

Studies of Chess
By AD Philidor (1825)

The Laws or Constitutions to regulate the Game, are originally established, either to prevent or decide contests; because, by defining what is capable of diversified construction, by determining points which, without explanation, would be uncertain, they prevent dispute. These statutes, founded in reason, countenanced by custom, confirmed by the practice of the best players, and the approbation of illustrious authors, may be reduced to the XVII. following RULES, which the Society or Club of Chess in ENGLAND have adopted for their code.

LAWS OF CHESS.

I. THE chess-board must be placed in such a manner, that each player may have a white square at his right hand. If a player perceive the board to be improperly placed, before four moves on each side have been played, he may insist on recommencing the game.

II. He that gives a piece is supposed to have the move, unless it be agreed otherwise. In games without odds, lots must be cast for the move, which afterwards becomes alternate.

III. If a pawn or piece have been forgotten at the beginning of the game, it will be in the adversary's choice, either to begin the game afresh, or to proceed, permitting the piece forgotten to be set in its place.

IV. If it be agreed to give the advantage of a piece, or a pawn, and it have been forgotten at the beginning of a game, it will be left to the choice of him who has suffered by such a mistake, to proceed, or to recommence.

V. A piece once touched must be played, unless it be said, in touching it, J'adoube: but if a piece be displaced or overturned by accident, the player in whose set it is, will be allowed to restore it to its place.

VI. If you touch one of your adversary's pieces without saying J'adoube, he has a right to oblige you to take it; and in case you touch a piece not prizable, you, who have touched it, must play your king if you can.

VII. When one has dismissed a piece from his hand, he cannot take it again to play it to another place; but so long as he keeps his hold of it, he is at liberty to play it where he pleases.

VIII. A player making a 'false move, must play his king, as in Rule VI.: but no false move can be recalled after the adversary's succeeding move; so if the irregular move be not revoked in time, the position taken must remain as' if it had been just.

IX. Every pawn which has reached the eighth or last square of the chess-board, is entitled to make a queen, or any other piece that shall be thought proper; and this, even when all the pieces remain on the chess-board"

So much of this rule as violates the uniform order of the set, was afterwards rescinded by Philidor. Where two antagonists can agree, that any rule is unreasonable, or inconvenient, they may reject or qualify it, in respect to their own play.

X. Any pawn has the privilege of advancing two squares at its first move: but, in this case, it may, in passing, be taken by any pawn which might have taken it if it had been pushed but one move.

One square would be more correct: but the language of this tenth rule is retained verbatim; because the reasoning on which the rule rests, may partly depend on this mode of speaking.

XI. The king when he castles, cannot in his flight exceed two squares, that is, the rook with which he castles must take the square next to the original square of the king; and the latter, leaping over, must be posted close on the other side of the rook.

XII. The king cannot castle when in check, nor after having been moved, nor if in passing he be exposed to a check, nor with a rook which has been removed from its place: and he that castles when he should not, must play his rook touched, or his king, at his own choice.

XIII. If a player give check without warning, the adversary will not be bound to ward it off; and he may consequently play as if such check did not exist: but if the former in playing the next move, were to say Check, each must then retract his last move, as being false, and he that is under check is to obviate it in the prescribed form.

The old way of castling in several countries, and it still subsist: in some, was to leave to the player's disposal, all the interval between the king and the rook, along with the squares first assigned them. But the above is the established rule in Great Britain, France, and Holland.

XIV. If the adversary warn you of a check, without however giving it, and you in consequence touch, or move, either your king, or any other piece, you will then be allowed to retract, so long as your adversary has not completed his next move.

XV. If any one touch a piece which he cannot play without exposing his king to check, he must then play his king; and if his king cannot be played, the mistake entails no penalty.

XVI. When one has nothing else to play, and his king being out of check, cannot stir without coming to a check, then the game is stale-mate.

In England, he whose is stale-mate wins the game; but in France, and several other countries, the stale-mate is a drawn game.

The good sense for which the English nation have credit is conspicuous in this rule: the player giving the stale-mate, has put the adversary into a position DIRECTLY THE REVERSE of check-mate. Mr. Sarratt, nevertheless, wishes to import the neutralizing law, which makes a stale-mate a drawn game. As an unanswerable objection to the British principle, he says, that if it be established, every player might have a two-fold object in view, "that of check-mating his adversary, or that " of compelling his adversary to stale- mate him." But, according to his own rule, in a few situations which he has mixed with some masterly ones adopted by him, the player may have a threefold object in view: 1. TO CHECKMATE THE ADVERSARY; 2. Having failed with loss, to GET INTO A STALEs; 3. Foiled in this, too, to GIVE A STALE; It is extending indulgence to an unskilful or inadvertent mode of approach, to make it indifferent to the player which of the two last happens; and it is encouraging that party who CAN avoid it, to produce that relation of the adverse pieces, which is an opprobrium to the board. Conceive the white king to be at the adverse rook's square, a white pawn at the same rook's second; the black king at his bishop's square: the white has to move. The black king might have avoided giving such a stale-mate: shall we grant him indemnity for marring the game? _

XVII. At all conclusions of parties, when a player seems not to know how to give the difficult mates, as that of a knight and a bishop against the king, that of a rook and a bishop against a rook, &c. at the adversary's request, fifty moves on each side must be appointed for the end of the game: these being accomplished without a mate, it will be a drawn game.