

Alexander Alekhine
CHESS DUELS
1927 – 1929

163 Games Annotated by
Alexander Alekhine

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INTRODUCTION

This is the fourth volume of our project to publish all the available games annotated by the fourth world chess champion Alexander Alekhine – not only his own games, but also games by other players for which he contributed notes in various publications. The first three volumes covered the periods 1893-1920, 1921-1924 and 1924-1926.

In early 1927 the world champion Capablanca agreed to defend his title against Alekhine later that year. A six-player tournament held in New York in February and March was convincingly won by the Cuban, with Alekhine finishing in a distant second place. Alekhine subsequently annotated all the games for a tournament book, first published in German in 1928. A Russian translation appeared in 1930, and a revised edition (1989) has been translated for this present work, thus providing a fresh English version of Alekhine's annotations.

In June/July 1927 Alekhine was victorious in an international tournament in the Hungarian city of Kecskemet. He annotated several of his games for a German tournament book, and these have been translated from the Russian version published in 1929 and reprinted in 1993. Other games from Kecskemet appeared in Alekhine's book *Auf dem Wege zur Weltmeisterschaft*, subsequently published in a Russian translation as *Na puti k vyschim shakhmatnym dostizheniyam*, and this was also the source of the 34 games from his epic world championship match with Capablanca later that year.

After winning the world title Alekhine played in no tournaments for some 18 months, restricting himself to simultaneous exhibitions. His annotations of the best examples from these appeared in various publications, especially the Argentine daily *La Nacion*, along with notable games contested by other players.

In June 1929 Alekhine played in a small tournament in Bradley Beach, and later that year he successfully defended his title against Efim Bogoljubow; he published several games from this match in his *My Best Games of Chess 1924-37*.

We have also included some two dozen games played between 1907 and 1926, which have come to light since the publication of the earlier volumes in this series.

Translator's notes have been given where it was felt appropriate. To avoid encumbering the text these have been inserted, with suitable cross-references, at the end of the book.

New York International Tournament, 19 February – 23 March 1927*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
1 Capablanca		1½1½½	1½1½	½½1½	½½1½	11½1	14
2 Alekhine	0½½½½		½01½	½½½½½	1½½1	½1½1	11½
3 Nimzowitsch	0½0½	½10½		100½	11½½	1½½1	10½
4 Vidmar	½½0½	½½½½½	011½		½½½½½	½01½	10
5 Spielmann	½½0½	0½½0	00½½	½½½½½		½½1½	8
6 Marshall	00½0	½0½0	00½½	½10½	½½0½		6

First Round

Game 1

J. R. Capablanca – R. Spielmann

New York 1927 (1)

Queen's Gambit D38

1 d4 d5 2 ♘f3 e6 3 c4 ♘d7

Lasker's move, the idea of which, in my opinion, consists not so much in the subsequent development of the bishop at b4 together with ...c7-c5 (as Vidmar and Spielmann eagerly played in New York), but rather in preparing the Cambridge Springs Variation and preventing the opponent from playing the fashionable variation (after 3...♘f6) with 4 ♙g5 and ♘bd2.

It was with the same aim that I employed the move 3...♘d7 in the 7th game of my match with Capablanca in Buenos Aires.

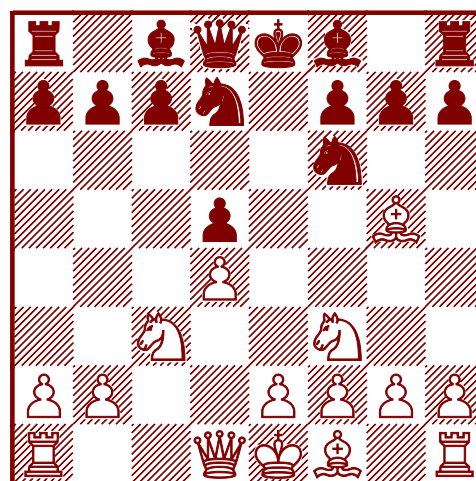
4 cxd5 exd5 5 ♘c3 ♘gf6

If White wanted to take the game into this variation, he should

first have played 4 ♘c3 and to 4...♘gf6 replied 5 ♙g5 (as in the following Alekhine-Vidmar game); now with 5...c6 Black could have completely neutralised the following pin.

Such slight inaccuracies in the playing of the opening and are not uncommon in Capablanca's games.

6 ♙g5



6...♙b4(?)

Spielmann wants without fail to play the dubious variation with the counter-pin, which he – by his own admission – thoroughly analysed with Vidmar on the way to New

York.

However, in the given position this plan seems illogical: indeed, the bishop move is usually made with the aim by tactical threats of forcing a clarification of the position in the centre (c4xd5, e6xd5). But since the opponent himself has earlier already voluntarily gone in for such a clarification, by playing 6...c6 followed by ...♙e7, ...0-0, ...♖e8 and ...♞f8 etc. Black could have set up a position that has long been known to be quite safe for him.

7 ♖b3

Not an especially good idea – although, of course, even after this move White does not yet have an inferior game. But if he definitely wanted to move his queen, then 7 ♙a4 (as was played in the 13th round between the same opponents) would have been more advisable. However, I don't think that White was forced to resort to such artificial manoeuvres, and by simply playing for further development (e2-e3, ♙d3, 0-0) he would have more firmly retained the advantage of the first move.

7...c5!

This move is perfectly correct, since Black is threatening an immediate counterattack with ...♙a5 etc., whereas White is short of a tempo to safeguard his king by castling kingside.

8 a3 ♙xc3+

Now after 8...♙a5 an adequate answer would have been 9 ♙d2!

9 ♙xc3

9 bxc3 was more in the spirit of the position, since in the resulting position it would have been much harder for Black to exploit his queenside pawn majority than after the move in the game.

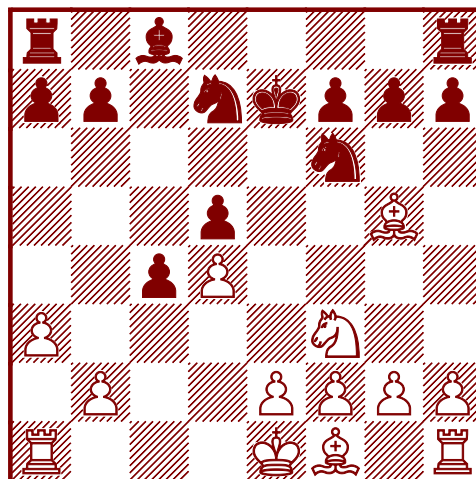
9...c4!

The point of this good move is that now White cannot play 10 e4 on account of 10...♞xe4.

10 ♙e3+

Comparatively best.

10...♙e7 11 ♙xe7+ ♙xe7



12 ♞d2?

It is only after this timid move that White's game becomes definitely worse. After the rather obvious 12 e4 the two sides' chances would have been roughly equal, for example: 12...dxe4 13 ♞e5 h6 (13...b5 14 a4) 14 ♙xf6+ ♞xf6 15 ♙xc4 etc.

12...h6! 13 ♙h4

If 13 ♙xf6+ ♞xf6 14 e4, then after 14...♞xe4 15 ♞xe4 dxe4 16 ♙xc4 ♖d8 17 d5 (or 17 ♖d1 ♙g4) with 17...♙d6 Black would have

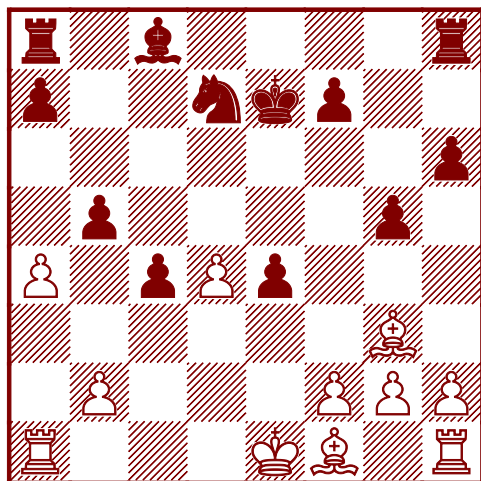
blocked the opponent's passed pawn and then exploited his pawn majority on the kingside.

13...b5 14 e4

A sad necessity: otherwise, the advance of the black pawns would have technically decided the game very easily.

14...g5 15 ♖g3 ♘xe4 16 ♘xe4 dxe4 17 a4

Of course, the only possibility of preventing the reinforcement of the opponent's pawn chain by ...a7-a6.



17...♗a6?

Up to here Spielmann has played excellently; now by 17...f5! he could have maintained his material advantage and gained excellent winning chances.

In this case Capablanca (as well as Tartakower, in the Russian tournament book) suggests the following variation: 18 ♗c7 ♗a6 19 h4 ♖hc8 20 ♗a5 g4 21 h5! with drawing chances for White.

However, I think that Black should make the move ...g5-g4,

devaluing his pawn formation, only in the case of extreme necessity, and since at the moment there is no such necessity, he should play 20...♘f6!, in order (in the event of 21 hxg5 hxg5) to neutralise the actions of the white rooks on the h-file by ...♔f7-g6 or in some cases ...♖h8.

After the move in the game, by various tactical threats White gains the opportunity to achieve a harmonious action of all his pieces and with accurate play he obtains the desired draw.

18 axb5 ♗xb5 19 b3! ♖hc8

After his error on the 17th move Black no longer has time for ...f7-f5.

20 h4 a6

In surprising fashion after 20...g4 White also gains adequate counter-resources: 21 ♗e2 f5 (or 21...h5) 22 ♖a5! a6 23 bxc4 ♗xc4 24 ♔d2! etc.

21 bxc4 ♗xc4 22 hxg5 hxg5 23 ♖h6!

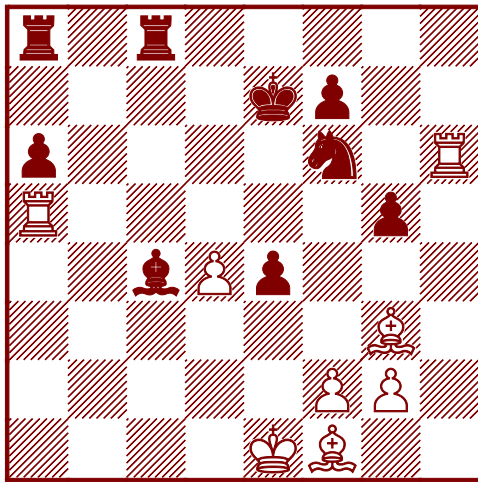
With the terrible threat of 24 ♗d6+.

23...♘f6

Not 23...f6 on account of 24 ♗xc4 ♖xc4 25 ♖h7+ ♔e6? 26 d5+ and wins.

24 ♖a5!

Threatening 25 ♗xc4 followed by ♖e5+. The attack by the rooks from both flanks is interesting.



24...♙b5

An admission that Black is already reconciled to a draw. And indeed, he can no longer extract anything more from the position: if, for example, 24...♘g4, then 25 ♖b6 ♙xf1 26 ♖b7+ ♔e8 27 ♔xf1 ♖c1+ 28 ♔e2 ♖ac8 29 ♖b2 and, in view of the many weaknesses in Black's position, White has nothing particular to fear.

25 ♙xb5 axb5 26 ♖xb5! ♖a1+ 27 ♔d2 ♖a2+

It would have been bad to play 27...e3+ 28 fxe3! ♘e4+ (or 28...♖a2+ 29 ♔d3) 29 ♔d3 ♘xg3 30 ♖b7+ followed by ♖h8+ and ♖xc8.

Capablanca once again showed himself to be a brilliant tactician, as he very skilfully saved a strategically bad game.

28 ♔d1 ♖a1+

Draw agreed.

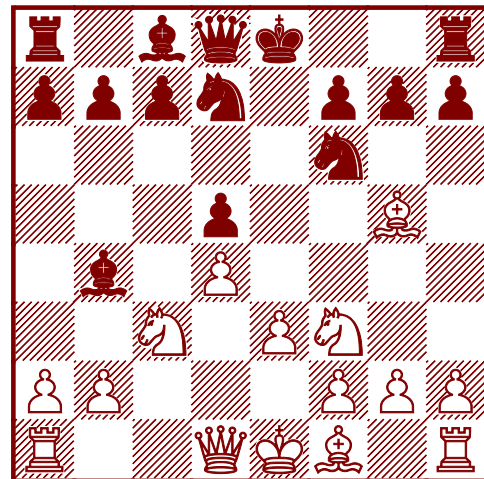
Game 2

A. Alekhine – M. Vidmar

New York 1927 (1)

Queen's Gambit D38

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 ♘d7 4 ♘c3 ♘g6 5 ♙g5 ♙b4 6 cxd5 exd5 7 e3



7...0–0

Up to the last move this variation has been frequently employed, in particular by Spielmann. But here it would seem that only 7...c5 is in accordance with the sharp bishop sortie on the 5th move. Then White would be forced to play a gambit, with all its advantages and drawbacks: 8 ♙d3 c4 9 ♙c2 ♖a5 10 0–0 ♙xc3 11 bxc3 ♖xc3 and now 12 ♖b1 or 12 ♖b1. Both these moves make it dubious for Black to castle, for example: 12 ♖b1 0–0 13 e4! dxe4 14 ♙d2 ♖a3 15 ♙b4 ♖a6 16 ♙xf8 exf3, and now, of course, not 17 ♙e7? ♖e6, as played in the game Maroczy-Tenner (New York Club Tournament 1926), but 17

♙b4 fxg2 18 ♖e1 with the threat of ♙xh7+!, when White should win.

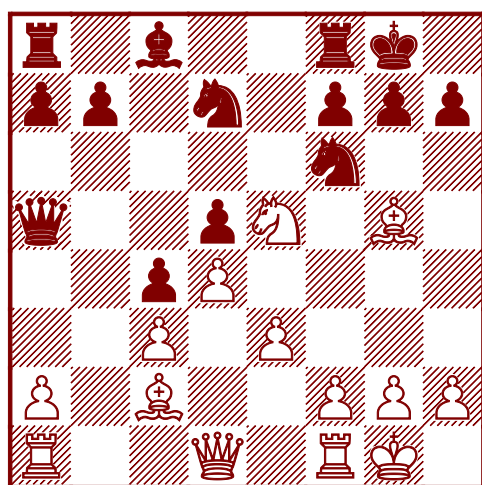
After the inaccurate move in the game White also obtains a good attack, but without the need to sacrifice anything.

8 ♙d3 c5 9 0–0 ♙xc3 10 bxc3 c4 11 ♙c2 ♚a5

Now with 12 ♙b1 White could have tried to take the play into variations similar to those given in the previous note, but the knight move is even more effective.

12 ♘e5!

The exchange of the c3-pawn for the h7-pawn planned with this move disrupts Black's kingside far more than it may seem at first sight. Therefore, it would now have been more prudent for Black to decline the Greek gift and play 12...♖e8, with the possible continuation 13 ♘xd7 ♘xd7 14 ♚d2 (14...b5 15 a4), after which White would nevertheless retain the better chances.



12...♙xc3 13 ♘xd7 ♘xd7

Of course, 13...♙xd7 14 ♙xf6

followed by ♖c1 would have been altogether bad.

14 ♙b1!

The point of White's 12th move: in view of the strong threat of 15 ♙e7 ♖e8 16 ♙b4 Black does not have time to save his h-pawn.

14...♖e8 15 ♙xh7+ ♚h8 16 ♙c2

Despite the opponent's superiority on the queenside, White's advantage is obvious, and Vidmar, for all his ingenuity, is unable to find an adequate defence against the numerous threats (17 e4, 17 ♙d1, 17 ♙a4).

16...♘f8

If 16...♘b6, then simply 17 a4 etc.

17 ♙a4!

This leads to the win of a pawn with an excellent position; the rest should essentially have been merely a matter of technique.

17...♖e6

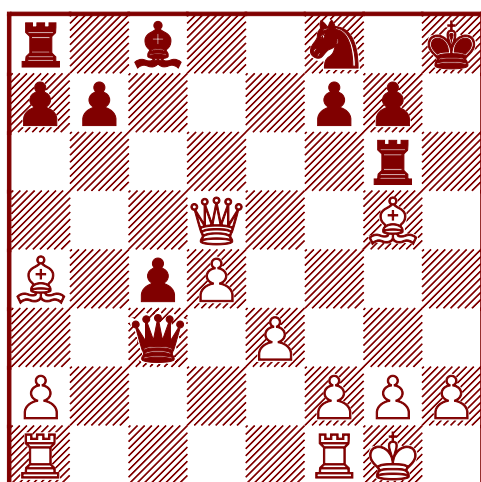
Forced.

18 ♙b5!

This is the correct continuation, rather than 18 ♙f5 f6!.

18...♖g6 19 ♙xd5

Of course, this is quite sufficient, but 19 ♙f4! was more accurate, after which it would have been very difficult for Black to find anything.



19...Qb4!

Very subtle: Black defends b7 and f8, attacks the bishop on a4 and with 20...Qe6 creates an obvious threat to the other bishop. But White has a convenient way of parrying all the threats.

20 Qc2 Qe6 21 Qe4

Of course, not 21 Qe5 f6, but now the bishop on g5 is defended (thanks to the possibility of a check on h4). Subsequently White has too wide a choice of various continuations leading to a win.

21...f5 22 Qf4

Or 22 Qh4+ Qh7 23 Qf4 etc.

22...Qh7 23 h4

This shielding was planned on the previous move. However, 23 Qh4 Qg4 24 Qe5 was also perfectly good.

23...Qxg5 24 hxg5 Qe7 25 Qh4+

White tries to force the rook to occupy an even more unfavourable position, but he thereby gives his opponent an opportunity to prolong the resistance (cf. the note to White's 30th move). 25 Qh2+

Qg8 26 f4 with the threat of e3-e4 was much simpler.

25...Qh6 26 Qg3 Qh5 27 f4

27 Qe5 was hardly any stronger in view of 27...Qd8!

27...Qa3!

In this way Black creates the greatest practical difficulties for his opponent.

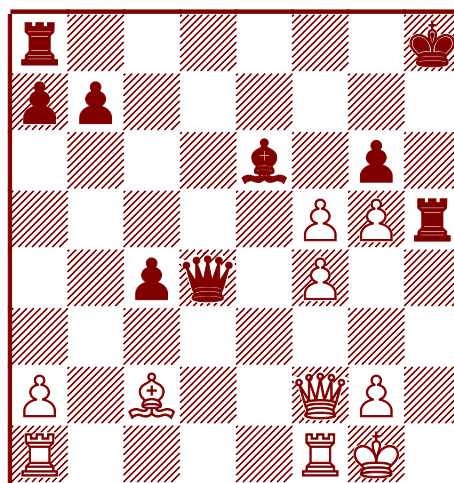
28 Qf3 g6 29 e4!

The simplest, since now White forces a won endgame. 29 Qab1 was not so clear on account of 29...Qd8!

29...Qb2 30 exf5

By no means an oversight, as certain critics consider, but a continuation of the manoeuvre begun with the preceding moves. Nevertheless, 30 Qf2 was simpler, and if 30...Qg7 (in order to prepare ...Qah8), then 31 Qd1! with an easy win.

30...Qxd4+ 31 Qf2



Now, at last, the position has clarified: Black is forced to exchange the queens and must soon allow the opponent to create

two passed pawns. Unfortunately for White, with his next move he deviates from his initially intended plan, leading to a win.

31...♔xf2+ 32 ♔xf2

This striving to win a pawn, which in the resulting rook endgame could not play any role (as a counter-chance for Black) deprives White of an undoubtedly deserved win. After 32 ♔xf2 ♕xf5 (if 32...gxf5, then 33 ♔e1, and Black loses due to the bad position of his bishop) 33 g4! ♕xg4 34 ♕xg6 ♖h3 35 ♕e4 ♖b8 36 f5 Black would very soon come to realise that further resistance was hopeless.

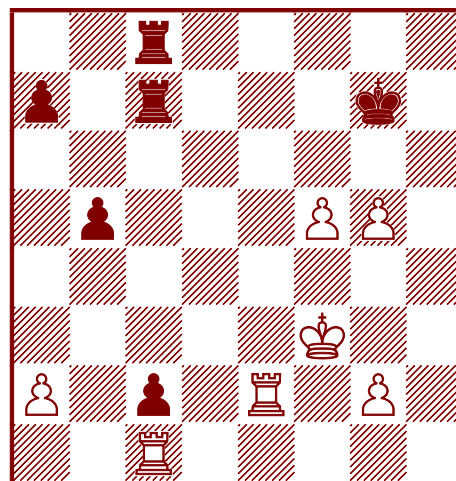
32...♕xf5 33 ♕xf5 gxf5 34 ♖fd1

Thanks to the threats of ♖d7 and ♖d5-c5 White wins a pawn; however, since Black now gains counterplay this proves insufficient for a win. 34 g4 fxg4 35 ♔g3 ♔g7! would also not give anything clear.

34...♖h7 35 ♖d5

Since now the opponent could not double rooks on the h-file, White should have tried his last chance with 35 g4! fxg4 36 ♔g3 etc.

35...♖c8! 36 ♖f5 ♖d7 37 ♖e5 c3 38 ♖c1 c2 39 ♖e2 ♖dc7 40 ♔f3 b5 41 f5 ♔g7



42 ♖e6

With this move White indicates his readiness to conclude matters peacefully, since the powerful black pawn on the 2nd rank makes any serious winning attempt fruitless. If, for example, 42 ♔f4, then simply 42...♖c4+, and now in the event of the rook exchange after 44...♖c3! and ...b5-b4 White would end up in a dangerous position.

42...♖d7

If 42...♖c3 the simplest is 43 ♖e3

43 ♖e2 ♖dc7 44 ♖e6 ♖d7 45 ♖e2

Draw agreed.

Game 3

F. Marshall – A. Nimzowitsch

New York 1927 (1)

French Defence C01

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♕b4 4 exd5 exd5 5 ♘f3

With this move White deprives himself of any hint of an opening advantage, and even more than

that: by exchanging at a convenient moment on c3, Black gains chances of creating an enduring weakness in White's position, in the form of doubled pawns.

Therefore the immediate 5 ♖d3 is more often played.

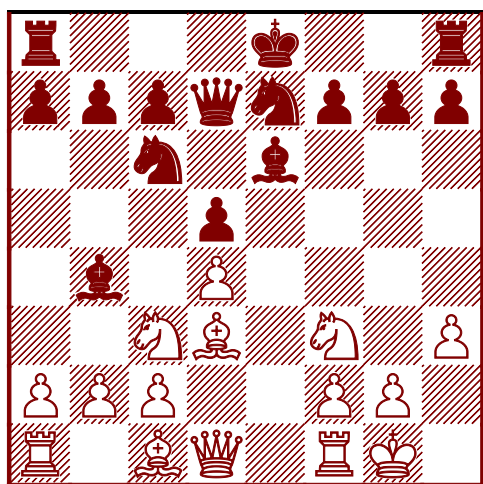
5...♘e7 6 ♖d3 ♘bc6 7 h3

If immediately 7 0–0, then 7...♙g4 would have been not very pleasant for White. The difference in the development of the kings' knights turns out to be not in White's favour.

7...♙e6

Encouraged by the opponent's poor actions in the opening, Nimzowitsch rejects the natural exchanging manoeuvre 7...♙f5 in favour of complicated and interesting, although not altogether correct play.

8 0–0 ♔d7



9 ♙f4

9 ♘e2 was simpler, with a roughly equal game. However, the move in the game should not be condemned – it even promises

good practical results, since it prompts the opponent to engage in risky experiments.

9...♙xc3

Over the past few years play against doubled semi-centre pawns has become one of Nimzowitsch's favourite strategic motifs; such positions, which he is able to obtain from various openings, are played by Nimzowitsch with particular virtuosity. However, in the given instance he is not on the right lines, since the insecure position of his own king should subsequently have prevented him from exploiting the weak points in the opponent's camp. With 9...♙d6 he could, of course, have easily equalised.

10 bxc3 f6

A necessary accompaniment to the previous move: since he no longer has his king's bishop, the dark squares must if possible be defended by pawns, but now the e6-square is weakened.

11 ♖b1 g5 12 ♙g3 0–0–0

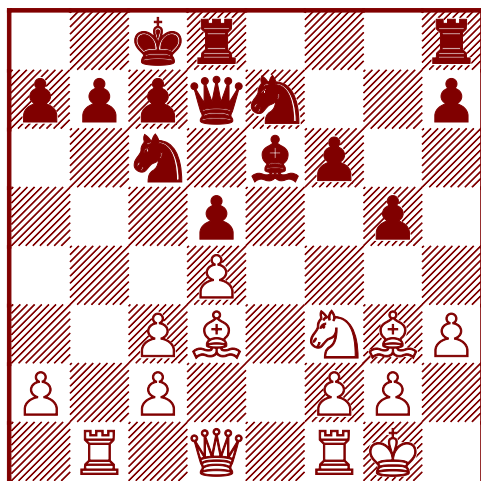
The king itself takes on the defence of the b7- and c7-pawns.

Generally speaking, the role of the king in defence (after the risky attempts by the ageing Steinitz to use this piece for attacking aims with the board full of pieces suffered a dismal fiasco) was for a long time seriously underestimated, and only the post-war period has brought changes in this respect (cf., for example, the games from the match in Buenos Aires, where

already in the middlegame the kings served to cover squares in the region of a breakthrough, i.e. before the endgame they performed as active pieces).

Of course, Black's last few moves, by their spontaneity and to some extent novel strategy, make the most favourable impression on anyone who believes in the evolution and deepening of chess thinking. Therefore it becomes almost annoying when on closer examination of the position it transpires that this plan is not only not the best, but after correct (and by no means very sophisticated) counterplay by the opponent it could even have placed Black in a highly unenviable position.

In view of this, instead of 11...g5 it would really have been better to choose the modest 11...♘d8 followed by ...0-0.



13 ♔e2?

The opponent's boldness unsettles Marshall, and he commits – now and subsequently – a series

of hardly reparable inaccuracies. For example, instead of the queen move (associated only with the crude threat of 14 ♕a6, which Black easily parries), a less routine plan of attack, beginning with 13 ♘d2!, was appropriate; if now, say, 13...♘b8, then 14 ♘b3 b6 15 ♔e2 – on this occasion with genuinely unpleasant threats. Therefore after 13 ♘d2 Black's best would have been to reply 13...♘a5, with the aim of exchanging the enemy knight on its way to c5. However, despite the fact that this exchange would have again repaired White's pawn formation on the queenside, and hence demonstrated the inadequacy of the plan begun with 9...♕xc3, in this case there would be no necessity for White to play 14 ♘b3 immediately; instead of this 14 ♔c1 is very good (and possibly ♔a3), and only after this the knight move. It is easy to see that with such a plan White would have gained an enduring initiative. But now, on the contrary, he gradually encounters difficulties.

13...♖de8!

A defence (vacating the d8-square for the flight of the king) and simultaneously a counter-attack.

14 ♖fe1

If 14 ♕a6, then 14...bxa6 15 ♔xa6+ ♘d8 16 ♖b7 ♘f5! 17 ♖xc7 ♔xc7 18 ♕xc7+ ♔xc7 with an easy win.

14...♘f5 15 ♕xf5(?)

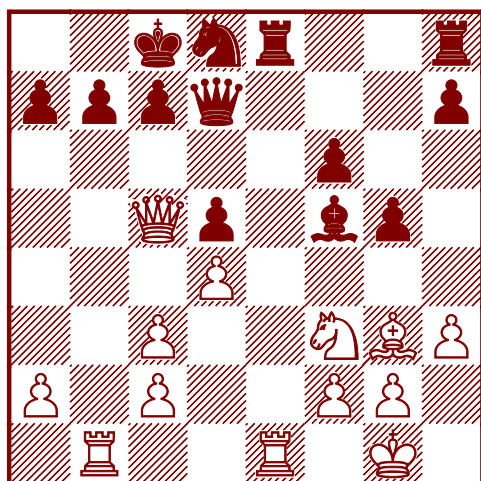
It is only with the absence of

this bishop that White's queenside pawns really become weak – and this promises White a cheerless endgame. Despite the obvious danger, 15 ♖h2 offered better chances.

15...♗xf5 16 ♚b5 ♘d8 17 ♚c5?

The decisive mistake, allowing Black to create a solid defensive position on the queenside with gain of tempo.

By playing 17 ♚a5! (if 17...♔b8, then 18 c4!, and the resulting complications are not unfavourable for White) Marshall could for the moment have prevented this.



17...b6 18 ♚a3 ♔b7 19 ♚b3

The tragedy begins: it is hardly possible to defend the c2-pawn in any other way.

19...♘c6 20 ♘d2

On the 13th move this would have been the start of a highly promising attack, whereas now it is a modest defence against the threatened invasion of the black knight at c4. The storm clouds are

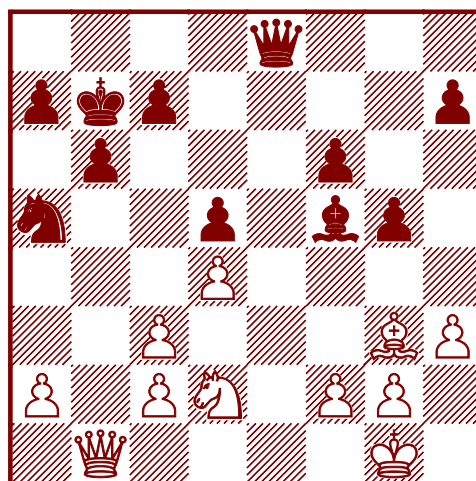
gathering.

20...♘a5 21 ♚b2 ♖xe1+ 22 ♖xe1 ♗e8

The double exchange of rooks is associated with a purely tactical idea (to say nothing of the fact that Black does not need these pieces for the conversion of his advantage): Black eliminates the threat of ♘c5+ (after ♘b3) and thereby avoids the otherwise obligatory exchange of knights.

23 ♖xe8 ♚xe8 24 ♚b1

What could be done? For example, after 24 ♔f1 the reply 24...♚a4 would have been very strong.



24...♔c8(?)

Black was obviously in time-trouble, otherwise it is inexplicable why he did not play 24...♚e2!, when after 25 ♚c1 White would have been in a stalemated position, while in the event of 25 ♘b3 ♘c4 26 ♘c5+ ♔c8 27 ♘d3 ♘d2! Black would have gained a material advantage, retaining an attack.

25 ♚d1 ♚e6

25...♔c6 was also strong.
 26 ♖b3 ♘c4 27 ♖d2 ♖a3 28 ♖f1
 ♘xc2

In view of the opposite-colour bishops, White could perhaps have reconciled himself to the loss of this pawn, were it not for the organic weakness of his queenside. As it is, he can only wait for the opponent to land the fatal blow.

29 ♔h5 ♙d3 30 ♔d1 ♔e4 31
 ♘d2 ♔e2! 32 ♔xe2

After 32 ♔c1 ♘e1! White would have gradually died of suffocation.

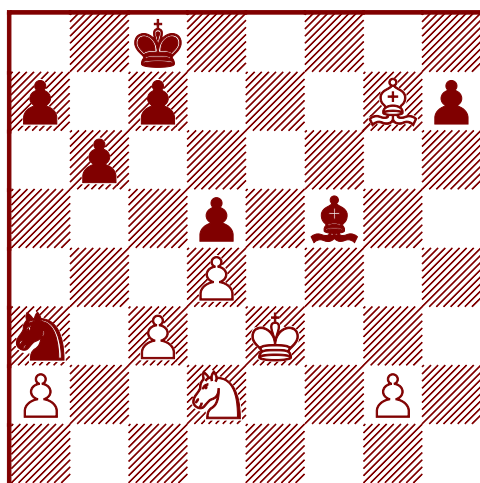
32...♙xe2 33 f4 ♘a3 34 fxg5 fxg5
 35 ♔f2

Otherwise 35...♘b5 followed by ...♙d3.

35...♙h5 36 ♙e5 g4 37 hxg4

The exchange of pawns is desirable only for Black, since on the other wing he has material sufficient for a win. Therefore from the practical point of view 37 h4 was more advisable.

37...♙xg4 38 ♔e3 ♙f5 39 ♙g7



39...♙e6!

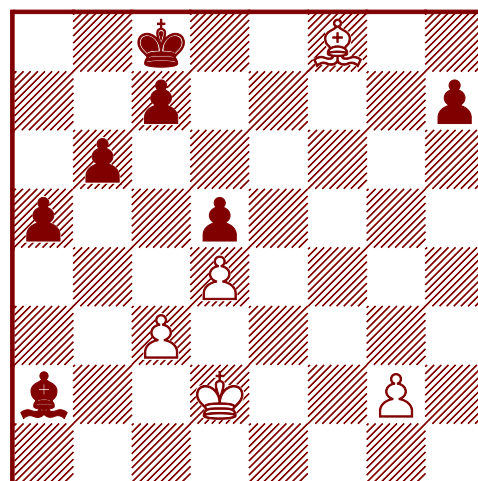
Threatening by 40...♘b5 to win a pawn; this would have been premature immediately on account of the possible reply c3-c4. White, obviously in time-trouble (the 40th move!), does not notice the threat, after which the endgame does not cause the opponent any problems.

However, Black would also have won after 40 ♔d3!, for example: 40...♔d7 41 ♙f8 ♙f5+ 42 ♔e3 ♘c2+ 43 ♔f4 ♙g6 44 ♔e5 ♘e3.

40 ♙f8? ♘b5 41 ♘b1 a5

41...♙f5 was also possible, since if 42 a4 ♙xb1 43 axb5, then Black, by playing most simply ...♔d7 followed (in the event of ♔f4-e5) by ...c7-c6, after the exchange of pawns would have invaded with his king on c4.

42 ♔d2 ♙f5 43 ♘a3 ♘xa3 44
 ♙xa3 ♙b1 45 ♙f8 ♙xa2



Marshall could have calmly saved himself the following 15 moves.

46 ♙g7 ♙c4 47 ♔e3 ♔b7 48 ♙h6
 ♙a6 49 ♔d2 ♙f1 50 g3 ♔b5 51

♔c1 ♔c4 52 ♔b2 c5 53 ♙e3 cxd4
54 ♙xd4 b5 55 ♙b6 a4 56 ♙a5
d4! 57 cxd4 b4 58 ♙b6 a3+ 59
♔a2 ♔b5 60 ♙c5 ♔a4

White resigned.

Second Round

Game 4

A. Nimzowitsch – J. R. Capablanca

New York 1927 (2)

Queen's Gambit D30

1 c4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 e6 3 d4 d5 4 e3

As is well known, here the moves 4 ♙g5 and 4 ♘c3 are more energetic and therefore the soundest for development. But against Capablanca in New York they played as though in games with him they had pledged to make not the best moves, but at the least second-rate ones.

4...♙e7 5 ♘bd2

Why such artificiality? Everything else (5 ♘c3; 5 ♙d3) would have been more natural and more active in the battle for the centre.

5...0-0 6 ♙d3

More in keeping with the previous move would have been the flank development of the queen's bishop (6 b3) or first 6 ♙e2.

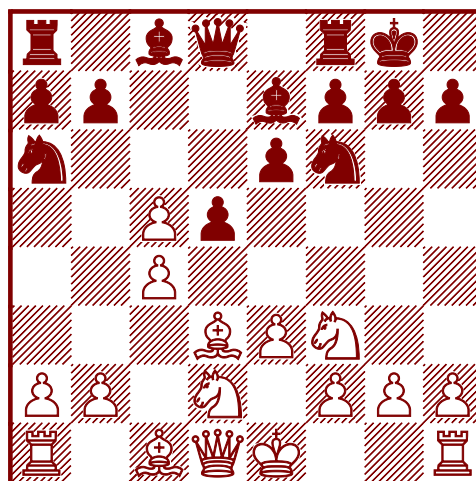
6...c5 7 dxc5

Even now 7 b3 followed by ♙b2 would have given a

reasonable game with chances for both sides. The move played should have led to a rapid simplification of the situation.

7...♘a6

A good move, which, however, leads only to an equal game.



8 0-0?

This is already a real mistake, after which the opponent gains domination over the whole board. Of course, it was essential to play 8 ♘b3 dxc4 (8...♘xc5 9 ♘xc5 ♔a5+ 10 ♙d2 ♔xc5, then 11 ♔c1 is more to the advantage of White) 9 ♙xc4 ♔xd1+ 10 ♔xd1 ♘xc5 11 ♘xc5 ♙xc5 12 ♔e2 with equality.

8...♘xc5 9 ♙e2 b6 10 cxd5?

This systematic assisting of the opponent's development, with a loss of time and space moreover, is equivalent to positional suicide. 10 b3 should still have been played. White rejects this possibility for so long, that in the end, because of his queen's bishop being shut in, he finds himself in a lost position.

10...♘xd5 11 ♘b3 ♙b7 12 ♘xc5

♙xc5 13 ♖a4

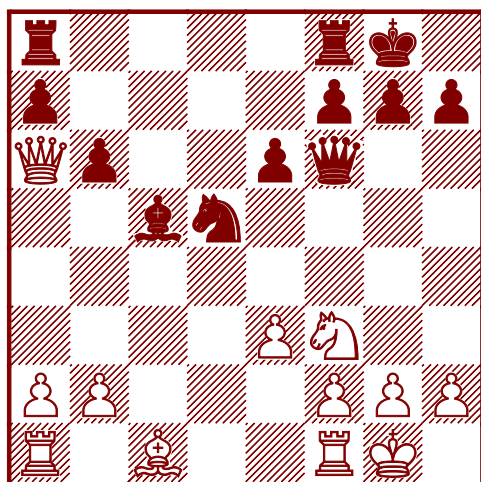
And now he aims to exchange his already developed bishop, leaving the other one peacefully asleep! In this game Nimzowitsch is truly unrecognisable...

13 ♙d2 ♖f6 14 ♖b3 (14...e5 15 ♙c3 etc.) really was better.

13...♖f6!

Black acts correctly, not preventing the opponent from carrying out his plan, which involves a further loss of time (the exchange on a6 could easily have been prevented by 13...a6), but aims merely to hinder the development of the bishop on c1. A sound plan in the spirit of the position, which, however, he does not conduct with the appropriate accuracy.

14 ♙a6 ♙xa6 15 ♖xa6



15...♞b4(?)

This knight manoeuvre, which would appear to have been calculated rather superficially, leads only to an exchange, easing the opponent's position. Simple

and strong was 15...♖fd8 followed by ...e6-e5-e4, after which White would hardly have been able to resist for long.

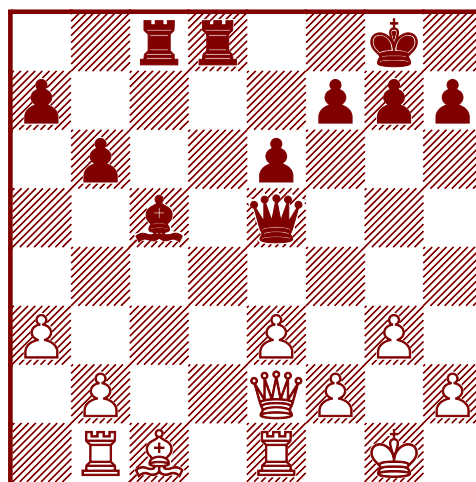
16 ♖e2 ♖fd8 17 a3

Better than 17 ♞e1, after which the simple doubling of rooks would have been very strong (17...♖d7).

17...♞d3 18 ♞e1 ♞xe1 19 ♖xe1 ♖ac8 20 ♖b1 ♖e5

This queen move, which provoked such admiration, should have achieved as little as any other one; all Black's main advantage was lost by his unfortunate knight manoeuvre. However, now it was bad for White to play 21 b4 in view of 21...♙d6 22 g3 ♖e4 followed by a rook invasion. But subsequently White had a simpler way out.

21 g3



This new, very sensitive weakening of the light squares could hardly have been avoided. After the natural move 21 ♙d2 Black would have gained the advantage as follows: 21...♙d6 22

g3 ♖c2 23 ♔d3 ♖xb2! 24 ♙c3 ♖xb1 25 ♙xe5 ♖xe1+ 26 ♔g2 ♙e7 etc.

21...♔d5!

Correct, since it provokes a further weakening in White's position.

However, Capablanca is incorrect in asserting (in his notes written for the English tournament book) that with 21...♔e4 he could have won a pawn. The point is that after 22 ♙d2 Black could not have played 22...♙xa3? due to the lack of an escape square for his king: 23 bxa3 ♖c2 24 ♖bc1! ♖b2 25 ♖ed1 ♔d5 26 e4! ♔d7 27 ♙b4! and wins.

22 b4 ♙f8 23 ♙b2 ♔a2!

With the unpleasant threat of 24...a5.

24 ♖a1?

A bad, and also temporary measure. The position could have been defended with 24 ♖bd1!, for example:

1) 24...♖xd1 25 ♖xd1 a5 26 bxa5 bxa5 (26...♙xa3 27 ♔a6!) 27 ♔a6* ♖c2 28 ♖d8 ♔xb2** (or 28...♖xb2 29 ♖xf8+ with perpetual check) 29 ♔d6 etc.;

2) 24...a5 25 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 26 ♙d4! with sufficient counter-chances.

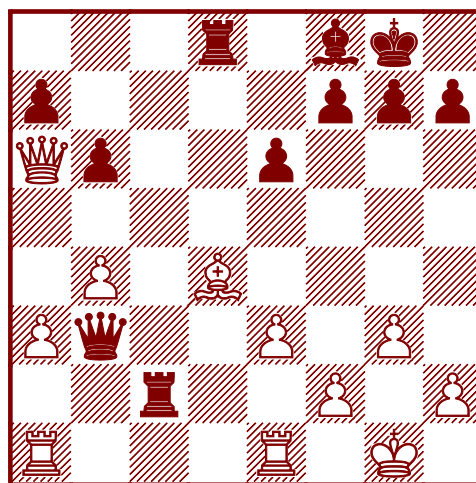
24...♔b3 25 ♙d4?

Even here 25 ♖ac1 was still possible, with variations similar to those given above.

The d4-square cannot be firmly occupied by the bishop, in view of the constant threat of ...e6-e5.

25...♖c2 26 ♔a6?

After this the game is definitely lost (it is simply amazing how many weak moves White had to make, in order to reach this result). Although White's position was rather bad, after 26 ♔f1 or 26 ♔d1 (in order to play ♖e2) some hopes of saving the game would still have remained.



26...e5!

The start of an energetic concluding attack, which to some extent makes up for the mutual errors in the preceding part of the game.

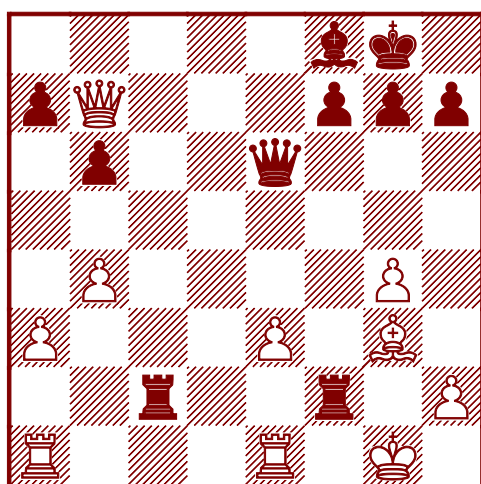
27 ♙xe5 ♖dd2 28 ♔b7

There is a pretty 'main variation': 28 ♖f1 ♔xe3! (like many problems and studies, here also there is a secondary solution – 28...♔d5 followed by ...♔f3) 29 ♙f4 ♖xf2! with a quick mate.

And 28 ♔f1 would no longer have saved White, for example: 28...♔d5 29 ♙d4 ♔h5! (this move, suggested by Capablanca, is stronger than 29...♔f3, to which it

is still possible to reply 30 ♖ac1) 30 h4 (otherwise 30...Rxf2, with an advantage in pawns sufficient for a win) 30...♔f3 with crushing threats.

28...♖xf2 29 g4 ♔e6 30 ♘g3



30...♖xh2!

A second pretty manoeuvre: if 31 ♘xh2, then 31...♔xg4+ 32 ♔h1 ♔h3! with unavoidable mate. 30...♔xg4 was less good in view of 31 ♖f1.

31 ♔f3 ♖hg2+ 32 ♔xg2 ♖xg2+ 33 ♔xg2 ♔xg4

The rest is very simple.

34 ♖ad1 h5 35 ♖d4 ♔g5 36 ♔h2 a5 37 ♖e2 axb4 38 axb4 ♔e7 39 ♖e4 ♔f6 40 ♖f2 ♔d5 41 ♖e8+ ♔h7

White resigned.

Game 5

R. Spielmann – A. Alekhine

New York 1927 (2)

Sicilian Defence B40

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘f6 5 ♔d3

After this move Black, in my

opinion, easily equalises. More chances are given by 5 ♘c3, but this is also sharper in view of Black's possible pressure on the c-file.

5...♘c6 6 ♘xc6

After 6 ♔e3 quite adequate is 6...d5 7 ♘d2 e5! with good equalising chances.

6...dxc6

After 6...bxc6 the continuation 7 ♔e2 followed by 0-0 and c2-c4! would have been unpleasant for Black.

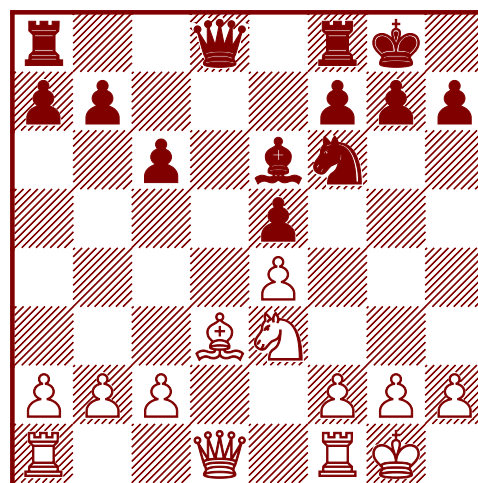
7 ♘d2

This knight, the development of which at c3 did not hold any prospects, heads for more promising squares. However, it is clear that this try does not set Black any problems.

7...e5 8 ♘c4 ♔c5! 9 ♔e3

Not 9 ♘xe5? ♔d4 etc.

9...♔xe3 10 ♘xe3 ♔e6 11 0-0 0-0



Black's game is now slightly better – mainly on account of the threat to the e4-pawn, which also restricts somewhat the scope of the

white pieces. However, in view of the almost inevitable exchange of the rooks on the only open file, a quick draw should have been expected.

12 ♖e2 ♜b6 13 c3 ♜ad8 14 ♜fd1 ♜c5

Unfortunately, it is not easy for Black to double rooks on the d-file, since 14...♜d7 15 ♘c4! would be rather to White's advantage.

15 ♜ac1 a5

Otherwise 16 b4.

16 ♘b1 g6

If immediately 16...a4, then 17 ♜xd8 ♜xd8 18 ♜d1 ♜xd1+ 19 ♜xd1, and if 19...♜b6? there would have followed 20 ♜xa4 with the threat of ♜a8+. Therefore an escape square is necessary.

17 ♜d2 a4 18 ♜cd1 ♜b6 19 g3

Although White is temporarily stronger on the d-file, it is not easy for him to strengthen his position: thus, for example, if 19 h3, then 19...♘h5 is very good. However, the text move, which also prepares a possible f2-f4, gives Black the opportunity to carry out a simplifying manoeuvre.

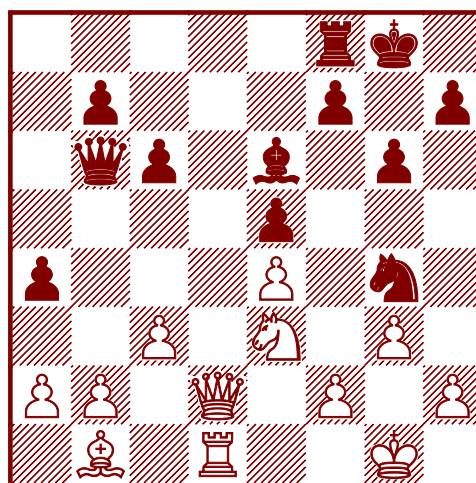
19...♜xd2 20 ♜xd2

If 20 ♜xd2, then, of course, 20...♜d8.

20...♘g4!

After this it appears that the advantage is with Black, but this only 'appears' to be so. It is true that both 21 ♘f1 ♖g7 with the threat of ...♜d8, and 21 ♘xg4 ♘xg4 followed by ...♜d8 are unsatisfactory for White, but he has

an adequate rejoinder in the form of the move...



21 ♘f5!

...which, at the least, leads to the exchange of Black's unpleasant bishop.

21...♘xf5

There was no choice, since the variation 21...gxf5 22 exf5 ♜xf2+ 23 ♜xf2 ♘xf2 24 ♖xf2 ♘d5 25 f6! ♜e8 26 ♘f5! would have been very favourable for White.

22 exf5 ♘f6

Or first 22...♖g7.

23 ♜d6

If 23 ♜g5, then 23...♜d8! etc.

23...♖g7 24 ♜d2 ♜e8 25 fxg6 hxg6 26 ♜b4

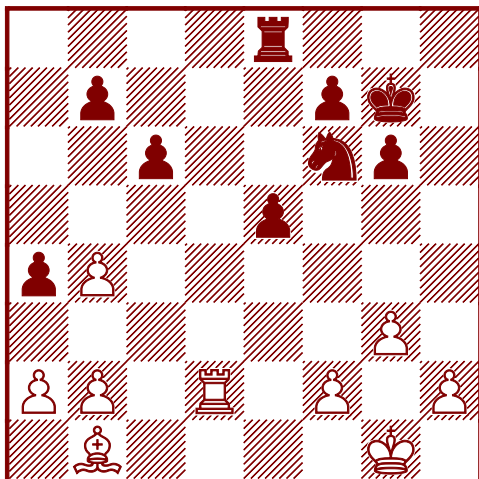
In view of the threatened advance of the e-pawn White hardly has anything better than to offer this exchange, but it should have proved sufficient.

26...♜xb4

If Black wanted to play for a win, he could without risk have retreated his queen to a7. But after the queen exchange the most sensible thing for

him would have been to accept the draw offered (with sufficient justification) by the opponent.

27 cxb4



27...a3

To his regret, the author has to say that this fruit of his ingenuity – outwardly so aesthetic – on no account deserved the exclamation marks with which it was accompanied by nearly all the critics. On the contrary, after the correct continuation by the opponent this move should have seriously compromised Black's game, whereas after 27...♞d5 28 a3 (or 28 b5) 28...f5 he would have easily gained a draw.

28 bxa3 ♖a8 29 ♖d3 e4 30 ♖e3

This only plays into Black's hands, although it does not yet subject White to any danger.

But 30 ♖b3! would have set the opponent genuinely difficult problems, since if 30...♖d8 there would have followed 31 a4!, with the threat of quickly exploiting White's pawn majority on the

queenside by a4-a5, a2-a4 followed by b4-b5. Although then Black would have had various counter-attacking possibilities, such as ...♖d1+ followed by ...♖d2 and ...♞g4, or ...e4-e3 followed by ...♖d2, in this case he could have gained at best a draw, and that after a tough fight.

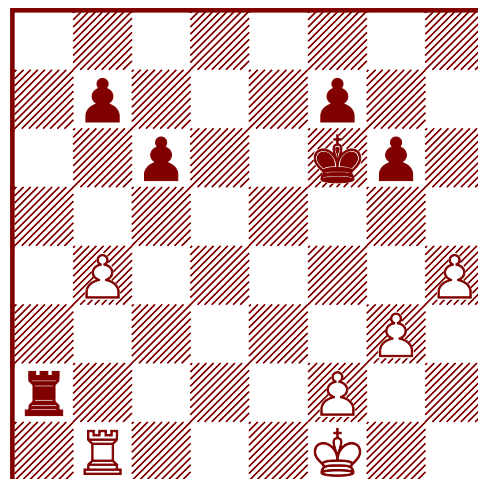
If after 30 ♖b3 Black had replied 30...b5, then after 31 ♔f1 his rook would no longer be able to invade White's position.

Now, however, Black achieves a perfectly satisfactory rook ending.

30...♞d5! 31 ♖xe4 ♞c3 32 ♖e1 ♖xa3 33 ♔f1 ♔f6 34 h4 ♞xb1

It was hardly possible to strengthen the position any more, since White was preparing the creation of a passed pawn on the h-file; if, for example, 34...♖a4, then 35 ♖c1 ♞d5 36 b5! cxb5 37 ♖c5.

35 ♖xb1 ♖xa2



36 ♖e1?

A rook ending has only just arisen, and White already makes a decisive mistake. As it soon

transpires, the idea of defending the b-pawn along the 4th rank is completely bad, and the attempt in connection with this to cut off the black king from the queenside cannot be realised.

36 ♖b3! was correct, aiming to exploit the chances on the kingside as quickly as possible, for example: 36...♔e5 37 ♖e3+ ♔d5 38 ♖f3 f5 39 h5! gxh5 40 ♖xf5+ ♔c4 41 ♖xh5 ♔xb4 42 g4 etc. In this case a draw could hardly be avoided.

36...♖a4 37 ♖e4 c5

Now Black obtains a winning position, since it is obvious that even after 38 ♖f4+ the pawn cannot be taken.

38 ♖f4+ ♔e6 39 ♖e4+ ♔f6

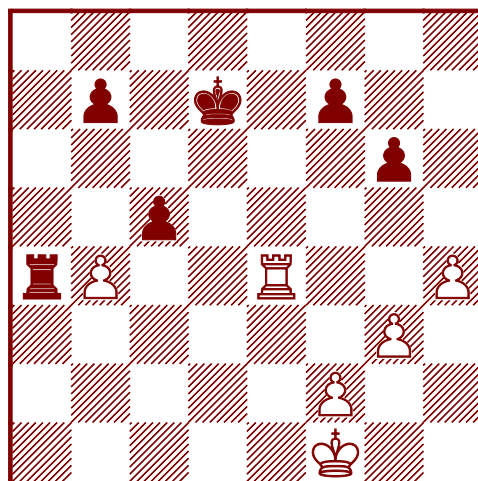
Although Black was not in great time-trouble, he nevertheless decided to wait till the time control on move 40, in order only after this to calculate the not altogether simple order of moves of the king en route to d5. Now this is possible, but the next neutral king puts the win in serious jeopardy.

40 ♖f4+ ♔e7(?)

It was essential to go to e6, so that it would be immediately possible to occupy the d5-square, but then it would be impossible to return to f6, since that would have led to a three-fold repetition of position! After this error White again obtains drawing chances.

41 ♖e4+ ♔d7

If 41...♔f8, then 42 ♖e5 cxb4 43 ♖b5 with a draw.



42 g4!

White's only chance. 42 ♖f4 ♔e6 43 ♖e4+ ♔d5! 44 ♖e7 cxb4! (the consequences of the natural move 44...♖xb4 45 ♖xf7 are not so clear) 45 ♖xb7 ♔c4! would have been unsatisfactory, for example: 46 ♖c7+ ♔d3 47 ♖d7+ ♔c2 48 ♖c7+ ♔b2 49 ♖xf7 b3 50 ♖f6 ♔a3!. It was this opportunity that Black missed, by losing time on the 40th move.

42...cxb4

After 42...♖xb4 43 ♖xb4 cxb4 44 ♔e2 Black would even have encountered some problems. The correct continuation then would have been the following: 44...♔e6 45 ♔d3 ♔f6! 46 ♔c4 ♔g7 47 ♔xb4 ♔h6 48 ♔b5 f5! 49 f3 fxg4 50 fxg4 ♔g7 51 ♔b6 ♔f6 52 ♔xb7 ♔e5 53 ♔c6 ♔f4 54 h5 gxh5 55 gxh5 ♔g5 with a draw.

43 h5 b5

Unnatural; after the simple 43...gxh5 44 gxh5 b5 White would have encountered serious problems, for example: 45 h6 b3

46 ♖e3 b2 47 ♖b3 ♔c6! 48 ♖xb2 ♖h4 etc. However, in the event of 46 ♖xa4 (instead of 46 ♖e3) 46...bxa4 47 h7 b2 48 h8♔ b1♔+ 49 ♔g2 it would have been very difficult (if at all possible) for Black to win in the queen ending.

44 h6 b3 45 ♖e3

Now the exchange of rooks would have been less favourable, of course, than in the variation given above. But now the 4th rank is blocked by the g-pawn, and White is able to win the opponent's passed pawn without giving up his own.

45...b2 46 ♖b3 ♔c6

Of course, not 46...♖a1+ 47 ♔g2 b1♔ 48 ♖xb1 followed by h6-h7.

47 ♖xb2(?)

This continuation should have been sufficient, but much more accurate was 47 f3! ♖a3 (47...♖a2 48 ♔g1!) 48 ♖xb2 ♖xf3+ 49 ♔g2 ♖e3 50 ♖f2 etc.

47...♖xg4 48 ♖c2+ ♔b6

Black is forced to allow the enemy rook to occupy the 8th rank, since 48...♔b7 49 ♖c5 b4? would have had dismal consequences in view of 50 ♖h5!

49 ♖c8 ♖h4 50 ♖h8 b4 51 ♔e2 ♔c7

It is clear that the king cannot go forward on account of h6-h7, and Black's last faint chance of a win is to switch the battle to the kingside.

52 ♔d3 ♖h3+ 53 ♔c2 b3+

If 53...♖f3, then 54 ♖f8! ♖xf2+ 55 ♔b3 ♖h2 56 ♖xf7+ followed by

h6-h7, with a draw.

54 ♔c1!

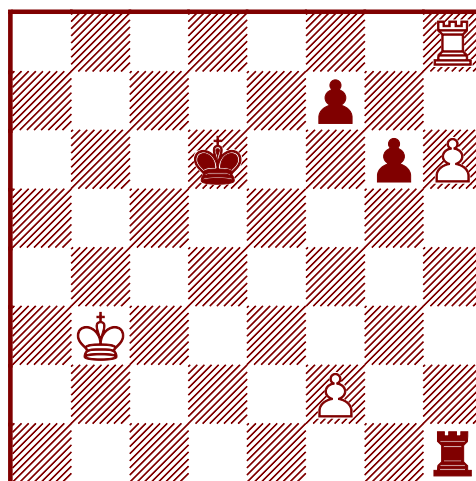
More accurate than 54 ♔b2 ♔d6 55 ♖b8 ♔e5! 56 ♖xb3 ♖xh6.

54...♖h1+ 55 ♔b2 ♔d6

Here also the win of the f2-pawn by 55...♖h2 would not have given anything on account of 56 ♖f8.

56 ♔xb3

Here White apparently imagined something, otherwise he would have chosen a simple way to draw: 56 h7 ♔e7 57 ♔xb3 ♔f6 58 ♔c3 ♔g7 59 ♖a8 ♔xh7 60 ♔d2 etc. But in this position White can permit allow himself a lot.



56...♔e5! 57 ♔c4

After a weak move, again a very good one! Its idea is that against the threatened advance of the black king White can if necessary reply with an analogous manoeuvre with his king, for example: 57...♔e4 58 ♔c5! ♔f3 59 ♔d6 ♔xf2 60 ♔e7 f5 61 ♔f6 with a draw. In addition, 58 ♔d3 is threatened, with a perfectly safe position.

57...♖h3!

Black tries every chance, but they should all have been in vain.

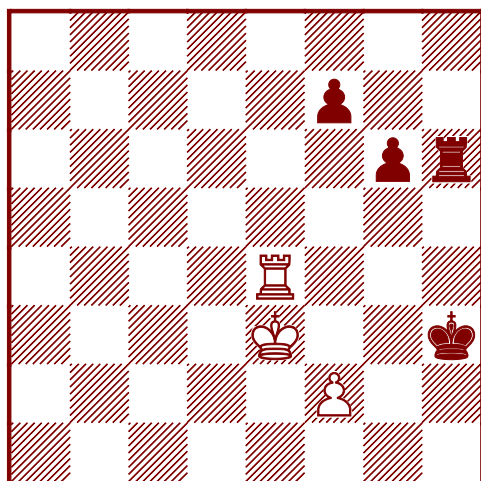
58 ♜e8+

Together with the following move – the simplest.

58...♔f5 59 ♔d4! ♜xh6 60 ♔e3 ♔g4 61 ♜e4+

The safest way to ensure a draw was 61 ♔e2! ♜h1 62 ♜e4+ ♔f5 63 ♜a4.

61...♔h3



62 ♜f4?

This instructive mistake allows the decisive surrounding of the last white pawn. 62 ♔e2 would still have led to a draw.

62...f5 63 ♜f3+

This loses immediately. But also in the event of 63 ♜a4, and after 63 ♔e2, Black would have won in the end by continuing 63...♔g2.

63...♔h2! 64 ♜f4 ♜h3+

White resigned. After 65...♔g2 the pawn cannot be saved.

Game 6

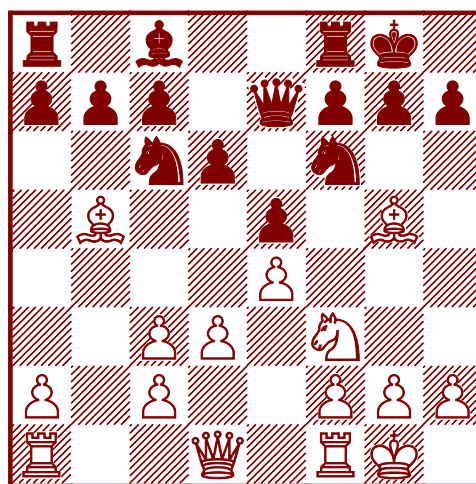
F. Marshall – M. Vidmar

New York 1927 (2)

Four Knights Game C49

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♘c3 ♘f6 4 ♙b5 ♙b4 5 0–0 0–0 6 d3 ♙xc3 7 bxc3 d6 8 ♙g5 ♚e7

The well-known Metger defence, which after 9 ♜e1 ♘d8 and 10...♘e6 usually leads to a difficult positional battle; in recent times it has been chosen with particular enthusiasm by Rubinstein. However, it is not so dangerous for White, such that (as in the present game) he should go in for the following unprincipled exchange, immediately simplifying the game.



9 ♙xc6(?) bxc6 10 ♜b1

If White made the exchange on c6 for the sake of immediately occupying the open file, he obviously overestimated the importance of this: for the moment the b7-point is defended, but in most cases even if the white rook

were able to penetrate there it would have no essential importance.

10...h6 11 ♗xf6

If 11 ♗h4, then 11...g5 would have been perfectly good.

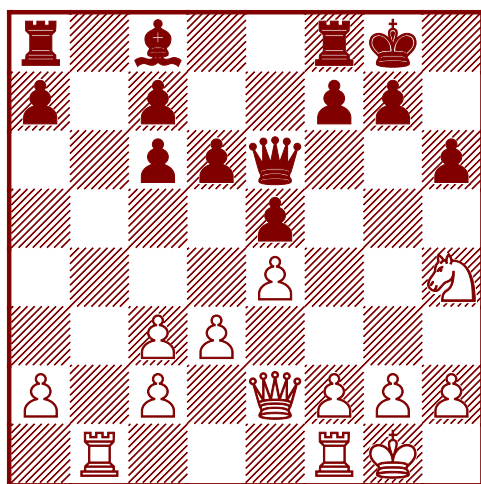
11...♔xf6 12 ♔e2

It was more circumspect to play 12 c4 first, so that subsequently he would not have to go in for a dubious sacrifice.

12...♔e6!

Threatening not only 13...♔xa2, but also 13...f5 exf5 ♔xf5 with a clear positional advantage. Therefore Marshall decides on a risky undertaking.

13 ♖h4!?



13...♔f6?

This queen move and the following repetition of moves exhibit a timidity altogether atypical of Vidmar.

What dangers could have threatened Black in the event of 13...♔xa2 ? After 14 c4 (otherwise the queen immediately returns) 14...♔a5 15 f4 (15 ♔e3 ♗d7)

15...exf4 (or first 15...♔c5+) 16 ♔xf4 ♔g5 17 ♔bfl a5 White would in vain have sought compensation for the opponent's menacing passed pawn. At any event, the position was such that it was certainly worth playing on.

14 ♖f3 ♔e6 15 ♖h4

White, encouraged by the opponent's obvious peaceableness, leaves the pawn *en prise* a second time.

15...♔f6? 16 ♖f3 ♔e6

Draw agreed.

Third Round

Game 7

J. R. Capablanca – F. Marshall

New York 1927 (3)

Bogo-Indian Defence E11

1 d4 ♖f6 2 ♖f3 e6 3 c4 ♗b4+ 4 ♗d2 ♗xd2+ 5 ♖bxd2 d5?

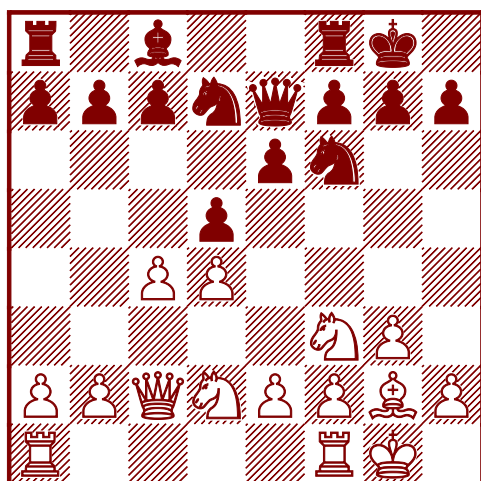
After White has captured with the knight this is inappropriate, since the tension created in the centre opens for the white knight the prospect of occupying the c4-square. In keeping with the exchange of bishops was 5...d6 followed by ...e6-e5, occupying with pawns the dark squares, no longer needed by the black bishop which so quickly disappeared from the board.

6 g3 0-0 7 ♗g2 ♖bd7 8 0-0 ♔e7

The immediate 8...b6 equally

deserved attention. However, the move in the game is by no means as bad as the commentators think.

9 ♔c2



9...b6(!)

This may appear to be a simple oversight, but in fact it is accurately calculated. Since now other continuations (like the one chosen in the game) would not have allowed White to forcibly gain any appreciable advantage (for example: 10 ♖e5 ♖xe5 11 dxe5 ♘g4! 12 cxd5 exd5 13 ♙xd5 ♗b8, winning the e5-pawn, or – after the moves 10 cxd5 ♖xd5 made in the game – 11 a3 c5!, when Black may also gain a tempo by ...♙a6), Black's position still seems alright.

10 cxd5 ♖xd5 11 e4 ♘b4!

This is the idea of the freeing manoeuvre begun with 9...b6. However, 11...♘5f6 12 ♔xc7 ♙a6 13 ♗fc1 ♗fc8 14 ♔f4 ♔b4 would have been inadequate on account of 15 ♘b3 or 15 b3.

12 ♔c3(!)

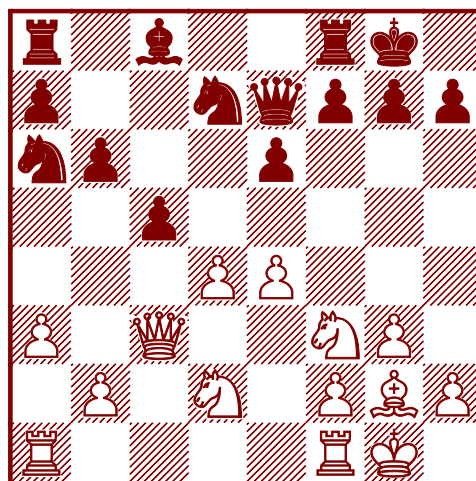
In this way White at least forces the enemy knight to occupy the modest square a6. Of course, 12 ♔xc7? would have been a mistake on account of 12...♙a6 followed by ...♗fc8.

12...c5

But not 12...♙a6? 13 a3! ♙xf1 14 ♙xf1.

13 a3 ♘a6

13...♘c6 was bad on account of 14 d5!



14 dxc5

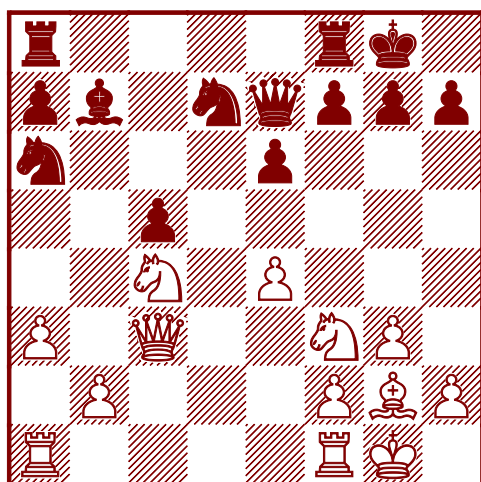
Simplification very typical of Capablanca's style of play, which, although it has the aim of eliminating any danger of losing, should also have given White very little. In my opinion, 14 ♗fe1! ♙b7 15 d5 or the immediate 14 d5 would have led to complicated play, favourable for White.

14...bxc5?

Incomprehensible! The capture with the queen did not provoke any doubts. After 14...♔xc5 15 ♗ac1 (15 ♔d3 ♘e5, or 15 ♘c4 b5) 15...♔xc3 16 ♗xc3 ♙b7 17 b4

♘f6 followed by ...♖ad8 Black would have gained a draw without difficulty. Instead of this, without any chances of a counter-attack, he saddles himself with an irreparably weak pawn on the queenside. Woeful play!

15 ♖c4 ♙b7



16 ♘fe5!

Again a typical Capablanca move, but this time completely irreproachable. The idea of retaining only the 'good' knight on c4 and the 'bad' one on a6 is very convincing.

16... ♘xe5 17 ♙xe5 ♖ad8 18 ♖fd1

Threatening an unpleasant knight invasion on d6.

18... f6 19 ♙c3 ♖xd1+ 20 ♖xd1 ♖d8 21 ♖d3

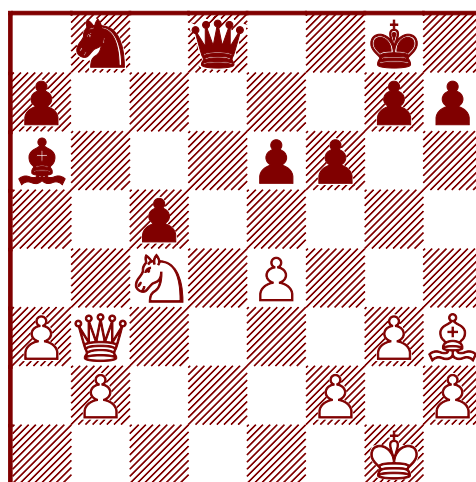
The immediate 21 ♖xd8+ followed by 22 ♙b3 was also a very strong continuation, although not yet decisive.

21... ♘b8

Capablanca was obviously expecting this attempt to switch the

knight to a more active position and wanted to exploit the momentary hanging position of the black pieces on the b-file. However, against correct defence it should not have been so easy to do this.

22 ♖xd8+ ♙xd8 23 ♙b3! ♙a6 24 ♙h3



24... ♘c6?

It is patently obvious that Black does not stand brilliantly, but the fact that he gives up the attacked pawn without any struggle can be explained only by some oversight in a combination or the hope of an illusory attack.

In reality, after 24... ♔f7, although this move looks rather dangerous, no clear way for White to win is apparent, for example: 25 ♘e3 ♙c8! and now nothing is given by either 26 ♘f5 ♙c7 or 26 ♙xe6+ ♙xe6 27 ♙xb8 ♙xe4 28 ♙xa7+ ♙b7.

Thus after 24... ♔f7 White would have had to find more subtle ways of carrying out decisive

manoeuvres (it is another question whether they can be found at all).

25 ♖xe6+ ♔h8 26 ♖d5

The secure position of the bishop in the centre suppresses all attempts by the opponent to gain an attack.

26... ♞d4 27 ♔a4 ♖xc4 28 ♔xc4 ♜c8 29 ♔g2 ♜g4

Desperation; White was also threatening 30 b4.

30 e5!

This is decisive.

30... fxe5 31 ♔xc5 h5 32 ♔f8+ ♔h7 33 ♖g8+ ♔h6 34 ♔d6+ g6 35 ♔f8+

Black resigned.

Game 8

A. Alekhine – A. Nimzowitsch

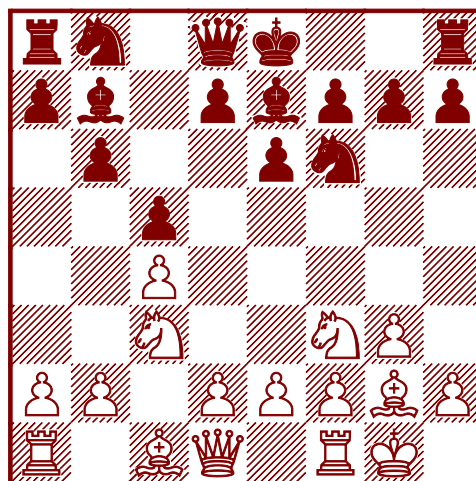
New York 1927 (3)

English Opening A30

1 ♖f3 ♞f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♞c3 b6 4 g3

Apart from this system of development, which a few years ago was very popular – mainly in view of Reti's successes with it – the following variations are very good for White: 1) 4 d4 ♖b7 5 ♖g5 followed by e2-e3, ♖d3 and so on; 2) 4 e4 ♖b7 5 d3 (5 e5? ♞e4), analogous to the strategy employed not without success by Nimzowitsch at the tournament in Dresden (1926).

4... ♖b7 5 ♖g2 c5 6 0–0 ♖e7



7 b3(?)

After 7 d4 cxd4 8 ♞xd4 ♖xg2 9 ♔xg2 White would have stood well (cf. also the similar position in the Capablanca-Vidmar game from the 4th round), whereas now Black is able to seize the initiative.

7...d5 8 ♞e5

White wants to complicate the play at all costs, instead of admitting the inadvisability of his last move and playing simply 8 cxd5 ♞xd5 9 ♖b2 ♖f6 with a defensive position sufficient for a draw.

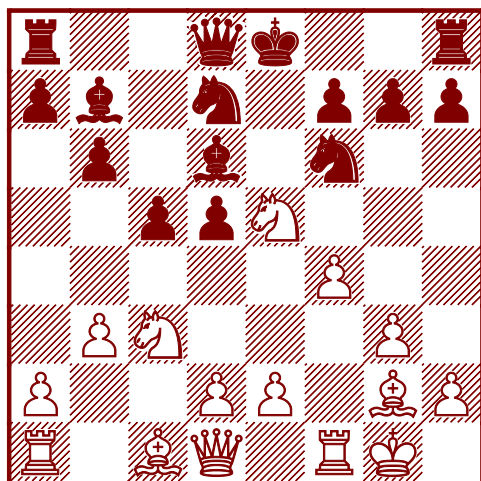
8... ♞bd7 9 f4

The consistent continuation – any exchange in the centre would only aid the opponent's development.

9... ♖d6 10 cxd5 exd5

Black displays a lack of courage and determination. As I said to my opponent immediately after the game, here he could have obtained a highly promising game if he had decided on a pawn sacrifice (probably temporary!), for example: 10... ♞xe5 11 fxe5 ♖xe5 12 dxe6 ♖xg2 13 exf7+ ♔xf7 14 ♔xg2 ♜e8! with

strong pressure on the central files, and with the white king's position weakened. After the routine move in the game the advantage is even rather on the side of White.



11 ♖c4!

This simple reply was apparently overlooked by Black.

11...♔b8!

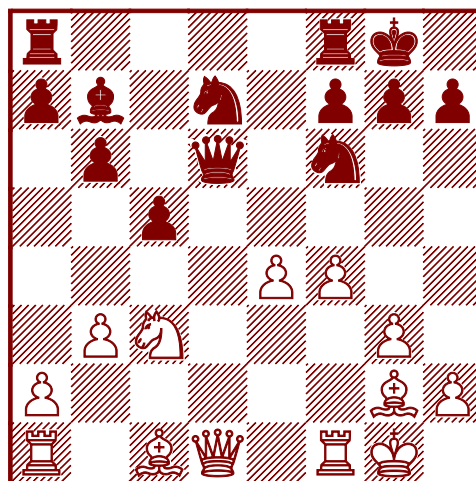
The only move, since if the bishop moved there would have followed 12 ♖e3! with an obvious advantage for White.

12 ♖xd6+ ♔xd6 13 d3

Unhappy with his handling of the opening, White aims only for a draw and relieves the situation in the centre.

Instead of this, by continuing 13 d4 0-0 14 ♕a3 he could have obtained very interesting play involving no risk; Black's possible counterplay on the e-file is more than compensated by the pressure of the white bishops on the c- and d-pawns.

13...0-0 14 e4 dxe4 15 dxe4



15...♔d4+

The only move, but sufficient.

16 ♔xd4 cxd4 17 ♖d5 ♖xd5 18 exd5 ♖f6 19 ♕b2 ♕xd5 20 ♕xd4 ♕xg2 21 ♔xg2

Draw agreed. Black, of course, plays 21...♖d5 and maintains the knight in this strong position.

Game 9

M. Vidmar – R. Spielmann

New York 1927 (3)

Queen's Indian Defence E14

1 d4 ♖f6 2 ♖f3 c5 3 e3

Too tame. If White could not bring himself to play 3 d5, which did indeed have some drawbacks, then 3 c4 was perfectly good; if now 3...cxd4 4 ♖xd4 e6 5 ♖c3 ♕b4 (as in the game Przepiorka-Spielmann, Munich 1926), then 6 ♕b3 ♖a6 7 g3! with advantage to White.

3...b6

This reply is unnatural and, since White will most probably be able to block the diagonal of the

fianchettoed bishop by d4-d5, it is illogical.

It was quite possible to play simply 3...d5 (4 ♖d3 ♘c6 or even 4...♖g4) or first make the waiting move 3...e6.

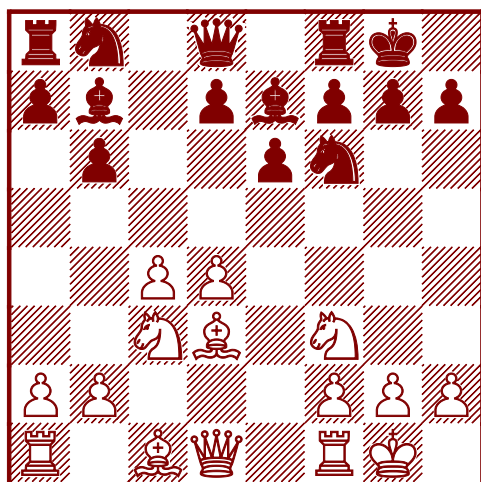
4 c4

Of course.

4...cxd4 5 exd4 e6 6 ♖d3 ♗b7 7 0-0 ♗e7 8 ♘c3 0-0(?)

After this inaccurate move Black could have ended up in an uncomfortable defensive position.

First 8...d6 was correct, in order to be able to answer 9 d5 with 9...e5.



9 d5! d6

Of course, 9...exd5 10 cxd5 ♘xd5 11 ♘xd5 ♖xd5 12 ♖xh7+ followed by ♔xd5 was unfavourable.

10 dxe6(?)

Play against the illusory weakness of the d6- and e6-points suggests itself and on a superficial glance at the position it seems quite appropriate. However, the now resurrected bishop on b7 and the

open f-file give Black more than adequate counterplay.

The logical development of the preceding moves was 10 ♘d4! e5 (10...♔c8 11 ♖e1) 11 ♘f5 followed by f2-f4, when it would be hard for Black to find a way to counter White's positional advantage.

10...fxe6 11 ♘d4

Somewhat better chances were offered by 11 ♘g5 ♔c8 12 ♖e1 e5 13 ♔c2, for example: 13...h6 (13...♔g4 is better) 14 ♖f5 ♔c6 15 ♘d5 etc. The knight invasion on f5, intended with the move in the game, proves pointless.

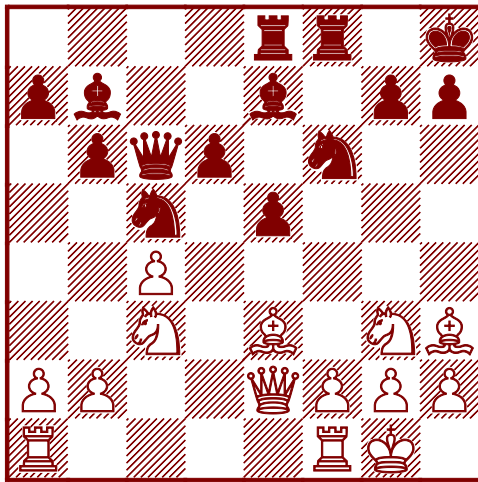
11...♔c8 12 ♔e2

Also after 12 ♖e1 Black would have gained counterplay: 12...e5 13 ♖f5 ♘bd7 14 ♖e6+ ♔h8 15 ♘f5 ♔e8 16 ♘xd6 ♖xd6 17 ♔xd6 ♘c5 with advantage to Black.

12...e5 13 ♖f5 ♘bd7 14 ♖e6+ ♔h8 15 ♘f5 ♔e8 16 ♘g3

Disillusioned by the failure of his faulty expedition (16 ♘b5? ♘c5! etc.), Vidmar retreats, instead of securing the advantage of the two bishops by 16 ♘xe7 ♔xe7 17 ♖h3, although, it is true, in the given position this would have been quite harmless for Black. Now Black begins counterplay on the c-file.

16...♘c5 17 ♖h3 ♔c6 18 ♖e3 ♖ae8



19 ♖xc5(?)

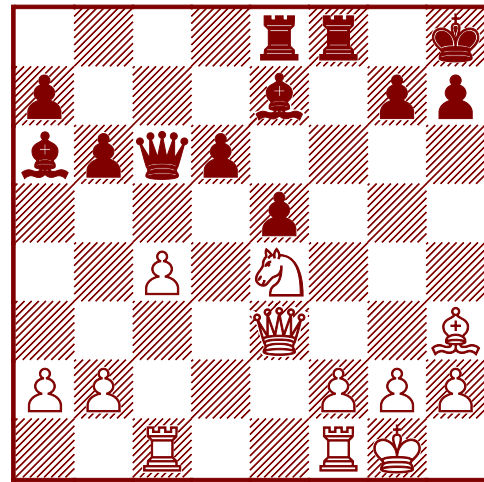
This voluntary exchange of a bishop that was so necessary for the defence of the dark squares is completely inexplicable for a player of Vidmar's class. He could have continued, say, 19 ♜fd1 (19...♞e6 20 ♞d5) with a game not without chances.

19...♞xc5 20 ♜ac1

Here also 20 ♜fd1 was more consistent.

20...♞a6(!) 21 ♞ce4 ♞xe4 22 ♞xe4 ♞c6 23 ♞e3?

White obviously overlooked that his c-pawn could be captured, otherwise he would have parried the threatened 23...d5 by, for example, 23 ♞d3! (23...d5 24 ♞xd5 ♞xd5 25 cxd5 ♞xf1 26 ♞xf1 with advantage), after which his position could well have been defended. But after the move in the game Black gains good winning chances.



23...♞xc4!

An unpleasant surprise for White. After 24 b3? d5 25 ♞d2 ♞c5 or 25 ♞g5 ♞g6 not only would he not have won a piece, but he himself would have lost material. With the continuation chosen by White he succeeds in temporarily avoiding the threatened loss of a pawn, but at the cost of Black's pressure increasing on both wings.

24 ♞d2 d5 25 ♞xc4 dxc4 26 ♞xe5 ♞c5?

Weak, and from this moment Black begins playing more and more weakly, until the game is finally drawn.

Much stronger than this attack on the f2-point would have been a strengthening of the pressure on the queenside by 26...♞f6!, for example: 27 ♞f4 b5 28 ♞d2! ♞c5! 29 ♜c2 ♞d4 or 29...b4, when White would be unable to defend for long against the unavoidable threats.

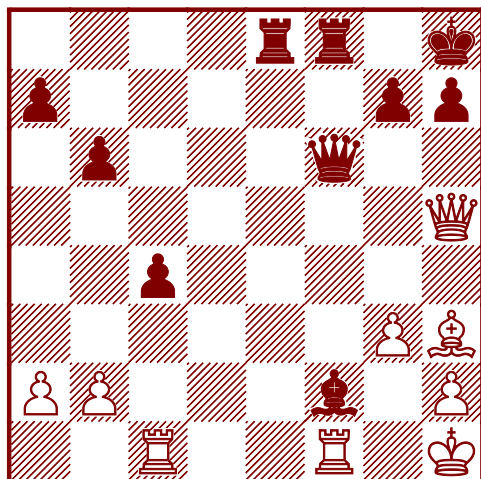
27 ♞h5 ♞f6

Placing the queen on the f-file, leaving the c4-pawn undefended, is at the least an unsuccessful preparation for the move ...♙xf2.

Strong was 27...♙e4! (with the threat of 28...♖xf2!) 28 ♔h1 ♙xf2 when White cannot, as in the game, make the important defensive move g2-g3.

28 ♔h1! ♙xf2 29 g3

The trap 29 ♖xc4 ♙g3! is too transparent (30 ♖g1* ♖e1 31 hxg3 ♖xg1+ followed by ...♙f1+ and ...♙xc4).



29...♙c6+

Although with his last few moves Black has largely squandered his winning chances, he should nevertheless have made a last attempt by playing 29...♖e5 30 ♙d1 ♙c6+ 31 ♙g2 ♙c5 etc.

30 ♙g2 ♙c5 31 ♙xc5 ♙xc5 32 ♖xc4 ♖xf1+ 33 ♙xf1 ♖f8

Draw agreed.

Fourth Round

Game 10

J. R. Capablanca – M. Vidmar

New York 1927 (4)

Queen's Indian Defence A30

1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 e6 3 c4 b6 4 g3 ♙b7 5 ♙g2 c5

I have always considered this move to be unfavourable in the given position in view of the possibility of 6 d5, and I give preference to 5...♙b4+ and 5...♙e7.

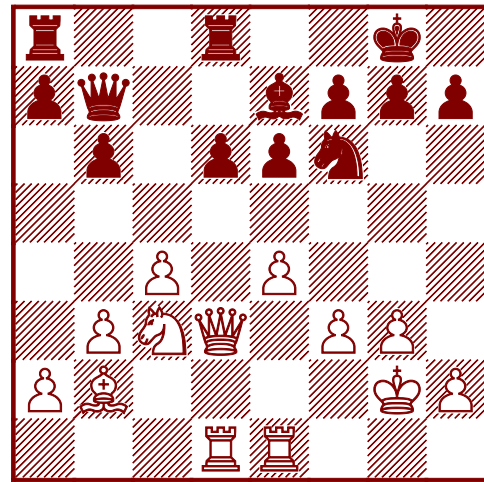
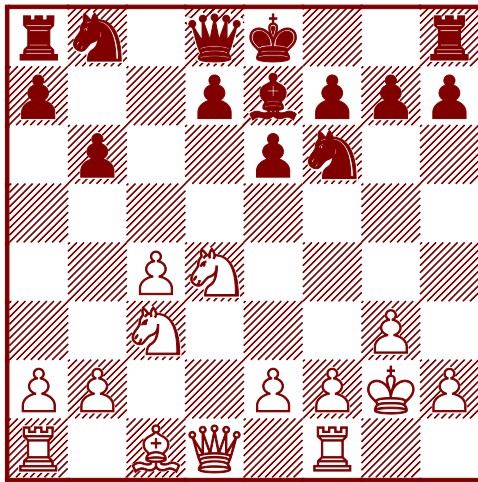
6 0–0

This reply is quite possible, but it is too harmless in character, allowing Black to equalise, and in various ways.

6...cxd4 7 ♘xd4 ♙xg2 8 ♔xg2 ♙e7

But this is inconsistent, since Black should aim as soon as possible to rid himself of the weakness on the d-file. Although with this aim the immediate 8...d5 is not good on account of 9 ♙a4+! (the 3rd game of the Capablanca-Alekhine match), 8...♙c8! was the correct preparatory move, for example: 9 b3 (9 ♙d3 ♘c6!) 9...♙e7 10 ♙b2 ♙b7+ 11 f3 d5 12 cxd5 ♘xd5 13 ♙d2 0–0 14 e4 ♘f6.

9 ♘c3



9...0-0(?)

Now also 9...♔c8 very much deserved attention (10 b3 d5!).

10 e4! ♔c8

With a delay of one tempo!

11 b3 ♔b7 12 f3 ♘c6 13 ♙b2 ♜fd8 14 ♜e1 ♞xd4

Vidmar plays the entire first part of the game inaccurately. Why, for example, does he now develop the white queen? The immediate 14...d6 was simpler.

15 ♔xd4 ♙c5(?)

Again, an obvious loss of a tempo!

16 ♔d3 ♙e7 17 ♜ad1 d6

Despite the numerous inaccuracies committed by Black, his position is quite solid, since in this variation, as is well known, *in the middlegame* the d6-point can be defended without difficulty.

Subsequently Capablanca tries to exploit his only serious chance, which consists in a flank attack. And indeed, the opponent, who is extremely cramped in his movements, is now required to defend with exceptional accuracy.

18 ♜e2 ♜d7 19 ♜ed2 ♜ad8 20 ♞e2

The simplest way of conclusively preventing the move ...d6-d5 (in view of 20...d5 21 ♙xf6 etc.).

20...♔a8

In order to retreat the knight, after which at the given moment there could have followed 21 e5!.

21 ♔e3 h6 22 h4 ♔b7 23 a4

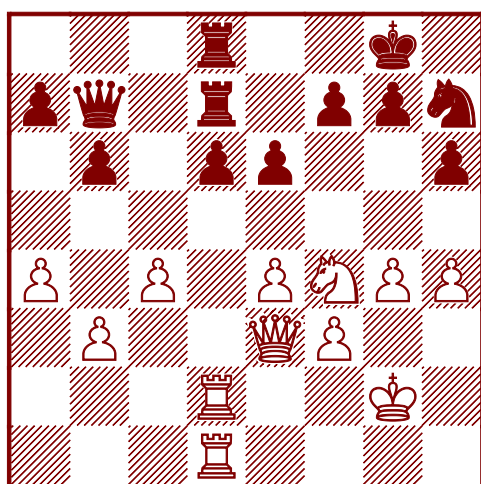
In order to suppress once and for all the freeing move ...b6-b5.

23...♞e8 24 ♞f4 ♙f6 25 ♙xf6 ♞xf6 26 g4 ♞h7

After this White's attack has very little chance of success, since the knight on f4 is tied down by the need to cover the d5-square. As soon as this knight ceases to control this square (say, after ♞h5

is played) there can immediately follow ...e6-e5, after which the black knight would acquire interesting attacking possibilities.

Therefore, Capablanca soon transposes into a rook endgame.



27 ♔c3 ♞f8 28 g5 hxg5 29 hxg5 ♞g6!

Perfectly correct. If now 30 ♞h5, then 30...e5 31 ♔g3 ♔c7 followed by ...♞f8, ...♔d8 and so on. Therefore, White has nothing better than to exchange.

30 ♞xg6 fxg6 31 ♔d4 ♔c6

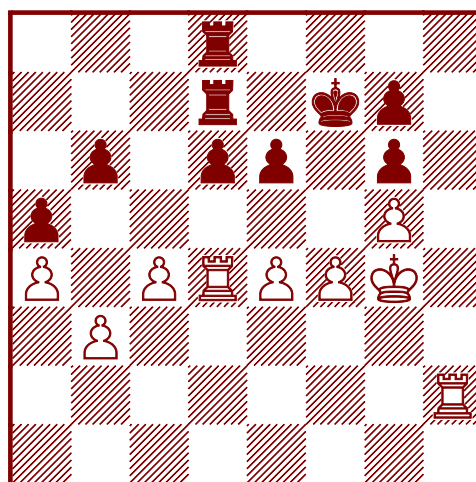
The c5-square is now an adequate counter-argument for Black.

32 ♔g3 ♔c5 33 f4 ♔f7 34 ♔g4 a5 35 ♞h2 ♔xd4?

Since it is unfavourable for White to exchange queens (on the last few moves in view of ...bxc5 with pressure on the b3-pawn, and now on account of ...dxc5 followed by an invasion on the d-file), and retreating the queen (to c3 or b2) is also not good for him in view of ...d6-d5!, the simplest

way to draw here was by waiting tactics. Therefore ...♞f7-g8-f7-g8 etc. was correct, inviting White himself to decide on how to change the position. Vidmar voluntarily goes, at the least, into a very dubious endgame.

36 ♞xd4



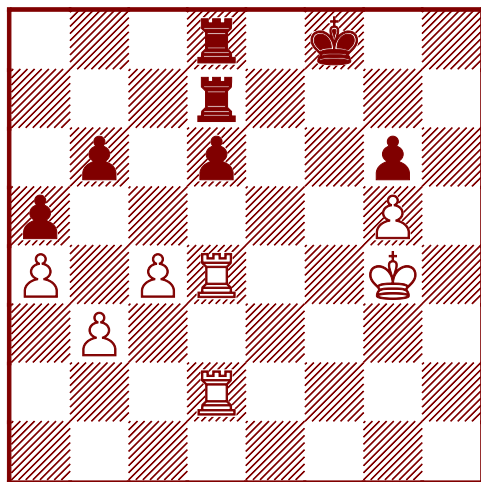
36...♞e7 37 ♞hd2 ♞ed7 38 f5

This breakthrough suggests itself, but in my opinion it should have been made only on the next move: 38 ♞4d3! ♔e7 (38...♞e8) 39 f5 gxf5+ (if 39...♞f7, then 40 fxe6+ followed by 41 ♞d5 and then ♞b5, or in some cases c4-c5 with advantage to White) 40 exf5 exf5+ 41 ♞xf5 ♞f7 42 g6+ with a winning position. Also, in other variations it would have been easier, than after the move in the game, to transform the positional advantage into a material one.

38...gxf5+ 39 exf5 exf5+ 40 ♞xf5 g6+ 41 ♞g4 ♞f8

The only, and at the same time temporary defence against the threat of ♞f2+ and ♞f6 with a

winning position. If 41...♔e8, then 42 ♖h2! etc. (see below).



42 ♖f2+?

This leads only to a draw. The correct way to convert the advantage, achieved with such difficulty, was again the gain of a tempo – 42 ♖d3!. If now 42...♔e8, then 43 ♖h2!, and after the exchange of one pair of rooks the remaining white rook invades at f6 or b8: 43...♔f8 (or 43...♖f7 44 ♖h6) 44 ♖f3+ ♔g7 45 ♖f6 (threatening 46 ♖h6) 45...♖f8 46 ♖xf8 ♔xf8 47 ♖h8+, then ♖b8 etc.

Capablanca forces the exchange of rooks with a changed and less favourable pawn formation, after which Vidmar saves the game without difficulty.

42...♖f7 43 ♖f6

If 43 ♖fd2, then 43...♔e7 with a draw.

43...♖xf6 44 gxf6 ♔f7 45 ♔g5 ♖e8! 46 ♖xd6 ♖e5+ 47 ♔f4 ♖e6

Much simpler than 47...♖f5+ and ...♖xf6.

48 ♖d5 ♔xf6

Here the game could have been calmly concluded.

49 ♖b5 ♔e7 50 ♔g5 ♖c6 51 ♔h6 ♔f8 52 ♖g5 ♔f7 53 ♖g3 ♖e6 54 ♖d3 ♖e5 55 ♖d7+ ♔f6 56 ♖d6+ ♔f7

Draw agreed.

Game 11

F. Marshall – A. Alekhine

New York 1927 (4)

Queen's Pawn Opening A47

1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 b6

In recent times first ...e7-e6 and only then ...b7-b6 has been played. After the move in the game, they usually reply 3 c4, after which it reduces to a transposition of moves. Marshall's next move gives the play a different character.

3 ♘g5 ♘b7

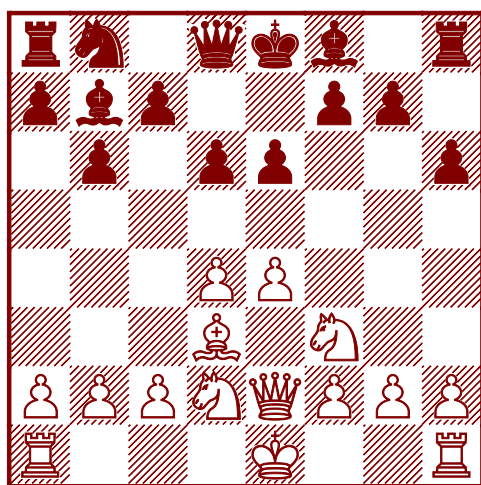
If on the 2nd move Black had played 2...e6, then now 3...c5 followed by ...♖b6 would, as is known, have been quite acceptable. By contrast, in the given situation 3...c5 would have been obviously unfavourable in view of 4 d5.

Apart from the move in the game Black's only other possibility was 3...♘e4, after which the play could have continued roughly as follows: 4 ♘h4 ♘b7 5 ♘bd2 ♘xd2 6 ♖xd2 (6 ♘xd2 c5! ...g7-g6, ...♘g7 and so on), and it would not be easy for Black to rid himself of the pressure on e7, which would become an Achilles' heel of his position.

4 ♘bd2 e6

A dangerous experiment: for the sake of retaining the two bishops Black allows his opponent to set up a strong position in the centre in the good old style. 4...c5! was more circumspect, and more in keeping with his 2nd move.

5 e4 h6 6 ♗xf6 ♔xf6 7 ♗d3 d6 8 ♔e2 ♔d8



In order to develop the king's bishop, which at the moment was uncomfortable on account of 9 e5. Black is already behind in development, and he is forced to resort to such unnatural manoeuvres in order to maintain the balance. He needlessly allowed White to play e2-e4 unhindered.

9 0-0 ♗e7 10 ♖ad1

Up to here White has played correctly. But now, in view of his better development, he should have taken more energetic measures in the centre; for example, by playing 10 c3 ♗d7 11 ♗e1! followed by f2-f4, ♗f3, ♖ae1 etc. he could have set up a powerful attacking position, without allowing the

opponent any counter-chances. The move in the game is also not bad; it only has the slight drawback of allowing a counter in the centre.

10...♗d7 11 c3 c5(!)

Before castling Black must at any cost divert the opponent from his planned attack. After 11...0-0 White would have gained an extremely threatening position by continuing 12 ♗e1! followed by f2-f4 and ♗e1-c2-e3.

12 dxc5

White changes his plan and wants to exploit the open d-file. However, his very next move shows that the details of this plan – in principle perfectly natural – were not accurately prepared.

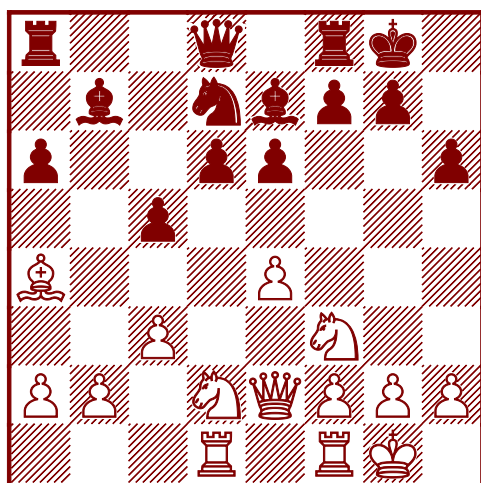
12...bxc5 13 ♗b5(?)

After this Black obtains a perfectly solid position and gradually gains an advantage. White should have concerned himself with depriving Black of his only counter-chance – the advantage of the two bishops, and with this aim played 13 ♗a6. After 13...♗xa6 14 ♔xa6 ♗b6 it is true that Black would not have suffered any immediate loss of material, but the weakness of the light squares on the queenside together with the need to defend the d6-point would undoubtedly have subsequently caused him serious problems.

13...a6

Not immediately 13...0-0 in view of 14 ♗c4 ♔c7 15 ♗xd7! ♔xd7 16 ♗xd6 ♗xd6 17 e5 with advantage to White.

14 ♖a4 0–0



15 ♖c2

White has nothing better than to admit the faultiness of his manoeuvre and to retreat: if 15 ♖c4 Black had the perfectly adequate defence 15...♘b6.

15...♙c7 16 ♘c4 ♖fd8 17 ♖d2 ♘f8 18 ♖fd1

All these manoeuvres, aimed at exploiting the illusory weakness of the d6-point, lead merely to the development of the black pieces.

18...a5

The immediate 18...♖ab8 was arguably more accurate, in order only if necessary to concede the b5-point to White. But the move played is also perfectly good.

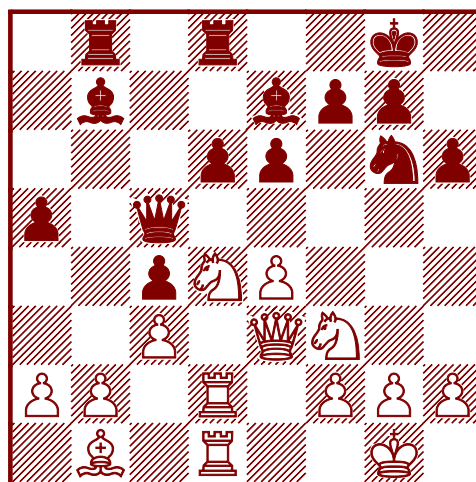
19 ♖d3 ♖ab8 20 ♘a3 ♘g6! 21 ♘b5 ♙c6 22 ♙e3

The knight has only just jumped proudly to b5, but it already transpires that it cannot be established there without positional concessions. Thus if White had parried the threat of 22...♘f4 by 22

g3, Black would have had a choice between two good continuations: 22...c4 23 ♖xc4 ♙xe4, or in some cases ...d6-d5, in order subsequently to exploit the weakness of the h1-a8 diagonal.

22...c4 23 ♘bd4 ♙c5 24 ♖b1

Black has succeeded in not only overcoming his opening problems, but also in gaining counterplay with good prospects in the endgame thanks to the possibility of fixing the b2-pawn. The most natural way now of exploiting this possibility was 24...♖a8 followed by ...♖b6, ...♖db8 and so on; also very promising was 24...♙f8, preparing to play the knight to e5. Instead of this Black makes a slightly hasty move, allowing the opponent to force desirable simplification.



24...♘e5(?) 25 ♘xe5 dxe5

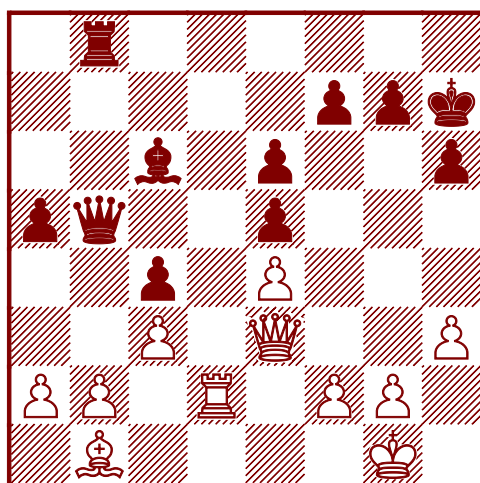
After 25...♙xe5 White could have gained a rather dangerous attack, by playing 26 f4 and (after doubling rooks on the f-file) e4-e5. 26 ♘f5!

The only move. If, for example, 26 ♖c2, then 26...♖xd2 27 ♖xd2 ♙c6! with a clear advantage for Black.

26...♖xd2 27 ♘xe7+ ♚xe7 28 ♖xd2!

After 28 ♚xd2 ♙c6! and ...♙a4 Black would still have retained an advantage. But now the rather passive position of the bishop on b1 and the weakness of the b2-pawn are compensated by the fact that White controls the only open file. Strictly speaking, already now the game should have been agreed drawn. But it appears to Marshall that his position is better, although over the course of the next dozen moves he merely disarranges his pawns, as a result of which the dark squares on his kingside become weakened.

28...♙c6 29 h3 ♚b7 30 ♚e2 ♚b5 31 ♚d1 ♙h7 32 ♚f3 ♙e8 33 ♚e3 ♙c6



34 a3

This was hardly essential at the given moment. This move,

condemning the b2-pawn to immobility, should have been made only after ...a5-a4.

34...♚b7 35 ♚e2 ♙b5 36 ♚e3 ♙c6 37 f3 ♚e7 38 ♙a2 ♙b5 39 ♙h2 ♙a6 40 ♚e2(?) ♚c5

After White, for no obvious reason, conceded the important g1-a7 diagonal, Black's position is preferable.

41 ♖d7 ♙b5 42 ♖d2

Of course, not 42 ♖xf7? ♙e8.

42...♖b7 43 ♙b1

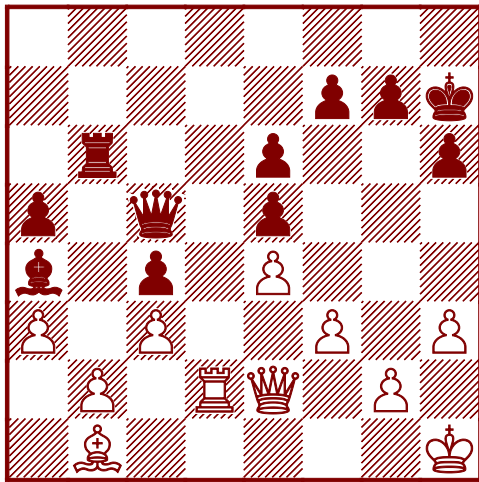
Now White pins his hopes on the 'threat' of f3-f4 followed by a discovered check. Black could at any moment have extinguished these hopes by playing ...g7-g6 and ...♙g7, but he does not do this, since he himself hopes to obtain winning chances after f3-f4.

43...♙a4 44 ♙a2 ♙b5 45 ♙b1 ♙a4 46 ♙h1

In order that after f3-f4xe5 Black would take the pawn without check.

46...♖b6

If Black did not want to make the move ...g7-g6, it was better to play 46...♖b8. If in this case White were to play f3-f4, he would inevitably (slowly but surely) have ended up in an inferior position.



47 f4

This strategically incorrect move proves acceptable here thanks to possible tactical tricks. Although Black now gains the opportunity to achieve a draw almost by force, without this move White cannot play for a win, and therefore the break undertaken by him should not be criticised.

47...♖b3

It is clear that 47...exf4 would have been unfavourable on account of 48 e5+ g6 49 ♖d4 etc. On the other hand, it was necessary to defend the c4-pawn somehow in view of the threat of 48 fxe5 ♕xe5 49 ♕xc4. Apart from the move in the game, for this aim only 47...♖b5 and 47...♖c6 were possible. In reply to the former White could have continued as in the game, while in the event of the latter the continuation 48 fxe5 ♕xe5 49 ♖d5! ♕f4 50 e5+ g6 51 ♖xa5 would have been even more unpleasant for Black.

48 fxe5 ♕xe5 49 ♕e3!

Now the drawbacks to Black's 46th move are evident: White makes this important attacking move with gain of tempo. On the contrary, the immediate 49 ♖d5 would have been incorrect in view of 49...♕f4! 50 e5+ g6 51 ♖d2 ♖b5, which is advantageous to Black.

49...♖c6

By playing 49...♕g5 50 e5+ g6 51 ♕f3! ♕xd2 52 ♕xf7+ ♖h8 53 ♕f8+ ♖h7 54 ♖xg6+ ♖xg6 55 ♕f6+ ♖h7 etc. Black could have immediately forced a draw. With the move in the game he provokes further complications, hoping that he will be able to parry the seemingly so dangerous attack and then exploit the rather advanced white e-pawn. However, as the game continuation shows, this plan is too bold and should have had unfavourable consequences for Black.

50 ♖d5!

White's entire attack, begun on the 47th move, is based on this move. The bishop, so long inactive, finally comes into play and its activity on the b1-h7 diagonal causes Black a great deal of trouble.

50...♕c7 51 e5+ ♖g8

After 51...g6 52 ♖d4 it would not have been possible to parry the threat of ♖h4.*

52 ♖d4 ♖f8

The king must as soon as possible move off the diagonal on which the bishop is operating.

52...♖c5 would of course have been premature in view of 53 ♔e4.

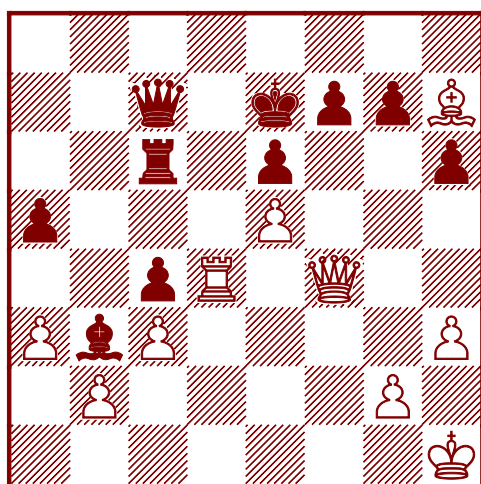
53 ♕f4

With the terrible threat of 54 ♗g6 followed by ♜d8+.

53...♔e7 54 ♗h7!

A very strong move, the main idea of which is that without loss of time the bishop moves off the back rank, which for the subsequent battle *should* have had enormous significance.

First of all 55 ♗g8 is a very serious threat, and as a result the retreat of the queen is forced.



54...♔b8 55 ♕g3! ♜c5

Black must try to counterattack, since in the event of passive defence by 55...♔f8 the move 56 ♜g4! would again have been very unpleasant, for example: 56...g6 57 ♗xg6 fxg6 58 ♜xg6 or 56...g5 57 ♕f3 ♜c5 58 ♜e4! with a decisive advantage.

56 ♜e4(?)

Marshall has very subtly exploited Black's risky 49th move and gained an advantage.

But instead of now choosing a natural continuation, ensuring him a favourable endgame, he, as is his habit, cannot resist the temptation to play for further complications in the hope that – by hook or by crook – he will be able to checkmate his opponent...

56 ♕xg7! was correct, with the possible continuation 56...♕xe5 (56...♜xe5 57 ♕g3!) 57 ♕xh6 ♜d5 58 ♜xd5 ♕xd5 with quite good chances of a draw for Black.

56...♔f8!

Black avoids an interesting trap: 56...♕h8 57 ♕f2 (after 56...♗c2? the same move wins immediately, of course) 57...♜d5 58 ♜f4 ♕e8 59 ♗e4! ♜xe5 60 ♕a7+ ♔f8 61 ♗c6! and wins.

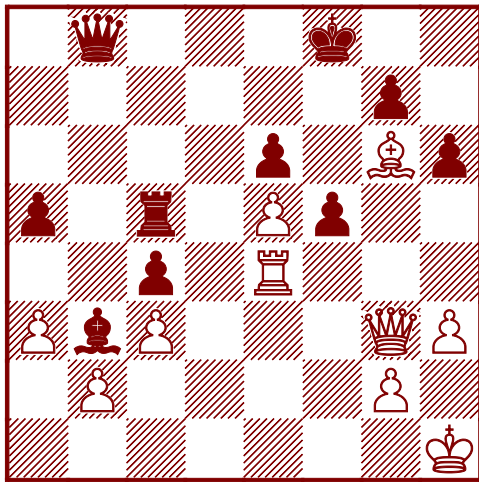
57 ♗g6

As ineffective as anything else: White threw away his real chances with his previous light-weight move.

57...f5!

By playing 57...f6 Black could have forced a draw: 58 ♕f2! ♜xe5 59 ♜xe5 ♕xe5 60 ♕a7 ♕e1+ with perpetual check.

The move in the game is a last attempt to play for a win.



58 ♖d4!

Best, since after the retreat by the rook on the e-file Black would have gained an obvious advantage by 58...♖d5 (on the previous move this was unfavourable on account of 57...♖d5 58 ♖f4 ♖d7 59 ♔f3 etc.).

58...♔xe5

Of course, not 58...♖xe5 59 ♖d7 with a winning position.

59 ♔h4 ♔f6 60 ♔g3 ♔e5 61 ♔h4

If 61 ♔xe5 ♖xe5 62 ♖d7, then 62...♖e2 63 ♖f7+ ♔e8! 64 ♖xf5+ ♔e7 65 ♖f7+ ♔d6 and wins.

61...♔f6

Had it not been for the fact that for his next 18 moves Black had only two and a half minutes left, he would have tried playing 61...♖d5, although even then after 62 ♖xd5 ♔xd5 63 ♔f4! with the threats of ♔c7 and ♔b8+ he would hardly have been able to exploit his material advantage.

62 ♔g3 ♔e5

Draw agreed.

Game 12

A. Nimzowitsch – R. Spielmann

New York 1927 (4)

Nimzowitsch Opening A03

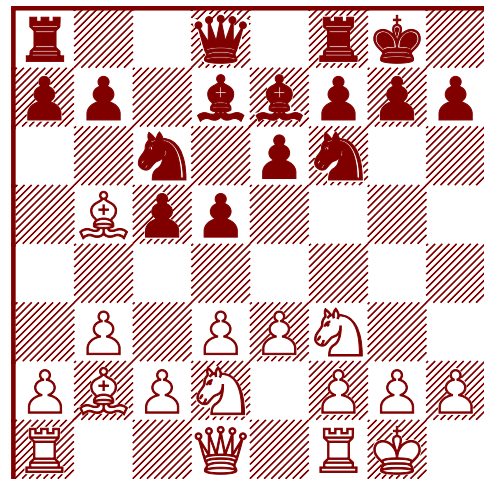
1 ♘f3 d5 2 b3 c5 3 ♙b2 ♘c6 4 e3 ♘f6

Why does Black so submissively give up the battle for the e5-point? At any event, 4...♙g4 or 4...a6 was more energetic, in order to retain the option of choosing between different development plans.

5 ♙b5 ♙d7 6 0–0 e6 7 d3 ♙e7

Now he has to be satisfied with this modest square, since if 7...♙d6 there would have followed 8 e4! (8...dxe4 9 dxe4 ♘xe4 10 ♖e1 with advantage to White).

8 ♘bd2 0–0



9 ♙xc6

This exchange is an integral part of the development plan chosen by White, and there was no sense in delaying it. He could perhaps still have played 9 ♔e2, but after 9...♖c8 or 9...♔c7 (the conse-

quences of 9...♘d4 would favour the opponent) White cannot get by without occupying the e5-square.

9...♙xc6 10 ♘e5 ♖c8

In a game from the next round Vidmar chose here (with reversed colours) the set-up with ...♙c7 and ...♖ad8, but soon he also obtained a not altogether satisfactory game.

Already now White's position is undoubtedly better.

11 f4 ♘d7 12 ♙g4

A natural move (if 12...f5 there follows 13 ♙xg7+!), but it has one fundamental drawback: starting from this moment, *all* White's hopes are based on a direct attack (and, of course, on achieving by this a material advantage), and as a consequence of this the other advantages of his position (the splendid diagonal of the b2-bishop and the flexibility of his pawn structure) are nullified to a greater or lesser extent. In view of this I would have preferred here the restrained continuation 12 ♘xc6 ♖xc6 13 e4; however, in the end this is a matter of taste and playing style. In the game Nimzowitsch also obtains good, sound play with definite winning chances.

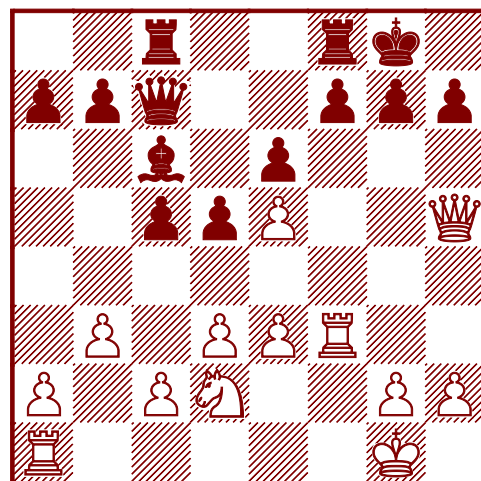
12...♘xe5 13 ♙xe5

13 fxe5 was weaker in view of 13...♙g5!.

13...♙f6 14 ♖f3 ♙xe5

Otherwise, White could have intensified the pressure by continuing 15 ♖af1 etc.

15 fxe5 ♙c7 16 ♙h5



16...h6

An over-passive move, giving the opponent an opportunity to conclusively consolidate his positional superiority.

16...♙e8! deserved attention (not 16...f5 in view of 17 exf6 followed by ♙g4+), when the seemingly powerful rook sacrifice (indeed decisive, in the event of its acceptance) 17 ♖f6!? would not have given anything after the simple 17...♙a5 18 ♘f3 h6! (19 ♖xh6? gxh6 20 ♙xh6 f6 21 exf6 ♖c7*).

Therefore, White would have had to be satisfied with the modest continuation 17 ♖h3, but in this case after 17...h6 18 ♘f3 f5 19 ♙h4 ♙d8 Black would have obtained a perfectly defensible position.

17 ♖af1 g6?

Now 17...♙e8 would not have been as good as on the previous move, because White could have exchanged his e5-pawn for the h6-pawn by playing 18 ♖g3 f5 19

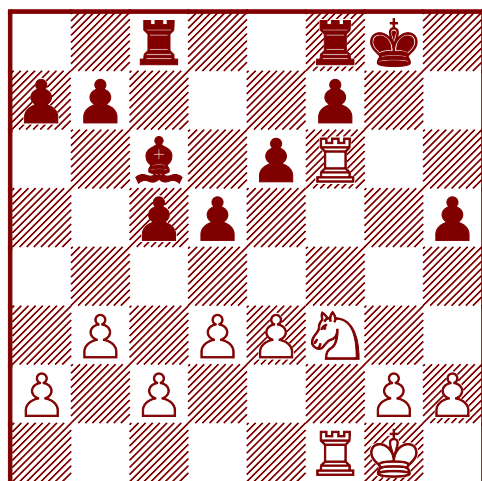
♔xh6 ♕xe5 20 ♔f4! followed by ♖f3. However, the pawn sacrifice associated with the move in the game leads to an endgame that, although protracted, is completely lost. It is obvious that here Spielmann missed something.

18 ♔xh6 ♕xe5 19 ♖f6! ♔h5

The only defence against ♖f1-f3-h3.

20 ♔xh5 gxh5 21 ♖f3

21 ♖h6 followed by ♖xh5 was also good enough.



21...♖c7!

Again, the only defence against the threat of 22 ♖g5, after which there would now have followed 22...♖e7. Therefore, White must be satisfied with the simple win of the pawn.

22 ♖h6 f6 23 ♖h4 ♕e8

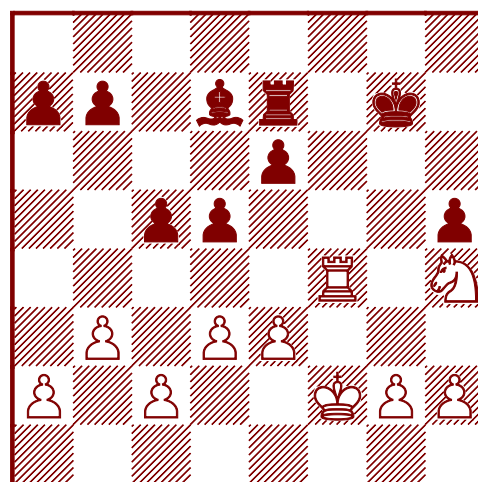
It is obvious that the f-pawn could not be defended.

24 ♖hxf6 ♖xf6 25 ♖xf6 ♖e7 26 ♔f2

But not 26 ♖g6 on account of 26...♔g7!, when after the exchange of rooks the knight

cannot be saved.** But now also its position on the rook's file is not very favourable. Subsequently White is forced to spend much effort on the conversion of his material advantage, for the reason that he is unable to occupy a post in the centre with his knight.

26...♔g7 27 ♖f4 ♕d7



28 ♔e2(?)

After 28 ♔e1! Black's reply, eliminating the 'e5-problem', would not have been possible.

28...e5! 29 ♖f5

Now this is ineffective, since the h5-pawn is indirectly defended (...♕g4+).

29...♖e8 30 ♖f2 e4 31 ♖f4

Not immediately 31 ♔d2 in view of 31...d4!.

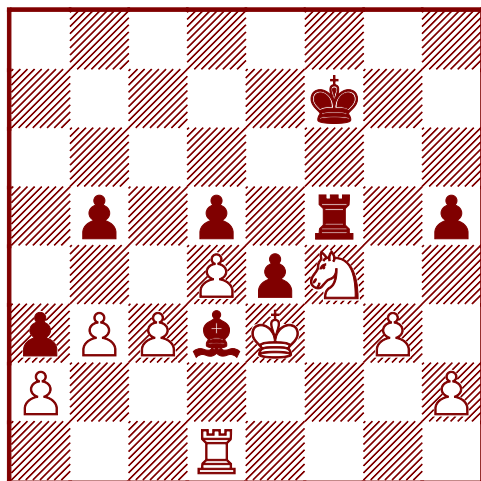
31...♖e5 32 ♔d2 b5 33 g3

The knight has to be transferred to a more active sector of the board: after the advance of the black e-pawn the f4-square has become accessible, and as a result of the following exchange the e3-square also becomes free.

33...♙h3 34 d4! cxd4 35 exd4
♖g5 36 c3 a5 37 ♖f2 a4 38 ♔e3
a3 39 ♖c2!

Now the strong threat of 40 c4
forces the bishop to lift its control
of the g2-square.

39...♙f1 40 ♖c1 ♙d3 41 ♘g2
♖f5 42 ♘f4 ♔f7 43 ♖d1



43...♔e7?

After 43...♙c2 (44 ♖d2 ♙b1)
White would also have found a
way to win, for example ♖g1, h2-
h4, g3-g4 and so on, but Black
could still have obliged his
opponent to find it. Now, however,
after the loss of a second pawn,
Black's position is hopeless.

44 ♘xd3 exd3 45 b4!

Another subtlety: after 45 ♔xd3
♖f3+ 46 ♔c2 b4! 47 cxb4 ♔d6
White would have had some
technical problems.

45...♔d6 46 ♔xd3 ♖f2 47 ♖d2
♖f3+ 48 ♔c2 ♔e6 49 ♖e2+ ♔d6
50 ♔b3 ♖d3 51 ♖e5 h4 52 gxh4
♖h3 53 ♖h5 ♔c6 54 ♖h6+ ♔b7
55 h5

Black resigned.

Fifth Round

Game 13

A. Alekhine – J. R. Capablanca

New York 1927 (5)

Queen's Indian Defence E15

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 b6 4 g3
♙b7 5 ♙g2 c5 6 d5

I made this move without
particular thought, being concerned
only about, at the least, avoiding a
draw. The move, however, is
perfectly good, but subsequently it
demands very accurate, consistent
play. Castling or 6 dxc5 would
have promised too little.

6...exd5 7 ♘h4

Suggested by Rubinstein in the
Collijns' Textbook. But the new
manoeuvre, suggested by Berger –
7 ♘g5 and then possibly ♘h3-f4
(f2), is interesting and gives good
chances.

7...g6 8 ♘c3 ♙g7 9 0-0

This natural move was
condemned by some critics, who
suggested instead 9 ♘b5.
However, I cannot share this
opinion, since after the simple
9...0-0 10 ♘d6 ♙c6 White would
not have any possibility of
exploiting the invasion of his
knight. No, the real inaccuracies
and mistakes came later.

9...0-0