both young women also love men of whom their fathers do not approve.

The Presbyterian Parson Matthews and the Puritan Parson Ravensworth are, moreover, cast from the same mold. Matthews is accused by his wife of being uncharitable and of losing sight of the true spirit of religion (p. 198), even as Ravensworth is charged with intolerance and with the misuse of religion by his neighbor Walford (IV, i). In addition, both men wear their religious offices heavily and resent, to the same degree, any expression of levity or happiness: Matthews is described as considering "a smile of inborn felicity a defiance thrown in the teeth of the very God that prompts it" (p. 189); and Ravensworth has so established the sobriety of religion that his daughter views levity a "misplac'd" emotion (I, i). The parsons also act alike when an Indian uprising threatens, Matthews finding solace in his faith and good works (p. 200), Ravensworth appealing to "prayer and sacrifice" for safety (III, ii).

Of course, *The Yemassee* and *Superstition* are of two different literary genres and, hence, discourage the drawing of exact parallels. However, the similarity between protagonists in the two works and the use by the two authors of parallel general story lines and forest scenes which are very much alike suggest that Simms probably was aware of Barker's play, either from seeing it acted or from reading it in the Lopez and Wemyss reprinting of it in *Acting American Theatre* (1826).

"Maelzel's Chess-Player," Poe's First Detective Mistake

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POE'S DETECTIVE STORIES were preceded by a number of essays in which the author exercised his own abilities as a detective on various material problems like hand writing and cryptography. The earliest of these essays is that about Maelzel's Chess-Player which was published in *The Southern Literary Messenger* in April, 1836. In this

essay Poe describes a chess-playing automaton which was exhibited in Richmond in the same year. Poe gives a detailed description of the Chess-Player and the routine followed by the impresario, Maelzel, as he exhibited it. He then examines several theories which had been advanced to explain the operations of the machine—that there was a dwarf concealed inside, that there was a child concealed inside. Then he recounts the explanation offered in an essay appearing in "a Baltimore weekly paper," which posited that the Chess-Player was large enough and manipulated in such a manner that a normal man could hide in the apparatus and operate the machine. Although he makes a niggling objection to the verbosity of this writer's solution, Poe finds this solution to be the only acceptable one, and sets out in the remainder of his essay to give it an inductive basis. He offers seventeen points of substantiation leading to the conclusion that "We do not believe that any reasonable objections can be urged against this solution of the Automaton Chess-Player.[1]

At the risk of being unreasonable, it seems that in all probability Poe was wrong. Two of the most important European magicians of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries offer a different explanation for the operation of the Chess-Player. The first of these was Jean Eugene Robert-Houdin, the French magician and inventor from whom Harry Houdini later took his stage name. In his autobiography, *Confidences d'un Prestidigateur* (Paris, 1859; Philadelphia, 1859), Robert-Houdin explains Kempelen's invention and exhibition of the automaton which Poe saw in Richmond. Robert-Houdin notes various small points which fill in Poe's account of the operation of the automaton—for instance, that the impresario's winding-up of the fake machinery masked the noise of his confederate squirming into position and that the Chess-Player was left-handed because the operator was left-handed. Most important, however, is the confederate himself. According to Robert-Houdin, Kempelen constructed the machine specifically to fit Worousky, a Pole (not an Italian as Poe states) who had been severely wounded in battle. He does not mention Worousky's condition beyond calling him a "cripple" and saying that his body was "mutilated."[2] Nevil

[1] Edgar Allan Poe, "Maelzel's Chess-Player," *The Works of Edgar Allan Poe,* ed. Edmund C. Stedman and George E. Woodberry (New York, 1914), IX, 212.

[2] Lascelles Wraxall, trans., *The Memoirs of Robert-Houdin* (New York, 1964), pp. 108–109.

Maskelyne, however, does. The son of John Nevil Maskelyne, the English magician and mechanic who popularized magic shows at Egyptian Hall in Piccadilly and who built various automatons including "Psycho" and "Zoe," Nevil Maskelyne explains Maelzel's Chess-Player in his article on conjuring in the 1910 edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica.* Here Maskelyne explains that Worousky had lost both of his legs in combat and when not in the automaton "he was furnished with artificial limbs. . . . his appearance, together with the fact that no dwarf or child travelled in Kempelen's company, dispelled the suggestion that any person could be employed inside the machine."[3]

Since, according to Robert-Houdin and Maskelyne—who as magicians had inside information about most illusions—Kempelen built the Chess-Player to be operated by an amputee, there is fairly strong presumptive evidence that Maelzel, who acquired the automaton from Kempelen sometime before 1819, worked it the same way. It can also be assumed that if Poe's delegate for the operator, Schlumberger, is correct, then he also might have been an amputee. Given these two deductions, it is ironic that Poe, master of the weird and grotesque, did not detect this answer to the riddle of the Chess-Player because his imagination was neither weird not grotesque enough.

[3] Nevil Maskelyne, "Conjuring," *Encyclopaedia Britannica,* 1910–1911, VI, 947.

Crane's "Fleming": Appellation for Coward or Hero?

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ONE OF THE LEAST OBVIOUS, and yet most interesting, details of Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage* is the suggestiveness of the protagonist's last name—"Fleming." Eric Solomon notes that Henry Fleming was worried that his name might become "a synonym for coward."[1] Henry is apprehensive lest his name become

[1] Eric Solomon, "The Structure of 'The Red Badge Of Courage,'" in *Modern Fiction Studies,* V (Autumn, 1959), 230.