

POSITIONAL IDEAS IN CHESS



John Love



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by

John Love

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Preface

It is assumed that the reader is acquainted with the main tactical ideas (pin, fork, discovered attack, and so on) for these are the elements which the beginner first encounters and employs in the early days of chess apprenticeship. Such tactics arise from the background of position and it is the elements which make up the nature of position that are the concern of the present volume.

The foundation upon which any position is built is the board itself, that apparently simple space of sixty-four squares, arranged in alternate light and dark colours, and the book begins with a consideration of that space in an attempt to show that it is not quite as simple as it first appears. It then moves on to study the effect that pawns and pieces have on the playing surface, modifying in remarkable ways the very territory on which the struggle takes place; how pawns change the nature of the arena, aiding or inhibiting the players; how their relative dispositions help or hinder the movement of pieces; how pieces fight for the control of routes and use those lines once they have been established, and how their relationship to that of the

pawn configuration enhances or diminishes their powers.

The positional elements presented, explored and illustrated in this book are as essential a part of the chessplayer's equipment as a knowledge of tactical ideas or the ability to evolve and calculate combinations. In fact combinations depend for their soundness and success on an awareness of position. Spielmann, a great attacking and combinative player, once wrote of Alekhine, 'I can comprehend Alekhine's combinations well enough, but where he gets his attacking chances from ... is beyond me. Give me the positions he obtains and I should seldom falter.'

Alekhine created those positions with painstaking attention to detail and the brilliance of the conclusions to many of his games can blind one to the earlier preparation that had taken place. It is the author's hope that this book will assist the reader to understand the need for preparation and to sharpen his positional sense so that when an attack begins it is launched from a sound base, or when a defence is needed the resources will be to hand.

The book begins with the simplest ideas and, in the early stages, new ideas are introduced slowly so that they are the more easily assimilated. Problems and questions appear in appropriate places to encourage the reader to practise the ideas as he goes along. When, through this method, he has become familiar with those elements, they are extended in greater depth and new ones are introduced more quickly. This gradual approach in both range and difficulty will carry the reader along a smooth curve of learning and, it is hoped, avoid the

stumbling kind of progress which often occurs when too much has to be absorbed too rapidly.

There is great satisfaction to be gained in achieving one's objectives through positional means. This is not to denigrate the pleasure to be derived from the success of a tactical finesse or sparkling combination; it is more to suggest that the knowledge that one's success is the product of positional sense and sound preparation enhances one's pleasure in the total conception.

Terrain

Diagram 1

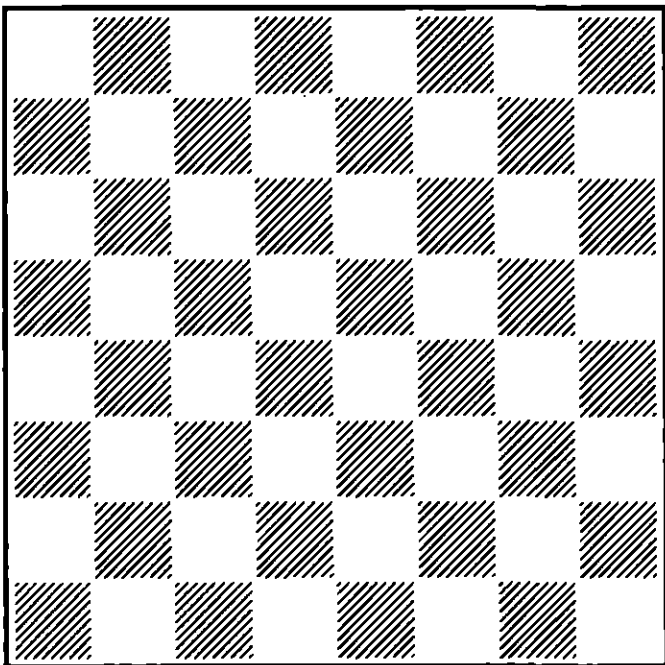
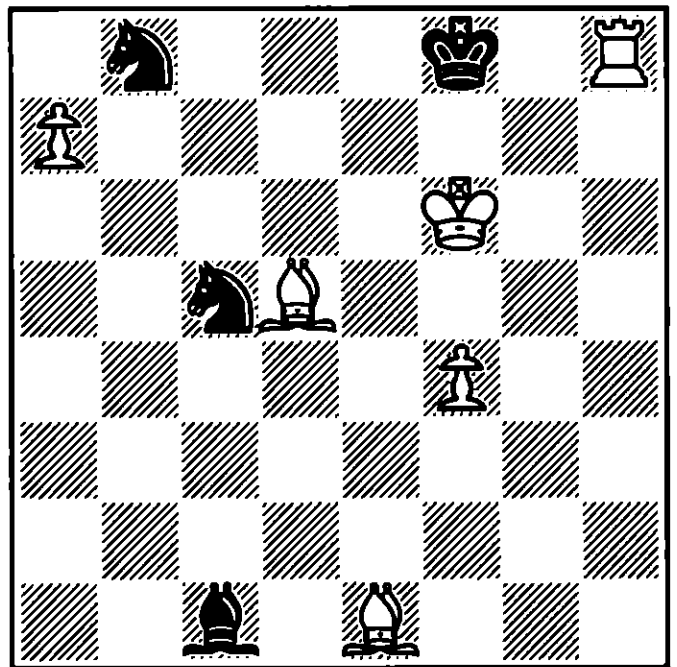
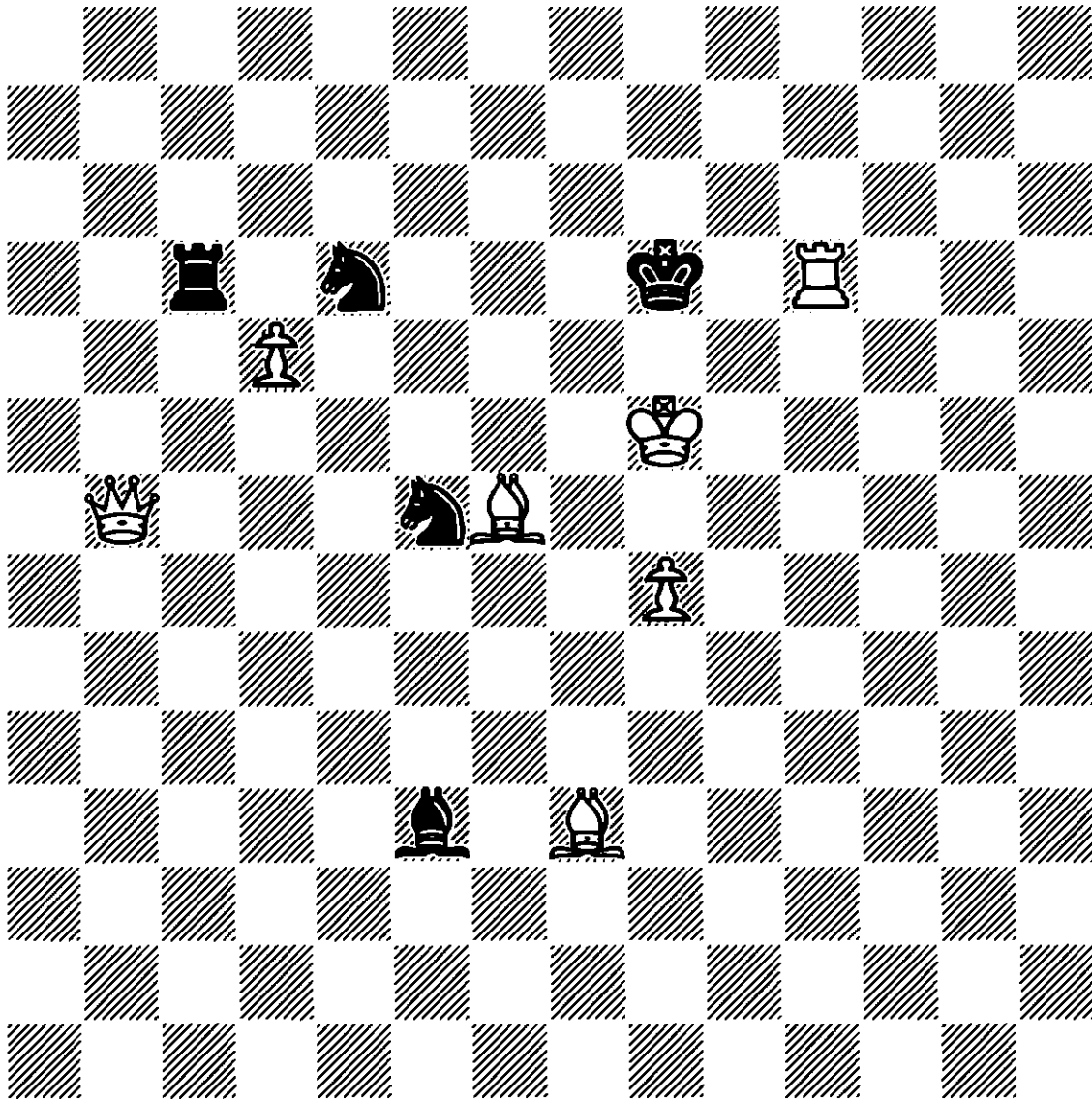


Diagram 2



In 2, Black's King is mated, whereas in 3 it can step out of check from White's Rook and it is clear that the King would always be more difficult to mate on the infinite board.

Diagram 3



White would need another Rook somewhere along the 9th rank (to form an artificial edge) in order to give mate.

The effect on pawns is interesting. The pawn at a7 in 2 is one move from queening but in 3 it is as far from promoting as it ever was. Again, in 2 the pawn is unable to fork or unmask a discovered attack, being a side pawn whereas in 3 it can fork and threatens to unmask a discovered attack from the White Queen, nor does it suffer any of the endgame disadvantages inherent in Rook's pawns on a normal board.

The boundary effect on pawns, then, is considerable.

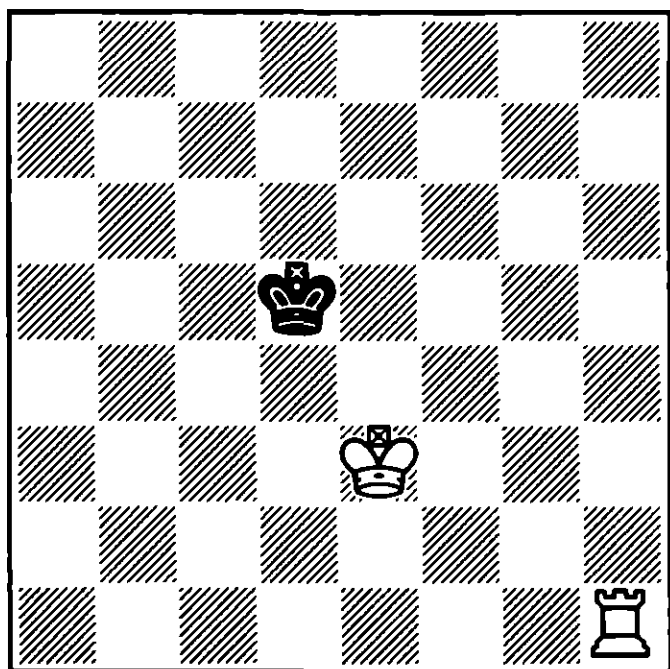
For ease of calculation of material there has to be a scale of the relative value of pieces and it is generally accepted that, counting a pawn as unity, $N=B=3$, $R=5$ and $Q=9$. But at any moment pieces vary from their mean value according to position and this other constantly changing value depends largely on the amount of space they command. For example, in 2 the Bishop at d5 has thirteen squares to move to but the one on e1 has only seven, approximately half. One Bishop, therefore, has a

spatial effect, or value be it only temporary nearly twice that of the other, caused solely by the presence of the boundaries, for in 3 it can be seen that all the Bishops have equal spatial values. Compare the Knights and it will be seen that a similar effect applies.

The limitations imposed by the edges of the board are felt by all the pieces, The King is mated with minimum force there, pieces lose much of their spatial value, and the Rook's pawns find great frustration in their extreme positions as players who try to promote them only too often discover.

Every beginner has learned the basic endgame mates of Queen and King against King, Rook and King against King etc.

Diagram 4



One only has to consider diagram 4 to realise that not all squares or lines of squares are of the same importance whatever geometrical equivalence there might be. No one would attempt to mate the

Black King in the middle of the board. It must be driven to one of the edges for the delivery of the final stroke. Look at one method of continuing:

1 Rc1

Limiting the freedom of the opposing King. The Rook acts along the c-file making that file a new edge of the board and he will continue in the same way, as if the board's boundaries are movable.

1 Kd6

Otherwise the Rook goes to c5 making a new edge from c5 to h5.

2 Ke4 Ke6

Black finds it useless retreating on the d-file since White simply advances on the e-file. Now the White King creates part of an edge, d5, e5, f5, as a barrier to the opposing King. (This is called the square opposition of Kings.)

3 Rc6ch Kd7
4 Kd5 Ke7
5 Rd6

The Pit and the Pendulum. The walls press ever closer on the hapless King.

5 Kf7
6 Re6 Kg7
7 Ke5 Kf7
8 Kf5 Kg7
9 Re7ch Kf8

If 9 ... Kh6, then 10 Ra7! a waiting move forcing mate next time.

10 Kf6	Kg8
11 Kg6	Kf8
12 Re1!	

Mate follows next move.

The Rook is well adapted to behave like sliding set-squares on a drawing board and is an excellent example of the main theme of this book: how pieces modify terrain. It was for this reason that the example was chosen and not, of course, to instruct the reader in so simple a mate.

White's method here was positional: he used his pieces for the control of space. Positional ideas are as much a part of the nature of the game as the tactical ideas of fork and pin, and the good chessplayer must take both into his or her thinking. In this sense there is no such thing as the 'positional player' or the 'tactical player', only the 'chessplayer' who weighs the position and the tactics with an equal hand and blends them according to the demands of the situation.

We are all positional players by the very fact that we play on a board with a limited number of squares. Those boundaries the edges of the board impose limitations on the pieces. From the ending we have just seen another idea emerges. It was much to White's advantage that the Black King was restricted by the edges of the board and by the mobile edges made with the White

pieces: they enabled White to win. It was to Black's disadvantage for he was prevented from drawing as he would have done on an infinite board. Freedom for one side often implies restriction for the other and these related elements are the gift or imposition of the terrain.

The geographer, the engineer, the general and even the hiker will examine closely the topography before him with a view to using its features to further his plans. The engineer, for example, with the task of constructing a road across the region, will devise methods of overcoming the various natural obstacles, a lake, a river, a marsh, a range of mountains. He will bridge the river, fill the marsh, and seek the best gradient through the mountains along the valleys, and whatever plan he finally adopts will reflect the constraints which the natural features impose upon him.

This regard for the nature of space must also preoccupy the mind of the chessplayer. The first fixed features we notice are the edges of the board and we have already seen the remarkable influence they have on the play. The rest of this book is devoted to a study of those other features, the changing configuration of pawns and pieces which have a greater and more subtle effect upon the space in which the game takes place.

ONE



Routes

CHAPTER 1

How pawns change the board

Diagram 5

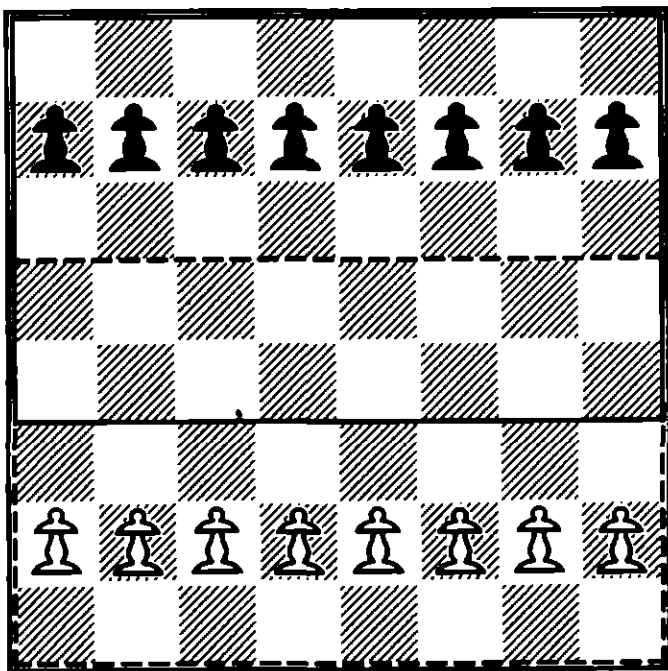
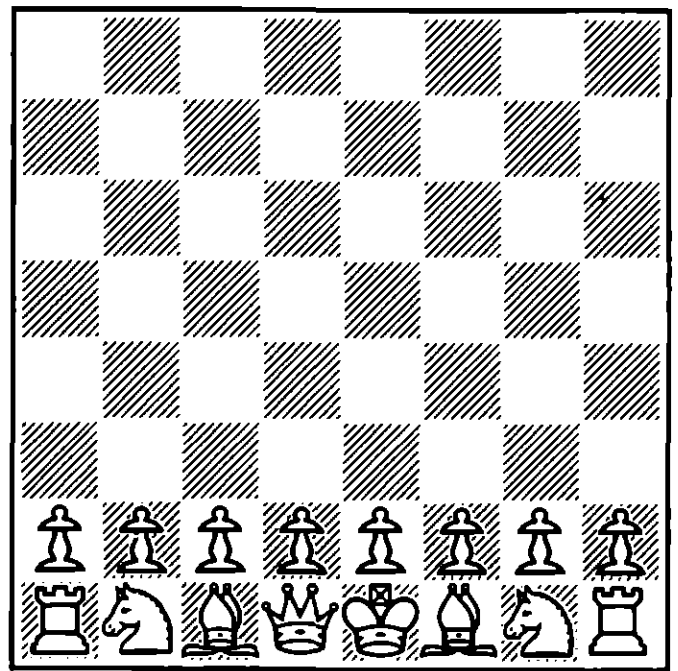


Diagram 6

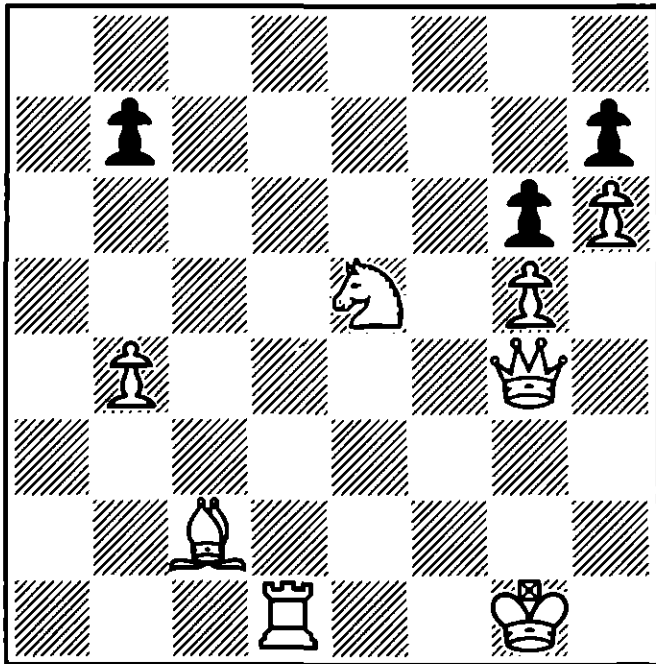


In their initial positions the two ranks of pawns look remarkably like the edges of the board, denying to the opponent the use of any squares beyond his fifth rank.

Diagram 6 reveals another effect of the pawn rank. Whilst the pawns remain there, White's pieces, apart from his Knights, are unable to move at all. From the outset it is clear that

pawns have an enormous influence on space and hence the freedom of the pieces. Of course, pawns will move and things will change, but the nature of pawns will ensure that, whilst they remain on the board, their effect on space will always be considerable. There is a clear distinction between pieces and pawns in the role they play as elements in the features of the terrain.

Diagram 7



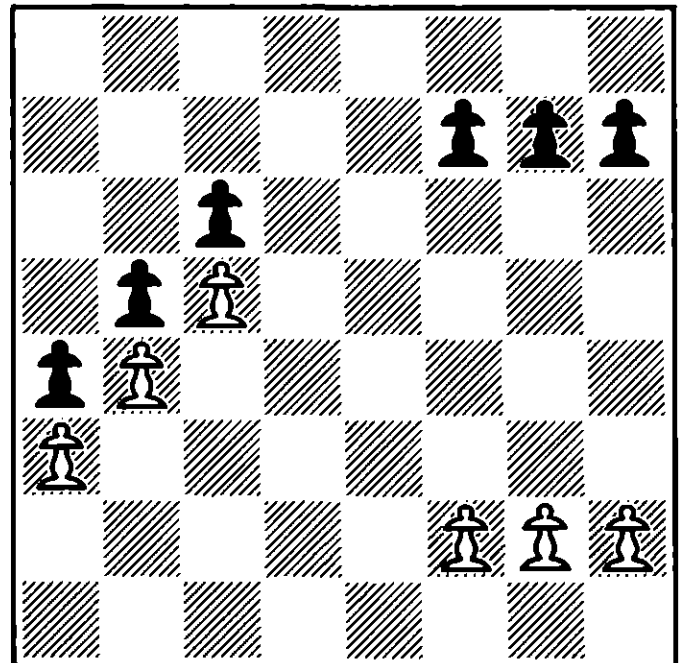
Consider the relative mobility of pawns and pieces in diagram 7.

The value of pieces varies according to their command of space and mobility. They are not fixed objects and they spend their lives moving about the board constantly trying to improve their position. When openings occur they are quick to move in, when attacked they are able to retreat or move aside.

The pawn, plodding and pedestrian, leads a different existence. It moves slowly on its own file unable to leave that line unless capturing. As often as not it is likely to come up against its opposite number and so become immobilised. When assailed it can neither slip aside nor retreat. The pawn, therefore, is a sometimes slow moving, sometimes fixed feature of the board, an element which both friendly and opposing forces must frequently regard as a portion of that terrain itself.

Supposing, after a certain number of moves, without noting at present what has happened to the pieces, that the pawn configuration stands as in diagram 8.

Diagram 8



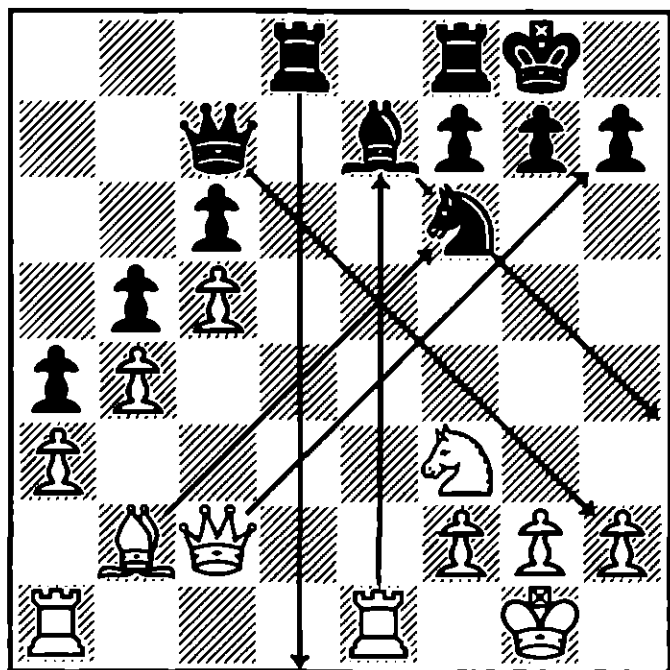
All the necessary moves have been made to release the pieces from their first rank, the central pawns have been exchanged and opposing wing groups remain. On the queenside the pawns are blockaded in interlocking pawn chains. They have the effect of a mountain range and forces must move round them in order to invade opposing queenside territory. They have become an almost permanent feature of the topography.

The kingside shows groups of pawns still at their original posts, a sensible arrangement if the Kings have been castled on that side for they offer sound defensive screens. They can also advance, which means they can change the nature of their influence over that portion of the field of battle.

The absence of pawns in the centre creates an open area for the free movement of pieces and so here it is the exchange of pawns that has made a permanent influence over the terrain.

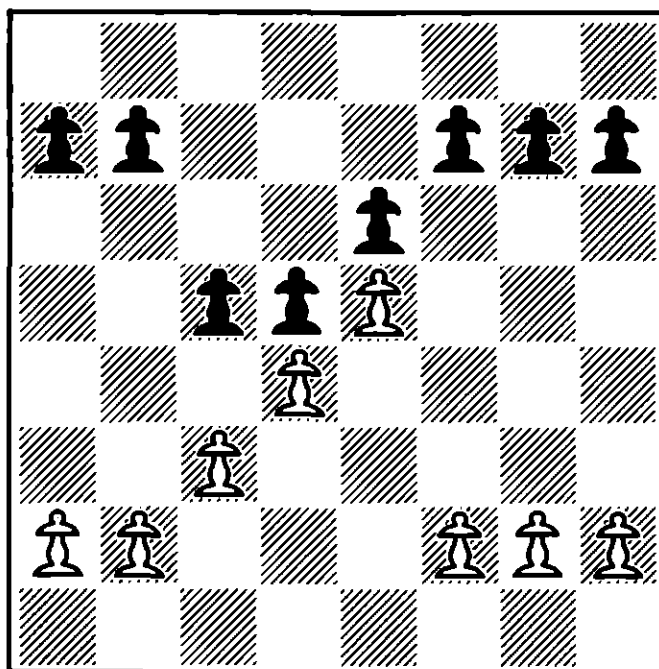
Such a configuration of pawns could well dictate the lines of action of a game. Add a few pieces to make the position of diagram 9.

Diagram 9



Play will almost inevitably occur in the open centre, up and down the open central files and along the diagonals in the directions indicated in the diagram. All of this action is the product of what has previously happened to the pawns.

Diagram 10



Here again pawn movement has freed pieces from the back line, but no pawn exchanges have yet taken place. Pawn groups on the wings remain mobile and it is the centre in this case which is becoming blockaded. Black has the choice of fixing pawns further with ... c4, or opening up one file (the c-file) with 1 cxd4 2 cxd4.

This time, instead of adding pieces, we can trace the evolution of the pawn pattern from the actual moves of a variation of the French Defence.

Play the following moves from the initial position.

1 e4 e6

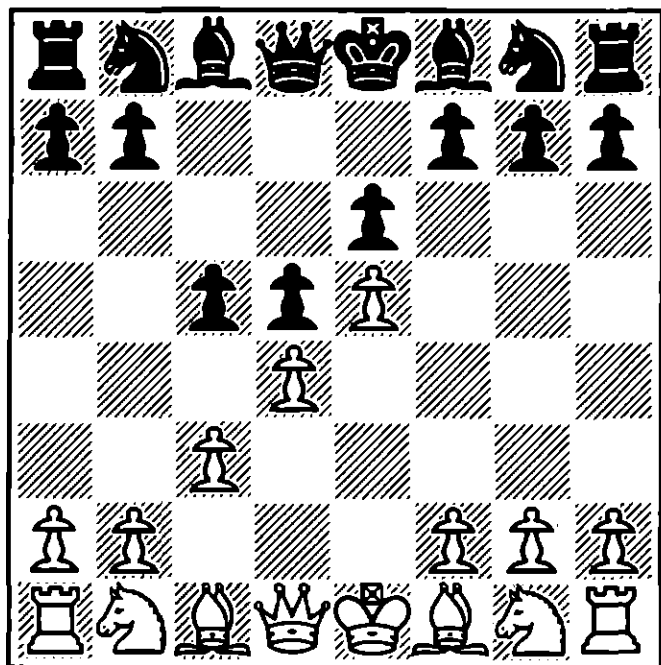
The French Defence.

2 d4 d5

3 e5 c5

4 c3

Diagram 11



The first thing one notices about diagram 11 is that no pieces have been moved: both players have been too concerned about modifying the terrain with their pawns to do so, yet it was the freedom and the future of those pieces which motivated their efforts.

Two pawn chains have emerged: a Black one formed by the pawns at f7, e6 and d5, whereas White's extends along the diagonal from b2 to e5. The overlap in the middle gives a fixed pawn centre and the total effect is to divide the board in two. No files are open and so direct movement up and down the board is unlikely for some time. Activity will have to be oblique. Black will slant his intentions towards the queenside whereas White's movement will slope in the opposite direction. Again it is geography, changed by the pawns, which determines future strategy.

We shall look at such pawn arrangements in greater detail

later on. It is sufficient at the moment to simply note the broad effects.

At the end of each chapter some problems and positions are given for you to solve. Look at the pawn patterns in the following diagrams. Can you describe those configurations, their extent, permanency, present state and influence on future play? In doing so consider each position as a whole and then look separately at the queenside, the centre and the kingside.

Diagram 12

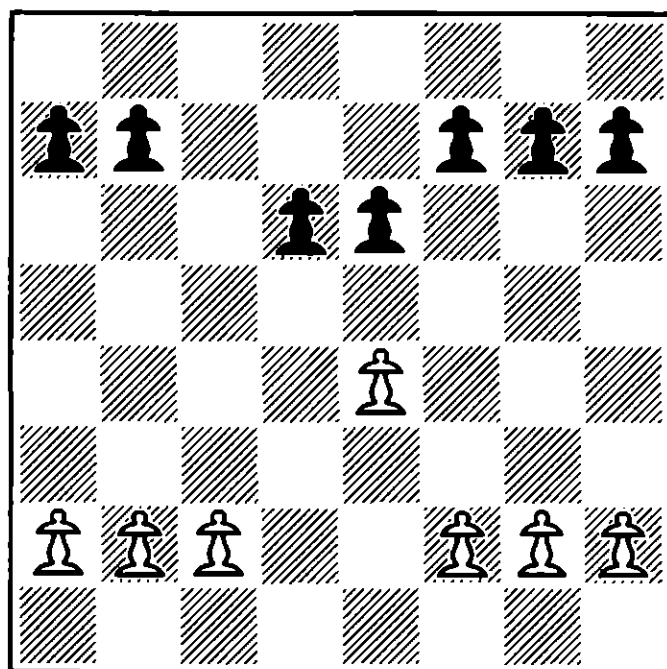


Diagram 13

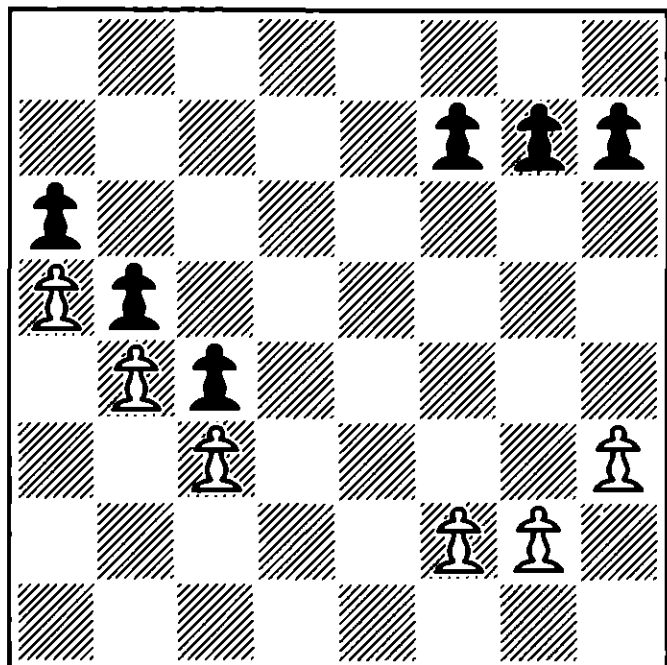


Diagram 15

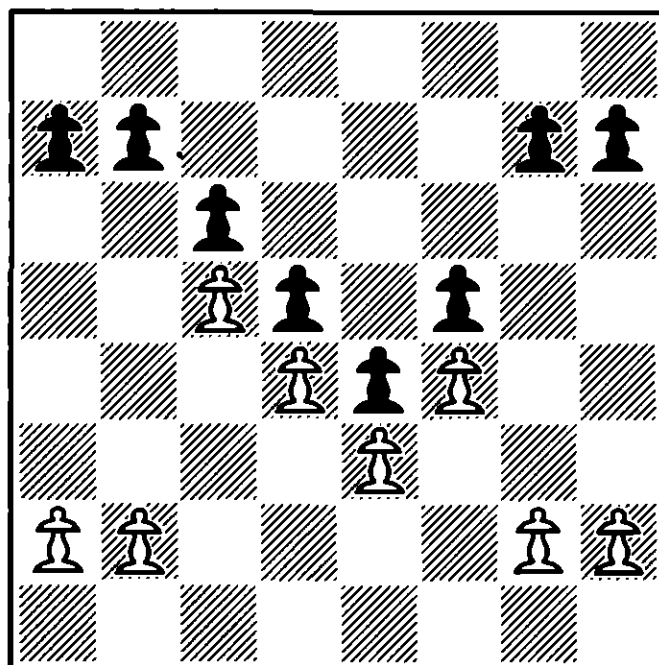
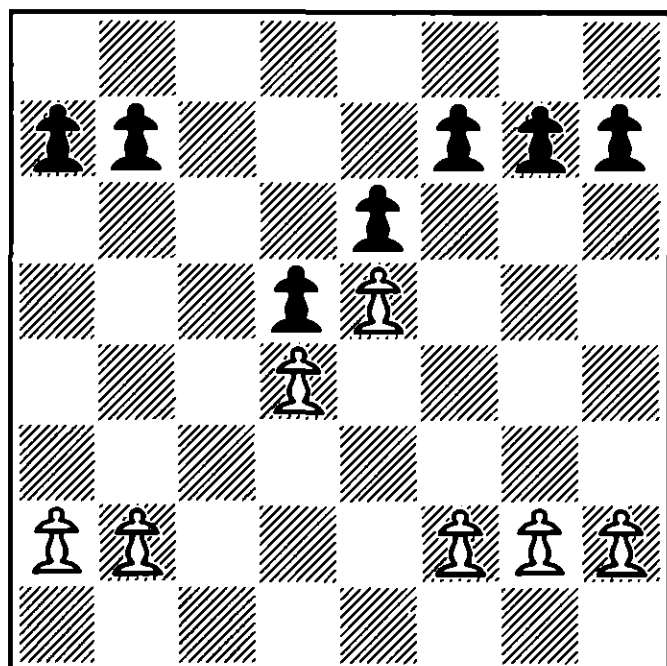


Diagram 14



SOLUTIONS

Diagram 12 Few pawn moves have been made so far and only one exchange taken place and so it is probable that the game is still in the early stages of the opening.

In the centre Black has two pawns to one. They are not very

far advanced but are solid and strong.

On the queenside White's pawns are uncommitted, Black, however, has ventured one of his and exchanged it for White's d-pawn.

The kingside remains undisturbed.

The first effect of the pawn pattern on future play is the persistent one of the pawn exchange. This confers on Black the use of the half open c-file and on White the half open d-file. The Black pawn at d6 cannot be defended by another pawn and will make a useful target for White on the d-file although it is deep in the Black lines and not easy to attack. Both White's Bishops are free to develop to a choice of squares whereas Black's, as the situation stands, have a more modest scope, assuming that pieces are in their original positions.

In general the situation is

fluid, the pawn pattern can easily, even quickly, change. You will probably recognise that the position has evolved from a Sicilian Defence and this flexibility is the very essence of the opening.

Diagram 13 This position is of a much more decided character. Many pawns have been moved and two pairs exchanged. Activity in the three areas of the board has been of different kinds and has resulted in completely different situations.

On the queenside the pawns have moved quickly towards each other but instead of being exchanged they passed each other and became fixed, establishing a new and permanent feature in the terrain. We can describe this as permanent since only the greatest violence piece sacrifice could blast a route through the ridge.

The clash of pawns in the centre has swept the area clean and this now open sector can again be regarded as permanent. It is unlikely that more than the odd pawn from a piece exchange - would ever enter it again and both sides must depend on the deployment of pieces for its control.

On the kingside the position is again different. Only one pawn move has been made. The situation here could be called fluid, but one must remember that pawn movements in this region will be inhibited by the need to retain good pawn defences for the Kings, assuming that both sides have castled, or intend to castle, on that side.

In general, what has happened to the pawns will greatly influence future play. Both sides must steer round the queenside pawns but a huge area (the space between the kingside pawns plus the central files plus the area behind Black's queenside pawns) is open for piece activity. Notice too that the pawn configuration will influence even the direction of that activity. White's movement will flow from the centre forwards and towards the kingside; Black's from the queenside and centre towards the kingside.

Black's pawns on the queenside are more advanced than White's and this will give him more space for manoeuvre not only on the queenside, which is obvious, but in the centre too which is not so clear until you compare the narrow channel for piece development between c3 and f2 for White with the more generous breadth between c5 and f7 for Black.

Diagram 14 Movement has been confined to the c-file and centre. One pawn exchange has taken place resulting in a completely open file which both players will attempt to use.

The situation in the centre is blocked almost permanently, 'almost' because it could be unlocked should Black wish to venture ... f6. The centre, then, forms an island around which all activity must flow and the very shape of that island determines the direction of flow for each side: towards the kingside for White and the queenside for Black.

White's centre pawns being more advanced give him more sea room for the manoeuvre of his pieces; Black's position, though sound, is cramped and he will have to take care in developing his pieces so that they do not get in each other's way.

Diagram 15 Here a huge area has become blocked assuming the proportions of an island continent with only narrow channels to left and right.

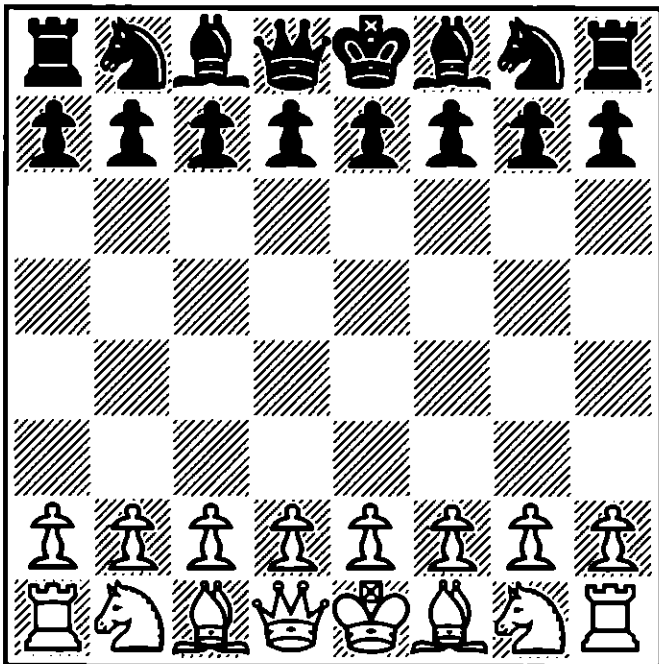
Clearly any action, certainly in the foreseeable future, will be confined to the a, b, g and h files. Movement will be straightforward rather than diagonal. Because of the advanced nature of Black's pawns he has relative freedom. White's most advanced pawn is on the c-file and it is probable that he will gain more space from movement on the queenside and Black could further his own cause with activity on the other wing.

CHAPTER 2

Mainly files

Pawn moves and exchanges are important for the way in which they free or constrict the movement of pieces.

Diagram 16



In the initial position this is obvious. With 1 e4 the Queen and Bishop are immediately given broader horizons and at the same time the pawn constricts the enemy since any Black piece that alights on d5 or f5 would be lost. The

ability of the Knight to jump over obstacles gives it a greater freedom than the other pieces; they depend for ease of movement on open files and ranks and diagonals, and this means pawn activity.

We will consider closely what is happening when a pawn advances.

- 1 Diagonals are opening and closing.
- 2 Space is being created behind the pawn on its file; space is being reduced in front.
- 3 The clearance of the square from which the pawn moves assists in clearing the rank through that square and, therefore, movement upon it.
- 4 The pawn travels further away from friendly forces and nearer to the enemy and so the need for its defence will increase.
- 5 The new square which the pawn occupies prevents you using that square for a piece until the pawn moves again.

Your reaction to the foregoing is perhaps that all that is obvious, even trivial. But consider the following positions:

Diagram 17

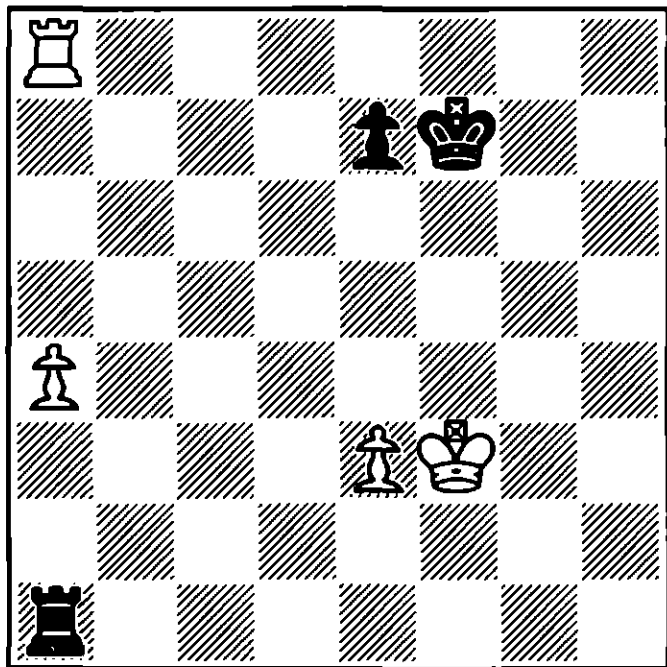
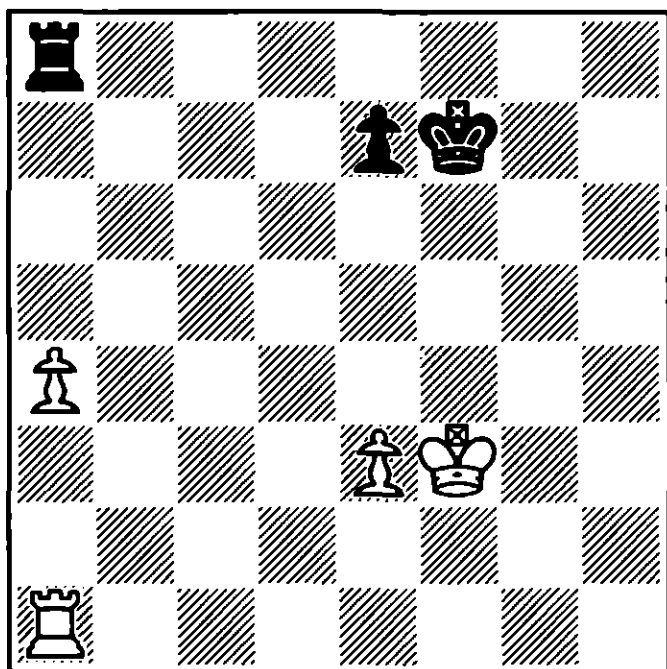


Diagram 18



White is a pawn up and so has a considerable advantage in the ending. Which of the two diagrams shows the most desirable position for the White Rook?

To make his winning bid White will have to advance his passed a-pawn with the support of his Rook. In diagram 17 the effect of this would be to

decrease the scope of his own Rook whilst increasing the power of the enemy one. In diagram 18 the opposite is the case and, therefore, the one to be preferred by White. The poor use of Rooks, particularly in endings, is a common error and so the attempt to dig down to the basic elements of positional play may not be so trivial after all.

We shall look at few moves from the initial position which show some of the effects of moving pawns. (The moves are not always the best, they have been chosen to illustrate particular points.)

1 d4

Giving some movement on the d-file for the Queen and on the c1 - h6 diagonal for the Bishop, but obstructing the long diagonal a1 h8.

1 d5

With the same points in mind and also preventing the further advance of the d-pawn.

2 Nf3 Nf6

The Knights are independent.

3 e3

Opening a diagonal for the King's Bishop but closing one for the Queen's Bishop. A new line opens for the Queen, the d1 h5 diagonal.

3 e6

Much the same can be said for Black's move.

4 c4

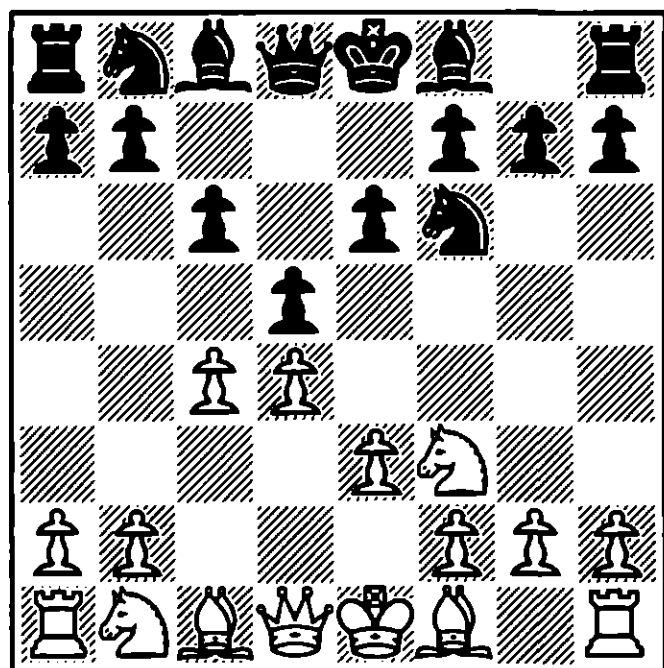
More freedom for the Queen whose influence now spreads out in three directions.

4

c6

Black forms a solid triangle of pawns in two converging pawn chains and opens another diagonal for his Queen although his Queen's Bishop is now badly hemmed in.

Diagram 19



The position we have now arrived at can be used to show the consequences of pawn exchanges. If White plays,

5 cxd 5

Black can reply in several ways. He can capture with either pawn, the Queen or the Knight.

a) 5 ... cxd5 This method clears all the pawns from the c-file which then becomes that vital feature of the terrain, an open file. (An open file is one without pawns irrespective of how many pieces lie in it.) This will serve as a fine

highway for the Rooks and Queens of either side.

b) 5 ... exd5 No open file results from this but now the e-file and c-file have only one pawn each and are called half or semi-open files, again useful lines of activity for file pieces. It is also clear that the c-file will be more useful to White and the e-file to Black.

c) 5 ... N(or Q)xd5. In either case two half open files are the result: the d-file and c-file.

In this we have concentrated mainly on the effect on files and it is clear that pawn movements and exchanges have considerable and lasting effects upon the terrain.

The group of examples which follow are for you to identify and distinguish among closed, open and half open files. The first two have pawns only, the second pair contain pieces. In each position take each file, a to h, and say whether it is closed, open or half open.

Diagram 20

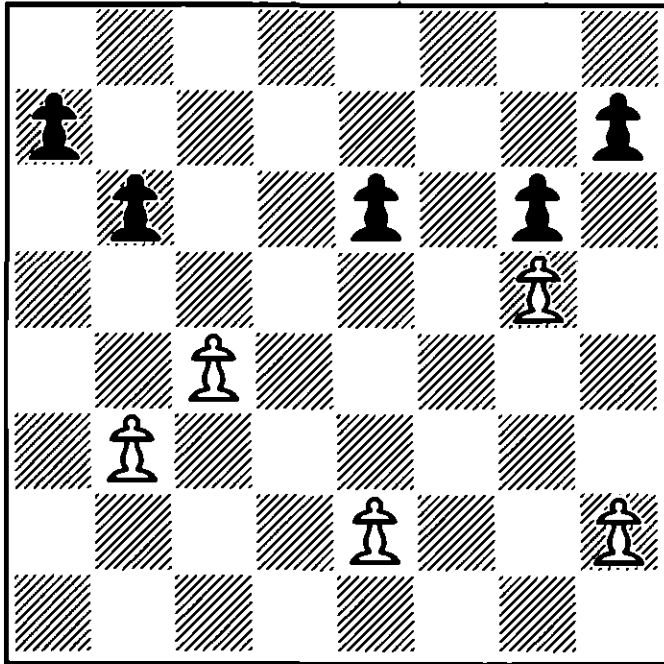


Diagram 22

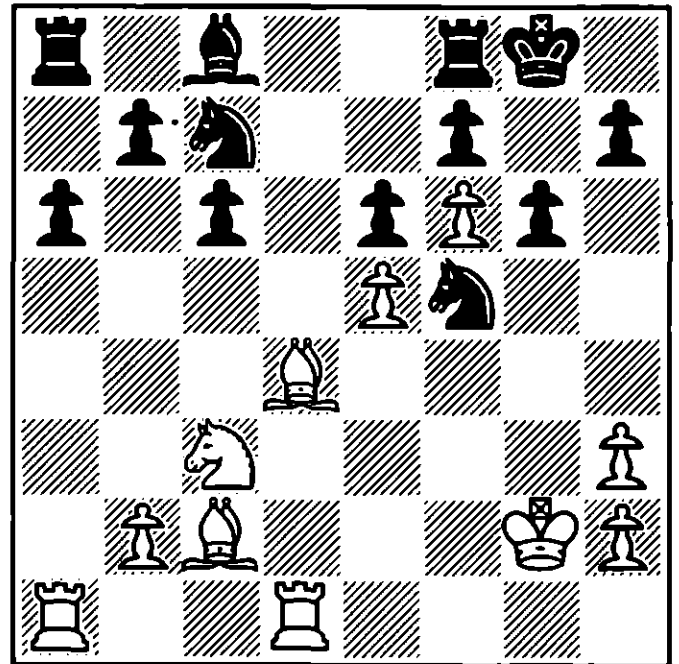


Diagram 21

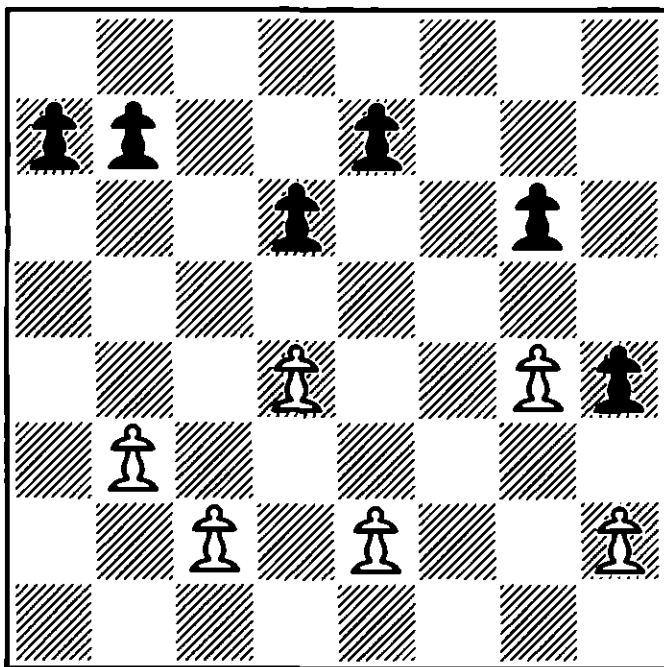
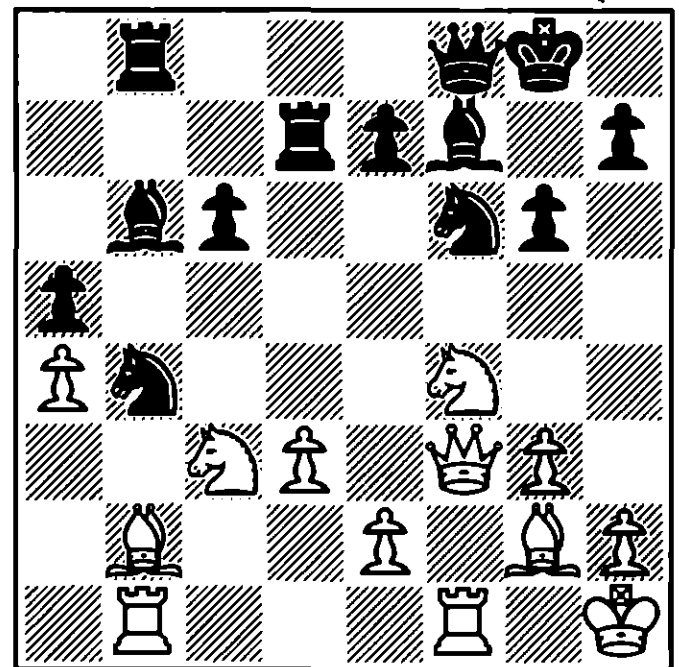
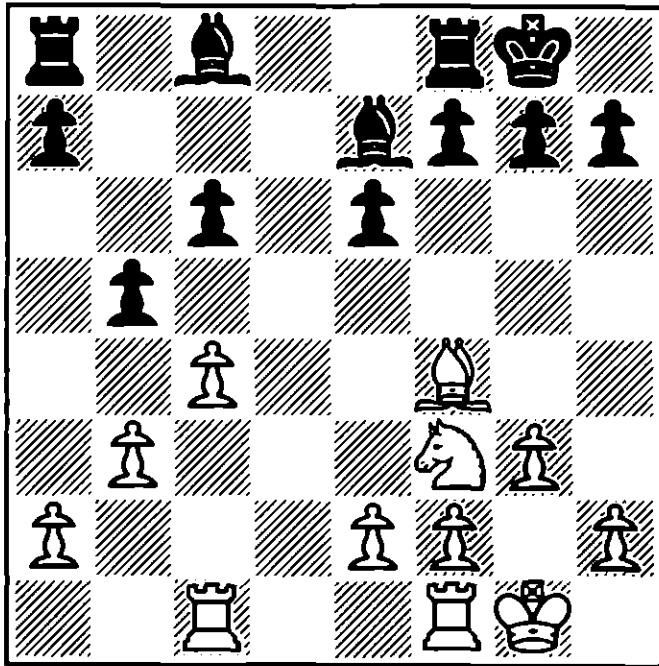


Diagram 23



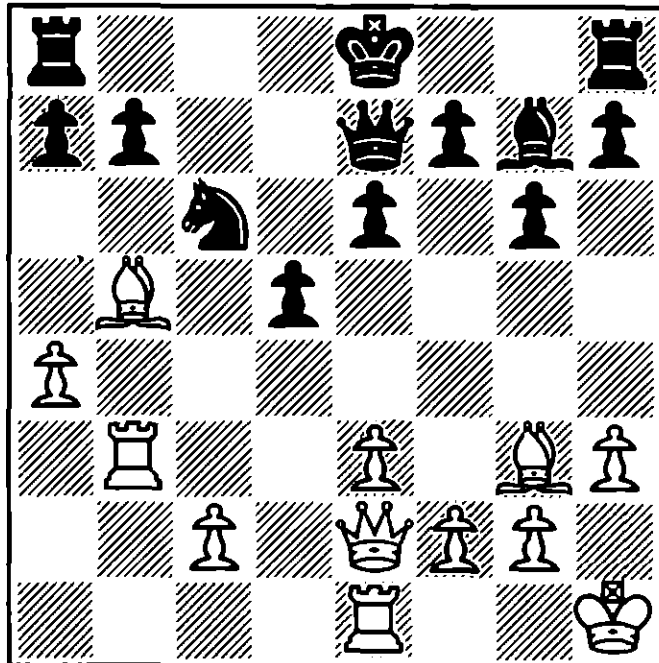
It may not always be desirable to open files, particularly if the enemy has a better chance of using them, but should we consider that our pieces are ready to expend then we need to be alert to the possibility of prising open those lines.

Diagram 24



In diagram 24, a simple pawn exchange, 1 cxb5 cxb5, creates an open c-file, a useful highway into the Black position for White's Rooks.

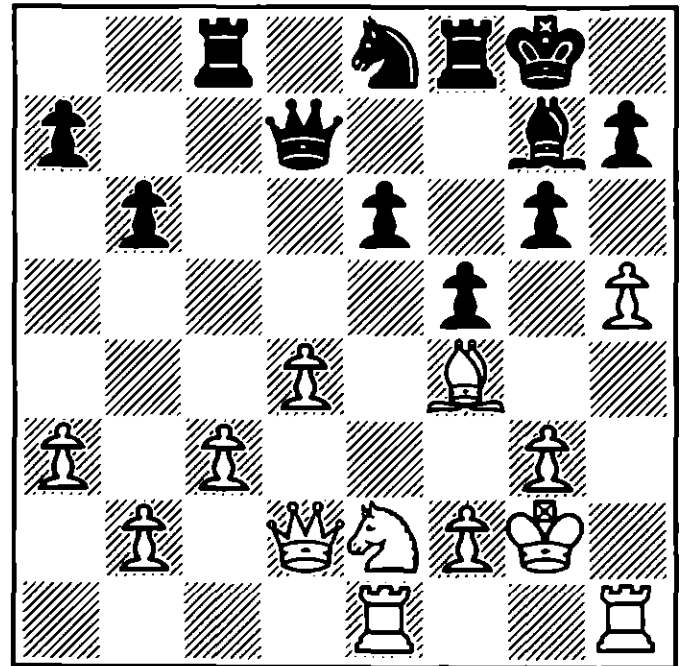
Diagram 25



Here the b-file is already half open and an exchange of pieces is all that is needed to open it completely: 1 Bxc6ch bxc6. White would then double his Rooks and make a formidable entry at b7.

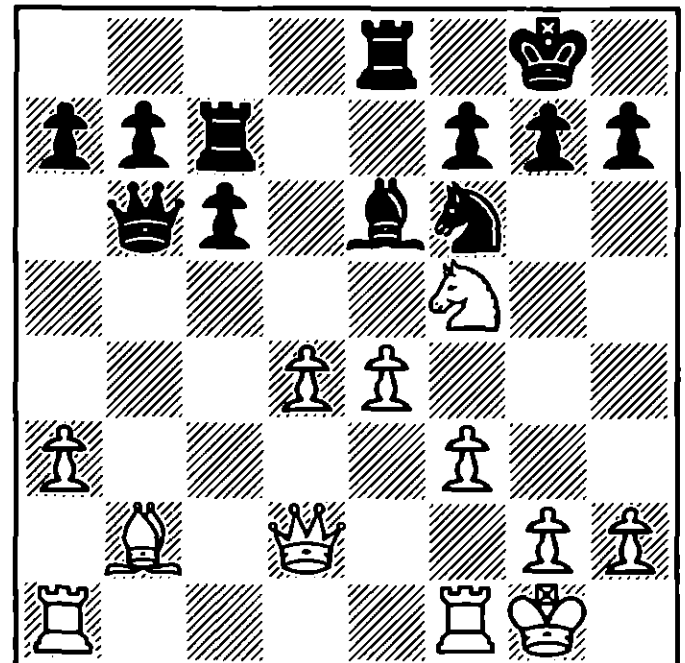
In the same way, look for means of opening files usefully in the following diagrams.

Diagram 26



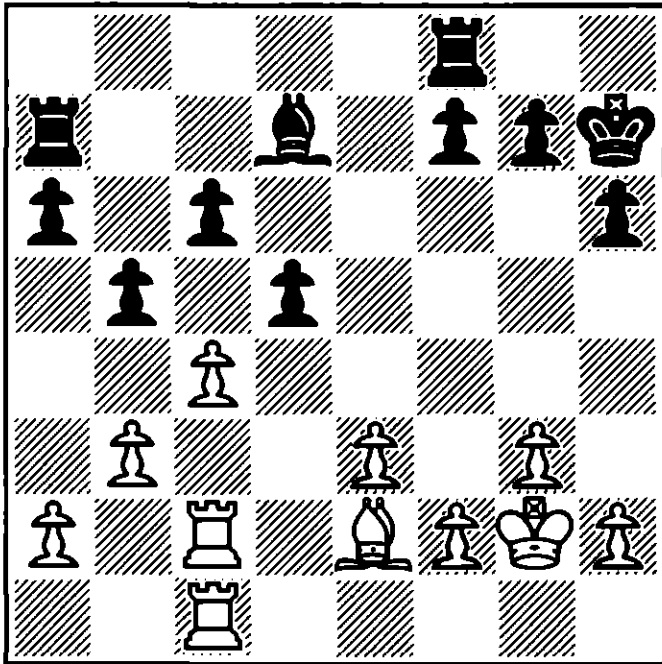
White to play

Diagram 27



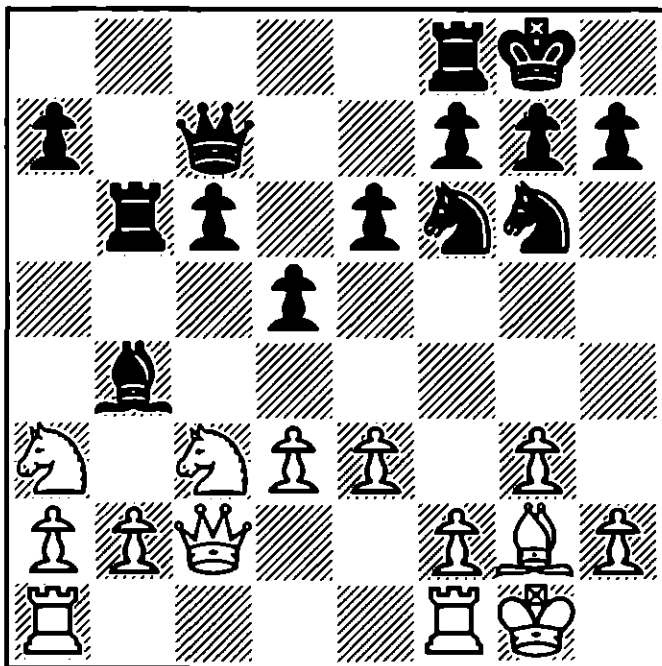
Black to play

Diagram 28



White to play

Diagram 29



Black to play

SOLUTIONS

Diagram 20

Closed files: b, e, g, h.
Open files: d, f.
Half open files: a, c.

Diagram 21

Closed files: b, d, e, g, h.
Open files: f.
Half open files: a, c.

Diagram 22

Closed files: b, e, f, h.
Open files: d.
Half open files: a, c, g.

It is only the presence or absence of pawns which determines the closed or open nature of the file. The presence of pieces does not affect the issue for they can be moved or forced away from the file whereas pawns must be either exchanged or won to clear the line.

Diagram 23

Closed files: a, e, g, h.
Open files: b, f.
Half open files: c, d.

Six pieces lie on the f-file but it must still be regarded as open.

Diagram 26 1 hxc6 hxc6 opens up the h-file, creating a fine highway into the Black King's position.

Diagram 27 1 ... Bxf5 2 exf5 Rce7 and Black has not only completely opened what was a half open e-file but has doubled his Rooks and is ready to invade at e2. White cannot challenge on the file for 3 Rae1 Rxe1 4 Rxe1 Rxe1ch 5 Qxe1 leaves his Bishop en prise.

Diagram 28 The c-file is closed and the opportunity for opening it completely with a pawn exchange has arisen. White has the choice of capturing either the b or d-pawn and it makes a lot of difference which way he takes. Don't be misled by the

fact that 1 cxd5 cxd5 gives the same position as 1 cxb5 cxb5 because Black does not have to recapture that way in the second case. He can go 1 ... axb5, keeping the c-file half open and half opening the a-file for his own use.

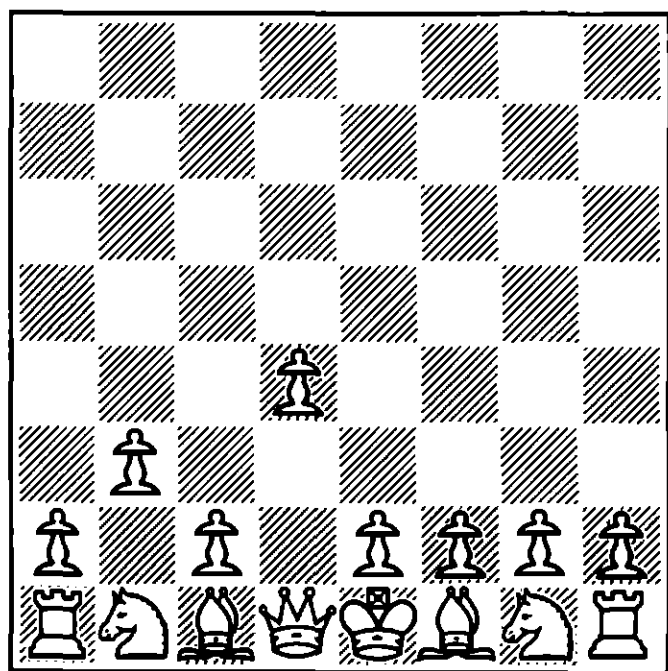
Correct is the unambiguous 1 cxd5 cxd5, after which White invades along the c-file.

Diagram_29 Here a piece exchange opens a file but not by 1 ... Bxc3 because White could then recapture with his Queen, but by 1 ... Bxa3 2 bxa3, spoiling White's pawns at the same time.

CHAPTER 3

Mainly diagonals

Diagram 30



Diagonals are important for both Queens and Bishops, but more particularly for Bishops since Queens have other means of getting about. Diagram 30 shows two ways from the initial position of clearing lines for a Bishop. Central pawn moves free them but they can also be developed the other way by b3 and g3, when the Bishops can stand on the long diagonals at b2 and g2 or perhaps find other useful outlets at a3 and h3.

As the game develops and whilst the Bishops remain on the board it is most important to keep diagonals open or ensure that they can be opened.

Diagram 31

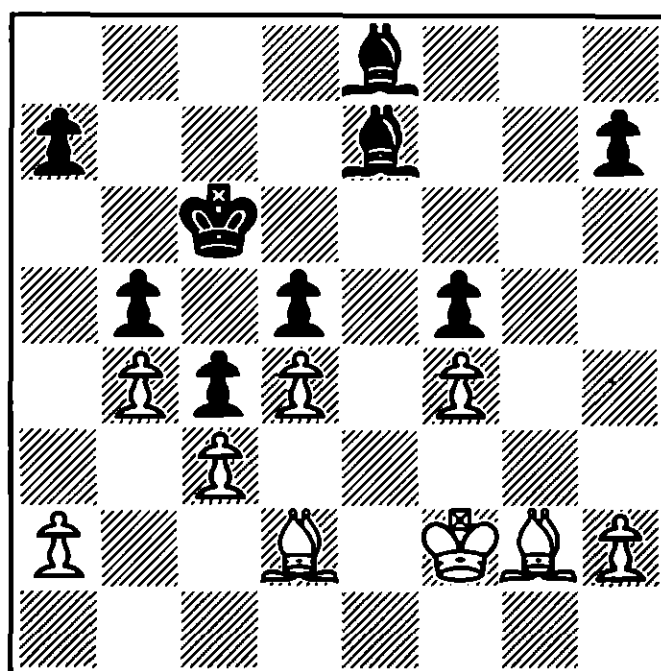
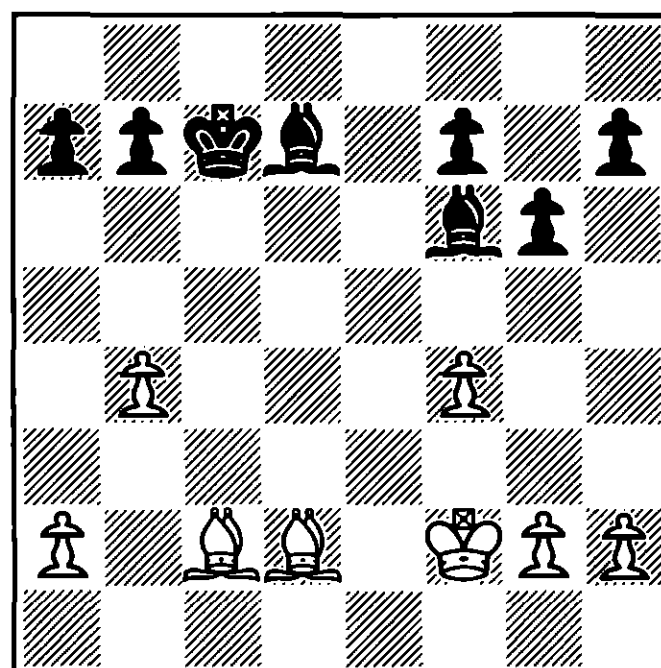


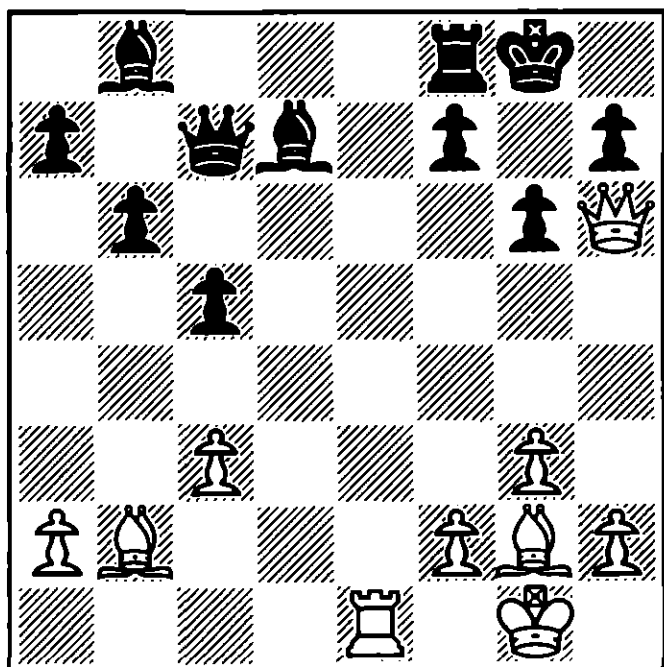
Diagram 32



In diagram 31 with most of the pawns blockaded and the rest likely to finish the same way, the Bishops are very restricted in movement and are quite unable to penetrate the opponent's half of the board.

In contrast, the Bishops in diagram 32 enjoy far more freedom although there are almost as many pawns on the board.

Diagram 33



In the next position (diagram 33) White can open up a line for the Bishop at b2 with devastating results:

1 c4

There is only one way to stop the mate at g7.

1 f6

Unfortunately it opens up a new diagonal for the other Bishop.

2 Bd5ch Rf7

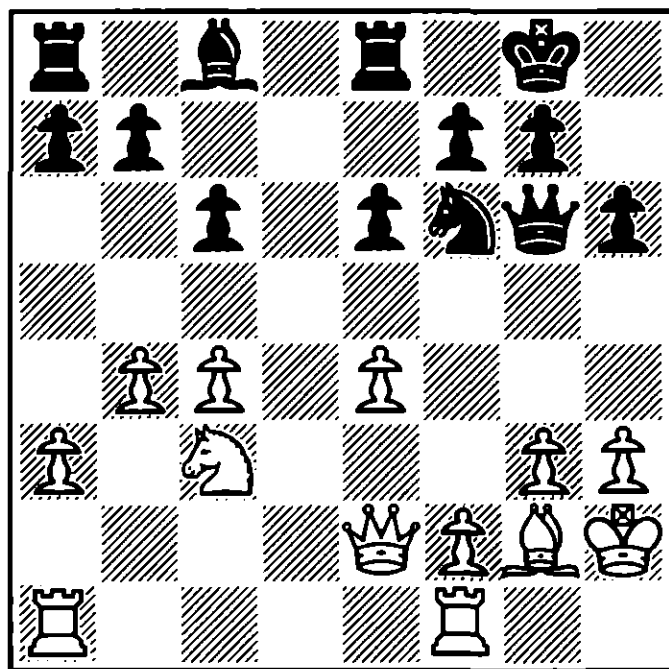
Again the only way to prevent mate.

3 Bxf6!

Forcing open the a1 h8 diagonal again and mate cannot be avoided. A good example of free flowing Bishops.

A less dramatic though no less important example appears in diagram 34.

Diagram 34



Black to Play

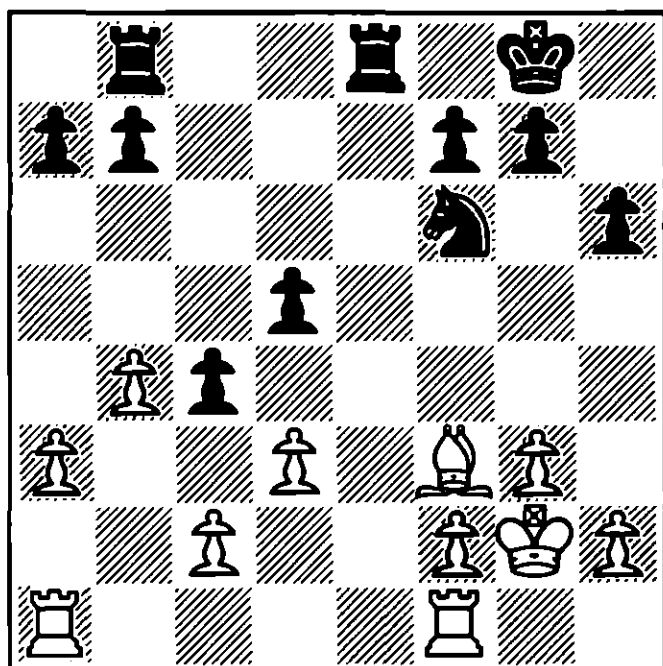
Black's problem is the development of his queenside. The Rook is locked in by the Bishop and if the Bishop goes to d7 its prospects are not improved. White, if given the opportunity, could play e5 and c5, fixing the opposing pawns and hence shutting up Black's Bishop for ever.

Black plays 1 ... e5 whilst there is still time, opening up an avenue for his Bishop.

Alertness for this kind of detail, undramatic though it may be, is at least as

important as the ability to spot White's winning idea in the previous example.

Diagram 35



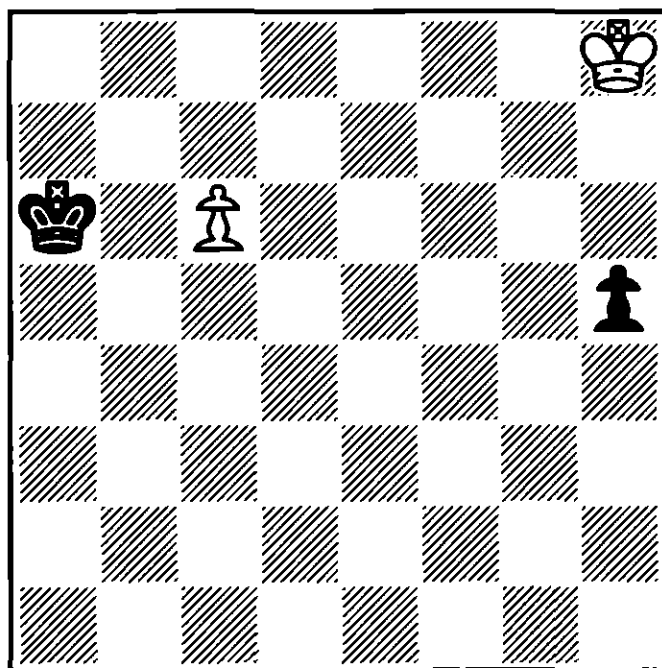
We have seen that the simple movement of pawns opens diagonals (as well, of course, as closing others) unlike opening files when exchanges have to be made. Diagonals too can be opened by exchanges and in this case without closing any others.

In diagram 35 White's Bishop enjoys one good diagonal, d1 - h5, but 1 dxc4 dxc4 will considerably improve its scope on the long diagonal, a8 - h1, striking into the enemy queenside. Another point to notice about diagonals is that they are not always, or even often, opened up completely by a pawn move or an exchange, but the effect of even a small clearance can be worthwhile.

Operating on files is, with many beginners, better understood than making the best use of diagonals. There are a number of reasons for this, one

of which we shall deal with here and others will be treated later. The first one is really an illusion about the geometry of the chessboard which is well illustrated by Richard Reti in the following amusing study.

Diagram 36



White to play and draw!

Highly unlikely is one's reaction on first seeing this position, for the Black pawn is well clear of the White King whereas the White pawn is easily stopped. 1 c7 Kb7 etc is as hopeless as 1 Kh7 h4 2 Kh6 h3 3Kh5 h2 and so on. But there is a solution:

1 Kg7 Kb6
2 Kf6

Now if Black captures the pawn he loses his own to 3 Kg5.

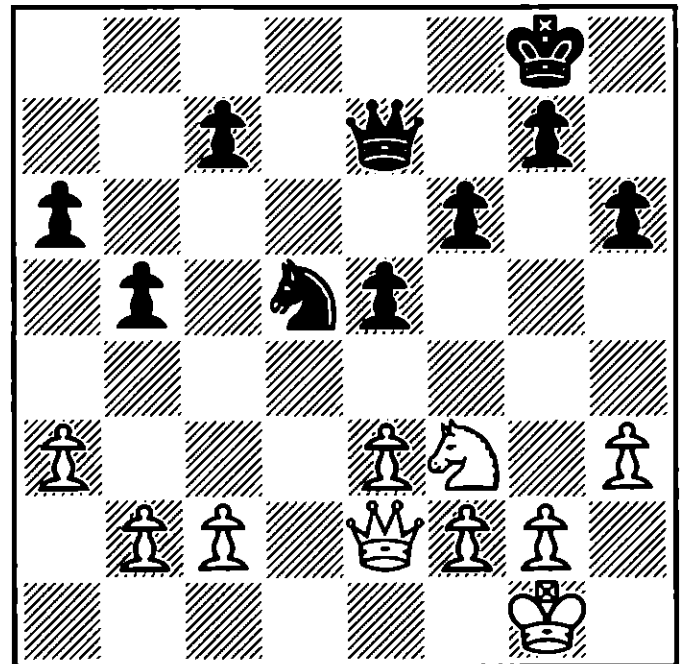
2 h4
3 Ke5 h3
4 Kd6! h2
5 c7

Both sides will queen with a drawn ending.

The point is that White moves his King along the diagonal so that he threatens both to catch the Black pawn and protect his own. From the original position it takes no longer to get to e5 than to h5. If Black had captured the pawn when White was at e5, then White would move down the diagonal f4, g3, h2 to capture Black's pawn, taking no longer on this zigzag course than moving directly on the h-file. The geometrical distance along a diagonal is of course longer than the length of a rank or file, but the chess distance is the same, for here it is simply the number of squares that is important.

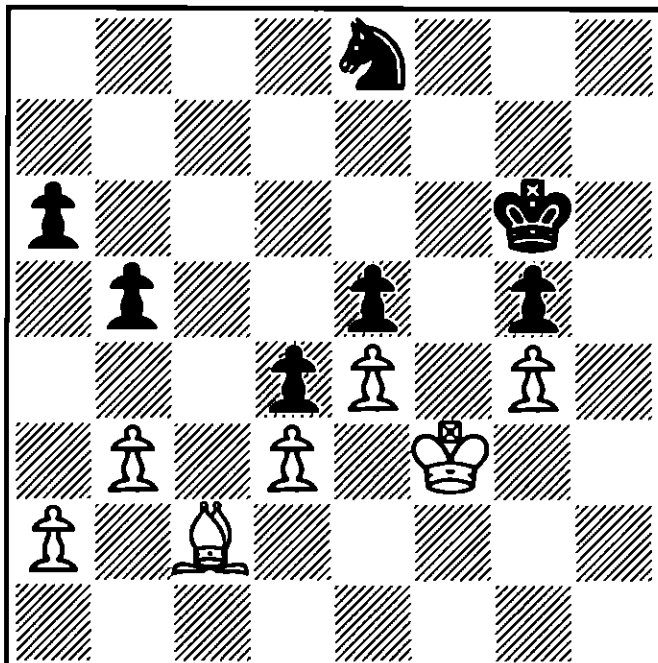
The following are for you to solve. What you have to do here is to improve the influence of pieces by making use of diagonals.

Diagram 38



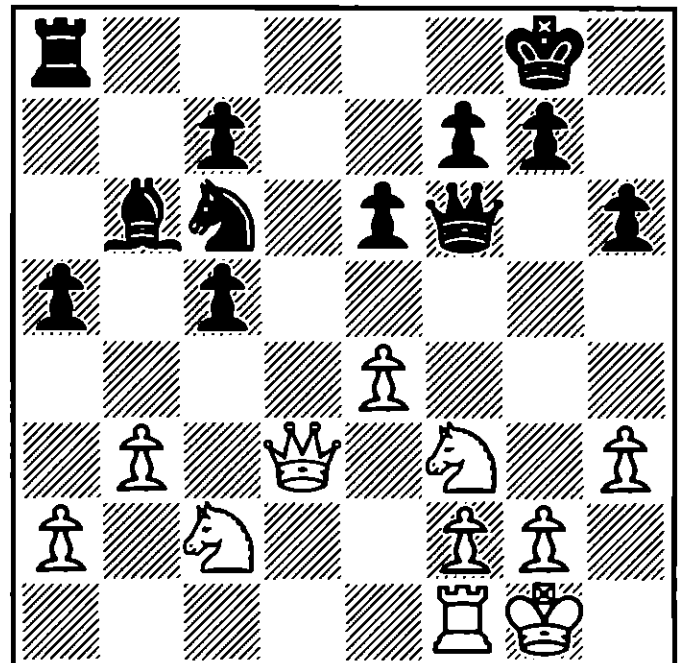
White to play

Diagram 37



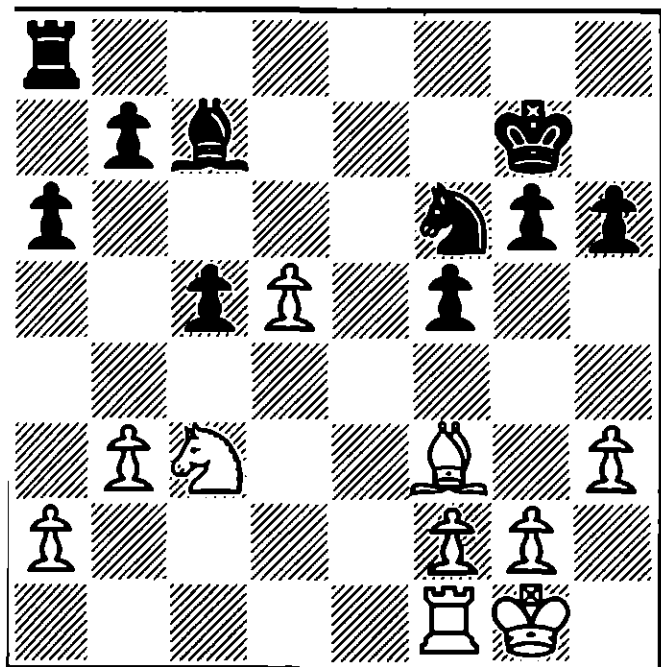
White to play

Diagram 39



Black to play

Diagram 40



White to play

SOLUTIONS

Diagram 37 If White does not react quickly Black will go 1 ... b4 and bury the White Bishop for ever. Therefore 1 b4, opening up a route on the a2 g8 diagonal is immediately essential.

Notice the open files in this diagram. The c, f, h files are all fully open but since there are no file pieces left on the board those often vital highways here have the appearance of overgrown and ancient tracks.

Diagram 38 The position of White's Queen could clearly be improved. One system would be 1 Qd2, aiming at control of the open d-file as well as the possibility of useful action on the e1 a5 diagonal. Probably stronger is 1 c4 forcing the exchange, 1 ... bxc4 2 Qxc4. Now not only has the power of the Queen on the f1 - a6 line

been enhanced but the new diagonal, a2 g8 gives him a powerful pin. This is a good example of rapid results from the opening of lines.

Diagram 39 Black's Bishop, hemmed in at b6 by his own pawns, needs to be exhumed. There is no prospect of advancing his c-pawn, without losing it, in order to open the a7 g1 diagonal. But 1 ... Nb4, because of the threat against White's Queen and a-pawn, forces 2 Nxb4, whereupon 2 ... cxb4 not only opens up the Bishop, but straightens out his own pawns.

Diagram 40 By giving up one pawn to gain another elsewhere with 1 d6 Bxd6 2 Bxb7 Ra7 3 Bf3, White increases the scope of his Bishop and weakens Black's queenside pawns.

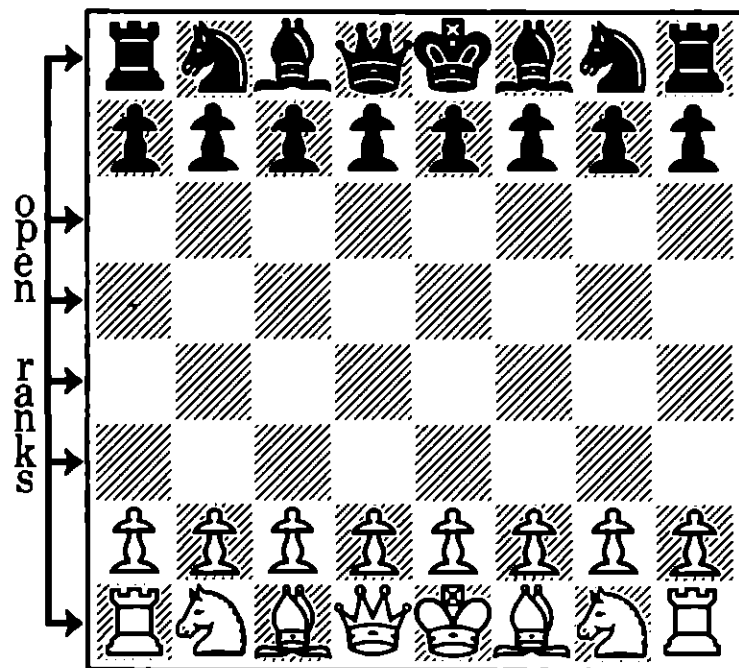
CHAPTER 4

Mainly ranks

Diagonals open first, files follow, but ranks tend to close before they open again and it is much later in the game that they come into their own.

Consider the initial position. If we use the same definition for the moment as we use for open files, then a rank is open when no pawns stand on it, and there would be six open ranks in diagram 41.

Diagram 41



Each player's second rank would need eight pawn moves for complete clearance and as those moves were being made more ranks would be closing. Clearly there is, from this point of view, more affinity between ranks and diagonals than ranks

and files and so more sensible aims would be the partial opening of vital ranks just as we have seen the partial opening of selected diagonals.

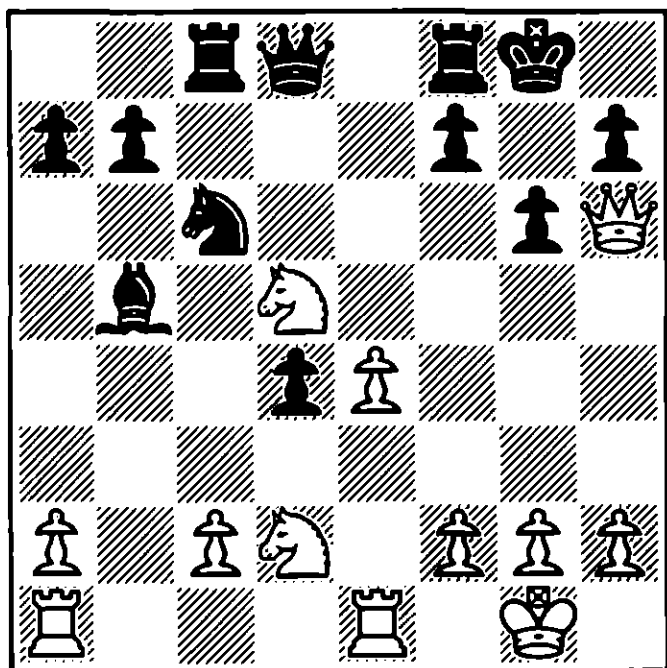
It is the Rook more than anything which will require clear ranks. The Queen does not depend on them and because she travels on diagonals can reach those ranks which Rooks for long find inaccessible.

The Rook starts life with the disadvantage of being stuck in a corner of the board. Central files open more often and earlier than others but the Rook still has to exercise patience, waiting for other pieces to clear before occupying them. Even greater patience is needed before he can venture into the file and look for ranks to use. Eventually he will have to, for the Rook will need to change direction and seek new targets, but if he does so too quickly he will be caught in the opening. Beginners attempt a reckless solution of the problem with 1 a4 and 2 Ra3 but there is little point, for even if the Rook is not captured by a Bishop as soon as it lands on a3, it will have little future, becoming trapped between the closing jaws of two ranks of pawns.

Later in the game the

opportunity to use the third rank safely can sometimes arise, and this can occur before any other rank, especially the second, of course, becomes available, because pawns often advance two squares, stepping over the third rank, or stay where they are to begin with. Take such a position as we see in diagram 42.

Diagram 42

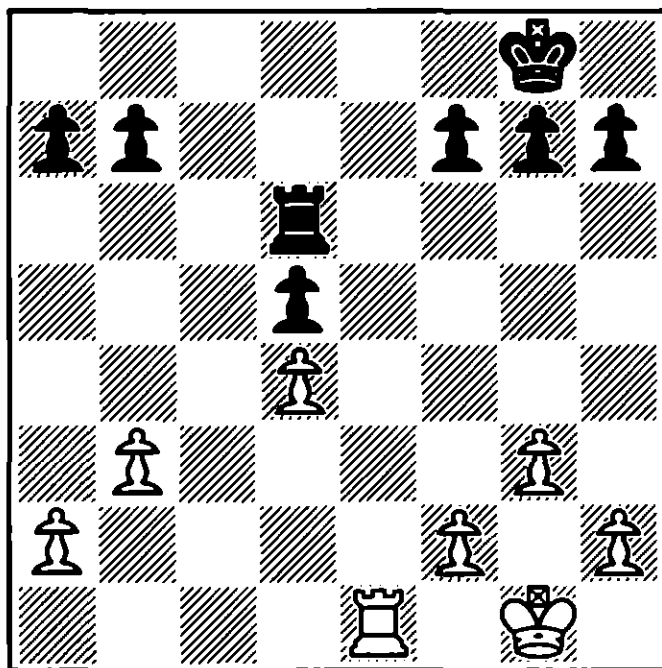


A Rook on the h-file would greatly assist the Queen in her attack but access via the normal route, d1 or e1, is unavailable because d3 and e3 are controlled by Black pieces. Surprisingly it is the Queen's Rook which has the quickest route to the kingside by 1 a4, Ba6, 2 Ra3 with access to both f3 and h3.

It is not that the third rank is an attacking line in such middle game situations, but a means of switching forces quickly between the two sides of the board: a handy communication trench.

As pieces move from the first rank and pawns from the second these become vulnerable to Rook attacks when files open. The back rank mating threat is of common occurrence and a simple example appears on diagram 43.

Diagram 43



Black has left his back rank undefended and 1 Re8 is mate. But even if Black had been more aware and made a flight-square for his King (as White has done) and advanced his h - pawn a square at an earlier moment, White would still have 1 Re8ch Kh7 2 Re7 with an invasion of the seventh rank which will net him a pawn.

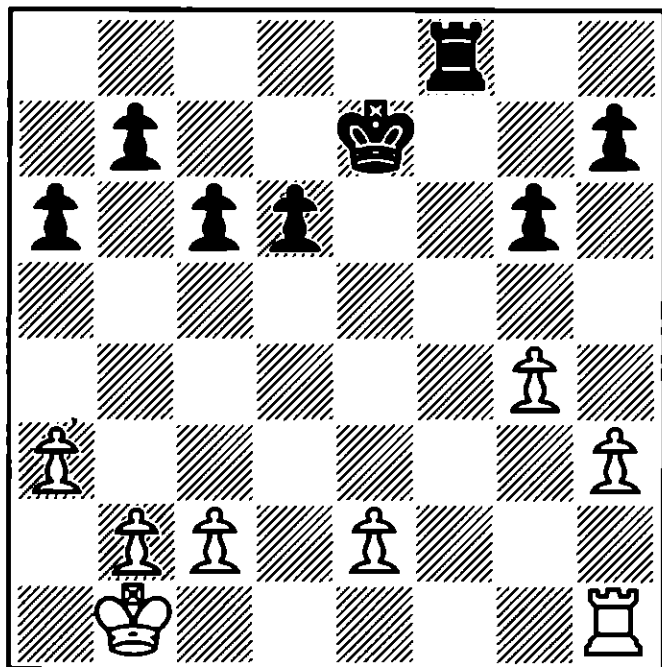
The most important thing to notice here is that access to the seventh and eighth ranks was via an open file. We can now describe the evolution of the Rook's growing power: it sits patiently in the corner until other pieces are developed, moves towards the centre files exerting pressure from a distance, it slips into enemy space along the opening

highways and then expands in full strength along the far ranks.

There is a formidable logic guiding the destiny of the Rook which makes it a fascinating piece. It should be handled with greater care and thought than is usually given to it, not only by beginners, for we all from time to time become a little irritated that its growth in influence is so slow and we are inclined to regard it as clumsy when in fact we should exercise more patience.

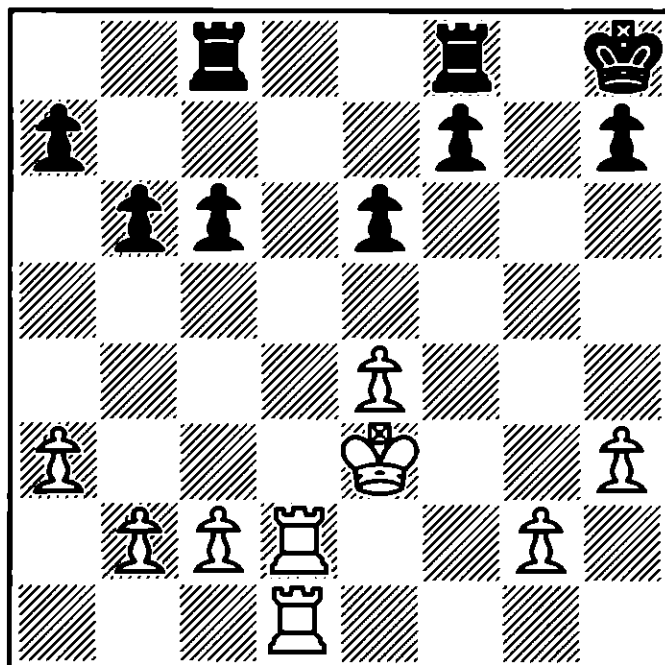
Here are some problems for you to work out based on ranks and access to them.

Diagram 44



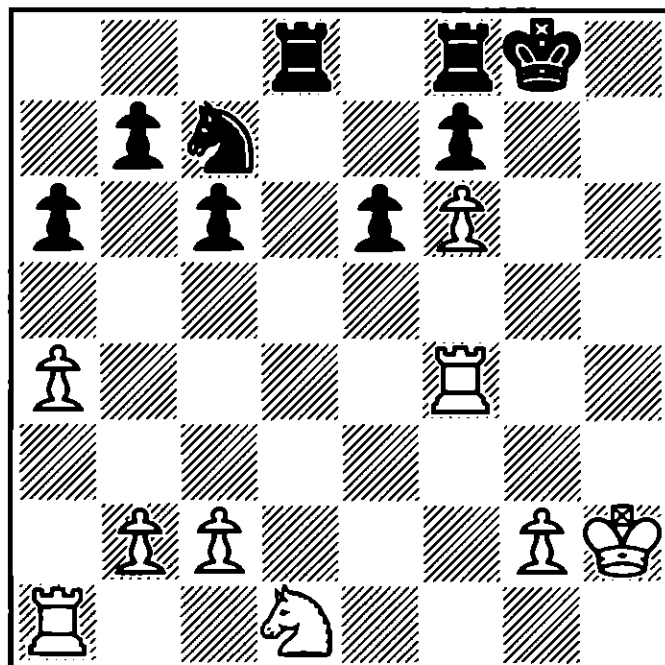
Black to play. He has control of the f-file. How does he exploit it?

Diagram 45



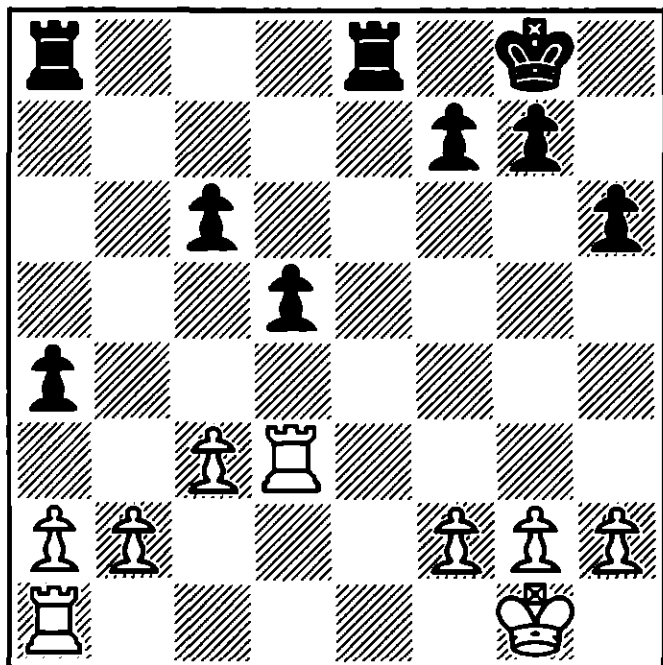
How does White, to play, exploit his doubled Rooks?

Diagram 46



White to play and win

Diagram 47



Black to play and win

SOLUTIONS

Diagram 44 By 1 ... Rf2. White has a choice between protecting his e-pawn with his Rook or moving it. His King is too far away to help. If 2 Re1 then Rh2 or 2 e4 then 2 ... Re2, winning a pawn in either case. Notice how useful the invasion of the seventh rank is to get in behind the enemy pawns.

Possible entry points for the White Rook into the Black position at d6, f6, f7, f8 are guarded by a well-placed Black King. Had this not been so and the Black King had been at, say, c7, then, after 1 ... Rf2 2 e4 Re2 3 Rf1 Rxe4 4 Rf7ch, White invades the seventh and regains his pawn with a good game.

Diagram 45 Again it is the seventh rank which is vulnerable. 1 Rd7 Ra8 2 Rc7 -

preparing to double the Rooks on the seventh with tempo -c5 3 Rdd7 and White wins the a or f pawn.

This doubling on the seventh is very powerful. Notice how it not only relegates the King to the back rank, but threatens mate with some configurations of pieces and pawns. For example, supposing Black had tried to save his f-pawn with 3 ... f6. There would follow: 4 Rxh7ch Kg8 5 Rcg7 mate.

Black had another approach to his problems as the following shows: 1 Rd7 a5 2 Rb7 b5 3 Rdd7 Kg8, seeming to secure all his weaknesses. But all his pieces are now tied down to the defence and White's grip is iron. There is nothing free to stop White's King invading and ultimately pawns must fall.

Diagram 46 Black is clearly in trouble with his King exposed on the g and h files. He could switch a Rook via the fourth rank ... Rd5 ... g5 if given time and so White must react quickly.

1 Ra3. This rapid switch of the Rook from queen to kingside via the third rank gives Black no opportunity for the suggested manoeuvre and 1 ... Rdx1 leaves a mate in two: 2 Rg3ch K moves 3 Rh4.

Best is 1 ... Rfe8, to make a flight-square for the King. There would follow: 2 Rg3 ch Kf8 3 Rh4 when Rh8 mate becomes unavoidable.

Diagram 47 An obvious target is the pawn at b2.

1 ... Re2 2 Rb1 (2 b3 does not work because there is a pin on his a-pawn after 2 ... axb3) Rb8 (2 ... a3 also wins) 3 b3 axb3 4 axb3 Rxb3! exploiting the back rank weakness.

1 ... Rab8 first would not have been as good because White would have protected his pawn as well as his second rank with 2 Rd2.

CHAPTER 5

All routes

We have looked at files, ranks and diagonals separately in order to bring out their particular characteristics, but they are, of course, interrelated as we saw when considering ranks and access to them through the files. An example from master practice will show how all routes are interdependent.

Capablanca Znosko-Borowsky
Paris, 1938

1 d4	d5
2 c4	e6
3 Nc3	c5

The Tarrasch Defence to the Queen's Gambit. It leads to an open game where control of the highways is all important.

4 cxd5	exd5
--------	------

More lines are opened. Black has good routes for both his Bishops and the possible use of the half open e-file. White has yet to release his King's Bishop but the c-file should quickly become his.

5 Nf3	Nc6
6 g3	

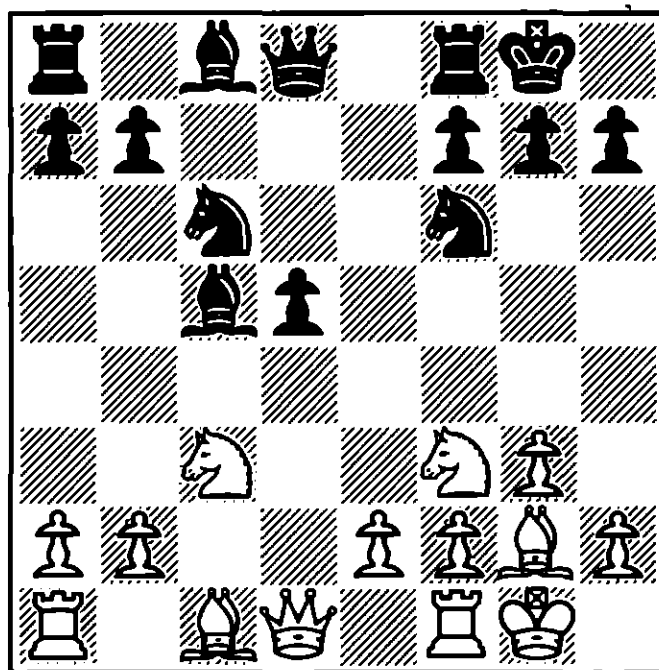
So the King's Bishop is to be developed on the long diagonal, a useful line on which only two Black pawns lie.

6	Nf6
7 Bg2	Be7
8 0 - 0	0 - 0

Slowly the Rooks find more room in which to operate.

9 dxc5	Bxc5
--------	------

Diagram 48



White has opened the c-file completely now, making a possible route into the enemy queenside. Notice how his fianchettoed Bishop converges on the same vital area so that two pieces, although on opposite sides of the board, are destined to combine their efforts.

Driving away the Bishop from the a7 - g1 diagonal, and preparing to make use of it himself.

10 Be7
11 Be3

The White Bishops now stand on adjacent diagonals, making a dual carriageway into the queenside.

11 Ne4

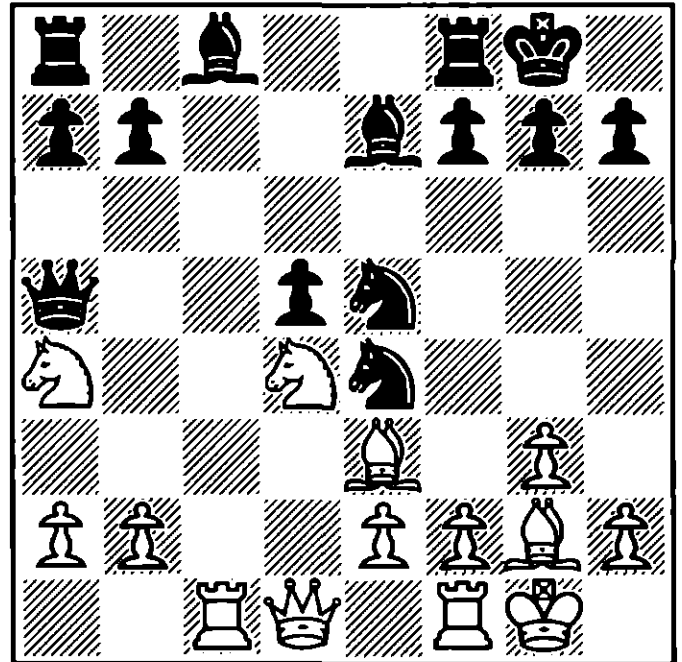
Not only does Black find a good post in the centre for the Knight but he clears f6 ready to put his King's Bishop there so that it will command the long a1 - h8 diagonal.

12 Nd4 Ne5
13 Rc1

Assuming control of the open file but, apart from the positional value of the move, there is a tactical point for Black cannot now play 13 ... Nc4 because of 14 Rxc dxc4 15 Bxe4.

13 Qa5

Diagram 49



Black also uses tactical means for positional ends. He needs to challenge White on the a8 - h1 diagonal by bringing a Bishop to b7, and on the c-file with a Rook at c8. It is a battle of the highways and one that he must join quickly before he is over-run. He now threatens to gain time with 14 ... b5 for this would win the a-pawn after 15 Nc3 Nxc3 etc. If White prevents this with 14 a3, there could follow: 14 ... b5 15 Nc3 Nxc3 16 Rxc3 Bb7, when White is clearly not getting it all his own way on the open lines.

14 Bf4!

Black is not allowed to assume any initiative for the apparently desirable 14 ... Bf6 loses a piece to 15 Bxe4 dxe4 16 Rc5, forking Queen and Knight.

14 Ng6
15 Bc7

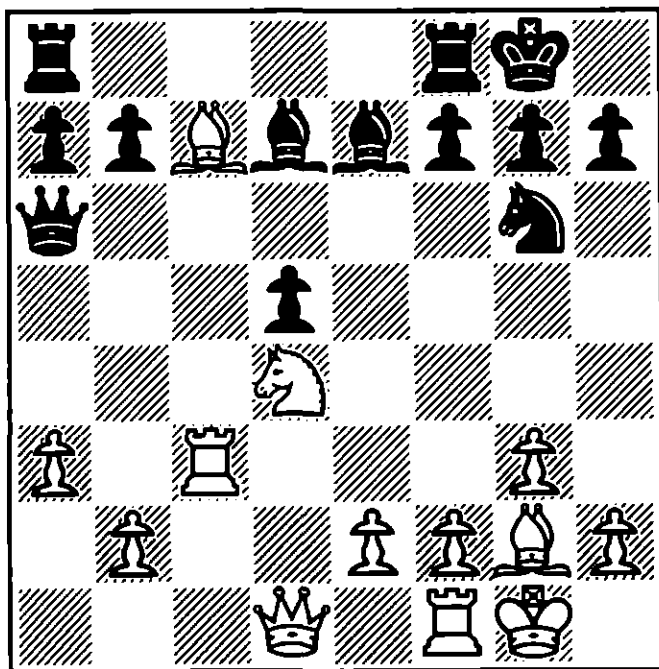
The dark squared diagonals offer easy movement to this Bishop.

15 Qa6
16 a3

Now White has time to protect his a-pawn, ready to challenge the centre with Nc3.

16 Bd7
17 Nc3 Nxc3
18 Rxc3

Diagram 50



Because of the threat against his weak and isolated d-pawn, Black has been forced to change off his best placed piece in exchange for a Knight which had been poorly placed at the edge of the board only a moment before. Now, as the diagram shows, White's control of files and diagonals is considerable and he also has a beautifully centralised Knight at d4.

18 Be6
19 b4

Encroaching on the Black Queen and threatening to win it. Again this is a tactical means to a positional end for Black must seek a flight-square for the Queen....

19 b6

which opens further the long light-squared diagonal.

20 e4

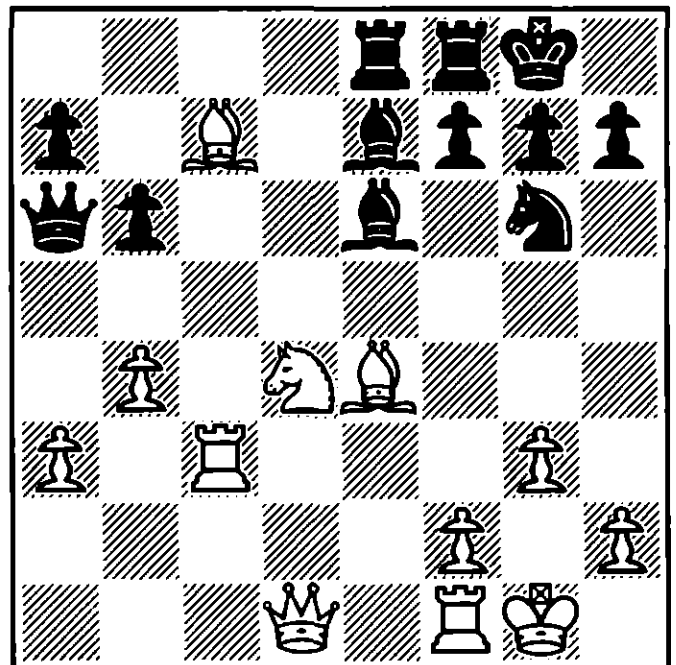
So that after the exchange,

20 dxe4
21 Bxe4,

White has completely opened two lines: the long diagonal and the d-file. This clear and persistent logic is typical of Capablanca.

21 Rae8

Diagram 51



A most revealing move. The Queen's Rook, which would normally expect to take up a good position on the open c- or d-file, is forced to seek refuge on the e-file, huddling

together awkwardly with the other Black pieces, admitting that White has taken control of all the important lines of communication. 21 ... Rac8 would allow 22 Nxe6 fxe6 23 Qd7.

22 Nxe6 fxe6

Another weak pawn appears, this time at e6.

23 Bc6

Not satisfied with the long diagonal this Bishop now takes over the a4 e8 line.

23 Bf6

To defend the e-pawn since ... Rc8 would be useless against Bd7.

24 b5 Qc8
25 Rc2

By removing his own Rook from danger he renews the attack on Black's. Black cannot capture on c7 because of Bxe8.

25 Re7

The contortions of the Black pieces in such cramped space are agony to watch.

26 Bd6

And how sprightly White's Bishops seem in comparison.

26 Rd8

Saving the exchange with a pin.

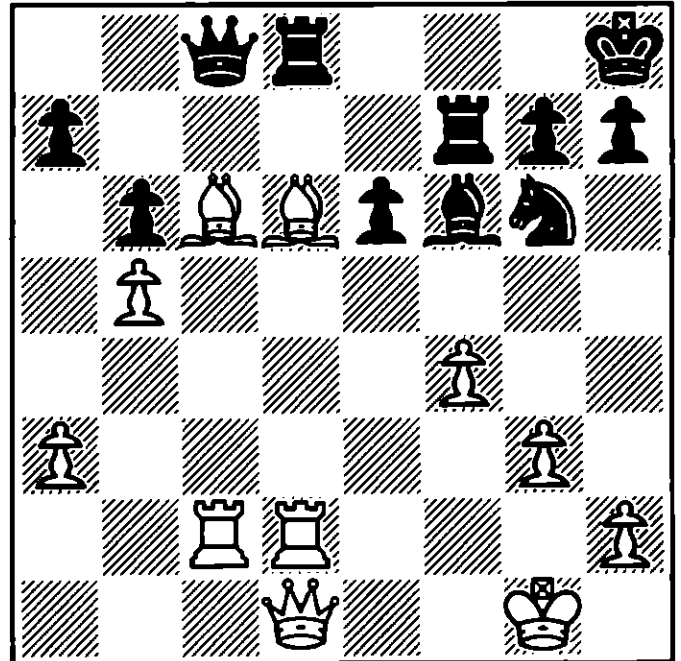
27 f4

This not only threatens 28 f5 exf5? 29 Bd5ch, winning

the Queen, but activates the King's Rook.

27 Kh8
28 Rff2 Rf7
29 Rfd2

Diagram 52



An amazing position. Notice that White has not won any material. He has pursued a ruthless policy of controlling the lines of communication, particularly with his Rooks and Bishops. This has given him enormous freedom of movement and restricted Black almost to the point of complete immobility. All White needs to do now is to convert this positional advantage into material gain or a mating attack.

29 Rg8

Another ignominious retreat but necessary since White threatened Be8.

30 Qh5 Qd8

White was threatening Be4

th a discovered attack on the
een and Bxg6 to follow.
though White has also got a
scovery on the d-file this is
e lesser of two evils.

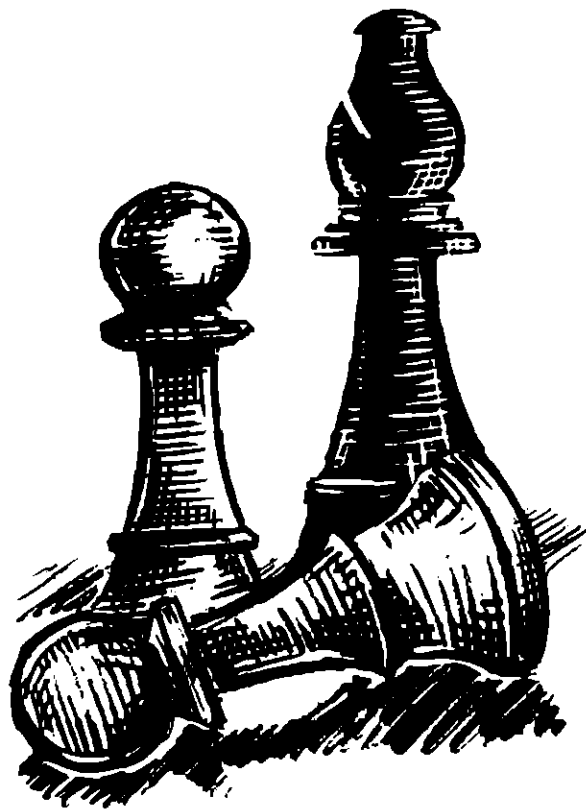
31 Be4

Even without the attack on
e Queen the move is still so
werful that Black chose this
int to give up the unequal

struggle. The Knight cannot be
protected nor has it anywhere
to go to: 31 ... Nf8, for
instance, 32 Bxf8 with mate to
follow. 31 ... Rd7, attempting
to win Bishop for Knight, fails
against 32 Bxg6 h6 33 Qd1,
and Black is a piece down.

A wonderful display of space
control through the opening up
of files and diagonals.

TWO



Pawns

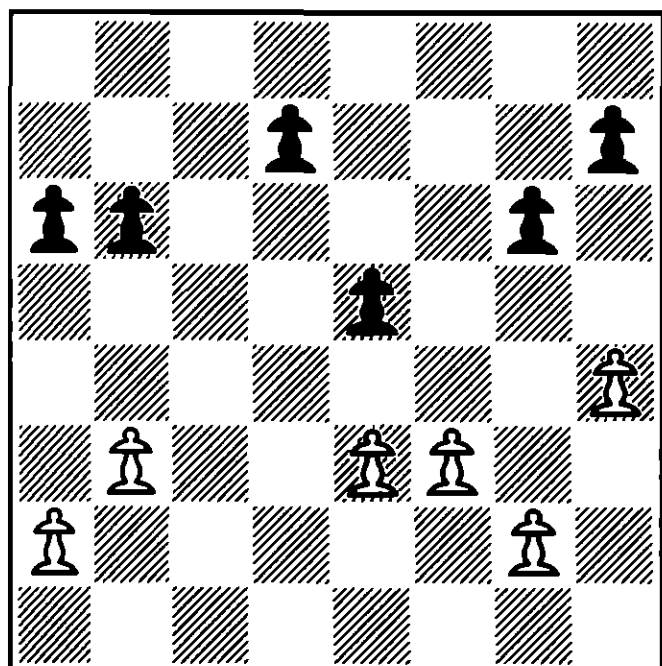
CHAPTER 6

Kinds of pawns

We began by considering the way in which terrain is modified and we saw that pawns play a great part in this, so much so that we must look at pawns and configurations of pawns in greater detail. In this chapter we shall define what is meant by the names we give to different kinds of pawns.

Pawn Groups or Islands

Diagram 53



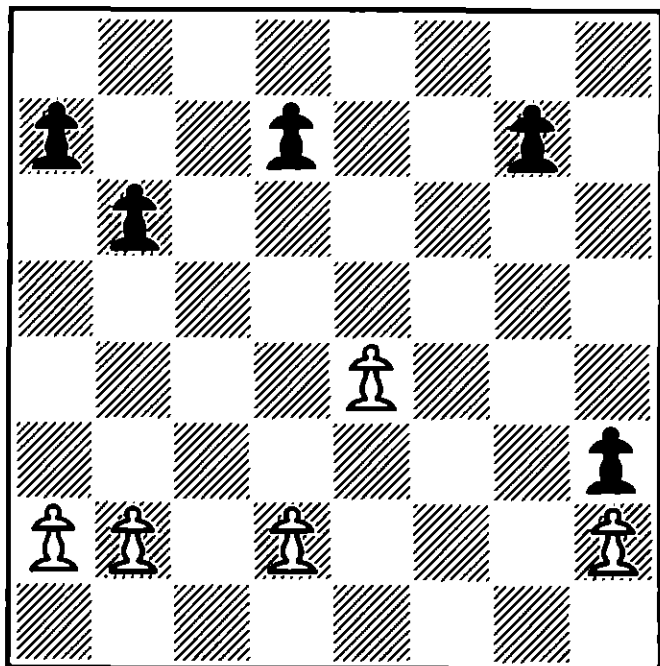
In diagram 53 White has two groups of pawns, the a and b-pawns form one and the e, f, g and h-pawns make up the other. In the second group it does not matter that the h-pawn is not in touch at the moment, for a group consists of pawns in adjacent files so long as they can at some time become connected.

In the same way Black has three pawn groups, or islands, as they are sometimes called, as they are sometimes called, and here the pawn pair in the middle is as much a group, although the pawns are out of touch, as those at the sides of the board.

As far as the number of pawn groups existing in a given position is concerned, in general it is an advantage to have the smaller number of groups, for there is then more cohesion within each group, since it will contain more pawns, and one's opponent has not so many target areas to aim at.

Connected Pawns

Diagram 54



Black's a and b-pawns form a little chain. They lie in adjacent files on a diagonal and the a-pawn supports the b-pawn. As they advance the rear one gives support to the forward one. This relationship between connected pawns gives them strength and makes them less vulnerable, in normal circumstances, to attack. White's queenside pawns are also connected.

White's d-pawn and e-pawn, though disconnected at the moment, are in the same pawn group and can get together whenever they wish.

Although Black's h-pawn is very far advanced there is nothing to stop ... g5, ... g4, giving support in this particular position. However, such a position contains other weaknesses that will appear later.

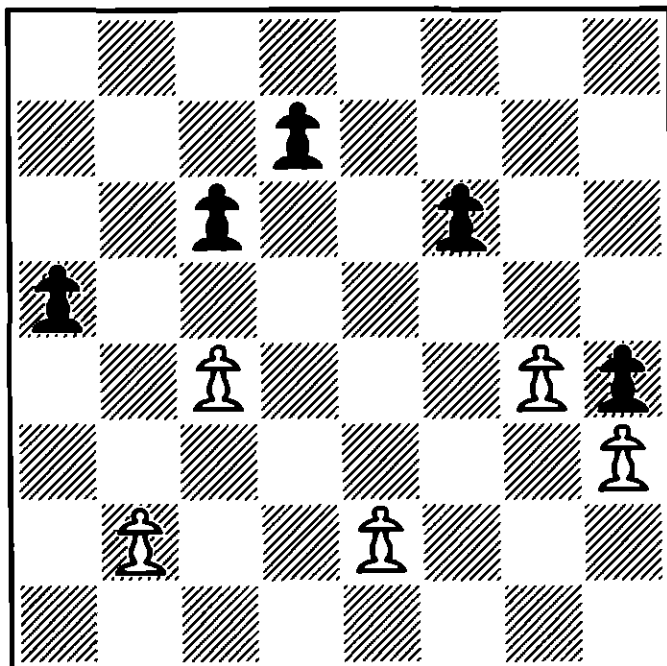
Black's d-pawn is without

support and is unlikely to achieve any without helpful piece exchanges from his opponent when pieces are on the board and White's h-pawn is a similar case. Such pawns as these last two are called isolated pawns.

Isolated Pawns

We saw two isolated pawns in the previous diagram. In Diagram 55 Black has isolated pawns at a5, f6, h4 and White at e2. Black, having more isolated pawns, naturally has more islands or groups of pawns than White and so has the weaker position. Isolated pawns are in themselves weak; they cannot defend each other and, when under attack, require the support of pieces when pieces should be going about more important tasks. Other weaknesses appear in their vicinity, as we shall see later.

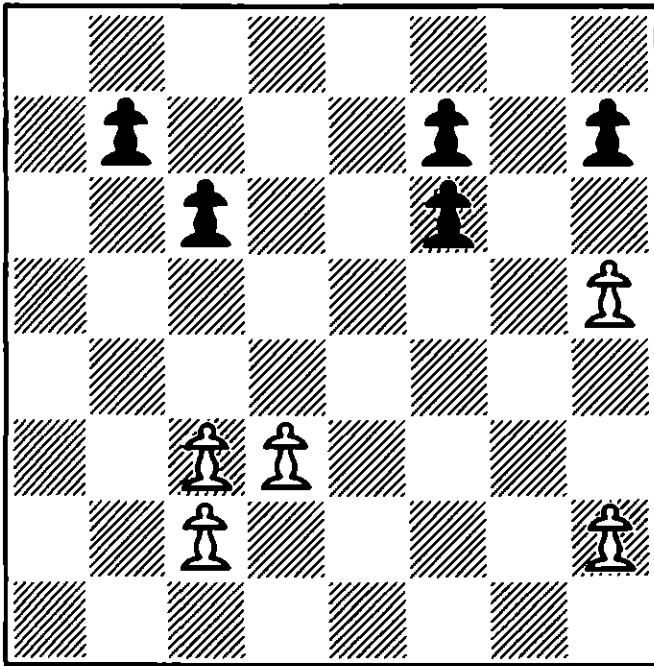
Diagram 55



Doubled Pawns

These are pawns which, through exchanges, have found themselves on the same file.

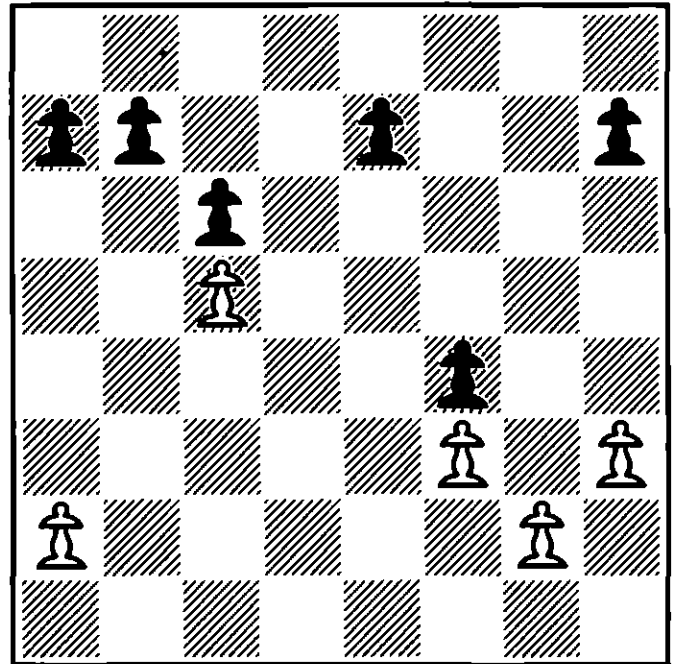
Diagram 56



White has a pair of doubled pawns on the c-file, even worse, he has doubled and isolated pawns on the h-file. Black also has doubled and isolated pawns on the f-file, and although these are closer together, they are of no help to one another and so must be counted as very weak.

Backward Pawns

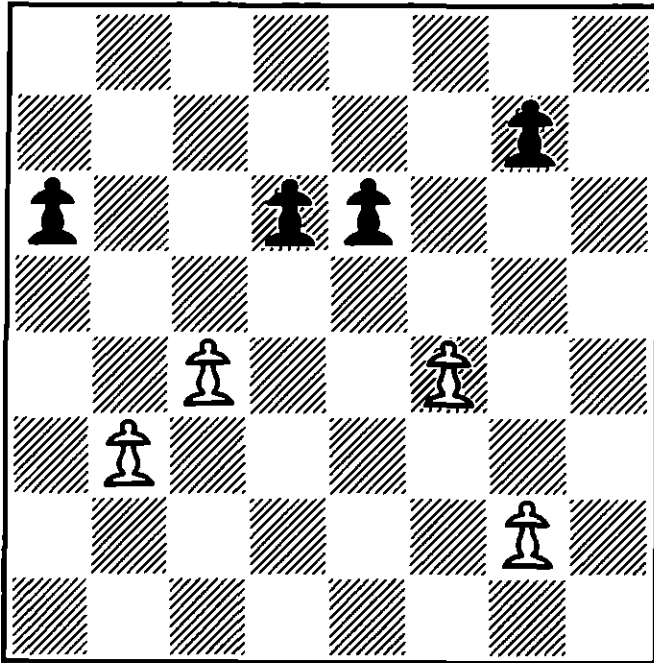
Diagram 57



In diagram 57 Black can advance 1 ... b6 in spite of the White pawn at c5 because after, 2 cxb6 his a-pawn is ready to recapture 2 ... axb6. White has a similar group of three pawns on the King's wing but there is one vital difference: if he wishes to advance his g-pawn it would be lost to the Black pawn at f4. The g-pawn is therefore said to be backward. The general tendency of pawns is to advance. Backwardness inhibits this mobility and so backward pawns must be regarded as inherently weak.

Black's e-pawn is also backward for after the advance ... e5 it can go no further for no pawn support is available.

Diagram 58

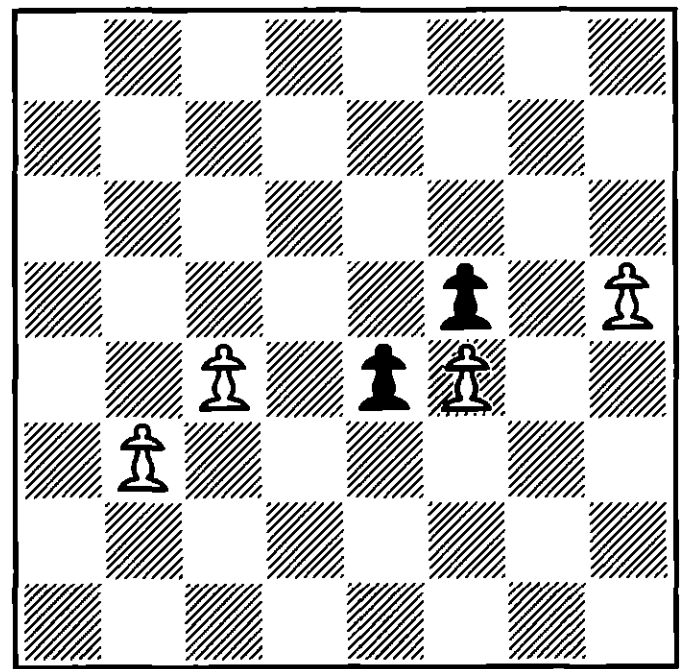


These are pawns which lie side by side in adjacent files with no pawns opposing them in their own files but with enemy pawns lying in ambush in each of the flanking files. An example is given in diagram 58. Black's d and e-pawns are hanging by virtue of the White c and f-pawns.

The main thing about the hanging pawn pair is that if one advances, a pawn exchange initiated by the opponent renders the other one isolated. However, the surviving pawn, though weak from its isolation, is strong from becoming passed, as we shall see later, and hanging pawns can be weak or strong according to circumstances.

Passed Pawns

A passed pawn is one which has no opposing pawns in its path, either in its own file or in either flanking one.



White's h-pawn is passed for no Black pawn can impede or capture it as it advances. Black's e-pawn is passed in spite of a White pawn in an adjacent file at f4 for it does not lie in the Black pawn's path. White's queenside pawns are both passed.

We can make a further distinction between the passed pawns in the diagram. White's h-pawn is an isolated passed pawn, the b and c-pawns are connected passed pawns and Black's e-pawn, because it is solidly protected by another pawn, is called a supported passed pawn.

The presence of pieces anywhere on the board makes no difference at all to any of the definitions which are dependent only on the relative position of pawns. Pieces can move or be driven away; pawns are committed to the lines they start on and can only be diverted by capture or exchange.

There is much more to be said about all these different kinds of pawns, especially passed pawns, a matter which will be taken up later. It is sufficient at the moment to understand the definitions, and the diagrams which follow will give you practice in recognising pawn types.

Describe each pawn in the following positions.

Diagram 60

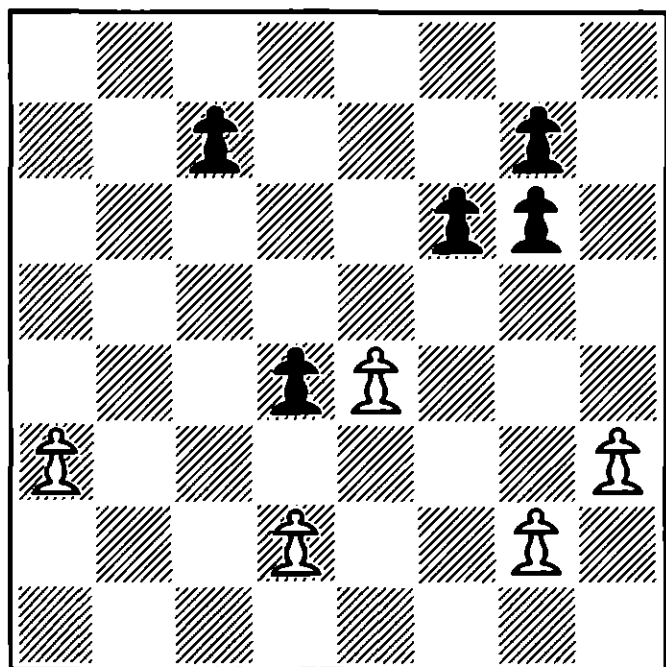


Diagram 61

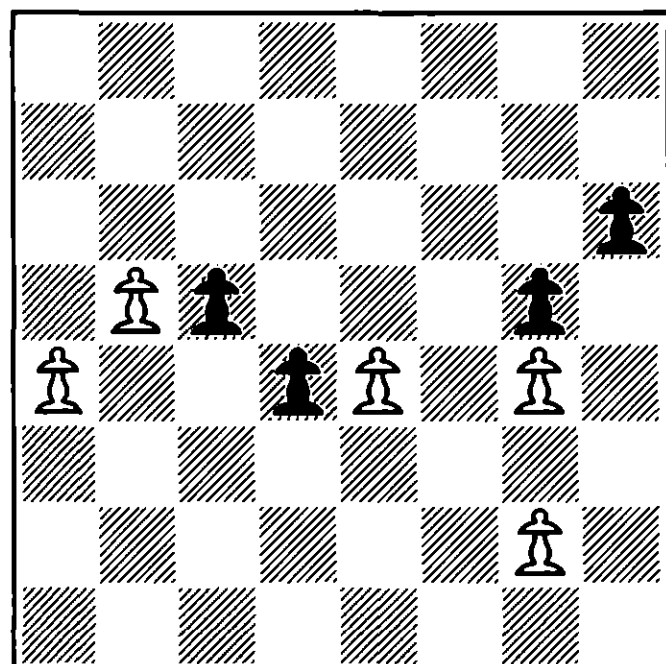


Diagram 62

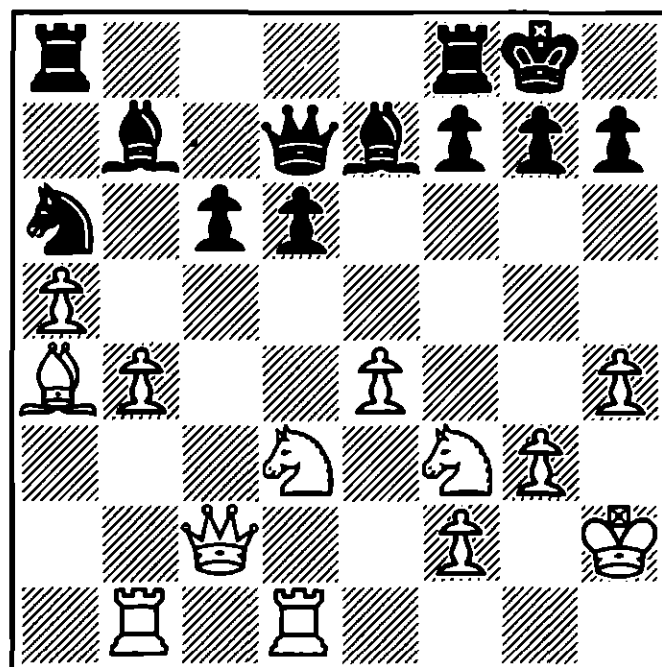
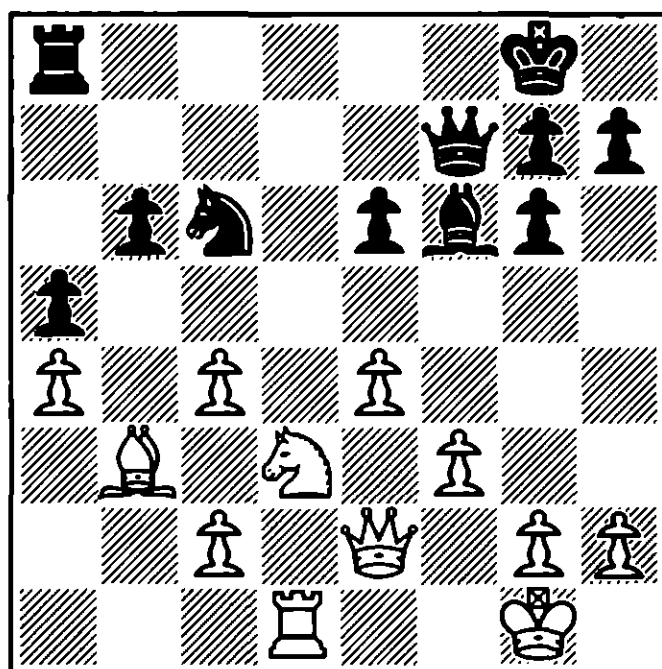


Diagram 63



SOLUTIONS

Diagram 60 White: a is an isolated passed pawn, d and e are connected pawns belonging to the same group or island as are also g and h.

Black: c and d are connected pawns, pawns in the same group, the three kingside pawns form a group and include a pair of doubled pawns on the g-file.

Diagram 61 White: a and b are a pair of connected passed pawns, e is an isolated passed pawn, the g-file pawns are doubled and isolated.

Black: c and d are connected passed pawns, g is a fixed pawn (as is White's pawn at g4), h is a backward pawn.

Diagram 62 White: a is a supported passed pawn, b is a

backward pawn, the other four pawns belong to the same group, each is mobile not blocked by an opposing pawn immediately to the front - and three of them, at f2, g3, h4, form a chain, a line of pawns on the adjacent squares of a diagonal.

Black: c and d are hanging, the other three form a group of connected and mobile pawns.

Diagram 63 White: a is isolated, the c pawns are doubled and isolated, the rest form a group of mobile pawns including a chain e4, f3, g2.

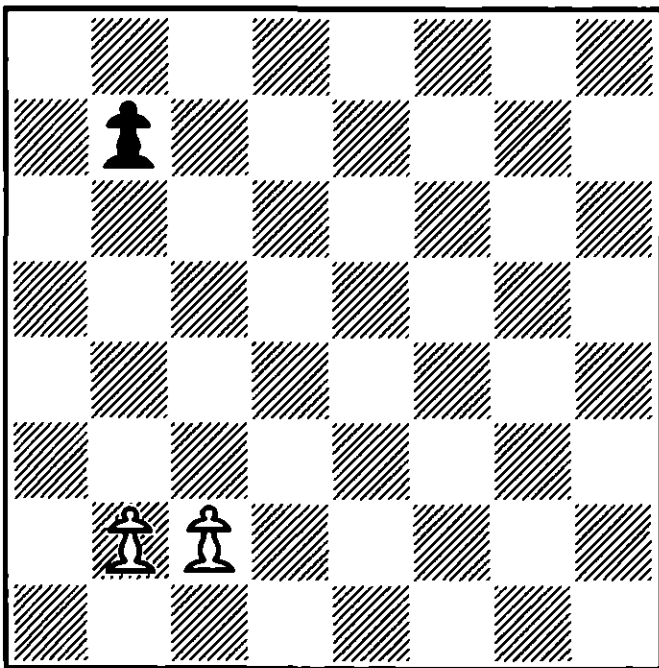
Black: a is fixed, b is backward, e is isolated, the rest form a group with doubled pawns on the g-file.

CHAPTER 7

Passed pawns

It is the ambition of every healthy mobile pawn to become a passed pawn and of every passed pawn to become a Queen.

Diagram 64



Many aspire, few succeed, but since one passed pawn confers a huge advantage on the possessor and two are usually overwhelming it does not matter.

Where do passed pawns come from? In diagram 64 White has two pawns to one on the queenside. This is called a

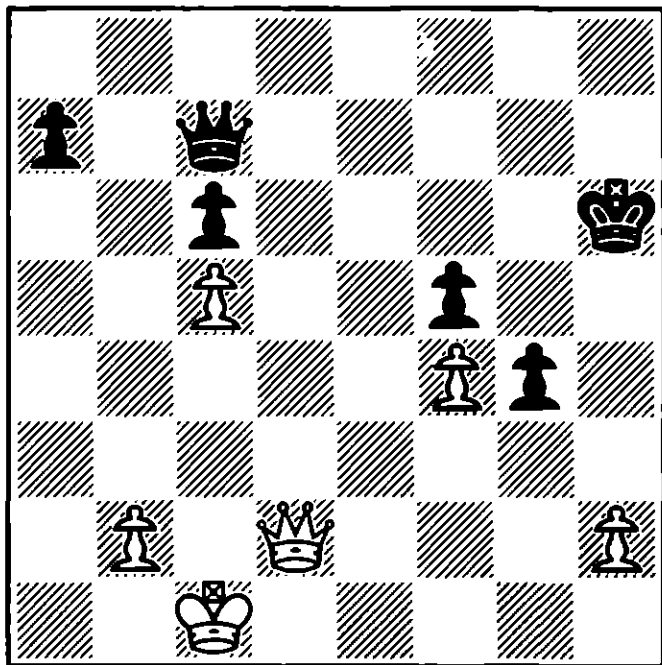
pawn majority and from it a passed pawn can be created. White can proceed: 1 c4 b6 2 b4 when he would be ready for 3 c5 and then, after the pawn exchange, a passed pawn appears.

It is very important to notice that 1 b4, moving the other pawn first, is not at all the same thing because of the possible response: 1 ... b5 and White's c-pawn is suddenly a backward pawn and can no longer be advanced. The c-pawn, the one on the file where no Black pawn lies, is the one which will eventually queen and so is called the 'candidate'. Remember that it is the candidate which moves first and then continues to be the leading member of the group when there will be no fear of it becoming backward.

The passed pawn in this position arose from the nature of the pawn structure: it was embedded in the position. Passed pawns can also arise tactically as in the following example.

In diagram 65 play could continue:

Diagram 65



1 Qd6ch Qxd6

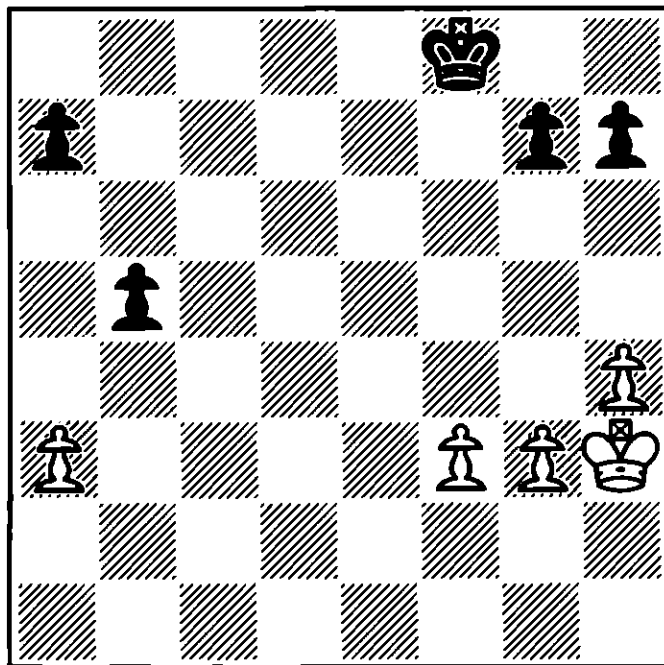
Had there been no fork Black would not have been forced to exchange Queens.

2 cxd6,

and a passed pawn appears at a point remote enough from the opposing King to run through safely.

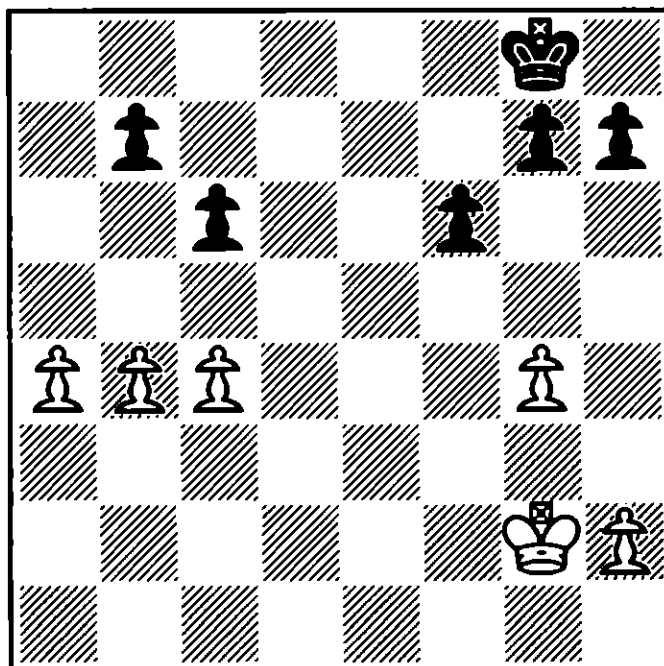
Solving the following positions will give you more ideas about creating passed pawns.

Diagram 66



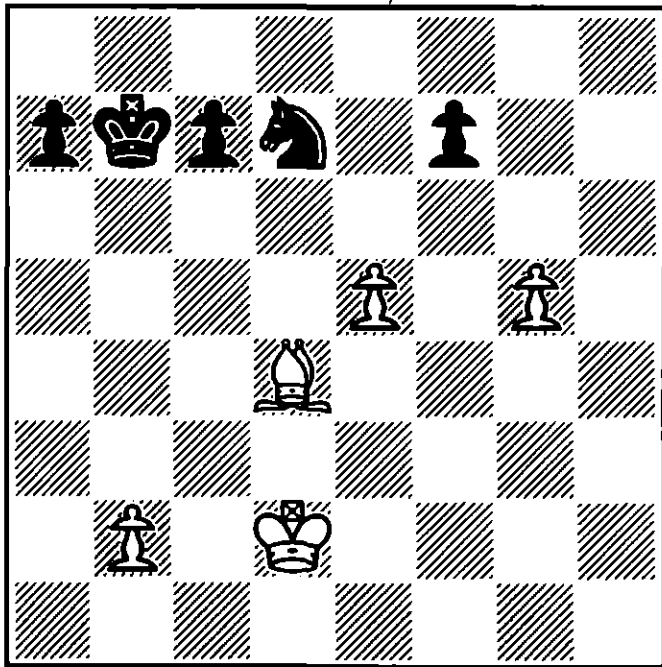
Black to play and win

Diagram 67



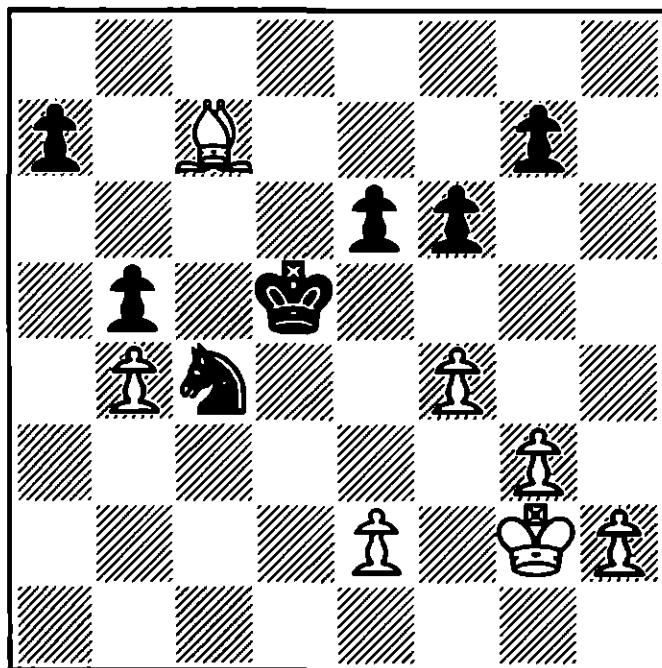
White to play and win

Diagram 68



White to play and win

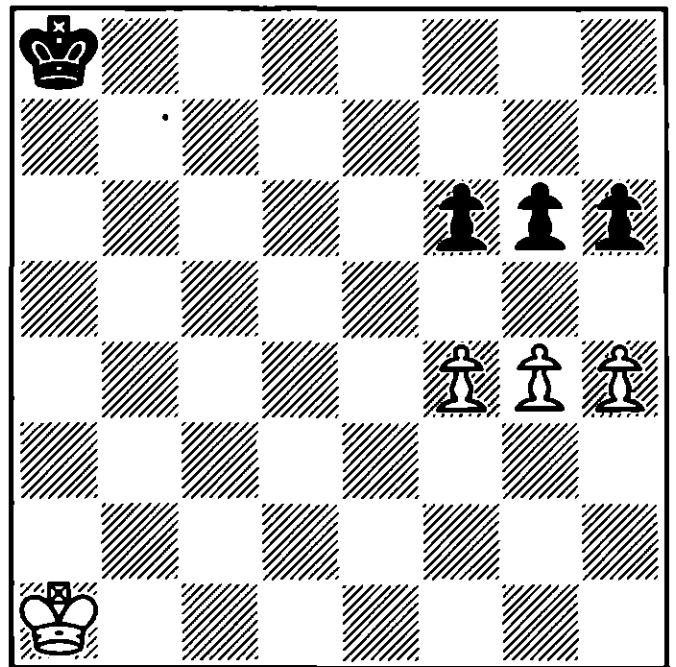
Diagram 69



Black to play and win

Diagram 70 shows a delightful example which is useful to know since it prompts one to seek such solutions in analogous positions.

Diagram 70



White to play and win

SOLUTIONS

Diagram 66 Black has a pawn majority on the queenside, White one on the kingside. Both, therefore, have a potential passed pawn. However, Black's majority is remote from the Kings and this gives him a clear advantage. 1 ... a5. The candidate has already advanced. 2 Kg2 b4 3 axb4 axb4 4 Kf2 b3, and the pawn goes through long before the King can intercept.

In the vast majority of games both sides castle on the kingside, consequently pawn majorities remote from the Kings and so usually on the queenside, confer on the owner a significant advantage. It is a point that has to be kept in mind almost from the beginning of the game.

Diagram 67 Here White has the queenside majority, this time of three pawns to two. The

winning method is: 1 a5. The candidate again leads the advance. 1 ... Kf7 2 b5 cxb5. Leaving White to exchange pawns does not prevent the passed pawn emerging on the a-file. 3 cxb5 Ke7 4 a6 bxa6 5 bxa6 and the pawn cannot be stopped. Black's kingside majority was of little use to him.

Diagram 68 In this a sacrifice, which Black is forced to accept, creates the passed pawn. 1 e6! fxe6 2 g6 and there is no way in which the Knight can intercept the pawn. 1 g6 first would work equally well.

Diagram 69 1 ... Kc6. Black plays on the unfortunate position of White's Bishop which has very little freedom left. 2 Bd8 (2 Bb8 loses the piece to 2 ... Kb7) Kd7 3 Ba5. White has been forced into the following exchange and now 3 ... Nxa5 4 bxa5 leaves Black with a passed b-pawn which is not to be stopped.

Diagram 70 1 g5! hxg5 2 f5! gxf5 3 h5. The passed pawn appears and although Black has one too (three!) White will queen with check. Check for yourself that a passed pawn is created however Black captures.

So far we have considered the passed pawn in the endgame but it has other roles to play in the middle game.

The kind of passed pawn which appears in diagram 71 is not often seen in a good game of chess. White has been allowed to acquire the pawn at e5, he has not had to fight for it since Black's d and f-pawns have both voluntarily 'passed' it. The position could, just,

have been forced although this is unlikely. Carelessness or collusion on Black's part are more reasonable explanations. Should you gain such a passed pawn, however, you will quickly recognise its value. Your opponent will always have to keep his eye on it and it will engage more pieces than a mere pawn is normally worth. It becomes a pivot around which White can work tactical as well as positional plans.

This particular passed pawn is supported by the pawn at d4 - which means that it will be a permanent thorn in Black's flesh since only sacrificial methods are likely to remove it.

There are certain other values which a supported passed pawn holds both in common with and in contrast to another and more usual type of middle game passed pawn. This is the isolated passed pawn of which we can see an example in the next diagram (72).

Diagram 71

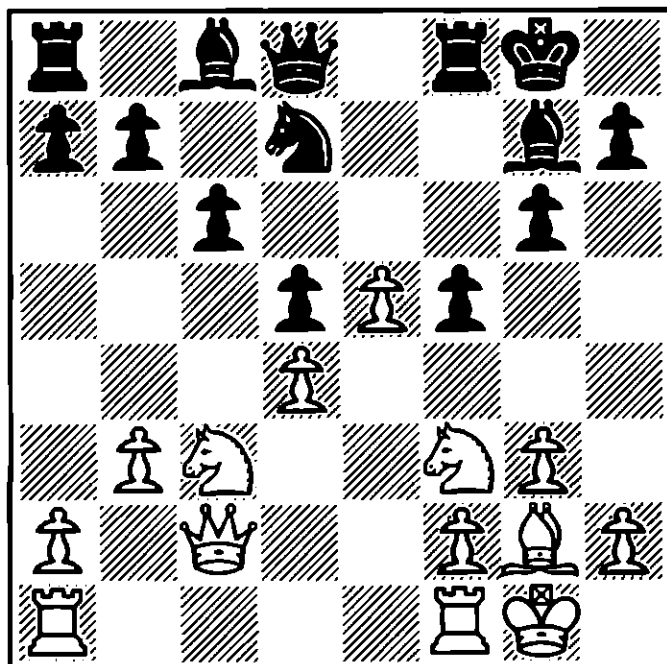
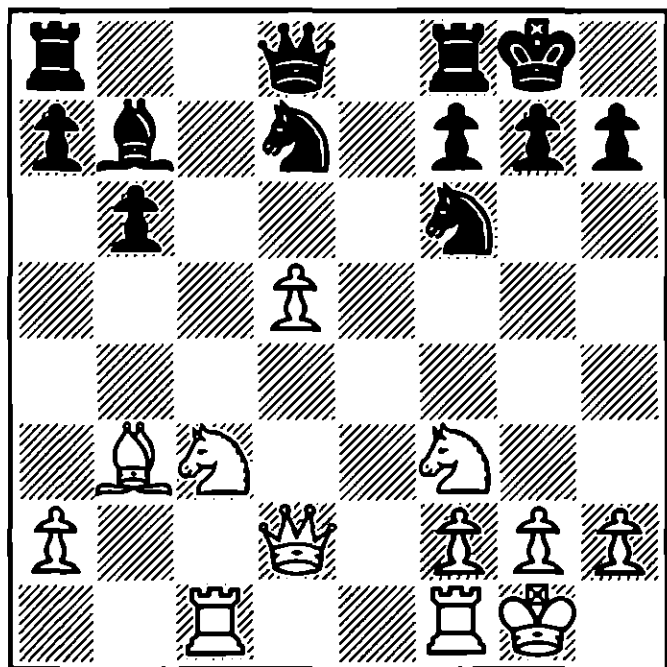


Diagram 72



Strength, unless it is completely overwhelming, is rarely present on the chessboard without the accompaniment of weakness and this ambivalence cannot be better illustrated than by the isolated passed pawn.

Strengths The ability to move forward freely, prodding at pairs of squares deeper and deeper into enemy territory, constantly increasing its queening potential, imbues the pawn with great dynamic strength.

The fact that the pawn is passed means that, usually, the files either side of the pawn are open, the c and e files in the case of diagram 72. The owner of the pawn would hope to make use of at least one of these files for the further infiltration of enemy space.

The control of squares to either side, c6 and e6 in the example, secures squares for pieces, of which more will be said later.

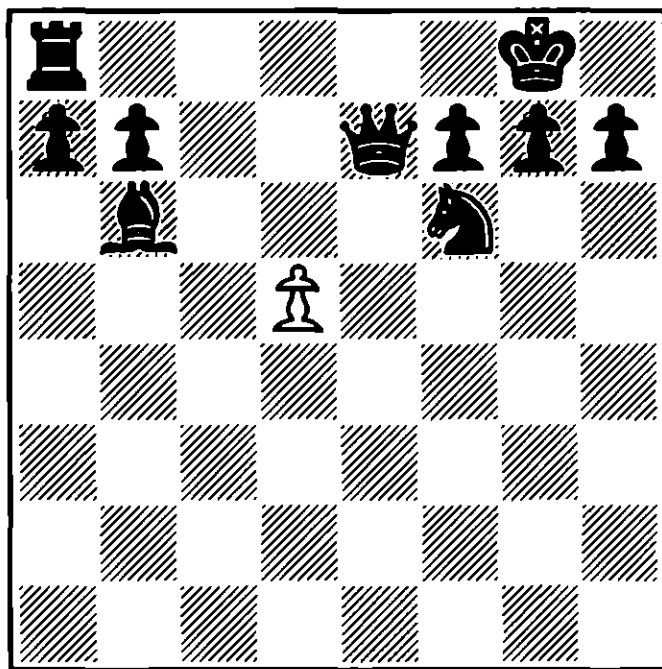
As the pawn moves forward, space for manoeuvre is created behind the pawn for pieces.

Weaknesses Some of these have already been suggested in the list of strengths.

Most important is the lack of support from other pawns so that when the pawn comes under attack, which it undoubtedly will, being a natural target for the enemy, it will have to be defended by pieces, a task which frequently becomes more difficult the further from its own lines the pawn strays.

The square immediately in front of the passed pawn becomes a weak square for the pawn's owner and a strong one for his opponent. In fact, so important is this square that we must insert here a short section devoted to it.

Diagram 73



Not to confuse the issue we will consider half a chess position as in diagram 73. Assume that White is protecting his pawn with pieces.

A moving target is not easily destroyed and so the best way to deal with a passed pawn is to blockade it and rob it of its dynamic strength.

In this position the blockading square is d6 and Black can choose among Queen, Rook, Bishop and Knight for his blockading piece. Kings can also be used, of course, but generally not in middle game positions owing to the danger of being caught in a mating net. The Queen can get there in one move, the others in two.

We have to accept that whatever piece we finally decide to settle on d6 is likely to be there a long time, perhaps a very long time. The piece chosen for this static role must be one that least loses power by being there. Supposing Black chose the Rook and played Rd8 - d6. The Rook as a blockader has the advantage of attacking the pawn, but don't be deceived, for this is the only advantage. The Rook now has no influence in the opposing half of the board, is limited to the squares d7 and d8 in the file and is unlikely to find useful penetration points along the rank. As already noted, associated with the isolated pawn are adjacent open files, here the c and e files, and the Rook would be far better employed in contesting those files. Clearly the Rook is a poor blockader.

Try ... Qd6. The Queen loses file strength too although its diagonal influence is unimpaired. However, to give such a lowly task as blockading a pawn to a piece which has

nine times its value is the height of inefficiency.

Look at ... Bc7 - d6 and you will see a difference straight away for the Bishop loses none of its strength. Similarly, after ... Ne8 - d6 the knight is also uninhibited. Obviously the Knight and Bishop are the better blockaders. To go one step further and compare these two pieces we should note that the Bishop is long-ranged and the Knight short-ranged. Should some emergency arise in a distant part of the board the Bishop would be able to deal with it more expeditiously. Consequently, if one is then choosing between the Knight and Bishop for the role of blockader, the Knight should be chosen leaving the Bishop for the more distant duties. The Knight, then, is the blockader par excellence. In the endgame, when mating prospects recede, the King makes an excellent blockader, for it is short-stepping like the Knight, losing none of its power and in addition attacks the isolated pawn at the same time.

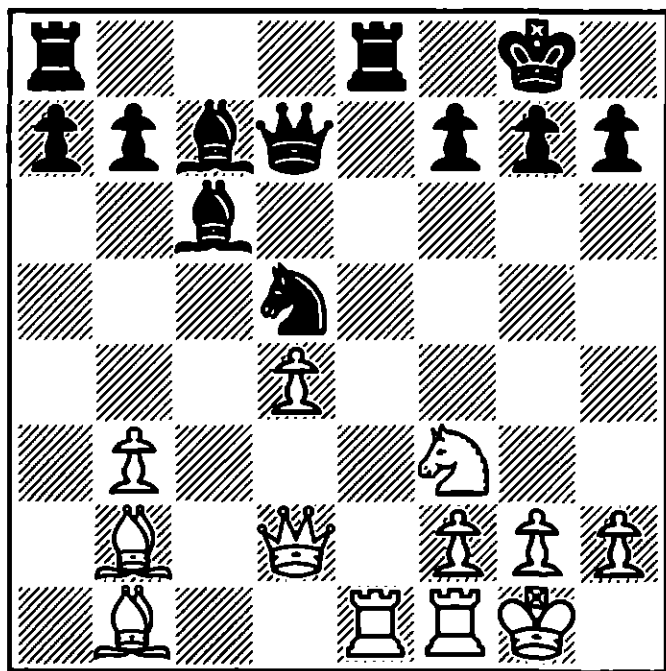
These are general rules and in chess don't forget that exceptional circumstances can arise in which the rules have to be amended. It may on occasions be necessary to use the least efficient piece, or one may be simply left with no choice in the matter. There is even a game of Tal's in which he deliberately chooses the Queen as the blockader.

The blockader, if the right one is chosen, can be a strong piece. By the very nature of the opposing passed pawn, the blockader cannot be attacked by

a pawn and is also immune from attack along the file on which it stands - at least from the front.

One further point. The passed pawn should be blockaded as soon as possible before it has advanced too far, as the examples will show.

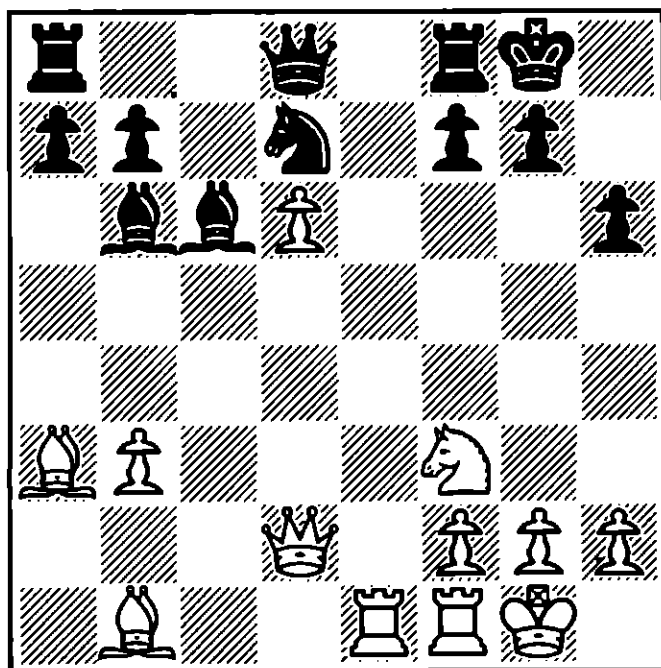
Diagram 74



In diagram 74 the isolated passed pawn has been stopped at its fourth rank. Both sides will have to manoeuvre around this fixed position at d4 and d5 and because Black has been able to blockade early he has gained more space for his pieces. The Knight is well posted, commanding four squares in the enemy half. The Queen has been able to move away from the back rank allowing the Rooks to combine and challenge the e-file. As a consequence Black retains his fair share of space and his position is as flexible as White's.

Compare this situation with the one in diagram 75.

Diagram 75



Here the pawn has slipped through to the sixth rank. The blockading Knight still controls good squares but none in the enemy half and so is less offensive.

More importantly, White's control of territory behind the advancing pawn has increased, whilst Black's position has become cramped and he will find great difficulty in moving forward. Another point emerges from diagram 75: since the blockader is fixed on the seventh rank communications between the queenside and the kingside are cut off. This is a frequent cause of disaster, for if White makes a concerted effort on one wing helped by his own ease of movement between the wings Black will be hard put to it to get his own forces across and match piece for piece. The Queen is also awkwardly placed and the Rooks are unable to come together.

The seventh and eighth ranks were discussed in an earlier chapter and those ideas have some bearing on the present position. Once the passed pawn has arrived at the sixth rank it controls two squares on the seventh rank, c7 and e7, which are points of penetration for the Rooks. White is already threatening Re7 and doubling up on the e-file.

The whole of this is a remarkable example of how a single pawn can modify territory.

To illustrate the ideas which surround the problem of the isolated passed pawn we will see how they work out in a master game.

Saigin Tal
Riga, 1954

1 d4 Nf6
2 c4 c5
3 Nf3

A quiet response. The more vigorous line against the Modern Benoni is 3 d5.

3 e6
4 g3

Still possible was 4 d5. Apparently White is content to allow Black a strong centre, perhaps with the intention of undermining it.

4 cxd4
5 Nxd4 d5
6 Bg2 e5
7 Nf3

And indeed, for the moment, it looks as though Black has occupied the centre too quickly for both his pawns are now under pressure.

7

d41

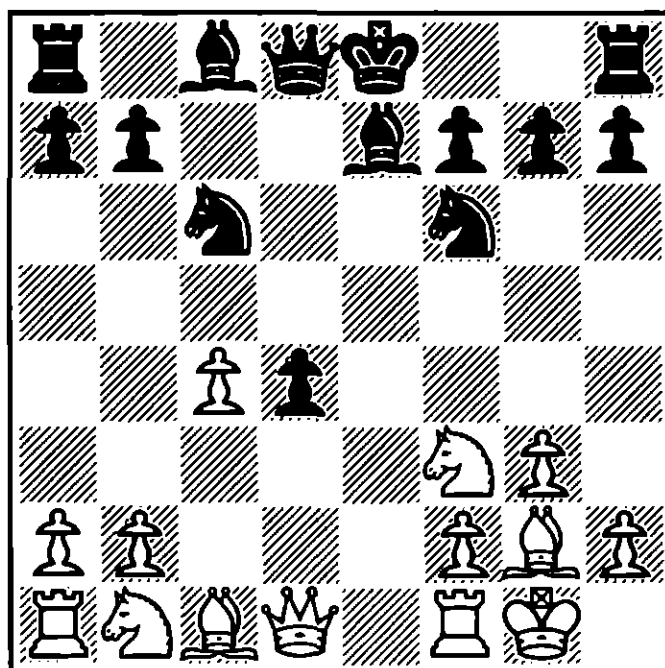
Of course. White cannot capture the e-pawn because of the Queen fork. White renews the threat by removing the King.

8 0 0 Nc6
9 e3

Black has a fine pawn centre and so White begins to reduce it, aiming to saddle his opponent with the problems of an isolated pawn. Such a prospect, however, does not trouble Tal, he has faith in that pawn's dynamic qualities.

9 Be7
10 exd4 exd4

Diagram 76



The isolated passed pawn appears. Only one adjacent file is open, the c-file being half closed by the pawn at c4, but otherwise the situation bears some similarity to the positions of diagrams 74 and 75, with Black having the isolated pawn. The pawn is one square further on than in 74

and one square less than in 75.

White has compensation firstly in the hope that the Black d-pawn will become static and weak and then in his three pawns to two queenside majority. But the d-pawn will not become fixed without positive action. White's objectives now should be, in order of priority, to blockade the d-pawn, contest the e-file and then expand on the queenside.

11 Nbd2 Be6
12 Re1?

The right idea but in the wrong order. If you look at all the possible blockaders of the d-pawn you will quickly come to the conclusion that the best candidate is the N at f3. That piece needs e1 to get to d3 but e1 has now been occupied by a Rook. White's pieces, in other words, are beginning to get in each other's way and a little thought gives you the clue to why this is so: the very pawn that demands this attention restricts White's space for manoeuvre because it is well advanced.

12 0 0
13 b3 Qd7

Black is almost fully developed, with his Rooks now ready to support the centre.

14 Bb2

This is the best way to develop the Bishop since it strikes at the isolated pawn and should the pawn advance the long diagonal would be cleared.

14 Rad8
15 a3

Beginning the queenside expansion but the blockade of the d-pawn was still the first priority. Black immediately stifles the advance:

15 a5
16 Ne5

This is the other route to d3 but of course Black will not allow the Knight to reach that square.

16 Nxø5
17 Rxe5 b6
18 Nf3

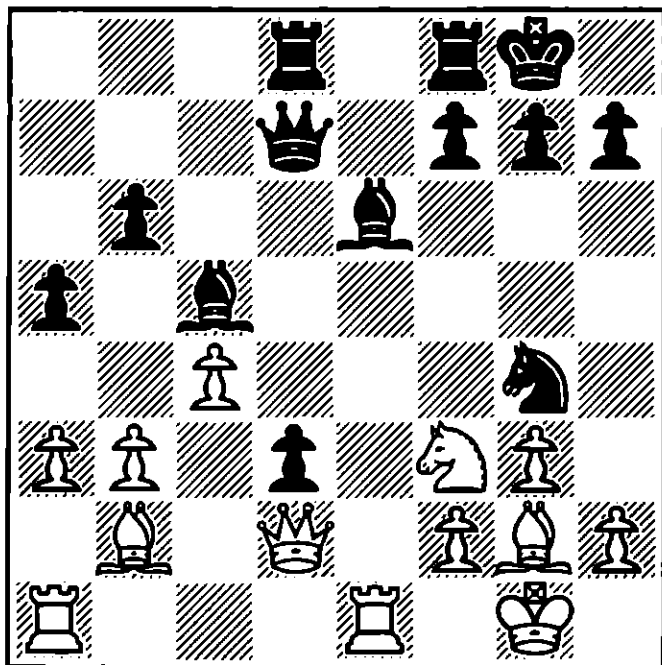
The d-pawn is now attacked three times and only defended twice, hence the reply.

18 Bc5
19 Qd2

Threatening to drive away the Bishop with b4. There is a hint here of how weak the isolated pawn can be if only it can be fixed and sufficient force then brought to bear.

19 Ng4
20 Røe1 d3!

Diagram 77



White pays the penalty of neglecting the blockade. The pawn avoids its attackers by advancing and now a whole new group of pieces must be mustered in order to bring it under pressure again. At the same time Black has expanded his territory and further restricted White's. His Bishop at c5 has a new line opened and now combines with the Knight against the f-pawn, and two points, deep in White territory, at e2 and c2, are falling into Black's hands.

21 Rf1

Giving up the e-file to protect the f-pawn. White has accomplished none of his objectives and the Rook retreats in ignominy. All he has left is a rearguard action with blockade at d2 with the Queen, the last piece which should be used for such a purpose.

21

Qd6

A beautiful move, quietly, but very firmly, emphasising Black's grip on the situation. So far his advantage has been in the centre; now, without removing any power from that region, this simple move suddenly produces an influence on both wings at b4, preventing a White advance, and at g3, preventing White from driving away the Knight with h3, for this would weaken the pawn at g3, allowing a later ... Qxg3! since the f-pawn is pinned.

22 Qc3

Making use of his one open line, threatening mate and so gaining time to exchange blockaders on d2.

22

f6

23 Rad1

Rfe8

Now the e-file falls into Black hands. White was offering the a-pawn for the d-pawn through 23 ... Bxa3 24 Bxa3 Qxa3 25 Rxd3, which Black naturally ignored.

24 Rd2

The new blockader.

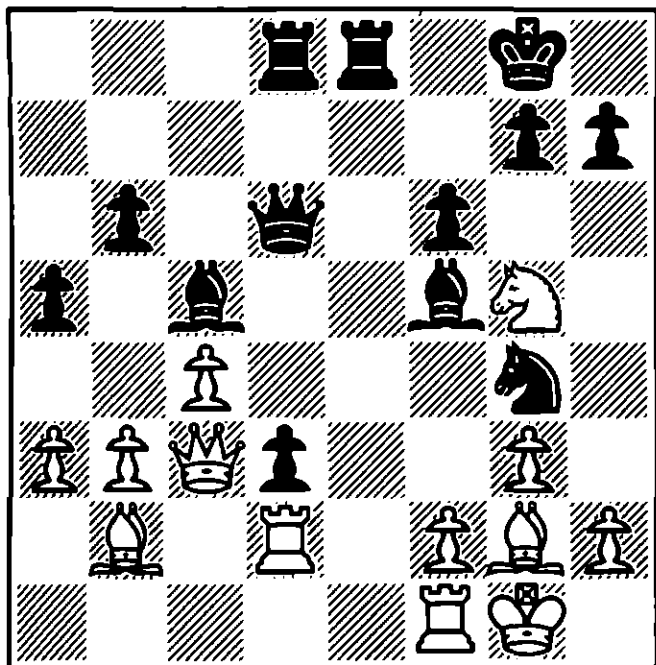
24

Bf5

The isolated pawn looks well defended again.

25 Ng5!

Diagram 78



Of course the Knight cannot be taken because of mate. White's idea is Bd5ch, cutting off some of the protectors of the d-pawn, but Tal is ready with an equally sharp rejoinder.

25 Ne3!

Holding up Bd5ch. If White refuses the offer and moves his Rook, to e1, say, then: 26 ... Nxf2 27 Rxe8ch Rxe8 28 Kxf2 Qc6ch 29 f3 (29 Nf3 would be met by 29 ... Be4) Re1 and White is helpless.

26 fxe3 Bxe3ch
27 Kh1 Bxd2

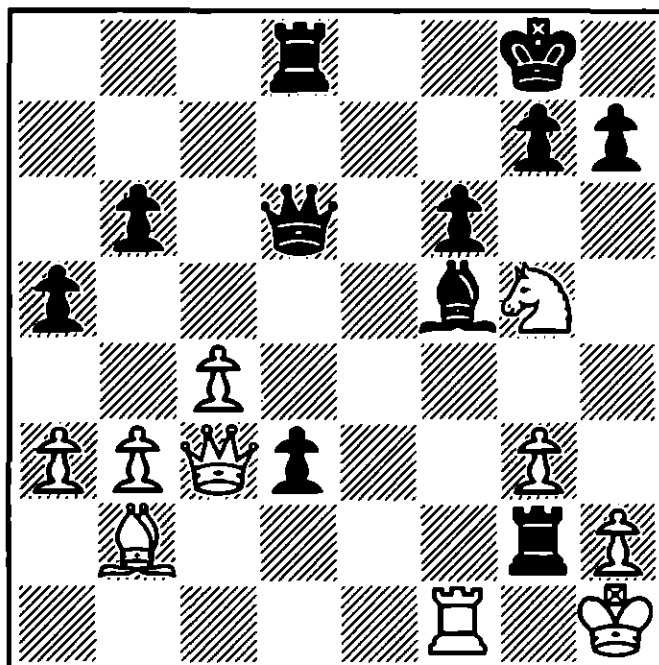
It is clear that the sacrifice is all to do with the blockader. Once a passed pawn is blockaded the general strategy is play to remove the obstacle so that the pawn can pass on to its ultimate goal. The Rook is replaced by the Queen again.

28 Qxd2 Re2

Driving away the blockader. For the exchange Black has an extra pawn, control of the seventh rank and the prospect of free passage for his isolated pawn. Notice now how the White forces are split. The Rook and its supporting d-pawn cut the White position in two.

29 Qc3 Rxf2

Diagram 79



White's one hope of trying to split the Black forces by Bd5 disappears and he resigns. There was only:

30 Kxf2 d2

The threat of queening protects the Bishop at f5.

31 Rd1

Again blockade. Note how the blockading square has moved from d3 to d2 to d1....

31 Bg4

...and how again the undermining of the blockader

creates the prospect of further expansion for the pawn.

32 Nf3 Qd3!

The race is now run and material tumbles.

33 Qxd3 Rxd3

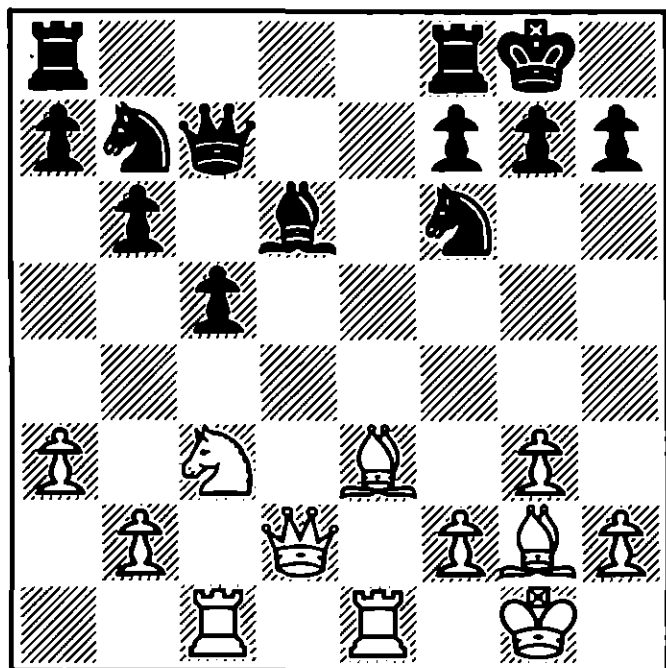
The Knight will fall first and then the Rook.

Nimzowitsch, who often wrote with tremendous and sometimes uncontrolled gusto, wrote of the isolated passed pawn's 'lust to expand', Tal's treatment of it here vindicates the extravagance.

Tal, renowned for the brilliance and originality of his handling of the middle game, bases his play, as we have seen, on sound and basic positional concepts.

Here are some problems, based on passed pawns, for you to solve.

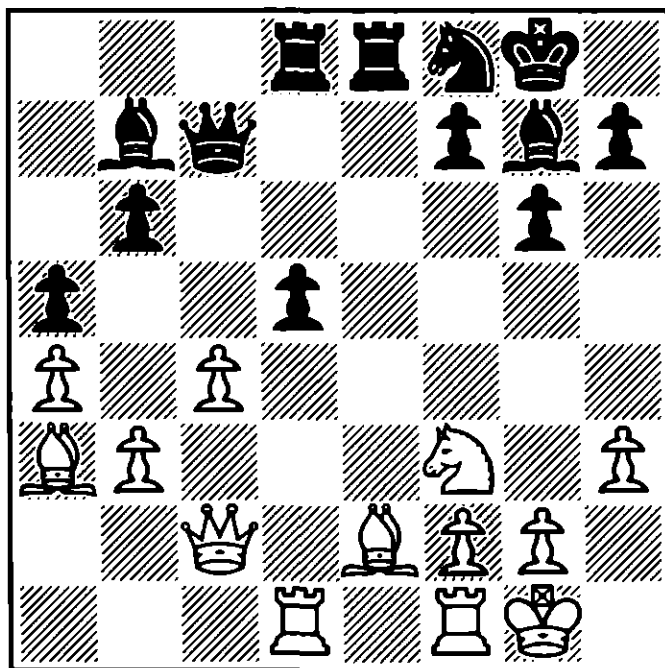
Diagram 80



White has an isolated passed pawn which is missing from the board. On what square would you place it?

- 2 What compensations does Black enjoy?
- 3 White to play. How would he proceed and Black reply?

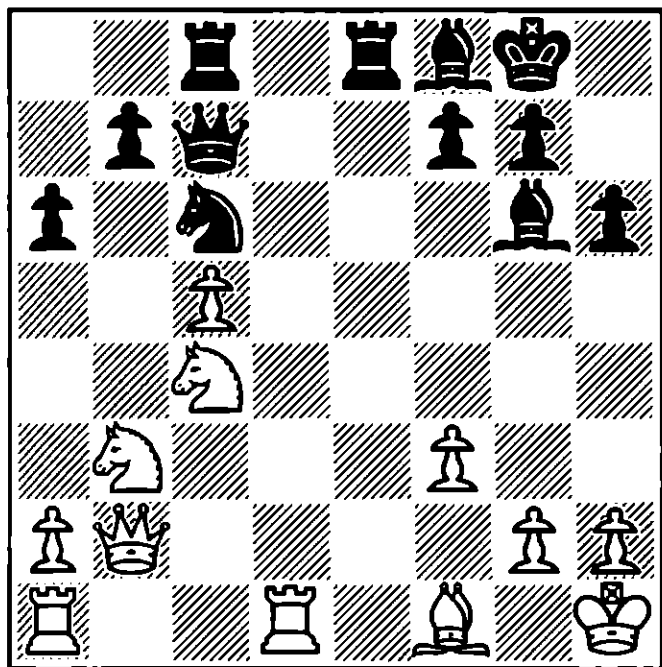
Diagram 81



There is no passed pawn in the position at the moment. Which side is able to create one?

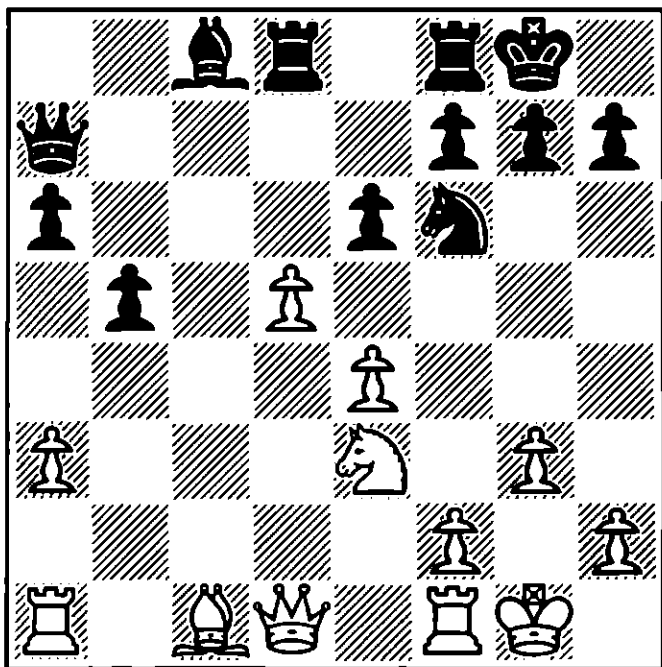
- 2 How?
- 3 With Black to play give the next few moves of a possible continuation with reasons for your choice.

Diagram 82



A case where a passed pawn becomes dynamic as soon as it appears. White to play and create a winning isolated passed pawn.

Diagram 83



Black can decide whether or not to exchange pawns in the centre. What should he do?

SOLUTIONS

Diagram 80

1 Clearly at d5.

2 Black has compensation in a solid queenside majority and the ability to contest the e-file.

3 White could immediately set about removing the blockader with 1 Nb5. Black finds a safe square for his Queen, 1 ... Qd7, without interfering with the freedom of the Rooks on the back rank and then, after 2 Nxd6 Nxd6, White has the advantage of the Bishop pair whilst Black has brought the best blockader to d6.

Diagram 81

1 Only Black has the opportunity.

2 Black could choose to do so, although he may not consider it the best idea in the circumstances, in which case he would avoid it, perhaps by an exchange on c4. This would lead to a decrease of tension in the centre and a rapid exchange of major pieces, which would be all right for him if he was looking for a quiet life. Otherwise he could take on all the prospects as well as the problems of an isolated passed pawn with d4.

3 1 ... d4. Now, if there was a good prospect of White winning the d-pawn he might be justified in doubling up on the d-file. However, Black can also double Rooks on the file as well as support the pawn with ... Ne6. Since he cannot win the pawn by direct methods

he must fix it and choose a suitable blockader. 2 Bd3 would be no good for then Black could capture at f3, breaking up the kingside pawns. The Knight would make a better blockader anyway and so 2 Ne1 seems to be the next move. Black has several good ideas now. He could bring the Knight to e6 not only defending the pawn but with the possibility of going to f4 to challenge the blockader when it arrives on d3. His pieces at b7 and c7 strike through the centre and into the opposing kingside. His position begins to look attractive.

Diagram 82

1 Nd6 Bxd6

Black captures because of the fork, though in the light of events it would have been no worse to give up the exchange straight away.

2 cxd6 Qd7

Black is not given time to choose a blockader.

3 Nc5

Removing the obstruction immediately.

3 Qf5
4 d7 Qxc5
5 dxc8 = Q Rxc8
6 Qxb7,

and the rapid passage of the passed pawn across the position leaves Black with the exchange down and nothing to hope for.

Diagram 83 Black should certainly saddle White with an isolated passed pawn by,

1 exd5
2 exd5,

for he can quickly bring his own force to bear upon it, whereas White has great difficulty in defending. Black could start a steady build up by doubling on the d-file, but the pin on the centre pawn allows a rapid resolution.

2 Be6

White needs another defender but there isn't one available. Pushing the pawn is the only resource and here its advance is not aggression but desperate defence.

3 d6

The pawn, straying further from its own lines, becomes even more vulnerable. In fact,

3 Qc5,

wins it immediately.

It is very important to keep this kind of position in mind, for the weak component of the isolated passed pawn is always present.

We shall return to this theme at a later stage.

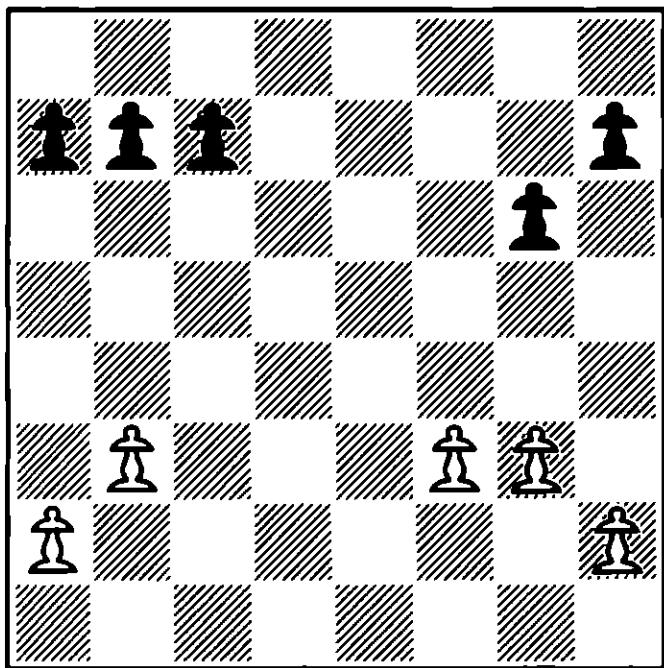
CHAPTER 8

Pawns to avoid

We have discussed the weakness of isolated but so far only defined doubled, backward and hanging pawns. It is these last three which will be treated in this chapter.

Doubled Pawns

Diagram 84



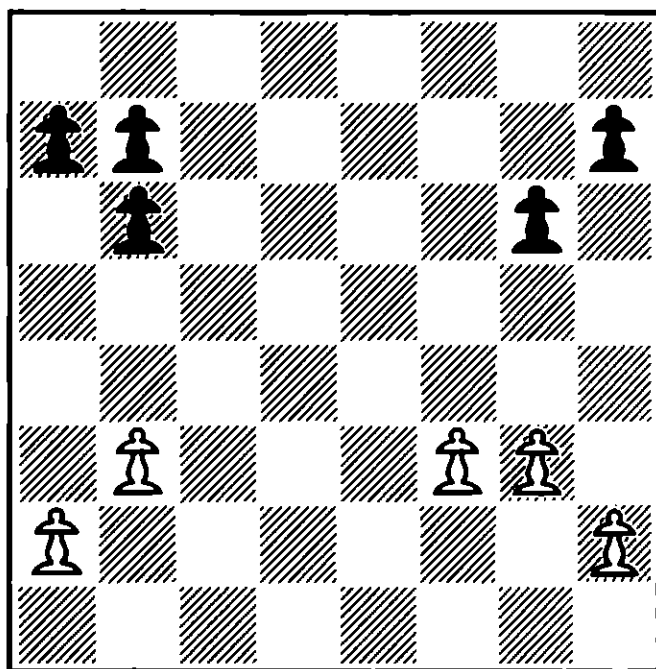
Here both players have two groups of pawns, White a 3-2 majority on the kingside and Black a 3-2 majority on the other wing. In other words, the position is perfectly even. This balance might be upset if the Kings were on the board, tipping in the favour of one side according to the relative position of the Kings. But we have removed this element

temporarily because we are interested in the values of the pawn groups themselves.

Each majority could eventually give birth to a passed pawn, and other things being equal, a draw would be the most likely result.

Look at the situation in the next diagram, (85). There is only a very small difference, the pawn at c7 being now at b6. White can still produce his passed pawn by playing f4, g4 and f5 in that order and at a suitable time, but how does Black create his passed pawn?

Diagram 85



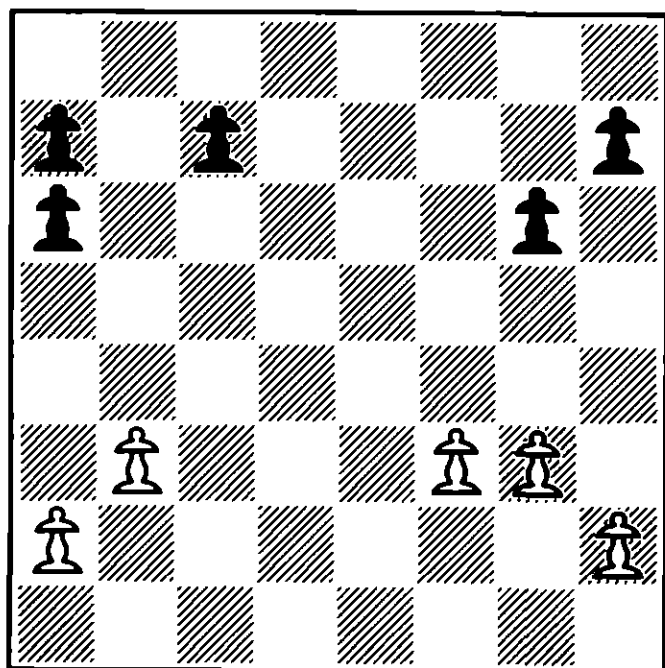
Experiment yourself with Black's queenside pawns and you

will find that no passed pawn will emerge without the assistance of White. For example, playing all Black moves ... b5, ... a5, ... b4, ... b5, ... a4. No further progress can be made provided White does not oblige with bxa4, allowing Black to straighten out the pawns. If now ... axb3, axb3, Black has doubled and isolated pawns which are really no better than one.

Now change the diagram by placing Black's queenside pawns at b7, c7 and b6. The situation is different. If Black can advance unmolested to obtain pawns at b5 and c5 then ... c4 will produce a passed pawn.

It is clear, then, that a doubled pawn compromises the pawn group in which it lies and a passed pawn is obtainable only under special circumstances.

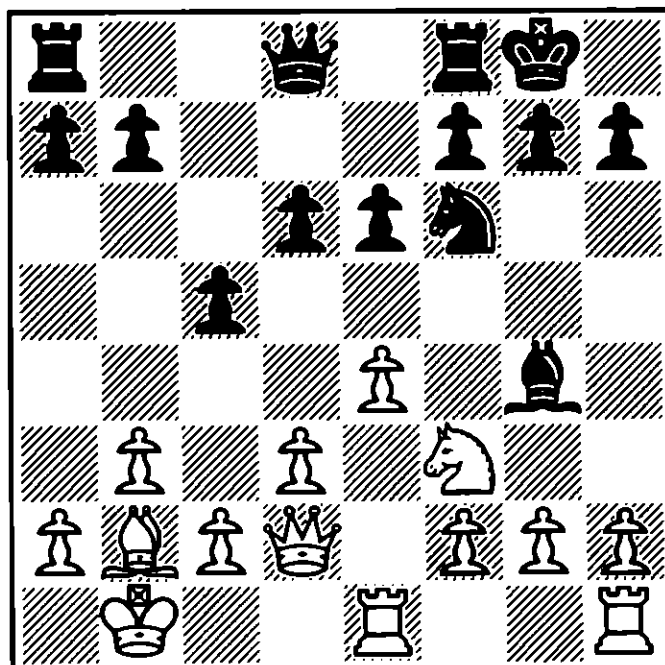
Diagram 86



In diagram 86 the pawns are not only doubled but isolated. There is no prospect of a passed pawn here nor do they offer each other support and such a ragged group easily falls victim to prowling pieces and penetrating Kings.

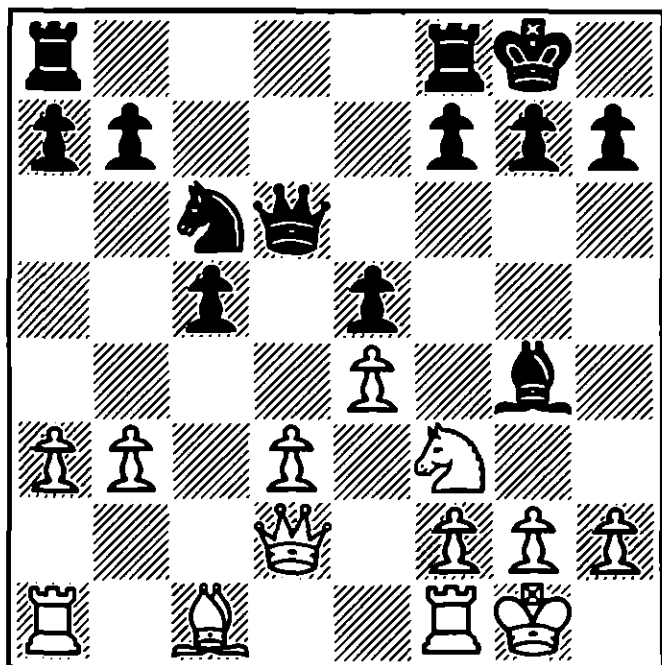
The weakness of doubled pawns is obvious in the endgame. Earlier, however, there are certain aspects of a doubled pawn position which cannot be regarded as weak and others in which they are a positive advantage.

Diagram 87



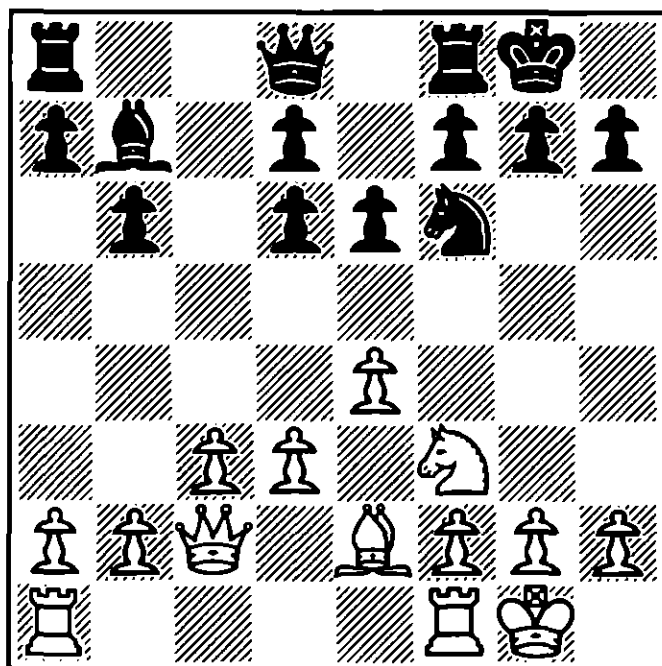
In diagram 87 Black has the opportunity to 'saddle' his opponent with a doubled pawn on the f-file by 1 ... Bxf3, but he would be very foolish to do so since he would be unlikely to last long enough to reap the reward in the endgame. After 2 gxf3 White has a fine half open file for the use of his major pieces whilst his own King is safely tucked away on the other wing.

Diagram 88



On the other hand, in the position of diagram 88, it would clearly be good sense to exchange B for Knight at f3, aiding Black in a kingside attack.

Diagram 89



Again, in the early stages of the game, the appearance of

a doubled pawn complex, particularly in the centre, can be an advantage, providing additional power there. Black has such pawns in diagram 89. He could go:

1 d5

and if,

2 exd5 Nxd5,

Black finishes with two pawns to one on the central files. But not:

2 exd5,

because the pawns then remain not only doubled but isolated.

White could try,

2 e5,

avoiding the exchange, but after,

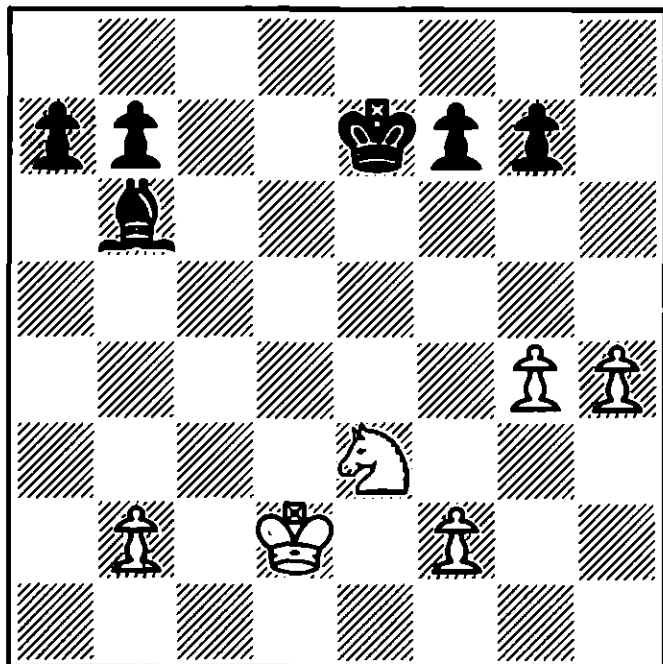
2 Ne8,

Black will be ready for ... d6, forcing the exchange this time.

As a structure, the doubled pawn is weak, as a feature enhancing power they can be strong in certain positions, but notice that even here realising that advantage in terms of pawn preponderance in the centre involves undoubling those pawns.

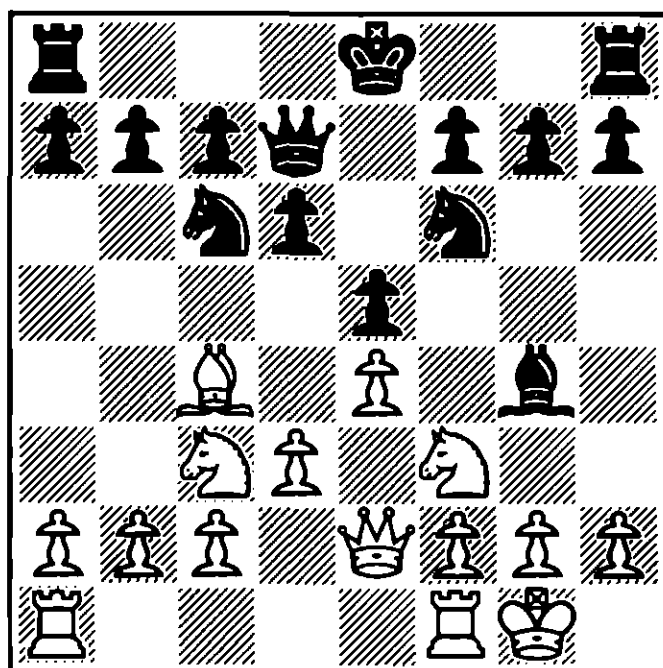
Can you find means of producing doubled pawns in the following positions? If so, say in each case whether they confer advantage on the creator or not.

Diagram 90



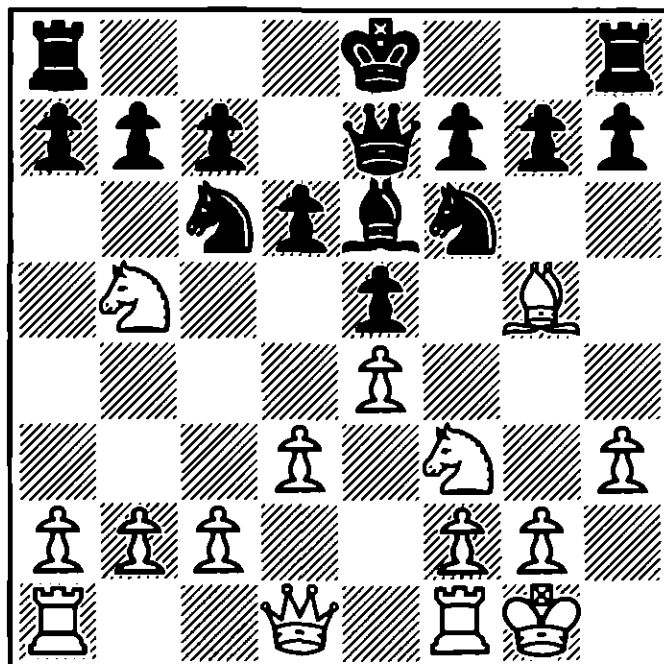
White to Play

Diagram 91



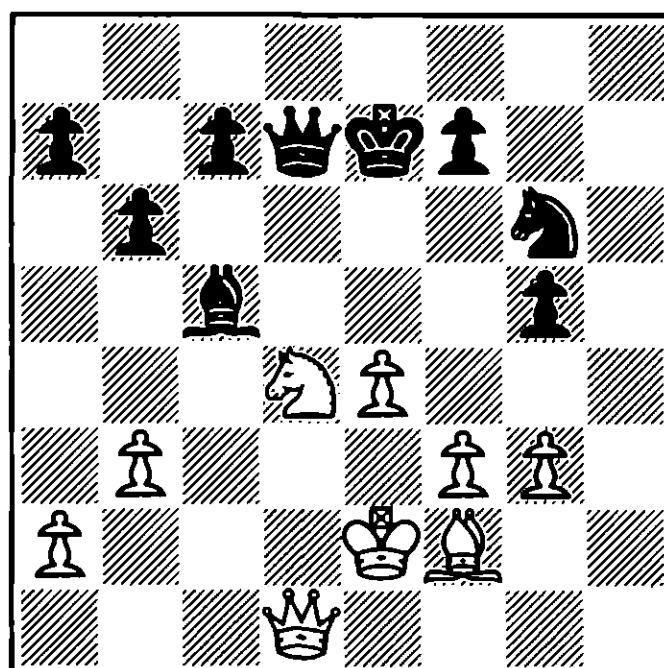
Black to play

Diagram 92



White to play

Diagram 93



White to play

SOLUTIONS

Diagram 90 White can create a doubled pawn with a Knight fork at d5. After 1 Nd5ch Kd6 2 Nxb6 axb6, Black's queenside pawn majority, from which he

would normally expect to produce a passed pawn, is compromised. Effectively Black is a pawn down for the doubleton on the b-file is little better than a single pawn, whilst White's kingside majority remains intact.

White has scored another victory. He has gained Bishop for Knight because in an open position such as this Black's Bishop was superior. Play could continue: 3 Ke3 Kd5 4 f4, and White will have little difficulty in winning the ending.

Diagram 91 Black has an easy win with 1 ... Nd4 2 Qd1 Bxf3 3 gxf3, and more significant than the doubling of the pawns is the cracking of the White King's pawn defences. 3 ... Qh3 and White will have to give up his Queen to save mate because of the threat of Nxf3ch etc.

Another interesting idea comes to light here. The defender would often wish to bring a piece, a Queen or a Rook perhaps, from the queenside to assist the troubled King. The doubling of the f-pawns impedes this because the pawn on f2 is blockaded by the pawn on f3 and makes rank communication between the wings very difficult.

This is another excellent example of how the pawn configuration modifies terrain.

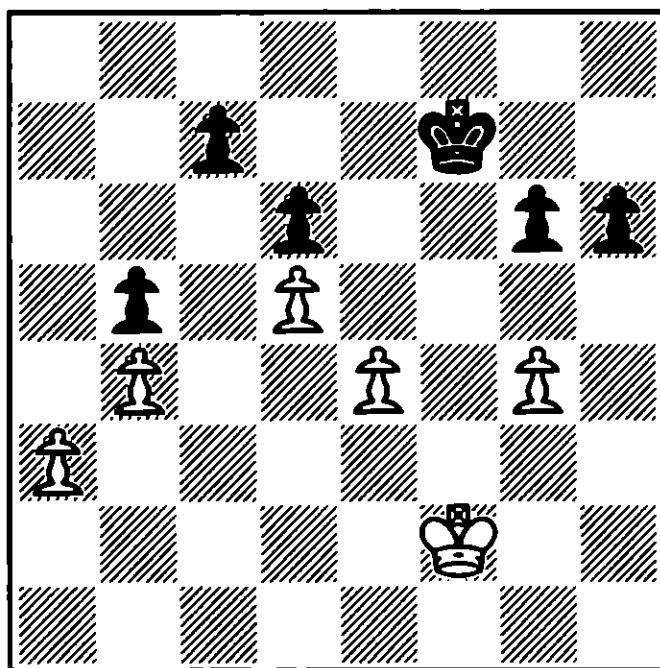
Diagram 92 White does not have to but he might be tempted to double Black's pawns with 1 Bxf6 since 1 ... gxf6 is forced because of the fork threat at c7. But White would then realise that the endgame is a long way off and all he has succeeded in doing is open a line the g-file - against his own King. Black can castle long and pile up an attack on the kingside.

Diagram 93 White will first

have to assess whether there is any possibility of direct attack against the enemy King. He could try: 1 Qd2 f6 2 b4, but then Black could change off Bishop for Knight and obtain a perfectly defensible position. Or White could steer for the endgame, creating pawn weaknesses on the way with: 1 Nf5ch Ke8 2 Qxd7ch Kxd7 3 Bxc5 bxc5, creating doubled and isolated pawns on the queenside. This would not automatically give White victory for Knight and pawn endings can be difficult to win, but it unquestionably gives him the better prospects.

Backward Pawns

Diagram 94



White has two pawns to one on the a and b-files and Black has the same on the g and f-files. It is interesting to compare these two groups. White cannot advance his a-pawn because it has no support from a neighbour. Such a pawn, when it is unable to move forward because of the threat of

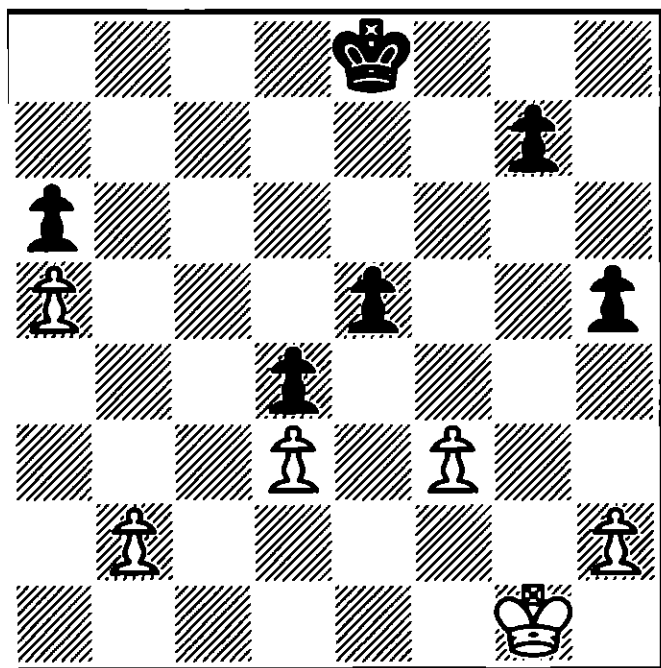
capture by an opposing pawn, and lacking the support of a friendly pawn in an adjacent file, is said to be backward.

The point can be emphasised by looking at Black's position on the g and h-files. There Black has the same majority as White's on the queenside, but the relative positions of the pawns makes all the difference. Black is able to advance 1 ... h5 because after 2 gxh5 he can recapture with a pawn, 2 gxh5.

Can you spot two other backward pawns in diagram 94?

They are the White pawn at e4 and the Black one at c7.

Diagram 95



Look for backward pawns in Diagram 95.

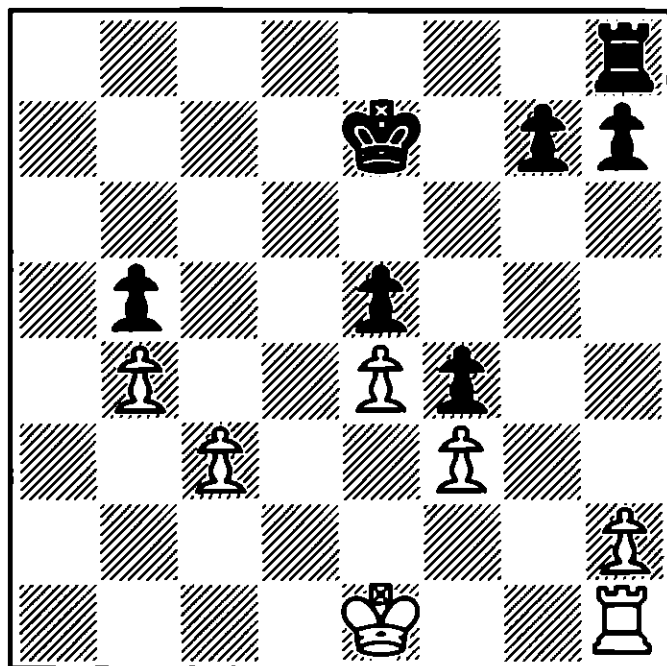
White has one at b2. Although at the moment it can move it will soon be brought to rest at b4. Not so with Black's pawn at g7 for after 1 ... g5 the two pawns are side by side and further progress is

possible. White with the move from the diagram could go 1 h4, making Black's g-pawn backward.

Black has a backward pawn at e5. It is a particularly severe case for its advance is opposed by two pawns, at d3 and f3. Even with the help of a piece it could not move without loss.

It is clear that the first and most obvious weakness of the backward pawn is the loss of mobility; the second weakness is its inability to become passed, even when part of a pawn majority.

Diagram 96



Another weakness emerges from a consideration of diagram 96.

White has a backward pawn at c3. He could make a threat on the g-file with,

1 Rg1

It is possible for Black to support his pawn with Rook or King, but this would tie a piece down to the menial task

of guarding a pawn. Another way is:

1 g6,

seeking support from a neighbouring pawn and establishing a formidable obstacle to White's further ambitions in that file.

With Black to play from the diagram a similar sort of threat would be,

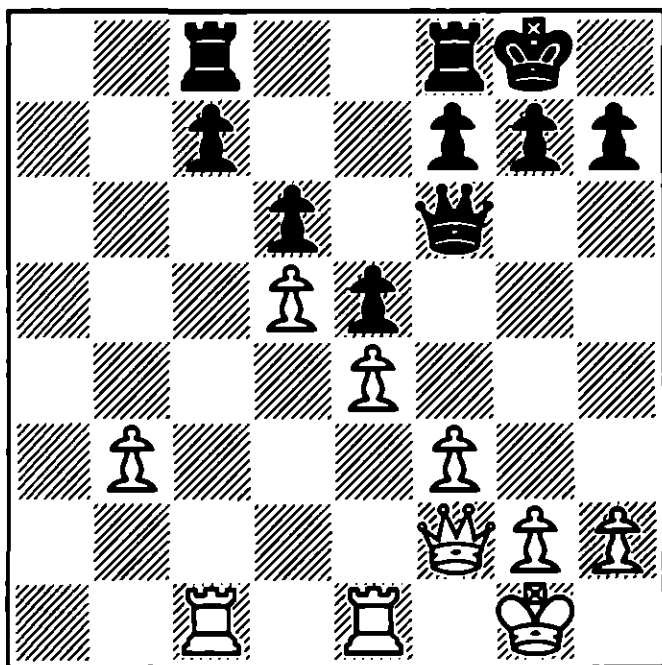
1 Rc8,

and the only possible response is piece support:

2 Kd2

Backward pawns, then, are vulnerable to an attack on a semi-open file and, because of their likely permanency, they have a great effect upon terrain. And they often become a burden to pieces which would be better operating more ambitiously elsewhere.

Diagram 97



In diagram 97 the c-file is half opened in White's favour

and on it lies a backward pawn at c7. Let us see what happens if White piles up his pieces on it.

1 Rc6	Rfd8
2 Rxc1	Rd7
3 Qc2	Qe7

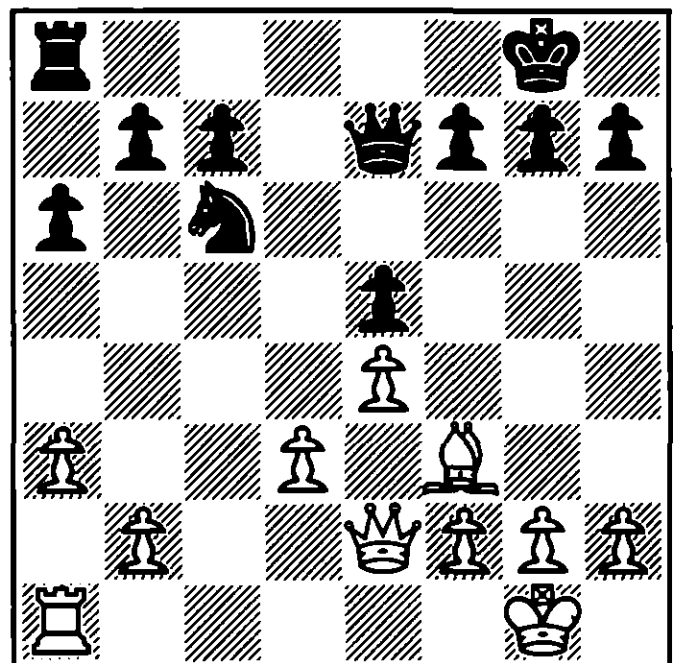
Attack and defence are balanced on the fulcrum of the backward pawn. Black is able to hold the pawn but all his pieces are now pinned down to its defence and themselves occupy mean and cramped quarters.

White, however, has great freedom of movement and as he continues to pin down the enemy forces he will be able to create opportunities elsewhere. He could advance the b-pawn effectively for there is now a pin on the c-file.

Associated with the backward pawn is a serious square weakness in front of that pawn.

In diagram 98 White has a backward pawn at d3. It is not

Diagram 98



attacked at present and even if Black doubled his Queen and Rook on the d-file, White would find adequate defence for the pawn with his three pieces. They would, however, be tied down, as we saw in the previous example, so that this would be sensible Black strategy. But there is the other weakness related to the backward pawn, which is obvious in the present position: the square weakness, or 'hole' in front of the pawn.

1 Nd4

A fine position for the Knight. Since White's minor piece is a white-squared Bishop the only possible way he could remove that Knight would be bring his Rook round and sacrifice the exchange.

2 Qd1

Any other Queen move would allow Black to break up his kingside pawns or fork Queen and Rook.

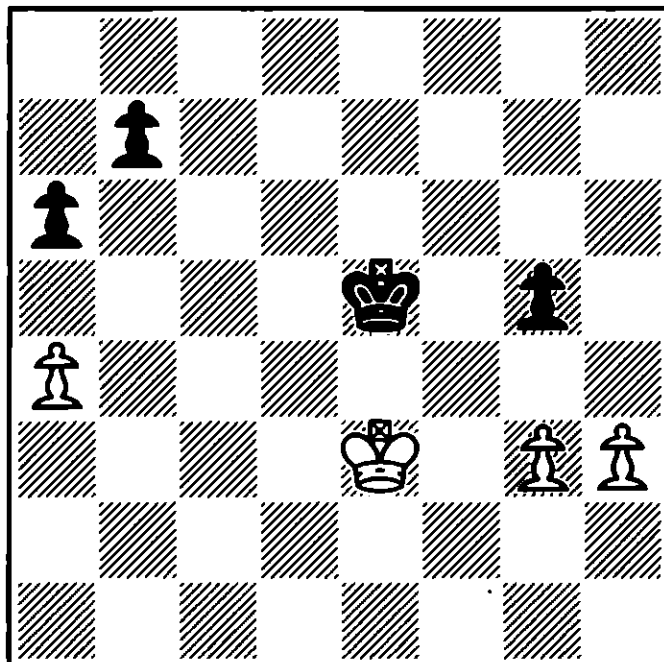
The position of the Knight forms a pivot of activity for the rest of the Black force. It is beautifully centralised and so Black can consider play on either wing. Its advanced position means that he possesses more space behind the piece and consequently restricts White territory. In defence or in regrouping for an attack White will be constantly aware of the constraining influence of that terrible thorn in his flesh.

Whether the advantages that Black enjoys here are sufficient to win is another matter, but what is clear is that any player given the choice would select the Black

pieces to play in this position.

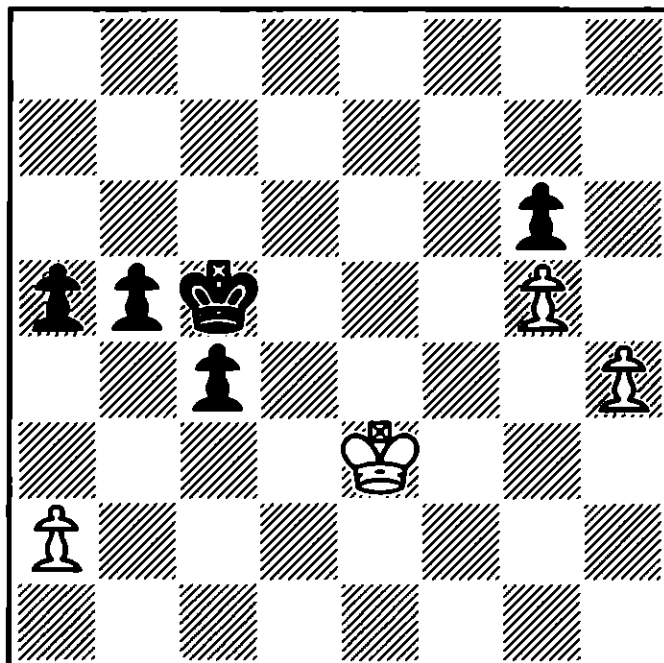
There follow some positions on the backward pawn theme for you to solve.

Diagram 99



White to move. How should play continue and what is the likely result?

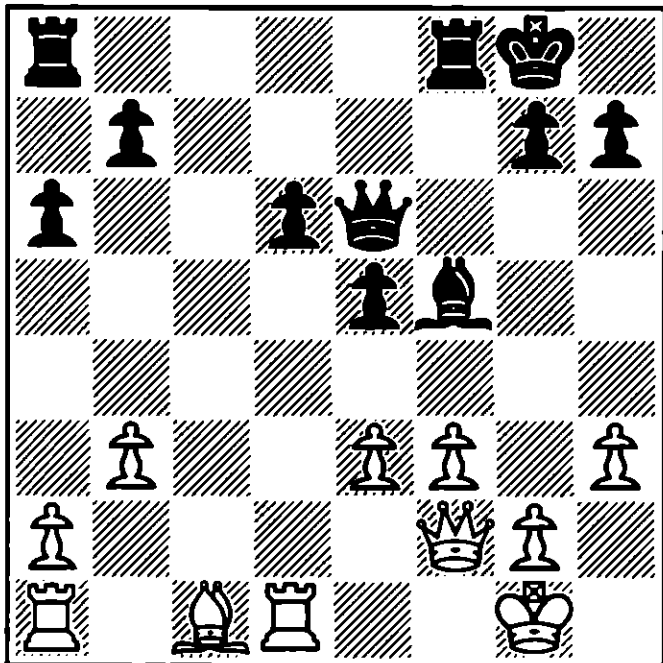
Diagram 100



Does possession of the move

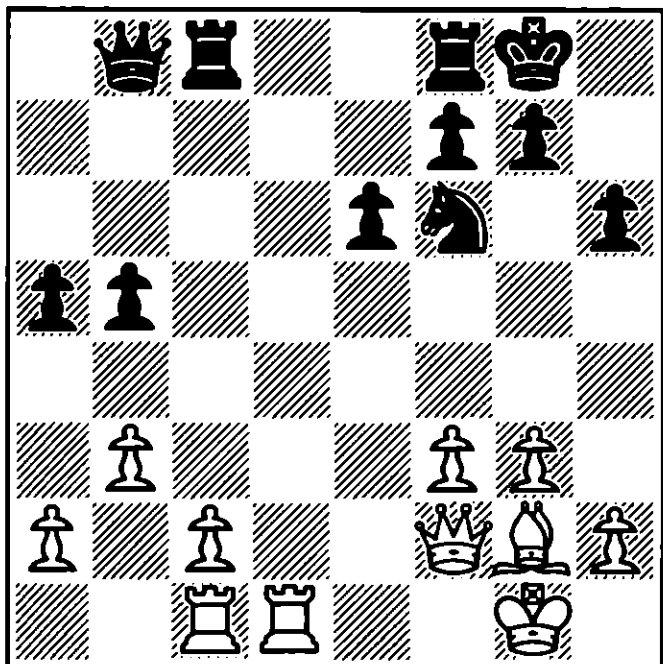
affect the result of this position?

Diagram 101



White to play. How should he continue in order to create a backward pawn and then exploit it?

Diagram 102



Black to play. How can he use the theme to restrict White's position?

SOLUTIONS

Diagram 99 Each player has a potential passed pawn in his pawn majority and Black has slightly the better King position since his is more advanced. However, he has neglected his queenside pawn configuration and White now has 1 a5, rendering the b-pawn backward. If Black goes after that a-pawn with his King, White quickly converts his majority into a passed pawn and runs through on the other wing. If Black stays in the centre a winning method is: 1 ... Kd5 2 h4 gxh4 3 gxh4 Ke5 4 h5 Kf5 5 Kd4 Kg5 6 Kc5 Kxh5 (the passed pawn has been used as a decoy) 7 Kb6 etc. Had Black's b-pawn been at b6 he too could have created a passed pawn.

A backward pawn in a King and pawn ending does not automatically give a win to the other side, but this example illustrates the need to avoid weaknesses that can prove fatal.

Diagram 100 Yes. With the move White can escape tactically from his disadvantage of the backward pawn at h4: 1 h5! gxh5 (if 1 ... Kd5 then 2 h6 wins) 2 g6 and Black cannot stop the pawn.

Black to play goes 1 ... Kd5 and the King can cut off any passed pawn on the kingside. If then 2 Kf4 Ke6 and White can make no more progress and Black can win on the queenside.

This example was given to demonstrate that a pawn majority, even though compromised by a backward pawn,

can occasionally produce a winning passed pawn.

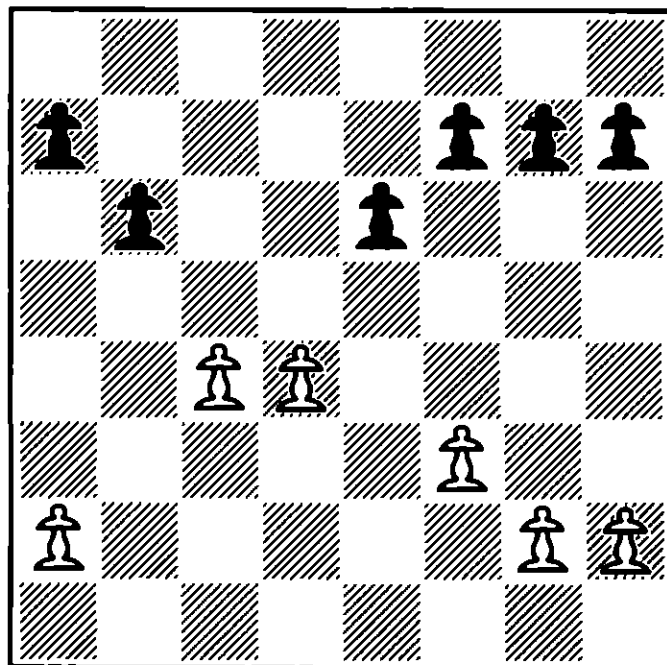
Diagram 101 White can render his opponent's d-pawn backward immediately and with a gain of tempo: 1 e4. After 1 ... Bg6 the weakness can be quickly exploited: 2 Ba3 Rfd8 3 Rd5 (occupying the weak square in front of the pawn) Rd7 4 Rad1 Rad8 5 Qb6. Black can summon no more assistance and so the pawn falls.

Diagram 102 He can constrain White by creating backward pawns at c2 and a2. To play 1 ... b4 straight away may not be the best because White could choose activity, even if risky, to passivity by giving up a pawn temporarily: 2 c4! bxc e.p. 3 Rd3 Qb4 4 Qc2, and White is on his way to regaining his pawn with no constraints on his position. In fact he will come out with a queenside pawn majority. (The Bishop, exposed after the f-pawn advances, would chase away the Black Knight if he tried to support the extra pawn with Nd5.)

Black should proceed more patiently with 1 ... Rc3, blockading the c-pawn and preparing to double, even triple, in the c-file. White can still put up a fight but he is clearly struggling in cramped conditions.

Hanging Pawns

Diagram 103



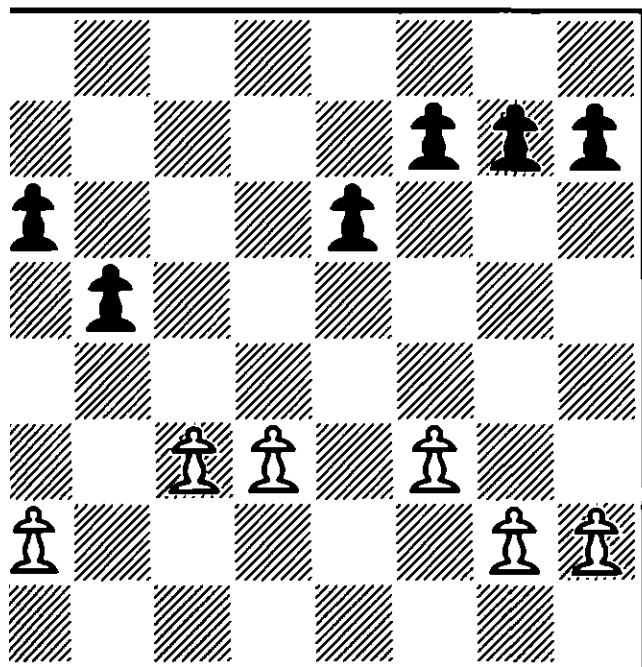
Hanging pawns appear in pairs and White has such a pair at c4 and d4.

The weakness of this configuration is that should White wish to advance either one an exchange initiated by Black will lead to an isolated pawn. 1 d5 exd5 2 cxd5 is one case and the same sort of thing happens when White pushes the other pawn first.

Notice, however, that the isolated pawn which emerges is also passed and so, should White find himself in a position where an isolated passed pawn is a strength rather than a weakness, then the hanging pawns themselves must be regarded as an advantage.

The symmetry in diagram 103 is not always the case and a slight rearrangement of the pawns gives diagram 104.

Diagram 104

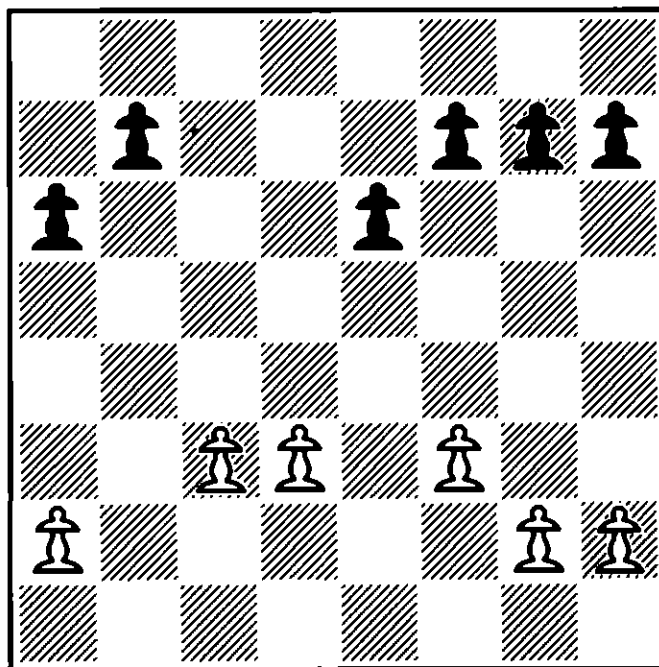


Again White's central pawns are hanging and whilst 1 c4 xc4 2 dxc4 gives all the possible strengths and weaknesses mentioned before, the alternative, 1 d4, gives rise to quite a different situation. Now the c-pawn is awkward and neither pawn has much hope of breaking away from that weak, immobile structure. The points c4 and d5 are strong posts for enemy pieces which could prove difficult to remove.

Of course, White did not have to play 1 d4, but he could have been forced to do so by his opponent by pressure on the f3 pawn in the half open file.

Another alteration to the pawn position gives diagram 105.

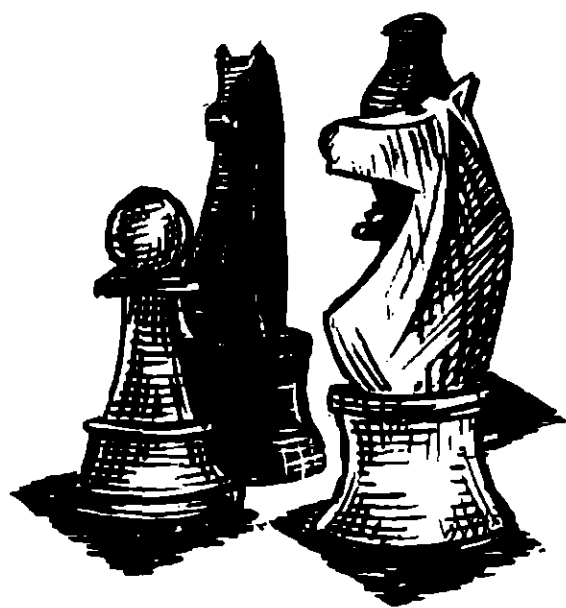
Diagram 105



Here the distance between the opposing pawn groups being greater, White appears to have more scope with his central pawns. None the less they are still hanging, for inherent in that pawn structure are the possibilities of isolation and backwardness whenever White chooses to advance them.

How to realise the strengths and exploit the weaknesses of hanging pawns will be left to a more suitable place.

THREE



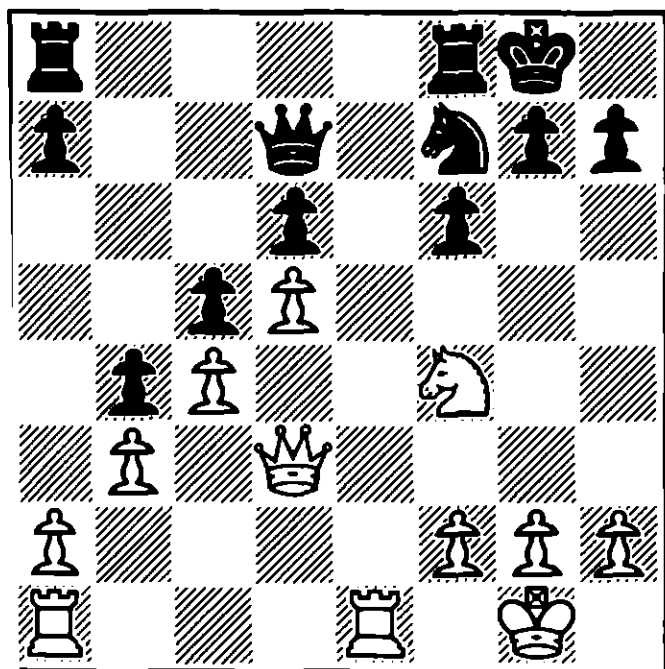
Pawns and Places

CHAPTER 9

Squares and pieces

The theme of this chapter has already been introduced when we were considering the square in front of the backward pawn, which proved to be a strong square for the opposition. A similar conclusion was made with regard to the blockading square in front of an isolated passed pawn. It is ideas such as these that are now developed.

Diagram 106



In diagram 106 the pawn situation is fluid on the kingside and largely fixed on the queenside. Look for good squares for White. Obvious ones are e6 and c6 and made so because they are controlled by the d-pawn, which is secure and

advanced and because Black has moved his f- and b-pawns so that they no longer watch e6 and c6.

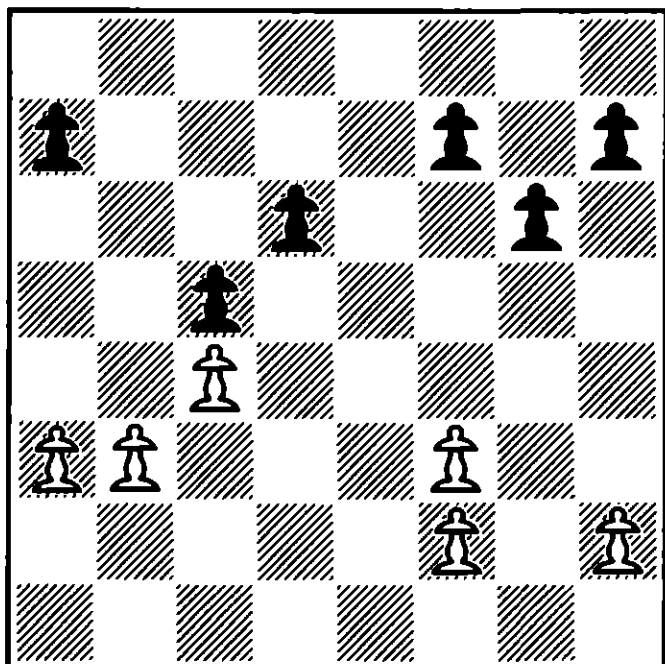
These weak squares in Black's territory make fine entry points for the White pieces. For example, 1 Ne6 (White would not at this stage choose to intrude with the Rook since it could be easily driven away by the opposing Knight) and the Knight assumes a powerful position, supported by a pawn, and gains influence over many squares in Black's half of the board. Such a piece in such a position is referred to as an outpost. It is true that under certain conditions it can be exchanged off, although prudent support by other pieces here the Rook on the open file ensures that a replacement is to hand. The important point is that it cannot be driven off by a pawn since Black has already committed his d and f pawns forward. Such squares as e6 are holes in the Black position, holes through which White pieces can pour. c6 is also a hole, but less useful, for White cannot occupy it with a piece.

There are vulnerable squares in the White position too, at d4 and c3, for instance, but not ones to be easily occupied. The square in front of the

White a-pawn is also a hole but again Black cannot use it and even if he could it is so far away from the field of activity in this game as to be irrelevant.

e5 seems to be a good square for Black at first glance but, once White has moved his Knight, f2 - f4 would quickly discourage Black from keeping a piece there.

Diagram 107



In diagram 107 again it is the pawn structure which affects the nature of the terrain and within it the points and lines of strength and weakness.

Looking for his own strong points, White would find:

- 1 d5, a strong square made so by the backward pawn at d6, and a fine outpost particularly for a Knight or Bishop.
- 2 f6 and h6 are strong squares provided White can occupy and maintain them with pieces, since no pawns are

available to support outposts. These points are different from d5, but holes in Black's game none the less, unless Black can plug them with pieces. A fianchettoed Bishop at g7 would go a long way to do this.

- 3 a6 is a good square for White because of the isolation of Black's a-pawn. Being at the edge of the board and away from the kingside (assuming Black has castled short) it is unlikely to be used in the middle game but could certainly have some endgame value.

Black would see as strong squares:

- 1 d4, and hope to occupy it with a piece, a beautiful central position. The square has all the virtues of White's d5.
- 2 f4, in front of White's isolated and doubled pawns and
- 3 h3 and h4 which serve as fine entry points because of the isolation of White's h-pawn.

Consider the next two diagrams and pick out the strong points for each side in the same way.

Diagram 108

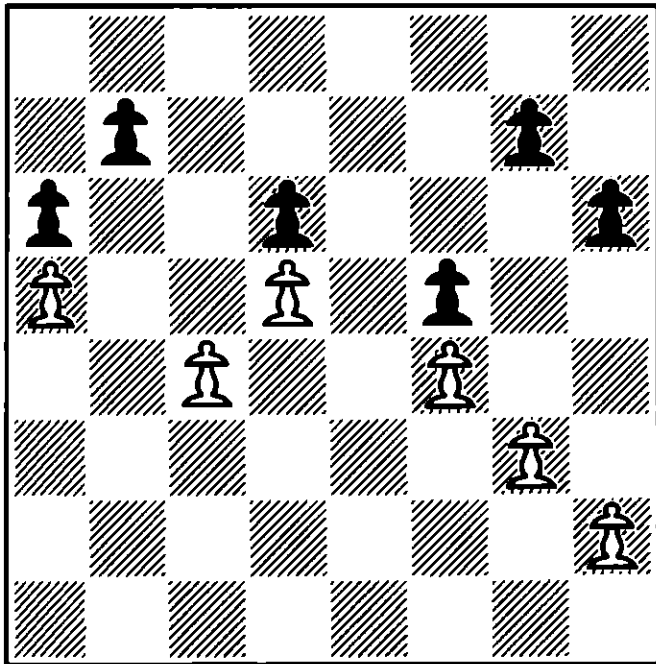
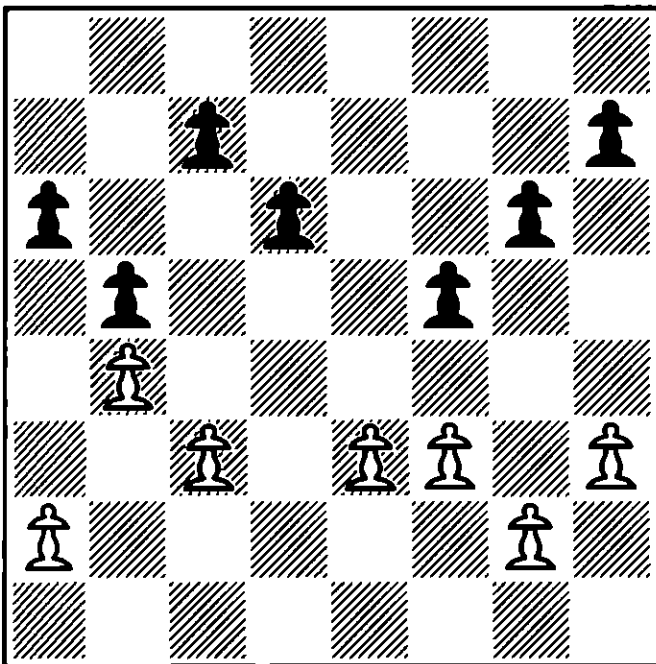


Diagram 109



SOLUTIONS

Diagram 108 Looked at from White's point of view e6 leaps to the eye, a beautiful outpost square in an open file. One would expect a Knight to alight there with access via d4 but not a Bishop since there is no clear way in. At a later stage

a Rook may be useful in such a spot in the sixth rank exerting pressure against the isolated d-pawn as well as controlling the file.

b6 is another useful square, depending for its importance on the area of main activity; for instance, its importance would decline if Black had castled on the other side. Both Knight and Bishop have easy access. A Rook would be well-placed there, exerting simultaneous pressure on the backward pawn at b7 and the isolated pawn at d6.

Black has an excellent square for an outpost at e4. c5 is also good, especially for a Knight. Notice how that piece could move between both strong points.

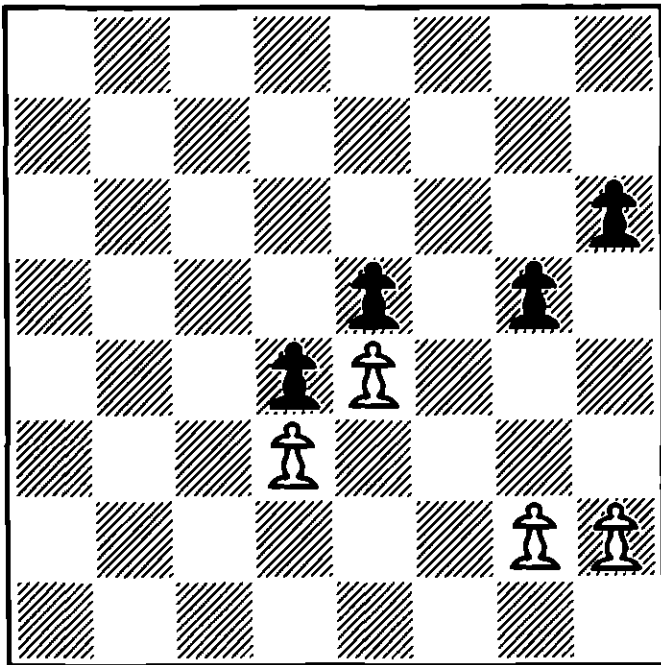
Diagram 109 White has no obviously good outpost squares. Technically a5 is one but is unlikely to be in the main area of activity though it may be useful in the ending. If White could plant a piece firmly on c6 with adequate support he could turn the square into a strong one and Black's c-pawn into a virtual backward one, but it would not be easy to support and Black would be constantly wary of anything landing there.

There is a good place for a Black outpost, in front of the backward pawn, at c4. e5, surprisingly, is also worth considering. A piece placed there could, admittedly, be driven away by White's f-pawn, but, should that happen, a new and real hole appears in White's game at e4 as well as a backward pawn at e3. g3 must also be noticed, for a Black

occupation of that square against a castled King could prove most fruitful.

We now consider a square as a strong point in four closely related positions and see how the total pawn structure and the pattern of open and closed lines in that area affect the prospects of its occupation. Take, for example, f5.

Diagram 110



In diagram 110 the f-file is open and could be contested by either side. In that file lies the important f5 square watched by White's e-pawn. Any White piece occupying that square could not be driven off by a pawn. It is a hole in the Black position and a piece alighting on it becomes an outpost in the opposing half of the board. It

would normally be sensible to occupy it with a Bishop or Knight, with access via g4 or g3, but in certain circumstances it would be suitable for a Rook, for a Rook could improve on the good work it was already doing in the open file by gaining rank power with pressure against Black's e-pawn.

Maintenance of an outpost is important for it is natural that the opponent will attack such a piece and here heavy support from major pieces would be available in the file as well as further pawn support by g4, should it be required. In this situation, when the outpost is in an open file, Black must be most careful in exchanging it, even if he is in a position to do so and anxious to be rid of the intruder, for White can choose to recapture with the e-pawn, so creating a passed pawn.

In diagram 111 Black has a backward pawn at f6 and it is in the square immediately in front of that White's strong point lies. The occupying piece is again likely to be Knight, Bishop or Rook for access is there for all three. The file is half open in White's favour and so support for the outpost offers little difficulty. However, should it be exchanged off by Black, retaking will not produce a passed pawn, in fact it would tend to weaken White's pawn structure.

Diagram 111

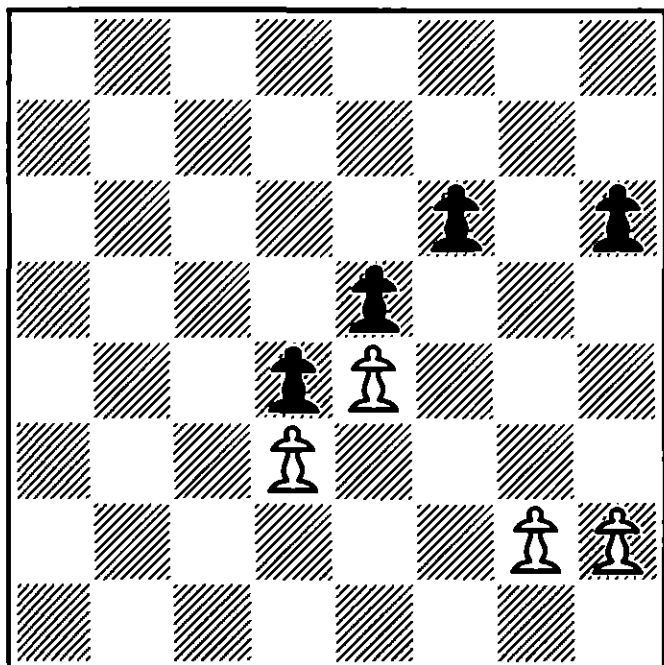
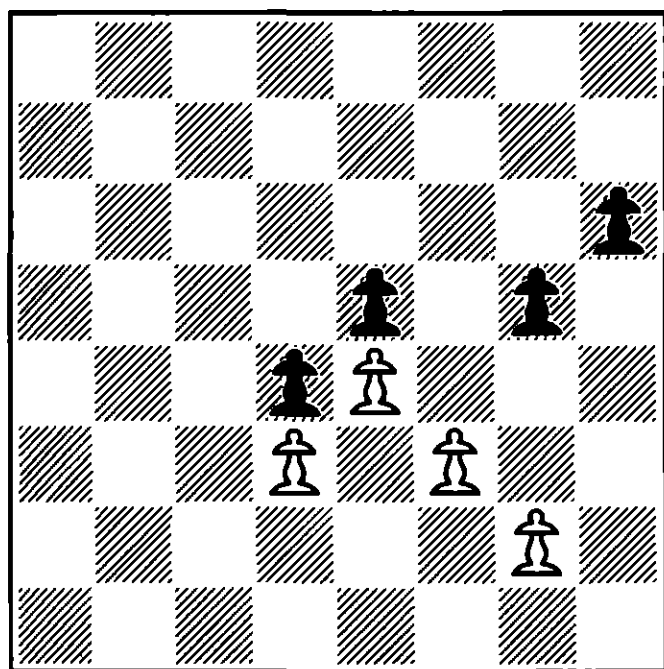
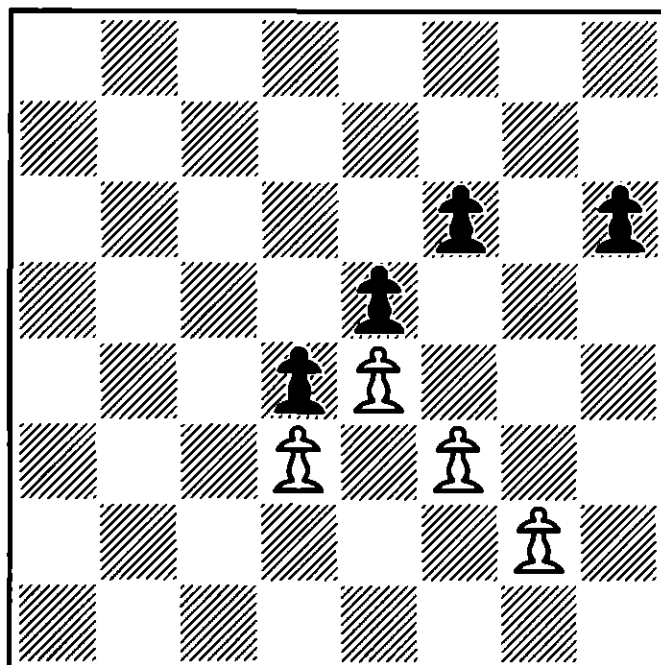


Diagram 112



In diagram 112 f5 is in a file half open to Black. Here White's problem, should he wish to use the square as an outpost, is one of access. It is most unlikely that either a Rook or Bishop could get there and so a Knight is the only practicable candidate. The post would be almost impossible to support with pieces, but pawn support is adequate with g2 -

Diagram 113



g4 as a reserve. It is clear, however, that f5 is not quite so favourable to White as an outpost in this case.

In diagram 113 the f-file is completely closed so that both support of and assault on an outpost at f5 is much more difficult. It could still prove a useful square for White in spite of the problems of access. Black has some compensation in the half open g-file which White could reduce by g2 g4.

The value to White of f5 in all these positions varies according to ease of access and maintenance, in other words open lines in the vicinity.

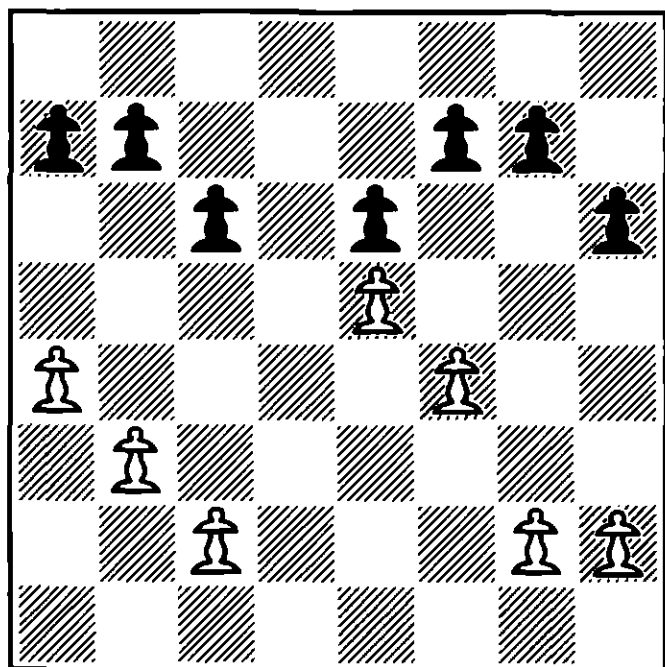
The better the lines of communication, the more effective the outpost will be.

The next group of puzzles are again pawn patterns but here you are invited to choose the most suitable piece for the needs and opportunities of the position. The first is an

example. Look for good places for White pieces, say Knight, Bishop and Rook, so that they could eventually take advantage of weak points in the opposing structure. A Knight would be useful at e4 or c4, ready for the immediate occupation of d6. The square is of easy access from almost anywhere on the board. Even a Knight at its original spot on b1 soon gets there via d2 and e4. The Bishop has little difficulty in occupying the post from say, c1, b2 or f2.

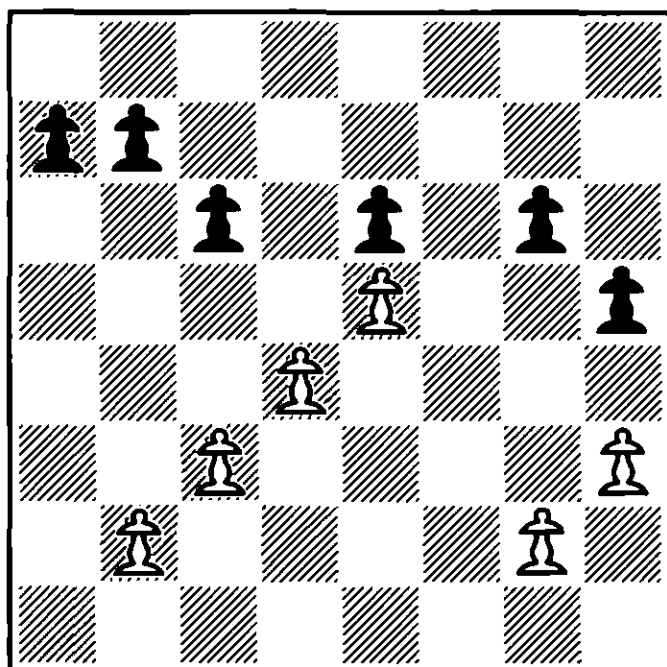
A Rook, situated anywhere along the first rank could quickly switch to d1, taking hold of the open file, to invade at d6 at an appropriate moment.

Diagram 114



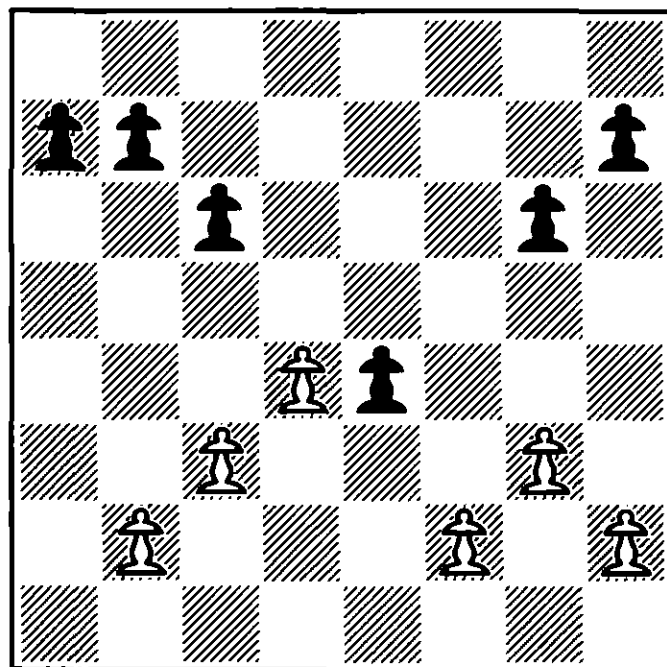
Now consider the other three positions in the same way.

Diagram 115



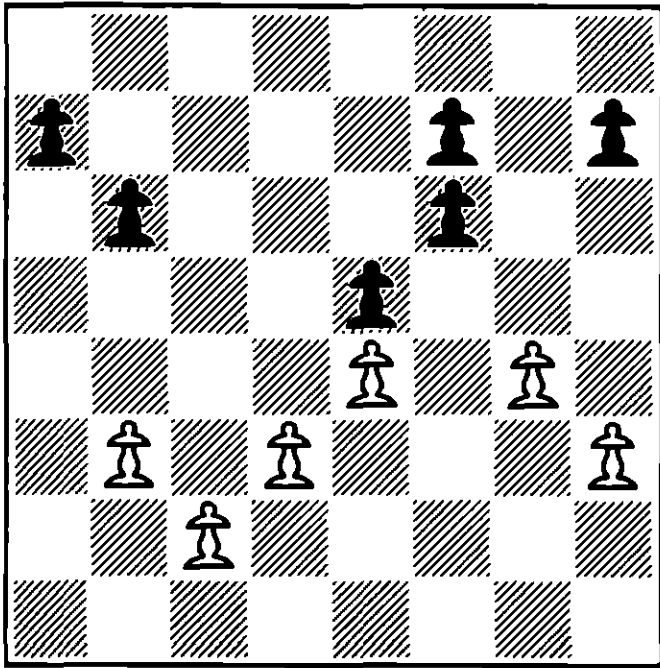
White to find suitable squares for Bishop, Knight and Rook

Diagram 116



Black to find suitable squares for Bishop, Knight and Rook

Diagram 117



Where would White wish to place Bishop, Knight and Rook?

SOLUTIONS

Diagram 115 Here there are two targets for White, d6 and f6, with the latter, since it lies in an open file, the more attractive, though only circumstances, the dispositions of all the forces, could make that a certainty. For a Knight access would be via e4, a well shielded square, so that even a remote Knight, say at a3, would have plenty of time to get there before Black could hope to close the route down: a3 b1 d2 e4.

A Bishop, probably lying initially on either of the diagonals c1 h6 and e1 h4, would easily find a way in to f6, but it is obviously unlikely that it would get to d6.

A Rook anywhere on the first rank would be ready to move into the open file.

Diagram 116 Two obviously weak squares in the White camp are d3 and f3. Another, though not under the eye of a Black pawn, is h3, which has lost its pawn guard and may be a vital spot if White has castled on that side. You will notice that there is no access route for a Knight from Black's side to d3 and only one to f3 g5 and even that can be closed up by h2 h4, and so Black will have to act quickly if he wants an outpost Knight.

A Bishop has more choice and would be best placed on e6 with quick entries to d3 via c4 and f3 via g4 as well as keeping an eye on h3. It is interesting to note that the Bishop as an outpost and the pawn prop give mutual support and here, because that prop at e4 is isolated and therefore weak, such support will doubtless be necessary. If the e-pawn is under immediate threat from White the Bishop may be needed at d5 or f5 to protect the pawn from behind, so that matters of tempo and initiative as well as access determine whether Black is able to establish a Bishop outpost in this position.

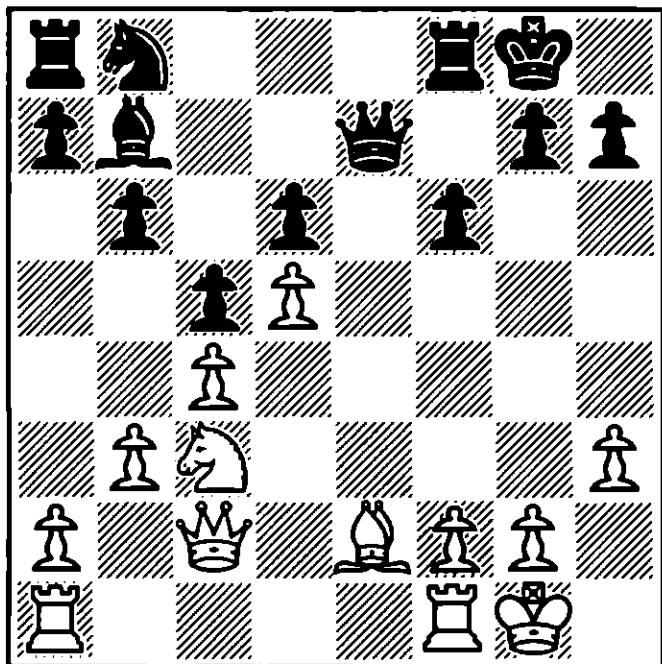
A Rook is best placed on the half open f-file and, should it be able to land on f3, this would give it entry to d3 as well.

Diagram 117 Black has at some time been forced to recapture on f6 with his g-pawn, leaving his position full of holes. Two obvious ones are d5 and f5, but h5 and h6 are also good squares for White. The best post for a Knight would be e3. Although d5 and f5 are light-coloured squares, a light-coloured bishop would be useless for it

would be locked behind its own pawns. A black-squared Bishop would be better, perhaps on d2, watching h6, or e1 with h4 and pressure against the backward pawn in mind. And the placement of a Rook is too obvious to mention, although don't forget that if things become closed on the kingside, the a-file is half open in White's favour.

It has been assumed in the foregoing that strong squares have appeared in areas of the board important to the particular position. Clearly such squares remote from the major area of activity are irrelevant, at least at the moment, though they may prove valuable later. It is the relative disposition of pieces which defines the vital area and we now look at positions with pieces on the board, the main actors, as it were, placed against the backcloth of the pawn structure.

Diagram 118



White's strong point at c6 is of little use at present since no piece is likely to

reach it. Black, similarly, has an excellent place at d4, equally unattainable. However, for White there is e6, well advanced on an open file with influence in the King's field, a fine target and one that Black must contest if he can.

We shall look at one possible line of play.

White first tries to post the Bishop at e6

1 Bg4 Bc8

Contesting the diagonal. Another line could be to let the White Bishop in whilst preparing to challenge with Na6 - c7.

2 Rae1

Naturally taking hold of the file for the Rook will also support any piece he manages to lodge at e6.

2 Qf7
3 Bxc8

Of course he could go 3 Be6 and replace it with the Rook after the forced exchange, but White would rather get his Knight there. 3 Re6 is refuted by 3 ... f5, but not 3 ... Bxe6 because of 4 Bxe6, pinning the Queen.

3 Rxc8
4 Ne2

The second candidate.

4 Na6

Black could keep out the Knight with 4 ... g5, but only at the cost of disturbing the kingside pawns and creating another weak square at f5 which

would prove at least as serious as the one at e6.

5 Nf4 Nc7

Again Black is ready to exchange off the invader.

6 Ne6 Nx6
7 Rx6

He could capture with the pawn, making it passed, but he is not quite ready for this. White must now be careful not to allow Black to change everything off for then his advantage would begin to disappear. It is sometimes best to delay occupying a post for this very reason. Black must now attend to the d-pawn and to protect it with a Rook would be to give up hope of contesting the open file. This gain of tempo is enough to enable White to convert his spatial advantage into a quick win.

7 Qd7
8 Rf6

What now? White threatens to take control of the seventh rank which gives Black no choice.

8 Re8
9 Qe4

Powerful play in the file around the pivot of action at e6.

9 Rx6

It is either this or leaving the file. A King is often useful in defending entry points in a file and should not be scorned but here ... Kf7, protecting the Rook as well as e7, is no good because the h-pawn is loose.

10 dxe6

Here 10 Qxe6 Qxe6 11 Rxe6 Rd8 12 Re7, would complete the invasion, but the text is an alternative which illustrates how the pawn protector of an outpost in an open file can, at the right moment, recapture and turn into a powerful passed pawn.

10 Qe8

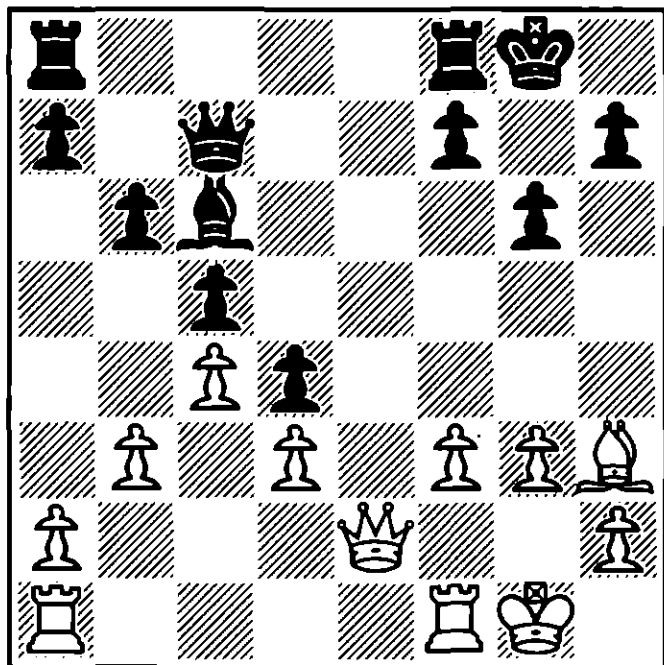
The Rook required protection.

11 Qd5,

and Black can resign. Notice that now the White d-pawn has captured, its blockader at d6 has become exposed and is in fact a backward pawn. Not only is the d-pawn threatened but there is a discovered check on the diagonal.

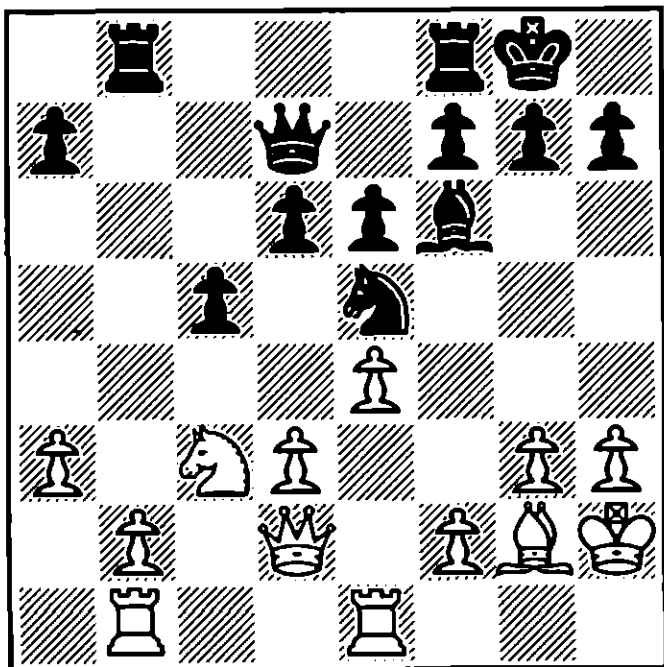
The following problems are not to be taken to this length. Find the best strong square, and say how to occupy it and how the opponent should contest it.

Diagram 119



Black to play

Diagram 120



Black to play

SOLUTIONS

Diagram 119 The target is in the open file at e3 and a Rook the candidate for the post.

1 Rae8

2 Qd2

The d-pawn will need protection.

2 Re3

Here the Rook exerts lateral pressure against the d- and f-pawns.

3 Bg2 Rfe8

With the threat of invading the seventh rank.

4 Rae1

There is clearly no alternative to contesting the file.

4 Qe7

White must now go in for exchanges or try 5 Kf2. After 5 Rxe3 Qxe3ch 6 Qxe3 Rxe3, he can no longer protect both pawns.

5 Kf2

Now some sort of balance is struck. Black would not go in for exchanges and White cannot since Black would recapture with the pawn, forking Queen and King. But the White force is now tied down to the defence of the weaknesses and Black can initiate a Kingside push with f5, etc.

Diagram 120 If you compare pawn structures it is clear that Black's is superior. His one weakness is the isolated a-pawn. White, on the other hand, has a permanent weakness at d4 and a hole at b3 which he will not find easy to plug. Black's Knight at e5 is not well-placed and he can improve its position with:

1

Nc6

Now both his Knight and Bishop have an eye on the outpost square at d4.

2 Ne2

This exposes his b-pawn on the long diagonal but otherwise Black can choose how he occupies d4.

2

Bd4

It is interesting to see how this centralised piece has influence on both wings: he attacks the f-pawn as well as still bearing down on b2.

3 Rf1

If he exchanges he has to contend with the Knight which may prove worse than the Bishop.

3

Rb3

Using the other hole to begin his invasion of the queenside. There is no need to take it any further for it is clear that Black has considerable advantage in space.

CHAPTER 10

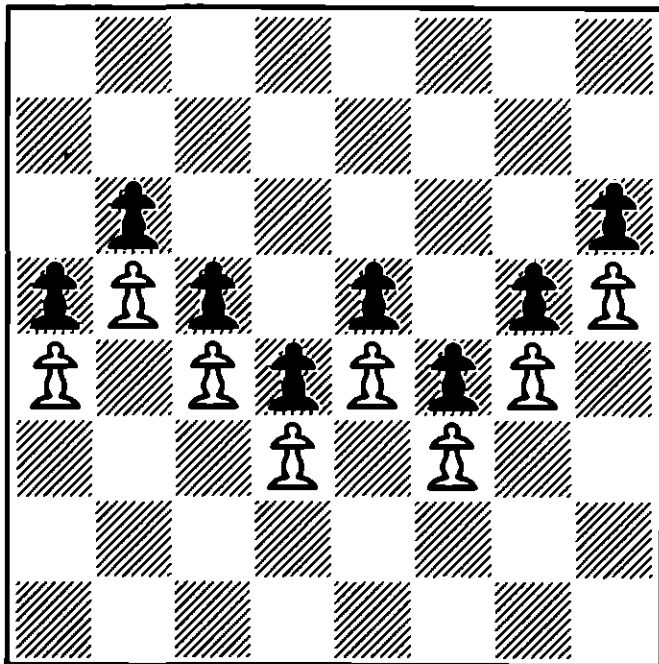
Pawn masses

We have seen that the presence of pawns on the board modifies space, enhancing or inhibiting the activity of the pieces. Pawns open and close lines, free one's pieces and restrain the enemy's, and create strong and weak points.

Now we look at pawns in the mass. They can be of two kinds, fixed or fluid and we shall think of them under these heads.

Fixed Pawns

Diagram 121



Look first at the highly improbable position of diagram

121. All the pawns are blockaded, immobile. The position each has achieved cannot be altered under its own volition. Only violence, sacrifice on the part of a piece, can create any possibility of further movement.

Each side possesses the same amount of space for his pieces to move about in on his own side of the barrier, but there is no hope of confrontation. Each has any number of strong points in the enemy half, without the faintest possibility of occupying even one of them, not even by a Knight, a piece which usually comes into its own in blocked positions. Blockaded pawns are obviously good for keeping the enemy out, but, when overdone, useless for penetrating opposing territory.

Parts of such a position are, however, likely to arise. Take a slice out of the middle of diagram 121 and we have the position of diagram 122.

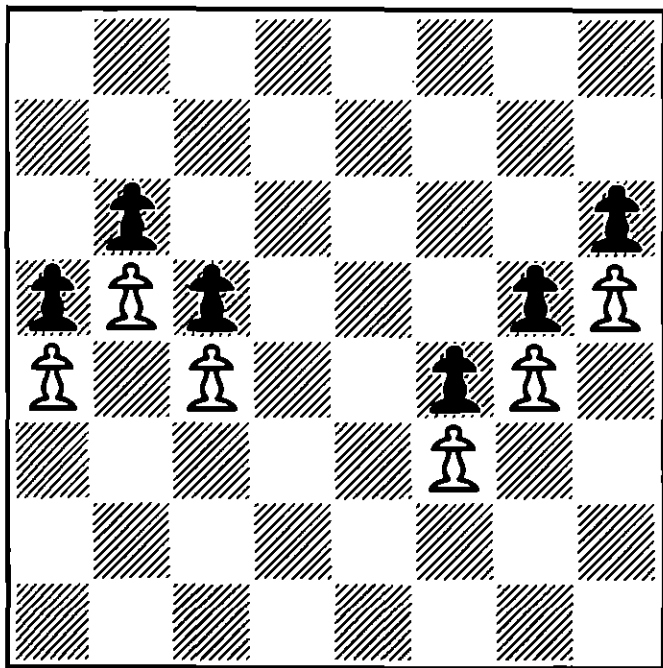


Diagram 122

Both islands of wing pawns are blockaded and this highlights the open area in the centre. From the point of view of penetration the central files are of vital importance, as are the diagonals a1 - h8, b1 - h7 and a8 - h1 in particular. Now some of the strong points become accessible, for example e3 for Black (a Rook or Bishop could get there) and d5 for White (available to any piece). Notice too the pawn chains and how they have become, or may become, vulnerable to flank attack. A White Rook on the sixth rank would attack both Black's base pawns at h6 and b6. White's base pawns at f3 and c4 would come under pressure not only from the flanks but along diagonals and a Black Knight posted at e5 would attack both simultaneously.

Rearrange the position again only a little and another feature of fixed pawns emerges.

In diagram 123 both sides have backward pawns, f3 and f6, both sides have strong squares, holes in the enemy game, easily accessible to minor pieces, at f4 and f5. Because the pawns are fixed these remain as permanent strengths and weaknesses. The pawns, of themselves, cannot alter the inherent features.

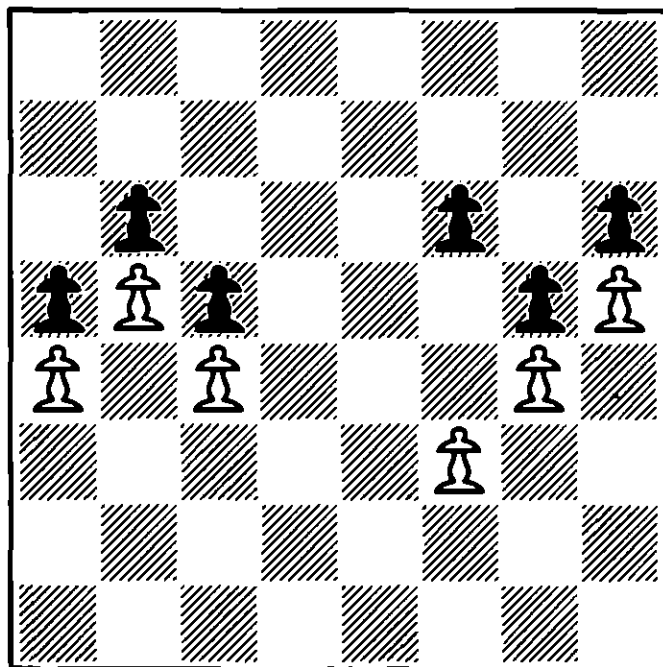
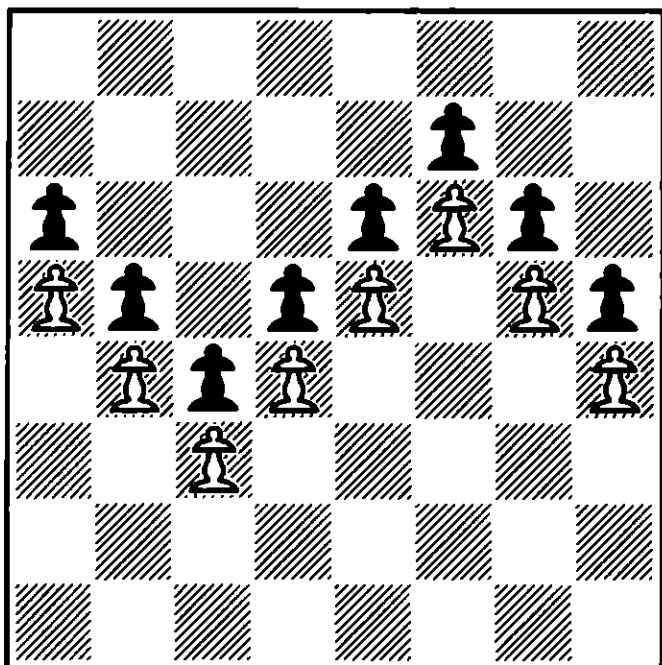


Diagram 123

The kingside pawns are not completely blocked since the f-pawns could advance under piece support but each side would ensure that such a move was made difficult for the other.

Another point about fixed pawns is brought out in another unlikely situation to be seen in diagram 124.

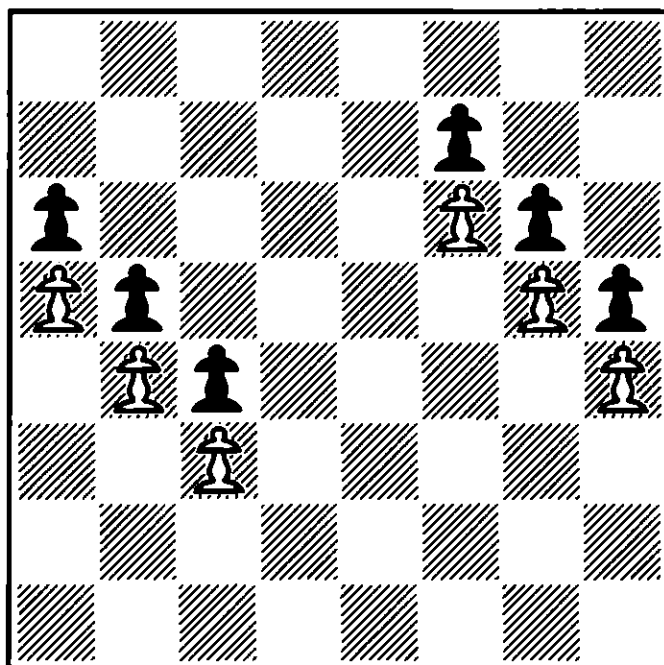
Diagram 124



Because his pawns are more advanced, White enjoys more space for his pieces behind the barrier. An important element in the ease of manoeuvre, or freedom, for pieces, is their ability to move between wings. White certainly has this but Black has his position almost cut in half, there being but one thin line of communication between the queenside and the kingside. How important this is would rapidly become only too clear if he had castled short and found his King under pressure. The cause of the trouble is, of course, the spearhead of White's pawn formation at f6. In less extravagant guise this is a very common situation.

The position doesn't have to be so extreme to have the same effects. Alter it a little to produce diagram 125, quite a possible one in a normal game.

Diagram 125



The White wedge, the pawn chain h4 f6, drives into the Black position, cutting off a castled King from central and queenside support.

When there are large areas of blocked pawns, as in the positions we have been considering, the lines of communication are themselves fixed and success will lie in meeting force with greater force along lines clear to both sides. There are unlikely to be ambushes, new lines opening and springing surprises, and preparations take place under the full gaze of the enemy. The pawn structure imposes itself on the very style of the game.

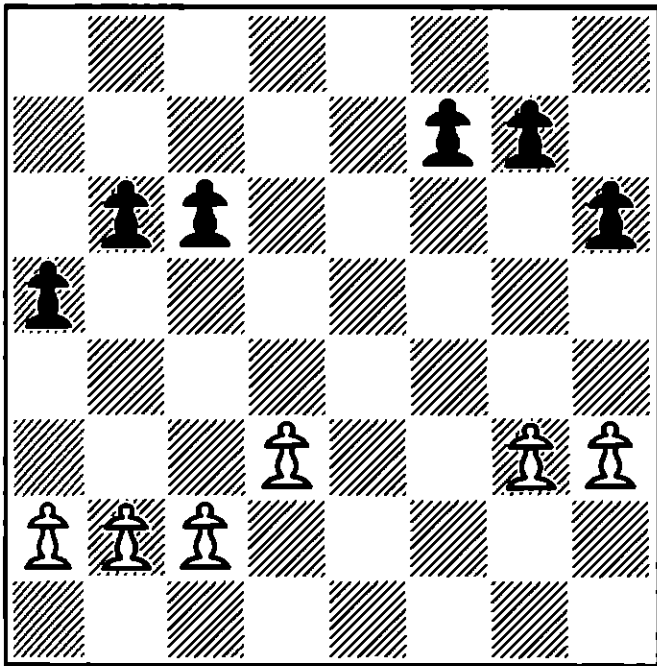
Fluid, or Mobile Pawn Masses

In diagram 126 each group of pawns is fluid. The potential for change in both the Black and White position on either the queenside or the kingside, remains. New diagonals can be opened, pawns exchanged and open files created, more

terrain controlled, more space made behind the pawns for the use of the pieces, and more constriction applied to the opposing force. Not only are the pawns mobile: the whole position is fluid, constantly on the brink of change. Weak points can be eliminated, strong points lost whilst new ones appear. Mobile pawns confer on the game a permanent state of flux.

Much can be learned by studying positions without the complication of pieces on the board. In diagram 126 we will consider what advantages each side holds as a consequence of the pawn structure.

Diagram 126



Each side has a pawn majority: Black on the kingside, White on the other wing. If both sides have castled on the kingside, White has the advantage of the queenside majority.

Again, if they have both castled short, Black has the better defended King's

position, a three-pawn barrier as opposed to White's two pawns which have both been advanced and expose the King on the a7 g1 and a8 h1 diagonals.

Each side has a half open file for his own use: Black the d-file, White the f-file. The fully opened e-file is one which both will dispute.

As far as individual squares are concerned neither side has a square in enemy territory controlled by a pawn, that is, an outpost position. But the fact that pawn advances have been made means that squares have been left behind undefended by pawns. These can be controlled or occupied by opposing pieces. In the Black position such a one is d6. It is remote from the White lines and should White place a piece there it would not be easy to support. Any supporting piece, a Knight at e4, for instance, could easily be driven off, but Black must still keep a watchful eye on it.

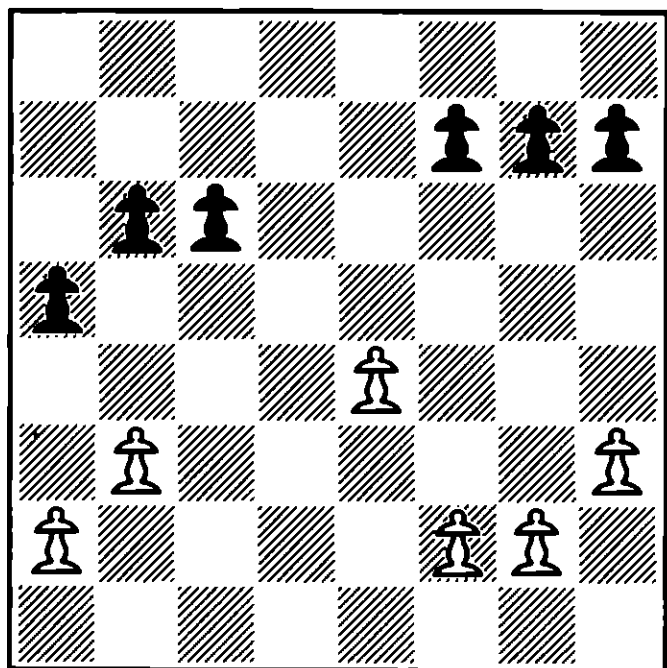
A similar potential weakness in White's position is at f3, though again a Black piece there is not easily defended. A more important square is e3. It is not defended by a pawn and although a piece there could not be made the solid outpost that a Black pawn at d4 would create, it is on an open file and could well be supported by file pieces. Therefore e3 is a strong square for Black, a useful target and one which must be a constant source of anxiety for White.

It is probable, from the pawn structure, that Black has castled on the kingside and White on the queenside. If this

is so each side is poised for, and has already begun, a pawn assault against the opposing King.

In the event of an endgame the creation of a passed pawn becomes paramount. Care must be taken in the way that majorities are converted with the proper sequence of pawn moves so as to avoid pawn weaknesses, especially backward pawns. Both sides will have to remember the rule that it is the candidate (the passed pawn candidate, that is) which moves first and never falls behind its neighbours.

Diagram 127



Examine the position of diagram 127 and analyse it in the same way. Compare your thinking with the comments.

To help you frame your thinking here are some questions to answer.

- 1 On which side have the players most likely castled?

- 2 What use can be made of open and semi-open files?
- 3 Which diagonals will White wish to use?
- 4 What useful diagonals are already open for Black and are there any others he would like to open?
- 5 Identify good entry squares for both sides.
- 6 Are there any outpost squares?

Comments

- 1 They have most likely castled on the kingside.
- 2 White can use the half open c-file to put pressure on the unsupported pawn at c6. Black can use the e-file to attack White's e-pawn and restrain it from advancing, but in the file he has e6 which his Rooks can use to enter his third rank, not only supporting the queenside, but switching to the kingside in front of his own pawns for an assault against the White King.

The open d-file will be keenly contested by both sides.

- 3 One fine diagonal stands out sharply: a1 h8, and one would hope that White has retained his dark-squared Bishop in order to take advantage of it.

b1 h7 could prove useful for a Queen and Bishop battery, unmasked as the e-pawn moves forward. a3 f8 is also worth noting, for a Bishop at a3 would drive out a Rook from the protection of f7, always a sensitive spot in the Black King's domain, as well as keeping a watchful eye on the potentially strong d6.

4 c8 h3 is good for the Queen and Bishop. The White pawn at h3 is a useful target and piece sacrifices such as ... Bxh3 or ... Nxxh3 are not of uncommon occurrence.

b8 h2 is an attractive line again for Queen and Bishop, with the Queen at the head, and the long light diagonal would come into its own after pawn clearances.

There are other diagonals, of course, for both sides.

5 d6 must be regarded as a good entry point for White. It cannot be defended by a Black pawn and should White win the contest for the d-file, d6 would become a very powerful square for White. There is also the possibility that he could establish his e-pawn at e5, turning d6 into a genuine outpost.

f5 is interesting and is dealt with under question 6.

Should Black win the open d-file competition then d4, d3 and d2 would all become good entry points for him. d4 could be made a solid outpost with the support from a pawn at c5.

6 Some of this has already been answered in question 5. Look at f5 from White's point of view. Supposing he placed a Knight there, well protected by the e-pawn but vulnerable from attack by ... g6 ... or is it? ... g6 would weaken Black in three ways: it would create weak squares at f6 and h6 and open the long dark diagonal which could quickly

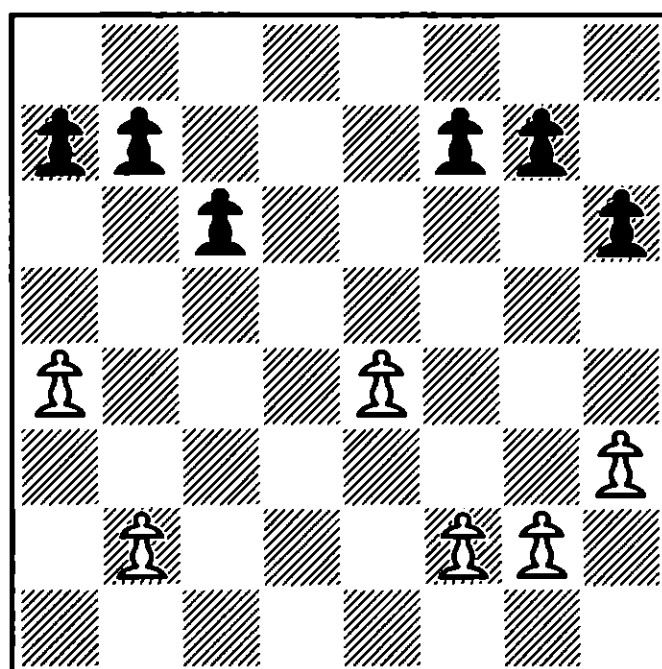
prove fatal. Consequently, f5 could serve as a good post for a Knight until Black became really desperate.

Look at f4 from Black's point of view, similar arguments apply. It is true that a Black Knight at f4 would be without pawn protection and would need pieces for survival, but White would be even more reluctant to drive it away with his g-pawn for his h-pawn would then be extremely feeble.

The following games illustrate some of the ideas about fixed and fluid pawns we have dealt with so far in this chapter, and introduce some new ones.

Diagram 128

Horowitz



Reshevsky

U.S. Championship, 1941

Diagram 128 shows the pawn structure which faced the players in the middle game. Each has two islands of pawns

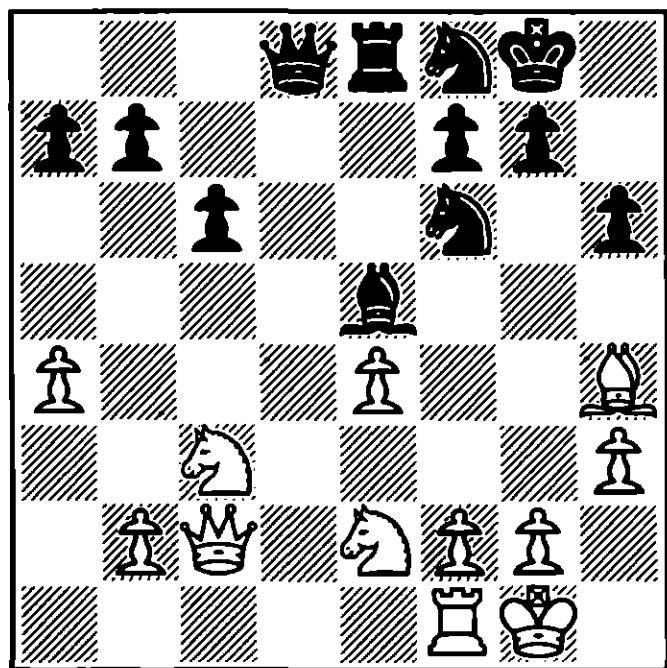
and each a majority, White's on the kingside, Black's on the other. All pawn groups are fluid. The d-file is open, the e and c-files half open.

As far as squares are concerned, f5 is a good one for White. It would be suitable for a Knight which would act as an outpost, for the only way to drive it off with a pawn would be ... g6, and this would badly weaken the kingside pawns. d6, in the open file, by-passed by the c-pawn, could even become a solid outpost for a minor piece should White be able to play e4 e5.

Black too has good entry squares on the d-file and a build up there combined with an advance of his queenside majority is an attractive plan.

All this, of course, will depend on the disposition of other forces and we will now look at the whole position.

Diagram 129



Watch White's kingside pawns. The fact that pawns are not blocked doesn't mean that

they are automatically going to rush forward, but in this game there is a special quality in their mobility. After due preparation they advance on a broad front, scattering all before them, until they finally smash through the enemy lines. Such an action is known as a pawn roller. It is a formidable and dynamic weapon which seems to grow in destructive power the further it advances. It is to introduce this new feature of mobile pawns that the example has been chosen, but other elements are there too: play in the files and concentration on strong points, blended into a successful attack.

It is White to play and it is the exposure of the Black Bishop and weakness of the pinned Knight that gives White's pawn roller its momentum.

1 f4 Bd4ch

He must remove the attacked piece with tempo, otherwise 2 e5 follows.

2 Nxd4 Qxd4ch
3 Bf2

This interposition not only prevents loss of tempo but switches the Bishop to another part of the board. Black has had to give up his own Bishop and will be weak on the dark squares, Reshevsky sees the entry point at d6, as we identified it in the pawn diagram, and begins to steer for it.

3 Qb4

Black probably sensed a looseness about the White pawns

which he felt he could take some advantage of, and it is true that the pawns at a4, b2, e4 and f4, although not isolated, are rather on their own at the moment and ought to be put under pressure. However, the dynamic strength of White's position is greater than any temporary static weakness.

4 e5

The attack on the Knight enables him to ignore the loose pawn at f4.

4 Nd5

A good response since it not only brings pressure on the f-pawn, but occupies an outpost in the open file and encourages the exchange of White's remaining Knight which, Black can see, is intended for d6.

5 Ne4!

Resisting the exchange and indirectly protecting the f-pawn. If now 5 ... Nxf4? then 6 Bc5, winning a piece.

5 Ne6

Once again the f-pawn is attacked and must now be properly protected.

6 g3

White's advanced pawns could leave the King unprotected, but in this position there is plenty of space around the middle of White's half of the board to allow him to manoeuvre with ease and bring them to the defence of the King if need be. None the less, there is always the danger that the enemy can infiltrate his pieces behind

the advancing pawns and this Black now attempts.

6 Nd4
7 Qd3

The double attack on the Knight allows him to leave the b-pawn for the moment.

7 Nf5

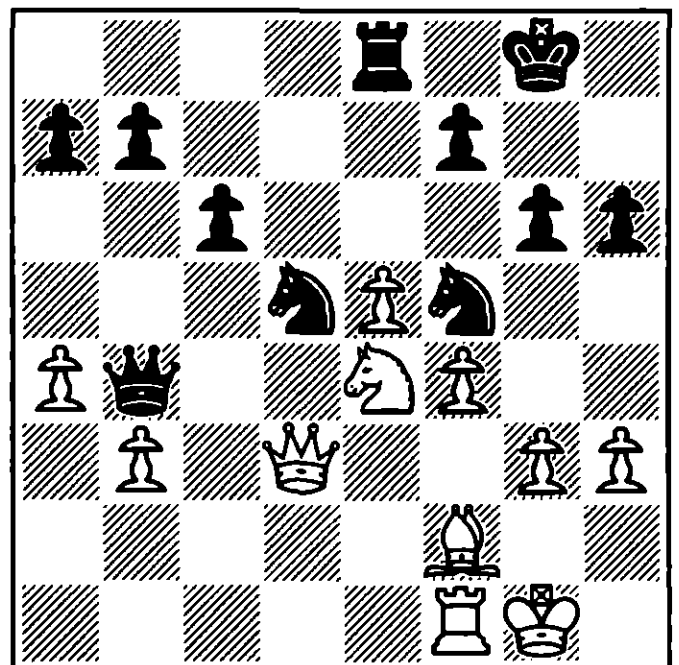
Trying to prevent the invasion of d6 but it cannot last for long.

8 b3

Securing his queenside first. Pawns were indeed loose. He has tightened them all up now and gathered himself together, as it were, for the next push.

8 g6

Diagram 130



The Knight required support because White was threatening 9 Nf6ch! a common method of breaking up the kingside pawns. Now f6 is weakened but Black at

least has the well-posted Knight at d5 to cover it.

9 Bc5

See the note to move 3. When White played Bf2 he certainly intended posting the Bishop eventually at d6, but he did not calculate all the possibilities that might intervene. It would have been impossible to do so. Instead he used his positional judgement which told him that at some future date there was an excellent chance of the Bishop finding itself at that desirable spot. This then is the value of having at one's finger-tips the elements of positional play. It enables you to make general judgements, to look into the future without exact calculation, to sense the needs and detect the opportunities inherent in the position.

9 Qa5
10 g4

The roller begins to move again, dislodging vital defenders.

10 Ng7
11 Bd6

The hole is occupied. The mutual support between the Bishop and the e-pawn means that the f-pawn is freed to advance again.

11 Qb6ch
12 Kh1 a5

Here and later the attempt to reduce the force of the attack by exchanges with 11 ... Qe3 fails because of 12 Nf6ch! Kh8 (the Knight cannot capture)

13 Qxe3 Nxe3 14 Rf3 and Black will lose material.

13 f5 gxf5

Leaving White to exchange pawns would not help since White threatens 14 fxg6 fxg6 15 Nf6ch Nxf6 16 exf6 with f7 to follow.

14 gxf5 Kh8

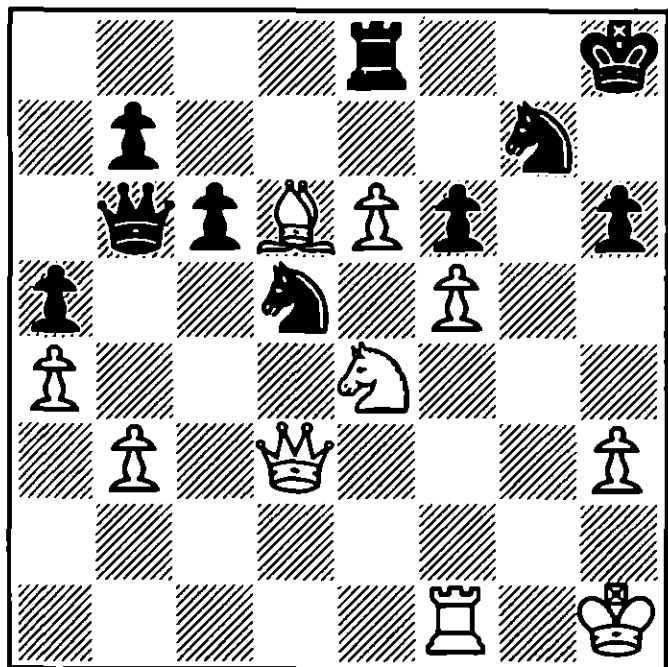
Now that the g-file is open the King moves away.

15 e6!

Although one pawn has gone the dynamic strength of the roller remains. Now 15 ... fxe6 would allow the f-pawn to rush on, f6 f7, winning material.

15 f6

The best way to stop a pawn roller is to blockade the pawns with your own. Black succeeds on the f-file but, of course, it is too late. White has a supported passed pawn at e6 and the kingside pawns are smashed. The roller has already done its work.



16 Bc5

Threatening to replace his Bishop by a Knight at d6, e.g. 16 ... Qd8 17 Nd6 threatening the Rook as well as Nf7ch.

16 Qa6
17 Qf3 Rg8

Black's solid Knight at d5 effectively blocks the d-file and so the g-file becomes important. Black's kingside is so broken and his major piece so cut off from its defence, there is little left for Black.

18 Rg1 Ne8

Hoping for relief in exchanges.

19 Qh5 Rxg1ch
20 Kxg1 Ng7

The h-pawn could not be protected.

21 Qxh6ch Kg8

White could win in a number of ways but he now found:

and Black resigned.

If 22 ... Kxf8 23 Qh8ch Ke7 24 Qxg7ch and mate follows shortly.

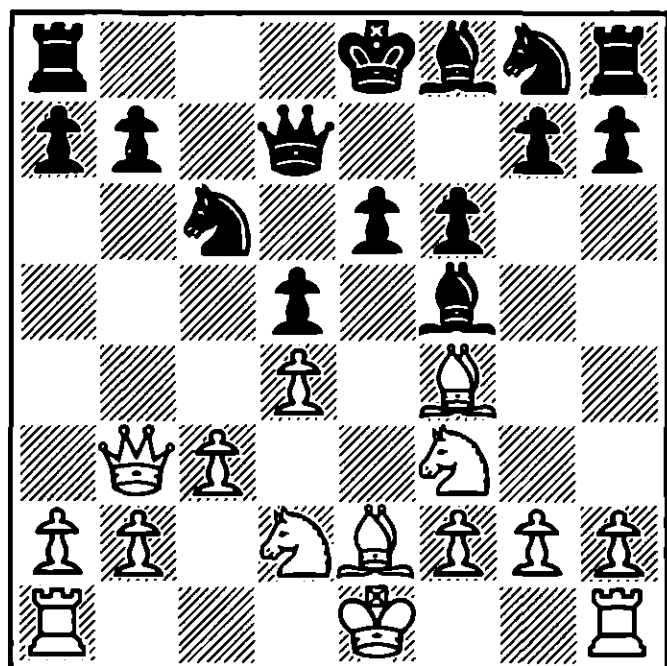
If 22 ... Qa7ch 23 Kh1 b6 24 e7 shuts out the Queen, protects the Bishop and leaves Black helpless.

This is an excellent illustration of the power of a pawn roller. It drives away the defending pieces and because of the speed and breadth of its operation, it denies them good alternative squares. Hence, the enemy forces find themselves not only dislodged but disorganised. The roller gains space for its possessor whilst reducing his opponent's and so the defending force, cramped and disorganised, loses cohesion and flexibility and renders him ever more prone to error. In the space behind the advancing pawns friendly forces enjoy ease of movement and so find sound bases from which to support the roller and thrust it like a battering ram in the final assault against the enemy pawns, making the vital breach in that last line of defence for the pieces behind to pour through.

The next example is, appropriately, from a game by Nimzowitsch, for the dynamics of the pawn roller played an important part in his concept of the game.

Diagram 132

Nimzowitsch



Spielmann

Carlsbad, 1923

The situation in diagram 132 occurred when the game was hardly out of the opening. Black rapidly pushes his mobile pawns in a wing attack against White's kingside. Embarking on a wing attack with pawns so early in the game can be hazardous, but Black judges that his pawn preponderance in the centre will shield his own King. White's Knight and Bishop on the f-file are useful targets and attacking them will provide tempi and impart momentum to the pawn roller.

1 g5
2 Bg3 h5

The threat against the Bishop forces White to make a flight-square,

3 h3,

which weakens his pawn

formation.

3

Nge7

The pawn roller pauses for further piece development.

4 0 0?

Castling into the coming storm must surely be an error. White probably reasoned that Black intended castling on the queenside which would give White some attacking chances and Spielmann was not the sort of player to look for a defence where an attack was possible.

4

Bh6

Again he moves with tempo for he now threatens g4 hitting one Knight and winning the other.

5 Ne1

The same feature we saw in the previous game appears: the retreat of defenders which then get in each other's way.

5

g4

Hitting the target created by 3 h3.

6 Qd1

Protecting the Knight and attacking the g-pawn but Black's reply wins a pawn.

6 Bxd2
7 Qxd2 gxh3
8 Nd3 b6

White is not even to be allowed a little excursion to c5.

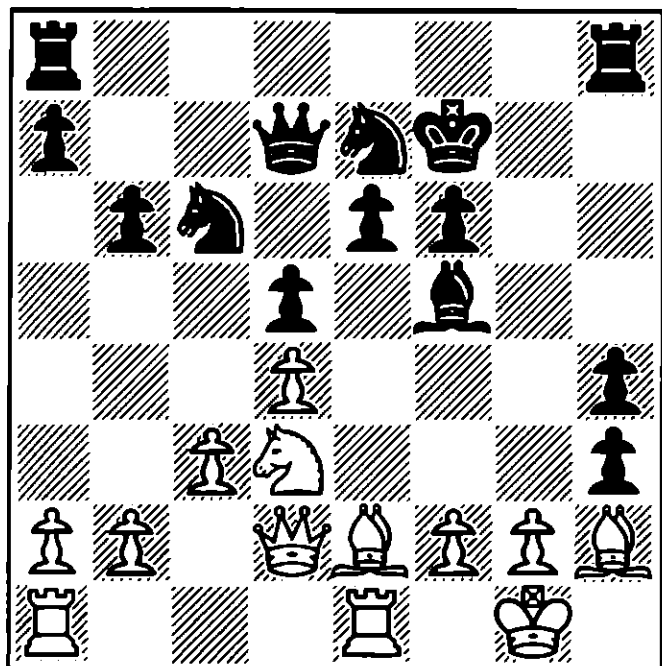
9 Rfe1

h4

The pawns rumble forward again and the bishop retreats.

10 Bh2 Kf7!

Diagram 133



Don't look at the next comment until you have tried to find out why 10 ... 0 0 0 would be so wrong that it would lose immediately.

White would answer 11 Nc5! winning the Black Queen for, if it seeks safety on e8, 12 Ba6 is mate and if 11 ... bxc5 12 Ba6ch forcing Black to interpose.

In any case the Black King is better at f7 supporting the centre.

11 g4

Trying to erect a road block on the g-file.

11 hxg4 e.p.
12 Bxg3 h2ch
13 Kg2

Taking the pawn would only

mean that both the side files would be completely open. White desperately needs shelter and sometimes even enemy pawns can provide it.

13 Be4ch
14 Bf3 Nf5

The reinforcements pour in, for White has no way of keeping them out.

15 Bxe4 dxe4
16 Nf4

Not 16 Rxe4 because of 16 Qd5, pinning.

16 e5

White's d-pawn is pinned.

17 Ne2

Defenders are again thrown back in typical disarray.

17 Nh4ch
18 Bxh4

The King cannot take the pawn because of the Knight fork and to move elsewhere would be to allow the Queen in at h3.

18 Qg4ch,

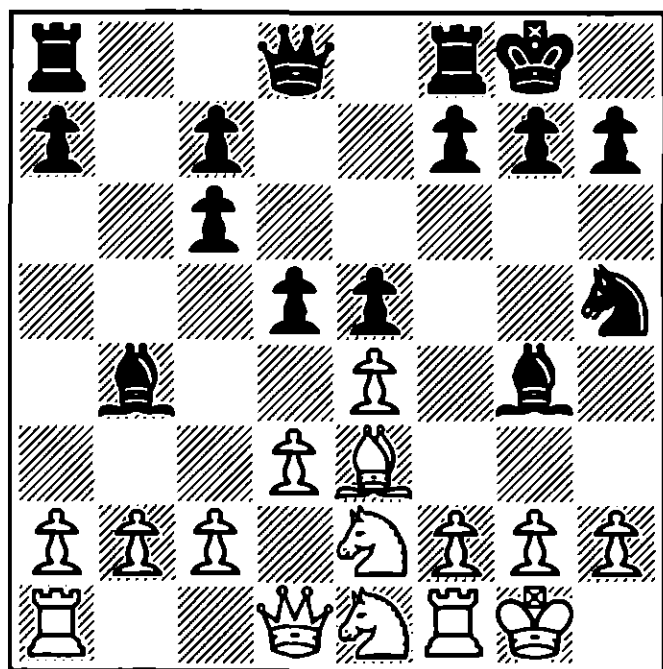
and mate follows however White replies.

19 Bg3 Qf3ch 20 Kf1
h1=Qch, etc.
19 Kxh2 Rxh4 mate.
19 Kf1 h1=Qch, etc.
19 Ng3 Qf3ch 20 Kh3
Rxh4ch 21 Kxh4 Rh8ch, etc.

Initiative was important here and was provided by pawn attacks on exposed minor pieces.

Diagram 134

Marshall



Rubinstein

Lodz, 1908

Probably the first thing you will notice about this position is that all the pawns are still on the board and almost all are able to move. White's pawns are all connected but at some time Black has had to recapture on c6 and so he has a pair of doubled pawns and an isolated one at a7. He has compensation in the use of the half open b-file. As for the rest of the files none is open and so the Rooks will have to seek freedom by means of pawn exchanges at some stage.

Black has just played ... d5, creating tension in the centre, for White will not know whether to expect ... dxe4 or ... d4 or indeed whether it would be better to exchange himself on d5, a move he would be reluctant to make since it would give Black two pawns to one in the centre as well as undoubling his c-pawns.

Black's minor pieces, though advanced, are not aggressively placed; in fact they look loose and invite pawn attacks. It is this that prompts Rubinstein to set his pawns in motion, for the attack will be sharpened by the gains in tempo.

1 f3	Be6
2 g4	Nf6
3 Ng3	

A pause to bring his troops in behind the pawns.

3	d4?
---	-----

An instructive error. The move fixes the four pawns in the centre which is good for White for it means that he will be able to continue his attack on the kingside untroubled by counter thrusts in the middle. Black considers that his queenside action on the b-file assisted by two Bishops bearing down on that side - which is why he does not exchange a Bishop on his next move will give him a share of the play. In the event he achieves some counter-play, but it is slow and far less incisive than White's attack.

4 Bd2	Be7
5 Ng2	Rb8
6 b3	c5
7 Nf5	Bxf5

One of the Bishops must go and in any case he cannot afford to let the Knight remain in such a powerful position.

8 gxf5

Half opening the g-file and keeping the centre solid.

8	Rb6
---	-----

Preparing to double and choosing the third rank for it is clear and offers the possibility of a switch to the other wing.

9 Rf2 Qd7
10 Qe2 Rfb8
11 f4

After preparations the pawns begin to roll again. This thrust not only chips away at Black's defences but clears lines for White pieces: a diagonal for the Queen, a file for the Rook and a new line for the Bishop after the exchange of pawns. Good value for one move.

11 exf4

11 ... Bd6 may have been better but Black probably thought that it was pointless trying to prop up the crumbling kingside and that it was more active to create a diversion on the queenside.

12 Bxf4 c4

Temporarily giving up a pawn.

13 bxc4

White captures this way to ensure that Black's activities are confined to the queenside and no chances appear on the d-file to spoil his own plans.

13 Rb1ch
14 Rxb1 Rxb1ch
15 Rf1 Rb2

Naturally he declines the second exchange for otherwise his queenside ambitions fizzle out: 15 ... Rxf1ch 16 Qxf1 Qa4 17 Qb1! and it is White

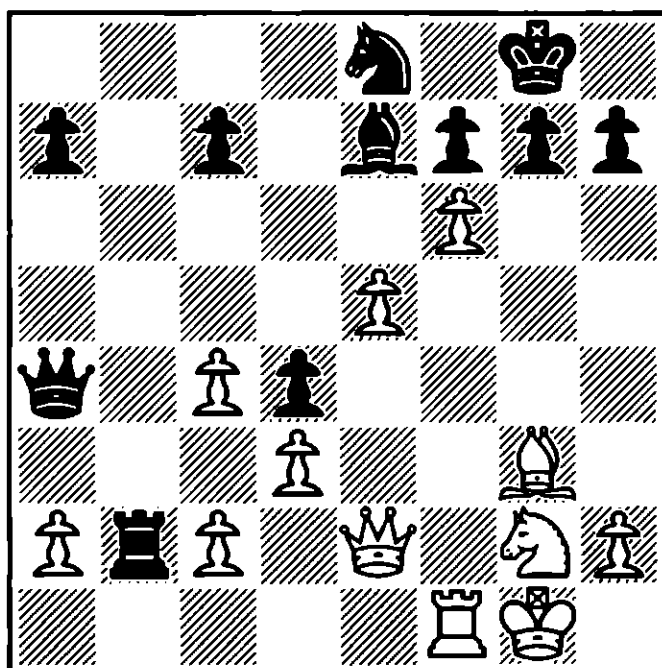
who secures the open b-file with an easily won ending.

16 e5

The pawns roll on again and with this move and his 18th strikes at the same two pieces as he did at the beginning of the attack.

16 Ne8
17 Bg3 Qa4
18 f6!

Diagram 135



18 Bf8

Unfortunately necessary. If 18 ... gxf6 then 19 Bh4! pinning the pawn with exf6 to follow. Nor was there any joy in 18 ... Rxc2 19 Qg4 Qxa2 20 Nf4 because in spite of collecting two pawns and occupying the seventh rank, White's King is secure and Black's on the point of collapse.

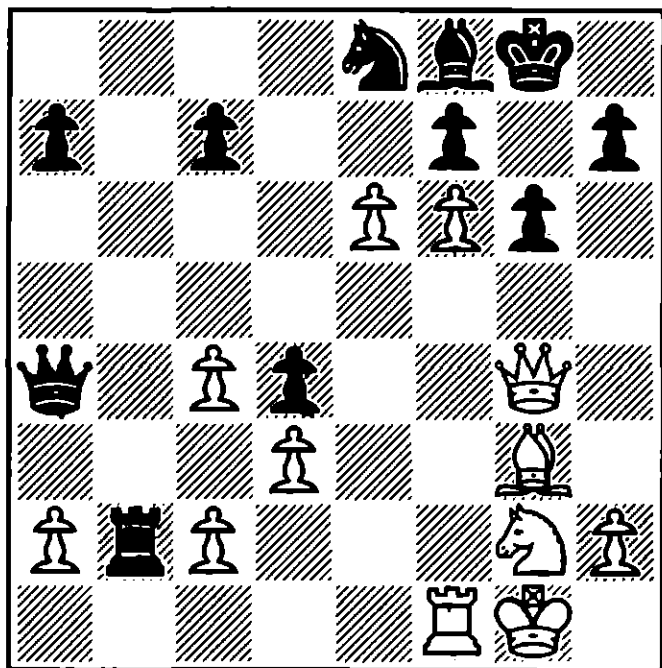
19 Qg4 g6

Black could have captured the c-pawn with his Queen since the Bishop was safe but it would have been to little purpose: 19 ... Qxc2 20 Nf4 and mate is prevented. If then 20 ... Qa4 (White was threatening Qc8 or Qd7) 21 e6! Nxf6 22 exf7ch Kh8 (to recapture would allow a mate by Qe6) 23 Qh4 (threatening Ng6 mate) h6 24 Ng6ch, etc.

20 e6!

The final assault and breakthrough. The pawns have done their work, broken open the King's castle and now it is up to the pieces to finish the task.

Diagram 136



20

Rxc2

Most players would enjoy playing White's game now whatever Black does and so there is no need for exhaustive analysis. One example will suffice: if 20 ... fxe6 then 21 f7ch wins lots of material.

21 Ne1

A little regrouping with tempo.

21	Rxa2
22 exf7ch	Kxf7
23 Nf3	Nxf6
24 Ng5ch	Kg7

24 Ke7 allows mate in two.

25 Rxf6

Rounding off the attack neatly.

25	Kxf6
26 Qf4ch	Ke7
27 Qf7ch	Kd8
28 Ne6ch,	

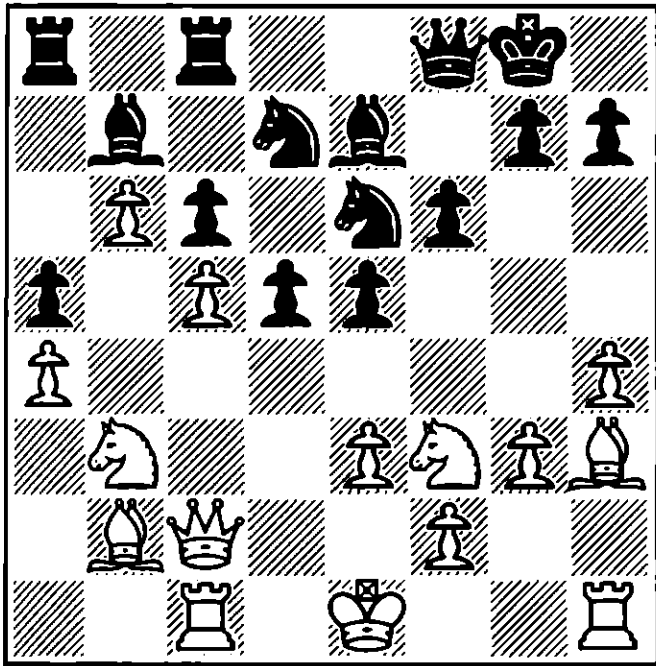
and Black resigned just in time to save the mate next move.

In this game White's pawns were activated with tempo, driving back the enemy pieces and leaving them uncoordinated and vulnerable, whilst behind the moving pawns the strength of the White forces expanded, pushing on the roller, imparting a momentum sufficient to break down the defences of the opposing King: a typically dramatic unfolding of most plots involving fluid pawns.

Sometimes it is worthwhile giving up material to initiate a moving pawn mass, as Tarrasch does in the following position.

Diagram 137

Tarrasch



Breyer

Göteborg, 1920

White's pawns, particularly on the queenside, are well advanced. He has plenty of room for manoeuvre behind them and he even has a supported passed pawn at b6.

Black's pieces are rather cramped behind his own pawns and he needs breathing space, he needs to expand.

Perhaps White has overreached himself a little with his pawn advance. The c-pawn is weak, attacked by four pieces and only defended by three, but fortunately for him there is a pin of the Black Knights against the Rook by the Bishop at h3.

It is Black to move. His Knight at e6 is en prise and so his pressure on the c-pawn is being undermined. Rather than retreat and release the tension he decides to give up material

and tap the potential of the pawn mass.

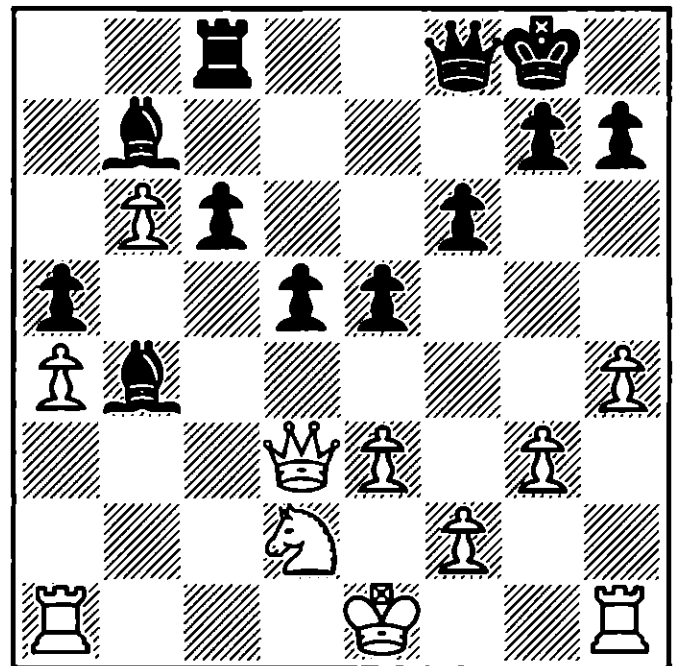
1	Nxc5
2 Nxc5	Nxc5
3 Bã3	

There is no reason why he should not take the Rook immediately. Now Black obtains a pair of Bishops.

3	Nd3ch
4 Qxd3	Bxa3
5 Bxc8	Rxc8
6 Ra1	Bb4ch
7 Nd2	

It is just as well White can interpose with the Knight since a pawn fork at e4 was threatened.

Diagram 138



The combination is over. For the exchange Black has a Bishop pair, an extra pawn and a mobilised pawn mass. White has weak queenside pawns, dislocated Rooks, and a King caught in the middle with a steamroller ready to smash through the centre.

Black's game is dynamic, White's passive and static. Black is already winning and the method of finishing is a matter of personal style.

The remaining moves were:

```

7          e4
8 Qb3      c5
9 Kd1

```

He is unable to castle but must unpin the Knight.

```

9          c4
10 Qa2

```

Again we see how frustrated pieces become when thrown back by advancing pawns.

```

10          Qd6
11 Ke2      Ba6
12 b7

```

Why not? It is lost anyway and this creates a little diversion.

```

12          Rb8
13 Kd1

```

There is no rest for the King from the Black Bishops. This time a discovery was threatened.

```

13          Rxb7
14 f3       Kh8

```

Removing surprises on the a2 g8 diagonal.

```

15 fxe4     dxe4
16 Kc1      Qxg3

```

White has dispersed Black's pawn mass but it is too late for his position is in ruins.

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17 Nf1      Qe1ch
18 Kc2      Qc3ch
19 Kd1      Qd3ch
20 Kc1      Rd7,

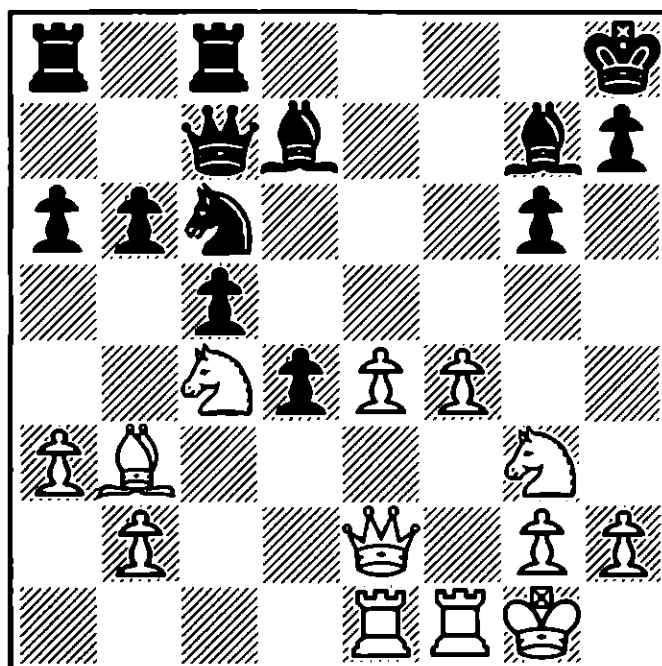
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and White belatedly resigned.

The potential energy of a pawn mass is clearly worth material to release.

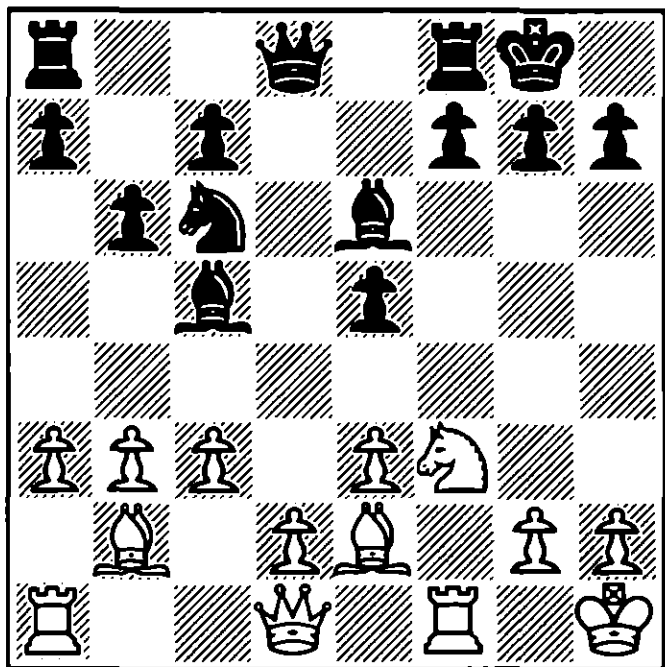
The puzzles which follow are based on the ideas of this chapter.

Diagram 139



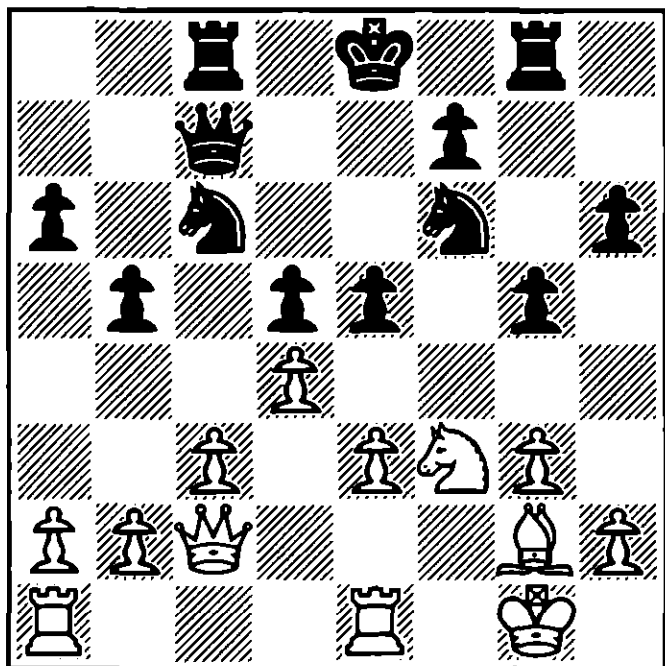
It is Black to play. He has a four to two majority of pawns on the queenside as White has on the other wing. How does he win quickly?

Diagram 140



In diagram 140 White's development is restricted to his first three ranks. He is like a crouched animal poised to spring. With White to play, what would his next few moves be? Assess the chances for Black and White.

Diagram 141



In diagram 141 White has just played d3 d4. Black must

now consider his whole pawn configuration. What should he aim for and what should be his first move? How, in general, should he plan after that?

SOLUTIONS

Diagram 139 White's pawns are also very good and poised for attack and so Black must play aggressively.

1 b5
2 Nd2

The only square.

2 c4
3 Ba2

His pieces would become even more cluttered after 3 ... Bd1 and to go to c2 would allow a fork at d3.

3 d3
4 Qd1

He had to watch out for the pin on the a7 g1 diagonal, and 4 Qf3 Nd4 is not inviting.

4 Bxb2.

Diagram 140 White must advance his pawns to make space for the pieces behind. Black seems to have a more flexible position but closer examination shows that his minor pieces, though more advanced than White's, bite on nothing and are themselves exposed.

1 d4 exd4

If he doesn't exchange the e-pawn is in danger of falling and if 1 ... e4 then 2 Nd2, winning the e-pawn when the Bishop has moved.

2 exd4 Be7

Not 2 ... Bd6 because 3 d5
forks Knight and Bishop.

3 c4

The fork threat is on again.
As we saw in Chapter Three pawn
movements open diagonals and
with this the Bishop at b2
comes to life on a fine
diagonal. It is true that the
pawn at c4 closes a line for
the other Bishop, but the pawns
will continue to flow and open
it up again.

3 Bf5
4 d5 Nb8

At least from here the
Knight can get back into the
game via d7 whereas ... Na5
would have invited more pawn
prodding.

5 b4

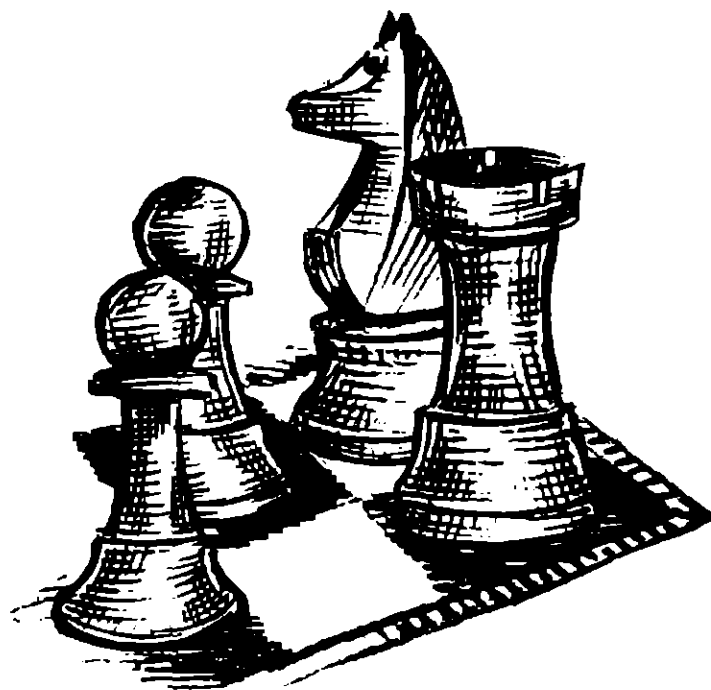
Or 5 Nd4, among other
possibilities, but we have gone
far enough. Compare the
situation now with the initial
position and we see that
White's game has been
transformed, giving him greater

space for his pieces behind his
pawns, open lines and
restriction of the enemy.

White's centre is strong, he
has a queenside majority and
obvious ambitions there, but,
surprisingly, because of the
freedom his pieces now enjoy
especially the diagonal ones
he might well prepare for a
kingside attack.

Diagram 141 The key to the
position is the Black King in
the middle with no prospect of
castling either side. It is
essential for Black to close
the centre and then proceed
with his activities on the
King's wing. To play 1 ... exd4
would be madness and no better
to leave White to exchange
there. In any case White is
threatening to go to f5 with
his Queen. Clearly 1 ... e4 is
his best move. After that he
should continue pressing on the
kingside where he already has
some initiative. He must take
care to keep the centre closed,
finding ways of dealing with
any plans for its opening that
White may have such as b3
followed by c4.

FOUR

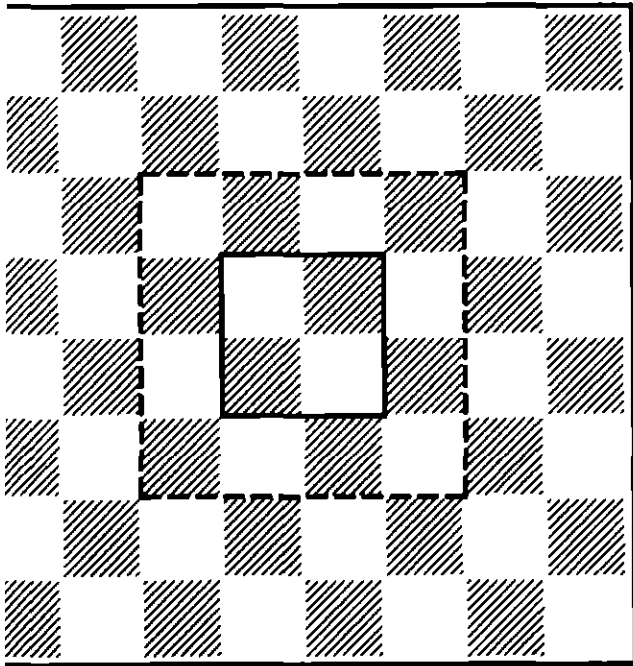


The Centre

CHAPTER 11

The centre

Diagram 142



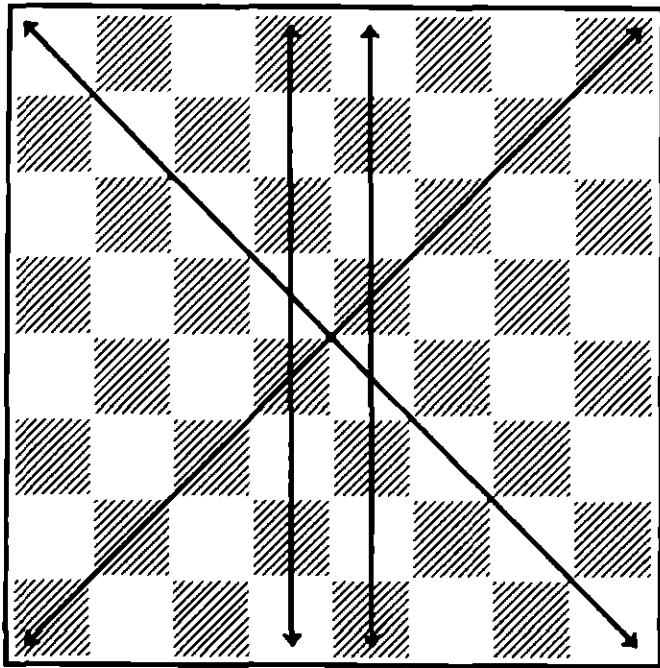
We have mentioned the centre already but it is so important a part of the terrain that it is worth considering in greater detail and we shall start with the very basic ideas.

The inner four squares are the true centre of the board, surrounded by twelve more, the larger centre, making an area in the middle which is vital for both players to keep in mind from the earliest moments of the game.

In an earlier chapter we have considered routes, the lines of travel which the pieces take, and it would be useful to be conscious of those ideas in the present one. Since two opposing forces face one another at opposite sides of the board in North-South positions it is natural that much movement must be North-South or South-North. The longer sloping lines which the diagonal pieces will seek to use pass through the centre, as shown in diagram 143, and it is clear that the centre becomes more of a thoroughfare for all the pieces as the game goes on.

Control of the centre by either party would give him a tremendous advantage. Consequently neither player will voluntarily make concessions there and will fight for at least an equal share in it. Moreover, the struggle for the centre will influence the players from the very beginning of the game and so the opening adopted, whatever kind it is, or the defence employed, whatever the theory behind it, will be influenced by considerations of the centre.

Diagram 143



At the outset, players are concerned with the development of pieces. Initially the pieces are trapped or protected, depending how you look at it, behind a barrier of pawns. They need freedom, space for manoeuvre, an increasing influence over the terrain. In an earlier chapter we have seen how the boundaries affect the pieces and how the pieces increase their power by moving towards the centre, simply because they overlook more squares as well as more important squares. For example, Nf3 as a first move for a Knight enables it to overlook eight squares (two of which are in the centre) compared with six from Ne2, four from Nh3 and three from its initial position. This is not to say that Nh3 and Ne2 are bad moves, in circumstances where considerations other than the centre prevail it may well be desirable to develop the Knight in such a way, but when the

centre and the enhancement of the power of a piece are paramount, then Nf3 is the way to develop.

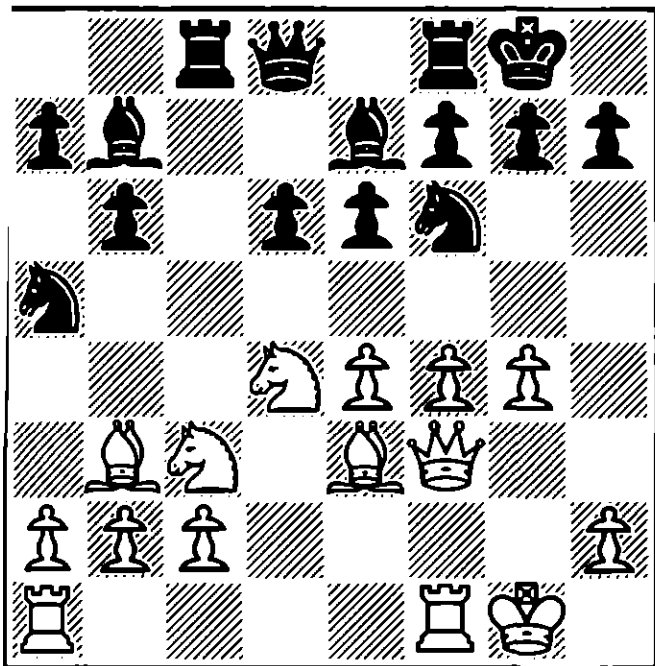
This idea can be applied to all the pieces. There is a close relationship between the power of a piece and its influence in the centre. It is a two-way flow; the pieces seem to draw power from the centre the more they unite to gain its control. There are, of course, other factors which affect the strength of a piece: its relationship with other pieces, the general pawn structure, and so on, but in the beginning the centre is the factor most likely to enhance its value.

The exception to all this is the King which must for its own safety shun the centre for much of the game. In the end game, however, when the King comes into its own, a well-centralised King is often the largest single factor in ensuring a win.

From the centre force can be applied efficiently in any direction, in activity towards the queenside or kingside or directly ahead, and defensive measures can be taken across the width of the board. Compare this with operating solely on a wing: the concentration of force there can be very great, but it is restricted and, should vital points become vulnerable elsewhere on the board, a force committed to the side will be hard put to it to find quick routes to the trouble spot.

Examples from master play will shed more light on these ideas.

Botwinnik



Padevsky

Alekhine Memorial Tournament
Moscow, 1956

White has a mass of pawns ready to roll at e4, f4 and g4, and a time-saving target in the Knight at f6. That the pawn roller has the backing of seemingly well-placed pieces must have given Padevsky considerable satisfaction with his position and prospects for attack. But there is a latent weakness in his centre, particularly at e4. Through that point passes the influence of the Black Bishop at b7, which strikes ultimately into White's King's position. The c-file is half open for Black's use and his restrained but solid centre, with pawns at d6 and e6, discourage White from advancing there.

1 g5

Rxc3

Immediately highlighting the weakness at e4.

2 bxc3

He would have been better pressing on with 2 gxf6 Rxe3 3 Qxe3, but after 3 ... Bxf6, White still has the inferior position.

2

Nxe4

In two moves Botwinnik has destroyed White's centre at the cost of a Rook for a piece and a pawn, the long diagonal is opened and other weaknesses appear in the c-file.

3 Qg4

He is committed to the wing attack and now has some pressure on e6 and the prospect of the useful thrust, f5.

3

Qc8!

A beautiful move, quiet, subtle and typically Botwinnik in the way it combines attack - along the c-file - with defence of e6 and f5.

4 Rf3

Nxb3

This exchange relieves pressure on the a2 - g8 diagonal.

5 axb3

f5

Creating space around his King for ease of defence. There is nothing for White in: 6 gxf6 e.p. Rxf6 7 f5 exf5 8 Nxf5 Bf8 9 Nh6ch Rxh6! 10 Qxc8 because Black goes 10 ... Rg6ch before recapturing the Queen.

6 Qh4

White's attack is being pushed to one side, narrowing

its objectives, whilst Black, with,

6 e5,

counters vigorously in the centre.

7 Rh3 h6
8 Qh5

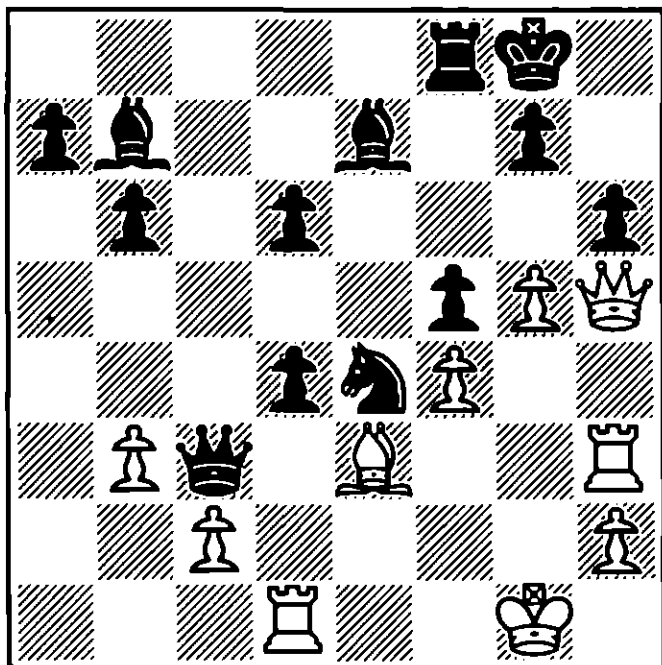
The g-pawn was pinned.

8 Qxc3!

It is central weakness which allows this devastating entry of the Queen. Not only is the Rook threatened but the Queen's position on the long diagonal indirectly, through the centre, protects the g-pawn.

9 Rd1 exd4

Diagram 145



It is remarkable how, in a few short moves, Black has dominated the centre and squeezed White's attack to the very edge of the board. Now, if 10 gxf6 then 10 ... dxe3, and the Queen defends everything in the Black King's corner.

10 Bd2

If 10 Bxd4 then 10 ... Qxc2 11 gxf6 Nf6, and it is White who is threatened with mate as well as having his Queen under attack.

10 Qc6

There is a touch of impish humour about this move: having used the long dark diagonal for defence the Queen now switches to the long light one for attack.

11 gxf6

At last but far too late.

11 Ng5!

Finishing neatly and improving on the more obvious Nf6.

12 Rg3

As good as anything else.

12 Qh1ch
13 Kf2 Ne4ch,

and White resigned.

This game is eloquent testimony to the maxim that the best way to defeat a wing attack is a counter-thrust in the centre. More, it is clear that Black had regard for the centre from the beginning and therefore moved from strength when the time came, whereas White neglected the centre, made insufficient preparation and lashed out on the wing before securing the vital squares in the middle.

Botwinnik's use of the Queen was an outstanding feature of the game. Before the final

entry on move twelve he moved the Queen just three times, but each time with telling effect. Look again at ... Qc8, Qxc3 and Qc6 to taste the full flavour of moves imbued with rare power and subtlety.

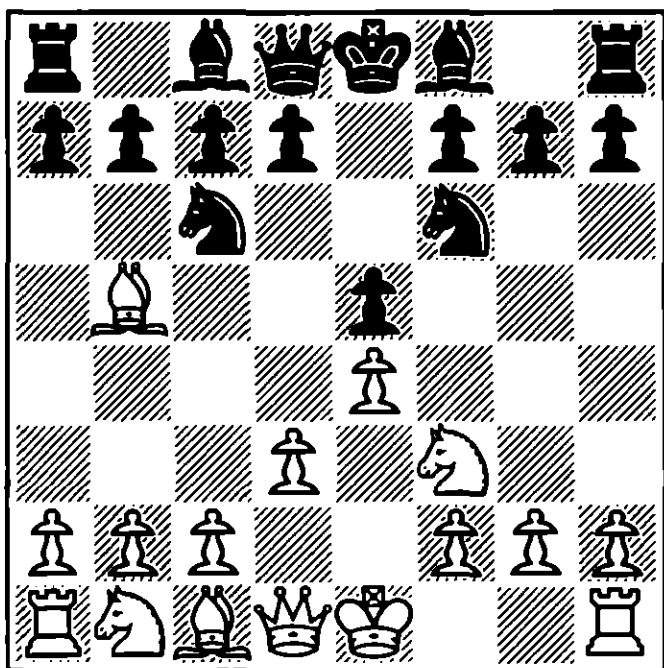
Going back into the history of the game, for a long time the value of central control was not understood and it was not until Steinitz showed the way at the end of the last century that chessplayers began to realise that the squares in the middle were of the first importance.

Here is a good example in one of his own games.

Steinitz Tchigorin
Havana, 1892

1 e4	e5
2 Nf3	Nc6
3 Bb5	Nf6
4 d3	

Diagram 146



The opening is the Ruy Lopez and White's objective is a strong pawn centre with a pawn

at d4 to join the one at e4 after the preparation, c3. 4 d3, is Steinitz's own move. His plan is to establish a modest, but very solid centre and then, when all is secure there, and only then, to embark on a flank attack against the enemy King.

4	d6
5 c3	

To guard central squares and certainly not as a preparation for an early d4.

5	g6
6 Nbd2	Bg7
7 Nf1	

Aiming for e3 from where the Knight will watch central squares.

7	0	0
8 Ba4		

The Bishop seeks more useful diagonals: a2 g8 and b1 h7.

8	Nd7
---	-----

Preparing the advance f5.

9 Ne3	Nc5
10 Bc2	Ne6

There has been altogether too much manoeuvring with the Knights. He was ready for ... f5 and should have played it but was probably tempted by the idea of dropping a Knight on f4.

11 h4!

Satisfied with his centre, he now launches out on the wing.

11	Ne7
----	-----

Of course, he needs another cover for f5.

12 h5 d5

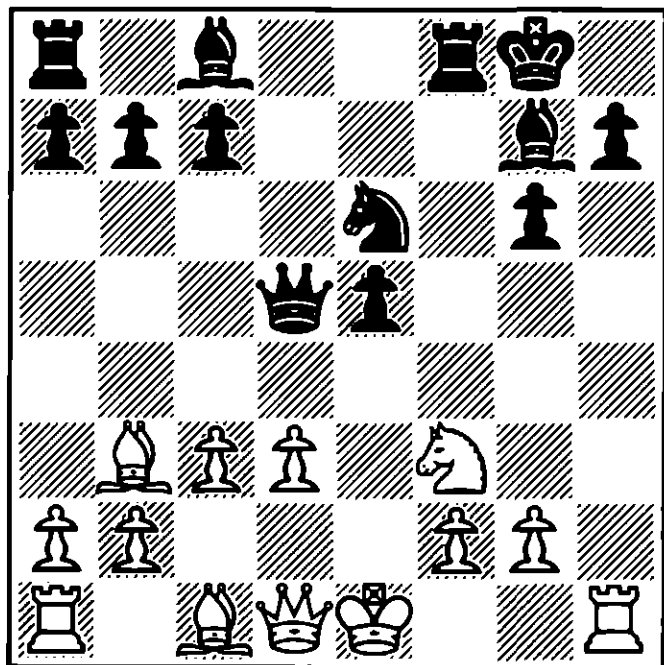
The best way to defend a wing attack is a counter attack in the centre ... but White knew all that from the beginning and his centre is secure. It will be Black who suffers from the opening of new lines as a consequence of this central action.

13 hxg6 fxg6

Recapturing this way he gives play to his own Rook on the f-file and prevents the h-file from becoming completely open.

14 exd5 Nxd5
15 Nxd5 Qxd5
16 Bb3

Diagram 147



Unlike Botwinnik's Queen entry into the centre Black is exposed here to new threats and White's Bishop strikes down a diagonal with an enemy King and Queen on it. White's centre,

restricted though it may be, adequately keeps out the opposing pieces. In any case, Black was hardly ready to open the centre with his queenside so undeveloped.

16 Qc6
17 Qe2

It is not his intention to win the e-pawn since it would leave his King and Queen exposed on an open file but to prepare long castling and to bring over the Queen's Rook to the kingside.

17 Bd7
18 Be3

Now White is threatening 19 Ng5, attacking h7 and piling up on the pinned Knight at e6, for 19 ... Qxg2 would be answered by 20 0 0 0 and Rdg1 to follow.

18 Kh8

Unpinning the Knight but without finding much comfort for the King.

19 0 0 0

Development is completed and White is clearly winning. He has the h-file, fine diagonals for his Bishops and a latent threat of d4, for exchanges on that square, which would ultimately settle a White Bishop on it, would leave the opposing King in a terrible state.

19 Rae8

Black also completes his development with an indirect threat to White's Queen in order to discourage d4.

20 Qf1!

A fine move resolving the e-file problem and seeking entry to the h-file.

20 a5

Being unable to improve his defences he starts a counter attack.

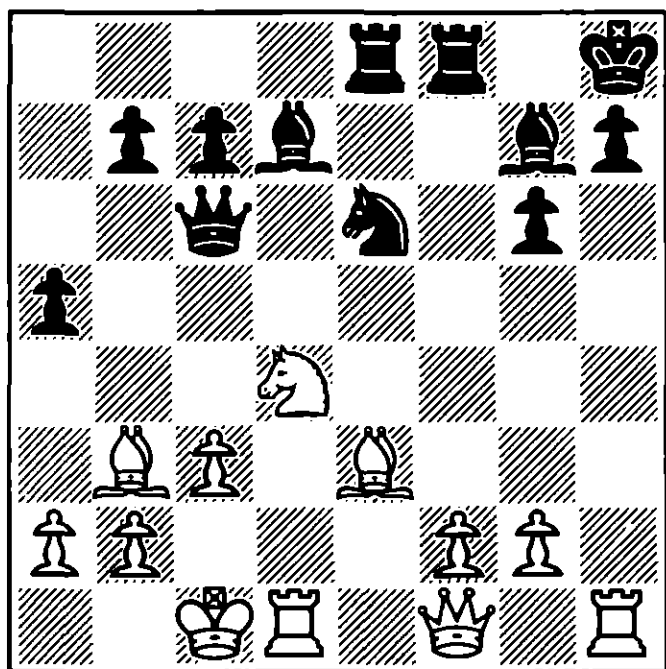
21 d4

And here it comes. See the note to move four.

The threat of d5, forking Queen and Knight, leaves Black with little choice.

21 exd4
22 Nxd4

Diagram 148



We now see the value of Qf1. Black cannot retake on d4 with his Knight for this would expose the a2 g8 diagonal and allow Rxh7ch followed by Qh1ch and a quick mate. He is forced to capture with the Bishop, weakening the long, dark diagonal.

22 Bxd4
23 Rxd4!

Naturally. He would like to finish the exchanges with a Bishop on d4.

23 Nxd4
24 Rxh7ch!

Capturing on d4 would also win easily, of course, but the text is even stronger.

24 Kxh7
25 Qh1ch,

and mate follows:

25 Kg7
26 Bh6ch Kf6
27 Qh4ch Ke5
28 Qxd4ch,

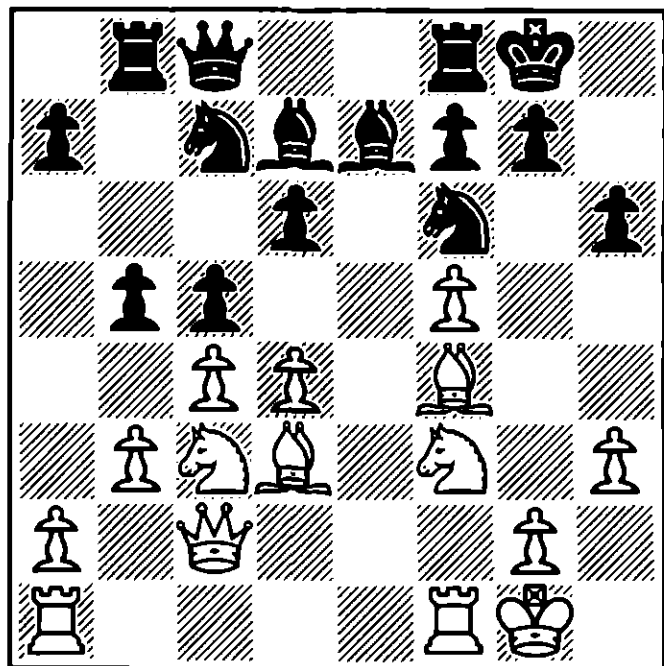
and Black resigned because of 28 Kf5 29 Qf4.

Steinitz kept the centre under control but he also kept it fluid so that he could make a break there to combine later with his wing attack.

In the next example Tarrasch threw up a shield of blockaded pawns across much of the queenside and centre so that he could concentrate solely on a wing attack.

Diagram 149

Marco



Tarrasch

Vienna, 1898

In the position of diagram 149 White has a choice between winning a pawn by 1 dxc5 dxc5 2 cxb5 (the pinned Knight at c7 ensures that Black cannot recapture) and blockade to restrict Black's pieces. Tarrasch decided that the positional advantage was worth more than the material one and played,

1 d5

The blockade of the pawn at d6 will make it very difficult for Black to manoeuvre, especially with his Bishops.

1 b4

Black responds by seeking breathing space on the queenside, hoping, later, to open the a-file.

2 Ne2

White, on the other hand, has plenty of room to move about in and now, with the centre secure and partly closed and the queenside largely shut down, he will be able to expand on the kingside, creating even more space for his use.

2 a5
3 g4 Nh7

Temporarily preventing g5.

4 h4

Renewing the threat.

4 Qd8

With the same purpose.

5 Bg3 a4

Having held up White for a while he returns to the queenside, for only there can he hope to gain any advantage.

6 Kh1 Ra8
7 Rae1

Avoiding exchanges when the a-file opens and the open e-file is the natural place to go.

7 Ne8

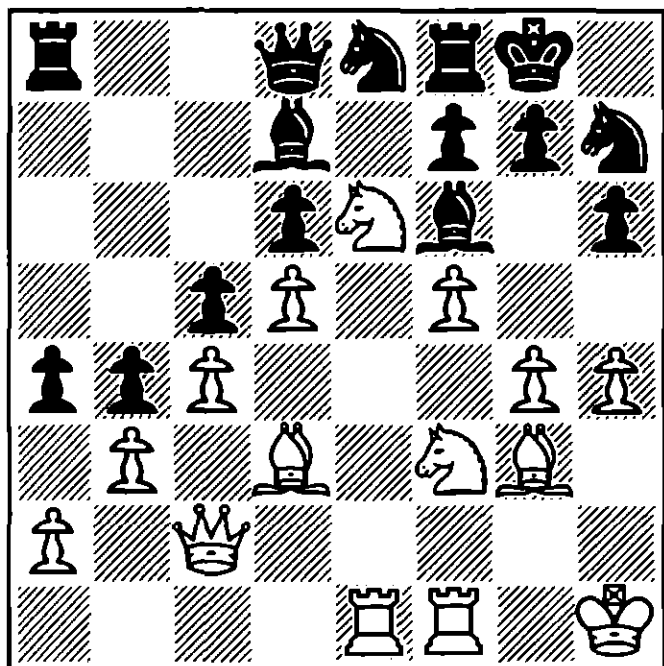
The Knight takes over from the Bishop in guarding the d-pawn so that the Bishop can be posted on the long dark diagonal that reaches into the queenside. This is good manoeuvring in difficult circumstances.

8 Nf4 Bf6
9 Ne6!

This is not really a sacrifice because after 9 ... fxe6 10 fxe6 both the Bishop

at d7 and the Knight at h7 will be en prise. The diagonal for White's Queen and Bishop would also be opened and rather than let this happen Black gives up the exchange.

Diagram 150



9	axb3
10	axb3
11	Nxf8
12	g5!

It costs a mere pawn to open up the h-file.

12	hxg5
13	hxg5
14	Qh2!

It is all over after this Queen switch.

14	Kg8
----	-----

Preventing mate.

15	Nxg5
16	f6

The final thrust.

16	g6
----	----

To keep the Queen out.

17 Bxg6,

and Black decided that it was time to resign. If 17 fxg6, then 18 f7ch, etc.

White's attack left nothing to chance. He didn't push the kingside pawns because it is a good standard method of attacking the King. It was the product of sound positional judgement and strategic planning. He locked the centre, cut off the queenside with a chain of pawns and only then began his kingside push and always with the pieces moving up to control the territory cleared by the pawn roller.

Whether the centre is fluid or firmly fixed or partly blocked, security there against any enemy breakthrough must be established before embarking on a major attack.

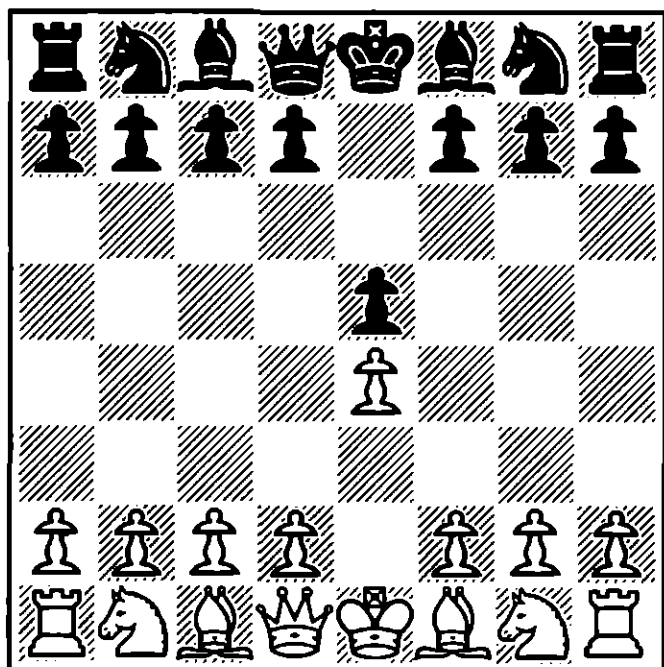
Over the past hundred years or so ideas about the centre have changed. It is important to understand those changes and their effect upon contemporary views. It is this matter we shall look into in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 12

A look into history

Once the paramount importance of the centre had been recognised, mainly through the example of Steinitz, there emerged contending theories about how to control the centre.

Diagram 151



One of the main problems in chess is how to avoid creating weaknesses; how to make good moves which improve one's position without offering targets for enemy attack.

When White plays,

1 e4,

controlling central squares and opening lines for the Bishop

and the Queen, Black responds with,

1 e5,

because he acquires the same advantages, equalising in the control of space and preventing further White expansion with e5. All this would be fine if it wasn't for the fact that Black's e-pawn then immediately becomes a target for attack.

In the King's Gambit,

2 f4,

it is attacked straight away, and if Black accepts the pawn, White plays Nf3 and then hopes to take advantage of his extra central pawn. If he doesn't capture then the pawn is under stress, Nf3 will create more and Black will have to concern himself with its support.

In the Giuoco Piano,

2 Nf3,

the Black pawn is again under pressure. White has an initiative and constantly calls the tune so that after,

2	Nc6
3	Bc4
4	c3,
	Bc5

the threat of d4 demands that Black make a decision about his

e-pawn and, should he exchange pawns, he would allow White pawns at d4 and e4: a classical centre.

Or, in the Ruy Lopez diverging from the above at move three

3 Bb5,

White attacks the defender of the e-pawn to begin with and will then follow up with direct attack: c3 and d4.

In all this White has a simple, straightforward strategy, however complex the variations in these openings might be, and that strategy is based on Black's provision of a target at e5.

Because of this other first moves for Black began to be used.

1 e6,

which is the French Defence, giving White nothing to bite on at his second move.

1 c5,

is the Sicilian Defence which, though only attacking one central square, d4, leaves White with the choice of leaving the pawn alone or attacking it sooner or later with d4, whereupon the exchange of pawns leaves Black with two pawns in the centre files and White only one.

Then there is the Caro-Kann,

1 c6,

which, like the French, leaves White without an immediate and concrete target.

A similar view could be taken of the Queenside openings.

After,

1 d4,

the symmetrical reply,

1 d5,

gives a clear target in the centre for White who can begin to exploit it immediately with,

2 c4,

when acceptance of the gambit will again give White two pawns to one in the centre and the prospect of a classical centre with pawns at e4 and d4. Otherwise,

2 e6,

defending the pawn, gives White the simple strategy of developing into the centre and increasing pressure on d5:

3 Nc3 Nf6,

defending.

4 Bg5,

pinning the defender, and so on.

Consequently a whole array of alternative defences has developed for Black. The Dutch Defence,

1 f5,

with similar ideas to The Sicilian Defence in the King's Pawn opening, is one system, or,

1 Nf6,

where Black commits no pawns anywhere in the centre and follows up with a fianchetto of the King's Bishop (the King's Indian) or the Queen's Bishop (the Queen's Indian) or ... e6 and ... Bb4, pinning the White Knight if White goes c4 and Nc3 (the Nimzo-Indian).

All of these, and others too, are designed to avoid offering White a target in the centre and consequently a simple strategic approach to the opening.

Some of these first moves for Black are an attempt to turn the tables, to provoke White to a premature commitment of his pawns in the centre and so offering Black targets there. Consider the French Defence, for example:

1 e4	e6
2 d4	d5,

and it is White's pawn which comes under attack. He tempts White to push on with,

3 e5,

establishing what appears to be a strong centre and then begins to undermine it, chipping away at the base of White's pawn chain, d4, with c5, Nc6, Qb6.

Even more provocative is a first move for Black against 1 e4,

1 Nf6,

which is Alekhine's Defence, deliberately presenting White with a moving target if he wishes to take up the challenge:

2 e5	Nd5
3 c4	Nb6
4 d4	

Black then holds up the pawn rush with moves like ... d6 and ... e6, hoping that White has over-reached himself so that he can destroy the centre. However, in this case, if White doesn't press too hard too quickly, Black is really asking too much from the cramped position which results.

What comes out of all this is the idea that occupying central squares is not necessarily the only or even the right way of controlling the centre. Black having, as it were, retreated from the centre, leaving White exposed with his pawns committed at d4 or e4, was gaining the psychological advantage, and this situation gave rise to the theories of the hypermoderns. Breyer, Reti, Nimzowitsch and others put forward the view that the centre could be controlled as easily from a distance, that there was no need for White to occupy it with pawns; that indeed, if he did he would not only be offering targets to Black but those pawns cluttering the central squares would only interfere with the freedom of the pieces. And so occupation of the centre was shunned in the early stages of the game and pawn advances there postponed to a more propitious moment.

Richard Reti was one of the foremost members of this school and he won many high prizes in international tournaments throughout the nineteen twenties and here is an example of him playing a game whose

opening bears his name. In Carlsbad, 1923, Reti (against Rubinstein) plays White.

1 Nf3

This move, common enough today, must have seemed strange, surrealistic perhaps, when it first appeared. It is now known as the Reti Opening. The Knight keeps a watchful eye on two central squares but offers no targets.

1 d5

Black occupies the centre.

2 g3

The Bishop is to be developed at g2, tucked in safely behind its own pawns, ready to watch the centre, from a distance.

2 Nf6
3 Bg2 g6

There is a touch of the hypermodern influence about Rubinstein's treatment of the opening too, although he does belong to an earlier generation.

4 c4

Black has offered a target in the centre at d5 and so White attacks it. If Black takes White has two pawns against one in the middle files as well as gaining clearance of the long light diagonal for the use of his Bishop at g2.

4 d4

Avoiding the exchange but opening the diagonal all the same. 4 ... c6 was better. Now White has a fine target: an

advanced, committed, Black pawn at d4.

5 d3 Bg7
6 b4

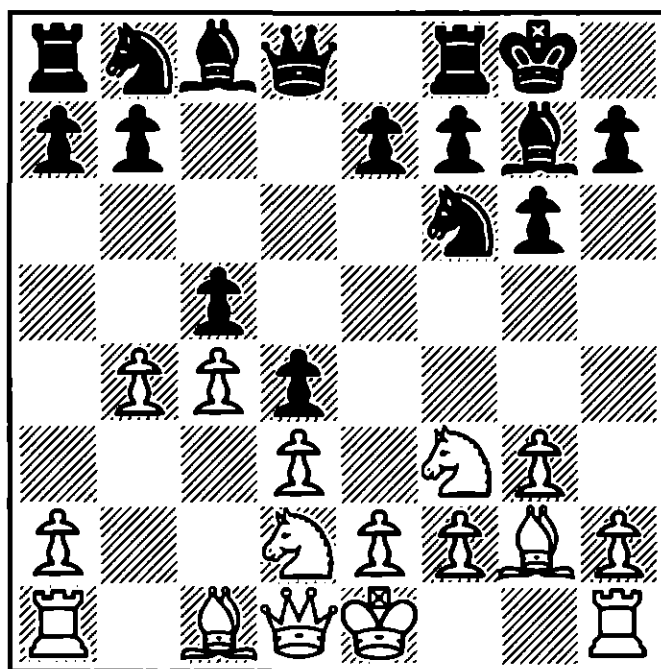
White intends to fianchetto his Queen's Bishop and so would have to move his b-pawn anyway, but instead of advancing it to b3 he gains time by attacking c5, a square which Black will need to use for the support of his d-pawn.

6 0 0
7 Nbd2

So that he can play on to the target by Nb3.

7 c5

Diagram 152



White could take the c-pawn if he wished, though hardly hold on to it, but in any case it is the pawn in the centre, the d-pawn, that he is interested in. If he does capture Black would reply, Nc6, protecting the d-pawn.

8 Nb3

Now the c-pawn is really threatened. ... b6 is no good because it exposes his Rook to the Bishop on the long diagonal, masked only by the Knight at f3. ... Nc6 would be no good either because of b5 and so he must first take the b-pawn.

8 cxb4
9 Bb2

And now the d-pawn is attacked thrice.

9 Nc6
10 Nbxd4 Nxd4
11 Bxd4

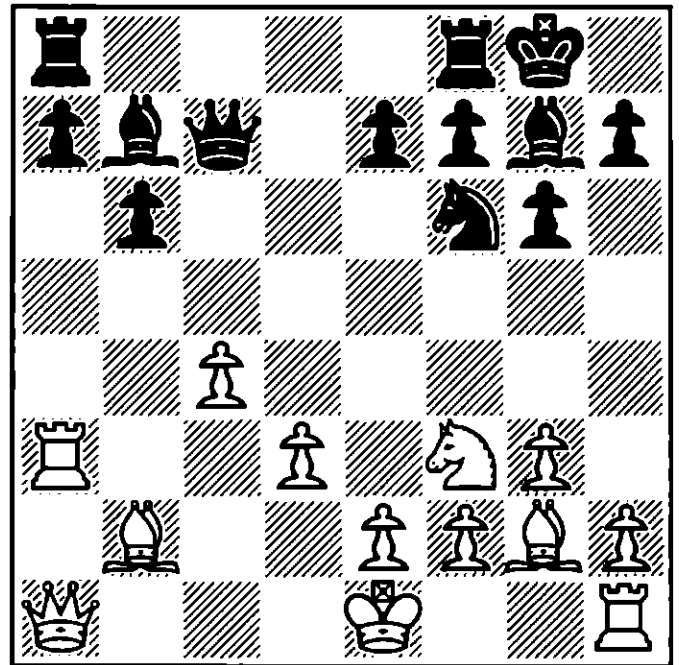
Success. Black's advanced centre disappears and the White pawns at e2 and d3, waiting in reserve, can come out whenever they wish and occupy the centre.

11 b6
12 a3 Bb7
13 Bb2

Black was threatening Bxf3 and Qxd4.

13 bxa3
14 Rxa3 Qc7
15 Qa1!

Diagram 153



The hypermoderns brought a healthy breath of fresh air into a chess world that was becoming stereotyped. To them openings, as we have seen in this game, were not to be played as a stock series of moves based on historical acceptance, but to be treated like any other part of the game and played to a plan in which every move was to be considered on its merits and accepted or rejected according to how well it assisted the advancement of that scheme. In a sense they were saying as you would detect if you were to play over the opening moves again - that the middle game begins on move one and positional thinking is vital from the outset.

On the whole White has the better position because of the pawns on the central files which can now be used to control and indeed occupy the centre. They have been held in reserve and are now ready to assume their proper duty. It would seem, then, that the controversy is not between

occupation, on the one hand, and remote control of the centre on the other, but the timing of that occupation. Too early, too hastily, and it will be the enemy reserves that will win the day, provided, that is, one is not over-run at the first charge.

Nor is there anything hackneyed about White's Queen move. Normally the last place to put a Queen would be in a corner, but in this position it slips in beautifully behind the Rook and Bishop forming a Queen and Bishop battery down the long diagonal into the kingside and a Rook and Queen ram down the a-file into the queenside. It is most original and effective.

From the point of view of this glimpse into history, the main interest of the game is over and so the rest is given with brief annotations.

15 Ne8

Rubinstein decides that the Queen and Bishop battery is too strong to be left intact.

16 Bxg7 Nxg7
17 0 - 0

At last, and the fact that he has been able to leave the King in the middle of the board for so long is proof that White has had the centre under control throughout. Not 17 Rxa7 Rxa7 18 Qxa7 because of 18 Ra8.

17 Ne6
18 Rb1 Bc6

The a-pawn now needs direct protection.

19 d4

Time to occupy the centre.

19 Be4
20 Rd1 a5

The passed pawn is Black's only asset but it is hard to make it effective against the heavy pieces which oppose it. This advance leaves the b-pawn backward and creates a hole at b5.

21 d5 Nc5
22 Nd4

Another hole appears at c6 and the Knight heads for it.

22 Bxg2
23 Kxg2 Rfd8
24 Nc6 Rd6
25 Re3 Re8
26 Qe5

The Queen's entry into the centre is designed to provoke further weakening pawn moves.

26 f6

Otherwise 26 ... Rd7 27 Qxc7 Rxc7 28 Rb1 Na4 29 Ra3 and the b-pawn falls.

27 Qb2 e5

Black gives himself more room and denies e6 to a White piece, but now White has a supported passed pawn at d5 and his Knight outpost is secure.

28 Qb5 Kf7
29 Rb1 Nd7

Black just manages to hold on each time against the White threats.

30 f3 Rc8
31 Rd3

Black was threatening to simplify by ... Nb8, which would have solved most of his problems, but now it would be met by 32 c5! Black, frustrated by this cramped position, offers a pawn for freedom.

31		e4
32	fxe4	Ne5
33	Qxb6!	Nxc6
34	c5!	

Not 34 dxc6 because of 34 ... Rxc6, and Black's problems evaporate.

34		Rd7
35	dxc6	Rxd3
36	Qxc7ch	Rxc7
37	exd3	Rxc6

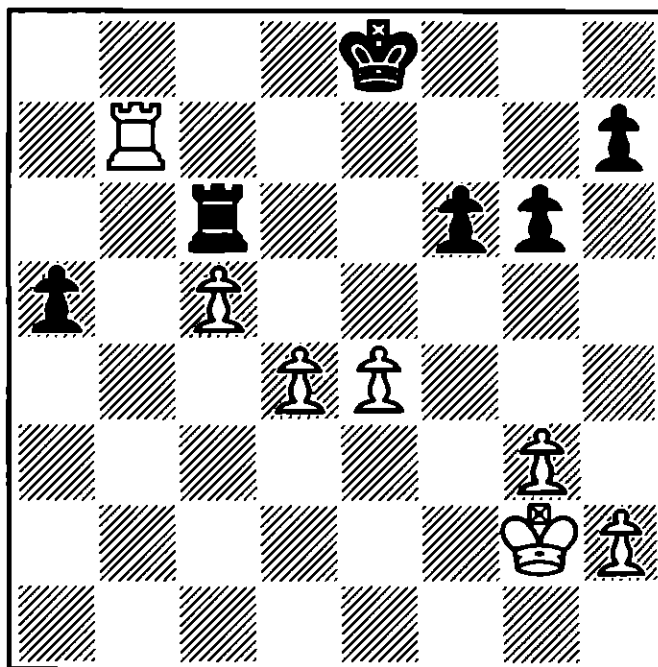
White has initiated the simplification to his own advantage.

38	Rb7ch	Ke8
39	d4	

A delightful vindication of the whole White strategy in this game. Having refrained from entering the centre throughout the opening he now has a perfect classical centre with pawns at e4 and d4.

Rubinstein should have resigned, but perhaps his disbelief in what had happened made him forget that it was a possible alternative.

Diagram 154



The remaining moves were:
 39 ... Ra6 40 Rb6 Ra8 41 Rxf6 a4 42 Rf2 a3 43 Ra2 Kd7 44 d5 g5 45 Kf3 Ra4 46 Ke3 h5 47 h4 gxh4 48 gxh4 Ke7 49 Kf4 Kd7 50 Kf5 and Black then did resign.

Next we see Capablanca using the Reti Opening and in his hands, as one would expect, the ideas are simple and lucid. Of course, by 1929, when this game was played in Barcelona, the opening system and hypermodern ideas were being absorbed by most of the practising masters. Capablanca is white.

1	Nf3	Nf6
---	-----	-----

Naturally, by this time, Black also looked on central occupation with suspicion.

2	c4	g6
3	b3	

The fianchetto of the Queen's Bishop first was a favourite treatment of Capablanca's, aiming straight

down the diagonal and into the Black King's position. It has a simplicity and directness that naturally appealed to him.

3	Bg7
4 Bb2	0 - 0
5 g3	d6

Probably better is 5 c5 but Black wishes to play ... e5 and so strengthens that square with this and his next move.

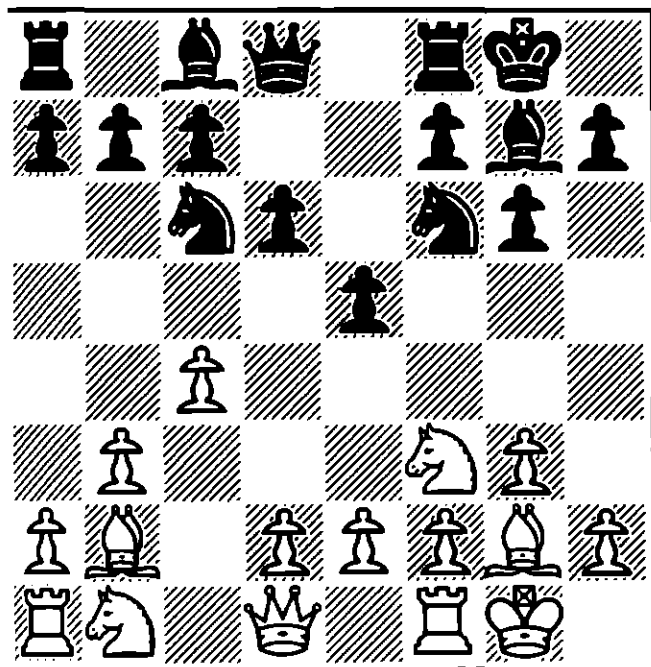
6 Bg2	Nc6
7 0 - 0	

After six Black moves and seven White ones the centre is still virgin territory.

7 e5

Black is the first to enter.

Diagram 155



It is interesting to consider how Black has prepared for this by bringing pawns and pieces to bear on e5 before moving his pawn there. This painstaking preparation before committing pawns in the centre contrasts sharply with those

openings in which both sides first advance the central pawns and then contrive to defend them as they come under attack.

8 d4

And as soon as Black arrives there White is ready to attack him.

8 Nd7

Having spent so much time preparing e5 as a strong point, he is loath to give it up as he would be doing if he tried the more aggressive e4.

9 dxex5

Played so that he can continue with simple development, Nc3 and so on.

9	Ndxe5
10 Nc3	Re8
11 Nxe5	Nxe5

By these exchanges Capablanca avoids complexity and gradually increases the scope of his pieces. Notice how the long light diagonal is cleared of pieces and the long dark one of pawns.

12 Qd2

Simple but effective. With this he improves the position of his Queen, protects the Bishop against surprises on the diagonal and clears the back rank for the use of the Rooks.

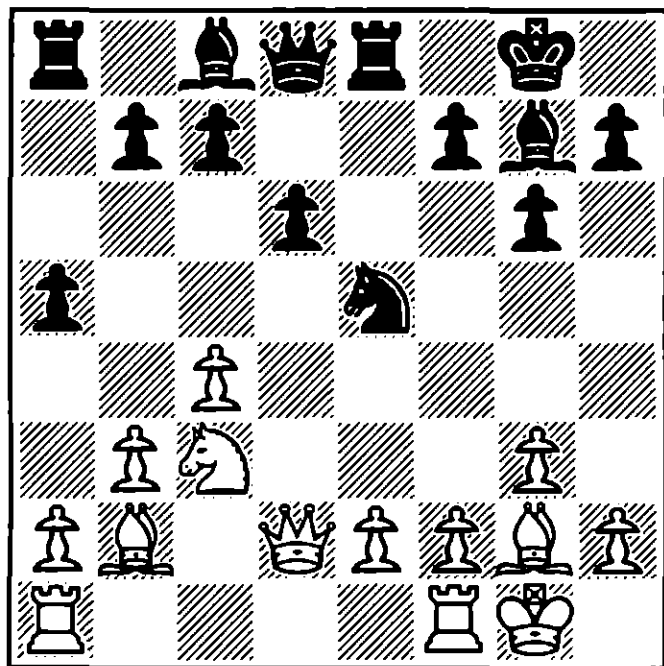
White has been able to complete his development with ease. Black has a problem with his Queen's Bishop and he will have to play to protect his b-pawn, perhaps with ... Rb8, before it can be brought out. Black, however, is momentarily

diverted from the main purpose of development and central control and is tempted to lay a trap, but as so often happens when the enemy fails to fall into it, it simply wastes time.

12

a5

Diagram 156



The idea is to continue with ... a4 and if then 14 Nxa4 there would follow 14 ... Nxc4! severely disrupting White's queenside.

White carries on with normal development,

13 Rac1,

incidentally preventing Black from springing his trap, for ... Nxc4 would then be answered by recapturing with the Rook instead of the b-pawn.

13

Rb8

Black returns to the main theme, but he has wasted a move.

14 h3

A quiet little move denying the use of g4 to Black's Bishop and Knight as well as preparing for a later advance on the kingside.

14

Bd7

15 Nd5

White's plan is simple and soon revealed. The Knight aims at the dark squares in the enemy position, particularly e7 and f6. He then intends to drive away the central Knight and exchange the dark-square Bishops. The Queen will then assume these duties on the a1-h8 diagonal from which the Black King's best defender, the Bishop on g7, has been removed, and Black will be unable to achieve a balance with his own Queen on that line because of the White Knight controlling f6. Black's irrelevant skirmish, ... a4, means that all this is accomplished with tempo for now the stray pawn is en prise.

15

b6

16 f4

Nc6

17 Bxg7

Kxg7

18 Qb2ch

f6

Forced.

19 g4!

The plan has succeeded. White threatens to pile up on the pinned pawn at f6 and Black can only try to reduce the forces attacking it.

19

Nb4

20 g5

Nxd5

21 cxd5

Better than capturing with the Bishop for now the c-file is half open and Black's c-pawn rendered backward. White now

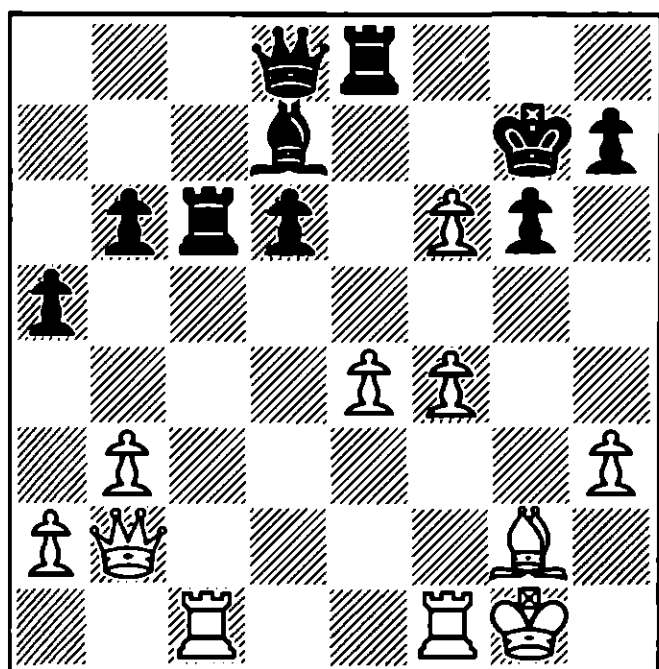
has targets on both sides of the board.

21 Rc8
22 e4 c6

A brave attempt to rid himself of the weakness quickly for otherwise his pieces will become tied down to its defence and be unable to assist on the other wing.

23 dxc6 Rxc6
24 gxf6ch

Diagram 157



24 Kf7

The pawn is untouchable. If 24 ... Qxf6 then 25 Qxf6ch Kxf6 26 e5ch, winning a piece with a discovered attack. Black is now a pawn down and the game already lost.

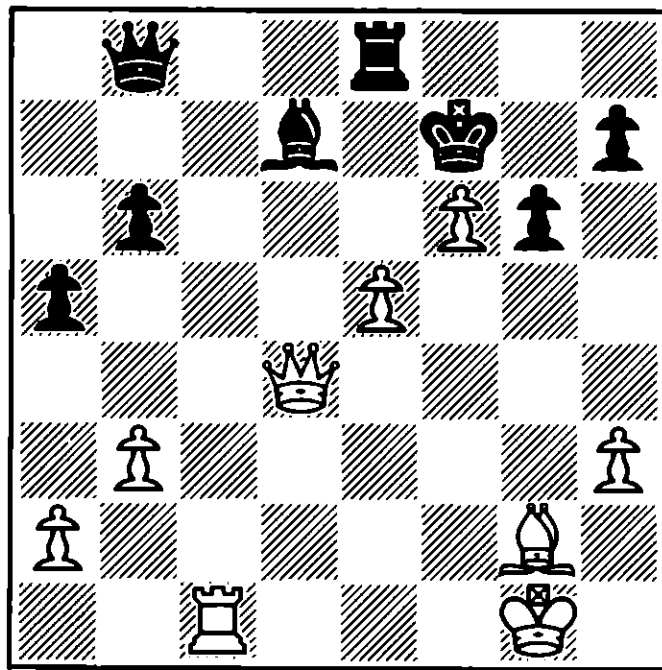
25 e5 Rxc1
26 Rxc1 dx e5
27 fx e5 Qb8

No better is 27 ... Be6. White would then have the choice of 28 Rc6 followed by 29 Qc1 with threats of invading

with the Queen at h6 and the Rook at c7, or, simply, 28 Qc3, entering the seventh rank, exchanging the Queens and winning with the passed pawns.

28 Qd4

Diagram 158



The Queen's occupation of the open centre puts everything under strain.

28 Bf5

Or 28 ... Be6 29 Rc6 Rd8 30 Qf4 Rd1ch 31 Kf2, and Black, running out of steam, will be unable to cope with Qh6. If 31 Qf8 then 32 Rc7ch, etc.

29 Bd5ch Kf8
30 Qf4 Rxe5
31 Qh6ch Ke8
32 f7ch Resigns.

Black has only 32... Ke7 and then would follow:

33 Rc7ch Bd7 (the Queen cannot capture because of f8=Qch, etc.)

34 f8=Qch Qxf8 35 Rxd7ch and Black will lose his Queen.

Does what we have discussed in this chapter demonstrate that occupation of the centre is now to be regarded as untenable? That the middle of the board must remain an empty wasteland under the baleful eyes of watchers on the flanks? That the classical centre with pawns at d4 and e4 spell disaster for the possessor? Should we agree with Breyer that "... after 1 e4 White's position is in the last throes?"

The answer is an emphatic no.

The point we have to make in this chapter is that occupation of the centre is not the only means of controlling it. The hypermodern ideas have now become absorbed into our thinking, enriching our own ideas, but the modern chessplayer has not thrown out the baby with the bath water.

What has emerged is that the centre is still paramount and the struggle to achieve at least equality there must be every player's first consideration. Whether or not he occupies it, or occupies it with pieces or pawns, depends entirely on the changing situation. White can still play e4 or d4 and Black reply in kind, as they still frequently do, but when the centre is occupied today it is with greater awareness that any targets offered must be capable of adequate defence. It is no longer a question of whether to occupy or not but to control by the means best suited to the occasion. The proof of the

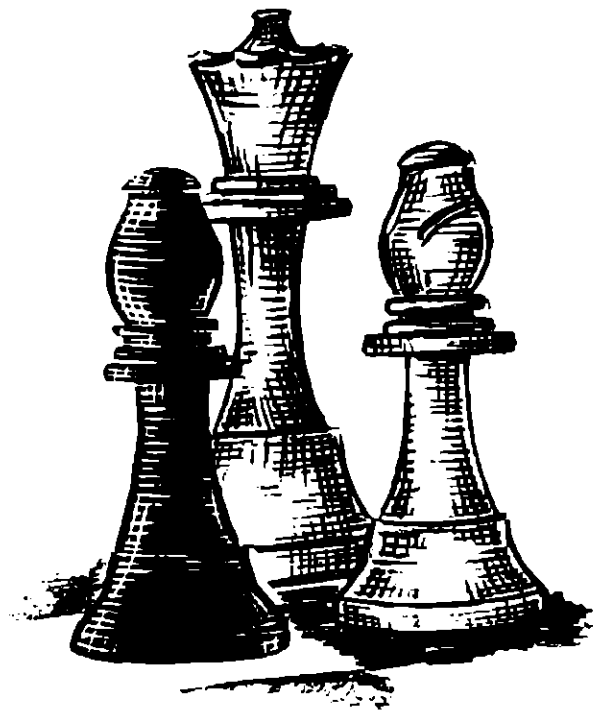
validity of any method lies in the soundness of the variations which ensue.

It is true that pawns and pieces in the centre impede one's own forces; that pawns in the middle offer targets to the enemy, but it is equally true that those same pawns hamper enemy movements, interrupt his lines of communication, and that pieces established there gain strength from their greater command of space and their ability to move rapidly to points anywhere on the board where they may be required whether for attack or defence. It is not a perfect world and there are no simple answers. Chess is a matter in the end of judgement and balance, strengths must be balanced against weaknesses, one must weigh the pros and cons, make a judgement and decide on a strategy, warts and all.

Somewhere between the tentative approach to the centre which allows the enemy to over-run you as soon as an attack begins and the premature commitment of your own centre is the region in which those decisions must be made.

Classical and Hypermodern centres are equally valid. Hypermodern theory has modified our approach to the classical centre, not demolished it. In the age of pragmatism the chessplayer today approaches any theory with the question, does it work? If it does, he uses it, if not he discards it.

FIVE



Positional Strategies

CHAPTER 13

Restriction

As pawns move forward space decreases in front of them and more appears behind. Provided other factors are equal, holes and other structural weaknesses do not appear, vital files and diagonals are not left as highways for opposing pieces to pour in behind the pawns, then the advance of the pawns grants more territory to their owner and denies it to the enemy. Thus the process of restriction begins. We shall see how it continues as we look through examples.

Reshevsky Sir George Thomas
Hastings, 1938

1 d4	Nf6
2 c4	e6
3 Nf3	b6

The Queen's Indian Defence. The idea is to control the long light diagonal into the opposing kingside and, through the use of the Queen's Bishop and the King's Knight, to attack e4, a central square in the White half of the board. Naturally it was a popular defence among the hypermoderns.

4 g3	Bb7
------	-----

Today ... Ba6 is a system often played against White's coming fianchetto, aiming to profit on a diagonal, a6 - f1, which is about to be abandoned by White.

5 Bg2	Bb4ch
6 Bd2	Bxd2ch
7 Qxd2	d6
8 0 - 0	Nbd7
9 Qc2	

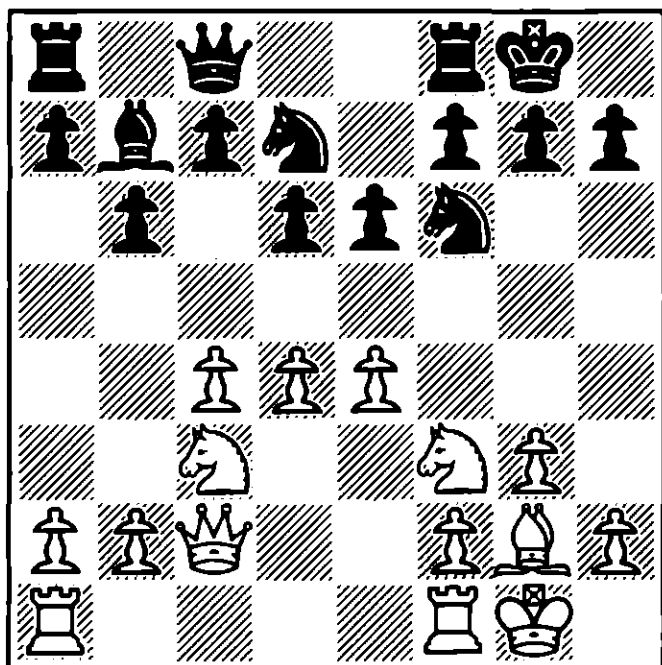
White aims at central control by occupation with Nc3 and e4 to follow. Passive play on Black's part will allow his position to be over-run.

9	Qc8?
---	------

Prompted by the desire to protect his Bishop against surprises on the long diagonal, but he was already short of room for movement and could ill-afford to clutter his own first rank with his Queen. Better was Qe7.

10 Nc3	0	0
11 e4		

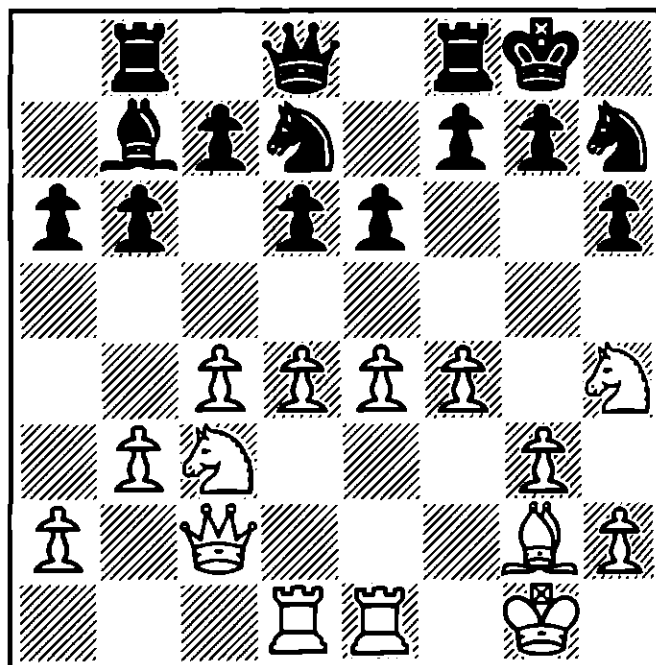
Diagram 159



One objective of the remote control of the centre is to avoid obstruction of one's own pieces and generally to increase flexibility of movement. In this Black has failed dismally. His Knights have little room for manoeuvre, his Rooks are disconnected because of the poor placing of his Queen and in his cramped quarters he attempts little more than waiting moves, hoping for White to allow him more freedom. Space, however, is just the thing that Reshevsky intends to deny him and whilst Black casts tentatively around White steadily improves his position.

11	a6
12 Rfe1	h6
13 b3	Nh7
14 Rad1	Rb8
15 Nh4	Qd8
16 f4	

Diagram 160



Black has achieved little in the last few moves whereas White has strengthened his position considerably. The curve of his pawns from a2 to h2 is strikingly symmetrical and behind those pawns a deep and wide space has been created for the coordination of his pieces.

Black's advance has been restricted to his third rank and the space behind his pawns is patchy and broken so that it is impossible for him to bring his pieces together and combine for some useful purpose. Frustrated, Black strikes out wildly, only to create permanent weaknesses on the kingside. This is a common reaction to a policy of restriction. It acts on the defender's nerves and creates psychological tensions which can be as destructive as anything which is happening on the board.

16	g5
17 fxg5	hxg5
18 Nf3	Qf6

The kingside needs support and he hopes to generate some activity for himself. At least he has more freedom.

19 e5!

By opening up the diagonals which cross on e4 - how important that square turns out to be and how neglected by Black in spite of early good intentions White obtains action on both wings. The period of quiet expansion for his pawns is over and they now serve to probe the opposing pawn structure and open the lines for his pieces.

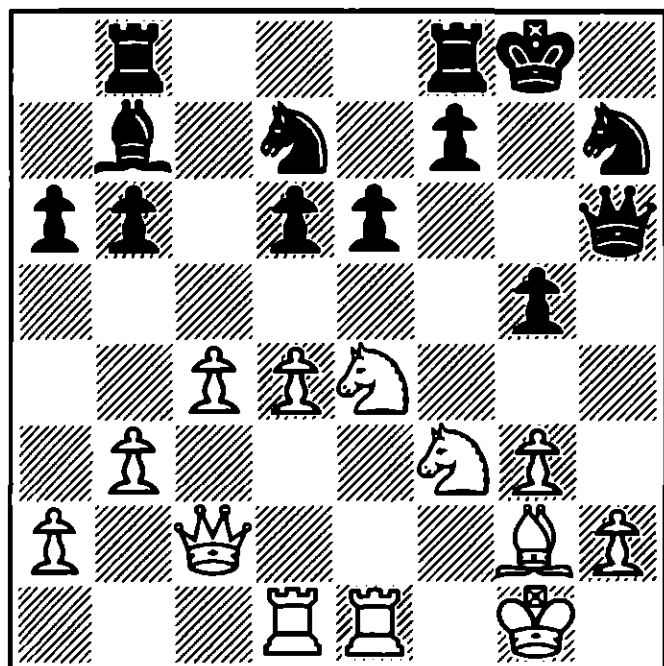
19 Qh6

He rightly avoids pawn exchanges which would only give more scope to the better placed White pieces and seeks an attack along the h-file.

20 exd6 cxd6
21 Ne4

The Knight now attacks the weakened d-pawn.

Diagram 161



Black chooses to advance the pawn for protection rather than exchange pieces. E.g., 21 ... Bxe4 22 Qxe4 (this centralisation is strong. White now threatens pawns with Qc6) Rfc8 (trying to plug the leak) 23 h4! forcing open the h-file into which he can switch Rooks after Kf2.

This idea makes a powerful point about how vital the centre is. The Queen lands on e4, threatens the queenside, draws a defending Rook away from the kingside and then White immediately turns his attention to a totally different area, the h-file. There can be no better demonstration of the efficacy of central control.

To return to the game position of diagram 161.

21 d5
22 Nd6

Probes have lead to breaches and now the pieces filter through.

22 Ba8
23 Ne5 Nxe5

If 23 ... Rbd8 then 24 cxd5 and the Queen enters via c7.

If 23 ... Nhf6 24 cxd5 exd5 25 Nxd7 Nxd7 the Queen enters at c7 again and the Rook at e7.

24 dxe5

The Knight is now a well supported outpost,

24 dxc4
25 Qxc4 Bxg2
26 Kxg2 f5!?

Rather than death by strangulation Black fights for freedom but his position is now too compromised for this to work.

27 exf6 e.p. Rxf6
28 Nf5!

Black was hoping to double his Rooks on the f-file but this sharp intervention crosses his plan and hastens the end. Of course the e-pawn cannot be defended now since the Black Queen is forced away and Qg6 fails to Ne7ch.

28 Rxf5
29 Rxe6

Wherever the Queen goes it will fall to a discovered check.

29 Rf2ch

Instead of resigning.

30 Kxf2 Qxh2ch
31 Kf3 Resigns.

31 ... Rf8ch is met by 32 Rf6 dis ch and 31 Qh5ch by 32 Kg2.

In this game White's pawns curtailed Black's freedom, probed at the opposing pawn structure until holes appeared for the infiltration of minor pieces and finally ripped open the centre for the triumphant entry of the major ones.

The classic case of this kind was produced by the high priest of restriction himself, Nimzowitsch.

Sämisch Nimzowitsch
Copenhagen, 1923

1 d4 Nf6
2 c4 e6
3 Nf3 b6

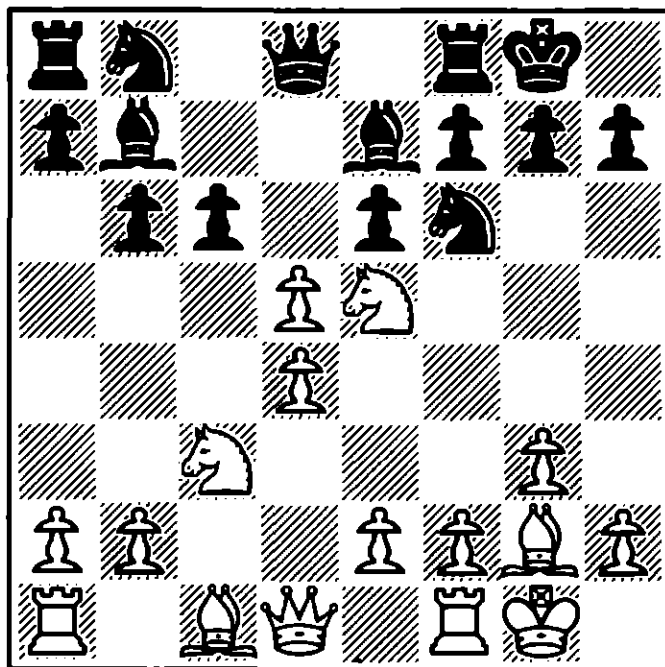
The Queen's Indian, as in the previous game.

4 g3 Bb7
5 Bg2 Be7
6 Nc3 O O
7 O - O d5

This was in the early days of the opening. 7 Ne4 would be preferred today.

8 Ne5 c6
9 cxd5

Diagram 162



Stronger is 9 e4 and if Black goes in for the win of a pawn by 9 ... dxc4 10 Nxc4 Ba6 11 b3 b5 12 Ne3 b4 13 Ne2 Bxe2 14 Qxe2 Qxd4, White has 15 Bb2 with fine open lines for his pieces, control of the centre and a useful target in the weak pawn at c6.

9
10 Bf4

cx d5
a6

At the moment it would seem that White has at least as much space under control as Black, but now Black gradually encroaches, each move nibbling away at territory, and White, without making any gross errors, is pushed back.

11 Rc1 b5
12 Qb3

A poor move because it doesn't really improve the scope of the Queen in spite of its advance and the need to clear the back rank for the use of the Rooks. White's pace of development is satisfactory, his problem is that he has not competed for the centre and now has difficulty in finding good places for his pieces. His Knight at e5 looks good but it is an illusion for it will soon be exchanged or driven off, whereas Black's grip on e4, with Knight, pawn and Bishop to control it, is strong.

12 Nc6
13 Nxc6 Bxc6

A good exchange for Black.

14 h3

White, seeing no prospect of advancing either on the queenside or in the centre, makes preparations for activity on the kingside. It is quickly forestalled.

14 Qd7
15 Kh2 Nh5
16 Bd2

He has no choice but to retreat again.

16

f5

Black has made space for himself on the queenside, secured the centre and now begins to expand on the King's wing.

17 Qd1

Admitting that his twelfth move was a waste of time, but the text is more aggressive than it looks because he now threatens e4, with a discovered attack on the loose Knight at the edge of the board and a chance to break up Black's centre or close it up completely with e5.

17 b4

Encroaching again and after,

18 Nb1,

we find that all White's pieces have been driven back to his first two ranks.

18 Bb5

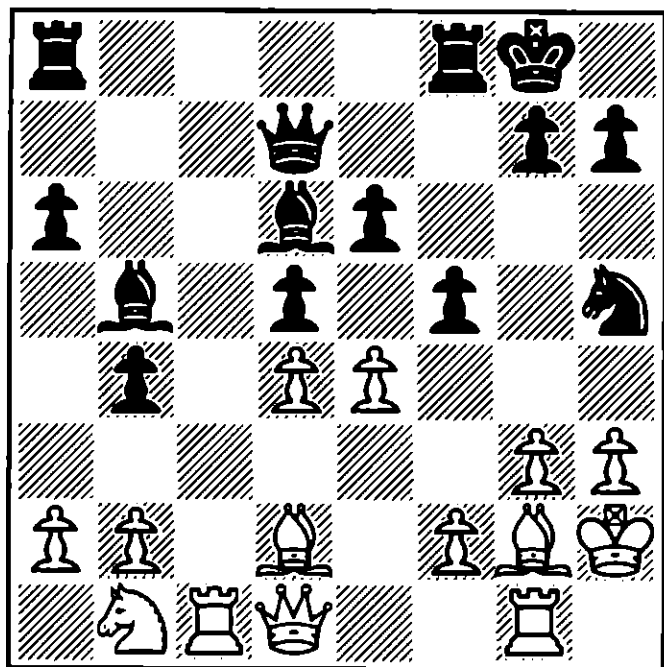
Fully conscious of White's intentions he pins the e-pawn.

19 Rg1 Bd6

Pinning the g-pawn and threatening to break in with ... f4. But hasn't he forgotten White's threat of e4?

20 e4

Diagram 163



White was relying on this move and it certainly looks effective. If 20 ... g6, protecting the Knight, then 21 exd5 etc. or 20 ... Nf6 21 e5 forking Knight and Bishop.

20 fxe4!!

A fine and original sacrifice designed to increase an ever-tightening grip over the whole board. It is a remarkable conception, giving up a complete piece simply for restriction, but the simple logic of Black's thinking is revealed as the game goes on.

21 Qxh5 Rxf2

For the piece Black has two pawns, complete control of the open f-file, an advanced and solid centre and a Rook on the seventh rank. Nimzowitsch considered this more than compensation.

22 Qg5

Since the Queen will inevitably be driven away,

White wants to get back to e3 rather than d1.

22 Raf8
23 Kh1

Unpinning both the Bishop and the g-pawn.

23 R8f5
24 Qe3 Bd3

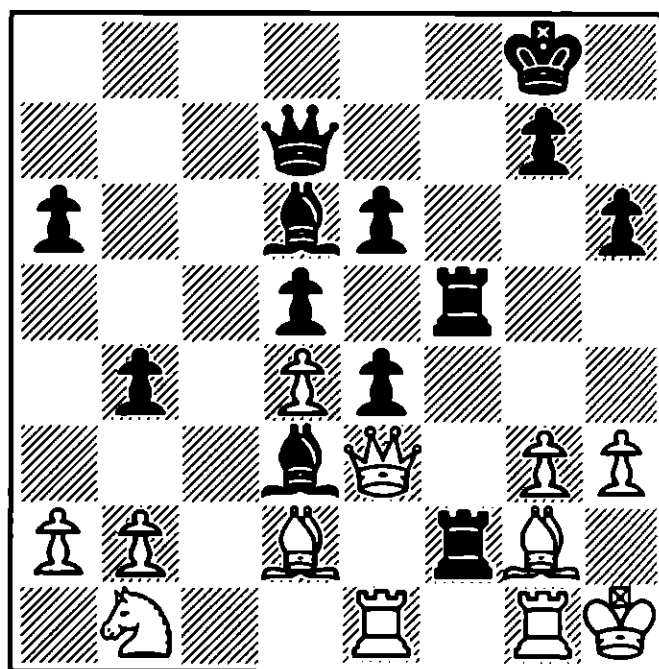
Threatening Re2.

25 Rce1

The Queen cannot leave the g-pawn and so now the only piece that enjoys an open line must be used to protect e2.

25 h6!!

Diagram 164



A remarkable position. To appreciate it fully examine each White piece in turn to see how it can move and with what consequences.

The Queen has no move.

The Rook at g1 can move to f1 where it could be taken by the Bishop.

The Rook at e1 can move only with the loss of the Queen to Re2.

The Bishop at d2 can go to c1 but then the Knight is lost to the Bishop at d3.

The other Bishop can go to f1 but Black attacks that square three times.

The King can go to h2 but then 26 ... Rf5f3 when the Queen is lost.

Try pawn moves:

26 a3 a5
27 axb4 axb4,

and the situation has not changed.

26 b3 a5,

and White is in the same position again, compelled to make some losing move.

Supposing,

26 g4 Rf5f3
27 Bxf3 Rh2 mate.

Or, finally,

26 h4 g5
27 hxg5 hxg5,

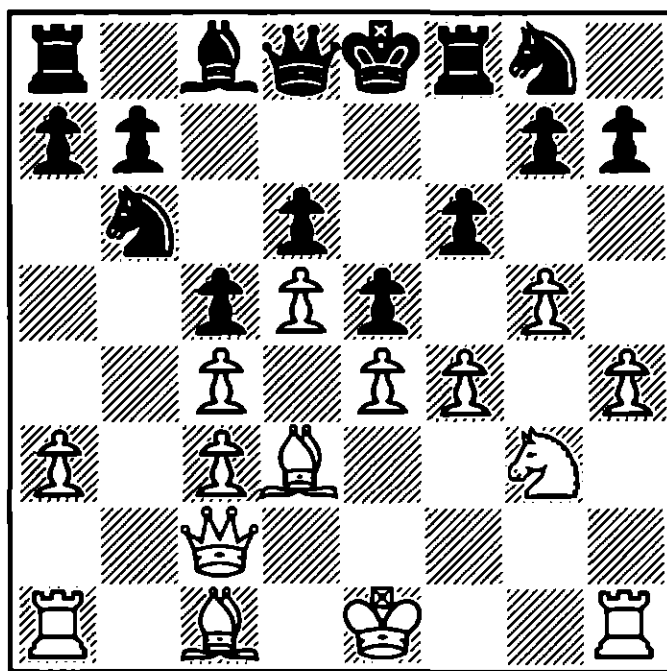
and Black will follow with ... Qh7ch, etc. If, in this, 27 h5 then 27 ... Qf7, or even another waiting move, 27 ... Kh8! will leave White with the same compulsion to choose between losing moves. White resigned.

White is said to be in Zugzwang; although there are no immediate threats, whatever White does leads to disaster, clear evidence that Black has assumed total control of the board. His policy of gradual restriction increased his grip on White territory to the point where White was unable to move at all. A splendid example of the theory of restraint.

Two positions from actual play appear now for you to solve.

Diagram 165

Ragosin



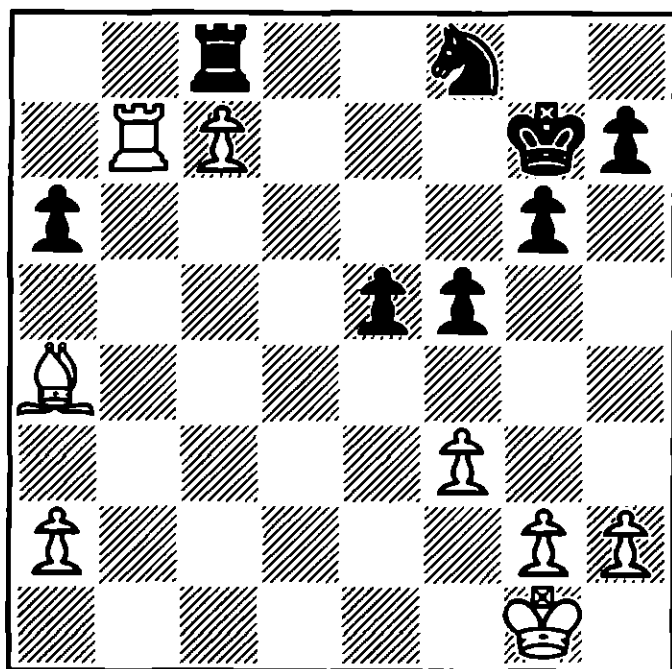
Capablanca

Moscow, 1935

Black has just played his King from f7 to e8, intending to remove the monarch from the besieged kingside. How should White continue?

Diagram 166

Rossetto



Fischer

Mar del Plata, 1959

Restraint can be applied in the most open of games. Here is an endgame with very little left on the board. White has the advantage of a passed pawn, which restrains Black's Rook already. White now finds a move which completely immobilises the Black force.

SOLUTIONS

Diagram 165 White could consider opening up lines against the enemy King in the middle by exchanging pawns at e5 or f6 but this would relieve Black in some measure. His position is very congested, his pieces get in each other's way and so why make matters easier for him? Capablanca chose to continue his policy of restriction by,

1. f5,

when Black made room for his King with,

1 Qe7

In such positions there is no hurry to break through; while Black slowly and clumsily tries to bring order to his congested pieces White has all the time in the world to organise in such a way that when the breakthrough comes his pieces will be at their most effective.

Diagram 166 Fischer found,

1 Bb3!

Now if Black moves his King anywhere White wins the Knight with 2 Rb8.

If the Knight goes to d7 it will be pinned against the Rook by 2 Be6.

Black is left with pawn moves:

1 a5
2 a4

Tying up the queenside. All White has to do is exhaust the enemy pawn moves when Black will be forced to make the losing piece moves already mentioned.

2 h6
3 h3 g5
4 g4 fxg4
5 hxg4,

at which point Black resigned. He is in Zugzwang.

CHAPTER 14

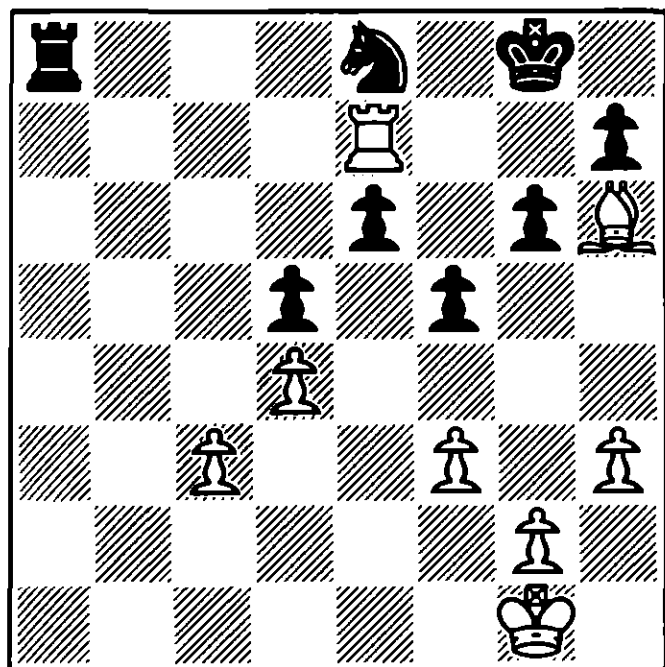
The problem of colour

This important feature of position is best introduced through examples.

Firstly a very striking and simple one.

Diagram 167

Reti



Tarrasch

Vienna, 1922

Both sides have five pawns and a Rook and White has a Bishop for the Knight. The next point to notice is that the Bishop is a dark-squared one and Black's pawns are on white squares. This gives the Bishop great freedom of movement, there are no Black pawns to

impede it and no dark-squared Black Bishop to oppose it.

White could win a pawn with 1 Rxe6 but this would let the King out via f7 whereas at the moment it is conveniently confined. At this point in his thinking White must have realised that there was a tremendous dark-squared weakness in the Black position and conceived a remarkable journey.

1 Kh2 Nd6
2 Rg7ch

Driving the King right into the corner for 2 ... Kf8 would expose him to a discovered check.

2 Kh8
3 Rd7 Nb5

If 3 ... Ne8 White wins in a similar way by a King march.

4 Kg3! Nxc3
5 Kf4 Nb5

No better is 5 Ne2ch 6 Ke5

6 Ke5 Re8
7 Kf6

and Black resigned.

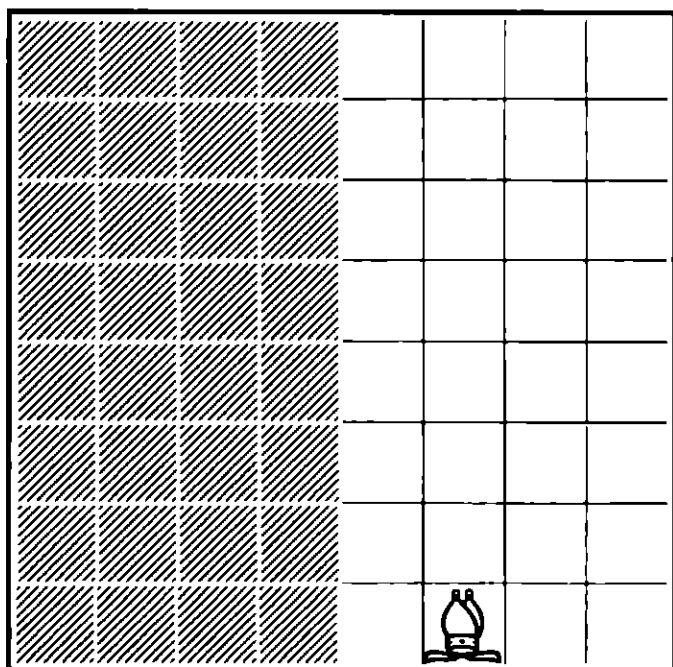
The unmanageable threat is 8 Kf7 Rg8 (to stop Bg7 mate) 9 Rd8! Nd6ch (otherwise mate

follows) 10 Rxd6 and nothing will prevent the Rook returning to d8.

Black's colour weakness, due to the absence of a suitable Bishop and the placing of his pawns, was so severe that the White King marched straight through the defences. The concept could be stated the other way, of course, in terms of White's colour strength.

The idea of colour weakness is one which is not always recognised as quickly as it should be especially by less experienced players. If the board was divided as in diagram 168 it would be more obvious that half the squares are light and the other half dark.

Diagram 168



White's Bishop, for example, would be permanently banished from half the board. Or a player with a weakness on the light squares would be handing over half the territory to his opponent. This must also be true on the normal chess board, but it is disguised or a little

hidden by the chequered pattern.

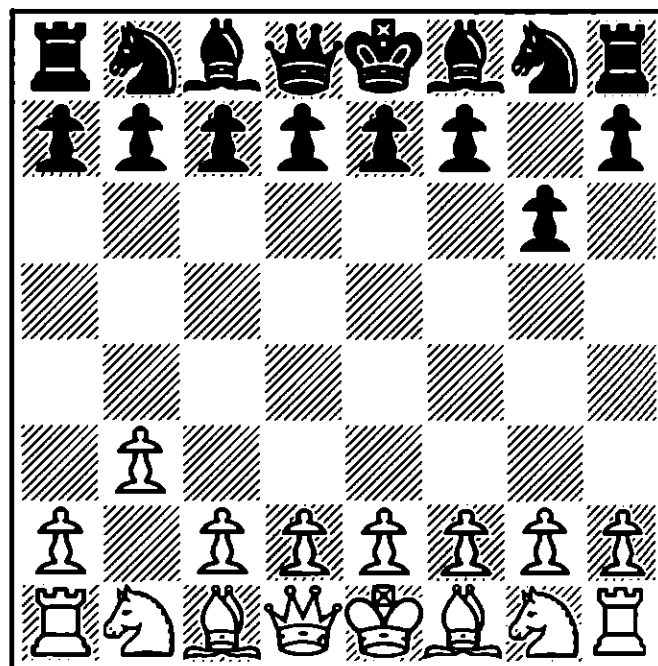
The next illustration is a game given in full for there is such a formidable logic that pervades the whole of it that it will establish the importance of colour weakness and strength better than many short examples.

Nimzowitsch Morrison
London, 1927

1 b3 g6

Watch the diagonal a1 h8. Other lines play a part in the evolution of the game but it is in this oblique, typically hypermodern line that the contention for supremacy takes place.

Diagram 169



White's first move, the Nimzowitsch Attack, with its intended 2 Bb2, strikes first at the centre squares and then into the heart of the Black kingside from the remote fastness of b2. There is no possibility of Black

challenging that Bishop from the front or a flank, only from direct opposition along the diagonal. It must be either exchanged for Black's King's Bishop or blockaded and the leading point in that blockade must be the point e5. What Black cannot do is ignore the challenge. This game is a battle for the black squares and whoever loses, loses half the board. If Black can establish and maintain a pawn at e5 he will neutralise the effect of the fianchettoed Bishop.

2 Bb2	Nf6
3 g3	Bg7
4 Bg2	d6

Preparing for e5

5 d4

And White prepares to contest e5. Admittedly White is obstructing his own Bishop with this advance, but the pawn is not fixed, it can either be moved or exchanged.

5	0	0
6 c4	Nc6	

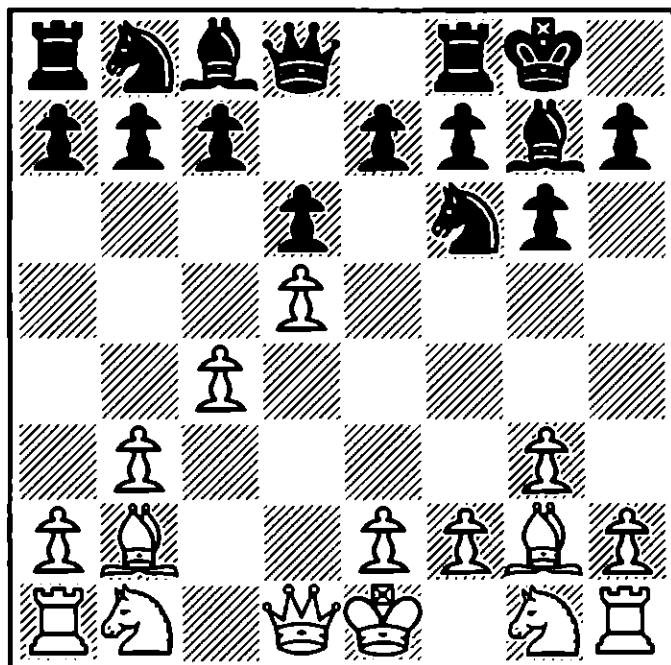
To support e5.

7 d5

Opening the dark diagonal again at the cost of closing half the light one. But the idea is still logical: Black must strive for ... e5 when the pawn can be captured e.p., opening up that line again.

7	Nb8?
---	------

Diagram 170



This was a common retreat at the time with the idea of bringing the Knight in again via d7 but today ... Na5 would be preferred. If then 8 Bc3, Black would continue 8 ... c5 9 Qd2 b6 when White has the idea, attractive in itself, of doubling Black's pawns on the a-file with 10 Bxa5. But it would be anti-positional and against the spirit of the game so far, for it would give up the dark squares to Black's King's Bishop.

8 Nc3	Nbd7
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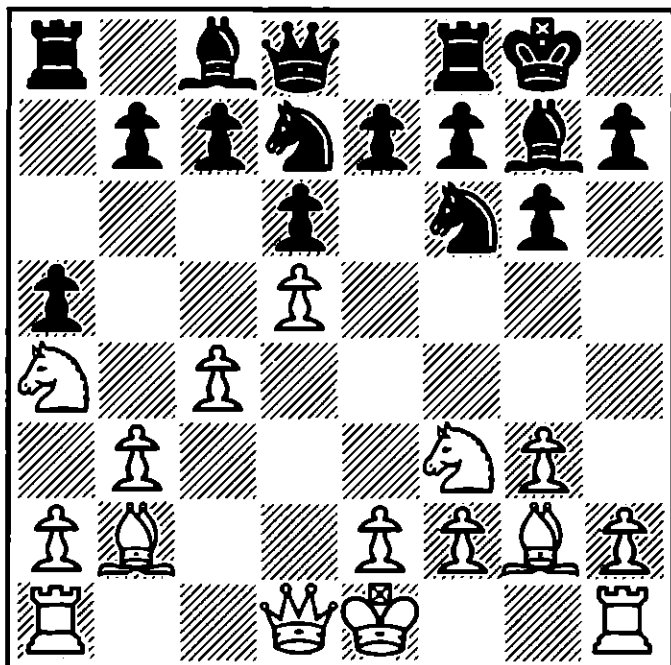
With its eye on e5 again.

9 Nf3	a5
-------	----

The game has transposed into a King's Indian Defence. The text is to protect c5, making it secure for the blockading move Nc5.

10 Na4

Diagram 171



A strange method of preventing ... Nc5 for this places the Knight off-side. However, it is logical, for Black's threat has much to do with who controls the a1 h8 diagonal. Supposing White castled, say, instead. Black would play 10 ... Nc5 and would then be threatening 11 ... a4 12 b4 a3! and if then 13 Bc1 there would follow 13 ... Nce4, and it is Black who has triumphed on the long diagonal.

10 e5

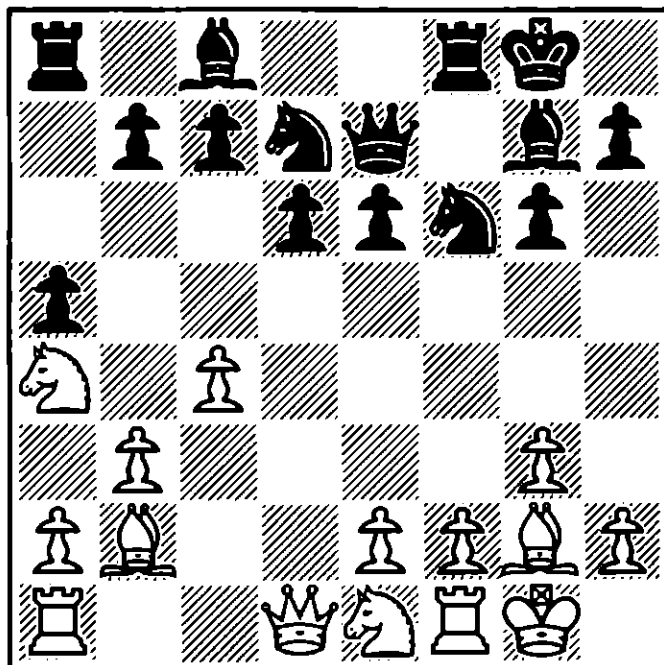
Obstructing the vital line which Nimzowitsch clears immediately.

11 dxe6 e.p. fxe6

Another candidate for blockade appears.

12 O O Qe7
13 Ne1!

Diagram 172



Black has another pawn ready to frustrate White on the dark diagonal. However, White foresees that after ... e5 there will be a weakening of light squares, particularly at d5, and so the Knight is sent off on a long journey to occupy that point.

13 e5

Black is aware of his opponent's intentions but the move is still necessary because he must open a line for his Queen's Bishop.

14 Nc2 Kh8

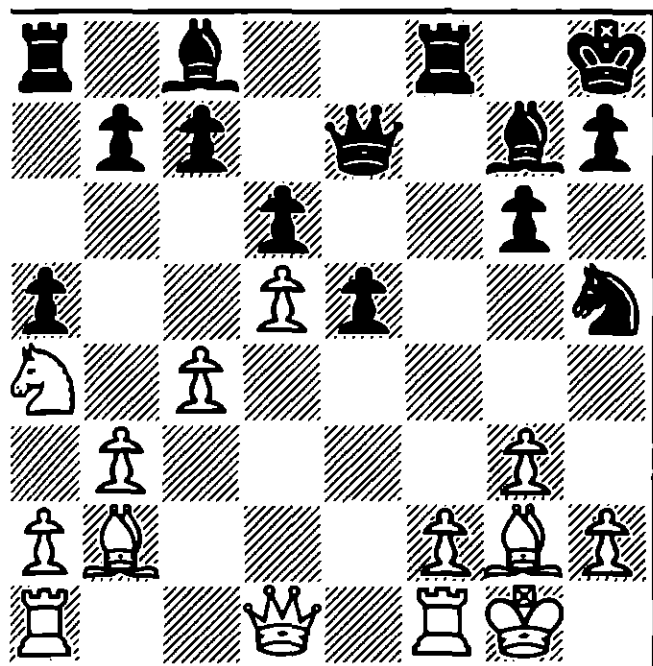
Moving off the a2 g8 diagonal now that it has become partly exposed.

15 e4 Nh5

An awkward looking move but he must make way for the other Knight which cannot develop towards the queenside because of White's Knight at a4. 10 Na4 was not quite such an off-side play after all.

16 Ne3 Ndf6
 17 Nd5 Nxd5
 18 exd5

Diagram 173



Now White has re-established his pawn chain a2 - d5, behind which he has ample space to manoeuvre and Black has succeeded in closing the dark diagonal whilst opening lines for his other pieces. Play continues to revolve about the point e5 and, after due preparation, White hopes to undermine it with f4.

18 Bd7
 19 Nc3

The Knight has finished its work at a4 and White does not want his queenside pawns broken up by letting Black exchange it for the Bishop.

19 Nf6
 20 a4

Securing the queenside so that no Black excursions there will divert him from concentration on e5.

20 Bg4

It is not clear what he intended with this move since the Bishop has no future here. It would have been better to use the time to bring his Queen's Rook to e8.

21 f3 Bd7
 22 Qd2

This unobtrusive move actually accomplishes quite a lot: it controls dark squares, protects the Bishop and clears the first rank for the Rooks.

22 b6
 23 Rae1 Qd8

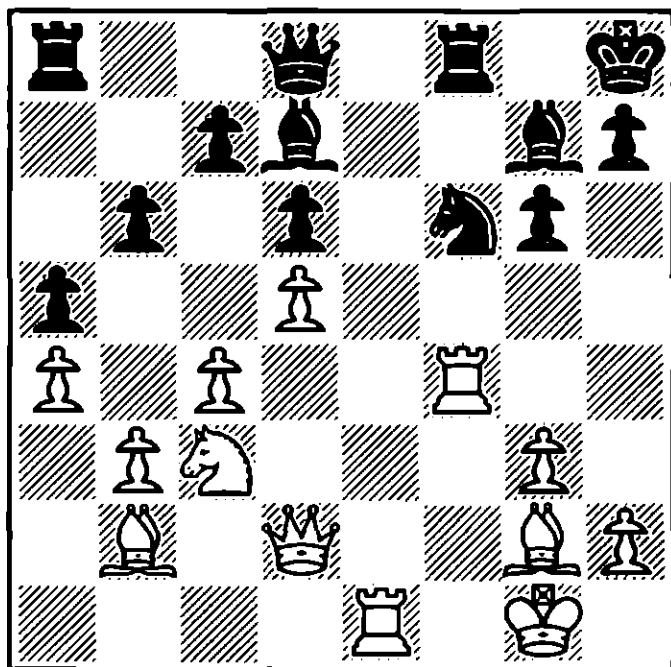
Unfortunately necessary because of the pin on the e-pawn. He cannot allow White to play f4 followed by 25 fxe5 dxe5, when the e-pawn becomes isolated on the open file. But how much better the text would have been if he had already played Rae8.

24 f4 exf4

Avoiding the isolated pawn, but now, after,

25 Rxf4,

White has succeeded in his general strategy of opening the dark diagonal.



The scene shifts from e5 to f6 and the Black Knight there which now assumes the role of the blockader of the diagonal.

But hasn't White made an error? Surely 25 ... Bh6 pins Rook against Queen and wins the exchange?

The answer would be 26 Ne4, pinning the Knight as well as attacking it and the colour problem is suddenly highlighted if the game continues: 26 ... Bxf4 27 Qxf4 Kg7 28 Rf1, winning the Knight. Immediately Black's King's Bishop disappears the White pieces are rampant on the dark squares.

25 Bf5

Now that the Knight is exposed on the f-file he shields it with his Bishop.

26 Nb5

En route to d4 from which square it aims at the hole at e6 as well as threatening the Bishop at f5.

Again 26 ... Bh6 is not possible: 27 g4 Bxg4 28 Rxf6! Bxd2 29 Rxf8 mate. As soon as the dark-squared Bishop comes off the vital line, Black is lost.

27 Nd4 Rae8

He should have played this moves ago.

Yet again 27 ... Bh6 is defeated, this time by 28 Ne6 Rf7 29 g4 Bxg4 30 Rxf6 Bxd2 31 Rxf7 dis ch Kg8 32 Rxd7 Bxe1 33 Rg7ch Kh8 34 Rxg6 dis ch and mate follows.

28 Nxf5 gxf5

Exchanging Rooks first would only let White's Queen in at e6.

29 Ref1

Now the f-file will be breached and there will then be nothing to stop the White pieces pouring through. Black goes for the Rook, hoping to salvage something from the wreck.

29 Bh6
30 Bh3 Qe7

Threatening to exchange Queens by ... Qe3ch and so reduce the force of the attack.

31 Bd4 Bxf4
32 Qxf4 Qe4

This sudden flurry of activity is short-lived for his King's Bishop has gone and the dark squares will prove fatal.

33 Qd2 c5

Hastening the end but there was little else he could do.

34 dxc6 e.p. Qxc6
35 Qh6

It is all over.

35 d5
Unmasking his Queen to protect the Knight.

36 Bxf5

Threat: 37 Qxh7 mate.

36 Rf7
37 Bxh7 Rxh7
38 Bxf6ch,

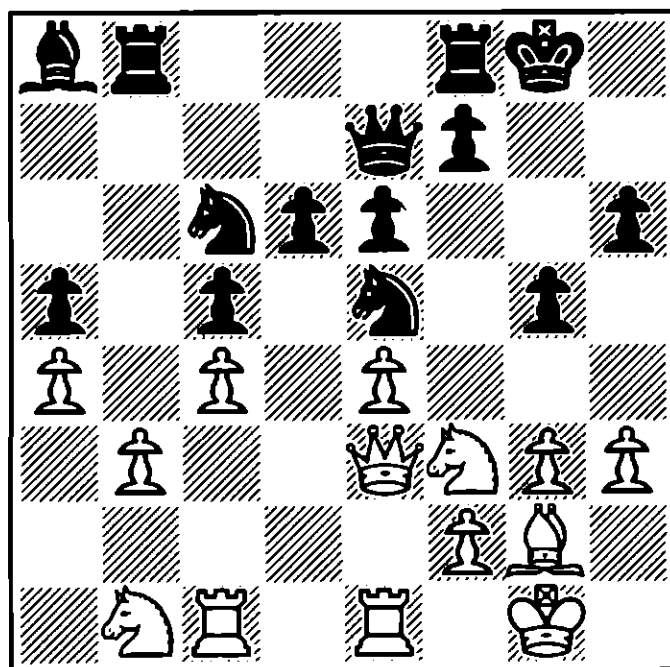
and the final triumph of the Bishop on the dark diagonal gave Black a suitable moment in which to resign.

White's obsession with the dark squares in this game is an excellent example of a conflict for supremacy over a single colour.

In the next example White loses because of his neglect of the light squares.

Diagram 175

Sultan Khan



Soultanbeieff

Liege, 1930

White must strive to maintain a balance on the long, light diagonal; should his King's Bishop leave it, the Black counterpart lurks at a8, ready to take over. At present the e-pawn blocks the line and so this is the point that needs to be defended. Another light-square problem appears on b3, a backward pawn on a half open file.

The game continued:

1 Nxf3ch
2 Bxf3 Nd4

A daunting move for White to meet for the Knight unmasks the Bishop, attacks the White Bishop at f3 and the backward pawn at b3 as well as establishing itself in a fine outpost.

3 Bd1

Preserving the Bishop and protecting the pawn, but too much strain is placed on the Bishop and the a8 h1 diagonal is bereft of defence.

3 f5

Seeking to prise the diagonal open.

4 exf5?

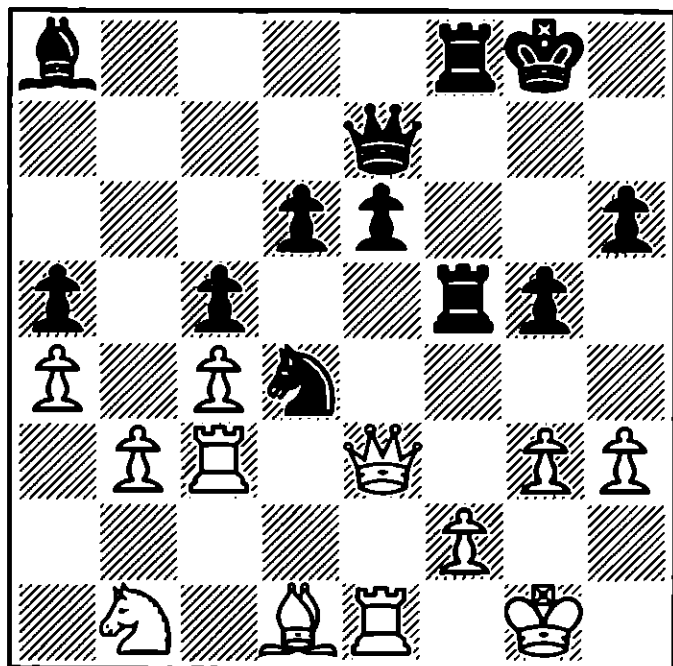
He gives up too easily. Nd2, shoring up the e-pawn for a while, was better, but, of course, Black would still have all the play and pressure.

4 Rxf5
5 Rc3

To protect points on both wings.

5 Rbf8

Diagram 176



A rapid transformation has taken place. Black's pieces are ideally situated and the Queen has the choice of trebling with the Rooks on the f-file or joining the Bishop in a battery

on the long diagonal, the two lines crossing at the vital f3 square, the focus of all Black's energy, for it is also watched by his Knight.

The white-square weakness is apparent at a glance and White clearly faces a hopeless task.

6 Rf1 Rf3

Hardly a surprise; in such situations it scarcely seems like the offer of the exchange.

7 Bxf3

No more hope was offered by 7 Qd2 Qb7.

7 Rxf3,

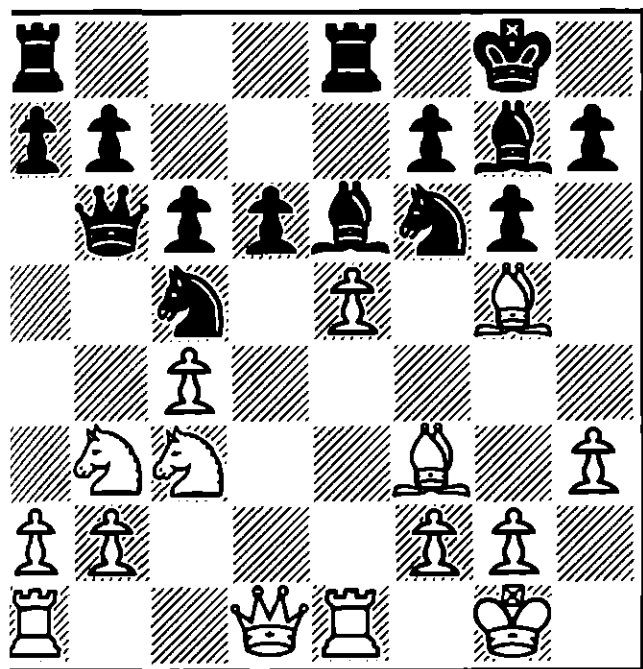
and White resigned. After 8 Qd2 there would be no reply to 8 Qb7.

White lost because he lost control of the light-squared half of the board, its effects appearing on both sides of the board, and much of this was due to placing too great a burden on the King's Bishop.

Finally a short, sharp finish which emphasises the ideas of this chapter in a startling manner.

Diagram 177

Horseman



Wallis

Nottingham, 1954

Black goes in for exchanges which net him material and wonderful pawns on the queenside, but leave him awfully weak on the dark squares.

1	Nxb3
2 exf6	Nxa1
3 fxg7	Bxc4
4 Qxa1	Rxe1ch
5 Qxe1	Qxb2

Black has four pawns to one on the queenside plus Rook for knight and Bishop, a winning advantage when other things are equal, but his fate is sealed on the dark squares around his king.

6 Bh6 Be6

Shutting down the e-file.

7 Ne4

Now it will be mate with the Knight at f6 if Black's Queen leaves the long diagonal.

7 d5

Fatal. The slender grip he held on dark squares, c5 and particularly e5, slips away. 7 ... Qe5 would have been better.

8 Qb4!

Violently exposing the weaknesses at f6 and f8.

8 Qa1ch

He cannot take the Queen because of 9 Nf6 mate, nor can he go to d4 or e5 because of 9 Qf8ch and mate next move.

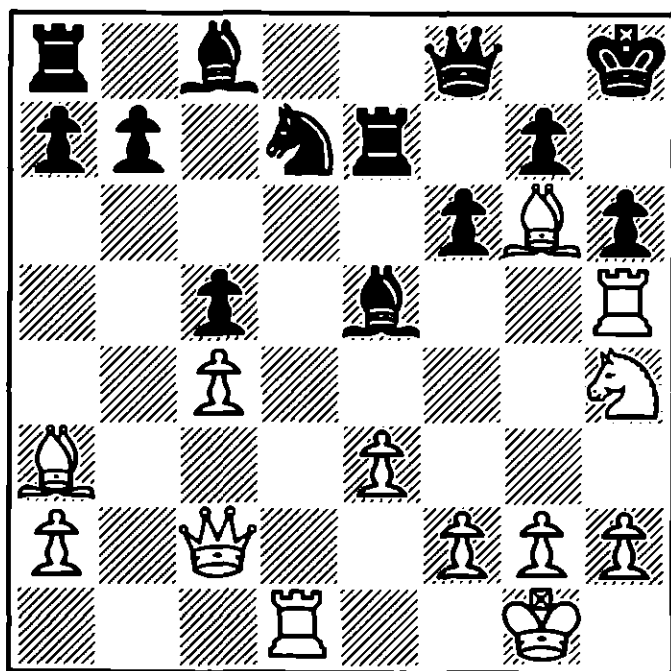
9 Bd1 Resigns

After 9 ... Qxd1ch 10 Kh2, Black has completely lost his hold on the dark squares.

This should help you to think about colour. Remember that each colour is half the board as you attempt to solve the following problems.

Diagram 178

Taimanov

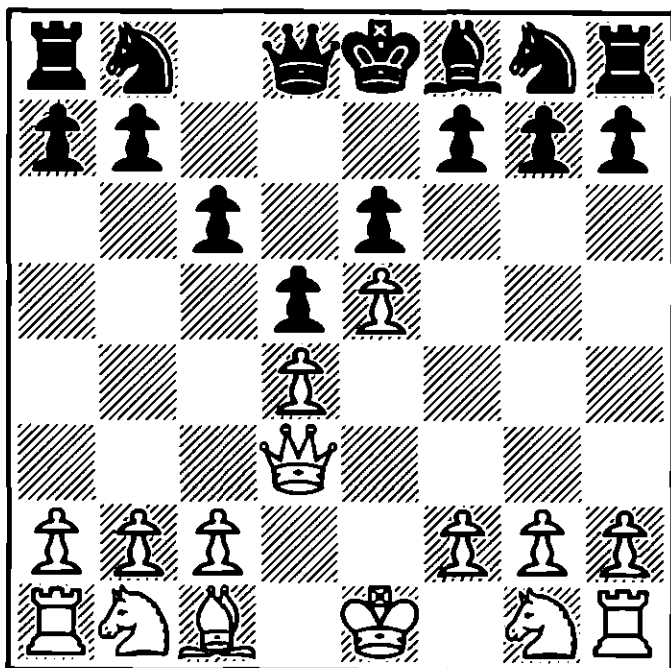


Petrosian

Moscow, 1955

This was the final position after 24 moves. It is Black to play. Why did he resign?

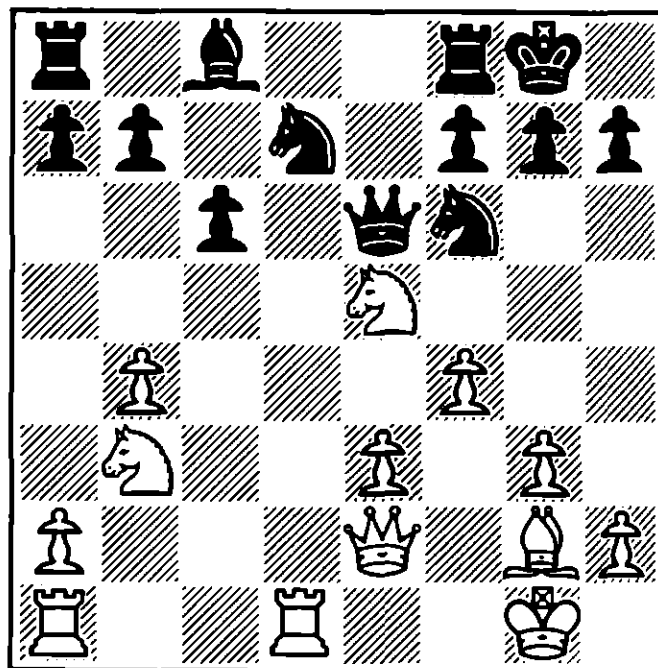
Diagram 179



The first five moves of a variation in the Caro-Kann Defence are 1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5

3 e5 Bf5 4 Bd3 Bxd3 5 Qxd3 e6 when the position of diagram 179 arises. Which side would you prefer to be playing, Black or White, and why?

Diagram 180



If White plays 1 Nxd7, how should Black reply to prevent a weakening of his light squares?

SOLUTIONS

Diagram 178 The position is materially equal and those pieces which Black has developed stand well. His control of the dark squares, you will notice, is good, but when you examine the light ones the key to the position is revealed. Due mainly to his undeveloped queenside, particularly the Bishop, he has a chronic weakness on the light squares: the b1 h7 diagonal and other vital points such as d5, e6, f7 and g8. White threatens to retreat his Bishop at g6 and use that square for a triple Knight fork. All Black can do is move his Queen. After 1 ... Qd8 2 Be4 White would

have Bd5 and Ng6 to follow against which there would be no defence.

Diagram 179 You have no doubt discovered only too often the problems involved in the development of the Queen's Bishop in many Black defences. Here Black has resolved the matter quickly and, in establishing the triangle of pawns on light squares at c6, d5 and e6, would otherwise have locked in the Bishop.

Now consider the dark-squared Bishops on both sides. The disposition of Black's pawns gives freedom to his King's Bishop whilst White's pawns at d4 and e5 will inhibit the activity of his Queen's Bishop. Other matters standing equal, Black's position is to be preferred. For this reason White seldom plays this variation against the Caro-Kann these days. It is interesting to see that the problem of colour arises in the very opening and the choice of opening variations today takes this factor into account.

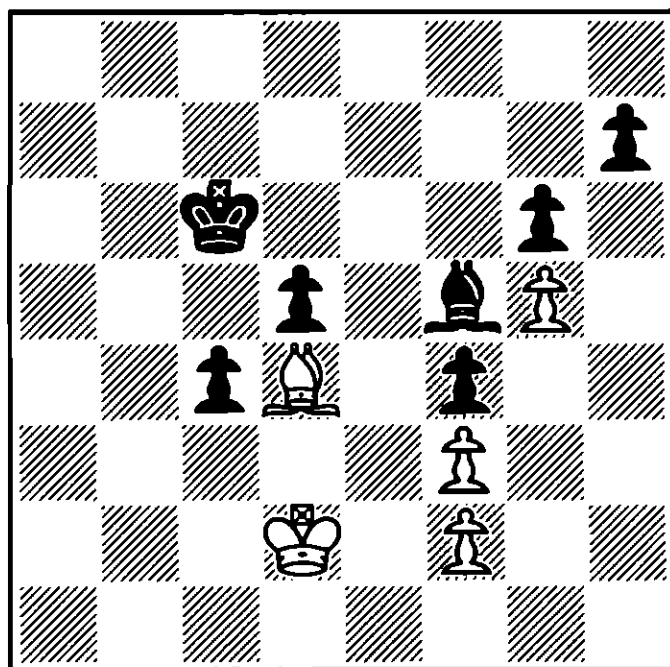
Diagram 180 In this middle game position White has greater control of space, advantage in development and the beginnings of a queenside attack well supported by the Bishop on the long diagonal. In the coming struggle Black will need his Bishop to oppose the threat against the light squares. After 1 Nxd7 supposing Black replied with 1 ... Bxd7. There would follow 2 Nc5 Qe7 3 Nxd7 (not 3 Nxb7 because of 3 ... Bg4) Nxd7 4 b5! and the pressure on the light squares wrecks Black's queenside pawns. On move one he must retake with

the Knight and preserve the Bishop.

A recent and extreme example of the colour problem is seen in diagram 181.

Diagram 181

Mestel



Tukmakov

England v. USSR Telex Match, 1982

Mestel was two pawns up in this position with White to play. It was left to the decision of the adjudicators. What award did they make? No extensive analysis is required.

Diagram 181 Black is two pawns up and under normal conditions he would expect to win comfortably. But the Bishops are of opposite colour which means that Black is all-powerful on the light squares and White invincible on the dark ones. This extreme case of the colour problem prevents Black making any progress with his pawns at c4 and d5, passed

and supported though they may be. After 1 Kc3 White needs only to stay there with his King and move his Bishop so as to keep an eye on the other blockade square, d4, and there is nothing Black can do to break through. The adjudicators declared the position drawn.

All through the game, from the opening to the endgame, the colour question is frequently a vital, always a relevant, issue.

Activity on two fronts

For example, in the position of diagram 182, White has made a grave miscalculation and Black can take immediate advantage of the situation to spoil White's pawns.

White now has doubled and isolated pawns.

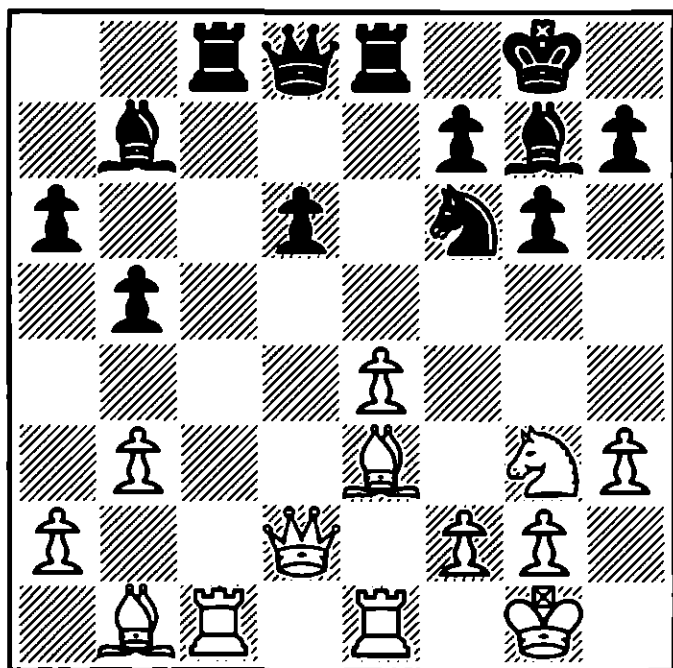
and Black wins a pawn which should be sufficient to win.

Weaknesses are not usually as blatant as this and it is necessary, once one weakness has appeared, to concentrate on that point and to provoke other weaknesses.

In diagram 183 there is a clear weakness in the Black position, the isolated pawn at d6.

Diagram 183

Smyslov



Korchnoy

USSR Championship, 1973

Korchnoy identifies another weakness, the pawn at a6, which is far from obvious at the moment. It is not technically backward until White plays b4, but it is in a backward position, being unsupported by another pawn, and there are possible future routes in to attack, perhaps along the c-file. These are vague notions at the moment, but, White argues, the pressure on the d-pawn may force Black to make concessions so that a serious attack on the a-pawn can later be mounted.

1 Rxc8

Black has a choice of plans. He could recapture with his Bishop and hold on to the d-

pawn. This would involve him in such moves as ... Bf8, ... Re6 and ... Ne8. Clearly he has sufficient force in the right places for the task, but it would mean that those pieces would be tied down to the protection of a mere pawn when they could be doing better work elsewhere.

Instead he could recapture with the Queen, letting the d-pawn go in return for White's e-pawn. This would rid him of what would otherwise become a permanent weakness, although it would enable White to find more active squares for his major pieces.

In this dilemma Black chose the latter course.

1	Qxc8
2 Qxd6	Nxe4
3 Bxe4	

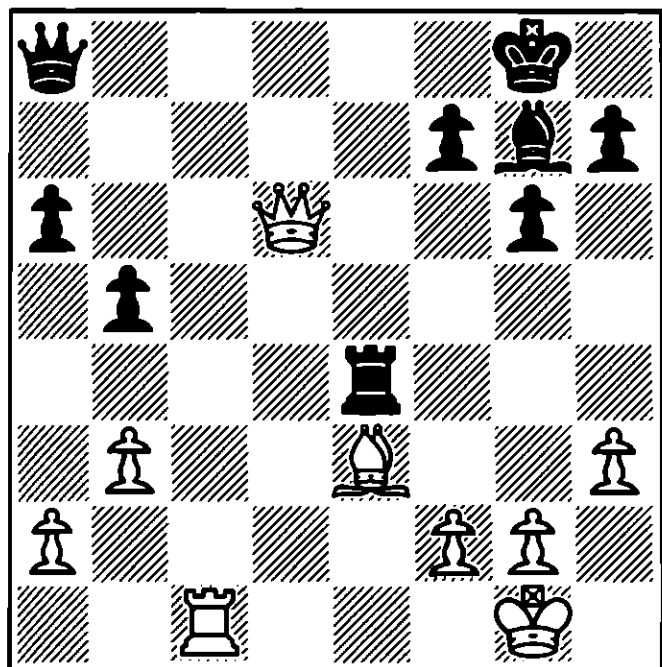
Exchanging two pairs of minor pieces is a most important part of his scheme for with the disappearance of his white-square Bishop Black's a-pawn becomes weak.

3	Bxe4
4 Rc1	

Slipping in an extra move and taking over the c-file with tempo. Moves such as this can be turning points in a game and here the Zwischenzug - as it is called gives impetus to White's initiative.

4	Qa8
5 Nxe4	Rxe4

Diagram 184



It is remarkable how quickly positions can change, but apart from one pair of pawns disappearing the exchanges have been of pieces and most of the original pawn structure has been preserved. Now that the battlefield has been cleared a little those salient features stand out, and it is quite obvious now, as it was not before, that the a-pawn is weak and that White's control of central lines will help him to undermine it.

He must not attack directly by Rc6 because of ... Re6. Instead he takes control of the seventh rank and works his way behind the target pawn.

6 Qd7

The d6 weakness has gone and the a-pawn exposed as the new target, but it is still a single one. White now teases out a new weakness so that he will again have two points to play on and so divide the Black force between them. The new spot is the pawn at f7. With

the text White not only threatens to win the Queen with a check on the back rank, but 7 Rc7, which has the dual threat of Qxf7ch and Ra7 winning the pawn, branching out, as it were, on both sides, and applying pressure at widely separated points so that the defensive forces are hard put to it to cover both vulnerable areas.

6 Re8
7 Rc7 Rf8

Black's Rook and Queen have been banished to miserable corners in a most ignominious manner.

8 Ra7

Now the pawn is attacked from behind and there is no way to save it. White must be careful for there is still some spite in the Black position. For example, here 8 Bc5 seems to win the exchange but then would come 8 ... Qe4 and after 9 Bxf8? Qe1ch 10 Kh2 Be5ch 11 g3 Qxf2ch 12 Kh1 Qf3+ 13 Kg1 Qxg3+ and Black comes out at least two pawns up.

8 Qe4

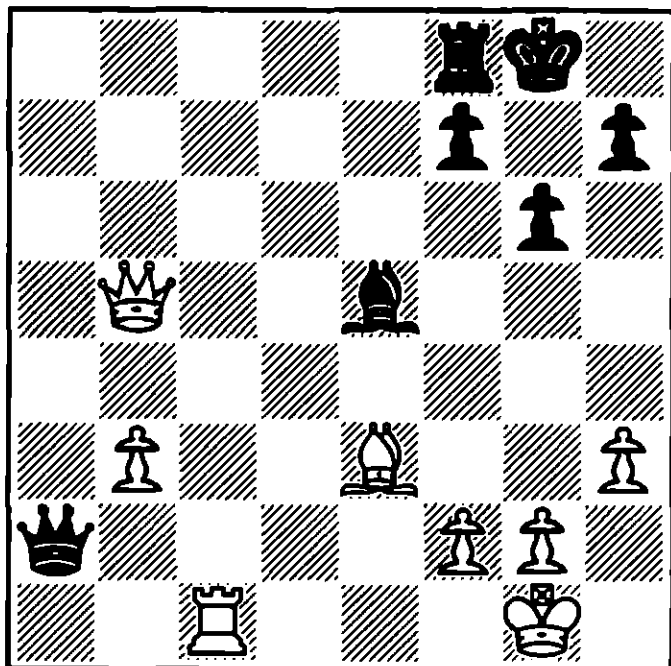
Black wisely keeps his Queen as active as possible, seeking compensation for the pawn.

9 Rxa6 Be5

Threatening mate on the back rank.

10 Rc6 Qb1ch
11 Rc1 Qxa2
12 Qxb5

Diagram 185



With a passed pawn on the queenside White now has a considerable advantage. It is interesting to see how the win is accomplished for the queening square, b8, is well covered, and Korchnoy again has to make use of the idea of subsidiary threats, probing for other weaknesses, in order to force the pawn through.

12 Qb2
13 Qd3

Black has taken up station behind the pawn and so the queen must be dislodged.

13 Ra8
14 Qb1

So that after the exchange the Rook would be behind the passed pawn, which is where Rooks should be in an endgame.

14 Qa3

Preserving his chances by keeping material on the board, although it allows the pawn to

run free for a while.

15 b4 Qa4
16 b5 Bd4

Any hope of Black getting in an attack against White's King is prevented by the well placed Bishop at e3 and so he offers an exchange.

17 Bxd4 Qxd4
18 b6

And White gains another square.

18 Rb8
19 Rc6 Rb7
20 Qb3!

Very good. The Queen once more puts pressure on f7 and threatens Rc7 with mate to follow.

20 Kg7

Looking for a flight-square a h6.

21 g3

So that if Black tries ... Re7 and ... Re1ch, the King can go to g2, protecting f2 and keeping out the enemy Queen.

21 Re7
22 Qf3

Not only securing the King's position but indirectly covering b7 for the next pawn advance.

22 Re1ch
23 Kg2 Re5
24 Qf6ch Kh6
25 b7 Qd5ch
26 Qf3

Not 26 Kh2 because of 26 ... Re1 etc.

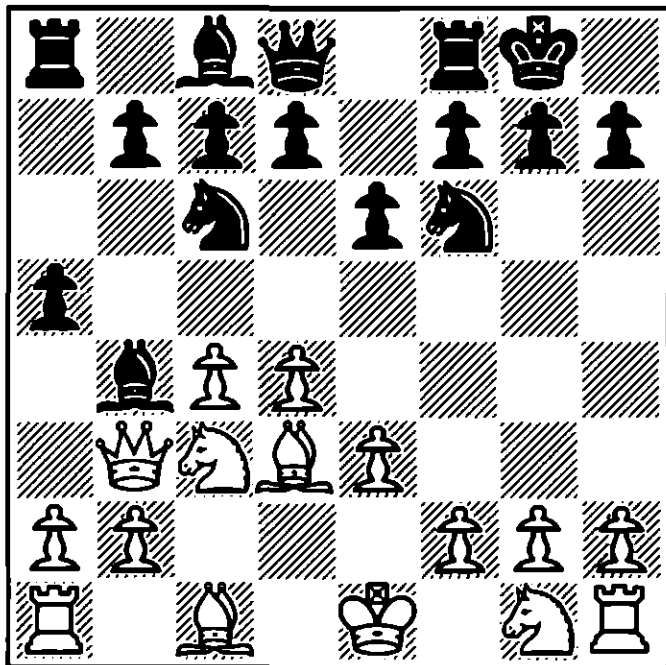
26 Qb5
 27 Qf4ch Kg7
 28 Rb6!

Neatly rounding off the game. 28 ... Qxb6 29 Qxe5ch f6 30 Qe7ch and then, according to where the King moves, White checks at e8 or f8 ready for queening. In face of this prospect Smyslov resigned.

In the next game we see a quite remarkable division of Black's forces to create activity on both sides of the board.

Diagram 186

Nimzowitsch



Stahlberg

Göteborg, 1934

The moves 1 d4 e6 2 c4 Nf6 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 Qb3 Nc6 5 e3 0 0 6 Bd3 a5, gave rise to the position of diagram 186.

White can prevent the advance on the a-file by breaking the pin on his Queen's

Knight with Bd2, but chooses instead,

7 Ne2 a4
 8 Qd1 a3

The point of Black's attack is to weaken the queenside. If now 9 bxa3, the a-pawn becomes isolated. Even so. White would have been better off accepting that and concentrating on the centre where prospects are more promising for him. Instead he played,

9 b3,

and after Black turned his attention to the centre with,

9 d5,

he has achieved effective restraint on the queenside without making concessions elsewhere. Both sides now move towards completing their development.

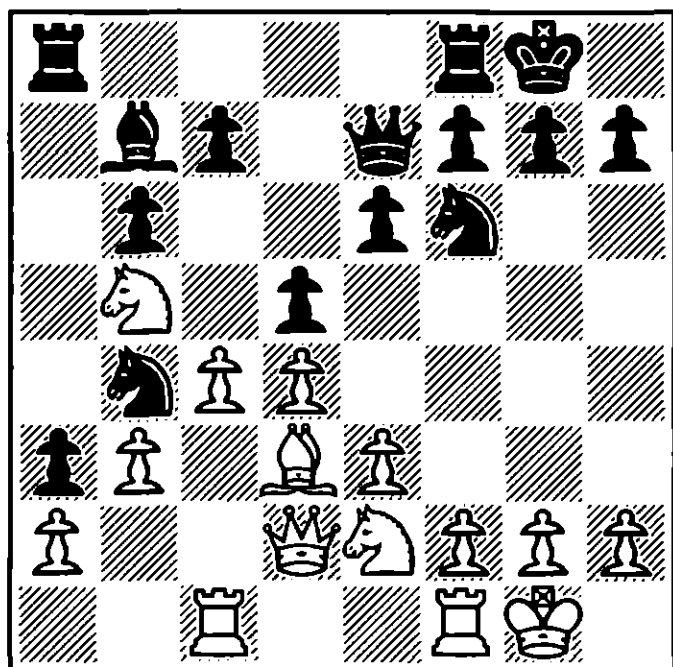
10 0 0 b6
 11 Bd2 Bb7
 12 Rc1 Qe7
 13 Nb5

White goes hunting along a file which he can half open by cxd5 and after,

13 Bxd2
 14 Qxd2 Nb4,

we have the position of diagram 187.

Diagram 187



Both Knights on the queenside are offensively placed in corresponding positions, but there is a world of difference in the implications of those postings. White's Knight, though exerting some pressure on c7, can be driven away with ... c6. Black's Knight, on the other hand, is unassailable, and consequently applies permanent pressure at a2; the closer the endgame comes, the thornier becomes the problem of that weakness in White's queenside.

15 cxd5 Nfxd5

Protecting c7 as well as the other Knight. But why cannot White drive it off with 16 e4 and then collect the c-pawn? Because there would follow 16 ... Nxd3 17 Qxd3 Nb4 (replacing the outpost) 18 Qd2 (he must protect the a-pawn) c6 and White has made no progress on the c-file and succeeded only in weakening his centre.

16 Be4

Now he is threatening the c-pawn because of the pin on the Knight.

16 c6
17 Bxd5 exd5

An important capture for in this way Black opens up the second arm of his dual attack, the e-file.

18 Nbc3 Ba6
19 Na4 Bxe2!

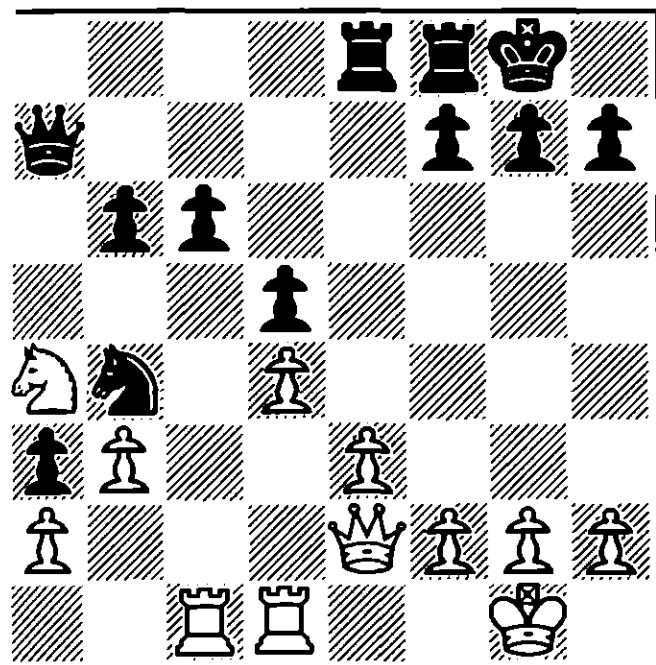
The exchange of a perfectly good Bishop for the Knight must have come as a surprise for White. The move is only understandable in the context of Black's wider strategy. Black's reasoning is very subtle; by the exchange he reduces White's forces on the kingside and so makes Black's second front in that region more effective. To give up a good Bishop in this way, which most chessplayers would have been very reluctant to do, displays a remarkable confidence in his own strategic planning.

20 Qxe2 Qa7

This and the next move disclose the purpose discussed in the previous note.

21 Rfd1 Rae8

Diagram 188



A fascinating interchange, switching the Queen from the e to the a-file and the Rook from the a to the e-file, but this is what Nimzowitsch saw as the proper division of his forces: the Queen and Knight are to work together on the queenside, a pair that is often good at cooperation, whilst the two Rooks are to join forces and operate on the e and f-files.

22 Qd2 Qa5
23 Nc3

Destined to replace the Knight that was exchanged but meanwhile Black's plans advance several moves.

23 f5
24 Ne2 Rf6
25 Kh1

The idea is to introduce the Knight into the hole at e5 by N g1 f3 e5, and so hold up Black's kingside advance.

25 h6
26 Ng1 f4!

Crossing White's plans by sacrificing a pawn.

27 exf4

If he continues with the Knight's journey, 27 Nf3, then 27 ... fxe3 28 fxe3 Ref8 and the Knight is denied its final move because of the threat of invasion of the seventh rank along the f-file.

27 Re4

A good outpost for the Rook since it applies lateral pressure against two weak pawns.

28 g3

Hoping that the extra pawn will shore up his kingside.

28 Qb5

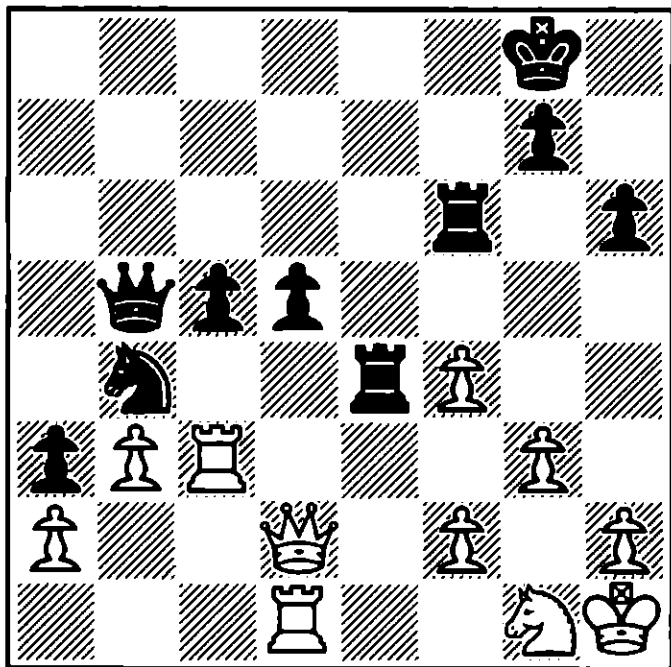
This neatly prevents White from challenging the e-file for if he places a Rook there Black replies Nd3

29 Rc3 c5

From Black's pawn mass a passed pawn is destined to emerge. White has been pinned down to his left and his right and will now be crushed by an advance in the centre.

30 dxc5 bxc5

Diagram 189



The final White obstruction in the centre having been removed, the two separate Black forces are now in complete communication with easy movement across the board: a remarkable strategic accomplishment.

31 Rdc1 Rc6

Proof that the two wings have now joined forces.

32 Re3

White has played well to engineer this challenge on the e-file but, strangely, it is too late, no longer relevant, as can be seen in Black allowing all the Rooks to be exchanged.

32 Rce6
33 Rxe4

White cannot play for repetition with 33 Rec3 because of 33 ... Rd4! trapping the Queen and if then 34 Rxc5, simply 34 Qxc5 wins.

33 Rxe4
34 f3 Re8
35 Re1 Rxe1
36 Qxe1 Qd7

The irony is that the e-file is no longer important at the very time that White has won control, for Black's fine Queen move covers all White's entry points in that file as well as taking up station behind what is germane a passed pawn ready to expand.

37 Qc1 d4
38 Ne2

If White takes either the a or c-pawn, Black's d-pawn runs through.

38 Qb5
39 Qe1

Sneaking back to the e-file.

39 Qd3

It is really only a matter now of choosing how White is going to lose.

40 Nc1 Qxf3ch
41 Kg1 Kf7!

Take care when you are winning! White had been plotting a little swindle on the e-file. Nimzowitsch covers the entry points again.

42 Qf2 Qe4
43 Qf1 d3

Closing the diagonal, among other things.

44 Qd1 Qe3ch
45 Kg2

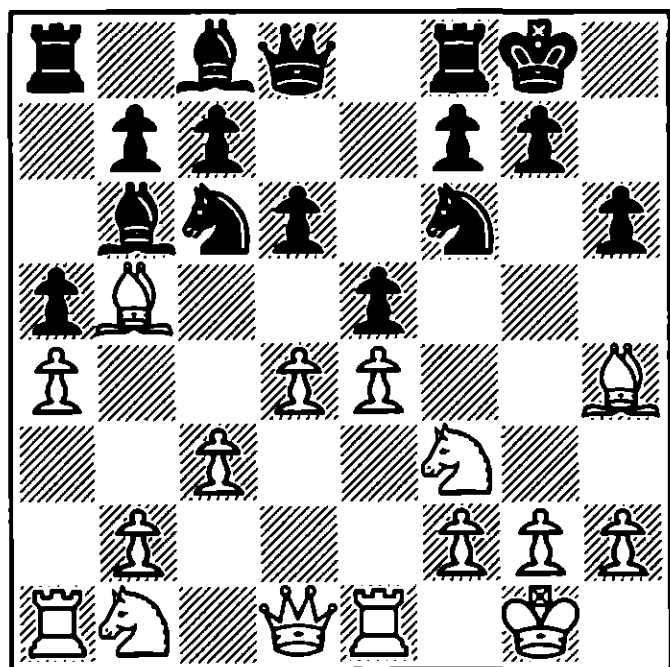
And White resigned without waiting for the reply. It would probably have been 45 ... d2 46 Ne2 (46 Qh5ch g6 and White

has no more checks) Nd3, with the unanswerable threat of controlling the queening square by Nb2.

Finding the resources to combat two widely separated attacks put such a strain on the White forces that something was bound to crack in the end.

Diagram 190

Zuidema



Spassky

Belgrade, 1964

It is Black to move and both sides have almost completed their development.

White has a powerful pin on the Knight at f6, one from which Black cannot escape since he cannot play a Bishop to e7 unless he weakens his kingside pawns with ... g5. In addition White has pressure against e5 which can be increased by N - a3 c4. Black decides to reduce the central tension and exchange pawns.

1

exd4

Instead of recapturing immediately Spassky, satisfied that the pin will give him a lasting advantage on the kingside, gives up Bishop for Knight to create weaknesses in Black's queenside pawn structure.

2 Bxc6!

bxc6

3 Nxd4

Now Black's c-pawns are doubled, the front one weak, and his a-pawn is isolated. But to achieve this White has had to concede the half open b-file and his own pawn at b2 has been consequently weakened.

3

Re8

4 Nd2

There would be no point in 4 Nxc6 because of 4 ... Qd7 and then if 5 Bxf6 not 5 ... gxf6? but 5 ... Qxc6! and Black has released himself from the pin and activated his pieces for the cost of a weak pawn.

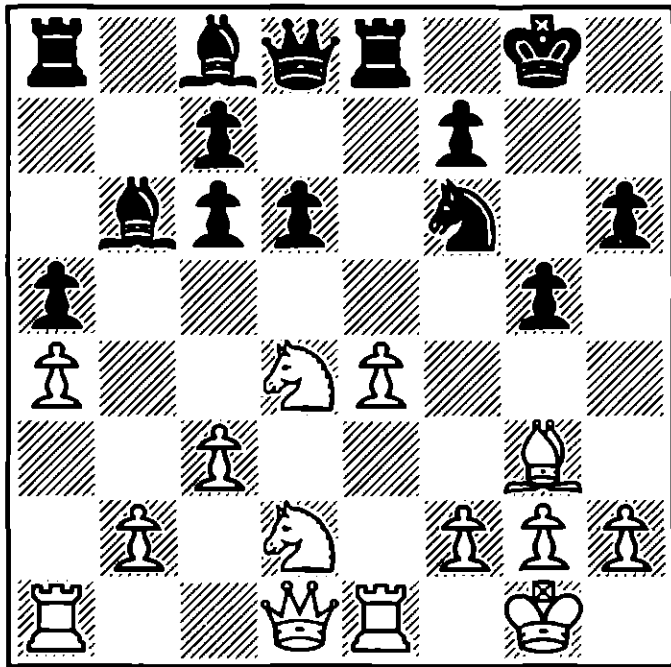
4

g5

Admitting that however long he waits he cannot rid himself of the pin in any other way. He takes the risks that all such moves in front of the King imply but not to do so would be to accept that neither his Knight nor Queen would be of any active use to him.

5 Bg3

Diagram 191



Now there are three weaknesses in the Black position at a5, c6 and g5 and one in White's at b2 which turns into a backward pawn at b3 a little later. It will be interesting to see whether Black's single, or White's multiple advantage has the better chance of success.

5 Bxd4

A good move removing a piece which was not only well placed in the centre but attacking c6. 5 ... c5 would only lock in his dark-squared Bishop and cause congestion on the b-file where he hopes to mount an attack. Bxd4 also allows him to develop his Queen's Bishop effectively at e6, rather than passively defending the c-pawn from d7.

6 cxd4 Rb8
7 f3!

A fine move. If Black captures the b-pawn then 8 Nc4 and 9 Nxa5 and White's a-pawn is passed. The text solidifies the centre by supporting the e-

pawn but, as importantly, gives his Bishop the opportunity to take an interest in the queenside, via f2, in addition to its kingside role.

7 Be6
8 b3 Rb4

Gaining a tempo with an attack on the d-pawn as he prepares to double his Rooks.

9 Bf2 Qa8

Another good move. The Queen not only protects the a and c-pawns but clears the way for the other Rook.

10 Rc1

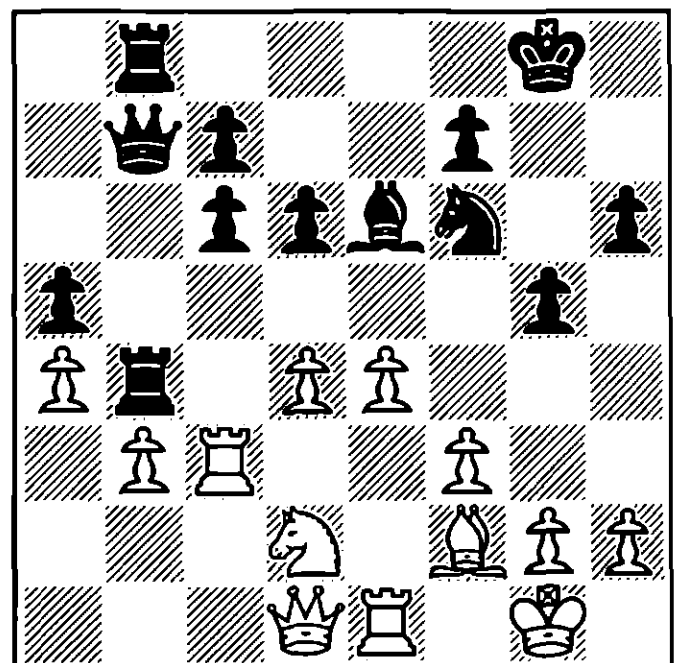
Reminding Black that the doubled pawn is still there and vulnerable.

10 Reb8
11 Rc3

This Rook has a defensive role as well as an attacking one.

11 Qb7

Diagram 192



Tripling smoothly on the b-file Black has rapidly mounted his attack on the backward pawn. White seems to have accomplished little for the last few moves apart from protecting the pawn and bringing one piece, the Rook at c3, to bear on one of his targets, c6.

White could go on in the same way and provide further cover for the b-pawn with Ree3, but the ultimate defence of that point was never a part of his purpose.

12 Qc1!

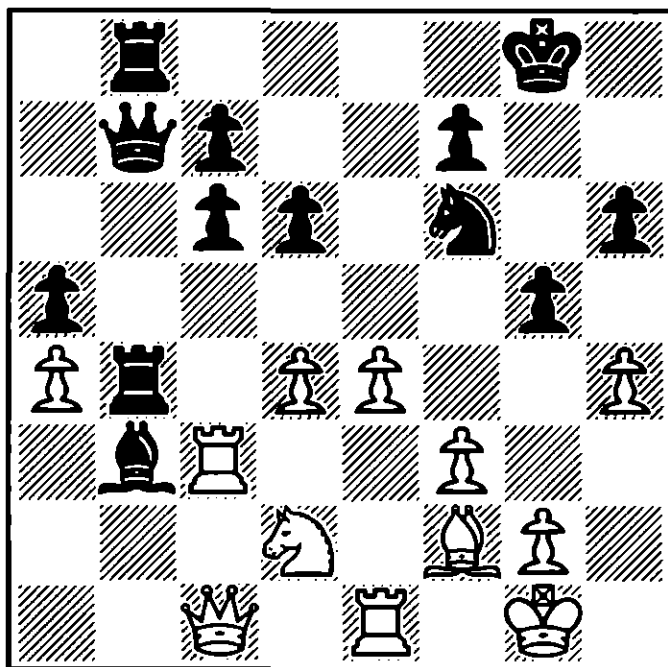
This seemingly innocuous little side step is really full of menace. It highlights two weaknesses, at c6 and g5, and though the Queen is masked in both directions by other White pieces, the move displays here multiple, long-range power.

12 Bxb3

Black's plan succeeds and now that the b-pawn has gone the a-pawn's position is badly eroded.

13 h4!

Diagram 193



Striking at the g5 target and the pawn beyond should Black choose to capture.

It is a critical situation. If Black takes the pawn at h4 his h6-pawn becomes weak, if he does not, then White will exchange pawns and g5 will be unsupported.

To give you some idea of White's hidden resources, here are two possibilities. In one Black attends to the kingside, in the other he turns to the Queen's.

1 Black takes the h-pawn:
13 ... gxh4 14 e5 Nd5
15 Ne4! Nxc3? 16 Qxh6 Nd5
17 Bxh4 and Black is clearly helpless.

2 Black goes on with his own plans on the queenside: 13 ... Bxa4 14 hxg5 hxg5 15 e5 Nd5
16 Ne4 (again unmasking the Queen and this time threatening to capture the pawn with check) Nxc3 17 Qxg5ch Kf8 18 Qh6ch Ke8 19 Nf6ch Ke7 (19 ... Kd8 20 Qf8 mate) 20 exd6 double ch

Kxd6 21 Qh2! a very pleasing mate.

In both these lines Black would have done better to retreat his Knight to h7 rather than go for material, but it is clear that White's chances of a kingside attack are excellent.

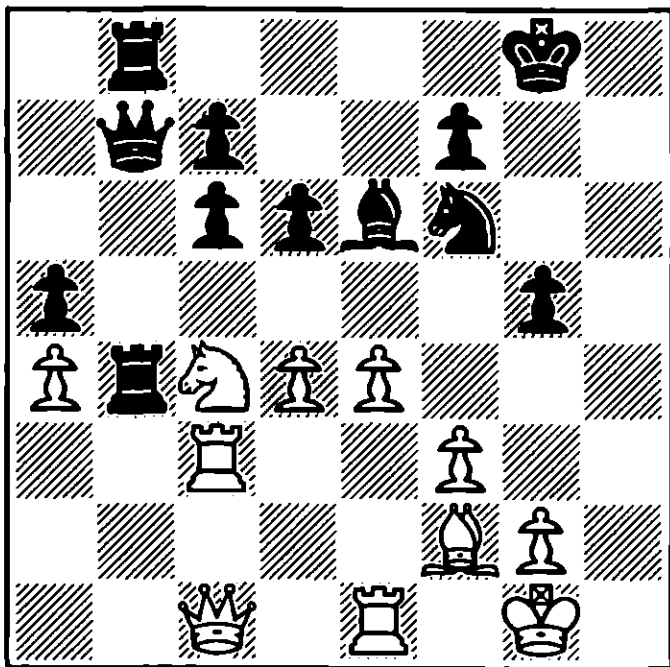
The line chosen in the game, however, reveals the queenside resources that are also latent in White's position.

13 Be6

Acknowledging that the kingside gives him some concern and clearing the b-file so that when the White Knight unmask the Queen he will be able to play ... Rb1, seeking to reduce the forces against him.

14 hxg5 hxg5
15 Nc4!

Diagram 194



A beautiful move because, with elegant simplicity, it stresses those three weaknesses, a5, c6 and g5 mentioned at move 5.

White threatens Qxg5ch and Nxa5 forking Queen and pawn.

15 Nh7

He must attend to the King first, of course.

16 Nxa5 Qb6
17 Nxc6

And so both the queenside weak points fall. White's strategy has succeeded and the game is over. Black had one target the backward b-pawn and although he hit it, it did not prove to be a fatal blow. White had three, located in two widely separated areas, and so again it was the capacity for engagement on two fronts that won the day.

But the game is not quite over....

17 Rb1

By this method Black gets out of the fork.

There are now all kinds of ways for White to win. He has a fine centre, a passed pawn on the a-file and is a pawn up. Spassky finds an original and pleasing way to finish.

18 d5! Rxc1
19 Rexc1 Qb2
20 Nxb8 Bxd5
21 exd5 Qxb8

White has an easy win with two Rooks for the Queen, especially as Black's Knight is remote from the scene of action.

22 a5 Qa8
23 Ra1 Nf6

Unfortunately he cannot lockade the pawn with Qa6 ecause of Rc6.

24 a6 Nxd5
25 Rb3 Resigns,

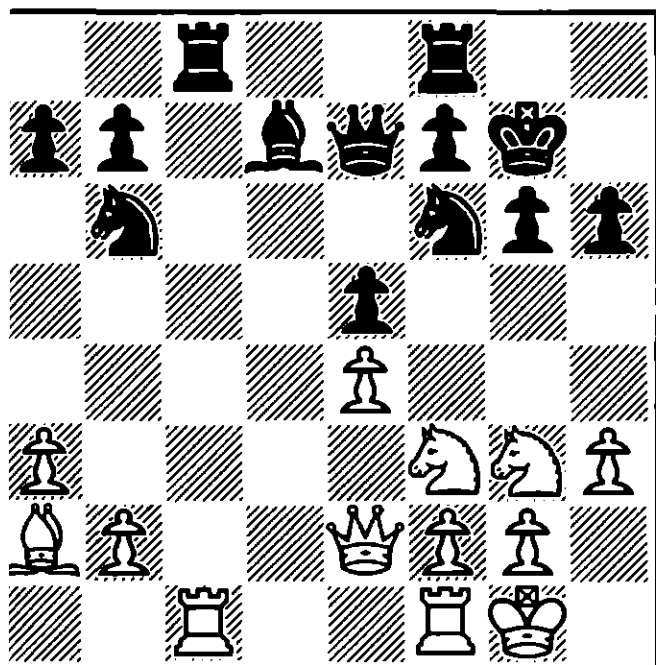
or the pawn is not to be topped.

It is remarkable that White as able not only to create the riple weakness but to apply qual and almost simultaneous ressure to those points.

The key move, subtle and ifficult to find because it as just a sideways shuffle by he Queen, reminds one of nother famous short step by he Queen which once decided he destiny of the World hampionship.

Diagram 195

Capablanca



Alekhine

Final match game for the
World Championship
Buenos Aires, 1927

In this complex though apparently even looking position Alekhine found a move which is really a sort of triple fork.

1 Qd2!!

The Queen is so powerful a piece that she doesn't need to move far to change totally her lines of attack. This move pinpoints three weaknesses in the Black position in a startling manner, none of which was in the least obvious before: the h-pawn on the far right, the a-pawn on the far left and the pawn at e5, right in the middle.

A few simple variations will show these weaknesses clearly. In the first two Black tries to reduce the forces against him by exchanges.

1 1 Rxc1
2 Rxc1 Rc8
3 Rxc8 Bxc8
4 Qa5!

forking the a and e-pawns and so winning material.

2 1 Rxc1
2 Rxc1 Rc8
3 Rxc8 Ncx8
4 Qc3!

and the e-pawn is attacked twice and must fall for Black cannot bring up another defender. Though not a long one this would have been a hard variation for either side to see from the initial position.

3 1 Bc6

More aggressive this time, Black counter attacks against the e-pawn.

2 Nh4 Bxe4
3 Qe3!

winning the Bishop for if the Bishop moves off the b1 h7 line, White forks twice with a Knight at f5, winning the Queen.

4 1 Bc6
2 Nh4 Nxe4

Trying it the other way and attacking the Queen.

3 Nh5ch gxf5
4 Nxf5ch

If the King retreats to the h-file it is mate in two and if he goes to g8 his Queen is taken with check.

4 Kg6 or f6
5 Qxh6ch Kxf5
6 g4 mate!

In the event Capablanca chose:

1 Be6,

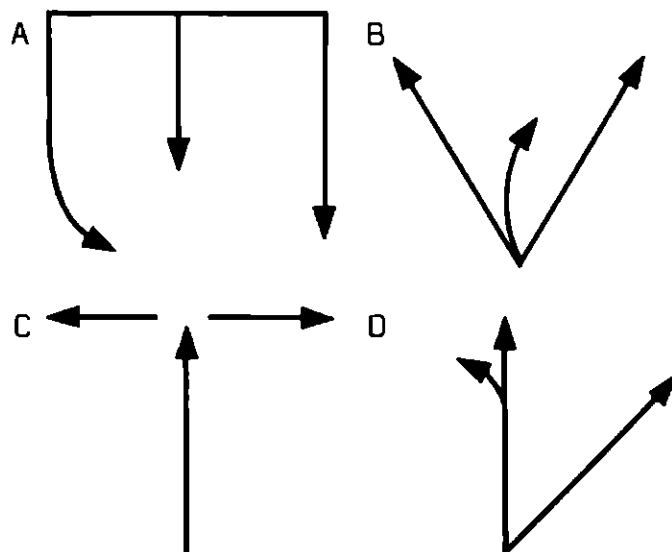
and after,

2 Bxe6 Qxe6
3 Qa5,

White won a pawn. Capablance fought on heroically, as one would expect from a man whose title depended on it, but in the end he resigned on the 82nd move.

The problems for this chapter are of a different kind.

Each of the following four diagrams could represent the lines of strategic planning for one of the games discussed in this chapter. Can you assign each to its appropriate game?



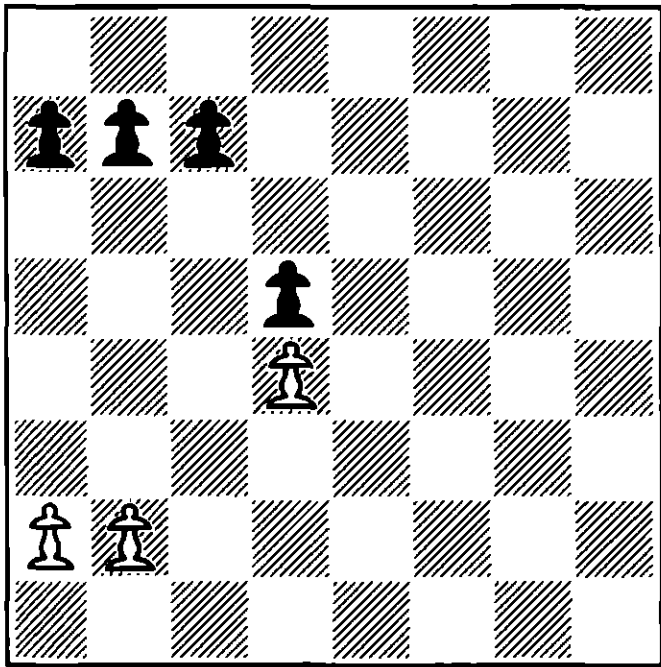
SOLUTIONS

- A Stahlberg Nimzowitsch
- B Alekhine - Capablanca
- C Korchnoy Smyslov
- D Spassky Zuidema

CHAPTER 16

The minority attack

Diagram 196



The pawn configuration in diagram 196 occurs quite frequently, particularly in openings such as the Queen's Gambit, and it is worthwhile devoting a short chapter to the subject.

Black has a queenside pawn majority and from it hopes to produce a passed pawn. However, White can sometimes take the initiative in spite of his pawn inferiority. The fact that he has a minority implies that he also has a half open file for his use. His object is to advance his pawns and create weaknesses among the Black pawn mass and then to prey upon them. It could be argued that to do so would only lead to the

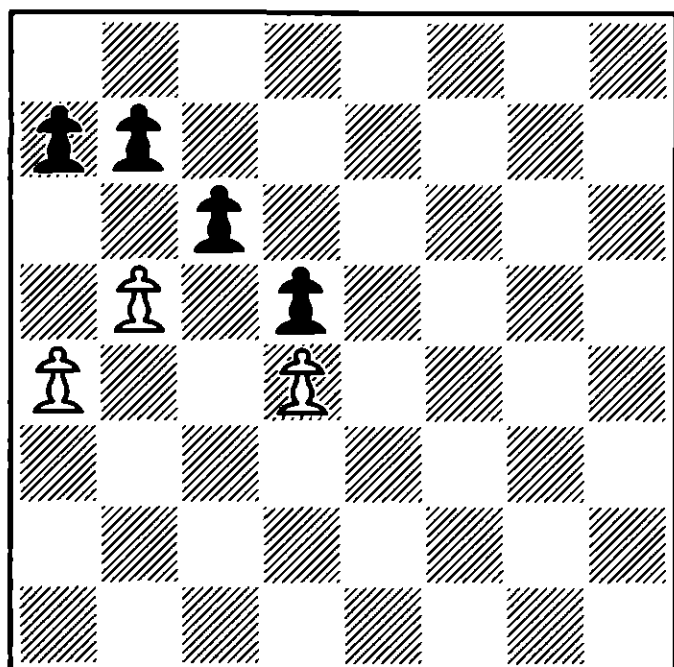
pawn exchanges desired by Black who would then emerge with the passed pawn he had hoped for. But this is not necessarily so. If Black took the initiative in advancing his pawns he would make proper preparations before he started, in order to ensure that the resulting pawn situation was to his advantage. White, on the other hand, with his pre-emptive attack, would contrive matters so that exchanges took place in conditions favourable to himself and, if he was successful, disturb the structure of the opposing force and spoil the majority's chances of producing a healthy passed pawn. It is a pre-emptive strike, intended to confound the enemy and tempt, prompt, press him into making pawn moves before he is ready.

Common forms of the attack will not infrequently produce positions akin to that in diagram 197 where Black has supported his d-pawn with ... c6 and White has advanced his b-pawn, perhaps with the support of a pawn at a4, or, if not, that of a piece.

Black is in something of a dilemma. He has the choice between capturing the b-pawn and so leaving his d-pawn isolated, unless he is lucky enough to have a pawn still on the e-file, or allowing White to exchange bxc6 when,

after ... bxc6 he is left with an isolated a-pawn, a backward c-pawn and a hole at c5.

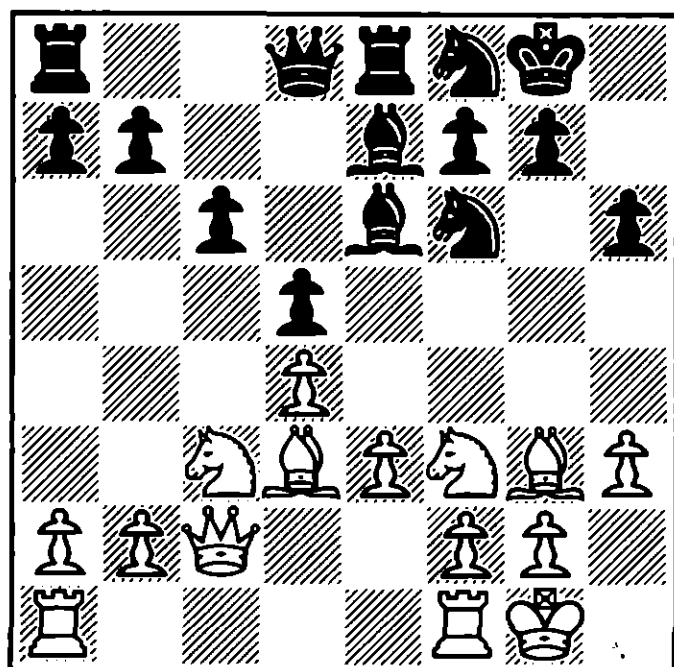
Diagram 197



In either case White has succeeded in creating weaknesses in the pawn structure and given himself targets for attack.

Diagram 198

Golombek



Capablanca
Margate, 1939

If you look at the position on the queenside you will see that Black has a pawn majority and the White forces are disposed in a typical array for a minority attack. It is signalled by White's first move.

1 Rab1

The other Rook is for use on the half open c-file.

Black aims for a reduction of forces by exchanges, which explains his next few moves, and then to seek compensation on the kingside where he has the half open e-file.

1 Nh5
2 Bh2

This Bishop controls a fine diagonal reaching into the queenside where he is preparing an attack, so he does not wish to exchange it, and certainly not for a Knight.

2 g6
3 Ne5 Ng7

Now he is ready to exchange the light-squared Bishops.

4 b4 Bf5
5 Na4

Cracks already appear in the Black position. White threatens Nc5 at a suitable moment and if Black tries to prevent this with ... b6 (after defending the c-pawn) the c-pawn will in effect become backward.

5 Bxd3
6 Qxd3 Nd7

Continuing his policy of exchanging.

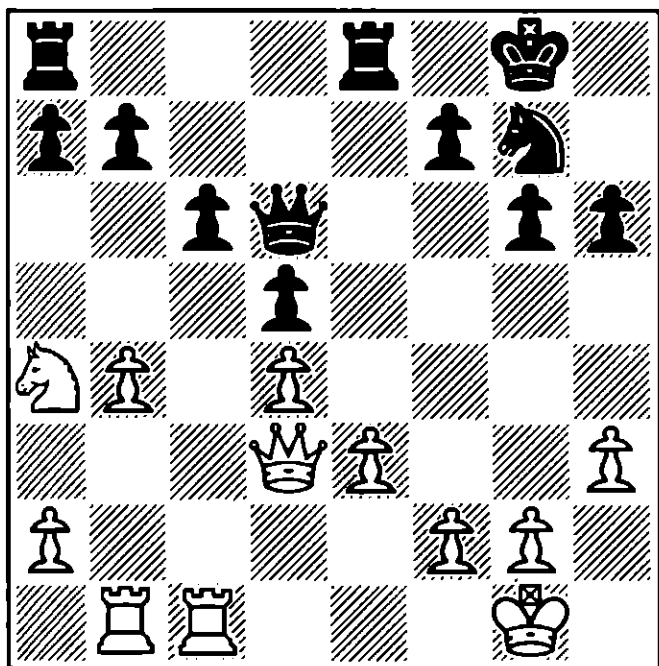
Capablanca leaves his opponent to make the exchanges whilst he strengthens his hold on the queenside files.

7 Nxe5
8 Bxe5 Bd6

The White Bishop enjoys too good a diagonal to be left unchallenged and White exchanges this time because he does not want his centre pawns broken.

9 Bxd6 Qxd6

Diagram 199

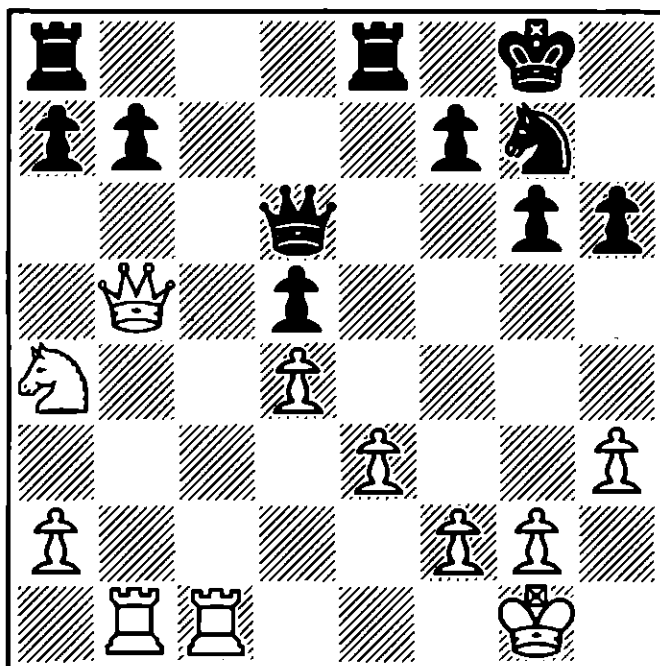


Black has succeeded in achieving wholesale exchanges but has not eased his position. As Golombek himself remarked, in his fine collection "Capablanca's 100 Best Games of Chess", Capablanca has brought his minority attack to a rapid climax. White is poised for a pawn thrust and the simplified nature of the position provides a good illustration of a minority attack at work.

Now Black faces the unpleasant choice discussed in diagram 197. Black regards the lesser evil as the isolation of his d-pawn.

10 cxb5
11 Qxb5

Diagram 200



Black's queenside majority still exists and so what has White accomplished for his pains?

He has created an isolated pawn at d5.

The c-file is now fully open.

The b-file has been half opened and Black's b-pawn is subject to frontal pressure. In fact the dual weakness at d5 and b7 forces Black to give up a pawn.

Supposing he tries to hold both pawns: 11 ... Re7 12 Rc5 (there is nothing a Rook likes better than lurking on an open

file, advancing in it when the time is ripe and applying lateral muscle as the White Rook does now against the d-pawn) Rd8 13 Nc3 and the d-pawn must fall.

Or again: 11 b6 (a hole at c6 appears and is immediately filled) 12 Rc6 Qd7 13 Rxb6! winning the pawn because of the discovery on the Queen, or, in this, if 12 ... Qd8 (the only other square for the Queen which also guards the d-pawn) then 13 Nc3 wins the d-pawn because Black cannot play a Rook to d8.

Black, therefore, abandons his attempt to hold both pawns and activates his Knight.

11 Ne6
12 Nc3

When you are winning don't snatch heedlessly at pawns. The text gives White a choice of pawns and his task would have been harder had he taken the b-pawn immediately: 12 Qxb7 Reb8 13 Qc6 Qxc6 14 Rxb8ch Rxb8 15 Rxc6 Rb1ch and, although White will still win, Black has gained some freedom.

12 Red8
13 Qxb7

Now it is different for if the Queen is challenged on the file White will win the a or the d-pawn according to which Rook Black uses.

13 Qa3

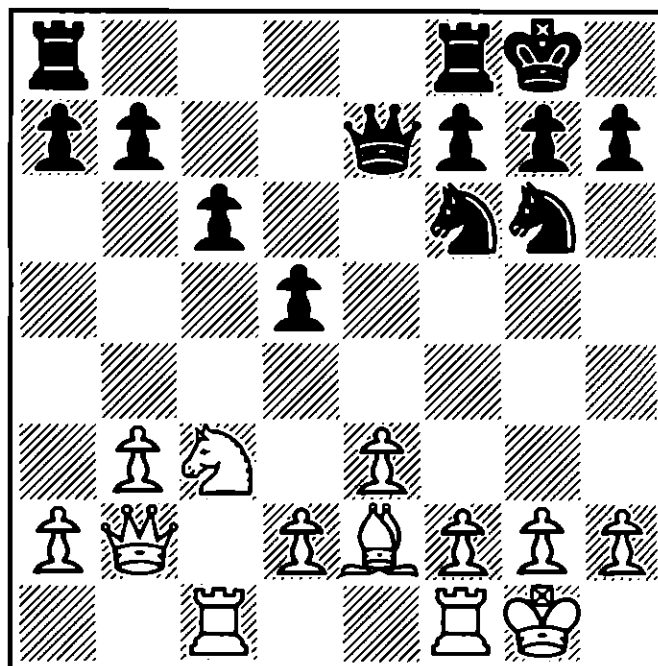
Seeking counter attack rather than watching his isolated pawns disappear.

14 Nxd5 Qxa2
15 Nb4 Qa4
16 Nc6 Resigns,

because White threatens both the Rook and Ra1, winning the Queen.

Diagram 201

Voellmy



Nimzowitsch

Bern, 1931

This example begins with a similar pawn formation though with White's d-pawn still at d2.

1 Na4

With the object of planting the Knight at c5, supported by the Rook which has just been unmasked on the half open c-file. If ... b6 at any time to prevent this the c-pawn is weakened.

1 Rfe8

Black seeks compensation on the kingside.

2 Qd4

A powerful centralisation. The Queen not only throws in her weight at c5 but pins down Black's Queen's Rook to the defence of the a-pawn.

2 Qe5

Black decides to chase off or exchange the powerful Queen. It results in a reduction of force against his queenside pawns, but doesn't help him with his own activity on the other wing. In fact it rapidly comes to a halt.

3 Qxe5 Rxe5
4 Nc5 Re7
5 b4

The minority attack begins.

5 a6

Black resisted the temptation to drive away the Knight with ... b6. He tries to halt the advance of the b-pawn but any movement of his own pawns on that side is weakening.

6 a4

To support the coming assault in the adjacent file.

6 Ne4

It is clearly a good idea to offer an exchange of Knights, but Nimzowitsch will have none of it.

7 Nb3

White was happy with earlier exchanges, for simplification often accentuates structural weaknesses but some minor pieces must be retained in such

positions to harass the enemy pawns and occupy any holes which occur.

7 Nd6

To cover the assault point, b5.

8 Ra1

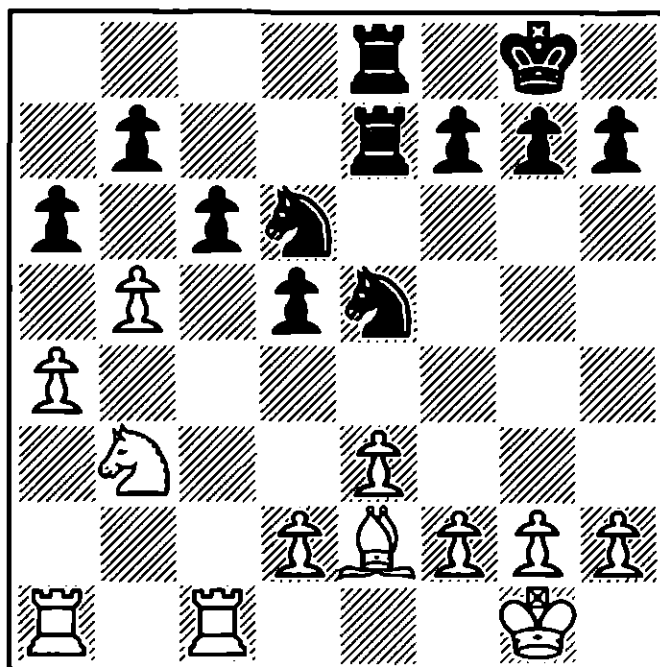
White regroups his Rooks before advancing.

8 Rae8
9 Rfc1 Ne5

If White now plays d2 d4 Black will be able to establish an outpost at c4 and partly close the queenside.

10 b5!

Diagram 202



White has only two pieces guarding this square against Black's three but if the sacrifice is accepted such havoc will have been created among the remaining pawns that some must fall.

10 axb5

He must go in for the first exchange at least for White was threatening to win the a-pawn.

11 axb5

Opening up the a-file which gives him access to the seventh rank as well as making Black anxious about the back rank.

Black does not have to capture again on b5 but he is reluctant to allow his Rooks to become tied down to the defence of his pawns.

11 Nxb5
12 Bxb5 cxb5

The Black pawns are now shattered. Notice how the d-pawn has become isolated and should this fall White's d-pawn will be passed.

13 Rc5 Rd7

He must defend the d-pawn and the other Rook cannot do so: 13 ... Rd8 14 Rxd5! There is a mate threat on the back rank.

14 Rxb5

Regaining the pawn and even if this was all the booty to fall to White, his minority attack could still be considered a success for Black is left with two isolated pawns in his position.

14 Nc6

The other b-pawn could not be saved: 14 ... Rb8 15 Nc5 Rc7 16 Rxb7, and again the back rank is Black's undoing.

15 Nc5 Rc7
16 Nxb7 Rb8
17 Nd6

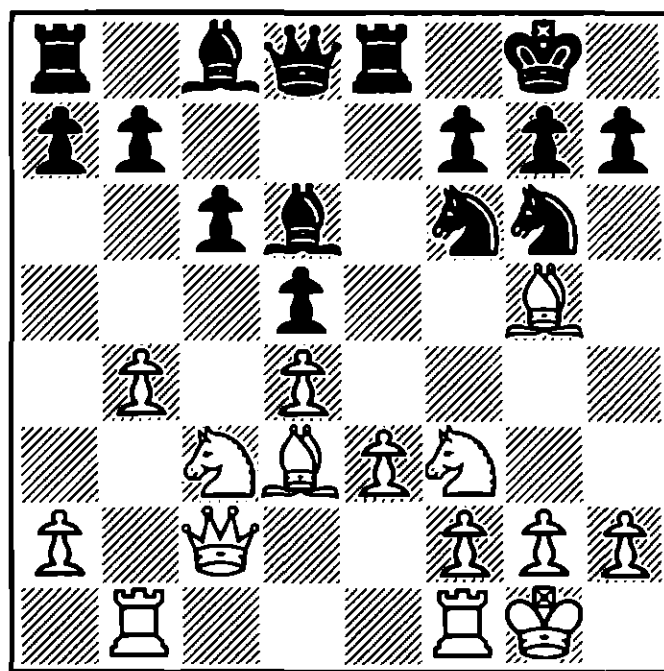
The queenside pawns have all disappeared. The minority attack is over. White is a pawn up and Black still has a weakness at d5.

The game continued for another thirty moves before Black resigned but we have seen sufficient of it to see again how formidable this kind of attack can be.

With these ideas in mind consider the next two positions from master games.

Diagram 203

Keres



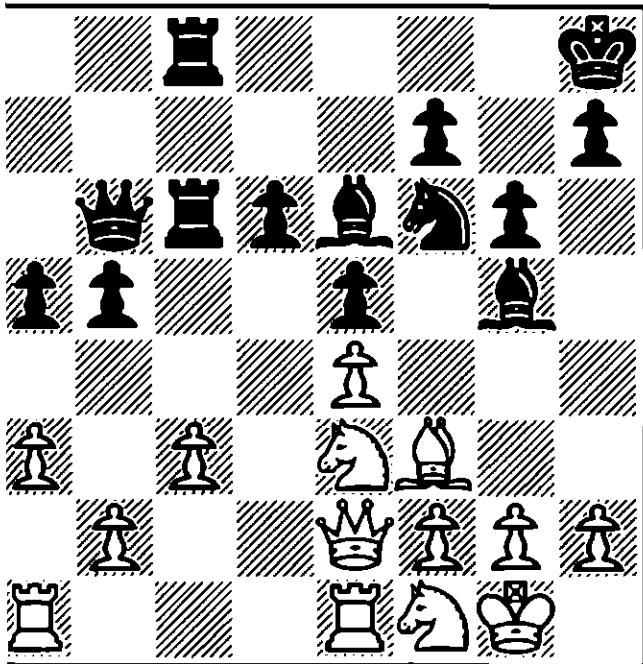
Smyslov

Moscow, 1948

White to play and create queenside weaknesses.

Diagram 204

Petrosian



Averbakh

Tiflis, 1959

lack to play and isolate at east one White queenside pawn.

OLUTIONS

Diagram 203

1 b5

Black can either ignore the awn or capture.

After 1 ... cxb5 his pawn at 5 becomes not only isolated ut very difficult to defend gainst 2 Bxb5 and a later Qb3. hould you examine this osition further take care in ines where White captures on 5 because Black has a iscovery with check: Bxh2.

In the game he ignored the awn and played 1 Bd7. fter 2 bxc6 he has two methods f retaking. If 2 ... Bxc6, his -pawn is isolated and if 2 ...

bxc6 the a-pawn is isolated, the c-pawn backward and a hole appears at c5.

Diagram 204

1

b4

If White leaves his queenside pawns untouched 2 ... bxc3 will isolate both the remaining pawns. Therefore, he must capture. If 2 axb4 then 2 ... axb4 3 cxb4 Qxb4 and the b-pawn is on its own.

2 cxb4

axb4

3 a4

The only other system. Black could isolate both a and b-pawns now with 3 ... b3! It is worthwhile noting this new way of isolating pawns. The intervention of the b-pawn between them effectively isolates even pawns on adjacent files. Black does not need to do this immediately since White is unable to play b3 at present. Had he been able to, he would have the prospect of a strong supported passed pawn at a4. But then, of course, Black would not have allowed it to happen.

Instead Black begins his attack on the a-pawn, treating it as if it was already isolated.

3

Qa7

4 Red1

Attacking the backward d-pawn for Black's pawn structure has not come out unscathed.

4

Ra6

5 Rd3

Neatly threatening both b3
and the doubling of his Rooks
on the d-file.

5

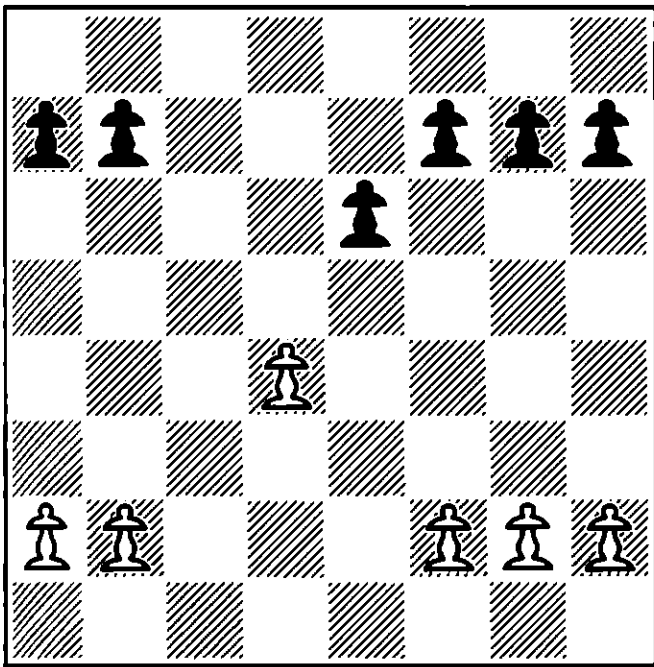
b3!

Now the pawns are truly
isolated and we shall take it
no further.

CHAPTER 17

Isolated and hanging pawns

Diagram 205



Pawns, their pattern, structure and distribution across the board change the nature of the terrain, determine tactics and strategies and constantly influence the course of the game.

We have been inclined so far to regard isolated pawns as essentially weak but there are cases that are too complex or too special to fit into so simple a theory. The isolated pawn in the centre of the board is an example and a typical pawn structure can be seen in diagram 205.

From general considerations Black's configuration is superior since he has two pawn

groups as opposed to White's three. But there are special factors which in certain circumstances contradict the general principle.

This kind of isolated pawn arises through pawn exchanges in many, particularly queenside, openings and usually, as in this case, it is the d-pawn which becomes isolated*.

To begin with, the pawn is a central one and so has influence over, and in some cases control of, e5 and c5. Those are squares that can become most valuable outposts for pieces. Then, since the pawn is isolated, adjacent files are at least half open and at least one likely to be fully open. Either could be usefully exploited though care must be taken to ensure that they do not fall into enemy hands. Thirdly the pawn may with support and preparation, become the spearhead of a central assault as it pushes forward, assuming a dynamic role. These points are all in the pawn's favour and so the disadvantages must now be considered.

*Such a pawn is sometimes known as an 'isolani', after Nimzowitsch.

It is vulnerable to attack from the front.

The square immediately in front of it is obviously a strong square for the opposition who can post a blockader there very effectively.

The nearer the endgame comes the less useful will be the outposts for which the pawn is guardian, and the more its isolation is shown to be a fundamental and static weakness. In other words, what strength it may acquire in the middle game must give rise to other advantages to its owner and if this conversion proves impossible, the pawn degenerates into a liability.

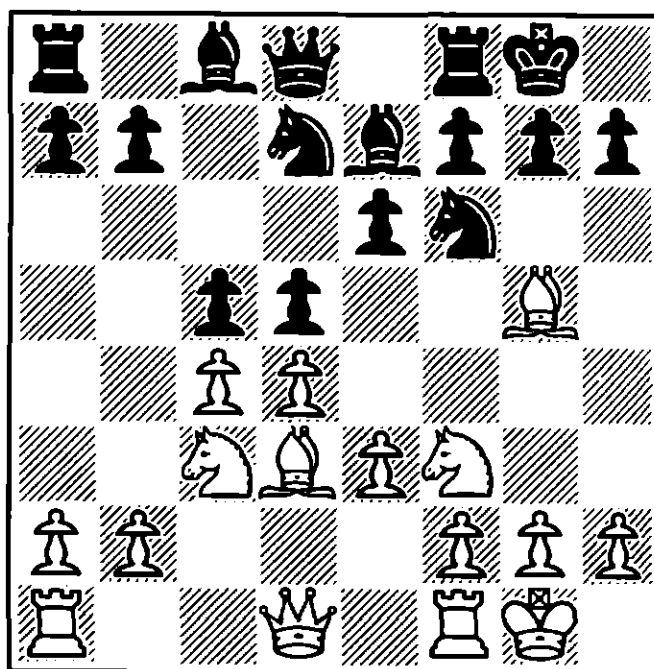
To sum up, the central isolated pawn has dynamic strength and static weakness, more prospects in the middle game and less in the ending.

Botwinnik Vidmar
Nottingham, 1936

To use an example by Botwinnik is appropriate in treating this ambiguous positional idea. From him we should obtain some objectivity for he seems as happy to have such a pawn as to play against it. Here he makes use of the pawn's dynamic.

After the moves: 1 c4 e6
2 Nf3 d5 3 d4 Nf6 4 Nc3
Be7 5 Bg5 0 0 6 e3 Nbd7
7 Bd3 c5 8 0 0, we arrive
at the position of diagram 206.

Diagram 206



This is a common position from which isolated pawns can arise.

8		cxd4
9	exd4	dxc4
10	Bxc4	

The isolated pawn appears and again it is a d-pawn.

Black should now keep two ideas firmly in mind:

1 Blockade of the d-pawn to prevent it expanding.

2 Simplification.

The first objective, blockade, is to render the pawn static for its strength lies in its dynamism. The second, simplification, will reduce the energy generated in the White forces associated with the pawn, and move the game along towards the ending where the static weakness of the pawn will become evident.

White must:

1 Defend the pawn.

2 Make use of any outposts which the pawn provides.

3 Use the outpost(s) as pivots for attack. For example, a Knight at e5 as a pivot for attack on the kingside.

4 Prepare for the advance of the pawn by using the major pieces behind it and undermining and finally destroying any blockader that lodges itself on d5.

The clash of Black's and White's strategical objectives should produce an interesting struggle.

10

Nb6

It seems carping to object to a move which so obviously fits the blockading plan so expeditiously. Botwinnik suggested that it was better to play ... b6 and ... Bb7, not only supporting a blockader when it arrives at d5, but keeping the c-file clear for Rook activity. It is not a gross error at all but it is the beginning of a series of little errors which make Black's problems increasingly difficult.

11 Bb3

Bd7

12 Qd3

Nbd5?

The wrong Knight. 12 ... Nfd5 is the correct way, with the possibility of exchanging off a pair of Bishops and perhaps even a pair of Knights. Black seems to have forgotten idea 2: simplification.

13 Ne5

The outpost piece and pivot for the kingside attack. The

Knight could be driven off later with ... f6, but White would be quite content with that for the Black e-pawn would be weakened and the King's pawn front compromised.

13

Bc6

We now see how right Botwinnik was, for the Bishop is awkwardly placed here, depriving Black of the proper use of the c-file in which he could have developed a queenside offensive to compensate for White's attack on the other wing.

14 Rad1

To protect the pawn and to support it when it is ready to move forward. There are two distinct elements in this Rook move which reflect the duality in the nature of the isolated pawn.

To exchange his outpost Knight for the Bishop would isolate a Black pawn but, it would also reinforce Black's blockader without making progress with his own plans.

14

Nb4

Trying to make amends for the previous error but the manoeuvre is time consuming.

15 Qh3

Thanks to his foresight with Rd1 the Queen can switch to aim at h7 and support the Bishop in an attack on e6. Watch the a2 g8 diagonal. Another sensitive point on it is f7, attacked by the Knight.

15

Bd5

16 Nxd5

Preserving his Bishop.

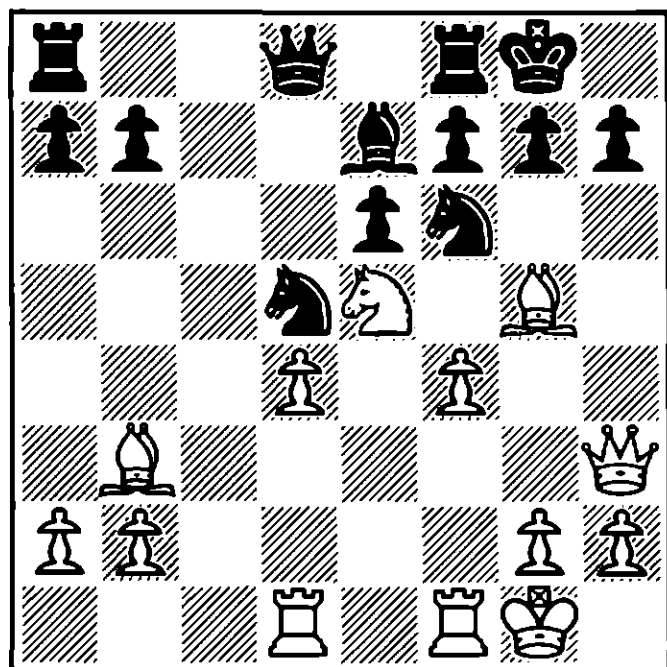
16

Nbxd5?

Repeating his error. Capture with the other Knight was again better, seeking simplification.

17 f4!

Diagram 207



Nearly thirty years later, in a match between Moscow and Leningrad in 1965, Botvinnik recalled this move when playing in a similar position against Tolush: This method of developing White's initiative was adopted by me as early as 1936'.

White is now striking at the base of the blockader e6 and intending to open up a line for his King's Rook.

17

Rc8

Here 17 ... g6, to prevent 18 f5, would lose the exchange to Bh6 and Ba4.

18 f5

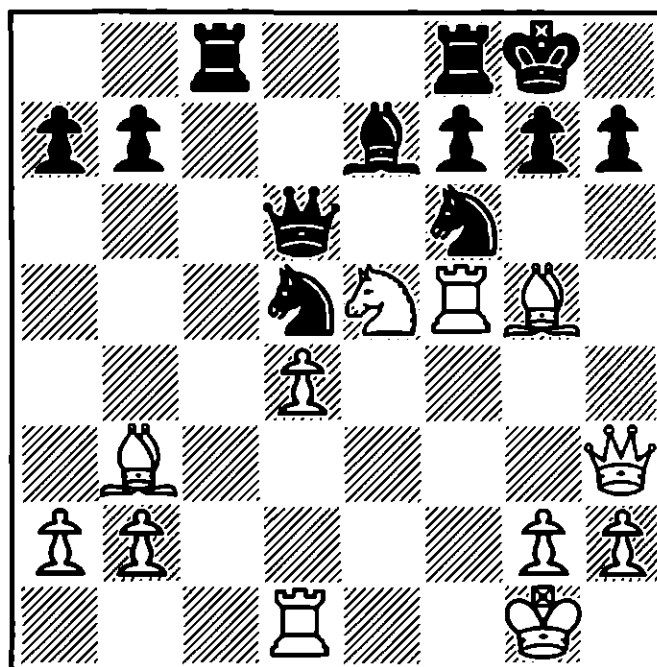
exf5

He could protect the e-pawn with 18 ... Qd6 but then 19 fxe6 fxe6 and the pawn is still weak, or if 19 ... Qxe6 then 20 Qf3 and Black's blockader is without pawn support.

19 Rxf5

Qd6

Diagram 208



This leaves the Queen's Rook vulnerable to a discovered attack from White's Queen and allows a decisive combination. Better was 19 ... Rc7 20 Rdf1, although White still has a powerful and winning initiative.

20 Nxf7!

Rxf7

If 20... Kxf7, then simply 21 Bxd5ch.

21 Bxf6

Bxf6

21 ... Nxf6 is met by 22 Rxf6 with a discovered attack on the Rook at c8.

22 Rxd5

The blockader has been undermined and demolished. Now the isolated pawn is passed and its way open to advance. In the event the pawn doesn't need to use any of its new-found energies, for Black's position is already in collapse.

22 Qc6

Or 22 Qc7 23 Rd7

23 Rd6

And not 23 Rc5 because of
23 Bxd4ch.

23 Qe8

At least we can see the pawn fulfilling its destiny in one variation: 23 ... Qxd6 24 Qxc8ch Qf8 25 Qe6 and Black can only watch whilst the pawn strides home.

24 Rd7 Resigns

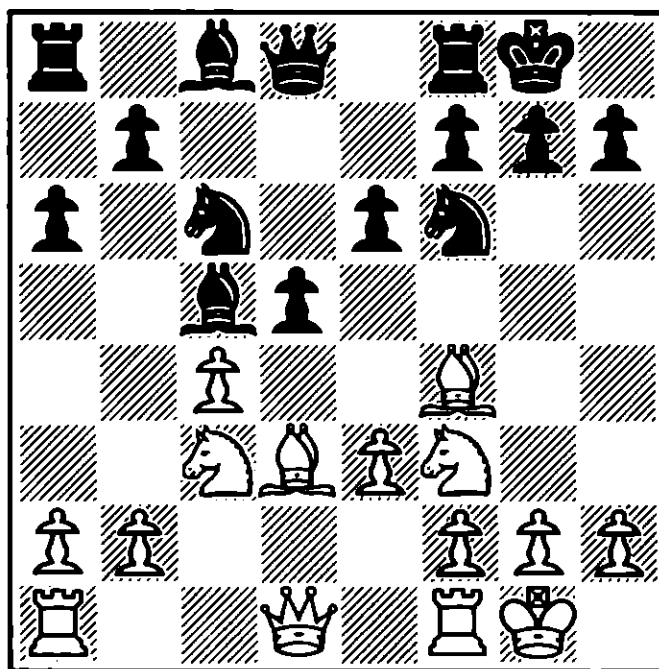
There is no point, of course, in further resistance.

The other aspect of the isolated central pawn is displayed in the next example. Here it is Black who has the isolated Queen's pawn so the objectives for each player mentioned on pages 178 and 179 should be reversed.

After the opening moves: 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 Nf3 Be7 5 Bf4 c5 (The typical configuration from which this special pawn arises. Stahlberg, who was Black in this game, had no fears about being the possessor of an isolated d-pawn, like Spassky today who frequently invites it.) 6 dxc5 Bxc5 7 e3 Nc6 8 Bd3 0 0 9 0 0 a6, we arrive at the following diagram.

Diagram 209

Stahlberg



Nimzowitsch

Göteborg, 1934

Had he wished, Black could have avoided the isolated pawn by 9 dxc4.

10 cxd5 exd5

Now Black must accept all the hopes and anxieties which come to the owner of the isolani.

11 Bg5

Immediately stating his objective of attack against the d-pawn. In fact 11 Bxf6 gxf6 is threatened and, as if that was not bad enough, 12 Nxd5 since the Queen cannot recapture because of 13 Bxh7ch.

11 Be6
12 Ne2

Even though this withdraws the Knight from its attack against d5 it is a fine move. The idea is to give the

Knight the choice of blockading on d4 or attacking d5 again from f4.

12 h6
13 Bh4 Bg4

Trying to cross White's plans but it would have been much better to leave the Bishop to defend the d-pawn where it is most needed and to get on with his other development.

14 Rc1 Be7

Unpinning his Knight.

15 Qb3

Economical. He brings pressure to bear on d5 with a tempo gain from his threat to b7.

15 Bxf3?

Generally it is a good idea to break up the pawns around the opposing King if the opportunity presents itself. White left the possibility on because he judged that the Black force was unready for attack and his centre still too insecure for an adventure on that wing. White's motive was to encourage his opponent to exchange off the light-squared Bishop knowing that Black would feel its absence later when trying to find enough pieces to defend his d-pawn, which stands on a light square.

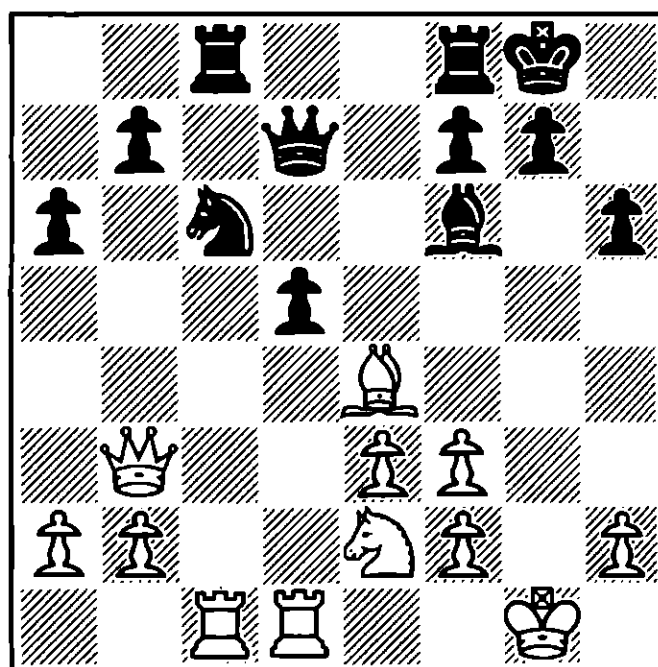
16 gxf3 Qd7
17 Rfd1 Rac8
18 Bxf6!

A well judged exchange for another vital protector of the isolated pawn disappears. Black has incautiously given up one

and now White takes off the other.

18 Bxf6
19 Be4

Diagram 210



Suddenly there are three White pieces on the d-pawn and only one protector. The race is nearly run.

19 Ne7
20 Rxc8 Rxc8

Unobtrusively White simplifies through exchanges, each time choosing the right moment when it would increase his pressure against the central weakness. One thing that White has failed to do is to blockade the d-pawn. A careful look at the position, however, will reveal that he has over-protected the d4 square, making it impossible for the pawn to move on and, therefore, blockading as effectively as would a piece placed there.

21 Nf4!

He doesn't grab the pawn immediately, preferring to keep his Bishop for the coming endgame.

21 Qb5

Black seems to be breaking all the rules. He has indulged in exchanges when he should have been keeping pieces on, he has failed to find outposts and he hasn't retained those pieces required for the pawn's protection. Now he commits another sin by offering a Queen exchange. There is, however, some excuse for this offer. After all, he is soon to be a pawn down with little hope of attacking compensation and so, seeing the possibility of an endgame with opposite coloured Bishops, he eagerly steers for it.

22 Qxb5 axb5
23 Nxd5

White collects his reward.

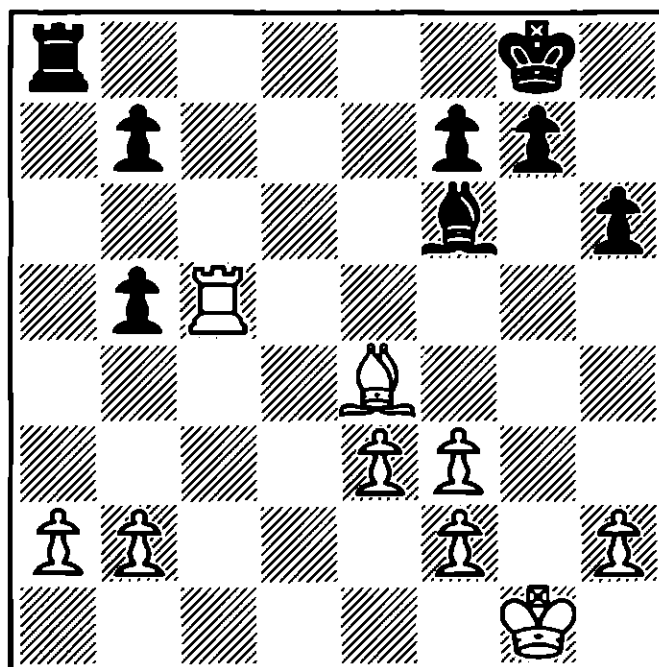
23 Nxd5
24 Rxd5 Ra8

He would lose both b-pawns if he played 24 ... Bxb2, but the text gives chances against an opponent who is not alert. If now 25 Rxb5 then 25 ... Rxa2 26 b3 (it is important not to exchange off all the queenside pawns: perhaps the largest single factor in winning endgames is retaining pawns on both sides of the board) Bh4! with good counterplay.

25 Rc5!

Very neat. It is the kind of move whose qualities become more attractive the more you think about it.

Diagram 211



By side-stepping to the adjacent open file the Rook has access to the eighth rank which it did not have before because of the Bishop guarding d8. It discloses an attack from the Bishop on the pawn at b7 and it vacates d5 so that the Bishop can take its place and in so doing defend a2 and attack f7. A move of most delightful subtlety in a situation which most players would regard as rather dull.

25 Kf8

Not being able to win the a-pawn because of mate, he renews the threat.

26 Bd5

Fine centralisation eliminating all hope of counterplay and sharpening White's own threats.

26 b4

Trying to salvage something. There was little else to do.

An embarrassment of riches.

27 Bxb2
 28 Rxf7ch Ke8
 29 Rxb7

Threatening a discovery on the Rook.

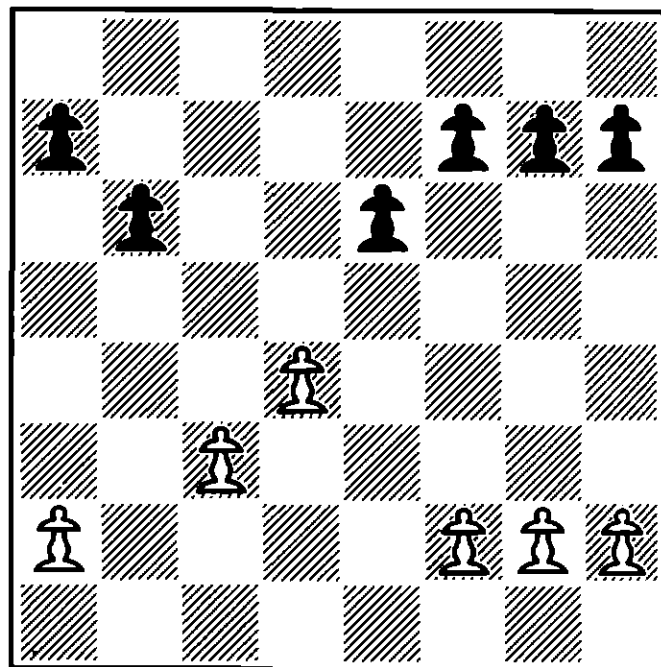
29 Bc3
 30 Rxc7 Bxc7
 31 Bxa8 Resigns.

A game of vicious demolition brought on by Black breaking the rules.

Courting or avoiding the isolated centre pawn in your position is a matter of taste, but it will inevitably appear from time to time and so it is well to understand the guiding ideas on how to treat the situation. Sometimes weak, sometimes strong, according to position, the problem of the isolated pawn is the essence of chess.

Hanging Pawns

A definition of hanging pawns was given on page 76, how they arise is best seen from an example.



To begin with we will look at a simplified position.

In diagram 212 the White pawns at c3 and d4 are hanging. They are, if it is not a contradiction, a pair of isolated pawns which have all the dynamic strength of isolanis as well as their static weakness.

What has been said of isolanis is true, in the main, of hanging pawns, although, of course, there are some additional features. Whilst remaining in the same formation as the diagram the forward one, unlike the isolani, has pawn support, and so the spearhead itself is a little stronger. When the backward one moves forward they control a broad front of squares which can be restricting to the opponent and in that new position they acquire pawn rolling potential with the possibility of making breaks to the left or right into the enemy position, provided proper preparation of support and thrust have been

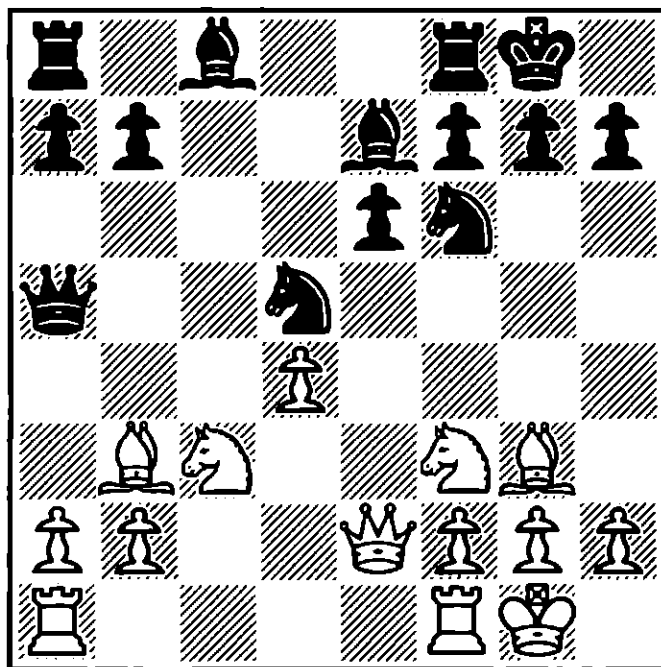
made. The isolani has this potential for expansion; in hanging pawns the partnership enhances this quality for after c4 (in this particular position) at a suitable moment can come d5 or c5 and then, after the pawn exchange, a new isolated pawn is created so that instead of a piece appearing in or near the centre, a passed pawn is born with all that that implies.

But hanging pawns have the component of weakness as well as strength. In the formation of the diagram the c-pawn is backward and can be attacked from the front. The two squares in front of the pawns, c4 and d5, are strong squares for the enemy and should blockaders be established there the nascent energy of the hanging pawns will be drained away, and as the endgame looms their weakness will become more and more pronounced.

The following position arose as long ago as 1886.

Diagram 213

Steinitz



Zukertort

New Orleans

The situation is one with which you must now be familiar. White has the isolated pawn and Black has planted a Knight in front of it at d5. It soon becomes clear that Steinitz knew what he was doing and that Zukertort, fine combination player though he was, did not.

1 Rac1 Bd7
2 Ne5

In taking up this outpost position he intends a kingside attack.

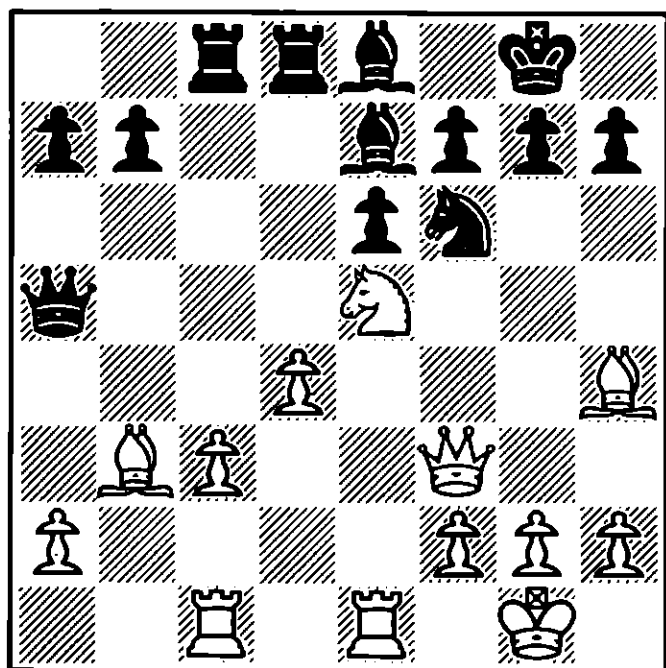
2 Rfd8
3 Qf3

With the point f7 in mind, but since the Queen can hardly lead in such a breakthrough 3 f4 would have been more like the energetic approach needed by the possessor of the isolated pawn.

Clearing the d-file and defending f7. It is clear that by playing a Rook to the d-file Black was well aware of the needs of the position. The whole point of White's play should revolve about the isolated pawn and it should, therefore, be very well defended whereas at present it is not protected at all.

4 Rfe1 Rac8
5 Bh4 Nxc3
6 bxc3

Diagram 214



The same pawn configuration emerges if White exchanges pieces on c3 first; in that case he plays into Black's hands for Black is happy to head for the endgame; it is White who must keep the pieces on the board.

Now the hanging pawns appear in a manner typical of the way in which they commonly arise.

6 Qc7
7 Qd3 Nd5

Now he re-establishes his blockade at d5, though not so securely as before since the Knight can be driven away.

8 Bxe7 Qxe7
9 Bxd5?

This move is completely wrong. White should be avoiding exchanges and his hanging pawns will now be subject to pressure from the Rooks. This will consume so much of his pieces' energy in their defence that there will be insufficient means for attack.

9 Rxd5
10 c4 Rdd8
11 Re3

At last he continues with his kingside ambitions but it is interesting to see that so much material has to be committed to his weak centre that this one Rook has to carry out the sortie more or less on its own.

11 Qd6
12 Rd1 f6

Though e6 is weakened the Bishop will be able to look after the pawn there as well as the other light squares around the King. The initiative is now firmly in Black's hands.

13 Rh3 h6

The single-handed skirmish is easily repulsed.

14 Ng4 Qf4
15 Ne3 Ba4!

To force the attacked Rook on to the second rank, allowing unpleasant surprises on the back rank.

16 Rf3	Qd6
17 Rd2	Bc6
18 Rg3	f5

It is Black who is now attacking.

19 Rg6

And White still thinks he is. His problem is that he needs three pieces to hold the hanging pawns, leaving nothing to assist the Rook.

19	Be4
20 Qb3	

How different it might have been if White had kept his Bishop to work on this diagonal.

20	Kh7!
----	------

The Rook has no move for a pawn fork follows Rg3. All he can do is make a wild strike at e6, for which Black has already prepared.

21 c5

This looks nasty but is really quite harmless.

21	Rxc5
----	------

The d-pawn is pinned and now the back rank is exposed.

22 Rxe6

Strangely enough an isolated passed pawn has now emerged at d4, but not under circumstances of White's making. The pawn is a weakling without any future. The rest is easy.

22	Rc1ch
23 Nd1	Qf4
24 Qb2	Rb1
25 Qc3	Rc8!

Rounding off the game with an attractive combination. If 26 Qa5 then simply 26 ... b6, or 26 Qe3 Qxe3 and 27 ... Rcc1 wins or 26 Qxc8 Qxd2 finishing quickly.

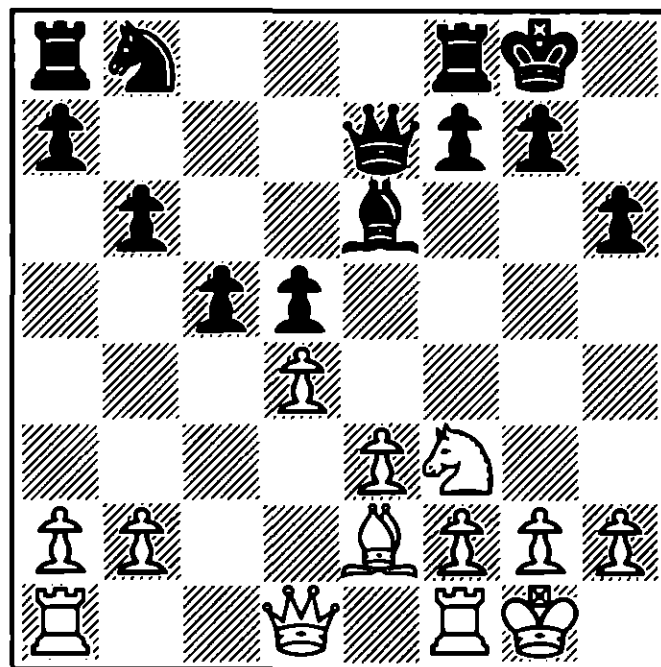
26 Rxe4	Qxe4,
---------	-------

and White resigned.

We return to the present era and Robert Fischer for a comparative example in which he demonstrates that at least in this game a pair of hanging pawns is worth a piece.

Diagram 215

Fischer



Bertok

Stockholm, 1962

The position of diagram 215 arose after the moves: 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Be7 4 Nf3 Nf6 5 Bg5 0 0 6 e3 h6 7 Bh4 b6 8 cxd5 Nxd5 9 Bxe7 Qxe7 10 Nxd5 exd5 11 Be2 Be6 12 0 0 c5.

Play now continued:

13 dxc5

Fischer criticised this move and considered Ne5 a better idea for White. The text creates hanging pawns for Black at c5 and d5.

13 bxc5

It is clear already that the hanging pawns are a restraining influence on White's game, the squares across a broad front from b4 to e4 being denied to his pieces. Nor is the point e5 any longer available. White must now find means of harassing the pawns in order to induce a weakness.

14 Qa4 Qb7!

Black has two half open files which he can use, the e and b-files. He chooses to operate on the b-file combined with a kind of minority attack.

15 Qa3

Attack and defence.

15 Nd7
16 Ne1

With the idea of attacking the c-pawn again by Nd3.

16 a5

Black's centre is quite magnificent thanks to the hanging pawns. He threatens Qb4 and should White exchange Queens he will recapture with the a-pawn giving him a three-pawn roller and tremendous pressure on the queenside.

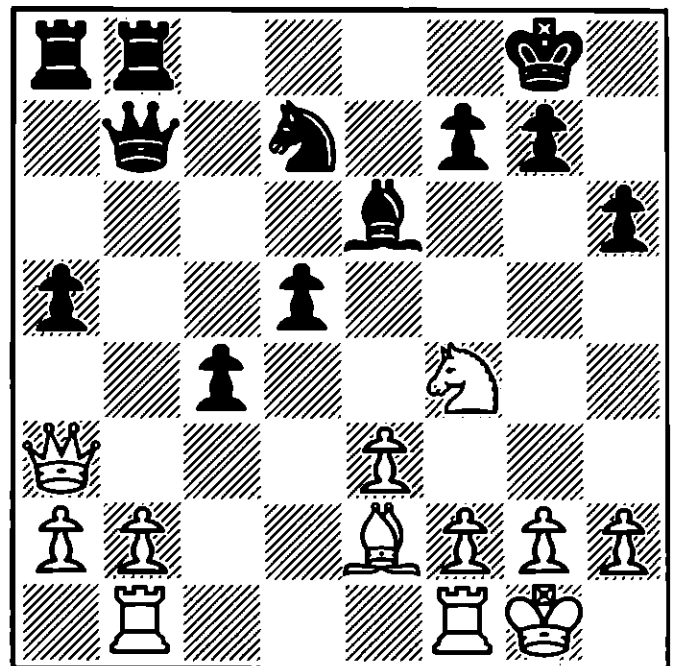
17 Nd3 c4

Choosing the right moment to advance. Now 18 Nc5 Qb4 would

force the Queen exchange. The Knight is in difficulties, having little choice of moves. To return to e1 would shut in his Rook.

18 Nf4 Rfb8
19 Rab1?

Diagram 216



If White is to maintain a balance in a situation which can so easily slip away from him he must respond vigorously. That common Achilles' heel in Black's position, e6, is a suitable target. Fischer gives: 19 Nxe6 fxe6 20 Bg4 (if 20 Qe7 straight away then 20 ... Nf8 forces him to exchange or retreat) Ra6 21 b3! (exchanges on this square will deflect the Black Queen) cxb3 22 axb3 Qxb3 23 Qe7 Nf8 24 Ra3, with good drawing chances.

After the text, however, White's attempts to retain the precarious balance quickly disappear.

19 Bf5
20 Rbd1 Nf6

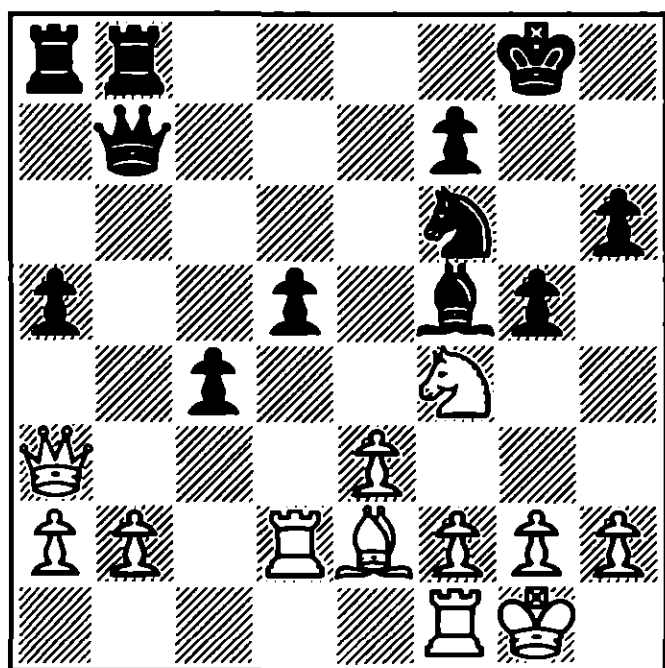
The time loss with the Rook has enabled Black to regroup his minor pieces completely. Now the d-pawn is soundly held without the prospect of any weakness appearing at e6.

If only White's Rook were already at d2 he could go 21 Bf3 and double his Rooks, giving him four pieces bearing down on the backward member of the hanging pawns. As it is there never seems to be quite enough time to exploit the static weakness of those pawns.

If now 21 Bf3, then 21 ... Qxb2 22 Qxb2 Rxb2 (the c-pawn is now passed) 23 Nxd5 (the backward pawn falls, but too late) Nxd5 24 Bxd5 Rc8 25 e4 (shutting out the Bishop which would otherwise help to escort the passed pawn through) Be6 26 Bxe6 fxe6 27 a4 c3 28 Rc1 c2 and Black is winning. (Fischer's analysis.)

21 Rd2 g5!

Diagram 217



His contrived offensive against the hanging pawns,

which has forced him to use awkward squares for his pieces, particularly the Knight, is now his ruin. The Knight has nowhere to go. If 22 Nh5, Black does not exchange but leaves the White Knight offside whilst bringing his own to the centre, 22 ... Ne4, with devastating effect: 23 Rc2 Qb4, and White is quite helpless.

Desperate situations requiring desperate methods prompt White to give up the Knight for what booty he can acquire.

22 Nxd5 Nxd5
23 Bxc4

And so the hanging pawns disappear, but at what a cost.

As usual in such situations, Black's attack now loses its impetus and White acquires some energy from the changed circumstances. But he has not obtained enough in return for his piece and Black soon contains his threats.

23 Be6
24 Rfd1

A blunder but 24 Bxd5 Bxd5 25 f3 is still not good enough.

24 Nxe3
25 Qxe3 Bxc4
26 h4 Re8

Black has only to seal the weak spots in the kingside...

27 Qg3 Qe7
28 b3 Be6
29 f4 g4

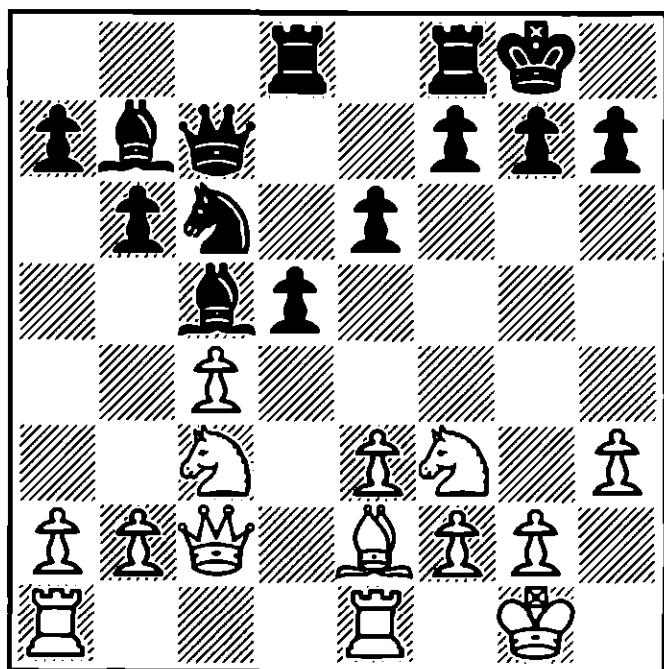
... and then the rest is easy.
After,

30 h5 Qc5ch
31 Rf2 Bf5,

White resigned.

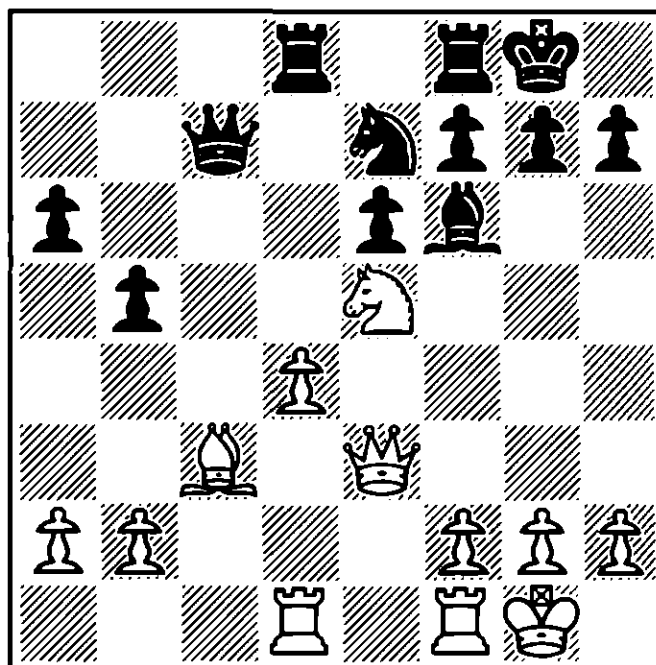
Here are some positions for
you to consider.

Diagram 218



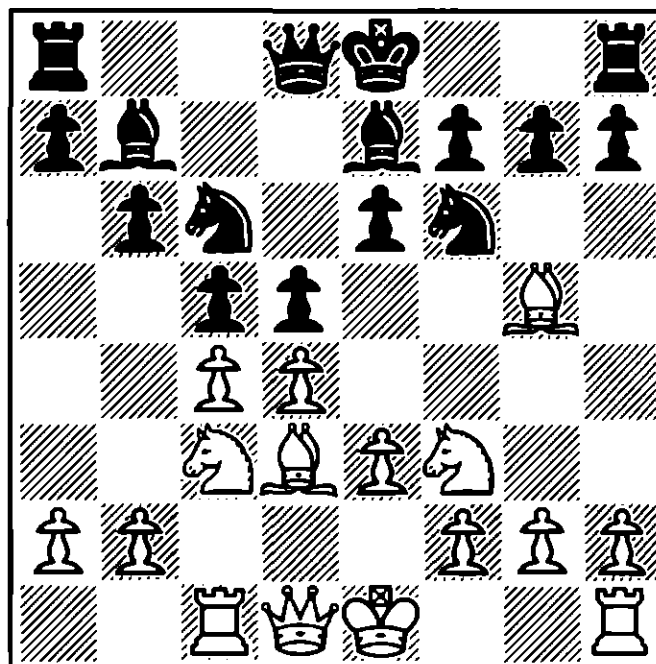
White to play. 1 How can he
create an isolated pawn in
Black's position? 2 Is there
any way that Black can avoid
this?

Diagram 219



Black to play. How does he
create hanging pawns in White's
position?

Diagram 220



White to play. What sequence of
moves forces the appearance of
hanging pawns in Black's
position?

SOLUTIONS

Diagram 218

- 1 After 1 cxd5 exd5, Black has an isolated d-pawn.
- 2 A neat Zwischenzug enables Black to avoid this:

1 cxd5 Nb4 2 Q moves Nxd5. In this White cannot win a pawn with 2 Qa4 Nxd5 3 Qxa7 because of 3 Ra8, winning the Queen.

Diagram 219 By 1 ... Nd5 followed by exchanging pieces on c3.

Diagram 220

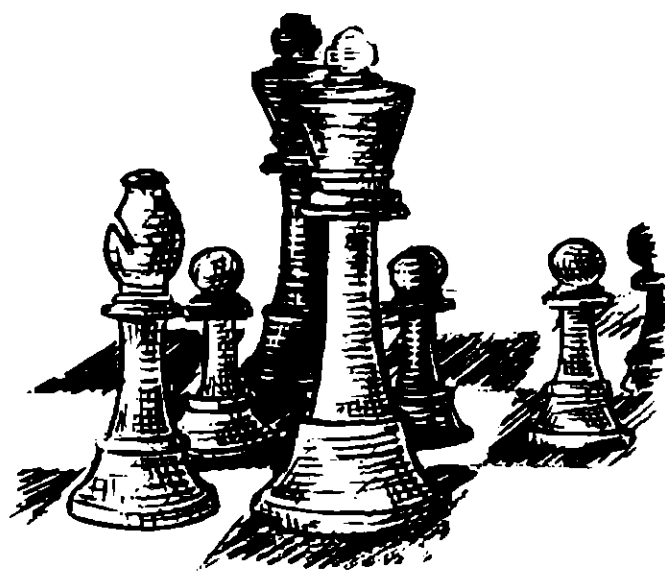
1	Bxf6	Bxf6
2	cx d5	ex d5

2 ... cxd4 would lead to the loss of a piece.

3 dxc5 bxc5,

and Black has hanging pawns at c5 and d5.

SIX



Illustrative Games

The criteria for the selection of games in this section have been mainly didactic. Some appear because they contain elements of positional play which consolidate or extend the ideas treated so far and others because they introduce new concepts.

At the beginning of each game is a short list of the positional elements it displays and so the reader's mind is directed towards them from the start, as an aid in recognition and anticipation of their appearance. In this way the reader becomes more involved in the game, participating in the thinking of the players.

The annotations concentrate on positional play and general

strategic planning, deliberately avoiding complex and multiple variations. Sometimes it is necessary to calculate precisely before embarking on a plan and when this is so it is indicated, but the principal aim of the notes is to heighten the reader's awareness of the positional perspective, that ability to sense the nature of what is likely to be favourable in a few, or several, or even many moves.

Finally it is hoped that the games will give pleasure as well as instruction for, although not all may be masterpieces, many are, and some must rank as positional immortals.

GAME 1

Reshevsky – Tylor

Reshevsky Tylor
Hastings 1937/38

Struggle for d5
Backward pawn
Light square weakness
Play on the semi-open file
Restriction

Queen's Gambit Declined

1 d4 d5
2 c4

With his first move White aims at the control of e5 and with his second challenges the point d5.

2 e6

Black cannot concede two central squares in his own half. This and his next three moves are designed to strengthen d5.

3 Nc3

d5 is again the target.

3 Nf6
4 Bg5

Pinning the defender of d5.

4 Be7
5 e3 Nbd7

To replace the Knight at f6 should White exchange.

6 cxd5

The Exchange Variation often favoured by Reshevsky. After the normal, and best, 6 ... exd5, you will notice that the pawn configuration on the queenside is the typical one for a minority attack. Black tries to avoid this by,

6 Nxd5,

but in doing so misses the benefit that Black derives from the Exchange Variation of easy development for his Queen's Bishop with 6 exd5.

7 Bxe7 Qxe7
8 Rc1

The Rook moves naturally to the half open file putting immediate pressure on the c-pawn and even threatening to win it with 9 Nxd5.

8 N7f6

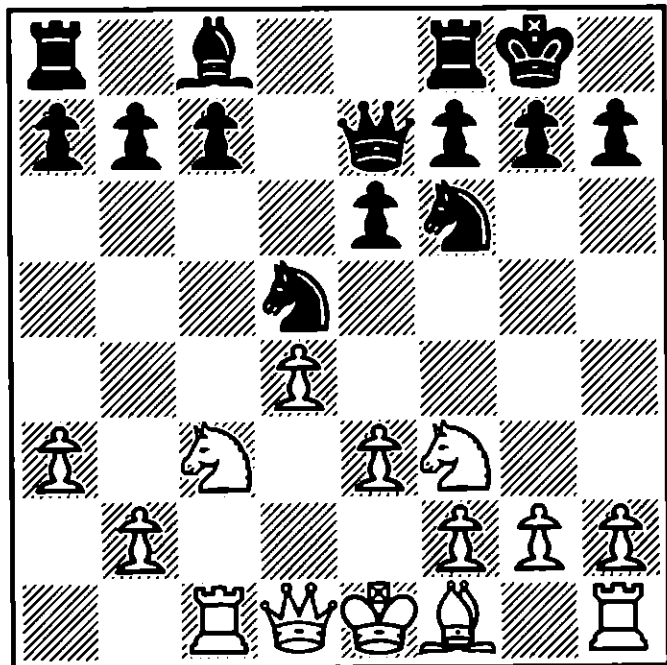
A natural looking move but it suffers from the defect of removing cover from e5. White is left in control of that square and Black has very little prospect of playing ... e5, with the inevitable consequence that he will find it difficult to develop his Bishop satisfactorily.

9 Nf3

Resuming development and emphasising his control over e5.

9 0 0
10 a3!

Diagram 221



A preventive move. Such measures are very important and we shall see them used time and again in the games which follow. Here the modest pawn move prevents any excursions by Black's Queen or Knight into White's queenside.

The trouble with Black's position now is that it is featureless and there is little chance of him breaking out from his cramped quarters. ... e5 is desirable but not really on when one considers the amount of preparation it would need. The Queen's Bishop has to be brought out, but where? Probably best is ... Bd7. More adventurously Black goes for the long diagonal, only to weaken seriously his queenside pawns.

10 b6?
11 Nxd5 Nxd5

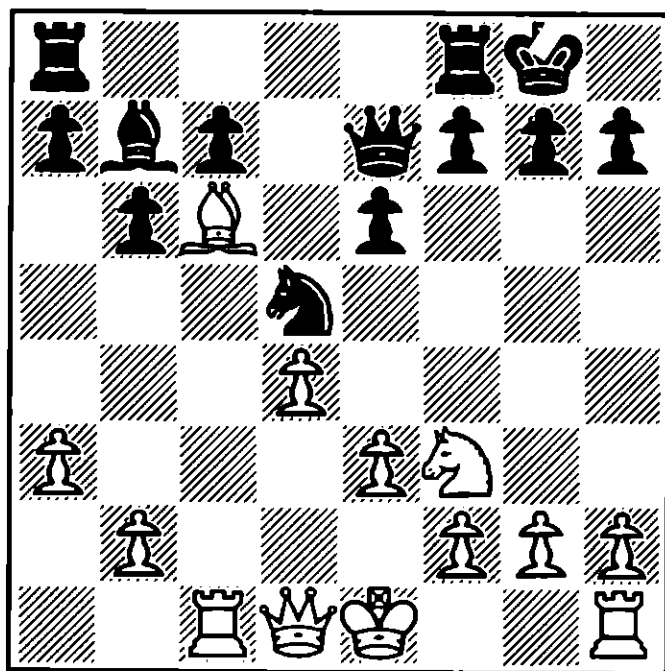
The second chance of recapturing with the e-pawn is an illusion: 11 ... exd5 12 Qc2 Ne8 13 Qc6, forking the Rook and d-pawn.

12 Bb5!

The light-coloured squares are weak. Alertly, Reshevsky takes immediate advantage.

12 Bb7
13 Bc6

Diagram 222



Blockade. The c-pawn, now fixed, is made effectively backward. White could have adopted a type of minority attack with the aim of establishing a pawn at b5 to render the c-pawn truly backward, but this would have meant lengthy preparation. Using the Bishop and Rook he has achieved the same objective much more quickly.

At move 12 Black had his last chance to rid himself of

the c-pawn problem by 12 ... c5
 13 dxc5 bxc5 14 Qc2 Rb8.
 This would have isolated his
 pawns at c5 and a7, but it
 would have given him more
 freedom and a line to operate
 on the b-file.

13 Bxc6
 14 Rxc6

The blockader is replaced by
 a Rook and so the c-pawn comes
 under direct attack.

14 Rfc8?

This square will be needed
 for the other Rook. Better was
 14 ... Rfd8 with 15 ... Rd6 to
 follow, making some attempt to
 drive off the blockader.

15 O O Nf6

White can triple on the c-
 file, dislodge the Knight with
 e4 and then win the c-pawn.
 Before this happens Black has
 time, thanks to the c-pawn
 being over-protected, to remove
 the Knight from its exposed
 position and guard the pawn
 again from the safety of e8.

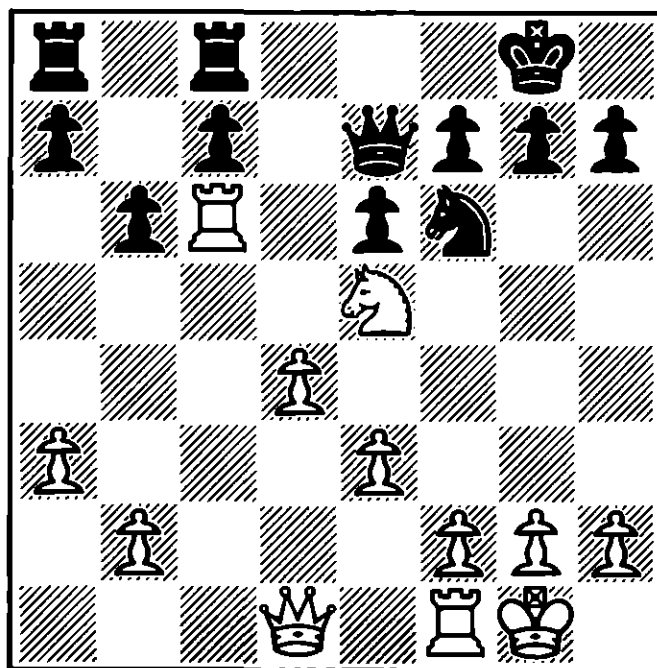
16 Ne5

The ease with which White
 acquires control of squares and
 lines testifies to the barren
 nature of the Black position.
 The Knight goes to the
 neglected e5 square, protects
 the blockader and clears f3 for
 the Queen to take post on the
 long light diagonal. Black's
 light square weakness is now
 obvious after the exchange of
 Bishops, for the White Queen
 can dominate those squares
 whereas the Black one cannot
 reach them.

The reason for Black's

malaise is that he has failed
 to contest central squares and
 combat White incursions with
 sufficient accuracy and vigour.
 In a word, he has set White no
 problems. For instance, White
 has only just castled. He
 didn't have to 'castle when
 you must, not when you can'
 which was worth a tempo, and
 finding himself under so little
 pressure he was able to hurry
 along with his own plans. It is
 a good idea from the very
 beginning to set your opponent
 problems for he may not always
 be able to solve them
 adequately and from these
 inaccuracies of response you
 can accumulate advantages.

Diagram 223



16 Ne8
 17 Qf3

Putting pressure on the long
 diagonal and on the file
 against f7.

17 Qf6

Black would be happy with a Queen exchange and White's Queen's position is too strong to leave unchallenged.

18 Qe2

Threatening 19 Qa6 which Black prevents with,

18 a5,

but at the cost of another defect in the queenside pawn structure for the b-pawn is now only supported once and by a pawn which could become pinned when White has doubled on the c-file.

19 f4

Aiming to bring his Queen back to f3, he shuts off the opposing Queen. There is other menace in the move. There is now a useful lateral pin on Black's e-pawn from the Rook at c6 so that White threatens f5, prising open yet another line, the f-file.

19 Rd8

Parrying the threat, for 20 f5 would be met by 20 ... Rd6 21 fxe6 Qxe6, driving off the blockader and somewhat freeing his game.

20 Qf3

Now 20 ... Rd6 would lose a piece to the discovery 21 Rxd6.

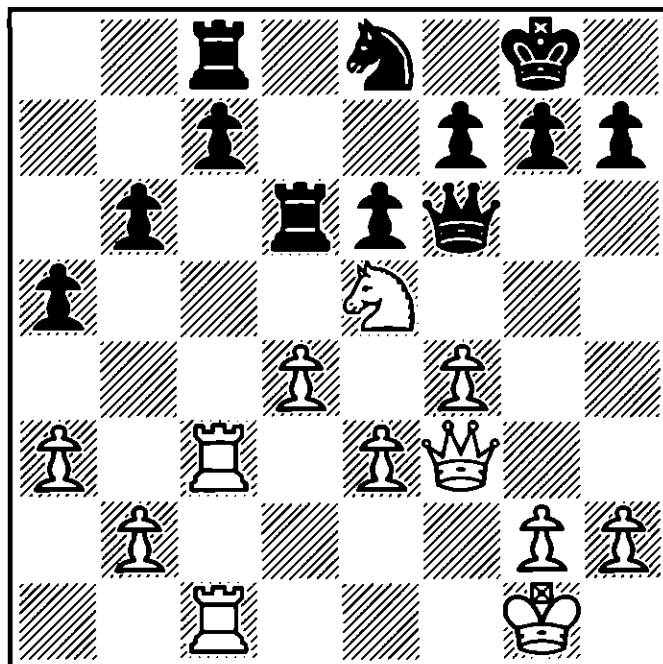
20 Rac8
21 Rfc1 Rd6

At last Black is able to challenge the blockade. Unfortunately it has taken so long that White's pieces have been able to find their best places and now strike at more

than one weak point in Black's game.

22 R6c3

Diagram 224



With this retreat he retains all his threats, maintains the tension and leaves Black's Rook awkwardly placed at d6. The enfeebled state of the b-pawn is shown in one possibility: 23 Nc4 R moves 24 Nxb6 because of the pin on the c-pawn.

If 22 ... Rcd8 (taking the pin off the c-pawn) then 23 Nc6 Rc8 (notice the effect of the Queen on the long diagonal preventing ... Ra8) 24 Na7 followed by 25 Nb5, winning the c-pawn.

Black could move his other Rook 22 ... Rdd8 23 Nc6 (White has changed blockaders) Rd7. In such positions White need not go in for the direct win of material. He could play for further restriction with 24 e4! when there is nothing to stop 25 e5, creating a total bind on the position. The Black Rooks would have hardly

anywhere to move, nor would the Knight. White would then be able at leisure to prepare a general advance on the kingside when even the Black Queen would be in danger of being trapped.

Instead of this death by slow strangulation Black decided to give up the sickly c-pawn in a bid for freedom.

22	c5
23 dxc5	bxc5
24 Rxc5	Rxc5
25 Rxc5	Qd8

Protecting the a-pawn and taking control of the d-file. Black gains some breathing space but not enough to compensate for the pawn and other weaknesses.

26 h3

A flight-square for the King.

26	f6
27 Nc4	Rd1ch
28 Kh2	Rc1

Pinning the Knight but there is no venom in the manoeuvre.

29 Qc6

Unpinning the Knight and emphasising his domination of the light squares. Now either the a-pawn or the e-pawn falls, for 29 Kf7 loses to 30 Ne5ch.

29 g5

Desperation.

30 Qxe6ch	Kg7
31 Rd5	Qb8
32 Rd7ch	Resigns,

since his case is clearly hopeless.

GAME 2

Botwinnik – Donner

Botwinnik Donner
Amsterdam, 1963

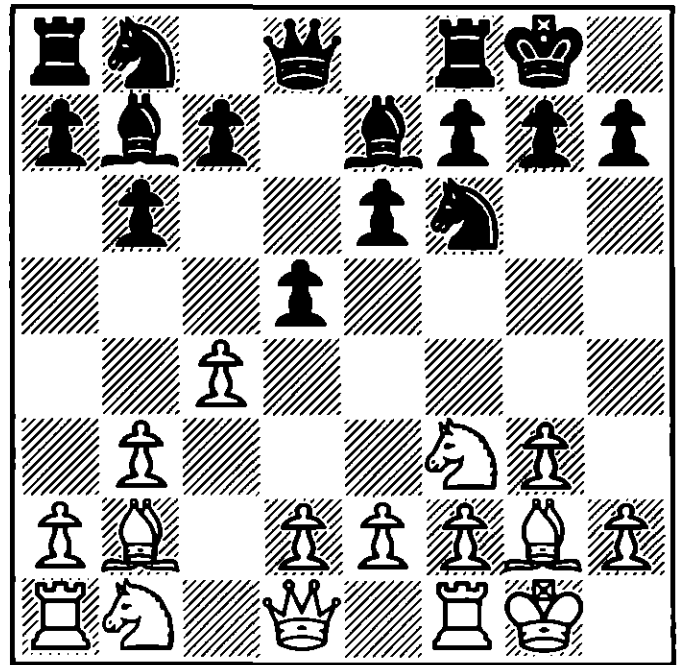
Control and occupation of a
strongpoint, c6.
Play in the open file.
The seventh rank.
Restriction.

Reti Opening

Look again at Chapter
Twelve, page 125, to remind
yourself of the ideas behind
this opening. In the present
game some moves have been
transposed.

1 c4	Nf6
2 Nf3	e6
3 g3	d5
4 Bg2	Be7
5 0 - 0	0 0
6 b3	b6
7 Bb2	Bb7

Diagram 225



It is interesting to see
what has been happening on the
central squares. As usual in
this opening, White, with Nf3
and the fianchetto of the
Queen's Bishop, has taken
control of e5. Black's
prospects with regard to the
corresponding square, e4,
are rather different, for White
has held back with his d-pawn.
The only square occupied is d5
by Black and this becomes a
target for White's attention
although it is, of course, well
protected by a pawn and three
pieces.

8 cxd5 Nxd5

The alternative was to
recapture with the pawn and

then to continue developing his pieces behind his pawns which would lead to quite a different game with a variety of prospects for both sides. The text is more likely to result in early exchanges and drawish tendencies which probably accorded well with Black's intentions.

9 d4 c5

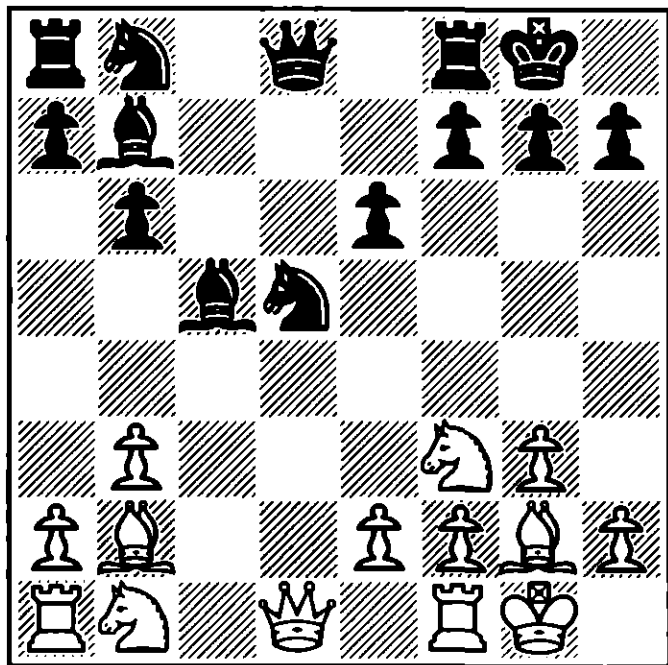
This time a White pawn appears in the centre and is immediately challenged.

10 dxc5

Botwinnik chose to exchange in order to gain a valuable tempo a few moves later.

10 Bxc5

Diagram 226



The only sensible way to retake for otherwise the queenside pawns become isolated.

Play so far has concentrated on placing pieces on the diagonal routes; Bishops bear

directly on the centre, their lines of force crossing there. Pawn moves have opened those diagonals and now pawn exchanges have opened files. Both players will work on those files, clearing them of pieces so that the Rooks can penetrate.

Files are highways into the enemy position and Rooks will try to probe as deeply as they can into the opposing territory. Botwinnik has already decided on the spot he would like to occupy: it is c6 in the open c-file and it soon becomes clear that his last move was far from being a routine exchange; it was a first step in the conquest of that point.

Why choose c6? This, on the surface, is one of those mysterious decisions which masters make and so it is worthwhile looking into the logic of that choice.

Botwinnik was looking for a strong point somewhere close to the centre and preferably in opposing territory, unassailable by enemy pawns but one that could be supported by friendly pawns, accessible to pieces both for occupation and support. Those provisions point immediately to two squares: d6 and c6. e5 could also be considered because, although it does not fit one condition - it is vulnerable to Black pawn attack none the less, if White did occupy e5, ... f6 would badly weaken the square e6. However, d6 and c6 are the top candidates at the moment. d7 and c7 are too far advanced, for no White pawns could cover those squares and other places on the two open files are

either too close to home or too vulnerable to Black's b and e-pawns.

c6 could be supported by advancing the b-pawn to b5; d6 by the e-pawn going to e5. In the latter case this would block the line of the Bishop at b2 and occupy a centre square (e5) with a pawn which would perhaps be better occupied by a Knight. A pawn at b5, supporting the c6 candidate, however, would not interfere with the movement of any of his own pieces. Then again, if the pawn on e5 was attacked it would have to be supported by the f-pawn going to f4, possibly exposing the White King's flank, whereas the b-pawn on b5 could be propped up with a pawn at a4 without any adverse side-effects. One last point: c6 is on the line of the light-squared Bishop which will add powerful, distant support.

Some readers may see all this at a glance but others may find this detail illuminating and be encouraged to believe that this kind of forward planning is within every player's ability once he has a firm grasp of positional ideas so that he knows what he is looking for in a given situation.

To return to the game:

11 Nbd2 Nd7
12 a3

Unfortunately for Donner he read this move as a preparation for e4, eliminating the response ... Nb4, which would give Black access to the splendid square d3. Consequently he defended with,

12

N5f6,

when he should have prevented White's next move with 12 a5.

13 b4

Here is the gain of tempo mentioned previously and with it White creates more space for manoeuvre as well as moving towards his target square.

13 Be7
14 Nd4

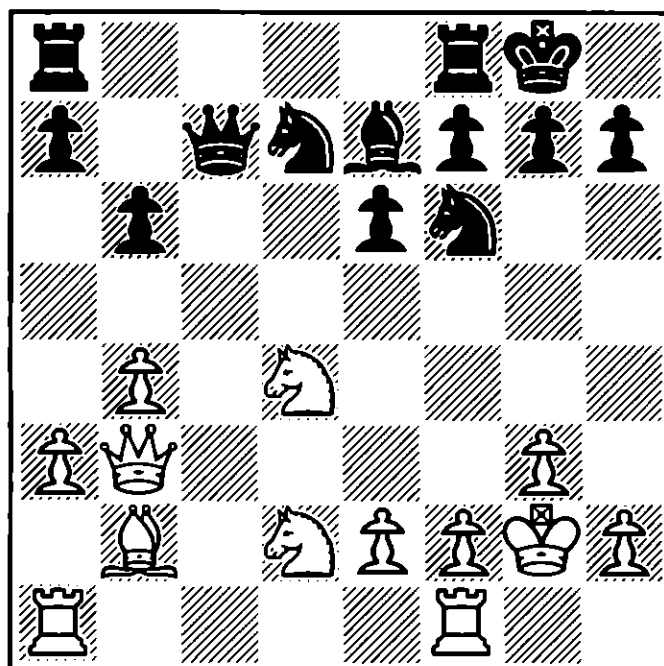
Opening the Knight and Bishop on to c6. The Bishop exchange is forced.

14 Bxg2
15 Kxg2 Qc7

The Queen moves across to take over the role of the Bishop on the light squares.

16 Qb3

Diagram 227



If you wondered why White played Nd2 instead of Nc3 on move 11, the complete answer is

now revealed. Apart from avoiding the exchange with Black's Knight on d5, as it was at the time, the Knight on d2 does not interfere with movement on the third rank. White, having exchanged off the light-squared Bishops, reducing Black's defence of c6, is now able, with the text and a clear third rank, to switch to f3 whenever Black goes ... Qb7ch, leaving Black with the difficult choice of whether to simplify in the hope of a draw but at the cost of weakening c6, or to keep the Queens on in the hope of better middle-game prospects.

16	Rfc8
17 Rfc1	Qb7ch
18 Qf3	

Now, after 18 ... Qxf3ch 19 N2xf3, there is no way to stop a Knight landing on c6 nor any method of driving it away, short of sacrifice. This would result in an enormous gain in space for White and a loss of mobility among the Black pieces, a situation similar to that in Game One.

18	Nd5
----	-----

Not only avoiding the exchange but threatening a sharp counterattack down the very diagonal that is in dispute: 19 ... Ne5 20 Qe4 f5! (forcing the Queen off the long diagonal) 21 Qxe5 Nf4 double ch with mate to follow.

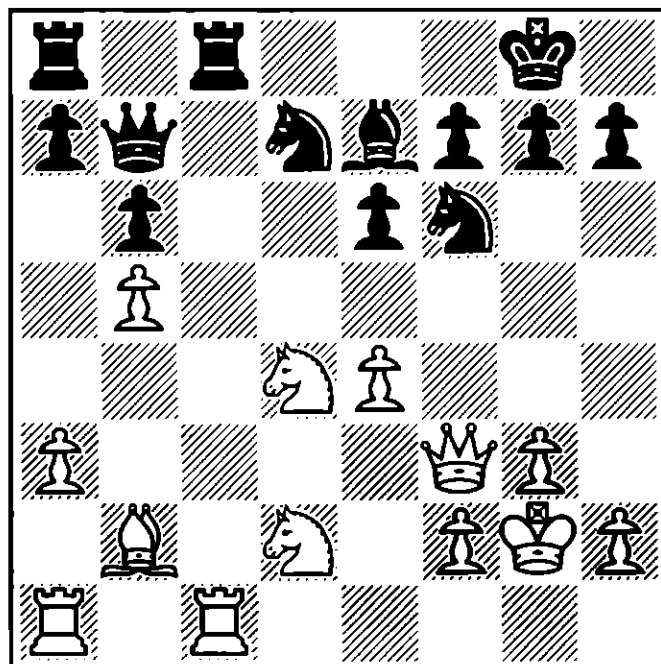
19 e4

Unfortunately for Black, White is now ready for this advance in the centre and Black has nothing better than to retreat the Knight.

19	N5f6
20 b5	

Mission almost accomplished: the foundations of the outpost are secured.

Diagram 228



20	a6
----	----

His attempt to undermine the foundations only opens more lines into his position.

21 Nc6

Entering the long-prepared outpost with tempo.

21	Bf8
22 a4	axb5
23 axb5	Rxa1
24 Rxa1	Ra8

Hoping for relief from further exchanges but White's reply emphasises his easy command of space.

25 Rd1

This occupation of the alternative file quickly proves decisive. The outpost Knight

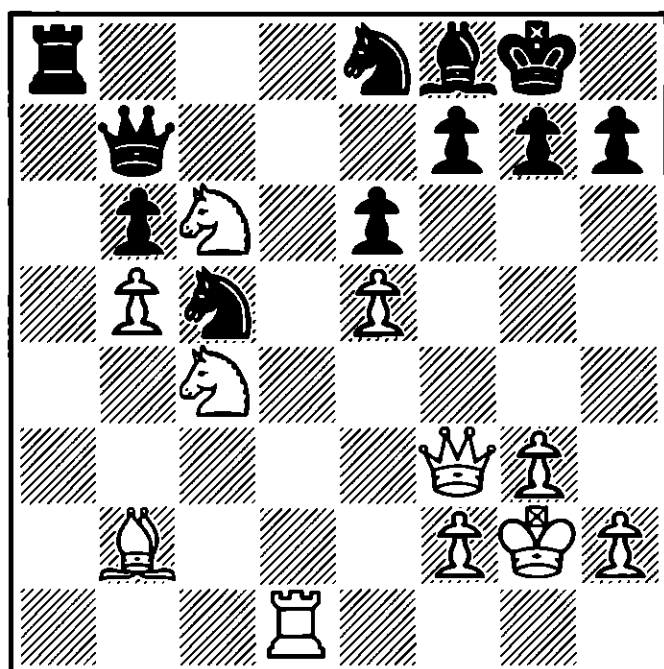
commands entry squares to the eighth rank at d8 and to the seventh rank at a7 and Black will find it impossible to defend both. His present control of the a-file is of little use to him since any advance into the White position along that line would be quickly repulsed.

25 Ne8
26 Nc4

Neatly stopping both ... Nc7 and ... Nd6. Botvinnik's policy of restraint works like magic.

26 Nc5
27 e5

Diagram 229



With this White opens the long diagonal for his Queen and further restricts enemy pieces. If you examine each Black piece in turn you will quickly understand what is meant by lack of mobility.

Queen: She has only two safe squares to go to, c8 and c7 and a move to either would lose material: 27 ... Qc8, 28 Nxb6

or 27 Qc7 28 Ne7ch. In other words the Queen's mobility is zero.

Rook: It has c8 on the rank and a4 and a2 on the file and neither of the file squares improves the Rook's prospects greatly.

Bishop: e7 is the only square it can move to and even then White could reply with Nxb6 etc.

Knight (e8): Its only possible move is 27 ... Nc7 which would be fatal after 28 Rd7! threatening 29 Qxf7ch, and if 28 ... Nxd7 then 29 Ne7ch wins the Queen.

Knight (c5): Probably Black's best piece. It is well placed and cannot be driven off but even so its only safe move is to the edge of the board at a4.

Compare this with the field of command and the possible manoeuvres of all the White force. It is not as if Black was cramped behind his own pawns; it is White who has actively employed pawns and pieces to control space.

27 Rc8

As good as any other move.

28 Ra1

White chooses the other file and invasion at a7.

28 Rc7

Or 28 Ra8 29 Rxa8 Qxa8
30 Ne7ch.

29 Ra7

Black is destroyed on the

seventh rank. If 29 ... Qc8
then 30 Nxb6 wins the Queen.

29		Qxa7
30	Nxa7	Rxa7
31	Nxb6	

With no prospects and behind
in material, Black resigned.

GAME 3

Botwinnik – Chekhover

Here Botwinnik saddles himself with doubled and isolated pawns, judging that the gain of an open file, an outpost in it and the prospect of good centralisation for his pieces will be worth it.

Botwinnik Chekhover
Leningrad, 1938

Occupation of e4 by a piece.
Centralisation.
Open file and outpost.
Light square weakness.
Doubled pawns.

Nimzo-Indian Defence

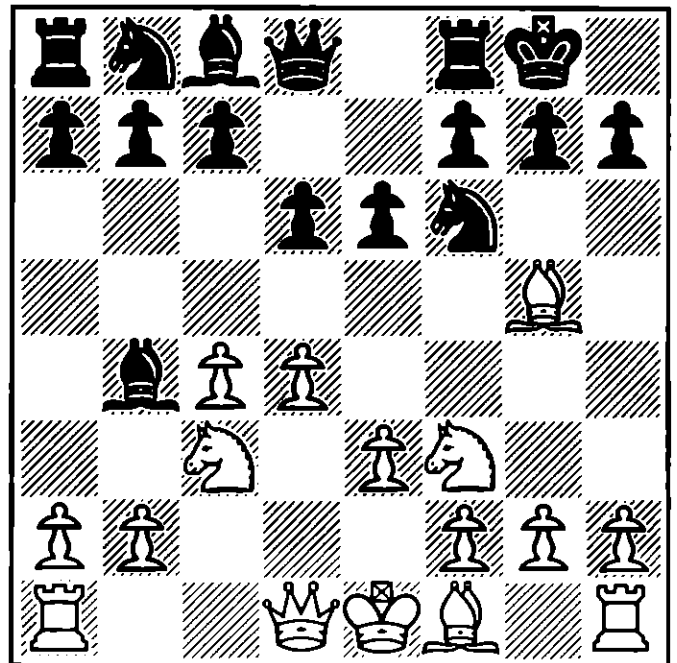
1 d4	Nf6
2 c4	e6
3 Nc3	Bb4

The move which characterises the defence. The object, through the pin on the Knight, is to restrain White's activities in the centre and discourage an early e4. According to variation Black may choose or be compelled to capture ... Bxc3, giving up Bishop for Knight but gaining in compensation a future target in the doubled pawn complex in White's queenside.

Of the many fourth move replies for White Botwinnik chooses the least well known and so avoids well-trodden paths.

4 Nf3	0 0
5 Bg5	d6
6 e3	

Diagram 230



Black's ideas follow the hypermodern pattern of a modest centre. White takes a similar view about the question of where to put his e-pawn. 6 e4 straight away commits the centre too early for his taste, for Black could respond with 6 ... h6 when White would have to exchange Bishop for Knight at f6 since 7 Bh4 would allow Black to play g5, Nxe4, and f5, giving him a pawn and a promising attack.

Botwinnik therefore preferred e3, preserving the square e4 for a piece.

6		Qe7
7	Be2	e5
8	Qc2	Re8
9	0 0	Bxc3

Now that the pin has disappeared White threatens Ne4 or Nd5.

10 bxc3

The doubled pawn cannot be avoided. After 10 Qxc3 Ne4 11 Bxe7 Nxc3 12 bxc3, the pawns are still doubled, exchanges have taken place and the endgame, in which those pawns will become an increasing liability, comes nearer.

10	h6
11 Bh4	c5

The idea of this is to provoke d5 when White's doubled pawns become both backward and fixed, but since White does not need to oblige he would have been better developing with Bg4.

12 Rfe1

White plans N-d2-e4 but must protect his Bishop first for otherwise 12 Nd2 exd4 13 cxd4 cxd4 and he cannot recapture.

12 Bg4

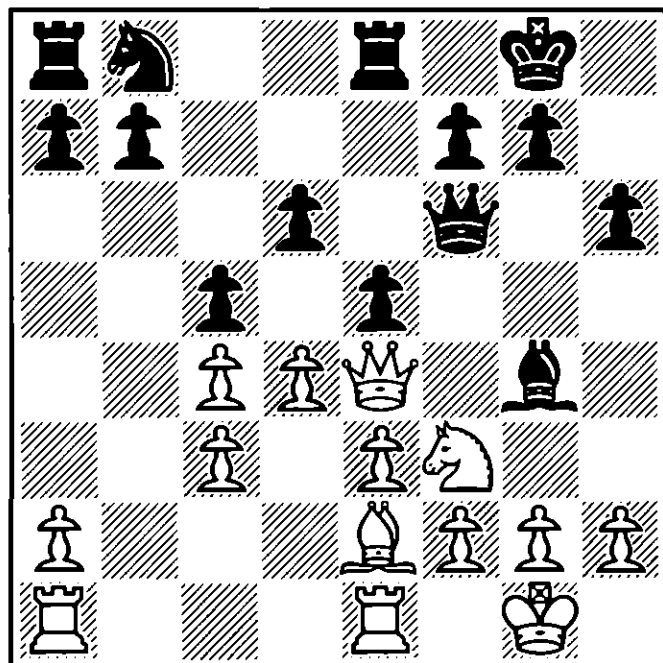
So that after 13 Nd2 Bxe2 14 Rxe2 again the e-pawn will be pinned when Black starts exchanging on d4. However, White has an alternative plan for that interesting square, e4.

13 Bxf6

Removing a watchdog.

13	Qxf6
14 Qe4!	

Diagram 231



Just enough force has been exchanged to make this early sortie with the Queen possible. The Queen, beautifully centralised and immune from attack, suddenly radiates enormous power both in her vicinity and at long range along the e-file and along the light diagonals on which she stands. The weakness of the light squares is immediately apparent.

Black's b-pawn and Bishop are forked and so he must take the Bishop home or exchange on f3.

14	Bxf3
15 Bxf3	

The Bishop joins in the domination of the light squares.

15 Nc6

White now needs a plan to further the advantages he has gained. The diagonal pieces are well enough placed, but the file pieces have not yet found

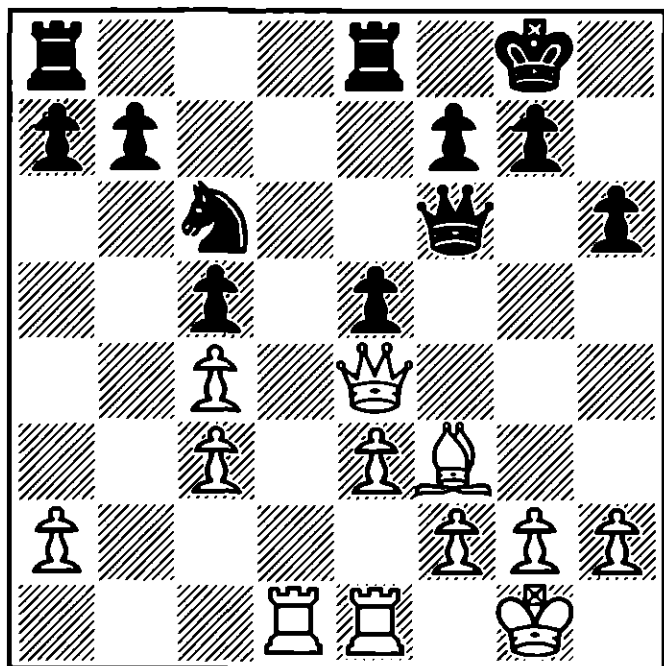
their maximum effectiveness. There is the half open b-file they could operate on but the b-pawn is easily defended without Black having to make weakening pawn moves.

Some other line is needed for the Rooks, perhaps a line yet to be opened. The obvious candidate is the d-file, but that would mean exchanging pawns on c5 which would leave a horrifying pawn configuration on the queenside: isolated pawn on a2, doubled, isolated and fixed pawns on c3 and c4.

Botwinnik weighed the pros and cons and came to the conclusion that the increased mobility of his pieces was worth the ragged pawns.

16 dxc5! dxc5
17 Rad1

Diagram 232



The file opens and a Rook appears on it, but surely, with the base of the file - from Black's point of view - so well covered, his own Rooks can challenge and both pairs be

exchanged, leaving White little for his pains, apart from his execrable pawns?

This is where an outpost in a file again becomes of service....

17 Rad8
18 Rd5!

... for if 18 Rxd5 then 19 cxd5, and a passed pawn appears. Not only that but the two weaklings become very strong as a supported passed pawn partnership. White, then, truly has control of the open file and threatens to double in it.

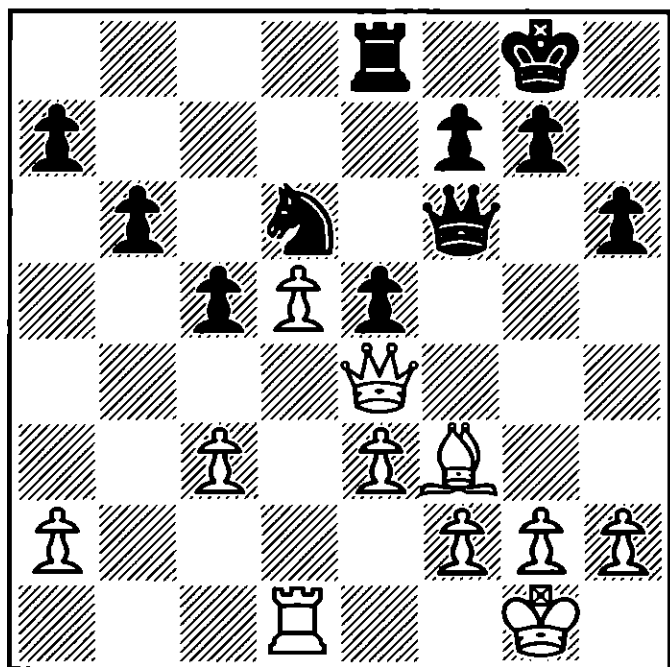
18 b6?

With so much light-squared weakness in his position Black should not place yet another pawn on a dark square and weaken the position of his Knight at the same time. His c-pawn needed support but this would have been better done by ... Qe7, which would have also prepared an advance on the kingside.

19 Red1 Na5!

A subtle plan. His idea is to create a passed pawn for White and then blockade it at d6: 20 ... Rxd5 21 cxd5 Nb7, followed by ... Nd6. This would give the position of diagram 233, apart from the missing White move, which would not alter the essential structure.

Diagram 233



Black has induced a passed pawn at d5, which could in some circumstances have been favourable to White, but not here. The pawn at d5 blocks both of White's main lines of movement and attack, the d-file and the a8 h1 diagonal. The principal virtue of a passed pawn lies in its ability to move freely towards the queening square, but here the Knight, that blockader par excellence, permanently immobilises the passed pawn, and, standing on a dark square, is unassailable. All White's abundant mobility has disappeared in a flash. This is a most fascinating and instructive position for in it we see how essential it is to create passed pawns in settings in which they will thrive and how effective the blockader can be not only in its obstruction of the passed pawn but in plugging holes in the position.

Returning to the game, the current position of which can be obtained by going back to

diagram 232 and playing 17 ...
Rad8 18 Rd5 b6 19 Red1 Na5.

20 h3

Seeing through Black's plan, Botwinnik plays a useful prophylactic move, preventing back rank surprises, as he waits for Black to proceed.

20 Rxd5
21 Rxd5!

White keeps his mobility rather than straightening out his pawns and avoids the consequences detailed in a previous note. He now threatens an invasion of the seventh rank which Black must attend to.

21 Qe7

Black could challenge the d-file again with ... Rd8 but White simply replaces the Rook with the Queen by the manoeuvre: 22 Qd3 Rxd5 23 Qxd5, maintaining his control over the light squares, the centre and the d-file.

22 Bg4

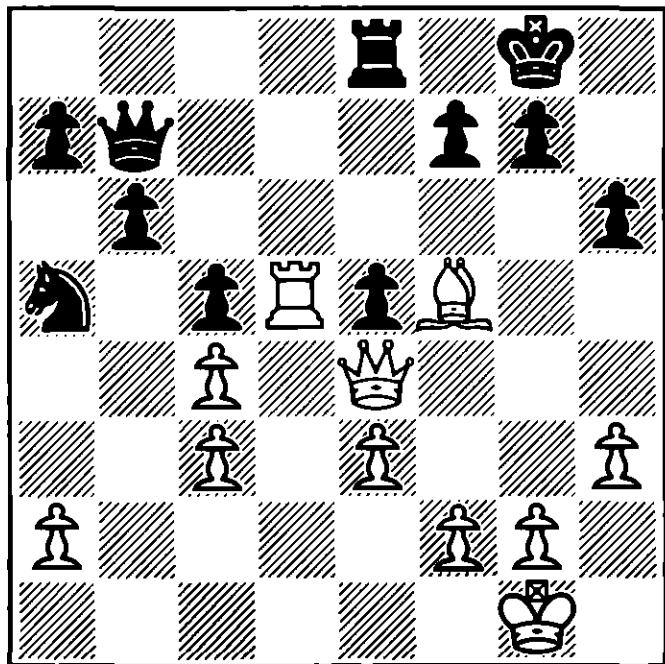
Renewing the threat of Rd7.

22 Qb7

Meeting the threat with a pin.

23 Bf5!

Diagram 234



Taking off the pin and increasing control over light squares. 23 ... g6 is prevented because of the reply 24 Bxg6! fxc6 25 Qxc6ch Kf8 (to protect the Rook) 26 Rd6 and Black can resign.

White threatens 24 Rd7 again and if 24 ... Qxe4 then 25 Bxe4 followed by Bd5, creating a situation similar to the game in which the ending is lost.

23 Qb8

He avoids the endgame and keeps his Queen, but for that he has to abandon his second rank.

24 Rd7

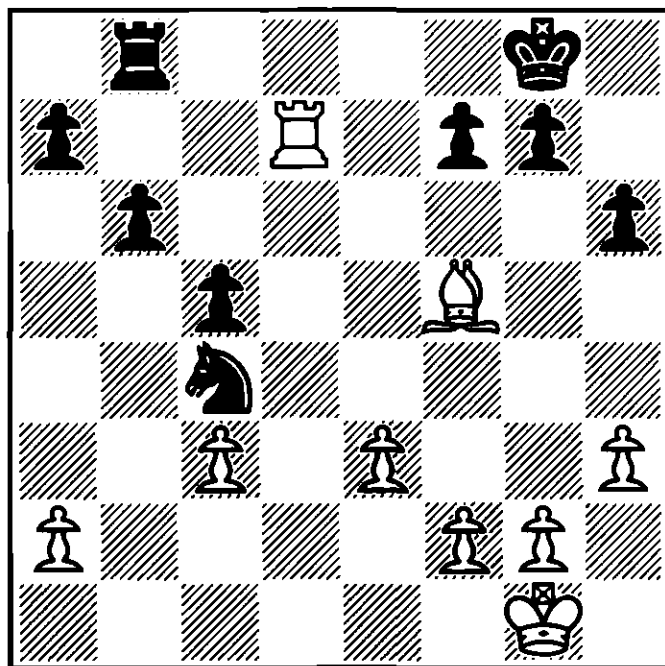
Now the threat of 25 Bh7ch Kf8 26 Qd5 (if Black stops the mate by interposing the Rook he loses the Queen on the back rank) forces Black to challenge the Rook.

24 Rd8
25 Qxe5!

Neatly winning a central pawn for a doubled one and eliminating to a won endgame. Of course if 25 ... Qxe5 26 Rxd8ch and mate next move.

25 Nxc4
26 Qxb8 Rxb8

Diagram 235



27 Be4!

Two moves ago Botvinnik made a Queen offer, now he plays this beautifully delicate move, Be4, a decisive centralisation of the Bishop threatening Bd5. It is interesting to look over the previous few moves again to see which gives the greater pleasure, 25 Qxe5 or 27 Be4. Perhaps it is invidious to compare moves so different in character but one thing is certain: 27 Be4 has at least the merit of the Queen offer. More to the point probably, as is soon revealed, those two moves combine to the same end, the creation of a potential passed pawn.

Why did White ignore the a-pawn? He could have won it but

Black has a majority of pawns on the queenside and its capture would only make matters equal there. The endgame is the time to consider (although Botvinnik had obviously considered it some time before) where a passed pawn is going to come from, for it is the principal means of winning at this stage of the game. White's pawn majority is on the kingside, the candidate is the e-pawn and so this is the region upon which he concentrates.

27	Na3
28 Bd5	Rf8

Black's King and Rook are now tied down to the defence of the f-pawn. Furthermore, the pawn is pinned on the diagonal and even if Black played ... g6 and ... Kg7, it would still be pinned, this time on the rank. This shows the real value of Be4: two-thirds of the Black force is immobilised and all he is left with is a wandering Knight.

29 e4

It seems a long time ago that White decided to delay this move. He will now advance the e and f-pawns together until a winning passed pawn emerges.

29	a5
30 c4	

Ensuring that when Black does produce a passed pawn it will be a feeble one.

30	b5
31 cxb5	Nxb5
32 e5	a4
33 f4	Nd4

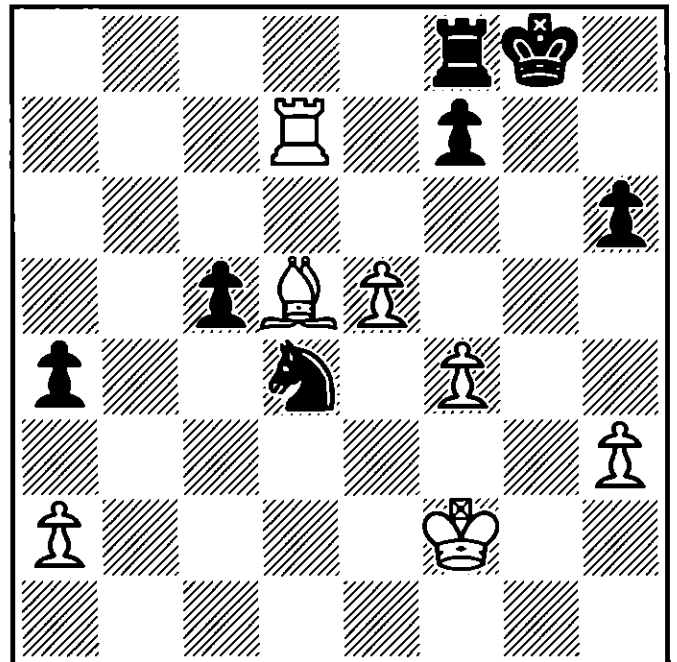
Preventing the immediate f5.

34 Kf2

Ne2ch was threatened.

34	g5
35 g3	gxf4
36 gxf4	

Diagram 236



Even if Black could achieve complete control of f5 and set up a blockade with his Knight supported by his King there would be little point, for White could then march his King to the other wing and collect the pawns there.

36	Ne6
37 Ke3	c4
38 f5	Nc5
39 Rc7	Nd3

Black soldiers on. He could have resigned some moves ago.

40 e6	fxe6
41 fxe6	Resigns,

because the passed pawn will be worth a Rook after: 41 ... Re8 42 e7 dis ch and 43 Bc6. If 41 ... Nf4 then simply 42 Bxc4.

GAME 4

Smyslov – Rudakovsky

Smyslov Rudakovsky

Moscow, 1945

How to occupy d5.
The outpost as pivot for
wing attack.
Colour weakness.

Sicilian Defence

1 e4 c5

The Sicilian Defence. Its first obvious intention is to be ready to exchange pawns as soon as White moves into the centre with d4, giving him two pawns to one in the middle. Such a description suggests that it is hypermodern in flavour but the strange thing is that the Sicilian is very old. It acquired the name from Greco in the seventeenth century and has since been one of the most popular of the asymmetrical replies to e4, only occasionally falling out of fashion.

The early acquisition of the half open c-file after the exchange of pawns and an open line for the Queen gives Black active play on the queenside.

Its disadvantage is that with its initial action remote from the kingside White can attack with a rush of pawns in the centre and on the kingside, an attack that can be both sudden and violent. However, Black's pawn structure generally remains sounder than White's in such situations, and so the longer the game goes on the more favourable to Black it becomes.

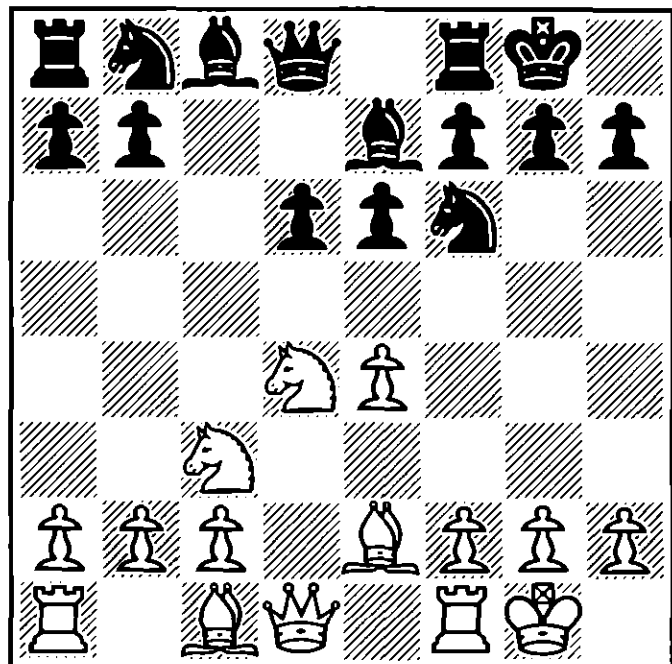
2 Nf3 e6

The Scheveningen Variation in which Black aims for a modest centre and development, hoping to release his accumulated power later.

There are many variations in the Sicilian. Even at this early stage Black has many choices of move and it is the flexibility and rich complexity of 1 ... c5 which has kept the defence alive for such a long time.

3 d4	cx d4
4 Nxd4	Nf6
5 Nc3	d6
6 Be2	Be7
7 0 0	0 0

Diagram 237



Black has achieved what is sometimes called the little centre. His pawns at d6 and e6 prevent, at present, any incursion of enemy pieces across the front c5 to f5, or the establishment of White outposts there. He has to pay for this, however, with a cramped position.

White's pieces are pointing generally towards the kingside and he will aim for something like f4, Qe1 and Qg3. The natural line of flow, after ... Bd7, for Black's forces will be towards the other wing. Hence a balance of opportunity is struck between the opposing sides.

8 Be3	Nc6
9 f4	Qc7
10 Qe1	

The Queen looks along the narrow corridor of its own file and needs more room and this

simple shift opens up new prospects along diagonals. But c2 must be watched. Black is taking over the c-file and the White pawn there could become vulnerable.

10 Nxd4

Black's problem is what to do with the Queen's Bishop. Unless it is fianchettoed it will need one of the squares e6 or c6 which are presently covered by the White Knight. This exchange is, therefore, a good one since the Knight was also keeping an eye on f5, a common square for kingside operations, particularly in this opening. White's pawns are also beginning to look ominous and Black plans a challenge with ... e5, even though it would leave his d-pawn backward.

11 Bxd4	e5
12 Be3	Be6

Trying to develop the Bishop in one move and aiming at c4, but it would have been better to use two moves with ... Bd7 and ... Bc6, retaining the Bishop there against a possible White outpost at d5.

13 f5

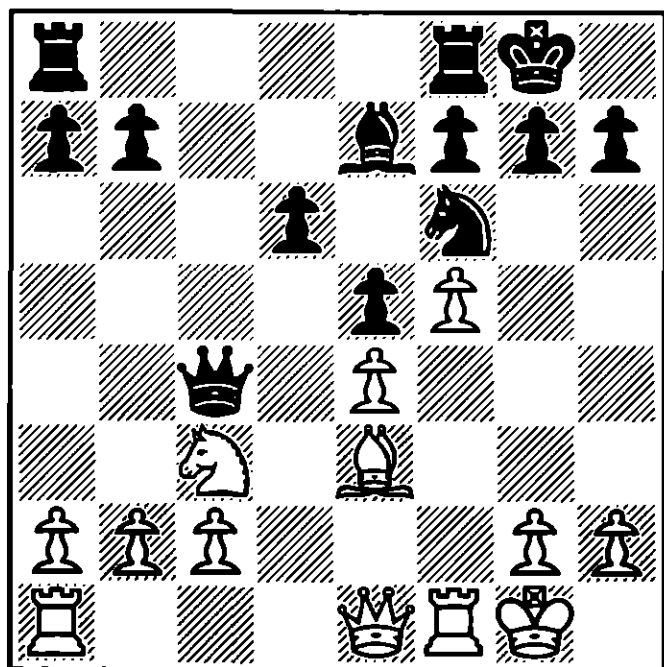
And now White advances with tempo.

13 Bc4

Continuing his defective plan.

14 Bxc4 Qxc4

Diagram 238



d5 now looms large in White's mind as a most attractive post for an outpost Knight. Black has already helped him by exchanging the light-squared Bishops. The only Black piece remaining to thwart the ambition is the Black Knight and so White adopts a typical manoeuvre in such situations.

15 Bg5!

Because the Knight is pinned Black cannot avoid the exchange.

15 Rf6
16 Bxf6 Bxf6
17 Nd5

Nor does White have to prepare the occupation by defending his c-pawn: 17 ... Qxc2 18 Rf2 and now, if the Queen leaves the c-file, 19 Nc7 forks the Rooks, and if Black stays on the c-file 19 Rc1 and the same thing happens.

17 Bd8

Otherwise White can break up the kingside pawns.

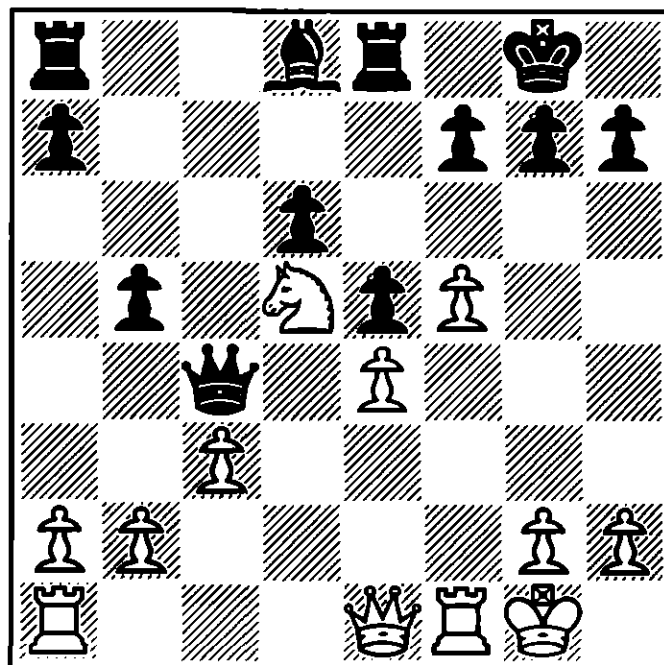
18 c3

Time to take preventive measures.

18

b5

Diagram 239



The position is a simple one and displays the virtues of the central outpost with striking clarity. The Knight itself is part of a fixed centre which will enable White to embark on wing activity in safety. The Knight aims at the squares e7 and f6 on the kingside but has influence on the other wing at c7 and b6 as well as defending vital points in his own pawn structure. The outpost becomes a kind of pivot or fulcrum of action on the wings. Notice too that the Knight covers dark squares, making his opponent's Bishop a bad one.

Black's only prospect now is to try to hold the kingside whilst he conducts a minority attack on the queenside.

19 b3

Releasing the Queen's Rook from the defence of the a-pawn and the Knight will look after the base of the c-file at c3.

19 Qc5ch
20 Kh1 Rc8
21 Rf3

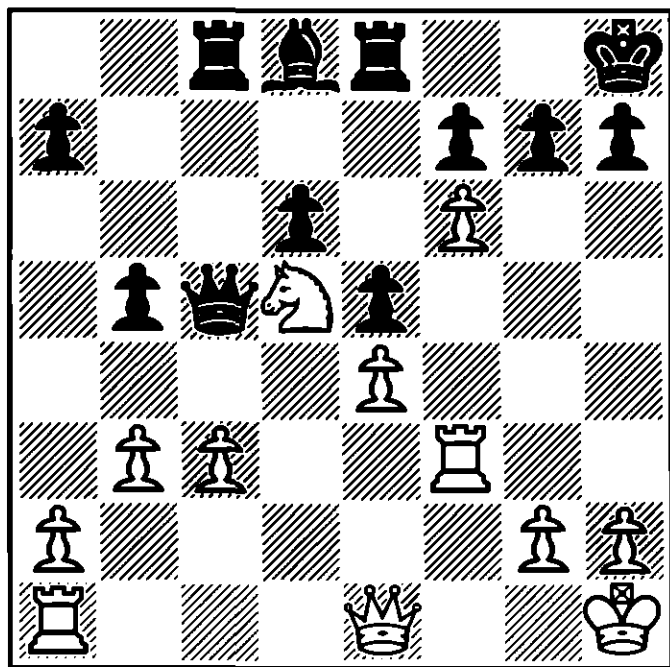
Simple and effective. The Rook, operating now on the third rank, covers points in the queenside as well as preparing to switch into a direct King attack.

21 Kh8

Black was naturally reluctant to restrict his Bishop further with ... f6, which would also allow Qh4 supported by Rh3.

22 f6

Diagram 240



A typical method of breaking up the King's pawn cover. If Black leaves the pawn where it is and plays, say, ... g6, the dark square weakness is

terrible in spite of his possession of a dark Bishop. There would follow Qe1 d2 h6 and Rf3 h3 with a mate that is not to be avoided.

On 22 ... Bxf6 there would follow 23 Nxf6 gxf6 24 Qh4 Rg8 (not 24 ... Re6 because of 25 Rh3, etc.) 25 Qxf6ch Rg7 26 Rd1, with variations similar to those in the game.

22 gxf6
23 Qh4 Rg8

To stop the mate at h7 which would follow after Rh3.

24 Nxf6 Rg7
25 Rg3

The threat of 26 Qxh7ch! Rxh7 27 Rg8 mate forces Black to clear the back rank and so he takes off the Knight.

25 Bxf6
26 Qxf6 Rg8
27 Rd1

Black cannot stop the d-file opening and letting in the other Rook to clinch the game.

27 d5

Hoping to get the Queen back to f8 in order to recapture with the Queen when White goes Rxg7, but White stifles even this bleak hope.

28 Rxg7! Resigns

After 28 ... Rxg7 29 Rxd5 Black can only defend the back rank by giving up Queen for Rook.

There could be no simpler demonstration of the outpost's power than White's elegant play in this game.

GAME 5

Bogoljubow – Nimzowitsch

The next game is remarkable for its single-minded pursuit of a strategical idea. Nimzowitsch writes of his games as if they were more heroic adventures than games. He wrote a book called 'My System' in the same manner which you may be fortunate enough not to have read, for it is a great pleasure to look forward to.

The game turns upon the simple idea of pawn weakness. Nimzowitsch doubles his opponent's pawns on the c-file in the opening and then bends all his energies to two things: exploiting that weakness and eliminating all enemy counter chances. This latter element, prevention, which Nimzowitsch called prophylaxis, he regarded as a corner stone of his system.

It was played in a famous tournament, Carlsbad, 1929, which Nimzowitsch won above Capablanca, Spielmann, Rubinstein and a galaxy of other names. His opponent was Bogoljubow, who played two matches against Alekhine for the World Championship during that period, and so in no way was this a victory against weak opposition.

Bogoljubow Nimzowitsch
Carlsbad, 1929

Doubled pawns.
Prophylaxis (preventive measures).
Centralisation.
Play in the file.

Nimzo-Indian Defence

1 d4	Nf6
2 c4	e6
3 Nc3	Bb4

See Game four for comments on these moves.

4 Nf3	Bxc3ch
-------	--------

Black does not wait to be challenged nor for White to further protect his Knight, so that after,

5 bxc3,

the c-pawns are irrevocably doubled.

5	b6
---	----

The fianchetto of the Bishop is intended to bring a piece to bear on e4, nor will White, with his compromised pawns, be able to block the diagonal, as we shall see.

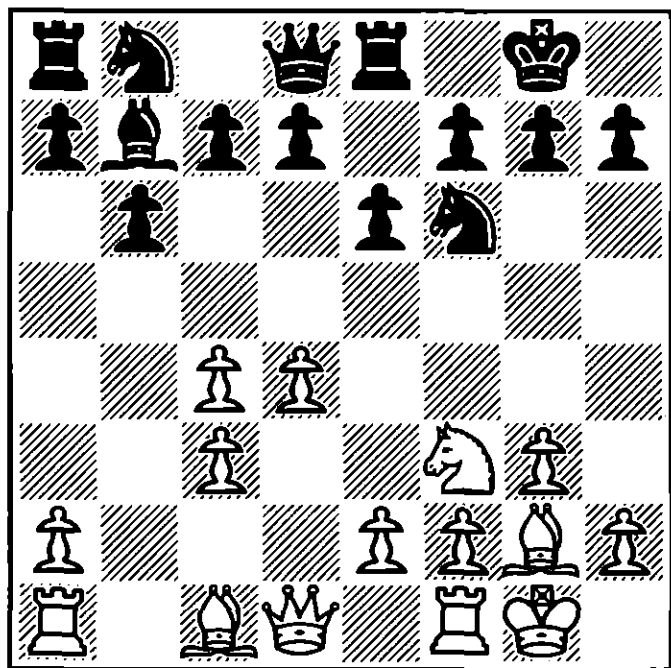
6 g3	Bb7
7 Bg2	0 0
8 0 - 0	

Both sides have moved along quickly with development and nothing has been disturbed in

the centre, although their watchful eyes have been on it all the time. An indication of what lies below the surface is seen in Black's next move.

8 Re8

Diagram 241



Nimzowitsch gives this Rook move two exclamation marks and goes on, 'Black operates here, and in the following play, with prophylaxis and centralisation The mysterious Rook move helps to forestall the possibility of Nd2 and e4, thus: 9 Nd2 Bxg2 10 Kxg2 e5! 11 e4 exd4 and ... Nxe4 follows'. In such ways Black frustrates White's natural lines of play.

9 Re1 d6

This restrained centre supports an eventual ... e5, gives options for the development of the Queen's Knight and watches the important square c5.

10 Qc2

Provoking Black's next move so that once Black's Bishop is on e4 he plans to drive it off with some sequence such as Bh3, Nd2, f3 and e4, so establishing a powerful centre. Eventually he succeeds in driving off the Bishop but not before the pawn structure has changed in Black's favour.

10 Be4
11 Qb3 Nc6

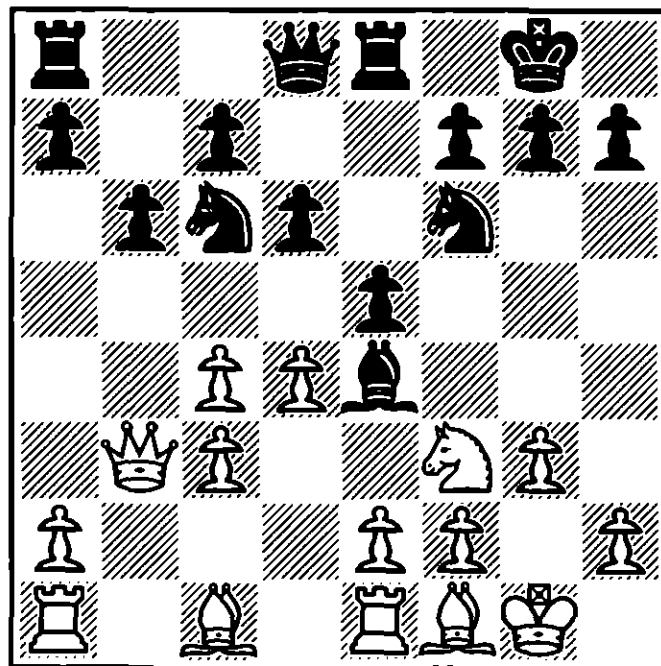
Pinpointing the nature of White's problem with the doubled pawns. The Knight can, now or later, go to a5 and then White's Queen will be needed to protect the pawn at c4.

12 Bf1

White, conscious of the point of the previous note, looks for another protector of the c-pawn.

12 e5

Diagram 242



The critical move of the game.

Doubling an opponent's pawns is comparatively simple; manoeuvring against them is quite another matter. The three White pawns at c3, c4 and d4 are quite a solid formation as they stand, their weakness incipient. We could say that doubled pawns are latently weak, doubled and isolated pawns, and doubled, fixed and backward pawns are really weak

or, as Nimzowitsch would put it more dramatically, 'organically diseased'. This is the whole point of ... e5. White is given three options:

- 1 dxe5, when the c-pawns become isolated and, therefore, really 'diseased'.
- 2 d5, when the pawns become immobilised and the c-pawns backward: again diseased.
- 3 Retaining the pawn at d4. The only way of doing this is by 13 Rd1 when Black will not straighten out his pawns for him but regroup his pieces to start pressing on the kingside, leaving White tied down to his queenside problems. In other words, the matter of what to do with the problem pawns is left hanging over him.

Rather than having this constant irritant Bogoljubow decided to resolve the matter immediately for he would then have the opportunity to expand in the centre and chase away some enemy pieces.

13 dxe5	Nxe5
14 Nxe5	Rxe5
15 Bf4	

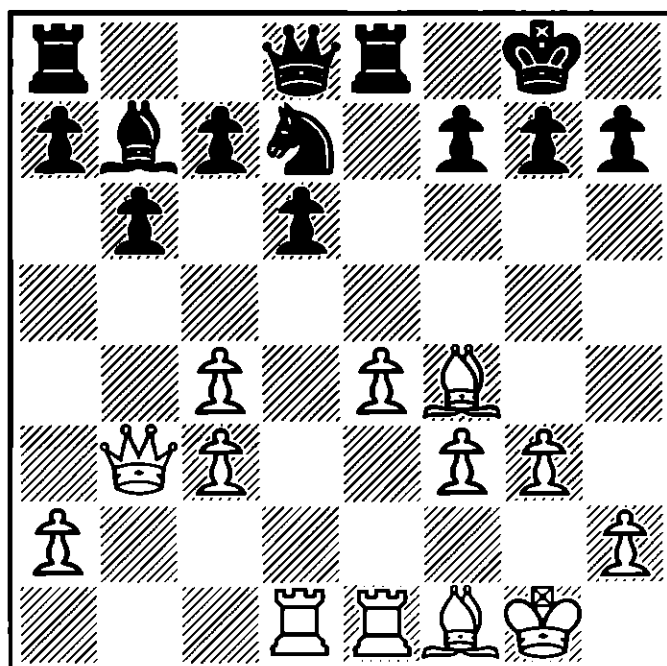
White now gains time to bring his pieces out of their cramped quarters.

15	Re8
16 f3	Bb7
17 Rad1	

A very good move. He develops into the centre with the threat of 18 c5! ridding himself of the doubled pawn because of the pins on the b and d-pawns. It is as if, having come to terms with his queenside handicap, the rest of his game springs into life.

17	Nd7
18 e4	

Diagram 243



In a few, swift strokes White seems, on the surface, to have developed his position, centralised his Rooks, eliminated threats and driven back the enemy, for Black's pieces are now no more forward than his second rank nor his pawns beyond the third. White has a pair of Bishops and a solid pawn at e4, just as he had intended from the beginning. But, in Nimzowitsch's words, 'White's position suffers from a profound inner decay. The

doubled pawns are isolated.... On top of this White does not have a shred of counter play anywhere'. And, strangely, this is true. The essential soundness of Black's position, particularly in its pawn structure, offers White no targets, so successful has Nimzowitsch's policy of prophylaxis been. Black has a strong square in front of the doubled pawns at c5 and another good post for the Knight at e5. Since White has nothing on at present, able only to look out for opportunities, Black has ample time to regroup his pieces ready for operations on the e-file and kingside.

18 Qf6
19 Bg2 Ne5

He ties down a White piece, at present the Queen, to the defence of the c-pawn.

20 Rd2 Re7
21 Red1 Bc6

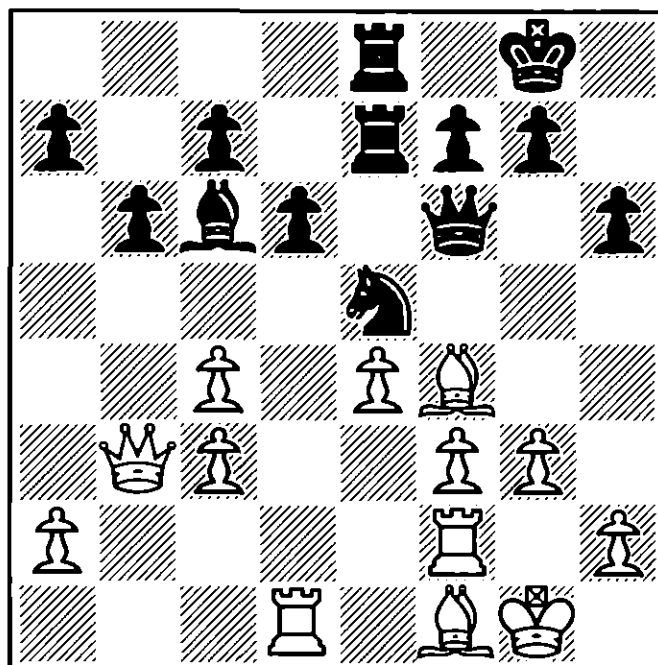
Prevention again, eliminating all surprises from c5! at any time.

22 Rf2

Now that there are no prospects of opening the d-file with c5 he protects the f-pawn with his Rook so that the Bishop can go to f1 and relieve the Queen from her pawn protection duties.

22 Rae8
23 Bf1 h6

Diagram 244



A few finishing touches have to be made and then Black is ready for ... f5. It is proof of the sterility of White's position, the product of preventive measures, that Black has so much time to put his whole house in order before proceeding with the final phase.

This move prevents Bg5, supported by the Queen at c1 or d2, at any time. It also contains the tactical threat of 24 ... Nxf3! 25 Rxf3 g5, though Black may not have followed that course even if he had been given the opportunity. Black now only needs to take his King off the a2 g8 diagonal (to prevent any surprises, discovered checks or pins occurring on that line) and to triple on the e-file and he is ready.

24 Be2 Kh8
25 Qa3

Not threatening 26 Qxa7?? because of 26 ... Ra8, but

simply to bring the Queen into a more active position.

25 Qe6
26 Qc1

Black threatens the c-pawn twice, and, although this is his legitimate booty it has been the object of his attention from the outset such treasure should only be collected at the most favourable time. Feeling defeat looming, White will naturally look for means of wriggling out of his difficulties and 26 ... Nxc4 would be a bad mistake. There would follow: 27 Bxc4 Qxc4 28 Bxh6! and if 28 ... gxh6 then 29 Qxh6ch Kg8 30 Qg5ch and White has a draw by perpetual check.

26 f5

The breakthrough at last begins.

27 exf5

Best. If, for example, 27 Bd3, then 27 ... Nxd3 28 Rxd3 fxe4 29 fxe4 Qxe4 is devastating.

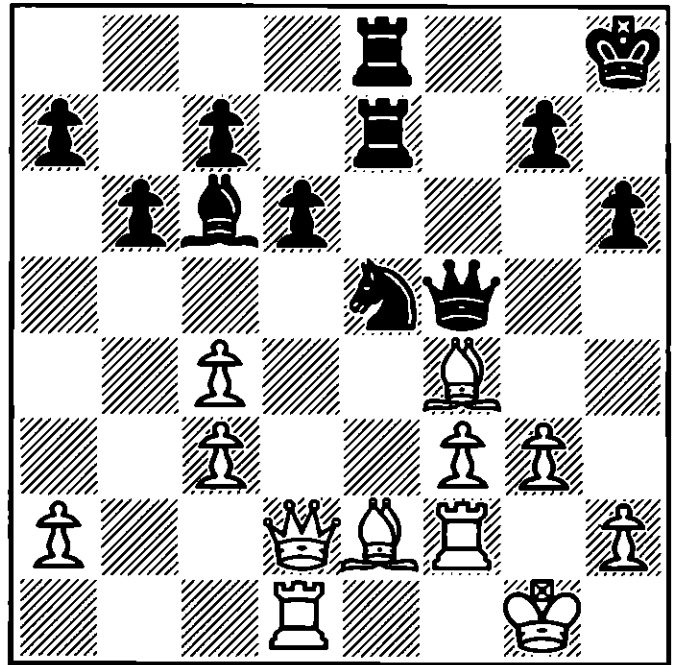
Of course, in the long run, the opening of the e-file and White's inability to challenge the Black strength upon it make the end almost inevitable.

27 Qxf5
28 Qd2

Hoping to stem the tide with Bd3, hence the reply.

With the e-pawn gone the highway is open but Black must not be too eager in attacking

Diagram 245



the King. Here 29 ... Nxf3ch is tempting but White can defend himself: 30 Bxf3 Bxf3 31 Rxf3 Re2 32 Qd3! Qh3 33 Rf2 Re1ch 34 Rxe1 (not 34 Rf1 because of 34 ... R8e2!) Rxe1ch 35 Rf1, and White holds the piece.

28 Qf7
29 Qd4

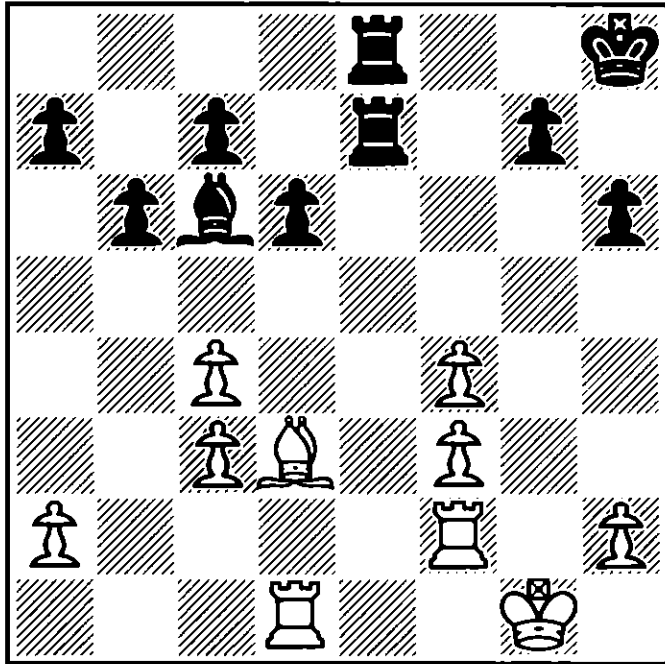
The c-pawn now needs support since the White resource at h6 is no longer on, but eliminating the Knight would have been better.

29 Ng6!

The discovered attack on the file means that White soon acquires another set of doubled pawns.

30 Bd3 Nxf4
31 Qxf4 Qxf4
32 gxf4

Diagram 246



There is a sad irony in this new affliction. All White's concerns over the doubled pawns in the c-file have only led to this mirror reflection in the kingside. The very symmetry of White's pawn structure and six isolated pawns must have seemed to Bogoljubow the devilish product of black humour.

The game is over now and there is little need for commentary on the rest.

32	Rf8
33 f5	Bd7
34 Rdd2	Bxf5

Black at last begins to collect his tribute.

35 Rfe2	Rxe2
36 Bxe2	Re8
37 Kf2	Re5

Aiming at c5, that long-established strong square.

38 Rd5	g5
39 Rxe5	dxe5
40 c5!	

Touché. But it is too late and it is no more than spite that prompts him to inflict his opponent with a pair of doubled pawns, or perhaps he was entering into the spirit of the thing. White played on ten more moves before resigning, which, for the record, were: 40 ... bxc5 41 Ba6 e4 42 a4 Kg7 43 a5 exf3 44 Kxf3 Kf6 45 Ke3 Ke5 46 Bc4 Bg4 47 Ba6 h5 48 Bc4 h4 49 Ba6 Bd1 50 Bb7 g4.

This was awarded the Best Game prize.

GAME 6

Keres - Smyslov

Keres

Smyslov

Zurich, 1953

Wing attack and central counter
Prophylaxis.

Queen's Pawn Opening

1 c4	Nf6
2 Nc3	e6
3 Nf3	c5

White's approach to the opening, delaying d4, allows Black to make this freeing move and turn a watchful eye on d4 without the need to consider the consequences of pawn exchanges in the centre.

4 e3	Be7
5 b3	O O
6 Bb2	b6

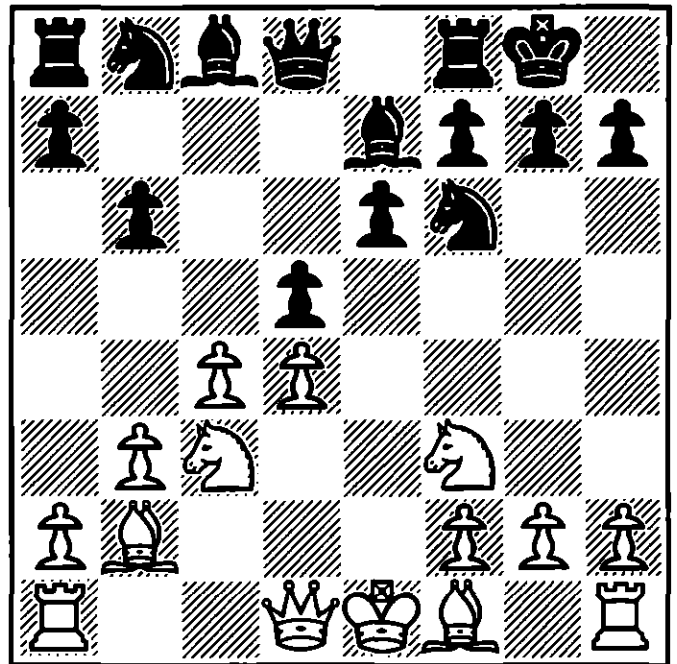
Although White's opening system is perfectly sound he has posed no problems for Black who now has a clear method of developing the rest of his force and, in particular, the Queen's Bishop, the piece that generally gives him the greatest trouble.

7 d4

Committing himself in the centre at last.

7	cx d4
8 ex d4	d5

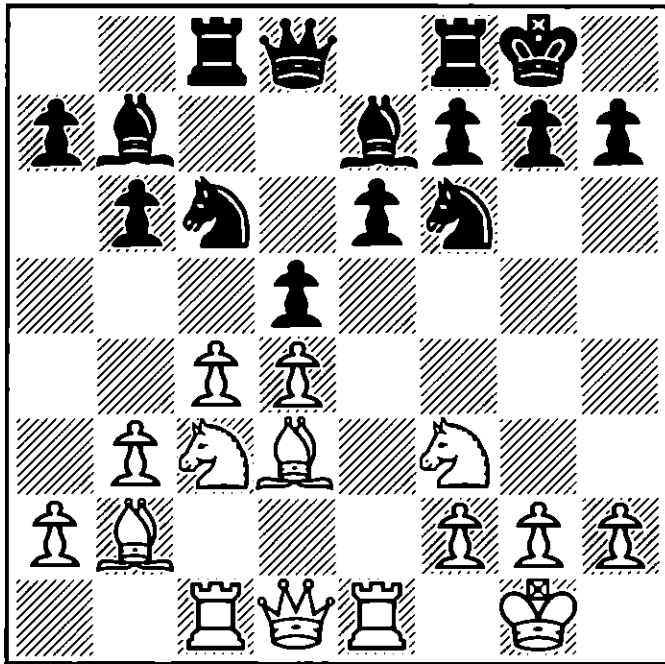
Diagram 247



The pawn exchange gave Black two pawns to one in the centre. This thrust holds over White's head the constant threat of ... dxc4 bxc4, creating hanging pawns which he could only avoid by accepting an isolated pawn by exchanging himself on d5. Those hanging pawns or the isolani may be weak or strong according to the turn of events, but the fact that the decision lies in Black's hands imparts, at the very least, a psychological advantage to him.

9 Bd3	Nc6
10 O O	Bb7
11 Rc1	Rc8
12 Re1	

Diagram 248



As development nears completion a great deal of tension builds up in the centre since neither player has ventured to exchange pawns. Such an exchange, by either side, would modify the pawn structure and consequently the strategic planning. They have aimed for flexible piece development so that they can quickly adapt to any change in circumstances.

White's Bishops are mobilised against the kingside and his Rook has come to e1 to support an invasion of e5, but, whilst uncertainty remains in the centre, he cannot, or should not, launch an attack there.

Black would like to reduce some of the kingside potential which is growing in White's position and he now takes preventive measures.

12 Nb4

The object of this is to drive away a Bishop that has an

aggressive eye on h7 and to do so before the Bishop is able to retreat to b1.

13 Bf1

This method of retreat is made necessary because the Bishop must still protect the c-pawn whose situation remains unresolved.

13 Ne4

Inviting White to capture on e4 so that when Black retakes the pawn will be supported by the Queen's Bishop and an eventual ... f5 and become a powerful intrusion which would cut White off from the e5 square

14 a3

He prefers to let Black do the exchanging and drives away the knight at the cost of weakening his queenside pawns a little.

14 Nxc3

Necessary since he wishes to retreat the other Knight to c6.

15 Rxc3 Nc6

Black's excursion has done something to quell White's belligerence, but has he not invited a queenside pawn roller? 16 c5 bxc5 17 dxc5 Bf6 18 Rc2 Bxb2 19 Rxb2 Qa5, forking two pawns, shows that White is little prepared for such a venture and that 14 a3, rather than giving momentum to the roller, simply weakens his pawns.

White, however, still has ambitions on the kingside.

16 Ne5 Nxe5
17 Rxe5

By capturing this way he commits himself to kingside operations.

17 Bf6

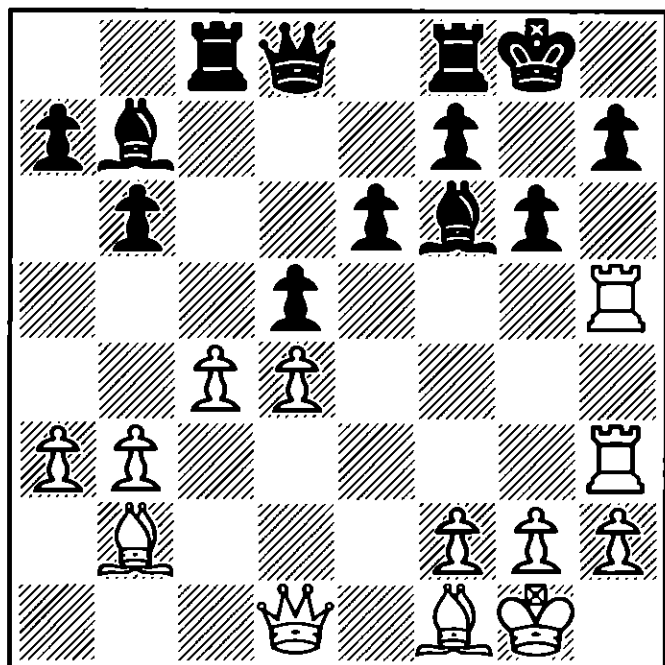
Striking through the Rook at the centre, particularly the point d4. White's pawn on that square, as we saw in the opening, was potentially an isolated one or a member of a pair of hanging pawns. As White goes for his attack Black puts his finger on the weakness of the operation: the insecure centre.

18 Rh5

Having cleared his third rank, the Queen's Rook will move quickly to support the other in a powerful doubling on the h-file. The attack looks dangerous, as indeed it is, especially in the hands of such an aggressive and tactically resourceful player as Keres.

18 g6
19 Rch3

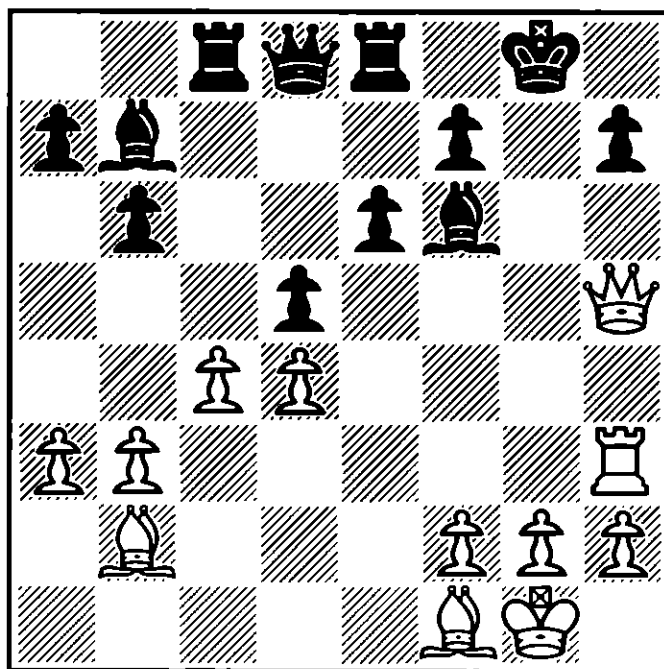
Diagram 249



White offers a whole Rook for the attack and it is worthwhile checking if it is possible or necessary to accept it. The motive for accepting sacrifices around the King's position is not avarice; it is simply that by doing so the defender reduces the size of the attacking force.

For example, after 19 gxf5 20 Qxf5, Black is compelled to make a flight-square for his King by 20 ... Re8, which would give rise to diagram 250.

Diagram 250



This is the position from which both players would have made their calculations during the game.

Black's Bishop at f6 is a fine defensive piece covering the vital squares g7 and h8 as well as combining with Queen support to interpose on the open g-file at g5.

It can be easily seen that there is nothing for White in Qxh7ch, for the King will

escape via f8 and e7. Such a system would work if White was able to open the centre and cut off the King's retreat with a Rook, say, on an open e-file, but in this game it is not possible and Black's central pawns provide a shield for the passage of the King.

Try 21 Qh6, cutting the King off from the escape route. There would follow: 21 ... Bg5! 22 Rg3 f6 23 h4, and White regains some of his material with a continuing attack. This is certainly not a line that Black would choose.

But White has other ideas too. From diagram 250 he could play 21 a4! opening up the a3-f8 diagonal on which lie two squares of the intended escape route for the King. If now 21 ... dxc4 (in order to play ... Be4 for kingside protection) then 22 Qxh7ch Kf8 23 Ba3ch Re7 (23 ... Be7?? 24 Qh8 mate) 24 Rg3 and Black must give up his Queen to avoid mate.

Clearly Black must try to close the a3 - f8 diagonal. ... Be7 obstructs the escape route and so he must use the Queen. From diagram 250 again: 21 a4 Qd6 22 c5. Flight-squares are blocked if the Queen goes to e7 or f8 and so: 22 ... bxc5 23 Qh6! White leaves the pawn recapture in the air because he wants to open the a1-h8 line at the right moment. 23 ... Bg7 24 Qxh7ch Kf8 25 dxc5 Qxc5 26 Qxg7ch Ke7 27 Qf6ch and White has recovered most of his material and the attack goes on.

There are many other fascinating possibilities in this position but sufficient

has been given to show that Black was wise to avoid the murky waters which he would have stirred up by accepting the Rook.

To return to the game and diagram 249.

Black fell back on the trusty principle that the best way to meet a wing attack is by a counter in the centre. This is particularly true here since Black's centre is strong where White's has been neglected. The main weakness lies at d4 and it will be seen that the rest of the game turns about this point.

19

dxc4

If there are any readers still with doubts about the efficacy of a good centre they will surely be convinced by this move and its implications. Firstly, it clears the diagonal a8-h1 and enables a Bishop which is deeply entrenched on the queenside and patiently waiting to support some invasion of White's kingside to be granted an important role in the defence of Black's own kingside. The possibility of playing ... Be4 and then dashing back along another line to defend such points as g6 and h7 suddenly appears, and the centre is seen as, among other things, a turning point for switching pieces between the wings.

Secondly, the pawn exchange half opens the d-file, pinpointing the weakness at d4, twice attacked and twice defended it is true, but one of the White defenders, the Queen, will be needed for attack and

what is a Queen doing anyway, defending lowly pawns?

Thirdly ... but the point is better understood after the next move.

If White continues to offer the Rook the delicate balance of the position slips gently into Black's favour. Supposing White simply recaptures with 20 bxc4. Black would be able just to take the Rook: 20 gxf5 21 Bd3 (White must now marshal the reserves, for 21 Qxf5 Bg4 with ... Bg6 to follow would provide Black with an impregnable defence) Rc5! Black can work on a new scale of pieces values for he is a whole Rook up. In such situations surplus material can be returned to fend off the marauders. 22 dxc5 Bxb2 especially when some of the booty is retained. White has now insufficient force to carry on.

20 Rxf7 c3!

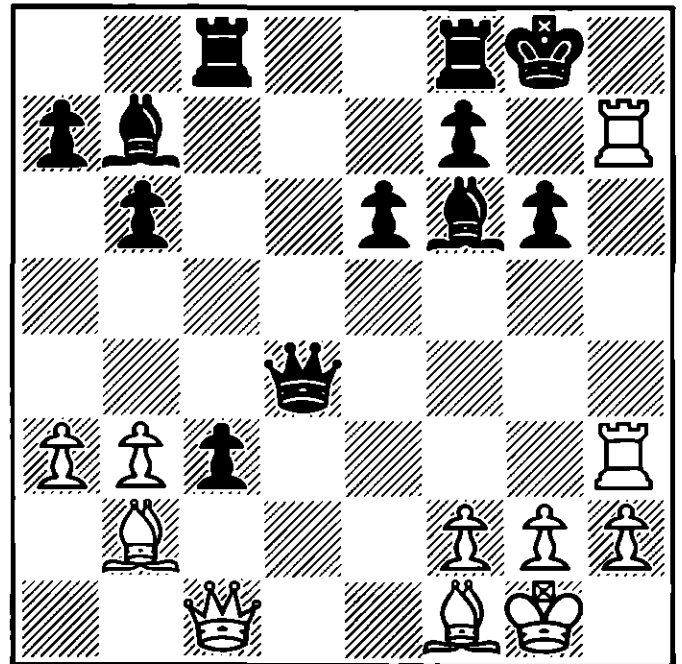
Cutting off the White Bishop from the centre and the protection of d4. If 21 Bxc3 then 21 Rxc3 22 Rxc3 Kxf7.

21 Qc1

A new route into the King's position which works well if Black takes the new offer: 21 ... cxb2?? 22 Qh6 when mate cannot be prevented.

21 Qxd4!

Diagram 251



Three sharp moves in the centre against the pawn at d4 and White's attack collapses. The domination of the centre by the Queen and Bishops relegates White's force to the periphery in complete disarray. Compare this position with the Botvinnik game in Chapter Eleven, page 115.

22 Qh6

Threatening mate in two, for the last time.

22 Rfd8

Making a flight-square as he centralises the Rook.

23 Bc1 Bg7

The White pieces are ignominiously sent away.

24 Qg5 Qf6
25 Qg4 c2

As so often happens when an attack is repulsed, a sudden surge of initiative is imparted to the defender.

26 Be2 Rd4

That turning point, d4 again.

27 f4 Rd1ch!
28 Bxd1 Qd4ch!

The Zwischenzug puts the final touch to the counter attack, supporting the recapture on d1. White, with

his whole team offside, resigned.

It is surprising to recall that it is only eight moves ago that Black began his counter attack with 19 dxc4.

The final position with Black's magnificent centre and White's pieces scattered around the edge of the board makes a fitting conclusion to the theme of the game.

GAME 7

Tseshkovsky – Hort

Tseshkovsky

Hort

Manila, 1976

Holes.

Probing for weaknesses.

Activity in the centre and both wings.

Alekhine's Defence

The various weaknesses which arise in this game are curiously linked in a chain reaction. One small blemish in the whole pawn configuration may be not too much to worry about, but when the infection begins to spread....

1 e4 Nf6
2 e5

See Chapter Twelve, page 124 for comments on this opening. Initially White picks up the gauntlet, chases the Knight and establishes an advanced pawn centre.

2 Nd5
3 d4 d6
4 Nf3

Now he continues with more restraint, avoiding c4 which tends to over extend the pawn centre.

4 Bg4
5 Be2 c6

More flexible, because it leaves another option for the Queen's Knight as well as freeing the King's Bishop, is 5 e6.

6 Ng5

Breaking the rule of development about not moving one piece twice before the others have been played out into the game; but, apart from the fact that rules must sometimes be broken, White here does not fall behind in development because Black has also had two moves with his Knight.

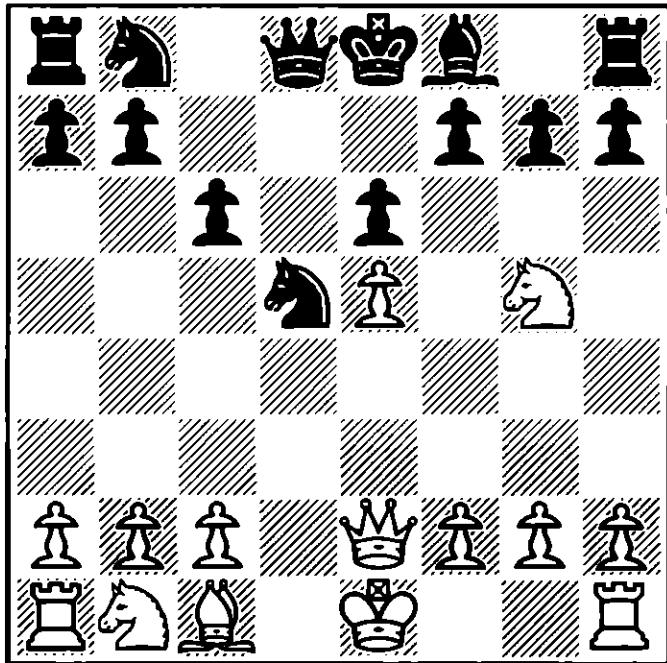
6 Bxe2
7 Qxe2

The exchange of the light-squared Bishops creates, for the moment, a weakness in the light squares around Black's King, particularly at e6. 8 e6 is now a most uncomfortable threat and, should Black's Queen leave the protection of the pawn at d6, White has exd6, because of the pin on the e-file, which is why Black does not play 7 Qa5ch.

7 dxe5
8 dxe5

The exchange relieves Black of one potential danger but e6 is still threatened and so his reply is practically forced.

Diagram 252



The state of the centre has matured very quickly in this game. Black has a hole at d6, a product of his concern about the weakness on the white squares which has now been eliminated. The d-file is open and White will be able to get a Rook on to it more quickly than Black, and in that file is the hole, d6, ready for an outpost piece, supported by the e-pawn. But the e-pawn is advanced and has yet to prove itself weak or strong.

Black has plans to destroy that pawn; White to occupy the hole. White has the initiative. Black conceded this on his first move quite deliberately. He provoked White to rush on eagerly in the hope that he would overreach himself in the middle. In such situations both players are often walking a tight-rope.

9 0 0

Tucking his King away and making way for a Rook to come to d1 as rapidly as possible. The Queen's Rook would take much longer and time is of the essence here.

Notice too that Black's King is still in the middle and not yet ready to castle.

9 Qc7

With pressure on the e-pawn. 9 Nd7 would also have served that purpose but the text removes the Queen from the open file.

10 Rd1 Nd7

White now has to make an important decision about the protection of the e-pawn combined with the occupation of d6. He would naturally like to play Ng5 e4 d6 and to this end f2 f4 seems obvious. However, this would give Black a valuable tempo for development with 11 ... Bc5ch, and so, surprisingly, White guards the e-pawn with the Knight at g5 with the intention of bringing the other Knight to d6.

11 Nf3! Ne7

Black goes for the e-pawn too quickly. The threat ... Ng6 looks good but the scheme does not work and the moves are wasted.

12 Ndb2!

Perhaps Black anticipated only 12 Nc3. From d2 the Knight has two methods of entering the hole, via e4 or c4. If Black covers c4 with 12 ... b5 then 13 Ne4! because 13 ... Nxe5 would lose to 14 Nxe5 Qxe5??

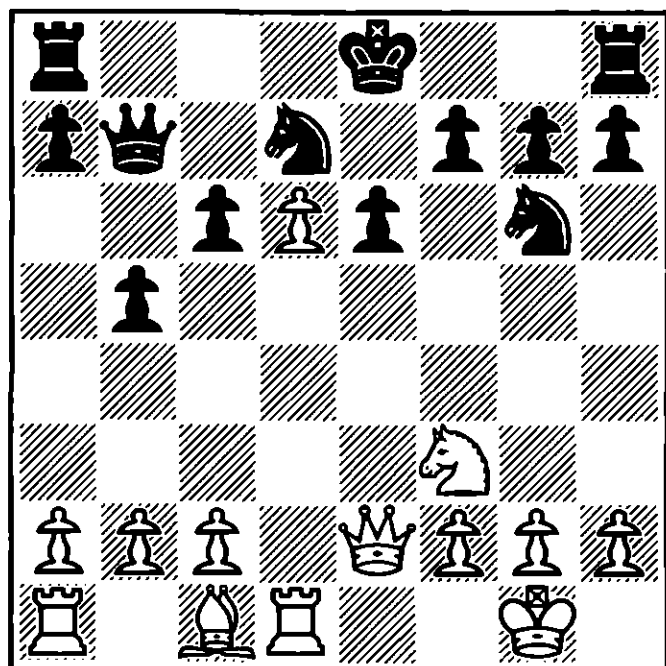
15 Nd6ch. Black, therefore, carries on with his plan of attacking e5 for the third time.

12 Ng6
13 Nc4 b5

Forcing White to occupy d6 otherwise the e-pawn falls, but in doing so he disarranges his queenside pawns, producing other weaknesses.

14 Nd6ch Bxd6
15 exd6 Qb7

Diagram 253



Of course Black had to take off the intruder and, since the passed pawn which emerges is suitably blockaded, he hopes that the pawn will be difficult to defend so far from its own lines. However, the pawn creates new outpost squares at c7 and e7 and proves remarkably resilient, inhibiting and cramping the movement of Black pieces.

After all this activity in the centre the game enters a new phase as White makes

thrusts at the extreme edges of the board, probing for weaknesses.

16 h4!

A very sharp move showing White's alertness over the whole board. The point is that if Black replies with the standard method of preventing further advance on the h-file - 16 ... h5 White's Knight will become firmly planted on g5.

16 h6
17 a4!

Poor Black! His mind is really focused on the centre, and concerned with what to do with the passed pawn there, and these keen thrusts on the wings are a most unwelcome distraction.

With the text White shows up the weakness of the queenside pawns. He also threatens to open lines for the Queen's Rook not only on the a-file but on the third rank via a3.

17 Nf6

Removing the blockader may seem illogical at first but Black realises that the other Knight will be driven off its square by h5 with only f8 to go to. He, therefore, decides to use this Knight as the blockader and the one presently at f6 to close the d-file with Nd5.

18 h5

First one wing, then the other and back again. White's moves, and their order, are prompted by sound chess logic, but one cannot help thinking that psychological warfare was

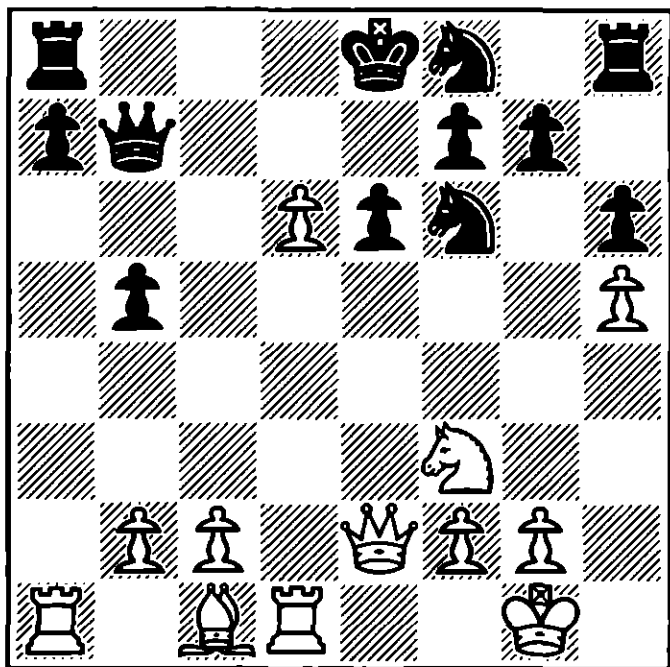
his main motive in this phase of the game.

18 Nf8

Prudently refusing the pawn.
18 ... Nxb5 19 d7ch Ke7 20 Nd4 would leave his King permanently caught in the middle and his queenside under great strain.

19 axb5 cxb5

Diagram 254



By no means a casual exchange for this opens the long light diagonal and half opens the a-file. The weakness at b5 is clear now, a problem which Black never adequately solves. Because of it he could not seek a Queen exchange: 19 ... Qxb5 20 Qxb5 cxb5 21 Nd4 b4 (the a-pawn cannot hold it since there is a pin on the a-file) 22 Nb5, and White's probing has resulted in this fine penetration.

20 Nd4 a6
21 Qf3! Nd5

Again Black cannot afford to exchange Queens: 21 Qxf3 22 gxf3 and the Knight is into the queenside and already threatening 23 Nxb5 against which there is no real answer.

With the text he obtains some relief from blocking the file and diagonal which White opened.

22 Nf5 0 0 0

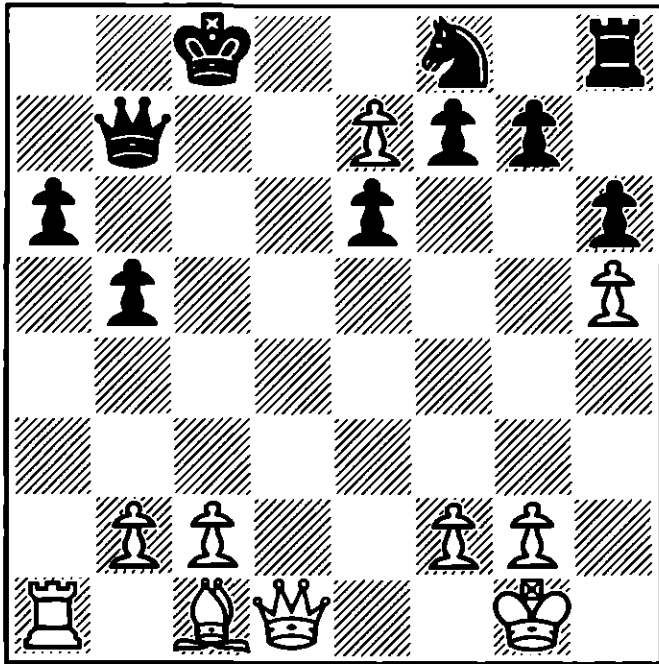
Now that all hope of castling on the kingside has gone he rushes the other way which is only slightly better than keeping the King in the middle. 22 ... exf5 23 Rxd5 would have left him wide open. But Black seems to have succeeded in dealing with the problem of the passed pawn. Having cut off Rook protection with his blockader at d5 he is ready to win it as soon as White moves his Knight. Unfortunately for Black the pawn finds a new place of safety.

23 Ne7ch Nxe7
24 dxe7 Rxd1ch

The pawn is untouchable 24 ... Qxd7 25 Qa8ch Kc7 26 Qa7ch, winning the Queen.

25 Qxd1

Diagram 255



And now if 25 ... Qxe7 then 26 Rxa6 Qb7 27 Qd6 with Rc6ch to follow; or, in this, 26 ... Kb7 27 Be3!! would be murderous with its threat of Ra7ch. The Rook cannot be taken: 27 ... Kxa6 28 Qa1ch! Kb7 29 Qa7ch. These are remarkable variations when you consider that in diagram 255 all White's pieces are on the first rank, and proof of how ingeniously he has gained control of the board, not by occupation of territory, but by opening lines and using his pieces from a distance.

25 Nd7

Both promotion and mate were threatened.

26 Ra3

The Rook seeks expansion on the third rank and threatens 27 Rc3ch Kb8 28 Qd6ch etc. Hence Black's reply.

26 b4
27 Rg3!

The Rook seems to have caught the spirit of psychological warfare too, switching to the other wing and aiming to penetrate the seventh rank.

There is really little Black can do now. He has lost the battle in the centre and the skirmishes on either wing and his pawns will now be plundered on one side or the other.

27 Nf6

The g-pawn could not be defended since the Rook could not leave the back rank and Rg8 is met by Rxg7.

28 Qe2

Rather than exchange the e-pawn for the g-pawn he ties Black down to the defence of a6. Black would be helpless after 28 ... Qxe7 29 Qxa6ch Qb7 30 Qxb7ch Kxb7 31 Rxg7, etc.

28 Nd7

The passed pawn has a remarkable influence over the game and new features occur to one from time to time. It now makes it difficult for Black to activate his Rook so that in any play away from the kingside he is, in effect, a piece down.

29 Be3

There is no hurry to convert his spatial advantage into material and so he develops the Bishop to deny Black dark squares on the queenside.

29 Qb5

The product of despair in a position without prospects.

Nothing else works either. For example: 29 ... Re8 30 Qc4ch Kb8 31 Bf4ch Ka8 (31 e5 32 Qxf7, etc.) 32 Bd6 with Rxg7, etc., to follow.

30 Qxb5

The simplest method.

30 axb5
31 Rxg7

Black has managed to preserve his queenside pawns, in a fashion, but there is nothing to stop those on the other wing disappearing.

31 b3

Instead of resigning.

32 Rxf7 Ne5

A merciful blunder. After 32 ... bxc2 33 Rh7 Re8 34 Bxh6 it would be absurd to carry on. For example: 34 ... Nf6 35 Rf7 Nxh5 36 g4 wins the Knight, or 34 ... Nc5 35 Be3 Nd3 36 h6 c1 Qch 37 Bxc1 Nxc1 38 Rg7 followed by h7, etc.

33 Rf8ch Resigns

GAME 8

Colle – Nimzowitsch

Colle

Nimzowitsch

Diagram 256

Frankfurt, 1830

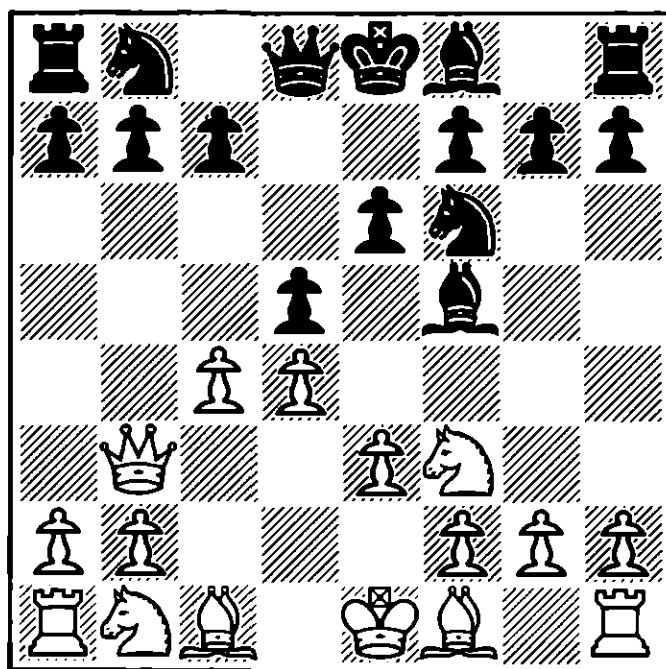
Poisoned pawn.
Inaccessible weaknesses.
Bad Bishop.
Outpost.

Queen's Pawn Opening

1 d4	Nf6
2 Nf3	d5
3 e3	Bf5

Taking the opportunity whilst he can to develop his Queen's Bishop outside his pawns.

4 c4	e6
5 Qb3	



Attacking the b-pawn which seems awkward to defend ... b6 being inappropriate since he no longer wishes to fianchetto the Queen's Bishop until you realise that it does not need defending.

5 Nc6!

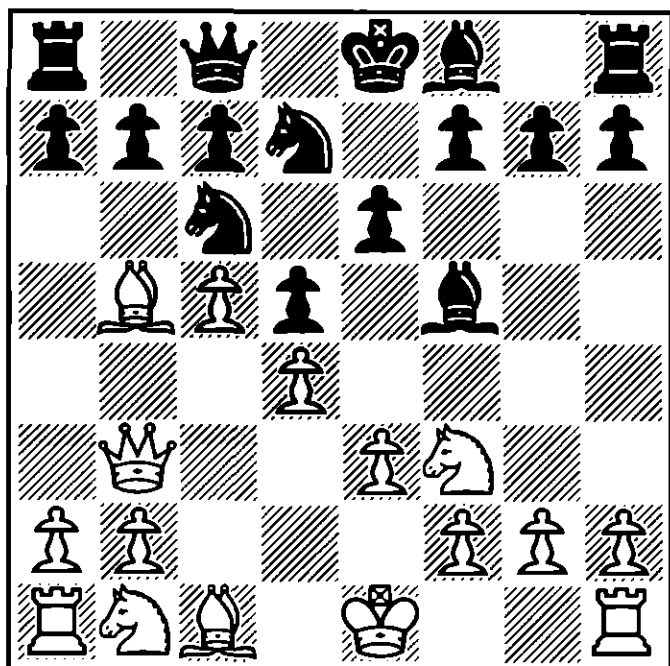
The pawn is poisoned, which is not uncommon with a b-pawn on either side. For example: 6 Qxb7? Nb4! 7 Na3 (to stop the Knight fork on c2) a6! (denying the Queen an exit via b5) 8 Bd2 (there doesn't seem to be anything else worth trying) Rb8 9 Qa7 Qc8 and the threat of Ra8 is unanswerable.

6 c5

It is not easy to understand the reason for this move and it certainly turns out very badly for him. Perhaps it was to renew the threat of Qxb7, for this is now on, but he should have realised two things when making the move. Firstly, he was reducing, even eliminating, all tension in the centre, which is rather early in the game to admit that Black has achieved equality there. Secondly, by establishing a dark-squared pawn chain from f2 to c5, the development of his Queen's Bishop would shortly give him problems. In the end it is the neglect of this piece which leads to his downfall more than any other single factor.

6 Qc8
7 Bb5 Nd7

Diagram 257



Two of the central squares, d4 and d5, are blocked by pawns which are unlikely to be disturbed for a long time, and so the other two, e4 and e5, are even more important than usual. White, having pinned the

Knight at c6, was about to invade e5 with his Knight. The text parries the threat, interposes in the pin, and fits in with a clear plan of development: to play ... Nd8 and ... c6 and then aim for a break in the centre with e5.

8 Bxc6

He must do this now or not at all. The move crosses Black's plan and inflicts doubled pawns on him at the expense of weakening his own control of the light squares. Doubled pawns, as Nimzowitsch so often went to great pains to demonstrate, are potentially weak. They are frequently accompanied by a further weakness, an isolated pawn, as in this case with the a-pawn. The question remains whether such weaknesses are accessible and it is this question which is the characteristic feature of this game.

8 bxc6
9 0 0 g6

Aiming at e5 again
with Bg7.

10 Nbd2 Bg7
11 Nh4

If White goes in for a queenside attack straight away by, for example, 11 Qa4, Black has plenty of resources to defend there. He could even transfer his Queen's Bishop to that side via d3.

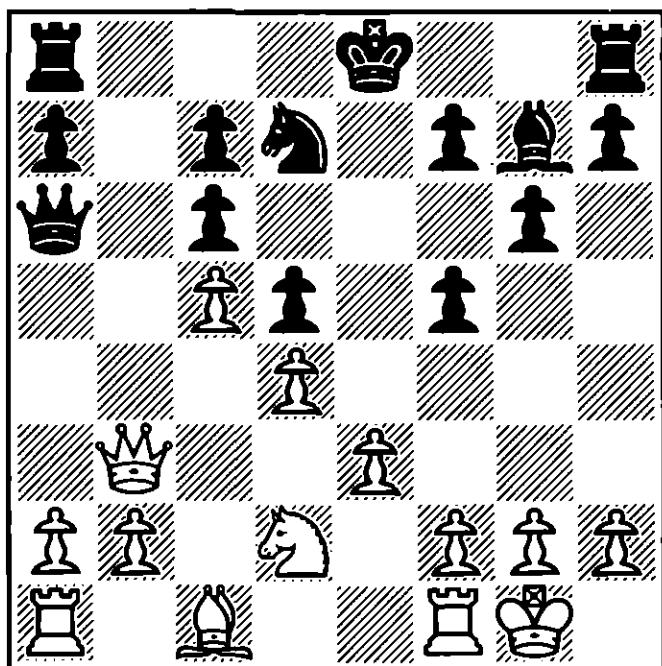
The text aims to exchange on f5 so that he can resume control over some light squares.

11 Qa6!

Ensuring that another piece takes over the duties of the Bishop when it disappears.

12 Nxf5 exf5

Diagram 258



Unfortunately for White there has been more loss than gain in several of his decisions. If we look at those two central squares mentioned earlier, e4 and e5, it is clear that he has definitely lost control of e5 and effectively that of e4. Any attempt to regain influence there by either f3 or f4 would leave him with a permanent pawn weakness at e3 in a file half open in Black's favour. He has succeeded in doubling another pair of Black's pawns but not in isolating any this time. And the doubled pawn on f5 might well become an advantage to Black as a spearhead of attack against the King.

In spite of the theoretical weaknesses he has created in Black's position, the trouble with White's is that it is sterile. It contains little

scope for useful activity and the unfortunate placing of the pawn chain is largely the culprit. There are no open files for him to work in and the half open ones are not his. Nor has he developed the Queen's Bishop, probably because it really hasn't anywhere to go.

13 Qc3 Nf6

It is interesting to notice that Black feels no compulsion to castle ('Castle when you must, not when you can'). The King is not in any danger in the middle, in fact, flanked by two sets of doubled pawns inaccessible to the enemy, the middle makes a fine fortress. In any case, the King might be needed here.

14 Nb3

With this and his previous move White starts some positive action on the queenside.

14 Ne4
15 Qa5 Qxa5
16 Nxa5 Kd7

If Black had not kept his King in the middle he would not have been able to exchange Queens, for this is the only method of guarding the pawn.

17 Rd1

The lack of an open file means that he will have to use the third rank to activate his Rooks. It is often, as we have seen in other games, a useful highway, but here the process is slow and cumbersome.

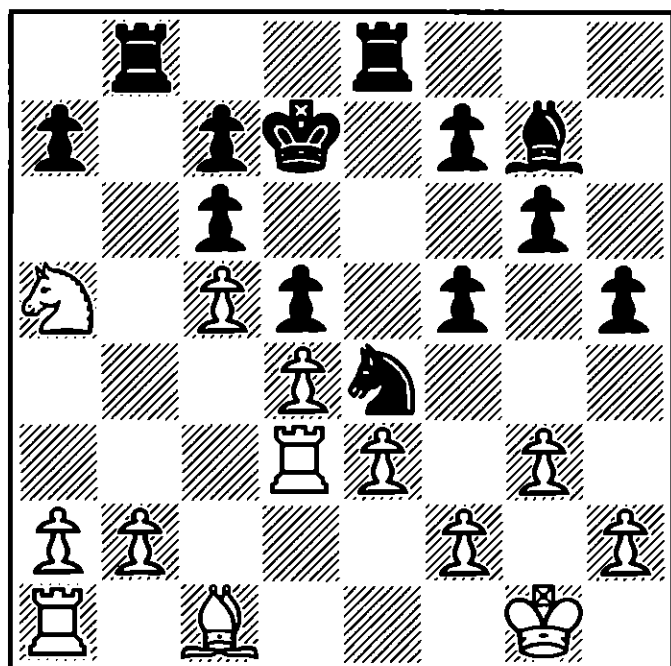
17 Rhe8

Thanks to the doubled pawns

Black's Rooks enjoy good lines.

18 g3 Rab8
19 Rd3 h5

Diagram 259



Black's pieces being in ideal positions he begins a breakthrough on the kingside. This is perfectly justified when you consider the dispositions of the White forces. They are all locked on the queenside behind that pawn chain and, though they should enjoy some space there, it is in fact very limited, partly because of the placing of some Black pieces - the outpost Knight, the Rook on the b-file, the d5 pawn and partly because White's pieces get in each other's way. The difficulty of developing the Queen's Bishop also puts the Queen's Rook out of operation and White's only target is the weak pawn at a7. This point could not be further from the kingside and should White commit his Rook and Knight to its capture there would be nothing remotely near to defend

the King. Black, therefore, advances on the h-file in the greatest confidence.

20 Ra3 h4
21 Nb3

Typical of the infelicity of White's pieces, nothing is in the right place at the right time.

21 hxg3
22 hxg3 Rh8

He switches to the h-file without troubling to protect the a-pawn.

23 Rxa7

He might as well take something for his pains for the Rook would not have the time to return to the other wing.

23 Rh3
24 Nd2 Rbh8

Mating threats appear already. Immediately there is 25 ... Rh1ch 26 Kg2 R8h2ch and mate next move.

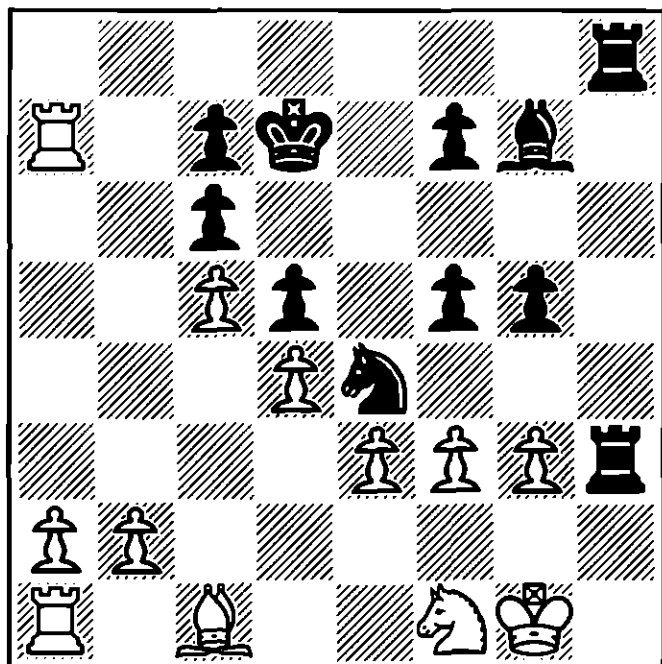
25 Nf1 g5

Now the threat is ... g4 when the Knight will go to f3 via g5.

26 f3

Trying to make some room for the King but there is now no way out.

Diagram 260



26 Rh1ch
27 Kg2 Nxg3!
28 Kxg3

If 28 Nxg3 then 28 R8h2 mate.

28 Rxf1

Not only does the last guardian of the King disappear but the queenside pieces are locked in by the pin.

29 a4

Hope springs eternal.

29 f4ch
30 exf4

There is no escape by taking his King up the board: 30 Kg4 Ke6 31 Kxg5 Rg1ch and mate next move.

30 Rg1ch
31 Kf2 Bxd4ch
32 Ke2 Rh2ch,

and White resigned just in time: 33 Kd3 Rd1ch and mate next move.

GAME 9

Kasparov – Pribyl

Kasparov

Pribyl

Diagram 261

Skara, 1980

The Centre.
Positional sacrifice.
Isolated passed pawn.
Seventh rank.

Grünfeld Defence

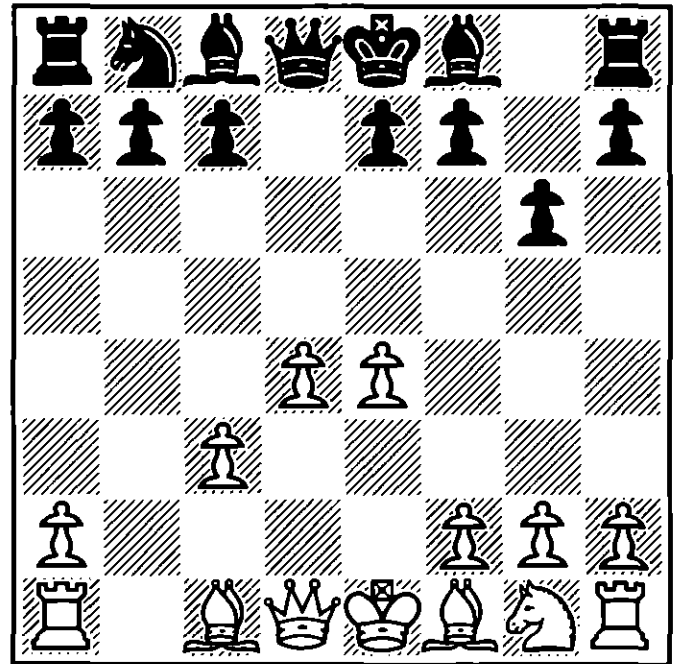
1 d4	Nf6
2 c4	g6
3 Nc3	d5

This defence was introduced by Grünfeld in 1922. It is interesting to note that the defence appeared a little before the Reti Opening (see Chapter Twelve) which was played by Reti against Grünfeld for the first time in 1922. Incidentally Reti lost, not because of any defect in the opening, more from overplaying his hand in the middle game.

We shall see the point of the Grünfeld if we play on a few moves.

4 cxd5	Nxd5
5 e4	Nxc3
6 bxc3	

Black's defence is clearly hypermodern. He has encouraged White to create a classical centre with pawns at d4 and e4 so that he obtains central targets and can proceed to demolish it. In this game White accepts the challenge. The centre looks formidable and



Black, if he is to achieve his objective, must ensure that the central pawn mass does not turn into an unstoppable pawn roller.

6 Bg7

d4 is the first target. To this end ... c5 is also possible but Black sometimes defers this move so that he does not have to exchange central pawns too early.

7 Nf3 b6

Preparing to attack the other target, e4.

8 Bb5ch

This appears to be a waste of time but the temporary

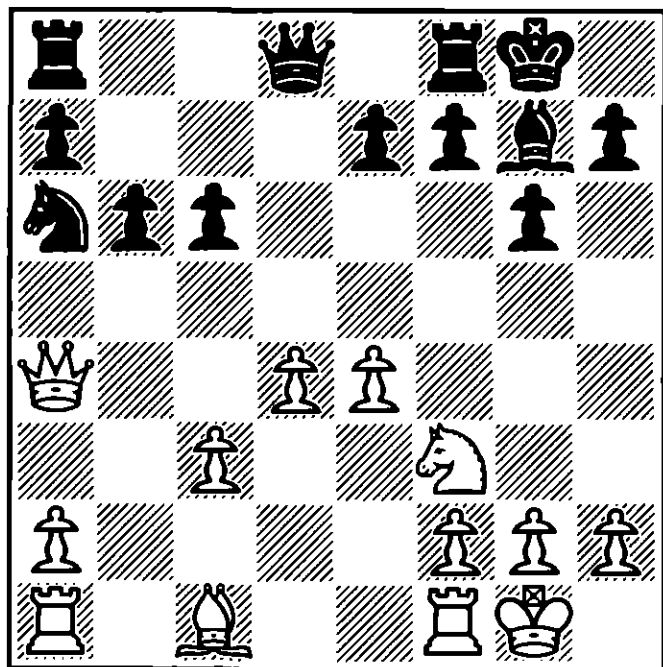
closing of the a8 h1 diagonal means that his e-pawn will not be attacked immediately by a Bishop at b7 and so White will be able to defend his pawn naturally by 0 0 and Re1.

8 c6
9 Bc4 0 0
10 0 0 Ba6?

Black certainly should be concerned about the a2 g8 line with the White Bishop already on it which can be quickly joined by the Queen, but this attempt to exchange Bishops allows White to make use of the resulting light-square weakness on the queenside and gain a powerful and unrelenting initiative.

11 Bxa6 Nxa6
12 Qa4

Diagram 262



White clears d1 for a Rook and sets up disturbing pressure on the light squares.

12 Qc8

Otherwise he will have to retreat the Knight to b8

although it may have had a more useful future by doing so. At a6 the Knight takes little part in the rest of the game.

13 Bg5

A good post for the Bishop from which it indirectly covers d8, a square whose importance will soon become apparent. White is not threatening to take the e-pawn immediately because after ... Re8 his own e-pawn would fall.

13 Qb7
14 Rfe1 e6

The pawn was now attacked because of the overburdened Queen.

15 Rab1

Taking the Rook off the long diagonal on which stands a fianchettoed Bishop, consequently mobilising the c- and d-pawns.

15 c5

At last but far too late.

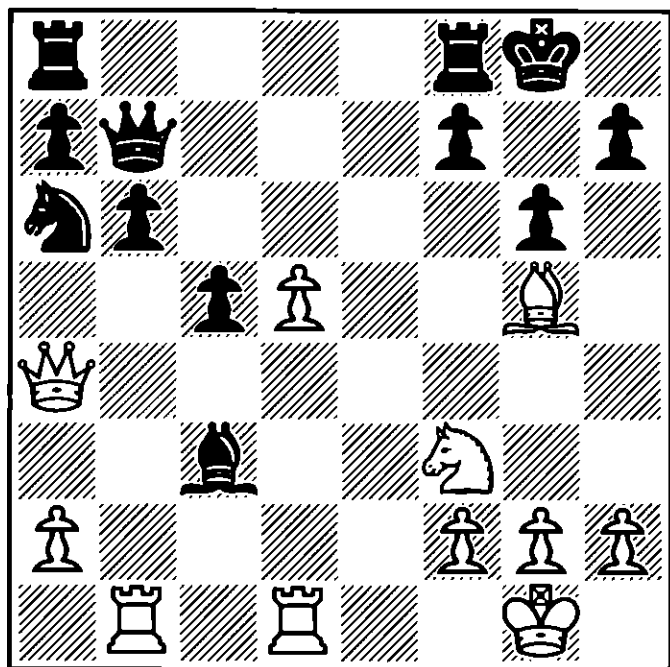
16 d5!

Black's offside Knight, and Queen preoccupied with its defence, allow White's centre to spring to life and give birth to a passed pawn.

16 Bxc3
17 Red1 exd5
18 exd5

At the cost of the c-pawn a central passed pawn appears. It is isolated and should it become static it will also become weak, and unless its dynamic qualities are exploited in the middle game, Black's queenside preponderance of

Diagram 263



pawns will win the ending for him.

But Kasparov plays with the utmost vigour.

Black now needs to blockade the pawn as quickly as possible. A Knight on d6 would be useful but there is obviously no time for that. ... Nb8, ... Nd7 might be possible. We will look at what happens if Black attempts such a blockade: 18 ... Nb8 19 d6 Nd7 20 Be7. White occupies an outpost with a piece which gives additional support to the passed pawn and he severely restricts the Black force, much of it being shut out on the queenside, giving White a powerful kingside attack. 20 ... Rfe8 21 Qf4! This sudden switch shows how poorly defended the kingside really is. There is no defence against the threat of Ng5. The f-pawn cannot be moved because of a Queen fork at c4. If 21 ... Bg7 then 22 Ng5 f6 or f5 23 Qc4 ch, etc.

18

Bg7

Necessary because otherwise the Bishop will be shut out of the Kingside.

19 d6

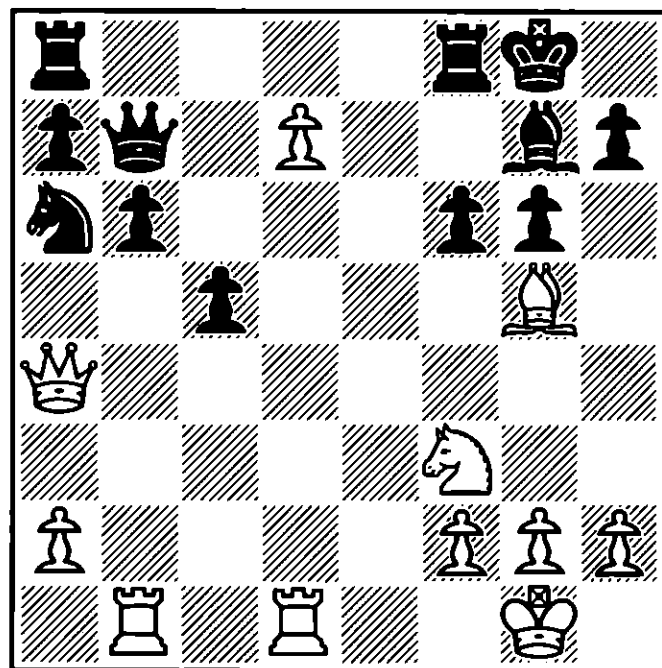
An extremely lusty Nimzowitschian pawn. Notice how well placed White's Bishop has turned out to be, watching the queening square, d8.

19 f6

20 d7!

It is remarkable how rapidly the passed pawn has emerged and set out for home.

Diagram 264



White does not have to wait even to look after his Bishop.

The passed pawn is most effective on the seventh rank for it cuts communications between the two wings to a thin line of Black's first rank. And suddenly the position bristles with sharp tactics combinations develop naturally from sound positional play.

20

fxg5

Since this badly exposes his King it would have been better to set up a blockade at d8 with ... Rxd8 but the constraints that this would have imposed were hardly attractive.

21 Qc4ch Kh8
22 Nxg5 Bf6

Making room for his King as well as guarding d8.

23 Ne6 Nc7

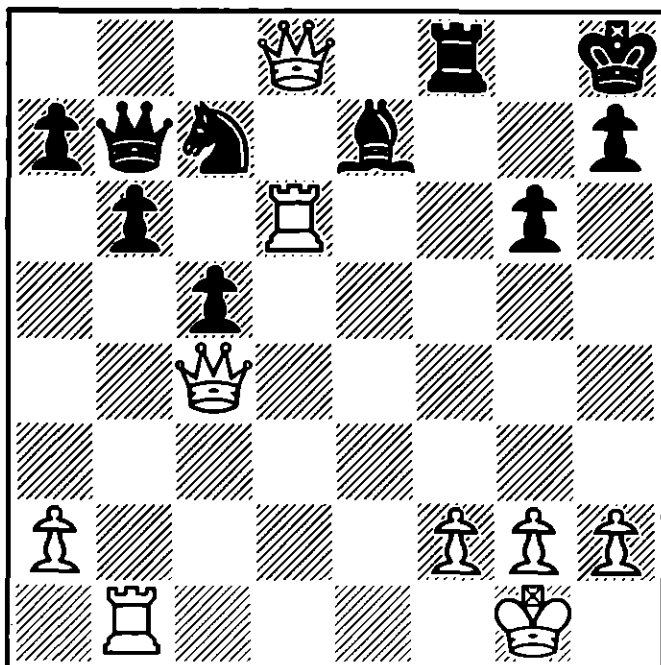
The Rook only had the choice between b8 and g8. In either case White would play 24 Qf4 when the Bishop must leave one diagonal to allow Qe5ch or the other to let the passed pawn in.

24 Nxf8 Rxf8
25 Rd6

Threatening Rxf6. The Bishop must move but stay on the d8 - h4 diagonal.

25 Be7
26 d8 Q!

Diagram 265



If 26 ... Rxd8 there would follow 27 Rxd8ch Bxd8 28 Qf7!

and Black will have to give up his Bishop because of the mate threat at f8. White's Rook would then join the Queen on the exposed seventh and eighth ranks.

26 Bxd8
27 Qc3ch Kg8
28 Rd7

Dominating the seventh rank, pinning the Knight and threatening mate. Black's pieces are now severely restricted even in this open position and his reply is forced.

28 Bf6
29 Qc4ch Kh8
30 Qf4!

The Queen's manoeuvres are a delight to watch, switching neatly and decisively between the dark and light diagonals. White carries out his attack with attractive economy; he has just enough of the right material to apply power at crucial points to prise open the lines into the King's position.

White now threatens both wings from this fine square f4: h6 and the pinned Knight which cannot be defended.

30 Qa6

Instead of resigning.

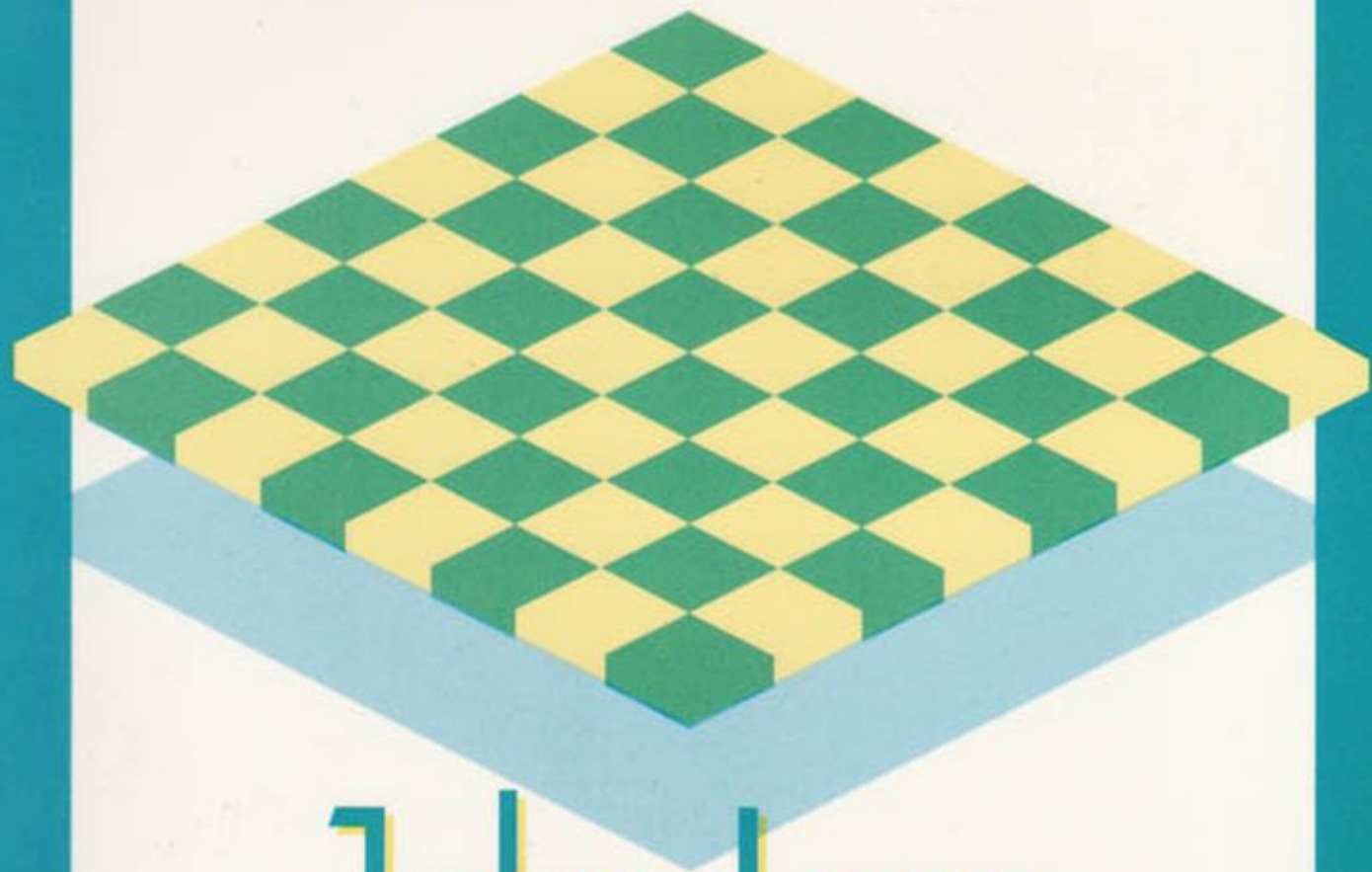
31 Qh6,

and Black changed his mind and resigned.

White played with impressive vigour. Kasparov is a young Russian who combines a fine positional sense with a gift for sharp attack. Indeed he displays all the qualities of a future World Champion.



POSITIONAL IDEAS IN CHESS



John Love