

CLASSIC

# JUDGEMENT and PLANNING in CHESS



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**Max Euwe**

NEW ALGEBRAIC EDITION



# Judgement and Planning in Chess

Max Euwe

*Translated by J. du Mont*

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*Series Editor: Dr John Nunn GM*

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# Preface

During the Plymouth Congress in August 1948 I met Mr J. du Mont, then editor of the *British Chess Magazine*, who suggested that I should write a book on the lines of the present volume.

His idea was to give the practical player some guidance as to how to proceed in a game from the point where the books on opening theory leave off. The result is the present volume, and I am grateful to Mr du Mont for giving me the opportunity of carrying out his idea and suggestions.

Max Euwe  
March 1953

# Symbols

+	Check
++	Double check
#	Mate
x	Capture
0-0	Castles kingside
0-0-0	Castles queenside
!	Good move
!!	Excellent move
?	Bad move
??	Blunder
!?	Interesting move
?!?	Dubious move
1-0	White wins
0-1	Black wins
½-½	Draw
(n)	nth match game
(D)	Diagram follows

# Foreword by John Nunn

One of the favourite questions asked by a non-chess player meeting a grandmaster is “How many moves ahead do you think?”. This question demonstrates that the public perception of chess thought is based on the assumption that chess players’ minds run entirely along the lines of “I go there, he goes there, then I go there...”, at least when they are sitting at the board. The fact that computers do actually calculate like this (and play very well!) probably only reinforces the impression.

There is an element of truth in this assumption, in that novices do tend to think predominantly in this manner. At a stage when most games are decided by simple tactics winning a piece, there is no need for more than a simple calculation followed by a quick head-count. However, as a player becomes stronger, he (or she) realizes that there are many aspects of chess which cannot be mastered simply by calculation. Even the calculation of variations may no longer be so helpful; instead of winning a piece, the player has to deal with finer distinctions. This is where *judgement* first enters the player’s chess perception - it’s not enough to be able to work out variations, it is also necessary to evaluate the position at the end. Even more important, perhaps, is to assess the position currently on the board correctly – there is no point looking for a drawing tactical continuation if one has a positional advantage.

Another hurdle faced by improving players is the problem of what to do when there are no tactics available and no direct attack on the king. In this situation *planning* becomes the most important facet of the game. The ability to select the most appropriate plan is a skill which is not easily learned, and there is little literature to help the aspiring player along. Most modern authors prefer the standard formula of an opening book, and are reluctant to venture into the trickier area of middlegame play. This is a shame, because more games are decided in the middlegame than in any other part of the game, yet only a fraction of current chess literature deals with this phase.

Max Euwe was one of the few authors to write extensively about the middlegame; he was well qualified to do so, having been World Champion from 1935 to 1937. This new algebraic edition of his *Judgement and Planning in Chess*, which was originally published in English in 1953, fills an undoubtedly gap in chess literature. There is much solid instruction and good advice on a variety of middlegame themes, using examples from the games of leading players. Euwe also shows how the most important positional ideas recur at all phases of the game and can have a dominating effect on the play.

Readers may be interested to know exactly what has changed in this new edition apart from the notation. The English has been edited to bring it more up-to-date and some analytical corrections have been incorporated into the text (as this is an instructional book, I did not use footnotes to detail these corrections). Curiously, the original English edition had no exclamation or question marks by the moves. At first I thought that this was an idiosyncrasy of the author, but on checking with the original Dutch I found that they had simply been removed at some stage. They have now been reinstated. The original book lacked indexes; a full set of indexes has now been added.

I would like to conclude by thanking Graham Burgess, David Cummings, Cor van Wijgerden, his wife Gosia and my wife Petra for their help in the production of this book.

# Introduction

Often, when a player has a fair understanding of the principles of chess and can make quite pretty combinations two or three moves deep, he suddenly notices, as he meets stronger players, that his development seems to have come to a standstill. He loses games without being able to perceive the cause. He works out a series of moves as far ahead as he possibly can and then notices that his opponent has planned and thought in an entirely different direction; in short, he loses the grip on the game which he had possessed at a previous stage. He learns opening variations by heart without accurately knowing why the moves are played, with the result that he finds himself in totally unfamiliar positions – positions which may well be favourable, although he has no idea why, nor does he know how to turn them to his advantage.

A new element enters the chess battle at this stage, namely ‘positional understanding’. It does not grow of itself but must be developed by the process of drawing conclusions in practical play. It represents the increasing ability to form a judgement on any position whatever, without going into the details of exact calculation.

Just like the doctor who first has to gain a clear picture of the disease in order to plan a cure, the chess player must make a plan on the basis of the characteristics of a given position. Steinitz’s axiom that the plan must be in keeping with the characteristics of the position appears self-evident to us, for it is the logical outcome of our present method of taking effective action, although a century ago Steinitz’s stipulation created a revolution in chess thought.

Coming back to our remarks on opening variations, we find that theoretical works judge the position for us, generally by means of such symbols as  $\pm$ ,  $\mp$  and so on. But this judgement in itself is not enough: we have to know not only which of the two players stands better, but also why. With this the first step is taken, on the basis of Steinitz’s axiom, towards the making of a plan. The forming of a judgement, and the making of a plan, are the topics to be dealt with in this book. They form, for the beginner, the bridge that takes him across to those higher regions where not impulse but reason determines the choice of a move; this does not, however, minimize the significance of what we call ‘intuition’.

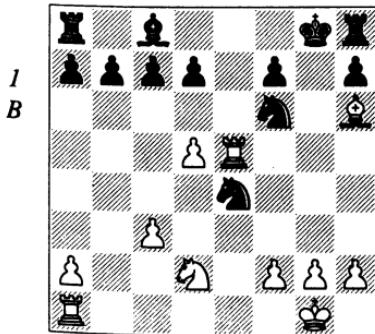
# 1 First Steps in Judging and Planning

The task is so vast and varied, that we must deal with it step by step, starting with the most elementary examples before approaching more difficult and complicated problems.

We shall first examine positions that require nothing more than a knowledge of the relative value of the pieces and no other ability than that of checking the accuracy of a series of forced moves. The positions we shall now proceed to illustrate are the outcome of fairly well known opening variations in which one side has a forced mate or a winning advantage in material.

1 e4 e5 2  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  4 c3  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5 d4 exd4 6 cxd4  $\mathbb{Q}b4+$  7  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  8 0-0  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  9 d5!  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  10 bxc3  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  11  $\mathbb{W}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}cd6$  12  $\mathbb{W}xg7$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  13  $\mathbb{W}xf6$  14  $\mathbb{M}e1+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  15  $\mathbb{Q}h6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  16  $\mathbb{M}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}de4$  17  $\mathbb{Q}d2!$

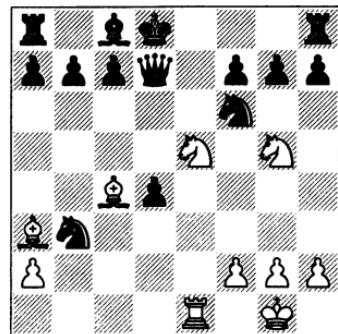
(1)



White has an easily won game, for neither black knight can move because of mate by the rook at e8 or g5. If Black plays 17...d6, then 18  $\mathbb{Q}xe4!$   $\mathbb{dx}e5$  19  $\mathbb{Q}xf6\#$ . There are no variations, no problems.

More simple still is the situation after:

1 e4 e5 2  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  4 b4  $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  5 c3  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  6 d4 exd4 7 0-0  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  8  $\mathbb{Q}a3$  d6 9 e5  $\mathbb{dx}e5$  10  $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  11  $\mathbb{M}e1$  e4 12  $\mathbb{Q}bd2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  13  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe1$  14  $\mathbb{M}xe1$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  15  $\mathbb{Q}eg5$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  16  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}xb3$  (2)



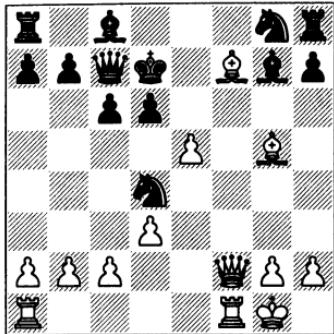
White mates in four: 17  $\mathbb{Q}exf7+$   $\mathbb{W}xf7$  18  $\mathbb{Q}xf7+$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  19  $\mathbb{Q}b5+!$  c6 20  $\mathbb{M}e7\#$ .

The next position will not cause the reader any headache:

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  g5 4  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  g4 5 0-0 gxf3 6  $\mathbb{W}xf3$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  7 d3  $\mathbb{Q}c6$

8 ♜xf4 ♜g7 9 ♜c3 ♜d4 10 ♜f2 d6  
 11 ♜d5 ♜d8 12 e5 c6 13 ♜g5 ♜d7  
 14 ♜c7+ ♜xc7 15 ♜xf7+ ♜d7 (3)

3  
W

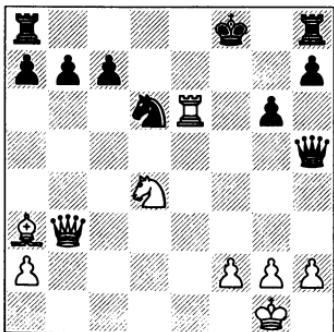


White mates in two by 16 ♜f5+!  
 ♜xf5 17 e6#.

The next example is more complicated:

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♜c4 ♜c5 4  
 ♜xb4 5 c3 ♜a5 6 d4 exd4 7 0-0  
 ♜f6 8 ♜a3 ♜xe4 9 ♜b3 d5 10  
 ♜xd5 ♜d6 11 ♜xf7+ ♜f8 12 ♜e1  
 ♜d7 13 ♜bd2 ♜xc3 14 ♜c4 ♜a5  
 15 ♜xa5 ♜xa5 16 ♜e5 ♜xe1 17  
 ♜xe1 ♜c6 18 ♜h5 ♜f6 19 ♜xc6 g6  
 20 ♜e6 ♜f5 21 ♜xd4 ♜xh5 (4)

4  
W



White now mates in 10 moves

22 ♜xd6+ cxd6

It is instructive to note how far the mate can be accelerated by deviating from the main variation, for example 22... ♜g7 23 ♜e7+ ♜h6 24 ♜f4+ g5 25 ♜f5+ ♜g6 26 ♜f7#. It is not of paramount importance whether the loser runs into a mate or suffers decisive material loss but, for our purposes and for the cultivation of combinative powers, it is worth making a sharp distinction between the two forms of decisive advantage – the opportunity to mate or great material superiority.

23 ♜f6+ ♜g7

It would lead us too far afield to give a complete analysis of the position, and we shall therefore confine ourselves to the main variation, but readers are urged to examine thoroughly all the possible ramifications.

24 ♜f7+ ♜h6 25 ♜e3+ ♜g5 26  
 ♜f5+ gxf5 27 ♜f6+ ♜h5 28 ♜f3+  
 ♜g4 29 ♜xf5+ ♜h6 30 ♜xg4 and  
 mate next move.

The illustrations given so far have one thing in common: the position in every case led to a forced mate, so that our theme may here be described briefly thus:

*Assessment:* White (or Black) wins.

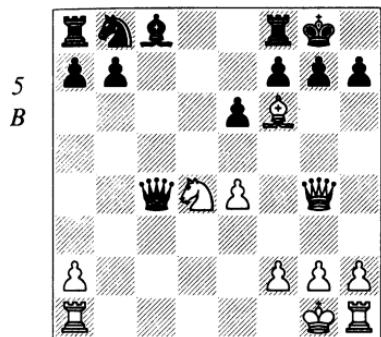
*Plan:* the appropriate mating continuation.

We shall now give a few examples in which the main variation likewise leads to a mate, but where the losing side has the opportunity to escape with some substantial material loss,

thus depriving the illustration of its forced character.

An important line of the so-called Vienna Variation of the Queen's Gambit is as follows:

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   
 $\mathbb{Q}b4$  5  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  dx $c$ 4 6 e4 c5 7  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   
 $cx$ d4 8  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  9  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3+$   
10 bxc3  $\mathbb{Q}xc3+$  11  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4+$  12  
 $\mathbb{Q}g1$  0-0 13  $\mathbb{Q}g4$  (5)



It is now of the greatest importance, in assessing the value of the Vienna Variation as a whole, to ascertain whether this variation does indeed lead to a decisive advantage. Here it would not do to dismiss the position with a remark that 'White has attacking chances' when he can indeed force mate or win of the queen. There follows:

13 ... g6

Forced.

14  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$

15 e5  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$

16 exf6

Mate is still threatened by 17  $\mathbb{Q}h6$ , etc.

16 ...  $\mathbb{Q}h8$

17  $\mathbb{Q}c1!$

An important intermediary move, intended primarily to safeguard the rook from attack by the queen.

17 ...  $\mathbb{Q}d5$

Other moves are worse.

18  $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$

19  $\mathbb{Q}f3!$

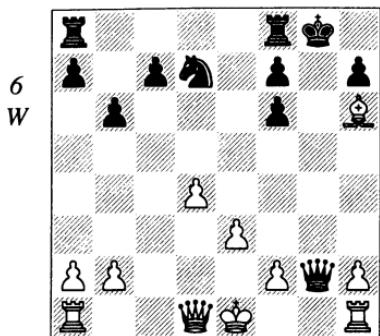
Threatens 20  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  and mate; to be sure, Black could at any time exchange his queen for the knight, but he would remain at a great, we may say a decisive, disadvantage in material, e.g.: 19...g5 (19... $\mathbb{Q}h5$  is met by the surprise sacrifice 20  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  and Black can parry the mate only by giving up his queen for the knight) 20 h4! and now:

1) 20... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  21  $\mathbb{Q}f8+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  22  $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  (now 23  $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  and 23 hxg5 are threatened) 22... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  23  $\mathbb{Q}e5!$  (Black cannot exchange queens because 24  $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  would be mate, and other moves by the queen lead to a similar result) 23... $\mathbb{Q}d2$  24  $\mathbb{Q}xh7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  25 hxg5#.

2) 20...e5 (preparing ... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ , protecting the pawn on h7) 21  $\mathbb{Q}xc8!$   $\mathbb{Q}axc8$  22  $\mathbb{Q}xg5$   $\mathbb{Q}c1+$  (Black cannot protect h7 without abandoning f7) 23  $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}xh1+$  24  $\mathbb{Q}xh1$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  (there is nothing better) 25 hxg5 and Black has no defence against the mate on g7.

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   
 $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  5 e3  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  6  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  b6? 7 cx $d$ 5  
 $ex$ d5 8  $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  9  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  0-0 10  
 $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  11  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  12  $\mathbb{Q}xe7+$   
 $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  13  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  14  $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$  gxf6  
15  $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  (6)

This is known as the Pittsburgh Variation.



White now obtains a decisive advantage with the surprising move...

**16 ♜f3!**

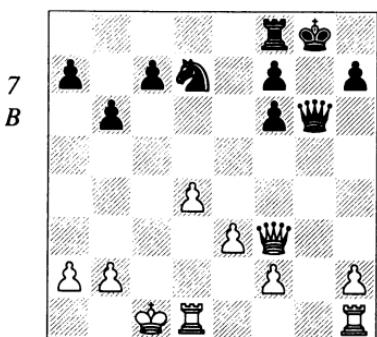
...for if 16...♜xf3 there is a mate after 17 ♜g1+ ♛h8 18 ♜g7+ ♛g8 19 ♜xf6+, while after...

**16 ... ♜g6**

**17 ♜xf8 ♜xf8**

**18 0-0-0 (7)**

...White has won the exchange and has a strong attack.



From a detailed consideration of this position there arises the question: what should be my plan; how can I convert my material advantage

into a win? It would be a colossal as well as a thankless task to write a book dealing with the various methods of bringing material advantage to fruition. In nearly every case, there are so many ways to win that no real problem arises. I fancy too that few novices would have the patience to wade through such a huge work; in the course of their studies they would make such progress that they would no longer be interested in problems which would, by then, have become obvious.

Nevertheless, it will be useful to make a few remarks on this subject.

1. If you have an advantage in material, the guideline is to simplify the position by exchanges, but with the following reservations:

a) do not exchange automatically, for there are positions in which exchanges cause your material superiority to lose its effect;

b) the endgames  $\text{R}$  vs  $\text{Q}$ ,  $\text{R}$  vs  $\text{B}$ ,  $\text{R}+\text{Q}$  vs  $\text{R}$  and  $\text{R}+\text{B}$  vs  $\text{R}$  (in each case without pawns), are usually drawn, though there are a few exceptions. The simplification in such cases must therefore not be allowed to go too far, but as long as a single friendly pawn is left on the board, it is nearly always sufficient to ensure a win.

2. Do not think that the win will come by itself. If you wish to derive the full benefit of your advantage in material, you must make it work for you. A rook is more valuable than a bishop only as long as proper use is made of its powers. Don't avoid

complications as a matter of course unless they are risky. It often happens that the player who has an advantage in material is inclined to play passively, awaiting events. This is the worst possible attitude and has been fatal to many.

3. Only attack can exploit material advantage. Therefore play aggressively, though, of course, not recklessly. Once you have the initiative the chances of forcing exchanges become greater (see point 1 above).

Now we will examine diagram 7 in greater detail.

After 18 0-0-0 we continue:

**18 ... ♖h8**

More or less forced because of the threat 19 ♜hg1.

Now White must play a rook to g1, but which one? The h1-rook because, after 19 ♜dg1, the black queen can move to d3? This is the wrong argument. Don't take anything for granted, for after the black queen's sortie, 20 ♜g4 wins the knight because of the mating threat. Thus, as it makes little difference which rook moves, White plays...

**19 ♜dg1 ♖h6**

What does White do now? He has several lines of play to choose from:

- 1) 20 ♜c6 winning a pawn.
- 2) 20 ♜g3 followed by 21 ♜hg1 continuing the kingside attack (this is the best).
- 3) Not, however, 20 ♜f4 aiming for a queen exchange. The pawn formation on White's kingside would be ruined and the win made much

more difficult (an example of 'exchange at all cost').

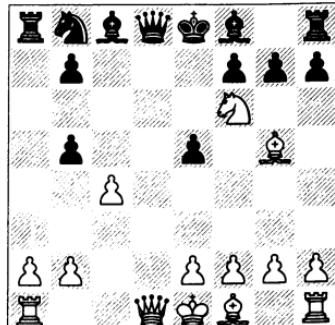
4) 20 ♜g4 followed by 21 ♜f4 so that now the exchange of queens does not damage White's pawn formation.

Of all these lines, White's best continuation is 20 ♜g3 and, as a likely sequel, 20...c5 21 ♜hg1 with the threat 22 ♜h3 and the black queen is cornered. Even now Black has a resource with 21...cxd4 22 ♜h3 ♜c8+ 23 ♔b1 ♜f8, but White forces the win with 24 ♜f5. An alternative after 21 ♜hg1 would be 21...♜c8 but then White wins by 22 ♜c6!.

Even in positions in which one side has achieved a material superiority, combinations are possible, one might even say particularly so.

We now give a number of positions in which there is no question of mate but only of material gain.

**1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♜c3 ♜f6 4 ♜f3 c5 5 ♜g5 cxd4 6 ♜xd4 e5 7 ♜db5 a6 8 ♜xd5 axb5 9 ♜xf6+ (8)**

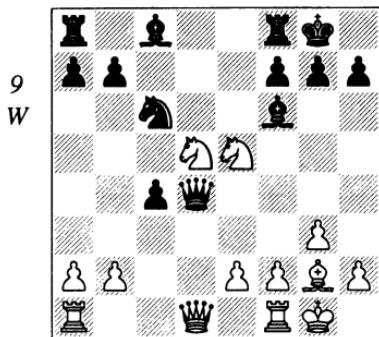


A well-known trap, in which White appears to win the exchange after 9...gxf6? 10  $\mathbb{W}xd8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  11  $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$ , but Black has a stronger line:

- |    |                 |                  |
|----|-----------------|------------------|
| 9  | ...             | $\mathbb{Q}xf6!$ |
| 10 | $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ | $\mathbb{Q}b4+$  |
| 11 | $\mathbb{W}d2$  | $\mathbb{Q}xd2+$ |
| 12 | $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ | gxf6             |

and Black remains a piece up.

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  c5 4 cxd5 exd5 5  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  6 g3  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  7  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  8 0-0 0-0 9  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  c4 10  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  11  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  12  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}xd4?$  (9)



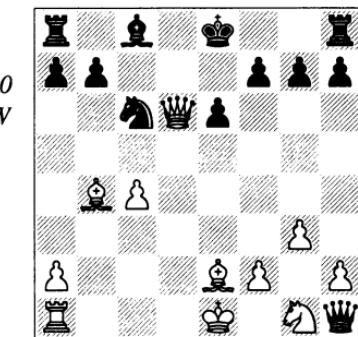
White wins a piece:

- |    |                  |                 |
|----|------------------|-----------------|
| 13 | $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$ | gxf6            |
| 14 | $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  | $\mathbb{W}xd1$ |
| 15 | $\mathbb{Q}e7+$  | $\mathbb{Q}h8$  |
| 16 | $\mathbb{M}xd1$  |                 |

This is a well-known manoeuvre which occurs in various other positions as, for instance, in the following: 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  c5 4 cxd5 exd5 5  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  6 g3 c4 7  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  8 0-0  $\mathbb{Q}ge7$  9 e4 0-0 10  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  11 exd5  $\mathbb{W}xd5$  12 a3! (to drive the bishop away from controlling e7) 12... $\mathbb{Q}a5$  13  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{W}xd4?$  14  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$

$\mathbb{W}xd1$  15  $\mathbb{Q}e7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  16  $\mathbb{M}xd1$  and again White has won a piece.

1 c4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  e6 3 e4 c5 4 g3 d5 5 e5 d4 6 exf6 dxc3 7 bxc3  $\mathbb{W}xf6$  8 d4 cxd4 9 cxd4  $\mathbb{Q}b4+$  10  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  11  $\mathbb{Q}xb4$   $\mathbb{W}e4+$  12  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}xh1$  13  $\mathbb{W}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  (10)



White wins with a combinative idea which requires exact calculation:

- |    |                 |                  |
|----|-----------------|------------------|
| 14 | $\mathbb{Q}f3!$ | $\mathbb{W}xg1+$ |
| 15 | $\mathbb{Q}e2$  |                  |

and wins because 15... $\mathbb{W}xa1$  fails after 16  $\mathbb{Q}xc6+$  and mate next move.

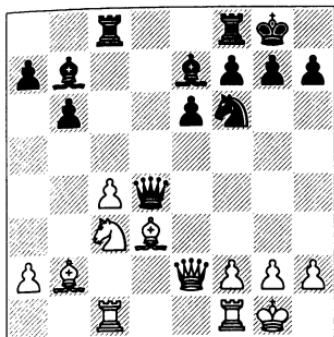
1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  5 e3 0-0 6 b3 c5 7  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  b6 8 0-0  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  9  $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  10  $\mathbb{M}c1$   $\mathbb{M}c8$  11  $\mathbb{W}e2$  cxd4 12 exd4 dxc4 13 bxc4  $\mathbb{Q}xd4?$  14  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  (11)

Black has been too greedy and has carelessly exposed his queen to an indirect attack, which is quickly decisive.

- |    |                 |                |
|----|-----------------|----------------|
| 15 | $\mathbb{Q}d5$  | $\mathbb{W}c5$ |
| 16 | $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ |                |

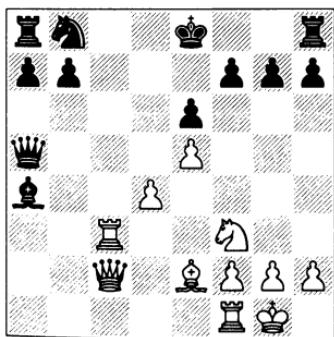
and now:

- 1) 16... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  17  $\mathbb{W}e4$  and wins.

11  
W

- 2) 16...gxf6 17  $\mathbb{Q}g4+$ !  $\mathbb{Q}h8$  18  $\mathbb{Q}h4$  f5 19  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  winning a piece.

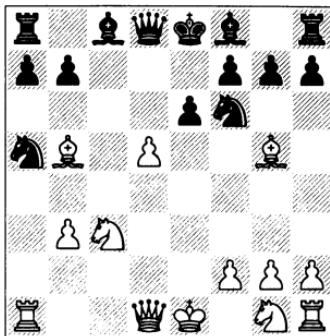
1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  dxc4 5 a4 e6 6 e4  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  7 e5  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  8  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  9  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  c5 10 0-0  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  11 bxc3 cxd4 12 cxd4 c3 13  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  14  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  15  $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  16  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  (12)

12  
W

Another example of greed punished. White wins surprisingly with 17  $\mathbb{Q}b5+!$ :

- 1) 17... $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  18  $\mathbb{Q}c8+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  19  $\mathbb{Q}c7$ +  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  (19... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  20  $\mathbb{Q}c5+$  leads to mate next move) 20  $\mathbb{Q}d6\#$ .
- 2) 17... $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  18  $\mathbb{Q}c8+$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  19  $\mathbb{Q}xh8$  and wins, for if 19... $\mathbb{Q}xf1$  then 20  $\mathbb{Q}c8+$  and mate to follow.

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  dxd5 4 c4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  6  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  dxc4 7 d5  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  8 b4 cxb3 9 axb3 e6 10  $\mathbb{Q}b5+$  (13)

13  
B

White obtains the advantage after 10... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  11 d6+  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  12  $\mathbb{Q}xd6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  13  $\mathbb{Q}xa5$ .

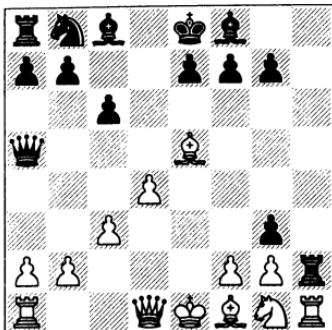
If Black plays instead 10... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  the sequel is 11  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  with the following two alternative continuations:

- 1) 11... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  12  $\mathbb{Q}xd7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  13 dxe6+.
- 2) 11...gxf6 12  $\mathbb{Q}xd7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  13  $\mathbb{Q}ge2$  (not immediately 13  $\mathbb{Q}xa5$  due to 13... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ ) with a favourable game for White, since he threatens 14  $\mathbb{Q}xa5$  and the black king is in a precarious situation.

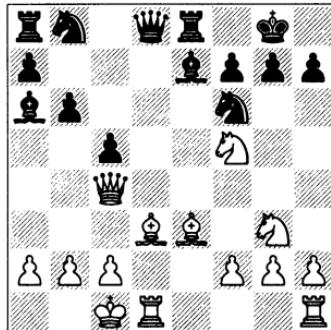
1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  dxe4 4  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5  $\mathbb{Q}g3$  h5 6  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  h4 7  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  hxg3 8  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}a5+$  9 c3  $\mathbb{Q}xh2!$  (14)

White has allowed the capture at h2 because the bishop is controlling that critical square. He therefore plays 10  $\mathbb{Q}xh2$  with full confidence, but this is rudely shattered by the

14  
W



15  
W



surprise manoeuvre 10... $\mathbb{Q}xe5+$ ! 11  $dxe5$   $gxh2$  and after queening his h2-pawn Black will remain a piece ahead.

Let us finish this chapter with a more complicated example.

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $dxe4$  4  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5  $\mathbb{Q}g3$  e5 6  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $exd4$  7  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  8  $\mathbb{Q}e2+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  9  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  c5 10  $\mathbb{Q}df5$  0-0 11  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  12  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  b6 13 0-0-0  $\mathbb{Q}a6$  (15)

Black has left his queen exposed to the rook on the open d-file, secure in the thought that White's queen is *en prise*. He has overlooked the point, however, as the following variations will demonstrate: 14  $\mathbb{Q}h6+$ !  $gxh6$  15  $\mathbb{Q}xh7+$  and now:

1) 15... $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  16  $\mathbb{Q}xf7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  17  $\mathbb{Q}xd8$   $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  18  $\mathbb{Q}h5$  with massive material gains.

2) 15... $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  16  $\mathbb{Q}g4+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  17  $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  and White wins material after

17... $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  18  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  or 17... $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  18  $\mathbb{Q}f3$ .

3) 15... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  (the least evil) 16  $\mathbb{Q}xd8$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  17  $\mathbb{Q}xe8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xe8$  18  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  19  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  and White will be one important pawn ahead, and Black's h-pawn remains weak.

In all the examples in this chapter, we have only touched the fringe of our main subject, *judging and planning in chess*. We have, however, paid attention to positions in which possibilities of mating or of extensive material gain were present. The problem in each case depended for its solution on some measure of tactical skill rather than positional judgement. Such possibilities are easily overlooked by a player who is too intent on positional considerations.

The big problems have, however, still to be tackled.

## 2 Pawn Majority on the Queenside

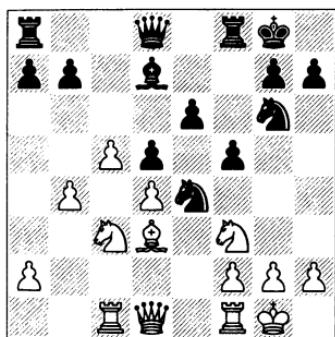
**Botvinnik – Kmoch**

*Leningrad 1934*

Caro-Kann Defence

**1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 exd5 cxd5 4 c4  
Qf6 5 Qc3 Qc6 6 Qg5 e6 7 c5 Qe7  
8 Qb5 0-0 9 Qf3 Qe4 10 Qxe7  
Qxe7 11 Qc1 Qg6 12 0-0 Qd7 13  
Qd3 f5 14 b4 (16)**

16  
B



The comment of ‘theory’ on this typical example is: ‘White has the superior position.’

The average player may well ask ‘Why is White’s position superior?’ The material is equal, each side has a queen, two rooks, two knights, a bishop and seven pawns. It cannot be said that White has progressed further than Black; on the contrary, Black’s knight, well established in White’s half of the board, looks particularly threatening. The pieces on either side enjoy approximately equal

mobility, one piece a little more, one piece a little less, but no considerable disparity can be noticed. Neither king has to fear a direct attack, and the reader will again ask ‘Why is White’s position better; why can his advantage be called a winning one?’

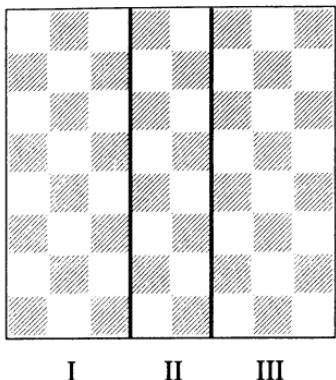
No doubt many chess players could give the correct answer immediately, but to not a few of these the answer would be a stereotyped phrase devoid of real meaning: *White stands better because he has a pawn majority on the queenside.*

Let us first examine this dictum in detail. Both White and Black have seven pawns but, and this is the crucial point, they are not evenly distributed across the board. Suppose we divide the board into three sections by drawing two vertical lines between the c- and d-files and between the e- and f-files, as in the diagram at the top of the following page.

Section I represents the queenside, Section II the centre, and Section III the kingside.

In positions such as that in diagram 16, which is under discussion, both sides have castled on the kingside and we note that White has more pawns on the queenside than Black – three to two – whereas the

17



position is reversed in the centre, where Black has two pawns to one. On the kingside White and Black have an equal number of pawns.

This is, of course, a particularly clear-cut case. The white pawn at c5 cannot interact with the black pawns on the right, which would not be the case were it standing at c3. We can speak of a positive queenside majority for White, while all the remaining pawns can be summarised as kingside pawns. In other words, in diagram 16 White has a majority of 3-2 on the queenside, and Black a majority of 5-4 on the kingside. The front pawn on White's majority wing has passed the black d-pawn, and thus the pawn chains on opposite wings are independent of each other. But the cardinal point is that White is able to force a passed pawn on his majority wing, while Black, with his majority of 5-4 on the kingside, will normally be unable to do so because of his backward e-pawn.

It is, of course, not exclusively a question of arithmetic. Other aspects of the pawn structure must be taken

into account, for example the presence of doubled pawns, which may make it more difficult or impossible to obtain a passed pawn, for example white pawns at a2, b2 and b3 against Black's at a7 and b7. Sometimes it may become necessary to sacrifice in order to achieve a passed pawn, for example the white pawns may be at a2, b3 and c4 against black pawns at b4 and c5.

None of these problems arise in the position under review. If there are no complications, White will always be able to force b5 with or without a preliminary a4 so that he can at all times be sure of securing a passed pawn.

Let us, however, for the sake of argument, assume that White and Black have equal chances of securing a passed pawn. Even then the pawn majority on the queenside often confers a slight advantage, especially in the endgame. Here are, in brief, some of the reasons why:

1. The passed pawn on the queenside is at a great distance from the enemy king, who is thus unable to arrest its progress – a clear-cut case arises with outside passed pawns in pawn endings.

2. Forcing a passed pawn on the kingside often necessitates the advance of pawns whose proper function is to guard their king.

While this advice is useful, however, it is wise not to be obsessed by it, for there is the danger of treating the whole subject by rote. A pawn

majority on the queenside, be it even of 1-0, is worth only so much as the player is able to make of it.

Let us now get a little closer to the substance of our task of judging and planning in the case of the queenside majority.

The first part is not difficult – White or Black has the advantage because of the possibility of making an outside passed pawn. However, we cannot be content with mere generalities. In deciding on our plan we must carefully ascertain whether the other side has compensating advantages, whether there are any factors in the enemy formation that counteract our positional advantage of a queenside pawn majority.

We have now reached the next step in our discussion, namely how to exploit the advantage of a pawn majority on the queenside. To this end we shall again refer to diagram 16.

14 ...  $\mathbb{A}e8$

15 g3

By preventing ... $\mathbb{Q}f4$  or ... $\mathbb{Q}h4$  the text-move slows down a possible kingside attack by Black.

15 ...  $\mathbb{E}c8$

16  $\mathbb{A}e1$   $\mathbb{W}f6$

17 a3

White takes it calmly.

17 ...  $\mathbb{Q}e7$

Not best, as it frees e5 for White's f3-knight. 17... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  18  $\mathbb{W}xc3$  f4 is a better continuation, with counter-chances on the f-file.

18  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{W}h6$

19 f3  $\mathbb{Q}f2$

Interesting. If White captures the knight, there is a perpetual check by 20  $\mathbb{Q}xf2$   $\mathbb{W}xh2+$  21  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  f4+ 22  $\mathbb{G}xf4$   $\mathbb{W}xf4+$  23  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}h2+$ .

20  $\mathbb{W}e2!$   $\mathbb{Q}h3+$

21  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $g5$

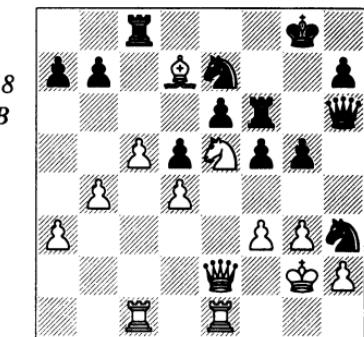
22  $\mathbb{Q}b5!$   $\mathbb{Q}xb5$

Black cannot allow the knight to reach d6, where it would occupy a commanding position.

23  $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{M}f6$

24  $\mathbb{Q}d7!$  (18)

The final preparation for the advance on the queenside.



24 ...  $\mathbb{M}d8$

25 b5!  $\mathbb{W}h5$

As Black can in no way prevent the execution of White's plan, he makes a last and desperate attempt to achieve some positive result on the kingside.

26 c6!  $\mathbb{M}h6$

With the threat of 27... $\mathbb{Q}f4+$  and 28... $\mathbb{W}xh2+$ . However, White parries this threat simply by protecting his h-pawn.

27  $\mathbb{Q}h1!$  1-0

For Black is powerless against the advance of White's passed pawn:

27...bxc6 28 bxc6 ♜c8 29 c7 ♜f8 30 ♜c6! with the double threat of 31 ♜xe6+ or 31 ♜xc8 and 32 ♜e7+.

It is quite clear that White owed his success to his pawn majority on the queenside, but, it should be noted, he had to work for it. He had many opportunities of going wrong, and on several occasions he had to find just the right move to withstand Black's kingside attack (15 g3, 20 ♜e2 and 27 ♜h1). He had to time with precision the moves preparatory to his queenside advance (17 a3, 18 ♜e5, 22 ♜b5 and 24 ♜d7), without which the advance of his queenside pawns would have been premature. That is the normal course of play, which can be summarised as follows:

1. Assess and analyse your opponent's counter-chances.
2. Thoroughly prepare your own action.

The last one is a very special requirement with a queenside pawn majority. In the position of diagram 18, for the moment the pawns on their own accomplish nothing. All of them are protected (a3-b4-c5), but their strength lies not in their static qualities but in their threat to advance. This threat ties up various enemy pieces, so that it is not easy for the opponent to undertake action somewhere else. After some preparation, White was finally able to advance his pawn majority. Why not earlier? Because every step forward means a weakening that one can permit oneself only if one is certain that

the opponent cannot take any advantage of it. On c5 the white pawn is safely protected by other pawns. On c6, however, the white pawn needs to be protected by pieces and in our example White was careful to protect the c6-square with the knight and bishop before advancing the pawn.

Once again, let's have a look at diagram 16 and specify the judgement and plan.

*Assessment:* White is better, because he has the pawn majority on the queenside, against which Black's majority on the kingside affords insufficient compensation.

*Plan:* White's plan as far as it concerns the pawn majority consists of two parts:

1) Thorough preparation of the pawn advance, including taking precautions against the weakening caused by a premature advance. This preparation consists primarily of protecting the pawn majority and covering the squares that the candidate passed pawn must cross.

2) The advance itself, which must take place as soon as it is certain that the opponent cannot stop the promotion of the white pawn or can achieve this only by engaging a considerable part of his forces in the task.

While forming a plan one must always consider the assets of the opponent. In the above example White must choose an appropriate defensive position against Black's pawn majority on the kingside.

One final remark in response to our example. It is very unusual that one feature dominates the play to the exclusion of everything else. In practice, it is far more common for not one but three or four features to influence the situation, and the play becomes far more complicated. However, without understanding the significance of each positional feature in isolation, one cannot hope to master these more complex cases.

We could continue by examining the various types of complications which can influence the course of events, but these will become clear when we examine the following illustrations. However, we wish to emphasize one point, which refers to the culmination of White's efforts to turn his pawn majority into a winning advantage. In the position shown in diagram 16, zero hour will strike when White, after much manoeuvring, both defensive and offensive, thinks the time ripe to play the decisive c6. Will this pawn, at that precise moment, have sufficient support from its own forces to overcome any possible defensive measures which the opponent can then bring to bear? This is the key question which, in the example quoted, has a positive answer. Other situations may not be so clear, but a method in chess which solves all problems and eliminates all complications has (luckily) not yet been found, and we must be content with indicating guiding principles, ideas,

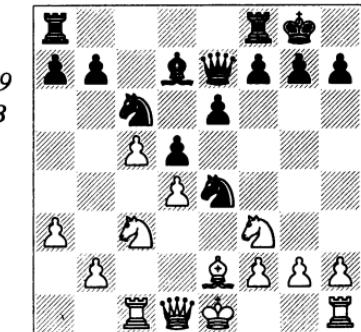
and suggestions, to help the player's own judgement and imagination.

We shall now examine a number of examples illustrating some of the forms that a queenside majority can take. They will be shown in less detail and serve the purpose of elucidating still further the ideas already set out.

### Botvinnik – Konstantinopolsky

Sverdlovsk 1943  
Caro-Kann Defence

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 exd5 cxd5 4 c4  
Qf6 5 Qc3 Qc6 6 Qg5 e6 7 Qf3  
Qe7 8 Mc1 0-0 9 c5 Qe4 10 Qxe7  
Wxe7 11 Qe2 Qd7 12 a3 (19)



The position is very similar to the preceding one. Here, too, White has a pawn majority on the queenside against which Black's knight at e4 is not sufficient compensation. Again White's plan is to secure his pawn formation on the queenside, obtaining command of the square c6 and if possible c7 as well, then advance

with b5 and c6. During these operations the e5-square acquires a special significance, for a knight posted there adds to White's command of c6.

After these remarks, the further course of the game is easy to understand.

**12 ... f5**

Fine rightly criticises this move as weakening e5 and thus playing into his opponent's hands. Correct was 12...f6 13 b4  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  14  $\mathbb{K}xc3$  a6 15 0-0  $\mathbb{B}ad8$  with the object of eventually pushing ...e5 to obtain counterplay and a possible passed d-pawn as compensation for White's queen-side majority.

**13  $\mathbb{A}b5!$**

It is often essential to act quickly. The text-move threatens 14  $\mathbb{A}xc6$  followed by 15  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  and a gradual exploitation of his majority, as Black is practically powerless because of the solid position of White's knight at e5.

**13 ...  $\mathbb{Q}g5$**

This cuts across White's intention to occupy e5 with a knight, but at the cost of submitting to another drawback.

**14  $\mathbb{A}xc6$        $\mathbb{Q}xf3+$**

**15  $\mathbb{W}xf3$       bxc6**

**16  $\mathbb{W}f4$        $\mathbb{E}ae8$**

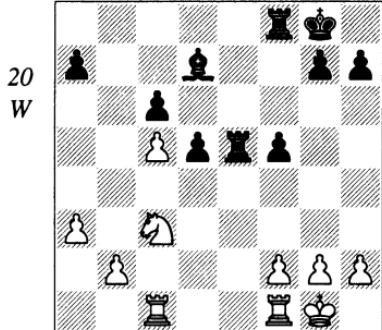
**17 0-0      e5**

The only way in which Black can get rid of his backward pawn.

**18  $\mathbb{W}xe5$        $\mathbb{W}xe5$**

**19 dxe5       $\mathbb{E}xe5$  (20)**

The fight has assumed an entirely different character. Certainly, White's

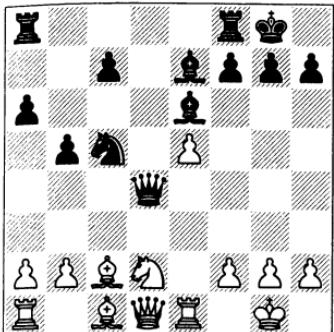


pawn majority is still in being, but Black's protected passed d-pawn is no less valuable an asset. However, White has secured a fresh advantage – he has a good knight against Black's bad bishop. The bishop is bad because the black pawns stand on the same colour squares, and its mobility is thereby strictly limited. The knight is strong because sooner or later it will be able to reach d4, where it will be secure from both the enemy pawns and the bishop.

The treatment of this type of position will be shown in Chapter 4, where we shall again refer to the above position (p. 43).

**1 e4 e5 2  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3  $\mathbb{A}b5$  a6 4  $\mathbb{A}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5 0-0  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  6 d4 b5 7  $\mathbb{A}b3$  d5 8 dxe5  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  9 c3  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  10  $\mathbb{E}e1$  0-0 11  $\mathbb{Q}bd2$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  12  $\mathbb{Q}c2$  d4 13 cxd4  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  14  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  (21)**

The 'book' formerly found fault with Black's position on several counts. It was wrongly assumed that, with the queens still on the board, White's position was entirely satisfactory, with good chances of a king-side attack. Furthermore, after the

21  
W

exchange of queens, White was still thought to have a satisfactory game because of his greater command of space and the favourable placement of his forces. In this last conclusion, the real meaning of the pawn majority on the queenside was completely left out of the reckoning.

As a double proof of this contention we give two examples of the treatment of this position in actual play.

### Dr Lasker – Dr Tarrasch St Petersburg 1914

**15 ♜b3**

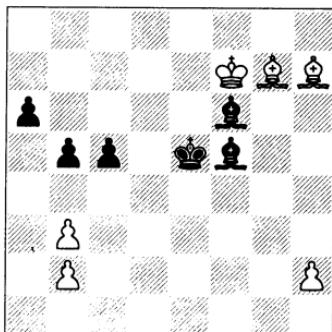
The best in the circumstances. White is not afraid of getting a doubled pawn as his pieces will get into play more rapidly. Moreover, when it comes to stopping the advance of a pawn majority, a doubled pawn is no worse than intact pawns.

- |                |              |
|----------------|--------------|
| <b>15 ...</b>  | <b>♝xb3</b>  |
| <b>16 axb3</b> | <b>♜xd1</b>  |
| <b>17 ♜xd1</b> | <b>c5</b>    |
| <b>18 ♜d2</b>  | <b>♞fd8</b>  |
| <b>19 ♜a5</b>  | <b>♞xd1+</b> |
| <b>20 ♜xd1</b> | <b>f6!</b>   |

- |                |             |
|----------------|-------------|
| <b>21 ♜c3</b>  | <b>fxe5</b> |
| <b>22 ♜xe5</b> | <b>♞d8</b>  |

Black plays strongly. He forces the exchange of rooks because, with only bishops on the board, the doubled pawn becomes a weakness. The sequel demonstrates this fact.

- |                    |              |
|--------------------|--------------|
| <b>23 ♜xd8+</b>    | <b>♝xd8</b>  |
| <b>24 f4</b>       | <b>♛f7</b>   |
| <b>25 ♜f2</b>      | <b>♝f6</b>   |
| <b>26 ♜d6</b>      | <b>♝d4+</b>  |
| <b>27 ♜f3</b>      | <b>♝d5+</b>  |
| <b>28 ♛g4</b>      | <b>♝e6</b>   |
| <b>29 ♜f8</b>      | <b>♝f7</b>   |
| <b>30 ♜d6</b>      | <b>♝xg2</b>  |
| <b>31 ♜xh7</b>     | <b>♝e6</b>   |
| <b>32 ♜f8</b>      | <b>♝d5</b>   |
| <b>33 ♜g5</b>      | <b>♝f6+</b>  |
| <b>34 ♜g6</b>      | <b>♝e4+</b>  |
| <b>35 f5</b>       | <b>♝e5</b>   |
| <b>36 ♜xg7</b>     | <b>♝xf5+</b> |
| <b>37 ♜f7 (22)</b> |              |

22  
B

Black could now have obtained a decisive advantage by 37...♝e6+ 38 ♜f8 ♜xg7+ 39 ♜xg7 ♜xb3. He instead chose the inferior continuation...

- |                |             |
|----------------|-------------|
| <b>37 ...</b>  | <b>♝xg7</b> |
| <b>38 ♜xf5</b> | <b>♛xf5</b> |

- 39 ♜xg7      a5  
 40 h4      ♜g4

...after which White secured a problem-like draw as follows:

- 41 ♜g6!      ♜xh4  
 42 ♜f5      ♜g3  
 43 ♜e4      ♜f2  
 44 ♜d5      ♜e3  
 45 ♜xc5      ♜d3  
 46 ♜xb5      ♜c2  
 47 ♜xa5      ♜xb3

1/2-1/2

One thing stands out clearly from this example: the pawn majority on the queenside can, in the later stages of the endgame, assume the same characteristics as in the case of the 'outside passed pawn'.

### H. Johner – Dr Euwe Zurich 1934

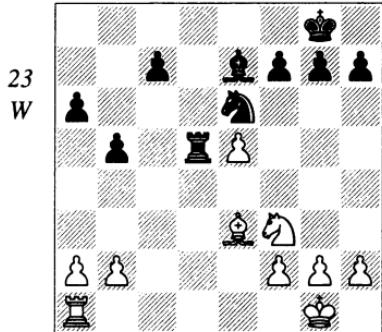
From Diagram 21.

- 15 ♜e2      ♜fd8  
 16 ♜f3      ♜c4  
 17 ♜xc4      ♜xc4  
 18 ♜e3

In a game Joss-Euwe from the same tournament, there followed 18 ♜g5 ♜xg5 19 ♜xg5 ♜d3 20 ♜xd3 ♜xd3 21 ♜e2 ♜d5, which was equally to Black's advantage.

- 18 ...      ♜e6  
 19 ♜e4      ♜d5  
 20 ♜xd5      ♜xd5  
 21 ♜ed1      ♜ad8  
 22 ♜xd5      ♜xd5 (23)

It is already clear that Black's pawn majority on the queenside



represents a solid advantage, while there is no method at all by which White's kingside majority can come into its own. Indeed, White's pawn at e5 can be looked upon as a definite weakness, as the necessity of defending it brings an additional strain on White's resources.

- 23 ♜f1      ♜f8  
 24 ♜c1

This loss of a tempo leaves White entirely without prospects.

- 24 ...      c5  
 25 ♜e2      ♜e8  
 26 ♜d1      ♜xd1  
 27 ♜xd1      ♜d7  
 28 ♜d2      g5

Stopping White protecting the e-pawn by f4.

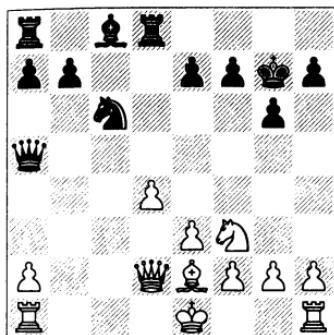
- 29 f3      ♜c6  
 30 g3      ♜d5  
 31 f4      gxf4  
 32 gxf4      ♜d4  
 33 ♜f1      ♜e4

The rest is no longer difficult: 34 ♜d2 ♜f5 35 ♜g3+ ♜xg3 36 hxg3 ♜f3 37 ♜d3 ♜xg3 38 f5 h5 39 ♜h6 h4 40 f6 ♜d8 41 e6 fxe6 42 f7 ♜e7 43 f8 ♜xf8 44 ♜xf8 h3 45 ♜xc5 e5 0-1

**Eliskases – Flohr**  
*Semmering-Baden 1937*  
 Grünfeld Defence

1 d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2 c4 g6 3  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d5 4  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   
 $\mathbb{Q}g7$  5 e3 0-0 6  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  c5 7 cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   
 8  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  9 bxc3 cxd4 10  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   
 $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  11 cxd4  $\mathbb{Q}a5+$  12  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$   
 13  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  (24)

24  
W



The assessment of this position by theory is that Black stands better. By now the student will have progressed sufficiently to recognize the reason for this conclusion: Black has two pawns to one on the queenside. However, it requires considerable discernment to realize that this advantage, in spite of White's clear-cut majority in the centre, is in fact of importance. Excellent technique is necessary, not indeed to force a win, but even to extract some real winning chances from the situation.

An inexperienced player will make a blind rush, like the proverbial 'bull in a china shop'. He pushes forward and forces a pawn through, which becomes isolated and is promptly lost.

Let us examine the further course of the game:

14  $\mathbb{Q}xa5$

More or less compulsory because 14 0-0 loses a pawn to 14...  $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  15  $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  e5!.

14 ...  $\mathbb{Q}xa5$

15 0-0

On the whole it is unwise to castle the king away from the hostile pawn majority. The king should be at hand when help is needed to stop a potential enemy passed pawn. Instead of the text-move, White should have played 15  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  and 16  $\mathbb{Q}hc1$ .

15 ...  $\mathbb{Q}e6$

16 e4

As is understandable, White tries to exploit his pawn majority in the centre, but to little effect, as will be seen.

16 ...  $\mathbb{Q}g4$

An indirect attack on the d-pawn.

17  $\mathbb{Q}fd1$  e6

In order to isolate a prospective white passed pawn.

18  $\mathbb{Q}f1$

The king, evidently sorry to have castled, decides to start back towards the centre.

18 ...  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$

19  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}ac8!$

An important subsidiary part of Black's strategy in such cases: occupying the c-file. He threatens in the first place 20...  $\mathbb{Q}c2$ .

20  $\mathbb{Q}d2$

Not 20  $\mathbb{Q}ac1$ ? owing to 20...  $\mathbb{Q}xc1$  21  $\mathbb{Q}xc1$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ .

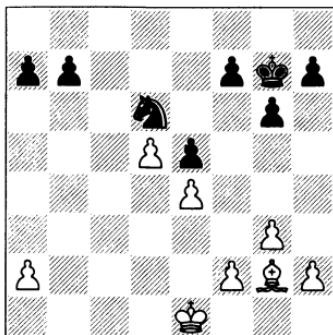
20 ... e5!

21 d5

Not 21  $\mathbb{Q}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  22  $\mathbb{Q}d3?$   $\mathbb{Q}b2.$

- |    |                      |                  |
|----|----------------------|------------------|
| 21 | ...                  | $\mathbb{Q}c4$   |
| 22 | $\mathbb{E}e2$       | $\mathbb{Q}d6$   |
| 23 | $\mathbb{E}b1$       | $\mathbb{E}c4$   |
| 24 | $g3$                 | $\mathbb{E}dc8$  |
| 25 | $\mathbb{A}g2$       | $\mathbb{E}c1+$  |
| 26 | $\mathbb{E}xc1$      | $\mathbb{E}xc1+$ |
| 27 | $\mathbb{E}e1$       | $\mathbb{E}xe1+$ |
| 28 | $\mathbb{Q}xe1$ (25) |                  |

25  
B



Black has made use of the c-file to force the exchange of rooks in order to secure a favourable knight vs bishop ending (see also diagram 20, Botvinnik-Konstantinopolsky). The treatment of this ending will be considered later (p. 48).

The role played here by Black's queenside pawn majority was in the main a passive one as Black was in fact chiefly concerned with the aim of making White's central majority harmless. However, it must be conceded that Black had to thank his queenside pawn majority for the ability to reach his objective. In this type of position, the c-file will often fall under Black's domination, at least when – as here – the queens are exchanged and the white king fails

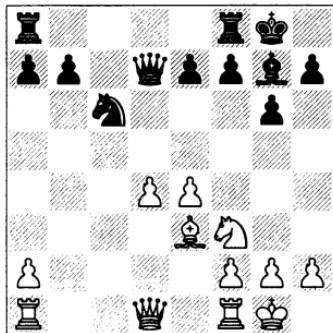
to reach d2 in good time (we note once more the damaging effect of White's castling on move 15).

It must be added that even before the general exchange which took place, Black was in a position to make use of the c-file for an attack on White's isolated a-pawn. This feature recurs in the next example:

### Kostić – Grünfeld Teplitz-Schönau 1922 Grünfeld Defence

- 1 d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2 c4 g6 3  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d5 4 cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  5 e4  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  6 bxc3 c5 7  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  8  $\mathbb{Q}b5+$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  9  $\mathbb{Q}xd7+$   $\mathbb{W}xd7$  10 0-0 cxd4 11 cxd4  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  12  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  0-0 (26)

26  
W

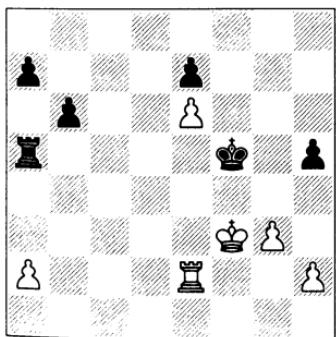


This position is declared by theory to favour Black.

We give, without notes, the further course of the game, which will throw more light on our subject.

- |    |                 |                  |
|----|-----------------|------------------|
| 13 | $\mathbb{E}b1$  | $\mathbb{Q}a5$   |
| 14 | d5              | $\mathbb{E}fc8!$ |
| 15 | $\mathbb{Q}d4$  | $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  |
| 16 | $\mathbb{W}xd4$ | b6               |
| 17 | $\mathbb{Q}e5$  | $\mathbb{W}d6$   |

- 18 ♜g4 ♜f4  
 19 ♜e3 ♜c5  
 20 ♜bc1 ♜ac8  
 21 ♜xc5 ♜xc5  
 22 f3 h5  
 23 g3 ♜c7  
 24 e5 ♜c4!  
 25 ♜xc4 ♜xc4  
 26 ♜e3 ♜c3  
 27 ♜d4 ♜c4  
 28 ♜e3 ♜c2  
 29 e6 ♜c5  
 30 ♜xc5 ♜xc5  
 31 ♜d1 fxe6  
 32 dxe6 ♜a5  
 33 ♜d2 ♜g7  
 34 f4 ♜f6  
 35 ♜e2 g5  
 36 fxg5+ ♜xg5  
 37 ♜g2 ♜f5  
 38 ♜f3 (27)

27  
B

Here again Black made himself master of the c-file with his knight at a5, an effective post in connection with the jump to c4. Then Black again played for simplification in order to take advantage of the weaknesses that White had created for himself in the centre. In diagram 27 White has

two pawns that require support and sooner or later he will fall into zugzwang, losing one of his pawns and the game.

- 38 ... ♜a3+  
 39 ♜g2 ♜a5  
 40 ♜h3 ♜a4!  
 41 ♜b2 ♜xe6  
 42 ♜b5 ♜xa2  
 43 ♜xh5 ♜b2  
 44 ♜h8 a5  
 45 ♜g4 a4  
 46 ♜a8 ♜b4+  
 47 ♜f3 b5  
 48 h4 ♜f6  
 49 g4 ♜b3+  
 50 ♜e4 a3  
 51 ♜a6+ ♜g7  
 52 ♜f5 b4  
 53 ♜a7 ♜f3+  
 54 ♜e4 ♜f2  
 55 ♜e3 ♜b2!

0-1

The queenside majority by itself may be of little relevance in the middlegame. It only becomes a dynamic force when coupled with other advantages, such as the initiative or superior piece positioning. Moreover, the timing of the advance of the queenside pawns requires great care. This actual advance has frequently to be held over while the necessary preparations are being made, and these, together with the exploitation of other advantages (e.g. open lines), take priority.

On the other hand, in an endgame the queenside majority may become a potent force in itself – in a king and pawn ending it is often decisive.

### 3 The Queenside Attack

There is a close affinity between the subject of the previous chapter and the ‘queenside attack’, although, in itself, the exploitation of a queenside majority does not, properly speaking, constitute an attack. The reason is that a queenside attack aims at definite objects, pieces or pawns, whereas in the other case the purpose is to effect a pawn breakthrough, while frequently the real struggle rages on other fronts.

The queenside attack is local and in the nature of things far more violent. A practical example will illustrate the idea better than words.

#### Bogoljubow – Capablanca

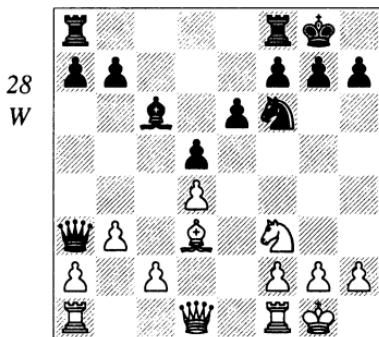
New York 1924  
Colle System

1 d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  d5 3 e3 e6 4  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  c5  
5 b3  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  6 0-0  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  7  $\mathbb{Q}b2$  0-0 8  
 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  9  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  cxd4 10 exd4  
 $\mathbb{Q}a3$  11  $\mathbb{Q}xa3$   $\mathbb{W}xa3$  12  $\mathbb{Q}df3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$   
13  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  (28)

Here the ‘book’ says that Black stands better.

We see equal pawns, equal pieces, and approximately equal mobility. True, the black queen is posted in white territory, but, if necessary, she can be driven off or exchanged by  $\mathbb{Q}c1$ . Why, then, is Black’s game preferable?

Answer: *because he has attacking chances on the queenside.*



On White’s queenside the three pawns at a2, b3 and c2 are solid and well protected; where then are the chances of attack? Let it be said that Black’s attack cannot depend on single, unrelated moves, but rather on a broad, accurately-designed plan. White’s c-pawn is weak, or, to be more accurate, can become weak. At present it is adequately guarded by the bishop, but this piece might be exchanged – in fact, the black bishop can force its exchange, after which the c-pawn will have to be protected by other, perhaps less reliable, means. The pawn will then be attacked along the c-file by a rook or two rooks, by the queen, and possibly still further by the black knight.

It is then an open question whether White can, at the right moment, find adequate defensive measures. This does not appear to be so difficult when White has equal forces at his disposal, but the problem is not as

simple as it appears. While White's pieces are tied to the defence of the c-pawn, Black will in all probability, and without relaxing his grip, threaten other parts of the board and present White with additional problems which he may be unable to solve.

Let us examine the real reason for White's difficulties and the basis of Black's attacking chances. The open c-file is not the main factor, but the fact that White has played b3. If this pawn were still on its original square at b2 White could play c3 and he would have little to fear.

So was 5 b3 already faulty? No, for if we could come to such a drastic conclusion, we could hardly dare to make any move at all. The real mistake occurred when, at a later stage, White exchanged his dark-squared bishop on the eleventh move, for this exchange created 'holes' in White's queenside position (b2 and more particularly c3), and these 'holes' gave Black the opportunity to exploit the open c-file.

It is therefore usual to play 8 a3 (instead of 8 ♜bd2), thus definitely preventing Black's ... ♜a3.

Note well that White could not defer a3, even for one move, without risking further damage: e.g. if in the game he had played 9 a3 instead of 9 ♜e5 then Black, with 9...e5!, would have obtained a majority in the centre as well as the freer game.

The *assessment* of diagram 28 therefore reads: Black stands a little better, because he can initiate an

attack on White's queenside along the c-file, helped by the fact that there are 'holes' at b2 and c3.

The *plan*: before enlarging on this, let us first study the course of the game:

#### 14 ♜d2

Here are some alternative ideas:

1) 14 c4 in order to remove the backwardness of the weak pawn without delay. White threatens 15 c5, establishing a queenside pawn majority, and so Black has no option but to exchange pawns by 14...dxc4 15 bxc4. Now how do matters stand with regard to White's pawn formation; has it improved or deteriorated? It is definitely worse, as after 15...♜fd8! White's d-pawn has clearly become weak. After, for example, 16 ♜e5 ♜a4 (not 16...♜xd4 17 ♜xh7+) 17 ♜d2 ♜d6 18 ♜f3 ♜c6 it is clear that White will not get off scot-free.

Conclusion: with c4 now or later, White transfers the weakness on the c-file to the d-file without otherwise strengthening his position.

#### 2) 14 ♜e5 ♜ac8 15 ♜xc6 ♜xc6.

White has eliminated Black's bishop, so that now the remaining white bishop can be expected to provide reliable protection for the c-pawn. However, this does not cover the whole question; there is not only a weak pawn at c2 but also a weak square at c3. Sooner or later a rook will settle down on that square and keep the whole of White's queenside under restraint. This again will afford the knight full freedom of action and, once the bishop is exchanged,

Black will conquer c2, which in turn will lead to further successes. It would lead us too far to go into greater detail, but one fact stands out: Black has the initiative.

3) 14  $\mathbb{W}c1$ . This would seem to be the best continuation, for if the attacker decides to accept the offer and exchanges queens, he is deprived of his best attacking piece, which is another way of saying his attack has become far less dangerous. In addition, the white king, once the queens are off the board, can play an important part in the defence of his queenside. At the same time White, with 14  $\mathbb{W}c1$ , abandons any idea of assuming the initiative and confesses that, as first player, he has failed to maintain his birthright, a confession not easy to make at any time.

14 ...  $\mathbb{E}ac8$   
15 c3 a6!

Black prepares for the following move.

16  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{A}b5!!$

An important intermediary part of Black's strategy. In order to increase the pressure on c2 and c3 Black submits to his b-pawn being doubled. This he does the more readily as his pawn at b5 will help the attack by stopping White playing c4.

17 f3

Let us examine 17  $\mathbb{A}xb5$  axb5 (17... $\mathbb{Q}e4$  18  $\mathbb{W}c1$ !  $\mathbb{W}xc1$  19  $\mathbb{E}fc1$   $\mathbb{A}xb5$  20 c4! is similar) and now:

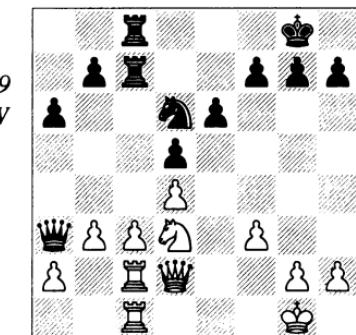
1) 18  $\mathbb{E}fc1$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  19  $\mathbb{W}e3$  (not 19  $\mathbb{W}d3?$ , met by 19... $\mathbb{W}b2!$  or even 19... $\mathbb{E}xc3$ ) 19... $\mathbb{E}c7$  with the following continuations:

1a) 20 c4  $\mathbb{B}xc4$  21  $\mathbb{B}xc4$   $\mathbb{W}xe3$  22  $\mathbb{F}f6$  winning a pawn.

1b) 20 f3  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  21  $\mathbb{E}c2$   $\mathbb{E}fc8$  22  $\mathbb{E}ac1$  b4! again winning a pawn because 23 c4 fails to 23... $\mathbb{D}xc4$  exploiting the unguarded white queen.

2) 18 f3  $\mathbb{E}c7$  19  $\mathbb{E}fc1$   $\mathbb{E}fc8$  20  $\mathbb{E}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  21  $\mathbb{E}ac1$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  and Black has prevented the advance of the c-pawn and exercises strong pressure on White's position.

17	...	$\mathbb{Q}xd3$
18	$\mathbb{Q}xd3$	$\mathbb{E}c7$
19	$\mathbb{E}ac1$	$\mathbb{E}fc8$
20	$\mathbb{E}c2$	$\mathbb{Q}e8$
21	$\mathbb{E}fc1$	$\mathbb{Q}d6$ (29)



The forces on both sides have occupied the appropriate squares: Black's rooks threaten the c-pawn and the black knight commands c4, while the white rooks guard the queenside, and White's knight has the option of  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  or  $\mathbb{Q}c5$ .

22  $\mathbb{Q}e5?$

An unfortunate move. He should play 22  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  so as to be able to bring the knight to a4 should it become necessary to reinforce the defence of the weak c-pawn. Black can then

reply 22...e5 but in that case too White plays 23  $\mathbb{Q}a4$  and Black's advance has only weakened his position and given the white queen chances of attack.

The correct method of continuing Black's attack after 22  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  is 22...b6 23  $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  (not on any account 23...b5? 24  $\mathbb{Q}c5!$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  25 b4 when Black would achieve nothing, since White's weakness at c3 is sealed off) 24  $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$ , protecting the a-pawn and intending 25... $\mathbb{Q}b7$  (controlling c5), with the further threat of 26...b5 and 27... $\mathbb{Q}ac8$ , when Black resumes his attack. In the meantime White will have played  $\mathbb{Q}a1$  to guard the a2-pawn, which is compulsory since the knight will be forced back to b2. All this leaves White no chance of achieving anything.

We perceive that once this type of attack is well and truly launched, it is very tenacious and sets the defender a difficult, at times almost hopeless, task. Take care not to leave yourself open to such an attack – in this case White's error was 8  $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ , allowing 10... $\mathbb{Q}a3$ .

**22 ...  $\mathbb{Q}a5!$**

The time has come to let the queen take a direct part in the attack. Now 23... $\mathbb{Q}b5$  is threatened, after which four pieces would bear on White's vulnerable c3-pawn.

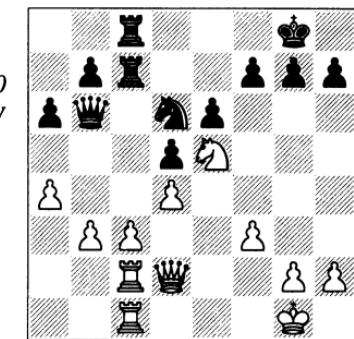
**23 a4?**

With the twofold object of preventing 23... $\mathbb{Q}b5$  and of manoeuvring the white knight via d3 to c5. Then b4 and a5 would 'seal' White's weakness, very much as shown in

the note to White's 22nd move. Black need not permit this to happen, and he can forestall White's intentions with some decisive blows.

Instead of 23 a4 White should have played 23  $\mathbb{Q}d3$ , e.g. 23... $\mathbb{Q}b5$  and now White plays not 24  $\mathbb{Q}b4?$  because of 24... $\mathbb{Q}a3$  25  $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{W}xb4!$  26 cxb4  $\mathbb{Q}xc1+$  27  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}1c2$ , but 24  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  b6 25  $\mathbb{Q}a4$  and, even after 25... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ , White can risk 26 c4.

**23 ...  $\mathbb{W}b6!$  (30)**



**24  $\mathbb{Q}d3$**

White gives up a pawn in order to try some counter-action, but all it does is to delay the execution.

White cannot, in any event, avoid the loss of a pawn, as can be demonstrated by the following variations:

1) 24 b4 a5! and now:

1a) 25 bxa5  $\mathbb{W}xa5$  and White cannot defend the a-pawn without leaving the c-pawn in the lurch.

1b) 25  $\mathbb{Q}b2$  f6 26 bxa5  $\mathbb{W}xa5$  27  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  wins the exchange.

1c) 25  $\mathbb{Q}b1$  axb4 26  $\mathbb{Q}xb4$   $\mathbb{W}xb4$  27 cxb4  $\mathbb{Q}xc2$  28  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  (other moves lose the queen at once) 28... $\mathbb{Q}c1+$  29  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}f5!$  with a decisive attack.

1d) 25 b5  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  26  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  (26  $\mathbb{W}e2$  leads pretty much to the same result) 26... $\mathbb{B}xc4$  27  $\mathbb{B}a2$  e5! wins a pawn.

2) 24  $\mathbb{B}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}f5!$  (Black threatens 25... $\mathbb{Q}xd4!$ ) 25  $\mathbb{B}bb1$  f6 26  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  (26  $\mathbb{Q}g4$  e5 and d4 falls) 26... $\mathbb{B}xc3!$  27  $\mathbb{B}xc3$   $\mathbb{W}xd4+$  picking up two pawns.

3) 24  $\mathbb{B}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}f5!$  with a similar continuation.

Note particularly how Black was able to make use of almost incidental circumstances (such as the pinning of White's d-pawn by the black queen) in order to reach his objective. These minor issues invariably come into the picture in some way or other when a player is tied up by the necessity of defending a weak point (c3 in this case White), and he is in consequence unable to develop his game freely.

We give the rest of the game without comment: 24... $\mathbb{W}xb3$  25  $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  26  $\mathbb{B}b2$   $\mathbb{W}a7$  27  $\mathbb{W}e1$  b6 28  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{B}c4$  29 a5 bxa5 30  $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  31  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4!$  32 cxd4  $\mathbb{B}8xc5!$  0-1

To recapitulate, Black's *plan* from diagram 28 was to engineer an attack on the queenside directed particularly against the c-pawn. Its *execution* comprised:

1. Doubling rooks on the c-file.
2. Elimination of the principal defensive piece (the bishop at d3) by an exchange (...a6 and ... $\mathbb{Q}b5$ ).
3. Preventing White from getting rid of his weakness by gaining control of c4.
4. Suitable placement of his remaining forces (here the queen, the

knight, and the neighbouring pawns), which must occupy the right squares until the time is ripe for the final combination.

In the preceding example, we have seen that the creation of a second weakness (the pawn at b3 after 23 a4) was followed by a swift debacle, as nearly always happens in such circumstances. Here one can well generalize: the defence of one weakness is a difficult task, that of several is an impossible one.

In this respect the following game (again one of Capablanca's) is particularly characteristic. Black offers (or loses) a pawn on the queenside, but he thereby obtains lines of attack along which the white queenside pawns are subjected to threats so manifold and varied that at length the defence can no longer hold out.

### Nimzowitsch – Capablanca

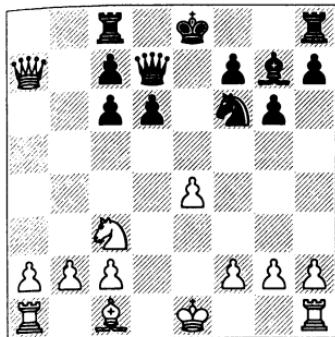
*St Petersburg 1914*

Ruy Lopez, Steinitz Variation

1 e4 e5 2  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  d6 5 d4  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  6  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  7  $\mathbb{W}d3$  exd4 8  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  g6 9  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  bxc6 10  $\mathbb{W}a6$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  11  $\mathbb{B}b7$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  12  $\mathbb{W}xa7$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  (31)

Theory says of this position 'Black has a strong attack for his pawn', by which of course is meant our queenside attack.

In the present instance there are no weaknesses in White's position, but Black has lines of attack along the open a- and b-files and, above

31  
W

all, the long dark-square diagonal, which will enable him to develop great pressure on White's queenside.

However, I am convinced that no critic would have ventured to characterize a position such as this as favourable to Black had it not been for the grand and convincing manner in which Capablanca handles this particular example. He would presumably have had to be content with the dictum: 'Black has little compensation for his pawn.'

Let us see how Black makes use of his opportunities.

13 0-0            0-0

14 ♕a6            ♜fe8

15 ♜d3

White decides on defensive measures and simply returns the queen to d3. It is remarkable how the gain of a pawn is liable to make a player over-cautious, almost as material possessions frequently do in real life.

It does not affect our investigation to determine whether or not a more enterprising method would have had better results for White, though it might well be so. One possibility is 15 f3, keeping the black queen tied

to the defence of the c6-pawn, at least for the moment; this would have prevented the knight manoeuvre which proves so effective in the game. At any rate White could hardly have been worse off.

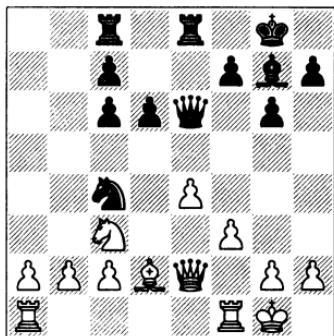
15 ...            ♜e6

Attacking the e-pawn once more and preparing the important manoeuvre ... ♜d7-e5-c4.

16 f3            ♜d7

17 ♜d2            ♜e5

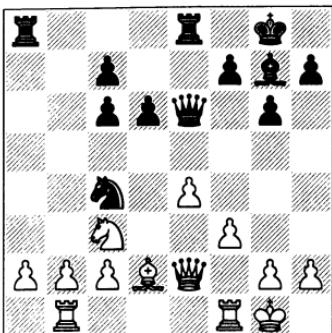
18 ♜e2            ♜c4 (32)

32  
W

Quite suddenly Black's attack has broken out in full force. Its first objective is White's b-pawn, and the special significance of Black's bishop at g7 becomes manifest in the following small combination: 19 b3? ♜d4+ 20 ♜h1 ♜xd2 21 ♜xd2 ♜e5 and wins (22 f4 ♜xc3). One perceives why Black, a few moves back, provoked 16 f3. A check at d4 can be handy at times.

19 ♜ab1            ♜a8! (33)

Now White's second weak point is under fire, and he can no longer avoid the loss of a pawn. To be sure, this is not so serious for, after all, he

33  
W

is a pawn up and need not feel the loss. In fact he can hope to improve his position by giving back the pawn, for example by 20 b3 ♜a3 21 ♜bc1 ♜xc3 22 ♜xc3 ♜b5 23 ♜b2 ♜xa2 24 ♜b1 and White has a very good game, since his bishop has become very effective.

In fact, 20 b3! is White's best move. Black, however, need not go in for the continuation given above, because he has a stronger line in 20...♜xd2! 21 ♜xd2 and now:

1) 21...♜xc3? 22 ♜xc3 and Black does not recover his pawn, as his c6-pawn is unguarded.

2) 21...♛e5? 22 ♜a4! and White's position is secure.

3) 21...♜a3! and now Black can capture the a-pawn at his leisure by driving away the knight (22 ♜fe1 ♜e5 23 ♜e3? ♜h6). Black will still have to work hard to increase his advantage, even though his bishop is stronger than White's knight.

**20 a4?**

This move can be good only if it can be followed up at once by b3, but that is not the case in this position.

**20 ... ♜xd2**

**21 ♜xd2 ♜c4!**

Hitting the nail on the head. White is tied up, he can no longer play b3, his a-pawn is doomed, and his b-pawn also stands a poor chance.

**22 ♜fd1**

22 ♜d3 ♜c5+ brings no relief for White.

**22 ... ♜eb8!**

Note the extreme care with which Black sets about the recovery of his pawn and, in particular, how he avoids a premature exchange at c3.

**23 ♜e3**

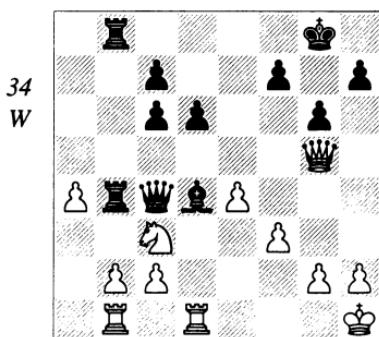
Black's threat was 23...♜xb2 24 ♜xb2 ♜xc3, when he himself comes out a pawn to the good.

**23 ... ♜b4!**

Threatening to win material with 24...♜d4.

**24 ♜g5**

**25 ♜h1 ♜ab8 (34)**



White's game now collapses like a house of cards. He is threatened with the loss of a piece by 26...♜xc3; if he moves the b1-rook, his b-pawn and c-pawn both fall, without any slackening of the attack. The white knight has no move!

**26  $\mathbb{A}xd4$** 

With this move White can put up the longest resistance. In view of this possibility it seems that it would have been better for Black to withhold the check 24... $\mathbb{A}d4+$  and to play 24... $\mathbb{A}ab8$  first. However, this is not really significant, as the game is won for Black in any event. There followed: 26... $\mathbb{A}xd4$  27  $\mathbb{A}d1$   $\mathbb{A}c4$  28  $\mathbb{h}4$   $\mathbb{A}xb2$  29  $\mathbb{A}d2$   $\mathbb{A}c5$  30  $\mathbb{A}e1$   $\mathbb{A}h5$  31  $\mathbb{A}a1$   $\mathbb{A}xh4+$  32  $\mathbb{A}g1$   $\mathbb{A}h5$  33  $a5$   $\mathbb{A}a8$  34  $a6$   $\mathbb{A}c5+$  35  $\mathbb{A}h1$   $\mathbb{A}c4$  36  $a7$   $\mathbb{A}c5$  37  $e5$   $\mathbb{A}xe5$  38  $\mathbb{A}a4$   $\mathbb{A}h5+$  39  $\mathbb{A}g1$   $\mathbb{A}c5+$  40  $\mathbb{A}h2$   $d5$  41  $\mathbb{A}h4$   $\mathbb{A}xa7$  0-1

Impressive and convincing as the last example was, the queenside attack need by no means be aimed exclusively at opposing pawns. The objective can also be, and frequently is, to obtain command of vital squares in the hostile position and concurrently to hamstring the opponent's normal development.

This is well illustrated by the following example:

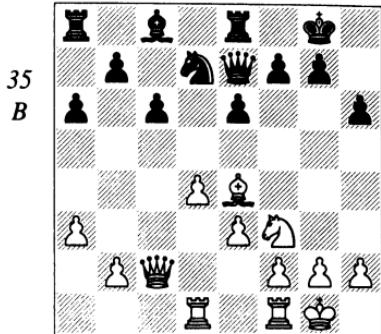
**Eliskases – Landau**

*Noordwijk 1938*

Queen's Gambit Declined

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3  $\mathbb{A}c3$   $\mathbb{A}f6$  4  $\mathbb{A}g5$   $\mathbb{A}e7$  5 e3 0-0 6  $\mathbb{A}f3$   $\mathbb{A}bd7$  7  $\mathbb{A}c2$  c6 8  $\mathbb{A}d1$  a6 9 a3  $\mathbb{A}e8$  10  $\mathbb{A}d3$  dx $c4$  11  $\mathbb{A}xc4$   $\mathbb{A}d5$  12  $\mathbb{A}xe7$   $\mathbb{A}xe7$  13  $\mathbb{A}e4$   $\mathbb{A}f6$  14  $\mathbb{A}d3!$   $\mathbb{A}xe4$  15  $\mathbb{A}xe4$  h6 16 0-0 (35)

White stands better according to Fine.



35  
B

The first impression is that there is not much to choose between the two camps. Black is not fully developed, but his position gives a solid impression. However, on closer examination matters do not appear to be too easy for Black, particularly as far as the development of his c8-bishop is concerned. A naïve conception of what constitutes development will not suffice here: 'Black plays ... $\mathbb{A}f6$  followed by ... $\mathbb{A}d7$  and all is well!' The fact is that the bishop is not really mobilized. The course of the game will make this line of thought clear.

**16 ... c5**

The idea underlying this move is that after ... $\mathbb{A}d7$  there will be an outlet in the direction of a4.

17  $\mathbb{A}c1!$   $\mathbb{A}xd4$   
18  $\mathbb{A}exd4$   $\mathbb{A}f6$   
19  $\mathbb{A}e5$

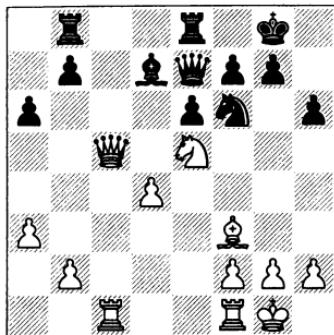
White need not fear the exchange at e4 because it would not solve for Black the problem of his c8-bishop.

**19 ...  $\mathbb{A}b8$** 

With the unmistakable determination to bring his bishop into play come what may.

20 ♜f3 ♜d7

21 ♜c5! (36)

36  
B

An excellent move, preventing Black from occupying the c-file with his rooks, which would quickly lead to equality. If now 21...♜bc8, then 22 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 23 ♛xd7 and White wins a piece. Furthermore, the exchange of queens would be to White's advantage, for after 21...♜xc5 22 dxcc5! White has the famed queenside majority (the subject of the preceding chapter), which here would be particularly effective because of his well-posted bishop.

21 ... ♜b5

22 ♜fd1 ♜f8

With an eye on the rapidly approaching endgame stage, Black plays his king nearer to the centre. Preferable, however, would be 22...♜d8 followed by 23...♜e7 with a congested but solid position for Black.

23 b3!

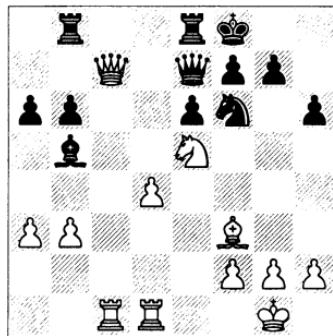
The black bishop, having barely tasted the joys of freedom, is already threatened with encirclement. After 24 a4 there would be nothing else but 24...♜d7. It would not be so bad

if Black could now clear e8 but he would not escape scot-free: 23...♝ed8 24 ♜xe7+ ♜xe7 25 ♜c7+ costs at least a pawn. In this connection, we would point to the preceding note (...♜d8 and ...♝e7); if Black now had e8 available to the bishop, he would have to contend with far fewer difficulties.

23 ... b6

Creating a weakness, but he has nothing better.

24 ♜c7 (37)

37  
B

Black is in difficulties. For instance, if he continues, as intended with the last move, 24...a5 followed by 25...a4, in order to meet 26 a4 by 26...♝a6, White would exchange queens and play ♛c6 winning the exchange; nor would 24...♜xc7 25 ♜xc7 ♜e7 26 ♜dc1 bring any relief. The actual continuation (24...♜ec8) leads to an entirely different type of game in which White also has the better chances.

The queenside attack has thus been successful. To recapitulate, the main points in the attack were:

1. Mastering the c-file.

2. Hindering the development of Black's c8-bishop through pressure on b7.

3. Command, and eventually occupation, of important points in the hostile position (d7, c5 and c7).

4. Chasing the black bishop (b3 and a4).

There followed:

24 ...  $\mathbb{E}ec8$

25  $\mathbb{W}xc8+$   $\mathbb{E}xc8$

26  $\mathbb{E}xc8+$   $\mathbb{A}e8$

As a general rule two rooks are stronger than a queen, and especially so when, as here, a hostile piece can be pinned. The defence incurs liabilities which put serious limitations on the queen's mobility and it is just this mobility on which the defence has to rely as compensation for the massive strength of the two rooks.

27 b4 a5

28 bxa5 bxa5

29 a4  $\mathbb{W}d6?$

The queen wanders too far afield, which quickly proves fatal. 29...g5 was essential, providing the king with a flight-square.

30  $\mathbb{A}c6$   $\mathbb{E}e7$

31  $\mathbb{E}b1!$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$

32  $\mathbb{A}xe8$   $\mathbb{E}e4$

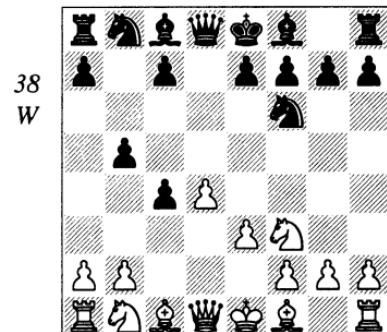
Both 32... $\mathbb{A}xe8?$  33  $\mathbb{A}c6+$  and 32... $\mathbb{W}xe5?$  33  $\mathbb{E}b7+$   $\mathbb{A}d6$  34  $\mathbb{E}d8+$   $\mathbb{A}c5$  35  $\mathbb{E}b5+$  lead to loss of the queen.

33  $\mathbb{A}c6+$   $\mathbb{A}d6$  34  $\mathbb{E}d1+$   $\mathbb{A}d5$  35  $\mathbb{E}d8+$   $\mathbb{A}c5$  36  $\mathbb{E}c1+$   $\mathbb{A}b6$  37  $\mathbb{A}b8$   $\mathbb{A}c3$  38  $\mathbb{E}d6+$   $\mathbb{A}a7$  39  $\mathbb{A}c6+$   $\mathbb{A}b6$  40  $\mathbb{A}e7+$   $\mathbb{A}a7$  41  $\mathbb{E}d7+$   $\mathbb{A}a6$  42  $\mathbb{A}c8!$  1-0

We shall conclude this chapter by giving two examples of an entirely different type, in which the attacker pays no attention to pawns and squares, but is after bigger game. Before doing so, however, we give a short account of what frequently happens when Black accepts the Queen's Gambit and attempts to hold the gambit pawn.

In its simplest form, this runs as follows:

1	d4	d5
2	c4	$\mathbb{W}xc4$
3	$\mathbb{Q}f3$	$\mathbb{Q}f6$
4	e3	b5 (38)



As is well known, this continuation is unfavourable for Black, as White, by the following typical manoeuvre, always recovers his pawn.

5 a4!

White intends to isolate Black's outpost and then to capture both pawns: after 5...bxa4 there is 6  $\mathbb{A}xc4$  or, a more direct method, 6  $\mathbb{W}xa4+$   $\mathbb{A}d7$  7  $\mathbb{W}xc4$ .

5 ... c6

It is clear that 5...a6 would be no protection at all (6 axb5) and that

5... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  is equally useless after 6 axb5  $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  and then 7  $\mathbb{Q}a3$  or 7  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  8  $\mathbb{W}a4+$ .

**6 axb5 cxb5**

**7 b3!**

This is the point of White's manoeuvre. Black cannot prevent White from recovering his pawn, for example:

1) 7...cxb3 8  $\mathbb{Q}xb5+$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  9  $\mathbb{W}xb3$ .

2) 7... $\mathbb{Q}a6?$  8 bxc4 bxc4 9  $\mathbb{W}xa6!$   $\mathbb{Q}xa6$  10  $\mathbb{W}a4+$  gaining material.

3) 7... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  8 bxc4 bxc4 9  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  (but not 9  $\mathbb{Q}xc4?$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  10  $\mathbb{W}a4+$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  11  $\mathbb{W}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}c8!$  and Black wins) 9... $\mathbb{W}c7$  10  $\mathbb{W}a4+$  (alternatively 10  $\mathbb{Q}a3$  or 10  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ ) 10... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  11  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  12  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  13  $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ .

As a rule White has the better position after recovering his pawn, for Black is saddled with an isolated a-pawn, while White's pawn formation is excellent.

There are, however, variations in which it is possible for Black either to maintain the gambit pawn or to give it back in return for a satisfactory position. The following examples illustrate this contingency:

**1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  c6 4  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  dxc4 5 e3** (a stronger continuation is 5 a4) 5...b5 6 a4  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  7  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}b6!$  (not 7...a6 8 axb5 and then 8...cxb5 9  $\mathbb{Q}xb5!$  or 8... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  9  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  cxb5 10 b3! cxb3 11  $\mathbb{Q}xb5+$ ).

**1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  dxc4 5 e3 b5 6 a4 b4 7  $\mathbb{Q}a2$  e6 8**

$\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  and Black has a satisfactory game, as White's a2-knight is out of play.

We have now seen the kind of attack which is at White's disposal against a hostile pawn-chain at b5 and c4, or at a6, b5 and c4.

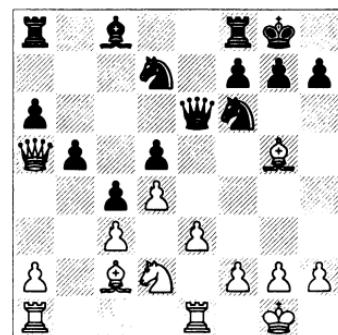
Here is the first of the two examples mentioned above:

### Capablanca – Spielmann

New York 1927

Queen's Gambit Declined,  
Westphalia Variation

**1 d4 d5 2  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  e6 3 c4  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  4  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}gf6$  5  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  6 cxd5 exd5 7  $\mathbb{W}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3+$  8 bxc3 0-0 9 e3 c5 10  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  c4 11  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  12 0-0 a6 13  $\mathbb{Q}fe1$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  14  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  b5 15  $\mathbb{W}a5$  (39)**



Theory's verdict is that White has the better game. The reasons: he has chances of attack on the queenside, firstly because of the possibility of playing a4 to weaken Black's pawn formation, and secondly, because of the advanced and fully secure position of his queen.

Over and above these remarks we must add:

1. Compared with the preceding illustration, White's action against the pawns at a6, b5 and c4 is far less incisive for the following reasons:

- The move b3 is not available.
- The black c-pawn is doubly guarded by pawns, so that after a possible a4 bxa4 the c-pawn is not left hanging and is in no need of support.

Against this we have the fact that

c) White has an equal number of pawns, and so whatever action he takes need not in itself be aimed at winning a pawn.

2. The queen, the strongest piece, can develop enormous power from a suitable outpost. She is at the same time the most valuable, but she is safe in this position and, in the absence of an enemy dark-squared bishop, out of the reach of Black's minor pieces. Therefore the white queen here can take a leading part in the attack on the queenside.

There followed:

**15 ... ♜e4?**

The following exchange weakens c4 and the text-move is therefore suspect. Black plays for an apparently safe position, but White refutes his plan by an attractive combination. 15...♝b7 would have been better and if 16 ♜c7, then 16...♜c6, although White remains with a slight endgame advantage.

**16 ♜xe4 dxe4**

**17 a4!**

As was to be expected.

**17 ... ♕d5**

With this intermediary move, Black has apparently improved his defence, as White's g5-bishop is *en prise*. After 18 ♜f4 ♜b7 Black would have a satisfactory game.

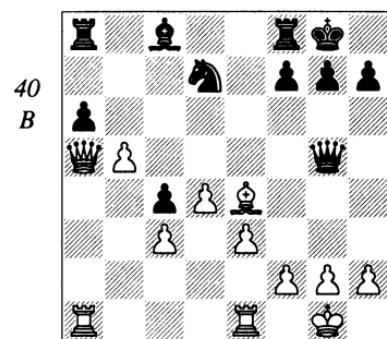
**18 axb5!!**

A fatal surprise. White offers a piece, and rightly so, as the sequel shows.

**18 ... ♜xg5**

Not, of course, 18...♜xb5?? 19 ♜xb5 and White wins a rook.

**19 ♜xe4 (40)**



**19 ... ♜b8**

The real point becomes manifest if Black plays 19...♜a7, viz. 20 b6! ♜xa5 21 bxa7!! and now:

1) 21...♝b7 22 ♜xa5 ♜xe4 23 ♜xa6 and White, with a rook and three pawns (including a strong one at a7) against two minor pieces, has an easy win.

2) 21...♜xa1 22 ♜xa1 ♜b6 23 a8♛ ♜xa8 24 ♜xa8 when White has an extra pawn and must win Black's queenside pawns as well.

The text-move is equally insufficient.

**20 bxa6 ♜b5 21 ♜c7 ♜b6 22 a7  
♜h3**

A last attempt!

**23 ♜eb1! ♜xb1+ 24 ♜xb1 f5 25  
♝f3 f4 26 exf4 1-0**

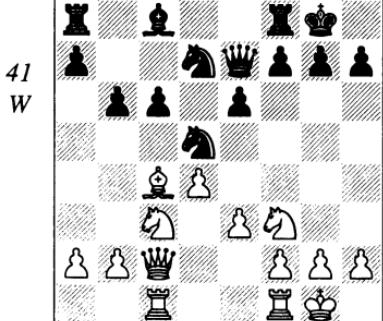
Finally, here is the second example, in which once more the queen plays the vital part and in which White, sacrificing two pawns, succeeds in hemming in a whole cluster of hostile units. It was again Capablanca who produced this work of art.

### Capablanca – Vidmar

*London 1922*

Queen's Gambit Declined

**1 d4 d5 2 ♜f3 ♜f6 3 c4 e6 4 ♜c3  
♝e7 5 ♜g5 ♜bd7 6 e3 0-0 7 ♜c1 c6  
8 ♜c2 dxc4 9 ♜xc4 ♜d5 10 ♜xe7  
♝xe7 11 0-0 b6 (41)**



*Bilguer* rightly remarks that the development of the c8-bishop at b7 aims at the exchange of knights at c3. However, White's reply gives him an overwhelming position.

**12 ♜xd5**

White exchanges knights himself, and this exchange is particularly strong, because:

1. The long light-square diagonal will be closed so that Black's last move fails in its purpose and, in fact, creates a serious weakening of the light squares on Black's queenside.

2. The c-file is opened, which White will soon occupy with queen and rooks, so that he will speedily break into Black's position.

We shall observe again and again the great effect these two factors will have on the course of the game.

**12 ... cxd5**

Black must recapture with the c-pawn, as otherwise he would lose a pawn after 13 ♜d3.

**13 ♜d3 h6**

Black refrains from 13...♜f6 as he wishes, for the time being, to use the knight for the defence of his queenside. After 13...♜f6 there might have followed 14 ♜c7 and now:

1) 14...♝xc7 15 ♜xc7 a5 (or 15...♜d7 16 ♜e5) 16 ♜fc1 ♜a6 17 ♜xa6 ♜xa6 18 ♜c6 with 19 ♜b7 to follow, winning a pawn.

2) 14...♜d7 15 ♜a6 ♜b4 16 ♜e5 ♜b5 17 a3 ♜a4 18 ♜xb5 ♜xb5 19 ♜c2 trebling major pieces on the c-file.

3) 14...♜b4 15 a3 with much the same sequel as in the game.

**14 ♜c7!**

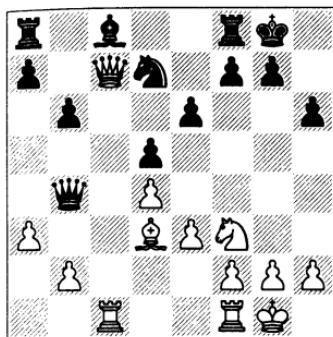
The white queen invades enemy territory and occupies an advanced but entirely secure post. There it completely frustrates all Black's attempts at development.

14 ... ♜b4

As Black is quite unable to develop his forces along normal lines, he tries to obtain some counterplay with his queen – an attempt which White refutes in exemplary fashion.

15 a3! (42)

42  
B



A very fine move – White offers one or two pawns in order to win the queen or, failing that, a queenside piece.

15 ... ♜a4

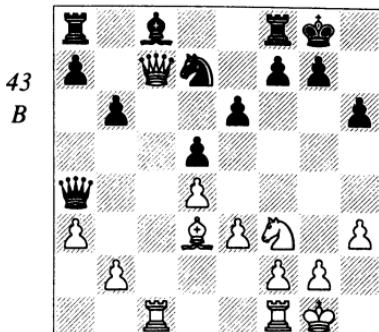
Let us investigate some of the other possibilities:

1) 15...♜xb2 16 ♜b1 ♜xa3 17 ♜b5 ♜e7 (17...♝f6 18 ♜a1 ♜b4 19 ♜fb1 wins the queen) 18 ♜c6 ♜b8 19 ♜e5 ♜d8 (19...♜d8 20 ♜xa7 ♜xe5 21 dx5) 20 ♜xd7 ♜xd7 21 ♜c6 and wins.

2) 15...♜b3 16 ♜c3 ♜xb2 17 ♜b1 ♜a2 18 ♜cb3 and there is no defence to the threats of 19 ♜d6 followed by ♜3b2, or 19 ♜c1 followed by ♜1b2.

16 h3 (43)

Again an excellent move, which is not merely intended to safeguard his king. For if we examine the position more closely, we find that Black



can no longer proceed with his proper development, e.g. 16...♜b8 17 ♜e5 ♜b7 (17...♝f6 18 ♜c2 followed by 19 ♜xb8) 18 ♜d6! ♜e8 19 b3 ♜xb3 20 ♜b1 ♜a2 21 ♜b5 is disastrous for Black.

White's last move ensures that Black will not long be able to withstand his opponent's severe positional pressure.

16 ... ♜f6

Black makes an heroic attempt to complete his development, cost what it may. After, for instance, 16...g6 17 ♜c3 Black would still have to go in for the variation shown in the preceding note.

17 ♜e5 ♜d7

17...♝a6 18 b3 ♜a5 19 ♜c6 would also cost a piece. Black literally has no move.

18 ♜c2 ♜b5

19 a4

Decisive; Black must leave his bishop to its fate.

19 ... ♜xb2

20 ♜xd7??!

It would have been stronger still first to have played 20 ♜b1 ♜a2 21 ♜xd7 ♜ac8 22 ♜xf6+ gxf6 23

$\mathbb{W}g3+$  and, as the bishop can move freely, White remains a piece ahead. As it is, White only wins the exchange, but Capablanca speedily and soundly turns this into a win:

20... $\mathbb{E}ac8$  21  $\mathbb{W}b7$   $\mathcal{Q}xd7$  22  $\mathbb{Q}h7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  23  $\mathbb{E}xc8$   $\mathbb{E}xc8$  24  $\mathbb{W}xc8$   $\mathcal{Q}f6$  25  $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{W}b4$  26  $\mathbb{W}c2+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  27  $\mathbb{W}c6$   $\mathbb{W}a3$  28  $\mathbb{W}a8+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  29  $\mathbb{E}c7$

Here White's material superiority consists of the exchange only, but

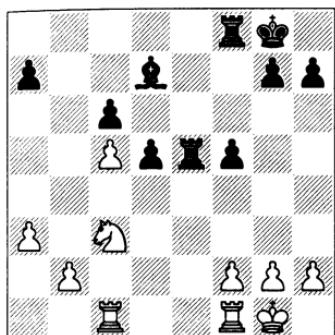
with the rook on the seventh rank taking a powerful part in the attack on Black's pawns, the ascendancy of rook over knight in an ending is well illustrated.

29... $\mathbb{W}xa4$  30  $\mathbb{E}xf7$   $\mathbb{W}d1+$  31  $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{W}h5$  32  $\mathbb{W}xa7$   $\mathbb{W}g6$  33  $\mathbb{E}f8$   $\mathbb{W}f5$  34  $\mathbb{E}f7$   $\mathbb{W}g6$  35  $\mathbb{E}b7$   $\mathcal{Q}e4$  36  $\mathbb{W}a2$   $e5$  37  $\mathbb{W}xd5$   $exd4$  38  $\mathbb{E}b8$   $\mathcal{Q}f6$  39  $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}f5$  40  $\mathbb{E}xb6$   $\mathbb{W}xf2$  41  $\mathbb{W}d3+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  42  $\mathbb{E}b8+$  1-0

# 4 Knight against Bad Bishop

When discussing the game Botvinnik-Konstantinopolsky (see p. 21), we came to the position shown in Diagram 44, which we undertook to investigate on a subsequent occasion.

44  
W



We have already stated that White has the better game, without, however, discussing very closely the reasons on which we base our opinion. As we pointed out, White's pawn majority on the queenside has lost its significance. The fact that White can obtain a passed c-pawn after a4 and b4-b5 is certainly of no greater importance than the fact that Black already has a passed pawn at d5.

So why is White's position superior? It is because Black has a 'bad' bishop. Let us examine more precisely what this means. Black's bishop at d7 is bad because its own pawns at c6, d5 and f5 are hampering its mobility. The other pawns do not restrict the bishop and one might

ask: where does the 'inferiority' of a bishop begin, is it with one, two, or three pawns fixed on squares obstructing the bishop? There is no definite answer to this question, but it can be said that the most serious hindrance of the bishop's mobility is provided by the central pawns, i.e. the c-, d-, e- or f-pawns. It follows that the term 'bad bishop' is not a sharply-defined concept and there are degrees of 'badness'; if, for instance, there were no black pawn on f5 in this position, the bishop's value would be much improved, and in the absence of a d-pawn as well, the appellation 'bad' would hardly apply at all.

At the same time, this indicates what kind of position White must aim for: *in order to keep the bishop as 'bad' as possible, the obstructive pawns must not be allowed to leave their respective squares*. Here this involves preventing Black playing ...f4 and ...d4.

We shall now give the further course of the game, from which we shall be able to derive additional points.

**20 f4!**

In the light of what we have just said, the object of this move is quite clear. Black's f-pawn is now blocked, and the bishop's mobility permanently crippled in this direction.

**20 ...                    ♜e7**

Black cannot play 20... $\mathbb{E}e3$  21  $\mathbb{Q}f2!$  d4, as White wins a pawn by 22  $\mathbb{H}fd1!$ .

**21  $\mathbb{H}fe1$**

As a rule, an exchange of rooks increases the superiority of the knight over the ‘bad’ bishop.

**21 ...  $\mathbb{H}fe8$**

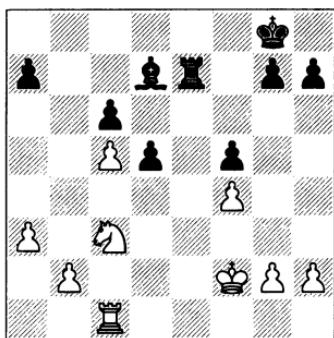
Black cannot give up the open file without a fight, since White’s rook would penetrate into the heart of his position.

**22  $\mathbb{H}xe7$        $\mathbb{H}xe7$**

**23  $\mathbb{Q}f2$  (45)**

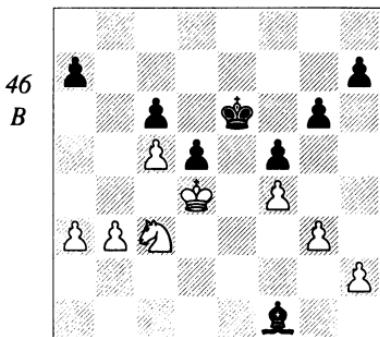
45

B



This aims to exchange the second rook as well, after which the ending knight vs bishop would be won for White. It is important to understand the basis for this statement. Let us assume that Black, in this position, continues ... $\mathbb{Q}c8-a6-c4$ , where the bishop’s obstruction by its own pawns would be much less – taking it all in all, a sound plan. The game might develop as follows: 23... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  24  $\mathbb{H}e1$   $\mathbb{H}xe1$  (practically forced) 25  $\mathbb{Q}xe1$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  26 b3 (preventing 26... $\mathbb{Q}c4$ ) 26... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  27  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  28  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f1$  29 g3 g6 30  $\mathbb{Q}d4$ .

We have now reached the position shown in diagram 46.



Up to now the moves on either side were by no means forced, and it would lead us too far afield to undertake a detailed investigation of the tangle of possible complications. Our main object is to give an idea of the winning chances without paying too much attention to finessing and detail.

The black pawn-structure is now fixed, mainly on account of the strong position of White’s king, but the bishop has escaped outside its own pawn-chains and is not hindered by them to the same extent as before. The drawback of the ‘bad bishop’ is now indirect, and is based on the fact that all the black pawns as well as the bishop occupy light squares, so that the dark squares are vulnerable and can easily fall into White’s control. Moreover, the white pawns cannot be attacked by the bishop. The important square at d4 is already occupied by White, and Black’s king must keep guard over e5. Black cannot undertake anything,

and must remain on the defensive. On the other hand, what is there for White to do? More than appears at first sight.

From b4 the white knight can attack the c-pawn, which cannot be defended by ... $\mathbb{Q}b5$  owing to White's a4. On the other hand, if the king guards the pawn by ... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  the way to Black's kingside pawns is free via e5, f6 and g7. It follows that Black, reasonably enough, must try to prevent White's  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  by ...a5, but then White has the opportunity of obtaining a passed a-pawn by b4, etc.

An early advance b3-b4 appears quite a normal move, but actually severely reduces White's chances. We perceive how much care is required in the handling of such an ending.

Here are two variations illustrating the above general ideas in concrete terms:

1) 30... $\mathbb{Q}a6$  31  $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}e2$  32  $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  33  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}d1$  34  $\mathbb{Q}f6$   $\mathbb{Q}xb3$  35  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  a5 36  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  37  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  d4 38  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  39  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  40 c6 a4 41 c7  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  42  $\mathbb{Q}xh7$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  43  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $\mathbb{Q}b3$  44 h4  $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  45 h5  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  46 h6 a3 47 h7 a2 48 h8 $\mathbb{W}$ , and wins.

2) 30...a5 31  $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}e2$  32 b4 axb4 (32... $\mathbb{Q}c4$  33 bxa5! wins, but if 32...a4 then quite simply 33  $\mathbb{Q}c3$ ) 33  $\mathbb{Q}xb4$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  34  $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  35  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  36 a4  $\mathbb{Q}f1$  37  $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  38  $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  39  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  40  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  d4 41  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  d3 42  $\mathbb{Q}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  43 h4! (not 43  $\mathbb{Q}xh7?$  g5!) 43... $\mathbb{Q}c4$  44  $\mathbb{Q}xh7$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  45  $\mathbb{Q}g7$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  46  $\mathbb{Q}f8$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  47 a5.

These variations were perhaps unnecessarily exciting, and we can

well imagine that the reader may not be entirely convinced of their forced nature, but this does not really affect our argument. The chief points are:

1. That Black could not, on the whole, undertake anything, so that it was in fact established that the knight is to be preferred to a 'bad bishop'.

2. That White's winning attempt was based on a combination of the knight-manoeuvre  $\mathbb{Q}c3-a2-b4$  (attacking c6), the plan  $\mathbb{Q}a2$  and b4 (forcing through a passed pawn), and finally  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  (penetration by the king).

Let us revert to diagram 45 in order to continue our discussion of the game in question; it has now become clear that Black has to avoid the exchange of rooks, at least in present circumstances. There followed:

23 ...  $\mathbb{Q}f7$

A cunning move! Should White nevertheless play for an exchange of rooks, failure awaits him after 24  $\mathbb{R}e1$   $\mathbb{R}xe1$  25  $\mathbb{Q}xe1$  d4! 26  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  27  $\mathbb{Q}xd4+$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  and Black wins back his pawn with a satisfactory position: the blockade is lifted and all danger is past. Generally speaking, it can be stated that Black can save the game if he can play ...d4 without immediately fatal consequences.

24  $\mathbb{R}d1!$

Forcing the black pawns to remain on light squares.

24 ...  $\mathbb{R}e8$

It is impossible to bring the bishop into the open without making some equivalent concession, e.g. 24... $\mathbb{Q}c8$

25 ♜e2! g6 26 ♜d4 ♜c7 and now the rook is immobilized.

**25 ♜d2**

Guarding the b-pawn and preparing the exchange of rooks.

**25 ... h6**

**26 ♜e2 ♜b8**

If instead 26...♜xe2+, 27 ♜xe2 and White controls the d4-square, which is the key to winning the game.

**27 ♜e3**

27 b4 is more obvious, but there are two objections:

1. After eventually exchanging rooks, White can no longer play ♜a2-b4 and, more important still, he has no further opportunity of obtaining a passed pawn.

2. Black can start a counter-action with 27...a5.

**27 ... ♜b3**

This fixes White's queenside, but at best only temporarily.

**28 ♜d4**

The king has reached the desired strong-point and already threatens ♜e5-d6, etc.

**28 ... ♜f6**

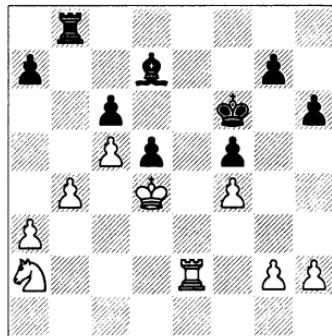
**29 ♜a2 ♜b8**

After 29...a5 there follows 30 ♜c1 ♜b8 31 b3, when b4 must follow sooner or later; the text-move is preferable, even though White can still force a passed pawn.

**30 b4 (47)**

The crucial moment, for with this move White foregoes the opportunity to carry out the manoeuvre indicated before (♜a2-b4), so that the ending knight vs bishop assumes a different aspect.

47  
B



**30 ... g5**

Let us investigate the alternatives:

1) Here 30...a5 would play into White's hands after 31 bxa5, as both 31...♜b3 32 ♜c3 ♜xa3 33 ♜a2 and 31...♜a8 32 ♜c3 ♜xa5 33 a4 give White a strong passed pawn.

2) 30...♜e8 31 ♜xe8 (31 ♜e5 also deserves consideration) 31...♜xe8 32 a4! (32 b5 fails against 32...cx b5 33 ♜xd5? ♜f7+) and then:

2a) 32...a6 33 b5! and now:

2a1) 33...axb5 34 a5 ♜d7 35 a6 ♜c8 36 ♜b4 ♜e6 37 a7 ♜b7 38 ♜a6 ♜d7 39 ♜e5 g6 40 ♜f6 and once again White has the whip hand.

2a2) 33...cx b5 34 a5 ♜e6 35 ♜b4 and wins.

2b) If Black omits 32...a6 and substitutes 32...♜e6 White likewise has excellent prospects after 33 a5! ♜d7 34 b5 cx b5 35 ♜b4.

**31 g3 ♜xf4**

**32 ♜xf4 a6**

**33 ♜c3 ♜g8**

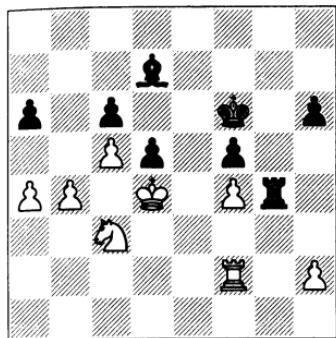
Black decides to leave the rooks on the board, which, in fact, is his best chance.

**34 a4 ♜g4**

**35 ♜f2 (48)**

Now the white rook fulfils the task of safeguarding the kingside. Meanwhile the remaining white forces carry out the winning plan on the opposite wing.

48  
B



35 ... ♕e6

There is an interesting winning continuation, should Black try instead 35...♜e8, viz. 36 b5 axb5 37 axb5 cxb5 38 ♜xd5+ ♕e6 (38...♚f7 39 ♜e3 wins a pawn) 39 ♜e2+ ♕f7 40 ♜xe8! ♕xe8 41 ♜f6+ ♕e7 42 ♜xg4 fxg4 43 f5 h5 44 c6 h4 45 c7! and White queens first.

36 b5!

The breakthrough, which has been impeding for some time.

36 ... axb5

37 axb5 cxb5

38 ♜xb5 ♜g1

39 ♜c3!

First safeguarding the position before reaping the rewards of his breakthrough.

39 ... ♜f7

An indirect defence of d5 (40 ♜xd5? ♜d1+).

40 ♜b2 ♜f1

41 ♜e2

Alternatively, 41 ♜e5 ♜e1+ 42 ♜e2! (as in the game), but not 42 ♜d6 because of 42...d4. White must still exercise care before lifting the blockade of Black's d-pawn.

41 ... ♜e1

42 ♜e5 d4

Giving up the pawn is Black's best chance. After 42...♜e7 the line 43 c6! d4 44 ♜b7+ ♜d8 45 ♜d6 ♜xe2 46 ♜b8+ ♜c8 47 c7+ is conclusive.

43 ♜xd4

White's strategy has resulted in the gain of a pawn, and the rest is no longer of interest as far as our subject is concerned. There followed 43...♝g6 44 ♜c3 ♜h5 45 ♜e2 ♜xe2 46 ♜xe2 ♜g4 47 ♜e5 ♜c8 48 ♜d4 h5 49 ♜xf5! ♜d7 (not 49...♜xf5 50 h3+!) 50 ♜g7 ♜a4 51 f5 ♜g5 52 ♜e6+ 1-0.

Let us sum up the conclusions derived from this example:

*Assessment:* White has the better game because Black has a 'bad' bishop, and White is in a position to fix the obstructing pawns that obstruct the bishop.

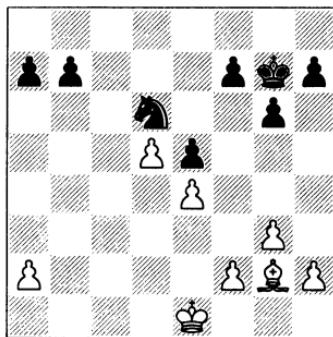
*Plan:*

1. Fix the obstructing pawns (20 f4 and 24 ♜d1).
2. Occupy the blockading square, preferably with the king (28 ♜d4).
3. Sum up the various possibilities of a breakthrough, and try to combine these (analysis of diagram 46).
4. Unassuming moves may have important consequences, e.g. 30 b4

which, for a certain period of time, prevents a number of possibilities.

5. Calculate accurately when to lift the blockade and allow the hostile passed pawn to advance. In such situations the smallest variation may make all the difference between a win and a loss.

Our next example illustrates a knight vs bishop ending in which the rooks have already been exchanged (49).

49  
B

This is another position from Chapter 2 (diagram 25, Eliskases-Flohr), in which the main subject, the pawn majority on the queenside, plays a subordinate part. This illustration is instructive although – we might even say because – both players are guilty of some inaccuracies. Here again we have a knight vs a ‘bad bishop’. The rooks have already disappeared. White’s pawns at e4 and d5 hinder their own bishop, and the unguarded e-pawn ties the bishop for the time being to f3, g2 or h1.

The *verdict* on the position is: Black has the better game but, as

will be seen, it is not clear whether a win can be forced against best play.

The *plan* consists again of a combination of possible continuations:

1. Advance of Black’s queenside pawns.

2. March of the black king to c5, d4, etc.

3. Establishing and reinforcing the pressure on e4.

Let us examine the sequel.

**28 ... f5!**

Black loses no time in increasing his pressure on e4. In addition, he need no longer be anxious about White’s f4, which might be the reply to the text-move if played later. At the moment 29 f4 would be satisfactorily met by 29... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ !.

**29 f3**

A difficult decision for White. Another type of structure arises after 29 exf5. After 29...gxf5 30 f4 e4 White controls d4 and has by no means a bad position. Black has a better continuation against 29 exf5, namely 29... $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ ! 30  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  31  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  and now:

1) 32  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  33 f4 (33  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  34  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  followed by 35... $\mathbb{Q}f6+$  wins a pawn) 33...exf4 34 gxf4 (34  $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$ ) 34...b5 35  $\mathbb{Q}f1$  b4 36  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  37  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  38  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$ , followed by ...a5-a4.

2) 32  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  33 a4 (33  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  34  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  and 35... $\mathbb{Q}b6+$  wins a pawn) 33...a6 with various possibilities for Black, e.g. 34 a5  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  35 f4 exf4 36 gxf4  $\mathbb{Q}c8$  37  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  b5+ 38 axb6  $\mathbb{Q}xb6+$  39  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  a5.

These variations are far from exhaustive, but they will serve to show that the continuation 29 exf5 leads to a different type of position, without, however, satisfactorily solving the problems White faces.

29 ... fxe4

30 fxe4

Black has obtained one of his target-positions: permanent pressure on e4 whereby at least one of the white pieces (king or bishop) is tied to its defence.

30 ... b5

Mobilizing the queenside.

31 ♕d2 a5

32 ♕d3

The king guards the e-pawn so that the bishop may be free to move.

32 ... ♘f6

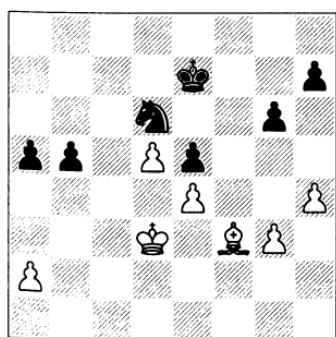
33 ♖f3 ♔e7

Bringing the black king into action.

34 h4? (50)

50

B



White's last move leads to a decisive weakening of White's kingside pawns, because he thereby abandons the possibility of keeping the g-pawn guarded by a pawn. It will become

clear why this factor is of importance when we come to discuss Black's 36th move.

34 ♖d1 ♘d8 35 a4! at once would be correct, and now:

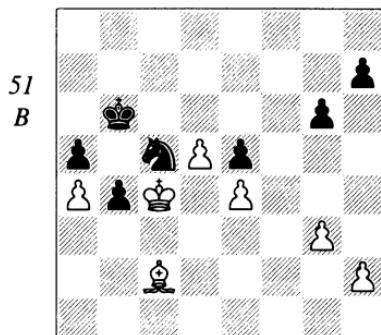
1) 35...bxa4 36 ♖xa4 ♔c7 37

♖c2 ♔b6 38 ♔c3 defends.

2) 35...b4 36 ♖b3 ♔c7 37 ♖c2

♔b6 38 ♖b3 ♖b7 39 ♔c4 ♖c5 40

♖c2 brings us to diagram 51.



It is now essential for White to obtain this position with Black to move, or else he will be in zugzwang. Since White has sufficient moves with his bishop, he can always ensure that this happens.

From diagram 51, Black may try:

2a) 40...h5 41 h4 b3 42 ♖b1 b2 43 ♔c3 ♖xa4+ 44 ♔b3 ♖c5+ 45 ♖xb2 ♖d7 46 ♖d3 ♖f6 47 ♔b3 ♖g4 48 ♖e2! (otherwise 48...♖f2 followed by ...♖h1! winning the g-pawn) 48...♖f2 49 ♖f3 defends.

2b) 40...g5 41 g4 h6 42 h3 ♖b7 (42...b3 43 ♖b1! b2 44 ♔c3 ♖xa4+ 45 ♔b3 ♖c5+ 46 ♖xb2 ♔b5 47 ♔c3, etc.) 43 ♖d3 ♖d6 44 ♖b3 ♔c5 and now Black can try to transfer his knight to f4 or deflect White's king

with ...b3-b2 and penetrate with his king towards White's kingside pawns. Neither of these methods leads to a forced win although White would experience continuing difficulties.

We have gone more deeply into the position shown in diagram 51 so that we could clearly diagnose Black's winning chances, whatever continuation he selects up to his 36th move. With the text-move, 34 h4, White intended to continue with h5 and in reply to ...g5 to advance to h6, blocking Black's h-pawn, after which the black king could not safely move to the queenside. However, Black can easily thwart this plan.

Carrying on from diagram 50, the game went on:

**34 ... h6**

Simple, for if now 35 h5, Black plays 35...g5.

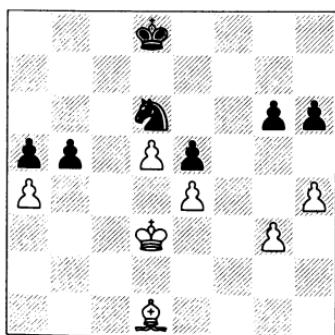
**35 ♜d1 ♜d8**

Note that 35...a4, in order to prevent 36 a4, is inadequate because of 36 ♜c2 (in order to free the king) 36...♜d7 37 ♜c3 ♜c7 38 ♜b4 ♜b6 39 ♜d3!, and White is practically out of danger.

**36 a4 (52)**

52

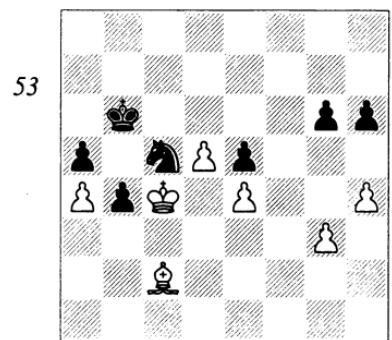
B



White hits on the right plan: he cannot adopt a waiting policy for, once the black king reaches the centre of the battle, the advance of his queenside pawns will be decisive.

**36 ... bxa4?**

Here Black misses his opportunity. With 36...b4!, followed by manoeuvring his king to b6 and his knight to c5 he could win in an interesting manner, e.g. 37 ♜b3 ♜c7 38 ♜d1 ♜b6 39 ♜b3 (39 ♜c2 ♜b7 40 ♜c4 ♜c5) 39...♜b7 40 ♜c4 ♜c5 41 ♜c2 (53).



Here again White has the option of reaching the position in question with or without the move, as his bishop can at will gain or lose a tempo.

We shall now demonstrate that Black has a win no matter who has the move:

With White to play: 1 g4 g5 and now:

1) 2 hxg5 hxg5 3 d6 (otherwise he loses either the a-pawn or the e-pawn) 3...♞c6 and wins.

2) 2 h5 b3! (here this move wins nicely) 3 ♜b1 (3 ♜xb3 ♜xe4 also

wins for Black) 3...b2 4  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  (or 4  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  followed by ... $\mathbb{Q}c5-d7-f6$  winning the g-pawn – if 5  $\mathbb{Q}b3$ , then 5...b1  $\mathbb{Q}+6 \mathbb{Q}xb1 \mathbb{Q}c5+$ ) 4... $\mathbb{Q}xa4+$  5  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5+$  6  $\mathbb{Q}xb2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7!$  and again ... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  wins a pawn.

With Black to play, 1...h5 wins, for either the a-pawn or the e-pawn must fall (2 d6  $\mathbb{Q}c6$ ). The same picture keeps on recurring: White drifts into zugzwang, and must then pay dearly for allowing his g-pawn to become weak, for it has lost the support of the h-pawn against an attack by the black knight. A fine example which teaches how very carefully such endings must be conducted!

Let us return to the actual game (diagram 52 and then 36...bxa4?).

37  $\mathbb{Q}xa4$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$

38  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$

39  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$

The attack on White's g-pawn no longer wins: 39... $\mathbb{Q}e8$  40  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  41  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  42 g4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  43 g5 hxg5 44 hxg5  $\mathbb{Q}h7$  and White just draws after 45 d6!  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  46 d7  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  47  $\mathbb{Q}d5!$ .

40  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$

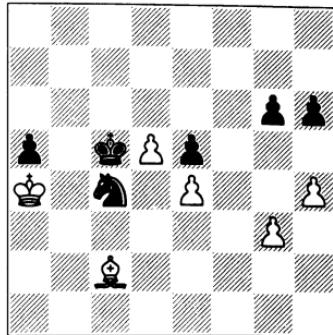
41  $\mathbb{Q}a4!$   $\mathbb{Q}c4!$  (54)

Black makes the last attempt which still has some chance of success.

42  $\mathbb{Q}b3?$

Now White loses after all. Correct was 42  $\mathbb{Q}b1!$   $\mathbb{Q}d2$  43  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  (stopping the black knight reaching f1), and now 43... $\mathbb{Q}d4$  fails against 44 d6!. Black can then undertake nothing more, and must be content with a draw.

54  
W



42 ...  $\mathbb{Q}d2$

43  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}f1!$

Winning the g-pawn (44 g4  $\mathbb{Q}e3$ ).

Now Black obtains a passed pawn on the kingside which wins in the nick of time. It is remarkable that White's weak g-pawn should thus tip the scales in Black's favour, thanks to White's error on move 34.

44  $\mathbb{Q}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}xg3$

45  $\mathbb{Q}a4$

It makes no difference whether the white king moves up the board or down, e.g. 45  $\mathbb{Q}a6$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  46  $\mathbb{Q}b7$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  47  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  g5.

45 ...  $\mathbb{Q}h5$

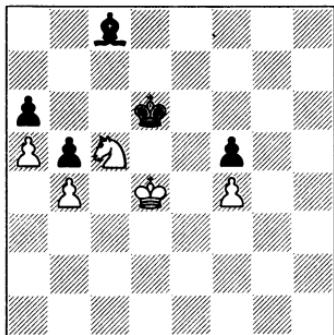
46  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$

47  $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  48 d6 g5 49 hxg5 hxg5 50  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  g4 51  $\mathbb{Q}d1$  g3 52  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}e3$  (everything works out now by one tempo) 53  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}f2$  54  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  g2 55  $\mathbb{Q}xg2$   $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  56 d7  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  57  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$   $\mathbb{Q}f3$  0-1

A difficult ending, which establishes that exact calculation is required before anything of a definite nature is undertaken. A new element in this ending is the 'tempo-squeeze' which can arise (see the analysis of diagram 53). This additional weapon

in an ending ‘knight vs bad bishop’ is illustrated in greater detail in the simple example below (55).

55



The black bishop is definitely bad – all the pawns are on squares of the same colour as the bishop – yet this does not in itself necessarily mean a loss for Black. If it is White’s move, he cannot win, but if it is Black’s move then he must lose by zugzwang. The bishop cannot move as Black would lose a pawn, and 1... $\mathbb{B}c6$  2  $\mathbb{B}e5$ , followed by 3  $\mathbb{B}b3$ , 4  $\mathbb{B}d4$  and 5  $\mathbb{B}xf5$ , would be decisive.

Here are a few variations on this position showing some additional possibilities:

1. Add another black pawn at d5. The situation is altered, and the game is drawn no matter who has the move, e.g. 1  $\mathbb{B}d3$   $\mathbb{A}e6$  2  $\mathbb{B}c5$   $\mathbb{A}c8$  or from the new position with Black to move, 1... $\mathbb{B}c6$  2  $\mathbb{B}e5$  d4! 3  $\mathbb{B}xd4$   $\mathbb{B}d6$ .

2. In diagram 55 place the white king on d3 and the black king on c7. This is drawn irrespective of ‘the move’, e.g. 1  $\mathbb{B}d4$   $\mathbb{B}d6$  or 1... $\mathbb{B}c6$ ! 2  $\mathbb{B}d4$   $\mathbb{B}d6$ .

3. With the white king at e3 and the black king at e7, White wins whether he has the move or not – 1... $\mathbb{B}d6$  2  $\mathbb{B}d4!$  or 1  $\mathbb{B}d3!$   $\mathbb{B}d6$  2  $\mathbb{B}d4$ .

The characteristics of the ‘bad’ bishop play an important role and are an easy guide to the correct procedure, not only when the knight is opposed to a bad bishop, but also in a contest between a ‘good’ and a ‘bad’ bishop. However, in this case the advantage is far less clear-cut, and in this chapter we shall therefore restrict ourselves to the study of bishop vs knight.

We conclude with two examples, both important for the theory of the openings concerned.

### Alekhine – Euwe

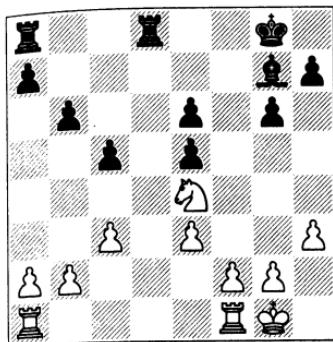
*London 1922*

London System

1 d4  $\mathbb{B}f6$  2  $\mathbb{B}f3$  g6 3  $\mathbb{B}f4$   $\mathbb{B}g7$  4  $\mathbb{B}bd2$  c5 5 e3 d6 6 c3  $\mathbb{B}c6$  7 h3 0-0 8  $\mathbb{B}c4$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  9 0-0 e5 10 dxe5  $\mathbb{B}xe5$  11  $\mathbb{B}xe5$  dxe5 12  $\mathbb{B}g5$   $\mathbb{B}e6?$  13  $\mathbb{B}xe6$

White has a decisive advantage. This is clear because Black remains with a doubled pawn, and that this advantage is decisive arises from the fact that, before long, White will reach an endgame with a knight against a bad bishop.

13	...	fxe6
14	$\mathbb{B}de4$	$\mathbb{B}xe4$
15	$\mathbb{W}xd8$	$\mathbb{B}exd8$
16	$\mathbb{B}xe4$	b6 (56)
17	$\mathbb{W}fd1$	$\mathbb{B}f8$

56  
W

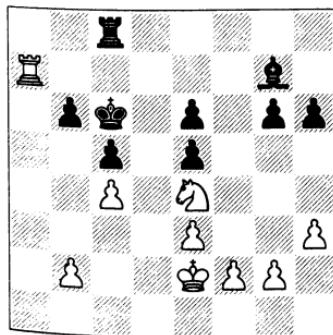
- 18 ♔f1 ♔e7  
19 c4 h6  
20 ♔e2 ♜xd1  
21 ♜xd1 ♜b8

The endgame is reached and now White wins by careful play. We give the rest of the game without much comment.

- 22 ♜d3 ♜h8  
23 a4 ♜c8  
24 ♜b3

The last preparation for the important breakthrough by a5.

- 24 ... ♔d7  
25 a5 ♔c6  
26 axb6 axb6  
27 ♜a3 ♜g7  
28 ♜a7 (57)

57  
B

White has succeeded in opening the way into Black's position via the a-file.

- 28 ... ♜c7  
29 ♜a8

The white rook is much more active than its counterpart, and an exchange would be unwise.

- 29 ... ♜e7  
30 ♜c8+ ♔d7  
31 ♜g8 ♔c6  
32 h4

Strengthening his position on the kingside; there is nothing that Black can undertake.

- 32 ... ♔c7  
33 g4 ♔c6  
34 ♔d3 ♜d7+  
35 ♔c3 ♜f7  
36 b3 ♔c7  
37 ♔d3 ♜d7+  
38 ♔e2 ♜f7  
39 ♔c3!

After stumbling, White now finds the right course: the knight makes room for the king – the changing of the guard.

- 39 ... ♜e7  
40 g5 hxg5  
41 hxg5 ♔c6  
42 ♔d3! ♜d7+  
43 ♔e4 (58)

The ideal set-up with the king on the blockade square.

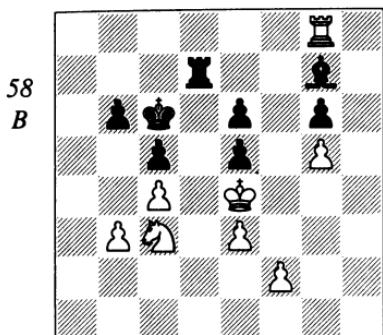
- 43 ... ♜b7  
44 ♔b5!

The beginning of the end.

- 44 ... ♜e7  
45 f3

Careful throughout.

- 45 ... ♔d7



Against 45... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ , 46  $\mathbb{Q}d6+$  followed by 47  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  would be conclusive.

- |    |                 |                |
|----|-----------------|----------------|
| 46 | $\mathbb{B}b8$  | $\mathbb{Q}c6$ |
| 47 | $\mathbb{B}c8+$ | $\mathbb{Q}d7$ |
| 48 | $\mathbb{B}c7+$ | $\mathbb{Q}d8$ |
| 49 | $\mathbb{B}c6$  |                |

Winning a pawn.

- |    |                 |                |
|----|-----------------|----------------|
| 49 | ...             | $\mathbb{B}b7$ |
| 50 | $\mathbb{B}xe6$ | 1-0            |

Note that in this example the black bishop was so ‘bad’ that throughout the ending Black was playing practically a piece down.

### Blumin – Fine New York 1939 Nimzo-Indian Defence

1 d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2 c4 e6 3  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  4  $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  5  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  d5 6 e3 0-0 7 a3  $\mathbb{Q}xc3+$  8  $\mathbb{W}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7!$

The course of the game provides an explanation of this, at first sight mysterious, move. Black wishes to exchange light-squared bishops in order to reach a position with a knight against a bad bishop.

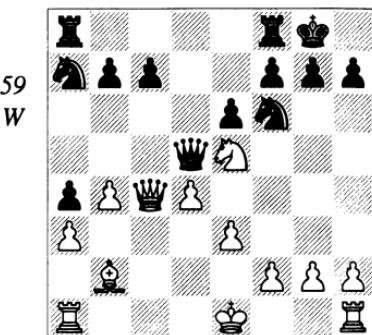
- |    |                |     |
|----|----------------|-----|
| 9  | $\mathbb{Q}d3$ | a5  |
| 10 | b3             | a4! |

The sequel to the foregoing, as will soon become clear.

- |    |                 |                 |
|----|-----------------|-----------------|
| 11 | b4              | $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ |
| 12 | $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ | $\mathbb{Q}a7!$ |

The point! White cannot prevent ... $\mathbb{Q}b5$  (if 13  $\mathbb{W}d3$ , then 13... $\mathbb{W}e8$ ), and this practically forces the desired exchange.

- |    |                 |                     |
|----|-----------------|---------------------|
| 13 | $\mathbb{Q}e5$  | $\mathbb{Q}b5$      |
| 14 | $\mathbb{Q}b2$  | $\mathbb{Q}xc4$     |
| 15 | $\mathbb{W}xc4$ | $\mathbb{W}d5$ (59) |



The verdict of theory that Black has the better game now needs no explanation: it is the advantage of the knight over the ‘bad’ bishop.

There followed:

- |       |                   |                              |
|-------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| 16    | $\mathbb{W}xd5$   |                              |
| If 16 | $\mathbb{W}xc7$ , | then 16... $\mathbb{W}xg2$ . |

- |    |                |                 |
|----|----------------|-----------------|
| 16 | ...            | $\mathbb{exd}5$ |
| 17 | $\mathbb{B}c1$ | $\mathbb{Q}b5$  |

Black blockades the enemy pawns on dark squares.

- |    |                 |                 |
|----|-----------------|-----------------|
| 18 | 0-0             | $\mathbb{Q}e4$  |
| 19 | $\mathbb{B}c2$  | $\mathbb{Q}ed6$ |
| 20 | $\mathbb{Q}c1$  | $\mathbb{Q}fe8$ |
| 21 | $\mathbb{B}d1$  | f6              |
| 22 | $\mathbb{Q}d7?$ |                 |

A blunder which costs a piece. He should have played 22  $\mathbb{Q}d3$ , after

which, however, 22... $\mathbb{Q}c4$  follows, with a definite advantage to Black.

**22 ... b6**

Cutting off the white knight's retreat.

**23  $\mathbb{E}c6$   $\mathbb{E}e7$**

...and Black won easily.

This example shows particularly well the uselessness of the 'bad' bishop. The 'bad' bishop is no match for the knight, and stands helpless against such strange-looking moves as 8... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ , 9...a5 and 12... $\mathbb{Q}a7$ . That the knight is superior to the 'bad bishop' was made sufficiently clear in the various examples given.

Here again – as in preceding chapters – it must be conceded that it is easier, though no less important, to formulate a judgement than to evolve a plan.

Finally, an instructive example from grandmaster practice. Here the player having the bishop comes to grief because, disregarding all the rules, he allows his opponent to reduce his good bishop to the status of a bad one.

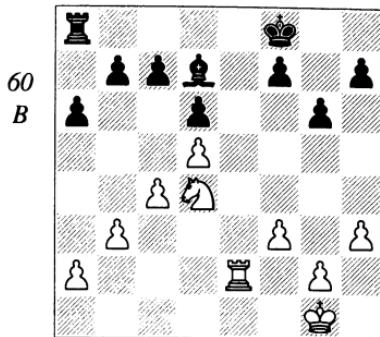
### Averbakh – Lilienthal

Moscow 1949

King's Indian Defence

1 d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2 c4 d6 3  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  g6 4  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  5 e4 0-0 6 h3  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  7 d5  $\mathbb{Q}b8$  8  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  e6 9 0-0 exd5 10 exd5  $\mathbb{E}e8$  11  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  12  $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  13  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}fe4$  14  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  15 b3  $\mathbb{Q}g3$  16  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2+$  17  $\mathbb{E}xe2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  18  $\mathbb{W}d2$  a6 19  $\mathbb{E}ce1$   $\mathbb{W}h4$  20  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{W}h5$  21

$\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{E}xe2$  22  $\mathbb{W}xe2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  23  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}xe2$  24  $\mathbb{E}xe2$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  25 f3 (60)



The white pawns are placed on squares of the same colour as the opposing bishop; in other words, the bishop is 'good'. It follows that with correct play, Black should in no circumstances lose the game. On the other hand, he has no winning prospects as White has full compensation in his knight's strong position and space advantage.

A normal continuation would now be 25... $\mathbb{E}e8$  26  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{E}xe2+$  27  $\mathbb{Q}xe2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  28  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  29  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  and neither side could do much more than play a waiting game.

It is remarkable that Black should neglect this simple drawing method, and take a risk which holds out no winning prospects, as White is allowed to transfer his queenside pawns to dark squares. As a result, the advantage of bishop against knight is entirely nullified.

**25 ... c5**

**26 dx $c$ 6 bx $c$ 6**

Now Black's d-pawn is seriously weakened, and the consequence will

be that, before long, he will be tempted to push his d-pawn on to d5. The whole of Black's strategy will in the end lead to unfortunate results for him.

**27  $\mathbb{H}d2$**

Aiming at the weakened pawn.

**27 ...  $\mathbb{A}e7$**

**28  $\mathbb{Q}e2$**

In preparation for manoeuvres such as  $\mathbb{Q}c3-a4$ , intending c5, or  $\mathbb{Q}c3-e4$  both attacking the d-pawn and preparing c5.

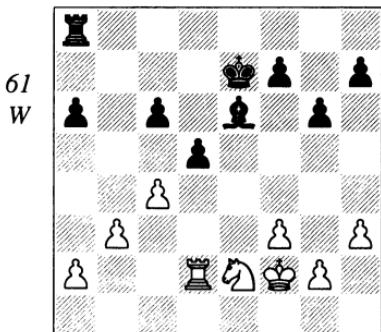
**28 ...  $\mathbb{A}e6$**

**29  $\mathbb{Q}f2$**

White could also have played 29  $\mathbb{Q}c3$ , but he sees no reason to prevent Black's next move.

**29 ... d5 (61)**

It is important to note that 29...a5 can still be answered by 30  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  for 30...a4 31  $\mathbb{Q}xa4 \mathbb{Q}xc4$  fails against 32  $\mathbb{Q}b6$ .



The position for Black is difficult, but the text-move is practically equivalent to resignation. He should have adopted a waiting policy and played ...c5 at the appropriate moment. In this case White would still

have an advantage, but not a decisive one.

**30 c5**

After 30 cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  White's position is still preferable, but the text-move is much stronger, as the bishop will become 'bad'.

**30 ...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$**

**31  $\mathbb{Q}d4$**

The knight occupies an excellent square – it restrains Black's d-pawn and is almost unassailable.

**31 ... f6**

**32  $\mathbb{H}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$**

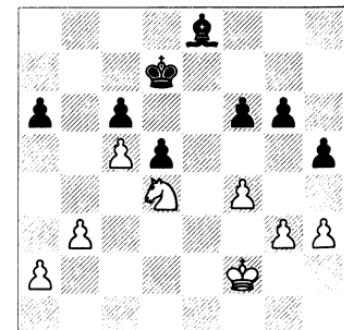
**33 f4  $\mathbb{Q}g8$**

**34 g3 h5**

**35  $\mathbb{H}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$**

While White quietly proceeds with his preparations, Black loses patience; he exchanges rooks, which makes the winning procedure considerably easier.

**36  $\mathbb{H}xe8$   $\mathbb{Q}xe8$  (62)**



Compare this diagram with the original position in diagram 60, and you will notice that Black has almost completed the process of turning his good bishop into a bad one. We see further that the bishop is particularly

bad because it has no chance at all of getting into the open; the journey to a6 is too long and too complicated, and the black kingside pawns would in the meantime have become easy prey for White's king and knight.

**37 g4**

With the object of establishing a white pawn at g5 and thus also forcing Black's kingside pawns onto light squares. Black cannot prevent this, for 37...g5 38 fxg5 fxg5 39 ♘f3 costs him a pawn.

**37 ... hxg4**

**38 hxg4 ♖c7**

Preparing for ...♗d7-c8-a6 but Black gets there much too late.

**39 ♖g3 ♖d7**

**40 g5**

Now Black did not put up the best defence – he was probably convinced that his task was hopeless – and gave up after 40...fxg5 41 fxg5 ♖c8 42 ♘f4 1-0 as he could not avoid material loss (42...♖d7 43 ♖e5).

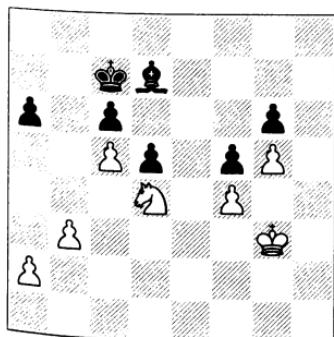
In fact he had two continuations, each of which would have set White a problem not at all easy to solve.

They are:

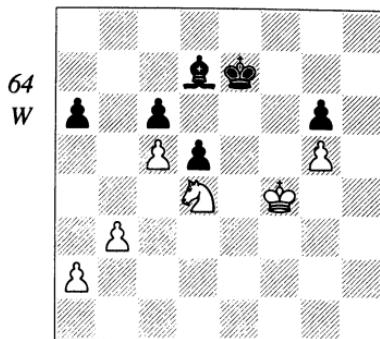
**40...f5 (63)**

63

W



and 40...fxg5 41 fxg5 ♖d8 42 ♘f4 ♖e7 (64).



Let us now work out the win in these two diagrams. Firstly, in diagram 63 (after 40...f5 instead of 40...fxg5).

**41 ♘f3**

With the intention of placing the knight at e5 and thus tying the bishop permanently to e8.

**41 ... ♖e8**

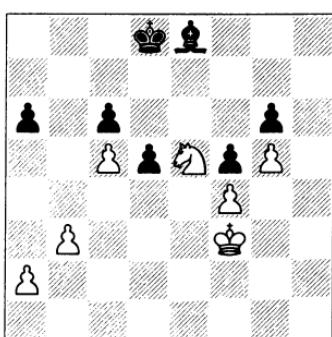
**42 ♘e5 ♖d8**

An attempt at action on the other wing must fail, as White, in reply to ...a5, always has the move a4.

**43 ♖f3 (65)**

65

B



**43 ... ♖e7**

**44 ♕e3 ♔e6**

Black is condemned to utter inactivity, for his king must carefully watch the possibility of the white king invading Black's territory via d4 and e5.

**45 ♕d4 ♔e7**

**46 a4**

A systematic winning process. White will tie up Black's a-pawn.

**46 ... ♔e6**

If Black plays 46...a5 to cut across White's plan, White wins without any difficulty by 47 ♦d3 and 48 b4, thanks to his passed a-pawn and the possibility of breaking in via e5.

**47 a5 ♔e7**

**48 ♦d3**

Heading for b4. Black can no longer prevent the loss of either his a-pawn or c-pawn.

Now, from diagram 64:

**43 ♕e5 ♔e8**

Again Black has nothing else, because, as before, he cannot allow the white king to penetrate to d6 or f6, for example 43...♔d8 44 ♕d6 ♔e8 (44...♔c8 45 ♕e7 and 46 ♕f7 or 44...♔e8 45 ♕c7 and 46 ♕b6) 45 ♕e6+ ♕c8 46 ♕e7 ♔d7 47 ♦d4 and 48 ♕f7.

**44 a4**

The same method of winning as in diagram 63.

**44 ... ♔d7**

If 44...a5, the reply is again 45 ♕c2 and 46 b4.

**45 a5 ♔e8**

**46 ♦c2**

White wins, for after the subsequent 47 ♦b4 either the a-pawn or the c-pawn falls.

# 5 Weakening the King's Defences

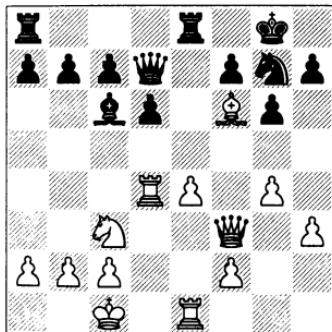
Alekhine – Brinckmann

Kecskemet 1927

Ruy Lopez, Steinitz Variation

1 e4 e5 2  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  d6 4 d4  
 $\mathbb{Q}d7$  5  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  6  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  7  
 $\mathbb{W}d3$  exd4 8  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  g6 9  $\mathbb{Q}g5!$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$   
10 0-0-0  $\mathbb{W}d7$  11 h3 0-0 12  $\mathbb{B}he1$   
 $\mathbb{B}fe8$  13  $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  14 g4  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  15  
 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  16  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  (66)

66  
B



According to ‘theory’, White has a definite and considerable superiority. What does this superiority consist of? Has White a mating attack? The answer is that White has latent threats which reduce Black to strictly defensive play and which eventually will force him to give way in some other important direction.

Suppose for instance White was to move and he could play 1  $\mathbb{W}h6$  threatening instant mate. Then matters would quickly come to a head

after 1... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  2 f4 and Black has no reply to 3 f5 winning a piece, as the knight cannot give up the protection of g7. How has this possibility arisen? It is a consequence of the weakened pawn formation in front of Black’s king. With the kingside pawns on their original squares, Black would have little to fear. The serious weakness is his pawn at g6 or, to be more precise, the fact that White has been able to occupy f6 with a bishop, while Black no longer has a defending bishop at g7.

The *verdict* then is: White has the advantage as Black’s king-position is weakened. For the appropriate *plan* let us first examine the further course of the game.

16 ...  $\mathbb{M}e6$

Intending ... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ , driving off the bishop.

17  $\mathbb{Q}dd1$

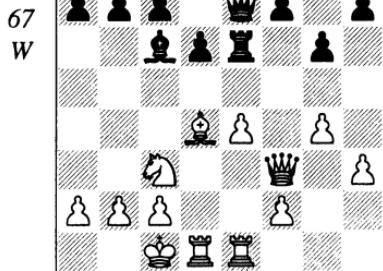
Making room for the bishop so that it can continue to watch the important squares f6 and g7.

17 ...  $\mathbb{Q}e8$

18  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  (67)

Here the defender could have tried 18...f6 in order to close the bishop’s diagonal, but then White plays 19  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  and Black cannot exchange the knight without losing a pawn (19... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  20 exd5  $\mathbb{M}xe1$  21  $\mathbb{M}xe1$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  22  $\mathbb{M}e6$   $\mathbb{Q}g7?$  23 g5). He

must therefore play 19... $\mathbb{W}f7$ , but Black is tied to the defence of his f-pawn, his knight merely gets in the way and his bishop is ineffective; in fact the additional weakness at f6 hamstrings the whole of his forces. Thus 18...f6 provides no satisfactory solution for Black's difficulties; White has a free game and can improve his position in various ways, e.g. h4-h5 or  $\mathbb{W}g3$  and f4-f5.

67  
W19  $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 

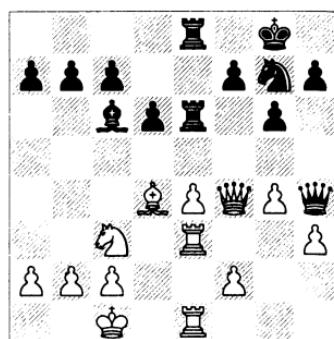
Again an important moment. Black seizes the first opportunity to get the knight away from e8 so that his other rook can take part in the fight. The line selected by Black must be considered with care as the g7-knight has no square available except e8 and so he has to reckon with the possibility of a direct attack on his king-position.

20  $\mathbb{W}f4!$ 

Threatening 21  $\mathbb{W}h6$ .

20 ...  $\mathbb{W}h4$ 

The correct counter. 20...g5 would create an irreparable weakness which would enable White to open new lines of attack by 21  $\mathbb{W}g3$  and 22 f4.

21  $\mathbb{R}de1$   $\mathbb{R}ae8$  (68)68  
W

This is the position Black had in mind when he played 18... $\mathbb{W}e7$ . All the immediate danger is past, and Black need not be afraid of 22  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  because, after 22... $\mathbb{A}xd5$  23 exd5  $\mathbb{R}xe3$  24  $\mathbb{R}xe3$   $\mathbb{R}xe3$  25  $\mathbb{W}xe3$ , the position has become so simplified that White can no longer force a win, e.g. 25... $\mathbb{Q}f8!$  and now 26  $\mathbb{A}xa7$  b6 27 a4 h5, 26  $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  or 26  $\mathbb{A}xg7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  27  $\mathbb{W}c3+$   $\mathbb{W}f6$ .

It remains to point out that a direct attack by 22  $\mathbb{W}f3$  (threatening both 23  $\mathbb{W}xf7+$  and 23  $\mathbb{Q}f6$ ) leads to nothing. After 22...f6! 23  $\mathbb{A}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  24 gxf5  $\mathbb{W}xf4+$  25  $\mathbb{R}xf4$  gxf5 26  $\mathbb{H}g1+$   $\mathbb{H}g6$  27  $\mathbb{R}xg6+$  hxg6 28 exf5 g5 Black has sufficient counter-play.

Thus we see that in diagram 68, not only have White's main threats been parried, but Black has, besides, some compensation in the pressure on White's e-pawn.

Nevertheless, Black's troubles are not yet at an end, because his king-position is still weakened and the bishop maintains unpleasant pressure on g7 which causes such an

important piece as Black's queen to remain misplaced. Furthermore, although all the black pieces are in action, they are limited in their movements. For instance, ... $\mathbb{K}f8$  would lead to a swift debacle after the reply  $\mathbb{Q}d5!$ .

We may sum up: while the defence, for the time being, is adequate, it is a little cramped.

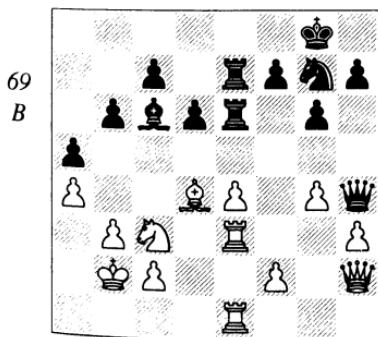
**22 b3!**

A procedure typical of this kind of position. Black can do nothing worthwhile, and so White proceeds to improve the positions of his pawns and of his king.

22 ... a5  
23 a4 b6  
24  $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{K}8e7$

Played to vacate the e8-square for his knight.

**25  $\mathbb{W}h2$  (69)**



Striking out in a new direction and preparing f4.

**25 ...  $\mathbb{Q}e8?$**

A serious mistake. This new interference with the mobility of the black rooks gives White the chance to decide the game quickly.

25...f5 (to take advantage of the temporary absence of White's queen) would be equally insufficient, because of 26 exf5  $\mathbb{K}xe3$  (26...gxf5 27  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{K}xe3$  28  $\mathbb{K}xe3$ ) 27  $\mathbb{K}xe3$  and now:

1) 27... $\mathbb{K}xe3$  28 fxe3 gxf5 29  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  30 gxf5 and White is a healthy pawn ahead.

2) 27...gxf5 28  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  (if 28... $\mathbb{K}xg7$ , then 29  $\mathbb{W}f4!$  wins because of the threat 30  $\mathbb{W}c4+$ ) 29  $\mathbb{W}f4$  fxg4 30  $\mathbb{Q}g3$ , etc.

Black's best defence in diagram 69 is 25... $\mathbb{Q}b7!$  for then 26 f4 leads to nothing after 26...c5! 27  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  28 f5  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  and White's attack has petered out. White must therefore go to work in a more subtle manner, beginning with 26  $\mathbb{Q}b5!$  to provide a line of retreat for the white bishop, after which 26... $\mathbb{K}xe4$  27  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{K}xe4$  28  $\mathbb{K}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  29  $\mathbb{Q}xc7$  leads to a decisive advantage for White. However, the position after 26  $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  is less clear, for now Black threatens to strike in earnest at e4 so that White has to play the defensive 27 f3 before embarking on further schemes.

An exhaustive analysis of the position thus reached would lead us too far afield, but it is worthwhile establishing the following points:

1. The black king-position is still weak, allowing White's bishop full control over the dark squares.

2. Any attempt to break up the black position quickly must fail, because Black's defence is working at full strength.

**26 f4!**

With the obvious threat 27 f5.

**26 ... ♦f6**

If 26...♦d7, making room for the e6-rook, then 27 f5 ♕ee7 28 ♕e2! threatening 29 ♦d5, e.g. 28...♔b7 29 ♦d5 ♔xd5 30 exd5 ♕f8 31 f6 ♕xe3 32 ♕xe3 ♕xf6 33 g5 and White wins. Black could meet this threat by 28...♔f8 (not 28...f6? 29 ♕c4+), but in this position he is faced with a hopeless task – his pieces are badly placed, and White can break through in a number of ways.

**27 f5 ♕xe4**

Despair, but the intended reply 27...♦xg4 fails against 28 ♕f4.

**28 ♕xe4 ♕xe4**

**29 ♕f4 g5**

**30 ♕f1 d5**

White finishes the game off forcefully:

**31 c4 ♕h6**

**32 f6 ♕e8**

**33 cxd5 ♕xd5**

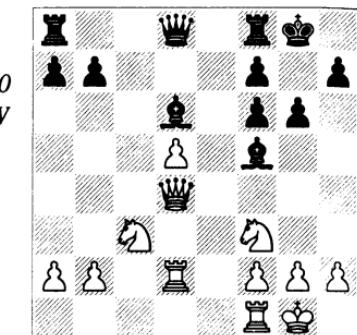
**34 ♕f5 1-0**

The salient points of the plan followed by White in the above game were:

1. Maintaining the bishop on its lifeline, the long dark diagonal.
2. Utilizing the bishop, either directly with the help of the queen or indirectly in a breakthrough.
3. Consolidation of his position as a preliminary to further action.

Here is a more forcible example, which shows that the weakness created by ...g6 can quickly become fatal:

**1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 exd5 cxd5 4 c4 ♕f6 5 ♦c3 ♕c6 6 ♕g5 dxc4 7 d5 ♕e5 8 ♕d4 ♕d3+ 9 ♕xd3 cxd3 10 ♕f3 g6 11 ♕xf6 exf6 12 0-0 ♕e7 13 ♕ad1 0-0 14 ♕xd3 ♕f5 15 ♕d2 ♕d6 (70)**



A variation recommended for White by Botvinnik. The position now shows various characteristics: White has a passed pawn against Black's doubled pawn, but Black has the two bishops. The essential feature, however, is the weakness of Black's king-position, which will lead to the f6-pawn becoming indefensible. The sequel is:

**16 g4**

The object of this move is to clear e4 so that the knight can take an active part in the fray.

**16 ... ♕c8?**

Thus runs Botvinnik's analysis, but he takes no account of the following variation, which prevents an immediate debacle: 16...♔e5!. Now, after 17 ♦xe5 fxe5 18 ♕xe5 ♕xg4 19 ♦e4 f6 20 ♕f4 White no doubt has the better game, but it still has to be won.

**17 ♜e4!**

Now, suddenly, the weak f-pawn cannot be saved, e.g. 17...♝g7 18 g5! or 17...♝e7 18 d6. It is self-evident that 17...f5 will not work because of 18 ♜f6+. In this case it is not the pawn but the f6-square which White has captured.

**17 ... ♜e5**

Relatively the best.

**18 ♜xe5 fxe5**

**19 ♜xe5 f6**

**20 ♜f4**

White remains a valuable pawn ahead.

We have seen in the preceding examples that the move ...g6 produces a weakness in so far as the squares at f6 and g7 can easily and, as it were, of their own accord, fall into the opponent's control. This possibility is lessened and even rendered practically non-existent if there is a defending bishop at g7. However, even then all danger is not eliminated, for there is yet another aspect to be considered: the adversary can, in certain circumstances, force open the h-file, as can be seen in the following example:

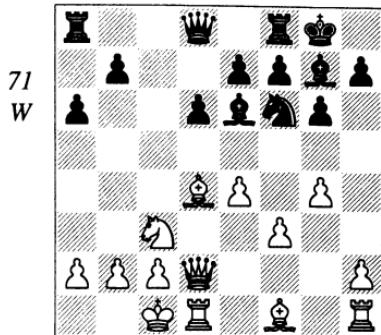
### Katetov – Golombek

Prague 1946

Sicilian Defence, Dragon Variation

1 e4 c5 2 ♜f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♜xd4  
 ♜f6 5 ♜c3 g6 6 f3 ♜g7 7 ♜e3 0-0 8  
 ♜d2 ♜c6 9 0-0-0 ♜xd4 10 ♜xd4  
 ♜e6 11 g4 a6? (71)

Better is 11...♝a5.



In diagram 71 White obtains before long an irresistible attack.

White controls more space, but Black has compensation in his mobility on the queenside, where he has available such moves as ...♝a5 and ...b5 coupled with an open c-file and a well-placed bishop at e6. Nevertheless, it is clear that, due to the weakness created by ...g6, the balance will weigh heavily in White's favour, as he will have the opportunity of opening the h-file by the advance h4-h5, followed by hxg6.

Let us examine the further course of the game:

**12 h4!**

Speaking generally, Black has a choice of two methods which he can apply against the advance of the h-pawn (other than simply ignoring it). Here it is a question of whether the cure is worse than the illness, for either method is wholly inadequate:

1) 12...h6? (in order to reply to 13 h5 with 13...g5) weakens the kingside further and allows 13 g5 (13 ♜xf6 is less clear, even though it wins a pawn, as Black would obtain excellent dark-square control in

return) 13...hxg5 (13... $\mathbb{Q}h5$  14  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  15 gxh6+  $\mathbb{Q}h7$  16 f4 is also very good) 14 hxg5  $\mathbb{Q}h5$  15 f4, with a tremendous attack.

2) 12...h5? is refuted by 13  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  14 gxh5 gxh5 15  $\mathbb{R}g1+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  16  $\mathbb{Q}d3$ , etc.

**12 ... b5**

**13  $\mathbb{Q}d5!$**

Unexpectedly, White delays his advance. He could have played 13 h5 to be followed by 14 hxg6, but he first undertakes preparatory manoeuvres so that he can open the h-file under favourable conditions.

**13 ...  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$**

Practically forced: White threatened to weaken the d-pawn by an exchange at f6 while Black could evidently not move his knight away, as the exchange of his g7-bishop would seriously denude his king's defences.

**14 exd5  $\mathbb{W}c7$**

Clearly not 14... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  because of 15  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  winning a piece.

**15 h5  $\mathbb{W}ac8$**

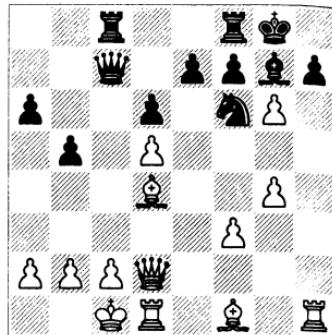
15...gxh5 would definitely not lighten Black's burden. After 16 gxh5 threatening h6, or after 16  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  17  $\mathbb{R}xh5$ , White would have a quick and easy win.

**16 hxg6 (72)**

**16 ...  $\mathbb{fxg6}$**

It is normally better to recapture with the h-pawn, but in this particular instance it would reduce Black's already slim chances of successfully defending himself, e.g. 16...hxg6 17  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  (so that the queen can manoeuvre freely) 17... $\mathbb{R}fd8$  18  $\mathbb{R}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  19

72  
B



$\mathbb{Q}dh1$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  (the only way to parry the mate threatened by 20  $\mathbb{R}h8+$ ) 20 g5  $\mathbb{Q}h5$  21  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  22  $\mathbb{R}h7$  and now:

1) 22... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  23  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $gxf5$  24  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  wins.

2) 22... $\mathbb{Q}h5$  23  $\mathbb{R}1xh5$   $gxh5$  24  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  is deadly.

White has much the better game, because he controls the h-file, where his rooks will threaten vital points in Black's position, while his other pieces also have a good range of activity.

**17  $\mathbb{Q}d3!$**

Attacking and defending at the same time.

**17 ...  $\mathbb{R}f7$**

Here 17... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  was also insufficient, because Black's best defensive piece, the g7-bishop, would be eliminated. After 18  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  19  $\mathbb{Q}h6+$  White wins comfortably, e.g. 19... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  20  $\mathbb{R}xh7+$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  (20... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  21  $\mathbb{R}xg6+$ ) 21  $\mathbb{Q}xg6+$ , followed by 22  $\mathbb{R}xd5$ , or 19... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  20  $g5+$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  21  $\mathbb{Q}h3+$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  22  $\mathbb{R}xh7+$ .

**18  $\mathbb{Q}g5!$   $\mathbb{Q}e8!$**

Hastening his defeat. 18... $\mathbb{R}b7$  would be a slightly better defence,

when White replies 19 ♜xg6. After 19...hxg6 20 ♜xg6 White has various threats, especially 21 g5 ♖e8 22 ♜h7+ ♔f8 23 ♜h8+! and 21 ♜h2. Against all these strong threats Black has no adequate defence (for instance, 20...♜xd5 fails against 21 ♜xf6), and we can conclude that the open h-file, which White has been able to conquer because of Black's weakness at g6, is a deciding factor.

### 19 ♜xh7!

Very strong, if fairly obvious.

### 19 ... ♜xh7

Other replies are no better.

### 20 ♜xg6+ ♔g8

### 21 ♜h1!

Threatening mate in two by 22 ♜h8+! ♜xh8 23 ♜h7#.

### 21 ... ♜f6

### 22 ♜xf6 1-0

For after 22...♜xf6 or 22...exf6 there is again a mate by 23 ♜h8+.

So much for the weakness created by ...g6, which is more awkward in the absence of the bishop at g7 and especially so if the opponent still has his dark-squared bishop. In these cases an advance h4-h5, together with the forcing open of the h-file, is to be expected.

Curiously enough, in such cases the plan is easy but the judgement is complicated. In almost every case where the conclusion is that there is in fact a weakness resulting from ...g6 (even if there still is a bishop at g7), the plan indicated (h4-h5 and an exchange of pawns at g6) is the one to adopt.

However, it is necessary, before embarking on this manoeuvre, to take the following factors into account:

1. Frequently it is a necessary preliminary to play g4 to provide against ...h5.

2. The parry ...h6 followed by ...g5 is generally doubtful. This does not secure Black's pawn formation, as there is still the possibility of opening lines by playing f4.

3. The exchange at h5 (see note to move 15 above) usually aggravates the defender's difficulties.

4. It is of great importance for White to force the exchange of Black's dark-squared bishop, as this piece plays a big part in the defence. This is usually accomplished by playing ♜h6.

In the above example, the opening up of the h-file is decisive because White has castled on the queenside and Black on the kingside. Where both players have castled kingside, the advance of the h-pawn is hardly feasible against ...g6. It follows that instances in which ...g6 represents a weakness are in the minority, and that is why such positions are difficult to assess accurately.

Still more difficult is the case of ...h6, which represents a weakness only in certain well-defined circumstances.

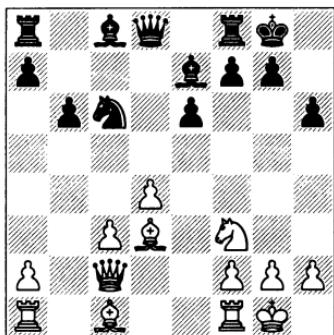
We give three such examples. In the first two, the attack against h6 is carried out by pieces, while pawns play the chief part in the third.

**Botvinnik – Szabó***Groningen 1946*

Semi-Tarrasch Defence

1 d4 d5 2  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  3 c4 e6 4  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  c5  
 5 cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  6 e3  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  7  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   
 8 bxc3 cxd4 9 exd4  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  10 0-0 0-0  
 11  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  b6 12  $\mathbb{Q}c2!$

This move forces Black to weaken his king-position; should he now play ...g6 or ...h6? Speaking generally, ...g6 creates the more serious weakness, but not, as will be seen, in this particular instance. In the game Szabó played 12...g6; had he played 12...h6 we would reach the position shown in diagram 73:

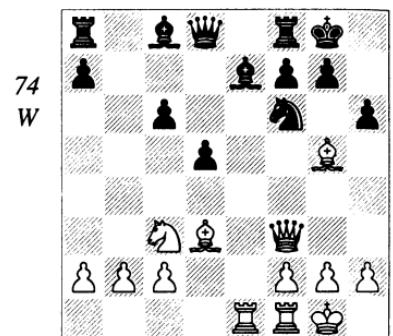
73  
W

White would continue 13  $\mathbb{Q}e2!$ , threatening to win a piece by 14  $\mathbb{Q}e4$ . The normal reply 13... $\mathbb{Q}b7?$  loses a pawn after 14  $\mathbb{Q}e4!$  threatening mate; Black now has the miserable choice between 14...g6 15  $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  and 14...f5 15  $\mathbb{Q}xe6+$ .

It can be seen why ...h6 here constitutes a weakness; in parrying the attack on h7 by ...g6, the h-pawn is left in the air. ...h6 can also prove weakening when it provides greater

possibilities of a sacrifice, as for instance in the following well-known variation of the Scotch Opening:

1 e4 e5 2  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3 d4 exd4 4  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  6  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   
 bxc6 7  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  d5 8 exd5 cxd5 9 0-0  
 0-0 10  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  c6 11  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  12  $\mathbb{Q}ae1$   
 h6 (74)



This allows White to make a dangerous sacrifice, against which Black can defend only by very precise play:

13  $\mathbb{Q}xh6$       gxh6  
 14  $\mathbb{Q}e3$

Attacking pawn and bishop.

14 ...      d4!

Black ignores the attack on the bishop and counterattacks the white knight. Other moves are worse:

1) After 14... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  15  $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  Black has no defence against the double threat  $\mathbb{Q}e3-g3$  and  $\mathbb{Q}e5-g5$ .

2) 14... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  15  $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  and now:

2a) 15...d4 (to prevent  $\mathbb{Q}e3$ , but this is too late now) 16  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  17  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  (threatening 18  $\mathbb{Q}g4+$  and 19  $\mathbb{Q}h7\#$ ) 17...f5 18  $\mathbb{Q}g4+!$  and White wins.

2b) 15... $\mathbb{B}b8$  (intending ... $\mathbb{B}b4$ ) 16 f4! and Black is defenceless against the double threat of 17  $\mathbb{F}f3$  and 17  $\mathbb{E}e5!$ , e.g. 16... $\mathbb{Q}g4$  17  $\mathbb{E}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  18  $\mathbb{F}xe5$  followed by 19 exf6 and mate.

**15  $\mathbb{W}xh6 \quad \mathbb{W}d6!$**

By covering e3 and e5, Black has prevented the e1-rook being transferred to the g-file.

**16  $\mathbb{W}g5+ \quad \mathbb{Q}h8$**

White has nothing better than perpetual check.

In this type of combination, the position of the rooks usually plays a very important part. As soon as the pawn-screen in front of the king is shattered, the rooks will get busy on the third, or perhaps on the fourth and fifth rank.

The weakness at h6 can be still more serious on different grounds:

### Blau – Van Scheltinga

*Hilversum 1947*

Ruy Lopez, Classical Defence

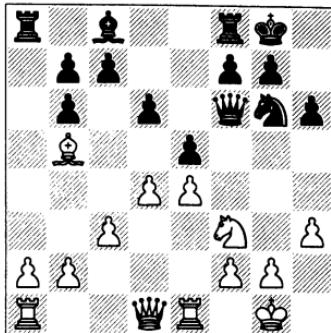
1 e4 e5 2  $\mathbb{Q}f3 \mathbb{Q}c6$  3  $\mathbb{Q}b5 \mathbb{Q}f6$  4 0-0  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  5 c3 0-0 6 d4  $\mathbb{Q}b6$  7  $\mathbb{E}e1$  d6 8 h3  $\mathbb{W}e7$  9  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  h6 10  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{W}xf6$  11  $\mathbb{Q}a3 \mathbb{Q}e7$  12  $\mathbb{Q}c4 \mathbb{Q}g6$  13  $\mathbb{Q}xb6$   $axb6$  (75)

Black has a slight advantage because White's king-position is weakened by h2-h3. It may be objected that Black also played ...h7-h6! The point is that, unlike White, Black is able to exploit his adversary's weakness.

**14  $\mathbb{Q}f1$**

Intending g3.

75  
W



**14 ...  $\mathbb{Q}f4!$**

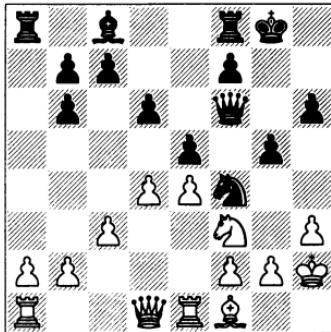
Thus playing h3 also means weakening the f4-square for White cannot play g3 without losing his h-pawn.

**15  $\mathbb{Q}h2$**

Intent on forcing g3.

**15 ...  $g5!$  (76)**

76  
W



This is another method of exploiting the weak point at h3: an advance ...g5-g4 aiming to open the g-file. Observe the similarity of the procedure adopted against ...g6 with the advance h4-h5 and opening of the h-file.

**16  $\mathbb{Q}g1$**

This was evidently intended to prevent ...g4, but such a passive defence is doomed to failure. White

should have tried 16 g3, although this would not solve all his problems after 16...g4! and now:

1) 17 ♜g1 transposes into the game.

2) 17 hxg4 ♜xg4 18 gxf4 ♜xf4+ 19 ♜g2 f5! (19...♜h7 20 ♜e3! gives White far better defensive chances) 20 ♜d3 d5 21 exd5 ♜f7 22 ♜e3 e4 23 ♜e2 ♜g7 24 ♜g5 (the only move) 24...♜xg5 25 ♜xg4 ♜xg4+ and Black has some positional advantage.

3) 17 gxf4 ♜xf4+ 18 ♜g2 after which Black can choose between:

3a) 18...♜h7?? 19 ♜h2 ♜g8 continuing his attack, but after 20 ♜h1 g3! 21 fxg3 ♜xg3 22 ♜f3 ♜xh3 23 ♜e2 or 20 h4! g3 21 ♜f3 ♜h3+! 22 ♜g1! White has fair defensive prospects.

3b) 18...gxf3+ 19 ♜xf3 ♜xf3+ 20 ♜xf3 f5 when Black has a small advantage in the endgame.

**16 ... g4!**

**17 g3**

If 17 hxg4, then 17...♜h4+ 18 ♜h3 ♜xg4 19 ♜d2 (19 g3? ♜h5 wins) 19...♜xh3 20 gxh3 ♜h7 with a strong attack. Black has carried out the appropriate plan against White's weakness, and has gained the advantages of an invulnerable knight at f4 and an open g-file for his rooks.

The text-move constitutes a pawn sacrifice, and has the object of slowing down Black's attack.

**17 ... ♜xh3**

**18 ♜xh3 gxf3**

**19 ♜d2**

The f-pawn was *en prise*.

**19 ... ♜g6**

Again 20 ♜xh3 is not feasible, because of 20...♜h5.

**20 f4 ♜g4**

**21 f5 ♜h5**

Black has maintained his extra pawn, and the forward march of the g-pawn has in addition provided him with an open line of attack. Indeed, he won without any great difficulty. We omit the rest of the game, as it has no relation to our subject.

The plan by which the attacker will attempt to exploit the weakness at h3 (or h6 if White is attacking) will, as shown above, contain the following elements (assuming that Black is the attacker):

1. Attack along the diagonal from d6 to h2.

2. Posting a knight at f4.

3. The advance ...g5-g4.

4. Sacrifice at h3.

The success of this plan will depend primarily on whether h2-h3 has in fact created a weakness; only then can the assessment of the position be conclusive.

The move h3 can also have advantages, the most frequent being preventing ...♜g4 pinning the f3-knight and providing the king with a flight-square at h2.

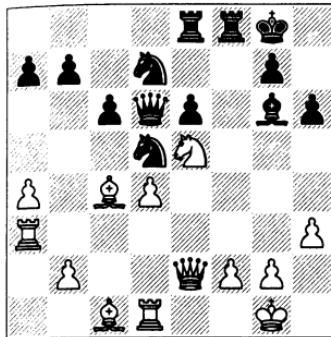
### Reshevsky – Santasiere

New York 1939

Slav Defence

1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♜f3 ♜f6 4 ♜c3  
dxc4 5 a4 ♜f5 6 e3 e6 7 ♜xc4 ♜b4

8 0-0 0-0 9  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{B}g4$  10 h3  $\mathbb{B}h5$  11  
 $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  12 e4  $\mathbb{W}e7$  13 e5  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  14  
 $\mathbb{Q}e4$  h6 15  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{B}g6$  16  $\mathbb{Q}e1$  f6 17  
exf6  $\mathbb{W}xf6$  18  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  19  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   
 $\mathbb{W}e7$  20  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{W}xd6$  21  $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}ae8$   
22  $\mathbb{Q}e5!$  (77)

77  
B

White stands better as Black's position is weakened in several respects, and the white pieces are well positioned to exploit these weaknesses: the white knight controls the important squares at g6 and f7 and the white rook posted on the third rank adds to the chances of a sacrifice at h6; finally, the b1-h7 diagonal at present held by Black's light-squared bishop, is in fact also vulnerable. White has in consequence many possibilities of attack, and Black will have a difficult, though not an impossible task.

22 ...  $\mathbb{B}h7?$

Black fails to tackle the difficulties that beset him, and straight away makes the decisive mistake.

How difficult it is in such positions to hit upon the right move is shown by the fact that the obvious move 22... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ , which eliminates

the powerful white knight, is equally insufficient. A few variations after 23  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ :

1) 23... $\mathbb{W}c5$  24  $\mathbb{B}g3$  and now:

1a) 24... $\mathbb{Q}h7$  25 b4! with another branch:

1a1) 25... $\mathbb{W}xb4$  26  $\mathbb{W}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  27  $\mathbb{Q}a3$  wins.

1a2) 25... $\mathbb{W}e7$  26  $\mathbb{B}xg6!$   $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  27  $\mathbb{Q}d3+$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  28  $\mathbb{W}h5+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  29  $\mathbb{W}g6$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  30  $\mathbb{Q}xh6$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  (30... $\mathbb{Q}f4$  31  $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{B}xf4$  32  $\mathbb{W}h7+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  33  $\mathbb{W}h8+$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  34  $\mathbb{W}h5+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  35  $\mathbb{Q}g6$  should win for White) 31  $\mathbb{W}g3$  with a very strong attack, for example 31... $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  32  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  exf5 33  $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  34  $\mathbb{W}g5$  wins.

1a3) 25... $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  26  $\mathbb{B}xg6$   $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  27  $\mathbb{W}e4+$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  (27... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  28  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  and Black has no satisfactory defence against 29 g4, since 28... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  fails to 29  $\mathbb{W}xf5+$ ) 28  $\mathbb{Q}d7+$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  29  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  30  $\mathbb{W}f5+$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  31  $\mathbb{Q}xe7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  32  $\mathbb{W}xe6+$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  33  $\mathbb{W}d6+$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  34  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  and wins.

1b) 24... $\mathbb{Q}f4$  25  $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{B}xf4$  26  $\mathbb{B}xg6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  27  $\mathbb{Q}d7$   $\mathbb{Q}c1+$  28  $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  29  $\mathbb{Q}d8+$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  (29... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  30  $\mathbb{Q}f6+$  gxf6 31  $\mathbb{W}h5+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  32  $\mathbb{W}g4+$  mates next move) 30  $\mathbb{Q}xh6+$  gxf6 (30... $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  31  $\mathbb{Q}h8+$  and 32  $\mathbb{W}g4\#$ ) 31  $\mathbb{W}e4+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  32  $\mathbb{W}g4+$  and again mate by 33  $\mathbb{W}g8\#$ .

2) 23... $\mathbb{W}c7!$  24  $\mathbb{B}g3$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  (the line 24... $\mathbb{Q}h7$  25  $\mathbb{B}xg6!$  is similar to 1a above) 25  $\mathbb{Q}d4!$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  (preventing 26  $\mathbb{Q}dg4$ ) 26  $\mathbb{W}c2$  with a strong attack.

It is clear from this analysis that on move 22 Black should move his bishop and, indeed, he can put up a

stronger resistance with (from diagram 77) 22... $\mathbb{Q}f5!$ .

White's best reply is then 23  $\mathbb{B}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  24  $\mathbb{B}b3!$  and now:

1) 24... $\mathbb{Q}7b6$  25  $\mathbb{Q}d3!$  with the powerful threats 26 g4 and 26 a5.

2) 24...b6 25 g4!  $\mathbb{Q}g6$  26  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  27  $\mathbb{W}e4+$  (27  $\mathbb{W}c2+$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  28  $\mathbb{Q}xh6!$   $gxh6$  29  $\mathbb{W}h7+$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  30  $\mathbb{B}f3+$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  is unclear) 27... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  28  $\mathbb{B}f3+$   $\mathbb{Q}7f6$  29  $\mathbb{W}e5$  with strong pressure.

3) 24... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  (best) 25 dxe5 and White has the advantage.

We revert to the actual course of the game after 22... $\mathbb{Q}h7$ :

**23  $\mathbb{B}g3$**

Threatening to win a pawn by 24  $\mathbb{Q}xh6$ . Black can parry the threat neither by 23... $\mathbb{B}f6$  24  $\mathbb{Q}g4$  nor by 23... $\mathbb{Q}f4$  24  $\mathbb{W}g4$ .

**23 ...  $\mathbb{Q}h8$**

**24  $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$**

A surprising exchange, the purpose of which at once becomes clear.

**24 ... cxd5**

The recapture with the c-pawn is forced, as 24...exd5 fails against 25  $\mathbb{Q}f7+!$  and 24... $\mathbb{W}xd5$  against 25  $\mathbb{Q}xh6!$   $gxh6$  26  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ .

**25  $\mathbb{Q}xh6!$   $\mathbb{B}e7$**

If 25... $gxh6$ , there follows 26  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$   $\mathbb{W}xd7?$  27  $\mathbb{W}e5+$  with mate to follow. Thus the exchange at d5 had the object of preventing Black's knight from settling at f6.

**26  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$**

Else Black loses at least another pawn after 27  $\mathbb{B}b3!$ .

**27 dxe5  $\mathbb{W}b6$**

**28  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}a5$**

**29  $\mathbb{B}d4$**

White must win, for he has a sound extra pawn and can continue his attack with undiminished energy.

**29 ...  $\mathbb{B}f5$**

If 29... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ , then 30  $\mathbb{W}h5+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  31  $\mathbb{B}h4$  and wins.

**30  $\mathbb{B}h4$   $\mathbb{W}c7$**

**31  $\mathbb{Q}g4$**

Threatening 32  $\mathbb{W}g6$ .

**31 ...  $\mathbb{Q}g8$**

**32  $\mathbb{Q}g5!$   $\mathbb{B}ef7$**

**33  $\mathbb{Q}f6$**

The participation of the bishop heralds a decisive intensification of the attack. If now 33...g6, then 34  $\mathbb{W}xg6+$  mates, while 33... $\mathbb{B}5xf6$  34 exf6  $\mathbb{B}xf6$  35  $\mathbb{W}h5$  wins easily.

**33 ... a6**

**34 a5  $\mathbb{W}d7$**

Black no longer has any adequate moves at his disposal, for instance 34... $\mathbb{B}d7$  35  $\mathbb{Q}h2!$  d4 36  $\mathbb{B}h6$  d3 37  $\mathbb{W}h4$  and wins.

**35  $\mathbb{B}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$**

**36  $\mathbb{W}g6$  1-0**

So far we have examined weakened king-positions only on the kingside. If we widen our field of observation, we can include positions in which the king is still in the centre and exposed to attack. This occurs chiefly when the attacker has by some means succeeded in confining the opposing king to its original position.

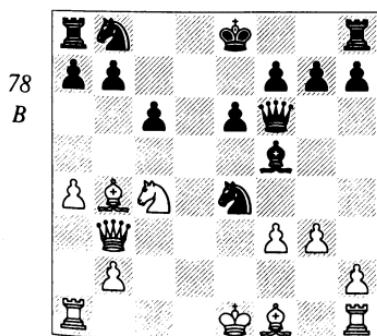
Normally this can be achieved only by means of sacrifices. Thus it becomes necessary to weigh up the material sacrificed against the prospects of the resulting attack, and

straight away the *assessment of the position* becomes complicated. The *plan* depends on the degree of insecurity of the hostile position.

All this is illustrated in the following two characteristic examples. In the first, the attacker prevents his opponent from castling kingside using the a3-f8 diagonal; in the second, he effects this by means of the open e-file at the cost of much material.

### Mikenas – Feigin Kemerri-Riga 1939 Slav Defence

1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   
 $\mathbb{d}xc4$  5 a4  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  6  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  e6 7 f3  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  8  
 $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  9  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}h4+$  10 g3  
 $\mathbb{W}xd4$  11 e3  $\mathbb{W}f6$  12 e4  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  13  
 $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  14  $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  (78)



According to theory White has a winning attack. If we ask ourselves why this attack should be decisive, the answer is not so easy to find, for we are in the midst of a combination which White has initiated with his 13th move.

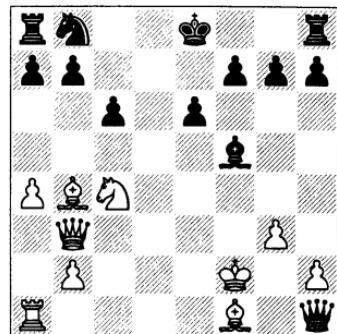
Let us look at what follows:

14 ...  $\mathbb{W}d4$

Black has no option but to fall in with White's combination, because 14... $\mathbb{Q}g5$  15 h4 wins a piece.

15  $\mathbb{f}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}xe4+$

16  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{W}xh1$  (79)



The combination has run its course, and we notice that, at the cost of the exchange and three pawns, White has succeeded in keeping the hostile king in the centre.

What is even more important, is that all the white pieces are well-placed to launch an immediate assault. Moreover, Black has no pieces available for the defence; his most important unit, the queen, is cut off and in danger of being trapped. When assessing positions of this type, it is essential to take into account the potentialities of attack and defence.

17  $\mathbb{Q}d6+$

The beginning of the hunt.

17 ...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$

Black has little choice, for example 17... $\mathbb{Q}d8$  (17... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  and 17... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  allow 18  $\mathbb{Q}xf5+$ ) 18  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{exf}5$  19  $\mathbb{Q}d1+$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  (19... $\mathbb{Q}e8$  20  $\mathbb{Q}g2$  and 21

$\mathbb{W}e3\#$ , unless Black gives up his queen) 20  $\mathbb{A}g2$   $\mathbb{W}xh2$  21  $\mathbb{W}xf7$  and now:

1) 21... $b6$  22  $\mathbb{A}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  23  $\mathbb{A}f4$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  24  $\mathbb{W}e6$  and wins.

2) 21... $\mathbb{H}d8$  22  $\mathbb{H}xd8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  23  $\mathbb{W}e7+$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  24  $\mathbb{A}d6$  with a quick mate.

### 18 $\mathbb{Q}xf5$      $\mathbb{H}d8$

If 18... $exf5$  we again have the variations given above.

### 19 $\mathbb{A}e7$

With a twofold attack on the rook and the b-pawn.

19 ...       $\mathbb{Q}a6$

20  $\mathbb{W}xb7+$        $\mathbb{Q}c7$

21  $\mathbb{H}d1+$       1-0

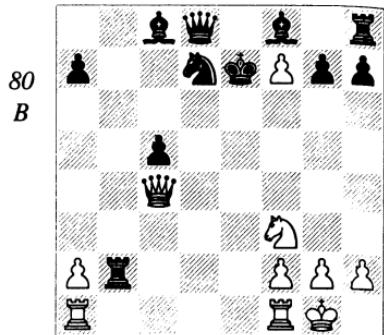
After 21... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ , 22  $\mathbb{W}xc7$  leading to a quick mate.

We conclude with a case in which it is far from clear that the attacker's sacrifices are justified.

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4  $\mathbb{W}a4+$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  5  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  e6 6 e4 c5 7 d5 exd5 8 e5 b5 9  $\mathbb{W}xb5$   $\mathbb{H}b8$  10  $\mathbb{W}a4$  d4 11 exf6 dxc3 12  $\mathbb{A}xc4$  cxb2 (12... $\mathbb{H}b4$  is better) 13  $\mathbb{A}xf7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  14  $\mathbb{W}c4+$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  15 f7+  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  16  $\mathbb{A}xb2$   $\mathbb{H}xb2$  17 0-0 (80)

This is analysis by Keres.

'Theory' states that White has a strong attack, but in this case, unlike the preceding example, it is not clear that the attack is necessarily winning. Indeed, although White's attack is very dangerous and, especially in practice, exceptionally full



of promise, accurate defensive play should see Black through.

Here are a few variations which throw light on White's attacking chances and the possibilities of Black's defence.

1) 17... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  18  $\mathbb{H}fd1+$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  19  $\mathbb{W}f4+$  and now:

1a) 19... $\mathbb{Q}b6?$  20  $\mathbb{H}ab1$   $\mathbb{H}b4$  21  $\mathbb{A}3$   $\mathbb{W}xb1$  22  $\mathbb{W}xb1+$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  23  $\mathbb{W}a4+$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  (23... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  24  $\mathbb{W}a5+$ ) 24  $\mathbb{H}d1+$  with advantage to White.

1b) 19... $\mathbb{Q}b7$  20  $\mathbb{W}e4+$  (if 20  $\mathbb{Q}e5$ , then 20... $\mathbb{W}f6$ ) 20... $\mathbb{Q}b8$  21  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  and Black can hold out.

2) 17... $\mathbb{W}b6$  (best) 18  $\mathbb{H}ae1+$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  19  $\mathbb{W}f4$  and now:

2a) 19... $\mathbb{Q}d6?$  20  $\mathbb{W}g5+$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  21  $\mathbb{H}e8$ , threatening 22  $\mathbb{W}d8+$ , with unclear complications.

2b) 19... $\mathbb{A}e7$  and White's attack has come to a standstill.

These few variations, selected from a great many, show how very difficult it is to assess the relative values of material against attacking chances.

# 6 The Attack on the King

This chapter is closely connected with the preceding one, in which it was shown how advantage can be taken of *weaknesses in the hostile king-position*. In order to exploit such weaknesses, it is necessary to start an attack on the king, and so the subject of this chapter has already been touched upon in what has gone before. We shall therefore mainly examine attacks on unweakened positions, and in order to define clearly the field of our investigations, let us begin with the following typical example:

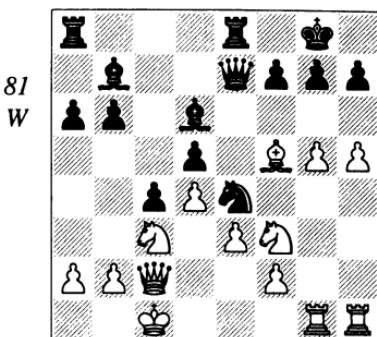
## Rubinstein – Teichmann

Vienna (4) 1908

Queen's Gambit Declined,  
Orthodox Defence

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♜c3 ♜f6 4 ♜g5  
♜e7 5 e3 ♜bd7 6 ♜f3 0-0 7 ♜c2 b6  
8 cxd5 exd5 9 ♜d3 ♜b7 10 0-0-0 c5  
11 h4 c4 12 ♜f5 ♜e8 (12...g6 is better)  
13 ♜xf6 ♜xf6 14 g4! ♜d6 15  
g5 ♜e4 16 h5 ♜e7 17 ♜dg1 a6 (81)

White has a great advantage in space on the kingside; most of his pieces are aimed directly or indirectly at Black's kingside, with the advanced g- and h-pawns as a spearhead. However – and here is the difference from the examples of the preceding chapter – on the black kingside the pawn formation is intact; his kingside pawns are on their



original squares, and Black's powers of defence are greatly increased. For instance, against 18 h6 Black replies simply 18...g6 while 18 g6 is answered by 18...fxg6 19 hxg6 h6. In either case the avenues of attack against the black king are closed, and it has become extremely difficult to continue the attack. The normal method of attack in analogous conditions against a weakened king-side – advance of the pawns in order to open lines of attack – does not work automatically in this case, and we must look for other and more trenchant methods. As a rule an unweakened king-position can be overcome only by means of sacrifices, which will demand more intricate and accurate calculation. This makes both assessment and plan more difficult. White stands better because he has a preponderance on the kingside, but is his preponderance so great that he can force a decision without

offering a sacrifice? The answer to this question is of particular importance whenever the defender has some compensation on another part of the board. Thus in diagram 81 Black has a pawn majority on the queenside which would play an important and perhaps decisive part, should White fail to force his attack home fairly soon. In many of these cases, it is a question of weighing up the pros and cons. Even for the expert in combinative play, it is a question of intuition to judge whether the attack will just succeed or just fail.

However, in the present position trying to assess the end result of the attack is no longer important; the die has already been cast on the 10th move, when White, by castling on the queenside, challenged his opponent to the race on opposite wings. From that moment White was committed, come what may, to his plan of kingside attack. He has advanced his flank pawns (the exchange at f6, making room for the g-pawn, is worthy of special notice). All is ready for the climax, the rooks behind the pawns, the bishop at f5 fully active, the queen ready in the background, and the knights prepared to intervene.

Rubinstein has made all preparations for the decisive combination which now follows.

**18 ♜xh7+**

The same general idea was shown in the preceding chapter, but here it costs material so the consequences must be calculated precisely.

**18 ... ♔xh7**

**19 ♜g6+!**

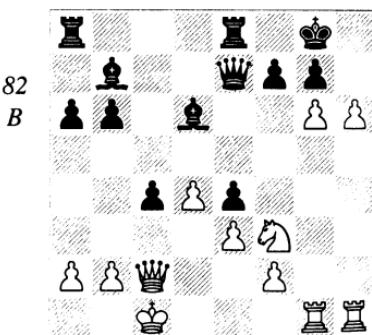
The logical continuation, but one may perhaps ask whether, after 19...fxg6 20 hxg6+ ♔g8 the open h-file is really worth a piece. This is the wrong question, because Rubinstein did not intend the automatic 20 hxg6+, but rather 20 ♜xe4! dxe4 21 ♜g5+ and White wins after 21...♔g8 22 ♜xc4+, 21...♔h8 22 hxg6+ or 21...♔h6 22 ♜f7+!.

**19 ... ♔g8**

**20 ♜xe4 dxe4**

Not 20...♜xe4 21 gxf7+ ♔xf7 22 ♜g5+.

**21 h6! (82)**



This is the critical position on which the success of White's attack depends. It is one of the situations which White had visualized a few moves before and on which he passed judgement, partly after calculation and partly intuitively. Most great players rely partly on instinct when they play, though the analysis of variations is also important. We will now attempt to outline the basis of this intuition; in other words, let

us try to establish whether there were solid grounds for the great master's (possibly subconscious) decision that this position can be won for White. Now we come to minor features, of which we must be aware, and which constantly occur whenever the success of a sacrificial combination is at stake:

1. The vertical action of the rook on the g-file.
2. The vertical action of the rook on the h-file.
3. The horizontal action of a rook established at g7.
4. The horizontal action of a rook established at h7.
5. The power of a guarded pawn at g7 with the support of a rook on the h-file.
6. The possibility of the queen intervening at c4.
7. Possible action by the white queen along the b1-h7 diagonal if Black captures at f3.

If we wish to examine the position systematically, the first step is to take stock of the material on either side. In this position, if material were equal, there could be no two opinions: White has no need for exact calculations to know that he can win in 10 to 20 moves. However, in reality White is a piece down, and so he must be on the look-out for any possible chances of material gain to redress the balance. In diagram 82 the question is: does the move 22 gxf7+ constitute a threat of material gain? Let us examine:

1) 22... $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  23  $\mathbb{K}xg7+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  24  $\mathbb{K}xe7$   $\mathbb{K}xe7$  25  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  and White has queen and pawn for rook and minor piece.

2) 22... $\mathbb{W}xf7$  23  $\mathbb{K}xg7+$   $\mathbb{W}xg7$  24  $\mathbb{K}hg7$   $\mathbb{exf3?}$  25  $\mathbb{W}h7+$ .

Thus the answer is quite clear: 22 gxf7+ does constitute a threat, and this makes it superfluous to examine such moves by Black as 21... $\mathbb{K}ac8$  or 21... $\mathbb{b}5$ . Other ineffective measures, such as 21... $\mathbb{exf3}$  and 21... $\mathbb{W}f6$  can likewise be ignored, so that practically speaking only four pawn moves are left for consideration (21... $\mathbb{fxg6}$ , 21... $\mathbb{gxh6}$ , 21... $\mathbb{f5}$  and 21... $\mathbb{f6}$ ).

However, for the sake of completeness, let us review all reasonable moves:

1) 21... $\mathbb{exf3}$  22  $\mathbb{gxf7+}$   $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  (or 22... $\mathbb{W}xf7$  23  $\mathbb{hxg7!}$   $\mathbb{W}xg7$  24  $\mathbb{W}h7+$  mating) 23  $\mathbb{W}g6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  24  $\mathbb{hxg7}$  also mates.

2) 21... $\mathbb{Q}d5$  22  $\mathbb{gxf7+}$   $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  23  $\mathbb{hxg7}$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  24  $\mathbb{K}h8+$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  25  $\mathbb{g8W+}$   $\mathbb{W}xg8$  26  $\mathbb{K}h7+$ .

3) 21... $\mathbb{K}f8$  22  $\mathbb{hxg7}$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  23  $\mathbb{gxf7+}$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  24  $\mathbb{K}h6+$ .

4) 21... $\mathbb{W}f6$  22  $\mathbb{gxf7+}$   $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  23  $\mathbb{K}xg7+$   $\mathbb{W}xg7$  (23... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  24  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  or 23... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  24  $\mathbb{K}xb7$   $\mathbb{W}xf3$  25  $\mathbb{W}xc4+$  mating) 24  $\mathbb{hxg7}$   $\mathbb{exf3}$  25  $\mathbb{W}f5+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  26  $\mathbb{g8W}$ .

5) 21... $\mathbb{gxh6}$  22  $\mathbb{gxf7++}$   $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  23  $\mathbb{K}xh6$   $\mathbb{K}h8$  24  $\mathbb{W}xc4+$ .

6) 21... $\mathbb{fxg6}$  22  $\mathbb{Q}h4!$   $\mathbb{g5}$  (alternatively 22... $\mathbb{Q}h7$  23  $\mathbb{hxg7}$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  24  $\mathbb{Q}f5+$  or 22... $\mathbb{Q}d5$  23  $\mathbb{K}xg6$ ) 23  $\mathbb{Q}g6$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  24  $\mathbb{h7+}$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  25  $\mathbb{h8W}$   $\mathbb{K}xh8$  26  $\mathbb{Q}xh8+$ .

7) 21...f5 22 hxg7 exf3 (22... $\mathbb{W}xg7$  23  $\mathbb{W}xc4+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  24  $\mathbb{H}h8+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  25  $\mathbb{H}h7)$  23  $\mathbb{H}h8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  24  $\mathbb{H}h7+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  25  $\mathbb{H}xe7$   $\mathbb{H}xe7$  26  $\mathbb{W}xf5$  wins.

8) 21...f6 (as played in the game) 22 hxg7  $\mathbb{W}e6$  (22...exf3 23  $\mathbb{H}h8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  24  $\mathbb{H}h7+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  25  $\mathbb{W}f5!$  c3 26  $\mathbb{H}xe7$  1-0 was the conclusion of the game) 23  $\mathbb{H}h8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  24  $\mathbb{H}h7+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  (24... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  25  $\mathbb{H}xb7$  exf3 26 g7+  $\mathbb{Q}g8$  27  $\mathbb{H}h7+!$  mates) 25  $\mathbb{H}gh1$  f5 26  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{W}d5$  27  $\mathbb{W}e2$  with a decisive attack.

Taken as a whole, this is a complicated set of variations, which would hardly be possible to calculate in detail over the board, so that instinct must play an important part. On the other hand, it must never be forgotten that instinct and intuition do not rest on exact foundations, and as far as possible should be supplemented by calculation.

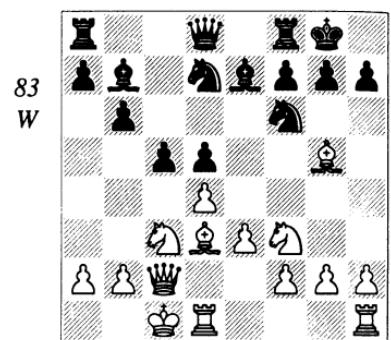
Reviewing all we have seen in this position, we arrive at the following *judgement*: White has a (winning) advantage, thanks to the advanced position of his kingside pawns and the mobility of his pieces, especially his rooks. The *plan* is to find the winning combination, which by means of the sacrifice of a bishop opens lines of attack for the rooks.

If, however, we go through the same process a little earlier in the game, say after the 10th move, we arrive at the following conclusion:

*Assessment*: White's chances on the kingside and those of Black on the queenside are approximately equal.

*Plan* (for White): Advance the kingside pawns, the pieces taking up action stations.

The standing rule not to hesitate in bringing pawns forward to strengthen a kingside attack is of course always valid when the players have castled on opposite wings. Take, for example, diagram 83.



White can bring his pawns forward without any special risks, but where both sides have castled on the same wing, the advance of pawns in an attack on the hostile king involves a weakening of the attacker's own king-position, and therefore requires careful deliberation.

Let us now examine diagram 84, which occurs after the following moves:

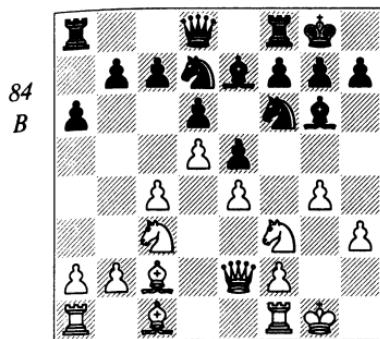
### Alekhine – H. Johner

Zurich 1934

Ruy Lopez, Delayed Steinitz

1 e4 e5 2  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  a6 4  $\mathbb{Q}a4$  d6 5 0-0  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  6 c3  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  7 d4  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  8 d5  $\mathbb{Q}b8$  9  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  10 c4  $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  11

**h3 ♜h5 12 ♜c3 0-0 13 g4 ♜g6 14 ♜e2 (84)**



White has brought his kingside pawns forward, thereby making room for the effective posting of his attacking units (thus, after ♜d2 and ♜g2 White can move his rooks to h1 and g1). Black has no such opportunities, one of the reasons being that the bishop at g6 stands in the way. It follows that the white position deserves preference, unless Black finds some way of developing an active defence. His only chance is 14...h5 which, however, does not seem to work because of 15 ♜h4 exchanging knight for bishop, and weakening Black's pawn formation. 15...♜h7 loses a pawn after 16 g5 and the well-known combination 15...♜xe4 fails after 16 ♜xe4 ♜xe4 17 ♜xe4 due to the mating threat. However, on examining the position more closely, it becomes evident that Black need not fear the exchange in question, and that he can continue with 15...hxg4 16 hxg4 ♜h7! and now:

1) 17 ♜xg6 fxg6 threatens to immobilize White's game by 18...♜g5,

obtaining control of f4. White must play 18 f4 and after 18...exf4 19 ♜xf4 ♜f6 Black controls e5.

2) 17 ♜f5 ♜g5! is also unsatisfactory for White, as shown in a game Van den Bosch-Kmoch, Baarn 1941 (18 ♜g2 ♜xc1 19 ♜axc1 ♜g5 20 ♜h1 ♜xf5 21 exf5 g6!, etc.).

The point in both cases is that Black gains the control of a number of dark squares, when the white pawn complex loses its elasticity and the bishop at c2 is out of action. Accordingly, the advance of the kingside pawns has proved unfavourable, and White's 13 g4 deserves a question mark. White should have made careful preparations for this advance, e.g. with ♜d2, ♜h2 and ♜g1. Although it is by no means certain that his attack would then prove successful, at any rate he would not incur any disadvantage.

It will be well worthwhile continuing the game Alekhine-H.Johner from diagram 84 as it illustrates the disastrous consequences of a passive defence, and also because White's handling of the situation can truly be called a model treatment.

14 ... ♜e8?

15 ♜d2 h6

A weakening move which, in view of Black's passive policy, must ultimately mean trouble for the bishop and help White's attack. Therefore the active continuation 15...h5 is still preferable (16 ♜d1 ♜ef6). In this case Black, although he has lost tempi, has nevertheless some counterchances.

- 16 ♔g2 ♕h7  
17 ♜h1 g5

This enables White to open the h-file at a moment of his choosing, but in fact the consequences of White's h4 and eventually g5 (after thorough preparations), would have been no less serious.

- 18 h4 f6  
19 ♔d1! ♜f7  
20 ♔e3 ♔f8

Intending to bring this knight to f4 via g6.

- 21 ♔f5 ♔xf5

Compulsory, but now g6 will be out of bounds.

- 22 gx5 ♜h7  
23 ♜ag1! ♔g7  
24 ♔f1

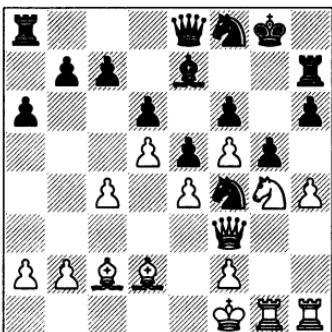
White has everything neatly tied up.

- 24 ... ♕e8

This enables a knight to reach f4 after all.

- 25 ♔h2 ♔h5  
26 ♔g4 ♔f4  
27 ♕f3 (85)

85  
B



Threatening to win beautifully by the queen sacrifice 28 ♔xf4 exf4 29

♔xf4! gxf4 30 ♔xh6++, with mate to follow.

- 27 ... ♔g7  
28 hxg5 hxg5  
29 ♜xh7+ ♔xh7  
30 ♜h1

By simple means White has gained control of the h-file, and now threatens to win quickly by 31 ♔xf4 and 32 ♕h3.

- 30 ... ♔h8  
31 ♜h6 ♕f7  
32 ♔d1 ♕g8

Black faces a difficult task: he has no counterplay and must defend himself against any number of threats. Just at the moment he must deal with 33 ♜h1 followed by 34 ♔xf4 exf4 35 ♔e5!, with ♔h5-g6 to come. The text-move counters this manoeuvre, as ...♜g7 can follow; on the other hand, it leaves Black's queenside bare, and White wastes no time in exploiting this circumstance.

- 33 ♕b3!

Instructive, and particularly strong; the attacker must never ignore the possibility of some deflecting manoeuvres. Here, for instance, unless the black rook returns in time, the white queen will penetrate Black's position, winning some pawns.

- 33 ... b6

After 33...♜b8 34 ♔xf4 gxf4 (or 34...exf4), there can follow either 35 ♕h3! (35...♜g8 36 ♔xe5 fxe5 37 ♔h5 or 35...♜g7 36 ♜g6 ♕f8 37 ♔h6) or 35 ♜g4!.

- 34 ♕a4!

With the double threat 35 ♕xa6 and 35 ♜d7.

- 34 ... ♜f8  
 35 ♜xa6 ♜xh6  
 36 ♜xh6 ♜g7

Note how important it is for White that his bishop at d1 prevents the black queen from reaching h5.

- 37 ♜xg8 ♜xg8  
 38 ♜c8+ ♜f8  
 39 ♜xf4

Finally this last outpost is eliminated, and at a time when Black cannot take advantage of the open files resulting from this exchange.

- 39 ... exf4

After 39...gxf4, the simplest win is by 40 ♜f3 followed by pushing the a- and b-pawns.

- 40 ♜e8 g4

Black's last chance, which is not to be underestimated.

- 41 ♜h5 f3  
 42 ♜a4 ♜h7  
 43 ♜c2

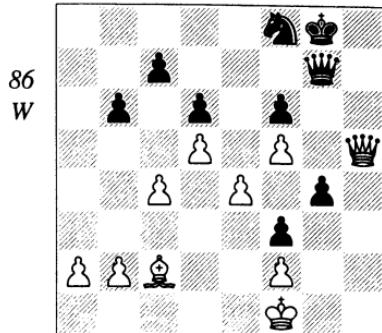
After 43 ♜e8 Black has counter-chances by 43...♜g5!.

- 43 ... ♜f8 (86)

In the tournament book Alekhine explains why 43...♜g5 now leads to nothing: 44 ♜xg4 ♜h6 45 ♜g1! ♜f8 (45...♜g7 46 ♜g3!) 46 ♜d1 ♜h3+ 47 ♜f1 ♜c1 (or 47...♜d2) 48 ♜xf3.

- 44 e5!

White was faced with difficult problems, because his bishop could develop little activity, but the text-move removes all obstacles. White's offer of a pawn has two aspects; one is positional (44...fxe5 45 f6! ♜xf6 46 ♜xg4+ ♜f7 47 ♜e4) and the other combinative, as shown by the further course of the game.



- 44 ... dxe5  
 45 d6!

Now 45...cxd6 will not do because of 46 c5!! and then:

- 1) 46...bxc5? (or 46...dxc5?) 47 ♜b3+ and wins.
- 2) 46...♜c7 47 ♜b3+ ♜g7 48 ♜xg4+ ♜h6 49 ♜g8 ♜e7 50 c6.
- 3) 46...♜d7 47 cxd6 ♜h7 48 ♜b3+ ♜h8 49 ♜g6 and wins.

- 45 ... c5

Not, of course, 45...c6 46 c5!, as above.

- 46 ♜e4 ♜d7  
 47 ♜h6! 1-0

Black resigns because 47...♜h7 fails against 48 ♜d5+ ♜h8 49 ♜g6 ♜d8 50 d7.

*Assessment* of the position after move 16: in favour of White, because he controls greater space on the kingside.

*Plan*: effective arrangement of forces (rooks at g1 and h1, one knight at f5 and, above all, one at g4 – later on a bishop at d1), careful preparation for opening up lines of attack (28 hxg5), at the same time not forgetting the opposite wing (33 ♜b3!).

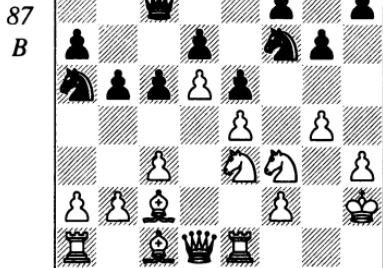
White's attack was made possible by Black's passive policy, and helped by the unfortunate position of his light-squared bishop. Without the presence of this bishop at g6, it would have been far more difficult for White to secure an open file for his attack. This problem is much in evidence in some important variations of the Ruy Lopez; we give here a particularly representative example:

### Alexander – Pachman

*Hilversum 1947*

Ruy Lopez, Chigorin Variation

1 e4 e5 2  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  a6 4  $\mathbb{Q}a4$   
 $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5 0-0  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  6  $\mathbb{Q}e1$  b5 7  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  d6 8  
c3 0-0 9 h3  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  10  $\mathbb{Q}c2$  c5 11 d4  
 $\mathbb{Q}c7$  12  $\mathbb{Q}bd2$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  13 d5  $\mathbb{Q}c8$  14  
 $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  15  $\mathbb{Q}h2$  g6 16  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  17  
g4 (87)



White has the better game. The situation here is better for White than in diagram 84 as Black does not have the opportunity himself to become active on the kingside (14...h5! in the previous example). Neither can

he set up an entirely satisfactory defensive position with pawns at f6 and g6 and knights at f7 and g7 as, due to 9... $\mathbb{Q}a5$ , his queen's knight is too far away.

- |                    |                |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 17 ...             | $\mathbb{Q}g7$ |
| 18 $\mathbb{Q}g1$  | $\mathbb{Q}h8$ |
| 19 $\mathbb{Q}g5!$ |                |

With the idea of provoking 19...h6. Should Black fail to respond, then the important h7- and f7-pawns remain under fire.

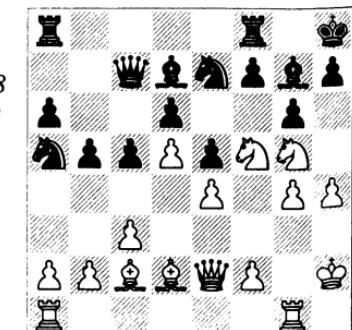
- |        |                |
|--------|----------------|
| 19 ... | $\mathbb{Q}f8$ |
| 20 h4  |                |

The object is to allow the white knight, if attacked, to retire to h3 from where it can assist the advance f4.

- |                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| 20 ...            | $\mathbb{Q}g8$  |
| 21 $\mathbb{Q}e2$ | $\mathbb{Q}d7$  |
| 22 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ | $\mathbb{Q}e7?$ |

This gives White the opportunity for a surprising combination. Correct is 22...f6 23  $\mathbb{Q}h3$  and only then 23... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ .

- |    |                       |
|----|-----------------------|
| 23 | $\mathbb{Q}f5!!$ (88) |
|----|-----------------------|



White offers a knight in order to open the g-file and give his queen access to h5. As in our first illustration,

intuition also plays an important part in this case, for the consequences could not be calculated accurately.

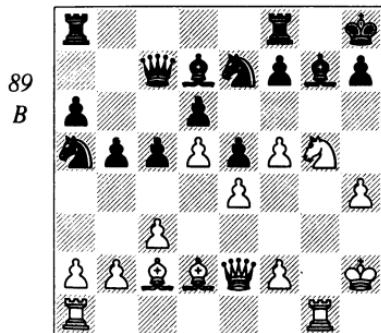
**23 ... gxf5**

A convincing proof of how difficult it is, even for a master, to assess the offer of a sacrifice at its true value. After its acceptance White's attack gathers decisive strength. Black's only chance is 23... $\mathbb{A}f6$ , when White must choose between:

1) The solid continuation 24  $\mathbb{Q}xe7 \mathbb{A}xe7$  25 f4!.

2) The promising sacrificial turn 24  $\mathbb{Q}xh7 \mathbb{Q}xh7$  25 g5.

**24 gxf5 (89)**



**24 ... f6**

Other possibilities do not hold out any better prospects, e.g.:

1) 24...h6 25  $\mathbb{W}h5 \mathbb{A}e8$  (25...f6 26  $\mathbb{Q}e6 \mathbb{A}xe6$  27  $\mathbb{M}xg7$  or 25... $\mathbb{A}g8$  26 f6!) and wins.

2) 24... $\mathbb{A}g8$  25  $\mathbb{Q}xh7!$   $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  26  $\mathbb{W}h5+$   $\mathbb{A}h6$  (or 26... $\mathbb{A}h6$  27  $\mathbb{M}xg7+!$ ) 27  $\mathbb{M}xg8!$  and wins.

**25  $\mathbb{Q}xh7!$**

A second piece sacrifice, and a logical complement of the first. If now 25... $\mathbb{Q}xh7$ , then 26  $\mathbb{W}h5+$   $\mathbb{A}g8$

27  $\mathbb{M}xg7+$   $\mathbb{A}xg7$  28  $\mathbb{M}g1+$  and mate follows.

**25 ...  $\mathbb{A}e8$**

There is nothing better; Black must hold h5. 25... $\mathbb{M}g8$  loses to 26  $\mathbb{Q}xf6!$ , while after 25... $\mathbb{M}f7$  26  $\mathbb{W}h5 \mathbb{A}g8$  27  $\mathbb{A}h6 \mathbb{A}e8$  White forces mate in three with the attractive blow 28  $\mathbb{W}xf7+$ .

**26  $\mathbb{M}xg7!$**

A last surprise. If instead 26  $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ , Black still has some defensive chances.

**26 ...  $\mathbb{A}xg7$**

**27  $\mathbb{Q}xf8$   $\mathbb{A}xf8$**

Black must recapture; otherwise the knight finds refuge at e6. Note that 27... $\mathbb{A}f7$  fails to 28  $\mathbb{Q}e6+ \mathbb{A}xe6$  29  $\mathbb{M}g1+$ .

**28  $\mathbb{A}h6+! \mathbb{A}f7$**

Or 28... $\mathbb{A}g8$  29  $\mathbb{W}g4+$ .

**29  $\mathbb{W}h5+ \mathbb{A}g6$**

**30 fxg6+  $\mathbb{A}g8$**

**31  $\mathbb{W}f5 \mathbb{A}e7$**

With two powerful extra pawns, to say nothing of further attacking chances, White has a clear win, and we therefore give the finish without comment: 32  $\mathbb{M}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  33  $\mathbb{A}c1 \mathbb{A}d7$  34  $\mathbb{W}f3 \mathbb{M}f8$  35 b3  $\mathbb{Q}b6$  36 h5 f5 37  $\mathbb{A}g5$  fxe4 38  $\mathbb{W}e2 \mathbb{W}e8$  39  $\mathbb{A}xe4$   $\mathbb{A}f5$  40  $\mathbb{A}h6 \mathbb{M}f6$  41  $\mathbb{W}f3$  1-0.

To conclude, let us return to the question of judging and planning in diagram 87.

**Assessment:** White has the better game, since his advantage in space gives him attacking chances on the kingside.

**Plan:** Place the attacking pieces in the most favourable positions,

provoke the creation of weaknesses (19 ♜g5), and eliminate the protective pawn formation in front of the king (23 ♜f5 and 25 ♜xh7).

Sometimes a pawn advance on the kingside has no other object than to establish strong-points or to drive off well-posted enemy units, while the attacking chances generated by the pawn advance are only of secondary importance. In such cases great care has to be exercised by the attacker in seeing to the security of his own king. Here is one pertinent example:

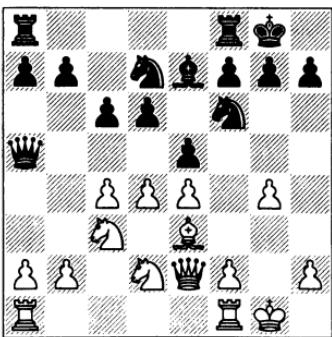
### Mikenas – Flohr

*Hastings 1937/8*

Caro-Kann Defence

1 e4 c6 2 c4 e5 3 ♜f3 d6 4 d4 ♜g4 5 ♜c3 ♜d7 6 ♜e2 ♜gf6 7 0-0 ♜e7 8 ♜e3 0-0 9 ♜d2 ♜xe2 10 ♜xe2 ♜a5  
11 g4 (90)

90  
B



Why this last move? Does White intend a forward push by his kingside pawns, attacking the enemy king? Evidently not, for the white

pieces are entirely unprepared for such an attack. However, it may well be that after this preliminary advance, White will be able to move his pieces into the required battle formation.

Generally speaking, however, it is very risky to start an attack with kingside pawns, as long as the centre is not secure. This leads to a simple maxim: an open centre gives the defender too many chances of counter-action. Here the centre is still open, but White can, at a given moment, play d5 and thereby create more favourable conditions for a general advance of the pawns.

The move g4 must therefore be looked upon in the light of the following considerations:

1. White reserves for himself the possibility of d5, followed eventually by f3, ♜f2, ♜h1 and ♜g1.

2. The white g-pawn commands the squares f5 and h5, making it impossible for the black queen to whip over to the kingside.

3. White has a latent threat of g5, driving Black's f6-knight to an unfavourable square.

*Assessment:* White has the greater mobility, and therefore the better game.

*Plan:* Preserving his advantage by judicious distribution of his pieces, while the transition to a general attack (see point 1) must be kept in view.

11 ... exd4

Black releases the central tension in order to eliminate the danger of a

general attack, but 11...h6 followed by 12... $\mathbb{Q}h7$  is preferable.

**12  $\mathbb{Q}b3!$**

Much stronger than the immediate recapture 12  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ , to which the reply is 12... $\mathbb{W}g5$ .

**12 ...  $\mathbb{W}a6$**

**13  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$**

Attacking White's g-pawn and c-pawn; the reply is compulsory.

**14 g5  $\mathbb{Q}e8$**

**15 b3  $\mathbb{Q}d8$**

**16 f4  $\mathbb{Q}g6$**

**17 h4**

It gradually begins to look very much like a general assault, but the difference lies in its real purpose. In an attack on the king, the first objective is to push at least one pawn to the sixth rank, in order to threaten the hostile king directly. This procedure would, in the present case, have little chance of success, because the white pieces are not effectively deployed. The advance of the pawns here serves a different object, and is in the first place intended to gain space and gain control of important squares.

**17 ...  $\mathbb{Q}b6$**

Not, of course, 17... $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  because of 18 f5! and the knight is cut off.

**18  $\mathbb{Q}f5!$**

Now White threatens to win a piece by 19 h5 as 19... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  is not feasible because of 20  $\mathbb{Q}e7\#$ . Note that Black's awkward situation is the consequence of the advance of the white pawns, which has driven the knights to unfavourable squares.

**18 ...  $\mathbb{W}a5$**

**19  $\mathbb{Q}ac1$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3+$**

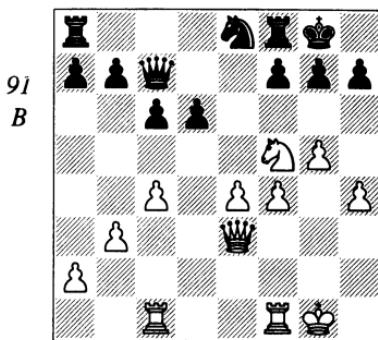
**20  $\mathbb{W}xe3$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$**

Guarding e7, and thereby parrying White's threat indicated above.

**21  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$**

**22  $\mathbb{Q}ed4$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$**

**23  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  (91)**



Upon closer examination we see that White has succeeded in bringing his whole pawn-front forward, but not without creating some weaknesses in his own camp. Black, however, is not in a position to turn these to his own advantage as his pieces are inactive and badly placed. While it is thus clear that White has suffered no damage in advancing his pawns, one may well ask what advantage he has gained in doing so. This question can be answered as follows:

1. The squares in front of the black king-position are inaccessible to his defending pieces (for example, his knight).

2. The advanced pawns are available as supports for attacking pieces (knight at f5).

3. The advanced pawn formation is a potential weapon of attack, as soon as Black attempts to use his own kingside pawns (e.g. 23...g6 24  $\mathbb{Q}h6+$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  25  $\mathbb{W}c3+$  f6 26  $\mathbb{Q}g4$  and Black is in great difficulties).

It follows that Black is compelled to remain passive, which explains why he played for an exchange of queens with 23... $\mathbb{W}b6$  although, contrary perhaps to his expectations, it did not ease the situation. After 24 h5  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  25  $\mathbb{W}xb6$  axb6 26  $\mathbb{E}c2$   $\mathbb{W}fd8$  27  $\mathbb{H}d1$  Black laboured under the disadvantage of a weak d-pawn which he finally lost, a factor in his defeat being the power of White's kingside, which prevents any sort of counter-action by Black on that wing.

An instructive but dangerous example: instructive because it shows that the attacking value of an advancing pawn formation increases as it gets further forward, dangerous because there is always a tendency to underestimate the risk entailed in the advance of kingside pawns. It must always be borne in mind that pawns do not satisfactorily fulfil their defensive functions once they have left their original squares, and it is particularly difficult to gauge when a pawn advance just succeeds or just fails in its purpose.

Here is an example which demonstrates one of the many dangers to which a kingside is exposed when weakened by an unjustified pawn advance:

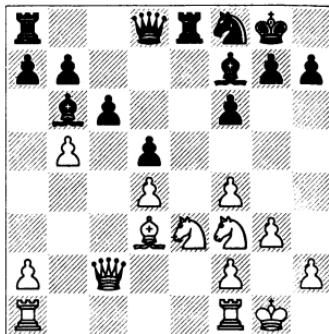
## Alekhine – Dr Em. Lasker

New York 1924

Queen's Gambit Declined

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   
 $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  5 cxd5 exd5 6  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  c6 7 e3  
 $\mathbb{Q}h5$  8  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  9 exf4  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  10 g3  
0-0 11 0-0  $\mathbb{E}e8$  12  $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  13  $\mathbb{Q}d1$   
f6 14  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  15  $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  16 b4  
 $\mathbb{Q}b6$  17  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  18 b5 (92)

92  
B



There followed:

18 ...  $\mathbb{Q}h5!$

Attacking the f3-knight and indirectly the d-pawn, so that another pawn advance is practically forced.

19 g4  $\mathbb{Q}f7$   
20 bxc6  $\mathbb{E}c8$   
21  $\mathbb{W}b2$  bxc6  
22 f5

In order to prevent Black's knight from re-entering the field via e6, but this move still further weakens White's kingside.

22 ...  $\mathbb{W}d6$

Threatening 23... $\mathbb{W}f4$ .

23  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$   
24  $\mathbb{E}fe1$  h5  
25 h3  $\mathbb{Q}h7$   
26  $\mathbb{E}xe8+$   $\mathbb{E}xe8$

- 27  $\mathbb{H}e1$        $\mathbb{B}b8$   
 28  $\mathbb{W}c1$        $\mathbb{Q}g5$

Conclusive. Now the exchange of knights is compulsory, and there follows a fatal check at h2, e.g.: 29  $\mathbb{Q}xg5$   $\mathbb{W}h2+$  30  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{fxg}5$  31  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xh3+$ . The game went on: 29  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{fxe}5$  30  $\mathbb{W}xg5$   $e4$  with a speedy decision.

These two examples show that it is essential to weigh up the advantages and dangers when deciding on a pawn advance. These considerations do not count when the players have castled on opposite wings, as we have pointed out before in this chapter.

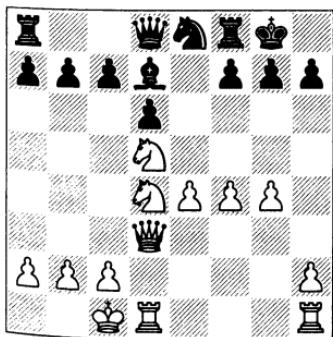
### Spielmann – Maróczy

Gothenburg 1920

Ruy Lopez, Steinitz Variation

- 1 e4 e5 2  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  d6 4 d4  
 $\mathbb{Q}d7$  5  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  6  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  7  
 $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{exd}4$  8  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  9  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$   
 10 0-0-0 0-0 11 f4  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  12  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   
 $\mathbb{W}xe7$  13  $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  14 g4 (93)

93  
 B



The advance of the g-pawn hardly requires any calculation. The simple

consideration that the capture of this pawn gives White an open g-file is sufficient: the attack on that file is bound to be worth more than a pawn. The concrete justification for this intuitive decision would be quite an undertaking, and would require the examination of variations such as 14... $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  15  $\mathbb{Q}dg1$  and then 15... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  16 f5 f6 17  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  or 15... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  16  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  c5 17  $\mathbb{Q}df5$ . The nature of the contest is simple for both players: if Black misses the right method of defence, or White fails to find the most incisive line of attack, a quick defeat is the probable result.

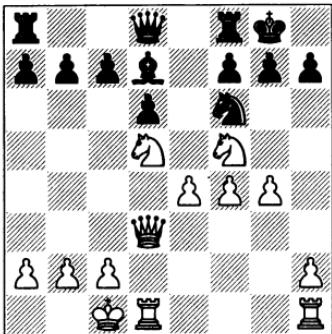
When there is considerable difference in the playing strength of the adversaries, the stronger player seldom hesitates to offer such a pawn sacrifice, but the weaker player should not refrain from doing the same when occasion arises: one cannot learn to play chess by attempting nothing. You should stand firmly by the maxim: *after castling on opposite wings, and with the forces reasonably well placed for attack, an open file against the enemy king is well worth a pawn.*

The game went on:

- 14 ...  $\mathbb{Q}f6$   
 15  $\mathbb{Q}f5!$  (94)

White holds to our principle that the open g-file outweighs the sacrifice of a pawn. In this case the proof of its soundness is less involved:

- 15... $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  16  $\mathbb{W}hg1$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  17  $\mathbb{exf}5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  (White wins after 17... $\mathbb{Q}f2?$  18  $\mathbb{W}g3$  or 17... $\mathbb{Q}h6$  18 f6 g6 19  $\mathbb{W}h3!$ ) 18  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  and now:

94  
B

1) 18... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  19  $\mathbb{M}xg7!$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  (or 19... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  20  $\mathbb{M}g8++!$  with mate to follow) 20  $\mathbb{M}g1+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  21  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  with a quick mate.

2) 18... $\mathbb{Q}e8$  19 f6 g6 20  $\mathbb{Q}e7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  21 f5  $\mathbb{M}d7$  22 fxg6 hxg6 23  $\mathbb{M}d3$ , with  $\mathbb{M}h3+$  to come.

Note that the advance g5 is intended primarily to act as a support for a white knight at f5. If Black eliminates this knight by exchanging it, White obtains an open g-file with all that this portends. Driving away the knight is not an option, as 15...g6 is immediately refuted by 16  $\mathbb{W}d4!$  (16... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  17  $\mathbb{Q}h6\#$ ).

- |                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| 15 ...             | $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ |
| 16 $\mathbb{W}xd5$ | $\mathbb{Q}c6$  |
| 17 $\mathbb{W}d4$  | $\mathbb{M}f6$  |

Black submits to a weakening of his pawn formation because after 17...f6 he fears the continuation of White's attack by 18 g5 and 19  $\mathbb{M}hg1$ ; no doubt he is right.

The game went on 18  $\mathbb{M}xf6$   $gxf6$  19  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  20  $\mathbb{M}he1$  with a clear endgame superiority for White.

If we review the various examples given in this chapter, we find that the

positions in diagrams 81, 84 and 87 are dynamic in character and in diagrams 91 and 93 they are static.

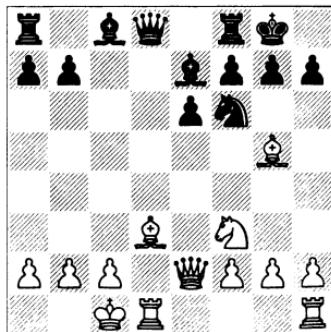
It can happen that a kingside attack is initiated without any pawn advance, but even then in most cases one of the wing pawns will finally play an important part. Here is an example:

### Spielmann – Petrov

Margate 1938

French Defence

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $dxe4$  4  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  5  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}gf6$  6  $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  7  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  c5 8  $dxc5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  9  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  10  $\mathbb{M}e2$  0-0 11 0-0-0 (95)

95  
B

*Assessment:* White undoubtedly has the better game, not only because he threatens to win the queen (by 12  $\mathbb{Q}xh7+$ ), but above all because his pieces are so well posted that they almost without exception can take part in a kingside attack – even the seemingly inactive rook on h1 can participate.

*Plan:* See the further course of the game.

- 11 ...  $\mathbb{W}a5$   
 12  $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{W}b6$   
 13 h4!

An important pawn advance, indispensable in this case. After this there will sooner or later be a threat of a combination, characteristic of such positions: 1  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  2  $\mathbb{Q}xh7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  3  $\mathbb{Q}g5+$  and now 3... $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  would open the h-file for White. This combination does not work at once on account of the mating threat at b2 (after 14  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ ), and so White must first spend a tempo preparing against this. His intention is first to play 14 c3, interrupting the black bishop's action on the long diagonal, and only then the combination shown above. Black, practically powerless against White's designs, now makes a blunder which alters the logical course of events.

- 13 ...  $\mathbb{Q}d7?$

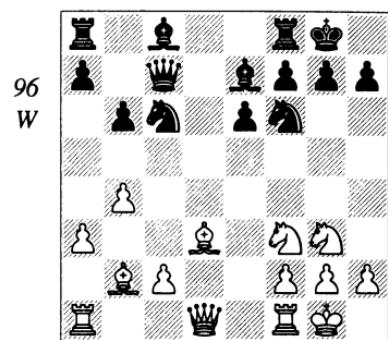
Played on the assumption that White cannot take advantage of the fact that his d1-rook and the black d7-bishop are lined up because, after 14  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  15  $\mathbb{Q}xh7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  16  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ , there is a mate by 16... $\mathbb{W}xb2\#$ . However, White can play a more subtle version of the same theme: 14  $\mathbb{Q}xh7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  15  $\mathbb{Q}xd7!$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  16  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  followed by 17  $\mathbb{W}d3+$ , remaining a pawn ahead. White did indeed take on h7 in the game and after 14... $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  15  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  16 c4  $\mathbb{Q}fe8$  17  $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  18  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  he remained a clear pawn ahead.

An attack by pieces only is illustrated in the following game:

## Spielmann – Hönlinger

Vienna 1929  
 Caro-Kann Defence

- 1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  dx $e4$  4  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5  $\mathbb{Q}g3$  e6 6  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  c5 7  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  8 dx $c5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  9 a3 0-0 10 0-0 b6 11 b4  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  12  $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  (96)



White has a considerable advantage: the bishops are aimed at Black's kingside and the knights are ready to co-operate.

- 13 b5!

White wishes to secure e5 for his knight.

- 13 ...  $\mathbb{Q}a5$   
 14  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$   
 15  $\mathbb{Q}g4!$

Entirely logical; he wants to get Black's best defensive piece out of the way.

- 15 ...  $\mathbb{W}d8!$

The best defence. Any other move would lead to a weakening of Black's king-position, e.g.:

- 1) 15... $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  16  $\mathbb{W}xg4$  g6.
- 2) 15... $\mathbb{Q}d5$  16  $\mathbb{Q}h5$  forces 16...f6, since 16... $\mathbb{Q}c3$  loses to 17  $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}fc8$  18  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ .

3) 15... $\mathbb{Q}f4$  16  $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  17  $\mathbb{Q}h5.$

**16  $\mathbb{Q}e3$**

Exchanges at f6 lead to nothing after 16  $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  17  $\mathbb{Q}h5$  g6. With the text-move White retains a choice of continuations.

**16 ...  $\mathbb{Q}d5?$**

Very careless. Black should never have weakened his kingside by voluntarily withdrawing this knight from the defence.

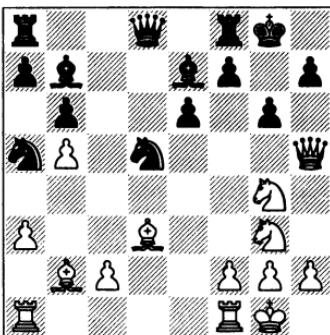
**17  $\mathbb{Q}h5!$  g6**

Note that 17...h6 fails after 18  $\mathbb{Q}xg7!$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  19  $\mathbb{Q}ef5+$ , leading to mate.

**18  $\mathbb{Q}g4!$  (97)**

97

B



A well-known idea: Black cannot capture the queen because 19  $\mathbb{Q}h6\#.$

**18 ...  $\mathbb{Q}f6$**

After 18...f6 White sacrifices at g6 and after 18... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  White wins by 19  $\mathbb{Q}e5!$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  20  $\mathbb{Q}h5+$   $gxh5$  21  $\mathbb{Q}g5\#.$

**19  $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$**

**20  $\mathbb{Q}h6$**

Stronger here than 20  $\mathbb{Q}e5$ , which would be answered by 20... $\mathbb{Q}d5!.$  Now that Black has had both to

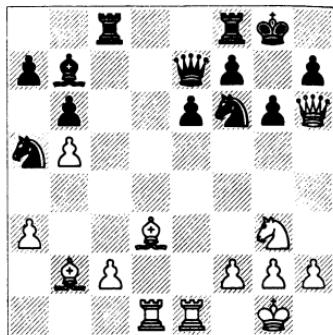
weaken his king-position and to surrender the dark-squared bishop that he needs to cover the weak squares, the win for White is a question of only a few strong moves.

**20 ...  $\mathbb{E}c8$**

**21  $\mathbb{Q}ad1$   $\mathbb{W}e7$**

**22  $\mathbb{Q}fe1!$  (98)**

98  
B



The effective disposition of the pieces is now all that is required. He threatens 23  $\mathbb{Q}f5!$   $gxf5$  24  $\mathbb{Q}g5\#.$

**22 ...  $\mathbb{Q}e8$**

**23  $\mathbb{Q}f5!$   $\mathbb{W}c5$**

Or 23... $gxf5$  24  $\mathbb{Q}xf5.$

**24  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$**

**25  $\mathbb{Q}e7+!$  1-0**

Mate in three follows: 25... $\mathbb{W}xe7$  26  $\mathbb{W}xh7+!$   $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  27  $\mathbb{Q}h5+$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  28  $\mathbb{Q}h8\#.$

It is difficult to give general directions on the conduct of a kingside attack without the help of pawns. It is always a case of the pieces achieving the greatest possible mobility and co-operation. In addition it is essential to be conversant with known tactical ideas. The following therefore holds good for the position in diagram 96:

*Assessment:* White has attacking chances because he has a great advantage in space, and further because he has command of a great number of good squares for his pieces.

*Plan:* Effective deployment of the pieces and sound combinations.

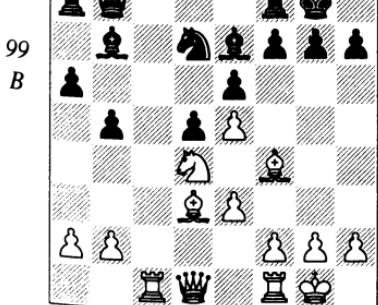
To conclude, here is an example in which the kingside attack becomes possible because an advanced centre pawn hinders the most effective arrangement of the defending forces, incidentally a frequently recurring situation.

### Dr Euwe – Bogoljubow

Utrecht (6) 1928

Queen's Gambit Declined,  
Orthodox Defence

1 d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2 c4 e6 3  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d5 4  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   
 $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  5 e3  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  6  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  0-0 7  $\mathbb{Q}c1$  c6  
8  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  a6 9 cxd5 cxd5 10 0-0 b5 11  
 $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  12 dxе5  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  13  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   
 $\mathbb{Q}b7$  14  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  15  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  (99)



White has the greater freedom of movement on the kingside, thanks to

the position of his pawn at e5, which prevents a black knight or bishop moving to f6. In addition White's knight is firmly posted at d4, again due to the pawn at e5.

15 ...  $\mathbb{g}6$

A compulsory weakening of the kingside, intended to intercept the action of White's d3-bishop.

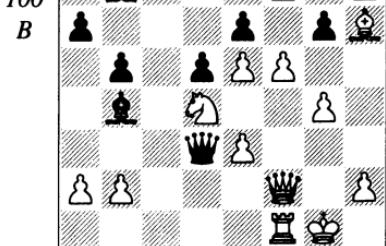
16  $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$   
17  $\mathbb{Q}xc8+$   $\mathbb{Q}xc8$   
18 f4

The e-pawn is now solidly defended.

18 ...  $\mathbb{Q}c5$   
19 g4

The intention is to play f5. After the opening of the f-file the knight at d4 and bishop at h6 will reach their maximum efficiency.

19 ...  $\mathbb{Q}xd3$   
20  $\mathbb{Q}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$   
21  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$   
22  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$   
23 f5 (100)



23 ...  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   
24  $\mathbb{Q}g3$

After 24 fxе6  $\mathbb{Q}xg4+$  25  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}e4+$  White can avoid perpetual

check only by allowing the exchange of queens.

**24 ... exf5**

**25 gxf5 ♖f8**

**26 ♖xf8 ♜xf8**

**27 f6**

With the threat of 28 ♜g5 and 29 ♜h6.

**27 ... h5**

**28 ♜g5 ♜g4+**

Or 28...♜h7 29 ♜f5. However, the exchange of queens does not ease the situation.

**29 ♜xg4 hxg4**

**30 e6**

The point is that Black cannot take this pawn because of 30...fxe6  
31 ♜xe6 ♜f7 32 ♜d8 ♜d7 33 f7+.

**30 ... ♜h7**

**31 e7 ♜e8**

**32 ♜c1 ♜h6**

**33 ♜e6 1-0**

Reverting to diagram 99:

*Assessment:* White has strong attacking chances on the kingside, because his advanced e-pawn hamstrings the defence.

*Plan:* Bringing all the forces to the kingside, culminating in the advance of the f- and g-pawns.

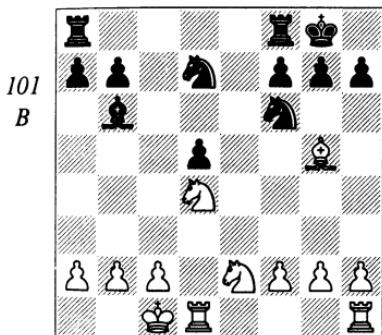
# 7 Weak Pawns

Kan – Bondarevsky

Tbilisi 1937

French Defence, Tarrasch Variation

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  c5 4 exd5  
exd5 5  $\mathbb{Q}b5+$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  6  $\mathbb{W}e2+$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  7  
 $\mathbb{Q}xd7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  8 dxcc5  $\mathbb{W}xe2+$  9  
 $\mathbb{Q}xe2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  10  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  11  $\mathbb{Q}bd4$   
 $\mathbb{Q}gf6$  12  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  0-0 13 0-0-0 (101)



Fine assesses this position as being in White's favour, which will surprise nobody, for it is common knowledge that an isolated pawn constitutes a weakness. White has six united pawns; Black has five, plus one lone pawn at d5. Has Black some compensation in space? Scarcely; at most it can be said that he might perhaps manage to transfer his f6-knight to e4, where it may be awkward to drive off because f3 could weaken White's position. But this line of play, depending as it does on a 'perhaps', is not of great importance.

Thus Black has a weak d-pawn, which is held fast. However, White must not imagine that the ultimate capture of this pawn is a mere matter of technique and accuracy. On the contrary, in practice it is seen that in nine cases out of ten the isolated pawn holds out. In view of this, the isolated pawn would not appear to constitute such a serious weakness. This conclusion is, however, equally fallacious; the drawback of the isolated pawn lies not so much in the danger of its being lost as in the commitments which it entails and the constant thought and attention required to maintain it. The units which are necessary for the defence of the pawn will not as a rule be fewer in number than those concerned in the attack, but while the attacker can at any time switch over and concentrate on some other object, the defender has no such discretion; he is wholly dependent on his opponent's course of action. Thus, although in most cases the defence of the weak isolated pawn will be successful, it will often be impossible to avoid damage on other fronts.

Let us first continue the game from diagram 101.

13 ...  $\mathbb{Q}g4$

Black prefers the text-move to 13... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ , the difference being that the knight, which can be maintained neither at g4 nor at e4, can now retire

via e5 instead of d6. There is little to choose between the two methods. The text-move is based on the following considerations: Black's d-pawn is difficult to defend as long as he has a knight at d7, nor can this knight move away at present, because  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  would give Black an awkward doubled pawn. Clearly there is nothing else to do than first to move the f6-knight. Black, on account of his weak d-pawn, is acting under slight but continuous pressure.

**14  $\mathbb{Q}h4$        $\mathbb{Q}d8$**

Black takes advantage of the opportunity to vacate b6 for his d7-knight. The text-move gains a tempo, as White's bishop must keep guard over f2.

**15  $\mathbb{Q}g3$        $\mathbb{Q}f6$**

**16  $\mathbb{Q}f3!$**

The first of a series of moves which gradually force Black into a less favourable situation. The d-pawn is now attacked by the rook; the knight at f3 commands e5 with the result that the black g4-knight's retreat via that square is no longer feasible.

**16 ...       $\mathbb{Q}b6$**

**17  $h3$        $\mathbb{Q}h6$**

**18  $\mathbb{Q}f4$        $\mathbb{Q}fd8$**

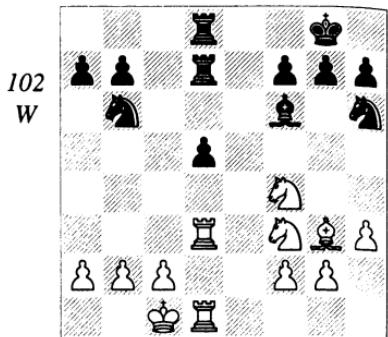
Attack and riposte.

**19  $\mathbb{Q}d3$        $\mathbb{Q}d7$**

A characteristic part of the action against the isolated pawn. White prepares to double rooks, and Black must do the same.

**20  $\mathbb{Q}hd1$        $\mathbb{Q}ad8$  (102)**

Thrice attacked and thrice defended. For the time being White is



unable to increase the pressure and must now think of some other plan. One tempting line is 21  $\mathbb{Q}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  22  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  (22... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  does not work because of 23  $\mathbb{Q}xf7!$ ) 23  $\mathbb{Q}g4$ , when after 23... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  24  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  25  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  26 c3, followed by  $\mathbb{Q}c2$ , the d-pawn comes under tremendous pressure. However, Black can improve by 23... $\mathbb{Q}g5+$  24  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  (now 24  $\mathbb{Q}b1$  can be met by 24... $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  25  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$ ) 24... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  and White has achieved nothing. This line of play gives White no advantage, but it is important for the attacker to check any forcing sequence of moves, such as this one, carefully. Such a forcing character is mostly present when a threat occurs to a defending unit, such as 22  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  attacking a black rook. Burdened with the anxious task of protecting that problem child, his d-pawn, Black finds his freedom of action much restricted.

**21  $\mathbb{Q}h2!$**

An excellently thought-out move. Now White threatens the advance of the g-pawn, creating fresh disturbances in the enemy lines, not so much because of the threat itself, but

because once White obtains command of f5, Black's knight on the h-file will be completely immobilized.

**21 ... g6**

21... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  is undoubtedly better, freeing the knight in the nick of time from its confined position. It is true that – according to the Russian tournament book – the knight has no great future after 22 g4  $\mathbb{Q}h4$  23  $\mathbb{Q}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  24  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  but in the game itself the knight suffers a worse fate.

**22 g4  $\mathbb{Q}g7$**

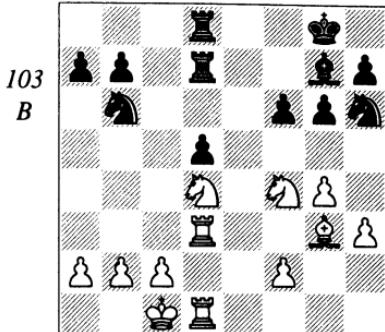
**23  $\mathbb{Q}g3$  f6**

With the idea of giving the knight a new lease of life via f7, but there is now a fresh weakness at e6 and this is more than Black's position can stand.

It is difficult, however, to think of another move which Black could have tried. The knight at b6 and both rooks are tied up, the knight at h6 is locked in, and the bishop practically so. The only alternatives are moves by the king or a pawn. As 23... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  fails against 24  $\mathbb{Q}h4$  f6? 25  $\mathbb{Q}e6+$  and 23...d4 loses a pawn after 24  $\mathbb{Q}e2$ , Black must try 23... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  or 23...a6, neither of which is at all attractive. It is easy to see that Black can hardly undertake anything, a psychologically unpleasant situation. All this results from the pressing commitments imposed by the presence of the weak isolated pawn.

**24  $\mathbb{Q}d4!$  (103)**

With obvious threats. White wishes to drive away one of the defending rooks by 25  $\mathbb{Q}de6$ , after which Black's d-pawn is one guard short.



Of course, playing the other knight to e6 would not work, as this knight is wanted for the attack on the d-pawn.

**24 ...  $\mathbb{Q}f7$**

Black thinks that he has found an active defence in ... $\mathbb{Q}e5$  but the result is that he still loses a pawn, although it is not the weakling at d5. Could Black have avoided the loss of a pawn?

1) 24... $\mathbb{R}c8$  25  $\mathbb{Q}de6$  and the d-pawn falls (if 25... $\mathbb{R}c6$ , then first 26  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ ).

2) 24... $\mathbb{R}e8$  25  $\mathbb{Q}de6$  (the threat is 26  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  and 27  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ ) 25... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  (25...g5 26  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  gxf4 27  $\mathbb{Q}xe8$ ) 26  $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{R}c7$  27  $\mathbb{Q}b3$ .

3) 24...f5 25  $\mathbb{Q}de6$   $\mathbb{R}e8$  26  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  (26... $\mathbb{R}xg7$  27 gxf5  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  28  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ ) 27  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  28  $\mathbb{R}xd5$   $\mathbb{R}xd5$  29  $\mathbb{R}xd5$  fxe5 30  $\mathbb{Q}d7+$ .

4) 24...g5 25  $\mathbb{Q}fe6$   $\mathbb{R}e8$  (25... $\mathbb{R}c8$  26  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  a6 27  $\mathbb{Q}c3$ ) 26  $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{R}de7$  27  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  a6 28  $\mathbb{Q}c7$ .

In every case White wins a pawn with an excellent position, so Black's weak pawn cannot be defended.

**25  $\mathbb{Q}de6$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$**

**26  $\mathbb{Q}xd8$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3+$**

- 27 ♜xd3      ♜xd8  
 28 ♜c5!

The b-pawn must fall. This particular case is of course accidental, but the fight in the open depends on such chance happenings, which are bound to occur in this type of position. When they do arise, the defender, who is faced with a host of difficulties, always bears the cost.

Let us revert to the original position in diagram 101. The *assessment*, as can easily be seen, must be: White has the advantage, because Black has an isolated pawn.

The attacker's *plan* comprises the following elements:

1. Direct threats to the d-pawn, e.g. by 18 ♜f4 and more so by doubling rooks on the d-file.

2. Indirect attacks on the weak pawn by threats to the defending pieces (see, for instance, 25 ♜de6 and various points in the analysis to Black's 24th move).

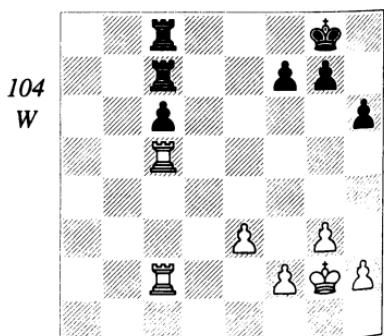
3. Subsidiary operations on fields away from the weak pawn (in this case the advance of White's g-pawn). Of course only a limited number of pieces take part in these operations, in this particular case three white against two black pieces. It is to be noted that Black's knight at b6 takes no part in these manoeuvres, while White's knight at f4 is active both in the attack on d5 and in the subsidiary action.

A plan for the defender is difficult to devise. He depends entirely on the measures taken by his opponent, and

he can generally do nothing else but adopt a patient waiting policy, hoping for a period of rest and calculating exactly when and where the blow is going to fall. This compulsory and rather unpromising suspense has a depressing effect on the defender, who more often than not decides on some violent counter-action which leaves him worse rather than better. However, the attacker must keep an eye on any possibilities of counterplay.

At the beginning of this chapter it was said that, although a weak isolated pawn is a source of worry to its owner because of the various commitments it implies, it by no means follows that its loss is more or less forced.

Let us examine this question in connection with the simple position in diagram 104.



Black's c-pawn is isolated and weak. Two white rooks are attacking it, and it is defended by two black rooks. White cannot in any way strengthen the attack, so there is no question of capturing the pawn by

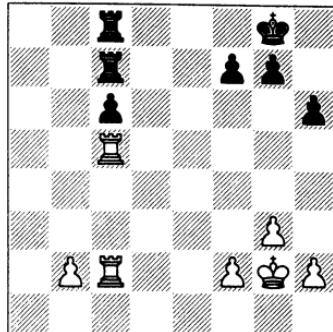
direct means. Therefore, if White still wishes to play for a win, he will have to find some indirect means of taking advantage of the constrained position of the black rooks. For instance, White can move his pawn up to h5 in order to fix Black's kingside pawns. If then Black plays ...g6, White exchanges pawns and obtains a passed e-pawn. If at some time or other Black plays ...f6 then White should be able to move his king to f5 and, with the help of zugzwang, force his way through to g6. If, however, Black plays neither ...g6 nor ...f6 White can try to force him to play one of these moves by playing g4-g5 and, after Black exchanges pawns on g5, attacking the g7-pawn with rooks on g4 and g5. All this is rather vague, and there is little doubt that White's plan is doomed to failure if Black hits on the correct defensive manoeuvre. This consists of bringing his king to d6 without delay, giving the c-pawn additional support and thus liberating one of the rooks, which will be well able to frustrate any possible plan of attack by White.

Nevertheless, it is clear that, even at this advanced stage in the game, the isolated pawn constitutes a weakness which demands careful handling.

If we now transfer White's e-pawn to b2 as in diagram 105, then White has a different method of attack on Black's isolated pawn, which is quickly successful.

1 b4!

105  
W



Now Black cannot parry the threat 2 b5, which forces the gain of the c-pawn, for against both 1...Bb8 and 1...Bb7, 2 b5 still wins. However, here Black has another continuation, which enables him to defend despite the loss of the c-pawn. This is purely accidental and hardly likely to occur frequently.

1 ...  $\mathbb{Q}f8!$   
2 b5  $\mathbb{Q}e7$

and now:

- 1) 3 bxc6  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  4  $\mathbb{M}f5$  f6 and White's c-pawn must fall.
- 2) 3  $\mathbb{M}xc6$   $\mathbb{M}xc6$  4 bxc6 (or 4  $\mathbb{M}xc6$   $\mathbb{M}xc6$  5 bxc6  $\mathbb{Q}d6$ ) 4... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  regaining the pawn.
- 3) 3 b6  $\mathbb{M}b7$  4  $\mathbb{M}xc6$   $\mathbb{M}xc6$  5  $\mathbb{M}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}d7!$  and White must abandon the b-pawn.

Even a small alteration in Black's pawn formation will not give White real winning chances, e.g. the g-pawn at g6 instead of g7, or pawns at f5, g6 and h7 instead of f7, g7 and h6.

If, in diagram 105, it were Black's move, then all danger of loss could be nullified by 1...Bb8!, by which

Black gives up his isolated pawn and attacks the white b-pawn instead. Now White has no means of preparing the advance b4 effectively. With 2... $\mathbb{M}cb7$  Black can in any event win the white b-pawn in exchange for his own c-pawn. In such cases counter-attack is always the best defence.

Now, in diagram 105, let us move the white rook from c2 to c4:

**1 b4**

Now Black has a curious loophole:

**1 ...  $\mathbb{M}b8!$**

It is to be noted that 1... $\mathbb{M}b7$  is insufficient here because, after 2 b5 cxb5, White captures at the c8-rook with check.

**2 b5**

Capturing the pawn leads to an easy draw.

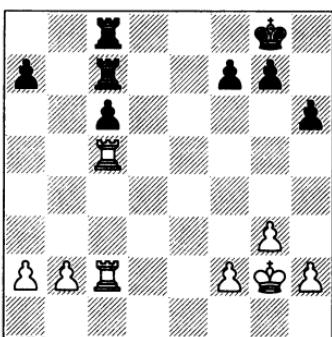
**2 ... cxb5!**

**3  $\mathbb{M}xc7$  bxc4**

With a clear draw.

Now let us add a white pawn at a2 and a black pawn at a7. The position does not appear to be different to any material extent (106).

106  
W



There follows:

**1 b4 a6**

Now, one attempt is 2 a4. With this move White can force the gain of a pawn by 3 b5, but we must remember Black's defensive plan based on bringing up his king, which works again here. Thus White must look for an improvement in his method of attack, and, indeed, there is a way:

**2  $\mathbb{M}a5!$   $\mathbb{M}a8$**

**3 b5!**

Winning a pawn (3...c5 4 bxa6 c4 5  $\mathbb{M}a4$  c3 6  $\mathbb{M}a3$ ) and after a general liquidation White remains with an extra a-pawn, a decisive advantage.

If Black plays differently, for instance 1... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  (instead of 1...a6), there follows 2 b5  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  3 bxc6  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  4  $\mathbb{M}a5$  and this attack on the a-pawn enables White to preserve an extra pawn. The win is still difficult, but with patience and accurate play it can be achieved.

How did White get these additional chances? They are a consequence of the presence of the two a-pawns. Black's a-pawn constitutes a second weakness on which White can fasten because of his greater mobility. This is shown even more clearly in diagram 107.

Black has two weak pawns, and this quickly proves fatal.

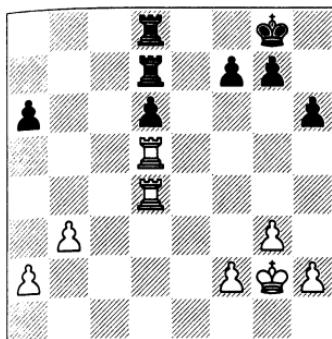
**1  $\mathbb{M}a4$   $\mathbb{M}a8$**

**2  $\mathbb{M}da5$   $\mathbb{M}da7$**

**3 b4**

and Black is helpless against the threat 4 b5. Moreover, White has an alternative method of winning:

**1  $\mathbb{M}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$**

107  
W2  $\mathbb{B}b6$ 

and Black cannot guard both the pawns.

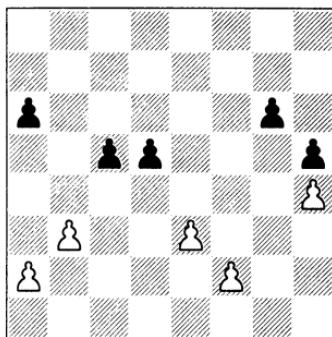
If the black king starts at f8 the second method is not effective because of 1... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  guarding the d-pawn, so that in this case White would have to use the first method. With a black rook at c6 instead of d8, neither of the lines shown above will lead to anything directly. The rook at c6 guards both pawns, and the attacker's greater mobility, which as a rule is the deciding factor, is here of no importance. The defender is therefore well advised to place his pieces so that they guard more than one weakness at the same time.

If we pass under review the positions shown so far in this chapter, we find that the weak pawn, round which the play revolves, is held fast either by the opponent controlling or actually occupying the square in front of the weak pawn. Occupying this square is called a *blockade*, and the square in question is a *blocking square*. It is much easier to shoot a sitting bird than a bird on the wing. On the same principle it is important

to immobilize the target, the weak pawn, before starting on direct action.

So far we have given examples only of isolated pawns that were weak, but united pawns also can be weak, as can be seen in the following diagram (108):

108



Black's a-pawn is isolated, but is nevertheless no weaker than the g-pawn, although the type of weakness is different. We call the g-pawn a *backward* pawn; it can get no support from the h-pawn unless it succeeds in advancing to g5. Backward or isolated pawns are at their weakest when (as here with the g-pawn) they are on an open file, since in such circumstances it is easy to attack the pawn. That is why the isolated a-pawn in diagram 108 is a less serious weakness.

Black's c- and d-pawns are united, but cannot guard each other, as their advance is hindered by White's b- and e-pawns, and so they are liable to be attacked and in certain circumstances, which we shall specify, these *hanging pawns*, as they are

called, constitute a definite weakness.

What about the white pawns in diagram 108? The pawns at a2 and b3 are united, as are those at e3 and f2, but here the similarity ends. The pawn at f2 is on an open file, and can be attacked. If it advances to f3 or f4 to take part in an attack, the e-pawn is at once vulnerable and in the latter case becomes a backward pawn.

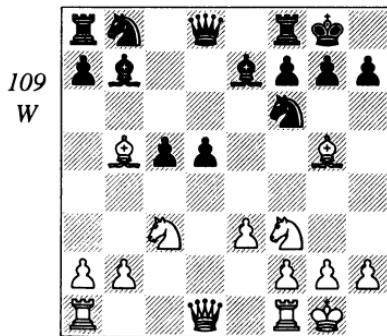
Here is a short review of various examples from practical play in which weak pawns play a part. This will further elucidate the principles already mentioned and the circumstances in which pawn weaknesses can arise.

### Dr Euwe – Tylor

*Nottingham 1936*

Queen's Gambit Declined

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  5 e3 0-0 6  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  b6 7 cxd5 exd5 8  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  c5 9 dxc5 bxc5 10 0-0  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  (109)



The hanging pawns at c5 and d5 form a weakness, as White is ahead

in development and can attack them before Black's forces are mobilized.

11  $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{W}b6$

12  $\mathbb{W}e2$  a6

There was a threat of 13  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  14  $\mathbb{Q}a4$  winning a pawn, and Black cannot bring out his b8-knight.

13  $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{H}d8$

14  $\mathbb{E}fd1$   $\mathbb{W}e6$

A critical moment. It is clear that 14... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  is refuted by 15  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  16  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ , but why does not Black play 14... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ ? The answer is that White would reply 15  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  forcing Black to play 15...c4, which would reduce the d-pawn from a hanging to a backward pawn. This would be a more serious weakness: Black's d-pawn is immobilized, d4 is under White's control, and the black b7-bishop's diagonal is obstructed.

15  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}e4?$

Black labours under considerable pressure, hoping that a combination may free his game. This is psychologically understandable, and is one of the disadvantages of a weak pawn. Regardless of the possible defects, Black must play 15...c4, after which White can begin the assault on d5.

16  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}xe4$

17  $\mathbb{E}xc5!$

and White is a pawn ahead with a solid position (17...f6 18  $\mathbb{E}c7$ ).

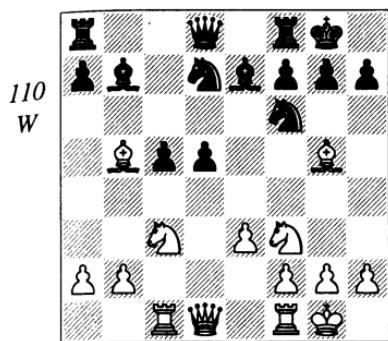
### Zukertort – Taubenhaus

*Frankfurt 1887*

Queen's Gambit Declined

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  5  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  b6 6 e3  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  7  $\mathbb{E}c1$  c5 8

$\text{cxd5 exd5 9 dxc5 bxc5 10 } \mathbb{A}b5+$   
 $\mathbb{Q}bd7 11 0-0 0-0$  (110)



A position of a type similar to the preceding one. White has given his opponent 'hanging pawns' under, from his own point of view, favourable conditions, in that his pieces are safe from any attack by the weak pawns.

**12  $\mathbb{A}xd7$**

This exchange of minor pieces, which may strike the reader as a little strange, is intended to gain a tempo after 13  $\mathbb{Q}e5$ , thereby accelerating the development of White's attack.

**12 ...  $\mathbb{W}xd7$**

**13  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{W}f5$**

**14 f4**

It is true that White's e-pawn has now become weak, but Black will have his work cut out to derive any advantage from this fact.

**14 ...  $\mathbb{W}fd8$**

**15 g4!  $\mathbb{W}e6$**

**16 f5!**

Excellent! After 16... $\mathbb{W}xe5$  Black loses the queen to 17  $\mathbb{Q}f4$ .

**16 ...  $\mathbb{W}c8$**

16... $\mathbb{W}a6$  is worth considering. At c8 the queen is dangerously placed in the line of fire of the white c-rook.

**17  $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{W}c7$**

**18  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$**

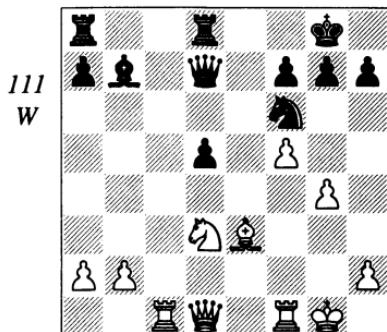
**19  $\mathbb{Q}xc5!$**

A liquidation which turns the two hanging pawns into one isolated pawn.

**19 ...  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$**

**20  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3+$**

**21  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  (111)**



A new phase. Black's isolated d-pawn can easily be defended, but the drawback of the isolated pawn is shown here in a different light:

White is master of the strong blockading square d4 in front of the weak pawn. Thanks to the isolation of the d-pawn, White's pieces are totally secure from pawn attack while they occupy d4.

We shall deal with the concept of a strong square in the following chapter.

There followed:

**22  $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{W}e7$**

**23  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$**

**24 ♜d4!**

From this strong square White controls the whole board.

- |         |      |
|---------|------|
| 24 ...  | ♝e8  |
| 25 ♜d3  | ♝ac8 |
| 26 ♜fe1 | ♝d6  |
| 27 ♜xf6 |      |

White refrains from 27 ♜xa7, when there would follow 27...♜xg4. Not only would White have taken an irrelevant queenside pawn in return for an important pawn near his king, but Black would have good chances to activate the c6-bishop by playing ...d4.

- |          |       |
|----------|-------|
| 27 ...   | ♝xe1+ |
| 28 ♜xe1  | gx f6 |
| 29 ♜f4   | ♝b8   |
| 30 a3    | ♝e8   |
| 31 ♜xe8+ | ♜xe8  |
| 32 ♜h5!  |       |

and White wins.

They knew it all over a century ago!

In 1933, J.H. Wertheim published in the magazine *Tijdschrift voor Schaak* an essay in three languages on the subject of hanging pawns. He arrived at the conclusion that in the middlegame and with minor pieces on the board, hanging pawns in the centre constitute an advantage, unless – as in the examples we have shown – the opponent is ahead in development and can win a pawn or break up the hanging pawns.

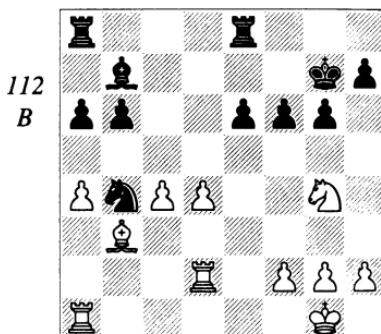
In the endgame, hanging pawns as a rule are a drawback, as we can see in the following example (diagram 112):

### Burn – Maróczy

Vienna 1898

Queen's Gambit Declined,  
Orthodox Defence

1 d4 e6 2 c4 d5 3 ♜c3 ♜f6 4 ♜g5  
♝e7 5 e3 0-0 6 ♜f3 ♜bd7 7 ♜d3  
dxc4 8 ♜xc4 c5 9 0-0 a6 10 a4 ♜b6  
11 ♜b3 cxd4 12 exd4 ♜bd5 13  
♝e2 ♜e8 14 ♜fd1 b6 15 ♜e5 ♜b7  
16 ♜d3 ♜xc3 17 bxc3 ♜d5 18 ♜h5  
g6 19 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 20 ♜h6 f6 21  
♜g4 ♜g7 22 c4 ♜b4 23 ♜xg7+  
♛xg7 24 ♜d2 (112)



Play went as follows:

- |         |      |
|---------|------|
| 24 ...  | ♝ad8 |
| 25 ♜e3  | ♝d6  |
| 26 f3   | ♝ed8 |
| 27 ♜ad1 | a5   |

In order to prevent White from playing a5 at some inconvenient moment, and obtaining a passed c-pawn.

- |         |      |
|---------|------|
| 28 ♜f2  | ♝f7  |
| 29 ♜c2  | ♝xc2 |
| 30 ♜xc2 | ♝e7  |
| 31 ♜e3  | ♝a6  |
| 32 ♜b3  | ♝c8  |
| 33 ♜c1  | ♝dc6 |

Changing the object of attack; it is now the c-pawn's turn.

- |    |                 |                 |
|----|-----------------|-----------------|
| 34 | $\mathbb{E}dc2$ | $\mathbb{Q}d6$  |
| 35 | f4              | $\mathbb{E}6c7$ |
| 36 | $\mathbb{Q}d3$  | h6              |
| 37 | $\mathbb{E}e1$  | g5              |
| 38 | g3              | $\mathbb{Q}d7$  |
| 39 | $\mathbb{E}f1$  | $\mathbb{Q}e7$  |
| 40 | $\mathbb{E}fc1$ | $\mathbb{Q}d6$  |
| 41 | $\mathbb{E}e1$  | $\mathbb{Q}d7$  |

Black's moves show all the signs of time-trouble.

- |    |                 |                |
|----|-----------------|----------------|
| 42 | $\mathbb{E}ee2$ | gx $f$ 4       |
| 43 | gx $f$ 4        | $\mathbb{E}g8$ |
| 44 | $\mathbb{E}e1$  |                |

If instead 44... $\mathbb{E}g2$ , then 44... $\mathbb{E}cc8$  followed by 45... $\mathbb{Q}b7$  and Black retains control of the g-file. This is the indirect result of Black's pressure on the c-pawn, which prevents White from taking the necessary defensive measures in time. When there is a weak pawn on the board, the attacker is quicker in transferring his forces from one sector to another.

- |    |                 |                |
|----|-----------------|----------------|
| 44 | ...             | $\mathbb{E}g4$ |
| 45 | $\mathbb{E}ce2$ |                |

At last White undertakes some counter-action.

- |    |                |                |
|----|----------------|----------------|
| 45 | ...            | $\mathbb{E}c6$ |
| 46 | $\mathbb{E}f2$ | $\mathbb{E}d6$ |
| 47 | $\mathbb{Q}c3$ | $\mathbb{E}c6$ |

- 48  $\mathbb{E}e3?$

The decisive mistake.

- |    |                 |                 |
|----|-----------------|-----------------|
| 48 | ...             | $\mathbb{E}g1$  |
| 49 | $\mathbb{E}h3$  | $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ |
| 50 | $\mathbb{E}xh6$ |                 |

50... $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{E}c1+$  is about equally disastrous.

- |    |                 |                |
|----|-----------------|----------------|
| 50 | ...             | $\mathbb{E}b1$ |
| 51 | $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ | $\mathbb{E}b4$ |

- |    |                 |                  |
|----|-----------------|------------------|
| 52 | $\mathbb{E}xf6$ | $\mathbb{E}xc4+$ |
| 53 | $\mathbb{Q}d3$  | $\mathbb{Q}e7$   |
| 54 | $\mathbb{E}h6$  | $\mathbb{E}xd4+$ |

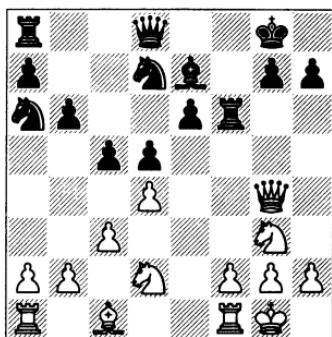
and Black wins.

### Kotov – Keres

*USSR Championship,  
Moscow 1948*

French Defence, Tarrasch Variation

- 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4 e5  
 $\mathbb{Q}fd7$  5  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  c5 6 c3 b6 7  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$   
8  $\mathbb{Q}xa6$   $\mathbb{Q}xa6$  9 0-0  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  10  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   
0-0 11  $\mathbb{W}g4$  f5 12 exf6  $\mathbb{E}xf6$  (113)



Black's e-pawn has remained backward, and it must be White's aim not only to attack this pawn, but also to prevent Black eliminating the weakness by forcing ...e5 at a suitable time.

- |    |                |                |
|----|----------------|----------------|
| 13 | $\mathbb{Q}h5$ | $\mathbb{E}g6$ |
| 14 | $\mathbb{W}e2$ | $\mathbb{Q}c7$ |
| 15 | $\mathbb{Q}f3$ |                |

White covers the square in front of the weak pawn – the blockading square.

- 15 ...  $\mathbb{Q}d6$

Now it would be of no use to White to occupy the blockading

square: after 16  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  17 dxe5 the e-file is closed, which means that the weakness of e6 has considerably diminished; one might even say that for all practical purposes it has disappeared. To put it pithily, the weakness is sealed.

16 g3 e5?

Black offers a pawn to relieve the pressure of the besieger.

17  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$

Stronger is 17 dxe5  $\mathbb{E}e6$  18  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  19  $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$ , preserving his extra pawn.

17 ...  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$

18 dxe5  $\mathbb{E}e6$

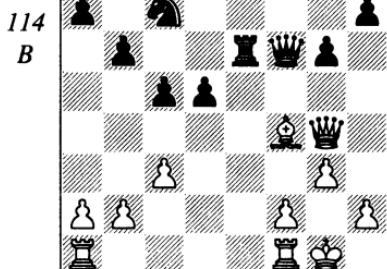
Now Black recovers the sacrificed pawn.

19  $\mathbb{W}g4$  g6

20  $\mathbb{Q}f6+$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$

21 exf6  $\mathbb{W}xf6$

22  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  (114)



A fresh situation has arisen. Now Black's d-pawn is weak, at least as long as it cannot advance to d4.

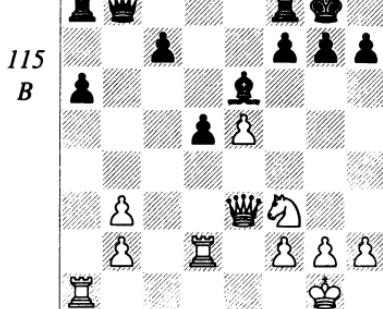
There followed 22... $\mathbb{Q}e8$  23  $\mathbb{R}ad1$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  24  $\mathbb{W}f3$  (but not 24  $\mathbb{R}xd5?$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$ ) 24... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  25 c4! and White won the weak pawn.

## Keres – Dr Euwe

*World Championship  
Tournament, Moscow 1948*

Ruy Lopez, Open Variation

1 e4 e5 2  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  a6 4  $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5 0-0  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  6 d4 b5 7  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  d5 8 dxe5  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  9  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  10  $\mathbb{Q}d1$  0-0 11 c4 bxc4 12  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  13  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  14  $\mathbb{W}xe3$   $\mathbb{W}b8$  15  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  16  $\mathbb{Q}bd2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  (many years later, it was discovered that 16... $\mathbb{W}a7$  is better) 17  $\mathbb{R}xd2$   $\mathbb{Q}xb3$  18 axb3 (115)



Black's a-pawn is isolated on an open file, but his c-pawn, although not isolated, is even weaker, since White can prevent its advance to c5. At the same time White's b-pawns are also weak, so that it becomes a question of 'first come, first served', and in this case it is White. The continuation was:

18 ...  $\mathbb{W}c8$

To enforce ...c5.

19  $\mathbb{R}c1$  c5

Best in the circumstances: after 19... $\mathbb{W}b4$  20  $\mathbb{R}c5$  (a positive prevention of the c-pawn's advance) 20... $\mathbb{R}ab8$  21  $\mathbb{R}d3$ , followed by 22

$\mathbb{B}dc3$  and 23  $\mathbb{Q}d4$ , White's pawn at b3 is solidly held, while in the long run Black's c-pawn must fall. Here again it is the weak pawn that has tipped the scales; it is incidental that White obtains strong squares at d4 and c5 (see Chapter 8). With the text-move, Black exchanges his weak c-pawn for White's weak b-pawn.

- 20  $\mathbb{B}xc5$        $\mathbb{B}xc5$   
 21  $\mathbb{W}xc5$        $\mathbb{W}xb3$   
 22  $\mathbb{Q}d4$

It is now clear who stands better; Black has two weaknesses (at d5 and a6), but White has only one. White has a strong knight (occupying a strong square); Black has a bishop which works only at half power (along one diagonal instead of two). Finally, White has a majority on the kingside of four pawns to three, and after adequate preparations these can go forward, and will develop great offensive powers.

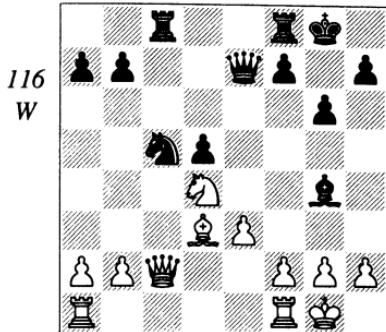
### Flohr – Dr Vidmar

Nottingham 1936

Queen's Gambit Declined,  
Orthodox Defence

- 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   
 $\mathbb{Q}e7$  5 e3 0-0 6  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  7  $\mathbb{W}c2$  c5 8  
 $\mathbf{cxd5}$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  9  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  10  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   
 $\mathbf{exd5}$  11  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  g6 12 dxc5  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  13  
 0-0  $\mathbb{Q}g4$  14  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{W}ac8$  (116)

White has forced an isolated pawn upon his opponent, but the circumstances are not such that White can soon set about threatening its capture. First comes endless manoeuvring, the sole object of which



is to exchange as many pieces as possible, and so make it easier for White to realize his advantage. He will keep a firm hold on the blockading square d4 to ensure that Black can neither get rid of his weakness (by ...d4) nor seal it (by an exchange at d4 without White being able to recapture with a piece).

- 15  $\mathbb{W}d2$       a6  
 16  $\mathbb{Q}c2$        $\mathbb{W}g5$   
 17 f3

Black has forced a weakness at e3 which, however, is of no great importance, as this pawn is close to White's base, and is therefore not difficult to defend.

- |    |                 |                 |
|----|-----------------|-----------------|
| 17 | ...             | $\mathbb{Q}d7$  |
| 18 | $\mathbb{E}fe1$ | $\mathbb{E}fd8$ |
| 19 | $\mathbb{E}ad1$ | $\mathbb{W}f6$  |
| 20 | $\mathbb{Q}b3$  | $\mathbb{Q}a4$  |
| 21 | $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ | $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ |
| 22 | $\mathbb{E}c1$  | $\mathbb{Q}c5$  |
| 23 | $\mathbb{E}ed1$ | $\mathbb{W}b6$  |
| 24 | $\mathbb{Q}e2$  | $\mathbb{Q}d7$  |
| 25 | $\mathbb{W}d4!$ |                 |

White is making considerable progress.

- |    |                 |                 |
|----|-----------------|-----------------|
| 25 | ...             | $\mathbb{W}xd4$ |
| 26 | $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ | $\mathbb{Q}e5$  |

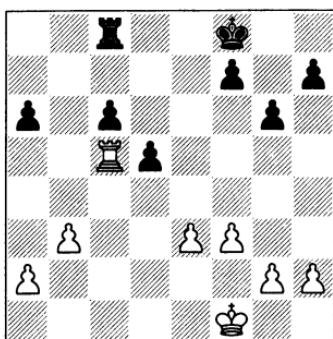
- 27 b3 ♘f8  
 28 ♔f1 ♜xc1  
 29 ♜xc1 ♖c6?

The point of Black's defensive plan which, however, miscarries.

- 30 ♖xc6 ♜c8  
 31 ♜c5! bxc6 (117)

Or 31...♜xc6 32 ♜xd5 ♜c1+ 33 ♔e2 ♜c2+ 34 ♜d2.

117  
W



What has Black achieved? His d-pawn is no longer isolated, but against that his c-pawn is backward, while his a-pawn has become weak and is open to attack. Moreover, two strong squares, d4 and c5, are available for White's king. The win for White is now only a question of time. The game continued:

- 32 ♔e2 ♘e7  
 33 ♔d3 ♘d6  
 34 ♜a5 ♜a8  
 35 ♔d4 f5  
 36 b4 ♜b8  
 37 a3 ♜a8

After 37...♜b6 38 f4 Black falls into zugzwang, which means that he will have to leave the white king in command of e5 and c5.

- 38 e4 fxe4

- 39 fxe4 dxe4  
 40 ♘xe4 ♜a7  
 41 ♘f4

White now turns his attention to Black's kingside in order to create further weaknesses before embarking on decisive action. Black's king and rook are completely tied up.

- 41 ... h6  
 42 h4 ♘e6  
 43 ♘g4 ♜a8  
 44 h5 g5  
 45 g3 ♜a7  
 46 ♘f3 ♜a8  
 47 ♘e4 ♜a7  
 48 ♜e5+!

The beginning of the end. The white rook forces the black king to declare his intentions: kingside or queenside. In either case the rook is to penetrate into Black's position via e8.

- 48 ... ♘d6

After 48...♘f6 49 ♜e8 Black must lose either the a-pawn or the c-pawn, while after 48...♔d7 49 ♘f5 the white king enters the enemy lines with decisive results.

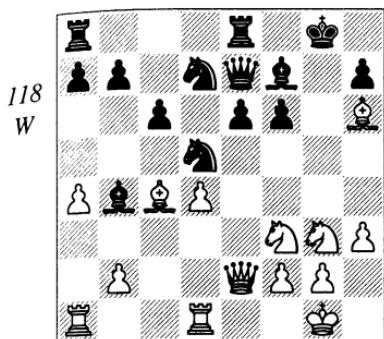
- 49 ♜e8 c5  
 50 ♜d8+

and White wins (50...♔c7 51 ♜h8 or 50...♔c6 51 ♜c8+).

**Capablanca – Fine**  
*Semmering-Baden 1937*  
 Slav Defence

- 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♘f3 ♘f6 4 ♘c3  
 dxc4 5 a4 ♘f5 6 e3 e6 7 ♘xc4 ♘b4  
 8 0-0 0-0 9 ♘e2 ♘g4 10 ♜d1 ♘e7  
 11 h3 ♘h5 12 e4 ♘bd7 13 e5 ♘d5

- 14 ♜e4 f6 15 exf6 gxf6 16 ♜g3 ♜f7  
 17 ♜h6 ♜fe8 (118)



Black's e-pawn constitutes a weakness, although White will, for the present, not be in a position to create serious threats against this pawn because Black's b4-bishop controls e1, preventing the doubling of the white rooks. Moreover, Black has control of the square in front of his weak e-pawn. This circumstance must not, however, be overestimated, for the advance ...e5 would not liberate the e-pawn, but merely displace it, while Black would have to reckon with the fact that this advance might make f5 available for the g3-knight.

### 18 ♜e1

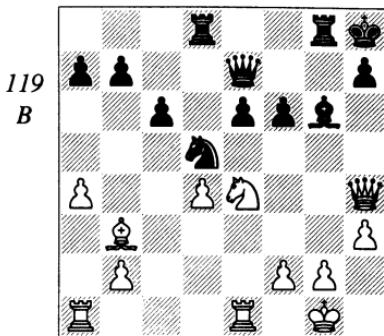
To drive away the b4-bishop.

- 18 ... ♜h8  
 19 ♜d3 ♜d6  
 20 ♜f3 ♜g8  
 21 ♜f4

The more pieces are exchanged, the easier the task for the attacker – a general rule when there are weak pawns on the board.

- 21 ... ♜xf4  
 22 ♜xf4 ♜xf4

- 23 ♜xf4 ♜b6  
 24 ♜b3 ♜ad8  
 25 ♜e1 ♜d5  
 26 ♜h4 ♜g6  
 27 ♜e4 (119)



White has succeeded in drawing the hostile f-pawn into the orbit of his attack and he now threatens both 28 ♜xd5 and 28 ♜c5. Black now has an unpleasant choice:

1. Exchanging at e4, after which White can concentrate all his forces on e6.
2. Guarding his f-pawn, when White can reply ♜c5, strengthening his attack on e6.
3. An immediate liquidation resulting in the loss of a pawn.

- 27 ... f5  
 28 ♜xe7 ♜xe7  
 29 ♜c5 ♜xd4  
 30 ♜xe6 ♜d5  
 31 ♜xb7

and White has a considerable advantage.

When the isolated pawn is also a doubled pawn, the weakness is even more serious, and this also holds

good in the case of a backward doubled pawn (in diagram 115, the white pawns on b2 and b3 constitute a backward doubled pawn). Not only can the backward doubled pawn expect no assistance from neighbouring pawns, but it stands in the way of such pieces as have the task of providing for its safety. The rules given for the handling of a single isolated or backward pawn apply in an even greater measure to a doubled pawn.

The case of doubled pawns which are not isolated (e.g. f7, g7 and g6) is different, and, although they also can, in certain circumstances, constitute a weakness, their treatment is entirely different and is outside the scope of this chapter.

Let us conclude with a recapitulation of the various forms of pawn weaknesses.

#### A. Isolated and backward pawns

*Assessment:* These are weaker when they stand on an *open file* and cannot *advance*. Moreover, the weakness increases when there are more than one of these pawns.

#### B. Hanging pawns

*Assessment:* These are weak only if the player attacking the hanging pawns is ahead in development, or if

most of the minor pieces have been exchanged. They are nearly always weak in an endgame.

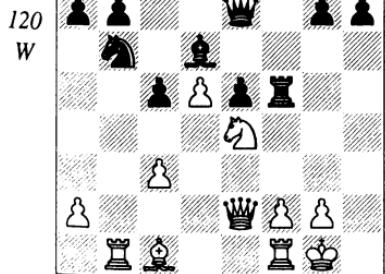
*Plan* (valid for both A and B): Attack on the pawn itself (typical forms of attack: doubling rooks or the advance of a pawn on an adjacent file; see diagrams 105 and 106), and on the *square in front of the pawn*, namely the *blockading square*. A piece which occupies this square can, as a rule, develop great activity (see Chapter 8). Avoid an exchange on this square if the recapturing unit is a pawn, lest the weakness become sealed. Keep harrying the pieces that protect the weak pawn. Exchanging pieces is usually to the attacker's advantage. If the direct assault is not likely to succeed, make use of the attacker's opportunities for the quicker transfer of his forces; this is more important and effective when there are several weak points in the opponent's position.

The *defender* must above all be armed against the psychological effect which the sustained pressure of the attack is likely to engender.

One more technical hint: the simultaneous guard of several points by one unit can constitute an economical use of available forces.

# 8 Strong Squares

The characteristic feature, ‘strong squares’, which we now propose to discuss, is in no way less important than what has gone before. It differs, however, in that it appeals less to the imagination, seems of less general application, and mostly occurs in combination with one or other of the themes which we have described in previous chapters. It follows that the resulting gains in material or other advantages could easily be ascribed to accidental circumstances, and it will be appropriate to give an example in which the reader will be left in no doubt that ‘strong squares’ alone have been the deciding factor (120).



In this position we say that e4 is a *strong square* for White. On it he has established a knight. In the preceding chapter we have already discussed ‘strong squares’. To amplify what we said then, a ‘strong square’ as we understand it must fulfil the following requirements:

1. The square must be safe from attack by hostile pawns.
2. It must be near the enemy position.
3. It must be possible to bring to bear sufficient force on the square in question, so as to lead sooner or later to its effective occupation.

Chess is not a matter of mathematics: it may well be that a square satisfies all three stipulations given above, and yet does not have any real significance, or that it conforms to only two of these requirements and yet still is effective. These varying circumstances make it extraordinarily difficult to assess the value of any particular strong square, and we shall let the matter rest at this point and try to obtain from a practical example a satisfactory understanding of the nature of a strong square and its consequences.

White, as we have said, has occupied the strong square e4 with a knight which commands a number of important squares in the hostile position, namely c5, d6, f6 and g5. This is an important point, but more important still is the fact that the knight cannot be driven from its post. It stands out of the reach of enemy pieces. The black bishop cannot attack the knight, nor can the black knight force an exchange. It can be compared with a gun well-posted on

a hill, on which the enemy cannot fire without himself running grave risks.

The position can now be *assessed* clearly: White has an important advantage in his strongly posted knight. Now for the *plan*: in this position the importance of the strong square comes into its own. It is easy to formulate a plan when the elements on which the plan is to be based are of a secure and lasting nature. For at least five moves the knight will remain at e4 and thus, in formulating a plan, the time factor will not be of the same urgency as in other cases.

The course of the game gives a clear demonstration of the type of plan required in such positions.

#### 1 c4

Guarding the passed pawn and blockading the black c-pawn, so that in a possible counter-attack Black cannot play ...c4.

1 ... **Qaf8**

2 ♕e3

Aimed at Black's c-pawn.

2 ... **h6**

3 ♜b5

Following up the attack on the c-pawn.

3 ... **Qc8**

4 ♕g4

Threatening 5 ♕xf5 and 5 ♕xh6.

4 ... **Qff8**

The alternative 4...♜f7? is fatal, because of 5 ♜xb6.

5 ♕xh6 **Qxc4**

Black can hold out a little longer; the queen guards the g-pawn and the knight guards the bishop.

#### 6 ♜c1!

A typical and instructive example of overloading. As soon as the knight gives way, the queen immediately assumes two functions, which it is unable to fulfil at the same time: defending the bishop, and preventing the mate at g7. Thus, after 6...♝b6 there follows 7 ♜xd6.

6 ... **a6**

7 ♜b3

7 ♜bb1 also wins, but the text-move is quicker.

7 ... **b5**

8 ♜g3 **Qc7**

9 ♕xg7

and wins, for example 9...♛xg7 10 ♕e6+.

A nice example of an attack, but what has it all to do with the strong knight at e4? The question is not so difficult to answer. In the first place, the control by the knight of f6 and g5 has made the defence uncommonly difficult; in the second, by attacking the bishop at d6 it has seriously curtailed the black queen's mobility; thirdly, the knight, by helping in the threat to Black's c-pawn, has tied several black pieces to its defence, and finally the knight, by guarding White's f-pawn, has prevented any counter-action by Black along the f-file. It is not a case of over-emphasizing the strong square, but of assessing objectively its actual performance, which is indeed impressive, even though the knight does not move from its strong square.

In examining the course of the game from this point of view, the

logic of White's sequence of moves becomes apparent; it is also clear that Black had no great choice of plans, and that the compulsory marching and counter-marching (... $\mathbb{H}af8-c8$  and ... $\mathbb{H}f5-f8$ ) cost him invaluable time.

Now to the *plan*. How can White take advantage of his knight's strong position? The answer is to start some manoeuvre in which the strong piece is the key element, and one or two subsidiary actions in which the attacker can exploit his greater freedom of action and greater variety of lines of play.

In this example White first of all pursued the scheme by which the c-pawn was attacked by three pieces (the rook at b5, bishop at e3 and knight at e4), and subsequently a mating attack was launched (with  $\mathbb{W}g4$ ,  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  and  $\mathbb{B}b5-b3-g3$ ). In all these manoeuvres the knight at e4 played an indirect but vital part. Were it not for this knight, the defender would have had access to f6 and the queen would not have been tied to the defence of his bishop at d6. It is remarkable how the interchange of manoeuvres by the bishop at e3 and the rook at b5 is effected with gain of tempo, while the defender is unable to regroup his forces. Yet the knight at e4 need not take part in these developments, but remains steadfast at e4 with effective threats to both wings. Black's defence has failed; he should at least have tried to bring his own knight to d6 by ... $\mathbb{Q}b6-c8$ , ... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  and ... $\mathbb{Q}d6$

to challenge the opposing knight on the strong square, but it would have taken too much time.

We now revert to diagram 120, in which the three requirements for a strong square are fulfilled (see the list on page 107). White's control of e4 is based on a number of factors, for instance the absence of Black's light-squared bishop, and above all the closing of the e-file by Black's pawn at e5. This pawn is the cause of all Black's problems! Without it Black might perhaps succeed in driving off the white knight – at any rate the knight would be far less secure, and White would have the task of defending it. However, the black e-pawn is very much there and e4 is thereby a strong square. In general it can be assumed that the square in front of an isolated pawn is or can become a strong square for the opposing side (see Chapter 7), but that is only one of many forms of strong square. If, for example, the unit at d6 is not a bishop, but a pawn, so that the e-pawn is no longer isolated, even then e4 would remain a strong square. In fact, the 'strong square' is found in all kinds of pawn formations. A glance at the various diagrams in this chapter will show how many variations there are of the same theme.

Are these concepts of strong square and weak square reciprocal? Does strong for one side mean weak for the opponent? One may well consider it so, but in chess language a distinction is made between the

two. If we speak of a weak square, we usually refer to a square which may at some future time become a strong square for the opponent; if, on the contrary, we speak of a strong square, then it is generally an accomplished fact, a strong square in being at the time.

Of the three requirements mentioned above, much more could be said, but instead of theorizing, let us rather find out about these things with the help of further examples. We would only emphasize the fact that a strong square in itself signifies nothing unless a suitable piece is available for its occupation, which means that effective action will depend on the piece in question.

We shall now give the moves leading to our next example, which will afford us an excellent illustration of the manner in which the *strong square* originates.

### Botvinnik – Boleslavsky

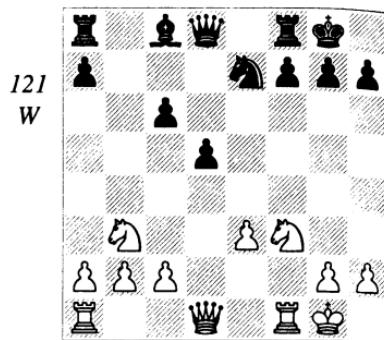
*Moscow 1941*

French Defence,  
Tarrasch Variation

- |          |      |
|----------|------|
| 1 e4     | e6   |
| 2 d4     | d5   |
| 3 ♜d2    | c5   |
| 4 exd5   | exd5 |
| 5 ♜b5+   | ♜c6  |
| 6 ♜gf3   | ♝d6  |
| 7 0-0    | ♝e7  |
| 8 dxс5   | ♝xc5 |
| 9 ♜b3    | ♝b6  |
| 10 ♜e3   | ♝xe3 |
| 11 ♜xc6+ | bxc6 |

### 12 fxe3 0-0 (121)

Many years later it was discovered that 12...♝g4 is more accurate.



Botvinnik considers that this position favours White, on account of various theoretical considerations. The situation, and especially the sequence of moves which have brought it about, is truly remarkable. His c1-bishop's singular manoeuvre (10 ♜e3), which without any ostensible necessity saddles him with an isolated pawn, and particularly the deeply thought-out exchange on his 11th move, bear witness to an outstanding insight into the potentialities of the position.

White has the possibility of obtaining two strong squares at d4 and c5, as the next diagram (after 19 b4!) clearly demonstrates. A cursory examination indicates that Black can no longer defend c5 by direct means: only the queen can get there, for the black knight at e7 is four moves away, while the bishop is of the wrong colour. Against this, White's queen and his knight at b3 are at hand. Thus c5 will fall into White's

hands with absolute certainty, and the command of d4 will follow of its own accord. White's control of both squares will form a harmonious whole. Should Black, however, succeed in obtaining command of c5, he would be able, at the right moment, to play ...c5 and to challenge d4 as well.

13 ♕d2      ♕b6  
14 ♕c3

It is clear that both players aim at the critical square.

14 ...      ♕b8

Indirectly defending c5 as now its immediate occupation by White would lose him the b-pawn.

15 ♕ab1

Indirectly attacking c5! Later on it will be seen that the move not only guards White's b-pawn but, above all, prepares for its advance to b4.

15 ...      ♕e8

The c5-square cannot now be defended, and so he turns his attention to White's weak e-pawn.

16 ♕fe1?!

In the spirit of Nimzowitsch's theory of prophylaxis, the weak e-pawn is guarded in anticipation of future events. However, Botvinnik himself criticizes this move as placing a good half of his advantage in jeopardy. 16 ♕c5 ♕f5 17 ♕fe1 is logical.

16 ...      ♕g6

The difference is that now this knight seeks a better post than f5. Black intends to occupy e5 as some compensation for the loss of c5 and d4. Clearly, e5 is a strong square for Black.

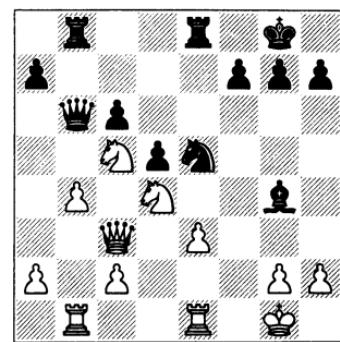
17 ♕c5!

The first and more difficult fortress is stormed; the second will fall at once. In the meantime 16 ♕fe1 is clearly shown to have been a wasted move.

17 ...      ♕g4

In keeping with Black's counter-plan, the command of e5.

18 ♕d4      ♕e5  
19 b4! (122)



White has achieved his strategic objective: both knights occupy dominating positions. The question now is: how can White follow up his advantage, while taking into account the trump card which Black holds in the favourable position of his own knight? The position of the respective knights has a static rather than a dynamic value; Black's knight commands some important squares, but it has no dangerous move at its disposal. The white knights are similarly situated: they are both beautifully posted, but have little chance of any effective advance and no immediate opportunities of co-operating with the other pieces. However, the

advantage conferred by the possession of strong squares is permanent and there is plenty of time.

19 ...  $\mathbb{K}bd8$

20 e4

White seizes the opportunity of getting rid of his weak e-pawn, simultaneously opening the e-file and thereby threatening to dislodge the strong knight from e5. Black has some compensation in the opening of the d-file and a possibility of weakening d4.

20 ... dx $e$ 4?!

The text-move illustrates one of those unobtrusive faults which frequently occur even among very strong players: capturing instead of letting the opponent capture. It is clear that making the capture yourself always costs one if not two tempi, which, among other things, means in the present case that White will be the first to double rooks on an open file.

Why then does Black decide on this capture? Is it on grounds of economy of thought, or love of a quiet life, because he reduces the number of possible continuations? After the stronger 20...f6! White still need not play 21 exd5. He can defer this capture at will while Black, in calculating the following moves, is obliged to reckon with this pending pawn exchange, which may occur at any moment.

21  $\mathbb{K}xe4$  a5

22 a3

The little by-play on the a- and b-files is more significant than it may appear. Analysts at the end of the

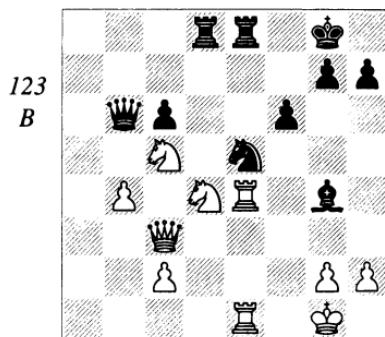
game pointed out that White could have played for the gain of a piece by 22  $\mathbb{W}g3$ . However, Botvinnik refutes this claim as follows: 22...f6 23  $\mathbb{K}xg4$   $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  24  $\mathbb{W}xg4$  h5 25  $\mathbb{W}f4$  axb4 26  $\mathbb{Q}db3$   $\mathbb{B}b5$  (26... $\mathbb{K}d5$  may be even better) and states that the chances are approximately equal. These complications lie outside the scope of our subject, and we must not divert our attention to them, important though they may be.

22 ... axb4

23 axb4 f6!

Safeguarding e5.

24  $\mathbb{K}be1$  (123)



Pinning the knight (Black's e8-rook being insufficiently guarded), which White will eventually attack with one of his own.

This position is important, because now a strategic decision has to be made. It is apparent that, since the two white knights are so much more effective than the one black one, White has a definite advantage.

White has a choice of a number of plans, of which the following three are the most important:

1. Attack on e6.
2. Attack on the pinned knight (as long as Black's e8-rook is guarded only once).
3. Threat to Black's c-pawn.

None of these possibilities offers at the moment any tangible prospects, because both white knights are half-pinned by Black's queen, a consequence of White's 20th move (e4). The king therefore must use up a tempo in order to make the knights mobile again, after which the threats enumerated above become actual. Thus Black has one tempo at his disposal, and if he makes good use of it, he will avoid considerable trouble.

It is curious to note that in this position Black has one manoeuvre which minimizes all three possibilities at one stroke, namely: 24... $\mathbb{Q}h5$  followed by 25... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ . Then the e8-rook is safe and guarded, so e6 is more strongly held and the c-pawn is indirectly protected as the knight is free to move.

The point is therefore that Black can neglect e6 for just one tempo because White cannot move a knight as long as the white king is still at g1. Moreover, the bishop is safer at f7 than at g4, where it is exposed to attack, and the protection of e6 is accordingly more secure.

**24 ...  $\mathbb{Q}h8?$**

Black did not see it.

**25  $\mathbb{Q}h1!$**

But White saw it clearly! A striking demonstration of the saying, 'When two do the same thing, it is not the same'. Now, suddenly, Black

is without defence against the various threats, first and foremost 26  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  attacking both e5 and c6.

**25 ...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$**

A few alternative possibilities:

- 1) 25... $\mathbb{Q}d5?$  26  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ .
- 2) 25... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  26  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  (not 26  $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{W}a7$  and White has achieved nothing) 26... $\mathbb{Q}b7$  27  $\mathbb{Q}f3$ .
- 3) 25... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  26  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  winning a pawn (26... $\mathbb{W}b8$  27  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $fxe5$  28  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$   $exd4$  29  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ ).
- 4) 25... $h6$  26  $h3$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  27  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  28  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  with advantage to White.
- 5) 25... $\mathbb{Q}h5$  (still best) 26  $\mathbb{Q}de6$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  and Black may defend.

**26  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$**

**27  $\mathbb{W}xc6$   $\mathbb{W}d8$**

**28  $\mathbb{Q}f3$**

White is a pawn up, though it took him some forty more moves to win.

This game demonstrates once again the value of strong squares, and in particular the power of a knight posted on such a square.

The *assessment of this position* (diagram 122) is more difficult than in the case of the first example, in that Black also has a strong square on which he too has posted a knight – but, on purely arithmetic grounds, we come to the same conclusion: two strong knights are better than one.

White's *plan* was to undermine Black's strong square at e5 and then to exploit his own strong points by attacking and overrunning e6.

While in an endgame the king too can come into its own on a strong square, in a middlegame position the piece of real importance is the knight,

a fact which is easy to understand. More powerful pieces, the queen and the rooks, are normally too valuable to fight in the front line. When a 'strong' queen is posted at e5, it may be out of reach of the pawns – the main characteristic of the strong square – but not secure from attack by rooks, knights or bishops.

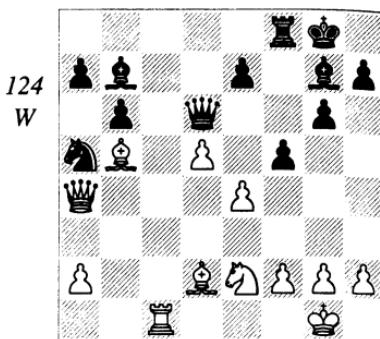
This argument does not hold good in the case of say, a strongly posted knight, which would have to give way only to an attack by a pawn. A threat from a bishop or knight may be disagreeable, but the worst that can happen is an exchange, or the strong piece may have to retreat.

On the strength of these considerations, the bishop too would seem to be a suitable piece to occupy a strong square, but there is a consideration which tips the scale in favour of the knight – a bishop can frequently carry out the same task without reference to its distance from the objective. A bishop at b2 is just as effective in an attack on g7 as when it is posted at e5. However, when occupying a square close to the enemy lines, the short-range knight is usually more suitable, although the bishop can also do good work from an advanced post, as in the following example:

### Furman – Smyslov USSR Ch, Moscow 1949 Grünfeld Defence

1 d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2 c4 g6 3  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d5 4 cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  5 e4  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  6 bxc3 c5 7  $\mathbb{Q}c4$

cxd4 8 cxd4  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  9  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  10  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  0-0 11 0-0 b6 12  $\mathbb{K}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  13  $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{K}c8$  14  $\mathbb{W}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  15 d5  $\mathbb{W}d6$  16  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{K}xc1$  17  $\mathbb{K}xc1$  f5 (124)



This move has the serious drawback of abandoning control of e6. However, threatened with the loss of a pawn at a5, Black decides on a risky plan without accurately gauging its serious consequences.

18  $\mathbb{Q}d7$

White has recognized that e6 is for him a strong square, and that in this instance a bishop is the most suitable piece for its occupation, in preference to the knight, which he could also establish there. The sequel clearly illustrates the activities of the bishop from the strong square in question.

18 ...  $\mathbb{W}e5$   
19  $\mathbb{Q}c3!$

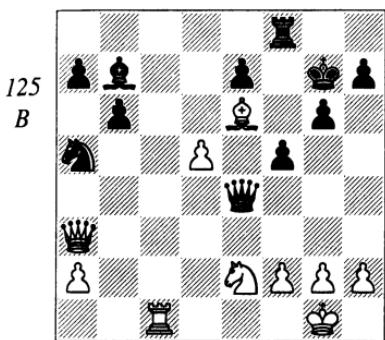
White first eliminates Black's g7-bishop, whereby Black's king-side is weakened still further and correspondingly the e6-square gains in strength.

19 ...  $\mathbb{W}xe4$   
20  $\mathbb{Q}e6+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$

**21 ♜xg7+ ♕xg7**

White has occupied the strong square with his bishop, and it becomes clear why it is so difficult to drive off this piece. The black knight is miles away, and Black's bishop is prevented from intervening (White's bishop and rook control c8), which would not be the case had the white knight occupied e6.

**22 ♜a3! (125)**



A particularly strong move, which clearly emphasizes the power of the bishop at e6. This bishop's function is not so much to co-operate in the attack on any particular objective, as to deprive the opposing king of flight-squares, so that there are direct mating threats. Incidentally, it prevents Black's rook from occupying the c-file. Thus here the strong piece acts in two directions, and its lines of action cannot be intercepted for the time being. The only pieces which come into consideration (the knight at a5 and bishop at b7) are too far away.

White now threatens 23 ♜xe7+ ♜h6 24 ♜xf8+ and as White checks

with each move, Black never has the chance to play either 22...♜xd5 or 22...♝xe2.

**22 ... ♜h4**

Some alternative replies:

1) 22...♝f6 23 ♜c3+ ♜e5 24 ♜d4! ♜xd5 (24...f4 25 ♜e1 followed by 26 ♜f3+) 25 f4! ♜e4 26 ♜f3+ ♜xe6 27 ♜g5+ ♜d7 28 ♜c7+ and mates.

2) 22...♜e8 23 ♜b2+ ♜h6 24 ♜c3 ♜xd5 25 ♜h3+ ♜g5 26 f4+ ♜g4 27 ♜xd5 ♜xd5 28 ♜c3 and mates.

**23 ♜c7 ♜h8**

If Black plays 23...♜e8 instead, 24 d6 at once would be inferior because of 24...♝e4, but after 24 g3 ♜f6 25 ♜f4, 26 d6 is a decisive threat. The black pieces are practically stalemated, and can undertake little or nothing against the forthcoming attack.

**24 ♜xe7**

This capture aggravates Black's problems, in that the a1-h8 diagonal cannot be left out of consideration for one moment under penalty of mate. The chief protagonist is always the strong bishop.

**24 ... ♜f6**

**25 ♜c7**

In order to interpose the rook in case of a check on the first rank.

**25 ... ♜a6**

**26 ♜f4!**

The constricted position of Black's forces makes the final attack possible: the threat is 27 ♜xg6+ hxg6 (27...♜xg6 28 ♜xf8+) 28 ♜h3+ followed by mate.

- 26 ... ♕a1+  
 27 ♜c1 ♕g7  
 28 ♜c3!

Renewing the threat 29 ♜xg6+ (29...♕xg6 30 ♜xf8+ or 29...hxg6 30 ♜h3+).

- 28 ... ♜d8  
 29 ♜b2!

Now that the threat from a3 has ended, the queen transfers her activities to the long diagonal. White again threatens 30 ♜xg6+ (30...♕xg6 31 ♜c7+).

- 29 ... ♜c4

This loses two pawns, but is the only way of prolonging Black's resistance.

- 30 ♜xg6+ ♕xg6  
 31 ♜xc4+ ♕g7  
 32 ♜xg7+ ♔xg7  
 33 ♜c7+

and White won, in the first place because of his extra pawns, but also through his strongly posted bishop, despite the fact that it is not nearly so effective in the endgame as in support of an attack in the middlegame.

*Judgement of the position in diagram 125:* White, although a pawn down, has the better game, as he can establish an unassailable bishop at e6 which powerfully supports the attack on the black king.

The *plan*: attack, and again attack – above all, avoid the exchange of queens, when the powerful bishop would at most give White equality, being a pawn down. Queen, rook and knight must support the action of the bishop, which they do to the full – the black king comes under

constant threats of mate, with the e6-bishop playing the chief part.

A strong square has a value in proportion to the importance of the squares which can be controlled from it, so it follows that a strong square is usually more valuable near the opposing king than on the other wing. It must be added that a strong square increases in value the closer it is to the enemy lines, which is why, in the last example, the bishop at e6 developed such remarkable power.

In diagram 115 the strong knight at d4 put the opposing bishop in the shade. In diagram 111 the strong white queen ruled equally in all directions. Finally, there is the example of diagram 117, where the king occupies a strong square from which it dominates the field in various directions.

We have already stated that, in the endgame, the strong square can provide an exceptionally favourable location for the king. As one of the conditions governing strong squares is that they should be inaccessible to the opposing forces, the king frequently finds on them a secure and, at the same time, an active post.

This is well illustrated in the following example:

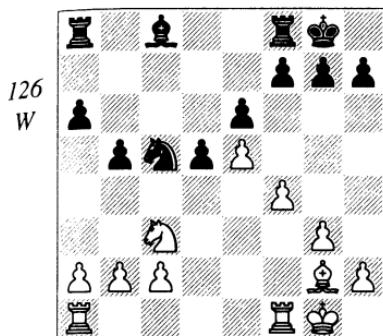
### Tarrasch – Teichmann

San Sebastian 1912

French Defence, Classical Variation

- 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♜c3 ♜f6 4 ♜g5 ♜e7 5 e5 ♜fd7 6 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 7

$\text{d}2\ 0-0\ \text{f}4\ \text{c}5\ 9\ \text{f}3\ \text{c}6\ 10\ \text{g}3\ \text{a}6$   
 11  $\text{g}2\ \text{b}5\ 12\ 0-0\ \text{cxd}4\ 13\ \text{xd}4$   
 $\text{xd}4\ 14\ \text{xd}4\ \text{c}5\ 15\ \text{xc}5\ \text{xc}5$   
 (126)



Bilguer's *Handbuch* pronounces the position to be in favour of White, a pronouncement with which the reader must agree – White has a permanently strong square at d4 – even though he may have some doubt as to its decisive effect, d4 fulfils all the requirements one may expect of a strong square but Black's position is to all appearances so sound that one may well doubt the possibility of exploiting the advantage normally derived from such a square.

Let the play speak for itself.  
There followed:

16 ♔e2

On the way to d4!

16 ... ♕d7

17 ♔d4 ♕ac8

Black has only one half-open file, and naturally endeavours to take advantage of it. Note that the strong knight at d4 guards the invaluable pawn at c2. It is fairly obvious that White will, at some time, advance

this pawn to c3, but the remarkable thing is that it will be less secure at c3 than c2 because Black can, at the right moment, play ...b4. Moreover, White may need to play b3 at some stage, and if the pawn is on c3 then the pawn itself might become vulnerable.

18 ♕f2?

A particularly fine move, which, with exact calculation, will relieve the watch on d4. The white king will occupy a temporary post at e3 and, as soon as it is safe to do so, will take over the occupation of d4.

18 ...  $\mathbb{H}c7$   
 19  $\mathbb{H}e3$   $\mathbb{H}e8$

Black fears the advance f5 and anticipates this manoeuvre by aiming at the e5-pawn with this rook. Meanwhile, White pursues a different plan.

20 

The object of this move is to allow the bishop to reach d3 via f1.

20 ... ♕b7

21 ♠f1      ♣a5

22 b3!

To allow Black's ... $\mathbb{Q}c4$  would spoil the whole of White's scheme. The exchange by  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  would be practically forced, and after ... $dxc4$  the occupation of d4 by the white king would become problematic (see the note to Black's 17th move).

22 ... h6?

A serious positional mistake, which White refutes in striking fashion. We have seen in Chapter 5 how much easier a kingside attack can be, when the opposing kingside pawns

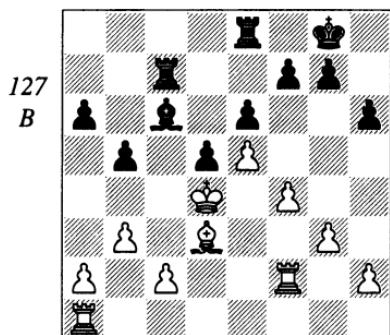
no longer stand on their original squares. Even when the queens are no longer on the board and there is practically no question of a mating attack, it can become of great importance for the attacker to be able, in addition to his pressure in the centre, to open a second front by clearing a file on the kingside. The text-move provides just such an opportunity.

**23 ♜d3 ♜c6**

Black eliminates the strong knight, but an even stronger piece takes its place.

**24 ♜xc6 ♜xc6**

**25 ♔d4! (127)**



His Majesty arrives. Note with what foresight White has taken the necessary measures: the bishop at d3 is guarding the c-pawn now that the knight has disappeared, and the pawn at b3 also has its uses: by controlling c4 it secures the king in his commanding position against any danger of being dislodged.

**25 ... ♜d7**

**26 g4!**

On the way to opening a second front. For the time being the white

king is concerned only indirectly in this manoeuvre, but nevertheless has the following influences:

1. One black rook is tied to the c-file, as otherwise the king would march in; and

2. Black must avoid any considerable liquidation, as the ideal position of White's king would inevitably lead to a won endgame.

**26 ... ♜c8**

**27 h4!**

There is now an immediate threat of 28 g5 h5 29 g6! and Black would lose his h-pawn.

**27 ... g6**

The typical pawn formation for defence against a pawn-storm. The idea is to keep the position closed by playing ...h5 in answer to g5 or ...g5 against h5. In the present position this method is less effective because White has a pawn at f4 and could answer ...g5 by an exchange at g5.

**28 ♜h1**

White intends to play h5, meeting ...gxh5 by ♜xh5.

**28 ... ♜g7**

**29 h5 ♜h8**

**30 ♜fh2 ♜d7**

**31 g5!**

Opening the h-file by force, and thereby practically guaranteeing a win for White.

**31 ... hxg5**

**32 fxg5 gxh5**

Black has no waiting moves available: 32...♜e8 is answered by 33 hxg6 ♜xh2 34 gxf7! and if, instead, 32...♜h7 then the rook is locked in

by 33 h6+. Relatively best would be 32... $\mathbb{H}cc8$ .

33	$\mathbb{H}xh5$	$\mathbb{H}xh5$
34	$\mathbb{H}xh5$	$\mathbb{Q}f8$
35	$\mathbb{H}h8+$	$\mathbb{Q}e7$
36	g6(?)	

Quicker is 36  $\mathbb{H}a8$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  37 a4 bxa4 38 bxa4  $\mathbb{H}c6$  39  $\mathbb{H}a7+$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  40 a5 and Black has practically no moves.

36	...	fxg6
37	$\mathbb{Q}xg6$	b4(?)
38	$\mathbb{H}h7+$	$\mathbb{Q}d8$
39	$\mathbb{Q}d3$	$\mathbb{H}c3$
40	a3	a5
41	$\mathbb{H}h8+$	$\mathbb{Q}e7$
42	$\mathbb{H}a8$	1-0

A notable ending, which enables us to draw some additional conclusions:

Our *assessment* of the position must follow from diagrams 126 and 127. In the first case, the white knight has full control of d4; in the second the king has taken over these duties, and it is to be noted that the king is quite safe from checks and cannot be driven from his dominating post.

White's *plan* is twofold:

1. The occupation of the safe square d4, first by a knight, then by the king (notable moves 18  $\mathbb{Q}f2!$ , 20  $\mathbb{H}f2!$  and 22 b3!).

2. The opening of a second front, exploiting White's space advantage on the kingside. To this end it is necessary to advance the pawns on that wing in order to open a file, which in turn creates the conditions in which simplification enables the strong king to take an effective part in the

proceedings. (The execution of this plan was made considerably easier by 22...h6?; but for this weakening move White would have had to make preparations for its realization by the further advance of his f-pawn.)

However, we must not take the term 'strong square' in too narrow a sense, even when the three essential conditions which were enumerated at the beginning of this chapter are satisfied, and we must in particular examine its invulnerability to hostile pawns. There are degrees of this; the square may be absolutely invulnerable, or it may be that the opponent must undertake lengthy and time-consuming preparations to expel a piece from the strong square.

Here is a simple example which illustrates an commonly occurring situation:

1	e4	e5	2	$\mathbb{Q}f3$	$\mathbb{Q}c6$	3	$\mathbb{Q}b5$	a6	4	$\mathbb{Q}a4$	$\mathbb{Q}f6$	5	0-0	$\mathbb{Q}e7$	6	$\mathbb{H}e1$	b5	7	$\mathbb{Q}b3$
d6	8	c3	9	0-0	9	h3	$\mathbb{Q}a5$	10	$\mathbb{Q}c2$	c5	11	d4	$\mathbb{W}c7$						

A familiar acquaintance, the Chigorin Variation of the Ruy Lopez.

12	dxe5	dxe5
13	$\mathbb{W}e2$	$\mathbb{Q}e6$
14	$\mathbb{Q}g5(?)$	

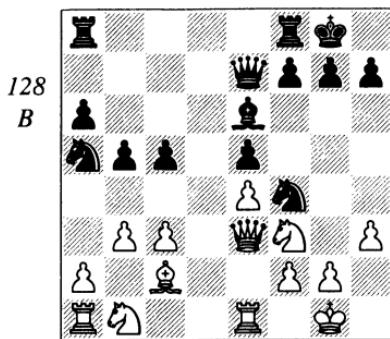
An inferior move, as will soon become apparent.

14	...	$\mathbb{Q}h5!$
15	$\mathbb{Q}xe7$	$\mathbb{Q}f4!$
16	$\mathbb{W}e3$	

Not 16  $\mathbb{W}f1$  which would lose still more material after 16... $\mathbb{Q}c4$ .

16	...	$\mathbb{W}xe7$
17	b3 (128)	

To prevent 17... $\mathbb{Q}c4$ . If 17  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  the reply is 17... $\mathbb{W}g5$  18  $\mathbb{Q}g4$  h5.

128  
B

Let us examine the black knight's position at f4. The square is not a strong one in the literal sense of the word, as the knight is exposed to attack by g3. On the other hand, this move is not immediately available because of the reply ... $\mathbb{Q}xh3+$ . It will take much time and thought to make g3 possible, and we can term Black's f4, to all intents and purposes, a strong square.

How has this come about? It is a result of the combination of h2-h3 and the exchange of dark-squared bishops (14  $\mathbb{Q}g5?$  and 15  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ ). One may view the position in this manner: in king's pawn openings, the normal pawn formation is pawns at e4, f2, g2, h2 vs. e5, f7, g7, h7. Here playing h3 does not create a weakness at f4 but it does imply a liability which in certain circumstances can lead to trouble; the presence at c1 of the dark-squared bishop can play an important role in minimizing the difficulties White might face. Let us add that the

square at d5 represents a weakness in Black's position, which, however, is of little importance, since White for some time will not be able to bring his pieces to bear on that point.

We give a few more moves in this game:

17 ...  $\mathbb{W}f6$

Threatening 18... $\mathbb{Q}xh3!$  19 gxh3?  
 $\mathbb{W}g6+$ .

18  $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{M}ad8$

The reply to 18... $\mathbb{W}g6$  is 19  $\mathbb{Q}h4$   
 $\mathbb{W}g5$  20  $\mathbb{W}g3$ .

19  $\mathbb{Q}bd2$

19  $\mathbb{W}xc5$  can be answered by  
19... $\mathbb{Q}xh3$  20  $\mathbb{W}xe5$   $\mathbb{W}h6$ .

19 ...  $\mathbb{W}h6!$

Threatening 20... $\mathbb{Q}xh3$ .

20  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{W}g5$

21 g3  $\mathbb{Q}xh3!$

and Black has won a valuable pawn. (22  $\mathbb{Q}xh3?$   $\mathbb{W}xe3$  23  $\mathbb{M}xe3$   $\mathbb{W}xd2$ .)

f4 has, in this example, functioned as a strong square, and has been the key element in the kingside attack.

We can sum up this illustration in the usual way:

*Judging the position in diagram 128:* Black has by far the better game because the knight at f4 cannot for the time being be driven off, and must therefore be considered a 'strong' knight.

The *plan*: Black must as speedily as possible take advantage of the knight's position at f4 by a general action against White's kingside. Above all, he must not wait until White has consolidated his position

by  $\mathbb{Q}h2$ ,  $\mathbb{Q}g1$  and  $g3$ , for then  $f4$  is no longer a strong square.

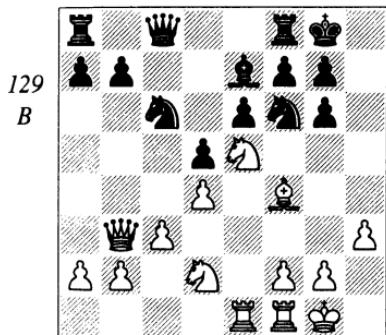
Here is another illustration, in which the conception of a 'strong square' is on an even wider scale.

### Milner-Barry – Znosko-Borovsky

Tenby 1928

Caro-Kann Defence

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 exd5 cxd5 4  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   
 $\mathbb{Q}c6$  5 c3  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  6  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  7  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  e6  
8  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  9  $\mathbb{Q}bd2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  10 0-0 0-0  
11 h3  $\mathbb{Q}h5$  12  $\mathbb{Q}ae1$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  13  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   
hxg6 14  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  (129)



Theory concludes here with the words 'White stands better'. There are indeed various factors in favour of White; chief among them is that he controls e5. Yet e5 is not properly speaking a strong square, since Black's f-pawn can at any time recover the control of e5. However, driving the knight from his post at e5 by means of ...f6 implies a weakening of the pawn at e6 and the remedy could well prove worse than the disease. Diagram 129 illustrates the

characteristics of a whole group of positions, in which a half-open file plays a dominant part. (See Chapter 9, in which the furthest square is occupied by a minor piece in order to extend the pressure on the hostile position.)

White commands the half-open e-file and Black the half-open c-file. Black should, in order to take advantage of this circumstance, place a knight on c4. However, this square is covered by two white knights and furthermore, even should Black succeed in bringing a knight to c4, it would not be equivalent to White's occupation of e5 as this square is more central and is also in closer proximity to the enemy king. There followed:

14 ...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$

Aimed at e5 but the drawback is that the text-move weakens Black's kingside.

15  $\mathbb{Q}df3$

Strengthening e5.

15 ...  $\mathbb{Q}cxe5$

16  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$

Taking with the pawn would be against White's strategic intentions.

16 ...  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$

17  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$

White has maintained his superiority. It is true, a bishop has taken the place of the knight, but, as the sequel shows, this in no way weakens his prospects, for here the bishop is at least as effective as the knight.

17 ...  $\mathbb{Q}c6$

After 17...f6 18  $\mathbb{Q}h2$  Black's e-pawn is doomed to rapid destruction.

**18  $\mathbb{B}e3!$** 

A well-known recipe: the remaining white pieces must support the action of the bishop.

**18 ... b5**

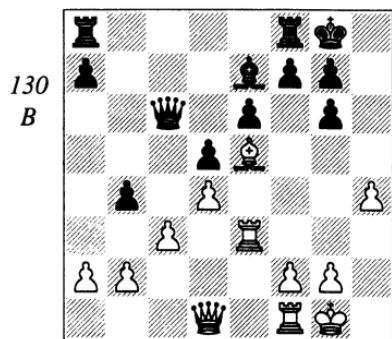
An attempt at counter-action on the queenside. It comes too late, and therefore brings no relief.

**19  $\mathbb{W}d1!$** 

Regrouping, always with the idea of making the best use of the bishop's strong position at e5.

**19 ... b4**

Consistent, but a defensive move such as 19... $\mathbb{A}d6$  is preferable.

**20 h4! (130)**

With the clear intention of eliminating the hostile g-pawn, after which Black's kingside lies bare to the concentrated assault of the white forces.

**20 ...  $\mathbb{B}xc3?$** 

After this ill-considered exchange, nothing will avail against White's attack. There is no doubt that at this point 20...f6 is necessary.

**21  $\mathbb{B}xc3 \mathbb{W}b6$** 

Now 21... $\mathbb{W}e8$  would be a better chance.

**22 h5! g5**

Or 22...f6 23 hxg6 fxe5 24  $\mathbb{W}h5$  and mate in a few moves.

**23 h6!!**

The strongest possible support for the bishop.

**23 ... f6**

Other moves lose, for example 23...g6 24 h7+ or 23...gxh6 24  $\mathbb{W}h5$  or finally 23... $\mathbb{A}f6$  24 hxg7  $\mathbb{A}xg7$  (24... $\mathbb{A}xg7$  25  $\mathbb{W}h5!$ ) 25  $\mathbb{A}xg7 \mathbb{A}xg7$  26  $\mathbb{W}h5$  f6 27  $\mathbb{B}fc1 \mathbb{A}f7$  28  $\mathbb{B}h3$  and wins.

**24  $\mathbb{W}h5?$** 

A sacrifice which is neither necessary nor correct. After 24  $\mathbb{A}c7$   $\mathbb{W}xb2$  (otherwise 25  $\mathbb{W}c2$ , heading for g6, gives White a strong attack in any case) 25  $\mathbb{W}d3$  f5 26  $\mathbb{B}e1$  White has very dangerous threats at the cost of only a pawn.

**24 ...  $\mathbb{A}d8??$** 

Equivalent to resignation. Black should have accepted the offer with 24...fxe5. Evidently White's idea was to continue 25  $\mathbb{W}g6$   $\mathbb{A}f6$  26  $\mathbb{B}fc1$ , with the deadly threat of 27  $\mathbb{B}c7$ . However, Black plays 26...e4! 27  $\mathbb{B}c7$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$ , covering g7 again, after which White would be struggling even to draw.

**25  $\mathbb{W}g6$** 

After this move the game finishes abruptly.

**25 ...  $\mathbb{W}b7$** **26  $\mathbb{B}c7!$  1-0**

Even when threatened with extinction, the white bishop helps in giving the enemy his death-blow.

*Judging the position in diagram 129: White has the better game because of his strong square at e5 and*

the greater freedom of movement of his forces on the kingside.

The *plan*: Support of the activities of the piece posted at e5 (bishop or knight) by bringing the major pieces to the kingside.

The success of this operation is made considerably easier by Black's doubled g-pawn – this provides another illustration of a weakness of the king-position such as shown in Chapter 5.

We conclude with some variations from openings popular in recent decades, in which a strong square plays an important part:

#### Ruy Lopez, Chigorin Defence

(Compare the example on p. 119)

1	e4	e5
2	Qf3	Qc6
3	Ab5	a6
4	La4	Qf6
5	0-0	Le7
6	Le1	b5
7	Ab3	d6
8	c3	0-0
9	h3	Qa5
10	Ac2	c5
11	d4	Wc7
12	Qbd2	Qc6
13	dxc5	dxc5
14	Qf1	Le6
15	Qe3	Qad8
16	Wc2	

d5 is a strong square and it must, after careful preparation, sooner or later fall into White's hands, possibly even by combinative means such as the following:

16	...	Qh5
17	Qd5	Qxd5
18	exd5	Qxd5
19	Qxh7+	Qxh7
20	Wc4+	

winning the exchange.

#### Sicilian Defence, Boleslavsky Variation

1	e4	c5
2	Qf3	Qc6
3	d4	Qxd4
4	Qxd4	Qf6
5	Qc3	d6
6	Qe2	e5

At first sight against accepted principles, as Black weakens his pawn at d6 as well as the d5-square. On the other hand, he has free play for his pieces, which frequently provides him with the opportunity of forcing ...d5 thus, at one stroke, simultaneously eliminating the weak pawn and the weak square, e.g.:

7	Qb3	Qe7
8	0-0	0-0
9	f4	a5
10	a4	Qb4
11	Qh1	Qe6
12	f5	Qxb3
13	cx b3	d5

leading to a satisfactory game for Black.

This line, however, requires careful play, lest the backward d-pawn become a permanent weakness. In this and similar variations White must make it his business to prevent Black's ...d5, which forces the exchange of pawns and eliminates the existing weaknesses.

**French Defence,  
Tarrasch Variation**

- |         |       |
|---------|-------|
| 1 e4    | e6    |
| 2 d4    | d5    |
| 3 ♜d2   | c5    |
| 4 exd5  | exd5  |
| 5 ♜b5+  | ♜d7   |
| 6 ♜e2+  | ♜e7   |
| 7 ♜xd7+ | ♜xd7  |
| 8 dxc5  | ♜xc5  |
| 9 ♜b3   | ♝xe2+ |
| 10 ♜xe2 | ♜xb3  |
| 11 axb3 | ♜c5   |
| 12 ♜d2  | ♜e7   |
| 13 ♜c3  |       |

and White has control of the strong square at d4.

**King's Indian Defence,  
Fianchetto Variation**

- |       |      |
|-------|------|
| 1 d4  | ♞f6  |
| 2 c4  | g6   |
| 3 g3  | ♜g7  |
| 4 ♜g2 | d6   |
| 5 ♜f3 | 0-0  |
| 6 ♜c3 | ♝bd7 |
| 7 0-0 | e5   |
| 8 e4  |      |

If 8 d5, then 8...a5 (preventing b4) after which Black has created a strong square for himself at c5. However, it should be noted that this situation may only be temporary, as White can eventually regain control of c5, for example by b3, a3, ♜b1 and b4.

- |        |      |
|--------|------|
| 8 ...  | exd4 |
| 9 ♜xd4 | ♝e8  |
| 10 h3  | ♞c5  |

**11 ♜e1 a5**

The last move strengthens the c5-knight's position. However, even without 11...a5 this knight can be classified as 'strong', for 12 b4 has the disadvantage for White of opening up the long dark-square diagonal for the g7-bishop.

**Nimzo-Indian Defence,  
Sämisch Variation**

- |        |       |
|--------|-------|
| 1 d4   | ♞f6   |
| 2 c4   | e6    |
| 3 ♜c3  | ♜b4   |
| 4 e3   | 0-0   |
| 5 a3   | ♜xc3+ |
| 6 bxc3 | d6    |
| 7 ♜d3  | e5    |
| 8 ♜e2  | b6    |
| 9 ♜g3  | ♞c6   |
| 10 ♜b2 | ♞a6   |
| 11 e4  | ♝e8   |
| 12 ♜e2 | ♞a5   |

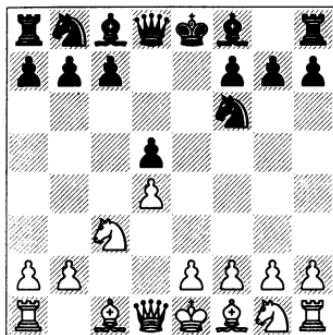
Black's a5-knight is now posted on a strong square, and although it is on an outside file, it is quite effective for the knight exerts pressure on c4 (the immediate threat is ...♝a4 winning the c-pawn). In addition the knight can at the right moment move to b3.

After 13 a4 (preventing ...♝a4) Black forces the advance 14 d5 by 13...♝e6 and obtains yet another strong square at c5 which the same knight can reach either via b7 or (at the moment with gain of tempo) via b3.

# 9 Open Files

When outstanding players, from Botvinnik to Kasparov, quite frequently continue with 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4 cxd5 exd5 (131), one must conclude that the concept of positional play has undergone a change since the first part of the century.

131  
W



One important consideration is an argument against the exchange 4 cxd5. The c8-bishop's diagonal is laid open, and the development of this bishop, which is awkward for Black in so many variations of the Orthodox Queen's Gambit, is no longer a problem. Against this, it might be argued that White exchanges his c-pawn against a centre pawn so that he obtains a pawn majority in the centre (e-pawn and d-pawn against Black's lone d-pawn), but it must not be overlooked that the centre in its wider conception includes the c- and f-pawns, so we must conclude that, both before and after the exchange, the respective centres are

approximately equal. If a central majority is not the justification for relieving Black of the problem of his c8-bishop, then what is? In fact the justification lies in the c-file which has been opened by the unexpected exchange of the c-pawn.

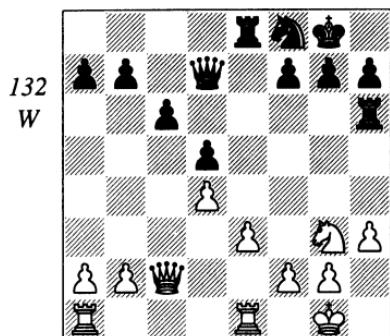
White has the open c-file, but Black has the e-file. Which of the two is the more important? We naturally assume that the c-file takes pride of place, or why should World Champions adopt this Exchange Variation? However, we shall not perceive this clearly until we have seen the continuation of the play from the position in diagram 131 up to the point where the open files begin to play their part. From a profusion of available material, we have selected a game in which this feature is illustrated particularly clearly so that, after considerable simplification, other characteristics lose their importance or disappear altogether.

If we ignore a transposition of moves, the game went as follows:

**Flohr – Dr Euwe**  
*Amsterdam (1) 1932*  
Queen's Gambit Declined,  
Exchange Variation

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4 cxd5  
exd5 5  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  6 e3 c6 7  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   
 $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  8  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  0-0 9  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  10 0-0  
 $\mathbb{Q}f8$  11  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  12  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  13

$\mathbb{Q}xg4 \mathbb{Q}xg4$  14  $\mathbb{M}fe1 \mathbb{M}ad8$  15  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   
 $\mathbb{M}d6$  16  $\mathbb{Q}g3 \mathbb{M}h6$  17  $\mathbb{Q}f5 \mathbb{W}g5$  18  
 $\mathbb{Q}xg4 \mathbb{W}xg4$  19  $h3 \mathbb{W}d7$  (132)



132 W

In the main the pawn formation here is similar to that in diagram 131. White has the open c-file and Black the e-file. To be accurate, however, as the c-file is blocked by Black's c-pawn and the e-file by White's e-pawn, both these files must be described as half-open. Such half-open files have certain special features, which will be clearly demonstrated by the further course of the game.

#### 20 b4!

In order to follow up later on with b5, which in any event will cause a weakening of Black's queenside. This pawn-thrust is characteristically called a 'minority attack'. (Here two pawns against three.)

20 ...  $\mathbb{Q}e6$   
 21  $\mathbb{M}ab1$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$   
 22 a4 a6

What the players are aiming for is quite clear. White wishes to advance b5 and Black aims at its prevention. For the present the chances are approximately equal. However, such a

state of temporary equilibrium must favour the attacker, who can at will direct his forces on to some other objective, while the defender's pieces are more or less tied up.

#### 23 $\mathbb{Q}f1$

White transfers his knight to the other wing, a manoeuvre he combines with threats to the black rooks.

23 ...  $\mathbb{M}e7$   
 24  $\mathbb{Q}h2$

Threatening 25  $\mathbb{Q}g4$  followed by  $\mathbb{Q}e5$ .

#### 24 ... $\mathbb{M}he6$

In order to be able to play ...f6 without separating the rooks.

25  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  f6  
 26  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{M}e8$   
 27  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{M}6e7$   
 28  $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{W}c8$

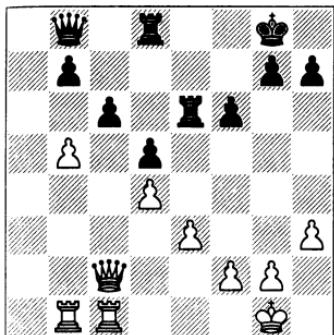
The white knight has reached its destination, but cannot at present achieve much.

29  $\mathbb{M}ec1$   $\mathbb{M}d8$   
 30  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{W}b8$   
 31  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$

Black gives up the fight for b5. This is not compulsory, but, taking into account that White has improved his position during the recent manoeuvres, it is hardly surprising that Black is not anxious to persevere with his current plan.

32  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{M}xe6$   
 33 b5! axb5  
 34 axb5 (133)

The key position in every attack on a half-open file is when the pawns support the pressure along the file. Now all Black can do is to choose between 34...cxb5, remaining with

133  
B

two weak pawns at b7 and d5, or leaving things as they are, which burdens him with one weak pawn only at c6.

**34 ... cxb5?**

He decides on two weak pawns, which may conceivably bring some compensation, but certainly not in this position. With 34... $\mathbb{W}d6$  35 bxc6 bxc6 on the whole Black has fair chances of a draw.

**35  $\mathbb{M}xb5$  b6**

With 35... $\mathbb{M}c6$  36  $\mathbb{W}xc6!$  bxc6 37  $\mathbb{M}xb8$  Black simply throws away a pawn.

**36  $\mathbb{W}b3!$**

Everything is now forced. Both isolated pawns are under pressure and one or the other must soon fall.

**36 ...  $\mathbb{W}d6$**

Or 36... $\mathbb{W}b7$  37  $\mathbb{M}cc5$   $\mathbb{M}dd6$  38 e4  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  39 e5! and the black rooks must give up the protection of one of the pawns.

**37  $\mathbb{M}b1$**

Black's pawn at b6 must fall.

This simple example clearly demonstrates the principles of half-open file strategy. After prolonged but by no means complicated manoeuvring,

White enforced the thrust b4-b5 and thereby created in the black camp such weaknesses that the loss of a pawn could not be avoided.

Perhaps the reader will ask why Black did not for his part make use of his own half-open file in a similar way, by the advance ...f5-f4. The answer is that the position generally is not favourable for this manoeuvre. It frequently costs a great deal of trouble to force the f-pawn forward to f4 and to achieve this it may be necessary to play ...g5 as well, weakening Black's kingside.

The minority attack is usually more effective on the queenside than on the other wing, so that, even when Black's advance ...f5-f4 can be carried out without much difficulty, the result is not necessarily favourable for Black. We will consider this situation in more detail in diagram 135, so let us first draw our conclusions from diagram 132 in the usual manner:

*Assessment:* White has the better chances because the half-open c-file is of greater importance than the half-open e-file.

*The plan:* Advance on the queenside (a4 and b4), with the white pieces posted on the b- and c-files, for preference the queen's rook at b1, the king's rook at c1 and the queen at c2. In addition, it is often of importance to occupy the furthest square on the c-file (here c5) with a knight (compare Chapter 7, diagram 119).

This simple illustration may perhaps lead to the assumption that the

half-open file is the key to the win in all circumstances, but the matter is not so simple, and this too can be seen in the example in question.

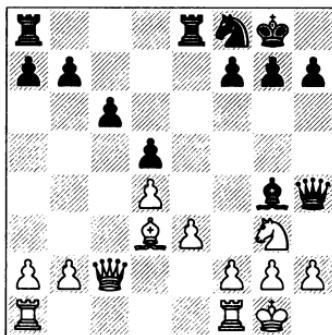
In the course of the game, from move 10 to move 20, we notice that White has to manoeuvre with extreme accuracy to avoid the danger which threatens his kingside. These dangers occur through the advantage in space which Black is able to obtain and which makes possible such manoeuvres as ... $\mathbb{K}a8-d8-d6-h6$ . This is further demonstrated in the following supplementary example from the same opening variation.

### Flohr – Keres

*Semmering-Baden 1937*  
Queen's Gambit Declined,  
Exchange Variation

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4 cxd5 exd5 5  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  6 e3 c6 7  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  8  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  0-0 9  $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  10 0-0  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  11  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  12  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  13  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$   $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  (up to here the same as in the preceding example) 14  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}h4$  15  $\mathbb{Q}g3$  (134)

134  
B



Fine remarks here that the advance of White's queenside pawns is difficult to check. Let us examine what follows:

- |                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| 15 ...             | $\mathbb{Q}ad8$ |
| 16 b4              | $\mathbb{Q}d6$  |
| 17 $\mathbb{Q}fe1$ | $\mathbb{Q}h6$  |

Black's typical kingside counter-attack.

- |                   |                |
|-------------------|----------------|
| 18 $\mathbb{Q}f1$ | $\mathbb{Q}e6$ |
| 19 b5             |                |

In view of Black's threatening position on the kingside, White has no time to prepare his own campaign quietly.

- |        |                  |
|--------|------------------|
| 19 ... | $\mathbb{Q}f3!?$ |
|--------|------------------|

A very dangerous and aggressive offer, which fails to be immediately successful only because of White's subtle defence.

- |                    |                |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 20 gxf3            | $\mathbb{Q}g5$ |
| 21 $\mathbb{Q}f5!$ |                |

To defend f3 would be ineffective after 21  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}h3+$ , mating, or 21  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{W}h3$  followed by 22... $\mathbb{Q}xf3+$ . The text-move, by guarding the key square h3, is intended to parry the mating threat 21... $\mathbb{Q}xf3+$  22  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{W}h3+$  23  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{W}xh2+$  24  $\mathbb{Q}xh2$   $\mathbb{W}xh2\#$ .

- |                   |                  |
|-------------------|------------------|
| 21 ...            | $\mathbb{Q}xf3+$ |
| 22 $\mathbb{Q}g2$ | $\mathbb{W}h5$   |

After 22... $\mathbb{Q}xf3+$  23  $\mathbb{Q}g3$  (and not 23  $\mathbb{Q}xh2$   $\mathbb{W}xh2+$  24  $\mathbb{Q}f1$ , when 24... $\mathbb{W}h5$  25  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{W}g5+$  26  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}h2$  gives Black a decisive attack) 23... $g6$  24 bxc6 gxf5 25  $\mathbb{W}xf5$  bxc6 26  $\mathbb{Q}h1$  White has the advantage as Black's forces are virtually paralysed.

After the text-move Black threatens to win back the sacrificed piece

by continuing with either 23... $\mathbb{Q}h4+$  or 23... $\mathbb{W}xf5!$ .

- 23  $\mathbb{Q}g3!$        $\mathbb{Q}xe1+$   
 24  $\mathbb{E}xe1$        $\mathbb{W}xh2+$   
 25  $\mathbb{Q}f3$

Black's attack is repulsed and the material on either side is approximately equal (rook and two pawns for two minor pieces). Although this game ended in a draw, the course of the game shows clearly that Black's attack is not to be taken lightly, and, upon examination of diagram 134 we arrive at the following conclusion: White has the better chances on the queenside, Black on the kingside.

*Assessment:* It is, in the nature of things, impossible to decide which side has the edge. Let it suffice to say that White's action is more enduring and Black's more fierce.

*White's plan:* Attack on the queenside by means of the well-known advance b4-b5, together with a firm defensive hold on the kingside, counteracting Black's numerical superiority there by keeping his minor pieces close at hand.

*Black's plan:* Attack at all costs on the kingside. Purely passive defence on the queenside offers few chances of survival in the long term. Once White has played b5 Black must on no account capture the pawn. It is easier for Black to defend c6 from the side than to defend b7 or d5.

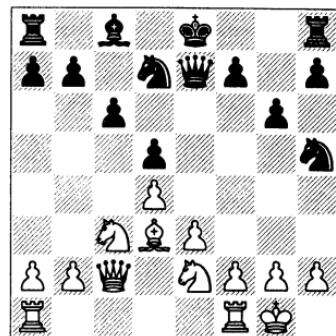
Here is another example in which Black takes advantage of his half-open file:

## Bouwmeester – Dr Euwe

Amsterdam 1950

Queen's Gambit Declined,  
Exchange Variation

- 1 d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2 c4 e6 3  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d5 4  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   
 $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  5 cxd5 exd5 6 e3 c6 7  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   
 $\mathbb{Q}e7$  8  $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  9  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  10  
 $\mathbb{Q}ge2$  g6 11 0-0 (135)



135  
B

The situation here differs from that in preceding examples, because the pawn at g6 makes a kingside attack by Black very much harder to carry out. Black therefore adopts a different plan.

- 11 ... f5

The minority attack on the kingside.

- 12  $\mathbb{E}ab1$

White prepares for the usual action on the queenside. Note that 12 a3 loses a tempo (in the game the pawn goes to a4 in one move – see move 14). Furthermore, White has left out the move  $\mathbb{E}ac1$  which is often played in the Queen's Gambit Declined. As mentioned before, the right place for the queen's rook in this variation is b1.

- 12 ... 0-0  
13 b4 a6

Not with any idea of preventing or even delaying White's advance, but rather to exchange the a-pawns and thus both activate the a8-rook and ensure that Black is not left with a weak a-pawn.

- 14 a4 f4!

The counter-stroke.

- 15 ♜xf4 ♜xf4  
16 exf4 ♜xf4  
17 ♜e2 ♜f6

Black's action has achieved the following: the f-file is open, and above all, White's d-pawn is weak.

- 18 b5 axb5  
19 axb5 ♜f8

According to the principle that one weak pawn is less damaging than two.

- 20 bxc6 bxc6

In this position the chances are fairly equal; White's d-pawn is at least as weak as Black's c-pawn, and the example demonstrates anew the conflict between the minority attacks on the c-file and the e-file respectively. However, as we said before, the minority attack on the e-file is by its nature less effective than that on the c-file, because after exf4 White's f-pawn is not isolated, unlike the black b-pawn after ...cxb5.

We have more than once established the fact that defence pure and simple is not only more difficult but also less effective than active defence. Whenever Black commits himself without reservation to defence

in the Queen's Gambit, he is from the first restricted to one line of action. Although it is possible theoretically to revert to an active defence, in practice this almost always fails.

Here are two examples which illustrate this point:

### Van den Berg – Kramer

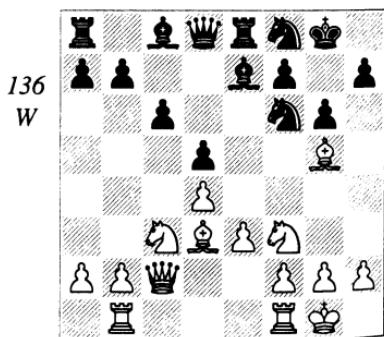
Amsterdam 1950

Queen's Gambit Declined,  
Exchange Variation

- 1 d4 ♜f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♜c3 d5 4 ♜g5 ♜e7 5 ♜f3 0-0 6 ♜c2 ♜bd7 7 cxd5 exd5 8 e3 c6 9 ♜d3 ♜e8 10 0-0 ♜f8 11 ♜ab1

This appears to be stronger than 11 ♜e5 as played in two previous examples, which merely leads to simplification.

- 11 ... g6 (136)



Preparing a manoeuvre by which he exchanges light-squared bishops and relieves some of the pressure on his position.

- 12 b4 a6  
13 a4 ♜e6  
14 ♜h4 ♜g7

- 15 b5 axb5  
 16 a5 bxc6  
 17 bxc6  
 18 ♖e5!

Black's weak c-pawn is set upon without delay.

- 18 ... ♜c8  
 19 ♜b7 ♜xd3

[Editor's note – This is the key error. Black should play 19...♝d6, when Ftačnik-Ivanchuk, Moscow OL 1994 and Van der Sterren-L.Hansen, Wijk aan Zee 1995 both ended in a draw. The significance of this move is that after 20 ♜fb1 ♜xd3 21 ♜xd3 Black can play 21...♝f5 22 ♜xf6 ♜xf6 23 ♜xf7 ♜e6 and the trapped knight gives him sufficient compensation for the pawn.]

- 20 ♜xd3 ♜c7

Now, however, 20...♝f5 is not possible because White keeps his extra pawn after 21 ♜xf6 ♜xf6 22 ♜xf7 ♜a5 23 ♜d7.

- 21 ♜xc7 ♜xc7

Black plays only for exchanges, but his weak pawns remain.

- 22 ♜c1

Threatening to win a pawn by 23 ♜xf6 ♜xf6 24 ♜xd5.

- 22 ... ♜b7

- 23 ♜b1!

In order to win the c-pawn after the exchange of queens.

- 23 ... ♜a6  
 24 ♜a2 ♜a8

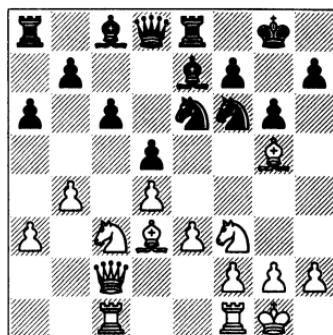
At this point White could have won quickly by 25 ♜xc6 as Black cannot avoid losing the d5-pawn as well, for example 25...♝f5 26 ♜xf6 ♜xf6 27 ♜ab4 ♜b5 28 ♜c5.

## Kotov – Pachman

Venice 1950

Queen's Gambit Declined,  
Exchange Variation

- 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♜c3 ♜f6 4 ♜g5 ♜e7 5 e3 0-0 6 ♜f3 ♜bd7 7 ♜c1 a6 8 cxd5 exd5 9 ♜d3 ♜e8 10 0-0 c6 11 ♜c2 ♜f8 12 a3 g6 13 b4 ♜e6 (137)



137  
W

The position bears the same character as the preceding one – Black has few active counter-chances.

- 14 ♜xf6

A noteworthy exchange frequently seen in this kind of position, and for the following reasons:

1. A knight is more liable to impede White's strategy than the dark-squared bishop.

2. By forcing the e7-bishop away from the a3-f8 diagonal, White is able to advance his a-pawn immediately.

- 14 ... ♜xf6  
 15 a4 ♜g7  
 16 b5! axb5  
 17 ♜f5 ♜xf5  
 18 ♜xf5 ♜xf5

**19 bxc6 bxc6**

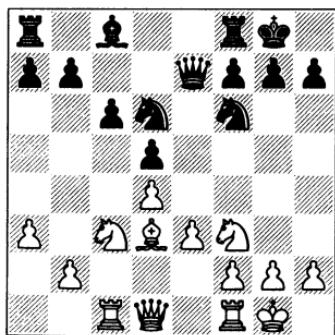
The situation is now clear: Black has a weak c-pawn without any compensation. White won after protracted manoeuvres, some on the queenside, others on the kingside – the usual tactics whenever the weak pawn cannot be captured by direct means (see Chapter 7).

Is it the case that in the Exchange Variation of the Queen's Gambit no defensive measures are available against the minority attack, and is Black reduced to counter-tactics such as were shown in the first examples? The situation is not as bleak as all that, but the correct counter-measures must be taken in time. If Black succeeds in posting a knight at d6 he can answer b4 with ...b5 without losing c6 and then the minority attack is no longer dangerous, because Black can seal up the c-file by ...d4.

Here is an example:

**1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♜c3 ♜f6 4 ♜g5 ♜e7 5 e3 0-0 6 ♜c1 ♜bd7 7 cxd5 exd5 8 ♜f3 c6 9 ♜d3 ♜e8 10 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 11 0-0 ♜df6 12 a3 ♜d6 (138)**

138  
W

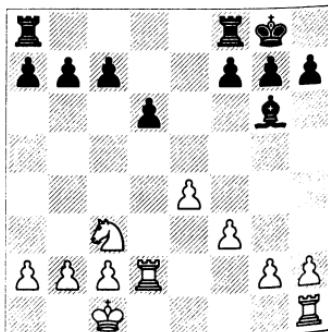


Here Black's position is more favourable than in any of the previous examples because he can, in reply to 13 b4, play 13...b5, when after 14 ♜e2 ♜c4 or 14 ♜e5 ♜d7 15 f3 ♜c4 he has nothing more to fear. As a rule, however, Black cannot be sure of reaching this improved position. If White delays playing ♜c1 or changes over to the development with ♜c2 and ♜d3, Black will not find it easy to reach the desired formation. Be that as it may, we have discovered an important weapon for the defence – a knight at d6 – and this can be a guide to the correct defence.

Up to now our treatment of half-open files has been closely connected with the minority attack, and since we have been dealing with the Exchange Variation of the Queen's Gambit, the attacker had hardly an alternative. However, the characteristic half-open file can also occur in other forms.

A simple illustration is given in diagram 139. White, to move, wins a pawn:

139  
W



**1 ♜d5!**

An outpost on the advanced square of a half-open file (see Chapter 8). Black's c-pawn is threatened and cannot be guarded ( $1 \dots \blacksquare a c 8$  loses the exchange after  $2 \diamond e 7 +$ ). There is nothing else but...

**1 ... c6**

...with a weakening of the d-pawn, which in this case is immediately fatal.

**2 ♜c3**

$2 \diamond e 7 +$  also wins a pawn.

**2 ... ♜ad8****3 ♜hd1**

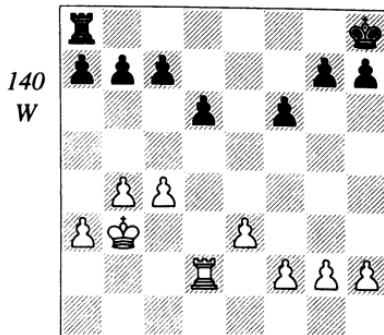
and the d-pawn falls. Two tactical points govern this simple example: the check at e7 and the position of White's rook at d2, which enables White to double rooks without any loss of time.

Of course a half-open file does not automatically lead to the gain of a pawn, but a direct consequence is the pressure that is exerted against the hostile position. Thus, in the English Opening, after  $1 c 4 e 5 2 \diamond c 3 \diamond f 6 3 \diamond f 3 \diamond c 6 4 d 4 e 4$  the position is said to be bad for Black, because of  $5 \diamond d 2 \diamond x d 4 6 \diamond d x e 4 \diamond e 6 7 g 3 \diamond x e 4 8 \diamond x e 4 \diamond b 4 + 9 \diamond d 2 \diamond x d 2 + 10 \diamond x d 2$ . White ultimately obtains command of d5 and Black cannot play ...c6 without weakening his d-pawn.

An altogether different example of a half-open file is shown in diagram 140. White played:

**1 c5!**

A minority attack, undertaken, not with the object of creating pawn



weaknesses, but in order to eliminate the obstructing d-pawn, so that the half-open d-file becomes an open file.

**1 ... dxc5**

Black has no option. After  $1 \dots \blacksquare d 8$   $2 c x d 6 c x d 6$  (or  $2 \dots \blacksquare x d 6 3 \blacksquare x d 6 c x d 6 4 \diamond c 4$  and the d-pawn is lost)  $3 \diamond c 4 \diamond g 8 4 \diamond d 5 \diamond f 7 5 \blacksquare c 2 \blacksquare d 7 6 \blacksquare c 8$  Black faces a hopeless defensive task.

**2 bxc5**

Note that White has allowed his own pawns to become isolated. On the other hand, he now has assumed control of the open d-file along which his rook can penetrate into the enemy lines.

**2 ... ♜g8****3 ♜d7 ♜c8****4 ♜c4**

and it will be very hard for Black to hold out.

The transition effected here in a few moves has brought us to a new subject: the *fully open file* and the *seventh rank*.

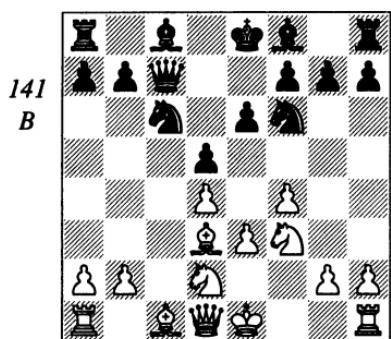
Here is, to begin with, a standard example, which will illustrate this concept in a more precise form.

**Van Vliet –  
Znosko-Borovsky**

Ostend 1907

Stonewall Attack

1 d4 d5 2 e3 c5 3 c3 e6 4 ♜d3 ♜c6 5 f4 ♜f6 6 ♜d2 ♜c7 7 ♜gf3 cxd4 8 cxd4 (141)



141  
B

In this position Black found a noteworthy opportunity to obtain an advantage along the open c-file with the help of a few tactical turns.

8 ... ♜b4!

9 ♜b1

To all appearances entirely satisfactory. The knight will be driven away by a3 without losing a tempo, though also without a gain in time, for not only would the black knight have to retire, but the white bishop could not remain at b1, where it seriously hinders the a1-rook.

9 ... ♜d7

10 a3 ♜c8!

The first spoke in the wheel. If 11 axb4, then 11...♜xc1 12 ♜xa7 ♜xb2 13 0-0 ♜xb4 and Black has won a pawn.

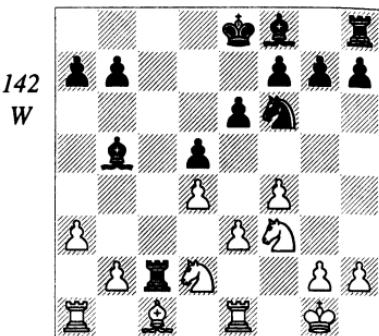
11 0-0 ♜b5!

This is the second spoke. 11...♜c2 is also playable, but less effective.

12 ♜e1 ♜c2

13 ♜xc2 ♜xc2

14 ♜xc2 (142)



142  
W

The result of Black's strategy is now apparent: Black's c2-rook obstructs White's development and can, in conjunction with other pieces, initiate all kinds of activities. The success of such manoeuvres stands or falls according to whether or not Black can maintain a rook at c2, exerting continuous pressure along the seventh rank. The minor pieces (bishop at b5 and knight at f6) also participate, in order to maintain or even increase the pressure on White's position.

15 h3

In order to prevent ...♜g4, but 15 ♜b1 at once is preferable.

15 ... ♜d6

16 ♜b1

A characteristic regrouping of forces. The knight makes for c3 in order to cut off the rook. Although there can be no question of its capture, this manoeuvre would at least

block the c-file for further operations.

**16 ... ♕e4**

Preventing 17 ♔c3.

**17 ♔fd2**

White intends to exchange knights and then play ♔c3.

**17 ... ♘d3!**

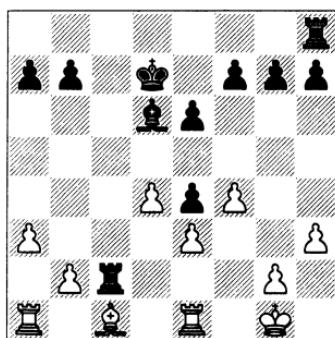
**18 ♔xe4 ♘xe4**

With a threat against the g-pawn, so that White has to give up the above-mentioned plan.

**19 ♔d2 ♘d7**

**20 ♔xe4 dxe4 (143)**

143  
W



The situation is clarified: the black rook at c2 is stronger than ever. With the support of the second rook at hand, it has become a practical impossibility to drive off the advanced rook. The most White can hope for is to obtain a measure of relief by exchanging one of the rooks.

So much for the first part of Black's plan: occupation of the seventh on an open file. The second part, exploiting the advantages realized, is less easily managed, and the minor pieces, after helping to attain the first part of the programme, have

been exchanged off. Black must now evolve a fresh plan in order to exploit his advantage, and its basis – as usual in such cases – is the greater mobility of the attacker's king, the defending king being mostly confined to the first rank.

**21 ♕b1**

In order to play 22 b4 and 23 ♘b2. White has hardly anything else, for if, e.g., 21 ♘f1 intending 22 ♘e2, Black replies with 21... ♘hc8 and the white rooks cannot leave the first rank.

**21 ... ♘hc8**

**22 b4 ♘8c3**

**23 ♘f1**

23 ♘b2 at once would cost White a pawn after 23... ♘b3 24 ♘a1 ♘xa3.

**23 ... ♘c6!**

The king marches on, and nothing can stop him.

**24 ♘b2 ♘b3**

**25 ♘e2 ♘xe2**

**26 ♘xe2 ♘b5**

The relieving exchange of rooks has come too late: the black king's entry is conclusive.

**27 ♘d2 ♘a4**

**28 ♘e2**

White can only wait.

**28 ... a5!**

Opening new lines of attack, which settle Black's positional superiority. White can no longer hold out.

The finish was 29 ♘f2 axb4 30 axb4 ♘xb4 31 ♘e2 ♘b5 32 ♘d2 ♘a3 33 ♘c2 ♘xb2+ 34 ♘xb2+ ♘xb2 35 ♘xb2 ♘c4 36 g4 ♘d3 37 g5 ♘xe3 0-1.

This particularly fine example of the open file and seventh rank is taken from Nimzowitsch's *My System*. This outstanding chess master, a thinker of the very first rank, died prematurely in 1935 at the age of forty-eight. Initially, his work did not receive the full recognition it deserved. Perhaps the bulk of the chess public of seventy years ago, when Nimzowitsch wrote his works on the strategy of chess, was not yet ripe for studies in this field. It is another proof of Nimzowitsch's greatness that the theories he evolved at the time should be valued even more highly in the light of present-day experience. Nimzowitsch laid particular stress on a number of principles which we today recognize and adopt as a matter of course.

Let us now recapitulate our findings on the positions in diagrams 141 and 142.

*Assessment of diagram 141:* Black has the better chances on the c-file, and relies not so much on the position of his queen at c7 as on the respective development of the black and white knights. Once the c-file is open, the knight would be more effective at c3 than at d2, so much so that when the knight stands on the wrong square (d2) it is quite usual to give up two tempi to bring the knight to the correct square (c3) via b1. Further analysis establishes the fact that we have here one of the minor advantages of the central formation in which a pawn at c5 is opposed to a

pawn at c3 – the black knight, unlike his opposite number in the white camp, is able to reach c6.

Once the white knight has got on the wrong track (d2), the c-file will be opened. In principle, recapture with the e-pawn in such cases is preferable, but here 8 exd4 would lose a pawn. However, it is on the whole reasonable, and tactically entirely justified, to give up a pawn, with all the risks attending gambit play (8... $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  9  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  10  $\mathbb{Q}ce5$ ), rather than voluntarily to submit to a definite positional disadvantage. On psychological grounds, too, you force the opponent into a variation which he never intended, and which is entirely different from the straightforward path which he had mapped out for himself.

The *plan*: Take advantage of the open file, sometimes quickly as in the game, with ... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ , ... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ , ... $\mathbb{Q}c8-c2$  and sometimes step by step with steady development and a later concentration of forces (e.g. doubling on the c-file, manoeuvres such as ... $\mathbb{Q}c6-a5-c4$  in order to establish an outpost, advance of the queenside pawns, etc.). By the second method the gain of two tempi is turned into pressure. The real object of these operations is the occupation of the seventh rank.

*Assessment of diagram 142:* A considerable advantage for Black on account of the absolute command of the c-file and the occupation of the seventh rank.

The plan:

1. Preservation of the advantages already acquired by the activity of the minor pieces (bishop at b5 and knight at f6) and the mobilization of the second rook.

2. A combined attack by the rook at c2 and the minor pieces so that, as in the game, the rooks and the king finally work together.

Nimzowitsch makes a number of weighty remarks on the subject of open files, for instance, he introduces the concept of the *restricted advance*, which is of great importance and which is illustrated, together with other important points, in the following examples.

### Nimzowitsch – Pritzel

Copenhagen 1922

Pirc Defence

**1 d4 g6 2 e4 ♜g7 3 ♜c3 d6 4 ♜e3 ♜f6 5 ♜e2 0-0 6 ♜d2 e5 7 dx5**

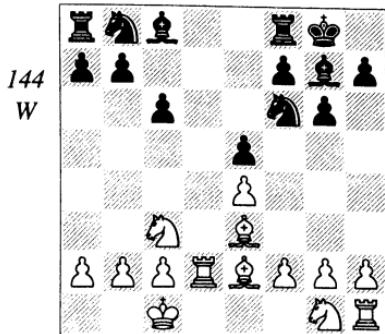
Creating an open file which White clearly feels will be favourable for him.

7 ... **dxe5**  
**8 0-0-0** **♜xd2+**  
**9 ♜xd2** **c6?** (144)

Holding d5 but relinquishing control of d6.

It is obvious that White has an advantage on the open d-file, but it is not so clear how he is to turn this advantage to account. Of course, there can be no question of an immediate penetration along the open file.

**10 a4!**



Attack on the flank frequently goes well with operations on the open file. The main object is to create weak points which may then be occupied by minor pieces which co-operate with the rook on the open file.

**10 ... ♜g4**  
**11 ♜xg4 ♜xg4**  
**12 ♜ge2 ♜d7?**

Nimzowitsch observes that the correct defensive formation is: the knight at a6, the king's rook at e8 and the king's bishop at f8, the last piece guarding d6.

**13 ♜hd1 ♜b6**  
**14 b3 ♜f6**

It is clear that Black wishes to contest the d-file by ...♜ad8 and so nullify White's advantage.

**15 f3 ♜e6**  
**16 a5!**

Frustrating Black's plan, and justifying White's flank attack in another sense than above.

**16 ... ♜c8**  
**17 ♜a4**

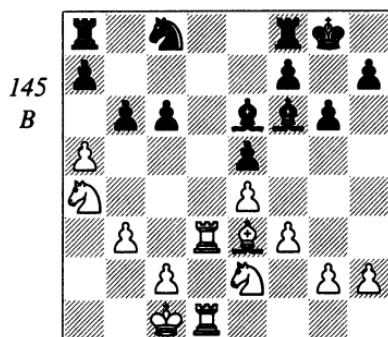
In order to occupy c5 and thereby to add force to the operation on the d-file. Without the advance of the

a-pawn White's efforts would have been in vain. We can now see the validity of the remark to Black's 12th move: the knight at a6 would have blocked White's a-pawn, and moreover would have guarded c5.

17 ... b6!

An excellent parry, based on a tactical point: 18 axb6 axb6 19 ♜xb6? ♜xb6 20 ♜xb6 and now Black wins the exchange by 20...♜g5.

18 ♜d3! (145)



Here we see the *restricted advance* along the open file: the rook is advanced modestly along the open file, so that it can manoeuvre horizontally in front of its own pawns. In this way the neighbouring files also become, as it were, open files, and the attacker has the advantage of being able to choose between various alternatives or even to try these out one after the other. Throughout the sequel we can see that in this position the restricted advance is by no means confined to the c-file.

18 ... bxa5?

Black should play 18...♜b8 19 ♜c3 c5 and although White then registers

a success in that d5 becomes free, Black's defensive prospects would be better than in the game. The consequences of the text-move are much more serious.

19 ♜c3 ♜e7

20 ♜c5!

Again the restricted advance, this time to the a-file via c5.

20 ... ♜fb8

21 ♜ec3 a6

22 ♜xa5 ♜g7

23 ♜b6 ♜a7

24 ♜ca4

Now Black cannot avoid losing a pawn, one threat being 25 ♜c5 (if 25...♜xb6?, then 26 ♜xe6+).

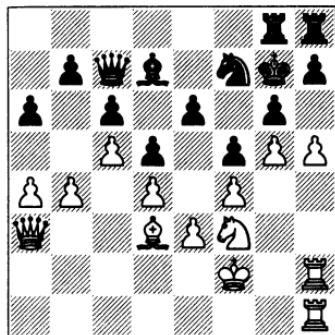
24 ... ♜ab7

25 ♜xa6 1-0

An impressive triumph of the open file – via a flank attack and restricted advance.

The rook's files occupy a special place in open-file strategy. It is true that squares away from the centre are of less importance, but on the other hand they may fall more easily into the grasp of a would-be conqueror. d7, for instance, is much easier to defend than a7. The manoeuvres that are required in order to open the a- or h-file are described elsewhere (Chapters 3 and 6), but the following example (146), which combines a- and h-file operations, demonstrates how these may lead to the occupation of the seventh rank, starting from a7, which falls first.

Here we see a war on two fronts, and on both fronts White is the attacker, although the kingside attack

146  
W

**Capablanca – Treybal**  
*Karlsbad 1929*

seems to be marking time. On that flank White has the option of exchanging pawns or advancing the h-pawn. The threat of an exchange at g6 ties up some important hostile units, but White will execute this threat only when it results in a clear advantage, and this is not the case as yet. Neither can he consider playing h6+ until he can obtain a decisive advantage on the other wing. The choice is entirely up to White, since Black cannot resolve the situation on the kingside himself. The reason is that the move ...gxh5 would bring about a considerable deterioration of Black's position, since the h7-pawn would be in need of support; the transfer of the white queen to the h-file will force Black to play ...h6 and the opening of the g-file will follow with fatal consequences.

First of all White secures fresh opportunities on the queenside:

**1 b5!**

This puts Black in a quandary: should he capture on b5, allow White

to capture on a6 or c6, or advance the a-pawn? Let us first examine the continuation 1...a5. White wins a pawn quite simply by 2 b6 ♕d8 3 ♕c3 ♕a8 4 ♖d2 followed by 5 ♖b3. Allowing White to capture implies the protection of the a-pawn by ...♖c8 as 1...♕c8 is insufficient because of 2 bxa6 bxa6 3 ♜b1 followed by ♜b6, preceded perhaps by the decisive h6+ depriving Black of all counterplay on the kingside. Incidentally, the same system is also effective against the stronger 1...♗c8 thus: 2 bxa6 bxa6 3 h6+ ♔f8 4 ♜b1 ♜b7 5 ♜b6 ♕c8 6 ♔g3 followed by 7 ♜hb2 and Black is completely tangled up.

From the above, it is clear that Black has no option but to capture with the a-pawn. After 1...cx b5? 2 h6+ ♔f8 3 c6+ the result is clear, as Black loses a piece.

**1 ... axb5  
2 h6+**

White chooses this line for the reasons already given: he has provided for decisive developments on the queenside, and Black is thereby deprived of any counter-chances.

**2 ... ♔f8  
3 axb5 ♔e7  
4 b6 ♕b8  
5 ♜a1**

The picture has changed significantly: there is an open file over which White has complete mastery, for 5...♕a8 is refuted by 6 ♜b2 while Black, on account of the unfortunate disposition of his forces, cannot possibly bring a rook to a8.

This perhaps is saying too much, as it can be done, though it is very much like a box puzzle, and would cost an enormous amount of time: ... $\mathbb{W}e8$ , ... $\mathbb{Q}d8$ , ... $\mathbb{W}e7$ , ... $\mathbb{H}e8$ , ... $\mathbb{W}f8$ , ... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ , or if Black wants to use both rooks, ... $\mathbb{H}d8$ , ... $\mathbb{H}e8$ , ... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ , ... $\mathbb{Q}g8$ , ... $\mathbb{H}f8$ , ... $\mathbb{H}de8$ , ... $\mathbb{W}d8$ , ... $\mathbb{W}e7$ , ... $\mathbb{H}b8$ , ... $\mathbb{H}fc8$ , ... $\mathbb{W}f8$ .

**5 ...  $\mathbb{H}c8$**

Black decides to put up with the unfavourable distribution of his major pieces, with the queen nearest the queenside.

**6  $\mathbb{W}b4$        $\mathbb{H}hd8$**

**7  $\mathbb{Q}a7!$**

Occupying the first square on the seventh rank, the conquest of which has not caused White much trouble.

**7 ...  $\mathbb{Q}f8$**

**8  $\mathbb{H}h1$        $\mathbb{Q}e8$**

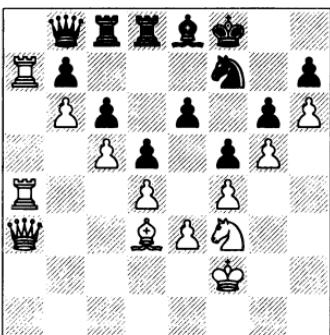
**9  $\mathbb{H}ha1$        $\mathbb{Q}g8$**

**10  $\mathbb{H}1a4$        $\mathbb{Q}f8$**

**11  $\mathbb{W}a3$  (147)**

147

B



**11 ...  $\mathbb{Q}g8$**

Black can but wait, while White in the meantime has completed the disposition of his forces, with the major pieces trebled on the a-file,

and in readiness to strike along the seventh rank. But how? This is less complicated than one might think. White plays his knight to a5 and if then Black guards his b-pawn with ... $\mathbb{H}d7$  there is the surprising combination  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{H}xb7$ ;  $\mathbb{H}a8!$  and the queen is caught. Black can thwart this plan only by moving his knight to d8. But this he can do only by making room for the knight with ... $\mathbb{H}d7$ , when  $\mathbb{H}a8$  is immediately decisive. Thus the black rooks can only operate horizontally: ... $\mathbb{H}d7$ , ... $\mathbb{H}e8$  when, it may be added, ... $\mathbb{H}d8$  is only feasible when the white knight is at a5, disconnecting the rooks on the a-file, so that  $\mathbb{H}a8$  is no longer threatened. This plan of defence fails because of  $\mathbb{Q}a6$  as the further course of the game will show.

The most effective disposition of Black's forces would be: ... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ , ... $\mathbb{Q}f7-g8$ , ... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ , ... $\mathbb{H}e8$  and Black can now answer  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  with ... $\mathbb{Q}d8$  as, resulting from the better position of his bishop, the 'killer'  $\mathbb{Q}a6$  is no longer possible.

There are two problems with this. First of all, it fails on account of the time element, and by several tempi at that. Secondly, even if Black managed to set up this defensive formation, White would still break through, for example: 11... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  12  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  13  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  14  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  (White marks time to allow Black to reach his optimum defensive position; of course, 14  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  wins at once) 14... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  15  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{H}e8$  16  $\mathbb{Q}a5$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$ . This is the position Black has been aiming for,

but White wins all the same by 17 ♜xb7! ♜xb7 18 ♜a6 ♜d8 (18...♜e7 19 ♜xb7 ♜xb7 20 ♜a8) 19 ♜xc8 ♜xc8 20 ♜c7 ♜b8 21 ♜a8.

**12 ♜g3(?)**

White does not wish to play 12 ♜d2 immediately, because of the reply 12...♝xg5! and if 13 fxg5 then 13...♝h2+. Therefore the preparatory 12 ♜g2 is essential. The text-move achieves nothing, for after 13 ♜d2 Black still plays 13...♝xg5.

**12 ... ♜d7**

**13 ♜h4 ♜h8**

**14 ♜a1 ♜g8**

**15 ♜g3**

White has wasted so much time that the manoeuvre shown above might after all have been accomplished. However, as we saw, this would not have saved Black from eventual defeat.

**15 ... ♜f8**

**16 ♜g2!**

At last the king finds the right square, and now matters are getting serious.

**16 ... ♜e8**

**17 ♜d2! ♜d7**

**18 ♜b3 ♜e8**

Here we may mention again that 18...♜e8 19 ♜a5 ♜d7 fails against 20 ♜xb7! ♜xb7 21 ♜a8.

**19 ♜a5 ♜d8**

**20 ♜a6!**

White could also have won by 20 ♜xb7 ♜xb7 21 ♜a6, as in the note to Black's 11th move, but here Capablanca has an alternative win.

**20 ... bx a6**

**21 ♜xd7**

The strategy of the seventh rank has triumphed. The threats are 22 ♜xh7 and 22 ♜b3 followed by 23 ♜xa6 and the doubling of the rooks on the seventh rank.

**21 ... ♜e7**

Hastens the end.

**22 ♜xd8+! ♜xd8**

**23 ♜xc6 1-0**

There is no stopping the united passed pawns. This example demonstrates clearly how important it is to have freedom of movement within your own lines. White is able to reap the advantages of the open file and the seventh rank, while Black is reduced to clumsy manoeuvres, which, compared to his opponent, leaves him at a great disadvantage in time.

One last example features the great pioneer of open-file strategy, Nimzowitsch, and emphasizes that the seventh rank can compensate for a considerable deficiency in material.

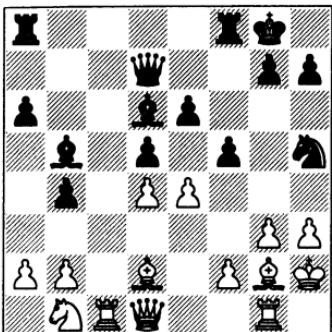
### Sämisch – Nimzowitsch

Copenhagen 1923

Queen's Indian Defence

1 d4 ♜f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♜f3 b6 4 g3 ♜b7  
 5 ♜g2 ♜e7 6 ♜c3 0-0 7 0-0 d5 8  
 ♜e5 c6 9 cxd5 cxd5 10 ♜f4 a6 11  
 ♜c1 b5 12 ♜b3 ♜c6 13 ♜xc6 ♜xc6  
 14 h3 ♜d7 15 ♜h2 ♜h5 16 ♜d2 f5  
 17 ♜d1 b4 18 ♜b1 ♜b5 19 ♜g1  
 ♜d6 20 e4 (148)

Black is threatened with 21 ♜xh5, 21 exd5 and 21 e5, but there follows a surprising offer of a piece.

148  
B20 ... **fxe4!**21 **Wxh5** **Rxf2**

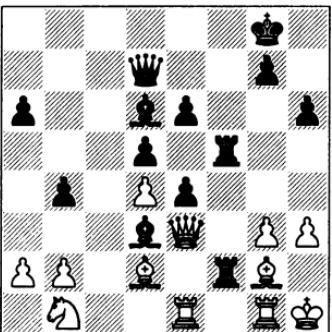
Nimzowitsch himself commented as follows: 'Two pawns, the seventh rank and an inextricable queenside, all that for merely a piece!'

22 **Wg5** **Raf8**23 **Wh1**

Not 23 **We3** because of 23...**Rf3**.

23 ... **Rf5**24 **We3** **Qd3**

Threatens to win the queen by 25...**Re2**.

25 **Rce1** **h6! (149)**149  
W**0-1**

White is in zugzwang. He cannot move without losing a piece (apart from a3, b3 and h4 – but these moves

will soon be exhausted), for example: 26 **Qc1** **Rxb1**, 26 **Rc1** **Re2**, 26 **Rgf1** **Rxf1**, 26 **Rf1** **Rxf1**, 26 **Qh2** **R5f3** or finally 26 **g4** **R5f3** 27 **Rxf3** **Rh2#**.

Apart from all this, Black could have exchanged two rooks for a queen and a bishop, but the waiting move is stronger and brings more substantial gain. This is an immortal zugzwang, a monument worthy of Nimzowitsch the thinker.

Three principles have provided the subject matter of this chapter: half-open files, open files and the seventh rank. They differ individually, but have so much in common that an exhaustive study of each one separately is scarcely possible.

Besides the vertical and horizontal lines, along which the major pieces operate, the chessboard also contains diagonal lines, the hunting ground of the bishops and, at times, of the queen. The character of these diagonals is of a different kind, if only because the trebling of pieces is impossible, and further, because hostile pawns bear a different relation to diagonals as compared with files and ranks. A file, once open, remains open – except for possible exchange transactions – but the diagonal from g2 to b7 (for example), can be blocked by pawns at c6, d5, e4 and f3. A discussion of the diagonal does not therefore fit into the framework of this chapter. However, in conclusion, we shall say this concerning the nature of a diagonal: Once we have placed a bishop in an

attacking position against the opposite hostile flank (e.g. ♜g2 attacking a pawn chain b7-c6 or ♜d3 attacking the chain g6-h7), it is generally desirable to advance the pawns on the flank against which the bishop is exerting pressure, in order to assist

the work of the bishop (thus in this case playing b4-b5 against c6 or h4-h5 against g6). In this way the diagonal is used to its greatest effect. The reader will find an example of this type of pawn advance in Game 3 of Chapter 10.

# 10 Illustrative Games

The gulf which, in all spheres of human endeavour, separates theory from practice can be seen also in chess. The player who, armed with the knowledge acquired from the study of the foregoing chapters, settles down to practical play with eager anticipation may well experience disappointment. He does not succeed in obtaining a pawn majority on the queenside or in occupying a strong square, or when he does, he finds himself in a mating net on the opposite flank. The teachings of theory seem to take on a different aspect in practical play and, besides, there are many more in addition to those for which we were able to find room in these pages.

The examples shown hitherto were carefully chosen as illustrating each characteristic in isolation, from which the correct line of play could in every case be worked out with precision and the correlation between judging and planning stood out clearly. In Chapter 2 we have said that a position containing several of the features we have discussed is more difficult to handle unless the player has a thorough grasp of each and every one of these characteristics individually.

It is, however, unavoidable that at times we should meet with a feature with which we are unfamiliar, however comprehensive we attempted to make this book. It would be quite senseless to speak of *all* characteristic features. Every peculiarity of the chessboard, be it to all appearances ever so insignificant, may become the basis of an assessment and a plan.

In order to facilitate the transition from theory to practical play, we shall in this final chapter discuss five games chosen from master practice. In these games the characteristics which we have been discussing will appear in more or less straightforward form, but in addition other elements, which we were obliged to leave outside the scope of our investigations, will play their part. We shall recapitulate the course of each game and enquire into the question of judging and planning at various critical stages of play.

## Game 1

**Dr Euwe – Reshevsky***World Championship Tournament, Moscow 1948*

Nimzo-Indian Defence, Milner-Barry Variation

1	d4	♘f6
2	c4	e6
3	♘c3	♗b4
4	♗c2	♘c6
5	♘f3	d6

In the earlier chapters no special attention was paid to the opening. Investigations began when the feature of interest had materialized. That feature then determined both the assessment of the position and the plan evolved from it, but little attention was given to the manner in which the situation arose.

The openings cover a very large field. We shall make some remarks concerning the initial phase, though only, of course, on broad lines. The opening presents on the whole a struggle for the command of the centre: he who holds sway in the centre can procure for his pieces the greater mobility and at the same time gain an advantage in space. Each player strives to achieve some particular pawn formation in the centre, which formation frequently governs the further course of the game. It follows that at the beginning of the game, the forces as far as possible are directed towards the centre – what is called *centralization*.

So far, all the moves played illustrate these ideas, even 3...♗b4, although in this case indirectly so, by

pinning the knight and thus interrupting its effect on the centre. Black aims at the central formation d6-e5, against which White can react in a number of different ways, as we shall see.

**6 ♘d2**

In preparation for 7 a3 so that, after an exchange at c3, White can recapture with the bishop, bringing an additional piece to bear on e5.

6	...	0-0
7	a3	♗xc3
8	♗xc3	a5

Alternatively Black could play 8...♗e7 or 8...♗e8, preparing for ...e5, but White then plays 9 b4, soon to be followed by b5 dislodging the knight from a position covering e5. The text-move prevents White's b4 and so, however unlikely it may appear, it still conforms to the principle of centralization.

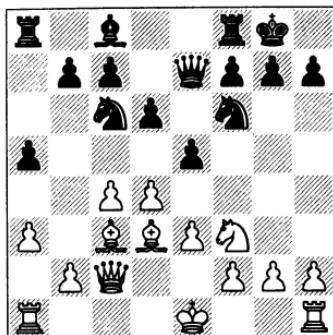
**9 e3?**

After this Black achieves his aim, which he would not have been able to do had White played 9 e4, for then 9...e5 at once costs a pawn, while after the preparatory 9...♗e7 White himself can continue with 10 e5.

9	...	♗e7
10	♘d3	

This move is open to the objection that White, before long, will be exposed to the threat of ...e4.

10 ... e5 (150)

150  
W

Black has reached his strategic target, and White must now decide which stand he will take against Black's formation in the centre. In general, there is a choice of three ways in which to proceed against this fairly common configuration: capture by dx5, advance by d5 or let things remain as they are. This last method cannot be seriously considered here; it would mean a loss of time, as White must then provide against ...e4, which threatens to win a piece. Therefore he must either advance or capture, leading to entirely different types of position. The advance d5 leads to a closed game presenting extremely difficult problems, which of course does not mean that White must avoid this line of play. He prefers, however, the alternative method of exchanging pawns, and that for a very particular reason: he possesses the two bishops. Experience teaches that two bishops are stronger than either two knights or knight and bishop. This advantage increases when the position has an

open character, and in consequence White has no interest in a pawn advance and the consequent closing of the position.

11 dx5 dxe5  
12 0-0

White does not as yet fear 12...e4 due to the reply 13 ♖xf6 (13...exd3 14 ♖xe7 dxc2 15 ♖xf8).

12 ... ♕e8!

Now 13...e4 is an actual threat.

13 ♖f5

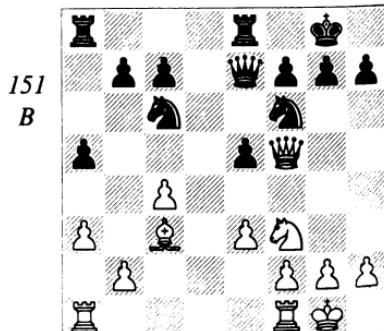
White cannot preserve the two bishops:

1) 13 ♖g5 e4! (after all) and the sequel 14 ♖xf6 exd3 15 ♖xe7 dxc2 16 ♖c5 ♕e5 wins for Black.

2) 13 ♖d2 e4 leads to troublesome consequences.

3) 13 ♖e2 can be answered by 13...♖g4 followed by 14...e4.

4) 13 e4 is out of the question. White buries his d3-bishop and abandons control of d4.

13 ... ♖xf5  
14 ♕xf5 (151)

14 ... ♕e6!

Forcing the exchange of queens, as c4 is under fire and 15 ♖d3 fails

against 15...e4. The significance of this forced exchange lies chiefly in the fact that Black takes command of e4.

### 15 ♜xe6 ♜xe6

Only now has the game taken on a definite character, which is characterized by the open d-file, and thus comes within the scope of the section in Chapter 9 dealing with occupation of the open file and invasion of the seventh rank. The reader will see this happen also in this game, but not at once. First there will be preparatory skirmishes relating to minor features which for the time being overshadow the chief feature, the open file. These skirmishes involve the weakness of c4 (should Black be able to play ...a4), and the insecure position of White's bishop at c3 (if Black plays ...♝e4).

### 16 b4?

The drawback of this move is that White will soon be forced to play b5, when his c-pawn will become hopelessly weak, but neither would 16 b3?! solve White's problem: 16...♝e4 17 ♜b2 ♜c5 and White is in trouble (18 b4 ♜a4).

On the whole, the best continuation is 16 ♜fd1, after which Black carries out his positional threat 16...a4 and so deprives c4 of possible protection by b3. However, White then need not fear ...♝e4 as he can play ♜e1 and eventually drive back the black knight by ♜d2.

In the sequel it turns out to be a great handicap for White that he cannot drive off the black knight after

...♝e4. Finally, another plan can be considered: 16 ♜g5 ♜d6 17 f3. The awkward ...♝e4 is eliminated, but White must expect to remain at a disadvantage on the open d-file.

### 16 ... ♜e4

### 17 ♜b2 f6

Certainly not 17...axb4 18 axb4 ♜xa1 19 ♜xa1 ♜xb4?? because of 20 ♜a8+ with mate to follow, but after the text-move White is threatened with the loss of a pawn, which forces him to weaken his position still further.

### 18 b5 ♜e7

### 19 ♜fd1 ♜d6!

At last the struggle for the open file begins, but at an awkward moment for White. For instance, White cannot exchange on d6 for after 20 ♜xd6 cxd6! the c-file is opened, and White's c-pawn is doomed to fall, e.g.: 21 ♜c1 ♜c8 22 ♜f1 ♜c5 23 ♜e2 ♜c8 24 ♜d2 ♜xd2 25 ♜xd2 ♜b6 26 ♜d3 d5! 27 cxd5 ♜xd5+ followed by 28...♜xb5.

White's inability to exchange on d6 ensures for Black the command of the open d-file.

### 20 ♜f1 ♜c8

The knight is making for b6 in order to strike at the weak c-pawn.

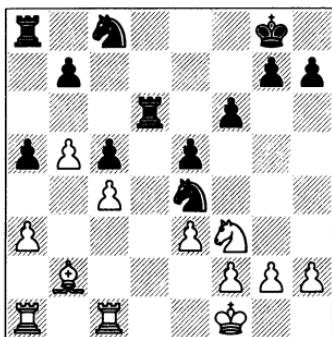
### 21 ♜dc1

White must relinquish the d-file now or on the next move. 21 ♜e2 is answered by 21...♝b6 (22 ♜ac1? ♜xd1 loses a pawn). The text-move at least prevents 21...♝b6.

### 21 ... c5! (152)

A particularly effective continuation, which turns b6 into a strong

square, i.e. one which is beyond the reach of hostile pieces and pawns, and which therefore makes a splendid post for the knight.

152  
W

22 ♜c3

Here 22 bxc6 ♜xc6 leaves the weak c-pawn defenceless. Nor is 22 ♜e2 ♜b6 23 ♜c2 ♜ad8 any more attractive.

22 ... ♜xc3

This bishop could play an important part in guarding d2 and is therefore eliminated.

23 ♜xc3 e4

Black takes his chance of driving the knight to an unfavourable square.

24 ♜g1 ♜b6

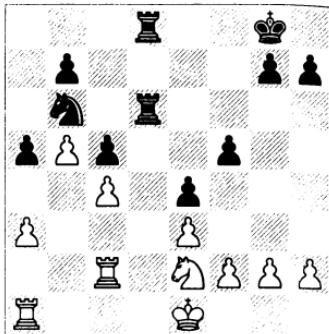
Before invading d2 Black must first make sure of the assistance of his second rook: after 24...♜d2 25 ♜e1 ♜b2 26 ♜d1 ♜b6 27 ♜d2 ♜b1+ 28 ♜d1 his satisfaction would have been short-lived.

25 ♜e2 f5

The alternative 25...♜d2 26 ♜g3 ♜e8 27 ♜e1 would also have been ineffective.

26 ♜e1 ♜ad8

27 ♜c2 (153)

153  
B

A temporary equilibrium has been established. White has only just managed to prevent Black from breaking in at d1 or d2, but that is all he has to show, while in other respects all the trumps are in Black's hand. He has command of the strong square at b6 from where White's c-pawn is kept under fire, and this permanent threat makes it impossible for White to use his rooks actively on the d-file. There is nothing that White can undertake, and Black can strengthen his position at leisure before embarking on decisive operations. The sequel requires little comment, but is typical of this type of situation.

27 ... ♜f7

28 ♜g3 ♜e6

29 ♜f1 ♜d3

30 ♜g3 g5

31 ♜e2 ♜a4

In order to strengthen his position by ...♜c3 or ...♜b2 according to circumstances.

32 ♜g3 ♜e5

33 ♜f1 h5

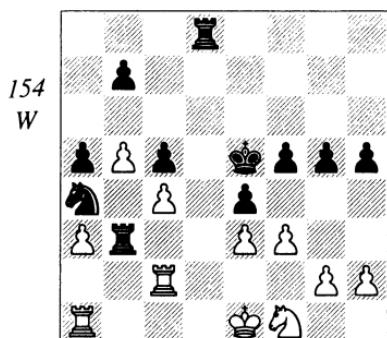
Black's play is smooth and unhurried.

34 f3

White still tries to put up a fight, but for Black this is the signal for the final attack.

34 ...

**■b3 (154)**



In order to bring his knight to d3 by way of b2. As Black could not obtain mastery over d1 and d2 he uses d3 as a thoroughfare in order to put

the finishing touches to the positioning of his forces.

35 **fxe4**

The opening of the f-file can benefit only Black, but White's position has long been untenable.

35 ... **fxe4**

36 **■f2** **■b2**

37 **■c2** **■d3+**

38 **■e2** **■f8**

Black has gained control of f2 (the seventh rank) and penetrates into White's position via this square with decisive vigour.

39 **■d2** **■f2+**

40 **■d1** **■b2**

41 **■xb2** **■xb2+**

42 **■c1** **■xg2**

**0-1**

White loses at least two pawns.

#### *Judging and planning at various stages of the game:*

##### 1) After 5...d6.

*Assessment:* White appears to have a slight advantage in the centre (the result of having the first move).

*Plan* (for White): To oppose Black's formation in the centre (d6 and e5). The counter-measures against the hostile centre formation can be either direct or delayed. The execution of this plan could be, for instance: 6 a3 **■xc3+** 7 **■xc3**. Now Black's ...e5 is prevented, but this seems to be only temporary, as Black can play 7...**■e7** and immediately realize ...e5. However, there follows 8 b4 directed against Black's centre, and if 8...e5, then 9 dxe5 dxe5? 10 b5 winning the e-pawn.

A different method is adopted in the game: 6 **■d2** in order to proceed, after 6...e5 with 7 a3 **■xc3** (7...exd4 8 axb4 dxc3 9 **■xc3** plays into White's hands) 8 **■xc3**. Here again we see the attack against the formation in the centre. Black now gets into difficulties after 8...**■e7** 9 dxe5 dxe5 10 b4! (10...e4 11 b5 exf3 12 bxc6 and White's two bishops hold sway over the open board).

In the execution of his plan, White faltered by omitting to play 9 e4 when Black's formation d6-e5 could definitely have been prevented. For his part, Black has with 8...a5 frustrated an indirect attack on his centre by White's b4.

##### 2) After 14 **■xf5** (151).

*Assessment:* The open d-file is the battleground. The mastery of this file will depend on whether Black's pieces are tied to other points. White must take into account the helplessness of c4 (even after b3 because of the possibility ...a4), and Black must consider the vulnerability of e5.

*Plan* (for Black): Exchange queens in order to relieve the pressure on e5. Then one idea is ...f6 to relieve the black pieces of their guard duties, while another is ... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ , attacking White's bishop at c3 and breaking up White's defences.

*Plan* (for White): To safeguard c4 and prevent ... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ ; if this proves impossible, provide a suitable retreat for the bishop (e.g. at e1 after the king's rook has vacated f1).

We have seen in the game that Black succeeded in carrying out his plan, while White failed to do so.

3) After 21...c5 (152).

*Assessment:* Black has a strong square for his knight at b6 and since White's c1-rook is tied to the protection of c4, Black has free play along the d-file.

*Plan* (for Black): Play the knight to b6, double rooks, deal with any obstacles preventing the rooks from breaking in (e.g. 22... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ ).

4) After 27  $\mathbb{R}c2$  (153).

*Assessment:* As before.

*Plan* (for Black): Circumvent, by pressure on the c-pawn or other means, any attempt by White to free his game. As soon as it becomes clear that the opponent has no further counterplay, do everything possible to help the coming liquidation, for example advance the kingside pawns to bring them nearer the queening squares.

## Game 2

N. Kopylov – Taimanov

USSR Championship, Moscow 1949

Slav Defence

- 1 c4 ♜f6  
 2 ♜f3 c6  
 3 d4 d5  
 4 e3 ♜f5

The formation of the centre on either side is provisionally completed: White, d4 and c4; Black, d5 and c6. There is a certain tension which could be relieved by White with cx5 or c5, or by Black with ...dxc4. In principle, each of these moves has some small drawback, so that the tension in the centre frequently endures right into the middlegame.

- 5 ♜b3 ♜b6

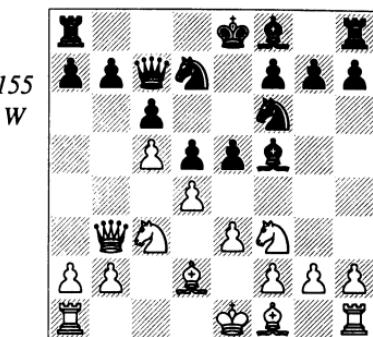
Black is not afraid of a doubled pawn, as after 6 ♜xb6 axb6 he obtains an open file.

- 6 c5?

White fears the doubled pawn even less, and if Black were now forced to exchange queens, the text-move would be very effective. However, Black is not forced to exchange; he retreats the queen, and White then has to contend with the awkward consequences of the change in the centre brought about by the text-move. It is worth noting that if White had played 4 ♜c3 rather than 4 e3, then he could meet 6...♜c7 with 7 ♜f4 (and if 7...♝xf4, then 8 ♜xb7).

- 6 ... ♜c7  
 7 ♜c3 ♜bd7

- 8 ♜d2 e5! (155)



This advance clearly demonstrates the objection to White's sixth move, c5. Black has now formed a centre d5-e5, which White cannot break up because of the vulnerability of his own c5-pawn (9 dxe5 ♜xc5 10 ♜d1 ♜fd7).

- 9 ♜h4?

White finds himself in an unhappy position, in which he cannot undertake anything in the centre, but must constantly reckon with Black's possible advance ...e4 followed eventually by an attack on the kingside. White aims at a forcible solution to his problems in the centre, but owing to the inferior line of play adopted by White, there is no solution, at most a change in the nature of his difficulties.

The correct plan would have been quietly to continue his development

( $\mathbb{A}e2$ , 0-0 and if necessary h3), together with, or (better) preceded by, some action on the queenside ( $\mathbb{B}a3$ , b4 with possibly b5). However, White's handicap in this manoeuvre is that Black's f5-bishop cuts across his position and prevents the white a1-rook from occupying the b-file by  $\mathbb{B}b1$ . For this reason White had better proceed by stages, first of all playing b4. Then c5 is twice guarded (by b4 as well as d4), so he can consider the exchange  $dxe5$ . If Black forestalls this by playing ...e4, his f5-bishop's diagonal towards b1 is intercepted. See assessment and plan at the end of the game.

9 ...  $\mathbb{A}e6$

10 f4

A consequence of the preceding move, which forced White to declare his intentions, but this flank attack is by no means unfavourable for Black.

10 ... exd4

11 exd4  $\mathbb{A}e4!$

The refutation of White's strategy. The threat is 12... $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  13  $\mathbb{Q}xd2$   $\mathbb{W}xf4+$ , while after 12  $\mathbb{A}e3$  Black can reinforce e4 by 12... $\mathbb{A}e7$  13  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}df6$ . e4 becomes a strong square within the meaning of Chapter 8, and operations against White's position can be intensified.

12  $\mathbb{A}xe4$  dxe4

13  $\mathbb{A}c4$   $\mathbb{A}e7$

A venomous intermediary move which further increases Black's advantage. The white knight has no flight-square.

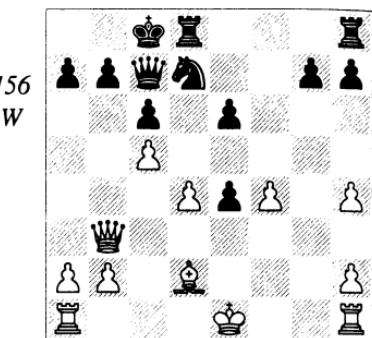
14  $\mathbb{A}xe6$   $\mathbb{A}xh4+$

15 g3 fxe6

16 gxh4

Of course 16  $\mathbb{W}xe6+$   $\mathbb{A}e7$  loses a piece.

16 ... 0-0-0 (156)



Let us investigate the damage. Both players have weak pawns, but White's are on dark squares and his dark-squared bishop has become an extremely bad bishop.

17  $\mathbb{A}g1$

Not 17  $\mathbb{W}xe6$  because of 17... $\mathbb{A}he8$  18  $\mathbb{W}h3$  e3! with a decisive advantage for Black.

17 ...  $\mathbb{A}f6!$

Black estimates the respective chances very accurately, and offers a pawn in order to obtain a favourable ending. 17...g6 18 h5 is inferior as White gets rid of at least one of his weak pawns.

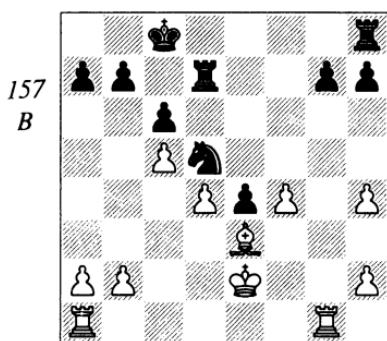
18  $\mathbb{W}xe6+$   $\mathbb{W}d7$

19  $\mathbb{W}xd7+$   $\mathbb{A}xd7$

20  $\mathbb{A}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$

White has a bad bishop, and Black has a knight on a strong square. Together this represents ample compensation for the latter's material disadvantage of one (weak) pawn.

**21 ♔e2 (157)**



157  
B

**21 ... ♜f8**

Attacking one of the weak pawns but, it should be noted, Black is not forced to capture on f4 and should only do so under favourable circumstances. Liquidation would mean the exchange of a strong knight for a bad bishop, so Black would lose part of his positional advantage. However, after 22 ♜g5, for example, Black can well play 22...♝xf4+ 23 ♜xf4 ♜xf4 24 ♜e3 ♜xh4 25 ♜g2 ♜f7 with a good extra pawn.

**22 ♜af1 ♜f5**

**23 ♜g5 ♜df7**

**24 ♜xf5**

Here White misses an opportunity to keep some prospects of a draw: 24 ♜fg1 g6 (24...♝xf4+ 25 ♜xf4 ♜xf4 26 ♜xg7 would lead to an easy draw) 25 h5 with some counter-chances. However, Taimanov gives the following line: 25...♜xg5 26 ♜xg5 ♜f5! 27 hxg6 ♜xg5 28 fxg5 hxg6 and an ending has resulted in which Black, in spite of being a pawn down, has excellent winning chances. The black king marches straight to f5 and White

has practically no resource. In any case, the consequences of the text-move are more serious still.

**24 ... ♜xf5**

**25 ♜g1 g6**

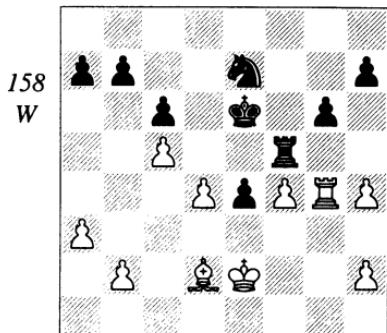
**26 ♜g4**

White employs his pieces in a purely defensive manner, a procedure which is seldom to be recommended.

**26 ... ♔d7**

**27 ♜d2 ♔e6**

**28 a3 ♜e7! (158)**



158  
W

Black regroups his pieces as follows: the king at d5, the rook at h5 and the knight at f5 (likewise a strong square). Once this new formation is achieved, d4 can no longer be held, and the passed e-pawn can come into its own.

**29 ♜g3**

White discovers his last counter-chance: attack on Black's queenside pawns, the only vulnerable spot in Black's position.

**29 ... ♜h5**

**30 ♜b3 ♜xh4**

The treatment of the ending presents no special difficulties for Black.

It is not a question of capturing pawns, but rather of carefully analysing White's random attempts at counter-action, which might otherwise become dangerous.

31  $\mathbb{B}xb7$   $\mathbb{B}xh2+$

32  $\mathbb{Q}d1$

Not 32  $\mathbb{Q}e3?$   $\mathbb{Q}f5+$  winning the bishop.

32 ...  $\mathbb{Q}f5$

33  $\mathbb{B}xa7$   $\mathbb{B}h1+$

Waiting to see whether White will fall into the trap (34  $\mathbb{Q}c2?$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4+$  35  $\mathbb{Q}c3 \mathbb{Q}b5+).$

34  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{B}h2+$

35  $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$

36  $\mathbb{B}d7+$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$

37  $d5$   $\mathbb{B}h1+$

Not 37... $cxd5$  because of 38  $c6$   $\mathbb{B}h1+$  39  $\mathbb{Q}e1.$

38  $\mathbb{Q}e2$

38  $\mathbb{Q}e1$  fails against 38... $\mathbb{Q}e3+$  and 39... $\mathbb{Q}xd5.$

38 ...  $cxd5$

39  $c6$   $\mathbb{Q}d4+$

40  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$

41  $b3+$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$

Black is well advised to hold on to his d-pawn.

42  $b4+$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$

43  $\mathbb{B}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$

Black now wins comfortably with his connected passed pawns.

44  $\mathbb{B}xc6$   $\mathbb{B}h2+$

45  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{B}xd2$

46  $a4$   $e3$

47  $\mathbb{B}e6$   $\mathbb{B}b2$

48  $b5$   $\mathbb{B}b4$

49  $\mathbb{B}e5$   $d4$

50  $a5$   $\mathbb{Q}d2$

51  $a6$   $\mathbb{B}a4$

0-1

*Judging and planning* at various stages in the game:

1) After 6  $c5?$ .

*Assessment:* Black has now the better game, because White's c-pawn requires the support of his d-pawn, so this pawn is working at barely half strength. This is always the case when a unit is overloaded by having to perform some other task.

*Plan* (for Black): In order to exploit this advantage, Black without delay prepares for ... $e5$ .

2) After 8... $e5$  (155).

*Assessment:* By reason of the greater elasticity of his centre, Black has a certain advantage.

*Plan* (for White): To force Black to declare his intentions in the centre. This is feasible, as he has further cover for  $c5$ , namely  $\mathbb{B}a3$  and possibly  $b4$ . In between he will add  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  to keep his king in readiness for castling, and  $h3$  vacating  $h2$  for the  $f3$ -knight. If Black later on continues with ... $e4$  the knight gets back into the game via  $h2-f1-g3$ , when it is a point in White's favour that Black's light-squared bishop no longer controls  $b1$ .

If Black allows the tension to continue, White can at the right moment play  $dxe5$  and  $\mathbb{Q}d4$ , conquering the strong square  $d4$ . When all this has come to

pass according to plan, there follows, as an offshoot of White's strategy, the advance b5 together with operations on the open file. (We have seen that White, in this game, decided on an entirely different and less commendable line of play.)

3) After 21 ♘e2 (157).

*Assessment:* Black has posted his knight on a strong square, while White has a bad bishop. White's pawn majority on the kingside (three pawns in ragged formation h2, h4 and f4 against Black's h7 and g7) is insufficient compensation.

*Plan* (for Black): Attack on f4, simplification by exchanges, the king playing an important part in these operations. Because White's bishop is 'bad', Black's king has a free run along the light squares, and these increase in importance as the rooks disappear from the board.

Game 3  
**Capablanca – Lilienthal**  
*Moscow 1936*  
 Réti's Opening

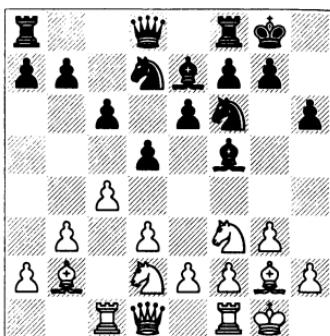
- |   |     |      |
|---|-----|------|
| 1 | Qf3 | d5   |
| 2 | c4  | c6   |
| 3 | b3  | Qf5  |
| 4 | Qb2 | e6   |
| 5 | g3  | Qf6  |
| 6 | Qg2 | Qbd7 |
| 7 | 0-0 | h6   |
| 8 | d3  | Qe7  |

White has selected a formation rather off the beaten track, but one which seventy years ago would have been called modern. Its chief characteristic is a prolonged delay in the final disposition of the centre. The pieces, certainly, are directed towards the centre, but the pawns are held back. In this game the e-pawn does not move forward until the 50th move. It is claimed that this idea of holding back the centre has the advantage that it can be timed according to the opponent's plan: however, this advantage may turn out to be little more than theoretical. Despite White's modest opening, such a build-up can contain no little venom, as can be seen should Black play 8...Qd6 instead of the text-move. In that case there follows 9 e4! and now, after 9...dxe4 10 dxe4 Qxe4 11 Qxg7 Black can no longer castle on the kingside, while after 9...Qg4 10 Qe1 White also obtains a big advantage.

- |   |      |     |
|---|------|-----|
| 9 | Qbd2 | 0-0 |
|---|------|-----|

- 10 **Mc1** (159)

159  
B



White could advance in the centre by either e4 or d4. The most usual method is to try for e4 (perhaps after the preparatory move  $\mathbb{W}c2$ ), although the drawback of this manoeuvre is that d3 could become weak (after an exchange by Black at e4 followed by ... $\mathbb{Q}c5-d3$ ). On the other hand, a premature d4 is unfavourable, because it gives Black's f5-bishop a splendid diagonal. In the game under review, White does neither one nor the other, but waits to see whether there might be an opportunity to employ one of these central advances in more favourable circumstances.

- |    |     |    |
|----|-----|----|
| 10 | ... | a5 |
| 11 | a3  |    |

The object of this move is to enable White to play b4 in reply to ...a4, preventing Black from opening the a-file to his advantage. In such

positions the capture bxa4 hardly ever deserves consideration, because a white pawn at a4 usually becomes untenable, so that White is left with a weak pawn at a3.

11 ...  $\mathbb{E}e8$

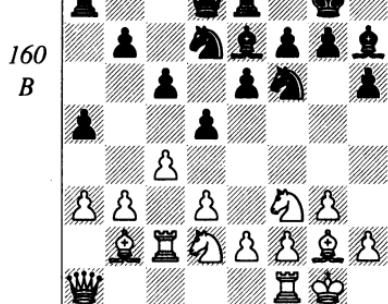
12  $\mathbb{E}c2$

To let the queen through to a1 (see the following move).

12 ...  $\mathbb{Q}h7$

A prophylactic manoeuvre, in case White eventually manages to play e4.

13  $\mathbb{W}a1$  (160)



This doubling on the long diagonal is characteristic of the hypermodern principle which requires pieces to be directed against the centre in preference to the occupation of the centre by pawns. With the text-move White exerts pressure on e5.

13 ...  $\mathbb{Q}f8$

13... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  is logical, threatening ...e5-e4, which would force White to abandon his waiting policy. Black decides on this course seven moves later; the intervening moves are of little importance, and might well have been omitted so far as the reader is concerned.

14  $\mathbb{E}e1$

The raid 14  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  15  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  would rather favour Black, who could then play ... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  to be followed by ...f6 and ultimately ...e5.

14 ...  $\mathbb{W}b6$

15  $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$

16  $\mathbb{E}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$

17  $\mathbb{E}cc1$

Taking the rook away from the h7-bishop's diagonal, enabling White to play d4 if necessary.

17 ...  $\mathbb{E}ad8$

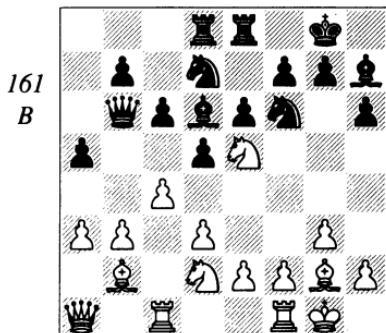
18  $\mathbb{E}fe1$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$

19  $\mathbb{E}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$

20  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$

At last this move, which opens a new phase in the game.

21  $\mathbb{Q}e5!$  (161)



White must on no account allow ...e5. Note that the text-move has a different significance here than on move 14 (see note thereto), in that Black must now exchange the bishop as well as the knight in order to play ... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ .

21 ...  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$

22  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$

23  $\mathbb{W}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$

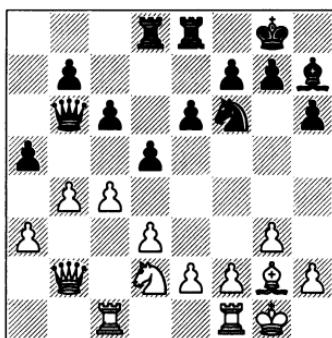
23...d4 is not so good because of 24 c5, when the white knight can get to d6 via c4.

**24 ♕b2 ♔f6**

Black also plays a waiting game, tactically perhaps not a bad idea. In the tournament book, Capablanca gives 24...c5 followed by the knight manoeuvre ...♘b8-c6. White then achieves nothing by capturing at d5 as the e-file is opened and the e2-pawn is exposed to attack (25 cxd5 exd5 26 ♖xd5 ♜xe2).

**25 b4! (162)**

162  
B



We have here an example of the half-open diagonal from g2 to a8 blocked by hostile pawns at b7, c6 and d5. It is to be noted that such a half-open line usually generates greater power than a fully open one, particularly when the blockade is by two (instead of three) pawns, as will later be the case in this game (see next diagram) after Black has unjustifiably exchanged his d-pawn.

Tactically, the line to adopt consists of attack by pawns and pieces on the blockading pawns then, by means of exchanges or pawn advances, the

creation of weaknesses which will be under fire from the bishop at g2. The execution of these manoeuvres begins with the text-move. White is ready either to operate along open a- or b-files, or to advance the b-pawn still further.

Note that Black's h7-bishop cannot compare in effectiveness with White's g2-bishop, especially as the d3-pawn, which blocks the diagonal, is quite unassailable.

**25 ... axb4**

**26 ♕xb4**

White seizes the opportunity to exchange queens. This is of importance in the forthcoming positional onslaught, the effect of which would be impaired by the presence of too many major pieces.

**26 ... ♕xb4**

Practically forced: after 26...♕c7 27 ♕b1 ♜e7 28 ♕b3, the b7-pawn becomes dangerously weak.

**27 axb4 ♜a8**

**28 ♜a1**

All according to plan.

**28 ... ♔d7**

To support the threatened wing.

**29 ♘b3 ♔f8**

**30 ♜a5!**

An important move. White prepares for the doubling of his rooks, while an exchange at a5 would bring the knight to a strong post. 30 ♜xa8 ♜xa8 31 ♘a5 is also playable, but the move chosen allows more varied possibilities.

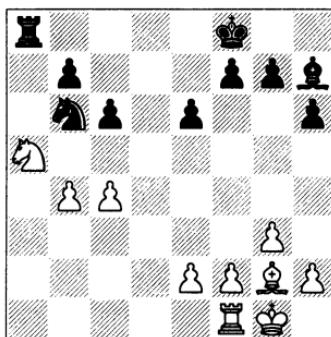
**30 ... dxc4?**

Positionally a mistake, through which an entirely new position arises.

Correct is 30... $\mathbb{B}xa5$  31  $\mathbb{Q}xa5$   $\mathbb{B}b8$  or the continuation recommended by Capablanca, 30... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  31  $\mathbb{B}f1$   $\mathbb{B}xa5$  32  $\mathbb{B}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  33  $\mathbb{B}a7$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  34  $\mathbb{Q}a5$   $\mathbb{B}b8$ , when Black has not much to fear.

- 31  $dxc4$        $\mathbb{Q}b6$   
 32  $\mathbb{B}xa8$        $\mathbb{B}xa8$   
 33  $\mathbb{Q}a5!$  (163)

163  
B



The attack on the half-open diagonal in its most characteristic form. A white knight threatens both the blockading pawns, and these pawns cannot be moved, for if either moves the other one falls; furthermore, the deadly b4-b5 is in reserve. Thus Black's options are restricted to playing ... $\mathbb{B}a7$  or ... $\mathbb{B}b8$ . In the first case (the game continuation), White wins by a pawn attack, while in the second the pieces decide the game, as follows: 33... $\mathbb{B}b8$  34 b5 (White could first make some further preparations without impairing the effect) 34... $cxb5$  35  $cxb5$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  (there is nothing else) 36  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $exd5$  37  $\mathbb{B}d1$   $\mathbb{B}d8$  (37... $\mathbb{Q}e4$  f3) 38  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{B}b8$  39  $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  40  $\mathbb{B}xd5$  and now neither 40... $\mathbb{B}d8$  41  $\mathbb{Q}f5+$  nor 40... $\mathbb{Q}e6$

41  $\mathbb{B}d2$  allows Black any counter-chances.

- 33 ...       $\mathbb{B}a7$   
 34  $\mathbb{B}d1!$

With the powerful threat 35  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ !  $bxcc6$  36  $\mathbb{B}d8+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  37  $\mathbb{Q}xc6+$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  38  $\mathbb{Q}xa7$ .

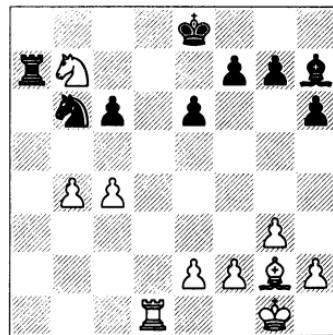
If Black now played 34... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ , then White could still take on c6 (35  $\mathbb{Q}xc6!$   $\mathbb{B}xa5$  36  $bxa5$  and the knight is attacked), while 34... $f6$  loses a vital pawn after the reply 35  $\mathbb{B}d8+$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  36  $\mathbb{B}b8$ .

- 34 ...       $\mathbb{Q}e8$

The best move, but also insufficient.

- 35  $\mathbb{Q}xb7!$  (164)

164  
B



An elegant triumph of the attack on the half-open diagonal.

- 35 ...       $\mathbb{B}xb7$   
 36  $\mathbb{Q}xc6+$        $\mathbb{B}d7$   
 37  $c5$        $\mathbb{Q}e7$   
 38  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$        $\mathbb{Q}xd7$

The combination has yielded ample material advantage, a rook and two united passed pawns for a knight and a bishop.

- 39  $c6$        $\mathbb{Q}b6$   
 40  $c7$

All goes smoothly. Black cannot avoid the loss of a piece.

**40 ... ♜f5**

To cover the queening square just in time by ...e5.

**41 ♜d8**

**e5**

**42 ♜b8**

**♝c8**

**43 b5**

**♝d6**

**44 b6**

**♝e7**

After 44...♝c6 45 b7 ♜xc7 46 ♜bc8!+ ♜xc8 47 ♜a8 the advantage of the exchange is conclusive.

**45 ♜f8**

White could also have won by 45 c8!+, winning a piece after 45...♜xc8 46 b7 ♜xb7 or 45...♝xc8 46 b7.

**45 ... ♜c8**

**46 ♜xf7**

**♝d5**

**47 ♜xg7**

**♝xb6**

**48 ♜h7**

**♝d5**

**49 ♜xh6+**

**♝xc7**

**50 e4**

**♝e7**

**51 f3**

**♝d7**

**52 h4**

**♝e8**

**53 ♜f6**

**♝g8**

**54 ♜c6**

**1-0**

### Judging and planning:

1) After 20 ♜g2.

*Assessment:* There is in the centre an extensive no-man's-land, which affords White in particular considerable freedom of movement.

*Plan* (for Black): To put an end to this situation by enforcing ...e5, thereby attaining a clear advantage in the centre (20...♝d6).

*Plan* (for White): To frustrate Black's intentions (21 ♜e5).

2) After 24...♝f6.

*Assessment:* White's g2-bishop operates along a half-open diagonal, on which are placed three hostile and vulnerable pawns.

*Plan* (for White): Attack on the queenside with pieces (28 ♜a1 and 29 ♜b3) and pawns (25 b4).

3) After 31 dxc4.

*Assessment:* As before, except that the blockading pawns at b7 and c6 have become considerably more vulnerable because of Black's incorrect exchange of his d-pawn (30...dxc4?).

*Plan* (for White): Attack on b7 by pieces (33 ♜a5) and pawns (see the variation given in the note to White's 33rd move).

Game 4  
**Bronstein – Botvinnik**  
*World Championship Match (22), Moscow 1951*  
 Dutch Defence

1	d4	e6
2	c4	f5
3	g3	♘f6
4	♗g2	♗e7
5	♘c3	0-0
6	e3	d5

Already the provisional formation in the centre is established, d4 and e3 against d5 and e6, but whereas c4 exercises pressure on the centre, Black has provided counter-pressure on e4 by bringing his own pawn to f5. The consequence of all this is that White can at will modify the situation in the centre, either by c5 (as a rule not to be recommended; see Game 2), or by the exchange cxd5 (see Chapter 9 on the half-open file).

Black's ...f5, on the other hand, has slightly weakened the e6-pawn and the e5-square is made accessible, though on the other hand his own knight can occupy e4. In addition, moving the f-pawn opens the way for Black's queen to move to the enemy kingside (...♕e8-h5), a manoeuvre which could easily become very dangerous.

7 ♘ge2

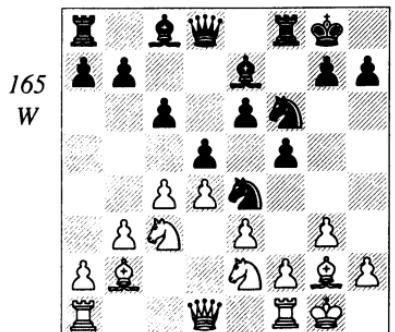
Directed principally against the manoeuvre ...♕e8-h5, but the development of the knight at e2 has the further advantage of enabling White to drive off the advanced black knight

by f3. White could also achieve this by immediately playing his knight to e5 ( $\kappa f3-e5$ ), but then Black could exchange this knight after ...♘bd7 and the white pawn at e5 could become a weakness.

7 ...                   c6  
 8 b3                   ♘e4

The black knight's jump to e4 works out differently than does the corresponding move by White, because an exchange of knights opens the f-file for Black after ...fxe4. On the other hand, it must not be overlooked that White can drive away the knight by f3. Note also that 8...♘bd7 has its drawbacks because of 9 ♘f4 (weakness at e6).

9 0-0                   ♘d7  
 10 ♘b2                   ♘df6 (165)



Both sides have completed their deployment, and now comes the most difficult phase of the game as both

sides decide on a plan for the future. The white pawn formation on the queenside points to operations there, but Black seems set for an attack on the kingside.

### 11 ♕d3

One more waiting move, which has, however, a slight drawback, in that the queen stands in the way of strategic manoeuvres such as ♘f4-d3-e5.

### 11 ... g5

Black is first in making a decision: action on the kingside. What continuation has he in mind? Presumably ...♝e8-h5, coupled with ...♞g4 and ...♝d7-e8-g6; eventually, should a favourable opportunity arise, Black might play ...f4. However, for the time being no concrete results are to be expected from this attack.

### 12 cxd5

White's rejoinder: this exchange initiates an attack on the queenside.

### 12 ... exd5

After 12...cxd5 White starts an attack along the open c-file. After the text-move his operations will be based on the half-open c-file (the minority attack).

### 13 f3

Before continuing with a3 (to which Black would probably have replied 13...a5), White drives away the troublesome knight.

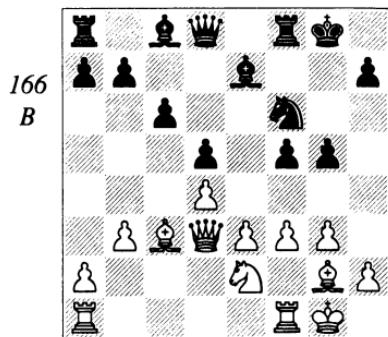
### 13 ... ♘xc3

Against 13...♞d6 White could have replied 14 e4. A general exchange, 14...dxe4 15 fxe4 fxe4 16 ♘xe4 ♘dxe4 17 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 18 ♜xe4 looks quite favourable for

White if the various holes in Black's king-position are taken into account.

### 14 ♘xc3 (166)

After 14 ♘xc3, 14...f4! is very embarrassing. As matters stand, the text-move fits in best with White's plan (b4).



### 14 ... g4(?)

A doubtful move. It is true that White was threatening 15 e4 (compare the note to Black's 13th move), but it could be satisfactorily parried by 14...♝e6 (15 e4 dxe4 16 fxe4 fxe4 17 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 18 ♜xe4 ♘d5!).

### 15 f4xg4 ♘xg4

### 16 ♘h3 ♘h6

Black can hardly allow 17 ♘xg4 f4xg4 as he would get into difficulties following e3-e4, as set out above. It is unfortunate for Black that he cannot retire the knight to f6 as he will have to lose two tempi bringing the knight from its outlying post to e4.

### 17 ♘f4 ♘d6

### 18 b4

The well-known minority attack.

### 18 ... a6

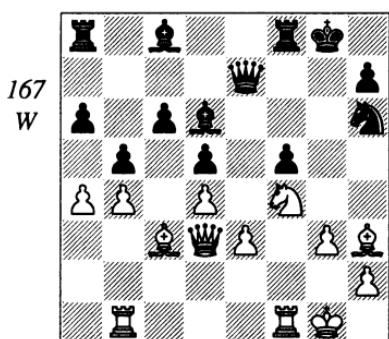
### 19 a4 ♜e7

### 20 ♜ab1

All along normal lines. The immediate advance 20 b5 is also playable, but White loses nothing by delaying this move.

**20 ... b5? (167)**

A positional misconception. While it stops White's intended action, it brings trouble for Black: the weakening of c6 and the opening, at a chosen moment, of the a-file by White. 20... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  is correct, with a probably tenable game.



167  
W

The text-move would have been barely sufficient had the knight been able to reach e4 quickly but that awkward beast is far away.

**21  $\mathbb{Q}g2$**

With an immediate threat of 22  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ , perhaps preceded by an exchange at b5. However, 21  $\mathbb{R}b2$  and 22  $\mathbb{R}a1$  may have been stronger.

**21 ...  $\mathbb{Q}g4$**

Gaining a tempo (by the attack on e3).

**22  $\mathbb{Q}d2$        $\mathbb{Q}f6$**

**23  $\mathbb{R}b2$**

In order to let the f1-rook through to a1.

**23 ...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$**

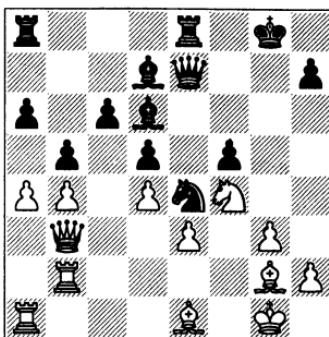
The match bulletin mentions the move 23... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ , so that after 24  $\mathbb{R}e1$  bxa4 the white f1-rook would be cut off, but White has something better in 24  $\mathbb{R}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  25  $\mathbb{W}xd2$  followed by 26  $\mathbb{Q}d3$ .

**24  $\mathbb{R}a1$        $\mathbb{Q}e4$**

**25  $\mathbb{R}e1$        $\mathbb{W}fe8$**

**26  $\mathbb{W}b3$  (168)**

168  
B



Guarding b4 so that the b2-rook can move to a2, doubling rooks on the a-file.

**26 ...  $\mathbb{W}h8$**

**27  $\mathbb{R}ba2$**

A gradual development of the attack; White now threatens to win a pawn by 28 axb5.

**27 ...  $\mathbb{W}f8?$**

Black parries the threat by guarding the a8-rook. However, this attempt to make a stand on the a-file should be preceded by 27... $\mathbb{Q}xf4!$  because now the white knight will play an important part in the proceedings. Meanwhile we can see the superiority of White's attacking formation a4 and b4 to Black's a6 and b5. White has doubled rooks on the a-file, and Black cannot emulate this

(27... $\mathbb{H}a7$ ? 28 axb5). Along the a-file Black is condemned to passivity, with his important pieces inactive.

**28  $\mathfrak{Q}d3!$**

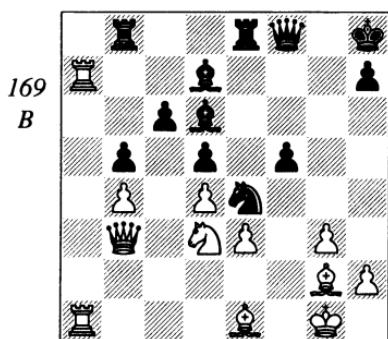
To bring the knight to the central square e5, for Black cannot then eliminate the knight without conjuring up serious dangers along the long dark-square diagonal. Note also that White need not fear the combination 28...bxa4 29  $\mathbb{H}xa4$  c5 because of the simple continuation 30 bxc5  $\mathfrak{Q}xa4$  31  $\mathbb{H}xa4$  after which White also captures the d-pawn, winning easily with his two connected passed pawns.

**28 ...  $\mathbb{H}ab8$**

Black abandons the a-file. He has no suitable waiting moves, and White can in any event play 29  $\mathfrak{Q}e5$ .

**29 axb5 axb5**

**30  $\mathbb{H}a7$  (169)**



**Occupation of the seventh rank.**

**30 ...  $\mathbb{H}e7$**

After 30... $\mathbb{H}a8$ , White can again play 31  $\mathfrak{Q}e5$ !.

**31  $\mathfrak{Q}e5$   $\mathfrak{Q}e8?$**

After 31... $\mathfrak{Q}e8$  32 dxe5  $\mathfrak{Q}e6$  33  $\mathbb{W}c2$  White would retain a slight positional advantage.

**32 g4!?**

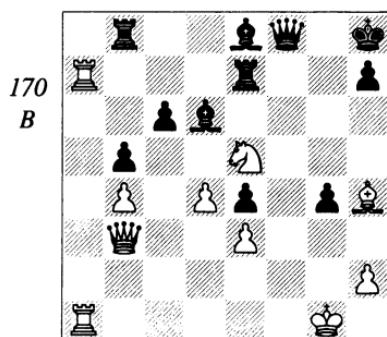
A dramatic attempt to bring the e1-bishop to life. The threat is  $\mathfrak{Q}h4$ , when Black must allow his opponent command of the seventh rank, with disastrous consequences.

**32 ... fxe4?**

In time-trouble, Black makes a fatal error. The correct continuation was 32... $\mathbb{W}g7$  33  $\mathbb{H}xe7$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  and after 34 gxf5  $\mathfrak{Q}xe5$  35 dxe5  $\mathbb{W}xe5$  36  $\mathbb{H}a7$   $\mathbb{W}g8$  Black's centralized queen gives him sufficient counterplay to hold the game. White should therefore prefer 34  $\mathfrak{Q}xe4$  fxe4 35  $\mathfrak{Q}g3$ , when he retains some positional advantage.

**33  $\mathfrak{Q}xe4$  dxe4**

**34  $\mathfrak{Q}h4!$  (170)**



Part of White's strategy, of which successive phases have been: contesting the a-file, conquest of that file, and contesting the seventh rank, which now is completely overrun.

**34 ...  $\mathbb{H}xe5$**

A despairing sacrifice by Black. After 34... $\mathbb{H}a7$  35  $\mathbb{H}a7$  the threat of 36  $\mathfrak{Q}f7+$  can hardly be answered by 35... $\mathfrak{Q}xe5$  because of 36 dxe5

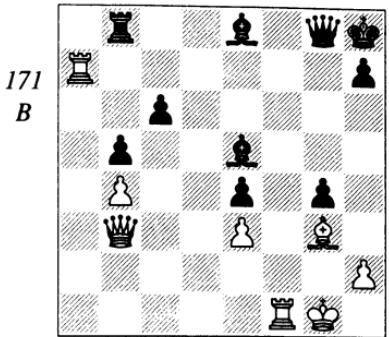
followed by 37 ♕f6+, again with serious loss of material for Black.

35 dx5 ♔xe5  
36 ♜f1 ♛g8

Alternative lines have much the same result, e.g. 36...♛d6 37 ♕g3! ♕xg3 38 ♜c3+ or 36...♛h6 37 ♕g3 ♕xg3 38 ♜c3+.

37 ♕g3! (171)

An elegant finish. Black cannot accept the queen sacrifice because of mate in two (38 ♜f8+ followed by 39 ♔xe5#).



37 ... ♕g7  
38 ♛xg8+ 1-0

#### *Judging and Planning:*

1) After 10...♝df6 (165).

*Assessment:* White has greater freedom on the queenside, Black on the kingside.

*Plan* (for White): Attack on the queenside (cx d5 and b4-b5).

*Plan* (for Black): Attack on the kingside (...g5 followed by ...♛e8-h5).

2) After 20...b5? (167).

*Assessment:* White has a clear advantage in his pawn formation on the queenside (a4 and b4 against a6 and b5), which enables him to open the a-file at a favourable moment.

*Plan* (for White): Doubling rooks along the a-file, to which end b4 must be adequately protected. The ultimate object of this manoeuvre is the occupation of the seventh rank.

3) After 30 ♜a7 (169).

*Assessment:* White has a rook on the seventh.

*Plan* (for White): The complete supremacy over the seventh rank by ♜e5, g4 and ♜h4. These moves give White an undoubted advantage because various black units are tied to the defence of the seventh rank, and also because the double exchange at e5 opens a diagonal for White's dark-squared bishop with decisive results.

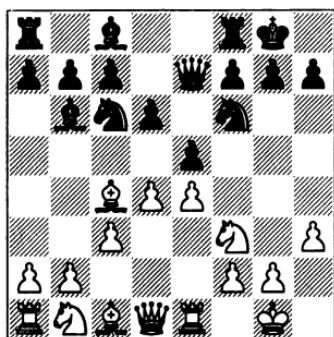
## Game 5

## Dr Tartakower – Dr Euwe

Venice 1948

Giuoco Piano

- |   |     |           |
|---|-----|-----------|
| 1 | e4  | e5        |
| 2 | Qf3 | Qc6       |
| 3 | Ac4 | Ac5       |
| 4 | c3  | Ab6       |
| 5 | d4  | We7       |
| 6 | 0-0 | d6        |
| 7 | h3  | Qf6       |
| 8 | Me1 | 0-0 (172) |

172  
W

A well-known central structure: e4 and d4 on the attacking side against the defensive e5 and d6. White has the option of altering the formation in the centre either by dx5 or d5. In either case Black's b6-bishop gets into action, so neither continuation can at present be entertained by White. His chance lies rather in forcing Black to effect the exchange ...exd4, which would greatly favour White as then White's e-pawn recovers its mobility, which carries with it all manner of attacking chances.

- 9  $\text{Qa3!}$

In combination with the next move an original way to strive for the target we have described. White has in view  $\text{Qc2-e3-d5}$ .

- 9 ...  $\text{Qd8}$

Better is 9... $\text{Qh8}$ , in which case White can hardly play 10  $\text{Af1}$  on account of 10... $\text{exd4}$  11  $\text{cxsd4}$   $\text{Qxe4}$ . The object of the text-move is to anticipate  $\text{Qc2-e3-d5}$  by ...c6.

- 10  $\text{Af1}$   $\text{Qe8?}$

The object of the text-move is to give the e-pawn effective support by ...f6, but it is inferior. Black could perhaps have played 10... $\text{exd4}$  11  $\text{cxsd4}$   $\text{Qxe4}$  in any case, since 12  $\text{Qg5 d5}$  13 f3 h6! gives White no advantage. Also 10... $\text{Qd7}$  is better, as will be seen before long.

- 11  $\text{Qc4}$   $f6$

Black has secured his e-pawn, and White's plan, of which his last three moves formed a part, apparently has achieved nothing.

- 12  $a4!$

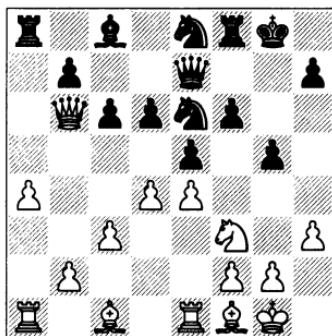
A characteristic manoeuvre, taking advantage of the immobility of Black's bishop at b6. The threat a5 forces Black to move either his a-pawn or c-pawn, both of which guard the bishop, and thus Black will finally lose a pawn. Had Black played his f6-knight to d7 instead of e8 then he would have escaped material

loss, although his formation (knights at d7 and d8, bishop at c8) would not have been particularly easy to disentangle.

- |        |             |
|--------|-------------|
| 12 ... | <b>c6</b>   |
| 13     | <b>Qxb6</b> |
| 14     | <b>Wb3+</b> |
| 15     | <b>Wxb6</b> |

**g5!** (173)

173  
W



A well-known recipe: Black attacks White's kingside, weakened by the advance of the h-pawn, using the advance of his own g-pawn. Black decides the more readily on this course, as after the setback in the last few moves he has little to lose.

- 16 ♜c4**

White takes Black's action too lightly. He should have left this bishop at f1 to take part in the defence and continued with 16 g3, preventing Black's ... ♜f4 more effectively than after the text-move.

- 16 ... h6**

So as to recapture with the f-pawn should White play 17 dxe5.

- 17 h4?**

White breaks the general rule that the pawns should not be moved on the side where one is under attack.

Instead of this serious weakening of White's kingside, White should have tried to exert more pressure in the centre, for example by 17 b3 (followed by ♜a3), or 17 d5.

- 17 ... ♘h7**

Now 17...g4 has no point. The primary object of Black's strategy is to open the g-file.

- 18 hxg5?**

This is in conflict with the ideas of the defence. White opens the h-file for his opponent.

- 18 ... hxg5**  
**19 dxe5 dxe5**

This is what White has been playing for; the f-file has remained closed, and White has the run of the a3-f8 dark-square diagonal, but it is clear that the time element will be against him, e.g.: 20 b3 ♘h8 21 ♜a3 ♘f7 and already 22...♘h5 is threatened.

- 20 ♜e3 ♘h8**  
**21 g3?**

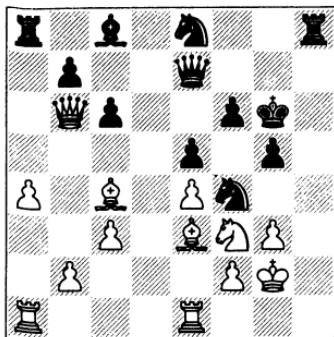
He again voluntarily weakens his kingside. Best was the king's immediate flight via f1 and e2.

- 21 ... ♘g6**  
**22 ♘g2**

In order to reply to 22...♘h7 with 23 ♘h1, but Black has more strings to his bow.

- 22 ... ♜f4+! (174)**

A fairly obvious offer of a knight, in accordance with the principles laid down in Chapters 5 and 6; White's defensive pawn at g3 is eliminated and, at the same time, Black's c8-bishop will be given the opportunity to intervene with gain of tempo.

174  
W

23  $\text{gx}f4$        $\text{h}3+$   
 24  $\text{g}3$

After 24  $\text{g}1$   $\text{gx}f4$  White's position is beyond hope, since Black's queen threatens to take part in the struggle on the g-file with 25... $\text{w}g7$ .

24 ...       $\text{ex}f4+$   
 25  $\text{xf}4$        $\text{w}d7$

The mating threat at g4 leads to a further collapse of the white forces. The white knight must move to h2, where it is out of action and itself becomes a target.

26  $\text{h}2$        $\text{gx}f4+$   
 27  $\text{xf}4$        $\text{h}4+$

Black must proceed with the utmost energy, as his own king is not safe and is threatened with  $\text{g}1+$ .

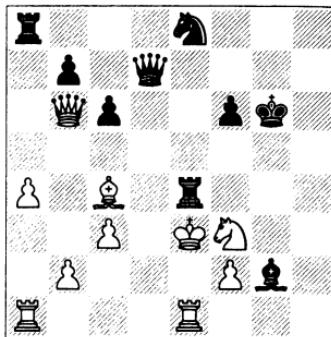
28  $\text{e}3$

Other possibilities are:

- 1) 28  $\text{f}3$   $\text{g}2+!$  29  $\text{x}g2$   $\text{h}3+$   
 30  $\text{g}1$   $\text{x}h2+$  31  $\text{f}1$   $\text{h}1+$  32  
 $\text{e}2$   $\text{xe}4+$  33  $\text{d}2$   $\text{xc}4$ , etc.
- 2) 28  $\text{g}3$   $\text{g}4+$  29  $\text{x}h3$  (29  
 $\text{f}3$   $\text{g}2+$  30  $\text{e}3$   $\text{xe}4\#$ ) 29... $\text{g}5+$   
 30  $\text{h}4$   $\text{h}7\#$ .

28 ...       $\text{g}2$   
 29  $\text{f}3$        $\text{xe}4+!$  (175)

White has set up a new line of defence, which, however, the text-move

175  
W

renders useless. The white king, bereft of all help and with the additional handicap of his queen's vulnerable position, is exposed to attack from three black pieces.

30  $\text{xe}4$        $\text{d}6+$   
 31  $\text{d}3$   
 31  $\text{f}4$   $\text{f}5+$ , 31  $\text{e}3$   $\text{xc}4+$  and 31  $\text{d}4$   $\text{c}8+$  are all immediately fatal.

31 ...       $\text{f}5+$   
 32  $\text{d}4$        $\text{f}4+$   
 33  $\text{d}3$

If 33  $\text{c}5?$ , then 33... $\text{xc}4+$  34  
 $\text{xd}6$   $\text{d}5+$  35  $\text{e}7$  (35  $\text{c}7$   $\text{d}8+$   
 36  $\text{xb}7$   $\text{c}8\#$ ) 35... $\text{f}7+$  36  $\text{d}6$   
 $\text{f}8+$  37  $\text{e}7$  (37  $\text{d}7$   $\text{h}3+$  mates)  
 37... $\text{d}8+$  38  $\text{xd}8$  (38  $\text{e}6$   $\text{h}3\#$ )  
 38... $\text{xd}8+$  39  $\text{d}7$   $\text{b}8+$  wins.

33 ...       $\text{xc}4+$   
 34  $\text{c}2$        $\text{xf}3$

Black's attack, for the time being, has come to an end, but on balance the situation is far from unfavourable for him; he has a knight and bishop against rook and pawn, with a very promising position. White's counter-action, 35  $\text{g}1+$   $\text{f}7$  36  
 $\text{c}7+$   $\text{e}6$  37  $\text{ae}1+$ , leads to nothing due to 37... $\text{e}4+!$  38  $\text{c}1$   $\text{xa}4$ .

**35 b3**

Here 35  $\mathbb{W}d4$  leads to a lost ending after the exchange of queens.

**35 ...  $\mathbb{A}e4+$**

**36  $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{W}d3$**

**37  $\mathbb{B}g1+$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$**

**38  $\mathbb{B}ac1?$**

This gives Black the opportunity for an elegant final combination, but other moves also lose:

1) 38  $\mathbb{B}ad1$   $\mathbb{W}c2+$  39  $\mathbb{Q}a1$  (alternatively, 39  $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}c4+!$  40  $bxc4$   $\mathbb{B}xa4\#$ ) 39... $\mathbb{B}xa4+!$  40  $bxa4$   $\mathbb{W}xa4+$  41  $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}c4+$  42  $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{W}c2\#$ .

2) 38  $\mathbb{W}c7+$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  39  $\mathbb{B}ac1$   $\mathbb{W}d2+$  40  $\mathbb{Q}a1$  (40  $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}b5+$ ) 40... $\mathbb{Q}c4+$  and wins.

3) 38  $\mathbb{W}c5!$   $\mathbb{W}c2+$  39  $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}d5!$  wins at once, as 40  $\mathbb{B}gb1$   $\mathbb{Q}c4+$  41  $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $b6!$  is decisive.

**38 ...  $\mathbb{W}d2+$**

**39  $\mathbb{Q}a3$**

Or 39  $\mathbb{Q}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  40  $\mathbb{W}xb7+$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  41  $\mathbb{B}b1$  (41  $bxc4$   $\mathbb{W}xa4\#$ ) 41... $\mathbb{W}xc3+$  42  $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{W}xa4+$  43  $bxa4$   $\mathbb{W}a3\#$ .

#### Judging and Planning:

1) After 8...0-0 (172).

*Assessment:* White's position in the centre is more aggressive, but it is hard to make progress as Black can retain his strong point at e5.

*Plan* (for White): To play his knight to c4 and, if occasion arises, inconvenience the immobile bishop on b6 by playing a4. However, White must be prepared to switch over to another course by bringing his knight to d5, either via c2 and e3 or c4 and e3.

2) After 15  $\mathbb{W}xb6$ .

*Assessment:* White has an extra pawn, but his king-position is weakened by the advance of his h-pawn to h3.

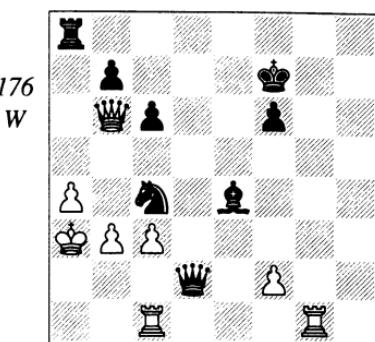
*Plan* (for Black): To assault White's kingside by ...g5-g4, strengthened possibly by ... $\mathbb{Q}f4$ .

3) After 22  $\mathbb{Q}g2$ .

*Assessment:* White's kingside is seriously weakened, and at the moment

**39 ...**

**$\mathbb{Q}c4+!$  (176)**



With this sacrifice and that on the next move, the white king's last defences on the queenside are destroyed.

**40  $bxc4$   $\mathbb{W}xa4+!$**

**41  $\mathbb{Q}xa4$   $\mathbb{W}a2+$**

**42  $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{W}b2+$**

**0-1**

After 43  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  Black mates with 43... $\mathbb{W}a3\#$ , while after 43  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  White loses his queen (43... $\mathbb{W}xf2+$  44  $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{W}xb6+$  45  $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}c2!)$ .

Black has a preponderance in available forces, but must not wait until White strengthens his defence, for instance by 23  $\mathbb{K}h1$ .

*Plan* (for Black): Destruction of White's battlements by the sacrifice of a knight at f4 in order to force an immediate breakthrough by the attacking forces.

4) After 29  $\mathfrak{Q}f3$ .

*Assessment:* White's king is poorly protected and his pieces stand unguarded, while the queen can easily become the victim of a fork.

*Plan* (for Black): To eliminate White's defensive e-pawn by a sacrifice and afterwards to throw all his forces into the battle.

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This index includes all positions in which neither side has more than two pieces (not including kings and pawns). The number of pawns is not listed. Thus ‘ vs ’ refers to all endings in which both sides have one rook, and any number of pawns.

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