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From the Archives...

Since it came online many years ago, [ChessCafe.com](#) has presented literally thousands of articles, reviews, columns and the like for the enjoyment of its worldwide readership. The good news is that almost all of this high quality material remains available in the [Archives](#). The bad news is that this great collection of chess literature is now so large and extensive – and growing each week – that it is becoming increasingly difficult to navigate it effectively. We decided that the occasional selection from the archives posted publicly online might be a welcomed addition to the regular fare.

Watch for an item to be posted online periodically throughout each month. We will update the [ChessCafe.com](#) home page whenever there has been a “new” item posted here. We hope you enjoy *From the Archives...*

In January 1885, Volume I, Number 1 of Wilhelm Steinitz' *The International Chess Magazine* made its appearance. The first world champion was feisty and controversial, characteristics that would be shared, to some degree, by other world champions. We thought it might be interesting to take a look back at the very first item to appear in *ICM*.

The International Chess Magazine, Volume I, Number 1

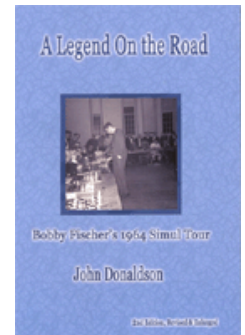
Introduction

Our literary venture enters into life under good auspices. Chess is rapidly growing in popularity and emerging gradually from the state of mere patronage which surrounded its early growth and reserved its cultivation as a privilege of the few. In that respect it had to pass a transition period similar to that which accompanied the rise of the sciences, arts, literature and the drama into popular favor. It is, however, now becoming generally recognized as a healthy training, which if properly applied exercises the same sort of developing and preserving influence on the mental faculties which gymnastics produce on the bodily powers. Our noble game can hardly be otherwise than beneficial, for it is a purely logical exercise, and as a test of strength unequalled in all branches of human knowledge, for it is the only accomplishment in which two contending intellects can be placed on an equal footing independent of taste and fashion.

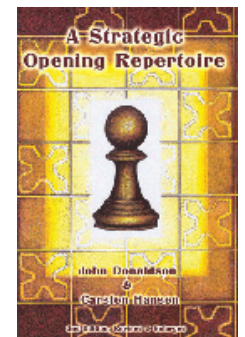
We have great pleasure in announcing that the response to our preliminary appeal for public support has been more than satisfactory, considering that the trust we applied for was not solely of a literary character.

The great kindness shown to us in the promotion of our enterprise unanimously by the whole chess press of this country and Canada, as well as by high-class publications, such as *Harper's Weekly* and the *New York Tribune*, and also by private American amateurs severely handicaps our efforts of returning thanks. Actually more generous assistance was voluntarily offered, and ultimately extended to us from perfect strangers

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on this side of the Atlantic than we could have expected from our oldest European friends. Considering that the publication of this periodical was only conditionally held in view, the foreign demand was naturally small at first, though of a most influential character, comprising the highest social circles in different countries, but it has perceptibly increased since the final announcement of the issue of our magazine was made public, and the widest circulation, in all quarters of the globe, is secured to us at starting. Besides in all parts of the States, we have already subscribers in Australia, Austria, Cuba, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, India, Italy, Jamaica, Mexico, New Zealand, Sweden and Russia. This truly international support shows the extensive confidence reposed in our fulfilling the promise indicated in our title, namely, of fairly representing the cosmopolitan character of our pastime.

Our motto is symbolical of our programme in brief. Cutting the Latin proverb in halves we leave a *pereat* for many ancient disputes of the chess world, but we must hold *Justitia* sacred. Vindication, not merely vindictive, may be part of our duty, and as some misgivings, private and public, have reached us from kind friends on that point, we think it right to make a further explanation on the subject. It will be admitted that the editor has played a not unimportant role on the chess historical stage for more than 20 years, and we may state he does not intend to abdicate his part yet. It is also well known that during that period he had to perform a sort of Steinitz Gambit in the game of life, in which his King was subjected to many worse than useless checks which apparently looked very dangerous. Believing however, all the time, that his strategy at least, and even his tactics, were quite sound in the main, he has now come to the conclusion that he has a won game in hand, and as no draw has been proposed by his consulting opponents (which, to say the truth, he would be rather reluctant to accept) he may have to fight on. It may be his turn now to administer some checks with his King to badly posted pawns of his adversaries, and he would be failing in generalship if he confined himself to the defense. Rarely as he has assumed the attack style has been generally simple and effective, and *Si vis pacem para bellum*. We may also have to prove analytically that his previous play was not as black as it was printed, and that variations containing fine combinations have been either ignored or misrepresented by some authors on the game of chess life.

To use plain language, we admit that naturally questions old and new will be treated in our pages, in which the editor might really have or be supposed to have a direct or indirect personal interest. In order to comply with the demands of justice, our position will become exceedingly difficult, for we may have to appear as judge, advocate and witness in one person: As no cosmopolitan code of laws has been framed yet for the guidance of international chess writers we lay down, at least for ourselves, the following rules, which we consider fair: Before discussing matters in which we are personally involved we shall conscientiously analyse our feelings and motives, in order to ascertain whether they are of real public interest. We shall very rarely rake up old affairs, and then only in their strictest relations to, or as a necessary illustration of current events. We shall confine ourselves as much as possible to bare facts which are perfectly well-known or can easily be proved, and we shall exclude almost invariably all personal evidence of our own, or if such evidence be absolutely required for our demonstration we shall make it quite distinct from our editorial remarks. In all other respects we claim freedom of discretion in this free country.

Before concluding our introduction we wish to record our fullest appreciation and warmest reciprocation of the fraternal feeling exhibited toward our advent by the *Brooklyn Chess Chronicle*, a well conducted periodical which since its first appearance has been the only one in America devoted exclusively to our game. There is plenty of room for both of us, and a healthy competition and friendly rivalry for the public benefit will benefit all. We also wish to express our special and most cordial thanks to the editors of the *Times Democrat*, of New Orleans, and

of the *Globe*, St. Paul, Minn., for the generous manner in which they have promoted our undertaking.

Finally, we offer our readers and the whole chess fraternity most heartily the compliments of the season.

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