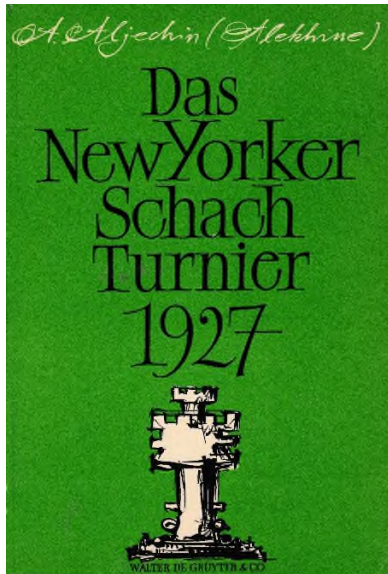


Computer-Assisted Analytical Critique of

New York 1927 by Alexander Alekhine

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Alexander Alekhine



Though not as famous as his book of the New York 1924 tournament, *New York 1927* must be considered one of Alexander Alekhine's major works. He annotated all 60 games played between World Champion José Raúl Capablanca, Milan Vidmar, Aron Nimzovich, Rudolf Spielmann, Frank Marshall, and himself, producing what IM William Hartston, in *The Kings of Chess* (1985), ranked as "among the most painstaking and profound chess commentaries ever written."

Moreover, aside from the notorious "Aryan and Jewish Chess" articles of 1941, it is surely Alekhine's most controversial work, what Hartston called "one of the greatest character assassinations in chess history." The introduction, written after Alekhine had taken the world title from Capablanca later in 1927, was a detailed and systematic deflation of the Capablanca myth, the popular belief that the Cuban genius was practically invincible, a perfect "chess machine." However, that critique, and the personal feud between Alekhine and Capablanca, are not our concerns here; we are interested in determining, objectively, the accuracy of the book's annotations.

For reasons not entirely clear, this important tournament book was at first published only in German. It was not until 2011 that an English-language edition came out from Russell Enterprises. Eventually, as I had already done with other books by Alekhine, plus works by Lasker, Capablanca, Euwe, Nimzovich, Tartakower, Fine, Najdorf, Reinfeld, and Chernev, I decided to put it under computer scrutiny.

The text moves and note variations were examined using Komodo 11.2.2 and Stockfish 11, both among the strongest of all analytical engines, the former rated about 3400 Elo and the latter 3600, running on a Dell Inspiron 17 7000 Series with an Intel Core i7-7500U CPU at 2.90 GHz with 16 GB RAM and a 64-bit operating system. The games were accessed via ChessBase 14 with the engines running in “kibitzer” mode, though I kept a copy of the book always at hand, to check for any notational errors databases are sometimes prey to (one was indeed found).

While Stockfish is now considered stronger than Komodo, it has an annoying tendency to freeze up. So my usual method was to play through the game first with Komodo, then go back and check critical points with Stockfish, especially in endgames. Generally when the “editorial we” is used, I am speaking for both the engines and myself.

Presented here are the corrections, additions and enhancements thus revealed that we considered significant: not minor half-pawn differences, but cases where an important tactical shot was missed, where a resource that could have changed a loss to a draw or win was overlooked, where a good move was called bad (or vice versa), or where a position was misevaluated. Also some cases where there was no real mistake, but an especially interesting variation, or a much stronger one, was not pointed out. Changes in opening theory since 1927 are not discussed.

This supplement is intended to be used with the book. We give full game scores, but nowhere near all of Alekhine’s notes. The great majority of his annotations are valid, either tactically, strategically, or both, but to avoid reproducing the whole book, I have followed the principle of *qui tacet consentire videtur*, omitting notes (and in twelve cases, entire games) where no significant error or improvement was found. At some points Alekhine failed to comment on an important error or possibility; these errors of omission are remedied.

Text moves are in **boldface**, note moves in normal type. Diagrams of actual game positions are in 14-point type, those for note variations in 12-point. Most of Alekhine’s in-game punctuation (i.e. ?, !, etc.) has been preserved. When a text move or note line of Alekhine’s shows punctuation or comment in **red** – e.g. 22...♙g7? (♟22...e4!=) – it means I have inserted an engine’s opinion.

Sometimes the usual Informator evaluation symbols: +–, –+, ±, ∓ etc., are used, but usually I prefer the engines’ numerical assessment — e.g. 28.♞f5 (+2.58), or 35.♜xf3 ♞g7 (-2.25) — to indicate the status of a position, as I consider this more precise and informative. The numbers represent Komodo’s and/or Stockfish’s evaluation of the position to the nearest hundredth of a pawn, e.g. a difference of exactly one pawn, with no other relevant non-material differences, has the value +1.00 when in White’s favor, or -1.00 when in Black’s. A position where White is considered better by 3½ pawns (or the equivalent, such as a minor piece) would get the value +3.50, the advantage of a rook +5.00, etc. With the symbols, a position where White is up knight for pawn, and another where he’s up a queen, would both get a “+–”, but there is obviously a big difference.

At the end of many notes you will see a more detailed entry such as “(+0.95 K/24)” or “(-1.37 SF/36)”. These show first the numerical evaluation, secondly the engine used (K for Komodo, SF for Stockfish), and finally the depth to which the analysis reached in ply, i.e. “K/24” means Komodo looked 24 half-moves beyond the board position. In some cases, especially where the

evaluation is overwhelmingly in favor of one side or the other, I did not bother giving the engine or the ply depth.

A few other Informator symbols are used here and there:

- △ a better move is
- the only playable move for the defender, or the only advantageous move for the attacker
- △ with the intention or threat of

Hartston's praise notwithstanding, the annotations turned out to be far from perfect. About two dozen glaring errors (commonly called "howlers" in chess slang) were found, along with other fairly serious mistakes, mainly due to overlooking relevant candidate moves (a prime example is game 32, Alekhine-Nimzovich, move 18). *Errare humanum est*, and no human being, even such a great as Alekhine, can match the unflagging attention, penetrating vision, and brute-force power of the lidless silicon eye.

Still, the notes for *New York 1927* are on the whole better than those for *New York 1924*, and Alekhine showed less of the tendency, seen especially in his *My Best Games of Chess* collections, to praise himself and overlook (or suppress?) his mistakes. And he again showed himself a more conscientious annotator than his contemporaries Lasker, Tartakower and Nimzovich, though not at the level of later masters such as Botvinnik and Fischer.

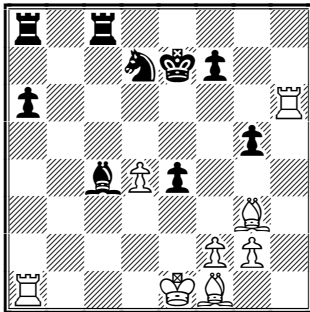
Also, despite Alekhine's antipathy toward Capablanca, there did not seem to be any straining to find fault with the Cuban's play. With the possible exception of move 38 in Game 10, we found no instance where a Capablanca move was criticized unfairly, and Alekhine's observation that the other players seemed to be pulling their punches and playing below their strength against the Cuban, was generally proven valid.

But enough from me. I hope you find this digital examination of a nearly century-old chess classic interesting. And I like to think that Alekhine, with his constant search for objective chess truth, would approve.

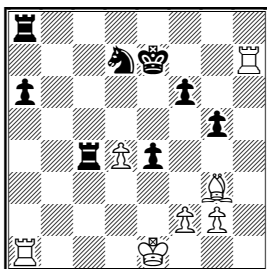
Taylor Kingston, San Diego, California, July 2020

Game 1, Capablanca-Spielmann, Queen's Gambit Declined [D38]: An uneventful game with only one minor comment required.

1.d4 d5 2.♘f3 e6 3.c4 ♘d7 4.cxd5 exd5 5.♗c3 ♗gf6 6.♕g5 ♖b4 7.♝b3 c5 8.a3 ♕xc3+ 9.♝xc3 c4 10.♝e3+ ♜e7 11.♝xe7+ ♜xe7 12.♗d2 h6 13.♖h4 b5 14.e4 g5 15.♖g3 ♗xe4 16.♗xe4 dxe4 17.a4 ♖a6 18.axb5 ♖xb5 19.b3 ♜hc8 20.h4 a6 21.bxc4 ♖xc4 22.hxg5 hxg5 23.♞h6



23...♗f6 Here Alekhine says “Not 23...f6 24.♖xc4 ♜xc4 25.♞h7+ ♜e6? 26.d5+, and wins.” However, after 25.♞h7+,

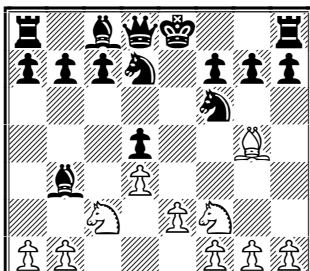


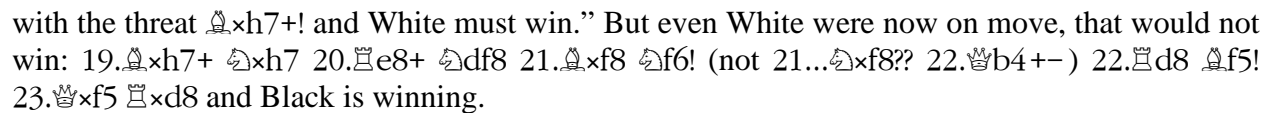
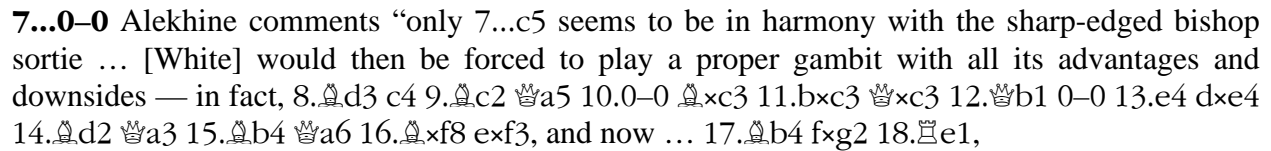
25...♜e6? is by no means forced; Black can safely play 25...♜e8 26.♖d6 (if 26.♞h8+ ♗f8 27.♖d6 ♜f7=) 26...♜ac8 27.♞e7+ ♜d8 28.♞xe4 ♜c1+ 29.♞xc1 ♜xc1+ 30.♜d2 ♜b1=.

24.♞a5 ♖b5 25.♖xb5 axb5 26.♞xb5 ♞a1+ 27.♜d2 ♞a2+ 28.♜d1 ♞a1+ ½-½

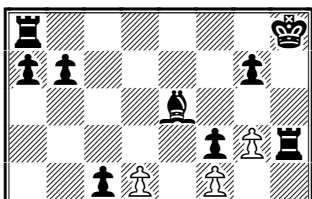
Game 2, Alekhine-Vidmar, Queen's Gambit Declined [D38]: An interesting game Alekhine could have won, but even in his later analysis he failed to see how, missing his opportunities at moves 28 and 30.

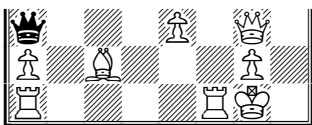
1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♗f3 ♗d7 4.♗c3 ♗gf6 5.♕g5 ♖b4 6.cxd5 exd5 7.e3



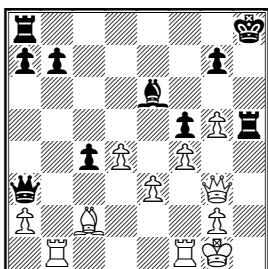


18. ♖b5 ♖g6(?) 18... ♗a3 was less bad. 19. ♖×d5 ♖b4 20. ♙c2 ♙e6 21. ♗e4 f5 22. ♗f4 ♙h7 23. h4 ♙×g5 24. h×g5 ♗e7 25. ♖h4+ ♖h6 26. ♗g3 ♖h5 27. f4 ♗a3(?) “With that he still provides the opponent with the most practical difficulties,” says Alekhine. But this is actually a serious mistake. Better 27... ♖f8, 27... ♖d8, or 27... g6, all about +2.25.





28. ♖f3 Good, but only about 7th-best. Much stronger was 28. ♖ab1!:



Some sample continuations then:

(a) 28...b6?? 29. ♖f3 loses a rook;

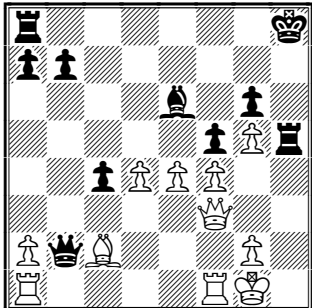
(b) 28...g6 29. ♖xb7 ♗xa2 30. ♗d1 ♖a6 31. ♗f3 (+6.50);

(c) 28...♗xa2 29. ♖f3 ♖h7 30. ♖xb7 ♗g8 31. ♖c6 c3 32. ♖fc1 (+5.39 SF/23);

(d) 28...♖b8 29. ♖f3 g6 30. d5 ♗f7 31. e4! ♖xf3 32. ♖xf3 fxe4 33. ♗xe4 (+4.14 SF/25);

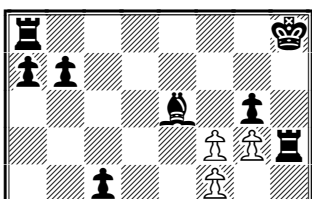
(e) 28...♗g8 29. d5! ♗c8 (if 29...♗xd5? 30. ♗xf5+-) 30. ♖f3 ♖xf3 31. ♖xf3 fxe4 32. ♗xe4 (+4.38 SF/25).

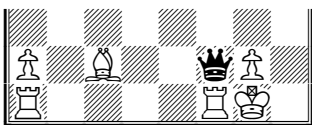
28...g6 29. e4 ♗b2



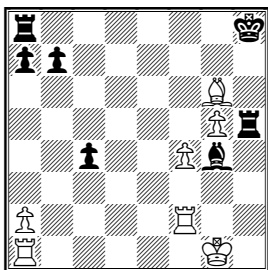
30. e×f5(?) “Absolutely not a mistake,” says AAA, “but rather the intended consequence of the maneuver introduced by the previous move.” Still, it is so sub-optimal (about +1.00) that it merits some censure, and it may in fact throw the win away. The alternative he considered, 30. ♖f2 ♗g7 31. ♗d1, was better, and can be further improved by first interpolating 31. e×f5 g×f5 and then 32. ♗d1, forcing 32...♖xf2+ 33. ♗xf2 ♖hh8 34. ♖e1 and White is clearly winning (+2.93 SF/27). After text it’s not certain that White can win against correct defense.

30...♖×d4+ 31. ♖f2 ♖×f2+

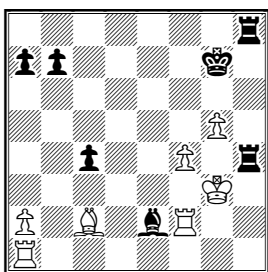




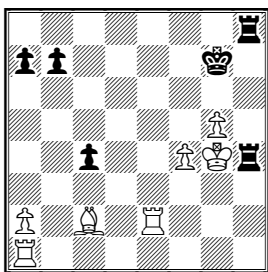
32. ♖×f2 Alekhine chides himself for this move, insisting that he could have won with 32. ♖×f2 ♗×f5 33. g4 ♗×g4 34. ♗×g6 ♜h3 35. ♗e4 ♜b8 36. f5 etc. However, at move 34 of this line,



Black's play can be improved: 34... ♜h4! 35. ♖g2 ♖g7 36. ♖g3 ♜ah8 37. ♗c2 ♗e2!!



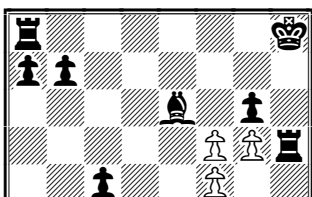
38. ♜×e2 (if 38. ♗f5 ♗d3=) 38... ♜h3+ 39. ♖g4 ♜3h4+,

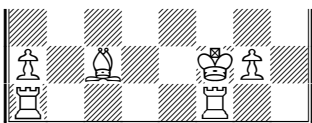


with a draw no matter what White tries, viz.:

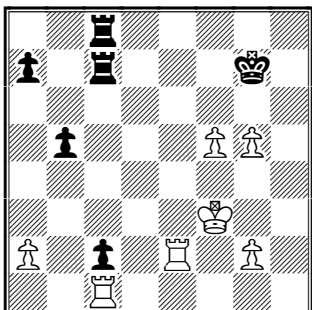
- (a) 40. ♖f5 ♜f8+ 41. ♖e4 ♜e8+ 42. ♖f3 ♜h3+ 43. ♖g2 ♜×e2+ 44. ♖×h3 ♜×c2=;
- (b) 40. ♖g3 ♜h3+ 41. ♖g2 ♜h2+ 42. ♖f3 ♜8h3+ 43. ♖g4 ♜h4+ etc.;
- (c) 40. ♖f3 ♜h3+ 41. ♖g4 ♜3h4+ 42. ♖f5 ♜f8+ etc.

Returning to the game:





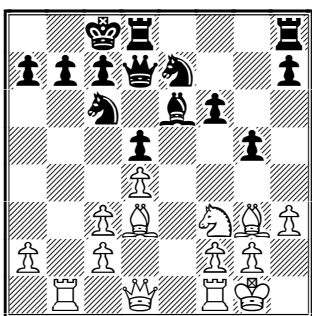
32...♙×f5 33.♙×f5 ♖×f5 34.♞fd1 ♞h7 35.♞d5 Alekhine says “At this moment, there was a last winning attempt: 35.g4! ♕g4 36.♜g3, since the opportunity to double rooks on the h-file would no longer be at the opponent’s disposal.” However, Stockfish sees no winning prospects there, its top ten replies all rated 0.00 out to 36 ply. **35...♞c8! 36.♞×f5 ♞d7 37.♞e5 c3 38.♞c1 c2 39.♞e2 ♞dc7 40.♜f3 b5 41.f5 ♜g7**



42.♞e6 Alekhine remarks “if 42.♜f4, then simply 42...♞c4+, and now the rook exchange 43.♞e4, after 43...♞×e4+ 44.♜×e4 ♞c3!, together with b5-b4, etc., would actually seriously endanger White’s game.” But Stockfish sees no danger after 45.♜e5, 45.f6+, or 45.♜d5, all rated at close to 0.00. **42...♞d7 43.♞e2 ♞dc7 44.♞e6 ♞d7 45.♞e2 ½-½**

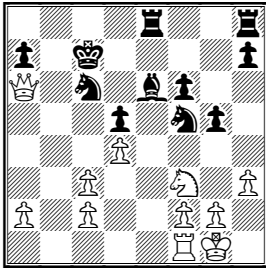
Game 3, Marshall-Nimzovich, French Defense [C01]: Alekhine’s notes here are for the most part quite perceptive, especially at move 13. His assessment of the note variation at move 14 is perhaps mistaken, and his note at move 41 can be improved, but he goes seriously wrong only in the note at move 24.

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♙b4 4.e×d5 e×d5 5.♘f3 ♘e7 6.♙d3 ♘bc6 7.h3 ♙e6 8.0-0 ♜d7 9.♙f4 ♙×c3 10.b×c3 f6 11.♞b1 ♗g5 12.♙g3 0-0-0



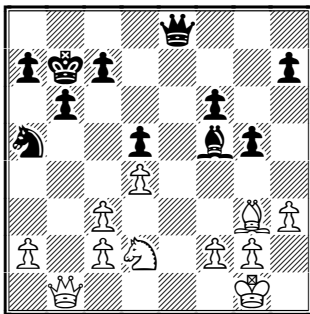
13.♜e2? Alekhine correctly points out that 13.♘d2! (threatening a winning attack with 14.♘b3 and 15.♘c5) was called for. He gives as one possibility then 14...♘b8 14.♘b3 b6 15.♜e2 “with really unpleasant threats,” which is an understatement (+3.18 SF/25). More or less forced actually would be 14...♘a5 15.♘b3 ♘×b3 15.♞×b3 ♞df8 16.♜c1 ♘ 17.♜a3 with a winning attack (+3.00 SF/25).

13...♖de8 14.♗fe1 Here Alekhine says if 14.♙a6 bxa6 15.♚xa6+ ♕d8 16.♖b7 ♘f5 17.♖xc7 ♚xc7 18.♙xc7+ ♚xc7 “with an easily winning game.”

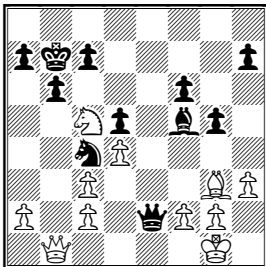


Though Black then has ♖+♙+♘-vs-♚+2♙, Stockfish actually sees this is as somewhat in White’s favor if he continues 19.♘e1 ♗d3-c5 (+1.31 SF/29).

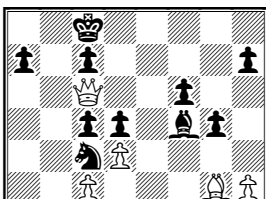
14...♘f5 15.♙xf5 ♙xf5 16.♚b5 ♘d8 17.♚c5? Correctly flagged as “the decisive mistake.” Alekhine’s 17.♚a5 is good, probably best was 17.♚b3. **17...b6 18.♚a3 ♖b7 19.♚b3 ♘c6 20.♘d2 ♘a5 21.♚b2 ♖xe1+ 22.♖xe1 ♖e8 23.♖xe8 ♚xe8 24.♚b1**



24...♖c8(?) Alekhine correctly faults this. His recommendation 24...♚e2! is good, but he goes astray in one variation stemming from it: 25.♘b3 ♘c4 26.♘c5+ ♖c8(?) 27.♘d3(?) ♘d2. After 26.♘c5+,



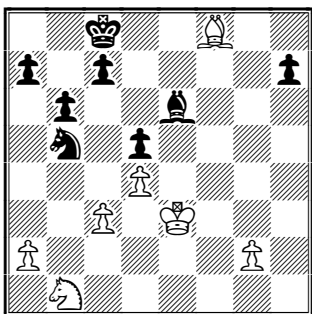
Black must play 26...♖c6!-+. Alekhine’s 26...♖c8? is refuted by 27.♚b5! bxc5 28.♚c6!,





threatening mate and forcing 28...♖e7 29.♗a8+ ♕d7 30.♗xd5+ ♘d6 31.dxc5= (-0.29 SF/30).

25.♗d1 ♖e6 26.♘b3 ♘c4 27.♘d2 ♘a3 28.♘f1 ♘xc2 29.♗h5 ♘d3 30.♗d1 ♖e4 31.♘d2 ♖e2 32.♗xe2 ♘xe2 33.f4 ♘a3 34.fxg5 fxg5 35.♗f2 ♘h5 36.♘e5 g4 37.hxg4 ♘xg4 38.♗e3 ♘f5 39.♘g7 ♘e6 40.♘f8 ♘b5 41.♘b1

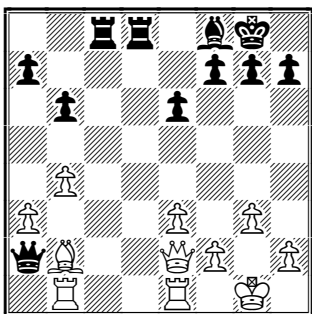


41...a5 The alternate line Alekhine gives here can be greatly improved. After 41...♘f5 42.a4, not 42...♘xb1 but 42...♘d6! Δ 43...♘c2 or 43...♘d7, and White's a-pawn cannot be saved.

42.♗d2 ♘f5 43.♘a3 ♘xa3 44.♘xa3 ♘b1 45.♘f8 ♘xa2 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 0-1

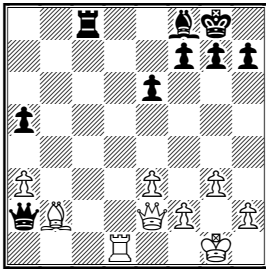
Game 4, Nimzovich-Capablanca, Queen's Gambit Declined [D30]: Alekhine's notes here, strongly critical of Nimzovich's lamentably flaccid and self-injurious play, are generally quite correct. But he goes seriously wrong at two points, with a howler at move 24, and missing a possibly saving line at move 28.

1.c4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 e6 3.d4 d5 4.e3 ♘e7 5.♘bd2 0-0 6.♘d3 c5 7.dxc5 ♘a6 8.0-0? ♘xc5 9.♘e2 b6 10.cxd5? ♘xd5 11.♘b3 ♘b7 12.♘xc5 ♘xc5 13.♗a4 ♗f6! 14.♘a6 ♘xa6 15.♗xa6 ♘b4(?) 16.♗e2 ♖fd8 17.a3 ♘d3 18.♘e1 ♘xe1 19.♖xe1 ♖ac8 20.♖b1 ♗e5 21.g3 ♗d5 22.b4 ♘f8 23.♘b2 ♗a2!

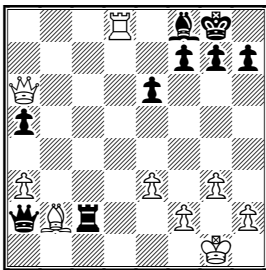


Alekhine remarks "With the unpleasant threat 24...a5." Even giving Black an extra move, the engines see no trouble for White after 24...a5 25.♘d4=.

24.♖a1? Alekhine is correct to fault this and recommend 24.♖bd1, but he goes awry twice a few moves later in that variation: 24.♖bd1 ♜×d1 25.♖×d1 a5 26.b×a5 b×a5 27.♚a6?? ♜c2 28.♖d8 ♚×b2? 29.♚d6. First, after 26...♙a5,

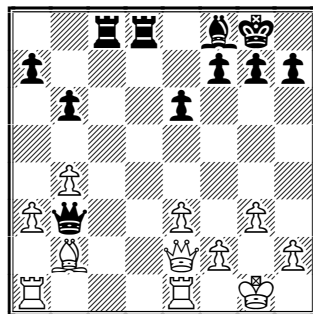


White must play 27.♖d2=. The flaw in 27.♚a6?? appears shortly, after 27...♜c2 28.♖d8,



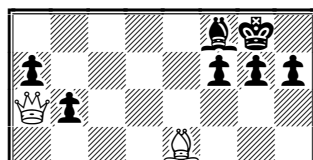
and now not 28...♚×b2? but first 28...♚b1+! 29.♚g2 ♚×b2-+ . The key difference is that if now 30.♚d6, then 30...♖×f2+ comes with check and Black forces mate in a few more moves. This is the first of two instances where Alekhine fails to “check for check.”

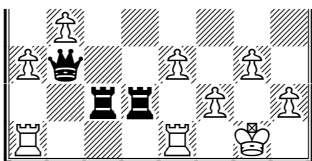
24...♚b3



25.♙d4? The question mark here seems undeserved. Alekhine prefers 25.♖ac1, but the engines see that as better for Black after 25...a5 26.b×a5 b×a5 27.♖×c8 ♜×c8 28.♖d1 ♜c2 29.♖d2 ♜×d2 30.♚×d2 a4 31.♚c1 f6 (-0.51 SF/27).

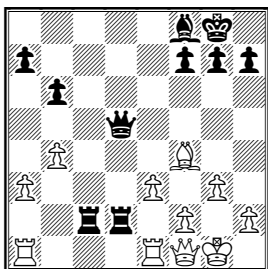
25...♜c2 26.♚a6? Correct again; better 26.♚d1=. **26...e5! 27.♙×e5 ♖dd2**



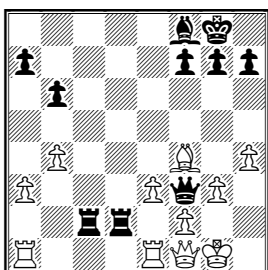


28. ♖b7(?)

This, not 26. ♖a6, was the real losing move. White would still have had drawing chances with 28. ♖f1! ♖d5, and now not Alekhine's 29. ♗d4?, but 29. ♗f4!:



If now 29... ♖xf2 30. ♖xf2 ♖xf2 31. ♖xf2 Black's advantage is slight (-0.65 K/22). But the key difference is that on f4 the bishop defends the g-pawn, and in some lines threatens to go to d6 and target the ♗f8 in combination with a rook on the back rank. The continuation recommended against 29. ♗d4, Capablanca's 29... ♖h5 30. h4 ♖f3, does not then bring "annihilation":



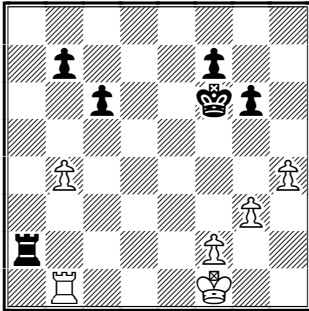
White is safe after 31. ♖ac1/♖ec1 and either 31... ♖xf2 32. ♖xc2 ♖xf1+ 33. ♖xf1 ♖g4 34. ♖fc1=, or 31... ♖xf2+ 32. ♖xf2 ♖xf2 33. ♖xc2 ♖xc2 34. ♖d1=.

28... ♖xf2 29. g4 ♖e6 30. ♗g3 ♖xh2! 31. ♖f3 ♖hg2+ 32. ♖xg2 ♖xg2+ 33. ♖xg2 ♖xg4 34. ♖ad1 h5 35. ♖d4 ♖g5 36. ♖h2 a5 37. ♖e2 axb4 38. axb4 ♗e7 39. ♖e4 ♗f6 40. ♖f2 ♖d5 41. ♖e8+ ♖h7 0-1

Game 5, Spielmann-Alekhine, Sicilian Defense [B40]: No problems until move 35, when Alekhine starts exaggerating the severity of some minor errors by White, overlooking worse ones, and missing some of his own.

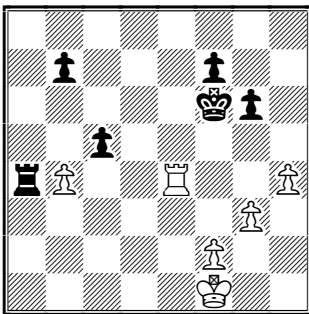
1. e4 c5 2. ♘f3 e6 3. d4 cxd4 4. ♘xd4 ♘f6 5. ♗d3 ♘c6 6. ♘xc6 dxc6 7. ♘d2 e5 8. ♘c4 ♗c5 9. ♗e3 ♗xe3 10. ♘xe3 ♗e6 11. 0-0 0-0 12. ♖e2 ♖b6 13. c3 ♖ad8 14. ♖fd1 ♖c5 15. ♖ac1 a5 16. ♗b1 g6 17. ♖d2 a4 18. ♖cd1 ♖b6 19. g3 ♖xd2 20. ♖xd2 ♘g4 21. ♘f5 ♗xf5 22. exf5 ♘f6 23. ♖d6 ♖g7 24. ♖d2 ♖e8 25. f×g6 h×g6 26. ♖b4 ♖xb4 27. c×b4 a3

28.bxa3 ♖a8 29.♞d3 e4 30.♞e3 ♜d5 31.♞xe4 ♜c3 32.♞e1 ♞xa3 33.♝f1 ♝f6 34.h4 ♜xb1 35.♞xb1 ♞xa2



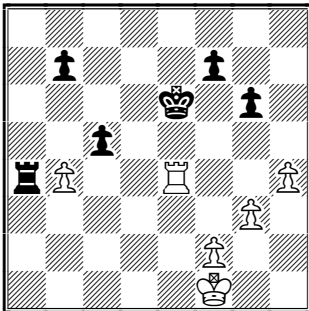
35.♞e1? Alekhine writes “Hardly had the rook endgame begun, when White already commits the decisive error.” But both the “?” and the summary judgement are undeserved. While his suggested alternative 35.♞b3 is perhaps marginally better, after the text Stockfish can see no victory on the horizon, rating the position at 0.00 out to 40 ply.

36...♞a4 37.♞e4(?) It is with this move, on which Alekhine does not comment, that White starts to go wrong. Best was 37.♞b1. **37...c5**



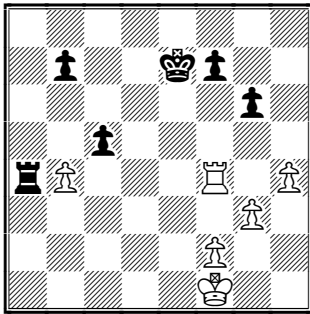
38.♞f4+(?) And this is a further error. Better 38.f3 cxb4 39.♝e2 b5 40.♝d3 b3 41.♞e2 ♞a2 42.♞e4 ♞g2 (if 42...b2 43.♞b4=) 43.♝e3 ♞xg3 44.♝f2 b2 45.♞b4 ♞h3 46.♝g2 ♞xh4 47.♞xb5 and White holds (-0.34 SF/42).

38...♝e6 39.♞e4+(?) This deserves the censure Alekhine gave to move 36. White had to play 39.♝e2 or 39.g4 to retain drawing chances (both about -1.05 SF/30).



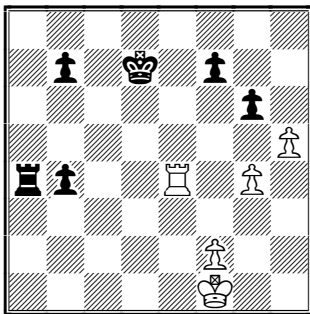
39...♖f6(?) But Alekhine errs in turn, believing he has the luxury of repeating moves until time control at move 40. To win, necessary was 39...♖d5, when White is powerless against the queenside advance, viz. 40.♞f4 ♞xb4 41.♞xf7 b5 42.♞d7+ ♖c4 43.♞d1 ♞a4 etc.

40.♞f4+ A more certain path to the draw was 40.f3, as detailed in the note to White's 38th move.
40...♖e7? Alekhine correctly chides himself here, though he mistakenly believes this, and not his previous move, is one that “seriously imperils the win.” His recommended 40...♖e6 is indeed best, but after 39.♖e2 or 39.g4, as noted at move 39, a win for Black is by no means certain.

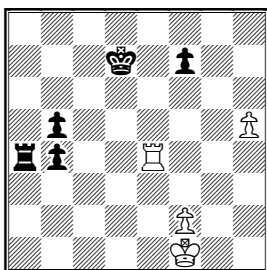


41.♞e4+ Perhaps even better was 41.♞c4, e.g. 41...b6 42.♖e2 cxb4 43.♞c6 ♞a2+ 44.♖e3 b5 45.♞b6=, or 41...cxb4 42.♞c7+ ♖d6 43.♞xf7 b5 44.♖e2=.

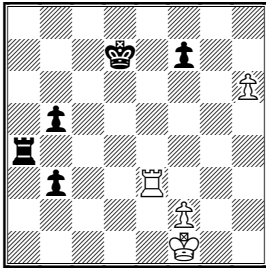
41...♖d7 41...♖f6 would lead to threefold repetition. **42.g4 cxb4 43.h5**



43...b5 Alekhine derides this as “contrived,” saying “White would have a difficult game” after the alternative line 43...g×h5 44.g×h5 b5 45.h6(?) b3 46.♞e3 b2(!) 47.♞b3 ♖c6 48.♞xb2 ♞h4 etc. While he rates this “±” Stockfish sees it as a likely draw (-0.24 SF/30). Furthermore, the variation can be improved at two points. At move 45,

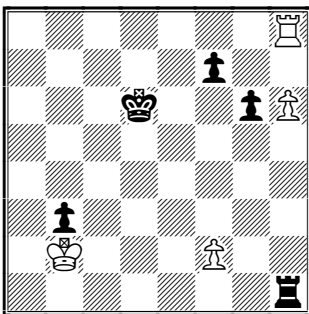


instead of 45.h6?, White should play 45.♖e3! ♖a3 46.♜e2 b3 47.♜d2 ♖a2+ 48.♜c1 ♖c2+ 49.♜b1 ♖f2 50.♖xb3= (-0.29 SF/39). And at Black's 46th move,

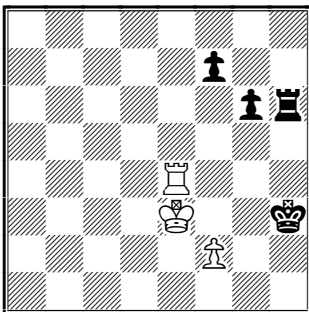


rather than 46...b2?!, best is 46...♖b4! 47.h7 b2 48.h8♜ b1♜+ 49.♖e1 ♜d3+ and Black should win (-2.54 SF/30), though Alekhine admits he wanted to avoid a queen endgame.

44.h6 b3 45.♖e3 b2 46.♖b3 ♜c6 47.♖xb2 ♖xg4 48.♖c2+ ♜b6 Alekhine notes the trap 48...♜b7 49.♖c5 b4? 50.♖h5!+- . **49.♖c8 ♖h4 50.♖h8 b4 51.♜e2 ♜c7 52.♜d3 ♖h3+ 53.♜c2 b3+ 54.♜c1 ♖h1+ 55.♜b2 ♜d6**



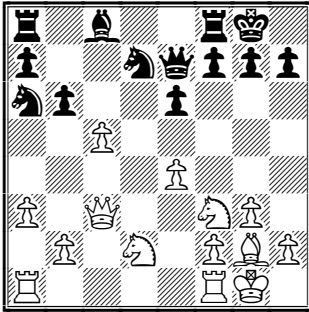
56.♜xb3 Alekhine writes “Here White appears to have seen a ghost, since otherwise he would have chosen the quite simple path to a draw: 56.h7 ♜e7 57.♜xb3 ♜f6 58.♜c3 ♜g7 59.♖a8 ♜xh7 60.♜d2.” But in fact there is nothing wrong with the text. **56...♜e5 57.♜c4 ♖h3 58.♖e8+ ♜f5 59.♜d4 ♖xh6 60.♜e3 ♜g4 61.♖e4+ ♜h3**



62.♖f4? This, finally, is the actual decisive mistake. 62.♖e7, 62.f3, 62.♜e2, and perhaps a few other moves, would hold the draw. **62...f5 63.♖f3+ ♜h2 64.♖f4 ♖h3+ 0-1**

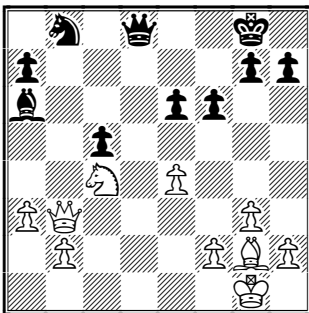
Game 7, Capablanca-Marshall, Bogo-Indian Defense: Not a well-played game by Marshall, and nothing noteworthy in the annotations except at moves 23 and 24.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 e6 3.c4 ♗b4+ 4.♗d2 ♗×d2+ 5.♘b×d2 d5 6.g3 0-0 7.♗g2 ♘bd7 8.0-0 ♚e7 9.♚c2 b6 10.c×d5 ♘×d5 11.e4 ♘b4 12.♚c3 c5 13.a3 ♘a6 14.d×c5



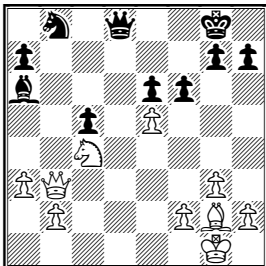
14...b×c5? Alekhine calls this “unbelievable,” and it is a serious positional error. Correct was 14...♚×c5, with the likely continuation 15.♗ac1 ♚×c3 16.♗×c3 ♗b7 17.b4 ♘f6=.

15.♘c4 ♗b7 16.♘fe5 ♘×e5 17.♚×e5 ♗ad8 18.♗fd1 f6 19.♚c3 ♗×d1+ 20.♗×d1 ♗d8 21.♗d3 ♘b8 22.♗×d8+ ♚×d8 23.♚b3 ♗a6(?)



No comment from Alekhine here, though this is as bad an error as Black’s 14th. Better either 23...♗c6 or 23...♗a8.

24.♗h3(!?) It is surprising that this move passes without comment by Alekhine, since it wastes White’s advantage. Much stronger was 24.e5!:



Some sample continuations then:

(a) 24...f×e5? 25.♘×e5 (+2.50 SF/25);

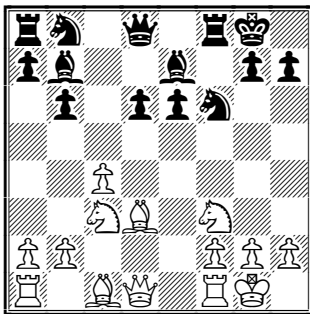
(b) 24...♗f8 25.♘d6 ♗e7 26.♗h3 ♚d7 27.♗×e6 ♚×e6 28.♚×b8 ♚×e5 29.♚×a7+ ♚×d6 30.♚×a6+ (+1.67 SF/26);

(c) 24...♟d7 25.♟d6 ♞f8 (if 25...c4 26.♞a4 c3 27.bxc3, or 25...♞e7? 26.♞a4 ♟d3 27.♞xa7) 26.♞a4 ♟d3 27.♞xa7 (+2.41 SF/26);
 (d) 24...♟xc4 25.♞xc4 ♞e7 26.exf6 gxf6 27.♟h3 ♞f7 28.♞h4 (+2.24 SF/25).

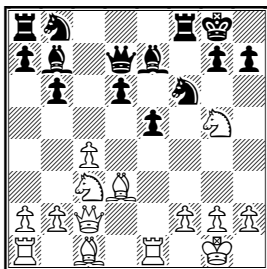
24...♟c6? Giving up the e-pawn for an illusory attack, and losing the game. Alekhine rightly points out that 24...♞f7! would give Black a quite defensible position. **25.♟xe6+ ♞h8 26.♟d5 ♟d4 27.♞a4 ♟xc4 28.♞xc4 ♞c8 29.♞g2 ♞g4 30.e5! fxe5 31.♞xc5 h5 32.♞f8+ ♞h7 33.♟g8+ ♞h6 34.♞d6+ g6 35.♞f8+ 1-0**

Game 9, Vidmar-Spielmann, Queen's Indian Defense [E14]: An interesting game. It is surprising that Alekhine's notes miss some tactical subtleties.

1.d4 ♟f6 2.♟f3 c5 3.e3 b6 4.c4 cxd4 5.exd4 e6 6.♟d3 ♟b7 7.0-0 ♟e7 8.♟c3 0-0 9.d5 d6 10.dxe6 Alekhine is critical of this, recommending instead 10.♟d4 e5 11.♟f5. But followed up correctly, the text is best. **10...fxe6**

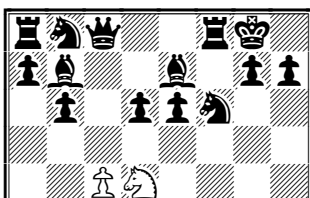


11.♟d4 About third-best. Strongest, as Alekhine notes, was 11.♟g5! ♞d7 12.♞e1 e5 13.♞c2,



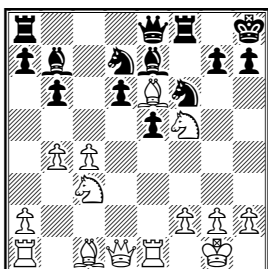
and Black has little choice but to give up his h-pawn, since if 13...h6 (not 13...g6?? 14.♟xg6) 14.♟f5 ♞e8 (worse is 14...♞c6?? 15.♟d5 ♟d8 16.♟xf6+ ♞xf6 17.♟e6+ ♞f8 18.♟h7+-) 15.♟e6 ♞f7 16.♟c7+- . White could also transpose into the same line with 11.♞e1 e5 12.♟g5.

11...♞c8





12. ♖e2 Alekhine writes “Also after 12. ♖e1, Black gradually would have gotten counter-play; for example, 12...e5 13. ♘f5 ♜bd7 14. ♙e6+ ♜h8 15. ♜f5 ♜e8 16. ♜xd6(?) ♙xd6 17. ♜xd6 ♜c5± etc.” There are two problems with this. One, after 18. ♙h3 or 18. ♙d5 the engines rate the position dead even rather than favoring Black. Two, White’s play can be improved with 16.b4!,



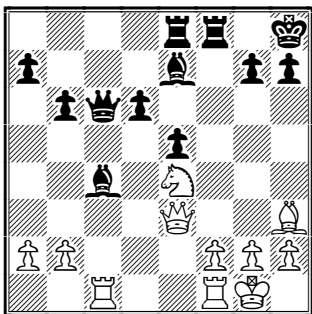
leading to at least some advantage in all variations, *e.g.*:

(a) 16...♜g6 17.f3 ♜fe8 18.♜e3 ♜f8 19.♙f5 ♜f7 20.♜d3±;

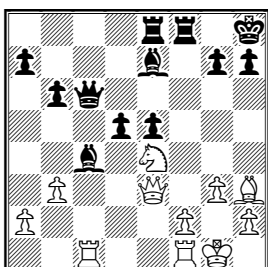
(b) 16...♜d8 17.♜b5 ♜b8 18.♜c7 ♜g6 19.♜h4 ♜h5 20.♜xh5 ♜xh5 21.♜f5 ♙f6 22.♜b5±;

(c) 16...♙d8 17.♜xd6 ♜c8 18.♜d1 ♜g6 19.♜h4 ♜h5 20.♜xf8+ ♜xf8 21.♙xc8 ♙e7 22.♙xb7 ♜xh4±.

12...e5 13. ♘f5 ♜bd7 14. ♙e6+ ♜h8 15. ♜f5 ♜e8 16. ♜g3 ♜c5 17. ♙h3 ♜c6 18. ♙e3 ♜ae8 19. ♙xc5? ♜xc5 20. ♜ac1 ♙a6 21. ♜ce4 ♜xe4 22. ♜xe4 ♜c6 23. ♜e3? ♙xc4!

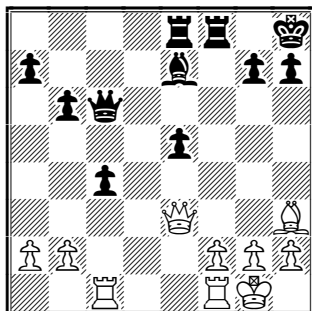


Alekhine says “An unpleasant surprise for White. With 24.b3?, he would not only fail to win a piece after 24...d5 25. ♜d2(?) ♙c5 or 25. ♜g5(?) ♜g6, but would even suffer a material disadvantage.” While 24.b3 is not good, it need not turn out as badly as Alekhine indicates. The best defense after 24.b3 d5 would be 25.g3,

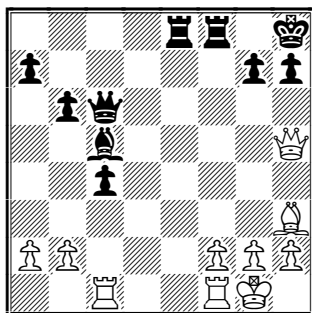


with some chance after either 25...d4 26.♖e1 ♜h6 27.♞xc4 ♜xh3 28.♞c7 ♞, or 25...♙xf1 26.♞xc6 ♙xh3 27.♙d6 d4 28.♖e1 ♞d8 29.♙e4 ♞.

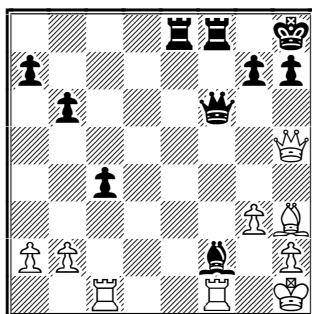
24.♙d2 d5 25.♙xc4 dxc4



26.♜xc5(?) Alekhine makes no comment here. Somewhat better was 26.b3 e4 27.♞xc4 ♙c5 28.b4! ♜b5 29.bxc5 ♜xc4 30.♞c1 ♜d3 31.c6 ♞. **26...♙c5?(!)** Alekhine's question mark is misplaced; this is actually Black's best move. His recommendation 26...♙f6 27.♜f4 b5 28.♜d2 ♜c5 29.♞c2 ♙d4 is not bad, but the text is better. **27.♜h5** Less bad was 27.♜c3 ♞xf2 28.♞xf2 ♙xf2+ 29.♜h1 ♞ (not 29.♜xf2?? ♜c5+ 30.♜f1 ♞f8+ etc.).



27...♜f6 Alekhine correctly recommends 27...♜e4 28.♜h1, but then gives the weaker 28...♙xf2. Instead 28...♞xf2! 29.♞xf2 ♙xf2 30.♞f1 ♜e2 31.g4 ♙c5 leaves Black with a practically won game (-1.78 K/22). **28.♜h1! ♙xf2(?)** Better 28...g6 29.♜d5 ♜xb2 30.♜xc4 ♞xf2 31.♞xf2 ♜xf2 ♞. **29.g3(?)** Best was 29.♜b5 ♞.

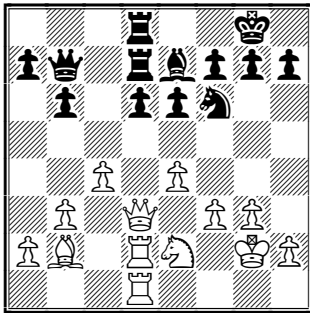


29...♜c6+ Alekhine here recommends 29...♞e5 30.♜d1 ♜c6+ 31.♙g2 ♜c5 if Black still wants

to try for a win. Also good was 29...♖xb2 30.♗xc4 ♕c5 31.♗h4 h6 32.a4. **30.♕g2 ♖c5**
31.♖xc5 ♕xc5 32.♗xc4 ♖xf1+ 33.♕xf1 ♗f8 ½-½

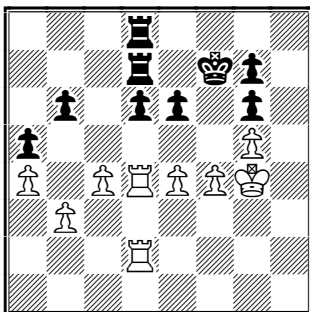
Game 10, Capablanca-Vidmar, Queen's Indian Defense [A30]: A game in which Capablanca's endgame skill, supposedly the world's best, fails him at a decisive moment. Alekhine offers two erroneous notes, but he does correctly point out the crucial mistake and its remedy.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 e6 3.c4 b6 4.g3 ♕b7 5.♕g2 c5 6.0-0 cxd4 7.♘xd4 ♕xg2 8.♖xg2 ♕e7
9.♘c3 0-0 10.e4 ♖c8 11.b3 ♖b7 12.f3 ♘c6 13.♕b2 ♗fd8 14.♗e1 ♘xd4 15.♖xd4
♕c5 16.♖d3 ♕e7 17.♗ad1 d6 18.♗e2 ♗d7 19.♗ed2 ♗ad8 20.♘e2



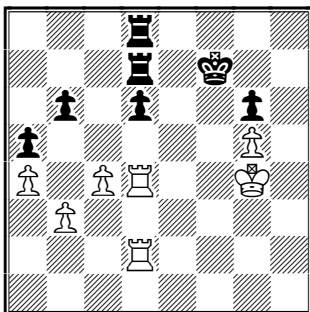
20...♖a8 Alekhine makes a puzzling comment on this move: “In order to move the knight to e8, which at this point one would hesitate to relocate because of 21.e5!” But in that case, after 20...♘e8 21.e5 ♕g5! 22.♘f4□ the engines see the game as perfectly even after almost any reasonable move, with 22...d5 as perhaps best. And how the text move prepares for ♘f6-e8 is not at all clear. Eventually Black moves the queen back to b7 and then retreats the knight anyway. I thought perhaps there might be a translation error, but the German edition says basically the same thing: “Um den Springer nach e8 zurückzuziehen, was in diesem Moment wegen 21.e5! noch nicht unbedenklich wäre.”

21.♖e3 h6 22.h4 ♖b7 23.a4 ♘e8 24.♘f4 ♕f6 25.♕xf6 ♘xf6 26.g4 ♘h7 27.♖c3 ♘f8
28.g5 h×g5 29.h×g5 ♘g6 30.♘xg6 f×g6 31.♖d4 ♖c6 32.♖g3 ♖c5 33.f4 ♖f7 34.♖g4
a5 35.♗h2 ♖xd4? 36.♗xd4 ♗e7 37.♗hd2 ♗ed7



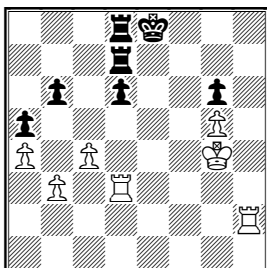
38.f5 Alekhine says “In my opinion, this strategic break ought better to occur after the next tempo; for example 38.♗d3 ♖e7 39.f5 gxf5+(?; ♠39...e5) 40.exf5 exf5+(?) 41.♖xf5 ♖f7(?) 42.g6+, with a winning position.” But this analysis has Black making three unnecessarily bad moves in a row. In fact the text is at least as good as 38.♗d3, and quite sufficient to win.

38...gxf5+ 39.exf5 exf5+ 40.♖xf5 g6+ 41.♖g4

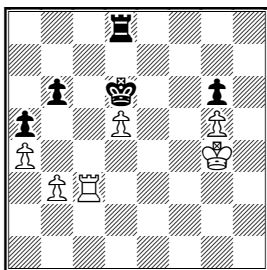


41...♖f8 If 41...♖e8, Alekhine recommends 42.♞h2. But that would allow Black to draw with 42...d5!, viz. 43.♞h8+ ♖e7 44.♞xd8 ♞xd8 45.cxd5 ♖d6 46.♞d3 (if 46.♖f4 ♞e8 47.♞e4 ♞f8+ 48.♖g4 ♖xd5=) 46...♞e8 47.♖f4 ♞e5=. Instead, White could win with any of four waiting moves: 42.♞d3 (probably ultimately necessary; see next note), 42.♞d5, 42.♞2d3, or 42.♞d1, all about +3.50.

42.♞f2+? Alekhine correctly observes that this lets the win slip away. He recommends instead “a tempo move – for example 42.♞d3!” and if 42...♖e8 43.♞h2:



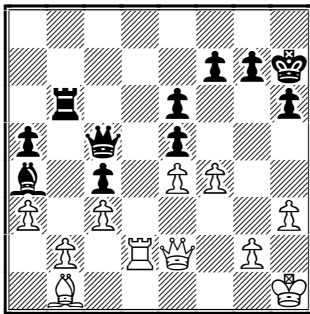
Unlike in the previous note, this does win now: 43...d5 44.♞h8+ ♖e7 45.♞xd8 ♞xd8 46.cxd5 ♖d6 47.♞c3!□:



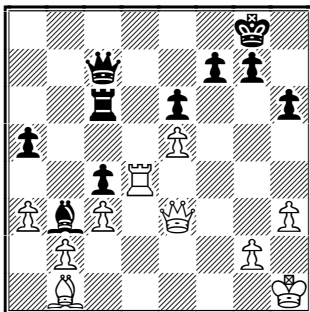
The key difference between this and the move 41 variation: if now 47...♖xd5?? 48.♞d3+- . Nothing now could help Black, e.g. 47...♞g8 48.♞c6+ ♖xd5 49.♞xb6 (+5.26 SF/25).

42...♞f7 43.♞f6 ♞xf6 44.gxf6 ♖f7 45.♖g5 ♞e8 46.♞xd6 ♞e5+ 47.♖f4 ♞e6 48.♞d5 ♖xf6 49.♞b5 ♖e7 50.♖g5 ♞c6 51.♖h6 ♖f8 52.♞g5 ♖f7 53.♞g3 ♞e6 54.♞d3 ♞e5 55.♞d7+ ♖f6 56.♞d6+ ♖f7 ½-½

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 b6 3.♙g5 ♙b7 4.♘bd2 e6 5.e4 h6 6.♙×f6 ♚×f6 7.♙d3 d6 8.♚e2 ♚d8 9.0-0 ♙e7 10.♙ad1 ♘d7 11.c3 c5 12.d×c5 b×c5 13.♙b5 a6 14.♙a4 0-0 15.♙c2 ♚c7 16.♘c4 ♙fd8 17.♙d2 ♘f8 18.♙fd1 a5 19.♙d3 ♙ab8 20.♘a3 ♘g6 21.♘b5 ♚c6 22.♚e3 c4 23.♘bd4 ♚c5 24.♙b1 ♘e5 25.♘×e5 d×e5 26.♘f5 ♙×d2 27.♘×e7+ ♚×e7 28.♙×d2 ♙c6 29.h3 ♚b7 30.♚e2 ♚b5 31.♚d1 ♚h7 32.♚f3 ♙e8 33.♚e3 ♙c6 34.a3 ♚b7 35.♚e2 ♙b5 36.♚e3 ♙c6 37.f3 ♚e7 38.♙a2 ♙b5 39.♚h2 ♙a6 40.♚e2 ♚c5 41.♙d7 ♙b5 42.♙d2 ♙b7 43.♙b1 ♙a4 44.♙a2 ♙b5 45.♙b1 ♙a4 46.♚h1 ♙b6 47.f4

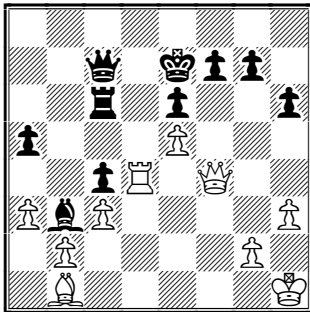


48.f×e5 ♔×e5 49.♔e3 ♚c6 50.♞d5 ♔c7 51.e5+ ♚g8 52.♞d4



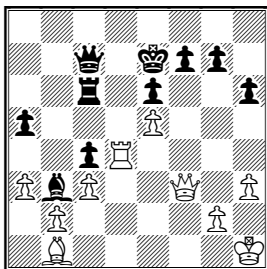
52...♟f8 Alekhine remarks that “52...♞c5 would obviously be premature because of 53.♞e4, etc.” What “etc.” he had in mind is unclear, as Black can simply continue 53...♟f8 and if 54.♞h7?? ♞xe5. However, 53.♞f3, threatening 54.♞a8+ and thus forcing 53...♞b8 54.♞d7 ♟f8, would be somewhat problematic (+1.24 SF/30).

53. ♖f4(?) Alekhine did not realize it, but with this Marshall let slip his winning chances. Strongest was 53. ♖f3, threatening 54. ♗g6+- and forcing 53... ♜c8, when White can set some tricky problems with 54. ♖f2, 54. ♖f4, 54. ♗g6, or 54. ♗e4. **53... ♝e7(?)**



But Alekhine errs right back, making what could have been the crucial mistake. Necessary was either 53... ♜c5 or 53... ♗a4, with equality.

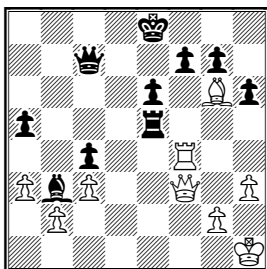
54. ♗h7(?) Alekhine calls this a very strong move, but it is only a distant third-best. Strongest by far was 54. ♖f3!



with a winning attack, *e.g.*:

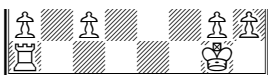
(a) 54... ♗a4 55. ♖f4 ♜xe5 56. ♖xf7+ ♜d6 57. ♖a7 ♖c7 58. ♖f8+ ♜d7 59. ♖f7+ ♜c8 60. ♖xc7+ ♜xc7 61. ♖xe6+ (+2.41 SF/29);

(b) 54... ♜c5 55. ♖f4 ♜e8 56. ♗g6! ♖xe5



57. ♖f1!! (if 57. ♗xf7+? ♜e7 58. ♗g6 ♖e1+ 59. ♝h2 ♜e5=, or 57. ♖xf7? ♖e1+ 58. ♖f1 ♖xf1+ 59. ♖xf1+ ♜d8 60. ♖f8+ ♜d7 61. ♖f7+ ♜c6 62. ♖xc7+ ♜xc7=) 57... ♜d8 58. ♖xf7 ♖f5 59. ♖xf5 exf5 60. ♖xf5+- (+3.00 SF/26).

54... ♖b8 **55. ♖g3!** Alekhine's exclamation is undeserved; the text gets nowhere against the correct defense, which Black finds. More testing was 55. ♖f3 or 55. ♖d2, though Black can probably hold on with 55... ♜c7 in either case. **55... ♜c5**



Actually now White wins with 22. ♖g5! and Black has no defense, viz.:

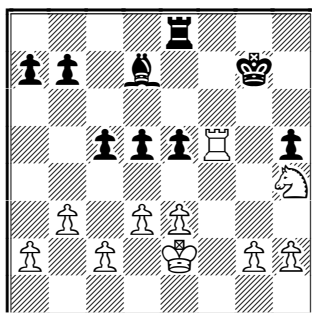
(a) 22... ♖ff7 23. ♖g6+ ♕h8 24. ♖f1 ♖d2 25. ♖xf7+ ♖xf7 26. ♖h5+ ♕g8 27. h3! ♖xe3+ 28. ♕h2 ♠29. ♖f3+-;

(b) 22... ♖a6 23. ♖f1 ♖d6 24. ♖f3 ♖e5 25. ♖xe6! ♖a1+ 26. ♕f2 ♖xf6 (forced, else mate shortly) 27. ♖xf6 ♖xf6+ 28. ♖xf6+-;

(c) 22... ♖d2 23. ♖xe6 ♖xf6 (if 23... ♖cf7 24. ♖g5+ ♕h8 25. ♖xf8+-) 24. ♖xf6 ♖xe3+ 25. ♕h1 ♖f7 26. ♖g6+ ♕h8 27. ♖h5+ ♕g8 28. ♖xd5+-.

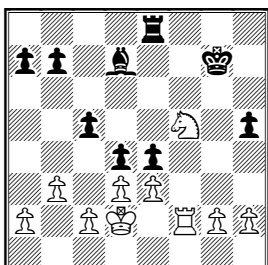
17. ♖af1 g6? 18. ♖xh6 ♖xe5 19. ♖f6 ♖h5 20. ♖xh5 gxh5 21. ♖f3 ♖c7! 22. ♖h6 f6 23. ♖h4 ♖e8 Alekhine says “The f-pawn obviously can’t be protected.” It can, by 23... ♖cf7, but it’s not clear that that is any better than the text. **24. ♖hxf6 ♖xf6 25. ♖xf6 ♖e7 26. ♕f2 26... ♕g7 27. ♖f4 ♖d7 28. ♕e2(?)** The reason Alekhine faults this, seen in the note to White’s 29th move, is actually unimportant. His suggested alternative, 28. ♕e1, is no better, and both are definitely inferior to 28. e4, 28. g4, or 28. h3, all about +2.00. **28... e5!** And this does not especially deserve the exclamation he gives it. By now Black has no good move, but this makes things a bit easier for White.

29. ♖f5(!) Alekhine says “Now useless, because h5 is indirectly protected by the possibility of ... ♖g4+.” Stockfish, however, considers the text best. **29... ♖e8**



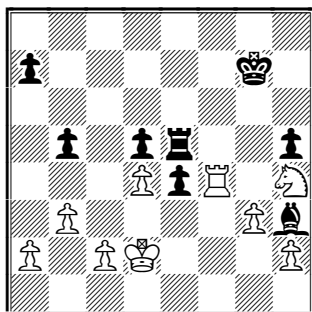
30. ♖f2(!?) No comment from AAA, but this lessens White’s edge. Strong was 30. ♖g5+!, with the following likely continuation: 30... ♕f6 31. ♖g6+ ♕f7 32. h3! (now threatening 33. ♖xh5) 32... ♖h8 33. e4 dxe4 34. dxe4 ♖e6 35. ♕e3 b6 36. c4 a6 37. ♖g5 ♕f6 38. ♖f3 ♖g8 39. ♖xe5 ♖xg2 40. ♖xh5 ♖xa2 41. ♖h6+ ♕e7 42. ♖g5 ♖c8 43. ♖xb6+-.

30... e4 31. ♖f4(!?) Alekhine comments “Not the immediate 31. ♕d2 because of 31... d4! .” But 31. ♕d2 is actually one of White’s best moves, and 31... d4? is answered by 32. ♖f5+!,



another case of failing to check for check. Then 32...♙xf5 (forced; if 32...♖g6 33.♘d6 dxe3+ 34.♖xe3 ♜e6 35.♘xe4+-) 33.♞xf5 and the c- or the h-pawn eventually falls.

31...♞e5(?) Another mistake that passes without comment. Better either 31...♙g4+ or 31...exd3+. **32.♖d2** And better here was the unmentioned 32.d4! cxd4 33.exd4 ♜g5 34.a4! (+3.11 SF/30). **32...b5 33.g3 ♙h3 34.d4! cxd4 35.exd4**

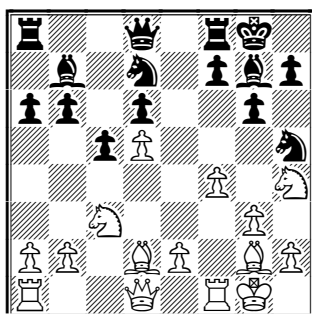


35...♞g5(?) Black still has no good move, but far less bad (and again unmentioned) was 35...♞e8 36.♘f5+ ♖g6 37.♘e3 ♙e6 (+1.94 SF/27). After the text the evaluation goes to +2.94.

36.c3 a5 37.♞f2 a4 38.♖e3 a3 39.♞c2 ♙f1 40.♞c1 ♙d3 41.♘g2 ♞f5 42.♘f4 ♖f7 43.♞d1 ♖e7 44.♘xd3 exd3 45.b4! ♖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 1-0

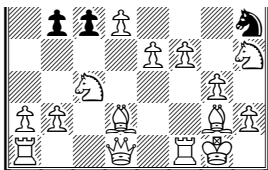
Game 13, Alekhine-Capablanca, Queen's Indian Defense [E16]: "I feel ashamed of this game," Alekhine wrote, not without reason. Rather than dwell on his every mistake (which he pretty much does anyway), we will examine only one seriously faulty note.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 b6 4.g3 ♙b7 5.♙g2 c5 6.d5 exd5 7.♘h4 g6 8.♘c3 ♙g7 9.0-0 0-0 10.♙f4 d6 11.cxd5 ♘h5 12.♙d2 ♘d7 13.f4 a6

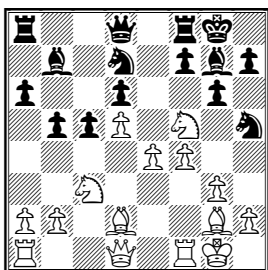


14.♙f3 Rightly, Alekhine rejected 14.e4 here, but the analysis he gives is badly flawed: 14.e4 b5 15.♘f5(?) b4(?) 16.♘a4(?) gxh5 17.♖xh5 fxe4 18.♙xe4(?) ♘f6=. To begin with, after 14...b5,

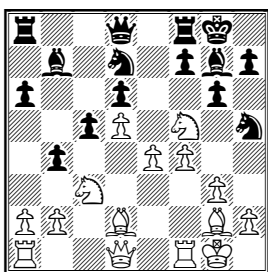




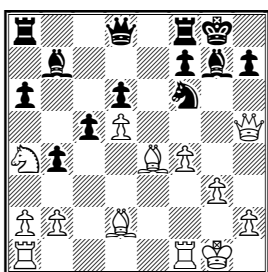
best is not 15. d5? but 15. d3. And in reply to 15. d5,



not 15...b4? but 15...gxf5! 16. ♖xh5 b4 17. ♖xf5 bxc3 18. ♗xc3 ♕f6=. The problem with 15...b4?,

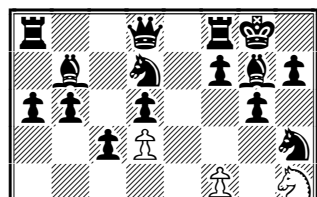


is that rather than 16. ♖a4?, White can play 16. ♕xd6! bxc3 17. bxc3 ♖b8 18. e5=. Finally, after 16. ♖a4? gxf5 17. ♖xh5 fxe4 18. ♗xe4?? (18.f5 is less egregious) 18... ♕f6,



the correct assessment is not “=” (advantageous for Black) but “-+” (winning for Black), or to put it numerically: -6.93 SF/27. For example 19. ♖f3 ♕xe4 20. ♖xe4 ♗d4+ 21. ♗g2 ♖a5 22. b3 ♗ae8 23. ♖f3 c4 24. bxc4 ♗xa1 25. ♖xa1 ♖xa4, and Black is up a rook.

Returning to the game:

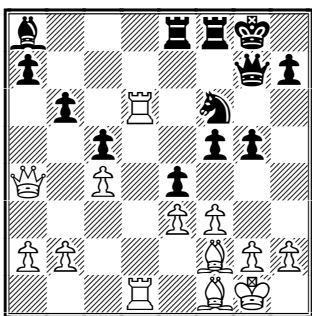




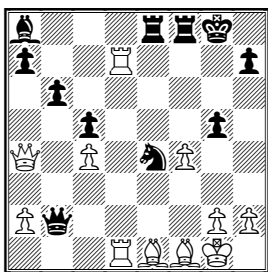
14...♘hf6 15.a4 c4! 16.♙e3 ♜c7 17.g4 ♘c5 18.g5 ♘fd7 19.f5 ♞fe8 20.♙f4 ♙e5 21.♙g4 ♘b3 22.f×g6 h×g6 23.♞b1 ♙×c3 24.b×c3 ♜c5+ 25.e3 ♘e5 26.♙f3 ♘d3 27.♜h1 ♙×d5 28.♞×b3 ♘×f4 29.♞b1 ♞×e3 30.♘g2 ♞×f3 31.♞×f3 ♘×g2 32.♜×g2 ♞e8 33.♜f1 ♙×f3 34.♜×f3 ♜×g5 35.♞e1 ♞×e1+ 36.♜×e1 ♜g1+ 37.♜d2 ♜×h2+ 38.♜c1 ♜e5 39.♜b2 ♜g7 40.♜f2 b5 41.♜b6 b×a4 42.♜×a6 ♜e2+ 0-1

Game 14, Vidmar-Nimzovich, Bogo-Indian Defense [E11]: A game quite well annotated by Alekhine, except for an unduly pessimistic note at move 23.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 e6 3.c4 ♙b4+ 4.♙d2 ♜e7 5.♘c3 0-0 6.e3 d6 7.♙e2 b6 8.0-0 ♙b7 9.♜c2 ♘bd7 10.♞ad1 ♙×c3 11.♙×c3 ♘e4 12.♙e1 f5 13.♜b3 c5 14.♘d2 ♘×d2 15.♞×d2 e5 16.d×e5 d×e5 17.f3 g5 18.♙f2 ♘f6 19.♞fd1 ♞ae8 20.♜a4 ♙a8 21.♞d6 ♜g7 22.♙f1 e4



23.♙e1(?) Alekhine writes “Bleak, like everything else. If 23.f×e4, then 23...♘×e4, together with ♜×b2, etc.” But that still would be far better than the text. After 23.f×e4 ♘×e4 24.♞d7 ♜×b2 25.♙e1 f4 (best) 26.exf4,



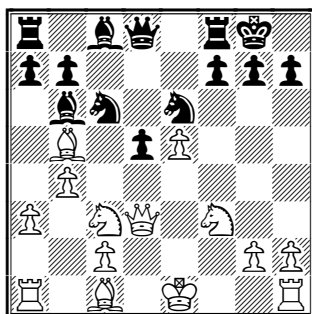
Black has the choice of:

- (a) 26...g×f4 27.♞1d3 ♜a1 28.♜×a7 and White has some counterplay;
- (b) 26...♞×f4? 27.♞g7+ ♜×g7 28.♜×e8+ ♞f8 29.♜e6+ ♜f7 30.♜×f7+ ♞×f7 31.♞d8+ ♞f8 32.♞d7=;
- (c) 26...♜f6 27.♜b3 ♜×f4 28.♜f3 ♜×f3 29.g×f3 ♞×f3 30.♞×a7 and Black will have to grind it out in the endgame. Instead after the text White is clearly lost.

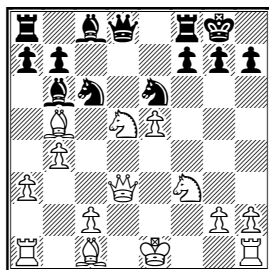
23...e×f3 24.♙c3 ♜e7 25.♞6d3 f×g2 26.♙×g2 ♙×g2 27.♙×f6 ♜e4 28.♞1d2 ♙h3
29.♙c3 ♜g4+ 0-1

Game 15, Spielmann-Marshall, Vienna Game [C29]: Tactical errors in two notes, and probably unjustified criticism of Black's 33rd and White 34th move.

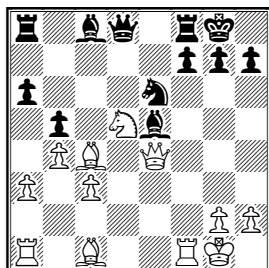
1.e4 e5 2.♘c3 ♘f6 3.f4 d5 4.f×e5 ♘×e4 5.♘f3 ♙c5 6.d4 ♙b4 7.♜d3 c5 8.d×c5 ♘×c5
9.♜e3 ♘c6 10.♙b5 ♘e6 11.a3 ♙a5 12.b4 ♙b6 13.♜d3 0-0



14.♜×d5 Alekhine's note here, examining the alternate capture 14.♘d5, has two flaws. He writes "Or 14.♘d5 ♘×e5(?) 15.♘×e5 ♙d4 — to Black's advantage; for example 16.c3 ♙×e5 17.0-0 a6 18.♙c4 b5 19.♙b3(?) ♙b7, etc." First, after 14.♘d5,



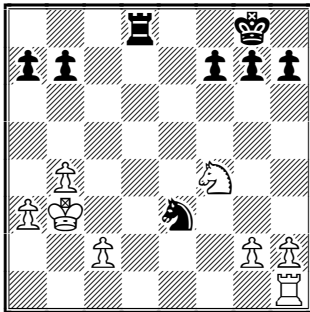
Black does much better with 14...♙d4! 15.c3 ♜×d5 16.c×d4 ♘c×d4 17.♘d4 ♘d4 18.0-0 ♙e6 19.♙a4 ♜×e5, when he is a clear pawn ahead. Secondly, after 14...♘×e5?! 15.♘×e5 ♙d4 16.c3 ♙×e5 17.0-0 a6 18.♙c4 b5, rather than retreat with 19.♙b3?!, White can equalize with 19.♜e4!:



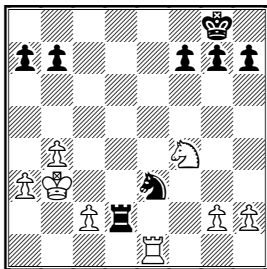
For example:

- (a) 19...b×c4 20.♜×e5 ♙b7 21.♞d1=;
- (b) 19...♙b7 20.♙d3 g6 21.♜×e5=;
- (c) 19...♙×h2+? 20.♜×h2 b×c4 21.♘f6+ g×f6 22.♜×a8±.

14...♖ed4 15.♜×d8 ♜×d8 16.♗×d4 ♗×d4 17.♙b2 ♗×e5 18.0-0-0 ♙g4 19.♗e2 ♗×e2
20.♗×e2 ♗×b2+ 21.♜×b2 ♗c4+ 22.♜b3 ♗d2+ 23.♜b2 ♗c4+ 24.♜b3 ♗e3 25.♜×d8+
♜×d8 26.♗f4

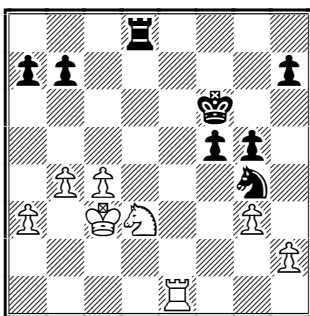


26...g5 Alekhine writes “After 26...♜d2(?), White saves himself with 27.♜c3! ♜f2 28.♜e1, etc.”
But White can do much better by skipping 27.♜c3? and immediately playing 27.♜e1!



when Black loses his knight (27...♗-any 28.♜e8#).

27.♗d3 ♜c8 28.♜c1 f5 29.g3 ♜f7 30.c4 ♜d8 Alekhine claims this lets White have an
advantage, and recommends instead 30...♜f6. But actually there is nothing wrong with the text
move. 31.♜c3 ♗g4 32.♜f1 ♜f6 33.♜e1



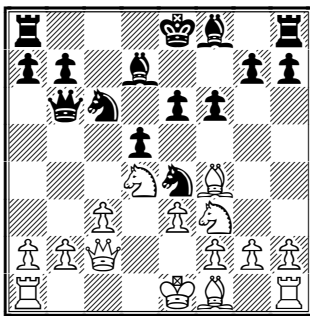
33...♜f7 Whatever advantage White now might gain is due solely to this move, not Black’s 30th.
Better the direct path to a draw by 33...♗xh2 34.♜h1 ♗g4 35.♜xh7 ♗e3 36.♜xb7 ♗d1+ 37.♜c2
♗e3+ 38.♜c3 ♗d1+ etc.

34.♜f1 Alekhine criticizes what he considers Spielmann’s timidity here, and recommends 34.c5,
which he believes gives White winning chances. Objectively it does not; after 34...h5, 34...h6, or
34...a6 Stockfish rates the position almost dead even out to 30 ply. Probably the only try for a win

is 34.♖c5, though even then after 34...♞b8 White has only a slight edge (+0.24 SF/29). 34...♜f6 35.♞e1 ♜f7 36.♞f1 ♜f6 ½-½

Game 16, Marshall-Capablanca, Torre Attack [A46]: A truly horrible game by Marshall, who gave himself a lost position within the first dozen moves. Only two minor additions to Alekhine's notes were necessary.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 e6 3.♙g5 Marshall's choice of opening here, and earlier in game 11, clearly seems to be influenced by his friend Carlos Torre, who had only recently suffered a nervous breakdown and retired from serious chess. Capablanca, who also knew Torre, would later repay the compliment, playing the Torre Attack against Nimzovich in game 22. 3...c5 4.c3 ♞b6 5.♞c2 c×d4 6.♘×d4 ♘c6 7.e3 d5 8.♘d2 ♙d7 9.♘2f3 ♘e4 10.♙f4 f6

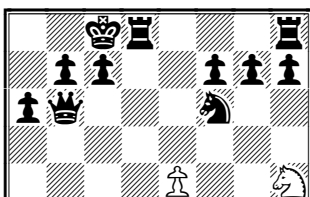


11.♙d3?? Alekhine correctly calls this move “horrible.” Of his two recommended alternatives, 11.♙g3 is not so bad, but 11.♙e2 is, if anything, worse, viz. 11...e5 12.♘×c6 b×c6 13.♙g3 ♙f5 14.♞b3 ♞c7 15.♘h4 ♞b8 16.♞d1 ♙e6 17.♞c2 ♙d6 with a huge superiority in development and center control for Black (-1.63 K/21). The least evil was actually 11.♘×c6 ♞×c6 12.♙g3±.

11...e5 12.♙×e4 Less bad was 12.♘×c6 ♙×c6 13.♘×e5 f×e5 14.♙×e5±. 12...d×e4 13.♞×e4 0-0-0 14.♙g3? e×d4 15.0-0 d×e3 16.a4 ♞e8 17.♞d3 e×f2+ 18.♜h1 ♞e3 19.♞d1 ♙g4 20.♞×f2 h5 21.♞f1 ♙×f3 22.♞×f3 ♞e2 23.♞g1 h4 24.♞e1 h×g3 25.♞×e2 ♞×e2 26.♞×g3 ♙d6 27.♞f1 ♞he8 28.♞f5+ ♜b8 29.♞f3 ♞8e5 30.♞d3 ♞e1+ 31.♞f1 ♞d5 32.♞f3 ♘e5 33.♞f2 ♞×f1+ 34.♞×f1 ♘g4 0-1

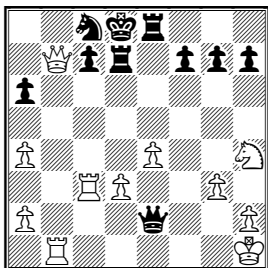
Game 17, Nimzovich-Alekhine, Réti Opening [A05]: Not a very good job by Alekhine here, either on the board or in the book. There are tactical errors of omission and commission, and faulty evaluations of several key positions.

1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.b3 d6 3.g3 e5 4.c4 e4 5.♘h4 d5 6.c×d5 ♞×d5 7.♘c3 ♞c6 8.e3 a6 9.♙b2 ♙g4 10.♙e2 ♙×e2 11.♘×e2 ♘bd7 12.♞c1 ♞b6 13.0-0 ♙d6 14.f3 ♙e5 15.♙×e5 ♘×e5 16.f×e4 ♘d3 17.♞c3 0-0-0 18.♞b1

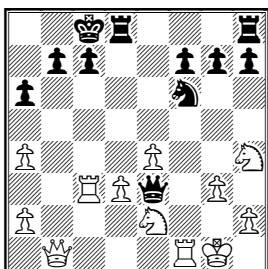




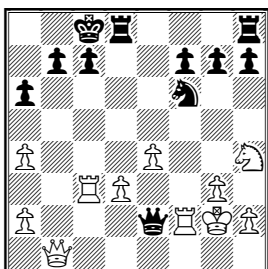
18...dxe4 Alekhine here gives an error-filled note: “The other sacrificial combination possible in this position, 18...dxc5 19.d3 dxa4!?(?), would be unsuccessful in the event White gives back the won material immediately: 20.bxa4 ♖xe3+ 21.♗h1!(!) ♖xe2 22.♞fc1 ♞d7 23.♜b6(!) ♜e8(?) 24.♞b1 ♜d6(?) 25.♜a7, etc., with a winning attack.” Well, after 25...♞d8 26.♜b8+ ♜c8 27.♜xb7 ♞e8,



White does have some advantage (about +1.10), but it is nothing compared to what he might have gained. To begin with, after 20...♖xe3+,



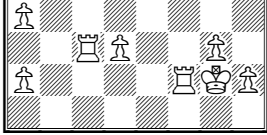
far better than 21.♗h1?! is 21.♗g2! ♖xe2+ 22.♞f2,



and either:

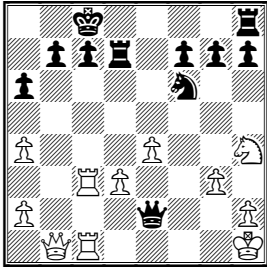
- (a) 22...♜h5 23.♜b6 ♜e5 24.♞fc2 ♞d7 25.♜a7 c6 26.♞b3 ♞e8 27.♜f5 (+4.82 K/20);
- (b) 22...♜e3 23.♜f5 ♜a7 24.♜e7+ ♜d7 (if 24...♞b8?? 25.♜c6+) 25.e5 ♜d4 26.♜b3 ♜xe5 27.♜xf7!



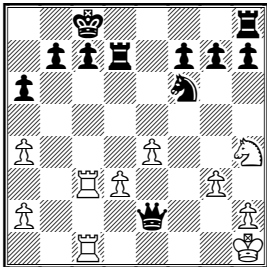


27...Rhf8 (if 27...Qxe7?? 28.Rxc7+) 28.Nc6+ Rxf7 29.Nxe5+ Qe8 30.Nxf7 Qxf7 31.Rxc7+-.

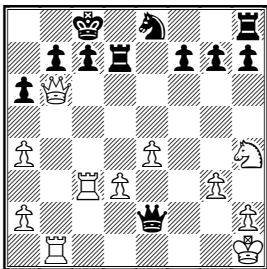
But if play does proceed 21.Qh1! Qxe2 22.Rfc1 Rd7, as Alekhine gives,



his 23.Qb6?! is worthless (+0.21); far better is 23.R1c2 (+1.53 SF/28). The problem with 23.Qb6?!

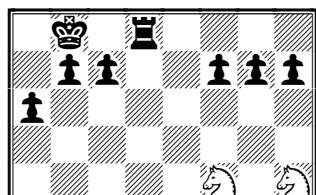


is seen if Black replies not 23...Ne8? but 23...Qb8! 24.Rxc7 Rxc7 25.Qxc7+ Qa8=. Finally, after 23.Qb6?! Ne8? 24.Rb1,



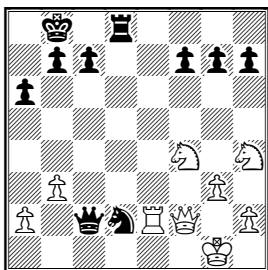
instead of Alekhine's 24...Nd6?, Black has 24...Rxd3! 25.Qxb7+ Qd8 26.Rxd3+ Qxd3 when White stands better (+0.51 SF/29) but has a long way yet to go.

19.Rxd3 Nxd2 20.Rxd8+ Rxd8 21.Qf5+ Qb8 22.Rc1 Qxe3+ 23.Qf2 Qd3 24.Nf4

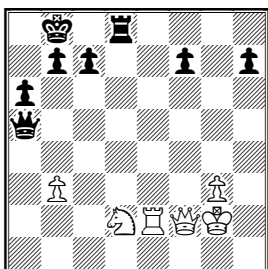




24...♙c3 Here Alekhine gives two long variations stemming from 24...♙c2. One, with 25.♘f3, is basically sound, but the other, 25.♞e2(?!), both starts and ends in error:

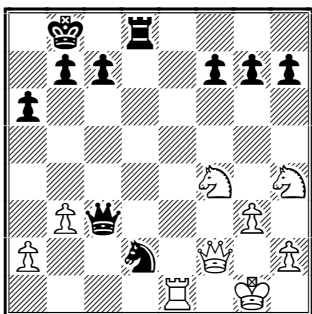


Rather than Alekhine's 25...♙a2, Black here should play 25...g5! 26.♘d5 ♖c1+ 27.♙g2 ♗c6 28.♞xd2 ♞xd5 29.♞xd5 ♗xd5+ 30.♙f3 ♗d2+ 31.♙h3 g×h4 32.♙xf7 h×g3=. After the note continuation 25...♙a2 26.♙g2 g5 27.♘f3 g×f4 28.♘d2 f×g3 29.h×g3 ♗a5,



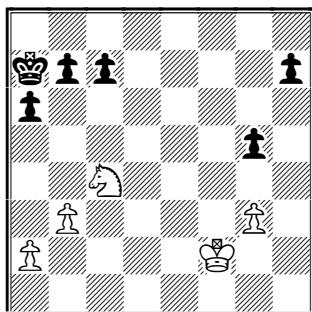
Alekhine concludes “the queen comes with tempo to d5, whereupon it will no longer be difficult for Black to force a favorable endgame.” Stockfish does not agree, seeing the position after 30.♙xf7! as favoring White (+1.37 SF/27), since he is up a knight for two pawns. Alekhine seemed to overlook that White could play this with impunity, since if 30...♞xd2?? 31.♙e8+ ♖a7 32.♙e3+ winning the rook. A third case of failing to check for check.

Returning to the game:



25.♞e3! ♙c1+(?) Alekhine correctly notes that the a-pawn is now taboo: 25...♙a1+ 26.♙g2 ♙a2 27.♘f3. But 25...♙c2 was less bad than the text. **26.♙g2 ♙c6+ 27.♘f3 g5 28.♘d3 ♘×f3 29.♙×f3 ♙c2+ 30.♘f2 f5 31.♞e2 ♙c5 32.♘d3 ♙d4 33.♘e5 f4 34.♘c4 f×g3**

35.♖d2 ♜h8 36.♖×d8+ ♜×d8 37.h×g3 ♜d4 38.♜f8+ ♜a7 39.♜f2 ♜×f2+ 40.♜×f2 h5

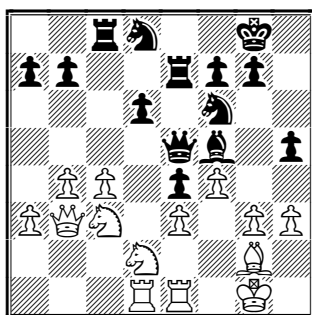


40...h5 Alekhine says “Here 40...b5 still offered a last practical chance,” but after 41.♗e5 the position favors White overwhelmingly (+4.30 SF/28). **41.♜e3** And here he writes “A nuance more precise was 41.♜f3. In contrast the retreat expected by the majority of onlookers, 41.♗d2, after 41...♜b6 — with the threat of conquering the pawns on the queenside — would have at least made victory very difficult.” The engines disagree, rating the latter line at +6.63 SF/30, the former at +3.62 SF/28, and the text at +4.82 SF/30.

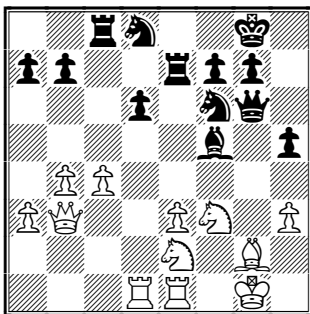
41...c5 42.a4 b5 43.a×b5 a×b5 44.♗d2 ♜b6 45.♗e4 h4 46.g4 h3 47.♜f3 b4 48.♗×g5 c4 49.♗e4 c×b3 50.g5 b2 51.♗d2 ♜c5 52.g6 h2 53.♜g2 ♜d4 54.g7 ♜d3 55.g8♜ ♜×d2 56.♜a2 ♜c2 57.♜c4+ 1–0

Game 20, Vidmar-Alekhine, Bogo-Indian Defense [E11]: An interesting game, full of subtleties and intricate nuances, most of which Alekhine perceives and explains well. Some tactical improvements were found at moves 27 and 40. One of the lengthy notes at move 43 proved remarkably sound, though errors, including one howler, were discovered in two sub-variations of the other.

1.d4 ♗f6 2.♗f3 e6 3.c4 ♗b4+ 4.♗d2 ♜e7 5.g3 0–0 6.♗g2 ♗×d2+ 7.♗b×d2 d6 8.0–0 e5 9.♜c2 ♗c6 10.e3 ♗d7 11.a3 ♖ae8 12.d5 ♗d8 13.b4 e4 14.♗d4 c6 15.d×c6 ♗×c6 16.♖fe1 ♜e5 17.♗e2 ♗f5 18.♗c3 ♖e7 19.h3 h5 20.♖ad1 ♖c8 21.♜b3 ♗d8 22.f4!

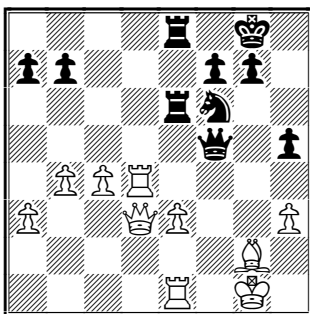


The engines don’t agree with Alekhine’s exclamation here, apparently considering unsound the pawn sac it entails. Stockfish seems to think White is better off strong-pointing d4, transferring the ♗c3 there via e2 or b5, and the ♗e2 to b3. However, this is a strategic point not really amenable to concrete digital analysis. **22...e×f3 23.♗×f3 ♜×g3 24.♗e2 ♜g6 25.♗f4 ♜g3 26.♗e2 ♜g6**

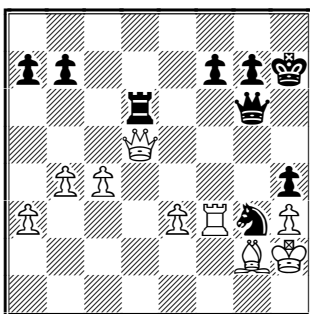


27. ♖f4 Alekhine correctly notes that White “would get a decisive disadvantage” after 27. ♖xd6 ♗xh3 28. ♖f4 ♖g3, but there is no need for him to make it all the worse with 29. ♖xd8+ (??) ♖xd8 30. ♖xh3 ♖g4 (-5.71). Not quite so egregious is 29. ♖b2 ♖e6 (-3.41).

27... ♖h7 28. ♖xd6 ♖e6 29. ♖xe6 ♗xe6 30. ♖g5 ♖f5 31. ♖xe6 ♖xe6 32. ♖d4 ♖ce8 33. ♖d3

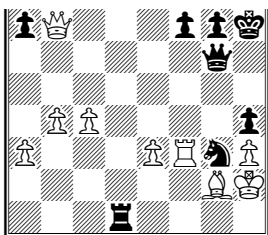


33... ♖e4 This move passes without comment. Worth considering was 33... ♖g5!?, which after 34. e4 b6 (34... h4 35. c5) 35. ♖e3 ♖e5 is seen by Stockfish as giving Black some advantage (-0.82 SF/27). **34. ♖f1 ♖g6** Alekhine is too hard on himself for this move, which he says gives White the upper hand. Stockfish says both the text and his recommended alternative 34... ♖g5 maintain deadeye equality. **35. ♖d8 ♖xd8 36. ♖xd8+ ♖h7 37. ♖d5 ♖g3 38. ♖f3 h4 39. ♖h2 ♖d6!**



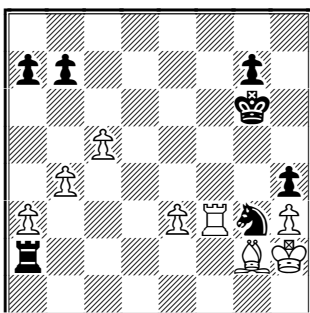
This pawn sac may not deserve the exclamation Alekhine gives it. The engines prefer 39... ♖e4, 39... f5, or 39... ♖e7, all with equality. **40. ♖xf7** Alekhine says “not 40. ♖xb7, because of 40... ♖d2 41. ♖f4 ♖h5+.” That line is OK (-1.96 SF/27), but immensely stronger is 40... ♖d1!,





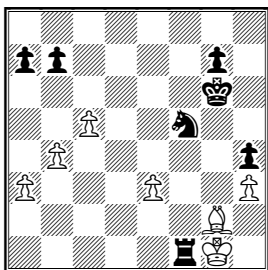
threatening mate starting with 41...Rd1+, and White can resign. After 41.Qc7 or 41.Qb8, Stockfish announces mate in 27 at most.

40...Rd2 41.Qxg6+ Qxg6 42.c5 Rb2

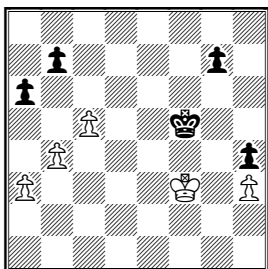


Here Alekhine examines at length two variations stemming from 43.Rf4: 43...Qf5 and 43...Qg5. His conclusion that the latter is best is quite correct, and the analysis, despite its length, is very sound. However, he goes astray in some variations of the former line.

After 43...Qf5 44.Qg1 Rb1+ 45.Rf1 Rxf1+,

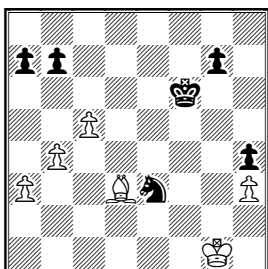


though he prefers 46.Qxf1, he conjectures that “the instructive pawn endgame after 46.Qxf1 Qxe3+ 47.Qf2 Qxg2 48.Qxg2 Qf5 49.Qf3 a6 would, one could be convinced, even be won for Black.”

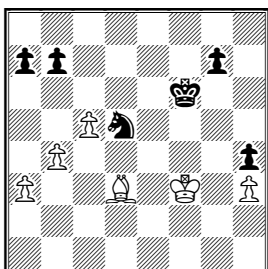


Perhaps Alekhine would be convinced, but not Stockfish, which says it's a draw after 50.a4!□. If then 50...♖e5 51.♗g4 or 51.b5 holds, while if 50...♖e6 51.♗e4, 51...b5 or ♗g4 do. Any other moves by Black lose.

Looking at his main line, 46.♗xf1! ♜xe3 47.♗d3+ ♖f6,

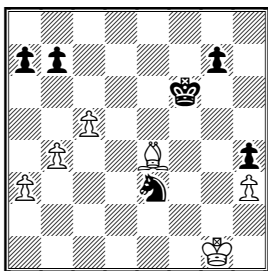


he is definitely wrong to recommend 48.♗f2? ♜d5 49.♗f3,

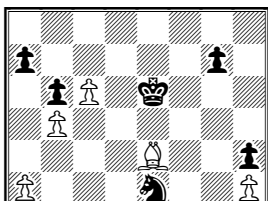


when, he says, “Black would hardly be able to successfully oppose the enemy’s penetration on both flanks.” But Stockfish says 49...♖e5! holds, e.g. 50.♗g4 ♖d4 51.♗g6 ♜e7 52.♗e8 ♖c3 53.b5 ♖c4 54.♗xh4 ♖xc5 (+0.18 SF/34).

Much better for White after 47...♖f6 is the move he dismisses, 48.♗e4!:



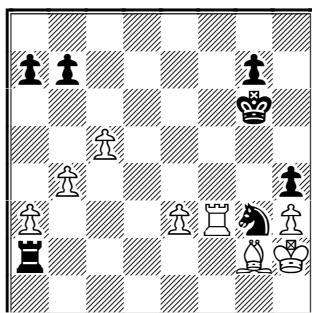
Incomprehensibly, Alekhine then gives the howler “48...♖e5 together with ...♜c2, etc.” But of course 48...♖e5?? loses to the obvious 49.♗xb7, viz. 49...♜c2 50.♗a6 ♜xa3 51.♗d3 (+9.40). Absolutely necessary is 48...b6, and after 49.c6 ♖e6 50.b5,





if a win for White is not certain, the chances are certainly all his (+2.46 SF/34).

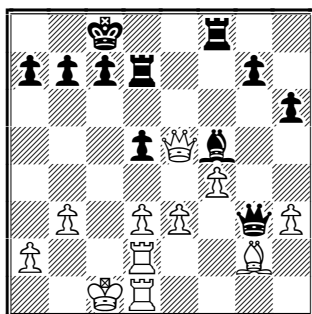
Returning to the game:



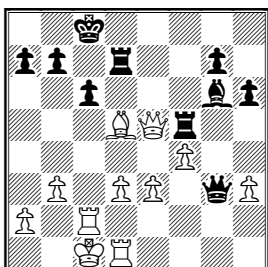
43.e4 ♖×e4 44.♞f4 ♜g5 45.a4 ♜e6 46.♞×h4 ♜f5 47.♞g4 g5 48.♜g3 ♜f4 49.♞×b7 ♞a3+ 50.♞f3 ♞a2 ½-½

Game 21, Nimzovich-Marshall, Nimzovich Attack [A06]: Alekhine's strategic comments are good, but there are three careless tactical howlers.

1.♜f3 ♜f6 2.e3 d5 3.b3 ♞g4 4.♞b2 ♜bd7 5.h3 ♞h5 6.d3 h6 7.♜bd2 e6 8.♜e2 ♞b4 9.g4 ♞g6 10.♜e5 ♜×e5 11.♞×e5 ♞d6 12.♜f3 ♜e7 13.♞g2 0-0-0 14.0-0-0 ♞×e5 15.♜×e5 ♞h7 16.c4 ♜d7 17.♜×d7 ♞×d7 18.c×d5 e×d5 19.♜b2 f5 20.♞d2 ♞f8 21.g×f5 ♞×f5 22.♞hd1 ♜g5 23.f4 ♜g3 24.♜e5

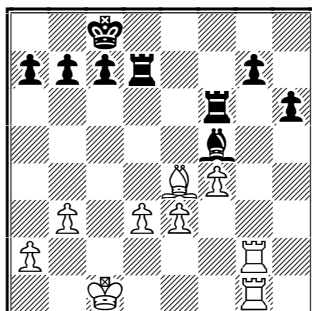


24...♞×h3(!) Alekhine writes "If 24...c6 25.♞c2, with the renewed threat of 26.♞×d5." But this overlooks 25...♞g6! 26.♞×d5 ♞f5! (the point of the previous move)

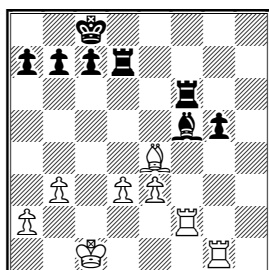


27. ♖g2 ♜xh3 28. ♙e6 ♜xg2 29. ♙xf5 ♙xf5 30. ♜xf5 ♜xa2 ♠.

25. ♙x d5 ♜g6 26. ♙e4 ♜f6 27. ♜xf6 ♜xf6 28. ♜g1 ♙f5 29. ♜dg2

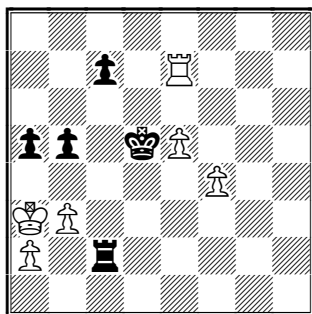


29... ♙x e4 Alekhine is critical of this, recommending as “simpler” 29... g5 30. f×g5 h×g5(?) 31. ♜xg5(?) ♙x e4 32. d×e4 ♜f2. The problem is that instead of the knee-jerk recapture 31. ♜xg5?, White can play 31. ♜f2!,

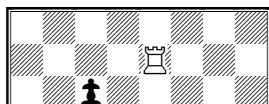


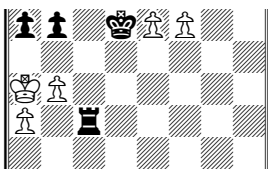
pinning the bishop. Black then is busted, viz. 31... ♜df7 32. ♜gf1 ♙x e4 33. ♜xf6 ♜xf6 34. ♜xf6 ♙x d3 35. ♜d2+.

30. d×e4 ♜d3 31. ♜xg7 ♜x e3 32. ♜g8+ ♜d7 33. ♜1g7+ ♜c6 34. ♜g6 ♜d6 35. e5 ♜e1+ 36. ♜b2 ♜e2+ 37. ♜a3 ♜xg6 38. ♜xg6+ ♜d5 39. ♜xh6 a5 40. ♜h7 ♜c2 41. ♜e7 b5



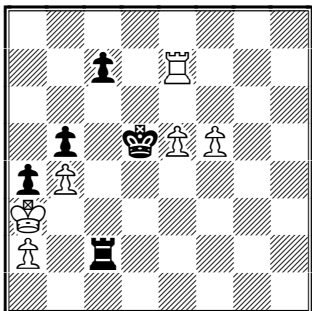
42. b4 Alekhine writes “If immediately 42. f5(?), then 42... b4+ 43. ♜a4 ♜xa2+ 44. ♜b5 c6+!, together with ...a4, etc. — draw.” But Black can do better: 42... c6!, denying b5 to White’s king:





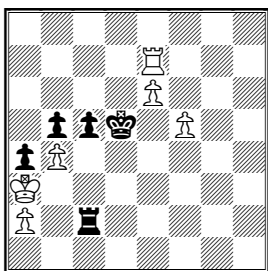
White can resign, since to avoid mate he must play 43.♖b7 b4+ 44.♗×b4 a×b4+.

42...a4? This does not deserve the scorn Alekhine heaps on it. It is in fact Black's best move.
43.f5



43...c5(??) This elicits no scorn, but richly deserves it. Correct was 43...♖c3+ or 43...♗f2, with equality. **44.f6?**

As Alekhine points out, 44.e6! would have won, albeit with difficulty.



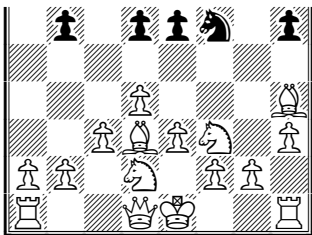
He gives the further continuation 44...♖c3+ 45.♗b2 c×b4 46.♖d7+ ♖c6 47.♖d8 a3+ 48.♗b1 ♖e3 49.f6 b3 50.a×b3 ♖e1+ 51.♗a2! b4 52.e7 ♖e2+ 53.♗b1 ♖e1+ 54.♗c2 a2 55.♖a8 ♖d7 56.f7+-, all of which is accurate analysis.

44...♖c3+ 45.♗b2 c×b4 ½-½

Game 22, Capablanca-Nimzovich, Torre Attack [A46]: One correction here, not to anything Alekhine wrote, but to a notation mistake in the English edition.

1.d4 ♖f6 2.♗f3 e6 3.♗g5 h6 4.♗h4 b6 5.♗bd2 ♗b7 6.e3 ♗e7 7.♗d3 d6 8.c3 0-0 9.h3



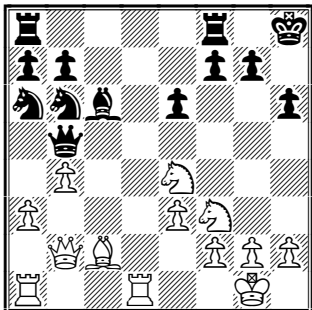


Alekhine's note here is given as "At this point hardly suitable, since a possible g4 before safeguarding the king's position would a strike at nothing — for example (after 9...c5) 10.cxd4 d5 11.♙g3 ♖b4+." Of course 10.cxd4 is impossible, and the black knight would be *en prise* after 11...♖b4??. This error results from omitting the actual tenth move of each side. The note should read: (after 9...c5) 10.g4 cxd4 11.cxd4 ♖d5 12.♙g3 ♖b4.

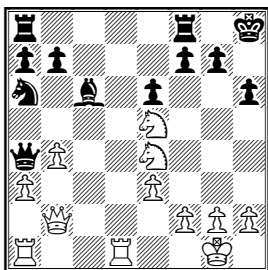
9...c5 10.0-0 ♖c6 11.♜e2 ♖h5 12.♙xg3 ♜xg3 13.♙a6 ♖f6 14.♞fd1 ♞fd8 15.e4 ♙xg3 16.♜xg3 ♜c7 17.♞ac1 ♞d7 18.b4 ♞ad8 19.♜e2 ♖e7 20.♞e1 ♖g6 21.g3 ♞c8 22.bxc5 dxc5 23.♖b3 cxd4 24.cxd4 ♜b7 25.♞xc8+ ♜xc8 26.♞c1 ♞c7 27.♞xc7 ♜xc7 28.♖fd2 ♜c3 29.♜a6 ♜c7 30.♜e2 ♜c3 31.♜a6 ♜c7 ½-½

Game 24, Vidmar-Marshall, Bogo-Indian Defense [E11]: Several significant corrections here.

1.d4 ♖f6 2.♖f3 e6 3.c4 ♙b4+ 4.♙d2 ♙xd2+ 5.♖bxd2 d5 6.e3 0-0 7.♜c2 ♖bd7 8.♙d3 h6 9.0-0 c5 10.cxd5 ♖xd5 11.dxc5 ♖b4 12.♙h7+ ♜h8 13.♜c4 ♖a6 14.♙c2 ♖dxc5 15.b4 ♖d7 16.♞fd1 ♖b6 17.♜b3 ♜d5 18.♜b2 ♙d7 19.♖e4 ♜b5 20.a3 ♙c6

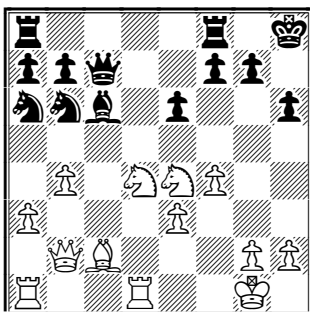


What must be a typo, by Alekhine or the German printer, is seen here in the note sub-variation 21.♖e5 ♖a4? 22.♙xa4 ♜xa4:



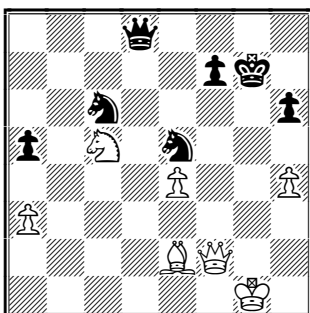
The note now continues 23.♖c5?, which of course accomplishes nothing after 23...♖xc5. Clearly intended was the obvious 23.♖c3 winning the queen.

21.♟d4 ♜e5 22.f4? Alekhine's question mark here is quite undeserved. This is in fact the best move. Anything deserving a ? comes later. **22...♞c7**

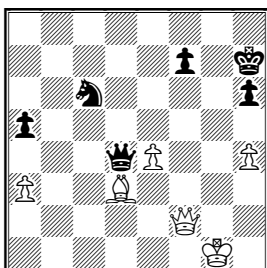


23.♟xc6 Not exactly bad, but much better is the unmentioned **23.♞ac1 ♟xe4 24.♟xe4 ♞e7 25.f5!±**, when if **25...exf5? 26.♟xf5 ♞g5 27.♞d6+-**.

23...bxc6 24.♟d3 ♟b8 25.♞ac1 ♟d5 26.♞f2(?) Again no comment from Alekhine. Far better was **26.♞d4!±**. The text wastes what was left of White's advantage. **26...a5 27.b5 ♞b6 28.bxc6 ♟xc6 29.♟c5 ♞ad8 30.g4? ♟de7 31.h4 ♞d5! 32.e4 ♞d4! 33.f5(?)** Stockfish says the unmentioned **33.♞c3** would maintain equality. **33...exf5 34.gxf5 ♟e5! 35.♟e2 ♞xd1+ 36.♞xd1 ♞d8** This is only about the 6th-best move. Best is the unmentioned **36...♞f6. 37.♞xd8+ ♞xd8 38.f6 ♟7c6 39.fxg7+ ♞xg7**



40.♞g2 Two flaws in Alekhine's note here, "The attempt **40.♟d3** would also prove insufficient after **40...♟xd3 41.♞g3+ ♞h7(?) 42.♟xd3 ♞d4+ 43.♞f1(?) ♟e5** etc." **41...♞h7?** loses Black's advantage; better **41...♞f6 42.♟xd3 ♞d4+ 43.♞f1 ♟e5±**. Further on in the note line, after **42.♟xd3 ♞d4+**, rather than the dreadful **43.♞f1?**, White equalizes with **43.♞f2!±**,

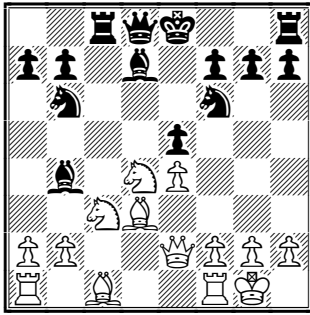


when the threat of 44.♙xf7+ shows the flaw in 41...♖h7. Therefore 40.♘d3 was in fact White's last chance to save the game.

40...♘g6 41.♖h3 ♜d6 42.♖g2(?) At this point it hardly matters, but 42.♘d3 (-2.24) was much less bad than the text (-3.51). 42...♘d4 43.♘b7 ♜e5 44.♖f1 ♘f4 45.♜g3+ ♖h7 46.♘d3 ♘de6 47.♘a6 ♜a1+ 48.♜e1 ♜b2 49.♜e3 ♜g2+ 50.♖e1 ♜c2 51.♜f3 ♘g2+ 52.♖f1 ♘ef4 53.♖g1 ♘xh4 54.♜f1 ♜xe4 55.♘c5 ♜e3+ 56.♖h1 ♜xc5 57.♘d3+ f5 0-1

Game 25, Vidmar-Capablanca, Queen's Gambit Declined [D30]: Only one minor correction here.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 e6 3.c4 d5 4.e3 ♘bd7 5.♘d3 dxc4 6.♘xc4 c5 7.0-0 ♘b6 8.♘d3 ♘d7 9.♘c3 ♞c8 10.♜e2 cxd4 11.♘xd4 ♘b4 12.e4 e5

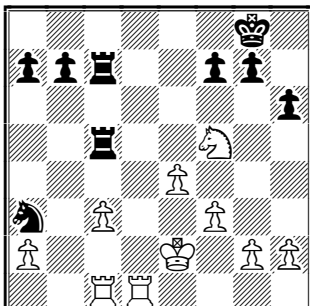


13.♘c2(?) Another undeserved question mark, even if it is in parentheses. The engines consider the text or 13.♘f5 the best moves, though the difference between them and Alekhine's preferred alternatives, 13.♘f3 or 13.♘b3, is less than a third of a pawn.

13...♘xc3 14.bxc3 0-0 15.♘e3 ♘a4 16.c4 ♘c5 17.♘d5 ♘xd5 18.cxd5 ♜a5 19.♞d1 ♘xd3 20.♜xd3 ♜c3 21.♘e3 ♜xd3 22.♞xd3 a5 23.a4 ♞c4 24.f3 ½-½

Game 26, Alekhine-Marshall, Queen's Gambit Declined [D38]: Very little to add here.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 e6 3.c4 d5 4.♘g5 h6 5.♘xf6 ♜xf6 6.♘c3 ♘b4 7.♜b3 c5 8.cxd5 cxd4 9.♜xb4 dxc3 10.dxe6 ♘xe6 11.♜xc3 ♘c6 12.e3 ♜xc3+ 13.bxc3 ♞c8 14.♘d3 0-0 15.♘d4 ♘d5 16.f3 ♘e5 17.♖d2 ♞c5 18.e4 ♘c4 19.♘xc4 ♘xc4+ 20.♖e2 ♘a3 21.♞ac1 ♞fc8 22.♘f5! ♞8c7 23.♞hd1!

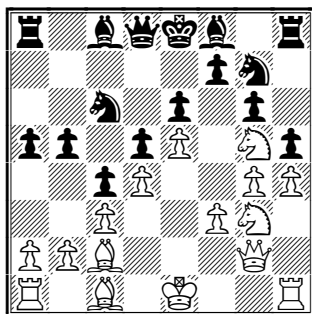


23...♖b5 Alekhine gives the alternative line 23...♞xc3 24.♞xc3 ♞xc3 25.♞d8+ ♔h7 26.♞d7 ♞c2+ 27.♔d3 ♞xg2(?) 28.♞xf7, “and White’s passed e-pawn would obviously be superior.” That is true, but instead 27...♔g8!±, preventing 28.♞xf7, is not nearly so bad. More importantly, better than either the text move or the note line is 23...♖c4!, and Black may yet draw, or at least force White to work much harder (+0.99 SF/32).

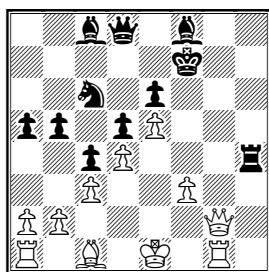
24.c4 ♖a3 25.♖e3! ♔h7 26.♞d5 ♞5c6 27.♔d3 b5 28.c5 b4 29.♖f5 ♞g6 30.♖d4 ♞xg2 31.c6 ♞xa2 32.♞d7 ♞c8 33.♞xa7 b3 34.♖xb3 ♖c2 35.♞xa2 ♖b4+ 36.♔d4 ♖xa2 37.♞c4 ♔g6 38.♔c5 ♔f6 39.♞d4 ♖c3 40.♞c4 ♖e2 41.♔b6 ♞b8+ 42.♔a7 ♞xb3 43.c7 ♞a3+ 44.♔b7 ♞b3+ 45.♔c6 1-0

Game 27, Spielmann-Nimzovich, Nimzovich Defense [C02]: A tragic game for Spielmann, who blundered after building up a clearly winning position. He and Alekhine both miss some important tactical points.

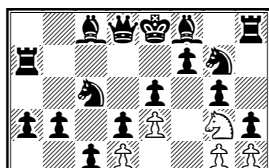
1.e4 ♖c6 2.♖f3 e6 3.d4 d5 4.e5 b6 5.c3 ♖ce7 6.♙d3 a5 7.♔e2 ♖f5 8.h4 h5 9.♖g5 g6 10.♖d2 ♖ge7 11.♖f1 c5 12.f3 c4 13.♙c2 b5 14.g4! ♖g7 15.♖g3 ♖c6 16.♔g2

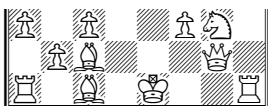


16...♙e7? Alekhine is correct to fault this, and to recommend instead 16...♞a7, but his further continuation is flawed: 17.gxh5(?) ♖xh5 18.♖xh5 ♞xh5 19.♖xf7 ♞xf7 20.♙xg6 ♞xh4 21.♙xf7+ ♔xf7 22.♞g1:



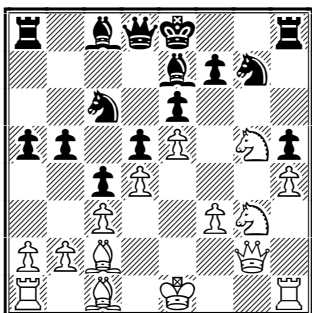
Alekhine rates this as definitely better for White, but the engines say it’s dead even after 22...♖e7 23.♙g5 ♞h7. White can retain an advantage by avoiding 17.gxh5?! in favor of 17.a3!,





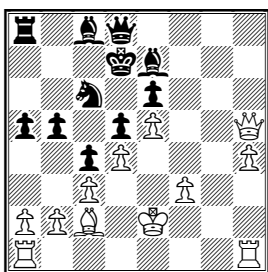
to prevent any counterplay by 17...b4. Plausible then is 17...♖b6 18.♗d2 ♜c7 19.♗f4 ♘d8 20.♙d2 with no clear win yet in sight, but enduring positional pressure for White (+1.70 SF/25).

17.g×h5 g×h5

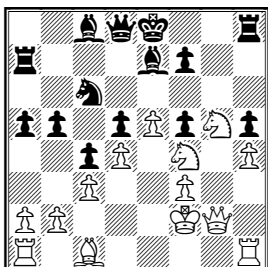


18.♞g1 Alekhine writes “From here on, different paths lead to Rome, and it’s really Spielmann’s bad luck that he thought of almost the only line that brought him, instead of to the eternal city, directly to hell. Instead of the reasonable amplification of pressure on the g-file, the immediate sacrifice on f7, as well as the simpler ♘h7-f6+, came under serious consideration.”

This is wrong on several counts. First, it makes it seem like the text is a mistake, when in fact, as Alekhine himself shows later, it need not lead anywhere near hell and is quite good enough to win. What does not win is 18.♘f7?, viz. 18...♜xf7 19.♘h5 ♘h5 (not 19...♞xh5?? 20.♙g6+) 20.♜g6+ ♜f8 21.♙h6+ ♜xh6 22.♜xh6+ ♜e8 23.♜xh5+ ♜d7 24.♜e2,

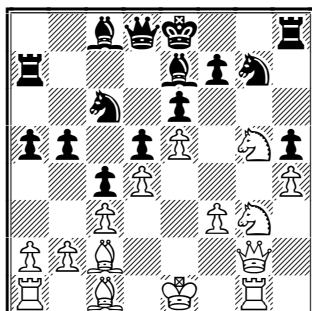


and though Black’s position does not look enviable, the engines say it is tenable (+0.23 SF/27). The other recommendation is better: 18.♘h7 ♜d7 19.♙g5 ♜c7 (+1.91 SF/24). However, best is the unmentioned 18.♘e2! ♘f5 19.♙xf5 e×f5 20.♘f4 ♞a7 21.♜f2,

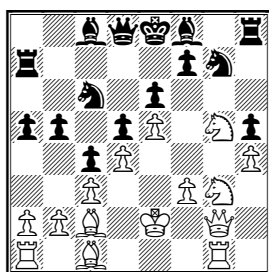


intending ♖c1-d2, ♜a1-e1, e5-e6 etc., blowing the position wide open (+2.56 SF/26).

18...♞a7



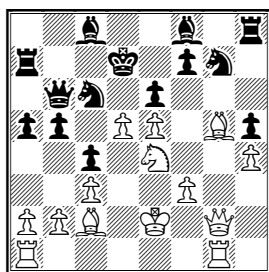
19.♜xf7 This can win, if White is careful, which in the event he is not. Alekhine is correct that 19.♞e2 was better, but after 19...♜f8,



he is wrong to recommend 20.♜xf7?, when after 20...♞xf7 21.♜g6 ♜e7 22.♜xf7+ ♞xf7 23.♜g5 ♞e8 Black is OK (-0.62 SF/27). From the above diagram, two better lines are:

(a) 20.♜h7! ♞d7 21.♜h6 ♜e7 22.♜g5 ♜f6 23.♜f6, when Black is tied up in knots and White will break through when and as he pleases (+3.00 SF/25);

(b) Another interesting line is 20.♜3e4! dxe4 21.♜xe4 ♞d7 22.♜g5 ♞b6 23.d5!:



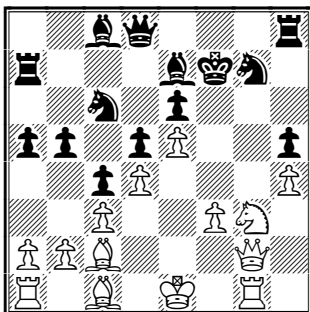
(b1) 23...exd5?? 24.♜f6+ ♞c7 (if 24...♞e6 25.♞h3+ ♞xe5 26.♞g3+ ♞e6 27.♞ge1 +15.09) 25.♜xd5+ winning the queen;

(b2) 23...♜xe5 24.♜e3 ♞a6 25.d6 ♜d3 26.♜xd3 cxd3+ 27.♞xd3 ♞e8 28.♞g5 ♞d7 29.♜f6+ ♞d8 30.♜b6+ ♞xb6 31.♜d5+ again winning the queen (+6.26);

(b3) 23...♜f5 24.♜f6+ ♞c7 25.dxc6 ♞xc6 26.♜e4 ♞c5 27.♞ad1 etc. (+3.64 SF/23).

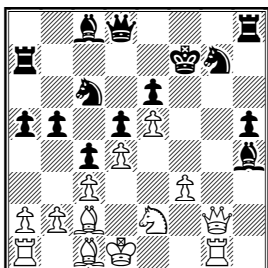
Besides 19.♞e2, White can also win with 19.♞f1, 19.♞d1, 19.♜e2 and several other moves.

19...♖×f7



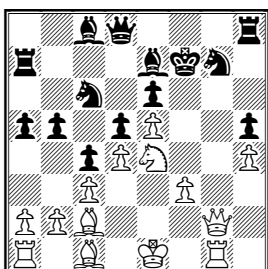
20.♗×h5?? Alekhine correctly flags this as a blunder. He mentions four alternative “reasonable attacking continuations”: 20.♗g6+, 20.♗e4, 20.♗f5 and 20.♗e2. He admits “it wasn’t at all easy to assess which [of them] is the best.” He finally says “The palm branch falls to the last method of play,” but his supporting analysis has a succession of unforced and increasingly bad moves for Black: 20.♗e2 ♗×h4+ 21.♖d1 ♖g8(?) 22.♗f4 ♖f7(?) 23.♗g6 ♗e7(???) 24.♗×h8 ♖×h8 25.♗g6 “with mate in some moves” (five to be exact).

However, Black need not play nearly so badly; after 20.♗e2 ♗×h4+ 21.♖d1,



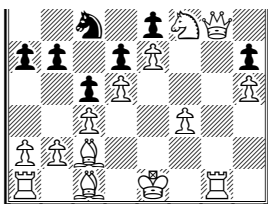
instead of 21...♖g8! he has 21...♗g8!± (-0.43 SF/30), and after 22.♗f4 not 22...♖f7??+- but 22...♗e8 or 22...♗f5 with slight hope (about +1.65). Finally after 22...♖f7 23.♗g6, far less egregious than 23...♗e7??? is 23...♗×e5, though still losing.

In fact, of Alekhine’s four alternatives, 20.♗e4! is the only clearly winning move:



viz. 20...♖e8 (if 20...d×e4?? 21.♗×g7+ ♖e8 22.♗×h8+ etc.) 21.♗g6+ ♖d7 22.♗f6+



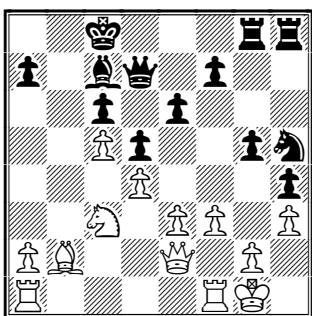


and either 22...♖c7 23.♜×g7 ♜b8 (+2.26 SF/24), or 22...♜×f6 23.exf6 ♜e8 24.♜g5 etc. (+2.61 SF/25).

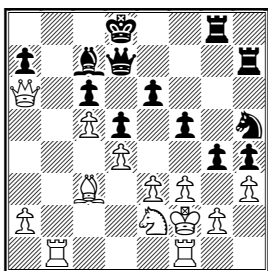
20...♜×h4+ 21.♞e2 ♜×h5 22.♜g6+ ♞e7 23.♜×h5 ♞d7 24.♞g7+ ♜e7 25.♜f7 ♞h2+ 26.♞d1 ♞c7 27.♜f4 ♞×b2 28.♞h7 ♞b6 29.♞g8 ♞c7 30.♞h8 ♜d8 31.♜g6 ♞g2 32.♞h1 ♞×g6 33.♞×g6 b4 34.♞g7 ♞c6 35.♞h8 ♞a4+ 36.♞e1 ♜c6 37.♞×c8 ♜h4+ 38.♜g3 ♞×g7 39.♜×h4 ♞c2 40.♜d8+ ♜×d8 41.♞b8+ ♜b7 0-1

Game 29, Nimzovich-Vidmar, Queen's Indian Reversed [A06]: Only one correction and one addition, but both quite important.

1.e3 d5 2.♜f3 ♜f6 3.b3 ♜g4 4.♜b2 ♜bd7 5.h3 ♜h5 6.♜e2 e6 7.♜e5 ♜×e2 8.♞×e2 ♜d6 9.♜×d7 ♞×d7 10.c4 c6 11.0-0 0-0-0 12.♜c3? ♜c7! 13.d4 h5 14.c5? While the text deserves Alekhine's punctuation, at least to some extent, his judgement that already "the game is no more to be saved" is premature, as will be seen in our note to move 19. 14...g5 15.b4 h4 16.b5 ♞dg8! 17.b×c6 b×c6 18.f3 ♜h5



19.e4(?) This move, on which Alekhine does not comment, deserves censure more than White's 14th, as now the game can indeed no longer be saved. Hope lay in 19.♞a6+! ♞d8 20.♜e2! f5 21.♜c3! g4 22.♞f2 ♞h7 23.♞ab1,

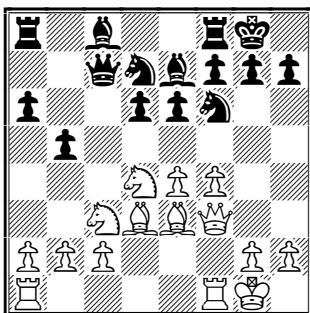


virtually forcing 23...♞c8 24.♞×c8+ ♞×c8 25.♞h1, and while Black still retains a positional advantage (-0.61 SF/28), he has no more prospects of winning by attack.

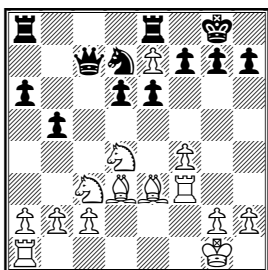
19...f5! 20.exd5 exd5 21.♖ae1 g4! 22.hxg4 fxg4 23.fxg4 ♖xg4 24.♟xd5 h3 25.♟e7+ ♜b7 26.♞f3 ♞xg2+ 27.♞xg2 hxg2 28.d5 ♞g4 29.♞b3+ ♜a8 30.♞xh8 ♞h4 31.d6 ♞xe1+ 32.♞xg2 ♞d8 33.♞d4 ♞xe7 34.dxe7 ♞xe7 35.♞f2 ♞e4+ 0-1

Game 30, Marshall-Spielmann, Sicilian Defense (by transposition) [B80]: Two interesting possibilities go unnoticed, and the note at move 16 is rife with errors.

1.d4 e6 2.♟f3 c5 3.e4 cxd4 4.♟xd4 ♟f6 5.♟c3 d6 6.♞d3 ♞e7 7.0-0 0-0 8.♞e3 ♟bd7 9.♞e2 a6 10.f4 ♞c7 11.♞f3 b5

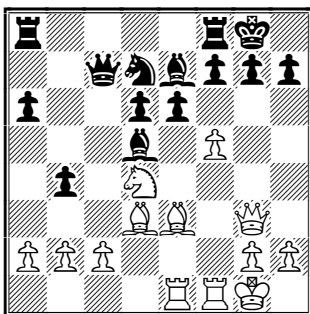


12.♖ae1 Alekhine remarks “It’s clear, by the way, 12.e5 would be unfavorable because of 12...♞b7.” A more certain advantage comes from 12...dxe5 13.♟c6□ 13...♞c5 14.♞xc5 ♟xc5 15.fxe5 ♟d5 16.♟xd5 exd5 17.♟d4 ♞xe5=. Instead, 12...♞b7 allows the interesting 13.exf6!? ♞xf3 14.fxe7 ♞fe8 15.♞xf3,

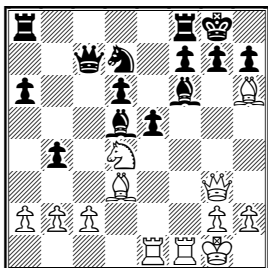


and with three minor pieces for the queen, White can stir up a lot of trouble.

12...♞b7 13.♞g3 b4 14.♟d5 ♟xd5 15.exd5 ♞xd5 16.f5!

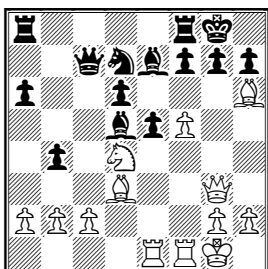


16...♟f6 Alekhine’s examination of the alternative 16...e5 is badly flawed. He gives the continuation 17.f6(?) ♞xf6(?) 18.♞h6(?) “with disconcerting threats.” Actually, in that position,

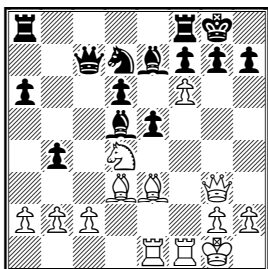


Black is fine: 18...g6! 19. Qxf8 Rxf8 20. Nf5 Qe6, and with two pawns for the exchange plus a great positional superiority, Black is winning (-2.45 SF/24). White can, however, get the upper hand by, instead of winning the exchange with 18. Qh6?, sacrificing it with 18. Rxf6! Nxf6 19. Nf5 Nh5 20. Bg4 f6 (not 20...g6?? 21. Ne7+ Kh8 22. Nxd5+-) 21. Bxh5 g6 22. Nh6+ Kg7 23. Bg4± (+0.72 SF/26).

Going back to the beginning of the note variation, rather than 17.f6?!, White's only good move is 17. Qh6!:

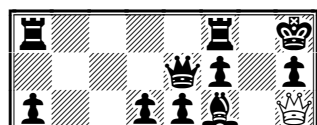


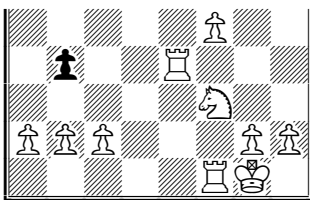
Best play then proceeds 17... Qf6 18. Qxg7 Qxg7 19. f6 Nxf6 20. Nf5 (not 20. Rxf6?? Bc5+-) 20... Ne8 21. Bg4 h6 22. Ne7+ Kh8 23. Nxd5 Bc5+ 24. Ne3 d5=. However, if White does play 17.f6?!,



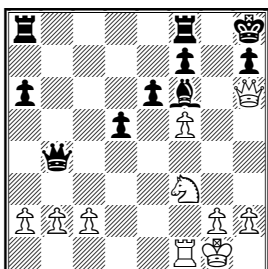
the correct defense is not 17... Qxf6? but 17... Nxf6! 18. Nf5 Nh5 19. Ne7+ Bxe7 20. Bg4 g6 21. Bxb4 f5 (-1.53 SF/24).

17. Qh6 Nh5 18. Bg4 Qf6 19. Nf3 Kh8 20. Bxh5 gxh6 21. Bxh6 Be7 22. Qe4 Qxe4 23. Rxe4

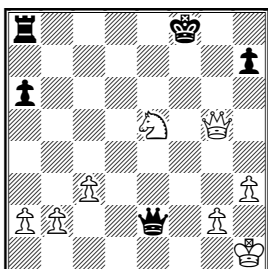




23...a5(!) A very interesting variation can arise after 23...d5. Alekhine considers only 24.♖e3 and 24.♖e2, both of which allow equality. More ambitious is 24.♖xb4!?, when if 24...♙xb4,

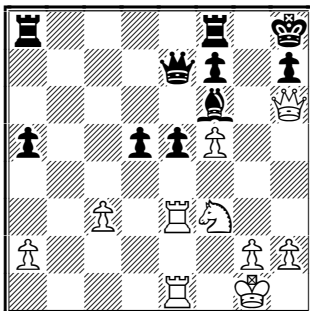


a long forced line results: 25.♙xf6+ ♖g8 26.c3! ♙e4 27.♘e5! ♙e3+ 28.♙h1 ♙e2 29.fxe6 fxe6 30.♙xe6+ ♖g7 31.♙d7+ ♖g8 32.♙xd5+ ♖g7 33.♖f7+ ♖xf7 34.♙xf7+ ♖h8 35.♙f6+ ♖g8 36.♙g5+ ♖f8 37.h3! (making *Luft* for the king)



37...♙d1+ (if 37...♙xb2? 38.♙f5+ ♖g8 39.♙g4+ ♖f8 40.♙f3+ ♖g7 41.♙xa8+-) 38.♙h2 ♙d8 and with ♘+3♙-vs-♖, White stands a good chance of winning the ending (+2.48 SF/27). Therefore Black's choice of the text move, defending the b-pawn, is best.

24.♖fe1 e5 25.c4 bxc3 26.bxc3 d5 27.♖4e3

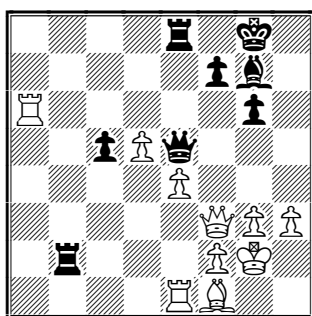


27...♖g8? Another tragic error by Spielmann. Alekhine correctly points out that he could have won with 27...e4 28.c4 ♙d8! 29.♘e5 ♖g5! etc. (not 29...♖xe5? 30.♖h3).

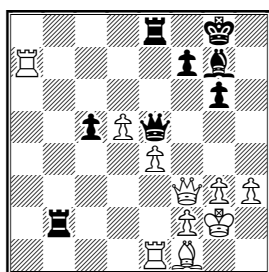
28.♖×e5 ♕g5 29.♜×g5 ♜×g5 30.♖g6+ h×g6 31.♜×e7 ♜×f5 32.♜e8+ ♜×e8 33.♜×e8+ ♜g7 34.♜a8 d4 35.c×d4 ♜d5 36.♜f2 ♜×d4 37.♜×a5 ♜d2+ 38.♜f3 f5 39.h4 ♜h6 40.♜a8 ♜c2 41.a4 ♜c3+ 42.♜f4 ♜c4+ 43.♜g3 ♜c3+ 44.♜h2 ♜a3 45.a5 ♜h5 46.♜h8+ ♜g4 47.h5 g×h5 48.♜a8 h4 49.a6 ♜f4 50.a7 ♜a1 ½-½

Game 31, Capablanca-Marshall, Modern Benoni [A62]: Alekhine's note at the crucial juncture, move 34, can be improved.

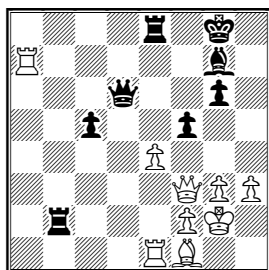
1.d4 ♖f6 2.♖f3 c5 3.d5 e6 4.c4 d6 5.♖c3 e×d5 6.c×d5 g6 7.g3 ♕g7 8.♕g2 0-0 9.0-0 ♜e8 10.♖d2 ♖bd7 11.h3 ♖b6 12.a4 ♕d7 13.a5 ♖c8 14.♖c4 ♜c7 15.e4 b5! 16.a×b6 ♖×b6 17.♖a3 a6 18.♜e1 ♜ab8 19.♜h2 ♖c8 20.♕f1 ♜b7 21.♜d3 ♜a8 22.♜f3 h6 23.♖c4 ♕b5 24.♖a5 ♜d7 25.♕×h6 ♕×h6 26.♜×f6 ♕g7 27.♜f3 ♖b6 28.♜g2 ♖a4? 29.♖×a4 ♕×a4 30.♖c4 ♜ab8 31.♖×d6 ♜×d6 32.♜×a4 ♜×b2 33.♜×a6 ♜e5



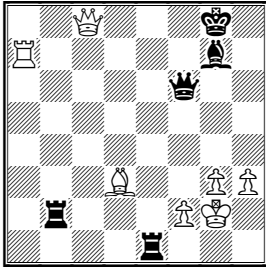
34.♜e2? Alekhine is quite correct to flag this as the mistake that let Capablanca's win slip to a draw. Several moves retain a winning advantage, *e.g.* 34.d6, 34.♜a4, and his recommended 34.♜a7. However, the rest of the note line, 34...f5(?) 35.d6 ♜×d6 36.e5(!) ♕×e5(?) 37.♕c4+ ♜h8 38.♕f7, can be much improved for both sides. First, after 34.♜a7,



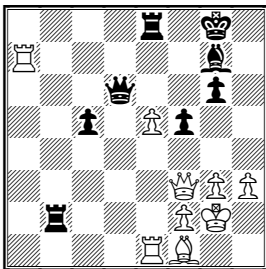
34...f5?? is quite bad; the least evil is 34...♜f8, when Black is still losing but at a much reduced rate (+2.00 vs. +6.80). After 35.d6 ♜×d6,



Alekhine's 36.e5 is OK, good enough to win, but only about 5th-best. Strongest is an amazing forced line Stockfish discovered: 36.exf5!! ♖xe1 37.fxg6 ♜xg6 38.♙d3 ♜f6 (or 38...♜e8 39.♞a8 ♞b8 40.♜d5+ ♞e6 41.♞xb8 etc.) 39.♞a8+ ♜f7 40.♜h5+ ♜e7 41.♜xc5+ ♜f7 42.♞a7+ ♜g8 43.♜c8+



43...♙f8 (if 43...♜f8 44.♜c4+ ♜h8 45.♜h4+) 44.♜g4+ ♙g7 45.♞a8+ ♜f7 46.♙c4+ ♞e6 47.♜h5+ ♜e7 48.♞e8+ etc. Finally, if White does play 36.e5,

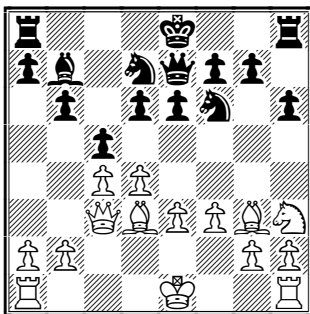


much less bad than 36...♙xe5? is 36.♜e6.

34...♞xe2 35.♜xe2 ♜xe4+ 36.♜xe4 ♞xe4 37.♞a8+ ♙f8 38.♜f3 ♞d4 39.♞d8 ♜g7 40.♜e3 f5 41.♙d3 ♙e7 42.♞d7 ♜f8 43.f4 ♜e8 44.♙b5 ♜f8 45.h4 ♞e4+ 46.♜f3 ♞d4 47.♜e3 ♞e4+ 48.♜d3 ♞d4+ 49.♜c2 ♞b4 50.d6 ♙xh4 51.gxh4 ♞xb5 52.♞e7 ♞b4 53.h5 gxh5 54.♞e5 ♞d4 55.♞xf5+ ♜g7 56.♞xh5 ♞xd6 57.♞xc5 ♞d4 58.♞f5 ♜g6 59.♞f8 ♜g7 60.♜c3 ♞a4 ½-½

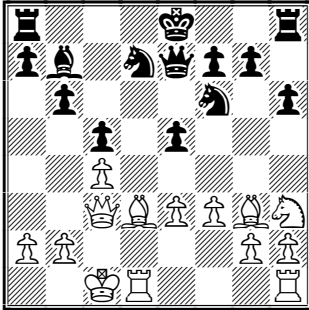
Game 32, Alekhine-Nimzovich, Nimzo-Indian Defense [E32]: Several surprising errors and oversights by Alekhine here.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♙b4 4.♜c2 d6 5.♙g5 ♘bd7 6.e3 b6 7.♙d3 ♙b7 8.f3 ♙xc3+ 9.♜xc3 c5 10.♘h3 h6 11.♙f4 ♜e7 12.♙g3

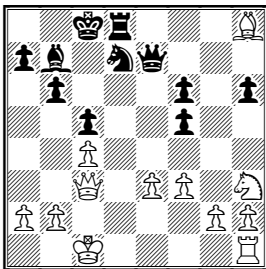


12...e5 Alekhine says “not 12...♖c8 13.♜a3!”, apparently in the belief that the a-pawn will then be lost. The engines don’t think this need happen, or if it does it is not important. Stockfish says simply 13...a5=, while Komodo gives 13...0-0 14.♜xa7 ♖c7 15.♜a3 ♖a8 16.♜c3 ♘h5=.

13.dxe5 dxe5 14.0-0-0

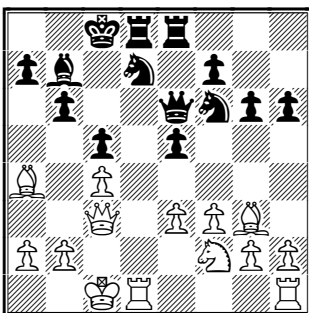


14...g6 Alekhine advises against 14...0-0-0, giving then 15.♘f5(?) g6 16.♘xe5(?) gxf5 17.♖xd7(?), “together with 18.♘xf6 (or ♘xh8), etc., ±.” But after 17...♗xd7 18.♘xh8 f6,



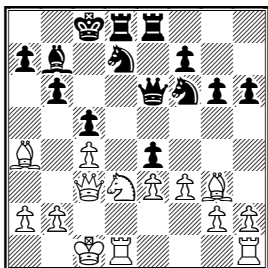
the trapped bishop will be captured, leaving Black a piece up.

15.♘c2 0-0-0 16.♘a4 ♖he8(?) This mistake, which gives Black a virtually lost game, goes unremarked, as do all the subsequent mistakes. Much better was 16...♗h5 with a nearly even game (+0.33 SF/26). **17.♗f2(?)** Beginning a flawed plan, the error of which Alekhine never realized. Much better was 17.♖d3. **17...♜e6**



18.♗d3(?) A serious mistake that could have allowed Black to turn the game around. Much better was 18.♖d3 or 18.♖d2, intending to double rooks and keep the file open (+1.70 SF/24).

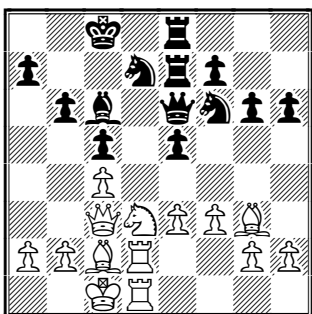
18...♖e7(?) Nimzovich missed quite a chance here, namely 18...e4!:



This exploits the flaw in the knight deployment White began at move 17. If now 19.fxe4? ♖xe4 20.♖c2 ♜xg3 21.hxg3 ♜xe3+ -+. Forced therefore is 19.♟f4 ♜e7 20.♞he1 exf3 21.gxf3 ♜xf3 and Black is a clear pawn up, with pressure on the isolani at e3 as well (-1.35 SF/27).

It's interesting to speculate how 18...e4! might have affected the final standings. Had Nimzovich won, he would have been tied with Capablanca for 1st place after 11 rounds, with Alekhine and Vidmar =3rd-4th, 2½ points back. It would have been difficult for Alekhine to recover from so far back with nine rounds to go. *Ceteris paribus*, Nimzovich would have finished second and Alekhine third, in which case had New York 1927, as some thought, been a "candidates tournament" (which we now know it was not), Nimzovich and not Alekhine would have been the challenger to Capablanca.

19.♞d2 ♞de8 20.♞hd1 ♜c6 21.♜c2

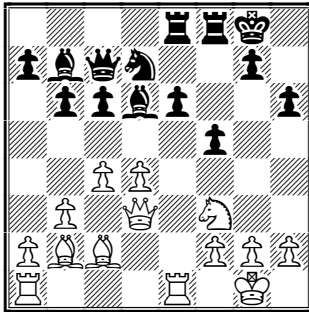


21...♜h5(?) After this Black cannot recover. Better was 21...♞c7, defending the bishop and the d6 square, and preventing the combination White now executes, since if 22.♜xc5? ♜xc5 23.♞d6? ♜xd6 24.♞xd6 ♜xd6, Black comes out materially ahead.

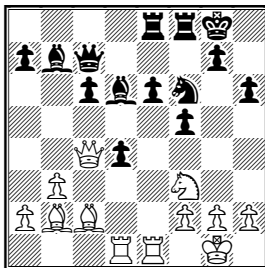
22.♜xc5 ♜xc5 23.♞d6 ♜xg3 24.hxg3 ♜xd6 25.♞xd6 ♞c7 26.b4 ♜b7 27.♞xc6 ♞xc6 28.♜a4 ♞ee6 29.♜xc6 ♞xc6 30.♜xe5 ♞xc4+ 31.♜d2 h5 32.a3 ♞c7 33.♜e8+ ♜d8 34.e4 ♞d7+ 35.♜e3 ♞c7 36.♜f4 ♞c3 37.a4 ♞c2 38.♜e7 ♞c7 39.♜f6 ♞c2 40.♜e7 ♞c7 41.♜d6 ♜e6+ 42.♜e5 ♜d8 43.♜d5 ♞c6 44.♜f4 ♜e6+ 45.♜e3 ♞c3+ 46.♜e2 ♞c7 47.f4 ♜d8 48.♜e3 ♞c3+ 49.♜d4 ♞c7 50.♜e5 a5 51.♜a8+ ♜d7 52.b5 ♜e7 53.f5 f6+ 54.♜d4 ♞d7+ 55.♜e3 gxf5 56.exf5 ♜f7 57.♜f3 ♜e5 58.♜xh5 ♞d3+ 59.♜f2 ♞d2+ 60.♜f1 ♞d4 61.♜h7+ ♜d6 62.♜b7 ♜d7 63.♜c6+ ♜e7 64.♜e6+ ♜d8 65.♜b3 ♞b4 66.♜d1 ♜e7 67.♜e2+ ♜d8 68.♜a2 ♜e7 69.♜e2 ♞e4+ 70.♜f3 ♞b4 71.♜e3 ♜c5 72.♜g8 ♜d7 73.g4 ♞xa4 74.g5 f×g5 75.♜xg5+ ♜d6 76.♜g6+ ♜c7 77.♜c6+ ♜d8 78.f6 ♞a1 79.g4 ♞f1 80.g5 ♞f5 81.♜a8+ 1-0

Game 33, Vidmar-Spielmann, Semi-Slav Defense [D46]: An uneventful game for which we have little to add, just a minor correction to one note.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 ♘d7 4.e3 ♘gf6 5.♙d3 c6 6.♘bd2 ♙d6 7.0-0 0-0 8.e4 d×e4 9.♘×e4 ♘×e4 10.♙×e4 ♚c7 11.♙c2 h6 12.b3 b6 13.♙b2 ♙b7 14.♚d3 f5 15.♞fe1 ♞ae8



16.♘e5(?) Alekhine is correct to fault this, and his recommendation 16.♞ad1 is indeed best, but then he goes wrong in one of his note variations, saying “if 16...♘f6, then 17.c5(?) b×c5 18.♚c4 with complications favorable to White.” Rather than 17.c5?! White should play 17.a3 or 17.h3, both about +1.35. To 17.c5?! b×c5 18.♚c4 both engines say Black replies 18...c×d4!,

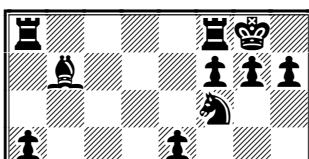


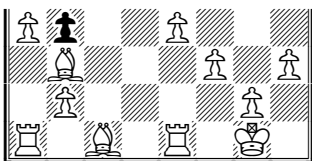
and it's even after either 19.♞×e6 ♙a6! 20.♚×a6 ♞×e6 21.♙×f5 ♞ee8, or 19.♙×f5 c5 20.♙×e6+ ♚h7 21.b4 ♘×f3 22.g×f3 ♙×h2+ 23.♚g2 ♙d6.

16...c5 17.♞ad1 ♘f6 18.♚e2 c×d4 19.♙×d4 ♘e4 20.f4 ♞d8 21.♚h1 ♚h7 22.♞d3 ♚e7 23.♞f1 ♞f6 24.♘f3 ♞ff8 25.♘e5 ♞f6 26.♘f3 ♞ff8 ½-½

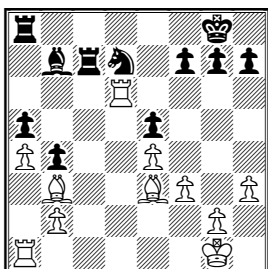
Game 34, Capablanca-Vidmar, Ruy Lopez [C98]: An archetypal Capablanca game. Alekhine errs at two points trying to find better defenses for Black.

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙b5 a6 4.♙a4 ♘f6 5.0-0 ♙e7 6.♞e1 b5 7.♙b3 d6 8.c3 ♘a5 9.♙c2 c5 10.d4 ♚c7 11.♘bd2 0-0 12.h3 ♘c6 13.d5 ♘d8 14.a4 b4 15.♘c4 a5 16.♘f×e5 ♙a6 17.♙b3 d×e5 18.d6 ♙×d6 19.♚×d6 ♚×d6 20.♘×d6 ♘b7 21.♘×b7 ♙×b7 22.c×b4 c×b4 23.f3



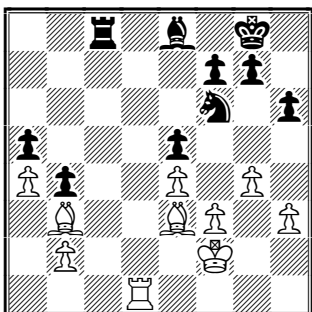


23...♖fd8 Alekhine writes “A better defense opportunity was offered here, for example, by 23...♘d7(?) 24.♙e3 ♜fc8! 25.♞ac1 (25.♞ed1(!) ♞c7) 25...♜f8, etc.” But in the parenthetical sub-variation 25.♞ed1 ♞c7 Black is virtually lost after 26.♞d6!:



e.g. 26...♜f8 27.♞ad1 ♜e7 28.♙xf7!.

24.♙e3 h6 25.♞ed1 ♙c6 26.♞ac1 ♙e8 27.♜f2 ♞×d1 28.♞×d1 ♞c8 29.g4 Alekhine correctly points out that 29.♙b6? ♘d7 30.♙xa5 ♘c5 would lose White’s advantage.



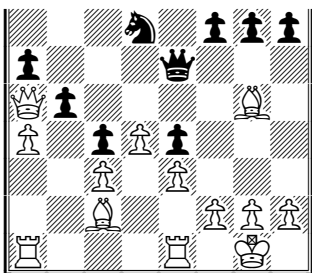
29...♙d7 Alekhine recommends 29...♜f8 as offering stiffer resistance, but in that case White could, unlike the move before, proceed with 30.♙b6!, since if 30...♘d7 31.♙xa5 ♘c5 32.♙×b4 the knight is pinned, while if 30...♞a8? 31.♞d8 ♞a6 32.♙c5+ ♜g8 33.♙e7+-.

30.♙b6 ♙e6 31.♙×e6 f×e6 32.♞d8+ ♞×d8 33.♙×d8 ♘d7 34.♙×a5 ♘c5 35.b3 ♘×b3 36.♙×b4 ♘d4 37.a5 1–0

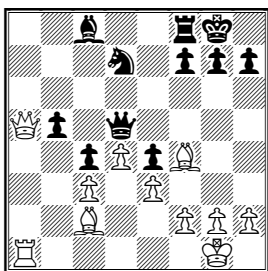
Game 37, Capablanca-Spielmann, Queen’s Gambit Declined [D38]: Several improvements to Alekhine’s notes were found.

1.d4 d5 2.♘f3 e6 3.c4 ♘d7 4.♘c3 ♘gf6 5.♙g5 ♙b4 6.c×d5 e×d5 7.♜a4 ♙×c3+ 8.b×c3 0–0 9.e3 c5 10.♙d3 c4 11.♙c2 ♜e7 12.0–0 a6 13.♞fe1 ♜e6 14.♘d2 b5 15.♜a5 ♘e4? Not a good move, but definitely not as “awful” as Alekhine thought. The real howler is Black’s 17th. **16.♘×e4 d×e4 17.a4**

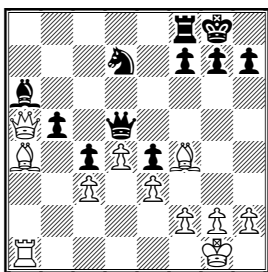




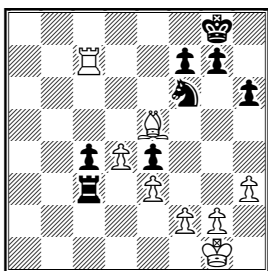
17...♙d5(?) Alekhine seems to think Black had nothing better, but he did. Alekhine gives 17...♖b8 18.♞eb1 ♙d5(?) (♞18...♖b6) 19.♙f4 ♖b6 20.a×b5 ♖×b5 21.♞×b5 a×b5,



and now 22.♙a4(?!). Correct is 22.♞b1! when 23.♞×b5 cannot be prevented (+3.32 SF/25). Alekhine's move can be countered by the surprising 22...♙a6!,

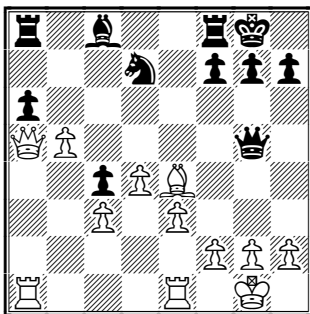


when best play proceeds 23.♞b1 (if 23.♙×a6? ♖a8 24.♙d6 ♙×d6 25.♙×d6 b×a4≠) 23...♖a8, and the best White can do is 24.h3 h6 25.♙×b5 ♙×b5 26.♙×b5 ♙×b5 27.♞×b5 ♖a3 28.♞b7 ♙f6 29.♞c7 ♖×c3 30.♙e5,

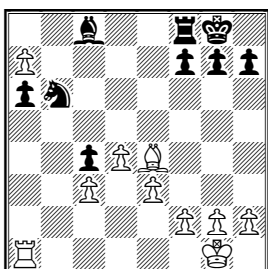


and White has a lot of work to do before he wins, if indeed he can (+0.69 SF/30). Also, going back to move 17, 17...♙b6 18.♙×e4 ♙×e4 19.♙×b6 ♙d7 was not nearly as hopeless as the text.

18.a×b5 ♙×g5 19.♙×e4



19...Rb8 Alekhine considers also the line 19...Ra7 20.b6 Bxa5 21.bxa7, and in the sub-variation 21...Bxa1 22.Rxa1 Nb6,

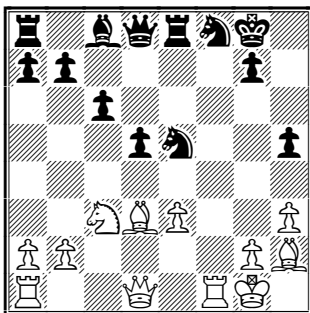


he continues 23.a8 Bxa8 24.Qxa8. While this does win (+2.42), far stronger is 23.Rb1, which will enable queening of the pawn without it being captured (+12.13).

20.bxa6 Bb5 21.Bc7 Nb6 22.a7 Qh3 23.Rb1 Bxb1+ 24.Rxb1 f5 25.Qf3 f4 26.exf4 1-0

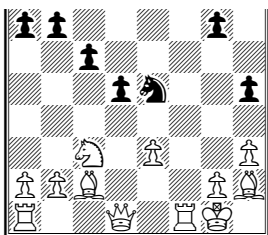
Alekhine-Vidmar, Queen's Gambit Declined [D35]: Alekhine may well have missed a win, both on the board and in his analysis.

1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 e6 3.c4 Nd7 4.Nc3 Ngf6 5.cxd5 exd5 6.Qf4 c6 7.e3 Qe7 8.Qd3 0-0 9.h3 Be8 10.0-0 Nf8 11.Ne5 Qd6 12.Qh2 Nd7 13.f4 f6 14.Ng4 h5 15.Ne5! fxe5 16.fxe5 Qxe5 17.dxe5 Nxe5



18.Rxf8+ Instead of this, which secures a draw, Stockfish indicates White had good winning chances after 18.Qc2!?:





Three sample continuations:

(a) 18...Qh4 19.♘xd5! cxd5 20.♖xd5+ ♕e6 21.♗xe5+-;

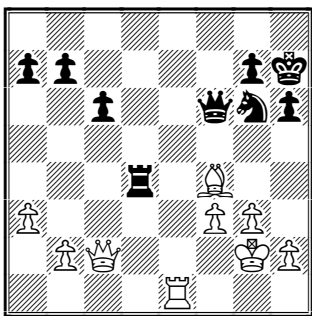
(b) 18...g6 19.e4 d4 20.♖b3+ ♕e6 21.♗xe5 dxc3 22.♖c1! ♗xb3 23.♗xc3 ♖c7 (not 23...♗e6?? 24.♗h6 and mate shortly.) 24.axb3 ♘e6 25.♖f6 ♗h7 26.e5 ♖e7 27.♖c2 ♖g8 28.♖a4 ♘h4 (+2.95 SF/25);

(c) 18...♖g5 (probably best) 19.♗f4 ♖f6 20.♖xh5 g6 21.♖e2 with an enduring kingside initiative (+1.66 SF/28).

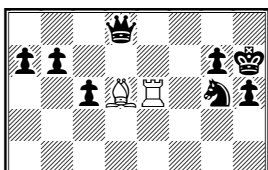
18...♖xh5 19.♖xh5 ♘xd3 20.♖f1+ ♖g8 21.♖f7+ ♖h8 22.♖h5+ ♖g8 23.♖f7+ ♖h8 1/2-1/2

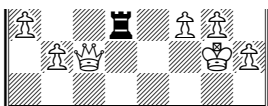
Game 39, Marshall-Nimzovich, French Defense [C01]: Little to correct here, except a howler at move 37.

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♖b4 4.exd5 exd5 5.♗d3 ♘e7 6.♘ge2 ♗f5 7.0-0 0-0 8.♘g3 ♗g6 9.♘ce2 ♗d6 10.♗f4 ♘bc6 11.♖d2 ♖d7 12.♖ae1 ♖ae8 13.c3 ♘c8 14.♗e3 ♘6e7 15.♘f4 ♗xf4 16.♗xf4 ♗xd3 17.♖xd3 ♘g6 18.♖f3 f5 19.♗d2 ♖xe1 20.♖xe1 f4 21.♘e2 ♖f5 22.c4 ♘b6 23.cxd5 ♘xd5 24.♘c3 ♘xc3 25.♗xc3 c6 26.♗b4 ♖d8 27.♖e4 ♖f7 28.a3 h6 29.g3 ♖f6 30.♗c3 ♖d5 31.♖e8+ ♖h7 32.♖e4 ♖f5 33.♖g2 ♖g4 34.f3 ♖g5 35.♗d2 ♖f6 36.♗xf4 ♖xd4 37.♖c2



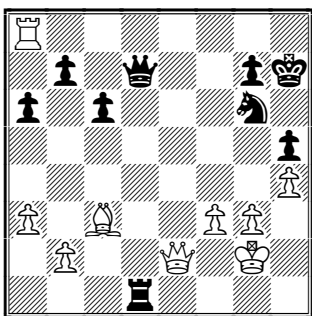
37...♖d5(?) Alekhine is wrong to fault this; it is actually the best move Black has. He writes “Instead of [the text] 37...♖d8(?) would have made the crossing over of the bishop to the a1-h8 diagonal somewhat difficult.” Perhaps, but more importantly, it would have made it easy for White to win a piece by 38.♖e6! ♖d3 39.♗d6:





An appealing instance of one interference countering another. If 39...♖c8 (of course not 39...♖xd6?? 40.♗xg6+ 40.♖xg6 ♗f5 41.♖e6+-).

38.♙d2 ♗d8 39.♙c3 ♖d3 40.♖e4 ♗d5 41.♗e2 ♗d7 42.h4 h5 43.♖e8 ♖d1 44.♖a8 a6

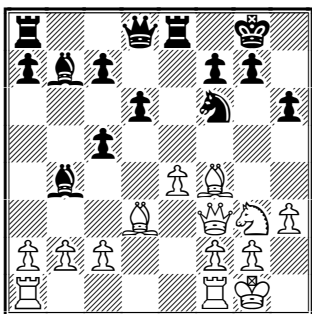


45.♖b8(?) Alekhine faults this and recommends 45.♗e4, though he does not believe it would win. Stockfish indicates that if White wants to try for a win, best is 45.♖e8, e.g. 45...♖c1 46.♗e6 ♗x6 47.♖x6 ♖d1 48.♗f2 (+1.40 SF/27), or 45...♗d3 46.♗xd3 ♖xd3 47.♗f2 ♖d7 48.♙b4 (+1.18 SF/27).

45...♖h1! 46.♗xh1 ♗h3+ 47.♗h2 ♗f1+ 48.♗g1 ♗h3+ 1/2-1/2

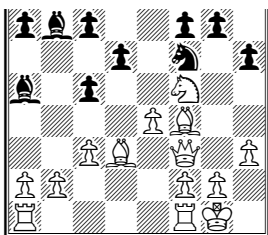
Game 42, Spielmann-Marshall, Scotch Game [C47]: Alekhine is clearly wrong at a crucial juncture.

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.d4 exd4 5.♘xd4 ♙b4 6.♘xc6 bxc6 7.♙d3 0-0
8.0-0 ♖e8 9.♗f3 h6 10.♙f4 d6 11.h3 ♙b7 12.♘e2 c5 13.♘g3



13...c4? Alekhine is quite correct to condemn this, but otherwise his note here is mistaken. On his recommended 13...♘d7 White gains an advantage with 14.♙b5! ♘e5 (if 14...♖b8 15.♙xh6! gxxh6 16.♗g4+ ♗g5 17.♙xd7±) 15.♙xe5 ♖xe5 16.♖ad1±. And he is quite wrong to condemn as “riskier” 13...♖b8, which is actually Black’s best move. The note continues “14.c3 ♙a5 15.♘f5!,”



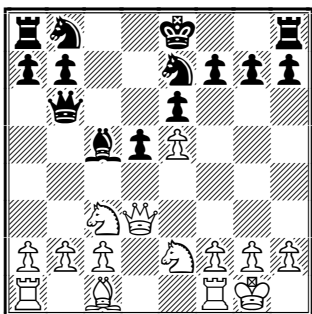


with various sacrificial turns for White.” But 15.♖f5 should actually be punctuated “?”, because Black gets in the first sacrifice: 15...♗xe4! 16.♜g3 (if 16.♜xe4?? ♜xe4 17.♜xh6+ g×h6 18.♜g3+ ♜g6 19.♜xh6 ♜e4 20.♜g4 ♗b2-+) 16...♜h5 17.♜xh6+ ♜f8 18.♜g4 ♗xf4 19.♜xh5 ♜h4 20.♜xh4 ♗xh4 21.♜f5 ♗f4, and though material is even, the position favors Black (-0.51 SF/32). Instead of 15.♜f5?, correct is 15.♗fe1 or 15.♗ad1 with some advantage for White (about +0.50).

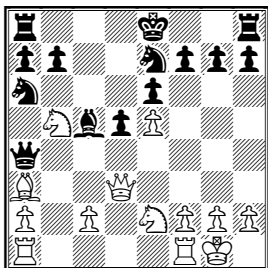
14.♜xc4 ♜xe4 15.♜b3! d5 16.♜b5 ♜d6 17.♜xd6 ♗b8 18.♜a4! ♗xb5 19.♜xb5 ♜xd6 20.♜xe4 ♗xe4 21.♜b8+ ♜h7 22.♜xa7 ♜e5 23.♜a5 ♜xb2 24.♜xc7 ♗c4 25.♜xf7 ♗xc2 26.♗ab1 ♜e5 27.♗b7 ♜g5 28.h4 ♜g4 29.♜xf6 1-0

Game 43, Nimzovich-Capablanca, Caro-Kann Defense [B12]: A difficult game even for the engines to analyze, due to the close nature of the positions and the complications at key points. Some important errors and improvements were found.

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 ♜f5 4.♜d3 ♜xd3 5.♜xd3 e6 6.♜c3 ♜b6 7.♜ge2 c5 8.dxc5 ♜xc5 9.0-0 ♜e7

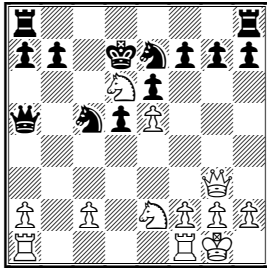


10.♜a4 Alekhine writes “the attempt to take by surprise, 10.b4, leads to nothing good: 10...♜xb4 11.♜b5 ♜a6 12.♜a3 ♜a5(?) 13.♜xc5 ♜xc5 14.♜d6+ ♜d7 15.♜g3 ♗hg8(?) 16.♜xf7(?) ♜f5, etc., with advantage for Black.” In fact 10.b4!? was a promising move leading to some very interesting lines. And as the red ink indicates, Alekhine’s analysis has several errors. First off, much better than 12...♜a5 is 12...♜a4,



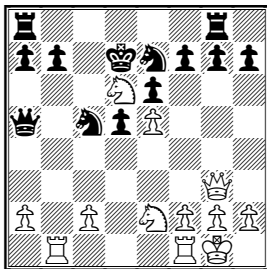
when after 13.♙xc5 ♜xc5 14.♞d6+ ♚f8 Black has a much sounder defensive position, with the queen able to occupy c6.

Further on in the note, after 15.♜g3,

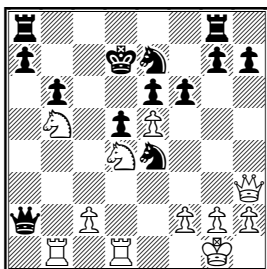


Black must avoid 15...♖hg8? and play 15...♞e4 16.♞xe4 dxe4 17.♖ab1 b6, when after either 18.♜f4 ♖hf8, or 18.♖fd1+ ♚e8 19.♜f4 ♖c8 20.♜xe4, White has a definite but not yet winning advantage.

If Black does play 15...♖hg8, Alekhine considered only 16.♞xf7?, which wins back the sacrificed pawn but nothing else. Instead White can get a fearsome initiative going with 16.♖ab1!:



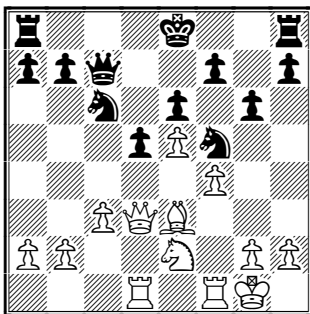
Exhaustive, conclusive analysis of all the possibilities then becomes impracticable, but the engines see best play proceeding 16...b6 17.♖fd1 ♜xa2 18.♞d4 f6 19.♞b5 ♞e4 20.♜h3,



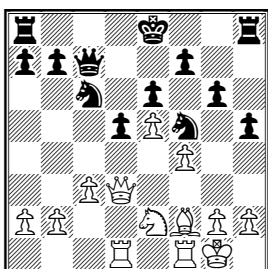
with now two main lines:

(a) 20...♞g5 21.♜e3 ♖gc8 (if 21...♖ac8?? 22.♖a1) 22.exf6 gxf6 23.♜f4 ♞e4 24.f3 (+5.96 SF/23);
 (b) 20...f5 21.♞d6 ♞xd6 22.exd6 ♜xd6 23.♞b5+ ♜d7 24.♜g3 ♖gc8 25.♜d6+ ♜e8 26.♜xe6 ♖c6 27.♞d6+ ♖xd6 28.♜xd6 ♖d8 29.♜e5 ♜f8 30.♖e1 etc. (+4.56 SF/29). Improvements for either side may be lurking in the complications; the interested reader is encouraged to investigate further.

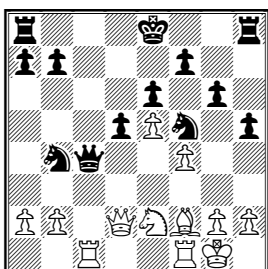
10...♜c6 11.♞xc5 ♜xc5 12.♞e3 ♜c7 13.f4 ♞f5 14.c3 ♞c6 15.♖ad1 g6



16.g4?? Not a good move, but Alekhine's extreme censure is somewhat overwrought. His recommendation 16.♘f2 is considerably better, but can be improved. After 16.♘f2 h5,



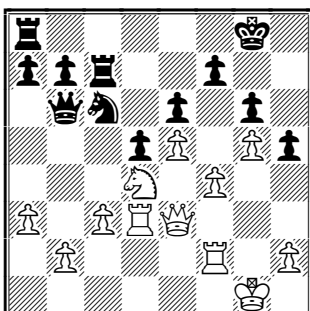
Alekhine rejects 17.c4, but it appears quite playable, viz. 17...♗b4 18.♙d2 ♙xc4 19.♞c1:



Black now has only two playable moves:

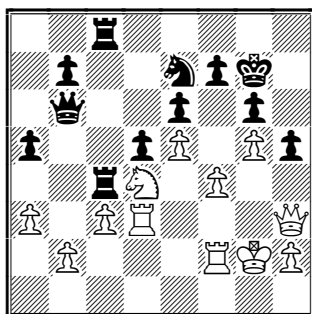
(a) 19...♙b5?! 20.♞c5 ♙a4 21.b3 ♙a3 22.♗c3 a5 23.♗b5 ♙xa2 24.♙xa2 ♗xa2 25.♞a1! (25.♗c7+ leads only to equality) 25...b6 26.♞c7 ♗b4 27.♗d6+ ♗xd6 28.exd6 0-0 29.♗xb6 (+1.28 SF/25);
 (b) 19...♙e4 20.♞fe1 a5 21.♞c3 d4 (else 22.♗d4 traps the queen) 22.♗xd4 ♙d5 23.a3 ♗xd4 24.♗xd4 ♗c6 25.♞d3= (+0.15 SF/31).

16...♗xe3 17.♙xe3 h5 18.g5 0-0 19.♗d4 ♙b6 20.♞f2 ♞fc8 21.a3 ♞c7 22.♞d3



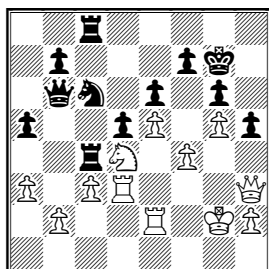
22...♟a5 The engines agree with Alekhine that this “only loses time,” but they do not endorse his recommendation of 22...♞e7 (rated only -0.53 SF/34), preferring 22...♟xd4, when if 23.♞xd4 ♞b5 24.♞fd2 ♞c4 25.♞f2 (-2.16 SF/38), or 23.♞xd4 ♞ac8 (-1.54 SF/36), or 23.cxd4 ♞ac8 (-2.47 SF/30). However, all we can offer are those numerical assessments; playing those lines out to a concrete win (assuming one is actually there at the end of the analytical rainbow) would require more time than this writer can afford on a *pro bono* basis.

23.♞e2 ♞e8 24.♞g2 ♟c6 25.♞ed2 ♞ec8 26.♞e2 ♟e7 27.♞ed2 ♞c4 28.♞h3 ♞g7 29.♞f2 a5



30.♞e2 No comment from Alekhine here, but this deserves a “??” more than move 16 did. Only the fact that Capablanca did not capitalize properly prevented that from being shown. The least evil here was 30.♞e3+.

30...♟f5! This does not especially deserve the exclamation Alekhine gives it. Stronger was 30...♟c6!:



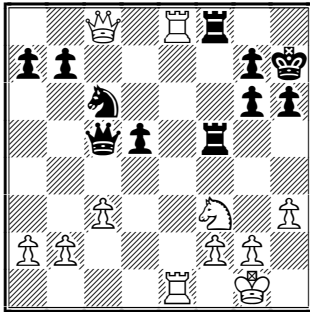
31.♞e3 (if 31.♟xc6? ♞xc6 32.♞f3 b5 ♟33...b4 etc. (+2.98 SF/25)) 31...♟xd4 32.♞xd4 ♞xd4 33.♞xd4 — On 33.cxd4 ♞c6 play would proceed much as in the final phase of the game. — 33...♞a6 34.♞d2 b5 etc., much as Alekhine described in his note to Black’s 22nd move.

31.♟xf5+ Alekhine remarks “The game would have lasted somewhat longer after 31.♞ed2 ♟xd4 32.♞xd4 ♞xd4 33.cxd4 ♞c4 34.♞e3 a4+ etc.” The engines see that as decidedly worse: -3.33 SF/25, compared to about -0.70 for the text.

31...gxf5 32.♞f3 ♞g6 33.♞ed2 ♞e4 34.♞d4 ♞c4 35.♞f2 ♞b5 36.♞g3 ♞cxd4 37.cxd4 ♞c4 38.♞g2 b5 39.♞g1 b4 40.axb4 axb4 41.♞g2 ♞c1 42.♞g3 ♞h1 43.♞d3 ♞e1 44.♞f3 ♞d1 45.b3 ♞c1 46.♞e3 ♞f1 0–1

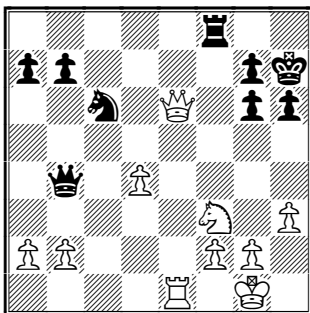
Game 44, Spielmann-Alekhine, French Defense [C09]: Two tactically inaccurate notes, including one with a howler. Also one that we felt required clarification.

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘d2 c5 4.dxc5 ♙xc5 5.♙d3 ♘c6 6.exd5 exd5 7.♘b3 ♙b6 8.♘f3 ♘ge7 9.0-0 0-0 10.c3 ♖d6 11.♞e1 ♘g6 12.♙e3 ♙xe3 13.♞xe3 ♙g4 14.♙xg6 f×g6 15.h3 ♙f5 16.♘bd4 ♞ad8 17.♘xf5 ♞xf5 18.♞e2 ♞df8 19.♞e1 ♞c5 20.♞e8 h6 21.♞e6+ ♞h7 22.♞c8!



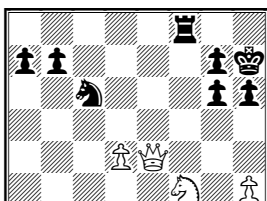
22...d4 Alekhine says “22...b6 loses immediately because of 23.b4, etc.” It’s not clear what “etc.” he had in mind. After 23...♞d6, Black stands worse, but does not seem to be in immediate danger of losing. However, playing it out further, Stockfish ultimate validates AAA, giving the likely continuation of 24.b5 ♘e7 25.♞a8 ♞ 25...♞xe8 26.♞xe8 ♘g8 27.♞e6 ♘f6 28.♞xd6 ♘xe8 29.♞d7, when the writing on the wall is clear (+1.97 SF/27).

23.cxd4 ♞d6 24.♞xf8 ♞xf8 25.♞e6 ♞b4



Alekhine writes “White, if he now wanted to avoid the queen exchange, would have to decide on the unclear sacrifice 26.♞e4. The result would be then 26...♞xb2 27.♞b1(!) ♞xa2 28.♞xb7 ♞c4!(??) 29.♞c7 ♞f6, with sufficient defense, since 30.♘e5 would be answered by 30...♞xd4.” Two errors here, one minor, the other quite major.

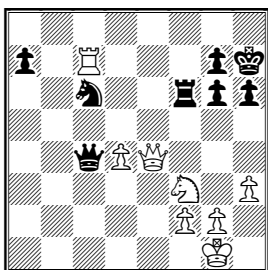
First, after 26.♞e4 ♞xb2,



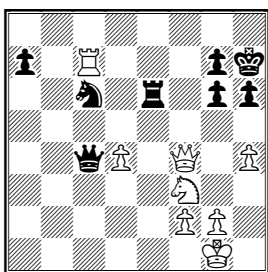


better than 27.♖b1?! is 27.d5 ♘d8 28.h4±.

More importantly, after 27.♖b1 ♜xa2 28.♖xb7 ♜c4?? (correct is 28...♖f6 29.h4 ♖e6 30.♜f4 ♖e7 with only a slight advantage for White) 29.♖c7 ♖f6,



Alekhine overlooks the quiet but deadly 30.h4!, intending 31.h5 and forcing 30...♖e6 31.♜f4:

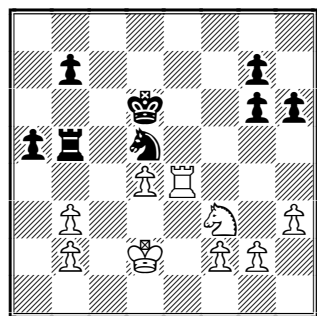


White threatens the crushing 32.♜f8, and of course if 31...♖f6?? 32.♜xf6+- . Black's two least disastrous replies are:

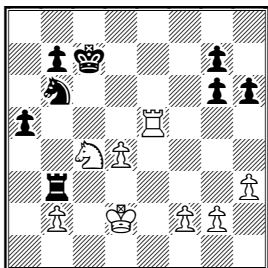
(a) 31...♖e7 32.♖c8 ♘xd4 33.♖xc4 ♘e2+ 34.♜f1 ♘xf4 35.♖xf4+- ;

(b) 31...♜b4 32.h5 ♜b1+ (if 32...g5 33.♜f5+ ♜h8 34.♖c8+ and mate shortly, or 32...g×h5 33.♜f5+ ♖g6 34.♖xc6+-) 33.♜h2 ♜b5 34.h×g6+ ♖×g6 35.♘h4 ♖e6 36.♘f5+- .

26.♜b3 ♜×b3 27.a×b3 ♖d8 28.♖e4 ♖d5 29.♜f1 ♖b5 30.♖e3 a5 31.♖d3 ♜g8 32.♜e2 ♜f7 33.♜d2 ♜e6 34.♜c3 ♘e7 35.♖e3+ ♜d6 36.♜c2 ♘d5 37.♖e4 ♘b4+ 38.♜d2 ♘d5



39.♜c2 Alekhine opines that “the winning attempt 39.♘e5 would remain without success because of 39...♖×b3 40.♘c4+ ♜c7 41.♖e5 ♘b6!, etc.”

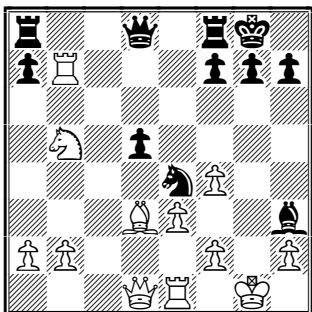


Actually the last move is not good; correct is 41...♖b5=. After 41...♜b6? comes 42.♜c2! ♖b4 (not 42...♜xc4?? 43.♖c5+ ♜d7 44.♜xb6+ ♖xb6 45.♖xa5, when White is a passed pawn ahead and Black will have to play carefully to draw (+1.06 SF/30)).

39...♜b4+ 40.♜d2 ♜d5 41.♜c2 ½-½

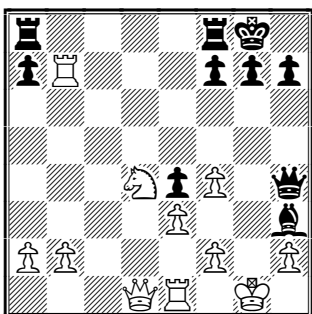
Game 45, Marshall-Vidmar, Slav Defense [D13]: Several noteworthy errors here, though one is not Alekhine's fault.

1.d4 ♜f6 2.♜f3 d5 3.c4 c6 4.cxd5 cxd5 5.♜c3 ♜c6 6.♞f4 e6 7.e3 ♞d6 8.♞xd6 ♜xd6 9.♞d3 0-0 10.0-0 e5 11.♜b5 ♜e7 12.dxe5 ♜xe5 13.♖c1 ♞g4 14.♖c7 ♜d8 15.♖xb7 ♜xf3+ 16.gxf3 ♞h3 17.♖e1 ♜e4 18.f4

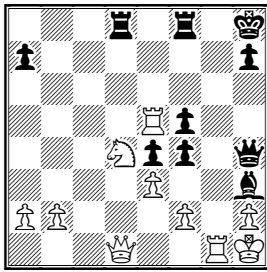


18...♜h4 Alekhine punctuates this “(?)”, but it is actually the best move by far (about -5.00). The alternative line he gives, 18...♜c5 19.♖xa7(?) ♖xa7 20.♜xa7 ♜xd3 21.♜xd3 ♜a5 22.b4 ♜xa7 23.e4 (-3.60 SF/27), can be improved for White by avoiding 19.♖xa7 and playing 19.♞c2! ♜xb7 20.♜h5 g6 21.♜xh3 with some counter-chances (-0.78 K/20, -1.49 SF/24).

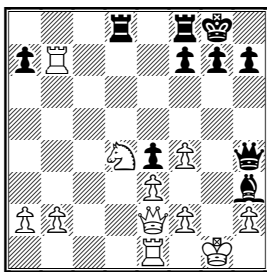
19.♞xh3 dxe4 20.♜d4



20...♖ac8(?) No comment from Alekhine here, but this nearly throws away the win. Best was 20...♖ad8! 21.♖b5 ♜f5 22.♖e5 g5! 23.♜h1 gxf4 24.♖g1+ ♜h8

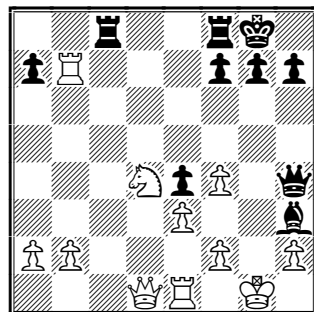


25.exf4 [if 25.♜e1 ♖g8 26.♖xg8+ ♖xg8 and to prevent a quick mate White must play 27.♖e8 ♖xe8 (-11.04)] 25...♜xf2 26.♖g3 ♜g4 27.♜g1 ♜xd4 (-5.73). And if 21.♜e2,

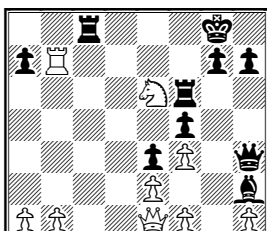


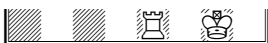
as Alekhine recommends in the next note, then 21...♖d6! 22.♜h1 ♜g4 23.♜f1 ♖xd4! 24.exd4 ♜f3+ and mate shortly.

Returning to the game:



21.♖b5 There is a typo in the REI edition, with Alekhine seeming to recommend 21.♜c2, which besides putting the queen *en prise* also allows mate in two. His actual recommendation is 21.♜e2, which is relatively best. However, he still underestimates the power inherent in Black's position, which comes out with 21...f5 22.♜e6 ♖f6:



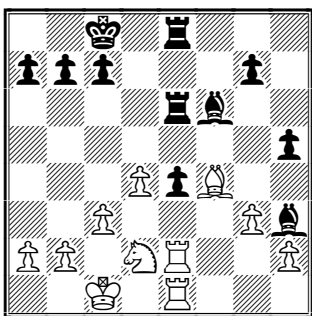


Now AAA's suggested 23.♘g5?? is refuted by the simple 23...h6, when the knight must just stand and die and the whole white position collapses (-15.56). Relatively best is 23.♞xg7+ ♔h8 24.♞g3 ♞x6, but even then White is still lost (-2.64 SF/25).

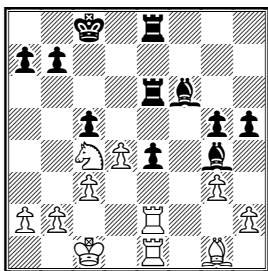
21...♞c1 22.♞g5 ♞x♠1 23.♞x♠1 ♕g4 24.♞c1 h6 0-1

Game 47, Nimzovich-Alekhine, Alekhine's Defense [B02]: Some hallucinations in the notes here.

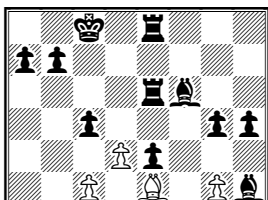
1.e4 ♘f6 2.d3 e5 3.f4 ♘c6 4.fxe5 ♘xe5 5.♘f3 ♘xf3+ 6.♙xf3 d5 7.e5 ♙e7 8.d4 ♘e4 9.♕d3 ♙h4+ 10.g3 ♙g4 11.♘d2 ♙xf3 12.♘xf3 ♕e7 13.♕e3 ♕h3 14.♕xe4 dxe4 15.♘d2 0-0-0 16.0-0-0 f6 17.exf6 ♕xf6 18.c3 ♞he8 19.♞de1 ♞e6 20.♞e2 h5 21.♞he1 ♞de8 22.♕f4



22...♕f5 Alekhine gives a very strange note here, saying “the pawn move [22...g5] would have been more logical, because after 22...g5 23.♕e3 c5!, White would have been able to execute the redeployment maneuver ♘f1(c4)-e3 only under unfavorable circumstances ... for example 24.♕g1 ♕f5 25.♘c4 (♘f1) and Black continues with 25...♕g4, ...♕f3 etc.” This line is nonsensical. For one thing, at its end, after 25.♘c4 (better than 25.♘f1) 25...♕g4,



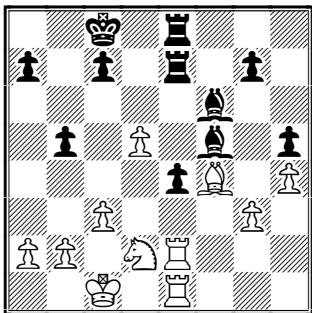
White can happily play 26.♞xe4!, since if 26...♞xe4 27.♘d6+. For another, going back a few moves, 23...c5 deserves not an exclamation but a question mark:



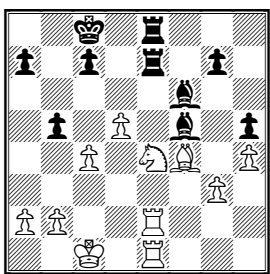


One is baffled as to why Alekhine considered only 24.♘g1? here, when White can gain quite an advantage with the simple and obvious 24.dxc5 (+1.60 SF/28). Also good is 24.d5! ♖d6 25.♙xc5 ♜xd5 26.♙xa7 ♜a5 27.♜xe4 ♜xe4 28.♙xe4 ♙d8 29.♙e3 ♜xa2 30.♙xg5 and White is two pawns up (if 30...♜a1+ 31.♙d2 ♜xe1 32.♙xe1 ♙g2 33.♙d6+ ♙d7 34.♙f4 keeps them both).

23.d5 ♜6e7 24.h4 b5

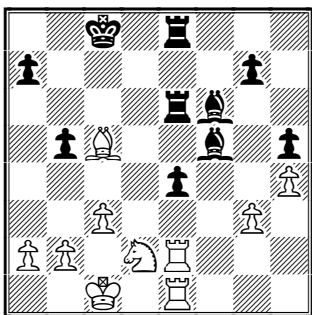


25.d6 Another strange note here. Alekhine says “upon 25.c4! then 25...♜d8! 26.♙xe4 bxc4! 27.♙d6+ cxd6 28.♜xe7 ♙xe7 29.♜xe7 ♜d7, etc., suffices — just barely — for a draw.” Again he has given an exclamation to a bad move, for after 25...♜d8 26.♙xe4? (⬇ 26.♙f1), instead of 26...bxc4?, Black can do much better than a “just barely” draw by moving the rook right back with 26...♜de8!,



forcing 27.♙c3 ♜xe2 28.♜xe2 ♜xe2 29.♙xe2 ♙d3 30.♙c3 ♙xc4= (-0.89 SF/29).

25...cxd6 26.♙xd6 ♜e6 27.♙c5



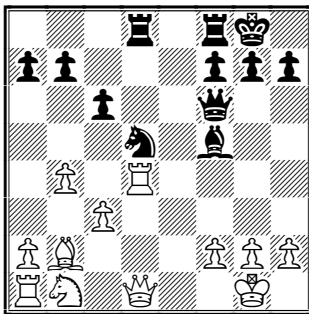
27...a6 AAA remarks “Now it’s Black who misses a favorable opportunity: after 27...a5, he would have held on to some winning chances,” followed by brief examinations of 28.♙f1 and 28.♙b3.

Stockfish agrees that 27...a5 was best here, but considers 28.a3 the best reply, with some edge for Black but no clear win on the horizon (-0.77 SF/39).

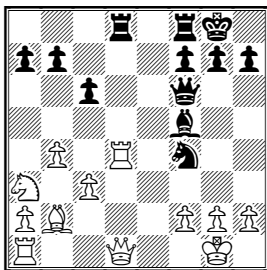
28.♖f1 ♗g4 29.♞d2 g5 30.h×g5 ♗×g5 31.♗e3 ♗e7 32.♗f4 ♗c5 33.♖e3 ♗×e3 34.♗×e3 ½-½

Game 48, Spielmann-Vidmar, Ruy Lopez [C65]: The possibilities at move 20 proved quite intriguing.

1.e4 e5 2.♖f3 ♖c6 3.♗b5 ♖f6 4.d4 e×d4 5.e5 ♖e4 6.0-0 ♗e7 7.♖×d4 0-0 8.♖f5 d5 9.♖×e7+ ♖×e7 10.♗d3 ♖c5 11.♗e2 c6 12.c3(?) ♞c7 13.b4? ♖e4 14.♗d3 ♞×e5 15.♞e1 ♞f6 16.♗×e4 d×e4 17.♞×e4 ♗f5 18.♞d4 ♖d5 19.♗b2 ♞ad8

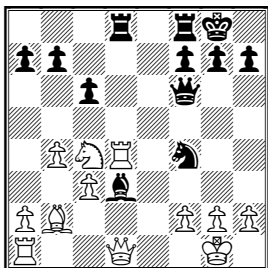


20.♖d2? The “?” here is undeserved; along with 20.♞f3 this was one of the two least evils. Alekhine says “for better or worse, probably 20.♖a3 had to happen here.” It is not surprising Alekhine failed to see the flaws in that move, as the proof requires examining at least a half-dozen variations at some length. But it would definitely be for the worse: 20.♖a3?? ♖f4!



and surprisingly, White is lost, viz.:

- (a) 21.♞f3 ♞×d4 22.c×d4 ♗e6 23.♞e3 ♗d5 24.g3 ♖h3+ 25.♞f1 ♞f5 26.f4 ♖g5 27.♞e2 ♖e4 –+ (-5.34 SF/24);
- (b) 21.♖c2 ♞g6 22.♖e1 ♞×d4 23.c×d4 ♖h3+ 24.♞f1 ♞d6 25.g3 ♞e8 26.♞b3 ♞e7 27.♞e3 ♞d7 28.♞b3 ♗e6 29.♞c3 ♞d5 30.f3 ♞b5+ 31.♖d3 ♗f5 (-8.97 SF/27);
- (c) 21.♞×d8 ♞×d8 22.♞f3 ♗e6 23.♞e1 (if 23.♞d1 h5! 24.♞×d8+ ♞×d8 25.h3 ♞d2 –+) 23...♞d2 24.♗c1 ♖h3+ 25.♞h1 ♖×f2+ 26.♞g1 ♞×f3 27.g×f3 ♞×a2 (-5.84 SF/25);
- (d) 21.♗c1 ♖×g2! 22.♞×g2 ♞g6+ 23.♞f1 ♗h3+ 24.♞e2 ♞g2 25.♞e1 f5 26.♖c2 ♞de8+ 27.♗e3 f4 28.♞g1 ♗g4+! 29.♞d3 ♞f3 30.♞e1 f×e3 31.♖×e3 ♗h5 (-4.14 SF/25);
- (e) 21.♖c4 ♗d3



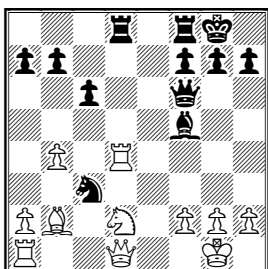
(e1) 22. ♖e3 ♗e2+ 23. ♖h1 ♗xd4 24. cxd4 ♜xf2 --;

(e2) 22. ♖xd8 ♜xd8 23. ♖e3 ♗e2+ and forced is either 24. ♖h1 ♜xf2 (-6.92 SF/28), or 24. ♖f1 ♜d6 25. ♖e1 ♜xh2 and 26. ♜xd3 (-8.51);

(f) And of course if 21. ♖xf4 ♜xd1+ 22. ♖xd1 ♜d8 23. ♖fd4 ♜xd4 24. ♖xd4 ♜e7 25. ♖f1 h5--.

It might be too harsh to call Alekhine's recommendation of 20. ♗a3 a howler, given the complexities of its refutation, but navigating such complications was usually his *forte*. Presumably he did not devote as much time to this game as he would to one of his own, or Capablanca's.

20... ♗b6? This punctuation is very much deserved, and Alekhine is correct to point out that 20... ♗xc3! should ultimately win:

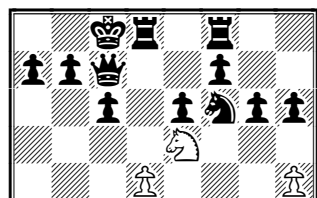


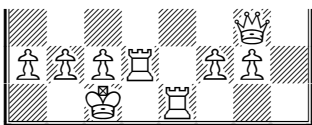
He gives the further moves 21. ♖xd8 ♜xd8 22. ♜b3 ♗e2+ 23. ♖h1 ♜e6 (-1.95 SF/29). We only wish to point out that instead 21. ♗xc3 ♜xd4 22. ♜f3 ♜d6 23. ♗xd4 ♜xd4 24. ♗b3 would not be quite as bad for White (-1.32 SF/29).

21. ♗b3 ♗c4 22. ♜e2 b5 23. ♖e1 ½-½

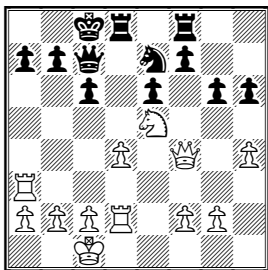
Game 49, Spielmann-Capablanca, Caro-Kann Defense [B19]: Some faulty analysis in one variation of the note at move 20.

1. e4 c6 2. d4 d5 3. ♗c3 dxe4 4. ♗xe4 ♗f5 5. ♗g3 ♗g6 6. ♗f3 ♗d7 7. h4 h6 8. ♗d3 ♗xd3 9. ♜xd3 ♗gf6 10. ♗d2 e6 11. 0-0-0 ♗d6 12. ♗e4 ♗xe4 13. ♜xe4 ♜c7 14. ♖he1 ♗f6 15. ♜e2 ♗f4 16. ♗e5 ♗xd2+ 17. ♖xd2 0-0-0 18. ♜f3 ♖hf8 19. ♜g3 g6

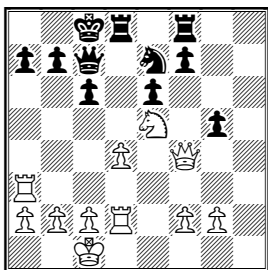




20. ♖a3? Apparently punctuated thus not because it is especially bad, but because there was something Alekhine considered much better. Yet while his recommendation 20. ♖f4 is best, his analysis of the reply 20... ♗g8 is flawed. He continues 21. ♖e3 ♗e7 22. ♖a3,

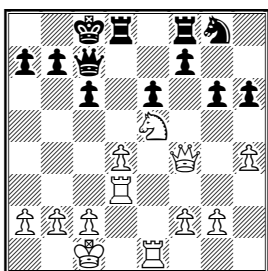


apparently thinking Black must then lose a pawn. But after 22... g5! 23. h×g5 h×g5,

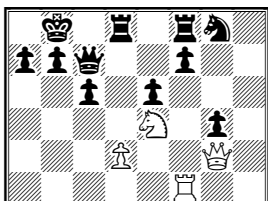


White cannot play 24. ♖×g5? because of 24... f6+-. The best White can do is 24. ♖e4 ♖b8 when Black has everything covered and the game is even.

A rook lift to the third rank is not a bad idea, but the correct way to do it is 21. ♖d3,



when if 21... ♗e7? White can safely play 22. ♖×h6 because, unlike with 21. ♖e3, 22... ♗f5 does not fork queen and rook. Black would have to play 21... g5 22. h×g5 h×g5 23. ♖g4 ♖b8 24. ♖f3,

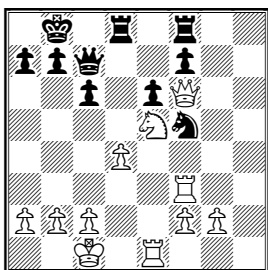




when things look good for White, e.g.:

(a) 24...f6?! 25.♖c4 ♕d7 26.c3 ♜fe8 27.♞fe3 ♕d5 28.♞xe6 ♞xe6 29.♞xe6 ♞xg2 30.♞e3±;

(b) 24...♗h6 25.♞xg5 ♗f5 26.♞f6

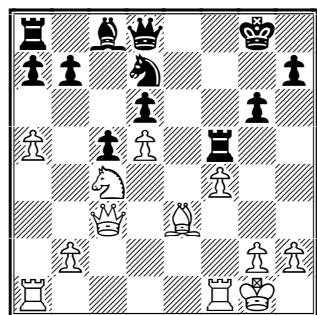


26...♞a5 (not 26...♗xd4?! 27.♞d3 c5 28.c3 ♗c6 [if 28...♗f5? 29.♞xd8+ ♞xd8 30.♞xf7] 29.♗xc6+ bxc6 30.♞ed1±) 27.♞d1 ♞xa2 28.♞a3 ♕d5 29.g4 ♗d6±.

20...♞b8 21.♞e3 g5 22.hxg5 hxg5 23.♞f3 ♗e4 24.♞e2 ♗d6 25.c3 ♞h8 26.♞e1 ♞h2 27.♞g3 ♗f5 Alekhine says Black had “excellent chances of victory” with 27...♞dh8, but the engines do not agree, rating the position virtually dead even after almost any reasonable reply. **28.♞g4 ♗d6 29.♞g3 ♗f5** ½-½

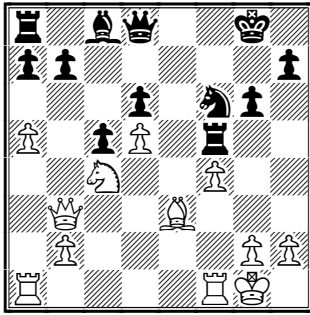
Game 51, Nimzovich-Marshall, Modern Benoni [A61]: Several kinds of errors here: analytical, translational, and typographical.

1.c4 ♗f6 2.d4 e6 3.♗f3 c5 4.d5 d6 5.♗c3 exd5 6.cxd5 g6 7.♗d2 ♗bd7 8.♗c4 ♗b6 9.e4 ♗g7 10.♗e3 0-0 11.♗d3 ♗h5 12.0-0 ♗e5 13.a4 ♗f4 14.a5 ♗d7 15.♗c4 ♗xd3 16.♞xd3 f5 17.exf5 ♞xf5 18.f4 ♗d4+ 19.♗e3 ♗xc3 20.♞xc3



20...♗f6 The note here is badly translated. The original German reads “Auch das sofortige 20...♞xd5 war u.a. 21.f5! gx f5 22.♞f3 usw. sehr stark.” Alekhine’s phrasing is awkward, and it’s not surprising that it was translated as “Very strong also was the immediate 20...♞xd5; among others 21.f5! gx f5 22.♞f3, etc.,” which makes it sound like 20...♞xd5 was a good move. A rendering more in keeping with Alekhine’s intent would be “If the immediate 20...♞xd5, then very strong is 21.f5! gx f5 22.♞f3 etc., among other lines.”

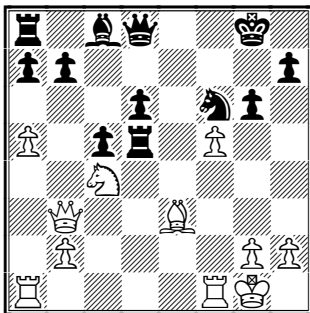
21. ♖b3



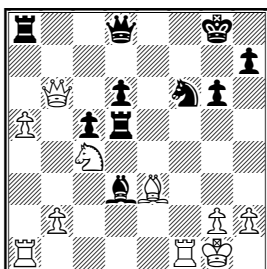
And here the note has a typo, where it says “relatively best for Black is 21...g4, in order to ensure a retreat for the rook.” Obviously that move is impossible; the German edition says 21... ♖g4.

21... ♖×d5? Alekhine is correct to fault this, but he comments further “Upon 21... ♖×d5, which looks somewhat better, Nimzovich indicates the strong file occupation 22. ♖ae1! as sufficient for a win.” *Pace* Nimzovich, the engines don’t see any such thing, rating the position dead even (0.00) after either 22... ♖e6 or 22...b5, out to 30 ply or more.

22.f5

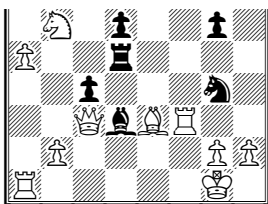


22...g×f5(??) No comment from Alekhine here, but this, more than Black’s 21st, is the losing move. The correct capture was 22... ♖×f5, when if 23. ♖×b7 ♖b8 24. ♖×a7 ♖a8 25. ♖b6 ♖d3



26. ♖b3! (much stronger than 26. ♖×d8+ ♖×d8 27. ♖×f6 ♖×c4) 26... ♖g4 27. ♖f3 ♖b8 28. ♖b6 c4 29. ♖c3,



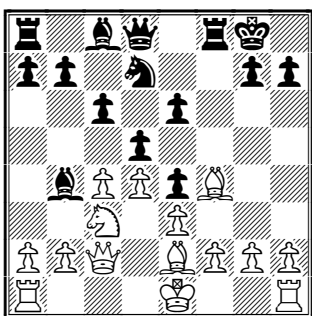


and after either 29...♖b5 ♜xc4, or 29...♜xe3 30.♖xe3 ♖xb6 31.axb6 ♜xb6, White stands clearly better (about +1.50 to +1.75), but Black would still have chances in the complications.

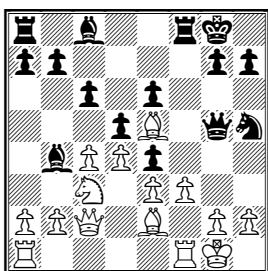
23.♙g5 ♜d4 24.♜b6+ c4 25.♜c3 axb6 26.♜xd4 ♜g7 27.♜ae1 bxa5 28.♜e8 ♜xe8 29.♜xf6+ ♜g8 30.♙h6 1-0

Game 53, Alekhine-Marshall, Queen's Pawn Game [E10]: No major problems, but improvements to two notes were found.

1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 e6 3.♜f3 ♜e4 4.♜fd2 ♙b4 5.♜c2 d5 6.♜c3 f5 7.♜dxe4 fxe4 8.♙f4 0-0 9.e3 c6 10.♙e2 ♜d7



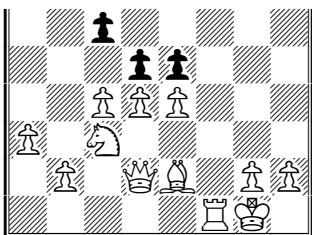
11.a3 In his note variation 11.0-0 ♜f6 12.f3 ♜h5, Alekhine seems to think that 13.♙e5 is inferior to 13.fxe4, and is adequately answered by 13...♜g5,



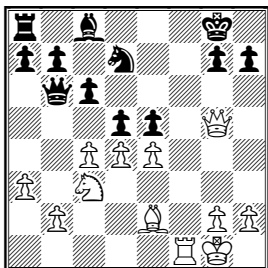
threatening 14...♜xe3+. But in fact that threat is hollow, and White then gets a terrific attack going, viz. 14.fxe4! ♜xe3+ 15.♜h1 ♜f6 16.♖f3 ♜h6 17.♖af1 dxc4 18.♖h3 ♜g5 19.a3 ♙xc3 20.bxc3 ♖f7 21.♙xc4 etc. (+3.41 SF/26). Best after 13.♙e5 is actually 13...exf3, when White's advantage is not nearly so great (about +1.35).

11...♙e7 12.0-0 ♙g5 13.f3 ♙xf4 14.exf4 ♖xf4 15.fxe4 ♖xf1+ 16.♖xf1 e5 17.♜d2!





17...c5 The note line here can be improved some. On 17...♖b6 18.c5, White's attack is blunted somewhat by 18...♘xc5 19.dxc5 ♜xc5+ 20.♖h1 d4. Stronger after 17...♖b6 is 18.♖g5!,

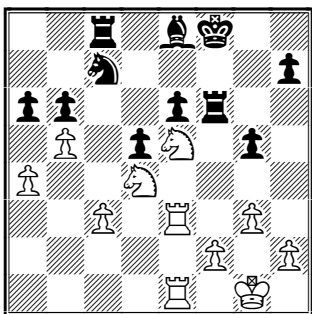


when if 18...♖d4+ 19.♖h1 ♘f6 20.cxd5 h6 21.♖g6 ♘f5 (or 21...♘d7 22.♖xf6) 22.♖xf5+-, or 18...♘f6 19.c5 ♜c7 20.♖xf6 ♖e7 21.dxe5+-, or 18...♘f8 19.c5 ♜c7 20.exd5 etc. (+5.27).

18.dxe5! d4 19.♖f4! dxc3 20.♖f7+ ♖h8 21.bxc3 ♖g8 22.♖e7 h6 23.♘h5 a5 24.e6 g6 25.exd7 ♘xd7 26.♖f7 1-0

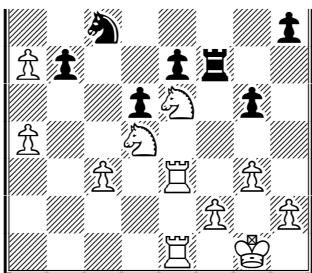
Game 54, Spielmann-Nimzovich, French Defense [C07]: One overstatement at move 30, one major error of omission at move 31, and one howler at the end of move 32's note.

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘d2 c5 4.dxc5 ♘xc5 5.♘d3 ♘f6 6.e5 ♘fd7 7.♘gf3 ♘c6 8.♖e2 ♘b4 9.0-0 ♘xd3 10.♖xd3 0-0 11.♘b3 ♘e7 12.♖e1 ♘b6 13.♘bd4 ♘d7 14.b3 ♖c8 15.♘d2 ♘a8 16.a3 ♘c7 17.♘b4 ♘a6 18.♘xe7 ♖xe7 19.b4 ♘c7 20.a4 ♘e8 21.c3 f6 22.exf6 ♖xf6 23.♖e3 ♖f4 24.♘e5 ♖xe3 25.♖xe3 ♖f6 26.g3 g5 27.b5 ♖f8 28.♖b1 b6 29.♖be1 a6

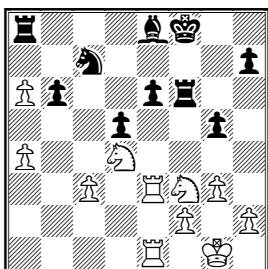


30.bxa6? It is true that this is not best, and that White could have won easily with 30.a5! as Alekhine claims, but as will be seen, he went too far in claiming this move “misses out on a win.”
30...♖a8





31. ♖b5(?) It is this move, and not 30. b×a6, that blows the last winning chance. Correct was 31. ♖ef3!:



and now:

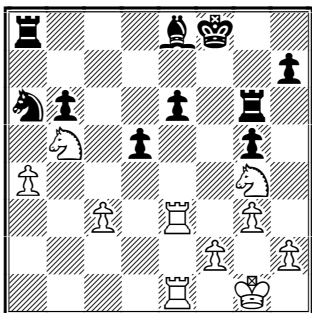
(a) 31... ♖d7/ ♖f7? 32. ♖×g5 --;

(b) 31... g4 32. ♖g5 ♖g8 33. ♖g×e6 ♖×a6 34. ♖f4 ♖f7 35. ♖e5 ♖c7 36. ♖g5+ ♖f8 37. ♖×g4+-;

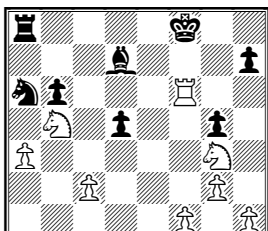
(c) 31... ♖g6 32. ♖×e6+ ♖×e6 33. ♖×e6 ♖×e6 34. ♖×e6 g4 35. ♖g5 ♖×a6 36. ♖×h7+ ♖f7 37. ♖g5+ ♖f8 38. f3 g×f3 39. ♖×f3 and White wins with his two connected, passed pawns;

(d) 31... h6 32. ♖×e6+ ♖×e6 33. ♖×e6 ♖×e6 34. ♖×e6 ♖×a6 35. ♖×h6 g4 36. ♖e5 ♖×a4 37. ♖×b6 ♖e4 38. ♖e6 and with two extra pawns, plus other advantages, White will still win (+3.30 SF/28).

31... ♖×a6 32. ♖g4 ♖g6



33. ♖e5 Alekhine correctly observes that “the pawn can’t be taken: 33. ♖×e6? ♖×e6 34. ♖×e6 ♖d7 35. ♖f6+,”



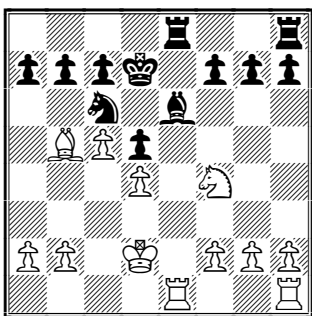


but then he goes wrong, saying “35...♖g7(?) and wins.” White wriggles out of that with 36.♗e5! ♖×f6 (if 36...♗×b5? 37.♖f7+) 37.♗×d7+ ♜f5 38.♗×b6 and victory for Black is unlikely (-0.33 SF/26). What does win is 35...♜e7! What a difference one square makes! 36.♗e5 ♗×b5! 37.♖×b6 (if 37.♖f7+ ♜e6-+) 37...♗×a4-+.

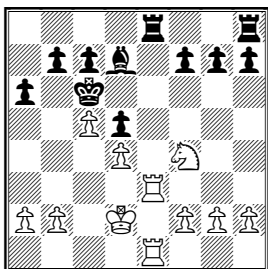
33...♖f6 34.♗g4 ♖g6 ½-½

Game 56, Alekhine-Spielmann, French Defense [C14]: An instructive and exemplary rook endgame played by Alekhine. A few corrections and improvements to his notes were found.

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♗c3 ♗f6 4.♗g5 ♗e7 5.e×d5 ♗×d5 6.♗×e7 ♜×e7 7.♜d2 ♜b4 8.♗×d5 ♜×d2+ 9.♜×d2 e×d5 10.♖e1+ ♗e6? 11.♗h3 ♗c6 12.♗b5 ♜d7 13.♗f4 ♖ae8 14.c4 ♜d6 15.c5+ ♜d7

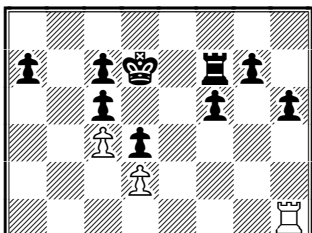


16.♖e5 In the note line 16.♖e3 a6 17.♗×c6+ ♜×c6 18.♖he1, the sub-variation 18...♗d7,



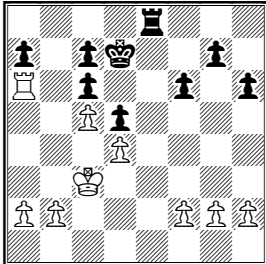
Alekhine says “White wins by means of 19.♖×e8, together with ♗h5, etc.” This is good, but better still is 19.♗d3! followed in most cases by either 20.♗e5+- or 20.♗b4+-.

16...f6 17.♖×e6 ♖×e6 18.♗×e6 ♜×e6 19.♗×c6 b×c6 20.♖e1+ ♜d7 21.♜c3 ♖b8 22.♖e3 ♖f8 23.♖g3 ♖f7 24.♜b4 ♖e7 25.♜c3 ♖f7 26.♖h3 h6 27.♜d2

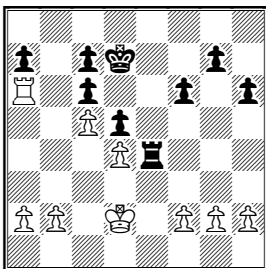




27...♖e7 Alekhine says “after 27...♖f8 28.♞a3 ♞b8 29.♜c3 ♞b7(?) 30.♞a6, Black would finally perish by *Zugzwang*.” However, Black can do better with 29...♞a8! 30.♞a6 ♞e8!

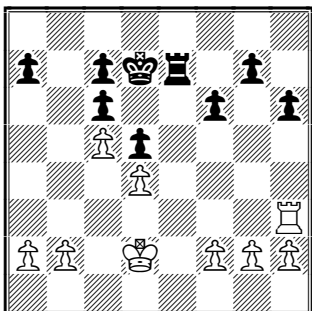


31.♜d2 (if 31.♞xa7?! ♞e2, or 31.♜d3?! ♞e1) 31...♞e4



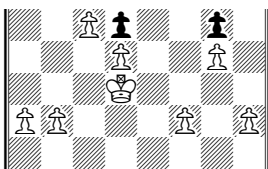
and though after 32.♜d3 or 32.♞a4 White retains a slight advantage (about +0.70), Stockfish sees no forced *Zugzwang* win, even out to 37 ply.

Returning to the game:



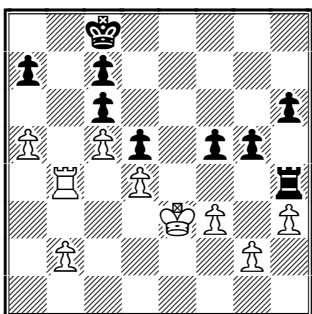
28.♞a3 Here Alekhine gives a long analysis line attempting to prove that “With the logical 28.♞e3 ... White could have compelled a victory-promising pawn endgame.” He continues 28...♞e3 29.♜xe3 ♜e6 30.♜f4 g6 31.g4 g5+ 32.♜e3 ♜d7 33.♜d3 ♜c8(?) 34.♜c3 ♜b7 35.♜b4 ♜a6 36.♜a4 ♜b7 37.♜a5 a6 38.a4 ♜a7 39.b3 ♜b7 40.b4 ♜a7 41.b5 a×b5 42.a×b5 ♜b7 43.b6 etc. However, like much long analysis, this one hits a snag along the way: After 33.♜d3,





Black is by no means compelled to play 33...♖c8??; instead 33...f5! holds (+0.87 SF/41).

28...♞e4 29.♞a4 ♜c8 30.f3 ♞h4 31.h3 ♜b7 32.♜e3 f5 33.♞b4+ ♜c8 34.a4 g5(?)
Alekhine is correct that 34...f4+ 35.♜f2 ♞h5 was the easiest way to a “dead draw” (0.00 SF/28).
35.a5



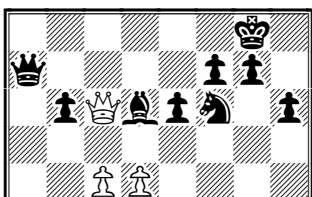
35...g4(?) Alekhine calls this “probably the best practical chance.” Stockfish considers it the losing move, and strongly prefers 35...a6, foreseeing no way for White to win then (+1.01 SF/45).

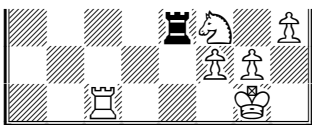
The rest of the game is played and annotated flawlessly by Alekhine.

36.h×g4 f×g4 37.a6! g×f3 38.g×f3 ♞h1 39.♞b7 ♞e1+ 40.♜f4! ♞d1 41.♜e5 ♞e1+ 42.♜f5 ♞d1 43.♞×a7 ♞×d4 44.♞a8+ ♜d7 45.f4 ♞a4 46.a7 h5 47.b3 ♞a1 48.♜e5 ♞e1+ 49.♜f6 ♞a1 50.♜e5 ♞e1+ 51.♜d4 ♞d1+ 52.♜c3 ♞a1 53.f5 ♜e7 54.♜d4 h4 55.♜e5 ♞e1+ 56.♜f4 ♞a1 57.♜g5 ♞g1+ 58.♜×h4 ♞a1 59.♜g5 ♞g1+ 60.♜f4 ♞a1 61.♜e5 ♞e1+ 62.♜d4 ♞a1 63.♜c3 ♞a3 64.♜b2 ♞a6 65.b4 ♜f7 66.♜b3 ♞a1 67.f6 ♞a6 68.b5 c×b5 69.♜b4 1–0

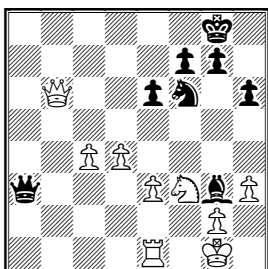
Game 59, Nimzovich-Vidmar, Sicilian Defense [B22]: Not a very interesting game. One correction was found, in the last note.

1.e4 c5 2.♟f3 e6 3.c3 ♟f6 4.e5 ♟d5 5.d4 c×d4 6.c×d4 ♟e7 7.♟c3 ♟×c3 8.b×c3 d5 9.e×d6 ♟×d6 10.♟e2 0–0 11.0–0 ♟d7 12.a4 ♟c7 13.♟b3 b6 14.c4 ♟b7 15.a5 ♟f6 16.a×b6 a×b6 17.♟e3 h6 18.h3 ♞fc8 19.♞fc1 ♞cb8 20.♞×a8 ♞×a8 21.♟d2 ♟e7 22.♟f3 ♞a3 23.♟b2 ♟×f3 24.♟×f3 ♞a5 25.♟d2 ♟a3 26.♞c2 ♟d6 27.♞c1 ♟a3 28.♞c2 ♟d6 29.♞c1 ♟a7 30.♟d3 ♞a3 31.♟e4 ♟f6 32.♟c6 ♞×e3





33. ♖×d6 ½-½ Alekhine writes “After the acceptance of the exchange sacrifice, Black would actually still have chances, for example 33.f×e3 ♜a3 34.♞e1 ♜g3 35.♞f1(?) ♜×e3+ 36.♜h1 ♜e4+.” However, 35.♞f1? is not forced, and White can maintain equality (or even gain the upper hand if Black errs) by giving back the exchange with 35.♜×b6!:



If now 35...♜×e1? 36.♜b8+ ♜h7 37.♜b1+ ♜g8 38.♜×e1±, and the net result is that White is a protected passed pawn ahead. Therefore Black must play 35...♜c3 36.c5 ♜d5 37.♜b1 ♜×e1 38.♜×e1 ♜×e3+ 39.♜×e3 ♜×e3=.