

**THE**

# **MIDDLEGAME**

**M. EUWE & H. KRAMER**



**BOOK ONE: STATIC FEATURES**

— *Algebraic Edition* —

Edited by Lou Hays

# **THE MIDDLEGAME**

by

**Dr. M. Euwe & H. Kramer**

**ALGEBRAIC EDITION**

Translated from the Dutch by W. H. Cozens

Editor: Lou Hays

***BOOK ONE – STATIC FEATURES***

**Hays Publishing**

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## FOREWORD

Once my opening and endgame series were completed it was natural that I should consider a book on the middlegame. It was obvious that this would involve entirely different problems, for ready knowledge and established facts play a far more important role in the openings and endings than in the middlegame. The theory of the middlegame is a very difficult thing to tackle, and this explains why it has been so long in preparation. Ten years ago, however, I was already exchanging ideas about a middlegame book with my former collaborator Hans Kmoch. In fact, this book really has not two authors, but three. Kmoch and I prepared a scheme at that time for the treatment of this missing phase, the middlegame, which has received such inadequate treatment in chess literature.

In the years just after the war we found no opportunity of working out this scheme and, when Mr. Kmoch said farewell to the Netherlands for good, I lost a valuable helper, to whom is due much of the merit of the opening and endgame books.

I count myself lucky to have found one of the leading players of the Netherlands, Mr. H. Kramer, willing to collaborate with me in writing this middlegame book on the basis of the previously drafted plan.

I warmly welcome the publication of an English edition of *Het Middenspel*, as I have many friends among British chess players. I have played in more than twenty tournaments in England and, indeed, my real chess career began at Hastings.

Dr. M. Euwe

January, 1964

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

There are various ways of setting about the classification of the middlegame. The most obvious is a system based on peculiarities of the position, such as the pieces left on the board, characteristic pawn formations, etc. One takes the actual state of affairs on the board as foundation; but since the state is changing with every move it is necessary that the peculiarities on which the classification rests should be chosen for some more or less lasting properties. Such peculiarities are known in chess terminology as positional features, and these features will form our first line of approach in classifying the middlegame.

Besides this system, which depends on the state of the board as seen at a glance, and which one might call the *static* system, there is a second system based on what *happens* on the board, and this can be called the *dynamic* system. For instance, whenever we group all positions together from which an attack on the King could be carried out we are working from the dynamic standpoint.

It is clear that these two classifications cut across one another. A Kingside attack can arise from various kinds of pawn formations, and conversely a certain aggressive pawn position may lead to something other than a Kingside attack.

Both the static and dynamic systems, based respectively on the position and the events, are concerned with *objective* considerations. In dealing with the middlegame, however, one cannot entirely exclude the *subjective* side. It is the exception rather than the rule for only one good move to be possible in any given position, and whenever one has to choose between several good moves, subjective factors are involved. So together with the static and dynamic we have here a third starting point.

In setting out to classify the middlegame, one can and must take these various starting points into account. But in systematizing and theorizing we must never lose sight of one thing: that the aim of a book on the middlegame must be to provide both beginners and advanced players with something which will be of real use in practical play. We may make wonderful classifications based on pawn formations and such things, but all our work is useless

unless we are taking into account the features which occur frequently in practice.

In other words, treating the subject from a variety of standpoints can be very interesting, but ultimately it must be *practice* which dictates the classification. Out of a multitude of positional features and maneuvers we must choose only those which are significant in actual play. The construction of a good classification must therefore be primarily a matter of *experience* – experience of chess literature and of the frequency with which various forms and phenomena occur.

At the same time, it follows that middlegame theory is subject to change, though not to the same extent as opening theory. In this respect the middlegame holds a midway position between the opening and the endgame.

In line with the above discussion, and remembering first and foremost that we are concerned with actual play, we have arrived at the following plan for this course:

**Book I.** *Static Features*, consisting of – Relative Worth of the Pieces; Center Formations; Various Formations; The Struggle for Open Lines; Weak Pawns.

**Book II.** *Dynamic and Subjective Features*, consisting of – The Initiative; Attacking the King; Defense; Maneuvering; Liquidation; Familiar Failings; Personal Style.



## PART ONE

## RELATIVE WORTH OF THE PIECES

## INTRODUCTION

To determine the values of the various pieces, using the pawn as our unit, we give the following approximation as a working rule:

Pawn	1
Knight	3 1/2
Bishop	3 1/2
Rook	5 1/2
Queen	10

These figures are valuable to the beginner, but the more advanced player soon realizes that the worth of a piece cannot be expressed absolutely in numbers, since its value may vary, even from one move to the next.

We can get a clearer idea of the value of the pieces by considering how many squares each can attack simultaneously from its best and worst positions. On the empty board we arrive at the following table:

	<i>Fewest Squares</i>	<i>Most Squares</i>
Pawn	1	2
Knight	2	8
Bishop	7	13
Rook	14	14
Queen	21	27
King	3	8

What especially catches the eye in this table is the great difference between Bishop and Knight, which are known to be about equal in value. But here a practical point arises which does not appear in the figures. While the Bishop is tied to squares of one

color the Knight commands light or dark squares at will; when it stands on dark it attacks light squares, but on its next move it will be on light, and putting dark squares under fire. A Bishop attacked by a Knight is therefore unable to attack the Knight in reply.

In the middlegame the pieces seldom exert their full powers, since they are obstructed by other pieces, both hostile and friendly. The aim must always be to give every piece its greatest possible radius of action; and this is really the hub on which turns all positional and combinational play.

A century ago most players, in the romantic tradition, gave preference to the Knight over the Bishop. Today the opposite is more often the case, at least in certain types of common positions. How far this is due to subjective factors is difficult to decide. It is certain that in general two Bishops are stronger than two Knights or than Knight and Bishop, although there are some cases in which the Knights will dominate.

Compensation for the Exchange in terms of positional advantage is a theme which has attracted a lot of attention lately, especially on account of a number of games played in Russia. It seems that it is easier to obtain full compensation than had formerly been supposed.

## CHAPTER 1

## THE BISHOP

The difference between Bishop and Knight was mentioned in passing in the Introduction. Formerly the Knight was usually given the preference, but nowadays it is the Bishop. However, it is still not possible to assert that a Bishop is in general stronger than a Knight, or visa versa. One cannot even say that a White Bishop is as strong as a Black one, however paradoxical that may seem! There are Bishops and Bishops.

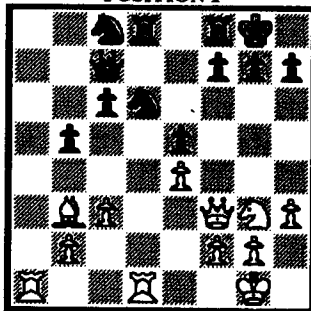
A Bishop which sweeps an important diagonal is more useful than a colleague who lurks in a pocket, looking at his own pawns. We therefore divide this chapter into:

- A. The Active Bishop.
- B. The Bad Bishop.

## A. THE ACTIVE BISHOP

An active Bishop is essentially a tactical, and therefore temporary, feature of a position, since there will not generally be permanently fixed pawns on the board. (This characteristic is not to be confused with the strategic property of the so-called "good" Bishop, which depends on the presence of pawns fixed on squares of opposite color from those on which it moves). The active Bishop occurs frequently in practice, and its owner can for a number of moves dictate the course of the game. He should usually utilize this time to get an attack going.

POSITION 1



*(The active Bishop puts White in a position to start a Kingside attack; from the game Alekhine-Junge, Warsaw 1942).*

The Bishop is very strongly placed on the diagonal a2-g8, from which it cannot easily be dislodged. Black's advance ...c5-c4 would always allow the Bishop to take up a still stronger post at d5. Yet White must hurry, for his opponent threatens to intercept the Bishop's line of action by ...Nb6-c4.

## 1.Nf5! Nb6

After 1...Nxf5 2.exf5! White would be threatening to split open Black's Kingside by f6, a threat which Black could not parry, as the Bishop pins his f-pawn.

## 2.Qe3

Threatening not only 3.Qg5 Nxf5 4.exf5 Nd7 5.Rxd7 Rxd7 6.f6 g6 7.Qh6 with mate to follow, but also simply 3.Nxd6 Rxd6 4.Rxd6 Qxd6 5.Qxb6.

## 2...Nxf5

Dealing with the less dangerous foe.

A better chance would have been to play a Knight to c4, after which the Bishop would have been shut out of the attack, at least for the time being.

### 3.exf5 c5

To shut out the Bishop by ...c4. If 3...Nd5 4.Qf3 Nf6, then 5.g4! is very strong, and the White attack continues unchecked.

### 4.f6! gxf6

Forced, because of the threat 5.Qg5.

### 5.Qh6 f5

Otherwise the Bishop decides the issue from c2.

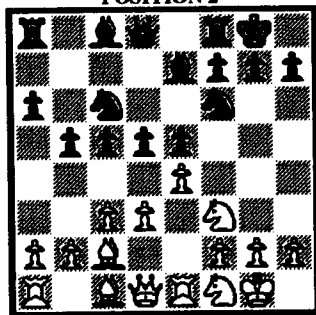
### 6.Bxf7+!! Qxf7

Not 6...Kxf7 7.Qxh7+ and not 6...Rxf7 because of 7.Qg5+ and 8.Rxd8+.

### 7.Rxd8 Na4 8.b3!

Now if 8...Nxc3 9.Raa8, if 8...Rxd8 9.Qg5+, and if 8...Qxb3 9.Rxf8#. **Black Resigned.**

POSITION 2



(An active Bishop obtained at the cost of a backward pawn; from the game Pilnik-Kramer, Amsterdam 1950).

With his last move (...d5) Black has taken the initiative in the center, and now threatens either to gain space and freedom by ...d4 or else to release the tension by ...dx4. Note here that after this latter possibility there still exists an essential difference between this

position and position 1. The White Bishop cannot play an active role, since an immediate Bb3 could be answered by ...c4. True, after the exchange on e4 Black will have a weak point at d5, which White may eventually exploit by Ne3-d5, but under the circumstances this is less important; this is a subject to be discussed later on.

In the present case White continued surprisingly with:

### 1.exd5 Qxd5 2.Qe2 Bb7 3.Bg5!

An immediate 3.Nxe5 Nxe5 4.Qxe5 will not do, because of mate at g2; and playing the Bishop to an active post at b3 with the intention of winning the e-pawn is premature: 3.Bb3 Qd7 4.Nxe5 Nxe5 5.Qxe5 Bd6 and Black has a strong attack for the pawn.

### 3...Rfe8 4.Bh4!

Not only threatening 5.Bg3 with increased pressure on e5, but also making room for the Knight, so that Black must already reckon with 5.Bb3 and 6.Ng5.

### 4...Rad8

Apparently Black still stands very well. His pressure on the d-pawn seems to condemn the Bishop to passivity, for 5.Rad1 is bad because of 5...Qxa2, while 5.Red1 would relieve Black of his chief worry – the need to protect the e-pawn.

### 5.Bb3!!

This deep move demonstrates otherwise.

### 5...Qxd3 6.Qxd3 Rxd3 7.Nxe5 Nxe5 8.Rxe5 c4?

The Black pieces are awkwardly tied up, while the White ones have developed great activity. With the text move Black hopes to persuade the dangerous Bishop to be more modest, but does not succeed. The point of White's 5th move is revealed in the following variation: 8...Bd6? 9.Rxe8+



Nxe8 10.Bc2 Rd5 11.Be4 Rh5 12.Bxb7 Rxh4 13.Bxa6 with an easily won ending. Black's best defense, however, would have been 8...Rdd8! 9.Rae1 Kf8.

### 9.Bc2 Rdd8 10.Rae1 Kf8

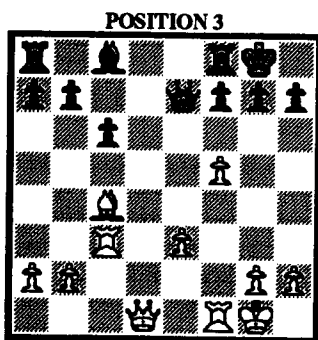
Now that the d-pawn has disappeared, the Bishop is even more active on c2 than it was on b3. Instead of the text move, which leads ultimately to the loss of a pawn, Black should have chosen 10...Bd6. Then after 11.Bxf6! Bxe5 12.Bxd8 (not 12.Rxe5 gxf6 nor 12.Bxe5 f6) Bxh2+ 13.Kxh2 Rxe1 14.Ng3 White's two minor pieces against Rook and pawn would give him winning chances, but still no clear win. This theme comes under the lens in Chapter 5, section B.

### 11.Bxh7!

An unpleasant surprise for Black. Obviously he cannot play 11...Nxb7 (12.Bxe7+) but he had reckoned on answering with 11...g6 12.Bg5 Ng8 hoping for 13.Bxg8 Bxg5 14.Rxe8+ Rxe8 15.Rxe8+ Kxe8. However, White can do much better after 11...g6 12.Bg5 Ng8 with 13.Bc1!, after which there is no avoiding 14.Bxg8 with a solid extra pawn.

### 11...Bd6 12.Rxe8+ Rxe8 13.Rxe8+ Nxe8 14.Bc2

And White's material advantage won the game.



*(A well-known position from the orthodox Queen's Gambit Declined. White's chances elucidated on the basis of the game Euwe-Thomas, Hastings 1934-5).*

This position, which has occurred hundreds of times in practice, provides an excellent example of an active Bishop. The problems facing both players are clear-cut. White must play for a direct attack, to make the most from his temporary advantage. Black still has to solve the problem of how to put his Bishop to work.

### 1...b5

Black sets about it by force.

### 2.Bb3 b4

Intending after any move of the QR to play simply 3...Ba6, which would indeed solve his problems.

### 3.f6

An unpleasant intermediate move which breaks open the King's position. The immediate 3.Rxc6 Qxe3+ 4.Kh1 Bb7 offers less for White.

### 3...gxf6 4.Rxc6 Qxe3+ 5.Kh1 Bb7

The most consequent continuation, by which the Black Bishop also assumes an active role. But the weakening of the King's position now begins to bear fruit. An important point is that the move 5...Be6, to put an end to the White Bishop's pressure, would cost a pawn: 6.Bxe6 fxe6 7.Qg4+ Qg5 (7...Kh8 8.Rc7!) 8.Qxe6+ Kh8 9.Rxf6 (9...Rg8 10.Rf2!, or 9...Rfe8 10.Qf7!). Or if Black tries 5...f5 White gets a winning attack by 6.Rf3 or 6.Qh5!.

### 6.Rcxf6 Qe4 7.Qd2 Kh8

Not 7...Rad8? 8.Qg5+ Kh8 because of 9.Rxf7!, winning outright.

### 8.Bxf7 Rac8

Threatening 9...Rc2, but 8...Rad8 would have given better drawing chances: 9.Qg5 Rg8! 10.Bxg8 Rxg8

11.Rf8 Qxg2+! with a draw. Or 9.Qf2! Qe7 10.Bb3 Rxf6 11.Qxf6+ Qxf6 12.Rxf6 Bd5!, etc.

### 9.R6f2!

And certainly not 9.Bb3? Rxf6 10.Rxf6 Qxg2+ with mate to follow.

### 9...Rcd8

Losing quickly. 9...Qg4 followed by 10...Qg7 was indicated.

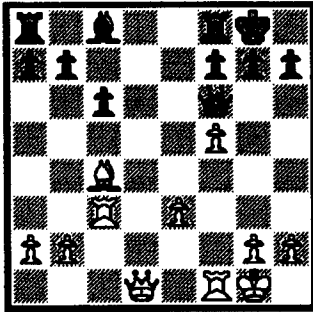
### 10.Qg5 Rd6

The other defense against mate, viz. 10...Qd4, also leads to immediate loss by 11.Bd5!! Qg7 12.Rxf8+ Rxf8 13.Rxf8+ Qxf8 14.Qe5+ Qg7 15.Qe8+. Or 11...Rxf2 12.Qxd8+ Kg7 13.Qg5+ Kf8 14.Qg8+ Ke7 15.Re1+, winning a piece.

### 11.Bd5!

The activity of the Bishop has reached its high point. **Black Resigned.**

POSITION 4



(How the active White Bishop in the orthodox Queen's Gambit Declined can be rendered harmless by Black; from the game Stahlberg-Trifunovic, Amsterdam 1951).

The position is nearly identical to the previous example, but the one small difference is very important. Black has retreated his Queen to f6 instead of e7. Thus the possibility of his Kingside being broken up by f6 does not arise for the time being, and

he can attend peacefully to the problem of his Bishop.

### 1...a5!

Preparing for ...b5. The text move has two advantages: in the first place, if White replies to ...b5 with Bb3 Black can drive him from the a2-g8 diagonal by ...a4; and in the second place after ...b5, Bd3 ...b4 Black can continue ...Ba6 without losing time, since the Bishop will always have the protection of the Rook.

### 2.a4

If 2.a3 Black can continue 2...b5 3.Ba2 b4 4.Rc5 Ba6 and 5...Bb5, definitely solving the problem of the Bishop.

### 2...Rb8 3.Qc2 Bd7

Not 3...b5? at once, because of 4.axb5 cxb5 5.Bxb5 Rxb5 6.Rxc8.

### 4.Rd3 Rbd8 5.Qd2

Seemingly very strong, attacking the Bishop and the a-pawn simultaneously. If now 5...Bc8, then 6.Qxa5! Rxd3 7.Bxd3 Qxb2 8.f6! and suddenly White has a strong attack.

### 5...b5! 6.axb5

6.Rd6? would be a bad blunder because of the reply 6...Bc8!. The attempt to win a pawn by 6.Bxb5 leads to nothing after 6...cxb5 7.Rxd7 Rxd7 8.Qxd7 Qxb2 9.Qxb5 Qxb5 10.axb5 Rb8, and White's chances are meager.

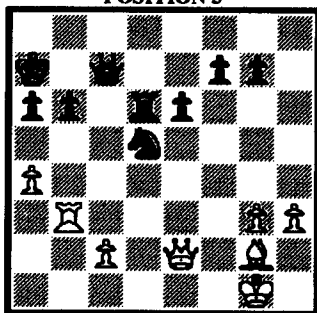
### 6...cxb5 7.Bd5 Bc6 8.e4

If 8s.Bxc6 Rxd3 9.Qxd3 Qxc6 White could easily run into trouble, for Black's pawn majority on the Queenside is more dangerous than White's on the other flank.

### 8...Bxd5

and after 9.exd5 Qb6+ 10.Qf2 Qxf2+ 11.Kxf2 the game was drawn.

POSITION 5



(An example in which an active Bishop proves too strong for a Knight; from the game Poletayev-Flohr, Moscow 1951).

Both King positions are seriously weakened, and but for the presence of minor pieces on the board Black would have the better chances, due to his extra pawn. Yet in the present circumstances the White Bishop is so much stronger than the Black Knight that White has a won game. The Bishop not only shields the weakness of White's King position, but also lends decisive strength to the attack which follows.

### 1.c4

First of all, the hostile Knight must be dislodged from his strong position.

1...Ne7 2.Qf3 Qc6 3.Qxf7 Qc5+ 4.Kh2 Rd1

Black has suddenly produced the counterthreat of 5...Qg1# – a threat not easily parried, for if 5.g4 then 5...Qd6+ 6.Rg3 Rd3 gives Black excellent counterchances, while 5.h4 is met by 5...g5!

### 5.Re3!

This Rook shuts off the diagonal attack of the Queen, and cannot be taken because of 6.Qxe7+ and mate on b7.

### 5...b5

Since defense is useless (5...Rd7 6.Qxe6, or even 6.Qf3), Black makes one last desperate attempt.

### 6.Qxe6 Nc8 7.a5!

Preventing the escape of the Black King *via* b6.

### 7...Qc7

8.Qf7+ was threatened.

### 8.Qe4 Qb8 9.Qg4

With the double threat of 10.Qxg7+ and 10.Qxd1. **Black Resigned.**

## B. THE BAD BISHOP

When there are various fixed pawns on the board, it is important to have a Bishop which can attack the enemy pawns. This is known as the *good* Bishop. The advantage of having such a Bishop is not only that it can threaten the opponent's pawns, but also that it can move around more easily, its own pawns not being in its way. In contrast with all this there is the *bad* Bishop.

In view of the above, one might assume that the bad Bishop is a serious disadvantage, which can easily lead to the loss of the game. However, this reasoning is only partly valid. If the bad Bishop is outside its own pawn chain it can often have an important part to play. Indeed, if a bad Bishop has at its disposal a strongpoint inaccessible to hostile pawn attack, it can even happen that the bad Bishop is stronger than the good Bishop.

In the central blockaded-oblique formation with White's d-pawn forward (i.e. White pawns on d5 and e4, Black pawns on e5 and d6) both King Bishops are bad, but White's is the worse, since he will have to fix more pawns on light squares. He will usually play c4 so as to have the Queenside advance c5 available, and will often play f3 as well, to protect the e-pawn, e.g. in answer to the counterthrust ...f5. Moreover, there is practically no good way of

getting the KB outside of this pawn chain. Cases of it being maneuvered via h3 or g4 to a strongpoint at e6, or via b5 to c6, seldom occur.

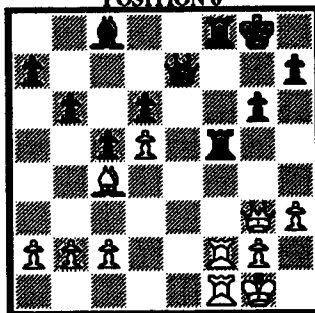
With the Black bad KB it is quite different. Not only can it occupy the diagonal a7-g1 (e.g. 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.c3 Qe7 5.d4 Bb6 6.O-O Nf6 7.Re1 d6 8.d5), but it can often be developed on the diagonal h6-c1. In both cases the bad Bishop is a full strength piece, which the opponent will usually be glad enough to exchange for his good Bishop.

In the corresponding formation with the White e-pawn forward (i.e. White pawns on e5 and d4, Black pawns on d5 and e6), the Black bad Bishop outside the chain is also a strong piece (e.g. 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 Bf5 followed by ...e6). Inside the chain (e.g. 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5), this Bishop can often exchange itself off for White's good Bishop *via* e8 and g6 or h5.

In order to appraise the value of a bad Bishop in any given position, it is important to consider how much material remains on the board. The weakness of a bad Bishop is highlighted as the endgame approaches. And this brings us to the important conclusion that while the bad Bishop can be quite strong in co-operation with other pieces, its strength wanes as opportunities for co-operation diminish with exchanges or unsuitable placings of the other pieces.

It follows that a clear judgment on this problem is hardly possible, except in the endgame. In the following examples, therefore, we shall have to ask ourselves time and again how the game would work out if all the heavy pieces were exchanged.

POSITION 6



*(The bad Bishop inside the pawn chain, and with no support-point; from the game Zvetkov-Smyslov, Moscow 1947).*

The White Bishop is inferior to the Black one because of the blocked pawn on d5. The inferiority is not yet decisive, since only one pawn is fixed on the wrong color. We shall now see how Black strives to increase his advantage.

**1...Rxf2 2.Rxf2 Qe1+ 3.Bf1 Rxf2 4.Qxf2 Qe5!**

By exchanging Queens at this point, Black could already have brought about a pure Bishop ending, but his advantage would have been too slight to lead to a win: 4...Qxf2+ 5.Kxf2 Kf7 6.Ke3 Kf6 7.g3 Ke5 8.c4 Bf5 9.h4, and White can hold out. The intention of the text move is plain: Black hopes to force c4 and so make the White Bishop still less effective.

**5.Qe2 Qd4+**

And certainly not 5...Qxd5? when White would win by 6.Qe8+.

**6.Kh2 Kf8 7.c4?**

Such pawn moves should be made only if no other possibility remains. Here there was a good alternative in 7.Qf3+ Kg7 8.c3 Qe5+ 9.Kg1 Bb7 10.Bc4.

**7...Bf5 8.g4?**

Another pawn on the wrong color! The right line was 8.g3 and 9.h4, giving White the opportunity to chase the Black Bishop with offers to exchange by Bh3 or Bg2. After the text move Black's advantage is of decisive significance.

**8...Bb1 9.a3**

After 9.b3 Qe5+ 10.Qxe5 dxe5 the Bishop ending is won for Black: 11.a3 Bc2 12.b4 cxb4 13.axb4 a5! 14.bxa5 bxa5 15.c5 a4 (16.Bc4 Bb3!), and White must give his Bishop for the a-pawn.

**9...Be4! 10.Kg3**

Or 10.Bg2 Bd3 11.Qe6 Qe5+ 12.Qxe5 dxe5 13.b3 Ke7!, followed by 14...Bc2.

**10...Qe5+ 11.Kf2 Qf4+ 12.Ke1 Kg7 13.Qd2 Qe5 14.Qc3**

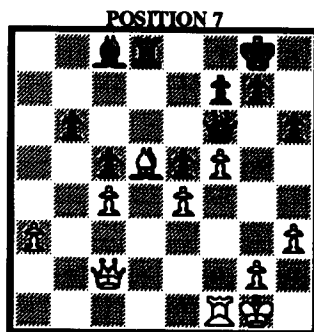
A common occurrence in such positions. White's bad Bishop keeps him on the defensive, and to put an end to the continual threats he seizes the opportunity of exchanging Queens. But thereby he only jumps from the frying-pan into the fire, for the endgame is lost.

White, however, had little choice by now, e.g. 14.Qe3 g5! 15.Kd1 Qd4+ 16.Qxd4 cxd4 17.b4 Kf6, and Black wins just the same.

**14...Qxc3+ 15.bxc3**

A full treatment of this ending would be out of place in a work on the middlegame, but we give the moves to show that the handicap of the bad Bishop really is decisive. There followed:

**15...g5! 16.Kf2 Kf6 17.Ke3 Ke5 18.Be2 Bc2 19.Kd2 Bb1 20.Ke3 h6 21.Bf3 Bc2 22.Be2 a6! 23.Kd2 Ba4 24.Ke3 b5 25.cxb5 axb5 26.Bf3 Bb3 27.Be2 Bc4 28.Bxc4 bxc4 29.a4 Kxd5 30.a5 Kc6 31.Ke4 d5+ 32.Ke5 d4 33.cxd4 c3 34.d5+ Kd7 35.a6 c2 36.a7 c1=Q 37.a8=Q Qf4#.**



*(The bad Bishop outside the pawn chain, and in possession of a support-point; from the game Botvinnik-Kan, Leningrad 1939).*

The White Bishop is very bad, since three of his pawns are fixed on his own color. But thanks to the fact that the Bishop is outside the pawn chain, and posted on a square from which it rakes both wings of the enemy position, it is precisely this "bad" Bishop which is White's winning trump!

**1.Qa4 Bd7 2.Qa7**

Under the circumstances, White has no thought of exchanging his bad Bishop for Black's good one. This move prevents 2...Bc6 because of the reply 3.Qxb6.

**2...Be8 3.Rb1 Rd6 4.a4 Kh7**

Black cannot prevent a5, for if 4...Qd8 5.a5 bxa5 6.Rb8 is decisive.

**5.a5 bxa5**

In the hope of 6.Qxc5 a4!, etc.

**6.Qxa5 Ra6**

Losing of a pawn is now inevitable, so Black goes for a counterattack.

**7.Qxc5 Ra2 8.Qe3!**

Preventing 8...Qg5 and threatening to drive the Black pieces back by 9.c5.

**8...Qa6 9.Rb8 Qa4 10.Kh2 Ra3**

Against 10...Qc2 Botvinnik in his

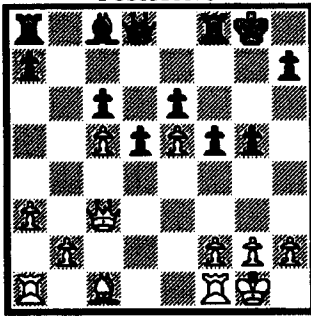
notes gives the following pretty win:  
 11.Qg3 Ra1 (11...Ba4 12.Bxf7) 12.Rxe8  
 Qc1 13.Qg6+!! fxc6 14.Bg8+ Kh8  
 15.Bf7+ Kh7 16.fxc6#.

### 11.Qc5 Ra2 12.Ra8 Qxa8

Losing hopelessly. Black could have still set a trap by 12...Qc2 13.Rxa2 Qxa2 14.Qe7 Qd2. Now White cannot take the Bishop without allowing a perpetual check: 15.Qxe8 Qf4+ 16.Kg1 Qe3+ 17.Kf1 Qc1+ 18.Kf2 Qd2+ 19.Kf3 Qd3+ 20.Kg4 Qe2+, etc. But White can do better by playing 15.Qxe5!, with an easily won ending.

### 13.Bxa8 Rxa8 14.Qxe5 Bc6 15.Qc7 Black Resigned.

POSITION 8



*(The struggle between a bad Bishop outside the pawn chain and a bad Bishop within the chain; from the game Keres-Konstantinopolsky, Moscow 1948).*

While Black's bad Bishop has an open diagonal at his disposal, and can play an active game, the White bad Bishop is condemned to a very passive role. It is plain that Black's advantage in mobility can be exploited only in the middlegame. An endgame might well be drawn, since the Bishops control opposite-colored squares. It is usual to speak of "unlike Bishops", or "Bishops of opposite colors", although these expressions are not literally correct.

(The opposite colors refer not to the Bishops themselves, which are obviously of unlike colors, but to the squares on which they move).

Many players have a holy dread of such Bishops, since in an ending it can happen that an advantage of two or even three pawns may not suffice to force a win. But before an ending the Gods have placed the middlegame, as Dr. Tarrasch often remarked. And this really is quite logical; the fact that the Bishops work on opposite colors means that one can never defend what the other attacks.

In Position 8 Black has attacking chances on the Kingside, and we shall see that through the presence of the unlike Bishops the pressure on the White position steadily increases.

### 1...f4

Prevents the development of the Bishop to e3 and at the same time obstructs the natural protection of the e-pawn by f4. The onus of guarding this pawn now falls on the Bishop, which is thereby doomed to passivity.

### 2.Bd2 Ba6 3.Rfe1 Rb8 4.Qd4 Bc4

The bad Bishop already begins to show alarming activity.

### 5.Bc3 Qe8 6.Qd1 Rb7 7.a4

It is evident that 7.b4 and 8.a4 would be quite useless, since the advance b5 could never be forced through.

### 7...Qg6 8.Ra3 g4 9.Bd4 Rg7 10.f3

Forced. Otherwise Black plays his Rook via f5 to h5 and then moves ...Qh6.

### 10...h5 11.Rc3 Rf5 12.Kh1

Not 12.Qc2, because of 12...gxf3 13.Rxf3 Rxe5! 14.Qxg6 Rxe1+, and mate next move.

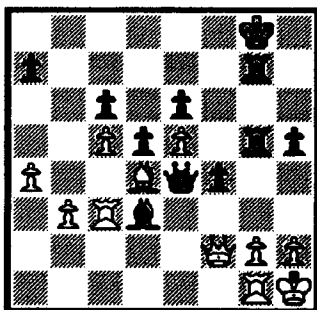
### 12...Rg5 13.b3 Ba6

Black is now fully prepared to attack. He has been able to post every piece splendidly, while White for his part can only adopt a waiting attitude.

**14.Rg1 gxf3 15.Qxf3 Qe4**

Very awkward for White since the Bishop cannot abandon protection of the e-pawn, while protection by 16.Rd1 would allow 16...Rxc2. Exchange of Queens would only transpose to an endgame easily won for Black, whose pieces control the board.

**16.Qf2 Bd3!**



The Bishop heads for the magnificent post, e4, from where it will decisively reinforce the attack against g2.

**17.b4**

If 17.Re1, then 17...Rxc2 would be instantly decisive after 18.Rxe4 Rxf2 19.Rxd3 Rf1+, or 19.Re1 Be4+, forcing mate in either case.

**17...Qf5 18.b5 Be4 19.bxc6 Rxc2 20.Rxc2 Rxc2 21.Qxc2+ Bxc2+ 22.Kxc2 Qe4+ 23.Kf1 f3**

This move, threatening mate in two, is the strongest continuation of the attack. 23...Qxd4 would have been bad because of 24.c7!.

**24.Be3 Qg6 25.Ke1 Qb1+ 26.Kd2**

Forced. Both 26.Rc1 Qd3 and 26.Kf2 Qh1 lose at once.

**26...Qb2+ 27.Rc2**

Or 27.Kd3 Qe2+ 28.Kd4 f2 29.c7 Qg4+ and wins.

**27...Qxe5 28.c7 Qxh2+ 29.Kd1 Qxc7 30.c6 e5 31.Bxa7 d4!**

The beginning of an exactly calculated final combination.

**32.Bb6 d3! 33.Rc1**

Or 33.Bxc7 dxc2+ 34.Kxc2 f2, and Black wins.

**33...Qxb6 34.c7 Qxc7 35.Rxc7 f2**  
and **White Resigned.**

The above examples should be sufficient to give the reader some idea of the play in positions with good and bad Bishops. Usually this characteristic does not occur alone, and in what follows we will frequently have occasion to refer to this chapter again.

## CHAPTER 2

# THE KNIGHT

In the previous chapter we saw that in an open position a Bishop is usually stronger than a Knight (Position 5). When we look for the reason we quickly conclude that the Bishop lends itself better to long-range action, and can conveniently operate against both wings. Against this the Knight is better adapted for close-range work, and is not tied to one color. This explains the fact that in an endgame with all the pawns on one flank a Knight is stronger than a Bishop.

In the middlegame the Knight shows to best advantage if support-points are available in the central sector. Such strong points nearly always arise from fixed pawns, so that closed positions or half-closed positions (blocked oblique centers, stonewalls, etc) favor the Knight.

The location of the support-point is naturally a matter of great importance. Briefly, the possibilities are:

### **Knight on the sixth rank.**

Generally gives a winning advantage. The defender will often be glad enough to liquidate the Knight at the cost of the Exchange.

### **Knight on the fifth rank.**

Gives good attacking chances. Such a Knight is usually stronger than a Bishop.

### **Knight on the fourth rank.**

Not only gives good prospects for an eventual attack, but has defensive value as well.

### **Knight on the third rank.**

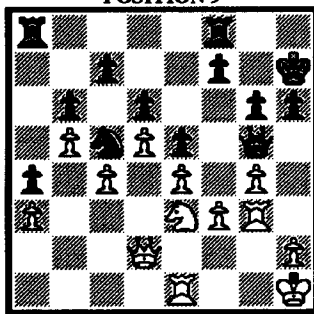
Especially useful in blockading enemy passed pawns. Here also the Knight can become active either in defense or attack.

In practice it often happens that the Knight has several support-points at its disposal, and this makes the defender's task uncommonly awkward, since he has to provide simultaneously against various Knight threats. A Knight in such a position is a veritable brigand.

In closed positions a bad Bishop is no match for a Knight, and even a good Bishop often has difficulty in keeping the agile brute under control.

The following examples give a good idea of the strength of the Knight. At the end of the chapter we give a couple of borderline cases of the struggle of Knight against Bishop, showing how the value of a Knight can be increased out of all recognition in a moment by an alteration in the pawn structure.

POSITION 9



(The Knight has several support-points; from the game Guimard-Euwe, Groningen 1946).

The Black Knight on c5 already stands very well, but if need be it can move *via* b3 to d4, where under certain circumstances it may be even more active.

By contrast, the White Knight has no prospect of improving its position. It



could go *via* b4 to c6, but there it would be virtually out of play, since the pawn position would not allow the other White pieces to cooperate with it.

**1...Rh8**

With the intention of opening a file for the Rooks.

**2.Qe2 Kg7 3.Ng2**

3.Nf5+ would merely lose time; Black would reply simply 3...Kf8 and the Knight must retreat.

**3...h5 4.h4 hxg4**

An important intermediate move, which prevents White from closing the position by g5.

**5.fxg4?**

Gives Black the opportunity for a decisive combination. 5.Rxg4 was essential.

**5...Rxf4+! 6.Nxf4 Rh8**

Much stronger than 6...Qxh4+ which would be met with 7.Qh2.

**7.Kg2**

Upon 7.Rh3 Rxh4, the Black Knight intervenes decisively with 8.Rxh4 Qxh4+ 9.Kg2 Nd3!, etc. Or 8.Qh2 Rxg4 9.Rh7+ Kf8 10.Rf1 Rf4, etc.

**7...Qxh4 8.g5 Nb3 9.Rg1 Nd2!**

The point of the combination. The square f1 is guarded, while 10.Qxd2 Qh2+ would cost the Queen.

**10.Kf2 Nxe4+. White Resigned.**

*(Knight with support-point against good Bishop; from the game Rossolimo-Kramer, Beverwijk 1951).*

White is handicapped here by his weak e-pawn, and is in no position to render the Knight harmless.

**1.Bf3 Rd8 2.a3 Rd7 3.b4**

White has fixed the enemy pawns on light squares, so that in a B vs. Kt ending he would have good chances. The snag is that the Knight now has a second support point available at c4.

**3...Qd8 4.Rc1**

To be able to exchange the dangerous Knight at last; but this piece now jumps across to its second outpost.

**4...Nb6 5.Qc5 Nc4 6.Rxc4**

There is nothing better, as the following shows: 1) 6.a4 Nd2 7.Bd1 Ne4 8.Qc2 Nxf2! 9.Qxf2 Rxd1+, and Black wins at least a second pawn. 2) 6.Rc3 Rd3!, etc. 3) 6.Be2 Rd5 7.Qa7 Rxe5 8.Bxc4 Qd2! 9.Rf1 bxc4 10.Qxa6 c3, etc.

**6...bxc4 7.Qxc4 Qb6**

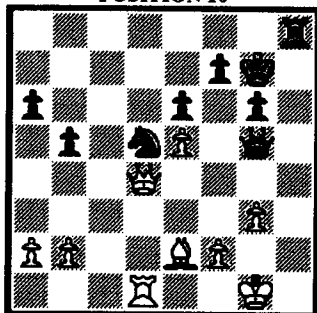
7...Rd3 would have been quicker: 8.Bb7 Rxa3 9.Bxa6 Qd2!.

**8.Be2 a5 9.Qf4 axb4 10.axb4 Rd5 11.Bf3**

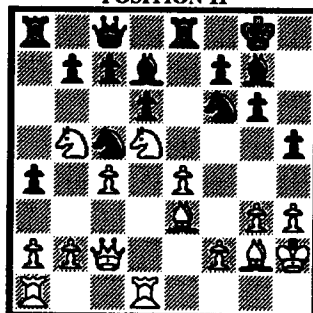
Or 11.b5 Qb8 12.Qf6+ Kg8 13.f4 Qb6+, and Black has a winning attack.

**11...Rd4 12.Qf6+ Kg8 13.Bg2 Qxb4 and Black won.**

POSITION 10



POSITION 11



*(Knight with support-point against bad Bishop without support-point; from the game O'Kelly-Najdorf, Dubrovnik 1950).*

With his last move (Nd4-b5), White gave his opponent the opportunity for the following transaction:

**1...Nxd5 2.exd5 Bxb5 3.cxb5 a3 4.Bd4 Bxd4 5.Rxd4 axb2 6.Qxb2 b6**

Now Black has a beautifully posted Knight against a bad Bishop – a decisive advantage. From now on there is little White can do.

**7.Rd2 Qf5 8.Re2 Nd3**

This Knight has no intention of abandoning his strong-point for good. With this foray Black achieves maximum activity for his other pieces.

**9.Rxe8+ Rxe8 10.Qc2 Qe5 11.Rd1 Nc5**

Now it becomes clear: Black threatens to invade the seventh rank, and also start a direct attack by 12...h4.

**12.h4 Qe2 13.Qd2 Qxb5 14.Re1 Rxe1 15.Qxe1 Qb2 16.f4**

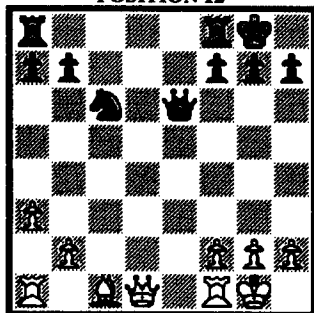
Or 16.Qe8+ Kg7 17.Qc8 Qxf2 18.Qxc7 Ne4, and the g-pawn falls. It is remarkable how this powerfully posted Knight influences the whole battlefield.

**16...Kf8**

Black prevents the invasion at e8.

**17.f5 Qe5 18.Qf1 Qxf5 19.Qxf5 gxf5 20.Bf3 Ne4 21.Bxh5 Nc3 22.Bf3 Nxa2 and White Resigned.**

POSITION 12



*(The struggle of Knight against Bishop in an open position; from the game Michell-Nimzowitsch, Berne 1931).*

**1.Re1 Rfd8 2.Bd2 Qf5 3.Rc1 Ne5! 4.Qc2 Nd3 5.Rf1**

Not 5.Re2? Nxc1! 6.Qxf5 Nxe2+ 7.Kf1 Rxd2, and Black wins.

**5...Qg4 6.Rcd1 Qe2**

This prevents the active placing of the Bishop on c3.

**7.Qb1 Rd5 8.Be3**

In the present circumstances the Bishop stands even better here than on c3, attacking a7 and defending f2. Yet Black retains a slight pull, thanks to his space advantage.

**8...Rad8 9.Rd2 Qh5 10.Rfd1**

White prefers to simply expel the Knight from its strong position rather than snatch the a-pawn. It is true that after 10.Bxa7 Nf4 11.Rxd5 Qxd5 12.f3 Qd2 13.Bf2! White can hold the extra pawn without immediate danger; but Black has a much more dangerous line: 10...Nf4 11.Rxd5 Rxd5!, with the treacherous threat of 12...Ne2+ 13.Kh1 Qxh2+! 14.Kxh2 Rh5#.

**10...b6!**

The Knight still cannot be taken: 11.Rxd3 Qxd1+! 12.Qxd1 Rxd3, and because of the threat of 13...Rd1+ Black remains the Exchange ahead.

**11.f3 Qg6 12.Qc2 h6 13.Kf1**

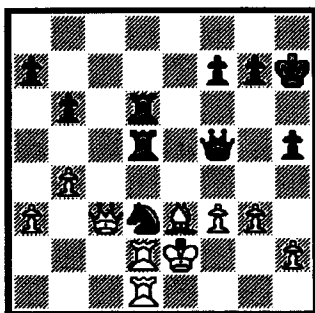
The beginning of a complicated maneuver to dislodge the Knight.

**13...Kh7 14.Qc3**

The immediate 14.g3 Qf5 15.Ke2 would fail because of 15...Nf4+.

**14...R8d6 15.b4 h5 16.g3 Qf5 17.Ke2** (see diagram next page)

White has achieved his object: the Knight must flee and content itself with a more modest role. Although the Knight is driven out, the results of



After 17...Ke2

his work remain visible. The White King is insecure and Black's heavy pieces are nicely placed.

**17...Ne5 18.Bf4 Rxd2+ 19.Rxd2 Rc6!**

It is important for Black to keep one Rook on the board, with an eye on the position of the White King. Further exchanges would only favor the opponent.

**20.Qd4**

Of course not 20.Qxe5 Re6.

**20...Ng6 21.Bd6**

The roles are reversed. Now it is the Bishop which enjoys a temporary strong point.

**21...Qh3 22.Ke3 Qf1 23.Rd1 Qg2 24.Qd2 Qh3 25.Qd5 Rc2 26.Rd2**

Not 26.Qxf7 Qg2!, and Black wins.

**26...Rc3+ 27.Rd3 Rc1 28.Qxf7 Qxh2 29.Qf5 Rc4**

Black can work with threats all the time. Now he threatens 30...Qg1+ again, but still the decisive line eludes him.

**30.Rd1 Rc3+ 31.Kd4!**

31.Rd3 would allow 31...Qg1+ 32.Ke4 Rxd3 33.Qxh5+ Kg8 34.Kxd3 Qd1+, winning the Bishop.

**31...Rxa3 32.Kd5 Rc3 33.Ke6?**

A serious blunder, which puts an untimely end to the struggle. The right move, 33.Kd4, would have given good drawing chances, e.g.

33...Qb2? 34.Qxh5+ Kg8 35.Qxg6 Rc1+ 36.Ke3 Rxd1 37.Qe8+ Kh7 38.Qh5+, with perpetual check.

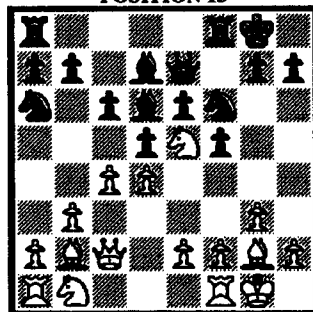
**33...Qe2+ 34.Kf7**

Threatens both 35.Qxh5#, and 35.Qxg6+ followed by mate.

**34...Rc7+!**

and mate follows (35.Bxc7 Qe7#).

POSITION 13



(A difference of opinion concerning the Knight and the bad Bishop; from the game Flohr-Goldberg, USSR Ch. 1949).

This position arose after the moves:

**1.d4 e6 2.Nf3 f5 3.g3 Nf6 4.Bg2 d5 5.O-O Bd6 6.c4 c6 7.b3 Qe7 8.Bb2 O-O 9.Qc2 Bd7 10.Ne5 Na6.**

In the Russian chess magazine *Shakmaty*, Flohr commented on this game, and drew attention to a noteworthy difference of opinion. The same position had occurred in the game Kotov-Goldberg, and the continuation was 11.Nd2 Be8. In the post-mortem at the end of the game Flohr contended that White should have exchanged on d7, but both the other masters thought it would have been wrong to exchange the Knight for the bad Bishop. In the present game Flohr seized the opportunity to demonstrate his point of view in practice.

**11.Nxd7 Qxd7**

In view of the weak pawn skeleton c6-d5-e6-f5, it would seem important for Black to preserve his light-squared Bishop for the defense, and, according to Flohr, its absence from d7 will weigh decisively in White's favor as soon as he succeeds in opening some lines.

**12.Nd2 g5 13.Nf3 Qg7 14.Qc1 g4?**

Flohr supposed this to be forced, but it tips the balance in White's favor.

White's Knight now gets a support-point of the utmost importance on f4, from which it can blunt the coming Kingside attack. A stronger move would have been 14...Ne4, with good play for Black.

**15.Ne5 Nb8 16.Ba3**

Exchanging Black's good Bishop.

**16...Bxa3 17.Qxa3 Nbd7 18.Nd3 Rfe8 19.Rac1 Nf8 20.Qb2 h5 21.b4 h4 22.b5 hxg3 23.fxg3 Qh6 24.Nf4 Re7 25.e3 Rh7 26.Bh1 Nh5**

Threatening 27...Nxb3. Thus far the game has followed clear-cut lines: Black presses on the Kingside, but White is poised ready to open files on the Queenside.

**27.Qf2 Nd7 28.bxc6**

Flohr thought that 28.Nd3 might have been stronger, since the White Knight is more active than the Black one.

**28...bxc6 29.cxd5 Nxf4**

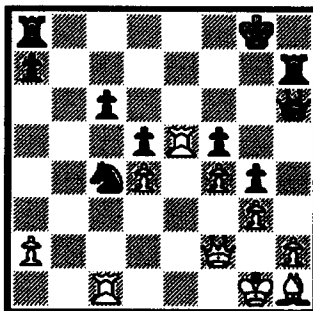
Not 29...exd5 because of 30.Rxc6 or 30.Nxd5.

**30.exf4 exd5**

After 30...cxd5 31.Rc6 Nb6 32.Re1 White also stands better.

**31.Rfe1 Nb6 32.Re5 Nc4**

Sacrificing a pawn, since the passive 32...Rf8 33.Qe2 gives meager prospects for Black.

**33.Rxf5?**

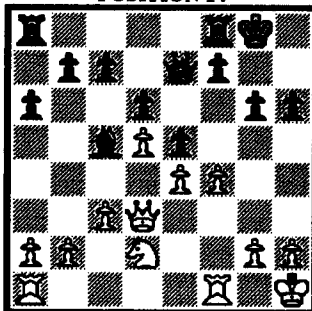
33.Rxd5 would have been stronger, according to Flohr: 33...Rb8 34.Rc5 Rb2 35.Rxc6 Qh5 36.R1xc4 Rxf2 37.Rc8+ Kg7 38.Kxf2 Qxh2+ 39.Bg2, with a won game.

**33...Re8 34.Rg5+ Rg7 35.Re1?**

A serious mistake in time pressure. The rest of the game has no importance for us. The finish was:

**35...Rxe1+ 36.Qxe1 Rxc5 37.Qe8+ Qf8 38.Qe6+ Qf7 39.Qx17+ Kx17 40.fxg5 Ne3 41.Bg2 Nf5 42.Kf2 Nxd4 43.h4 gxh3 44.Bxh3 Ne6 45.g6+ Kf6 46.Ke3 Ke5 47.Kd3 c5 48.Bg4. Drawn.**

POSITION 14



(A borderline case with bad Bishop outside the pawn chain, against Knight; from the game Henneberke-Kramer, Baarn 1949).

White has just played 1.f4, evidently to forestall Black from taking the initiative with ...f5. In Chapter 1 we

saw that a bad Bishop outside its pawn chain can be a full-strength piece, provided that the other pieces can cooperate well with it. Black could have achieved this here by means of 1...exf4 2.Rxf4 f5!, e.g. 3.exf5? Qe3!, with advantage (4.Rf3 Qxd3 5.Rxd3 Rxf5) or 3.Raf1 fxe4 4.Nxe4 Rxf4 5.Rxf4 Rf8 6.Rxf8+ Kxf8 7.h3 Bb6, with equal chances. Instead Black played:

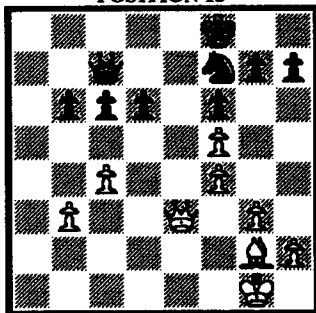
**1...f6**

and there followed:

**2.Rf3 Kg7 3.f5! g5 4.Rh3 Qf7 5.g4**

This is a very different situation. The Bishop is out of play, and suddenly the Knight is much stronger. White has a positionally won game, since there is practically nothing to be done against the maneuver Rh5, Nf3, Kg2, Rh1, and finally h4. Black therefore decided on the pawn sacrifice 5...h5, but even so could not avert ultimate defeat.

POSITION 15



*(Another borderline case with Knight against Bishop; from the fifth match game Botvinnik-Flohr, 1933).*

The game was adjourned in this position, and it was thought that by 1.Bf3 White might win. Botvinnik demonstrated later, however, that Black would have obtained satisfactory counterplay just as in the actual game.

**1.b4 d5!!**

A pretty sacrifice which kills two birds with one stone: the White Bishop becomes bad, as it must now keep an eye on the d-pawn, while the Black Knight becomes very active.

**2.cxd5 c5 3.bxc5 bxc5 4.Bf1 Nd6**

The Knight is an ideal piece for stopping passed pawns. The d6 square is the so-called "blockade square" in this position. It is only in recent times that the importance of the blockade has been fully realized. We shall return to this subject later.

**5.Qa3 Kf7 6.Bd3 c4 7.Bc2 c3**

7...Qb6+ 8.Kf1 Ke7 would have been stronger, but even then 9.Ke2 would still draw, according to Botvinnik's analysis.

**8.Qb4 Nc4 9.Qxc3 Qc5+ 10.Kh1 Qxd5+**

With perpetual check.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE BISHOP PAIR

A clear idea of piece cooperation can be gathered from their use in the endgame for mating an unaccompanied King. With Bishop and Knight this can be quite awkward; with two Knights it is only in exceptional cases possible at all; but with two Bishops it is perfectly simple, as these pieces work together so economically. It is fair to say then that the Bishop pair is a formidable weapon, and further that Bishop plus Knight is a stronger combination than two Knights.

In the middlegame, however, there are always circumstances which make a correct estimate of these values difficult or even impossible. This is because of the presence of other pieces on the board, and because of the nature of the pawn position. One thing can be stated categorically: in a position with many open diagonals the Bishops can deploy their full powers, and to possess them then will constitute a great advantage – often decisive. Bishop and Knight, or two Knights, in general have chances against two Bishops only as the position takes on a more or less closed character, or in which the availability of support points plays a great role. But even in these favorable circumstances the player with two Knights, or Bishop and Knight, must be continuously on the alert. What frequently happens is this: the player with the Bishop pair runs into difficulties, but nevertheless wins or draws in the end because the opponent at some stage has to open the position in order to play his trumps, thus allowing the Bishop pair to employ their alarming activity.

From the foregoing it is evident that the possessor of the Bishop pair must aim at open play. To this end a pawn sacrifice may be called for, and even an Exchange sacrifice may have surprising possibilities. This last method of unleashing the full strength of the two Bishops is examined in Chapter 4. It has a close connection with the ability of the Bishop pair to support a passed pawn.

In support of a Queenside pawn majority the Bishop pair can also render yeoman service.

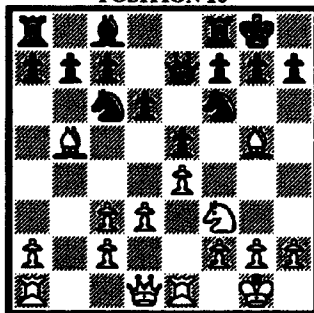
We draw attention to two points:

a) The power of the Bishop pair is shown in its purest form in the endgame, when extraneous effects caused by the other pieces have disappeared. It follows that, having the Bishop pair, one need not fear to exchange the major pieces.

b) The advantage of the Bishop pair can often be transformed into some other advantage. By exchanging one Bishop one can, for instance, often leave oneself with the good or active Bishop, or alternatively saddle the opponent with a weakened pawn formation.

#### A. TWO BISHOPS AGAINST BISHOP AND KNIGHT

POSITION 16



*(The Bishop pair employed to weaken the enemy pawn position; from the game Trifunovic-Van Scheltinga, Amsterdam 1950).*

A familiar position from the Four Knights which used to occur very frequently:

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bb5 Bb4 5.O-O O-O 6.d3 d6 7.Bg5 Bxc3 8.bxc3 Qe7 9.Re1.**

Since the position is half closed, and since, moreover, the White pawns are somewhat weakened by the doubling on the c-file, Black has some compensation for White's Bishop pair.

**9...Nd8**

First of all, Black must get rid of the troublesome pin on his f6-Knight by dislodging the White QB.

**10.d4 Ne6 11.Bc1**

This strange looking move is the best. On c1 the Bishop is well placed, not exposed to exchange, and free to operate not only from c1 to h6, but also on the a3-f8 diagonal.

**11...c5**

Black means to force White to clear up the central situation.

**12.Bf1**

Not 12.dxe5 dxe5 13.Nxe5? because of 13...Nc7, attacking two pieces. Normally 12.d5 might be preferred, but in that case Black could play 12...Nc7 13.Bf1 b5!, with counterplay on the Queenside.

**12...Rd8**

Keres gives 12...cxd4 13.cxd4 Qc7 as a strong line, but this would not be without its problems. The position is becoming more open, so that 14.Bb2 would give good chances, even if it meant losing a pawn.

**13.d5 Nf8**

Hoping to bring the Knight into active play at g6. A more flexible move would have been 13...Nc7, with possibilities of ...b5 in some circumstances.

**14.c4 Ne8 15.g3**

White's plan is clear: he intends, after the necessary preparation, to force the advance f4 and so to open lines for his Bishops.

**15...f5?**

Playing White's game; but a waiting policy would have been no better: 15...Ng6 16.h4 Bg4 17.Qd3, and Black has the unpleasant choice of playing 17...Bxf3 or allowing 18.Nh2 with h5 to follow.

**16.exf5 Bxf5 17.Nh4!**

Thus in any case White gets an open diagonal for his Bishop.

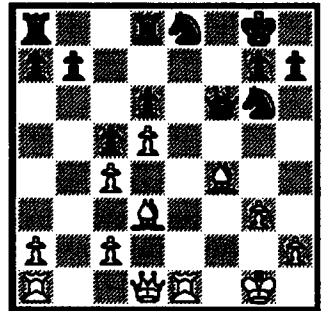
**17...Qd7 18.f4**

Always the same aim: open the position!

**18...exf4 19.Bxf4 Ng6?**

Giving White the chance of a favorable liquidation. Better was 19...Bg4 when White would continue with 20.Qd2 and 21.Bd3.

**20.Nxf5 Qxf5 21.Bd3 Qf6**



**22.Bxg6!**

A characteristic turn; White relinquishes the Bishop pair but obtains in return either a weakening

of the hostile pawn structure or else an inroad into the seventh rank (22...Qxg6 23.Re7).

**22...hxg6 23.Rb1 g5**

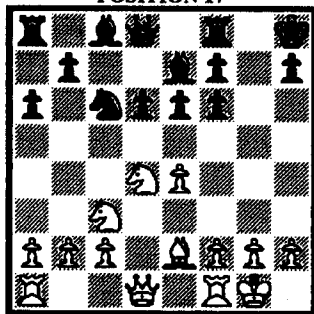
Soon loses a pawn, but 23...b6 24.Re6 is hardly an improvement: 24...Qd4+ 25.Qxd4 cxd4 26.Rd1 Rac8 27.Rxd4, etc.

**24.Be3 Rd7 25.Qg4 Rf7 26.Rf1 Qg6 27.Rxf7 Qxf7 28.Bxg5.**

With a sound extra pawn, a good Bishop and some advantage in development White now stands to win. The continuation was:

**28...Nc7 29.Bf4 Qf6 30.Qd1 b6 31.Qd3 Re8 32.Rf1 b5 33.cxb5 Qd4+ 34.Qxd4 cxd4 35.Bxd6 Nxb5 36.Bb4 a5 37.Bxa5 Ra8 38.Bb4 Rxa2 39.d6 Ra8 40.d7 Nc7 41.Rf8+, and Black Resigned.**

POSITION 17



*(The Bishop pair is more important than the pawn position; from the game Smyslov-Botvinnik, Moscow 1948).*

**1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 d6 6.Bg5 e6 7.Be2 Be7 8.O-O O-O 9.Ndb5 a6 10.Bxf6 gxf6 11.Nd4 Kh8.**

The strategic situation here is not unlike that of the previous example – two Bishops accompanied by a weakened pawn position. In what follows we shall see White working logically against the pawn complex,

while Black aims at opening lines. Remarkably enough, these plans do not cut across one another. Black seems to play right into his opponent's hands; his pawns are badly doubled and isolated. Then, just when White seems to have realized his aims, suddenly it emerges that Black has also achieved his. The Bishops control the board, and the resulting attack gives Black a decisive advantage.

**12.Kh1 Rg8 13.f4 Bd7 14.Bf3 Rc8 15.Nxc6?**

This strengthens the Black center. The correct line would have been 15.Nce2 Na5 16.b3, and 17.c3.

**15...bxc6 16.Ne2 d5!**

If Black had deferred this one more move, White could have played 17.c4.

**17.f5?**

In accordance with White's plan, which is to ruin the enemy pawn formation. Nevertheless, it would have been stronger to prepare for c4 by 17.b3 or 17.Qd2.

**17...Qc7 18.c4 dxc4 19.Qd4 c5 20.Qxc4 Bd6 21.g3 Bb5 22.Qc2 exf5 23.exf5**

White has achieved what he wanted: all the Black pawns are weak.

**23...Rce8 24.Rf2**

24.Qd2 came into consideration here, to prevent the inroad which follows. If then 24...Bxe2 25.Bxe2 Bxg3 he can continue with 26.Bf3!. But Black could do better with 24...Be5, followed by 25...Rd8.

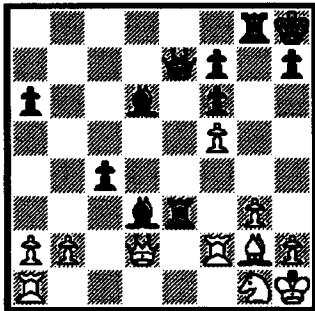
**24...Re3 25.Bg2**

The more obvious 25.Nc3 would be answered by 25...Bc6, after which 26.Bxc6 would not do, because of 26...Qxc6+ 27.Kg1 Bxg3!, while 26.Bg2 would be answered by 26...Qb7!, followed by ...Be5-d4, with every Black piece in active play.



**25...Qe7 26.Ng1**

There is nothing better. Any other Knight move allows 26...Re1+, with an immediate win.

**26...Bd3 27.Qd2 c4**

Thus one Bishop secures a splendid strong-point on d3, while a new line is opened for his colleague. The threat now is 28...Bb4, followed by 29...Re1.

**28.Rf3 Re8 29.Rd1**

The transition to the endgame by 29.Rxe3 Qxe3 30.Qxe3 Rxe3 is hopeless. If White then protects the f-pawn, 31...Be5 follows.

**29...Bc5 30.b3**

Costs the Exchange, but other moves are no better. White could hold out longest by 30.Rxe3 Bxe3! 31.Qc3 Qe5 32.Qxe5 Rxe5 33.b3, but after 33...Rxf5 34.bxc4 Bxc4, the a-pawn will soon fall.

**30...Re1 31.bxc4 Bxc4**

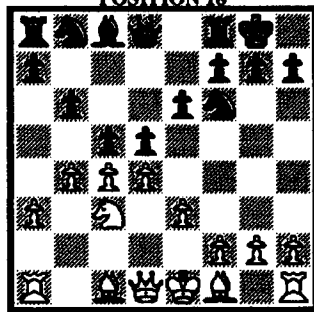
31...Bxg1? would be too hasty: 32.Qxd3 Bf2+ 33.Rxe1 Qxe1+ 34.Qf1.

**32.Bf1 Rxd1 33.Qxd1 Rd8 34.Qc2 Bd5 35.Qc3 Bd4 36.Qd3 Qe3 37.Qxe3 Bxe3 38.Bg2 Bxf3 39.Bxf3 Rd2 40.Ne2**

The a-pawn is not to be held: 40.a4 Ra2 41.Bc6 Ra1, and wins.

**40...Rxa2 White Resigns.**

POSITION 18



(Two Bishops in an open position; from the game Reshevsky-Van den Berg, Amsterdam 1950).

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e3 O-O 5.Nge2 d5 6.a3 Bxc3+ 7.Nxc3 b6 8.b4! c5?**

It often happens in the Nimzo-Indian that Black has to concede the Bishop pair to his opponent. In return he usually has the (temporary) control of the crucial square e4, and so can give a half-closed character to the position. In the present game Black lacks this compensation, and this is why White can rapidly go over to the attack. There followed:

**9.dxc5 bxc5 10.cxd5**

This is stronger than 10.bxc5, to which Black could reply 10...Ba6!. White could then hardly preserve the Bishop pair, for 11.Nb5 would be strongly answered by 11...Ne4.

**10...cxb4?**

Not 10...Nxd5 11.Nxd5 exd5 12.bxc5 Qa5+ 13.Bd2 Qxc5 14.Bb4, and Black loses the Exchange; but 10...exd5! was stronger than the move actually played. After 11.bxc5 he could make the Bishop pair harmless by 11...Ba6.

**11.axb4 exd5 12.Be2 Nc6 13.b5 Na5 14.Ba3**

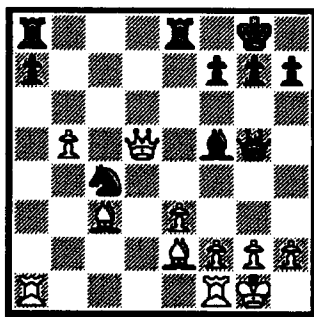
For the time being White is content

to get his pieces into play. He has no use for 14.Qa4 Nc4 15.Bxc4 dxc4 16.Qxc4 Bb7, even though this line would win a pawn. Quite rightly, he prefers to see his Bishop pair in full cry.

**14...Re8 15.O-O Bf5**

A quiet line like 15...Be6 would promise little, in view of the weak a-pawn, so Black plays for counterattack.

**16.Bc5 Ne4 17.Bb4! Nxc3 18.Bxc3 Nc4 19.Qd4 Qg5 20.Qxd5!**



White is not content to win the a-pawn, but forces his opponent into the piece sacrifice which follows. In any case 20.Rxa7 Rxa7 21.Qxa7 Be4! would have led to some dubious complications.

**20...Nxe3 21.fxe3 Qxe3+ 22.Kh1 Bg6!**

The point. The immediate 22...Qxc3 23.Qxf5 Rxe2 loses outright by 24.Qxf7+ Kh8 25.Qf8+, and mate next move.

**23.Bh5!**

A variation on the same theme (23...Bxh5 24.Qxh5 Qxc3 25.b6! axb6 26.Rxa8 Rxa8 27.Qxf7+, and mate follows).

**23...Rad8**

After 23...Qxc3 White also has a strong continuation in 24.Bxg6 hxg6 25.Qxf7+ Kh7 26.Ra4!, when 26...Re5 would fail against 27.Rh4+ Rh5

28.Rxh5+ gxh5 29.Qxh5+ Kg8 30.Qd5+. Black can do better in this line: after 26...g5! (instead of 26...Re5) White's task is still not an easy one.

**24.Bxg6!**

The most elegant way, though 24.Qf3 would also have won.

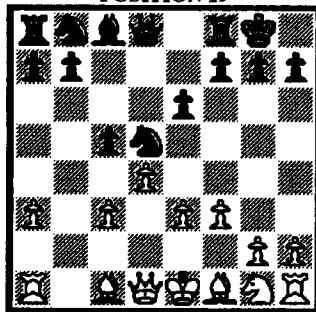
**24...Rxd5 25.Bxf7+ Kh8 26.Bxe8 Qxe8 27.Rxa7 Qc8**

There is no defense, as 27...Rg5 fails to both 28.Rfa1 and to 28.b6, followed by 29.b7. The move played conceals a last trap: 28.Bxg7+ Kg8 29.Rf8+? Qxf8 30.Bxf8 Rd1#.

**28.Rc7!**

**Black Resigns**, for if 28...Qf5 29.Kg1! is decisive, while if the Queen goes to a8 or b8, then 29.Rxg7 wins.

POSITION 19



*(The Bishop pair counterbalanced by a lead in development; from the game Lilienthal-Botvinnik, Moscow 1935).*

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.a3 Bxc3+ 5.bxc3 c5 6.f3 d5 7.e3 O-O 8.cxd5 Nxd5.**

In this Nimzo-Indian position Black has some compensation for White's Bishop pair in the form of a slight lead in development. Such a lead can always be best utilized by opening the position. It follows that it is usually very difficult to make use of a lead in development as compensation for the

Bishop pair, since they also carry most weight in an open position. In the foregoing example we saw that Black's lead was insufficient, and once it was dissipated the Bishops controlled the whole board. Here, however, the situation is different, as the following shows:

### 9.Bd2

If 9.c4 the best would be 9...Ne7, e.g. 10.Bd3 cxd4 11.exd4 Nf5! 12.Bxf5 Qa5+ and 13...Qxf5, with good play for Black, since the White center is vulnerable.

### 9...Nc6 10.Bd3 cxd4 11.cxd4 e5! 12.dxe5

The point of Black's central advance lies in the following variation: 12.e4 Nf4! 13.Bxf4 exf4 14.d5 Qh4+ 15.Kf1 Ne5, with very good play; and 12.Ne2 would have cost a pawn: 12...exd4 13.exd4 Nxd4! 14.Nxd4 Qh4+ 15.g3 Qxd4.

### 12...Nxe5 13.Be4 Nc4?

Forcing the exchange of one of the White Bishops, but at the same time showing how difficult it is to weigh up positional advantages one against the other. Subsequent analyses have shown that in this position the Bishop pair will not be very dangerous.

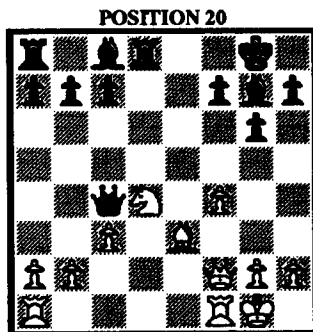
After 13...Nf6! Black would have the better of it: 1) 14.Bb4 Nxe4! 15.Bxf8 Nd3+ 16.Kf1 Nef2 17.Qc2 Nxf1. 2) 14.Bc3 Qc7 15.Qd4 Nxe4! 16.fxe4 f6. 3) 14.Bc2 Nd3+, and White must relinquish his Bishop pair under conditions less favorable than in the game.

### 14.Qc1 Nxd2 15.Qxd2 Nf6 16.Bd3

White no longer has his Bishop pair, but neither has Black any lead in development. The game is level. For our purpose no discussion of the rest is called for. The finish was:

### 16...Re8 17.Ne2 Qb6 18.Nd4! Nd5 19.Be4 Nxe3 20.Qxe3 f5 21.O-O fxe4

22.fxe4 Rd8 23.Nf5! Qxe3+ 24.Nxe3 Be6 25.Rfd1 Rxd1+ 26.Rxd1 Rc8 27.Nf5 Kf8 28.Nd6 Rc3 29.Nxb7 Rxa3 30.Nc5 Ke7 31.Nxe6 Kxe6 32.Kf2 g6. Draw.



*(Systematic use of the Bishop pair; from the game Rosenthal-Steinitz, Vienna 1873).*

Steinitz was the first to show a method for the best utilization of the two Bishops. So far as is known, it was in the present game that he first applied his system, and for that reason we should not omit it here.

The theory of Steinitz applies to positions like position 20 – positions which are not closed, but which, on the other hand, are not yet completely open in character. White still has support points at d4 and e5. The cornerstone of the Steinitz system is to deprive the opponent of such support points by means of pawn advances. The hostile pieces will thus be doomed to passivity, and the owner of the Bishop pair should not find it difficult to set a decisive attack in motion. This all sounds very simple to us, but in the lifetime of Steinitz it was by no means so. His contemporaries pointed out the weaknesses which these pawn advances must necessarily create. Only through the games of Steinitz was it realized that such weaknesses are not so serious because two Bishops can cover all the squares, being in this way much more

useful for neutralizing weaknesses than two Knights or Knight and Bishop would be. The game continued:

**1...c5**

Robs the Knight of the d4 square.

**2.Nf3 b6**

Puts an end to any Bishop activity on the diagonal g1-a7.

**3.Ne5 Qe6 4.Qf3 Ba6 5.Rfe1 f6**

Deprives the Knight also of the e5 square.

**6.Ng4 h5**

Drives the Knight still further back.

**7.Nf2 Qf7**

Intending ...Bb7 to induce a weakness on the long diagonal.

**8.f5?**

It is understandable that White should strive for some counterplay, but in so doing he only weakens his own position. A modern master would probably play 8.b3, intending after c4 and Rad1 to activate his Bishop by bringing it via c1 to b2.

**8...g5 9.Rad1**

The tactical justification of his previous move is that 9...Qxa2 would now simply be met by 10.Qxh5.

**9...Bb7 10.Qg3**

And now 10...Qxa2 is to be answered by 11.Qc7! Rxd1 12.Rxd1 Bd5 13.Qd7, and White has freed his game.

**10...Rd5!**

This is the positional refutation of White's 8.f5. The f-pawn is now incurably weak.

**11.Rxd5 Qxd5 12.Rd1**

If 12.Qh3? then 12...g4 is decisive.

**12...Qxf5 13.Qc7 Bd5 14.b3 Re8 15.c4 Bf7 16.Bc1 Re2 17.Rf1 Qc2**

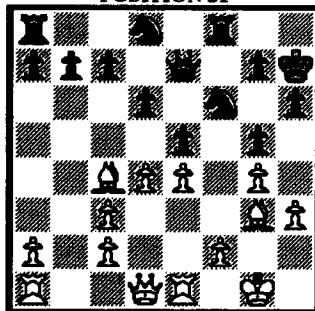
With the threat 18...Rxf2 19.Rxf2 Qxc1+.

**18.Qg3 Qxa2**

and Black won easily.

## B. TWO BISHOPS AGAINST TWO KNIGHTS

POSITION 21



*(The Knights in a closed position; from the game Wolf-Rubinstein, Teplitz-Schonau 1922).*

It is evident that in a struggle against the Bishop pair the two Knights will do best in a closed position such as this one. Moreover, in this case the presence of the support point at f4 is a factor which strongly favors the Knights. The practical outcome of such a position is that White will have to look for a favorable moment to exchange one of his Bishops for a Knight, bringing about a Bishop versus Knight struggle such as we have discussed in Chapter 1.

Rubinstein continued:

**1...Nf7**

Heading for the strong point f4 via h8 and g6.

**2.Qf3**

Threatening to win a pawn by 3.Bxf7 Rxf7 4.dxe5 dxe5 5.Qf5+, but this does not alter the strategic situation. White has the choice of three schemes:

I. He can exchange one Bishop at once (2.Bxf7 Rxf7) and then undertake

the fight with good Bishop (3.f3!) against Knight.

II. He can exchange the other Bishop for a Knight as soon as it appears at f4; but then he will have bad Bishop against Knight.

III. He can leave things as they are, and keep both Bishops; but in this case he must work out some way of getting them into action.

In what follows it becomes clear that schemes II and III were unfavorable for White, and that scheme I would have been his best choice.

### **2...Rae8 3.Qe3**

Another tactical maneuver, this time threatening to win a pawn by 4.dxe5 dxe5 5.Qxa7; while in answer to 3...exd4 4.cxd4 Nxe4? he has 5.Qxe4+ Qxe4 6.Rxe4 Rxe4 7.Bd3 and 8.f3 up his sleeve.

### **3...b6 4.Bb5?**

Definitely abandoning all possibility of scheme I.

### **4...Rd8 5.a4 Nh8!**

Black does not fear the opening of the a-file, or he would have interpolated 5...a5.

### **6.a5 Ng6 7.f3 Nf4 8.Bf1 Kh8! 9.Bxf4**

So White chooses scheme III, and the chances swing definitely in Black's favor. But had he anything better? After Black's last move it is clear that scheme III - to leave the Knight at its powerful post - would involve great difficulties. Black's general plan would be ...Rf7, ...Nf6-h7-f8-g6, and then double Rooks on the f-file. Meanwhile, there is little White can undertake; in particular, he can make no use at all of his dark-square Bishop. If he puts it on the g1-a7 diagonal, it is obstructed by Black's b-pawn. If he works it round to the a3-f8 diagonal, Black will play ...c5. In either case the Bishop bites on granite.

### **9...gxf4 10.Qf2 g5**

The rest of the game really belongs in Chapter 2 - a plain proof of the interdependence of the sections of this book. The owner of the Bishop pair must always reckon with the possibility that he may have to exchange one of them.

### **11.d5?**

Closes up the position still more, and fixes yet another pawn on the same color as his own Bishop. White should have played 11.Bc4 or 11.Bb5. Notice however that the exchange on b6 would be bad, because after the reply 11...cxb6 Black can put the c-pawns under fire.

### **11...h5 12.Bg2 Kg7 13.Qe2 Rh8 14.Kf2**

To the sally 14.Qa6 Black can reply simply 14...Kg6, for 15.Qxa7 is no real threat: 15...Ra8 16.Qb7 Rhb8 17.Qc6 bxa5.

### **14...Ra8 15.Reb1 Nd7 16.Qb5 hxc4 17.hxc4 Nc5 18.Rh1 Rh4! 19.Rxh4 gxh4 20.Bh3**

Parrying the threat 20...h3! 21.Bxh3 Qh4+ 22.Kg2 Qg3+, and wins.

### **20...bxa5!**

Getting a passed pawn on the a-file as well.

### **21.Qxa5**

21.Rxa5 also results in decisive disadvantage for White, after 21...a6 22.Qb1 Qd8 followed by 23...Rb8.

### **21...Qd8 22.Rb1 Rb8 23.Rb4 a6 24.Ke2 Rb6 25.Qa1 Kg6 26.Kd2 Kg5**

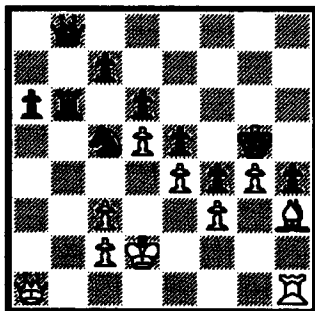
Protects the h-pawn, and by preventing an eventual g5 deprives White of any chance of counterplay.

### **27.Rb1**

The barrier in the b-file suddenly gives way, the trouble being that Black can quickly force the advance of the a-pawn: 27.Qa5 Qb8 28.Qa3 Qa7 29.Qa5 Nb7 30.Qa4 Rxb4! 31.cxb4 Qf2+, or 27.Qa5 Qb8 28.Ke2 Qa7!,

threatening 29...Nb7 30.Qa4 Rxb4  
31.cxb4 Qe3+. If White does not play  
Qa5 in these lines, Black pushes ...a5.

27...Qb8 28.Rh1



After 28.Kc1 Rxb1+ 29.Qxb1 Qxb1+  
30.Kxb1 the ending is a loss for White,  
Black having passed pawns on both  
wings. There might follow: 30...Na4  
31.c4 Nc3+ 32.Kc1 Ne2+ 33.Kd2 Ng1  
34.Bg2 h3 35.Bh1 a5 and wins (a line  
given by Knoch).

28...a5!!

Most unexpectedly, the a-pawn  
begins to march. White cannot now  
play 29.Qxa5 because of 29...Rb2  
30.Qa3 Nb3+ 31.Kd3 Qb5+ 32.c4 Qb6!,  
with mate to follow.

29.Bg2 a4 30.Qe1 Qh8 31.Qc1 Ra6  
32.Bf1 Ra8 33.Bc4 a3 34.Ba2 Qh7  
35.Rh3 Nd7 36.Qf1 Qh8 37.Rh1 Nc5  
38.Qc1

Time trouble apparently influenced  
the last few moves, but now the time  
pressure seems to be over.

38...Rb8!!

Introducing a magnificent finish.  
Black sacrifices both his passed  
pawns in order to force his pieces into  
the enemy position. There is an  
immediate threat of 39...Rb2.

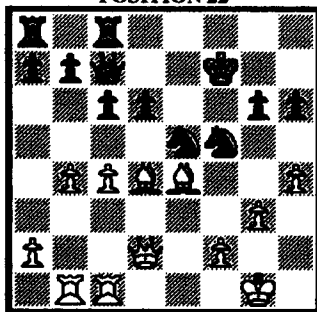
39.Qxa3 Ra8 40.Qb2 h3 41.Bc4 Qh4  
42.Be2 Qf2! 43.Rxh3

White's moves are all forced.

43...Qe3+ 44.Ke1 Na4

The Knight gives the final blow.  
**White Resigned.** This game was  
honored with a brilliancy prize.

POSITION 22



*(The Knights in an open position. The  
undermining of support points; from the game  
Capablanca—Milner-Barry, Margate 1936).*

In this position we see two centrally  
placed Bishops facing two centrally  
placed Knights. The contrast is  
obvious. The Bishops would still  
sweep the center of the board if they  
stood on h1 and a1, but the Knights  
must have support points if they are  
to maintain themselves in play. The  
support points here are insecure, and  
are speedily undermined.

1.Ba1

Preserving the Bishop from  
exchange. 1.Bxf5 would be a blunder,  
permitting 1...Nf3+.

1...Rg8

If 1...h5 2.Bxe5 dxe5 3.Bxf5 gxf5  
4.Qg5, and Black loses material.

2.h5! Raf8 3.c5!

Undercutting the other Knight as  
well.

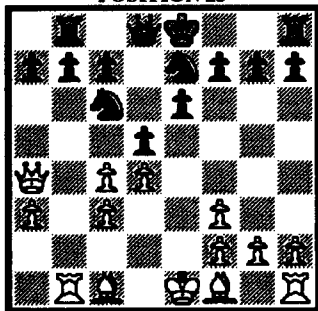
3...d5

Permits a decisive combination; but  
in any case the Bishops will now  
control the whole board.

4.Bxd5+ cxd5 5.Qxd5+ Kf6 6.f4 Qc6  
7.Bxe5+ Ke7 8.Bd6+

**Black Resigned**, for 8...Nxd6 9.cxd6+ Qxd6 10.Re1+ Kd7 11.Qxb7+ Qc7 12.Rbd1# leaves nothing to be desired on the score of clarity!

POSITION 23



(The Knights in a half-closed position; from the game Alekhine-Colle, Baden-Baden 1925).

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 Nc6 3.Nf3 Bg4 4.Qa4 Bxf3 5.exf3 e6 6.Nc3 Bb4 7.a3 Bxc3+ 8.bxc3 Nge7 9.Rb1 Rb8.**

This position occurred twice between Alekhine and Colle. The first time (Paris 1925) White continued 10.cxd5, but after 10...Qxd5 11.Bd3 O-O 12.O-O Qd6 13.Qc2 Ng6 14.f4 Nce7 15.g3 Rfd8 16.Rd1 b6 17.a4 Nd5 18.Bd2 c5 he had achieved no advantage. Later on however, by the exchange of one Bishop and the establishing of a passed pawn, he still managed to turn the game into a win.

**10.Bd3!**

Alekhine considered this an improvement on 10.cxd5.

**10...dxc4?**

Dr. Lasker, who annotates this game in his well-known *Manual*, rightly queries this move, and prefers 10...0-0. Black should try to keep a pawn on d5 to prevent the opening of the long dark diagonal. It would then be by no means easy for White to get any play for his QB. An eventual a4 and Ba3 would have the disadvantage

that the a-pawn would become a target.

**11.Bxc4 O-O 12.O-O Nd5 13.Qc2 Nce7 14.Bd3 h6 15.c4 Nb6 16.Rd1 Nbc8 17.f4**

Here White is employing the Steinitz method, already known to us, which consists of advancing one's own pawns to deny the opposing pieces any support points.

In this case White must go to work cautiously, in view of his own vulnerable center. The advance c5, for instance, is not to be considered, for it would give Black an unassailable strong point at d5. White's tactics must be based on an eventual advance of d5 or f5, giving up a pawn if need be. Notice that Black has to maintain a completely passive attitude, since his only freeing move, ...c5, would lead only to an opening of the position which would favor the Bishop pair.

**17...b6 18.Bb2 c6**

The breakthrough squares, d5 and f5, are now protected as well as possible.

**19.Qe2 Nd6 20.Qe5**

Threatening 21.d5.

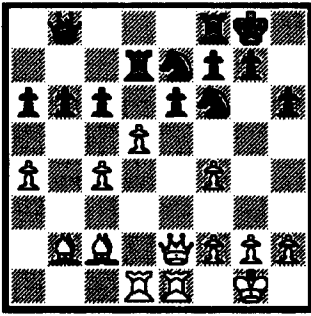
**20...Ne8 21.a4 Rb7 22.Re1 Nf6 23.Rbd1 Rd7 24.Bc2 a6?**

Black should have played 24...Qc7. Then after 25.Qe2 admittedly he could not very well play 25...Qxf4, because of 26.Qe5! Qxe5 27.dxe5 Rxd1 28.Rxd1 Nh7 29.Rd7. But Dr. Lasker's recommendation, 25...Rfd8, would give Black fair chances of holding the position. The point is that after 26.d5 cxd5 27.Bxf6 gxf6 28.Qg4+, Black has f8 as a flight square for his King.

**25.Qe2! Qb8**

And here 25...Re8 should have been played, again with the object of freeing f8 for the King.

26.d5!



The long-awaited breakthrough.

**26...cxd5 27.Bxf6 gxf6 28.Qg4+ Kh8**

The end of the game is not apposite to our theme; nevertheless, it is instructive to see how the advantage obtained is converted into a win.

**29.f5!**

Threatening to win outright by 30.Qh4 Kg7 31.Re3. Since the e-pawn is also attacked, Black must go in for the following liquidation.

**29...Nxf5 30.Bxf5 exf5 31.Qxf5 Qd8 32.cxd5**

The balance sheet can now be drawn up. White has a passed pawn which limits the activity of the Black pieces; moreover, Black's Kingside is irreparably weak. The Bishop pair has paid good dividends. In what follows we shall see how White utilizes every detail of the position to increase his advantage.

**32...Rd6 33.Qf4 Kh7 34.Qe4+ Kh8 35.Qe3 Kg7 36.Qd3**

Forces the following pawn move, which considerably devalues Black's Queenside pawn majority.

**36...a5 37.Re3 Rg8 38.Rh3 Qd7 39.Qe3 f5**

A new weakness, but 39...Rh8 is no better. 40.Qf4! would then threaten Rd1-d3-g3, and 40...Rxd5 would fail

against 41.Rg3+ (41...Kf8 42.Qb8+, or 41...Kh7 42.Qe4+).

**40.Rg3+ Kh7 41.Rxg8 Kxg8 42.Qg3+ Kh7 43.Qb3 Kg7 44.h3**

Before White undertakes the decisive action, it is necessary to provide the King with a flight square.

**44...Qd8 45.Qg3+ Kh7 46.Qe5 Qd7 47.Rd3 f6**

Yet another weakening, which was hardly to be avoided, since Black is now more or less in *Zugzwang*. On 47...Kg8 White would have strengthened his position by 48.Rg3+ Rg6 49.d6! (49...Rxxg3 50.fxxg3 Qxa4 51.Qe7!).

**48.Qd4 Qd8 49.Qc4 Qd7 50.Rd4 Kg7 51.Qd3 Kf7**

There are no good moves left for Black:

- 1) 51...Qc8 52.Qg3+ and 53.Qxd6.
- 2) 51...Qe7 52.Qxf5 Qe1+ 53.Kh2 Qe5+ 54.Qxe5 fxe5 55.Rd1 Kf6 56.Kg3 and the Rook ending presents no difficulty for White.
- 3) 51...Kh7 52.g4 Kg6 53.gxf5+ Qxf5 54.Rg4+, and wins.
- 4) 51...Kh8 52.Qe3 Rxd5 53.Qxh6+ Kg8 54.Qg6+ and 55.Qxf6+.
- 5) 51...Kf8 52.Qe3 Kg7 53.Rh4.
- 6) 51...Kf8 52.Qe3 Rxd5 53.Qxh6+ Ke7 54.Qg7+ Ke6 55.Qg8+, and White must win in the long run. Nevertheless, this last line is what Black should have chosen.

**52.g4 Kf8**

If 52...fxg4 53.Qh7+ Kf8! 54.Qxh6+ Kf7 55.Rxxg4 and wins.

**53.gxf5 Qe8 54.Re4 Qh5 55.Rg4 Qf7 56.Qe3 Qh7 57.Rg6.**

**Black Resigns**, for after 57...h5 comes 58.Qc3 and White wins as he pleases.



## CHAPTER 4

# THE EXCHANGE

The advantage of the Exchange is decisive. There can be no two opinions about this, and it is necessary to begin this chapter by stating it definitely.

In practice it is true that the player who is the Exchange ahead may still lose in the end, or only draw, but these are always cases in which the opponent had some compensation for the Exchange. The intention of this chapter is to examine what forms this compensation can take.

We begin with a common method of winning the Exchange. One side manages to establish a Knight on the sixth rank, and to protect it with a pawn. The opponent will usually not be able to tolerate such a Knight crippling his whole game, and unless there is some opportunity of exchanging it he will eventually decide to take it with a Rook. In this case he obtains for his Rook not only the Knight, but also the pawn which guarded it. His material disadvantage is therefore very slight, but he cannot be said to have a full equivalent for the loss of the Exchange (Position 24).

The pawn-equivalent for the Exchange can be reckoned at about one and a half pawns, so that one may say that two pawns will be more than sufficient.

More interesting than material equivalents, however, is the question of positional compensation, which in recent years has attracted a lot of attention from the experts. For instance, the compensation may take the form of a pawn plus an unassailable strong point for the Knight (Position 25) or a pawn plus a preponderance of pawns in the center (Position 29).

In cases of compensation without a pawn, the side weaker in material needs two kinds of advantage in position. The possession of two Bishops is always a dominating factor. Two Bishops plus a protected passed pawn (Positions 26 and 27) or two Bishops plus a weakened enemy King position (Position 28) must be reckoned as full compensation.

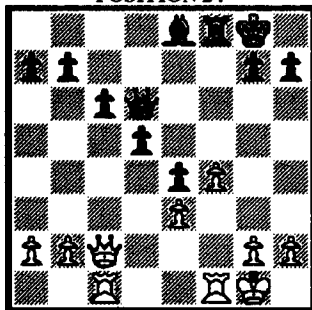
This means that the sacrifice of a Rook for a fianchettoed Bishop is always worth considering if it achieves the advantage of two Bishops and at the same time destroys an essential part of the King's defenses.

We divide this chapter into: A) Rook against Bishop or Knight. B) Rook against two minor pieces. This latter is an important case because it occurs frequently in play. The Rook is no match for two minor pieces, even with the help of an extra pawn. Indeed, if the two minor pieces happen to be the two Bishops, even a Rook with extra pawns will usually not be an equivalent. Our two examples suffice to show that the kind of compensation necessary to give the Rook any chances of success rarely arises in practice. The reason is not far to seek. The player with the Rook will always have lost two of his original four minor pieces, and the chance that the two remaining will be the two Bishops – the most valuable form of compensation – must naturally be slight; but the chance that the player of the minor pieces will retain two Bishops is correspondingly great. This explains why the owner of the minor pieces will usually do best to play for a direct attack on the King.

It is important for him to force a decision in the middlegame, for the drawing chances of the Rook increase considerably in the ending.

### A. ROOK AGAINST BISHOP OR KNIGHT

POSITION 24



(A pawn is not sufficient compensation for the Exchange; from the game Kramer-Thomas, Utrecht 1949).

White wins the Exchange in a familiar manner, by managing to post a Knight on the sixth rank (see introduction to Chapter 2).

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 d5 4.Bg5 Be7  
5.Nf3 Nbd7 6.e3 Ne4 7.Bxe7 Qxe7  
8.Rc1 c6 9.Bd3 f5 10.O-O O-O 11.Ne5  
Nxe5 12.dxe5 Bd7 13.Ne2 Be8  
14.Qc2 Qc7 15.f4 Qe7 16.cxd5 exd5  
17.Nd4 Rc8? 18.Bxe4 fxe4 19.Nb5  
Rd8 20.Nd6 Rxd6 21.exd6 Qxd6.

Apart from the pawn, Black has no compensation for the Exchange, his Bishop being on the wrong color. But if White should now play the inviting 22.Qc5, on the principle that a material advantage is best utilized by heading for the endgame, then comes 22...Qxc5 23.Rxc5 b6 24.Rc3 c5, and the positional state of affairs is very different. The Black Bishop has become "good", and comes into powerful play by going *via* b5 to d3. Moreover, Black will now have the

possibility of ...d4, which will make his central majority very dangerous.

White will be unable to prevent him from establishing either united passed pawns (if he exchanges on d4) or else a protected passed pawn (if he allows ...d3). In either case, Black will have more than enough compensation for the Exchange.

22.Qc3!

Preparing on the one hand for the following maneuver, which fixes the Black pawns on the same color as their Bishop, and on the other hand for the direct attack f5-f6.

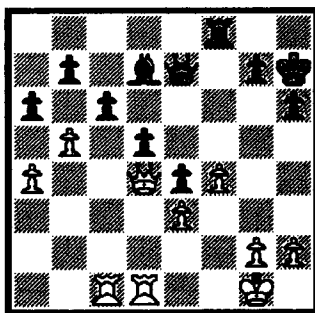
22...Bd7 23.b4 a6

This suits White's plans admirably; but 23...b6 would meet with the strong reply 24.f5! (24...Bxf5 25.Qxc6).

24.Qd4 h6 25.Rfd1 Qe7

The threat was 26.Qxe4.

26.a4 Kh7 27.b5!



Rooks need open files to show their full strength.

27...axb5 28.axb5 Ra8 29.bxc6 Bxc6

After 29...bxc6 30.Ra1, a White Rook will penetrate at a7.

30.Ra1 Ra3 31.Rxa3 Qxa3 32.Ra1  
Qb3 33.h3 Qd3 34.Qc5

Even now the endgame would not be a clear win: 34.Qxd3 exd3 35.Kf2 Bb5, and the Black passed pawn paralyzes the White pieces.

**34...Kg6 35.Ra8 Kh5**

Or 35...Kh7 36.f5 Qe2 37.Kh2, followed by 38.Qf8.

**36.Kh2**

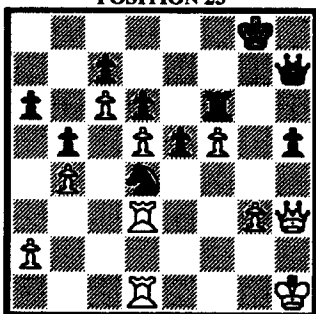
Threatening 37.Qd6 Qxd3 38.g4+ Kh4 39.Qe7+ g5 40.Qxg5+! hxg5 41.Rh8#.

**36...Qe2 37.Rg8**

Now if 37...Kg6 38.Qd4. Or 37...g5 38.Qd6, etc. The Black Bishop is useless.

**Black Resigned.**

POSITION 25



*(A pawn and a strong Knight position for the Exchange; from the Lasker-Janowski match, 1909).*

A Knight in the middle of the board, protected by a pawn and out of range of any enemy pawn, is stronger than a Bishop, and nearly as strong as a Rook (Dr. Tarrasch).

Here Black can soon win the f-pawn, while the d-pawn is also a weakling. All this combined outweighs the Exchange, as the sequel shows.

**1.Rf1 Qf7**

Not 1...Nxf5 at once, because of 2.Rdf3. Nor 1...Rxf5 2.Rxf5 Nxf5 3.Rf3. He could play 1...Rxf5 2.Rxf5 Qxf5, but would then have to look out for surprises; e.g. 3.Qxf5 Nxf5 4.Rf3 Nd4? 5.Rf6 Kg7 6.Rxd6! cxd6 7.c7, and White wins. Black's best policy is to keep the Queens on the board.

**2.Qg2?**

Falls in with Black's plan. Best would have been 2.Kh2 (2...Qxd5 3.Qxh5).

**2...Rxf5 3.Rxf5 Qxf5 4.Re3**

Costs another pawn, but White has no good continuation at his disposal. The most important lines (given by Tarrasch) are: 1) 4.Ra3 e4 5.Rxa6 e3 6.Ra3 e2, and wins. 2) 4.Rd1 Nf3 5.Rf1 e4, etc.

**4...Qb1+ 5.Kh2 Qxb4 6.g4 h4**

Black's program reads: push on with the Queenside pawns, but don't let the opponent become active.

**7.Kh3**

If 7.Rh3 Qe1.

**7...Qc4 8.Qe4**

Not 8.Kxh4 at once, because of 8...Nf5+; but now the h-pawn is untenable.

**8...Kg7 9.Kxh4 Qf1!**

Before he can bring the Queenside pawns forward Black must prevent 10.Kg5. The text move achieves this in a radical manner, preparing the reply 10...Qf6+ 11.Kh5 Qh6#.

**10.a3 a5 11.Kg3 Qg1+!**

White was again threatening to become active, this time by 12.Re1 Qc4 13.Rh1.

**12.Kh3**

Forced, for if 12.Kh4 Qh2+ 13.Rh3 Qf2+ 14.Rg3 Ne2, and White can resign.

**12...Qf2**

Immobilizes the Rook, for now 13.Re1 will not do because of 13...Nf3, while 13.Rc3 or 13.Rg3 both lose to 13...Ne2.

**13.g5 b4 14.axb4 axb4 15.Kg4 Qg1+**

This is unnecessary. The immediate 15...b3 was stronger. 16.Rh3 would be no threat, because after 16...Qg1+ 17.Rg3 Qd1+, White would have to

block the h-file with his own King.

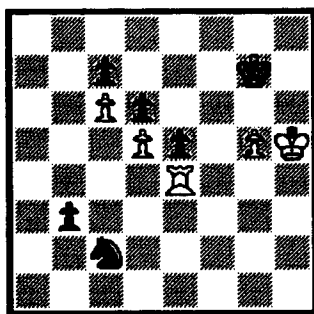
**16.Kh5 Qh2+ 17.Kg4 b3 18.Re1**

Threatening 19.Rh1.

**18...Qc2 19.Kh5**

After 19.Qxc2 bxc2 20.Rc1 Kg6 21.Kh4 e4 22.Kg4 e3, Black would win quickly.

**19...Qxe4 20.Rxe4 Nc2!**



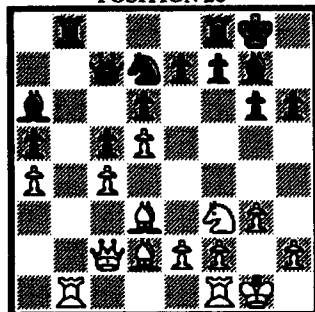
Thanks to this fine move, Black ensures that his opponent cannot stop the pawn. After 21.Rh4 b2 22.Rh1 comes 22...Na3.

**21.Rxe5 b2**

The simplest, but 21...dxe5 would also have won, as Tarrasch showed in his book, *Die Moderne Schachpartie*: 22.d6 b2 23.dxc7 b1=Q 24.c8=Q Qh1+ 25.Kg4 Ne3+ 26.Kg3 Qg2+ 27.Kh4 Qf2+ 28.Kh3 Qf3+ 29.Kh4 Ng2#.

**22.Re7+ Kf8 23.Rxc7 b1=Q 24.Rc8+ Ke7 25.Rc7+ Kd8 26.Rd7+ Ke8 27.Rxd6 Nd4 White Resigned.**

POSITION 26



(The Exchange counterbalanced by two positional advantages: two Bishops plus protected passed pawn; from the game Selesniev- Alekhine, Triberg 1921).

Black played:

**1...Rb4! 2.Bxb4 cxb4**

For the Exchange Black now has a whole string of advantages:

a) A protected passed pawn. b) The Bishop pair. c) White's weak a- and c-pawns. d) The square c5.

According to Alekhine, whose excellent annotations we are substantially following here, these advantages add up to more than the value of the Exchange.

**3.Nd2**

The Knight is the ideal piece for stopping a protected passed pawn; see Chapter 2, introduction.

**3...Nc5?**

An inexactitude, of which White makes excellent use. 3...Rc8 was correct, with 4...Bc3 or 4...Nb6 to follow.

**4.Nb3**

Black had supposed this to be impossible, because of the undefended a-pawn. If now 4...Nxa4 there follows very strongly 5.Ra1 Nc5 6.Nxa5 Bxa1 7.Rxa1 Kg7 (8.Bxg6! was threatened) 8.Nc6, and White stands the better.

**4...Nd7**

A painful decision, but after 4...Rc8 5.Nxc5 Qxc5 6.Rfc1 Bc3 7.Qb3 Qd4 8.Rxc3! bxc3 9.Rc1, White would have succeeded in restoring the balance.

**5.c5!**

Correct: this pawn was only obstructing the Bishop.

**5...Bxd3 6.exd3! dxc5 7.Rfe1**

7.Qc4 was another good move. Alekhine then intended the

promising pawn sacrifice, 7...Qd6  
8.Nxa5 Ne5 9.Qb3 Ra8, etc.

### 7...Ne5 8.Re3

Alekhine points out that the possibility 8.Qxc5 Nf3+ 9.Kf1 Qxc5 10.Nxc5 Nd2+ 11.Kg2 Nxb1 12.Rxb1 Rd8! is in Black's favor. He does not mention, however, the stronger alternative, 9.Kg2! Nxe1+ 10.Rxe1 Qxc5 11.Nxc5 Rc8 12.Nb3, or 10...Rc8 11.Qxc7 Rxc7 12.Nxa5 Ra7 13.Nc6, etc.

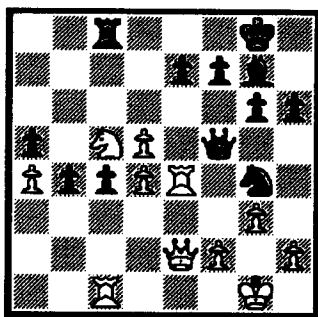
### 8...Rc8 9.Rc1 Qd7 10.d4 Ng4 11.Re4

Again White could have given back the Exchange, but this time it would have brought no relief. After 11.dxc5 Nxe3 12.fxe3 Qxa4 Black's united passed pawns would be too strong.

### 11...c4 12.Nc5

This is the only reasonable continuation, in view of the threat of 12...Nf6 and 13...Qxa4. If 12.Nxa5, there comes 12...Qxd5 13.Nxc4 Rxc4! 14.Qxc4 Qxe4 15.Qxb4 Bxd4, and wins.

### 12...Qf5 13.Qe2



White's hopes rested on this move, which attacks not only the Knight, but also the c- and e-pawns.

### 13...b3!!

A decidedly unexpected advance.

### 14.Rxg4

Other possibilities are: 1) 14.Qxg4 b2 15.Rb1 Qxg4 16.Rxg4 c3, and again the united passed pawns are too powerful. One nice possibility is 17.Nd3 Rc4 18.Nxb2 Rb4! 19.Re4 Kf8 20.Rc1 f5! 21.Nd3 fxe4 22.Nxb4 axb4 23.a5 Bxd4 24.a6 Kf7!, and wins (Alekhine). 2) 14.Rf4 Qh5 15.Rxg4 b2, with variations similar to those in the game.

### 14...b2 15.Qxb2

Now forced, for any Rook move along the back rank allows 15...Bxd4! with promotion of the pawn.

### 15...Qxg4 16.Rxc4

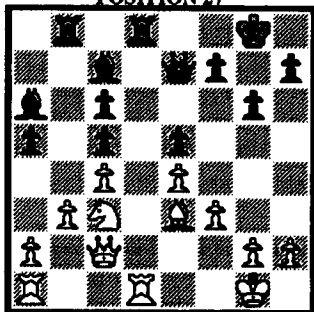
Apparently things have worked out well enough for White. True, he has relinquished the Exchange, but he has the initiative on the Queenside, and rejoices in the possession of an extra pawn.

### 16...h5!

But this move reveals a different side to the picture. Black opens a sharp attack on the King, and the sequel clearly shows that his chances are to be preferred. As the rest has no connection with our theme of the Exchange, we give it without comment.

17.Qc2 h4 18.Qd3 Rd8 19.f3 Qh5 20.Qe4 hxg3 21.hxg3 Qg5! 22.Kg2 Qd2+ 23.Kh3 Bf6! 24.Rc2 Qh6+ 25.Kg2 Kg7 26.g4 Rh8 27.Kf2! Rb8! 28.Ke2 Rb4 29.Rd2 Qh2+ 30.Ke3 Qg1+ 31.Ke2 Bxd4 32.Nd3 Rb1? 33.Nc1! Bc3 34.Qxb1 Qg2+ 35.Kd3 Qxd2+ 36.Kc4 Qd4+ 37.Kb3 Ba1! 38.Ka3 Qc5+ 39.Ka2 Bf6 40.g5 Qxd5+ 41.Nb3 Qxg5 42.Qe1 Qg2+ 43.Qd2 Qxf3 44.Qxa5 g5 45.Qe1 Qc3 46.Qxc3 Bxc3 47.a5 Bxa5 48.Nxa5 g4 49.Nc4 g3 50.Nd2 Kg6 51.Kb2 Kf5 52.Nf3 Kf4 53.Ng1 Ke3 54.Kc2 Kf2 55.Nh3+ Kf1  
White Resigned.

POSITION 27



(A case similar to Position 26; from the game Lyublinsky-Botvinnik, Moscow 1943).

We saw in Position 26 that the placing of a Rook at a strongly supported point on an open file gives winning chances, especially if the Bishop pair is retained. In the present case this possibility is in fact Black's only chance, in view of his seriously weakened pawn position.

**1...Rd4! 2.Ne2?**

He intends to take the Rook with the Knight rather than the Bishop. This is an interesting point – one, however, which we have already discussed in this book (see the introduction to Chapter 2 and Position 26). With the knowledge which we now have we can see that White is on the wrong track. He should have played 2.Bxd4 cxd4 3.Na4 c5 4.Nb2 followed by 5.Nd3. The Knight is the ideal piece for stopping an enemy passed pawn. He still has the same line at his disposal, by way of 3.Bxd4 cxd4 4.Nc1, followed by 5.Nd3.

**2...Bc8 3.Nxd4 cxd4 4.Bf2**

Another small inexactitude. The Bishop would have been much better placed at d2, covering two diagonals and in a position to support either Queenside operations (by a3 and b4) or an advance on the other wing (by f4).

**4...c5 5.Rf1 f5 6.Bg3**

To provoke ...f4

**6...Bd7 7.Rae1**

If 7.f4, then 7...Bc6! would follow, securing united passed pawns for Black (8.exf5 e4!). After the text move, however, there is a threat of 8.f4 Bc6 9.fxe5 Bxe4 10.Rxe4 fxe4 11.Qxe4.

**7...f4 8.Bf2 g5 9.g4?**

The White Rooks have no open file, and so cannot make their weight felt. The best plan consists in opening a file on the Queenside, the natural method being a3 and b4. It is possible that this was White's intention, but that he wished to see the Kingside closed first. This was false reasoning. Black does not permit the closing, and it transpires that the move played has only provided more targets for attack.

**9...fxg3 10.Bxg3**

A better chance was 10.hxg3. Then if 10...Bh3 11.g4 Bxf1 12.Rxf1 and 13.Bg3. Now the game has suddenly become a struggle of White's good Bishop on g3 against Black's bad one on c7. Nevertheless, Black still has the better of it, with more freedom of movement and with a choice of attacking lines (...a4 or ...h5). For this sort of position we refer the reader again to Chapter 1.

**10...Bh3 11.Rf2 h5 12.Rd2 h4**

The Steinitz method for making the best of two Bishops is in operation here: depriving the enemy pieces of all their best squares.

**13.Bf2 Rf8 14.Rd3 Rf4 15.Kh1 Kh7 16.Rg1**

Trying to hold back the decisive breakthrough, ...g4.

**16...Bd8 17.Qe2 Qf7**

Again threatening 18...g4.

**18.Qd1**

To meet 18...g4 with 19.fxg4 Rxf2 20.Rxh3. An important point is that if

18.Be1, then 18...g4! still follows:  
19.fxg4 Bxg4! 20.Rxg4 Rxg4 21.Qxg4  
Qf1+ and 22...Qxd3, with a won  
ending for Black.

**18...Qh5!**

After which no further defense  
against ...g4 is to be found, and White  
is reduced to desperation.

**19.Be3 Qxf3+ 20.Qxf3 Rxf3 21.Bxg5  
Rxd3 22.Bxd8 Re3**

Destroying White's last hope, which  
was based on the opposite colored  
Bishops. After this move Black gets  
connected passed pawns, which will  
care little about the color of the  
Bishops.

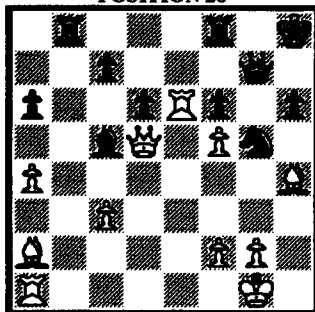
**23.Bb6 Rxe4 24.Bxc5 Re2 25.Rd1  
Bg4 26.h3**

Otherwise 26...Bf3+ and 27...Rg2+.

**26...Bxh3 27.b4 Bf5 28.Bd6 d3  
29.bxa5 h3 White Resigned.**

When the enemy King's position has  
been weakened, the type of Exchange  
sacrifice which we have been  
discussing in the last two examples  
can be rapidly decisive, especially if  
the outpost on the open file is still  
deeper inside enemy territory. Here  
are two supplementary examples  
from tournament practice.

POSITION 28

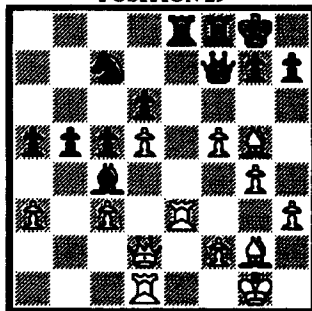


*(Invasion point on the sixth rank; from the  
third match game Najdorf- Trifunovic, 1949).*

The game went as follows:

**1.Rae1! Nx6 2.fxe6 Rbe8 3.Qf5 d5  
4.Bxd5 Be7 5.Be4 Rd8 6.f4! c6 7.Kh2  
Rd5 8.Bxd5 cxd5 9.Re3 Rg8 10.Rg3  
Qf8 11.Qxd5 Rxg3 12.Bxg3 f5 13.Bf2  
Kh7, and Black Resigned** without  
waiting for White's reply.

POSITION 29

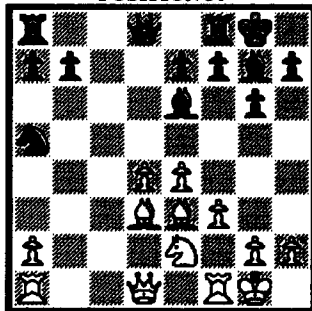


*(Invasion point again in the sixth rank;  
from the game Guimard-Michel, Mar del  
Plata 1949).*

White won by:

**1.Re6! Nx6 2.dxe6 Qc7 3.Bf4 Qa7  
4.Bxd6 Bb3 5.Bxf8 Kxf8 6.Qd6+ Qe7  
7.Qxe7+ Rxe7 8.Rd8+, and Black  
Resigned.**

POSITION 30



*(The Exchange counterbalanced by two  
Bishops and a weakened Kingside; from the  
first match game Bronstein-Boleslavsky,  
1950).*

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.cxd5  
Nxd5 5.e4 Nxc3 6.bxc3 c5 7.Bc4 Bg7**

**8.Ne2 O-O 9.O-O cxd4 10.cxd4 Nc6 11.Be3 Bg4 12.f3 Na5 13.Bd3 Be6.**

In this well-known position the offer of the Exchange by 14.d5 is very strong. The reason is to be found in the following considerations:

I. White gets the Bishop pair.

II. With the disappearance of the Bishop from g7, Black's ...g6 is only a weakening.

III. White has a pawn majority in the center, and this always favors the attacker. Black's Queenside majority will have more significance in the endgame.

**14.d5! Bxa1 15.Qxa1 f6**

A further weakening, which, however, is unavoidable, as White was threatening to regain the Exchange by 16.Bh6, leaving Black with no compensation for his weakened Kingside.

**16.Bh6 Qb6+**

It appears from the sequel that the Queen is not very safe here. 16...Re8 would have been more prudent. Then 17.Nf4 Bf7 (18.Bb5?? Qb6+).

**17.Kh1!**

White values his positional advantages higher than the Exchange. A game between the same opponents (Budapest 1950) had shown that White can regain the Exchange by 17.Nd4 Bd7 (there was a threat of 18.Rb1 Qc5 19.Rb5 Qa3 20.dxe6) 18.Rb1 Qc5 19.Rc1 Qb6 20.Bxf8 Rxf8 21.h4 Qd6, but this did not lead to a win.

**17...Rfd8?**

The only way to save the Exchange, but it does not improve Black's chances. 17...Bf7 would have been better.

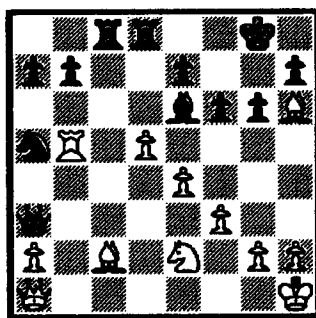
**18.Rb1 Qc5!**

Forced as the following variations show: 1) 18...Qf2 19.Qc3 Qh4 20.Bf4,

and wins. 2) 18...Qd6 19.Qc3 b6 20.Bf4 Qd7 (20...Qc5 21.Qxc5 bxc5 22.Bc7) 21.Bb5, and wins. 3) 18...Qc7 19.Bf4 and now 19...Qc8 fails against 20.Rc1, so that Black must play 19...Qc5, transposing into the actual game.

**19.Bd2!**

White has at his disposal another continuation in 19.Rb5, with the point 19...Qa3 20.Bc2 Bd7 21.Bc1, and Black will have to cede his Queen for two Rooks under unfavorable circumstances: 21...Qxc1+ 22.Qxc1 Bxb5 23.Nd4 Bd7 24.Qa3, etc. Nevertheless, 19.Rb5 is weaker than the move actually played, by reason of the defense indicated by Flohr: 19...Qa3 20.Bc2 Rac8!!, and now:



After 20...Rac8!! (analysis)

1) 21.Bc1 Qd6 22.Rxa5 Rxc2 23.dxe6 Qd1+, and wins. 2) 21.Qb1 Bd7 22.Bc1 Qd6 23.Rxa5 Qc7, winning a piece. 3) 21.Nd4! Rxc2! 22.Nxc2 Qa4. Now 23.Rxa5 fails against 23...Qxa5 24.dxe6 Qxa2!, so White must choose between 23.Qb2 and 23.Nd4, with about even chances in either case.

**19...b6**

19...Nc4 20.Qc3 costs Black material.

**20.Bb4 Qc7 21.Rc1 Qb7**

Or 21...Qd7 22.Nd4 Bf7 23.Bb5 Qb7 24.Bxa5 bxa5 25.Bc6, and wins.

**22.Qb1!**

With the double threat, 23.dxe6 and 23.Bxa5.



**22...Rab8**

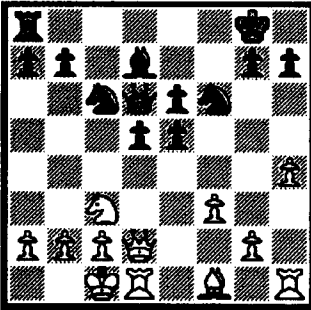
Losing hopelessly, but if 22...Bc8, White gets a rapidly winning attack by 23.Nf4, threatening 24.e5.

**23.dxe6**

A Rook is no match for two Bishops, especially when the position leaves something to be desired in other respects. White won quickly:

**23...Nc6 24.Bc3 Ne5 25.Bb5 Rbc8 26.Bxe5 Rxc1+ 27.Qxc1 fxe5 28.Bd7 Qa6 29.Ng3 Qxa2 30.h4 Rf8 31.Qg5 Rf6 32.Qxf6! Black Resigned.**

POSITION 31



*(The Exchange offset by a pawn and a preponderance in the center; from the game Bronstein-Stahlberg, Budapest 1950).*

**1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Be7 5.e5 Nfd7 6.h4 c5 7.Bxe7 Qxe7!? 8.Nb5 O-O 9.Nc7 cxd4 10.Nxa8 f6 11.Qxd4 Nc6 12.Qd2 fxe5 13.O-O-O Nf6 14.f3 Qd6 15.Ne2 Bd7 16.Nc3 Rxa8.**

It is a well-known fact that the owner of a strong pawn center often gets automatic attacking chances. The attempt to achieve such a center by an Exchange sacrifice is nothing new, and in practice it has been repeatedly successful. Nevertheless, its correctness must be questioned, as we shall show in the further course of this game.

**17.Ne4**

Logical and strong. To give the opponent no attacking chances, White is aiming to exchange minor pieces.

**17...Qe7 18.Nxf6+ Qxf6 19.Bb5 Nb8!**

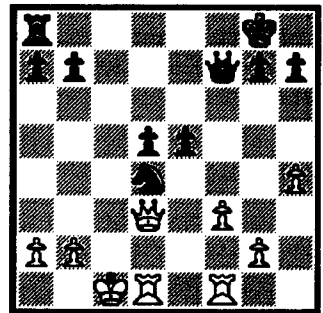
It is understandable that Black prefers to exchange a bad Bishop rather than a Knight.

**20.Qb4 Bxb5 21.Qxb5 Qf7 22.c4**

Apparently the pawn center is now demolished, since 22...Qc7 is impossible because of 23.Qe8#, while 22...dxc4 fails against 23.Rd8+. White's last move has weakened d4, and his King's position is too open for him to achieve his aims. Preference should have been given to 22.c3.

**22...Nc6! 23.cxd5 Nd4 24.Qd3**

Not 24.dxe6?? Qf4+. Nor can 24.Rxd4 be recommended because of 24...exd4 25.dxe6 Qxe6 26.Kb1 Qg6+ and 27...Qxg2.

**24...exd5 25.Rhf1!**

The only possibility of undermining the position of the Knight consists in the pawn advance f4.

**25...Qf4+ 26.Kb1 Rd8 27.g3!**

With this pawn offer, White succeeds in carrying out his plan.

**27...Qxg3 28.f4 Qxd3+ 29.Rxd3 Nc6 30.fxe5 Nxe5 31.Rd4 Nc6 32.Rdf4 Ne5**

Black cannot allow the invasion at f7. In material, Black has not done

badly, with two pawns for the Exchange; but positionally things are not so good for him, with the White Rooks connected, and open files at their disposal. White is justified in playing for a win.

**33.Rf5?**

33.Rd4 would have been stronger. Then, after 33...Nc6 34.Rd2 d4 35.Rdf2 Ne5, we should have the same position as could have occurred in the actual game, but with White a tempo to the good.

**33...Nc4 34.R1f2?**

The other Rook should have come back to this square. Then 34...d4 35.b3 Ne3 36.Re1 d3 37.Rd2, etc., still with winning chances for White. For the rest, 34.Re1 was also good.

**34...d4 35.b3?**

This loses. With 35.Rc5! White could have still drawn: 35...d3 36.Rxc4 d2 37.Rxd2 Rxd2 38.Rc8+ Kf7 39.Rc7+ Kf6 40.Rxb7 Rh2 41.Rb4.

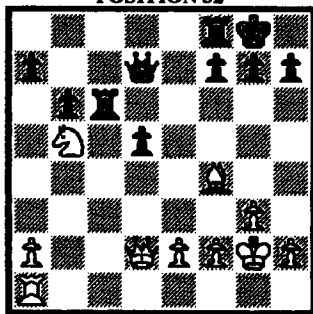
**35...d3! 36.bxc4 d2 37.Rxd2 Rxd2**

and Black won—

**38.Rb5 b6 39.Re5 Rd4 40.c5 Rxh4 41.Re8+ Kf7 42.Ra8 Rb4+ 43.Ka1 bxc5 44.Rxa7+ Kf6 45.Ra5 g5 46.Rxc5 g4 Black Resigned.**

## B. ROOK AGAINST TWO MINOR PIECES

POSITION 32



*(The minor pieces succeed by playing for the attack; from the third match game Capablanca-Alekhine, 1927).*

**1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 b6 3.g3 Bb7 4.Bg2 c5 5.O-O cxd4 6.Nxd4 Bxg2 7.Kxg2 d5? 8.c4! e6? 9.Qa4+ Qd7 10.Nb5 Nc6 11.cxd5 exd5 12.Bf4 Rc8 13.Rc1 Bc5? 14.b4! Bxb4 15.Rxc6 Rxc6 16.Qxb4 Ne4 17.Nd2 Nxd2 18.Qxd2? O-O.**

Black has a pawn as well as a Rook against two minor pieces, but in practice this is seldom enough. It is certain that the minor-piece player must go for the attack, for in that way he will make the most of his advantage. The Rook player will generally welcome exchanges, since it is in an endgame that he will have drawing chances. Position 32 is a classic example of the proper use of the minor pieces.

There followed:

**19.Rd1 Rc5 20.Nd4 Re8 21.Nb3 Rcc8 22.e3**

Naturally, not 22.Qxd5, which, apart from playing Black's game by inviting an ending, would quickly lose a pawn: 22...Qxd5 23.Rxd5 Rxe2 24.Rd2 Rxd2 25.Bxd2 Rc2, etc.

**22...Qa4 23.Qxd5!**

White, being committed to the attack, can allow Black two united passed pawns on the Queenside. From now on Black's attention will be divided between the two wings, and he will be unable to organize the defense of his King.

**23...Rc2**

Not the immediate 23...Qxa2, because of 24.Ra1 and 25.Rxa7.

**24.Rd2 Rxa2**

The best chance. After 24...Qxa2 White would win as follows: 25.Qd7 Rf8 26.Rxc2 Qxc2 27.Nd4 Qc5 28.Nf5, threatening 29.Ne7+ Kh8 30.Bd6 and 31.Ng6+.

**25.Rxa2 Qxa2 26.Qc6 Rf8 27.Nd4 Kh8**

Vacating g8 as a safe refuge for the Rook. The Yugoslav master Vukovic gives the following possibilities:

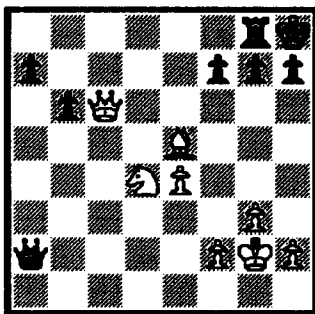
1) 27...Qa5 28.Bd6 Rd8 29.e4, followed by 30.Nf5 (or if 29...g6 30.Be7! Rxd4 31.Qc8+ and mate next move). 2) 27...Rd8 28.e4 h6 29.Be5 f6 30.Ne6, and wins. 3) 27...h6 28.Bd6 Rd8 29.e4 Qd2 (29...g6 30.Be7) 30.Nf5 g6 31.Bf4 Qd7 32.Qf6 gxf5 33.Bxh6 Qd4 34.e5 Qe4+ 35.f3 Qe2+ 36.Kh3 Qf1+ 37.Kh4 Rd4+ 38.Kg5, and wins.

**28.Be5**

With the threat 29.Bxg7+ Kxg7 30.Nf5+, followed by 31.Qf6 and mate.

**28...f6**

This weakening should, of course, have been avoided if possible, so 28...Rg8 came in for close consideration. The tempting 29.Bxg7+ is then incorrect, as Vukovic shows with the following remarkable variation: 29...Rxg7! 30.Qe8+ Rg8 31.Qe5+ Rg7 32.Nf5 f6! 33.Qxf6 Qd5+ 34.f3 Qd2+ 35.Kh3 Qd7, and in the ending which follows Black has an unstoppable a-pawn. (36.Qf8+ *draws= Ed.*) The correct line for White would have been 29.e4!, and now:



After 29.e4! (analysis)

1) 29...f6 30.Bxf6! gxf6 31.Qxf6+ Rg7 32.Ne6, and wins. 2) 29...Qb2 30.Nf3 Qb3 31.Ng5 f6 32.Qb5 Qa2 33.Qa4,

mating (34.Nf7#) or winning the Queen. 3) 29...Qa5 30.Nf3 f6 (30...Qc5 31.Ng5! Qe7 32.Qh6!) 31.Bd4! Rf8 (or 31...h6 32.e5 fxe5 33.Bxe5 Kh7 34.Qc2+ Kh8 35.Qg6, and wins) 32.Qd6 Kg8 33.Qe6+ Kh8 34.e5 fxe5 35.Nxe5, and wins.

**29.Ne6 Rg8 30.Bd4 h6**

A further weakening, but 30...a5 would have lost outright to 31.Nxg7! Rxg7 32.Qxf6 Qg8 33.h4, with h5-h6 to follow.

**31.h4! Qb1 32.Nxg7!**

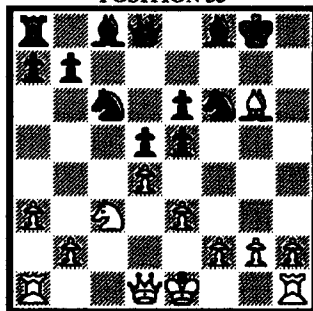
The decisive combination. White has carried out his plan with great singleness of purpose.

**32...Qg6**

There is nothing better. If 32...Kxg7, then follows 33.Qxf6+ Kh7 34.Qf7+, and mate next move; while if 32...Rxg7 the win is 33.Qxf6 Qe4+ 34.Kg1! Qb7 (or 34...Qb1+ 35.Kh2 Qh7 36.Qf8+) 35.Qxh6+ Kg8 36.Qxg7+, and Black has no chance in the pawn ending as White's King is within reach of the a-pawn.

**33.h5 Qf7 34.Nf5 Kh7 35.Qe4 Re8 36.Qf4 Qf8 37.Nd6 Re7 38.Bxf6 Qa8+ 39.e4 Rg7 40.Bxg7 Kxg7 41.Nf5+ Kf7 42.Qc7+ and Black Resigned.** He is mated in two moves.

POSITION 33



(The minor-piece side possesses two Bishops; from the game Tartakower-Bogolyubov, Bled 1931).

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.cxd5 cxd5 4.Nc3 Nf6 5.Nf3 Nc6 6.Bf4 e6 7.e3 Be7 8.Bd3 O-O 9.a3 Nh5 10.Be5 f6 11.Ng5 g6 12.Nxh7 fxe5 13.Nxf8 Bxf1 14.Bxg6 Nf6!

White has Rook and two pawns against two minor pieces; moreover, Black's Kingside is completely demolished. One would think that White must have more than sufficient compensation. There is nevertheless one factor in the position which will make White's game very difficult – namely, Black's two Bishops.

15.g4

Threatening 16.g5 Nh7 17.Qh5.

15...Nh7 16.h4 Bg7 17.Bxh7+

White is compelled by the pressure on d4 to take this drastic measure. After the simple 17.dxe5 Nxe5 18.Bc2 Black will quickly build up a strong attack: 18...Nc4 19.Qd3 Nf8 20.0-0 Bd7 and 21...Rc8.

17...Kxh7 18.Qc2+ Kh8 19.dxe5 Nxe5 20.O-O-O Bd7 21.h5 Rc8

Black is not interested in winning the g-pawn, thereby giving the White Rooks an opportunity of showing their paces on the g-file. Rather he concentrates all his strength against White's King position, the two Bishops giving invaluable service.

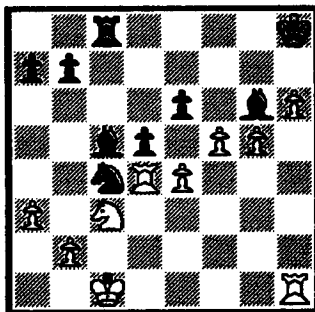
22.h6 Bf8 23.g5 Be8 24.f4 Bg6 25.e4

A consequence of the previous move. If now 25...Bxe4, then 26.Qxe4 dxe4 27.Rxd8 Rxd8 28.fxe5.

25...Nc4 26.Qd3 Qb6

Forcing White into the following simplification. 26...Bxe4 would have been less clear: 27.Qd4+ e5 28.Qxe4 dxe4 29.Rxd8 Rxd8 30.f5, etc.

27.Qd4+ Qxd4 28.Rxd4 Bc5 29.f5!



White's best counterchance. 29.Rdd1 Be3+ would have been hopeless.

29...exf5

Black prefers to keep his Bishops. After 29...Bxd4 30.fxg6 White could have fished in troubled waters, e.g. 30...Be3+? 31.Kb1 Nxa3+ 32.bxa3 Rxc3 33.g7+ Kh7 34.g6+ and wins. And after the stronger 30...Nxa3 31.bxa3 Bxc3, the White passed pawns still pose some problems for Black.

30.Rxd5 fxe4 31.Kb1

The Knight must be unpinned, and this is the only way (31.Kd1? Ne3+).

31...e3+ 32.Ka1 Nb6 33.Re5 Bd4 34.Re6 Bf5

The tempting 34...Rxc3 (35.bxc3 Bxc3+ 36.Ka2 Bf7, or 35.Rxb6 axb6 36.bxc3 Bxc3+ 37.Ka2 e2) would have been answered by 35.Rxg6!.

35.Re7 Nc4 36.Rh4 Nxa3!

Notice how Black is always careful to keep his two Bishops, making no use of the chance of winning White's c-pawn after 36...Bxc3. After the text move the Bishop is indirectly covered (37.Rxd4? Nc2+).

37.bxa3 Bxc3+ 38.Ka2 Bd2 39.Rf4 Bh7 40.Rd4

Not 40.Rff7? Bg8.

40...Bg8+ 41.Kb1 Bh7+ 42.Ka2 Rg8

Black has been repeating moves to gain time. Now begins the decisive phase.

**43.Rdd7 Bf5 44.Rxb7 a5**

It is remarkable how helpless the White Rooks are.

**45.a4**

White cannot prevent the maneuver which follows. If 45.Rb3, then comes 45...Bc2.

**45...Bd3 46.Rbd7 e2 47.Rxd3 e1=Q  
48.Rxe1 Bxe1**

The ending is an easy win for Black:

**49.Rd5 Kh7 50.Kb3 Kg6 51.Kc4 Rb8  
52.Rb5 Re8 53.Rd5 Re4+ 54.Rd4  
Rxd4+ 55.Kxd4 Bd2 56.Kc4 Bxg5 and  
White Resigned.**

## CHAPTER 5

# EQUIVALENTS FOR THE QUEEN

To the question of how many pieces the Queen is worth, no conclusive answer can be given, since so much depends on the nature of the position.

In the endgame it is demonstrable that the Queen cannot win against two minor pieces, apart from some exceptional cases. The strength of the Queen consists in her mobility, and the consequent facility with which she wins material by checking. When there is little or nothing left to be won this mighty piece suffers a decrease in strength.

We have divided this chapter into:

- A. Queen against two minor pieces.
- B. Queen against three minor pieces.
- C. Queen against Rook and Bishop or Rook and Knight.
- D. Queen against two Rooks.

Against two minor pieces the Queen ought to win, but she can only be in one place at a time, and so has to put all her agility into the fight. The Queen is not happy in defense, which explains the fact that once in a while she will get the worst of it against two pieces.

On the other hand, the Queen is no match for three minor pieces, especially if the pieces are on the attack. Queen against Rook, Knight and pawn, or Rook, Bishop and pawn gives something like equilibrium, but in these cases too it is important that the Queen should be able to attack.

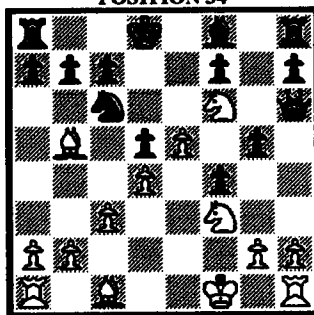
Two Rooks are stronger than the Queen if they can cooperate, and if their King is well protected. If these requirements are not fulfilled, however, the Queen is in her element,

and this is why in master practice one comes across more examples of the Queen's advantage than of her disadvantage. The Queen is a particularly dangerous piece if the opposing King's position is broken open. In such cases the Queen's checking powers speak continually, and she usually succeeds in having the last word.

We give two examples of each combination of pieces against the Queen. Our ultimate concern here is the value of the pieces, and not primarily to ascertain what usually happens in practice. If that were the case, the positions of Section C ought to be brilliant wins, as the attentive reader will realize from some of our previous examples (see, for instance, the upshot of Positions 1, 7, and 8 and the note to move 33 of Position 13).

### A. QUEEN AGAINST TWO MINOR PIECES

POSITION 34



*(The minor pieces have an attack on the King; from the game Spielmann-Moller, Goteborg 1920).*

**1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.Qf3 Nc6 4.c3 Nf6**

5.d4 d5 6.e5 Ne4 7.Bb5? Qh4+ 8.Kf1  
g5 9.Nd2 Bg4 10.Nxe4 Bxf3 11.Nxf3  
Qh6 12.Nf6+ Kd8

Under normal circumstances the two minor pieces will clearly get the worst of it against the Queen; but the purpose of this example is to show that given favorable conditions the minor pieces can make things very difficult – so difficult, indeed, that the Queen may even have to pay the piper.

Here White has some lead in development, while the enemy King must stay in the middle for the time being. To make use of these factors, White must attack at once.

**13.h4! Be7**

If 13...g4 there follows 14.Ng5 Qg6 15.Bxf4, threatening to continue the attack with 16.h5.

**14.Nxg5 Qg6 15.Nxd5 Bxg5 16.hxg5 Qc2**

The simple 16...Qxg5 was much stronger. The Queen is decidedly not well placed on c2, as is soon apparent.

**17.Be2**

Now, if Black attempts to end the separation of his Rooks by playing 17...Kd7, White will put a spoke in his wheel by 18.Bg4+.

**17...Ne7 18.Nxf4 c5?**

Black takes his task too lightly. A much better preparation for ...Kc7 would have been 18...c6.

**19.Rh3! cxd4?**

Missing his last chance of withdrawing his King into safety. After 19...Kc7 20.d5, or 19...Qf5 20.g4 Qd7 21.d5, Black would also have found things none too easy.

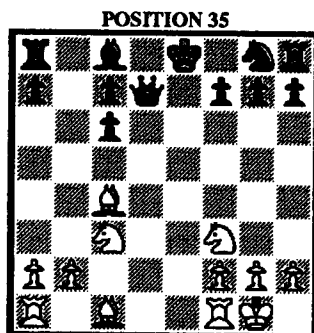
**20.Rd3!**

Threatening to win the Queen by 21.Bd1. The Queen has no escape, for 20...Qa4 is met by 21.Rxd4+.

**20...Kc7 21.Bd1 Qxd3+ 22.Nxd3**

and Black Resigned after a few more moves:

**22...dxc3 23.bxc3 Rad8 24.Be2 Nf5  
25.Bf4 Kb8 26.Rb1 b6 27.e6+ Kc8  
28.Ne5.**



*(The minor pieces include two Bishops, and they have an attack on the King; from the game Marshall-Halper, New York 1941).*

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4 4.c3 dxc3  
5.Bc4 d6 6.Qb3 Qd7 7.Qxc3? d5!  
8.exd5 Bb4 9.dxc6 Bxc3+ 10.Nxc3  
bxc6 11.O-O.**

The situation is now somewhat as in Position 34, but the game is more open, so that the Bishops come into their own all the better. For Black it is now essential to finish development; to which end 11...Qf5!, answering 12.Re1+ with 12...Be6, is the indicated line. 11...Nf6 is less strong, because of 12.Re1+ Kf8 13.Be3 h6 14.Bc5+, followed by 15.Re7, with a winning attack. The actual continuation was:

**11...Ne7? 12.Bxf7+! Kf8**

The endgame after 12...Kxf7 13.Ne5+ would be in White's favor, on account of his better pawn position.

**13.Bb3 Bb7 14.Be3 Nf5**

Fine, who gave this game a close examination, and whose analysis we are following in part, showed that 14...Nd5 is no better: 15.Bc5+ Kg8 16.Ne5 Qe6 17.Rae1, and Black is at a

loss for a good continuation, e.g. 17...Re8 18.Nxc6!, or 17...Rd8 18.f4 h6 19.f5 Qf6 20.Ng6 Kh7 21.Ne4!, winning the Queen.

**15.Bc5+ Nd6 16.Nd4**

Black labors under the same difficulties as in the previous game; he cannot get his Rooks into play. After this Knight move, the move 16...g6 would be answered by 17.Ne6+.

**16...Re8 17.Rfe1 h5**

This loses the Exchange, so that White already has Rook and Bishop for the Queen. But 17...Rxe1+ 18.Rxe1 h5 19.Ne6+ Kf7 20.Nxc7+ is worse still: 1) 20...Kf8 21.Bxd6+ Qxd6 22.Re8#. 2) 20...Kf6 21.Bxd6 Qxd6 22.Re6+, and wins. 3) 20...Kg6 21.Re6+, and wins.

**18.Ne6+ Rxe6**

Or 18...Kf7 19.Nxc7+, followed by 20.Nxe8.

**19.Bxe6 Qd8 20.Re5 Rh6**

At last the Rook puts in an appearance, but it is far too late now.

**21.Rae1 Bc8 22.Bb3 Bd7 23.Be3 Nf5**

Other possibilities are:

1) 23...Rh8? 24.Bg5, followed by 25.Be7+, and wins. 2) 23...Rg6 24.Rxh5 Nf7 25.Bc5+ Kg8 26.Re7 Rf6 27.Ne4, and wins.

**24.Bxh6 gxh6 25.Ne4 Kg7 26.Nc5 Kf6**

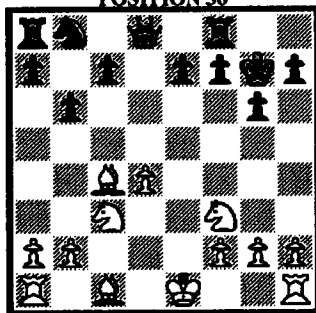
After 26...Bc8 White wins by 27.Re8 Qd4 28.Rxc8, etc.

**27.Nxd7+ Qxd7 28.Be6 and Black Resigned.**

## B. QUEEN AGAINST THREE MINOR PIECES

*(A well-known possibility in the Grunfeld Defense; from the game Kmochn-Prins, Amsterdam 1940).*

POSITION 36



**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Qb3 dxc4 6.Qxc4 O-O 7.e4 b6? 8.e5! Be6 9.exf6 Bxc4 10.fxg7 Kxg7 11.Bxc4**

White dominates the game. An examination of the position reveals that Black can undertake nothing, while his own position is beset with perils.

It is noteworthy that it is the weakening produced by the fianchetto which particularly hampers him. If only the b-pawn were unmoved, his game might yet be tenable.

**11...Nc6 12.Be3 Nb4**

12...Na5 would have been stronger. The enterprising move actually played forces the exchange of one of the White Bishops, it is true, but leads at the same time to the opening of the f-file, and this is speedily fatal.

**13.O-O Nc2 14.Rad1 Nxe3 15.fxe3 c5?**

A blunder which puts an untimely end to the fight. Even with best play the game could not have been saved in the long run.

**16.Ng5!**

Now Black has no way of defending f7, and his game collapses.

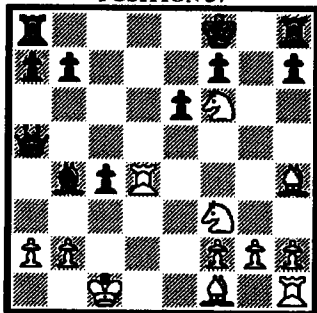
**16...e6 17.Rxf7+!**

**Black Resigns**, for if 17...Rxf7 18.Nxe6+ wins his Queen, while if



17...Kh6 18.Rxh7+ Kxg5 19.h4+ Kg4 (or 19...Kf6 20.Rf1#) 20.Be2+ Rf3 (or 20...Kg3 21.Ne4#) 21.Bxf3+ Kf5 22.Rf7+ Qf6 23.g4#.

POSITION 37



*(The player with the Queen has his King in an unsafe position; from the game Fine-Grünfeld, Amsterdam 1936).*

1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.c4 e6 4.Nc3 dxc4 5.e4 Bb4 6.Bg5 c5 7.e5 cxd4 8.Qa4+ Nc6 9.O-O-O Bd7 10.Ne4 Be7 11.exf6 gxf6 12.Bh4 Nb4 13.Qxb4 Bxb4 14.Nxf6+ Kf8 15.Rxd4 Qa5 16.Nxd7+ Ke8 17.Nf6+ Kf8

Due to the insecure Black King, the minor-piece player here has a very favorable game, if not an outright win.

#### 18.Bxc4

White has time to develop his pieces. 18.Ne5 (Gereben-de Groot, Munich, 1936) is somewhat too hasty. That game continued 18...h5 19.Ned7+? Kg7 20.Bxc4 Rhc8, and the vital connection of the Rooks is accomplished. The rest of the game was 21.Kb1 Bc3 22.Re4 Bxb2 23.Kxb2 Qd2+ 24.Kb1 b5 25.Bb3 Qd3+ 26.Ka1 Qc3+, with a draw by perpetual check.

After the stronger 18.Ne5 h5! 19.Bxc4 Black also has chances, according to Fine, by 19...Rc8 20.Kb1

Be7 21.Rhd1 Kg7 22.Ned7 Rhd8. But the text move makes Black's game much more difficult.

#### 18...Rc8 19.Kb1 h5 20.Rhd1 Be7.

Threatening not only to win a piece by 21...Bxf6 22.Bxf6 Qf5+, but also to play simply 21...Kg7 and 22...Rhd8. But White parries very easily, still strengthening his position.

#### 21.Nd7+ Ke8 22.Bg3

Maintaining the pressure. 22.Bxe7 Kxe7 23.Nde5 Rhe8 would only develop Black's game.

#### 22...Rg8 23.h3

Preventing 23...Rg4.

#### 23...Rg7

The Rooks must seek separate employment. This move prepares ...f6 and ...e5.

#### 24.a3

An innocent-looking move, but in reality a very good one. The explanation is that Fine intends later on to establish a Knight or Bishop on f6, and must first move his King to a2 to avoid the Queen check at f5.

#### 24...b5

Seeking counterplay.

#### 25.Bb3 b4

Fine suggested the stronger line, 25...Qa6 26.Be5 Rxc2 27.Nf6+ Kf8 28.Nxh5, with some counterplay for Black.

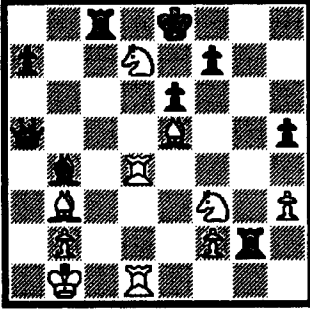
#### 26.axb4 Bxb4

The attempt at attack by 26...Qf5+ 27.Ka2 Rc6 would be refuted by 28.Nc5!.

#### 27.Be5

Leading to a pretty finish.

#### 27...Rxc2



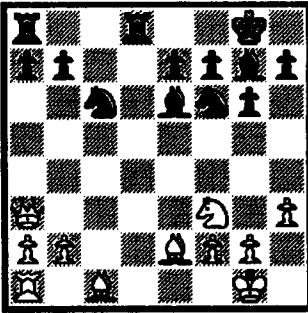
28.Rxb4! Qxb4 29.Nf6+ Ke7 30.Rd7+ Kf8 31.Bd6+ Qxd6 32.Rxd6 Rxf2 33.Rd3

With three pieces against Rook and two pawns, White has an easily won game. The game finished as follows:

33...Ke7 34.Nxh5 Rf1+ 35.Bd1 Rg8 36.Nd4 e5 37.Nc6+ Ke6 38.Ka2 Rxd1 39.Rxd1 Rg5 40.Nf4+ exf4 41.Nd4+ Kf6 42.Rf1 Ra5+ 43.Kb1 Ra4 44.Nf3 Re4 45.Re1 Re6 46.Rxe6+ fxe6 47.Kc2 e5 48.Kd3 Kf5 49.Nd2 Kg5 50.Ke4 Kh4 51.Kxe5 Kxh3 52.Kxf4 Black Resigned.

### C. QUEEN AGAINST ROOK AND BISHOP OR ROOK AND KNIGHT

POSITION 38



(The Queenless side has a positional advantage; from the game Najdorf-Ragozin, Saltsjobaden 1948).

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Qb3 dxc4 6.Qxc4 O-O 7.e4 Bg4 8.Ng5!? Nc6 9.d5 Ne8 10.h3 Ne5 11.Qb3

Bc8 12.Be2 c6 13.O-O cxd5 14.Nxd5 Nc6 15.Nf3 Nd6 16.Rd1 Be6 17.Qa3 Nxe4 18.Nf6+ Nxf6 19.Rxd8 Rfxd8

Rook, Knight and pawn generally mean full compensation for the Queen. In the present case there is a little positional advantage as well, consisting of a lead in development sufficient at least to ensure the advance of Black's center pawn. The extra freedom of movement which must result from this gives Black the better chances.

20.Bd2?

This enables Black to improve the placement of his Knight with gain of tempo. Better was 20.Bg5 or 20.Be3.

20...Ne4 21.Be3 Nd6 22.Rc1

Preventing 22...Nc4, but permitting another strong Knight move. After 22.Re1 White could have answered 22...Nf5 with 23.Bc1, but in that case, of course, Black would have played 22...Nc4 23.Bxc4 Bxc4 24.b3 Bd5 and the two Bishops would begin to pull their weight.

22...Nf5 23.Bf4?

This allows Black to advance his center pawn with gain of tempo. White however has not enough points of contact for forming a sound plan, since he exerts so little influence in the center.

In the tournament book, Pirc suggested 23.Bc4, but then Black gets a good game simply by 23...Bxc4 24.Rxc4 e5. The provocation of ...b6 by 23.Bc5 b6 24.Be3, another suggestion from Pirc, achieves little after 24...Bd5. Probably best is Kmoch's idea 23.Ng5, e.g. 1) 23...Nxe3 24.Nxe6! Rd6 25.Nxg7 Nd5 26.Nh5 and White regains his pawn, attaining material advantage. 2) 23...Bd5 24.Bf3 Nxe3 25.Qxe3, and White has some counterplay, e.g. 25...Bxb2 26.Rb1 Bd4 27.Qf4, etc.

23...Bd5 24.Bc4 Bxc4 25.Rxc4 e5  
26.Bg5

Rather than driving the Rook to a better square by this move, he should have chosen 26.Bd2.

26...Rd1+ 27.Kh2 h6 28.Rc1 Rd7  
29.Be3 e4

Opens the diagonal for the Bishop, and sets up a splendid strongpoint at d3 for the other pieces.

30.Ne1 Rad8 31.Bc5

White can hold off the Rook incursion no longer, for 31.Bf4 would be answered by 31...g5 32.Be3 Be5+ 33.g3 Nxe3 34.Qxe3 f5, speedily followed by ...Rd2.

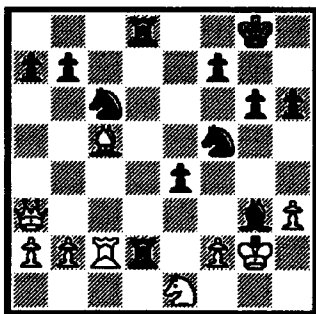
31...Be5+ 32.g3

Forced, for if 32.Kg1, there comes the decisive 32...Rd2 33.Rb1 (33.Rc2? Rxc2 34.Nxc2 Rd1+ and mate next move) 33...Re2, followed by 34...Rdd2.

32...Rd2

This wins a pawn, by the double threat of 33...Bxb2 and 33...Bxg3+.

33.Rc2 Bxg3+ 34.Kg2



This sets a cunning trap: if Black plays the seemingly decisive 34...Bxf2 35.Bxf2 e3, there follows 36.Qc3! exf2 37.Rxd2 fxe1=Q 38.Rxd8+ and 39.Qxe1. Black could do better at move 37 by choosing, not a Queen, but a Knight (with check!). This leads after 38.Kf1 Rxd2 39.Qxd2 Nf3 to an ending with Queen against three

Knights and two pawns. In spite of this weight of material the game would still not be a win for Black, since Knights cooperate so poorly. For that matter it is just as well that Black did not trust in this line, since White has a much stronger move in 38.Kf2!, after which Black gets only two Knights for the Queen!

34...Be5! 35.Kf1 Rxc2

This is an inexactitude. It was not necessary to relieve White of his poorly placed Rook by this exchange. 35...Rd1! immediately would have been stronger.

36.Nxc2 Rd1+ 37.Ke2

Not 37.Kg2 because of 37...Nh4#.

37...Rb1 38.b4 Rb2 39.Kd1 Rb1+  
40.Kd2 Bf6!

Initiating the decisive attack.

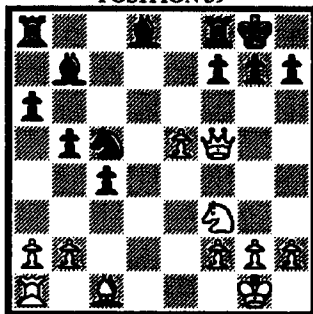
41.Bxa7 Ne5! 42.Qa4

Intending to get the Queen into play at e8, but it is too late. In this game the White Queen has achieved nothing at all.

42...Nf3+ 43.Ke2 Ng1+

The game was adjourned here, and White Resigned without resuming play. Black has a forced win by 44.Kd2 Nf3+ 45.Ke2 Nd6 46.Qd7 (the threat was 46...b5 47.Qa6 Nc4 and 48...Ng1#) 46...Ng1+ 47.Ke3 Rd1 48.Nd4 Rd3+ 49.Kf4 Ne2+ 50.Nxe2 Rf3+ 51.Kg4 h5#.

POSITION 39



*(The owner of the Queen is on the attack; from the game Euwe-Grünfeld, Zandvoort, 1936).*

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.Nf3 a6 4.e3 e6  
5.Bxc4 Nf6 6.O-O c5 7.Qe2 Nc6 8.Rd1  
b5 9.Bb3 c4 10.Bc2 Nb4 11.Nc3 Nxc2  
12.Qxc2 Bb7 13.d5 exd5 14.e4 Be7  
15.e5 Nd7 16.Nxd5 O-O 17.Qf5 Nc5  
18.Nf6+ Bxf6 19.Rxd8 Bxd8

Here, in contrast with the previous position, the respective chances are sharply defined. White must attack the King, helped by his pawn on e5; Black must make use of the d-file and his Queenside pawn majority. His possession of the outpost at d3 is obviously an important trump.

#### 20.Ng5

Forcing Black to relinquish the Bishop pair, for if he should weaken his King's position instead, White's material advantage would soon be decisive.

#### 20...Bxg5 21.Bxg5

The strong position of this Bishop deprives Black of any opportunity of playing for control of the d-file. The Bishop cannot be repulsed except by pushing up the pawns which protect the King.

#### 21...Rfe8

Black would have done better to play 21...Be4, getting the Bishop over to defend the Kingside. White now prevents this maneuver.

#### 22.Re1 Re6 23.Re3 Rae8?

This must be considered the decisive mistake. There was a stronger line in 23...h6 24.Bf6 Nd7!. And 23...Rg6 was also better than the move played.

#### 24.h4

Now 24...Rg6 can be met with 25.h5.

#### 24...h6 25.Bf6!

White threatens 26.Rg3 g6 27.Rxg6+,

etc., while after 25...gxf6 26.exf6 the double threat of 27.Qg4+ and 27.Qxc5 turns the scale. Notice that 25...Nd7 would now only be beating the air, for White can continue with 26.Rg3 now that his King has a flight square (26...Nxf6 27.exf6 Re1+ 28.Kh2). This is where the present variation differs from that given at Black's 23rd move.

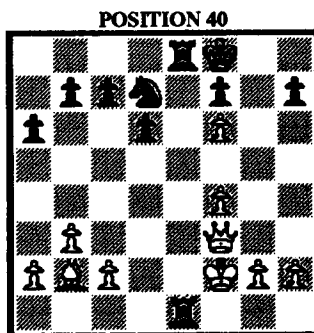
#### 25...g6 26.Qf4 Kh7 27.Bg5!

Attacking the h-pawn and the f-pawn simultaneously. Now 27...hxg5 fails against 28.Qxf7+ and then if 28...Kh8 29.hxg5 and 30.Rh3; or if 28...Kh6 29.hxg5+ Kxg5 30.Rg3+ Kh6 31.f4.

#### 27...f5 28.exf6

**Black Resigned;** He is helpless against the many threats.

### D. QUEEN AGAINST TWO ROOKS



*(The Queen on the attack; from a match game, Janowski-Lasker, 1909).*

It is true enough that two Rooks are generally stronger than the Queen, but in positions where the player with the Rooks has his King exposed, so that it can be checked from left and right, things are different. The Queen's great mobility gives her all

sorts of chances.

In Position 40 the pawn on f6 guarantees White a winning advantage. There followed:

**1.Qxb7?**

1.Qh5, threatening 2.Qh6+, would have been instantly decisive: 1) 1...R8e2+ 2.Qxe2 Rxe2+ 3.Kxe2, and the endgame is easy to win. 2) 1...R8e6 2.f5 R6e4 3.Bc3 R1e3 4.Qh6+, followed by 5.Qxe3. 3) 1...R8e4 2.Bc3 R1e3 3.Qxh7 Ke8 4.h4, and this pawn will be too strong. 4) 1...R8e3 2.Bc3!, again forcing transition to the endgame.

**1...R1e2+ 2.Kf3 Rxc2 3.Bd4 a5 4.Qb5 Nc5 5.Qxa5 Nd3 6.Be3**

Countering the threat of 6...Ne1+, followed by 7...Rxc2+.

**6...d5 7.Bd2!**

Because White had wandered off on a side-track, the Black Rooks were suddenly becoming very active. There was a new threat of 7...Ne1+ 8.Qxe1 d4 9.Qb4+ c5. The text move swings the game in White's favor again.

**7...c5 8.Kg3 Nc1?**

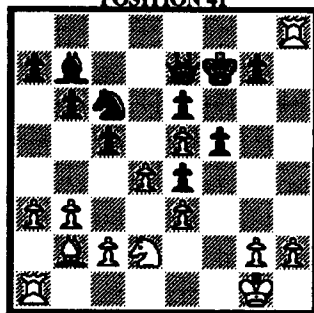
After the best move, 8...d4, White would win as follows: 9.f5 (threatening 10.Bh6+ Kg8 11.Qb5), and then 1) 9...Nc1 10.Bh6+ Kg8 11.Qb5 Rd8 12.Qf1 Nxa2 13.Qf4. 2) 9...Ne5 10.Bh6+ Kg8 11.Qb5 Rd8 12.Qf1 d3 13.Qe1! d2 (13...Nc6 14.Qe3) 14.Bxd2 Rxd2 15.Qxc6, and White's advantage is far too great.

**9.Bxc1**

**Black Resigned**, since after 9...Rxc1 10.Qd2 he loses his last trump, the passed pawn.

*(The Rooks on the attack; from the game Euwe-Rubinstein, Mährisch-Ostrau 1923).*

POSITION 41



**1.Nf3 d5 2.d4 Nf6 3.e3 e6 4.Bd3 c5 5.b3 Nc6 6.O-O Bd6 7.Bb2 O-O 8.a3 b6 9.Ne5 Bb7 10.Nd2 Qe7 11.f4 Rfd8 12.Rf3 Ne4 13.Rh3 f5 14.Bxe4 dxe4 15.Qh5 Bxe5 16.Qxh7+ Kf7 17.fxe5 Rh8 18.Qxh8 Rxh8 19.Rxh8**

To show their full strength, Rooks must cooperate, and this cooperation is not apparent in Position 41. However, White is threatening to bring it about by bringing his Queen Rook to f4.

**19...Ba6**

The best countermove. This not only stops Rf1, but also prevents the Knight from traveling via c4 to the dominating post at d6.

**20.Nf1 Qd7?**

After this inferior move, White's advantage is decisively strengthened. The right way was 20...Bxf1 21.Rxf1 Qg5 with some counterplay, since White still cannot connect his Rooks (22.Rf4 cxd4!).

**21.Rd1**

A pawn sacrifice in the interests of better cooperation among the White pieces.

**21...Nxe5 22.d5!**

Attacking the Knight, so that Black cannot prevent the opening of the d-file.

**22...Ng4 23.dxe6+ Qxe6 24.Rhd8**

The aim is accomplished, and White now threatens to end the game forthwith by 25.R1d7+.

**24...Bb5 25.c4 Be8 26.R1d5 f4!**

Black's best counterchance, and in any case preferable to 26...Nf6, after which White plays 27.Re5 and wins the f-pawn. With the move played, Black at least gets a dangerous passed pawn.

**27.h3**

Not 27.exf4? e3 and the pawn goes through to Queen.

**27...fxe3**

Threatening 28...e2.

**28.Ng3 e2**

In order to play 29...Ne3, but this is playing White's game. 28...Nf6 would have been a little better.

**29.Nxe2 Ne3 30.Rg5 g6 31.Nf4 Qe7 32.Rxg6!**

The refutation of Black's 28th move. If now 32...Qxd8 33.Rg7+ Kf8 34.Ne6#.

**32...Nf5 33.Rf6+ Kg8 34.Rxe8+ Qxe8 35.Rxf5 e3 36.Rg5+ Kh7**

Or 36...Kf8 37.Ng6+ Kf7 38.Nh8+ Kf8 39.Re5, winning the e-pawn, whereupon the rest is easy.

**37.Rh5+**

**Black Resigned**, for he loses his Queen after 37...Kg8 38.Rh8+.

## INTRODUCTION TO PARTS TWO - FIVE

### PAWN FORMATIONS

The French chess master and musician, Philidor, who lived in the eighteenth century, once said that pawns are the soul of chess. Since his time nearly two centuries have gone, but however much the theories of chess strategy and tactics change their ground, Philidor's dictum is as true as ever. Indeed, so important are the pawns that we are devoting all the rest of this volume to the study of pawn formations. We shall break down these pawn formations into various categories.

First we shall study positions with center pawns. In Part II we examine one by one all the various central pawn configurations, bearing on the four central squares e4, e5, d4, d5.

In Part III we review positions in which pawns not placed in the center are involved. Naturally, this will cover a great deal of territory.

In Part IV we analyze positions in which there is a struggle to obtain and control open lines. This will depend heavily on the particulars of both side's pawn formation.

Finally, in Part V we discuss various "sub-structures" of pawn formations - e.g. isolated, doubled, or hanging pawns. Often such structures are weak or at least vulnerable, yet fairly often there will be countervailing tendencies which provide various degrees of compensation to their owner. The peculiarities accompanying these various formations can provide opportunities to their pieces in terms of open lines or control of important squares.

In what follows the reader will notice that we repeatedly mention

support-points. Therefore we shall delineate what qualities a support-point must possess:

1) It must be possible to post a piece there.

2) It must be protected by at least one pawn.

3) No enemy pawn should be able to attack it - at least not for the time being.

4) Preferably it should be a central square, or else a square in or near the opponent's half of the board.

We give a simple example: after 1.d4 d5 2.Bf4 the square f4 is not a support-point, for even though White could give it pawn protection by 3.e3, there remains the possibility that the Bishop may be pushed back by ...f6 and ...e5. If Black replies to 2.Bf4 with 2...f5, then the e5 square does become a support-point.

## PART TWO CENTER FORMATIONS

### CHAPTER 6 SYMMETRICAL CENTER FORMATIONS

Symmetrical central pawn formations do not, in general, allow a suitable basis for attacking operations. The reason is that in most cases there will be one or more files which both sides will have to occupy (otherwise the opponent would achieve dominance there), and the result will usually be exchanges with consequent drawish tendencies. Cases in which the equilibrium is decisively altered are not rare, but these would be usually attributable to a lead in development. We now define four forms of symmetrical center:

**A. The Vanished Center.** (All four center pawns are exchanged off).

**B. The Queen's Pawn Center.** (White d-pawn on d4, Black's on d5).

**C. The King's Pawn Center.** (White's e-pawn on e4, Black's on e5).

**D. The Symmetrical Four-Pawns Center.**

(i) with e-pawns forward (White's e-pawn on e4, d-pawn on d3; Black's e-pawn on e5, d-pawn on d6).

(ii) with d-pawns forward (White's d-pawn on d4, e-pawn on e3; Black's d-pawn on d5, e-pawn on e6).

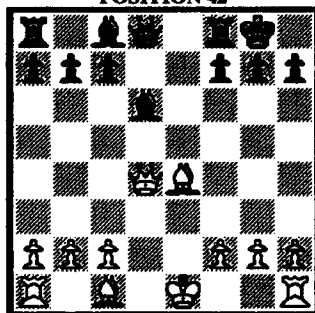
Of these, D. gives the most chance of play. With the other forms of the symmetrical center, the major role will be played by some of the factors already mentioned – lead in development, control of open lines, the two Bishops, etc. As the position takes on an open character, the two Bishops can display great activity.

#### A. THE VANISHED CENTER

The least important form of symmetry in the center is that in which all the center pawns have disappeared—partly because they don't occur very often, and partly because without center pawns there is not much strategical content to work with. The main factor will be a lead in development or the coordination of the pieces.

We give only one example, while referring the reader to Position 20, which showed the activity of the two Bishops in such positions.

POSITION 42



*(The significance of a lead in development; after an analysis by Dr. Tarrasch arising out of the game Chigorin-Forgacs, Nuremberg 1906).*

**1.e4 e5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.Nf3 Nc6 4.Bc4 Nxe4  
5.Nxe4 d5 6.Bd3 dxe4 7.Bxe4 Bd6 8.d4  
Nxd4 9.Nxd4 exd4 10.Qxd4 O-O**

This example shows in striking fashion how a small advantage can, with exact play, assume decisive significance.



**11.Be3 Qe7 12.O-O-O!**

Now White needs only one move (Rhe1) to complete his development. Black needs at least three.

**12...Be5 13.Qd3 f5 14.Bd5+ Be6 15.Rhe1 Kh8**

Black is in serious trouble, since he is well behind in development. If 15...Rfd8 then 16.Bxe6+ Qxe6 17.Qxd8+ Rxd8 18.Rxd8+ is very strong for White.

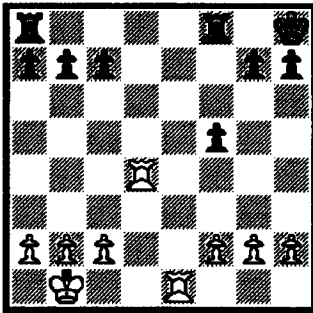
**16.Bxe6 Qxe6 17.Kb1**

By evading the intermediate check from f4, White now threatens 18.Bd4. In the actual game the weak move 17.Bc5 was played, after which, by 17...Rfe8 18.Kb1 Qc6 19.Ba3 Qxg2 20.Qxf5 Bxh2 Black can turn the tables.

We now follow the analysis of Dr. Tarrasch in *Die Moderne Schachpartie*.

**17...Qf6 18.Bd4 Bxd4**

Forced. If 18...Rae8 then 19.Qe2! Bxd4 20.Qxe8!

**19.Qxd4 Qxd4 20.Rxd4****20...Rfe8!**

After the more obvious 20...Rad8?, White can seize the 7th rank with 21.Rxd8 Rxd8 22.Kc1.

**21.Re3! Rxe3 22.fxe3 Kg8 23.Rd7 Re8**

In this sort of position, counterattack

is always the best form of defense.

**24.Rxc7**

Also strong is 24.Kc1 Rxe3 25.Kd2.

**24...Rxe3 25.Kc1 Re2 26.g3 b6 27.Rxa7 Rxh2 28.Ra6 Rh3 29.Rxb6 Rxc3**

The position is still remarkably symmetrical, but White has nursed his lead in development to decisive proportions.

**30.a4 Re3 31.a5 Re8 32.a6 Ra8 33.b4 h5 34.b5 h4 35.Rc6**

White is winning due to the threat of 36.b6 Rxa6 37.b7. If 35...h3, then simply 36.Rc3.

**B. THE QUEEN'S PAWN CENTER**

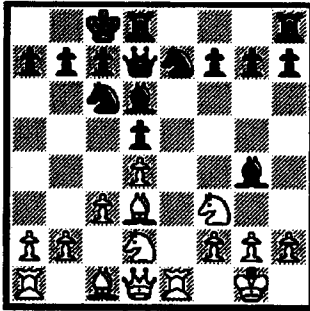
(White's d-pawn on d4, Black's on d5).

Since each side has a center pawn, there are more strategic possibilities than with the vanished center. In practice, however, this formation doesn't lead to many chances of a full-bodied conflict, since an automatic exchange of the major pieces typically follows on the one open file. Any attempts to liven up play will have to be taken in the early stages. For either White or Black the advance of the c-pawn may inject some dynamism into the position.

The support-points are at e5 and c5 (e4 and c4 from Black's point of view); the timely occupation of one of these support-points often is of crucial importance in these positions. For example, if White castles Kingside and Black (in order to sharpen play) castles Queenside, the establishment of a White Knight at c5 followed by pushing the b- and a-pawns, can create a powerful attack. Note that Black's chances against White's King on the opposite flank are lessened by

the lack of a support point at the corresponding square (f4).

POSITION 43



(The significance of the support point c5; from the game Maroczy-Spielmann, Bad Sliac 1932).

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 exd5 4.Bd3 Nc6 5.c3 Bd6 6.Nf3 Nge7 7.O-O Bg4 8.Re1 Qd7 9.Nbd2 O-O-O

The treatment of this opening is an example of how Black can avoid symmetry. The sequel shows, however, that he has pursued the idea too far. He should have castled Kingside.

10.b4!

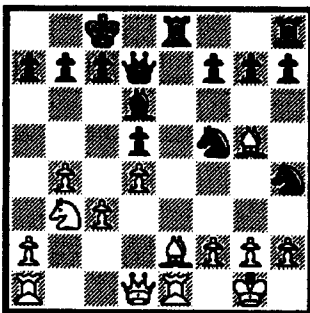
After castling on opposite sides, it is important to seize the initiative as quickly as possible.

10...Ng6 11.Nb3!

Heading for the support point at c5.

11...Rde8 12.Be3 Nh4 13.Be2 Bxf3

14.Bxf3 Ne7 15.Be2 Nef5 16.Bg5



16...Nxg2!?

Spielmann embarked on this promising but ultimately incorrect piece sacrifice, as otherwise White would play 17.Bxh4 and 18.Nc5 with a winning position.

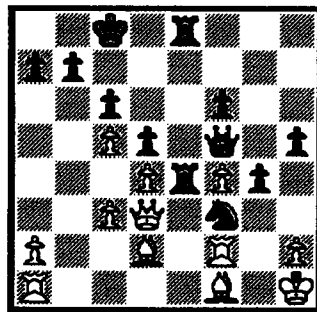
17.Kxg2 f6 18.Bd2 Nh4+ 19.Kh1 h5

Preventing 20.Bg4.

20.Bf1 Qf5 21.f4 g5

Better, but still insufficient, was 21...Bxf4. For example, 22.Bxf4 Qxf4 23.Qd2 Qf3+ 24.Kg1! Qf5 25.Qf2! Nf3+ 26.Kh1 and Black has no good defense against 27.Bg2.

22.Qb1! Re4 23.Qd3 g4 24.Nc5 Bxc5 25.bxc5 Nf3 26.Re2 Rhe8 27.Rf2 c6



28.Rxf3!

The easiest way to win. Now White has two powerful Bishops against a Rook.

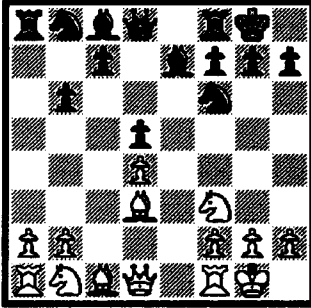
28...gxf3 29.Qxf3 Qd7 30.Bh3 f5 31.Qxh5

And White won easily after the following moves.

31...Kb8 32.Bxf5 Qe7 33.Qg5! Re2 34.Qxe7 R8xe7 35.Rd1 Rg7 36.Bd3 Rf2 37.f5! a5 38.a4 Ka7 39.Be1 Ra2 40.Bg3 Rf7 41.Be5 Black Resigned.

(Breaking the symmetry by advancing the c-pawn; from the game Tartakower-Botvinnik, Groningen, 1946).

POSITION 44



1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 exd5 4.Nf3 Bd6  
5.c4 Nf6 6.c5 Be7 7.Bd3 b6 8.cxb6  
axb6 9.O-O O-O

In itself the advance of the c-pawn constitutes a weakening of White's pawn structure. On move 5, Black could have played ...dxc4, leaving the d-pawn isolated; but then the White pieces would come into active play.

The further advance of the pawn to the fifth rank could have been reinforced by 7.b4. By move 8, however, this opportunity had already gone, because of the strong reply 8...a5!

In Position 44 White's d-pawn is vulnerable, but Black's c-pawn is no less so.

### 10.Nc3

More solid would be 10.Bg5 followed by Nbd2; the pin which now follows is troublesome.

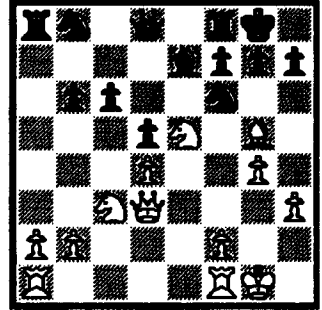
### 10...Bg4 11.h3 Bh5 12.g4

An energetic advance, but also a dangerous weakening of the Kingside. After the prudent 12.Be2, however, Black would seize the initiative by ...Ne4, either immediately or after preparation by ...c6, ...Bd6, ...Nbd7, ...Re8, etc.

### 12...Bg6 13.Ne5 Bxd3 14.Qxd3 c6 15.Bg5?

This allows Black a combination which forces off a pair of pieces and

reduces White's attacking chances to practically nil.



### 15...Nxc4! 16.Nxc6

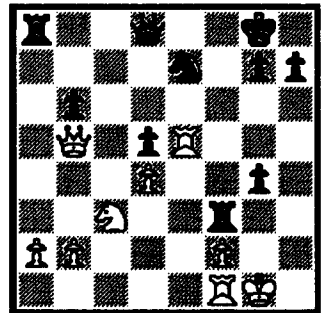
The only way to avoid the loss of a pawn, for 16.Bxe7 fails to 16...Nxe5 17.Bxd8 Nxd3 18.Bxb6 Nxb2.

Russian analysts later showed that White's best chance was 16.hxg4! Bxg5 17.Kg2 followed by Rh1, etc.

### 16...Nxc6 17.Bxe7 Nxe7 18.hxg4 f5 19.Rae1

A temporary sacrifice of a pawn by which White saves himself from being immediately overrun on the Kingside.

### 19...fxg4 20.Re5 Rf3 21.Qb5



Threatening 22.Rxe7 Qxe7 23.Qxd5+ and 24.Qxa8.

### 21...Ng6!

With the point 22.Qxd5+ Qxd5 23.Rxd5 Nf4! 24.Rb5 Rf8 25.Rxb6 g3 is

winning as 26.fxg3 is impossible because of 26...Nh3+ and 27...Rxf1.

**22.Rxd5 Qf6 23.Rg5 Rf8 24.Ne4 Qf4 25.Qd5+ Kh8 26.Rh5 Rh3?**

Black could have won quickly with 26...h6, e.g. 27.Qe6 Re3! 28.Qxg6 Rxe4 29.Rh4 Rxd4 30.Qxb6 Rd2. After the move played, it is more difficult.

We give the rest without notes, since it has no bearing on the symmetrical d-pawn center.

**27.Rxh3 gxh3 28.Ng3 Nh4 29.Qe4 Nf3+ 30.Kh1 Qxe4 31.Nxe4 Rf4 32.Rc1 h6 33.Rc3 g5! 34.d5 g4 35.Re3 Rf5 36.Nc3 Rf6 37.Re6 Kg7 38.Rxf6 Kxf6 39.d6? Ke6 40.Nd5 Kxd6 41.Nxb6 h5 42.Nc4+? Kd5 43.Ne3+ Ke4 44.a4 Kd3 45.Nd5 Ke2 46.Nf4+ Kxf2 47.Nxh3+ Kf1 48.Nf4 g3 49.Ng2 Kf2 50.a5 h4 51.Nf4 Kf1 52.Ng2 h3 53.Ne3+ Kf2 54.Ng4+ Ke2 and White Resigned.**

### C. THE KING'S PAWN CENTER

(White's e-pawn on e4, Black's on e5).

The e-pawn center would have precisely the same strategical characteristics as the d-pawn center, assuming that both players have castled Queenside—however, this seldom happens in practice. This is because the open d-file is controlled by the player who first castles Queenside, this making it illegal for the other side's King to travel over the d-file (of course, there are rare exceptions, which occur when the player who wants to castle "next" can interpose one of his pieces to block the d-file and allow his King "safe passage" over the d-file). Consequently, most of the time both players castle Kingside, and this alters the whole aspect of the game.

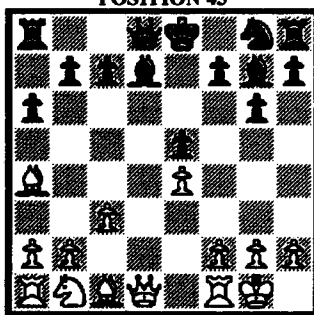
The typical support-point associated with the e-pawn center is f5 (f4 for Black)—which is a most important

base for a Kingside attack (compare Position 43, where the corresponding point c5 with a d-pawn center was used to similar effect).

Furthermore, it is evident that the advance f4-f5 (f5-f4 for Black) will have a much more deadly effect than c4-c5 advance of Section B.

All things considered, the symmetrical e-pawn center gives more fighting chances than the d-pawn center of Section B.

POSITION 45



(The advance of the f-pawn; from the game Fine-Alekhine, AVRO 1938).

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 d6 5.O-O Bd7 6.c3 g6 7.d4 Bg7 8.dxe5 Nxe5 9.Nxe5 dxe5**

White leads in development; to make use of this fact he presses on with...

**10.f4!**

This looks premature, but is in fact very strong.

**10...Bxa4**

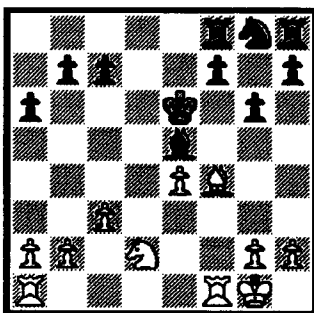
Two other possibilities come into consideration here, but both strongly favor White: 1) 10...Ne7 11.fxg6 Bxe5 12.Bxd7+ Qxd7 13.Qb3, or 2) 10...ef4 11.Bxf4 Bxa4 12.Qxa4+ Qd7 13.Qxd7+ Kxd7 14.Bxc7! Kxc7 15.Rxf7+ and White wins three pawns.

**11.Qxa4+ Qd7**

This temporary pawn sacrifice is practically forced, as 11...b5 12.Qb3 presses not only on the f-file, but also on the Queenside (a4!).

**12.Qxd7+ Kxd7 13.fxe5 Ke6 14.Bf4 Rf8**

Black must hurry to regain the pawn. The continuation 14...Ne7 15.Nd2 Nc6 takes too much time, in view of 16.Nf3, after which White would be threatening awkward checks at d4 or g5.

**15.Nd2 Bxe5****16.Nb3!**

Threatening 17.Nc5+. This clearly shows the vulnerability of Black's King.

**16...Bxf4**

A trap. If now 17.Nc5+, then 17...Kd6 18.Nxb7+ Kc6 19.Na5+ Kb5, wins the Knight.

**17.Rxf4 b6 18.a4!**

To take advantage of the forced weakening of the pawns by a5.

**18...Ke5?**

Under the impression that White must play 19.Raf1, after which 19...f5(20.g4 Ne7), Black can get equality. Correct, however, was 18...a5, as the sequel shows.

**19.g3!**

Simple, but extremely strong; now White threatens 20.Rd1, and leaves Black no time to consolidate his Queenside.

**19...Nf6**

Not 19...g5 20.Rf5+ Kxe4 21.g4 and the Black King is helpless against the many threats.

**20.Nd2 Nh5**

A little better was 20...Nd7. On h5 the Knight is out of play.

**21.Rf2 Ke6**

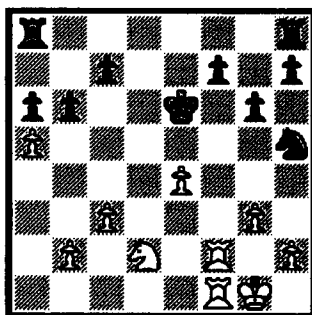
No better is 21...a5 22.b4.

**22.a5! Ra8**

On 22...b5 White plays 23.Nb3, and the threat of 24.Nc5+ is tough to meet.

**23.Raf1!**

White's advantage has become decisive. The point is seen after 23...Raf8 24.g4 Ng7 25.axb6 cxb6 26.Rf6+ Ke7 27.Rxb6.

**23...Rhd8 24.Nf3 Ke7**

Or 24...f6 25.Nd4+ Kd7 26.g4 Ng7 27.Rxf6.

**25.axb6 cxb6 26.Ng5!**

Now 26...f6 loses to 27.Nxh7 Rd6 28.g4. Therefore White wins a pawn.

**26...h6 27.Rxf7+ Kd6 28.Nf3 g5 29.Nd4 Re8 30.Rh7 Rh8 31.Rff7 Rxh7 32.Rxh7 Rf8 33.Rxh6+ Nf6 34.Nf3 Kc5 35.Nd2 g4 36.Rg6 Nd7 37.Rxg4 Ne5 38.Rg5 Kd6 39.Rf5 Rd8 40.Nf3 Nd3**

41.Rd5+ Ke7 42.Rxd8 Kxd8 43.b3 Ke7  
44.Nd2 a5 45.Kf1 b5 46.Ke2 and Black  
Resigned.

**D. THE SYMMETRICAL FOUR PAWNS CENTER**

(i) With e-pawns forward. (White has pawns on e4 and d3, Black has pawns on e5 and d6).

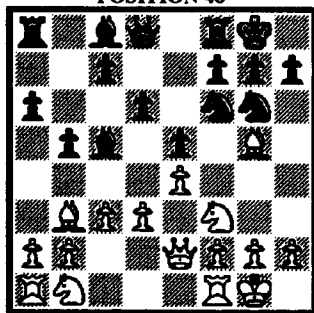
All the pawns are still on the board, and there is no immediate prospect of large-scale exchanges. As a result, both sides have chances of devising a plan of attack, the basis of which will be either:

- (a) The advance of the d-pawn, or
- (b) The advance of the f-pawn.

The first named of these possibilities seldom occurs during the middlegame stage. Moreover, the advance of the d-pawn leads either (after dxe5, dxe5) to the e-pawn center, which we have just discussed in Part C; or else (after d5) to the central oblique blocked formation, which comes up in Chapter 7.

The symmetrical four pawns center usually arises from the classical openings: Giuoco Piano, Ruy Lopez, Four Knights, etc.

POSITION 46



(Black prevents the advance of the f-pawn; from the game Sir George Thomas-Rubinstein, Hastings 1922).

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6  
5.Qe2 b5 6.Bb3 Bc5 7.c3 O-O 8.O-O  
d6 9.d3 Ne7? 10.Bg5? Ng6

Now there followed:

11.Nh4

At move 10 White was wrong to omit the powerful advance d4. But now, at move 11, it would have been less strong, since Black would not have to take the d-pawn, but could have maintained the central tension with 11...Bb6. If 11.Nbd2 h6 12.Be3! would have been preferable.

11...Nxb4 12.Bxb4 h6!

Well-played. Black is going to play ...g5, holding back White's threatened f4.

13.Kh1 g5 14.Bg3 Kg7 15.Nd2 Qe7  
16.Bc2

Apparently with the intention of Nb3, preparing the advance d4. The Bishop was well-placed on b3; the maneuver 16.Rfe1, followed by Nf1-e3, would have been more consistent with White's strategy.

16...Bd7 17.Rfe1?

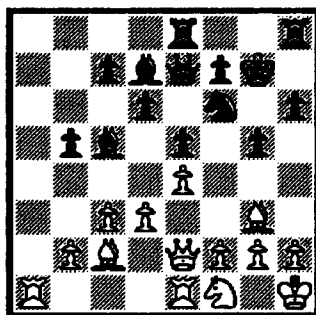
Inconsequential. The logical line was 17.Nb3 Bb6 18.d4.

17...Rae8 18.a4?

The a-file holds no prospects for White. The right line was 18.Nb3 and 19.d4.

18...Rh8 19.axb5 axb5 20.Nf1?

Now Black seizes a Kingside initiative.



**20...h5 21.f3 h4 22.Bf2 Bxf2 23.Qxf2 g4!**

With the strong threat of ...g3!.

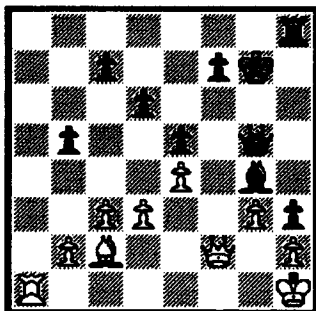
**24.fxg4 Nxc4 25.Qf3 h3!**

This pawn can't be taken because of 26...Rxh3! 27.Qxh3? Nf2+. But White must not allow 26...hxc2+ 27.Qxc2 Rag8, followed by 28...Kf8. His next move is practically forced, even though the Black pawn on h3 will now be quite unpleasant.

**26.g3 Qg5 27.Ne3 Ra8!**

Now Black vies for control of the a-file. This shows the weak side of 18.a4?.

**28.Nxc4 Bxc4 29.Qf2 Rxa1 30.Rxa1**



**30...Ra8!!**

The point of the previous moves. Black assumes control of the a-file, for if 31.Rxa8 Qc1+ 32.Qg1 Bf3#; and if 31.Qe1, then 31...Rxa1 32.Qxa1 Bf3+ 33.Kg1 Qe3+ 34.Kf1 Bg2#.

**31.Rb1**

Slightly better was 31.Rf1, after which, as Kmoch showed, 31...f5 is not good because of 32.d4! (but not 32.exf5 Qxf5!, in Black's favor). Black would have to meet 31.Rf1 with 31...f6.

**31...b4!**

Very strong. Now on 32.cxb4, Black plays 32...Rb8, and the many

weaknesses in White's position must mean his downfall.

**32.Bb3 f6 33.c4**

There is nothing better, as the following pretty variations show: 33.Bd5 bxc3!! and now: 1) 34.Bxa8 c2 35.Qxc2 Qe3! 36.Rf1 Bf3+ 37.Rxf3 Qe1+ with mate to follow; 2) 34.bxc3 Ra3! winning a pawn.

**33...f5 34.Kg1 fxe4 35.Rf1**

Or 35.dxe4 Rf8 and Black wins easily, e.g. 36.Qe1 Bf3 37.Bc2 Bg2 38.Qe2 Rf3 39.Re1 Rxc3! 40.hxc3 Qxc3 and 41...h2# (Tartakower).

**35...e3 36.Qf7+ Kh8 37.Qd5 c6!**

The initiation of a superb climax.

**38.Qxc6 Rc8 39.Qe4 e2 40.Re1 d5!**

Since the White Queen can't leave e4 because of 41...Qe3+, this move not only forces open the c-file, but also obliges White to cut off the access of his own Queen to a8.

**41.cxd5 Rc1 and White Resigned.**

## D. THE SYMMETRICAL FOUR PAWNS CENTER

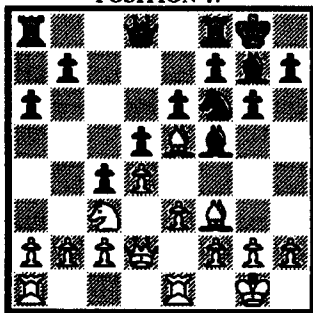
(ii) With d-pawns forward. (White has pawns on d4 and e3, Black has pawns on d5 and e6). This formation has a more lasting character than that of Section D (i), and is also more important in modern practice. The advance e4 (e5 for Black) is generally much more difficult to achieve than was d4 (d5) in the previous formation, so that in the symmetrical four pawns center with the d-pawns forward, the emphasis is on the advance c4 (c5), and thus the main struggle often shifts to the Queenside. For tactical reasons, however, c4 usually occurs on one of the earliest moves so as to make it difficult for Black to develop his Queen Bishop.

This is the logical basis of the Queen's Gambit. With the formation: White pawns on c4, d4, and e3, against Black pawns on d5 and e6, Queenside operations are in the offing.

Thanks to the advances of theory, the handling of such positions is to be considered more of an opening problem. This is likewise true for the Colle Opening, which aims at the advance e4.

We content ourselves with a single, rather unusual example.

POSITION 47



(An attack depending on the advance e4; from the game Torre-Yates, Baden-Baden, 1925).

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.Bf4 c6 5.e3 Bg7 6.Bd3 O-O 7.O-O Nbd7 8.Re1 c5 9.Qd2 a6 10.Ne5 Nxe5 11.Bxe5 c4 12.Be2 Bf5 13.Bf3 e6 (No. 47) 14.Qe2!

Before advancing with e4, White forces his opponent to weaken his pawn structure. Now he threatens 15.Bxf6 and 16.g4.

14...g5 15.e4 dxe4 16.Nxe4 Nxe4 17.Bxe4 Bxe5 18.dxe5 Qc7 19.Qf3

As a result of White's e4, the Black position has been wrenched at the seams, and now displays a number of weaknesses (c4, b7, g5, f6, h6, h5). The text move puts pressure on several of these weak points; but direct action by

19.Bxf5 exf5 20.Qh5 Qe7 21.Re3 was also promising.

19...Bxe4 20.Rxe4 Rac8 21.h4!

Decisive. On 21...gxh4 follows 22.Rg4+ Kh8 23.Qf6#; and 21...h6 22.hxg5 hxg5 23.Qh5 Qe7 24.Rg4 is crushing.

21...Qe7 22.hxg5 Kh8 23.Qe3 Rg8 24.f4 b5 25.Rd1 Rcd8 26.Red4

Thus White also dominates the d-file.

26...Qc5 27.Kf2 Rc8 28.Rh1 Qe7

Black overlooks his opponent's threat, but there was not much to be done. If 28...Rg7 29.Rd8+ Rg8 30.Qxc5 Rxc5 31.R1d7, the Rook ending is quite hopeless. Now White mates in five.

29.Rxh7+ Kxh7 30.Qh3+ Kg6 31.Qh6+ Kf5 32.Qh7+ Rg6 (or ...Kg4) 33.Qh3#.

The formations of this chapter do not lend themselves very well to general discussion. Anyone who has thoroughly grasped the principles involved in Positions 43 and 44, for instance, may still not be capable of playing the Exchange Variation of the French Defense in irreproachable style. The incidental details of the position may have more influence on the course of play than the symmetrical d-pawn center will. A thorough mastery of the French Exchange Variation would involve study of a very large number of illustrative games; this variation, which occurs only sporadically, does not warrant such intense effort. The same consideration goes for most of the formations of Chapter 6, which, in comparison to other chapters may seem to have received only superficial treatment. We have given them attention in more or less proportion to their occurrence in practical play.



## CHAPTER 7

### POSITIONAL PREPONDERANCE IN THE CENTER

We make a distinction between material and positional preponderance in the center. Material preponderance denotes that one side has more center pawns than the other, while positional preponderance is equivalent to superior freedom of movement. Consequently, White (for convenience, we are assuming that it is White who has the initiative – as is usually the case) will have more opportunities of posting his pieces to advantage. We consider here three cases:

**A. White has at least one center pawn on the fifth rank.**

**B. White has both center pawns on the fourth rank. Black has one on the fifth.**

**C. White has only one center pawn on the fourth rank. Black has none.**

The subdivisions are as follows:

#### **A. Fixed formations**

(i) Advanced Fixed Single-pawn Centers

(a) The e-pawn forward. (White pawn on e5, Black pawn on e6; the d-file open).

(b) The d-pawn forward. (White pawn on d5, Black pawn on d6; the e-file open).

(ii) Central Blocked Oblique Formations

Here we are concerned with positions without neighboring open files, e.g. White's pawns on d4, e5; Black's pawns on d5, e6 (see Part Three).

#### **B. Partially Fixed Formations**

(i) The Tension Form. (White's pawns on e4, d4; Black's pawns on e5, d6).

(ii) Miscellaneous Partly Fixed Formations.

#### **C. Mobile Center Formations**

(i) The Incomplete e-pawn Center. (White pawn on e4; Black pawn on e6; with open d-file).

(ii) The Incomplete d-pawn Center. (White pawn on d4; Black pawn on d6; with open e-file).

(iii) The Half Center

Here we are concerned with such positions as White pawn on d4; Black pawn on e6. (See Part Three).

In this part, as already stated in the introduction to Chapter 6, we deal with positions in which the accent is on happenings in the central sector. In the formations A (ii) and C (iii) this is not the case, and this is why discussion of these positions is deferred to Part Three.

We shall now take a closer look at the formations with the help of typical examples from actual play, but first one preliminary general point. The side possessing the greater freedom of movement should avoid exchanges whenever reasonably feasible. Thus in these positions White should try to keep as many pieces as possible on the board. Conversely, Black will try to trade a few minor pieces whenever reasonably possible. In this way Black avoids having his pieces getting in each other's way, reserving possibilities for counterplay at a suitable moment.

#### **A. FIXED FORMATIONS**

(i) Advanced Fixed Single-pawn Center.

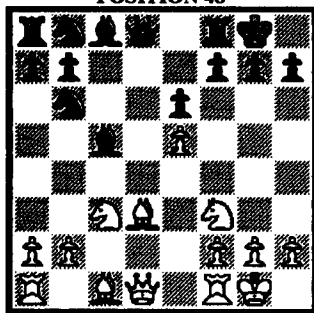
(a) The e-pawn Forward

This formation is usually very favorable for White. If Black has castled Kingside, White can often create a winning attack. The pawn on e5 typically chases off a Knight on f6,

normally one of the most important defenders of the Kingside. Also, the strong point at e4 is useful to reinforce the attack in all sorts of ways.

Consequently, it is often advisable for Black to castle Queenside. True, this brings dangers of its own (the d6 square is weak), but this is not usually fatal. Black's chances generally depend on occupying the support-points at d5 and f5; these squares become more and more valuable as pieces are exchanged. The opening of the f-file (by ...f6) can also be a valuable resource in some circumstances.

POSITION 48



(White's chances of a direct attack on the King; from the game Euwe-Mattison, The Hague 1928).

1.Nf3 d5 2.c4 Nf6 3.cxd5 Nxd5 4.d4 e6 5.e4 Nb6 6.Nc3 Be7 7.Bd3 O-O 8.O-O c5 9.dxc5 Bxc5 10.e5

An ideal attacking set-up for White. The classic Bishop sacrifice at h7 is already threatened (11.Bxh7+ Kxh7 12.Ng5+ Kg8 13.Qh5, etc.).

10...Be7 11.Qe2 Nc6 12.Rd1 Nd5

Other moves also allow White to continue strengthening his position. If 12...Qc7, then 13.Bg5 is possible, for the exchange of Bishops would eliminate Black's only useful defensive piece, at the same time leaving his d6 irreparably weak. If

12...Bd7, simply 13.Ne4 is strong, e.g. 13...h6 14.Ng3, threatening 15.Qe4.

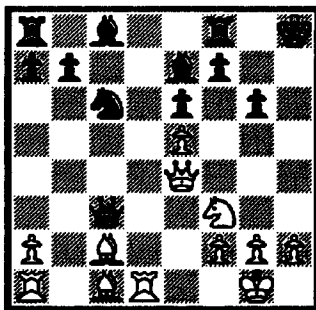
13.Be4!

Decisive. Now on 13...Ncb4 14.a3 Nxc3 15.bxc3 Nd5 16.Qc2 costs Black at least a pawn (he is threatened with 17.Bxh7+ and 17.c4).

13...Nxc3 14.Bxh7+ Kh8

Not 14...Kxh7 15.Qc2+, winning the Black Queen.

15.bxc3 Qa5 16.Bc2 Qxc3 17.Qe4 g6



18.Ng5!

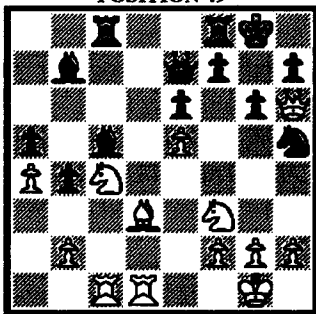
Threatening 19.Qh4+ and 20.Qh7#, while 18...Bxg5 19.Bxg5 Qxe5 fails to 20.Qxe5 Nxe5 21.Bf6+.

18...Qb4 19.Nxf7+ Rxf7 20.Qxg6 Rg7 21.Qh5+ Kg8 22.Bh6 Bf8

The threat was 23.Qe8+ Bf8 24.Bxg7 Kxg7 25.Qg6+ and 26.Qh7#.

23.Rd3 Black Resigned.

POSITION 49



(A tactical example; Black obtains counterplay by ...f6; from the game Landau-Reshevsky, Kemer, 1937).

Looked at from the strategic point of view, White's chances are definitely better, since Black's pawn structure on both wings is compromised. Yet tactically it is another matter, mainly because of the power of Black's two Bishops and the ability to open the f-file for attack.

### 23.Ng5

Reshevsky gives some interesting variations at this point:

1) 23.Be2 Bxf3 24.Bxf3 Qh4!, with a strong attack for Black, e.g. 25.g3 Bxf2+ 26.Kg2 Bxg3!. 2) 23.Nxa5 Bxf3 24.gxf3 Qa7 25.Nc4 Qxa4 or 25...Bxf2+. 3) 23.Nd6 Bxd6 24.exd6 Rxc1! 25.Qxc1 (if 25.dxe7 Rxd1+ 26.Bf1 Re8 27.Ng5 Nf6, and Black should win); 25...Qf6 26.Qe3 Bxf3 27.Qxf3 Qxf3 28.gxf3 Rd8 29.Bb5 Nf6 30.Bc6 Kf8 31.Kf1 Rc8 32.Bb5 Nd5, and Black has some winning chances.

### 23...f6 24.exf6

The consequence of his previous moves. Other possibilities are not seriously to be considered, but there are some attractive lines given in the tournament book:

1) 24.Ne4 fxe5 25.Ncd6 (25.Nxe5 or Nxa5 would be answered by 25...Bxe4 26.Bxe4 Bxf2+ 27.Kh1 Qh4!) 25...Bxd6 26.Nxd6 Rxc1 27.Qxc1 Qxd6 28.Bxg6 Qb6! wins. 2) 24.Bxg6 fxe5 (or even 24...hxg6 25.Qxg6+ Qg7) 25.Bxh5 Bxf2+ 26.Kh1 Bxg2+ 27.Kxg2 Qb7+ 28.Kf1 Qh1+ 29.Ke2 Qe4+, forcing mate.

### 24...Bxf2+!!

With elemental violence, White is awakened from his rosy dreams.

### 25.Kxf2

No better is 25.Kh1: 25...Rxf6, and now 26.Nxa5 fails to 26...Rxc1 27.Rxc1 Be3! 28.Re1 Bxg5 29.Qxg5 Rf1+, winning the Queen.

### 25...Qxf6+ 26.Nf3

King moves allow mate in two at most.

26...Bxf3 27.gxf3 Qxf3+ 28.Kg1 Rf4! 29.Qxf4 Nxf4 30.Bf1 Rc5! 31.Rd8+ Kg7 32.Rd7+ Kh6 White Resigns.

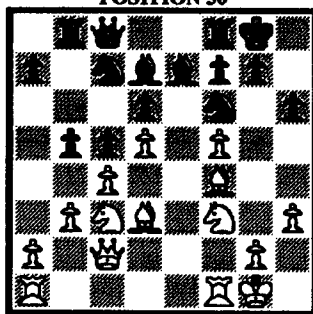
(i) Advanced Fixed Single-pawn Center.

(b) The d-pawn Forward.

Superficially it might be expected that this formation would show much the same qualities as the previous one. The only difference seems to be that instead of a pawn at e5, there is one at d5, and instead of a support-point at e4, there is one at d4. However, this formation contains considerably different issues, mainly due to the different position of the Kings. In the great majority of cases the Kings will be castled on the Kingside. With the e-pawn center, therefore, White's main idea was to begin an attack on the enemy King, but with the d-pawn center this idea is secondary. The main stratagem here is to obtain persistent pressure against the Black position.

We now give two classic examples:

POSITION 50



(The technique of siege warfare; from the game Tarrasch-Marco, Vienna 1898).

We observe here, not only that the d-pawn cramps the Black game, but also that the pressure is intensified by the f-pawn—so much so that all chance of counterplay by Black is ruled out. Only on the Queenside has he some

chance of increasing the space available to him. Dr Tarrasch felt especially at home in such positions, and he demonstrates the superiority of White's position with impeccable technique.

**18...b4 19.Ne2 a5 20.g4 Nh7 21.h4**

The purpose of this move is not so much to play g5 as to prevent Black's pieces from using g5, and thus achieving some slight freedom.

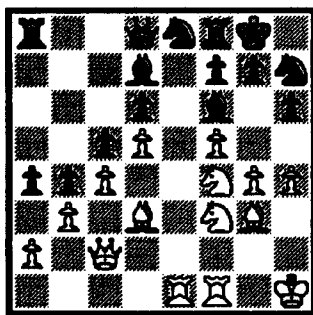
**21...Qd8 22.Bg3 a4 23.Kh1 Ra8 24.Rae1!**

Typical siege technique; White is not going to allow an exchange of Rooks. We know already that every exchange helps the side with less maneuvering space. In this case we have clear evidence of this fact, since Black's pieces are cramped and uncoordinated.

**24...Ne8**

The changing of the guard. This Knight takes over defense of the d-pawn to enable the Bishop to cooperate with the Rook. 24...axb3 25.axb3 Ra3 would be useless because of 26.Nf4 Bf6 27.Nh5, etc.

**25.Nf4 Bf6**



**26.Ne6!**

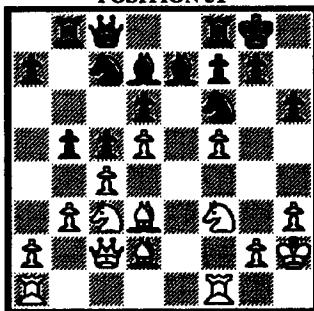
The decisive blow. If the Knight is captured, the f-pawn recaptures and the Knight on h7 as well as the Bishop on d7 are attacked.

**26...axb3 27.axb3 Qb6 28.Nxf8 Kxf8 29.g5!**

Now White blasts open lines to destroy Black's hapless defense.

**29...hxg5 30.hxg5 Nxc5 31.Qh2 Kg8 32.Nxc5 Bxc5 33.f6! g6 34.Bxc6! Black Resigned.**

POSITION 51



*(Rubinstein was another master of the art; from the game Rubinstein-Nimzowitsch, Berlin 1928).*

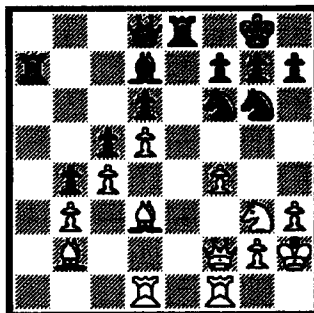
This position is similar to the previous one, the only real difference being that a pair of minor pieces have been exchanged. Hence, Black has a little more room in which to maneuver.

**21.Bc1 Qd8**

Momentarily crossing White's plan of putting his QB on the long diagonal, for if now 22.Bb2 then 22...Ng4+! 23.hxg4 Qh4+ 24.Kg1 Qxc3 and it is Black who is calling the tune.

**22.Qf2 a4 23.Bb2 Ng6 24.Rbd1 axb3 25.axb3 Ra7**

Black can only wait.



**26.Rde1!**

So as to be able to play f5 without giving Black free use of the e5 square.

**26...Rxe1**

Playing White's game. Better was 26...Ra8.

**27.Rxe1 Nf8**

This allows White to take the offensive at once, but it is difficult to suggest a good course for Black. After 27...Bc8 there follows 28.Bxf6 gxf6 29.Nh5 and 30.Qb2. The relatively best move is 27...Ra8.

**28.Bxf6 Qxf6 29.Ne4 Qh6 30.f5 Ra3 31.Rb1 Ra6 32.g4!**

Threatening to win the Queen by 33.g5 Qh5 34.Be2.

**32...f6 33.Kg3**

The King himself takes a hand in restraining the Black Queen.

**33...Bc8**

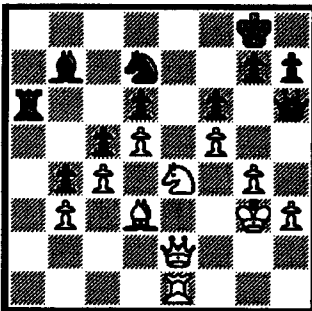
With the evident intention of getting the Knight to e5.

**34.Re1 Bb7**

Now 34...Nd7 would lose to 35.Nxd6! Rxd6 36.Re8+ Kf7 37.Rxc8.

**35.Qe2**

The beginning of the end. The main threat is 36.h4 and 37.g5.

**35...Nd7****36.Nxd6! Rxd6 37.Qe8+ Nf8 38.Re7**

Black is helpless to stop the coming slaughter.

**38...g6 39.Qf7+ Kh8 40.Re8 Rd8**

The last hope is 41.Rxd8? Qe3+ 42.Kg2 Qd2+ 43.Kg1 Qe3+ with a draw by perpetual check.

**41.Qxf6+ Kg8 42.Qe6+ Kg7 43.f6+**

**Black Resigned** as the Rook can be taken next move.

**B. PARTIALLY FIXED FORMATIONS****(i) The Tension Form.**

The tension form (White's pawns on e4 and d4; Black's pawns on e5 and d6) presents White with the problem of how to maintain his center and obtain greater freedom for himself by inducing Black to play ...exd4. This sort of position is not generally easy to handle. Transpositions into other central formations are frequently possible, and thus both players have to consider, move after move, the pros and cons of various set-ups.

We examine the following possibilities:

1) White plays dxe5. If Black retakes with the pawn, we have the e-pawn center, already dealt with in Chapter 6, Section C. If he captures at e5 with a piece, we have the Ruy Lopez Formation. [see Chapter 10, Section A (i)].

2) White plays d5. This gives the Blocked Oblique Formation of Chapter 9, Section A (i).

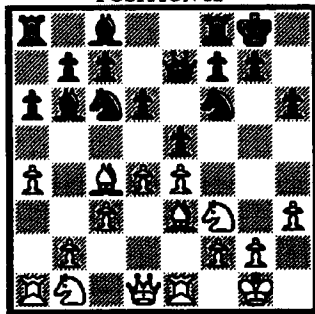
3) White maintains his pawns abreast, and this leads in the long run to Black playing ...exd4. Then if White recaptures with a piece we have the Half-center of Chapter 10, Section A. Very important, however, is the other possibility - recapture with a pawn from c3, leading to the Classical Center, Chapter 8, Section C. This usually has a brief life before Black challenges with ...d5, after which a new Tension Form occurs, with the following further possibilities:

(a) White continues with e5, the Spanish Center.

(b) Either White plays exd5 or Black plays ...dxe4, leaving the Isolated d-pawn Center. Practice has shown that the abandoning of the center by Black's ...dxe4 doesn't always mean a success for White, particularly if Black has chosen carefully the moment to trade pawns. On the other hand, Black can't afford to wait too long for the right moment, for if White can get in f4, he will frequently be able to resolve the central situation with great advantage.

A less important version of the Tension Form occurs with Black's pawns on d5 and e6, and White's pawns on d4 and e4. To maintain the tension in this case, White has to play f3, but since this weakens the position of the White King, White usually has to protect the e-pawn with a piece, or push it forward, or make the exchange himself. One exception is the gambit variation of the Caro-Kann, and we give one example of this in Position 56.

POSITION 52



(Black gives up the center at the right moment; from the game Tarrasch-Alekhine, Baden Baden 1925).

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.c3 Bb6 5.d4 Qe7 6.O-O Nf6 7.Re1 d6 8.a4 a6 9.h3 O-O 10.Bg5 h6 11.Be3

11...Qd8!!

Alekhine described this as the most difficult move of the whole game. The intention is twofold: he gets his Queen off the file of the enemy Rook and prepares to play ...d5, preceded by ...exd4. Meanwhile, the e-file is reserved for a Black Rook.

12.Bd3 Re8 13.Nbd2 Ba7

Maintaining the tension. This move robs White of a chance of playing Nc4 later on with gain of tempo, and also prevents him from eventually breaking up the Black pawns by capturing first on e5 and then on b6.

14.Qc2

Over-protecting his e-pawn in preparation for the maneuver, Nf1-g3.

14...exd4!

At the correct moment, Black abandons the center.

15.Nxd4

On 15.cxd4 Black would exchange off White's strong King Bishop by playing 15...Nb4.

15...Ne5 16.Bf1 d5! 17.Rad1

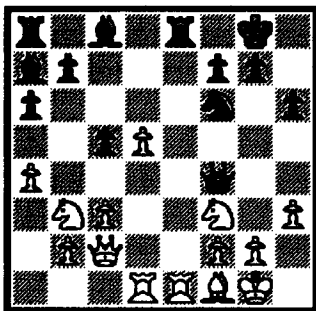
The tempting 17.f4 Ng6 18.e5 fails against 18...Nh5, winning a pawn.

17...c5 18.N4b3 Qc7 19.Bf4

With 19.exd5, White could bring about a form of the "Vanished Center" (Chapter 6, Section A), but under conditions unfavorable for him, as Black would retain the two Bishops: 19...Nxd5 20.Nc4 Nxc4 21.Bxc4 Nxe3 22.Rxe3 Rxe3, etc.

19...Nf3+! 20.Nxf3 Qxf4 21.exd5?

Now Black gets a winning attack. 21.e5 was stronger. Alekhine then suggests 21...Bf5 22.Qd2 Qxd2 23.Rxd2 Ne4 24.R2d1 (24.Rxd5 Be6!) 24...Rad8, with advantage to Black because of his two Bishops.



21...Bf5! 22.Bd3

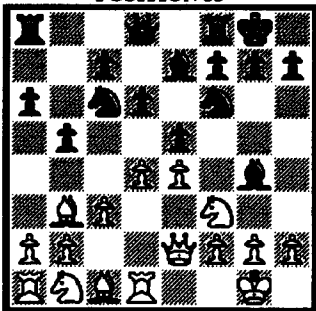
Also favoring Black is 22.Qd2 Qxa4 23.Nc1 Bc2 24.Rxe8+ Rxe8 25.Re1 Ne4 26.Qf4 c4 27.Nd4 Bxd4 28.cxd4 Qb4!.

22...Bxh3 23.gxh3 Qxf3 24.Rxe8+ Rxe8 25.Bf1

White has avoided the loss of a pawn, but now his King will soon fall.

25...Re5 26.c4 Rg5+ 27.Kh2 Ng4+ 28.hxg4 Rxg4 White Resigned.

POSITION 53



(Via Tension Form to the Spanish Center; from the game Reti-Stoltz, Stockholm 1928).

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.O-O Be7 6.Qe2 b5 7.Bb3 d6 8.c3 O-O 9.d4 Bg4 10.Rd1 (No.53)

10...exd4

This was very strongly criticized by Dr. Tarrasch in his book, *Die Moderne Schachpartie*. Black not only surrenders his hold on the center, said

Tarrasch, but also presents White with the square c3 for his Knight.

11.cxd4 d5

Nor did this move please Tarrasch.

12.e5 Ne4

This is what we called, in our introduction, the Spanish Center.

13.Nc3 Nxc3 14.bxc3 Na5!

In the game Lasker-Teichmann, St. Petersburg 1909, Black played the much weaker 14...f6? 15.h3! Bh5 16.g4 Bf7 17.e6.

It is noteworthy that Tarrasch, who was so critical of Black's play, himself suggested the stronger 14...Qd7, intending to force off the dangerous White Bishop by 15...Na5 16.Bc2 Bf5—a suggestion which alters the assessment of this position.

In this game we see Stoltz following this very plan, with transposition of moves, and it appears the Black position is not bad at all.

15.Bc2 Qd7 16.Qd3!

Forcing a weakening of Black's Kingside. However we believe this transposition of moves was not a good idea. By playing 14...Qd7, Black could have avoided this weakening.

16...g6 17.Qe3 Rfb8!

An excellent move, vacating f8 for the Bishop and simultaneously preparing for Queenside operations.

18.Qh6 Bf8 19.Qh4 Bf5 20.Bxf5 Qxf5 21.Re1 Rb6

Black makes his Rook available for offense or defense. However the move is an inexactitude, since it permits White to bring his Rook into the attack via e3 — a danger Black could have ruled out by 21...Nc4!.

22.Bh6 Ba3 23.Bc1

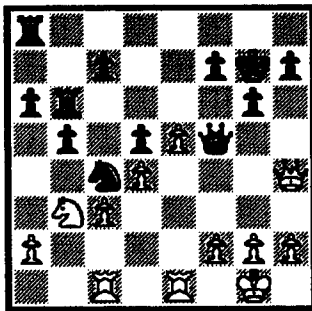
This amounts to an offer of a draw. With 23.Ng5 instead, White could have placed Black into a nasty

predicament. He would be threatening not only 24.Nxh7! Kxh7 25.Bg5+ Kg8 26.g4 Qc8 27.Bf6 Rxf6 28.exf6 Qf8 29.Re3, but also 24.g4 Qd7 25.Bg7! Kxg7 26.Qxh7+ and wins. Against this double threat, Black seems to not have a good defense: e.g. 23...Be7 24.g4 Qd7 25.Re3, after which 25...f5 is no good, in view of 26.e6 Bxg5 27.exd7, etc.

**23... Bf8 24.Bh6 Ba3 25.Bc1 Bxc1**

Black decides to play for a win.

**26.Raxc1 Kg7 27.Nd2 Nc4 28.Nb3**



It is clear that White doesn't want to exchange Knights, opening the b-file for Black's Rooks. He aims to occupy his own support-point at c5.

**28...g5!**

With White no doubt expecting Queenside operations, suddenly Black attacks on the Kingside.

**29.Qg3 h5 30.h4**

More prudent was 30.h3.

**30...Rg6 31.Nc5 gxh4 32.Qxh4 Nd2.**

With this and his next moves, Black throws all his pieces at the White King.

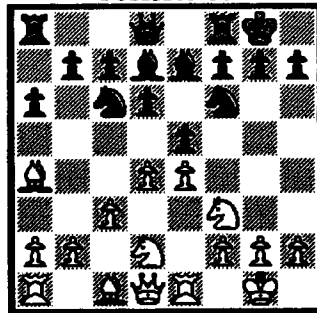
**33.Kh2 Kh7 34.Re3 Rag8 35.Rg1**

White has no choice. Now comes a forced liquidation, the point of which emerges with Black's unexpected 38th move.

**35...Rg4 36.Qf6 Qxf6 37.exf6 Rh4+ 38.Rh3 Nf3+! 39.gxf3 Rxh3+ 40.Kxh3**

**Rxg1 41.Nxa6 Rc1 42.Nxc7 b4 White Resigned.**

POSITION 54



*(The dangerous Kingside pawn majority becomes active; from the game Szabo-Euwe, Budapest 1940).*

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.O-O d6 6.Re1 Bd7 7.c3 Be7 8.d4 O-O 9.Nbd2 (No.54) exd4 10.cxd4 Nb4 11.Bxd7**

Sharper is 11.Bb3. In a match game, Euwe-Keres, 1939, this was followed by 11...c5 12.Nf1 Bb5 13.Ng3 d5 14.e5 Ne4 15.Nxe4 dxe4 16.Rxe4 Bd3 17.Re3 c4 18.a3, with lively development.

**11...Qxd7 12.Nf1 d5 13.Ne5!**

Before committing himself to the advance, e5, White goes in for a maneuver to exchange a pair of Knights, and thereby be ready to push the f-pawn as well.

**13...Qe8 14.a3 Nc6 15.Nxc6 Qxc6 16.e5 Ne4 17.Ne3 Qd7 18.f3**

The point of White's previous moves is now apparent; his pawn majority on the Kingside—four against three—rolls into action with gain of tempo.

**18...Ng5 19.f4 Ne4 20.f5 Rfe8 21.Qf3**

A critical moment. White threatens to win a pawn by 22.Nxd5, and so compels Black's reply. The result is that Black can't obtain counterplay by means of ...c5.



**21...c6 22.f6! Bf8**

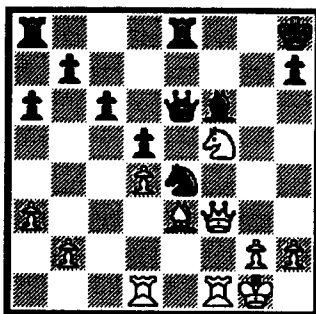
Forced, after 22...gxf6 23.Ng4 things would be really serious.

**23.fxg7 Bxg7 24.Nf5**

Threatening 25.Qg4 f6 26.Nh6+, winning the Queen.

**24...Qe6 25.Be3 Qg6 26.Rad1?**

The strongly placed Black Knight makes it difficult for White to attack, but this last move permits Black to get rid of the spearhead of the White position—the e-pawn—and suddenly it is Black who stands better. It is essential for White to prevent ...f6, and for this purpose 26.Rf1 was necessary.

**26...f6! 27.Nh4 Qf7 28.Rf1 Qe6 29.exf6 Bxf6 30.Nf5 Kh8**

In a few moves the whole picture has changed. Through the disappearance of the e-pawn, White is now plagued by the weakness of his isolated d-pawn; moreover, the open g-file will be favorable for Black.

This is a familiar circumstance in the struggle for the center. A central pawn majority lays upon its owner the responsibility of maintaining it. A pawn center always has associated weaknesses, which remain latent so long as the center is intact. As soon as it becomes impossible to hold the center, the drawbacks loom larger.

**31.Qh5 Rg8 32.Rf3 Bg5 33.Rdf1 Raf8 34.Nh6**

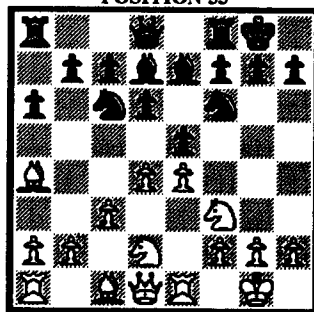
On 34.Nh4? follows 34...Rxf3 35.Nxf3 Nf6, and Black wins.

**34...Bxe3+ 35.Rxe3 Rxf1+ 36.Kxf1 Qf6+ 37.Nf5 Rf8 38.g4 Qxd4 39.Qxh7+?**

A blunder, but it makes little difference now. On 39.Qh6, Black wins easily by 39...Qd1+ 40.Kg2 Qxg4+ 41.Rg3 Qe2+; and if 39.Rf3 then 39...Qd1+ 40.Kg2 Qe2+.

**39...Kxh7 White Resigned**, for on 40.Rh3+ simply 40...Kg8 wins.

POSITION 55



*(The tension protracted as long as possible; from the game Smyslov-Lyublinsky, USSR Championship 1949).*

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 d6 5.c3 Bd7 6.d4 Nf6 7.Nbd2 Be7 8.O-O O-O 9.Re1**

This is a fine example of a position which needs to be played in the "tension" style.

**9...Be8**

This strange-looking move has a double purpose. Firstly, the Bishop no longer blocks the action of the Queen down the file, so that the possibility of ...d5 is open to Black. This appears, for instance, in the line 10.Nf1 exd4 11.cxd4 d5 12.e5 Ne4 – a procedure already known to us from the previous examples. The second point of ...Be8 is that it vacates d7 for a Knight. An eventual ...Nfd7 will allow

Black to play ...Nb6, forcing the hostile Bishop to declare its intentions. It also allows the move ...f6, protecting the e-pawn and simultaneously freeing the Bishop for action on the diagonal e8-h5.

**10.Bb3!**

This hinders Black's plans. Transition to a blocked oblique center by 10.d5 would give Black good counterplay by 10...Nb8 11.Bc2 c6 12.c4 cxd5 13.cxd5 a5, followed by ...Na6-c5.

**10...Nd7 11.Nf1 Bf6**

Also to be considered was 11...Kh8, in preparation for 12...f6.

**12.Ne3 Ne7 13.Ng4 Ng6 14.g3**

Stopping Black's Knight from occupying f4.

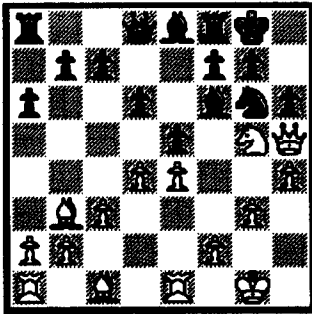
**14...Be7**

Black suffers from lack of elbow room, and now hopes to exchange a pair of Knights by 15...Nf6.

**15.h4! Nf6 16.Ng5 h6 17.Nxf6+ Bxf6**

Apparently all according to plan.

**18.Qh5**



This powerful move emphasizes White's advantage. Now 18...hxg5 is met by 19.hxg5 Be7 20.Qxg6 Kh8 21.Qh5+ Kg8 22.g6, and White wins.

**18...Nh8**

On e7 this Knight would also be in the way: 18...Ne7 19.dxe5 dxe5 20.Be3 Nc6? 21.Rad1 Qc8 22.Qg6!.

**19.dxe5!**

Putting an end to the tension at exactly the right moment.

**19...dxe5**

So we reach a form of the e-pawn center which we discussed in Chapter 6, Section C. Black could also have played 19...Bxe5, running into the Ruy Lopez Center, which we shall meet in Chapter 10, Section A. In view of the bad position of his pieces, however (the Nh8!), both formations promise very little.

**20.Be3 Qe7**

An interesting line is 20...hxg5 21.hxg5 g6 22.Qh4 Bg7, in which Black wins a piece, at first sight without much danger, but there follows: 23.Kg2 Bc6 24.Rh1 Re8 25.Qh7+ Kf8 26.Bc5+ Re7 27.Qxh8+ Bxh8 28.Rxh8+ Kg7 29.Rxd8 Rxd8 30.Bxe7, and White wins.

**21.Bd5!**

Forcing a weakening of Black's pawn position. Note that 21...hxg5 22.hxg5 g6 now fails to the intermediate move, 23.gxf6!.

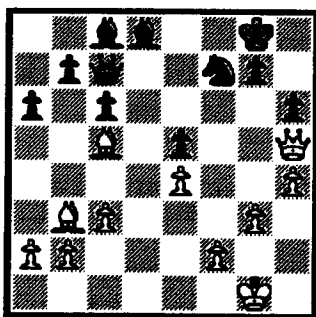
**21...c6 22.Bb3 Bd7 23.Rad1 Rad8 24.Rd2 Bc8 25.Red1 Rxd2 26.Rxd2 Qc7**

Now White has again to reckon with the possibility of ...hxg5. Also, Black is trying to force more simplification by 27...Rd8 28.Rxd8 Bxd8.

**27.Bc5!**

Very well played! Now 27...hxg5 loses to 28.Bxf8 Kxf8 29.Qxh8+. Also, after 27...Be7 28.Bxe7 Qxe7 29.Nf3 Re8 White has 30.Qxe5! Qxe5 31.Nxe5 Rxe5 32.Rd8+ Kh7 33.Rxc8 Rxe4? 34.Bc2.

27...Rd8 28.Rxd8+ Bxd8 29.Nxf7!  
Nxf7

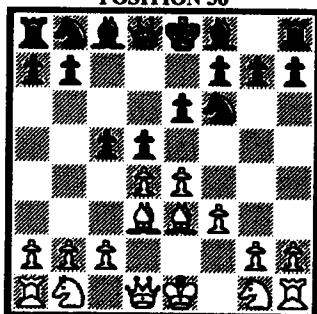


30.Bb6!!

Uncommonly pretty. The Bishop can't be taken because of 31.Qxf7+ Kh7 32.h5 and 33.Qg8#.

30...Qd7 31.Bxd8 Kh7 32.Bxf7 Qxd8  
33.Bg6+ Black Resigned. He loses another pawn.

POSITION 56



(An unimportant version of the Tension Form: the gambit variation of the Caro-Kann; from the game Tartakower-Sultan Khan, match, 1931).

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.f3 e6 4.Be3 Nf6  
5.Bd3 c5!

Strictly speaking we are still in the opening stage; yet already White is experiencing some difficulty in maintaining the tension. The root cause is the weakened diagonal e1-h4.

6.c3

The fact that this costs a pawn will not worry White, who in playing this variation is looking for compensation in play on the f-file.

There isn't really much choice anyway. If he adopts a blocked oblique formation with 6.e5, Black has the strong intermediate move 6...cxd4! (7.Bxd4 Nfd7 8.f4 Nc6, etc.).

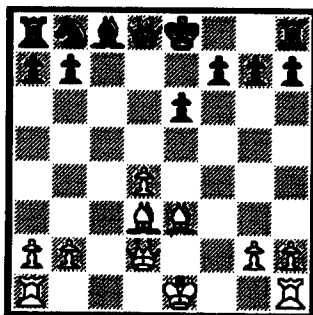
6...cxd4 7.cxd4 dxe4 8.fxe4 Nxe4

This tactic is possible because of the weakening effect of 3.f3.

9.Nf3 Bb4+ 10.Nbd2

If White avoids simplification with 10.Ke2, he runs into even more problems, as his King is too exposed. For example, 10...Nf6 11.Qa4+ Nc6 12.Bb5 (or 12.Ne5 Qa5!) 12...Bd6! 13.Bxc6+ bxc6 14.Qxc6+ Bd7 15.Qxd6? Bb5+, and wins.

10...Nxd2 11.Nxd2 Bxd2+ 12.Qxd2



For the sacrificed pawn White has the two Bishops and the f-file, but these factors are not sufficient compensation. White is hindered by the weakness of his center pawn; moreover, Black will soon play f5, after which there will be few chances for attack on the Kingside.

The continuation of the game is not important for our purpose, but we give it for the sake of completeness.

12...Nc6 13.O-O O-O 14.Rf3 f5 15.Bc4  
Bd7 16.Raf1 Na5 17.Be2 Rc8 18.d5  
Nc4 19.Bxc4 Rxc4 20.b3 Rg4 21.Rd1

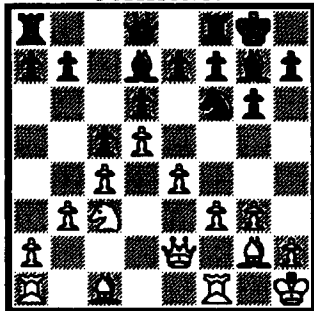
e5 22.Bxa7 Rf6 23.Rg3 f4 24.Rxg4 Bxg4 25.Re1 b6 26.Rxe5 Qd7 27.h3? Bxh3 28.gxh3 Qxh3 29.Qg2? Rg6 30.Qxg6 hxg6 31.Bxb6 Qg3+ 32.Kf1 Qc3 33.Re2 Qd3 34.Kf2 Qxd5 35.b4 g5 36.a4 g4 37.a5 g3+ 38.Ke1 f3 39.Rd2 Qe4+ 40.Kf1 Qb1+ White Resigned.

(ii) Various Partially Fixed Formations.

There are still a few partially fixed formations in addition to the tension-forms with which we have been dealing. In play they arise rarely, so we will treat them briefly. Possible forms are:

- 1) White pawns, d5, with e-pawn on the fourth, third, or second rank; Black pawns on d6 and e7.
- 2) White pawns, e5 and d3; Black pawns, d5 and e6.
- 3) White pawns, e5 and d4; Black pawns, e6 and d7. But in most cases these quickly become normal blocked formations, but it does sometimes happen to be more advantageous to maintain the status quo. Here are three illustrations:

POSITION 57



(White has a crushing advantage in space; from the game Donner-Van Scheltinga, Beverwijk 1952).

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d6 4.e4 Bg7 5.g3 O-O 6.Bg2 c5 7.Nge2 Nc6 8.d5 Ne5 9.b3 Bg4 10.O-O Nf3+ 11.Kh1 Nd4 12.f3 Nxe2 13.Qxe2 Bd7

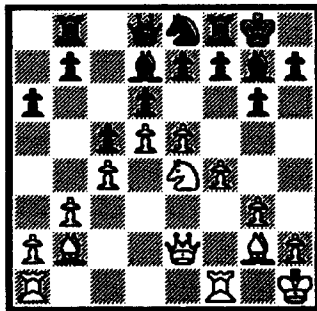
There followed:

14.Bb2 a6

Black aims for Queenside counterplay by playing ...b5. Trying to block the center by 14...e5 doesn't work because of 15.dxe6, leaving Black with a very weak d-pawn.

15.f4 Ne8 16.e5 Rb8 17.Ne4

White's position is now overwhelming; anything the opponent attempts must rebound, because of an acute lack of space.

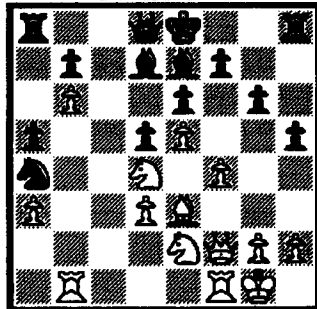


17...b5 18.Bc3 bxc4 19.bxc4 Qc7 20.Nd2 e6

For our purpose, the rest of the game is not important. It went:

21.Rfb1 exd5 22.Rxb8 Qxb8 23.Rb1 Qc8 24.cxd5 Bb5 25.Qe3 Nc7 26.exd6 Bxc3 27.Qxc3 Ne8 28.Ne4 c4 29.Qe5 Qd7 30.a4 Bxa4 31.Nc5 Qxd6 32.Nxa4 Qa3 33.Ra1 and White won.

POSITION 58



(Support point at d4; from the game Pillsbury-Lasker, Nuremberg 1896).

In this position White will not even consider playing d4 as his Knight is very well-placed there. This is instrumental for the following spectacular breakthrough.

**20...Bxa3**

Apparently the gift can be accepted, as White needs to make three more moves on the Kingside (g3, h3, and g4) before he can threaten f5. Now comes a surprising irruption.

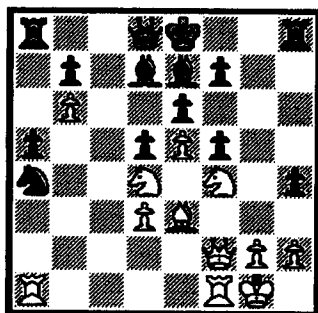
**21.f5!! gxf5 22.Nf4 h4**

Black can't allow 23.Qg3.

**23.Ra1! Be7**

Other possibilities are:

1) 23...Qe7? 24.Nxf5 exf5 25.Nxd5, and wins. 2) 23...Bc5? 24.Nxf5!. 3) 23...Bb2 24.Rxa4 Bxd4 25.Rxd4, and wins.



**24.Rxa4!**

This pretty exchange sacrifice serves to make the Bishop on d7 give up its defense of the e-pawn.

**24...Bxa4 25.Nfxe6! fxe6 26.Nxe6 Bd7**

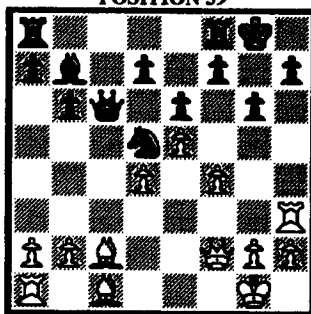
The main variation runs: 26...Qc8 27.Qxf5 Qc6 28.Bg5 Qxb6+ 29.d4 Qb4 30.Qf7+ Kd7 31.Bxe7 Qxe7 32.Nc5+ Kd8 33.Nxb7+ Kd7 34.Nc5+ Kd8 35.Qxd5+, and wins.

**27.Nxd8 Rxd8 28.Bc5**

In view of the exposed position of Black's King, White now has a clearly won game. The game continued:

**28...Rc8 29.Bxe7 Kxe7 30.Qe3 Rc6 31.Qg5+ Kf7 32.Rc1 Rxc1+ 33.Qxc1 Rc8 34.Qe1 h3 35.gxh3 Rg8+ 36.Kf2 a4 37.Qb4 Rg6 38.Kf3 a3 39.Qxa3 Rxb6 40.Qc5 Re6 41.Qc7 Ke7 42.Kf4 b6 43.h4 Rc6 44.Qb8 Be8 45.Kxf5 Rh6 46.Qc7+ Kf8 47.Qd8 b5 48.e6 Rh7 49.Ke5 b4 50.Qd6+ Black Resigned.**

POSITION 59



(The breakthrough systematically prepared; from the game Colle-Capablanca, Carlsbad 1929).

The difference between this partially fixed formation and the normal blocked oblique center is that the Black d-pawn stands on d7 instead of d5, and this improves Black's chances, as d5 is a splendid support-point for his Knight. For the time being White retains some chances of Kingside attack, and his two Bishops may play a useful part; but sooner or later the tide must turn. Black's strategy includes the opening of the f-file by ...f6, but this is not practical yet, for if 21...f6, White replies 22.Qh4 Rf7 23.Bxg6.

**21...Rac8 22.Bd1**

Forced, for on 22.Qh4 Black has 22...Nf6! threatening mate; and 22.Be4 is refuted by 22...Qxc1+! 23.Rxc1 Rxc1+.

**22...f6 23.Qh4**

Now White's position falls apart like a house of cards. However, 23.Bd2 is also poor in view of 23...Nxf4! 24.Bxf4 fxe5 25.Bf3 e4 26.Be2 e3! 27.Rxe3 Rxf4. By 23.Rf3!, as suggested by Prins, White might be able to hold his own.

**23...Rf7 24.Bf3**

The main threat was 24...Nxf4.

**24...Qc4 25.Be3**

Forced, as 25.Qf2 loses to 25...Qxc1+.

**25...Nxe3 26.Bxb7 Nf5 27.Qe1 Rc7 28.Be4 Qxd4+ 29.Kh1 fxe5 30.Bxf5 exf5 31.fxe5 Re7 32.Re3 Qxb2 33.e6 dxe6 34.Rxe6 Kf7 White Resigns.**

**C. Mobil Center Formations**

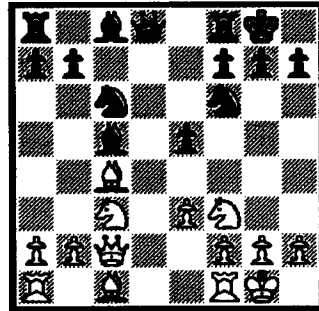
(i) The Incomplete e-pawn Center.

We are already aware that the normal e-pawn center (White has a pawn on e4, Black a pawn on e5) with the open d-file gives few dynamic chances (see Chapter 6, Section C). But we have also seen that the advance position, with a White pawn on e5 and a Black pawn on e6, gives White good chances, with the e-pawn itself a vital factor in any attack on the enemy King. The darker side of this set-up (weakening of the squares d5 and f5) becomes important only as the endgame approaches (see Chapter 7, Section A).

In the formation now to be considered (White pawn on e4, Black pawn on e6) the possibility of going over into one or another of the above-mentioned formations has to be kept constantly in mind. White naturally wants to push his pawn to e5, to reach formation 7A(i), but this push must be made under favorable circumstances or White may find that it only creates weaknesses at d5 and f5, which might be instrumental for a Black counteraction. Also, the

e-pawn, when pushed to e4 unjustifiably, may be considered to be only an obstruction on the important b1-h7 diagonal. Hence, White should think carefully before making the committal advance e4.

POSITION 60



*(The darker side of the advance of the e-pawn; from the game Reshevsky-Rossolimo, Amsterdam 1950).*

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.Qc2 c5 5.dxc5 O-O 6.e3 Bxc5 7.Nf3 Nc6 8.Be2 d5 9.O-O dxc4 10.Bxc4 e5**

Black wants to seize the initiative by pushing this pawn to e4.

**11.a3 Qe7 12.Ng5!**

Crossing Black's plans, whereas 12.b4 Bd6, threatening ...e4 would have forwarded it.

**12...g6**

White threatened an immediate win by 13.Nd5!.

**13.b4 Bb6**

If 13...Bd6 now, then 14.Nge4 gaining a tempo.

**14.Bb2 Bf5**

Black is not giving up his idea yet. If now 15.Qb3, then 15...e4!, and, despite some dangers on the long diagonal, he has good counter-chances, the immediate threat being 16...h6.

**15.Bd3!**

Keeping the vital e4 square under control.

**15...Bxd3 16.Qxd3 Rfd8 17.Qc2 Rac8  
18.Rfd1 Rxd1+ 19.Rxd1 Rd8 20.h3**

Black, with his next move, decides to simplify, possibly expecting a quick draw, but soon realizes he has played into White's hands.

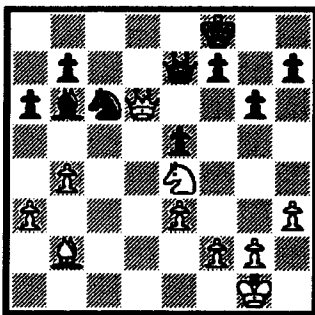
**20...Rxd1+? 21.Qxd1 a6**

Not good was 21...e4 as after 22.Nd5 Nxd5 23.Qxd5 the e-pawn would fall. Black should give up all thoughts of ...e4 now, for with the removal of the heavy pieces there is little chance for an attack, while on the other hand the resulting weaknesses would be serious (long diagonal from a1-h8 and the squares d4 and f4).

**22.Nge4 Nxe4 23.Nxe4 Bc7**

Preventing 24.Qd6. Black could not play 23...Qd8, because of 24.Qxd8+ Bxd8 25.Nc5 and White wins a pawn.

**24.Qd5 Bb6 25.Qd6 Kf8?**



This loses a pawn. Better was 25...Bd8, after which White stands better, but a clear win is not in sight.

**26.Bxe5! Bxe3!**

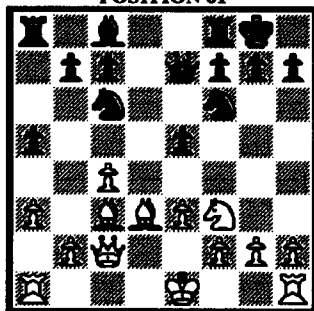
Best. After 26...Nxe5 27.Qxb6 Black has no counterplay at all.

**27.Qxe7+ Kxe7 28.Bf6+ Ke6 29.fxe3  
Kf5 30.Nd6+ Kxf6 31.Nxb7**

An examination of this ending would lead us too far afield. Suffice it

to say that White won after Black overlooked a routine drawing line.

POSITION 61



(The brighter side of the e-pawn advance; from the game Euwe-Reshevsky Moscow, 1948).

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.Qc2 Nc6  
5.Nf3 d6 6.Bd2 O-O 7.a3 Bxc3 8.Bxc3  
a5 9.e3 Qe7 10.Bd3 e5 11.dxe5 dxe5**

There followed:

**12.O-O**

Inaccurate. Correct was 12.Ng5 h6 13.Ne4, after which Black could only force ...e4 with the help of his f-pawn, and this would have involved him in greater obligations:

1) 13...Ne8 14.Ng3!, keeping control of the important e4 and f5 squares. 2) 13...Nxe4 14.Bxe4 f5 15.Bd5+ Kh8 16.O-O, and White threatens to generate dangerous activity for his two Bishops by 17.f4.

**12...Re8**

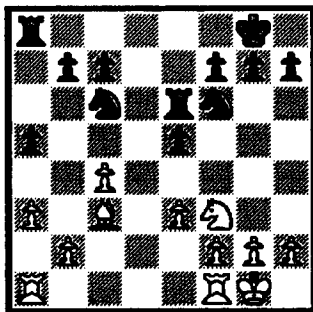
Threatening 13...e4, which couldn't be played immediately because of 13.Bxf6 exd3 14.Bxe7 dxc2 15.Bxf8.

**13.Bf5**

There is nothing better. It's too late for 13.Ng5, because of 13...e4! 14.Bxf6 exd3 15.Bxe7 (15.Qxd3 Qxf6) 15...dxc2 16.Bc5 Re5, and Black wins. The alternative, 13.Nd2 e4 14.Bxf6 exd3 15.Bxe7 dxc2 16.Bh4 Bf5! is also in Black's favor.

**13...Bxf5 14.Qxf5 Qe6 15.Qxe6 Rxe6**

Black stands better in this ending, mainly due to his control of e4. Not only can he play e4 whenever the moment is right, but meanwhile this square can be used by the Knight.



**16.b4**

This move intends to play for b5, but it is tactically flawed. Better was 16.Rfd1; Black would then continue 16...a4. Another plan well worth considering was 16.Ng5 Re7(or e8) 17.f3 h6 18.Nh3, with 19.Nf2, fighting against Black's intended ...e4.

**16...Ne4 17.Bb2 f6**

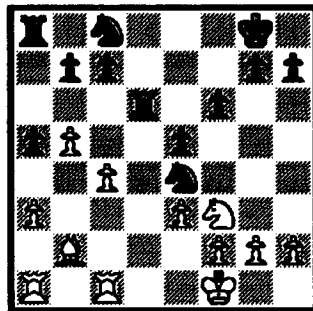
Now threatening to win a pawn by 18...axb4.

**18.b5 Ne7 19.Rfd1 Rd6!**

So that if 20.Rxd6 then ...cxd6!, and Black can target the c-pawn.

**20.Kf1 Nc8 21.Rdc1**

Hoping to continue with 22.c5.



**21...c5! 22.Bc3**

Both 22.bxc6 Rxc6 and 22.Ke2 Nb6, followed by ...Rad8, are clearly in Black's favor.

**22...Nxc3 23.Rxc3 e4**

With this long-expected advance, Black takes up the advanced fixed single-pawn center, which we examined in Chapter 7, Section A (i), and under very favorable conditions. He controls the open d-file, with its obvious outpost on d3, and has ready targets in White's c- and a-pawns. Reshevsky dealt with the technical problems as follows:

**24.Ng1 Nb6 25.Ne2 f5 26.Ke1 Rad8 27.Rc2 Kf7 28.Ng3 Ke6 29.Nf1 Rd3 30.Ng3 g5 31.Ne2 Na4 32.Ng3 Ke5 33.Nf1 h5 34.f3 Rb3 35.fxe4 fxe4 36.Rf2 Nb2 37.Rc2 Nd3+ 38.Ke2 Rf8 39.Nd2 Rf2+ 40.Kd1 Rb2 41.Rxb2 Nxb2+ 42.Kc1 Rxc2 White Resigned.**

(ii) The Incomplete Queen's Pawn Center.

The incomplete d-pawn center consists of a White pawn on d4 and a Black pawn on d6, with the e-file open. This formation has practical significance only if White also has a pawn on c4. If this is not the case, Black has two possibilities:

1) He can play ...d5, making an ordinary d-pawn center, which, as we have seen, gives few opportunities for a vigorous encounter. 2) He can use the d5 square for a piece, and this could give some chances for initiative. For example, we examine the opening of the game Lewitt-Caro, Berlin 1905: 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Nxe5 d6 4.Nf3 Nxe4 5.d4 Be7 6.Bd3 Nf6 7.O-O Bg4 8.b3 Nc6 9.Bb2 O-O 10.Nbd2 Qd7 11.Nc4 (better was 11.c4) 11...Nb4! 12.a3 Nxd3 13.Qxd3 Nd5.

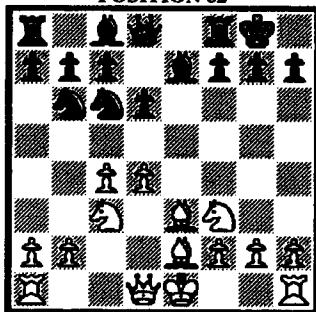
With a White pawn on c4 Black would not have had this possibility.



Then if Black subsequently pushes ...d5, White can bypass with c5 while gaining space. If Black refrains from ...d5 very long, then White might well be able to push d5, with a gain of valuable central space (see Chapter 7, Section A (i) (b)).

In general it can be said that the incomplete d-pawn center gives White a slight, but persistent initiative.

POSITION 62



(White plays for constriction; Black seeks freedom; from the game Konstantinopolsky-Panov, Moscow 1946).

**1.e4 Nf6 2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 d6 4.c4 Nb6  
5.exd6 exd6 6.Nc3 Be7 7.Be3 Nc6  
8.Be2 O-O 9.Nf3**

In this well-known variation of Alekhine's Defense Black suffers from lack of elbow-room, his pieces tending to obstruct each other. The Knight on b6 in particular has to play a very modest role.

**9...Bg4**

If instead 9...Bf5, Black would have to be continually reckoning with d5 followed by Nd4.

**10.b3 Re8 11.O-O Bf6**

After 11...Bxf3 12.Bxf3 Bg5, White would push 13.d5!, ensuring himself some advantage in all variations.

**12.Rc1 d5**

Completing the d-pawn center, but under circumstances unfavorable for Black. However, Black was understandably uneasy about the possibility of d5, as well as Ne4 or Nd5 (e.g. 12...Ne7 13.Ne4 or 12...Nd7 13.Nd5).

**13.c5 Nc8 14.h3 Bh5**

Somewhat stronger would be 14...Be6, followed by ...N8e7.

**15.Qd2 h6**

Now 15...N8e7 would be refuted by 16.g4 Bg6 17.g5.

**16.Rfe1 a6 17.Rcd1 g5?**

Also bad was 17...N8e7 18.g4 Bg6 19.h4 Nc8 20.g5 with a strong attack for White. The move played, however, produces a serious weakening of Black's Kingside, which White immediately exploits. The best choice was 17...Bg6.

**18.Nxg5! Bxe2**

After 18...Rxe3 19.fxe3 Bxe2 20.Nxf7! Kxf7 21.Qxe2, White's attack is still too strong to meet.

**19.Nxf7!**

Demolishing the Black King's shaky fortress.

**19...Kxf7 20.Qxe2 N8e7**

Otherwise the d-pawn falls.

**21.Qh5+ Kg8 22.Bxh6 Qd7**

If 22...Bxd4 23.Rxd4, or if 22...Nxd4 23.Bg5 Bg7 24.Rxd4 Bxd4 25.Qg4 Bg7 26.Bf6 winning.

**23.Re3 Nf5 24.Nxd5 Qxd5 25.Rg3+ Nxg3 26.Qg6+! Black Resigned.**

## CHAPTER 8

# PAWN PREPONDERANCE IN THE CENTER

In all our central formations so far, both players had either one or two pawns each. We are now going to deal with formations in which the balance is upset, having two pawns against one, two pawns against none, or one against none.

We distinguish the following types:

### A. The Absolute Center.

This includes all the 2:0 formations except the so-called hanging form (see Section B), e.g. White: a2, d4, e4, f2, g2, h2; Black: a7, b7, c7, f7, g7, h7.

### B. The Hanging Center.

White: a2, b2, c2, f2, g2, h2; Black: a7, b7, d5, e6, g7, h7.

### C. The Classic Center.

White: d4, e4; Black: d6.

### D. The Neo-Classic Center.

White: d4, e4; Black: e6 or e7.

### E. The Unbalanced Tension Form

White d4 against Black e5.

### F. The Latent Central Majority

(i) With d-pawn in reserve (White d3, e4 against Black's e5).

(ii) With e-pawn in reserve (White d4, e3 against Black's d5).

### G. The Bridge-head Formation

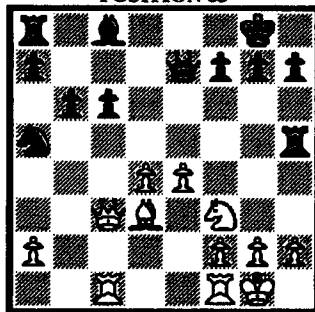
A pawn majority of 4:3 on one wing and a minority of 2:3 on the other wing, with an open file in between. The unopposed pawn of the majority forms a bridge-head in the center. The bridge-head also can be on the Queenside: (White: a2, b2, c2, d4, g2, h2; Black: a7, b7, c7, f7, g7, h7); or on the Kingside: (White: a2, b2, e4, f2, g2, h2; Black: a7, b7, c7, f7, g7, h7). We defer discussion of this position to Chapter 10, Section C, as this is not a purely central formation. The outside pawns have an important effect on the play.

### A. THE ABSOLUTE CENTER

It might be supposed that the possessor of the absolute center has a crushing advantage in every case. It is true that he would have great freedom of movement, enabling him to find ideal posts for his pieces; yet in reality the absolute center is very often not as strong as it looks. The reason is to be found in the existence of the open center files, down which the opponent can mount pressure against the center pawns. Only if White (whom we are assuming is the owner of the absolute center) succeeds in resisting this pressure and keeping his center intact, can one speak of any real advantage.

Here are two examples from Lasker's Defense to the Queen's Gambit.

POSITION 63



*(Illustrating the well-known rule that a flank attack has little chance of success if one exercises no influence in the center; from Eliskases-Spielmann, second match game, 1932).*

1.d4 e6 2.c4 Nf6 3.Nc3 d5 4.Bg5 Be7  
5.e3 O-O 6.Nf3 Ne4 7.Bxe7 Qxe7  
8.cxd5 Nxc3 9.bxc3 exd5 10.Qb3 Rd8  
11.c4 Nc6 12.cxd5 Na5 13.Qc3 Rxd5

14.Bd3 b6 15.O-O Rh5 16.Rac1 c6  
17.e4

In this position Black can exert no pressure on White's center; his pieces – especially the Rook and Knight on the Rook-files – are very poorly placed. To justify the position of the Rh5, Black will have to attempt a direct attack on White's King, but this is problematic as White's central dominance allows him to maneuver his pieces rapidly, whether for attack or defense of any threatened sector.

17...Be6 18.Rc2 g5 19.Re1 Rd8 20.e5  
g4 21.Nd2 Qh4

By this attack, Black forestalls Ne4-f6+.

22.Nf1 g3

This is refuted in a surprising fashion. 22...f5 might have been better, although Black's situation would remain difficult: 23.exf6 Qxf6 24.Re4!, and Black's King is feeling the pressure.

23.Re4! gxh2+ 24.Kh1 Qe7 25.f4 c5

Or 25...Bf5 26.Ng3 Bxe4 27.Nxh5 Bxd3 28.Qxd3, followed by 29.Nf6+. However, 25...f5 would have been better than the move played.

26.Ng3 Rh6 27.f5 Bd5 28.Rg4+ Kh8  
29.Qd2 Qf8 30.f6

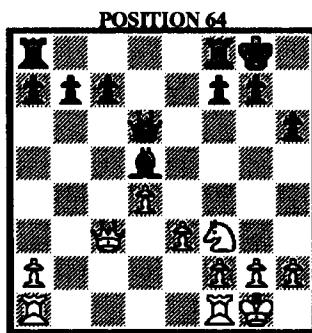
Threatens 31.Rg7, and so Black is induced to surrender the exchange.

30...Rg6 31.Bxg6 fxg6 32.Ne4

Now on 32...Be6 there would follow 33.Rh4 Rxd4 34.Ng5!! Rxd2 35.Rxh7+ Kg8 36.Rxd2, and White's attack will win. If 36...Bc4 37.R2d7, or 36...Qe8 37.Rg7+ Kh8 38.Nxe6.

32...Nc6 33.Nd6 cxd4 34.Rxd4! Nxd4  
35.Qxd4 Be6 36.Rc7 Black Resigns.

He is helpless against various threats, e.g. 36...Rd7 37.Rxd7 Bxd7 38.e6!, etc.



*(The center under pressure; from the game Bogolyubov-Eliskases, Stuttgart 1939).*

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Be7  
5.e3 O-O 6.Nf3 h6 7.Bh4 Ne4 8.Bxe7  
Qxe7 9.cxd5 Nxc3 10.bxc3 exd5  
11.Qb3 Qd6 12.c4 dxc4 13.Bxc4 Nc6  
14.O-O Na5 15.Qc3 Nxc4 16.Qxc4  
Be6 17.Qc3 Bd5

By exerting pressure on e4, the Black Bishop restrains the mobility of the White center pawns.

18.Ne5 Rfe8 19.Rfe1

A fine move, by which White not only prepares e4, but at the same time renders dubious Black's intended 19...c5, which would now be met by 20.Qa3 Qe7 21.e4!, etc. On the other hand, 19.f3 would have been very strongly answered by 19...c5!

19...f6 20.Nd3 Rad8 21.a4 b6

This has the advantage that under some circumstances ...c5 may become possible, but also the potential disadvantage of giving White a target for his Queenside activities.

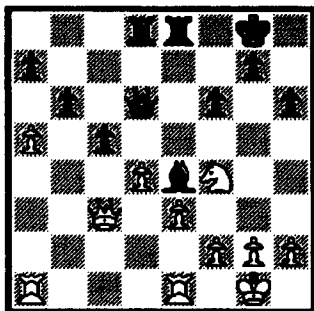
22.a5

After 22.f3 Bf7 or 22...Bb7, White can't continue with e4, because of pressure on d4.

22...Be4 23.Nf4 c5!

So far the White center has only been held in check, but with this energetic move it is disrupted. Although in the

long run Black loses a pawn, the material remaining on the board is such that no serious disadvantage results. The game continued:



24. axb6 axb6 25. dxc5 Qxc5 26. Qxc5  
 bxc5 27. Rec1 Re5 28. h4 Rc8 29. Ra7  
 c4 30. Rc3 Rb5 31. Ra4 Rbc5 32. f3 Bf5  
 33. e4 Bd7 34. Ra7 R8c7 35. Rxc7 Rxc7  
 36. g4 Ba4 37. Nd5 Rc5 38. h5 Bb3  
 39. Kf2 Ra5 40. Ke3 Kf7 41. Nb6 g6!  
 42. hxg6+ Kxg6 43. Nd5 Ra2 44. Kf4  
 Rd2 45. Re3 Rd3! 46. Rxd3 cxd3  
 47. Ke3 Bc2 48. Nf4+ Kg5 49. Nxd3 h5!  
 50. gxh5 Kxh5 51. Nb4 Bd1 52. Nd5  
 Kg6 53. Ne7+ Kf7 54. Nf5 Ke6 Drawn.

## B. THE HANGING CENTER

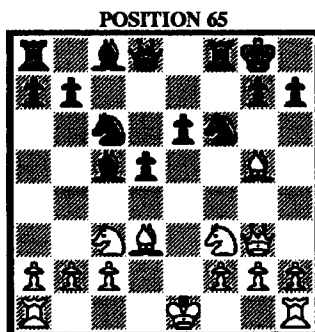
In contrast to most other central pawn formations the hanging center is usually held by Black (White pawns c2 and f2 against Black pawns at d5 and e6). It frequently occurs from the French Defense when White, after assuming the blocked oblique formation with pawns at d4 and e5 against Black pawns at d5 and e6, then reacts to the attacks on his center pawns by exchanging them on c5 and f6 respectively.

The Black pawns on d5 and e6 are then "hanging"; that is to say, they have no adjacent pawns to protect them. The situation is critical for both sides, with the strategic struggle raging around e5. If White can occupy this square with a piece, and maintain

it there, then his advantage will be definite, and often decisive.

White can also gain advantage if he firmly controls (rather than occupies) the e5 square. For then the Black e-pawn, being backward on an open file, may be a serious weakness, while cramping it's own forces behind it.

Black's chances to avoid these unfavorable contingencies rest in the advance ...e5. Because of this, a small lead in development has great significance in this central formation. A single tempo may make all the difference between achieving this critical advance, and failing to do so.



(By occupying e5, White is able to build up a winning attack; from the third match game Stoltz-Flohr 1931).

1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. Nc3 Nf6 4. e5 Nfd7  
 5. Qg4!? c5 6. Nf3 Nc6 7. dxc5 f5 8. exf6  
 Nxf6 9. Qg3 Bxc5 10. Bg5 O-O 11. Bd3  
 (No.65) Nb4?

This allows Black the two Bishops, but, more important, removes the Knight from control of e5. Much stronger would have been 11...Bd6! 12. Qh4 h6 13. Bxf6 (or 13. Bd2 e5!) 13...Qxf6 14. Qxf6 gxf6, and Black not only gets the two Bishops, but a strong center as well.

12. O-O-O Nxd3+ 13. Rxd3 Bd7 14. Ne5  
 Be8 15. Qh4 Qc7 16. Re1 Rc8 17. Re2

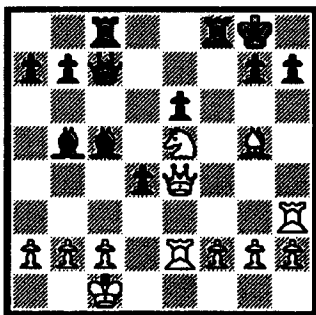
Giving extra protection to c2.

17...d4?

Stahlberg gives the stronger line 17...Bd6! (the key concept is control of e5) 18.f4 Bxe5 19.fxe5 Ne4! 20.Nxe4 Rf1+ 21.Rd1 Rxd1+ 22.Kxd1 dxe4, and White's King is exposed to attack.

18.Ne4 Nxe4 19.Qxe4! Bb5 20.Rh3

White now has a strong attack, thanks to the dominating position of the Knight.



20...Rf5

If 20...h6 then 21.Qg6! Bxe2 22.Qxe6+ Kh7 23.Bxh6! wins. The attack also wins after 20...g6 21.Ng4! Bxe2 22.Qxe6+ Kh8 23.Bf6+ Rxf6 24.Nxf6 Bh5 25.Nd5 Qc6 26.Qe5+ Kg8 27.Nf6+ Kf7 28.Nxh5 gxh5 29.Rf3+ Kg8 30.Rg3+ Kf8 31.Qh8+ Ke7 32.Rg7+ Kd6 33.Qxh7, etc.

21.g4! Bxe2

Also insufficient is 21...Rxf5 22.Qxh7+ Kf8 23.Rf3+, and White wins:

1) 23...Rf5 24.gxf5 Bxe2 25.fxe6+ Bxf3 26.Ng6+ and mate follows. 2) 23...Ke8 24.Qh8+ Ke7 25.Qh4, and wins.

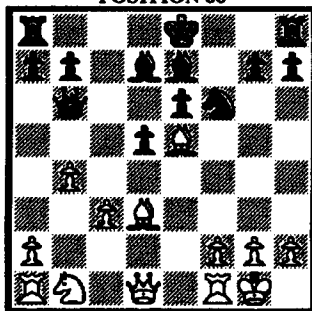
22.gxf5 d3 23.c3 Ba3

A last desperate attempt to turn the tables. Other moves are hopeless, in view of the threatened 24.fxe6.

24.Bd2! Bxb2+ 25.Kxb2 Qb6+ 26.Ka1 Qxf2 27.Qxb7! Qg1+ 28.Kb2 Qb6+

29.Qxb6 axb6 30.fxe6 Re8 31.Nxd3  
Black Resigned.

POSITION 66



(The hanging center blocked; from the game Nimzowitsch-Salwe, Carlsbad, 1911).

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.c3 Nc6 5.Nf3 Qb6 6.Bd3 Bd7 7.dxc5 Bxc5 8.O-O f6 9.b4 Be7 10.Bf4 fxe5 11.Nxe5 Nxe5 12.Bxe5 Nf6

Nimzowitsch understood better than anyone the art of blockading an enemy position; he wrote a whole book on the subject. Here we see him putting his theory of the blockade into practice.

13.Nd2 O-O

Preferable was 13...Bb5, trading off White's strong Bishop.

14.Nf3!

Now 14...Bb5 would lose a pawn: 15.Bd4 Qa6 16.Bxb5 Qxb5 17.Ng5, and the e-pawn falls.

14...Bd6 15.Qe2 Rac8 16.Bd4

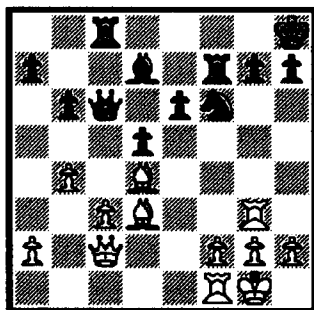
Clearing e5 for the Knight.

16...Qc7 17.Ne5 Be8 18.Rae1 Bxe5 19.Bxe5 Qc6 20.Bd4 Bd7 21.Qc2

Now that the Black center is fixed, White can head directly for attack.

21...Rf7 22.Re3 b6 23.Rg3 Kh8

24.Bxf6 was threatened.

**24.Bxh7!**

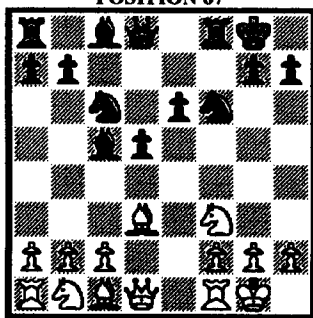
Pretty and decisive. Now 24...Nxb7 loses to 25.Qg6! Kg8 26.Bxg7.

24...e5 25.Bg6 Re7 26.Re1 Qd6 27.Be3 d4.

The blockade of the pawns is over, but the two Bishops and extra pawn give White an easy win.

28.Bg5 Rxc3 29.Rxc3 dxc3 30.Qxc3 Kg8 31.a3 Kf8 32.Bh4 Be8 33.Bf5 Qd4 (Otherwise 34.Bg3 is crushing) 34.Qxd4 exd4 35.Rxe7 Kxe7 36.Bd3 Kd6 37.Bxf6 gxf6 38.Kf1 Bc6 39.h4 Black Resigns.

POSITION 67



(The significance of a lead in development; from the game Van Scheltinga-Van der Tol, Leeuwarden 1946).

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.dxc5 Nc6 5.Nf3 Bxc5 6.Bd3 f5 7.exf6 Nxf6 8.O-O

Black has a slight lead in development, but it is enough to alter the whole picture. He is already threatening to push ...e5 and in addition is exerting troublesome pressure against f2.

**9.c4**

On 9.Bf4 Black has 9...Ne4! 10.Bxe4 dxe4 11.Qxd8 Nxd8. Also, after 9.Qe2 Black plays 9...e5! and after 10.Nxe5 Nxe5 11.Qxe5 Re8, Black will obtain a winning attack, as detailed analyses have shown.

**9...e5!**

Sharp and very effective.

**10.cxd5 e4**

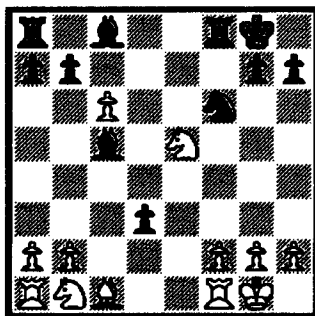
Clearly best; not so good is 10...Qxd5 11.Nc3, or 10...Nxd5 11.Bc4.

**11.dxc6 Qxd3!**

The only way; after 11...exd3 12.Qb3+ Rf7 13.Ne5 or 12...Kh8 13.cxb7, it is White who is on top.

**12.Qxd3**

If 12.Ne5 then 12...Qxd1 13.Rxd1 Bxf2+ 14.Kxf2 Ng4+ wins.

**12...exd3 13.Ne5?**

The losing move. The only way to resist was 13.Nc3 bxc6 14.Na4 Bd6 15.Be3, with some counterplay.

**13...bxc6 14.Nxd3 Bd4!**

White has won a pawn, but Black has an overwhelming position. An

immediate threat is 15...Ba6 16.Rd1 Rad8!

### 15.Be3

Or 15.Nc3 Ba6 16.Rd1 Rad8 17.Ne2 Bxd3 18.Rxd3 Bxf2+.

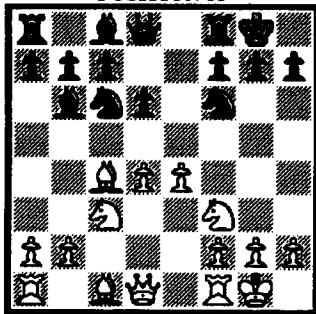
**15...Bxe3 16.fxe3 Ba6 17.Rd1 Rad8 18.Nf2 Rxd1+ 19.Nxd1 Ne4 20.Nf2 Nxf2 White Resigned.**

## C. THE CLASSIC CENTER

The classic center may be regarded as about the strongest formation of all, if White can manage to keep it intact. This can be a challenging task as we have already seen in Chapter 7, Section B (i), where Black always had the move ...d5 lurking in the background, to break the integrity of the classic center.

Here we content ourselves with a single example, showing the problems with which White must contend, as well as the potential strength of the center if it is properly handled.

POSITION 68



*(The classic center as a steamroller; from the game Leonhardt-Burn Carlsbad, 1911).*

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.c3 d6 5.d4 exd4 6.cxd4 Bb6 7.Nc3 Nf6 8.O-O O-O (No.68) 9.Bb3!**

We already know that the first obligation of the owner of a classical center is to maintain it. The text move

agrees with this principle, for Black was threatening to blow up the White center with the pseudo-sacrifice, 9...Nxe4 10.Nxe4 d5.

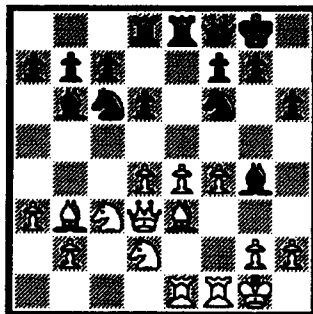
### 9...Bg4 10.Be3 h6?

The weakening of White's pawn structure, which Black could have forced here by 10...Bxf3 11.gxf3, would in fact have helped White. The square e4 would always be reliably protected, and the open g-file would come into use at a favorable moment. Interesting is 10...Re8!, 11.Qd3 Bxf3 12.gxf3 Nh5! 13.Ne2 Qf6 14.Kg2 Qg6+ 15.Kh1 Qf6 16.f4! followed by doubling Rooks on the g-file, with White clearly on top. Black's best line is 10...Re8! 11.Qd3 Bh5! 12.Nd2 Bg6, threatening 13...d5. Even so, White can retain the advantage by 13.d5! Ne5 14.Qe2.

### 11.Qd3 Re8 12.Nd2 Qe7 13.Rae1 Rad8 14.a3

White is in control, and can quietly strengthen his position.

### 14...Qf8 15.f4!



This is serious. There is an immediate threat to win the Bishop by 16.f5 and 17.h3.

### 15...Bc8 16.h3 Kh8 17.g4!

With his center fully secure, White proceeds to storm the enemy Kingside. Black's lack of space leaves him unable to find counterplay.

### 17...Ne7 18.Kh1 d5

A belated and ineffective counter thrust in the center.

**19.e5 Nh7 20.f5 f6**

Thus Black keeps the position closed, but the protected passed pawn White now gets at e6 cripples Black's game.

**21.e6 c6 22.Bf4 Ng8 23.Na4**

The scene of action switches to the Queenside, with the threat of 24.Nxb6 axb6 25.Bc7.

**23...Ba5 24.Bc2 Qe7 25.Qg3**

Renewing the threat (26.b4 Bb6 27.Nxb6 axb6 28.Bc7).

**25...b5 26.Nc5 Bb6 27.b4 Nf8 28.a4**

All very logical; if Black allows 29.a5 Bxc5 30.bxc5, he will be unable to prevent the loss of the exchange by 31.Bc7 (30...Bb7 31.Bd6!).

**28...a5 29.Ndb3 bxa4**

Or 29...axb4 30.a5 Ba7 31.Bc7.

**30.Nxa5 Bxc5 31.Nxc6! Bxd4**

Black is hopelessly lost. There followed:

**32.Nxe7 Rxe7 33.Bc7 Be5 34.Rxe5 Rxc7 35.Rxd5 Bb7 36.Qxc7 Bxd5+ 37.Kg1 Re8 38.Bxa4 Re7 39.Qb8 Nh7 40.Rd1 Rb7 41.Qxb7 Bxb7 42.Rd8**  
**Black Resigned.**

#### D. THE NEO-CLASSIC CENTER

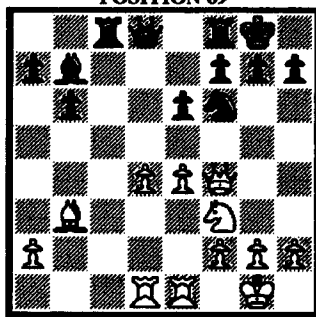
The neo-classic center is to the modern style of play what the classic center is to the e-pawn openings. It arises from many variations of the Queen's Gambit and Indian Defenses.

This center is somewhat less dangerous than the classic center of Chapter 8 C, since it doesn't give as many chances of a Kingside attack. This is largely because the advance e5, so powerful in the classic center, will now have the drawback of leaving the central square d5 available to Black's pieces.

Nonetheless, advancing with e5 can, if properly prepared, still lead to promising vistas. The advance d5 is another way to proceed; this can be considered as the creation of a central passed pawn, but care must be taken as to whether or not the opponent can favorably blockade it – in which case it might even become a liability. A more dangerous aspect of the d5 thrust is seen in its sacrificial form. After d5, ...exd5, White eschews the materialistic recapture exd5, instead opting for e5. The thought here is to seal off the central square d5 from Black's pieces while pursuing with vigor the attack against the opponent's Kingside. Of course it costs a pawn, but it can be more than worth it.

Black's best counterstrategy is to put pressure on White's d-pawn, usually with ...c5 or ...e5. Sometimes the f-pawn may also be enlisted to attack the center.

POSITION 69



(White plays for a Kingside attack; from the game Keres-Fine, Ostend 1937).

**1.Nf3 d5 2.d4 Nf6 3.c4 e6 4.Nc3 c5 5.cxd5 Nxd5 6.e4 Nxc3 7.bxc3 cxd4 8.cxd4 Bb4+ 9.Bd2 Bxd2+ 10.Qxd2 O-O 11.Bc4 Nd7 12.O-O b6 13.Rad1 Bb7 14.Rfe1 Rc8 15.Bb3 Nf6 16.Qf4 (No.69) Qc7**

Exchange of Queens would, of course, suit Black very well. He could



then put pressure on the White center, meanwhile setting his Queenside majority in motion, since his King would be in no danger of attack.

### 17.Qh4 Rfd8 18.Re3

Keres said afterwards that 18.e5! would have been stronger:

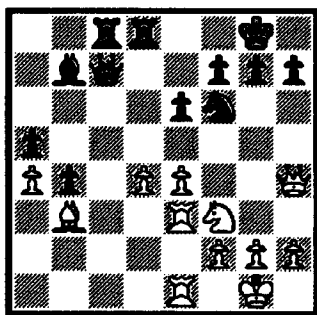
1) 18...Bxf3 19.exf6 Bxd1 20.Qg5 Kf8 21.Qxg7+ Ke8 22.Rxe6+! fxe6 23.Qg8+ Kd7 24.Qxe6#.

2) 18...Nd5 19.Ng5 h6 20.Ne4, and the Knight goes to an ideal square at d6.

3) 18...Ne8! 19.Ng5 h6 20.Ne4, with good play for White.

### 18...b5! 19.Rde1 a5 20.a4 b4?

Better was 20...bxa4 21.Bxa4 h6. After the text move, White can achieve a breakthrough with a powerful attack.



### 21.d5! exd5 22.e5!

The surprising point.

### 22...Nd7?

After 22...Ne4 23.e6! fxe6 24.Rxe4 dxe4 25.Ng5 the attack looks overwhelming, but the following variations, given by Keres and Reinfeld, show that Black can hold the position:

1) 25...Qc3 26.Bxe6+ Kf8 27.Qf4+ Ke7 28.Qf7+ Kd6, and White has nothing better than perpetual check (29.Qf4+ Ke7 30.Qf7+).

2) 25...Qe5 26.Qxh7+ Kf8 27.Nxe6+ Ke7 28.Qh4+ Qf6 29.Qg4 and Black has various counterchances.

### 23.Ng5 Nf8

After 23...h6 White also has a winning attack by 24.e6! hxg5 25.exf7+ Kxf7 26.Re7+.

### 24.Nxh7! Nxh7 25.Rh3 Qc1 26.Qxh7+ Kf8 27.Rhe3 d4

A desperate lunge.

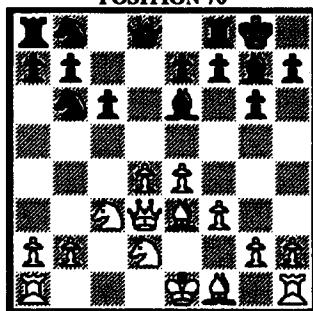
### 28.Qh8+ Ke7 29.Qxg7 Rf8

After 29...Bd5 30.Qf6+ Ke8, then 31.e6! wins.

### 30.Qf6+ Ke8 31.e6! Black Resigned.

After 31...dxe3 32.exf7+ Kd7 33.Be6+ wins, or 32...Rxf7 33.Bxf7+ Kd7 34.Be6+.

POSITION 70



(Maneuvers behind the front line; from the game Botvinnik-Smyslov, The Hague 1948).

### 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Qb3 dxc4 6.Qxc4 O-O 7.e4 Bg4 8.Be3 Nfd7 9.Nd2 Nb6 10.Qd3 c6 11.f3 Be6

A comparison with the previous position favors Black in some respects; the Bg7 is very well-placed, striking directly through the central d4 and e5 squares. However, there are more minor pieces on the board, therefore White's space advantage has more significance here.

### 12.Rd1 Na6

Black's primary strategical task is to fix White's vulnerable d-pawn, so he

concentrates his forces on the d5 square.

**13.a3 Qd7 14.Qc2**

Black was threatening 14...Rad8.

**14...Nc7?**

This leads to difficulties. He should have liquidated White's center with 14...Bxd4! 15.N2b1! c5 16.Nb5 Rac8 17.Bxd4 cxd4 18.N1c3!, and White wins a pawn, which, however, will give him only a slight advantage.

**15.Nb3 Bc4**

Otherwise White secures the two Bishops by 16.Nc5.

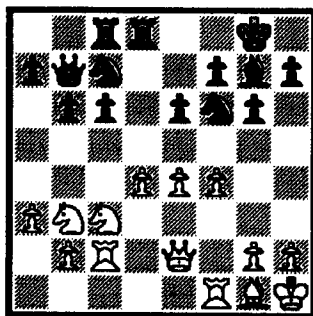
**16.Be2 Bxe2 17.Qxe2 Rad8 18.O-O Qe6 19.Nc5 Qc8 20.Kh1 Nd7 21.Nb3 b6**

The attack on the d-pawn has fizzled out, so Black must think of some other way to keep his opponent busy. Since 21...e5 22.d5! would only favor White, he fences with the idea of ...c5.

**22.Qc4 Qb7 23.f4 e6**

Black can't allow 24.f5 without a struggle.

**24.Rc1 Nf6 25.Bg1 Rc8 26.Rc2 Rfd8 27.Qe2**



**27...Nb5!**

Suddenly the game flares up. For that matter, any further waiting tactics by Black would be

questionable, in view of the vulnerability of his c-pawn.

**28.e5**

After 28.Nxb5 cxb5 29.Rxc8 Rxc8 30.e5 Nd5 31.Qxb5 Rc2! Black has ample compensation for the pawn.

**28...Nxc3 29.bxc3 Nd5 30.c4**

More accurate was 30.Nd2 with c4 coming later on. Now Black will be able to save himself, because of the weakness at d4.

**30...Ne7 31.Nd2 Nf5 32.Ne4 Nxd4!**

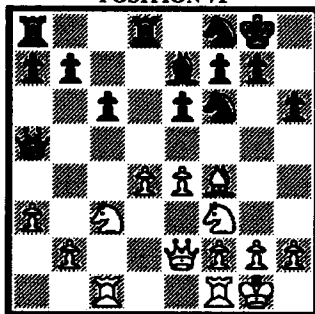
Black gives up the Exchange, thereby smashing the White center.

**33.Bxd4 Rxd4 34.Nd6 Rxd6 35.exd6**

This pawn must soon fall, so that Black, with two pawns for the Exchange, will have full compensation, at least as regards material. The task which he faces in the endgame, however, is far from simple, mainly because his extra pawns can't play any active part.

Since this endgame falls outside our province, we shall not pursue it further.

POSITION 71



(Successful attack on d4; from the game Bogolyubov-Kramer, Travemunde 1951).

**1.d4 Nf6 2.Bg5 d5 3.Nc3 c6 4.e3 Bf5 5.Bd3 Bxd3 6.cxd3 e6 7.Nf3 Be7 8.O-O O-O 9.Rc1 Nbd7 10.e4 h6**

**11.Bf4 dxe4 12.dxe4 Qa5 13.Qe2 Rfd8  
14.a3 Nf8**

Although he has exchanged off only one piece, Black can maneuver comfortably here, mainly because White has allowed his important K-Bishop to be traded off. This greatly reduces White's possibilities for Kingside attack; consequently, Black will eventually gain the initiative by pressuring White's center.

**15.h3 Ng6 16.Bh2**

If 16.Bg3 then Black could play 16...Nh5 17.Bh2 N6f4 18.Qe3 Bg5! 19.Nxg5 Qxg5.

**16...Rd7 17.Rc2 Nh7!**

With the idea of playing ...Ng5, which undermines the Nf3—the main defender of White's d-pawn.

**18.Qe3 Rad8 19.Bg3**

White intends 20.h4, in order to prevent ...Ng5, but it is too late.

**19...Ng5! 20.Nd2**

Protecting the d-pawn indirectly (20...Rxd4? 21.Nb3).

**20...Qb6 21.Ne2**

A critical moment. White guards the d-pawn and threatens to repulse Black's pieces by 22.Nc4 or 22.f4.

**21...c5!**

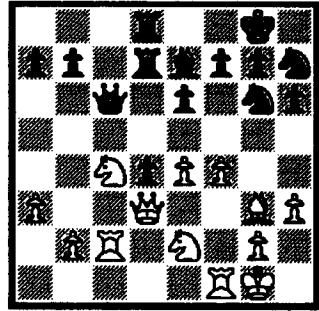
A powerful stroke. Now White's proud center is under full attack.

On 22.dxc5 Bxc5! is strong:

1) 23.Qxc5 Qxc5 24.Rxc5 Rxd2 winning a pawn. 2) 23.Rxc5 Rd3! (but not 23...Rxd2 24.Bc7!) 24.Bc7 (or 24.Nc4 Rxe3 25.Nxb6 Rxe2 26.Na4 Nxe4) 24...Rxe3 25.Bxb6 axb6! 26.fxe3 bxc5, and Black has a winning ending.

**22.Nc4 Qc6 23.f3 cxd4 24.Qd3 Nh7  
25.f4?**

This further weakening only weakens his e-pawn, which Black immediately exploits.



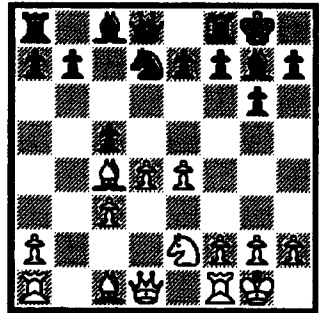
**25...Nf6!**

Now 26.Ne5 fails to 26...Nxe5 27.fxe5 Qxe4, or, if 26.e5 then 26...Ne4 is very strong.

**26.Nd2 Qxc2! 27.Qxc2 d3 28.Qc4 dxe2 29.Re1 Rxd2**

And after a very long endgame, Black's material advantage finally won (on the 125th move!).

POSITION 72



(The c-pawn plays a part; from the game Ratner-Botvinnik, Moscow 1945).

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.cxd5  
Nxd5 5.e4 Nxc3 6.bxc3 c5 7.Bc4 Bg7  
8.Ne2 O-O 9.O-O Nd7**

The real neo-classic center is not yet formed, for Black has still not exchanged on d4. He continues to postpone this pawn trade, so we can speak of a sort of enlarged neo-classic center.

**10.a4?**

This works out poorly. The best move is 10.Bg5 and if 10...h6 then 11.Be3 when White will win an important tempo with Qd2.

**10...Qc7**

If White had chosen the correct move 10.Bg5, then he could now have played 11.Rc1 with good chances.

**11.Ba2**

So White has had to lose a tempo; it is now clear that Black has a very satisfactory game.

**11...b6 12.Be3 Ba6 13.Re1 Rad8**

Thematic pressure against d4.

**14.Qb3**

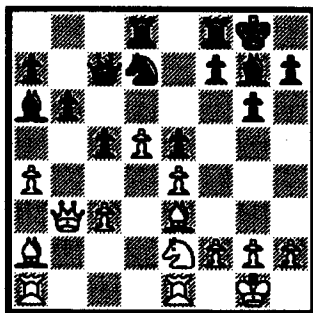
On 14.f4, Black still has 14...e5!

**14...e5!**

Threatening 15...exd4 16.cxd4 Bxe2 17.Rxe2 cxd4; White is thereby induced to make the following unfavorable change in his central pawn formation.

**15.d5**

After 15.dxe5 Qxe5 Black wins a pawn, and 15.dxc5 Nxc5 leaves White's Queenside pawns in a bad way.

**15...c4! 16.Qa3 f5**

Now it's apparent that Black's strategy has been completely successful. White's center is only a

target and Black has excellent squares for his pieces at c5 and d3.

**17.Bg5**

After 17.f3 f4 18.Bf2 g5 Black has a strong attacking formation on the Kingside.

**17...Bf6 18.Bh6 Rf7 19.exf5**

Now on 19.f3, Black plays 19...f4 and White's Bh6 is cut off.

**19...gxf5 20.a5 b5 21.Rad1 Nc5 22.Ng3 Be7 23.Qc1 f4 24.Nh5 Qd6 25.Bg7 Rxc7 26.Nxc7 Kxc7 27.Bb1 Bc8 28.Qc2 Rh8 29.Qe2 Bf6 30.Qh5 Bd7 31.Bc2 e4 32.Bxe4 Qe5 33.Qf3 Re8 34.Bd3 Qxe1+ 35.Rxe1 Rxe1+ 36.Bf1 Ne4 37.Qxf4 Nxc3 38.Qg3+ Kf7 White Resigned.**

**E. THE UNBALANCED TENSION FORM**

In the tension form we saw in Chapter 7, Section B, there were two pawns against two pawns in the center, White's advantage consisting solely of greater freedom of movement. In this unbalanced tension form, White has two pawns (e4, d4) versus one in the center, leading to very different considerations.

Both players must constantly be aware of the following possibilities:

1) White exchanges at e5, obtaining a pawn majority on the Kingside (Position 73).

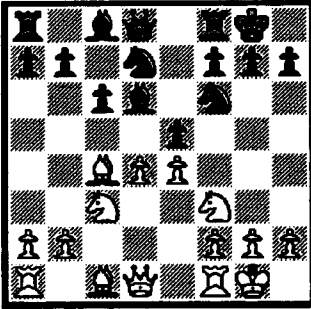
2) Black exchanges at d4 with essentially the same result as (1), (See Position 74).

3) White plays d5 (Position 75).

*(White exchanges on e5; from the game Pirc-Van Scheltinga, Birmingham 1951).*

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 d5 4.e3 e6 5.Bd3 Nbd7 6.O-O Bd6 7.Nc3 O-O 8.e4 dxc4 9.Bxc4 e5 (No.73)**

POSITION 73

**10.Bg5**

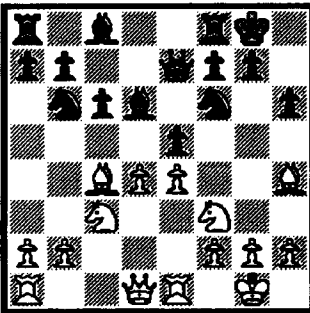
After 10.d5 Black can play 10...Nb6  
11.Bb3 cxd5 with very good play.

**10...h6 11.Bh4 Qe7 12.Re1**

Maintaining the tension and centralizing the Rook. On the other hand, Black needs to find a way to develop his Q-Bishop. If 12...b6 then 13.d5! cxd5 14.Nxd5 is very strong for White; while 13...c5 would allow White's Knight or Bishop access to b5, again with advantage for White.

**12...Nb6**

This seems to solve the problem satisfactorily, as 13.Bb3 is effectively met by 13...Bg4.

**13.dxe5!**

A fine interpolation which keeps White on top. Now if 13...Nxc4 then 14.exd6 Qxd6 15.Qxd6 Nxd6 16.e5 wins a piece.

**13...Bxe5 14.Nxe5 Qxe5 15.Bb3 Qa5 16.Bg3**

White values his Bishop pair too much to play 16.Bxf6.

**16...Bg4 17.Qc1**

Simpler was 17.f3.

**17...Rad8 18.Bh4**

Threatening not only 19.e5, but also 19.Bxf6 gx6 20.Qxh6.

**18...g5 19.e5**

On 19.Bg3 Black could obtain some counterplay by 19...Nh5. But now on 19...Nh5 20.Bxg5 hxg5 21.Qxg5+ wins.

**19...Nh7 20.Bg3 Nd5 21.Ne4! Nb4 22.Nf6+ Nxf6 23.exf6 Nd3 24.Qc2 Qf5**

But not 24...Nxe1? 25.Qg6+ and 26.Qg7#.

**25.Re3 Rfe8?**

This loses. The only move was 25...Nc5.

**26.Re7! Bh5**

Forced. After 26...Rxe7 27.fxe7 Re8 28.f3 Bh5 29.Rd1 Qc5+ 30.Qxc5 Nxc5 31.Rd8 White wins.

**27.Bc7 Rc8 28.Bc4 Bg6**

Or 28...Rxe7 29.fxe7 Qd7 30.Qxd3 Qxc7 31.Qh3 Bg6 32.Qxh6, winning.

**29.Rd1**

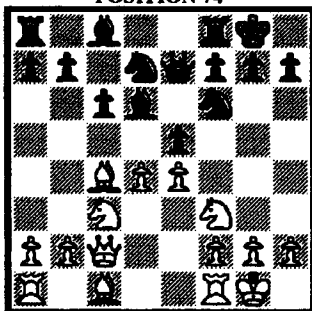
Now if the Knight moves to c5 or f4, then 30.Bxf7+! is crushing.

**29...Qxf6 30.Rxe8+ Rxe8 31.Bxd3 Bxd3 32.Qxd3 Qxb2 33.h4 gxh4 34.Qd7 Re6 35.Qd8+ Kg7 36.Qxh4 Qxa2 37.Qg4+ Kh7 38.Qf5+ Rg6 39.Be5 Qe6 40.Rd8! Black Resigned.**

(Black exchanges on d5; from the game Davidson-Alekhine, Semmering, 1926).

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.e3 e6 5.Nc3 Nbd7 6.Qc2 Bd6 7.Bd3 O-O 8.O-O Qe7 9.e4 dxc4 10.Bxc4 e5**

POSITION 74



This position is almost the same as Position No.73, the only difference being that the Queens were unmoved. However, this difference is very important, as the Black Queen is well-placed on e7, while the White Queen is not so fortunately placed. Black already threatens to win a pawn by 11...exd4 12.Nxd4 Bxh2+ 13.Kxh2 Qd6+ 14.Kg1 Qxd4.

**11.Rd1 exd4! 12.Nxd4 Nb6**

According to Alekhine, whose annotations we are largely following, this is stronger than 12...Ne5 13.Bf1 Ng6 14.Nf5 Bxf5 15.exf5 Ne5 16.Bg5, with good chances for White.

**13.Bf1 Rd8**

The sacrifice at h2 is on again: 14...Bxh2+ 15.Kxh2 Rxd4 16.Rxd4 Qe5+.

**14.h3 Bc7 15.Be3**

Parrying the threat 15...Rxd4 16.Rxd4 Qe5.

**15...Re8!**

Black continues to play with finesse.

**16.Bd3 Nh5 17.Nce2 g6 18.Re1 Nd7 19.Nf3?**

A serious error. He had to try 19.f4, as after 19...Nf6 20.e5 Nd5 21.Bd2 White is still in the game.

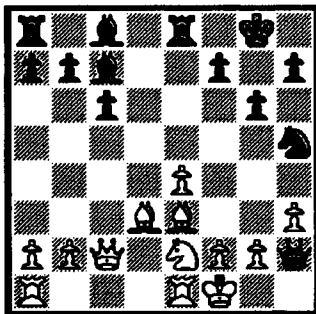
**19...Bb6! 20.Bg5**

Slightly better was 20.Bxb6 though Black had the good reply 20...axb6!.

**20...Qc5! 21.Nc3**

After 21.Qxc5 Nxc5 22.Nc1 f6 23.Bd2 Nxd3 24.Nxd3 Ng3 25.e5 Bf5, Black has a tremendous position.

**21...Ne5 22.Nxe5 Qxe5 23.Be3 Bc7 24.Ne2 Qh2+ 25.Kf1**



**25...Bxh3!**

This begins a deep combination, which, together with the preceding excellent positional play, justifiably qualified this game for the brilliancy prize.

**26.gxh3 Qxh3+ 27.Kg1 Bh2+ 28.Kh1 Nf4 29.Nxf4**

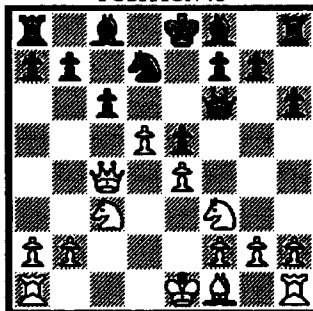
If 29.Bxf4 then 29...Bg3+ mates in two.

**29...Bxf4+ 30.Kg1 Bh2+ 31.Kh1 Qf3+!**

This further sacrifice finishes off White quickly.

**32.Kxh2 Re5 33.Qc5 Rxc5 34.Bxc5 Qh5+ 35.Kg2 Qxc5** and after a few unimportant moves, **White Resigned.**

POSITION 75



(White plays d5; from the game Petrov-Stahlberg, Kemerl 1937).

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Nf3 e6  
5.Bg5 h6 6.Bxf6 Qxf6 7.Qb3 dxc4  
8.Qxc4 Nd7 9.e4 e5 10.d5**

White strives to keep the position closed, in order to minimize the effect of the Black Bishop pair.

**10...Nb6 11.Qb3 Bc5**

After 11...cxd5 then 12.Bb5+ is quite strong (12...Bd7 13.Nxd5), and on 11...c5 12.Nb5 is difficult to meet (12...Bd6 13.Nxa7).

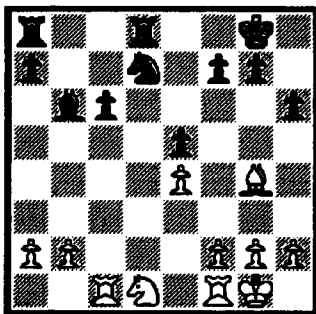
**12.Be2 O-O 13.O-O Bg4**

Black doesn't fear 14.dxc6 bxc6, as the two Bishops would be sufficient compensation for the weak pawn. Nonetheless, 13...cxd5 would have been preferable.

**14.Rac1 Rfd8 15.Nd1!Bxf3**

Black admits his mistake; after 15...Bf8 16.dxc6 bxc6 17.Ne3 Be6 18.Qc3 he would lose a pawn.

**16.Qxf3 Qxf3 17.Bxf3 Nd7 18.dxc6  
bxc6 19.Bg4 Bb6**



**20.Rxc6!**

Best. After 20.Bxd7 Rxd7 21.Rxc6 Rd2, Black gets good counterplay.

**20...Nf6 21.Bf3 Rd2 22.a4!**

Building an initiative on the Queenside.

**22...Rad8 23.b4 R8d4**

On 23...Nxe4 White has 24.a5!. Also, after 23...R8d3 24.Ne3! Bxe3 25.fxe3 Rxe3 26.Rc7 White is better. The text clears d8 for the Bishop.

**24.Rc8+ Kh7 25.a5 Bd8 26.Ne3 Rxb4**

On 26...Nxe4 the tournament book gives 27.Nf5 as winning for White, apparently overlooking 27...Rxb4. The right way to meet 26...Nxe4 is 27.Rxd8! Rxd8 28.Bxe4+. There is another inexactitude in the assertion that after 26...Be7 27.Nf5 Rd7 28.Rb1 White's advantage is clear (all according to the tournament book). Black could then play 28...Bxb4 as 29.Rxb4 Rd1+ 30.Bxd1 Rxd1#. However, instead of 28.Rb1, White can play 28.Nxe7, keeping a definite advantage.

**27.Nd5 Rxd5**

Preferable was 27...Bxa5 28.Nxb4 Bxb4 29.Rc7 a5 30.Rxf7 a4, etc.

**28.exd5 Bxa5 29.Rd1 Rb2 30.Kf1 Bb6  
31.Be2 Ne4 32.Rc6!**

Indirectly protecting the f-pawn. Now on 32...Nxf2 33.Rxb6 wins, and if 32...Bxf2, then 33.Bd3 f5 34.Bxe4 fxe4 35.d6 e3 36.Ra1 wins.

**32...Bd4 33.d6 Nf6 34.Rc7 Rb6  
35.Rxd4!**

A fine finishing touch.

**35...exd4 36.Bd3+ g6**

Or 36...Kh8 37.Rc8+ Ng8 38.d7.

**37.Rxf7+ Black Resigned.**

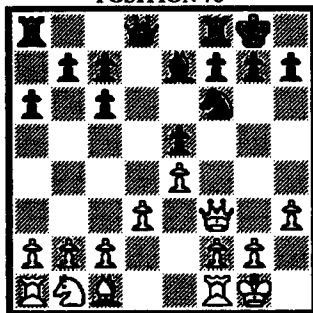
## F. THE LATENT CENTRAL MAJORITY

(i) With d-pawn in reserve.

In this formation (White pawns on e4 and d3 against a Black pawn on e5) White's majority remains inactive until the enemy e-pawn can be exchanged off. This is accomplished by either the central thrust with d4 or the flanking blow f4.

We now give an illustration of both methods at work.

POSITION 76



(White keeps both d4 and f4 in reserve; from the 5th match game Euwe-Kramer, 1940).

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.O-O Be7 6.Bxc6 dxc6 7.d3 Bg4 8.h3 Bxf3 9.Qxf3 O-O**

In the Ruy Lopez Exchange Variation, White usually plays d4 early in the opening; this advance leads mostly to an ending featuring a struggle between White's better pawn structure and Black's Bishop pair. In this case, however, if White should now play for d4 by say Nc3-e2, Be3, Rad1, and c3, Black would play ...c5 and exchange off the pawns when they reach d4. So White tries another method.

**10.Nd2 Nd7 11.Nc4 b6?**

This only loses time and weakens the Queenside. He should have tried 11...Bg5, though even so, White would have a slight pull.

**12.Qg3 Bd6 13.Qg4**

Ineffective is 13.Bh6 because of 13...Qf6; now 14.Bh6 is threatened since Black's Queen is tied to the defense of the Knight.

**13...Qe7**

If 13...Nf6 then 14.Qe2 followed by 15.f4 or 15.Bg5 is advantageous for White.

**14.Ne3 Nf6 15.Qg5 h6?**

This amounts to a serious weakening of the Kingside. Better was 15...Nd7 16.Qg3 Qf6 17.Nf5 Qg6, after which White would continue 18.Qh4 with ideas of playing f4 soon.

**16.Qg3 Nh5 17.Qf3 Nf4**

On 17...Nf6 18.Nf5 Qe6 19.Bxh6! Black loses a pawn. Also, after 17...g6 White again wins a pawn, this time by 18.Ng4.

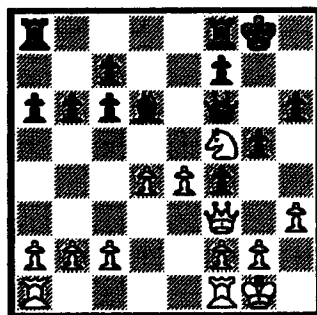
**18.Nf5 Qf6 19.d4!**

Undermining the Black Knight.

**19...g5**

White threatened 20.dxe5 Qxe5 21.Nxd6 and 22.Bxf4; and on 19...Ne6 or 19...Ng6, then 20.Nxh6+ wins.

**20.Bxf4 exf4**



After 20...gxf4 21.dxe5 Bxe5 22.Qh5! Bxb2 (22...Kh7 23.Nxh6!) 23.Rab1 and now 23...Kh7 allows the crushing 24.Rxb2! Qxb2 25.Qxh6+ Kg8 26.Ne7#.

**21.g4! Qe6 22.e5 Be7 23.Qxc6 Rae8 24.Qxc7 h5 25.d5 Bd8 26.dxe6 Black Resigned.**

## F. THE LATENT CENTRAL MAJORITY



(ii) with e-pawn in reserve.

In the Queen's Gambit and several of the Indian Defenses the central formation with White pawns at d4 and e3 against a Black pawn at d5 is often seen. This formation, though not centrally active at the moment, can be activated by proper preparations. For example, in the Queen's Gambit Exchange Variation - 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Nbd7 5.cxd5 exd5 6.e3 - the advance e4 will be feasible only under certain conditions:

1) White's d4 must not be weak.

2) Preparation of e4 by f3 is advisable, in order to meet ...dxe4 with fxe4 - otherwise the White d-pawn would be isolated.

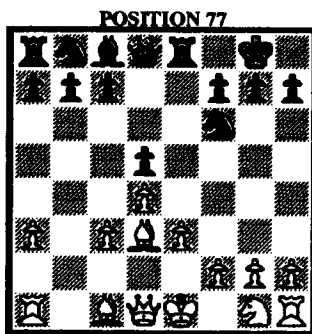
3) The two Bishops would be a welcome asset, as after e4 the position often becomes open.

It happens that in one familiar variation of the Nimzo-Indian Defense all of these requirements are met (1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.a3 Bxc3+ 5.bxc3 d5 6.cxd5 exd5). Experience has shown that the advance e4 in this position enables all of White's pieces to cooperate harmoniously, so that this advance is often of decisive significance.

Chess literature contains many examples of this scheme being 100 per cent successful (Botvinnik-Capablanca, AVRO 1938, Euwe-Bogolyubov, Zurich 1934, Szabo-Kottbauer, Groningen 1946, to name a few), but the example which follows - not so well-known as the others - shows an even fiercer struggle to enforce e4.

*(Preparation and execution of the advance e4; from the game Taimanov-Abramov, USSR 1950).*

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.a3 Bxc3+ 5.bxc3 d5 6.cxd5 exd5 7.e3 O-O 8.Bd3 Re8



The next few moves are easy to understand. White strives for the central push e4, Black tries to stop him.

**9.Ne2 Nbd7**

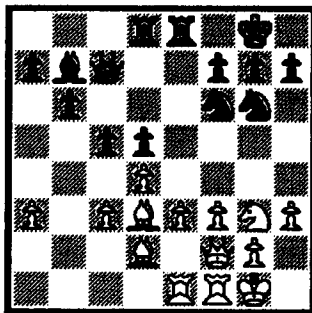
After 9...c5 10.O-O b6 11.Ng3 Ba6 Black trades off White's strong King Bishop; but after 12.Bxa6 Nxa6 13.Qd3 White will soon be able to play e4.

**10.O-O Nf8 11.f3 Ng6 12.Qe1 c5 13.Qf2**

Reinforcing d4 as a preparation for e4.

**13...Qc7 14.Bd2 b6 15.Ng3 Bb7 16.Rae1 Rad8 17.h3**

Now it seems White can play e4, as both d4 and e4 are protected. However after 17.e4, Black would have 17...cxd4 18.cxd4 dxe4 19.fxe4 Ng4 20.Qe2 Rxd4!, ruining White's dream.



**17...Qd6**

Threatening to win a pawn by 18...cxd4 and 19...Qxa3, but also pressuring d4 so as to prevent e4.

**18.Bc1 Re6 19.Re2 Bc6**

Note Black can't double Rooks on the e-file, since that would relax the pressure on d4.

**20.Rfe1 Ba8**

Black has nothing constructive to do now, and so marks time.

**21.Nf5**

White tries another tack. He diverts one piece from control of e4 in order to have d4 fully covered.

**21...Qc7 22.Bd2**

Finally, White threatens to play e4. The immediate 22.e4 would fail to 22...dxe4 23.fxe4 cxd4 24.cxd4 Nxe4! 25.Bxe4 Bxe4 26.Rxe4 Rxe4 27.Rxe4 Qxc1+.

**22...Rde8 23.Ng3! Qd6**

White's excellent maneuvering has decoyed the Black Rook from d8 to e8, thus reducing the pressure on d4.

**24.Bf5 R6e7 25.e4!**

Finally! Now White's central expansion quickly leads to a powerful Kingside attack. True Black wins the a-pawn, but this is a comparatively small detail.

**25...dxe4 26.fxe4 cxd4 27.cxd4 Qxa3 28.Bg5!**

White now gives up the two Bishops in order to wreck Black's Kingside pawn structure.

**28...h6 29.Bxf6 gxf6 30.Nh5 Rd8 31.Nxf6+ Kh8 32.e5 Qb4 33.Be4!**

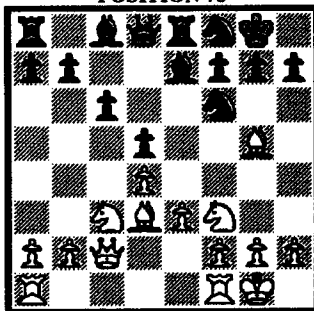
Exchanging Black's Q-Bishop and indirectly defending the d-pawn.

**33...Bxe4 34.Rxe4 Rc7 35.h4 a5 36.h5 Ne7 37.Ng4**

White had a direct win by 37.Qe3, but the text wins, too.

**37...Ng8 38.Nxh6 Qe7 39.Qf4 Qe6 40.Nf5 Ne7 41.Nxe7 Rxe7 42.R1e3 Kh7 43.Rg3 Ree8 44.Qf3 f5 45.Rf4 Rg8 46.Rxg8 Kxg8 47.Rxf5 Rxd4 48.Rf6 Qe8 49.Qg3+ Kh7 50.Qg5 Black Resigned.**

POSITION 78



(White plays e4 in the Queen's Gambit Exchange Variation; from the game Rubinstein-Weenink, Luik 1930).

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Nbd7 5.e3 c6 6.cxd5 exd5 7.Bd3 Be7 8.Qc2 O-O 9.Nf3 Re8 10.O-O Nf8**

In this familiar position White's best plan is the Minority Attack – Rab1 followed soon by b4-b5. We shall be studying this method in detail in Chapter 14.

**11.Nd2**

White is aiming for e4.

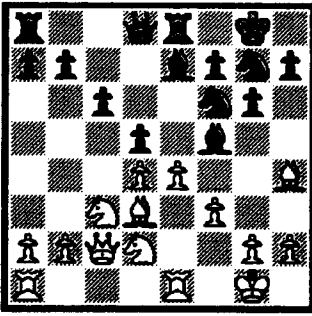
**11...g6!**

An excellent stratagem first worked out by Samisch. The idea behind this move, which at first sight appears to be a pointless weakening of the Kingside, is to play ...Nf8-e6-g7 followed by ...Bf5, forcing the strategically desirable trade of the light squared Bishops.

**12.Rfe1 Ne6 13.Bh4 Ng7 14.f3?**

Intending to meet Black's plan with e4, but there is a tactical flaw in White's idea.

**14...Bf5 15.e4?**



Losing. Another thought is 15.Bf2, reinforcing d4 in preparation for e4. After 15...Bxd3 16.Qxd3 Ne6 17.e4 dxe4 18.fxe4 Ng4 19.Nf3 Nxf2 20.Kxf2 Qb6 White's d-pawn is vulnerable.

**15...dxe4 16.fxe4 Nxe4!**

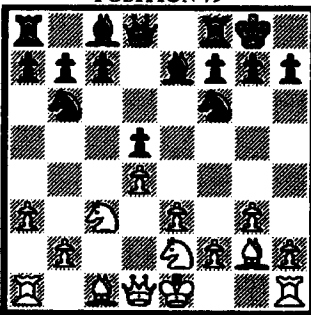
The shot White overlooked. White probably felt good about e4 here since 16...Qxd4+ loses to 17.Bf2. After 16...Nxe4! White can't play 17.Bxe7 as then Black wins by 17...Qxd4+ 18.Kh1 Nf2+ 19.Kg1 Nh3+ 20.Kh1 Qg1+! 21.Rxg1 Nf2#.

**17.Bxe4 Bxh4 18.g3 Qxd4+ 19.Kh1 Bf6**

Now, with two extra pawns, Black has an easy win.

**20.Nf3 Qc5 21.Bxf5 Nxf5 22.g4 Ne3 23.Qf2 Bxc3 24.bxc3 Rad8 25.Re2 Rd3 26.Rae1 Rxc3 27.h4 h6 28.h5 Re4 29.hxg6 fxg6 30.Qh4 Qf8 31.Qh3 Nxg4 32.Rxe4 Nf2+ White Resigned.**

POSITION 79



(White leaves his central action too late; from the game Botvinnik- Lilienthal, Leningrad- Moscow, 1941).

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e3 O-O 5.Nge2 d5 6.a3 Be7 7.cxd5 exd5 8.g3 Nbd7 9.Bg2 Nb6**

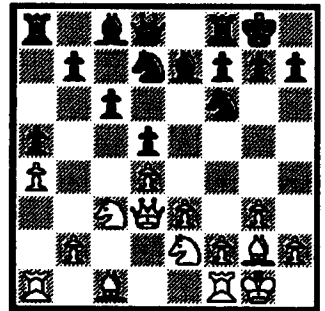
White's strategy is clear: he will try to advance his central pawn majority by f3 and e4. According to Fine, White can play 10.f3 at once, the move actually played (to prevent Black from playing ...Bf5) being superfluous.

**10.Qd3 a5!**

Intending 11...a4, fixing the White b-pawn and thus creating a strong square at c4 for his pieces.

**11.a4 c6 12.O-O Nbd7!**

The Knight is aiming for another fine post on b4 – which can't be controlled by a White pawn.



**13.Rd1?**

This is rather insipid. Botvinnik considered that f3 and e4 was not dangerous to Black; he later stated that 13.b3 was the best move.

Grandmaster Reuben Fine, however, gave this game a close analysis and claimed that White could play directly in the center with 13.f3. For example, 13...Nb8 14.e4 dxe4 15.fxe4 Na6 16.Be3 Nb4 17.Qd2 Be6 18.h3 Qd7 19.Nf4 Bc4 20.Rf2, with good chances for White.

It seems, though, that after 13.f3 Black could play 13...c5!, obtaining

satisfactory counterplay after 14.dxc5 Nxc5.

**13...Nb8 14.b3 Na6 15.Na2 Re8 16.Bb2 Bd6 17.Re1**

Still thinking of playing e4.

**17...Qe7 18.Rad1 g6!**

A good idea, preparing ...Bf5 to increase his control over e4.

**19.Nf4 Bf5 20.Qe2 Nb4 21.Nxb4 Bxb4 22.Rf1 Bg4**

Now Black has such control of e4 that White is induced to play f3, despite his earlier reservations. Since it is unlikely that White will be able to successfully enforce e4, the net result is that the e-pawn will be backward and vulnerable.

**23.f3 Bf5 24.Bc1 Ba3**

The idea is to weaken the e-pawn by exchanging the defending Bc1.

Nonetheless, Botvinnik preferred 24...h5, restraining g4, with better chances for White than in the game.

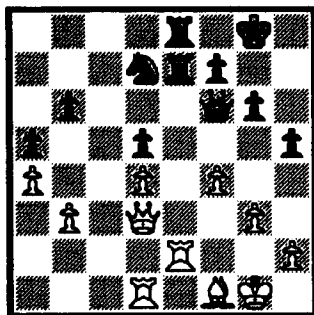
**25.Rfe1 Bxc1 26.Rxc1 h5 27.Qd2 Qa3 28.Qc3 Re7 29.Ra1 Qd6 30.Ra2 Rae8 31.Rae2 b6 32.Nd3 Bxd3**

Practically forced, as 32...Nd7 (to keep the White Knight out of e5), allows White the strong advance 33.e4!

**33.Qxd3 c5 34.Bf1 Nd7 35.Rd1 Qf6 36.f4**

Not 36.dxc5 Nxc5 37.Qxd5 because of 37...Rd7. The move 36.Kg2 would have been better.

**36...cxd4 37.exd4**



Also playable was 37.Qxd4 Qxd4 38.Rxd4. In the current position, White's central pawn majority no longer exists; though Black has some advantage, White should be able to hold. Botvinnik loses the game because of a later blunder.

**37...Rxe2 38.Bxe2 Qe7 39.Bf3 Nf6 40.Kg2 Rc8 41.Rd2 Qb4**

Black's only (slight) chance for victory was 41...Kg7 42.f5 Ne4-Botvinnik.

**42.f5! Rc3 43.Qe2 g5 44.Qe5! Rxb3**

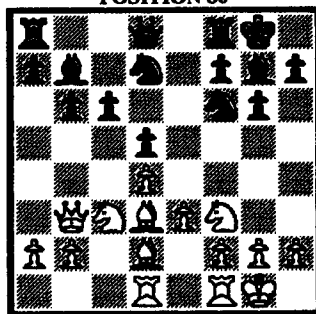
If 44...Rxf3? White has 45.Re2!, which shows why Black should have played 41...Kg7.

**45.Re2 Kg7 46.Bxd5 Rb2 47.Bc4?**

The losing blunder; 47.Rxb2 Qxb2+ 48.Kf1 would have drawn.

**47...Rxe2+ 48.Bxe2 Qxa4 49.Bxh5 Qc2+ 50.Be2 a4 51.d5 Qc5 52.h4 Qxd5+ 53.Qxd5 Nxd5 54.hxg5 a3 White Resigned.**

POSITION 80



(White accepts the isolation of his d-pawn; from the game Reshevsky-Flohr, AVRO 1938).

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.Qb3 c6 5.Nf3 Bg7 6.e3 O-O 7.Bd2 e6 8.Bd3 b6 9.O-O Bb7 10.Rad1 Nbd7 11.cxd5 exd5**

White will advance e4, which will leave his d-pawn isolated; However,

he is counting on using the resulting extra freedom of movement and the possibility of occupying e5, to give full compensation for the isolated pawn.

**12.e4 dxe4**

This isolates the d-pawn, and is possibly not the best move. Deserving close scrutiny is 12...c5!?

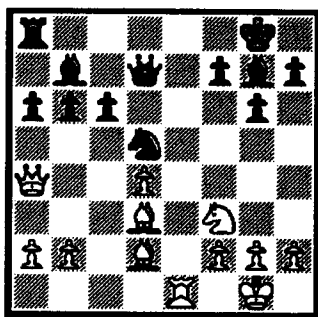
**13.Nxe4 Nxe4 14.Bxe4 Nf6 15.Bc2 Nd5**

The usual way to exploit an isolated pawn is not to attack it directly, but to occupy the square immediately in front of it, preferably with a Knight. The isolated d-pawn by no means dominates the current position; Black has to be concerned about his poorly placed Q-Bishop and the vulnerable c-pawn.

**16.Rfe1 Re8 17.Bd3 Qd7**

In view of the possibility of Ne5, the Queen would be better placed on d6.

**18.Qa4 Rxe1+ 19.Rxe1 a6?**



Another slight error of judgment, further weakening the Queenside. Better was 19...Rd8 (20.Qxa7?? Ra8).

**20.Rc1 Qd6 21.Qb3 Rc8 22.a4 h6**

According to Reshevsky, Black should have played ...c5 here or next move.

**23.Be4 Re8? 24.Bxd5!**

An astute exchange which makes the central pawn position symmetrical and concedes the two Bishops—seemingly a poor strategy, but Reshevsky has seen that he will have favorable play after Ne5.

**24...cxd5 25.Ne5!**

Now on 25...Bxe5 26.dxe5 Rxe5 27.Bf4 Qc6 28.h3! (not 28.Bxe5?? Qxc1 mating), White is on top. Also after 25...Bxe5 26.dxe5 Qxe5 27.Qxb6 Qe2 28.Be3, White has the better play.

**25...Rc8 26.Re1 Re8 27.h3 Re6 28.f4 Qe7 29.Rc1 Kh7**

Protecting the g-pawn and thus hoping to play ...f6 to oust the Ne5. Better was 29...Bf8.

**30.Bb4! Qh4**

Hoping for 31.Rc7 Qxf4 32.Rxb7 Qxd4+.

**31.Qf3 Bxe5 32.fxe5!!**

Flohr had missed this most unlikely recapture. Now if 32...Qxd4+, then 33.Kh1 Kg8 34.Rc7 f5 35.Bc3 and White wins a piece.

**32...f5 33.Rc7+ Kg8 34.Qc3 Rc6 35.Rxc6 Bxc6 36.Kh1?**

A slight inaccuracy. By 36.Qxc6! Qxd4+ 37.Kh1 Qxb4, White could have shortened the game by three moves, the position being the same as in the actual game at move 40.

**36...Qf2**

After 36...Bxa4 37.Qc8+ Kh7 38.Qc7+ Kg8 39.e6 and wins quickly.

**37.Qxc6 Qf1+ 38.Kh2 Qf4+ 39.Kg1 Qxd4+ 40.Kh1 Qxb4 41.Qxg6+ Kh8 42.Qxh6+ Kg8 43.Qg6+ Kh8 44.Qf6+ Black Resigned.**

## PART THREE

### VARIOUS FORMATIONS

#### CHAPTER 9

### CLOSED FORMATIONS

No exchanging, but much interlocking of the pawns: this is the dominant feature of the closed position. The general objective here is to open a file for the Rooks, for it is self-evident that only very exceptionally can a game be won without a single open file.

In the great majority of cases only the center pawns are fixed, so that both players dispose of three pawns to the right and three to the left which can act as storm troops. It is usual to try to push these pawns forward in a broad front – the phalanx strategy which was employed as long ago as Philidor. If these flank pawns lose their mobility for one reason or another, the result is always a serious positional disadvantage. Such a position can be compared to a bird with a broken wing, still trying to fly.

We begin with a classification of closed positions:

#### A. Blocked Oblique Formations

(The four center pawns blocked, only one of them beyond the halfway line).

(i) The d-pawn forward (White pawns d5-e4; Black pawns d6-e5).

(ii) The e-pawn forward (White pawns e5-d4; Black pawns d5-e6).

#### B. Stonewall Formations

(i) Normal Stonewall.

(ii) Anti-Stonewall.

(iii) Pseudo-Stonewall.

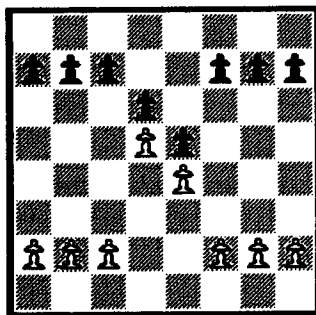
#### C. The Wyvill Formation

(White pawns c3-c4-d5-e4; Black pawns d6-e5).

#### D. Various Closed Formations

#### A. BLOCKED OBLIQUE FORMATIONS

(i) The d-pawn forward.



This formation, with many variations in the position of the wing pawns, can arise from either the e-pawn or the d-pawn openings. The importance of this set-up can hardly be overestimated, for in current master play there is no formation which occurs so often.

To keep up to date therefore, it is absolutely essential to understand the ins and outs of this sort of position.

Let us look at it first from White's point of view. He has a choice of two ways of opening a file: by c4, b4 and c5 he can open the c-file, or by f4 he can open the f-file. It is immediately evident that the latter course has its disadvantages. Black can always answer f4 with ...exf4, obtaining a splendid square for his pieces at e5 and leaving the e-pawn as a permanent weakness in the White camp. Even if White prepares the advance f4 with g3, so as to recapture with a pawn at f4, keeping e5 under

control, he is still saddled with the weak e-pawn. This difficulty can be avoided only if, after f4, ...exf4, gxf4, White can force the further advance e5; and it is clear that this will need extensive preparation, such as the doubling of the Rooks on the e-file.

The plan of opening the c-file is a much simpler alternative, involving practically no obligations. It cannot be good for Black to capture the c-pawn, and the idea of holding back White's b-pawn by playing a5 puts no great difficulty in White's way, provided only that he takes good care to see that the formation of his phalanx is not jeopardized. In the diagram, for instance, after

1.c4 a5, the move 2.a3? would be bad, since Black could then play 2...a4! and answer 3.b4 by taking *en passant*. White would be left with weak pawns at a3 and c4, and by playing ...b6 Black would quickly put a stop to all White's hopes of opening the c-file. The correct method is 1.c4 a5 2.b3!, and only then 3.a3 and 4.b4, after which White can proceed with preparations for his real objective, the advance, c5.

It was Nimzowitsch who first laid down the principle that a pawn chain must be attacked at its base. In the present case the base of Black's chain is d6, and the base of White's chain is e4. It is clear then that Black for his part must play for ...f5, followed either by ...fxe4, opening the f-file, or else by ...f4, with subsequent opening of the g-file by ...g5-g4.

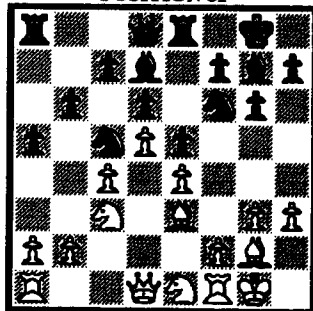
Black has a second way of opening a file - namely, ...c6. This, however, will seldom be good. After White's dxc6, the Black d-pawn will be left very weak. Black's position will be analogous to that of White when he plays g3 and f4.

Our broad conclusion then is that White's best chances are on the Queenside; Black's on the Kingside.

In practice, Black's attack is the first to produce serious threats, and White is well advised to attend first to the defense of his Kingside before going over to the offensive on the other wing.

We now give a series of examples showing how one side and the other go to work on these ideas.

POSITION 81



(Black remains passive, and White carries out his plan; from the game Kramer-Palomaa, Beverwijk 1951).

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 d6 3.Nf3 g6 4.Nc3 Nbd7 5.g3 Bg7 6.Bg2 O-O 7.O-O e5 8.e4 Re8 9.d5 Nc5 10.Ne1 a5 11.h3 Bd7 12.Be3 b6**

It is already noticeable that Black's strength is not being very economically deployed. For the purpose of forcing ...f5, the Rook stands decidedly worse on e8 than on f8, and, more or less as a consequence of this, the Knight is also in the way.

**13.b3**

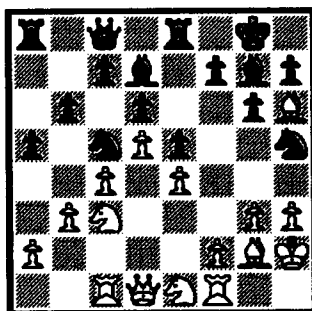
The beginning of the Queenside attack. We know that 13.a3? would be weak because of 13...a4!, crippling the White Queenside.

**13...Qc8 14.Kh2 Nh5**

The intention is both evident and good, but the manner of execution is defective. If 15...f5, then 16.exf5 will

follow, after which 16...Bxf5 17.g4 will cost a piece, while 16...gxf5 is impossible because it leaves the Knight undefended. For the time being, therefore, White is not obliged to take any measures against the Black plan.

**15.Rc1 Bh8 16.Bh6 Bg7**



Black's intention, of course, had been ...Ng7, but the text shouldn't be condemned, for the Bishop incarcerated on h8 would not have been a pretty sight.

**17.Bxg7 Nxb7 18.Nd3 Nxd3?**

Here 18...f5 should have been played. White's best continuation would then have been 19.exf5 gxf5 20.f4 e4 21.Nxc5 bxc5 22.g4 – a plan which was crowned with success in the game Flohr-Bogolyubov, Bad Sliac 1932 (Position 87).

**19.Qxd3**

Now 19...f5 has lost its sting, for 20.exf5 would favor White; after 20...Bxf5, White has the support point e4 (21.Ne4), and after 20...gxf5 21.f4 e4 22.Qd4, followed by playing the Knight to d1-e3 and ultimately g4, Black would have no counterplay at all.

**19...Rf8 20.f4!**

This rules out 20...f5 because of the reply, 21.fxe5 dxe5 22.d6, while if 20...exf4 21.gxf4, White is all set for the further advance e5 (see introduction to this chapter).

**20...f6 21.Rce1 Qd8 22.Rf2 Qe7 23.Qd2**

Now that Black's counteraction has been thoroughly stopped, White makes quiet preparations for his Queenside attack. His Rooks are ready to double on the e-file or the f-file as required, while this Queen move enables the Knight to work around to d3, from which vantage point it observes e5, and is also ready to support an eventual c5.

**23...Rab8 24.a3 Ra8 25.Nd1 Rab8**

Black awaits events.

**26.Nb2 Rbd8 27.Nd3 Ra8 28.Qc3 Rfd8 29.Ref1 Rf8 30.b4 axb4 31.axb4**

At last an open file!

**31...Rac8**

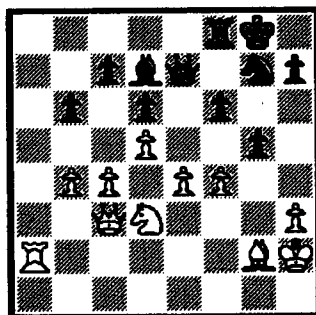
Not 31...Ra7 32.fxe5 dxe5 33.Nxe5!, but 31...Rfd8 was stronger, for after 32.fxe5 fxe5, Black has time to play his Rook back to f8.

**32.Ra1 Ra8 33.Rfa2 Rxa2 34.Rxa2 exf4**

Otherwise White's Queenside attack will continue with 35.Ra7 and 36.c5.

**35.gxf4 g5**

An attempt to gain control of e5.



**36.e5! fxe5 37.fxe5 Bf5?**



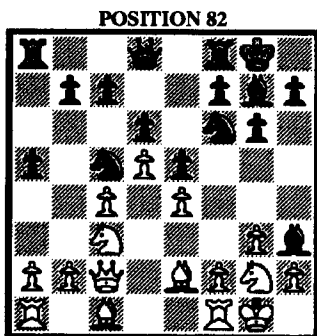
The indicated line was 37...dxe5 38.Qxe5 Qxe5 39.Nxe5 Bf5 40.Ra7 Ne8 41.Bf3, which at least makes White's task harder.

**38.e6**

This protected passed pawn impairs the freedom of the Black pieces.

We give the rest without comment:

**38...Bxd3 39.Qxd3 Qf6 40.Qe4 Qf4+ 41.Qxf4 Rxf4 42.Ra8+ Rf8 43.Ra7 Ne8 44.Kg3 Kg7 45.Bf3 Kg6 46.Ra8 h5 47.Bd1 h4+ 48.Kg2 Kf6 49.Bh5 Ke7 50.Rxe8+ Rxe8 Black Resigned.**



*(White remains passive and Black carries out his plan; from the game Michel-Flohr, Hastings 1934-5).*

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.Nf3 O-O 6.Be2 Nbd7 7.O-O e5 8.d5 a5 9.Qc2 Nh5! 10.g3 Nc5 11.Ne1 Bh3 12.Ng2 Nf6**

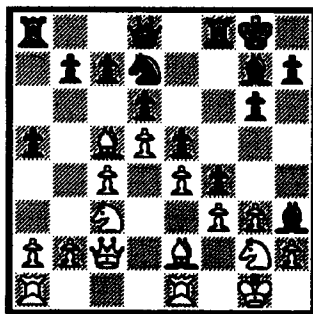
In order to keep the Black Knight from settling on f4, White has weakened his Kingside by g3. He could still have held his game together by playing, from the diagram, 13.f3 followed by Nd1-f2.

Only after this should he have considered preparing a Queenside attack of his own.

**13.Re1? Nfd7 14.Be3 f5 15.f3 f4!**

It is clear that in this case ...fxe4 would not have led to much.

**16.Bxc5**



An unsuccessful attempt to keep the game closed. 16.Bf2 would have been best. Notice that 16.gxf4 exf4 17.Bxf4 was impossible because of 17...Bxg2, and that 16.gxf4 exf4 17.Nxf4 is as bad (17...Qg5+ and 18...Rxf4).

**16...Nxc5 17.g4 h5! 18.gxh5**

Hoping to occupy the open g-file after 18...gxh5 19.Kh1.

**18...Qg5**

This intermediate move foils White's plans. It is only Black who gets an open file for his Rooks.

**19.Bf1 Qxh5 20.Qf2 Bf6 21.Be2 Kg7 22.Kh1 Rh8**

The big guns are already in position.

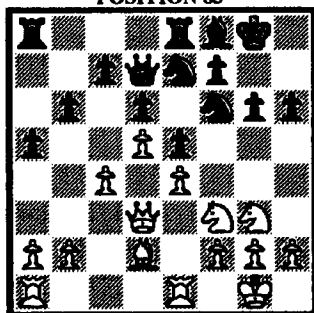
**23.Rg1 Rh6 24.Bf1 Ra8 White Resigned.**

The Black Bishop will move off the h-file next move, leaving h2 indefensible.

*(Diamond cut diamond; from the game Aronin-Lyublinsky, Moscow 1951).*

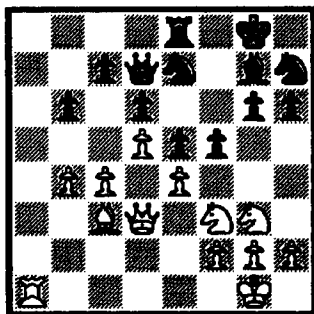
**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.d3 d6 6.c3 Bd7 7.O-O Be7 8.Re1 O-O 9.Nbd2 Re8 10.Nf1 Bf8 11.Bb3 Be6 12.Ng3 h6 13.d4 Bxb3 14.Qxb3 Qd7 15.d5 Ne7 16.c4 b6 17.Bd2 g6 18.Qd3 a5**

POSITION 83



In the handling of the strategic phase which follows now, both players know their business.

19.b3 Bg7 20.a3 Nh7 21.b4 axb4  
22.axb4 Rxa1 23.Rxa1 f5! 24.Bc3?

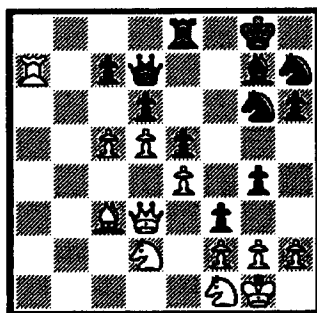


This is too mechanical. White puts pressure on the e-pawn in preparation for c5, but omits to spare a thought for the defense of his Kingside. Correct was 24.h3! with the possible sequel 24...f4 25.Nf1 g5 26.N3h2 h5 27.Qe2 Nf6 28.g4! fxc3 29.fxc3 Qxh3 30.Bxc5. After the move played, the White King's position is in some danger of being submerged by the avalanche of Black pawns.

24...f4 25.Nf1 g5 26.c5 bxc5 27.bxc5 g4 28.N3d2 Ng6 29.Ra7 f3?

Too hasty! Much stronger was 29...Ng5!, with a very strong attack, as show by the following variations given in the Hungarian tournament book: 1) 30.Ba5 f3 31.Rxc7 Qa4,

followed by 32...fxg2. 2) 30.f3 Nh4 31.Ra2 gxf3 32.Nxf3 N5xf3+ 33.gxf3 Qh3 34.Rf2 Bf6. 3) 30.c6 Qf7.



30.g3 Ng5 31.Ne3!

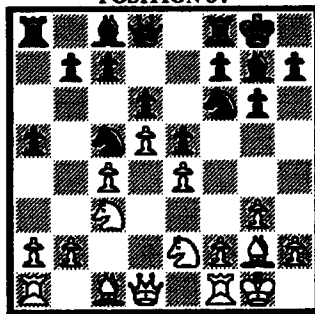
Now the White King can escape *via* f1, and Black's attack comes to a halt.

31...Nh3+ 32.Kf1 dxc5 33.Qa6 Kh7 34.Qc6 Qxc6

Forced, for if 34...Re7 there comes 35.Nf5 Rf7 36.Qxd7 Rxd7 37.d6!

35.dxc6 Re6 36.Rxc7 Ne7 37.Nf5! Bf6 38.Rd7 Kg6 39.Nxe7+ Bxe7 40.c7 Rc6 41.Rxe7 Black Resigned.

POSITION 84



(White draws the sting from Black's ...f5 by answering with f3; from the game Van Scheltinga-Zvetkov, Hilversum 1947).

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.g3 O-O 6.Bg2 e5 7.d5 Nbd7 8.Nge2 a5 9.O-O Nc5

White has managed to keep f4 well under control, so that Black will not

find it an easy matter to carry out the advance, ...f5-f4.

### 10.f3

10.Qc2 might have been more exact, but the move played makes one thing very clear: White means to take no action on the Kingside and make his real effort on the other wing.

### 10...Ne8

After 10...Nh5 11.Be3 f5 another point of White's strategy would emerge. He would play 12.Bf2!, and answer 12...f4 with 13.g4!, making it practically impossible for Black to open a file.

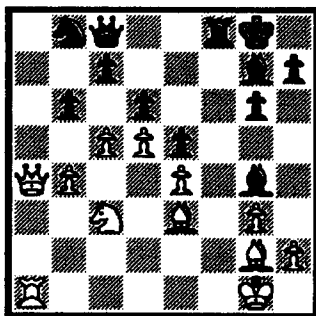
### 11.Be3 f5 12.Qc2 b6? 13.a3!

Profiting by Black's negligence. This move would have been impossible had Black played 12...Bd7, because then he would have had the reply 13...a4!

### 13...Nf6 14.b4 axb4 15.axb4 Rxa1 16.Rxa1 Na6 17.Qb3

By 17.Qa4! White could have saved a tempo, but he is hoping to get a discovered check after ...c5, dxc5.

### 17...fxe4 18.Nxe4 Nxe4 19.fxe4 Bg4 20.Nc3 Qc8! 21.Qa4 Nb8 22.c5!



All according to plan.

### 22...dxc5 23.bxc5 Nd7 24.h3 Bf3

If 24...Nxc5 25.Bxc5 Bd7, there follows 26.Bxf8! Bxa4 27.Bxg7 Kxg7 28.Rxa4, and White, with Rook and

two minor pieces for the Queen, has the better of it.

### 25.c6!

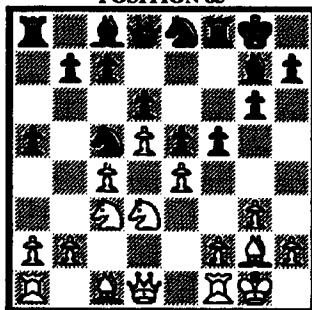
This is the point of the previous move. 25...Nf6 is impossible, and 25...Nb8 is hardly to be considered, since the Knight would never get out again.

### 25...Nc5 26.Bxc5 bxc5 27.Qc4 Kh8 28.Qxc5 Bxg2 29.Kxg2 Qd8 30.Ra2!

To meet 30...Qf6 with 31.Rf2. White now has a sound extra pawn. Van Scheltinga handles the technical phase in irreproachable style:

### 30...Bf6 31.Rf2 Be7 32.Rxf8+ Bxf8 33.Qf2 Kg8 34.h4 Bb4 35.Na2 Qe7 36.Nc1 Bc5 37.Qf3 Bd4 38.Ne2 Bb6 39.Kh3 Ba5 40.g4 Be1 41.g5 Bb4 42.Ng3 Bd6 43.Nf1 Qf7 44.Qx7+ Kxf7 45.Ne3 Bf8 46.Nc4 Ke7 47.Nxe5 Kd6 48.Nd7 Be7 49.Kg4 Bd8 50.Kf4 Black Resigned.

POSITION 85



(White takes the sting out of Black's ...f5 by playing f4 himself; from the game Gilg-Pelikan, Reichenberg 1936).

### 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nf3 Bg7 4.Nc3 O-O 5.g3 d6 6.Bg2 Nbd7 7.O-O e5 8.d5 a5 9.e4 Nc5 10.Ne1 Ne8 11.Nd3 f5

Black's idea is to recapture on c5 with his d-pawn, and then occupy d6 with the Knight.

### 12.Nxc5 dxc5 13.Be3!

This crosses Black's plan, for if 13...b6, there comes 14.exf5 and 15.d6.

**13...Qd6 14.f4!**

This move, as we have already mentioned, generally involves difficulties caused by the weakness of the e-pawn. Here there is no such difficulty, since at some suitable moment the e-pawn can be exchanged for the pawn on f5. If Black opens the game by exchanging on e4 and f4, the game turns to White's advantage as a rule, for with his d-pawn already on the fifth rank the square e6 can easily become a strong support point.

**14...Bd7 15.Qd2 Rb8 16.Rae1 b6 17.Rf2 Rf7 18.Kh1 Qf8**

Now Black is ready for Nd6.

**19.fxe5 Bxe5 20.Bh6 Qd6**

20...Bg7? is met by 21.Bxg7 and 22.e5. The square which Black has really been reserving for his Knight therefore has to be occupied again by his Queen instead.

**21.Rf2 Nf6**

Or 21...f4 22.gxf4 Bxf4 23.Bxf4 Qxf4 24.Qxf4 Rxf4 25.b3, followed by e5.

**22.exf5 Bxc3 23.Qxc3 Bxf5 24.Re6!**

A decisive combination, based on the support point e6. The main line runs: 24...Bxe6 25.dxe6 R7f8 26.e7 Rfe8 27.Bd5+ Kh8 28.Re6, and wins.

**24...Qd8 25.Bg5 Ne4**

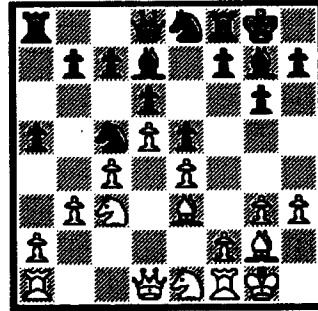
Losing a piece, but 25...Kg7 also fails against 26.Re7! Qd6 27.R1e6!!

**26.Bxd8 Nxc3 27.Re8+ Kg7**

Or 27...Rf8 28.Rxf8+ Kxf8 29.Be7+ Kf7 30.bxc3 Re8 31.d6 cxd6 32.Bd5+, and wins.

**28.bxc3** and White won easily.

POSITION 86



(White takes the sting out of Black's ...f5 by capturing with the e-pawn; from the game Flohr-Lilienthal, Moscow 1936).

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 d6 3.Nf3 Nbd7 4.g3 g6 5.Bg2 Bg7 6.O-O O-O 7.Nc3 e5 8.e4 Re8 9.d5 Nc5 10.Ne1 a5 11.b3 Bd7 12.h3 Rf8 13.Be3 Ne8**

Comparison with Position 81 shows that Black's play has been more to the point here; he is all set for ...f5.

**14.Rc1 b6 15.Qd2 f5 16.exf5 Bxf5?**

This leaves White in control of a fine support point at e4. Recapture with the pawn is indicated in this sort of position; see the next position.

**17.g4! Bd7 18.Nf3 Rb8 19.Ng5! Bf6 20.Nge4 Bg7 21.Rce1 Nf6 22.Ng3!**

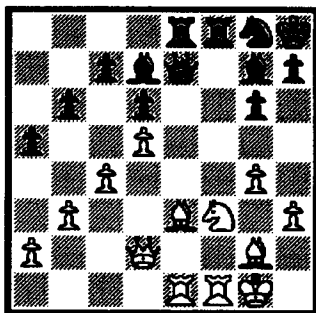
Every exchange would ease Black's task, and White must in any case be careful to keep a Knight to make use of the strong square e4. If any Black pieces contest the control of this square, White's first priority is to drive them away. He now threatens g5.

**22...Kh8?**

22...Be8 gave slightly better chances. Alatortzev then gives 23.f4 exf4 24.Bxf4 Nfd7 25.Bh6 Bf7!

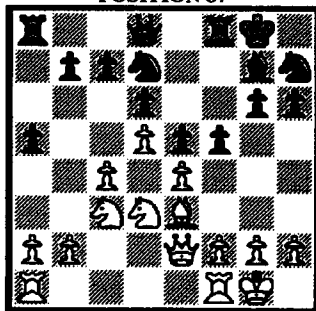
**23.f4! Ng8 24.Nce4 Nxe4 25.Nxe4 Qe7 26.Ng5 Rbe8 27.fxe5 Bxe5 28.Nf3 Bg7?**

This loses outright, but after 28...Qg7 29.Nxe5 dxe5, White would have decisive positional advantage, with his strong point at e4, his Bishop pair and his active Queenside majority, which can start rolling at once with 30.c5.



29.Bxb6 Qxe1 30.Rxe1 Rxe1+  
31.Qxe1 cxb6 32.Qg3 a4 33.Qxd6  
axb3 34.axb3 Black Resigned.

POSITION 87



(Again White meets Black's ...f5 by capturing with the e-pawn; from the game Flohr-Bogolyubov, Bad Sliac 1932).

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6  
5.Nf3 O-O 6.Be2 Nbd7 7.O-O e5 8.d5  
Nc5 9.Nd2 a5 10.Qc2 Bg4 11.Nb3  
Bxe2 12.Qxe2 Ncd7 13.Be3 h6 14.Nc1  
Nh7 15.Nd3 f5?

When this game was played, the maneuver which White now employs—or at least its underlying background—was unknown.

16.exf5 gxf5 17.f4! e4

Unavoidable in the long run.

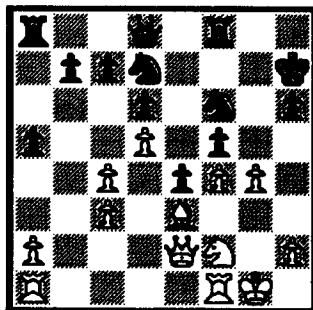
18.Nf2 Bxc3?

18...Nhf6 was better, but even then White would get the advantage by 19.g4. In the modern lines of the King's Indian, however, White's plans are not so easily realizable, since Black has time for ...h5, securing for himself some counterplay on the g-file.

19.bxc3 Nhf6 20.g4!

Completely dislocating the Black position.

20...Kh7

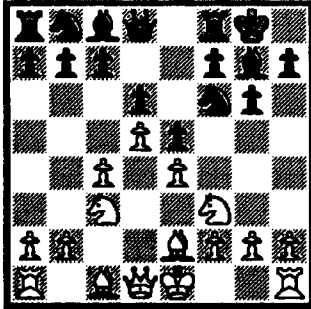


20...fxg4 21.Nxg4 Nxg4  
22.Qxg4+ Kh8 23.Kh1 is no better;  
White's attack becomes decisive  
as soon as he gets a Bishop on d4  
combining with the major pieces  
on the g-file.

21.g5! Ng8 22.Kh1 Qe8 23.Rg1 Qg6  
24.gxh6 Qxh6 25.Rg3 Ngf6 26.Rh3  
Black Resigns

(The latest idea: Black forces ...f5 at all costs; from the game Szabo-Boleslavsky, Budapest 1950).

POSITION 88



1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.d4 O-O  
5.e4 d6 6.Be2 e5 7.d5 (No.88) Nh5  
8.Ng1?

Better is 8.0-0, but White thought that his opponent had nothing better now than to retreat ...Nf6, whereupon with 9.g4! he not only actively prevents ...f5, but also starts a direct attack of his own.

**8...Nd7!!**

One of the most startling discoveries of recent years. Without batting an eyelid, Black gives up a pawn simply to enforce ...f5.

**9.Bxh5 gxh5 10.Qxh5**

The sequel shows that White should have played 10.Nge2 h4 11.0-0 f5 12.f4, with an equal game.

**10...Nc5 11.Nf3**

If 11.g4 (to prevent 11...f5), then 11...c6 12.Nf3 cxd5 13.cxd5 Qf6 14.g5 Qg6! is a powerful line for Black.

**11...f5 12.O-O f4**

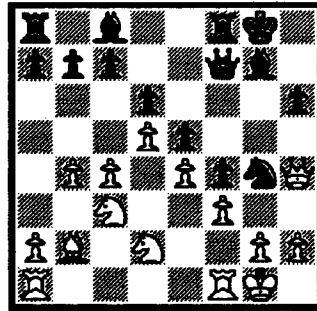
Much stronger than 12...fxe4 13.Ng5 Bf5 14.Qe2, after which it is probably White who will get the better of it.

**13.b4 Nd7 14.Bb2 Qe7! 15.Ng5**

Otherwise Black plays 15...Rf6 and 16...Rh6.

**15...Nf6 16.Qh4 h6 17.Nf3 Qf7 18.Nd2 Ng4! 19.f3**

In order to make an escape route for his Queen, White has to concede to his opponent the use of e3.



**19...Ne3!**

Much stronger than 19...Bf6 20.Qh3 Ne3 21.Qxh6, when White would have two pawns for the Exchange.

**20.Rfc1 Kh7 21.Nd1 Bf6 22.Qf2 Rg8!**

The tactical point, not only of Black's 19th move, but also of his whole plan so far. The use of this open file was what Black visualized when sacrificing the pawn at move 8.

**23.Nxe3 fxe3 24.Qxe3 Bg5 25.Qe2 Bxd2 26.Qxd2 Bh3 27.g3 Qxf3 28.Rc3**

28.Re1 is answered by 28...Raf8, with the threat of 29...Rxc3+.

**28...Qxe4 29.c5**

This leads only to a weakening of the d-pawn. There was more hope of a draw in 29.Qc2 Qxc2 30.Rxc2 Raf8 31.Rf2.

**29...Rg7 30.Qc2 Qxc2 31.Rxc2 Rf8 32.Rf2 Rg7 33.Rxf7+ Rxf7**

The White King is in a tight corner, and a White pawn is bound to be lost.

**34.Re1 Rf3 35.cxd6 cxd6 36.Bc1**

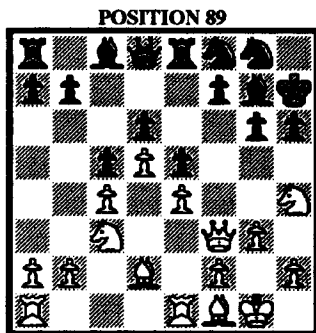
If 36.Rd1 Kg6 37.b5 Kf5 38.Bc1 Ke4, etc.

**36...Rd3 37.Be3 a6 38.Kf2 Rxd5**

Black's united passed pawns now

guarantee him an easy win:

**39.Rc1 Kg6 40.Rc7 Rb5 41.Rc4 Be6  
42.Rh4 h5 43.a4 Rd5 44.h3 Bd7 45.a5  
Rd3 46.Ke2 and White Resigned**  
without waiting for the reply.



*(The c-pawns are fixed as well; from the game Gligoric-Klein, London 1951).*

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6  
5.Nf3 O-O 6.Be2 Nbd7 7.O-O e5 8.Re1  
Re8 9.Bf1 c6 10.d5 Nf8? 11.Bd2 h6  
12.g3 Kh7 13.Nh4 Ng8 14.Qf3 c5**

At move 10 Black neglected to play ...c5 directly and follow up by working for ...f5 in the manner now familiar to us, by ...Rf8 and ...Ne8. The result is that White can now prevent ...f5, and so remain free to concentrate on his own problem of how to open a file on the Queenside. It must be said, however, that the Black formation c5-d6-e5 is in itself some improvement on what we have seen hitherto: c7-d6-e5. The base of this new chain, d6, is virtually impregnable, so that White can only strike at one of the heads, e5 or c5; and this, as we know, can lead him into difficulties.

**15.a3**

Preparing for b4. 15.Qxf7? would be bad, for after 15...Nf6, the Queen would be lost.

**15...Re7 16.b4 b6**

Things look good for White: after 16...cxb4 17.axb4 there would be no way for Black to take advantage of the weakness of the White c-pawn.

**17.Rab1 Bd7 18.bxc5 bxc5**

Here 18...dxc5 would have been positionally preferable, but it is tactically unplayable: 19.d6 Re6 20.Qxf7 Rxd6 21.Nd5.

**19.Qd3 Be8 20.Rb2 Rb8 21.Reb1 Rb6**

After 21...Rxb2 22.Rxb2, followed by 23.Qb1, White would have achieved his aim – mastery of the only open file. Rather than let this happen, Black accepts a weak b-pawn, and hopes for counterplay on the a-file.

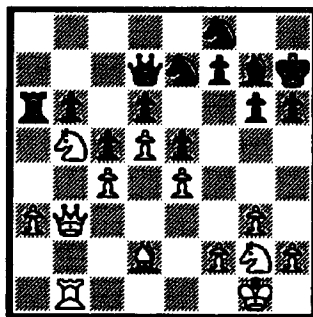
**22.Rxb6 axb6 23.Qc2 Ra7 24.Qb3 Ra6  
25.Nb5 Ne7**

The Knight is to defend both d6 and b6. After 25...Bxb5, White can either play 26.cxb5 Ra7 27.a4, threatening 28.a5, or 26.Qxb5 Rxa3 27.Qxb6, which is also very good.

**26.Bh3**

An important intermezzo. By preventing ...Nc8, White practically forces his opponent to part with his good Bishop in exchange for White's bad one.

**26...Bd7 27.Bxd7 Qxd7 28.Ng2**



There is no longer any need to prevent ...f5, for Black is now being kept too busy on the Queenside to think of transferring his forces to the

Kingside. Under the present circumstances, the move ...f5 would be only a weakening: 28...f5 29.f3 g5 30.Ne3 f4 31.Nf5!

**28...Nc8 29.Ne3 h5 30.Nd1 Bf6 31.Kg2 Kg7 32.Ne3 Nh7 33.h4 Kg8 34.a4!**

After some harmless shuffling, White hits on the right plan: The following breakthrough aims to get the b-file fully open, so that his pieces can penetrate into the enemy lines.

**34...Bg7 35.Nc3 Na7**

To prevent 36.Qb5, but 35...Ra5 would have been a better way of doing it.

**36.a5! Nc8**

One last attempt to stem the invasion on the b-file. If 36...Rxa5 37.Qxb6 is decisive, while 36...bxa5 37.Qb8+ Nc8 38.Rb7 is tantamount to resignation.

**37.Na4! bxa5 38.Qb5 Qxb5**

Or 38...Ra7 39.Qxd7 Rxd7 40.Rb8 Rd8 41.Nb6, and wins.

**39.cxb5 Ra7 40.b6 Nxb6**

Or 40...Rb7 41.Nc4 and 42.Nxa5.

**41.Rxb6 Bf8 42.Nc4 Nf6 43.f3 Nd7 44.Rc6 Kg7 45.Nxd6! Black Resigned.**

If 45...Nb8, there follows 46.Nb5 Nxc6 47.dxc6 Ra8 48.c7 and 49.Nb6.

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.O-O d6 6.Re1 b5 7.Bb3 Be7 8.c3 O-O 9.d4 Bg4 10.d5 Na5 11.Bc2 c5 12.Nbd2 Ne8 13.Nf1 g6 14.Ne3 Bd7**

This and similar variations of the Ruy Lopez differ but little in their general strategy from the positions we have been handling so far (see also Position 83). One small difference here is that the Bishop placed on c2 may become very active if White plays f4 later on.

**15.b4! Nb7 16.a4**

In this case White obtains his open file on the Queenside particularly easily.

**16...Ng7 17.h3 Qc7 18.Qd2 Rfc8**

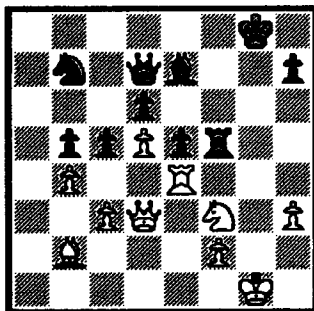
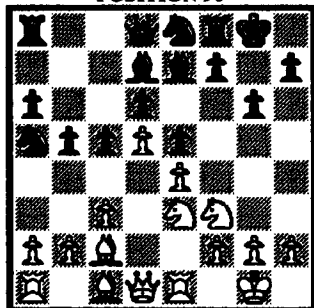
A remarkable preparation for the advance which follows. Simpler, however, was 18...f5.

**19.Bb2 f5!? 20.exf5 gxf5 21.axb5 axb5 22.Rxa8 Rxa8 23.g4?**

With 23.c4! White could have given maximum freedom to his Bishops, for both 23...e4 24.Qc3! and 23...f4 24.Qd3! would be possibilities which Black could not allow under any circumstances.

**23...Rf8 24.Nxf5 Nxf5 25.gxf5 Bxf5 26.Bxf5 Rxf5 27.Qd3 Qd7 28.Re4?!**

POSITION 90



In obtaining this strong square, White has achieved a strategic success, but it is at the cost of his

(An example from the closed defense to the Ruy Lopez; from the game Thomas-Keres, Margate 1939).



King's safety, and this factor now begins to tell.

**28...h5 29.Bc1 Rf7 30.Ng5 Bxg5 31.Bxg5 Qf5 32.Qe3?**

If 32.Bh4 Rg7+ follows. Then if 33.Kh2 Qg6 34.Bg3 h4! would be quite strong, but 33.Kf1 would be quite playable. Now the Knight gets into play.

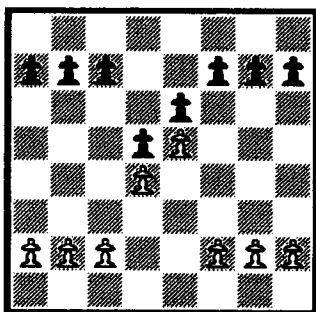
**32...cxb4 33.cxb4 Rg7 34.h4 Nd8 35.Qe2 Nf7 36.Re3 Nxc5 37.hxc5 h4!**

Directed against 38.Rg3.

**38.Qxb5 Qxg5+ 39.Kf1 Qg2+ 40.Ke1 Rf7 41.f3 h3 42.Qf1 Rg7 43.Qb5 Qg5 and White Resigned.**

## A. BLOCKED OBLIQUE FORMATIONS

(ii) The e-pawn forward.



This formation arises primarily from the French Defense. Really closed positions like this, however, occur but seldom, for this would suppose that the Black c-pawn has not been advanced to the fifth rank, whereas Black can and should play ...c5 right in the opening. The corresponding advance ...f5 in the positions handled under 9A(i) was possible only after careful preparation, so that the game kept its closed character for some time. After 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 the position is comparable only with the second phase of the Section A(i) examples, after Black had forced ...f5.

Since the examination of the first five or ten moves belongs to the domain of

the openings, and since the central tension in the present case is unlikely to persist into the middlegame, we shall deal here with two types only:

1) The Black c-pawn is still on c7 or c6 and cannot easily be advanced to the c5 square.

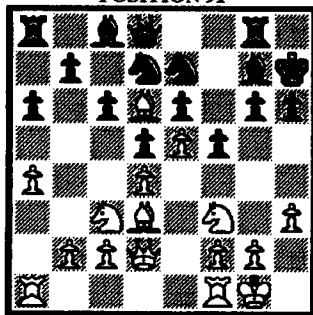
2) The Black c-pawn has been pushed through to the c4 square.

The first of these is decidedly in White's favor, for all sorts of Kingside activities lie ready at hand (advance of the f-pawn, and eventually the g-pawn as well), and in addition he can often open a file on the Queenside.

The second type gives Black more chance of counterplay in the form of a breakthrough on the b-file by ...b5-b4. One glance is enough to show, however, that White still has the better prospects. Black's difficulty is to provide safety for his King. If the Black King is in the center, or castled into dubious security on the Kingside, then it is at once obvious that White's action aimed at opening the f-file will be extremely effective. If, on the other hand, the Black King goes to the other side, then Black's ...b5 will need much more preparation, so that in this case also, White is likely to get his blow in first.

The following positions exemplify these possibilities.

POSITION 91



*(Passive placing of the Black c-pawn; from the game Alekhine-Mikenas, Folkestone, 1933).*

1.e4 g6 2.d4 Bg7 3.Nc3 d6 4.Nf3 Nd7  
5.Bc4 e6 6.O-O Ne7 7.a4 O-O 8.Be3 h6  
9.Qd2 Kh7 10.h3 c6 11.Bf4 d5 12.Bd3  
a6 13.Bd6 f5 14.e5 Rg8 (No.91)15.h4

Alekhine, whose annotations we shall largely follow, intends to open a file on the Queenside, but before proceeding to this he pauses to prevent ...g5.

15...b6

Black wants to play ...Nf8, but it would be dangerous to do so at once because of 16.Qg5! hxg5 17.Nxg5+ and 18.Nf7+. After b6 the sally 16.Qg5 could be answered by 16...Ra7.

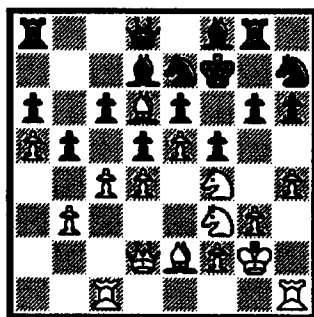
16.Ne2 Nf8 17.a5

Forcing a further weakening.

17...b5 18.g3 Rh8 19.Kg2 Kg8 20.Rh1  
Kf7 21.Nf4 Rg8 22.b3

White's maneuvers so far have aimed only at predestining any Black counteraction to failure; but now White lays his trumps on the table. The c-file is to be opened.

22...Nh7 23.c4 Bd7 24.Rac1 Bf8  
25.Be2!



A fine double-purpose move, which vacates d3 for a Knight and again prevents 25...g5, as the following line shows: 25...g5 26.hxg5 Nxg5 27.Nxg5+ hxg5 28.Bh5+ Kg7 29.Nxe6+! Bxe6 30.Qxg5+ Kh7 31.Bg6+, and mate next move.

25...Nc8 26.cxd5 cxd5

Or 26...Nxd6 27.dxe6+ Bxe6 28.Nxe6 Kxe6 29.Rxc6.

27.Bxf8 Nxf8 28.Rc5 Na7 29.Nd3 Kg7  
30.Rhc1 Rc8 31.Rxc8 Bxc8 32.Qc3

All White's objectives are realized; he controls the open c-file, and can now proceed to force a decision.

32...Kh7 33.Qc5 Rg7 34.Qb6 Qe7  
35.Nc5 g5

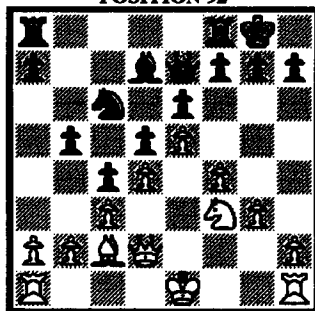
One last attempt.

36.hxg5 hxg5 37.Ne1!

Black's attack can get no further for if 37...f4 38.Bg4! is too strong. The rest is simple.

37...Ng6 38.Ned3 f4 39.Rh1+ Kg8  
40.Bg4 fxg3 41.fxg3 Nh4+ 42.gxh4  
gxh4 43.Nf2 Rf7 44.Nxe6 Kh7 45.Qd6  
Black Resigned.

POSITION 92



(Active use of the Black c-pawn; from the game Forgacs-Tartakower, St. Petersburg, 1909).

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Be7  
5.e5 Ne4 6.Nxe4 Bxg5 7.Nxg5 Qxg5  
8.g3 c5 9.c3 Nc6 10.f4 Qe7 11.Nf3 Bd7  
12.Qd2 O-O 13.Bd3 c4 14.Bc2 b5  
(No.92) 15.O-O a5 16.Rae1 b4 17.f5!

Starting a breakthrough in the grand style. The more mechanical approach by 17.g4 would give Black an opportunity to play 17...f5.

**17...exf5**

The threat was 18.f6! and if 17...f6, then 18.fxe6 Bxe6 19.exf6 Rxf6 20.Bxh7 + Kxh7 21.Ng5+ Kh8 22.Rxf6 Qxf6 23.Rxe6.

**18.g4!**

The point of the previous move.

**18...fxg4**

If 18...f4 19.Qxf4 Be6 20.Ng5 h6 21.Nh7 Rfe8 22.g5.

**19.Ng5 g6**

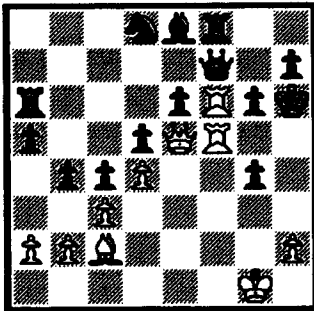
19...h6 is no better: 20.Nh7 Rfd8 21.Nf6+! gxf6 22.Qxh6.

**20.Rf6 Kg7 21.Ref1 Be8 22.Qf4 Nd8**

The threat was 23.Ne6+ fxe6 24.Rxf8.

**23.e6! Ra6 24.Qe5 Kh6 25.R1f5! fxe6 26.Nf7+ Qxf7**

Or 26...Kg7 27.Rxe6+, forcing mate.

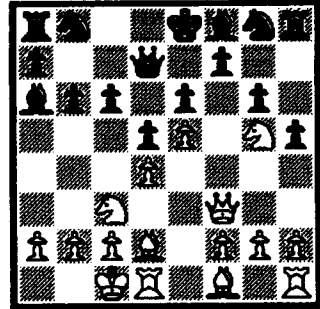
**27.Rh5+! Kg7 28.Rxg6#.**

*(Open lines obtained by pawn sacrifice; from the game Unzicker-Czaya, Essen 1948).*

**1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 b6 5.Qg4 Bf8 6.Nh3 h5 7.Qf3 c6 8.Ng5 Qd7 9.Bd2 Ba6 10.O-O-O g6 (No.93)**

Black's immediate plan is to trade his bad Bishop for White's good one, and then occupy f5 with a Knight.

POSITION 93

**11.h3!**

So as to meet 11...Nh6 with 12.g4.

**11...Bxf1 12.Rhxf1 Bh6 13.g4 Qe7 14.h4!**

This looks anti-positional, for Black will now be able to carry out his plan by 14...hgx4 15.Qxg4 Bg7, followed by 16...Nh6 and eventually ...Nf5.

**14...hgx4 15.Qg3!! Bg7 16.f3!**

This is the whole idea. At the cost of a pawn, White now gets the open f-file.

**16...gxf3 17.Rxf3 Nh6**

Black still doesn't believe it; he hopes to block the file with the Knight. Now the real point of White's 14th move emerges.

**18.Nxf7! Nxf7 19.Qxg6 O-O**

Forced, for if 19...Bf8 or 19...Kf8 20.Rdf1 wins outright.

**20.Rg1 Nxe5**

If 20...Nh8, then 21.Rxf8+ Kxf8 22.Qh7, threatening both 23.Bh6 and 23.Rxg7 Qxg7 24.Bh6. Equally hopeless is 20...Nd8 21.Rfg3 Rf7 22.Bh6.

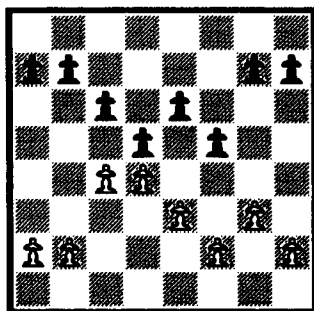
**21.Rxf8+ Kxf8 22.Qh7 Qf7 23.Rxg7! Qf1+ 24.Nd1 Nf7 25.Qg8+ Black Resigned.**

## B. STONEWALL FORMATIONS

### (i) The Normal Stonewall.

The usual Stonewall is a very solid formation which can arise from various openings – Slav, Dutch, Bird's, Queen's Pawn and Orthodox Queen's Gambit Declined. This set-up has always had its adherents.

In the last century it was used by Zukertort, and more recently it has been successful in the hands of Dr. Tartakower and the Dutch masters Noteboom and Muhring.



It became quite popular after some attractive games in which Botvinnik forged the Dutch Stonewall into a weapon to be feared. Black's chances lie in a Kingside attack. His firm position in the center often enables him to push up the g-pawn, and under certain circumstances he can play his KR from f8 to f6 and h6 with great effect. Meanwhile White's problem is to find some feasible way of breaking up the Black position.

According to the rule that a hostile pawn chain should be attacked at its base, White should here concentrate his efforts on e6 and c6. We arrive then at the following systems:

1) Attack on e6. This can be done only by opening the e-file, for which purpose White will have to prepare e4, meanwhile maintaining the central tension.

2) Attack on c6. This requires the advance b4-b5, usually preceded by

c5, or else by cxd5, although in the latter case the plan can be completed only if Black is compelled to recapture with the e-pawn.

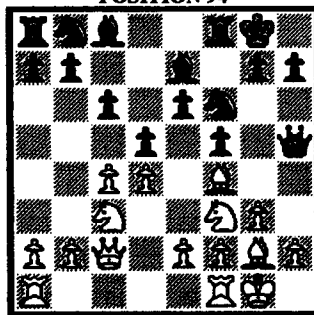
3) In addition to these systems, there is a more recent plan based on the weakness of the dark squares – e5, and to a lesser extent c5 and f4. The essentials of this plan are:

a) Exchange of Black's KB for the White QB by playing b3 and Ba3.

b) Installing the White Knights on d3 and f3, from where they control all of Black's weak points.

It goes without saying that it is possible to transpose from one scheme to another; plan No. 3 can, for instance, form an excellent foundation for the execution of plan No. 1 or 2.

POSITION 94



(White plays for e4; from the game Yudovich-Botvinnik, Leningrad 1934).

1.c4 15 2.d4 Nf6 3.g3 e6 4.Bg2 Be7  
5.Nf3 d5 6.O-O O-O 7.Nc3 c6 8.Qc2  
Qe8 9.Bf4 Qh5 (No.94) 10.b3

If the central tension is to be maintained, White must first take care to protect his c-pawn.

10...Nbd7 11.Rad1 Kh8

Black's plan takes shape: ...Rg8, followed by ...g5.

12.Kh1?

From the sequel, it appears that this is not only unnecessary: it actually puts the King on a worse square.

**12...Rg8 13.e3 g5 14.Bc7 Ne8 15.Be5+ Nxe5 16.Nxe5 Nf6 17.f3 Bd6 18.e4**

White has achieved his object, but it will soon be apparent that Black has secured good counterchances.

**18...Nd7!**

This cannot be answered by 19.Nxd7? because of 19...Bxg3.

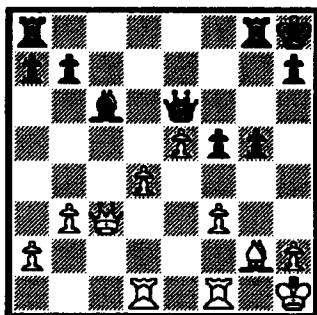
**19.g4 Qe8 20.Nxd7 Bxd7**

Black has no objection now to the liquidation of the center. If 21.exf5 exf5 22.cxd5, he continues 22...fxg4 23.dxc6? Qh5!

**21.e5 Bb4 22.gxf5 exf5 23.cxd5 Bxc3 24.dxc6?**

The pawn which White wins by this move is dearly bought. Much better was 24. Qxc3 cxd5 25.f4, with about even chances.

**24...Bxc6 25.Qxc3 Qe6**



Thus Black secures control of d5 and gets a sharp Kingside attack as compensation for the lost pawn. The rest of the game is not really relevant to our theme. We give it briefly:

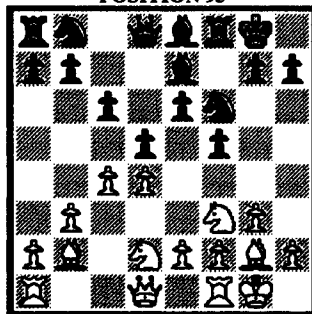
**26.Qd2 Bd5 27.Rc1 Rg7 28.Rc2 f4 29.Qc1 Rag8 30.h3 h5 31.Kg1 g4 32.hxg4 hxg4 33.Kf2 Rh7 34.Rh1 g3+ 35.Ke1 Rxh1+ 36.Bxh1 Qh6 37.Bg2 Bc6? (Better is 37...Be6) 38.a4 Bd7 39.d5 Bf5 40.Rc7 Qh2 41.Qb2 Qg1+**

**42.Bf1 Qe3+ 43.Be2 Be6 44.Qc2 Rg7 45.dxe6?**

45.Rc8+ would have drawn.

**45...Qf2+ 46.Kd2 Qd4+ 47.Ke1 Rxc7 and White Resigned.**

POSITION 95



(White plays e4; from the game Stoltz-Vlagsma, Beverwijk 1946).

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 e6 4.Nbd2 f5 5.g3 Nf6 6.Bg2 Be7 7.O-O O-O 8.b3 Bd7 9.Bb2 Be8**

Black has developed in an unusual way, omitting the maneuver ...Qe8-h5, and played instead to get his QB outside the pawn chain at once. In consequence, the e-pawn has lost its natural protection, and White can attack this base immediately.

**10.Ng5 Qc8 11.f3 Na6 12.Nh3 Nc7 13.e4**

White now has a distinct advantage, but how to make further progress is another matter.

**13...Bf7**

Correct. Black adopts a waiting policy, not wishing to dissolve the central framework. The points d5 and e5 are well enough defended, and in such positions the closure by e5 is nothing to fear.

**14.Qe2 Re8 15.Kh1 g6 16.Nf4 Kg7 17.Nd3 h6 18.Ne5**

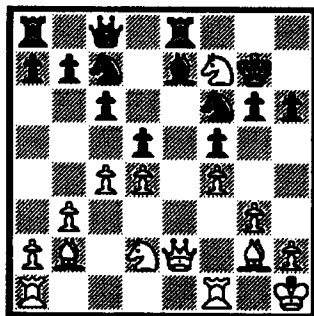
The beginning of a new plan, by which White manages to dissipate his advantage. White should have continued to maneuver, aiming always to strengthen his position while keeping the possibilities of e5 or c5 in hand. In the tournament book, Kmoch recommends that White should first develop his QR to c1, and then proceed to prepare for an eventual g4.

**18...Nd7 19.exf5? exf5 20.f4?**

Now Black will gain control of a support point at e4.

**20...Nf6 21.Nxf7**

The two Bishops, which White obtains by this move, are not very useful in a closed position like this. If White had decided to exchange the Knight which stood at e5, he should have done it a move earlier and not for the Bishop, but for the Knight at d7.



**21...Kxf7 22.Nf3 Qe6 23.Qc2 Bd6 24.c5 Bf8 25.Ne5+ Kg7 26.Rae1 Ne4**

It is evident that White's operations have achieved less than nothing. His QB is a spectator, and it is the Black Knight at e4 which controls the situation in the center. The attempt to undermine the Knight which follows now also leads to nothing.

**27.g4 Kh7 28.gxf5 gxf5 29.Bh3 Be7 30.Qe2 Rg8 31.Qh5 Raf8 32.Bc1 Ne8**

**33.Be3 Ng7 34.Qf3 Ne8 35.b4 N8f6 36.a4**

There is nothing to be had on the g-file, so White tries his luck on the other wing.

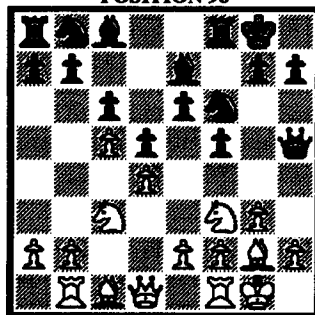
**36...a6 37.Rc1 Rg7 38.b5 Rfg8 39.bxc6 bxc6 40.Qe2 Rg3 41.Rf3 Rxf3 42.Qxf3 Bd8 43.Rg1 Rxcg1+ 44.Kxg1**

There is nothing much left in the game:

**44...Ng8 45.Qh5 Ne7 46.Kh1 Nf6 47.Qf7+ Qxf7 48.Nxf7 Bc7 49.Bf1 a5 50.Bd3 Ne4 51.Ne5 Kg7 52.Kg2 Kf6 53.h4 Ke6 54.Be2 Nc3 55.Bh5 Nxa4 56.Bf7+ Kf6 57.Be8 Nc3 58.Nxc6 Nxc6 59.Bxc6 Ke6 60.Kf3 Ne4**

Here a Draw was agreed. This game gives a good idea of the difficulty of overrunning a Stonewall formation.

POSITION 96



(Attack on the base pawn at c6; from the game Reshevsky-Botvinnik, Nottingham 1936).

**1.d4 e6 2.Nf3 f5 3.g3 Nf6 4.Bg2 Be7 5.O-O O-O 6.c4 d5 7.Nc3 c6 8.Rb1 Qe8 9.c5 Qh5**

With his 8th and 9th moves, White lays his cards on the table. He intends an immediate assault against the base-pawn at c6. From what follows it appears that in this line Black's Queen excursion to h5 is not particularly

good, for the Queen will soon find it necessary to return nearer to base.

**10.b4 Ne4 11.Qc2 Nd7 12.b5 Bf6 13.Bf4!**

Not only preventing ...e5, but also setting a fine trap: 13...Ndxc5? 14.Nd1! Nd7 15.bxc6 bxc6 16.Qxc6, winning a piece.

**13...Qe8! 14.Bc7 Rf7 15.Ba5**

The means adopted by White for making his bad Bishop active is certainly noteworthy.

**15...e5 16.e3 Nxc3 17.Bxc3 e4 18.Nd2**

We have now reached the formation which we studied in Section A(ii) of this chapter (blocked oblique formation with e-pawn forward). On the basis of the examples given there we can make the following assertions: 1) Black has Kingside chances, but in view of White's defensive set-up (pawns on e3 and g3. Bishop on g2), it may not be easy to make anything concrete out of them. 2) White's Queenside attack is well advanced. A comparison with Position 92 is particularly instructive.

**18...Nf8 19.f3!**

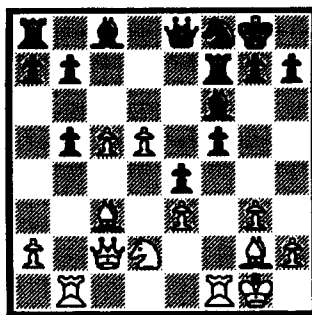
Another point in White's favor emerges here. He does not have to wait for Black to attack (with ...g5, etc), but can himself take the initiative in this sector. This move involves a promising pawn sacrifice.

**19...cxb5**

The interpolation of the Kingside exchange is no better, for after 19...exf3 20.Rxf3 cxb5 21.Qb3 Bd7 22.Nf1! followed by Rf2, White's KB comes vigorously into the fray - at least regaining the sacrificed pawn at d5.

**20.fxe4 dxe4 21.d5!**

The point of White's 19th move.



**21...Bxc3 22.Qxc3 Bd7 23.Nb3 Rc8 24.g4!**

Besides this continuation, which aims at undermining the Black center (24...fxg4 25.Rxf7 followed by 26.Rf1 and 27.Nd2), the more positional line, 24.Rfc1, in combination with 25.Nd4, was well worth considering.

**24...g6 25.Qd4 Qe7 26.Rbc1 Be8 27.Rf4 Rd8 28.Rc1 Qd7**

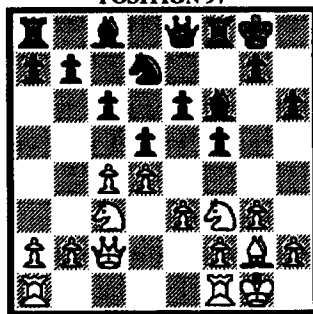
And certainly not 28...Ne6 29.dxe6! Rxd4 30.exf7+, getting two Rooks and a Knight for the Queen.

**29.gxf5 gxf5 30.Bh3 Qxd5 31.Rxf5?**

With this move, White loses all his advantage. Correct was 31.Bxf5, after which the e-pawn must fall as well.

**31...Qxd4 32.Nxd4 Rg7+ 33.Kh1 Bd7 34.Rh5 Bxh3 35.Rxh3 Rg5 36.Nf5 Rd7 37.Rh4 Rc7 38.Nh6+ Kg7 39.Nf5+ Kg8 40.Nh6+ Kg7 41.Nf5+ Draw by repetition.**

POSITION 97



(Attack on the base at c6 while maintaining the central tension; from the game Cruz-Eliskases, Rio de Janeiro 1946).

**1.d4 f5 2.g3 Nf6 3.Bg2 e6 4.Nf3 Be7 5.O-O O-O 6.c4 d5 7.Nc3 c6 8.Qc2 Qe8 9.Bg5 h6 10.Bxf6! Bxf6 11.e3 Nd7**

Since a Knight is worth at least as much as a Bishop in a closed game like the Stonewall, White's exchange on his 10th move is strategically justified. Naturally, Black should now have gone in for an open game by 11...dxc4, and then if 12.Nd2 e5!

**12.Nd2 Rf7**

This is too tame. Better was 12...g5 straight away; or perhaps 12...Be7, followed by ...Nf6.

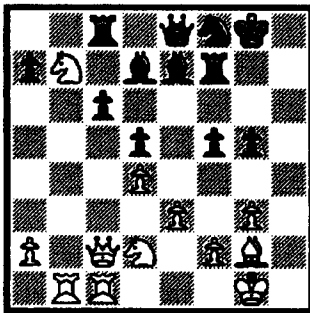
**13.b4! Nf8 14.b5 g5 15.Rab1 h5 16.Rfc1 h4 17.bxc6 bxc6 18.cxd5! exd5**

Forced, for if 18...cxd5, 19.Nb5 settles it.

**19.Na4**

White has achieved all his objectives: open files for his Rooks, and a weak c-pawn to shoot at.

**19...Bd7 20.Nc5 hxc3 21.hxc3 Rc8 22.Nb7 Be7?**



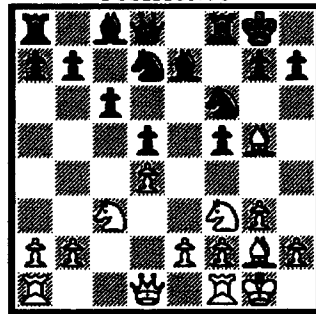
Best was 22...Qe6, trying to make something out of the counterthreat, ...f4. Now White's advantage assumes decisive proportions.

**23.Nf3 Ng6 24.Nxg5! Bxg5 25.Nd6 Qf8 26.Nxc8 Qxc8 27.Bxd5! cxd5 28.Qxc8+ Bxc8 29.Rxc8+ Kg7**

After this series of forced moves, we can weigh things up, and the balance comes down on White's side. As far as material goes, Black is not bad off, for two minor pieces should be able to put up a good fight against a Rook and two pawns. Positionally his game is a wreck; every pawn is weak. The technical phase of the game really falls outside our province, but we give it in brief for the sake of completeness:

**30.Rbc1 Be7 31.R1c7 a5 32.Rd7 Bb4! 33.Rcc7 Rxd7 34.Rxd7+ Ne7 35.Kg2 Kf6 36.Kf3 Ke6 37.Rb7 Bd6 38.g4 fxg4+ 39.Kxg4 a4 40.Rb2 a3 41.Rc2 Kf6 42.Rc3 Kg6 43.f3 Nf5 44.Rd3 Nh6+ 45.Kh4 Nf5+ 46.Kg4 Nh6+ 47.Kh4 Nf5+ 48.Kh3 Kg5 49.e4 Ng7 50.Rb3 Kf4 51.Rb6 Kxf3 52.Rxd6 Kxe4 53.Kg4 Kxd4 54.Ra6 Ne8 55.Kf3 Nc7 56.Rxa3 Nb5 57.Ra8 Nd6 58.a4 and White won.**

POSITION 98



(White exchanges pawns at d5 and Black recaptures with the e-pawn; from the game Najdorf-Gligoric, Saltsjobaden 1948).

**1.d4 e6 2.c4 f5 3.g3 Nf6 4.Bg2 Be7 5.Nc3 O-O 6.Nf3 d5 7.O-O c6 8.Bg5 Nbd7 9.cxd5 exd5**



In recapturing with the e-pawn, Black generally gets attacking chances on the Kingside. Against this White usually works with a Queenside offensive against the c-pawn.

**10.e3 h6 11.Bxf6 Nxf6 12.Rb1 Ne4?**

Black sets to work too hastily. He should first have guarded his e5 by ...Bd6.

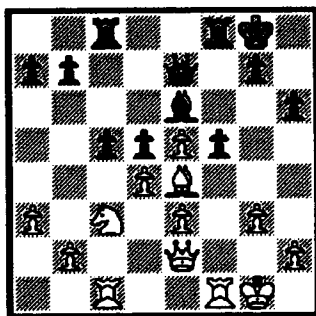
**13.Ne5! Bd6 14.f4**

The big difference between the two Knights at their respective strong points on the e-file is that White can take off the Black Knight whenever he chooses without suffering any unpleasant consequences, Black can never take the White Knight without conceding White a protected passed pawn.

**14...Be6 15.Qe2 Bxe5**

Nevertheless, Black does it.

**16.fxex5 Qe7 17.Rbc1 Rac8 18.a3 c5 19.Bxe4!**



In this closed position White rightly thinks more of his Knight than of the Bishop.

**19...fxex4 20.Rxf8+ Rxf8 21.Rf1 Rxf1+ 22.Qxf1 cxd4 23.exd4**

Now each player has a protected passed pawn, but the Black Bishop is inferior to the White Knight, the Black

center pawns being on the wrong color.

**23...a6 24.Na4 Qg5 25.Qf4 Qh5 26.Nc3 Kh7 27.h4 Kg8 28.Kf2 Qe8 29.Ne2 Qc8 30.Ke1 Qe8 31.Qc1 Qg6 32.Qc3 Qg4 33.Qb3 b5 34.Nf4 Bf7 35.Qe3 g5?**

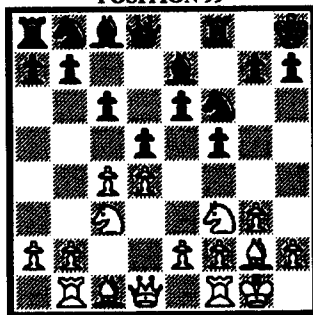
This advance weakens the Kingside too much. Black should have persevered with his waiting policy.

**36.hxg5 hxg5 37.Ne2 Kg7 38.Nc3 Be6 39.Qf2 Kg8 40.Kd2 Bf7 41.Nd1 Qe6 42.Ne3 Qb6 43.Nf5 b4 44.a4 b3**

In the tournament book, Pirc gives 44...Kf8 as better. If then 45.Qe3 Qg6, and if 45.Qh2 Qg6 46.Qh6+ Qxh6 47.Nxh6 Be6 White will have to play 48.g4 to rescue his Knight. Then, by bringing pressure to bear on this pawn, maybe Black could still save the game.

**45.Qe3! Qb4+ 46.Ke2 Qc4+ 47.Ke1 Qb4+ 48.Kf1 Kf8 49.Qxg5 Ke8 50.Nd6+ Kd7 51.Qg7 Black Resigned.**

POSITION 99



(White exchanges pawns at d5 and Black recaptures with the c-pawn; from the game Keres-Botvinnik, Moscow 1947).

**1.d4 e6 2.Nf3 f5 3.g3 Nf6 4.Bg2 Be7 5.O-O O-O 6.c4 d5 7.Nc3 c6 8.Rb1 Kh8**

Keres has chosen the line which

Reshevsky played against Botvinnik at Nottingham (Position 96), and his plan should be to attack the c-pawn with his b-pawn. And since 9.b4 is dubious because of the reply, 9...dxc4!, his most logical continuation would be 9.c5.

**9.cxd5?**

So as to play 10.b4 if Black retakes now with the e-pawn.

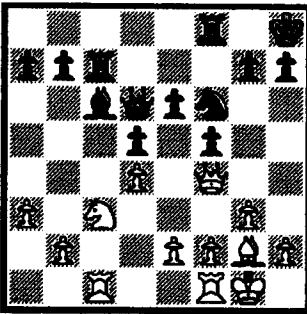
**9...cxd5!**

This simple move crosses his plan. White's 8th move, Rb1, is now only a loss of time. It is worth noticing that in the Najdorf-Gligoric game (No.98) this recapture with the c-pawn would have been less good, since the QN was already on d7. In the present game this piece now has the better square, c6, at its disposal.

**10.Bf4 Nc6 11.Ne5**

11.Nb5 would be premature, because of 11...Nh5!

**11...Bd7 12.Rc1 Rc8 13.Qd3 Nh5 14.Bd2 Bd6 15.Nxc6 Bxc6 16.Qf3 Qe8 17.Qd3 Nf6 18.a3 Rc7 19.Bg5 Ng4 20.Qd2 Nf6 21.Bf4 Qd7 22.Bxd6 Qxd6 23.Qf4?**



The endgame will not be favorable for White, even though his Bishop is on the right color. In fact, this Bishop will find nothing better to do than exchange itself for Black's bad Bishop. Meanwhile Black's microscopic

Queenside advantage (Rooks already half-doubled on the c-file, and a small weakness produced by White's a3) will be very slowly brought to fruition. The best move for White here would have been 23.Rc2.

**23...Qxf4 24.gxf4 Rfc8 25.e3?**

Letting slip his last chance of equality, which consisted of 25.Na2! Bb5 26. Rxc7 Rxc7 27.Rc1.

**25...Bb5 26.Rfe1 Kg8 27.f3**

The direct 27.Bf1 will not do, because of 27...Bxf1 28.Kxf1 Ne4!, and Black penetrates on the c-file.

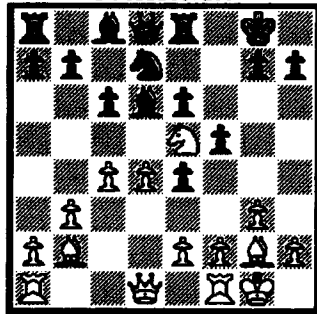
**27...Bc4 28.Bf1 Ne8 29.Bxc4 Rxc4 30.Kf2 Nd6 31.Ke2 b5 32.Kd3 b4 33.Na2**

The loss of a pawn is unavoidable: 1) 33.axb4 Rxb4 34.Rb1 Rcb8 35.Kc2 Nc4. 2) 33.Ne2 bxa3 34.bxa3 Rxc1 35.Rxc1 Rxc1 36.Nxc1 Nc4.

**33...bxa3 34.bxa3 Ra4 35.Rxc8+ Nxc8 36.Nc3 Rxa3**

And Black won a difficult ending.

POSITION 100



(The Stonewall deformed by exchange of pieces on e4; from the game Reti-Bogolyubov, New York 1924).

**1.Nf3 d5 2.c4 e6 3.g3 Nf6 4.Bg2 Bd6 5.O-O O-O 6.b3 Re8 7.Bb2 Nbd7 8.d4 c6 9.Nbd2 Ne4 10.Nxe4 dxe4 11.Ne5 f5**

This game shows the difficulties caused by Black's premature ...Ne4,

which has produced a sort of deformed Stonewall. When the Black Knight is exchanged at e4, Black does best to recapture with the f-pawn, and this, of course, requires that Black should have played ...f5 before inviting the exchange.

**12.f3! exf3 13.Bxf3!**

Much stronger than 13.exf3. White means to break the position wide open with e4.

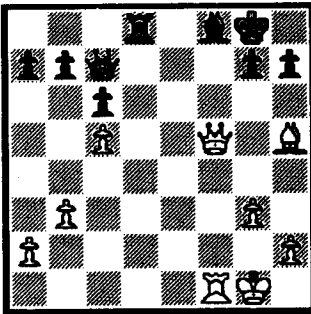
**13...Qc7 14.Nxd7 Bxd7 15.e4 e5**

Otherwise White will play 16.e5 and follow up with d5.

**16.c5 Bf8 17.Qc2! exd4 18.exf5! Rad8 19.Bh5!**

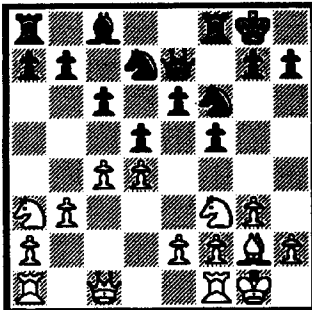
Beginning the decisive attack.

**19...Re5 20.Bxd4 Rxf5 21.Rxf5 Bxf5 22.Qxf5 Rxd4 23.Rf1 Rd8**



**24.Bf7+ Kh8 25.Be8!! and Black Resigned.**

POSITION 101



*(Exchange of Black's dark-squared Bishop before proceeding with the attack on the c-pawn; from the game Donner-Kieninger, Beverwijk 1951).*

**1.d4 f5 2.g3 Nf6 3.Bg2 e6 4.Nf3 Be7 5.O-O O-O 6.b3 c6 7.c4 d5 8.Ba3 Bxa3 9.Nxa3 Qe7 10.Qc1 Nbd7**

The exchange of White's bad Bishop for Black's good KB is usually good policy for White. In particular, the fact that the KB usually plays an important part in Black's Kingside attack means that White will now have more time for developing his Queenside operations.

**11.Qb2**

An important move, directed against the possibility of ...e5 by Black.

**11...Ne4 12.e3 Nd6**

Presumably intending to meet 13.c5 with 13...Nf7 14.b4 e5.

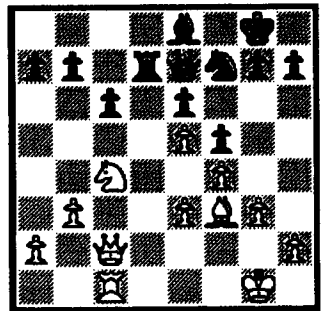
**13.Ne5 Nxe5 14.dxe5 Nf7 15.f4 Bd7 16.Rac1 Rfc8 17.Rf2 Be8 18.Rfc2**

18.c5 would be premature because of 18...b6! 19.b4 a5!.

**18...dxc4**

There was a threat of 19.cxd5 exd5 20.Bxd5. However 18...dxc4 does not improve Black's prospects.

**19.Nxc4 Rd8 20.Bf3 Rd7 21.Rd2 Rxd2 22.Qxd2 Rd8 23.Qc2 Rd7**



An idea worth considering was 23...c5, setting the Queenside majority

in motion, e.g. 24.Nd6! b6 25.Nxe8 Qxe8 26.e4 g6 27.exf5 gxf5, and White has only a slight pull.

**24.Rd1 Qd8 25.Rxd7 Qxd7 26.b4!**

At last comes this advance, which to all intents and purposes demolishes the Stonewall.

**26...b6 27.Nd2 Nd8**

Not 27...c5 because of 28.bxc5 bxc5 29.Nb3.

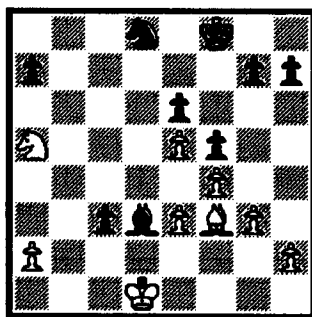
**28.Nb3 Qe7 29.Qc4 Kf8 30.Kf2 Bd7 31.Nd4**

With Black's c-pawn under vigorous pressure White now arranges his pieces as effectively as possible for a central breakthrough with e4 and eventually g4.

**31...c5?**

This method of raising the siege results in the loss of a pawn.

**32.bxc5 Qxc5 33.Qxc5+ bxc5 34.Nb3 c4 35.Na5 c3 36.Ke2 Bb5+ 37.Kd1 Bd3**



Nor does 37...Ba4+ help: 38.Kc1 Ke7 39.Bd1 Bb5 40.Kc2 Ba4+ 41.Nb3.

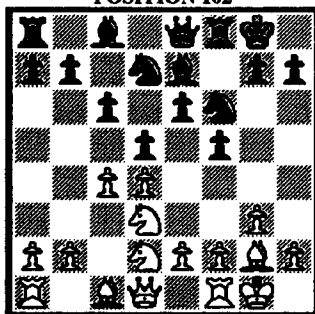
**38.Kc1 Ke7 39.Nb3 g5 40.a3 g4 41.Bg2 Nf7 42.Nc5 Be2 43.Kc2 h5 44.Kxc3**

The technical phase follows in brief:

**44...Nh8 45.Bb7 Ng6 46.Bc8 Nf8 47.Kb4 Bf3 48.Ka5 Bd5 49.Ka6 Ng6 50.Kxa7 h4 51.Bb7 h3 52.a4 Nh4**

**53.Bxd5 exd5 54.a5 Nf3 55.a6 Nxe8 56.Kb6 Nf1 57.a7 h2 58.a8=Q h1=Q 59.Qb7+ Kf8 60.Ne6+ Ke8 61.Qc6+ Ke7 62.Qd6+ Kf7 63.Qd7+ Kg6 64.Qg7+ Kh5 65.Qh7#**

POSITION 102



*(The modern way of fighting against the Stonewall – by installing the Knights at d3 and f3; from the game Geller-Szabo, Budapest 1952).*

**1.d4 e6 2.Nf3 f5 3.g3 Nf6 4.Bg2 Be7 5.O-O O-O 6.c4 d5 7.Nbd2 c6 8.Ne5 Nbd7 9.Nd3 Qe8**

Here we see White adopting the latest, and—as it seems—the most effective, means of meeting the Stonewall. By placing his Knights on d3 and f3, he keeps all the central points under observation, and makes Black's task—the engineering of a Kingside attack—very difficult.

**10.Qc2**

To relieve the Knight from guarding the c-pawn.

**10...g5**

The indicated continuation. With 10...Bd6 Black would be playing into his opponent's hands: 11.Nf3 Ne4 12.Bf4 Bxf4 13.gxf4!, and White holds all the trumps. He can operate at will on the Queenside or on the open g-file.

**11.Nf3 Ne4**

According to Botvinnik, the greatest expert in the domain of the Stonewall, 11...h6 is stronger.

**12.Rb1! Bf6 13.b4 b5**

Otherwise, of course, White plays b5.

**14.c5 a5 15.a3**

White wisely avoids the complications arising from 15.bxa5 Rxa5 16.Nfe5 Bxe5 17.dxe5. True, White would then be threatening to trap the Knight by 18.f3, but, as Tolush shows in his notes to this game, Black could play 17...Qe7! 18.f3 Nxc5 19.Bd2 Nxd3 20.Bxa5 N6xe5, with a game very favorable to Black.

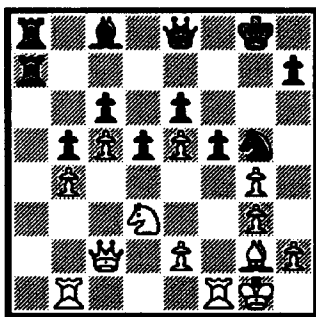
**15...axb4 16.axb4 g4 17.Nfe5 Nxe5**

After 17...Bb7 18.Bh6 Bg7 19.Bxg7 Kxg7 20.f3, White also has a clear advantage.

**18.dxe5 Bd8 19.Bh6 Rf7 20.f3!**

Again it is apparent that the Black Knight on e4 is not at all well placed. After 20...gxf3 21.exf3 Ng5 22.h4 it would be lost.

**20...Bg5 21.Bxg5 Nxg5 22.fxg4 Rfa7**



Since 22...fxg4 23.Nf2! (23...h5? 24.Qg6+) is evidently unthinkable, Black tries to stem the tide by means of a counterattack.

**23.gxf5 exf5 24.Qd2 Nf7**

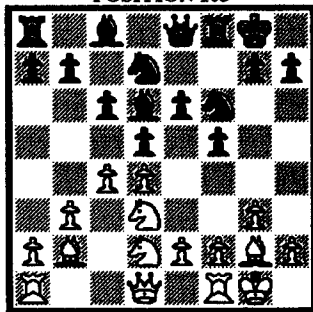
If 24...Ne4 25.Qh6 is very strong.

**25.Qf4 Ra2**

Or 25...Re7 26.Ra1 Rxa1 27.Rxa1 Nxe5 28.Nxe5 Rxe5 29.Bf3 followed by an invasion on the a-file.

**26.Qe3 Qe7 27.Bh3 Ng5 28.Bxf5 d4 29.Qxd4 Rxe2 30.Bxc8 Raa2 31.Nb2 Rxe5 32.Rbd1 Re2 33.Rd2 Rxd2 34.Qxd2 Ne4 35.Qf4 Rxb2 36.Be6+! Black Resigned.**

POSITION 103



(Another example of the modern treatment against the Stonewall; from the game O'Kelly-Donner, Amsterdam 1950).

**1.d4 e6 2.Nf3 f5 3.g3 Nf6 4.Bg2 Be7 5.O-O O-O 6.b3 d5 7.Bb2 Qe8 8.Ne5 Nbd7 9.Nd3 Bd6 10.c4 c6 11.Nd2**

The difference between this and the previous example is that White's c-pawn is protected by the b-pawn, and the QB stands at b2 instead of on the diagonal to h6. At b2 the Bishop has some useful functions; in particular, it makes e5 more difficult for Black.

**11...b6**

The advance 11...e5 would only weaken the d-pawn, so Black develops his QB in fianchetto.

**12.Rc1!**

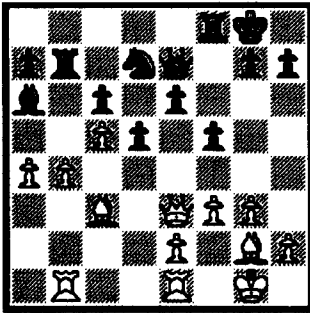
The right tactics. White's attack must come ultimately on the Queenside, and he will therefore need to keep the option of c5. On the other hand, 12.f3 would be less effective, because Black could very well reply with 12...e5 - the

weakness of his d-pawn being offset by that of White's e-pawn.

12...Ne4 13.Nf3 Bb7 14.Nfe5 Rc8 15.f3 Nef6 16.c5! bxc5 17.Nxc5 Nxc5 18.dxc5 Bc7 19.Qd4

White's aim is accomplished. He has established a Queenside pawn majority and has blocked – at least for the time being – Black's preponderance in the center.

19...Ba6 20.Rfe1 Bb5 21.a4 Ba6 22.Bc3 Rb8 23.Rb1 Rb7 24.b4 Bxe5 25.Qxe5 Qe7 26.Qe3 Nd7?



Preparing to push the e-pawn; but 26...Bc4 was correct.

27.14?

Deep in his positional plans, White here overlooks the win of a piece by 27.b5! cxb5 28.c6.

27...Bc4 28.Bd4 a6 29.Rec1 Rfb8 30.Rxc4

An exchange sacrifice which puts new life into the Queenside attack.

30...dxc4 31.Qc3 e5

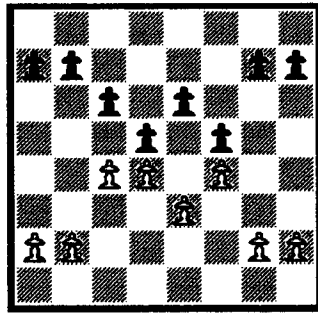
This brings the game to an untimely end. The correct move was 31...Nf6, with the following possibilities: 1) 32.Bxc6 Nd5! 33.Qxc4 (or 33.Bxd5 exd5) Rxb4 34.Rxb4 Rxb4. 2) 32.Qxc4 Nd5 33.Qxa6 Rxb4 34.Rxb4 Rxb4 35.e3 Qb7. 3) 32.Be5 Nd5! 4) 32.Bxf6! Qxf6 33.Qxc4 Rc7 34.e3 Ra8 35.Rd1. This last variation seems to give White the most winning chances.

32.fxe5 Qe6 33.e4! a5

Or 33...fxe4 34.Bf1 Kh8 35.Bxc4 Qg4 36.Rf1 (36...Rxb4 37.e6! Nf8 38.Qxb4!).

34.b5 cxb5 35.exf5 Qxf5 36.Rf1! Qe6 37.Bxb7 Rxb7 38.Qf3 Rb8 39.c6 b4 40.cxd7 Qxd7 41.Bc5 h6 42.Bd6 Black Resigned.

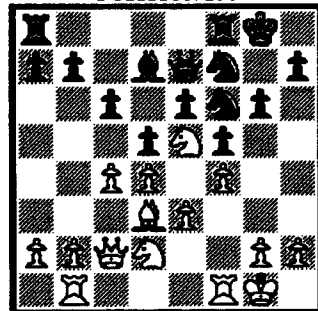
B. STONEWALL FORMATIONS



(ii) The Anti-Stonewall.

Since the main purpose of setting up the Stonewall is to use the firm center as the basis of a Kingside attack by ...g5, one obvious reaction for White is to forestall this move by playing f4 himself. Experience has shown that against the Anti-Stonewall thus formed Black can indeed make little headway, and that in consequence White gets a freer hand on the Queenside. This is confirmed by the following examples, and we come to the conclusion that Black is well advised not to go in for the Stonewall if White still has the option of meeting it with an Anti-Stonewall.

POSITION 104



*(Closing of the Kingside and breakthrough on the Queenside; from the game Capablanca-Treybal, Karlsbad 1929).*

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 e6 4.Bg5 Be7  
5.Bxe7 Qxe7 6.Nbd2 f5 7.e3 Nd7  
8.Bd3 Nh6 9.O-O O-O 10.Qc2 g6  
11.Rab1 Nf6 12.Ne5 Nf7 13.f4 Bd7

The exchange of Bishops at move 5 has enabled White to set up a favorable Anti-Stonewall, since Black has the bad Bishop. Black's 13th move is a new sin of omission, allowing White to retain a Knight on e5. Black should have played 13...Nxe5.

14.Ndf3 Rfd8 15.b4 Be8 16.Rfc1 a6  
17.Qf2 Nxe5 18.Nxe5 Nd7 19.Nf3!

In accordance with the well-known rule that the side having the greater freedom should seek to keep the pieces on the board.

19...Rdc8 20.c5 Nf6 21.a4 Ng4 22.Qe1  
Nh6 23.h3 Nf7 24.g4!

Not primarily to start operations on this wing, but rather to deprive Black of his last counterchance, ...g5. Besides all this, it must be considered a point in White's favor that Black will now be hampered in all his movements by having to reckon all the time with the possibility that White may yet open an offensive on the Kingside.

24...Bd7 25.Rc2 Kh8 26.Rg2 Rg8  
27.g5 Qd8 28.h4 Kg7 29.h5 Rh8  
30.Rh2 Qc7 31.Qc3 Qd8 32.Kf2 Qc7  
33.Rbh1 Rg8 34.Qa1 Rb8 35.Qa3  
Rbg8 36.b5!

White has retained twofold possibilities, and has kept Black's forces so tied down on the Kingside that he is now in a position to open a file on the far side without Black being able to contest it.

36...axb5 37.h6+!

At last he closes the Kingside and transfers the whole course of the battle definitely to the other flank.

37...Kf8 38.axb5 Ke7 39.b6 Qb8  
40.Ra1 Rc8

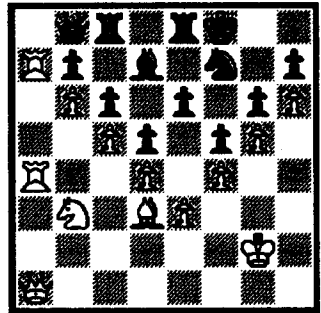
If 40...Qa8 41.Qc3 and 42.Ra7.

41.Qb4 Rhd8 42.Ra7 Kf8 43.Rh1 Be8  
44.Rha1 Kg8 45.R1a4 Kf8 46.Qa3

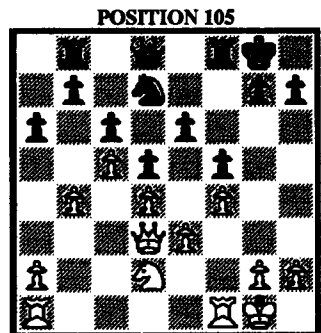
Black is completely encircled, and it remains for White to conquer b7. He is anxious to rule out any possibility of Black breaking the cordon on the Kingside by a Knight sacrifice. The way he chooses is not the shortest, but he has ample time.

46...Kg8 47.Kg3 Bd7 48.Kh4 Kh8  
49.Qa1 Kg8 50.Kg3 Kf8 51.Kg2! Be8  
52.Nd2 Bd7 53.Nb3 Re8

Or 53...Be8 54.Na5 Rd7 55.Nxb7  
Rxb7 56.Ra8, winning the Queen.



54.Na5 Nd8 55.Ba6! bxa6 56.Rxd7  
Re7 57.Rxd8+ Rxd8 58.Nxc6 Black  
Resigned.



(The same theme as No. 104; from the game Petrov-Grau, Buenos Aires 1939).

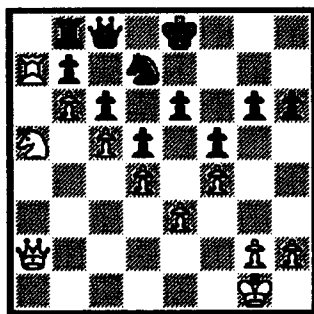
1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Bf5 3.c4 e6 4.Qb3 Nc6  
5.Bd2 Rb8 6.e3 a6 7.Bd3 Bxd3 8.Qxd3  
Nb4 9.Bxb4 Bxb4+ 10.Nbd2 Nf6  
11.O-O O-O 12.c5 Bxd2 13.Nxd2 c6  
14.f4 Nd7 15.b4 f5?

Although Black's situation is better than was the case in No.104 (the exchange of his bad Bishop for White's good one is a point in his favor), he is still in an unenviable position, as the following play will confirm:

16.a4 Qc7 17.Rfc1 Ra8 18.b5 Rfb8  
19.Nf3 axb5 20.axb5 Qd8 21.b6 Rxa1  
22.Rxa1 h6

To keep White busy with ...g5. On 22...Ra8 there follows 23.Ra7! Rxa7? 24.bxa7 Qa8 25.Qa3 Kf7 26.Qa5, threatening 27.Qc7.

23.Ra7 Kf7 24.Qe2 g6 25.Nd2 Nf6  
26.Nb3 Ke8 27.Na5 Qc8 28.Qa2 Nd7



Everything is guarded, and it looks as though Black can hold the game. He is terribly cramped, but the lack of space is less serious than was the case in the Capablanca vs. Treybal game, simply because more pieces have been exchanged. Nevertheless, White has virtually a forced win.

29.Qf2 Nf6 30.Qh4 Ng8

The only way to keep out the White Queen.

31.g4 Kf7

If 31...fxg4 32.Qxg4 Kf7, there comes the pawn sacrifice, 33.f5!, after which the White Queen forces an entry in every variation.

32.g5!

An uncommonly fine move which, by controlling f6, cuts off the Knight from d7.

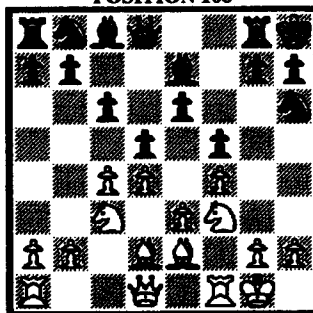
32...h5 33.Qf2 Ke8 34.Qa2 Ne7

Or 34...Kd8 35.Nxb7+ Rxb7 36.Ra8 Rb8 37.Rxb8 Qxb8 38.Qa7 Kc8 39.Qf7, and wins.

35.Nxb7 Rxb7 36.Rxb7 Black Resigned.

If 36...Qxb7 37.Qa7 settles it.

POSITION 106



(Black plays for counterattack by ...g5; from the game Kramer-Koomen, Soest 1941).

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 c6 4.e3 f5 5.f4  
Nh6 6.Nf3 Be7 7.Be2 O-O 8.O-O Kh8  
9.Bd2 Rg8

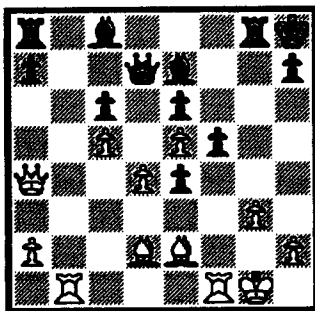
In contrast with both of the foregoing examples Black here goes straight for his target, and already threatens ...g5. The fact that White nevertheless keeps the upper hand speaks well for the effectiveness of the Anti-Stonewall.



**10.g3!**

So as to be able to answer 10...g5 with 11.fxg5 Bxg5 12.Nxg5 Qxg5 13.e4!

10...Nf7 11.c5 g5 12.b4 Nd7 13.b5 gxh4  
14.exf4 Nf6 15.bxc6 bxc6 16.Qa4 Qc7  
17.Rab1 Ne4 18.Nxe4 dxe4 19.Ne5  
Nxe5 20.fxe5 Qd7

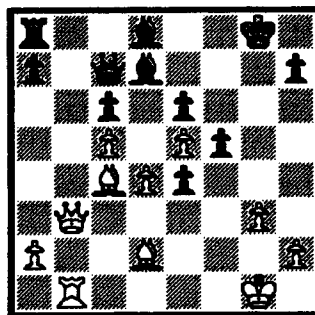


Black's action on the g-file is halted, while White's on the Queenside has achieved important results – an open b-file, and weak pawns at a7, c6 and e6.

21.Be3 Qc7 22.Rb3 Bd7 23.Rfb1 Rgb8  
24.Bd2 Bd8

The threat was 25.Qa5 Qc8 26.Ba6.

25.Ba6 Rxb3 26.Qxb3 Kg8 27.Bc4



Not 27.Qb7 Qxb7 28.Rxb7 Bc8!  
27...Kf7 28.Rf1!

This sudden switch to the Kingside leads to a rapidly decisive attack – a typical occurrence in this sort of position.

28...Ke7 29.Qe3 Be8 30.Qh6 Bf7

Or 30...Bg6 31.Qg7+ Ke8 32.Qg8+.

31.Qxh7 Kf8

There was a threat of 32.Rxf5.

32.Qh8+ Ke7 33.Qg7 Ke8 34.Bh6 Be7  
35.Qh8+ Black Resigned.

**B. STONEWALL FORMATIONS**

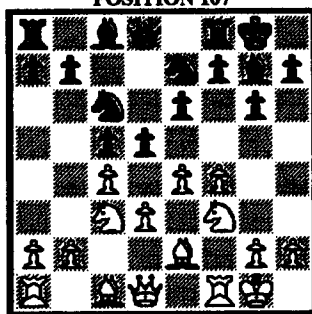
(iii) The Pseudo-Stonewall

The White pawn formation c4-d3-e4 forms a sort of Stonewall moved one file towards the Queenside. This Pseudo-Stonewall has no great practical value, since Black can usually enforce the advance ...d5 without trouble, gaining access to the weak d4 square.

If both players adopt the same formation, we have what might be called a Double-Pseudo-Stonewall, and the play will now hinge on the formation of a phalanx by f4 and g4 or ...f5 and ...g5 for Black.

We give one example of each type:

POSITION 107



*(The weakness of the Pseudo-Stonewall; from the game Carls-Euwe, Goteborg 1920).*

1.c4 e6 2.Nc3 c5 3.e4 Nc6 4.f4 Nge7  
5.Nf3 d5 6.d3 g6 7.Be2 Bg7 8.O-O O-O

White's great trouble in the Pseudo-Stonewall is the weak square at d4. Black can take advantage of this by opening the d-file and basing his whole strategy on this one weakness.

In the diagramed position the Black Bishop on g7 is particularly powerful.

**9.Bd2**

If 9.Be3 of course 9...d4.

**9...Nd4 10.Be1 b6 11.Bh4**

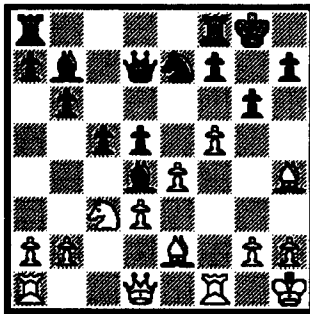
Intending a Kingside attack, but it soon becomes clear that Black has nothing to fear, thanks largely to his centralized Knight on d4. 11.Bf2 would have been a little better.

**11...Bb7 12.cxd5 exd5 13.Nxd4**

If 13.Nxd5 Bxd5 14.exd5, there follows 14...Ndf5, quickly recovering the pawn, with an excellent position.

**13...Bxd4+ 14.Kh1 Qd7 15.f5?**

The long-prepared attack; but it really has no chance of achieving anything, since Black's pieces are posted so much better than White's. Relatively best was 15.Bxe7 Qxe7 16.Nxd5 Bxd5 17.exd5.



**15...dxe4 16.dxe4 gxf5 17.exf5**

Or 17.Bxe7 Qxe7 18.exf5 Rad8 19.Qe1 Rfe8, with clear advantage to Black.

**17...Nxf5 18.Bf2**

Not 18.Bg4? Nxh4 19.Bxd7 Bxg2#.

**18...Kh8 19.Bg4 Rg8 20.Bxd4+ cxd4 21.Rxf5**

Forced, for 21.Bxf5 fails against 21...Bxg2+ 22.Kg1 Bc6+ 23.Kf2 Qxf5+.

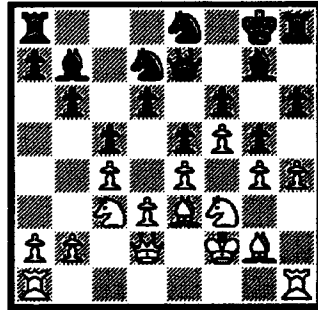
**21...Rxxg4 22.Qxxg4 Rg8 23.Qxxg8+**

White has no choice; if 23.Rg5, then 23...Qxxg4 is conclusive.

**23...Kxxg8 24.Rg5+ Kf8 25.Nd1 Qe7 White Resigned.**

If 26.h4 Qe1+ 27.Kh2 Qxxh4+ and 28...Qxxg5.

POSITION 108



(Opening a file in the Double Pseudo-Stonewall; from the game Lundin-Mross, Munich 1941).

**1.Nf3 Nf6 2.g3 b6 3.Bg2 Bb7 4.O-O g6 5.d3 Bg7 6.e4 d6 7.c4 O-O 8.Nc3 Nbd7 9.Nh4 e5 10.f4 h6 11.Nf3 Kh7 12.f5 g5 13.g4! Ne8 14.Kf2 Rh8 15.Rh1 Kg8 16.h4 f6 17.Be3 Qe7 18.Qd2 c5**

To open the h-file at this moment would obviously lead only to the exchange of a pair of Rooks. Some preparation is necessary, and White's first step must evidently be to double the Rooks.

**19.Rh3 Nc7 20.Rah1 Kf7 21.Ne2!**

This Knight is bound for h5, there to reinforce the action of the Rooks.

**21...a5**

Black deprives himself of his only chance of counterplay (...b5). Better 21...a6.

**22.Ng3 Rag8 23.Nh5 Bc6 24.Ke1**

Another idea would have been 24.R1h2, followed by bringing the Queen to h1.

**24...Qd8**

Better was 24...Bf8. The sacrifice on f6 would then be not quite clear: 25.Nxf6 Nxf6 26.hxg5 Nxg4, etc.

**25.Nxg7 Kxg7 26.hxg5 hxg5 27.Nxg5!**

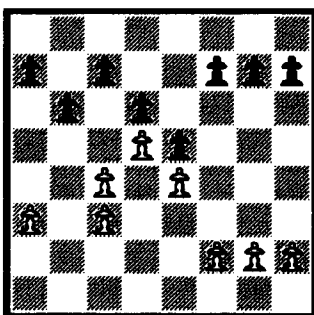
A decisive piece sacrifice which enables White to advance his Kingside pawns.

**27...fxg5 28.Bxg5 Nf6 29.Bh6+! Kf7 30.g5 Nce8**

On 30...Ng4 there would follow 31.g6+ Ke7 (31...Ke8 32.Bg5) 32.Bg5+ Nf6 33. Rh7+ and wins.

**31.gxf6 Qxf6 32.Bf3 Ba4 33.Rh5! Qe7 34.Bg5 Qf8 35.Rh7+ Black Resigned.**

### C. THE WYVILL FORMATION



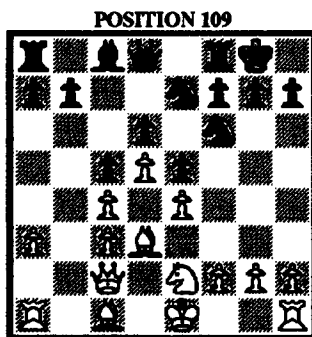
As far as is known, Wyvill was the first player who systematically handled the pawn position diagrammed here (see, for instance, the St. Petersburg, 1914, tournament book, Game 24, note on 8...d5). We name the position after him.

A comparison with the oblique formations of 9 A shows White clearly worse off in the present case. The doubled pawn is a permanent handicap which means that - apart from tactical pleasantries which may arise from c5 - his Queenside policy must be a waiting one. His chances lie exclusively in opening the f-file by f4, and if Black castles on this side White

may get good play. Black should preferably castle on the Queenside, where his King will be safer, notwithstanding White's open b-file. This file is not very useful so long as the Black b-pawn is solidly buttressed.

Piece exchanges will generally favor Black, for the weakness of the White doubled pawns will be more serious in the endgame.

One important point is the position of Black's c-pawn. If it advances to the fourth rank, Black's chances of making anything of the enemy's pawn weakness are reduced. It is best left unmoved, so that Black has c5 available for a Knight, and so that at some chosen moment Black can open the c-file by ...c6.



(How Black should not treat the Wyvill formation; from the game Capablanca-Ragozin, Moscow 1935).

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.a3 Bxc3+ 5.bxc3 d6 6.Qc2 O-O 7.e4 e5 8.Bd3 c5 9.Ne2 Nc6 10.d5 Ne7?**

Here we see the Wyvill formation in its worst light for Black, who 1) Has blocked c5 so that his Knights cannot use it. 2) Has castled Kingside. 3) Cannot now put pressure on the c-pawn, as he could have done by 10...Na5, followed by ...b6 and ...Ba6.

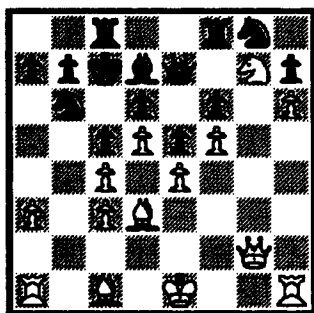
**11.f3 Nd7 12.h4 Nb6 13.g4 f6**

Permits White to open the g-file, but also enables his own King to escape to the Queenside.

14.Ng3 Kf7 15.g5 Ng8 16.f4 Ke8 17.f5 Qe7 18.Qg2

Now that Black is deprived of all chance of counterplay, White can prepare the decisive action at leisure. It is clear that the g-file will be the scene of the final showdown.

18...Kd8 19.Nh5 Kc7 20.gxf6 gxf6 21.Ng7 Bd7 22.h5 Rac8 23.h6



The support point at g7 is of the utmost importance. White will be able to switch the Knight at will to e6 and replace it with a Rook.

23...Kb8 24.Rg1 Rf7 25.Rb1 Qf8 26.Be2 Ka8 27.Bh5 Re7 28.Qa2 Qd8 29.Bd2 Na4

Again we are witnessing combined operations by White on both flanks.

30.Qb3 Nb6

If 30...b6, or 30...Rb8 31.Ne6 will be very strong.

31.a4! Rb8

After 31...Bxa4 32.Qa2 Bd7 33.Ne6 Bxe6 34.dxe6, Black has no defense against 35.Bf7 (34...Rec7 35.Rxb6).

32.a5 Nc8 33.Qa2 Qf8 34.Be3 b6 35.a6 Qd8 36.Kd2 Qf8 37.Rb2 Qd8 38.Qb1 b5

An attempt to get some counterplay even now. If he continues to do

nothing, White will penetrate via the g-file.

39.cxb5 Nb6 40.Qa2 c4 41.Qa3 Qc7 42.Kc1 Rc8 43.Rbg2 Qb8 44.Qb4 Rd8 45.Rg3 Rf8 46.Ne6

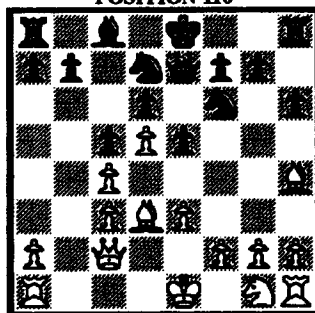
At last!

46...Bxe6

Forced, for 46...Rc8 47.Bxb6 axb6 48.a7 would cost a piece.

47.dxe6 Rc7 48.Qxd6 Ne7 49.Rd1 Black Resigned.

POSITION 110



(Black sets up a defensive position on the Kingside; from the game Keres-O'Kelly, Budapest 1952).

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.Bg5 h6 5.Bh4 c5 6.d5 Bxc3+ 7.bxc3 e5 8.e3 d6 9.Qc2 Nbd7 10.Bd3 Qe7

A comparison with Position 109 shows that Black, as before, is unfavorably placed. Again he has occupied c5 with a pawn, and again the White c-pawn cannot be put under pressure. One thing, however, is different: Black has not castled, and this is a very important point, as we shall see.

11.f3

If 11.e4 at once, Black gets counterplay by 11...g5 12.Bg3 Nh5! (heading for the f4-square!).

11...g5 12.Bg3 Nh5 13.Ne2 Ndf6

Not 13...Nxc3 14.Nxc3, and White controls the important traffic junctions at e4 and f5.

**14.Rb1 Ng7 15.Bf2**

Clearing a route for the Knight to go to f5.

**15...h5**

This crosses White's plan, for now if 16.Ng3 there would follow 16...h4 17.Nf5 Nxf5 18.Bxf5 Bxf5 19.Qxf5 Nh5! and 20...Ng7, and f5 is under Black's control. The disadvantage of the text line, however, is that Black weakens his grip on f4.

**16.h4! g4 17.e4 Ng8**

It is self-evident that 17...gxf3 18.gxf3, opening the g-file, would be playing White's game for him.

**18.Be3 f6 19.f4!**

Before embarking on this advance, White induced the weakening move, 18...f6. This is a very important point, for otherwise Black, by taking the pawn, would have obtained for himself a valuable square at e5. Under the altered circumstances if now 19...exf4, then 20.Nxf4, and the invasion points which White gets at e6 and g6 are even more valuable.

**19...Qc7 20.O-O Ke7 21.Rf2 Ne8 22.Rbf1 Bd7 23.Qd1 b6 24.Ng3**

White cannot make his bad Bishop active by 24.Bc2, because of 24...a6 25.Ba4 b5!

**24...a5**

Now, if 24...a6, White has a strong reply in 25.Rb2 b5 26.Qb1!

**25.Rb2 Ra6 26.Bc2 a4**

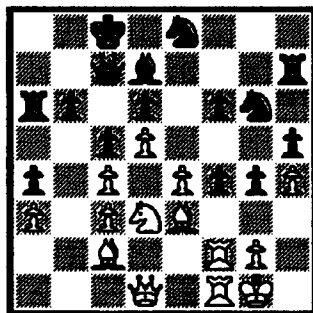
Black prefers not to have the Bishops exchanged by 27.Ba4.

**27.a3 Kd8 28.Rb1 Rh7 29.Qd2 Kc8 30.Rbd1 Qb7 31.Ne2 Ne7**

It will become apparent that this Knight cannot be spared from g8;

Black's best policy was to continue playing a waiting game.

**32.Nc1 Ng6 33.Nd3 Qc7 34.Qf2 Kd8 35.Rd2 Kc8 36.Qe1 Kd8 37.Rdf2 Kc8 38.Qd1 exf4**



If 38...Kd8 39.Nb2 Qa7 40.fxe5 Nxe5 41.Rxf6!, somewhat as actually occurs.

**39.Nxf4 Ne5**

After 39...Nxf4 40.Rxf4 Rf7 White also breaks open the position: 41.R4f2 Rf8 42.e5! dxe5 43.Bg6, followed by 44.Bxe8 and 45.Rxf6.

**40.Ne6! Qa7**

If 40...Bxe6 41.dxe6 Qc6 42.Rxf6!, etc.

**41.Rxf6 Nxf6 42.Rxf6 b5**

If 42...Nxc4 43.Bc1, threatening 44.e5.

**43.cxb5?**

There was a much stronger move in 43.Qf1!, with the powerful threat, 44.Rf8+ Kb7 45.Qf5 Re7 46.Bg5. Now Black can almost restore the balance, though he will still not have a path of roses.

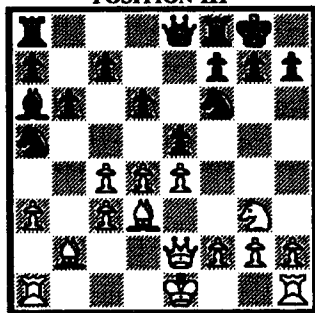
**43...Bxb5 44.Rf8+ Kb7 45.Qe1 Rb6 46.Qg3 Bd3 47.Nd8+ Kc7 48.Bxd3 Nxd3 49.Nc6 Rxc6! 50.dxc6 Kxc6 51.Bf4 c4+ 52.Kh2 Rf7!**

Planning to meet 53.Rxf7 Qxf7 54.Bxd6, with 54...Qf2!

**53.Rc8+ Kd7 54.Be3 Qa6 55.Rb8 Qc6 56.Rb6 Qc7 57.Rb5 Qc6 58.Rb6 Qc7 59.Bd4 Re7? (59...Nc5 was correct) 60.Rb5 Rxe4 61.Rxh5 Kc6 62.Rg5**

**Qd7 63.Rg6 Rf4 64.Qe3 Qd8 65.g3 Rf2+ 66.Kg1 Qf8 67.Qe4+ Kc7 68.Rg7+ Rf7 69.Qxg4 Kb8 70.Rg8 Black Resigned.**

POSITION 111



*(Black provokes d5 without playing ...c5; from the game Kramer-Euwe, Baarn 1949).*

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e3 O-O 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 d6 7.Bd3 e5 8.Ne2 b6 9.Ng3 Nc6 10.Bb2 Ba6 11.e4 Qe8 12.Qe2 Na5**

Master play has few examples of the Wyvill formation with Black's c-pawn unmoved. The reason is obvious: the advance of Black's c-pawn is usually the only way of forcing White to push his d-pawn on to d5. Only under very exceptional circumstances will he do it voluntarily.

**13.a4?**

An instructive mistake, after which Black can force White's d5. The correct line was 13.Nf1!, followed by Nd2 or Ne3. With his c-pawn thus secured, White could have set about preparing Kingside operations by f4.

**13...Qe6! 14.d5 Qg4 15.f3 Qh4 16.O-O Nh5!**

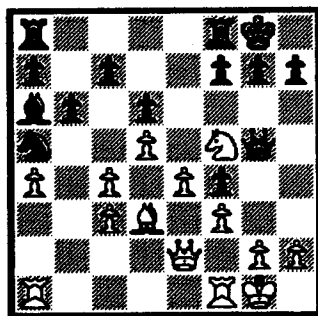
Even now White's best chance would be to force f4, and Black's maneuvers are directed against this possibility.

**17.Nf5 Qg5 18.Bc1**

Not 18.h4 Qd8! 19.g3, because of 19...g6.

**18...Nf4 19.Bxf4 exf4**

Strategically Black's superiority seems overwhelming. He has support points at a5, c5 and e5, and White has the bad Bishop. Even so, the realization of these advantages is far from simple.



**20.Nd4 Rf6 21.Nb5**

There might have been more chance of counterplay in 21.Rfb1 and 22.Nb3.

**21...Bxb5 22.cxb5**

The characteristic doubled pawn of the Wyvill formation has gone, but White's strategic problems have not gone with it. We have now reached the type of oblique position discussed in Section A of this chapter. The game finished as follows:

**22...Qf6 23.Ra3 Re5 24.Qd2 Rh5 25.g3 Rg5 26.Kf2! Qh6 27.Kg2! Rh5**

Not 27...fxg3?, because of 28.h4!, and suddenly White has good play, since 28...Qxh4 29.Rh1 would cost the Queen.

**28.Rh1 g5 29.g4 Rh4 30.h3 Re8 31.Bf1 Qf6 32.Kf2**

Better would have been Qd4.

**32...h5 33.Rg1 hxg4 34.Rxg4 Rxg4 35.hxg4 Qh6 36.Kg1 Kg7 37.Qh2 Qg6 38.Ra2 Rh8 39.Qf2 Qh6 40.Qh2 Qf6 41.Qc2 Nb7 42.Qd2 Qh6 43.Qd4+ f6 44.Bg2 Nc5 45.Kf1 Qh2 46.a5?**

With 46.Qg1, White could still have held out.

**46...bxa5 47.Qg1**

Not 47.Rxa5 Nb3 48.Qxa7 Nd2+!, and wins.

**47...Qg3 48.Qf2 a4 49.Qxg3 fxc3 50.Ke2 Rh2 51.Ke3 Nb3 52.f4 Nc1 53.Ra1**

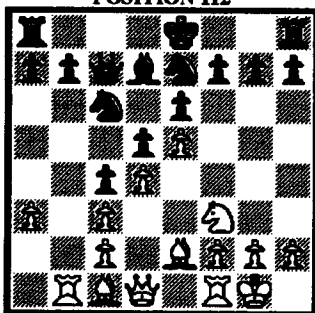
Or 53.Rc2 gxf4+ 54.Kxf4 Nd3+ 55.Kxg3 Ne1, and wins.

**53...Rxc2 54.Rxc1 Rb2, and White Resigned.**

#### D. VARIOUS CLOSED FORMATIONS

There are a few more closed formations, less important than those we have already handled, and we deal with two of them. First we take the formation: White c2-c3-d4-e5 against Black c4-d5-e6, which is rather reminiscent of the Wyvill formation; and then a single example of a fixed flank formation.

POSITION 112



*(A familiar pawn formation arising from the French Defense; from the game Milner-Barry—Botvinnik, Hastings 1934-5).*

**1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 Ne7 7.Nf3 Nbc6 8.Be2 Bd7 9.O-O Qc7 10.Rb1 c4**

Instead of 10.Rb1, White should have played 10.a4!, with the object of placing his Bishop on a3. With this opportunity neglected, his prospects

of counterplay are not bright. The b-file offers little, and the f-file still less, as Black's next move shows.

**11.Ne1 O-O-O!**

Just as in the Wyvill Formation, Black brings his King into safety on the Queenside. The consequence is that the advance of White's f-pawn and g-pawn (necessary for getting the f-file open) would now merely result in a serious weakening of the White King's position.

**12.f4 f6 13.Nf3 Nf5 14.Qe1**

White lets slip his last chance of counterplay – namely, 14.g4. Admittedly, it would be a risky advance in the present circumstances, but since a waiting policy will result in certain defeat, the risk had to be faced. The continuation might have been 14.g4 Nfe7 15.Be3 h5 16.h3 hxg4 17.hxg3 Rh6 18.Kg2 Rdh8 19.Qd2 and 20.Rh1.

**14...h5 15.Nh4 Nce7 16.Nxf5 Nxf5 17.Qf2 Be8 18.Bd2 Qa5 19.Rb4**

The passive 19.Ra1 would enable Black to strengthen his game decisively by 19...Qa4 20.Ra2 Bg6, etc.

**19...Qxa3!**

Exactly calculated. Black is not afraid of the attack which follows, since with the center firmly closed only a fraction of the White army can participate.

**20.Rfb1 Qa6 21.Qe1**

21.Rxb7 would also be inadequate: 21...Qxb7 22.Rxb7 Kxb7, and Black's passed a-pawn will be a decisive factor.

**21...b6 22.Ra1 Qb7 23.Bf3 Qe7**

There were two threats: not only 24.Rxc4+ but also 24.exf6 gxf6 25.Qxe6+.

**24.Ra6.**

Rather better than this would have been 24.Rb2, followed by 25.Rba2 and then Bc1-a3.

**24...Bc6 25.Qa1 Kb8 26.g3 Qb7 27.Ra2 Rc8 28.Qf1 Qf7 29.Rb1 Kb7 30.Qf2 Ra8 31.Bc1 Rhb8**

With the threat of 32...g5 33.exf6 g4! etc.

**32.h4 Rh8 33.Qg2?**

33.Kh2 would have been better, for Black now gets a direct attack against the two Kingside pawns.

**33...Qe7 34.Kh2**

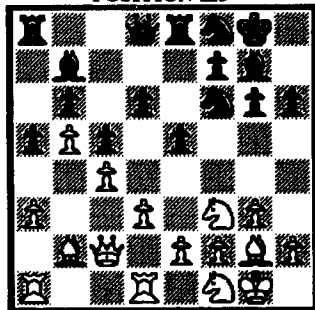
Or 34.Bd2 Rh6 35.Be1 Rg8 and ...g5.

**34...Rh6! 35.Bd2 Rg6 36.Rg1 Rxcg3**

Black now won easily:

**37.Qxcg3 Nxcg3 38.Rxcg3 Qf7 39.Ra1 Rg8 40.Rag1 fxe5 41.fxe5 Qf5 42.Bd1 Ba4 43.Rf3 Qh7 44.Rf7+ Ka6 45.Rg5 Bxc2 46.Bf3 Qd3 47.Rg2 Qf1 48.Bxh5 Bf5 49.Bg4 Rh8 50.h5 Qd3 51.Be2 Qh3+ 52.Kg1 Rxh5 53.Bxh5 Qxh5 54.Rfxg7 Be4 White Resigned.**

POSITION 113



(Fixed pawns on the flank; from the game Reti-Capablanca, New York, 1924).

**1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.b4 Bg7 4.Bb2 O-O 5.g3 b6 6.Bg2 Bb7 7.O-O d6 8.d3 Nbd7 9.Nbd2 e5 10.Qc2 Re8 11.Rfd1 a5 12.a3 h6 13.Nf1 c5 14.b5 Nf8 (No.113) 15.e3**

White is going to play d4 to open a file.

**15...Qc7 16.d4 Be4! 17.Qc3**

As Alekhine pointed out in the tournament book, 17.Qc1 here is more precise.

**17...exd4 18.exd4 N6d7?**

This leads to the exchange of the Black KB, after which the pawn formation g6-h6 will become a serious weakness. The correct play was 18...Ne6 19.dxc5 dxc5 20.Qc1.

**19.Qd2 cxd4 20.Bxd4 Qxc4 21.Bxg7 Kxg7 22.Qb2+! Kg8 23.Rxd6**

Threatening 24.N3d2 Qc2 25.Qxc2 Bxc2 26.Bxa8.

**23...Qc5 24.Rad1 Ra7 25.Ne3 Qh5 26.Nd4!**

Alekhine also pointed out the surprising possibility, 26.R1d5!? Bxd5 27.g4 Bxf3 28.gxh5 Bxh5 29.Bc6. The move played, however, is even stronger.

**26...Bxg2 27.Kxg2 Qe5?**

27...Rxe3 28.fxe3 Qxd1 is defeated by 29.Ne6 but with 27...Ne5! Black could still have given a good account of himself.

**28.Nc4 Qc5 29.Nc6 Rc7 30.Ne3 Ne5 31.R1d5! Black Resigned.**

If 31...Nc4 32.Rxc5 Nxb2 33.Rc2 Na4 34.Nd5 is decisive.



## CHAPTER 10

# OPEN FORMATIONS

In describing closed positions we used the words: no exchanging, but much interlocking of the pawns. Now we come to precisely the opposite case: plenty of exchanging, and no interlocking of the pawns.

As more and more pawns are exchanged the game becomes less and less strategic in character. In this chapter, therefore, we shall handle only positions in which not more than two pawns are missing from the central zone.

We have already seen in Chapter 6 that the complete clearance of the central pawns leaves a featureless game, at least in the matter of pawn characteristics. For instance, in Position 42 (arising from 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6 4.Nc3 Nxe4 5.Nxe4 d5 6.Bd3 dxe4 7.Bxe4 Bd6 8.d4 Nxd4 9.Nxd4 exd4 10.Qxd4 0-0) there is no positive character about the remaining pawns, and the open center files make further simplification probable.

### A. The Half Center

- i) Ruy Lopez Formation. White e4; Black d6.
- ii) French Formation. White d4; Black e6.
- iii) Caro-Kann Formation. White d4; Black c6-e7 or c6-e6.

### B. The Sicilian Formation

White e4; Black d6-e6 or d6-e7.

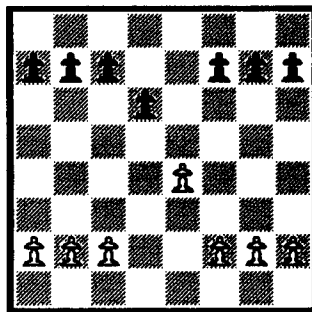
### C. The Rival Majorities

- i) With an open file between.
- ii) With no open file between.

## A. THE HALF CENTER

- i) The Ruy Lopez Formation.

It is certainly no accident that this formation rarely occurs in modern



tournament play. White's superior mobility gives him lasting positional dominance, and Black's only chances involve first conducting a successful defense, and then taking advantage of any weaknesses that may have arisen in the enemy ranks. Such famous masters of the art of defense as Steinitz and Lasker scored many beautiful wins in this way, but nowadays we are inclined to take a more practical line. Why complicate matters when there are simpler alternatives?

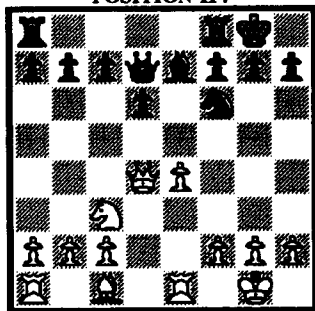
The position of White's e-pawn gives him possession of four ranks to Black's three. White can post his Rooks effectively on e1 and d1, and there are plenty of good squares for his minor pieces. It is a different story with Black, whose pieces are continually getting in one another's way. It follows automatically that Black plays for exchange of pieces – a familiar recipe which applies to all cramped positions.

White's strategy is also clearly indicated:

- 1) Avoid piece exchanges.
- 2) As occasion offers, concentrate pieces against the opponent's castled

position, or seize a favorable moment for the break by e5.

POSITION 114



(Conversion of mobility into attack; from the game *Tarrasch-Schlechter, Leipzig 1894*).

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 d6 4.d4 Bd7 5.Nc3 Nf6 6.O-O Be7 7.Re1 Nxd4 8.Nxd4 exd4 9.Bxd7+ Qxd7 10.Qxd4 O-O**

The fact that two pairs of minor pieces have gone eases Black's task a little, but it remains arduous enough, as will appear. Concerning the opening moves, we observe that Black would have done better by 9...Nxd7 10.Qxd4 Bf6. In this way he could have gotten rid of another pair of pieces. Just how important this is we shall see in the course of the game.

**11.b3! Rfe8**

If 11...Ng4 there follows 12.Nd5 Bf6 13.Nxf6+ Nxf6 14.Bb2, and, notwithstanding the further simplification, White's pressure has grown considerably.

**12.Bb2 Bf8 13.Rad1 Qc6**

White was threatening e5.

**14.Rd3 Re6**

Not only to put pressure on the White e-pawn, but also a precaution against being taken unawares presently by the Queen sacrifice Qxf6.

**15.Rde3 Rae8 16.h3**

A typical move in this sort of position. White denies the Black pieces the use of g4.

**16...Qb6 17.Qd3 c6 18.Na4 Qc7 19.c4**

Giving Black no chance to play the freeing move, ...d5.

**19...Nd7?**

According to Dr. Tarrasch, whose notes we are largely following, Black should have sought further simplification by ...g6 and ...Bg7.

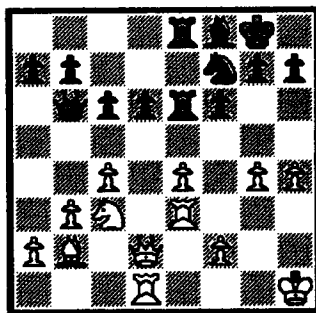
**20.Kh1 f6 21.Qd2 Ne5 22.Nc3 Nf7**

Otherwise White brings his Knight via e2 and d4 to f5. With ...Nf7 Black prevents the move 23.Ne2 (23...Rxe4).

**23.g4**

Preventing ...f5.

**23...Qa5 24.Rd1 Qb6 25.h4**



25.Ne2 would have been met by 25...Ng5!

**25...Ne5 26.Rg3 Nf7 27.f3 Nh8**

Now Black can no longer hold off the Knight maneuver.

**28.Ne2 Qc7 29.Rdg1**

There was a new possibility of Black playing ...d5 – for instance, in reply to 29.Nd4, since the Rook on g3 was undefended. Notice how White is continuously on the *qui vive* to deprive Black of every possible

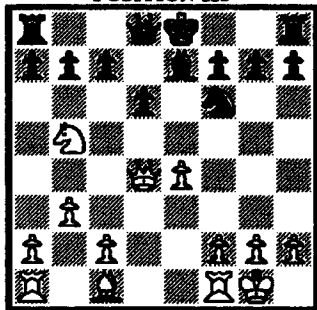
counterchance. Indeed, this is more than half of his task.

**29...Qf7 30.Nd4 R6e7 31.g5!**

Now suddenly all the White pieces are poised for attack on g7, and the rest virtually plays itself.

**31...fxg5 32.Rxg5 g6 33.Nf5 Re5 34.f4! Rxf5 35.exf5 Bg7 36.fxg6 Black Resigned.**

POSITION 115



(A timely exchange; from the game Lasker-Capablanca, New York 1924).

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 d6 4.d4 Bd7 5.Nc3 Nf6 6.O-O exd4 7.Nxd4 Be7 8.b3 Nxd4 9.Qxd4 Bxb5 10.Nxb5 (No.115) Nd7!**

Black hits the nail on the head. He is going to play ...Bf6 and force further simplification.

**11.Ba3**

If 11.Qc4, the answer would be 11...c6 12.Nd4 0-0, threatening 13...d5 14.exd5 Nb6, with complete freedom.

**11...a6**

Not 11...Bf6 12.Qc4 Bxa1 13.Nxc7+.

**12.Nc3 Bf6 13.Qe3 O-O 14.Rad1 Bxc3!**

Just in time, before White plays Nd5.

**15.Qxc3 Re8 16.Rfe1 Rc8 17.Qh3**

Nor would there be anything in 17.Bb2 Qg5! 18.f4 Qg4 19.Rd3 f6, in fact, this line gives White a new weakness on e4.

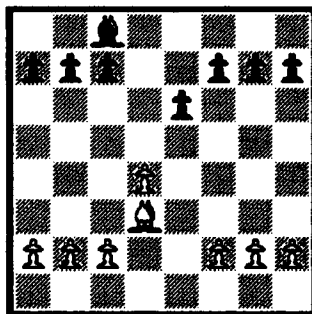
**17...Ne5 18.Bb2 Qg5**

Now 19.Re3 would simply be answered by 19...Qg4. Black's troubles are over, and his remaining pieces can move freely.

**19.Qg3 Qxg3 20.hxg3 f6 21.f3 Kf7 22.g4 h6 23.Re2 Nc6 24.Kf2 Re7 25.Bc3 a5 26.Rd5 b6 27.a4 Re6 28.Rd1 Rce8 29.Red2 Ke7 30.Ke3 Kd7 Draw.**

## A. THE HALF CENTER

### (ii) The French Formation



This formation occurs frequently. The great difference between it and the Lopez formation just examined is that ...c5 will be much easier for Black to force than was the corresponding ...f5 in the previous position. Only if White can prevent Black's ...c5 will he have anything comparable with the Lopez Formation.

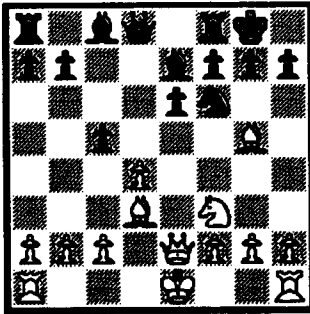
Nevertheless, this French Formation is also to be reckoned good for White, who normally has the good Bishop, in addition to superior mobility. Black has difficulty in developing his QB. The best method of getting it into play is *via* b7; but the move ...b6 will involve a weakening (usually only temporary) of c6, and this explains why ...b6 and ...Bb7 are usually preceded by ...c6.

White's main chances are based on the occupation of e5 with a Knight, and this can frequently lead to a sharp

attack on the enemy King, especially if he is castled Kingside.

Even if Black succeeds in making the freeing advance ...c5, it must not be supposed that his difficulties are over; for whether White exchanges the pawns or allows Black to do so, it is White who remains with the Queenside pawn majority.

POSITION 116



(Treatment of the French Formation when Black plays ...c5; from the game Euwe-Landau, Match 1939).

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nd7 5.Nf3 Ngf6 6.Nxf6+ Nxf6 7.Bd3 Be7 8.Qe2 O-O 9.Bg5 c5

Notice first of all that the characteristic move ...b6, would not have done here, because of 10.Bxf6 Bxf6 11.Qe4.

10.dxc5 Qa5+

Black could also have played 10...Bxc5 11.0-0 Be7 12.Rd1 Qc7.

11.c3 Qxc5 12.O-O Rd8

Still Black cannot develop his QB: 1) 12...b6? 13.Bxf6 Bxf6 14.Qe4, and wins. 2) 12...Bd7 13.Bxf6 Bxf6 14.Bxh7+ Kxh7 15.Qd3+, winning a pawn. Both these lines are typical of this kind of position.

13.Ne5

Again preventing ...Bd7, which would now fail against 14.Bxf6 Bxf6

15.Bxh7+ Kxh7 16.Qh5+ Kg8 17.Qxf7+ Kh8 18.Nxd7.

13...Rxd3?

He should have played 13...h6 14.Bh4 Nd7, with good prospects of gradually consolidating his game.

14.b4! Qd5 15.c4 Qe4 16.Qxe4 Nxe4 17.Bxe7 Rd2 18.Rad1!

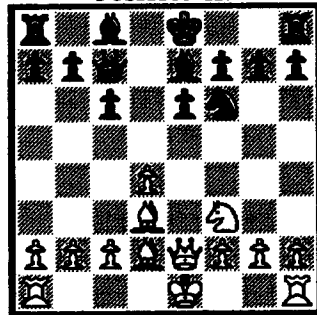
Gaining complete control of the open d-file.

18...f6 19.Rxd2 Nxd2 20.Rd1 fxe5 21.Rxd2

In spite of the Bishops on opposite colors, White's advantages (d-file, Queenside majority, better pawn structure) are decisive. We give the technical phase in brief:

21...Kf7 22.Bd6 Bd7 23.Bxe5 Be8 24.Rd4 g6 25.h4 Rc8 26.g4 h5 27.f3 a6 28.Kf2 Bc6 29.Ke3 Rg8 30.Kf4 Ke7 31.g5 Rc8 32.Bd6+ Kf7 33.Ke5 Kg7 34.Rf4 Re8 35.Rf6 b5 36.c5 Bd5 37.a3 Rd8 38.Rxe6! Bxe6 39.Kxe6 Ra8 40.c6 Re8+ 41.Kd7 Kf7 42.c7 Black Resigned.

POSITION 117



(Treatment of the French Formation when Black omits ...c5; from the game Prins-Guimard, Dubrovnik 1950).

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nd7 5.Nf3 Ngf6 6.Nxf6+ Nxf6 7.Be3 Be7 8.Bd3 c6 9.Qe2 Qa5+ 10.Bd2 Qc7

White is trying to hold back Black's c-pawn until he can get a Rook on the d-file. In the foregoing game we saw how important this point is.

### 11.O-O-O Nd5

Here ...c5 was Black's right move.

### 12.Ne5 Bf6?

Giving White the opportunity for f4-f5. 12...Nb4 was much stronger.

### 13.f4 b5 14.Rhf1

Threatening 15.Nxc6, which was not immediately possible, because of 14...Nxf4!

### 14...a6 15.Be4 Ra7 16.Rf3 Bd7

If 16...0-0?, White wins outright with 17.Bxh7+ Kxh7 18.Rh3+ Kg8 19.Qh5.

### 17.Rdf1 b4

Hoping for 18.Bxd5 cxd5 19.Bxb4? Bb5.

### 18.Qc4 a5 19.Nxd7 Qxd7 20.f5!

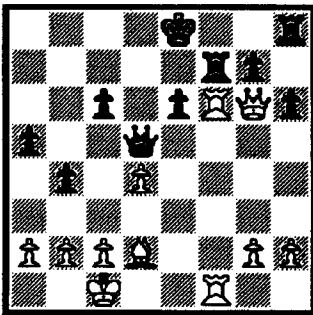
This opening of a center file, in conjunction with the Black King's position, must lead to a direct attack.

### 20...Qd6

Or 20...0-0 21.Qd3 h6 22.g4. Or 20...Nb6 21.Qxc6 Bxd4 22.fxe6 fxe6 23.Rd3, etc.

### 21.fxe6 fxe6 22.Qd3 h6 23.Bxd5 Qxd5 24.Qg6+ Rf7 25.Rxf6!

Pretty and conclusive.



### 25...gxf6 26.Rxf6 Rhf8

Other possibilities might run: 1) 26...Qd7 27.Rxe6+, and wins. 2) 26...Rhh7 27.Bxh6! Qxd4 28.Rf1, and wins.

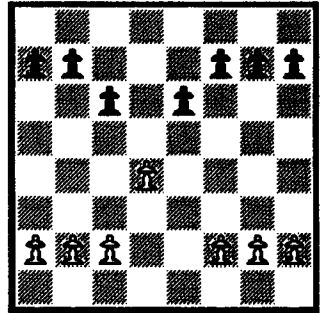
### 27.Bxh6 Qxd4 28.Rf1 Kd8 29.Rxf7!

Not 29.Rd1? Rf1!, and Black wins.

### 29...Qg1+ 30.Kd2 Qd4+ 31.Ke2 Qc4+ 32.Ke3 Qc5+ 33.Kf3 Qd5+ 34.Kg3 Qe5+ 35.Bf4 Qe1+ 36.Kh3 Rh8+ 37.Rh7 Black Resigned.

## A. THE HALF CENTER

### (iii) The Caro-Kann Formation.

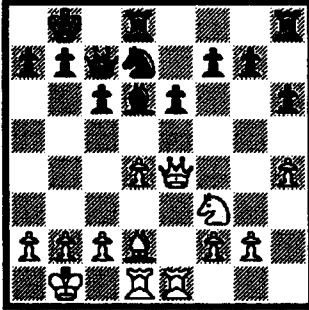


Since it makes very little difference whether the Black c-pawn is on its second or third rank, this formation is virtually identical with the French Formation just discussed. The opening moves which lead up to the two positions, however, are quite different. In the Caro-Kann, Black's QB manages as a rule to get outside the pawn chain, and it follows that Black's difficulties in the Caro-Kann Formation are noticeably less than in the French.

(White's chances in the Caro-Kann Formation; from the game Maroczy-Keres, Zandvoort 1936).

### 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Bf5 5.Ng3 Bg6 6.h4 h6 7.Nf3 Nd7 8.Bd3 Bxd3 9.Qxd3 e6 10.Bd2 Ngf6

POSITION 118



11.O-O-O Qc7 12.Rhe1 O-O-O 13.Kb1  
Bd6 14.Ne4 Nxe4 15.Qxe4 Kb8  
(No.118) 16.c4 c5

Just as in the French Formation, this counterthrust with the c-pawn is Black's best chance.

17.Bc3 Nf6 18.Qe2 cxd4 19.Nxd4 a6  
20.Nf3

White's aim is to keep e5 under pressure, and thus prevent Black's central pawn majority from rolling forward.

20...Ka8 21.Ne5 Rhf8

Black is in for a laborious defense.

22.g4! Ng8!

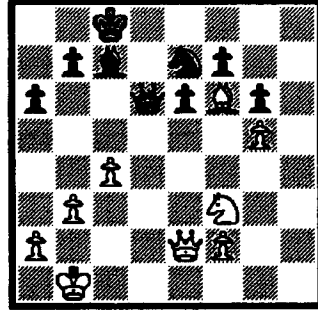
If now 23.g5 Black has a very good reply in 23...hxg5 24.hxg5 Ne7 and 25...Nf5.

23.Nf3 g6 24.b3 Qe7 25.Rd3 Bc7  
26.Red1 Rxd3 27.Rxd3 Rd8

Following the well-known rule that the side with the less freedom should seek exchanges. Notwithstanding the thorough-going simplification, Black still cannot achieve full equality.

28.Qd2 Kb8 29.g5 Kc8 30.Rxd8+  
Qxd8 31.Qe2 hxg5 32.hxg5 Ne7  
33.Bf6 Qd6?

Losing a pawn at once. Either 33...Qe8 or 33...Qd7 would have done. White would then have had to try to advance his Queenside majority.

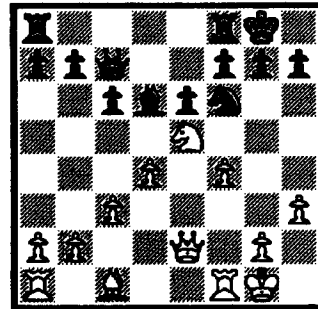


34.Ne5 Qc5 35.Nxf7 Qf5+ 36.Qc2 Ng8  
37.Qxf5 exf5 38.Nh8!

Winning a second pawn. The game continued:

38...Nxf6 39.gxf6 Kd7 40.Nxg6 Ke6  
41.Ne7! Bd6 42.Nd5 Ke5 43.Kc2 Ke4  
44.f4 a5 45.f7 a4 46.bxa4 Ba3 47.Kc3  
Bd6 48.a5 Bf8 49.Kb3 Bd6 50.Ka4  
Kd4 51.Kb5 Black Resigned.

POSITION 119



(Black's counterchances with the Caro-Kann Formation; from the game H. Steiner-Flohr, Moscow 1946).

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4  
Nd7 5.Nf3 Ngf6 6.Bd3 Nxe4 7.Bxe4  
Nf6 8.Bd3 Bg4 9.c3 e6 10.h3 Bh5  
11.Be2 Bd6 12.Ne5 Bxe2 13.Qxe2  
Qc7 14.f4 O-O 15.O-O

White has lost several tempi in the opening (6.Bd3?), but the chances are

still about equal.

**15...c5 16.dxc5 Bxc5+ 17.Be3 Rad8  
18.Rae1**

This is too optimistic: apparently White is hoping for a Kingside attack. 18.Rad1 was the move.

**18...Nd7? 19.Bxc5 Qxc5+ 20.Kh2**

It will be seen later that the King would have been better placed at h1.

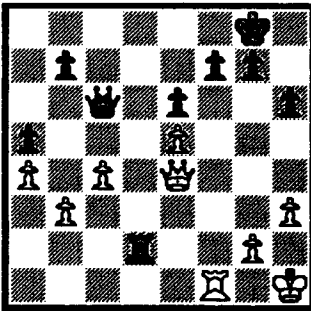
**20...Nxe5 21.fxe5**

If 21.Qxe5 Rd5 22.Qe2 Rfd8 23.Rd1 Qd6, and Black controls the open d-file.

**21...Rd5 22.c4 Rd4 23.b3 Rfd8 24.Qe3  
Qc7 25.Kh1**

See note to White's 20th move.

**25...a5 26.Qf3 h6 27.Re4 Rxe4  
28.Qxe4 Rd2 29.a4 Qc6!**



Black is progressing slowly but surely. This move leaves White the unpleasant choice between putting up with the pressure on his g-pawn or going into a very unfavorable Rook ending.

**30.Qg4 Rd3 31.Qh5 Rxb3! 32.Qxf7+  
Kh7 33.Kh2**

Black threatened 33...Rxb3+.

**33...Qxc4 34.Rf6**

After 34.Rf5 Flohr gives 34...Qh4!  
35.Qxe6 Qg3+ 36.Kg1 Rb1+ 37.Rf1  
Qe3+.

**34...Qd3 35.Rf3 Qd5 36.Rxb3**

36.Rf5 is still insufficient: 36...Qd2!  
37.Qxe6 Rb2.

**36...Qxb3**

The rest is only technique:

**37.Qd7 Qc4 38.Qd6** (better is  
38.Qxb7) **Kg6 39.Kg1 Qd5 40.Qc7  
Qd4+ 41.Kh1 Qxa4 42.Qxb7 Qa1+  
43.Kh2 Qxe5+ White Resigned.**

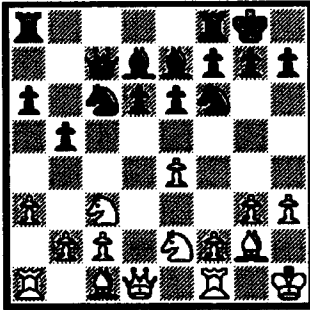
## B. THE SICILIAN FORMATION

The characteristic feature of the Sicilian Formation is the exchange of Black's c-pawn for White's d-pawn, in consequence of which Black has a pawn preponderance in the center. The broad strategy for the respective sides is therefore for White to press against the Black center pawns, and for Black to work for the advance ...d5. White can generally hold up this advance quite easily by occupying the half-open d-file with one or more of the major pieces; but Black also has real chances on the Queenside, based on his initiative in the half-open c-file. Black's center pawns play a noteworthy defensive role in the Sicilian, denying White any support points in the central region and compelling him to resort to other methods for his Kingside attack – usually a pawn storm.

The Sicilian produces two main types of pawn position, which correspond with the two methods of developing the Black KB. The position with ...e6 and ...Be7 we shall call the Paulsen Type; the position with ...g6 and ...Bg7 is known as the Dragon Type. This latter is the sharpest form of the Sicilian. On the one hand, White often gets possession of d5, and in conjunction with this Black's ...g6 must be considered a weakening, improving the prospects of White's Kingside attack; on the other hand, the Bishop on g7 is a powerful reinforcement of Black's Queenside

attack. We illustrate both types with some examples.

POSITION 120



(White's chances against the Paulsen set-up; from the game Tolush-Kotov, Moscow 1945).

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6  
5.Nc3 d6 6.g3 Nc6 7.Bg2 Bd7 8.Nde2  
a6 9.O-O b5 10.a3 Qc7 11.h3 Be7  
12.Kh1 O-O

This pawn position occurs frequently, with various differences in the placing of the pieces. The present example is known in the books as the Scheveningen Variation, and Paulsen's name is reserved for the form with Black's QN developed on d7. We shall not bother about these distinctions here, as our concern is with the pawn skeleton, which is the same in both cases. Variations are possible in White's position too. Here his KB stands on g2, discouraging Black from playing ...d5; but the same effect could be obtained by Be2, f4 and Bf3.

13.g4

The Kingside attack begins. Notice, however, that the majority of Black pawns in the center is held immobile by the placing of the White pieces.

13...Kh8

So as to meet g5 with ...Ng8 and then open a counterattack by ...f6 or ...f5. Another plan - and a more logical one

- would be 13...Rfd8, withdrawing the Knight to e8. On d8 the Rook would be better placed for future operations in the center.

14.Ng3 b4 15.axb4 Nxb4 16.g5 Ng8  
17.f4 Bc6?

This is too slow. Black could have gotten good counterplay by the pawn sacrifice 17...d5! 18.exd5 exd5 19.Nxd5 Nxd5 20.Qxd5 Bb5, the advance of White's Kingside pawns having left his King none too safe.

18.Nce2 Bb5 19.Bd2 d5 20.Bc3 dxe4  
21.Nh5 f6 22.Nxg7!!

With this pretty sacrifice White makes a breach in the Black lines.

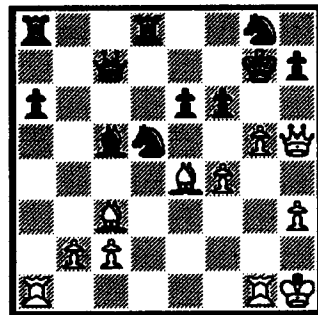
22...Bxe2

Immediate acceptance by 22...Kxg7 23.Nd4 Bc4 24.Bxe4 Kh8 25.Qh5 is even worse.

23.Qxe2 Kxg7 24.Bxe4 Nd5 25.Qh5  
Rfd8

Or 25...Rf7 26.g6! hxg6 27.Qxg6+ Kf8  
28.Rg1.

26.Rg1 Bc5



On 26...Nxc3 there follows 27.gxf6+ Kxf6 28.Rg6+! and wins.

27.gxf6+ Kf8 28.Rxg8+! Kxg8  
29.Bxh7+ Kf8

29...Qxh7 30.f7+! costs the Queen.

30.Qg6 Nxf6



There is no other way of preventing Qg8#, for 30...Qf7 fails against 31.Qh6+ Ke8 32.Bg6.

**31.Qxf6+ Qf7 32.Qh6+ Ke7 33.Qg5+ Kd7**

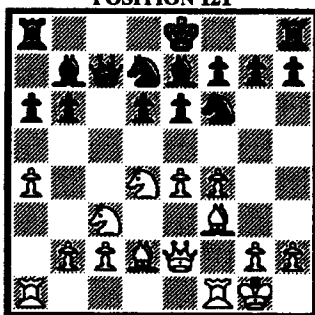
Or 33...Kd6 34.Rd1+ Kc6 35.Be4+, and wins.

**34.Qxc5 Qxh7 35.Rd1+ Ke8 36.Qc6+ Kf8 37.Bb4+ Kf7 38.Qc7+ Kg6 39.f5+**

The finishing touch in an attack conducted in masterly style by Tolush.

**39...Kh6 40.Qf4+ Kg7 41.Qg5+ Black Resigned.**

POSITION 121



(Black's chances with the Paulsen Formation; from the game Cortlever-Stoltz, Munich 1941).

**1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.Be2 d6 4.d4 cxd4 5.Nxd4 Nf6 6.Nc3 a6 7.O-O Qc7 8.a4 b6 9.f4 Bb7 10.Bf3 Nbd7 11.Qe2 Be7 12.Bd2 (No.121) Rc8**

Black has already taken precautions against g4, which he would meet with 13...Qc5! 14.Qf2 d5.

**13.Rae1 O-O 14.Kh1 Rfe8 15.e5!?**

Black must always be prepared for this advance in the Sicilian. Very often, it gives White a strong Kingside attack, but in the present case Black disposes of sufficient defensive resources.

**15...Bxf3 16.Rxf3 dxe5 17.fxe5 Ng4 18.Bf4**

This leaves White entirely on the defensive. He could have kept the initiative by the exchange sacrifice, 18.Rxf7 Kxf7 19.Qxg4, e.g. 19...Nf8 20.Bh6! or 19...Bf8 20.Nf3, etc.

**18...Qc4 19.Rd3 Nc5! 20.b3 Qb4 21.Na2 Qa3 22.Nc1?**

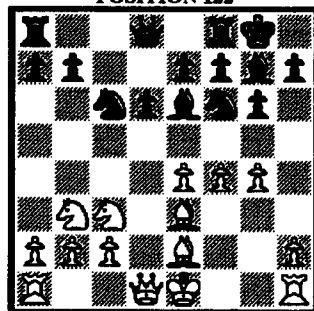
The idea is that after 22...Nxd3 23.Nxd3, there will be a chance of winning the Queen by 24.Bc1, 25.Bb2, and 26.Ra1. The strongest line was 22.Rg3 Qxa2 23.Qxg4 g6 24.h4, with counterplay for White.

**22...f5! 23.exf6**

This makes matters worse. He could have troubled Black more by 23.h3 Nh6 24.Rc3.

**23...Bxf6 24.Rh3 e5 25.Qxg4 exf4 26.Nf3 Rxe1+ 27.Nxe1 Qxc1 28.Qxc8+ Kf7 White Resigned.**

POSITION 122



(White's chances against the Dragon; from the game Foltys-Eliskases, Podebrady 1936).

**1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 d6 6.Be2 g6 7.Be3 Bg7 8.Nb3 Be6 9.f4 O-O 10.g4!?** (No.122) **Na5?**

In the Dragon Variation Black must react very sharply to a flank attack. Half measures are useless, for White's assault is considerably fiercer than

against the Paulsen set-up. The reason is that the move ...g6 involves a slight weakening, enabling White to open the h-file by h4-h5. The proper reaction is an immediate counter in the center. The game Alekhine-Botvinnik, Nottingham 1936, went: 10...d5! 11.f5 (if 11.e5, then 11...d4! 12.Nxd4 Nxd4 13.Bxd4 Nxd4!) 11...Bc8 12.exd5 Nb4 13.d6 Qxd6 14.Bc5 Qf4! 15.Rf1 Qxh2 16.Bxb4 Nxd4! 17.Bxg4 Qg3+, with perpetual check.

**11.g5 Ne8 12.Bd4 Rc8 13.h4 Nc4 14.Bxc4 Rxc4 15.Qd3 Rc8 16.O-O-O Qd7 17.Rd2 Bg4 18.Nd5**

The d5-square is always an important outpost for White in this variation.

**18...b6 19.f5!**

The storm breaks. If 19...gxf5 20.exf5 Bxf5, there would follow 21.Qxf5! Qxf5 22.Nxe7+.

**19...e6 20.Bxg7 Kxg7 21.f6+ Kh8 22.Ne7 Rd8 23.Nd4**

Threatening to win by 24.Ndc6, and 25.Ne5.

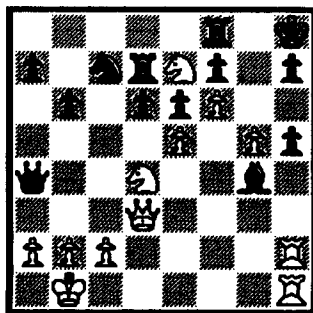
**23...Qa4 24.Kb1 Nc7 25.h5!**

The h-file is broken open by main force.

**25...gxh5 26.Rdh2 Rd7**

After 26...Qa5 the game finishes very prettily: 27.e5! Qxe5 28.Qxh7+! Kxh7 29.Rxh5+ Bxh5 30.Rxh5#.

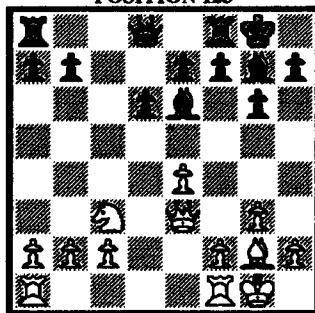
**27.e5!**



Again threatening 28.Qxh7+!

**27...Rxe7 28.Rxh5! Bxh5 29.Rxh5 Black Resigned.**

POSITION 123



(Black's chances in the Dragon Variation; from the game Evans-Reshevsky, Havana 1952).

**1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 g6 6.g3 Nc6 7.Bg2 Nxd4! 8.Qxd4 Bg7 9.Be3 O-O 10.Qd2 Ng4 11.O-O Nxe3 12.Qxe3 Be6**

As usual, the exchange of two pairs of minor pieces benefits the side with the less available space. Black now has no fear of any immediate Kingside attack, and can set about realizing his plans on the other wing.

**13.Nd5 a5!**

The beginning of a Queenside attack which will make full use of the Black Bishop at g7.

**14.c3 Rb8 15.Rad1**

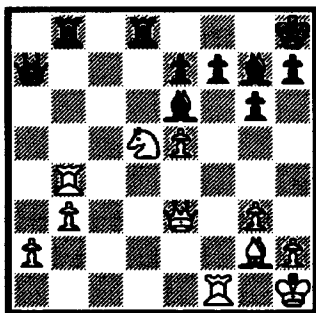
At least White could have delayed the coming assault by 15.Nb6.

**15...b5 16.f4 b4 17.cxb4 axb4 18.e5**

Closing the dangerous diagonal, and threatening to saddle Black with a weak pawn by 19.exd6.

**18...Kh8! 19.Kh1 Qd7 20.b3 Rfd8 21.Rd4 dxe5 22.fxe5 Qa7 23.Rxb4!**

Based on the interpolation (after 23...Qxe3) of 24.Rxb8!



### 23...Qxa2 24.Rxb8

24.Ra4 was also worth considering. Kmoch then gives the continuation, 24...Qxb3 25.Qxb3 Rxb3 26.Nxe7. Then if 26...Bxe5? 27.Nc6.

### 24...Rxb8 25.Nxe7 Rxb3 26.Qd4 Bf8 27.Qh4

There was an immediate draw to be had by 27.Qd8 Kg7 28.Nf5+ Bxf5 29.Rxf5, etc.

### 27...Rb1 28.Qf6+ Bg7 29.Qf3 Rxf1+ 30.Qxf1 Bxe5

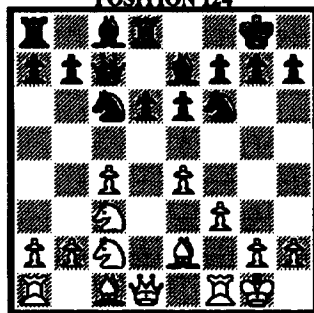
Black's attack has won a pawn, and this, added to the enormous power of his two Bishops, is bound to be decisive. The final technical phase was full of interest.

31.Nc6 Bc3 32.h3 Kg7 33.Qd3 Bf6 34.Kh2 Bc4 35.Qf3 Qc2 36.Nb4 Qd2 37.Nd5 Bd4 38.h4 Qe1 39.Nf4 Bg1+ 40.Kh3 Bb5 41.Qd5 Qe8! 42.g4 h5! 43.Nxh5+ gxh5 44.Qg5+ Kf8 45.Qh6+ Ke7 46.Qxh5 Qb8 47.Qg5+ f6 48.Qg7+ Ke6 49.g5 Qh2+ 50.Kg4 Be2+ 51.Bf3 Qg2+ White Resigned.

*(The great significance of c4 for White; from the game Euwe-Winter, Holland-England match, Amsterdam 1937).*

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.f3 Nc6 6.c4! e6 7.Nc3 Be7 8.Nc2 O-O 9.Be2 Qc7 10.O-O Rd8

POSITION 124



In the Sicilian the question whether White can play c4 or not is vital. From the preceding examples we have seen that Black's chief trump card is his action down the half-open c-file, with the eventual central advance, ...d5, also playing an important part.

If, however, White succeeds in playing c4, both these plans for Black are forestalled. He will not make much headway on the c-file against White's bulwark at c4, while the advance ...d5 will be, to say the least, a difficult matter.

### 11.Bf4 Ne5

Black cannot force ...d5, for if 11...Qb6+ 12.Kh1 d5, there follows 13.cxd5 exd5 14.exd5 Be6 15.Bc4 Qc5 16.Ne3 Nh5 17.Bc7, and now if 17...Rd7 18.Qe1 Rxc7 19.dxe6, and White has won a pawn; while 17...Qxe3 18.Bxd8 Rxd8 19.Qe1 Qxe1 20.Raxe1 Na5 is answered by 21.Bb5 a6 22.Ba4 b5 23.dxe6 bxa4 24.exf7+ Kxf7 25.Re5.

### 12.Nb5

After the timid 12.b3, Black really would have been able to play 12...d5: 13.exd5 exd5 14.Nxd5 Nxd5 15.cxd5 Qc5+ 16.Kh1 Rxd5, and Black has the better of it. In general it is true that whenever Black achieves ...d5 successfully he gets the advantage.

### 12...Qb8

The Queen is safest here. If 12...Qc5+ 13.Be3 Qc6 14.Ncd4 Qd7 15.f4 Nc6

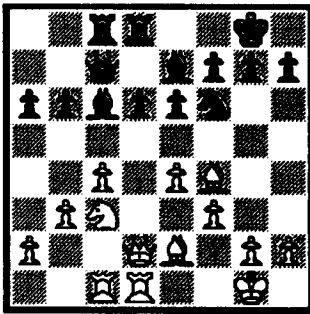
16.Nf3! d5 17.cxd5 exd5 18.e5 Ne4  
19.Rc1, Black has achieved ...d5 it is  
true, but it will do him no good.  
White's Kingside pawn majority  
ensures him a strong attack.

### 13.Qd2 a6

13...d5 still achieves nothing: 14.Qc3  
Nfd7 15.cxd5, and wins.

14.Nc3 Qc7 15.b3 b6 16.Rac1 Bb7  
17.Nd4 Rac8 18.Rfd1 Nc6 19.Nxc6  
Bxc6?

This allows White to transform his  
space advantage into something  
concrete. After the correct move,  
19...Qxc6, White would have trained  
his guns on the b-pawn by 20.Be3,  
followed by Bf1, Qf2 and Na4.



### 20.Nd5! Qb7

The other possibilities were: 1)  
20...exd5 21.cxd5 Qb7 22.dxc6 Rxc6  
23.Bxa6!, and wins. 2) 20...Bxd5  
21.cxd5 Qb7 22.Rxc8 Rxc8 23.dxe6  
fxe6 24.Qb4, with decisive positional  
advantage.

21.Nxe7+ Qxe7 22.Bxd6 Qb7 23.Qe3  
Rd7 24.e5 Ne8 25.Rd4 Rcd8 26.Rcd1  
Qa7 27.Rg4 f5

Not 27...Nxd6 28.exd6 Rxd6, because  
of 29.Rxd6 Rxd6 30.Qe5, and wins.

### 28.Rgd4 b5

This is often Black's best chance  
when White has played c4. Here,  
however, it is far too late.

29.c5 Qb7 30.a4 Ra8 31.Bd3 Bd5?  
32.Bxf5 Black Resigned

## C. RIVAL MAJORITIES

When the material is equal and one  
player has a Queenside majority, the  
opponent must necessarily have a  
Kingside majority. This is what we  
mean by the rival majorities.

This situation can arise from all sorts  
of positions. Anyone who takes the  
trouble to look through all the  
preceding examples will come across  
these rival majorities more than once  
(the last occasion being Position 121,  
after Black's 16th move).

It is not feasible to treat this topic  
systematically; there is so much  
diversity about the forms it may take  
that we should run the risk of not being  
able to see the wood for the trees.

We can lay down one rule for the  
handling of this sort of position: one's  
own majority should be pushed  
forward as quickly as possible, with  
the corollary that the enemy majority  
should be impeded in every possible  
way. Once the hostile majority has  
been blockaded, one is free to  
concentrate everything on the  
advancing of one's own.

In Chapter 11, Section C (Blockaded  
Passed Pawn), we return to one  
important element in the strategy of  
the rival majorities.

Meanwhile, we confine ourselves to  
two illustrative examples – one with  
an open file between the two pawn  
masses, and the other without.

## C. RIVAL MAJORITIES

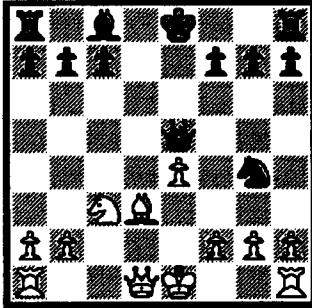
### (i) With Open File Between.

*(The Kingside majority on the attack; from  
the game Alekhine-Marshall, Baden-Baden  
1925).*

1.d4 d5 2.c4 Nf6 3.cxd5 Nxd5 4.e4

**Nf6 5.Bd3 e5 6.dxe5 Ng4 7.Nf3 Nc6  
8.Bg5 Be7 9.Bxe7 Qxe7 10.Nc3  
Ncxe5 11.Nxe5 Qxe5**

POSITION 125



Black's last move was a poor one. He should have played 11...Nxe5 and then, after 12.0-0 0-0 13.Be2, he could have continued with 13...Be6. His Queenside majority would then have been certainly no less strong than White's on the Kingside. After Black's actual move, the White majority can roll forward with the gain of a tempo.

**12.h3 Nf6 13.Qd2! Bd7 14.Qe3!**

Prevents Queenside castling, and at the same time prepares to advance the f-pawn.

**14...Bc6 15.O-O-O O-O 16.f4 Qe6**

If 16...Qa5 17.e5 Nd5 18.Nxd5 Bxd5 19.Bxh7+, followed by 20.Qd3+ and 21.Qxd5 (Alekhine's analysis).

**17.e5 Rfe8**

Otherwise 18.f5.

**18.Rhe1 Rad8 19.f5 Qe7 20.Qg5 Nd5  
21.f6 Qf8 22.Bc4 Nxc3**

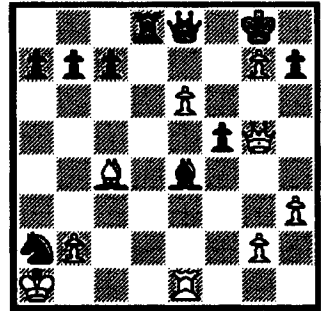
Another forced move. If 22...h6 23.fxg7! wins a piece.

**23.Rxd8 Rxd8 24.fxg7 Nxa2+**

If 24...Qe8 25.Bxf7+! is decisive: 25...Kxf7 26.Rf1+ Ke6 27.Rf6+ Kd5 28.Rf8.

**25.Kb1! Qe8 26.e6! Be4+ 27.Ka1! f5**

Or 27...fxe6 28.Bxe6+ Qxe6 29.Qxd8+ Kxg7 30.Qd4+ and 31.Qxe4.



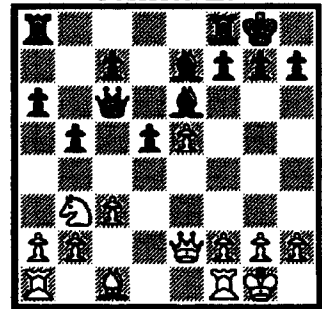
**28.e7+ Rd5 29.Qf6 Qf7 30.e8=Q+**

An appropriate finish to the majority attack. **Black Resigned.**

### C. RIVAL MAJORITIES

(ii) With No Open File between.

POSITION 126



(Both majorities go into action; from the game Botvinnik-Euwe, Leningrad 1934).

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6  
5.O-O Nxe4 6.d4 b5 7.Bb3 d5 8.dxe5  
Be6 9.c3 Be7 10.Nbd2 O-O 11.Qe2  
Nc5 12.Nd4 Nxb3 13.N2xb3 Qd7  
14.Nxc6 Qxc6**

The respective plans are now laid down: White must push his f-pawn, Black his c-pawn.

**15.Be3 Bf5 16.Rfd1 Rfd8 17.f3!**

Before committing himself, White wishes to control d4, and especially c5, in order to cripple the Black

Queenside majority. The direct attempt to prevent Black's ...c5 by 17.Na5 Qg6 18.Nb7 fails against the finesse, 18...d4!, simultaneously threatening 19...dxe3 and 19...Be4. The text move deprives Black of the use of e4 and at the same time prepares the next move, which strengthens the pressure on c5.

**17...Bf8 18.Qf2 a5 19.Rd2?**

He should have played 19.Rac1 to forestall Black's next move.

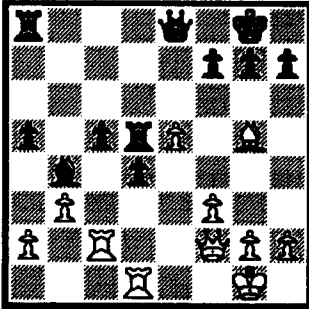
**19...b4**

Thus Black gets his blow in first.

**20.Rc1 Qa4 21.Nd4 Bg6 22.b3**

In this way White avoids losing a pawn, but he has to relax his pressure on c5.

**22...Qe8 23.cxb4 Bxb4 24.Rdd1 c5 25.Nc2 Bxc2 26.Rxc2 d4 27.Bg5 Rd5?**



This is not a good place for the Rook. 27...Rd7 was correct; then, after 28.f4 Qe6 29.Qf3 Qd5, the advantage would be with Black. The move played allows White time to bring his Kingside majority into action.

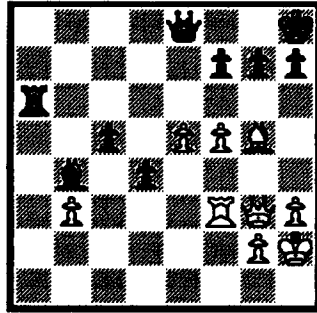
**28.f4 a4 29.Qf3 axb3 30.axb3 Rd7 31.f5**

The consequences of Black's omission at move 27 are now all too clear. The White majority is in powerful action, and Black is hard put to find the right answers on the Kingside.

**31...Rda7 32.Qg3 Ra1 33.Rcc1 Rxc1 34.Rxc1 Kh8 35.Rf1 Ra6**

To aid the threatened flank. The need is urgent, as the following variation shows: 35...Ra7? 36.f6 g6 37.e6!, and wins.

**36.h3 Qa8 37.Kh2 Qe8 38.Rf3**



This is too slow. 38.e6! was a better chance. If then 38...fxe6 39.f6! would follow, so Black would have had to play 38...f6. Also 38.h4, followed by h5, was another good line for White.

**38...Ba5! 39.Bf4 Bc7 40.Rf1 Ra8 41.Re1 Qc6 42.e6**

Certainly not 42.f6, because of 42...gxf6 43.exf6 Rg8, etc.

**42...Bxf4 43.Qxf4 fxe6 44.fxe6**

Or 44.Rxe6 Qb7 45.Qe5 Qb8!

**44...Re8 45.e7 h6 46.Qf5**

Black can just hold the game. If 46.Rf1 Qf6!, or if 46.Qf7 Qd7.

**46...Qd6+ 47.Kh1 Kg8 48.Re6 Qd7 49.Qe5 Draw.**

The continuation might have been: 49...d3 50.Rd6 Qxe7 51.Qxe7 Rxe7 52.Rxd3, etc.

## CHAPTER 11

# HALF-OPEN FORMATIONS

So far we have handled two sorts of positions—closed formations (no exchanging, much interlocking) and open formations (much exchanging, no interlocking). There remains a large group characterized by both exchanging and interlocking of the pawns, and these we shall call the half-open positions. Since it is the presence of fixed pawn formations which gives a position its permanent character, it is evident that the strategic content of the present group will be greater than that of the open positions, but less than that of the closed positions.

There is bound to be some overlapping here with positions already discussed, and with positions which will come up later in the book. In the following outline some cross-references are included:

### A. Half-Open Formations with an Open File

#### (i) Symmetrical Forms

Symmetrical formations have been discussed in Chapter 6. Here we deal only with positions where the open line is not a center file, e.g. the Slav Exchange Variation (1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.cxd5 cxd5).

#### (ii) The Focus Formation.

White: pawns on a2-b2-c3-e4-f2-g2-h2. Black: pawns on c5-d5, etc.

The d5-square is the focus.

#### (iii) Blocked Oblique Formations

The normal oblique formations were discussed in Chapter 9, Section A; the incomplete blocked formations in Chapter 7, Section A. In this latter case the open file was a central one.

There remains for discussion the case of the open c-file (1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5

3.e5 c5 4.c3 cxd4 5.cxd4) or other open files.

### B. Half-Open Formations with No Open File

Here we discuss the kind of position which arises from the Exchange Variations of the Classic Queen's Gambit and the Caro-Kann. The characteristic feature is the half-open file, a theme which is examined in detail in Chapters 12-14.

### C. The Passed Pawn, Protected but Blocked

This occurs in the transition from a half-open position to an open one (see Chapter 10, Section C - The Rival Majorities). The leading pawn of one majority is promoted (or downgraded!) to a protected but blocked passed pawn.

## A. HALF-OPEN FORMATIONS WITH AN OPEN FILE

### (i) Symmetrical Forms

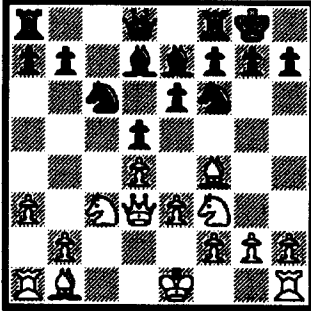
Symmetrical pawn positions with only one open file provide little opportunity for strategic planning. The emphasis is rather on such features as a lead in development, or the possession of two Bishops.

In Chapter 6, Sections B and C, we saw that neither of the symmetrical centers, e-pawn or d-pawn, gave much chance of a real fight. The only open file, which was situated in the center, had a damping effect on the play. In most cases the major pieces disappeared from the board *via* the open file, with a quick draw the most common result.

The symmetrical formation which arises from the Slav Exchange Variation is an exception to this

generalization, as the next two examples show.

POSITION 127



(The bad Bishop inside and outside the pawn chain; from the game Lipnitsky-Smyslov, U.S.S.R. Championship 1950).

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.cxd5 cxd5 5.Nc3 Nc6 6.Bf4 e6 7.e3 Be7 8.Bd3 Nb4? 9.Bb1 O-O 10.a3 Nc6 11.Qd3 Bd7

Black's weak eighth move has allowed White to gain some time in the opening. Moreover, White's QB is developed outside the pawn chain, and so exerts more influence than does his Black counterpart, which is confined within the chain. All this adds up to the chance of a sharp attack by White.

12.h4! Qb6 13.Ne5 Rfd8

14.Nxd7 was threatened.

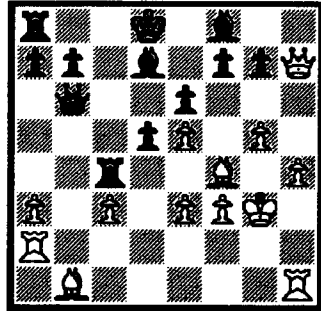
14.Ra2 Kf8?

There was a better defense in 14...Be8 15.g4 g6!, followed by 16...Nxe5 and 17...Ne4. These last two moves are in fact part of the plan Black has in mind, but it soon appears that he could not afford to dispense with ...Be8 and ...g6.

15.g4 Nxe5 16.dxe5 Ne4 17.f3! Nxc3 18.Qxh7 Ke8 19.bxc3 Rdc8 20.Kf2

By protecting the Bishop on b1, this threatens Qxg7.

20...Bf8 21.g5! Rc4 22.Kg3 Kd8



Otherwise the escape route of the Black King will be cut off by 23.g6! fxe6 24.Bg5!

23.Qg8 Kc7 24.Qxf7 Bc5 25.Bd3!

Prettily played. White brings his reserves into action.

25...Rxc3 26.Rb1 Rb3

Compulsory, for if 26...Qa5, White forces the win by 27.Bb5 Rd8 28.Bxd7 Rxd7 29.Rxb7+ Kxb7 30.Qxd7+.

27.Rc1!

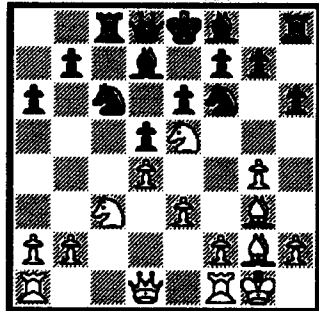
Now 27...Rxd3 is to be met by 28.Rac2.

27...Qa5 28.Rac2 b6 29.Qe7! Rxd3 30.Rxc5+ bxc5 31.Rxc5+ Qxc5 32.Qxc5+ Bc6 33.Qd6+ Kb6 34.a4 Re8 35.g6

White now won without difficulty:

35...a5 36.Bg5 Rc8 37.Bd8+ Kb7 38.Qe7+ Kb8 39.Bxa5 Rb3 40.Bb4 d4 41.Bd6+ Ka8 42.Qxe6 Black Resigned.

POSITION 128





(Black relies on quiet defense; from the game Knoch-Landau, Groningen 1941).

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.cxd5 cxd5 4.Nc3 Nc6 5.Nf3 Nf6 6.Bf4 Bf5 7.e3 a6 8.Ne5 Rc8 9.g4 Bd7 10.Bg2 e6 11.O-O h6 12.Bg3

This position also occurred in the game Alekhine-Euwe, AVRO 1938, but there Black played too sharply with 12...h5?, and White obtained a decisive advantage by 13.Nxd7 Nxd7 14.gxh5 Nf6 15.Bf3.

12...Be7!

This quiet defensive move is an important improvement.

13.f4 Nxe5 14.fxe5 Nh7 15.e4

The best chance, otherwise Black castles, and then plays ...f6 in perfect safety.

15...dxe4 16.Bxe4 Qb6 17.Rf2 Ng5 18.Bg2 Bc6 19.h4

White feels compelled to continue his attack as sharply as possible.

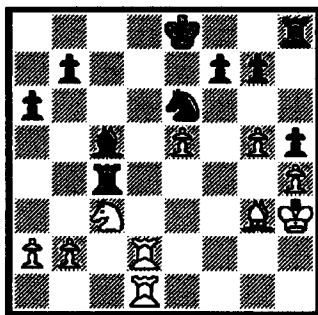
19...Bxg2 20.Kxg2 Qc6+! 21.d5 exd5 22.Qxd5 Ne6 23.Qxc6+?

A serious loss of time. 23.Rd1 was correct, with Ne4 to follow.

23...Rxc6 24.Rd1 Rc4! 25.Kh3 h5!

This forces the following weakening, after which White's Bishop becomes "bad".

26.g5 Bc5 27.Rfd2?



Only after this move does White's disadvantage become really acute. 27.Rf3 was essential.

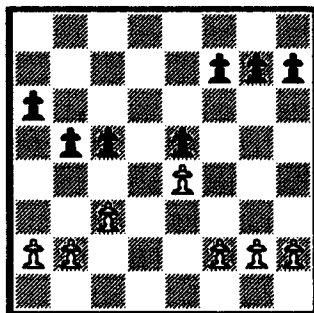
27...Bb4 28.Rd7 Bxc3 29.bxc3 Rxc3 30.Rxb7 O-O 31.Rd2 Rfc8 32.Kg2 R8c4

Black is decidedly better placed for the endgame. His Knight is much stronger than White's bad Bishop, and White has several weak pawns. Black turned his advantage into a win as follows:

33.Rb3 Kh7 34.Rf2 Kg6 35.Rbb2 a5 36.Rb7 Rg4 37.Rf3 Rc2+ 38.Rf2 Nf4+ 39.Kf3 Rc3+ 40.Ke4 Ne6+ White Resigned.

## A. HALF-OPEN FORMATIONS WITH AN OPEN FILE

ii) The Focus Formation.

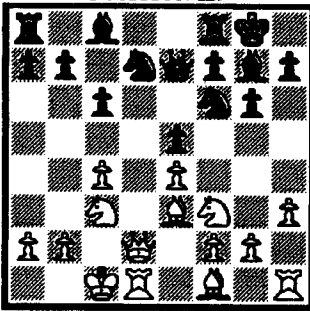


This position, with slight differences in the arrangement of the wing pawns, can arise from various openings, the commonest being the Ruy Lopez (1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Be7 6.Re1 b5 7.Bb3 d6 8.c3 0-0 9.h3 Na5 10.Bc2 c5 11.d4 Qc7 12.dxc5 dxc5) and the King's Indian (1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.Nf3 0-0 6.Be2 Nbd7 7.0-0 e5 8.dxe5 dxe5 9.Qc2 c6).

The essential difference between this and the symmetrical e-pawn center (Chapter 6, Section C) is the position

of the c-pawns. In the e-pawn center they were unmoved, but here White has played c4 or Black ...c5, making a focus of the weakened square d5 for White or d4 for Black. We shall see from the following examples that this plays an important part in dictating the course of the game.

POSITION 129



*(The strategic value of d4; from the game Tarrasch-Euwe, Pistyan 1922).*

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 d6 3.Nf3 Nbd7 4.Nc3 e5  
5.e4 g6 6.Be3 Bg7 7.dxe5 dxe5 8.h3  
c6 9.Qd2 Qe7 10.O-O-O O-O

Although White has taken firm control of the d-file, it is clear that there is nothing to be gained there.

11.Qd6 Qxd6 12.Rxd6 Re8 13.Bg5

A fruitless attempt to tie down the Black pieces.

13...Bf8! 14.Rd2

Not 14.Rxf6? Kg7!

14...Kg7 15.Bd3 Bb4 16.Kc2 Nc5  
17.a3 Bxc3 18.Bxf6+ Kxf6 19.Kxc3  
Rd8 20.Bc2

He cannot very well play 20.Rhd1 because of 20...Rxd3+ 21.Rxd3 Nxe4+ 22.Kc2 Nxf2 23.Rd6+ Ke7 24.R1d2 Ne4.

20...Rxd2 21.Nxd2 Ne6 22.g3

The main threat was 22...Nf4, winning a pawn.

22...a5

Black is in no hurry to occupy d4, but seeks first to cut down White's freedom of movement in every possible way.

23.Nf3 c5!

In order to make sure of this critical square, Black is prepared to weaken his own "focus" on d5, arguing that it would take White at least four moves to occupy it with a Knight.

24.Ba4 Ra6 25.Rd1 Nd4

The goal is achieved.

26.Nxd4?

This gives Black a protected passed pawn as well as a Bishop which is stronger than his White counterpart. But even if White had played the better move, 26.Ng1, he would soon have been in difficulties after Black's continuation ...g5, followed by ...Ke7 and ...Rh6.

26...exd4+ 27.Kd3 Bxh3 28.Bb5

If 28.Rh1 at once, then 28...Bg2 29.Rxh7 Bf1+, and White's c-pawn falls.

28...Rd6 29.Rh1 Bg2 30.Rxh7 Re6  
31.Rh4 g5 32.Rh6+ Ke5 33.f4+

He is bound to lose a pawn.

33...gxf4 34.Rh5+ Kd6 35.gxf4

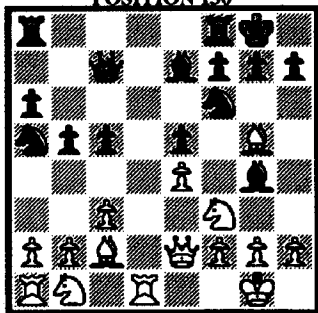
Or 36.Rd5+ Ke7 37.Rd7+ Kf6, winning the e-pawn.

35...Bxe4+ 36.Kd2 Rg6 37.Rh2 Rg2+  
38.Rxg2 Bxg2 39.Ke2 Bc6 White  
Resigned.

*(The tactical significance of the support-point d5; from the game Alekhine-Keres, Salzburg 1942).*

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6  
5.O-O Be7 6.Qe2 b5 7.Bb3 d6 8.c3  
O-O 9.Rd1 Na5 10.Bc2 c5 11.d4 Qc7  
12.Bg5 Bg4 13.dxe5 dxe5

POSITION 130



**14.Nbd2 Rfd8 15.Nf1 Nh5!**

Black looks for counterplay by occupying f4.

**16.h3 Be6**

16...Bxf3 was simpler: 17.Qxf3 Bxg5 18.Qxh5 Qe7. Then, if a Knight appears on e3, aiming for d5, Black takes it off. This line gives about an equal game.

**17.Ne3! f6 18.Nh2!**

A fine interpolation, based on the tactical complications which could arise from Nd5, e.g. 18...Bf7 19.Nd5! Rxd5 20.exd5 fxd5 21.d6 Bxd6 22.Qe4, with the double threat, Qxh7+ and Qxa8+.

**18...g6 19.Bh6 Bf8**

Tactical possibilities are still playing a part, as the following variation demonstrates: 19...Nf4 20.Bxf4 exf4 21.Nd5! Bxd5 22.exd5, with advantage to White, whose passed d-pawn is certainly worth more than Black's doubled f-pawns.

**20.Bxf8 Kxf8 21.g3**

Eliminating for good the possibility of ...Nf4 by Black. Black cannot now reply with 21...Bxh3?, because of 22.Nd5 Qa7 23.g4 Nf4 24.Nxf4 exf4 25.Qf3, winning a piece.

**21...Rxd1+ 22.Bxd1 Rd8 23.a4 Nc4 24.axb5 axb5 25.Nd5!**

White retains the initiative, although

the pawn sacrifice involved in this move is not altogether clear. The consequences of 25...Bxd5 26.exd5 Rxd5 27.b3 Nd6 28.Qe3! Nb7 (pointed out by Fine) are very difficult to judge, but in any case White will get some attack for the pawn.

**25...Qb7 26.b3 Nd6 27.c4 bxc4 28.bxc4 Bxd5 29.exd5**

Just as in the previous game the occupation of the support point has produced a protected passed pawn. Although Black occupies the blockade square in front of this pawn in the best possible way – with a Knight – yet the indirect pressure which emanates from the passed pawn is so great that White is enabled to carry out successful operations in other sectors of the board.

**29...Ng7 30.Ng4 Qe7 31.Bc2 Nge8 32.h4 e4 33.Ne3**

White is working the Knight around to f4 *via* g2.

**33...Qe5?**

This is the move which really spoils Black's game. 33...f5 was correct.

**34.Ra7! Kg8 35.Ng4 Qd4**

35...Qb2 would have been better. Then 36.Nh6+ Kh8! (and not 36...Kf8 37.Qxe4!).

**36.Bxe4!**

Pretty and decisive. 36...Qxe4 37.Nh6+ Kh8! 38.Qxe4 Nxe4 39.Nf7+.

**36...f5 37.Nh6+ Kh8 38.Bc2 Qf6**

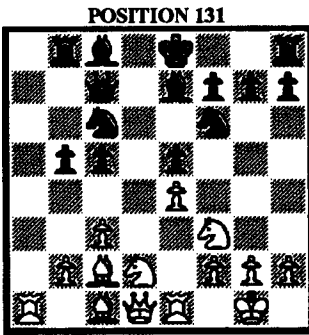
White was threatening 39.Qe7.

**39.Qe6 Qxe6 40.dxe6 Rc8 41.Nf7+ Nxf7 42.exf7 Nd6 43.Bd3 Kg7 44.f8=Q Kxf8 45.Rxh7**

Now White won without much trouble, as follows:

**45...Kg8 46.Rd7 Ne8 47.h5! gxh5 48.Bxf5 Ra8 49.Be6+ Kh8 50.Rd5 Nf6 51.Rxc5 Kg7 52.Kg2 Ra2 53.Bf5 Ra3**

54.Rc7+ Kh6 55.Rf7 Ra6 56.f4 h4  
57.g4 Black Resigned.



*(The second support point (f5) plays a part as well; from the game Rauzer-Ryumin, Leningrad 1936).*

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6  
5.O-O Be7 6.Re1 b5 7.Bb3 d6 8.c3  
Na5 9.Bc2 c5 10.d4 Qc7 11.Nbd2 Nc6  
12.a4 Rb8 13.axb5 axb5 14.dxc5 dxc5  
(No.131) 15.Nf1 Be6 16.Ne3 O-O  
17.Ng5 Rfd8 18.Qf3!

With this move and his next, White transfers his attention from d5 and goes for the occupation of f5 instead.  
18...Rd6

Black could have played 18...h6, so that after 19.Nxe6 fxe6, he would retain full control of d5 and f5 – at the cost, it is true, of his pawn position. The line was worth serious consideration, e.g. 20.Ng4 Rf8 21.Nxf6 Rxf6, and Black has counterplay.

19.Nf5 Bxf5 20.exf5 h6 21.Ne4 Nxe4  
22.Bxe4

Now White has decidedly the better game. He has two Bishops, pressure against d5, full control of the support point e4, and on f5, a pawn which can form the spearhead of a powerful attack.

22...Bf6 23.Be3 Ne7 24.b4 c4 25.g3  
Rd7 26.Ra7 Qd8 27.Rxd7 Qxd7 28.h4  
Kh8 29.g4!

Based on the line 29...Bxh4? 30.Qh3 Bf6 31.g5, winning the Bishop.

29...Ng8 30.g5 Be7 31.Rd1 Qc7

If Black had played 31...Qc8, White had an uncommonly attractive finish in 32.f6 Bf8 33.fxg7+ Bxg7 34.Rd8!! Qxd8 35.Qf5 Nf6 36.gxf6 Kg8 37.Bc5!, forcing mate.

32.f6 Bxf6

Or 32...gxf6 33.Qf5 Kg7 34.gxh6+, and wins.

33.gxf6 Nxf6 34.Bc2 Rd8 35.Bxh6  
Rxd1+ 36.Bxd1 e4 37.Bf4 Qd8 38.Qe2  
Nd5 and Black Resigned.

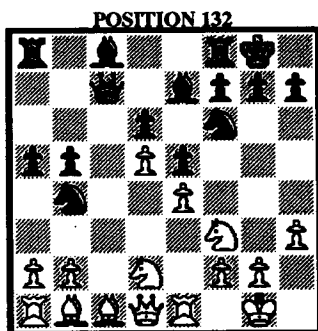
### A. HALF-OPEN FORMATIONS WITH AN OPEN FILE

#### (iii) Blocked Oblique Formations.

In Chapter 9, Section A, we saw that the blocked oblique formations gave both players the opportunity to undertake far-reaching schemes with the ultimate object of opening a file. In the present type of position, however, the players have to bear in mind the fact that an open file already exists.

These blocked formations with an open file can arise in various ways from the openings. The type with the e-pawn forward is well known in the French Defense, while the type with the d-pawn forward often plays an important part in the Ruy Lopez and the King's Indian.

In Chapters 12-15 we give detailed study to the use of open files. Meanwhile, here are a few striking examples. The handling of these positions often differs markedly from those shown in Chapter 9, which had no open file, and the comparison is instructive.



*(The d-pawn forward, and an open c-file; from the game Yanofsky-Botvinnik, Groningen 1946).*

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6  
5.O-O Be7 6.Re1 b5 7.Bb3 d6 8.c3  
O-O 9.h3 Na5 10.Bc2 c5 11.d4 Qc7  
12.Nbd2 cxd4 13.cxd4 Nc6 14.d5 Nb4  
15.Bb1 a5 (No.132) 16. Nf1**

16.a3 Na6 17.b4 was well worth considering.

**16...Bd7 17.Bd2 Rfc8**

Black is quite prepared to accept the doubling of his b-pawn, in return for which he retains the two Bishops and gets the open a-file.

**18.Bxb4 axb4 19.Bd3 Bd8 20.Qd2  
Qa5 21.Ne3 b3**

Dissolving the doubled pawns.

**22.a3 Qa4 23.Nd1 b4 24.Ne3 bxa3  
25.Rxa3 Nxe4!**

This is the point of Black's Queenside operation. In return for the b-pawn, which is bound to fall, he wins a valuable center pawn.

**26.Qd1 Qb4 27.Rxb3 Qa4 28.Bc2 Nc5  
29.Rc3 Qb4 30.Qb1**

So far Black has the better of it, with two Bishops and the majority of pawns in the center; but with this move White begins a counteraction.

**30...g6 31.Rc4 Qb7 32.b4 Na6  
33.Rxc8 Rxc8 34.Bd3! Nxb4?**

Black swallows the bait. After 34...Rb8 or 34...Bb5 he would have kept the advantage.

**35.Re2! Ba5?**

There were still drawing chances by 35...Rc1+ 36.Qxc1 Nxd3.

**36.Rb2 Rb8**

Black is in an unbreakable pin.

**37.Nd2! Qa7 38.Ndc4 Qc5 39.Nxa5  
Qxa5 40.Nc2 Nxd3**

Otherwise a whole piece goes. Thus Black has been compelled to cede the exchange after all, and under conditions much less favorable than he could have obtained by sacrificing it at the 35th move, for then he would have kept his two Bishops.

**41.Rxb8+ Kg7 42.Ne3 Qd2 43.Qf1 Nc5  
44.Qd1 Qc3 45.Rb6 Ba4 46.Qf3 Qe1+  
47.Kh2 f5 48.Rxd6 f4 49.Nf5+**

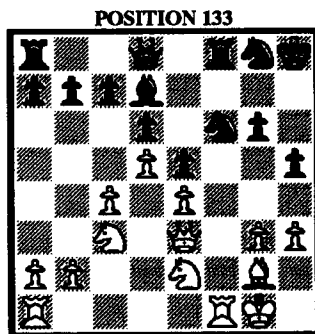
If now 49...gxf5, 50.Qh5! wins quickly.

**49...Kf7 50.Qg4 Ne4**

Or 50...Qe4 51.Qh4 Qxf5 52.Qxh7+ Ke8 53.Rxg6, and wins.

**51.Qh4 gxf5 52.Qxh7+ Ke8 53.Qg8+  
Black Resigned.**

This example has shown how the open c-file can bring tactical elements to the forefront.



*(The d-pawn forward, and open f-file; from the game Fine-Koltanowsky, Hastings 1935-6).*

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6  
5.g3 O-O 6.Bg2 Nc6 7.Nge2 e5 8.d5  
Ne7 9.O-O Nd7 10.Be3 f5 11.Qd2 Nf6  
12.f3 Kh8 13.Bh6 Bxh6 14.Qxh6 fxe4  
15.fxe4 Bd7 16.h3 Neg8 17.Qe3 h5

The open f-file favors White here, for in the long run the exchange of Rooks is inevitable, and this will reduce Black's chances of a Kingside attack. White's chances, on the other hand, consist of a pawn storm against Black's base (the d-pawn) and this operation will not be hindered by an exchange of Rooks.

18.Nc1 Qc8 19.Kh2 Kg7 20.Nd3 Nh6  
21.Qd2

Black was threatening 21...Ng4+. The text move parries the threat and allows White to go ahead undisturbed on the Queenside. Fine now goes straight for his target.

21...Qe8 22.c5 Qe7 23.b4 Nh7 24.Qe3  
Qg5?

After what we have been saying, it is obvious that the exchange of Queens plays into White's hands. Black had to try to create chances on the Kingside, and to this end the indicated line was 24...h4 (25.g4? Bxg4!).

25.Qxg5 Nxg5 26.b5 Rxf1 27.Rxf1 Rf8

All according to schedule!

28.Rxf8 Kxf8 29.c6 Bc8 30.Nb4

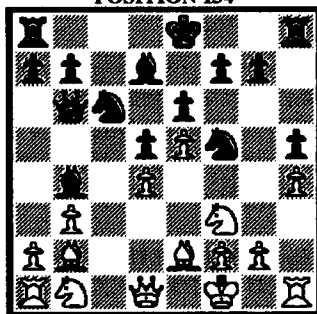
It is as good as over. If 30...b6 31.Na6 Bxa6 32.bxa6 and 33.Nb5.

30...Ke8 31.cxb7 Bxb7 32.Nc6 a6

This gives White a passed a-pawn, but 32...Bxc6 33.bxc6 would have been equally hopeless, for with the Black Knights cut off by the double pawn chain on the e-, d- and c-files, the White pieces would have things all their own way on the far side of the board.

33.Bf1 axb5 34.Bxb5 Bxc6 35.Bxc6+  
Kd8 36.Kg2 Ng8 37.h4 Nf7 38.a4 Ne7  
39.Bb7 Kd7 40.a5 Nd8 41.a6 Nc8  
42.Nb5 Nb6 43.Na7 Black Resigned.

POSITION 134



*(The e-pawn forward, and open c-file; from the game Aitken-Bondarevsky, Radio match, Great Britain vs. U.S.S.R. 1946).*

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.c3 Nc6  
5.Nf3 Qb6 6.Be2 cxd4 7.cxd4 Nge7  
8.b3 Nf5 9.Bb2 Bb4+ 10.Kf1 h5 11.h4  
Bd7

Here also the open file is of prime importance. White's best line now is 12.a3 Be7 13.Nc3. His d-pawn is then indirectly guarded (13...Ncxd4 14.Nxd5!) and he is ready for such maneuvers as Na4 and Rc1.

12.Nc3? Bxc3! 13.Bxc3 Rc8 14.Rh3

This provides against the threat of 14...Nxe5, which could now be met by 15.Nxe5. Nevertheless, 14.Qd2 would have been better, for the Rook is not really well placed on h3.

14...Nce7 15.Qd2 Bb5

Black gets rid of his bad Bishop in exchange for White's good one.

16.Ng1 Ng6 17.Qg5 O-O 18.Re1 f6!

Opening a second file in readiness for a direct attack on the White King. 19.Qxg6? now would be a blunder, because of 19...Be8.

19.exf6 Rxf6 20.Bxb5 Qxb5+ 21.Ne2 Ngxh4!

The White Rook was overloaded, with the Bishop and the h-pawn to guard.

22.a4 Qa6 23.Bb4 Rg6 24.Qxh5 Rh6 25.Qg4 Rc2 26.g3

Allowing Black to wind up prettily.

26...Ne3+! 27.fxe3 Rf6+ 28.Qf4

If 28.Kg1 there follows 28...Nf3+ 29.Kh1 Nxe1 30.Qh5 Rf1+ 31.Ng1 Rxg1+! 32.Kxg1 Rg2+, and mate next move.

28...Rxf4+ 29.gxf4 Nf5 30.Kf2 Qd3 31.Rf3 Ra2! 32.a5 b6 33.axb6 axb6 White Resigned.

He has completely run out of moves (34.Rh3 Nxd4).

## B. HALF-OPEN FORMATIONS WITH NO OPEN FILE

Half-open formations without open files occur frequently, and can arise from all sorts of openings, Familiar examples include the Exchange Variations of the Classic Queen's Gambit (1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.cxd5 exd5) and the Caro-Kann (1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5) and the variation of the French Defense which goes 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.dxc5.

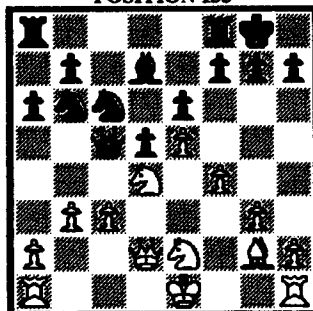
In all these formations the overruling characteristic is the half-open file, a topic which we shall be examining closely in Chapters 12-14. The course of events is largely shaped by the so-called minority attack, which has already cropped up once (Position 97). The whole of Chapter 14 is devoted to this subject, so we content ourselves here with two examples.

*(The French Half-open Formation; from the game Israel-Yanofsky, Ilford 1952).*

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Be7 5.e5 Nfd7 6.Bxe7 Qxe7 7.Qd2 O-O 8.f4

c5 9.Nf3 Nc6 10.g3 a6 11.Bg2 Nb6 12.b3 Bd7 13.Ne2 cxd4 14.Nfxd4 Qc5 15.c3

POSITION 135



The possession of the strongpoint at d4 gives White the advantage in the center, and consequently the usual chances of Kingside attack. Black's chances are not to be underestimated. The half-open c-file enables him to put the Queenside under pressure - pressure which he can increase by ...b5 (the minority attack). Moreover, White must continually reckon with the possibility of ...f6. Then, after exf6, ...Rxf6, Black would be left with the hanging center, which we discussed in Chapter 8, Section B.

### 15...Nc8

On the one hand clearing the way for the b-pawn, and on the other hand preparing to undermine White's Knight on d4.

16.O-O N8e7 17.Kh1 Rac8 18.Rac1 Qa5

Directed against c4.

19.Rfd1 Rc7 20.a4 Nxd4 21.Nxd4 Qb6 22.Qa2 Nc6

See note to Black's 15th move.

23.Nxc6 Bxc6 24.a5 Qe3 25.Re1 Qc5 26.b4 Qe7 27.Qd2 Rd8 28.Re3 Bb5

The bad Bishop emerges from behind the chain, and becomes a full-value piece.

**29.Bf1 d4!**

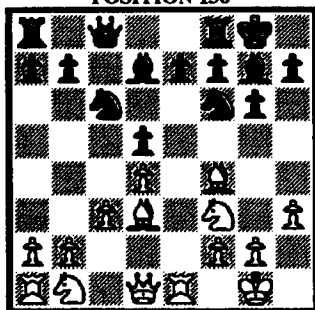
Once White's d4 has been systematically undermined, so that it cannot support a piece, the square becomes ripe for the decisive breakthrough.

**30.cxd4 Rxc1 31.Qxc1 Bxf1 32.Qxf1 Qxb4 33.Qe1 Qxd4**

After the win of this pawn, it is only a question of technique.

**34.Re4 Qd5 35.Kg1 h6 36.Re3 Qa2 37.Re2 Qc4 38.Rd2 Qc5+ 39.Qf2? Qc1+ and White Resigned.**

POSITION 136



*(The Caro-Kann Half-open Formation; from the game Broadbent-Golombek, Cheltenham 1951).*

**1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.Bd3 Nc6 5.c3 Nf6 6.Bf4 g6 7.h3 Bg7 8.Nf3 O-O 9.O-O Bd7 10.Re1 Qc8**

White has the half-open e-file with its support point at e5, and will direct his attack towards the Kingside. Black, on the other hand, must attack on the Queenside by means of the half-open c-file. One priority is to exchange off his bad Bishop by ...Bf5.

**11.Ne5 Nxe5 12.Bxe5 Bf5 13.Bf1!**

Quite rightly, White declines the offer.

**13...Be6 14.Nd2 Nh5 15.Nf3 Bxe5 16.Nxe5 Nf6 17.Re3 Nd7 18.Nd3!**

If White means to have his Kingside attack, he must keep the pieces on the board.

**18...Re8 19.Nf4 Nf8 20.Qf3 Qd7 21.Rae1 a6**

At last Black's counteraction makes a start, but this is about as far as it ever gets.

**22.Bd3 Rad8**

With this extra protection of d5, he threatens ...Bf5.

**23.Re5 Qa4 24.Bb1 Qb5 25.R1e2 Rd6 26.Qg3 Qa4 27.Re1 Qb5 28.R1e2 Qa4 29.Kh2!**

Putting an end to Black's counterattack, for if 29...Qd1, White replies simply: 30.Re1 (30...Qd2 31.R5e2).

**29...Red8 30.h4**

Now Black's g6 is seen to be a serious weakening, for White can break open the h-file.

**30...Qe8 31.h5 Kg7 32.hxg6 hxg6 33.R2e3 Qd7 34.Kg1 Rb6 35.b3 Rc6 36.Nh5+ Kh7**

Or 36...Kg8 37.Qg5 f6 38.Qh6 gxh5 39.Rxh5, and wins.

**37.Qh4 Kg8 38.Qg3 Rdc8 39.Nf4 Qc7 40.c4 b5 41.c5**

An important promotion in the White ranks – from weak pawn to protected passed pawn.

**41...Qd7 42.Nxe6 Nxe6 43.Bf5!**

Leading to a forced win.

**43...Kg7 44.Rxe6! Rxe6 45.Bxe6 fxe6 46.Qe5+ Kf7 47.Rf3+ Kg8 48.Rh3 Black Resigned.**

**C. THE PASSED PAWN, PROTECTED BUT BLOCKADED**

It is common knowledge that in a pure pawn ending, other things being equal, the possession of a protected



passed pawn confers a decisive advantage. The protected passed pawn is also an important factor in the middlegame, as we saw in Position 136; but the idea that a protected passed pawn is invariably an advantage – as was believed for a number of years – has been overtaken by the facts.

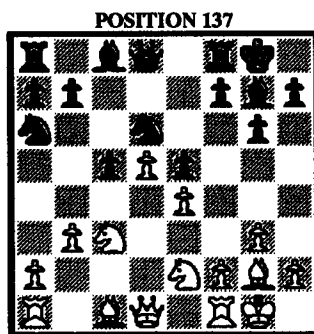
Indeed, there are circumstances under which it is a possession of dubious worth. Particularly this is true when the pawn is blockaded by a Knight.

In Chapter 10 we handled the type of pawn formation characterized by rival majorities: one side had a majority on the Kingside, the other on the Queenside. A plausible outcome, common in practice, is that one or other of these majorities will eventually produce a protected passed pawn. Experience has shown that such a pawn, if it can be blockaded by a Knight, may be an actual hindrance to its own majority. The Knight itself may turn out to be so well posted that it can function as a powerful support for the advance of its own still mobile majority.

Moreover, this blocking Knight – to which we shall refer from now on in the terminology of Nimzowitsch as the "blockader" – can cooperate in the undermining of the protected passed pawn itself.

Take the following case: White pawns d5-e4-f3, Black pawns c5-e5-f7, with a Black Knight on d6. Black will now try to play ...f5, which would put a knife to White's throat. If White should play exf5, his d-pawn becomes isolated and therefore vulnerable; on the other hand, if White does not exchange, Black will, and then the White e-pawn becomes a source of anxiety, permanently threatened by the blockader.

One way or another, it is clear that the first priority for the possessor of a protected passed pawn is to remove the blockader by exchange. What may then happen we have already seen in the game Israel-Yanofsky (Position 135), where Black forced the exchange of the strongly posted White Knight on d4, and later on was able to use this very square for his own decisive breakthrough.



*(The protected passed pawn as a weakness; from the game Euwe-Pilnik, Amsterdam 1950).*

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 Bg7 4.Bg2 d5  
5.cxd5 Nxd5 6.e4 Nb6 7.Ne2 c5 8.d5  
O-O 9.O-O e6 10.Nbc3 Na6 11.Nf4 e5  
12.Nfe2 Nc4! 13.b3 Nd6**

White has a difficult game: his majority has produced a protected passed pawn, and is thereby crippled. The blockade radiates influence. On the Queenside, he can support the advance of his own majority, and on the other flank he puts the requisite strength into an action by the f-pawn.

**14.Be3 b6 15.Qd2 Re8**

Now Black can meet 16.Bh6 with 16...Bh8.

**16.f4?**

There are several bad points to this. It opens the diagonal of the Black KB, and introduces a danger that Black may presently get control of e5. A

holding operation by 16.f3, 17.Rf2, and 18.Bf1 deserved consideration.

### 16...Nc7 17.Rf2?

17.h3 would have been a little stronger, and then if 17...Ba6 18.f5, but even then Black would still have had the better chances after 18...Ncb5.

### 17...exf4!

Profiting by the unprotected position of the White QR, for White cannot now reply 18.gxf4, in view of 18...Nxe4! 19.Bxe4 Rxe4.

### 18.Bxf4 Ba6

The win of a pawn by 18...Nxe4 19.Bxe4 Rxe4 was now of doubtful value, because of the continuation 20.Nxe4 Bxa1 21.N2c3!

### 19.Re1 Qe7 20.g4 Be5 21.Bxe5 Qxe5

There are now two blockaders in action – the familiar Knight at d6 and the Queen at e5. The stronger a piece is intrinsically, the less suitable it is as a blockader, since the strongest piece must always flee from the attack of any other piece. The Black Queen is in fact a poor blockader, and White should now maneuver his pieces so as to drive her away.

### 22.Ng3?

This is a positional blunder, moving the Knight to a point where it is even further from attacking the Black Queen. The right sequence was 22.Kh1, intending to follow with Ng1-f3, e.g. 22.Kh1 f6 23.Ng1 Nf7 24.Nf3 Qd6 25.e5! fxe5 26.Ne4. In view of this line, Black would have had to capture the Knight before it left e2, and this would in any case have afforded some relief to White.

### 22...Re7 23.Bf1 Bc8 24.Be2 Bd7 25.Re1 Rf8 26.Qc1 Nce8!

This Knight is going to take over from the Queen as blockader at e5.

### 27.Kh1 f6 28.Rg1 Ng7

A little intermezzo. More to the point would have been ...Nf7, followed by ...Ned6, etc.

### 29.Bf3 Qg5! 30.Qxg5 fxc5

White now has two connected passed pawns, but neither can advance.

### 31.Rg1 Nge8 32.Be2 Rxf2 33.Rxf2 Kg7 34.h3 Nf6 35.Bf3 Be8 36.Re2 Nd7 37.Rd2 Ne5

The ideal position: both Knights now function as blockaders.

### 38.Be2 b5!

The Black majority comes into action.

### 39.Rc2 Rc7 40.Nd1 c4 41.bxc4 bxc4 42.Nc3?

Again the Knight neglects to aim at e5. Here 42.Nb2 was indicated, and then if 42...c3 43.Nd3, with some counterplay.

### 42...Kf6 43.Nb1 Rb7 44.Nd2 Ba4! 45.Rc1 Rb2

A temporary pawn sacrifice for the purpose of forcing off the Rooks.

### 46.Nxc4 Nexc4 47.Bxc4 Bc2! 48.Bb3 Rb1! 49.Rxb1 Bxb1

Now White's connected passed pawns are doomed.

### 50.Ne2 Bxe4+ 51.Kh2 Ke5 52.Nc3 Bd3 53.Kg3 Ne4+ 54.Nxe4 Bxe4 55.d6 Kxd6

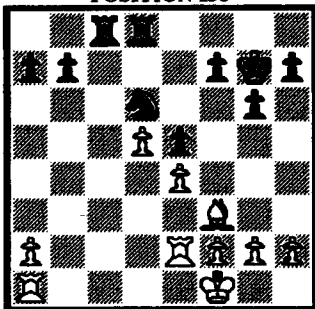
The battle is over. The resulting endgame is won for Black, not so much on account of the extra pawn, which is relatively unimportant, as because he has the good Bishop. The finish was:

### 56.Bg8 h6 57.Bf7 Bd5 58.Bxg6 Bxa2 59.h4 a5 60.hxg5 hxg5 61.Kf3 a4 62.Ke3 Be6 63.Kd4 Bxg4 64.Kc3 Bd1 65.Bf5 Ke5 66.Bd7 Kf4 67.Kb4 Bc2 68.Kc3 Bb3 69.Kb4 Bf7 70.Kxa4 Bg6 71.Kb4 Bf5 72.Bc6 g4 73.Kc5 Be4

74.Bd7 g3 75.Bh3 Ke3 76.Kd6 Bf5!  
77.Bg2 Kf2 White Resigned.

Black will play ...Bg4-f3.

POSITION 138



(One majority mobile, the other having already produced a protected passed pawn; from the game *Eliskases-Flohr, Baden-Baden 1937*).

Although this position is really an endgame, we can draw from it some important conclusions about the handling of the middlegame. The point is that such an endgame is in favor of the side which can block the protected passed pawn with a Knight and simultaneously bring his own majority into action.

23.Rb1 Rc4 24.g3 Rdc8 25.Bg2 Rc1+

Black takes his task too lightly. All sorts of preparatory moves ought to have been made first: ...Kf8-e7, ...b5, etc.

26.Rxc1 Rxc1+ 27.Re1 Rxe1+ 28.Kxe1

Although Black is still the better placed, he has squandered part of his advantage. His Rooks were better posted than White's, particularly with regard to the pressure he could have put on White's e-pawn.

28...f5 29.f3

Otherwise the d-pawn would have been isolated. If 29.f4, the answer is 29...Kf6.

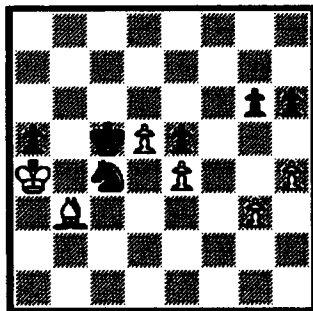
29...fxe4 30.fxe4 b5 31.Kd2 a5 32.Bf3 Kf6 33.Kd3 Ke7 34.h4 h6 35.Bd1 Kd8?

35...a4 would have been stronger: 36.Bc2 Kd8 37.Kc3 Kc7 38.Kb4 Kb6.

36.a4! bxa4

If 36...b4 37.Bc2, and Black can get no further.

37.Bxa4 Kc7 38.Bc2 Kb6 39.Kc3 Kb5 40.Kb3 Kc5 41.Ka4 Nc4 42.Bb3?



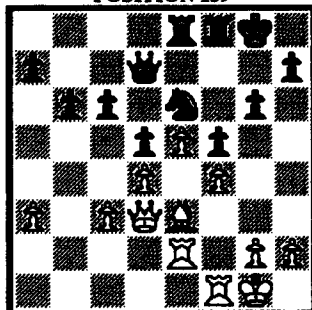
The right move is 42.Bb1, after which, thanks to his protected passed pawn, White can just hold on, e.g. 42...Nd2 43.Bd3 Kd4? 44.d6!

42...Nd2 43.Bc2 Nf1!

Winning the g-pawn, for if 44.g4 Ne3 follows.

44.Kxa5 Nxf3 45.Ka4 Nh5 46.Kb3 Kd4 47.Kb4 Nf6 48.d6 g5 49.hxg5 hxg5 50.Kb5 g4 51.Bd1 g3 52.Bf3 Ke3 53.Bh1 Kf2 54.Kc6 g2 55.Bxg2 Kxg2 56.d7 Nxd7 57.Kxd7 Kf3 White Resigned.

POSITION 139



*(A protected but blockaded passed pawn can doom its owner to inactivity; from the game Najdorf-Beni, Dubrovnik 1950).*

The situation here is much the same as the previous one, but Black adopts rather different tactics. His logical strategy would be ...c5, either at once or after preparation, followed by ...cxd4, and then pressure down the c-file.

**24...b5**

The idea is to prevent White's c4, and so fix his pawns on the same color as his Bishop, which thus becomes "bad".

**25.a4 a6 26.Bc1 Ra8 27.Ba3**

These two moves of White have brought his bad Bishop outside the pawn chain. We remember from Chapter 1 that such a Bishop can pull its full weight.

**27...Rf7 28.g3 Qe6 29.Rg2**

White fences with the possibility of g4, to discourage Black from playing his KR over to the Queenside.

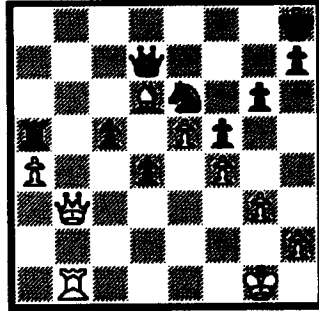
**29...Kh8 30.Bd6 Raa7 31.Ra2 Rfd7 32.Rfa1 Qf7 33.Qe2 Rdb7 34.Ra3!**

In view of the fact that 34.axb5 axb5 35.Rxa7, etc., could easily lead to just such an ending as No.138, White tries something different. He is now preparing to triple his major pieces on the a-file by R1a2 and Qd1-a1.

**34...b4! 35.cxb4 Nxd4 36.Qb2 Ne6 37.Qc3 Qd7 38.Rc1 a5! 39.bxa5**

The line 39.Qxc6 Qxc6 40.Rxc6 axb4 41.Bxb4 Rxb4 42.Rxe6 Rc7 43.a5 Rb2 44.Ra1 R7c2, although not without danger, would probably lead to a draw.

**39...c5 40.Qf3 d4 41.Rb3! Rxb3 42.Qxb3 Rxa5 43.Rb1**



By seizing the open file, White has just about restored the balance.

**43...Kg7 44.Qd5 Kh6!**

So as to answer 45.Rb7 with 45...Qxa4, threatening 46...Qd1+.

**45.Kg2 Qf7 46.Kf2 Qd7 47.Rb2 Rxa4! 48.Rb7 Ra2+ 49.Qxa2 Qxb7 50.Qxe6 Qb2+ 51.Kg1 Qc1+ 52.Kg2 Qd2+ Draw** by perpetual check, for 53.Kh3 fails against 53...Qe2!, with mating threats.

## PART FOUR THE STRUGGLE FOR OPEN LINES

### CHAPTER 12 OPEN AND HALF-OPEN LINES

The struggle to obtain open lines for the Bishops and the Rooks really begins at the first move. One's first concern is to develop the minor pieces. Open diagonals for the Bishops are usually found without difficulty, and the Knights are still more easily managed, for they need no open lines at all.

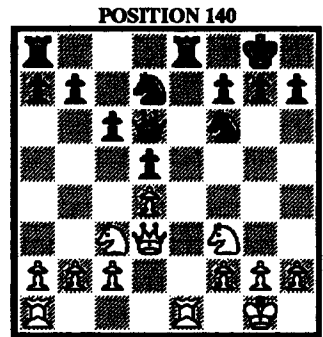
Once the minor pieces are satisfactorily placed and the King castled into safety, the opening stage can be considered at an end. The finding of open files for the Rooks is really the first stage of the middlegame – and a most important stage too, for it can determine the whole course of the game. A simple pawn exchange may accomplish nothing, for as likely as not the file so opened will be available to both sides, with the result that all the Rooks will be promptly exchanged. And if the Queens follow their example, the game may soon fizzle out into a draw. Such games occur in tournaments between strong players who are scared of one another, or who are tired after an arduous game in the previous round, and feel like an extra rest day.

In playing for a win, it is advisable not to open a file until you are ready to control it. If this can be achieved, rosy visions open up. The object is to penetrate the enemy position, preferably on the seventh rank, with a lateral attack against his pawns. If ever the two Rooks can be doubled

on the seventh rank, we have a situation to delight the chess player's heart. Pawns can be slaughtered to left and right, and there may be a mating attack as well.

The foregoing refers to fully open lines, i.e. files on which no pawn remains. There are also the so-called half-open files. These are files which still contain an enemy pawn, and this pawn, of course, is the target. Generally a half-open file is even more useful to its owner than a fully open one, since the enemy cannot oppose Rooks. The strategy is now to occupy the half-open file with one Rook or both, and then to assail the target pawn with one's own pawns, and force it to exchange.

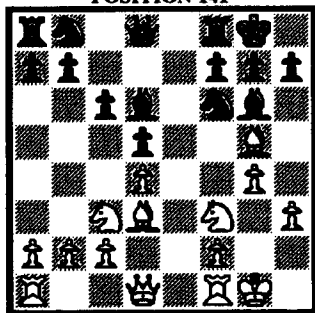
The following diagrams, which need little explanation, illustrate this difference between open and half-open files.



*(Open e-file; from the Exchange Variation of the French Defense).*

The open file here is worthless; the Rooks, and probably the Queens as well, will speedily disappear from the scene.

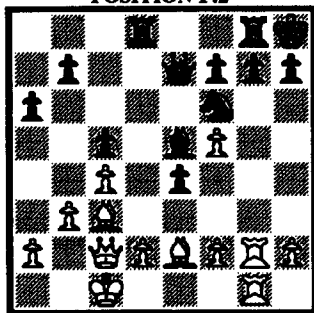
POSITION 141



(Open e-file with outpost; from the game Maroczy-Rubinstein, Prague, 1908).

Between this and the previous diagram there is a fundamental difference. White can occupy an outpost in the open file by 1.Ne5!, for 1...Nbd7 would lead to a serious weakening of the Black King's position after 2.Nxd7 Qxd7 3.Bxf6. In the game the continuation was 1...Be7 2.f4 Bxd3 3.Qxd3 Nbd7 4.Rae1 Re8 5.Re2, with good play for White, the doubling of whose Rooks cannot be emulated by Black.

POSITION 142



(Useless half-open g-file; from the 12th match game Tartakower-Sultan Khan, 1931).

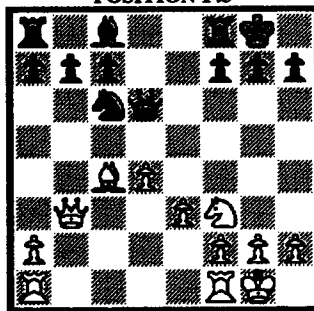
White controls the half-open g-file, but can do nothing with it, since there is no way of breaking the file fully open. The half-open d-file, however, which Black controls, is very important, for the following reasons:

1) Black exerts an unpleasant pressure down the file, particularly through his control of support-points at d4 and d3.

2) This pressure can be augmented by the opening of neighboring files, the key move being ...b5.

The actual continuation was 1...Bd4! 2.Bd1 Qe5 3.Ba5 Rde8 4.Bc3 b5 5.cxb5 axb5 6.f3 (a forlorn attempt to get some sort of counterplay) 6...e3! 7.Bxd4 cxd4 8.Kb1 Nd5, and Black's advantage had assumed decisive proportions.

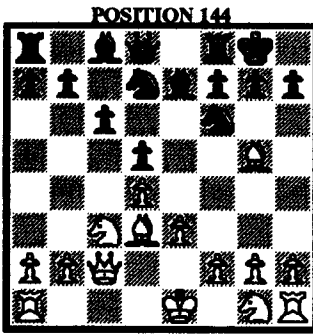
POSITION 143



(The half-open b- and c- files, with very little significance; from Lasker's Defense to the Queen's Gambit Declined).

The half-open files here are in much the same state as was the g-file in the previous diagram. White can occupy them with his Rooks, but still stands to achieve nothing, since there is no way of completing the opening of the files.

In Position 144 White can force the opening of the c-file by the advance of his b-pawn, supported by pawn to a4. The eventual exchange, bxc6, will always turn out to White's advantage,



*(Exchange Variation of the Queen's Gambit: great importance of the half-open c-file)*

for Black will be left with a weakness either in the d-pawn or the c-pawn.

This attack is known as the Minority Attack. The White minority (the a-pawn and the b-pawn) advances against the Black majority (the a-pawn, b-pawn, and c-pawn). This scheme is so important that we devote the whole of Chapter 14 to it.

## CHAPTER 13

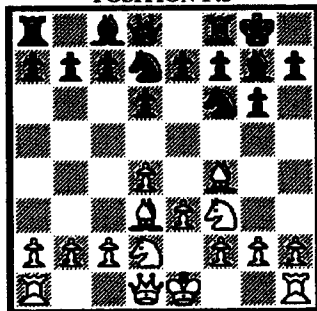
### OPENING A FILE

Any pawn move whatever provides the opponent in the long run with the opportunity to open a file. If Black plays ...g6, for instance, White can answer h4 followed by h5; or if Black plays ...h6, White can open a file by advancing his g-pawn. On this elementary consideration a great number of attacking plans are based – not only in the middlegame, but even in the openings. It was discovered by experience years ago that if the opponent tries to open a file on the flank, the best counter is to try to open a file in the center for oneself, or, if this should be impossible, to open a file on the opposite flank. Counterattack is still the best form of defense!

Let us examine this a little further. Suppose that Black plays ...g6, having already castled on that side. Then White plays h4, the familiar reaction.

He will, of course, have a Rook at h1; otherwise the opening of the file will not benefit him. It follows that the White King is to be found in the middle or on the Queenside. If then Black carries out the above mentioned policy of counterattack, he will be making direct threats against the White King. It is this danger which is the origin of the working rule: "Do not start a flank attack until the center is closed, or made proof against breaking and entering". We hasten to add that this rule is no more than a general guide, which admits plenty of exceptions. The inexperienced player would be well advised to begin by following the general principles, and then to let experience teach when it is safe to depart from them.

POSITION 145



*(Early opening of the h-file; from the game Marshall-Burn, Ostend, 1907).*

**1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 d6 3.Bf4 Nbd7 4.e3 g6  
5.Bd3 Bg7 6.Nbd2 O-O (No.145)  
7.h4!?**

With obvious intention, and extremely dangerous for Black. The move is premature, however, as we shall see.

**7...Re8**

Black permits the opening of the file and plays for counterattack in the center. Important alternatives were

1) 7...h5. This obstructs White's plan, but on the other hand has two disadvantages: in the first place, it seriously weakens g5, and secondly it permits White, after due preparation, to open a file by playing g4.

2) 7...h6, so as to answer 8.h5 with 8...g5, keeping the h-file closed.

It is perhaps not superfluous to remark that these two lines are not peculiar to the present position. The defender generally has a choice between such systems.

**8.h5!? Nxh5?**



The consequent continuation would have been 8...e5 9.Bg5 exd4, opening the e-file with a counteraction which would hamper White's activities.

The dangers of the open h-file may be seen from the following little offhand game: 8...e5 9.Bg5 h6 10.hxg6! fxg6 11.Bxg6 Re7 12.Bxh6! Bxh6 13.Rxh6 Kg7 14.Rh2 Kxg6 15.Nh4+ Kf7 16.Nf5 Re8 17.Rh7+ Kg6 18.Rg7+ Kxf5 19.Qf3+ Ke6 20.d5+ Nxd5 21.Qf7#!

**9.Rxh5! gxh5 10.Bxh7+ Kxh7?**

Better was 10...Kf8.

**11.Ng5+ Kg6**

The sequel to 11...Kg6 would have been even worse for Black: (from another offhand gamelet) 12.Qxh5 Nf6 13.Qxf7+ Kh8 14.0-0-0 Bf5 15.Rh1+ Bh7 16.Ne6 Rg8 17.Nxd8 Raxd8 18.Ne4! Rgf8 19.Nxf6 exf6 20.Qg6 Black Resigned.

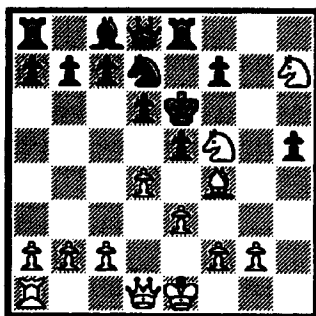
**12.Ndf3 e5**

Now the counterattack in the center comes too late.

**13.Nh4+ Kf6 14.Nh7+ Ke7**

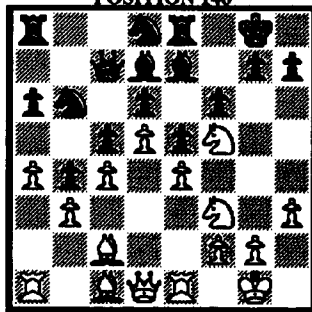
If 14...Ke6 15.d5+ and 16.Nf5#.

**15.Nf5+ Ke6 16.Nxg7+ Ke7 17.Nf5+ Ke6**



**18.d5+ Kxf5 19.Qxh5+ Ke4 20.0-0-0 exf4 21.Rd4#.**

POSITION 146



*(The g-file opened after careful preparation; from the game Medina-Edward Lasker Hastings 1952-3).*

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.O-O Be7 6.Re1 b5 7.Bb3 d6 8.c3 O-O 9.h3 Na5 10.Bc2 c5 11.d4 Qc7 12.Nbd2 Nd7 13.Nf1 Nb6 14.Ne3 f6 15.b3 Nc6 16.d5 Nd8 17.c4 b4 18.a4 Bd7 19.Nf5 Re8**

On the Queenside and in the center the game is completely closed, and if there is still anything to be done, it must be on the Kingside. The position of Black's f-pawn gives White an opportunity to open the g-file.

**20.g4! Bf8**

If Black keeps the g-file closed by playing ...g5, White can play h4 and open the h-file.

**21.Kh2 Nf7 22.Rg1 g6**

A critical moment. If the Knight retreats, Black plays ...h6 and then if in due course White plays h5, he can answer with ...g5; nor does he fear White's playing g5, for then he can play ...fxg5, followed by ...h5, with a valuable half-open f-file. All this should be compared with our discussion of Black's 7th move in the previous game.

**23.g5!**

With this sacrifice White forces his plan through. Such a piece sacrifice is a favorite device for opening a file. Compare for instance, the following

opening: 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 d6 5.O-O Bg4 6.h3 h5! 7.hxg4 hxg4, and Black has a powerful attack on the h-file.

**23...Qd8**

Black can hardly afford to take the Knight, for after 23...gxf5 24.gxf6+ Kh8 25.exf5, White's attack would be too strong, e.g. 25...Bh6 26.Bxh6 Nxb6 27.Rg7, or 25...Qd8 26.Ng5! Qxf6 27.Qh5! Nxb6 28.Bxg5, etc.

**24.Qf1! Kh8**

Still the Knight cannot be taken: 24...gxf5 25.gxf6+ Kh8 26.Qg2 Bh6 27.Bxh6, and wins.

**25.Qg2 Ra7 26.Qg3! Be7 27.Nxe7 Qxe7 28.Qh4 fxe5**

Giving White a quick finish. The alternative 28...f5 29.exf5 Bxf5 30.Bxf5 gxf5 31.Qh5, followed by 32.g6, was hopeless for Black.

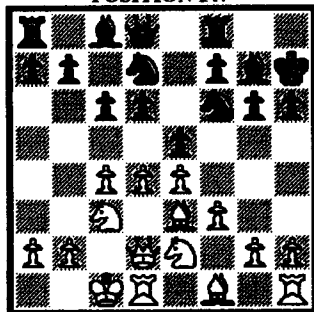
**29.Nxg5 Nxg5 30.Bxg5 Qf7 31.Bf6+ Kg8 32.Rxg6+**

Violently opening the half-open file.

**32...Qxg6 33.Rg1 Qxg1+ 34.Kxg1 Kf7 35.Bd1 Rg8+ Black Resigned.**

After 36.Kh2 Ke8 there follows 37.Bh5+ Kf8 38.Bd8.

POSITION 147



(Various open files; from the game Steiner-Eliskases, Stockholm 1952).

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 O-O 5.f3 d6 6.Bg5 h6 7.Be3 e5 8.Nge2 c6 9.Qd2 Kh7 10.O-O-O Nbd7**

Positions with one King castled Queenside and the other castled Kingside, set the players special problems. Both sides feel constrained to attack vigorously, since passive play by either side will allow the opponent's attack to gather momentum.

It is quite obvious that in playing for an attack, the first requirement is to get a file open for the Rooks; but this creates its own problems. Any attempt to follow the advice given earlier in this chapter – not to embark on a flank attack until the center is closed – would in the present case run into trouble, for if White plays 11.d5, Black can open the c-file without more ado. White therefore maintains the tension in the center.

**11.g4 Qa5 12.h4**

Already White could have half-opened the g-file by playing 12.g5 hxg5 13.Bxg5, but he might not have found it easy to complete the opening of the file. Hence the text move, which aims to open the h-file by 13.g5 hxg5 14.hxg5+.

**12...b5**

Black opens a file on the other wing. He must not postpone this in favor of an attempt to close the Kingside, for if 12...Ne8 (to meet h5 with ...g5 or g5 with ...h5), White has the fierce continuation, 13.f4!

**13.g5 Nh5!**

After either 13...hxg5? 14.hxg5+ or 13...Ng8? 14.h5, White achieves his aims in full, but now he will have to be content with a half-open file.

**14.gxh6 Bh8 15.cxb5 cxb5**

Now we can draw up a provisional balance sheet. White has won a pawn – not as yet a very important pawn –

and has succeeded in half opening the g-file. Black's g-pawn and the Knight at h5, however, block any further progress in this sector. White has a support point at d5 which may prove very important. Black for his part rejoices in the fully open c-file.

**16.Kb1 Nb6 17.Nc1 Nc4 18.Bxc4 bxc4 19.dxe5 Bxe5**

With these last few moves, Black has made distinct progress. The b-file is an even better file for attacking the White King, and his dark squared Bishop is now a powerful reinforcement. However, the sequel will show that there is more to it than this.

**20.N1e2 Rb8 21.Bd4**

Shutting out the dangerous Bishop.

**21...Bb7**

To prevent White from planting a Knight on the support point d5.

**22.Ka1 Ba8 23.Rhg1 Rb4 24.f4!**

With the playing of this important trump card, the game reaches its climax.

**24...Bxd4 25.Qxd4 Rfb8 26.f5!**

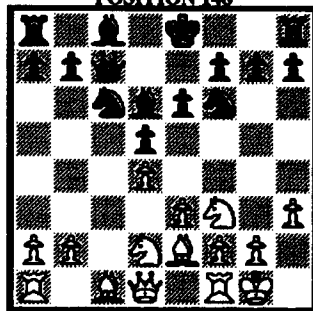
Thus White forces open the g-file, and suddenly the pawn at h6 becomes a major element in the game. If now 26...Rxb2 27.fxg6+ fxg6 28.Qxd6 R2b6 29.Qe7+ Kh8 30.Rd7, and wins; or if 26...gxf5 27.Rg7+ Kxh6 28.Rxf7 Qb6 29.Qd2+ Kg6 30.Rd7 is decisive.

**26...Qb6 27.fxg6+ fxg6 28.Qxd6 Qxd6 29.Rxd6 Rxb2 30.Nd4 Rf2 31.Rdxg6**

The White Rooks have found each other, and this fact, coupled with the gain of a second pawn, means that the rest is no more than a question of technique.

**31...Rd8 32.Ndb5 Rd3 33.Ra6 Rf7 34.Rg5 Ng3 35.Rg7+ Rxc7 36.hxg7 Nxe4 37.Kb2! Nxc3 38.Nxc3 Rd7 39.Nb5 Bd5 40.Kc3! Bf7 41.Nd6 Bg6 42.h5 Bb1 43.Ne8 Rd3+ 44.Kb2! and Black Resigned.**

POSITION 148



*(The White pawn on h3 gives Black the opportunity to open the g-file; from the game Davidson-Spielmann, Match 1932).*

**1.d4 e6 2.Nf3 c5 3.c3 Nf6 4.Nbd2 cxd4 5.cxd4 d5 6.e3 Nc6 7.Be2 Bd6 8.O-O Qc7 9.h3?**

Thanks to White's passive handling of the opening, Black already has much the better of it. His advantages are: 1) His Bishop on d6 is more active than White's on e2. 2) His Knight on c6 is more active than White's on d2.

After the last move he also has a third advantage – the weakening of White's castled position. This is all the more serious in that Black has not yet castled, and so can throw up his Kingside pawns without endangering his own King. This sort of thing is an accepted part of opening theory, e.g. the game Dubois-Steinitz, London 1862: 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.d3 d6 5.0-0 Nf6 6.Bg5 h6 7.Bh4? g5 8.Bg3 h5! 9.h4 Bg4 10.c3 Qd7 11.d4 exd4 12.e5 dxe5 13.Bxe5 Nxe5 14.Nxe5 Qf5 15.Nxc6 hxg4 16.Bd3 Qd5, and Black won easily.

**9...Rg8! 10.Qc2 g5 11.e4**

White reacts in the center to Black's flank attack.

**11...g4 12.hxg4 Nxg4**

The pawn advance has achieved its desired effect – the open g-file.

**13.e5**

This advance is refuted forthwith. The best move was 13.exd5, but White's position is in any case already critical, e.g. 13...exd5 14.Qxh7 Ne7, and then, if 15.Qd3 Rh8, or if 15.Bb5+ Bd7 16.Bxd7+ Qxd7 followed by 17...0-0.

**13...Ncx5! 14.Qxh7**

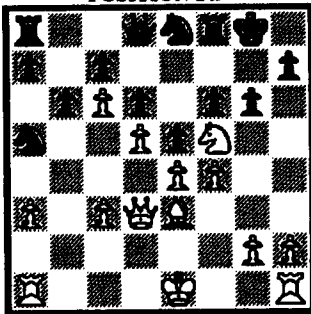
After 14.Qxc7 Nxf3+ 15.gxf3 Nf6+, White comes out a pawn short.

**14...Nf6 15.Qh4 Ng6!**

This is the sharpest continuation. After 16.Qxf6 Be7, the Queen has no flight square.

**16.Qg5 Nf4 17.Bb5+ Ke7 18.Qh6 Bd7 and White Resigned.**

POSITION 149



*(Opening a file by sacrifice of a piece; from the game Kotov-Golombek, Venice 1950).*

Opportunities to open a file for the Rooks by means of a piece sacrifice are naturally very numerous. We have already met one familiar example (Position 146, note to White's 23rd move).

**18.Nh6+ Kg7 19.f5! g5**

Thus Black hopes to keep the game closed. After 20.Ng4 h5 21.Nf2 Nb3 followed by 22...Nc5, he would have a

satisfactory position, for if White should take the Knight he could recapture with the d-pawn and have a useful square for the other Knight at d6.

**20.h4 Nb3**

After this White gets his wish right away—the open h-file. The consequences of 20...Kxh6 were no less serious, as Kotov shows in the tournament book: 21.hxg5+ Kg7 22.g6 Rh8 23.Bh6+ Kg8 24.Qg3 Ng7 25.Bxg7 Kxg7 26.Rh6!! Qe7 (26...Kxh6 27.g7! Qe8 28.gxh8=Q Qxh8 29.Kf2, with mate to follow) 27.Ke2 Kf8 28.Rah1, followed by 29.Rxh7, and the open h-file gives White a decisive advantage.

**21.Rb1 Nc5 22.Bxc5 dxc5 23.Qg3 Kh8**

After 23...Kxh6 the game ends with a typical Rook file combination: 24.hxg5+ Kg7 25.gxf6+ Kh8 26.Rxh7+! Kxh7 27.Qg6+ Kh8 28.Ke2, followed by 29.Rh1+ and mate.

**24.hxg5 fxg5 25.Ng4!**

This is even stronger than 25.Qxe5+, after which Black can still holdout with 25...Qf6.

**25...Nf6 26.Qxe5 Qd6**

The power of the h-file is well shown by the following attractive variation, also given by Kotov: 26...Qe8 27.Nxf6! Qxe5 28.Rxh7#!

**27.Qxd6 cxd6 28.Nxf6 Rxf6 29.Kd2 Re8 30.Kd3 Kg7 31.a4!**

The b-file is to be opened as well.

**31...Rf7 32.a5 bxa5 33.g4 Rfe7 34.Rhe1 Kf6 35.e5+!**

Now if 35...dxe5, simply 36.d6; or if 35...Rxe5 36.Rxe5 Rxe5 (36...Kxe5 37.Re1+) 37.c7 Re8 38.Rb8 and wins.

**Black Resigned.**

## CHAPTER 14

# THE MINORITY ATTACK

### THE OPENING OF A HALF-OPEN FILE

In Position 144 we touched on the subject of the minority attack. Before we proceed with our study of this important system we must correct a common misunderstanding. The minority attack frequently arises after the opening moves, 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.cxd5 exd5, and it is a common idea that this attack is necessarily connected with the Queen's Gambit Declined. This is not so. The minority attack should be seen as the normal method of rendering a half-open file fully open.

It is directed against the enemy pawn which is the characteristic feature of a half-open file. (In Position 144 it was Black's c-pawn). From this it follows that the minority attack can crop up in all sorts of positions. After 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.Bd3 Nf6 5.c3 e6 (Caro-Kann), it is Black who can choose the minority attack as his plan of campaign, by advancing his Queenside pawns. Black's attack in the Scheveningen Variation of the Sicilian (1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 d6 6.Be2 e6 7.0-0 Be7 8.Be3 a6 9.Kh1 Qc7, followed by ...Bd7, ...Rc8, ...b5, etc.) is based on the same principle. The fact that the half-open c-file is blocked, not only by the pawn on c2, but also by a Knight on c3 modifies the character of the attack only slightly.

The reason for the examples in this chapter being taken mainly from games which opened with the Queen's Gambit Declined is the fact that in this opening the minority attack is usually the best procedure.

The irrelevant factors which often intrude are here reduced to a minimum.

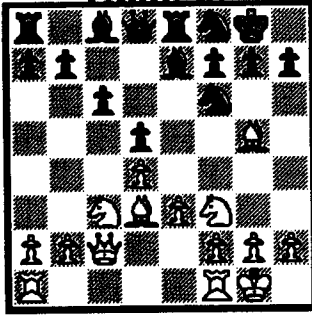
We can summarize the method of attack as follows (referring for the moment to Diagram 144): 1) The advance b4 to b5, possibly supported by a4. 2) The occupation of the furthest available square on the half-open file – in this case c5. 3) Finally, the exchange on c6, unless Black has already exchanged the pawn while it stood at b5.

As a result of the minority attack, Black will be left with at least one weak pawn. If he is not to sink deeper into positional disadvantage, Black *must* look for counterchances. The possibilities are quite varied, and he can choose from the following plans: 1) A general Kingside attack, using the half-open e-file as basis, and occupying the furthest available square (e4). 2) The prevention, at least for the time being, of White's playing b4 by playing ...a5. 3) Permitting b4, and then trying to make use of the weakening of c4, perhaps by playing ...b5 and ...Nd6 or ...Qb6. 4) Defense of the Queenside in such a way that White's b5 can be answered by ...c5. 5) Provocation of the advance a4 (by means of ...a6), and then answering b5 with ...cxb5, axb5, ...a5, creating a passed a-pawn.

This last scheme, No.5, is a new idea, and not many examples exist as yet.

*(The respective opportunities; from the game Flohr-Apscheneek, Kemer-Riga 1939).*

POSITION 150



1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Be7  
5.e3 O-O 6.Nf3 c6 7.Qc2 Nbd7 8.cxd5  
exd5 9.Bd3 Re8 10.O-O Nf8 (No. 150)  
11.Ne5?

This was customary twenty years ago, but it is now established that the minority attack is White's best line. He could have set it in operation right away by 11.Rab1.

11...Ng4!

This leads to the removal of two pairs of minor pieces, and helps Black considerably, enabling him to maneuver with freedom. A waiting game, on the other hand, would have been dangerous for Black, since then his opponent, in addition to his Queenside prospects, could choose to make the Kingside his hunting ground, leading off with f4.

12.Bxe7 Qxe7 13.Nxg4 Bxg4 14.a3

This is the prelude to b4 - b5.

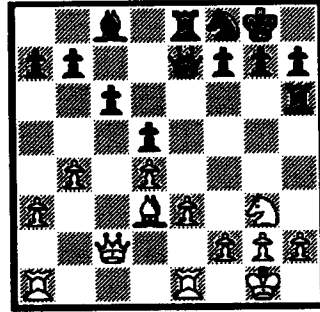
14...Rad8

This move and the next move mark the beginning of a Kingside attack. The following game, from a simultaneous display, shows how dangerous this attack can be: 14.Rab1 (instead of 14.a3) 14...Qg5 15.Kh1 Re6 16.Ne2 Rh6 17.Nf4 Qh4 18.h3 g5! 19.g3 Bf3+ 20.Kh2 Qxh3+! 21.Nxh3 g4 and White Resigned (Gereben-Komarov).

15.Rf1

A valuable defensive move, which frees the square f1 and takes an option on e4.

15...Rd6 16.Ne2 Rh6 17.Ng3 Bc8  
18.b4



Now that White has attended to the defense of his King position, he resumes his advance on the Queenside. He threatens to open a file at once by playing b5.

18...a6 19.Rab1 Qc7

Since 19...Qh4 achieves nothing (20.Nf1), Black means to bring his Knight *via* d7 to f6 and e4 (the furthest available square on the half-open file!). He could not play 19...Nd7 at once, because of 20.Nf5.

20.a4 Nd7 21.Rec1 Nf6 22.Nf1 Ne4  
23.b5

Both players proceed according to plan.

23...axb5 24.axb5 Bd7 25.Qa2 Qd8  
26.bxc6 Bxc6 27.Bb5 Rg6 28.Bxc6  
bxc6

The minority attack is at an end, and Black's weak c-pawn is the result. Indeed the whole Queenside is completely under White's control. Nevertheless, as the sequel will show, there is no cause for Black to despair. His operations in the half-open e-file and on the Kingside in general are beginning to bear fruit in the form of a menacing attack.

**29.Rb2 h5 30.Rbc2**

Putting the weakness under fire.

**30...Qd7**

Protecting the c-pawn, but also casting an eye towards the White King.

**31.Kh1 h4**

Threatening 32...h3, and also envisaging a possible Rook sacrifice on g2.

**32.h3 Qf5**

Threatening 33...Qg5.

**33.Nh2 Qg5 34.Ng4 15 35.14 Qh5 36.Ne5 Rg3**

Black's c-pawn is doomed, but he threatens to win the White e-pawn in return.

**37.Re1**

After 37.Rxc6 Rxe3 38.Qxd5+ Kh7, Black has all sorts of threats, such as 39...Re2 or 39...Nf2+.

**37...Rb8 38.Kh2**

If 38.Rxc6, the sequel could be 38...Rxe3! 39.Rxe3 Qd1+ 40.Kh2 Rb1 41.Qa8+ Kh7 42.Rh6+ gxh6 43.Qa7+ Kh8 44.Qa8+, drawing by perpetual check.

**38...Kh7 39.Nxc6**

This looks decisive, but in fact Black can now force the draw. It is an open question whether White could have achieved more by 39.Rxc6 instead. After 39...Qe8 40.Rc2 (not 40.Qxd5? because of 40...Rb2!), 40...Qg5, Black would have full compensation for the lost pawn, since his pieces would be the more active by far.

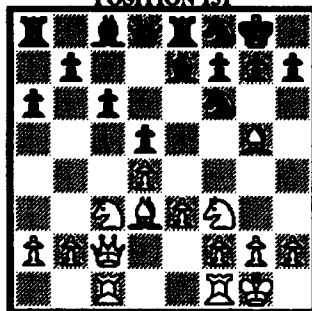
**39...Qg6! 40.Rg1**

Too risky is 40.Nxb8 Rxb3+ 41.gxh3 Qg3+ 42.Kh1 Qxe1+ 43.Kg2 Qg3+, and Black gains at least a pawn.

**40...Rxe3 41.Nxb8 Qg3+ 42.Kh1 Re1**

**Drawn**, as White cannot avoid perpetual check.

POSITION 151



(*Passive defense offers drawing chances at best; from the game Kotov-Pachman, Venice 1950*).

The differences between this position and the previous one do not alter the fact that its essential character is the same.

**1.d4 e6 2.c4 Nf6 3.Nf3 d5 4.Bg5 Be7 5.e3 O-O 6.Nc3 Nbd7 7.Rc1 a6 8.cxd5 exd5 9.Bd3 Re8 10.O-O c6 11.Qc2 Nf8 (No.151) 12.a3 g6 13.b4 Ne6 14.Bxf6**

This exchange is noteworthy in that it permits White to push on with the minority attack without delay. If 14.Bh4 instead, it would have necessitated the loss of a valuable *tempo* in protecting the b-pawn, e.g. 14...Ng7 15.Rb1 Bf5 16.a4 Bxd3 17.Qxd3 Nf5 with counterplay for Black.

**14...Bxf6 15.a4 Ng7**

In this game we are making use of Kotov's notes in the tournament book. Here he suggests 15...b5. This would weaken the c-pawn, it is true, but it is going to be weak in any case.

**16.b5 axb5 17.axb5 Bf5**

This was the idea behind 12...g6. Black exchanges his bad Bishop for White's good Bishop.

**18.Bxf5 Nxf5 19.bxc6 bxc6 20.Na4**

The assault on the weak pawn now begins, which means that the minority attack proper is over. What remains must be regarded as the phase of technique, in which the advantage gained is to be converted into a win.

This technical phase, however, is so closely integrated with the minority attack that we urge the reader to give it minute attention. The whole procedure is very characteristic of such positions.

**20...Rc8 21.Qc5**

Another scheme would have been 21.Nc5 followed by 22.Rb1.

**21...Nd6 22.Nd2**

Directed against 22...Nc4 or 22...Ne4.

**22...Re7**

This is to repel the White pieces by 23...Rb7 and 24...Rb5.

**23.Rb1 Rb7 24.Rxb7 Nxb7 25.Qa7 Nd6 26.Qa6 Qc7 27.Rc1**

Keeping the c-pawn under siege. This threatens 28.Nb6 Rb8 29.Nxd5.

**27...Bd8 28.Nc5 Qa5 29.Qd3**

The exchange of Queens would afford some relief to Black.

**29...Qb5 30.g3**

If now 30...Qxd3 31.Nxd3 Ba5, White has the opportunity for 32.Nb3 and 33.Ne5.

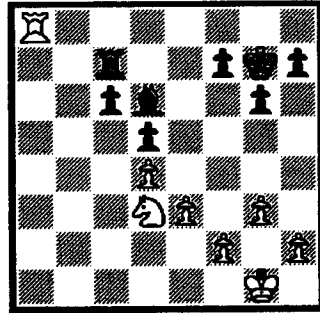
**30...Bb6 31.Rb1 Qxd3 32.Nxd3 Ba5 33.Nb3 Bd8**

If 33...Rb8, there follows 34.Ne5 Rb6 35.Ra1.

**34.Nbc5 Be7 35.Nd7 Rc7 36.Nb8 Nc4 37.Ra1 Rc8**

White threatened 38.Ra6.

**38.Nd7 Rc7 39.Ra8+ Kg7 40.N7e5 Nxe5 41.Nxe5 Bd6 42.Nd3**



This is a vital moment. Black has found the best defense and reached a position in which a draw seems probable. In practical play however, the task of the defender is extremely arduous. Fatal consequences can follow the smallest inexactitude.

**42...Kf6?**

This is it. It was essential for Black to prevent the advance that now follows. According to Kotov, the right way was 42...h5; according to Pachman, the best move was 42...f5.

**43.g4!**

Creating a new weakness in the enemy's camp – namely the h-pawn.

White's strategic intention is to prevent Black from playing ...h5, and to play g5 himself. Two advantages will accrue from this:

1) The weak h-pawn will be fixed.

2) The Black Bishop will become "bad" with respect to the Kingside pawns.

The text move is justified tactically by the line 43...Kg5 44.h3 h5 45.f4+ Kh4 46.Kg2, after which 46...hxg4 is impossible because of 47.Rh8#. It is also important to notice that 43...c5 costs a pawn after 44.dxc5 Bxc5 45.Rd8 Ke6 46.Nf4+.

**43...Ke6 44.Kg2 Rb7 45.Re8+ Re7 46.Rh8 f6 47.h4 Rb7 48.Kf3 Rf7 49.Re8+ Re7 50.Rd8! Ra7 51.Nc5+**



Now it begins to look serious. After 51...Bxc5 52.dxc5 Ra6 (52...Rd7? 53.Rc8) 53.Rd6+ Ke7 54.g5!, the White King will force a way into Black's camp. This position actually occurs in the game after move 57.

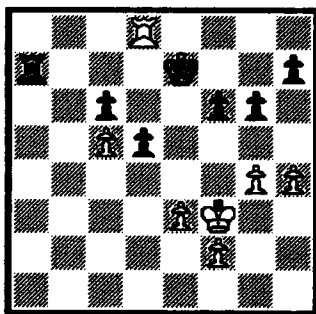
**51...Ke7 52.Rc8**

Not 52.Rh8 Bxc5! 53.Rxh7+? Ke6! If Black should now play 52...Rc7 then suddenly 53.Rh8! becomes decisive: 53...Bxc5 54.Rxh7+ Kd8 55.Rxc7 Kxc7 56.dxc5.

**52...Bxc5 53.dxc5 Kd7 54.Rh8 Ke6 55.Rd8!**

So White still achieves the position which floated before his eyes at move 51.

**55...Ke7**



Here Kotov gives the following variation: 55...Rc7 56.Rd6+ Ke5 57.Ke2! g5 58.hxg5 fxg5 59.Kd3 Rc8 60.Rd7 h6 61.Rd6, winning a pawn.

**56.Rd6 Ra6 57.g5!**

Forcibly freeing the square e5, and the White King will presently make grateful use of the square.

**57...fxg5 58.hxg5 Kf7 59.Kg3!**

Not 59.Kf4 at once because of 59...Ra4+ 60.Ke5?? Re4#.

**59...Ke7 60.f3 Ra3 61.Kf4 Ra4+ 62.Ke5 Ra3!**

If 62...Ra6, White wins by 63.Re6+ Kd7 64.Kf6, but after the move actually played, Black would at this

point have the resource 64...d4! 65.exd4? Rxf3+.

**63.Rxc6 Rxe3+ 64.Kxd5 Rd3+**

Pachman queries this move, but if 64...Rxf3, then 65.Rc7+ Ke8 66.Rxh7 Rf5+ 67.Ke6 Kd8 68.Kd6, followed by 69.c6, would have been equally conclusive.

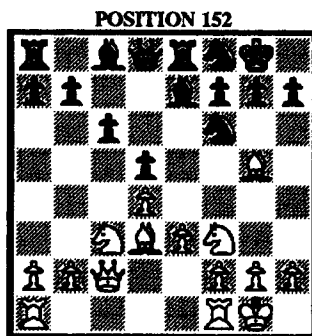
**65.Ke4 Rc3 66.f4 Rc1 67.Rc7+ Kd8**

Or 67...Ke6 68.Rxh7 Rc4+ 69.Kf3 Rxc5 70.Rg7 Kf5 71.Rf7+ Ke6 72.Rf6+ and wins.

**68.Rxh7 Rxc5 69.Rf7**

Threatening 70.Rf6. Against this there is no defense, for 69...Rc6, would be answered by 70.Ke5 and 71.Rf6.

**Black Resigned.**



*(The game Filip-Szabo, Bucharest, 1953. Black plays for ...c5, and White replies with Na4-c5).*

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.cxd5 exd5 5.Bg5 Be7 6.e3 O-O 7.Qc2 Re8 8.Nf3 Nbd7 9.Bd3 Nf8 10.O-O c6 (No.152) 11.Rab1**

Straight for the goal.

**11...g6 12.b4 Ne6 13.Bh4 Nh5**

The most consequent continuation is 13...a6 14.a4 Ng7, but various games have already shown that after 15.b5 Bf5 16.bxc6 bxc6 17.Ne5, White has a distinct pull, thanks to the completion of his minority attack.

**14.Bxe7 Rxe7 15.Na4**

The immediate 15.b5 could be answered by 15...c5 16.dxc5 Nxc5 whereupon White must permit the exchange of his Bishop, since 17.Be2? fails against 17...Bf5. Black playing ...c5 is a possibility against which White must always be well prepared (see also Position 153), and it is often a good idea to occupy the c5-square with a Knight.

**15...Rc7 16.Rfc1 Nhg7 17.Qb3 Bd7 18.Nc5**

18.b5 could have been played here, but after 18...cxb5 19.Bxb5 Bxb5 20.Qxb5 Rac8, the open c-file would be of little use to White.

**18...Be8 19.Rc3 Rac8 20.Rbc1 Ng5**

Black has done everything possible for the defense of his Queenside, and now deems the moment propitious for his own counterattack.

**21.Nxg5 Qxg5 22.b5!**

Uncommonly strong, as White's next move shows.

**22...cxb5 23.Nxb7! Rxc3 24.Rxc3 Rxc3 25.Qxc3 Qg4**

In spite of the exchange of all of the Rooks, White's control of the c-file is now a serious matter. Black has prevented 26.Qc8, but now the White Queen threatens to enter at c7.

**26.Nd6! Bd7 27.Qc7! Nh5**

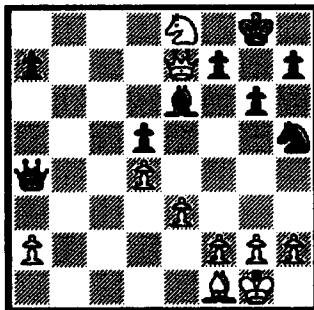
27...Qe6 28.Qb8+ Ne8 29.Nxe8 Qxe8 30.Qxa7 would also cost a pawn.

**28.Bxb5 Qd1+**

If 28...Bxb5 29.Qxf7+ Kh8 30.Qf8#.

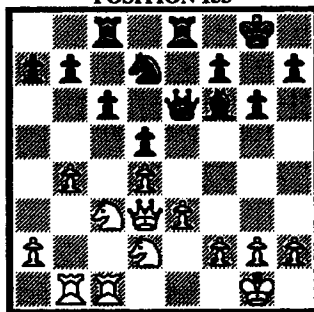
**29.Bf1**

With a sound extra pawn and the attack as well, White must easily win: 29...Qa4 30.Qd8+ Kg7 31.Qe7 Be6 32.Ne8+ Kg8



**33.Qd8 Kf8 34.Nc7+ Kg7 35.Nxe6+ fxe6 36.Qe7+ Kh6 37.g4 Ng7 38.Qh4+ Nh5 39.gxh5 g5 40.Qg4 Qxa2 41.Qxe6+ Kxh5 42.Qh3+ Kg6 43.Bd3+ Black Resigned.**

POSITION 153



*(White plays b5 too hastily, and Black gets the advantage with ...c5; a snapshot from the game Pachman-Ragozin, Saltsjobaden 1948).*

**1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.c4 e6 4.Nc3 c6 5.cxd5 exd5 6.Qc2 g6! 7.Bg5 Bg7 8.e3 Bf5 9.Bd3 Bxd3 10.Qxd3 Nbd7 11.O-O O-O 12.Rab1 Qe7 13.Rfc1 Qe6 14.Nd2 Rfe8 15.Bxf6 Bxf6 16.b4 Rac8 (No.153) 17.b5? c5! 18.dxc5 Nxc5 19.Qf1**

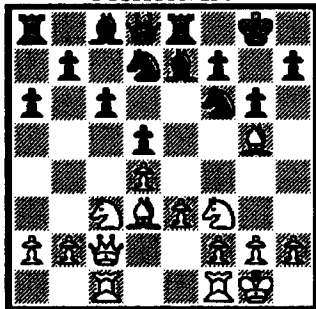
In making his 17th move, White must have overlooked that he cannot play 19.Qxd5 because of 19...Bxc3 20.Qxe6 Nxe6.

**19...d4 20.exd4 Bxd4**

Although the equilibrium has not been decisively broken, it is evident that Black now has the better chances. His pieces are more purposefully placed, the Bishop being particularly dangerous.

In the game, Pachman contrived by accurate defensive play to get a draw. The rest of the game has no bearing on our present topic, and need not concern us here.

POSITION 154



(Black plays to get a passed a-pawn; from the game Kramer-Fichtl, Vimperk 1949).

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Be7 5.e3 O-O 6.Nf3 Nbd7 7.Rc1 a6 8.cxd5 exd5 9.Bd3 c6 10.Qc2 Re8 11.O-O g6**

The only difference between this and position 151, is that Black has played ...g6 instead of ...Nf8. We have already met ...g6 in previous examples.

**12.Rb1 Nb6!**

This time it seems, ...g6 has an entirely different motive – not only to screen the point h7, but also to have the possibility of ...f5 always handy, so as to start operations on the half-open e-file. The move 12...Nb6 is significant. The first intention is to bring c4 square under fire; it is always a weak square as soon as the b-pawn advances. Besides this there is a second point, which emerges presently.

**13.Ne2 Nh5 14.Bxe7 Rxe7 15.b4 Ng7 16.Ng3**

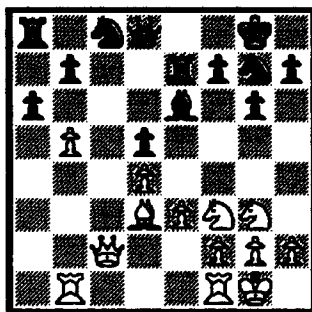
White is not going to have his good Bishop exchanged for Black's bad Bishop.

**16...Be6**

Increasing the pressure on the c4 square.

**17.a4 Nc8**

This is the second intention of Black's 12th move. The Knight is coming to d6, from which vantage point it observes not only c4, but also e4. 17...Nc4 was also to be considered here: if 18.Bxc4 dxc4 19.e4 b5, or if 19.Ne5 Qd5 20.Ne4 Ne8.

**18.b5 cxb5 19.axb5****19...a5**

These last moves of Black have put an entirely new complexion on the game, for the passed a-pawn could be very dangerous. In view of the fact that White still has the initiative through his control of the c-file, Black would have been wiser to play 19...Rc7 first.

**20.Rfc1 Nd6 21.Qa4 Ngf5**

Not 21...Nc4 because of 22.Bxc4 dxc4 23.Ne5 and White wins a pawn. In any case the text move, and the simplification involved, are in line with Black's chosen strategy.

**22.Nxf5 Bxf5 23.Bxf5 Nxf5 24.Rc5!**

Drawing a bead on the weak d-pawn, and at the same time threatening 25.b6.

**24...b6 25.Rc6 Nd6 26.Ne5 f6 27.Nd3 Kf7?**

27...Nc4 would also be insufficient, because of 28.Nf4!, threatening 29.Nxd5 Qxd5 30.Qxc4. A move worth considering was 28...Kh8, getting off of the diagonal from a2-g8. The idea of the move played is to prevent 28.Nf4 Nf5 29.Ne6, but White has other shots in his pocket.

**28.Nf4 Nf5**

If 28...Nb7 29.Qa2 Rd7 30.Ne6 and the b-pawn falls. Or if 28...Ne4 29.Qa2 Rd7 30.f3 Ng5 31.h4, and the Knight has no escape.

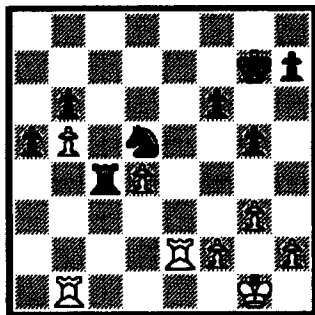
**29.Qa2 Rd7 30.Nxd5! Rxd5 31.e4 Ne7 32.Rc2 Kg7 33.exd5 Nxd5 34.Rbc1!**

White has won the Exchange, but the Black Knight is established at his blockade post (see Chapter 11, Section C) and the game is still not easy to win. White's move renews the pressure on the open c-file. 34...Nb4 is no good now, because of 35.Rc7+.

**34...Qd7 35.Qc4 Re8 36.g3 Qf5 37.Re2 Rd8**

If Black permits the Rook exchange, he will be unable to keep the White pieces out of his back rank.

**38.Rce1 Rc8 39.Qa2 g5 40.Qb1 Qxb1 41.Rxb1 Rc4**



**42.Ree1**

The d-pawn being now no more than an obstruction to the White Rooks, White decides to hand it over *gratis*. In fact, if now 42...Rxd4 43.Rbd1 Rxd1 44.Rxd1 Nc3 45.Rd6 Nxb5 46.Rxb6, the ending is technically a simple win for White.

**42...Nc3 43.Re7+ Kg6 44.Rbe1 Rxd4 45.Rb7 Na4 46.Ree7**

Two Rooks on the seventh rank: the ultimate objective of everyone who operates on an open file.

**46...h5 47.Rbd7 Rb4 48.Rg7+ Kf5 49.Rd6**

White switches to the sixth rank, which is more promising in the present case.

**49...Ke5 50.Rc6 Rxb5 51.Rg6 Rd5 52.Rcxf6 Kd4 53.h4! b5**

Not 53...gxh4 54.Rf4+ winning the Knight.

**54.hxg5 b4 55.Rg8 Nc5 56.g6 b3 57.g7 Rd7 58.Rf4+!**

Even now the win hangs by a silken thread. If 58.Rd8?, there follows not 58...Rxd8? 59.Rf8, but 58...b2! Should Black now try 58...Kd3 then White wins by 59.Rf3+ Kc2 60.Rxb3! Rxb3! 61.Rbb8.

Or if after 59.Rf3+ in this line Black returns his King to d4, then the win is by 60.Rd8! b2 61.Rxd7+ Nxd7 62.Rb3.

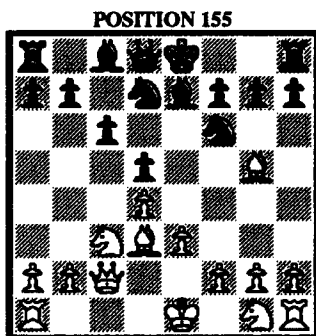
**58...Kd5 59.Rf5+ Kd4 60.Rxc5! Rxb7**

Black's last hope is his well advanced connected passed pawns.

**61.Rgc8! Rb7 62.Rxa5 b2 63.Rd8+ Kc3 64.Rd1 Black Resigned.**

Although the new plan which Black introduced in this game did not, in the end, lead to the desired result, nevertheless, this game is an interesting contribution to the theory of the minority attack. It seems by no means impossible that this scheme – the creation of a passed a-pawn

combined with the pressure against the c4 square – may be instrumental in banishing the dread of the minority attack, or at least considerably reducing it.



(Black makes good use of the half-open e-file; from the game *Bouwmeester-Euwe, Amsterdam 1950*).

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Nbd7 5.e3 c6 6.cxd5 exd5 7.Bd3 Be7 8.Qc2 (No.155) 8...Nh5**

Another method of using the half-open e-file consists of the maneuver ...Ne4 (compare the next example). The text however, is more direct, as Black rapidly arrives at ...f5, starting a minority attack on his own account.

**9.Bxe7 Qxe7 10.Nge2**

If 10.Nf3, then 10...Nf4 is unpleasant.

**10...g6 11.O-O f5 12.Rab1 O-O 13.b4 a6**

Although this move does not ultimately prevent b5, it does provide an open a-file which may be important.

**14.a4 f4!**

Black gets his blow in first.

**15.Nxf4 Nxf4 16.exf4 Rxf4**

Now the f-file is half-open, with the f-pawn as a target, while the White d-pawn has been isolated.

**17.Ne2 Rf6 18.b5 axb5 19.axb5 Nf8 20.bxc6 bxc6 21.Rb6 Bd7**

The Queenside action has taken its normal course and achieved its normal advantages. Against the weakness of Black's c-pawn must be set the weakness of White's d-pawn. The game is evenly poised.

**22.Rfb1 Rf7 23.Qd2 Qh4 24.f3**

A slight loosening, which could have been avoided by 24.Qe3.

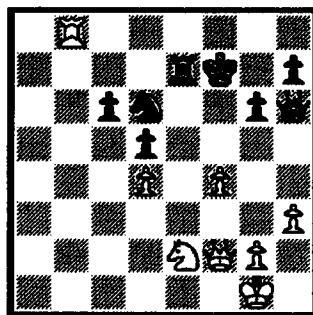
**24...Ne6 25.Qe3 Re7 26.Rb8+ Rxb8 27.Rxb8+ Kf7 28.Qf2 Qh6 29.f4 Ng7**

Preventing 30.f5.

**30.Bc2?**

Losing a vital tempo. After the right line, 30.Rb7 Bf5 31.Rxe7+ Kxe7 32.Qe3+ followed by 33.Bxf5, the game looks very drawish, but now Black gains ground.

**30...Bf5 31.Bxf5 Nxf5 32.h3 Nd6**



In this sort of situation a Knight on d6, watching both e4 and c4, is a trump card for Black.

**33.Qf3 Qh4 34.Rb1 Nb5**

In this special case the Knight is even stronger at b5 than at d6, chiefly because of the weak White d-pawn.

**35.Rd1 Qf6**

35...Rxe2 36.Qxe2 Nc3 loses to 37.Qe1!

**36.Rd2 Re4 37.Qf2 h5 38.Rd3 Kg7 39.Rd2**

White can only mark time.

**39...Nd6 40.Rd3 h4 41.Rc3 Nf5 42.Kh2 Qe6**

42...Qe7 would have been still better. On the other hand, if 42...Nxd4 43.Nxd4 Rxd4 44.Rxc6! and although White then loses a pawn by 44...Qxf4+, he has good prospects of a draw.

**43.Rc2 Re3 44.Ng1**

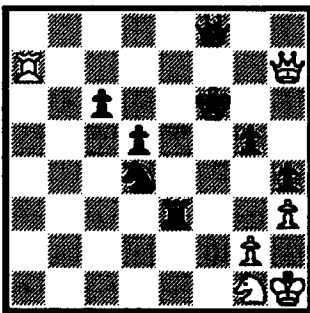
Quite correctly, White offers the pawn again, for if he continues to do nothing, Black can easily continue to strengthen his position, e.g. by 44...Ng3 or 44...Qe4.

**44...Nxd4 45.Ra2 g5**

Now it becomes clear why Black would have done better to play ...Qe7 at his 42nd move. He needs that lost move now, for if 45...Qe7 46.Ra7! Qxa7 47.Qxe3 Nb5 48.Qe5+, White's chances are excellent.

**46.Ra7+ Kg6 47.Qb2 Qf6 48.Qb7**

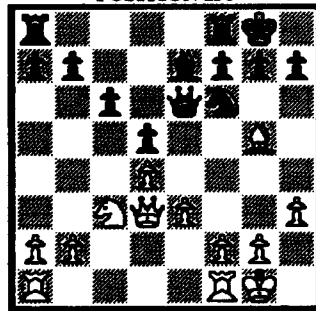
In view of the threat 48...Nf3+, White must concede a second pawn.

**48...Qxf4+ 49.Kh1 Qf8 50.Qh7+ Kf6**

The game remains interesting right to the end, and the rest is worth including.

**51.Ra1 Re4 52.Rf1+ Rf4 53.Rxf4+ gxf4 54.Qxh4+ Ke5 55.Qe1+ Kf5 56.Qd1 Qf6 57.Qh5+ Ke6 58.Qe8+ Kd6 59.Qb8+ Kd7 60.Qb7+ Kd6 61.Qb8+ Kd7 62.Qb7+ Ke8 63.Qc8+ Kf7 64.Qd7+ Kg6 65.Qg4+ Kh6 66.Qd1 c5 67.Qc1 c4 68.Qb2 Qe5 69.Qb6+ Kh5 70.Qc5 f3! 71.gxf3 Nf5 72.Qc8 Kh4 73.Qg8? Ng3+ White Resigned.**

POSITION 156



(Black plays ...a5 to gain time for his Kingside attack; from the game Mulder van Leens Dijkstra-Kramer, Leeuwarden 1948).

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 c6 4.Nf3 Nf6 5.cxd5 exd5 6.Bg5 Be7 7.Qc2 Bg4 8.Ne5 Bh5 9.e3 Nbd7 10.Nxd7 Qxd7 11.h3 Bg6 12.Bd3 Bxd3 13.Qxd3 Qe6 14.O-O O-O (No.156) 15.Rab1 a5**

Preventing b4 for the moment, and so gaining time for the Kingside attack. Curiously enough, this move is hardly ever seen in actual practice.

**16.Rfc1**

If 16.a3, Black can play 16...a4, while 16.Na4 is premature because of 16...b5 17.Nc5 Bxc5 18.dxc5 Ne4.

**16...Bd6 17.Bxf6**

Otherwise Black would play 17...Ne4.

**17...Qxf6 18.Na4**

Resuming the minority attack. As the direct advance of the b-pawn is not possible. White proceeds to occupy the furthest available square on the half-open file - a device already familiar to us.

**18...Rfe8 19.Nc5 Re7 20.a3**

According to the well known scheme. If now 20...a4, White has a powerful continuation in 21.Qc2 b5 22.Nd3.

**20...g5!**

This method of sharpening the struggle on the Kingside is also typical of this kind of situation. It is very effective here, because White's h3 has weakened his King position. The following line illustrates some of the tactical finesses now available to Black: 21.e4 Bxc5 22.e5 Rxe5! 23.dxe5 Bxf2+! 24.Kf1 Qf4 25.Qf3 Qxf3 26.gxf3 Bd4, with an endgame in Black's favor.

**21.Qd1**

Black was threatening 21...g4 22.hxg4 Qh4.

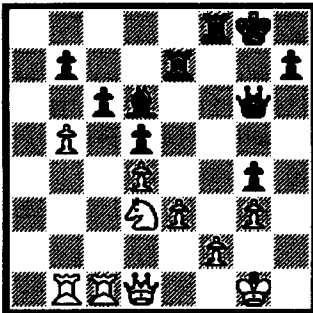
**21...Qg6 22.b4 axb4 23.axb4 f5 24.b5**

White has succeeded in carrying out his plan, but meanwhile the Black counterattack has assumed decisive proportions.

**24...g4! 25.hxg4 fxg4 26.g3**

Otherwise 26...g3.

**26...Rf8 27.Nd3**



Succour for the threatened King, but it is too late.

**27...Bxg3! 28.fxg3 Rxe3 29.Nf4**

Or 29.Ne5 Rxg3+ 30.Kh2 Qh5+! 31.Kxg3 Qh3#.

**29...Rfxg3+ 30.Kh2**

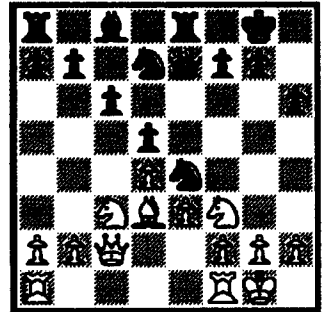
After 30.Ng2 Rxg2+! leads to mate: 31.Kxg2 Qe4+ 32.Kg1 Qe3+ 33.Kh1 Qh3+ 34.Kg1 Qg3+ 35.Kh1 Rf5, and 36...Rh5+

**30...Qh6+ 31.Kxg3 Qxf4+ 32.Kh4**

If 32.Kg2 Qf2+ 33.Kh1 Qh4+ 34.Kg1 Qg3+, and we have reached the same position as in the previous note. After the move played, Black announced mate in five.

**32...Qh6+ 33.Kxg4 Rf4+ 34.Kg3 Qh4+ 35.Kg2 Qf2+ 36.Kh1 Rh4#.**

POSITION 157



(Black plays the liberating ...Ne4; from the game Kramer-Van Scheltinga, Beverwijk 1950).

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Nf3 Nbd7 5.Bg5 c6 6.cxd5 exd5 7.e3 Be7 8.Qc2 O-O 9.Bd3 Re8 10.O-O h6 11.Bh4 Ne4 12.Bxe7 Qxe7**

Should White now proceed in the usual way with 13.Rab1, Black has an important method of blunting White's minority attack - namely, 13...Nd6! 14.b4 b5!, with a magnificent support point at c4 for the Black

pieces. It is fair to conclude that in such positions it is always a good idea for Black to play a Knight to d6. White must now modify his Queenside plans in some way.

He could try 13.Rac1 Nd6 14.Na4, but it is clear that long preparations will be needed before the b-pawn can be advanced with any hope of profit. Another idea is the system he actually adopts.

### 13.Bxe4 dxe4 14.Nd2 Nf6

This type of position frequently arises in the orthodox Queen's Gambit Declined (see also Position 158). The essential difference between it and the foregoing examples is the advanced position of the Black e-pawn. This generally betokens a slight improvement in Black's prospects, for the e-pawn can be an important element in a Kingside attack, while the strong square at d5 can also be very useful.

### 15.b4!

This advance is possible here without preparation, because if 15...Qxb4, White will get excellent compensation by 16.Ncx4.

### 15...Bd7 16.Rfc1 h5?

Black is right to seek counter-chances on the Kingside, but this does not mean that he can leave his Queenside completely in the lurch. 16...Rac8! would have been better here.

### 17.Rab1 h4

This practically forces the following weakening move.

### 18.h3 g5 19.b5

White must hurry, or his Kingside will be overrun. This advance comes just in time, for the answer 19...c5 will not do now, because of 20.dxc5 Qxc5 21.Ncx4 Nxe4 22.Nxe4 Qxc2 23.Nf6+! Kh8 24.Rxc2.

### 19...g4

Black must also push on. It is too late for defense, e.g. 19...cxb5 20.Nxb5 Rac8 21.Qb2 a6 22.Nc7.

### 20.hxg4 Bxg4 21.bxc6 bxc6 22.Na4 Nd5

After 22...Rac8 23.Qc5, Black would have to go into a bad endgame (all of his pawns are weak), since he could not allow 24.Qg5+.

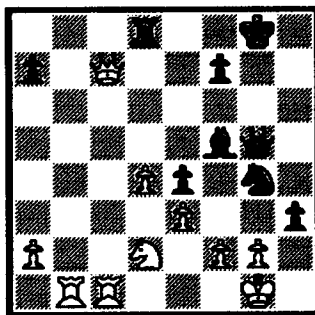
### 23.Qxc6 Rad8

If 23...Qg5 24.Nxe4! would be conclusive.

### 24.Nc5 Bf5 25.Nb7

Now Black can no longer avoid material loss, for 25...Rd7 would be answered by 26.Rc5.

### 25...Qg5 26.Nxd8 Rxd8 27.Kh2 Nf6 28.Qc7 Ng4+ 29.Kg1 h3



### 30.gxh3!

The discovered check is not dangerous, as the White Queen has access to g3.

### 30...Ne5+ 31.Kh2 Rxd4 32.Rg1?

Simpler is 32.Qxe5 Rxd2 33.Rb8+.

### 32...Ng4+ 33.hxg4

Here there was a direct win by 33.Rxg4 Bxg4 34.exd4 Qxd2 35.Rb8+.

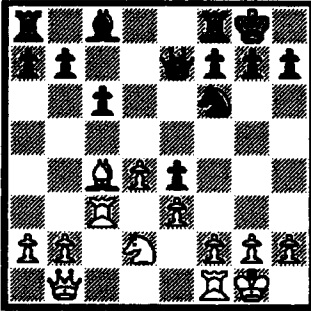
### 33...Qh4+ 34.Kg2 Rxd2 35.Qg3



Forcing the exchange of Queens. The finish was:

**35...Qxg4 36.Qxg4+ Bxg4 37.Kg3 Bh5 38.Rb8+ Kg7 39.a4 Ra2 40.Rb4 Bg6 41.Rgb1 Black Resigned.**

POSITION 158



(Invasion via the c-file; from the game Najdorf-Sanguinetti, Mar del Plata 1945).

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Be7 5.e3 Nbd7 6.Nf3 O-O 7.Rc1 c6 8.Bd3 dxc4 9.Bxc4 Nd5 10.Bxe7 Qxe7 11.O-O Nxc3 12.Rxc3 e5 13.Qb1 e4 14.Nd2 Nf6 (No.158) 15.b4**

The promptness with which White can start his minority attack results from his 13th move. The question really is whether Black, in these circumstances, should have played 13...e4. We do not propose to argue this point here, as it belongs properly to the domain of the openings.

**15...a6 16.Rfc1 Bg4**

Better was 16...Bd7, followed by 17...Rac8 (compare to Position No.157).

**17.a4 Rad8**

Intending to swing the Rook over to the Kingside *via* d6, but it never gets that far. 17...Rac8 was necessary.

**18.h3 Bh5?**

The Bishop cannot be spared from the Queenside. 18...Bc8 was indicated.

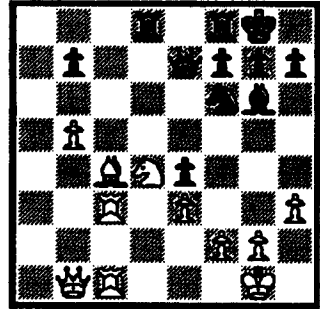
**19.b5 axb5 20.axb5 c5**

With this move, which is based on the unprotected position of the White Knight, Black avoids being left with a weak c-pawn, but he jumps out of the frying pan into the fire.

**21.Nb3!**

Now 21...b6 fails because of 22.dxc5 bxc5 23.Nxc5! Qxc5? 24.Bxf7+. So Black has to open the c-file himself.

**21...cxd4 22.Nxd4 Bg6**



Black cannot dispute White's possession of the c-file, for 22...Rc8 fails against 23.Bxf7+. The move 22...Nd5 is also insufficient, because of 23.Bxd5 Rxd5 24.Rc7 Rd7 25.Rxd7 Qxd7 26.Qxe4. Hence the text move.

**23.Bb3 Ne8**

If 23...Nd5 24.Rc5

**24.Qa2 Rd7 25.Qa5 Qd8 26.b6! Rd6 27.Rc8**

This is the point of the previous move. If now 27...Qxb6, then 28.Qa8 is conclusive.

**27...Qe7 28.Qc5**

Fuller mastery of an open file than this there cannot be!

**28...Rd7 29.Ba4 Qxc5**

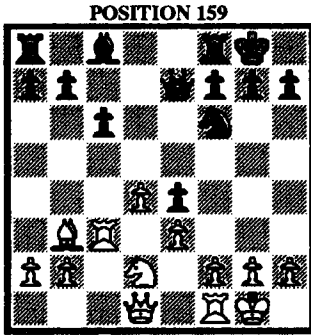
Or 29...Rd6 30.Bxe8 Rxe8 31.Qxd6!.

**30.R1xc5 Re7 31.Rd8 h6**

If 31...Nf6 32.Rcc8 settles it.

**32.Rcc8 f6 33.Rb8 Black Resigned.**

There is nothing to be done against Nb5-c7.



*(The significance of Black's support point at d5; from the game Najdorf-Stahlberg, Mar del Plata 1945).*

This position is the same as the previous one, except that White has played 13.Bb3 instead of 13.Qb1. This little difference clearly favors Black, since White must spend a tempo to unblock his b-pawn.

Black's advanced pawn on e4 is more in place here than in the previous example, and theory has not yet quite overcome the tactical problems produced by this pawn.

**15.Qc2 Bg4!**

The best counter to the threat of Rc5-e5, winning the e-pawn. Black now threatens in turn ...Be2-d3.

**16.Re1?**

A stronger line would be 16.Rc1 Be2 17.Bc4.

**16...Kh8 17.a3 Rae8 18.Nf1?**

This Knight is certainly not better placed on f1 than at d2. 18.Ba2, followed by b4 would be more purposeful.

**18...Be6 19.Bxe6 Qxe6 20.b4 Nd5**

An important success for Black. The occupation of this support point enables him to work up a powerful offensive on the Kingside.

**21.Rc5 a6 22.Ng3**

There is no time now for the thematic 22.Rb1, followed by a4 and b5, e.g. 22.Rb1 f5 23.a4 f4 and 24...f3, and the Black attack is a long way towards its consummation, but for that matter the move played is not a lot better.

**22...f5 23.Qd2 Qh6!**

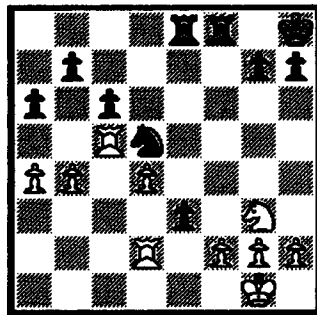
If White should now try to parry the threat to open the c-file with 24...f4 by playing 24.Ne2, Black has a powerful continuation in 24...g5.

**24.a4 f4 25.exf4**

Or 25.Nf1 f3 26.Ng3 Qh4, with ...Re6-h6 to follow.

**25...Nxf4 26.Re3**

Black was threatening both 26...Nh3+ and 26...Nd3.

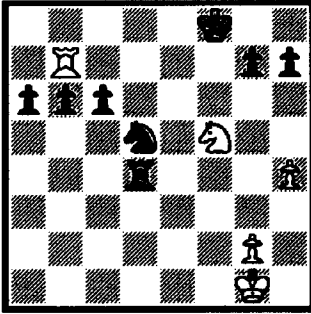
**26...Nd5 27.Re2 Qxd2 28.Rxd2 e3!**

Black could also have played simply 28...Nxb4, but the text move is even stronger, for now both of his Rooks will have open files.

**29.fxe3 Rxe3 30.Rc1 Nxb4 31.Nf1 Ra3**

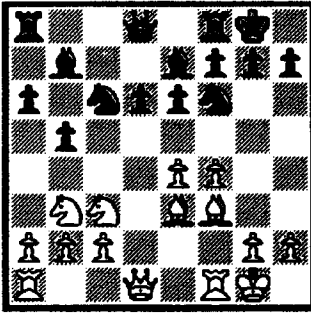
This horizontal activity of the Rooks once they control an open file, has already come to our notice. The rest of the game was:

32.Re1 Kg8 33.Re7 b6 34.h4 Ra1  
35.Rf2 Rxa4 36.Rxf8+ Kxf8 37.Rb7  
Nd5 38.Ng3 Rxd4 39.Nf5



39...Re4! 40.Nd6 Re6 41.Rf7+ Kg8  
42.Rd7 h6 43.Nf5 Rf6 White Resigned.

POSITION 160



(Minority attack in the Sicilian; from the game Znosko Borovsky-Euwe, Weston -super-Mare 1924).

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6  
5.Nc3 d6 6.Be2 e6 7.O-O Be7 8.Be3  
O-O 9.Nb3 a6 10.f4 b5 11.Bf3 Bb7

This position seems entirely different from those we have been looking at before, but there is one essential similarity-the half open c-file, with the possibility of a minority attack for Black. We shall soon see that there is considerable degree of correspondence between

the positions.

12.Ne2

Preparing c3.

12...Na5

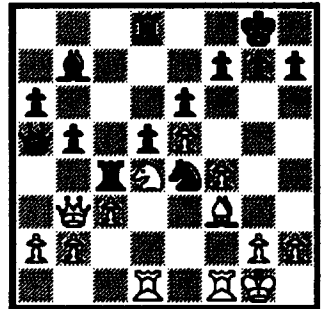
Heading for the furthest available square on the half-open file (c4).

13.Nxa5 Qxa5 14.Ng3 Rac8 15.c3  
Rfd8 16.Qb3 d5 17.e5 Ne4

Comparing the Queenside pawn formations with Positions Nos.157-159, which arose from the Queen's Gambit Exchange Variation, we come to the surprising conclusion that - apart from unimportant discrepancies - they are the same, with colors reversed. There are other openings as well which give rise to the same type of position - notably the French and Caro-Kann Defenses.

The same strategic plan is now applicable, but the tactical differences may be considerable. For instance, it is important to notice that in the present case, White cannot start an immediate Kingside attack by 18.Bxe4 dxe4 19.f5, because Black could then avail himself of the open d-file at once by 19...Rd3.

18.Ne2 Bc5 19.Bxc5 Rxc5 20.Rad1  
Rc4 21.Nd4



Occupying his support point. Compare Position No.159, in which Black's occupation of the d5 square played an important role.

**21...g6**

Preventing Nf5. White should now hit out with g4, but he dares not face the possible consequences.

**22.Kh1 Ba8**

So as to push on with the minority attack by ...b4.

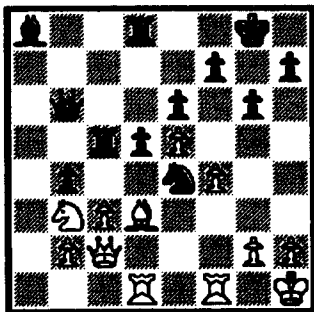
**23.Be2 Rc5 24.Qc2?**

24.Qb4! was stronger: 24...Qxb4 25.cxb4 Rc7 and White can maintain equality by 26.Rc1.

**24...Qb6 25.a3 a5 26.Bd3 b4 27.axb4 axb4**

The climax of the minority attack.

**28.Nb3**



There were other interesting possibilities here:

1) 28.Qb3 Rb8! 2) 28.c4 dxc4! 29.Bxe4 Bxe4 30.Qxe4 Rcd5 and Black regains his piece with decisive advantage. 3) 28.Bxe4 dxe4 29.c4 Rcc8, and now: a) 30.Nb3 Bd5 31.Nd2 e3! b) 30.Ne2 b3 31.Qc3 Rxd1 32.Rxd1 Qf2! 33.Nc1 e3! 34.Rg1 Rd8, and wins.

**28...Rcc8 29.Bxe4 dxe4 30.c4**

30.Rxd8+ Rxd8 31.Nd4 was a better chance.

**30...Bd5 31.Rd4 Bxc4 32.Rxc4 Qa6 33.Nd2?**

33.Rc1 would be useless: 33...Rxc4 34.Qxc4 Qxc4 35.Rxc4 Rd1#. With

33.Na5! Rc5 34.Rc1, White could have cut his disadvantage to the minimum.

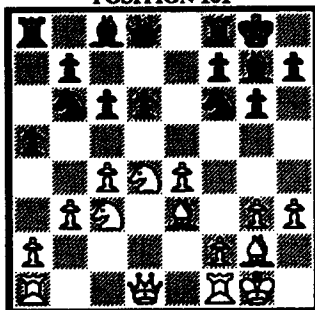
**33...e3! 34.b3 exd2 35.Rd1 Rxc4 36.bxc4 Qa3 37.g3**

Threatening to win the d-pawn at last.

**37...Qc3 38.Qe4 b3 39.Kg2 Qc2 White Resigned.**

After 40.Qe2 comes the decisive 40...Qxd1! 41.Qxd1 b2.

POSITION 161



(Minority and majority attacks combined; from the game Van Scheltinga-Van den Berg, Amsterdam, 1950).

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 Bg7 4.Bg2 O-O 5.Nc3 d6 6.Nf3 Nbd7 7.O-O e5 8.e4 c6 9.h3 exd4 10.Nxd4 a5 11.Be3 Nb6 12.b3 (No.161) 12...a4**

Black intends on opening the a-file and exchange a pair of Rooks—always a good policy in a cramped position.

**13.Qc2 axb3 14.axb3 Rxa1 15.Rxa1 Nfd7 16.Rd1**

There is nothing to be done on the a-file, so White comes back to the half-open d-file, where the backward pawn is a welcome target.

**16...Qf6**

Not 16...Nc5? 17.Nxc6 bxc6 18.Bxc5.

**17.Nde2 Nc5**

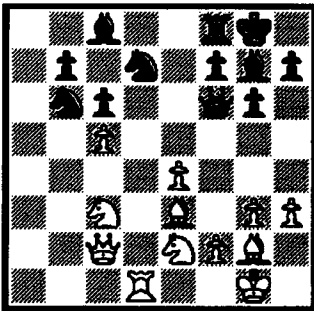
Based on the tactical point 18.e5

Qxe5 19.Bf4 Qf6 20.Bxd6 Bf5 21.Qc1 Nd3!, and White has achieved nothing.

**18.b4!**

In the thick of the fight, White starts a minority attack – the ultimate aim of which is to produce a majority attack!

**18...Ncd7 19.c5 dxc5 20.bxc5**



**20...Na8**

After 20...Nc4 21.Bd4 Qe7 22.Bxg7 Kxg7 23.Na4 Nce5 24.f4, the Knight is lost.

**21.Bd4 Qe7 22.Bxg7 Kxg7 23.Na4**

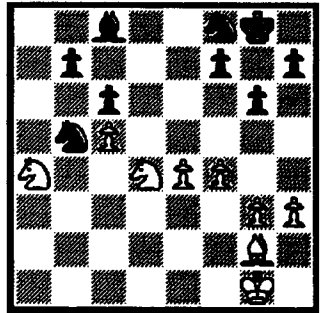
The result of the minority attack is that the Black Queenside is crippled, the d-file is fully open, and that the White Kingside majority now becomes an important factor.

**23...Nc7 24.Nd4 Re8 25.Nb3**

Before White can mobilize his Kingside majority he must thoroughly protect his vulnerable minority pawn on c5.

**25...Nf8 26.f4 Rd8 27.Qc3+ Kg8 28.Rxd8 Qxd8 29.Qd4 Qxd4+ 30.Nxd4 Nb5?**

After this White's advantage assumes decisive dimensions. Black had to play 30...Be6, then after 31.Nxe6 Nxe6 32.Bf1 Kf8, he could still have defended himself.

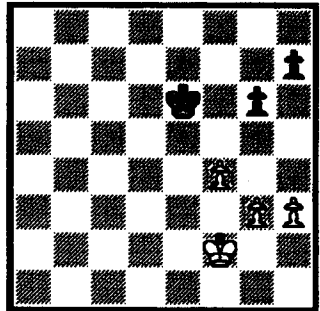


**31.Nb3! Be6 32.Na5**

Winning a pawn, for if the Black Bishop returns to c8, then 33.Nb6.

There followed:

**32...Nd7 33.e5 Nd4 34.Nxb7 f6 35.exf6 Nxf6 36.Na5 Nd7 37.Nxc6 Nb3 38.Nd8 Nbx5 39.Nxc5 Nxc5 40.Nxe6 Nxe6 41.Bd5 Kf7 42.Kf2 Kf6 43.Bxe6 Kxe6**



**44.Kf3 Kd5 45.Ke3 h5 46.Kd3, and Black Resigned.**

## CHAPTER 15

# CONTROLLING THE OPEN FILE

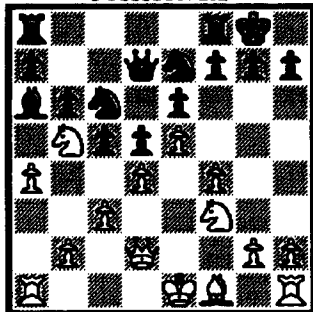
The occupation of an open file does not in itself constitute an advantage; the essential thing is to control it. Unless this can be done, all we are likely to achieve is the exchange of the major pieces (the Queens and Rooks), after which there are generally not many winning chances left.

How are we to get full possession of a file? How are we to prevent the enemy from making use of it on his own account? And assuming that we do finally succeed in controlling the file, what use are we to make of it? These are the questions we shall be trying to answer in this chapter. First though, a few general remarks.

Before making the exchange which will open a file, it is always wise to ask what advantage this will give us. If none, then it is better to put off the exchange until further preparations have been made. The simplest way is to begin by doubling the Rooks.

Other possibilities are the occupation of a support point on the file which is to be opened, or the driving away of the enemy Rooks by a Knight or Bishop. Or in more complex style one might engineer a diversion in another sector, forcing the enemy to fight on two fronts simultaneously.

POSITION 162



(Doubling and tripling on the c-file; from the game Alekhine-Nimzowitsch, San Remo 1930).

**1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5 5.Bd2 Ne7 6.Nb5 Bxd2+ 7.Qxd2 O-O 8.c3 b6 9.f4 Ba6 10.Nf3 Qd7 11.a4 Nbc6**

Black now threatens to open the file by ...cxd4, and then to take the initiative by ...Na5-c4 (occupying the furthest available point on the open file).

**12.b4**

Not only spoiling Black's scheme, but also forcing him to show his hand.

**12...cxb4**

Virtually forced, for after 12...c4, the whole Queenside would be closed, giving White a free hand on the opposite wing.

**13.cxb4 Bb7 14.Nd6 f5**

According to Alekhine, this is the decisive strategic misjudgment. 14...a5 was necessary. Then 15.Bb5 axb4 16.0-0.

**15.a5 Nc8**

If 15...bxa5 16.b5! followed by 17.Rxa5, would be very much in White's favor. Black takes the earliest opportunity to remove the offending Knight.

**16.Nxb7 Qxb7 17.a6 Qf7**

17...Qe7 would be answered by 18.Bb5! (18...Nxb4 19.Rb1).

**18.Bb5 N8e7 19.O-O h6 20.Rfc1**

This initiates the siege of the Black position *via* the c-file.

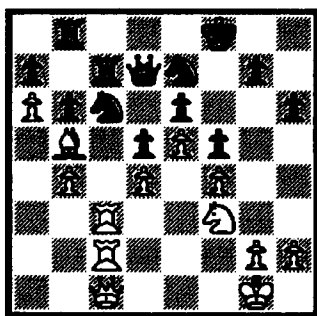
**20...Rfc8 21.Rc2 Qe8**

Black buttresses the Knight on c6 with all the means at his disposal, so as to prevent the invasion down the c-file. The most natural countermeasure in the fight for an open file – namely, the exchange of some pieces – is unfortunately not available to him: 21...Nd8 22.Rac1 Rxc2 23.Rxc2 Rc8 24.Rxc8 Nxc8 25.Qc3 Ne7 26.Qc7, and Black can resign.

### 22.Rac1

Alekhine himself criticized this move later, on the ground that by 22.Ra3!, followed by 23.Rac3 and 24.Qc1, the game could have been shortened by one move.

22...Rab8 23.Qe3 Rc7 24.Rc3 Qd7 25.R1c2 Kf8 26.Qc1



The tripling process is complete, and Black is bound hand and foot. Only the King can move, and he will arrive on the scene too late.

26...Rbc8 27.Ba4!

This threatens to break into the Black defensive lines forthwith by 28.b5.

27...b5 28.Bxb5 Ke8 29.Ba4 Kd8

Guarding the Rook on c7 so that the Knight will be able to move in answer to 30.b5.

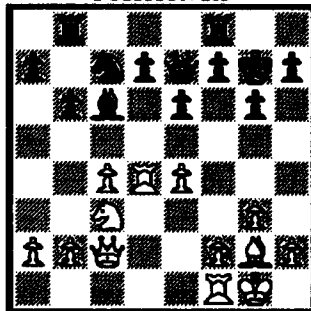
30.h4!

The last straw. Black has only his h-pawn and g-pawn left to move. As soon as these have exhausted their moves, he will have to move ...Qe8;

but this will remove an essential guard from the Rook, and his whole game will be demolished by b5.

**Black Resigned.**

POSITION 163



*(White masters the d-file by means of a pawn sacrifice; from the game Botvinnik-Kan, USSR Championship 1952).*

1.Nf3 c5 2.c4 Nf6 3.g3 b6 4.Bg2 Bb7 5.O-O g6 6.d3 Bg7 7.e4 O-O 8.Nc3 Nc6 9.Ne1 Ne8 10.Bg5 Nc7 11.Qd2 Nd4 12.Bh6 e6 13.Bxg7 Kxg7 14.Nc2 Nxc2 15.Qxc2 Rb8 16.Rad1 Qe7 17.d4 cxd4 18.Rxd4 Bc6

In this position, nine out of ten players would move 19.Rfd1, intensifying the pressure on the backward d-pawn. Botvinnik selects an entirely different method.

19.e5!!

This move involves a pawn sacrifice which Black is virtually bound to accept, in view of the positional threat Ne4 – preceded perhaps by the exchange of the Bishops. The Knight would then threaten to penetrate permanently into the Black position on d6 or f6.

19...Qc5 20.Qd2 Qxe5 21.Bxc6 dxc6 22.Re1

Before occupying the seventh rank, White forces the Black Queen to an unfavorable square.

22...Qf5 23.g4!

Driving the Queen back to f6, so that later on the White Knight can gain a tempo by attacking the Queen as it crosses over.

**23...Qf3 24.Re3 Qf6 25.Rd7**

Over the years this idea of playing a Rook to the seventh rank has become a standard objective. It is the consummation of play in an open file.

**25...Rfd8 26.Red3 Rxd7 27.Rxd7 Ne8**

Compulsory, for after 27...Rc8 28.Ne4 Qf3 29.Nd6 Qxg4+ 30.Kf1 Qh3+ 31.Ke1, and Black can resign.

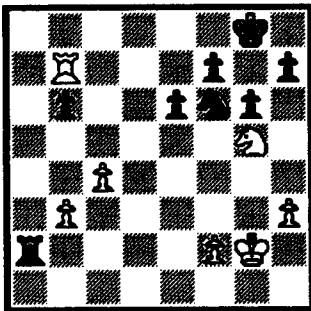
**28.Ne4 Qf3 29.Qd4+ Kg8 30.Ng5 c5 31.Nxf3 cxd4 32.b3**

The immediate 32.Nxd4 has the objection that after 32...Nf6 33.Rxa7 Rd8, the Black Rook would develop some activity.

**32...Rc8**

This leads to a dead lost ending, but 32...Nf6 was hardly any better: 33.Rxd4 Rb7 34.Ne5 g5 35.Kg2 Kf8 36.Rd8+, and Black cannot move a finger to help himself.

**33.Nxd4 Nf6 34.Rxa7 Nxd4 35.Rb7 Rd8 36.Nf3 Rd1+ 37.Kg2 Ra1 38.h3 Nf6 39.Ng5 Rxa2**



**40.Kf3!**

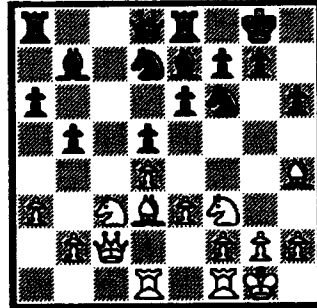
Not 40.Rxf7? because of 40...Ne4!

**40...Rb2 41.Rxb6**

Now White's connected passed pawns must be decisive:

**41...h6 42.Ne4 Nd7 43.Rb5 Kf8? 44.Ke3 15 45.Nd2 Ke7 46.c5 Nf6 47.Rb7+ Kd8 48.Nc4 Nd5+ 49.Kd4 Black Resigned.**

POSITION 164



(Open file with support-points; from the twelfth match game, Alekhine-Capablanca, 1927).

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 d5 4.Bg5 Nbd7 5.e3 Be7 6.Nf3 O-O 7.Rc1 c6 8.Qc2 a6 9.a3 h6 10.Bh4 Re8 11.Rd1 b5 12.cxd5 cxd5 13.Bd3 Bb7 14.O-O**

Here it is obvious that the open c-file is of dominating importance. The routine idea of occupying the furthest available square on the open file is already on the cards; Black can play ...Nb6-c4. White can hardly occupy c5 just yet, not having played b4. From this point of view, Black is a little ahead. On the other hand, White retains the option of evicting a Black piece from c4 by playing b3. While Black holds the initiative, however, this may not be an easy matter.

**14...Rc8 15.Qb1 Qa5**

The combination often seen in this sort of position - 15...Bxa3 16.bxa3 Rxc3, would be pointless here, for White would promptly regain the pawn by 17.a4. A simpler move than the one played, however, was 15...Nb6.



**16.Ne2 Nb6**

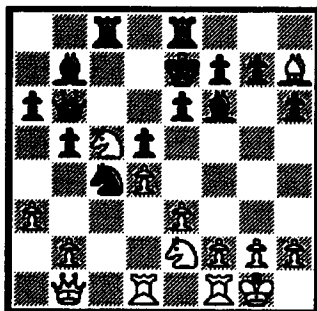
It would have been more prudent to play 16...b4. The boxed-in Queen offers White the opportunity to make tactical complications.

**17.Ne5?**

White misses a tactical chance. He should have played 17.Bxf6! with the point: 17...Bxf6 18.b4 Qxa3 19.Bh7+ Kh8 20.Rd3 Qa4 21.Nc3, etc. Since, moreover, 18...Qa4 (instead of 18...Qxa3) 19.Rd2 Nc4 20.Ra2 followed by 21.Qa1, and 22.Rb1, and finally 23.Nc3, would also lose material, Black would have been forced into 17...gxf6! Then White continues with 18.Nf4, after which Black's ...Nc4 has lost its sting, because of 19.Nxe6! fxe6 20.Bxc4 Rxc4 21.Qg6+, forcing perpetual check.

**17...Nc4 18.Bxf6 Bxf6!**

The recapture with the pawn, which was correct in the previous note, would now be wrong, because of 19.Nxf7! Kxf7 20.Bxc4 Rxc4 21.Qh7+ Kf8 22.Nf4, with the annihilating threat of 23.Ng6#.

**19.Bh7+ Kf8 20.Nd7+ Ke7 21.Nc5 Qb6?**

Black had a stronger line here in the exchange sacrifice 21...Rxc5! with the following possibilities: 1) 22.dxc5 Nxb2 23.Rc1 Qxa3, with decisive advantage to Black. 2) 22.b4 Nxa3! a) 23.bxa5 Nxb1 24.dxc5 Na3, and Black

wins at least a second pawn. b) 23.Qb3 Qa4 24.Qxa4 bxa4 25.dxc5 g6, rapidly followed by ...Rh8, etc.

**22.Nxb7 Qxb7 23.Bd3 Rc7**

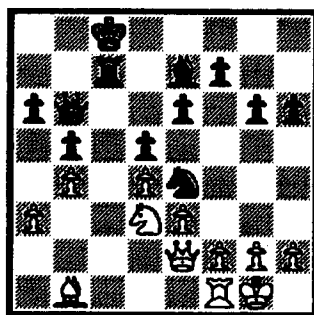
To double the Rooks and thus extract full value from his occupation of c4. The sequel shows, however, that White can undermine the Knight by b3. The proper move to maintain his advantage, therefore, was 23...Kf8. Then, if 24.Qa2, he can reply 24...Be7!, still preventing b3.

**24.Qa2! Rec8 25.b3 Nd6 26.Qd2 Qb6 27.Rc1 Kd7 28.Rxc7+ Rxc7 29.Bb1**

By exchanging a pair of Rooks, White has just about freed himself. He could, of course, play for further exchanges by Rc1, but with this Bishop move he undertakes an interesting attempt to revive his own winning chances. He vacates d3 as a route for his Knight to his own outpost on c5.

**29...Be7 30.Nf4 Kc8 31.Qe2**

If 31.Nd3 immediately, then 31...Ne4 would follow.

**31...g6 32.Nd3 Ne4 33.b4**

The struggle for possession of the outpost reaches its climax.

**33...Rc3?**

The best line was 33...Nd6 34.Nc5 Nc4, after which White would still keep the initiative with 35.e4! The

move actually played, in combination with the next move, forms an instructive mistake.

**34.Qb2 Qc7?**

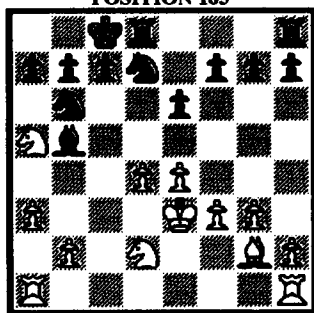
There was nothing better than to concede two tempi by 34...Rc7.

**35.Nc5 Bxc5 36.dxc5 Qe5 37.f4! Qg7**

If 37...Qf6 38.Bxe4 dxe4 39.Rf2!, with the inexorable threat of 40.Rc2.

**38.Bxe4 dxe4 39.Kf2 Qf6 40.g3 g5 41.Rc1 Black Resigned.**

POSITION 165



*(Mastery of the 7th rank; from the game Botvinnik-Vidmar, Groningen 1946).*

**1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.c4 e6 4.g3 dxc4 5.Qa4+ Qd7 6.Qxc4 Qc6 7.Nbd2 Qxc4 8.Nxc4 Bb4+ 9.Bd2 Bxd2+ 10.Nfxd2 Nc6 11.e3 Nb4 12.Ke2 Bd7 13.Bg2 Bc6 14.f3 Nd7 15.a3 Nd5 16.e4 N5b6 17.Na5 Bb5+ 18.Ke3 O-O-O**

It is often difficult to draw the line between middlegame and endgame. Here for instance, one might say that it begins to look like an endgame, with the Queens off; but equally it is true that with all the Rooks and most of the minor pieces still in play, plenty of middlegame character remains. The use that is made of the half-open c-file, makes this a very instructive game for our purpose.

**19.Rhc1 Nb8 20.b3 Bd7**

Black is cramped, and therefore should not object to further exchanges. If he had tried for exchanges here by 20...Nc6, he would have fallen into a subtle trap: 21.a4! Nxa5 22.axb5, and the Knight is lost.

**21.Bf1 Nc6 22.Nxc6 Bxc6 23.a4**

Strictly, this is a minority attack, but it deviates sharply from the characteristic course taken by the previous examples.

**23...Be8**

The threat was 24.a5 and 25.a6.

**24.a5 Na8**

Not a pretty square for a Knight, but it does provide an effective square for the c-pawn; and this might not have been so easy to achieve after 24...Nd7 25.a6 b6 26.Rc3, etc.

**25.a6 b6 26.b4 Kb8**

Black will, of course, have to play ...c6 to release the Knight, but the immediate 26...c6 is unsatisfactory, since after 27.Bb5, the Black King must come to c7, whereupon His Majesty bars his own Knight's route to freedom.

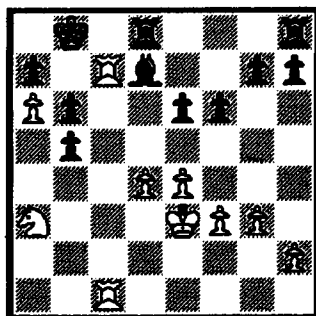
**27.Rc3 c6 28.Rac1 f6 29.Nb1 Bd7 30.Na3 Nc7**

White was threatening to open the c-file by 31.b5.

**31.b5!**

By means of this pawn sacrifice, White conquers the seventh rank.

**31...Nxb5 32.Bxb5 cxb5 33.Rc7**



An interesting position, which provides an excellent demonstration of the power of a Rook on the seventh rank. The principal threat now is 34.Rb7+ Ka8 35.Rcc7, with an immediate decision – the usual result whenever two Rooks get to the seventh rank in the middlegame.

### 33...Rc8?

This looks strong, since the obvious continuation, 34.Rb7+ Ka8 35.Rxc8+ Bxc8 36.Rxg7 Bxa6, would leave Black with adequate counterplay; but Botvinnik has a surprising plan in view. Black's best chance would have been 33...Bc8 34.Nxb5 Rd7!, as White pointed out afterwards. This would have lead, after 35.Rxd7 Bxd7 36.Nxa7 Kxa7 37.Rc7+ Kxa6 38.Rxd7, to a Rook ending, in which the strength of Black's passed b-pawn could be a saving factor.

### 34.Rb7+ Ka8 35.Rxd7!

A pretty sacrifice of the Exchange, by means of which White definitely ensures complete mastery of the seventh rank.

### 35...Rxc1 36.Nxb5 Rhc8

This is the only possible parry to the threat of 37.Rxa7+ Kb8 38.Rb7+ Ka8 39.Nc7+.

### 37.Rxg7 h6 38.Rxa7+ Kb8 39.Rb7+ Ka8 40.Ra7+ Kb8 41.Rb7+ Ka8 42.g4

The last few moves were played only to reach the time control. Now White initiates the final phase. The idea is to play h4-h5, and then to win Black's h-pawn by Rh7.

### 42...e5

Black does not await events. Now White treads a different path to victory.

### 43.d5 R1c5 44.Ra7+ Kb8 45.Rb7+ Ka8 46.Rxb6 Rb8

Putting an end once and for all to the dangerous forays of the White Rook.

The Rook has done his job well and what he has left of the Black position is now an easy prey to the Knight.

### 47.Rxb8+ Kxb8 48.a7+ Kb7

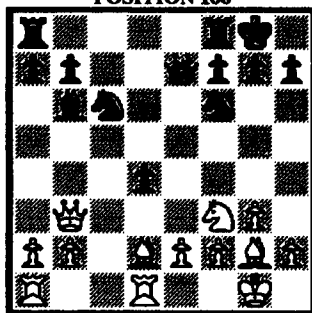
If 48...Ka8, 49.d6 decides the game.

### 49.Nd6+ Kxa7 50.Ne8

The rest is easy:

### 50...Kb6 51.Nxf6 Rc3+ 52.Kf2 Rc7 53.h4 Rf7 54.Nh5 Kc7 55.g5 hxg5 56.hxg5 Rh7 57.Nf6 Rh2+ 58.Kg3 Rh1 59.Kg2 Rh8 60.g6 Black Resigned.

POSITION 166



(Bishop and Rooks cooperate to win the open file; from the game Lasker-Tarrasch, St. Petersburg, 1914).

### 1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 c5 3.c4 e6 4.cxd5 exd5 5.g3 Nc6 6.Bg2 Nf6 7.O-O Be7 8.dxc5 Bxc5 9.Nbd2 d4 10.Nb3 Bb6 11.Qd3 Be6 12.Rd1 Bxb3 13.Qxb3 Qe7 14.Bd2 O-O

This position has various well marked features, such as the isolated d-pawn, and the White light-squared Bishop in *fianchetto*; the open c-file is not quite such an overriding characteristic this time. Nevertheless, as the sequel shows, it still has an important part to play.

### 15.a4!!

The intention is to march this pawn to the sixth rank, where, as we saw in Position No.162, it will undermine the position of the Black Knight. The

result will be that Black will be unable to offer sufficient resistance in the c-file.

**15...Ne4**

Certainly not 15...Qxe2 16.Re1 Qa6 17.Bf1, and the Black Queen is lost. Tarrasch suggested that 15...Bc5 would have been a little stronger, so as to meet 16.a5 with 16...a6.

**16.Be1 Rad8**

It seems from this move that Black was not aware of the danger threatening on the c-file. Otherwise he would have played this Rook to c8.

**17.a5 Bc5 18.a6 bxa6**

After 18...b6 White breaks all resistance in the c-file by 19.Qa4, followed in good time by b4.

**19.Rac1!**

This is the whole point of the preceding maneuvers. Notice also that the advance of the a-pawn has made the White light squared Bishop very active, for the removal of the Black b-pawn has weakened the whole of the long white diagonal. In Chapter 17 we shall see that pawn-advances play a particularly important part in the struggle for the diagonals.

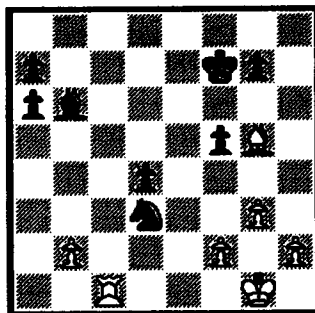
**19...Rc8 20.Nh4!**

Threatening 21.Bxe4 Qxe4 22.Rxc5, and so compelling the following move, which leads by force to the loss of the Exchange.

**20...Bb6 21.Nf5 Qe5 22.Bxe4 Qxe4 23.Nd6 Qxe2 24.Nxc8 Rxc8 25.Qd5**

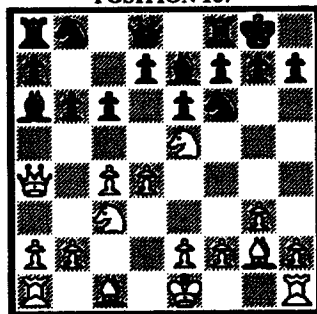
Thus White forces a speedy exchange of Rooks, and so reduces his task to one of technique. The rest of the game, which falls outside our province, we give without comment.

**25...Qe6 26.Qf3 h6 27.Bd2 Ne5 28.Rxc8+ Qxc8 29.Qe4 Nd7 30.Rc1 Qf8 31.Bxh6! Nc5 32.Qg4 f5 33.Qg6 Qf7 34.Qxf7+ Kxf7 35.Bg5 Nd3**



**36.Rb1! Ke6 37.b3 Kd5 38.f3 a5 39.h4 Nc5 40.h5 d3 41.Kf1 a4 42.bxa4 Nxa4 43.Bf6! Ke6 44.Bxg7 Kf7 45.Be5 Nc5 46.Rd1 Black Resigned.**

POSITION 167



*(Black finds an unusual way of conquering the c-file; from the game Stahlberg-Taimanov, Neuhausen-Zurich 1953).*

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6 4.g3 Ba6 5.Qa4 Be7 6.Bg2 O-O 7.Nc3 c6 8.Ne5 (No.167) Qe8**

This serves not only to defend the c-pawn, but also to prepare ...b5, and so to open the c-file.

**9.O-O d5 10.Re1?**

White should have opened the c-file himself by 10.cxd5. Now he is forced into a disadvantageous position.

**10...b5! 11.cxb5 cxb5 12.Qd1 b4 13.Nb1**

There was more counterplay in 13.Na4 Bb5 14.Nc5.

**13...Nc6 14.Nxc6?**

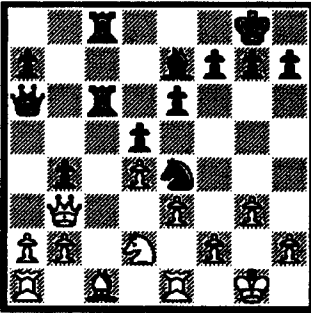
Now Black holds all the trumps. 14.Bf4, or even 14.Nf3, would have been better than this move.

**14...Qxc6 15.Nd2 Qb6!**

This attack on the d-pawn forces White to forgo his intended e4. On the other hand, if Black had played 15...Rac8, White could still have gotten into the game by 16.e4, e.g. 16...Qc2? 17.Qxc2 Rxc2 18.exd5.

**16.e3**

If 16.Nf3, Black could reply either 16...Rac8 17.Bg5 Rc4 or 16...Ne4 17.Bf4 Rac8, in either case with strong pressure in the c-file.

**16...Rac8 17.Bf1 Rc6 18.Bxa6 Qxa6 19.Nf3 Rfc8 20.Qb3 Ne4 21.Nd2**

Since 21.Bd2 Rc2 22.Rad1 (22.Red1 Qe2) 22...Qc4! leads to a dead lost game, White offers to give up two minor pieces for a Rook, intending thereby to get full possession of the c-file for himself: 21...Rxc1 22.Rex1 Nxd2 23.Rxc8+ Qxc8 24.Qd1, followed by 25.Rc1. In this way he would retain some slender drawing chances.

**21...Rc2! 22.Nxe4 dxe4 23.a3 h5!**

Now that Black has complete control of the c-file, it is a good idea to take the initiative on another front.

**24.d5 R8c4 25.Rd1**

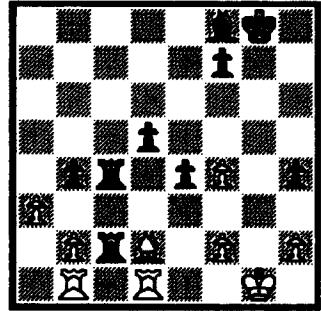
Offering a pawn in order to complete his development. There is no time for 25.dxe6, for after the reply 25...Qxe6, Black threatens 26...Rxc1!.

**25...exd5 26.Bd2 Qf6 27.Rab1 h4 28.Qa4 Qf5!**

Preventing the White Queen from hurrying across to the threatened Kingside *via* d7.

**29.Qxa7 Bf8 30.Qb8 g5 31.gxh4 gxh4 32.Qf4**

Or 32.Be1 d4! 33.Rxd4 Rxd4 34.exd4 e3! The move played, however, leads to a lost ending.

**32...Qxf4 33.exf4**

**33...d4 34.b3 Rc6 35.axb4 f5 36.h3 Ra6 37.Rbc1 Rxc1 38.Rxc1 Ra2 39.Be1 Rb2 40.Kg2 Rxb3 41.Rc8 Rb1 42.Bd2 e3! White Resigned.**

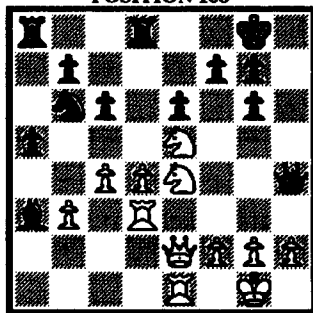
## CHAPTER 16

# PLAY ON THE RANKS

From all the examples we have looked at up until now, the reader may perhaps have gotten the impression that Rooks can come fully into action only by way of an open file – and therefore only after the obstructing pawn has been removed, either by exchange or sacrifice.

There is, however, another way for a Rook to get right into the firing line. It can move in front of its own pawns, and make use of an open or half-open rank. The analogy with an open file is not a complete one. The characteristic maneuvers, doubling and tripling, are not usually available, and pawn support is usually lacking. It follows that this way of mobilizing the Rooks is not very important from the strategic point of view. Tactically, however, it is an important and frequently decisive intervention in a Kingside attack. Here are a few snapshots showing the sort of thing that can happen.

POSITION 168



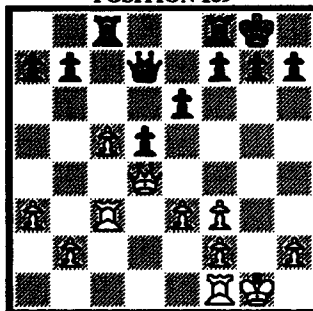
*(A sudden raid; from the game Yates-Reti, New York 1924).*

Black's last move was 22...Qf4-h4?. If he had foreseen White's next two moves, he would certainly have played 22...Rxd4! 23.Rxd4 Qxe5.

**23.Rh3 Qe7 24.Ng5!!**

This Knight cannot be taken because of 25.Rh8+ Kxh8 26.Nxf7+. Now White's threats (Nxf7, and Qg4) are so formidable that there is nothing for Black to do but resign.

POSITION 169



*(With a surprising pawn sacrifice, Black prepares a Rook foray on his third rank; from the game Marshall-Stoltz, Warsaw 1935).*

Positionally, White's situation is not at all bad. He has the Queenside pawn majority, and an open g-file which may have great future possibilities. For the moment the one feature which overshadows all others is the weakening of White's King position. This is the background of the following combination:

**20...e5!! 21.Qxe5 Rc6 22.e4**

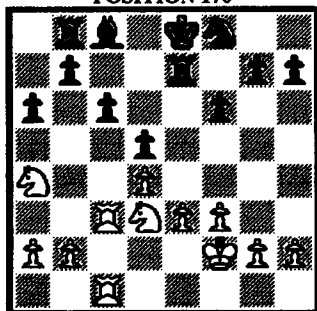
Upon 22.Kh1 there comes 22...Qh3 23.Rg1 Qxf3+. The idea of the text move is to meet 22...Qh3 with 23.f4!.

**22...d4!**

This forces the White Rook along the third rank to an undefended square, and so eliminates the defense by f4.

**23.Rd3 Qh3 24.Rxd4 Rg6+** and Black won easily.

POSITION 170



(Positional intermezzo; from the game Capablanca-Mieses, Kissingen 1928).

Capablanca preferred not to push the pawns too early. The advantage of this rule is exemplified in this position, where the familiar minority attack is rejected in favor of operations with Knights and Rooks.

**25.Rb3**

White wants to provoke ...b5. He threatens 26.Rxc6.

**25...Nd7 26.g4 b5 27.Nac5 Nb6?**

There was more resistance in 27...Nxc5 28.Rxc5 Bb7 29.Nb4 Kd7.

**28.Nb4 Bb7 29.Nxb7 Rbxb7 30.Rxc6 a5 31.Rxb6 axb4**

If 31...Rxb6, of course 32.Nxd5.

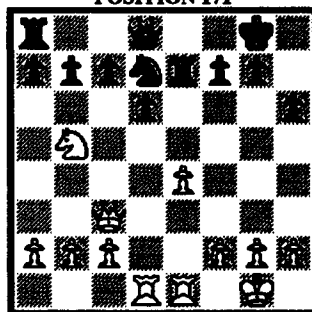
**32.Rxb7 Rxb7 33.Rxb4 Black Resigned.**

(Lasker's famous Rook maneuver; from the fourth match game Tarrasch-Lasker, 1908).

White's last move, 15.Qd4-c3 attacks c7 and at the same time vacates d4 for the Knight, which will be able to cross over to f5, from where

it will support a dangerous – possibly decisive – Kingside attack. Another characteristic maneuver for White in such a position, would be to bring a Rook into strong play along the third rank, but Lasker is one jump ahead.

POSITION 171



**15...Re5!**

Indirect protection of the c-pawn (16.Nxc7? Rc5 or 16.Qxc7 Qxc7 17.Nxc7 Rc8).

**16.Nd4 Rc5 17.Qb3 Nb6 18.f4**

Cutting off the Rooks return to e5. It looks as though the Black Rook foray is going to be proved premature.

**18...Qf6 19.Qf3 Re8 20.c3 a5**

Support for the Rook.

**21.b3 a4 22.b4 Rc4**

Still deeper into the enemy lines.

**23.g3 Rd8**

Preparing for liberation by ...c5.

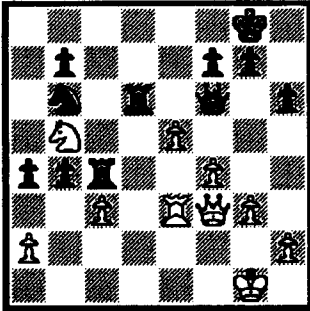
**24.Re3**

Protecting the c-pawn so that the Knight can be dispatched on a Rook-hunt.

**24...c5 25.Nb5 cxb4 26.Rxd6**

This is the combination which White had hoped would refute the whole of Black's strategy.

**26...Rxd6 27.e5**



**27...Rxf4!**

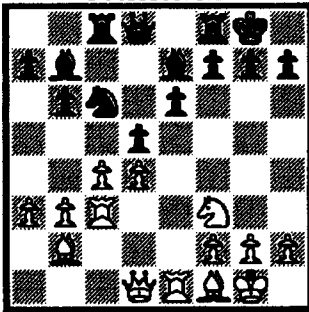
The flaw in White's calculations.

**28.gxf4 Qg6+ 29.Kh1?**

Upset by the total collapse of his plans, White now makes a serious blunder. 29.Kf1 was the better move.

**29...Qb1+ 30.Kg2 Rd2+ 31.Re2 Qxa2 32.Rxd2 Qxd2+ 33.Kg3 a3!** and Black won.

POSITION 172



*(All that glitters is not gold; from the game Keres-Smyslov, Zurich 1953).*

**16.Ne5 Nxe5 17.Rxe5?**

White goes in for Rook operations on the third and fifth ranks, but these will be convincingly refuted. Recapturing with the pawn was correct.

**17...Bf6 18.Rh5 g6 19.Rch3**

A surprising move, based on the continuation, 19...gxh5 20.Qxh5 Re8 21.a4!

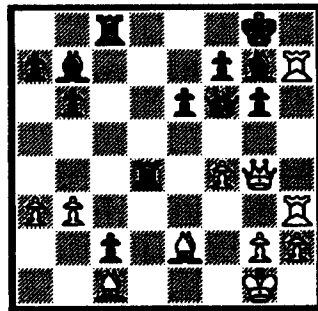
**19...dxc4!**

Now he does threaten to take the Rook, since his Bb7 can defend h7 from e4.

**20.Rxh7 c3 21.Qc1 Qxd4 22.Qh6 Rfd8**

White was threatening both 23.Rh8+ and 23.Rg7+, with mate on h7.

**23.Bc1 Bg7 24.Qg5 Qf6 25.Qg4 c2 26.Be2 Rd4! 27.f4**



**27...Rd1+ 28.Bxd1 Qd4+ and White Resigned.**

There are, of course, varied possibilities for the Rooks operating along the ranks. At present however, these examples will be enough, since these Rook maneuvers occur incidentally under various other headings in this volume. Moreover, the mobilization of the Rooks is taken up again in *The Middlegame - Book Two*. For further study under the heading, "Types of Kingside Attack".



## CHAPTER 17

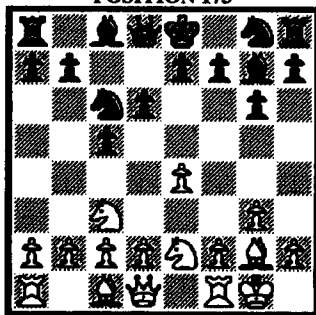
### THE STRUGGLE FOR THE DIAGONALS

What an open file is to the Rook, an open diagonal is to the Bishop; but it is usually much easier for a Bishop to play an active role. It is a matter of experience that under normal circumstances a Bishop can almost automatically find some square from which it can exert an important influence on the play. Modern opening systems however, such as the King's Indian and the Sicilian, have brought the significance of the diagonals very much into the foreground. Certain fashionable lines are steeped in this idea of fighting for the diagonals - for instance, in many King's Indian lines Black plays e-pawn takes d-pawn, leaving his opponent in possession of the center, simply in order to increase the scope of his dark-squared Bishop.

The Bishop has the advantage that he can operate from afar. From a corner on one flank he can powerfully affect the play on the opposite flank.

Experience has shown that a pawn-storm can be an important method of lengthening a Bishop's diagonal.

POSITION 173



*(Black storms with his Queenside pawns in order to control the long dark-squared diagonal with his Bishop; from the game Nilsson-Euwe, The Hague 1928).*

**1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.g3 g6 4.Bg2 Bg7 5.Nge2 d6 6.O-O (No.173) Rb8 7.d3**

White's treatment of the opening has not been particularly exact. There was no hurry to get castled; it would have been wiser to play d3 and Be3 first, with a threat of d4 to keep Black busy. By neglecting this he allows Black's operations to develop smoothly.

**7...b5 8.Nd5 e6 9.Ne3 Nge7 10.c3**

Just about compulsory, for after 10.Rb1 b4 11.Bd2, Black continues very strongly with ...a5, threatening ...a4-a3.

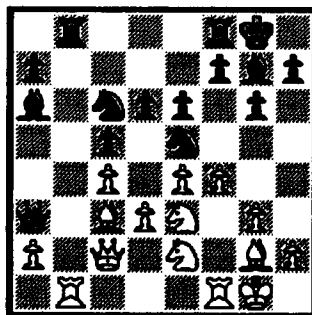
**10...b4 11.Bd2 O-O 12.Qc1 bxc3 13.bxc3**

Black would also have a promising game after 13.Bxc3 Nd4 14.Bxd4 cxd4 15.Nc2 Qb6, but this line would at least have had the advantage of keeping the dangerous long diagonal closed.

**13...Ba6 14.Qc2 Qa5 15.Rab1 Ne5! 16.c4**

Now Black's aim is achieved; the diagonal is definitely open.

**16...Qa3 17.Bc3 N7c6 18.f4**



18...Nd4!

Forcing the following liquidation, which is in Black's favor.

19.Bxd4 cxd4 20.fxe5 dxe3 21.exd6 Qxd6 22.Rxb8 Rxb8 23.Rb1 Rb4! 24.Rb3

24.Rxb4 Qxb4 would give Black's Queen a chance to get in at d2 or e1.

24...Qb6 25.Bf3 Qa5

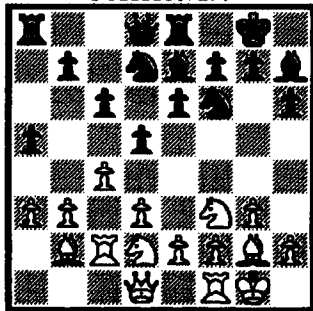
Threatening to win by 26...Rxb3 27.Qxb3 Qe1+ and 28...Qf2+.

26.Nc1 Bd4 27.Kf1 e5 28.Rxb4 Qxb4 29.Nb3 Bc8 30.Ke2 a5!

The decisive advance, compelling White to abandon his positions so that the storm troops can infiltrate.

31.Nxd4 exd4 32.c5 a4 33.c6 a3 34.c7 Qb2 35.Kd1 Qa1+ 36.Ke2 Qg1! White Resigned.

POSITION 174



(Involving various diagonals; from the game Capablanca-Lilienthal, Moscow 1936).

1.Nf3 d5 2.c4 c6 3.b3 Bf5 4.Bb2 e6 5.g3 Nf6 6.Bg2 Nbd7 7.O-O h6 8.d3 Be7 9.Nbd2 O-O 10.Rc1 a5 11.a3 Re8 12.Rc2 Bh7 (No.174) 13.Qa1

"Doubling" on the diagonal – an idea typical of the so-called hypermodern style, which originated around 1920 with the masters Reti and Breyer. The center was not occupied by pawns, but controlled from a distance by the

long range pieces.

13...Bf8

Passive defense. An active counter by 13...Bd6, to be followed by ...e5, was preferable.

14.Re1 Qb6 15.Bh3 Bc5 16.Rf1 Bf8 17.Rcc1 Rad8 18.Rfe1 Bc5 19.Rf1 Bf8 20.Bg2 Bd6 21.Ne5

So far both sides have been groping for a plan of campaign, but this move precipitates a phase of battle for the diagonals.

21...Bxe5 22.Bxe5 Nxe5 23.Qxe5 Nd7 24.Qb2 Nf6?

Black perseveres with his waiting policy. He should have struck at the center by 24...c5! (25.cxd5 exd5 26.Bxd5 Rxe2).

25.b4! axb4 26.Qxb4 Qxb4 27.axb4 Ra8 28.Ra1 Nd7 29.Nb3 Kf8 30.Ra5

An idea already familiar to us from previous chapters. White forces a clearing-up of the open file situation by occupying its furthest available square. Compare the move 23...Rb4! in the previous game.

30...dxc4?

30...Ke7 was essential. This exchange is grist to White's mill, extending the range of his Bishop.

31.dxc4 Nb6 32.Rxa8!

A strong move, now that White can work with tactical devices.

32...Rxa8 33.Na5 Ra7 34.Rd1

Threatening to win by 35.Bxc6! bxc6 36.Rd8+ Ke7 37.Nxc6+.

34...Ke8

If 34...Ke7 35.Bxc6! settles it at once.

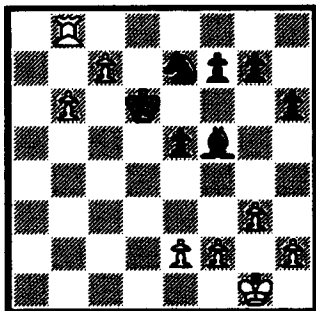
35.Nxb7!

The long diagonal is violently opened.

35...Rxb7 36.Bxc6+ Rd7 37.c5 Ke7 38.Bxd7 Nxd7 39.c6

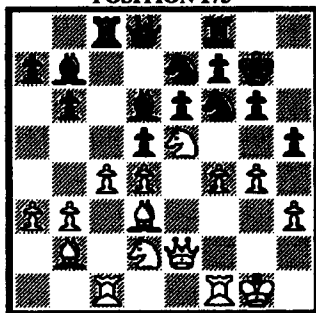
Black eventually had to concede the game after the following moves:

39...Nb6 40.c7 Bf5 41.Rd8 e5 42.Rb8 Nc8 43.b5 Kd6 44.b6 Ne7



45.Rf8 Bc8 46.Rxf7 Nd5 47.Rxg7 Nxb6 48.Rh7 Nd5 49.Rxh6+ Kxc7 50.e4 Ne7 51.f3 Kd7 52.h4 Ke8 53.Rf6 Ng8 54.Rc6 Black Resigned.

POSITION 175

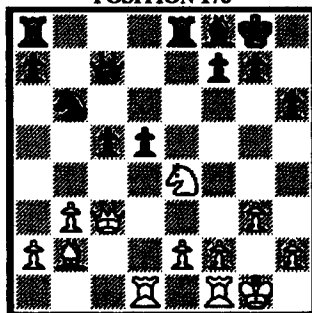


(The long diagonal again; snapshot from the game Alekhine-Roselli, Zurich 1934).

18.c5!!

Based on the position of White's Bishop at b2. If now 18...bxc5 19.dxc5 Bxc5+ there follows 20.Rxc5! Rxc5 21.g5, and the Knight cannot leave its place without the Queen being lost. Black played: 18...Bxe5 but after 19.fxe5 Nd7 20.b4 his positional disadvantage was decisive.

POSITION 176



(Yet another long diagonal combination; from the game Lachmann-Muller, Stolp 1934).

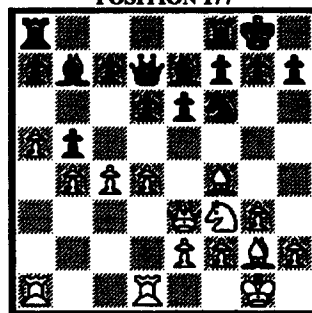
1.Nf6+!! gxf6 2.Qxf6 d4

Shutting the dangerous diagonal; but White was ready for this.

3.Rxd4! cxd4 4.Bxd4 Kh7 5.g4!!

The key move! There is no defense now to the threat 6.Qh8+ Kg6 7.Qg8+. If instead White had played 5.Qh8+ Kg6 6.g4, Black could have saved himself in a surprising way: 6...Qxh2+! 7.Kxh2 Bd6+ and 8...Rxg8.

POSITION 177



(A characteristic finesse; from the game Szabo-Keres, Budapest 1952).

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6 4.g3 Bb7

5.Bg2 Be7 6.O-O O-O 7.Nc3 Ne4  
 8.Qc2 Nxc3 9.Qxc3 Be4 10.Bf4 d6  
 11.Qe3 Bb7 12.Rfd1 Nd7 13.b4 Nf6  
 14.a4 Qd7 15.a5 b5? (No.177)  
 16.Ne5!! dxe5 17.dxe5

Not 17.Bxb7, of course, because of 17...exf4.

17...Qc8

The attempt to close the diagonal by 17...Nd5 is not good enough: 18.exf6, and now: 1) 18...Bxf6 19.Qd4 threatening 20.e4. 2) 18...gxf6 19.a6 Bc6 20.Qc3, followed by Rac1.

18.exf6 Bxf6 19.Rac1 Bxg2 20.Kxg2

The outcome of White's combination is that the enemy Queenside is seriously weakened, especially in the c-file. The game continued:

20...e5 21.Bg5 Bxg5 22.Qxg5 Qb7+  
 23.Kg1 Rae8 24.cxb5 Qxb5 25.Qd2  
 Qa6 26.Qd3! Qe6 27.Rxc7.

White wins a pawn, and ultimately the game.

It will not have escaped the reader that the tactical element plays a relatively larger part in the fight for diagonals than in the struggle for ranks and files, where the positional element predominates. The explanation is to be found in the difference between the powers of Rook and Bishop. The Rook is strong enough to wreak havoc on its own account once it has forced an entry into enemy territory; but the Bishop cannot do much on its own, and needs the support of the other pieces. In position No.173, for instance, the struggle on the long dark diagonal was accompanied by the opening of the b-file for the Rooks. And here we are anticipating the subject of our next chapter.

## CHAPTER 18

# CONVERGING LINES

Players who have taken the trouble to memorize lengthy opening variations are often heard to complain that all their midnight oil is wasted when the opponent deviates too early from the standard lines. Even if the move made is distinctly weaker than that given in the book, our budding theorist lacks the playing strength to take proper advantage. He loses his way in the complications and loses the game.

It is not fair to condemn opening study on the grounds of such experiences. Chess is not a science – at least, not exclusively a science. The proportion as we see it is roughly one quarter science, one quarter art, and all the rest – battle. Chess is inexhaustible, and our aim in this chapter is to gather up the positional conceptions so far considered and exhibit them to the reader in relation to one another.

What we have been saying above about opening theory is certainly no less true of the theory of the middlegame. We may know all there is to know about the technique of opening a file or getting possession of a diagonal; we may be able to weigh up all the pros and cons of the various pawn formations with great precision; yet in actual play we shall meet with setbacks again and again.

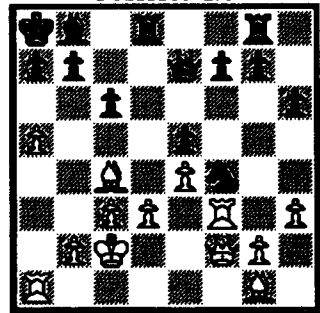
It is most unusual for one specific feature to control the whole course of a game. Other features repeatedly intervene. At first one thing may seem most important, but then suddenly another comes to the forefront. An open file may be of value only in conjunction with one or more of the diagonals. One pawn formation

rapidly dissolves into another. Now our Knight is stronger than a Bishop; then precisely the opposite is true. In short, each move as it is played may radically alter the aspect of the game. On the board, just as in real life, we must keep reassessing the changing situation.

The reader must not be deterred by all of this. The knowledge that he has acquired by now is not wasted. On the contrary, it has placed him firmly on the right lines, and should have given him plenty of self confidence.

Now for some actual play.

POSITION 178



*(A potpourri of files and diagonals; from the game Rubinstein-Hromadka, Mährisch Ostrau 1923).*

What is the most important feature of this position for White? Is it the open f-file? Is it the diagonal from a2 to the right or is it the diagonal from g1 to the left? Is it the a-file which is yet to be opened? Will the half-open d-file be valuable to Black?

The answers are given in the form of a sparkling combination.

**23.g3!! Nxh3 24.Rxf7 Qd6**

The ending after 24...Nxf2 25.Rxe7, is a win for White, as his Rook controls the seventh rank.

**25.Qb6!!**

One of the most staggering moves in the whole of chess history. Is it an accident that the only right square for this move is b6, a sort of highest common factor of all the lines and diagonals mentioned above? Very definitely not!

**25...Rd7**

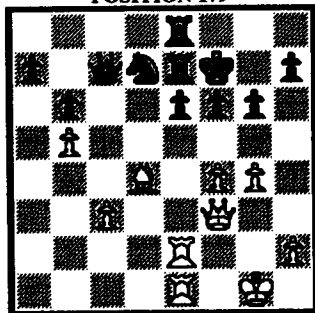
If 25...axb6, White wins by 26.axb6+ Ba7 27.Rxa7+ Kb8 28.Rfxb7+ Kc8 29.Ba6.

**26.Bc5!**

This is the real point.

**26...Rxf7 27.Bxd6 Rf2+ 28.Qxf2 Nxf2 29.Bc5! Black Resigned.**

POSITION 179



*(Explosion at the crossroads; from the game Alekhine-Bogolyubov, Nottingham 1936).*

**35.g5! fxc5?**

Better was 35...f5, after which White would have continued with 36.h4.

**36.f5!!**

A highly unexpected move, which suddenly throws the emphasis on files and diagonals hitherto unused.

**36...Qf4**

In his book, *My Best Games of Chess, 1924-1937*, Alekhine gives the following possibilities:

1) 36...exf5 37.Qd5+ Kf8 38.Bg7+ and wins. 2) 36...gxf5 37.Qh5+ Kf8 38.Qh6+ Kg8 39.Qxg5+, and wins. 3) 36...e5 37.Qd5+ Kf8 38.Qc6! Qxc6 39.bxc6 exd4 40.Rxe7 Rxe7 41.Rxe7 Kxe7 42.c7, and wins.

All sorts of apparently chance features play a part in this combination—various open files and diagonals and even the support point at c6.

**37.fxe6+ Rxe6 38.Qd5**

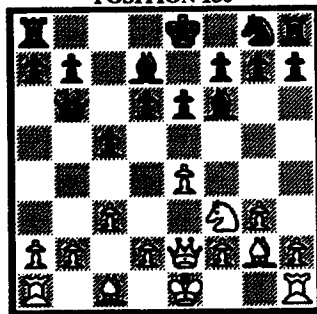
According to Alekhine, the line, 38.Qh3 Qh4 39.Rf1+ Kg8 40.Rxe6!, would also have lead to a win.

**38...Nf6 39.Bxf6 Qg4+ 40.Rg2 Qf5 41.Be5**

Of course, not 41.Qc4 Qc5+, and Black wins.

**41...Kg8 42.Rf2 Qg4+ 43.Kh1 h5 44.Rg1 Qh4 45.Rf6 Kh7 46.Rxe6 Rxe6 47.Qd7+ Black Resigned.**

POSITION 180



*(Various features pass in review; from the sixth match game Chigorin-Tarrasch, 1893).*

**1.e4 e6 2.Qe2 c5 3.g3 Nc6 4.Bg2 Nd4 5.Qd3 Be7 6.Nc3 Bf6 7.Nb5 Nxb5 8.Qxb5 Qb6 9.Qe2 d6 10.Nf3 Bd7 11.c3**

We have chosen for our last game in this section, one which provides us with illustrations of several of the

features we have been studying. We keep our notes concise, and base them in the main on the excellent analysis by Tarrasch in his well-known book, *Dreihundert Schachpartien*.

### 11...Bb5

Many years after this game was played, Tarrasch used to be accused of playing too dogmatically; for instance, he strongly condemned the playing of any piece twice in the opening. It is certainly not so in this game, for rather than complete his development by 11...Ne7, he prefers to devote several tempi solely to inducing a weakening of the White pawn structure. It is curious to think that some twenty-five years later this strategy in the hands of Reti was to be called new and hypermodern.

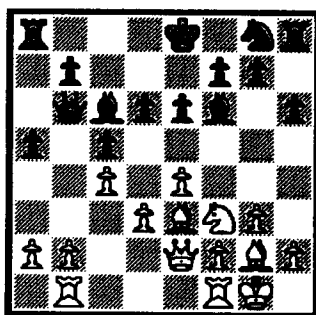
### 12.d3 Qa6 ! 13.c4 Bc6

The pawn position has been completely transformed, and our treatment in chapter 9 would now classify it as a Pseudo-Stonewall.

### 14.O-O h6

Black does not wish to have his active Bishop exchanged (by White's Bg5).

### 15.Be3 Qb6 16.Rab1 a5



### 17.a3?

The proper sequence is 17.b3 and only then 18.a3. This is a point we

made in our introductory discussion in Chapter 9.

### 17...a4! 18.Rfd1 e5

Naturally White is not allowed to play d4. After this last move of Black's, we have a double Pseudo-Stonewall.

### 19.Nd2 Ne7 20.Nf1 Bd7 21.Bd2 Nc6 22.Bc3

Tarrasch rejects this move and the subsequent exchange as unsatisfactory. The stronger line was 22.Ne3 Nd4 23.Qf1, followed by Bc3 and Nd5.

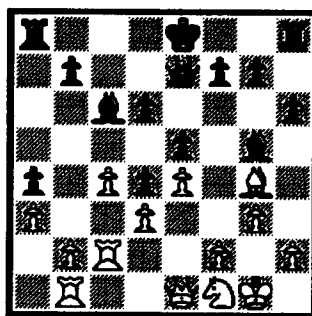
### 22...Nd4 23.Bxd4 cxd4

The pawn formation has undergone another change, and is now our "Blocked Oblique Center, with d-pawn forward", with the difference however, that Black has a pawn on d6 instead of c5.

### 24.Bf3 Qc7 25.Bg4

This move shows that Chigorin, consciously or unconsciously, knows all about the "bad Bishop". He offers to exchange his bad Bishop for Black's good Bishop.

### 25...Bc6 26.Rdc1 Bg5 27.Rc2 Qe7 28.Qe1



### 28...h5

Not only to repel the Bishop, but also in due course to open the h-file.

29. Bd1

Tarrasch rightly considered that this Bishop should have stayed on the other diagonal – h3-c8.

29... Qe6 30. f3 Bd8 31. Qf2

White lets himself be blocked in. 31. f4 was necessary.

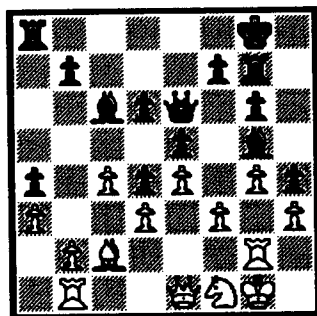
31... h4 32. Qg2 Rh6 33. g4

To keep the game closed, but now White is condemned to complete passivity.

33... Bg5 34. h3 Kf8 35. Qe2 Kg8 36. Qe1 g6

Black's plan of entry into the White position is threefold: First, ...f5; then ...b5 to open the b-file; finally, ...d5, breaking into the center.

37. Rg2 Rh7 38. Bc2 Rg7



39. Qd1

In spite of the risks involved, White should have played 39. b4 axb3 40. Rxb3. After the text move he can only await his fate, without being able to do anything at all to fend off the impending dangers.

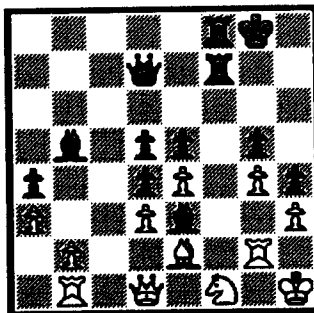
39... Qd7 40. Qe1 f5 41. Bd1 Rf8 42. Be2 fxe4 43. fxe4 Rg7

The first file is open, and Black already has his Rooks doubled on it. As yet, however, he cannot penetrate; he must proceed with the second part of his plan.

44. Qd1 b5 45. cxb5 Bxb5 46. Nh2 Be3+ 47. Kh1 g5!

Eliminating any counterchance White might have manufactured by g5 and Bg4.

48. Nf1 d5



49. Nd2

After 49. Nxe3 dxe3 50. Qc1, Black wins easily by 50... dxe4 51. dxe4 Bd3! 52. Bxd3 Qxd3. White's move is one last attempt to hold on to the blockade square, e4.

49... Bc6 50. exd5 Bxd5 51. Ne4 Qc6 52. Ra1 Rf4!

If 52... Bxe4 53. dxe4 Qxe4, White has the reply, 54. Bc4.

53. Kh2 Rxe4

The strongest continuation.

54. dxe4 Bxe4 55. Bf1 Bxg2 56. Bxg2 Rf2

Right to the end, this game demonstrates the importance of the convergent lines. Here the Queen on the long diagonal and the Rook on the seventh rank converge on g2.

57. Qh1 e4 58. Qb1 Qd6+ 59. Kh1 Rxg2 White Resigned.



## PART FIVE – WEAK PAWNS

### CHAPTER 19 THE ISOLATED PAWN

There are few subjects in the game of chess on which opinions are so divided as that of the isolated pawn. It is of course agreed that an isolated pawn – i.e. a pawn which has no pawn of its own color on either neighboring file, and so can never be given pawn protection – has its disadvantages; yet there are many who hold that an isolated d-pawn brings with it so many counterbalancing advantages as at least to neutralize the disadvantages.

The great champion of the isolated d-pawn was Dr. Tarrasch. The defense which bears his name (1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 c5 4.cxd5 exd5 5.Nf3 Nc6) stands or falls by the value of the d-pawn. It was Rubinstein who developed a system (6.g3, followed by Bg2) which directly challenged the doctrines of Tarrasch. Many years have gone since then, but there is still no absolute certainty as to whether the isolated d-pawn is weak or strong.

There are still plenty of masters, e.g. Unzicker, Lundin, and even Botvinnik, who readily permit the isolation of the d-pawn, and continue to record their successes.

On such a hotly debated point, of course, much experience has been gained over the years. The first objective in the fight against an isolated pawn is to control the square in front of it, and best of all to occupy that square with a Knight. After that the pawn itself must be put under

pressure. It is wise also to seek simplification, as the weakness of the isolated pawn becomes more marked as more pieces are removed from the board.

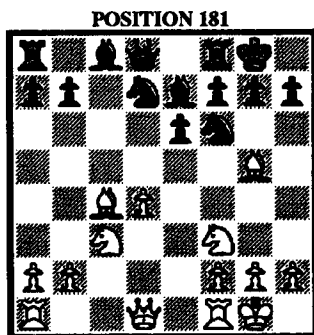
Even still, when one has succeeded in carrying out all these plans, there remains the burning question: is an isolated d-pawn a fatal weakness in the endgame? Here then we have a thread running right through the game – opening, middlegame, and endgame – and the answer to the question we have just posed about the endgame, would have great significance in the theory of the openings.

Alas, there is still no absolutely definite answer. It is true that in the endgame an isolated d-pawn is bound to be a handicap. The defense is not easy, and the slightest slip may be fatal. On the other hand, even present day practice has not shown the task of the defender to be hopeless. Even the technique of a Capablanca was not always able to win. It is, however, fairly safe to say that any other weakness in the pawn structure – a second isolated pawn or a doubled pawn – really would make the case hopeless.

In view of all of this, it is no wonder that there are still players who, in the spirit of the famous motto of Tarrasch: "Before the endgame the gods have placed the middlegame," will most willingly plunge for an isolated

d-pawn. For in the middlegame such a pawn carries real advantages. In the first place, its owner is sure to have freedom of movement, and by making good use of the support points, he can often gather his forces for an all out Kingside assault which may prove decisive.

We now let some actual play speak for itself, and we begin with two model games which should not be omitted from any book dealing with this theme; the first shows the advantages, and the second shows the disadvantages of the isolated d-pawn.



*(The strength of the isolated d-pawn; from the game Botvinnik-Vidmar, Nottingham 1936).*

**1.c4 e6 2.Nf3 d5 3.d4 Nf6 4.Nc3 Be7 5.Bg5 O-O 6.e3 Nbd7 7.Bd3 c5 8.O-O cxd4 9.exd4 dxc4 10.Bxc4 (No.181) Nb6?**

In accordance with the principle of controlling as quickly as possible the square in front of the isolated pawn - in this case the d5 square. Botvinnik's notes, however, point out that 10...a6! would be a better move here. Then if 11.a4, Black could play 11...Nb6 with the difference that White's weakened b4 square would have provided extra counterchances for Black.

**11.Bb3**

It is very important to maintain the Bishop on this diagonal, as the following play will make clear.

**11...Bd7 12.Qd3 Nbd5?**

With this move, admittedly Black occupies the vital d5 square; but at the same time he is neglecting another important requirement - the need to simplify. The right move was 12...Nfd5! which would have forced exchanges, e.g. if 13.Bc2, then 13...g6, threatening both 14...Bxg5 and 14...Nb4; or if 13.Ne4, then 13...Ba4 etc.

**13.Ne5 Bc6 14.Rad1**

It is always difficult to judge how to make the best use of the Rooks in a case like this. They could be planted on the open files i.e. at c1 and e1, but then the weakness of the d-pawn stands out.

Another placing would be c1 and d1; but the ideal arrangement is that chosen by Botvinnik. It will soon become clear why the Rook is best left at f1.

**14...Nb4**

This merely drives the Queen to a better square. More to the point would be either 14...Rc8 (to answer Nxc6 with ...Rxc6, and also to start operations on the c-file) or else 14...Qa5 (to simplify by means of 15...Nxc3 16.bxc3 Ba4).

**15.Qh3 Bd5 16.Nxd5 Nbx5?**

After this move, the White attack breaks with full intensity. Again 16...Nfxd5 should have been chosen. Then if 17.Bc1, Rc8 could follow; and in any case Black would have had ...f5 available if needed.

**17.f4!**

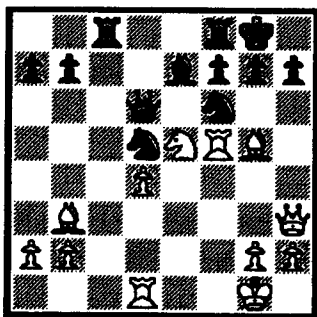
Played at the right moment, for Black cannot prevent the advance f5 by means of 17...g6, because of 18.Bh6 Re8 19.Ba4.

**17...Rc8**

After 17...Ne4, Botvinnik would have continued with the sacrifice 18.Nxf7, and if 18...Rxf7 19.Qxe6, or if 18...Kxf7 19.Rde1, obtaining a very strong attack in either case.

**18.f5 exf5 19.Rxf5**

Now it is clear why the Rook stayed on f1, and what an important duty awaited the Bishop on b3. The White pieces now work together like the components of a well-oiled machine.

**19...Qd6**

Giving his opponent the opportunity to force the game prettily. Afterwards the question was debated whether Black could have held out by 19...Rc7, but it seems that in that case too, White can still get the better of it. After 19...Rc7 comes 20.Rdf1, and then: 1) 20...a6 21.Nxf7! Rxf7 22.Bxd5 Nxd5 23.Rxf7 Bxg5 24.Qe6! 2) 20...Nb6 21.Qh4 Nbd5 22.Nxf7 Rxf7 23.Bxd5 Nxd5 24.Rxf7 Bxg5 25.Qxg5!, and wins. These lines are analysis by the Russian master Panov.

**20.Nxf7!**

Always this same sacrifice. It is no accident that the offer is made on the square where the lines of action of the Rooks and Bishop meet. In problem terminology, this is a cutting-point, so we may describe this as a cutting-point combination.

**20...Rxf7**

If 20...Kxf7, simply 21.Bxd5+.

**21.Bxf6 Bxf6**

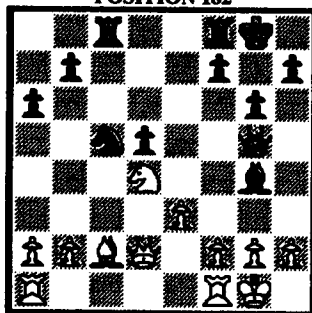
If 21...Nxf6 22.Rxf6 Bxf6 23.Qxc8+.

**22.Rxd5 Qc6 23.Rd6!**

Of course, not 23.Rc5? because of 23...Bxd4+!.

**23...Qe8 24.Rd7 Black Resigned.**

POSITION 182



*(The weakness of the isolated d-pawn; from the game Flohr-Vidmar, Nottingham 1936).*

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Be7 5.e3 O-O 6.Nf3 Nbd7 7.Qc2 c5 8.cxd5 Nxd5 9.Bxe7 Qxe7 10.Nxd5 exd5 11.Bd3 g6 12.dxc5 Nxc5 13.O-O Bg4 14.Nd4 Rac8 15.Qd2 a6 16.Bc2 Qg5**

A comparison with the previous position shows that the player fighting against the isolated d-pawn has already achieved two successes, viz.: 1) He has occupied the blockade square d4 with a Knight. 2) He has exchanged two pairs of minor pieces.

We shall now see to what extent White's advantage is capable of expansion.

**17.f3**

This weakens the e-pawn, it is true, but on the other hand it takes control of the e4 square. The course of Position 181 showed very clearly that it is precisely this square which can

form the basis of a Kingside attack by the opponent.

**17...Bd7 18.Rfe1 Rfd8 19.Rad1 Qf6 20.Bb3 Ba4!**

Correct: Black gets rid of his bad Bishop.

**21.Bxa4 Nxa4 22.Rc1 Nc5 23.Red1 Qb6 24.Ne2**

Beginning the direct attack on the weak d-pawn.

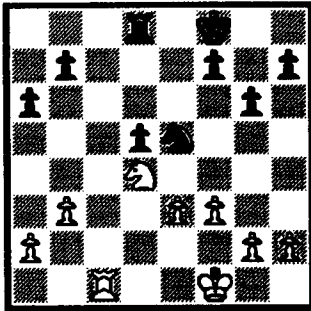
**24...Nd7**

With a counterattack against the e-pawn.

**25.Qd4 Qxd4 26.Nxd4**

Everything proceeds according to plan. White has preserved his advantage into the endgame.

**26...Ne5 27.b3 Kf8 28.Kf1 Rxc1 29.Rxc1**



**29...Nc6**

Although White has been able to make things go just as he wished, it is still doubtful whether he could have achieved more than a draw after the stronger move, 29...Ke7 (30.Rc7+ Rd7).

Now he has the opportunity to transform one type of advantage into another.

**30.Nxc6 Rc8 31.Rc5**

Apparently Black had reckoned on recapturing with the Rook, but now

finds this impracticable: 31...Rxc6 32.Rxd5 Rc1+ 33.Ke2 Rc2+ 34.Rd2.

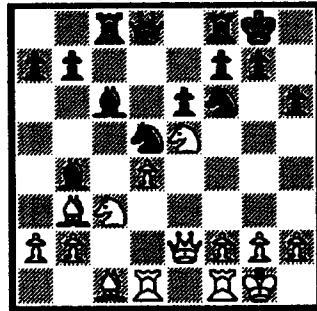
**31...bxc6**

The Black d-pawn is no longer isolated, but instead Black is saddled with an isolated a-pawn, together with a backward c-pawn. These two handicaps between them are quite decisive (see Chapter 22).

The rest, which has little bearing on the middlegame, was:

**32.Ke2 Ke7 33.Kd3 Kd6 34.Ra5 Ra8 35.Kd4 f5 36.b4 Rb8 37.a3 Ra8 38.e4! fxe4 39.fxe4 dxe4 40.Kxe4 Ra7 41.Kf4 h6 42.h4 Ke6 43.Kg4 Ra8 44.h5 g5 45.g3 Ra7 46.Kf3 Ra8 47.Ke4 Ra7 48.Re5+ Kd6 49.Re8 c5 50.Rd8+ Kc6 51.Rc8+ Kb6 52.Rxc5 Rh7 53.Re5 Kc6 54.Re6+ Kb5 55.Kf5 Rf7+ 56.Rf6 Black Resigned.**

POSITION 183



*(The significance of the third rank; from the game Stoltz-Richter, Munich 1941).*

**1.e4 d5 2.exd5 Nf6 3.c4 c6 4.d4 cxd5 5.Nc3 e6 6.Nf3 Be7 7.Bd3 O-O 8.O-O dxc4 9.Bxc4 Nc6 10.Be3 Bd7 11.Qe2 Nb4 12.Ne5 Nbd5 13.Bg5 Bc6 14.Rad1 h6 15.Bc1 Rc8 16.Bb3 Bb4 (No.183) 17.Rd3**

This Rook protects the Nc3, but even more important, it stands ready to cooperate strongly in a Kingside attack.

**17...Ne7 18.Rg3!?**

White offers two tempi in order to decoy the Black Knight to f5.

**18...Nf5 19.Rd3 Bd5?**

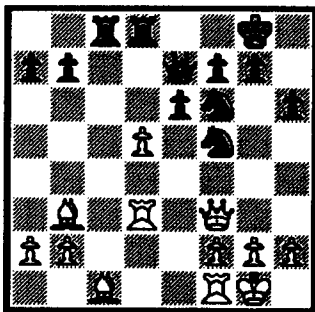
Here Black could have permitted himself 19...Nxd4! (20.Qd1 Qc7! 21.Nxf7 Nxb3 22.Nxh6+ gxh6 23.Qxb3).

**20.Nxd5 Nxd5 21.Qe4 Be7 22.Ng6!**

Forcing the exchange of Black's other Bishop, for 22...fxg6 23.Qxe6+ Kh8 24.Bxd5, is unthinkable.

**22...Nf6 23.Nxe7+ Qxe7 24.Qf3 Rfd8**

Giving White the opportunity for the sort of breakthrough typical of such positions. Either 24...Nh4 or 24...Nd6 would have been better.

**25.d5!****25...Nh4**

Advantage for Black is now out of the question, but he might have obtained an equal ending out of 25...Qd7! 26.g4 Nh4 27.Qh3 Ng6 28.g5 hxg5 29.Bxg5 exd5 30.Qxd7 Rxd7 31.Bxf6 gxf6 32.Rxd5 Rxd5 33.Bxd5. After the move played, Black gets the worst of it.

**26.Qe3! Nf5 27.Qh3 Qd7 28.g4!**

Based on a surprising turn of events. Compare what actually follows with the variation given at Black's 25th move.

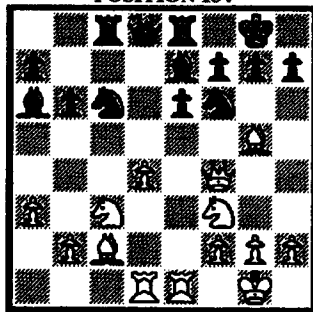
**28...Ne7 29.g5! hxg5**

Black's only hope of holding out would have been 29...Nfxd5 30.gxh6 Ng6!

**30.dxe6!! Black Resigned.**

After 30...Qxd3, White wins by 31.exf7+ Kf8 32.Qh8+.

POSITION 184



(Another tactical breakthrough by d5; from the game Szabo-Unzicker, Amsterdam 1954).

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 d5 4.Nc3 c5  
5.cxd5 Nxd5 6.e3 Nc6 7.Bd3 cxd4  
8.exd4 Be7 9.O-O O-O 10.Re1 Nf6  
11.a3 b6 12.Bg5 Bb7 13.Bc2 Ba6  
14.Qd2 Rc8 15.Qf4! Re8 16.Rad1  
(No.184) h6?

The other weakening, 16...g6, was less serious, e.g. 17.Qh4 Nd5 and now 18.Nxd5 exd5 19.Rxe7? fails against 19...Nxe7 20.Bf6 Rxc2 21.Qh6 Nf5

**17.Bxf6! Bxf6 18.d5!**

The possessor of an isolated d-pawn must be constantly on the lookout for the chance of this breakthrough. If now 18...Bxc3, obviously 19.dxc6.

**18...exd5 19.Rxe8+ Qxe8 20.Qf5!**

This is the real point. Black cannot now prevent the penetration at h7, since the g-pawn is the only defense of the Bf6.

**20...Bxc3**

20...Ne7 loses at once to 21.Qh7+ Kf8 22.Qh8+ Ng8 23.Re1 followed by

24.Bh7; and 20...Kf8 also loses to 21.Re1 Qd8 22.Nxd5 Bxb2 23.Nf4!

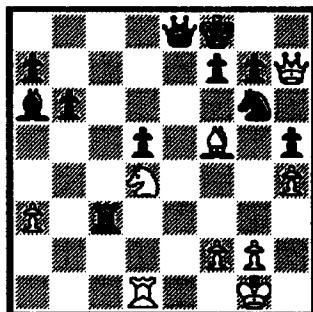
**21.Qh7+ Kf8 22.bxc3 Ne5! 23.Nd4!**

White could win a piece by 23.Qh8+ Ke7 24.Qxe8+ Kxe8 25.Nxe5, but then Black achieves satisfactory counterplay by 25...Rxc3. The move played is far stronger.

**23...Ng6 24.h4! h5**

Forced, for after 24...Qe5 25.h5 Qxh5 26.Nf5, Black cannot defend the g7 square.

**25.Bf5! Rxc3**



**26.Ne6+!**

By means of this pretty continuation, the Black King is now bereft of his protecting pawns.

**26...fxe6 27.Bxg6 Qc6 28.Qh8+ Ke7 29.Qxg7+ Kd6 30.Re1!**

The Rook comes in with decisive effect, for 30...Rc1 now fails to 31.Qf8+ Kc7 32.Qf4+.

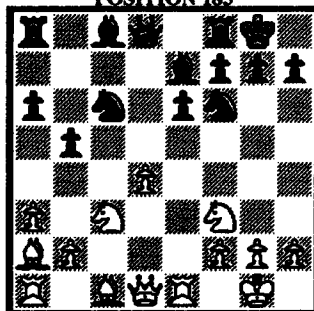
**30...Bc8 31.Bxh5 Qc5 32.Bg4 Rc2 33.Qf6 Kc6 34.h5!**

The shortest way.

**34...Rc1 35.Rxc1 Qxc1+ 36.Kh2 Qxa3 37.h6 Qd6+ 38.f4 Qc7 and Black Resigned.**

*(The strategic breakthrough with d5; from the game Stolz-Thomas, Zaandam 1946).*

POSITION 185



**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 d5 4.Nf3 c5 5.e3 Nc6 6.a3 cxd4 7.exd4 dxc4 8.Bxc4 Be7 9.O-O O-O 10.Re1 a6 11.Ba2 b5 (No.185) 12.d5!**

The strategic breakthrough by d5 is simply the result of the fact that the owner of the isolated d-pawn has extra control of Black's blockade square at d5. The result of the break is that the isolated pawn disappears, but also that the advantages persist for a long time in the form of extra freedom of maneuver.

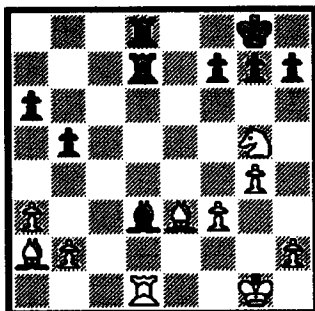
**12...exd5 13.Nxd5 Nxd5 14.Qxd5 Qd6?**

This costs two minor pieces for a Rook. The official tournament book (in which the analysis in general is rather poor) suggests that after the better move, 14...Bb7, White would be no better off than at the start, but this is certainly not true, for after 15.Bg5, White would retain a strong initiative, e.g. 15...Bxg5 16.Nxg5 Qxd5 17.Bxd5 h6 18.Ne4 or 15...Na5 16.Qf5 Bxg5 17.Nxg5 g6 18.Nxf7!

**15.Rxe7! Qxe7 16.Qxc6 Bg4 17.Be3 Rac8 18.Qd5 Rfd8 19.Qg5 Qxg5 20.Nxg5**

The rest is just a demonstration of how two minor pieces win against a Rook:

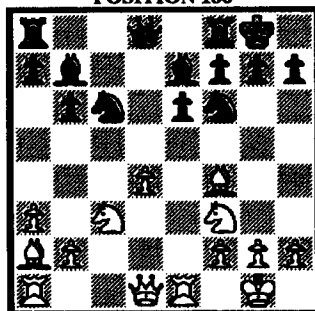
**20...Rd7 21.f3 Bf5 22.g4 Bd3 23.Rd1 Rcd8 (see next diagram) 24.Bb6 Bc4 25.Rxd7 Rxd7 26.Bxc4 bxc4 27.Ne4**



After 23...Rcd8

15.28.gxf5 Kf7 29.Ba5 Rd5 30.Bc3 h5  
31.Kf2 Kg8 32.f6 and Black Resigned.

POSITION 186



(The Black Kingside weakened; from the 2nd match game Najdorf-Reshevsky 1952).

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e3 O-O  
5.Bd3 c5 6.Nf3 d5 7.O-O Nc6 8.a3  
dxc4 9.Bxc4 cxd4 10.exd4 Be7  
11.Re1 b6 12.Bf4 Bb7 13.Ba2  
(No.186) Rc8?

It is clear that the breakthrough 14.d5 would give White no more than equality after 14...exd5 15.Nxd5 Nxd5 16.Bxd5 Na5, in spite of his slight pull in development. A stronger move than that played, however, would have been 13...Nd5 cutting across White's plan of attack.

14.Qd3 Qd7 15.Rad1 Nd5

The right idea at the wrong moment.

16.Bb1 g6 17.Bh6 Rf8 18.Ne4

Having forced the weakening ...g6, White now begins to direct his pieces at the resulting holes at h6 and f6 squares. At the same time, as far as possible, he avoids exchanging pieces, a principle which we have learned from previous examples.

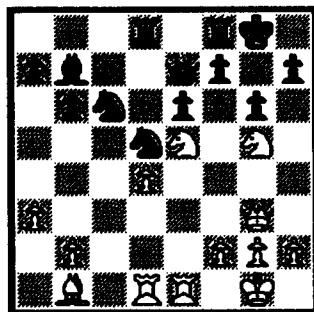
18...Bf8?

Black wants exchanges, but this Bishop is precisely the piece he needed to keep. 18...Nf6 would have been wiser.

19.Bxf8 Rxf8 20.Ne5!

Now Black can hardly exchange, for after 20...Nxe5 21.dxe5, White controls the vital squares d6 and f6.

20...Qe7 21.Qg3 Rcd8 22.Ng5!



The direct attack gets going. White threatens 23.Nxh7 Kxh7 24.Nxg6 fxg6 25.Qxg6+ Kh8 26.Rd3, and wins.

22...Nf6 23.Qh4 Nxe5

This time the threat was 24.Nxc6 Bxc6 25.Nxh7!

24.Rxe5 Qd6 25.Re3 Kg7 26.Rh3 Rh8

If 26...h5 27.Rg3, threatening 28.Nxf7.

27.Qh6+ Kg8 28.Ba2!

Having nothing more to achieve on the b1-h7 diagonal, the Bishop seeks fresh fields.

28...Qf8 29.Qh4 Kg7

This costs a pawn, but after the stronger 29...Bd5 30.Bxd5 Rxd5 31.Rf3! White also retains a considerable advantage.

30.Bxe6! Bd5 31.Bxd5 Rxd5 32.Qh6+ Kg8 33.Qh4 Kg7 34.Qh6+ Kg8 35.Qh4

In time trouble, Black here misses a chance to claim the draw by repetition.

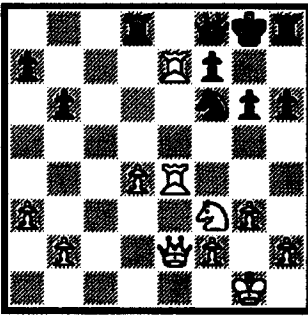
35...Kg7 36.Nf3 Qd6?

36...b5 would have been stronger.

37.Qh6+ Kg8 38.Re1 Qf8 39.Qf4 Nh5 40.Qc7 Kg7 41.Re7!

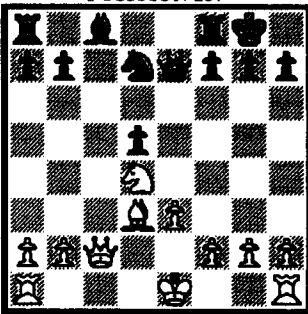
The rest is not difficult:

41...Kg8 42.Rh4 Rd8 43.g3 Nf6 44.Qe5 Nd7 45.Qe2 h6 46.Rhe4 Nf6



47.R4e6! Nd5 48.Rxa7 Rh7 49.Rc6 f6 50.Qe6+ Kh8 51.Nh4 Rg7 52.Qg4 g5 53.Rxg7 Qxg7 54.Nf5 Qg6 55.Qe4 h5 56.Qe6 Qg8 57.Rxb6! Black Resigned.

POSITION 187



(The effect of the advance e4; from a match game Fine-Stahlberg, 1937).

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 d5 4.Nf3 Be7 5.Bg5 Nbd7 6.e3 O-O 7.Qc2 c5 8.cxd5 cxd4 9.Nxd4 Nxd5 10.Bxe7 Qxe7 11.Nxd5 exd5 12.Bd3 (No.187) Qb4+

So as not to lose a tempo in defending his h7 square.

13.Qd2 Ne5

An interesting continuation which was used by Capablanca in one of his games with Flohr.

14.Be2

Obviously not 14.Qxb4, because of 14...Nxd3+ and 15...Nxb4.

14...Qb6

Following the rule that the weakness of an isolated pawn is less serious in the middlegame than in an ending. This rule holds true only in so far as one's extra freedom of movement can be utilized in a Kingside attack. In the present game Black will not be able to mount an assault on the King, so that the text move must be classed as faulty. After 14...Qxd2+ 15.Kxd2, the ending is admittedly in White's favor, but it is very much open to question whether the advantage is sufficient for a win. We shall pursue this question further in later examples.

15.b3 Nc6 16.Rd1

Obviously White is not going to allow his opponent to make the pawn position symmetrical by exchanges on d4.

16...Be6 17.O-O Rac8 18.Qb2 Nxd4

In order to double the Rooks on the c-file.

19.Rxd4 Rc5 20.Rfd1 Rfc8 21.R4d2 h6 22.Bf3 Qc6 23.h3

In view of an eventual ...Rc1 by Black, a flight square is necessary for the King.

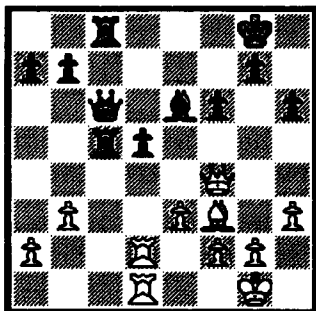


**23...Rc7**

Black is marking time, but it soon appears that the Rook is not well placed at c7. It is very difficult, however, to find any freeing maneuver. After 23...Rc2 24.Qd4 Rxd2 25.Rxd2, the isolated pawn would be indefensible, for 25...Rd8 is answered by 26.e4.

**24.Qe5 f6 25.Qf4 Rc8**

This is where the unfortunate side of 23...Rc7 shows itself. White threatened to win a pawn by 26.Bxd5 Bxd5 27.Rxd5 Rxd5 28.Rxd5 Qxd5 29.Qxc7. Black's move parries this threat, but now danger comes from another quarter.

**26.e4!**

Leading to a liquidation which is very much in White's favor.

**26...dxe4 27.Rd6**

The point. If Black now protects the attacked Bishop by 27...Qe8, White plays 28.Qxe4, with a double attack on the Bishop and the b-pawn.

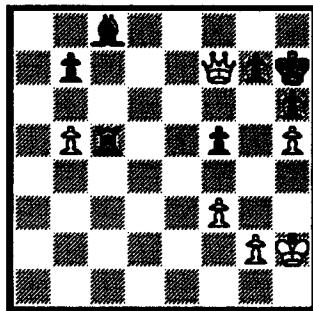
**27...exf3**

Hoping for chances of a draw in the endgame, but Black is deceived.

**28.Rxc6 R5xc6 29.Qxf3 Rc1 30.Rxc1 Rxc1+ 31.Kh2 Rc6**

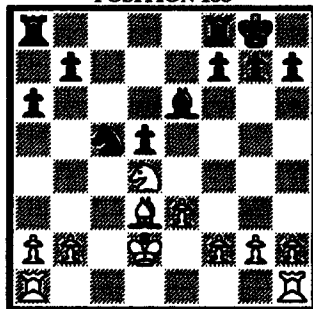
The technical problems posed by this endgame are now solved by Fine in exemplary fashion:

**32.Qf4 a6 33.Qb8+ Bc8 34.b4?** (34.a4! –Fine, *Lessons from my Games*, 1958) **Kh7 35.a4 f5 36.Qe5 Rf6 37.Qc7 Rc6 38.Qe7 Rg6 39.f3 Rc6 40.b5 axb5 41.axb5 Rc4 42.h4 Rc2 43.h5 Rc4 44.Qf7 Rc5**



**45.Kg3 Rc2 46.Qg6+ Kh8 47.Qe8+ Kh7 48.Kf4 Rc1 49.Qg6+ Kg8 50.Ke5 Bd7 51.Qb6 Bc8 52.Kd6 Kh8 53.Qe3, and Black Resigned.**

POSITION 188



(The isolated d-pawn in the endgame; from the game Flohr-Capablanca, Moscow 1935).

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Nf3 Nbd7 5.Bg5 Be7 6.e3 O-O 7.Qc2 c5 8.cxd5 Nxd5 9.Bxe7 Qxe7 10.Nxd5 exd5 11.Bd3 cxd4 12.Nxd4 Qb4+ 13.Qd2 Nc5 14.Bb5 Qxd2+ 15.Kxd2 a6 16.Bd3 Be6 (No.188) 17.Rac1**

The fact that there is only one fully open file means that White can virtually force an ending with a strong Knight against a bad Bishop. It is precisely this ending which is vital to

understand for the conduct of an isolated d-pawn game.

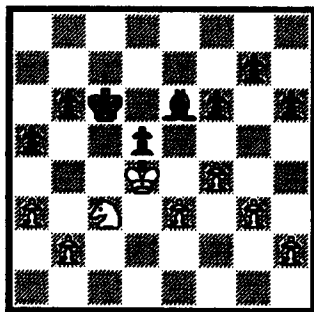
17...Rfc8 18.Rc2 Nxd3 19.Kxd3 Rxc2  
20.Kxc2 Kf8 21.Kd2 Rc8 22.Rc1 Rxc1  
23.Kxc1 Ke7 24.Kd2 Kd6 25.Kc3

An important moment: White has the better pawn position, and, moreover, – or rather therefore – his Knight is stronger than Black's Bishop. Is this advantage sufficient for a win? This question must, provisionally, be answered in the negative.

25...b6 26.f4 Bd7 27.Nf3 f6 28.Kd4

White has achieved his first objective – Kd4. His second aim – Nc3, attacking the isolated pawn – follows without difficulty.

28...a5 29.Nd2 Bc8 30.Nb1 Be6  
31.Nc3 Kc6 32.a3 h6 33.g3



Rabinovitch put forward an interesting plan in the tournament book – that White should try for f5 and g4, followed by transferring the Knight to f4, threatening Ne6 or Nh5, according to circumstances.

33...h5 34.b4

Now White threatens to gain a decisive advantage by 35.b5+ Kd6 36.f5 Bf7 (36...Bxf5 37.Nxd5 Bd7 38.a4) 37.Ne2, followed by 38.Nf4.

34...axb4 35.axb4 Kd6 36.b5

If 36.f5, Black could now defend himself by 36...Bxf5 37.Nxd5 b5.

36...g6 37.Na4 Kc7 38.Nc3 Kd6 39.f5  
gxf5

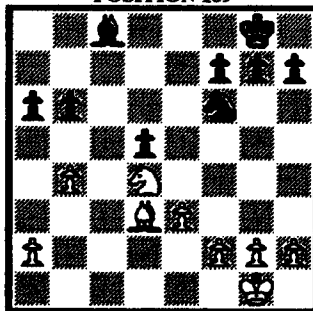
39...Bxf5 will not do in view of 40.Nxd5 Bd7 41.Nxf6 Bxb5 42.Nd5, White winning a pawn.

40.Ne2 Bd7 41.Nf4 Be8 42.Nxd5 Bxb5  
43.Nxb6

The isolated pawn has disappeared, and White still has a slight pull, but not a winning one.

43...Bc6 44.Nc4+ Ke6 45.Nb2 Bb5  
46.Nd1 Be2 47.Nf2 Bf1 48.Nd3 Bxd3  
49.Kxd3 Ke5 50.Ke2 Ke4 51.h3 Kd5  
52.Kf3 Ke5 Drawn.

POSITION 189



(Another example of the isolated pawn in the endgame; from the game Kramer-Schumacher, Vevey 1953).

1.f3

Not only avoiding any unpleasantness which might arise from the Black Knight coming to the e4 or g4 squares, but also facilitating an eventual e4.

1...g6

The same idea; Black avoids having his f5 square invaded by a Knight or Bishop.

2.Kf2 Bb7?

This is not the best. The prime essential was to begin to centralize the King by 2...Kf8.

**3.Nb3 Ne8?**

The stronger move, 3...Nd7, would lead, after 4.a4 Ne5 5.Ke2 Nc6 6.b5 axb5 7.axb5 Ne5, to positions analogous with the previous examples. In fact, after 3...Nd7, White might have been well advised to defer the advance a4.

**4.a4! Nc7 5.a5**

This way White ensures that at least one Black pawn will be fixed on the same color as its own Bishop.

**5...b5**

It was a difficult choice, but 5...bxa5 6.Nxa5 Bc8 7.Ke2 Kf8 8.Kd2 Ke7 9.Kc3 Kd6 10.h4!, White has possibilities on both sides of the board, but still nothing clearly decisive.

**6.Nc5 Bc8 7.Ke2 Ne6**

It is important to investigate the ending resulting from 7...Kf8 8.Kd2 Ke7 9.Kc3 Kd6 10.Kd4 Ne6+ 11.Nxe6. There would then be two variations:

1) 11...Bxe6 12.e4! dxe4 13.Bxe4 Bc8 14.g4!, and Black must give way and lose. 2) 11...fxe6 12.f4! Bb7 13.e4 Bc8 14.exd5 exd5 15.Be2 Bb7 16.Bf3 Bc6 17.g4 Bb7 18.f5, and White wins.

**8.Nxe6 fxe6**

An attempt to evade the variation given above. The point is that now if 9.f4 Kf7 10.Kd2 Kf6 11.Kc3, Black secures the draw by 11...e5.

**9.e4! Bb7**

9...d4 is bad because of 10.e5, while 9...dxe4 10.Bxe4 Kf7 11.Ke3 e5 12.Bd5+ Ke7 13.Ke4 Kd6 14.g4, leads Black inevitably into *zugzwang*.

**10.Ke3 Kf7 11.Kd4 Kf6 12.e5+ Ke7 13.Kc5 Kd7 14.Kb6 Bc8 15.h4 Ke7 16.Kc7 Bd7 17.Kb7**

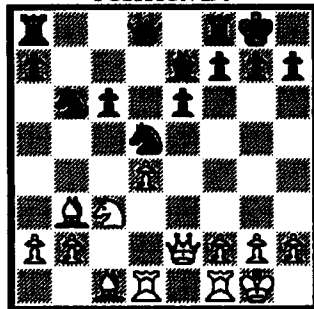
Now it is as good as over. The finish was:

**17...Kd8 18.Kxa6 Kc7 19.Bxb5 h6 20.Bxd7 Kxd7 21.Kb5 Kc7 22.Kc5**

**Kb7 23.b5 Kb8 24.b6 Kb7 25.Kb5 Kb8 26.a6 Ka8 27.Kc6 Black Resigned.**

If 27...d4, White mates in four, beginning with 28.Kc7.

POSITION 190



(Isolated d-pawn against isolated c-pawn; from the game Euwe-Fuster, Beverwijk 1952).

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e3 Nf6 4.Bxc4 e6 5.Nf3 c5 6.O-O cxd4 7.exd4 Be7 8.Qe2 O-O 9.Nc3 Nbd7 10.Bg5 Nb6 11.Bb3 Bd7 12.Rad1 Bc6 13.Ne5 Nfd5? 14.Nxc6 bxc6 15.Bc1**

Black was wrong to allow himself to be saddled with the isolated c-pawn which will prove weaker than the White d-pawn. White, with his greater freedom of movement, will now have chances of a Kingside attack. He already threatens 16.Rd3, and Black finds it essential to bring reinforcements across to the King's wing.

**15...Nd7 16.Rd3 Nxc3 17.Rxc3!**

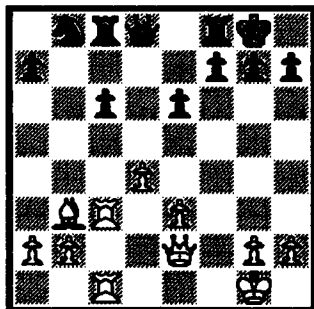
It is important to keep the c-file open, and Black would therefore have done better to make the exchange one move earlier.

**17...Rc8 18.Be3 Bg5**

The attempt to dissolve the isolated pawn by 18...Qa5 19.Rfc1 c5 would not succeed, for White would simply play 20.Qc2, winning the pawn. With

his chosen move Black breaks up the White Bishop pair.

19.Rfc1 Bxe3 20.fxe3 Nb8



21.Bc2

To put another attack on the c-pawn by Be4. Moreover, White has Qh5 in hand, so that Black still has to reckon with the possibility of Kingside trouble in the future.

21...Qd6 22.Be4 f5

White was threatening to win a pawn by 23.Qc2.

23.Bf3 e5

A bid for freedom, based on the line 24.dxe5 Qxe5 25.Bxc6 Nxc6 26.Rxc6 Rxc6 27.Rxc6 f4, with counterplay.

24.Qc4+ Kh8 25.Qc5!

The refutation.

25...Qxc5 26.Rxc5 exd4

Or 26...e4 27.Bd1 Rcd8 (otherwise 28.d5) 28.Ba4, and the c-pawn falls.

27.exd4

The White d-pawn is once more isolated, but in view of the threat d5, it is now anything but weak.

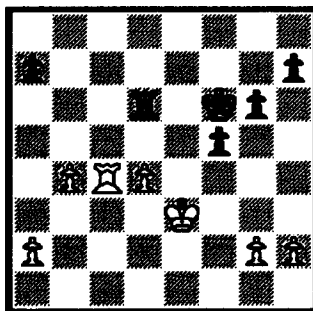
27...Rcd8 28.R1c4 g6

The protection by 28...Rf6, is no good: 29.Bxc6 Nxc6 30.Rxc6 Rxc6 31.Rxc6, and now 31...Rxd4? allows mate by 32.Rc8+.

29.Bxc6 Nxc6 30.Rxc6

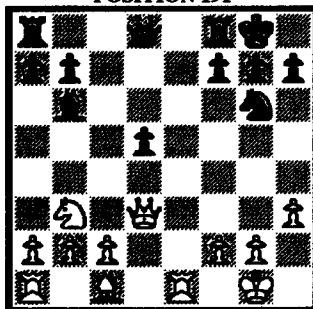
White won the endgame as follows:

30...Rd7 31.Rc7 Rfd8 32.Rxd7 Rxd7  
33.Kf2 Kg7 34.Ke3 Kf6 35.b4 Rd6



36.b5 Re6+ 37.Kd3 Re1 38.Rc7 Rg1  
39.Rxa7 Rxc7 40.a4 Rxc2 41.b6 Rb2  
42.a5 f4 43.Fxc7 g5 44.b7 f3 45.a6,  
and Black Resigned.

POSITION 191



(Isolated d-pawn on the 5th rank; from the game Capablanca-Rubinstein, Berlin 1928).

1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 c5 3.dxc5 e6 4.e4 Bxc5  
5.exd5 exd5 6.Bb5+ Nc6 7.O-O Nge7  
8.Nbd2 O-O 9.Nb3 Bb6 10.Re1 Bg4  
11.Bd3 Ng6 12.h3 Bxf3 13.Qxf3 Nce5  
14.Qf5 Nxd3 15.Qxd3

Such positions arise mostly from the French Defense, e.g. 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 c5 4.exd5 exd5 5.Ngf3 Nc6 6.dxc5 Bxc5 7.Bb5 Ne7 8.O-O 0-0 9.Nb3, running into the present game. A comparison with the positions dealt with so far shows that the difference consists in the fact that White has an

unmoved c-pawn instead of a pawn on e3. The advantage from White's point of view is that the e-file is open; the disadvantage is that the f2 square is rather vulnerable.

In the diagrammed position a vital decision confronts Black: whether or not to push his d-pawn to the fourth rank. Generally this is good policy, leading to greater freedom of movement. In this particular case, things are rather different, as we shall see. The best line was 15...Qf6 16.Rf1 Rad8, after which Black, with his actively placed pieces, has a very good game.

### 15...d4?

Here the advance only makes things more difficult for Black. At d4 the pawn comes under persistent pressure, which has the effect of reducing Black's Bishop to a second rate piece. Another great handicap for Black is that he cannot – or at any rate can only with great difficulty – get control of d3, the blockade square.

### 16.Bd2 Qf6 17.Re4!

Now if 17...Ne5 18.Qg3 Rfe8, there follows 19.Rae1.

### 17...Rad8 18.Rae1 Qc6 19.g3 Rfe8 20.Ba5!

This begins the direct attack on the isolated pawn. The threat is 21.Bxb6 axb6 22.Rxe8+ Rxe8 23.Rxe8+ Qxe8 24.Qxd4.

### 20...Rxe4 21.Qxe4 Nf8

Capablanca himself suggested 21...Qxe4 22.Rxe4 f5 23.Re2 Rd7, and this was certainly better, but after 24.Re8+ Kf7 25.Rb8 Bxa5 26.Nxa5, White would still have good winning chances.

### 22.Qxc6 bxc6 23.Re7 Rd5?

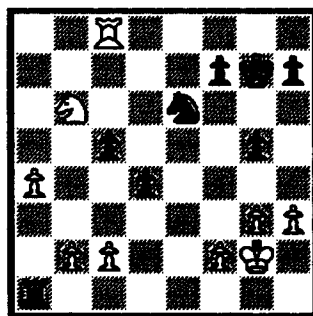
This meets the threat 24.Rxa7 Bxa7 25.Bxd8, but leaves Black in a thoroughly passive state. He could have made an interesting attempt to

save himself by 23...d3! After 24.cxd3 Rxd3 25.Bxb6 axb6 26.Rb7 b5 27.Rc7, Black draws easily by 27...Rd1+ 28.Kg2 Rb1. To keep any winning chances, White would have had to meet 23...d3 with 24.Rxa7 Bxa7 25.Bxd8 dxc2 26.Bg5!

### 24.Bxb6 axb6 25.Rb7 Nd7

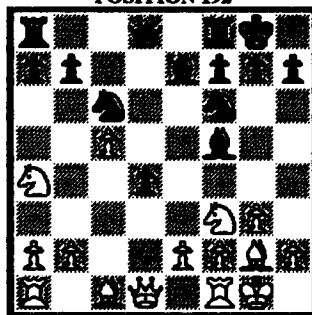
White now had a clear endgame advantage, which he converted into a win in the following instructive way:

26.Rc7 Rd6 27.Rc8+ Nf8 28.Nd2 c5 29.Nc4 Re6 30.Rb8 Re1+ 31.Kg2 g5 32.a4 Ra1 33.Nxb6 Kg7 34.Rc8 Ne6



35.Nd7 Rxa4 36.Nxc5 Rb4 37.Nd3 Rb5 38.Kf3 h6 39.b4 h5 40.g4 hxg4+ 41.hxg4 42.Rc4 Kf7 43.Nc5 Nd8 44.Nb3 and Black Resigned.

POSITION 192



(Isolated d-pawn on the 5th rank; from the game *Fine-Vidmar, Hastings 1936-37*).

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 c5 4.cxd5 exd5  
5.g3 Nc6 6.Nc3 Nf6 7.Bg2 Be7 8.O-O  
O-O 9.dxc5 d4 10.Na4 Bf5

A well known form of the Tarrasch Defense in which, by means of a pawn sacrifice, Black has pushed his isolated pawn to the fourth rank. According to Tarrasch, Black's space advantage is now ample compensation for the lost pawn.

11.Nh4

White himself later suggested 11.Bf4 here, and applied it in his play. It is to be observed that 11.a3 Ne4 12.b4 Nc3 13.Nxc3 dxc3 14.Qxd8 Raxd8 15.Bg5 Bxg5 16.Nxg5 Nd4, gives Black satisfactory counterchances.

11...Bg4 12.a3 Nd5 13.Qb3 Be6!

Now White cannot very well take the b-pawn: 14...Na5 15.Qa6 Nb3 16.Rb1 Bxh5, etc.

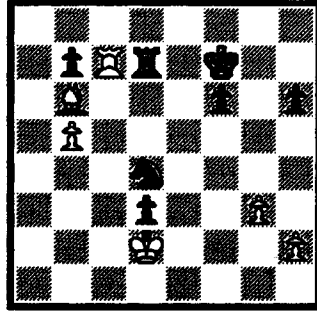
14.Nf5! Nb6! 15.Nxe7+ Qxe7 16.Qd1 Nxa4 17.Qxa4 Qxc5

Black has recovered his pawn and stands well. Notice that – unlike Black in the previous game – he has the good Bishop.

18.Bf4 Qb6 19.b4 Bc4 20.Qc2 Qa6  
21.Rfe1 Rfe8 22.Be4 h6 23.Bh7+ Kh8  
24.Bd3 Bxd3 25.Qxd3 Qxd3 26.exd3  
a6

The pressure which Black exerts on the open e-file is almost bound to give rise to this sort of endgame. It would be going too far for us to discuss it in any detail; suffice it to say that Black's position is certainly not inferior. In fact, he had a chance later on of seizing the advantage.

27.Kf1 Kg8 28.Rac1 f6 29.Bc7 Kf7  
30.Re4 g5 31.Rc5 Rxe4 32.dxe4 Re8  
33.f3 Re7! 34.Bb6 g4 35.fxg4 Rxe4  
36.Rc4 Rxf4 37.a4 Rg5 38.Ke2 Rd5  
39.Rc5 d3+? 40.Kd2 Rd7 41.b5 axb5  
42.axb5 Nd4 43.Rc7



43...Rxc7?

Better was 43...Nf3+ 44.Ke3 Rxc7 45.Bxc7 d2 46.Ke2 h5.

44.Bxc7 Nxb5 45.Bf4 h5 46.Kxd3 Ke6  
47.h3 f5 48.Kc4 Nd6+ 49.Kc5 Nc8  
50.Bb8 Kd7 51.Bf4 Ne7 52.Bg5 Nc6  
53.Kd5 b5 54.Bd2. Draw.

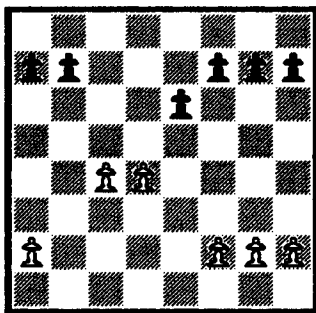
Naturally these examples have by no means exhausted the subject. There are also "ordinary" isolated pawns which have no bearing on the center, and have little or nothing in common with the isolated d-pawn.

For these, the principles which we have laid down – blockade square, pressure, and break-through – still hold good, but it is self evident that in the case of say, an isolated Rook pawn, the question of extra freedom of movement hardly arises. The given examples are sufficient for our purpose.

As regards to the isolated d5-pawn, there is a link with the next chapter (Hanging Pawns), for the pair of hanging pawns on d4 and c4 very often result in precisely such an isolated pawn.

## CHAPTER 20 HANGING PAWNS

The problem of the so-called hanging pawns is closely related to that of the isolated d-pawn. Either case frequently gives rise to the other. First of all, a diagram to show what we mean by hanging pawns.



In the hands of an attacking player, the hanging pawns can be a formidable weapon. The attacker always has a great superiority in freedom of movement, and can make use of it to deploy his pieces in the most effective possible way behind the lines.

On the other hand, the hanging pawns can easily become weak in the endgame, for they cannot protect one another and have to depend on the support of the pieces. Provided that these pieces are not too unfavorably placed, defense is perfectly feasible in most cases.

It must be stated clearly that this endgame is not necessarily going to be a loss. It follows, generally speaking, that any player who is looking for a real fight can well afford to accept the risks inherent in the hanging pawns.

We now summarize what middlegame theory has so far established on this subject. In so doing we draw on an excellent article by J.H.Wertheim in *Tijdschrift van de K.N.S.B.* 1932, as well as on the teachings of Nimzowitsch.

### PRINCIPLES TO FOLLOW WHEN IN POSSESSION OF THE HANGING PAWNS

- 1) Keep the pieces on the board.
- 2) Try to control e4, e5, and f4 (or all vacant central squares, according to Wertheim). The e4 square is especially important.
- 3) The advance d5 at the right moment can be the winning move, since it suddenly brings to life the Bishop, which is usually at b2.
- 4) The advance c5 (blockaded security, in the words of Nimzowitsch) is also important. The weakness of d4 is then counterbalanced by the strength of d6, and perhaps by an enemy weakness at his b7.
- 5) Should the opponent play ...b6, then the reply a4-a5, should yield some initiative without risk.
- 6) The advance f4-f5 weakens the position in the center, and should be undertaken only if it is going to mean a decisive strengthening of the attack.

### PRINCIPLES TO FOLLOW WHEN FIGHTING AGAINST THE HANGING PAWNS

- 1) Exchange pieces whenever possible.
- 2) Put pressure on the hanging pawns.

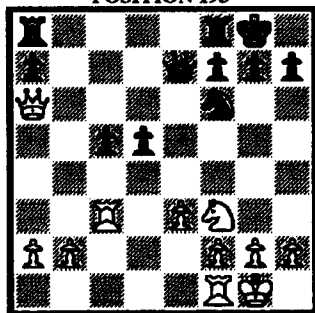
3) Try to control the vacant central squares e4, e5, and f4. In particular, f4 is often a jumping off point.

4) It is usually favorable to fianchetto the Bishops; thus developed, they are out of the way of the major pieces, and add to the pressure against the pawns.

5) Try to lure the hanging pawns forward, and watch for your chance to break through with ...e5 or ..b5.

Now for practical examples.

POSITION 193



*(Hanging pawns on the defensive; from the game Bernstein-Teichmann, Carlsbad 1923).*

Most of the minor pieces have gone, and the weakness of the hanging pawns becomes a serious matter. White now tries to lure them forward.

**17.Qa3 Ne4**

This guards the c-pawn, but now the d-pawn has been weakened.

**18.Rd3 Rfd8 19.Rfd1 Qe6 20.Nd2 Qb6 21.Nf1?**

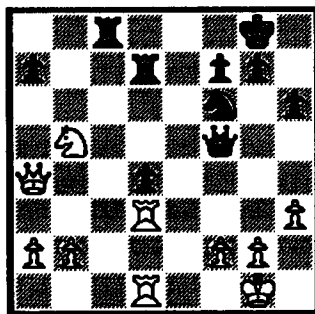
After 21.Nxe4! dxe4 22.Qxa7!!, White wins in all variations due to the weakness of Black's back rank. *(The incredible shot, 22.Qxa7!!, unnoticed for 75 years in numerous publications of this game, was discovered by New Orleans Master Jude Acers in 1994 -Ed.)*

**21...Nf6 22.Ng3 Rac8 23.h3 h6 24.Ne2 Rf7 25.Nc3 Qe6 26.Qa5 d4!**

The fighter against hanging pawns must always reckon with this advance.

Now we come to a situation which we met in the last chapter – the isolated d-pawn at the fourth rank. The difference is that here it is also a passed pawn.

**27.exd4 cxd4 28.Nb5 Qf5! 29.Qa4**

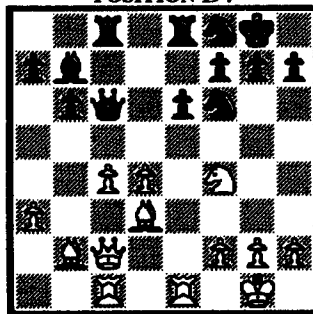


**29...Rc1!**

The tactical justification of Black's 26th move. He is now threatening 30...Qxd3; and White cannot play 30.Rxd4 because of 30...Rxd1+ 31.Rxd1 Rxd1+ 32.Qxd1 Qxb5.

**30.Rxc1 Qxd3 31.Rc8+ Kh7 32.Qc2 Qxc2 33.Rxc2 d3 34.Rd2 Ne4 35.Rd1 Rb7 36.Nc3 Nxc3 37.bxc3 Rb2 38.Rxd3 Rxa2 Draw.**

POSITION 194





(Fianchettoed Bishops and empty squares; from the game *Euwe-Reshevsky, Neuhausen 1953*).

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e3 c5  
5.Bd3 O-O 6.a3 Bxc3+ 7.bxc3 b6  
8.Ne2 Bb7 9.O-O d6 10.Qc2 d5  
11.cxd5 Qxd5 12.Nf4 Qc6 13.c4 cxd4  
14.exd4 Nbd7 15.Bb2 Rfe8 16.Rfe1  
Rac8 17.Rac1 Nf8 (No.194) 18.Bf1

In view of Black's threat of 18...Ng6, White must do something about the impending mate at g2. Another way of meeting the threat would have been 18.f3 Ng6 19.Nxg6 hxg6 20.Qf2.

18...Ng6 19.Nxg6?

19.Nd3! and if 19...b5 20.Nc5, would have given better prospects. Now White will be on the defensive.

19...hxg6 20.Re3 Red8 21.Qe2

The Queen must leave the c-file, chiefly in view of Black's threatened ...b5 advance.

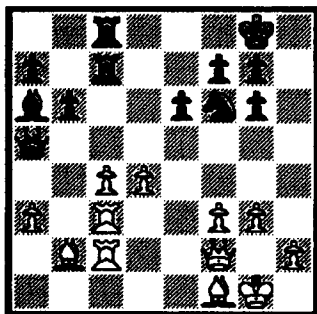
21...Qd6 22.Rh3 Qf4!

Showing how vital are the vacant central squares.

23.Rd1 Ba6 24.Rf3 Qe4 25.Re3 Qg4  
26.f3 Qf4 27.g3

Thus White succeeds in controlling the vacant central squares, but at the cost of a weakened King position.

27...Qh6 28.Rc3 Qg5 29.Qf2 Rd7  
30.Rdc1 Rdc7 31.R1c2 Qa5



### 32.Bc1?

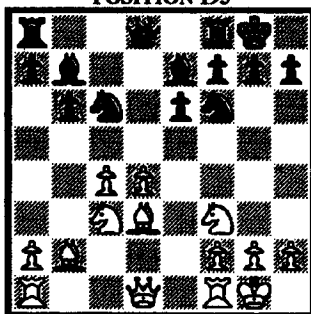
A serious mistake. White had to play Rc1 – a passive procedure it is true, but a policy by which he might have been able to survive, as the previous example showed.

32...Nd5! 33.cxd5 Rxc3 34.Rxc3 Qxc3

Of course, not 34...Rxc3? 35.Bd2.

35.Bb2 Qb3 36.Bxa6 Rc2 37.d6 Rxf2  
38.d7 Qd5 39.Kxf2 Qxd7 and White Resigned.

POSITION 195



(The effect of an early d5; from the game *Keres-Taimanov, XIX USSR Championship 1951*).

1.c4 Nf6 2.Nf3 e6 3.Nc3 d5 4.e3 Be7  
5.b3 O-O 6.Bb2 b6 7.d4 Bb7 8.Bd3  
dxc4 9.bxc4 c5 10.O-O cxd4 11.exd4  
Nc6 (No.195) 12.Qe2

The Queen stands best here, not only protecting the c-pawn, but also taking part in all sorts of tactical twists on the Kingside.

12...Re8

It is important to notice that the d-pawn cannot be taken here: 12...Nxd4? 13.Nxd4 Qxd4 14.Nd5 Qc5 15.Bxf6! and now 15...Bxf6 fails against 16.Qe4 and 15...gxf6 fails against 16.Qg4+ Kh8 17.Qh4!

13.Rfd1 Rc8 14.Rac1 Qd6

Heading for the vacant central square at f4. From the sequel however, it seems that the Queen would have done better to stay at home. 14...Bd6! was the best choice, so that after 15.Ne4 Nxe4 16.Qxe4 f5 17.Qe2 Bf4, the Bishop would take over the duty instead of the Queen.

**15.Bb1 Qf4 16.d5!**

Opening the flood gates.

**16...exd5 17.cxd5 Nb8**

17...Na5 was worth considering, but 17...Ba3 would have been bad because of 18.dxc6! Rxe2 19.cxb7!

**18.Rd4 Qd6**

The Queen takes on the role of blockader – a task for which she is by no means the ideal piece.

**19.Rcd1 Bf8 20.Ne4 Nxe4 21.Rxe4 Rxe4 22.Qxe4 Qh6 23.Ng5! Bd6**

Black has no time to defend his h7 square, for 23...g6 fails against 24.Nxf7! Kxf7? 25.Qe6#.

**24.h4**

White is not going to be satisfied with the win of a pawn, but quite rightly expects to get more out of the position.

**24...Nd7 25.Qf5! Nf6 26.Bxf6 gxf6 27.Nxf7!**

Pretty and decisive; if 27...Kxf7 28.Qd7+.

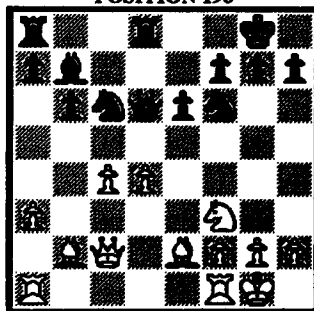
**27...Qc1 28.Qxh7+ Kf8 29.Nxd6 Qxd1+ 30.Kh2 Qxd5 31.Nxb7 Qe5+ 32.g3 Rc7 33.Qh8+ Kf7 34.h5!**

The threat of 35.Bg6+ now virtually forces Black into the following liquidation:

**34...Rxb7 35.Qh7+ Ke6 36.Qxb7 Qxh5+ 37.Kg2 Black Resigned.**

*(The effect of d5 played later; from a match game Kramer-Van der Tol, 1942).*

POSITION 196



**1.c4 e6 2.Nc3 d5 3.d4 Bb4 4.a3 Bxc3+ 5.bxc3 Nf6 6.e3 O-O 7.cxd5 Qxd5 8.c4 Qd6 9.Nf3 c5 10.Be2 Nc6 11.Bb2 cxd4 12.exd4 Rd8 13.Qc2 b6 14.O-O Bb7 (No.196) 15.Rfd1**

The ideal arrangement for White would be Rad1, Bd3, and Qe2. But 15.Bd3 allows 15...Nxd4! and then 16.Nxd4 e5 or else 16.Bxd4 Bxf3 17.Bxf6 Qxd3, while the immediate 15.Rad1 runs into trouble after 15...Rac8 16.Bd3 Na5!, after which 17.Qe2 fails against 17...Bxf3 18.Qxf3 Nxc4.

**15...Qf4**

15...Rac8 is stronger, for then White would have to play 16.Bc3 to forestall Black's 16...Na5.

**16.Bd3 Rac8 17.Qe2 Na5 18.Nd2**

Not 18.Ne5, because of 18...Nb3!, but now White has made his hanging pawns secure, and can set about building his own ideal position.

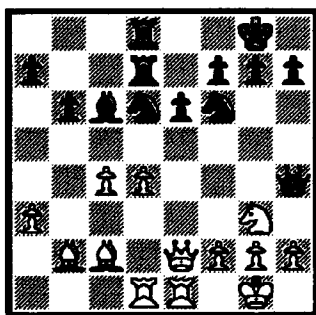
**18...Rd7 19.Re1 Rcd8**

Not 19...Rdc7? 20.d5! threatening 21.Be5.

**20.Rad1**

Now White has the position he wanted.

**20...Bc6 21.Bc2 Nb7 22.Nf1 Nd6 23.Ng3 Qh4**

**24.d5!**

Yet again the same breakthrough. This combination is based on the bad position of the Black Queen, and the possibility of a mate on the back rank.

**24...exd5 25.Rd4! Nde4**

Other possibilities were: 1) 25...Qg5 26.Bc1. 2) 25...Qh6 26.Bc1 g5 27.h4! 3) 25...Nfe4 26.f3! Nxc3 27.hxc3 Qf6 (27...Qxc3 28.Rg4) 28.Rg4! Qxb2 29.Bxh7+, winning the Queen.

**26.Bxe4 dxe4**

This is best. 26...Nxe4 fails against 27.f3 Nxc3 28.Qe8+! with mate to follow.

**27.Nf5**

Threatening not only 28.Nxh4, but also 28.Ne7+!

**27...Rxd4! 28.Bxd4**

28.Nxh4 Rd2 would suit Black better.

**28...Qh5 29.Ne7+ Kf8 30.Qxh5!**

And certainly not 30.Nxc6? Qxe2 31.Rxe2 Rd6 32.Bxf6? Rd1+, and mate next move.

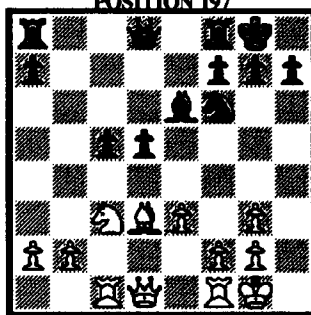
**30...Nxb5 31.Nxc6 Rd6 32.g4!**

This is the point: Black cannot recover the piece.

**32...Nf4 33.Be5 Rxc6 34.Bxf4 Rxc4 35.Rc1 Ra4 36.Rc7 Ke8 37.Bd6 Rd4 38.Be5 Ra4 39.Bb2 b5 40.Kf1 a5 41.Rb7 Black Resigned.**

41...b4 42.axb4 axb4 43.Bxg7.

POSITION 197



*(Blocked security by means of the advance ...c5; from the game Rubinstein-Nimzowitsch, Carlsbad 1907).*

**1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 e6 3.c4 c5 4.cxd5 exd5 5.Nc3 Nc6 6.Bf4 cxd4 7.Nxd4 Bb4 8.e3 Nf6 9.Nxc6 bxc6 10.Bd3 O-O 11.O-O Bd6 12.Bg3 Bxg3 13.hxc3 c5 14.Rc1 Be6 (No.197) 15.Qa4**

In the tournament book, Marco drew attention to the line 15.e4 d4 16.Na4 Bxa2 17.Nxc5, a possibility which, in view of the subsequent course of the game, would seem to have been preferable to the move actually adopted.

**15...Qb6 16.Qa3 c4! 17.Be2 a5 18.Rfd1 Qb4 19.Rd4 Rfd8**

After 19...Qxa3 20.bxa3, White would either win the d-pawn or else get control of the open b-file, e.g. 20...Rab8 21.Bf3 Rfd8 22.Rcd1, etc.

**20.Rcd1 Rd7 21.Bf3 Rad8 22.Nb1?**

The game was approaching a state of deadlock, but this move which partially relaxes the pressure on Black's d-pawn, gives Black his opportunity of bringing the White b-pawn under fire in return. White's best policy would have been to make peace overtures by 22.Kf1 or 22.R4d2.

**22...Rb8! 23.R1d2 Qxa3!**

Nimzowitsch pointed out that if he had played 23...Rdb7, instead, White could have saved himself as follows:

24.Qc3! Qxc3 25.Nxc3 Rxb2 26.Rxb2 Rxb2 27.Bxd5 Nxd5 28.Nxd5 Rxa2 29.Rxc4.

**24.Nxa3 Kf8**

Not 24...Rdb7, because of 25.Nxc4.

**25.e4**

Virtually forced; otherwise the b-pawn falls.

**25...dxe4 26.Rxd7 Nxd7 27.Bxe4 Nc5 28.Rd4?**

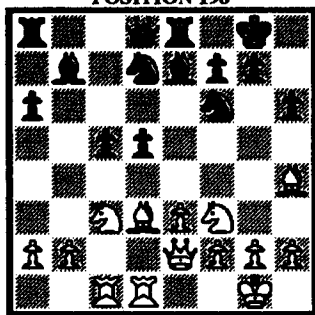
Letting his last chance of a draw slip – namely, 28.Bc6! If then 28...Rb4 29.Bd5 Na4, as given by Nimzowitsch, White could play 30.Bxe6 fxe6 31.Rd8+ Ke7 32.Ra8.

**28...Nxe4 29.Rxe4 Rxb2 30.Nxc4 Rb4! 31.Nd6 Rxe4 32.Nxe4 Bxa2**

And Black clinched the win as follows:

**33.Nc3 Bc4 34.f4 Ke7 35.Kf2 Kd6 36.Ke3 Kc5 37.g4 Kb4 38.Kd4 Bb3 39.g5 a4 40.Nb1 Be6 41.g3 Kb3 42.Nc3 a3 43.Kd3 g6 44.Kd4 Kc2 White Resigned.**

POSITION 198



*(How White can maintain the initiative against Black's blockaded security; from the game Szabo-Petrosian, Candidates Tournament 1953).*

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 d5 4.Bg5 Be7 5.e3 O-O 6.Nf3 h6 7.Bh4 b6 8.Bd3 Bb7 9.O-O Nbd7 10.Rc1 c5 11.Qe2 a6**

**12.cxd5 exd5 13.dxc5 bxc5 14.Rfd1 Re8 (No.198) 15.Bc2**

This Bishop is going to b3, virtually forcing Black to play c4 and accept what Nimzowitsch called a blockaded security. The only question is whether this security really is secure.

**15...Qb6 16.Bb3 c4 17.Ba4 Bc6 18.Bxc6 Qxc6 19.b3**

This is the normal way of attacking the hanging pawns; but another idea well worth considering was 19.Nd4 and 20.Nf5.

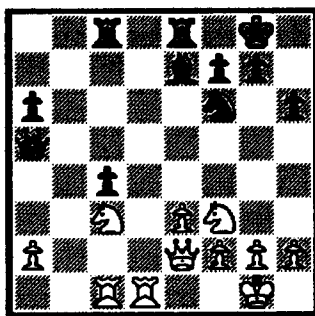
**19...Rac8 20.Na4?**

Beating the air; this only induces the Black Queen to improve her position. White should have exchanged pawns, either immediately or after 20.Nd4.

**20...Qb5 21.Nc3 Qa5 22.Bxf6**

This exchange suits White's strategy, relieving him from the necessity of constantly watching the threat, Nc5-d3.

**22...Nxf6 23.bxc4 dxc4**



Not 23...Rxc4? 24.Nxd5!, etc. Black's hanging pawns have now disappeared, and he is left instead with an isolated, but passed c-pawn. This pawn may be either strong or weak. There is no general rule about this, for even the slightest modification of the position may alter the result completely. In the present case, the

pawn is weak, and White could win it in several ways.

### 24.Nd2?

This is not the way to go about it. The best way would be 24.Rd4, but it is still doubtful whether White could win the game. After 24...Bb4 25.Rxc4 Bxc3 26.R1xc3 Qxc3! 27.Rxc3 Rxc3, Black has little to fear. With two Rooks against a Queen and pawn, he can face the future with equanimity (see the discussion of this point in Chapter 5).

### 24...Rc6 25.Nxc4?

A decisive mistake: White now gets into a deadly pin.

### 25...Qc7 26.Na4 Rc8 27.Rd4

Not 27.Nab2 Ba3!, but there were drawing chances in 27.Nab6 Rxb6 28.Nxb6 Qxc1 29.Nxc8 Qxc8 30.e4

### 27...Ne8 28.e4 Bf6 29.e5 Bxe5! 30.Re4 Nf6!

The point of the previous move. Now if 31.Rxe5 Rxc4 32.Rxc4 Qxc4 33.Qd1 Qxa4! 34.Qxa4 Rc1+, forcing mate.

### 31.Nab6 Rxb6 32.Rxe5 Rc6

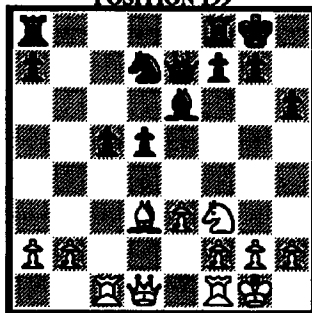
Good enough, but 32...Qxc4! was immediately decisive, for if 33.Rxc4 Rb1+. The actual finish was:

### 33.Re7 Rxc4 34.Re1 Qc6 35.h3 Rc1 36.Rxc1 Qxc1+ 37.Kh2 Qc4 38.Qf3 Qxa2 39.Ra7 Qd5 and White Resigned.

*(Direct attack on the hanging pawns by e4; from the game Makagonov-Stolberg, Moscow 1940).*

### 1.d4 e6 2.c4 Nf6 3.Nc3 d5 4.Bg5 Be7 5.e3 h6 6.Bh4 O-O 7.Nf3 b6 8.cxd5 Nxd5 9.Bxe7 Qxe7 10.Nxd5 exd5 11.Rc1 Be6 12.Bd3 c5 13.dxc5 bxc5 14.O-O Nd7

POSITION 199



### 15.e4!

A very important stroke which transforms the whole picture of the battle (compare Position 197, note to White's 15th move).

### 15...dxe4

After 15...d4 16.Nd2, it is clear that White has many advantages:

1) The hanging pawns are blocked and vulnerable. 2) White is firmly in control of the vital c4 square. 3) White's Kingside majority is mobile and likely to be a decisive weapon. On the other hand, it would not be correct to suppose that Black is entirely without counterplay. With the open b-file at his disposal, he could force White to play b3, after which he could set White some problems by advancing his a-pawn.

### 16.Bxe4 Rad8 17.Re1?

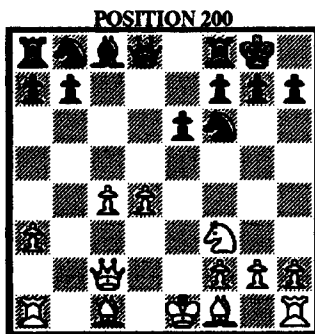
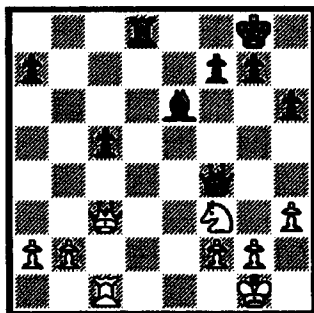
The tournament book correctly gives 17.Qc2 as a stronger move.

After the text move, Black can always exchange the dangerous Bishop.

### 17...Nf6 18.Qc2 Nxe4 19.Rxe4 Rd5 20.h3 Rfd8

In compensation for his weak a-pawn and c-pawn, Black has control of the open d-file.

### 21.Re5 Rxe5 22.Nxe5 Qg5 23.Nf3 Qf4 24.Qc3



If 24.Qxc5, Black answers with 24...Bxh3, threatening 25...Bxg2 26.Kxg2 Qg4+.

**24...c4**

The weak pawn turns out to be strong and now 25...Rd3 is threatened.

**25.Qe3 Qxe3 26.fxe3 Rb8 27.Rc2 Bf5 28.Rxc4**

After 28.Rd2 Bb1 29.a3 Rb3, Black has the initiative.

**28...Rxb2 29.Ra4 Rb7**

The chances are even. The game was drawn after the following moves:

**30.a3 Kf8 31.Nd4 Bd7 32.Ra5 Ke7 33.Kf2 g6 34.g4 Rc7 35.Kg3 Kd6 36.h4 Ke7 37.h5 g5 38.Ra6 f6 39.Nf5+ Bxf5 40.gxf5 Rb7 41.a4 Kf7 42.a5 Re7 43.Kf3 Kg7 44.e4 Kf7 45.Rc6 g4+ 46.Ke3 g3 47.Rc4 Ke8 48.Kf3 Rg7 49.Kg2 Kd7 50.Rc3 Rg4 51.Rxg3 Rxe4 52.Rg7+ Kd6 53.Rxa7 Ra4 Draw.**

*(The less familiar but nevertheless dangerous flank attack on the hanging pawns by ...b5; from the game Ojanen-Trifunovic, Mar del Plata 1953).*

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e3 O-O 5.Nf3 d5 6.a3 Bxc3+ 7.bxc3 c5 8.cxd5 Nxd5 9.c4 Nf6 10.Qc2 cxd4 11.exd4**

**11...Bd7! 12.Be2 b5**

This strong flank attack is possible, thanks to the fact that White is uncastled, so that Black has the finesse 13.cxb5 Bxb5 14.Bxb5 Qa5+ and 15...Qxb5. From the positional point of view, the consequences are most striking.

**13.c5**

If White had allowed this pawn to be captured at c4, he would have been left with an isolated d-pawn. The consequences of the move actually played are even more serious, for he now gets all the disadvantages which we know are associated with "blockaded security", but not its advantages. The usual advantage lies in the possibility of an attack on the b-pawn, but in the present case with the pawn not at b7, but already on b5, this simply does not arise.

**13...Bc6 14.O-O Be4**

Occupying a vital "vacant central square".

**15.Qc3**

If 15.Qb3, Black can play either 15...Nc6 16.Qxb5 Bxf3 17.Bxf3 Nxd4 18.Qd3 Nxf3+ 19.Qxf3 Qd5 or the simple move 15...a6.

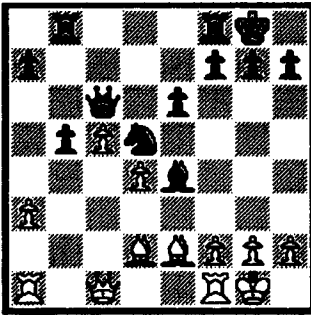
**15...Nc6**

This threatens 16...Bxf3 17.Bxf3 Nxd4 18.Bxa8? Ne2+; while after

16.Bxb5 Bxf3 17.Qxf3 Nxd4 18.Qd3 Nxb5 19.Qxb5 Qc7, the weakness of the White c-pawn will be a serious liability.

16.Be3 Nd5 17.Qc1 Rb8 18.Ne5 Qc7 19.Nxc6 Qxc6 20.Bd2?

20.f3 was essential, but Black could then play either 20...Bg6 or 20...Nxe3 21.Qxe3 Bd5, and in either case maintaining his twofold advantage which consists of the weakness of the White d-pawn and his ability to create a passed pawn on the extreme Queen's wing.



20...Bxg2!

Decisive, for if 21.Kxg2, he is demolished by 21...Ne3+, with the sequel 22.Kg3 Qg2+ 23.Kh4 Nf5+ 24.Kh5 Qg6#. There followed:

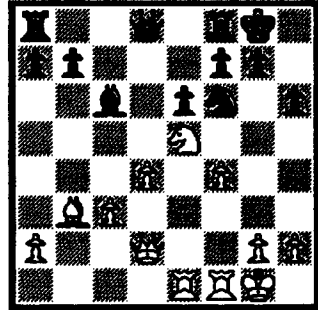
21.Re1 Ne7 22.Bf4 Rb7 23.Bd6 Bd5 24.Qc3 Rc8 25.Bxe7 Rxe7 26.Reb1 e5! 27.Bxb5 Qg6+ 28.Qg3 Qe4 29.f3 Qxd4+ 30.Qf2 Qxf2+ 31.Kxf2 Rxc5 32.Bd3 g6 and White Resigned.

*(If White has already pushed his f-pawn two squares, Black's play against the hanging pawns is very much hampered; from the game Eliskases-Vaitonis, Saltsjobaden 1952).*

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 d5 4.Nc3 Be7 5.Bg5 Nbd7 6.e3 O-O 7.Bd3 dxc4 8.Bxc4 c5 9.O-O Nb6 10.Bb3 cxd4 11.exd4 Nfd5 12.Qd2 Bxg5 13.Nxg5

Nxc3 14.bxc3 Nd5 15.f4 h6 16.Nf3 Bd7 17.Ne5 Nf6 18.Rae1 Bc6

POSITION 201



19.f5!

Before playing c4, White first opens the f-file. This has to be done promptly, for Black was on the point of occupying a vacant central square by 19...Be4.

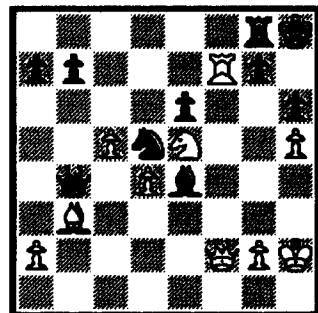
19...Bd5 20.c4 Be4 21.fxex6 fxex6 22.Rf4 Bh7 23.c5!

Evidently this advance (blockaded security once more!) has a rather different significance here from that of the previous game. Here it heralds a direct attack by White.

23...Nd5 24.Rxf8+ Qxf8 25.Rf1 Qe8 26.Rf7 Qb5 27.Qf2 Qb4 28.h4

The tournament book draws attention to the pretty combination: 28.Rd7 Rf8 29.Rxd5!!, with the main variation 29...Rxf2 30.Rd8+ Rf8 31.Bxe6+ Kh8 32.Nf7+ Kg8 33.Ng5+ Kh8 34.Rxf8+ Bg8 35.Rxg8#.

28...Be4 29.Kh2 Kh8 30.h5 Rg8

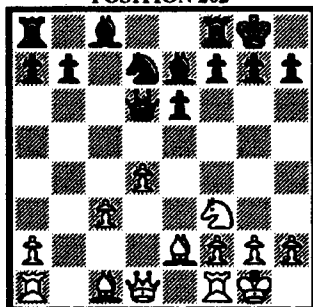


**31.Bc2!**

Revealing the point of White's last few moves. If now 31...Bxc2 32.Qxc2 Re8 33.Rxg7!, winning at once.

**31...Nf6 32.Rxf6 Qxd4 33.Qxd4 Black Resigned.**

POSITION 202



*(Assault by the a-pawn; a defensive idea put forward by Nimzowitsch, and elucidated in this game: Nimzowitsch-Vidmar, New York 1927).*

**1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.c3 Nf6 4.e5 Nd5 5.d4 cxd4 6.cxd4 Be7 7.Nc3 Nxc3 8.bxc3 d5 9.exd6 Qxd6 10.Be2 O-O 11.O-O Nd7 (No.202) 12.a4**

In the patent Nimzowitsch style. He gets in a4 now, anticipating that sooner or later Black will have to play ...b6. There is an incidental threat of 13.Ba3. Another important Nimzowitsch dogma was that the Bishop should sustain the hanging pawns from e2 - not from d3. This, to say the least, is a debatable point, as our previous examples have shown. White's prospect of attack will be better with the Bishop on d3, than if it is on e2. However, the dictum of Nimzowitsch is sound enough in the sense that as a defender pure and simple the Bishop functions better at e2.

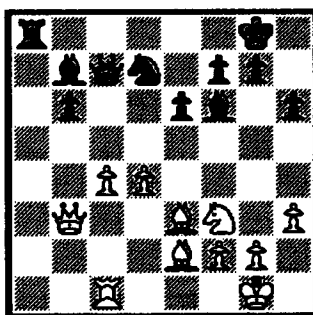
**12...Qc7 13.Qb3 b6 14.c4 Bb7 15.a5!**

Now 15...bxa5 can be answered by 16.Bf4! Qb6 17.Qa4.

**15...Bf6 16.axb6 axb6 17.Be3 h6 18.h3 Rfc8 19.Rfc1**

If Black now accepts the pawn sacrifice by 19...Rxa1 20.Rxa1 Bxf3 21.Bxf3 Qxc4 White will get full counterplay by 22.Qxc4 Rxc4 23.Ra8+Nf8 24.d5. It is evident that Black's weakness at b6 is a real compensation for the weakness of the hanging pawns.

**19...Rcb8 20.Rxa8 Rxa8**



**21.Nd2 Be7 22.Bf3 Ra3 23.Qb2 Bxf3 24.Nxf3 Ra5 25.Qd2 Ba3 26.Rc2 Bd6 27.Rc1**

White is content to defend. In view of the state of the tournament score it is understandable that Nimzowitsch sought no more than a draw from this game.

**27...Ba3 28.Rc2 Bd6 29.Rc1 Qa7 30.Qd3 Ra3 31.Qe4 Nf6 32.Qc6 Rxe3!**

One last attempt. If 33.fxe3, there follows 33...Qa3 34.Re1 Bg3 35.Rf1 Qxe3+ 36.Kh1 Ne4, with various threats, of which 37...Bf4 is chief.

**33.Qxd6! Draw**



## CHAPTER 21 THE DOUBLED PAWN

To lay down a general theory covering the problems of the doubled pawn would be impossible; there is far too much diversity about the theme. A doubled pawn is not simply a doubled pawn: it may be mobile or fixed, normal or isolated: it may form part of a pawn majority, or part of a pawn minority; above all it may or may not be part of the King's defense line.

There is no definite answer to the question whether a doubled pawn is a weakness. One may speak of a certain devaluation of a pawn itself, or of indirect weaknesses associated with it. Certainly a doubled pawn always curtails the mobility of the pawns, and this is particularly true if it happens to be on the majority wing, for then it, may be very difficult to make anything at all out of the majority. If however, it is on the minority wing, it may be no great handicap. In general, the defensive strength of such a formation is not seriously reduced, but there is the indirect disadvantage that the standard minority attack is hardly practicable.

Experience shows that the weaknesses of a doubled pawn, both direct and indirect, are greatest when the pawns are fixed. In Chapter 9 we looked at the so-called Wyvill Formation (White pawns at c4, c3, d4, and e4 against Black pawns at c7, d6, and e5). We decided that this formation carries certain positional disadvantages, but that these are usually counterbalanced by chances of attack. If however, Black can induce White to play d5, the positional

disadvantage will immediately become dominant. Now that c5 is ruled out, the direct weakness becomes serious, and there is also a serious indirect weakness in the use which the Black pieces can make of the c5 square.

The doubled pawn is a dominant feature of several important opening variations. One well known case is 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Bxc6 dxc6 5.d4 exd4 6.Qxd4 Qxd4 7.Nxd4, where Black's majority is seriously compromised by the doubling, but luckily for Black, he retains the two Bishops, and these make the chances about even.

On the other hand, in the Caro-Kann line, 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nf6 5.Nxf6+ exf6 Black has theoretically no compensation for the doubling, and this explains why the variation has fallen into disuse, even though no decisive refutation of it is known.

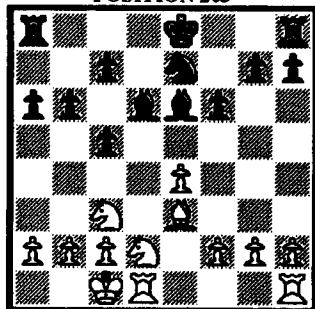
An isolated doubled pawn is generally a serious handicap, for such pawns are very vulnerable. As with the isolated d-pawn, the important square to control is the one in front of the pawn.

Worst of all is a doubled pawn in the King's position, for then it is not only the pawns which cause concern, but also the denuded King.

Our general conclusion then is that a doubled pawn is likely to involve some more or less serious disadvantage. The only real advantage of having a doubled pawn is that it is necessarily accompanied by an open file for the Rooks. From the following examples, the attentive reader may decide for himself just what

significance this extra open file may have.

POSITION 203



(Doubled pawns accompanied by the Bishop pair; from the game Bogolyubov-Kostic, Goteborg 1920).

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Bxc6 dxc6 5.Nc3 f6 6.d4 exd4 7.Qxd4 Qxd4 8.Nxd4 Bd6 9.Be3 Ne7 10.Nb3 b6 11.O-O-O c5 12.Nd2 Be6 (No.203) 13.f4

A familiar sort of situation. White's pawn position is decidedly preferable; a pure pawn ending would now be a White win, but the presence of the Black Bishop pair at least restores the balance.

13...O-O-O 14.Nf3 Nc6

White was threatening 15.e5 fxe5 16.fxe5 Nf5 17.Bg5 Be7 18.Bxe7 with advantage.

15.h3 Rd7! 16.g4

This is what Black was waiting for. It would have been more prudent of White to prepare this move by 16.Kb1.

16...Nd4! 17.Nh4

And not 17.Nxd4 cxd4 18.Rxd4 Bxf4! 19.Rxd7 Bxe3+, etc.

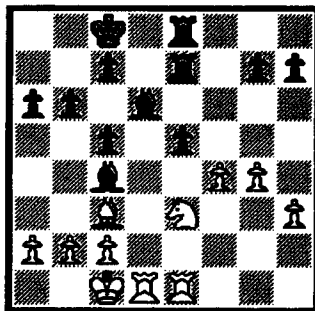
17...Re8 18.Ng2 Bc4!

The two Bishops are beginning to show their faces. Now the threat is 19...Ne2+ 20.Nxe2 Bxe2 and 21...Bf3.

19.Rhe1 Nb5!

It is now apparent that the White pawns are vulnerable; the e-pawn is especially weak.

20.Bd2 Nxc3 21.Bxc3 Rde7 22.e5 fxe5 23.Ne3



23...Be2!!

Black has been working with this pretty move in mind.

24.Rxd6

The other possibilities were 24.Rxe2 exf4 or 24.Rd2 exf4 25.Nf5 f3! 26.Nxe7+ Rxe7, and Black must win.

24...cxd6 25.fxe5

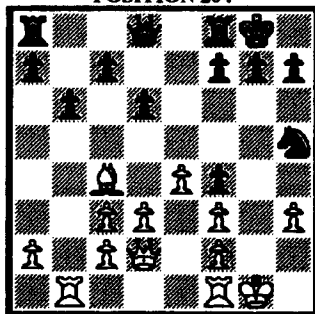
This is necessary, for 25.Nf5 exf4 26.Nxd6+ Kd7 27.Nxe8 f3! is a dead loss.

25...Bf3 26.Nf5 d5! 27.Nxe7+ Rxe7

So Black emerges into a very favorable endgame, which although is not essential to our theme, it contains some interesting play:

28.Bd2 Be4 29.c4 Kd7 30.cxd5 Bxd5 31.a3 Rf7 32.h4 Ke6! 33.h5 Rf2 34.h6 gxh6 35.Bxh6 Rg2 36.g5 Bb3! 37.Rh1 Bc2 38.Bg7 Bd3 39.Rh3 c4 40.b3 b5 41.bxc4 bxc4 42.Bh8 Rxc5 43.Kd2 Kd5 44.Kc3 h5! 45.Rh2 Rg3 46.Rd2 Kc5 47.e6 Bf5+ 48.Kb2 Rb3+ 49.Ka2 Bxe6 50.Bd4+ Kc6 51.Ka1 Rxa3+ 52.Kb2 Rb3+ 53.Ka1 c3 White Resigned.

POSITION 204



*(The weakness of a fixed doubled pawn; from Janowski-Lasker, second match game 1909).*

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bb5 Bb4 5.O-O O-O 6.d3 d6 7.Bg5 Bxc3 8.bxc3 Ne7 9.Bc4 Ng6 10.Nh4 Nf4 11.Bxf4 exf4 12.Nf3 Bg4 13.h3 Bh5 14.Rb1 b6 15.Qd2 Bxf3 16.gxf3 Nh5

The Black doubled pawn blocks the White one, and produces such an uncomfortable pressure that White's counteradvantages—central majority and open g-file—carry very little weight.

17.Kh2 Qf6 18.Rg1 Rae8 19.d4 Kh8 20.Rb5 Qh6 21.Rbg5 f6 22.R5g4 g6 23.Bd3

Directed against 23...f5.

23...Re7 24.c4

Apparently hoping to sow confusion in the enemy ranks by an eventual c5.

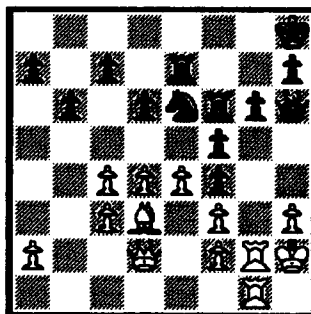
24...Ng7!

So as to get at the White doubled pawns *via* e6. Of course, if White now plays 25.Qxf4, there follows 25...Qxf4+ 26.Rxf4 Ne6 and 27...Nxd4.

25.c3 Ne6 26.Bf1

26.Qd1 would have been a little stronger.

26...f5 27.R4g2 Rf6 28.Bd3



28...g5!!

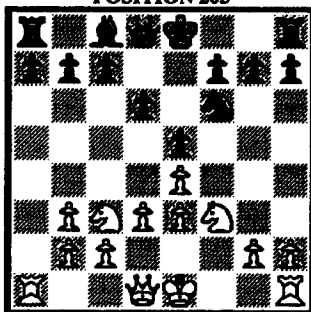
If now 29.exf5, there would be a magnificent finish: 29...Qxh3+!! 30.Kxh3 Rh6+ 31.Kg4 Rh4#. The Queen sacrifice is, of course, threatened in any case.

29.Rh1 g4

With 30...Ng5 as a new threat.

30.Be2 Ng5 31.fxg4 f3 32.Rg3 fxe2  
White Resigned.

POSITION 205



*(The value of the open files associated with doubled pawns; from the game Salwe-Schlechter, Carlsbad 1907).*

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6 4.d3 Bc5 5.Nc3 d6 6.Be3 Bxe3 7.fxe3 Na5 8.Bb3 Nxb3 9.axb3

White has two doubled pawns, and therefore two open files. No less an authority than Steinitz was of the

opinion that this position was in Black's favor, maintaining that the doubled pawns must be considered a serious handicap to White.

**9...Ng4 10.Qd2 f5**

Here Steinitz characteristically preferred 10...f6, following up by playing the Knight back to h6 and then f7, with a resilient defensive position. In such a position, however, Black must be prepared for a long defensive game, and in due course Tarrasch pronounced the text to be a better move.

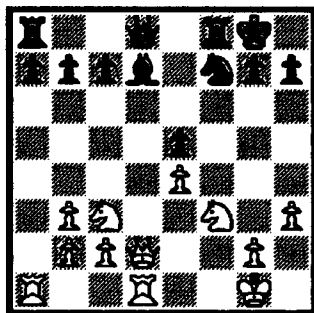
**11.exf5 Bxf5 12.O-O O-O 13.h3 Nh6**

Here the Knight is badly placed, but 13...Nf6 allows 14.Nxe5! Bxh3! 15.Ng6! hxc6 16.gxh3, after which it is Black who is left with a weak isolated doubled pawn.

**14.e4 Bd7 15.d4!**

Thanks to the open a-file, this advance is particularly powerful. If 15...exd4 16.Qxd4 b6 17.e5 dxe5 18.Qd5+ Kh8 19.Nxe5 Bf5 20.Qxd8 Raxd8 21.Rf2, with the double threat of 22.Rxa7 and 22.Raf1.

**15...Nf7 16.dxe5 dxe5 17.Rfd1**



This wins a pawn, for after 17...Bc6 18.Qxd8, etc., either the a-pawn or the e-pawn must fall.

**17...Nd6 18.Nxe5 Be6 19.Nf3**

Intending to answer 19...Bxh3 with 20.e5.

**19...Rxf3**

An attempt to salvage a strategically lost game by tactical means.

**20.gxf3 Qh4 21.Ra5!**

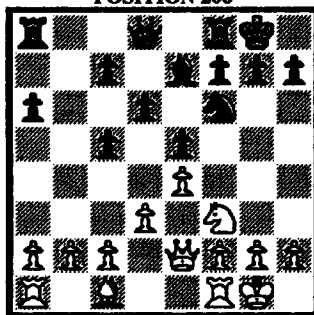
The a-file is still very much in evidence. The entry of the Rooks is decisive.

**21...Rf8 22.Qf2 Qxh3 23.Rd3 b5**

Otherwise White will play 24.Rg5 and 25.Qg2. Should White now capture the b-pawn, Black would have time for 24...Rf6!

**24.Qh2! Qxh2+ 25.Kxh2 g5 26.e5 Nf7 27.Rxb5 g4 28.fxg4 Ng5 29.Rc5 Rf2+ 30.Kg3 Rf7 31.Re3 Rf1 32.Ne4 Rg1+ 33.Kf2 Rxc4 34.Nxc5 Black Resigned.**

POSITION 206



(A classic example of the weakness of a doubled pawn; from the game Tarrasch-Berger, Breslau 1889).

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.Nc3 Bb4 6.Nd5 Be7 7.d3 d6 8.Nb4 Bd7 9.Nxc6 Bxc6 10.Bxc6+ bxc6 11.O-O O-O 12.Qe2 c5 (No.206) 13.c3**

Intending d4. This will admittedly afford his opponent a chance to rid himself of the doubled pawn, but against this White will retain a formidable advantage in freedom of movement. In addition to this method – preferred by Tarrasch – White has the option of a different system which is really more appropriate to the pawn formation, and which originated with

Steinitz. His scheme was 13.Nd2 followed by Nc4-e3 – surprisingly modern looking play.

**13...Nd7 14.d4 exd4 15.cxd4 Bf6!**

A good move, reanimating the Bishop. If now 16.d5, Black plays 16...Rb8, and suddenly his pieces are working together like the parts of a well-oiled machine.

**16.Be3 cxd4 17.Bxd4 Re8 18.Qc2**

The Black doubled pawn is vanished, it is true, but its after-effects will be felt for a very long time. As a result of the method employed by White, the c-pawn will be a constant target.

**18...Bxd4?**

18...c5 at once would have been stronger. Then after 19.Bxf6 Qxf6 20.Nd2 Rab8, the mobility of the Black pieces would compensate to some extent for White's positional advantage.

**19.Nxd4 Nc5 20.f3 Qf6 21.Rfd1 Reb8 22.Rab1 a5**

Preventing b4 for the time being

**23.Kh1**

A tactical intermezzo. White now threatens 24.e5 Qxe5 25.Nc6, after which Black would not now have a saving Queen check on e3.

**23...Rb6**

The Rook is vulnerable here, as the sequel shows. Better was 23...Rb7.

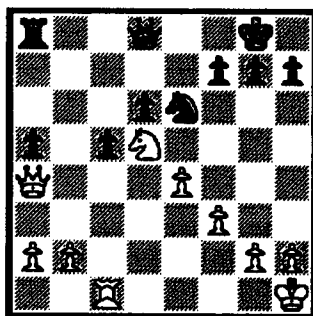
**24.Ne2! Ne6 25.Nc3 Rc6?**

Steinitz and Tarrasch were in agreement here that 25...Qd8 26.Nd5 Rb7, followed by ...Rab8, deserved the preference.

**26.Qa4 Rc5 27.Nd5 Qd8**

Any other Queen move allows 28.b4.

**28.Rbc1 Rxc1 29.Rxc1 c5**



*(From doubled pawn, via weak pawn, to backward pawn).*

A radical cure for the weakness of the c-pawn, which however, only transfers the weakness to the d-pawn.

The diagram shows a backward pawn of the worst kind. This is the theme of our next chapter, but it may be as well to point out here that it is the logical result of White's plan of playing all the time against the weakness which began with the doubled pawn. The weakness of a backward pawn consists in the fact that it is fixed and cannot possibly be protected by another pawn. The result in the present case is that White has full control of the central support-point d5.

**30.Rd1 Nd4**

This screening of the d-pawn is only temporary, since the Knight can always be driven back by Nc3-e2.

**31.Qc4 Rb8 32.b3 Rc8?**

32...Qd7 was correct here, keeping some chance of counterplay by ...a4.

**33.Rxd4! cxd4 34.Ne7+**

Not 34.Qxc8? Qxc8 35.Ne7+ Kf8 36.Nxc8 d3, and Black wins!

**34...Qxe7 35.Qxc8+ Qf8 36.Qxf8+ Kxf8**

Suddenly a second doubled pawn

has made its appearance in the Black game – this time an isolated doubled pawn, of whose weakness there can be no doubt.

**37.Kg1 Ke7 38.Kf2 d5 39.e5**

A simpler plan would have been 39.exd5 Kd6 40.Ke2 Kxd5 41.Kd3, followed by the advance of the Queenside pawns.

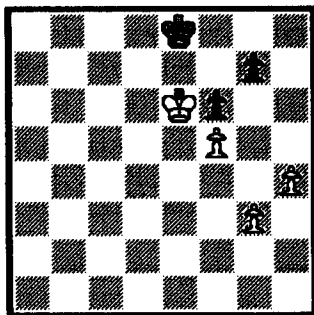
**39...Ke6 40.Ke2!**

This is essential. There is no time for 40.f4, as is clear from the continuation, 40...g5! 41.g3 gxf4 42.gxf4 Kf5 43.Kf3 d3, etc.

**40...Kxe5 41.Kd3 h5 42.a3 h4 43.b4 axb4 44.axb4 Kd6 45.Kxd4 Kc6**

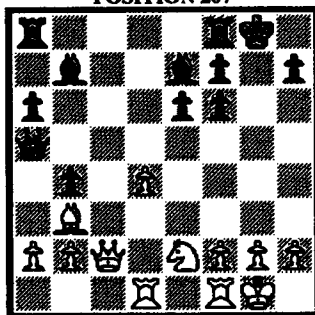
The correct play now is 46.f4! Then, if 46...Kd6 47.b5 wins; or, if 46...g6 47.b5+ Kxb5 48.Kxd5, and the White King can get in. In the game Tarrasch made a miscalculation here, and the fact that he nevertheless won is attributable to Black's missed chance at move 51. The rest of this very instructive game does not concern our theme:

**46.b5+? Kxb5 47.Kxd5 Kb4! 48.Kd4 Kb5 49.Ke5 Kc4 50.Kf4 Kd4 51.Kg4 Ke5? (51...Ke3! 52.Kxh4 Kf2 53.Kh3 g5!) 52.Kxh4 Kf4 53.Kh5 Kf5 54.g3 Kf6 55.Kg4 Kg6 56.Kf4 Kf6 57.Ke4 Ke6 58.Kd4 Kd6 59.Kc4 Kc6 60.f4 Kd6 61.Kd4 Ke6 62.Kc5 Ke7 63.Kd5 Kd7 64.Ke5 Ke7 65.f5 f6+ 66.Kd5 Kd7 67.h3 Ke7 68.Kc6 Ke8 69.h4 Ke7 70.Kc7 Ke8 71.Kd6 Kd8 72.Ke6 Ke8**



**73.h5 Kf8 74.h6 Black Resigned.**

POSITION 207



*(The doubled pawn as a weakening of the castled position; from the game Lilienthal-Marshall, Munich 1936).*

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.Qc2 c5 5.dxc5 Nc6 6.Nf3 O-O 7.Bg5 Qa5 8.Bxf6 gxf6 9.a3 Bxc5 10.Be2 d5 11.O-O dxc4 12.Bxc4 Be7 13.Rad1 a6 14.Nd4! Nxd4 15.exd4! b5 16.Bb3 b4 17.Ne2 Bb7 (No.207) 18.d5!!**

The isolated d-pawn is offered in order to get possession of valuable squares from which the White pieces can menace the Black King.

**18...Rac8**

On 18...Bxd5 19.Bxd5 exd5 20.Nf4 Rad8 21.Qf5, and 22.Nxd5 or 22.Nh5 **19.Qe4 Rfd8**

Other possibilities: 19...Kh8 20.Bc2 f5 21.Qe5+ Kg8 22.Rd3 or 19...f5 20.Qe5 Qc7 21.d6 Qc6 22.Bd5!, etc.

**20.Qg4+ Kh8 21.Qh5 Kg7 22.Rd3**

Against this incursion of the Rook there is no antidote.

**22...Bd6 23.Rh3 Kf8 24.Qh6+ Ke7 25.dxe6 Rg8**

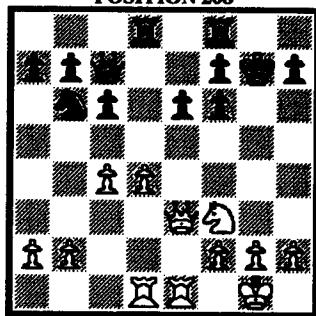
If 25...fxe6, of course 26.Qg7+.

**26.Ng3 Bxg3 27.hxg3 Bd5 28.exf7 Bxb3**

Or 28...Bxf7 29.Re1+, and wins.

**29.fxg8=Q Bxg8 30.Qg7+ Black Resigned.**

POSITION 208



(Another example of a castled position weakened by the doubling of a pawn; from the game Smyslov-Stahlberg, Zurich 1953).

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 dxe4 5.Nxe4 Be7 6.Bxf6 Bxf6 7.Nf3 Nd7 8.Bc4 O-O 9.Qe2 Nb6 10.Bb3 Bd7 11.O-O Qe7 12.Rfe1 Rad8 13.Rad1 Ba4? 14.Bxa4 Nxa4 15.Qb5 Nb6 16.c4 c6 17.Qb3 Qc7? 18.Nxf6+ gxf6 19.Qe3 Kg7? (No.208) 20.Ne5!!

In this surprising fashion White lays bare the weakness of the Black's King position. The Knight cannot be taken, because after 20...fxe5 21.Qg5+ Kh8 22.Qf6+ Kg8 23.Rd3 Rfe8 24.Qh6!, White's attack will go like a knife through butter.

Of course the Knight cannot be maintained at e5, but the move has set an irresistible attack in motion. The first threat is 21.Qg3+ Kh8 22.Ng6+, winning the Queen.

20...Qe7 21.Ng4 Rg8

This costs the exchange, but 21...Nd7 22.Qh6+ Kh8 23.d5 cxd5 24.cxd5 e5 25.Re3 Rg8 26.Rh3 Rg7 27.Ne3 and 28.Nf5, would come to much the same thing.

22.Nh6 Qc7

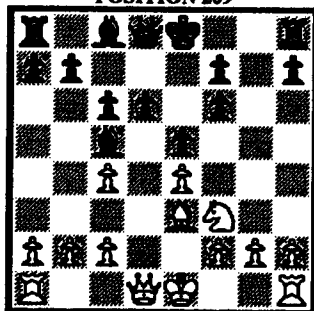
If 22...Nxc4 23.Nf5+ Kh8 24.Qh6 Qf8 25.Qxf6+, and wins.

23.Nxg8 Rxg8 24.b3

Now it is easy for White. Not only is Black behind on material, but he is still plagued by his doubled pawn.

24...Kh8 25.Qh6 Rg6 26.Qh4 Nd7 27.Re3 Qa5 28.Rh3 Nf8 29.Rg3 Qxa2 30.Rxg6 Nxc6 31.Qxf6+ Kg8 32.Qf3 Qc2 33.Qd3 Black Resigned.

POSITION 209



(A whole handful of doubled pawns; from the game Korchnoi-Bronstein, XX Championship of the USSR 1952).

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.d3 Nf6 5.Nc3 d6 6.Bg5 Na5 7.Nd5 Nxc4 8.dxc4 c6 9.Nxf6+ gxf6 10.Be3

A remarkable position: each side has a doubled pawn already, and White, by his last move, declares his willingness to accept another doubling. He judges, apparently, that the open d-file and the f-file will afford him full compensation.

10...Qb6 11.Qd2

With the following recondit intention: 11...Qxb2 12.Bxc5!! dxc5 (12...Qxa1+ 13.Ke2 Qxh1 14.Qxd6, and wins) 13.O-O, followed by 14.Qd6, with dangerous attacking chances.

11...Be6 12.O-O-O O-O-O

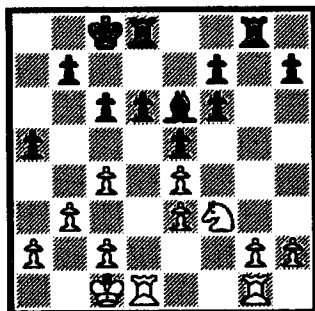
If 12...Bxc4, the continuation might be 13.Bxc5 dxc5 14.Qh6 Ke7 15.Nxe5! fxe5 16.Qd6+ Ke8 17.Qxe5+, and wins.

13.b3 Rhg8 14.Rhg1 a5 15.Bxc5 Qxc5

**16.Qe3 Qxe3+ 17.fxe3**

White has his wish: he has two doubled pawns against Black's one, but Black also has a backward d-pawn and an isolated h-pawn.

The position deserves an extra diagram!



(Most of Chapters 19-22 compressed into one diagram!).

**17...Rg4!**

Forcing White into defensive play, for the Knight move he now has to make deprives him of all play in the d-file.

**18.Nd2 Rdg8 19.g3 Kd7! 20.Kb2 Ke7**

Here the King is ideally placed for guarding both the d-pawn and the f-pawn.

**21.Kc3 h5 22.Rgf1 h4 23.gxh4 Rxh4 24.Rf2 Rgh8 25.Rh1**

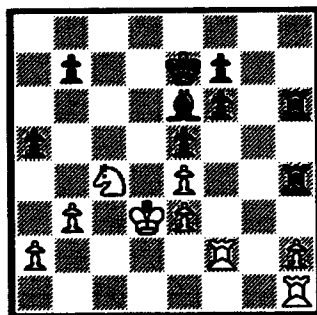
There is no relief to be found in 25.Rhf1, for after 25...R8h6, White must still play his Rook to h1, if he wants to hold his h-pawn.

**25...R8h6 26.Kd3 d5!**

In chess everything is relative. Black now forces the win with the only move which permits White to rid himself of both of his doubled pawns!

**27.cxd5 cxd5 28.c4**

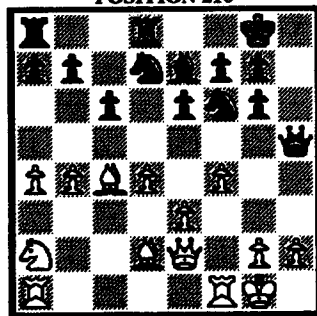
If 28.exd5 Bxd5 29.e4, Black wins by means of 29...Rh3+ 30.Ke2 Bc6 and 31...R6h4.

**28...dxc4+ 29.Nxc4****29...Rh8! 30.Nxa5**

This loses quickly, but defense of the e-pawn by 30.Nd2 is no good either, in view of 30...Rc8!! 31.Rhf1 R4h8! with an irresistible attack.

**30...Rd8+ 31.Kc3 Rxe4 32.h4 Rxe3+ 33.Kb2 f5 White Resigned.**

## POSITION 210



(The doubled pawn as a battering ram: from the game Kramer-Ekstrem, Zaandam 1946).

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nc3 dxc4 5.a4 Bf5 6.e3 e6 7.Bxc4 Bb4 8.O-O O-O 9.Qe2 Bg6 10.Ne5 Nbd7 11.Nxg6 hxg6 12.f4 Qa5 13.Na2 Be7 14.Bd2 Qh5 15.b4 Rfd8 (No.210) 16.Qxh5 Nxh5!**

Black would rather remain with doubled pawns than play 16...gxh5, allowing White to obtain powerful play for his Bishops by 17.f5.



**17.Rfd1 Nb6 18.Bb3 Nd5 19.Bc2**

Intending 20.g4 and 21.g5, a scheme which Black nips in the bud. 19.e4, however, would have been bad: 19...Ndx4! 20.g4 Ne2+ 21.Kf2 Nxd4.

**19...f5!**

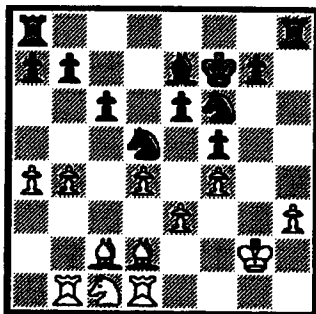
This cuts across White's plans.

**20.Rab1 Nhf6 21.g3 g5!**

Powerfully played; if 22.fxg5 there follows 22...Ng4 23.Rb3 Bxg5.

**22.h3 gxf4 23.gxf4 Kf7 24.Kg2 Rh8 25.Nc1**

This Knight aims to get back into the game *via* d3, but it is too late.



**25...g5! 26.fxg5**

26.Nd3 Rag8 27.Ne5+ Ke8, is certainly no improvement.

**26...Rag8 27.Rh1 Rxc5+ 28.Kf3 Rgh5 29.Rb3 29...Rxc3+ 30.Rxc3 Rxc3+ 31.Kg2 Rh8 32.Nd3 Bd6 33.Ne5+ Bxe5 34.dxe5 Ng4 35.Rd3 Nxe5 36.Rd4 Rg8+ 37.Kf2 Ng4+ 38.Ke2 e5** and Black had an easy win.

## CHAPTER 22

# THE BACKWARD PAWN

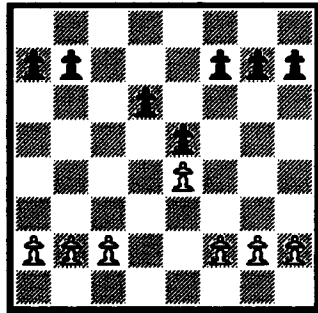
The backward pawn – i.e. a pawn which, although having one or two colleagues on the adjoining files, is yet on its own because they cannot protect it – is almost invariably a serious disadvantage. It is the square in front of the pawn which causes all the trouble; in this respect it is just like an isolated pawn.

The backward pawn can also act as a kind of self-block. However, this is not always so. In recent years some opening lines have been developed (e.g. 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 d6 6.Be2 e5) which seem to laugh at all theory. Even the semi-backward pawn in the King's Indian (1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 Bg7 4.Bg2 0-0 5.Nc3 d6 6.e4 Nbd7 7.Nge2 e5 8.0-0 exd4 9.Nxd4 Re8 10.h3 Nc5 11.Qc2 a5 12.Be3 c6!) is enough to make certain theorists of yesterday, turn in their graves.

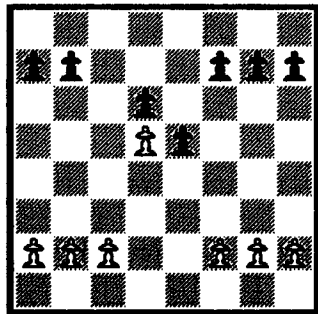
In a certain sense this reappraisal of the backward pawn can be seen as one aspect of the new trend of thought which has been pervading chess since the Second World War. During the period of the so-called "neo-romantics" after World War I, Breyer and Reti caused quite a stir with their innovations; similarly since World War II, a new dynamic style has emerged, with the Russian school its chief advocates. This school puts the accent chiefly on the play of the pieces, their activity being sufficient to compensate for the weakness of the backward pawn. The duties which the neighboring pawns are unable to carry out are taken over by the pieces, whose powers have to be concentrated on the vital square in front of their backward pawn.

In the King's Indian Variation given above, the play is tactical in character, its real aim being to activate to the utmost the Bishop lurking on g7. In the Sicilian line quoted, however, the strategic element predominates.

Before tackling some examples, we give two diagrams for comparison. The second one is particularly important in assessing the value of several variations of the Sicilian.



The above diagram shows the backward pawn as it often occurs in the Sicilian defense. The single difference in the diagram below transforms the whole situation. The Black d-pawn, although still backward, is no longer on an open file, for the White center pawn now blocks it.



In such a case we speak of a screened backward pawn, and, of course, there is no question now of referring to it as a weak pawn.

In such a position the play is controlled rather by the pawn majorities. Black has four to three on the Kingside, while White has the same ratio on the Queenside. A glance is sufficient to show that Black's majority is the easier one to utilize, for he will have no trouble in playing ...f5, whereas White may not find it at all easy to achieve c5.

Now for some actual play:



*(The backward pawn as a weakness; from the game Smyslov-Denker, Moscow 1946).*

1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.g3 g6 4.Bg2 Bg7  
5.d3 e6 6.Be3 Nd4 7.Nce2 d6 8.c3 Nc6  
9.d4 cxd4 10.Nxd4 Nxd4 11.Bxd4 e5?  
12.Be3 Ne7 13.Ne2 O-O 14.O-O Be6  
15.Qd2 Qc7 (No.211) 16.Rfc1!

Very refined play against the square d5, preparing c4. If Black reacts with 16...b5, White will play 17.a4 a6 18.Rd1, with a constant threat to open the a-file.

16...f5 17.c4 fxe4 18.Nc3

Another fine move. The tactical possibility 18...Bxc4 19.Nxe4 d5 20.Ng5!, is incidental: the positional aim is to control the squares e4 and d5.

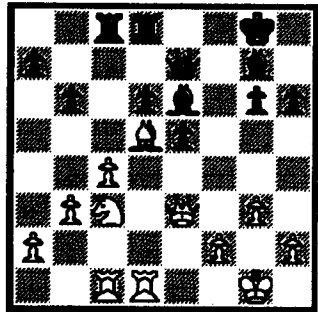
18...Nf5 19.Nxe4 Nxe3

If 19...Nd4, Smyslov would have played 20.c5! d5 21. Ng5 Bf7 22.f4.

20.Qxe3 h6 21.Rd1 Rfd8

If 21...Bxc4, White replies not 22.Nxd6, but 22.Rac1! – a much stronger move, according to Smyslov.

22.Rac1 Rac8 23.b3 b6 24.Nc3 Qe7  
25.Bd5!



Thus Black is forced to relinquish the only piece with which he might have been able to contest the d5 square, and is left with a bad Bishop which is no match at all for the White Knight.

25...Kh7 26.Bxe6 Qxe6 27.Rd3 Rc7  
28.Rcd1 Rf7 29.Ne4 Bf8 30.Rd5 Qg4  
31.R1d3

After 31.Nxd6 Bxd6 32.Rxd6 Qxd1+, Black would have some counterplay.

The methodical text move, preparing to treble the heavy pieces on the d-file, marks the doom of the backward pawn. If 31...Qe6 32.Qd2 Rfd7 33.c5 bxc5 34.Nxc5, and wins.

31...Be7 32.Nxd6 Bxd6 33.Rxd6

White aims are fully achieved, and the rest of the game is outside our province:

33...Rdf8 34.Qxe5 Rxf2 35.Rd7+ R2f7  
36.Rxf7+ Rxf7 37.Rd8 Rg7 38.Qe8 g5  
39.Qh8+ Kg6 40.Rd6+ Kf7 41.Qxh6  
Qf5 42.Rd1 Qc5+ 43.Kg2 Qe7 44.Rf1+  
Kg8 45.Qf6 Qe8 46.Qf5 g4 47.Rf2 Qe7  
48.Qd3 Rg5 49.Re2 Qf8 50.Qe4 Rg7

51.Qd5+ Qf7 52.Re6!, and Black Resigned.

32.Bh3!

The first part of White's problem is solved. His e-pawn is well secured, and the Bishop has found a fine action station.

32...Ne8 33.Rc3 Kf8 34.Rb3!

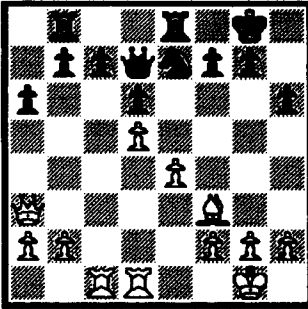
The threat of 35.Qa7 now forces a further weakening.

34...b6 35.Ra3 Ra8 36.Qc4 a5 37.Rac3 Ra7 38.Qd4 Nf6 39.a3

The forced weakening of the Black Queenside means that White will be able to open a file on this flank.

39...Ne8 40.Qa4 Nf6 41.Qc2 Kg8

POSITION 212



(The siege of c7; from the game Flohr-H. Johner, Zurich 1934).

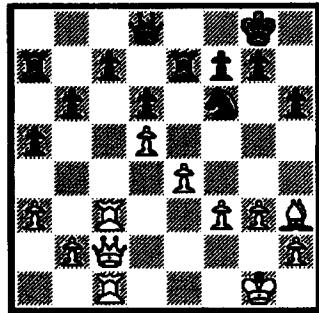
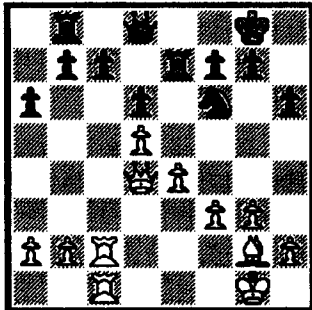
1.c4 e5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.Nf3 Nc6 4.d4 exd4 5.Nxd4 Bb4 6.Bg5 O-O 7.Rc1 Re8 8.e3 Ne5 9.Be2 h6 10.Bh4 Ng6 11.Bxf6 Qxf6 12.O-O Bxc3 13.Rxc3 d6 14.Nb5 Qd8 15.Rc1 Bd7 16.Nc3 Bc6 17.Nd5 Rb8 18.Qd2 Ne7 19.Rfd1 a6 20.Bf3 Qd7 21.Qc3 Rec8 22.Qa3 Re8 23.e4 Bxd5 24.cxd5

White must now maneuver to pressure the c-pawn. For now Black has the mobility of his Knight to set against the weakening of his c-pawn.

24...Ng6 25.g3 Re7 26.Qb4 Nf8

Black directs his counterplay against the White e-pawn.

27.Rd2 Nh7 28.Rdc2 Qd8 29.Bg2 Nf6 30.f3 Ne8 31.Qd4 Nf6



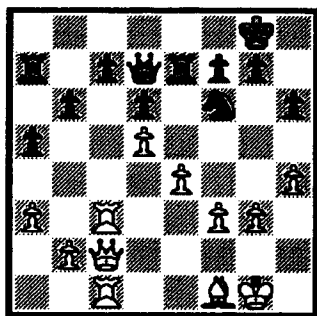
42.Bf1

At last things are getting really serious. The Bishop is going to b5, from which vantage-point it will cut off the Knight from the Queenside.

42...Qd7 43.Rc6 Qd8 44.Bb5 Kf8 45.Rc3 Kg8 46.h4

This is a characteristic feature of the tacking style of strategy being followed here by White (a subject which we shall take up in detail in Book II). When maneuvering like this it is essential to prepare attacking chances on both wings. White now shifts his attention to the Kingside.

46...Qc8 47.Kh2 Kf8 48.Bf1 Qd7 49.Bh3 Qe8 50.Qd2 Qd8 51.Qc2 Qe8 52.Kg1 Kg8 53.Bf1 Qd7

**54.b4 axb4?**

Black should have continued his waiting game. Now the a-file will fall quickly into White's hands – a normal consequence for a defender who lacks freedom of movement.

**55.axb4 Ne8 56.Qb2 Qa4 57.Bc4 Kf8 58.Rb1 Qd7 59.Bf1 Qa4 60.Rcc1 Qd7 61.Ra1 Rxa1 62.Qxa1**

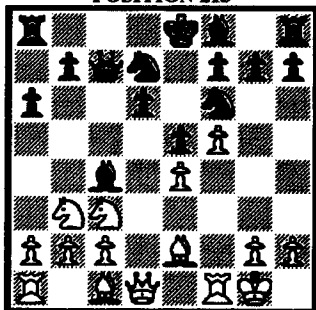
The end of a vital phase: mastery of the open a-file.

**62...Qd8 63.Qc3 Nf6 64.Bb5 Qc8 65.Kg2 Ne8 66.Qc6!**

Threatening not only 67.Qxb6, but also Ra1-a8.

**66...f5 67.Ra1 fxe4 68.Ra8 Qxa8 69.Qxa8 e3 70.Kf1 Kf7 71.g4 Black Resigned.**

POSITION 213



*(The backward pawn is weak whenever the opponent can occupy the square in front of it with a piece; from the game Geller-Najdorf, Zurich 1953).*

**1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Be2 e5 7.Nb3 Be6 8.O-O Nbd7 9.f4 Qc7 10.f5 Bc4**

The advance of the White f-pawn has the advantage of preventing Black from ever playing ...f5, but the disadvantage of leaving White's own e-pawn weak. In the given circumstances, Black can find no way of profiting from this weakness.

**11.a4! Rc8 12.Be3 Be7?**

The result of this will be that Black's b-pawn will also become backward, although it will not be a glaring weakness while the b-file remains closed. It was essential to play 12...b6.

**13.a5! h5 14.Bxc4 Qxc4 15.Ra4 Qc7 16.h3 h4**

No lack of backward pawns in this game! White's g-pawn now adds to the number. It gives Black no practical advantage at present, however, since g3 is inaccessible. (...Nh5 would give away the vital d5 square).

**17.Rf2 b5**

Black resorts to violence, and quite correctly, for a waiting policy would only allow White to carry out at leisure his plans for the conquest of d5, by Rd2, Bg5, and Bxf6.

**18.axb6 Nxb6 19.Bxb6**

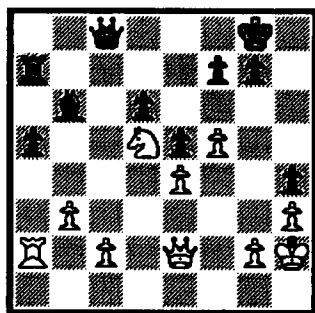
In this position the Black Knight is more valuable than the White Bishop, for the simple reason that the Bishop cannot be brought to bear on d5. It is to be noticed incidentally that 19.Rxa6 was out of the question, in view of the continuation 19...Nc4 20.Bc1 Qb7.

**19...Qxb6 20.Qe2 Ra8 21.Kh2 O-O 22.Rf1 Ra7 23.Rfa1 Rfa8 24.R1a2 Bd8 25.Na5 Rc8 26.Nc4 Qc6 27.Ne3!**

The d5 square is the key to the position. Had he played 27.b3 d5!, and suddenly Black is free.

**27...a5 28.Rc4 Qa6 29.b3 Bb6  
30.Rxc8+ Qxc8 31.Ned5 Nxd5  
32.Nxd5**

The battle for d5 is won. It remains only to convert the advantage gained into a win.



**32...Qc5 33.Ra1 Qf2 34.Qxf2 Bxf2  
35.Rf1 Bd4**

After 35...Bg3+ 36.Kg1, things would be easier for White, with Black's Bishop out of the way.

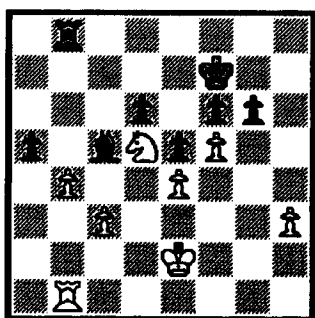
**36.c3 Bc5 37.g4**

Necessary to get the White King in play.

**37...hxg3+ 38.Kxg3 Rb7 39.Rb1 f6**

There is nothing in 39...a4 40.b4, followed by 41.Ra1.

**40.Kf3 Kf7 41.Ke2 Rb8 42.b4 g6**



**43.Kd3?**

There was a quicker win by 43.fxg6+

Kxg6 44.bxc5! Rxb1 45.c6 Rb8 46.c7, followed by 47.Ne7+. However, the move made is perfectly adequate.

**43...gxf5 44.exf5 axb4 45.cxb4 Bd4  
46.Rc1 Kg7**

Since the exchange of Rooks (46...Rb7 47.Rc7+) is tantamount to resignation, Black has no choice.

**47.Rc7+ Kh6 48.Ke4 Kg5 49.Rh7**

White now threatens to play 50.h4+ Kg4, and then take the f-pawn with check, so retaining the b-pawn.

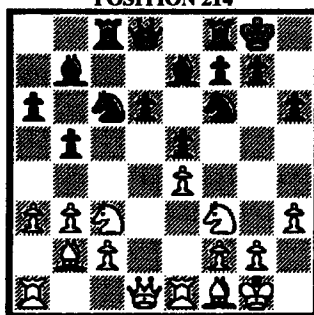
**49...Bf2 50.Rg7+ Kh4 51.Kf3 Be1  
52.Kg2**

Threatening 53.Rg4+ Kh5 54.Nxf6+ Kh6 55.Rg6#.

**52...Rf8 53.b5 Ba5 54.b6 Bxb6  
55.Nxb6 Rb8 56.Rg4+ Kh5 57.Nd5  
Black Resigned.**

After 57...Rb2+ 58.Kf3 Rb3+ 59.Ke4 Rxh3, there follows again 60.Nxf6+ and 61.Rg6#.

POSITION 214



(The pieces take over the duty of guarding the square in front of the backward pawn; from the game Unzicker-Taimanov, Saltsjobaden 1952).

**1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4  
Nf6 5.Nc3 d6 6.Be2 e5 7.Nf3 h6 8.O-O  
Be7 9.Re1 O-O 10.h3 a6 11.Bf1 b5  
12.a3 Bb7 13.b3 Rc8 14.Bb2 (No.214)  
14...Rc7**

Preparing on the one hand to double Rooks on the c-file; on the other hand to redouble his pressure against e4 and d5 by means of ...Qa8.

**15.Nb1**

The alternative was 15.Nd5 Nxd5 16.exd5 Nb8, after which the backward pawn is screened. We return to this theme in our next example.

**15...Qa8!**

A very effective layout of the Black pieces.

**16.Nbd2 Nd8 17.Bd3 Ne6 18.Rc1 Rfc8 19.Nh2**

Black's pressure down the half-open c-file, combined with his attack on the e-pawn, holds White completely on the defensive. The idea of this Knight move is to prop up the e-pawn by f3 if the need arises.

**19...Nd7 20.Nhf1 Ndc5 21.Ng3 g6**

Of course, Black does not allow Nf5.

**22.Ne2?**

A better idea would have been 22.Ndf1, followed when practicable by Ne3. After the move played it is true that the reply 22...Nxe4 is not good, for after 23.Nxe4 Bxe4 24.Bxe4 Qxe4 25.Nc3 Qd4 26.Qxd4 exd4 27.Nd5, it is White who suddenly has the better game, with the square d5 firmly in his possession. But Black has other strings to his bow.

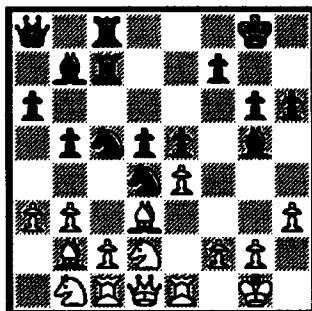
**22...Bg5! 23.Nc3 Nd4**

Threatening 24...Nxd3 25.cxd3 Bxd2 26.Qxd2 Nxb3 and wins.

**24.Ncb1 d5!** (see next diagram)

This advance of the backward pawn has automatically been made possible by the systematic pressure of the Black pieces against the square in front of it.

**25.exd5 Nxd3 26.cxd3 Rxc1 27.Bxc1 Bxd5**



After 24...d5!

The extraordinary thing about this game is that Black, who up to now has been demonstrating that his own backward pawn was no disadvantage, now proceeds to show that White's backward pawn is a very great disadvantage. The isolated White d-pawn in fact shows all the characteristics of a backward pawn, but only in the negative sense.

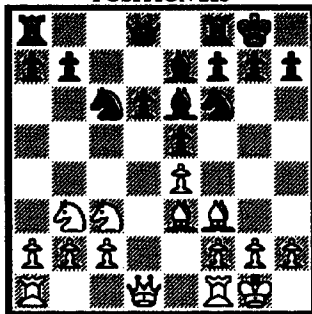
**28.f3 Rc2! 29.a4**

If 29.Rxe5, Black wins prettily by 29...Bxf3! 30.gxf3 Rxc1! 31.Qxc1 Nxf3+.

**29...b4 30.Kh1 Qc6 White Resigned.**

There is hardly a move left for him to make.

POSITION 215



(The screened backward pawn; from the game Pilnik-Geller, Goteborg 1955).

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 d6 6.Be2 e5 7.Nb3 Be7 8.O-O O-O 9.Be3 Be6 10.Bf3 (No.215) 10...a5

A sharper line than 10...Na5, which also came in for consideration. After 11.Nxa5 Qxa5 12.Qd2 Rfc8!, it appears from the game Boleslavsky-Euwe, Zurich 1953, that the half-open c-file compensates Black fully for his backward d-pawn. This game continued 13.Rfd1 Qb4 14.Rab1 h6 15.a3 Qc4 16.Rbc1 a6 17.Be2 Qc7 18.f3 Nd7 19.Bf1 b5 20.a4 b4 21.Nd5 Bxd5 22.Qxd5 Nc5 23.b3 Bg5, etc.

11.Nd5

After 11.a4, Black would not have much difficulty in the long run in arriving at the freeing advance, ...d5.

11...Bxd5 12.exd5 Nb8 13.c4 Na6

The cards are on the table: White must advance his Queenside majority, Black his corresponding Kingside majority. White's trouble lies in the fact that he will find it very difficult to get control of the c5-square, especially after Black's last move.

14.Bd2

This is not in accordance with the needs of the position. 14.Nd2 was called for, preparing to play b4 as soon as possible. The continuation might have been 14...Nd7 15.Be2 f5 16.f3 Bf6 17.Rb1 Nac5 18.b3 and then 19.a3 and 20.b4.

14...b6 15.Bc3 Nc5 16.Nxc5 bxc5 17.Qe1

After 17.Qd3 Black's pawn majority is also much more active than White's: 17...g6! 18.Be2 Nd7 19.f4 f5.

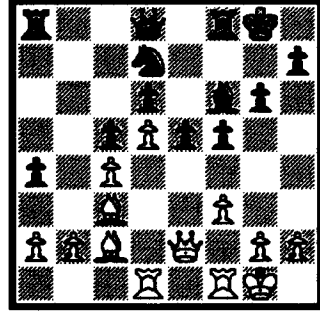
17...Nd7 18.Bd1 a4!

This prevents the White Bishop from getting into the thick of the fight *via* a4.

19.Bc2 f5 20.Rd1

Still too passive. The only chance of salvation was the vigorous 20.f4, and then, if 20...e4 21.g4!

20...g6 21.Qe2 Bf6 22.f3



22...e4!! 23.Bxf6 Qxf6 24.fxg4 f4!

Black's pawn sacrifice has brought him a whole string of positional advantages: 1) His 3-2 majority on the Kingside is now extremely active. 2) He controls the vital square e5, and can plant a Knight there as a blocker. 3) The hapless White Bishop is no match at all for the Black Knight.

25.Rf2 Ne5 26.Rdf1 Qh4 27.Bd1 Rf7 28.Qc2 g5

Now the storm troops move into action.

29.Qc3 Raf8 30.h3 h5 31.Be2 g4 32.Rxf4

One last attempt to save the situation.

32...Rxf4 33.Rxf4 Rxf4 34.g3 Nf3+

This intermediate check wrecks White's plans.

35.Kf2

If 35.Bxf3, of course 35...Qxg3+ settles it.

35...Qxh3 36.gxf4 g3+ 37.Kxf3 g2+ 38.Kf2 Qh2! White Resigned.



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