportions vary.

Owing to Mr Smith not having received any authoritative account of Professor Bose's work on plant feeling, he did not include any reference to this in his lecture. Some of the journals now to hand give short accounts of the wonderful advance in plant study made by this Indian professor. He has perfected an instrument called the magnetic crescograph which has some points in common with that wonderfully sensitive instrument, the reflecting galvanometer, which has been in use for delicate electrical tests for a long time. Briefly the instrument first mentioned consists of a long light magnetic needle on a fulcrum and attached to a plant by a slender glass thread. Opposite the end of this needle is suspended a small magnet attached to a light mirror. When movement takes place in the plant the needle moves and affects the small magnet and mirror. A beam of light from the mirror is thereby moved on a distant screen. The instrument is capable of magnifying plant movement ten million times. It has been found with this instrument that poisons in small doses accelerate plant growth but when applied in quantity instantly kills the plant. It seems to be a fact that plants have the faculty of preception and feeling. Professor Bose has shown clearly that a leaf, twig or bud will give a response when pricked with a pin or cut with a knife. Elaborate instruments were devised which caused a plant to write a record of its responses to different conditions. The slightest change in light immediately caused a response. It was discovered that trees could be given medicine and also put under the influence of anaesthetics—chloroformed as it were. When in this semi-conscious state they could be safely transplanted. Plants apparently sleep much like animals, for it was found that from 3 to 8 p.m., a tree responded vigorously. From 8 p.m. to 6 a.m., in the morning the responses died down and it was asleep, and from 6 to 9 a.m. was dormant. Space prevents me from saying more on this fascinating subject at present.

Dear Student,—I have read with considerable interest the Nature Column in "The Digger." I would be glad if any of your readers would contribute information through your column which would assist me in formulating something of a more concrete character regarding the colouration of animals. Any information regarding direct action of environment upon organisms and of the mechanism of its action would be welcome.

I suppose I am correct in stating that almost all of the biologists engaged in this kind of research do not maintain any doubts as to the importance of natural selection as a factor of evolution. For many adaptations it would seem to offer the best explanation, but biology would have been brought to a standstill if the idea had prevailed that, after a more or less plausible explanation of some adaptation has been given under the hypothesis of natural selection, nothing more is left to be done to explain this adaptation. The explanation would seem at its best to be on a hypothetical basis; but in the best of cases the origin of each variation would still have to be found. I understand that a number of biologists have been working on the origin of these mechanical and physiological variations. Wherever we go we see animals coloured in accordance with their surroundings. White and light grey colours predominate in the Arctic regions; tawny and yellow colours in the desert; gorgeous colours in tropical lands, while in Africa I was amazed at the variety of beautiful colours. The striped tiger is hardly recognisable among the shadows of the tall trees; insects resemble flowers which they visit; caterpillars have the colours and often the very form of twigs and leaves, which they feed upon;

dusty coloured nocturnal insects; moths which take autumn tints if they begin life in the autumn. These are instances and are they due to natural selection alone, or does not environment take some part in producing these colours.—Yours etc.,

TADPOLE,

Baldutha, 29/7/20.

We take it that our correspondent doubts the fact that natural selection is accountable for all the above variations.

Professor Osborne states that he believes that solution proceeds on a definite plan, and is not the result of haphazard variations as we are led to believe. We hope that some of our readers will take the matter up.

DRAUGHTS.

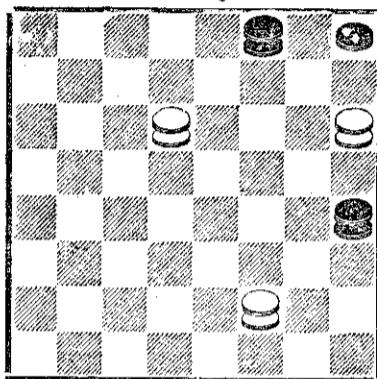
(By F. Hutchins.)

Draughts Club meets in Athenaeum on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons and evenings.

PROBLEM 21.

(By E. Truelove, Pretoria, Transvaal.)

BLACK.



WHITE.

White to play and win.

Black 4, Kings 3, 20.

White Kings 10, 12, 27.

Useful finish.

SOLUTION TO PROBLEM 20.

Black 13, 23, King 8.

White 30, Kings 29, 31.

White to play and win.

29.25, 8.11, 25.22, 11.15, 30.25, 23.26, 22.18. White wins.

"Only Pretending to Play!" The scene, a local cafe; dramatis personae, two cracks sweating their brains over a game, and two youths who had just strolled up. Ten minutes went by, and the wracking still continued. "Come on, Tom, they are only pretending to play," and disappeared unimpressed.—Birmingham Post.

The following are two well contested games played by two of the strongest players in the handicap tourney played recently in Timaru in connection with the Australasian Championship:—

Paisley.	Paisley.	Carswell (Black).	Souness (Black).	Souness (White).	Carswell (White).
11.16	11.18	11.16	25.30		
24.19	23.7	24.19	9.6		
8.11	3.10	8.11	30.25		
22.18	27.23	22.18	6.2		
4.8	10.14	10.14	7.11		
26.22	19.15	25.22	2.6		
16.20	16.19	16.20	25.22		
30.26	23.16	30.25	6.9		
10.14	12.19	11.16	22.25		
22.17	18.15	22.17	9.6		
7.10	19.23	4.8	25.22		
26.22	11.8	17.10	6.9		
9.13	14.18	6.22	22.25		
18.9	8.3	25.18	9.5		
5.14	18.22	7.10	25.22		
22.18	3.7	29.25	19.15		
13.22	22.26	10.14	11.18		
18.9	7.11	26.22	23.14		
6.13	26.31	2.6	16.19		
25.18	11.15	19.15	5.1		
11.16	31.26	6.10	19.24		
29.25	15.18	15.6	1.6		
2.7	23.27	1.10	12.16		
18.15	26.19	28.24	14.10		
13.17	Draw.	3.7	8.12		
15.6		24.19	10.7		
1.10		9.13	22.26		
21.14		18.9	Draw.		
10.17		5.14			
25.22		22.18			
17.26		14.17			
31.22		21.14			
8.11		10.17			
22.18		25.21			
7.10		17.22			
18.15		18.14			
		22.25			
		14.9			

Solutions, criticisms, etc., to be sent in to "Draughts" Editor," 28 Biggar street, Invercargill.

The teak, which supplies one of the strongest timbers known, grows slowly, attaining a height of only 150 feet in over a century.

Passing Notes.

BY JACQUES.

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

Everybody has at time wished to hadn't said it, or had said it differently. Recently the Invercargill Orphans visited the local gaol and entertained the inmates with a concert. It was kindly meant, of course, but one can imagine the feelings of the assembled prisoners when the visitors opened the proceedings with the ode, or hymn, or chorus, or whatever it is:

"Brothers all, accept our greeting;
We are glad to see you here."

It was hard to tell which were most embarrassed, the prisoners, or the Orphans, when they realised their gaudierie.

Secretary O'Byrne is evidently regarded by certain members of his unions as something in the nature of a savage dog, to be let off the chain now and then for worrying purposes. One of these recently clinched an altercation with his employer with the blood-curdling threat: "If you don't shut up I'll scold O'Byrne on to you." The employer trembled—and "shut up."

The discussion on the Samoan question provoked some strange revelations and rather ugly charges. It was stated that of twenty-seven remits sent forward by the Samoan people, through their chiefs, to the conference with the Parliamentary party, the most important—that expressing the Islanders' objection to indentured labour—had met the fate of Bo-Peep's muttons, and could not be found. "And," said the member for Grey Lynn, "I make this deliberate charge, the Samoan chiefs were got at, and deliberately prevented from giving an expression of opinion on that particular question." "Got at!" By whom? It is a pity that Mr Bartram was not a little more explicit; but the natural inference is that his charges had reference to one, or some, of the Parliamentary party, who were in collusion with those in Samoa who were most interested in getting bargains in brawn. The charge was a serious one, and it is strange that it met with no rebuttal—unless, indeed, we assume the Parliamentarians' silence was based on the prudent principle that he who excuses, accuses himself. Anyway, it looks as though there was something that badly wanted washing up before we were definitely and finally committed to a system to which the Samoans are violently opposed, and which cannot be approved by anyone having any knowledge of the working of the indentured labour system, and who values the fair name of New Zealand more than the Samoan planters' pounds, shillings, and pence.

KINGS AND PRINCES I HAVE MET.

JOHN STEAD THE GREAT, O.B.E.,
A.B.C., D.E.F., G.H.I., Etc., Etc.

Family Motto: Stead-fast Unto the Last.

It was in my official capacity as delegate from the "Stiggins Society of Snufflers and Spoilsports" that I sought audience of this great monarch, than whose illustrious name no brighter adorns the splendid scroll of history. I found him—like that other king of whom the late Mr Shakespeare wrote—"in the perfumed chambers of the Great. . . . With all appliances and means to boot"—er—his subjects. I must confess that my first feeling on beholding him was one of mingled surprise and disappointment, since I had expected, from his fame and surname, to see one of more than ordinary stature. Still, what he lacked in inches and avoirdupois was more than compensated for by his grave courtesy, impressive dignity, and chest expansion—to say nothing of the long-tailed coat he invariably wears. He received me with gracious condescension and bade me state my business. I explained the aims and objects of the S.S.S.S.—which were, briefly, to suppress Sunday band concerts and all forms of sport and sinful pleasure; to make smiling a misdemeanour and laughter a crime, and generally to fit

people for the next life by making this one not worth living, and that I had been delegated to solicit his kind offices in the furtherance of those aims. He was not sympathetic as I had hoped, saying that he could not see his way clear to acceding to our request, since he was not yet convinced that the things I had enumerated were actually and intrinsically wicked. Personally, he was favourably inclined towards sport and games, especially those like hopscotch and skipping—which were not only healthful and amusing, but served to promote trade—in boots—and encourage industry—in half-soles. In fact he had for some time had in consideration the matter of donating a more roughly concreted hopscotch and skipping ground for the benefit of the city children, and had only been withheld from doing so by his uncertainty as to the effect that such action would have on his popularity among the parents.

I was much crestfallen at the lapse of my mission, which perceiving, his Majesty kindly endeavoured to cheer me up by engaging me in conversation on other matters, indulging, inter alia, in some very interesting personal reminiscences. Among other things, he assured me that he had delivered no less than 300 speeches within the last three years, a large proportion of them to departing returning soldiers, and practically all on patriotic matters.

When I expressed my astonishment that one small head could carry sufficient material for such an amount of oratory, his left eyelid quivered—I will not say winked—as he confided to me his formula—which, after all, was simplicity itself. It seems that one has merely to take certain well-known and popular phrases such as "Our far-flung Empire," "Our glorious flag," "Boys of the bulldog breed," "Our Imperial heritage," "King and County," "Imperishable loyalty," "National Honour," "Crimson thread of kinship," "The Motherland," "Lion and its whelps," "Bonds that bind the Empire," etc., etc., and tack them together with any old words—"and there you are." Just as with a few pieces of coloured glass, he explained, one can get in the kaleidoscope an infinitude of different patterns, so, by the skilful transposition of the foregoing phrases, one can frame a practically limitless series of speeches. With these he was always prepared for any occasion or audience, but his preference was to address departing soldiers—partly, he explained, to make them resigned to leaving home, and partly to provide in them a fierce fighting spirit, such as the bagpipes are said to excite in Scotchmen. That he was eminently successful in the latter object was strikingly shown on one occasion in particular, when after an address by his Majesty of one hour and forty minutes' duration one harassed-looking and haggard khaki clad warrior was heard to exclaim desperately: "By the Lord, but we'll make that Fritz sit up for this." "So you see," beamed his Majesty, "I thus really helped to win the war."

But, alas! life has not been all skittles and —, I mean, croquet and coffee, even to him. He has, and still has, his troubles. For instance, the dread that wears the crown has often been made uneasy by the insolent and arrogant position of certain of the Barons of his Council. He cited one or two cases, notably that of the gold chain. Unlike the Labour party, who are always declaiming against chains, his Majesty has a liking for such things—or at least one fine gold chain that would serve to distinguish him from ordinary people, but when the matter came before the Grand Council it was vehemently rejected, one of them was vehemently rejected, one of them by way of emphasis to his declaration that he would be (something) before he would sanction the extravagance of even a rolled-gold one. His Majesty was obviously affected by the recollection, and another subject entering at the moment, I seized the opportunity to withdraw. As I left the chamber I thought I heard him address some rather strange phrases to my successor, such as "Latest style and finish," "durable material," "all workmanship guaranteed," "prices moderate," etc. But it may have been only my fancy, after all.