

THE ARTISTRY OF THE CHESS PROBLEM

with special reference to the beauties
of the three- and four-mover

by B. G. Laws

[1923]

NOTES TO ELECTRONIC EDITION

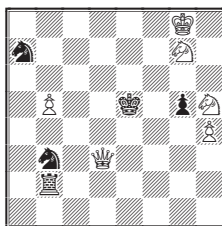
The main change in this edition is the use of modern algebraic notation, using the letter 'S' to represent the knight. The notation used in the original is a mixture between algebraic and descriptive.

All problems have been computer tested – any inadvertencies have been documented in brackets in the solutions. Some minor notation mixups have been silently corrected.

The obvious misprint of a white Queen instead of a white Rook on d2 in the Geyerstam three-mover has also been corrected, as well as the name of the creator of the Indian problem, which was given as Rev. C. Loveday.

One oddity was discovered during testing. The Chocholouš four-mover lacks a solution: it turns out that it appears here in a different form than that it was originally given. The reason for the change is not known. The original form is as follows:

G. Chocholouš



Mate in four

BEAUTY IN THE THREE-MOVER

By B. G. Laws

In considering the Chess Problem with a view to appreciating its qualities, three essentials must be borne in mind: difficulty, idea and construction. Each of these is complementary of the others. Difficulty is placed first mainly for the purpose of disposing of that subject before dealing with the other two. It can hardly be suggested that there is beauty in this quality considered alone; but the causes which create this feature may be beautiful, such as the latent chess truth being obscured by skilful deployment of the men.

A Chess Problem by its proposition is designed to exercise one's reasoning faculties, with compensation to be won by solution; just as the success of a fireside conundrum depends upon puzzling by some witticism or *double entendre*. Difficulty, therefore, is chiefly the consequence of the profundity or subtlety of idea, and it is frequently induced by the dexterous manner in which the men are assembled in the construction of the problem.

Idea (revealed by the solution) and construction (the method of presenting the idea) are the cardinal attributes of a chess problem and, though generally they are susceptible of being contemplated separately, they are often correlative, as a bright chess thought gains by being appropriately presented, and a dull one can be made passing fair, or even attractive, by a happy choice of forces, skilfully employed.

When the two qualities—idea and construction—are examined and estimated, the beauty in a good problem becomes apparent. The natural impulse of the solver is to look primarily for something to gratify an

intelligent expectancy, and the idea or motive is relied upon to supply this. Beauty at the Court of Caissa is, however, so evasive and tricky a grace, that perhaps one might sing a variation of the song sung in Portia's house at Belmont:

*Tell me where is beauty bred?
On the board or in the head?
How begot, how nourished?*

*It is engender'd in the eyes,
With gazing fed; and beauty dies
In the cradle where it lies.*

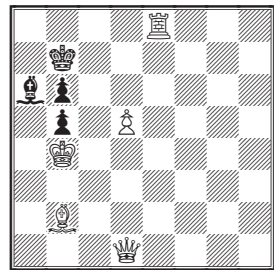
The Three-mover is an appropriate medium for the illustration of "potted" strategy in a popular form. Strategic plots are not many, and some of these are never seen in actual play. A position which displays some impressive line of action bears the character of being thematic in contra-distinction to one containing a blend of ideas. In such problems the themes appear to be super-imposed, more or less casting into shadow the "trimming" play or variations which the composer may be constrained by necessity to add.

It would take considerable time to discourse the various forms of strategy which figure so prominently in the compositions of past masters of the Art, and it may suffice if a running commentary is given on each problem as it appears on the "exhibition" board.¹

The first example is submitted as an expression of a beautiful idea, known as the "Bristol" theme. It is the work of H. F. L. Meyer, who adapted Frank Healey's prize three-mover (British Chess Association, at Bristol, 1861), by using the Bishop in place of a Rook for making the key move. In addition to the idea, there is excellent construction.

The White Bishop lingers superfluous on the field and has to make a graceful flight to

H. F. L. Meyer



Mate in three

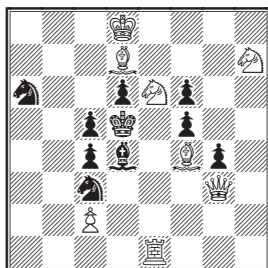
1. Bh8
 Ka7 2. Qa1
 Kc7 2. Qc2†

¹ Or "wall" board, arranged to display positions in full view of an audience.

the remotest corner to enable the Queen to make use of her best power in the prescribed number of moves. 1. Ba3 fails inasmuch as after 2. Qa1, the Black Bishop is not pinned, being free to move, and 1. Bc1 obstructs the Queen from reaching a1. Any other square on the long diagonal hinders the Queen mating at g7.

Alain C. White has described such a key as a "passive sacrifice"; but it seems to be more in the nature of suppression or repression of force.

J. G. Campbell



Mate in three

1. Rc1
 Se4 2. Qb3
 Bc5 2. Rd1†

One of England's finest composers of half a century and more ago, was J. G. Campbell, whose works were characterised by admitted originality.

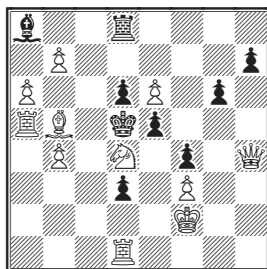
In his time, however, refined construction as accepted to-day was unknown and consequently one must not be too critical in this regard. The three-mover now before us has a deep key-move, followed by a brilliant second move, with a surprise mate, and it is altogether a very beautiful conception. As the position stands, White has an answer to all Black's moves except 1 ... Se4, and the manoeuvre (prefaced by 1. Rc1) requires

penetrating powers to foresee the result.

Following somewhat the thematic style of the last example, the next position, which is by Dr A. Kauders (a German), contains a most piquant idea, it was published about 1879. The setting is uninviting, but the startling play condones this, as also the absence of an economical mate. The clearance key made by the White King to allow 2. Qe1 is not extraordinary; but the defence 1 ... d2, appears to completely counter this attack. This, however, is fallacious, since notwithstanding the sacrifice, promotion and disturbing check, White is provided with a decisive rejoinder.

The sacrifice of the Queen to the Black

Dr A. Kauders



Mate in three

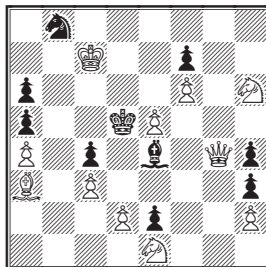
1. Kg1
 d2/~ 2. Qe1
 e4 2. Qxf4

King has been a device indulged in by composers of every rank. In most cases the artifice is clear; but ingenious treatment can disguise the composer's intention and render the full effect radiant as well as strike the solver with astonishment.

Ph. Klett (now some years deceased), one of Germany's brilliant "stars," was a chess scholar who advocated profundity and purity of mate, as shown in his remarkable four and five-movers. A cursory survey of the accompanying position gives little clue to a Queen sacrifice, which can only be brought about by an apparently eccentric yet beautiful key. The rest of the play is subsidiary and uneventful. Passing from illustrations of the class of three-mover adorned with single but beautiful themes, we approach an order of composition where more than one idea is embodied in the setting. Starting with seemingly artless positions, we shall by gentle degrees touch upon more elaborate, but not confusing *chef d'œuvres*. In explaining these, we shall be able, in passing, to direct attention to the operative value of the key, the importance and character of the second moves, the nature of the mates and, where pertinent, to the effects contributed by cleverly contrived defences.

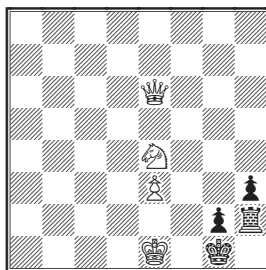
In subjecting the next batch of problems to even a superficial trial, we shall find that, as indicated before, idea and construction are interwoven. In some cases, excellent as are the ideas portrayed, they would lose much of their lustre without artistic treatment and orderly arrangement of the forces employed. It is here where the experienced manipulator is enabled to embellish the fruit of his efforts and complete, with becoming constructional appointments, agreeable harmony in the ideas blended.

Ph. Klett



Mate in three

1. Bh8
 Ka7 2. Qa1
 Kc7 2. Qc2†

G. Chocholous &
J. Dobrusky

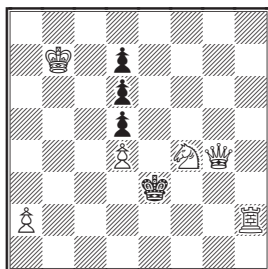
Mate in three

1. Kd2
 Kh1 2. Qc6
 Rh1 2. Qe5
 Kf1 2. Qf6†

The paragon now before us is the joint work of the Bohemian composers, G. Chocholous and J. Dobrusky. It was the result of the study of a prize problem composed by the former about 1880.

Here is an unsophisticated arrangement, not quite a miniature, but one might term it a “problemette.” It conceals genuine strategy to secure ascendancy over an obstinate defence. The key-move, part and parcel of the whole scheme, is super-excellent.

J. Dobrusky

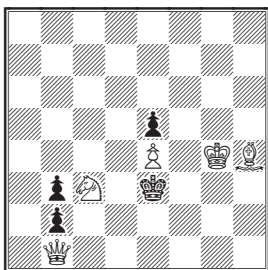


Mate in three

1. Rh4

Ke4	2. Qg3
K×d4	2. S×d5†
Kd2/Kf2	2. Qf6†

G. Heathcote



Mate in three

1. Sa2

b×a2	2. Qc2
Kd2	2. Kf3
Kd4	2. Bf2†
Ke2	2. Sb4

There are two ideas combined in this problem: (1) after 1 ... Kh1, when White prepares an ambush, allowing his King to be checked by discovery on Pawn promoting, and (2) the waiting play (after 1 ... Rh1), to meet the self block—to say nothing of the third defence, 1 ... Kf1.

J. Dobrusky, who participated in the rendering of the last piece of work, has composed many exquisite problems (his four-movers are almost unrivalled), is the author of our next exhibit.

It does not require much perception to appreciate the consummate skill displayed in the construction which brings out cameo-like three clever continuations, with highly polished mates. The key, it must be observed, is fascinatingly deep.

To give a further glimpse at what can be accomplished in an apparently simple manner, this problem by one of England's best artists, Godfrey Heathcote (a composer who has ascended to the highest rung of the ladder of chess fame), has an irresistible spell. His works are specimens of the purest art.

Though there is no specific strain of strategy, the beautiful key and fine continuations are manifestly the work of a genius.

The four “model” mates are a criteria of

skilful handling of the chessmen. Few, on glancing at this position, would realise that 1. Sa2 was of the slightest use.

The next position is one of vicissitude. It is an admitted adaptation of two unsound three-movers composed about the same time by S. Loyd and W. A. Shinkman in the 'seventies. H. F. L. Meyer shortly afterwards remodelled, with acumen, the faulty works and produced a refined version ; but it was left to C. A. L. Bull (now of Durban) to give a standard representation conforming to present-day doctrines, and this he did in 1915. It was published in the *Natal Mercury*.

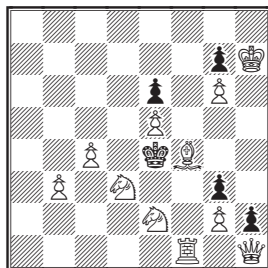
The key-move to this remarkable problem is one of the most singular among chess problem classics, followed by second moves of decided point and merit.

In the earlier versions there was no "model" mate; but here we have two "models" which transform an originally raw conception into one that conforms to modern precepts. It is a pity this splendid problem is not better known.

F. af Geyerstam, of Sweden, enjoyed a reputation for the sharpness of his ideas and pleasing workmanship. The position now to be considered has a sacrificial key-move which might well cause wonderment in anyone unacquainted with the craft; it is quite theatrical and looks futile in the face of the Queen's exposure to annihilation by adverse capture. The "lay-out" is heavy; but the demonstration of two hidden sister lines, with three "model" mates, is ably devised.

A jewel in three-mover composition will be found in J. Fridlitzius'

C. A. L. Bull

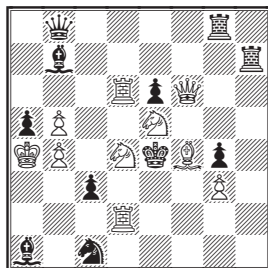


Mate in three

1. Rg1

Kf5	2. Sf2
K×d3	2. Ra1
hxg1	2. Sc5

F. Geyerstam



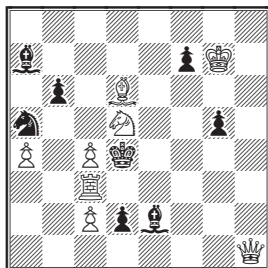
Mate in three

1. Qh8

Rh×h8	2. Sd7
Rg×h8/Qc7	
	2. S×g4
Rh6/Rh5	2. Q×KR
Others	2. Q×R†

prize-winner of 1898. Key, continuations and principal mates are all of the first order. The character of the play, as well as the mates (and

J. Fridliziuz

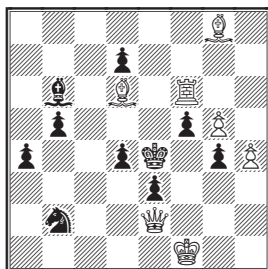


Mate in three

1. Rf3

- | | |
|---------|---------|
| Bxc4 | 2. c3† |
| Sxc4 | 2. Rd3† |
| Bxf3/f5 | 2. Qa1† |
| Others | 2. Qh4† |

J. Svejda



Mate in three

1. Kg1

- | | |
|--------|----------|
| Sd1 | 2. Rxf5 |
| Sc4 | 2. Bd5† |
| d3 | 2. Qxg4† |
| Bd8 | 2. Qxb5 |
| Others | 2. Qf1 |

there are as many “models” as variations, namely, four), are diversified, Pawn, Knight, Rook and Queen (by discovered check), in turn giving the *coups de grace*. The key abandoning an important protective Pawn, conceding a second flight at e4, and placing the Rook *en prise*, is little short of being superb.

Another object-lesson in multi-theme designs is by J. Svejda, a Bohemian composer. There are five lines which are all good, three of the second moves being quiet. The King-key making room for the Queen is highly meritorious, giving warning of an incursion by her majesty which, if allowed to be made, leads to a conclusion of little significance; but the defences thwarting the designed menace create opportunities for White to assert superiority by vivacious or ensnaring play, according to requirement.

The next three-mover picture is the work of the late Joseph Pospisil, the erstwhile pre-eminent Bohemian composer of this class of problem. It is one well known to most students and holds a prominent place among the masterpieces of construction.

The key cannot be considered to be difficult to find, but is theoretically good. It leads to astonishing variety of play, which is crisp and clear-cut. The Queen sacrifices, combined with the long-shot Queen mate at a8 was not quite a new device when this three-

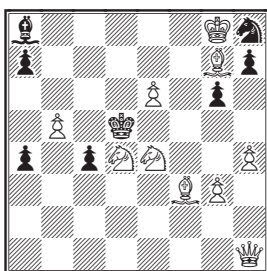
mover was honoured by being awarded first prize in the *Cesty Spolek Schochovin* Tourney of 1886, but the graceful disposition of the men

and the seven continuations evolved are masterly. There are twelve mating moves, six being “model” mates.

The world was amazed when the late A. F. Mackenzie, of Jamaica, resumed composing after being afflicted with blindness early in 1896—not so much in that he was able to follow the pursuit of his taste, as that the quality of his work was superior to the first-rate problems he had contributed to the domain of chess whilst in possession of all his faculties.

The problem now on the board, by reason of being “fairly fashioned,” to use the composer’s words, is delicate both in setting and working. It reveals three splendid, quiet, strategical second moves, with other interesting lines.

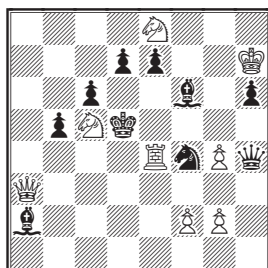
It opens with a most commendable key-move, and the *tout ensemble* equals, if not surpasses,



Mate in three

1. Sf5
- | | |
|-----------|---------|
| g5 | 2. Bg4 |
| a6/threat | 2. Qh3 |
| c3 | 2. Qb1 |
| gxf5 | 2. Qd1† |
| Kxe6 | 2. Sc5† |
| Sf7 | 2. Kxf7 |

J. Pospisil



Mate in three

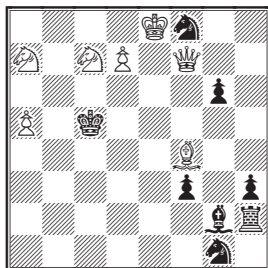
1. Sa4
- | | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| Bd4 | 2. Qc5† |
| Qg3 | 2. Qd6† |
| Be5 | 2. Sc7† |
| Qxf2/Qxg4 | 2. Sxf6† |
| Kxe4 | 2. Qe3† |
| c5 | 2. Sc3† |
| Sxg2 | 2. Qd3† |
| Bb3 | 2. f3 |
| Others/bxa4/b4/Se6 | 2. Sc7†/Sb6† |

in quality the work of Mr. Mackenzie’s contemporary rivals. There are technically seven “model” mates, but two of these are *ipso facto* repetitions, namely, in the variation after 1 ... g5 and the threat 1 ... a6. This Black Pawn is curiously not actually needed; but it is introduced for the purpose of bringing out a delightful model mate, *vide*: 1. Sf5, a6; 2. Qh3, axb5; 3. Se6 mate. It is true that this “model” can be worked in by 1 ... Bc6, etc., but then the “model” 2. Qh3, Pc6 vanishes in that variation, though it appears after other defences. It is not clear what object the P at h7 serves.

At first sight it is peculiar that in one case, on the second move, White takes command of the diagonal, h3–c8 by the Queen and in another by the Bishop.

The comparatively recent prize problem—Dutch Chess Association, 1918—by G. Heathcote, is offered for commendation.

G. Heathcote

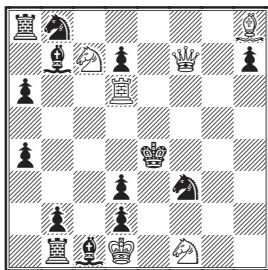


Mate in three

1. Qa2

- | | |
|-----|---------|
| Se2 | 2. Be5 |
| B- | 2. Be3† |
| f2 | 2. Scb5 |
| g5 | 2. Sc6 |
| Kd4 | 2. Qc2 |
| Sf- | 2. Se6† |
| Kb4 | 2. Bd2† |

M. Havel



Mate in three

1. Qf8

- | | |
|-------|---------|
| Sc6 | 2. Sd5 |
| Se5 | 2. Rd4† |
| Other | 2. Rf6 |

As a study it is *beau idéal* and by some may be regarded as the Koh-i-noor of our favourite composer's collection of three-move gems. The impelling inclination is to make a key such as Qb3, Sa7–b5, or c6 or Be5, leaving out of reckoning the promotion of the Pawn, in order to get into close grip; but these are futile and only the beautiful 1. Qa2 heralds success. White has seven second moves controlled by Black's play (four being quiet), resulting in six "model" mates.

As an illustration of subtle play, the next position is a pattern. It is a masterful piece of staging. There are but three lines of play, each being keen-pointed. Though White's scope of initiating a successful attack is really limited, it is strange that such an unobtrusive key-move as 1. Qf8 is so penetratingly effective.

The last problem brings to mind a recent prize position, by Karel Traxler (Bohemian), which in a most ingenious manner duplicates the clever ambuscading device shown in the threat, with other pleasing incidents. The key is certainly not ideal, but quite a happy one. The defences here—particularly 1 ... Re8 and 1 ... g6, contribute much to this position's virtue.

As an illuminating illustration of the alluring charm of a problem well appointed

with ideas worthy of being esteemed, but not sharpened by any special quality, the prize problem by J. Moller (*Hampshire Telegraph and Post*, 1920), should be welcomed.

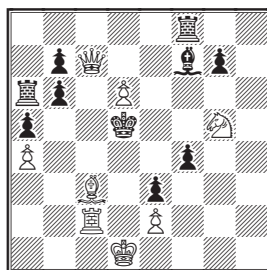
In some problems which are admired, one of the principal attractions is the species of the mates inflicted, and among the most picturesque, probably is the "pin-model," when it has been imported by legitimate means into spirited work.

There are several minor subjects connected with the æsthetic features of the three-mover which might usefully be closely scrutinised and discussed, but the limits of this paper do not permit of their admission. For instance, the respective claims of "block" and "threat" strategy, the compensating balances of checking and quiet second moves, the compromising effects of short mates and venial duals, the comparative merits of echo-mates (and play), and mates and play of antipodal or dissimilar character, and the value and importance of "tries," are all matters relevant to beauty, but they rather rank as side-issues of the subject.

In sauntering through our gallery of *tours de force*, manifesting taste and skill of the loftiest order (as we have just done), it must not be forgotten that the problems shown are only selections from many world-famed models. There is a considerable number of others which are equal in quality, but comparatively few, if any, excel those chosen.

No allusion has been made to the legendary or American school which prescribes

K. Traxler



Mate in three

1. Ba1

Re8/Bg8

2. Rb2

g6

2. Rc3

f3

2. Rd2†

Rf~

2. Qxf7†

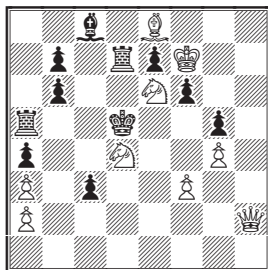
Ra~

2. Qxb6

B~

2. Qc4†

J. Moller



Mate in three

1. K5f5

Kc4

2. Qe2†

Kc6

2. Sxe7†

Rc5

2. Se3

Rb5/b5

2. Se3

Ra8 etc.

2. Qe2

c2

2. Qxc2

sharpness of motive, secured if possible by means conforming to the highest ideals of modern construction, but this is seldom practicable. The tincture of pleasantry or esprit is expected to be present whatever expedient may have to be resorted to, and success in dealing with such a thesis has a beauty peculiar to itself. Problems constructed under such conditions produce exciting situations, with weird operations to lead to a sensational climax; but exhilarating as are these quaint schemes, in the light of modern teachings relating to problem construction they appear exotic.

The ideal three-mover has yet to be composed; but it may be taken as axiomatic that more instruction and enjoyment can be secured by studying on the serene heights, problems which bear the seal of orthodoxy, than by meandering through a wilderness of mediocrity. It consequently behoves students of chess problems to embrace every opportunity of becoming acquainted, not by perfunctory attention, but by concentrated application and intelligent comparison—with the works of reputed good composers, in order that they may master the intricacies of solution and construction.

Thus will the emotion of delight be excited and a vista of promise be envisioned for renewed and more successful endeavours.

THE FOUR-MOVER: ITS BEAUTIES ILLUSTRATED

By B. G. Laws

The Four-mover, with its richness of strategy and stately structure may well be designated the Grand Opera in the Art of Chess Problem Construction. Inspiration, volume and strength combine to give it a status to which no other endeavour in the realm of problem composition can aspire. It is a happy medium between the attractive three-mover and the involved five-mover. A close relationship exists between the three-mover and the four-mover, both in regard to Idea and Construction. The approved maxims which regulate the composition of the former apply equally to the latter. When the nature of Idea, as presented in the two classes is compared, a perceptible difference is found to exist. In the longer problem there is more scope for strategic operations and tactical fencing for position. Imagination is not so constrained, and skill in constructing is given greater latitude. Subtlety and brilliancy alike abound in the "Mate in four" for this very reason, but on the other hand Opportunity is timorous in permitting variety to be successfully harmonised. A full length line of play often repels fusion with another of similar calibre, and when accomplished, there is danger of marring unity and grace of construction. An idea which calls for four moves to effect the specified result must be conceded to be more profound than one requiring fewer moves; the intensity of its beauty, however, legitimately increases Difficulty. Consequently (with construction conforming to artistic and scientific principles) the four-mover is entitled to the highest rank in the liberal Art of Problem Composition.

In order to realise the value and importance of the subject under consideration it is fitting that comparison be made with the popular three-mover, which many composers and solvers regard as prime in the lyrics of chess. The superiority of the one over the other is chiefly evidenced in those schemes which necessitate four moves of White and three of Black, as there is more freedom for the display of animation, dramatic force and scientific manipulation. There is yet a further feature in that the Defence with its three moves is sometimes cleverly vested with means of crafty intent to resist the original attacks made chiefly in the first move, but sometimes emphasised in the second moves. This cannot be so effectively shown in the three-mover with but two defending moves. Similar defensive devices are often skilfully used to defeat measures not designed. Further, when White is obliged to alter an incipient policy, variety is enhanced and sometimes Difficulty appears to be increased. It is probably this fact which deters the student (satisfied with the charms offered by the three-mover), from attempting to master more ponderous work. Difficulty, nevertheless, generally an uncontrolled incident, is subordinate to Beauty of Idea and Construction. A little ray of light thrown on the two last-mentioned elements, may remove prejudice, correct misunderstandings and at the same time encourage the practice of concentrated deliberation.

It is not essential that the student in his early conning, should steel his determination to solve four-movers; he would be well advised to play over the solutions in somewhat the same manner as players in their homesteads do with published games. In this way beauty will be brought out in clear relief, and an insight gained of the artists' methods of handling the subject.

By reason of its larger range of moves the four-mover is susceptible of being moulded in various shapes and fashions, possessing in a few cases the constitution of the two-mover, in some that of the three-mover, and in others the sturdiness of its own complete strategem. In a perfect presentment, its themes, or at least its principal theme, should have the ring of true four-move strategy and not be hybrid with a two or three-move idea inflated to the dimensions of four. Expediency, however, sometimes renders it politic, when two or three motives are mingled, to make them of even length by some artifice.

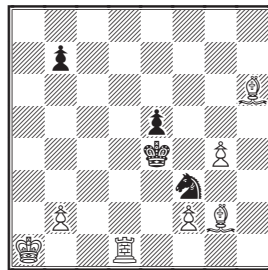
The best four-movers of about the middle of the last century carried out single themes. The key, being an important part of the scheme was frequently the most surprising move of the solution, but some composers in those days preferred to follow the advice of an early English composer, W. Bone : "Never put your best move first." When more than one idea is embodied in a structure, constructive exigencies force the composer to select or accept a first move which may not be in close harmony with the after-play. It may be a "give and take," a capture, an aggressive or suppressive key. The interest in such problems generally commences with Black's first move, but by long continued practice it is found incumbent upon White to open fire and any departure from the well-established convention would be regarded as an obliquity, hence we always get "White to play," etc. A key-move well suited to one of the principal fines of play may be incongruous to the others with the ever present possible bugbear of unsoundness, shattering the entire work. It is due to these factors one finds some of the finest problems have key-moves which are not of correlative bearing upon the rest of the contents, but these invariably sustain the initiatory shortcomings.

Many fine problems in four moves, the motive of which could be faithfully interpreted in three moves, have been composed and deservedly admired. The now historic "Indian" for instance, contains a three-move device, yet by reason of its first appearance as a four-mover, the impression clings that the rendering in this number of moves was and is correct. The position is as follows, with a slight change, believed to have been made by the author himself in order to avoid alternative moves of White.

It will be noticed that after the key and second moves (1. Bc1 ... 2. Rd2) the third move 3. b3 or b4, is an interpolation. The rectified strategy would be sufficiently pronounced had Black's Knight's Pawn been at b4, when 1. Bc1, b3; 2. Rd2; 3. Rd4♯ would be all that is necessary.

It should be understood that the sandwiched moves of the original

Rev. H. A. Loveday



Mate in four

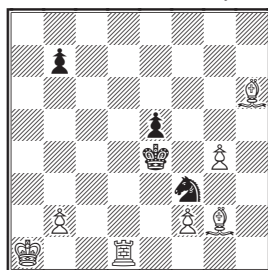
“Indian” are not deemed incorrect, but rather that they are not an actual necessity for a complete illustration of the idea.

1. Bc1
1. ... b6 2. Rd2, b5 3. b4
1. ... b5 2. Rd2, b4 3. b3

Another instance where a particularly fine idea of three-move brand loses some of its virtue by being prolonged to four moves, is the next problem by Ph. Klett. In running over the solution it will be seen that the essence of the work commences with White's beautiful second move. The key-move is but a tame introduction to a well thought out and clever idea, since it threatens a common-place short mate on the third move, and the other defence which defers the mate to the fourth move is lacking in interest.

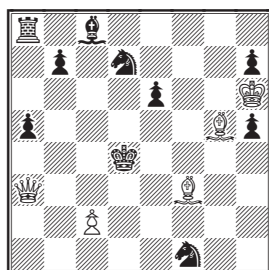
1. Be7
 1. ... Ke5 2. Bc6!, Pxc6 3. Bd6†
- [Note: Not 2. Bh1 or g2, Ra6; 3. Qf3, Sd2 and no mate.]
2. ... Kd4 3. Qd3†
 2. ... Kf3 or Kf5 3. Qf3†
 2. ... Sf moves 3. Qe3†
 2. ... Sc5 3. Qxc5†
 2. ... others 3. Bd6†
1. ... Sd2 or Kg3 2. Qd3+, K moves 3. Qe3+

Rev. H. A. Loveday



Mate in four

Ph. Klett

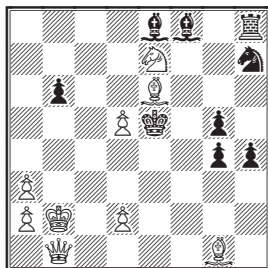


Mate in four

There are sparkling three-move ideas which cannot be carried out without checking moves, and as a checking key offends taste, composers have some justification in adding a quiet move as a preliminary, thus presenting the finished positions as full-blown four-movers.

The problem by F. Schrüfer is a case in point. It has a three-move idea cleverly extended to four moves. In order that the key move should not be a check the author has used the artifice of the quiet clearance key with the King. The White Pawn at a2 stops the King going to that square. The solution explains all that need be said.

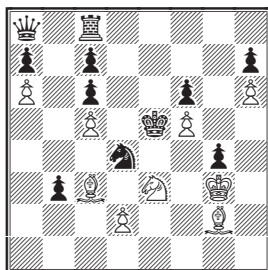
F. Schrüfer



Mate in four

1. Kc1
 1. ... B×e7 2. Qb2†, Kd6 3. Bc5†
 2. ... K else 3. Qd4†
 1. ... Bg7 2. Qc2, Bg6 or Bc6 3. S(×)g6†
 2. ... Kf6 or Kd6 3. Sc8(†)
 2. ... Kf4 3. Qf5†
 2. ... others 3. Qc3†
 1. ... b5 2. Bc5, Bg6 3. S×g6†
 2. ... Kf4 3. Qd3
 1. ... Kf6 2. Bd4†, K×e7 3. Qb4†
 1. ... Sf6 2. d4†, Kd6 3. Sc8†
 2. ... Kf4 3. Qd3
 1. ... others 2. Qb2+, Kd6 3. Sc8†
 (Bh5 or Pg3) 2. ... Ke4 or Kf4 3. Qc3 or Qd4†

J. Kohtz & C. Kockelkorn

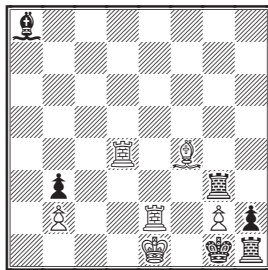


Mate in four

A marked example in which the defending moves figure more prominently than the attacking moves is seen in the next problem. White with three minor pieces must quickly re-arrange them. 1. d3 to support the Bishop when played to e4, looks straightforward and is not particularly interesting. Indeed it gives one pause to see why the mate cannot be given in three. This is the point. Black,

however, by a clearance process, so often a device of White, is just in time, 1. d3, Rh8; 2. Be4, Qg8! White now makes a semi-waiting move Bb2 and the Queen's focal command of the c4 and g4 must be yielded—the Rook being imprisoned.

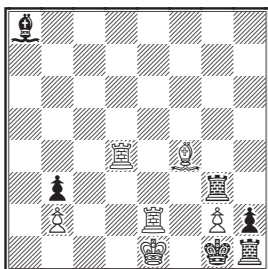
W. A. Shinkman



Mate in four

A pretty case where White fences for position will be seen in the attractive looking 4-er by W. A. Shinkman. Any attempt to mate with a Rook will be found waste of time, so the Bishop naturally is relied upon to do his best. The key-move is 1. Rdd2 which clears the diagonal so that the Bishop may act in opposition to the Black Bishop and Rook. The latter piece is a temporary fixture, and wherever the other moves White

W. A. Shinkman



Mate in four

plays his Bishop accordingly, as shown in the full solution.

1. Rdd2

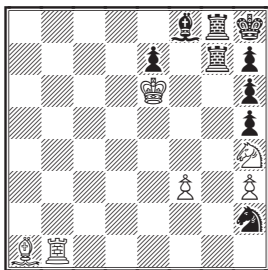
1. ... Bb7/Bc6/Bd5/Be4

2. Bb8/Bc7/Bd6/Be5 etc.

1. ... B×P 2. B×R, B moves 3. Rg2†

Many solvers are ill-contented unless a problem has either a move of apparent purposeless or exceptional daring. In the position by Klett just considered, the surprise occurs on White's second move, but usually in thematic play, the key-move is the one designed to cause a thrill.

W. J. Wood



Mate in four

In W. J. Wood's problem, it would seem futile to play the Rook to the corner, but on consideration it will be seen that to be of use there is no other square for it, as unpromising as it is.

1. Rh1

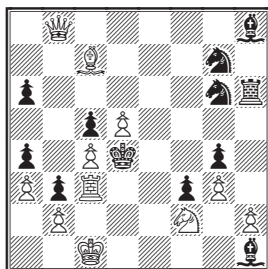
1. ... Sg4 2. h×g4, h×g4 3. Sg6†

1. ... Sf1 2. Sf5, Sg3 3. S×h6

1. ... S×f3 2. S×f3, h4 3. Se5

The composition now before us is a remarkable "block" four-mover; it has not this appearance, as the Black Bishop at h1 seems so inconsequential. What do we find? The White King moves to d1 (not d2, which looks more tempting and stronger) which is followed by an enigmatical sacrifice of the Rook in reply to the listless defence of 1 ... Bg2, and after its acceptance a brilliant yielding of the Queen (2. Qb4) finishing on its capture by an unexpected model mate by the Bishop. With such a grand "leader" one would be rather exacting to ask for more play of equal quality. The other variations pale before such a fine line of play. As an illustration of clever thematic play this problem stands out as a work of great merit.

J. Berger

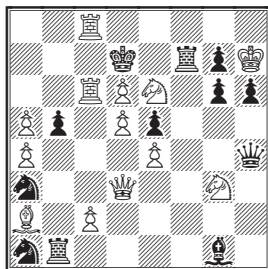


Mate in four

1. Kd1
 1. ... Bg2 2. Re3, K×e3 3. Qb4
 2. ... K×c4 3. Re4†
 1. ... R moves 2. Rd3†, K×c4 3. Qb6/Qb7
 1. ... Se6 2. d×e6, Bf6 3. Qa8/Qb7
 2. ... Others 3. Qd8†
 1. ... a5 2. Qb5, Se5 3. Re3
 2. ... Sf4 3. g×f4/B×f4

This four-mover by J. G. Campbell towers above all English four-movers of the early Transition period. It looks as heavy as it is profound, still it has beauty in its subtleness. The leading idea is very fine, and some of the variations, though somewhat like platitude, interspersed in flowery rhetoric, are difficult to fully comprehend and demand close examination.

J. G. Campbell



Mate in four

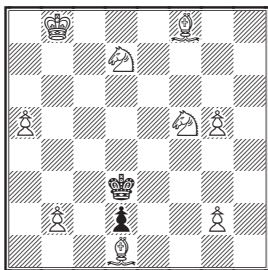
1. Sh1
 1. ... Rb3 2. Qf1, R×f1 3. Sf2
 2. ... Qe7 3. Q×f7
 2. ... Qf6 3. Q×
 2. ... Rbf3 3. Q×g1
 2. ... Bf2 3. Q×f2
 1. ... Rf5 2. R6c7†, K×d6 3. Rb7
 1. ... Qe7 2. d×e7, K×e7 3. d6†
 1. ... Rf3 2. Q×f3
 1. ... Bb6 2. a×b6
 1. ... Be3 2. Q×e3

The positions so far brought on the scene may be viewed by the modern devotee as having a musty flavour. They are, however, works which it would be disrespectful to stigmatise by harsh criticism, since it should be remembered that without pioneers and the incentives which they must have given, excepting W. J. Wood's which is a composition of recent date, the present high quality of work could not have been achieved—at all events not in so comparatively a short time.

The next illustrations are of the modern school, displaying ideas in combination with refined construction.

The first of these is by Dr C. Planck, delicately manipulating play with minor pieces. Actual chess strategy is not claimed here, but the nicety with which the White force is used to hold the Black King in hand is beautiful and remarkable, indeed there is quite a fairy touch about the whole composition.

Dr. C. Planck



Mate in four

1. g6

1. ... Ke4 2. Bc2†, Kd5 3. Se3+

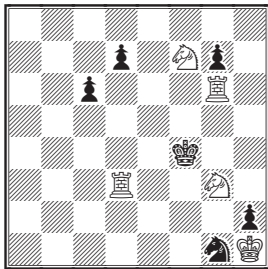
2. ... Kf4 3. Bh6†

1. ... Kc4 2. Sb6†, Kd3 3. Bd6

2. ... Kb5 3. b4

Another choice'piece of work in which the White Queen is absent, is seen in M. Havel's four-mover. Though the key-move strengthens White's command of the White diagonal, it is an excellent one, since it offers Black a flight square. In working out the solution one must be struck by the economy shown from start to finish when three unusual model mates (tantamount to echoes) are developed.

M. Havel



Mate in four

1. Sd6

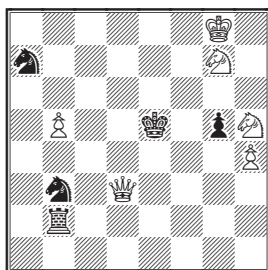
1. ... Ke5 2. Sc4†, Kf4 3. R×d7

1. ... c5 2. Sh5†, Ke5 3. Rg4

1. ... S moves 2. S(×)e2†, Ke5 3. R×S

The four-mover by G. Chocholous is a little fragile in appearance, but the play inducing three self-blocks in the theme lines is surprising. It is at first sight hardly credible that the Rook on playing to e2 forms a block, the square being so distant from the Black King—Kt x P and P x P lead to interesting finales, quite consonant with the Rook defence. The key is a good one though easy, for the reason that Black falls an immediate victim on the movement of the King and the fact that a short mate is threatened. The all-checking continuations are not subtle and

G. Chocholous



Mate in four

the position relies upon the daintiness of the construction and the strategical blocks for its beauty.

1. Sf6

1. ... Re2 2. Qd5†, Kf4 3. Sgh5†
2. ... Kxf6 3. Qd6† [3. Qxg5#]

1. ... Sxb5 2. Qe4†, Kd6 3. Sge8†

1. ... g×h4 2. Sd7†, Kf4 3. Se6†

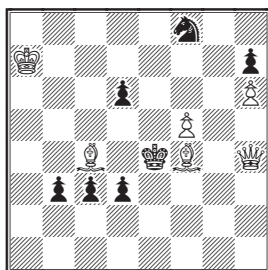
Threat: 2. Qe3†

[but 1. ... Sc5! Sd2!]

This is one of the foremost gems of echoed mates woven in the four-mover. The mate echoed is as remarkable as it is artistic. One cannot imagine such a mating position occurring in play over the board. This helps to support the contention that all the beauties of chess are not the special estate of the game and that the problem discloses many aesthetic qualities which could never be revealed in contentious chess.

The key in Cimburek's 4-er cuts off a "flight square" and this is unfortunate. This restrictive key was forced on the composer in order that his fine conception could be presented in a sound form. The strategy is of small account, but the play with six second move continuations is interesting and difficult, culminating in quaint and surprising mates.

L. Cimburek



Mate in four

1. Qg3

1. ... Kxf5 2. Qg5†, Ke4 3. Bd5†

1. ... Kd4 2. Qxd3†, Kc5 3. Bxd6†

1. ... Sg6 2. Qe3†, K×3. Be6†

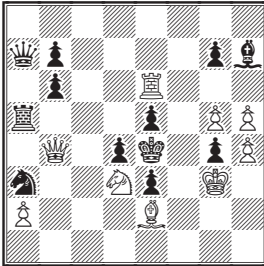
1. ... S else 2. B(×)e6 short mate

1. ... d5 2. B×d3† short mate

Threat: 2. Be3, K×3. Qf4†

The next position is a fine combination, full of incident and elegant mates. The keymove is restrictive but is condoned by the cheerful play which is in some cases rather subtle. The five second moves made by the Queen are quite interesting and it is a noticeable fact that the principal mates (models) are given by the Knight and Bishop only.

J. Pospisil



Mate in four

1 Rd6

Threat: 2. Rxd4†, exd4 3. Qe7†

1. ... Qb8 2. Qb3, Qxd6 3. Sc5†

1. ... Rc5 2. Qxd4†, exd4 3. Re6†

1. ... Sc2 2. Qb1, ~ 3. Qh1†

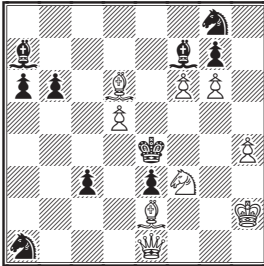
1. ... Rb5 2. Qc3, dxc3 & c 3. Sc5†

2. ... Kf5 3. Qc8†

1. ... Ra4/threat 2. Qe1, ~ 3. Qh1

Here in M. Feigl's we have a remarkable triple echo. Like Cimburek's 4-er, this problem has been composed specially for mating effects. It is true they are not exact counterparts, but the strategical denouements are sufficiently similar. It will be observed the Black King is in each of the three "star" variations mated on a White square and the charm of chameleon models is not present such as was seen in Cimburek's. Feigl's

M. Feigl



Mate in four

1. Se5

1. ... Se7 2. Qd1, Bb8 3. Bd3†

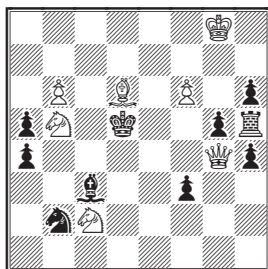
1. ... Bxd5 2. Qf1, Sc2 3. Bf3†

1. ... c2 2. Qb4†, Kx3. Bc4†

has a most excellent key; there is bright play and the terminals are graceful, an achievement of no mean value.

In this gem by G. Heathcote the key-move looks as though the King is anxious to get well into the picture. It really is more of a supporting move than an aggressive one. Black has four defences to a carefully prepared threat, viz., 2. Sca3 and each of these brings into the lime-light beautiful play and sweet mates, there being as many as six models given by Q, B and S. Skill and ingenuity are in unison with the result that a master-piece has been staged.

G. Heathcote

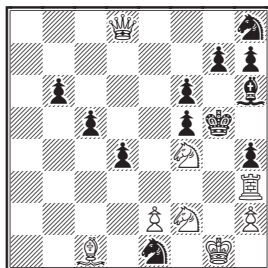


Mate in four

1. Kf7
 Threat: 2. Sca3, Kc6 3. Qc8†
 1. ... f2 2. Scd4, Bxd4 3. Qf3†
 1. ... Sd3 2. Qe4†, Kxe4 3. Sxc3†
 1. ... Kc6 2. Qc8†, Kxb6 3. Bc5†
 2. ... Kxb5 3. Sca3†
 2. ... Kd5 3. Sxc3†
 1. ... h3 2. Sxc3†, Kxd6 3. Qg3†
 2. ... Kc6 3. Qc8†

The merit of V. Marin's problem will be found, not so much in the key-move as in the replies to the defences which stand out so prominently—especially the two strategical "turns" after 1. ... Sf7 and the advance moves of the Queen's Pawns, 1. Qd5 is not a recondite key-move, because it will occur to the solver that Black's 1. ... Sf3† is not satisfactorily met by exf3. However, the apparent weakness of the key-move is made good by White's extraordinary second moves: 2. Qh1 after Sf7 and the three Rook placings when the Queen side Pawns come down. In each of these cases, the chief mates by Pawn and Rook are excellent, being entirely of a different character.

V. Marin



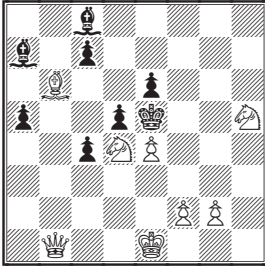
Mate in four

1. Qd5
 1. ... Sf7 2. Qh1, Sf~ &c. 3. Rg3†
 2. ... Sf3† 3. Qxf3
 1. ... b5 2. Rc3, } 2. ... h3 3. Qxf5†
 1. ... c4 2. Rb3, }
 1. ... d3 2. Rxd3,
 2. ... dxc3 &c 3. Se4†
 2. ... Sf3† 3. Qxf3
 1. ... Sg6 2. Se6†, Kh5 3. Sxg7†

This four-mover by J. Salminger deserves close attention; it is replete with excellent features. One cannot say that even to an expert the solution is easy. The key-move, giving up the White Pawn to the King is

decidedly a problematical one and the solver meets with a lateral model mate after 1. ... c×b6 and long shot diagonal model mates with Queen at b1 and h7 dexterously introduced. The quiet play is exceedingly interesting and the variety appreciable. There is a dual after 1. ... c5/c6 by 2. Sf3 or Sc6†, but it must not be taken seriously in such a splendid presentment.

J. Salminger



Mate in four

1. Qb5

1. ... c×b6 2. Sf5, c3 3. Qd3

2. ... K×e4 3. Qb1†

2. ... Others 3. f4†

1. ... Ba6 2. Qd7, B×b6/Bc8 3. Sf3†

2. ... K×e4 3. Q×e6†

1. ... K×e4 2. Sf3, d4 3. Sd2†

2. ... c3/K~ 3. Qb1†

1. ... Kd6 2. Qc5†, Kd7 3. Sf6†

2. ... Ke5 3. f3

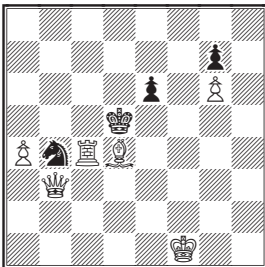
1. ... B×b6 2. Sc6†, Kd6 3. e5†

Alain C. White wrote of this problem by J. Dobrusky in *Tasks and Echoes*, published in 1915:

“If every experienced problemist were to make a list of the world’s six best chess problems, there is no question that many of the problems on the list would be different, but probably Dobrusky’s would figure in the selection of every one who had personally solved it.”

With just the very trite exception that the key-move is of the give and take type, all students of problems cannot but be profoundly impressed

J. Dobrusky



Mate in four

1. Bb6

1. ... Sc2 2. Qb5†, Kd6 3. Bc5†

1. ... Sa6 2. Qd3†, Ke5 3. Bd4†

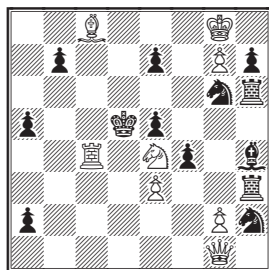
1. ... e5 2. Rc8†, Kd6 3. Bc5†

2. ... Ke4 3. Rf8

by the greatness, beauty and elegance of this apparently simple position. It must have been an inspiration cleverly shaped into accurate form, almost without a blemish. The two main lines bring about unexpected finales and the mate with Queen at h3 is astonishing.

P. F. Blake's problem has diversified features; brilliant play and perfect mating positions in the bold leading lines. There are six full length variations, all brimful of interest. 1. Qa1 as key-move may strike a solver as being a necessity to prevent the Pawn Queening, but beyond this small sentimental objection it is a capital one as the threat continuation is not on the surface. A work with a blend of many charms.

P. F. Blake

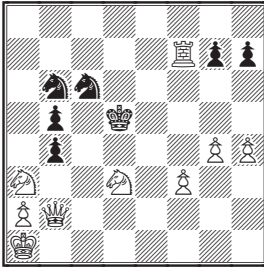


Mate in four

1. Qa1
threat/Sf6 2. Q×a2, b5 3. Qb1
2. ... Sd4 3. Sc3†
2. ... Be1 3. Rb4†
1. ... R×e3 2. Qd4†, e×d4 3. Rc5†
1. ... K×c4 2. Qc3†, Kd5 3. B×b7†
2. ... Kb5 3. Qb3+
1. ... e6 2. B×b7+, K×c4 3. Qc3+
1. ... f×2. Qb2, K×c4 3. Be6+
1. ... Sg4 2. Sc3, Sf2 3. Qb3
2. ... Sf6 3. S×f6+
2. ... R×e3 3. Rc5+
2. ... a1Q 3. Qd3+

In studying this position by G. Heathcote one must experience intense pleasure. With the principal force of White Queen, Rook and two Knights, a volume of thoughtful and captivating play is evolved. There are six distinct separate second moves of White resulting in as many model mates. The solution contains quiet as well as brilliant movements with quite a good key-move to develop them. The Queen visits fourteen squares, whilst there is considerable activity on the part of the other pieces. Though unaffected in appearance, some portions of the solution are puzzling and Difficulty is no small concern. In a case like this, duals and minor inaccuracies are often abundant, but in this great four-mover such blemishes as these are of a negligible quantity. For artistic completeness, sparkle and subtlety this work is one of the finest of its class ever composed.

G. Heathcote



#4

1. Rc7
threat 2. Qe5†, S×e5 3. Sf4†
1. ... Kd6 2. S×b5†, Kd5 3. Qe5†
1. ... b3 2. S×b5, P~/Sa~ 3. Rd7†
1. ... b×a3 2. Qc3, Sc4 3. Rd7†
2. ... Sd4 3. Qc5†
2. ... others 3. Q×c6†
1. ... Ke6 2. Q×g7, b×a3 3. R×c6†
2. ... Se7/Sd7 3. Q×S†
1. ... Sd4 2. S×b5, S×f3 3. Qe2
2. ... Ke6/Sb~ 3. Sf4†
2. ... g5 3. Q×d4†
2. ... Sb3†/Sc2† 3. Q×S
1. ... g5 2. Qf6, b×a3 &c. 3. R×c6
2. ... Sc~ 3. Rd7†
1. ... Sc4 2. Rd7†, Sd6 3. Qb3†
1. ... Sc8 2. Qb3 (short mate)
1. ... Sd7 2. R×d7† (short mate)

The chess problems we have reviewed—well described as chess poems—possess conspicuously agreeable features, and if the discovery of the meaning of a four-mover be a great accomplishment, one can imagine the delight of the author of the problem.

A fine problem of this length is not soon forgotten; it takes more time to master than a two- or three-mover, and greater exercise of the mental faculties to construct, leaving in each case pleasant and lasting memories of a *fait accompli*.

As before stated, the best way to realise the depth as well as the beauties of the four-mover, without testing one's patience too much, is to work out the transcribed solution with deliberation. This process will stimulate the student to emulate those composers and solvers, who by their achievements have established themselves as experts.

The thoughtful study of positions given in this paper, supplemented by a careful scrutiny of others (many of equal merit to those we have examined) will awaken an interest in the subject, which to many is erroneously regarded as too deep for the ordinary problem devotee, and help to make one of the most illuminating off-shoots of the problem art irresistibly popular, that is the four-move chess poem.