

NEW ZEALAND CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP CONGRESS.

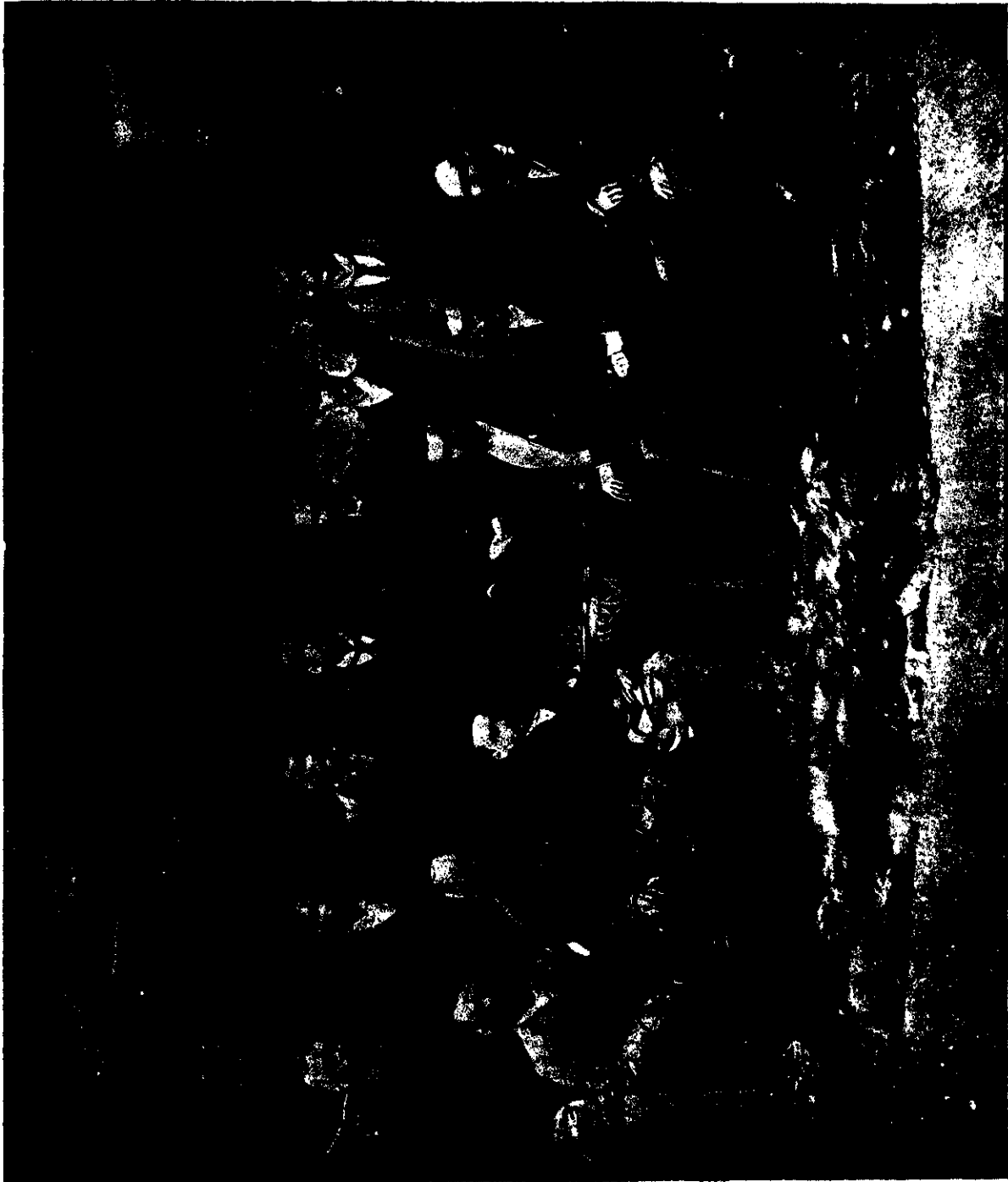
THE eighth Chess Congress to decide the championship of New Zealand for the ensuing twelve months was held at Wellington during the recent Christmas and New Year holidays. The following is the full score :-

Competitor	Wins	Losses	Points (Sonneborn system)
Mackay, W.	8	3	8.71
Cocks, H. B.	7.5	3.5	8.40
Edwards, J.	7	4	7.76
Lelièvre, A. A.	7	4	7.66
Hookham, H.	6.5	4.5	7.19
Gifford, A.	6.5	4.5	7.12
Barnes, R. J.	6	5	6.28
Barraud, W. F.	5.5	6	4.73
Plessants, O. C.	5	6	4.69
Hatherly, H. R.	3.5	7.5	2.31
Peacock, G.	2	9	1.32
Wood, J.	2	9	1.03

(trophy value £20) and the Championship, is thirty-one years of age, and a member of the firm of S. and W. Mackay, booksellers, Wellington, which business he started at the early age of eighteen. He was born in Melbourne, and came to New Zealand at the age of fourteen, and learnt the game as a boy in Nelson. In 1884 he joined the Wellington Chess Club, and has ever since been very closely identified with its interests, having conducted the secretaryship for four years. As a player he has risen gradually and surely, each year seeing him take a more responsible board in the interprovincial contests with marked success, his form having also been very consistent in club tournaments. Messrs Banow and Littlejohn, who are regarded as the strongest Wellington players, were unable to compete for the championship, and other former competitors not being available, it was necessary to fall back on untried men. Mr Mackay

an exceedingly popular one. In the annual bout between the smokers and non-smokers, Mr Mackay plays for the latter.

Mr H. B. COCKS, the winner of the second prize (trophy value £10), is a son of the late Rev. H. B. Cocks, of Christchurch, and is twenty-nine years of age. He is a B.A. of the New Zealand University, and is a member of the Wellington College Staff. It is many years since he learnt the game, which, however, he only took up actively when joining the Wellington Chess Club some fifteen months ago. He has therefore come to the front very rapidly, so quickly, in fact, that his merits have not hitherto been fully recognised. He was, consequently, not selected to do battle for his club, but exercised the right of private entry by paying an entrance fee. This, it may be mentioned, is provided for by the rules, so as to obviate an un-



NEW ZEALAND CHESS CONGRESS.
 BACK ROW.—J. WOOD, O. PLESSANTS, H. B. COCKS, J. EDWARDS (ex-champion), DR. HATHERLY, W. MACKAY (champion), H. C. SKIMM (hon. secretary).
 FRONT ROW.—G. PEACOCK, H. HOOKHAM, R. J. BARNES, A. LELIÈVRE, A. GIFFORD, W. F. BARRAUD.

It will be noticed that Messrs Edwards and Lelièvre tied for third place, which, however, has been awarded to the former, who scored more points under the Sonneborn system. This complicated system of determining the value of the wins is the best known at present, but in the opinion of many chess enthusiasts is by no means perfect. To describe it briefly one is penalised more for losing to a weak player than to a strong one.

Mr WM. MACKAY, who has carried off the first prize

was accordingly chosen one of the representatives, and has won championship honours at his maiden attempt, having fully played up to the high standard looked for by his club mates. As a fellow competitor put it, Mr Mackay deserved to win 'being such a glutton for hard work.' His good nature, however, in trying to get through two stiff games in one day to oblige a player who was desirous of curtailing his visit nearly cost him dear, but as things have turned out, will greatly enhance his win, which it should be added, is

due number of local entries, which would tend to prevent desirable competitors living at a distance from attending the Congress. Mr Cocks is a careful, painstaking player, good at the Stonewall opening, and generally manages to keep the draw in hand, so that he is a capital specimen of the Vienna School, the members of which have been playfully termed 'drawing masters.' And here it may be mentioned that while Mr Cocks is credited with 7½ wins, 3½ losses, he in reality won 5 games, lost only 1, and drew no less than 5.