

The Haberdasher's Puzzle

By H. E. Dudeney or is it C. W. McElroy

Simon S. Allen 17 November 2025, Monday.

The Weekly Dispatch for 6th April 1902 p. 13. Puzzle no. 440. The Triangle to Square

“The puzzle is to cut any equilateral triangle into as few pieces as possible that will fit together and form a perfect square.

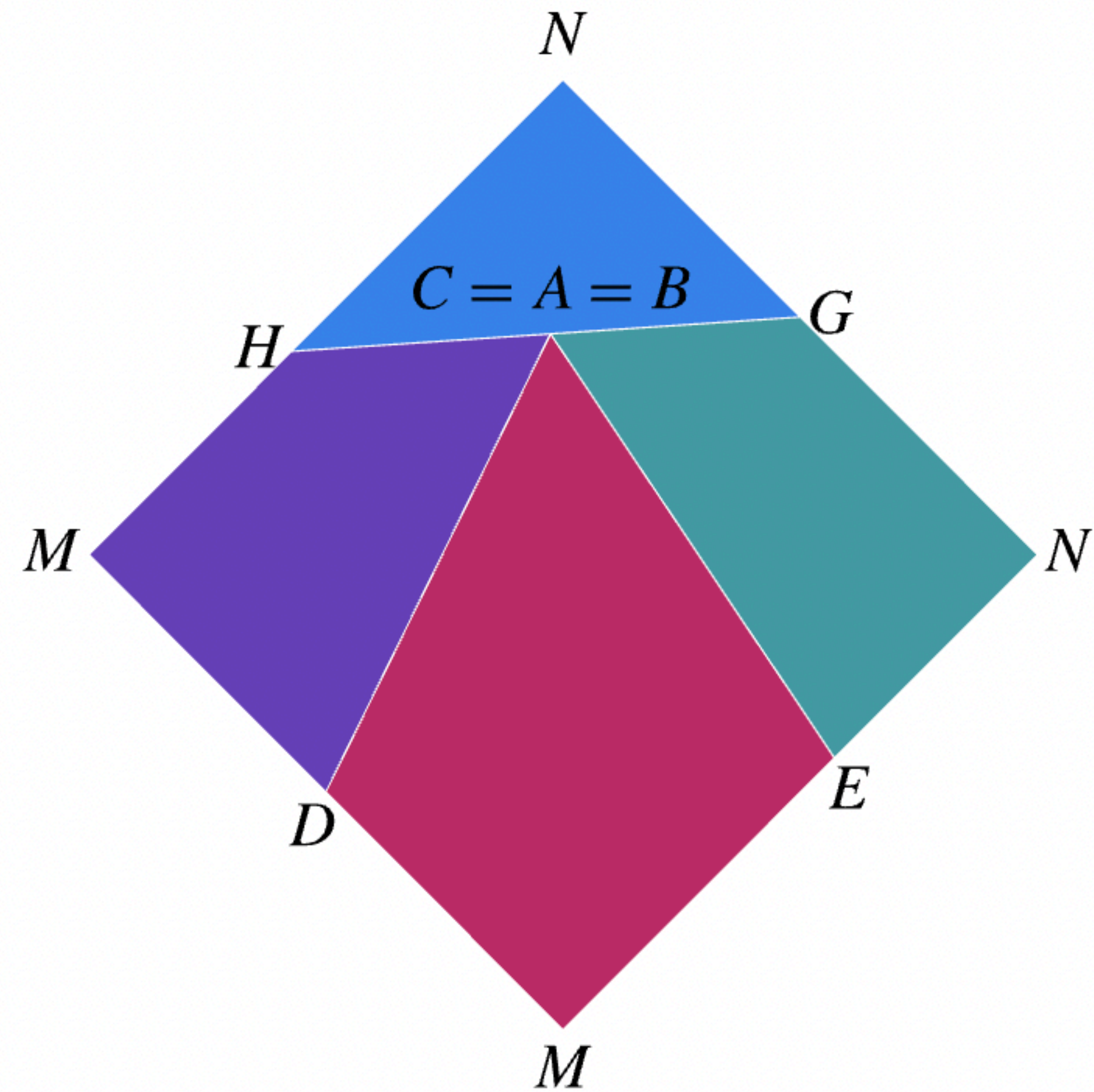
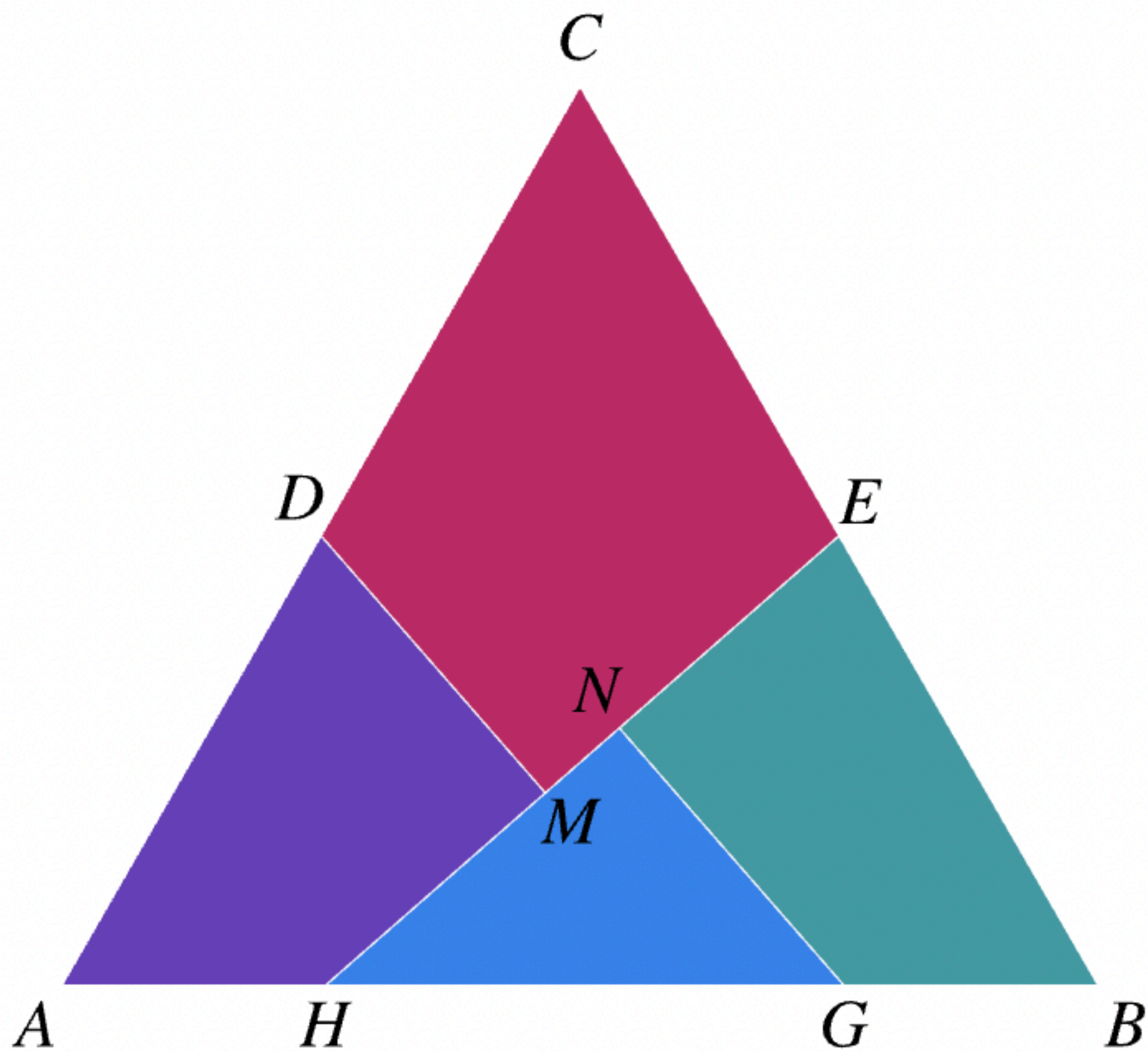
I shall award our weekly half Guinea Prize for a correct solution.”

A fortnight later.

This method involves turning over (which was not prohibited), but it gives the key to a solution in five pieces without turning over any piece. The correct solution, however, is much prettier, and is in only four pieces. It seems that I was right in believing that it would be solved, though only one competitor succeeded in getting at "the heart of the mystery." This was Mr. C. W. McElroy, 25, Great Jackson Street, Hulme, Manchester, to whom the prize of half a guinea will be sent.

Haberdasher's Problem

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17th May 1905

H. E. Dudeney exhibits the solution to the Royal Society

1907 he publishes the puzzle in his Canterbury Tales.

Credit should go to Mr C. W. McElroy of 25, Great Jackson Street,
Hulme, Manchester.