

LONDON DAILY MAIL
LONDON, ENGLAND
3 APRIL 1897

VARSITY CHESS MATCH

SUCCESS OF OXFORD

The British Chess Club is a somewhat dingy-looking building in King-street, Covent-garden; but exterior dulness is presumably more than compensated for by the interior brilliance that characterises the play most often to be witnessed there. Yesterday, while their more active fellows were wrestling victory from each other by superiority of muscle and wind at Queen's Club, the intellectual battle was fought out by seven representatives of Oxford and Cambridge in King-street.

The long room on the ground floor was the scene of the fight. Low-ceiled and prodigally furnished with black carved oak, it was illuminated by a mixed method of skylight, gas, and electricity, and since the gas was in a minority, and there were no fires, the duty of watching the play was as cold a one as that of watching the carriages in the Mall going to a March Drawing-room. This was probably arranged with a view to assisting some among the players to keep their heads cool. The room is hung with pictures mostly, but not exclusively, germane to chess questions; and ranging from a coloured bas relief of Ramses III offering a wholly mythical gambit to a slave boy, to a representation of an elegant, Wattean-like demoiselle check-mating a gallant in light blue breeches, or to portraits of Zukertort and Paul Morphy.

The centre portion of this room was inclosed by posts and rails formed of red braid, and within this sat the champions of the 'Varsities. Some wore the blazer of the C.U.C.C., with its piping of pale blue; others contented themselves with a mere tie of the distinguishing colour, or even with a bunch of violets; and yet others were satisfied with the mere frock-coat of Piccadilly unadorned. Altogether the display was inferior to that made by the dogs of Putney and Fulham. On each little table, in addition to the board and its pieces, was

A CHESS CLOCK

a curious double-faced arrangement, worked on entirely occult principles, besides a collection of choice meerschaum and other

pipes. The curious little clocks appear to have been set alike at twelve noon; and although the clock in the bosom of a smiling bronze lady on the mantelpiece moved inexorably on from two to six, its little two-faced companions never got much past one, a circumstance which the "Daily Mail" representative found no time to investigate properly.

The fourteen players played games of varying brilliancy, and played them in different manners. Some were nervous, their hands shook visibly, and their muscles twitched under the strain. Others took matters more coolly. One even read a paper while awaiting his opponent's moves. He was rather badly beaten. Others went from table to table during such intervals in order to follow the fortunes of their side. But all spoke in whispers, low and infrequent, as though one were in church, or at least in a City Mecca.

Towards five o'clock two of the Cambridge men had been disposed of, the tension became relaxed, conversation waxed loud, and the remainder of the games were played under what might have constituted a serious difficulty to some of the "masters" whose portraits adorn the walls. At a quarter before six six players had been disposed of, and the result hung on the game between Jenkins of Brasenose, and Battersby of St. Catherine's. Battersby made a mistake at the critical moment, and although Jenkins might have won, time (as represented by the smiling lady) forbade, and the game was adjudicated a draw, thus making Oxford the victors by four games to three. Score:—

OXFORD		CAMBRIDGE	
1. Mr. E. G. Spencer-Churchill (Magdalen)	1	Mr. E. Aleister-Crowley (Trinity)	0
2. Mr. E. Lawton (Corpus)	1	Mr. W. V. Naish (Emmanuel)	0
3. Mr. R. A. Jenkins (Brasenose)	$\frac{1}{2}$	Mr. R. Battersby (St. Catherine's)	$\frac{1}{2}$
4. Mr. G. Fraser (Corpus)	0	Mr. C. E. C. Tattersall (Trinity)	1
5. Mr. A. W. H. George (New)	0	Mr. L. McLean (King's)	1
6. Mr. G. H. Stoker (Corpus)	1	Mr. A. L. Stainer (St. Catherine's)	0
7. Mr. R. Hancock (Exeter)	$\frac{1}{2}$	Mr. A. Fotheringham (Emmanuel)	$\frac{1}{2}$
	4		3