

# THE MAMMOTH BOOK OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST CHESS GAMES

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**Graham Burgess, Dr John Nunn and John Emms**  
With a foreword by World Champion Vishy Anand

The Mammoth Book of

# The World's Greatest Chess Games

Graham Burgess  
John Nunn  
John Emms

Foreword by Vishy Anand



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# Foreword by Vishy Anand

In virtually every sport, there is a debate about who was the greatest of all time, and which was the best contest. Comparisons made over long periods of time are far from simple; comparing the tennis players of the past with those of today must take into account advances such as carbon-fibre rackets and scientifically designed training programs. A further difficulty is that for events pre-dating television, one often has to rely on written descriptions rather than video records. Chess is in a uniquely fortunate position in this respect; chess notation means that the great games of the past can be played over just as easily as those played last week.

This book aims to present the 125 greatest games of all time. Obviously not everyone will agree with the choice, but there is no doubt that these are all outstanding games. There are many old favourites, but also some less well-known encounters which will be new to most readers. Readers will meet not only the familiar names of world champions, but those of less familiar masters and grandmasters, correspondence players, etc.

At the moment, one decade into a new millennium, chess is looking to the future. The Internet is having an increasing impact for both disseminating chess information and providing a playing forum. The game will undoubtedly change in the years to come, but it will only be another evolutionary step in the long and rich heritage of chess. This book contains selected highlights from over 160 years of chess history; we can all learn from the experience of the past, and anyone who studies these games cannot fail to gain a greater understanding of chess.

As for the questions posed at the start of the foreword, was Mikhail Tal, who has more games in this book than any other player, really the most brilliant of all time? Were Botvinnik – Capablanca, AVRO tournament, Rotterdam 1938, Karpov – Kasparov, World Championship match (game 16), Moscow 1985, and Kasparov – Topalov, Wijk aan Zee 1999 really the greatest games in chess history? After playing over the 125 masterpieces in this book, you may form your own opinion; whether you agree or disagree, these games can hardly fail to give pleasure, instruction and entertainment.

*Vishy Anand*

# Introduction

The aim of this book is simple: to present the 125 greatest chess games of all time, with annotations that enable chess enthusiasts to derive the maximum enjoyment and instruction from them.

The first problem we faced was the selection of the games: how could we choose just 125 from the treasure-house of chess history? Clearly the games should be great battles, featuring deep and inventive play. We decided that the prime consideration had to be the quality of the play, not just of the winner, but also of the loser. We rejected games where the loser offered little resistance, and those where the winner jeopardized victory by aiming for false brilliance. As one of the book's objectives is to help the reader gain a deeper understanding of all aspects of chess, we favoured games illustrating important concepts. The selection criteria were therefore as follows:

- Quality and brilliance of play by both contestants
- Instructive value
- Historical significance

Using these criteria, we selected a shortlist of 270 games; then each author voted on the games, rating each on a scale of 1 to 5, as follows:

- 5 one of the greatest 25 games ever played
- 4 in the top 60
- 3 in the top 125
- 2 the game is not in the top 125
- 1 the game is unsuitable for inclusion in the book

Thus the greatest possible score for a game was 15 votes. In the end just three games achieved this theoretical maximum.

This enabled us to select our 125 games, which were then allocated between the three annotators, 67 to Graham Burgess (who coordinated the whole project), 33 to John Nunn, and 25 to John Emms.

The annotator and the total number of votes for each game are indicated in the contents list.

Our primary aims in annotating each game were to provide an accurate set of notes, and to highlight the main instructive points. In some cases pre-existing notes, especially those by the players, proved a valuable source of ideas, but we repeatedly found major deficiencies in previous annotations. The most common problem was “annotation by result”, i.e. the annotator praises everything the winner did, and criticizes all the loser's decisions. Few games between strong opponents are really so one-sided. Another common failing was the sheep-like tendency of annotators to copy earlier notes. Thus, if a game was poorly annotated in the tournament book, or in the winner's “best games” collection, then subsequent annotations were blighted. Of course, it would be unfair (and dangerous!) for us to be too critical of other annotators, especially considering that they were without computerized assistance, but in many cases there was



clearly a definite lack of independent thought.

In this book we have aimed to present the truth about these games, warts and all. In some cases readers might feel that the games have lost some of their brilliance as a result, but we do not agree. On the contrary, it shows that many games which were hitherto regarded as rather one-sided were in fact massive struggles between almost evenly-matched players; only an 11th-hour slip at the height of the battle finally tipped the balance in the winner's favour. These new annotations often reveal new and instructive points in the games – so please don't skip a game just because you have seen it before. We were assisted in our work by a variety of computer software, most notably ChessBase, together with the Fritz, Junior, Rybka and Robbolito analysis modules. In this 2010 edition, Games 113–125 are completely new, while there are also some significant revisions to the analysis and information from the earlier editions.

Each game starts with biographical information about the players (where a player has already been introduced,

the reader is referred to the earlier material) and a summary of the game. The game and its detailed notes follow, with a final review of the game's most instructive points. These games represent the pinnacle of human creativity on the chessboard (in one case, silicon 'creativity'!) and there is a great deal to be learnt from them. You may find it convenient to use two chessboards – one to keep track of the position in the main game, and another to play over the variations. Alternatively, and preferably, play over the moves using a suitable computer program (for example ChessBase). Keeping a program such as Fritz running in the background will reveal analytical points we had no space to include in the book.

We hope you enjoy reading this book as much as we enjoyed writing it. If there are any terms in this book that you don't understand, please refer to the extensive glossary in *The Mammoth Book of Chess*.

*Graham Burgess*

*John Nunn*

*John Emms*

June 2010

## Symbols

+	check
++	double check
#	checkmate
x	captures
O-O	castles kingside
O-O-O	castles queenside
!!	brilliant move
!	good move

!?	interesting move
?!	dubious move
?	bad move
??	blunder
1-0	the game ends in a win for White
½-½	the game ends in a draw
0-1	the game ends in a win for Black

# Game 1

## **Alexander McDonnell – Louis Charles de Labourdonnais**

### *4th match, 16th game, London 1834*

#### Sicilian Defence, Löwenthal Variation

#### **The Players**

Alexander McDonnell (1798–1835) was born in Belfast and established himself as the best player in England in the 1830s. Indeed, his superiority was such that he even played at odds when facing the best of the English players blindfold. Though his talent was undoubted, he had little experience facing opposition of his own level, and this showed when he faced Labourdonnais in their series of matches.

Louis Charles Mahé de Labourdonnais (1797–1840) was born on the French island of La Réunion, where his father had been governor. After settling in France, then the world's leading chess nation, he learned the game while in his late teens, and progressed rapidly; from 1820 up until his death he was regarded as the leading player. He was clearly a man who loved to play chess; even during his matches, he would play off-hand games for small stakes between the match games.

#### **The Game**

After some lacklustre opening play from McDonnell, Labourdonnais sets up a powerful mobile pawn centre, very much in the style of Philidor, the greatest French player prior to Labourdonnais. He plays extremely energetically to support and advance the pawns, and when McDonnell threatens to make inroads around and behind the pawns, he comes up with a fine exchange sacrifice. The tactics all work, and Black's pawns continue their advance towards the goal. The final position, once seen, is never forgotten: three passed pawns on the seventh rank overpowering a hapless queen and rook.

<b>1 e4</b> <b>2 ♘f3</b> <b>3 d4</b> <b>4 ♗xd4</b> <b>5 ♗xc6?!</b>	<b>c5</b> <b>♟c6</b> <b>cx d4</b> <b>e5</b>
--	--

ambitious 4th move, i.e. the weakening of the d5-square. 5 ♗b5 has been the normal move ever since.

<b>5 ...</b> <b>6 ♙c4</b> <b>7 ♙g5</b> <b>8 ♕e2?!</b>	<b>bx c6</b> <b>♟f6</b> <b>♙e7</b>
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This somewhat cooperative exchange strengthens Black's control of the centre without giving White any compensating advantages. Moreover, it nullifies the main defect of Black's

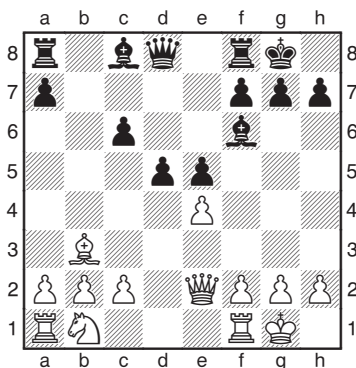
By delaying development and exposing his queen to possible attack along the a6–f1 diagonal, White only

encourages Black to advance in the centre. The fact that the queen exerts pressure on e5 is unlikely to be relevant before White has, at the least, got his king safely castled. He should instead try 8 ♖c3 or 8 ♙xf6 followed by 9 ♖c3.

8 ... d5  
9 ♙xf6

9 exd5 cxd5 (9...♗d5 is also possible, when Black has good piece-play) 10 ♙b5+ ♗d7 11 ♖c3 (after 11 ♙xd7+ ♗xd7 12 ♙xe7 ♖xe7 Black can comfortably maintain his pawn-centre) 11...d4 12 ♙xf6 ♙xf6 13 ♗d5 doesn't work for White after 13...♖a5+ 14 b4 (14 c3 ♙xb5 15 ♖xb5+ ♖xb5 16 ♗c7+ ♗d7 17 ♗xb5 ♖ab8 and b2 caves in) 14...♙xb5 15 bxa5 ♙xe2 16 ♗c7+? (after normal moves, White's shattered queenside pawns will give him a dreadful ending) 16...♗d7 17 ♗xa8 ♙a6 and the knight is trapped.

9 ... ♙xf6  
10 ♙b3 0-0  
11 0-0



11 ... a5

Now Black threatens both 12...a4 and 12...♙a6. Thus Black manages to

use his a-pawn to cause White to make concessions in the centre.

12 exd5 cxd5  
13 ♖d1 d4  
14 c4

McDonnell decides to play actively, hoping that his own passed c-pawn will prove as strong as Black's d-pawn. However, this hope may be unrealistic. Black's d-pawn is already well advanced, and ably supported by its neighbour, the e5-pawn. Moreover, Black's pieces are better mobilized and have more scope. If a modern grandmaster were to end up in this position as White, then he would not try to start a race, but rather develop the queen's knight, and aim to restrain and blockade the d-pawn, most likely chipping away at it with c3 at some point. However, this game was played almost a century before Nimzowitsch systematized the concept of "restrain, blockade, destroy" (though the third part would be hoping for too much in this instance), and, besides, in the early nineteenth century it was more standard for players to try to solve positional problems by lashing out aggressively. More prudent options include 14 c3 and 14 ♗d2.

14 ... ♖b6  
15 ♙c2 ♙b7

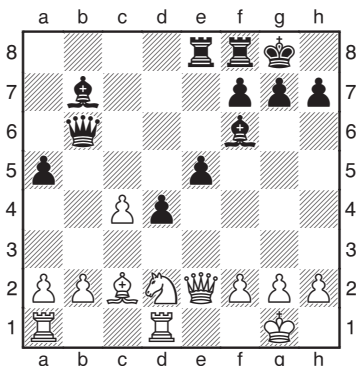
Certainly not 15...♖xb2??, which loses the queen to 16 ♙xh7+.

16 ♗d2 ♖ae8!

Labourdonnais correctly perceives that his rooks belong on the e- and f-files, despite the fact that this leaves his rooks poorly placed to act on the queenside. The d-pawn is of course his main asset, but to create real threats Black will need to push his e-pawn, and this in turn may need the support

of the f-pawn. If White could somehow set up a firm blockade on e4, then he would have good chances, so this square may be regarded as the focus of the battle.

16...♖xb2 strays off-course and dissipates Black's advantage after either 17 ♖xh7+ ♖xh7 18 ♖ab1 or 17 ♖d3 e4 (17...g6 18 ♖ab1 forces 18...e4 anyway) 18 ♖xe4 ♖xe4 19 ♖xe4 g6.



17 ♖e4 ♖d8

Black's threat of ...f5 forces White to act quickly if he is not to be overrun.

18 c5 ♖c6

19 f3 ♖e7

Preventing 20 ♖d6, which White's last move had made possible.

20 ♖ac1 f5

Black immediately begins the decisive advance. Note that he spends no time on prophylaxis against White's queenside play, confident that his pawn-storm will sweep everything from its path.

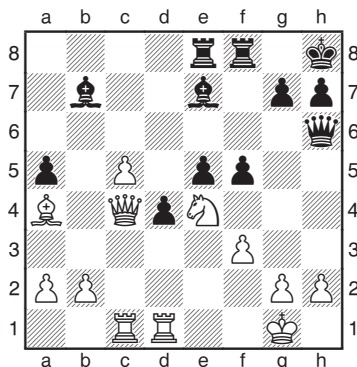
21 ♖c4+ ♖h8!

21...♖d5 would be annoyingly met by 22 ♖b5, threatening ♖b3.

21...♖f7? loses an exchange under far worse conditions than in the game:

22 ♖a4 ♖c8 23 ♖xe8 ♖xe8 24 ♖d6 ♖xd6 25 cxd6.

22 ♖a4 ♖h6



23 ♖xe8

After 23 ♖d6, Black must play extremely precisely to keep his advantage: 23...♖xd6 24 ♖xe8 ♖c7 25 c6 (25 ♖b3 e4 26 g3 should be answered by 26...♖a6, with excellent play for Black, since 26...♖xe8 27 ♖xb7 ♖e3+ 28 ♖h1 ♖xf3+ 29 ♖g1 may yield no more than a draw) 25...e4 and now:

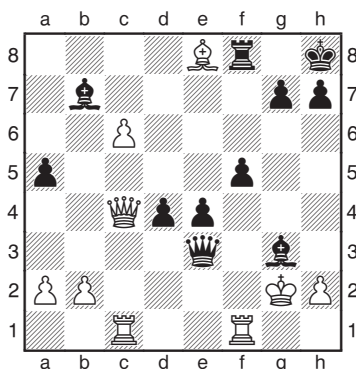
1) 26 cxb7? ♖xh2+ 27 ♖f1 exf3 28 gxf3 ♖h3+ 29 ♖e2 ♖xe8+ 30 ♖d3 ♖xf3+ 31 ♖c2 ♖xb7 is good for Black.

2) 26 h3?? ♖e3+ 27 ♖f1 (27 ♖h1 ♖f4) 27...♖h2 and Black wins.

3) 26 g3 ♖e3+ 27 ♖h1 ♖xf3+ 28 ♖g1 ♖xg3 (28...♖c8 is met by 29 ♖f1) and here:

3a) 29 ♖xg3 ♖xg3+ 30 ♖f1 (30 ♖h1 ♖f6) 30...d3 31 ♖c5 (31 cxb7 e3) 31...♖xe8 32 ♖g1 ♖f3+ 33 ♖f2 ♖xf2+ 34 ♖xf2 e3+ and ...♖a6 wins for Black.

3b) 29 ♖f1 ♖e3+ 30 ♖g2 and now Black wins by sacrificing yet more material and using his swathe of pawns:



3b1) 30...♙e5 is not fast enough:  
 31 ♜c5 (not 31 cxb7? ♜h6) 31...♜d2+  
 32 ♜f2 ♜g5+ 33 ♙h1 ♙d6 34 ♜xd6!  
 (34 ♜c2 d3 allows Black to consolidate)  
 34...♜xc1+ 35 ♙g2 ♜g5+ 36 ♙h1!  
 ♜xe8 (not 36...♜f6?? 37 ♜xf6  
 gxf6 38 cxb7 ♜xe8 39 ♜c2) 37 cxb7  
 gives Black no more than a draw.

3b2) 30...♜d2+! 31 ♙xg3 f4+ 32  
 ♙h3 f3 and mate cannot be prevented,  
 e.g. 33 ♜g1 ♜h6+ 34 ♙g3 ♜f4+ 35  
 ♙f2 (35 ♙h3 ♜f6) 35...♜xh2+ 36 ♙f1  
 e3 followed by ...e2+; or 33 ♜c2 ♜h6+  
 34 ♙g3 ♜g5+ 35 ♙f2 (35 ♙h3 ♜f4)  
 35...♜e3+ 36 ♙g3 f2+ 37 ♙g4 ♜f3+  
 38 ♙h4 ♜f4+ 39 ♙g5 ♜g4#.

23 ... fxe4  
 24 c6 exf3?

24...♜e3+ 25 ♙h1 exf3 is the correct move-order.

25 ♜c2

White is mated after 25 cxb7??  
 ♜e3+ 26 ♙h1 fxg2+ or 25 gxf3??  
 ♜e3+ 26 ♙h1 ♜xf3+ 27 ♙g1 ♜f5.

25 ... ♜e3+?!  
 25...♙c8 26 ♙d7 is unclear.

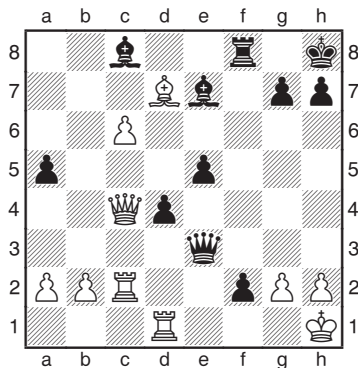
26 ♙h1?

After 26 ♜f2 Black has nothing.

26 ... ♙c8  
 27 ♙d7

White dare not let the c8-bishop out, e.g. 27 ♙f7 (trying to block off the rook instead) 27...♙g4 28 c7? (28 ♜f1 d3 29 ♜cf2 d2 is hopeless for White in any case) 28...fxg2+ 29 ♜xg2 ♙xd1 30 c8 ♜e1+ 31 ♜g1 ♙f3#.

27 ... f2

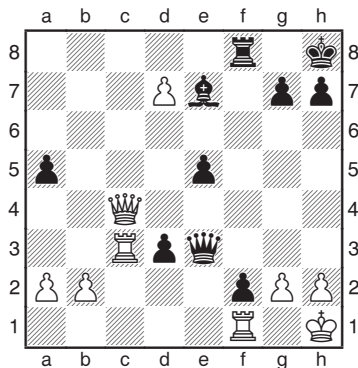


Black is threatening both 28...d3 and 28...♜e1+ 29 ♜f1 ♜xd1.

28 ♜f1

Not 28 ♜f1? ♙a6.

28 ... d3  
 29 ♜c3 ♙xd7  
 30 cxd7

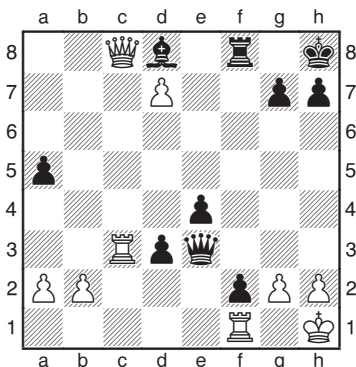


Not 30 ♖xd3? ♙e6 (30...♖e2 31 ♖c3) 31 ♖c2 ♖c5.

30 ... e4

The threat is now ...♗e1, and there isn't much White can do about it.

31 ♖c8 ♙d8



32 ♖c4

32 ♖c6 ♖e1 is no different, and 32 ♖cc1 is met by 32...♖f4.

32 ... ♖e1!

33 ♖c1 d2

34 ♖c5 ♗g8

35 ♗d1 e3

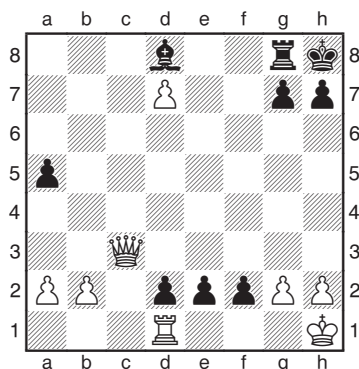
36 ♖c3

Now for a truly magical finish...

36 ... ♖xd1

37 ♗xd1 e2

0-1



### Lessons from this game:

1) A large mobile pawn centre is a major strategic asset.

2) Don't be afraid to sacrifice to press forward to your main strategic goal (e.g. the advance of a pawn-centre, as in this game). An advantageous position does not win itself against a resourceful opponent, and at some point it may become necessary to "get your hands dirty" and analyse precise tactical variations.

3) When pawns are far-advanced, close to promotion, always be on the lookout for tactical tricks involving promotion. The final position of this game should provide all the necessary inspiration – make a mental note of it!

Game 2  
The “Immortal Game”  
**Adolf Anderssen – Lionel Kieseritzky**  
*London 1851*  
King’s Gambit

### **The Players**

Adolf Anderssen (1818–79) was undoubtedly one of the strongest players of his era and indeed he was crowned unofficial World Champion after handsomely winning the great London Tournament of 1851, which had the distinction of being the first international chess tournament ever held. A teacher of mathematics by profession, Anderssen began to take chess much more seriously after his London triumph. He kept his status as the world’s strongest player until 1858, before losing convincingly in a match to the brilliant young American, Paul Morphy. Morphy’s sudden retirement from the game, however, meant that Anderssen could once more take up the mantle as the leading player. Despite his numerous work commitments, he stayed active on the chess front, playing matches against many of his nearest rivals. In 1870 he won the strongest ever tournament at that time, in Baden-Baden, ahead of players such as Steinitz and Blackburne. Anderssen was certainly a chess player at heart. At London in 1851, he was asked why he had not gone to see the Great Exhibition. “I came to London to play chess” was his curt reply.

Lionel Kieseritzky (1806–53) was born in Tartu, in what is now Estonia, but settled in France in 1839. He became a frequent visitor to the Café de la Régence in Paris, where he gave chess lessons for five francs an hour, or played offhand games for the same fee. His main strength was his ability to win by giving great odds to weaker players. Kieseritzky was also an openings theoretician, who invented a line in the King’s Gambit which is still considered a main variation today. However, despite his other achievements, he is still best remembered for the part he played in this game.

### **The Game**

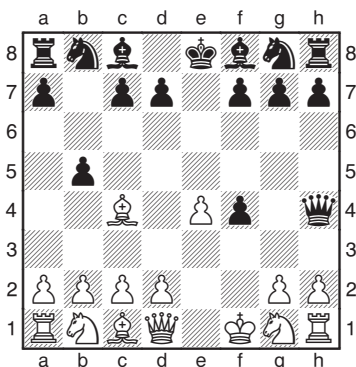
Dubbed the “Immortal Game” by the Austrian player Ernst Falkbeer, this is a game typical of the “romantic era” of chess, in which sacrifices were offered in plenty and most were duly accepted. Anderssen’s love of combinations and his contempt for material are plain to see here. After some imaginative opening play, the game explodes into life when Anderssen plays a brilliant (and sound) piece sacrifice. Spurning more mundane winning lines, Anderssen raises the game onto another plane by a double rook offer, followed by a dazzling queen sacrifice, finishing with a checkmate using all three of his remaining minor pieces. In

the final analysis it could be claimed that it's not all entirely sound, but this is merely a case of brilliance over precision.

1 e4 e5  
2 f4 exf4  
3 ♖c4 ♔h4+

It seems quite natural to force White to move his king, but the drawback of this check is that Black will be forced to waste time moving his queen again when it is attacked. Modern players prefer 3...♘f6 or 3...d5.

4 ♔f1 b5?!



This counter-gambit was named after the American amateur player Thomas Jefferson Bryan, who was active in the chess circles around Paris and London in the middle of the nineteenth century. Kieseritzky also took a shine to it, especially after his pretty win over Schulten (see below). However, it has always been considered, to put it mildly, somewhat dubious. That said, it has been utilized by none other than Garry Kasparov, although the circumstances were hardly normal. After comfortably defeating Nigel Short for the PCA World Chess Championship in 1993, the audiences at the Savoy

Theatre in London were treated to some exhibition matches between the two players. Kasparov won the rapid-play games by the convincing margin of 4-0. Short, however, got some sweet revenge in the theme games, where the openings were chosen by the organizers. After two draws the proceedings were "spiced up" when Kasparov was forced to defend with the Bryan. Clearly disgusted with this choice, Kasparov could only last fifteen moves before resigning in a totally lost position, and storming off stage to vent his feelings to the powers-that-be. Still, Kasparov couldn't complain too much. *Batsford Chess Openings 2*, written by Garry Kasparov and Raymond Keene, only gives White a slight plus in this line!

5 ♙xb5 ♘f6

6 ♘f3

Kieseritzky's more pleasant experience with this line continued 6 ♘c3 ♘g4 7 ♘h3 ♘c6 8 ♘d5 ♘d4 9 ♘xc7+ ♘d8 10 ♘xa8 f3 11 d3 f6 12 ♙c4 d5 13 ♙xd5 ♙d6? 14 ♔e1? fxg2+ 15 ♙xg2 ♔xh3+!! 16 ♙xh3 ♘e3+ 17 ♙h4 ♘f3+ 18 ♙h5 ♙g4# (0-1) Schulten-Kieseritzky, Paris 1844.

On this occasion the boot was firmly on the other foot!

6 ... ♔h6

7 d3

The more active 7 ♘c3 is probably better. Now 7...g5 8 d4 ♙b7 9 h4 ♔g8 10 ♙g1 gxh4 11 ♔xh4 ♔g6 12 ♔e2 ♘xe4 13 ♔xf4 f5 14 ♘h4 ♔g3 15 ♘xe4 1-0 was the start and the end of the infamous Short-Kasparov game.

7 ... ♘h5



Protecting the f4-pawn and threatening ...g3+, but it has to be said that Black's play is a little one-dimensional. Once this idea is dealt with Black soon finds himself on the retreat.

8 ♖h4

As one would expect, the Immortal Game has been subjected to much analysis and debate from masters of the past and present. The sum of the analysis alone would probably be enough to fill up an entire book. One of the most recent annotators is the German GM Robert Hübner, who reviewed the game in his own critical way for *ChessBase Magazine*. From move seven to eleven inclusive, Hübner awarded seven question marks! Here, instead of 8 ♖h4, he recommends 8 ♔g1, intending g4. He follows this up with 8...♗b6 9 ♖c3 c6 10 ♙c4 ♗c5 11 ♗e2 ♙a6 12 ♙xa6 ♖xa6 13 d4 ♗a5 14 ♖e5 g6 15 ♖c4 ♗c7 16 e5, with a winning position for White. This all looks very correct, but then again Anderssen – Kieseritzky has always been noted for its brilliancy rather than its accuracy.

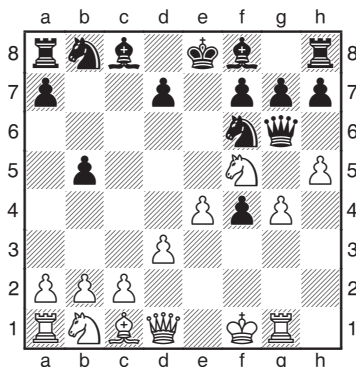
8 ... ♗g5  
9 ♖f5 c6

Here or on the next move Black should probably try to dislodge the f5-knight with ...g6. Hübner gives 9...g6 10 h4 ♗f6! 11 ♖c3 c6 12 ♙a4 ♖a6 13 d4 ♖g3+ 14 ♖xg3 fxg3+ 15 ♗f3 ♗xd4, which looks about equal.

10 g4 ♖f6  
11 ♔g1!

An imaginative piece sacrifice. The idea is to gain masses of time driving the black queen around the board. This will give White an enormous lead in development.

11 ... cxb5  
12 h4! ♗g6  
13 h5



13 ... ♗g5

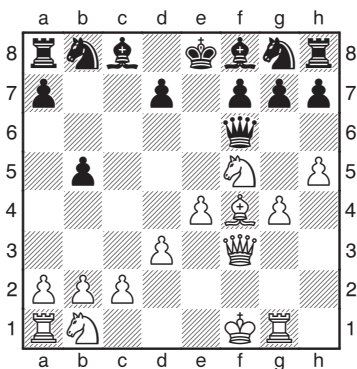
Black is forced to bite the bullet. Returning the sacrificed piece with 13...♖xh5? doesn't relieve the pressure. Hübner then gives 14 gxh5 ♗f6 15 ♖c3 ♙b7 16 ♙xf4 g6 17 ♖xb5 with a winning position for White.

14 ♗f3 ♖g8

This abrupt retreat leaves Black's development in an almost comical state. In *The Development of Chess Style* Euwe suggested the counter-sacrifice 14...♖xg4, although it has to be said that 15 ♔xg4 ♗xh5 16 ♙xf4 doesn't look too appetising for Black either. Hübner continues with 16...d5 17 ♖c3 ♙xf5 18 exf5, when White is clearly better.

15 ♙xf4 ♗f6

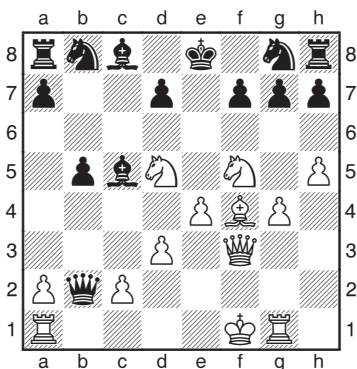
Once more Black chooses the most aggressive option. Much more sober is the full retreat with 15...♗d8, although White's development advantage should still be decisive after 16 ♖c3. Instead Kieseritzky insists on plunging further into the fire.



16 ♖c3 ♜c5  
17 ♘d5

The game is already nearing its climax, as White initiates the grand concept of sacrificing both rooks. In the cold light of day 17 d4 should also be seriously considered. White wins after both the mundane 17...♜xd4 18 ♘d5 and the slightly more exciting 17...♜e7 18 ♜d6! ♜xd6 19 g5!.

17 ... ♜xb2



18 ♜d6!!(?)

And here is the immortal sacrifice. The two exclamation marks are for ingenuity, while the question mark is for

the actual strength of the move. With 18 ♜d6 White says to Black "Take my rooks!". Given that Black can actually spoil the fun by choosing a resourceful option at move 19, it should be pointed out that objectively stronger moves do exist for White here. Hübner gives three possible wins:

1) 18 d4 ♜xa1+ (or 18...♜f8 19 ♘c7+ ♜d8 20 ♜e1) 19 ♘g2 ♜b2 20 dxc5 ♘a6 21 ♘d6+ ♜f8 22 ♜e5 ♜xc2+ 23 ♜h3 f6 24 ♘xf6 and the white attack breaks through.

2) 18 ♜e3 and now:

2a) 18...♜xa1+ 19 ♘g2 ♜b2 20 ♜xc5 ♜xc2+ 21 ♜h3 ♜xc5 22 ♜c1 d6 23 ♜xc5 ♜xf5 24 ♜xf5 dxc5 25 ♜c8#.

2b) 18...d6 19 ♜d4! ♜xd4 (White also wins if Black gives up his queen, e.g. 19...♜xd4 20 ♘xd4 ♜xd4 21 ♘c7+ ♜d8 22 c3) 20 ♘xd6+ ♜d8 21 ♘xf7+ ♜e8 22 ♘d6+ ♜d8 23 ♜f8+ ♜d7 24 ♜f7+ ♜xd6 25 ♜c7+ ♜e6 26 ♘f4+ ♜f6 27 g5#.

3) 18 ♜e1 and now:

3a) 18...♘a6 19 ♜d6 ♜b7 (or 19...♜xg1 20 e5 ♜d8 21 ♘xg7 ♜b7 22 ♜xf7 ♘e7 23 ♘e6+! dxe6 24 ♜c7+ ♜d7 25 ♜xe7+ ♜c8 26 ♜xe6#) 20 ♜xc5 ♘xc5 21 ♘d6+ ♜d8 22 ♘xf7+.

3b) 18...♜b7 19 d4 and once again White's attack is too strong.

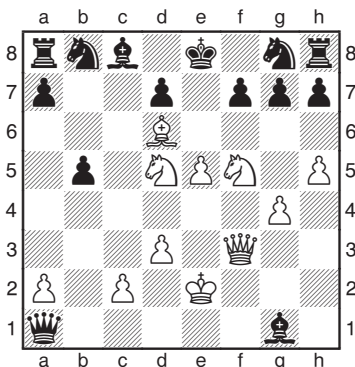
So the assessment after 17...♜xb2 is that White has many ways to win. The one chosen seeks the most brilliant finish.

18 ... ♜xa1+  
19 ♜e2 ♜xg1?

By this stage I imagine Kieseritzky was too much in mid-flow not to capture the second rook. It would certainly have been less sporting to play the strong move 19...♜b2!, after which

the outcome of the game remains far from certain.

**20 e5!!**



Blocking off the black queen and threatening 21 ♖xg7+ ♔d8 22 ♙c7#. Black has many defensive tries but none really do the trick:

1) 20...f6 21 ♖xg7+ ♔f7 22 ♖xf6 ♙b7 (or 22...♙xg7 23 ♖e8+ ♔h6 24 ♗f4#) 23 ♖d5+ ♙xg7 24 ♗f8#.

2) 20...♙b7 21 ♖xg7+ ♔d8 22 ♗xf7 ♖h6 23 ♖e6+ mates.

3) 20...♙a6 (the grimmest defence) 21 ♖c7+ ♔d8 22 ♖xa6 and now:

3a) 22...♗c3 (Falkbeer) 23 ♙c7+ ♗xc7 24 ♖xc7 ♙xc7 25 ♗xa8 ♖c6 26 ♖d6 ♖xe5 27 ♖e8+ ♙b6 28 ♗b8+ and 29 ♗xe5.

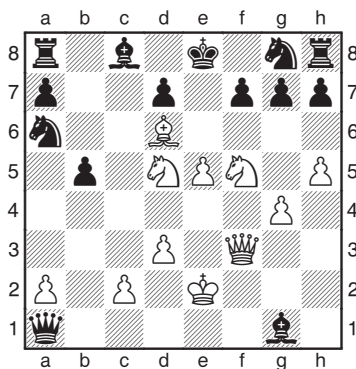
3b) 22...♙b6 (Chigorin) 23 ♗xa8 ♗c3 24 ♗xb8+ ♗c8 25 ♗xc8+ ♙xc8 26 ♙f8 h6 27 ♖d6+ ♔d8 28 ♖xf7+ ♙e8 29 ♖xh8 ♙xf8 30 ♙f3 and White rather mundanely wins the endgame.

3c) 22...♗xa2 23 ♙c7+ ♙e8 24 ♖b4 ♖c6 (what else?) 25 ♖xa2 ♙c5 26 ♗d5 ♙f8 27 ♗xb5 and White wins.

Kieseritzky's defence was in a sense far superior, as it ensured the game's immortality.

**20 ...**

**♖a6(!)**



**21 ♖xg7+ ♔d8**

**22 ♗f6+!!**

The final glory in a game of many glories.

**22 ... ♖xf6**

**23 ♙e7# (1-0)**

### Lessons from this game:

1) It goes without saying that Black was punished in this game for his lack of respect for development. He had fun with his queen, but this was short-lived.

2) In the so-called romantic era of chess, defensive technique was not very well developed, and sacrifices tended to be readily accepted. Hence, Anderssen's 18 ♙d6 was a good practical bet, but such a move could prove unwise against a modern grandmaster.

3) The Bryan Counter-Gambit is a very dodgy opening. Just ask Garry Kasparov!

# Game 3

## The “Evergreen Game”

### Adolf Anderssen – Jean Dufresne

#### *Berlin 1852*

#### Evans Gambit

#### The Players

Adolf Anderssen (1818–79) was one of the greatest players of the nineteenth century. See Game 2 for more information.

Jean Dufresne (1829–93) was born in Berlin. When a hearing defect forced him to give up his career as a journalist, he devoted himself to chess and chess writing. Although not one of the leading players of his time, he was strong enough to score some successes against masters, and his writings proved influential: his *Kleines Lehrbuch des Schachspiels* was a popular beginners’ guide, from which several generations of Germans learned their chess. Nowadays, outside Germany at least, he is mostly remembered as Anderssen’s opponent in the Evergreen Game.

#### The Game

Like the “Immortal Game”, this encounter did not take place under tournament conditions, but was a friendly game, just for the pleasure of playing chess. It has certainly given a great deal of pleasure to generations of enthusiasts ever since, and to this day articles appear now and then in chess magazines with some new nuance in the analysis of Anderssen’s great combination.

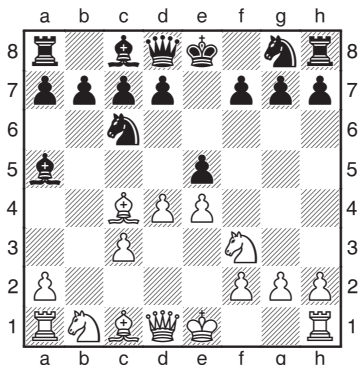
The game starts with a sharp Evans Gambit – one of the most popular openings of the day. Dufresne chooses a somewhat offbeat sideline, losing a little time to frustrate the smooth development of White’s position. Anderssen achieves a powerfully centralized position, and while Black tries to generate play on the flanks, White wrenches attention back to Black’s king, stranded in the centre, with a stunning (though, it must be said, unnecessary) knight sacrifice. Dufresne, though, has considerable counterplay against the white king, making for a thrilling finale. When he misses his best chance to stay in the game, Anderssen pounces with a dazzling queen sacrifice to force an extremely attractive check-mate.

1 e4	e5
2 ♖f3	♟c6
3 ♙c4	♙c5
4 b4	♙xb4
5 c3	♙a5

5...♙e7 is the preference of many modern players, on the rare occasions when the Evans is played, but is by no means clearly better. One line runs 6 d4 ♟a5 7 ♟xe5 (7 ♙e2!? exd4 8

♔xd4 was Kasparov's choice in a game he won against Anand at the Tal memorial tournament, Riga 1995, but shouldn't lead to anything better than unclear play) 7...♗xc4 8 ♖xc4 d5 returning the pawn to bring about a relatively quiet position.

6 d4



6 ... exd4

6...d6 is the modern preference:

1) 7 ♖b3 ♗d7! is known as the Conservative Defence, and is a tough nut to crack – analysts have been trying for a long time, without denting it much. A recent try is 8 dxe5 ♗b6 9 ♖bd2 ♖a5 10 ♗c2 ♗xc4 11 ♖xc4 d5 12 ♗g5, with attacking chances.

2) After 7 0-0, 7...♗b6 has been the preferred move ever since its strength was realized by Emanuel Lasker. It is a tough defensive move, preparing to return the pawn to secure a good position, rather than riskily clinging to the material. The key idea is 8 dxe5 dxe5 9 ♗xd8+ (9 ♖b3 ♗f6 10 ♗g5 ♗g6 11 ♗d5 ♖a5 has been discovered by Murray Chandler to lead to satisfactory simplifications for Black) 9...♖xd8 10 ♖xe5 ♖f6 and in so far as winning

chances exist here, they are on Black's side.

7 0-0 d3?!

7...dxc3?!, known as the Compromised Defence, gives White a massive attack after 8 ♖b3 ♗f6 9 e5 ♗g6 10 ♖xc3 (10 ♗a3 is less convincing, and, interestingly, was played in a later game between the same players, but with colours reversed: 10...♗ge7 11 ♗e1 0-0 12 ♖xc3 ♗xc3 13 ♗xc3 d5 14 exd6 cxd6 15 ♗d3 ♗h6 16 ♗e4 ♗f5 17 ♗h4 ♗g6 18 ♖d1 ♗xd3 19 ♗xd3 ♖f5 20 ♗h3 ♗fe8 21 ♖h4 ♖xh4 22 ♗hg3 ♗f6 0-1 Dufresne – Anderssen, Berlin 1855).

7...♗b6 8 cxd4 d6 brings about the so-called “Normal Position” of the Evans, presumably because it can be reached via many natural move-orders. It offers White fair compensation and attacking chances, due to his fine centre and good development.

8 ♖b3!?

Naturally, White plays for the attack, immediately targeting the weak f7-pawn, rather than wasting time capturing the d3-pawn, but 8 ♗e1!? may well be a better way to pursue this aim, e.g. 8...♖f6 9 e5; 8...♗ge7 9 ♖g5!; 8...d6 9 ♖b3 ♗d7 (9...♗e7 10 e5 dxe5 11 ♗a3) 10 e5; or 8...♗b6 9 e5, when it is difficult for Black to develop and avoid coming under a heavy kingside attack.

8 ... ♗f6

9 e5 ♗g6

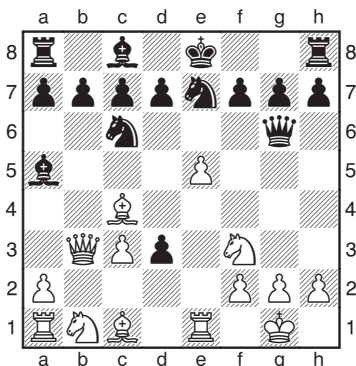
Instead, 9...♖xe5?? 10 ♗e1 d6 11 ♖b5+ costs Black a piece.

In case you are thinking that Black's play looks very old-fashioned, consider that this position has been taken on, with success, as Black by Grandmaster Beliavsky (whom we

meet in Games 78, 81 and 84), though his opponent did not play Anderssen's next move. Still, Believsky prepares his openings extremely thoroughly, so it is reasonable to assume that after 10 ♖e1 he has an improvement for Black that he considers viable.

10 ♖e1! ♞ge7

10...♗b6 intending 11...♘a5 may cause White more inconvenience.



11 ♗a3 b5?!

This is the first truly “nineteenth-century” move of the game, and is reminiscent of Kieseritzky’s 4...b5 in the Immortal Game. Rather than try to defend carefully, and to return the pawn, if necessary, in due course to deaden White’s initiative, Black lashes out with a counter-sacrifice of a pawn. To a modern player, the logic is hard to see. Black’s only consolation for White’s lead in development is his extra pawn (the one of d3 cannot survive in the long term), and healthy, unweakened pawn-structure. These advantages are thrown away on a whim, Black hoping for some sort of counterattack on the b-file and a8–h1 diagonal. While it is true that Black does secure some

counter-threats, to start a tactical shoot-out from a strategically inferior position is a policy doomed to failure. However, such logic was foreign to ordinary masters in the 1850s – it was some decades yet before the writings of Steinitz (see Game 5) put the case for the methodical approach to chess. That said, lashing out with a move such as this is not always bad – sometimes specific tactics will justify outrageous, “illogical” moves.

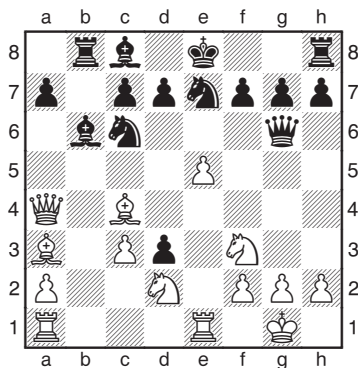
11...a6 would prepare the b-pawn’s advance, and give Black more realistic hope.

12 ♖xb5 ♖b8

13 ♖a4 ♗b6

13...0-0? would now lose a piece in view of 14 ♗xe7 overloading the c6-knight.

14 ♞bd2



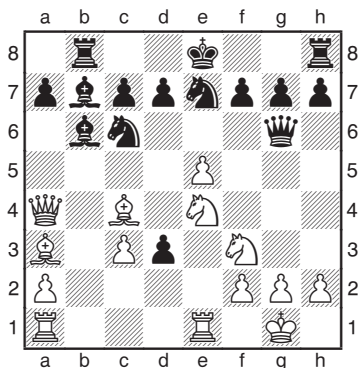
Anderssen brings his last minor piece into play and will now aim his pieces at Black’s king, wherever it tries to hide.

14 ... ♗b7

Black has carried out the idea behind his ...b5 pawn sacrifice. 14...0-0 has been suggested, but if that is the

best move, then why not just castle on move 11?

15 ♖e4



15 ... ♖f5?

This lands Black in trouble, so it is worth looking at the alternatives:

1) 15...0-0? 16 ♕xd3 threatens 17 ♖f6+, as in the game, and moreover 17 ♖eg5 is an idea after the queen moves, while 16...♖h5 loses to 17 ♖g3 ♖h6 18 ♕c1 ♖e6 19 ♕xh7+!.

2) 15...♖d4? is a thematic attempt to use the pressure on the long diagonal to bring about some exchanges. However, after 16 cxd4 ♕xe4, White has the nice square-clearing idea 17 e6! (17 ♕xf7+!? is also good) 17...fxe6 (17...♕xf3? 18 ♖xd7+ mates; 17...0-0 18 ♖xe4 ♖xe4 19 ♕xe7) 18 ♕xd3! ♕xd3 19 ♖e5, when Black's position collapses.

3) 15...d2 16 ♖exd2 0-0 was Lasker's suggestion, but then material is level and White has all the chances. For instance a correspondence game with Tim Harding as White ended 17 ♖e4 ♖fe8 18 ♖ad1 ♖bd8?? (18...♖a5) 19 ♖eg5 1-0. Instead 17 ♕xe7 ♖xe7 18 ♖xd7 looks horribly materialistic,

but Black must be careful, for example:

3a) 18...♖bd8 19 ♖xe7 ♖xd2 (not 19...♕xf2+? 20 ♖xf2 ♖xd2+ 21 ♖xd2 ♖xg2+ 22 ♖e3) 20 e6! ♕xf2+ 21 ♖h1 ♕c5? 22 ♖xf7+! ♖xf7 23 exf7+ wins for White.

3b) 18...♖f5 19 e6 ♖bd8 20 exf7+ ♖h8 21 ♖e8 ♖dx8 22 fxe8 ♖xe8 (22...♖xe8?? 23 ♕f7) 23 ♖xe8 ♖xe8 and Black must put his faith in the bishop-pair to save this ending.

16 ♕xd3 ♖h5

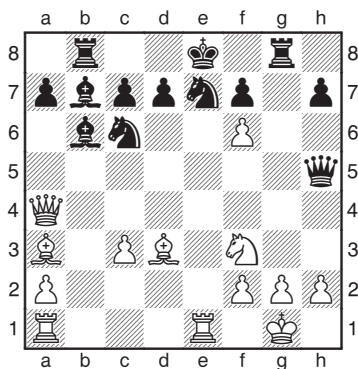
17 ♖f6+!?

17 ♖d6+!? is another interesting (pseudo-)sacrifice, but the best continuation is 17 ♖g3! ♖h6 18 ♕c1 ♖e6 19 ♕c4, winning material in simple fashion. This is rather an artistic blemish on the game, but we can certainly forgive Anderssen for wishing to win in spectacular fashion.

17 ... gxf6

18 exf6 ♖g8

Black's attempt to defend will be based on threats to the white king.

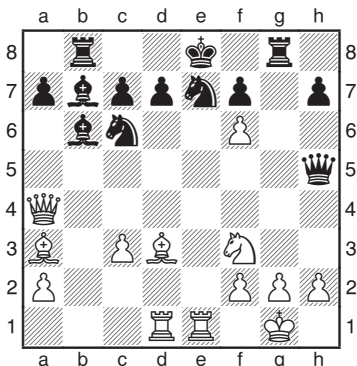


19 ♖ad1

This move was criticized by Lasker, who suggested 19 ♕e4!? ♖h3 20 g3



♙xg3+ 21 hxg3 ♖xg3+ 22 ♔h1 ♕xf2. Then 23 ♕xe7 (not 23 ♖e2? ♜d4!) 23...♖h3+ 24 ♜h2 keeps some advantage after 24...♖h4?! 25 ♖e2 ♜d4 26 ♕xb7 ♜xe2 27 ♖xh4 ♕xh4, but 24...♕xe1 25 ♖xe1 ♖h4 only gives White the better of a drawish ending.



### 19 ... ♖xf3?

Now White wins. Plenty of alternatives have been analysed in great depth, and at least two look sufficient to hold the balance:

1) 19...♙xg2+? 20 ♖xg2 ♜e5 is a dangerous counterattacking try, but White strikes first, in similar fashion to the game continuation: 21 ♖xd7+!! ♜xd7 (21...♖xd7 22 ♕g6+) 22 ♙xe7+ ♖d8 (22...♖f8 23 ♖e5+) 23 ♙xd7+! ♖c8 (23...♖xd7 24 ♕f5++ ♖e8 {24...♖c6 25 ♕d7#}) 25 ♕d7+ ♖d8 26 ♕e7#) 24 ♙d8+! ♖xd8 25 ♕f5+ ♖e8 26 ♕d7+ ♖d8 27 ♕e7#.

2) 19...♙g4?! has over the years been subjected to much debate:

2a) 20 c4? has been recommended, but this artificial move is inadequate: 20...♙xg2+ (20...♙f4? 21 ♕g6!) 21 ♖xg2 (21 ♔h1 ♙xf2) 21...♖g4+ (not 21...♜e5??, when 22 ♖xd7+ still

works) 22 ♖f1 ♖xf3 looks most unconvincing for White:

2a1) 23 ♙xe7+ ♜xe7 24 ♖xd7+ ♖xd7 25 ♕f5++ (25 ♕e2+ ♖e6 26 ♕xf3 ♕xf3 leaves Black a piece up) 25...♖e8 26 ♕d7+ ♖f8 27 ♕xe7+ is no longer mate, because Black has the g8-square at his disposal.

2a2) 23 c5 ♖h3+ 24 ♖gl (24 ♖e2 blocks the e-file, and allows 24...♕a5, with devastating threats) 24...♜e5 and it is Black who is attacking.

2b) The key line is 20 ♙e4 ♙xe4 (20...♙xg2+ 21 ♖xg2 ♖g6+ 22 ♖f1 ♖xf6 23 ♙de1) 21 ♖xe4 and although White's threats aren't too devastating here (to regain the piece, with an extra pawn or so, possibly starting with 22 ♙e1), it is difficult for Black to find a decent move – indeed most moves worsen his position:

2b1) 21...♕a5? 22 ♕xe7 ♕xc3 23 ♕a3+ ♜e5 24 ♙b1 d5 25 ♖a4+ wins.

2b2) 21...♖g6? 22 ♖h4 ♜f5 23 ♖f4 and White wins back the piece with a substantial advantage.

2b3) 21...d6 22 ♙e1 and now 22...♖a5? 23 ♖xh7 ♖xa3 24 ♕f5! cuts off the king's escape, while after 22...♜e5?! 23 ♕b5+! c6 (23...♖f8 24 fxe7+ ♖g7 25 ♖xb7 and the e-pawn queens) 24 ♕xd6 cxb5 25 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 26 ♙xe5 White will regain the sacrificed material with a lot of interest. However, after 22...♖g6! White can do no more than regain his material with a slightly better endgame: 23 ♖xc6+ ♕xc6 24 ♙xe7+ ♖f8 25 ♕xg6 hgx6 26 ♜e5! ♕e8.

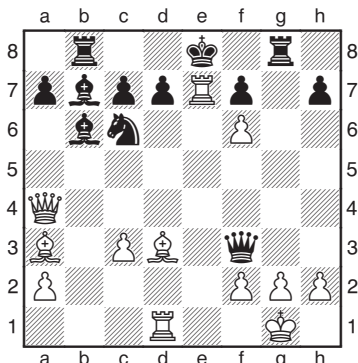
3) 19...♕d4! has the idea of blocking the d-file. After 20 cxd4 ♖xf3, Black's counterplay is good enough for a draw. 21 ♕e4 ♙xg2+ 22 ♖h1 ♙xh2++ 23 ♖xh2 ♖xf2+ should lead



to perpetual check, though there are some fireworks still possible; e.g., 24 ♖h3?! ♙c8! 25 ♙g2 ♜f4! and White is in some danger.

4) 19...♜h3! is also sufficient to draw: 20 ♙f1 ♜f5 21 ♙d3 ♜h3, etc. (not 21...♜xf6?! 22 ♙e4).

**20 ♜xe7+!**



**20 ... ♜xe7?**

Now Black is mated by force. Instead 20...♜f8? loses simply after 21 ♜e3+, picking up Black's queen, but 20...♜d8 21 ♜xd7+! ♜c8 (21...♜e8? 22 ♜e7+ ♜d8 23 ♙e2+; 21...♜xd7? 22 ♙f5++ ♜e8 23 ♙d7+ ♜d8 24 ♙xc6+ mates) 22 ♜d8+!! ♜xd8 (22...♜xd8? 23 gxf3 wins on material; 22...♜xd8? 23 ♜d7+!! ♜xd7 24 ♙f5++ forces mate: 24...♜c6 25 ♙d7# or 24...♜e8 25 ♙d7#) needs careful analysis:

1) 23 ♙f5+ ♜xd1+ 24 ♜xd1+ ♜d4 25 ♙h3! (25 g3 ♜g5 26 ♙h3 ♙f3 is less clear – Kasparov) 25...♙d5 26

♙e7+ ♜e8 27 cxd4 wins (Nunn). He gives the sample line 27...♙a5 28 g3 c6 29 ♜c2 ♜g6 30 ♙g2! ♙xg2 31 ♜xg2 ♜c8 32 ♜e4.

2) 23 ♙e2+ ♜d4 24 ♙xf3 ♙xf3 25 g3! ♜g5 (25...♙xd1 26 ♜xd1 “with a boring but winning endgame” – Kasparov) 26 cxd4 ♜a5 27 ♙e7+ ♜c8 28 ♜c2 ♙xd1 29 ♜xd1 is another line cited by Nunn – Black is in trouble since the f7-pawn cannot be held, and then White's own far-advanced f-pawn will be unstoppable.

**21 ♜xd7+!! ♜xd7**

**22 ♙f5++ ♜e8**

22...♜c6 23 ♙d7#.

**23 ♙d7+ ♜f8**

23...♜d8 24 ♙xe7#.

**24 ♙xe7# (1-0)**

### Lessons from this game:

1) Play in the centre has more effect than play on the wings – everyone knows this of course, but it is all too easily forgotten in the heat of battle.

2) Always analyse variations with double checks extremely carefully – however improbable they may look.

3) Before playing a spectacular combination, check to see whether there is a simpler, safer way to win cleanly. Unless of course you want to play a brilliancy that is still being talked about a century and a half later, in which case play the sacrifice and keep your fingers crossed! (And don't blame me if you follow that advice and go on to lose.)

## Game 4

# Johann Zukertort – Joseph Blackburne

### *London 1883*

### English Opening

#### **The Players**

Johann Zukertort (1842–88) was a Polish-born player, who for many years was considered second only to Wilhelm Steinitz in the chess world. In 1861 he enrolled in the faculty of medicine at Breslau University. Rather than attending lectures, however, Zukertort spent most of his waking hours playing chess, including many friendly games against Anderssen, and he was finally struck from the university register due to non-attendance. Zukertort gradually built up his reputation as a chess player, and this was enhanced when a match of off-hand games ended in a 5–2 victory over Anderssen in 1871. He arrived in London in 1872, and spent the rest of his life there as a professional player. Many successes in tournaments and match-play followed, including first place at the 1883 London Tournament, ahead of all the world's best, including Steinitz. His triumphs were rewarded with a battle against Steinitz in New Orleans in 1886, which has been recognized as the first official World Championship match. Steinitz won by the score of +10 =5 –5.

Joseph Blackburne (1841–1924) was for many years the leading English chess player, as well as being one of the world's best. Inspired by Paul Morphy's brief but explosive accomplishments in Europe, the eighteen-year-old from Manchester decided to learn the game. He proved to be an excellent student. After spending much of the 1860s developing his game, he made his breakthrough by winning the British Championship in 1868, and following this he became a full-time professional player. Blackburne's excellent results were helped by his brilliant combinative powers, his ability to create awesome kingside attacks, plus his knack of producing swindles from seemingly lost positions. The tournament book of Vienna 1873 called him "der schwarze Tod" (The Black Death), a nickname that has stuck ever since.

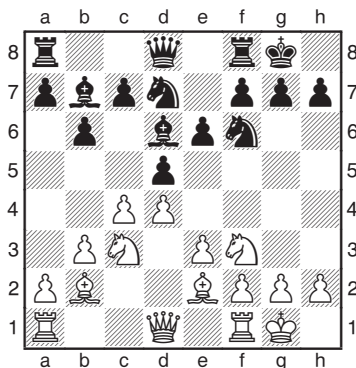
#### **The Game**

A deceptively quiet opening and a strategic middlegame give us no warning of the fireworks that eventually decide this battle. Blackburne starts off well, but then makes a minor slip, which Zukertort immediately exploits. The rest of the game is played to perfection by the Polish player, who builds up impressively on the kingside. When the position finally opens up, Blackburne appears to be fighting back strongly, but Zukertort's concept turns out to have hidden depth, and he wins by a spectacular combination. Look out in particular for White's sensational 28th move.

1 c4 e6  
2 e3

Zukertort plays the early part of the game in a very innocuous way indeed, allowing Black to reach a comfortable position with no effort at all. Later on Richard Réti (see Game 22) was to develop a more potent, “hypermodern” method of development against 1...e6, involving a fianchetto of the king’s bishop. At this particular moment, however, the theory of flank openings had not really developed at all.

2 ... f6  
3 f3 b6  
4 e2 b7  
5 0-0 d5  
6 d4 d6  
7 c3 0-0  
8 b3 bd7  
9 b2

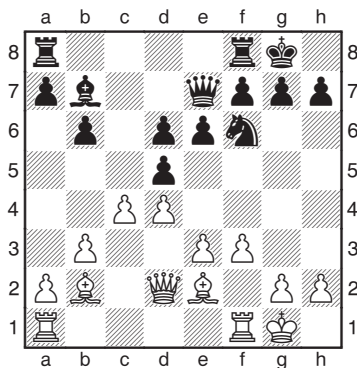


9 ... ♖e7?!

After some effective opening play, Black now starts to drift. There are two basic pawn breaks for Black in this position, namely ...c7-c5 and ...e6-e5. Both advances will lead to pawn exchanges and thus an opening of the position. With 9...♖e7 Black connects

his rooks and keeps his options open on which advance to make, but forgets one vital factor, the generalization that “in open positions bishops are better than knights”. For this reason Black should take one move out to preserve his d6-bishop. Only after 9...a6! can Black safely continue with such moves as ...♖e7, ...♗ad8, ...dxc4 and ...e5 (or ...c5). Needless to say, Zukertort is quick to seize his chance.

10 b5! e4  
11 xxd6 cxd6  
12 d2 df6  
13 f3 xd2  
14 ♖xd2



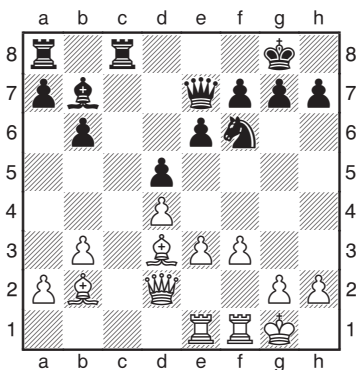
At the moment the position remains reasonably closed, but without being really blocked up. In effect it has the potential to become open and it is this situation which the bishops are waiting for. With his next move Blackburne allows just one open file, but in doing so he accepts a lifeless position. The advance 14...e5 is more enterprising, and ensures more counterplay, e.g.:

1) 15 cxd5 e4! (aiming to block the position: 15...xd5 16 e4 f4 17

♙c4! is clearly better for White) 16 ♙c4 ♙xd5 and Black has good control over the central light squares, whereas White's bishops haven't yet found their scope.

2) 15 dxe5! dxe5 16 ♖fd1 (or 16 cxd5 ♜xd5 17 e4 ♜f4 and Black is very active) 16...♞fd8 17 ♚e1 and White's bishop-pair is enough for a small edge.

14 ... dxc4  
15 ♙xc4 d5  
16 ♙d3 ♞fc8  
17 ♚ae1!

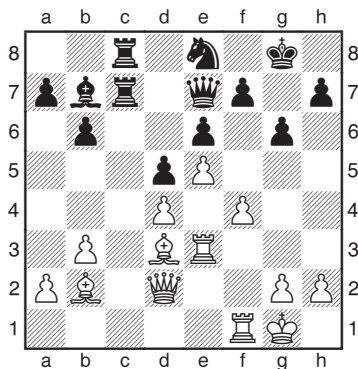


It is deep moves like this which often separate good players from great players. Many players would have been very tempted to oppose the only open file with 17 ♞ac1, but this would have been an incorrect plan, leading only to a mass exchange of the major pieces on the c-file. It's true that White could still advance in the centre later on, but with fewer pieces on the board, Black's defensive task would be greatly eased. As we shall see later on, the presence of white rooks is an important factor in the success of the attack.

This is not to say that giving up the only open file is a business that should be taken lightly. Here, however, White correctly assesses that Black's occupation of the c-file is not so important, especially as all the possible infiltration squares (i.e. c1-c5) are covered more than adequately by White's pieces and pawns.

As a further point it should be mentioned that this is definitely a case of the "right rook". The other rook is excellently placed on f1, where it will support the eventual advance of the f-pawn.

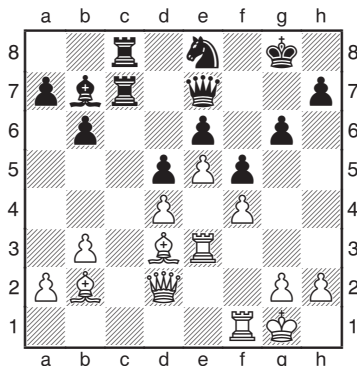
17 ... ♞c7  
18 e4 ♞ac8  
19 e5 ♞e8  
20 f4 g6  
21 ♞e3



We now begin to see for sure that Black's counterplay along the c-file is proving to be more apparent than real. Meanwhile, White's attack on the kingside builds up at his leisure behind the impressive pawn-centre. The next stage of the plan will involve forcing the f4-f5 breakthrough with moves such as g2-g4. Rather than

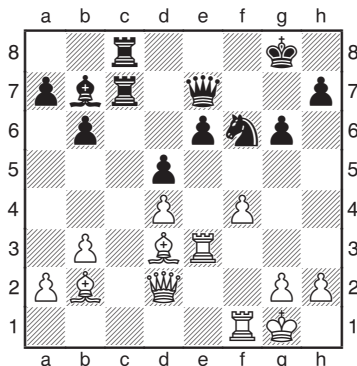
waiting to be squashed without a contest, with his next move Blackburne understandably tries to fight back. However, by doing so he stumbles into a long forced line, ending in a brilliant win for White.

21 ... f5



Despite the fact that this loses, it can hardly be criticized, especially as the alternatives are hardly enticing; e.g., 21...♖g7 22 g4 ♜h4 23 ♜g2 (23 ♜g3?! ♙a6! is less clear) and White methodically prepares the f5 advance.

22 exf6 ♘xf6

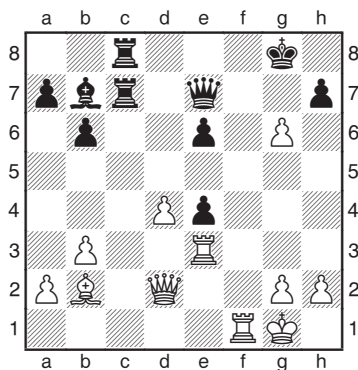


23 f5 ♘e4

23...gxf5 24 ♙xf5 is even worse, e.g. 24...♘e4 25 ♙xe4 dxe4 26 ♜g3+ ♘h8 27 d5+ e5 28 d6.

24 ♙xe4 dxe4

25 fxg6



25 ... ♜c2

Black bases all of his hopes on this move, which does seem to give him a lot more counterplay than he perhaps deserves. In any case, the alternative 25...hxg6 loses swiftly to 26 ♜g3, when Black's creaking kingside cannot stand up to the intense pressure, e.g.:

1) 26...♜e8 27 ♜h6 ♜h7 28 ♜xg6+ ♘h8 29 d5+ e5 30 ♙xe5+! ♜xe5 31 ♜f8+! ♜xf8 32 ♜xf8#.

2) 26...♘h7 27 d5 e5 (or 27...♙xd5 28 ♜h3+ ♘g8 29 ♜h8#) 28 d6 ♜d7 29 ♜h3+ ♘g8 30 dxe7 ♜xd2 31 ♙xe5 and ♜h8#.

3) 26...♜h7 27 ♜f6 ♜g7 28 ♜h3 wins the queen.

4) 26...♜g7 27 d5 e5 28 ♜g5 ♜e8 29 ♜f6 and again White wins.

26 gxf7+ ♘h8

The only move. Both 26...♙xh7 27 ♜h3+ ♘g8 28 ♜h6 and 26...♙xh7 27

♖g3+ ♕h8 28 d5+ e5 29 ♔xe5+ are winning for White.

**27 d5+ e5**

Suddenly it seems as if Black has dealt with the threats and White is left facing the loss of a piece. 28 d6 looks good, but Black can fight on after 28...♗g5!. Zukertort, however, has a dazzling queen sacrifice up his sleeve.

**28 ♖b4!!**

and White mates as in variation "1".

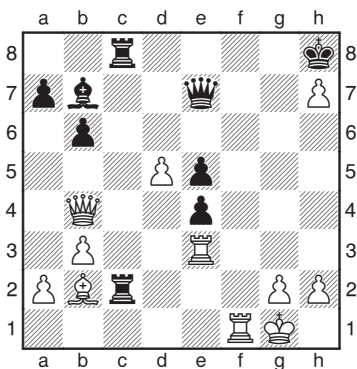
4) 28...♖2c7 defends against the flash moves, but after the prosaic 29 ♗xe4 Black can still resign.

**28 ... ♖8c5**

**29 ♖f8+! ♕xh7**

After 29...♗xf8 30 ♔xe5+ ♕xh7 31 ♗xe4+ ♕h6 32 ♖h3+ White mates in the usual way.

**30 ♗xe4+ ♕g7**

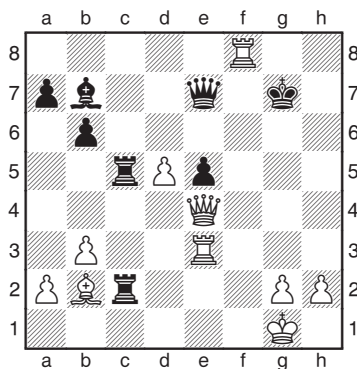


An extraordinary idea against which there is no defence. Accepting the offer with 28...♗xb4 leads to a forced mate in seven after 29 ♔xe5+ ♕xh7 30 ♖h3+ ♕g6 (or 30...♕g8 31 ♖h8#) 31 ♖g3+ ♕h6 (other moves lead to quicker mates, e.g. 31...♕h7 32 ♖f7+ ♕h6 33 ♔f4+ ♕h5 34 ♖h7# or 31...♕h5 32 ♖f5+) 32 ♖f6+ ♕h5 33 ♖f5+ ♕h6 34 ♔f4+ ♕h7 35 ♖h5#. Other moves do no good either:

1) 28...♗e8 29 ♖f8+! ♗xf8 30 ♔xe5+ ♕xh7 31 ♗xe4+ ♕h6 32 ♖h3+ ♕g5 33 ♖g3+ ♕h5 34 ♗g6+ ♕h4 35 ♖g4#.

2) 28...♖8c7 29 ♔xe5+ ♗xe5 30 ♗f8+ ♕xh7 31 ♖h3+ ♕g6 32 ♖h6#.

3) 28...♖e8 29 ♖f8+! ♗xf8 30 ♔xe5+ ♕xh7 31 ♗xe4+ ♕h6 32 ♖h3+



**31 ♔xe5+ ♕xf8**

**32 ♔g7+ ♕g8**

32...♗xg7 33 ♗e8# is mate.

**33 ♗xe7 1-0**

### Lessons from this game:

1) Look out for sneaky knight moves. It's very easy to overlook annoying ones like Zukertort's 10 ♖b5, which secured the advantage of the two bishops.

2) Open files should be studied carefully. Sometimes they are the most important feature of the position. In this game, however, the open c-file was virtually irrelevant.

3) A queen sacrifice, based on a forced checkmate in seven moves, is a pleasing way to end the game!

Game 5  
**Wilhelm Steinitz – Mikhail Chigorin**  
*World Championship match (game 4),*  
*Havana 1892*  
Ruy Lopez, Berlin Defence

### **The Players**

Wilhelm Steinitz (1836–1900) was the first official World Champion, a title he received after defeating Zukertort in New Orleans in 1886. Despite actually being one year older than Paul Morphy, Steinitz really belonged to the next generation of chess players. By the time Steinitz was beginning to dedicate himself seriously to the game, in 1862, Morphy's chess career was already finished. After a few years living in Vienna, Steinitz came to England, and it was there that he developed his positional style, which contrasted with Anderssen's wholly combinative play.

Steinitz's importance was not just as a player of the game. He was also a profound thinker and teacher and became the most prolific chess writer of the nineteenth century. Unlike Philidor, who also advocated a positional approach to chess, Steinitz was able to persuade the world of its absolute importance. He was undoubtedly helped in this respect by his excellent results using his deep concepts of positional play.

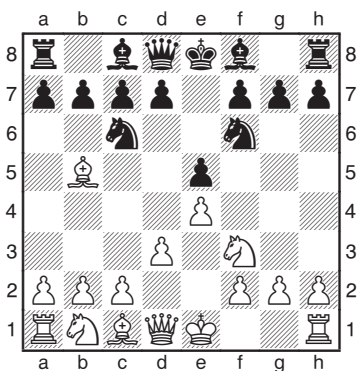
Mikhail Chigorin (1850–1908) was one of the world's leading players towards the end of the nineteenth century. He twice challenged Steinitz for the world championship, in 1889 and 1892, but lost on both occasions, although the second match (+8 =5 –10) was close. Like many of his contemporaries, he was an exceptional tactician and he was also renowned for his imaginative approach to the opening, which is shown in his surprising invention against the Queen's Gambit (1 d4 d5 2 c4 ♖c6). At Vienna in 1903, where everyone was forced to play the King's Gambit Accepted, Chigorin won with ease, ahead of Pillsbury, Maróczy and Marshall. He also did much to develop chess activity in Russia, forming a chess club in St Petersburg and lecturing in many other cities.

### **The Game**

After some peaceful opening play, Steinitz totally bewilders his distinguished opponent with some high-class manoeuvring. Not realizing the danger, Chigorin procrastinates over the right plan and is punished when Steinitz suddenly lashes out on the kingside with his h-pawn. Facing a sudden change in tempo, Chigorin is unable to cope and he finally falls prey to an irresistible attack on his king. Steinitz finishes with quite a flourish as an exquisite rook sacrifice rounds off some extremely subtle play.

- 1 e4 e5  
 2 ♖f3 ♘c6  
 3 ♙b5 ♙f6  
 4 d3

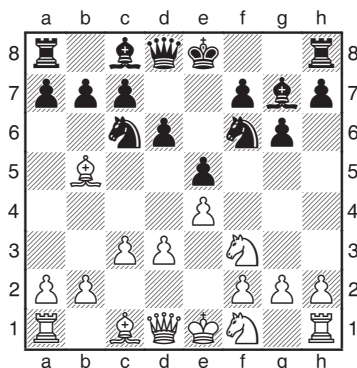
This is the old way of playing against the Berlin. The modern method involves offering the e-pawn with 4 0-0. Although Black normally captures with 4...♗xe4, this is not done with the intention of keeping the extra pawn. After 5 d4 Black tends to enter the endgame arising after 5...♗d6 6 ♙xc6 dxc6 7 dxe5 ♗f5 8 ♔xd8+ ♕xd8, or to play the developing move 5...♙e7. The greedy 5...exd4 allows White to set up a powerful pin on the e-file with 6 ♙e1. Then 6...d5 7 ♗xd4 gives White an advantage, as both 8 ♗xc6 and 8 f3 are threatened.



- 4 ... d6  
 5 c3 g6  
 6 ♘bd2 ♗g7  
 7 ♖f1?

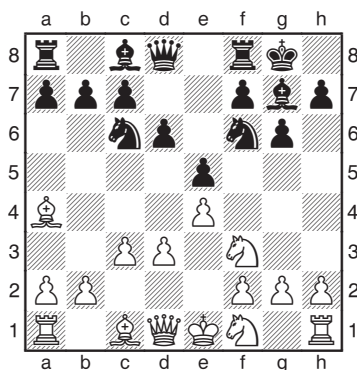
By delaying castling White is able to execute the classic Lopez knight manoeuvre. This knight can now emerge at either g3 or, on this occasion, e3 where it has a substantial influence over the centre. That said, Steinitz's

plan is a little bit too elaborate to give hope of a real advantage.



- 7 ... 0-0  
 8 ♙a4

White withdraws the bishop in order to preserve it for later on. In game 2 of their match Steinitz had chosen instead 8 ♗e3 and Chigorin correctly countered in the centre immediately with 8...d5.



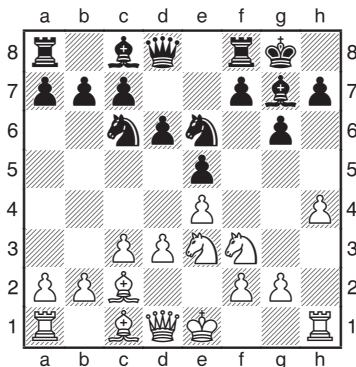
- 8 ... ♗d7

The following manoeuvre with this knight proves rather time-consuming, without being especially constructive.



Perhaps Chigorin was lulled into a false sense of security by White's apparently slow opening play. Euwe recommended queenside expansion with 8...a6 9 ♖e3 b5 10 ♙b3 ♘a5 11 ♙c2 c5, which would virtually be taken for granted today. After 11...c5 Black's position possesses a certain amount of coordination, which is missing in the game continuation. Later on in their match Chigorin also improved on 8...♘d7 in another way, with an immediate lunge in the centre. The 14th game continued 8...d5!? 9 ♖e2 ♗d6 10 ♙c2 b6 11 ♘g3 ♙a6 12 0-0 dxe4 13 ♖xe4 ♘e4 14 ♗xe4 ♙b7 and Black had fully equalized.

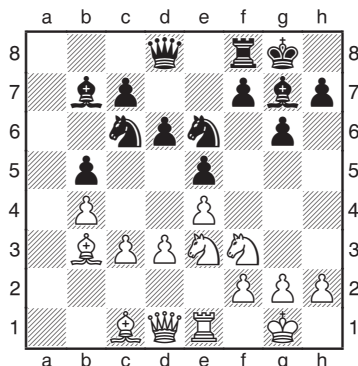
9 ♖e3 ♙c5  
10 ♙c2 ♙e6  
11 h4!



Probably the most important move of the entire game. Steinitz certainly enjoyed attacking in such a fashion. In some ways this offensive looks risky, because White has yet to complete his development, but his prophylactic measures in the centre have made it difficult for Black to obtain counterplay. This means that White can and

should create instant pressure on the black kingside. In particular the rook on h1 will enter the game under favourable circumstances.

Steinitz's idea of h2-h4 has not been lost on future generations. Just over a hundred years later the current World Champion used a very similar idea, with an equally favourable result.



**Kasparov – Short**  
PCA World Championship  
match (game 7), London 1993

Here Kasparov had already castled, but the wing attack still carried a nasty sting. After 19 h4! ♙c8 20 h5! ♙h8 21 ♘d5 g5 22 ♖e3 ♘f4 23 g3 ♘h5 24 ♘f5 ♙xf5 25 exf5 ♗d7 26 ♙xg5 h6 27 ♘h4 ♘f6 28 ♙xf6 ♙xf6 29 ♗h5 ♙h7 30 ♘g2 ♖e7 31 ♖e3 ♘g8 32 d4 exd4 33 cxd4 ♙xd4 34 ♘g4 ♙g7 35 ♘h6! ♙f6 36 ♙xf7! Black was forced to resign.

(Back now to Steinitz – Chigorin.)

11 ... ♖e7

Finally Black hits on the correct plan, to aim for the ...d6-d5 advance.

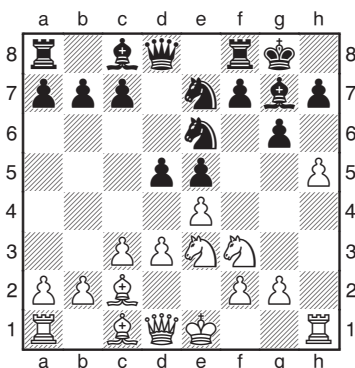
Other moves are in danger of being either too slow or too panicky:

1) 11...h6 (too slow) 12 h5 g5 and now White should immediately occupy the outpost with 13 ♖f5 and follow up with 14 d4, securing a definite advantage.

2) 11...f5!? (too panicky) 12 exf5! (but not 12 h5 f4 13 ♖d5 g5 14 h6 ♙f6 15 ♙b3 ♖h8, when Black has not only survived, but has taken over the operation on the kingside) 12...gxf5 13 d4! exd4 14 ♖xf5 dxc3 15 ♖xg7 cxb2 16 ♙xb2 ♖xg7 17 ♖g5 and White has a very strong attack.

3) Perhaps Black's best alternative to 11...♖e7 is 11...h5, which makes it harder for White to expand on the kingside. Of course White can continue with 12 g4, but 12...hxg4 13 ♖xg4 ♖f4 14 ♖g5 d5 gives Black definite counterplay.

12 h5 d5



13 hxg6 fxg6?

This was an occasion where Black should have definitely adhered to the "capture towards the centre" principle. Perhaps Chigorin was seeking counterplay along the now half-open

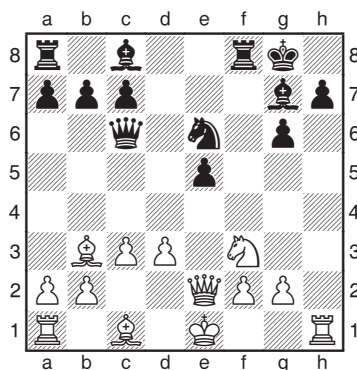
f-file, but in reality all that Black has done is to weaken his king position. The threats down the h-file remain, while White will now also be able to find particular joy along the a2–g8 diagonal, which has suddenly become quite vulnerable.

After 13...hxg6 White should probably continue with 14 ♖e2, intending ♙d2 and 0-0-0. Notice that 14...♖f4 would not be too much of a worry. White could simply retreat with 15 ♖f1, before kicking the knight back with g3.

14 exd5!

White normally doesn't release the tension in the centre like this without good reason, but here he is absolutely justified in his decision. The Lopez bishop will now find a nice home on the b3-square.

14 ... ♖xd5  
15 ♖xd5 ♖xd5  
16 ♙b3 ♖c6  
17 ♖e2



17 ... ♙d7

Other moves have been suggested, but in all probability Black's position is beyond repair already. 17...♖h8

removes the black king from the pin, but after 18 ♔h6! the weaknesses in the black camp are becoming more and more apparent. In particular, the e5-pawn is basically a sitting duck. 17...a5, trying to chase the bishop off the diagonal with ...a4 is another try, although once more White can keep the advantage by either direct means with 18 ♖g5 ♗xg2 19 ♖xh7, or in a more positional way with 18 a4 ♗b6 19 ♗c2 and 20 ♙e3, as suggested by Neishtadt.

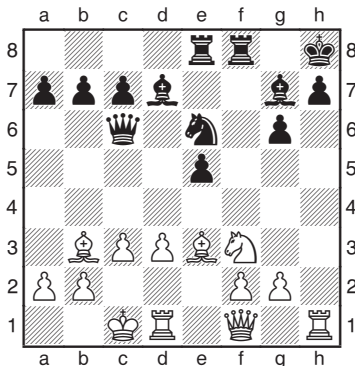
18 ♙e3

After obtaining positional domination, now is the right time to complete development. 18 ♖xe5? ♗xg2 would spoil all the earlier work.

18 ... ♔h8

19 0-0-0 ♖ae8

20 ♗f1!



“More attacking than defensive” – Steinitz. This subtle queen retreat, which has many different purposes, is a move of star quality. Firstly White removes the queen from the e-file, thus eliminating many of Black’s tactical tricks involving ...♖f4 and ...♖d4. There is also a much deeper aspect to

20 ♗f1, which becomes obvious very soon.

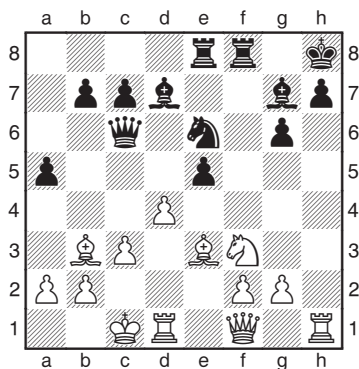
20 ... a5

Passive defence with 20...♗f5, intending ...♖f8, doesn’t help Black. White should simply increase the pressure on the h-file with 21 ♖h4, when 21...♖f8 can be answered with 22 ♖g5!. Instead of 20...♗f5, we should consider two knight moves for Black.

1) 20...♖d4? 21 ♖xh7+! (another point of 20 ♗f1) 21...♗xh7 22 ♗h1+ ♔h6 23 ♗xh6#.

2) 20...♖f4 and now either 21 ♖g5 h6 22 ♖f7+ ♔h7 23 d4! ♗xg2 24 ♗xg2 ♖xg2 25 ♖xh6 (Ravinsky) or 21 d4! exd4 22 ♖xd4 looks very strong for White.

21 d4!



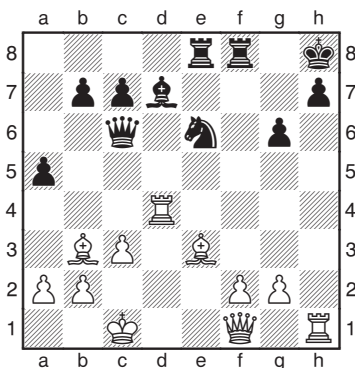
21 ... exd4

22 ♖xd4 ♙d4

Unfortunately Black must part with his defensive bishop, leaving him woefully weak on both the dark squares *and* the light squares! 22...♖xd4 allows White to mate after 23 ♖xh7+! ♗xh7 24 ♗h1+. Euwe also gives the depressing variations 22...♗a6 23 ♙c4 ♗a8 24 ♖f3 and 22...♗e4 23 ♙c2

♔g4 24 f3 ♕g3 25 ♜f5! gxf5 26 ♝xd7  
as positionally winning for White.

23 ♝xd4!



23 ... ♞xd4?

Overlooking White's next brilliant idea, Euwe gives 23...b5 24 ♝d3! as winning for White, when 24...♜c5 runs into the usual rook sacrifice: 25 ♝xh7+! ♜xh7 26 ♝h4+ ♜g7 27 ♝d4+ ♝f6 28 ♜h6+ ♜h7 29 ♜xf8+ ♝xh4 30 ♝g7#. Black's final chance to prolong the agony lies in 23...♝e7, hoping for 24 ♝d3? ♜c5, when White is forced to give up one of his bishops for that lowly knight. Instead White should swing his rook across the fourth rank to increase the pressure on h7.

24 ♝xh7+!

Revealing to his startled opponent the real point of 20 ♝f1. The black king will find itself checkmated in mid-board.

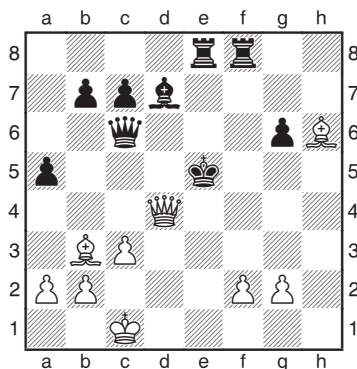
24 ... ♜xh7

25 ♝h1+ ♜g7

26 ♜h6+ ♜f6

27 ♝h4+ ♜e5

28 ♝xd4+



1-0

After 28...♜f5 White can choose between 29 g4# and 29 ♝f4#.

### Lessons from this game:

1) Don't dither with your plan! Here Black wanders around aimlessly for too long before deciding to carry out the logical ...d5 advance, something which could have been achieved as early as move eight. Be direct!

2) Look out for the unexpected. Sometimes pedestrian developing moves can be replaced by a sudden idea which causes your opponent immediate problems. Steinitz's 11 h4 is an example of such an effective idea.

3) A move which looks to have merely one purpose, but in fact contains some heavily concealed threats, often produces the desired result. Here Steinitz's very deep 20 ♝f1 was too much for Chigorin.

# Game 6

## Wilhelm Steinitz – Curt von Bardeleben

### *Hastings 1895*

#### Giuoco Piano

#### The Players

Wilhelm Steinitz (1836–1900) was the first player to be recognized as World Champion, a title he held from 1886 to 1894, and one of the key figures in the development of chess. See Game 5 for more information.

Curt von Bardeleben (1861–1924) was born in Berlin. He studied law but never practised, finding the lure of the chessboard too strong to resist. He was undoubtedly an extremely talented player, capable of first-class results, but his temperament was unsuited to the hurly-burly of tough competitive play, with its inevitable setbacks. His standard of play would fall substantially after a disappointing loss, and he would sometimes withdraw from an event altogether.

#### The Game

For both players this was a turning point in the tournament. Steinitz had begun poorly, but starting with this game rallied to a respectable fifth place, whereas for von Bardeleben, who had the tremendous score of  $7\frac{1}{2}/9$  up to that point, it marked the start of a collapse. Steinitz plays a rather simple opening, common nowadays only at club level for its trappiness, but rare at top level because it brings matters to a premature crisis. However, von Bardeleben avoids the main lines, and lands in a position where structurally he is doing well, but his king is stranded in the centre. After a trade of inaccuracies, Steinitz plays an excellent pawn sacrifice to bring his knight into the attack. The finish is highly dramatic. It appears that Steinitz has over-reached, as Black finds a cunning defence based on White's back rank. However, this illusion is washed away by a staggering series of rook offers. This opens up a route for the white queen to come into the attack and bring about a beautiful mating finish.

<p><b>1 e4</b></p> <p><b>2 ♖f3</b></p> <p><b>3 ♙c4</b></p>	<p><b>e5</b></p> <p><b>♟c6</b></p> <p><b>♙c5</b></p>
--	--

This move characterizes the Giuoco Piano. The name means “Quiet Game”, and seems rather inappropriate given the stormy events to come. However, when it received its name, the standard opening was the King's Gambit, and in comparison it is relatively “quiet”.

**4 c3**

Instead 4 d3, or 5 d3 on the next move, would bring about the Giuoco Pianissimo. This is actually the modern preference, with White keeping open many plans, including queenside expansion with b4, play in the centre, and kingside activity, often involving the manoeuvre ♟bd2-f1-g3. Note that 4 d3 followed by ♟c3 is a deadly dull

system that tends to be seen a lot in schools' chess.

4 ... ♖f6

This healthy developing move forces White either to slow the pace with 5 d3 or else to open the centre before he is fully ready to do so.

5 d4 exd4  
6 cxd4

White has set up an "ideal" pawn-centre, but he is unable to maintain it. Another logical attempt to achieve central dominance, 6 e5, is met by the thematic central thrust 6...d5!, assuring Black his full share of the play. Anyone who defends symmetrical king's pawn openings absolutely *must* know this idea.

6 ... ♙b4+

This is the problem. If White had had time to castle before playing d4, then his pawns would have been able to steam-roller through in the centre, scattering Black's minor pieces in all directions before them.

7 ♘c3

Instead 7 ♙d2 ♙xd2+ 8 ♘bxd2 d5! breaks up White's pawn-centre, and gives Black a completely acceptable position.

7 ... d5?!

Now, however, this move causes White rather less inconvenience. The key difference from the line in the previous note is that White retains his dark-squared bishop, and this greatly enhances his attacking prospects in the open position that now arises. Theory regards 7...♘xe4 as best, when White is struggling for equality in the notorious and thoroughly analysed complications after 8 0-0 ♙xc3 9 d5 ♙f6 10 ♖e1 ♘e7 11 ♖xe4 d6.

8 exd5 ♙xd5

9 0-0 ♙e6

It is too late for Black to grab the pawn:

1) 9...♘xc3 10 bxc3 ♙xc3? 11 ♖b3! ♙xa1 12 ♙xf7+ ♘f8 13 ♙a3+ ♘e7 14 ♙h5 g6 15 ♘g5 ♖e8 16 ♖e1 and White wins.

2) 9...♙xc3 10 bxc3 ♘xc3 11 ♖b3 gives White a huge attack without him having had to sacrifice.

10 ♙g5

Now White has the initiative in a position with level material.

10 ... ♙e7

After 10...♖d7?! 11 ♙xd5 ♙xd5 12 ♖e1+, the undesirable 12...♘f8 is forced since 12...♙e7? loses on the spot to 13 ♘e5!

11 ♙xd5 ♙xd5

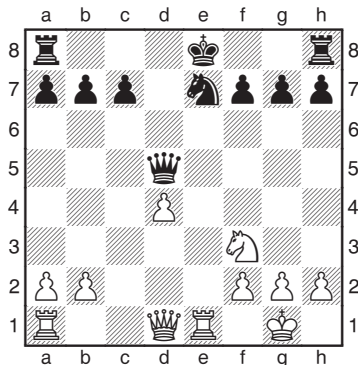
12 ♘xd5

12 ♙xe7?! ♘e7 13 ♖e1 is less effective, since after 13...0-0 14 ♖xe7 ♙xf3! 15 ♖e1 ♙c6 16 ♖e5 ♖e8 Black survives the pressure.

12 ... ♖xd5

13 ♙xe7 ♘e7

14 ♖e1



14 ... f6

15 ♖e2

This move seems very natural and strong, but White had an excellent alternative in 15 ♖a4+!:

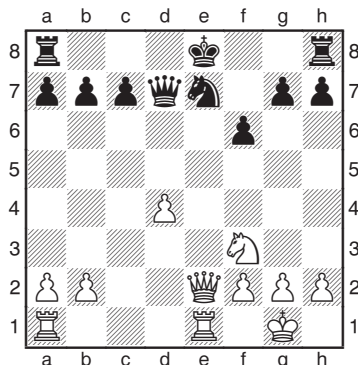
1) 15...c6? 16 ♖a3 gives Black no decent way to defend his knight, since 16...♞d7 allows 17 ♜xe7+ ♞xe7 18 ♜e1.

2) 15...♙f7 16 ♜e5+! fxe5 (declining the sacrifice by 16...♙g8 17 ♜g4 ♜g6 18 ♜e3 ♞f7 19 ♜f5 gives White a very strong position) 17 ♜xe5 ♞d6 (17...b5 18 ♖a3; 17...♞c6 18 ♞b3+ ♙f8 19 ♜ae1 ♜e8 20 ♜e6 ♞d7 21 ♜le4 and the deadly threat of ♜f4+ decides the game in White's favour) 18 ♞c4+ ♙f8 19 ♜ae1 ♜g8 (19...♜e8 20 ♜le3 g6 21 ♜e6 wins) 20 ♜d5 and then:

2a) 20...b5!? 21 ♞b3 ♞f6 22 ♞b4+ wins: 22...♙f7 23 ♞xb5 ♜e7 (23...♜h6 24 ♜d7+ ♙g6 25 ♜de7) 24 ♜xe7+ ♞xe7 25 ♜d7; or 22...♜e7 23 ♜xe7 ♞xe7 24 ♜f5+ ♙e8 25 ♞xb5+ ♞d7 26 ♜e5+ ♙d8 27 ♜d5.

2b) 20...♞c6 21 ♞b4+ ♙f7 22 ♜c5 ♞d6 23 ♞c4+ ♙f8 24 ♜xc7 ♜h6 25 ♜c8+ wins.

15 ... ♞d7



16 ♜ac1

Not the sharpest. White has a number of more forceful possibilities:

1) 16 d5 is Romanovsky's suggestion, but 16...♙f7 17 ♜ad1 (this is an improved version of the next note) 17...♜ad8 (17...♜xd5? 18 ♜g5+ fxg5 19 ♞f3+) 18 ♞e6+ ♙f8 might survive for Black.

2) 16 ♞e4!? c6 17 ♜e2 ♙f7 18 ♜ae1 keeps some pressure.

3) 16 ♜ad1! (Zaitsev) looks very strong. After 16...c6? 17 d5 White simply powers through, while 16...♙f7 17 ♞c4+ ♜d5? (bad, but otherwise how is Black to develop his pieces?) 18 ♜e5+ fxe5 19 dxe5 wins nicely.

16 ... c6?! ♞c6?!

Black underestimates the forthcoming square-vacating pawn sacrifice.

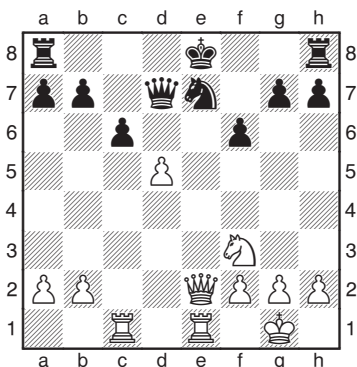
16...♙f7 has been regarded as a major improvement. White has a variety of attempts, but none that gives a serious advantage:

1) 17 ♞xe7+ ♞xe7 18 ♜xe7+ ♙xe7 19 ♜xc7+ ♙d6 20 ♜xg7 ♜hc8 followed by ...♜c7 is good for Black, whose king is very active (Réti).

2) 17 ♜e5+ fxe5 18 dxe5 is Colin Crouch's suggestion in his book reanalysing the games from the Hastings tournament of 1895. White has enough for the piece after 18...♞e6 19 ♞f3+ (19 ♜xc7?! ♜hd8) 19...♙g6 20 ♜xc7, but probably no more than that.

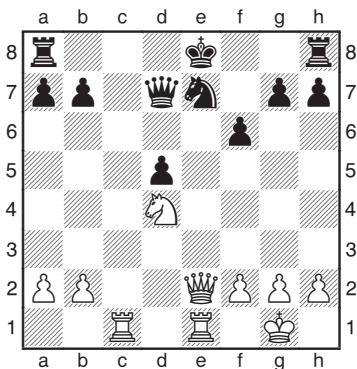
3) 17 ♜g5+ (Gufeld and Stetsko) 17...fxg5 18 ♞f3+ ♜f5 19 g4 will regain the material and provides some chance of White keeping an edge, but with his king also now exposed, it will be nothing serious, e.g. 19...c6 20 ♜e5 g6 21 gxf5, 19...♜ae8 20 ♜e5 or 19...♜hd8 20 ♜e5 ♙g8 21 ♜xf5.

17 d5!



This excellent pawn sacrifice suddenly enlivens the struggle.

17 ... cxd5  
18 ♖d4



It is well worth a pawn to get such a wonderful square for the knight.

18 ... ♙f7  
19 ♖e6

White threatens 20 ♖c7 ♖d6 21 ♖g4 g6 22 ♖f4! ♖xf4 23 ♖xf4 followed by 24 ♖xd5, winning the pinned knight on e7.

19 ... ♖hc8

Instead after 19... ♖ac8 20 ♖g4 g6 21 ♖g5+ ♙e8 22 ♖xc8+ White wins

on the spot, while 19... ♖c6 20 ♖c5 ♖c8 21 ♖h5+! is also devastating.

20 ♖g4

Now the threat is to enter on g7.

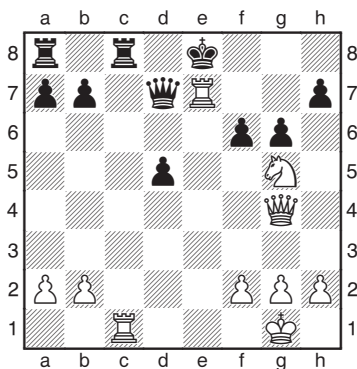
20 ... g6

21 ♖g5+

The discovered attack on the black queen forces the reply.

21 ... ♙e8

22 ♖xe7+!



Starting one of the most famous sacrificial sequences in chess history. The rook cannot be taken, but Black has a cunning defensive idea.

22 ... ♙f8

Black suffers a disaster if he touches the rook: 22... ♖xe7 23 ♖xc8+ ♖xc8 24 ♖xc8+ leaves White a piece up, while 22... ♙xe7 gives White a pleasant choice of winning lines:

1) 23 ♖b4+ ♙e8 (23... ♖d6 24 ♖xb7+ ♖d7 25 ♖e1+ ♖d6 26 ♖f7+) 24 ♖e1+ ♖d8 25 ♖e6+ safely wins the queen since White has two pieces covering e1.

2) 23 ♖e1+ ♖d6 24 ♖b4+ ♙c7 (24... ♖c5 25 ♖e6+) 25 ♖e6+ ♙b8 26 ♖f4+ wins in view of 26... ♖c7 27 ♖xc7 ♖xc7 28 ♖e8#.



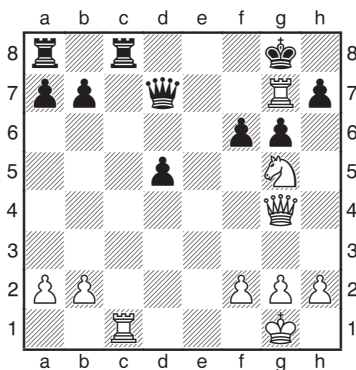
After Black's choice in the game, 22...♙f8, the black queen cannot be taken due to mate on the back rank. Meanwhile all four of White's pieces are under attack. Something dramatic is now needed.

**23 ♖f7+!**

23 ♖xc8+? ♖xc8 24 ♖f7+ ♔g8 25 ♖g7+ ♔h8 26 ♖xh7+ ♔g8 27 ♖g7+? ♔h8 is only a draw, since if White goes in for 28 ♖h4+? ♔xg7 29 ♖h7+ ♔f8 30 ♖h8+ ♔e7 31 ♖g7+ ♔d8 32 ♖f8+ ♔c7 the king escapes.

**23 ... ♔g8**

**24 ♖g7+!**



Aiming to decoy the black king so that the queen falls with check.

**24 ... ♔h8**

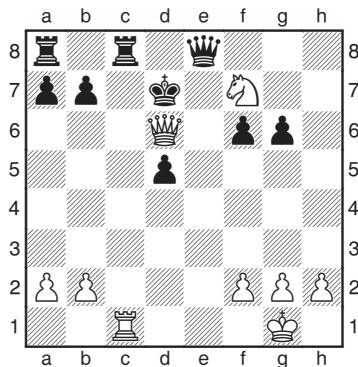
24...♙f8 is no better: 25 ♖xh7+ ♔xg7 26 ♖xd7+.

**25 ♖xh7+! 1-0**

This "1-0" needs some explanation. von Bardeleben now saw the spectacular finish that awaited him, and elected to "resign" by simply leaving the tournament hall and not coming back. Obviously, this is rather poor sportsmanship.

After this devastating loss he even wanted to withdraw from the tournament. Ironically, this game is now virtually the only thing he is remembered for – perhaps the idea of gaining immortality as a loser is what upset him so much.

The key variation is 25...♔g8 26 ♖g7+ ♔h8 27 ♖h4+ ♔xg7 28 ♖h7+ ♔f8 29 ♖h8+ ♔e7 30 ♖g7+ ♔e8 (30...♔d8 allows White to save a couple of moves by 31 ♖f8+) 31 ♖g8+ ♔e7 32 ♖f7+ ♔d8 33 ♖f8+ ♖e8 34 ♖f7+ ♔d7 35 ♖d6#.



### Lessons from this game:

1) If the opponent allows you to win a centre pawn, take it unless there is a very good reason not to.

2) It can be well worth sacrificing a pawn to gain a superb square for a piece, particularly if it is near the enemy king.

3) Try not to be too upset by a loss. Setbacks are inevitable, and it is most useful (though not necessarily very easy) to view each as a learning experience.

## Game 7

# Harry Nelson Pillsbury – Emanuel Lasker

## *St Petersburg 1895/6*

### Queen's Gambit Declined, Semi-Tarrasch Defence

#### The Players

Harry Nelson Pillsbury (1872–1906) shot to fame when he won his first major tournament. No one had ever done this before and only Capablanca later achieved a success of a similar magnitude in his international debut. Although considered merely an outside bet for the first Hastings International in 1895, Pillsbury produced some magnificent chess, scoring fifteen wins, three draws and only three losses. He came first, ahead of Steinitz, Chigorin, Tarrasch and the reigning World Champion Lasker. This result catapulted Pillsbury to the top of the chess world, and his exceptional form continued in the first half of the St Petersburg Tournament, a round-robin tournament with Lasker, Steinitz and Chigorin (six games against each). After nine rounds Pillsbury was a clear leader with 6½ points. However, Pillsbury's play mysteriously collapsed in the second half, when he could muster only 1½ points, leaving him in third place behind Lasker and Steinitz. Pillsbury also caught syphilis at St Petersburg, which plagued him through the rest of his career and led to his premature death.

Emanuel Lasker (1868–1941) is one of the most famous chess players of all time. As a youngster Lasker showed incredible talent at both chess and mathematics and he fulfilled his potential in both fields. Lasker defeated Steinitz to become World Champion in 1894, a title he was to hold for twenty-seven years, which is still a record. Despite his victory over Steinitz, the chess world remained unimpressed, chiefly as the former World Champion was 32 years older than Lasker and his health was declining. Lasker, however, was still improving. In 1896 he proved his worth without doubt by winning four successive major events, including the St Petersburg tournament. Lasker continued to have excellent results, before beating Steinitz in a return match in 1896/7. During his chess career he still found time to pursue his mathematical studies, and in 1900 he was awarded his doctorate at Erlangen University. In chess Lasker was an exceptional tactician, but more than anything he was an immensely resourceful fighter. On countless occasions he was able to turn inferior positions to his advantage and his defensive qualities were without equal.

#### The Game

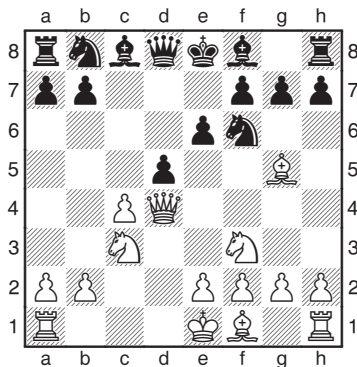
Lasker gets away with some provocative opening play to reach a very comfortable position with the black pieces. Undaunted, Pillsbury continues to plough ahead with a crude attack, but is rocked on his heels by a clever rook sacrifice from Lasker. Fighting hard, Pillsbury offloads some material to set up a defence,

but at the vital moment, he misses the best line and allows Lasker to sacrifice again. This time there is no defence.

- |       |     |
|-------|-----|
| 1 d4  | d5  |
| 2 c4  | e6  |
| 3 ♖c3 | ♗f6 |
| 4 ♗f3 | c5  |
| 5 ♕g5 |     |

A popular move at the time, but this has now been replaced by the more direct 5 cxd5, when after 5...♗xd5 6 e4 ♗xc3 7 bxc3 cxd4 8 cxd4 ♕b4+ 9 ♕d2 ♕xd2+ 10 ♖xd2 0-0 Black has to play accurately against White's impressive-looking centre (see Game 58, Polugaevsky – Tal).

- |        |       |
|--------|-------|
| 5 ...  | cx d4 |
| 6 ♖xd4 |       |



- |       |     |
|-------|-----|
| 6 ... | ♗c6 |
|-------|-----|

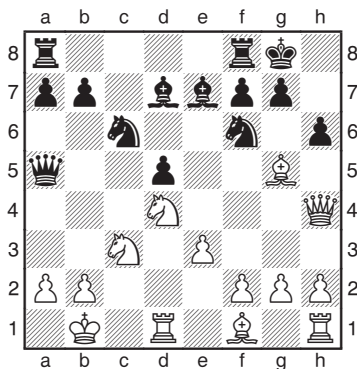
Lasker liked this move, although 6...♕e7 is probably more accurate, e.g. 7 cxd5 exd5 8 e4 ♗c6 9 ♕b5 0-0 10 ♕xc6 bxc6 with an equal position.

- |       |  |
|-------|--|
| 7 ♖h4 |  |
|-------|--|

In the later game Pillsbury – Lasker, Cambridge Springs 1904, the American improved on his opening play with the subtle 7 ♕xf6!, and after 7...gxh6 8 ♖h4 dxc4 9 ♗d1 ♕d7 10 e3

♗e5 11 ♗xe5 fxe5 12 ♖xc4 ♖b6 13 ♕e2 ♖xb2 14 0-0 ♜c8 15 ♗d3 ♜c7 16 ♗e4 Black's weaknesses were obvious. Note that 7...♗xd4 8 ♕xd8 ♗c2+ 9 ♕d2 ♗xa1 10 ♕h4 favours White, who will pick up the trapped knight in the corner.

- |         |      |
|---------|------|
| 7 ...   | ♕e7  |
| 8 0-0-0 | ♖a5  |
| 9 e3    | ♕d7  |
| 10 ♖b1  | h6   |
| 11 cxd5 | exd5 |
| 12 ♗d4  | 0-0  |



- |         |  |
|---------|--|
| 13 ♕xf6 |  |
|---------|--|

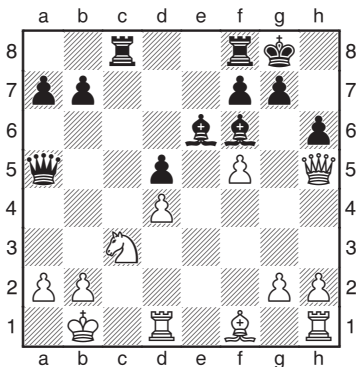
It looks tempting to go “all-in” with 13 ♕xh6. Indeed, after 13...gxh6 14 ♖xh6 ♗g4 15 ♖f4 White has some menacing threats. However, Black doesn't have to capture the bishop immediately. Instead he can keep a cool head with 13...♗e4!, when 14 ♗xc6 ♗xc3+ 15 ♕c2 ♕xh4 16 ♗xa5 ♗xd1 wins for Black, as does 14 ♖f4 ♗xc3+ 15 bxc3 gxh6 16 ♖xh6 ♗xd4 17 ♗xd4 ♕f5+.

- |        |      |
|--------|------|
| 13 ... | ♕xf6 |
|--------|------|

14 ♖h5 ♘xd4  
 15 exd4 ♙e6  
 16 f4

The attempt to profit from the pin on the fifth rank with 16 ♘e4 fails after 16... ♙xd4! 17 ♖xd4 ♖e1+ 18 ♖d1 ♖xd1+ 19 ♖xd1 dxe4 and Black has merely won a pawn. With 16 f4 White intends to launch an attack on the kingside. Meanwhile Black has his own ambitions on the other wing. Who will get in first?

16 ... ♖ac8  
 17 f5



17 ... ♖xc3!

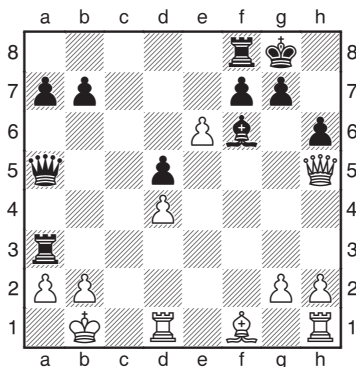
This move is the start of some real cut-and-thrust, where neither side is willing to go on the defensive. Of course 17... ♙d7 is possible, but that's another, less exciting story.

18 fxe6!

Grabbing the rook leads to a catastrophe on the queenside for White. After 18 bxc3 ♖c8! 19 fxe6 ♖xc3 White cannot defend against the many mating threats, e.g. 20 ♙e2 ♖b4+ 21 ♖a1 ♖c1+!! 22 ♖xc1 ♙xd4+ and mate next move. The desperate 20 ♖e2 ♙xd4 21 exf7+ ♖f8 22 ♖e8+ avoids mate, but

22... ♖xe8 23 fxe8 ♖+ ♖xe8 is clearly hopeless for White.

18 ... ♖a3!!



Moving the rook from one attacked square to another creates quite an impact. Lasker must have had this in mind when playing 16... ♖ac8. White will have to capture the rook, as otherwise the decisive ... ♖xa2 will follow. It's just a question of when to take the rook.

19 exf7+

A mistake in a difficult position. It would have been more sensible to keep the e-file closed.

1) However, the apparently disruptive 19 e7? actually fails to do the trick after 19... ♖e8 20 bxa3 ♖b6+ 21 ♖c2 (21 ♖a1 ♙xd4+ 22 ♖xd4 ♖xd4+ 23 ♖b1 ♖xe7 wins for Black, as White has no useful square to develop his bishop, e.g. 24 ♙b5 ♖e4+ 25 ♖a1 a6!) 21... ♖c8+! 22 ♖d2 ♙xd4 and there is no defence:

1a) 23 ♙d3 ♖b2+ 24 ♙c2 ♖xc2+ 25 ♖e1 ♖f2#.

1b) 23 ♖e2 ♖e6+ 24 ♖f3 ♖e3+ 25 ♖g4 g6! 26 ♖xd5 h5+ 27 ♖h4 ♙f6+ 28 ♖g5 ♙xg5#.

Instead of 19 exf7+ or 19 e7, White can also make the most obvious move, that is grabbing the rook:

2) 19 bxa3 ♖b6+ and now:

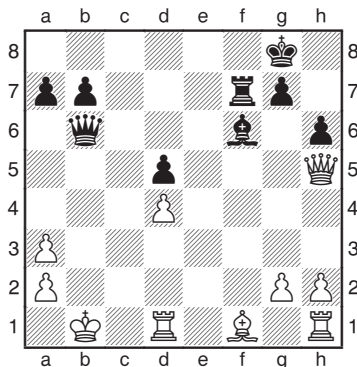
2a) 20 ♖c2?! and then:

2a1) 20...♗c6+ 21 ♖b1 (not 21 ♖b2? ♗c8!, nor 21 ♖d3? ♖g5! 22 ♖e2 ♗xe6+ 23 ♖f3 ♗e3+ 24 ♖g4 f5#) 21...♗b6+ is perpetual check.

2a2) 20...♗c8+ is a sharp winning attempt; for example 21 ♖d2 ♗xd4+ (after 21...♗xd4?! 22 ♗xf7+ ♖h8 23 ♖e2 the attack flounders) 22 ♖e1 (not 22 ♖d3? ♗c2+! 23 ♖xc2 ♗b2#) 22...♗e3+ (22...♗c3+ 23 ♖d2 fxe6 gives Black compensation, but White is certainly still in the game) 23 ♖e2 (23 ♗e2? ♖c3+ 24 ♖d2 ♖xd2+ 25 ♖d1 ♗c1#) 23...fxe6 followed by ...♖c3+ gives Black a large advantage.

2b) 20 ♖b5! is the best defensive try, giving back some of White's extra material to bring his forces into play. After 20...♗xb5+ 21 ♖a1 fxe6 22 ♗g4 Black can't focus so squarely on his attack as he could in the game.

19 ... ♗xf7  
20 bxa3 ♗b6+



21 ♖b5

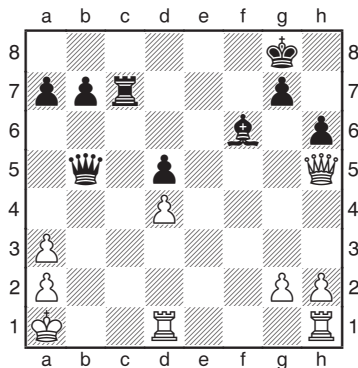
An excellent defensive resource. The white bishop can be captured with check, but at least the black queen is lured off the attack of the d-pawn. In any case king moves lead to a swift defeat:

1) 21 ♖a1 ♖xd4+ 22 ♗xd4 ♗xd4+ 23 ♖b1 ♗e4+ 24 ♖a1 (Black wins quickly after 24 ♖c1 ♗c7+ or 24 ♖b2 ♗f2+) 24...♗e1+ 25 ♖b2 ♗f2+ 26 ♖b3 ♗b1+ 27 ♖a4 (27 ♖c3 ♗b2+ 28 ♖d3 ♗d2# is mate) 27...♗f4+ 28 ♖a5 ♗b6#.

2) 21 ♖c2 ♗c7+ 22 ♖d2 ♗xd4+ 23 ♖d3 (23 ♖e2 also leads to mate after 23...♗e7+ 24 ♖f3 ♗e3+ 25 ♖g4 ♗e4+ 26 ♖f5 ♗f4+ 27 ♖g6 ♗e8#) 23...♗c2+! 24 ♖xc2 ♗b2#.

21 ... ♗xb5+  
22 ♖a1 ♗c7?

There is no rest for White. Now the threat is 23...♗c1+! 24 ♗xc1 ♖xd4+ and mate follows. Even so, it appears that 22...♗c4! would have given White no chance to erect a defensive wall. The only way to protect the vital d4-pawn would be with 23 ♗g4, but then 23...♗e7, intending to continue ...♗e4, leaves White with no defence.



**23 ♖d2 ♗c4**

Another vital moment has arisen. Black threatens both 24...♙xd4+ and 24...♗xd4, with the added idea of doubling the major pieces on the c-file. White has to decide between active and passive defence, and it is by no means an easy choice.

**24 ♖hd1**

Or:

1) 24 ♖b1 ♖c6 25 ♗d1 loses to 25...♗xd4 26 ♖xd4 ♖c3+ 27 ♖b2 ♙xd4, when White is trapped in a lethal pin.

2) 24 ♗g4 also doesn't work after 24...♖c6, e.g. 25 ♙b2 ♖b6+ 26 ♙a1 ♗xd4 27 ♖c8+ ♙f7 28 ♗d7+ ♙g6 29 ♖e8+ ♙h7 or 25 ♙b1 ♙g5 26 ♖dd1 ♖b6+ 27 ♙a1 ♙e3!.

3) However, the active 24 ♖e1! looks like a good move. Suddenly White has threats of his own, including ♖e8+ and the simplifying ♖e8+. Indeed, there seems to be no decisive continuation for Black, e.g.:

3a) 24...♙xd4+? allows a decisive counterattack after 25 ♖xd4! ♗xd4 26 ♖e8+ ♙h7 27 ♖f5+ g6 28 ♖f7#.

3b) 24...♗xd4 is no better. White wins with 25 ♖e8+ ♙h7 26 ♖f5+ g6 27 ♖xf6, threatening mate on h8.

3c) Black could also try the quiet 24...♙f8, preventing ♖e8 and ♖e8 ideas, but this is too slow to have any real chance of working. It should be remembered, after all, that Black is the exchange down. White can simply play 25 ♖f2, pinning the bishop and creating the opportunity of a counter-sacrifice of the exchange on f6. For example 25...♗xd4? 26 ♖xf6+! gxf6 27 ♖xh6+ ♙f7 28 ♖h7+ ♙f8 29 ♖e7+ ♙g8 30 ♗d8+ ♙g7 31 ♖e7+ and now it's Black's king on the run.

3d) 24...♖c6 is probably the best choice. This does allow White to exchange queens with 25 ♖e8+, but after 25...♙h7! (forcing White to exchange improves Black's pawn structure) 26 ♖xc6 bxc6 27 ♙b1 ♙xd4 28 ♖c2 ♙c3 Black still has good compensation for the exchange.

**24 ... ♖c3?**

This prepares an imaginative sacrifice on a3. Nevertheless, it was objectively better to carry out the intended doubling on the c-file. After 24...♖c6! Black threatens the deadly 25...♖c1+ and forces White to relinquish his material advantage with interest:

1) 25 ♙b2 ♖b6+ 26 ♙a1 ♗xd4 27 ♗xd4 ♙xd4+ 28 ♗xd4 ♖xd4+ 29 ♙b1 ♖g1+ and the g2-pawn drops with check.

2) 25 ♙b1 is a better try, planning to meet 25...♖b6+? with 26 ♖b2. However, Black has the very strong reply 25...♙g5!. Now, moving the d2-rook allows 26...♖c1+, so White must give up the exchange. However, after 26 ♖e2 ♙xd2 27 ♖xd2 ♗d6! Black immediately wins another pawn. Together with White's shaky king position, this promises Black a winning advantage.

**25 ♖f5**

White has a good alternative in 25 ♖e1!?, which is a particularly difficult move to see, as the rook had deliberately bypassed this option on the previous move. Nevertheless, the fact that the black rook is no longer attacking d4 makes ♖e1 an even stronger option now than on move 24. Let's examine the variations:

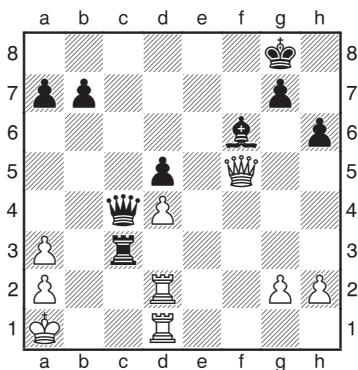
1) 25...♖c4? 26 ♙b2! ♖xa3 (or 26...♙xd4 27 ♖e8+ ♙h7 28 ♖f5+ g6 29 ♖f7+ ♙g7 30 ♖g8#) 27 ♖e8+

♔h7 28 ♖f5+ g6 29 ♜e7+!! ♕xe7 30 ♖f7+ ♔h8 31 ♜e8+ ♕g7 32 ♖xe7+ ♕g8 33 ♖xa3 and White wins.

2) 25...♜xa3? 26 ♜e8+ ♔h7 27 ♖f5+ g6 28 ♖e6! h5 29 ♜e7+! ♕xe7 30 ♖xe7+ ♔h6 31 ♖xa3 and again White prevails.

3) As on the previous move, 25...♜c6 is best. After 26 ♜e8+ ♔h7 27 ♖xc6 bxc6 28 ♔b1 ♜xa3 29 ♜e6 ♜c3 30 ♜c2 ♜d3 31 ♜cxc6 ♜d2 32 ♜c2 ♜d1+ 33 ♔b2 ♕xd4+ 34 ♔b3 White has an edge, although a draw is the most likely outcome.

25 ... ♜c4



26 ♔b2?

White makes a fatal error. He seems to have everything covered, but Black's next move, the third offer of a rook in the game, shatters this illusion.

26 ♔b1! renders Black's play insufficient – one square makes all the difference! After 26...♜xa3 27 ♜c1, 26...♜c6 27 ♜e1 or 26...♜b5+ 27 ♜b2 ♜c6 28 ♜b3, White consolidates.

26 ... ♜xa3!!

27 ♜e6+ ♔h7

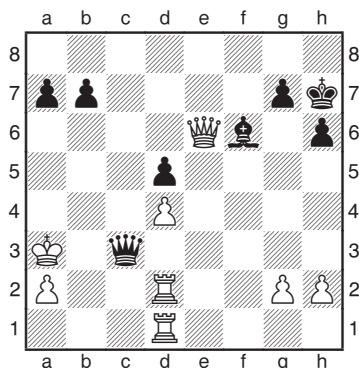
27...♔h8 28 ♜e8+ ♔h7 29 ♔xa3 ♜c3+ 30 ♔a4 a6! also wins.

28 ♔xa3

Declining the sacrifice doesn't help, for example 28 ♔b1 ♕xd4 29 ♜xd4 ♖xa2+ 30 ♔c1 ♜c3#, or 28 ♔a1 ♕xd4+ 29 ♔b1 ♜b4+ 30 ♔c1 ♜c3+ 31 ♜c2 ♜xc2+ 32 ♜xc2 ♜c3+ 33 ♔b1 ♜b2#.

28 ...

♜c3+



0-1

After 29 ♔a4 b5+! 30 ♔xb5 ♜c4+ 31 ♔a5 ♕d8+ 32 ♖b6 Black has the pleasant choice between 32...axb6# and 32...♕xb6#.

### Lessons from this game:

1) Study your own games! Despite being on the wrong end of a brilliancy here, Pillsbury didn't just erase the game from his memory. He looked long and hard for an improvement and was ready to unleash 7 ♕xf6! next time around.

2) Often attack is the best form of defence. Instead of passive resistance, the more active 24 ♜e1 or 25 ♜e1 would have saved White.

3) Sacrificing two rooks, followed by driving the king up the board to checkmate, is a pleasing way to win!

## Game 8

# Wilhelm Steinitz – Emanuel Lasker

### *St Petersburg 1895/6*

### Queen's Gambit Declined

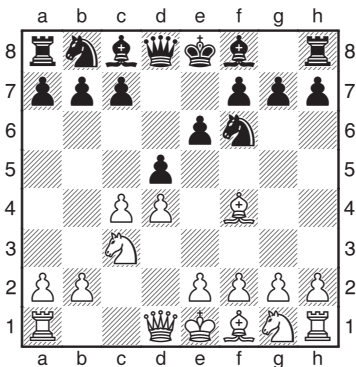
#### The Players

We have already met both Steinitz and Lasker in earlier games (see Game 5 for more information on Steinitz and Game 7 for more about Lasker). By the time of this particular meeting between the two giants of the chess world, Steinitz had already lost the title of World Champion to Lasker, who was now proving his worth by a convincing demonstration at this tournament, which he won by a big margin ahead of Steinitz, Pillsbury and Chigorin. In his six games against Steinitz in the St Petersburg event, Lasker scored three wins, two draws and one loss, which is shown here.

#### The Game

Steinitz introduces a new concept in a well-worn opening, which presents Lasker with some early difficulties. Lasker reacts badly to the new circumstances and leaves the opening with clear disadvantage. Steinitz then plays the rest of the game in an accurate and imaginative fashion, never once letting Lasker use his renowned fighting abilities. Faced with problem after problem, the new World Champion finally breaks and Steinitz's relentless attack reaps the reward his ingenious play deserves.

- |       |     |
|-------|-----|
| 1 d4  | d5  |
| 2 c4  | e6  |
| 3 ♘c3 | ♘f6 |
| 4 ♙f4 |     |



4 ... ♙e7

These days 4 ♙f4 is very uncommon, since it has been shown that the active 4...c5 offers Black a problem-free position. If White is intent on playing ♙f4 lines, he tends first to play 4 ♘f3 and only after 4...♙e7 does he commit the bishop to f4. In fact, in another encounter between these two later on in the same event, Lasker showed that he had learned from this encounter. The third Steinitz – Lasker game went 4...c5 5 e3 ♘c6 6 ♘f3 a6 7 dxc5 ♙xc5 8 cxd5 ♘xd5 9 ♘xd5 exd5 10 ♙d3 ♙b4+ 11 ♙e2 with equality.

5 e3                      0-0  
6 c5!?

This move, which introduces an extremely adventurous scheme by



White, was quite a surprise at the time. A bind is established on the queenside and Black has to play actively or else run the risk of being squashed and suffocated to death.

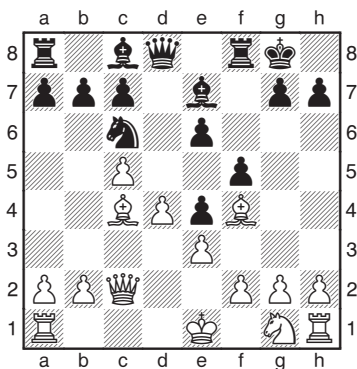
6 ... ♘e4?

Predictably, Lasker seeks activity, but this proves to be the wrong way to find counterplay. In particular Black's central pawn-structure becomes compromised, and the e4-pawn becomes a liability. What are Black's other options in this position? *Handbuch* gives 6...b6 7 b4 a5 8 a3 as better for White, but more recent games have shown this to be the way forward. One very important theoretical battle was Lerner – Geller, USSR Championship, Riga 1985, which continued 8...axb4 9 axb4 ♖xa1 10 ♖xa1 ♘c6 11 ♖a4 bxc5!! 12 ♖xc6 cxd4 with a dangerous initiative for the sacrificed piece.

7 ♖xe4 dxe4

8 ♖c2 f5

9 ♙c4 ♘c6



10 a3

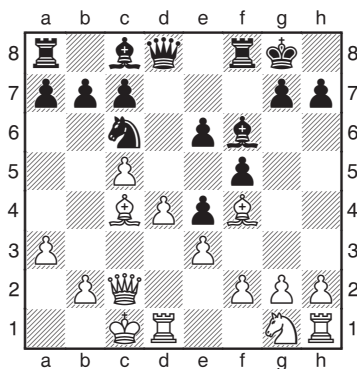
This quiet move is a useful prophylactic device, preventing ...♘c6-b4-d5 ideas from Black, and also making a

retreat-square on a2 available for the light-squared bishop, which is destined to do good work on the enticing a2–g8 diagonal.

10 ... ♙f6

Black can actually trap the f4-bishop here with 10...g5 11 ♙g3 f4, but following 12 ♖xe4 fxg3 13 hxg3 ♖f7 14 d5! White has more than enough compensation for the piece.

11 0-0-0



An excellent decision. Black's counterplay revolves around the advance ...e5. Putting the rook on d1 further dissuades Black from this lunge. With 11 0-0-0 Steinitz changes direction, preparing the move f3, which will pose Black some problems in the centre. White can also hope to initiate a king-side attack.

11 ... ♙h8

This move breaks the pin of the e6-pawn, making it easier for Black to realize his goal of ...e5. In fact, Black already has to be careful in this position. 11...b6? runs into 12 d5!, which leads to a complete disaster. 11...♘e7, intending ...♘d5, has been suggested as an alternative defence. Then White

can still keep the initiative in the centre and on the kingside with 12 g4!, e.g. 12...g5 13 ♖g3 ♕h8 14 h4! and the attack is gathering momentum by the move.

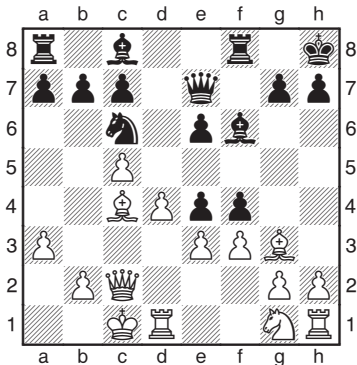
**12 f3 ♖e7!**

Not surprisingly Lasker begins to fight hard in what can only be described as a miserable position. The obliging 12...exf3 13 ♖xf3 leaves Black with absolutely no prospects, while White could slowly prepare to open lines on the kingside with the eventual g2-g4.

**13 ♖g3!**

Very clever play from White. What could be more natural than grabbing a pawn with 13 fxg4? Well, this was exactly what the World Champion was hoping for. Following 13...e5! 14 dxe5 ♖xe5 Black suddenly takes over the initiative. Note that 15 exf5? ♖xf5! makes matters worse for White, as after 16 ♖xf5 ♖xc4 Black's swift counter-attack has reached menacing proportions.

**13 ... f4!?**



Once more a typical move from Lasker, who won many games from

suspicious positions just by complicating matters. Unfortunately on this particular day he met Steinitz in an irrepressible mood.

**14 ♖xe4!!**

This brilliant piece sacrifice kills Black's attempt at snatching the initiative. Lasker was once more hoping that White would grab the offered pawn. After 14 ♖xf4 e5 15 dxe5 ♖xe5 both 16 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 17 f4 ♖f6 18 ♖d5 ♖f5 19 ♖xb7? ♖ab8 and 16 ♖xe4 ♖f5! 17 ♖xf5 ♖xc4 leave Black firmly on the offensive. After 14 ♖xe4 White gains only two pawns for the piece. On the other hand, Black is reduced to a grim defensive job, which would not have suited Lasker at all.

**14 ... fxd3**

**15 hxg3 g6**

By relinquishing a third pawn Lasker hopes to use the semi-open g-file for defence. If instead 15...g5 White tightens his grip over the e5-square with 16 f4!, after which it is extremely difficult to see what Black can do to prevent White's steamroller of an attack. 16...gxf4 17 gxf4 ♖d7 18 ♖f3 looks totally grim, so Black should try to block the game up with 16...g4. Nevertheless, following 17 ♖e2 the analysis is overwhelmingly in White's favour, e.g.:

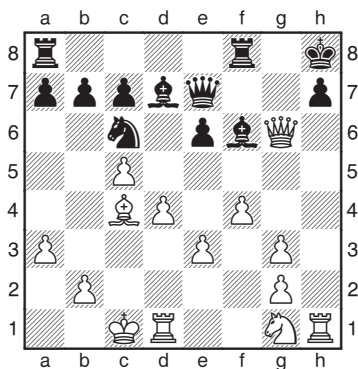
1) 17...♖f7 18 ♖c2 b6 19 e4 ♖g7 20 e5 h6 21 ♖g6 ♖e8 (or 21...bxc5 22 d5 ♖d8 23 dxe6 ♖xe6 24 f5 ♖g5+ 25 ♖xg5 ♖xg5 26 f6 ♖f8 27 ♖f4 ♖g8 28 e6!) 22 ♖d3 is a variation given by none other than Garry Kasparov, who annotated the game for *ChessBase Magazine*. Following 22...♖g8 White wins neatly with 23 ♖xh6+ ♖xh6 24 ♖xh6+ ♖h7 25 ♖xh7 ♖xh7 26 ♖f8+ ♖g8 27 ♖h1#.

2) 17...♔d7 18 ♖h6! ♕f7 19 ♖dh1 ♖g8 20 ♗d3 and the threat of e5 is decisive, e.g. 20...♗a5 21 ♔a2 ♖gg7 22 e4 ♗e8 23 b4! ♔b5 24 ♗c2 ♔a4 25 ♗b2 ♔c6 26 e5 ♔d8 27 b5 ♔b8 28 ♔c3, winning the bishop on a4.

16 ♗xg6 ♔d7

Black can snatch one of the three pawns back with 16...♖g8 17 ♗e4 ♖xg3, but this only allows White to bring the knight into the attack with tempo after 18 ♔e2 ♖g7 19 ♔f4. It is clear that Black cannot afford such greed.

17 f4



17 ... ♕f7?

Lasker finally cracks under the strain of having to defend a miserable position for a long time. 17...♖g8! offers more hope, although it has to be said that White retains a significant initiative after 18 ♗e4, e.g. 18...♖xg3 19 ♔e2 ♖g7 20 ♖h6 followed by ♖dh1. It is also worth mentioning that after 17...♖g8 White can play 18 ♖xh7+, which leads to a draw by perpetual check following 18...♗xh7 19 ♗xf6+ ♗g7 20 ♗h4+. Black can avoid the draw with 19...♖g7, although this

is risky in view of White's attack after 20 ♔f3.

After 17...♖f7? the game is over as a contest. Black's defences become uncoordinated and White's attack is allowed to power through.

18 g4 ♖g7

After 18...♖g8 White simply replies 19 ♗h5!, followed by g5.

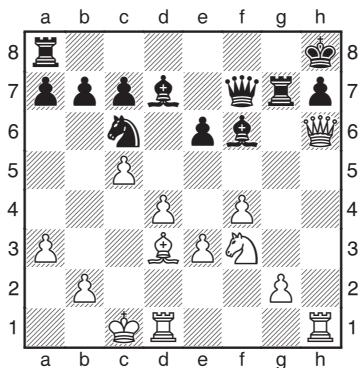
After the text-move, 19 ♗h5 allows Black to defend with ...♔e8-g6, but White has an alternative square.

19 ♗h6! ♖xg4

20 ♔d3 ♖g7

Or 20...♖h4 21 ♖xh4 ♔xh4 22 ♔f3 ♔f2 23 ♔h1 ♔xe3+ 24 ♔b1 and h7 collapses.

21 ♔f3 ♗f7



22 g4!

The rest of the game must have been very pleasurable for Steinitz. White's attack virtually plays itself. A collapse on h7 is simply unavoidable.

22 ... ♖ag8

23 g5 ♔d8

24 ♖h2! ♖g6

25 ♗h5! ♖6g7

26 ♖dh1! ♗xh5

27 ♖xh5 ♖f8

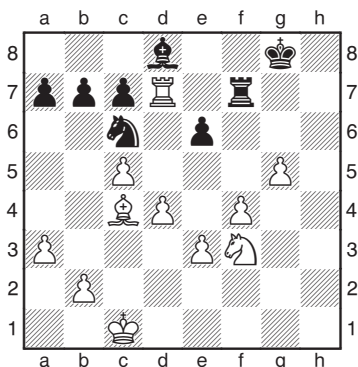
28 ♖xh7+ ♖xh7

The loss of the d7-bishop cannot be avoided by 28...♖g8, as White replies 29 ♖xg7+ ♖xg7 30 ♖h7+ and 31 ♖xd7. Black could already resign.

29 ♖xh7+ ♖g8

30 ♖xd7 ♖f7

31 ♖c4!



1-0

After 31...♖xd7 32 ♖xe6+ ♖f7 33 g6 White will be four pawns up.

### Lessons from this game:

1) Always be careful to study carefully the consequences before allowing your pawn-structure to change. Lasker hoped that he would gain enough activity to counterbalance his compromised structure after 6...♖e4, but was proved wrong by Steinitz's imaginative play.

2) If your opponent shocks you in the opening (as in this case with 6 c5), don't panic into moving quickly. Take a deep breath and try to weigh up the novel idea in objective fashion. In most cases you'll find that the new move is not any better than its predecessors and that its main strength is indeed its surprise value.

3) It is often worth giving up material to kill off any chances of counterplay. This is shown with great effect by Steinitz's 13 ♖g3! and 14 ♖xe4!. With absolutely no attacking chances to relieve the purely defensive task at hand, even great fighters such as Lasker are going to make mistakes.

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