

Progress in Chess

Volume 9 of the ongoing series

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2002

EDITION OLMS



Mark Dvoretsky

Strategic Play

School of Chess Excellence 3

Edited and translated
by Ken Neat

2002

EDITION OLMS





Contents

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Die Deutsche Bibliothek – CIP Einheitsaufnahme
Dvoreckij, Mark I.:
School of chess excellence / Mark Dvoretsky.
Ed. and transl. by Ken Neat. -
Hombrechtikon/Zürich : Ed. Olms
Einheitssacht.:
Geheimnisse der Schachstra

3. Strategic play. - 2002
(Progress in Chess ; Vol. 9)
ISBN 3-283-00418-8

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Breitlenstr. 11 · CH-8634 Hombrechtikon/Zürich, Switzerland

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Printed in Germany

Editor and translator: Ken Neat

Typeset: Arno Nickel · Edition Marco, D-10551 Berlin

Printed by: Druckerei Friedr. Schmücker GmbH, D-49624 Lönigen
Cover: Prof. Paul König, D-31137 Hildesheim

ISBN 3-283-00418-8

Preface	7
Part six	
Positional Play	8
The logic of a positional battle	9
Which pawn to advance?	19
Undermining pawn moves	23
The blocking of passed pawns	30
The two bishops	36
An unusual exchange	40
Mistakes, mistakes... ..	46
Advantage in space	54
Routes for the rook	62
Don't forget about prophylaxis!	69
'Mysterious' rook moves	78
Training with grandmasters	82
What is meant by a strategic plan?	90
How a plan is formulated	97
Clash of plans	102
The initiative	109
I seek a win	120
An 'easy' win	130
Exercises for analysis	137
Part seven	
Simple Positions	141
Attack with a small army	143
Abundance of possibilities	149
A memorable loss	157
When technique lets you down	164
The scales tipped	169
A course in tactics	174
Defend actively!	178
Failure to take the initiative	181
Turning points	186
Exercises for analysis	194



Solutions to exercises 196

Appendix

Index of exercises by thinking skills and types of problems to be solved 229

Index of players 231



*The skill of the artist is the ability to force the mind to act on the level of intuition.
Skill is a recollection of inspiration and therefore is partly a noble imitation of it.
...Inspiration may be intermittent, and in this case skill fills in the gaps.*

Fazil Iscander

*Playing positional chess means formulating opinions
and striving to demonstrate them.*

Aron Nimzowitsch

Preface

The book you have before you, dear reader, is a continuation of the titles already published in the series 'School of Chess Excellence' – Volume 1: 'Endgame Analysis', and Volume 2: 'Tactical Play'. This, the third volume, is devoted to positional play.

In reviews of the preceding books it was sometimes mentioned that they are rather difficult, and full of complicated analysis. The games and game extracts which you will now meet are mainly (although, of course, not all) rather simpler. Some readers will be reassured by this, others may possibly be disappointed. But believe me, I have never aimed deliberately to simplify or complicate material – here, evidently, it all depends on the chosen topic and the literary form. Generally speaking, it sometimes seems to me that the conscientious author is much less capable, than it is customarily imagined, of controlling that which he writes. My books may or may not be liked, but it is unlikely that they could have been any different. I

demonstrate examples that are memorable to me in the way that I myself see them, and I describe the chess and psychological mechanisms in the same way that I explain them in lessons to my pupils. I am sure that an attempt to deliberately correct, and artificially simplify the material would have led to a significant lowering of its quality, and a distortion of the chess patterns generated in the mind of the author, and, I hope, subsequently also in the mind of the reader.

As in the previous books of the series, your attention is drawn to episodes, in which in some way or another the author of these lines and his pupils participated – our own games or games of other players with our analyses. As was the case previously, the reader is invited to train himself by independently solving numerous problems. These are divided into 'questions', the replies to which are contained in the following text, and 'exercises', with replies at the end of the book.



Part Six

Positional Play

Francis Bacon once remarked: 'Some books are to be tasted; others to be swallowed; and some few to be chewed and digested'. Among the books devoted to positional play, one of the few that is universally recognised, and in my view simply the best, was and remains 'My System' by Aron Nimzowitsch. At one time, when I was still a schoolboy, I carefully studied this book, after which, from being a first category player, in just over a year I became a master.

Even now, if one of my pupils is not familiar with Nimzowitsch's ideas, I definitely recommend that he should read 'My System'. But when I myself give lessons in positional play, I employ a different approach.

Nimzowitsch proposes a complete set of principles of positional play. His ideas have withstood the test of time, although, of course, many of the positions that he examined are today interpreted rather differently. But suppose you have assimilated these principles, and have begun (successfully!) to employ them in your games. What next? After all, it is clear that for the present by no means all the positional secrets have been disclosed to you. You will probably want (perhaps not immediately, but in a year or two) to make a new step forward in this

field. But how can this be done, and what other approaches are possible here? It is about this that I wish to talk.

I must once again emphasise: it is not a question of correcting or even adding to Nimzowitsch, but about other approaches to your work. A complete system of knowledge, convenient for assimilation and memorising, will, unfortunately, not be obtained – chess is too complicated and diverse, for it to be exhausted with the aid of a single plan or theory. But on the other hand, any of the directions offered for improving your positional mastery remains open – along it, if desired, you can advance further and further, achieving progress in the most varied aspects of the game.

Initially we will analyse one good positional game. With its help it will be possible to make an objective sketch of those directions in positional improvement that are to be described. Then we will take a step or two along certain of these directions. In the course of things we will solve numerous exercises (the majority of which are not as complicated as those in the two previous books of this series). Positional exercises are a great rarity on the pages of chess books and magazines, and here I endeavour, at least to some degree, to make up for this deficit.



The Logic of a Positional Battle

*What a good thing Adam had. When he said a good thing,
he knew nobody had said it before.*

Mark Twain

In the game with which we will begin there are no complicated variations or spectacular combinations, but even so it appeals to me. The strict logic of a positional battle also has its inherent beauty.

Dvoretsky – Timoshchenko

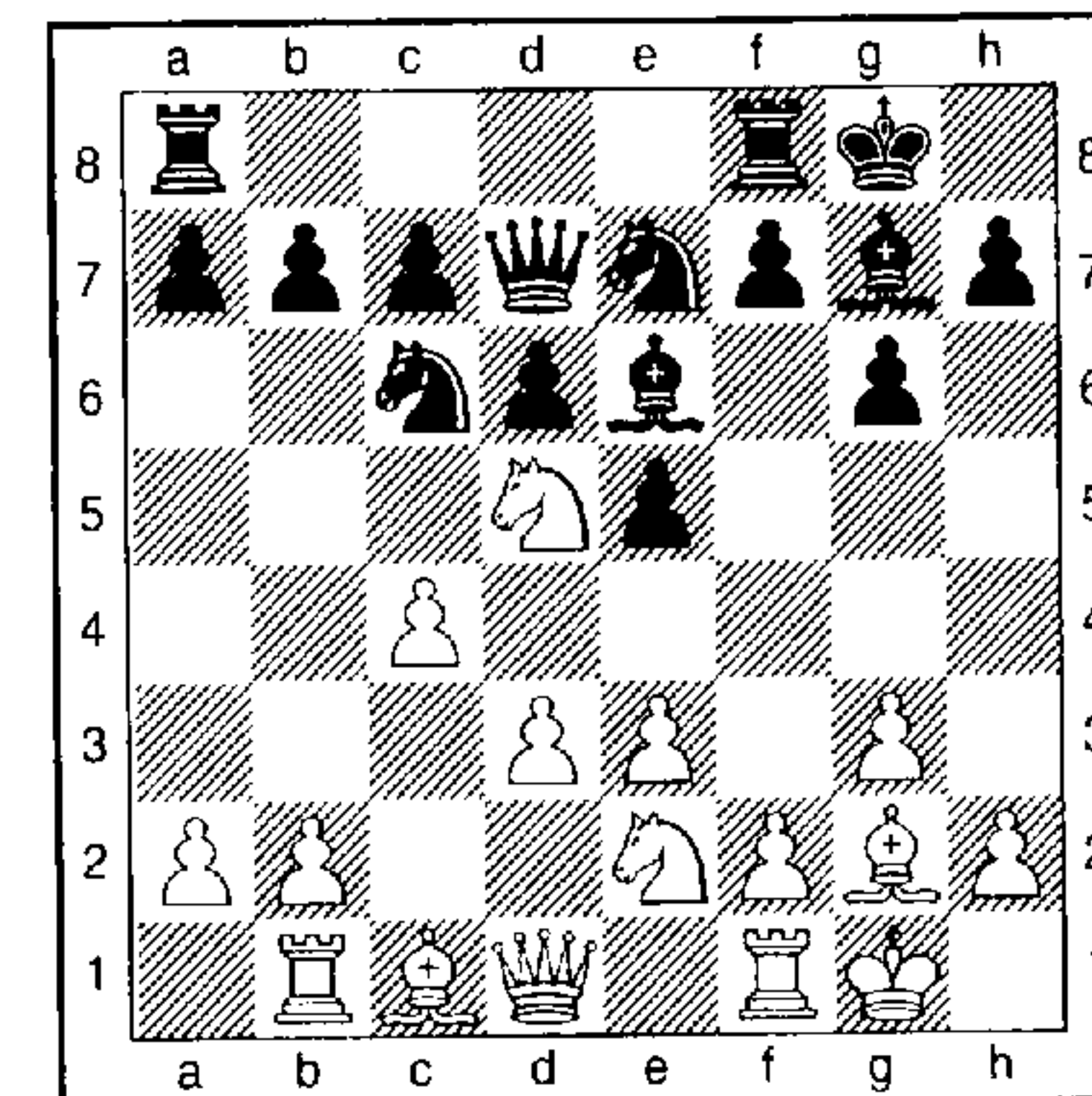
USSR Team Championship, Moscow 1966

1	c4	g6
2	♘c3	♙g7
3	g3	d6
4	♙g2	e5
5	d3	♘c6
6	e3	♘ge7
7	♘ge2	0-0
8	0-0	♙e6
9	♘d5!	

Otherwise Black would have played 9...d5 and subsequently pressed along the d-file on the weak d3 pawn.

9	...	♙d7
10	♙b1	

1



White's flexible development scheme is, in my view, one of the best against the King's Indian set-up chosen by my opponent. The pieces, as in the ancient opening tabiyas from the shatranj era, are harmoniously deployed behind the pawns – therefore at the appropriate moment almost any white pawn can advance. And for the present they are securely covering all the important central squares.

The two sides' subsequent plans are largely dictated by the pawn formation. Black, thanks to his pawn at e5, has more space on the kingside, and it is there that he intends to attack. Possible, for example, is ...f7-f5 and ...g6-g5, creating the threat of ...f5-f4. But White can neutralise the danger by meeting the enemy pawns at the appropriate moment with f2-f4!

He himself will obviously attack on the queenside. By advancing his pawn to b5 and driving the knight from c6, White will intensify the already unpleasant pressure exerted on the opponent's position by his bishop at g2. If Black wishes to push back the knight from d5 by playing ...c7-c6, White will open the b-file by exchanging pawns on c6, and then bring out his bishop to a3 and his queen to a4. (Taking account of this, there is clearly no point in him developing his bishop at d2 in the opening).

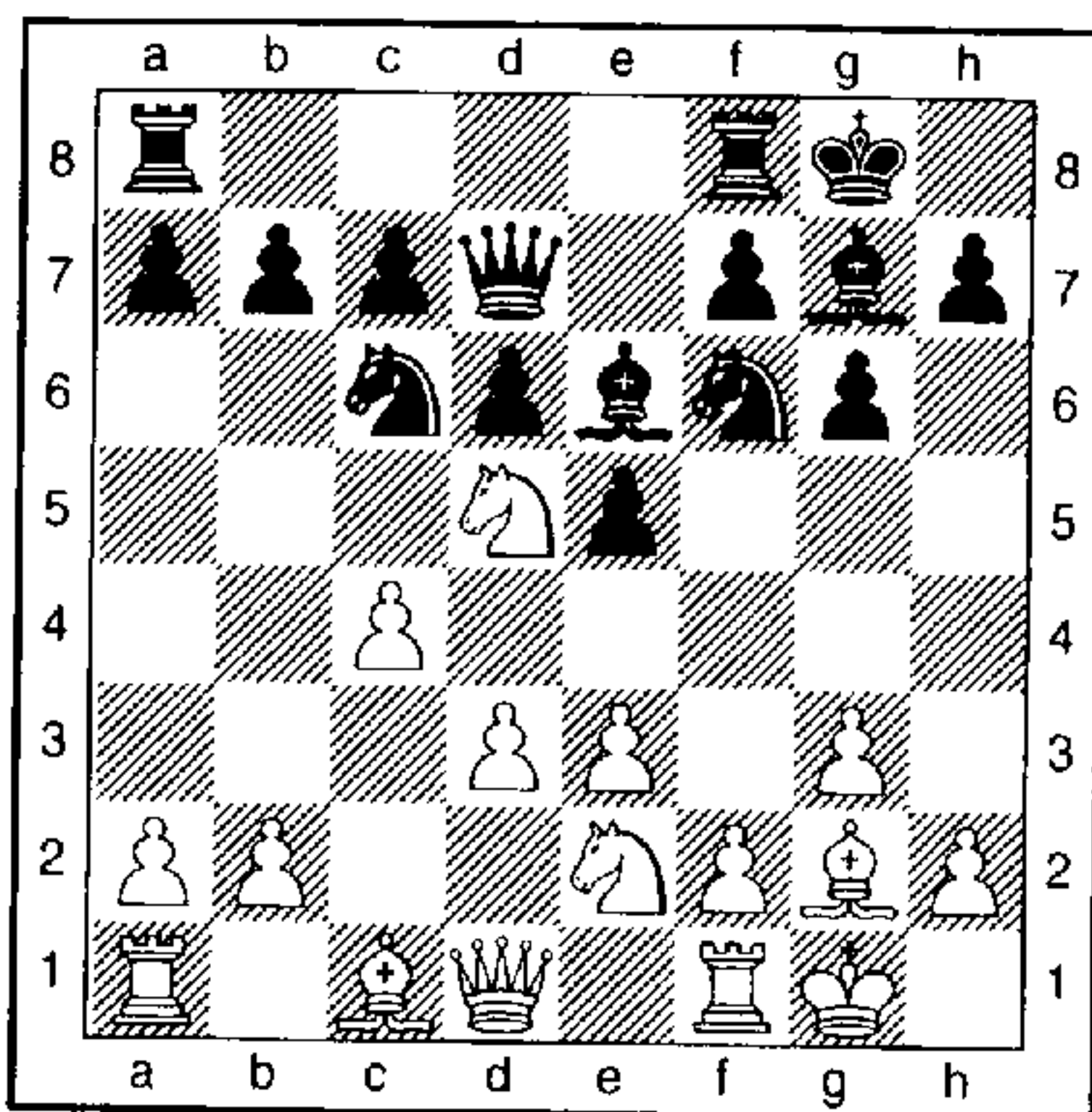
It would be advantageous for the opponent to exchange the strong g2 bishop – without its support, the offensive on the queenside planned by me is largely devalued, and in addition the position of the white king is weakened. But 10...♙h3? will not do, of



course, in view of 11 ♙xh3 ♚xh3 12 ♜xc7 . But now imagine that Black's king's knight is not at e7, but at f6 or h6. Then 10... ♙h3! would be possible, since 11 ♙xh3?! ♚xh3 12 ♜xc7?? ♜g4 leads to mate. This simple tactical motif suggests to Black the idea of slightly changing the arrangement of his forces in the opening.

When I played this variation as Black, I preferred to develop my knight at f6. For example: 6... ♜f6 7 ♜ge2 0-0 8 0-0 ♙e6 9 ♜d5 ♚d7 .

2



10 ♞b1 is now harmless in view of 10... ♙h3 . In the event of 10 ♜ec3 the reply 10... ♙h3?! would now be inaccurate: 11 ♜xf6+! ♙xf6 12 ♜d5 ♙d8 13 ♙d2 ♙xg2 14 ♜xg2 f5 15 ♚b3 with the better chances for White (Savon–Dvoretzky, USSR Championship First League, Odessa 1974). Stronger is 10... ♜e8! , preparing not only 11... ♙h3 , but also 11... ♜d8 followed by ...c7–c6. The white knight at d5 feels uncomfortable (especially when there is the second knight at c3), if it is unable to move from there with gain of tempo, by exchanging itself for a black knight. This type of position is described in more detail in the article 'The superfluous piece' in my book 'Training for the Tournament Player'.

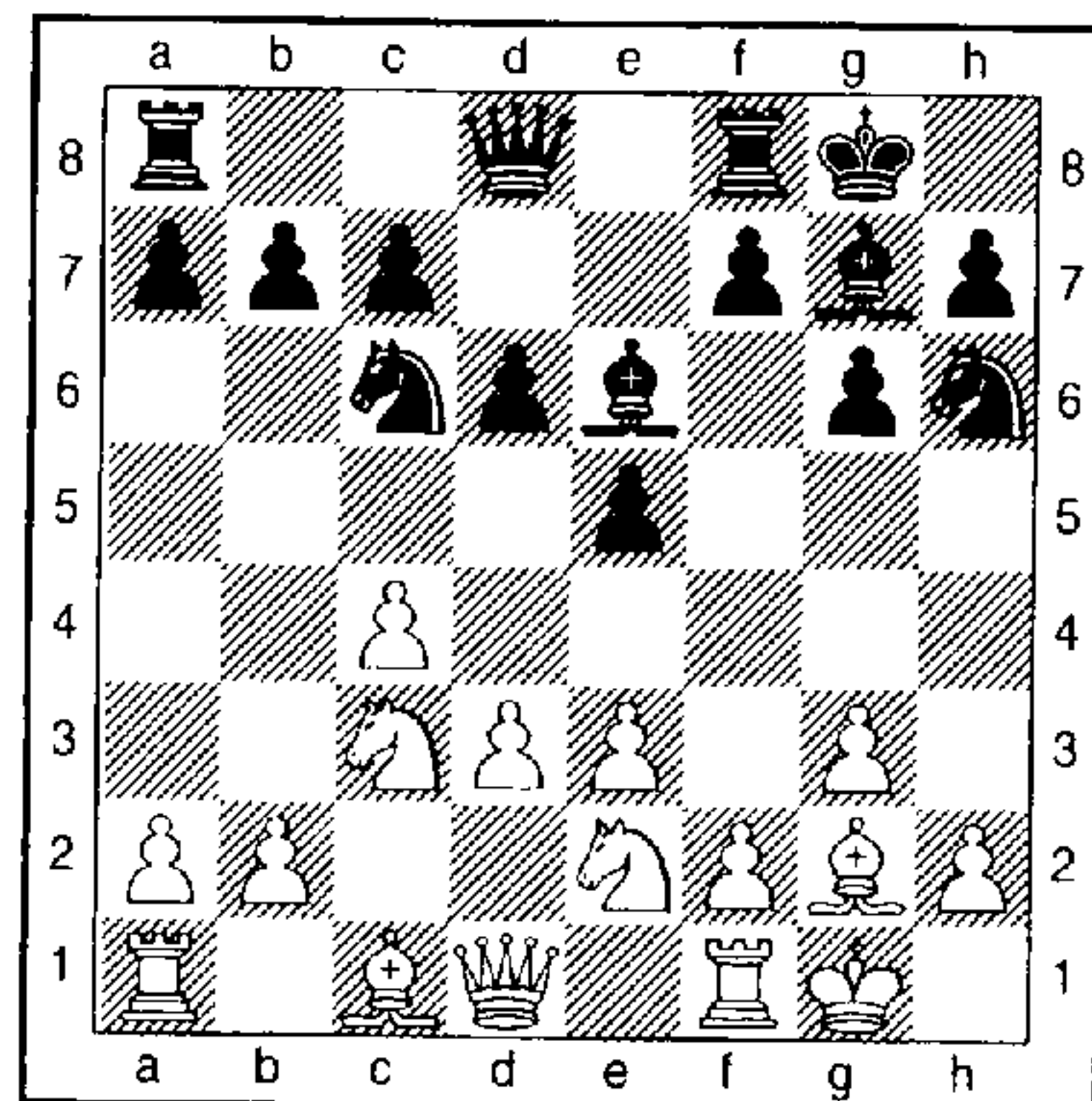
Artur Yusupov has several times tried developing his knight at h6. Generally speaking, in the opening it is customary to develop the pieces towards the centre, but this plan too has its logic. The knight does not block the f7 pawn, and in addition the d5 square is devalued. If the white knight goes there, it can be driven away by ...c7–c6, and White is forced to retreat with loss of time – the exchange of knights is no longer possible.

This was the course taken by the game **Petursson–Yusupov**, played in the 1978 World Junior Championship in the Austrian town of Graz:

1 c4 e5 2 ♜c3 ♜c6 3 g3 g6 4 ♙g2 ♙g7 5 e3 d6 6 ♜ge2 $\text{♜h6!?$ 7 ♞b1?! a5 8 a3 ♙e6 9 ♜d5 (9 d3 is sounder) 9...0-0 10 0-0 ♚d7 11 b4 ♙h3! 12 d3 ♙xg2 13 ♜xg2 f5 14 f4? (14 e4!?) 14... axb4 15 axb4 exf4 16 gxf4 ♜e7 17 ♜dc3 ♜h8 18 ♚b3 ♜g4 19 ♙d2 ♚e6 20 ♞f3 c6 21 h3 ♜f6 22 ♞f2 ♜h5 23 ♜g1 h6 24 ♜f3 g5! 25 fxg5 hxg5 26 ♜xg5 ♚h6! 27 ♜f3 (27 h4 ♜g6) 27... ♞g8 28 ♜f1 ♜g6 29 ♜e1 f4! 30 e4 ♜e5 31 ♜xe5 ♙xe5 32 ♜d1? (32 ♜e2) 32... ♙d4 33 ♞f3 ♞g2 34 ♜e2 ♞xe2! 35 ♜xe2 (35 ♙c3 ♚g7 36 ♙xd4 ♚xd4) 35... ♚g7 36 ♚d1 (36 ♞bf1 ♚g2+ 37 ♜d1 ♞a1+ 38 ♙c1 ♞a2) 36... ♚g2+ 37 ♜e1 ♜g3 38 ♙xf4 ♙c3+ . White resigns.

Instead of 7 ♞b1 , preferable is 7 0-0 0-0 8 d3 ♙e6 .

3



In the game Hort–Kovacevic (Zagreb 1969) White gave his opponent the opportunity to demonstrate the main ideas incorporated in the arrangement of his pieces – the exchange of light-square bishops and the driving away of the knight from d5: 9 ♜d5?! ♚d7 10 ♞b1 ♙h3! 11 b4 ♙xg2 12 ♜xg2 ♜d8 13 b5 c6, and Black's chances were already better.

It probably makes sense to prevent the exchange of bishops: 9 h3! ♚d7 10 ♜h2 f5 11 b3!? ♞ae8 12 d4! Here are two practical examples:

Csom–Yusupov (Olympiad, Luzern 1982): 12...f4?! 13 d5 f3 14 dxe6 ♞xe6 15 ♙xf3 ♞xf3 16 ♜e4 (threatening 17 ♜g5 or 17 ♜c5) 16... ♞e8 17 ♜g2 ♞ff8 18 ♙a3 ♜f5 19 ♚d3 ♜ce7 20 ♞ad1 , and White has an obvious advantage;

Forintos–Taimanov (Skopje 1970): 12... ♙f7 13 dxe5 ♜xe5 14 ♙b2 g5! (Black intends 15...g4 or 15... ♙h5) 15 f4 ♜eg4+! 16 hxg4 ♜xg4+ 17 ♜g1 ♚e6! 18 ♚d2 ♚xe3+ 19 ♚xe3 ♞e3 (followed by 20... ♞fe8) with a complicated and, apparently, roughly equal position.

In this last game Black coped successfully with his opening problems. But White's play can be improved. Instead of 14 ♙b2 he should for the moment have kept the bishop on the c1–h6 diagonal, by playing 14 ♞b1! ? Another tempting idea (suggested by Vadim Zviagintsev) is 8 b3!? White wants to save a tempo, by advancing his pawn to d4 in one go (immediately, or after the preparatory h2–h3 and ♜h2).

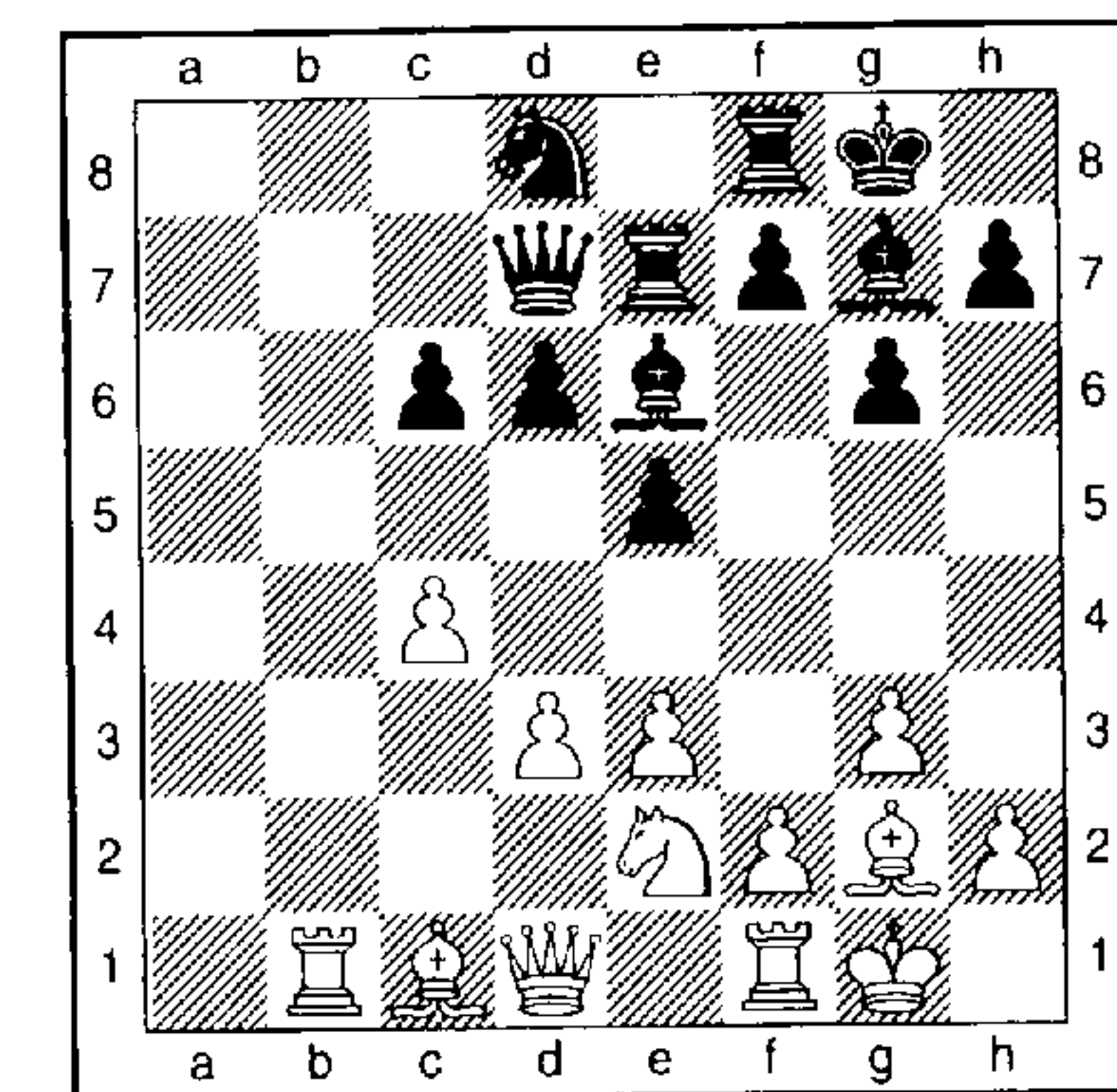
Let us return to the set-up with the knight on e7.

10 ... ♜d8

Sometimes Black plays 10...a5. This move seems dubious to me, since it runs contrary to a well-known positional principle: **'Don't move pawns on that part of the board where you are weaker'**. The ...a7–a5 advance leads to the opening of the a-file,

which will most probably favour White – it being he who is dominant on the queenside. After 11 a3 in the 1967 Moscow Team Championship, Sergey Veselovsky played 11... ♞ae8?! against me. He wanted to concentrate all his pieces on the kingside, but in so doing he left his queenside completely undefended. There followed 12 b4 axb4 13 axb4 ♜d8 14 b5 c6 15 bxc6 bxc6 16 ♜xe7+ ♞xe7 .

4



E 6–1. How would you now have continued?

11 b4 ♜xd5

In the event of 11...c6 12 ♜xe7+ ♚xe7 13 b5 ♚d7 14 bxc6 bxc6 15 ♙a3 followed by ♚a4–a6 White has an easy game. My opponent decided to exchange the light-square bishops, but for the sake of this he had to open for me the c-file, along which it will be possible to press on the backward c7 pawn.

12 cxd5 ♙h3
13 e4!

Typical play! Only the dark-square bishops are left on the board, which means that White should arrange his pawns on light squares, in order to open the diagonal for his

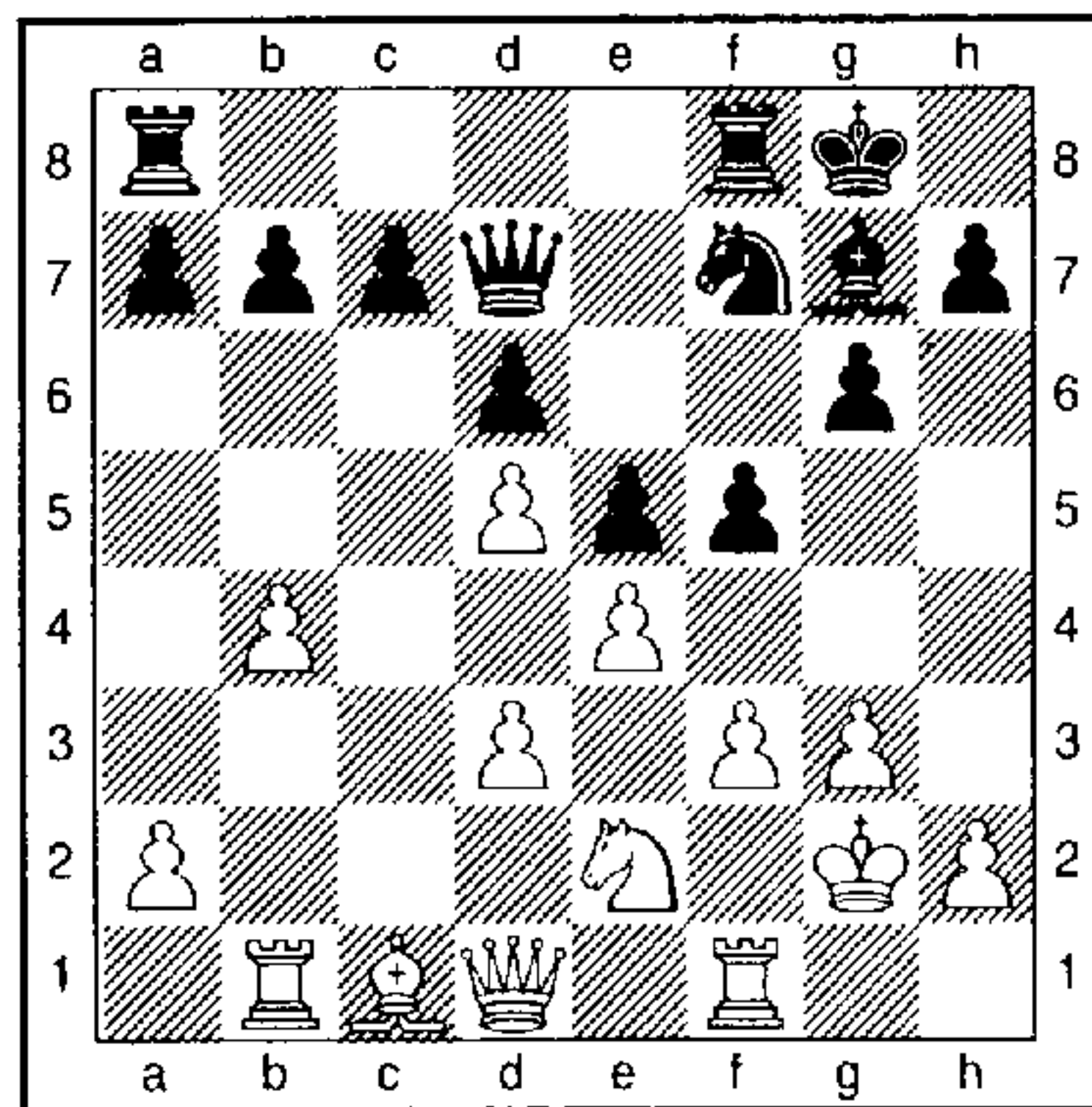


bishop and to fix the opponent's pawns on squares of the same colour as his bishop.

13 ... ♗xg2
14 ♔xg2 f5
15 f3

White's position is preferable. He controls more space, and he can attack on the queenside, whereas the opponent's attack on the opposite side of the board is not too dangerous. The black bishop runs up against its own pawns and can therefore be classed as 'bad'. In the event of 15...c6 White replies 16 ♖c3 and then prepares the exchange of pawns on c6, in order after ...b7xc6 to play b4-b5 and gain the d5 square for his knight. If Black desires, he can play his knight to d4, but these squares are not equivalent. White is attacking the d4 square with his bishop, whereas the opponent is not able to exchange his bishop for the knight. It is here that the advantage of a 'good' bishop over a 'bad' one is seen.

15 ... ♞f7
5



Q 6-1. What should White play?

The following move of mine was probably the best in the game. In order to find it, a chain of reasoning was required.

What does Black want? He will most

probably play 16...♗h6. Should I agree to the exchange of bishops?

Generally speaking, it is desirable to keep on the board the opponent's 'bad' bishop. But avoiding the exchange involves a loss of time, the white rooks will be deprived of the important c1 square, and the black knight will go to g5, dangerously threatening my king. So that it will probably be necessary to exchange the bishops.

But on which square? The opponent can be allowed to take on c1 – then the white rook will immediately occupy the open file. But after the exchange on h6 the black knight will be diverted away from g5 to the edge of the board. The latter factor seemed to me to be more important.

It is clear that any bishop move is a pure waste of time. In principle, it is useful to play b4-b5, but here this is rather premature. After 16 b5 a6!? the opening of the a-file causes White a certain amount of discomfort. It is better for him first to complete his development, tying the opponent to the defence of the backward c7 pawn.

White needs to prepare the tripling of his heavy pieces on the c-file. The piece to occupy c1 will obviously be the king's rook. The place for the other rook is c3, and the queen will be deployed behind it, at c2. Here a general rule operates: **'On an open file a rook should stand in front, and behind it the queen'**.

This means that it remains to make a choice between 16 ♖b3 and 16 ♖c2.

16 ♖b3!!

The rook will certainly have to follow the route b1-b3-c3, while if necessary the queen will also be able to go to c1, simultaneously creating threats along the c-file and along the c1-h6 diagonal. This means that the rook move is the most accurate.

This latter factor was confirmed in the later



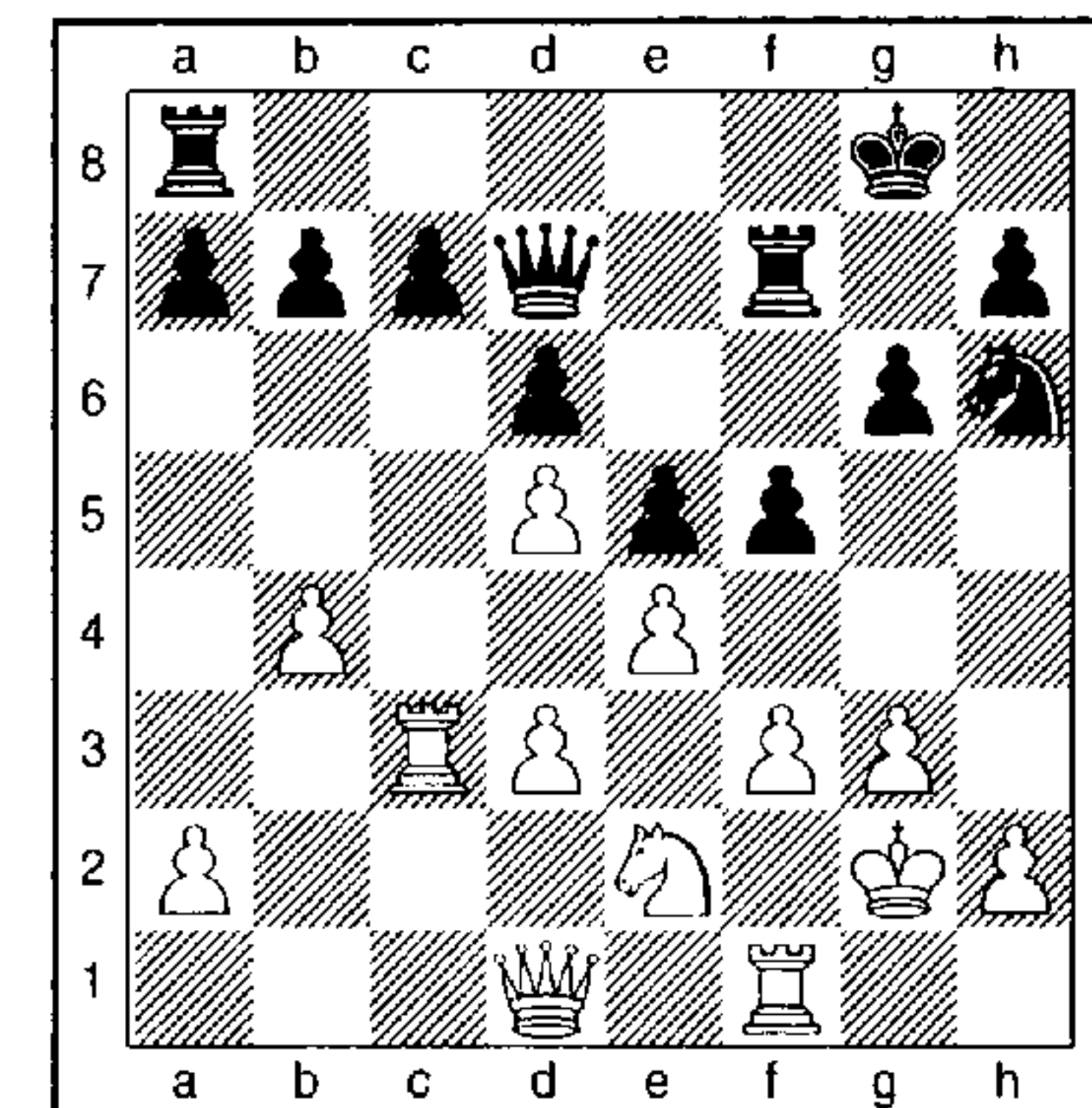
game **Dvoretsky-Kremenetsky** (35th USSR Championship, Kharkov 1967), which continued 16...h6 17 ♖c3 ♞g5? (17...c6) 18 ♗xg5 hxg5 19 ♖c1! (the loss of a pawn is now inevitable) 19...fxe4 20 dxe4 g4 21 ♖xc7 gxf3+ 22 ♖xf3 ♖b5 23 ♖c4 ♖b6 24 ♞g1! ♗h6 25 a4!, and White subsequently converted his advantage.

16 ... ♗h6
17 ♗xh6 ♞xh6
18 ♖c3

Threatening 19 ♖c1; 18...♞f7? 19 ♖c2 ♖ac8 20 ♖c1 is bad for Black.

18 ... ♞f7

6



Now 19 ♖c2 and 20 ♖c1 can be played – Black will defend his pawn by ...♖c8. White will advance his queenside pawns with a2-a4 and b4-b5, but this will not bring him any immediate gains.

Let us remember how we usually mount a pawn attack on the kingside. If a black pawn stands at g6, then the usual plan is h2-h4-h5, opening the h-file. With a pawn at h6 it is often possible to open the g-file by g2-g4-g5. The general rule states: **when making a pawn storm we can use an advanced enemy pawn as a 'hook' – a target for our attack. And if there is no such 'hook', it**

should be created – then the pawn storm will grow sharply in strength.

Now the following manoeuvre of the white queen becomes understandable.

19 ♖c1! ♔g7
20 ♖a3 a6

The rook has to be freed from having to defend the a7 pawn – 21 ♖fc1 was threatened. If 20...♖b5 there is the unpleasant reply 21 ♖a5!

21 ♖fc1 ♖c8
22 ♖b3

After a2-a4 and b4-b5 White will be threatening both to exchange on a6, breaking up the queenside, and b5-b6. In the event of ...a6xb5 White will recapture on b5 with his queen, transposing into a favourable ending.

The queen could also have been placed on the more active square a5, but I did not want to take it too far away from the kingside, fearing a counterattack against my king.

22 ... g5?

The decisive strategic mistake! Black's pieces are badly placed and therefore nothing comes of his planned attack.

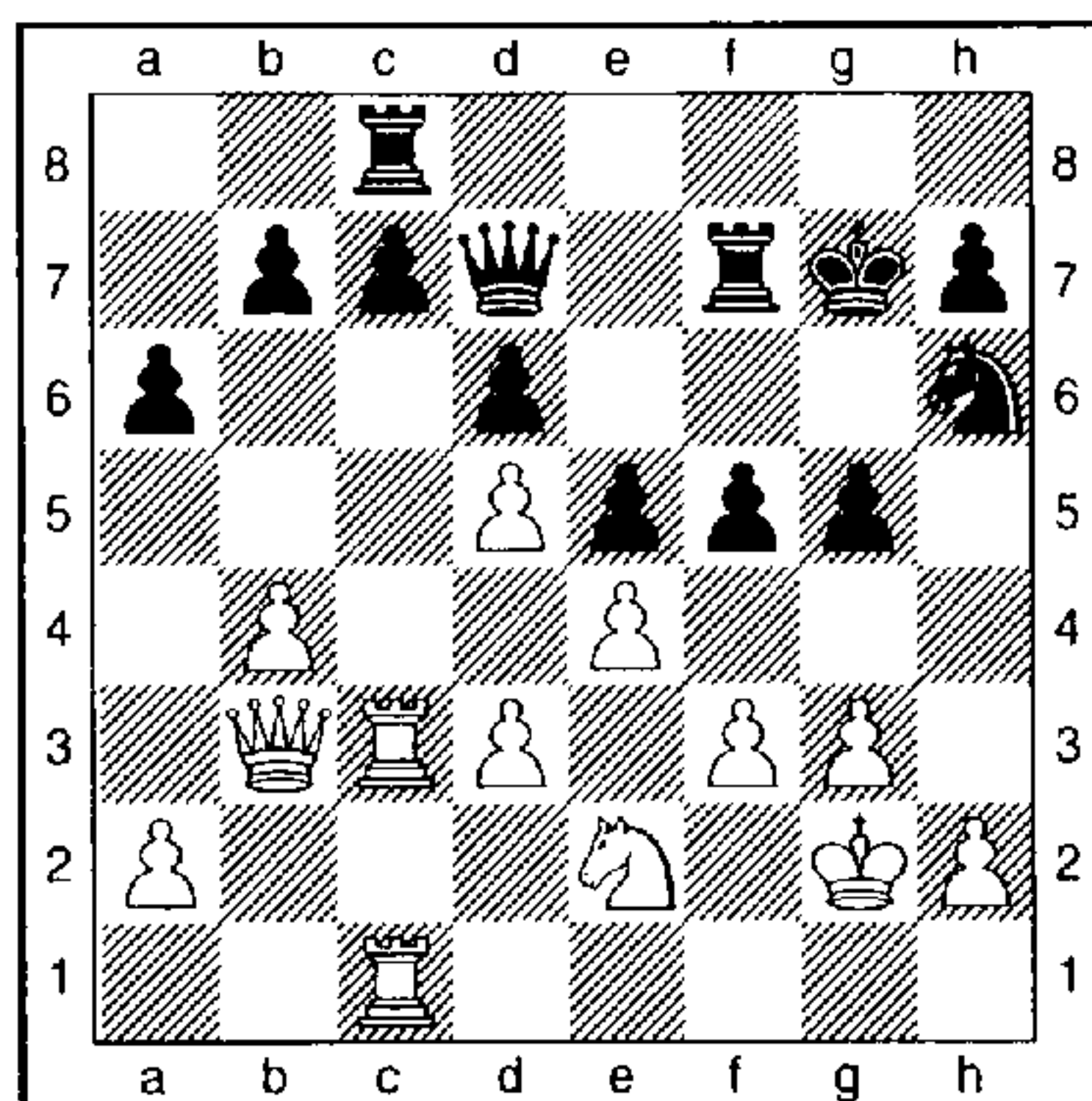
But what should he have played? In a lecture at one of the sessions of the Dvoretsky-Yusupov school for talented young players, Alexey Kosikov, a trainer from Kiev, formulated **'the principle of the worst piece': decide which of your pieces is placed worse than all the others, and move it to better squares.** In many cases the correct move can be easily found in this way. And this is the case here: Black's worst piece is his knight at h6. He should play 22...♞g8! and 23...♞f6, and then, if necessary, defend his c7 pawn by ...♞e8.

There is also a more interesting, although also more risky idea – the activation of the queen with 22...♖b5!? followed by ...♖b6. From b6 the queen not only defends the c7 pawn, but also threatens in some cases to



invade at e3; on the other hand, here it may come under attack by the white pawns or pieces.

7



Q 6-2. How should White continue?

An effective procedure against a flank attack by the opponent is usually a counterblow in the centre. But here such a counterblow 23 d4? would be a serious mistake: after 23...fxe4 Black opens the f-file and obtains the g4 square for his knight or queen.

Let us ask the question, with which it is useful to begin, when considering any positional problem: 'What does the opponent want?'. Obviously, he is intending 23...g4 or 23...f4.

In the event of 23...g4 we have the very strong reply 24 f4!, after which all the avenues into our camp for the opponent's pieces are completely blocked.

If 23...f4 we would like to reply 24 g4, but then there will obviously follow the knight sacrifice on g4. To avoid this, it is sufficient to choose the prophylactic 23 h3. But in principle, this move is undesirable, since it contradicts the afore-mentioned rule: 'Don't move pawns on the part of the board where

you are weaker'. If possible, it is better to get by without it. Here it is perhaps appropriate to remember also *the principle of economy of force in defence: when defending, make only the minimal concessions, without which it is impossible to get by.*

The move h2-h3 is undoubtedly a concession. Does White have to make it? The ...f5-f4 advance also has a serious drawback: it removes the attack on the e4 pawn. As a consequence of this, the central blow d3-d4! becomes possible, also opening the 3rd rank and allowing the rook at c3 and queen at b3 to take part in the defence of the kingside.

Thus it transpires that Black is not threatening anything serious, which means that there is time to make a planned move on the queenside.

23 a4!

Take note: *the principle of 'prophylactic thinking', which demands that when taking a decision the opponent's intentions should without fail be taken into account, by no means signifies the need always to make prophylactic moves.*

23 ... f4
24 d4! g4

If 24...fxg3 25 hxg3 g4, then of course 26 f4!

25 dxe5 dxe5
26 gxf4!

The exchange of pawns allows the white knight to move to e6. Here it will be colossally strong: attacking c7, creating threats to the opponent's king, and blocking the black queen's path to the kingside.

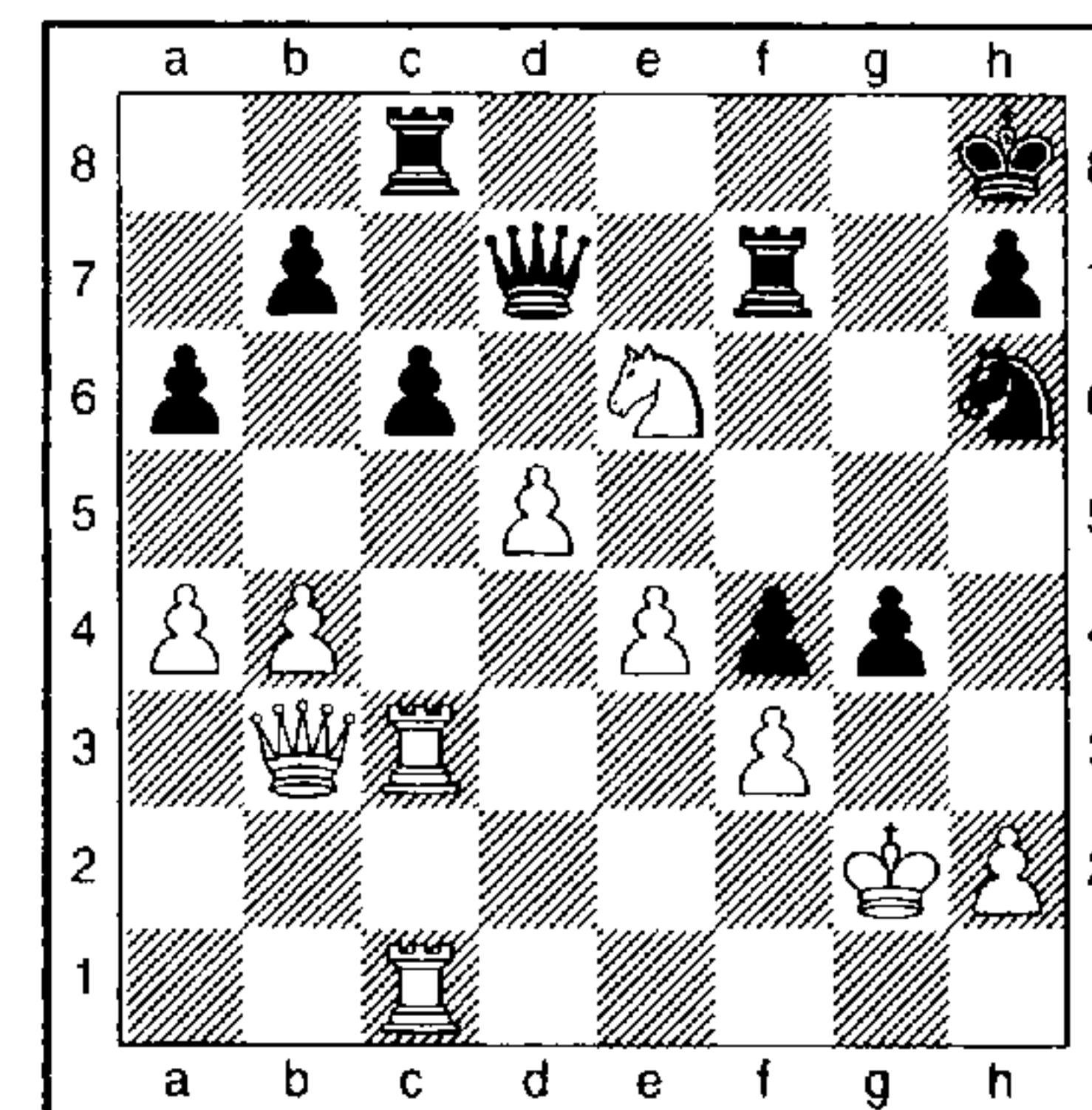
26 ... exf4
27 d4! e6

Slightly better was 27...gxf3+, when White has a pleasant choice between 28 fxf3 and 28 e1.

28 e6 c6



8



29 b2!

Good technique! Black's king is forced to go to g8, which deprives him of any hopes of using the g-file for a counterattack. On the contrary, this file will soon be occupied by White.

29 ... g8
30 b5!

The triumph of my opening plan of an offensive on the queenside. The opponent's defences collapse.

30 ... axb5
31 axb5 gxf3+
32 e1xf3

This is desperation – after all, it is perfectly possible to take the knight. But in a winning position one does not want to allow even the slightest activation of the enemy forces.

33 g1+ g7
34 bxc6 bxc6
35 c2!

Threatening 36 c2g2; bad is 35...cxd5 36 fxc8+ e8xc8 37 fxc8g7+.

35 ... e8

With the last faint hope of 36 c2g2?! e6xe6 37 dxe6 e3d3+. I decided to go into a rook ending with two extra pawns, although, of course, the simple 36 fxc6 was equally

good.

36 fxc6g7+ e8g7
37 e3g7+ e8g7
38 e6g7 cxd5?
39 e8xe8

Black resigns.

After completing our analysis of the game, using it as an example let us again return to the question of the various directions in positional improvement. We will list the most important of these:

Positional operations. Many actions that we undertake during a game are comparatively simple positional operations, pursuing immediate and clear-cut strategic aims. Three main types of such operations can be distinguished.

1) Improving the placing of the pieces, manoeuvres, regroupings. For example, in the above game on moves 16-18 White prepared the doubling or tripling of his heavy pieces on the c-file; on move 22 he had to decide where to keep his queen, at a5 or b3; then he transferred his knight to e6; on move 35 he began the manoeuvre of his rook to g2. On move 22 Black made a strategic mistake, when he refrained from the manoeuvre ...h6-g8-f6.

2) Play with the pawns, the creation of a favourable pawn formation. Remember at least the regrouping of the white pawns on moves 13-15; White's offensive on the queenside; the opponent's pawn storm on the opposite side of the board and the ways of parrying it.

3) Exchanges. In this game it was necessary to evaluate the advisability of exchanging the dark-square bishops (when considering White's 16th move). And in the opening position with the development of the knight at f6 (instead of e7) Black carries out the advantageous exchange of light-square bishops and endeavours to avoid the exchange of knights.



Our operations may be aimed not only at improving our own position, but also at worsening the opponent's position (for example: the manoeuvre ♖d1–c1–a3 provoked ...a7–a6, weakening the opponent's pawn chain; the move 29 ♖b2! forced the black king to move to the inferior square g8). It is often useful to try and prevent operations planned by the opponent, i.e. to carry out a **prophylactic operation**.

Positional operations (along with tactical ones) are the threads out of which the fabric of a game is woven. The ability quickly to find a favourable operation is a very important component of positional mastery. This skill can and should be constantly trained (exactly like combinative vision), by solving comparatively simple exercises, which do not demand a great delving into the position or a detailed calculation of variations.

Evaluation of a position. Many chess terms that we employ have several shades of meaning. This includes such widely-used concepts as evaluation and plan.

What is often understood by evaluation is weighing up the two sides' chances, deciding which of the players stands better, and by how much. During the course of a game we rarely do this explicitly, but subconsciously this work is constantly carried on, and its results influence the decisions that we take. However, an even greater role is played by evaluation in another sense of the word – disclosing the characteristic features of a position. **In any position many factors operate simultaneously, and the art of evaluation consists in being able to select from them the most important at the given moment.** Relying on his evaluation, a player undertakes a plan of action, and carries out specific positional operations. Since the time of Wilhelm Steinitz, what is understood by positional play is the process

of evaluating a position and choosing a plan. By making progress in these fields, we obviously become stronger in positional play as a whole.

Plan. In the above game, already in the opening White outlined and then successfully carried out the plan of an offensive on the queenside. Black's plan, involving an attack on the kingside, proved to be a failure. In this sense of the word, a plan is the general course of our play over a quite lengthy period of the game.

It is clear that such plans are only of a guiding nature. After a game has been played, it is not hard to describe, step by step, the plan carried out in it. But during the play it is not usually possible to guess (and this means, there is no point in planning), how events will develop just a few moves ahead. For example, on the 11th move Black closed the centre by exchanging on d5, after which I arranged my pawns on light squares and set up pressure on the c-file. But he might also have played 11...c6 – then White's plan would have been different: the opening of the b-file and the switching of the pieces to the queenside, with the e- and f-pawns remaining on their original squares. And if after b4–b5 the opponent had replied ...c6–c5, then after playing my knight to d5 I would probably have had to prepare f2–f4 or d3–d4.

Only in very rare cases is it possible to compile and put into effect a multi-stage plan. Either when the position (opening or endgame) has previously been very well studied by us, or if the opponent is completely deprived of counterplay and we can carry out unhindered any regroupings.

Plans are also what we call shorter ideas, sometimes consisting merely of one or two positional operations. For example, White carried out the plan of concentrating his heavy pieces on the c-file, and in reply Black should have implemented the plan of switch-



ing his badly placed knight at h6 to better squares.

Prophylaxis. As Nimzowitsch pointed out, **genuine positional play combines the consistent carrying out of your own plans with simultaneous counteractions against the opponent's ideas.** Look again at the game commentary, and you will see how often the search for a solution to the position begins with the question: 'What does the opponent want, and what is he now intending to play?'

Meanwhile, many players are not accustomed to thinking in this way, and usually concentrate only on their own ideas. For them the development of 'prophylactic thinking' is a very important source of improvement.

Typical positions. It is very useful to select positions with similar arrangements of pawns and/or pieces, and also positions with the same material balance – in order to study the rules that operate in them, the plans that are employed, and the positional and tactical techniques.

The game we have analysed is quite a good textbook example of a Sicilian set-up against the King's Indian. A similar structure (with reversed colours) often arises if you are playing Black against the King's Indian Attack or the Closed Variation of the Sicilian Defence. I had analysed such positions and therefore I felt quite confident in them.

In the commentary the development of the black knight at f6 or h6 (instead of e7) is briefly analysed. It stands to reason that both sides also have other ways of varying their play. Occasionally, already at an early stage of the game, Black plays ...f7–f5 or ...h7–h5. White sometimes begins an offensive on the queenside, without completing his kingside development (with his knight at g1), or plays

d2–d4 instead of d2–d3. The analysis of all these possibilities is essentially the analysis of the given opening variation. Hence the principle: **in our day the study of many typical positions is closely linked with the study of the opening.**

Thus there are typical positions, determined by the arrangement of the pieces and pawns in the opening. There are also others, not connected directly with the opening – it is also useful to study them. For example, when one side has a 'bad' bishop; the advantage of the two bishops; weak squares in the opponent's position; control of an open file; advantage in space, and so on.

Typical situations. Whereas typical positions are defined by the particular purely chess situation on the board, typical situations are of a general character. Attack or defence, reaction to an opening novelty, time trouble (for yourself or the opponent), playing for a win or for a draw, the exploitation of a material or positional advantage – the list of situations can also be continued further.

The rules operating in typical situations are of a general nature, often not relating purely to chess, but to chess psychology or even philosophy. Remember, if only, the principle of economy of force when defending that is mentioned in the text.

Technique. The problem of the technical conversion of an advantage is one of the most important in chess. In almost every game we encounter it in some form or another. According to my observations, the majority of players, even very strong ones, suffer from certain defects in their technique, and an improvement in this field promises an increased stability in their play and markedly better results.

In the above game White did not have any problem in exploiting his advantage; perhaps



only his 29th move was an instructive one. The question of whether the knight should have been taken on the 33rd move is of little interest – here any decision was good. But much more often things are different: enormous precision and accuracy are required, in order to convert your advantage into a win.

The connection with tactics and dynamics. Strategy and tactics in chess are closely interwoven: it is not enough to find the correct plan, it is also important to carry it out in the most accurate way. *Play that is positionally competent, but non-dynamic and insufficiently concrete, rarely leads to success.*

Even in such a purely positional game as the one analysed above, behind certain positional decisions one can discover an underlying tactical motive. For example, the choice between 16 ♖b3 and 16 ♜c2 was determined to a considerable extent by the idea of subsequently making the double attack ♜c1.

The initiative. History knows of players who readily conceded the initiative to their opponents and felt quite confident in passive positions. However, in our day nearly all the leading grandmasters prefer from the very first moves to play as actively as possible, fiercely fighting for the initiative. They believe that *the possession of the initiative promises a definite advantage – a purely chess advantage or at least a psychological one.*

Critical moments. In the course of a game, experienced players fairly quickly and easily find the majority of their positional moves. But sometimes the solution to a position is not very obvious: in order to find it, serious work has to be done. The solution found is usually a fusion of the most varied factors, direct and prophylactic, positional and tactical. If we are able to cope successfully with this difficult task, the game develops in a desirable direction for us, and the probability of success is markedly increased.

We cannot think for a long time over every move. Therefore it is very important to learn to sense the critical moments of a game, in which an expenditure of time and effort on seeking the solution is justified.

In the above game perhaps the most difficult decision for White was the move 16 ♖b3!! Before making it, he had to consider his opponent's plan, evaluate the advisability of the exchange of bishops, plan the arrangement of the white pieces, and choose the most precise move order. In the subsequent chapters we will draw special attention to this type of episode – and we will encounter many of them!

One type of difficult decision, which significantly influences the course of a game, is the **transformation** of a position – a sharp change in it (for example, as a result of a series of exchanges). During a game it may not be easy to evaluate how promising such a change is and to decide on it. And sometimes a situation can be transformed in several different ways, and you have to choose which position to aim for.



Which Pawn to Advance?

*A mistake relates to truth, like sleep to awakening.
Waking up from a mistake, a man addresses the truth with new strength.*

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

The ability to play with pawns is a very important component of positional play. The choice of this or that pawn structure determines for a long time the character of the battle. The rules state that pawns are not allowed to move backwards, and therefore the consequences of an unfortunate pawn advance are sometimes impossible to repair.

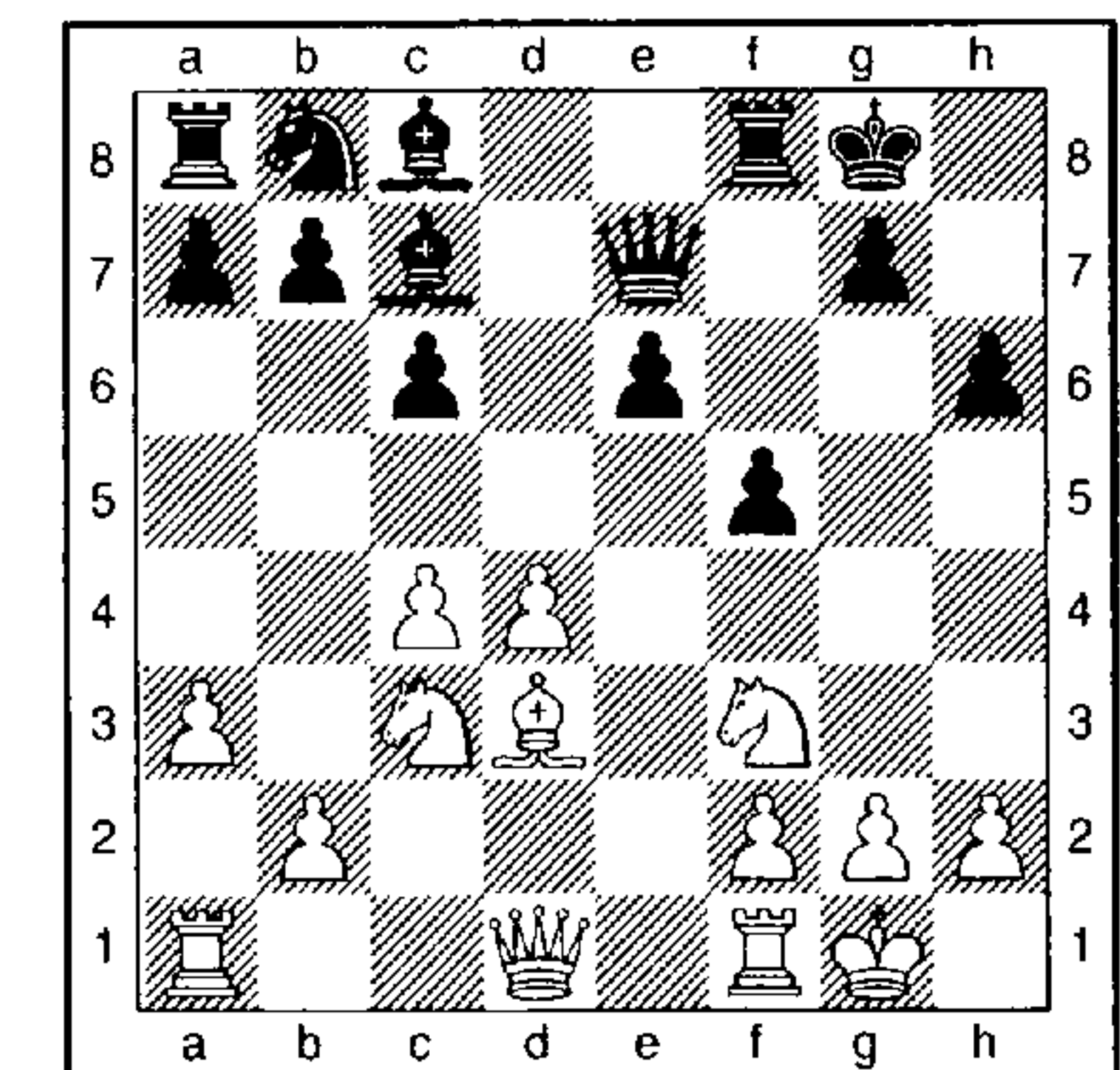
Theory recommends restrained strategy for Black: 12...♗d7, then ...♜d8,...♗f8 and ...♙d7–e8. Dolmatov chooses another, more aggressive plan, with which he hopes to exploit the opponent's slight delay in the opening (the superfluous move a2–a3 and the advance e2–e4 in two steps).

12 ... ♙f5!?

Such pawn moves need to be carefully considered – they involve considerable strategic risk, and if unsuccessful they lead merely to the creation of serious weaknesses in your own position.

13 ♗c3

9



Yusupov – Dolmatov
USSR Championship First League,
Frunze 1979

1	c4	c6
2	d4	d5
3	♗c3	♗f6
4	♗f3	e6
5	♙g5	h6
6	♙xf6	♜xf6
7	e3	♙d6
8	a3?!	

Yusupov wants to play e3–e4 (the immediate 8...e4 does not give anything in view of 8...dxe4 9 ♗xe4 ♙b4+). But it was more logical to prepare this advance with normal developing moves: 8 ♙d3 and 9 0–0.

8	...	♜e7!
9	e4	dxe4
10	♗xe4	♙c7
11	♙d3	0–0
12	0–0	

It is not easy to evaluate this position. White controls more space, but this factor is neutralised by the opponent's two bishops. True, one of them – the light-square bishop – is for the moment shut in, and risks being converted into a 'bad' one.

It is clear that now Black has to advance a pawn in the centre, but which one? Both 13...c5 and 13...♗d7 followed by 14...e5 are possible.

Q 6-3. Decide on the correct plan.



If the white knight had not retreated to c3, Black should have advanced his c-pawn, e.g. 13 ♖g3! c5! 14 ♜e1 ♜f6 with chances for both sides.

But after the move in the game he should play 13...♘d7!, aiming for ...e6–e5. White is not able to prevent this advance, since the variation 14 ♜c2 e5! 15 ♙xf5 exd4 16 ♜fe1 (16 ♘xd4 ♜e5) 16...♜f6 is not in his favour (the opponent has the two bishops in an open position).

And so, 14 ♜e1 e5! If now 15 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 16 f4, then simply 16...♜d8! (but not 16...♙b6 17 c5 ♙xc5? 18 ♙c4+) 17 dxe5 ♜d4+ 18 ♘h1 ♜xf4 with the better chances for Black. And after 15 dxe5 ♘xe5 16 ♘xe5 ♙xe5 17 ♜e2 ♜e8 it is not possible to exploit the pin on the e-file. White would have had to seek a way to equalise, since after completing his development with ...♙d7 and ...♜f6, the opponent will gain the advantage (the dark-square bishop is very dangerous). Incidentally, in this variation the move ...f7–f5 proves appropriate – it restricts the mobility of White's knight and bishop.

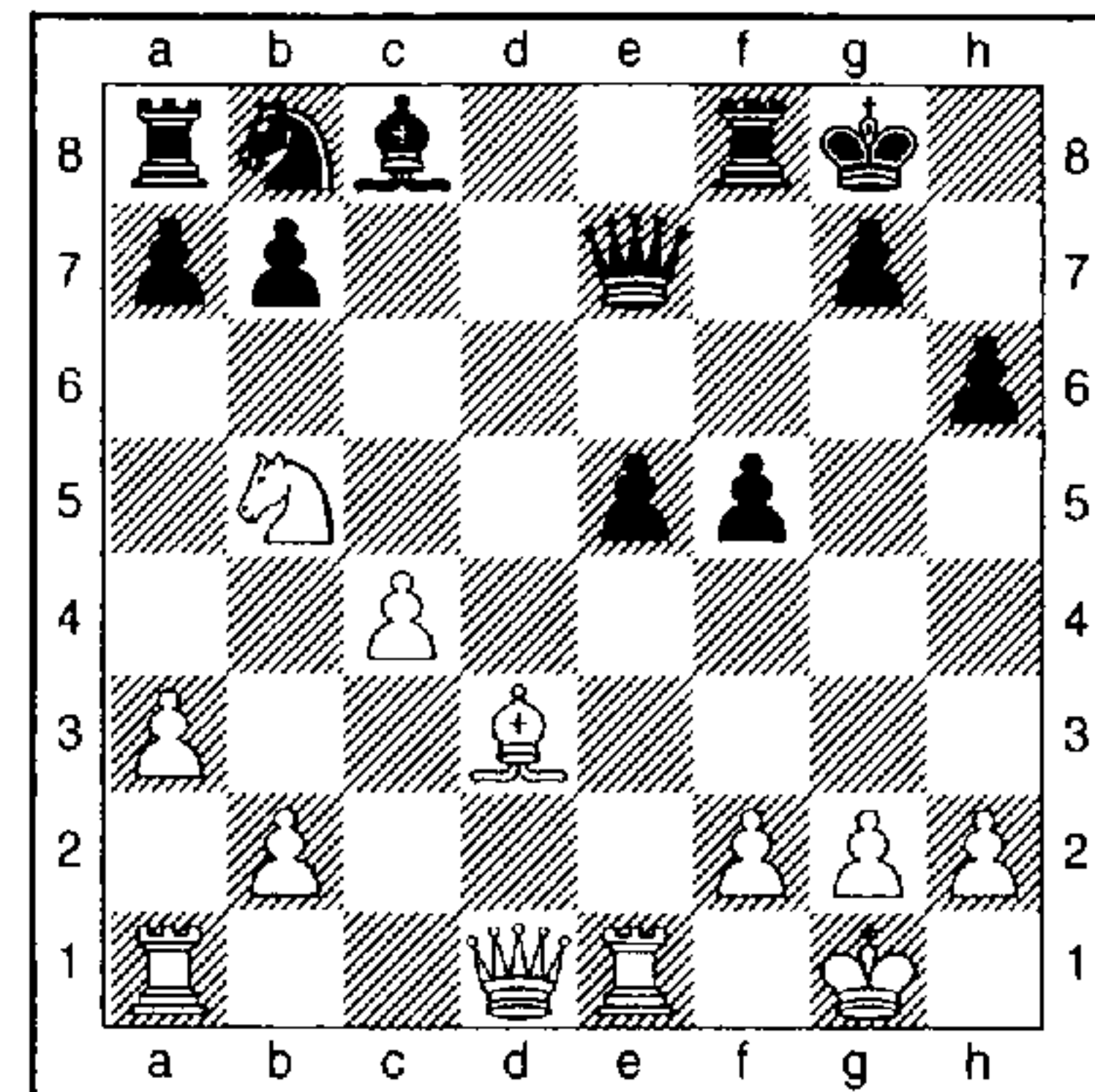
We see that after 13...♘d7! Dolmatov could even have hoped to seize the initiative. The move made, by contrast, led to a swift catastrophe.

13	...	c5?
14	♜e1!	cx d4
15	♘d5	♜d8
16	♘xc7	♜xc7
17	♘xd4	

Let us assess what has happened. Black has been deprived of his advantage of the two bishops and, moreover, it is his better, dark-square bishop that has been exchanged. The e6 pawn is attacked; the tactical defence 17...♜d8 18 ♘xe6 ♙xe6 19 ♜xe6 ♜d7 is most simply refuted by 20 ♙c2! True, he can play ...e6–e5, but, with him being so far behind in development, activity in the centre proves unsuccessful.

17	...	e5
18	♘b5	♜e7

10



19 c5!

The decisive move! White obtains the c4 square for his bishop and d6 for his knight or queen. The pawn is immune: 19...♜xc5 20 ♜c1.

Yusupov accurately converted his advantage.

19	...	♘c6
20	♙c4+	♘h7
21	♜d6!	♜xd6
22	♘xd6	a5
23	f3	♙g6
24	♜ad1	a4
25	♙b5	♙f6
26	♙xc6	bxc6
27	♘c4	♜e8
28	♜d6+	♜e6
29	♘b6	

Black resigns.

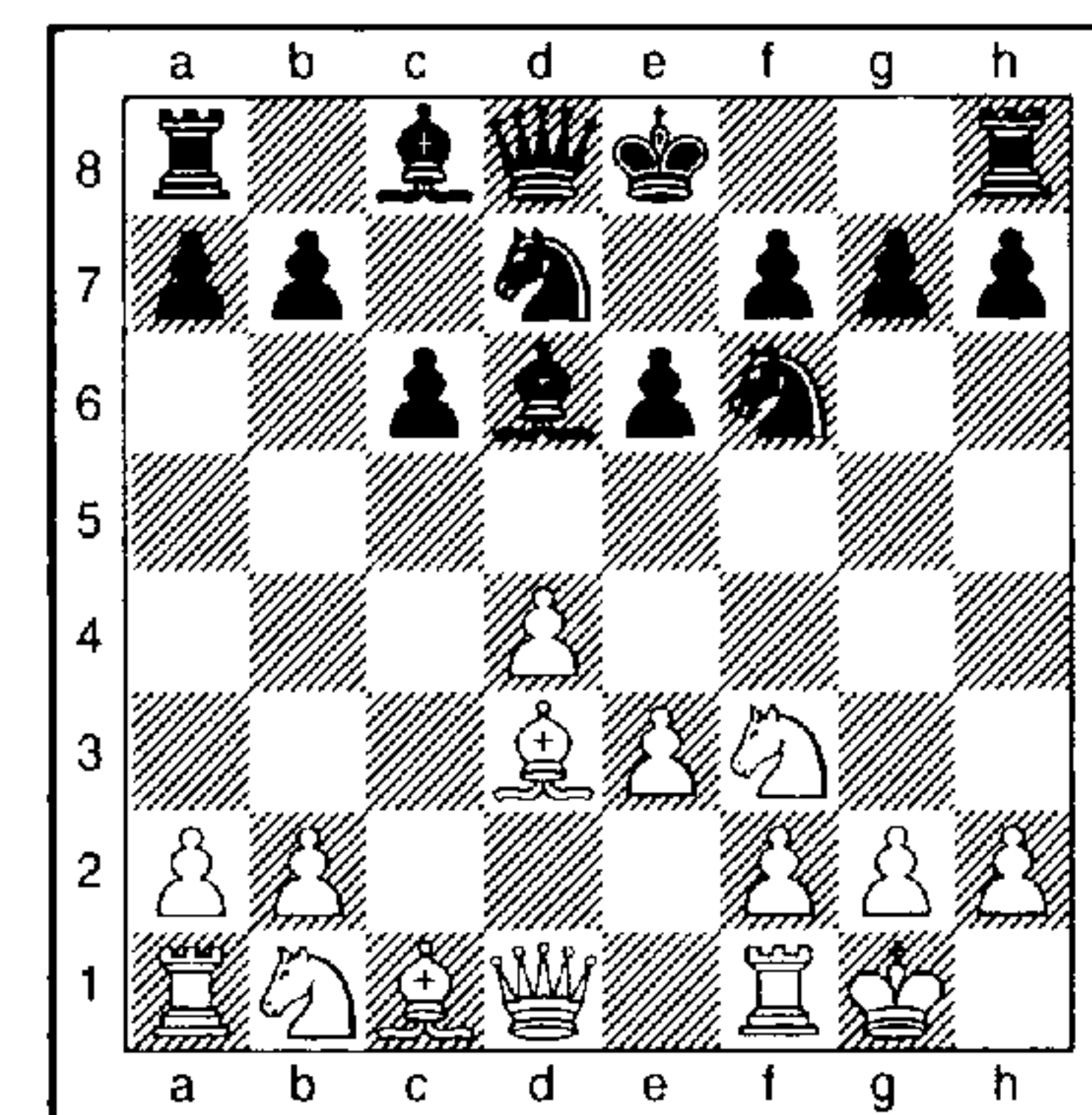
Dolmatov had already encountered a similar strategic problem a year earlier. Alas, then too he was unable to find the correct solution.



Lerner – Dolmatov
Kutaisi 1978

1	♘f3	d5
2	d4	c6
3	c4	♘f6
4	e3	e6
5	♙d3	♘bd7
6	0–0	dx c4
7	♙xc4	♙d6
8	♙d3!?	

11



This often happens: a position is reached that is similar to a theoretical one, but even so is not altogether theoretical, differing from it in some details. Here book variations cannot help. It is good if you are familiar with the ideas typical of the resulting situation, but they cannot be applied automatically – you have to delve into a concrete analysis.

Which advance is correct, ...c6–c5 or ...e6–e5? And a second question: should one of these moves be made immediately, or should you first castle?

White is preparing e3–e4. But why is he delaying the development of his queen's knight? Obviously, Konstantin Lerner is intending in some cases to direct it via d2 to c4. Black has to reckon with this manoeuvre, especially if he is aiming for ...e6–e5.

If he really wants to play ...e6–e5, he should do it immediately. After 8...0–0 the opponent can reply 9 ♘bd2, and 9...e5? is no longer possible: 10 ♘c4. And so, 8...e5!? 9 ♘bd2!? Now 9...♜e7 is tempting, not allowing 10 ♘c4? in view of 10...e4. Then there follows 10 e4!?, and 10...exd4 11 e5! is extremely dangerous for Black. Sounder is 9...exd4!? with a good game.

The plan with ...c6–c5 is also quite possible, but it should be carried out only after the white knight goes to d2. For example: 8...0–0!? 9 ♘bd2 (in the event of 9 e4 or 9 ♘c3, correct is 9...e5!) 9...c5 10 ♘c4 ♙e7 – Black is alright.

Three months earlier, at the 1978 all-union qualification tournament in Daugavpils against Alexey Suetin, Dolmatov had reached exactly the same position a tempo down (there 6 ♘bd2 dx c4 7 ♘xc4 c5 8 0–0 ♙e7 was played). He remembered that during the game he had been afraid of coming under an attack after 9 e4 cxd4 10 e5, and he decided to deprive his opponent of this possibility by playing ...c6–c5 a move earlier.

8	...	c5?
9	♜e1!	

It is amusing that Lerner meets ...c6–c5 with the same move as Yusupov, although, of course, with a completely different idea. By creating the threat of 10 e4 cxd4 11 e5, he wants to force the exchange of pawns on d4. If 9...♜c7!?, then 10 ♜e2!, renewing the threat.

9	...	cx d4
10	ex d4	0–0
11	♘c3!	

With an isolated pawn the knight should be on this square (this is why Black should have waited for ♘bd2, and only then played ...c6–c5). In contrast to the opponent's pieces, Black's are not well positioned. The place for the bishop in such positions is not at d6, but at e7, and also the queen's knight would be



better developed at c6. It is obvious that White has won the opening battle.

Vexed by such an outcome, Dolmatov's interest in the game fades and he loses it instantly.

11	...	b6
12	♙g5	♙b7
13	♚e2	h6?

An anti-positional move, weakening the kingside.

14	♙h4	♙e7
15	♖ad1	♘d5??
16	♚e4!	

Black resigned in view of 16...g6 17 ♙xe7 ♚xe7 18 ♘xd5 ♙xd5 19 ♚xd5.



Undermining Pawn Moves

Routine decisions often prove correct, but usually it is possible to win only with a bold, non-standard move.

Grigory Sanakoev

A timely undermining move – an attack on the opponent's pawn chain with our pawn – enables us to open lines for our pieces and to weaken or altogether eliminate the strong enemy pawns.

10 ♚d3! ♘e7 (10...♘f6 11 ♚g3!) 11 a4! b4 12 ♘b1 ♘g6 13 ♚b3 ♙c5 14 ♙c4 0-0 15 ♙e3 ♚e7 16 ♘d2 a5 17 ♖ad1 ♘f4 18 ♙xc5 ♚xc5.

Sokolov – Dvoretzky

Moscow 1963

1	e4	c5
2	♘f3	♘c6
3	d4	cxd4
4	♘xd4	♚c7
5	♘c3	e6
6	a3	a6
7	♙e2	b5
8	0-0	

8 ♘xc6 has been played many times. A curious opening debate on this theme took place in the early 1960s between Ratmir Kholmov and Alexey Suetin.

Kholmov–Suetin (30th USSR Championship, Yerevan 1962) 8...♚xc6 9 0-0 ♙b7 10 ♙f3 ♖c8 11 e5 ♚c7 12 ♙xb7 ♚xb7 13 ♚e2 ♘e7 14 ♙f4 ♘f5 15 a4! b4. If 15...♖c4 Kholmov gives an interesting variation: 16 ♙d2! ♘h4 17 f3 ♙c5+ 18 ♖h1 ♘f5 19 axb5 axb5 20 b3 ♖h4 21 ♙e1!, and 21...♙d4 22 ♙xh4 ♙xc3 23 ♚xb5! is bad for Black.

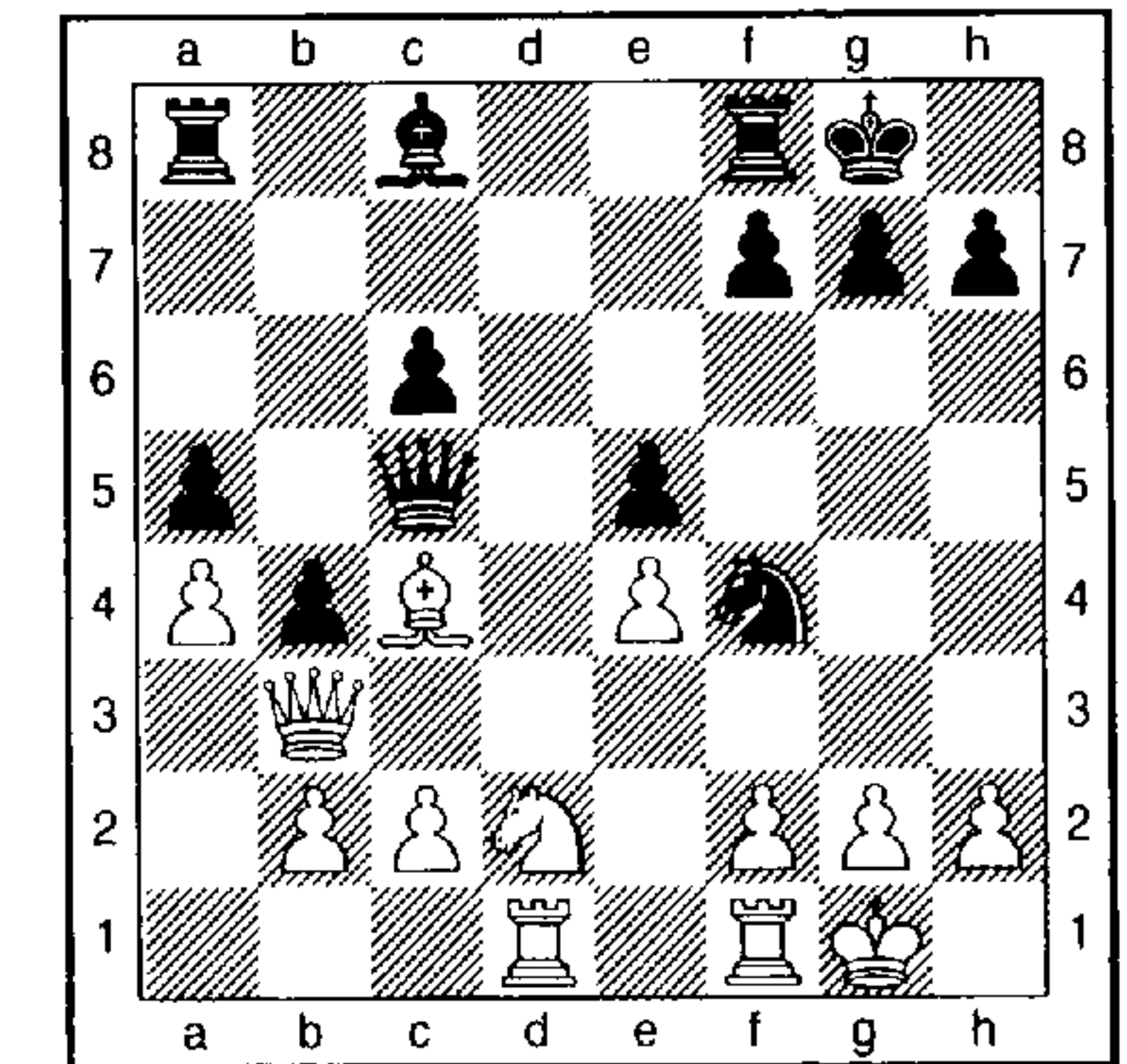
16 ♘e4 ♙e7. Dangerous is 16...♘d4 17 ♚d3 ♘xc2 18 ♖ac1 b3 19 ♘d2, and if 19...♖b8 20 ♖fd1! followed by 21 ♘xb3.

17 ♖ad1 0-0 18 g4! ♘h4 19 ♙g3. White's chances are better, and he won.

A year later Suetin decided to play more safely, and he took on c6 with the pawn.

Kholmov–Suetin (31st USSR Championship, Leningrad 1963) 8...dxc6 9 0-0 e5

12



Q 6-4. How should White continue?

Incorrect is 19 g3? ♘h3+ 20 ♖g2 ♘g5, when the black bishop moves with gain of tempo to h3. Kholmov found a non-routine solution.

19 ♚e3!! In the event of the exchange of queens on e3, the knight is driven from the strong square f4 and the f-file is opened for the white rook: 19...♚xe3 20 fxe3 ♘e6 (after 20...♘g6 21 ♘b3 or 21 ♘f3 the black knight remains out of play) 21 ♘f3 ♙a6 22 ♙xa6 ♖xa6 23 ♘e5 ♘c5 24 ♘d7! with the advantage in the endgame (variation by Kholmov). And no better is 19...♘e6 20 ♙xe6 ♚xe3 21 ♙xf7+ ♖xf7 22 fxe3, in view of the weakness of the e5 pawn.



19...♖e7 20 ♘b3 ♕e6 21 ♔xe6 ♖xe6 22 ♖d2 c5. Black has a difficult ending after 22...♖fd8 23 ♖fd1 ♖xd2 24 ♖xd2 ♖d8 25 ♖xd8+ ♗xd8 26 ♗d3!

23 ♖d5 c4 (23...♗d4 24 ♖xc5 ♖xb3 25 cxb3) 24 ♖c5 ♖fc8 (24...♗f4 25 ♖d7 ♗g5 26 g3) 25 ♖xe6 ♗xe6 26 ♖fd1. White has a significant positional advantage, which he subsequently successfully converted.

Note that in both games a significant role in White's plans was played by the undermining of the opponent's queenside pawns by a3-a4!

Even so, it is hard to believe that the modest move 6 a3 allows him to hope for an opening advantage. Black's defence can most probably be improved. For example, in the first game he could have considered 14...♖c4 (instead of 14...♗f5) 15 ♕g3 ♗c6!, preventing the undermining move a3-a4 (recommended by the 'Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings').

8 ... ♕b7
9 ♕f3 ♕c5

The most active, although also a rather risky way of developing the black pieces. In the game the opponent was unable to cast doubts on it.

10 ♘b3

10 ♕e3 looks more natural, but White wants to create as soon as possible the threat of the knight sacrifice on d5.

10 ... ♕a7
11 ♖e1 ♗e5!

I avoided 11...♗ge7, fearing 12 a4 b4 13 ♗d5 exd5 14 exd5. However, its consequences are unclear, seeing as there is the important intermediate move 14...♕b8! For example: 15 dxc6 (15 g3 ♗e5) 15...♗xh2+ 16 ♖f1 ♕xc6 17 ♕xc6 dxc6 18 ♗g4.

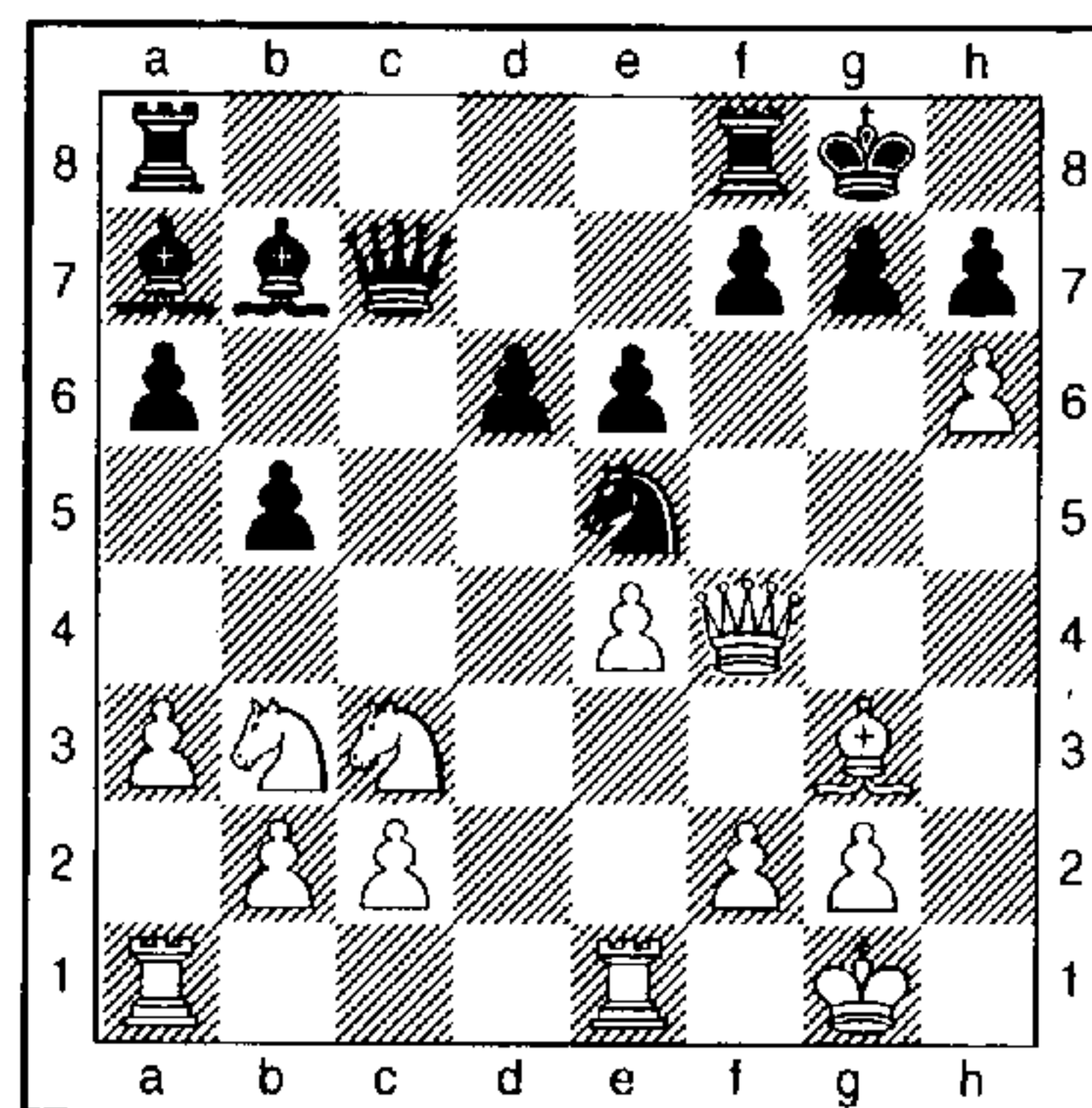
12 ♕f4 ♗e7
13 ♕g3

After 13 ♗d5 exd5 14 exd5 ♗xf3+! 15 ♗xf3 d6 16 ♗e4 (16 ♕g5 f6; 16 ♗g3 0-0-0)

16...♖d8 17 ♗a5! White retains attacking possibilities, but objectively the sacrifice nevertheless looks not fully correct.

13 ... ♗7g6
14 h4?! 0-0
15 h5 ♗xf3+
16 ♗xf3 ♗e5
17 ♗f4 d6
18 h6

13



Q 6-5. How should Black continue?

Black has successfully completed his development, and the time has come to launch a counterattack.

18 ... f5!

Thanks to this undermining move, Black's rook and bishop pair become dangerously trained on the opponent's kingside, and at the same time the queen is included in the defence of g7. White's position immediately becomes difficult.

19 ♗c1?!

Only now, when annotating this game, did I understand the point of this move – it defends the c2 pawn (in the variation 19...fxe4 20 ♗xe4). During the game, of course, I was not even looking at that side of the board.



19 ... f4!
20 ♕xf4 ♖xf4
21 ♗xf4 ♖f8
22 ♗d2

If 22 ♗g5, then 22...♕xf2+ 23 ♖h1(h2) ♖f6! is decisive.

22 ... ♖xf2
23 ♗xf2 ♕xf2+
24 ♖xf2

Materially the forces are roughly equal, but Black's positional superiority is undisputed. He has available several tempting possibilities. I decided first to pick up the h6 pawn with my queen, avoiding the doubling of my pawns.

24 ... ♗f7+!
25 ♖g1 ♗g6

Threatening 26...♗f3+.

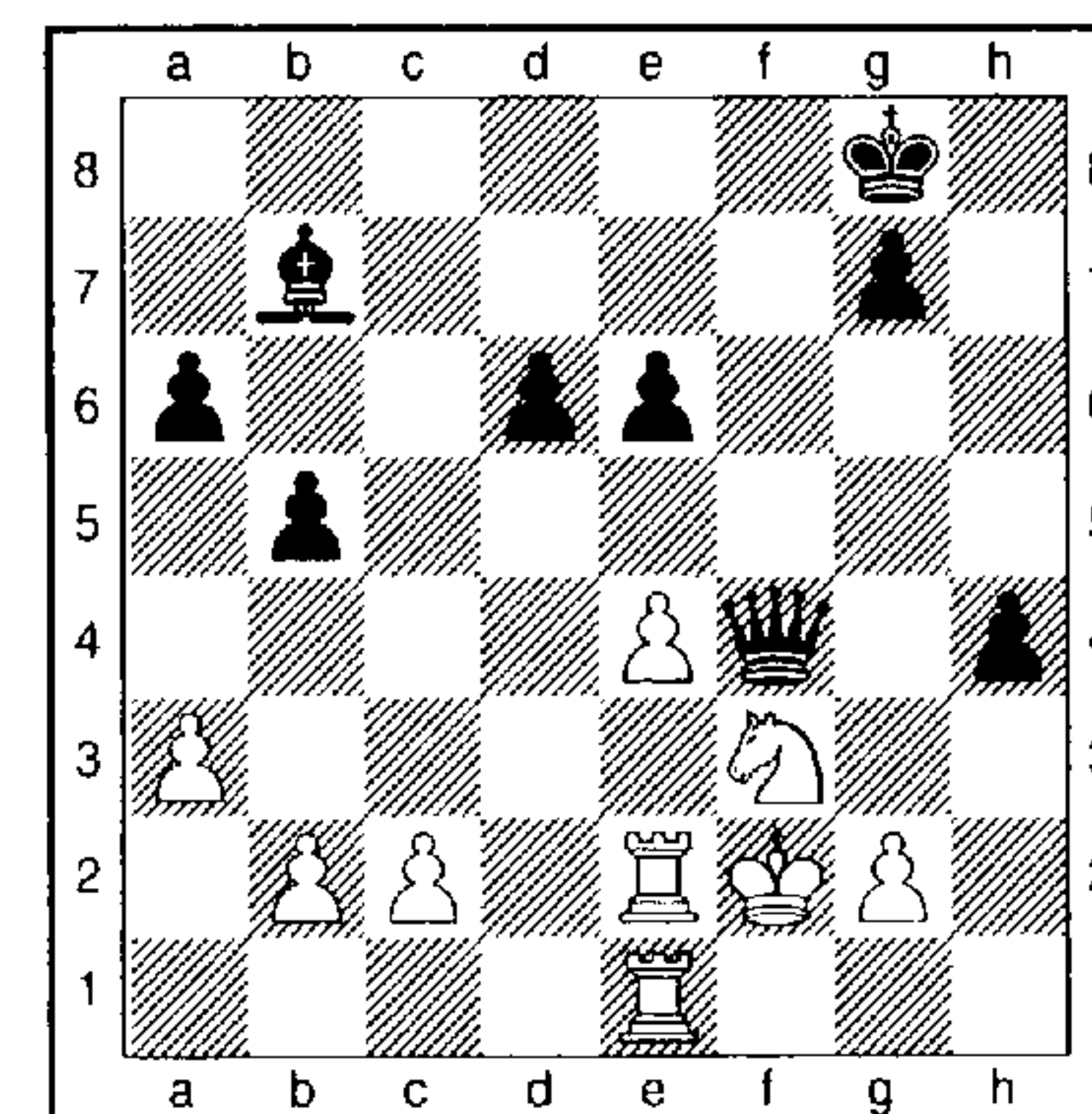
26 ♖e2 ♗xh6
27 ♗d2 ♗g4
28 ♗f3 ♗f4!

Black ties down the opponent's pieces to the defence of the e4 pawn and clears the way for his h-pawn, with the help of which he hopes to break through on the kingside.

29 ♖ae1 h5
30 ♗d1 h4
31 ♗f2 ♗xf2
32 ♖xf2?

Of course, 32 ♖xf2 was better.

14



32 ... d5!

Another undermining move! Black eliminates the e4 pawn – the only barrier between his bishop and the kingside. If 33 e5 there follows 33...d4.

33 exd5 ♕xd5
34 ♖f1?! h3

The final, decisive undermining move. White resigns.

This game was played in a school competition, and both players were only of first category standard. Even without making allowances for Black's comparatively low qualification, his actions can be deemed quite sensible and consistent. But White defended weakly and therefore I was able to put my idea into effect. It is possible that, given stronger play by my opponent, it would all have been not so simple – then Black's moves would have had to be subjected to a more scrupulous check.

Playing on a neighbouring board was the significantly more experienced Yuri Razuvaev (I think that at that point he had already achieved the master norm). He praised my move 18...f5! The following day, in the Pioneers Palace, to my surprise the same was said by grandmaster Simagin, to whom I showed the game I had just played. As you see, the aesthetic criteria of these two strong players coincided: this good positional move seemed more interesting to them than, for example, Black's little combination (19...f4! 20 ♕xf4 ♖xf4!).

Yusupov – Kupreichik
47th USSR Championship, Minsk 1979

1 d4 ♗f6
2 c4 g6
3 ♗c3 ♕g7
4 e4 d6
5 f3 a6
6 ♕g5

In those years against the King's Indian



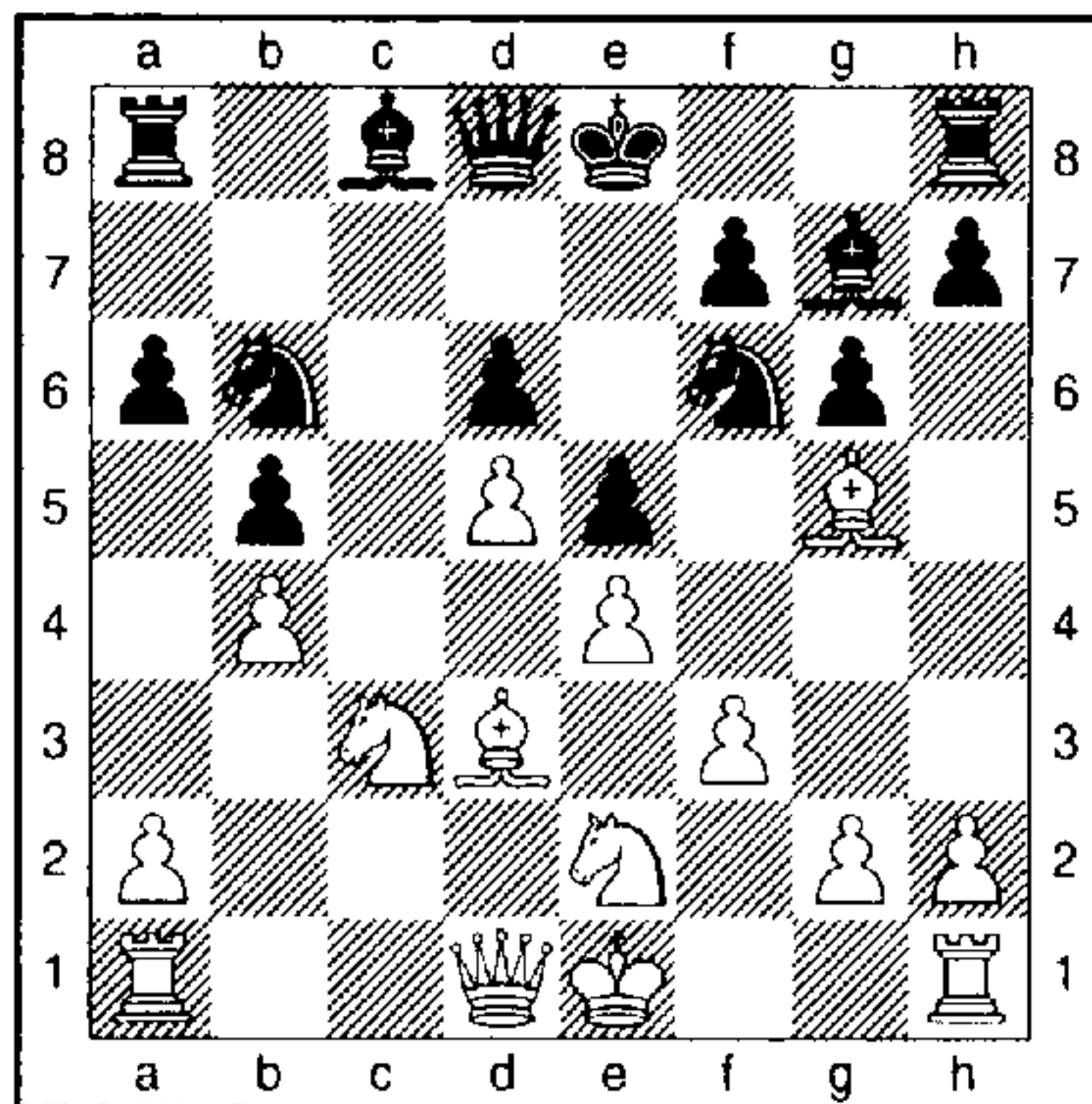
Defence Yusupov often employed the Sämisch Variation with the development of his bishop at g5.

6 ... c6

A couple of years later the same position was reached in the game Dolmatov-Kupreichik (Minsk 1982), which developed as follows:

7 ♙d3! ? e5. Chasing the pawn does not work: 7... ♜b6 ? 8 ♜ge2 ♜xb2 9 ♞a4 ♜a3 10 ♙c1 ♜b4+ 11 ♙d2 ♜a3 12 ♞b6! ♜xd3 13 ♞xa8 , and White gains the advantage. 7...b5 8 ♜ge2 bxc4 9 ♙xc4 d5 10 ♙b3 dxe4 11 fxe4 leads to a difficult position for Black. 8 d5 cxd5 9 cxd5 b5?! (9...0-0) 10 b4! ♞bd7 11 ♜ge2 ♞b6 .

15



E 6-2. How should White continue?

Yusupov handled the position differently.

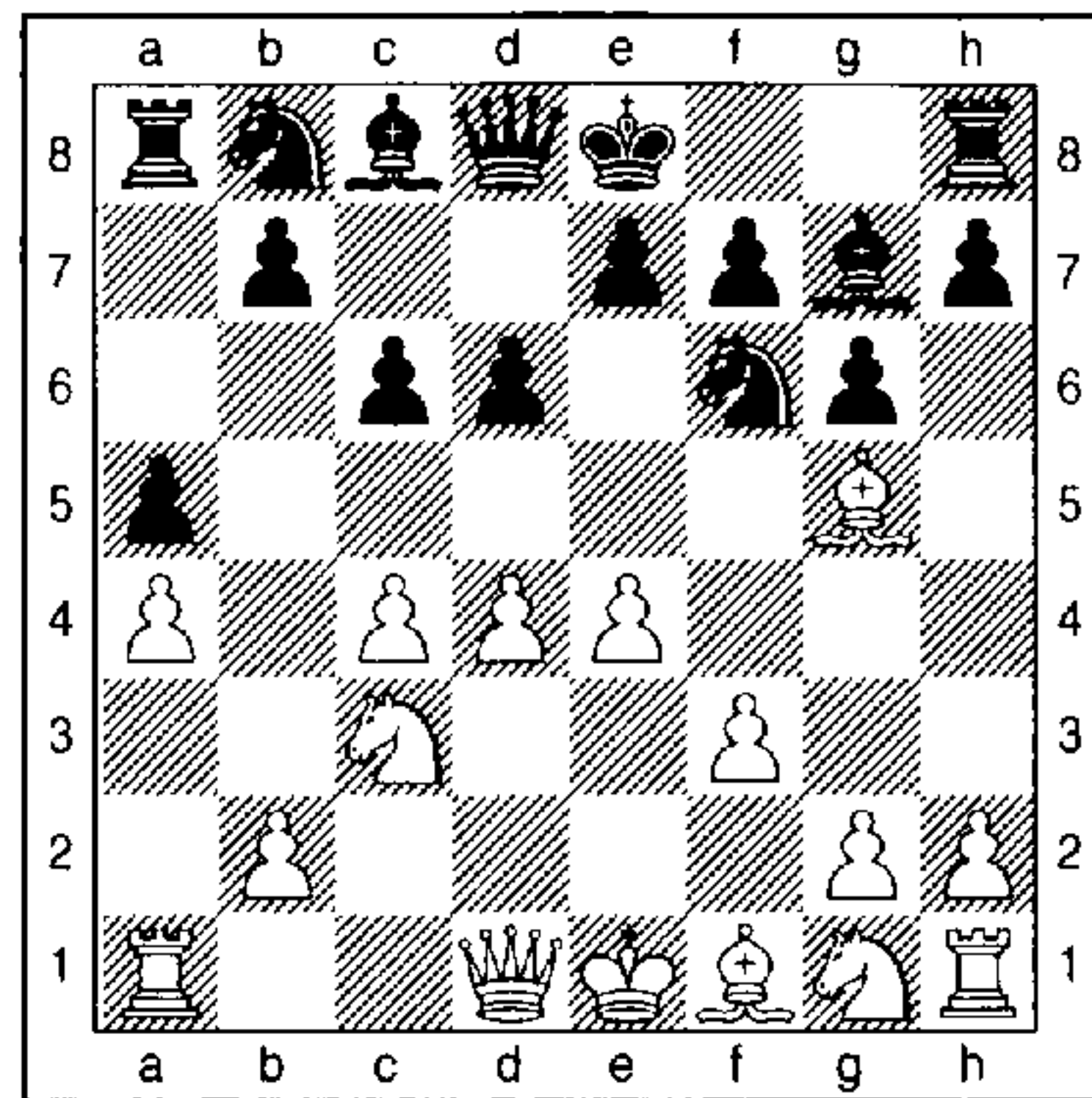
7 a4

In order to prevent the undermining move ...b7-b5, White weakens the dark squares on the queenside, conceding b4 to the opponent. It is hard to give a clear evaluation of his decision – it is perhaps a question of style. Yusupov values highly an advantage in space, and he aims to consolidate it, even at

the cost of some positional concessions.

7 ... a5

16



Q 6-6. Choose a plan for developing the white pieces.

Black is intending ... ♞a6-b4 . The most accurate is 8 ♙d3! ♞a6 9 ♜c1! ♞b4 10 ♙b1 . After this the knight at b4 does not discomfort White at all, and he can calmly complete his development: ♜ge2 , ♜d2 and 0-0.

8 ♜d2?! ♞a6
9 ♜d1 ♞b4
10 ♜ge2 d5?!

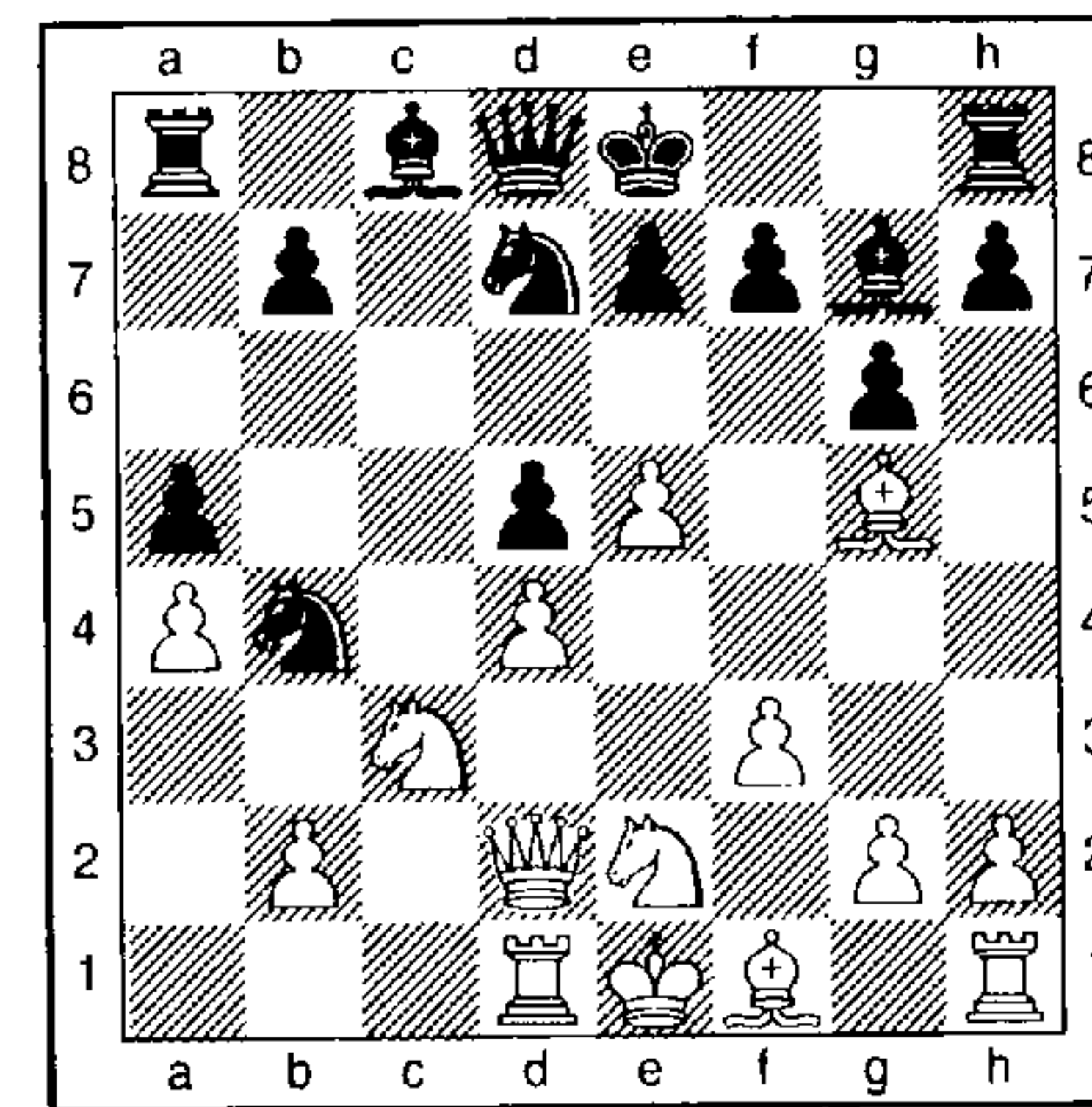
Pointless! Black should have simply castled – then White would have had to reckon with three possible pawn advances in the centre: ...c6-c5, ...e7-e5 or ...d6-d5. **A threat, as is known, can sometimes be stronger than its immediate execution.** But what also told here was style of play – Viktor Kupreichik, a resourceful tactician, decided to tempt his opponent into the variation 11 e5?! dxc4 12 exf6? ♞d3+ 13 ♜xd3 cxd3 14 fxg7 ♜g8 15 ♜xd3 . He had prepared 12...exf6! (instead of 12... ♞d3+ ?) 13 ♜e3+ ♞f8 , when Black has the advantage: in view of the threat of 14... ♞c2+ , he wins a piece. Yusupov does not fall into the trap.

11 cxd5! cxd5



12 e5 ♞d7

17



13 ♙h6!

A bold decision – without completing his development, White launches himself against the opponent's kingside, which is cramped by the pawn at e5. If 13...0-0 he wants to reply 14 h4!, e.g. 14... ♞d3+ 15 ♜xd3 ♙xh6 16 h5 with an attack. A more cautious player would probably have preferred 13 ♞b5 , but then he has to reckon with the undermining move ...f7-f6 (immediately or after 13...0-0).

13 ... ♙xh6

Black would have lost a pawn after 13... ♞d3+ 14 ♜xd3 ♙xh6 15 ♞xd5 .

14 ♜xh6 ♜b6?

It was the knight that should have been placed on b6, since now it has almost nowhere to go.

15 ♜d2

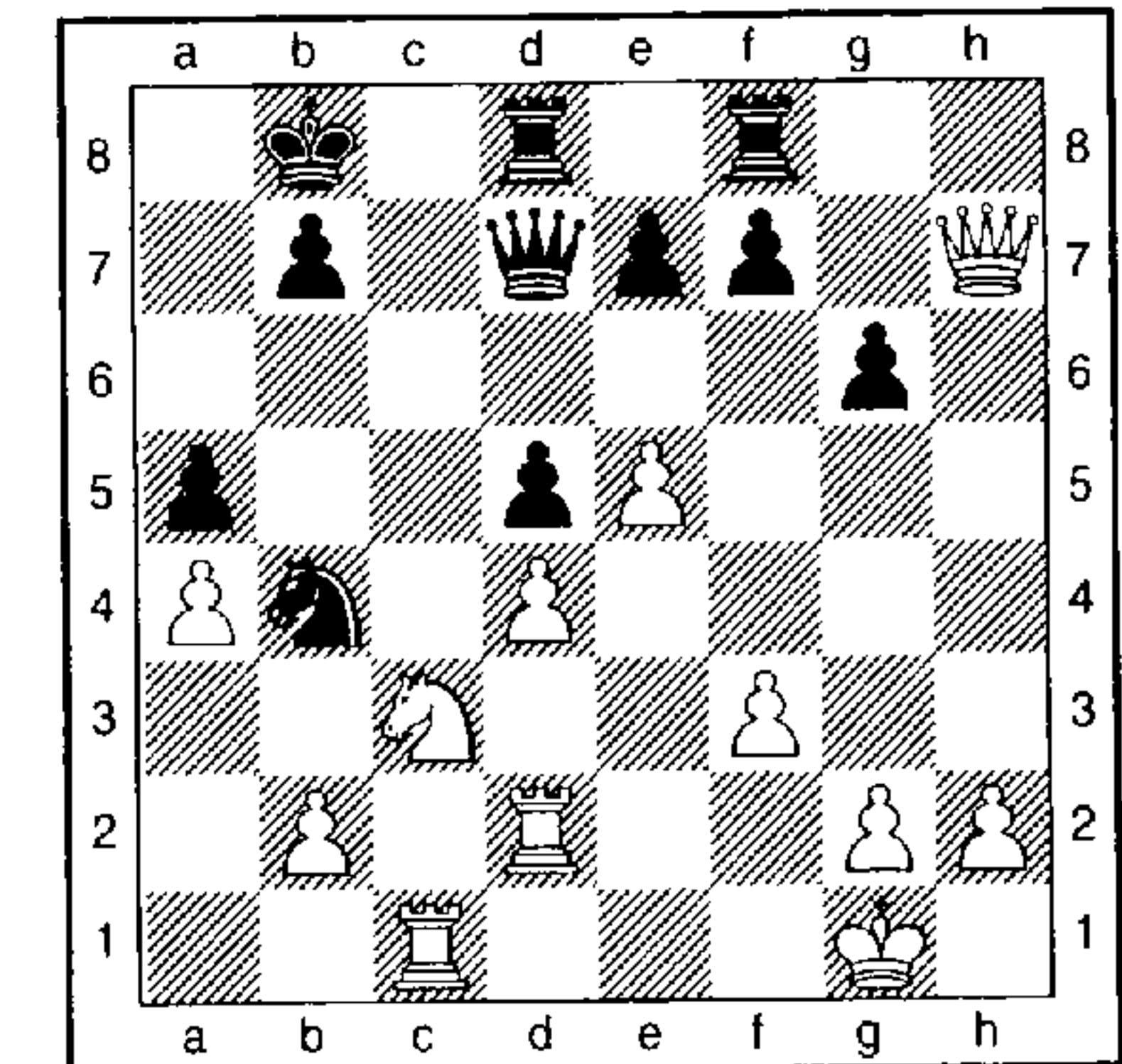
It was already possible to grab the h7 pawn: 15 ♜g7 ♜f8 16 ♜xh7 ♞c2+ 17 ♞f2 , and if 17... ♞xe5 , then 18 ♞xd5 is decisive. Yusupov prefers first to complete his development.

15 ... ♞b8
16 ♞f4 ♙e6
17 ♜g7 ♜f8
18 ♙b5+ ♞d7

18... ♞8c6 19 ♞xe6 fxe6 20 ♜xh7 0-0-0 21 ♙xc6 ♞xc6 22 ♞b5 is hopeless for Black.

19 0-0 0-0-0
20 ♜c1 ♞b8
21 ♞xe6 ♜xe6
22 ♙xd7 ♜xd7
23 ♜xh7

18



23 ... ♜c8

Black has no compensation for the lost pawn. An interesting practical opportunity for complicating matters was offered by the unexpected 23... ♞d3! ? The knight is immune: if 24 ♜xd3 ? there follows 24... ♜f5 with the threats of 25... ♜xd3 and 25... ♞h8 26 ♜g7 ♜dg8 . Yusupov was intending to reply 24 ♜cd1 and had in mind the winning variations 24... ♞f4 25 ♜h6 ♜f5 ? 26 g4! or 25...g5? 26 ♜b6! (but, of course, not 26 ♜xg5?? $\text{♞h3+!$). Instead of 24... ♞f4 , stronger is 24... ♜f5 25 ♜h6 (25 g4 ♜e6!) 25... ♞h8 26 ♜e3 ♞f4 , when the black pieces come alive somewhat.

The opponent's idea can be refuted by the counter-blow 24 e6! After 24... ♜xe6 (no better is 24... ♜d6 25 ♜xd3 ♞h8 26 ♜xf7 ♜xh2+ 27 ♞f2 ♜h4+ 28 ♞e2) 25 ♜xd3 ♞h8 26 ♜g7 f6 (26... ♜dg8 27 ♜e5+) 27 ♞xd5! ♜xe7 White remains two pawns up.

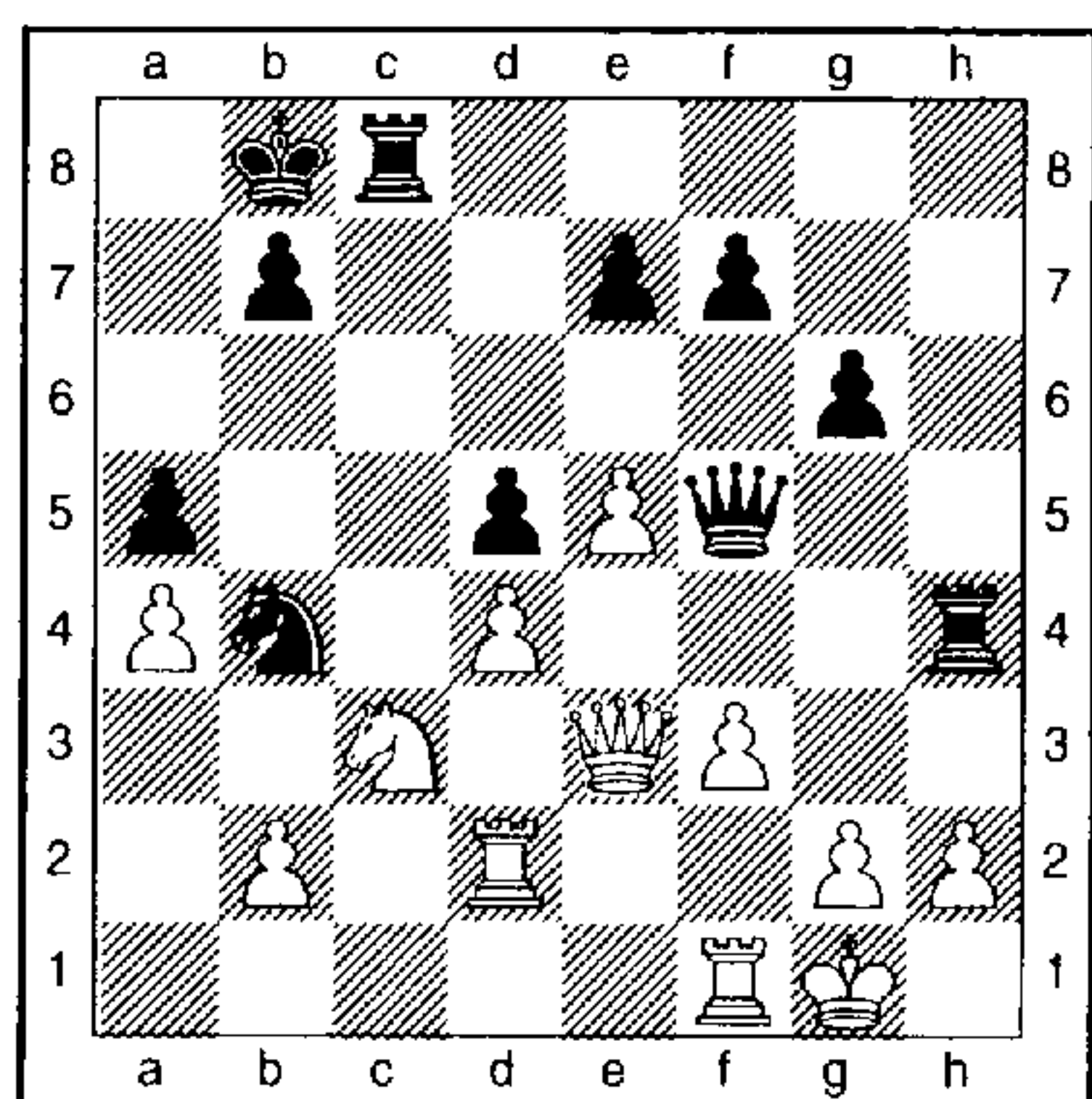


24 ♖h6?!

A careless move in a strategically winning position! By playing 24 ♖h4! White would have prevented the activation of the enemy queen, by tying it to the defence of the e7 pawn. If 24...♗h8 there is the unpleasant reply 25 ♖f4.

- 24 ... ♖f5
- 25 ♖f1 ♗h8
- 26 ♖e3 ♗h4

19



Q 6-7. What should White play?

As yet the opponent has not created any real threats. The problem is that the white pieces are rather passively placed – it is not apparent what to do with them, what active strategy to carry out. Yusupov finds a brilliant solution – he unexpectedly sacrifices his central pawn, in order to break up Black’s kingside and then attack the resulting pawn weaknesses.

- 27 e6!! fxe6

27...f6!? came into consideration, trying to avoid the opening of the e-file. Kupreichik was apparently afraid of 28 g4!, although after 28...♖g5 29 ♖xg5 fxe6 White would have had to overcome numerous difficulties in order to win. After 30 ♗e1! it

is unfavourable to reply 30...♗c6? 31 ♗xd5 ♗d8 in view of 32 ♗b6! ♗xd4 (32...♗xd4? 33 ♗d7+ ♗xd7 34 exd7 ♗xf3+ 35 ♖h1!) 33 ♗xd4 (33 ♗ed1!?) 33...♗xd4 34 ♗e3! (34 ♖g2? ♗xh2+!) 34...♖c7 35 ♗d7! (but not 35 ♗c4? ♗xf3+ 36 ♗xf3 ♗xg4+), and Black’s position is difficult in view of the threats of 36 ♗f8(e5) or 36 ♖g2. Stronger is 30...♗f6! 31 ♗e5 ♗xf3 32 ♗xg5, and now, probably, 32...♗f6!? 33 ♗e2 ♗c6, since the straightforward 32...♗f4 33 ♗xg6 ♗hxg4+ 34 ♗xg4! (less convincing is 34 ♗g2 ♗xg6 35 ♗xg6 b6!) 34...♗xg4+ 35 ♗g2 ♗xg2+ 36 ♖xg2 leads to a lost knight ending.

- 28 ♗e1! ♗c2?

After the more tenacious 28...♗c6 White would have transposed into a highly favourable ending by 29 ♖e5+!

- 29 ♖f2! ♗xe1
- 30 ♖xh4 ♗c2?!

30...♗xc3? 31 bxc3 ♖b1 did not work in view of the simple 32 ♖f2. The move in the game leads to the loss of a piece, but also after 30...♗d3 31 ♖xe7 Black’s position is unenviable.

- 31 g4! ♖xf3
- 32 ♗xc2

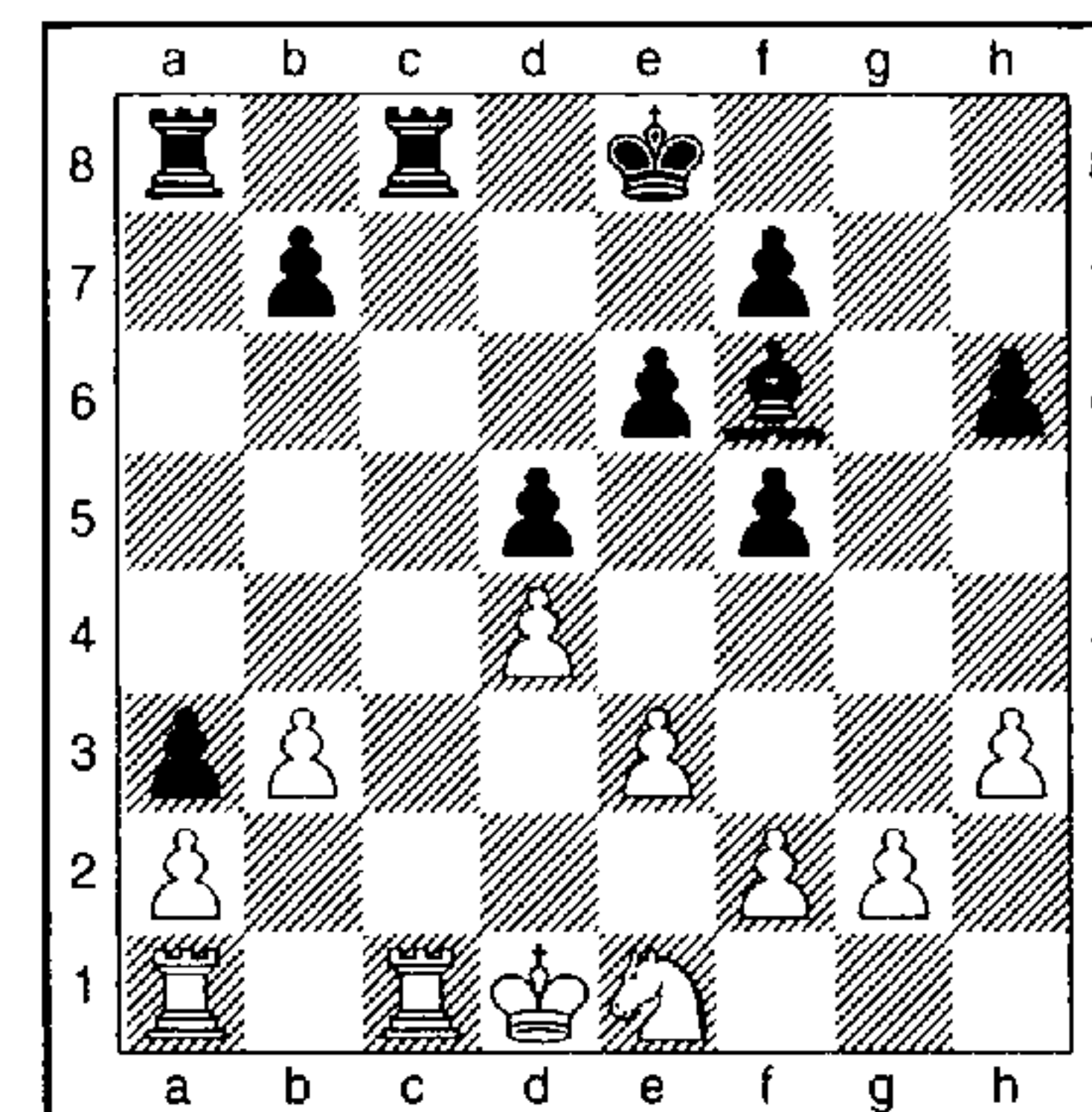
The rest is a matter of straightforward technique.

32...e5 33 ♗f2 ♖e3 34 ♖xe7 exd4 35 ♖xe3 dxe3 36 ♗f4! ♗e8 37 ♖f1 ♗h8 38 ♖g2 g5 39 ♗d4 ♗f8 40 ♗xd5 ♗f2+ 41 ♖g3 ♗xb2 42 ♗e5 ♗b3 43 ♗xe3 b5 44 axb5. Black resigns.



E 6-3

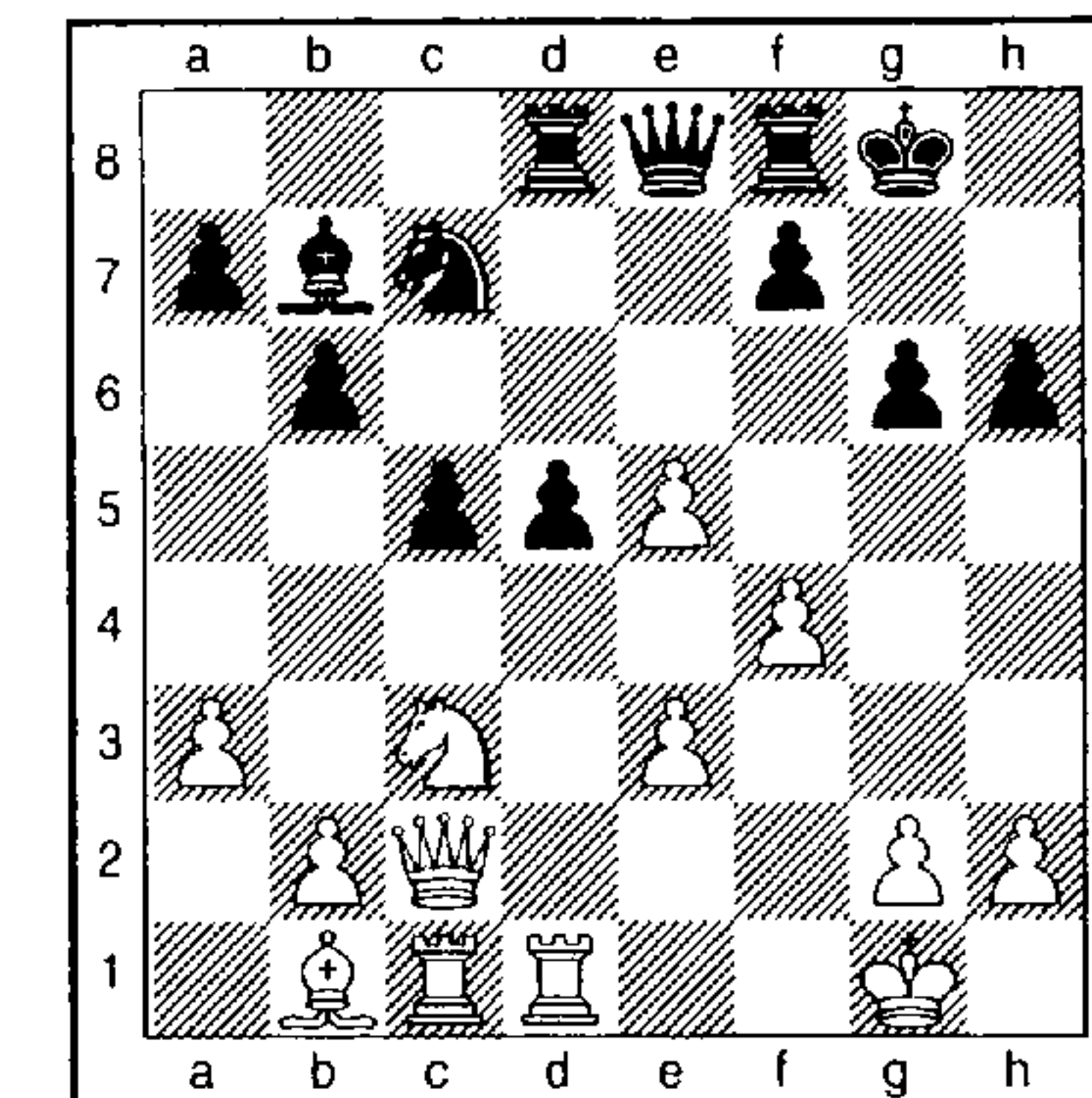
20



Black to move

E 6-4

21



Black to move



The Blocking of Passed Pawns

The passed pawn is a criminal, who should be kept under lock and key. Mild measures, such as police surveillance, are not sufficient.

Aron Nimzowitsch

Vukic – Davcevski

Yugoslav Championship 1979

- | | | |
|---|----|----|
| 1 | d4 | e6 |
| 2 | c4 | f5 |
| 3 | g3 | f6 |
| 4 | g2 | d5 |

Until recently the 'stonewall' variation in the Dutch Defence was played only occasionally, and had the reputation of being a positionally dubious opening. It is true that, in his youth, Mikhail Botvinnik included it in his opening repertoire, but later he gave it up altogether.

In the mid-1980s grandmaster Yusupov became interested in the 'stonewall'. He realised that Black's position, apart from the obvious minus connected with the weakness of the dark squares, also has a serious plus. The solid pawn structure in the centre hinders White's e2–e4, and without this advance his g2 bishop remains passive and may prove to be no better than the 'bad' c8 bishop.

I remember that one day Artur came up to me and said that he was intending to employ the 'stonewall'. I was sceptical about the idea, but after we had played several blitz games, I sensed that it was not easy for White to proceed.

Whereas Botvinnik preferred to develop his bishop at e7, Yusupov always placed it on d6. However, initially success was on my side, thanks to a plan which I knew from the very old game Schlechter–John (Barmen 1905). I played f4, then e2–e3!, endeavoured to force the exchange on f4 (after c4–

c5), and then recaptured the bishop with the e-pawn. The resulting pawn formation is extremely unfavourable for Black. But then Artur realised that in reply to f4 he should immediately exchange bishops. The capture g3xf4 weakens the kingside somewhat, which will tell if Black is able to play ...g7–g5.

Yusupov successfully employed the 'stonewall' several times. Soon it came into fashion, its reputation improved, and its theory developed significantly.

The game which we will now analyse was played before the 'renaissance' of this opening variation, and many of its subtleties had not yet been discovered. One such subtlety involves the move order. It turns out that it is more advantageous for White to develop his knight not at f3, but at h3. Therefore nowadays Black usually does not hurry with ...d7–d5, but prefers 4...c6!?, and only if 5 f3 – 5...d5. And if 5 h3, then 5...d6!, preparing ...e6–e5, after which the knight at h3 will be out of play.

- | | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| 5 | f3 | e7 |
| 6 | 0–0 | c6 |
| 7 | b3 | 0–0 |

With his bishop at d6 Black makes the useful move 7...e7, and in order to play a3 White has to waste time on a2–a4 or b2 and c1.

- | | | |
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| 8 | a3 | xa3 |
| 9 | xa3 | e7 |
| 10 | c1 | d7 |

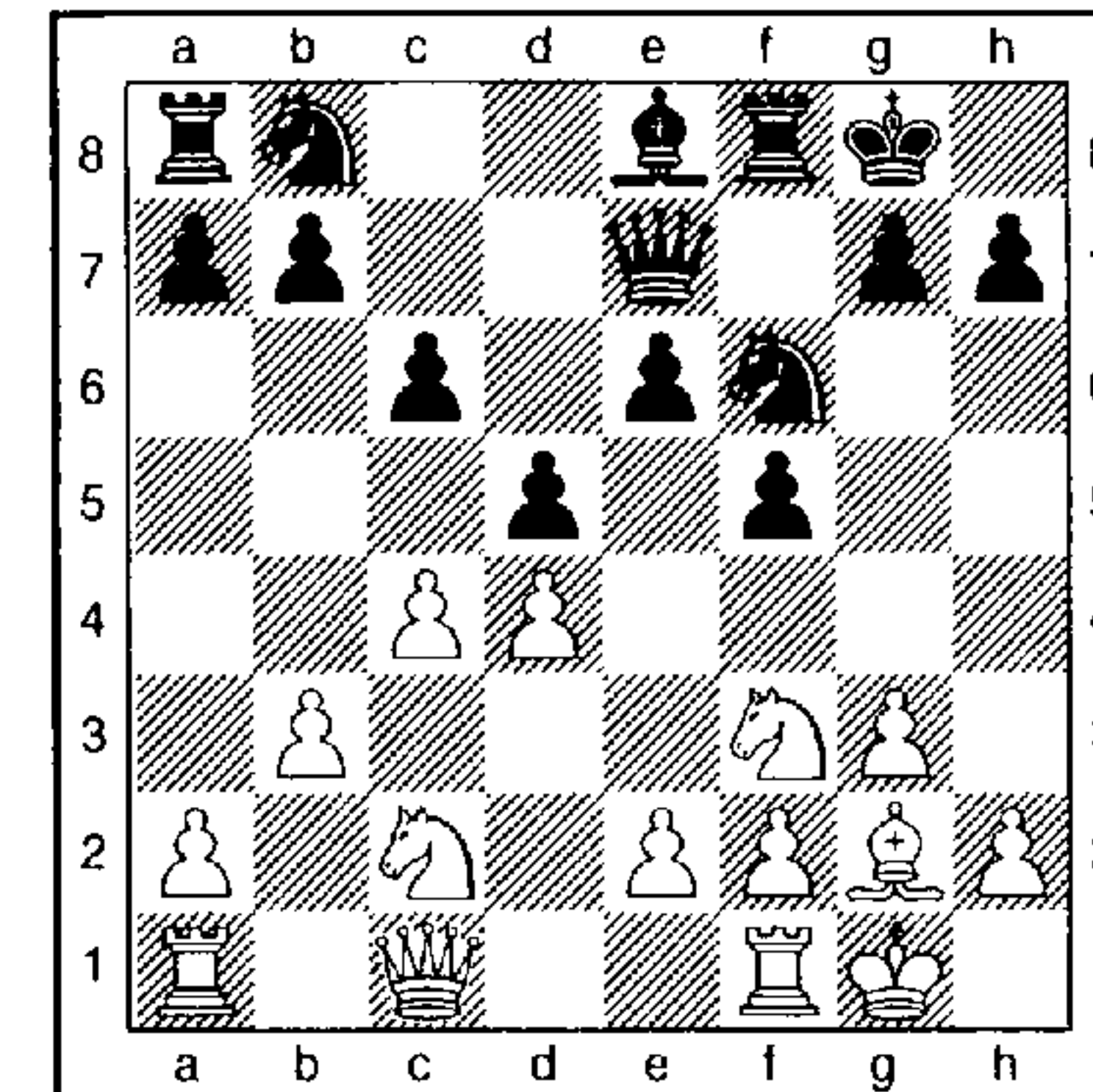
One of the serious questions that always faces Black in the 'stonewall' is where to develop his light-square bishop? In previous



times he usually directed it along the route d7–e8–h5; nowadays he more often plays ...bd7, ...b7–b6 and ...b7.

- | | | |
|----|----|----|
| 11 | c2 | e8 |
|----|----|----|

22



Q 6-8. What should White play?

The time for specific action has not yet come – for the moment he needs to improve the placing of his pieces.

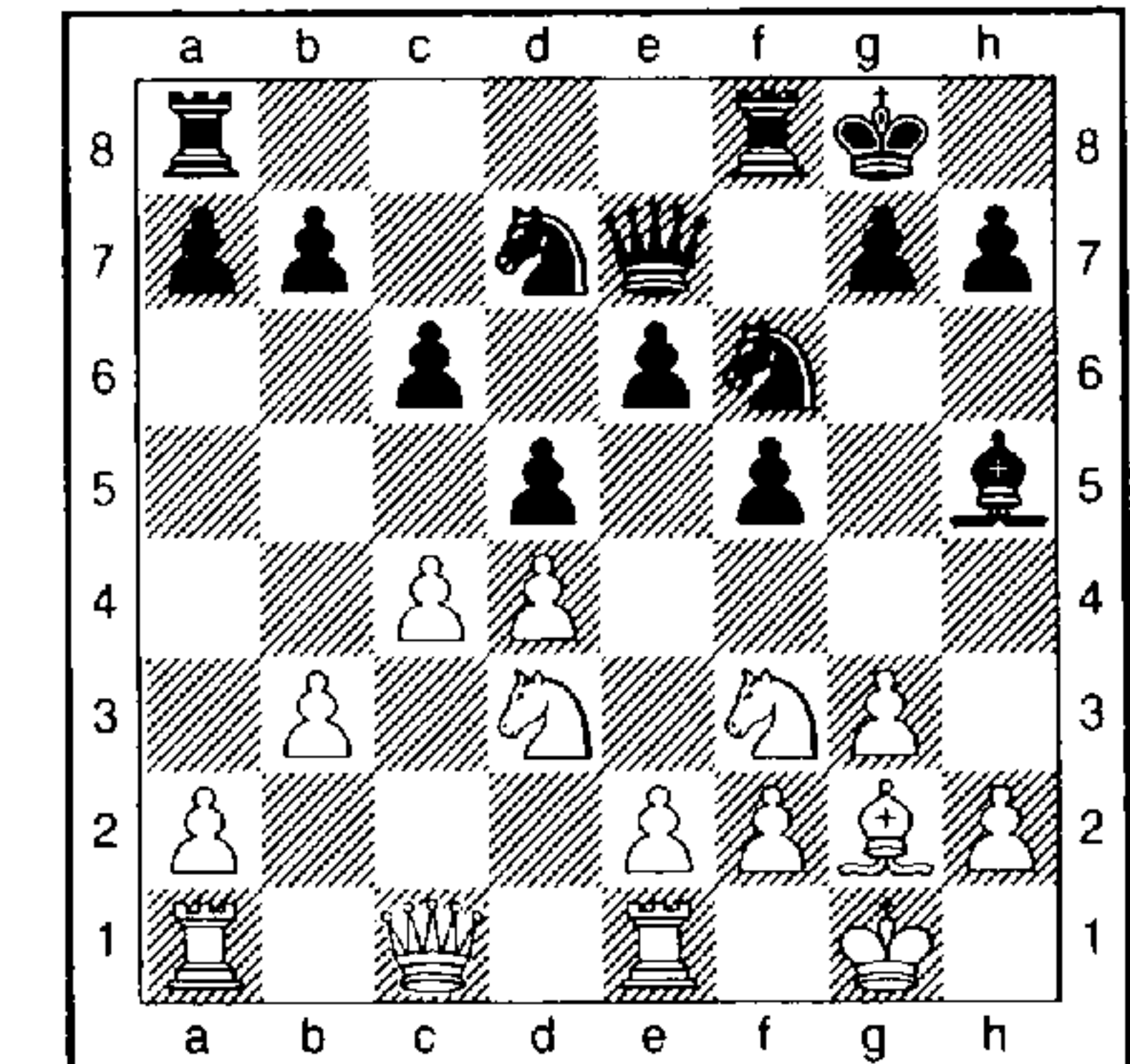
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| 12 | ce1! |
|----|------|

At d3 the white knight will be excellently placed – from here it will control the important squares e5, f4 and c5. It was this arrangement of the knights that Tigran Petrosian, in his time, liked to carry out. He usually developed his queen's knight at d2 and then played f3–e5–d3 and d2–f3. At one time it was sufficient to know this prescription, in order to obtain a superior position against the 'stonewall'.

- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 12 | ... | bd7 |
| 13 | d3 | h5 |
| 14 | e1! | |

To use Nimzowitsch's expression: 'a mysterious rook move'. What is the point of it?

23



First and foremost, this is prophylaxis against the exchange on f3. After 14...xf3 15 exf3! Black does not have the reply 15...e5.

It is interesting to note that a few years earlier, in the game Vukic–Gazic (Sarajevo 1972) the same position was reached. There White played 14 b2 (once again not allowing 14...xf3 15 exf3 e5) 14...e4 15 ac1 g5 16 fe5 f4, and did not achieve anything much. On this occasion Milan Vukic acts more purposefully, intending after 14...e4 15 fe5 to play a rapid f2–f3 and e2–e4 – this is another reason for 14 e1.

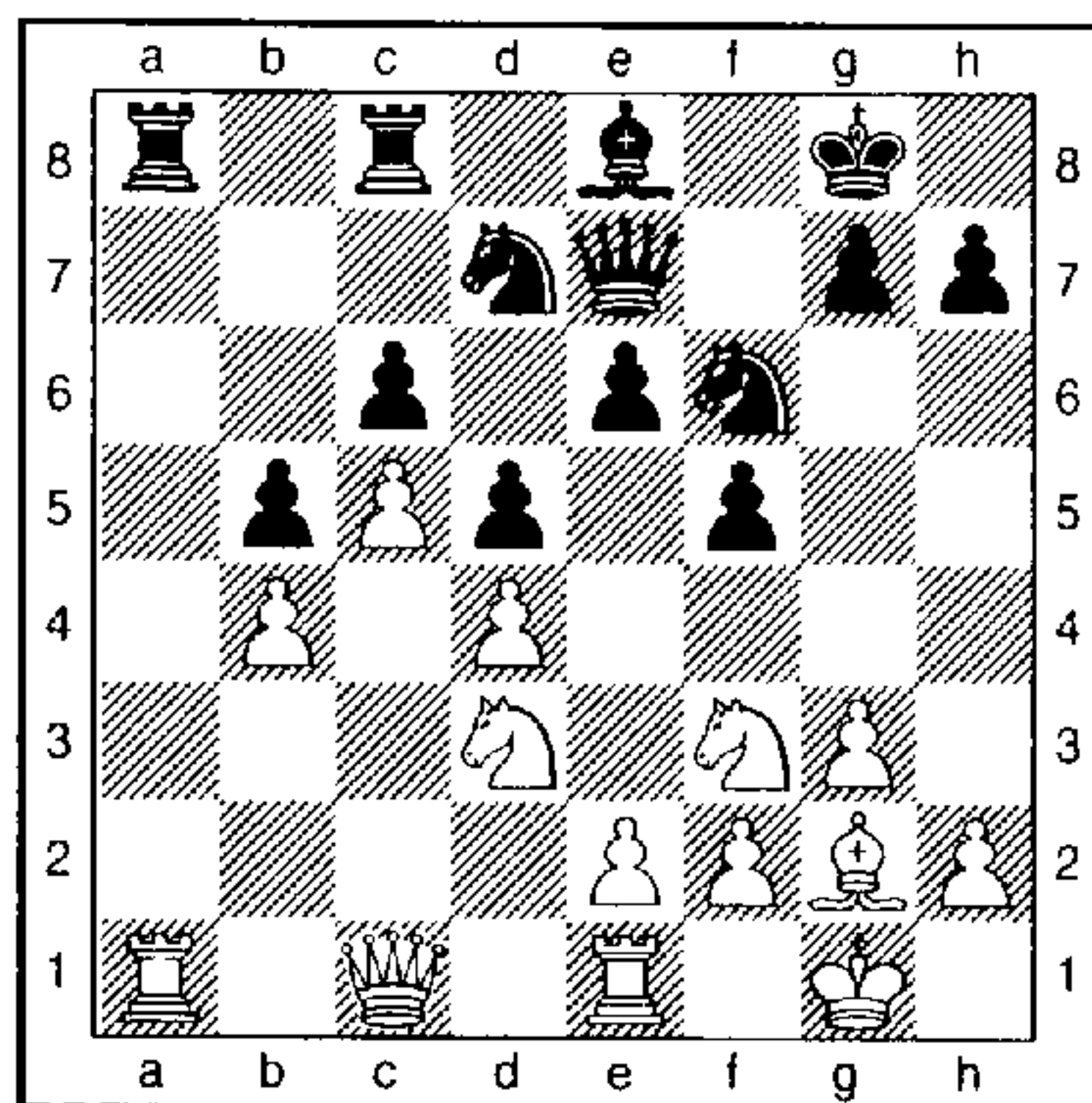
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| 14 | ... | a5? |
|----|-----|-----|

Remember: you should not advance pawns there, where you are weaker! Black weakens his queenside, making it easier for the opponent to open lines on this part of the board. As a result he has to forget about active play against the king, and the initiative is completely taken over by White.

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 15 | c5! | fc8 |
| 16 | a3 | e8 |
| 17 | b4 | axb4 |
| 18 | axb4 | b5 |



24



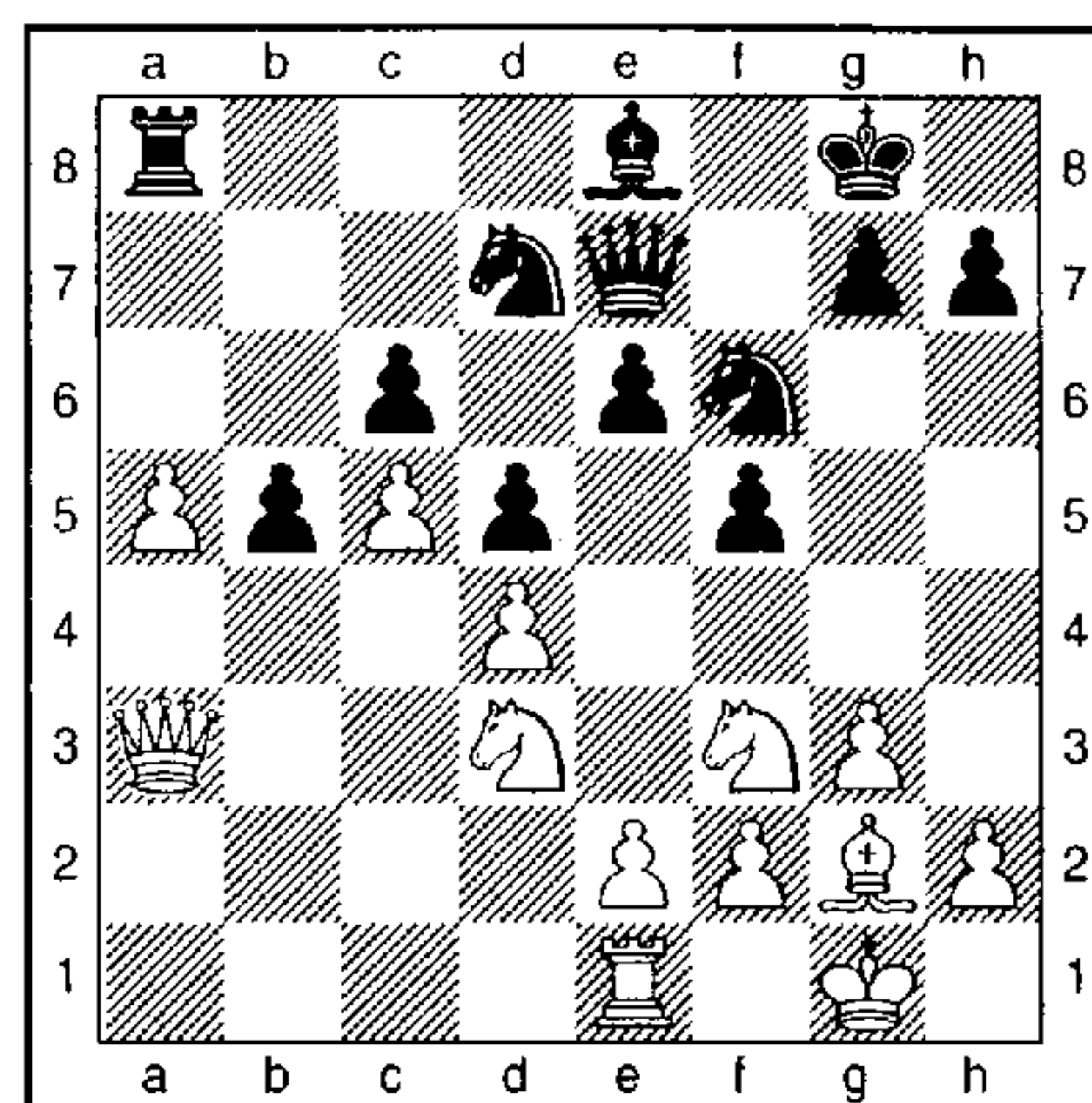
The abundance of good continuations available to White is simply dazzling. It looks tempting to capture en passant on b6. Not bad is the plan suggested by Vukic: 19 ♖b2 then ♗d2, f2–f3 and e2–e4. It is worth considering 19 ♗f4, threatening a possible invasion of the queen at d6 or c7. There is also some point in 19 ♗de5 ♗xe5 20 dxe5, in order subsequently to use the d4 square for the knight.

19 ♖a5?

Played in accordance with a recommendation by Nimzowitsch: White makes use of an outpost on an open file, and, as one is supposed to do when it is a wing file, he occupies it with a rook. However, in my view this is a positional mistake. After the exchange on a5 it is true that White obtains a passed pawn, but it has to be defended by both his queen, and his rook, which significantly restricts their activity.

19 ... ♖xa5
20 bxa5 ♖a8
21 ♗a3

25



Q 6-9. What should Black play?

Black appeared to be condemned to passive defence, when suddenly he has acquired an attractive possibility of activating his game. It is very hard to resist the temptation.

21 ... ♗b6?

Vukic awards this move two exclamation marks, and to his own move 21 ♗a3 he attaches a question mark. He suggests instead 21 ♗c3, and evaluates the resulting position as equal. Logically this signifies that after 21 ♗a3 ♗b6 White no longer has even equality.

The charm of spectacular moves sometimes affects our perception of what is happening on the board. But let's try to approach the problem soberly. White will obviously reply 22 ♗fe5 (although 22 a6 is also possible). Where now should the black knight head? In the event of the exchange on c4, the white knight will go to b4 and the passed a6 pawn supported by it will be very dangerous. And 22...♗a4 has only one virtue: it temporarily blocks the a-file. If White should nevertheless succeed in retaining his passed pawn, the knight at a4 will be out of play.

We see that the pretty knight jump involves a considerable strategic risk. Of course, for an



objective evaluation of it, the arguments given are insufficient – variations have to be calculated. But first let us consider what else Black might have done.

The opponent obviously wants to place his knight on b4. From here the knight puts pressure on c6, blockades the b5 pawn and helps its own passed a5 pawn to make a step forward. The manoeuvre of the black knight to a6 suggests itself, in order to blockade the a-pawn and prevent the white knight from establishing itself at b4. In principle, it is advantageous for Black to exchange all the knights, since the remaining bishop at g2, securely restricted by the black pawns, does not present any danger.

Let us check: 21...♗b8! 22 ♗b4 ♗a6 23 ♗e5 ♗xb4 24 ♗xb4 ♗c7 25 ♖a1 ♗d7 26 ♗d3 (after 26 ♗xd7 ♗xd7 White cannot play 27 a6? ♗c8) 26...♗b8! with equality (but not 26...e5? 27 dxe5 ♗xe5 28 ♗f4).

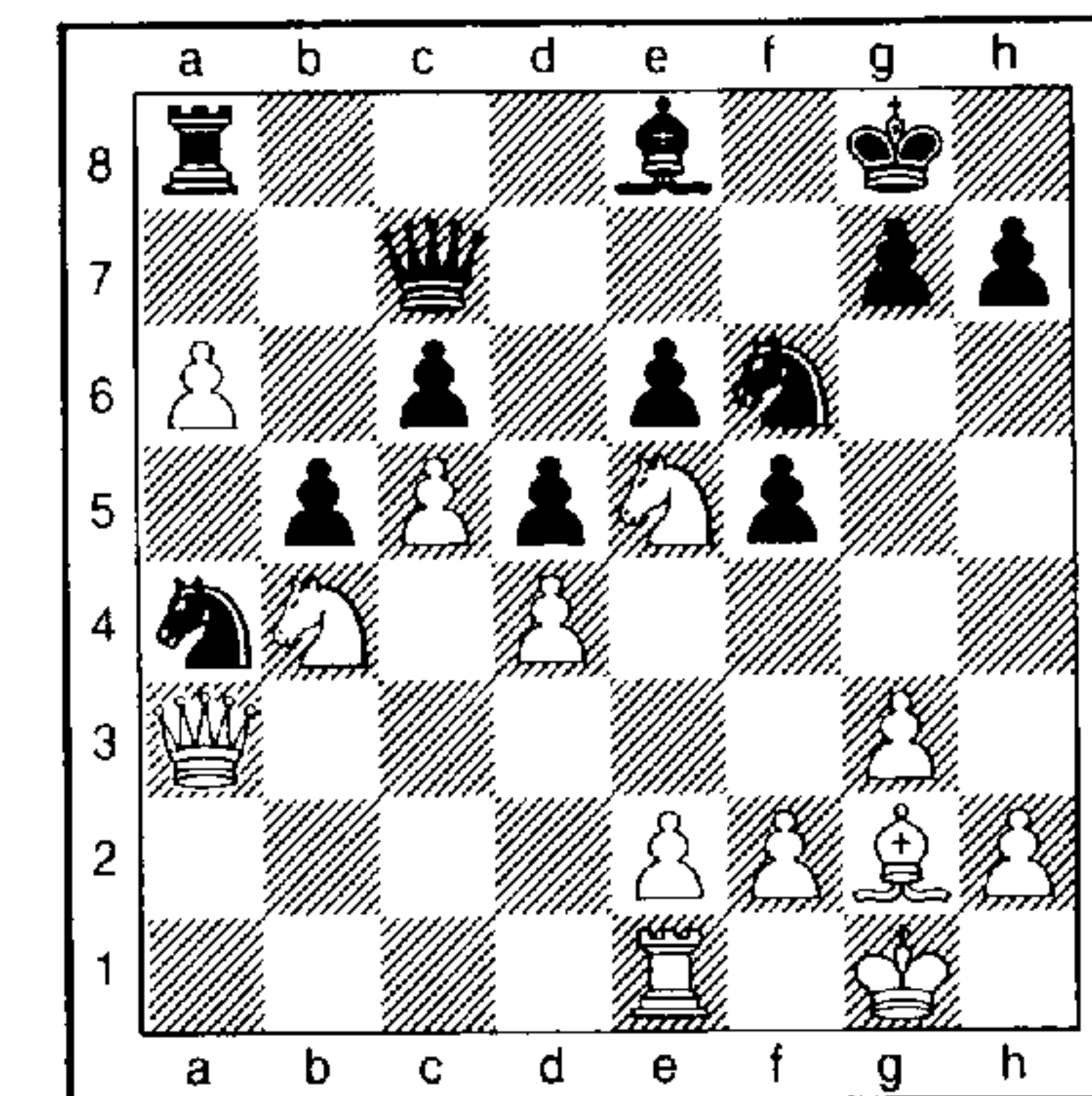
If 23 ♗xa6 ♖xa6 24 ♗e5, then 24...♗d7! (less precise is 24...♗c7 25 ♖a1 ♗d7 26 ♗d3!, although even this position is defensible – there is both the careful 26...♗b8, as well as the more active 26...e5!? 27 ♗b4 ♖a7). In the event of 25 ♗d3, in contrast to the game, 25...♗b6! fully merits its exclamation mark.

22 ♗fe5 ♗a4

In Vukic's opinion, preferable was 22...♗c4 23 ♗xc4 dxc4 (if 23...bxc4, then 24 ♗e5 is strong) 24 ♗b4 ♗c7 25 a6 ♗d5. Any yet the final position of this variation is clearly in White's favour! He continues either 26 ♖a1, or 26 ♗xd5!? exd5 27 ♖a1 ♖a7 28 ♗e3! (I should mention that in the endgame after 28 ♗a5 ♗xa5 29 ♖xa5 it is also not easy for Black to defend).

23 ♗b4 ♗c7
24 a6

26



Q 6-10. Evaluate 24...♗xc5.

It is possible that you will already have given an answer when solving the previous test. After all, the moves leading to this position look more or less forced, which means that the evaluation of 21...♗b6 also depends to a considerable degree on its evaluation.

After 24...♗xc5 Black is happy with both 25 dxc5? ♗xe5 and 25 ♗exc6? ♗xa6. 25 ♖c1 is tempting, but then there is 25...♗xa6! 26 ♗xa6 ♗b6 (26...♗c8 27 ♖a1 b4) 27 ♗e7 (if 27 ♖a1, then possible is either 27...♗xd4, with three pawns for the piece, or 27...b4) 27...♗xa6 28 ♗xe6+ ♗h8 29 ♖xc6! ♗a1+ 30 ♗f1 ♗xd4 with an unclear position.

Even so, Black's idea can be refuted by 25 ♗bxc6!:

(a) 25...♗xc6 26 ♗xc5 ♖xa6 (26...♗a5 27 ♖c1 ♗e8 28 ♗e7) 27 ♖c1 ♗d7 28 ♗e7;
(b) 25...♗xa6 26 ♗e7+! ♗h8 27 ♗xd5! exd5 28 ♗f8+ ♗g8 29 ♗xd5.

24 ... ♗d7
25 f4

White's plan is clear: the manoeuvre of his bishop to d1 followed by the capture on a4 (at last some useful work has also been found for the g2 bishop!). Black is not able to do anything to counter this threat.



It can now be said with certainty: 21...♘b6 deserves not an exclamation mark, but a question mark. The active plan chosen by Black was incorrect, and led to an extremely difficult, most probably lost position. He should have preferred passive defence, involving the exchanging of knights and the blockade of the passed a-pawn at a6.

The question arises: is it fair to call Black's pretty idea 21...♘b6 anti-positional, if it can be refuted only by a single combinative way (24...♗xc5 25 ♘bxc6! ♗xa6 26 ♘e7+! etc.)? After all, this refutation might not have been found!

The fact that White had to resort to tactics is quite natural. Here it is appropriate to recall what Emanuel Lasker had to say: **'With masters, combinative and positional play complement each other. With the help of combination they aim to refute false values, and by positional play they try to consolidate and exploit true values'**.

The fact that there is only one solution does not by any means signify that it is accidental. It is quite logical that the decisive role in the combination is played by the knight at b4, which Black could and should have exchanged, but did not do so.

However, after the manoeuvre of the knight to a4 Black's position looks so vulnerable, that I suspect that there should also be alternative ways of maintaining the advantage. Suppose that we were frightened by 24...♗xc5 – then instead of 24 a6! we could have tried 24 ♖e3!?, since in the variation 24...♖xa5 25 ♗exc6 ♗xc6 26 ♖xe6+ ♗h8 27 ♖xc6 ♗d8 28 ♗d3 (with the threat of 29 ♖b7 and 30 c6) White retains the better chances.

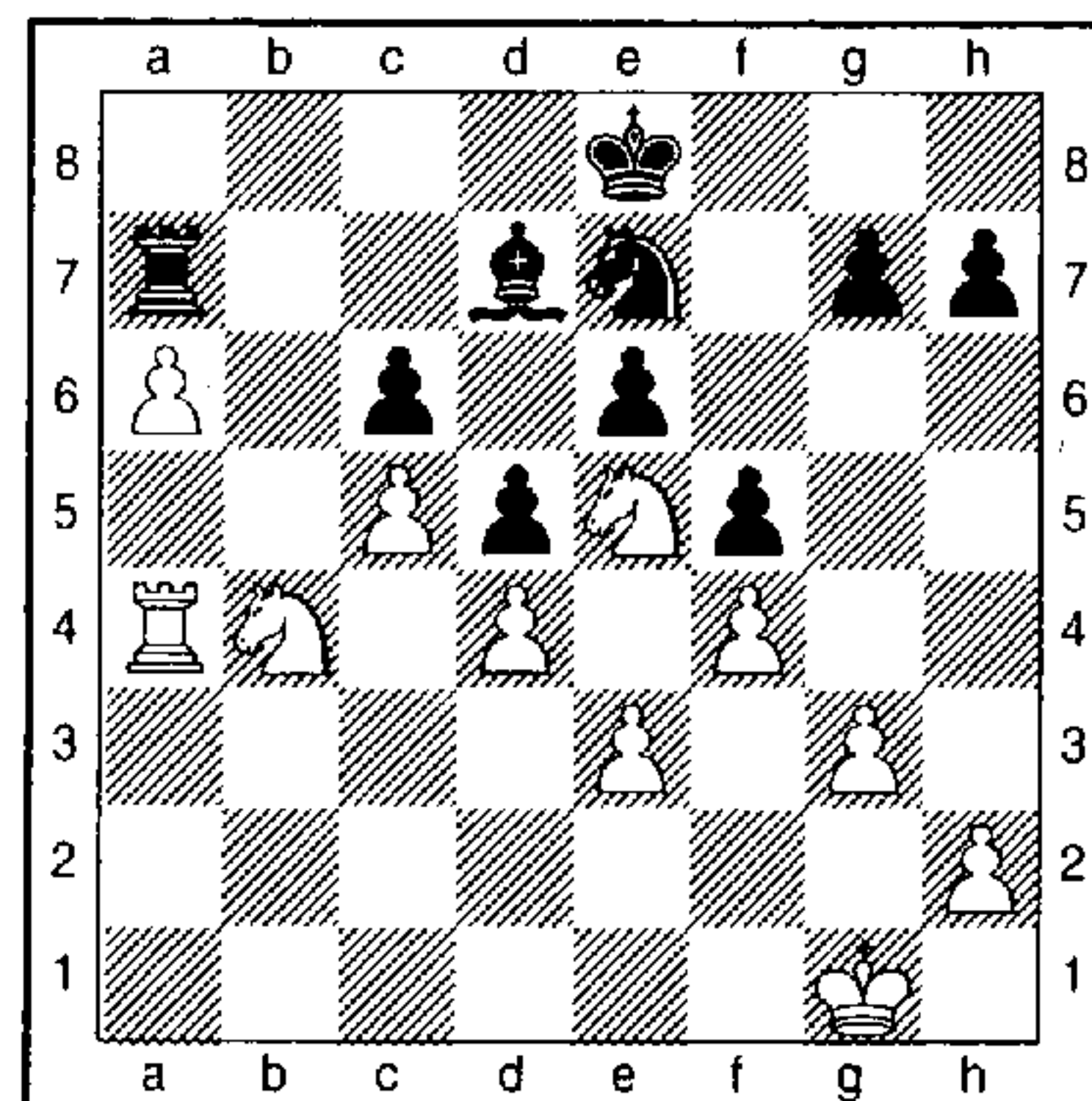
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| 25 | ... | ♔f8 |
| 26 | ♗f3 | ♘g8 |
| 27 | e3 | ♗e8 |
| 28 | ♖a1 | |

To 28 ♗d1 Black would have replied 28...♖a5, and so White first places his rook

on the a-file. After 27...♗e7 (instead of 27...♗e8), 28 ♖a1 would have been incorrect on account of 28...♗c8, but on the other hand the immediate 28 ♗d1 would have been possible, since Black's queen has to defend the bishop at d7. **'Chess is the tragedy of one tempo!'**

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 28 | ... | ♗e7 |
| 29 | ♗d1 | ♖a5 |
| 30 | ♗xa4 | bxa4 |
| 31 | ♖xa4 | ♖xa4 |
| 32 | ♖xa4 | ♖a7 |

27



White has won a pawn. The conversion of the advantage is not difficult, but quite instructive. It is not easy to make progress on the queenside – if the knight moves from b4, the a6 pawn will immediately be attacked by the black bishop. This means that the **'principle of two weaknesses'** must be employed – a 'second front' opened on the kingside, lines opened there, and the rook transferred there. In the light of this plan, White's subsequent actions are easily understood.

- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 33 | h3! | ♗d8 |
| 34 | g4 | ♗c7 |
| 35 | ♗f2 | ♗e8 |
| 36 | ♖a1 | ♖a8 |
| 37 | ♗e2 | |



Black was possibly intending to activate his rook, by playing ...♗b8–a7 and ...♖b8. By bringing his king close to the c3 square, White parries this threat. **A basic principle of converting an advantage is to forestall even the slightest counter-chances for the opponent.**

- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 37 | ... | ♗c8 |
| 38 | ♗d2 | ♗a7 |

By playing his knight to a7, Black wanted to free his rook from the need to blockade the a-pawn. But the kingside, abandoned by the knight, has become indefensible.

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 39 | gxf5 | exf5 |
| 40 | ♖g1 | g6 |
| 41 | h4! | ♗c8 |

The knight rushes back. Here it is, the principle of two weakness in action: the opponent's pieces are capable of defending only one part of the board, but not both simultaneously!

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 42 | h5 | ♗e7 |
| 43 | hxc6 | ♗xc6 |
| 44 | ♖h1! | ♖c8 |
| 45 | ♗xc6 | |

The transformation of an advantage – White exchanges the opponent's bad bishop, in order to break through with his rook onto the 7th rank.

- | | | |
|----|-----|------|
| 45 | ... | hxc6 |
| 46 | ♖h7 | ♗d7 |
| 47 | a7! | |

The time has come for the passed pawn to have the decisive word.

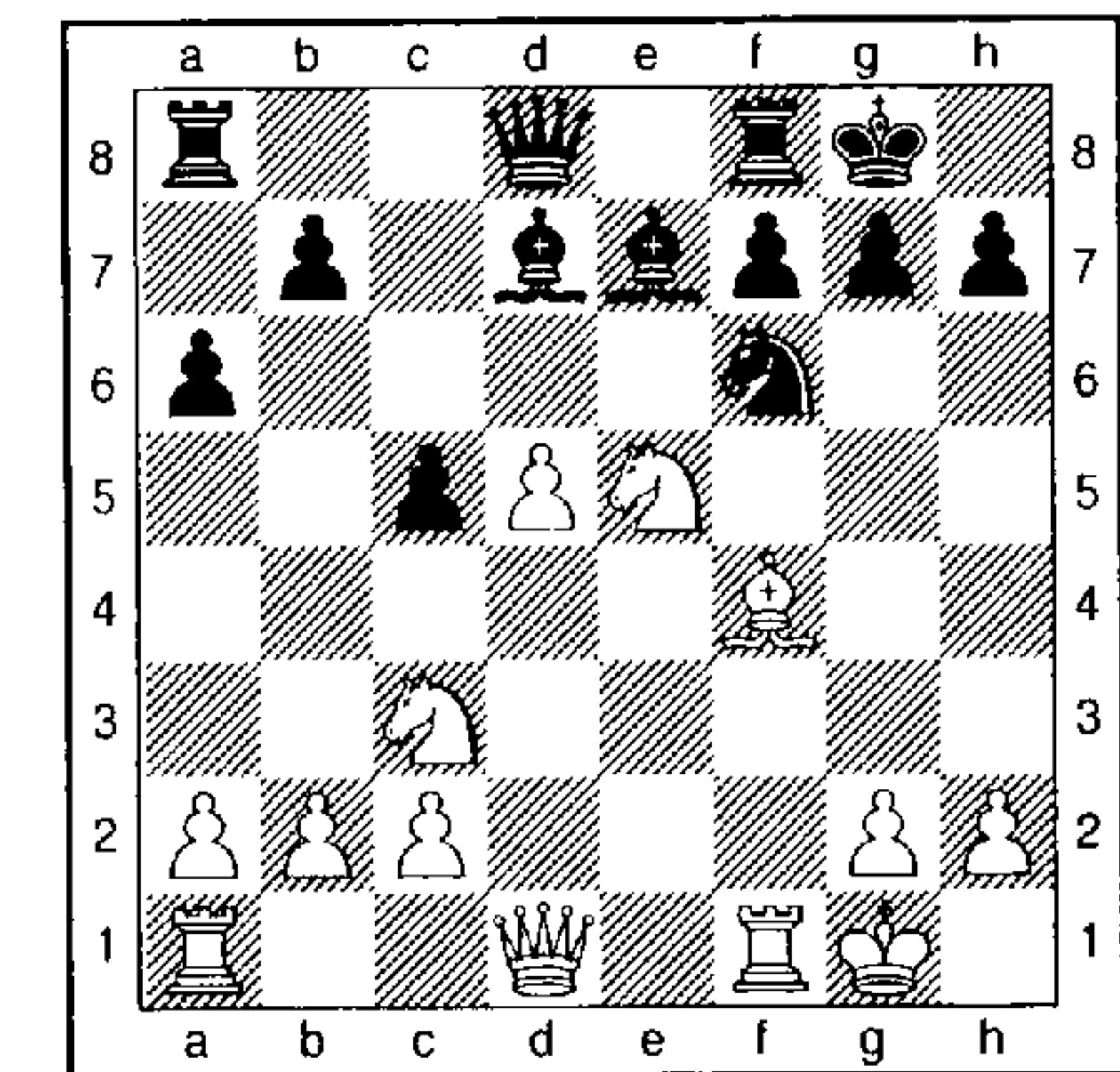
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| 47 | ... | ♗e6 |
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The rook ending after 47...♖a8 48 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 49 ♖xe7 is completely hopeless.

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| 48 | ♖xe7+ | |
|----|-------|--|

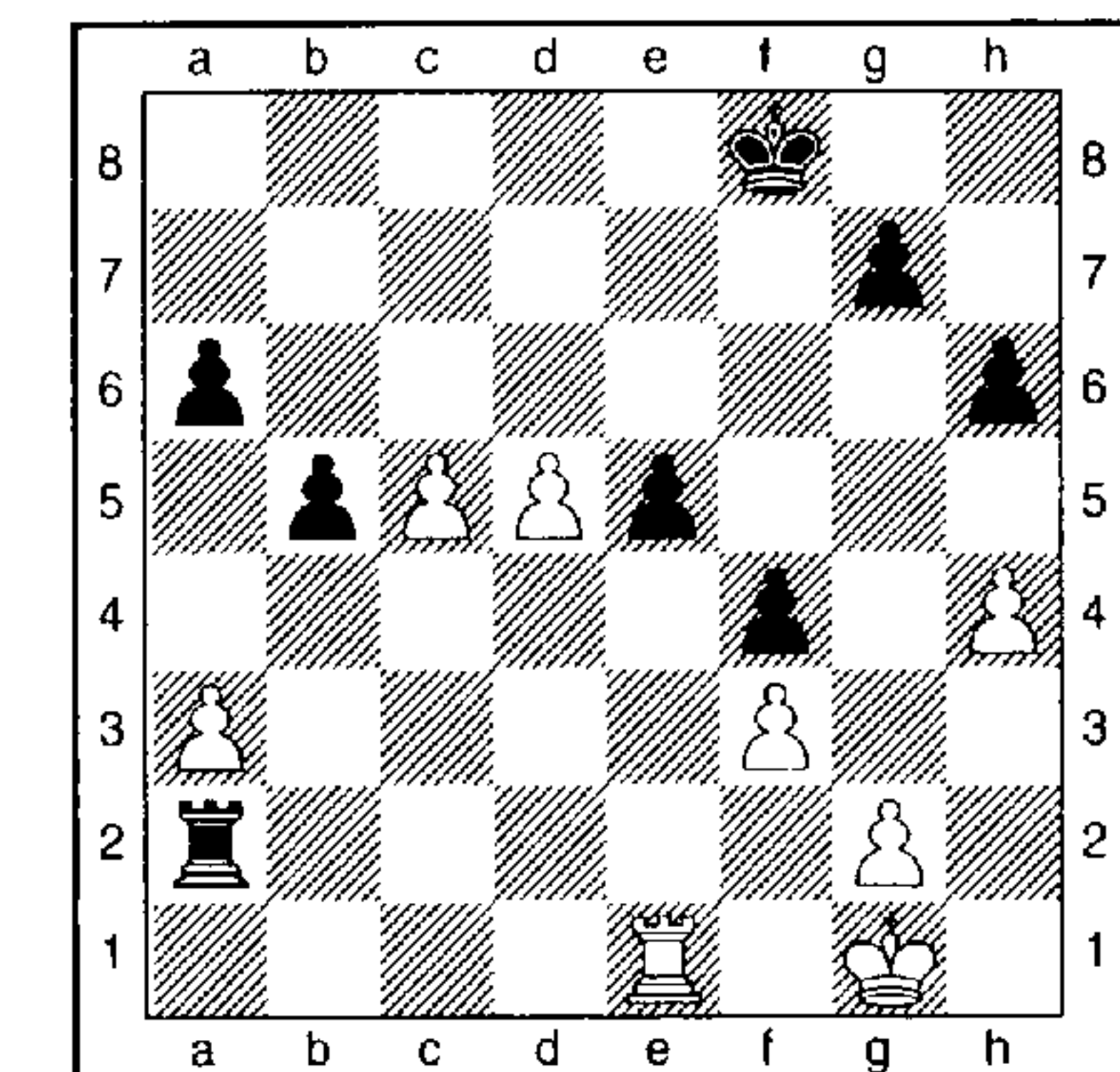
Black resigned in view of 48...♗xe7 49 ♗xc6+ followed by 50 ♗b8, when the pawn queens. An instructive game in the positional sense!

E 6-5
28



Black to move

E 6-6
29



Black to move



The Two Bishops

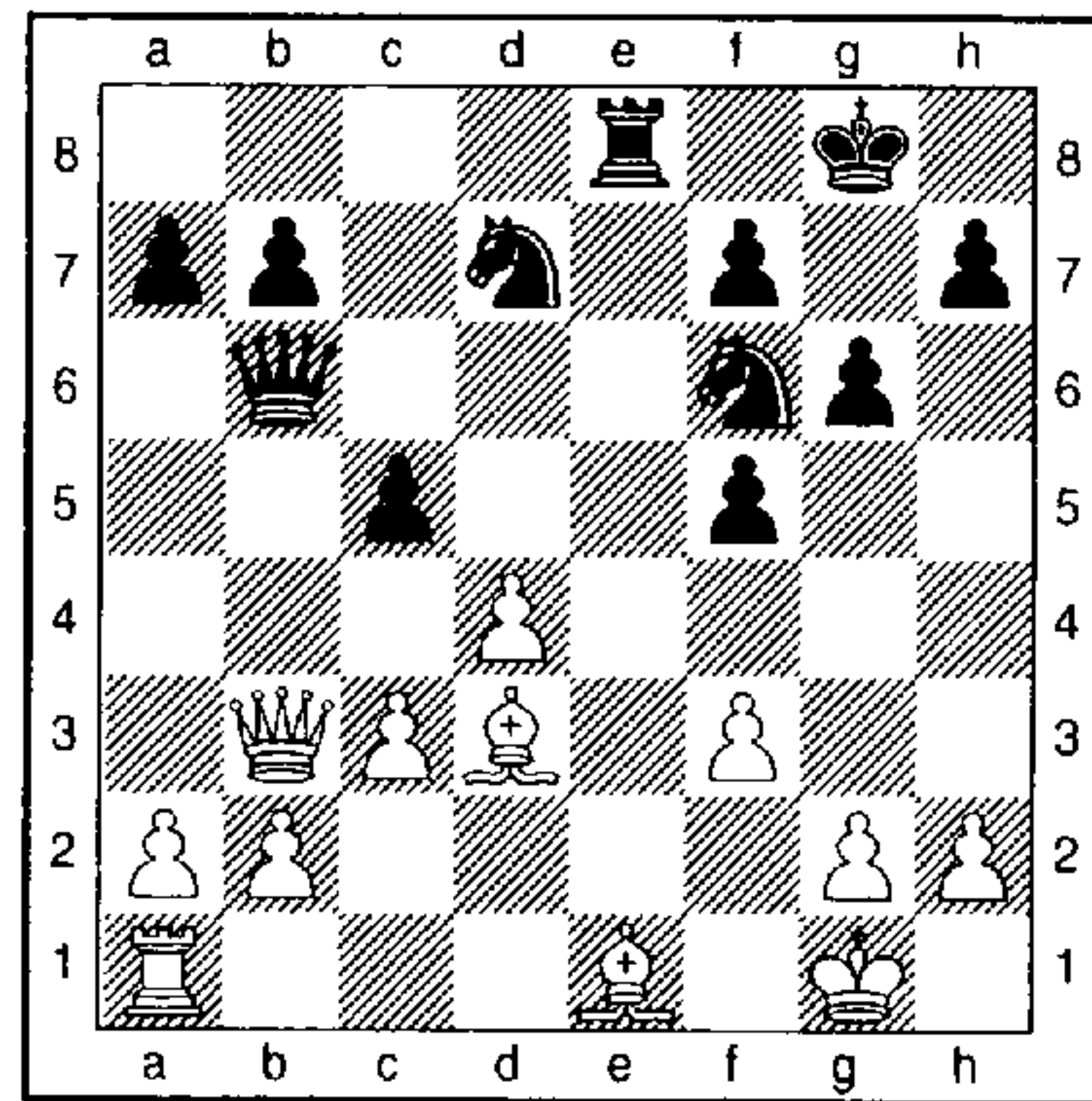
The two bishops are, in the hands of a skilful fighter, a terrible weapon.

Aron Nimzowitsch

In the following example we will again encounter the same problems – the choice of the optimal pawn formation and the blockading of passed pawns. But to them will be added a new theme: exploiting the power of the two bishops.

Orekhov – Akopian
Moscow 1973

30



Q 6-11. What should White play?

White's advantage is very considerable. It is determined by two basic factors:

- 1) Superior pawn formation: he has a healthy extra pawn on the queenside, whereas the opponent's extra pawn on the kingside is doubled and is not of any particular value.
- 2) The two bishops: in an open or semi-open position they are significantly stronger than the two knights, which in addition do not have a single strong-point.

Of course, the advantage will be retained

after any sensible move, and the only question is where it is the greatest. To me the most technically correct decision seems to be the immediate exchange of queens: 21 ♖xb6! axb6 22 ♕f2 followed by ♕b5, ♖d1 and so on. The weakness of the doubled b-pawns makes it unfavourable for Black to relieve the tension in the centre, and therefore his forces remain tied down.

21 ♕f2 ♖c7

And now 22 dxc5 ♗xc5 23 ♖c4 suggests itself. Evgeny Orekhov chooses a different, less successful plan.

22 ♕c4 ♖e7
23 ♖d1 b6
24 d5?!

White is counting on exploiting the strength of his passed pawn. However, it will be blockaded after which the scope of the two bishops will be restricted. **With the two bishops you should open up the play, not close it.**

24 ... ♖d6!

The queen is a far from ideal blockader, of course, but the attempt to play 'à la Nimzowitsch' – transfer the knight to d6 – is refuted: 24...♗e8? 25 ♕h4! (but not 25 d6? ♗xd6 26 ♕g3 ♗e5) 25...♖e3 26 ♕g5 f4 27 d6.

25 ♖b5

25 ♖a4 looks more natural. Black's reply is forced – he has no right to allow the enemy queen in at c6.

25 ... ♗e5
26 ♕f1 g5

26...f4 came into consideration (after 25 ♖a4 this would not have been possible).



27 b4 cxb4
28 ♖xb4!

White tries to lift the blockade of the d5 pawn. In the event of 28...♗e8 he will move his queen and then try to advance c3–c4–c5 or a2–a4–a5.

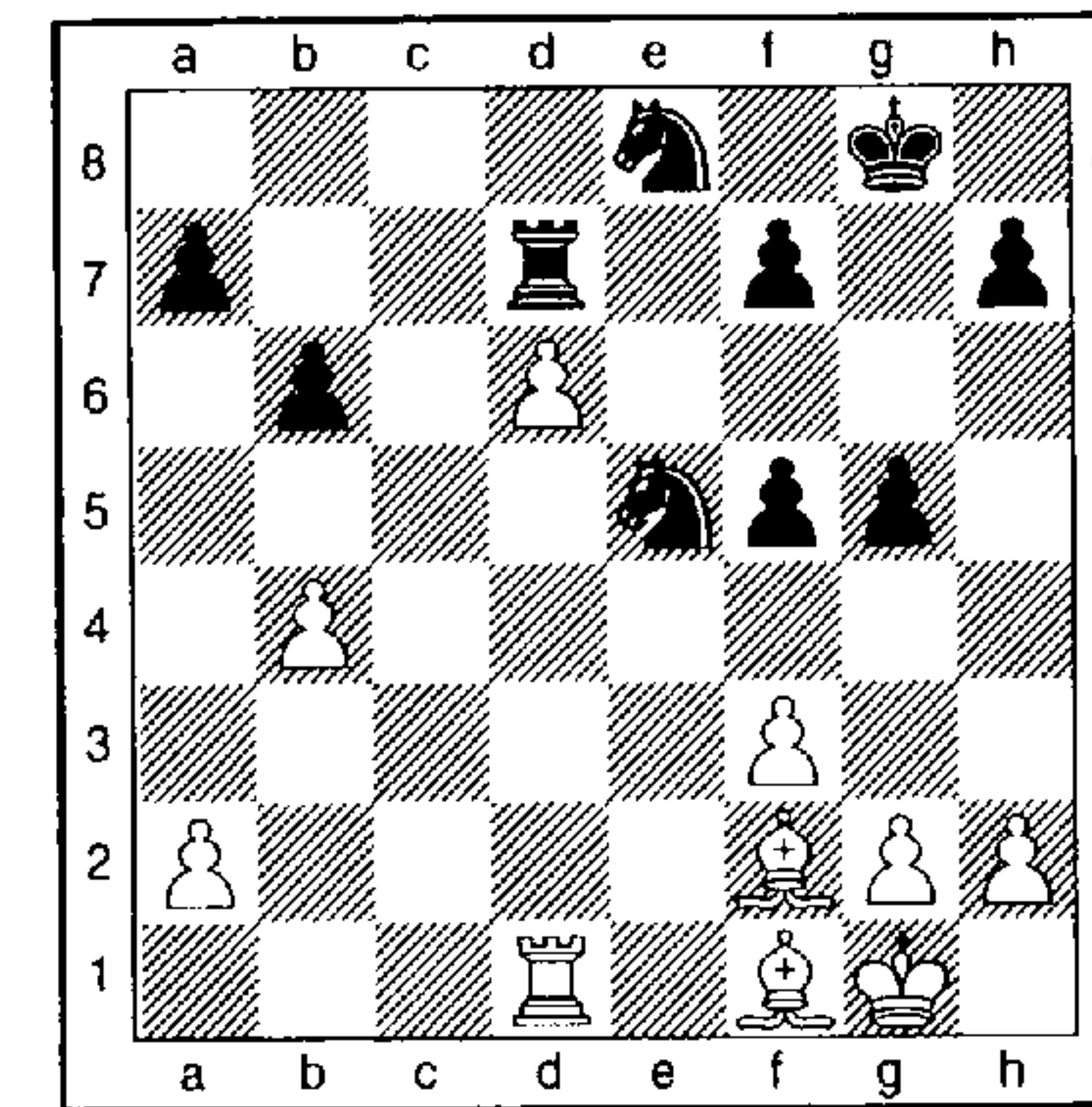
28 ... ♖xb4?

Nevertheless Black should have played 28...♗e8! Wishing to stabilise the pawn formation on the queenside, for a moment he stops blockading the passed pawn and is made to pay heavily for this. This is not surprising – remember Nimzowitsch's rule, given as the epigram to the present chapter!

29 cxb4 ♖d7
30 d6! ♗e8

White was threatening 31 ♕b5 or 31 ♕d4.

31



Q 6-12. What should White play?

White's advantage is about to evaporate. It can be maintained only by means of a veiled and elegant combination. This is another illustration of the idea of Siegbert Tarrasch, discussed in the second book of this series, *Tactical Play*, in the chapter 'All that glitters is not gold' and the two following chapters. Tarrasch asserted that often a combination is necessary, in order to repair the consequences of mistakes committed earlier.

31 ♖e1!
Not 31 ♕b5? ♖xd6 32 ♖e1 ♖e6.

31 ... f6
32 f4!

This accurate move order is necessary: 32 ♕b5? ♖d8 33 f4 ♗xd6 does not work.

32 ... gxf4
33 ♕b5 ♖d8

Now 34 ♖xe5? fxe5 35 ♕xe8 (hoping for 35...♖xe8? 36 ♕h4) leads after 35...♖xd6! to an unclear position.

34 ♕h4!!

The idea of the combination! The two bishops finally display their power. Black has no satisfactory defence against the threat of 35 ♖xe5.

34 ... ♗xd6
35 ♕xf6 ♖c8
36 ♖xe5

36 ♕a6 is also good.

36 ... ♖c1+
37 ♕f1! ♗c4
38 ♖e8+! ♗f7
39 ♖c8 b5
40 ♕g5 ♖b1
41 ♕xf4 ♖xb4
42 ♖c7+

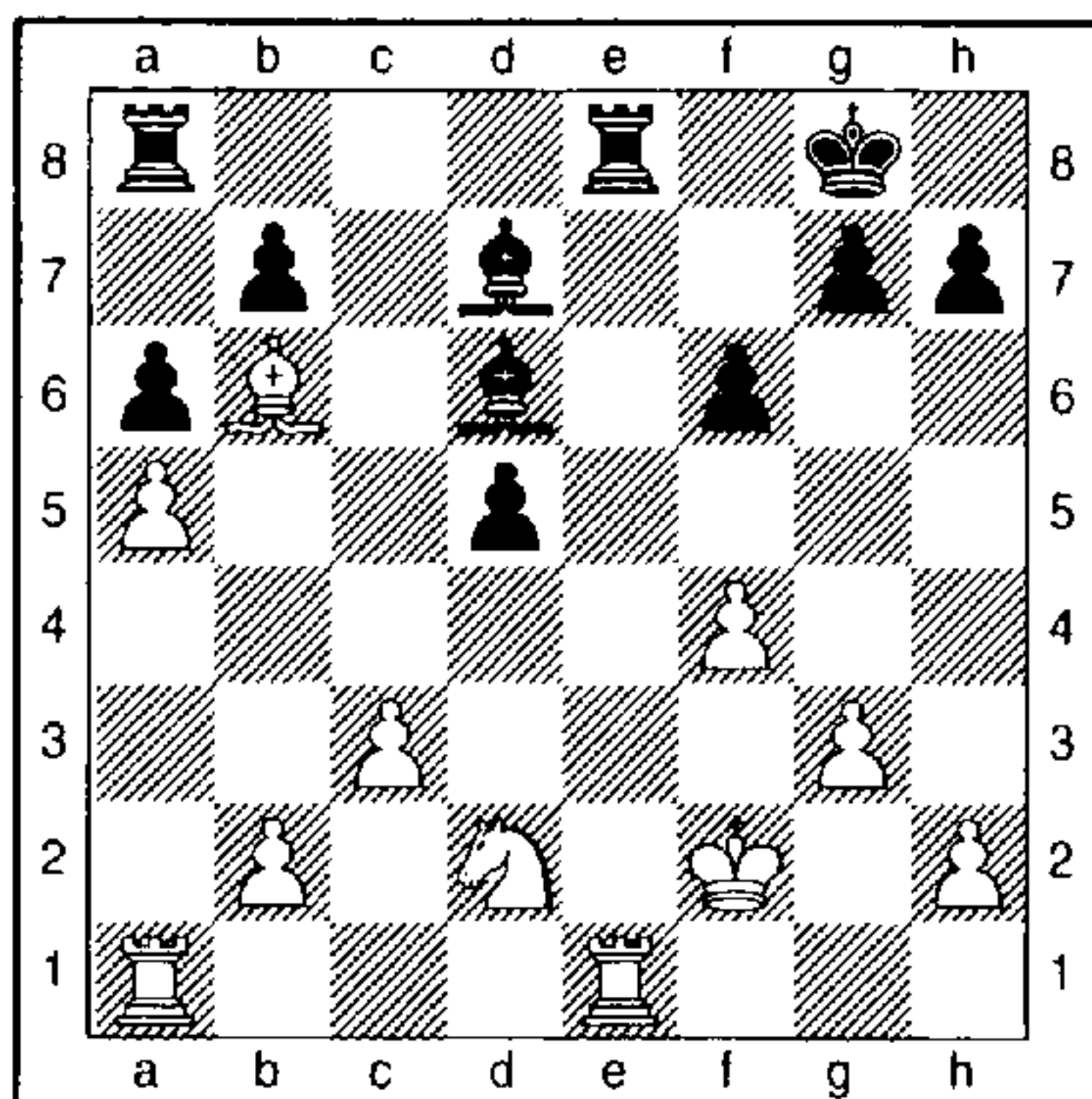
Black resigns.

see next diagram



Dvoretsky – Nikitin
Moscow 1970

32



Q 6-13. What should Black play?

On this occasion the situation is of a quiet, static nature. A defect of Black's position is his isolated d-pawn. The two bishops compensate to some extent for this weakness, but not more.

The strongest continuation seems to me to be 25...g5! 26 fxc5 fxc5. Black's bishops gain more scope, and on the open f-file the white king does not feel altogether comfortable. It is probable that in this way Black would have maintained the balance.

In the game a less good move was made.

25 ... ♖f7?!

The question arises: why did Alexander Nikitin – a highly experienced player – commit this positional inaccuracy? It was certainly very well known to him that with the two bishops you need to open lines. Yes, but the move made complies with another important principle: 'in the endgame use your king actively, and at the very first opportunity bring it closer to the centre'. At first sight it is really not so obvious to which rule preference should be given.

The art of positional play consists in correctly understanding the essence of a position, and, in searching for a move, using those rules, patterns and evaluations which conform most exactly to this essence.

I have no doubt that many of the positional ideas described in the book are familiar to you. But developing your mastery consists not only in learning new ideas – it is also very important to train yourself in the employment of those already known.

In the solving of the next exercise you will encounter this very problem.

Q 6-14. How should White continue?

In the preceding examples the importance of securely blocking the opponent's pawns was emphasised. Therefore 26 ♖f3 suggests itself. However, there are no rules without exceptions. Bent Larsen once ironically remarked that he did not understand why books recommend blocking an isolated pawn – after all, sometimes it can simply be won.

26 ♖f1!

White's plan is clear: the exchange of rooks on e8, then ♖e3, ♖d1 and possibly c3–c4, exploiting the pin on the d-file. The opponent could have neutralised this threat by 26... ♖xe1 27 ♖xe1 ♖c8!?, having in mind the variation 28 ♖e3?! ♖c5 29 ♖xc5 ♖xc5 30 ♖a1 d4! 31 cxd4 ♖b5 with equality. I would probably have replied 28 ♖d4 in the hope of 28... ♖c5?! 29 ♖e3 with advantage to White. But with his bishop at d4 it is harder for White to develop pressure on the weak d5 pawn, and after 28... ♖f5 29 ♖e3 ♖e4 Black is out of danger.

26	...	h5?
27	♖xe8	♖xe8
28	♖d1	♖c6
29	♖e3	g5

Too late and (in view of the position of the black king on the f-file) not so effective as a



few moves earlier.

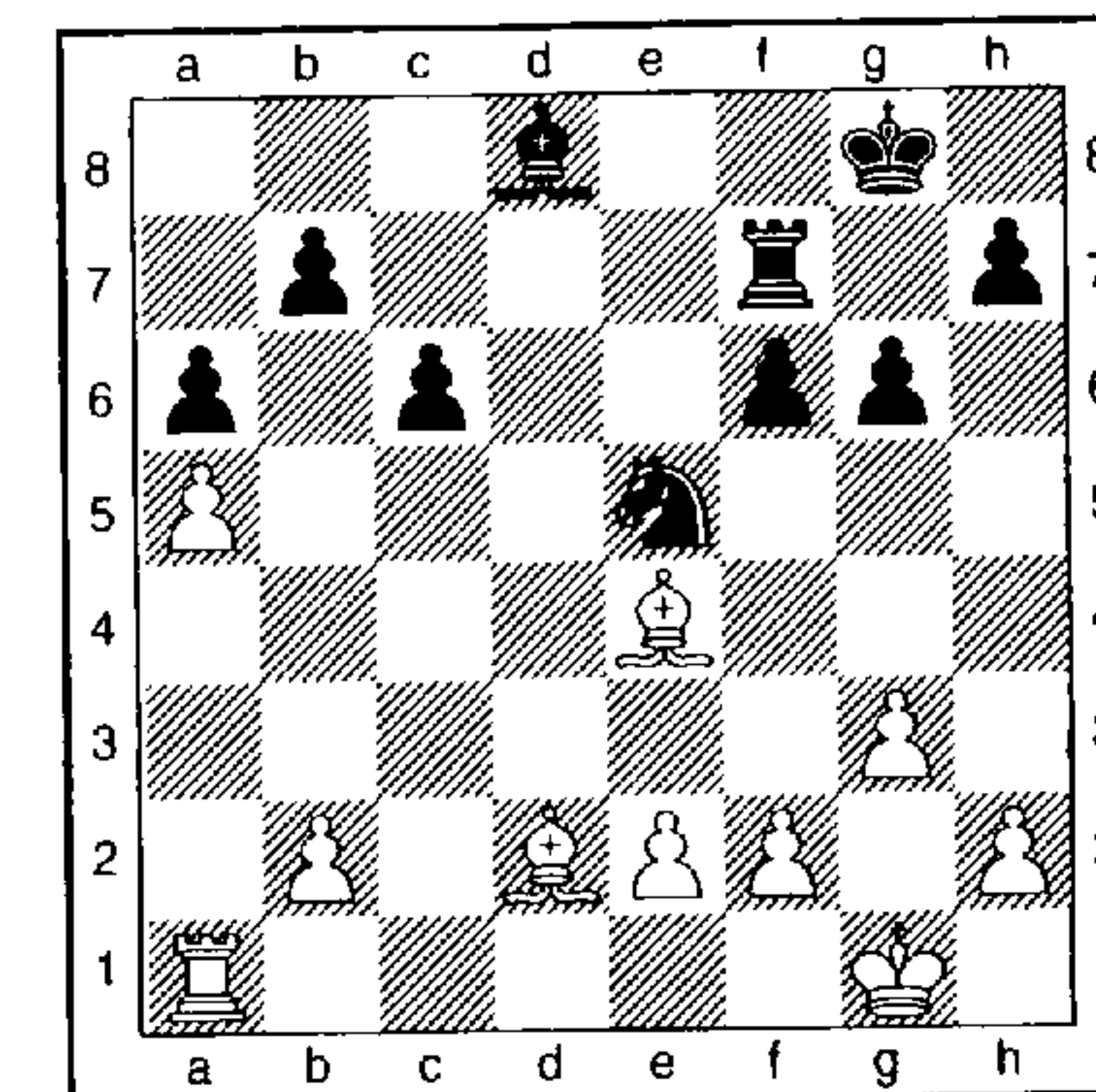
30	fxg5	fxg5
31	c4	d4
32	♖xd4	

White has won a pawn, but the opponent's possession of the two bishops significantly complicates the conversion of the advantage.

32...h4 33 ♖d5 ♖e4 34 ♖e3 hxc3+ 35 hxc3 ♖g6 36 ♖b6 ♖e7 37 b3 ♖e6 38 ♖d5. 38 g4 came into consideration, preparing 39 ♖f5, and if 38... ♖e4 39 ♖d4.

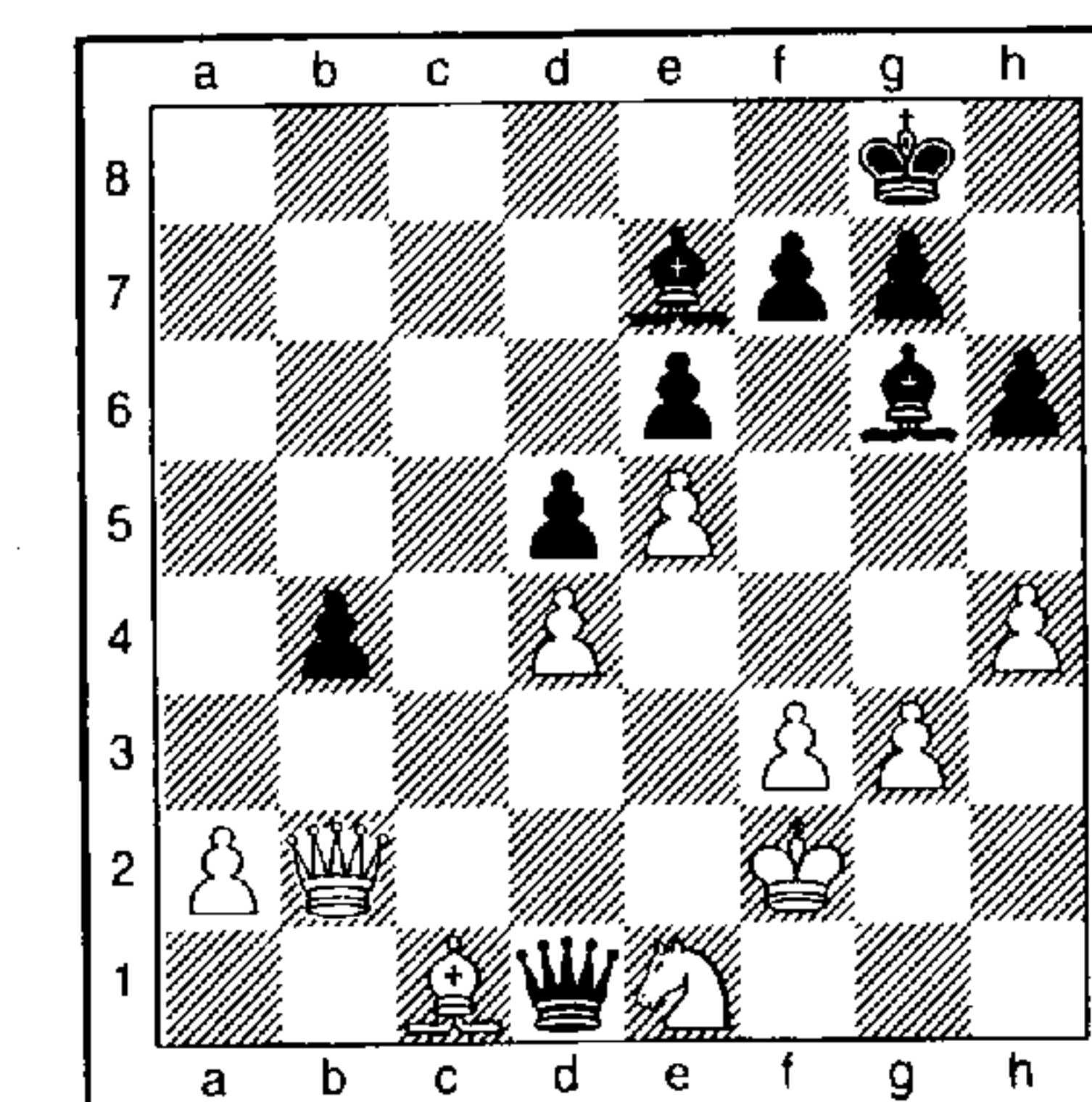
38... ♖d6 39 ♖d3 ♖e5. The further development of events can be seen in the first book in this series, *Endgame Analysis*, in the chapter 'The transition into a pawn endgame'.

E 6-7
33



Black to move

E 6-8
34



Black to move



An Unusual Exchange

Many things are incomprehensible to use, not because our conceptions are weak, but because these things do not come within our range of conceptions.

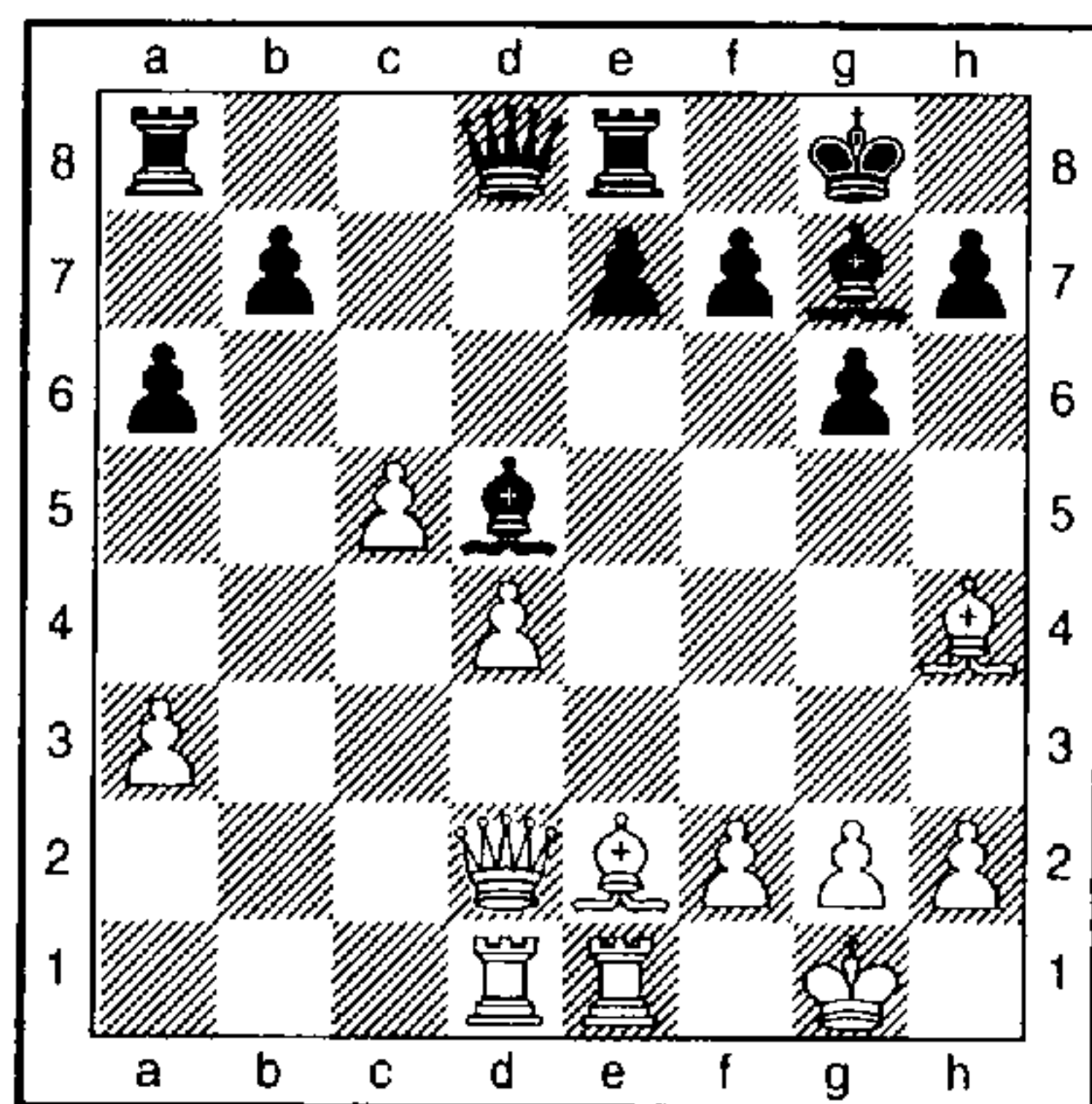
Kozma Prutkov

Sometimes a player deliberately violates well-known principles of positional play, and the reason why he does this is not obvious. In such cases the paradoxical move in the game creates a strong aesthetic impression (of course, after the point of it becomes clear).

L. Grigorian–Kupreichik

Riga 1975

35



Q 6-15. What should White play?

Who stands better? It is not possible to say straight away – you must first look to see what the two players can undertake.

It is not hard to suggest a plan for improving Black's position, and not just one. For example, 21...♖d7 or 21...♖c7 followed by ...♗c6, ...♞ad8 or ...e7–e6. There is also a sharper try: 21...b5!? (getting rid of the backward b7 pawn), then 22...♞a7! and 23...♞d7 or 23...♗a8.

And what can be suggested for White? He cannot do anything, as long as the opponent's powerful light-square bishop dominates the board. It must be exchanged, and as soon as possible, before Black strengthens his control of the important d5 square. For the sake of this exchange White can even allow the break-up of his kingside pawns.

21 ♔f3!!

The only way of fighting for the initiative! I should remind you that we have already encountered a similar unusual exchange in the chapter 'Undermining Pawn Moves' in the analysis of one of the Kholmov–Suetin games.

22 ♔xd5 ♗xd5 23 ♔xe7 is threatened. 21...♔xf3 22 gxf3 suggest itself, but then Black has to take measures against d4–d5–d6. In the event of 22...♗d5 23 ♔xe7 ♗xf3 a very tense situation arises: the white king is exposed, but on the other hand the d-pawn is no longer blockaded and may rush forward at any moment.

But does Black have any choice? Yes, he does. I gave several of my pupils this position to play, and Sergey Dolmatov, Vadim Zviagintsev and Viorel Bologan suggested the cautious 21...f6!? They were prepared to block in their dark-square bishop for the sake of maintaining the blockade of the d-pawn. In all the games White continued 22 ♗e3 (with the positional threat of 23 ♔xd5+ ♗xd5 24 ♗e6+ ♗xe6 25 ♞xe6) 22...e6 (22...♔f7!?) 23 ♞b1. The pressure on the b-file is unpleasant, but Black's position is nevertheless quite defensible.



21 ... ♔xf3
22 gxf3 ♗d5

Other attempts to counteract d4–d5, involving attacks on the c5 pawn, also come into consideration.

22...♗c7?! 23 ♗e3, and if 23...e6 24 d5 with advantage. Stefan Kindermann tried 23...b6!? against Philipp Schlosser. How should White continue? In the event of 24 d5 ♗xc5!? 25 ♗xc5 bxc5 26 ♔xe7 ♔f8 27 d6 ♔xe7 28 ♞xe7 (28 dxe7 f5 29 ♞d7 ♔f7) 28...♔f8 an almost equal ending arises. The game went 24 ♔xe7 bxc5! (less good is 24...♔f8 25 ♔d6 ♔xd6 26 cxd6 or 24...♞a7 25 cxb6 ♗xb6 26 ♔c5) 25 d5, and now 25...c4! 26 d6 ♗d7 would have led to an unclear game. However, White could have played more accurately and retained the better position: 24 c6! ♗xc6 25 d5 and 26 ♔xe7.

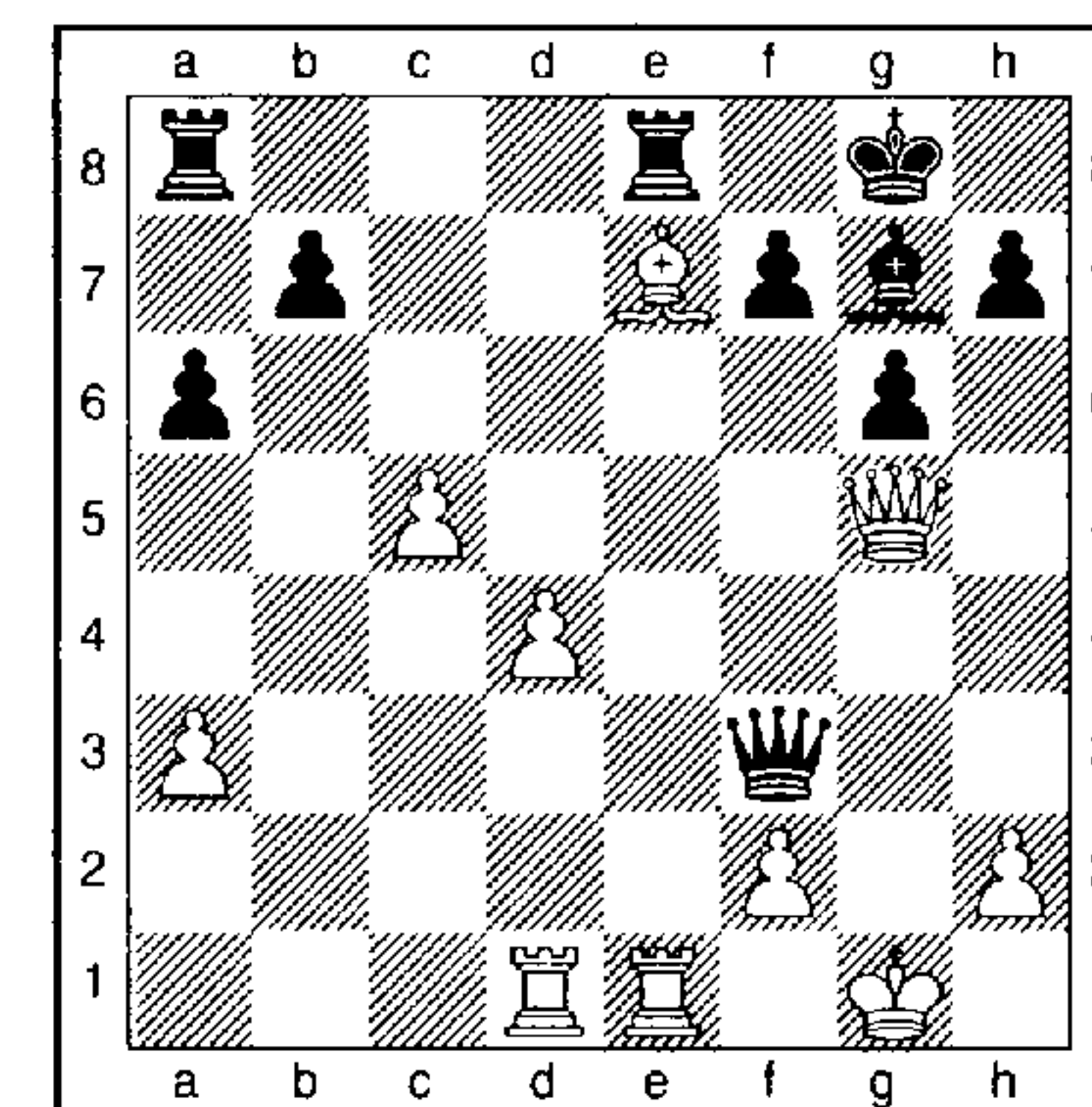
22...♞c8!? 23 ♗e3 (unfortunately, the tempting 23 d5?! is refuted by 23...♞xc5 24 d6 ♔c3!, e.g. 25 ♗e3 ♔xe1 26 d7 ♞h5(c4) 27 dxe8♗+ ♗xe8) 23...♗d5 24 ♗e4 e6 with a roughly equal game.

23 ♔xe7 ♗xf3

If now 24 ♗e3, then 24...♗d5!, but not 24...♗xe3? 25 ♞xe3 ♔h6 26 ♞e1 ♔f8 27 ♔xf8 ♔xf8 28 d5, and Black's position is uneasy.

24 ♗g5!

36



Q 6-16. How should Black continue?

I am not convinced that it is possible to give a clear-cut answer here. Make your choice, and then compare it with the variations analysed below.

Perhaps the most unfortunate continuation was chosen by Viktor Kupreichik. He was greedy, forgot about the blockade and grabbed the a3 pawn. The passed d-pawn advanced, and soon it was all over.

24...♗xa3? 25 d5 ♗a4 26 d6 ♗d7 27 ♞d3! a5 28 ♞f3 ♗c6 29 ♞ee3 a4 30 ♞d3 ♗d7 31 ♞xf7! a3 32 ♗d5 ♔h8 33 ♔f6 ♗g4+ 34 ♞g3 ♗e6 35 ♔xg7+ ♔g8 36 ♞f8+. Black resigns.

Also dubious is the provocative move 24...♞ac8?!, hoping for the careless 25 d5? ♞xe7! 26 ♗xe7 ♗g4+ when White has to agree to a draw, since moving the king into the centre in such a situation is too dangerous. But the simple 25 ♗g2! ♗xg2+ 26 ♔xg2 ♔f8 (26...♞c7 27 ♔d6 ♞xe1 28 ♞xe1) 27 ♔xf8 ♞xe1 28 ♞xe1 ♔xf8 29 ♔f3 leads to a rook ending that is difficult for Black.

Serious consideration should be given to the exchange sacrifice 24...♞xe7!? 25 ♗xe7 ♗g4+ 26 ♔f1 ♗h3+! (26...♔xd4? 27 ♗xb7 ♗h3+ 28 ♔g1! ♗g4+ 29 ♔h1) 27 ♔e2 ♗g4+ 28 ♔e3 ♗h3+! (more accurate than 28...♔h6+ 29 ♔d3 ♗f3+ 30 ♔c2) 29 f3 (29 ♔d2 ♔xd4) 29...♔h6+ 30 ♔e2 ♗g2+ 31 ♔d3 ♗xf3+ 32 ♔c2. How should the resulting sharp situation be evaluated? I don't know...

I prefer the unusual idea found by grandmaster Klaus Bischoff.

24 ... ♔f5!?

Black is intending to bring out his king to f7 or play 25...♗d5. And he will meet the obvious 25 d5 with 25...♔c3!?, forcing White either to agree to a draw after 26 ♞f1 ♞xe7 27 ♗xe7 ♗g4+, or to sacrifice the exchange: 26 d6 ♔xe1 27 ♞xe1.

Now Black loses after 27...♗g4+? 28 ♗xg4



fxg4 29 d7 ♖xe7 (29...♖f8 30 ♔xf8 or immediately 30 ♖b1; 29...♕f7 30 dxe8 ♖+ ♖xe8 31 c6! bxc6 32 ♔b4; 29...♖eb8 30 ♔g5!? ♕f8 31 ♖e7 h6 32 ♔f6) 30 ♖xe7 ♕f8 31 ♖xh7 ♖d8 32 ♕g2 ♕g8 33 ♖e7 ♕f8 34 ♖e8+! ♖xe8 35 dxe8 ♖+ ♕xe8 36 ♕g3 ♕d7 37 ♕xg4 ♕c6 38 ♕g5 ♕xc5 39 ♕xg6 b5 40 f4! and the white pawn queens with check.

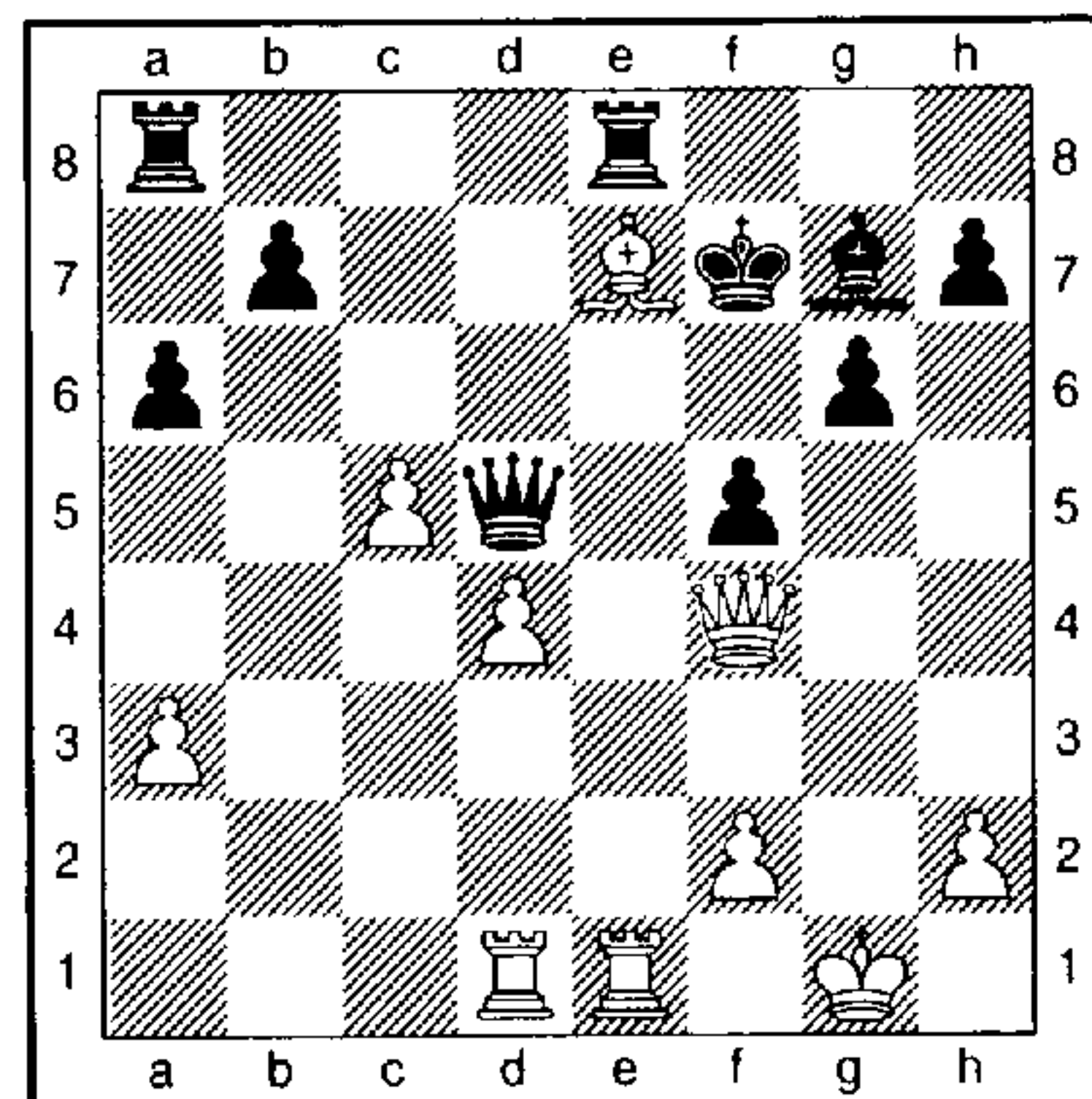
A sound defence is offered by 27...♖ad8! followed by ...♖d7 or ...♖g4+. But also possible is 27...♖d5!? 28 h4 ♖ac8! (too passive is 28...♖ad8 29 h5 ♖f7 30 ♖e5) 29 h5 ♖xc5 30 hxg6 ♖c4! 31 gxh7+ ♕xh7, and White has only a draw.

25 ♖e3!? ♖d5!

Much weaker is 25...♖xe3 26 ♖xe3 ♕f7 (26...♔h6 27 ♖ee1) 27 ♔d6.

26 ♖f4 ♕f7

37



27 ♖b1!?

A clever attempt to create an attack, suggested by Vadim Zviagintsev. The exchange of queens on d6 suggests itself, but it only leads to a draw: 27 ♖d6 ♖xd6 28 cxd6 ♔f6(f8) 29 ♖c1 ♔xe7 30 ♖c7 ♖ad8, or 28 ♔xd6 ♖xe1+ 29 ♖xe1 ♔xd4 (29...♖e8!?) 30 ♖e7+ ♕f6 31 ♖xb7 ♖c8.

27 ... ♖xe7

27...♖xd4?! 28 ♖xd4 ♔xd4 29 ♖xb7 leads to a difficult endgame for Black, but 27...♔xd4 is quite possible. In the variations 28 ♖bd1 ♖xe7 29 ♖xe7+ ♕xe7 30 ♖xd4 ♖xc5 31 ♖c4 ♖d5 or 28 ♖h4 ♔g7 29 ♖bd1 (29 ♖xb7 ♕g8) 29...♖b3 30 ♖d7 ♕g8 it would appear that White is not able to give mate.

28 ♖xe7+ ♕xe7
29 ♖c7+ ♕f8
30 ♖xb7 ♔xd4
31 ♖e7+ ♕g8
32 ♖xh7+ ♕f8
33 ♖e7+

Or 33 ♖h6+ ♕e8 34 ♖xg6+ ♕f8!

33 ... ♕g8
34 ♖d7 ♖c4!

The game should probably end in perpetual check.

Makarychev – Dvoretzky

Moscow Championship 1972

1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 ♖d2 ♖f6
4 e5 ♖fd7
5 c3 b6

Every player has his opening tastes. In closed positions I often chose plans involving the exchange of my 'bad' bishop. In the French Defence I liked to play ...b7–b6 and ...♔c8–a6. Against 1 d4 I sometimes used to reply 1...c5 2 d5 e5 3 e4 d6 followed by ...♔e7–g5, and if White prevented the exchange by ♖f3, then ...♔g4, ...♔xf3 and nevertheless ...♔e7–g5. Such a treatment of the opening involves a considerable risk – Black falls behind in development and can come under a positional squeeze or a direct attack. But if he succeeds in defending himself, there is a chance of obtaining a strategically favourable middlegame or an advantageous endgame where the opponent has a bad bishop.

6 ♖df3 ♔e7



7 ♖h3

White takes into account his opponent's intentions and does not hurry with the development of his light-square bishop, in order to exchange on a6 without losing a tempo. It is important to note that in such positions Black should play ...♔a6 only with his pawn at c7. The point is that after 7...c5?! White has the highly unpleasant reply 8 a4! ♔a6 9 ♔b5 (or 8 ♔b5! ♔a6 9 a4). After the exchange on b5, the pawns at e5 and b5 take away all the squares from Black's knights. He is obliged to eliminate the pawn at b5: ...a7–a6, ...♖c7 and ...♖a7, but during this time White prepares an attack on the kingside.

7 ... ♔a6
8 ♔xa6 ♖xa6
9 ♖d3

Sergey Makarychev immediately attacks the knight, in order to prevent the plan which, as he knew, I had carried out several times in similar positions: ...c7–c5, ...♖c7, at some point ...f7–f5, and from c7 the knight defends the weak e6 pawn.

9 ... ♖ab8
10 ♖fg5

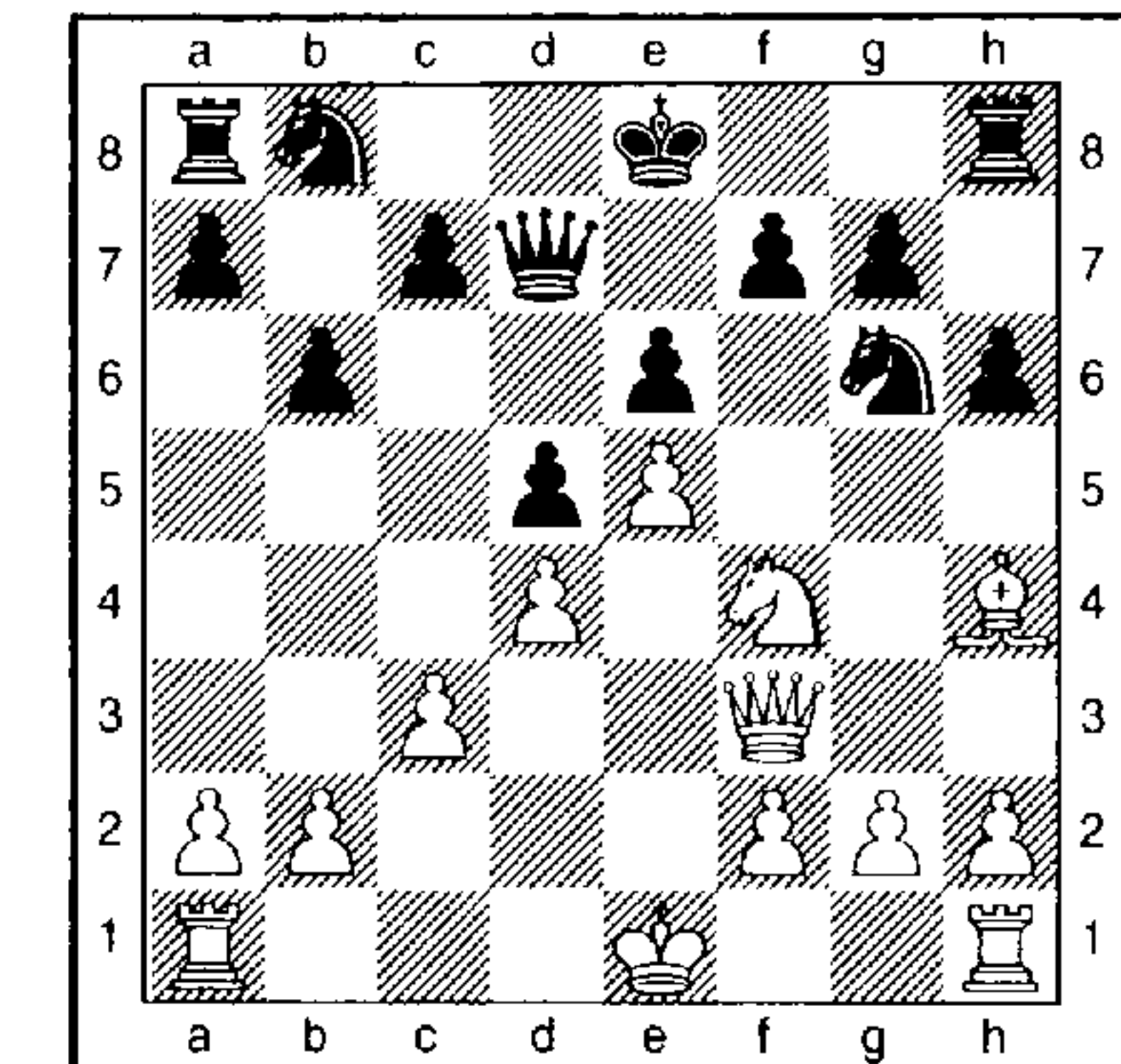
White wants immediately to exploit his lead in development, but I think that the simple 10 0–0 would have been even more unpleasant for Black.

10 ... ♖f8
11 ♖f3 ♔xg5
12 ♔xg5 ♖d7
13 ♖f4 h6
14 ♔h4

Now, of course, 14...g5? is not possible in view of 15 ♖h5. The clever try 14...f5?! (in order to answer 15 exf6 with 15...g5!) is too risky: after 15 g4! g5 16 ♖h5 ♖h7 17 gxh5 White has a powerful attack. I preferred a more reliable continuation.

14 ... ♖g6

38



Q 6-17. What would you recommend for White?

The bishop sacrifice 15 ♖h5? ♖xh4 is, of course, incorrect. 15 ♔g3 ♖xf4 16 ♔xf4 ♖c6 or 15 ♖xg6 fxg6 followed by ...♖c6 leads precisely to the type of position that I was hoping for, in choosing the given opening variation: White's attack comes to an end, and his bad bishop remains.

Makarychev found the only way of maintaining his fading initiative.

15 ♔g3!!

White has defended his bishop and wants to place his knight on h5, where it will be extremely dangerous. After 15...0–0? 16 ♖h5 it is difficult to parry the threat of 17 ♔f6. The variation 15...♖c6 16 ♖h5 ♕f8 also did not inspire me: Black's rooks are disconnected, and he all the time has to reckon with sacrifices on f6 and g7. Therefore the exchange of knights is practically forced. But then the g-file is opened, the bishop remains on the h4–d8 diagonal, and the black king is stuck in the centre of the board.

15 ... ♖xf4
16 gxh4 ♖c6
17 ♖g1 g6
18 ♔f6 ♖h7



A poor place for the rook, but Black had no choice. If 18...♖g8, then 19 ♖h5 or 19 ♖h3 is very strong.

19 h4

This move was made 'on general grounds'. As will be seen from what follows, it is by no means indisputable.

19 ... h5
20 f5

A tempting pawn sacrifice. But also quite good was the simple 20 0-0-0 ♗e7, and now either 21 ♖b1, or 21 ♗xe7 ♗xe7 (21...♖xe7? 22 f5!) 22 ♖b1, intending c3-c4 (or even immediately 22 c4 ♖c6?! 23 ♖b1).

20 ... exf5
21 0-0-0 ♗d8
22 ♗xd8?!

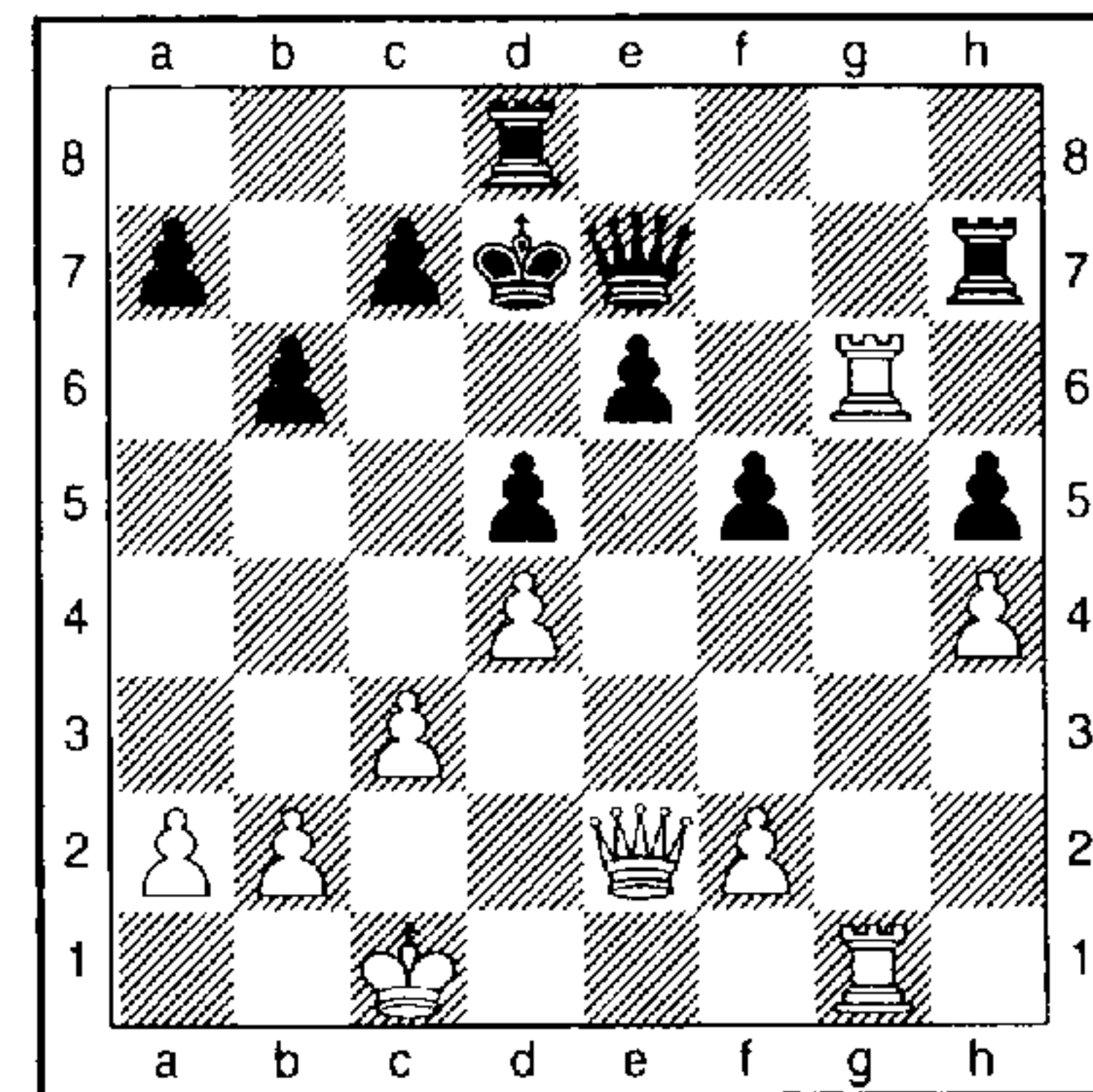
Makarychev does not want to allow the knight to go to e6, but the bishop was pressing very strongly on Black's position, preventing the rook at h7 from coming into play, and so he should not have parted with it so readily. The simple 22 ♖b1 ♗e6 23 ♗d2 (followed by ♗c1 and c3-c4) would have retained the advantage for White. Also possible is the immediate 22 c4!? c6 23 ♖b1, intending ♗d2 and ♗c1 (bad is 23...dxc4? 24 d5).

22 ... ♗xd8?!

22...♗xd8 was sounder. I was afraid of 23 c4 c6 24 ♖b1, but after 24...♗c8 25 ♗c1 ♖b7 Black is alright.

23 e6! fxe6
24 ♖xg6 ♖f7
25 ♗dg1 ♗d7
26 ♖e2 ♖e7

39



27 ♖b5+?!

Nothing was achieved by 27 ♖e5 ♗f8 (or 27...♖d6). The most dangerous for Black was 27 ♖a6! ♖xh4 28 ♖xa7, keeping the black king in the centre of the board. Incidentally, both in this variation, and in the game continuation, the drawback to the position of the pawn at h4 is seen.

27 ... ♗c8
28 ♖c6 ♗b8
29 ♖xe6 ♖xh4

At last the black king feels safe. It was time for White to force a draw by 30 ♗g8 ♖f4+ 31 ♖b1 ♗h8 32 ♗xh8 ♗xh8 33 ♗g8+ ♗xg8 34 ♖xg8+ ♖b7 35 ♖xd5+.

30 ♖xf5?! ♗hh8
31 ♗f6 ♖h2
32 ♖g5 h4?!

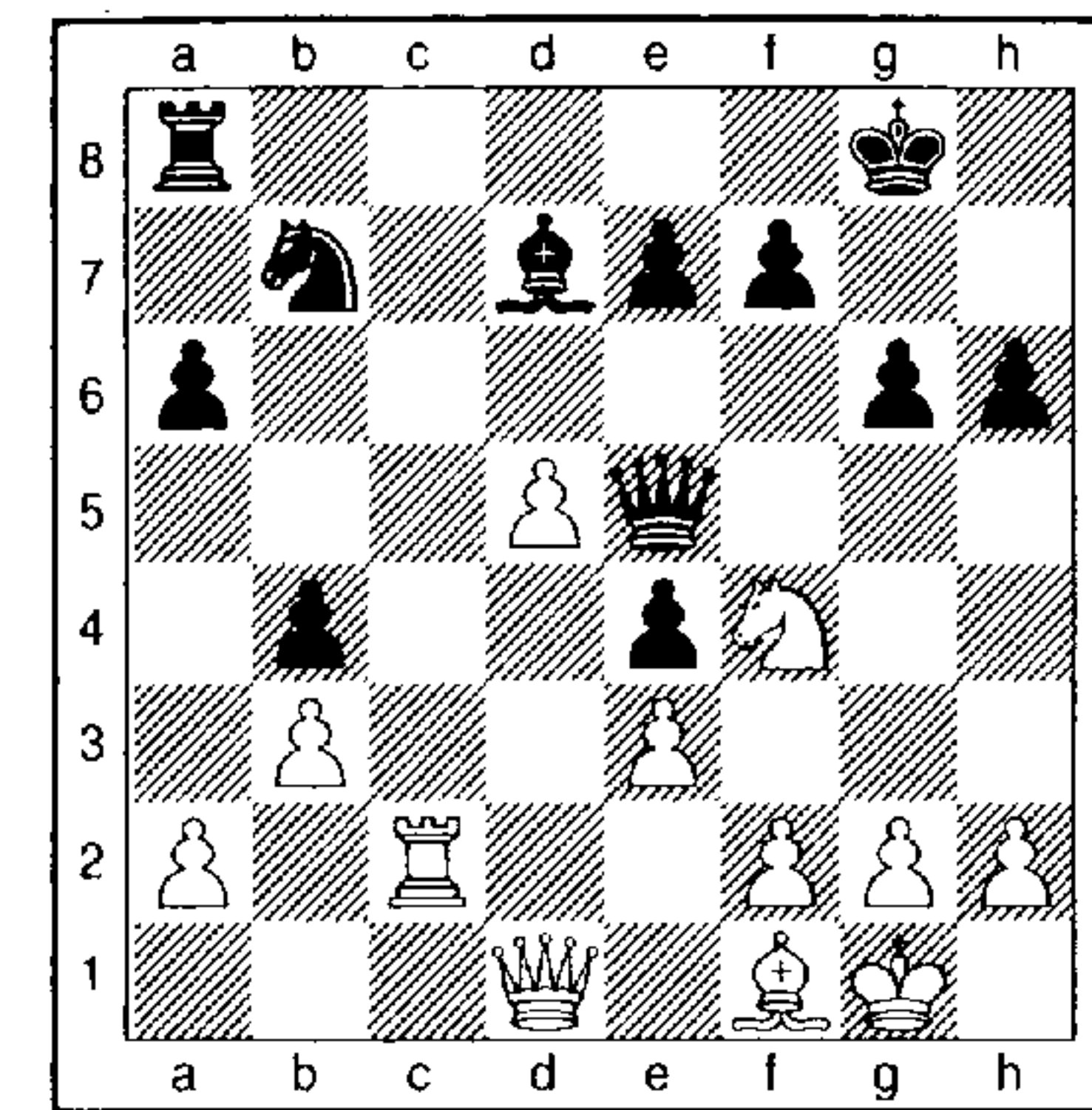
Black would have retained some practical chances of success after 32...♗df8. For example, 33 ♖g7? ♖xg1+! or 33 ♗e1 h4 34 ♖g7 ♗fg8.

33 ♖g2! ♖xg2
34 ♗xg2

Draw.

E 6-9

40



White to move



Mistakes, Mistakes...

It is easier to perceive error than to find truth, for the former lies on the surface and is easily seen, while the latter lies in the depth, where few are willing to search for it.

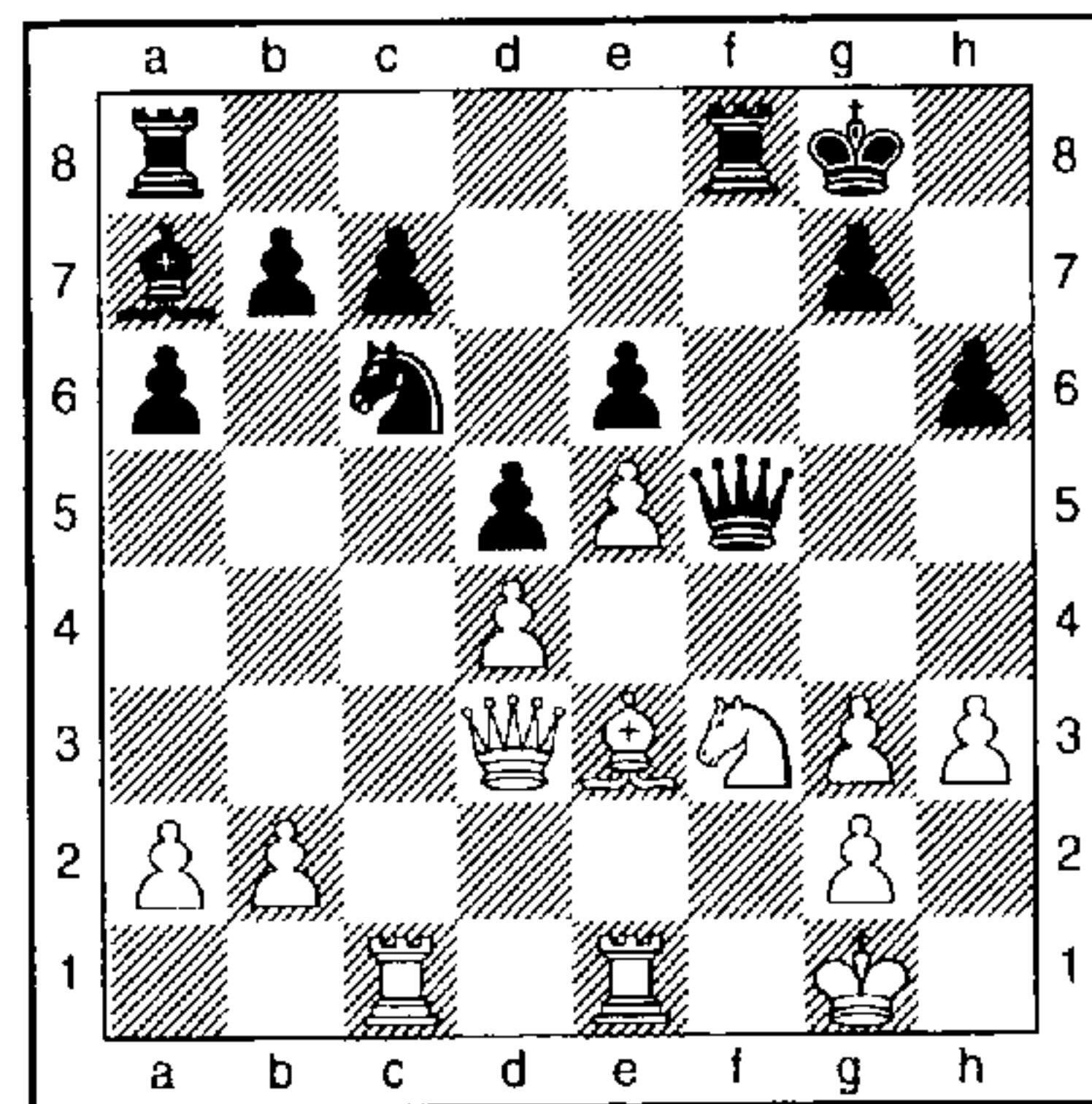
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

For a long time I have been collecting examples of instructive mistakes, and I readily make use of them in articles, books, or lessons with pupils. The point is that, when studying a game, many strong moves seem completely natural and therefore do not draw attention or engrave themselves in the memory. Whereas the discovery of a mistake immediately generates an interest in the situation on the board. We seek the strongest move, analyse its consequences, compare them with that which occurred in the game, and ponder over the possible reason for the mistake committed...

Dolmatov – Razuvaev

47th USSR Championship, Minsk 1979

41



Q 6-18. Should White exchange queens?

It is not so easy to evaluate the position. Is the bishop at a7, shut in on the queenside,

good or bad? If Black succeeds in intensifying the pressure on d4, it will be an important attacking piece. Otherwise the bishop will remain locked out of play.

First let us see how the game developed.

21 ♖d2 ♙b6 22 ♗g4 ♜g6 23 ♜b4 ♞f7 24 a3 ♞af8 25 ♘h2 h5 26 ♗xh5 ♜xh5. It is now obvious that the initiative has been seized by Black – he is pressing both in the centre, and on the kingside.

27 ♜d3 ♘e7 28 ♞f1 ♜h4 29 ♞xf7 ♞xf7 30 ♞d1 c6 31 ♜d2 ♜g3 32 ♘f1 ♜g6 33 ♙f2? ♞f3! 34 ♙h2 ♞xa3, and Black soon won.

When we analysed the game, Dolmatov and I came to the conclusion that the retreat of the queen to d2 was a mistake, allowing the opponent to retain control of the light squares. White should have exchanged queens: either immediately, or after making the accurate move 21 ♞ed1?

21 ♜xf5!? exf5

In reply to 21...♞xf5 White intends g3–g4 and h3–h4–h5, gaining space on the kingside and restricting the mobility of the opponent's pieces, in particular his knight. But in so doing he must seriously reckon with the exchange sacrifice on f3.

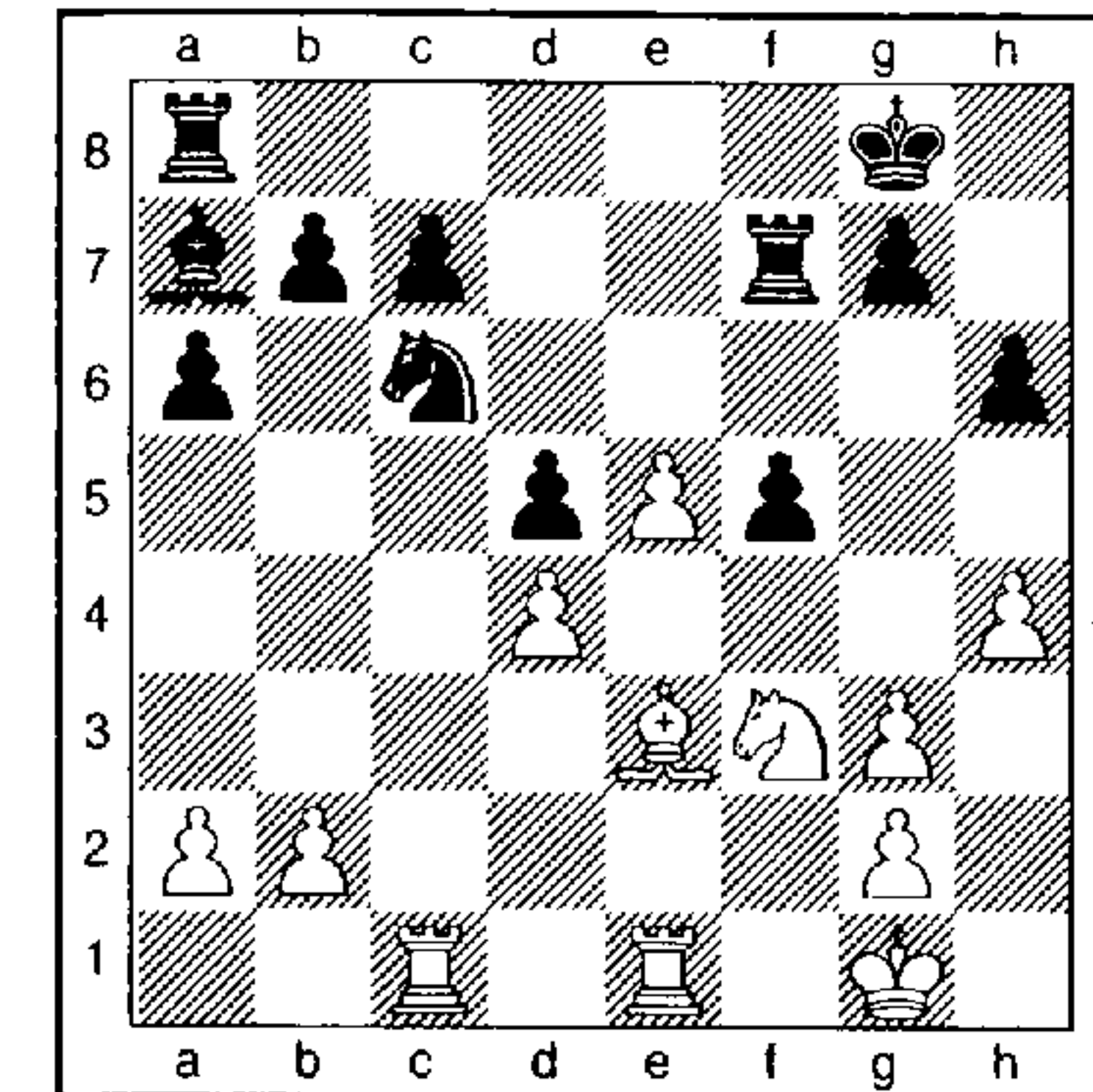
22 h4!

It is important to blockade the opponent's kingside pawns, as otherwise, after playing 22...g5, Black will be threatening by ...g5–g4 to harass the knight at f3, and this means also the d4 pawn – the main support and at the same time the main weakness of White's position.

22 ... ♞f7



42



Q 6-19. What should White play?

Having defended his c7 pawn, Black now wants to transfer his knight to e6. To parry the opponent's positional threat, White has to decide on a radical measure – the sacrifice of the exchange.

23 ♞xc6!

The same reply, but with even greater strength, would have followed after 22...♙b6.

23 ... ♞xc6
24 ♞c1 ♞b8
25 b3

25 ♞xc6 ♞xb2 26 ♞xa6 ♙b6 27 h5!? would appear to be weaker – White wins a pawn but allows the opponent to activate his pieces.

25 ... ♞b6
26 ♙f2!?

The king wants to go to d3, to support the d4 pawn (in accordance with Nimzowitsch: the over-protection of important points!). Then the bishop will move to d2, and at the first convenient opportunity the pawn will advance to h5... If 26...a5, then 27 ♙d2 a4 28 b4. The awkward position of the bishop at a7 guarantees White full compensation for the sacrificed exchange.

Had Dolmatov played 21 ♞ed1 or 21 ♜xf5, in our analysis of the game we would probably have skipped over this moment, without paying any attention to it. But he made a mistake, which served as a stimulus for analysis, enabling the position to be analysed more deeply, and instructive ideas concealed in it to be revealed.

Ehlvest – Andrianov

Bukhara 1981

1 d4 ♘f6
2 c4 e6
3 ♘f3 b6
4 g3 ♙a6
5 ♜b3

White has chosen a comparatively rare variation (usually 5 b3 or 5 ♘bd2 is played). Theory considers 5...♘c6 to be the best reply to it. 5...c6 also comes into consideration.

5 ... d5
6 cxd5 exd5
7 ♘c3 ♙e7
8 ♙g2 0-0
9 0-0 c6
10 ♘e5

A natural, good move. However, it was also worth thinking about another plan, typical of such positions: 10 ♙g5!?, then ♞fe1, ♞ad1 and ♘e5, intending a possible ♙xf6 and e2–e4. And if 10...♘e4, then 11 ♘xe4 dxe4 12 ♙xe7 ♜xe7 13 ♘e5 with advantage to White.

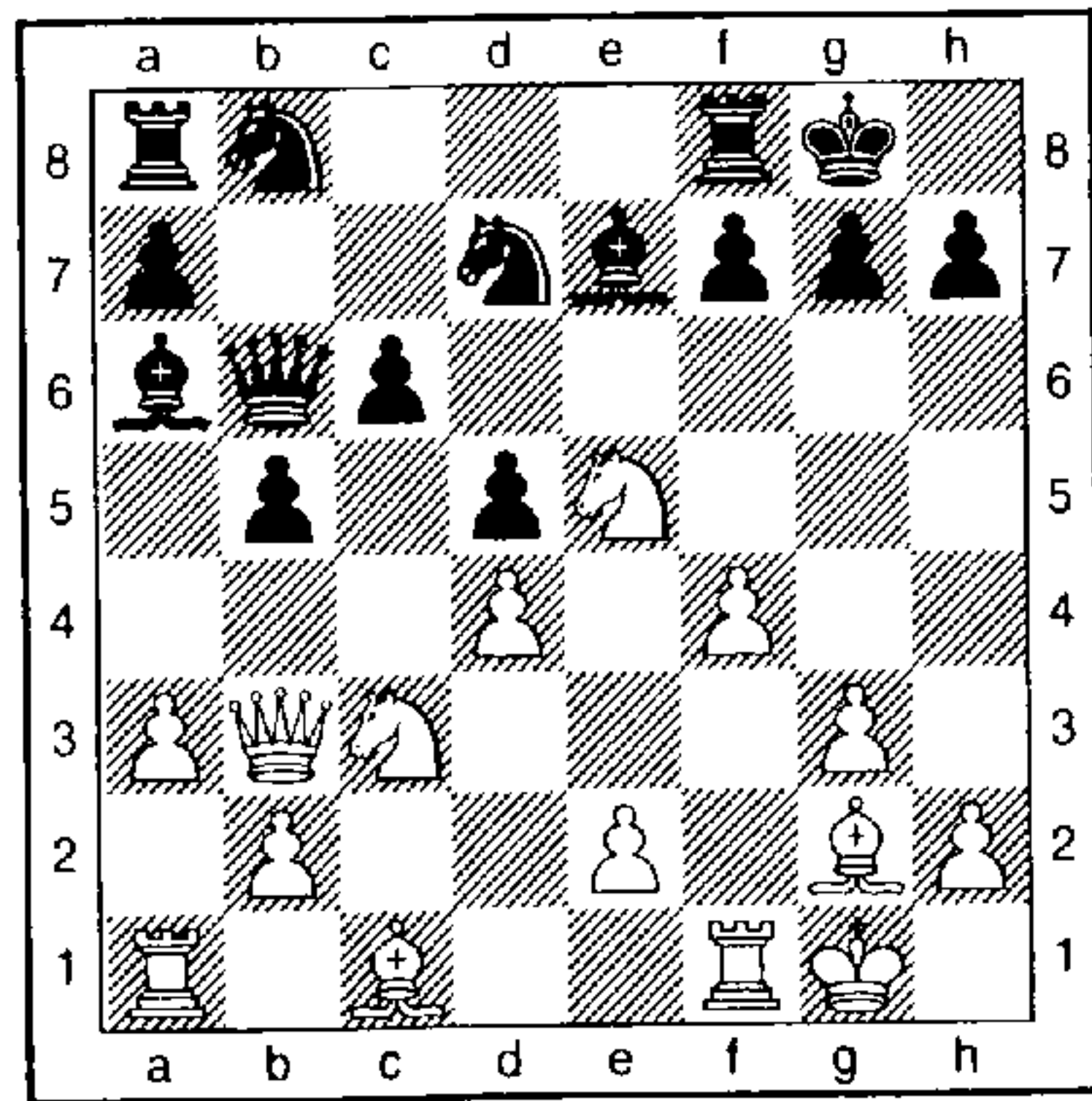
10 ... ♘fd7?
10...♙b7 followed by 11...♘bd7 is sounder.
11 f4 b5

An attempt to obtain counterplay. Black vacates the b6 square for his queen and prepares by ...b5–b4 to drive the knight from c3, hindering the opponent's thematic central advance e2–e4.

12 a3 ♜b6?!



43



Nikolai Andrianov consistently carries out his plan. However, as was shown many years later by grandmaster Etienne Bacrot, White could now have gained a great advantage with the unexpected 13 ♖xd5!! cxd5 14 ♗xd5. The attempt by Black to initiate complications by 14... ♗xe5 15 fxe5 b4!?

I should mention that a similar idea would also have worked a move earlier: 12 ♗xd5! (instead of 12 a3) 12... cxd5 13 ♗xf7!! ♜xf7 14 ♗xd5.

Not noticing the combination, Jan Ehlvest makes a logical developing move.

13 ♗e3!?

White temporarily blocks the path of his e-pawn, but he wants to withdraw his bishop to f2, after which e2-e4 will be threatened with even greater force. Such a strategic conception is by no means new, and it occurs in many openings.

Grünfeld Defence: 1 d4 ♗f6 2 c4 g6 3 g3 c6 4 ♗f3 ♗g7 5 ♗g2 d5 6 cxd5 cxd5 7 ♗c3 0-0 8 ♗e5 e6 9 0-0 ♗fd7 10 f4 ♗c6 11 ♗e3! ♗b6 (11... ♗dx5; 11... f6) 12 ♗f2 ♗d7

(12... ♗e7) 13 e4 ♗e7 14 ♗xd7 ♗xd7 15 e5 ♜fc8 16 ♜c1 ♗f8. This was the course taken by the 1st game of the Karpov-Kasparov world championship match (Seville 1987). By playing 17 g4! Karpov could have begun a dangerous attack on the kingside.

Tarrasch Defence to the Queen's Gambit: 1 d4 d5 2 ♗f3 c5 3 c4 e6 4 cxd5 exd5 5 g3 ♗f6 6 ♗g2 ♗e7 7 0-0 0-0 8 ♗c3 ♗c6 9 ♗g5 cxd4 10 ♗xd4 h6 11 ♗e3 ♜e8 12 a3 ♗e6 13 ♗h1!? This unusual king move was made by Smyslov against Kasparov in the 2nd game of the final candidates match (Vilnius 1984). White is planning the exchange on e6 followed by f2-f4, ♗g1 and e2-e4. There followed 13... ♗d7?! (in the 8th game of the match Kasparov strengthened the variation: 13... ♗g4! 14 f3 ♗h5 15 ♗g1 ♗d7! 16 ♗a4 ♗c5! with chances for both sides) 14 ♗xe6! fxe6 15 f4 ♜ed8 (15... d4? 16 ♗e4!) 16 ♗g1 ♜ac8 17 ♗a4 ♗h8 18 ♜ad1 ♗e8 19 e4, and White's position is preferable.

And here is a slightly more distant 'relative' of the same idea. English Opening: 1 c4 ♗f6 2 ♗c3 e6 3 ♗f3 b6 4 e4 ♗b7 5 ♗d3! This move was introduced by Romanishin in a game against Petrosian (43rd USSR Championship, Yerevan 1975), which continued 5... d6 (5... c5 is stronger) 6 ♗c2 c5 7 d4 cxd4 8 ♗xd4 ♗e7 9 0-0 0-0 10 b3 ♗c6 11 ♗b2 a6 12 ♗h1 ♗c7?! (preferable is 12... ♗d7, preparing ...b6-b5) 13 f4 ♜ad8 14 ♜c1 ♗b8? (14... ♗xd4 15 ♗xd4 ♗c5) 15 ♜f3 g6 16 ♗d5!!, and White developed a crushing attack.

13 ... ♗xe5
14 fxe5 ♗d7
15 ♗f2 b4!?

Not wishing to concede the initiative to his opponent, Andrianov is the first to initiate activity on the queenside – however, at the cost of creating pawn weaknesses in his own position.

16 axb4 ♗c4
17 ♗a4 ♗xb4

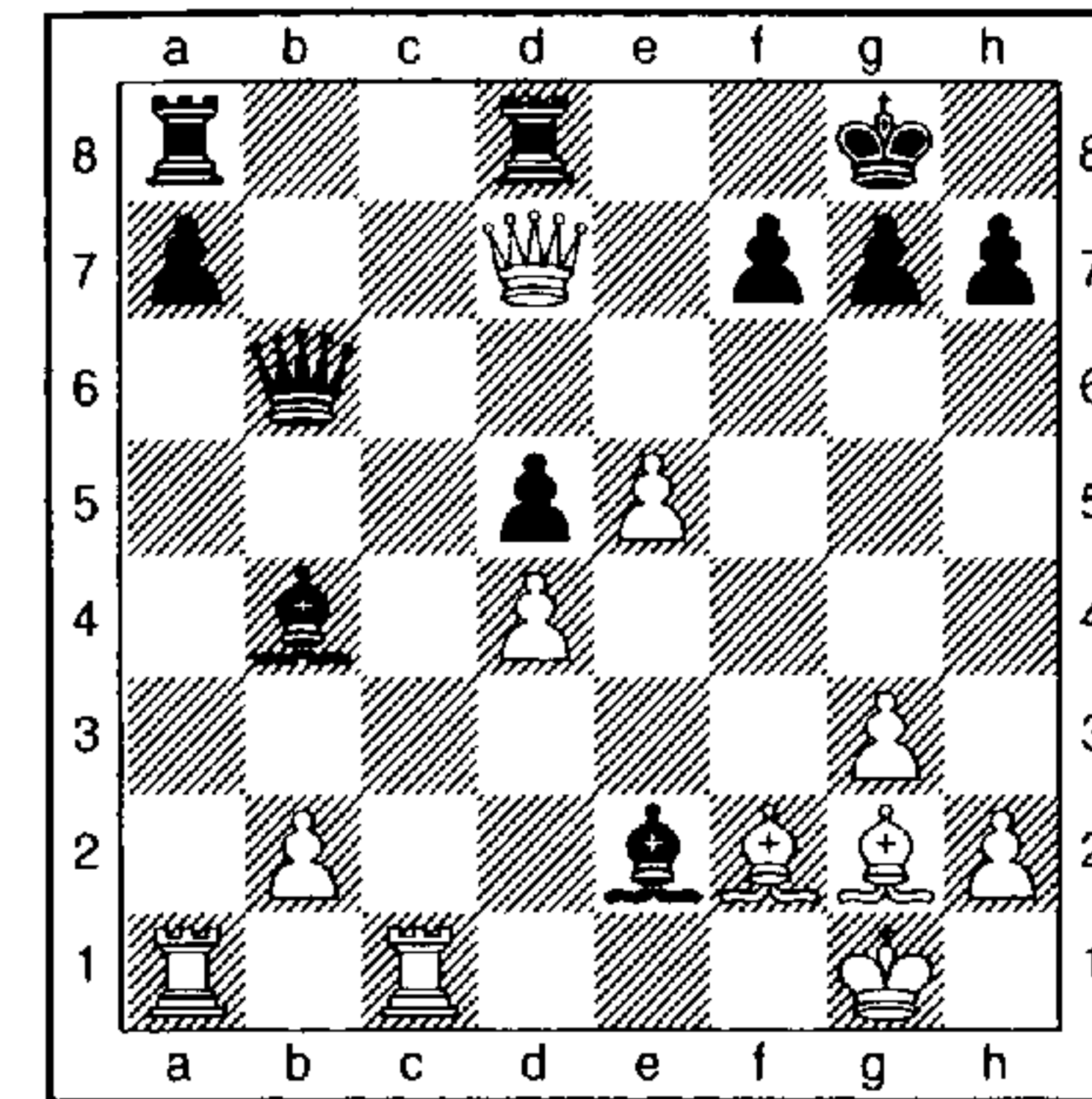


18 ♗xd5! cxd5
19 ♗xd7 ♗xe2
20 ♜fc1

Not 20 ♗xd5? ♜ad8.

20 ... ♜fd8

44



The first half of the game has been conducted quite skilfully by both sides (if one disregards the combination that they overlooked with the knight sacrifice at d5), but from this point it is as though other players took their place. Mistake began to follow mistake (and it is curious that they were all on the same theme: the exchange of pieces).

Such a picture is typical of many young players, whose work on chess essentially reduces merely to the study of opening theory. As a result they acquire extensive knowledge and sometimes a reasonable understanding of the opening. But the rules that apply in the middlegame or the endgame remain for them 'terra incognita', and in these stages of the game they feel much less confident than in the opening, which also inevitably tells on their competitive results.

An indispensable condition for a player to achieve good and stable results is serious training work on the study of chess as a whole, and the assimilation of opening theory is only a part (although a very important part) of this work.

Now White should have forced the exchange of queens, by playing 21 ♗c6! After 21... ♗xc6 (21... ♗c4? 22 ♜xc4!) 22 ♜xc6 a5 he can choose between 23 ♜c7 and 23 ♗e1, retaining the better chances in the endgame.

Also interesting is 21 ♜c6!?, a move suggested by Viorel Bologan, although to me it seems less convincing. Firstly, the opponent gains the opportunity to keep the queens on by 21... ♗b5, when 22 ♜xa7? does not work: 22... ♜xd7 23 ♜xa8+ ♗f8 24 ♜cc8 h6 25 ♜xf8+ ♗h7 26 ♗h3 ♗d3! True, the simple 22 ♗c7 sets Black problems, since if 22... ♗g4, then 23 ♗f1! is very strong (but not 23 ♜xa7? ♜xa7 24 ♗xd8+ ♗f8), while if 22... ♗f8, then 23 e6 fxe6 24 ♗h3! and the black king is in danger. Secondly, after 21... ♜xd7!? 22 ♜xb6 ♗e7(f8) the exchange of queens is carried out in a version that is slightly more favourable for Black compared with 21 ♗c6.

In the game Ehlvest played inaccurately and allowed his opponent to avoid the queen exchange.

21 ♗c7? ♗e6!

Now 22 ♜xa7?? is not possible in view of 22... ♜ac8. White has already lost his advantage. There is nothing more for his queen to do at c7, and it hurries back to its own camp.

22 ♗c2 ♗b5

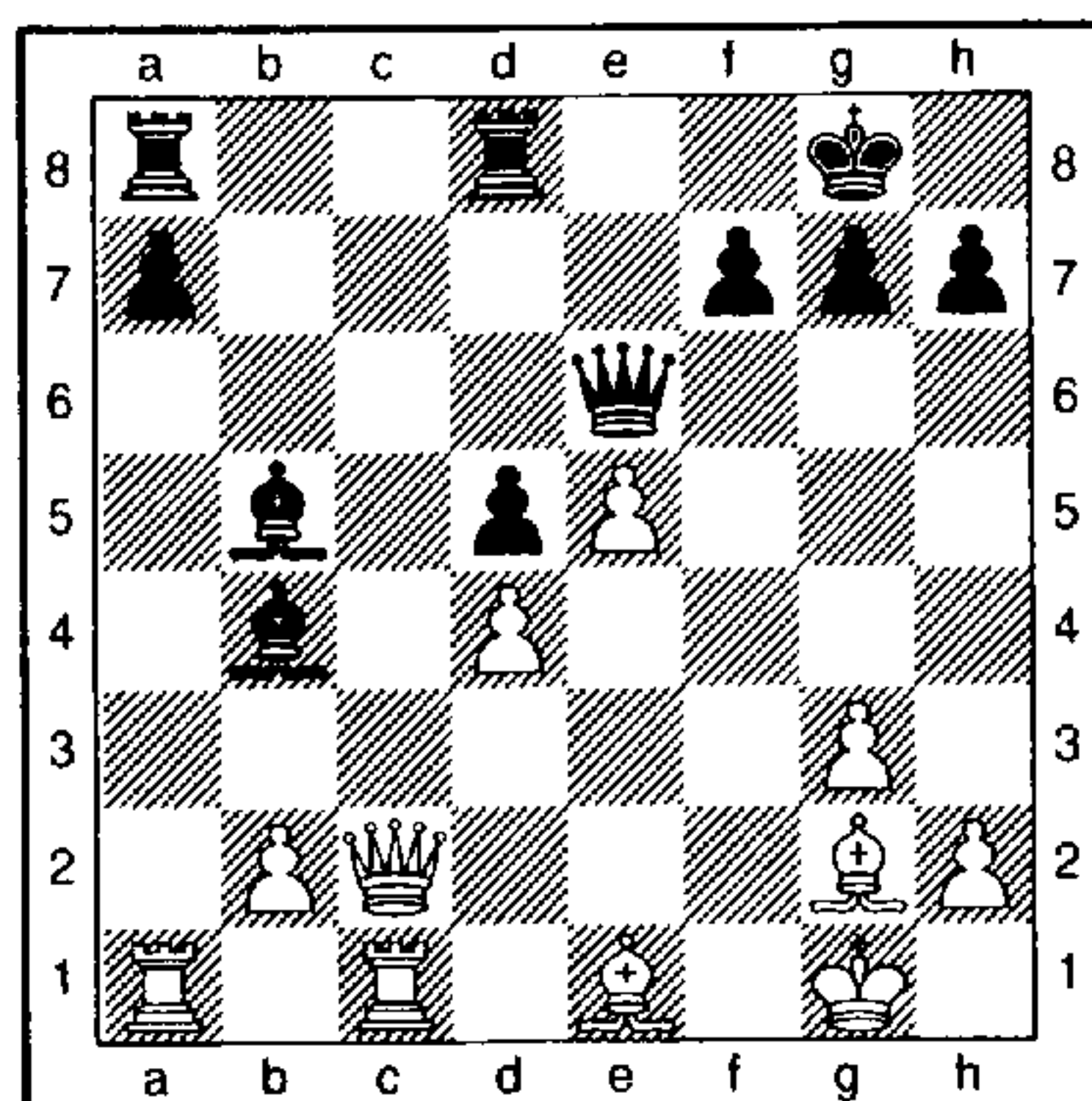
I would have preferred 22... ♗g4!?

23 ♗e1

see next diagram



45

**Q 6-20. Should Black exchange bishops?**

From the formal viewpoint White's dark-square bishop is 'bad' (his central pawns are on squares of the same colour as the bishop), whereas Black's is 'good'. Therefore the retreat to f8, which occurred in the game, looks logical.

But in chess, formal logic is far from always valid. By standing at c3, the bishop securely defends the vulnerable pawns at b2 and d4, after which White can calmly strengthen his position – the opponent has no counterplay. (As grandmaster Mihai Suba pointed out, a bad bishop sometimes defends good pawns.)

So as not to concede the initiative, it was essential to exchange bishops and then latch on to the d4 pawn. Let us check: 23...♙xe1! 24 ♖xe1 ♜ac8 25 ♚d2 ♚b6. If now 26 ♜ac1?!, then 26...♜c4! 27 ♜xc4 dxc4, while if 26 b3 there follows 26...♙d7! (intending ...♙e6), and if 27 ♙xd5?!, then the bishop returns to b5.

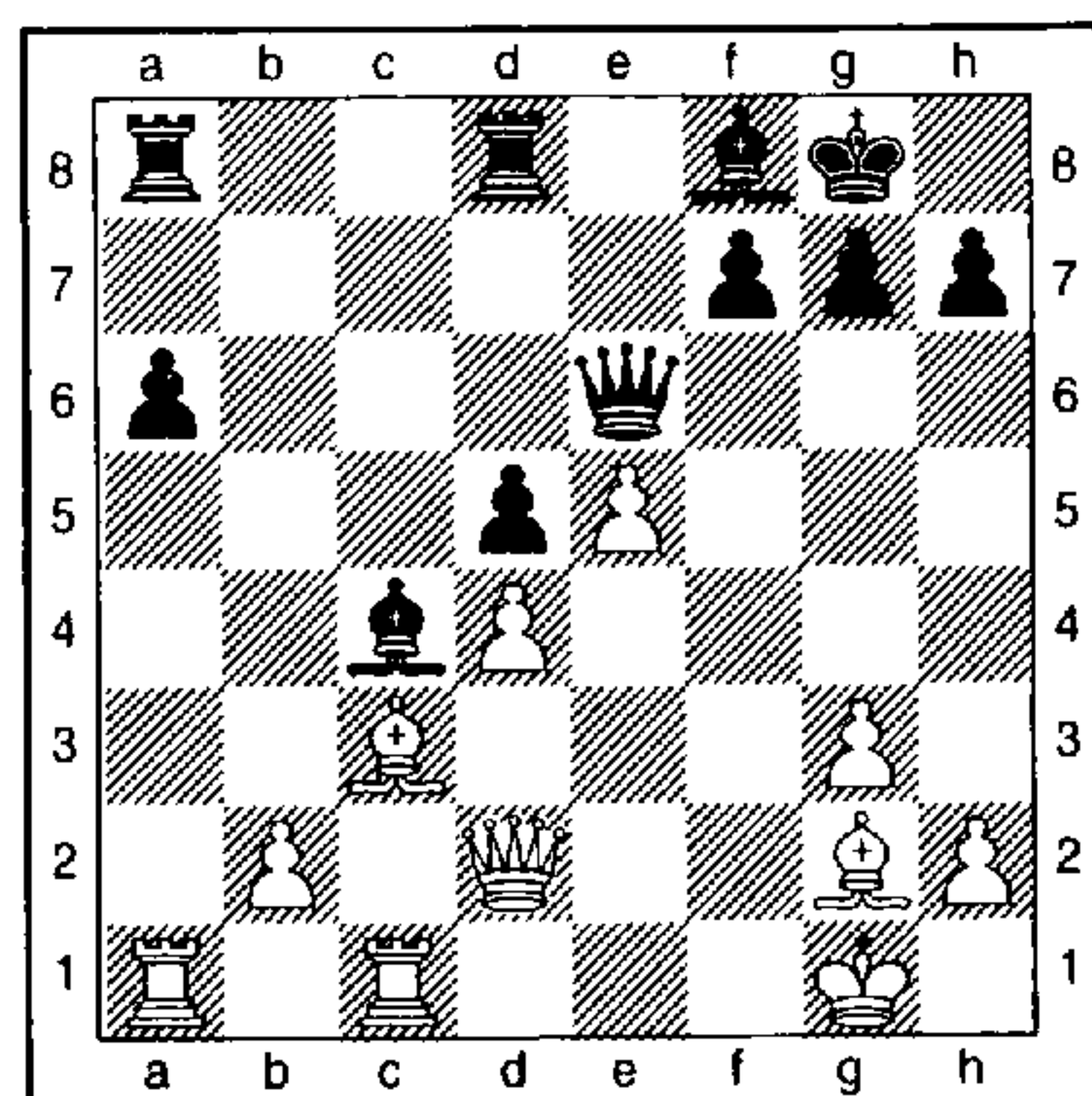
23 ... ♙f8?
24 ♙c3 a6
25 ♚d2

White did not face any threats, and therefore he had time for the gradual switching of his heavy pieces to the kingside, beginning with the manoeuvre ♜e1–e3–f3.

25 ...

♙c4

46



Now, apart from the afore-mentioned plan of switching his rook to the kingside, White also had the unusual idea of exchanging his g2 bishop for the opponent's 'bad' light-square bishop. The justification for this is exactly the same as in the analysis of the exchange on the 23rd move: the bishop at c4 is cementing together Black's queenside, and after its removal White will be able to develop there a dangerous initiative, by attacking the weak points at a6 and d5. For example, 26 ♙f1! h5?! 27 ♙xc4 dxc4 28 ♜a5 ♜d5 29 ♜xd5 (29 ♜ca1) 29...♚xd5 30 ♚g2 with an obvious advantage in the ending. Or 26...♜dc8 27 ♙xc4 ♜xc4 28 ♜a5 and then ♜ca1 or ♚g2. In this case Black should probably associate his hopes with the undermining move ...f7–f6!?

Ehlvest approached the position in a routine way – he decided to get rid of his 'bad' bishop.

26 ♙a5?! ♜dc8
27 ♙b4? ♙xb4
28 ♚xb4 ♜ab8

Of course, not 26...♜db8? 27 ♜xc4.

The fruits of White's erroneous strategy are obvious: by doubling rooks on the b-file and



placing his queen on b6, the opponent wants to attack the b2 and d4 pawns, and it will not be easy to hold them.

When a trainer gives lessons to beginners, he is obliged to explain to them the most important, basic principles (which will certainly include the concept of good and bad bishops). I prefer to work with more highly-qualified players – to them one can talk about more interesting and deeper things, to teach them a concrete approach to every position, and to demonstrate exceptions to the rules. *In fact the negation of some obvious rule does not signify that the position is not subject to the laws of chess – it is simply that other, latent principles and rules are operating.* The game we are examining is an instructive example. Standard considerations, involving good and bad bishops, are much less significant than the seizure of the initiative, and the possibility of being the first to mount an attack on the opponent's pawns.

29 ♚d2 ♜b3?!

Illogical! Why place the rook on a square where it can be exchanged? 29...♜b5! followed by ...♚b6 and ...♜b8 suggested itself.

30 ♜c3 ♜cb8
31 ♜xb3 ♜xb3
32 ♜c1 h6

32...♚b6? was premature because of 33 ♙xd5!

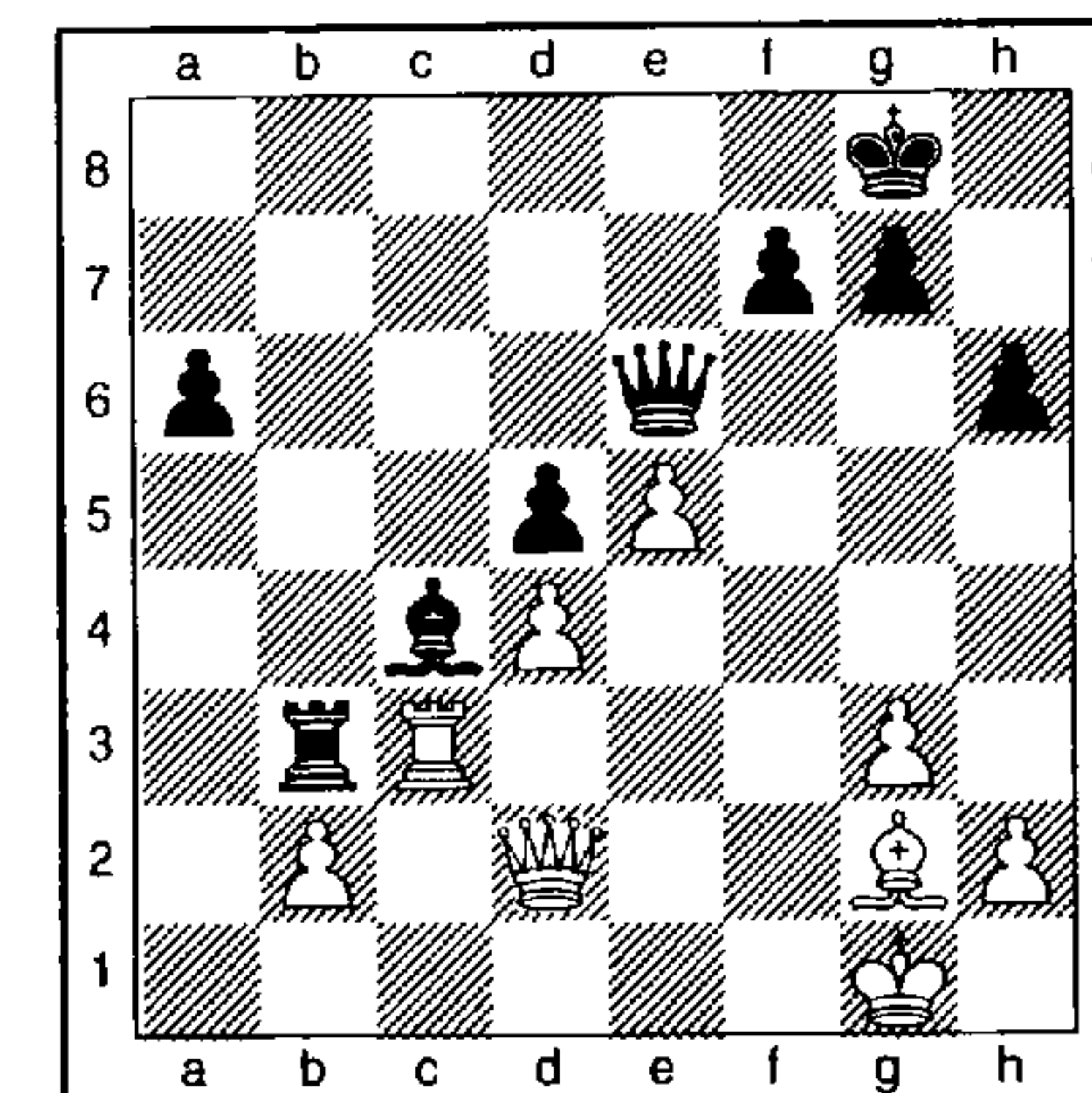
33 ♜c3

see next diagram

Q 6-21. What should Black play?

Here Andrianov made a positional mistake – he allowed his opponent to exchange the last pair of rooks. Of course, he should have

47



played 33...♜b4!, intending ...♚b6. Black would have retained the initiative in view of the weakness of the b2 and d4 pawns. True, after 34 ♜f3! ♚b6 (34...a5!?) 35 ♜f2 it would not have been easy for him to make progress, since he constantly has to reckon with ♚f4. If only his bishop had been at e6... From here the 'bad' bishop would have defended all the important pawns, leaving the heavy pieces free for play on the queenside.

33 ... ♚b6?
34 ♜xb3 ♚xb3

The game has become level. The white bishop is now even slightly better than the opponent's (at last it is possible, without mistake, to apply the standard evaluation of the strength of the bishops). However, this factor would become perceptible only if it were possible to drive back or exchange the active black queen. But it is not possible to achieve the exchange, and therefore the normal outcome is a draw.

35 ♙f2 a5
36 h4
36 ♙f3 and 37 ♙d1 is preferable.

36 ... a4
37 ♙h3 ♙d3!



38 e6?! e4?!
 Black misses an opportunity to again seize the initiative, by playing 38...f5!

39 exf7+
 39 e7 Wf3+ 40 e1 Wxg3+ 41 Wf2 Wb8 42 e4d7 does not work in view of 42...Wb4+.

39 ... Qxf7
 40 Wf4+ Qg8??
 The number of mistakes that are made on the 40th move, the last one before the time control! Any other king move would have led to a draw; only this one loses.

41 e6+ Qh7
 42 Wxe4+ dxe4
 43 Qxb3 axb3
 44 Qe3

Black resigns.

Let's now have a little practice on the theme of exchanging bishops – let us try to assess the advisability of the exchange in the examples given below.

Dvoretsky – Klovans

43rd USSR Championship, Yerevan 1975

1 e4 e5
 2 c3 f6
 3 g3 d5
 4 exd5 Qxd5
 5 Qg2 Qxc3
 6 bxc3 Qd6
 7 Bb1!?

When studying this opening variation, I came to the conclusion that with the black knight at c6 it is better for White to develop his knight at e2, and when it is at d7, then f3 is better. Thus I want to see where the black knight will go. But the move Bb1 also has a drawback – it weakens the a2 pawn.

7 ... c6
 7...d7!? is probably more accurate, aiming subsequently for ...Bb8 and ...b7-b6.

8 f3! 0-0
 9 0-0 Qd7

10 Re1 f5?!
 10...Wa5!? was also worth considering.

11 We2!?
 11 d3!? is also not bad, e.g. 11...Wa5 12 e4d2! (weaker is 12 e4b2 Wxa2 13 c4 Wa5 14 Ba1 Wc7) 12...Wxa2 13 c4 and Black is in serious danger. I was concerned about 13...e4, but then the simple 14 d4 followed by e4c3 is strong.

11 ... h6
 11...e4 12 d4 e5 13 d3 or 12...f6 13 Wc4+ is to White's advantage.

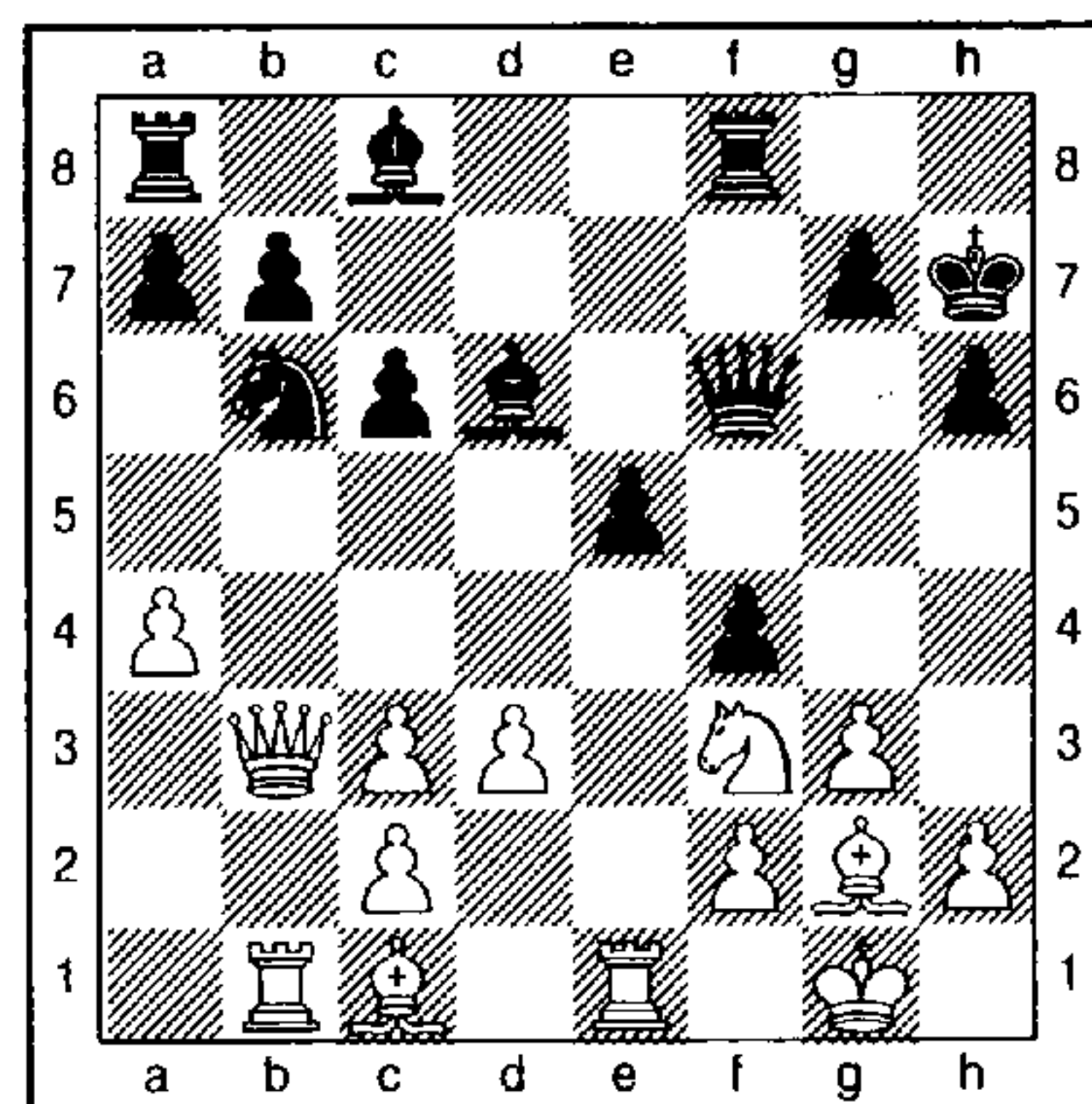
12 Wc4+ Qh7
 12...Qh8 would appear to be slightly more accurate.

13 d3 Wf6
 14 a4 Qb6

If 14...Qc5, then 15 Qxe5! is strong.
 15 Wb3 f4

15...e4 (hoping for 16 dxe4? e6) did not achieve anything because of 16 d4, or, more accurately, 16 d2! Black would have had a difficult position after 15...e6 16 c4 Bb8 17 e4b2 Qd7 18 d4 Wf7 19 dxe5 Qc5 (19...Qxc4? 20 Wc3 Qe7 21 e6) 20 We3 Qe7 21 e4a3 Qxa4 22 e4d6!

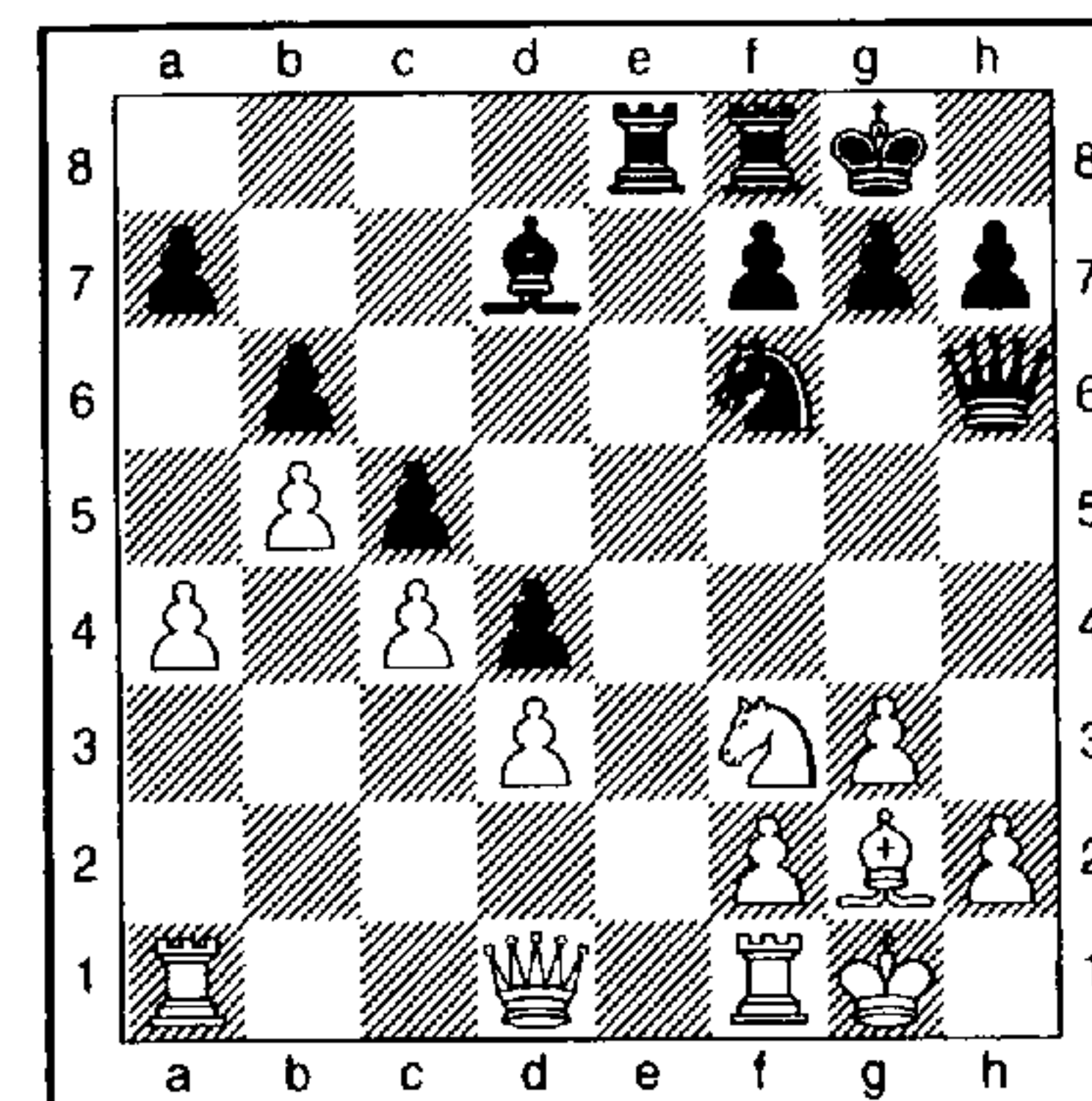
48



E 6-10. What should White play?

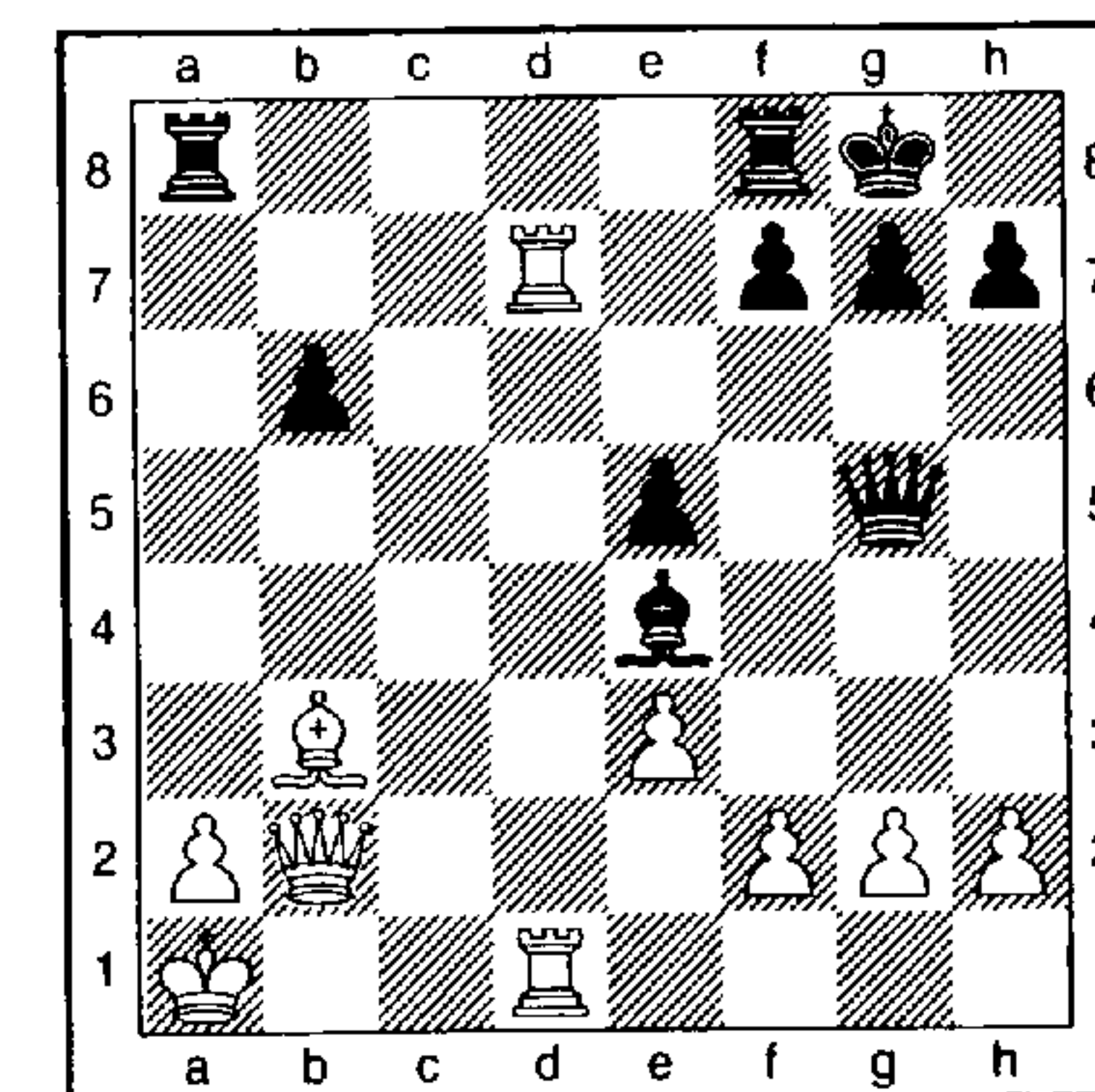


E 6-11
 49



Black to move

E 6-12
 50



White to move



Advantage in Space

Every cramped position harbours within it the germ of defeat.

Siegbert Tarrasch

The opening repertoires of modern players include the Pirc-Ufimsev Defence, the Grünfeld Defence, and many other set-ups which involve conceding space to the opponent. Therefore Tarrasch's assertion, like any categorical assertion, today cannot be perceived other than ironically. But it also contains more than a grain of truth – it is true, perhaps not for every cramped position, but for many of them.

The side who has an advantage in space can freely manoeuvre with his pieces, switching them from flank to flank, whereas his opponent often lacks scope for manoeuvring, and his pieces hinder one another. From this it is clear that, if you have an advantage in space, it is advantageous to retain as many pieces as possible, whereas in a cramped position, by contrast, you should aim for exchanges.

Seizure of space is usually secured by advancing your own pawns; in so doing they cease to defend certain important squares in their own camp, which in some cases may be exploited by the opponent to develop a counterattack.

All these considerations are fairly obvious, but in practice even experienced players go wrong, ignoring them or using them insufficiently skilfully.

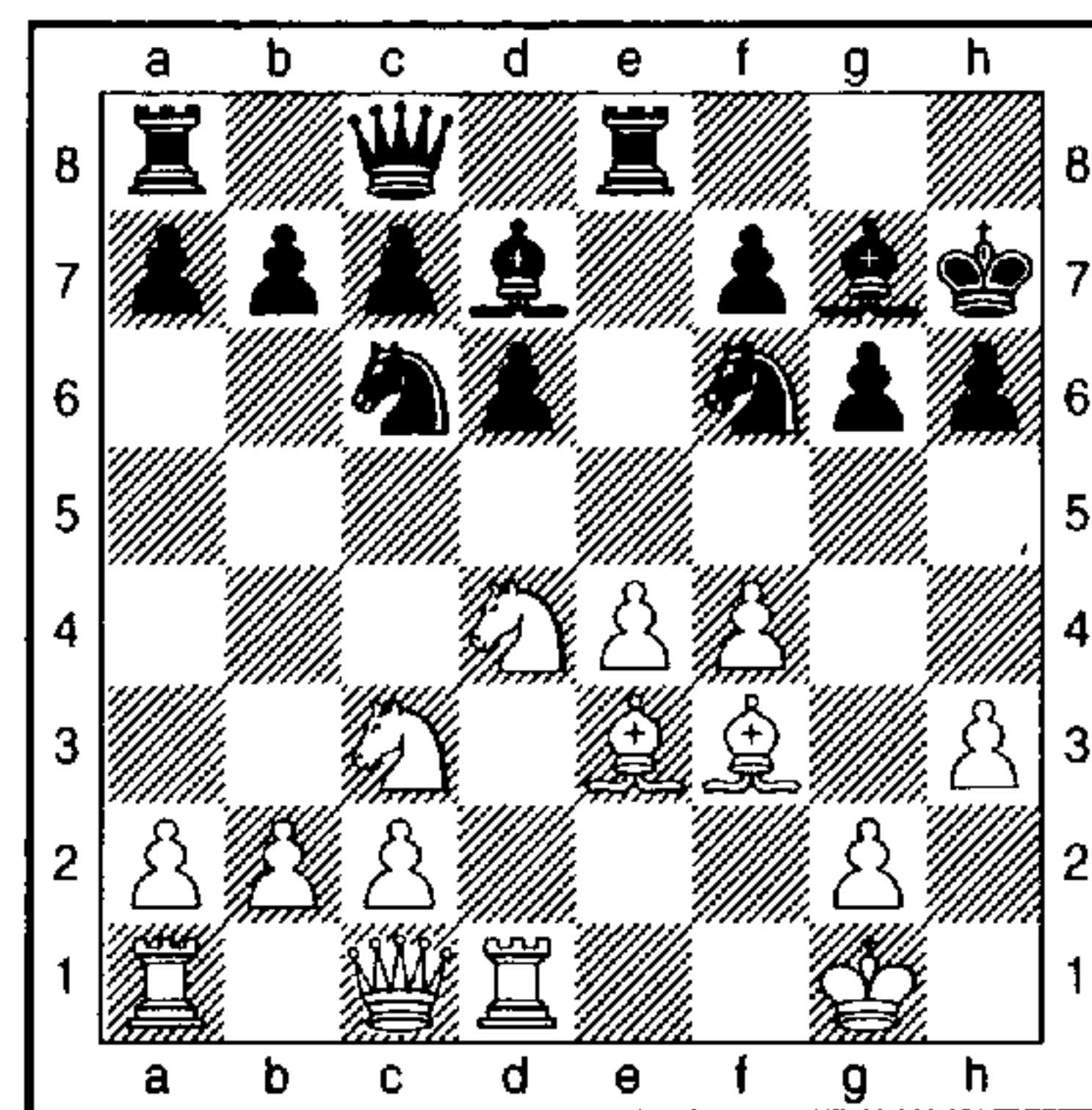
Polovodin – Razuvaev

USSR Team Championship, Tbilisi 1979

1 e4 g6 2 d4 g7 3 f3 d6 4 c3 f6 5 e2 0-0 6 0-0 c6 7 d5 b8 8 h3 (8 Re1) 8...e5 9 dxe6 xe6 10 g5 h6

11 e3 c6 12 c1 (12 d2) 12...h7 13 d1 c8 (13...e7!?) 14 d4 d7 15 f4 e8 16 f3.

51



White controls more space: his pieces and pawns are deployed on four ranks, whereas Black's are only on three. This means that exchanges are advantageous to Black. 16...xd4! suggests itself: 17 exd4 c6 18 e1 e7! (preparing 19...e8 or 19...h8 and 20...ae8) with equality.

16 ... e7?!

Yuri Razuvaev decided to carry out immediately the regrouping of his heavy pieces, suggested in the previous note. But now White has the opportunity to avoid the exchange favouring his opponent, by playing 17 b3! (or 17 de2!?) followed by e1, d2 and so on. In this case his position would have been preferable. Take note: Black's queen's knight prevents his bishop from occupying c6, from where it could



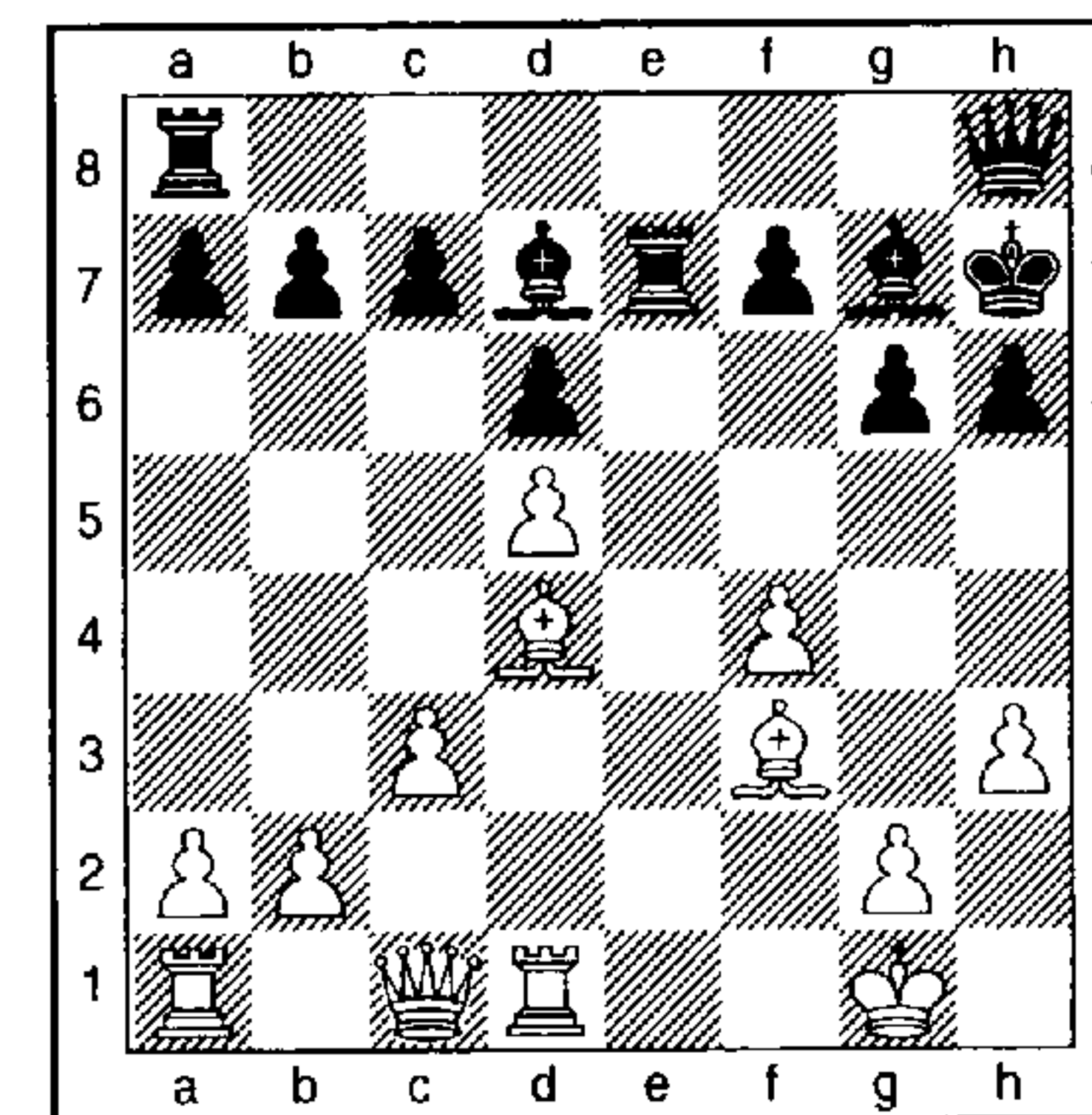
attack the e4 pawn, and his king's knight is blocking the diagonal of the other bishop. The knights have no convenient squares to move to – after all, Black is in a cramped position and he lacks space for manoeuvring.

17 d5?

An astounding strategic mistake: instead of avoiding exchanges, White himself offers to exchange several more pieces. Now Black's last move is fully justified – he carries out the planned regrouping and seizes the initiative.

17 ... xd5
18 exd5 xd4
19 exd4 h8
20 c3

52



Q 6-22. What should Black play?

Black's position, although good, is still very cramped, and so as before exchanges are advantageous to him. He could have gained the advantage by continuing 20...xd4+! 21 xd4 (21 cxd4 f6 followed by ...ae8 – the c7 pawn is immune) 21...ae8 22 d2 f6. (Incidentally the exchange of bishops on d4 could also have been carried out a move earlier). Black's lack of space is no longer any problem for him – after the series of exchanges his remaining pieces are actively

placed and excellently coordinate with one another. The advanced placing of the d5 and f4 pawns does not bring White any dividends – on the contrary, it creates unnecessary weaknesses. He would gladly agree to return his f4 pawn to f2, and his d5 pawn to d4.

20 ... ae8?
21 f2!

Igor Polovodin exploits his opponent's error and prevents the exchange of his bishop. As a result, the black queen, shut in by the g7 bishop, proves to be temporarily out of play. The positional mistake made by Razuvaev is all the more surprising, for the fact that even after 21 d2! the bishop exchange 21...xd4+ 22 xd4 would be made in a significantly less favourable version for him, than after the immediate 20...xd4+!

21 ... f5
22 d2 e4

In order to gain some squares for his rooks on the half-open e-file, Black is forced to exchange the opponent's 'bad' light-square bishop, which is running up against its own pawn at d5.

23 xe4 xe4
24 e1 e7?!

A waste of a tempo! The useful move 24...a5! should have been made. Now White maintains the balance without difficulty.

25 xe4 xe4 26 e1 e8 27 e3 a5 (27...xe3 28 xe3 b5 29 e7!) 28 d3 xe3 29 xe3 a4 30 a3 b3 31 c1 b5 32 f2 b4 33 axb4 axb4 34 d2 bxc3 35 xc3 xc3. Draw.

Yusupov – Lipnowski

Winnipeg 1986

1 d4 f6
2 c4 c5
3 d5 d6
4 c3 g6
5 e4 g7
6 d3 0-0

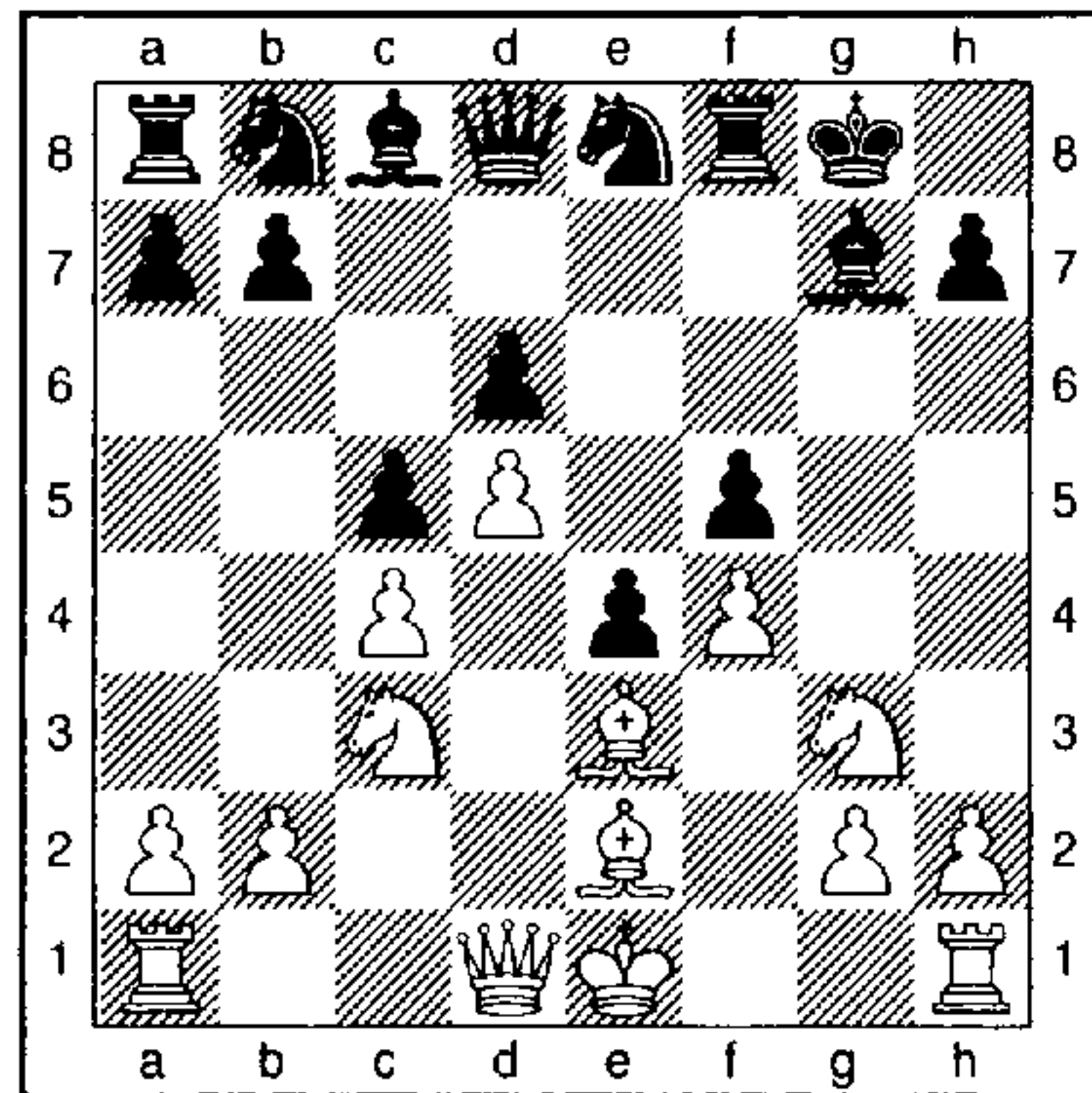


7 ♖ge2 e5
8 h3

White takes measures in advance against 8...♗e8 and 9...f5.

The game Miles–Djindjhashvili (Tilburg 1985) went 8 ♖g3 ♗e8 9 ♖e3 f5 10 exf5 gxf5 11 f4 e4 12 ♖e2.

53



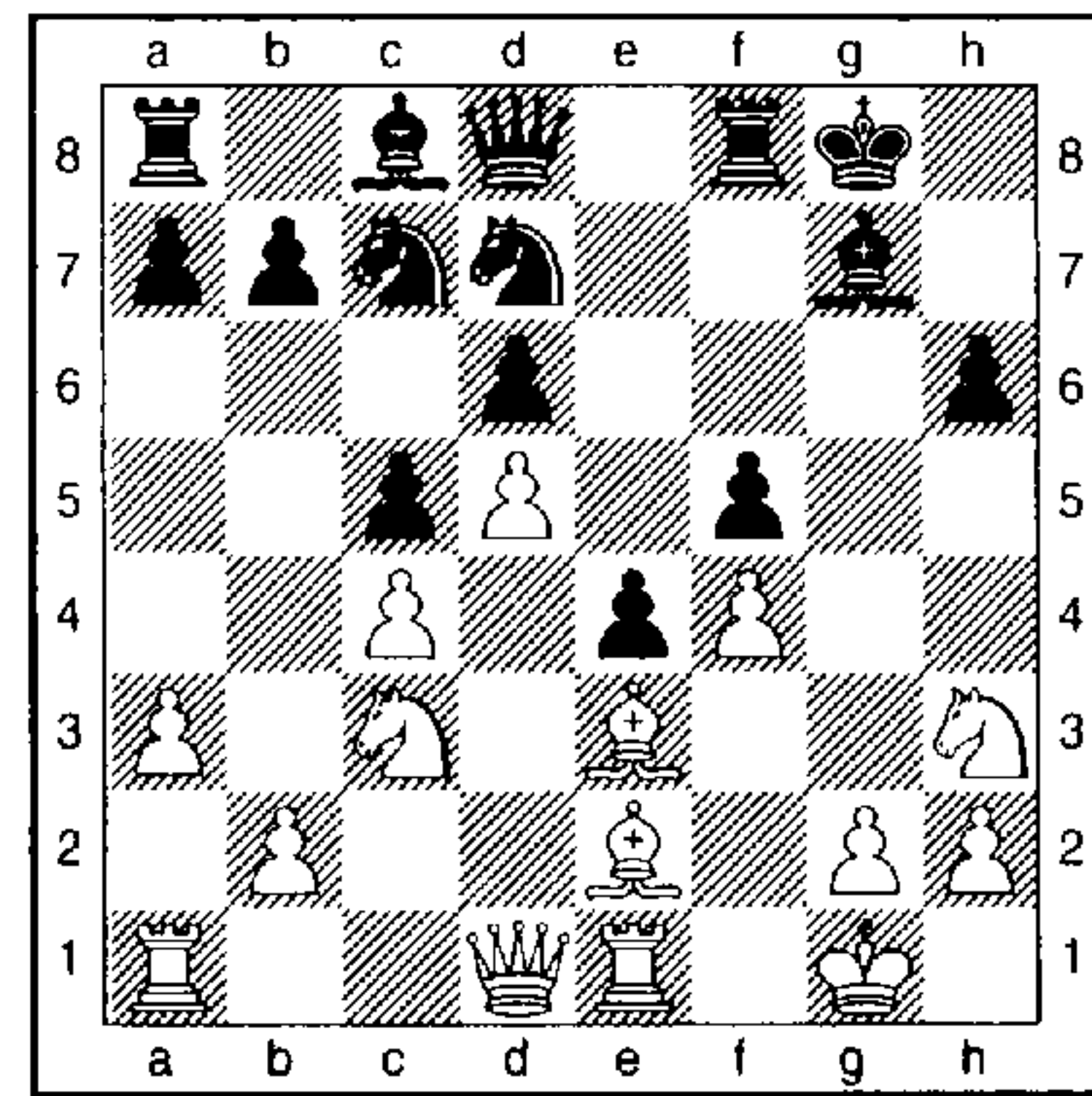
Q 6-23. How should Black continue?

White is intending 13 ♖c1 (or 13 ♖d2), and then ♗h5, preparing a subsequent g2–g4. But Black has available a standard strategic procedure, which neutralises the opponent's plan.

12...♖xc3+! 13 bxc3 ♗g7 14 ♖f2 ♖f6 15 ♖d2 ♖h6, and the players agreed a draw.

The idea of exchanging the King's Indian bishop in such a position was apparently first employed in the game Bronstein–Petrosian (Candidates Tournament, Amsterdam 1956): 1 c4 g6 2 ♗c3 ♖g7 3 ♗f3 d6 4 d4 ♗f6 5 e4 0–0 6 ♖e2 e5 7 0–0 ♗bd7 8 ♖e1 c6 9 d5 (theory recommends 9 ♖f1) 9...c5 10 a3 ♗e8 11 ♖g5 (11 b4!?) 11...f6 12 ♖d2 f5 13 ♗g5 ♗c7 14 exf5 gxf5 15 f4 e4 16 ♖e3 h6 17 ♗h3.

54



17...♖xc3! 'A very bold and subtle decision. Several arguments in its favour can be given: firstly, the presence of blocked pawn chains altogether neutralises the strength of the white bishops. Secondly, the knight, which could have assisted the undermining move g2–g4, is eliminated. And finally, and especially important, because of his own c3 pawn and the enemy c5 pawn, White's dark-square bishop is prevented from occupying the a1–h8 diagonal' (Lev Aronin).

18 bxc3 ♗f6 19 a4 ♖h8 20 ♗f2 ♖g8 21 ♖h1 ♖e8 22 ♖g1 ♖g6 23 ♖d2 ♖d7 24 g3 ♖ae8 25 a5 ♖e7 26 ♖ab1 ♖c8 27 ♖g2 ♖eg7 28 ♖bg1 ♗ce8 29 h3 h5. Draw. In the final position there is very probably some advantage on the side of Black.

Returning to the opening of the present game, I should mention that 8 ♖g3 does not give White anything. But, apart from the move made by Yusupov, 8 f3!? (intending 9 g4 or 9 ♖g5) also deserves serious consideration, leading to a position resembling the Sämisch Variation in the King's Indian Defence.

8 ... ♗e8
9 g4 ♖h4

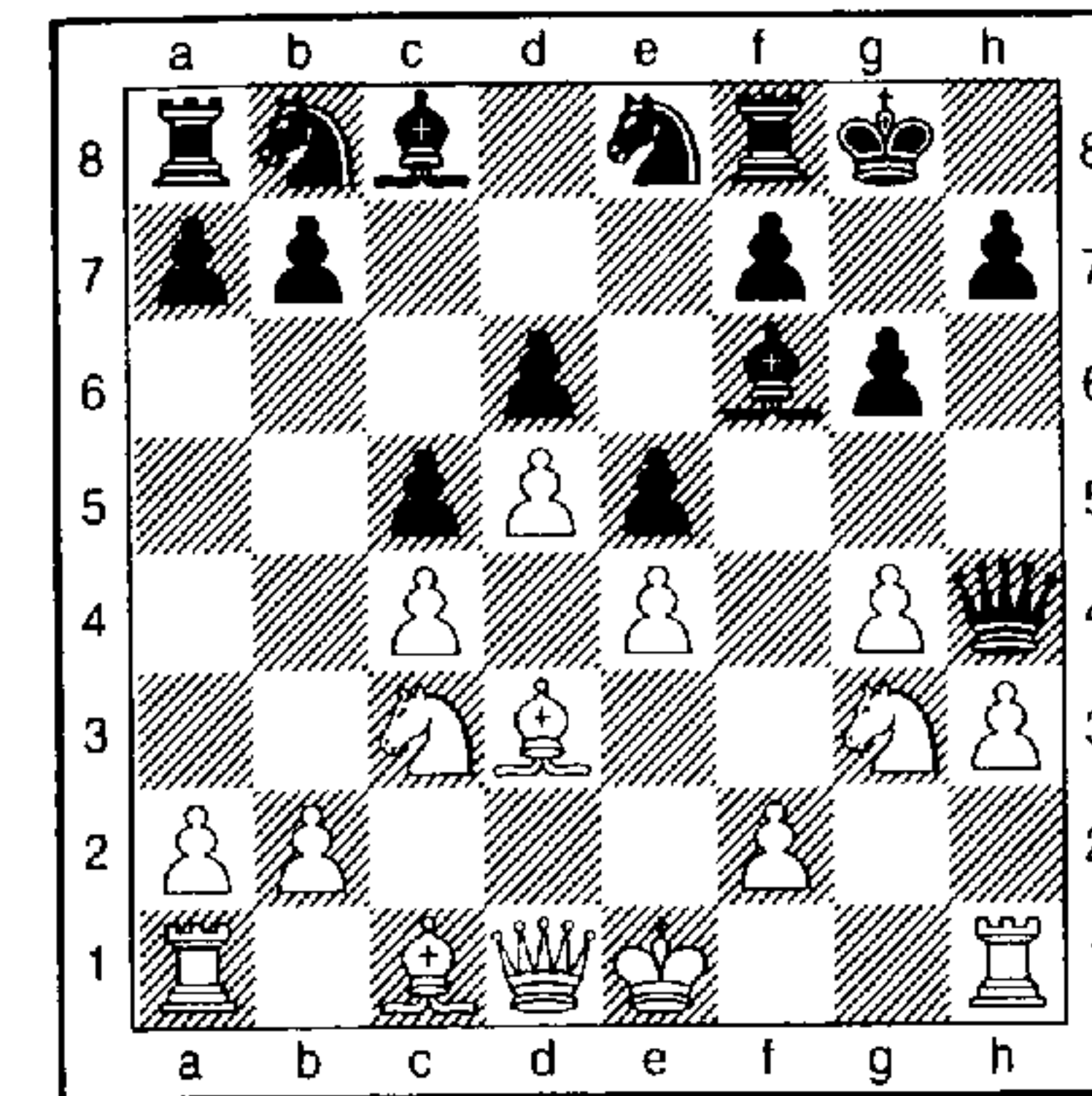
Threatening 10...♖xg4.



10 ♖g3 ♖f6?

Black incorrectly avoids the natural 10...♖h6! Possibly he was concerned about 11 ♖xh6 ♖xh6 12 h4, but after 12...♖f4! he would have retained counterplay.

55



Q 6-24. What should White play?

The opponent's intentions are clear: he wants to play 11...♖g5. But it is not hard to prevent the exchange.

11 ♖d2! ♖g7
12 ♗d1!

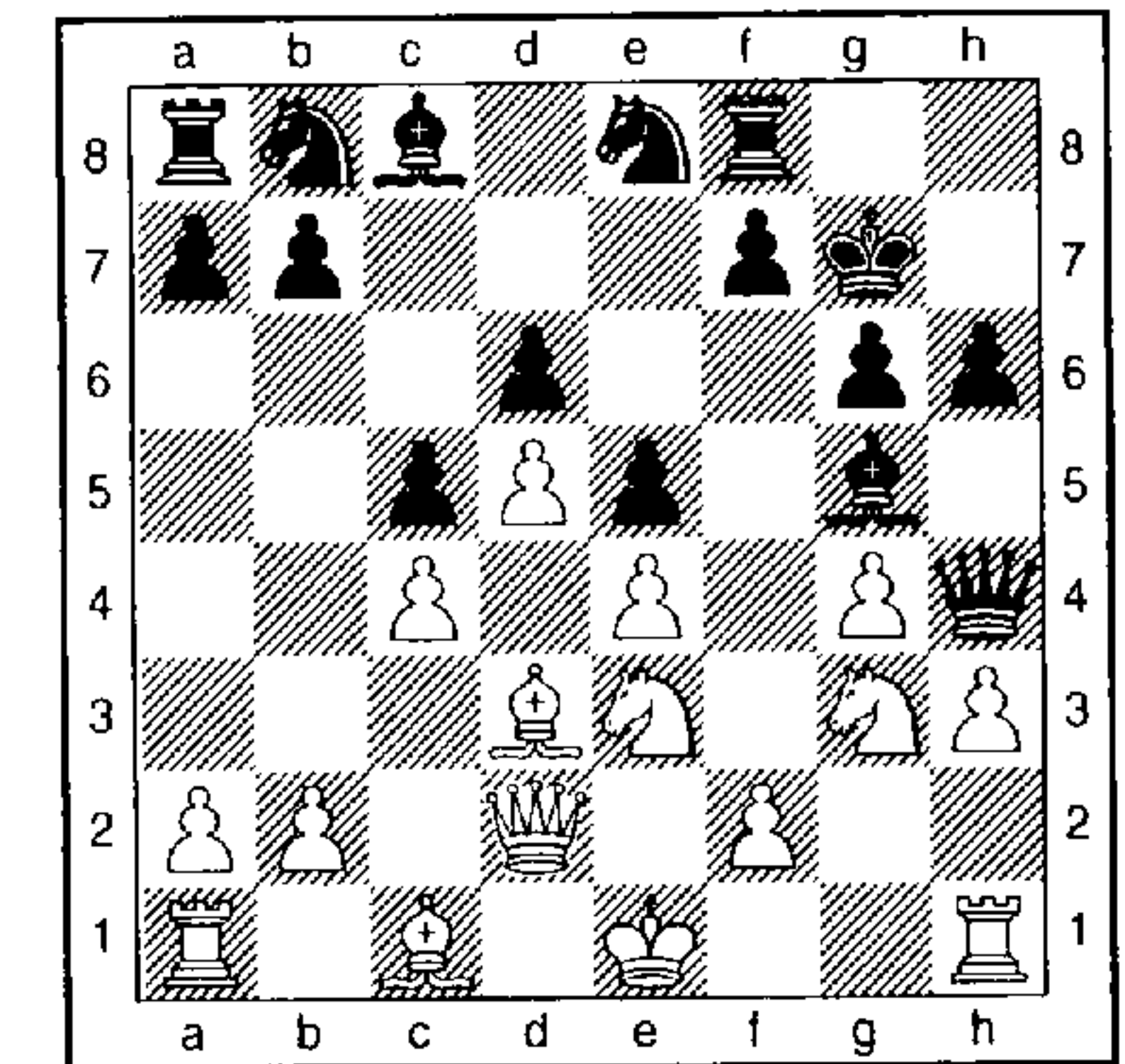
The white queen's move was not only prophylactic – it vacated a square for the transference of the knight to the kingside. With a spatial advantage the pieces usually have various manoeuvring possibilities, and it is important to choose the most effective of them.

12 ... h6
13 ♗e3 ♖g5

White has a great positional advantage. The game lasted only five more moves: 14 ♖e2 ♖f4 15 ♖f3 ♖f6 16 h4 ♖h8 17 ♗ef5+ ♖f8 18 g5!, and Black resigned in view of 18...hxg5 (18...♖d8 19 ♗xh6) 19 hxg5 ♖xh1+ 20 ♖xh1 ♖xg5 21 ♖xg5 ♖xg5 22 ♖h8 mate.

Such a rapid and crushing win does not usually encourage a critical attitude to the actions of the winner. Even so, let us analyse the finish of the game more carefully, in order to understand why grandmaster Yusupov was not satisfied with his play.

56



Q 6-25. What should White play?

With 14 ♖c3! White would have created the threat of 15 ♗g2, and in so doing would have prevented the enemy bishop from going to f4 (14...♖f4 15 ♗g2 ♖f6 16 ♗xf4 exf4 17 ♖xf6+ ♖xf6 18 ♖xf4). The opponent would have had to defend a very difficult position after 14...♖xe3 or 14...♖d8.

14 ♖e2?! ♖f4

Now 15 ♗g2 ♖f6 no longer gives White anything.

15 ♖f3 ♖f6

Q 6-26. What should White play?

The bishop at f4 is the fulcrum of Black's position. It must be attacked by the knight, but avoiding unnecessary exchanges which ease the defence. The strongest plan is 16 ♖d2! followed by ♖c3, ♖e2 and only then ♗g2. Black would probably be forced to exchange on g3, after which there is the extremely unpleasant threat of opening the a1–h8 diagonal by f2–f4.

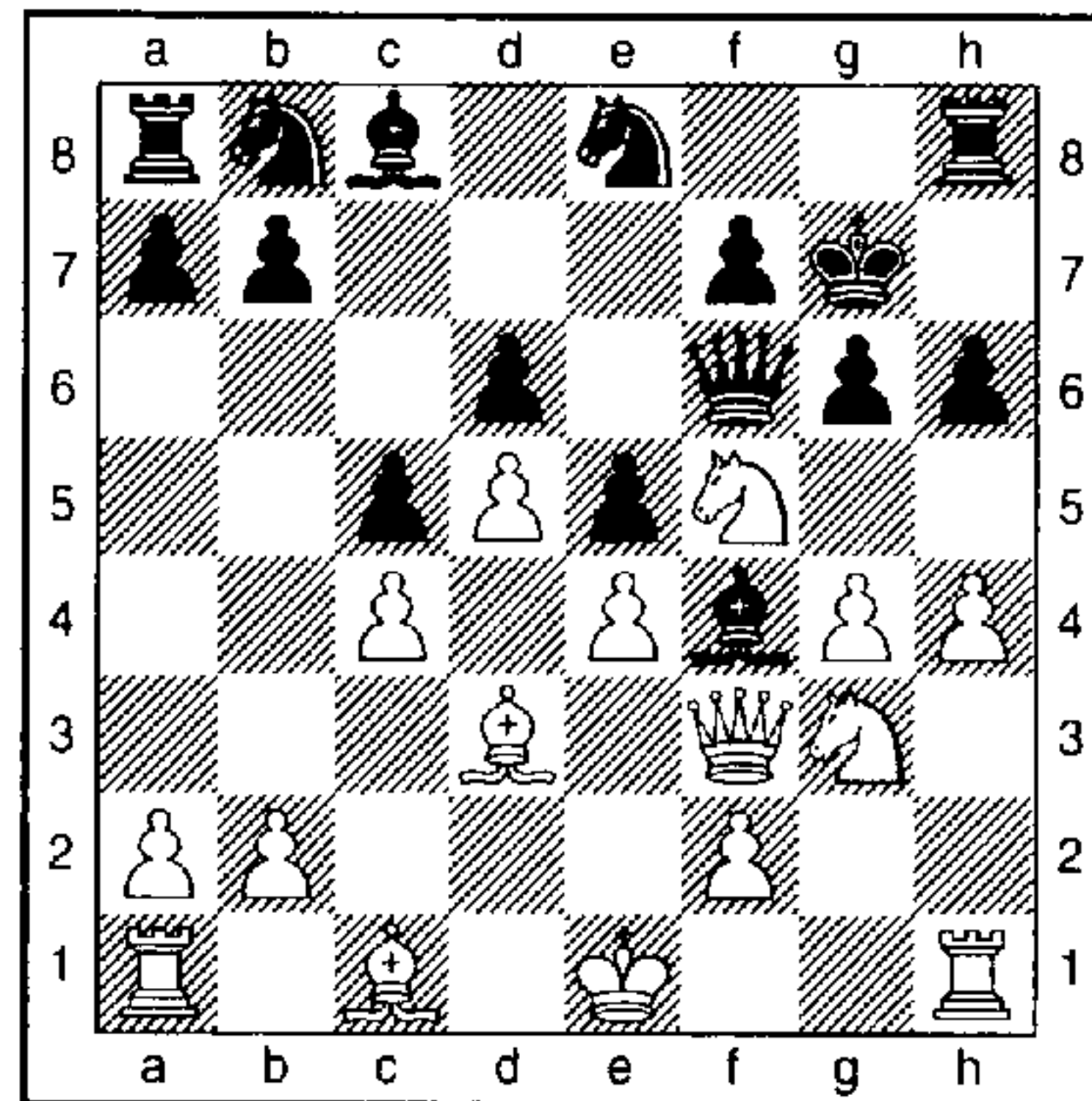


16 h4?! ♖h8!

The position has become more complicated – the opponent wants to play 17...♗e7 and 18...♘f6 with counterplay.

17 ♘ef5+?!

57



Q 6-27. What should Black play?

Of course, 17...gxf5? 18 ♘h5+ is not possible. In the event of 17...♙xf5? 18 gxf5 or 18 exf5 White has an obvious advantage. We already know that 17...♗f8?, as played in the game, loses to 18 g5! Only one possibility remains.

17 ... ♗g8!

Now 18 g5 no longer works. Black was probably concerned about 18 ♘h6+, but he need not have been!

18 ♘xh6+?! ♖xh6!

Also possible is 18...♙xh6 19 ♗xf6 ♘xf6 20 g5 (20 ♙xh6 ♖xh6 21 g5 ♖h8 22 gxf6 ♘d7) 20...♙g7 21 gxf6 ♙xf6, but the capture with the rook is much stronger.

19 g5 ♙d2+!
20 ♗e2 ♗xf3+
21 ♗xf3 ♙xc1
22 gxh6 ♙xh6

White faces a difficult struggle for a draw.

This is what happens if, under the impression of an easily gained advantage, you stop delving into the position and make a few superficial moves. **A cramped position sometimes resembles a compressed spring, which is capable of uncoiling at any moment!**

In the following game White exploited his spatial advantage very convincingly.

Dolmatov – Karolyi

European Junior Championship,
Groningen 1978

1	e4	e6
2	d4	d5
3	♘d2	♘f6
4	e5	♘fd7
5	c3	c5
6	f4	♘c6
7	♘df3	♗b6
8	g3	♙e7
9	♙h3	0-0

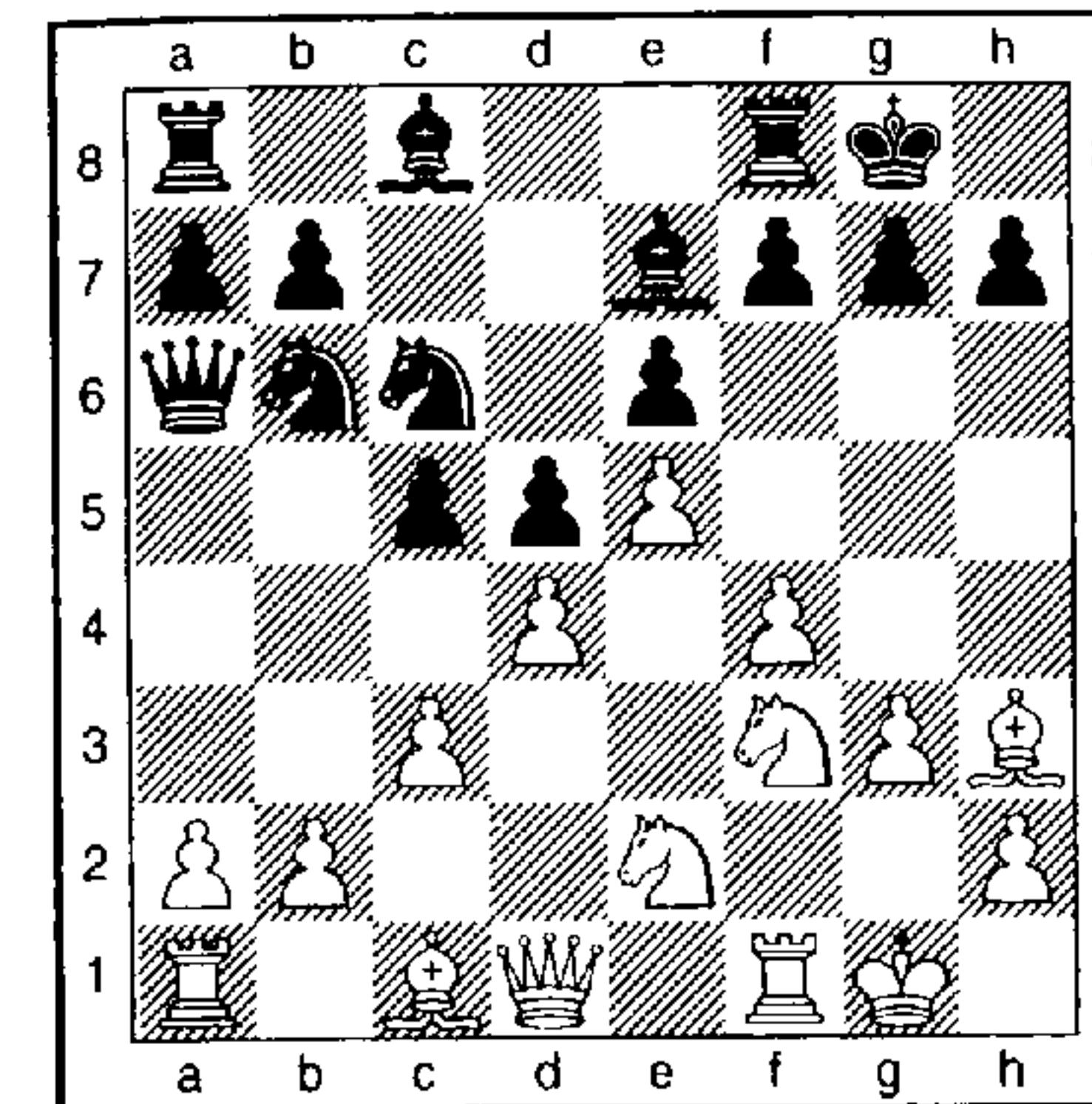
The opening variation chosen by Black involves a serious spatial concession. It must be compensated by something, as otherwise the opponent will gain a clear advantage. Counterplay may be achieved by undermining the enemy centre. For example, 8...cxd4 9 cxd4 ♙b4+ 10 ♗f2 g5!? often occurs. But the development of the bishop at e7 also has its point, only instead of castling Black should play 9...cxd4 10 cxd4 f6!, e.g. 11 ♗f1 0-0 12 ♗g2 g5!?, or 11 ♘e2 fxe5 12 fxe5 0-0! (White cannot castle in view of ...♘dxe5) 13 ♙xe6+ ♗h8 14 ♙xd5 ♘dxe5! 15 dxe5 ♘xe5 (Lukyanov–Gleizerov, USSR 1996).

10	♘e2	♗a6
11	0-0	♘b6

see next diagram



58



Q 6-28. What should White play?

The young Hungarian player wants to complete his development with ...♙d7 and ...♖ac8, and is hoping to create pressure on the queenside, where many of his pieces are gathered. But Sergey Dolmatov finds a strategic refutation of his opponent's plan.

12 ♖f2!

The next move will be 13 ♙f1, after which the queen at a6 will begin to feel uncomfortable.

12	...	cxd4
13	♘exd4	♘xd4
14	♘xd4	♙c5
15	♙f1	

15 b3!? with the threat of 16 ♙f1 is also strong.

15	...	♗a4
16	b3	♗e8
17	a4!	♙d7
18	♙d3	

A debatable moment. As we have already mentioned, with a spatial advantage one should normally avoid exchanges. Following this rule, Dolmatov simply develops his bishops on the active squares d3 and e3. But 18 ♙a3!?, exchanging the opponent's 'good' bishop, also had its point.

18	...	♘c8
19	♙e3	♘e7
20	♗c2	g6

The weakening of the dark squares will subsequently tell, but it is doubtful whether 20...♗h8 was any better. Now, and on the next move, White could again have exchanged the bishops, by playing 21 ♘f5!?

21	♗d2	♘c6
22	g4	

After completing his development and reinforcing his centre, White begins an attack on the kingside. It can be conducted in various ways – 22 h4!?, with the threat of 23 h5, was also not bad. In the event of 22...h5 he would have prepared g3–g4, and to ...f7–f5 he would have replied e5xf6, creating weak pawns in the opponent's position at e6 and g6.

22	...	♙xd4
23	cxd4	

Dolmatov avoids exchanges and retains the advantage of the two bishops. In overwhelming positions it is sometimes not easy to choose between various good plans. Probably simpler was 23 ♙xd4!? ♘xd4 24 cxd4 (threatening 25 f5) 24...f5 25 exf6 ♖xf6 26 g5 and 27 h4.

23	...	f6
24	♖af1	f5?!

If 24...♗e7 Black was apparently concerned about 25 f5!? But now his position becomes completely hopeless.

25	gxf5	exf5
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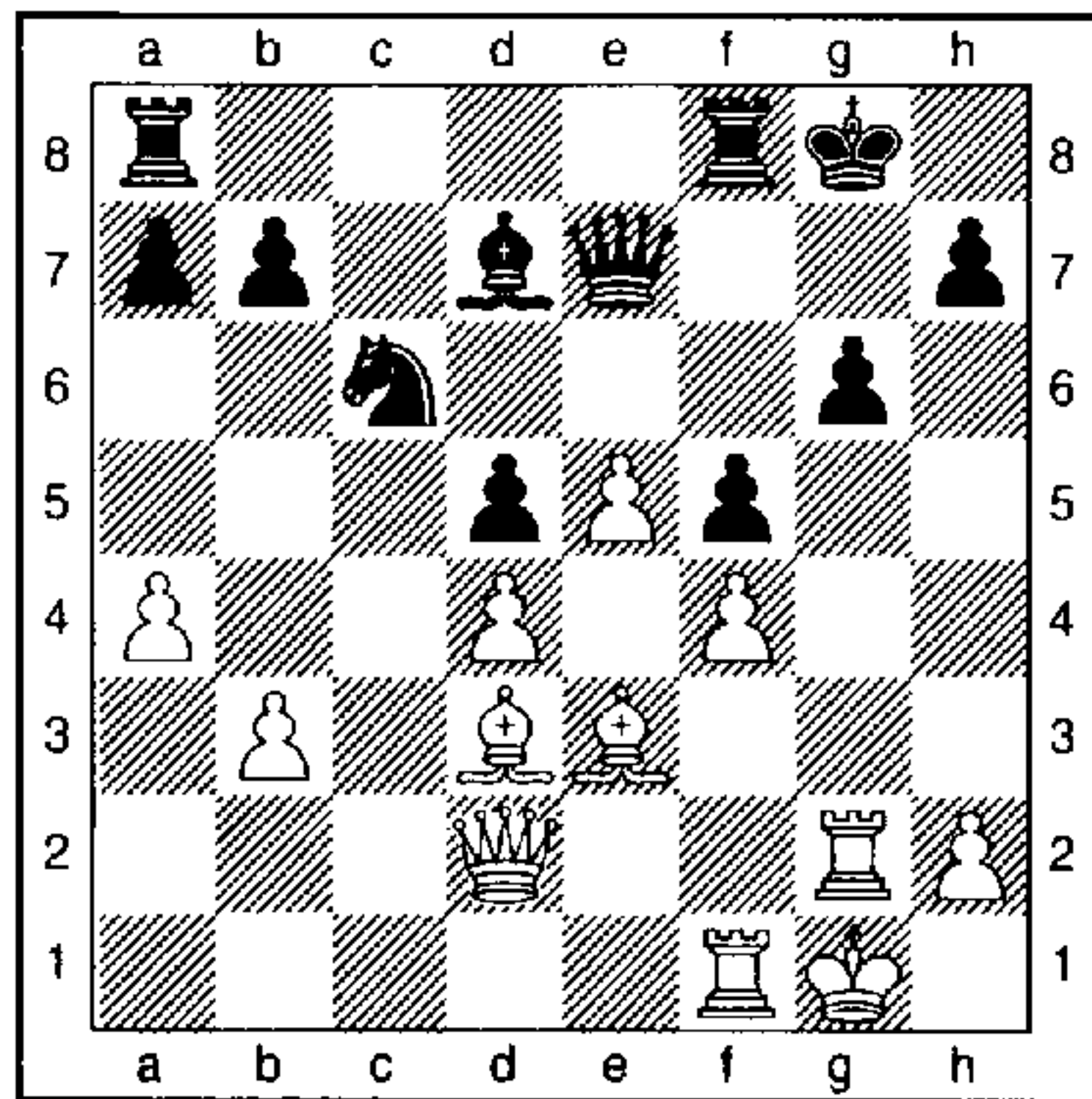
After 25...gxf5 26 ♖g2+ ♗h8 Black would have had to reckon with ♙f2–h4, exploiting the weakness of the dark squares.

26	♖g2	♗e7
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see next diagram



59



Q 6-29. What should White play?

The most natural plan is the advance of the pawn to h5, then $\text{R}h2$ and $\text{f}2-h4$. With his last move Tibor Karolyi not only prevented h2-h4, but also created the threat (never forget about 'prophylactic thinking!') of $27... \text{B}b4$. The exchange of queens is undesirable for White, but his b3 and d4 pawns are under attack.

With a series of excellent manoeuvres Dolmatov suppresses the opponent's counterplay and decisively strengthens his position. In such cases, as Nimzowitsch remarked: *'... the attacker relies mainly on his territorial superiority – on the superior state of his lines of communication. The game is lost, because at some point it proves impossible for the defender to keep pace with his opponent in the rapid regrouping of his forces.'*

27 $\text{f}e2!$

A multi-purpose move! Now after $27... \text{B}b4$ there is the simple reply $28 \text{B}d3$, and if $28... \text{a}5?$ $29 \text{f}d2$. From e2 the bishop will support the offensive on the kingside, and from here it can go to f3, attacking the weak d5 pawn.

27 ... $\text{B}ac8$

28 $\text{f}f2$

Threatening h2-h4-h5.

28 ... $\text{c}f7$

29 $\text{B}g3!$

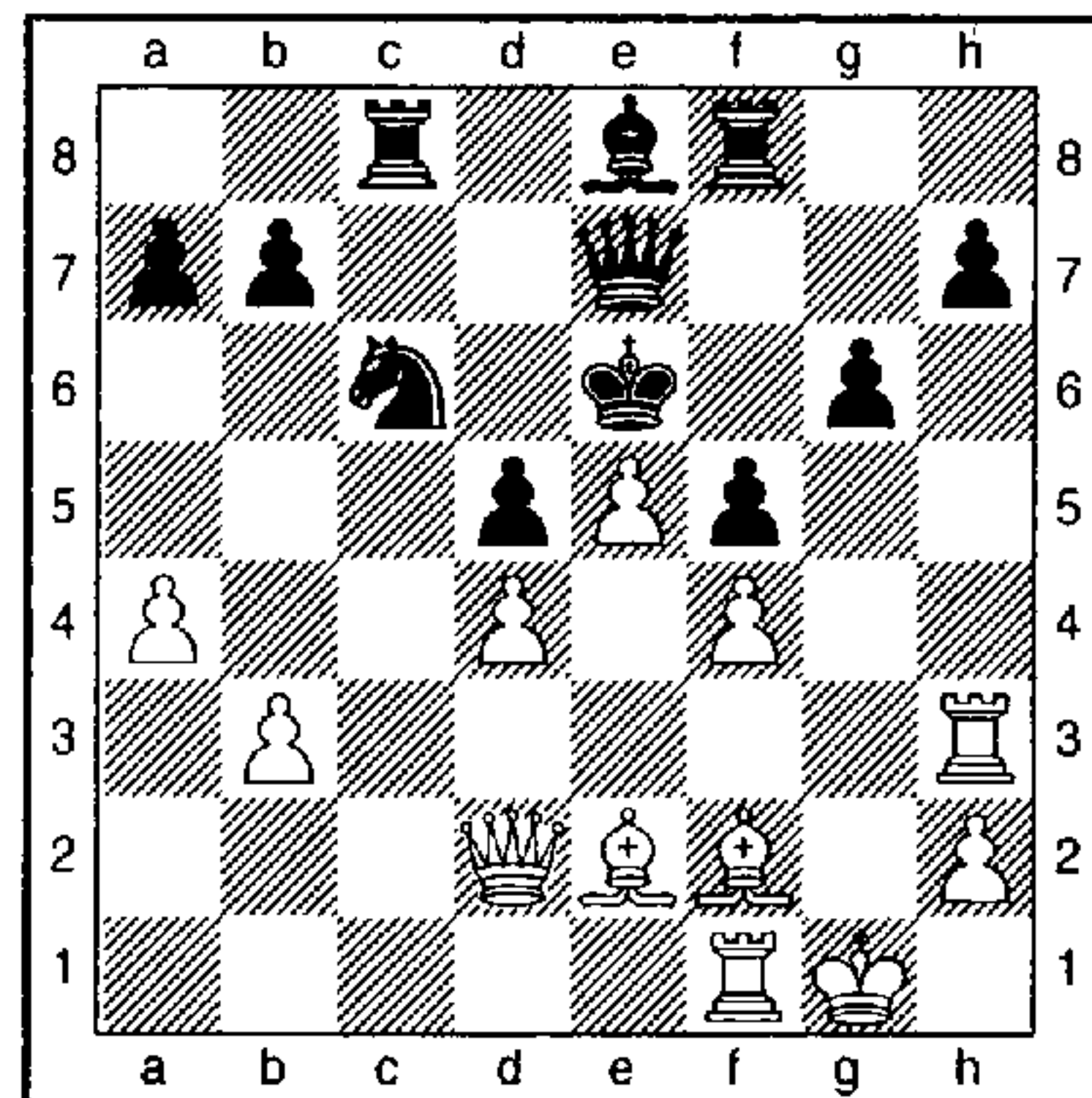
$29 \text{h}4?!$ is incorrect in view of $29... \text{h}5!$, blocking the kingside. Therefore White makes a change to his plan. He wants to play $\text{B}h3$, attacking the h7 pawn and preparing $\text{f}h4$. In addition (in the event of $... \text{B}b4$) he strengthens his queenside – the b3 pawn and the c3 square.

But a different approach to the position can also be made. $29 \text{B}d1!?$ was very strong, creating the threat of $30 \text{h}4 \text{h}5 31 \text{f}xh5$.

29 ... $\text{c}e6$

30 $\text{B}h3$ $\text{f}e8$

60



Q 6-30. What should White play?

$31 \text{f}h4?$ is premature in view of $31... \text{B}b4$.

31 $\text{B}c1!$

Here it is, the freedom of communication with a spatial advantage! White does not confine himself to the kingside alone, but makes use of the whole board. He again threatens $32 \text{f}h4$ (because of the pin on the c-file, the reply $... \text{B}b4$ is not possible), and $31... \text{c}d7 32 \text{f}h4 \text{B}b4 33 \text{B}xb4 \text{c}xb4 34 \text{e}6+$ is bad for Black. A new threat is also created: an



attack on the d5 pawn by $\text{B}c5$ and $\text{f}f3$.

31 ... $\text{B}d7$

32 $\text{B}c5$ $\text{c}e7?$

Frightened by the pretty threat of $33 \text{B}xd5$, Black gives up his h7 pawn, which is equivalent to capitulation. It is well known that 'the threat is stronger than its execution!'. He should have played $32... \text{h}5$, setting his opponent a positional trap: the tempting $33 \text{B}xd5?!$ leads after $33... \text{B}xd5 34 \text{f}c4 \text{c}e7 35 \text{f}xd5+ \text{c}xd5$ to a position in which Black retains definite compensation for the lost material. Dolmatov would have probably replied $33 \text{f}b5!?$ with a great advantage.

33 $\text{B}xh7$ $\text{f}f7$

34 $\text{f}b5$ $\text{B}d8$

35 $\text{B}xc8$ $\text{B}xc8$

36 $\text{B}h3$

There is nothing more for the rook to do on the kingside, and it instantly switches to the queenside.

36 ... $\text{a}6$

37 $\text{f}f1$ $\text{B}d7$

38 $\text{f}h4$ $\text{B}c8$

39 $\text{B}c3$ $\text{B}c7$

40 $\text{a}5$

White does not hurry – first he makes all the useful moves, and only then does he begin decisive action.

40 ... $\text{B}xc3$

41 $\text{B}xc3$ $\text{B}c6$

42 $\text{B}b4$ $\text{c}g8$

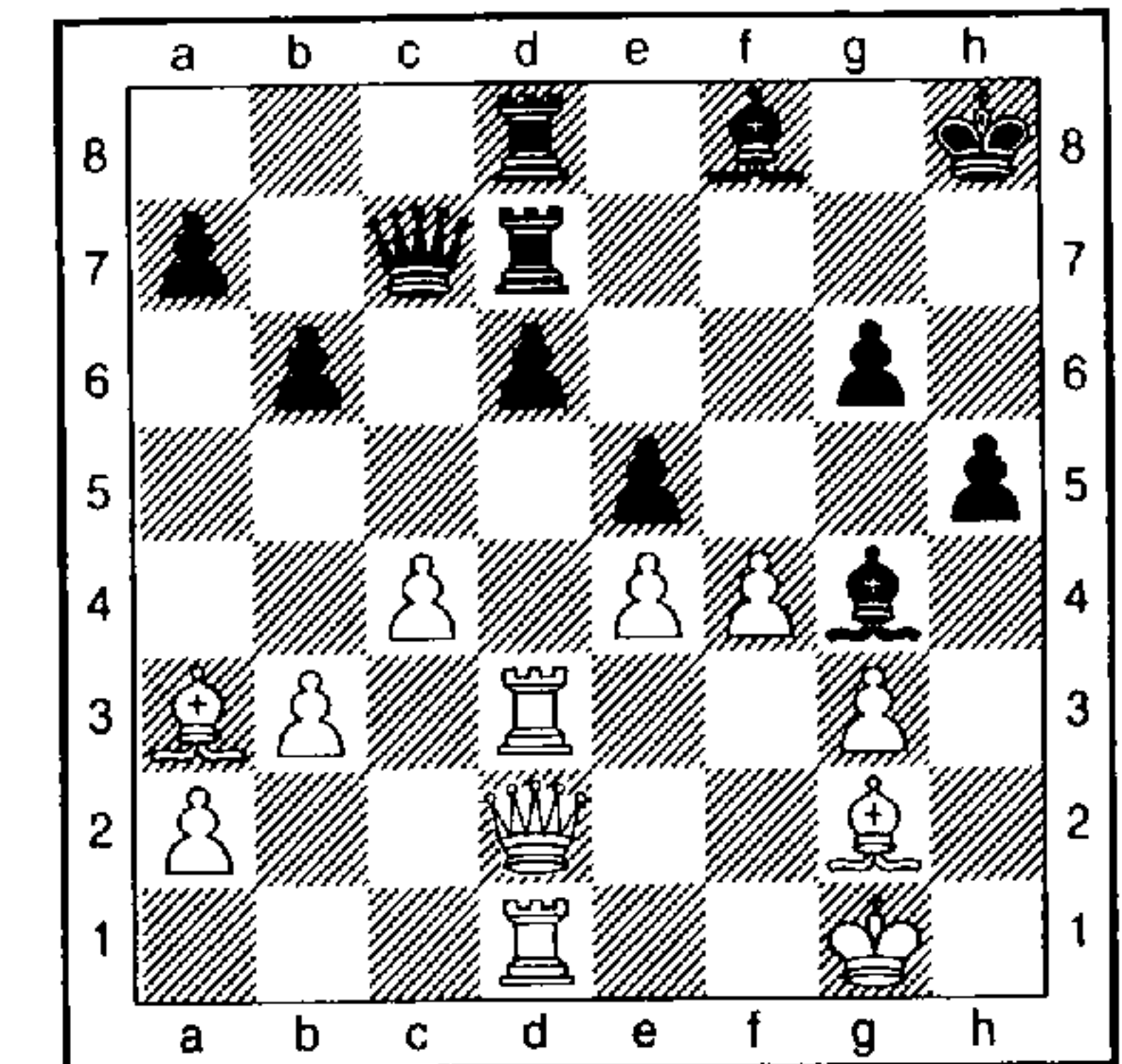
43 $\text{B}f8$ $\text{B}c7$

44 $\text{f}d8$ $\text{B}d7$

Black resigns. The finish could have been as follows: $45 \text{f}f2 \text{B}c6$ ($45... \text{c}h6 46 \text{h}3; 45... \text{c}e7 46 \text{B}xe7+ \text{B}xe7 47 \text{f}xe7 \text{c}xe7 48 \text{c}g3$ followed by $\text{c}h4-g5$) $46 \text{f}e2 \text{B}d7 47 \text{b}4 \text{B}c6 48 \text{h}3 \text{B}d7 49 \text{b}5! \text{a}xb5 50 \text{f}xb5$.

E 6-13

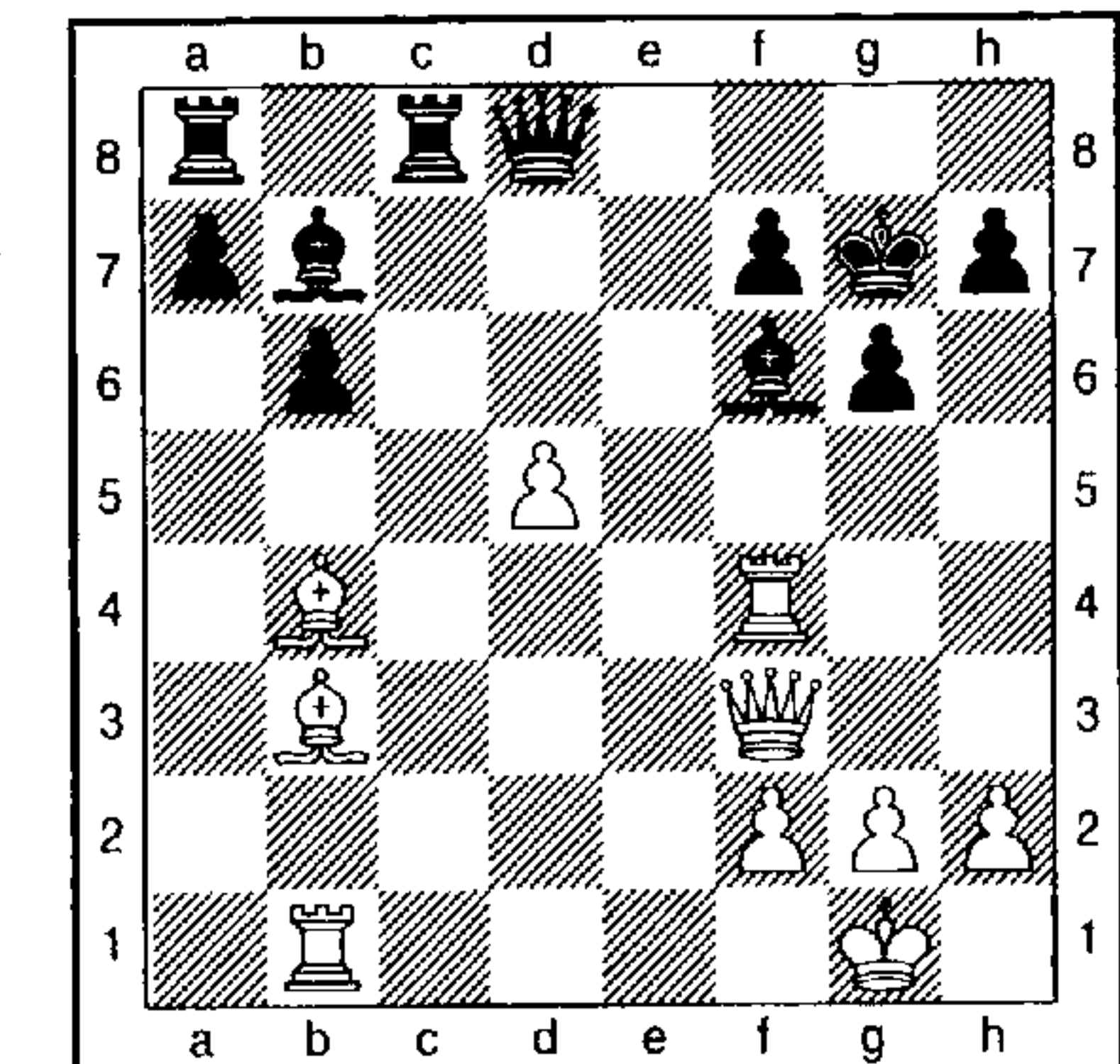
61



White to move

E 6-14

62



White to move



Routes for the Rook

You should realise that a thorough acquaintance with one of the elements is more effective in the sense of improving your positional feeling, than a superficial acquaintance with all of the elements.

Aron Nimzowitsch

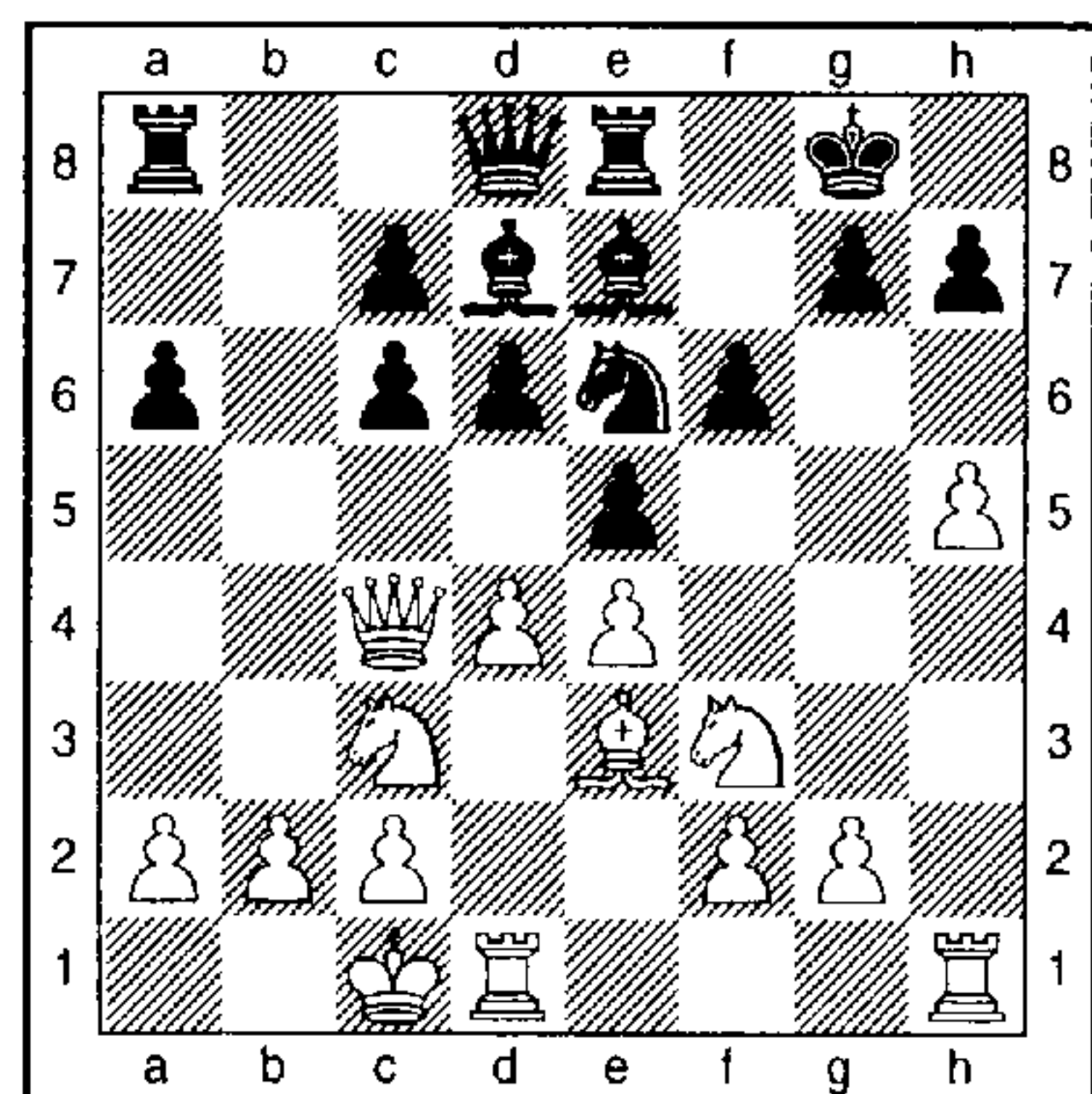
In the opening the two players first develop their minor pieces, castle, and only then comes the time for the rooks. Usually they are deployed on the central files, preferably on open files.

The rook is a strong piece, capable by its inclusion of substantially influencing the character of the play.

Dvoretsky – Bykov

35th USSR Championship, Kharkov 1967
1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♘c6 3 ♙b5 a6 4 ♙a4 d6 5 ♙xc6+ bxc6 6 d4 f6 7 ♙e3 ♗e7 8 ♗c3 ♗g6 9 ♖d2 ♙e7 10 0-0-0 0-0?! (10... ♙e6!?) 11 h4 ♞e8?! (11... ♙g4 12 h5 ♗h8) 12 h5 ♗f8 13 ♖e2! ♙d7 (the only defence against 14 ♖c4+ and 14 dxe5 fxe5 15 ♗xe5) 14 ♖c4+ ♗e6. After 14... ♗h8 15 ♗h4 the very dangerous threat of 16 ♗g6+ is impending over Black's position.

63



Q 6-31. What should White play?

Black has played the opening passively and he stands clearly worse. Now ♗h4–f5 suggests itself, followed by a kingside pawn offensive. But I found a stronger solution.

15 ♞d2! ♖c8
16 ♞hd1

By doubling rooks on the d-file, White has created a threat to the central e5 pawn. In the event of 16... ♗h8 he should not hurry with 17 dxe5 fxe5 18 ♗xe5 dxe5 19 ♞xd7 on account of 19... ♗d4 – it is better to prepare the pawn capture with a preparatory thrust on the kingside: 17 h6!

The opponent is forced to make a very serious positional concession – surrender of the centre.

16 ... exd4
17 ♗xd4

The c6 pawn is attacked, and Black is forced to advance it, conceding the important central d5 square.

17 ... c5
18 ♗f5

The knight has nevertheless reached f5, but in a far more favourable situation than after 15 ♗h4.

18 ... ♙f8

Now 19 ♙xc5? does not work in view of 19... ♙b5. But after 18... ♙d8 the pawn could have been taken: 19 ♙xc5!? ♙b5 20 ♖b3 dxc5 21 ♞xd8!

19 ♗d5

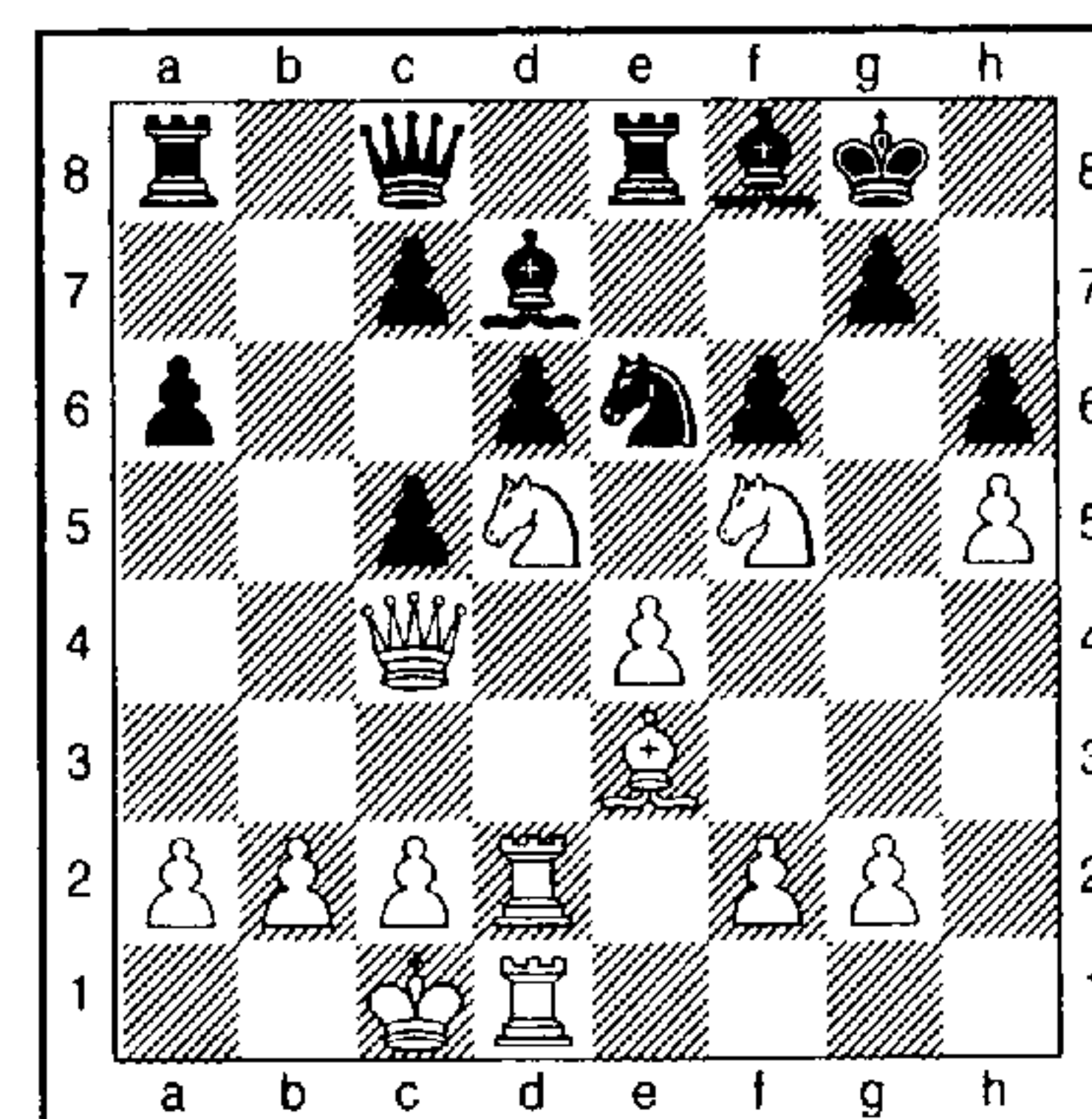
20 h6 is threatened. The position has become won. Why did the modest doubling



of rooks achieve such an impressive result? It was because White acted in the centre, and central strategy is usually the most effective. Here is what Nimzowitsch wrote about this:

'The importance of the centre, that is to say the complex of squares in the middle of the board, as a base for further operations, is beyond question; and a note of Emanuel Lasker's to a game is worth recalling. 'White,' he wrote, 'does not stand well enough in the centre, to undertake an operation on the wing.' This is finely conceived, and at the same time illustrates the close relationship between the centre and the wings, the centre being the dominating principle, the wings subordinate to it. That control of the centre must be of great significance, is, other considerations apart, clear from one thing, that if we have built up our game in the centre, we have from thence the possibility of exercising influence on both wings at one and the same time, and of embarking on a diversion should opportunity offer.'

19 ... h6
64



Q 6-32. What should White play?

Everything is now ready for the combinative destruction of the opponent's defences.

20 ♙xh6! ♙gxh6
21 ♗xf6+ ♗h8

In the event of 21... ♗f7 White opens the d-file for his rooks with e4–e5! (either immediately, or after capturing on e8 or d7).

22 ♖c3 ♙g7

22... ♗g7 is met by 23 ♗h4!, and 22... ♗d4 by 23 ♖g3 ♙e6 24 ♖g6.

23 ♗xg7 ♗xg7
24 ♖e3 ♗f5
25 ♖f4

White has regained with interest the sacrificed material. The game concluded: 25... ♞f8 26 ♗xd7 ♖xd7 27 exf5 ♖g7 28 ♞e1 ♞f6 29 g4 ♞b8 30 c3 d5 31 ♞xd5 ♞fb6 32 ♞e2 ♞xb2 33 ♞xb2 ♖xc3+ 34 ♞c2. Black lost on time.

Novices, aiming to bring their rook into play as soon as possible, sometimes begin a game with h2–h4 and ♞h3 (or a2–a4 and ♞a3). Later, after learning the rules of development and centralisation, they forget about this way of including the rooks. But sometimes that is what you can and should play (although, of course, not in the initial moves).

Dvoretsky – Zavyalov

Moscow 1968

1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 ♗d2 dxe4
4 ♗xe4 ♗d7
5 ♗f3 ♗gf6
6 ♗xf6+ ♗xf6
7 ♙g5 ♙e7

Apart from 7...c5!?, Black should also consider 7...h6!? 8 ♙h4 and only now 8... ♙e7, preventing the attacking set-up adopted by White in the game.

8 ♙d3 0-0



Here I again repeat the previous comment (8...c5!?, 8...h6!?).

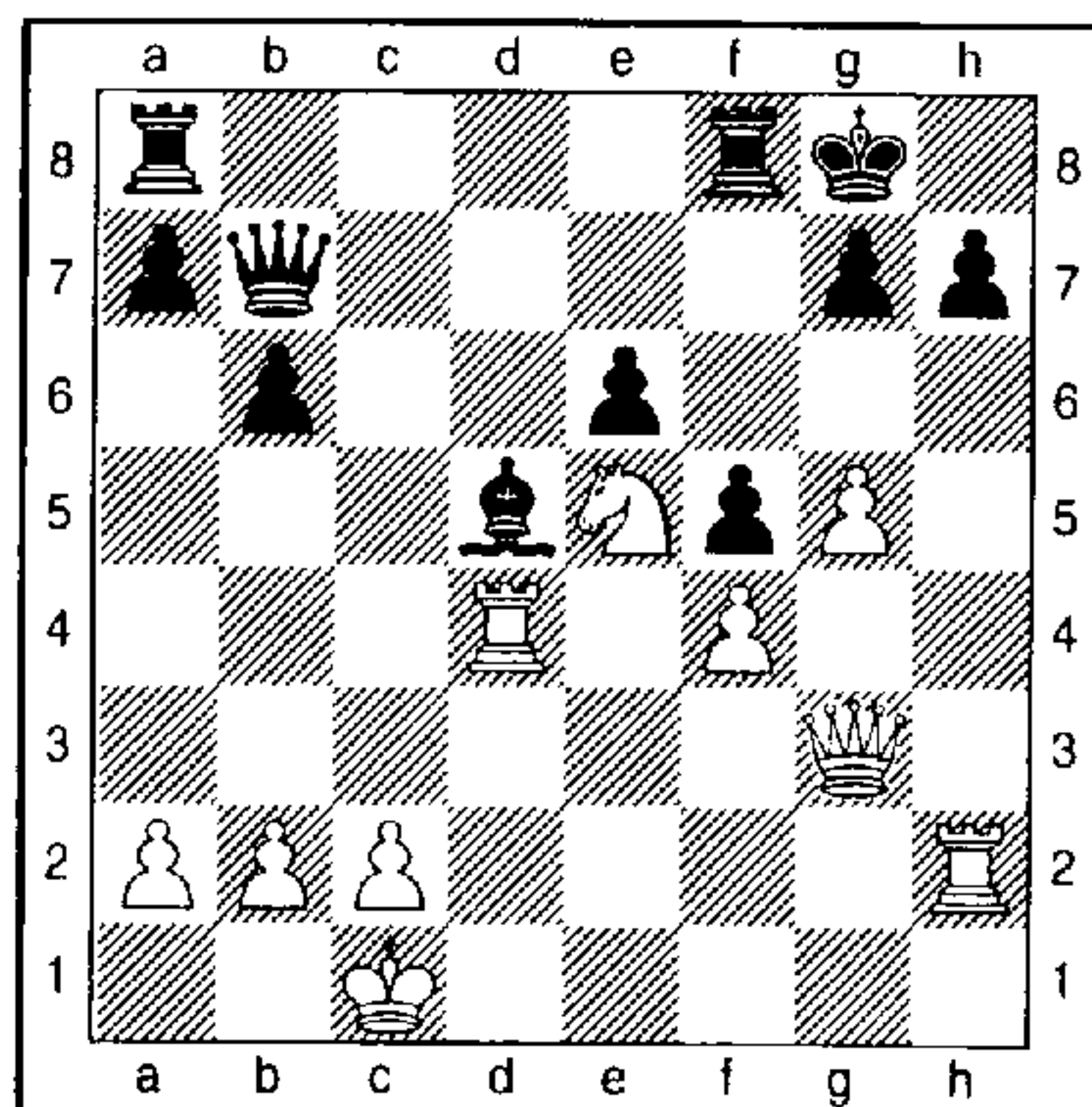
9 ♖e2

The plan involving queenside castling followed by the storming of the kingside is the most dangerous.

9 ... c5

Weaker is 9...♘d5?! 10 h4 f6 (10...h6 11 ♙xe7 ♜xe7 12 0-0-0 c5 13 g4 with a dangerous attack, Tatai-Andersson, Las Palmas 1972) 11 ♜e4!? (11 ♙d2!? c5 12 0-0-0, but not 12 ♙xh7+? ♙xh7 13 ♘g5+ ♙g8 14 ♜h5 fxg5 15 hxg5 ♜f5) 11...f5 12 ♜e2 ♙xg5 13 hxg5 ♘f4 14 ♜d2 ♘xd3+ 15 ♜xd3, and White's advantage is obvious. The game **Dvoretsky-Dembitsky** (Moscow 1968) concluded as follows: 15...c5 16 0-0-0 b6 17 ♜e3 ♜e7 18 ♘e5 ♙b7 19 f4 (19 ♜xh7! ♙xh7 20 ♜h3+ ♙g8 21 ♜h5!) 19...♙xg2 20 ♜h2 cxd4 21 ♜xd4?! (21 ♜e2!) 21...♜b7 22 ♜g3 ♙d5

65



23 ♜xh7! ♙xh7 24 ♜h4+ ♙g8 25 g6 ♜fb8 (it is essential to defend the queen) 26 ♜d3 b5?

It would have been much harder for White to attack after 26...♙f8! Then 27 ♜h3 suggests itself, but it apparently does not succeed in

view of 27...♜c8! 28 ♜h8+ (28 ♜g5? ♜xc2+! 29 ♙xc2 ♙e4+; 28 c3 ♜c7 29 ♜g5 ♙g8 30 ♜h7 ♜c8! with the threat of 31...♜xc3+) 28...♙e7 29 ♜xg7+ ♙d6 30 ♘f7+ ♙c6 (30...♙d7? 31 ♘d8+!) 31 ♜c3+ ♙d7, and White has only perpetual check. Stronger is 27 c4! ♜c7 28 ♜h8+ ♙e7 29 ♜xg7+ ♙d6 30 ♜f6! with decisive threats.

27 ♜h3 ♙f8 28 ♜g5! ♙g8 29 ♘f7 ♜xf7 30 ♜h8+! ♙xh8 31 gxf7 Black resigns.

10 0-0-0

Also quite good is 10 dxc5 ♜a5+ 11 c3 ♜xc5 12 0-0-0 (a recommendation by Paul Keres).

10 ... cxd4

A good defensive plan was demonstrated in the game **Nunn-Skembris** (Paris 1983): 10...♜a5 11 ♙b1 cxd4 12 h4 (12 ♘e5!?) 12...♙d7! 13 ♘xd4 (13 g4?! ♙c6) 13...♙c6! 14 ♘xc6 (otherwise 14...♙d5) 14...bxc6 15 ♙d2 ♜b6 16 c4! ♜fb8 17 ♙c3 ♜b7 18 g4 ♘d7; even so, by playing 19 ♜c2! White would have retained the better chances. John Nunn preferred the sharper 19 g5 ♙b4! 20 ♙xh7+!? ♙xh7 21 g6+ with great complications.

11 h4!

Now Black has to reckon with 12 ♙xf6 ♙xf6 13 ♙xh7+ ♙xh7 14 ♘g5+.

11 ... ♜d5

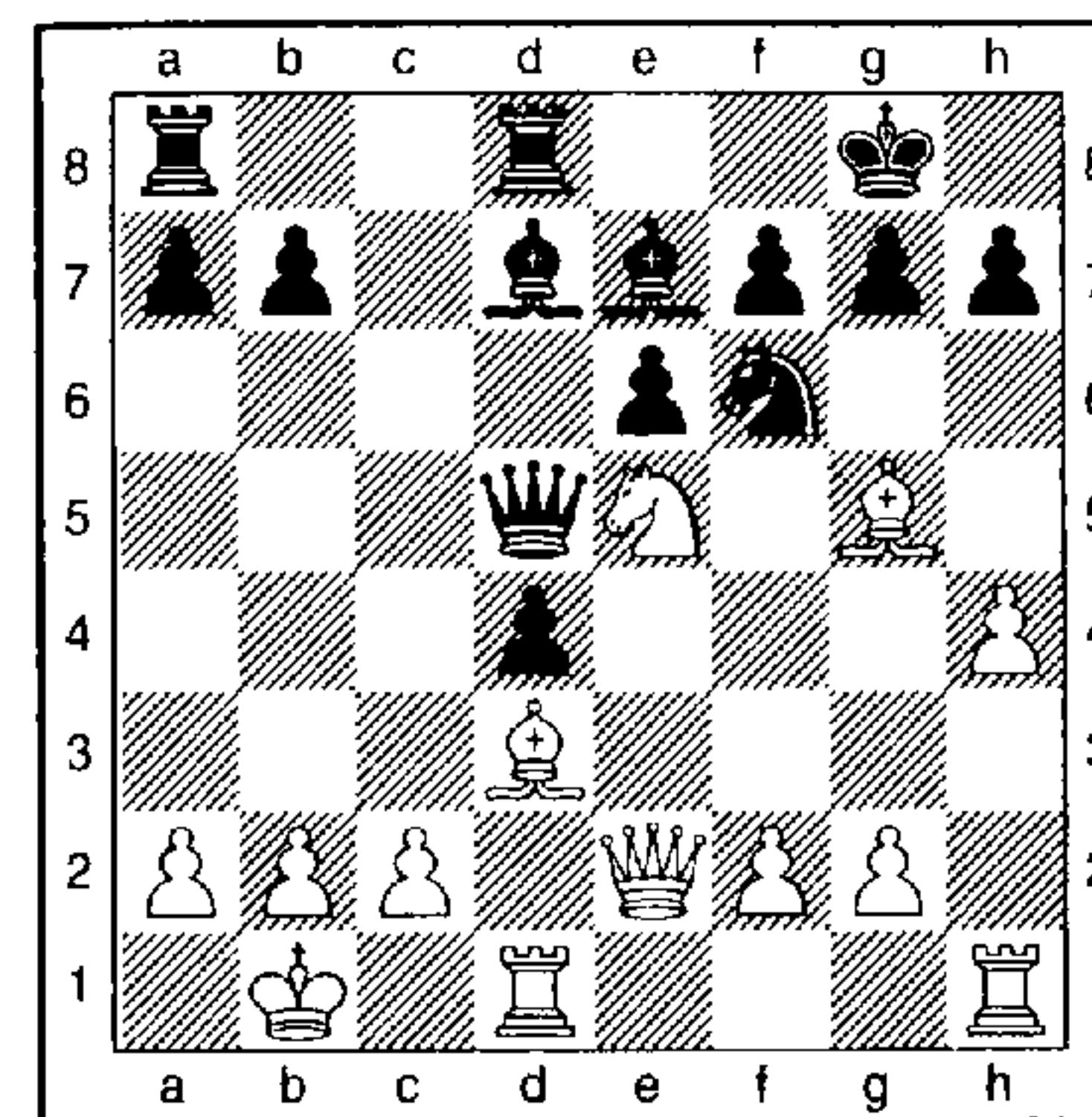
It was not yet too late, by playing 11...♜a5 12 ♙b1 ♙d7, to transpose into the Nunn-Skembris game. With the queen at a5 or d5, the bishop sacrifice is incorrect: 12 ♙xf6 ♙xf6 13 ♙xh7+ ♙xh7 14 ♘g5+ ♙g8 15 ♜h5 ♜f5.

12 ♙b1 ♜d8
13 ♙e5! ♙d7

see next diagram



66



The standard bishop sacrifice does not lead to a win: 14 ♙xf6?! ♙xf6 15 ♙xh7+ ♙xh7 (15...♙f8) 16 ♜h5+ ♙g8 17 ♜xf7+ ♙h7, and White has only perpetual check.

For the moment the rook at h1 is not participating in the attack – it must be brought into play via h1-h3-g3.

14 ♜h3!

Now Black should have defended by 14...♙e8 15 ♜g3 ♙h8.

14 ... a6?!

Q 6-33. What should White play?

The sacrifice on h7 still does not work. 15 ♜g3?! suggests itself, but then the opponent forces the advantageous exchange of bishops by 15...♙b5! It is important to parry this positional threat.

15 c4!

Even when attacking you should not forget about prophylaxis!

15 ... ♜c5
16 ♜g3 ♙f8
17 ♜e1!

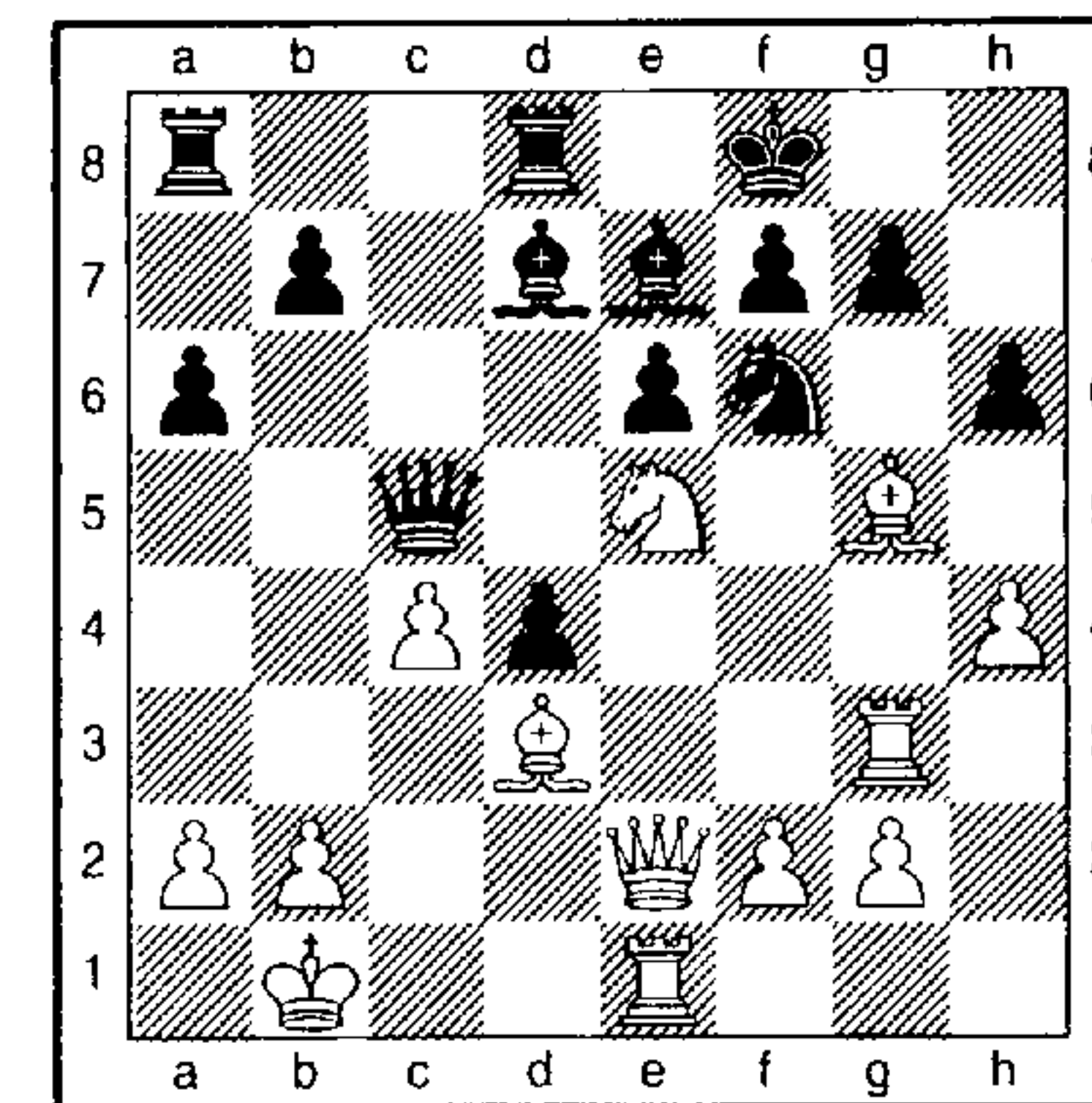
By supporting the knight at e5, White prepares 18 ♙xf6 ♙xf6 19 ♜h5. For example, 17...b5 18 ♙xf6 ♙xf6 (18...gxf6 19 ♜g4) 19 ♜h5 ♙xe5 20 ♜xe5 with very dangerous threats. Black no longer has any

satisfactory defence.

After the game Yuri Razuvaev, a well-known expert on the opening, asked me for my scoresheet in order to copy the moves. He considers it useful to collect and to study 'model' games, typical of the opening variations that he adopts, in which their strategic and tactical ideas are prominently displayed. Apparently my game seemed to him to be very appropriate. I would also recommend the readers to use this method of working on the opening.

17 ... h6

67



Q 6-34. How should the attack be continued?

The situation resembles that which was reached after Black's 19th move in the previous game – a piece sacrifice (incidentally, on the same square h6) worthily crowns White's offensive.

18 ♙xh6! gxf6
19 ♜d2

The variations are easy to find: 19...♙d6 20 ♜xh6+ ♙e7 21 ♘g6+! or 19...♘g8 20 ♜xg8+ ♙xg8 21 ♜xh6 and wins.

19 ... ♜b4
20 ♜xh6+ ♙e8
21 ♜e2



The threats of 22 ♖g7 and 22 ♖h8+ are irresistible. The attempt to 'play for brilliancy' 21 ♖h8+ ♘f8 22 ♖xf6? ♖xe1+ 23 ♖c2 did not work in view of 23...♘a4+ 24 b3 ♖c3+ 25 ♖d1 ♖a1+ 26 ♖e2 ♖xa2+ 27 ♖f3 ♘c6+ 28 ♖g4 ♘d7.

21 ... ♘f8
22 ♖xf6 ♖e7
23 ♖h8

Black resigns.

The inclusion of the rook along the 3rd rank in such positions is a standard technique. The following example is less stereotyped.

Dvoretzky – Kurajica

European Champions' Cup, Solingen 1976

1 e4 c5
2 ♘f3 ♘c6
3 ♘b5 e6
4 ♘xc6 dxc6?!

4...bxc6 is stronger – *in the opening pawns should capture towards the centre.*

5 0-0 ♘e7
6 d3 ♘g6
7 e5 f6

Clearly, this undermining move would be more effective if the b7 pawn were at d7.

8 ♖e1 ♘e7
9 a4

It is tempting to prevent the black king from castling by 9 exf6 gxf6 10 ♘h6, but after 10...e5 and 11...♖g8 the situation is unclear. **When the opponent has two bishops, one should be cautious about opening the position.**

9 ... 0-0
10 ♘c3

10 ♘a3!? looks more natural. I was concerned about 10...fxe5 11 ♘c4 ♘f6 12 ♘fxe5 ♘xe5 13 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 14 ♖xe5 ♖xf2!, but instead of 12 ♘fxe5?, stronger is 12 ♘d2!, preparing 13 ♘c3.

10 ... ♖c7
11 ♖e2 ♘h8?!

11...b6 was preferable.

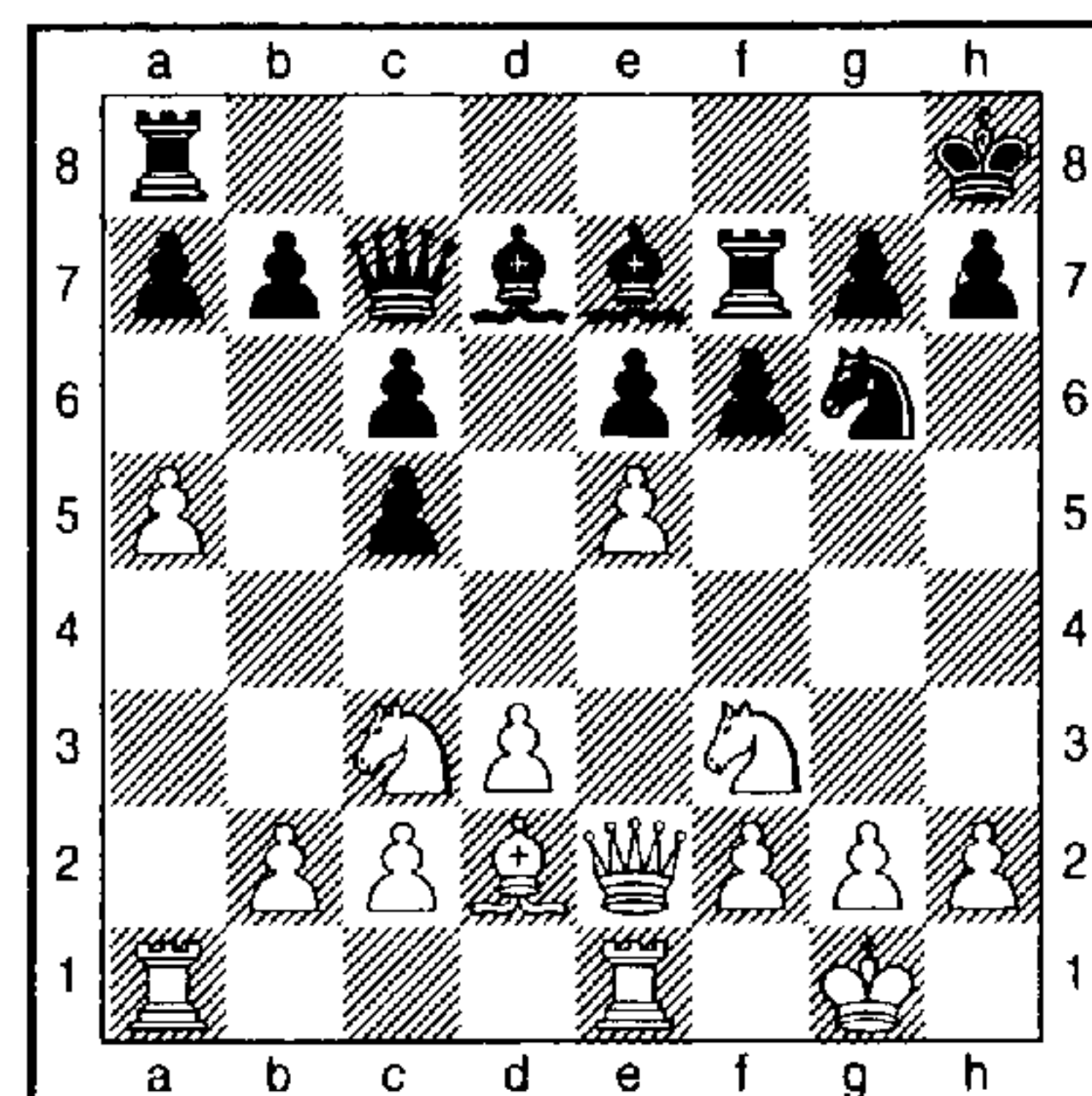
12 a5!

While there is time, it makes sense to seize space on the queenside.

12 ... ♘d7
13 ♘d2 ♖f7

Exchanges in the centre are unfavourable for Black: 13...fxe5 14 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 15 ♖xe5 ♘d6 16 ♖h5. He wants to double rooks on the f-file, directing them at the f2 pawn, and only then take on e5.

68



Q 6-35. What should White play?

White has developed all his pieces apart from his queen's rook. Where should he place it? Of course, on an open line! **An open line for a rook may be not only a file, but also sometimes a rank.**

14 ♖a4! ♖af8
15 exf6 gxf6
16 ♘h4!

The knight at g6 deprives the rook of important squares on the 4th rank, and in order to exchange it White is even prepared to make a positional pawn sacrifice. After 16...♘xh4 17 ♖xh4 ♖xa5 (17...f5 18 ♖h6)



18 ♘e4 (18 ♖h5! with the threat of 19 ♘h6 would appear to be even stronger) 18...♖d8 19 ♘c3 the activity of the pieces provides sufficient compensation. White is threatening 20 ♘g5 or 20 ♖h6 and 21 ♖h5 (also aiming at the c5 pawn). If ...e6–e5 there is always f2–f4!

The plan of attack chosen by White also has a psychological basis. Bojan Kurajica is an aggressive player, who feels confident in positions where he has the initiative. He does not like defending. Therefore it was important for me to seize the initiative, and to force the opponent onto the defensive.

16 ... e5
17 ♘xg6+ hxg6
18 f4

This undermining of the enemy centre is again carried out thanks to the rook.

18 ... ♘d6?!

Now Black is deprived of the two bishops, and a difficult position for him with opposite-colour bishops is reached. 18...exf4 was better, although even in this case White has the advantage.

19 ♘e4 exf4
20 ♘xd6 ♖xd6
21 ♘xf4 ♖d5
22 ♖f2

My advantage is determined by the fact that the white king is safe, whereas this cannot be said about Black's. It is well known that, with opposite-colour bishops in the middle-game, an attack on the king can be especially dangerous. Since my opponent is not able to do anything, I have time to calmly improve the placing of my pieces.

22 ... g5
23 ♘d2 ♖g7
24 ♘c3 ♖g6
25 ♖ae4

At last the rooks are connected on the open file!

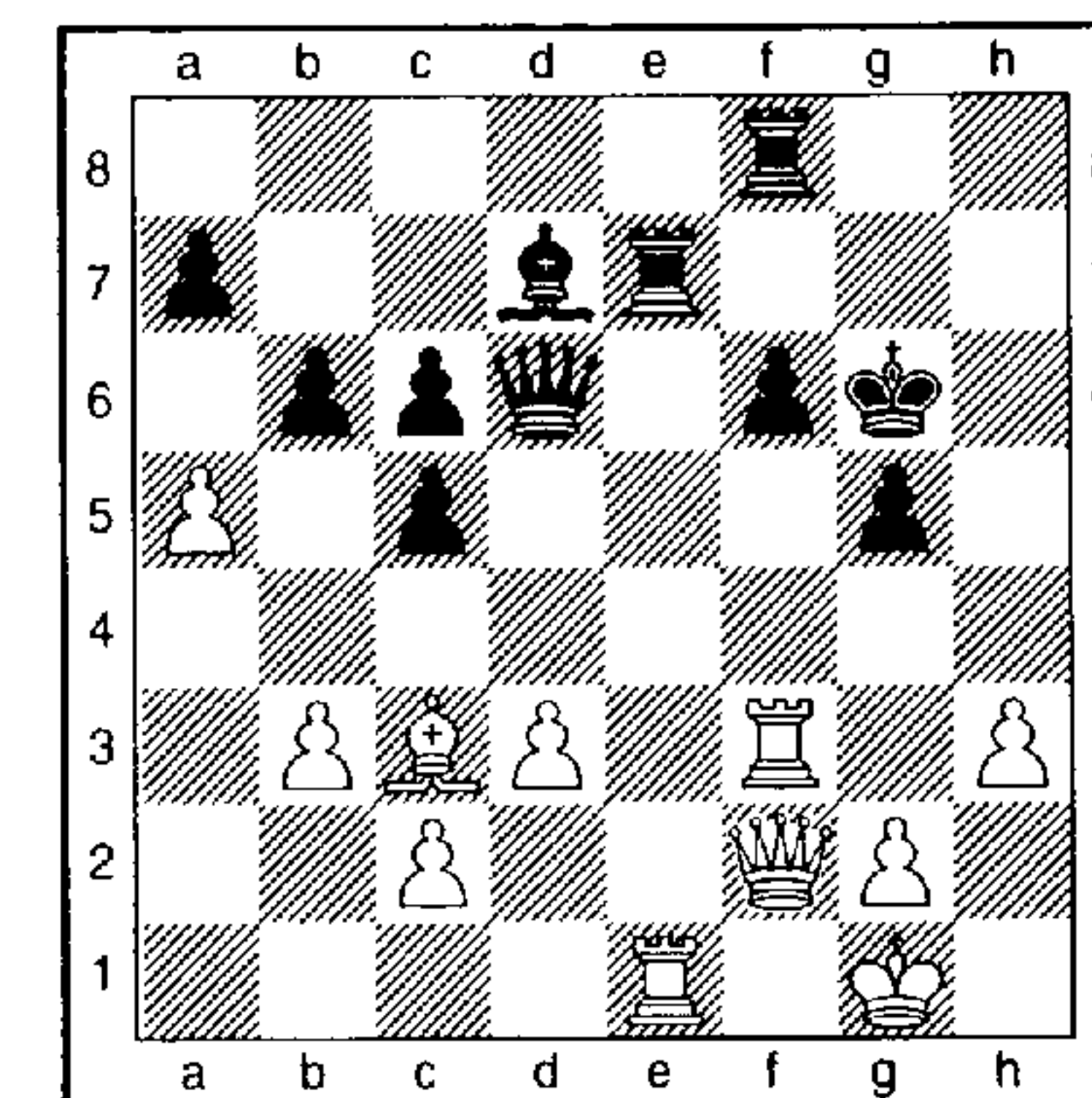
25 ... ♖d6

26 h3

My attention was focused on the kingside, and therefore I missed an opportunity to strike on the queenside: 26 b4!

26 ... b6
27 b3 ♖h8
28 ♖4e3 ♖hf8
29 ♖f3 ♖e7

69



Q 6-36. What should White play?

In the event of the exchange on e7, White's advantage is reduced. But 30 ♖f1 f5 is also unconvincing, since it is not easy to demolish the black king's pawn screen: if 31 h4 there follows 31...g4, and if 31 g4 – 31...f4.

After thinking for a few minutes, I found the strongest continuation of the attack: 30 ♖e4! Now 30...♖xe4 is bad in view of 31 dxe4 with the terrible threat of 32 e5. And if 30...f5 there follows the murderous undermining move 31 h4!, when 31...g4 is not possible in view of 32 ♖xg4+.

After coming to the decision, I made my move and... discovered to my horror that, instead of moving to e4, for some reason the rook had taken on e7. This happened to me for the only time in my life.

Without delving into a detailed analysis (or even a psychoanalysis) of what happened, I

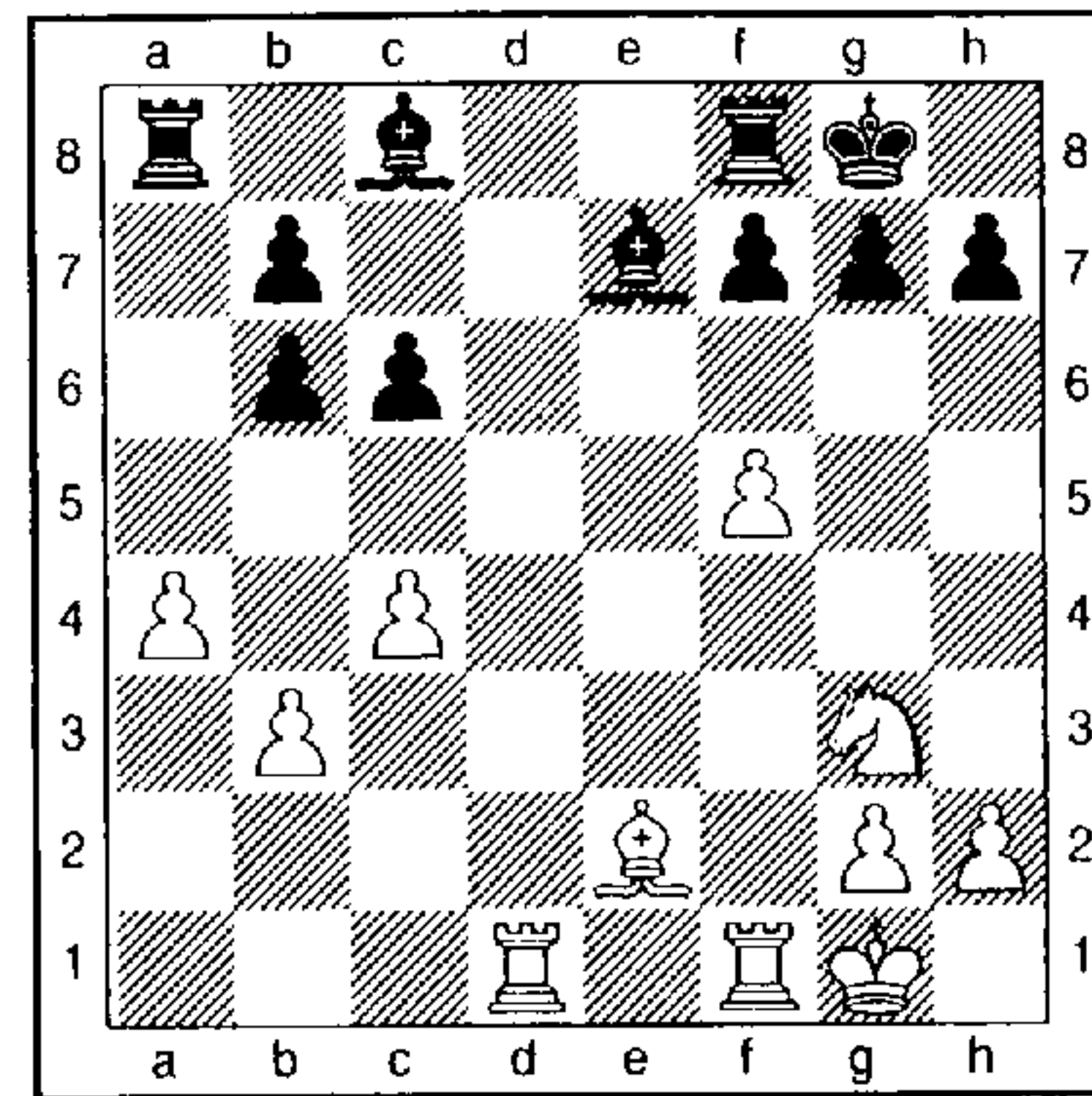


should mention that a player is guaranteed against such ridiculous happenings, only when he is in excellent form, and physically and psychologically fully prepared. For certain reasons my condition at that moment was, alas, too far away from the ideal.

- | | | |
|----|-------|------|
| 30 | ♖xe7? | ♔xe7 |
| 31 | ♖e3 | ♔d6 |
| 32 | ♗e2 | ♖f7 |

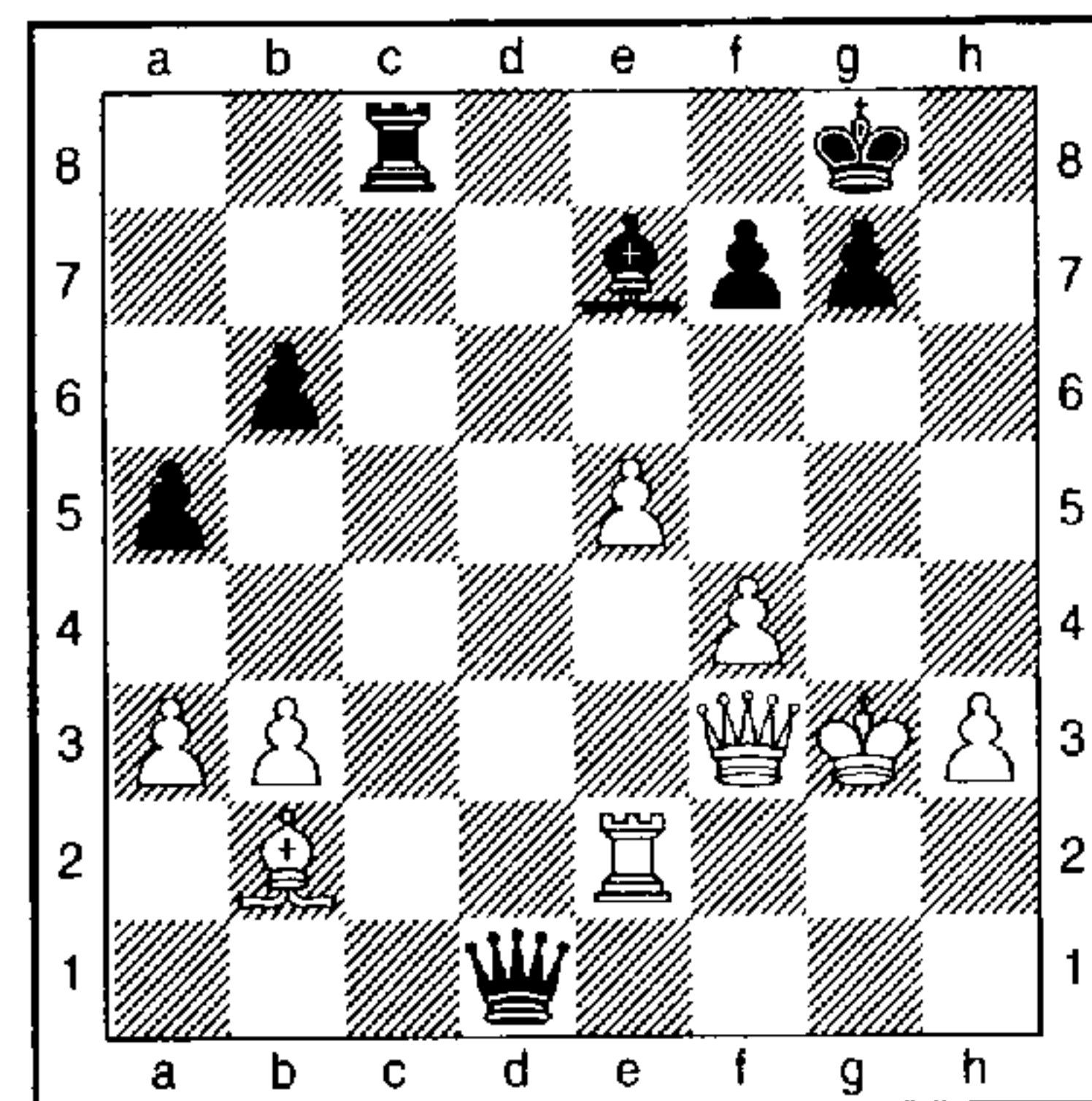
White still has the initiative, but it is now hard for him to approach the opponent's king. Under the impression of what had happened, I was unable to concentrate, and the game soon ended in a draw.

E 6-16
71



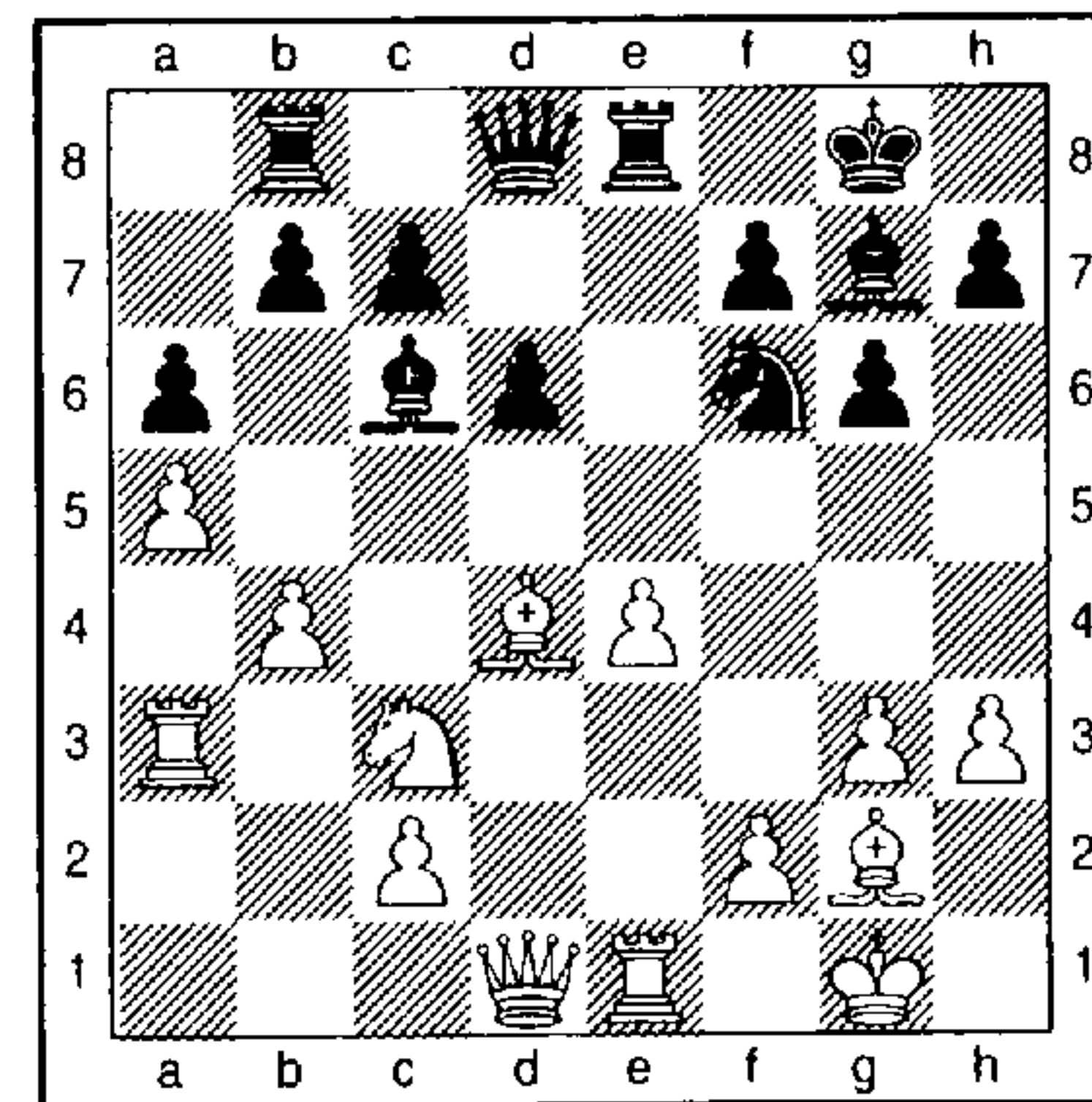
Black to move

E 6-15
70



Black to move

E 6-17
72



White to move



Don't Forget About Prophylaxis!

Chess is a game that demands clear, logical thinking.
Yefim Geller

The topic of prophylaxis is probably present in every book of mine, it being usually a question not of prophylactic moves, but of 'prophylactic thinking'. **What I understand by prophylactic thinking is the habit of constantly asking yourself what your opponent wants to do, what he would play if it were him to move, and the ability to find a reply to this question and to take account of it in the process of taking a decision.**

The second part of this formula is of a purely chess nature. The search for the best move for the opponent may be difficult to a lesser or greater degree, but these are normal chess difficulties. It is another matter with the very habit of thinking about the opponent's intentions – here we encounter a psychological problem. After all, by nature a person characteristically concentrates mainly on his own plans, thoughts and feelings. About our opponent (and in chess our opponent has fully equal rights) we too often forget, and sometimes we deservedly pay for this. This is why the development and perfection of prophylactic thinking guarantees a rise in the level of mastery of a player and the stability of his play, and assists a rapid improvement in his results.

In the following game for a long time there was a double-edged struggle, and the evaluation of the position oscillated around dynamic balance. But then at one point Black successfully made use of prophylactic thinking, the opponent was unable to respond in the same way, and the outcome was quickly decided.

Gik – Dvoretsky
Moscow 1972

- | | | |
|---|------|------|
| 1 | e4 | e6 |
| 2 | d3 | c5 |
| 3 | ♗f3 | ♗c6 |
| 4 | g3 | g6 |
| 5 | d4!? | cxd4 |
| 6 | ♗xd4 | a6 |

Later I found a dangerous rejoinder to the opening variation chosen by White: 6...♗g7! 7 ♗b5 d5 8 exd5 exd5 9 ♗xd5 ♗e7+! 10 ♗e2 ♗g4! with an initiative, fully compensating for the sacrificed pawn. This is all quite logical: in order to exploit the opponent's delay in the opening (d2–d4 in two steps) Black should play as energetically as possible, aiming to open lines.

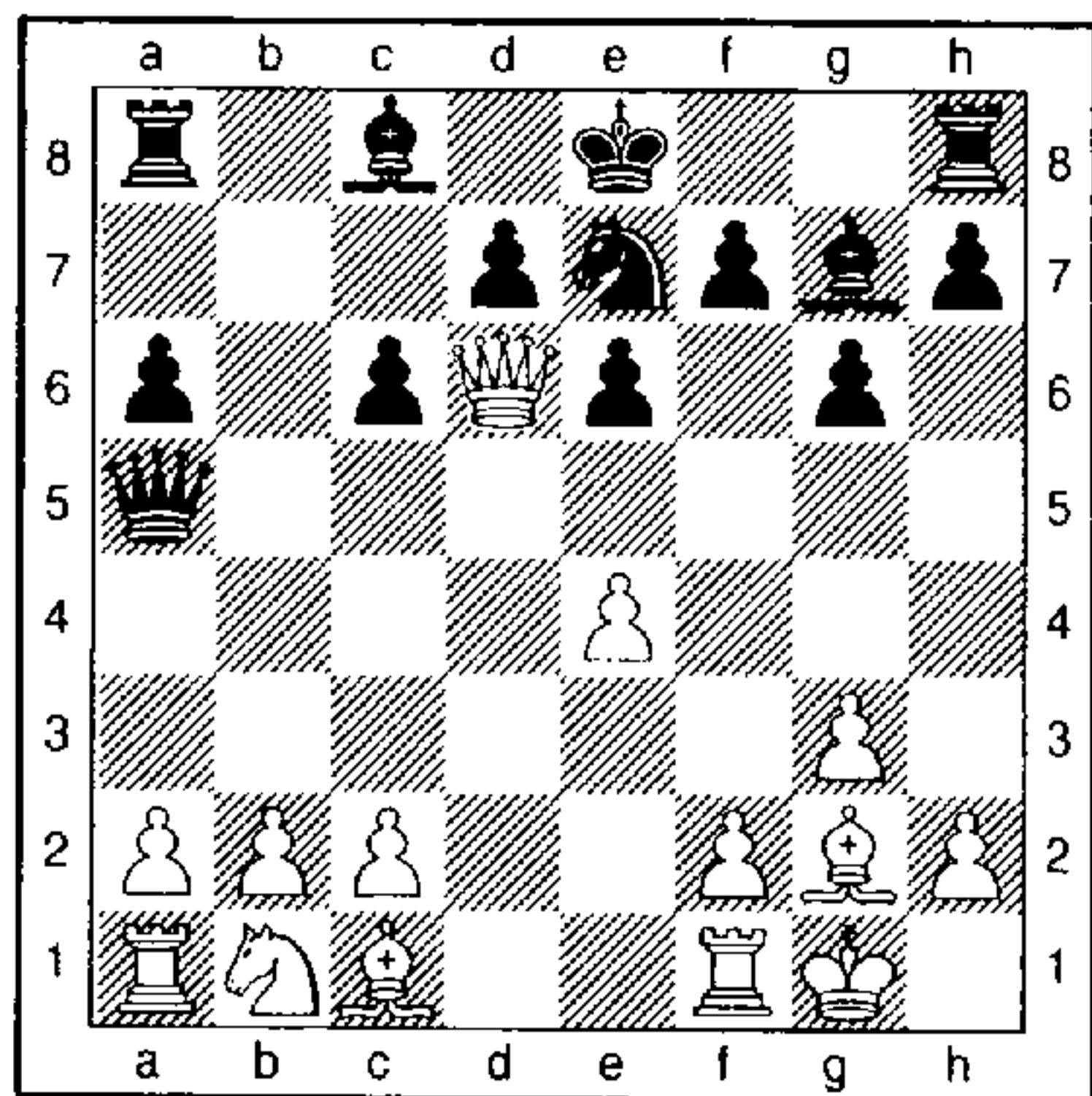
7 c4

Playing White in this position, I preferred 7 ♗g2 ♗g7 8 ♗xc6 bxc6 (after 8...dxc6 9 ♗xd8+ ♗xd8 10 ♗d2! the dark squares on the queenside are really too weak) 9 0–0 ♗e7 10 ♗d6! If now 10...0–0, then 11 ♗c3! with unpleasant pressure on the opponent's position (weaker is 11 c4?! a5 and 12...♗a6). In the game **Dvoretsky–Filipowicz** (Varna 1980) Black replied 10...♗a5.

see next diagram



73



Q 6-37. Decide on some promising possibilities for White.

Exercises of this type develop the ability, one that is very important for every player, to find all the candidate moves that make sense. White can achieve a positional advantage perhaps in not just one way, but nevertheless certainly not in any way. For example, the routine 11...d2? does not promise anything in view of 11...e5 12...d3 d5 13...b3... Much stronger is 11...a3! e5 (11...e5 12...c4) 12...d1! (weaker is 12...d3?! d5 13...d2... serious consideration should be given to 12...d2!?... 14 bxa3 with the better endgame) 12...d5 13...exd5 cxd5 14...c4! Now it is clear why the queen had to retreat to d1.

I chose another plan, also not bad – transposing into an ending: 11...d2!... 12...xe5... 13...c3... 14...xc3 d5 15...a4... 16 b3. In the opponent's position the dark squares are weak. White develops his rooks at d1 and c1, advances c2–c4 and gains the advantage.

7 ... e5g7
8 ... xc6

Illogical! If White is going to exchange on c6, why move the pawn to c4? However, after 8...e3... Black would nevertheless have

forced the exchange of knights.

8 ... dxc6!

After c2–c4, weakening White's position, has been played, the exchange of queens leads to a favourable ending for me.

9 ... c2 c5
10 ... c3 e7
11 ... g5!

The knight is aiming to occupy d4 – this plan must definitely be opposed.

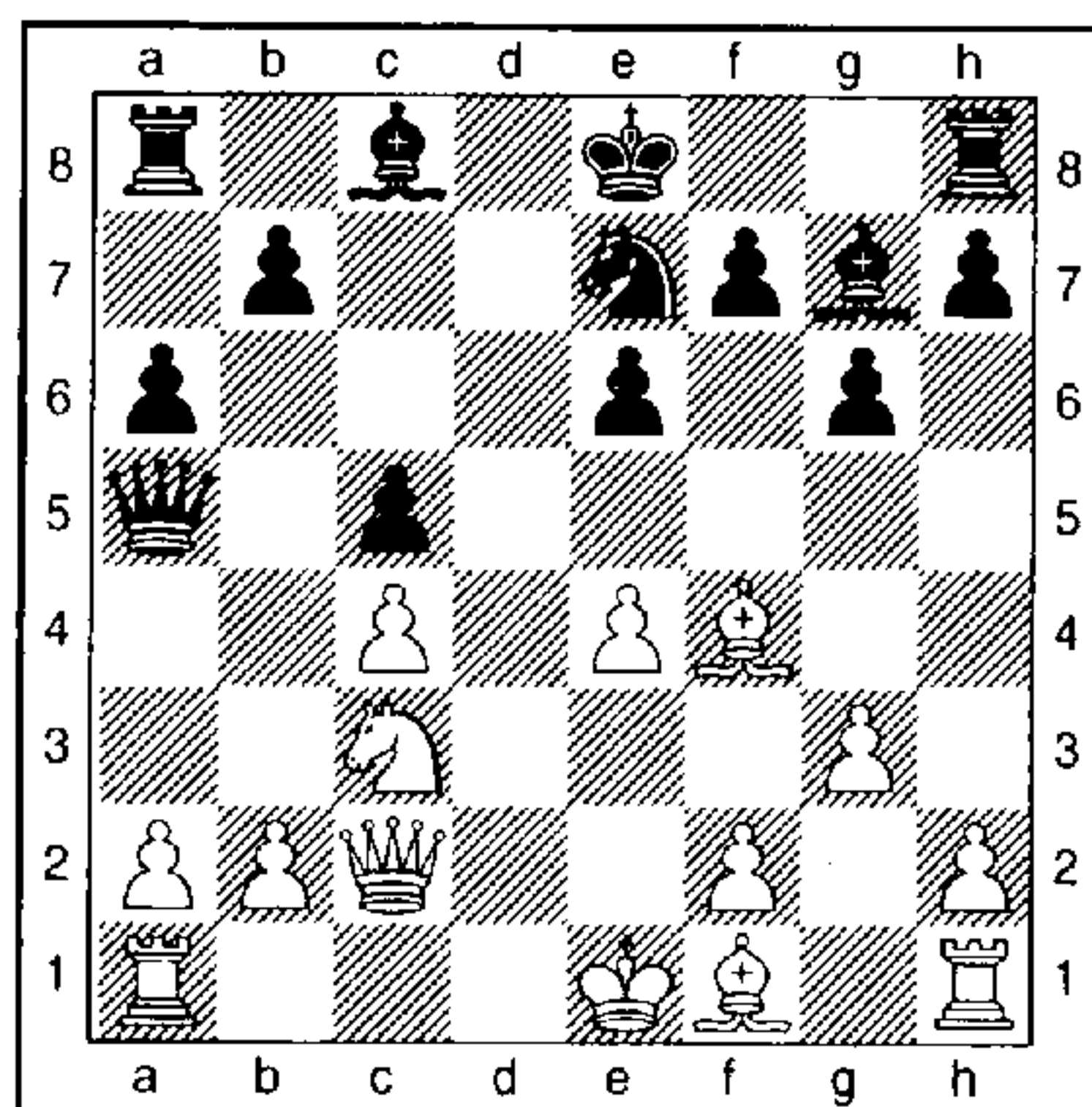
11 ... c7?!

I underestimated my opponent's strong reply. 11...a5 should probably have been preferred – after all, the exchange on e7 is not at all dangerous for Black.

12 ... f4! ... a5

The primitive 12...e5?! 13...e3 would have led to a somewhat inferior position, while 12...e5? would have been a serious mistake in view of 13...xe5... 14 f4 followed by e4–e5 and...e4.

74



13 ... a4+

Evgeny Gik begins pursuing the rook at a8 and in the end he catches it, but Black finds adequate counter-chances. 13...0–0–0!?... 14...d6 would have led to complicated play.

13 ... xa4



14 ... xa4 d7!
15 ... b6 d8
16 ... c7 c6!

Not 16...xb2? 17...d1!... 18...xd8... 19...xd7, when White remains the exchange up. Therefore I am not in a hurry to pick up the enemy pawns, but, in giving up my rook, I try in turn to trap the over-advanced white knight at b6.

17 ... xd8 ... xd8
18 ... 0–0–0+ ... d4

Unfortunately, 18...c7? is not possible because of 19...d5+! But now the opponent has the opportunity to save his knight by a counter exchange sacrifice on d4.

19 ... g2

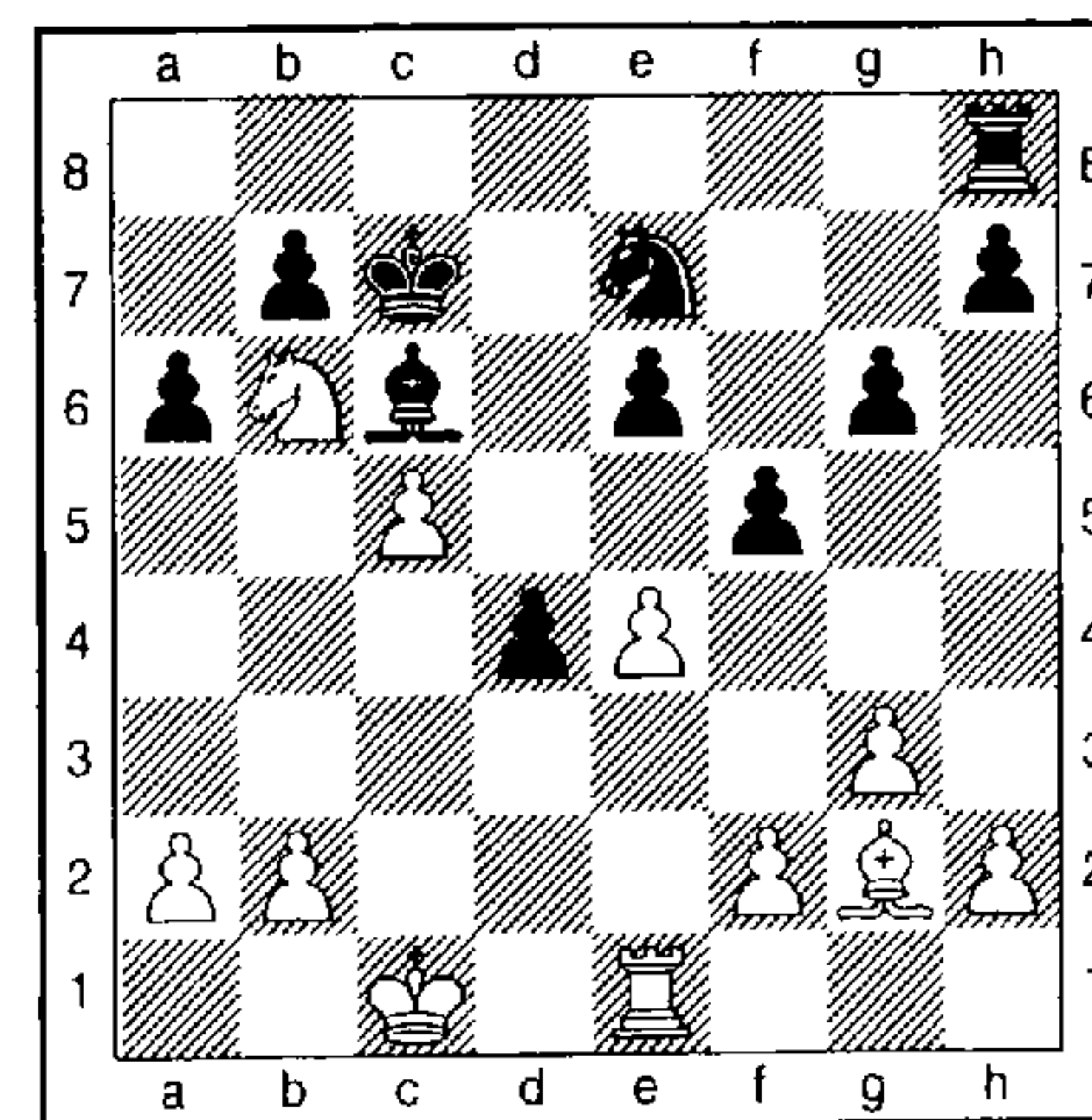
19...xd4+!? cxd4 20...d3 came into consideration.

19 ... c7
20 ... xd4

Not 20...d5+? exd5 21...cxd5... 22 f4...d8.

20 ... cxd4
21 ... c5 f5
22 ... e1

75



Q 6-38. What should Black play?

For the moment my rook is not taking part in the play. Where should it be used? It would

be good to play ...h7–h5–h4, but after 22...h5 the opponent replies 23 h4. On the d-file there is nothing for the rook to do – Black's passed pawn can be blockaded by the king from d2. The rook can be placed on f8, in order to press on the f-file, but White advances his pawn to f4 and there is no longer anything to press on.

The idea springs to mind of preventing the important defensive move f2–f4! It looks tempting to play 22...f4 (or 22...h5 23 h4 f4), since 23 gxh4...f8 is clearly to Black's advantage. However, then the opponent strongly activates his game by 23...h3! This means that Black must show more restraint.

22 ... g5!

The next move will be ...f8, when f2–f4 will no longer help White at all – after the exchange on f4 the pawn there will become even more vulnerable than it was at f2.

The game concluded very quickly – within a couple of moves Gik hopelessly spoiled his position, which, generally speaking, is almost equal. If one considers why this happened, the only explanation to be found is his lack of prophylactic thinking.

23 ... h1?

My opponent improves his position – he unpins his e4 pawn. But he undertakes absolutely nothing against Black's strategic threat.

But what should he have done? I will suggest one possible solution (not the only one, I think) – remove the pawns from the second rank, where the black rook will invade, and strengthen the queenside by 23 b4!?...f8 24 a3! After 24...fxe4 25...xe4...xf2 26...xc6...xc6 (it is important that after 26...xc6 the c5 pawn is defended, and that after 26...xc6 the b4 pawn is defended) 27...xe6 White, who has available the active possibilities 28...e8, 28...d6 and 28...d5+, maintains the balance without difficulty.

23 ... f8



24 f4?

An absurd move, which makes things significantly easier for me.

24 ... gxf4
25 gxf4 g6
26 exf5 xf5

Under attack is not only the f4 pawn, but also the c5 pawn, and this means also the white knight. Black gains a material advantage and easily converts it.

27 b4 xf4 28 d2 h5 29 xc6 xh2+ 30 d1 xc6 31 e4 e5 32 xe5 d3 33 e6+ b5 34 a3 a5 35 bxa5 xc5 36 e7 b2+ 37 e1 d3 38 d7 d2+! 39 xd2 40 xd2 c4+. White resigns.

Realising the enormous importance of prophylactic thinking, I have, naturally, endeavoured to develop it in each of my students. Exercises in this direction have made for a rapid growth in their overall standard of play – mainly thanks to an improvement in their positional mastery and technique. As a result they have entered the international arena, being already mature and versatile players. I should like to show you an instructive game by Sergey Dolmatov, played in his first international adult competition. The tournament ended in a convincing victory for Sergey, who finished well ahead of the other competitors.

Dolmatov – Hernandez
Amsterdam 1979

1	e4	e5
2	f3	c6
3	c4	e7
4	b3	f6
5	d3	0-0
6	0-0	d6
7	c3	

When we make customary opening moves, we sometimes do not think about their point. Why did White play c2-c3, and not, say, bd2? For prophylactic reasons! With his

last move Black freed his knight from having to defend the e5 pawn and created the positional threat of ...a5 – White parried the threat, by creating a retreat square for his bishop at c2.

7 ... a5
8 c2 c5
9 bd2 b5?

A bad move, in every respect – it is both a waste of time, and a weakening of the queenside. A year later (Amsterdam 1980) Jan Timman acted more purposefully against Dolmatov: 9...c7 10 e1 c6 11 f1 e6 12 g3 d5 13 h3 ad8 14 e2 d4 15 c4 g6 16 h6 fe8 17 d2 f8. After a complicated battle the game ended in a draw.

10 e1 c6
11 f1

At that time Dolmatov's play was characterised, unfortunately, by a certain dogmatism. In positions where he knew in advance a good plan, he would aim to carry it out, without being distracted, and without paying attention to other promising possibilities. Incidentally, this feature also told on his choice of opening – he rarely varied his openings, choosing only those which appealed to him the most at the given moment. This lack of flexibility not only made it easier for his opponent's to prepare, but also inflicted a definite creative damage – it restricted the range of positional means available to Dolmatov.

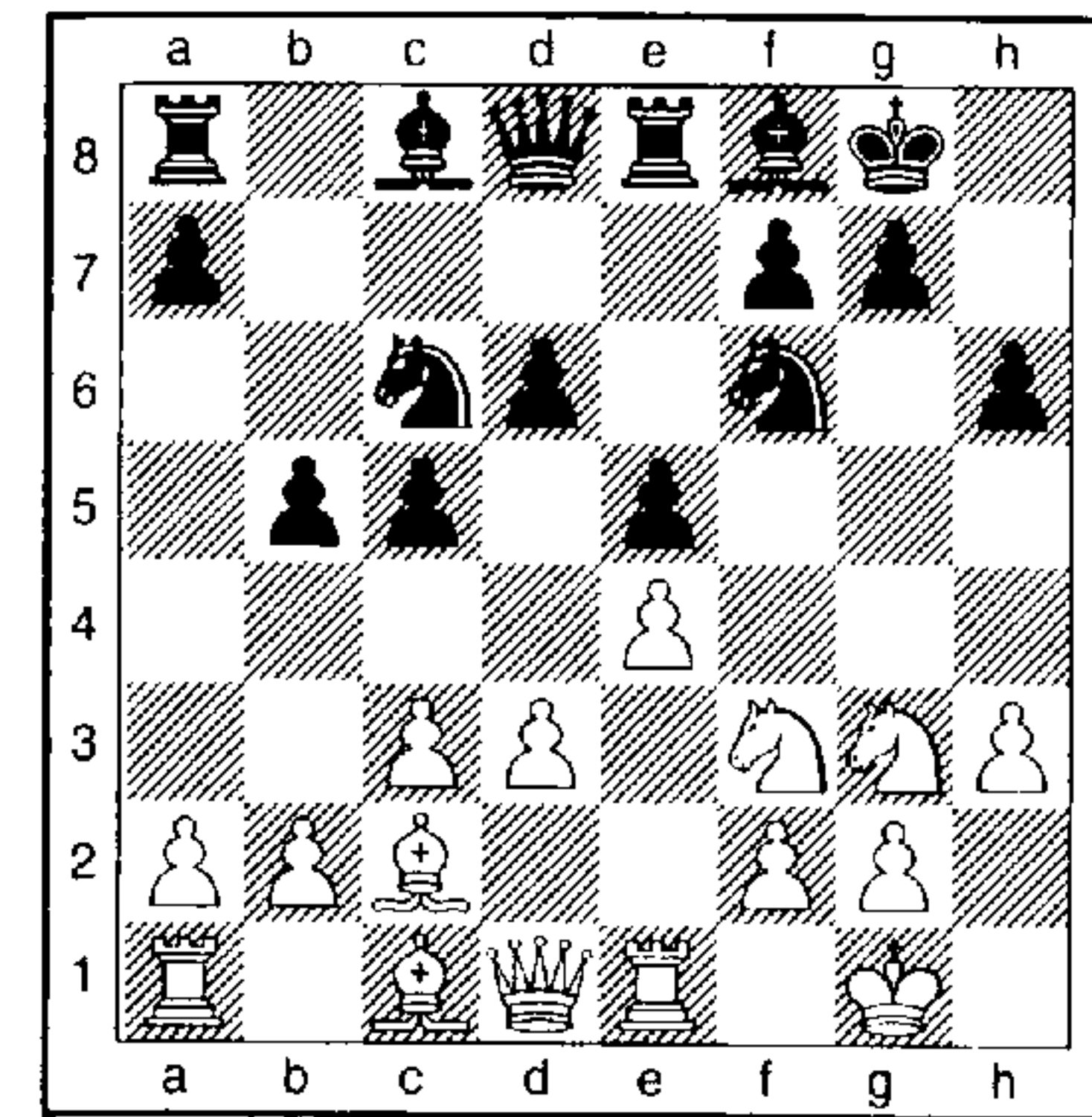
The standard plan for White in this position is the manoeuvre of his knight to g3 followed by d3-d4. But, thanks to the poor move ...b7-b5, White acquired an opportunity to weaken the opponent's queenside by a2-a4!

11 ... h6
12 h3 e8
13 g3 f8

see next diagram



76



14 d4!

At just the right time! Another instant, and Black himself would have become active in the centre with 14...d5. Highly-developed positional mastery consists in carrying out your own plans, while at the same time hindering the opponent's plans.

14 ... c7

14...cxd4 was better.

15 d5 b8

16 h2

Again White misses a favourable opportunity to strike on the queenside: 16 a4!

16 ... g6

17 g4!

This move cannot be delayed – otherwise Black would prevent it by ...h6-h5, or play simply 17...g7, after which 18 g4 no longer achieves anything in view of the reply 18...h5.

17 ... xg4

Black also stands worse after 17...g4.

18 hxg4 bd7

19 e3 c4

20 f3

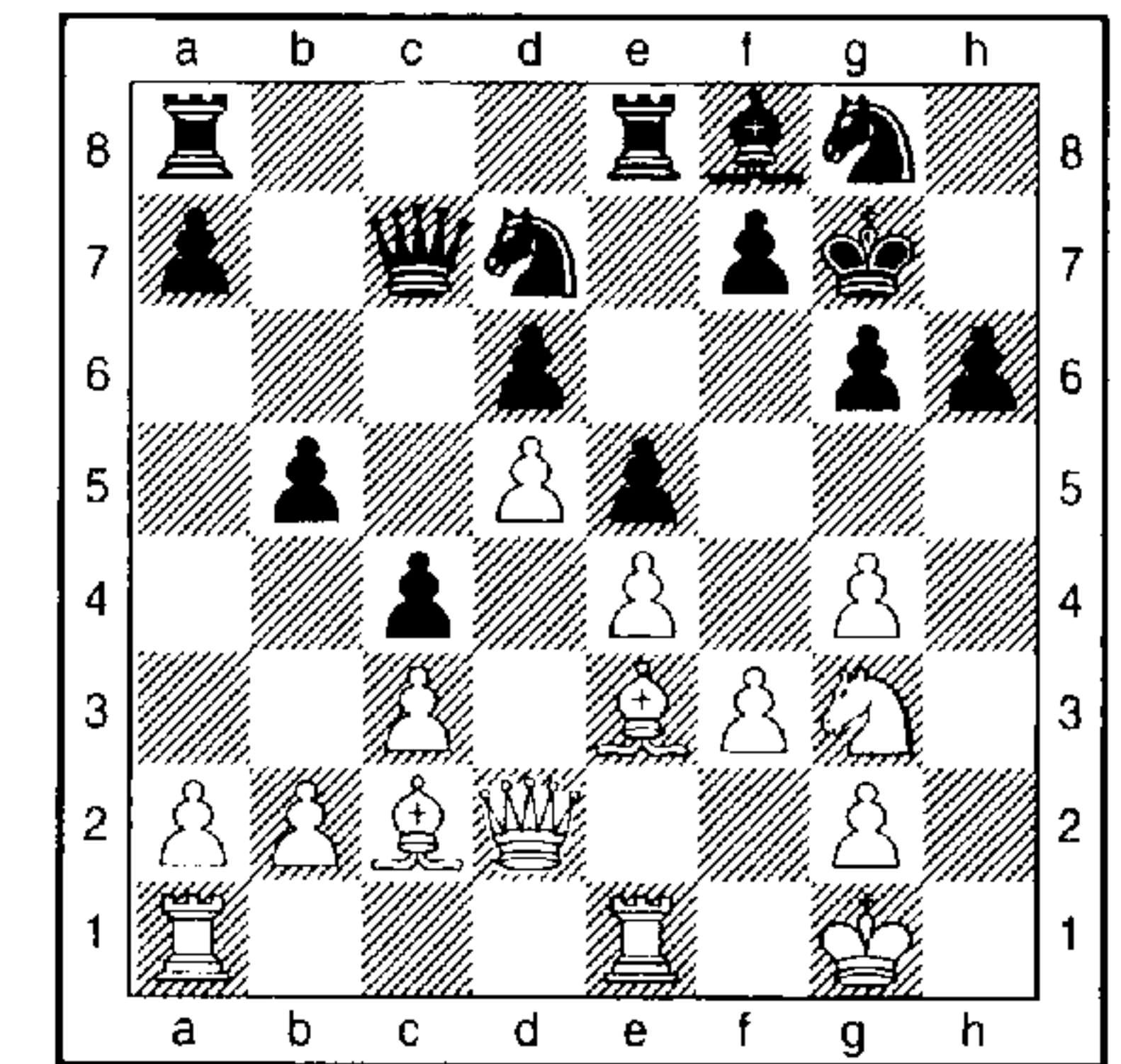
Threatening 21 d2 followed by f2 and h1.

20 ... g7

21 d2

g8

77



Q 6-39. What should White play?

A player with no mastery of prophylactic thinking would without hesitation play 'according to plan' – 22 f2. But Dolmatov was already accustomed to approaching a position more deeply. He realised that in this case the opponent would strengthen his kingside by 22...f6 23 h1 f7, after which attempts to break through could only be associated with the questionable exchange sacrifice on h6.

There is only one way to prevent Black's defensive plan: 22 g5. This does not yet mean that this is the only way to play (prophylactic thinking by no means implies the need always to make prophylactic moves). Simply it is necessary to compare the positions arising after 22 f2 and 22 g5, and to decide which of these it is better for White to go in for.

22 g5! hxg5

In the event of 22...h5 White would have broken through on the kingside, by preparing either a piece sacrifice, or the undermining move g2-g4. I should mention that Sergey likes such a pawn formation – the pawns at d5 and g5 seriously cramp the opponent's



position, and in particular the black knights.

23 ♖xg5 ♔e7

Q 6-40. What should White play?

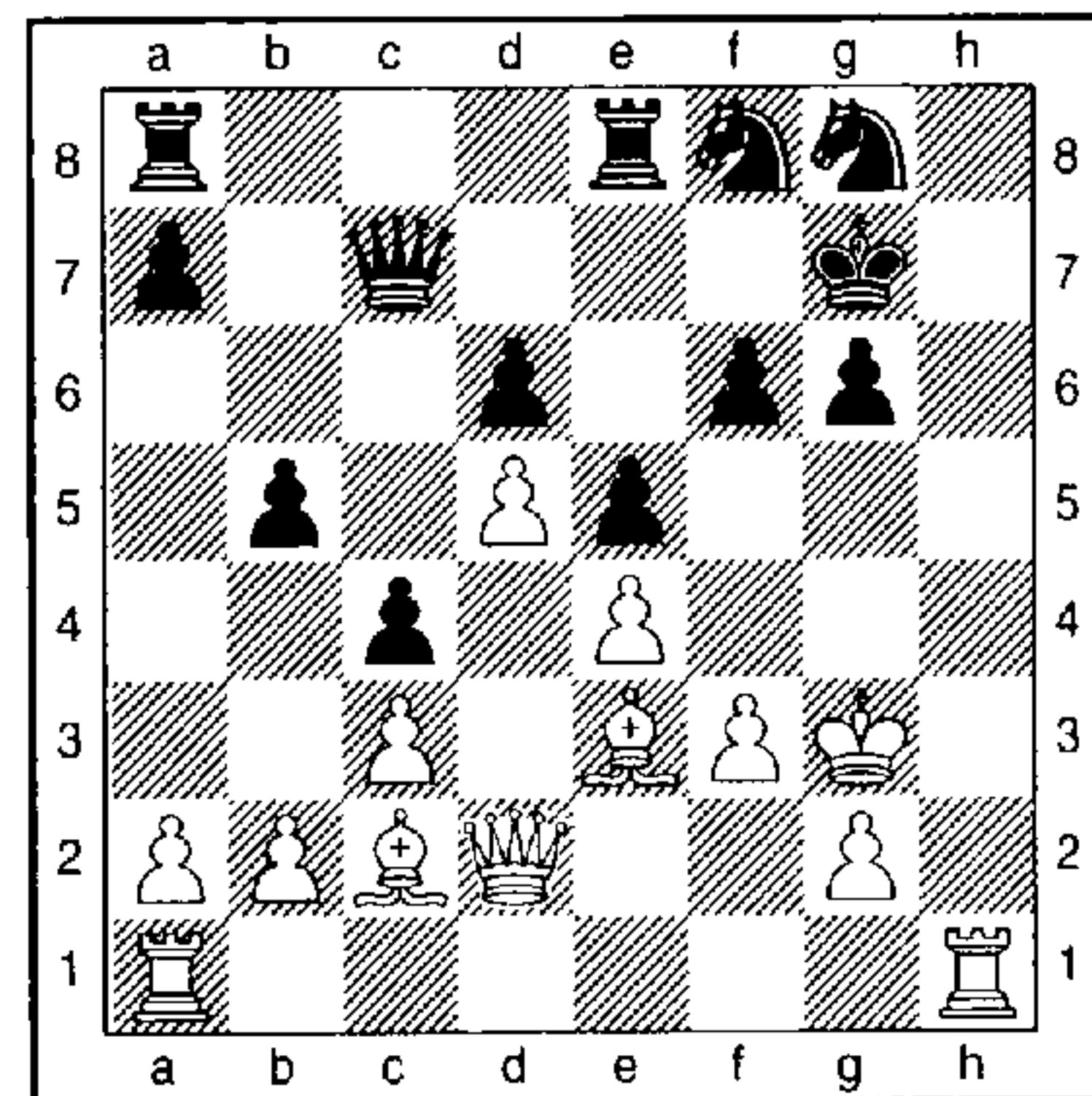
With an advantage in space one should avoid exchanges – therefore Dolmatov retreats his bishop. True, he had to reckon with 24...♔h4, but, as a simple calculation showed, the bishop move is not dangerous.

24 ♖e3! ♔h4
25 ♖f2! ♖f8
26 ♖h1 ♖xg3+

If 26...♖e7 there follows 27 ♖xh4 (or simply 27 ♖h3 followed by ♖ah1) 27...♖xh4 28 ♖h1 (but not 28 ♖g5 ♖h8! 29 ♖h1 ♖h7), forcing 28...♖xh1, since 28...♖e7? 29 ♖h6+ leads to mate.

27 ♖xg3 ♖f6
28 ♖h6+ was threatened.

78



Q 6-41. What should White play?

Now Black's kingside is not badly defended, and it is hard to break through there – the time has come to open a 'second front'.

28 a4! a6
29 ♖a2 ♖ab8
30 axb5 axb5
31 ♖a7! ♖b7
32 ♖a6

If 32...♖bb8 White replies 33 ♖ha1, preventing the exchange of rooks. Of course, he could also have played this immediately, on the 31st move, but why not make use of an opportunity to improve the rook's position with gain of tempo?

32 ... g5
33 ♖f2 ♖f2

Good technique! Black was intending ...♖g6-f4 – why allow him to do this?

33 ... ♖g6
34 g3 ♖h6
35 ♖d1

The 'principle of the worst piece' in action. At present the bishop is doing nothing at c2 – it must be transferred to e2. From there it will either support b2-b3, a standard undermining move in such positions, or continue its journey – via f1 to h3.

35 ... ♖h8
36 ♖g2

In order to parry the threat of 36...♖g4+, White had to place his king in the way of the bishop's route to h3. But this is nothing terrible – the position is not one where every tempo counts, and sooner or later the bishop will reach the desired squares.

36 ... ♖bb8
37 ♖e2 ♖f7
38 ♖a7!

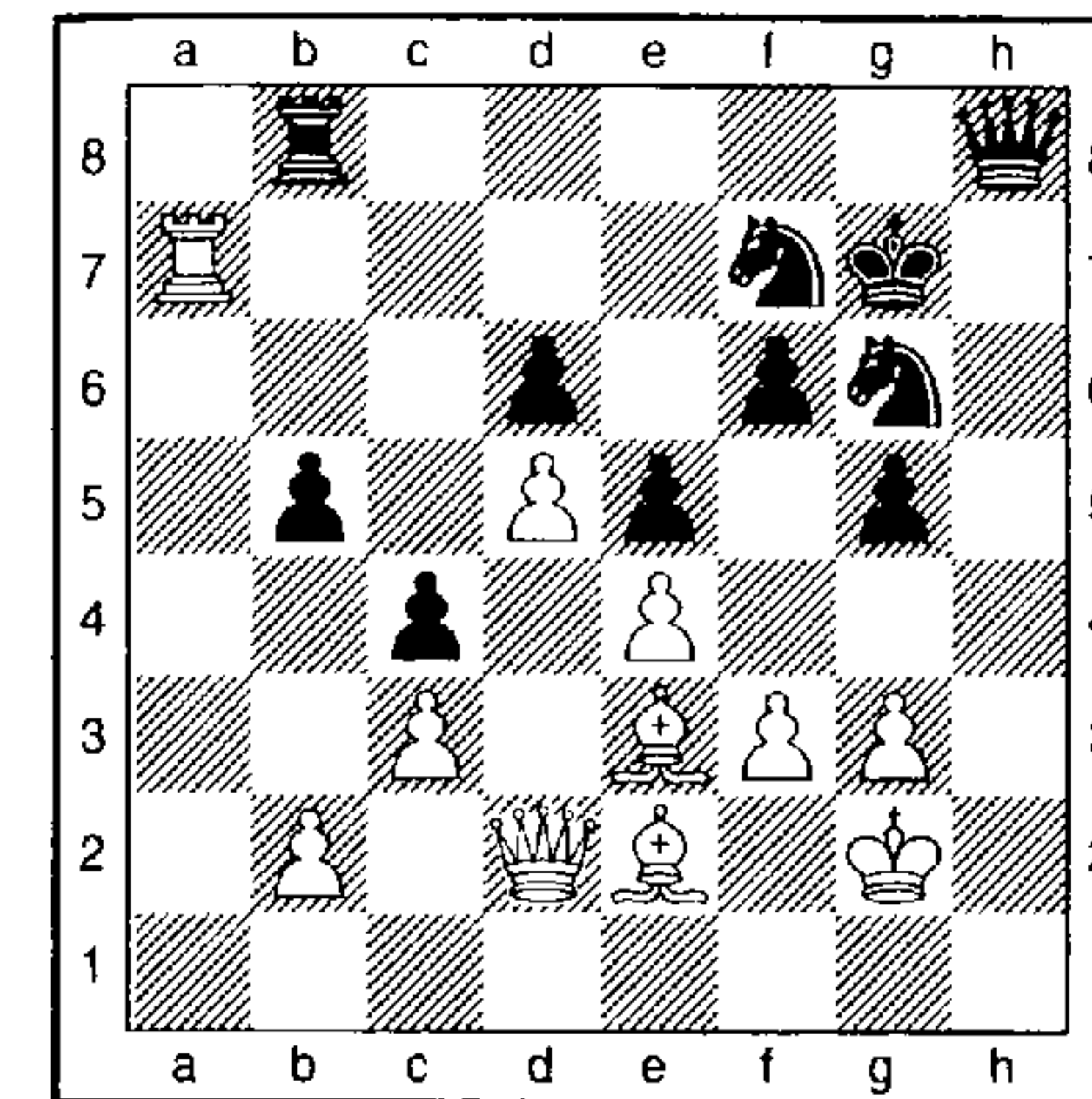
White is now prepared to exchange all four rooks: after 38...♖b7 39 ♖xb7 ♖xb7 40 ♖xh8 and 41 b3! he inevitably wins a pawn on the queenside.

38 ... ♖c8
39 ♖xh8 ♖xh8

see next diagram



79



Q 6-42. What should White play?

What does the opponent want? His main threat is 40...♖h7 and 41...♖h8. White also has to reckon with 40...♖a8 – it would be a pity to have to concede the a-file to the black queen. This means that the white queen must move onto the first rank – from there it easily parries both threats.

40 ♖c1!

40 ♖d1 or 40 ♖e1 was equally good.

40 ... ♖h7

40...♖a8 41 ♖a1.

41 ♖h1 ♖xh1+

42 ♖xh1 ♖f8

Unfortunately for Black, he is unable to active his game: if 42...b4 there follows 43 ♖d2! bxc3 44 ♖xc3, and the c4 pawn is lost.

43 ♖g1 ♖e7

44 ♖f2

White does not hurry with the manoeuvre ♖f1-h3, fearing after 44 ♖f1 the reply 44...g4!

44 ... f5

45 ♖d2!

An excellent prophylactic move! It simultaneously pursues three aims:

a) it parries ...b5-b4 for ever;

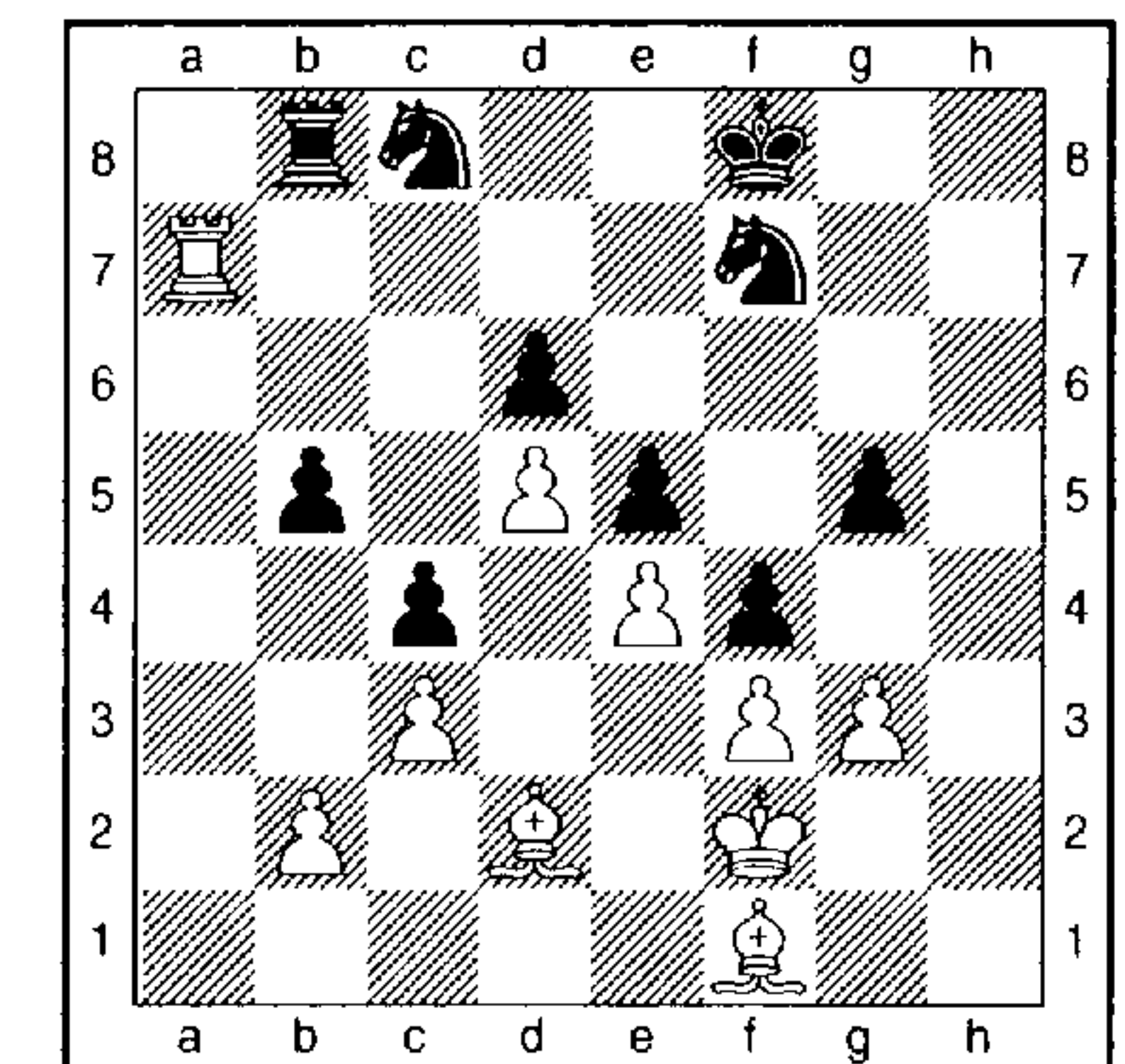
b) ...f5-f4 will be played without a gain of tempo;

c) after Black replies to ♖f1 with ...g5-g4, White can take on f5, and ...♖xf5 will no longer threaten to exchange the white bishop.

Once again 45 ♖f1 was premature because of 45...g4!

45 ... f4
46 ♖f1 ♖c8

80



Q 6-43. What should White play?

Black's only active possibility is the manoeuvre ...♖b6-a4. It must be prevented.

47 ♖a5! ♖e7

48 ♖h3 ♖d8

49 ♖e6 ♖h8

50 ♖g2

White's position is completely won. Realising this, Dolmatov began playing less carefully and accurately than before, and he slightly spoiled the finish. His plan is logical and correct: to activate what is for the moment his only idle piece, his king, via g2-h3-g4. But it made sense for White to employ prophylactic thinking for a last time, and to ask himself what Black will do. His only sensible idea is the manoeuvre ...♖g6-f8-d7-c5. Had White played 50 ♖f5!, his



opponent would have had nothing better than to resign, since 50...♗e7 is met by the decisive 51 ♖a7!

50 ... ♗g6
51 ♖h3 ♗f8
52 ♗f5

The attempt to save a tempo by 52 ♖g4!? came into consideration.

52 ... ♗d7
53 ♗xd7!

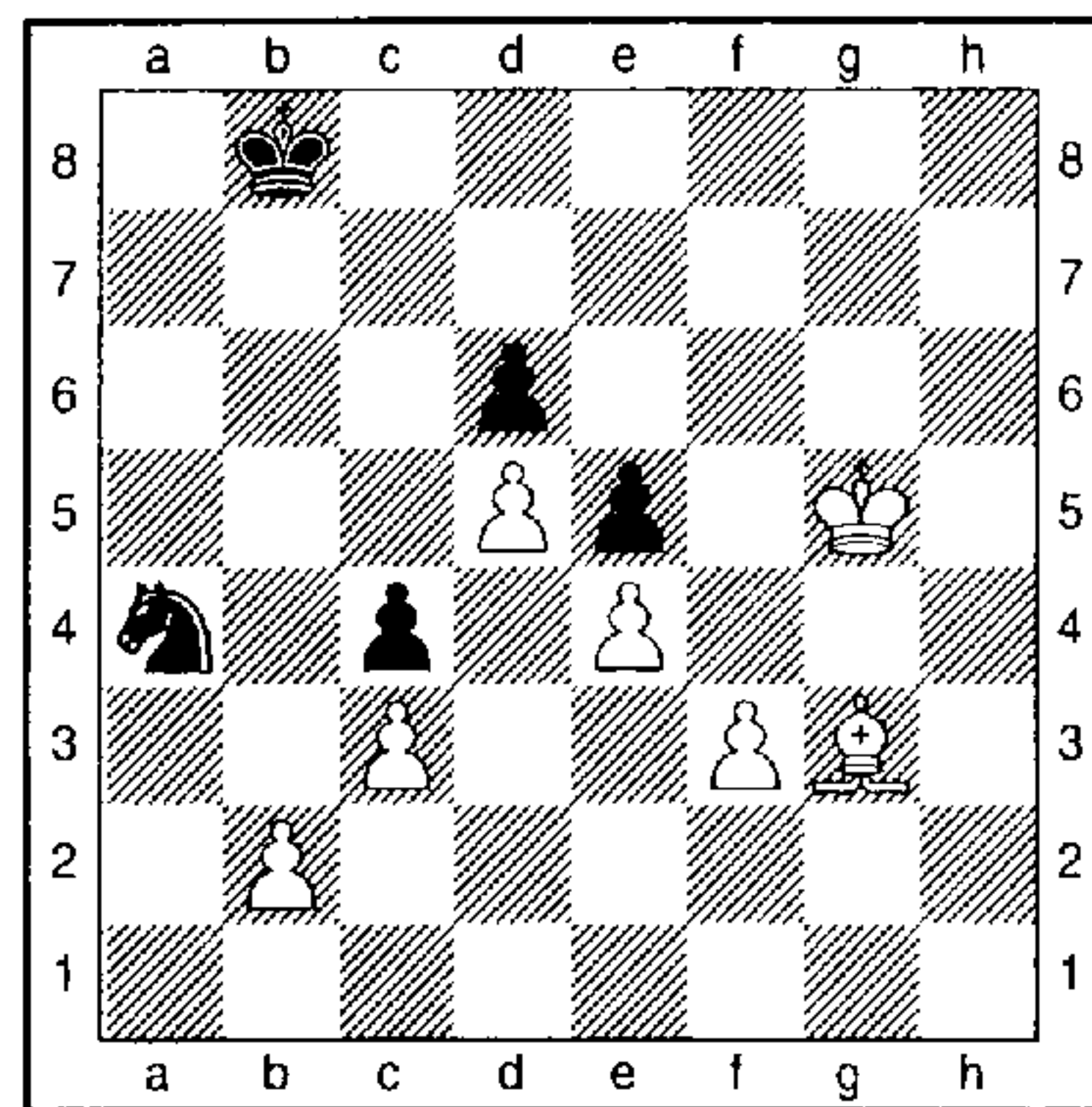
White is forced to give up his bishop, so as not to allow the knight to go to c5.

53 ... ♖xd7
54 ♖g4 ♖c7
55 ♗e1 ♗b6!

Black cannot passively await his demise – he sacrifices a pawn, but his knight finally breaks into the opponent's position.

56 ♖xb5 ♗a4
57 ♖xb8 ♖xb8
58 ♖xg5 fxg3
59 ♗xg3

81



59 ... ♗xb2?!

The white king is aiming for e7, but it could have been prevented from going there by playing 59...♖c7!? 60 ♖f6 ♖d7. Now White has a choice between the bishop sacrifice 61 ♗xe5 dx5 62 ♖xe5 ♗xb2 63 ♖d4 ♗d3,

and the quiet 61 f4 exf4 62 ♗xf4 ♗xb2. Almost certainly one of these positions is won, and possibly even both, but White would have had to exert himself: choose the correct plan, and calculate variations. Since earlier the win was achieved almost automatically, without any risk, it is obvious that somewhere Dolmatov's play was not the best.

60 ♖f6 ♗a4

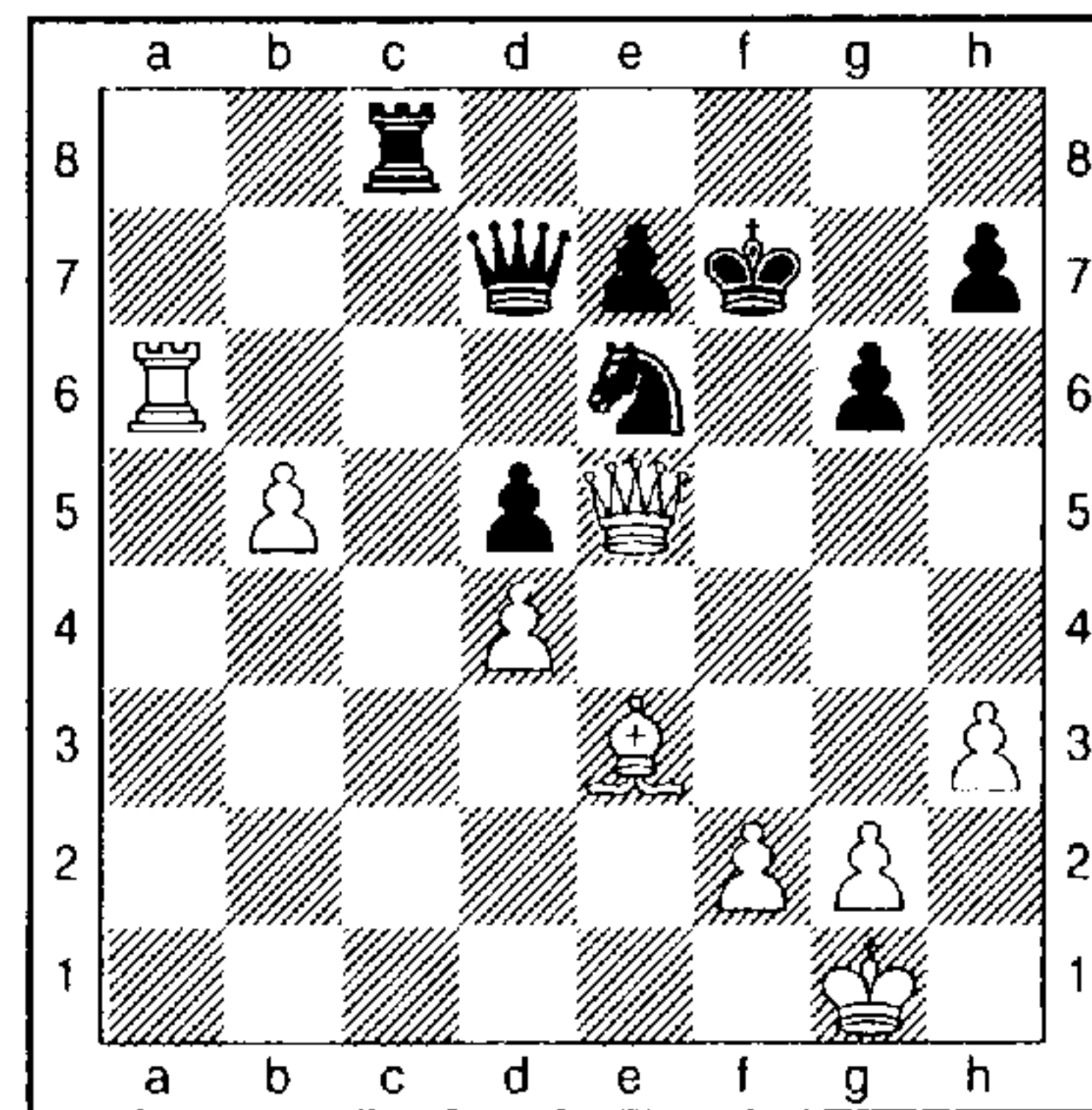
Black does not even try to complicate things for his opponent. The only possibility of slightly prolonging the resistance was 60...♗d3 61 ♖e7 ♖c7.

61 ♖e7

Black resigns, since if 61...♖c7, then 62 ♗xe5 is decisive.

In this game White did not have to solve any complicated prophylactic problems; but, as you have probably noticed, his entire play was permeated with the spirit of prophylaxis. In choosing many of the moves he made, Dolmatov took into account his opponent's intentions, which enabled him all the time to dictate the course of events on the board.

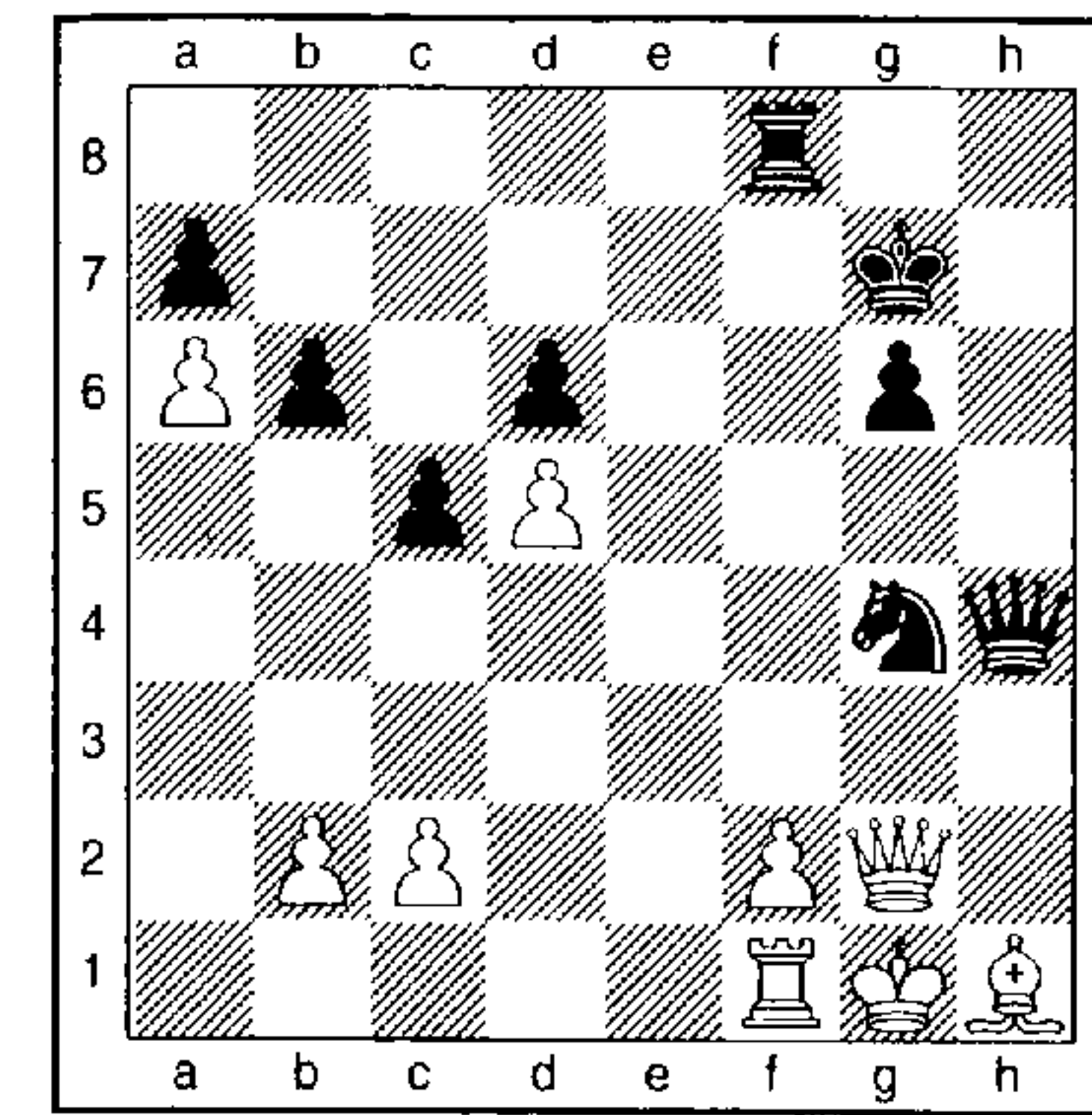
E 6-18
82



White to move

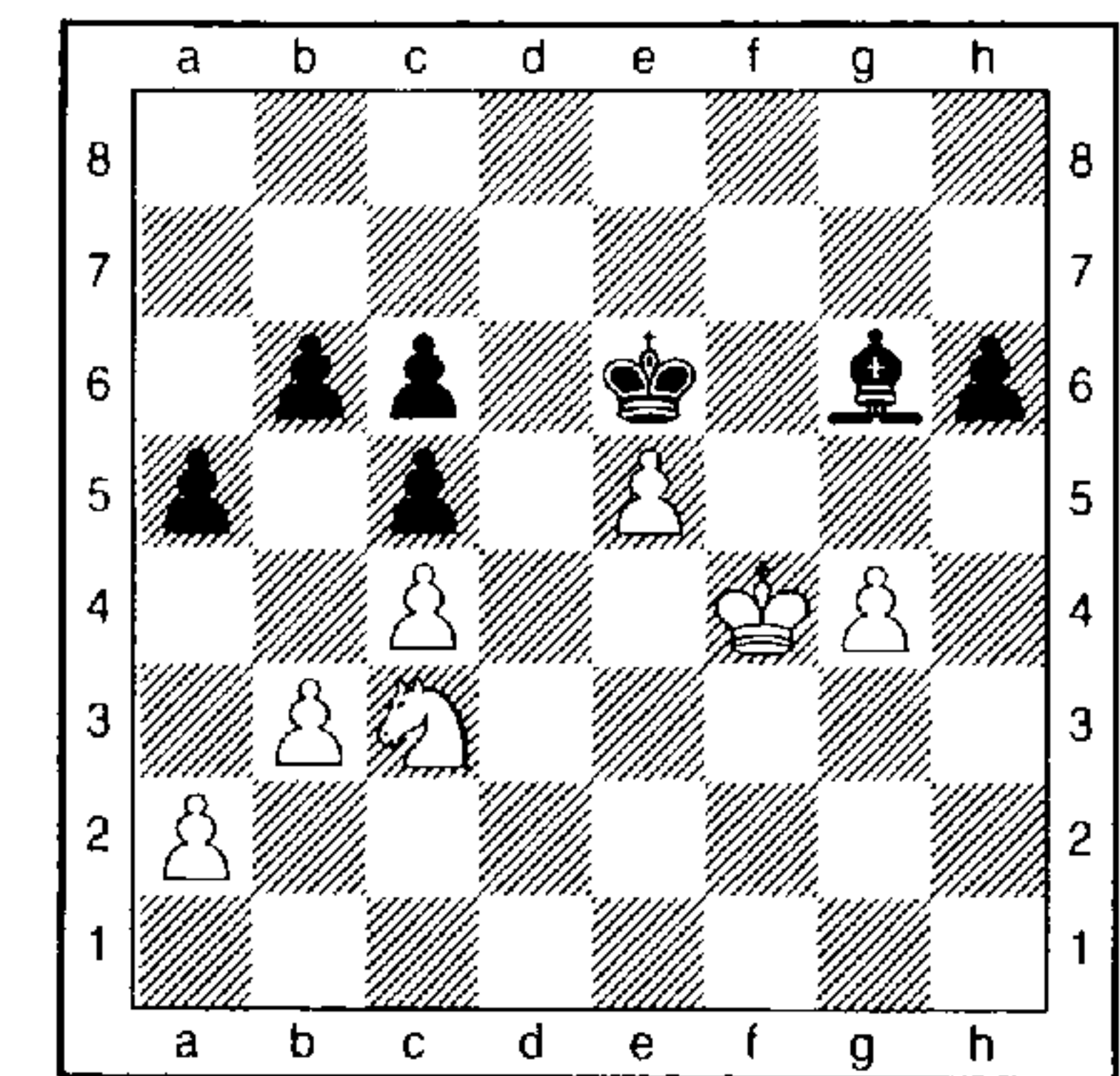


E 6-19
83



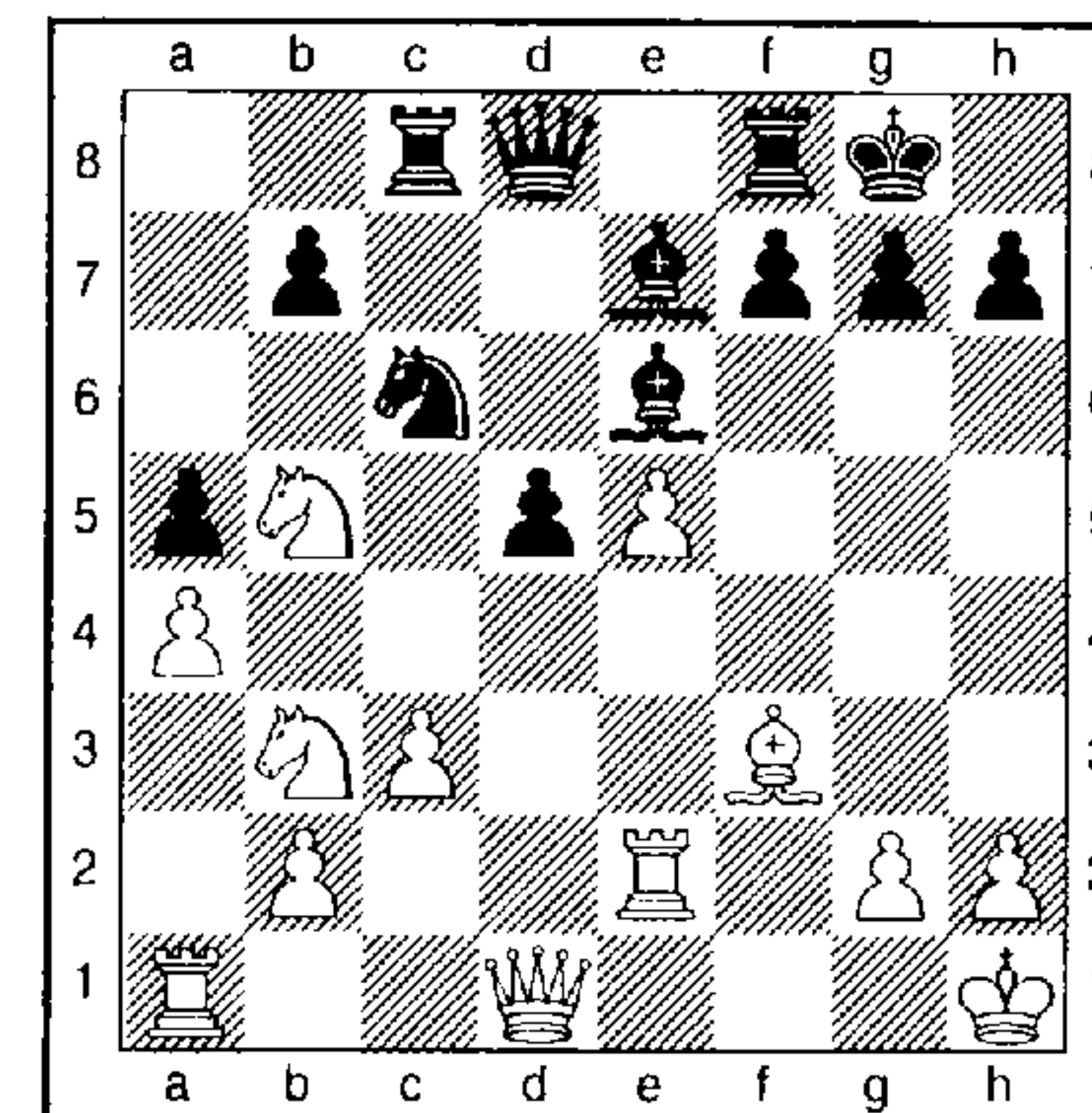
Black to move

E 6-21
85



Black to move

E 6-20
84



White to move



'Mysterious' Rook Moves

To demand of a piece only direct attacking activity is the stamp of the mere 'wood-shifter'. The keener chess mind quite rightly demands of the pieces that they also undertake preventive action.

Aron Nimzowitsch

The prophylactic moves which we encountered in the previous chapter looked fairly simple, and sometimes they even suggested themselves. In a game we nevertheless often overlook them, being unable to tune in to the 'prophylactic wavelength' or correctly assess the opponent's intentions.

But certain prophylactic decisions make a strong aesthetic impression on us, on account of their unusual and non-obvious nature. For example, 'mysterious' rook moves (Nimzowitsch's definition) – when, for what is at first sight an inexplicable reason, a rook occupies not an open file, but a closed one. The explanation usually lies in the need to suppress in this way an important pawn advance by the opponent. Remember, for example, the reasons behind White's 14th move in the Vukic–Davcevski game (in the chapter 'The blockade of passed pawns').

In a lecture which he read at the second session of the Dvoretzky–Yusupov school (cf. the book 'Opening Preparation'), grandmaster Dolmatov showed three of his games (against Lev Polugayevsky, Kiril Georgiev and Alexander Belyavsky), which brilliantly illustrated this theme. I cannot refrain from reproducing here an extract from one of them.

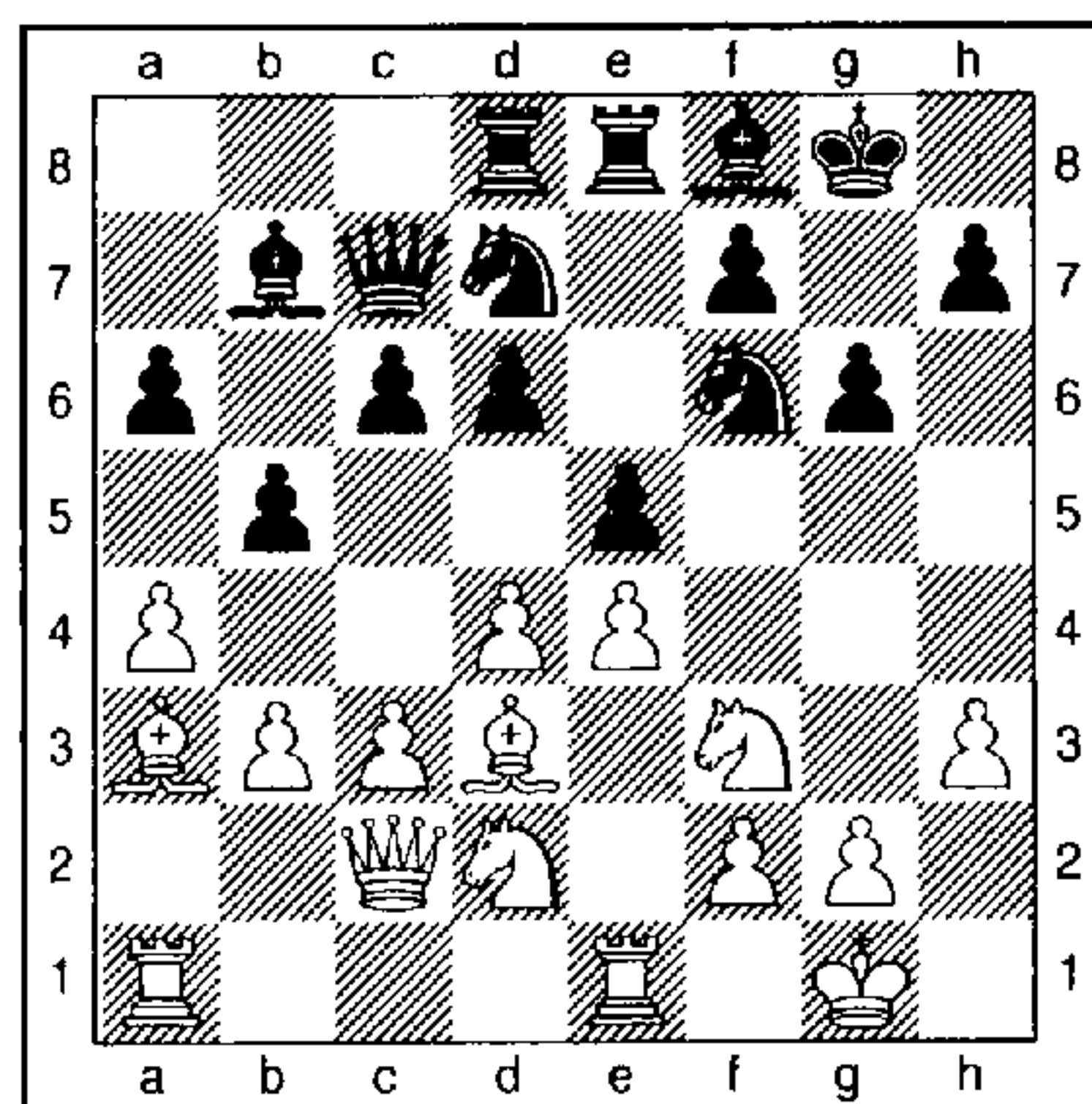
Dolmatov – Belyavsky

56th USSR Championship, Odessa 1989
1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♙b5 a6 4 ♙a4 ♘f6 5 0–0 ♙e7 6 ♖e1 b5 7 ♙b3 d6 8 c3 0–0 9 h3 ♘b8 10 d4 ♘bd7 11 ♘bd2 ♙b7 12 ♙c2 ♖e8 13 a4 ♙f8 14 ♙d3 c6 15 b3 g6. A year earlier, in the 55th USSR Championship

(1988), the game A.Sokolov–Belyavsky went 15...♖b8 16 ♙a3 ♘h5. Dolmatov was aiming to repeat this game, having prepared an improvement for White, but Belyavsky chose a different plan.

16 ♙a3 ♖c7 17 ♖c2 ♖ad8.

86



18 ♖ab1!!

Q 6-44. What is the idea of this 'mysterious' rook move?

After pondering over the point of his opponent's last few moves, Dolmatov realised that Belyavsky was preparing to open the centre by ...d6–d5. The series of exchanges in the centre does not promise White any advantage.

In his book 'My System', Nimzowitsch, while emphasising the importance of freeing pawn moves and their influence on the further course of the game, at the same time



remarks that sometimes they are illusory, since they effectively do not have a freeing effect. In the position that we are considering, probably the most difficult thing is to establish that 18...d5 is indeed merely an illusory threat, since after 19 ♙xf8 ♘xf8 White has the excellent positional move 20 b4!, fixing Black's pawns on squares of the colour of his bishop and transforming the bishop at b7 into a 'large pawn'.

The real threat (for example, in reply to 18 ♖ad1 or 18 ♙f1, is 18...bxa4! 19 bxa4 and only now 19...d5! with equality. It was this threat that Dolmatov parried with his 'mysterious' rook move (after the exchanges on f8, d5 and e5, the bishop at b7 is under attack). Later Sergey admitted that in the game he carried out the entire chain of reasoning fairly quickly, but for a long time he could not make up his mind, since he simply could not bring himself to make the move – it looks so unusual. He was probably helped by the consideration that, if Black were to avoid 18...d5 (for example, in favour of 18...♙g7), then at an appropriate moment White can play c3–c4, provoking an exchange of pawns, after which the rook is after all on an open file.

Realising that the exchange of pawns on a4 was unfavourable for him, Belyavsky decided to play ...d6–d5 immediately, underestimating the strength of the positional idea found by Dolmatov.

18 ... d5?!
19 ♙xf8 ♘xf8
20 b4! dxe4
21 ♙xe4!

When there are weak squares in the opponent's position, knights sometimes prove more necessary than bishops. Besides, after 21 ♘xe4?! ♘xe4 22 ♙xe4 Black could have sharpened the play by 22...f5, forcing the bishop sacrifice on f5.

21 ... exd4?!

22 cxd4 ♖d6

Now White should have consolidated his advantage by 23 a5! ♖e7 24 ♖b2 followed by the exchange of rooks on the e-file. Dolmatov played less strongly, but after a complicated and far from faultless battle he nevertheless won.

And now another example from Dolmatov's play, which he could well have included in his lecture.

Mochalov – Dolmatov

Moscow 1981

1 ♘f3 d5
2 c4 c6
3 d4 ♘f6
4 ♖c2 g6
5 cxd5

In the game Van Dop–Dolmatov (Bad Lauterberg 1979) Black achieved an excellent game after 5 ♙f4 ♙g7 6 e3 0–0 7 ♘bd2 ♙f5 8 ♙d3 (8 ♖b3 ♖b6 with equality) 8...♙xd3 9 ♖xd3 c5! 10 dxc5 ♘a6.

5 ... cxd5
6 ♘c3 ♙g7
7 ♙f4 0–0
8 e3 ♘c6

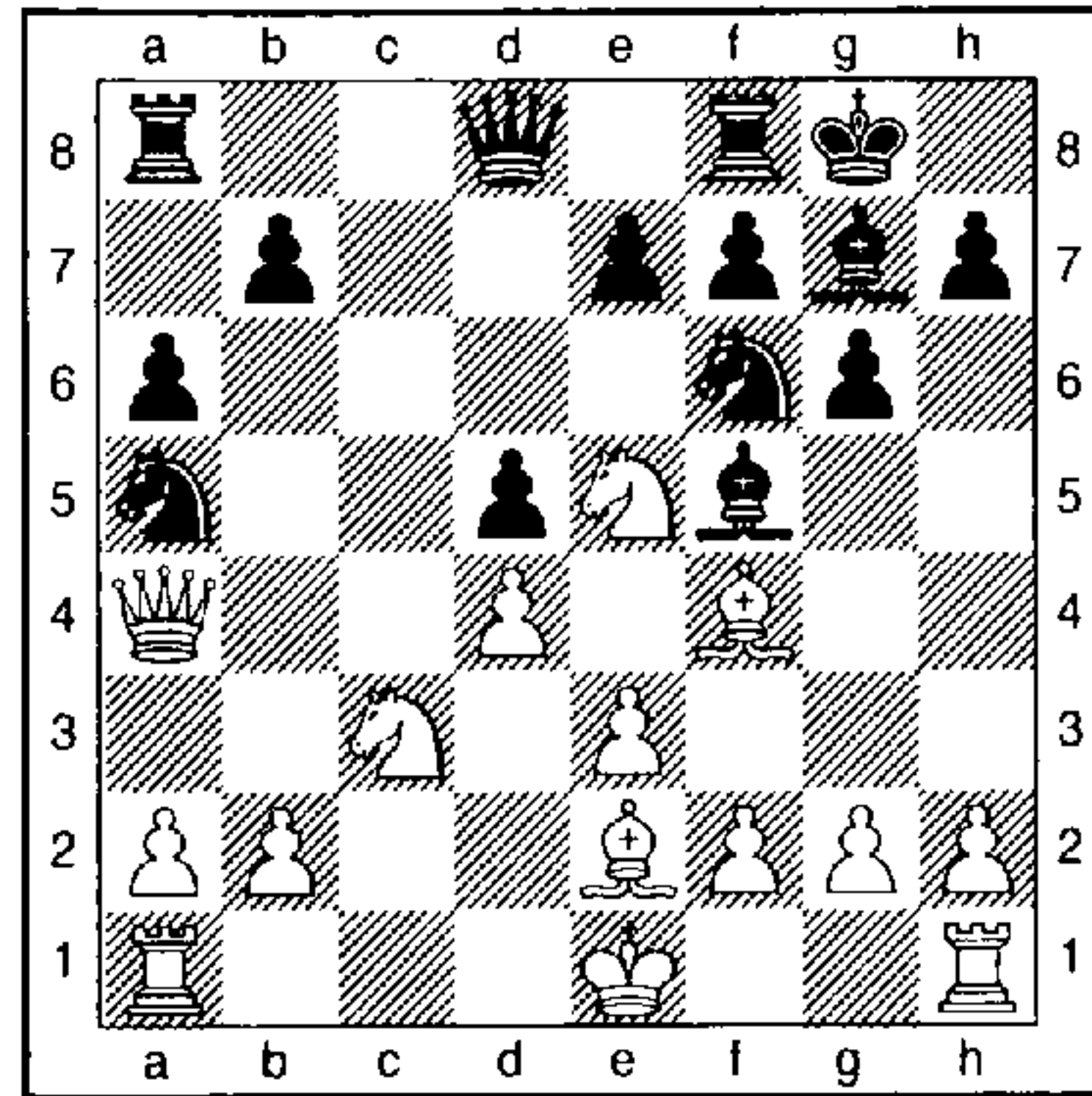
In such positions Black usually does not hurry to attack the queen with his bishop (since the queen will go to b3, in turn attacking the b7 pawn), but first makes other useful moves, completing his development and reserving the possibility of ...♙f5 for the future.

9 ♙b5 ♙f5
10 ♖a4 ♘a5
11 ♙e2 a6
12 ♘e5

see next diagram



87



12 ... ♖e8!!

Q 6-45. Give an explanation for Black's move.

Strangely enough, here too it is all a matter of prophylaxis against an important pawn advance by the opponent. Black is planning to play ...b7-b5 in order to obtain the c4 square for his knight. He rejected the immediate 12...b5?!, since after 13 ♖b4! and 14 a4! the unfavourable exchange of pawns on a4 is forced. But with the rook at e8, the white queen will no longer dare to go to b4, since it immediately comes under attack by the black bishop (...e7-e6 and ...♗f8).

13 0-0 b5
14 ♖d1

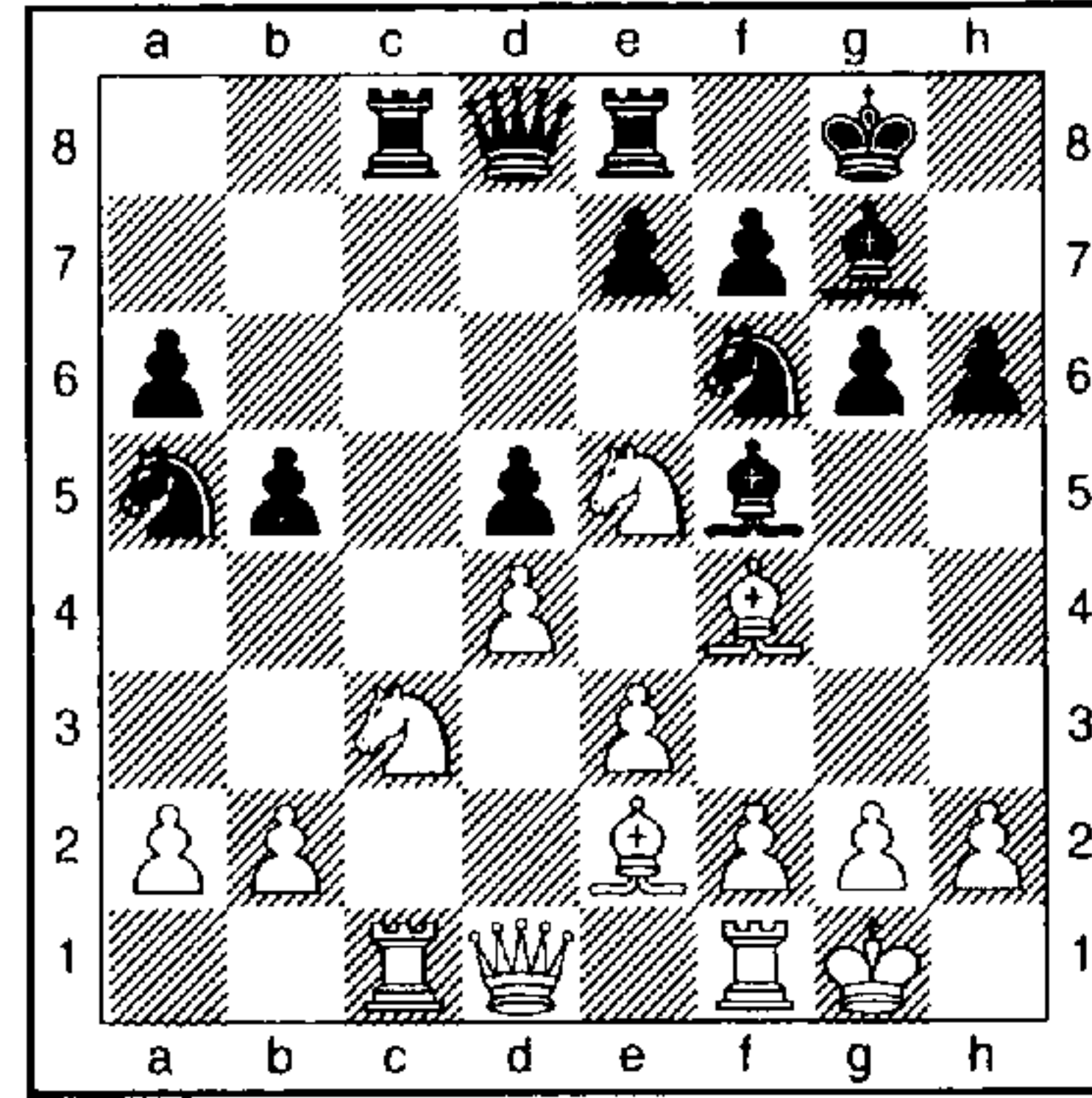
Forced.

14 ... ♖c8

Now if a2-a4 there is always the reply ...b5-b4.

15 ♖c1 h6!?

88



Q 6-46. What should White play?

As usual, one should begin with the question: 'What does Black want?'. His last move serves as the starting point of his entire plan. He is intending to exchange the most active white piece – the knight at e5 – by playing ...♗d7, and then to invade with his knight at c4. But first he needs to defend his d5 pawn with ...e7-e6, which can be done only after he has ensured the safety of his f5 bishop by ...g6-g5.

To disrupt the opponent's plan, White should have decided on the energetic 16 g4! The bishop is forced to retreat, and then White can consider, for example, the manoeuvre of his knight to the weakened c5 square. As you see, sharp, aggressive moves can also be prophylactic!

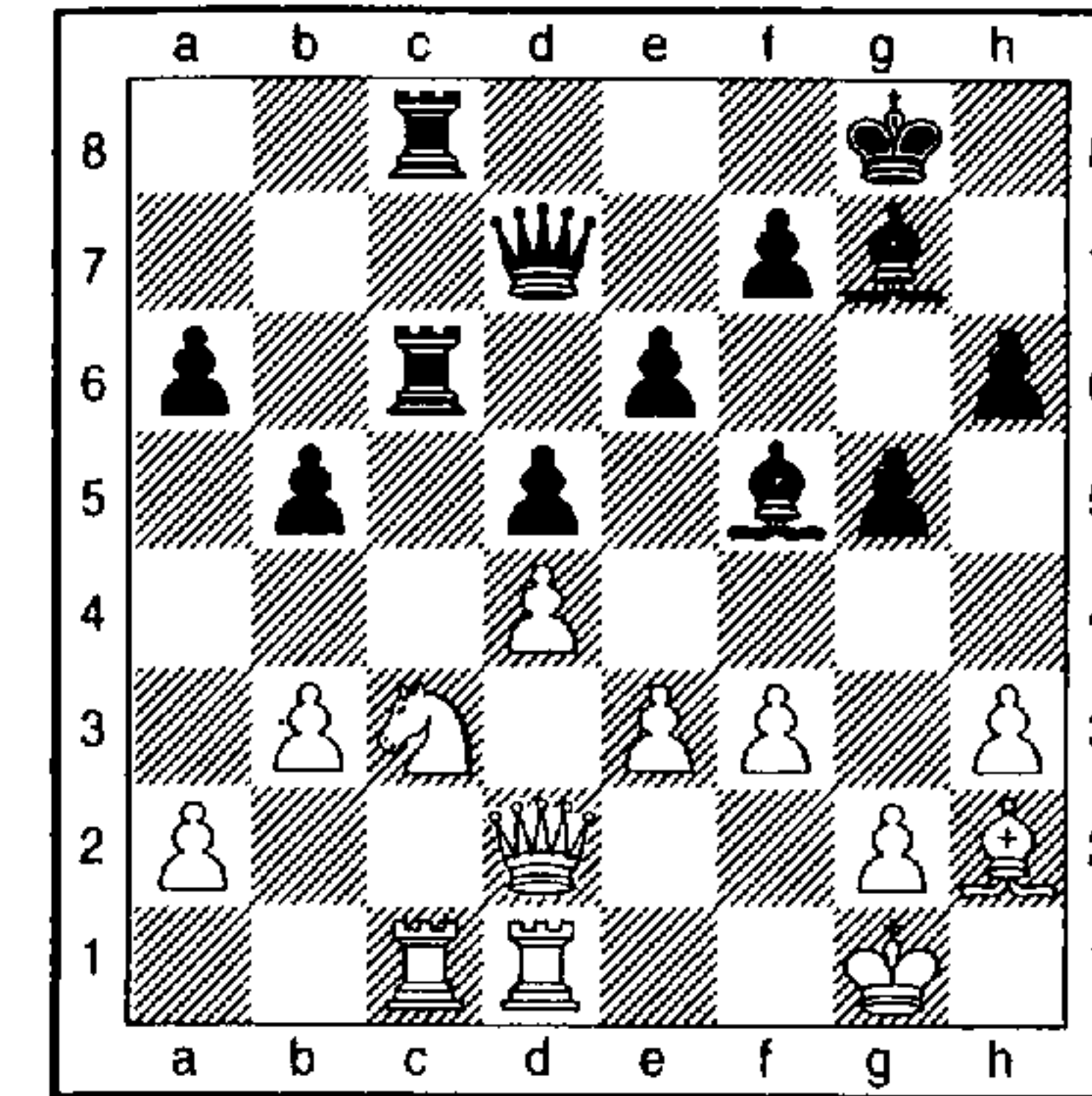
16 h3? g5!
17 ♗h2 e6
18 f3?! ♗d7
19 ♗xd7 ♖xd7
20 ♗d3 ♗c4
21 ♗xc4 ♖xc4

As a result of his opponent's passive play, Black has completely seized the initiative. The remainder of the game is a vivid demonstration of the power of the two bishops.



22 ♖d2 ♖ec8
23 b3 ♖4c6
24 ♖fd1

89



24 ... ♗f8

The a3 and b4 squares are weak, and the black bishop is aiming for them.

25 e4 ♗g6
26 exd5 exd5
27 ♗b1 ♖c2
28 ♖xc2 ♖xc2
29 ♖a5 ♖e7!
30 ♖e1 ♖b4

30...♖c1! (K.Neat).

31 ♖xb4 ♗xb4
32 ♖e8+ ♗g7
33 a3 ♗a5
34 ♖a8 ♖c1+
35 ♗f2 ♖xb1

And White soon resigned.



Training with Grandmasters

Any missed opportunity to play better, even in a drawn game or one won with difficulty, is your loss. This is why you must again and again return to your own errors, irrespective of the outcome of the game.

Garry Kasparov

During the years of my youth the leading players of the country often gave simultaneous displays against Moscow schoolchildren. I was always happy to take part in these. It was mainly, of course, the desire to take the 'scalp' of another famous grandmaster. But there was also something else – the games played in these displays, or isolated episodes from them, usually proved instructive, and became firmly imprinted in my memory, and I was able to make use of ideas found in them in later tournament games. There is no doubt that this form of training is very useful for young players.

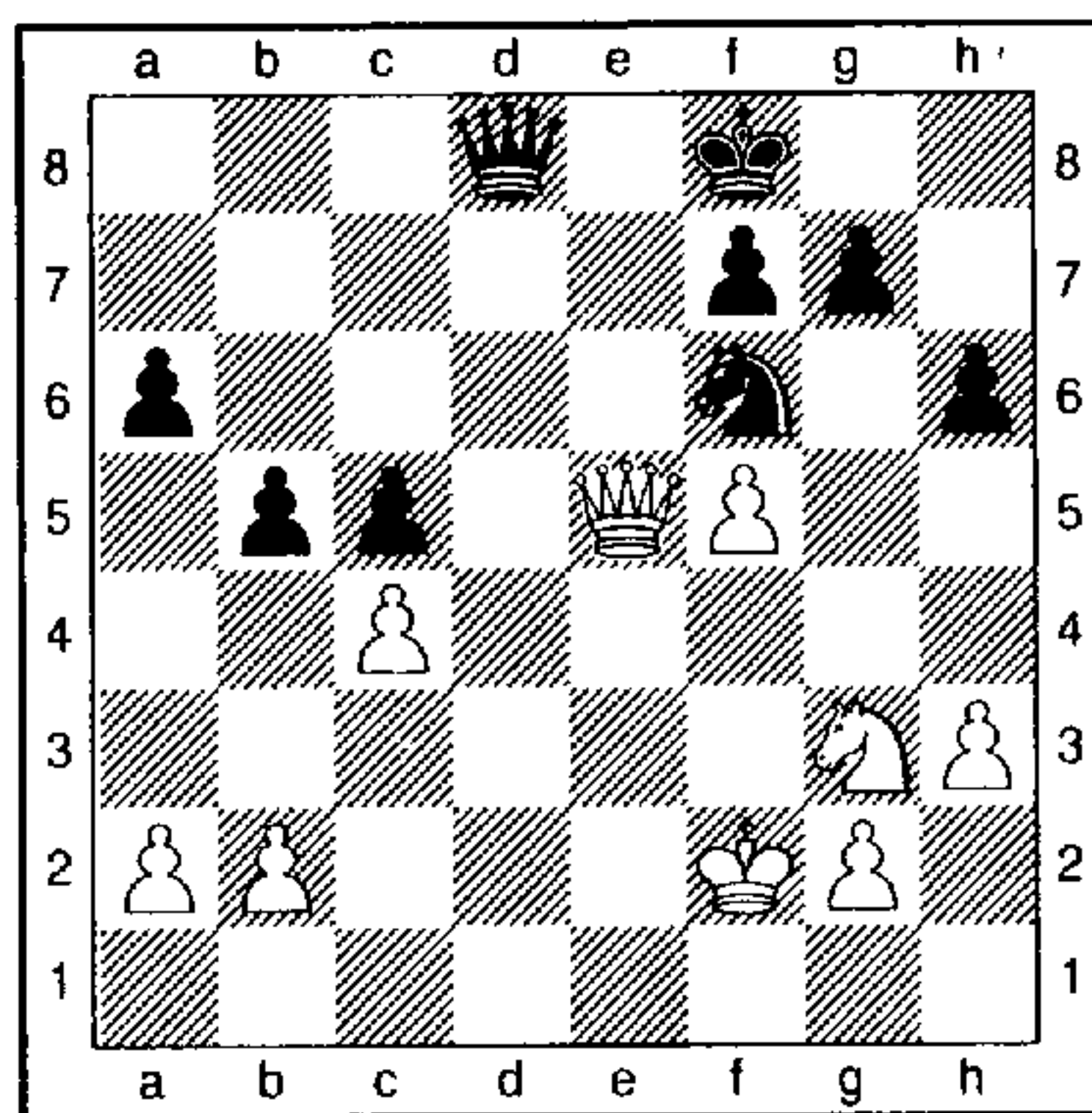
To be honest, I can hardly recall any instance when in a simultaneous display (a normal one, or with clocks, on a small number of boards) a decision by some grandmaster came as a revelation to me. I learned mainly from my own discoveries and omissions. There is nothing surprising in this. The player giving the display has no time to think seriously over a move, and he plays superficially, whereas his opponent is sometimes able to delve into the position and discover its secrets. And also, generally speaking, each of us is inclined to concentrate on our own thoughts, plans, discoveries and errors – to borrow the experience of others is psychologically much more difficult.

I should like to offer you several examples of my participation in simultaneous play, and with the help of them show from what viewpoint a player can think over games he has played, in order to extract useful information from them. Here I think it is

appropriate to recall one of the aphorisms of Kozma Prutkov: *'When you throw stones into the water, look at the circles they create, otherwise it will be a pure waste of time.'*

Bronstein – Dvoretsky Moscow 1963

90



Q 6-47. What should Black play?

- | | | |
|----|-----|------|
| 29 | ... | ♔d2+ |
| 30 | ♘e2 | ♘d7! |
| 31 | ♚c7 | ♚e7 |

Note that neither White's queen, nor Black's, is able to give a single check to the opponent's king. The conclusion: **a knight positioned next to the king securely defends it against the enemy queen.** In this game I encountered this technique for the first time, and subsequently I made use of it on several occasions.



Now White should have chosen either the cautious 32 ♚b7 ♚xb2 33 ♚xa6 b4 with a markedly inferior position, or a pawn sacrifice for the sake of obtaining a passed pawn: 32 cxb5!? axb5 33 ♚b7 ♚xb2 34 a4. However, David Bronstein made a typical simultaneous display blunder: 32 ♚f3?!, and after 32...♚d3+ 33 ♚f2 ♚xf5+ 34 ♚e3 ♚e6+ 35 ♚f2 ♚xc4 he quickly lost.

Botvinnik – Dvoretsky Moscow 1964

- | | | |
|----|--------|------|
| 1 | g3 | ♘f6 |
| 2 | ♙g2 | g6 |
| 3 | e4 | d6 |
| 4 | ♘e2 | ♙g7 |
| 5 | 0-0 | 0-0 |
| 6 | d4 | c5?! |
| 7 | c3 | |
| 7 | dxc5!? | |
| 7 | ... | ♘c6 |
| 8 | h3 | ♚c7 |
| 9 | ♙e3 | ♚d8 |
| 10 | ♘d2 | |
| 10 | ... | cxd4 |
| 11 | cxd4 | d5 |
| 12 | e5 | ♘e4 |
| 13 | ♘xe4 | |
| 13 | ... | dxe4 |
| 14 | ♚c2 | ♙f5 |
| 15 | g4 | ♙e6 |
| 16 | ♙xe4 | |

White has a clear advantage in space. To avoid coming under a positional squeeze, I decided to undertake a diversion in the centre, assuming that, even if it should lead to the loss of a pawn, I would have definite compensation thanks to the opening of lines.

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 10 | ... | cxd4 |
| 11 | cxd4 | d5 |
| 12 | e5 | ♘e4 |
| 13 | ♘xe4 | |

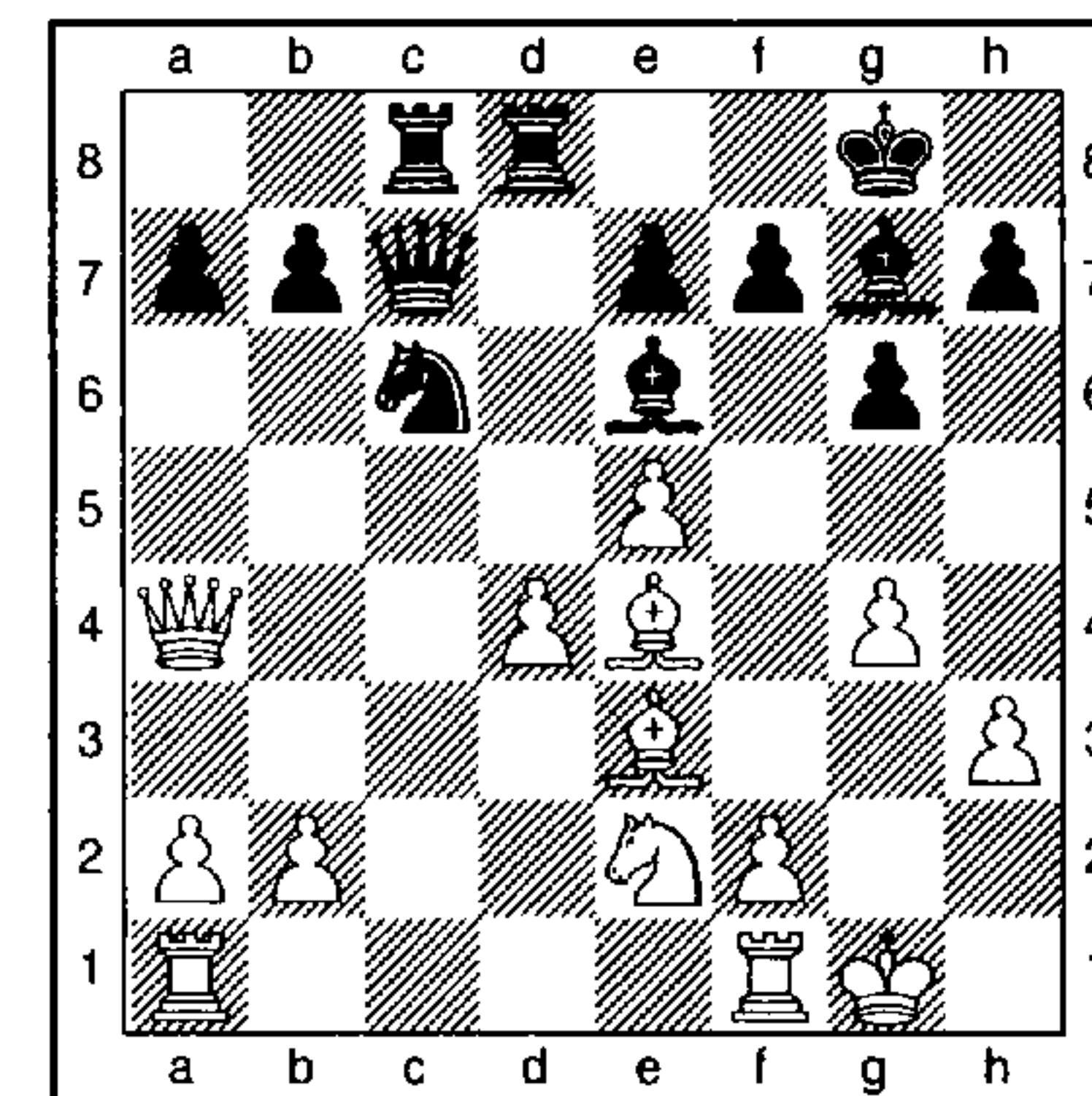
Another good option was 13 ♘b3 f6 14 f3 ♘g5 15 ♙xg5 fxg5 16 ♚d2 with advantage to White.

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 13 | ... | dxe4 |
| 14 | ♚c2 | ♙f5 |
| 15 | g4 | ♙e6 |
| 16 | ♙xe4 | |

Both players overlooked the strong positional move 16 ♘f4!

- | | | |
|----|-------|------|
| 16 | ... | ♚ac8 |
| 17 | ♚a4?! | |
| 17 | ♚ac1. | |

91



- | | | |
|----|------------------------|------|
| 17 | ... | ♚d7! |
| 17 | Threatening 18...♘xe5. | |
| 18 | ♚a3 | h5 |

The sacrifice on g4 is incorrect: 18...♙xg4? 19 ♙xc6 ♚xc6 20 hxg4 ♚xg4+ 21 ♘g3 h5 22 ♚xe7.

19 f3?!

The positional exchange sacrifice came into consideration: 19 gxh5!? ♙xh3 20 hxg6.

- | | | |
|----|------|-------|
| 19 | ... | hxg4 |
| 20 | hxg4 | ♙xg4! |
| 21 | ♚f2 | |

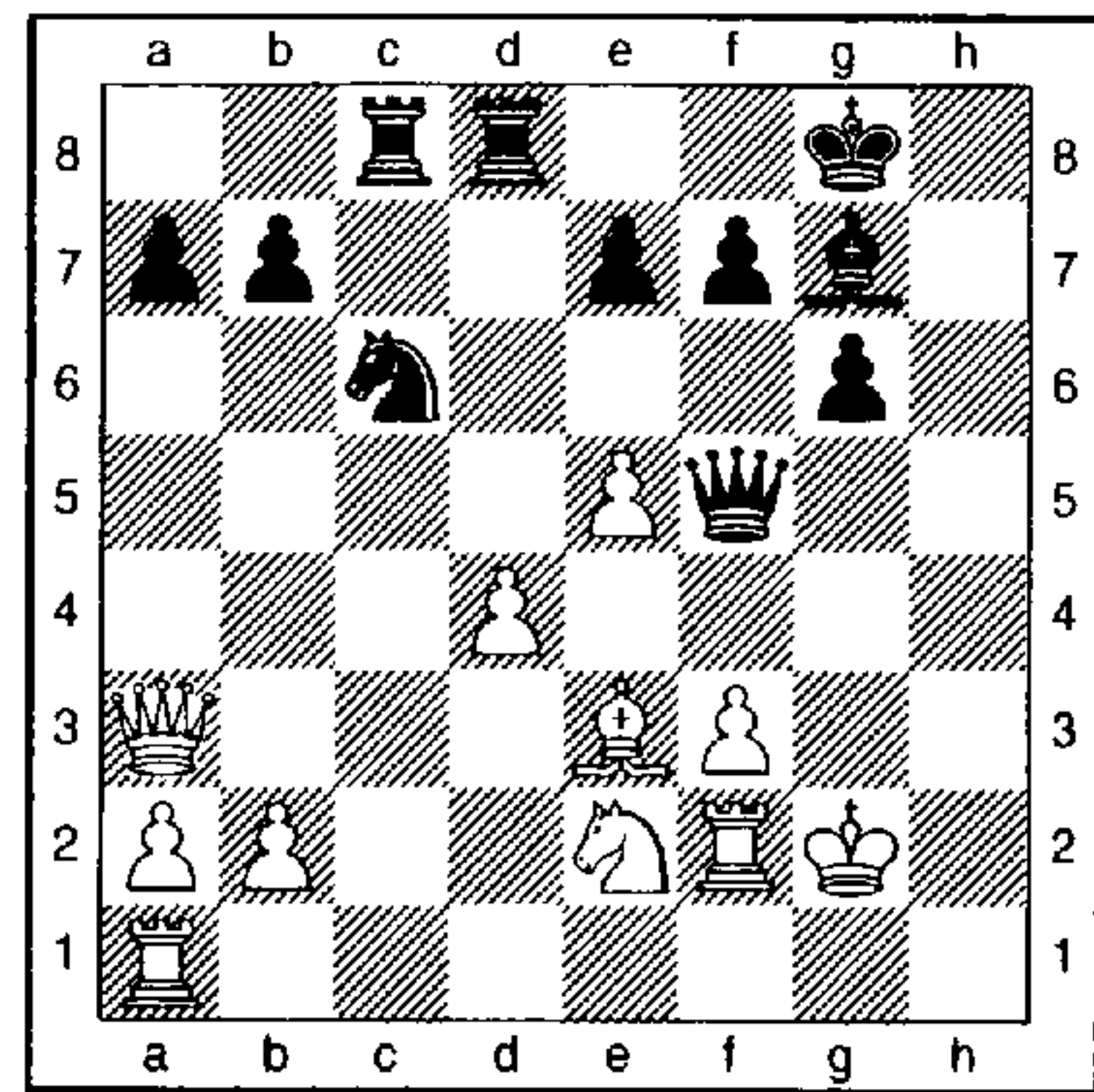
The position after 21 ♙xc6 ♚xc6 22 fxg4 ♚xg4+ 23 ♚f2 ♚c2 seemed to Mikhail Botvinnik to be too dangerous. Players giving simultaneous displays usually try to avoid such adventures.

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 21 | ... | ♙f5 |
| 22 | ♙xf5 | ♚xf5 |
| 23 | ♚g2 | |

see next diagram



92



Q 6-48. What should Black play?

23 ... f6?

After playing the opening excellently, White then acted uncertainly and ended up in an inferior position. The move in the game seemed to me to be completely natural – it attacks the enemy centre, and includes the inactive dark-square bishop in the play.

The following day I showed the game to grandmaster Simagin. When the move ...f7–f6 was reproduced on the board, Vladimir Pavlovich stopped me and asked in surprise: 'Why weaken the position of your king, and give White counterplay? Surely you can manage without this move?'

'But what should I do?', I enquired.

'Look at the 'holes' in the opponent's position on the light squares. Your knight is dreaming of reaching there', Simagin replied, and he suggested a move which, I have to admit, had not even occurred to me: 23...a5!! The black knight obtains the wonderful transit point b4, from where it threatens to invade at c2, d3 or d5.

Any commentary here is superfluous. Such episodes engrave themselves in the memory for a long time, and assist the development of a player's positional understanding.

24 ♖b3+ ♔f8
25 exf6 ♕xf6
26 ♖h1 ♘xd4
27 ♘xd4 ♖xd4!

27...♕xd4 28 ♖h7 ♕xe3 29 ♖xe3 is dangerous for Black.

28 ♖h7

In the event of 28 ♕xd4? ♕xd4 29 ♖e2 (29 ♖xb7 ♖g5+ 30 ♖h3 ♖c4!) 29...♖g5+ 30 ♖f1 (30 ♖h3 ♖g7) the most quickly decisive is 30...♖c1+ 31 ♖e1 ♖d2!

28 ... ♖d5
29 ♖xb7

In the resulting complicated position the chances of the two sides would appear to be equal, as was confirmed by the further course of the game.

29...♖g8 30 ♖h3 ♖c2 31 ♖b8+ ♖f7 32 ♖h7+ ♖e6 33 ♖b3 ♖xf2+ 34 ♖xf2 g5 35 ♖h5 ♖g6 36 ♖h1 ♖f5?! (36...♖d3) 37 ♖d1 ♖e5 38 ♖xd5?! (38 ♖f1!) 38...♖xd5 39 ♖xd5+ ♖xd5 40 ♖xa7 ♖xb2 41 ♖e3 e5 42 ♖xg5 e4 43 f4 ♖c1 44 ♖e2 ♖c6 45 ♖d1 ♖xf4. Draw.

Studying the books of the classics, I noticed how differently they sometimes handled one and the same question of chess strategy. Thus Aron Nimzowitsch usually based his play on exploiting weak squares in the opponent's position. Whereas Richard Réti, by contrast, often prepared an attack on the most fortified point, and aimed first to weaken and then destroy it, which would lead to the collapse of the entire opposing defence. For example, after 1 ♘f3 d5 Nimzowitsch would develop his bishop at b2, in order to control the weakened dark squares (in particular e5). But Réti would undermine the d5 strongpoint by c2–c4, and attack it again by developing his bishop at g2.

Fortunately, already then I had sufficient sense to avoid asking foolish questions: who is right, which strategy is better. I realised



that, depending on the specific circumstances, preference can be given to either one strategy, or the other, and sometimes they have to be combined. Even so, Nimzowitsch's ideas were closer to me, more understandable, and I often employed them. The first time I succeeded with a Réti-style plan – a systematic attack on the most fortified point in the opponent's position – was in a game played in a simultaneous display with clocks.

Vasyukov – Dvoretzky
Moscow 1965

1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 ♘c3 ♕b4
4 e5 ♘e7
5 a3 ♕xc3+
6 bxc3 c5
7 a4 ♘bc6
8 ♘f3 ♖a5
9 ♕d2 ♕d7
10 ♕e2

Later 10 ♕b5 became popular.

10 ... c4

10...f6 was preferable, since now White had the possibility of a strong knight manoeuvre: 11 ♘g5! h6 (11...0–0 12 0–0 f6 13 exf6 ♖xf6 14 ♕g4) 12 ♘h3 0–0–0 13 ♘f4 ♖b8 14 0–0 ♘c8 (better 14...g6) 15 ♘h5! ♖hg8 16 ♕g4!, and Black has no active counterplay (Kavalek–Uhlmann, Interzonal Tournament, Manila 1976).

11 0–0 f6
12 exf6!? gxf6
13 ♖e1

Theory recommends playing for the restriction of the enemy pieces: 13 ♘h4!? 0–0–0 14 ♕h5. In reply Black usually sacrifices a pawn with 14...♘g6!?

13 ... 0–0–0
14 ♕f1 ♘g6

Black achieved an excellent position in the game Suetin–Uhlmann (Berlin 1967) by

continuing 14...♘f5 15 ♖c1 h5 16 ♖a3 ♖dg8 17 ♖ab1 ♘d8 18 ♖b4 ♕c6.

15 g3 ♘ce7

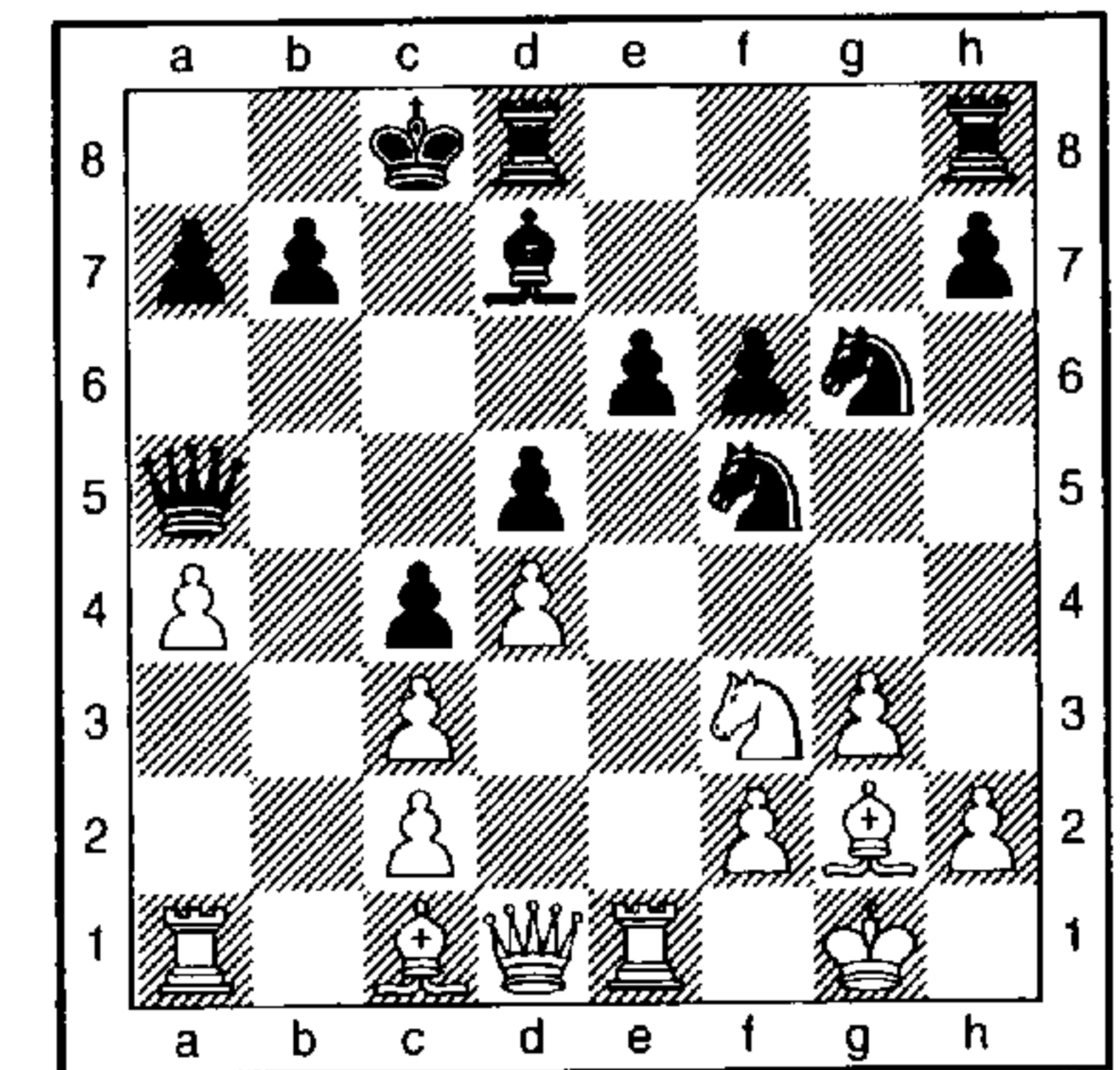
Now the opponent has to reckon with the manoeuvre ...♘f5–d6–e4.

16 ♕c1 ♘f5

17 ♕g2

17 ♕h3 was more logical, when, I remember, I was considering the positional pawn sacrifice 17...♘d6!? 18 ♕xe6 ♘e4 19 ♕xd7+ ♖xd7.

93



17 ... h5

Black is planning to throw all his forces against the bulwark of White's position – the g3 pawn. First he plays ...h7–h5–h4xg3. Then follows ...♘d6–e4 and ...f6–f5. The pawn at f5 supports the knight at e4 and is ready to attack g3, by making another step forward.

18 ♕a3 ♖a6

It is important to retain the d6 square for the knight.

19 a5 h4
20 ♕c5 hxg3
21 hxg3 ♘d6
22 ♘d2 f5!
23 ♕xd6

Otherwise the knight will go to e4.



23 ... ♖xd6
 24 a6?! b6
 25 ♖f3?!

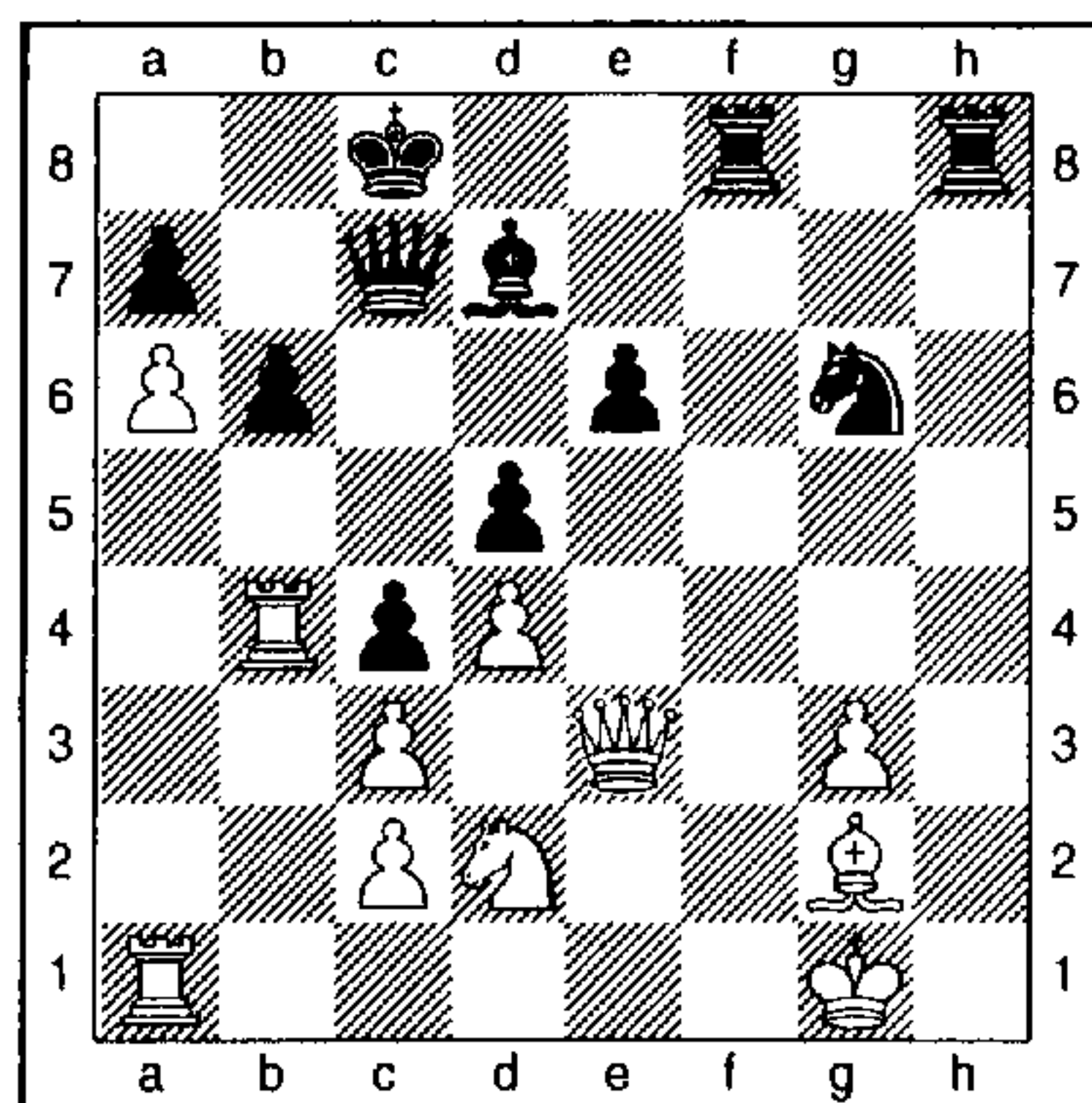
A one-move trap typical of a simultaneous display: White creates the threat of 26 ♖xc4. The immediate 25 ♖xc4 dxc4 26 ♖f3 (hoping for 26... ♖b8 27 ♖xe6!) would have been refuted by 26... ♖dg8! Stronger was 25 f4 or 25 ♖f3.

25 ... ♖c7!

The threat is parried, and now White can no longer defend against ...f5-f4.

26 ♖eb1 f4
 27 ♖b4 fxg3
 28 fxg3 ♖df8
 29 ♖e3

94



Q 6-49. What should Black play?

The g3 pawn has been transformed into an obvious weakness. The knight is transferred to f5, in order to threaten it once again, and if necessary a rook can also take part in the attack along the g-file.

29 ... ♖e7!

The triumph of Black's plan! His position is strategically won.

30 ♖f1 ♖f5 31 ♖f4 ♖xf4 32 ♖xf4 (32 gxf4 ♖hg8 or 32... ♖e3) 32... ♖xg3 33 ♖xf8+

♖xf8 34 ♖f3 ♖c7 35 ♖g2 ♖f5 36 ♖f2 b5 37 ♖b1 ♖b6 38 ♖a1 ♖c8 39 ♖f1 e5 40 dxe5 ♖h4 41 ♖h2 ♖xf3 42 ♖xf3 ♖g4 43 ♖g3 ♖xf3 44 ♖f1 ♖xa6 45 ♖xf3 ♖xf3+ 46 ♖xf3 ♖b6 47 ♖f4 ♖c7 48 ♖f5 ♖d7. White resigns.

The most memorable win for me was in a simultaneous display with clocks against the world champion.

**Petrosian – Dvoretsky
 Moscow 1965**

1 e4 c5
 2 ♖f3 e6
 3 ♖c3 ♖c6
 4 ♖b5 ♖ge7
 5 0-0 a6
 6 ♖e2?!

A strange move. Why then was the bishop brought out to b5? To provoke the development of the knight at e7 (instead of f6)? I don't think that the knight is less well placed here.

6 ... d6
 7 d3 g6
 8 ♖g5

8 d4!? came into consideration. After Black has committed himself to the development of his bishop at g7, it makes sense for White to play for the weakness of the d6 pawn, by opening the d-file.

8 ... ♖g7

Black has successfully arranged his pieces – you have already seen this scheme of development (with reversed colours) in the game Dvoretsky–Timoshchenko, analysed at the very start of the book. This set-up is discussed in more detail in the book *Opening Preparation*, in my lecture about the construction of an opening repertoire.

9 ♖c1 ♖d4
 10 ♖h6 0-0

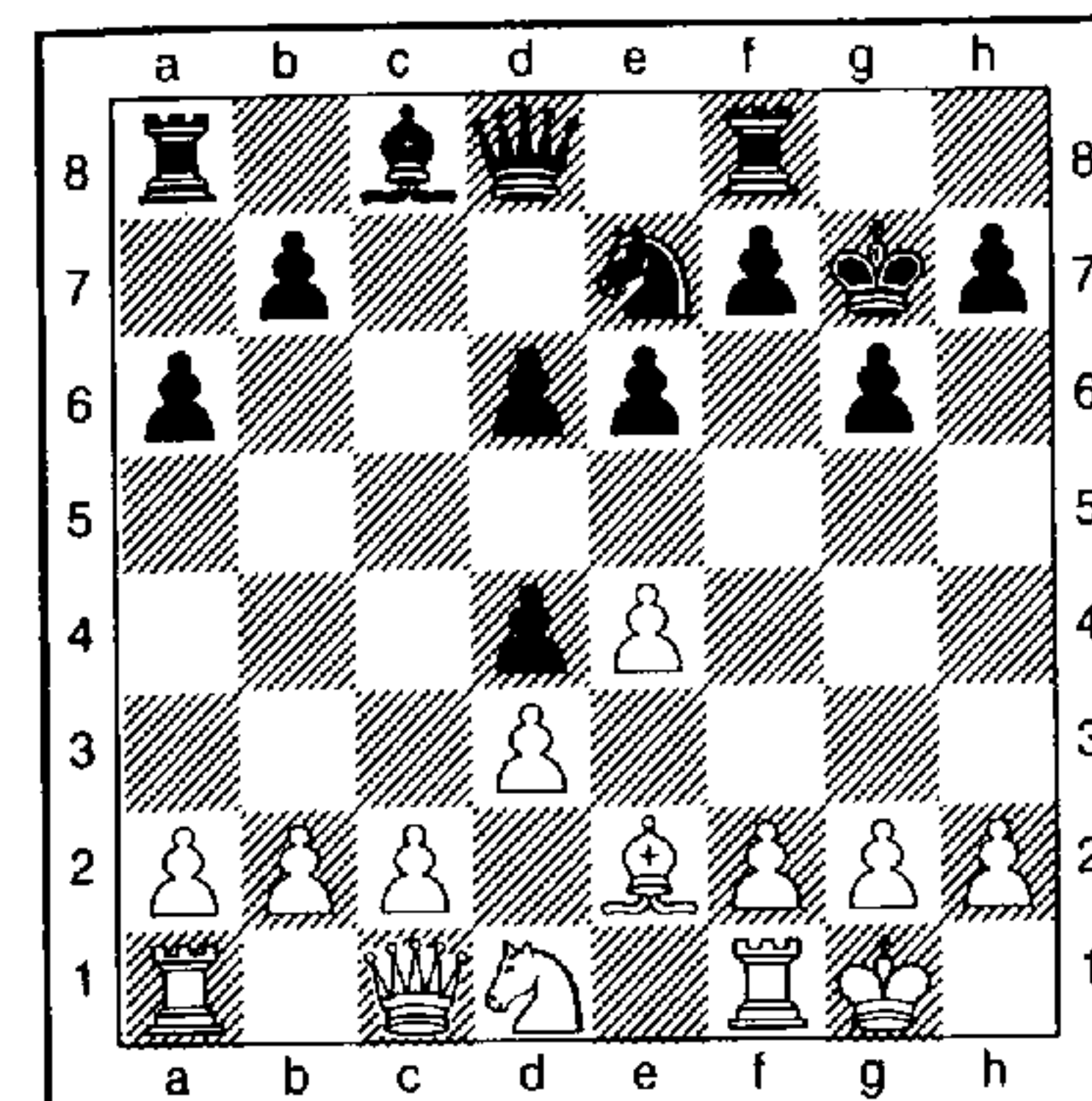
There was hardly any point in allowing the sharpening of the play after 10... ♖xh6 11



♖xh6 ♖xc2 12 ♖ac1 ♖d4 13 ♖g7 ♖g8 14 ♖xh7.

11 ♖xd4 cxd4
 12 ♖xg7 ♖xg7
 13 ♖d1

95



The standard plan in such positions (which, incidentally, was carried out in the aforementioned Dvoretsky–Timoshchenko game) is to rearrange the pawns on dark squares: ...e6-e5 and ...f7-f6. But I improved on this by employing (probably, for virtually the first time in my life) 'prophylactic thinking'. What here does White want to play? Most probably f2-f4, but pawn moves on the queenside must also be considered. The undermining move c2-c3 is pointless – Black easily defends his d4. But c2-c4 has its point – by getting rid of his backward c2 pawn, White strengthens his queenside, which is where I would like to develop an offensive.

13 ... b5!
 14 c4?!

I guessed right!

14 ... bxc4
 15 ♖xc4 e5

Black has opened the b- and c-files, and soon they will be occupied by his rooks.

16 f4 ♖e6
 17 ♖b4 ♖c8

18 ♖f2 ♖c6
 19 ♖d2

Q 6-50. What should Black do now?

Let us again make use of prophylactic thinking. It is likely that White would not be averse to getting rid of his bad bishop, by playing 20 ♖g4 (in the absence of the g7 bishop, the reply ...f7-f5 weakens the kingside). For example, 19... ♖a5?! 20 ♖xa5 ♖xa5 21 fxe5 dxe5 22 ♖g4!? (22 ♖fc1!?) 22...f5 23 exf5 gxf5 24 ♖f3 with chances for both sides.

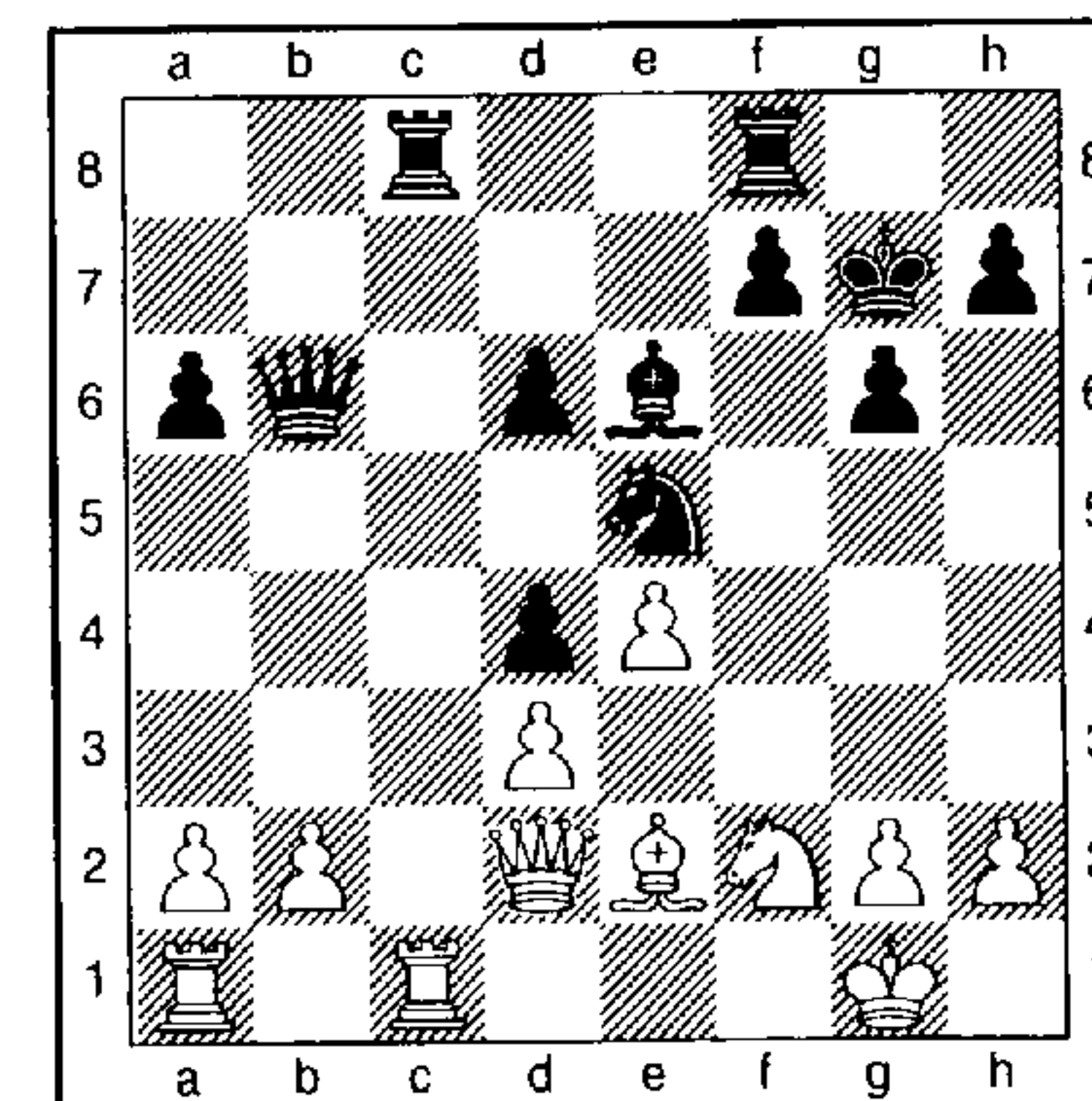
19 ... exf4!
 20 ♖xf4 ♖e5

Black has carried out a favourable transformation of the position. He has worsened his pawn formation somewhat, but on the other hand he has gained the excellent square e5 for his knight. The opponent does not have time for 21 ♖g4, since he has to parry the threatened rook invasion at c2.

21 ♖fc1 ♖b6
 22 ♖d2

I will initially annotate the final part of the game as I understood it at the time.

96



22 ... ♖xc1+

Black exploits the fact that the enemy rook is tied to the defence of the a2 pawn.

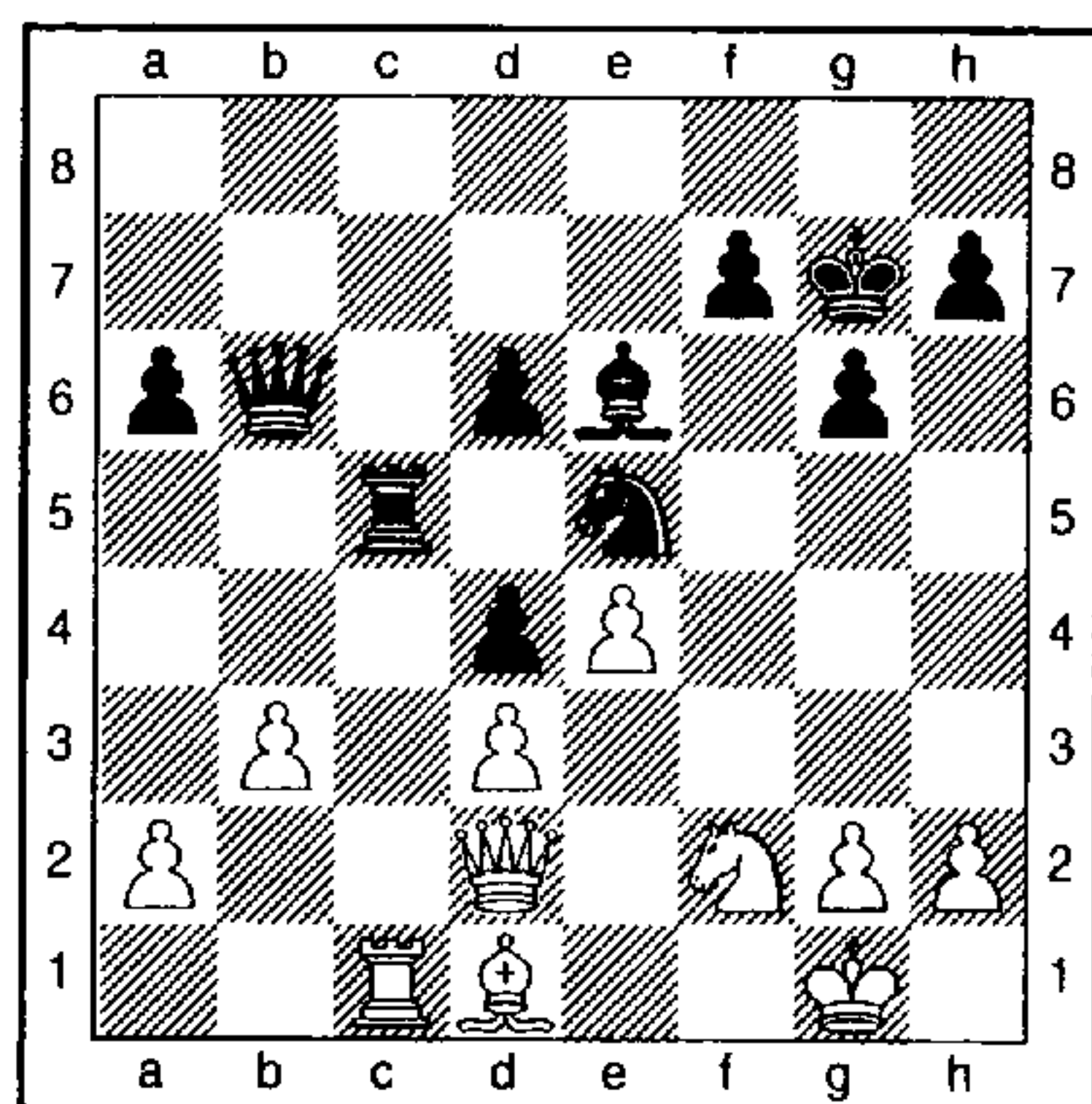


23 ♖xc1 ♜c8
 24 ♕d2 ♜c5
 25 ♙d1 ♜b5!

It is important to force b2–b3, weakening the dark squares and restricting still further the mobility of the white bishop. The opponent has no choice, since the pawn sacrifice 26 ♙b3 ♙xb3 27 axb3 ♜xb3 does nothing to ease his position.

26 b3 ♜c5
 27 ♜c1?

97



Q 6-51. What should Black play?

Aiming for simplification, Tigran Petrosian overlooked a tactical subtlety.

27 ... ♜xc1
 28 ♕xc1 ♕a5!

A decisive double attack! I win a pawn, and with it the game.

29 ♔f1 ♕xa2
 30 b4?

A customary 'simul blunder' in a lost position.

30 ... ♕xf2+!

White resigns. A good positional game!

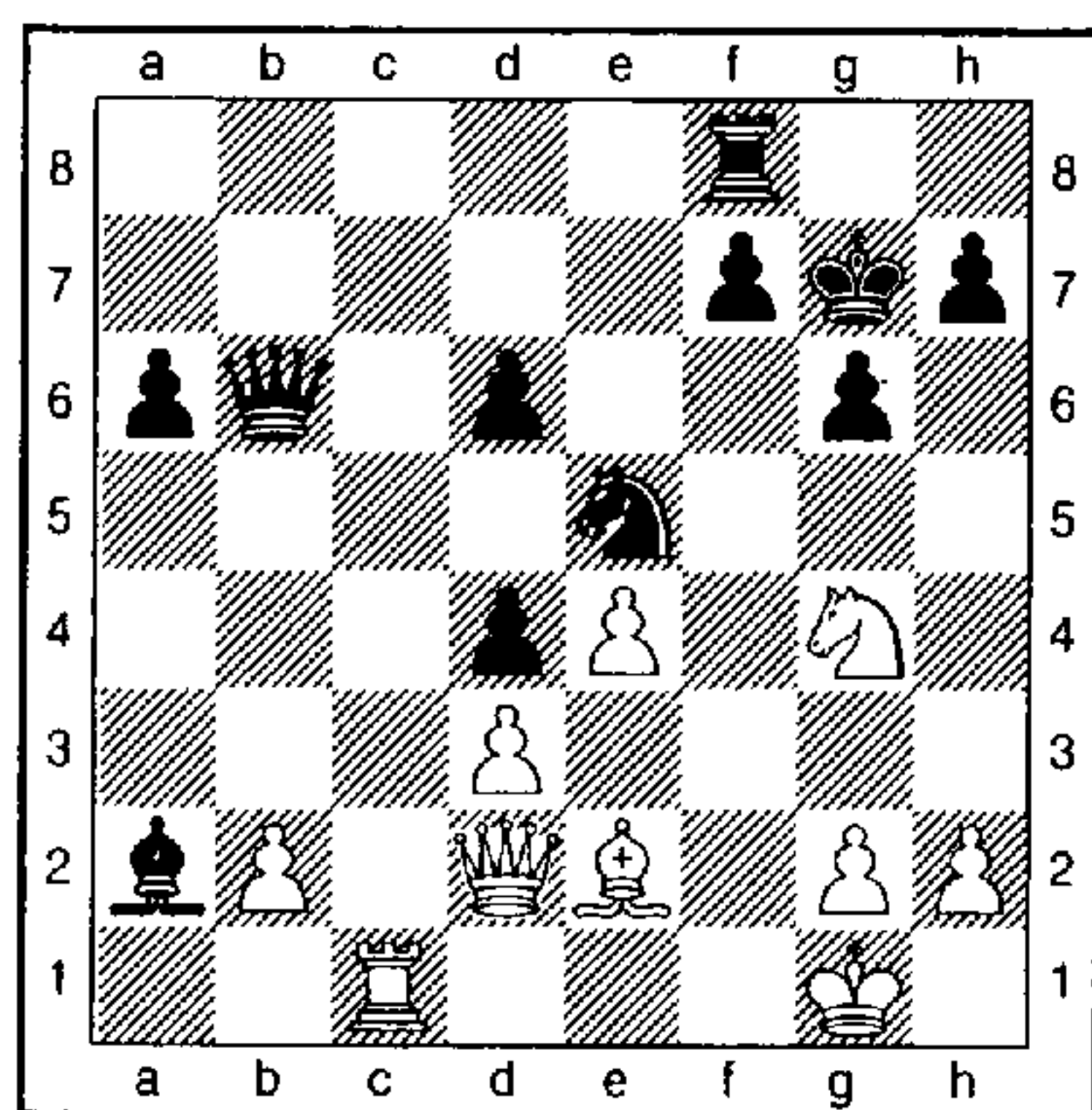
Two decades later, when looking for appropriate teaching material, I returned to my game with Petrosian. As a trainer, I was then interested in the problems of defending

difficult positions and the conversion of an advantage. Examining the concluding moves from this point of view, I saw that my actions were not irreproachable, since they allowed the opponent to obtain some counter-chances.

Let us turn to the position in the last diagram but one. In the positional sense the move ...a6–a5 is advantageous to Black. The fact that time for it was not in fact found casts some doubts on the technical mastery of the black player. In the game, it is true, the absence of the pawn from a5 proved advantageous to me, allowing me to land the decisive blow 28...♕a5!, but this occurred almost by accident.

Instead of exchanging rooks, 22...a5!? could have been played, and if 23 b3, then either 23...♕b4, or 23...♜c5 (after the immediate 22...♜c5 White has the reply 23 b4). If 23 a3, then 23...♜b8 or 23...♜c5 followed by 24...♜b8 is strong (24 b4 axb4 25 axb4 ♜b5). But why is 22...♜xc1+ bad? – after all, White is forced to recapture with his queen. The point is that he is not forced to. Serious consideration should have been given to the pawn sacrifice 23 ♜xc1!? ♙xa2, and now not 24 b3? ♙xb3 25 ♜b1 a5, but 24 ♘g4!

98



Q 6-52. What should Black play?



Mate is threatened, and 24...f6? does not help in view of 25 ♕h6+ ♔g8 26 ♘xf6+! ♜xf6 27 ♜c8+. After 24...♘g4 25 ♙xg4 the departure from the board of the knight from e5, which was cementing Black's position together, gives the opponent chances of exploiting the vulnerability of the doubled pawns at d6 and d4. To 25...♜b8 there is the reply 26 b4!, while if 25...♙b3, then 26 ♜a1 with the idea of 27 ♕a5. After 25...♙e6 26 ♙xe6 fxe6 27 h3 the position of the black king is really too open.

I think that the only real possibility of playing for a win is by avoiding the exchange of knights: 24...♘d7! and then 25...♙e6. But is it easy to decide on this?

But whereas 22...♜xc1!? and 22...a5!? are objectively roughly equivalent, my next move 23...♜c8?! was a significant inaccuracy. Since it was advantageous to provoke the weakening b2–b3, this should have been done immediately, by playing 23...♜b8! A possible variation is 24 b3 ♜c8 25 ♕d2 a5 26 ♜c1 ♕b4! Black later had to waste time on the manoeuvre ...♜c8–c5–b5–c5, and this

delay gave the opponent certain counter-chances.

After 23...♜c8?! 24 ♕d2 the move 24...♜c5 was apparently correct. In the event of 24...a5 25 ♙d1 (with the idea of 26 ♙b3) 25...♜c5 Black would have had to reckon with 26 h3! ♜b5 27 ♙b3!? ♙xb3 (27...a4!? is more dangerous, and if 28 ♙xe6 ♜xb2) 28 axb3 ♜xb3 29 ♕xa5 ♕xa5 (29...♜xb2 30 ♕xb6 ♜xb6 31 ♜a4) 30 ♜xa5 ♘xd3 (30...♜xb2 31 ♜d5 with a draw) 31 ♘xd3 (31 ♜a3!?) 31...♜xd3 32 ♜d5.

Instead of the losing move 27 ♜c1? White should have tried 27 b4!? (it was there that the absence of Black's ...a6–a5 would have told) 27...♜c3 28 ♜b1 with the idea of 29 a4. Then 28...a5 29 b5 ♜a3 30 ♜b2 is hardly dangerous for him. After 28...♜a3 he has a choice between 29 ♜b2 and 29 ♙b3. The latter move 29 ♙b3!? involves a little trap: 29...♙xb3 30 axb3 ♘c6? 31 ♘g4! If Black replies with the prophylactic 30...h5, then 31 ♘h3!? comes into consideration. Although White's position remains anxious, he can nevertheless continue the struggle.



What is Meant by a Strategic Plan?

A unified plan in a game of chess is a sum of strategic operations, following one after another, carried out each time in accordance with an individual conception, stemming from the demands of the position on the board.

Alexander Kotov

Znosko-Borovsky – Alekhine

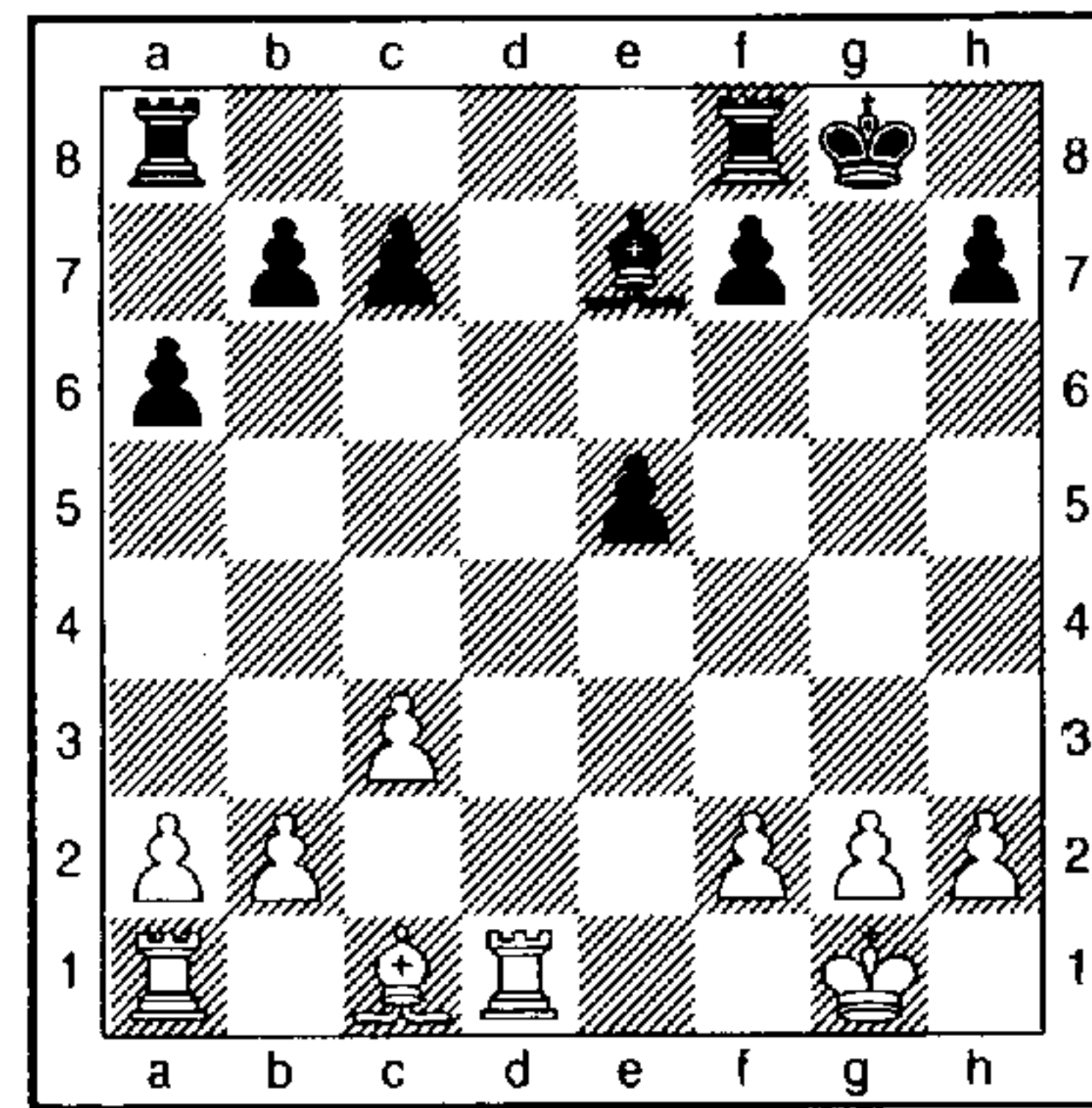
Paris 1933

1 e4 e5 2 d4 f3 c6 3 b5 a6 4 a4 f6 5 0-0 d6 6 c3 d7 7 e1 e7 8 d4 0-0 9 b2 e8. 'An original move, the idea of which is to keep the central position intact by means of ...d7 and utilise – after ...f7-f6 – the queen's bishop on the e8-h5 diagonal' – Alekhine. Modern theory has a sceptical regard for Alekhine's opening plan on the basis of the game Smyslov-Lyublinsky (17th USSR Championship, Moscow 1949), which continued 10 b3 (less accurate is 10 f1 exd4 11 cxd4 d5 12 e5 e4) 10...d7 11 f1 f6 (no better is 11...h8 12 e3 f6 13 f5) 12 e3 e7 13 g4 g6 14 g3 e7 15 h4 f6 16 g5 h6 17 xf6+ xf6 18 Wh5! h8 19 dxe5 dxe5 20 e3, and Black has a difficult position.

Eugene Znosko-Borovsky, fearing his formidable opponent, did not even try to fight for an advantage, and carried out a series of exchanges with the aim of gaining a draw as soon as possible. Alas, he did not achieve his objective – excessive caution, transforming into passivity, rarely produces good results.

10 xc6 xc6 11 dxe5 dxe5 12 xe5 xe4 13 xe4?! (13 Wb3!) 13...Wxd1! (13...xe4? 14 d7!) 14 xf6+ gxf6 15 xd1 fxe5.

99



6-53. What should White play?

Here is Alexander Alekhine's commentary.

'The endgame position thus reached is by no means as easy to conduct – especially for the first player – as it looks. Black's plan of campaign – which will prove a complete success – is divided into the following parts:

- 1) Exchange of one pair of rooks.
- 2) Bringing the king to e6 where he will be protected from a frontal attack by the e-pawn and be used to prevent the entrance of the remaining white rook at d7.
- 3) By operating with the rook on the open g-file and advancing the h-pawn, force the opening of the h-file.
- 4) After this the white king – and also eventually the bishop – will be kept busy in order to prevent the intrusion of the black rook at h1 or h2.



5) In the meantime Black, by advancing his a- and b-pawns will sooner or later succeed in opening one file on the queenside. And

6) as at that moment the white king will still be on the other wing, the first player will not dispose of sufficient forces to prevent the final intrusion of the enemy's rook on his first or second rank.

Granted that if White had, from the beginning, realised that there actually existed a danger of losing this endgame, he probably would by extremely careful defence have saved it. But as it happened, Black played with a definite plan, and White only with the conviction that the game must be a draw. And the result was a very instructive series of typical stratagems much more useful for inexperienced players than the so-called "brilliances".

16 e6

'Certainly not an error but a proof that White has not grasped as yet the spirit of the position. Otherwise he would not have been anxious to 'force' the exchange of one pair of rooks which, as mentioned, is quite welcome to the opponent.'

16 ... f8
17 f1

'A more aggressive line starting with 17 g4 would perhaps be advisable. But Black would also in this case maintain opportunities for complicating matters after 17...f6 followed by ...f7-e6 etc.'

17 ... f5

After this events developed in accordance with the plan described by Alekhine.

18 xd8+ xd8 19 g3 f7 20 e3 h5 21 e2 e6 22 d1 g8! 23 f3 (23 h4 g4 with the threat of 24...f4) 23...h4 24 f2 hxg3 25 hxg3 h8 26 g1 d6 27 f1 g8 28 f2 b5! 29 b3?! a5! 30 g2 a4 31 d2 (31 b4 c8!? 32 c5 a8! followed by ...a6-c6) 31...axb3 32 axb3 a8 33 c4 a3! 34 c5 e7 35 b2 b4 36 g4 f4 37 f1

a1+ 38 e2 c1 39 a2 c3 40 a7 d7 41 b7 xb3 42 b8 b2+ 43 f1 b3 44 g1 c6 45 f1 d5 46 b7 e4! 47 fe4+ xe4 48 xc7 f3 49 xe7 xf2+ 50 e1 b2 51 b7 c2 52 c6 g3! (52...c1+ 53 d2 b1? 54 xb1 xb1? 55 c7) 53 c7 f3 54 d1 xc7 55 xb2 f2. White resigns.

The world champion drew an impressive and, it has to be admitted, rather instructive picture of the play in this ending. The procedures used by Black are typical of such positions, and should be in the arsenal of every player. Here there is the centralisation of the king, and the customary (with this pawn structure) advance of the h-pawn, and the exchange of one (just one!) pair of rooks while retaining the second pair on the board, and, finally, the skilful use of the 'principle of two weaknesses'. Take note: after tying down the opponent's forces on the kingside, Alekhine began operations on the queenside; but then, after achieving complete success there, by creating a passed b-pawn, he did not queen it, but again switched to the kingside, breaking through there with his king. An excellent instructional game!

And yet two points in the commentary cause perplexity.

1) The initial position of the endgame seems equal. But Alekhine tries to persuade us that he has an advantage (remember: White 'probably would by extremely careful defence have saved the endgame').

2) Black's multi-stage plan looks impressive. Applicable to this game is a well-known maxim of Emanuel Lasker: 'An intelligent plan makes heroes of us, and absence of plan cowards and dullards'. But did Alekhine really foresee the entire plan from the very start? Was it possible, was it advisable, and should we aim for this in our own games?

Let us return to the position in the diagram. After 16 e6 f8 Black wants to create a strong set-up in the centre by ...f7-f5 and ...f7-e6. Is it not possible for his opponent



to frustrate this idea? 17 g4, the move mentioned by Alekhine, only partially solved this problem.

Let us check the sharper continuation 17 f4! How should Black react? 17...e4?! is unfavourable in view of 18 f5!, separating the enemy pawns and making the e4 pawn vulnerable. If 17...d6 there follows 18 fxd6 cxd6 19 d1 with a good position, and after 17...c5+ 18 f1 e3 19 g3 or 19 e2 it is Black who has to fight for equality.

It was also possible to play f2-f4! a move earlier, with the bishop on c1.

This short analysis gives an answer to both of the questions that interest us.

1) The position was indeed equal.

2) There was no point in compiling a multi-stage plan, since the very first strong move of the opponent was capable of radically changing the character of the play and forcing completely different problems to be solved.

Here it is appropriate to give the opinion of David Bronstein.

'From Tarrasch was born the impression, which exists to this day, of so-called consistent games, in which one of the players carries out, from beginning to end, a logical plan like the demonstration of a geometric theorem. I think that such games between equal opponents do not happen, and commentators, who are often the winners, pass off the desirable for the actual.'

The above game, of course, was by no means one between equal opponents, but even so it is probable that Alekhine did not draw up the entire plan immediately. He would have decided on the immediate positional operations that he needed to carry out. Later in our eyes (and in his too) they were fused into a unified strategic plan.

I suggest casting a critical glance at another well-known game by Alekhine.

Alekhine – Asztalos

Kecskemet 1927

1	♖f3	♜f6
2	c4	e6
3	d4	d5
4	♙g5	h6
5	♙xf6	♚xf6
6	♜c3	c6
7	♚b3	♜d7

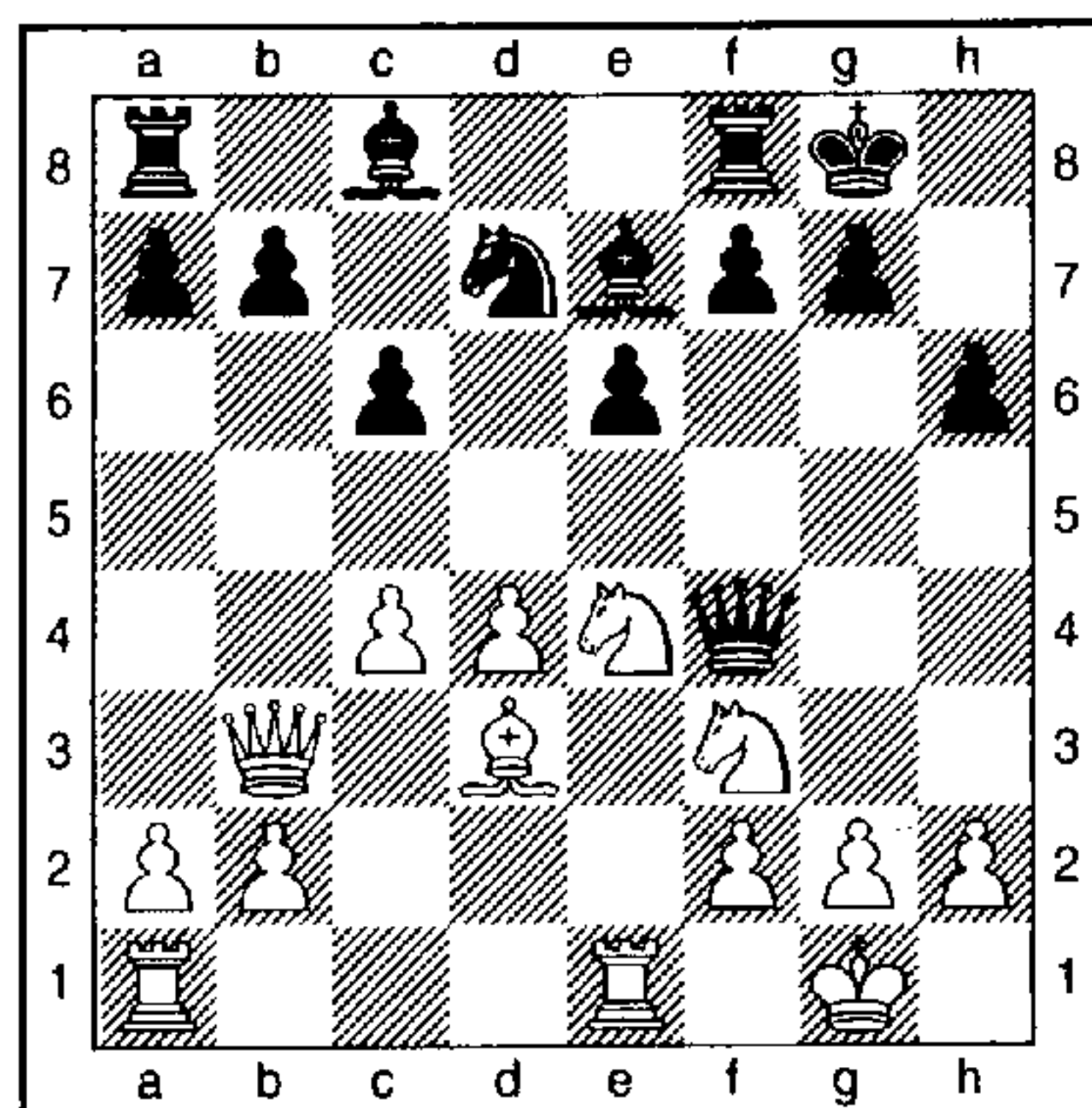
In our day the interesting move 7...a5!? has come into fashion. If 8 e4 there follows 8...dxe4 9 ♜xe4 ♙b4+, while if 8 a3 a4 9 ♜xa4 dxc4. A fierce battle for the initiative from the very first moves is typical of modern chess.

8	e4	dxe4
---	----	------

According to theory, 8...dxc4 9 ♚xc4 e5 or 9 ♙xc4 b5 10 ♙d3 e5 is preferable.

9	♜xe4	♚f4
10	♙d3	♙e7
11	0-0	0-0
12	♙fe1	

100



12	...	♙d8
----	-----	-----

We have already seen a similar pawn formation in our analysis of the Yusupov-Dolmatov game in the chapter 'Which pawn to advance?'. Black chooses the defensive arrangement of his forces that is standard for



such positions: ...♙d8, ...♜f8, and ...♙d7-e8. It is acceptable (Alekhine himself with Black acted in roughly this way in his win in the 11th game of the 1927 match against Capablanca), but nevertheless rather passive. White's spatial advantage gives him the better chances. Modern theory recommends 12...c5!? 13 ♙ad1 cxd4 14 ♜xd4 ♜c5 15 ♜xc5 ♙xc5.

13	♙ad1	♚c7
14	♜g3	

The game Smyslov-Petrosian (Moscow 1971) went 14 ♙b1 ♜f8 15 c5!? b5 16 ♜g3 ♙d7 17 ♚e3 ♙e8 18 ♙c2 a5 19 a3 ♙a7 20 h4 ♚b8 21 h5 with advantage to White.

14	...	♜f8
15	♚c3!	

Threatening 16 ♜h5 and 17 d5.

15	...	a5
16	a3	a4
17	♜e5	

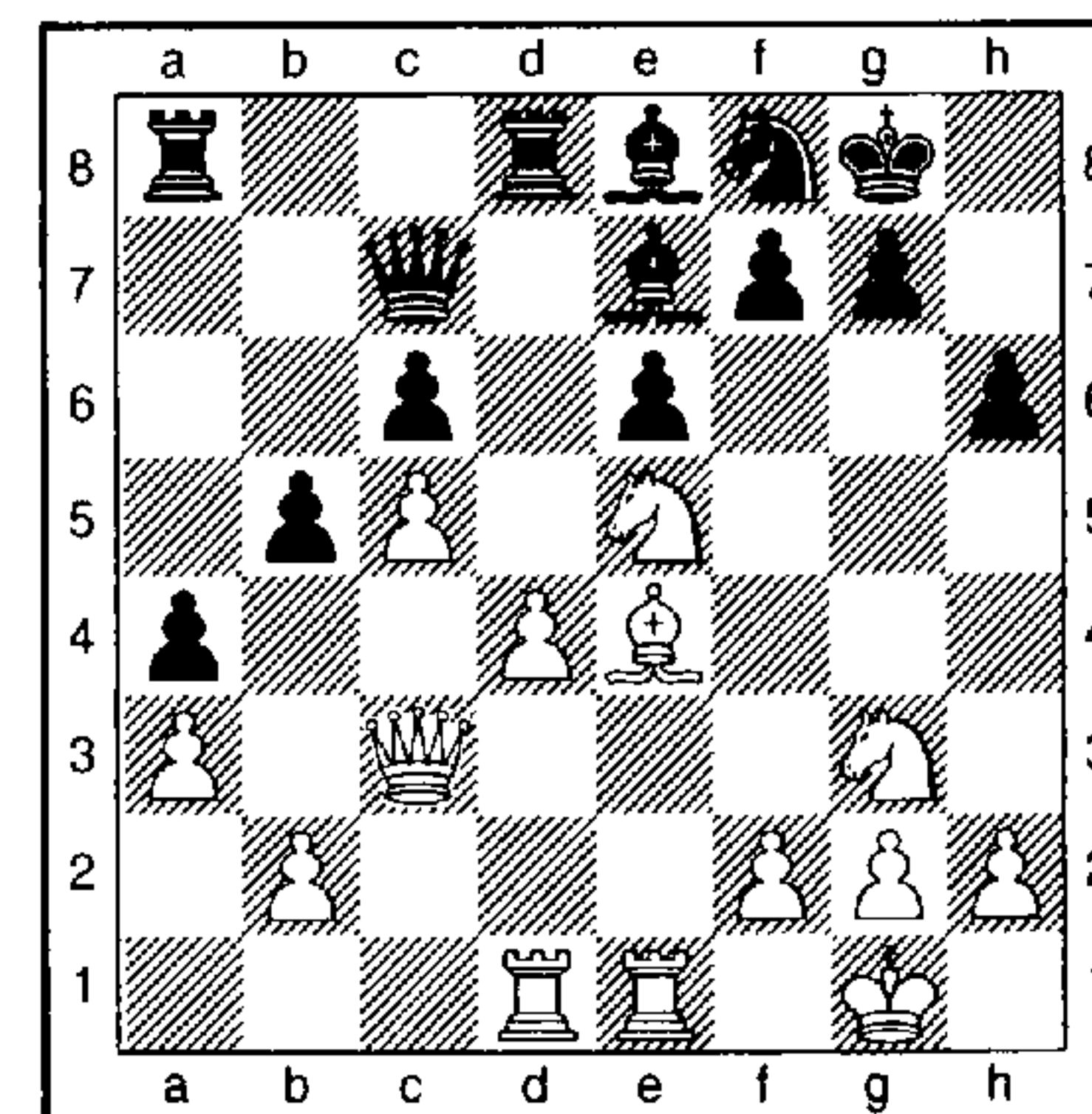
17 ♜h5? ♚a5.

17	...	♚a5
18	♚c1	♙d7
19	c5!	b5

Otherwise 20 ♜c4.

20	♙e4	♚c7
21	♚c3	♙e8

101



Q 6-54. How can White increase the pressure?

White has an undisputed advantage, but the opponent's position is still fairly solid. It is possible to try breaking up the enemy defences in various ways; the question is, which of them is the most effective.

22	♜e2
----	-----

Alekhine awards this move an exclamation mark and makes the following comment:

'The beginning of a series of manoeuvres against which Black has no adequate defence. In the first place White threatens to bring his knight via c1 to b4 and in order to prevent this Black is forced to exchange his valuable knight, thus leaving his h7 defenceless.'

In this case the description of White's plan looks far more plausible than in the previous example. Only the immediate positional operation is indicated – the manoeuvre of the knight to b4, creating a threat to the c6 pawn. However, if Black will indeed be forced to exchange his knight at f8, it is also not hard to predict the subsequent events: the creation of threats along the b1-h7 diagonal, forcing ...g7-g6, and then the advance of the h-pawn.

But once again, there is no point in planning so far ahead. It is more important to concentrate on the initial moves – to check whether the manoeuvre intended by White achieves its aim, and whether he does not have a more energetic plan.

In Alekhine's comment there is an evaluation that is highly important for such positions: it emphasises the enormous significance for defence of the knight at f8. This suggests the idea of avoiding the exchange of knights, and of ensuring the safety of the c6 pawn by ...f7-f6. This can be done immediately, but it is probably better to await the arrival of the white knight at d3. It seems to me that Black's position remains defensible – while



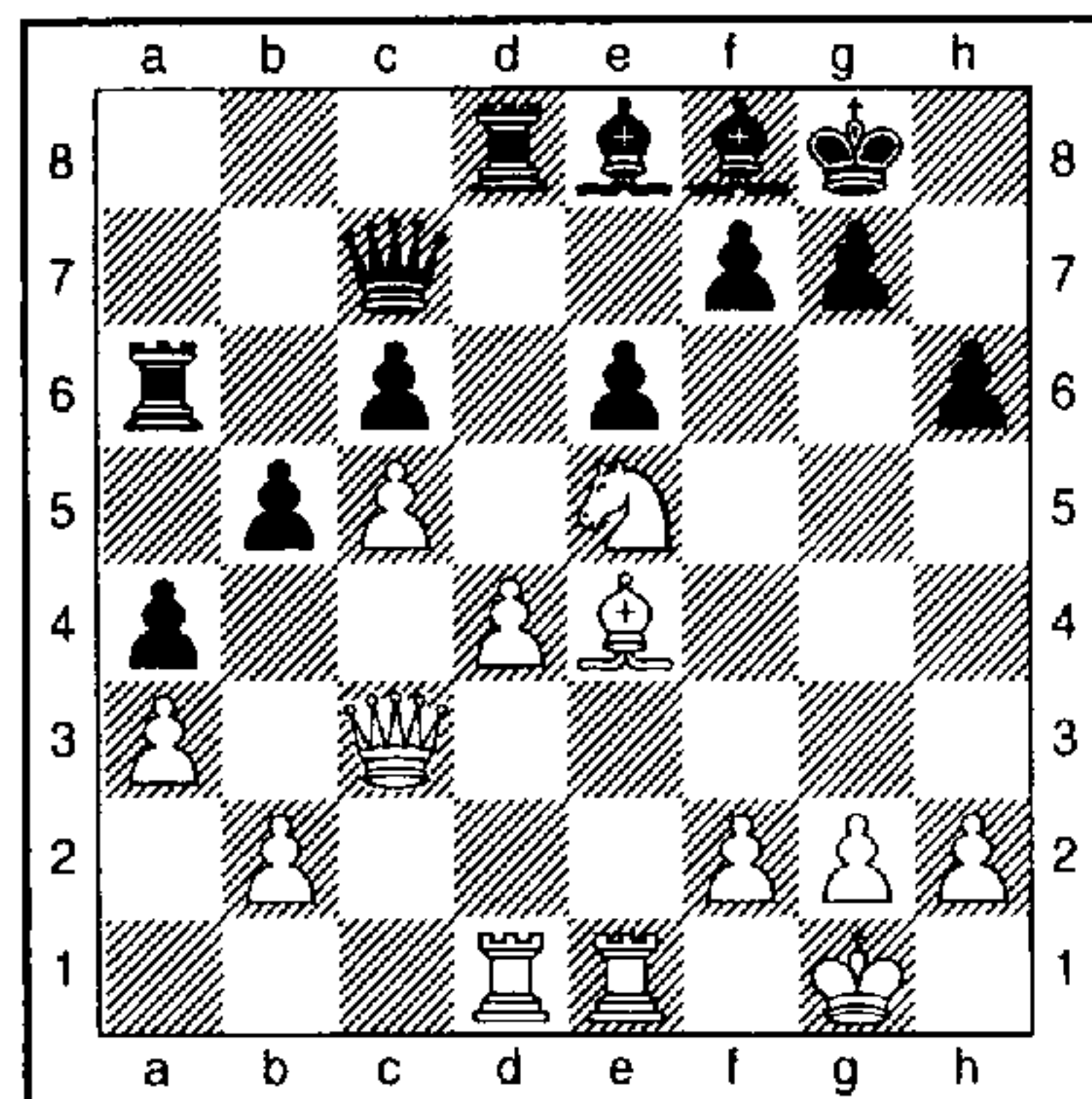
the knight at f8 is alive, the weakness of the e6 pawn is quite tolerable.

In view of this, another, more direct plan of attack deserves serious consideration: 22 f4!? (with the threat of 23 f5). If 22...f6 there follows 23 d3 (again threatening 24 f5) 23...f5 24 e3 e6 25 d5 e5 26 dxe5 followed by e6d6, or 23...g6 24 b4 ac8 25 e3! It is also possible to delay slightly the carrying out of this idea, by playing 22 f3!? e6a6 (22...ac8? 23 e6c6!) 23 e3, and then 24 f4 or 24 d3.

In good positions there are sometimes several tempting plans, and it is not so easy to choose the strongest. However, when dealing with an opponent who is significantly inferior in class, almost any sensible plan will be successful.

22	...	aa6?!
23	d3c1	d7?
24	dxd7	xd7
25	d3	d8
26	d5	f8

102



27 h4!

Black wanted to play ...g7-g6 and ...e7. Now if 27...g6 there follows 28 h5 g5 29 f4!

27	...	aa8
28	e6b1	h5

29 e2c2 g6 30 h5 was threatened.

29	e3f3	g6
30	g4!	hxg4
31	exg4	g7
32	e6a2!	b4
33	e6c4!	

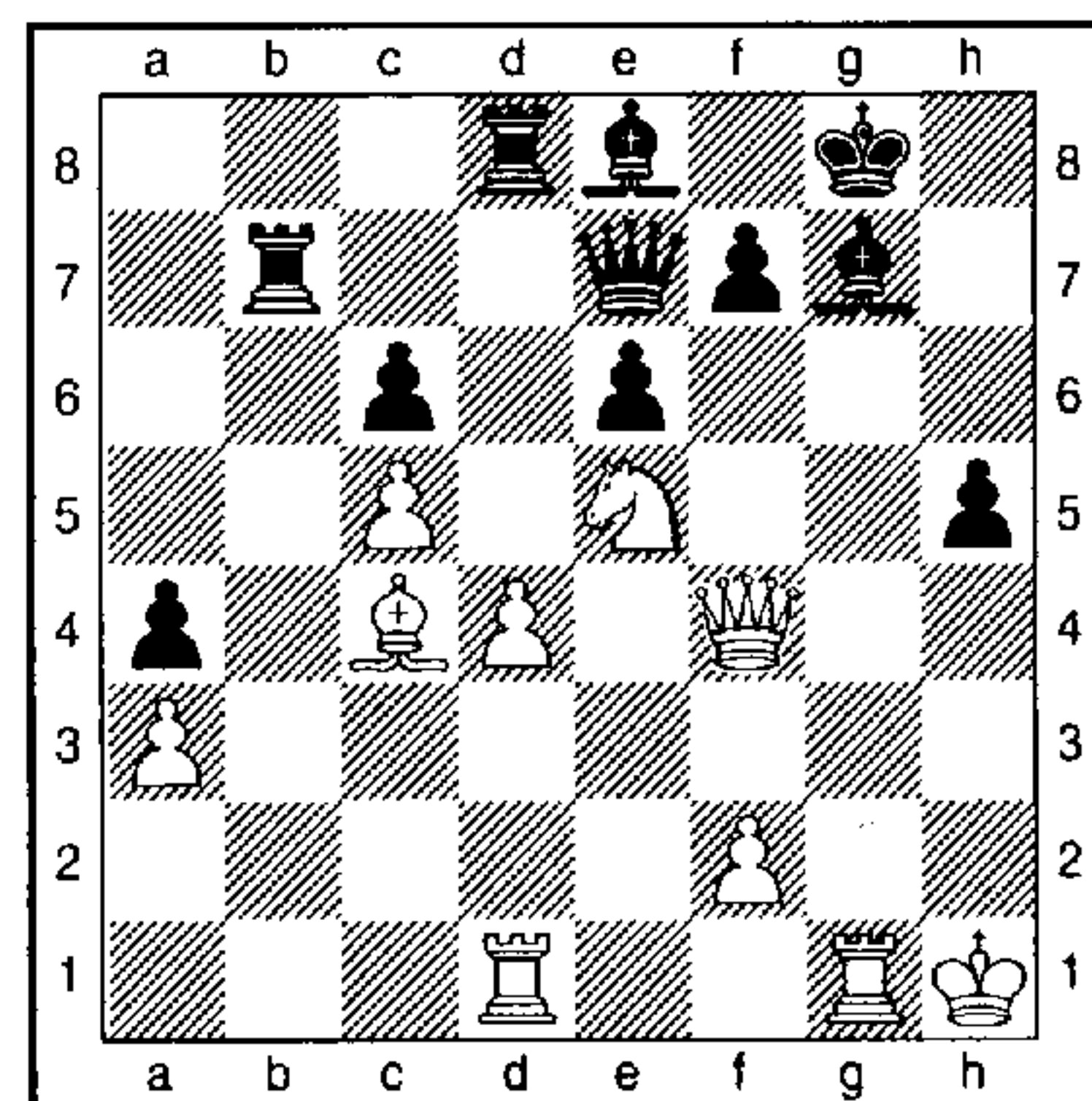
Alekhine skilfully combines attacking and prophylactic moves. By placing his bishop on a2, he prevented a possible ...f7-f5, and now he avoids the variation 33 axb4 a3 34 bxa3 xa3, in which the opponent's pieces become slightly more active.

33	...	bxa3
34	bxa3	ea5
35	ea4!	

Less good was 35 d5xg6 e6xd4! or 35 h5 gxh5 36 e6xh5 e6xd4!

35	...	ec7
36	ef4	ab8
37	h5!	gxh5
38	eh1	b7
39	eg1	e7

103



40	exg7+!	eg7
41	eg1+	eh7
42	exf7!?	

Black resigned, in my view, slightly prematurely. Alekhine gives the variation 42...ef7 43 e6d3+ eg6 44 e6xg6+ e6xg6 45 e6xg6!



exg6 46 e4+ eg7 47 e5+!, 'and Black, after a few further checks, would inevitably lose one of his rooks.'

It is said that, when on one occasion Alexander Tolush's opponent announced: 'It is mate in seven moves', the grandmaster calmly replied: 'Please show me!'. The opponent became flustered and was unable to give the mate. Here too, I should like to appeal to Alekhine with the same request - I do not see how after 47...eg6 48 e6xg6+ eg7 White can pick up a rook.

After the Russian edition of my book had already been published, I came across the classic monograph by Vladimir Vukovic 'The Art of Attack in Chess'. It turned out that the Yugoslav analyst had come to the same conclusion: Alekhine's variation was incorrect! Instead he examined three alternative ways of conducting the attack.

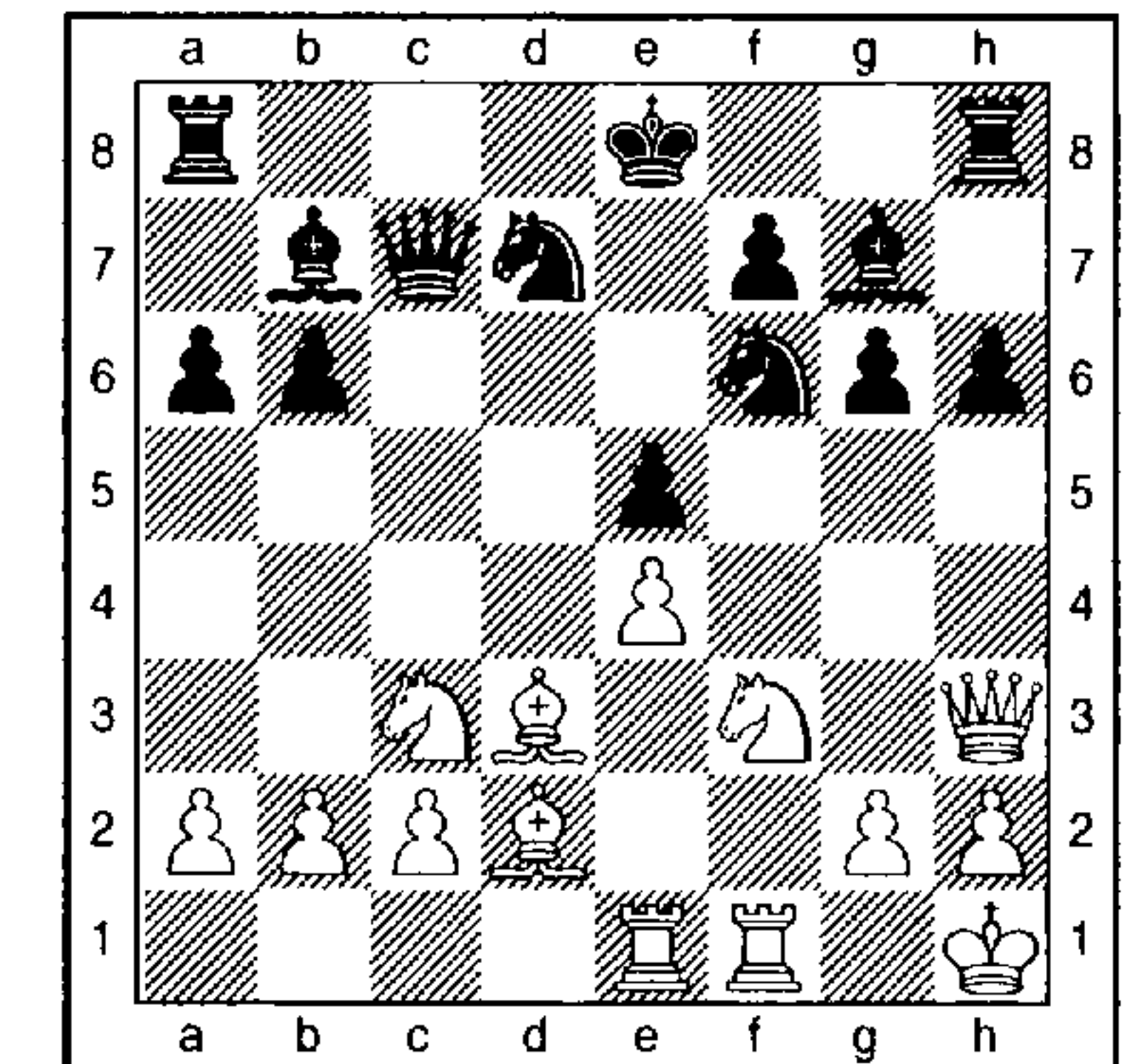
1) 45 e6f6!? (instead of 45 e6xg6?) 45...eg8 46 e6xg6 - in Vukovic's opinion, here White still has to solve some difficult technical problems; grandmaster John Nunn, by contrast, judges White's position to be easily won.

2) 44 eg5!? (instead of 44 e6xg6+) with a double attack on g6 and d8: 44...exd3 45 eg8+ eh6 46 eh8+ eh7 (46...e7 47 ef8+) 47 ef8+ eg7 (47...e7 48 ef4+) 48 exg7 exg7 49 ef6+ eg6 50 exd8 - I also considered this variation. It seems to me that White should win, although Vukovic's opinion is that the position is drawn. For my part I should add that a similar situation with queen against rook and bishop, but in a more favourable version for White, arises after 44 exg6! e6xg6 45 eg5 e6xd3 46 exh5+ eg7 47 eg5+ ef7 48 exd8.

3) 42 eg3! (instead of 42 d5xf7 - it turns out that it is also possible to manage without the knight sacrifice) 42...ef8 (42...ef6 43 e6d3+) 43 eh4! f6 (43...e5 44 dg4; 43...db8 44 ef6 e6b3 45 e6xe6) 44 e6d3+ eh8 45 e6g6! e6h7 46 e6xh7 eh7 47 dg4 eg6 (47...eh8

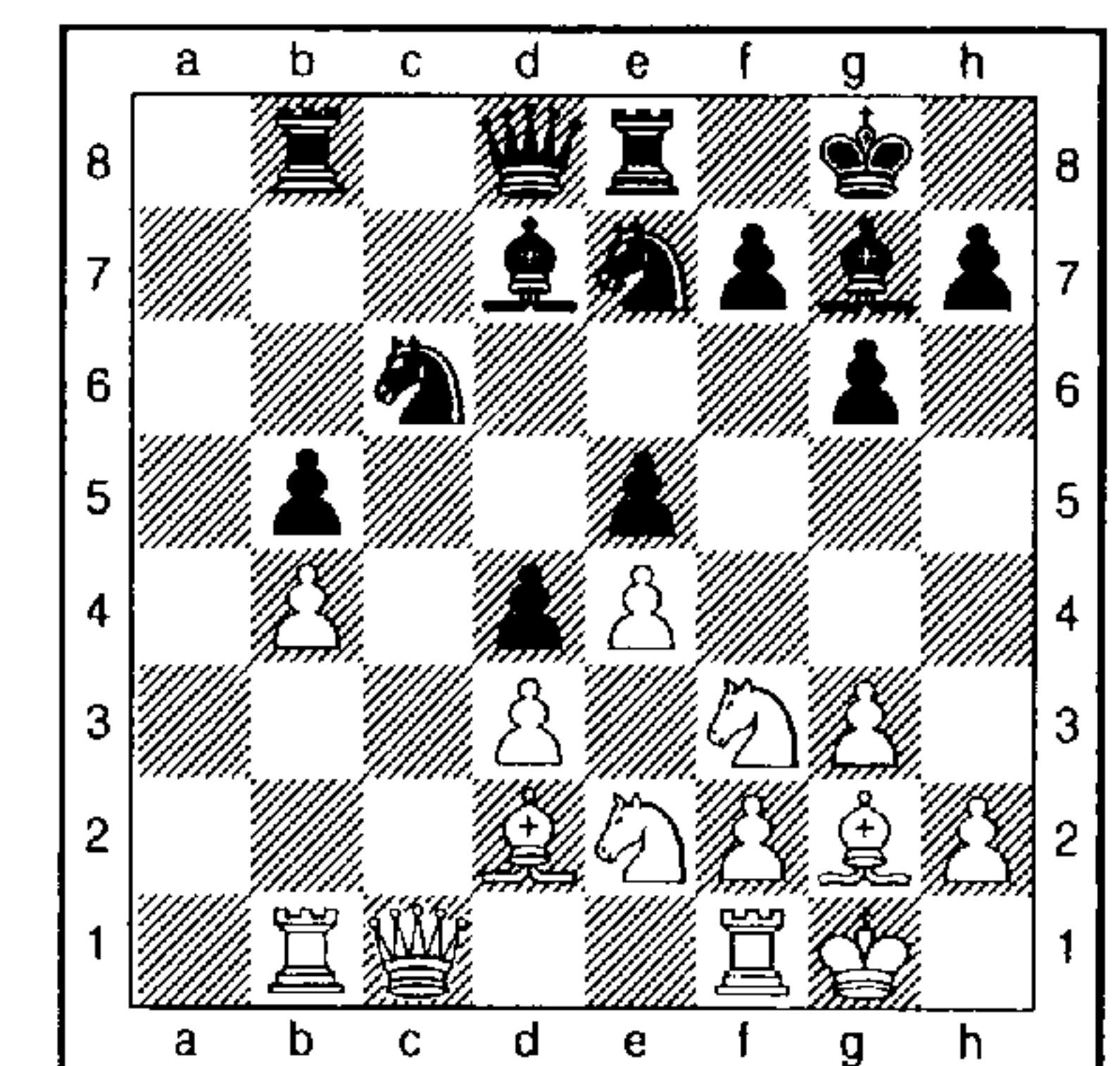
48 d5xf6 e6f7 49 d5xh5) 48 d5xf6+ eg7-49 d5xh5+.

E 6-22
104



White to move

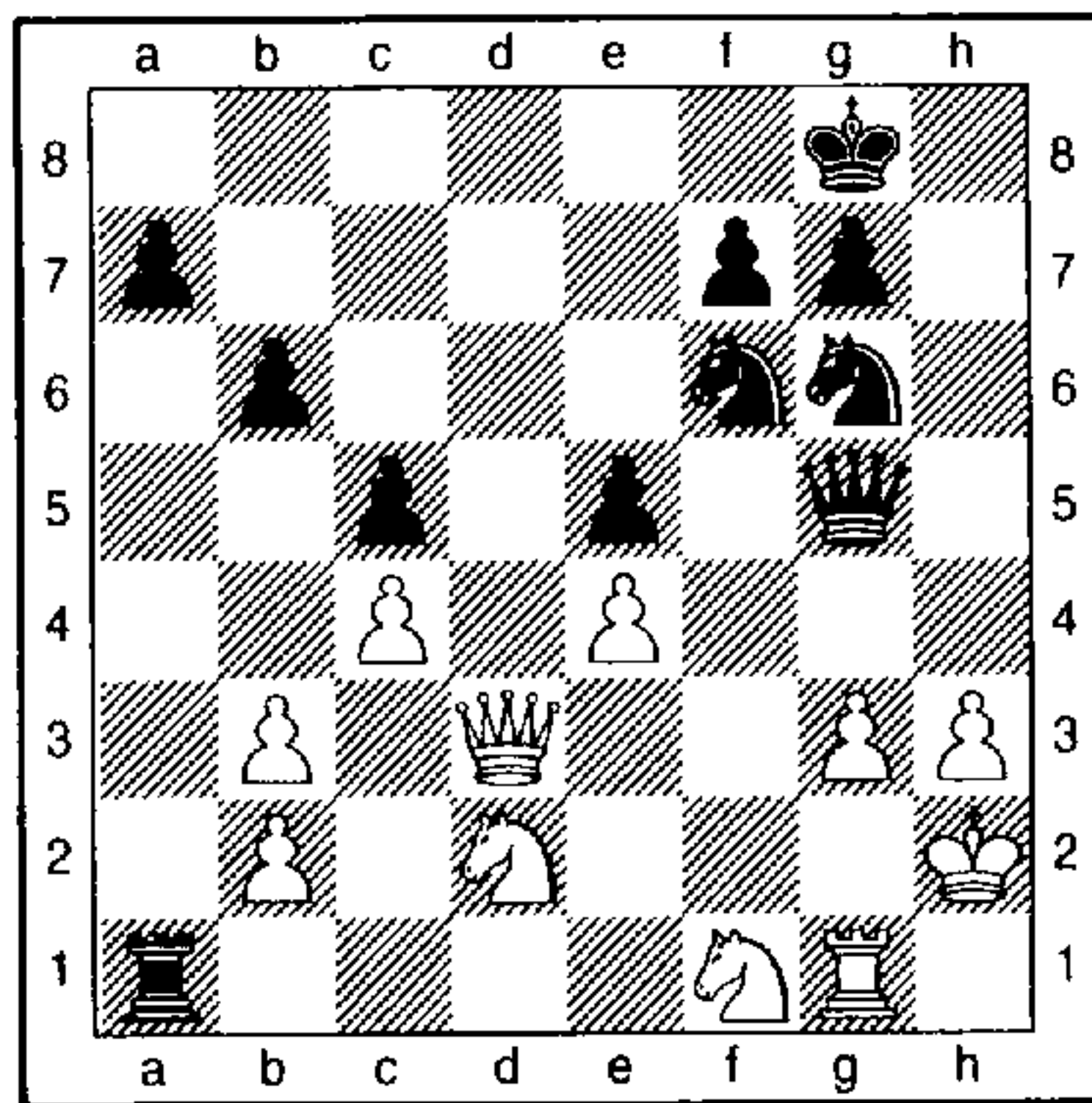
E 6-23
105



Black to move

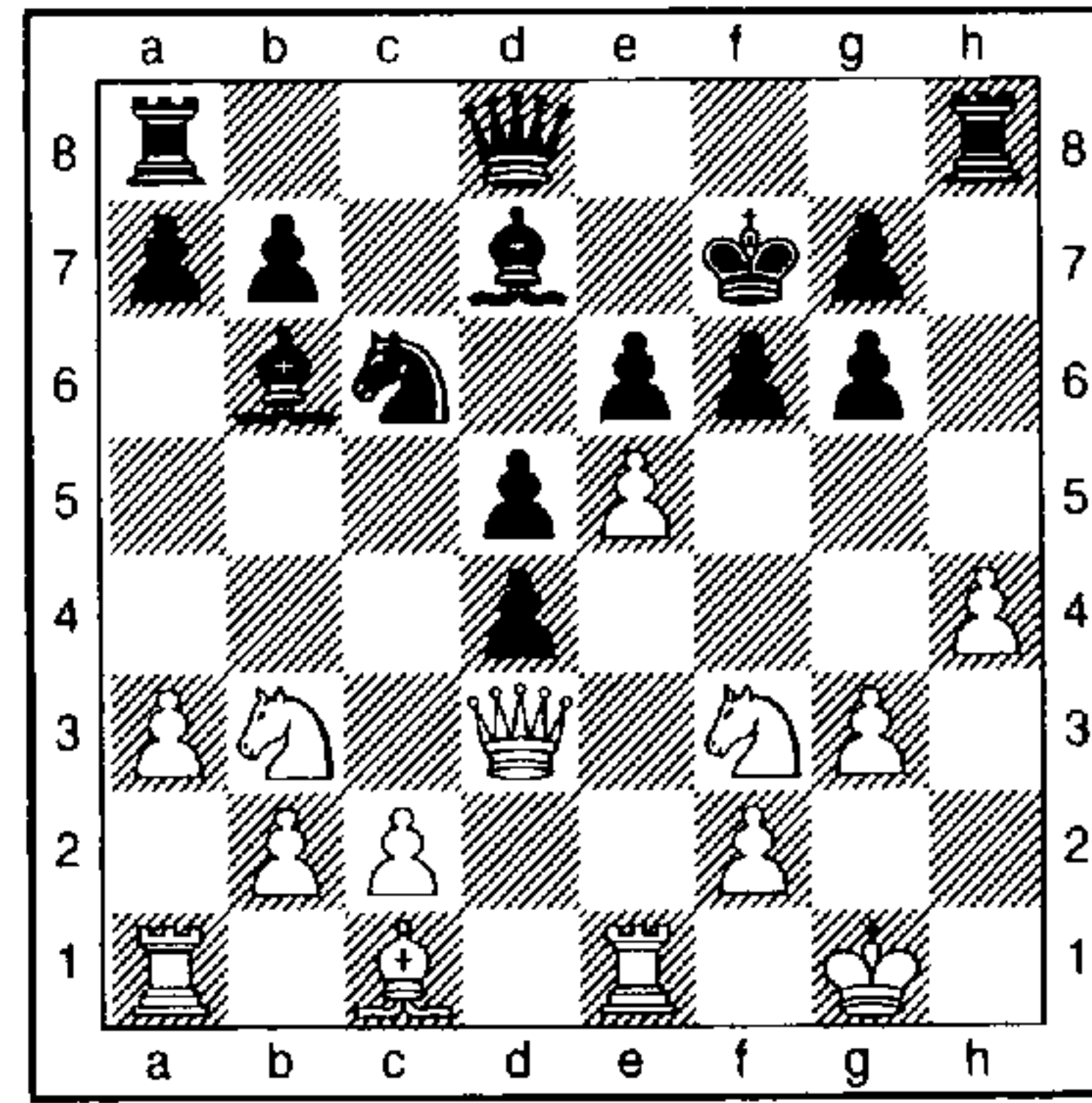


E 6-24
106



Black to move

E 6-25
107



Black to move



How a Plan is Formulated

*That which attracts me now in chess, I would call a creative moment.
This is the search for a correct way, a decisive idea, illustrating the beauty of logic.*

Svetozar Gligoric

The planning of your play is something that can be discussed for a long time, but as it is said, 'it is better to see something once, than to hear it a hundred times'. The game which we will now examine is an excellent example of the strategic preparation of an attack on the opponent's king.

Yusupov – Van der Wiel

Olympiad, Luzern 1982

- | | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| 1 | c4 | ♘f6 |
| 2 | ♘c3 | e6 |
| 3 | e4 | |

The so-called 'Mikenas-Flohr Variation'. For many long years it was not popular, but in our days, in searching for an appropriate opening weapon, players have restored many variations that seemed to have been shelved for ever.

In 1975 I took part in the final of the USSR Championship. Preparing for one of my games, I looked to see how theory suggested countering the 3 e4 variation. The book recommendations did not look convincing to me, and I came to the conclusion that this variation was not so harmless. A couple of rounds later I successfully employed it against the future winner of the championship, Tigran Petrosian, and from that time I included it in my opening repertoire. Soon it also began to be regularly employed by other players.

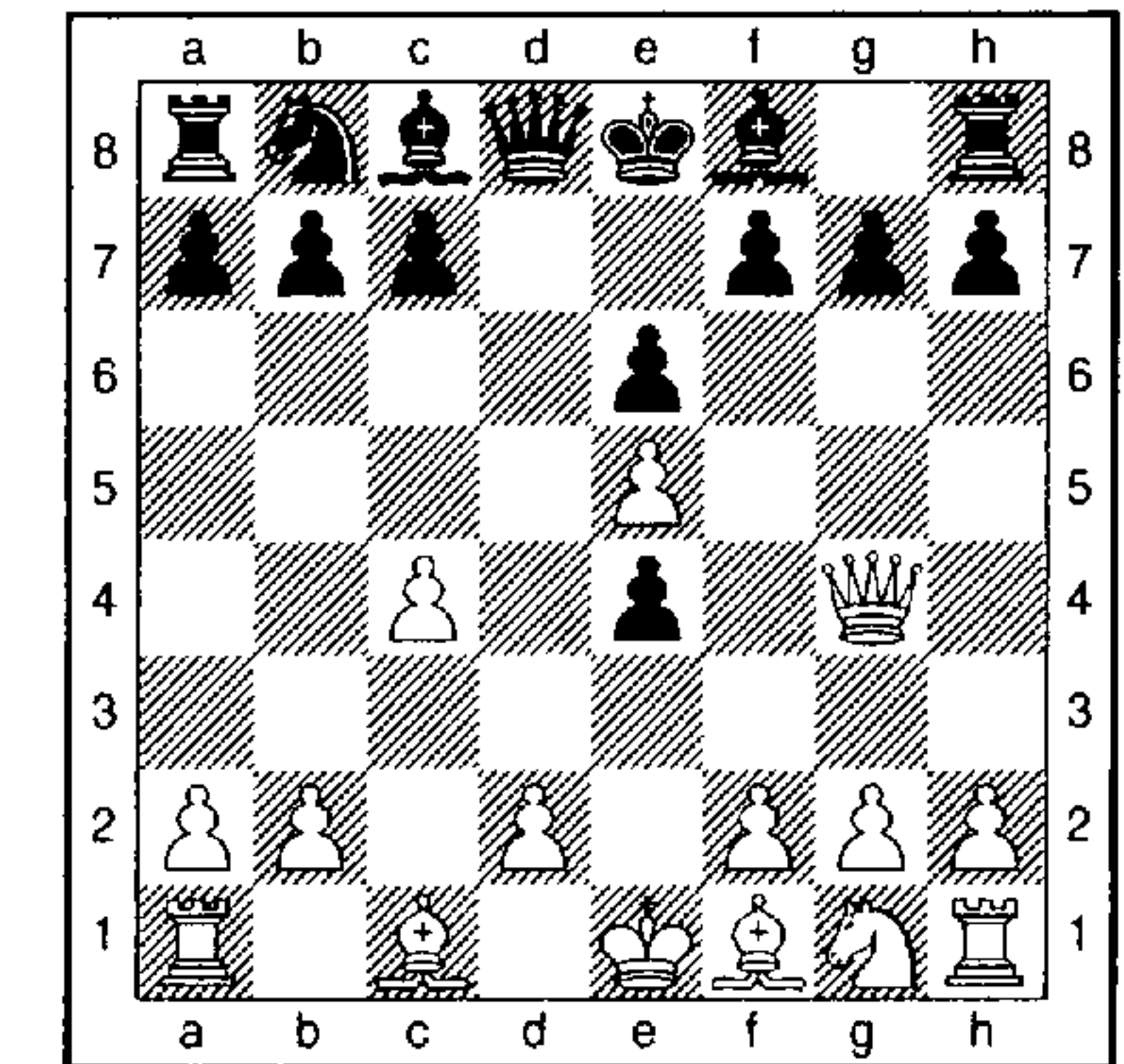
- | | | |
|---|-----|----|
| 3 | ... | d5 |
|---|-----|----|

After 3...c5 4 e5 ♘g8 White should aim for a pawn sacrifice: 5 ♘f3 ♘c6 6 d4 cxd4 7 ♘xd4 ♘xe5 8 ♘db5.

- | | | |
|---|----|-----|
| 4 | e5 | ♘e4 |
|---|----|-----|

The main line of the variation is 4...d4 5 exf6 dxc3 6 bxc3 ♖xf6 7 d4. But now, if he wishes, White can win a pawn by 5 ♘xe4 dxe4 6 ♖g4. It was this that was played in the afore-mentioned Dvoretzky–Petrosian game (Yerevan 1975).

108



The world champion acted in accordance with the recommendation of theory at that time: 6...♘c6 (6...♖d4? 7 ♘f3) 7 ♖xe4 ♖d4 8 ♖xd4 ♘xd4, but after 9 ♘d1! ♘c5 (9...♘d7 10 d3 0–0–0 11 ♘e3) 10 d3 ♘c6 (if 10...♘f5 I was intending 11 g4 ♘h6 12 h3 ♘xf2 13 ♘g2 followed by ♘f3, ♖e2 and d3–d4) 11 f4 f6 12 ♘f3 fxe5 13 fxe5 0–0 14 ♘e2 ♘d7 15 ♘d2 ♘e8 16 ♘g5! ♘d7 (16...♘d4 17 ♘g4 ♖ae8 18 ♘c3 White gained a serious advantage.



Later two stronger plans were found for Black, promising him real compensation for the sacrificed pawn:

(a) 6...c5!? 7 ♖xe4 ♘c6 8 ♘f3 ♗d7 followed by ...b7-b6 and ...♙b7;

(b) 6...♙d7!? 7 ♖xe4 ♙c6 8 ♗e3 (8 ♗e2?! ♙c5!) 8...♘a6!

Since then, not wishing to become involved in double-edged complications, White has increasingly often avoided the win of material in favour of a solid continuation which retains for him some spatial advantage.

5 ♘f3 ♘c6
6 ♙e2

In principle, it is desirable to play d2-d4 and ♙d3, but in the event of the immediate 6...♙b4. Therefore he first completes his kingside development and only then advances his queen's pawn. There you have White's first strategic plan. It is possible, of course, to express it differently: 'the first step of his future plan', but for the moment neither we, nor the players, know anything about the further steps.

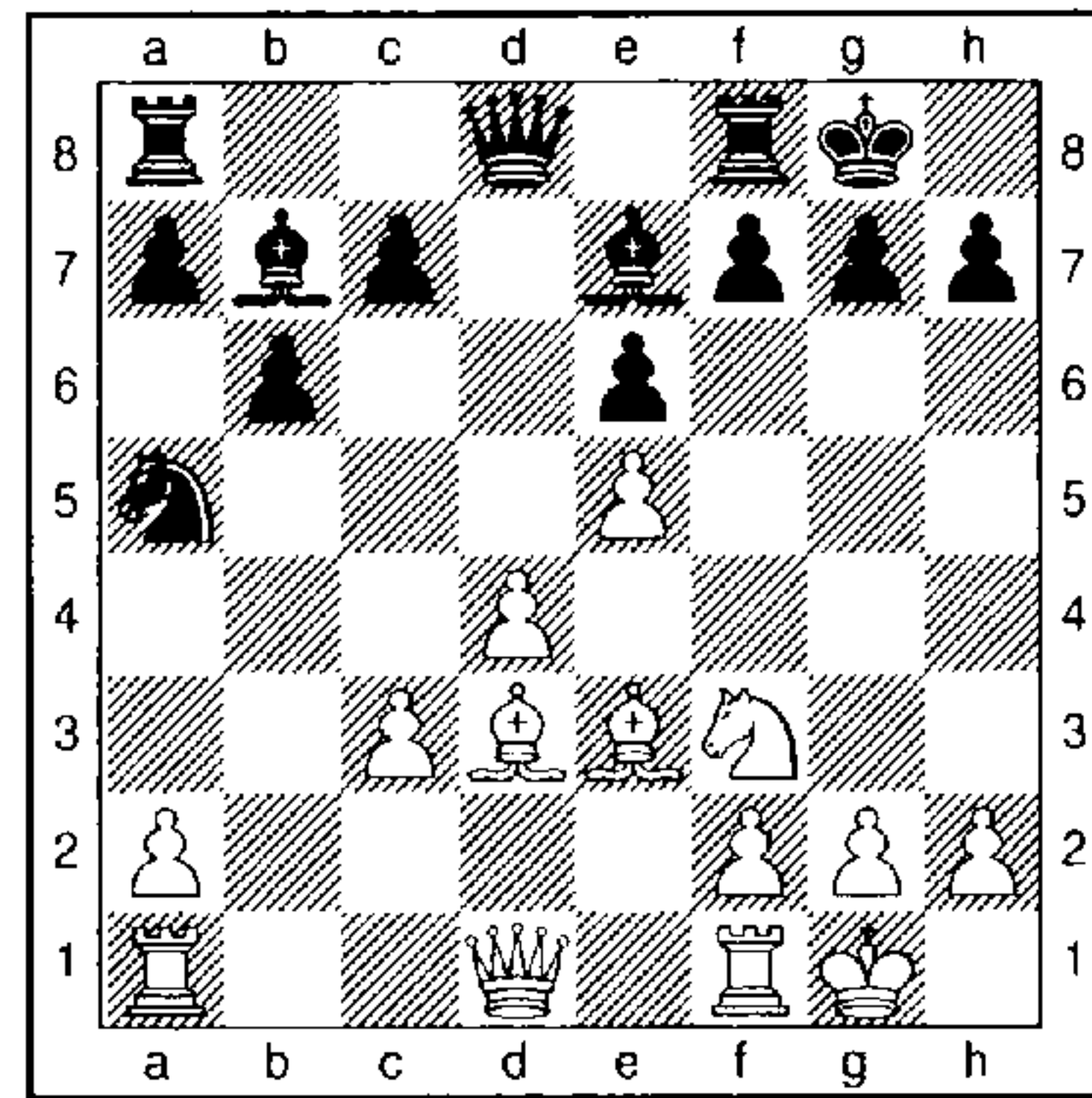
6 ♗c2 has also been played here.

6 ... ♙e7
7 0-0 0-0
8 d4 b6
9 ♙e3 ♘xc3

If 9...♙b7, then 10 cxd5 exd5 11 ♖c1, or 10...♘xc3 11 bxc3 exd5 12 ♙d3 – in both cases with the better game for White, since the bishop at b7 is passive.

10 bxc3 dxc4
10...♙a6!?
11 ♙xc4 ♘a5
12 ♙d3 ♙b7

109



Q 6-55. How should White continue?

A similar type of position sometimes arises in the Grünfeld Defence. The advanced e5 pawn, cramping the opponent's kingside, suggests to White that it is there that he should develop his initiative. Whereas Black, by playing ...c7-c5, will develop activity in the centre and on the queenside.

Yusupov finds an excellent regrouping of his forces, which increases his attacking potential.

13 ♘d2! c5
14 ♗g4
Threatening 15 ♙h6.
14 ... g6
15 ♘e4 cxd4
16 cxd4

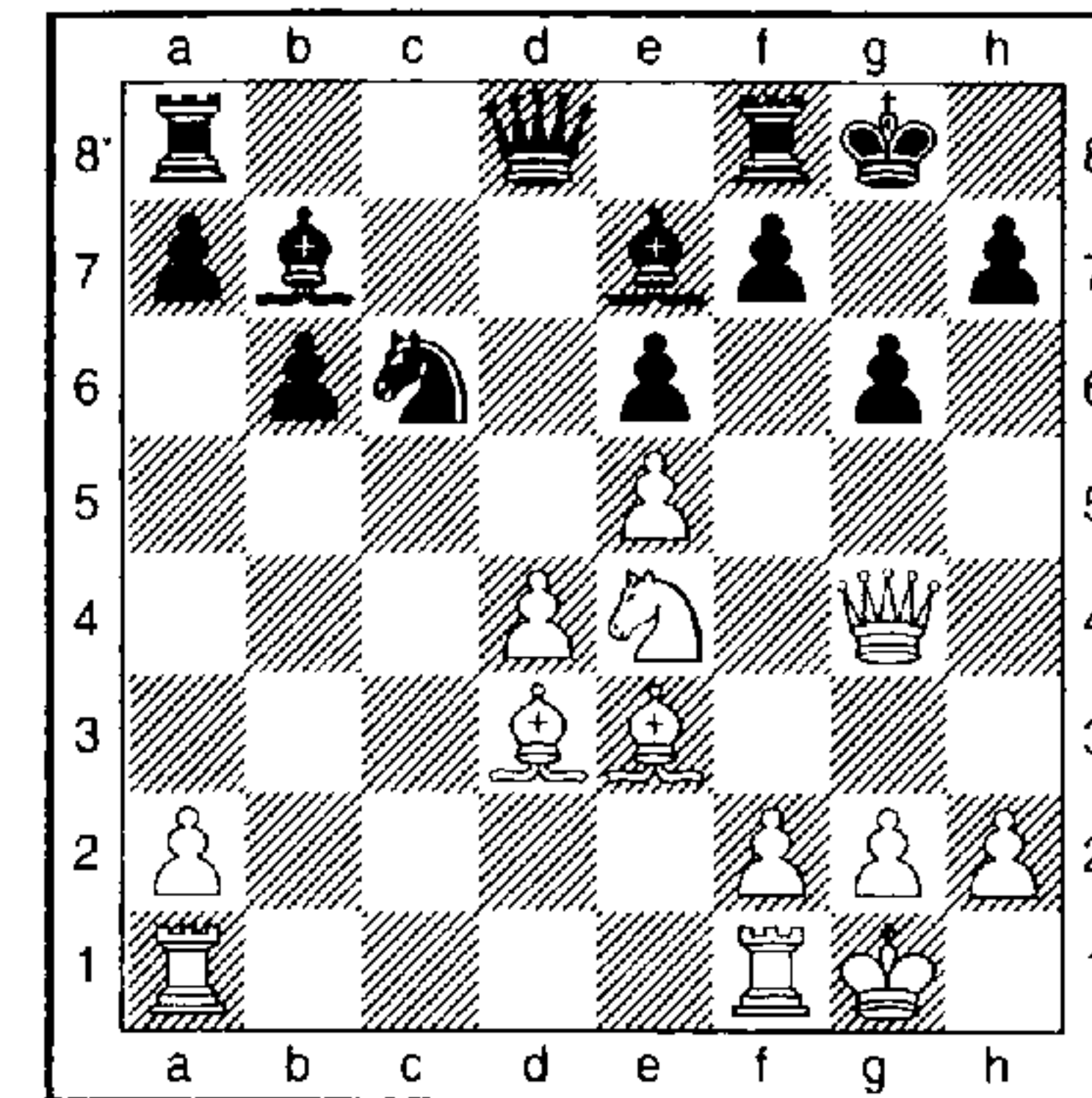
White's pressure on the kingside is already perceptible. Given the opportunity, he is also ready to include his h-pawn in the offensive. Such positions have to be defended carefully: one imperceptible inaccuracy, and the opponent's initiative will develop into a formidable attack.

Perhaps the most dangerous piece for Black in such situations is the enemy knight, irrespective of whether it is on e4, as in the given instance, or on f3. For it he should not

even begrudge giving up his splendid b7 bishop. It is true that after 16...♙xe4 17 ♙xe4 ♖c8 18 ♖ad1 the d4-d5 breakthrough is an unpleasant threat. But it was probably worth playing 16...♖c8!?, intending both 17...♘c4 and 17...♙xe4.

16 ... ♘c6?!

110



Q 6-56. What should White play?

I would advise you to think very carefully about this position. This is the critical point of the game, determining its entire future course. The decision taken by Yusupov is an example of grandmaster logic. In it are combined many important components of chess mastery: prophylactic thinking and resourcefulness, a correct evaluation of the position and an accurate calculation of variations.

What does Black want? The threat of 17...♘xe5 is easily parried by a rook move to d1. However, White also has to reckon with 17...♘b4.

17 ♖ad1 ♘b4 18 ♙b1 suggests itself. But remember our discussions about the role of the white knight in the attack. Now the exchange on e4 gains in strength, since Black's knight has taken control of the

important d5 square. And he can also delay the exchange, by playing 18...♖c8.

Does White have anything better? We find a new idea: 17...♘b4 18 ♙h6 ♖e8 19 ♙b5. The reply 19...♙c6 is forced. After the exchange of bishops White retains his powerful knight at e4, and in addition the black knight is moved away from the d5 square.

Let us check the idea we have found. After 17 ♖ad1?! ♘b4 18 ♙h6 Black is not obliged to move his rook. He can exchange several pieces by 18...♘xd3! 19 ♙xf8 ♗xf8 20 ♖xd3 ♙a6. Only now does it become clear which rook should be placed on d1.

Take note: without his highly-developed prophylactic thinking, Yusupov would have been unlikely to discover the secret of the position. White was obliged to take into account not only the opponent's visible threats of 17...♘xe5 and 17...♘b4, but also the much less obvious idea of exchanging the bishop for the knight at e4, as well as the tactical resource 18...♘xd3!

17 ♖fd1!!

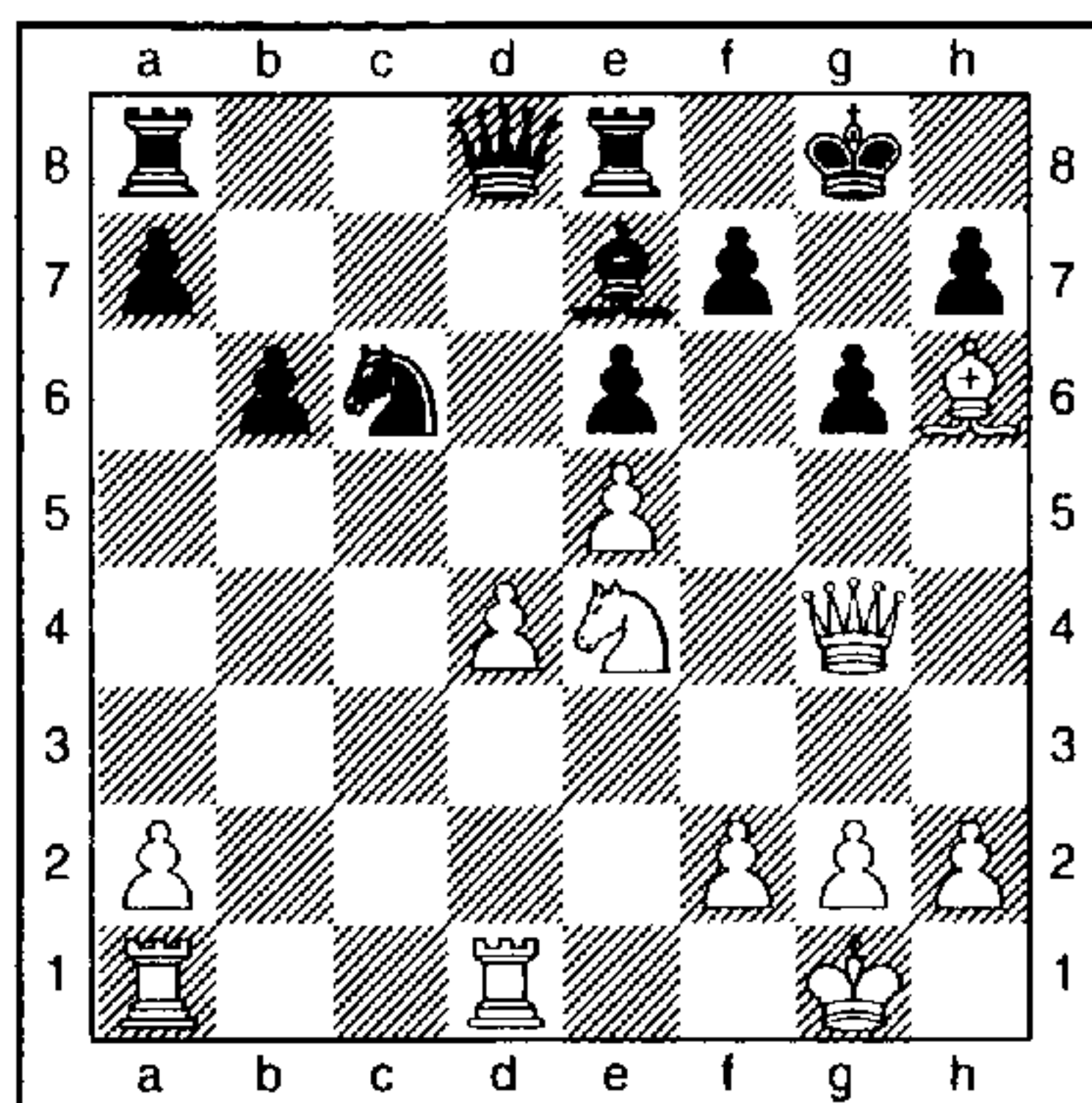
It is with such unobtrusive, at first sight, but in fact deep moves that it is sometimes possible to outplay a strong opponent, and it is they that display the true class of a player!

17 ... ♘b4
18 ♙h6! ♖e8
19 ♙b5 ♙c6
20 ♙xc6 ♘xc6

see next diagram



111



Q 6-57. Find the most accurate continuation of the attack.

White's advantage has grown. He now has a mass of promising possibilities. It makes sense to exchange bishops by 21 ♕g5 , in order to exploit the 'holes' on the dark squares. And it is tempting to play, in one or the other order, ♖f4 and ♘g5 , forcing the exchange of bishop for knight and trying then to give mate on g7.

Nevertheless, even in such a promising situation we should not concentrate only on our own resources. Let us ask ourselves what the opponent is intending to do.

'Black's position can be held only if he should succeed in playing his knight to d5 via b4. Therefore White's main objective it not to allow this.' Yusupov illustrates his evaluation with the following approximate variation: 21 ♖f4 ♘b4 22 ♘g5 ♕xg5 (22... $\text{♖f8!?$) 23 ♕xg5 ♘d5! 24 ♖h4 ♖d7 25 ♖h6 f5! with chances of a successful defence.

However, it would be a pity to have to play 21 a3, since this does nothing to assist White's attack. According to Nimzowitsch, the essence of true positional play is a 'systematic application of prophylactic measures'; in other words, the impeding of the opponent's

plans should be combined with the implementation of your own ideas.

21 ♖ab1!!

A brilliant solution to the problem. With 22 ♖b3 White wants to include in the attack another, hitherto inactive piece. At the same time he prevents the manoeuvre of the knight to d5: 21... ♘b4 is bad in view of 22 ♖xb4! ♕xb4 23 ♘f6+ ♖h8 24 ♖h4 , when there is no defence against mate.

This game was published earlier in several books and articles. Commenting on 17 ♖fd1!! , the authors explained that already at this moment Yusupov foresaw that his queen's rook would be needed on b1. This is, of course, nonsense, and such comments merely confuse the reader, distorting the real mechanism by which plans are formed. The grandmaster had no need to look so deeply, and White's choice was determined by the specific considerations explained above.

However, I have noticed for a long time that if a player makes a very strong move, often the virtues of this move are revealed not only in the variations for the sake of which he made it. As it is said: 'virtue is its own reward'. That is the case here – when it came to taking a new decision, it turned out that White's pieces were situated where they needed to be.

21 ... ♖d5?

21... ♖c8 was more tenacious, since now Black simply loses two tempi. However, his mistake is quite natural. If you disrupt your opponent's ideas, it is usually very hard for him to readjust and develop a new plan.

22 ♖f4

In view of the deadly threat of 23 ♘f6+ , the queen is forced to return ignominiously to d8.

22 ... ♖d8

23 ♖b3 ♖c8

24 h4

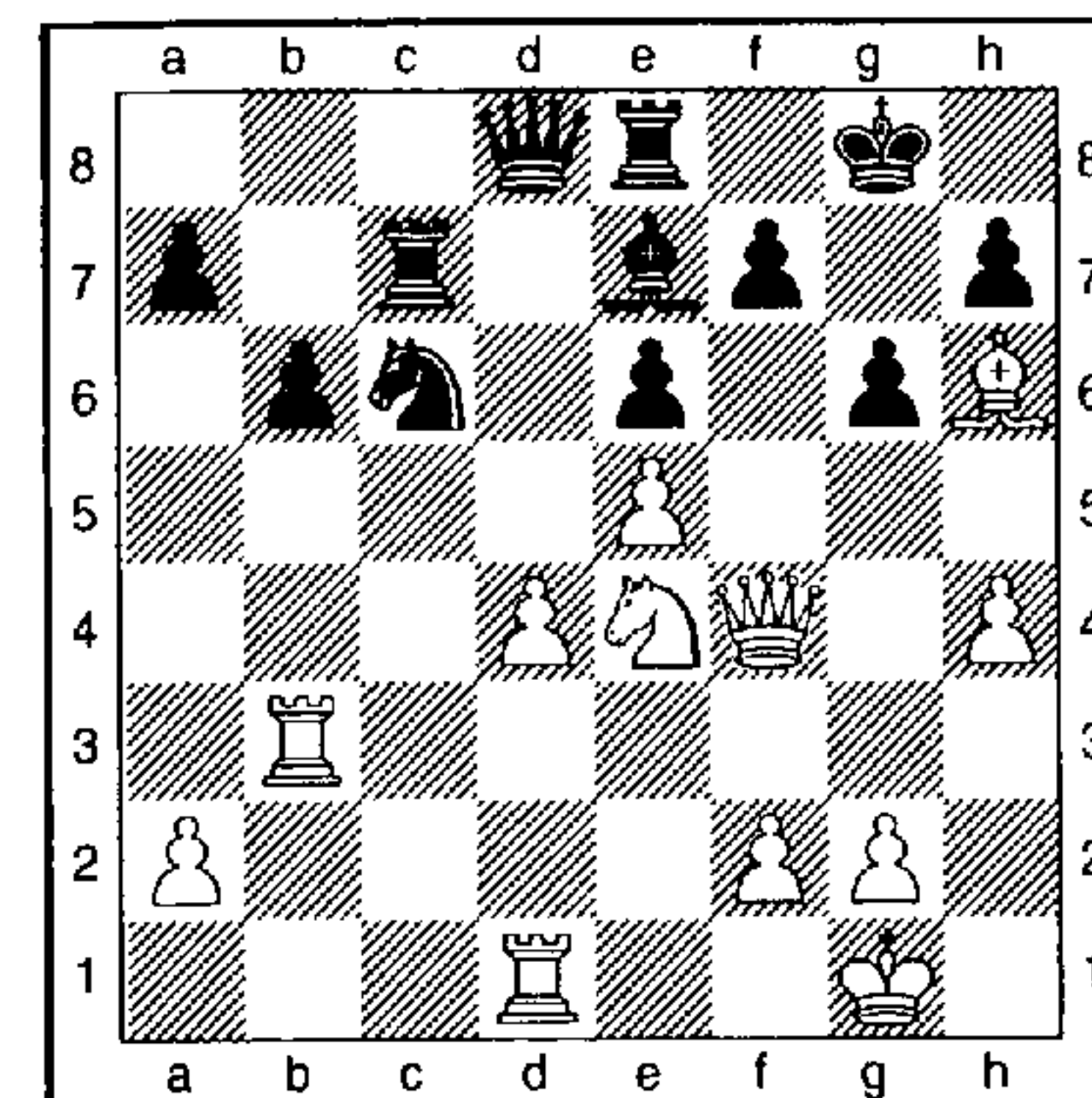
If 24 ♖f3 the only reply is 24... ♖f8 . Yusupov is not in a hurry to win the exchange, and



prefers first to give his king an escape square and to include his h-pawn in the attack.

24 ... ♖c7

112



Q 6-58. Does White have a forced win?

Mikhail Tal pointed out a pretty combination, which would have immediately concluded the game: 25 d5! exd5 26 ♖xd5! ♖xd5 27 ♘f6+ ♕xf6 28 ♖xf6 ♖xe5 29 ♖e3! It is a pity that Artur did not notice it. The move played takes the game into the technical phase of converting a material advantage, which, however, does not cause White the slightest difficulty.

25 ♖f3 ♖f8

If 25... ♕xh4 the simple 26 g3 is sufficient, but Yusupov was intending the more dramatic 26 ♖h3 ♕e7 27 ♕g7! g5 28 ♖g4 ♕xg7 29 ♖h5 and wins.

26 ♕xf8 ♖xf8
27 d5 exd5
28 ♖xd5 ♘b4
29 ♖d1

Threatening 30 e6.

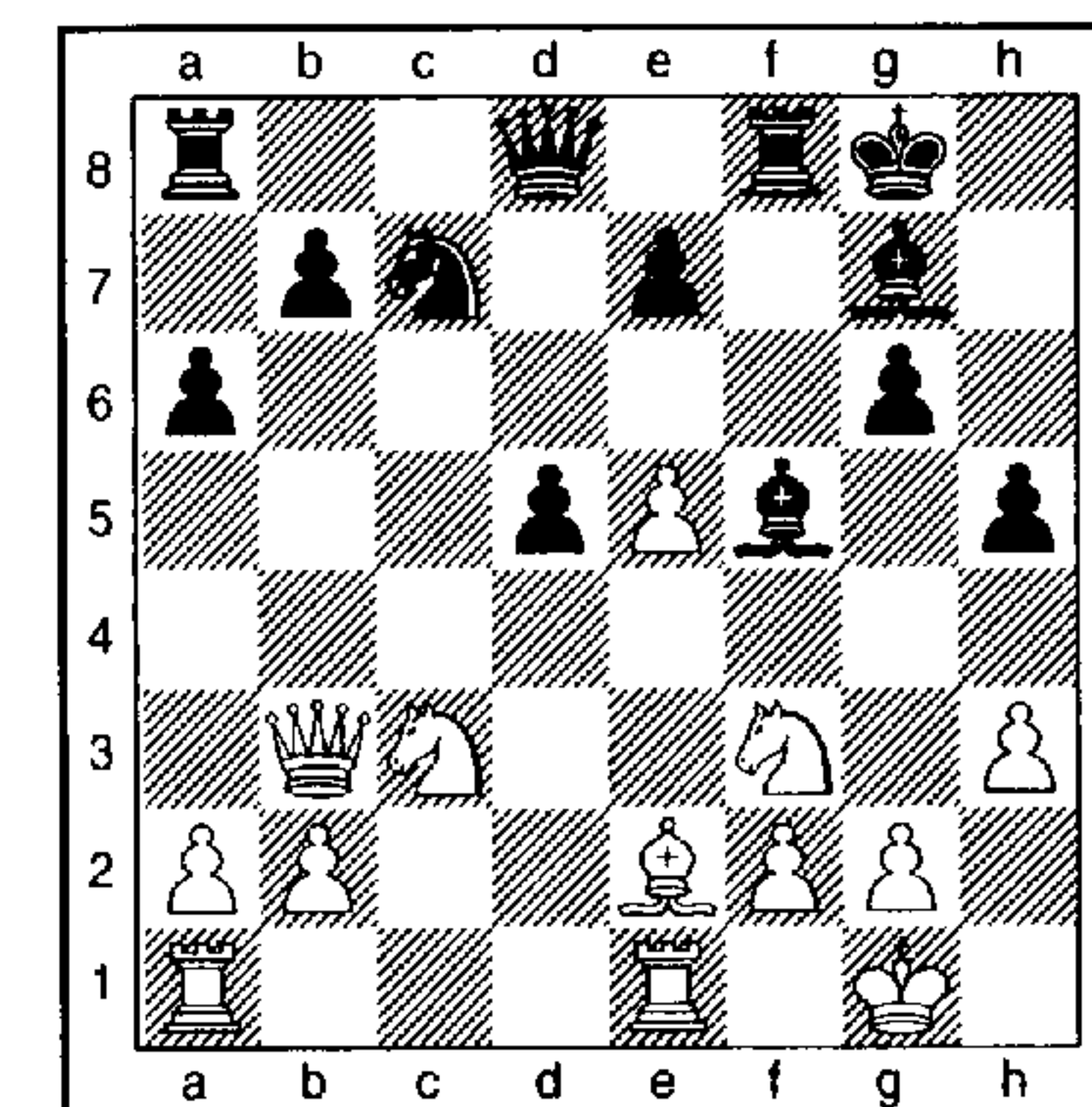
29 ... ♖c6
30 ♘d6 ♘xa2
31 ♖a4

Black resigns.

I have to admit that this is one of my favourite games. I hope that you too will have sensed that deep positional ideas have their inner beauty, which in the eyes of the connoisseur are not inferior to the most striking combinative effects.

E 6-26

113



White to move



Clash of Plans

*As from a broken vase, as from a dropped violin,
the sounds of a thousand passions burst from this lost game.*

Saviely Tartakower

The game which we will now analyse has an attractive strategic content. The result of it was decided not by chance tactical errors, but by the superior strategy of one of the players. Right from the opening Black planned a pawn offensive on the queenside, and in the end he successfully carried it out. Even so, it would hardly be fair to assert that the battle developed within the framework of a complete strategic plan. Rather the opposite: the plans of both players were conceived, and then, depending on the opponent's actions, were corrected or even disrupted, without managing to be implemented; in their place new plans appeared... Some of the ideas in fact remained off-stage.

Browne – Gheorghiu

London 1980

- | | | |
|---|-----|-------|
| 1 | d4 | ♟f6 |
| 2 | ♞f3 | c5 |
| 3 | d5 | g6 |
| 4 | ♞c3 | ♙g7 |
| 5 | e4 | 0-0!? |

The usual continuation is 5...d6, and only then ...0-0. What does Black achieve by transposing moves? First of all, he rules out the not particularly pleasant possibility of 6 ♙b5+ (after 5...d6). But generally speaking, the strongest plan for White is to prepare e4–e5 by ♙e2, 0-0, h2–h3, ♙f4 etc. After 5...0-0 it is no longer so easy for White to decide on 6 ♙e2 – he has to reckon with 6...b5! A problematic position arises after 7 e5 ♞g4 8 ♙f4 b4 9 ♞e4 d6 10 exd6 exd6 11 0-0 ♞f6! (weaker is 11...♙xb2 12 ♞b1 ♙g7 13 ♞xd6). How should it be evaluated? To be honest, I do not know.

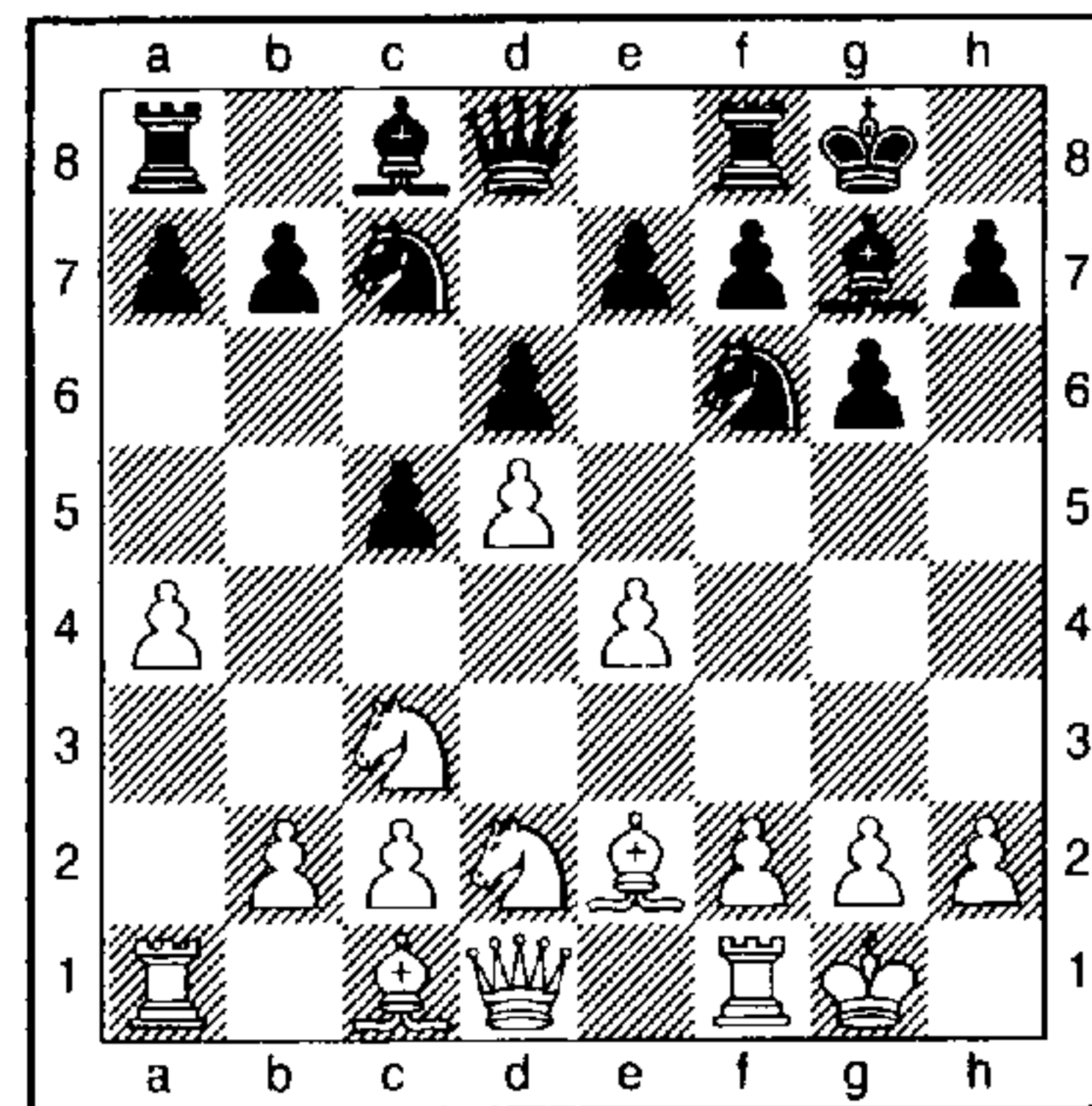
The e4 pawn may also be advanced a move earlier: 6 e5! Where should the knight move? In the event of 6...♞e8 7 h4! d6 8 e6! fxe6 9 h5 White creates rather dangerous threats on the kingside (Yermolinsky–Khmelnitsky, USA Championship, Modesto 1995). Theory recommends 6...♞g4, and if 7 ♙f4 d6. However, as was pointed out by Alexey Yermolinsky, White has the clever thrust 7 ♞g5!?, e.g. 7...♞xe5 (7...d6 8 e6) 8 f4 f6 9 ♞xh7 ♞xh7 10 fxe5 with an attack.

- | | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| 6 | ♞d2 | d6 |
| 7 | ♙e2 | ♞a6 |

Florin Gheorghiu avoids ...e7–e6, the usual move in such set-ups, in favour of another standard plan – the preparation of ...b7–b5. With this aim the knight is transferred to c7.

- | | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| 8 | 0-0 | ♞c7 |
| 9 | a4 | |

114



- | | | |
|---|-----|----|
| 9 | ... | b6 |
|---|-----|----|



Black can also play 9...a6, intending 10...♙d7 and 11...b5. For example, 10 ♞e1 ♙d7 11 ♞c4 b5 12 ♞b6 ♞b8 13 ♞xd7 ♞xd7 14 ♙f1 b4 with an excellent position for Black (Nikitin–Tal, 36th USSR Championship, Alma-Ata 1968/69). However, White has the possibility of squeezing Black's queenside by 10 a5. The game Dvoretsky–Gulko (Dubna 1970) continued 10...♞d7?! 11 ♞c4 ♞b5 12 ♞a4 ♞f6 13 f3 with advantage to White. But the defence can be improved: 10...♞b5!, and in the event of the double capture on b5 Black restores material equality with 12...♞xa5.

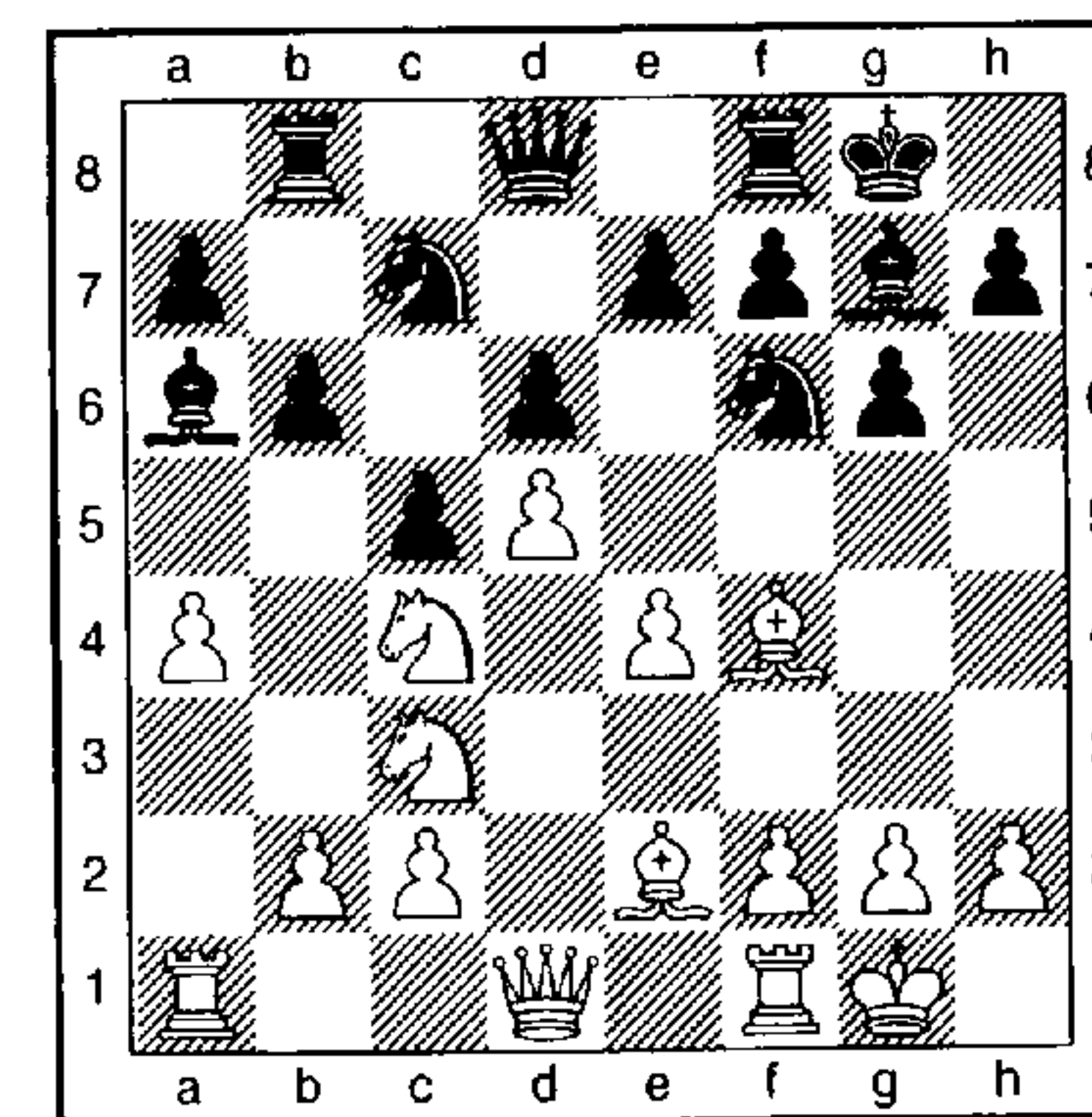
- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 10 | ♞c4 | ♙a6 |
|----|-----|-----|

It is not easy to carry out ...a7–a6 and ...b6–b5: Black has to reckon with the manoeuvre ♞a5–c6. The knight on c4 is very strong, and so he prepares to take it with his bishop followed by ...♞b8, ...a7–a6 and ...b6–b5. In addition, the exchange of bishop for knight will hinder White's thematic e4–e5 breakthrough.

- | | | |
|----|-----|--|
| 11 | ♞e1 | |
|----|-----|--|

In the game Smyslov–Schmid (Olympiad, Helsinki 1952) 11 ♙f4 ♞b8?! was played.

115



Q 6-59. How should White continue?

Black is intending 12...♙xc4 13 ♙xc4 a6 and 14...b5. Nothing is achieved by 12 e5?!, when Black has both 12...♞h5, and 12...dxe5 13 ♙xe5 ♞fxd5 14 ♞xd5 ♙xe5 15 ♞xe5 ♙xe2 16 ♞xe2 ♞xd5 17 ♞ad1 ♞e6. Note the typical technique, with which Vasily Smyslov disrupted his opponent's plan.

12 b3!! Now 12...♙xc4 13 bxc4! is pointless, and also nothing is achieved by 12...♞h5 13 ♙d2. After suppressing the counterplay on the queenside, White wants simply to strengthen his position: ♞d2, ♞ad1 etc.

12...♞d7 13 ♞d2 f5 14 ♞ad1. Now Black can win a pawn in various ways, but in so doing he weakens his kingside and comes under a dangerous attack. For example, 14...♙xc3 15 ♞xc3 fxe4 16 ♙h6 ♞f7 17 ♙g4.

14...fxe4 15 ♞xe4 ♞f5. If 15...♙b7 Smyslov was intending 16 ♙g5 ♞e8 17 ♙g4! ♙xd5 18 ♞exd6! exd6 19 ♞xd6 ♞e5 20 ♞b5, and in all variations White regains the piece, retaining the advantage.

16 ♙g4! ♞xd5 17 ♙e6+ ♞xe6 18 ♞xd5, and White won.

Black should not allow b2–b3! Instead of 11...♞b8?!, stronger is 11...♞d7 12 ♞d2 ♙xc4! 13 ♙xc4 a6.

- | | | |
|----|------|-----|
| 11 | ... | ♞d7 |
| 12 | ♞a3! | |

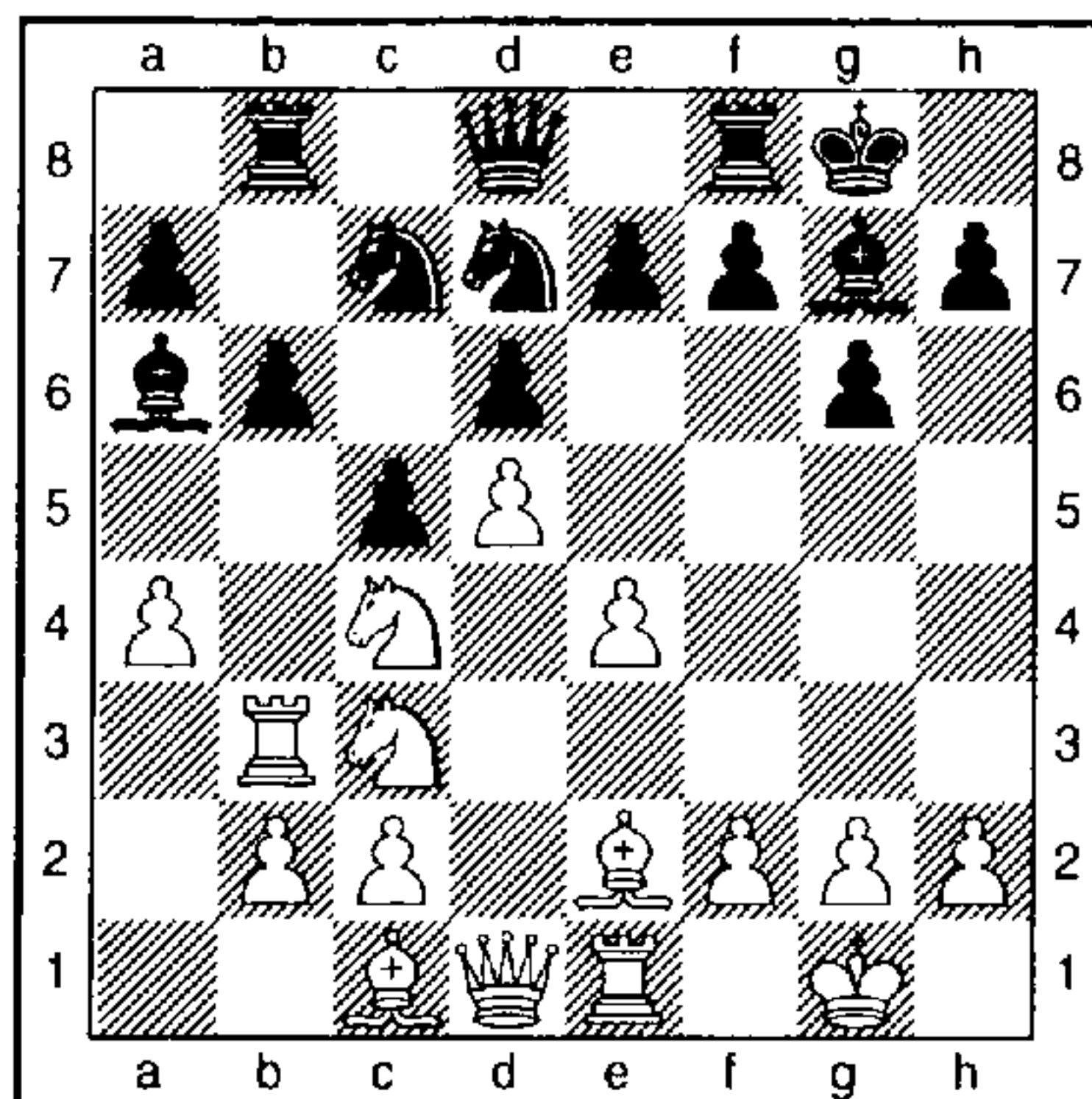
An interesting idea. The rook goes to b3, from where it impedes ...b6–b5. Subsequently it may be switched along the 3rd rank to the kingside for an attack.

- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 12 | ... | ♞b8 |
| 13 | ♞b3 | |

see next diagram



116



13 ... ♖e5!

Black makes a correction to his plan. If he plays routinely: 13...♗xc4 14 ♗xc4 a6, then after 15 ♖e2 he is able to play ...b6–b5 only at the cost of the exchange of his important g7 bishop, which is, of course, unfavourable. 15...♗xc3?! is strongly met by both 16 ♖xc3 b5 17 ♗a2! followed by 18 ♖h3 (less accurate is 17 axb5?! axb5 18 ♗a2 ♖a8 19 ♗b1 ♖a1 20 ♗h6 ♖e8 with an unclear position), and 16 bxc3!? ♖c8 17 ♗h6 ♖e8 18 ♖eb1 (not allowing 18...♗e5).

Instead of 14...a6, tempting is 14...♗e5 15 ♗f1 c4 16 ♖a3 a6 17 f4 ♗d7, when 18 ♗xc4? b5 is bad for White. However, Black has to reckon with an excellent knight manoeuvre (incidentally, rather typical): 18 ♗a2! b5 19 ♗b4. The weakness of c6 ensures White the advantage.

Finally, if Black rejects 15...c4?! in favour of 15...a6, then after 16 f4 ♗d7 17 ♗c4 (with the idea of 18 ♖e2) he can once again carry out ...b6–b5 only by giving up his dark-square bishop.

14 ♗xe5

The exchange of two pairs of minor pieces is, in principle, undesirable, if the opponent is in a cramped position. For the same reason 14

♗b5 ♗xc4 15 ♗xc4 is not too convincing – Black frees himself by 15...♗xb5! 16 axb5 a6! 17 bxa6 b5 18 a7 (18 ♗f1 ♖d7!, but not 18...♖b6?! 19 ♗d2!) 18...♖b7 and, as is shown by the variation 19 ♖e2 ♖d7 20 ♗d2 ♖a8 21 ♖a1? ♖bxa7 22 ♖xa7 ♖xa7 23 ♗xb5 ♖a1+, White is unable to defend his a7 pawn in view of the weakness of his first rank.

Let us check the attempt by White to restrict himself to the exchange of only the light-square bishops: 14 ♗a3 ♗xe2 (14...c4 15 ♖b4 is pointless) 15 ♖xe2 a6 16 f4 ♗d7 17 ♗c4. The opponent's only active resource is ...b6–b5, but then the knight goes to a5. Even so, as shown by Vadim Zviagintsev, by playing 17...b5! 18 ♗a5 (18 axb5 ♗xb5) 18...bxa4! Black maintains the dynamic balance. If 19 ♗c6 there follows 19...axb3 20 ♗xd8 ♖fxd8 with full compensation for the queen. An unclear position results from 19 ♗xa4 ♖xb3 20 cxb3 ♗b8. And after 19 ♖a3 ♗b5 20 ♗c6 Black can choose between the exchange sacrifice 20...♖c7!? and the variation 20...♗d4!? 21 ♖xa6 ♖b6 22 ♖xa4 ♗xc6 23 dxc6 ♗xc3! (23...♗b8? 24 c7! ♖xc7 25 ♗d5) 24 bxc3 ♗b8 with chances for both sides.

14 ... ♗xe2

15 ♖xe2

Not 15 ♗xf7? ♗xd1 16 ♗xd8 ♗xc2. The attempt to begin an attack on the kingside by 15 ♗xe2 ♗xe5 16 ♖h3 is premature – in reply the opponent opens the centre by 16...e6!

15 ... ♗xe5

Black is intending to play 16...a6 followed by 17...♖d7 and 18...b5. Walter Browne forestalls the opponent's plan.

16 ♗b5! ♖b7

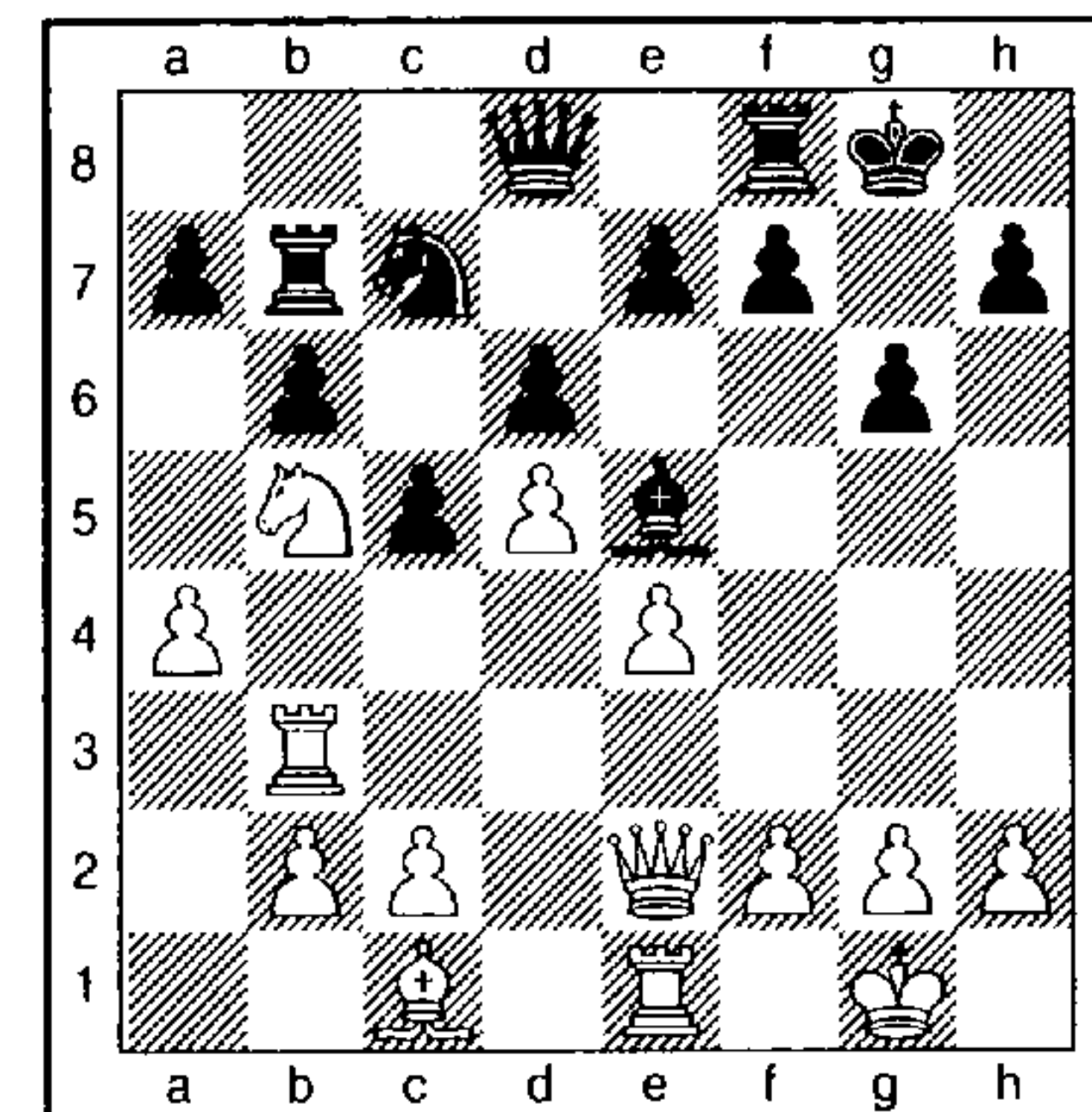
A move clearly made by the method of elimination: 16...a6 is not possible, 16...♖a8 is too passive, and in the event of 16...♗xb5 17 axb5 Black is deprived of counterplay on



the queenside and stands clearly worse.

But have all the candidate moves been taken into account? No, not all. 16...♖d7! came seriously into consideration, since if 17 ♗xa7 there is 17...♗xd5.

117



17 f4

A natural, but not an indisputable move. It will be justified if White subsequently succeeds in advantageously advancing one of his central pawns (e4–e5 or f4–f5). Otherwise the weakening of the dark-square periphery and the passivity of the c1 bishop will tell.

17 ... ♗g7

18 ♖d1?!

The start of a dubious plan, which in the end leads to White's defeat. He must have been wanting to prevent 18...e6, and was hoping on the next move to play e4–e5. But if he really wanted to prepare this advance, then the simple 18 c4 was preferable (to which Black would have replied 18...e6). To me 18 f5!? seems a more tempting idea, intending 19 ♖h3 followed by playing the queen to h4.

Q 6-60. How should Black react to the move in the game?

He must prepare activity on the queenside and at the same time hinder e4–e5. Black's

next subtle move successfully resolves both of these objectives.

18 ... ♖c8!

Two tactical threats have been created: 19...c4 20 ♖xc4 ♗xb5, and 19...♗xb5 20 axb5 c4 followed by 21...♖c5+.

19 ♖c4

It was not yet too late to play 19 c4. On c4 the queen is not too well placed: it no longer controls the e5 square (which means that e4–e5 is deferred) and also in the future it will come under attack when the opponent plays ...a7–a6 and ...b6–b5.

19 ... ♖d8

20 ♗h1 ♗e8!

Excellent play! Black intends 21...a6, then ...♗c7, ...♖b8 and ...b6–b5. To prevent this plan, White should have immediately retreated his knight. It is possible that in this case the game would have ended in a repetition of moves: 21 ♗a3! ♗c7 22 ♗b5! ♗e8 etc.

21 h3?!

Typical 'pseudo-prophylaxis'. It would seem useful to open an escape square for the king and to deprive the enemy queen of the g4 square, but it was not the right time for this – the opponent's real positional threat should have been parried.

21 ... a6

22 ♗c3?!

White does not want to reject the plan of preparing e4–e5, now clearly delayed due to the attendant circumstances. It made sense to retreat the knight to a3 and then move the rook from b3. Here it is no longer able to prevent ...b6–b5, and it merely comes under attack by the advancing pawns on the queenside.

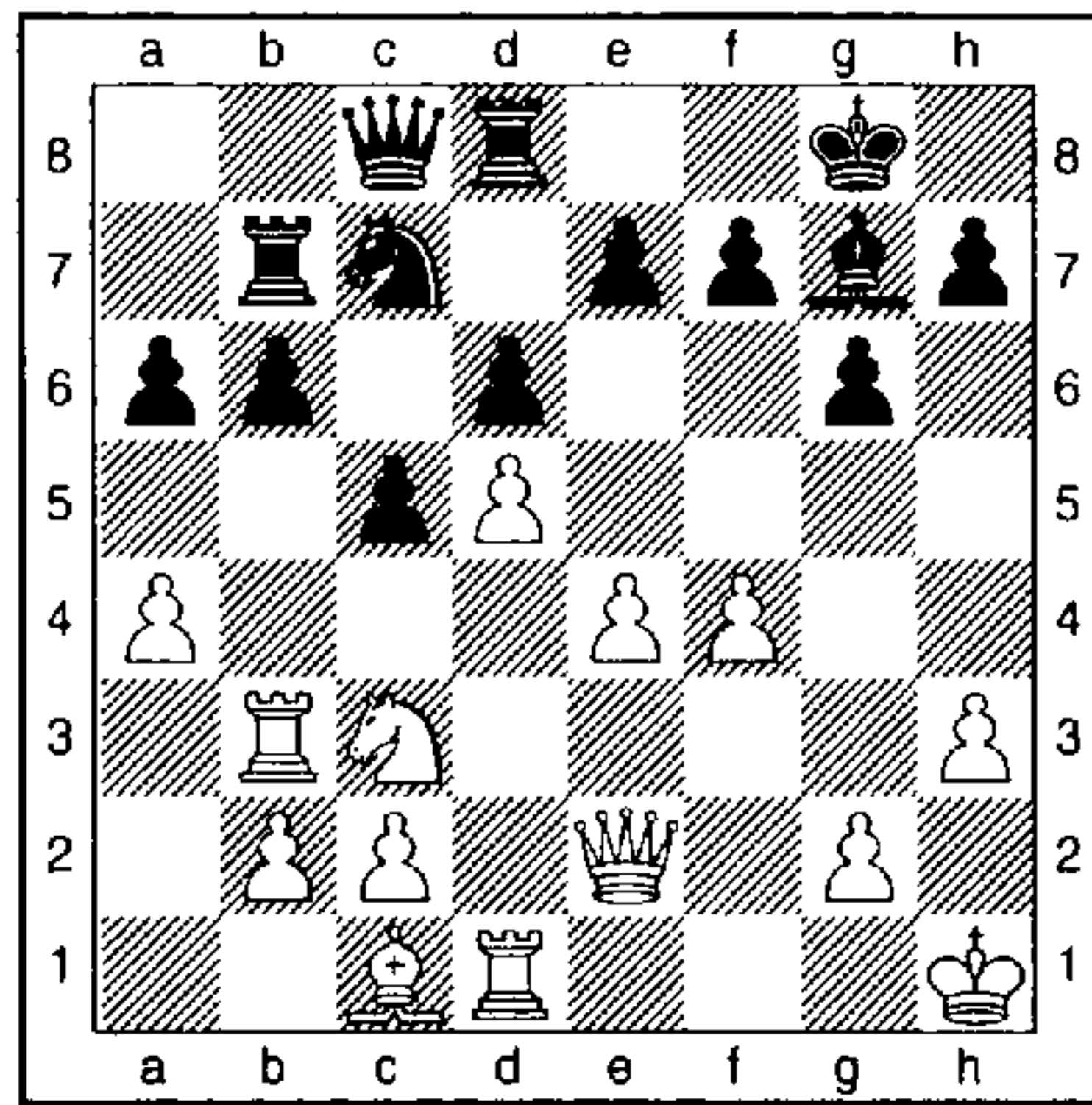
22 ... ♗c7

23 ♖e2

see next diagram



118



Q 6-61. What possibilities does Black have? Which would you prefer?

Gheorghiu chose the simplest continuation: 23... ♖b8, after which ...b6–b5 cannot be prevented. With the same aim he could have played 23... ♖d7!? – here the queen is more actively placed.

But is it not possible to save a tempo and, exploiting the tactical features of the position, advance the pawn immediately? In the variation 23...b5!? 24 axb5 axb5 25 ♖xb5 c4! Black wins a piece. But it is too early to cut short the calculation: 26 ♖xd6! exd6 27 ♖xc4 ♖xb3 28 ♖xb3 (weaker is 28 cxb3 ♖a6!), and for the knight White has an adequate material equivalent – three pawns. Black, obviously, still stands better, but how much? Let us continue the analysis: 28... ♖a6 29 ♖e3 ♖e8 30 ♖a4! ♖xb2?! 31 ♖b1 ♖g7 32 ♖b6 ♖c5 33 ♖xc5. Or 29... ♖c5 30 ♖b4! (but not 30 ♖c4 ♖xb2 31 ♖xc5 ♖a3!). The situation seems unclear to me, with White retaining good drawing chances.

Up till now all our thoughts have revolved around the planned advance ...b6–b5. But aren't there any other ideas? Grandmaster Viorel Bologan suggested beginning active play in the centre: 23...e6!? The counter-advance 24 e5?! leads after 24...exd5 25

♖xd5 ♖xd5 26 ♖xd5 dxe5 27 ♖xd8+ ♖xd8 28 fxe5 ♖d7 29 ♖d3 (29 ♖f4 ♖d1+ 30 ♖h2 ♖d4) 29... ♖xd3 30 cxd3 ♖d5 31 ♖f4 h6 (or 31...h5) to an obvious positional advantage for Black. And after 24 dxe6 fxe6 he has the strong positional threat of ...d6–d5. Possibly the evaluation of the position depends on the correctness of the attempt 25 f5!? followed by 26 ♖g5, suggested by Zviagintsev.

What would you have chosen? Most of the problems that you are set in this book have a single, clear-cut solution, but in practice it by no means always happens this way. In the given instance, and in general throughout this game, it was very hard to establish which plan was the best – the position permitted various interpretations. Here the most important thing was to find as many promising options as possible. For example, you would not be reproached at all, if you considered 23...b5 and consciously rejected it (rightly or wrongly); it would be much worse if the move did not occur to you at all.

23 ... ♖b8
24 e5

Browne finally carries out his idea, but the effect of the breakthrough in the centre is only slight – the white pieces are badly prepared for a head-on fight. It looks more circumspect to switch to defence: 24 ♖b1 b5 25 axb5 axb5 26 ♖a3, and if 26...b4?! 27 ♖c4 ♖b5 there is the reply 28 ♖a5. But for all of us it is hard to reconcile ourselves to the collapse of our ambitious hopes.

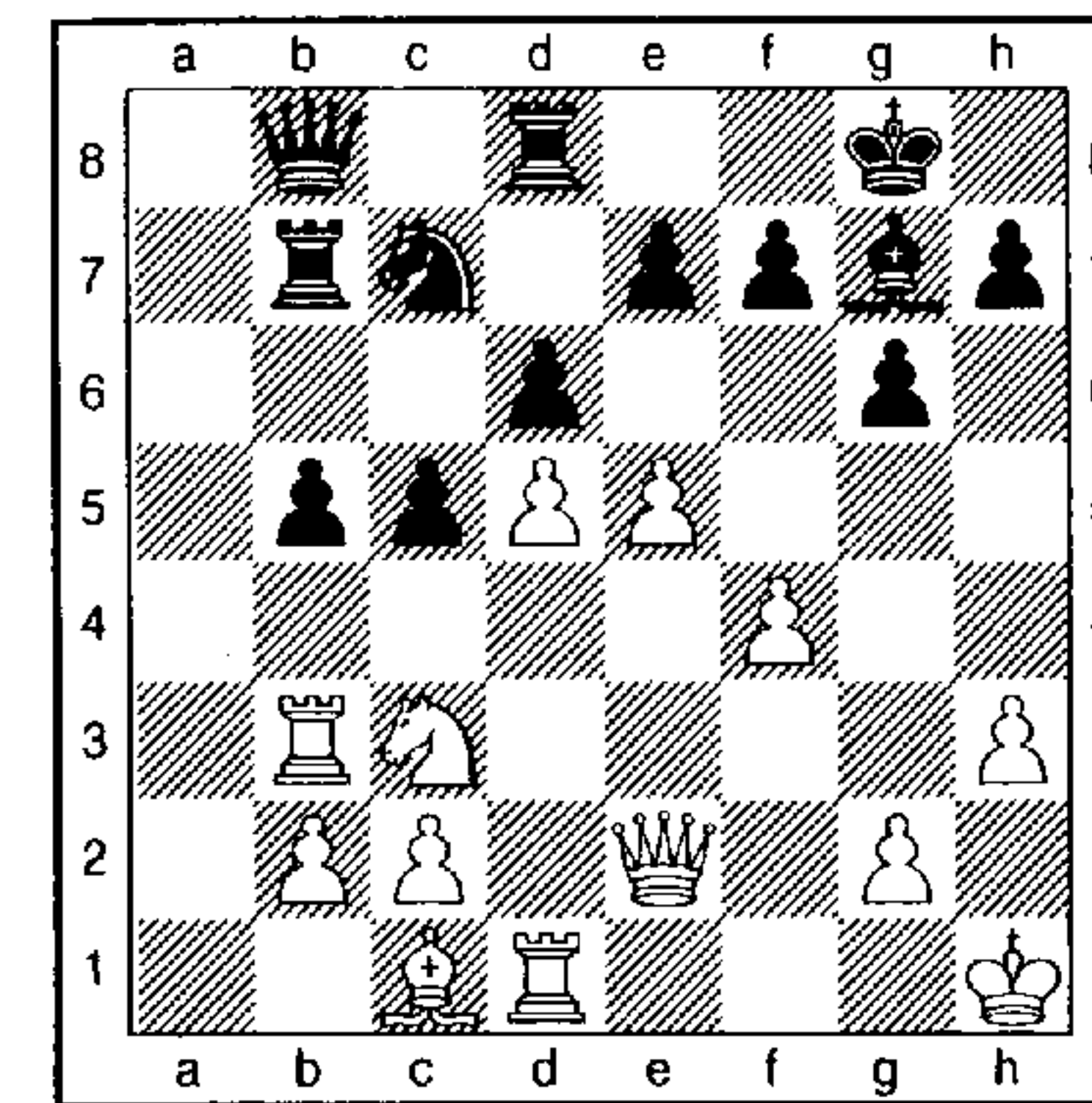
24 ... b5
25 axb5 axb5

Black also stands well after 25... ♖xb5. He wants more, and he achieves it, but only thanks to a mistake by the opponent.

see next diagram



119



26 ♖e4?

This leads to the loss of a pawn without any compensation. Meanwhile, after 26 exd6! exd6 27 ♖e4 White's position would have been by no means hopeless – in some cases he could have gained counterplay by f4–f5. It was here that it would have come in useful for Black to have his queen on d7.

26 ... c4!
27 ♖f3 dxe5
28 ♖c5 ♖a7
29 fxe5 ♖xd5
30 ♖xd5 ♖xd5
31 e6 f5!

The game is essentially over: Black has both an extra pawn, and significantly better placed pieces.

32 ♖f1 ♖a1
33 ♖d1 ♖g3!
34 ♖d7

34... ♖e5 was threatened. White has no useful moves, and so Gheorghiu does not hurry, but calmly strengthens his position.

34 ... h5
35 c3 ♖h7
36 ♖g5

The usual story: when there are no good moves, bad ones are made. True, here it is

no longer possible to suggest anything sensible.

36 ... ♖xc3
37 bxc3 ♖xd1+
38 ♖xd1 ♖xg5
39 ♖d5 ♖e3
40 ♖xb5 ♖xe6

White resigns.

By studying this game we have improved our understanding of positions arising from the Benoni Defence (and certain other opening variations) – we have learned or repeated many typical plans, ideas and evaluations. *In principle, this is how to become familiar with typical middlegame positions – by choosing and making a deep analysis of interesting examples on the theme that interests us.*

I invite the reader to analyse independently another fascinating game, in which after the opening the pieces and pawns were on almost the same squares. The brief explanations to it are based on the comments from the interesting book by the world correspondence champion Grigory Sanakoev 'World Champion at the Third Attempt'.

Shmulenson – Sanakoev

VIII World Correspondence Championship Semi-Final, 1972–75

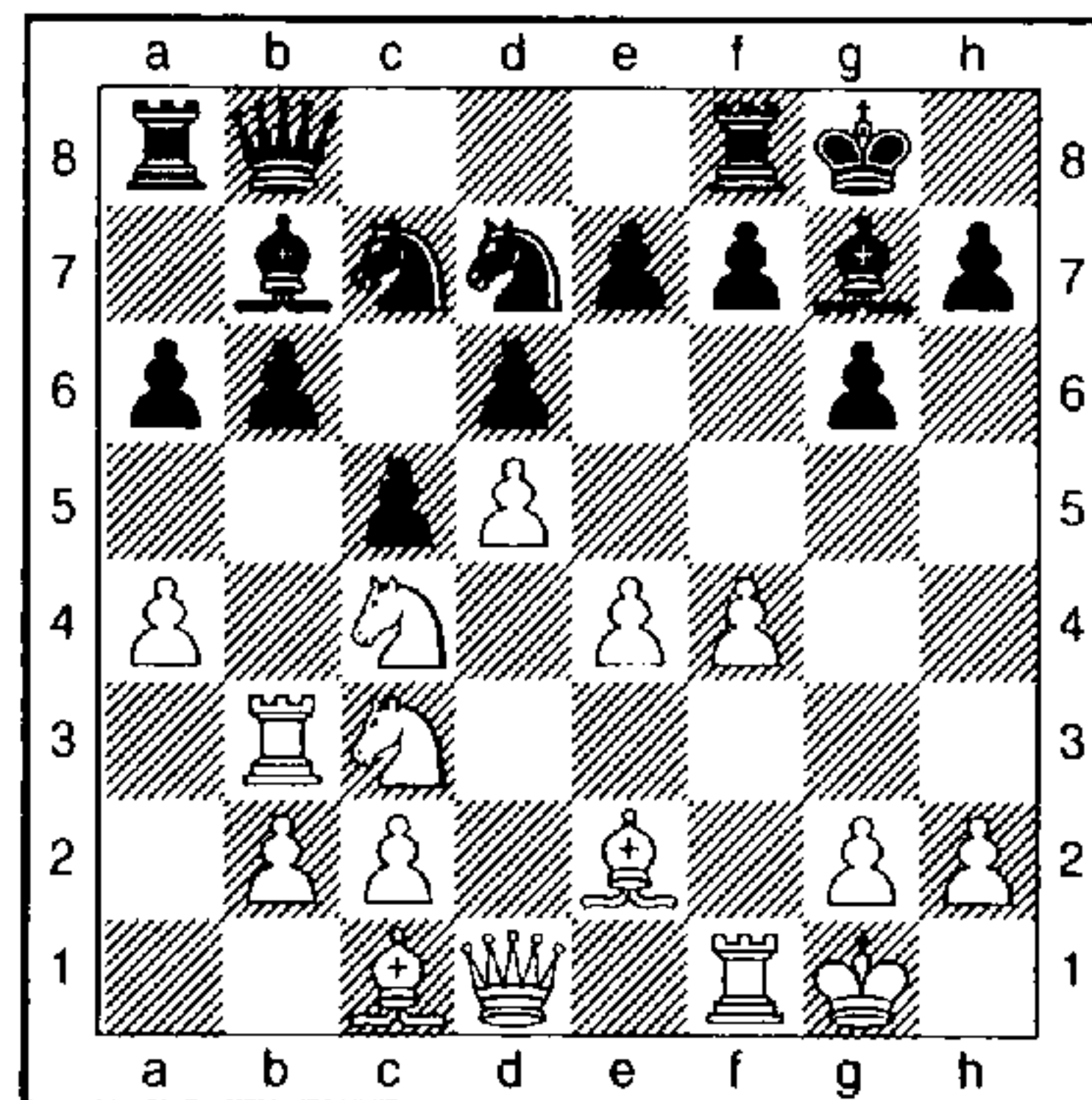
1 e4 c5 2 ♖f3 g6 3 d4 ♖g7 4 d5 d6 5 ♖c3 ♖f6 6 ♖b5+ ♖bd7 7 a4 0–0 8 0–0 a6 9 ♖e2 b6. According to theory, Black can prepare ...b7–b5 by 9... ♖b8 and ... ♖e8–c7, not fearing the cramping move a4–a5.

10 ♖d2. The game Andrianov–Razuvaev (Moscow 1981) developed as follows: 10 ♖f4 ♖b7 11 ♖e1 ♖e8 12 h3 ♖c7 13 ♖d2 ♖f6 14 ♖c4 ♖d7 15 e5 ♖h5 16 ♖h2 b5 17 ♖f1 f5 with an unclear game.

10... ♖b7 11 f4 ♖e8 12 ♖c4 ♖b8 13 ♖a3!? ♖c7 14 ♖b3.



120



For Black to carry out the vitally important ...b6-b5, he is forced to part with his dark-square bishop.

14...b5! 15 axb5 ♗xc3 16 ♖xc3 axb5 (of course, not 16...♗xb5? 17 ♖h3 ♗d4 18 ♗d3 and 19 c3) 17 ♗e3 (17 ♗d2!?) 17...♖a4! 18 ♖a3! (18 ♗f3 ♗a6) 18...♗d4?! (18...♖xe4 19 ♗d3 ♖xe3!) 19 ♖e1 ♖xe4 20 ♗d3 ♗d4?! A risky decision. It was sounder to sacrifice the exchange by 20...♖xe3.

21 ♗f5!! b4 22 ♖b3 gxf5 23 ♗xf5 ♗f6 24 ♖h3 ♖c8! Black finds the only possible defence – he clears the way for his king to run to the queenside.

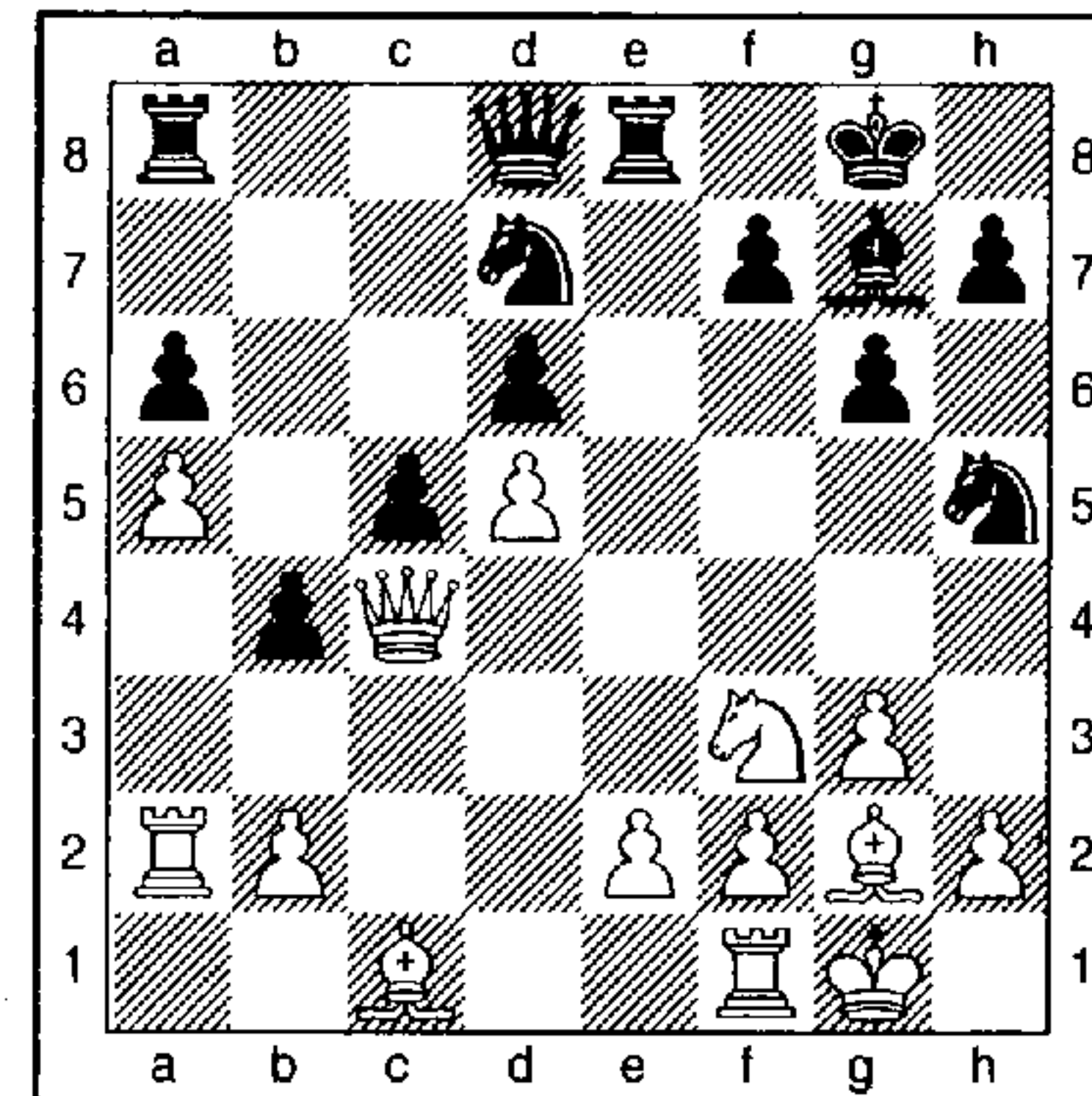
25 ♖g3+ ♗f8 26 ♖xh7 ♗xh7 27 ♗xh7 ♗e8 28 ♖g8+ ♗d7 29 ♗f5+ ♗e6 30 dxe6+ ♗c6 31 ♖xf7 ♗b6 32 ♖xe7 ♗xg2! The saving counter-attack!

33 ♗xg2 ♖g8+ 34 ♗f2 ♖a8 35 ♖g1. Draw agreed, in view of 35 ♖g1 ♖xg1 36 ♗xg1 ♗d1+ 37 ♗f2 ♖h1 38 ♖d8+, when White gives perpetual check.

The exercises suggested for independent solving are linked with the Browne-Gheorghiu game not only by their similar pawn formation, but also by there being a choice of almost equivalent possibilities. It is not so

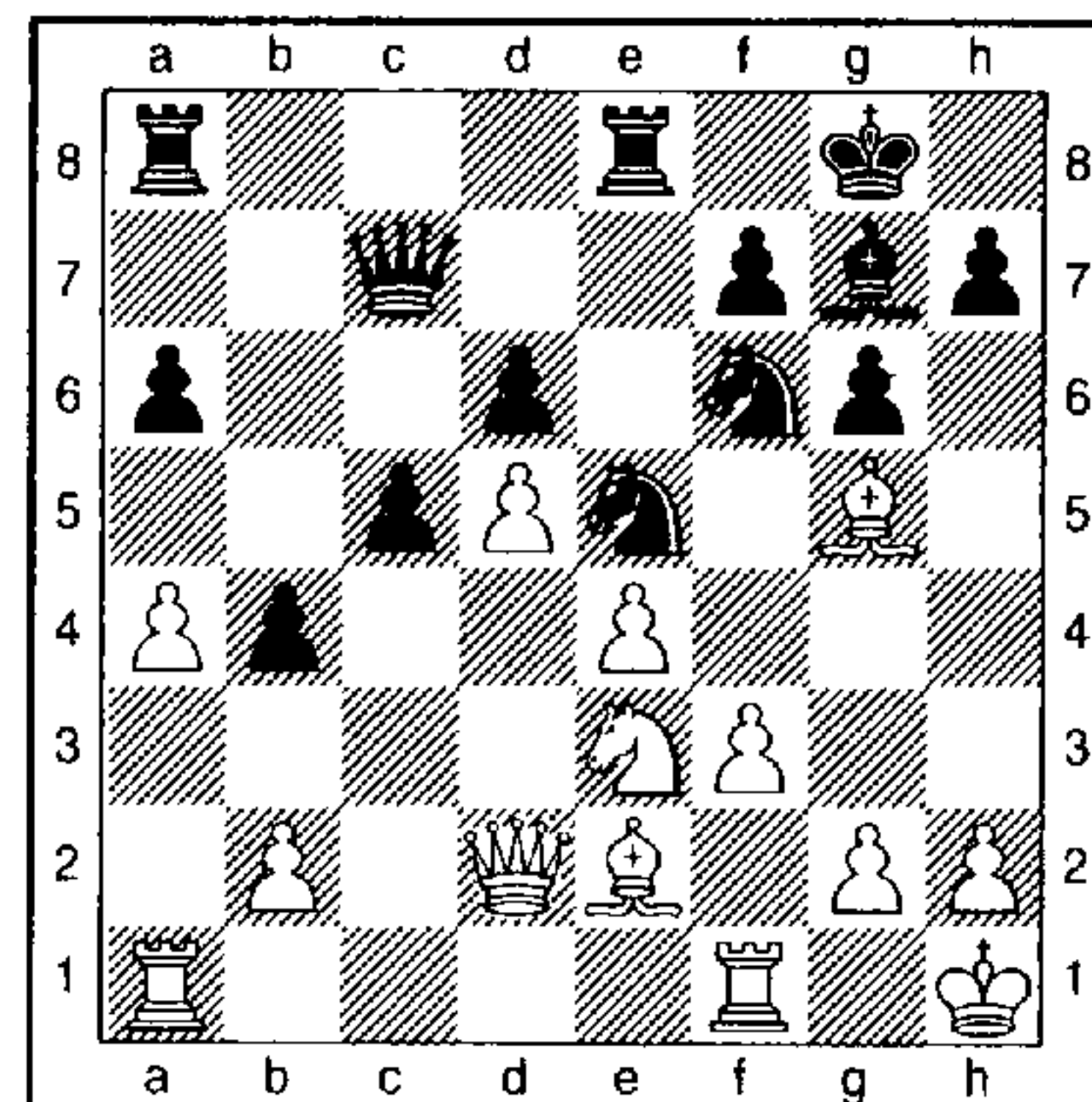
significant which of the good solutions you choose – the important thing is that the solution should indeed be good.

E 6-27
121



Black to move

E 6-28
122



White to move



The Initiative

It is essential to act more or less aggressively, attacking as soon as a chance presents itself. The initiative should be seized at the very first opportunity. The initiative is an advantage.

José Raúl Capablanca

The initiative means activity, the imposing of your will on the opponent. If we hold the initiative, we force him to parry our threats, thereby diverting him from putting into effect the plans he has conceived.

The word 'initiative' constantly appears in game commentaries – this means that it is a highly significant factor in chess. And meanwhile, in literature there are hardly any studies of this important topic. I, for example, can remember only a chapter, devoted to the fight for an opening initiative, in Isaac Lipnitsky's excellent (but, alas, little-known) book 'Voprosy sovremennoy shakhmatnoy teorii' (Questions of modern chess theory).

The examples offered for your attention are devoted to one of the aspects of this topic: turning points in a game, determining who will hold the initiative. It is on the success of our actions at such moments that the entire subsequent course of a game will often depend.

Euwe – Alekhine

World Championship Match, 4th Game,
Holland 1935

1	d4	♗f6
2	c4	g6
3	♗c3	d5
4	♖b3	dxc4
5	♖xc4	♗g7
6	♗f4	c6
7	♖d1?!	♖a5

Black energetically exploits the drawbacks of the opponent's last move (delay in development, and weakening of the a2 pawn) and creates the threat of 8...♗e6.

8 ♗d2 b5

'There are some moves of mine in the first Euwe match which I actually simply cannot understand. Neither before nor since have I played such decidedly unsound chess, especially in the openings! Here, for instance, the spoiling of the pawn skeleton on the queenside cannot even be excused by the lack of other promising continuations; for the simple 8...♖b6 9 ♗c1 ♗f5 followed by ...0-0 would have secured Black a distinct advantage in development.' (Alekhine).

9 ♖b3 b4?!

It is most probably this pawn move, rather than the previous one, which should be condemned. After 9...0-0 or 9...♖b6 Black would have retained an excellent position, whereas now the white knight aims for c5.

10 ♗a4 ♗a6
11 e3 ♗e6?!

11...0-0 was preferable, and if 12 ♗c4, then 12...♖b8 (with the idea of 13...c5) or 12...♗e4.

12 ♖c2 0-0
13 b3

The pawn capture 13 ♖xc6!? looks risky, but White could, and probably should have played this. Both 13...♗b8 14 ♖b5! (but not 14 ♖xa8? ♗d5) 14...♖xb5 15 ♗xb5 and 13...♗d5 14 ♖xa6 ♖xa6 15 ♗xa6 ♗xg2 16 f3 (16 ♗xb4!?) 16...♗xh1 17 ♗f2 are to his advantage. And after 13...♗c7 14 b3! (less good is 14 ♖c1 ♗d5 15 ♖xc7 ♖xa4 or 15 ♖c5 ♗xc6 16 ♖xa5 ♗xa4 17 ♖xa4 a5) he would have had the important resource 15 ♖c5.



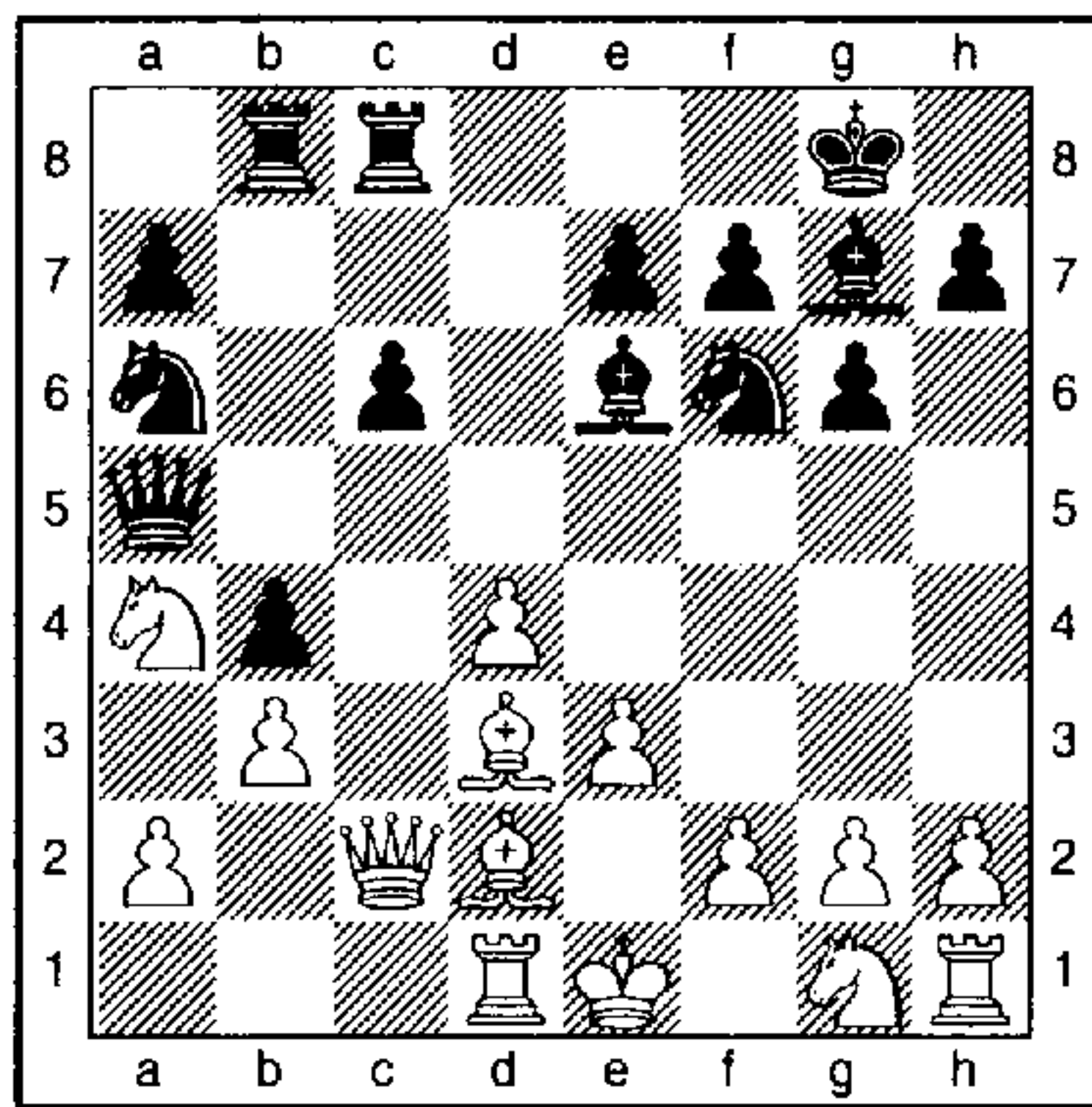
In rejecting gain of material, Max Euwe wants to complete his development as quickly as possible and then in a quiet positional battle exploit the opponent's weaknesses on the c-file.

13 ... ♖ab8
14 ♔d3

Here 14 ♗xc6?! was much weaker than before. Alexander Alekhine gives the excellent reply 14...♗c8! with the idea of 15...♗b7 and 16...♖fc8. But the other developing move 14 ♖f3!? came into consideration.

14 ... ♖fc8

123



Q 6-62. How should White continue?

White's positional pluses are obvious, whereas he has only one minus, but it is very serious: he is behind in development. Black wants to exploit it by 15...c5! By sacrificing a pawn, he will open lines for his pieces and develop a counter-attack.

Euwe could have prevented the activation of the opponent's forces by the simple exchange 15 ♗xa6 (of course, this could also have been played a move earlier) 15...♗xa6 16 ♖c5 ♗b5 17 ♖e2 (weaker is 17 ♖f3 ♗f5!, and if 18 e4, then 18...♖xe4! 19 ♖xe4 ♗d5). But after 17...♖d7 does White have any advantage? In the event of 18 ♖xe6 fxe6

Black will inevitably undermine the centre by ...e6-e5 or ...c6-c5. And after 18 ♖c1 he achieves equality by playing 18...♗f5 19 e4 (19 ♗c4 ♖xc5 20 ♗xc5 e5) 19...♖xc5 20 dxc5 ♗d7!? followed by 21...e5 and 22...♗e6.

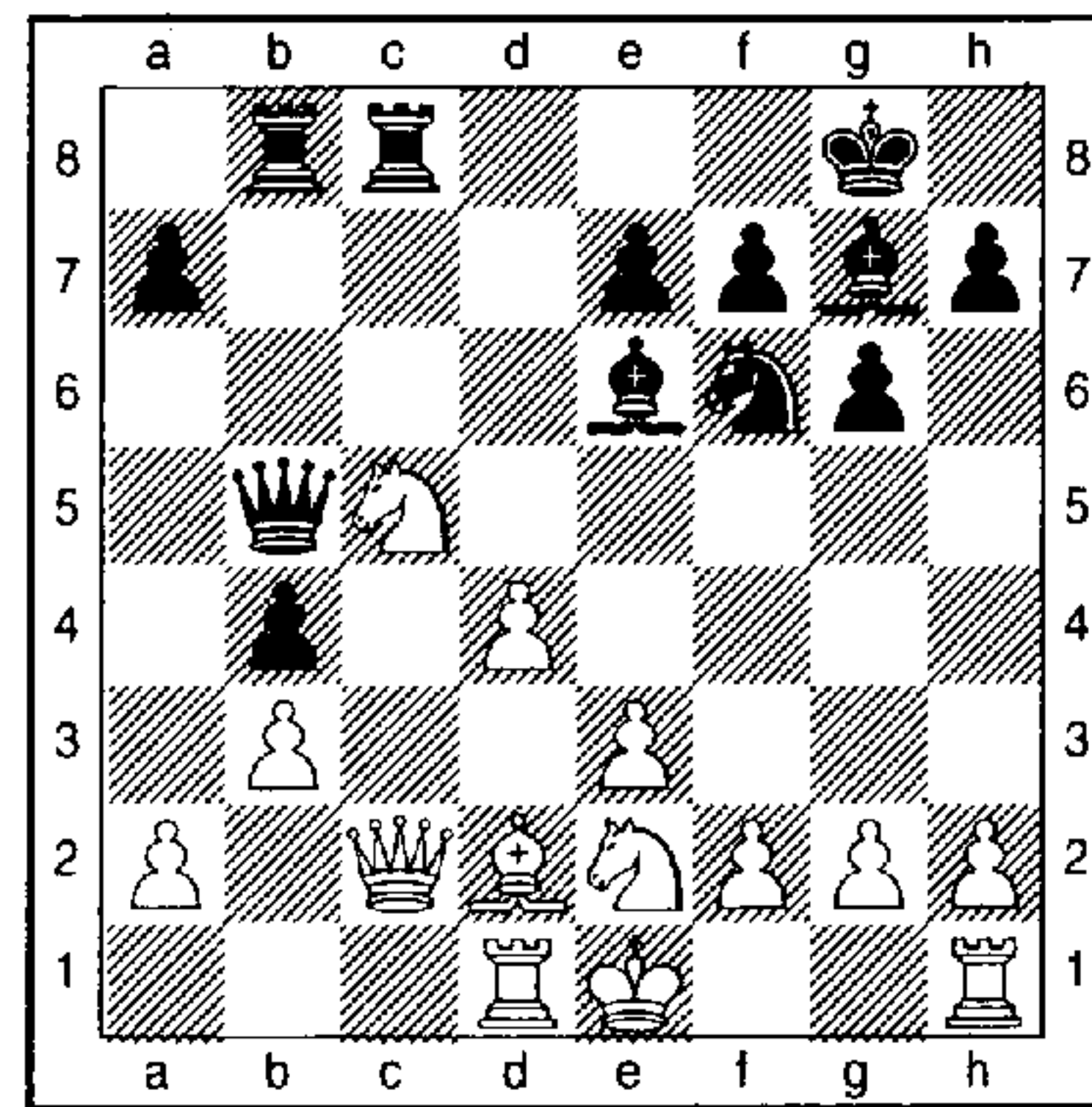
This variation probably seemed insufficiently convincing to the challenger for the world title, who wanted to achieve more, and he headed into the storm.

15 ♖e2!? c5!

'Delay is fatal'. Black is obliged at any cost to seize the initiative – otherwise the defects in his pawn formation will gradually tell.

16 ♗xa6 ♗xa6
17 ♖xc5 ♗b5

124



White's position has become uneasy – he has to reckon with the threats of 18...♖d7, 18...♗f5 and 18...♗g4.

18 ♖f4?

Euwe goes wrong, unable to find his way in the suddenly sharpened situation. Now Black's initiative quickly grows into a powerful attack. But how should White have continued?

Let us consider 18 ♖c1 ♖d7 (if 18...♗f5 there is the sound reply 19 ♗c4) 19 ♖f4. After 19...♖xc5 20 dxc5 White's c5 is



defended, and 20...♗f5 is strongly met by 21 e4! However, the opponent transposes moves: 19...♗f5! 20 ♗c4 (20 e4? ♗xd4) 20...♖xc5 21 dxc5 ♗b2! (Black is no longer satisfied with the draw after 21...♗c3?! 22 ♖d5 ♗xc4 23 bxc4 ♗xd2+ 24 ♗xd2 ♖f8) 22 ♗xb5 ♖xb5 23 ♖c4 ♖bxc5 24 ♖xc5 ♖xc5, and White's position is difficult.

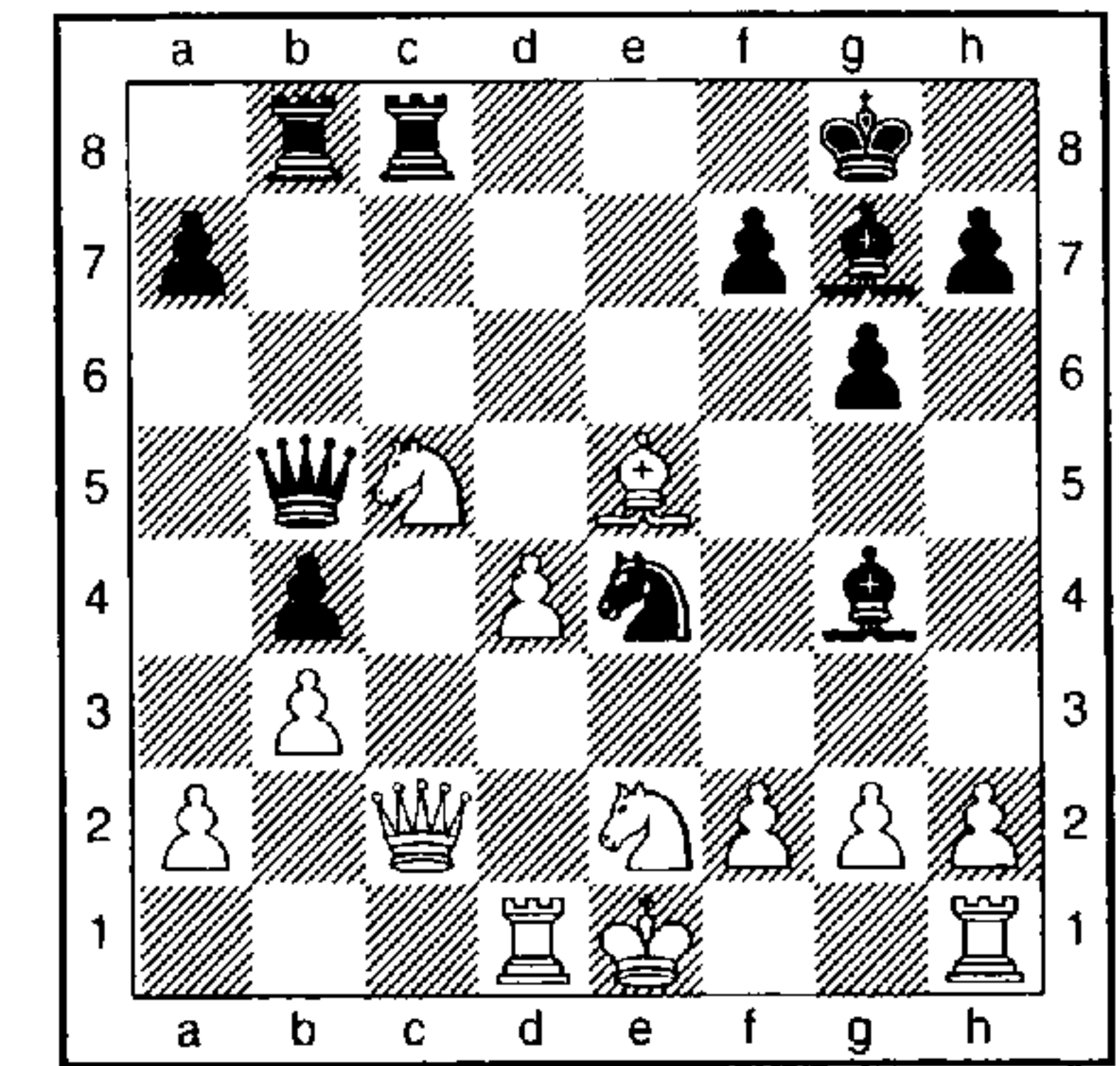
18 e4! should have been played, after which it is Black who faces a difficult task.

Q 6-63. How should Black reply?

Alekhine suggested the variation 18...♖d7 19 ♗e3 ♗xd4 20 ♖xd4 ♗xc5 21 ♗xc5 ♖xc5 with equality. Emanuel Lasker pointed out that, instead of exchanging queens, 21 ♗d2! with the threat of 22 ♖xe6 was stronger. Black has to agree to a markedly inferior endgame: 21...♗d6 22 ♖xe6 ♗xd2+. And in the event of 19...♗g4 with the simple 20 ♗d3 White retains his extra pawn (less convincing is 20 f3 e5).

I initially thought that 18...♗g4! would easily solve the problem: 19 ♗e3 ♖xe4! is bad for White, while if 19 f3 there follows 19...e5! But White has the important intermediate move 19 ♗f4!, and if the rook moves, then 20 f3 is now strong (the e5 square is under control). Even so, Black has the right to go in for this variation, if he finds an unexpected and complicated combination: 19...e5!! 20 ♗xe5 ♖xe4! It is not possible to calculate its consequences at the board, but all the same there is nothing better, so he has to take the risk.

125



A) The exchange of blows after 21 ♗xb8 ♖xc5 (threatening 22...♖xb3 or 22...♗f5) 22 dxc5 ♖e8 (22...♗xe2? 23 ♗xe2 ♖e8 does not work because of 24 ♗e5!!) 23 0-0! (23 f3? ♗c3+ 24 ♖f1 ♗f5) 23...♗xe2 leads to a situation in which Black retains compensation for the lost pawn: 24 ♗xa7 ♗xf1 25 ♖xf1 ♖e2 26 ♗d1 ♖xa2, or 24 ♗d6 ♗xf1 25 ♖xf1 ♖e2.

B) In reply to 21 ♗xe4!, 21...♗xe5? 22 ♗xg4 will not do for Black. 21...♗f5 is an interesting try, when he obtains a satisfactory position in the variations 22 ♗e3 ♗xe5 23 dxe5 ♖xc5 (but not 23...♗xc5?? 24 ♖d8+!) 24 ♖d4 (or 24 f4 ♗g4) 24...♗e8! 25 f4 (25 ♖xf5? ♖xe5) 25...♗g4, or 23 ♗xe5 ♖e8 24 ♖e6! ♗xe5 (24...♖xe6!? 25 ♗xb5 ♖xb5) 25 dxe5 ♖xe6 26 f4 ♗g4 27 ♖d2 (27 ♖d5 ♖c8) 27...f6 28 ♖d4 ♖ee8. Alas, White finds a veiled refutation: 22 ♗f3! ♗xe5 23 g4!! ♗c2 (the bishop has no other good square) 24 ♖d2! (weaker is 24 ♖c1? ♗xd4 25 ♖xd4 ♖e8+, or even 25...♗xc5 26 ♖xc2 ♗e5+ followed by ...♗b2) 24...♗xd4 (24...♗b1 25 0-0) 25 ♖xd4 ♖e8+ (25...♗xc5 26 ♖xc2) 26 ♖ce6! etc.

There remains 21...♗xe2 22 ♗xe2 (22 ♗xg7!?) 22...♗xe5! (22...♗xe2+? 23 ♖xe2 ♗xe5 24 ♖d7!). If 23 dxe5 ♗xc5 24 0-0 ♖e8



25 ♖fe1 ♖b5 Black has the right to count on a draw, but after 23 ♘e4! his prospects are much worse. For example, the clever reply 23...♖e8?! will be refuted by 24 dxe5 ♗xe5 25 f3 f5, and now either 26 ♗c4+, or 26 ♖d5!? ♗a1+ 27 ♖f2 ♗xh1 28 ♗c4.

It turns out that objectively Euwe was right to allow the pawn sacrifice. Black's initiative can be suppressed, albeit with great difficulty.

18 ... ♗g4!
19 f3 e5!
20 ♘fd3 exd4!
21 fxg4

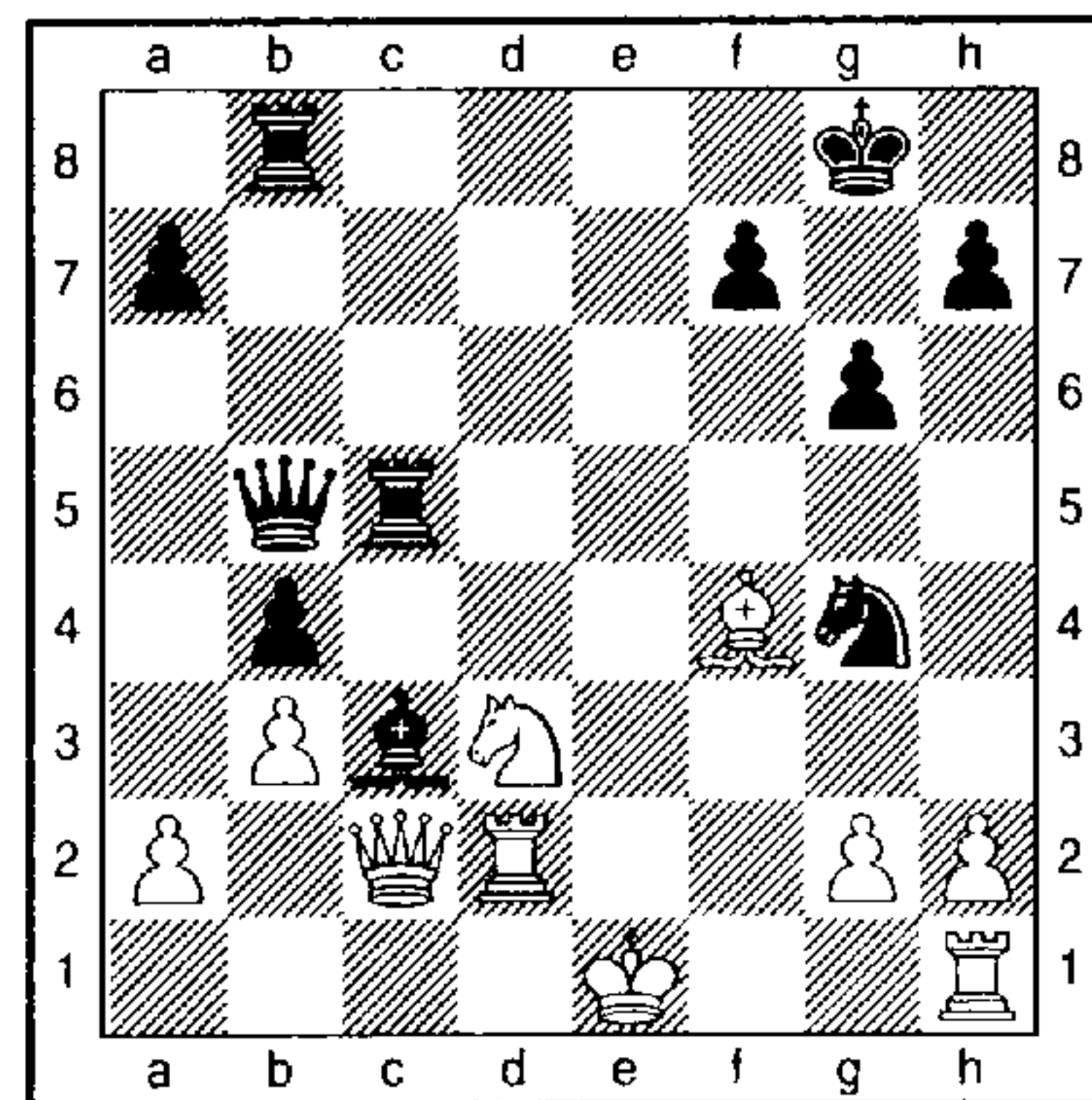
21 exd4 ♘d5! (Alekhine) or 21 e4 ♘xe4! 22 fxe4 ♖xc5 23 ♗xc5 ♗xd3 was even worse.

21 ... dxe3
22 ♗xe3?

If 22 ♗xb4 Alekhine gives the variation 22...♘d5 23 a3 a5 24 ♗c4! axb4! 25 ♗xd5 bxa3 26 ♖f1 (26 b4 ♗c3+ and ...♗xb4) 26...a2! 27 ♖xf7 ♗c3+ 28 ♖e2 ♖xc5, and Black wins. However, it is not obligatory to take on f7 – after 27 ♖e2! ♖c7 the position still remains unclear.

22 ... ♗xg4
23 ♗f4 ♗c3+
24 ♖d2 ♖xc5

126



25 ♗xc5
If 25 ♗xb8, then 25...♗e8+!

25 ... ♗xc5
In Alekhine's opinion, 25...♖e8+! would have won more quickly. But also after the move in the game Black's advantage is sufficient for a win.

There followed: 26 ♗xb8 ♗e7+ 27 ♖d1 ♘e3+ 28 ♖c1 ♘xc2 29 ♖xc2 h5! 30 ♖d1 ♗g7 31 h3 a5 32 ♗f4 ♗e4 33 ♗c7 ♗e3+ 34 ♖b1 a4! 35 bxa4 b3 36 axb3 ♗xb3+ 37 ♖c1 ♗h6+?! (37...♗e3+! 38 ♖b1 ♗a3!) 38 ♖dd2 ♗xa4 39 ♗e5 (39 ♖d1) 39...♖h7 40 ♗c3? (40 ♗b2 was more tenacious) 40...♗b5! 41 ♗d4 ♗e2! 42 g4 ♗e1+ 43 ♖b2 ♗xd2 44 ♖c8 ♗c1+! White resigns.

Hazai – Uhlmann
Halle 1981

1	e4	e6
2	d4	d5
3	♗c3	♗b4
4	e5	♗e7
5	a3	♗xc3+
6	bxc3	c5
7	♗f3	♗d7
8	a4	♗a5
9	♗d2	♗bc6
10	♗b5	c4
11	♗c1?!	

11 0–0 is more natural. The c1 square might subsequently be used for transferring the bishop to a3.

11	...	f6
12	exf6	gxf6
13	0–0	♖g8
14	♖e1	♗f7!

The king defends the e6 pawn. After queenside castling the knight would remain tied to the e7 square – if it moved there would follow ♗xc6, when Black has no good recapture.

15 ♖f1

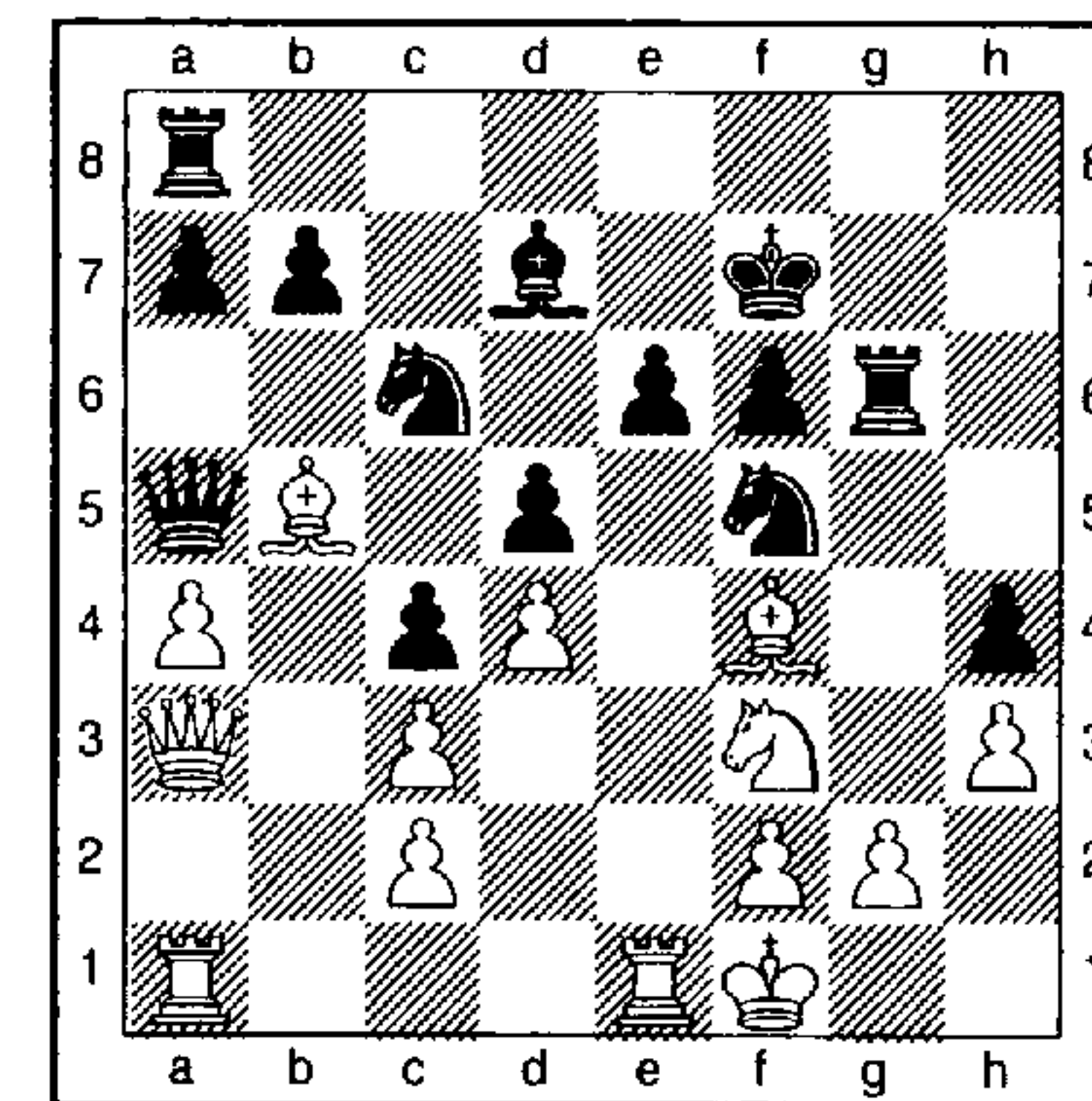


White prepares to place his bishop on f4. The immediate 15 ♗f4? was a mistake in view of 15...♗xc3, when 16 ♗d2? ♗xf3 is not possible.

15	...	♗f5
16	♗f4	h5
17	h3	♖g6
18	♗a3	h4!

Otherwise White would have played g2–g3, making pointless the doubling of rooks on the g-file.

127



Q 6-64. How should White act?

He has to do something against the threat of 19...♖ag8.

19 ♗h2?!

The solution that suggests itself – the knight is played to g4. As we will see, in this case the initiative remains with Black. But what can be recommended instead?

Let's try making the waiting and, generally speaking, useful move 19 ♖e2!, vacating the e1 square for the second rook or for the knight. After 19...♖ag8 there is now the comfortable defence 20 ♗e1. But there is also the surprising possibility of a sharp counter-attack: 20 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 (20...bxc6 21 ♗e1 or immediately 21 ♖b1) 21 ♖xe6!! ♗xe6 22 ♖e1+ ♖f7? 23 ♗xh4! It is important

that the king does not have the g8 square – otherwise the combination would not work. Or 22...♖d7 23 ♗xh4! ♗xa4 (best) 24 ♗xa4 ♗xa4 25 ♗xf5 ♗xc2 26 ♖e7+ ♖c6 27 ♖c7+ ♖b6 28 ♗e3!? ♗d3+ 29 ♖e1 with the threats of 30 ♗xd5+ and 30 ♖c5. White's unexpected combination led almost by force to an ending that is rather hard to evaluate.

19 ♖ab1 can also be played, aiming for another tactical idea: 19...♖ag8 20 ♗xc4! (20 ♗xc6!? ♗xc6 21 ♖xe6! transposes into the variation that we have just considered) 20...dxc4 21 ♖xb7 ♗d5?! (21...♖e8? 22 ♖b5 and 23 ♖xf5; 21...♖d8) 22 ♖b5. The counter-combination 22...♗xf3 23 gxf3 ♖g1+ 24 ♖e2 ♗cxd4+ 25 cxd4 ♗xd4+ 26 ♖d2 ♖xe1 is clever, but insufficient in view of 27 ♖b7. Black would probably have rejected 19...♖ag8?! in favour of 19...a6 20 ♗xc6 (20 ♗xc4? dxc4 21 ♖xb7 ♗d5, and the b5 square is defended) 20...♗xc6. For this position 19 ♖e2 looks more appropriate than 19 ♖ab1.

19	...	♖ag8
20	♗g4	♖xg4!

This positional exchange sacrifice was undoubtedly envisaged by Wolfgang Uhlmann when he played 18...h4.

21	hxg4	♖xg4
22	♗h2	♗d8!

The queen goes to g8. The initiative is completely in Black's possession, and White is required to defend carefully.

23	f3	♖g6
24	♗c1	

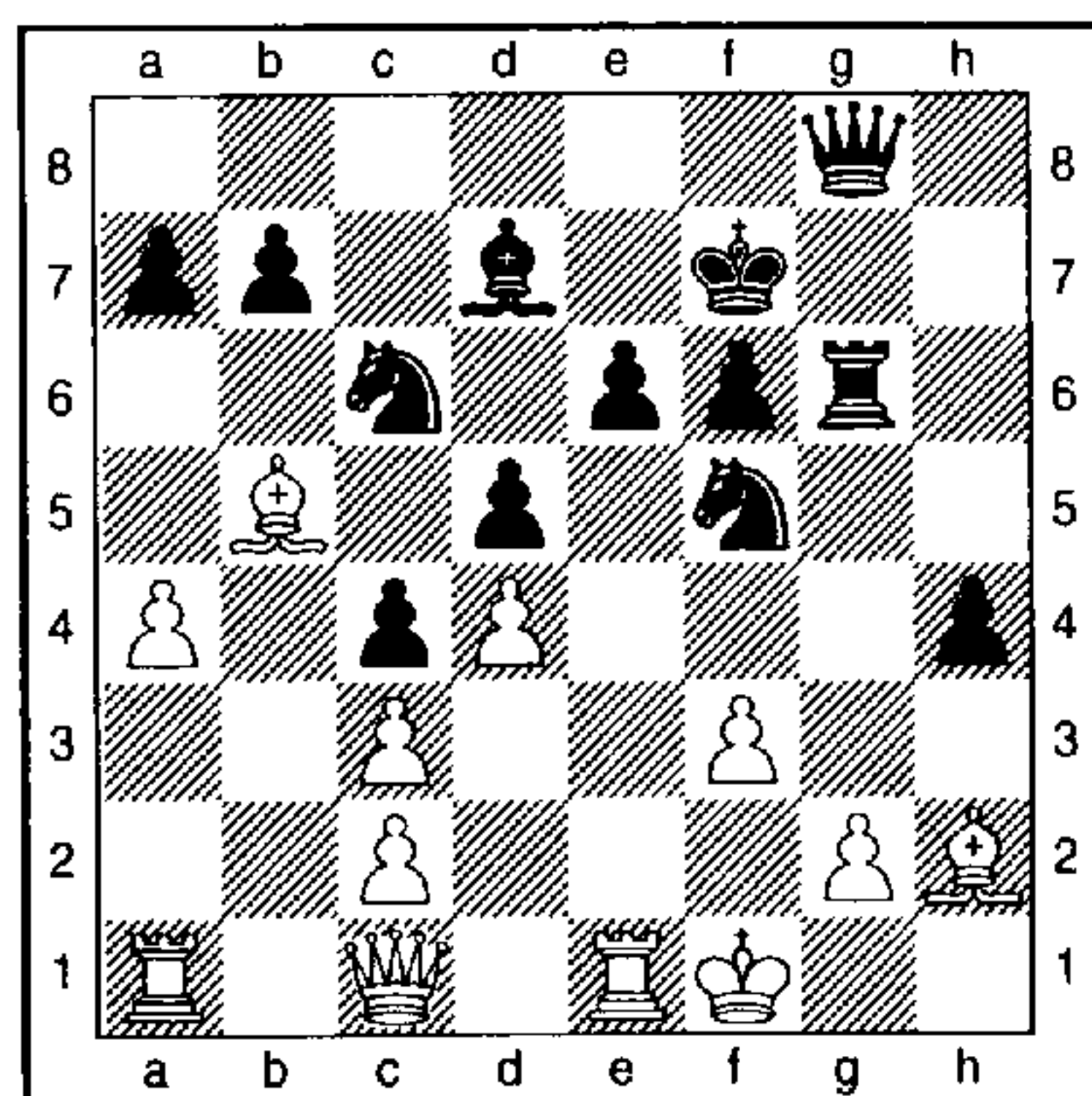
If 24 ♖e2 Uhlmann was intending 24...♗h8! followed by 25...♗g3+.

24	...	♗g8
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see next diagram



128



25 ♖d2

25 ♖e2 looks more logical, to defend the pawn with the rook and leave the queen free for counter-attacking actions. Black replies 25... ♟g3+ 26 ♔xc3 ♝xc3 27 ♔xc6 bxc6 28 ♞f4 h3. Now 29 ♞b1! h2 (29... ♝xc2 30 ♞b7) 30 ♞h6 leads to a position that we still have to examine – it occurred in the game. But there is also the possibility of 29 ♞c7.

Q 6-65. Work out the consequences of this variation.

The play develops by force: 29...h2! 30 ♞xd7+ ♟g6 31 ♟f2 ♟h6! White is a rook up, but how can he parry the threat to his g2? 32 ♞g1 is refuted by the pretty 32... ♝xf3+!!

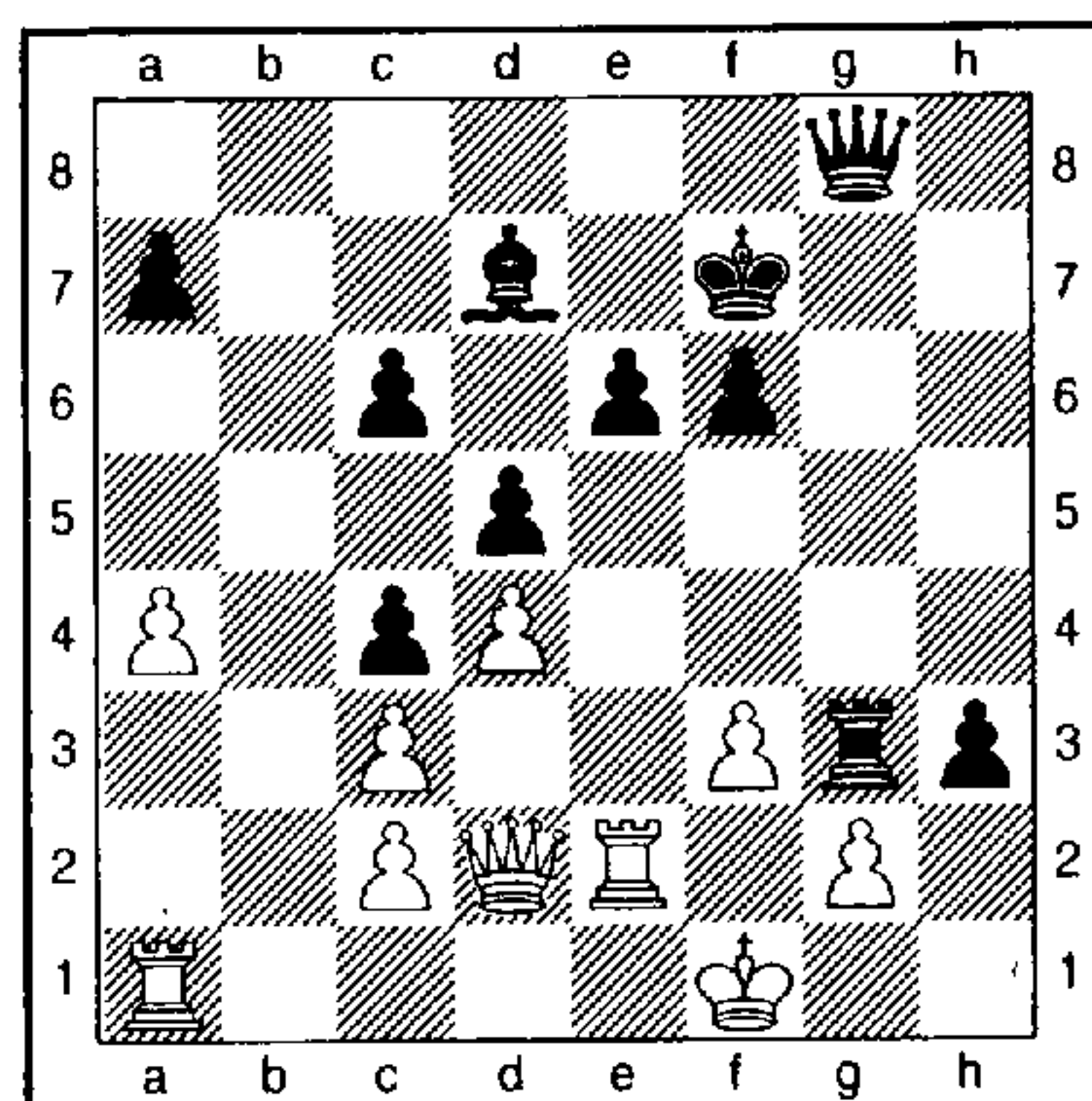
Let us continue the variation: 32 ♞d6 ♝xc2+ 33 ♟e3 ♞g5+ 34 f4 ♞g3+ 35 ♟d2 ♝xe2+ 36 ♟xe2 ♞g2+ 37 ♟e3 h1 ♞ 38 ♞xh1+ ♞xh1. The e6 pawn is immune because of ... ♞e1+, and there is no perpetual check: 39 ♞f8+ ♟g6 40 ♞e8+ ♟f5. Even so, after 39 ♟d2! ♞f1 (39... ♞e4?! 40 ♟c1; 39... ♟g6! 40 ♞xe6 ♞h2+ 41 ♟e3 ♞g3+ 42 ♟e2 ♞xf4) 40 a5! the battle continues. The advantage is with Black, but whether it is sufficient for a win is not clear.

25 ... ♟g3+
26 ♔xc3

Both 26 ♟f2 ♟e4+! and 26 ♟g1 h3 are bad for White.

26 ... ♝xc3
27 ♔xc6 ♝xc6
28 ♞e2 h3

129



29 ♞b1!

A difficult ending for White arises after 29 ♟g1 ♝xf3 30 ♞f2 ♝g3 31 ♞e1 a5! 32 ♞e3 ♝xc2+ 33 ♝xc2 ♞xc2+ 34 ♞xc2 hxc2 35 ♞h3 c5! (Uhlmann).

29 ... h2!?
30 ♞h6 ♝xf3+
31 ♞f2?

The decisive error. Essential was 31 ♟e1!, which, in Uhlmann's opinion, would have led to a slightly inferior position for White in the variation 31... ♞g3+ 32 ♟d2 ♞f2 33 ♞h7+ ♟e8 34 ♞b8+ ♞xb8 35 ♝xf2 ♞g3 36 ♞h8+ ♟e7 37 ♞xf6+ ♟d6 38 ♞e5+ ♞xe5 39 dxe5+ ♟xe5 40 ♞f1 a5! 41 ♞h1 c5.

Sergey Dolmatov pointed out that instead of 34 ♞b8+? White can play more strongly: 34 ♝xf2! ♞xf2+ 35 ♟c1 ♞g1+ 36 ♟b2 ♞xc2 37 ♟a2. Here it is Black who is now in danger. If 37... ♟d8 there follows 38 ♞b7 ♞xc2+ (the only defence against mate) 39 ♞xc2 h1 ♞ 40 ♞xa7. It would appear that he nevertheless does not lose after 37... ♟c8!,



e.g. 38 ♞b8 ♟d8 39 ♟b2 (39 ♞h8+ ♟e7) 39...h1 ♞ 40 ♞b7 ♞xc2+! 41 ♟xc2 ♞h2+ 42 ♟b1 ♞g1+ 43 ♟a2 ♞h2+ 44 ♟a3 ♞d6+.

Of course, the mistake made by Laszlo Hazai was no accident. By conceding the initiative to his opponent, he condemned himself to a cheerless defence, demanding full concentration and not provoking any positive emotions. In such an unfavourable situation it is very easy to deviate somewhere from the correct path.

31 ... ♞g6!
32 ♞xc6+ ♟xc6
33 ♟e2 ♝xc3
34 ♟d2 ♞g3!

Stronger than 34... ♞a3 35 ♞f3! ♝xa4 36 ♞g3+ ♟f7 37 ♞h3.

35 ♞h1 c3+
36 ♟c1 ♞g4

With three pawns for the exchange Black is bound to win.

37 ♞xh2 ♝xd4 38 ♞f3 e5! 39 ♝xc3 ♝xa4 40 ♞g3+ ♟g4 41 ♞c3 e4! 42 ♞h8 (42 ♝xc6 e3) 42... ♞a1+! 43 ♟b2 ♞g1 44 g3 ♟f3! 45 ♞d8 ♞d1 46 ♝xc6 e3 47 ♞f8 ♟e4! 48 ♝xc6+ ♟g5 49 ♞f7 ♟g4! 50 ♞f4+ ♟h3 51 ♞h4+ ♟g2 52 ♞hf4 ♞d2. White resigns.

Take note: in both of the games we have examined the seizure of the initiative by one of the players did not yet decide the outcome, but it made things much harder for his opponent, and created favourable grounds for his subsequent mistakes.

**Dolmatov – Adams
Hastings 1989/90**

1 e4 c6
2 d4 d5
3 exd5 cxd5
4 c4 ♟f6
5 ♟c3 g6
6 ♞b3 ♟g7
7 cxd5 0-0
8 ♟e2 ♟bd7

9 ♟f3 ♟b6
10 ♟ge2 ♟f5

The alternative is 10... ♟g4.

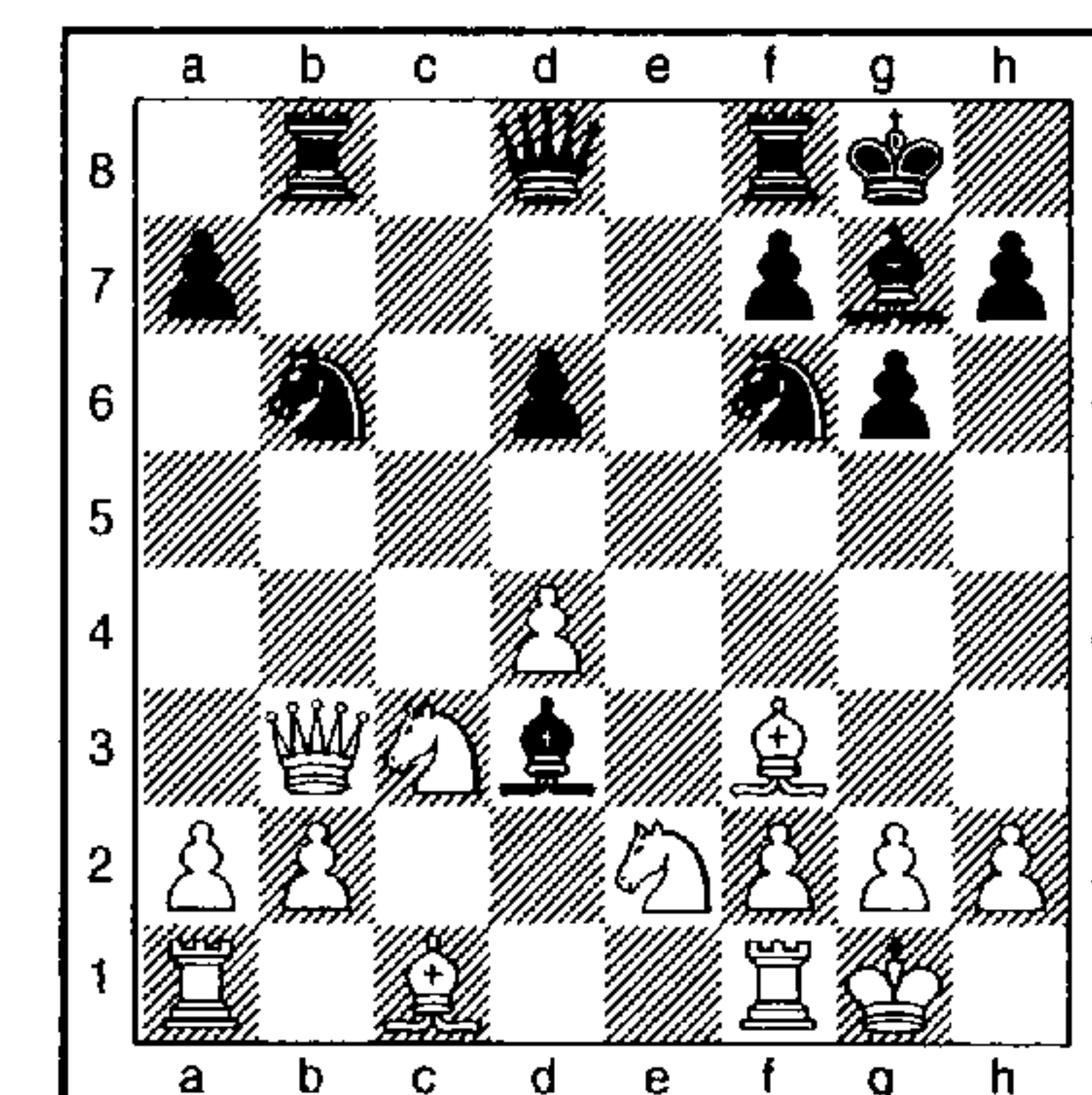
11 0-0

A simpler and sounder continuation than the 11 ♟f4 which is recommended in opening books.

11 ... a5

11... ♟d3 (with the threat of 12... ♟c4) looks tempting, but after 12 d6! exd6 13 ♟xb7 ♞b8 14 ♟f3 it is not easy for Black to demonstrate that the activity of his pieces compensates for the lost pawn.

130



The stem game Hort–Dolmatov (Amsterdam 1980) went 14... ♞e8 15 ♞d1 ♟a6 16 ♞e1 ♝c8 17 ♟g3 ♝xe1+ 18 ♞xe1 ♞d7 19 ♟f4 ♞e8 20 ♞d2 ♞e6 21 b3 d5. In the 'Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings' the resulting position is evaluated by Mikhail Botvinnik as equal. But of course, this is incorrect – White's healthy extra pawn secures him the advantage. True, later Dolmatov defended resourcefully, at some point his opponent missed a winning continuation, and the game ended in a draw.

The incorrect evaluation by Botvinnik (in fact, almost certainly not by Botvinnik, but his assistant, who prepared the material, to



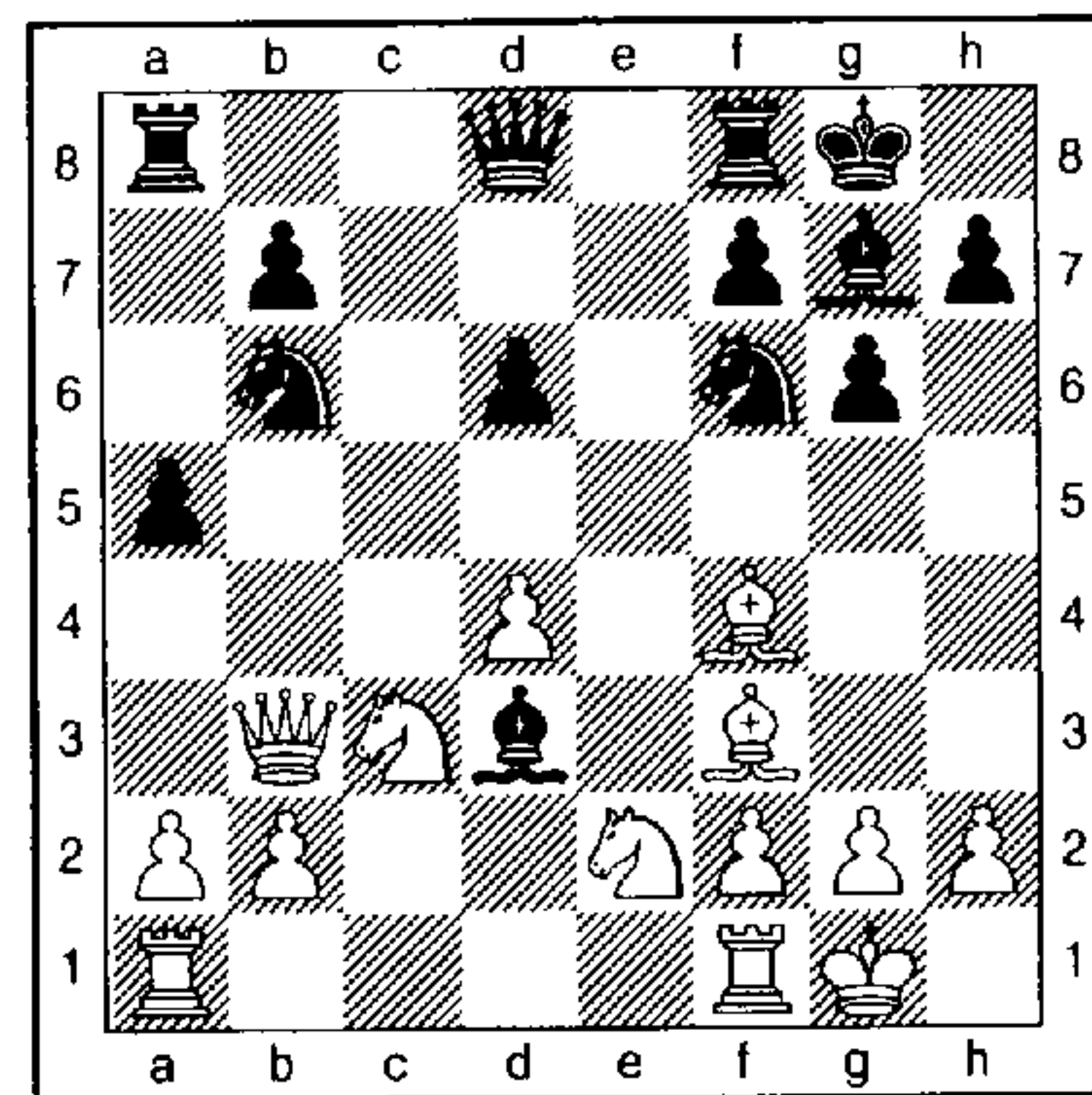
which Botvinnik then put his signature) was most probably the result not of a study of the resulting position (it is possible that it was not even set up on the board), but merely the result of the game. Such hack-work is often encountered on the pages of opening guides. Another example: Dvoretsky–Rytov (tournament with a time control of 20 minutes for the game, Tallinn 1987): 14...♙c4 15 ♖d1 ♘fd5 16 ♗e1! (with the positional threat of threat 17 b3!) 16...♗e8 17 ♙d2 (not 17 b3? ♘xc3 18 ♘xc3 ♙xd4!) 17...♘b4? (17...♘xc3 is more tenacious, but after 18 bxc3 and 19 ♘f4 White retains the advantage) 18 b3! ♙a6 19 ♙e3 ♘d3 20 ♗f1. White has a significant advantage, which is determined not only by his extra pawn, but also by the badly placed knight at b6, which is shut out of the game (remember Siegbert Tarrasch: *'If one piece stands badly, the entire game stands badly'*). As you will see, this same motif substantially influenced the evaluation of the position in the Dolmatov–Adams game.

12 ♙f4!

The 'Encyclopaedia' suggests only 12 a4 ♖d6! 13 ♘b5 ♖d7 with equality (Van Baarle–Gaprindashvili, Amsterdam 1976). Yet now if 12...a4 White has the excellent reply 13 ♖b5! – so why should he weaken his b4 square?

12 ... ♙d3
13 d6 exd6

131



Q 6-66. What should White play?

It is now unfavourable to take the b7 pawn. The simple 14 ♗fd1! ♙a6 (14...♙c4 15 ♖a3) 15 a4 would have led to an advantage. However, at first sight the move in the game also looks very attractive.

14 ♖d1?! ♙a6
15 b3

Dolmatov bases his play on the poor position of the knight at b6, and, in the future, the bishop at a6 (after the knight moves from e2, the bishop will be firing into empty space, while the exchange on e2 will give White the advantage of the two bishops). He wants to calmly strengthen his position by ♗e1, ♖d2 and so on. Black is obliged now to take the initiative and disrupt the opponent's normal development, as otherwise he risks gradually being suffocated.

15 ... h6!?

The start of an original plan of counterplay on the kingside. However, it would have been simpler to play in the centre: 15...♗e8 16 ♗e1 d5!, with the idea of 17...♘e4. For example, 17 ♙e5 ♘bd7 18 ♙g3 (White had prepared 19 ♘f4) 18...♗c8 (less good is 18...♘f4 19 ♘f4 ♗xe1+ 20 ♖xe1 ♘e4 21 ♘cd5 ♘xg3 22 hxg3 ♙xd4 23 ♗d1) 19 ♗c1



♙f8! I do not see how White can gain an advantage here – he now has to reckon with 20...♙a3 and 20...♙b4.

16 h3

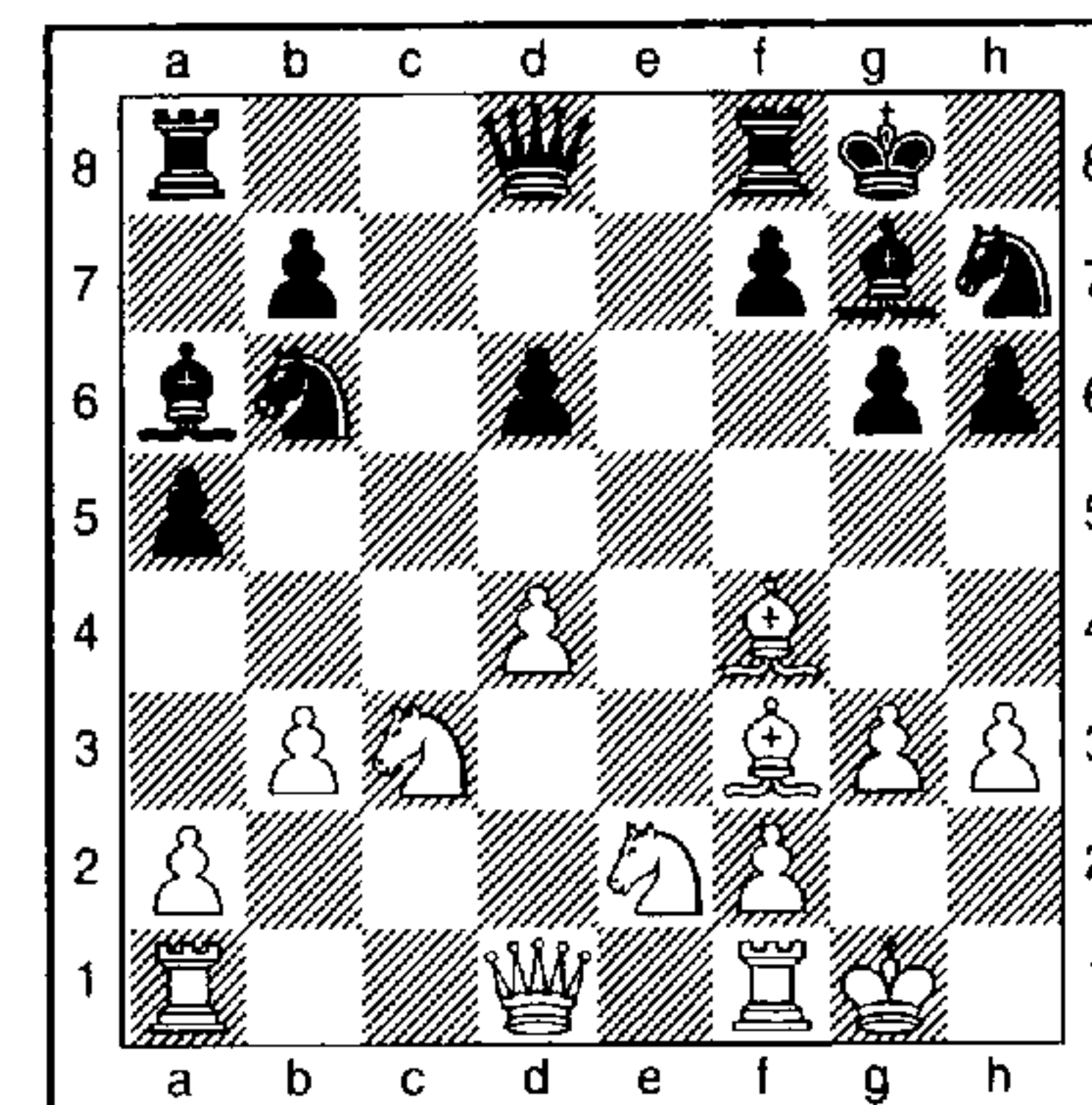
Dolmatov does not guess the opponent's intentions and merely parries the obvious threat of ...g6–g5–g4. After the game he recommended 16 g3! g5 17 ♙e3(c1). However, ...g6–g5 is not obligatory – Black can revert to play in the centre: 16...♗e8 and 17...d5.

16 ... ♘h7!

This is the point – the unpleasant threat of 17...♘g5 has been created. The exchange of either of the white bishops is clearly to Black's advantage.

17 g3!

132



Q 6-67. How should Black continue?

Here the saying 'in for a penny, in for a pound' is applicable. Now 17...♘g5 18 ♙g2 is pointless, and therefore the logical continuation of Black's plan was 17...g5! 18 ♙e3 (18 ♙d2! is more circumspect) 18...f5! Good or bad, that is how he should have played – it would have led to a rather sharp position with chances for both sides.

Michael Adams is unable to bring himself to play something so drastic. As a result he loses the thread of the game, concedes the initiative, and gradually ends up in the positional bind that has been threatening him from the very start.

17 ... ♗c8?!
18 ♙g2 ♗e8?

The exchange 18...♗xc3 19 ♘xc3 ♙xf1 20 ♘xf1 is, of course, advantageous to White. It was probably not yet too late to advance the kingside pawns. By placing his rook on e8, Adams finally rejects this, his only possible active plan.

19 ♗e1 ♘f6

Because of Black's indecisiveness, his excellent 16th move has merely turned out to be a loss of time.

20 ♗c1 ♖d7
21 ♖d2 ♘h7
22 ♙e3!

By frightening his opponent with the apparently powerful 23 d5, White provokes ...d6–d5, for which he is now well prepared – his knight goes immediately to f4.

22 ... d5
23 ♘f4 ♗c7?!

23...♙f8 was better.

24 ♘d3 ♙xd3

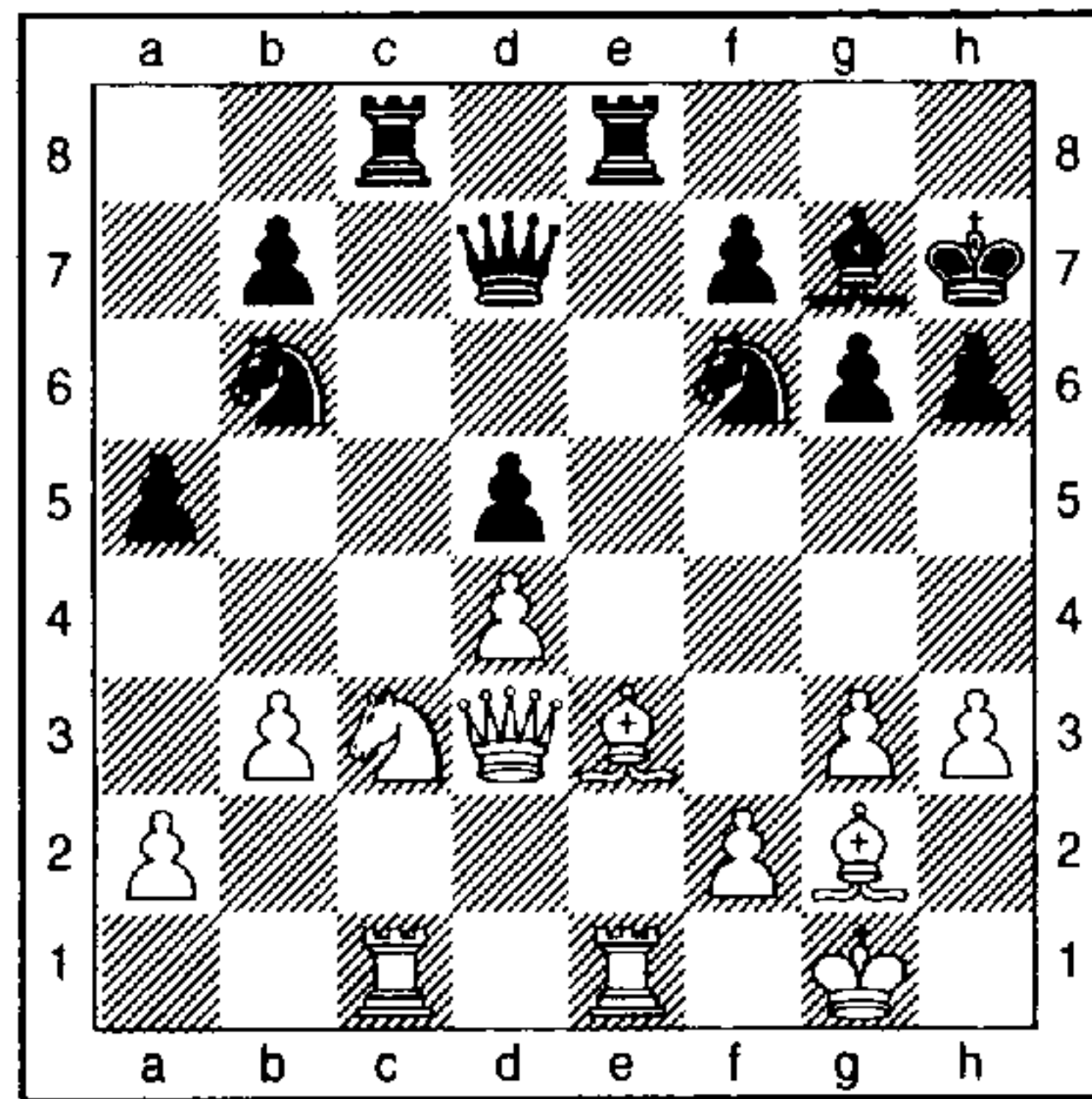
Black has to give up his bishop – the knight was threatening to occupy an excellent outpost at c5.

25 ♖xd3 ♗cc8

see next diagram



133



- | | | |
|----|------|-----|
| 35 | ♙e3 | ♚d6 |
| 36 | ♜xd5 | ♜c7 |
| 37 | ♜xc7 | |

Having a decisive advantage, there is no reason for White to sharpen the play and calculate variations such as 37 ♜xb6 ♜fxd5 38 ♙xd5 ♙xg3 39 fxg3 ♜e7 (or 38... ♜e7 followed by ... ♙xg3).

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 37 | ... | ♜xc7 |
| 38 | ♜c6 | ♜e7 |
| 39 | ♜xb6 | ♙xg3 |
| 40 | ♜xa5 | ♙d6 |
| 41 | ♜b5 | g5 |
| 42 | a5 | |

Black resigns.

Q 6-68. How can White develop his initiative?

The attempt to exchange queens is incorrect: if 26 ♜b5? there follows 26... ♜xc3!, forcing 27 ♜xb6 (bad is 27 ♜xd7? ♜xc1). The exchange of the badly placed knight at b6 is certainly not something that comes into White's plans.

26 a4!

White fixes the pawn on a5 and prepares to attack it, by placing his bishop on d2. *Developing an initiative means finding targets to attack, thereby forcing the opponent to defend them.*

- | | | |
|----|------|-------|
| 26 | ... | ♙f8 |
| 27 | ♙d2! | ♜xe1+ |
| 28 | ♜xe1 | ♜d8 |
| 29 | ♜e2 | ♜a8 |

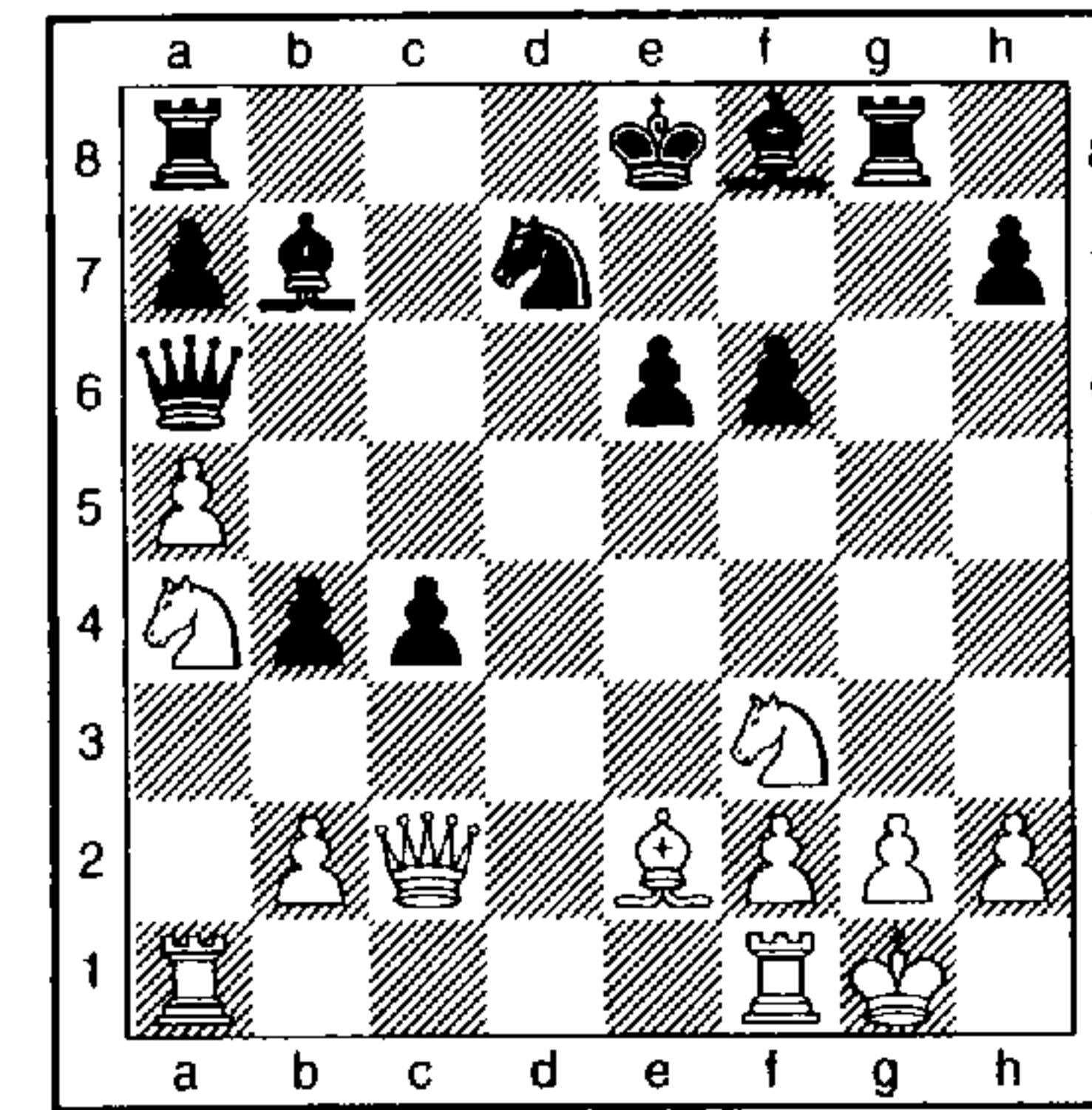
An awkward move, but if 29... ♜bd7 there would have followed 30 ♜b5 or 30 ♜f4. It is obvious that Black's position is already lost.

- | | | |
|----|------|-------|
| 30 | ♜f4 | b6 |
| 31 | ♜b5 | ♜c2 |
| 32 | ♙e3 | ♙b4 |
| 33 | ♜c1 | ♜xc1+ |
| 34 | ♙xc1 | ♜g7 |

The d5 pawn cannot be defended. White is not in a hurry to pick it up, but first improves the placing of his bishop.



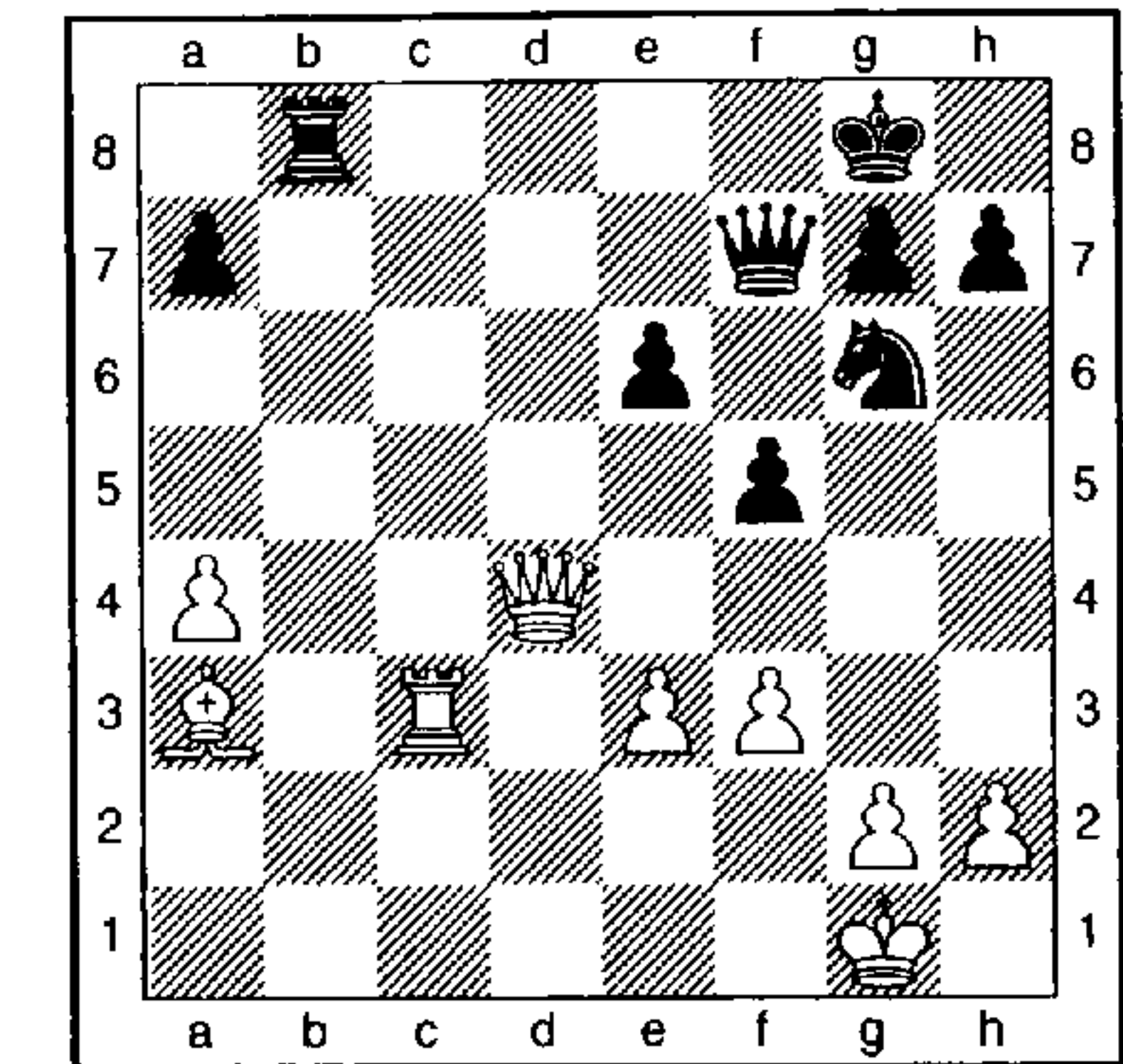
134



E 6-29. What should Black play?

E 6-30

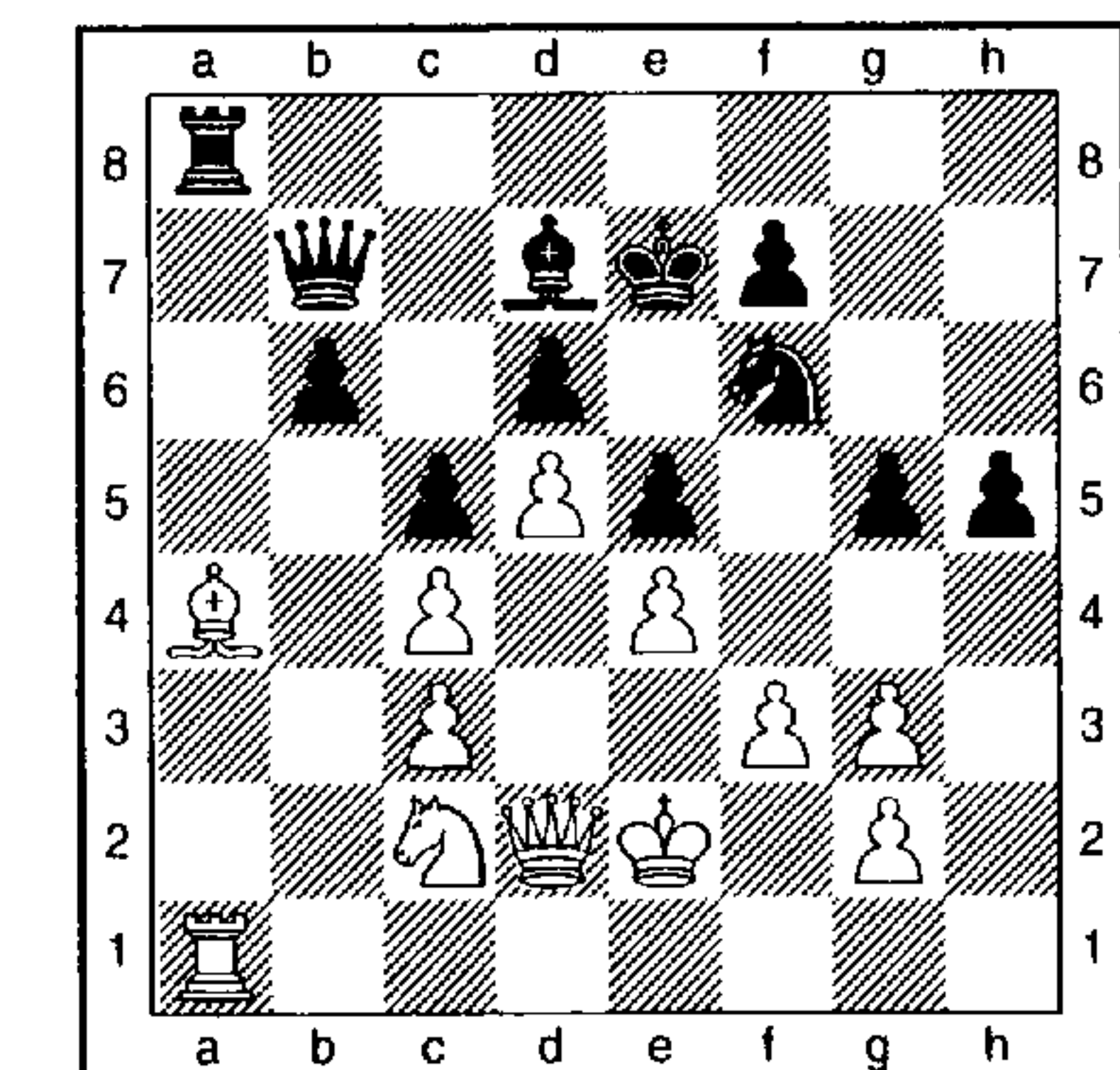
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White to move

E 6-31

136



White to move

Eingorn – Dolmatov

USSR Championship First League,
Kharkov 1985

- | | | |
|----|------|-------|
| 1 | d4 | d5 |
| 2 | c4 | c6 |
| 3 | ♜f3 | ♜f6 |
| 4 | ♜c3 | e6 |
| 5 | ♙g5 | dxc4 |
| 6 | e4 | b5 |
| 7 | a4 | ♜b6!? |
| 8 | ♙xf6 | gxf6 |
| 9 | ♙e2 | ♙b7 |
| 10 | 0-0 | ♜d7 |

This is a sharp opening variation, which demands of both players great accuracy and resourcefulness. Black's last move seems to me to be rather risky, since it allows the opening of lines on the queenside: 11 axb5 cxb5 12 b3! Souder is 10... ♙b4 11 ♜a2 ♙e7 12 b3 cxb3 13 ♜xb3 0-0.

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 11 | d5?! | cxd5 |
| 12 | exd5 | b4 |
| 13 | a5 | ♜a6! |
| 14 | dxe6 | fxe6 |
| 15 | ♜a4 | ♜g8! |
| 16 | ♜c2 | |



I Seek a Win

When a player has a sufficient advantage, he should choose those continuations where the win is achieved without allowing the opponent counterplay.

Benjamin Blumenfeld

The technique of converting an advantage is one of the most important and most difficult in chess. Grandmaster Yusupov and I did some serious work on this topic and then devoted to it one of the sessions of our school for talented young players. The results of the work are summed up in our book 'Technique for the Tournament Player'.

It seems to me that the chief difficulties in the exploitation of an advantage stem from the dual nature of the conversion process. On the one hand, you need accurate technique, and the ability to patiently and methodically build up your advantage, suppressing any attempt by the opponent to change the character of the play, or to create counterplay. On the other hand, you need to be prepared at the most appropriate moment (no sooner and no later!) to cut short the unhurried manoeuvring, and find and calculate a concrete way to win.

Some players lack self-control, and are in too much of a hurry to force events. Others, by contrast, lulled by the superiority of their position and the opponent's helplessness, do not want to exert themselves and calculate variations, and they miss favourable opportunities. In both cases a victory that has almost been gained melts away somewhere.

In the next part of the book, devoted to 'simple' positions, you will find a number of instructive examples of chess technique. But now let us see how one should act when the final, culminating point of the game arrives – the choice of the optimal way to win.

Dvoretsky – Gedevanishvili

Kutaisi 1978

1	e4	e6
2	d4	d5
3	♘d2	♘f6
4	e5	♘fd7
5	c3	c5
6	f4	♘c6
7	♘df3	cxd4
8	cxd4	f6
9	g3	♖b6
10	♙h3	fxe5
11	fxe5	♙b4+
12	♙f1	

In those years theory judged this position to favour White, on the basis of the game Portisch–Tal (European Team Championship, Oberhausen 1961), in which the Hungarian grandmaster gained a great advantage after 12...♘f8 13 ♘e2 ♘g6 14 ♙g2 0–0 15 ♙g4! ♙d7 16 h4. I think that this evaluation remains correct even today.

How can Black's play be improved? A brief prescription can be found in the notes to the game Dolmatov–Karolyi (the chapter 'Advantage in space'), and a more detailed one in the lecture by Alexey Kosikov 'The move ...g7–g5 in the French Defence', included in the book by Dvoretsky and Yusupov 'Opening Preparation'.

12	...	0–0
13	♙g2	

Of course, not 13 ♙xe6+? ♙h8 14 ♙g2 ♘dx5!

13	...	♘dx5
----	-----	------

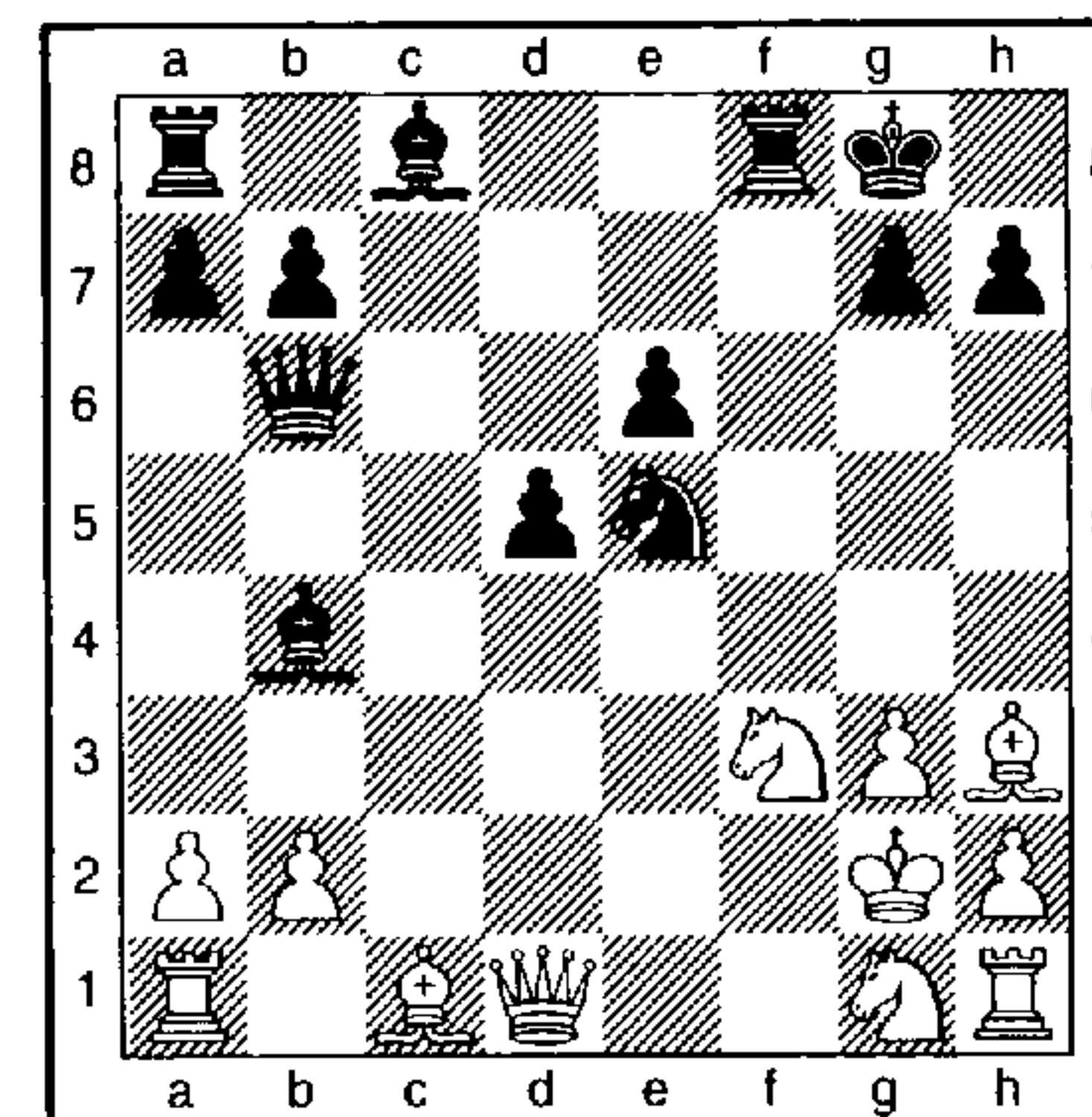
Annotating this game in my notebook, I



wrote: 'The desperate piece sacrifice made by Black is, of course, incorrect'. However, a few years later grandmaster Reiner Knaak, and then also other players, began playing this. In the end, to judge by the 3rd edition of the 'Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings', experience has confirmed White's advantage. But I, by contrast, have begun to doubt my initial evaluation.

14 dxe5 ♘xe5

137



15 ♖e2!

White must play accurately, so as not to allow the opponent's counterplay to flare up, as, for example, in the variations 15 ♙f4?! ♘g6 or 15 ♖d4?! ♖xd4 16 ♘xd4 ♘d3! The game Yudasin–Knaak (Trnava 1983) continued 15 ♖b3?! ♘c4 (15...♖a6 is also possible – 16 ♙d2?, as recommended by Yudasin and Livshitz, is refuted by 16...♙xf3! 17 ♖xb4 ♙f2+!; 15...♙c5 is also good) 16 a3 ♙c5 17 ♖xb6 ♙xb6 18 b3 ♘a5 (18...♘e5!?) 19 ♙f4! (19 ♙b1 e5) 19...♘xb3 with chances for both sides.

An interesting suggestion was made by Dolmatov: 15 b3!? ♙c3 (hopeless is 15...♘xf3 16 ♘xf3 e5 17 ♖xd5+ ♙h8 18 ♖e4) 16 ♙b1 (16 ♙a3 ♘xf3 17 ♘xf3 ♙xa1 18 ♙xf8 ♙f6 19 ♙a3 ♖a6). If 16...♖a6 there follows 17 ♙b2! ♖xa2 18 ♖c2 with a great advantage.

However, the simple reply 16...♙d7 is unpleasant, since if 17 ♖e2 Black has 17...♙b5.

15 ... ♘c4?!

15...♘g6 16 ♙e3 followed by ♙d4 is clearly unfavourable for Black. The best continuation is 15...♘xf3 16 ♘xf3 e5! 17 ♙xc8 ♙axc8.

Events developed sharply in the game Ermenkov–Knaak (Bulgaria–East Germany match, 1983): 18 ♘xe5 ♖e6 (18...♙ce8 19 ♙f4 ♙d6 20 ♙hf1 ♙f5 21 ♖d3) 19 ♙f4 ♙f5 (19...g5? 20 ♙xg5 ♖f5 21 ♖g4!) 20 ♙ac1 ♙e8 (20...♙cf8 21 ♖e3! g5 22 ♘g4!) 21 ♖b5! ♙d6 (21...♙xe5!? 22 ♙xe5 ♖xe5 23 ♙hf1!) 22 ♘f3 ♙xf4 23 gxf4 ♙xf4 24 ♙hf1 ♙ef8 25 ♘d2!, and White retained the advantage. However, Black's play can be improved by 20...♙xc1! 21 ♙xc1 g5, e.g. 22 ♙c7 ♙d6 23 ♙xb7 ♙xe5 with equality.

The game Sisniega–Matamoros (Seville 1992) went 18 ♙d1 e4?! 19 ♘d4 ♙c4 20 ♙e3 ♙c5 21 ♖h5! ♖xb2+?! (21...♙d8 22 ♖e5! ♖xb2+ 23 ♙h3 ♙d8 23 ♖e5!?) with a big advantage to White (but 23 ♙ab1! was even stronger).

In reply to 18...♖g6! Marcel Sisniega examines 19 ♘xe5 ♖f5! 20 ♘f3 ♙c2 21 ♙d2 ♙xb2, when Black has the initiative, and recommends 19 ♙d2 ♙c2 (19...♙d6 20 ♙ac1) 20 ♖xe5, considering White's position to be won. But in fact after 20...♖d3! his opponent regains the piece.

16	b3	♙c3
17	♙b1	

Black's position would be acceptable, were it not for the extremely unpleasant threat of 18 ♖d3, simultaneously attacking two minor pieces. For example, in the game Henningham–Carton (Oakham 1990) White gained a decisive advantage after 17...♙f6 18 ♖d3! ♘d6 19 ♘e2 ♖a5 20 a4 ♘e4 21 ♘f4.

17	...	e5
18	♖d3!	



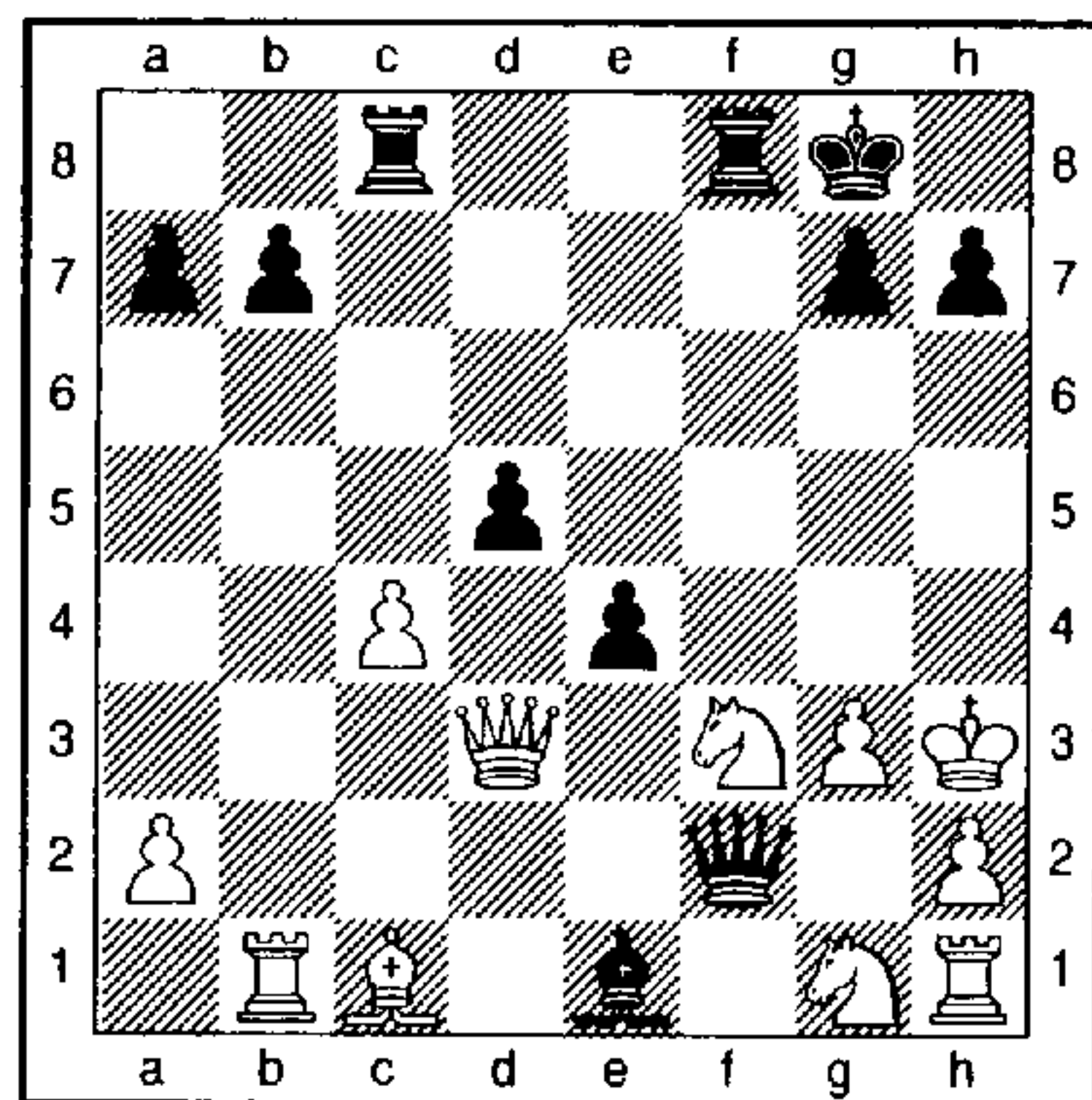
Now Black can avoid the loss of a second piece only at the cost of both of his central pawns: 18...e4 19 ♖xd5+ ♘h8 20 ♗xe4 ♘d6, but after 21 ♗d3 he would, of course, be hopelessly placed.

18 ... ♔e1
19 ♔xc8 ♗f2+
20 ♘h3 ♖axc8
21 bxc4

21 ♘xe1 is also good.

21 ... e4

138



Q 6-69. What should White play?

Up till here my play had been based on common sense – deciding on sensible candidate moves and choosing the most appropriate of them on the basis of the calculation of short variations. But it would appear that the moment had come when it was necessary to cease 'playing' – it was time to pick up the point. It is clear that White's material advantage should guarantee him a win. The only question is how to convert it most simply, so as not to give the opponent counter-chances and to avoid in the future any technical or calculation difficulties.

Let's consider White's possibilities.

After 22 ♗xd5+ ♘h8 it is, unfortunately, not

possible to play 23 ♗xe4 on account of 23...♗f1+ 24 ♘g4 ♖xc4 25 ♘d4 h5+! 26 ♘xh5 ♖xd4 27 ♗xd4 ♗f5+ with perpetual check. After 23 ♘xe1 the reply 23...♖c5? 24 ♗xe4 will not do, but the simple 23...♗xe1! leads to a rather unclear situation in view of the double pin on the white pieces along the first rank.

When you have a big material advantage, the problem can sometimes be solved by giving up part of the extra material. This is also the case here: two ways of exchanging the queens suggest themselves, by returning one of the two extra pieces.

22 ♗e2 exf3 23 ♗xf2 ♔xf2. Alas, the resulting position is not altogether clear. The knight at g1 has no moves, and the f3 pawn may become dangerous.

22 ♔e3 exd3 23 ♔xf2 ♔xf2. Here too Black retains counterplay, and in addition, as in the previous variation, he still has a couple of pawns for the piece, so that technical difficulties cannot be avoided.

Strange! The position looks totally won, but for some reason an easy way to win cannot be found. It is one of two things: either our evaluation is incorrect, or we have missed something in our calculations.

I was convinced that my evaluation was correct, and I quite quickly found a way of demonstrating it.

22 ♗xd5+! ♘h8
23 ♔b2!!

This is the whole point: White not only includes his rook along the first rank, but also launches a counter-attack – he creates the deadly threat of 24 ♔xg7+. The main variation is easily calculated.

23 ... ♗f1+
24 ♘g4

24 ♘h4 is also strong.

24 ... ♖xf3
25 ♘xf3 ♗xf3+
26 ♘h3



Black resigns, since for the moment he is a rook down, and 26...♗xh1 leads to mate: 27 ♔xg7+ ♘xg7 28 ♖xb7+.

The way to the goal sometimes proves to be much more complicated than in the above example. In such cases it is important to be able to sense that it is now that the key moment has arrived, when a concrete solution to the position exists and you need to concentrate, in order to find it.

Rajna – Damljanovic
Titovo-Uzitse 1981

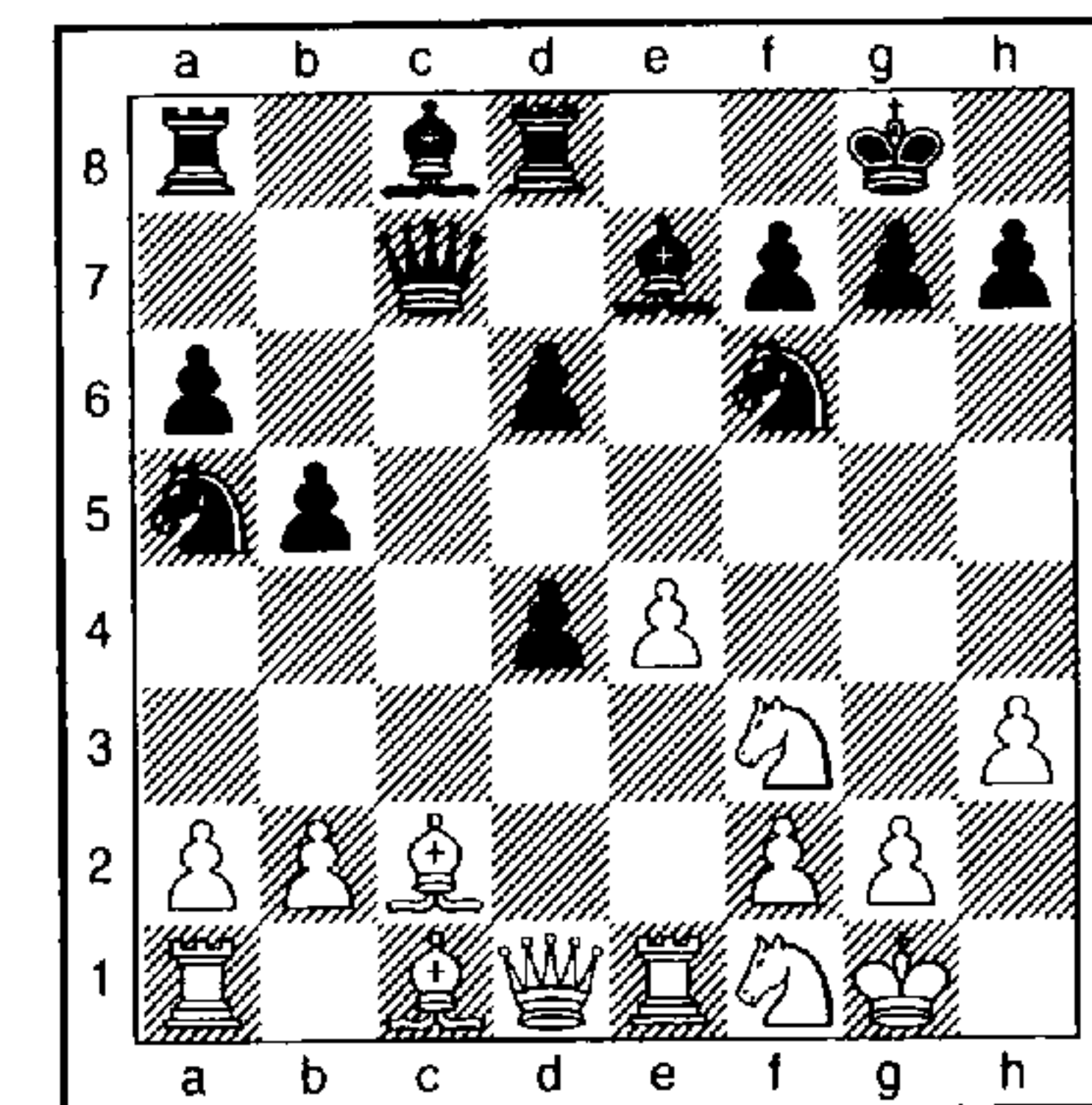
1	e4	e5
2	♘f3	♘c6
3	♔b5	a6
4	♔a4	♘f6
5	0-0	♔e7
6	♖e1	b5
7	♔b3	d6
8	c3	0-0
9	h3	♘a5
10	♔c2	c5
11	d4	♗c7
12	♘bd2	cxd4
13	cxd4	♖d8?!

Usually 13...♘c6 or 13...♔b7 is played. The dubious move in the game involves the idea of opening the centre by ...d6-d5. The simplest reply to it is 14 d5!?

14 ♘f1 exd4

After 14...d5 both 15 exd5 exd4 16 ♔g5 and 15 ♘xe5 dxe4 16 ♘g3 are strong.

139



15 ♘g3!?

White strengthens his control of e4. Previously only 15 ♘xd4 d5 16 e5 ♘e4 17 f3 or 17 ♘d2 had occurred.

15	...	d5
16	e5	♘e4
17	♘xe4	dxe4
18	♔xe4	♔b7
19	♔g5	♔xe4
20	♔xe7	♗xe7
21	♖xe4	d3
22	♘d4	♖d5
23	♗xd3	♖xe5

The variations given by Branko Damljanovic in the 32nd volume of 'Chess Informator' in reply to 23...♖ad8 are completely unconvincing. Firstly, after 24 ♗e3 ♘c4 25 ♘f5 Black has 25...♗d7, when 26 ♗g5 is parried by 26...f6. Secondly, after 25...♗f8 26 ♗g5 ♖d1+ (if 26...♖xe5? the simplest is 27 ♘h6+ ♘h8 28 ♘xf7+) 27 ♖xd1 ♖xd1+ 28 ♘h2 ♘d2 29 ♖d4 (according to Damljanovic, White is winning) 29...♘f1+ 30 ♘g1 ♘d2+ things end in perpetual check. However, White's play can be improved by 24 ♗c3! b4 25 ♗e3.

24 ♘f5! ♗f6
25 ♖ae1 ♖e6

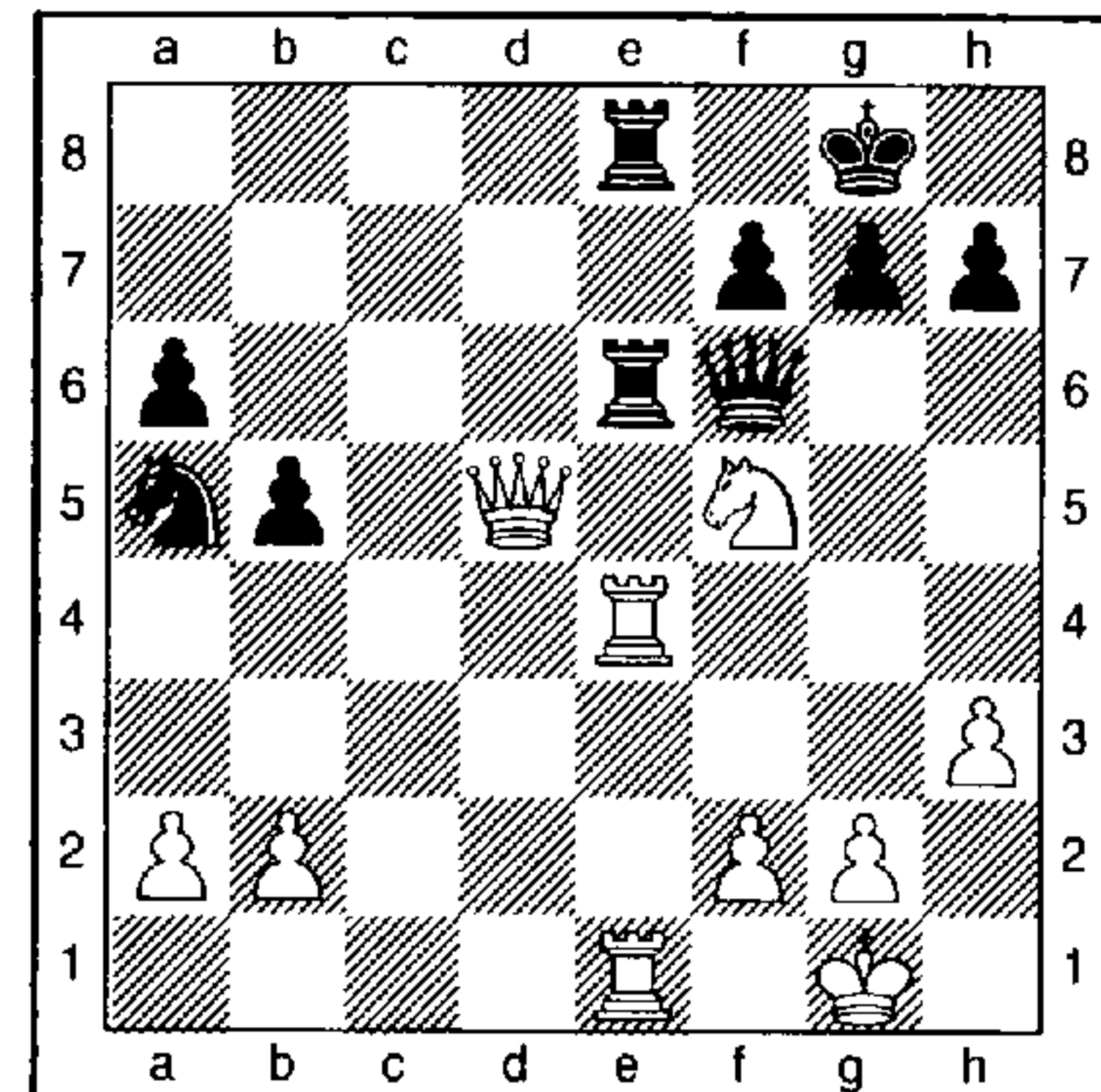
Damljanovic claims that this is the only



move, an opinion that can be disputed. It is true that 25...♖c4? 26 b3 does not work, but it is not so easy to refute 25...♖c6! In addition, the commentator made an obvious mistake in the variation 25...♖xe4 26 ♖xe4 ♖f8 (after 26...♖c6 he for some reason gives 27 ♖xc6, rather than 27 ♖e8+) 27 ♖e7+ ♖h8, claiming that White wins by 28 ♖b4 with the threats of 29 ♖xa5 and 29 ♖g6+. In fact the knight check is no threat: after 29 ♖g6+? f6 the rook is defended (an amusing optical illusion!). Instead of 28 ♖b4 stronger is 28 b3!

26 ♖d5 ♖ae8

140



Q 6-70. How should White exploit the advantages of his position?

Black's problems stem from the weakness of his back rank and his badly placed knight at a5. Both these factors are temporary: he only needs to make an escape square for his king and bring his knight closer to the main centre of events, and the position will immediately become equal. This means it is now that White is obliged to find a concrete way of exploiting his temporary advantages, to transform them into permanent ones.

Gyorgy Rajna failed to cope with this task. The game concluded as follows: 27 ♖d6?

♖xe4 28 ♖xe4 (28 ♖xe4 ♖d8) 28...♖d8! (28...♖f8 29 b4, winning a pawn) 29 ♖e8+ ♖xe8 30 ♖xe8 ♖c6 31 ♖xc6 (31 ♖e5 f6) 31...♖xc6 32 ♖c7 ♖b8. Draw.

But what should he have done? First let us analyse Damljanovic's recommendation.

27 ♖d7?! ♖f8
28 ♖e7+ ♖h8
29 b3!?

It is important to keep the knight on the edge of the board. Now it does not have the c4 square, and the attempt to bring it into play via c6 leads to mate: 29...♖c6 30 ♖xc6 ♖xc6 31 ♖e8.

The position arising after 29 ♖xe6!? fxe6 30 ♖e2 will be analysed below.

29 ... ♖d6

30 ♖xe6 fxe6 31 f3 or 31 ♖e2 was threatened. The alternative was 29...♖xe4 30 ♖xe4 ♖a1+ 31 ♖h2 ♖xa2. Damljanovic thinks that White wins by 32 ♖f5 with the threat of 33 ♖xh7+, but Black has a defence: 32...♖d2! (33 ♖h4 ♖d6+ 34 f4 h6). Stronger is 32 ♖d6! ♖a8 (32...♖xf2? 33 ♖f4 and 34 ♖g6+) 33 ♖d5 ♖f8 34 ♖c5! ♖d8 (34...♖a8 35 ♖c8!) 35 ♖d4! ♖e8, and only now 36 ♖f5! (with the threat of 37 ♖xh7+) 36...h6 37 ♖xf7. Another, perhaps simpler way is 32 ♖f5! (threatening both 33 ♖e8, and 33 ♖d4) 32...♖xf2 33 ♖e8 ♖f4+ 34 ♖g3 ♖b4 35 ♖xf7.

30 ♖c7 ♖d2
31 ♖4e2

31 ♖f4! ♖d6 32 ♖xf7! ♖xf7 33 ♖c8+ ♖d8 34 ♖g6+ hxg6 35 ♖e8+ is much more convincing.

31 ... ♖xe2
32 ♖xe2 ♖a1+
33 ♖h2 ♖d1
34 ♖e4

White's advantage is undisputed, although after 34...♖d2 or 34...♖d8 the game continues.

This is a very complicated analysis, which in



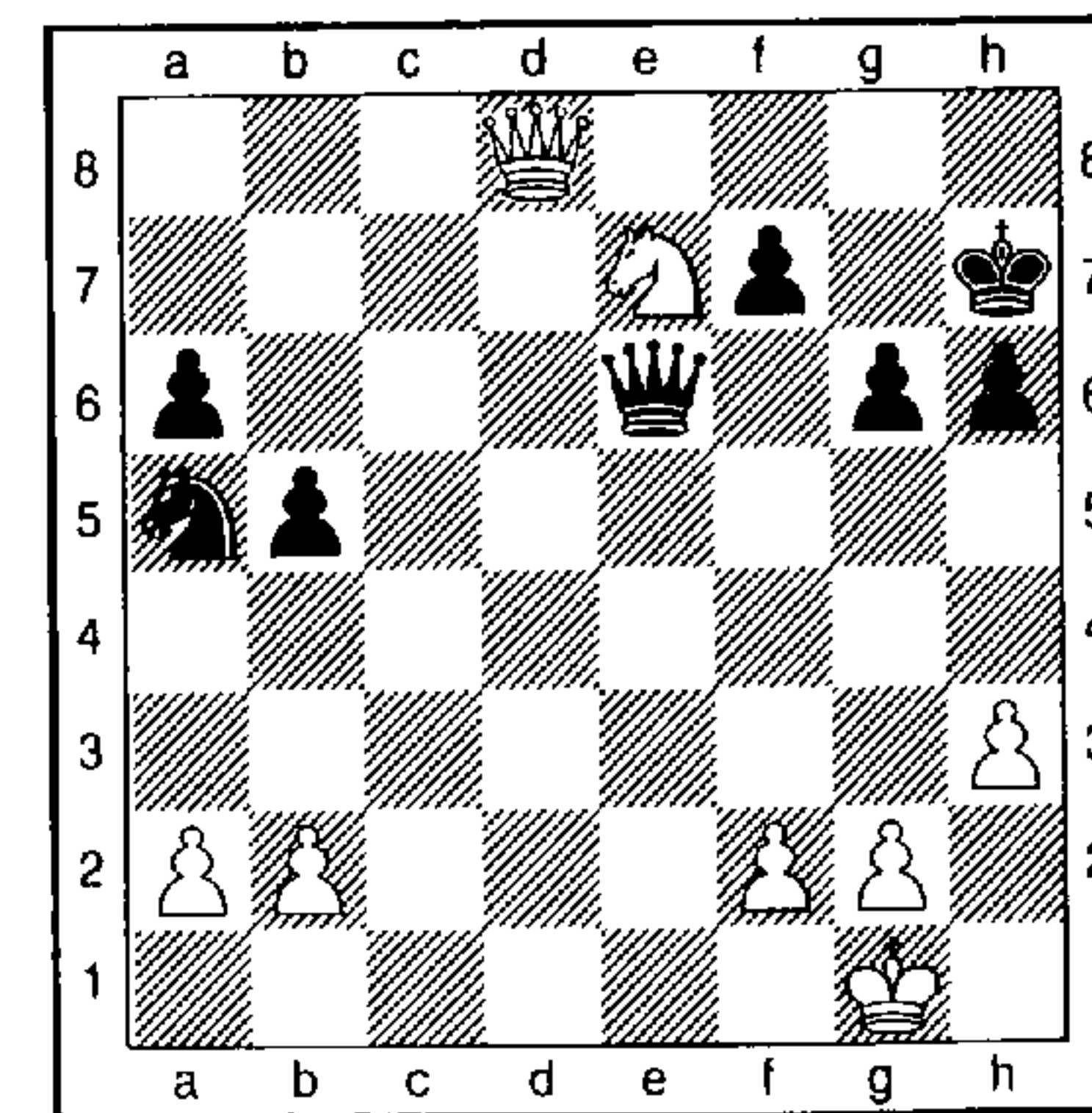
addition contains some substantial inaccuracies. Since things are bad for Black here, he has to seek a way of improving the defence. At the very start of the variation he could have made an escape square for his king. But which of the two moves – 27...h5 or 27...h6 – is correct?

1) 27...h5? 28 ♖xe6 ♖xe6 29 ♖xe6 ♖xe6 30 ♖e7+ ♖h7 31 ♖e8! g6 (bad is 31...f5 32 ♖xh5+) 32 ♖g8+ ♖h6 33 ♖h8+ ♖g5 34 h4+! (34 f4+! is also strong) 34...♖xh4 35 ♖d4+ ♖g5 36 f4+!, and Black is mated or loses his queen.

2) 27...h6! 28 ♖xe6. Consideration should be given to 28 ♖d6!? Black has a choice between 28...♖d8!? 29 ♖xe6 ♖xd7 30 ♖xf6 gxf6 with a slightly inferior endgame, and 28...♖g6!? 29 ♖xe8+ (in the event of 29 ♖xe8 ♖xe4 30 ♖xe4 ♖xe4 31 ♖xf7+ ♖xf7 32 ♖d6+ ♖e6 33 ♖xe4 ♖d5 the activity of the black king compensates for the missing pawn) 29...♖xe8 30 ♖xe8! (threatening 31 ♖g4) – here he still has to defend carefully, to avoid coming under an attack.

28...♖xe6 29 ♖xe6 ♖xe6! ('Informator' gives only 29...fxe6? 30 ♖e8+ ♖h7 31 ♖e7 and wins) 30 ♖e7+ (30 ♖d8+ ♖h7 31 ♖xa5 ♖xf5 32 ♖xa6 ♖b1+ 33 ♖h2 ♖xb2 leads to a draw) 30...♖h7 31 ♖d3+ (if 31 ♖e8 or 31 ♖d8 there follows 31...f5) 31...g6 32 ♖d8.

141



After 32...f5 33 ♖c7 ♖f7 the position looks quite dangerous for Black, but the outcome is still not altogether clear. The same can be said about the knight ending arising after 32...f6 33 ♖d5! (33 ♖c7 ♖e1+ 34 ♖h2 ♖e5+) 33...♖c6 34 ♖d7+!? ♖xd7 35 ♖xf6+ ♖g7 36 ♖xd7 a5!? It is better to play 32...♖g7!, when a draw becomes the most probable result.

What else can be done? I know as many as three good solutions to the problem. The first, involving an attack on the king, was found by Stefan Kindermann; the second – active play on the queenside – was suggested by Sergey Dolmatov, and the third – transposing into an endgame with an extra pawn – was discovered by Roman Slobodjan.

27 ♖1e3!

What is the point of this move? Firstly, along the 3rd rank the rook strengthens the attack, as, for example, in the variation 27...♖c4 28 ♖xe6 fxe6 29 ♖d7 ♖f7 (29...♖f8 30 ♖e7+ ♖h8 31 ♖f3) 30 ♖h6+! gxh6 31 ♖g3+ ♖f8 32 ♖f3. Secondly, it moves off the first rank and cannot be taken with check. After 27...h6 28 ♖d6! it is no longer possible to play 28...♖xe4? 29 ♖xe8, while if 28...♖8e7, then 29 ♖xe6 ♖xe6 30 ♖xf7! ♖xf7 31 ♖f3. Black is forced totally onto the defensive, but then things become strategically hopeless for him.

27 ... ♖xe4
28 ♖xe4 ♖f8
29 ♖e7+ ♖h8
30 b3

The consequences of the variation 30...♖a1+ 31 ♖h2 ♖xa2 32 ♖c5! are already known to us.

II

27 a4!

Exploiting the vulnerable placing of the opponent's pieces, White weakens the b5 pawn.



27 ... h6

If 27...g6 there follows 28 ♖xe6! fxe6 (28...♖xe6?? 29 ♖a8+) 29 ♖d7 ♖f8 30 ♘h6+ ♘h8 31 ♘g4 ♖xb2 32 ♖xe6 with the terrible threat of 33 ♖e7.

28 axb5 axb5

28...♖xe4 29 ♖xe4 also does not ease Black's position, e.g. 29...♖xe4 30 ♖xe4 (30 ♖a8+ ♘h7 31 ♖xe4), when he remains a pawn down, or 29...♗d8 30 ♖e5 ♖xe5 31 ♖xe5 ♘c4 32 ♖c5 axb5 33 ♖xb5 ♗d1+ 34 ♘h2 ♖b1 (34...♗d2 35 b3) 35 b4! (but not 35 b3? ♘d2 with the threat of 36...♘f1+).

29 ♘d6! ♖xe4
30 ♘xe4! ♖d8
31 ♖xb5

White should win.

III

27 ♖xe6! fxe6
28 ♖d7 ♖f8
29 ♘e7+ ♘h8
30 ♖e2 e5

30...♘c4 31 ♖xe6 ♖xe6 32 ♖xe6 ♘xb2 33 ♖xa6.

31 b3!

Less good is 31 ♘d5 ♖c6 or 31 ♖c7 ♘c4.

31 ... e4
32 ♘d5!

It is this move, made with the intention of playing 33 ♖e7, that constitutes Slobodjan's idea. I considered 32 ♖c7 e3! 33 f3 ♖g5! (weaker is 33...♖e6 34 ♖c5!) 34 ♖xa5 ♖xe7 35 ♖xa6 b4, when the outcome remains unclear.

32 ... ♖g6

After 32...♖e5 or 32...♖d4 there follows 33 ♖e7, while if 32...♖a1+ 33 ♘h2 ♖e5+, then 34 f4.

33 ♘f4!

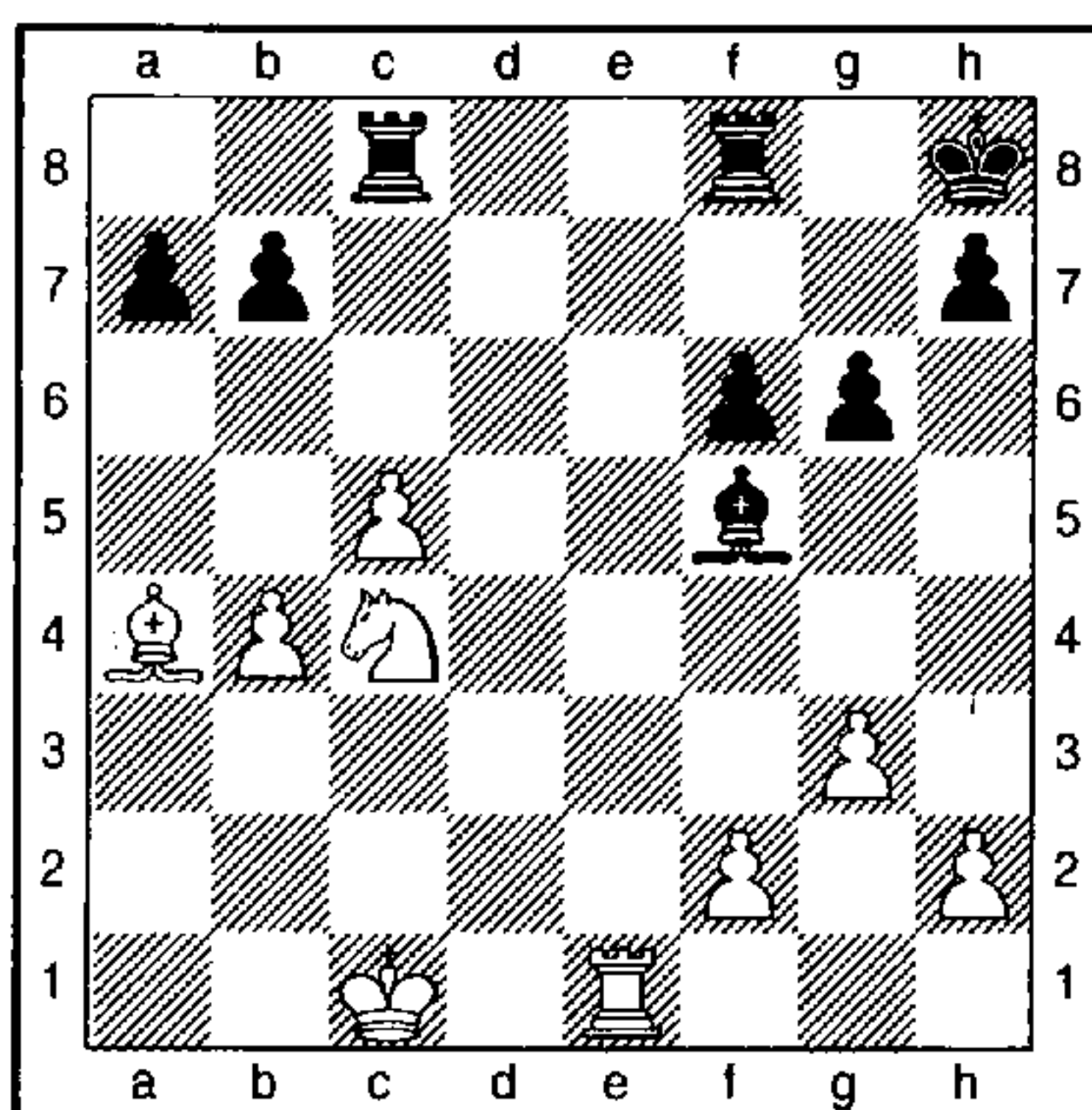
I should like to emphasise that each of the analysed plans for converting the advantage exploits, in one form or another, both of the defects in the opponent's position, which

were pointed out at the very start. Here is seen the 'principle of two weaknesses', which was described in the second part of 'Endgame Analysis', Volume 1 in this series. We will return to it again in the next part of the present book.

Georgadze – Dolmatov

48th USSR Championship, Vilnius 1980/81

142



After combinative complications in the middlegame, Dolmatov has emerged the exchange up. However, the opponent retains active resources such as ♘d6 or ♖e7, and in some cases the c5 pawn may become a dangerous passed pawn. In the game Black was unable to convert his material advantage.

28...♖fd8 29 ♘b2 (29 ♘d6?? ♖xd6) 29...♘d7 30 ♘b3 ♖e8 31 ♖a1! This strong move was overlooked by Dolmatov. He had only reckoned on 31 ♗d1 ♖c7 32 ♘d6 ♖e2+ followed by ...a7-a6 and ...♘c6.

31...a6 32 ♘d6 ♖e2+ 33 ♘c3 ♖c7 34 ♘d5 ♘c6 35 ♘xc6 ♖xc6 36 ♘xb7 ♖xf2. The initiative has already been seized by the opponent, and if he had now played 37 ♘d8!, things would have been difficult for Black.

37 ♘c4? ♖xh2 38 ♘d8 ♖c8 39 ♘e6 ♖c2+ 40 ♘d3 ♖g2 41 ♖xa6 ♖xg3+ 42 ♘c4 ♖g4+



43 ♘d4! Here the game was adjourned. Analysis showed that with correct play this very sharp endgame should end in a draw. This diagnosis was confirmed on the resumption.

43...h5 44 b5 h4 45 ♖a3 ♘g7 46 c6 g5 47 ♘c5 ♖e4 48 ♗d3 ♖e5+ 49 ♘c4 ♖e4 50 ♘c5 ♖e5+ 51 ♘c4. Draw.

Wouldn't you agree that even such an outcome did not dispel your first impression, that the position should be won without particular difficulty, and that it is only necessary to find a more accurate plan? Let's try! We would deprive the opponent of counterplay, if we were to break up his strong formation on the queenside. Therefore the moves ...b7-b6 and ...b7-b5 suggest themselves.

Q 6-71. Evaluate the consequences of 28...b6.

The simplest reply is 29 ♘d6!? bxc5 30 ♘xc8 ♖xc8 31 b5! ♖c7 32 ♘b2. From c3 the king blockades the passed c-pawn, and if the opportunity presents itself, it will also attack it. The activity of the white pieces compensates to a considerable extent for the missing pawn, and a draw is the most likely outcome. Also correct is the sharper 29 c6 b5!? 30 ♘xb5 ♘d3 (threatening 31...♘xc4 32 ♘xc4 ♖xc6) 31 ♖e6 ♖b8 32 ♗d6! ♖xb5 (32...♘xc4 33 ♘xc4 ♖xb4 34 ♘e6) 33 ♖xd3 ♖xb4 34 ♖c3!

The second try is 28...b5 29 ♘xb5 ♘d3.

Q 6-72. Does it lead to a win?

Black has three threats: 30...♖b8, 30...a5, and 30...♘xc4 31 ♘xc4 a5. 30 ♘d6 ♘xb5 31 ♘xb5 ♖b8 (or 31...a5) is dubious for White. He needs to bring his king to the help of his queenside pawns: 30 ♘d2! If 30...♖fd8 31 ♘c3 a5, then 32 ♗d1!? axb4+ 33 ♘xb4. Black is also not promised anything by 30...♘xc4 31 ♘xc4 a5 32 ♘c3 axb4+ 33 ♘xb4 ♖b8+ 34 ♘b5! He has not managed to

eliminate the strong c-pawn – it was supported just in time by the king. In this variation the initiative on the queenside inevitably passes to the opponent. After all, here he essentially has an extra piece, since the black king is stuck in the opposite corner. Let us return to the move made by Dolmatov in the game. It includes the black rook in the play, and therefore is quite logical.

28 ... ♖fd8!
29 ♘b2

But Black's next move 29...♘d7? did not justify itself. What else could have been done?

29...♗d4 looks tempting. In the event of 30 ♘d6? ♖xb4+ 31 ♘a3 ♖xa4+ 32 ♘xa4 ♖xc5 Black has a great advantage. However, the opponent can reply 30 ♘b3!? or 30 ♘c3!? Here is an approximate variation: 30 ♘c3 ♗d3+ 31 ♘b2 (threatening 32 ♖e7) 31...♖c7 32 ♘d6 ♗d2+ 33 ♘a3 b6 34 ♖e8+ ♘g7 35 ♗d8! ♖e2 (the only move) 36 ♘d1! (after 36 ♘e8+ ♖xe8 37 ♖xe8 bxc5 38 bxc5 ♖xc5 39 ♖e7+ ♘h6 Black retains the advantage, but 36 c6!? is possible, with an unclear position) 36...♖e1 37 cxb6 axb6 38 ♘e8+ ♖xe8 39 ♖xe8.

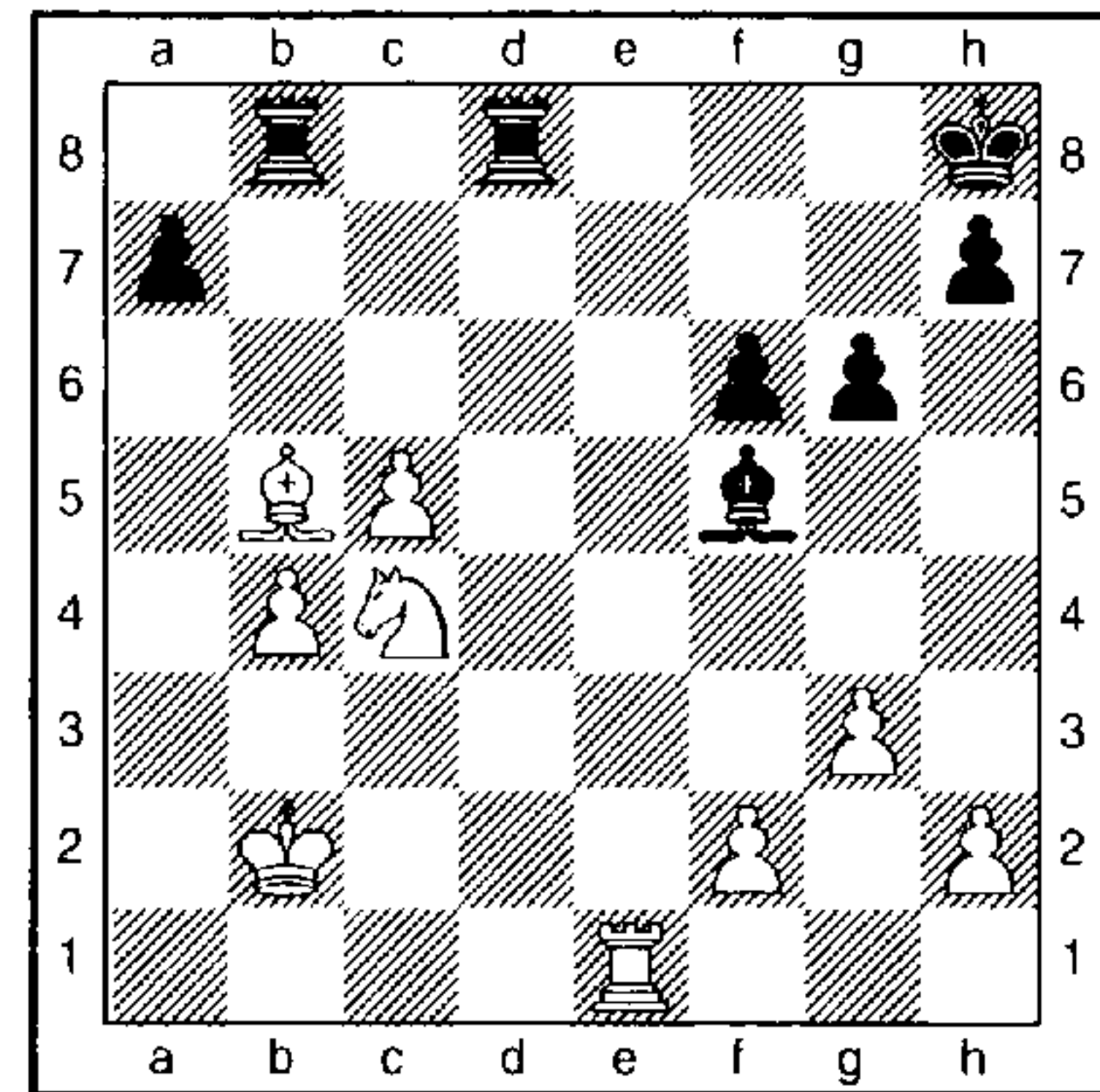
Nevertheless, our initial intention of breaking up the queenside pawns is too tempting. Let us try carrying it out now.

29 ... b5!?
30 ♘xb5 ♖b8

see next diagram



143



Black has sharply activated his forces. The opponent has three possible defences.

31 ♖a6 ♜xb4+ 32 ♔a3 ♜db8. If now 33 ♜e8+ ♜xe8 34 ♔xb4, then 34...♜b8+ 35 ♔c3 ♖d7 36 ♔a5 ♜b1 with a decisive advantage (bad is 37 ♖b7? ♜b5). But it is not clear whether Black can refute 33 c6!?

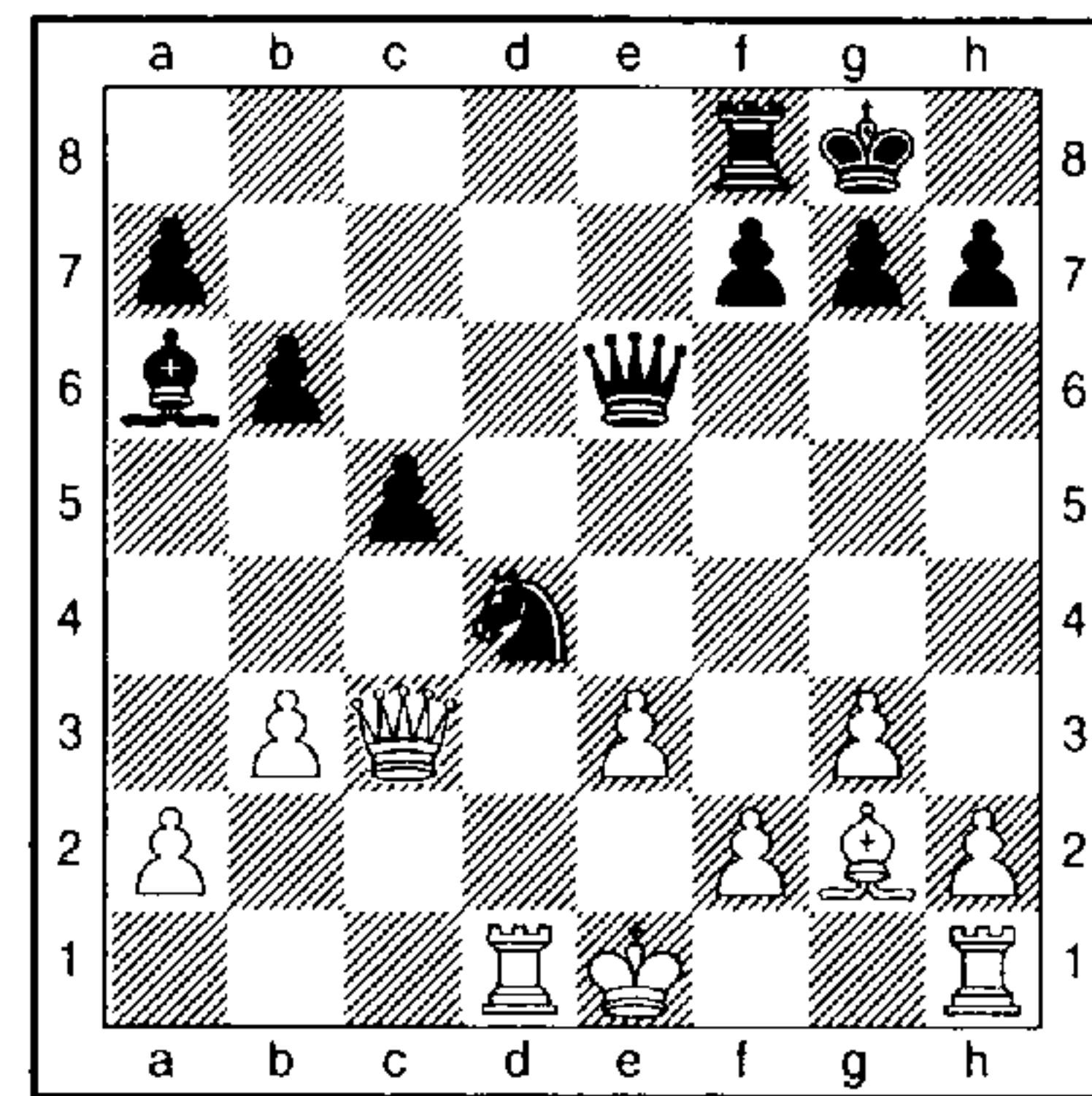
31 ♖c6 ♜xb4+ (less good is 31...♜d4 32 ♔b3) 32 ♔c3. Now 32...♜bb8 33 ♔d6 is pointless. After 32...♜db8 Black retains the advantage, but to convert it into a win is not easy.

31 ♔d6 ♜xd6 32 cxd6 ♜xb5 33 ♜e8+ ♔g7 34 d7 ♖xd7 35 ♜e7+ ♔h6 36 ♜xd7 ♜xb4+ 37 ♔c3 followed by ♔d3, and the rook ending is drawn. Instead of the pawn capture there is also 36...a5!?, when White can choose from 37 ♔b3, 37 ♔c3 and 37 ♜d4.

The results of this analysis are staggering. Black is a clear exchange to the good, but there is no obvious win. We have found the only way of retaining the advantage, but even there it is difficult, if at all possible, to convert it. How great in chess are the defensive resources!

E 6-32

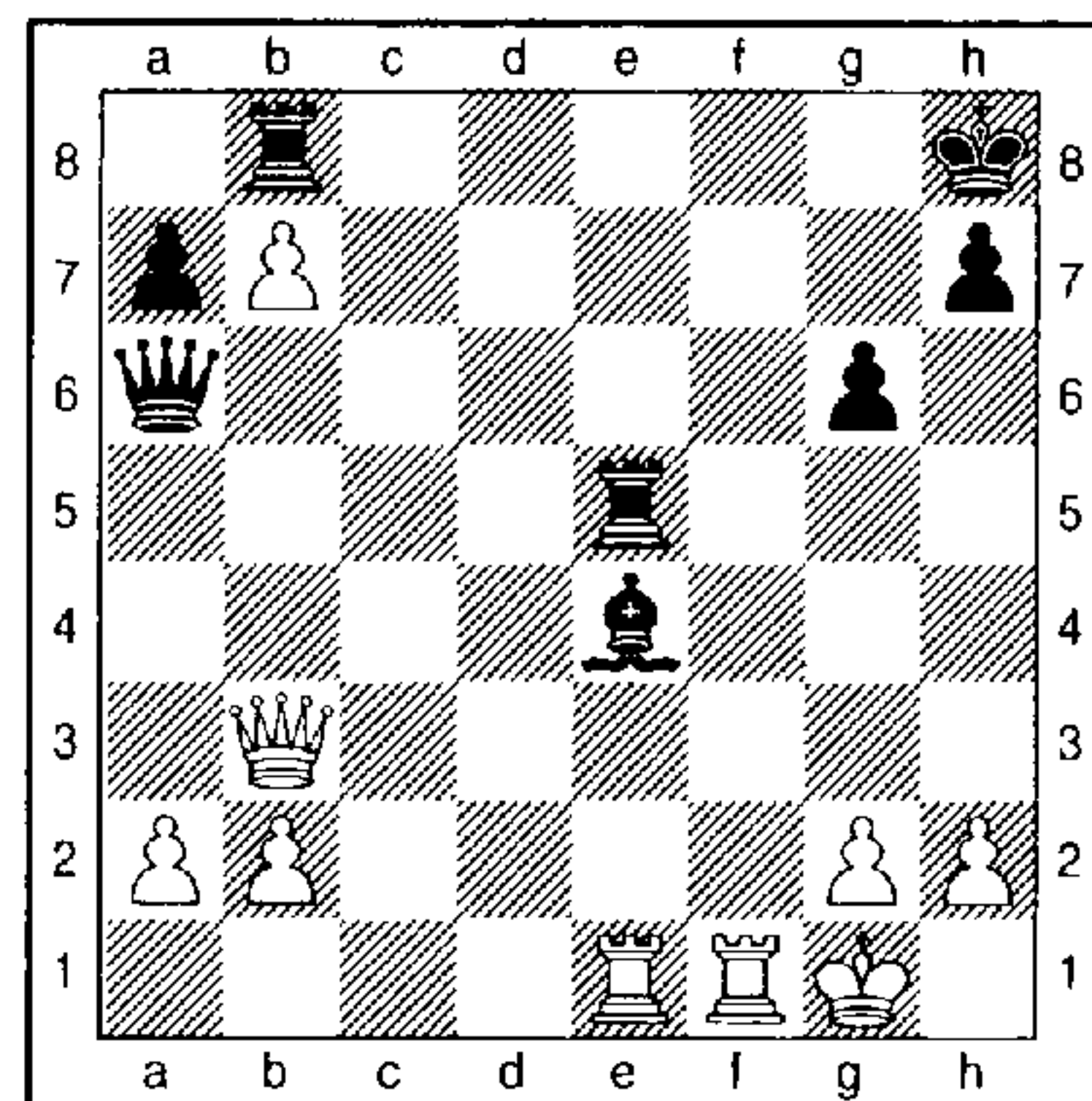
144



White to move

E 6-33

145

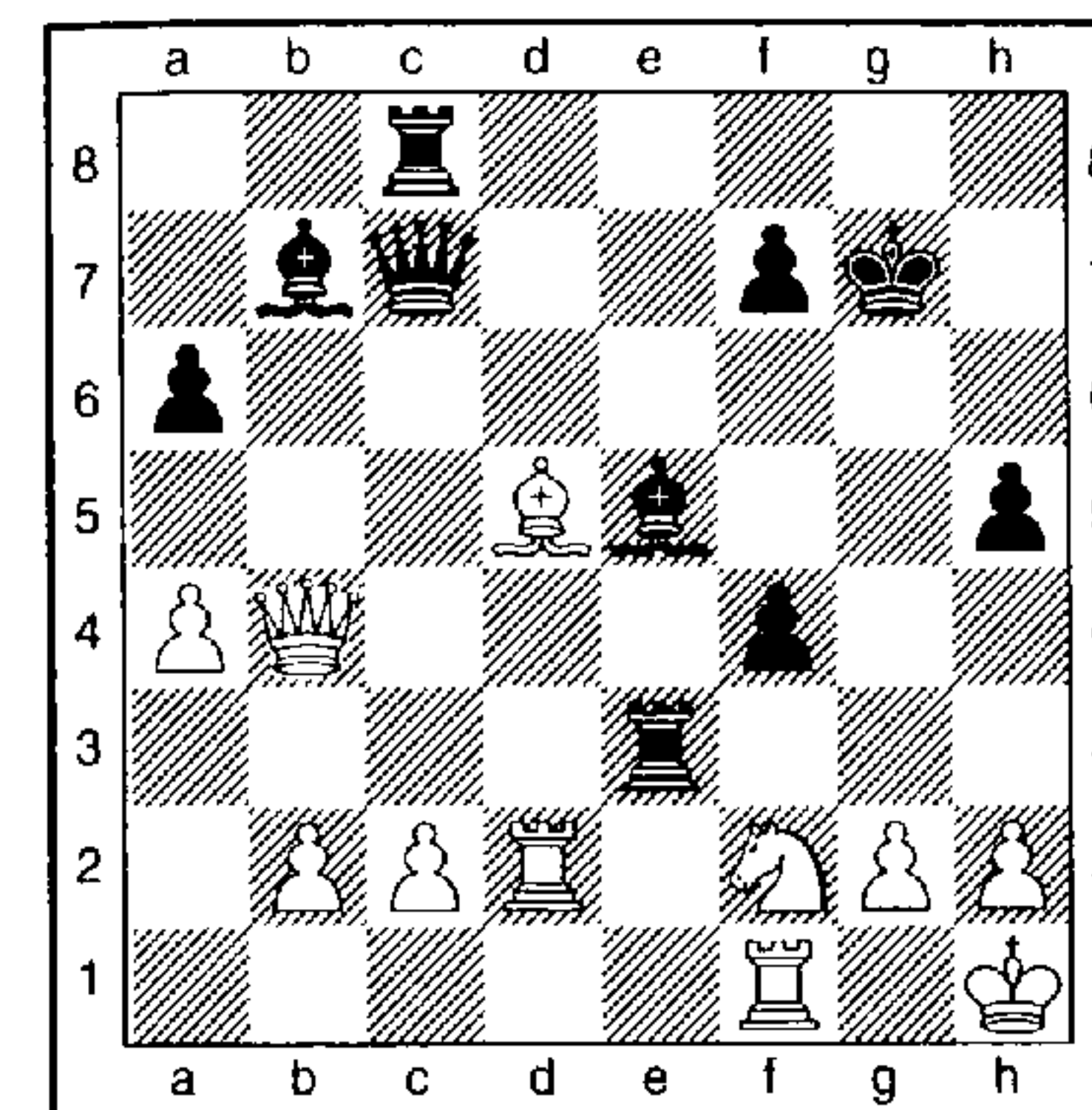


White to move



E 6-34

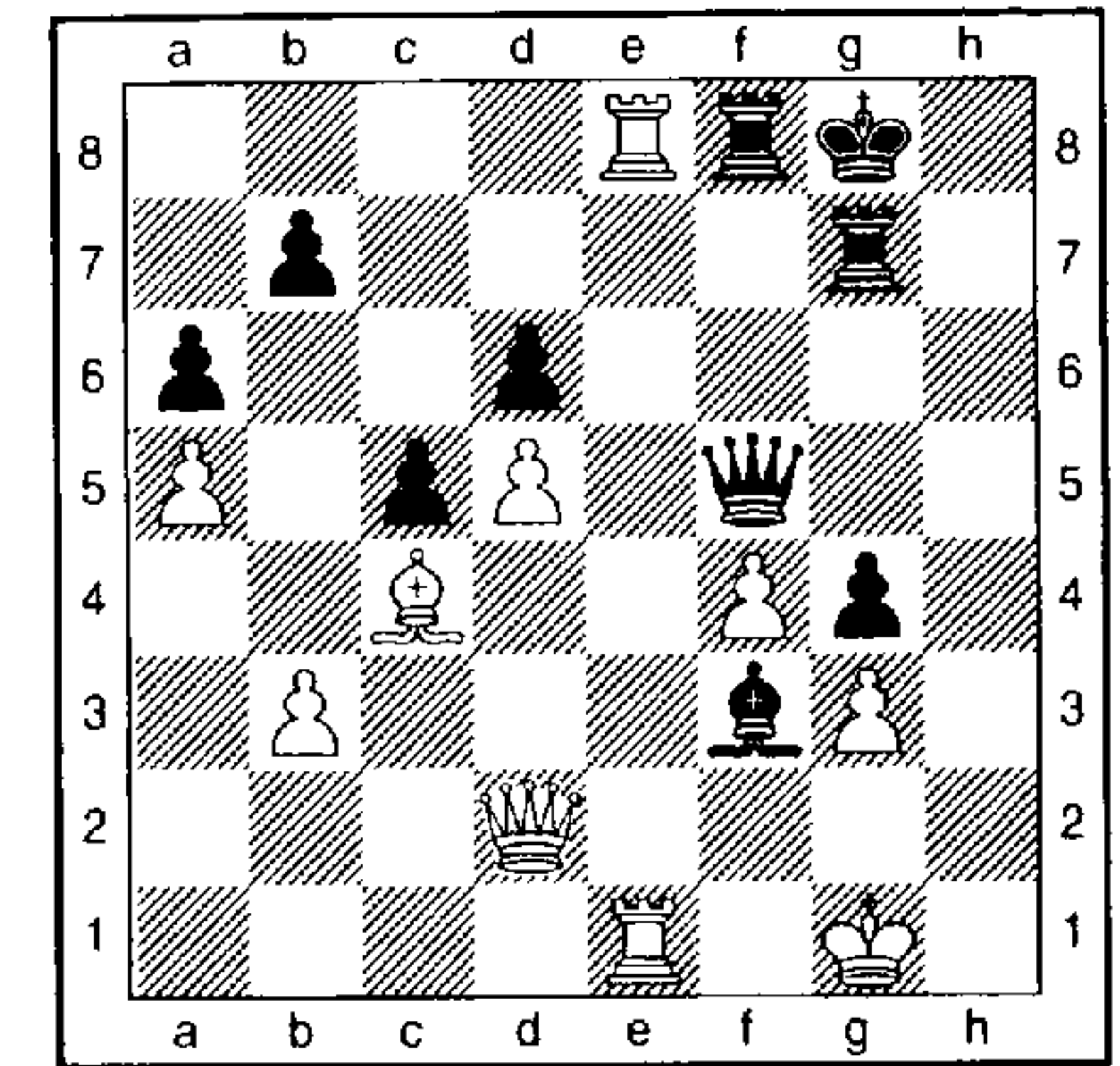
146



Black to move

E 6-35

147



White to move



An 'Easy' Win

The aesthetic perception of a chess game should be based on its inner content, and not on its appearance... In the end, it is the world of ideas alone that is beautiful in chess.

Aron Nimzowitsch

A grandmaster encounter sometimes resembles an iceberg. On the surface there is nothing in particular, everything seems simple and understandable. A quite different impression arises if you succeed in seeing the underwater part. Here you cannot get by without a commentator. I very much like reading notes which describe the latent forces at work, the reasons for choosing a particular move, and psychological experiences at the board. All this is usually present, when the game is demonstrated by one of the players.

The Yusupov–Timman candidates semi-final match in 1992 began with a rapid and confident win for Yusupov. The spectators, and also the experts in the press centre, did not notice any hidden subtleties. However, after the game Artur was extremely tired. The reason became clear to me, when he described the problems that he had had to solve.

Yusupov – Timman

Candidates Match, 1st Game, Linares 1992

- | | | |
|---|------|------|
| 1 | d4 | ♘f6 |
| 2 | c4 | g6 |
| 3 | ♘f3 | ♙g7 |
| 4 | g3 | 0-0 |
| 5 | ♙g2 | c6 |
| 6 | 0-0 | d5 |
| 7 | cxd5 | cxd5 |
| 8 | ♘c3 | ♘e4 |

In this opening variation one of the knights (and sometimes both) invariably invades the central square. For example, if 8...♘c6 there

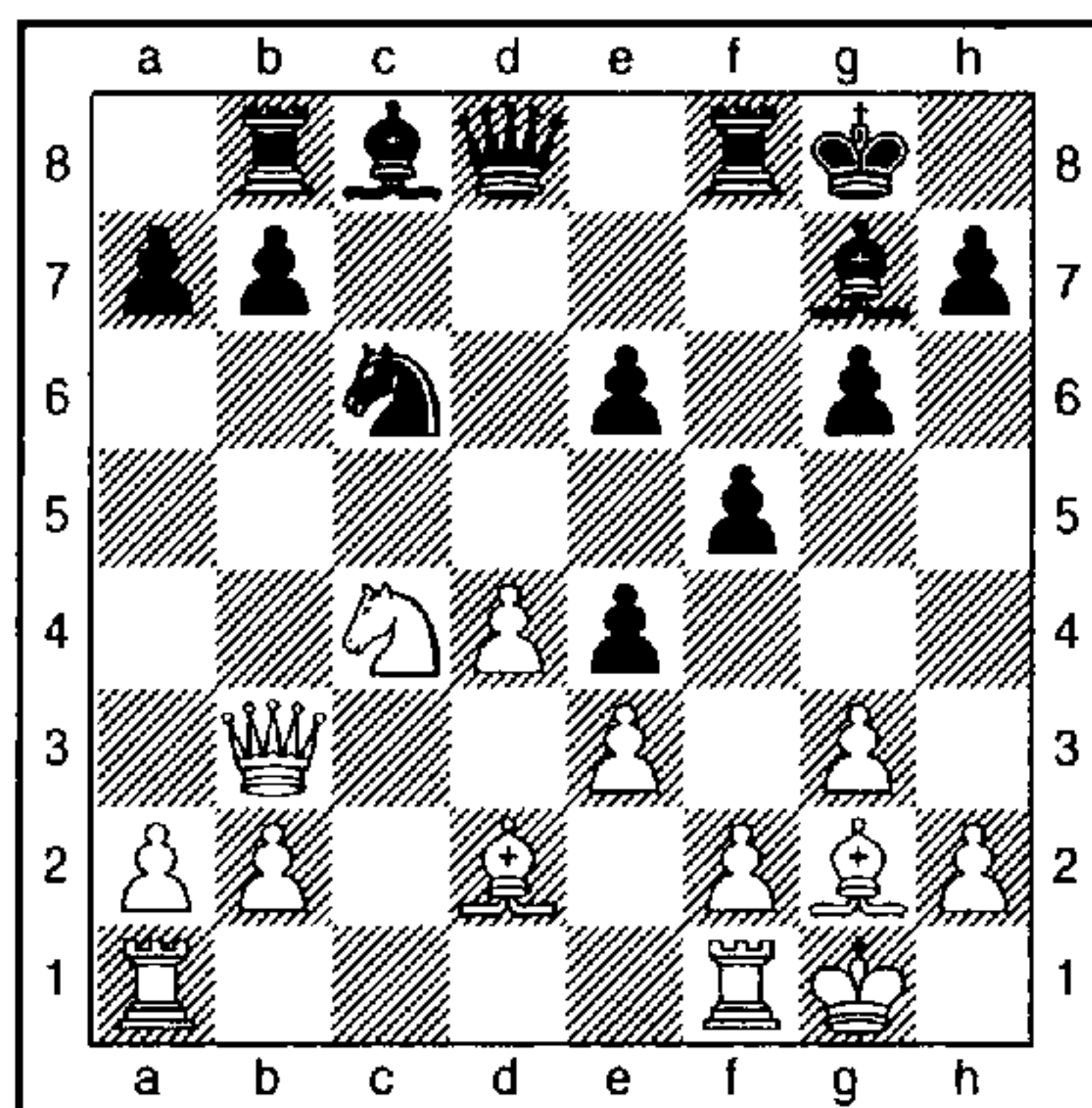
follows 9 ♘e5! Anatoly Karpov likes to place his knight on e5 a little earlier, instead of 8 ♘c3.

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 9 | ♘xe4 | dxe4 |
| 10 | ♘e5 | f6 |

The play takes on a different aspect after 10...♙d5!? 11 b3!? ♘c6 12 ♙b2.

- | | | |
|----|------|-----|
| 11 | ♙b3+ | e6 |
| 12 | ♘c4 | ♘c6 |
| 13 | e3 | f5 |
| 14 | ♙d2 | ♖b8 |

148



15 a4!?

A year earlier this variation occurred in the 4th game of the Yusupov–Dolmatov candidates match (Wijk aan Zee 1991), but there White played differently.

15 ♖ac1 ♙d7 16 ♖fd1 b5! The start of an interesting plan, aimed at restricting the bishop at d2. Weaker is 16...♙e7 17 ♘e5!



♘xe5 18 dxe5 ♖fd8 19 ♙a5 b6 20 ♙c3 with the better chances for White (Andersson–Nunn, Skelleftea 1989).

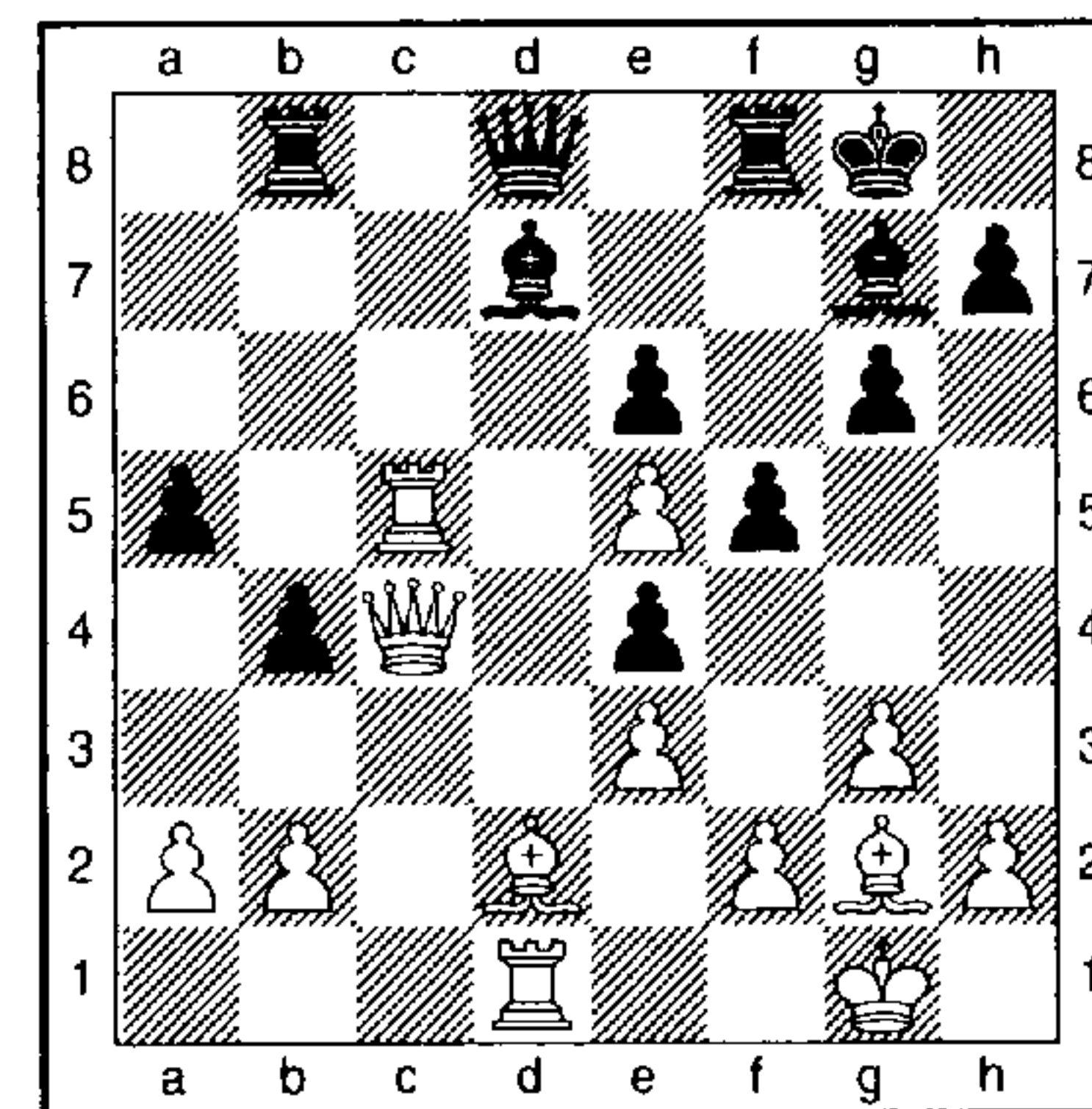
17 ♘e5 ♘xe5 18 dxe5 b4! Of course, not 18...♙xe5?! 19 ♙c3 ♙xc3 20 ♙xc3, when White has an obvious advantage.

19 ♖c5. The queen sacrifice 19 ♙xb4 a5 20 ♙xf8 ♖xb3 21 ♙xg7 leads only to an equal position after 21...♖d3! 22 ♙f6 ♙b6.

19...a5! Weaker is 19...♙b6 20 ♙xb4! (20 ♙xb4 ♙a4! 21 b3 ♙xb3 22 axb3 ♙xb4) 20...♖fd8 21 ♙a3 ♙xb3 22 axb3 ♖xb3 23 ♙f1.

20 ♙c4! If 20 a3 it is now possible to play 20...♙b6 21 ♖dc1 (21 axb4?? ♙xc5) 21...♖fc8 22 ♖xc8+ ♖xc8 23 ♖xc8+ ♙xc8 24 axb4 axb4 with equality.

149



Q 6-73. How should Black continue?

20...♙b6?! is dangerous in view of 21 ♙xb4! ♙xb4 22 ♙xb4 ♖xb4 23 ♖xd7 ♖xb2 24 ♙f1! ♖xa2 25 ♙c4 ♖a1+ 26 ♙g2, when the initiative is entirely in White's possession. Dolmatov replied 20...♖c8?!; there followed 21 ♙d4! ♖xc5 22 ♙xc5 ♙c8 23 ♙f1, and White retained the better chances, although after fascinating adventures the game nevertheless ended in a draw.

Later Sergey found the strongest plan of defence, involving the reinforcement of his vulnerable d7 and b4 points.

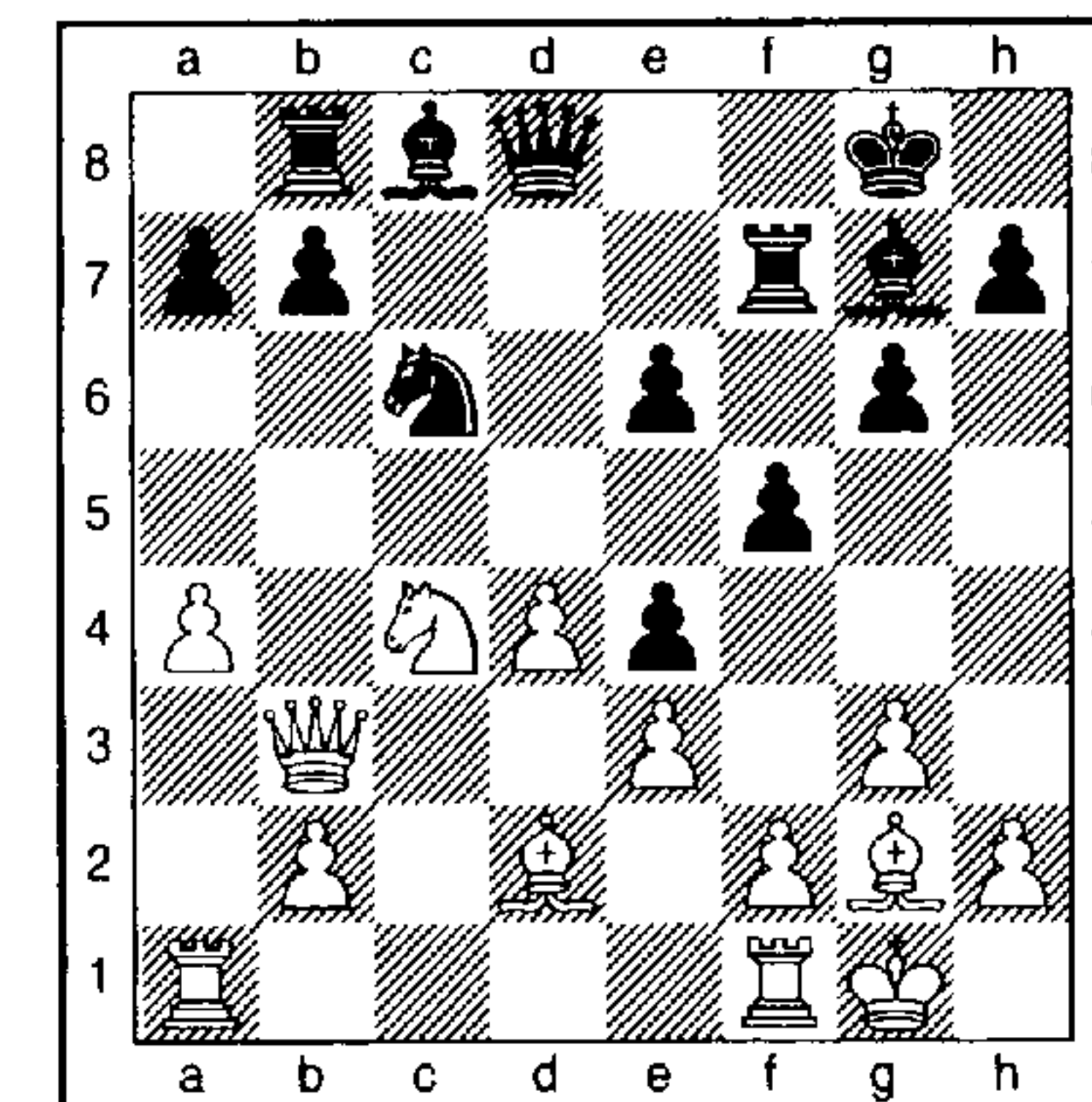
20...♖f7! 21 ♖c1. If 21 ♙e1 ♙f8 22 ♖c7, then either 22...♖c8 with equality, or 22...♙e8!? followed by 23...♙b5.

21...♙f8 22 ♖c7 ♖b5! Unexpectedly White has problems – the black rook wants to take on e5 or occupy the strong square d5. This variation vividly displays the main idea of Black's strategy: shutting the d2 bishop out of the game.

Playing against Jan Timman, Yusupov noticed that in reply to 15 ♖ac1 not only 15...♙d7 is possible, but also the immediate 15...b5. This is why Artur decided to immediately suppress the opponent's activity on the queenside. However, the move 15 a4 was not new. It occurred in the game Ribli–Andersson (Clermont-Ferrand 1989). After 15...♙d7 16 ♙a3 ♖e8 17 a5 ♙f8 18 ♙a2 ♙e7 19 ♖fc1 ♖ec8 20 ♙f1 ♙d8 21 ♖ab1 ♙e8 22 b4 White maintained some pressure.

15 ... ♖f7

150



Q 6-74. How should White continue?

After half an hour's thought the grandmaster played 16 ♖ac1!! I suspect that this informa-



tion will have provoked in you a perplexed reaction, if not one of indignation. In fact, why award two exclamation marks to the most natural move, one which any player would have made in a blitz game?

But the move itself is merely the tip of the iceberg. After seeing the underwater part, you will realise why this was the turning point of the entire game and why it largely determined its outcome.

It is useful to begin the solving of any positional problem with the question: 'What does the opponent want, and what was the point of his last move?' It turns out that Black had prepared a breakthrough in the centre: 16...e5! 17 dxe5 (17 ♖xe5 ♗xe5 18 dxe5 ♜xd2 19 ♖c7) 18 dxe5 ♜xd2 19 ♖xc6, or 18...♖xe5 19 ♖c5! ♖d3 20 ♖d5. He had to reject his intended plan and look for another one, which is always unpleasant and difficult. In such situations mistakes become highly probable.

We already know that 16...♜d5 is strongly met by 17 f3! In the event of 16...♗d7 the position of the rook at f7 is rather ridiculous. It is possible that 16...♖c7 followed by ...♗d7 was comparatively best. Timman preferred another way of developing his pieces.

How can the threat of ...e6–e5 be parried? The simplest solution would appear to be 16 ♖fd1 – after all, this move comes into White's plans, since it prepares the thematic ♖e5 (we have seen it in the games Yusupov–Dolmatov and Andersson–Nunn). However, at the given moment moving the rook from f1 is a positional mistake, allowing the black queen to occupy safely the splendid central square d5. Earlier Black did not play ...♜d5, since he was afraid of the undermining move f2–f3!, when after the exchange of pawns on f3 he would have to waste time moving his queen. But in the event of 16 ♖fd1? ♜d5! the undermining move is no longer possible, and Black is excellently placed.

The other easy solution 16 ♗c3 is not bad, but even so it is rather a pity to block the c-file, along which the white rook wants to operate. This can be played if it is not possible to find a stronger continuation.

There is a well-known expression 'tactics at the service of strategy'. Yusupov established that, after the systematic developing move made in the game, ...e6–e5 would encounter a tactical refutation.

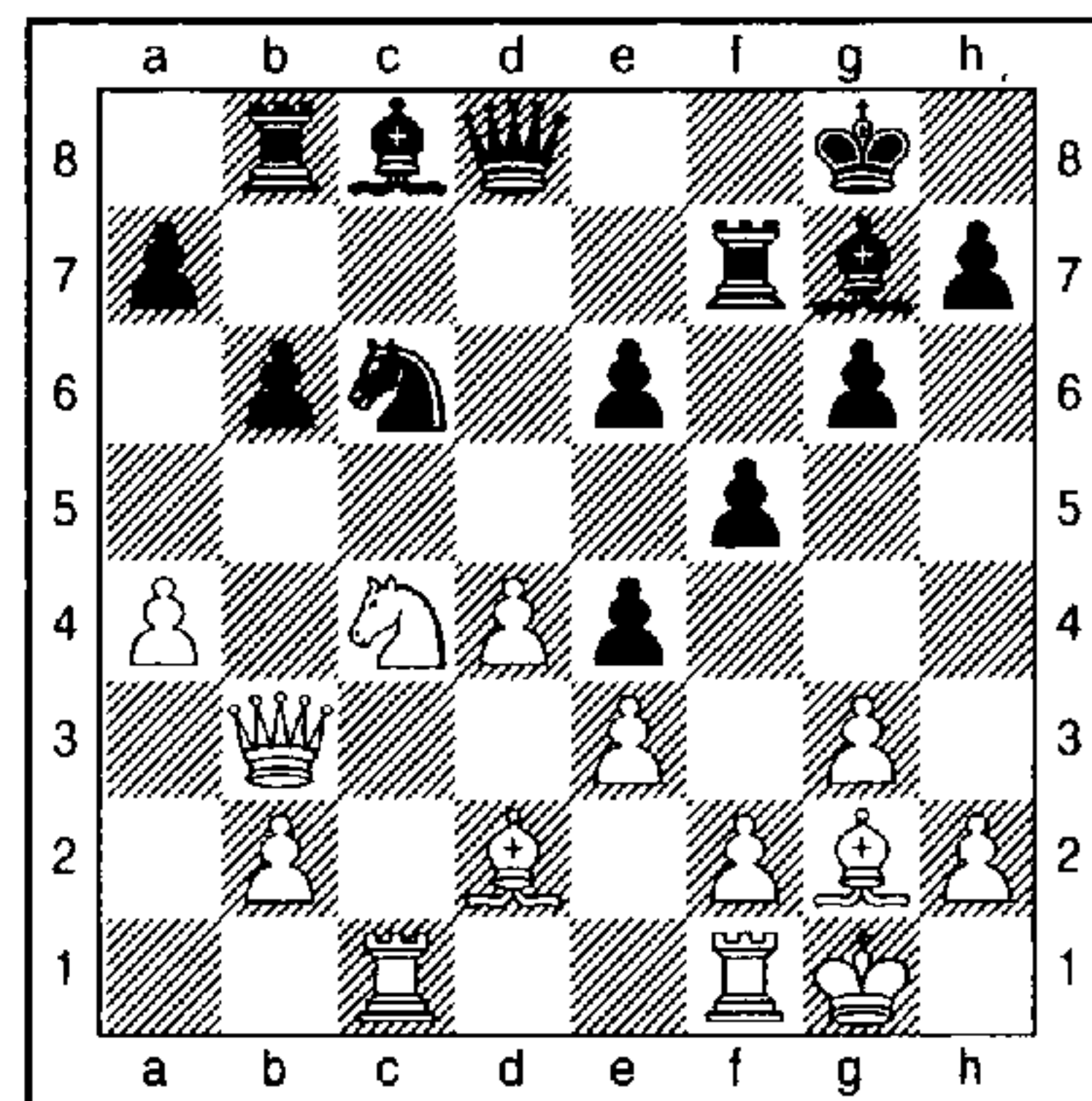
16 ♖ac1!!

Here Timman sank into thought and realised that in reply to 16...e5 the opponent had prepared 17 ♖xe5! ♗xe5 (17...♖xe5 18 dxe5 ♜xd2 19 ♖c7) 18 dxe5 ♜xd2 19 ♖xc6, or 18...♖xe5 19 ♖c5! ♖d3 20 ♖d5. He had to reject his intended plan and look for another one, which is always unpleasant and difficult. In such situations mistakes become highly probable.

We already know that 16...♜d5 is strongly met by 17 f3! In the event of 16...♗d7 the position of the rook at f7 is rather ridiculous. It is possible that 16...♖c7 followed by ...♗d7 was comparatively best. Timman preferred another way of developing his pieces.

16 ... b6

151



Q 6-75. What should White play?

Black wants, by placing his bishop on b7, to then gain control of the d5 square. The drawback to his plan is that the e6 pawn is weakened, and Yusupov skilfully exploits this factor.

17 f3!

When such a move does not involve the gain of a tempo, it is usually not too advantageous to White. Artur nevertheless makes it, since he has in mind a concrete tactical idea.

17 ... exf3



18 ♗xf3 ♗b7

It is doubtful whether other moves are better: 18...♖e7 19 ♗b4 or 18...♖c7 19 ♖a3.

19 ♗xc6!

This unexpected exchange is the whole point.

19 ... ♗xc6
20 ♖e5 ♗xa4!

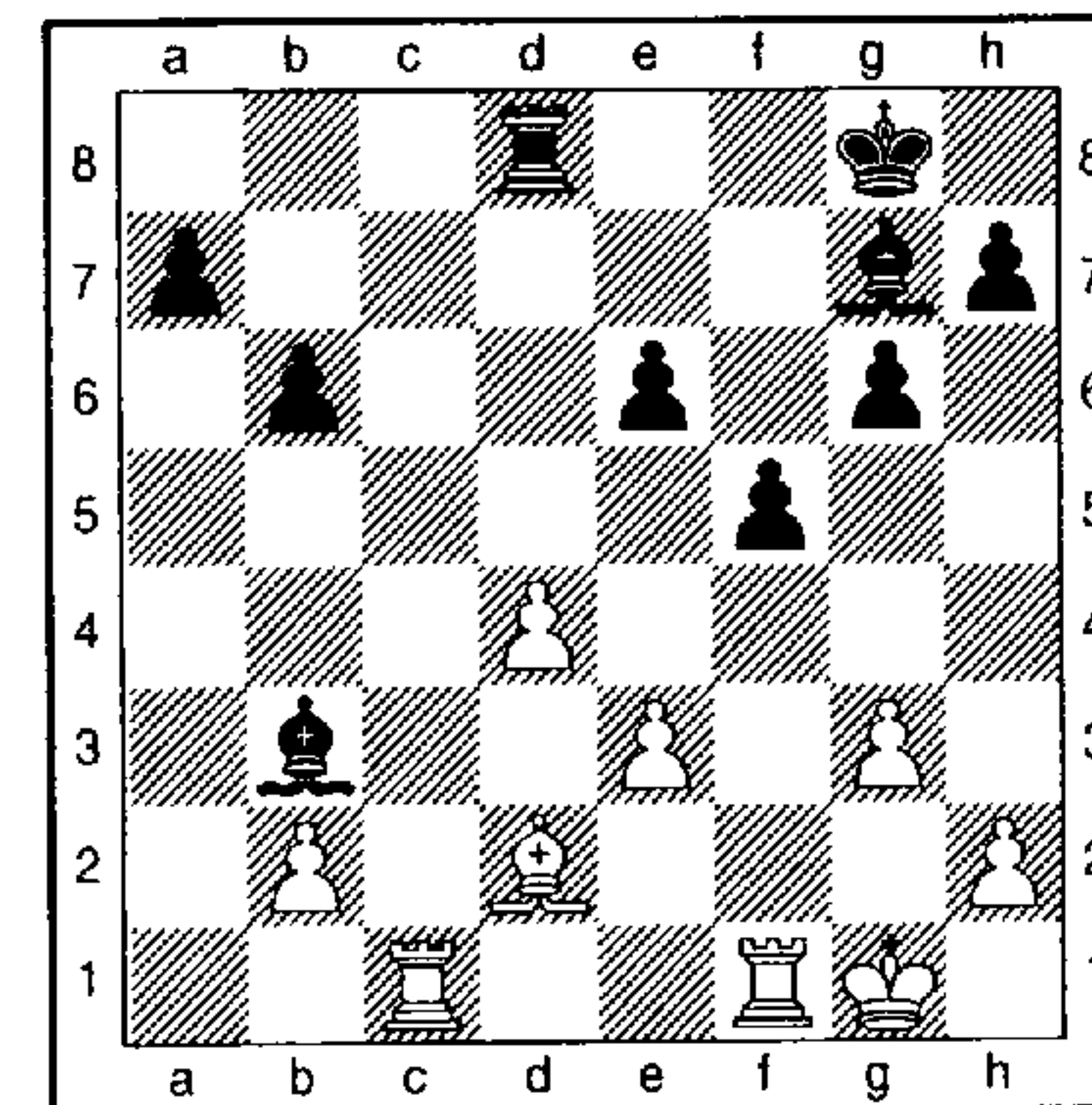
The only chance. Completely hopeless is 20...♗xe5 21 ♖xc6, when Black cannot defend his e6. The attempt to complicate the game by 20...♗d5 21 ♖xf7 ♖xf7 does not work. It could have been justified after 22 ♜c3?! ♖b7 23 ♜c8 ♜d6 24 ♖c3 ♖e7 25 ♖fc1 ♗b7 (threatening 26...♜d5) 26 ♜c4 h5!? with reasonable positional compensation for the lost exchange. The refutation of this idea is not difficult: 22 ♜c2! ♖b7 (otherwise 23 ♜c7+) 23 e4! ♗xd4+ 24 ♖g2.

21 ♖xf7 ♗xb3?

Equivalent to capitulation. The opponent could have been set much more difficult problems by playing 21...♜d7! We will return again to this moment.

22 ♖xd8 ♖xd8

152



The concluding stage of the game is an example of the technical conversion of a

material advantage. Chances of saving the game for Black might be given either by a counterattack on the enemy centre with ...e6–e5, or the consolidation of his own position after playing his king to the centre. But things do not get as far as that.

23 ♖c3!

Wishing to force events, White avoids the natural 23 ♖c7. He intends 24 ♖fc1 and 25 ♖c8. **The exchange of one pair of rooks for the sake of invading with the remaining rook along an open file is a typical procedure for exploiting the advantage of the exchange.**

23 ... ♗d5
24 ♖fc1 ♗f6
25 ♖c8 ♗b7
26 ♖8c7!

In the event of 26 ♖xd8+ ♗xd8 all the squares on the c-file would be covered. Therefore Yusupov avoids the exchange and occupies the 7th rank with gain of tempo.

26 ... ♗e4
27 ♗b4!

The a7 pawn will not run away. It is far more important to exchange bishops, depriving the opponent of his last hopes of gaining counterplay.

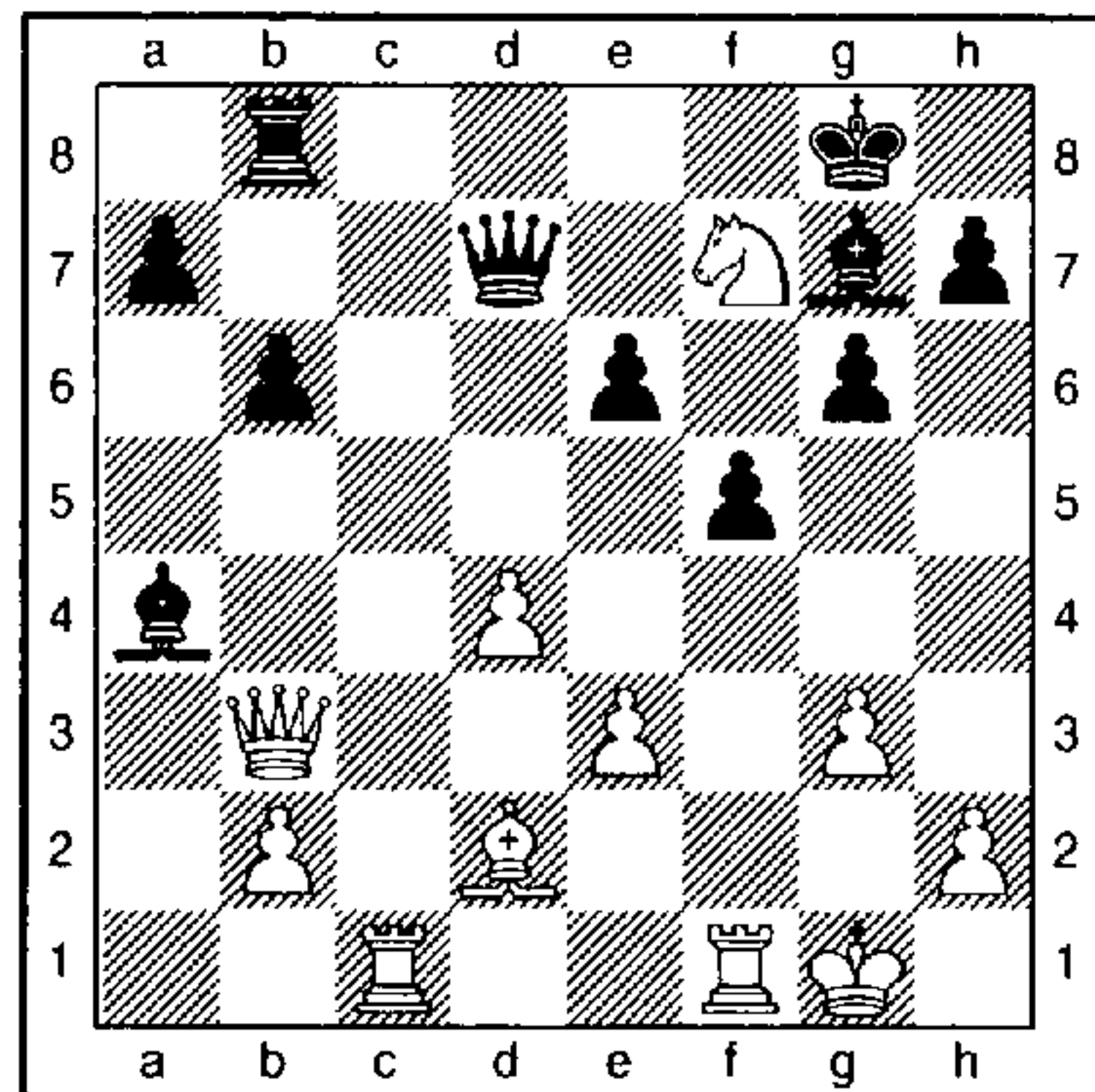
27 ... g5
28 ♗e7 ♗xe7
29 ♖xe7 f4
30 gxf4 gxf4
31 exf4 a5
32 ♖f2 ♗f5
33 ♖b7 b5
34 ♖cc7

Black resigns.

Let us go back a little, and see what could have happened if Black had played more strongly on his 21st move.

21 ... ♜d7!

see next diagram



Q 6-76. How would you have set about exploiting your advantage?

If you have little time left on your clock, or you are simply lazy about calculating complicated variations, then without particular reflection you can simplify the position by 22 ♖c4 ♗xf7 23 ♖c7 ♖b7 24 ♖xd7+ ♜xd7 (weaker is 24...♗xd7 25 ♗b4). But this version of the endgame is much more favourable for Black than the one in the game, and after, say, 25 ♗b4 a5 or 25 ♜c8 e5 he retains quite good saving chances.

22 ♖a2!? ♗xf7 is more critical. Now nothing is given by the primitive 23 ♜a1 ♗b5 24 ♖xa7? ♖b7 or 23 ♜c3 ♗b5 24 ♜fc1 ♖b7. White has to play more sharply. I see two ways of beginning an attack against the black king: 23 g4 or 23 d5 exd5 24 e4. In both cases, of course, you cannot get by without deep and accurate calculation.

First let us consider 23 g4! White's idea is revealed in the variation 23...♗b5? 24 gxf5! ♗xf1 25 fxe6+ ♖xe6 26 ♜xf1+ ♗f6 27 ♖xa7+ and wins.

In the event of 23...♗g8?! 24 gxf5 gxf5 25 ♜xf5 White gains the advantage, e.g. 25...♗c6 26 ♜xc6! (26 ♜g5) 26...♖xc6 27 ♖xa7 ♜a8 28 ♖f7+ ♗h8 29 ♜g5, or

25...♗h8 26 ♜g5 ♜g8 (26...♗xd4 27 ♖c4, intending 28 ♗c3) 27 ♖c4.

Black can defend in gambit style: 23...♗e8! 24 gxf5 ♗d5. After 25 fxe6+ ♗xe6 26 ♖b1 ♗e7! a double-edged position arises. Stronger is 25 fxg6+ ♗g8 26 gxh7+ ♗xh7 27 ♖b1+ and 28 ♖g6.

But another way of sacrificing a pawn is, in my view, more promising for Black: 23...♗e8! 24 ♜a1 ♗c6 (24...♗b5 25 ♖xa7 ♖b7 26 ♖a8+ ♗f7 27 ♜fc1 ♗xd4 28 ♜c8, and White attacks) 25 ♖xa7 ♖b7 26 ♖a8+ ♗f7 27 ♜fc1 (threatening 28 ♜xc6 ♖xc6 29 ♜a7) 27...♜c7 with an unclear game.

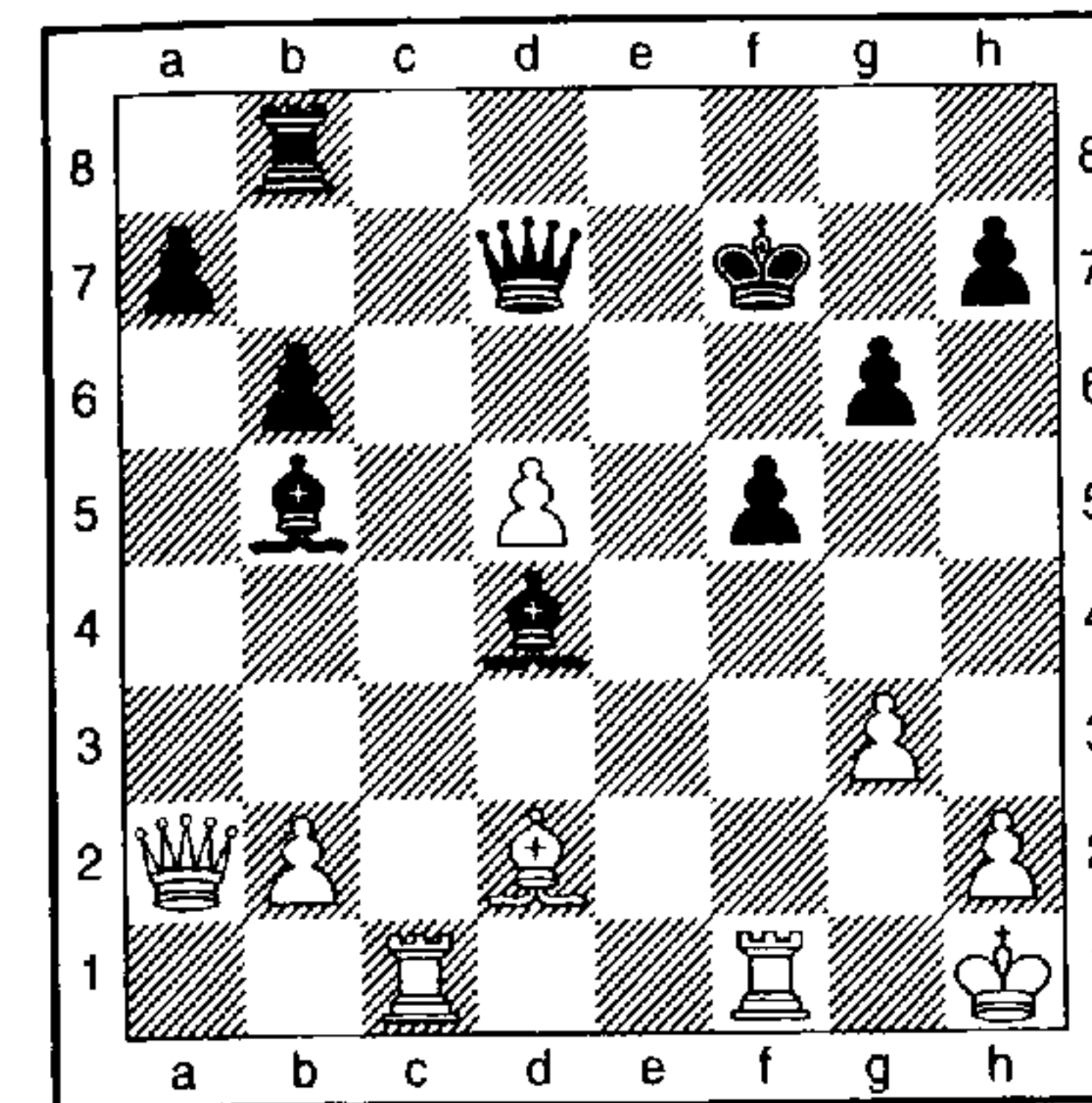
Thus the consequences of 23 g4 are uncertain. The other possibility is a dramatic breakthrough in the centre.

23 d5!? exd5 24 e4! The cautious 24...♗c6?! leads after 25 exf5 gxf5 26 ♗c3 to a difficult position for Black. He has to play more aggressively.

24...♗b5. Now nothing is given by 25 ♗f4 ♖b7 26 ♜fd1 fxe4 27 ♜xd5 ♖e6, but the exchange sacrifice **25 exd5!?** comes into consideration. The following variations were analysed by me together with grandmasters Joël Lautier, Matthew Sadler and Viswanathan Anand.

25...♗d4+. The immediate 25...♗xf1 makes things easier for White: 26 d6+ ♗f8 27 ♜c7. **26 ♗h1**

see next diagram



26...♗xf1 27 d6+ ♗f6 28 ♖d5! The obvious 28 ♜c7? (hoping for 28...♗d3? 29 h4! or 28...♖e6? 29 ♗g5+ ♗e5 30 ♜e7) is incorrect because of 28...♖e8!

28...♗e5 29 ♜c7 ♗d3! 30 ♗g5+! ♗xg5 31 ♖xe5 ♗e4+. If 31...♖e8 there follows 32 ♖f4+ ♗f6 33 ♖d4+ ♖e5 (33...♗e6 34 ♖xd3, but not 34 ♜e7+? ♖xe7 35 dxe7 ♗e4+ 36 ♗g1 ♜e8) 34 ♖h4+ (34 ♜f7+ ♗xf7 35 ♖xe5 is also strong) 34...♗e6 35 ♜e7+.

32 ♗g1 ♖a4 33 ♖e7+! ♗g4 34 ♖h4+ ♗f3 35 ♖f4+ ♗e2 36 ♖f2+ ♗d1 37 ♜c3! (threatening 38 ♖f1+ ♗d2 39 ♖c1+ ♗e2 40 ♜e3 mate) 37...♗c2, and now the simplest is **38 ♜a3! ♖e4 39 ♜e3.**

A pretty tale, wouldn't you agree? But, alas, it is only a tale! When I told it to Vadim Zviagintsev, he didn't believe the authenticity of the entire story, and in the position from the last diagram he suggested rejecting the capture of the rook in favour of the cool 26...♜d8! Now if 27 d6+ Black has both 27...♖e6 (and if 28 ♜c7+?! ♜d7), as well as Ken Neat's suggestion of 27...♗g7 28 ♖d5 (28 ♜c7? ♗c6+) 28...♗c5. I tried to find a way for White to gain an advantage, but, alas, nothing came of it.

Later another defence was discovered. The sharp variation 28...♖b7! (instead of 28...

♗e5) 29 ♜c6 ♗b5!! (29...♖xc6 30 ♖xc6 ♗d3 does not work: 31 d7+ ♗g7 32 d8♖! ♜xd8 33 ♖c7+) 30 ♖xb5 ♗c5! 31 b4 (31 d7+ ♗g7 32 ♗g5 a6! 33 ♖a4 b5! 34 ♖xa6 ♖xd7 35 ♜xc5 ♖d1+ with perpetual check) 31...a6 32 d7+ ♗g7 33 ♖a4 ♗d4 34 ♗g5 I assessed in favour of White, not noticing an elegant way to draw: 34...♗h8!! 35 d8♖+ ♜xd8 36 ♗xd8 ♖d7.

So what happened to the apparently obvious superiority achieved by White? Could it be that our interpretation of the events that occurred in the game was incorrect?

No, in fact a mistake was made by me only at the moment when choosing a plan for converting the advantage. I got carried away too early by the analysis of dramatic variations. **Before delving into the labyrinth, it should first have been carefully checked whether White has any other promising possibilities. The 'candidate move' principle is a highly important procedure, enabling one to rationally organise a search and take decisions both during a tournament game, and in analysis!**

Grandmaster Christopher Lutz suggested a comparatively simple and very convincing way of retaining an advantage for White.

22 ♖b4! ♗xf7
Bad is 22...a5? 23 ♖d6 or 22...♗f8? 23 ♗e5 ♗xb4 24 ♗xd7.
23 d5! exd5
24 ♗c3

Although Black has two pawns for the exchange, his position is difficult. His dark squares are weak, his bishop at a4 has no future, and the white queen can quickly be switched to the kingside to create an attack there (♖h4 or ♖f4).

Many solutions seem obvious, after they have been found. But to make the correct choice at the board, when alongside is the rapidly ticking clock, is very, very difficult. If Timman had played 21...♖d7!, who knows how the game would have ended.



What was the cause of the fatal mistake, made by the Dutch grandmaster? I think that it can be explained by the fact that already in the opening Yusupov firmly held the psychological initiative. Black permitted himself a couple of liberties (15...♖f7?! and 16...b6?!), which he might have got away with, had it not been for Artur's accurate play. First with his 'elementary' 16th move he prevented ...e6-

e5 and forced the opponent to seek a new plan. Then with an unexpected exchange he gained a material advantage. Imagine to yourself Timman's psychological state! In such a situation it is easy to lose faith in a favourable outcome to the game. And when your optimism runs dry, your fighting spirit is weakened and the probability of mistakes increases sharply.



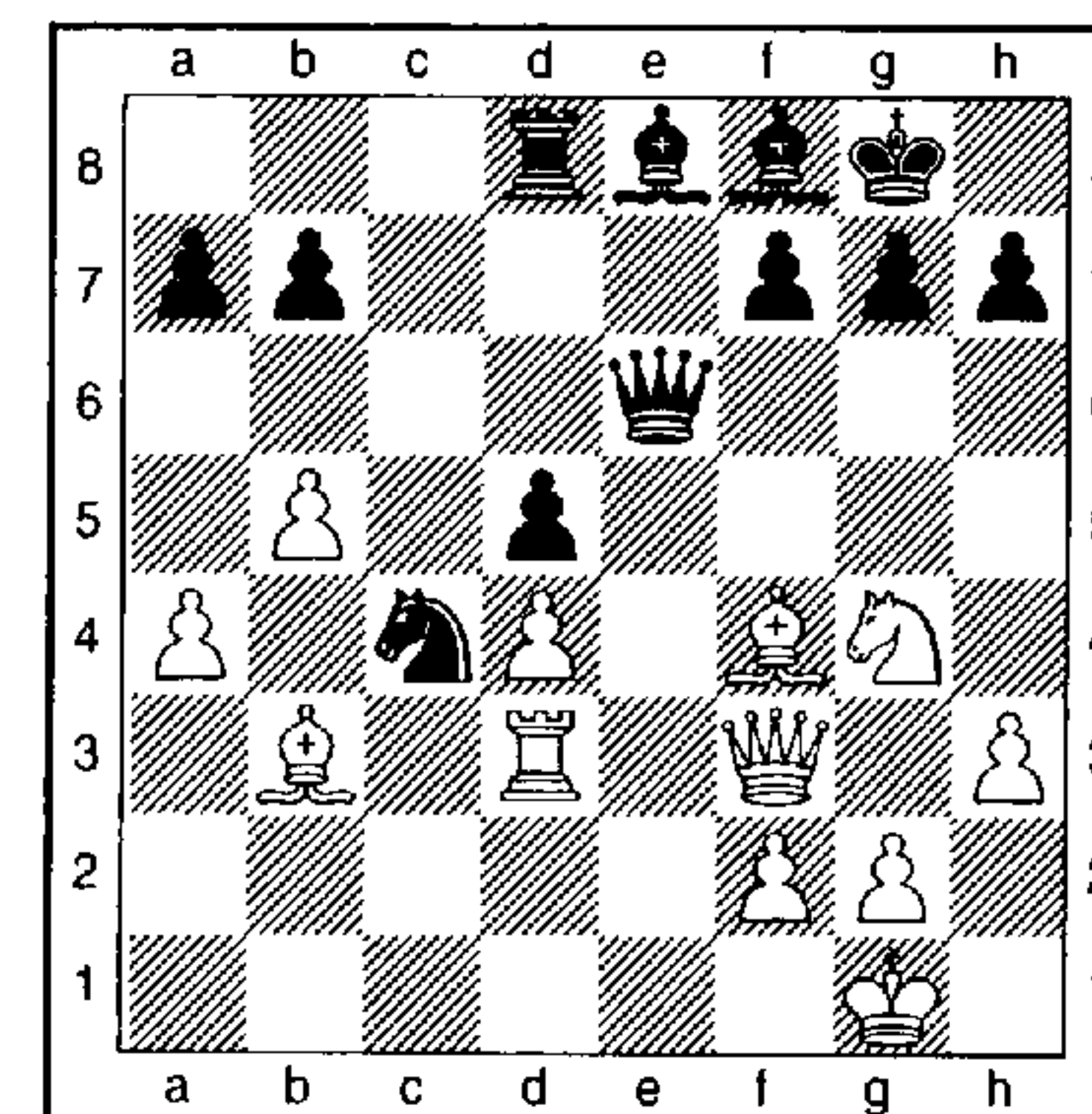
Exercises For Analysis

The first thing that a player's thoughts dwell on during a game when considering a move is finding the 'main thing' in the position, its core, its spirit – the starting-point for a move or variation.

Pyotr Romanovsky

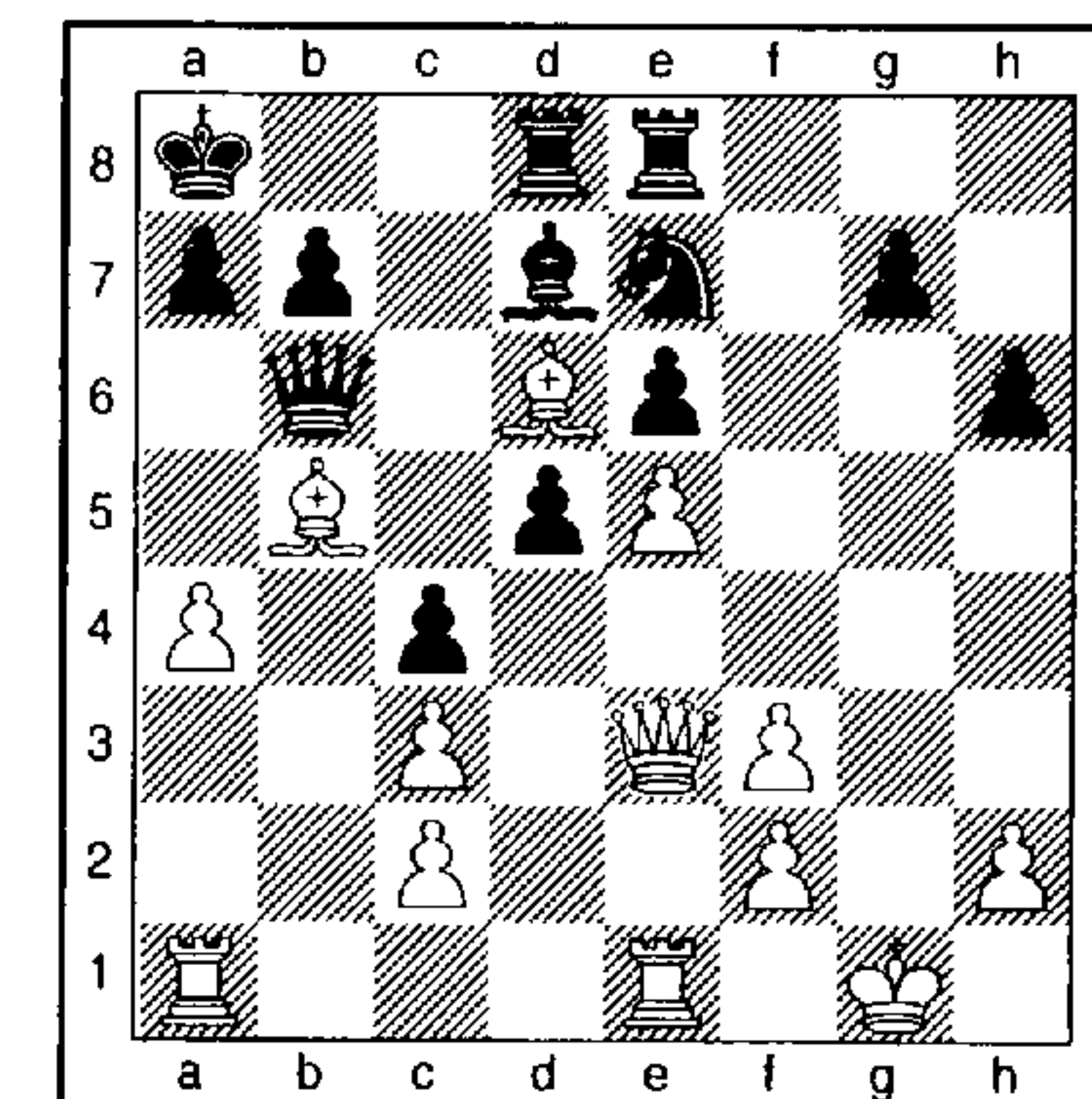
The heading of this chapter is a traditional one. Each of the sections in the two preceding books 'Endgame Analysis' and 'Tactical Play' concludes with such a chapter with exercises, in the most part quite difficult. On this occasion the exercises will be easier, and it is recommended that you try and solve each of them in your head, without moving the pieces.

E 6-36
155



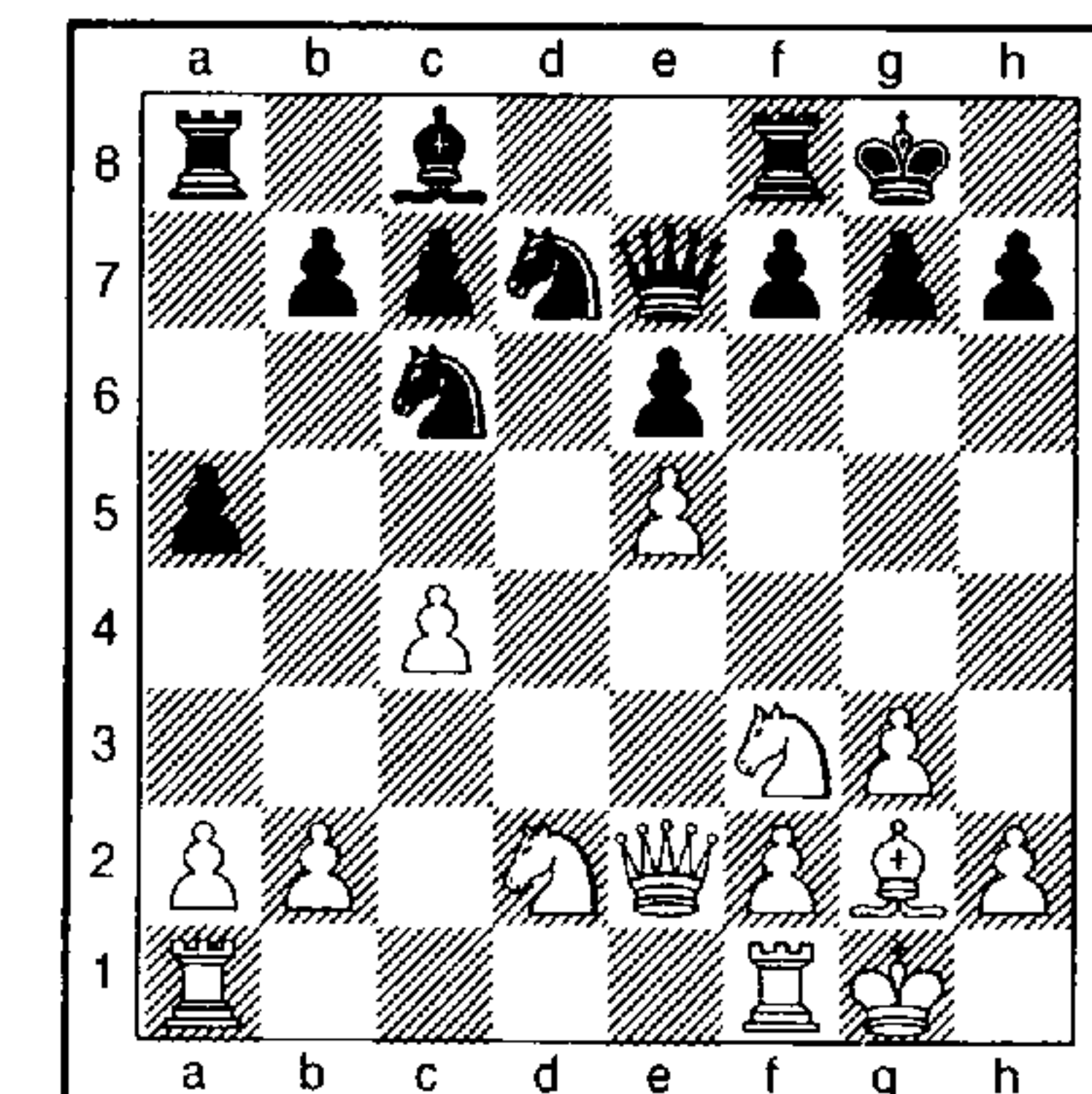
White to move

E 6-37
156



Black to move

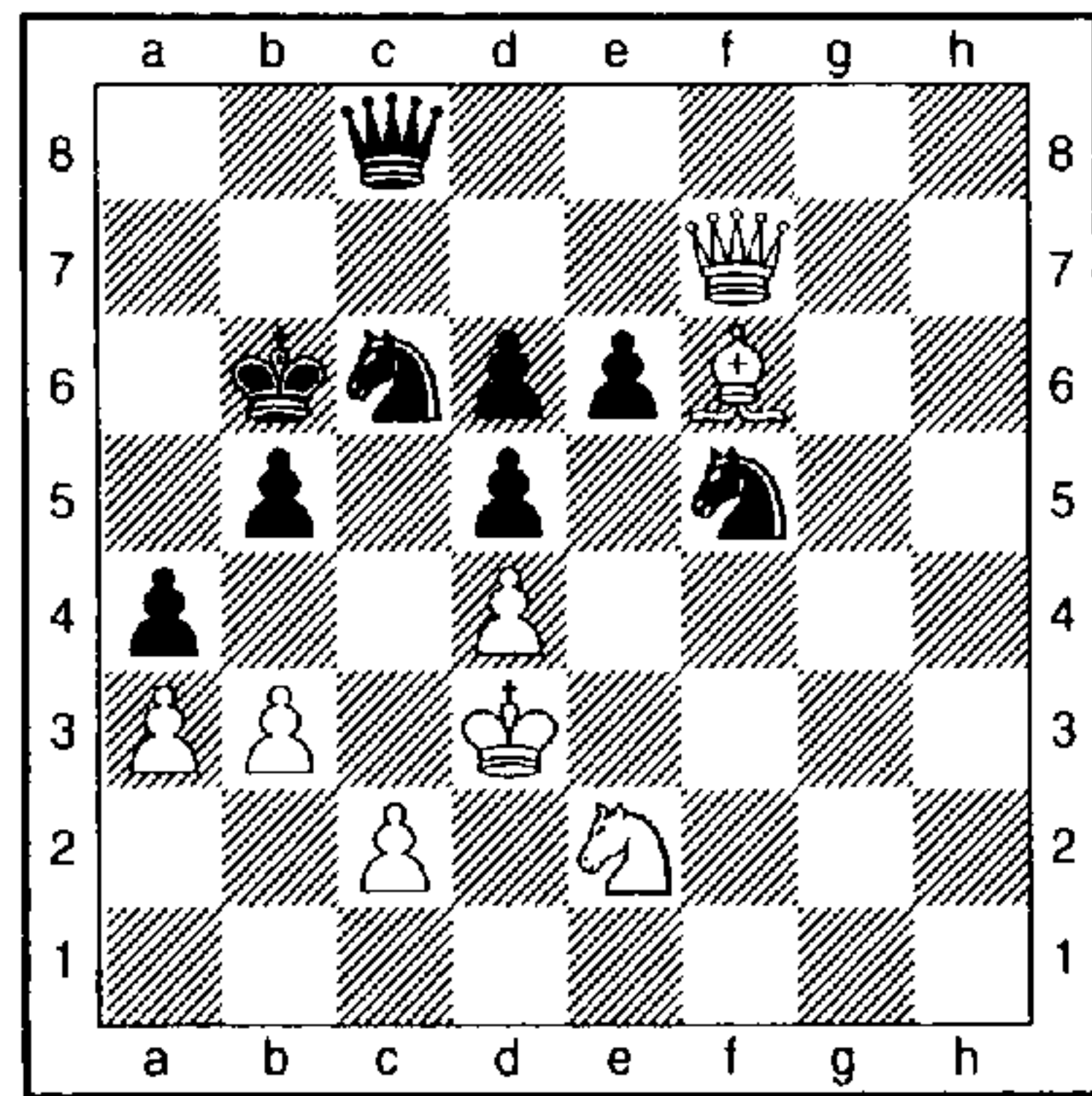
E 6-38
157



Black to move

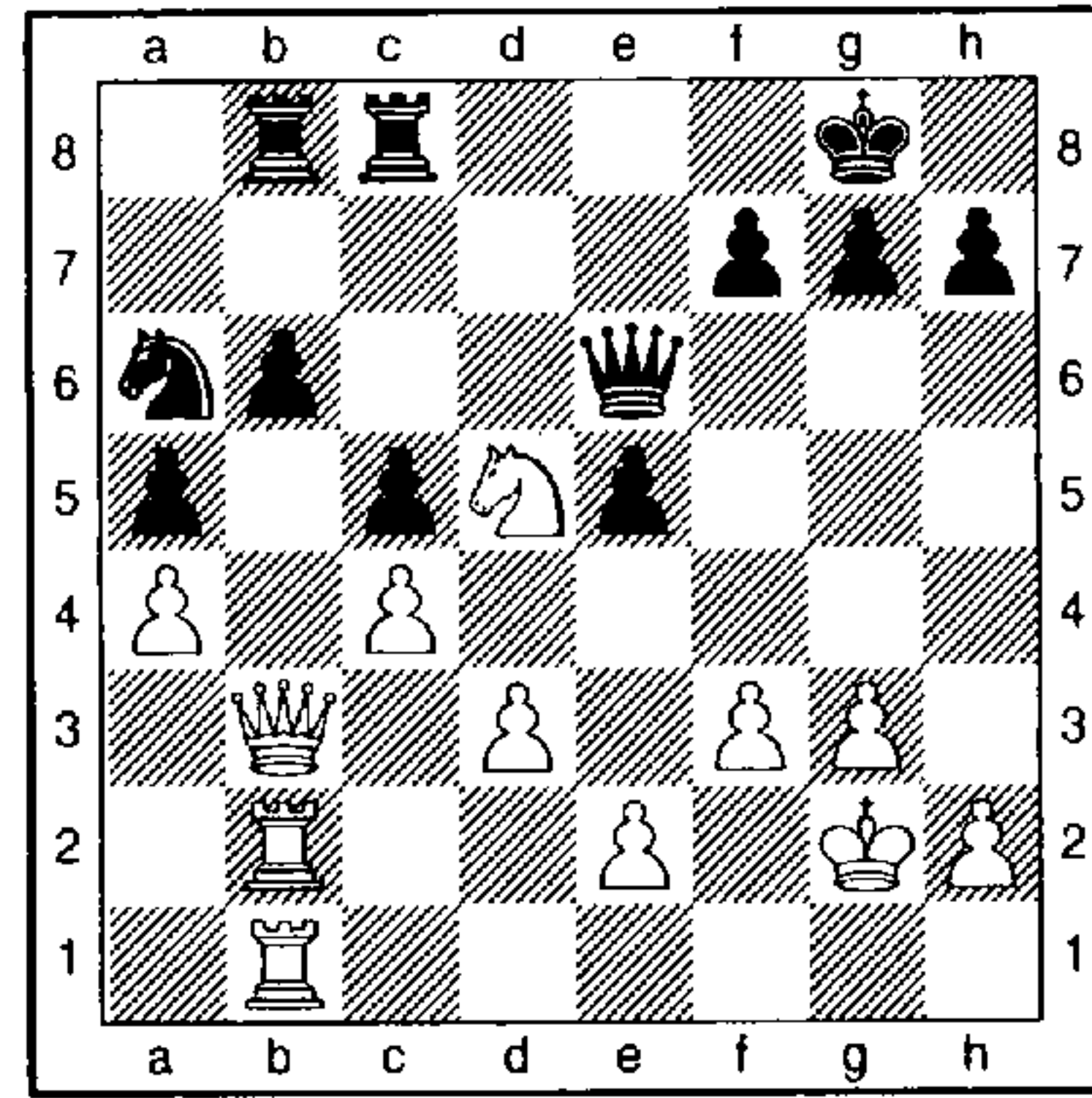


E 6-39
158



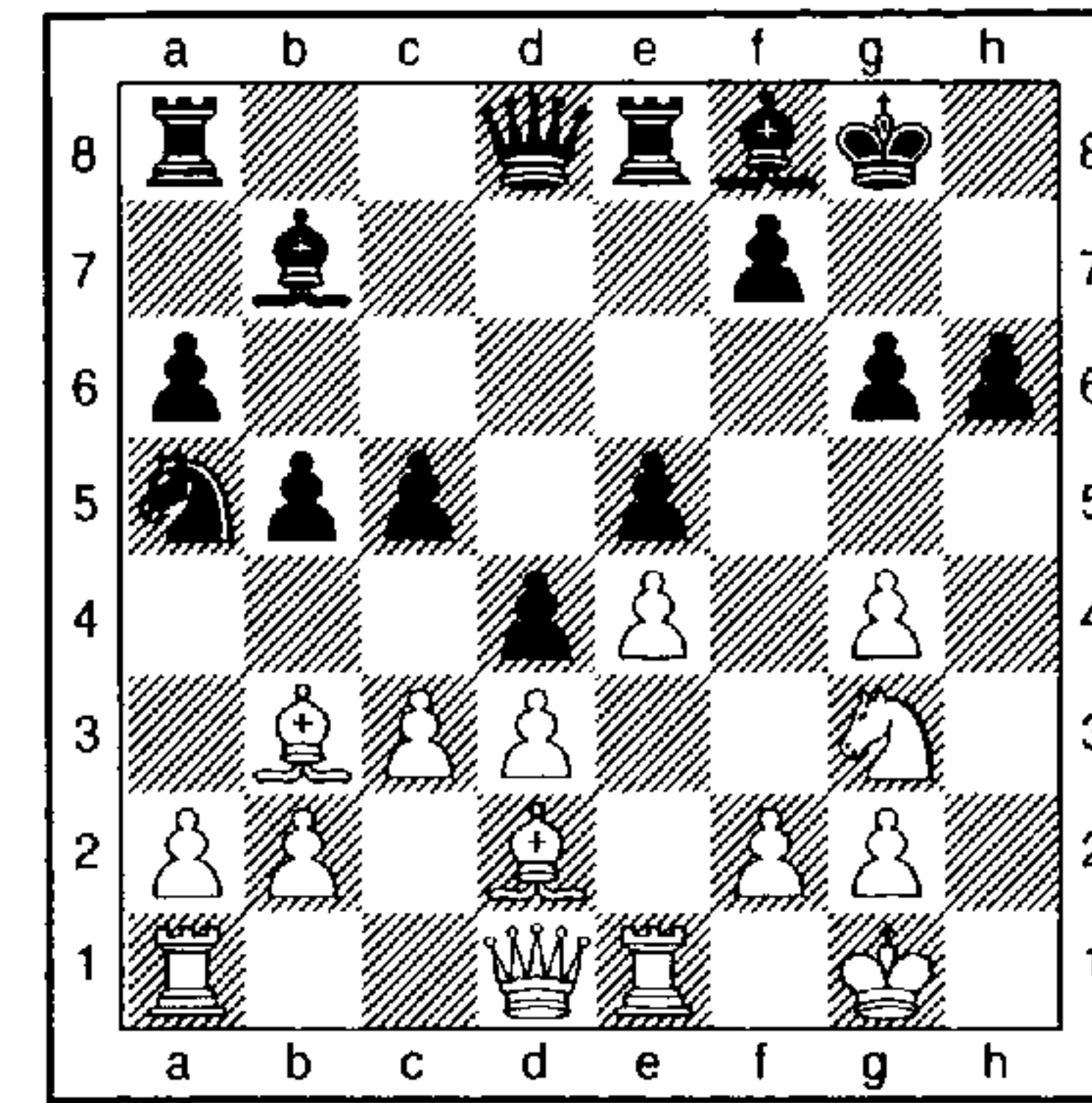
White to move

E 6-41
160



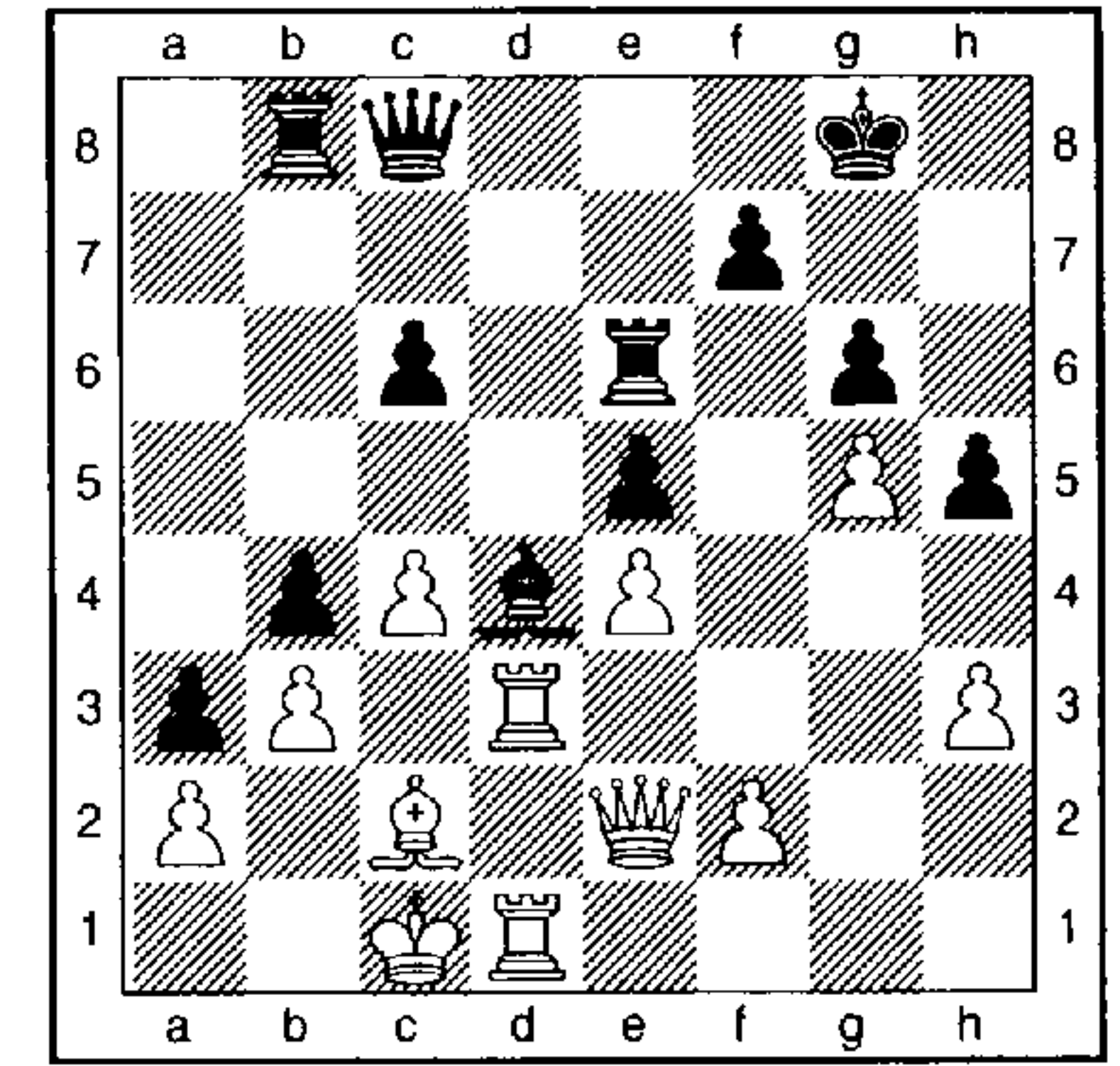
White to move

E 6-43
162



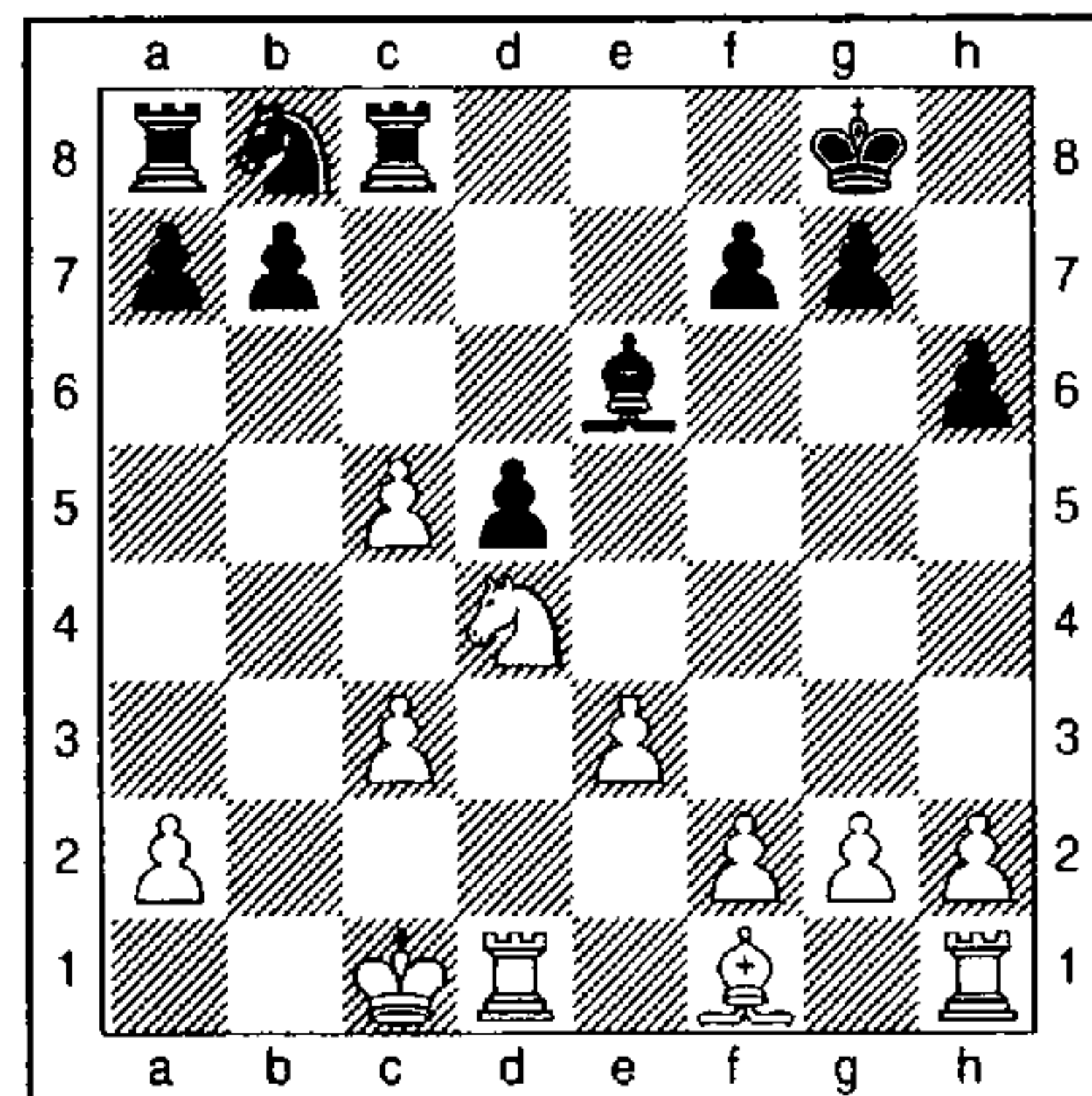
White to move

E 6-45
164



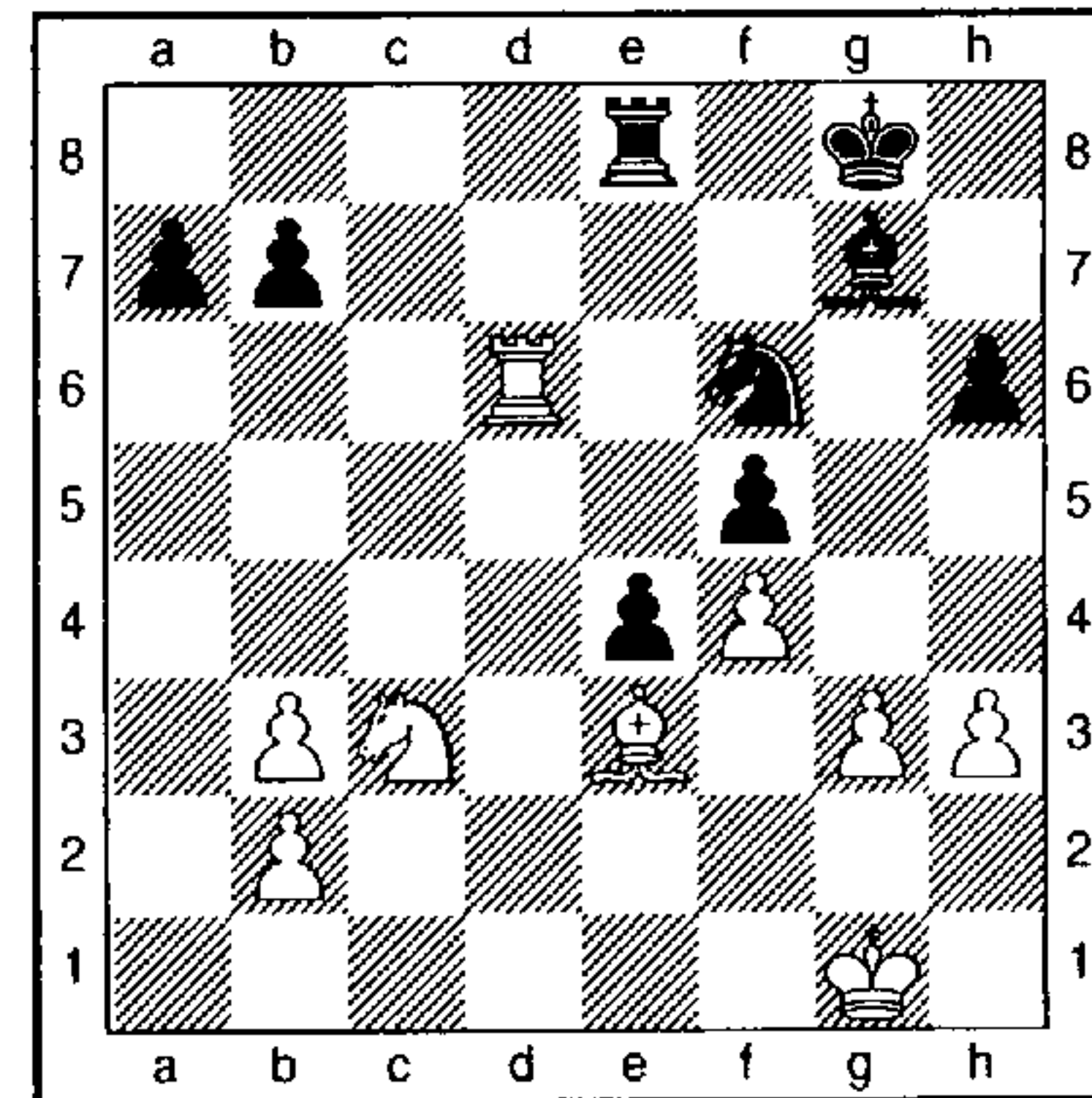
White to move

E 6-40
159



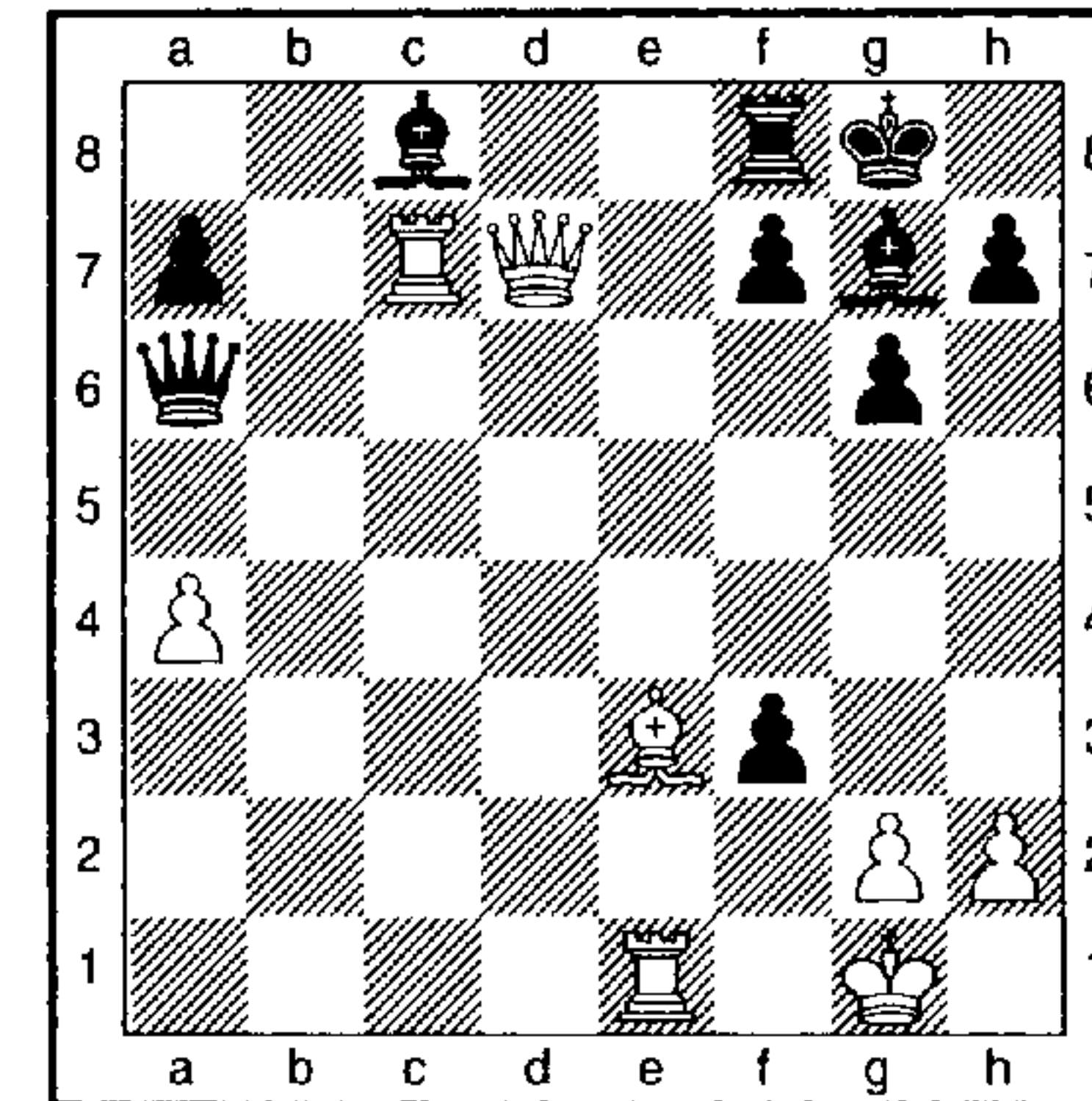
White to move

E 6-42
161



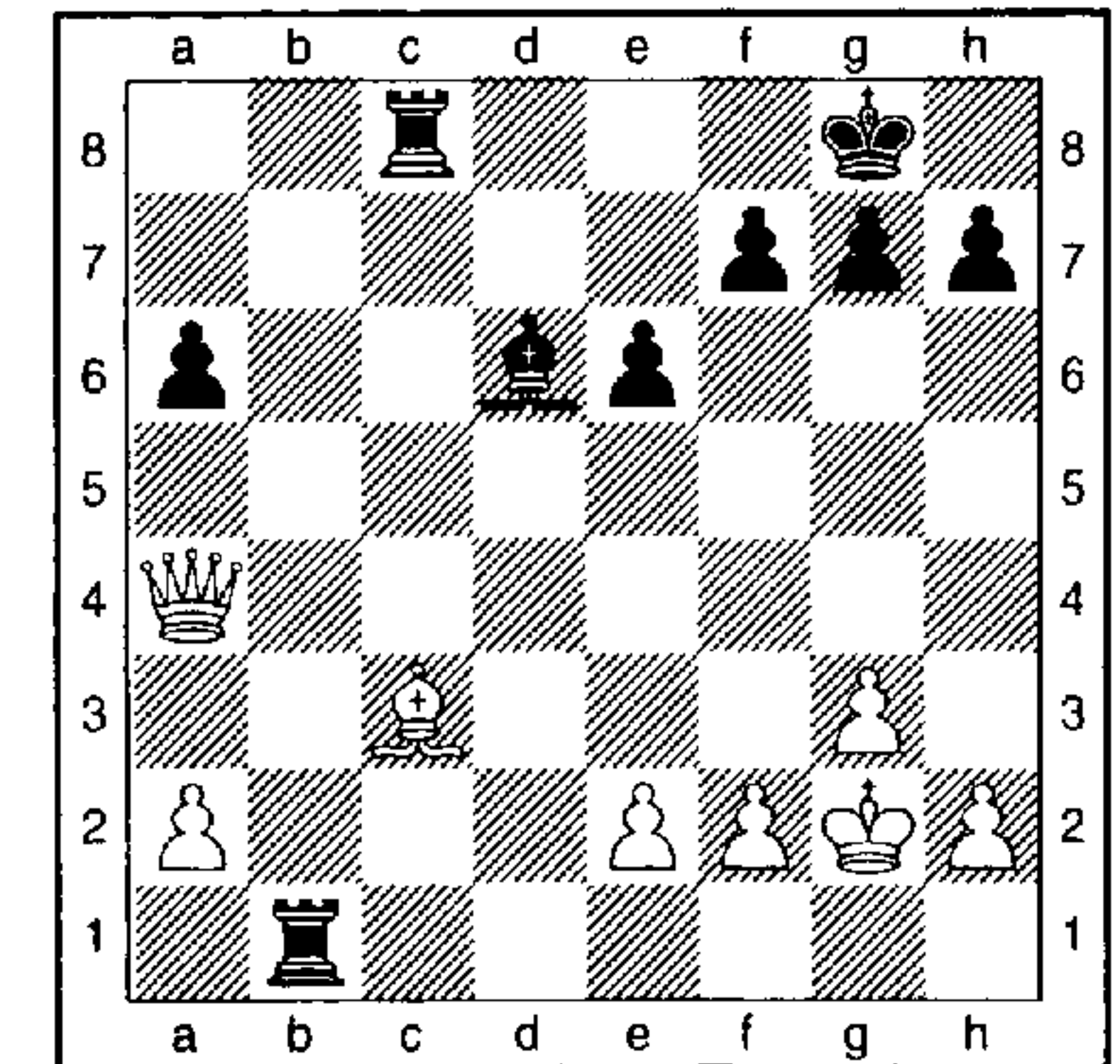
Black to move

E 6-44
163



White to move

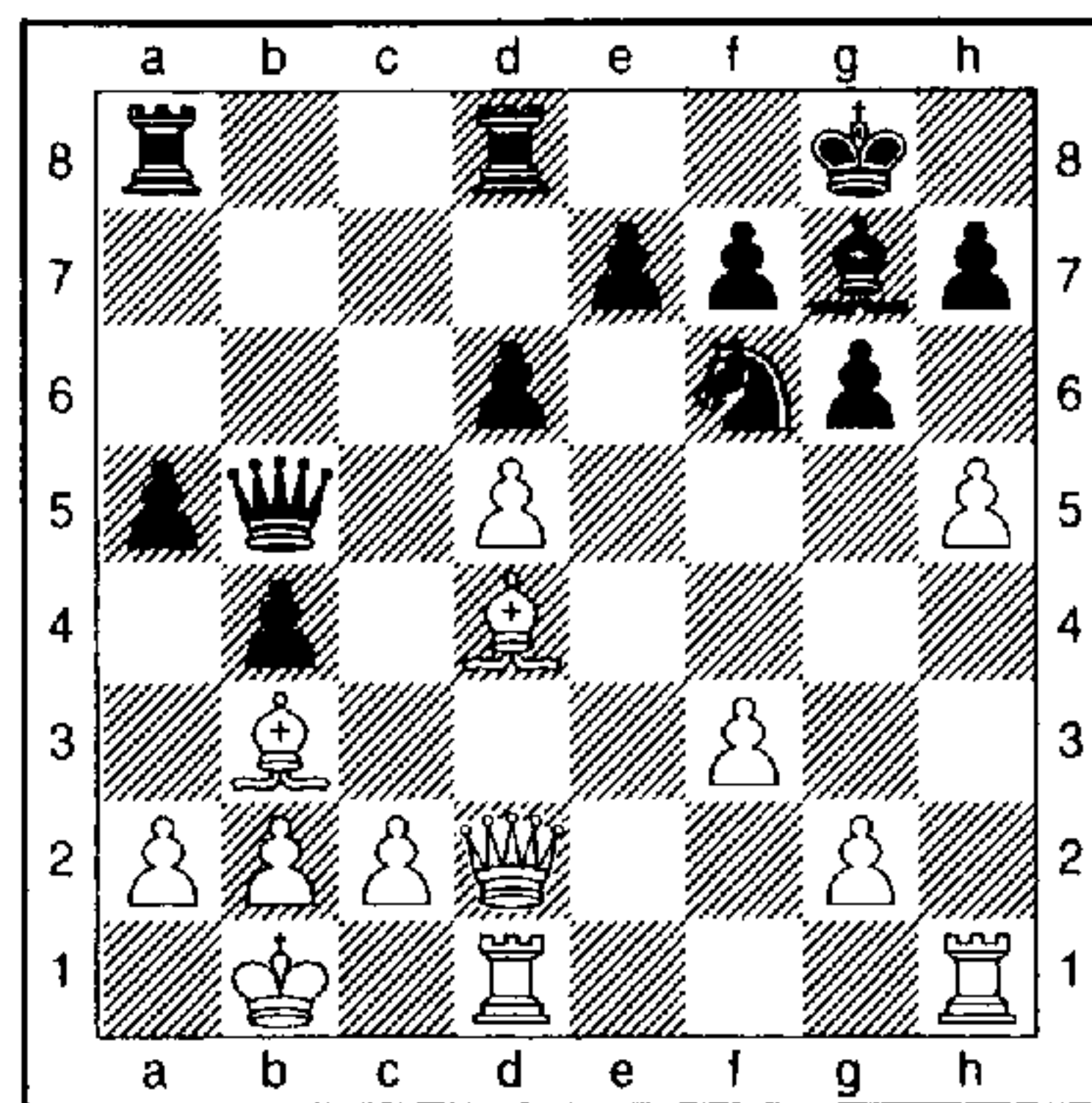
E 6-46
165



White to move



E 6-47
166



White to move



Part Seven Simple Positions

Positions with a small number of pieces on the board are sometimes called simple positions. If it is desired, they can even be considered and studied as a specific, 'fourth' phase of a chess game – an intermediate stage between the middlegame and the endgame.

What is meant by 'a small number of pieces on the board'? In principle, I do not aim for formal definitions, precise classifications, and so on – all this is not an end in itself, and it makes sense only when it serves as a convenient instrument of research. But when preparing my computer program for the training of a chess player I had to make a formal definition of simple positions, to distinguish them from the endgame and the middlegame. It is this that I also use here.

What is understood by an endgame is positions in which at least one of the sides has not more than one piece (not counting the king and the pawns).

In simple positions each of the two players has at least two pieces. But at the same time one of the types of pieces is missing – either the queens, or the rooks, or the minor pieces. Thus it is possible to distinguish six possible types of simple positions:

- 1) rooks and minor pieces in combat (the most common material relationship);
- 2) minor pieces in combat;
- 3) double-rook endings;
- 4) queens and minor pieces;
- 5) heavy pieces in combat (queens and rooks);

6) non-standard material relationships (unbalanced material).

Each of these types of positions can be studied separately, picking out the features specific to it. It is clear, after all, that heavy pieces in combat and minor pieces in combat are two very different things. But this is a topic for special research. Here we will be talking about the most general features of simple positions. What are they?

In the endgame a rather important role is played by theoretical knowledge. In simple positions it is much less. In addition, in the endgame a position can often be evaluated as definitely won or drawn, and the play resembles the proof of a theorem (sometimes a very difficult one) – the search for a precise way to win or to draw. In simple positions such a categorical formulation operates more rarely, and what comes to the fore is the process of gradually outplaying the opponent.

The main distinction from the middlegame is that mating attacks are comparatively rare here (although they still sometimes occur). The aims of the players more often involve winning material or the queening of pawns.

A decisive role in simple positions is played by technique. Technical superiority usually enables opponents to be outplayed and excellent results achieved. Therefore this part of the book is largely devoted to the problem of chess technique (although not only to this).

Of course, this problem is one that I have also studied earlier. I have already mentioned the book by Dvoretzky and Yusupov



Technique for the Tournament Player' from the series, based on the material of our school for talented young players. In addition, various aspects of technique have also been discussed in Volume 1 of the present 'School of Chess Excellence' series, 'Endgame Analysis'. In it I did not make any distinction between the endgame and simple positions, and so the chapters on the endgame contained a number of examples

that I would also have been happy to use here.

And one more thing. The concept of 'simple positions' is not a generally accepted one – usually we do not distinguish them from the endgame. And I too am not accustomed to using this term, so do not be surprised later on if, with regard to the examples being analysed, the word 'endgame' or 'ending' occasionally slips in.



Attack with a Small Army

'Your reasoning is somehow strange, Christo. How can you look for a solution, when there isn't one? It's ridiculous...'

'Excuse me, Theodor, but it is your reasoning that is strange.'

It is ridiculous to look for a solution, if there is one.

The question is what to do about a problem that has no solution.'

Arkady and Boris Strugatsky

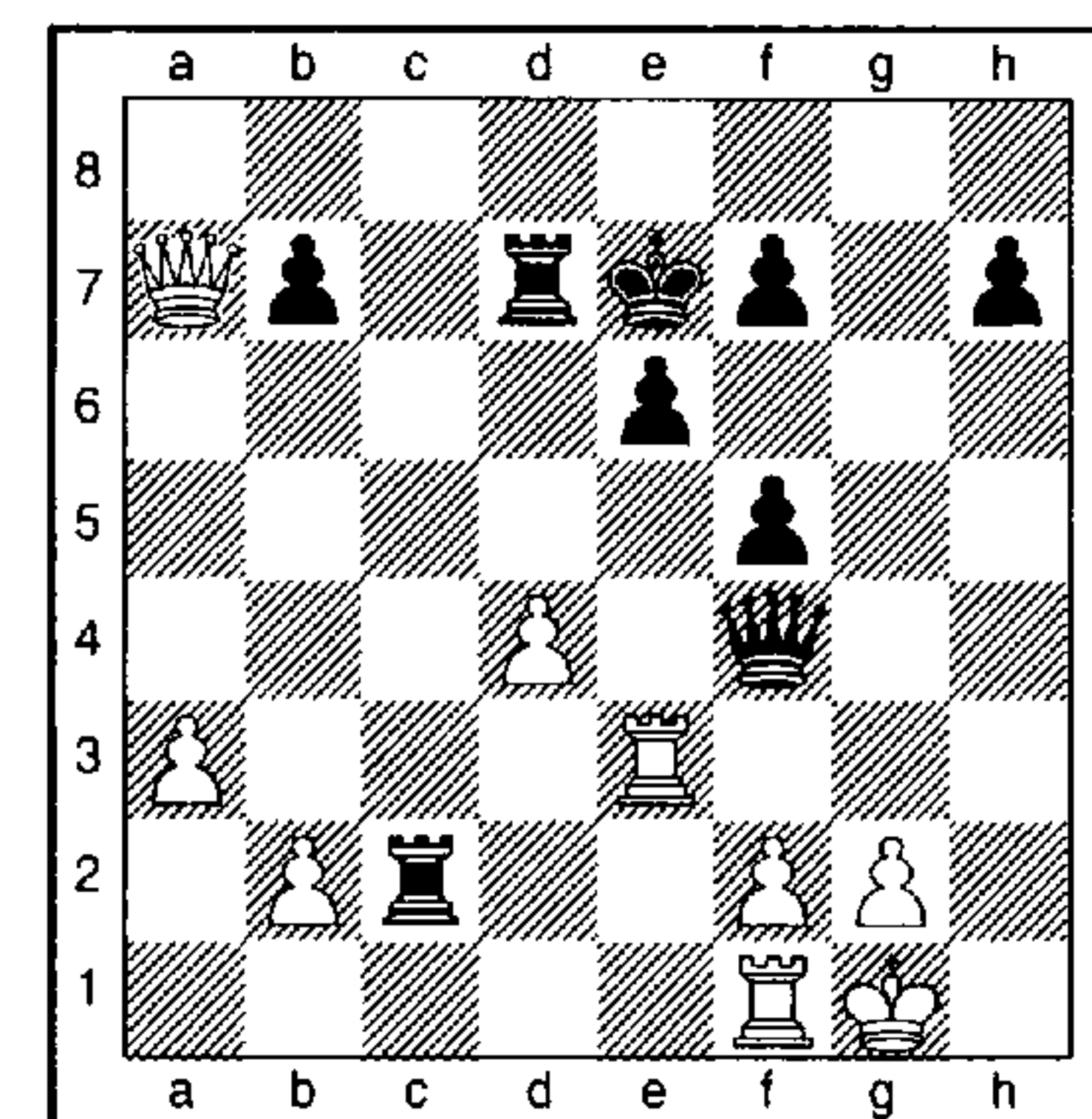
I should like to begin with a warning: mating attacks are also possible in simple positions. Yes, they occur much more rarely than in the middlegame, but they nevertheless occur. And not only under unusual, study-like circumstances, but also in very normal positions. Two or three pieces on the board are sometimes quite sufficient to weave a mating net.

Even experienced players sometimes forget that the attack with a small army is one of the possible and very dangerous plans.

Dvoretsky – Polugayevsky

43rd USSR Championship, Yerevan 1975

167



Q 7-1. What should Black play?

30... Rxf2? 31 Wc5+ Ke8 32 Wc8+ leads to an immediate draw. 30... b5?! is unconvinc-

ing: 31 Wb6 Wxd4 32 Wxb5 Rxb2 33 Rb3 , with counter-chances due to the open position of the black king.

The simplest solution, and the correct one from the practical view point (especially in view of the shortage of time that Black was experiencing) was to transpose into a double-rook ending with an extra pawn and quite good chances of success: 30... Wxd4! 31 Wxd4 Rxd4 32 Rb3 Rd7 . Then the king goes to c7, freeing the rook from having to defend the b7 pawn.

To Lev Polugayevsky this did not seem enough, and he decided to keep the queens on, underestimating the dangers threatening his king.

30 ... Rxb2?!

31 Wc5+ Kf6

If 31... Wd6 , then 32 Wxf5 Wxd4 33 Wxh7 .

32 Wf8?!

32 Rh3 Wxd4 33 Wf8 was objectively stronger, regaining one of the pawns and retaining real counter-chances. The move in the game was played quickly, without proper verification, and was aimed at the opponent's time trouble. I wanted, firstly, to retain in reply to 32... Wxd4 the additional possibility of 33 Rfe1 , and secondly, I was hoping that my opponent would overlook the threat of 33 Rh3 . It is true that the queen move allows 32... Rxf2! , but for some reason it seemed to me that Polugayevsky would not play that.



And indeed, he played differently. Either he was afraid of 33 Rfe1 and did not notice 33... Rf1+! , or else he did not want to play with isolated pawns in the variation 33 Rxe6+ Qxe6 . This was how I was intending to continue, assuming that after 34 Rxf2 (34 Re1+ Qf6 35 Wh8+ Qg6 36 Wg8+ Qh6 37 Wf8+ Qh5 does not work) 34... Wxd4 35 Wh6+ I would pick up the h7 pawn, forgetting about the simple reply 35...f6. Things are not changed by 33 Wh8+ Qe7 34 Rxe6+ fxe6! 35 Rxf2 Wxd4 . In all variations Black's advantage is undisputed.

In time trouble the grandmaster became flustered and he lost quickly.

32 ... Wxd4?
33 Rh3! Rxf2?!

If 33... Rd1 , then 34 Wh8+ and 35 Wxb2 (or 34 Rh6+ Qe5 35 Wc5+). The position after 33... Re2 34 Rxh7 is also cheerless.

34 Rh6+ Qe5
35 Wc5+ Qe4
36 Re1+ Qd3
37 Rh3+

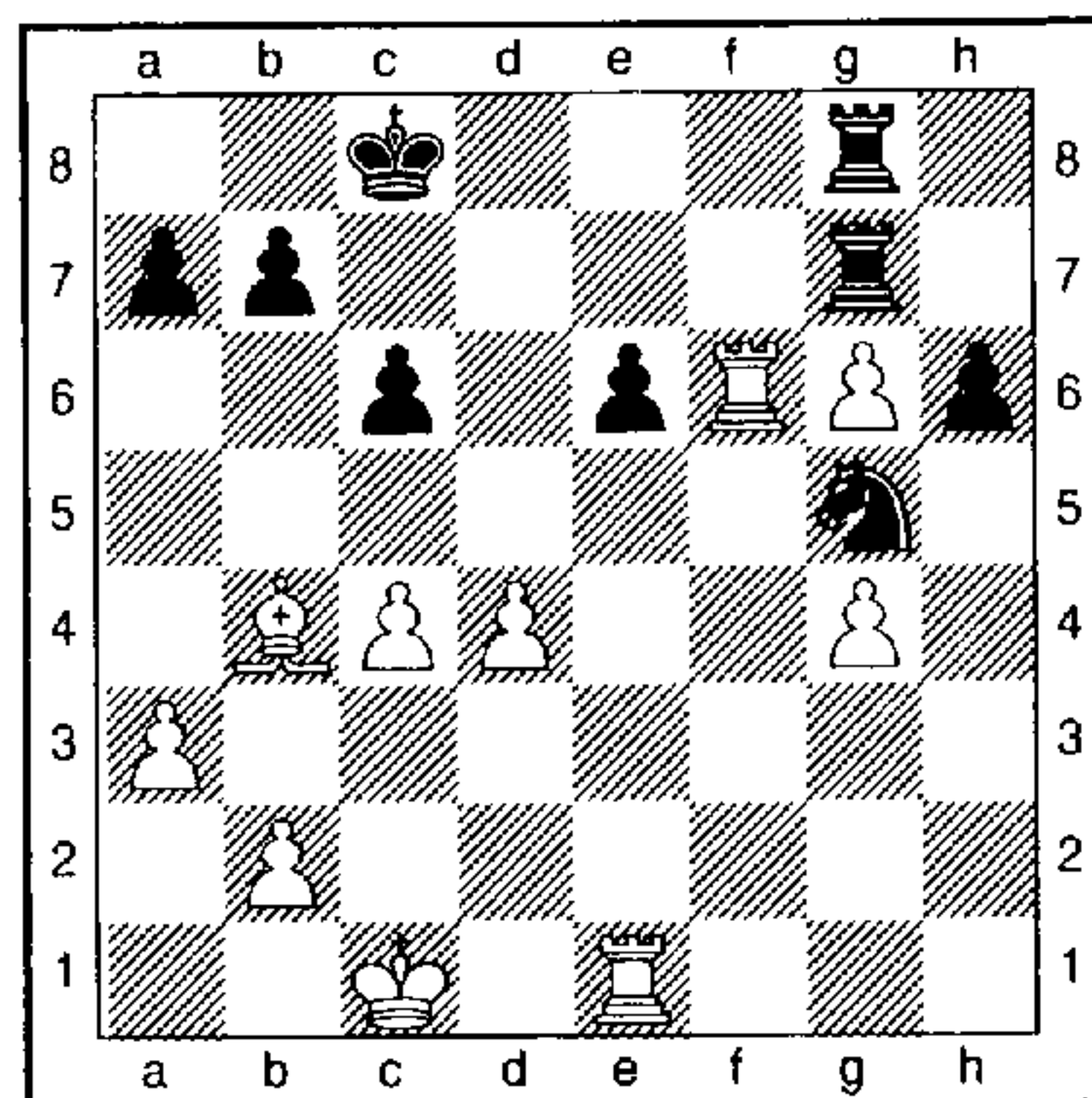
Black resigns.

Of course, I did not deserve to win, but Polugayevsky possibly deserved to lose. Firstly, for the fact that he got into time trouble (this, as Alekhine rightly commented in his time, is not a mitigating factor, but rather the opposite), and secondly, for underestimating the attack on his king with heavy pieces on the board.

The fact that a queen and rooks are capable of checkmating a king comes as no surprise – on the contrary, what is surprising is that the opponent should underestimate the danger. The following example shows that mating threats can also sometimes be created with much weaker forces.

Karpov – Pomar Olympiad, Nice 1974

168



Black will inevitably eliminate the g6 pawn, but in return White can win the h6 pawn. Let us see what happens in this case.

32 Rh1 Rxg6 33 Rxh6 Rxh6 34 Rxh6 . Now Black has a choice:

a) 34... Re4 35 Rxe6 Rxg4 . White remains a pawn up, but the opponent retains drawing chances, since all the pawns are on one wing, and in addition the pressure of the black rook along the 4th rank is unpleasant.
b) 34... Qf3 35 Rf6! (35 Rxe6 Rxg4 , and Black restores material equality) 35... Qxd4 36 Rf8+ Rxf8 37 Qxf8 . The outside passed pawn and the superiority of bishop over knight ensure White the better chances, but is it possible to convert them?

Anatoly Karpov chooses another plan. He does not aim for gain of material, but organises an attack on the king.

32 Rf1!? Rxg6
33 Rxg6 Rxg6

Now White could have considered 34 Qd6! ? Qd7 (34... Re4 35 Qe5) 35 c5! (but not 35 Qe5? Qe8) 35... Rg7 36 Qe5 (36 Rf8? Qf7) 36... Rf7 37 Rh1 .

34 Rf8+

The rook has broken into the opponent's

position. How serious are the threats that it has created? Was White correct to go in for this position, and would not 32 Rh1 have been preferable? It is not easy to answer even after a thorough analysis.

Generally speaking, I prefer to demonstrate examples in which there is a single, clear-cut and pretty solution. They create a strong aesthetic impression and therefore are remembered for a long time, which is important for a chess trainer. But in real life many situations are ambiguous, and different ways of interpreting them are permissible. The problem for a player is to sense where he has the greatest practical chances of success. And this depends on numerous factors: his own style of play and the style of his opponent, the experience of their previous meetings, his mood during the game, his tournament position, the amount of time left on the clocks, and so on. All these psychological factors (together, of course, with purely chess considerations, ideas and variations) can be weighed up only intuitively. This is difficult to learn – here only your own competitive experience can help, along with a careful analysis of the actions of other players in similar situations.

Karpov's games provide excellent material for thought. He has an exceptionally developed, perhaps stronger than anyone has ever had, purely playing instinct, an intuitive feeling of how to act in this or that situation. Analysing games played by him, we sometimes consider certain of his decisions to be debatable or even objectively incorrect, but each time we see that they are justified by the final result. It sometimes seems that success is achieved only thanks to incomprehensible mistakes by his opponent. But then similar impressions arise when one sees the sacrificial attacks of Mikhail Tal, the stout defence of Emanuel Lasker, or the unhurried handling of the endgame by Ulf Andersson... No, here it is not a question of luck, but of the exceptional skill of the

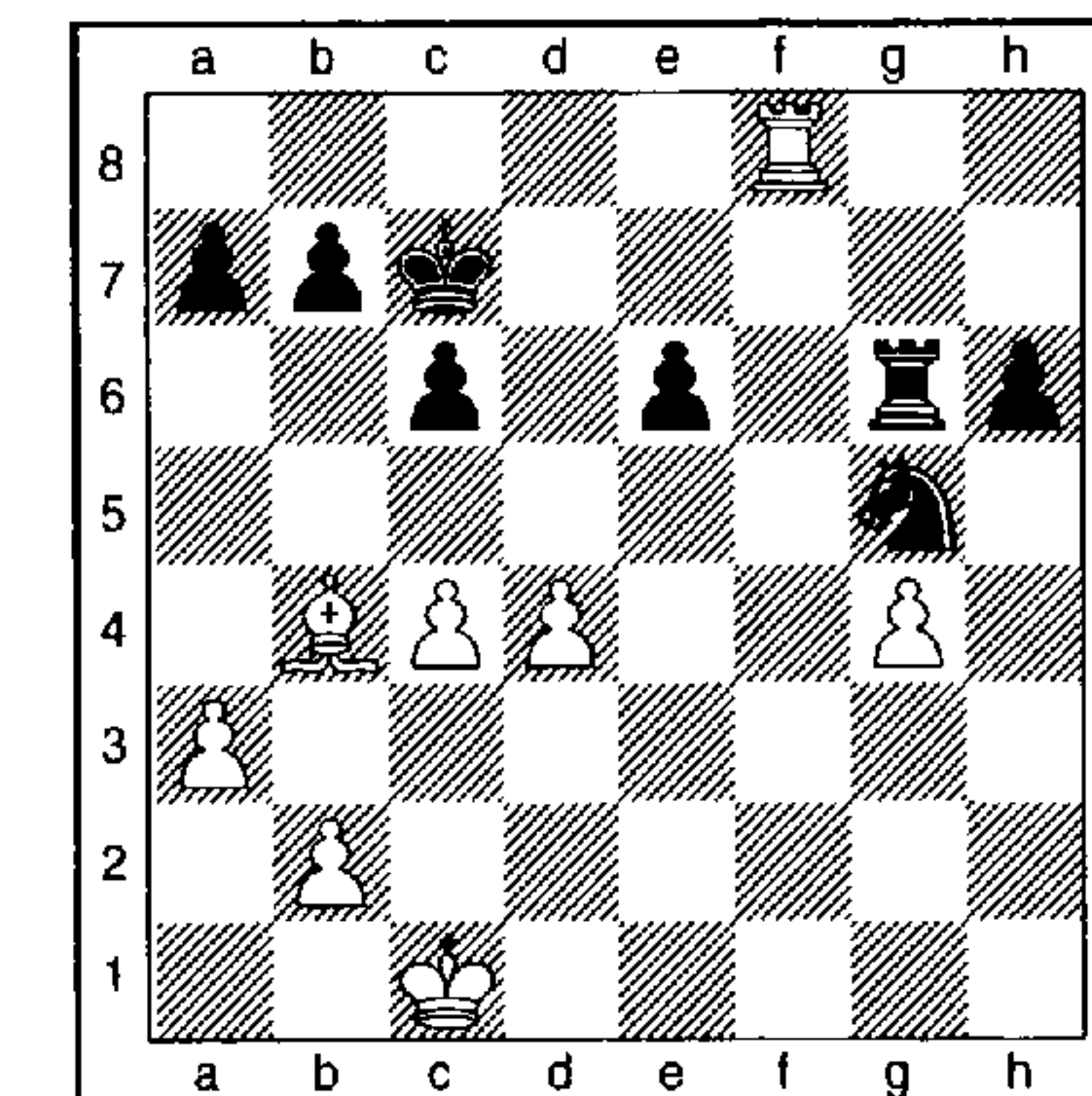
grandmaster, the ability to squeeze the maximum out of a position, and to set his opponent one new problem after another, thereby provoking him into making mistakes.

In my comments it is not possible to reconstruct the whole range of latent motifs, which gave rise to this or that decision, and besides they are not known to me – I was not present at the game, and I have not discussed it with Karpov. Perhaps against another opponent and in other circumstances he would have played differently. But there is one criterion of choice, rather important and typical, which I should nevertheless like to mention. **Experienced players often try to 'hold' the position, not fixing it and not sharply changing its pattern (and forcing events only when this provides obvious benefits). In indeterminate situations there is a higher probability of a mistake by the opponent. Here one of the most important principles of the technique of converting an advantage is displayed – 'do not hurry!'**

34 ... Qc7

34... Qd7 35 Qa5! b6 36 Qd2 , and the black pawns on the queenside become vulnerable.

169



Q 7-2. How should White continue?



The unhurried strengthening of the position by 35 ♖c2?! (or 35 ♖d2?!) is inappropriate here – Black attacks the g4 pawn by 35...♗e4. The strongest plan is to switch the bishop to the h2–b8 diagonal. But first the b6 square must be taken away from the king – inaccurate is 35 ♕d2?! ♗e4 36 ♜f7+ (36 ♕f4+ ♖b6) 36...♖b6 37 ♕e3 ♖a6 with the threat of 38...♞xg4.

35 ♕a5+! ♖b6

Not 35...♗d7? 36 ♞d8+ ♖e7 37 ♞a8 a6 38 ♞a7.

36 ♕d2! ♗e4

37 ♕f4+ ♖b7

38 ♞f7+

Each mini-trap such as 38...♖a6? 39 ♕b8 must be tried – the opponent may fall into one, if not the first, then the fifth.

'Such situations are quite common in chess. One has a slight advantage, but no obvious way to proceed. The correct approach is based on the theory of probability. One should create a series of small problems for the opponent. He has to find a good reply each time, or his position will slip downhill. Failing all else, one can always hope that time trouble will lend a helping hand.' (John Nunn).

38 ... ♖a8!

39 ♞f8+ ♖b7

40 ♖b4!

Karpov begins weaving a mating net. With the pawn at b5 there will be a threat of mate on b8.

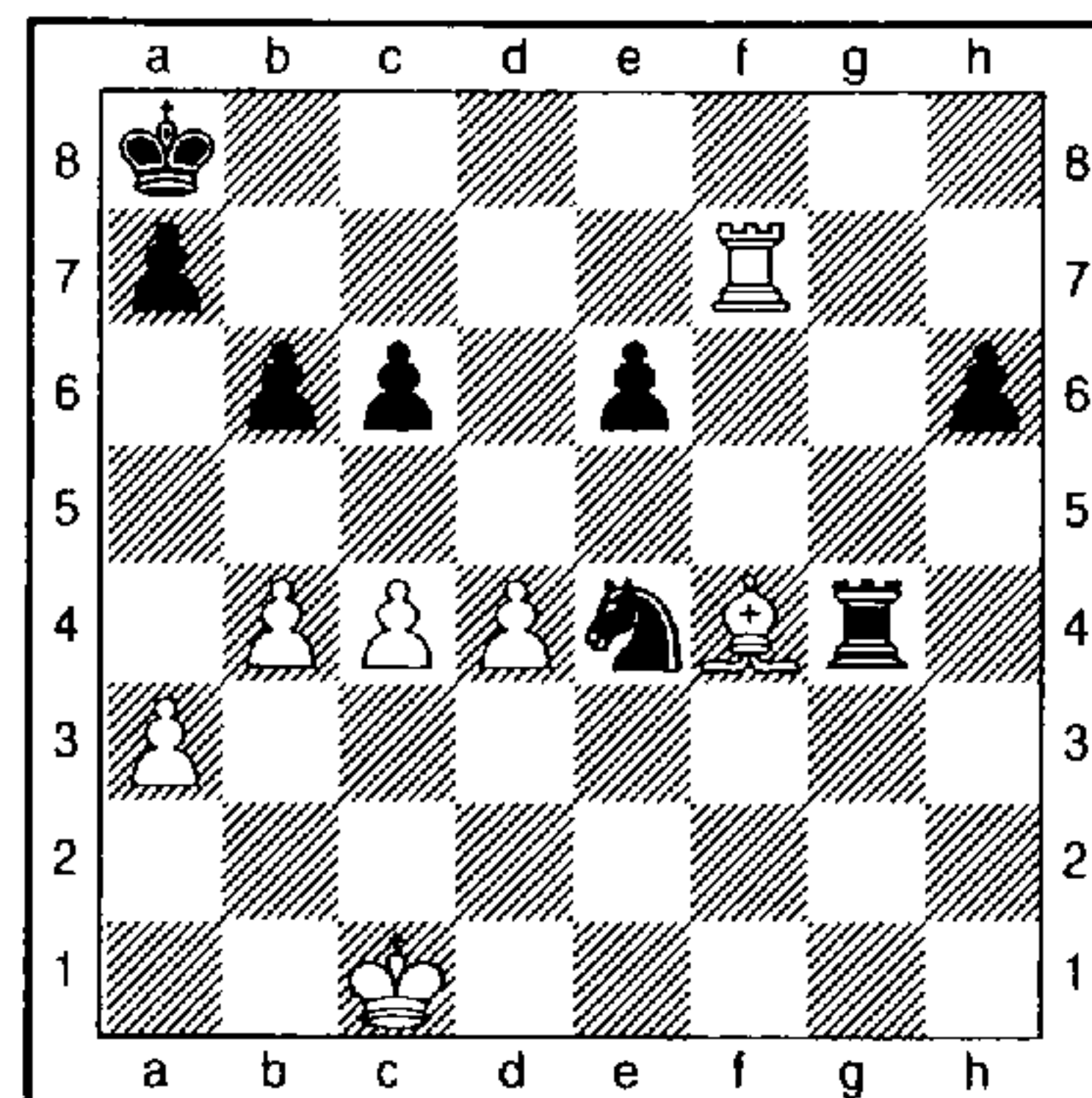
40 ... ♞xg4

41 ♞f7+ ♖a8

see next diagram

But how would you now play as White? The hasty 42 b5? leads only to the spoiling of the pawn formation, and there is no mate: 42...cxb5 43 cxb5 ♞g8 (43...a6), or 43 ♞f8+ ♖b7 44 cxb5 a5. This means that he has to choose between 42 a4 and 42 ♖c2.

170



To 42 a4 the opponent can reply 42...♗c3! A knight fork at e2 is threatened, and it cannot be parried by a king move, since the a4 pawn is also attacked. White is obliged to force events: 43 ♞f8+ ♖b7 44 ♞b8+ ♖a6 45 b5+ cxb5 46 cxb5+ ♖a5 (46...♗xb5 comes to roughly the same thing) 47 ♕d2 ♖xa4 48 ♕xc3 ♖xb5. How should the resulting position be evaluated? It is clear that White has the advantage, but is it sufficient for a win? I do not know.

When calculating such intense variations there is always the danger of overlooking some tactical detail, capable of changing the evaluation of the position. That is also the case here: 48...♖b3! (instead of 48...♖xb5) forces a draw, since White is unable to retain his d4 pawn: 49 ♞c8 ♞g1+ 50 ♖d2 ♞g2+ 51 ♖d1? ♞c2.

Now let us see what happens after 42 ♖c2?! White wants to play a3–a4 in a more favourable situation. In the event of 42...b5?! 43 c5 the c6 pawn becomes vulnerable. The only problem is that Black gains the opportunity to give a series of checks: 42...♞g2+! 43 ♖d3 ♗f2+ 44 ♖e3 (44 ♖e2 ♗h3+ and 45...♗xf4) 44...♗d1+ 45 ♖f3 ♞f2+, and after 46 ♖g3 to attack one of the white pawns: 46...♞c2 (or 46...♞a2).



Can you guess how Karpov played? Remembering the choice criteria, mentioned in the note to White's 34th move, it is not hard to assume that he made the king move. Indeed: after 42 a4 the opponent has an obvious reply, and subsequently too his moves will be easy to make – they are the only moves. On the other hand, the position after 42 ♖c2 is less determined, the counterplay beginning with a series of checks is not so obvious, and the opponent may not in fact find it.

Of course, a more primitive explanation of the move made by Karpov is permissible. He might not have noticed the win of a piece in the variation 42 a4 ♗c3 or he may have underestimated Black's counterplay after 42 ♖c2 ♞g2+. This sounds quite plausible, taking account of the fact that in such situations Karpov (like many other players) is not too inclined to delve into concrete variations.

42 ♖c2!? h5?

Arturo Pomar underestimates the dangers threatening his king, and unconcernedly advances a pawn on the opposite wing. We see that, if not from the theoretical, then from the practical viewpoint, Karpov, as usual, proved to be right.

43 a4! h4?

Amazingly careless. 43...♞g8 or 43...a6 was necessary. Now follows a brief reprisal

44 ♖d3! ♗g5

45 ♞f8+ ♖b7

46 ♞b8+ ♖a6

47 ♕d2! ♞g3+

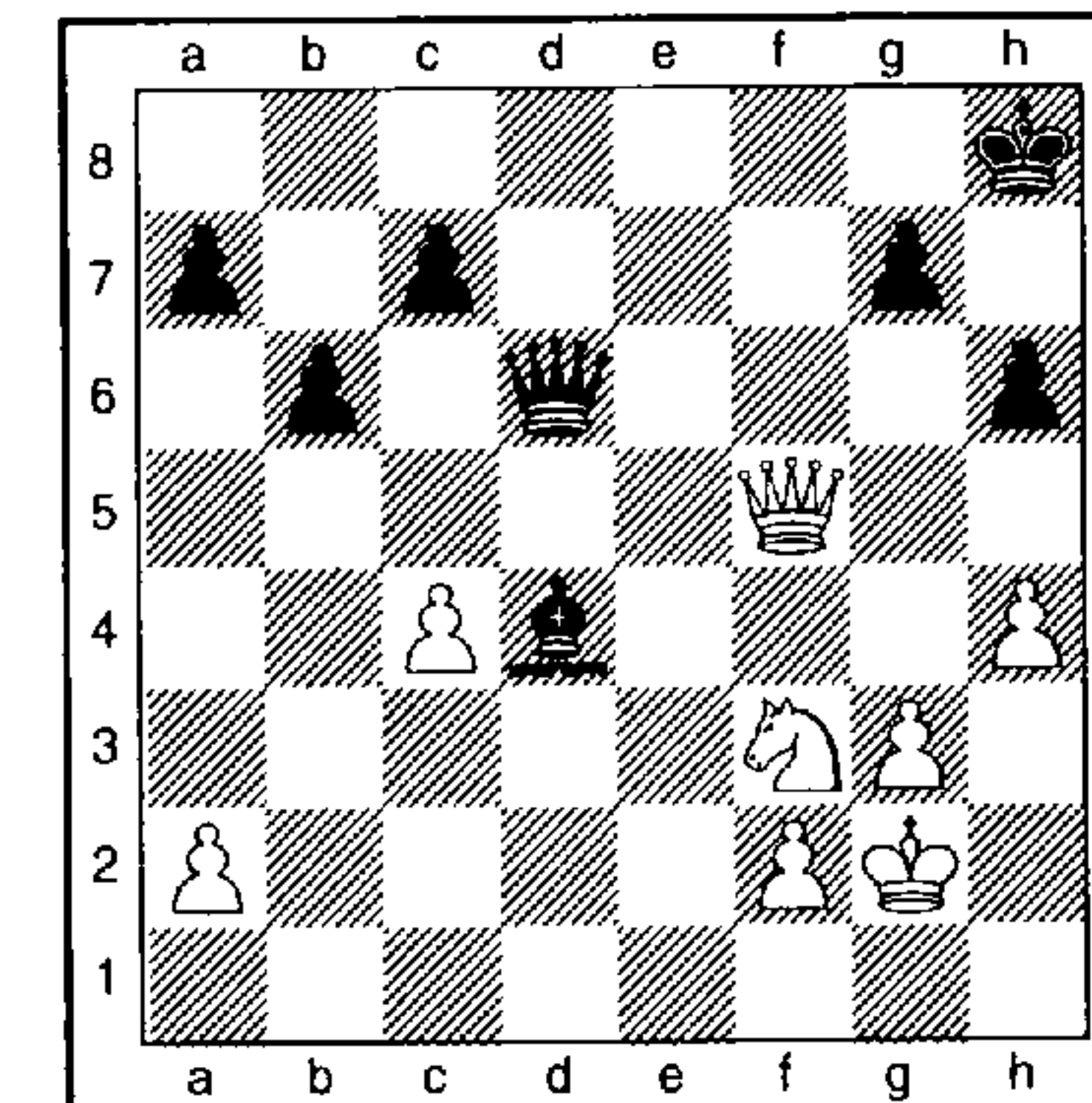
48 ♖c2

Black resigned in view of inevitable mate.

In the following position White had to make a difficult choice between winning a pawn at the cost of a temporary worsening of his own position, and playing for an attack with material equal.

Tseshkovsky – Dvoretzky
USSR Championship First League,
Minsk 1976

171



Q 7-3. How would you have continued as White?

During the game I was afraid of 31 g4!? I think that Karpov would have played this without much hesitation. The pawn goes to g5, depriving the bishop of the convenient f6 square and approaching the residence of the black king, which at the very first convenient opportunity the queen and knight (as is known, a highly dangerous duo!) are also ready to attack. Black can defend in various ways, and a sound defence probably exists, but he would have had to find it. With the abundance of possibilities and the lack of easily-calculated, forcing variations, it would be easy to go wrong.

Vitaly Tseshkovsky has a way of thinking that is unlike that of Karpov. He approached the position differently: before thinking about a rather abstract attack, he began checking concrete attempts to obtain tangible gains. Of course, he easily established that the straightforward 31 ♗xd4?! ♖xd4 32 ♖c8+ ♖h7 33 ♖xc7 leads to an immediate draw after 33...♖e4+ 34 ♖h2 ♖c2. But the double attack 31 ♖e4, threatening the



bishop and also a check at a8, appeared tempting to him.

In principle, it was possible to calculate accurately the consequences of this operation, but in the majority of similar cases this is not done (Tseshkovsky and I did not know how it would all end). Either time trouble is approaching, or you lack energy, which has been spent on the solving of difficult problems in the preceding play. Therefore players usually restrict themselves merely to checking short variations and rely on their intuition. But what did it suggest to you?

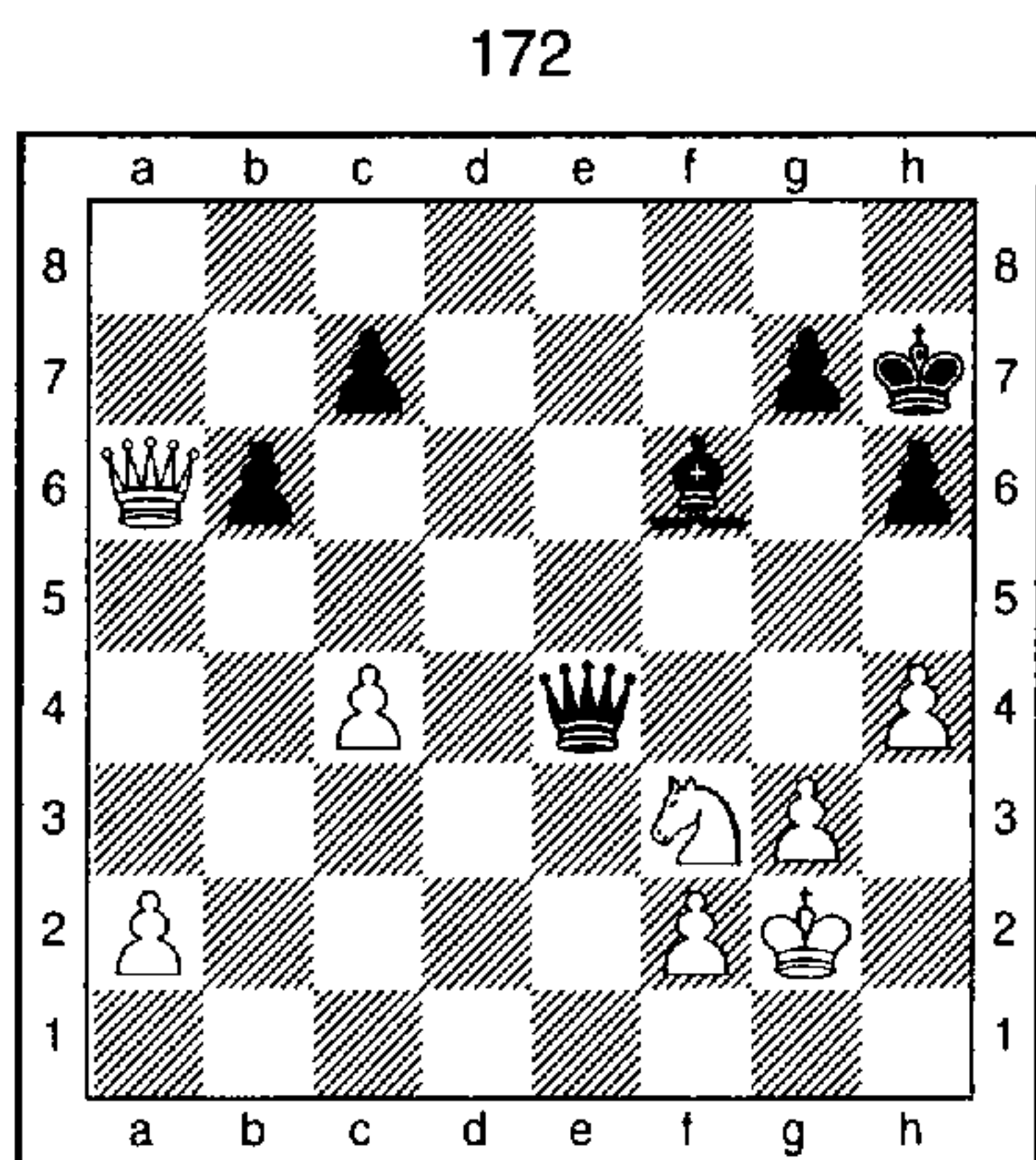
31 ♖e4 ♙f6
32 ♖a8+

It is now too late for 32 g4 – there is the convenient defence 32...♗e7!, and White's options are restricted, since the h4 pawn is attacked.

32 ... ♗h7
33 ♖xa7 ♖c6
34 ♖a6

Another instant, and the white queen will again come into play via b5. I will not be deceitful by asserting that I foresaw the elegant defence demonstrated in the game. But at this point I saw it.

34 ... ♖e4!



35 ♖b5

If 35 h5, then 35...♙e7! followed by 36...♙c5, and it is awkward for White to defend his f2 – after all, the pawns at c4, a2 and h5 also have to be covered.

35 ... ♙xh4!

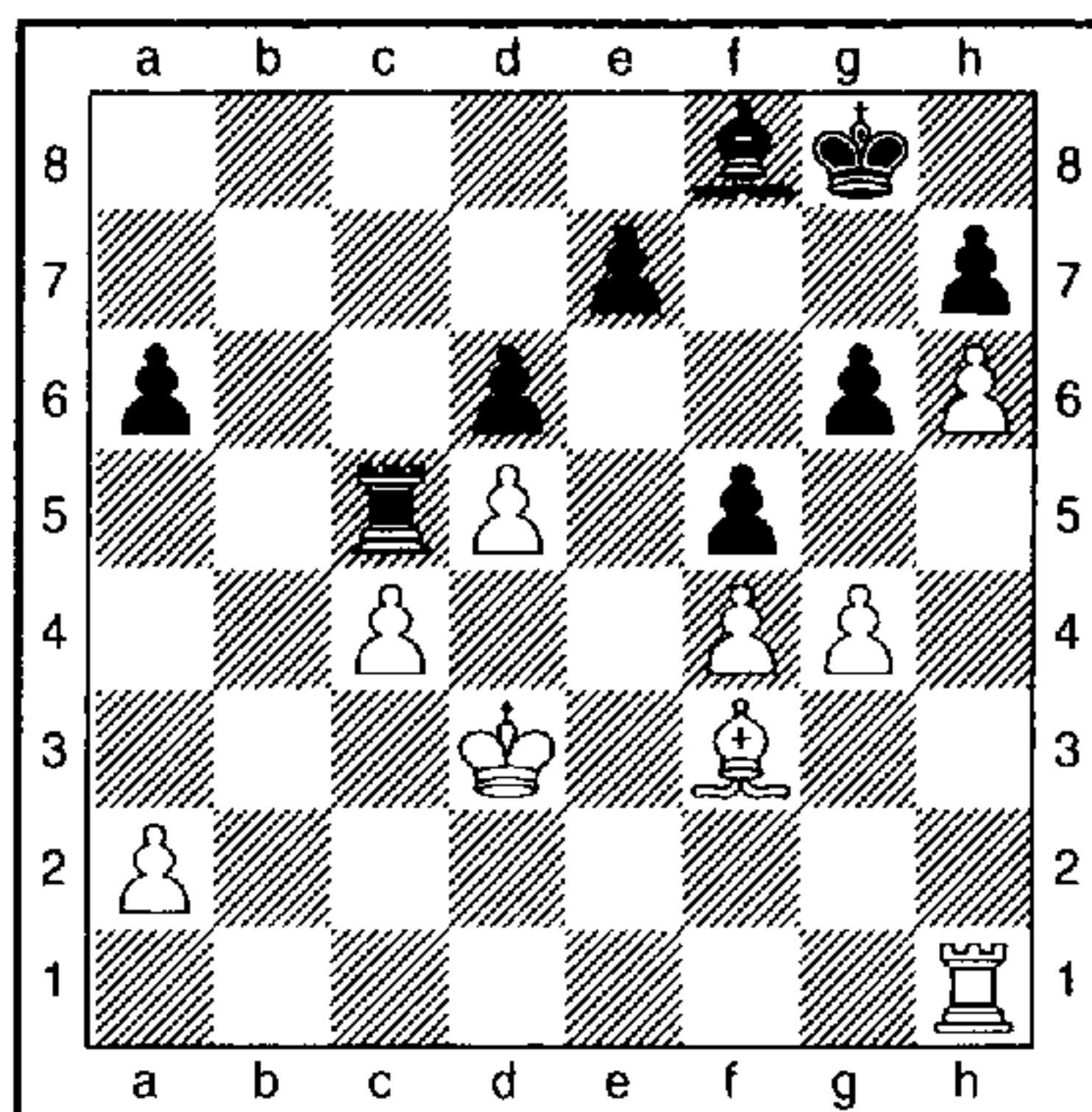
This is the whole point. After the removal of the dangerous h-pawn, the black king can breathe more freely – White's attack is not now a reality, and a draw becomes inevitable.

36 ♖d7 ♙e7
37 ♖xc7 ♙c5
38 ♖f4 ♖c2
39 ♗e5 ♙d6
40 ♖d4 ♙xe5
41 ♖xe5 ♖xc4

Draw.

It is hardly fair to call 31 ♖e4 a mistake. Imagine that White had played 31 g4, and I had found a sound defence (after all, it is quite probable that it exists). Then it would have been asked in perplexity why Tseshkovsky had rejected the win of the a7 pawn (in such cases commentators do not usually get as far as 35...♙xh4!). No, here it is a matter of intuitive feeling, as to which continuation promises the best practical chances, and where it will be hardest for the opponent to defend. Better than anyone, such things are sensed by Karpov!

E 7-1
173



White to move



Abundance of Possibilities

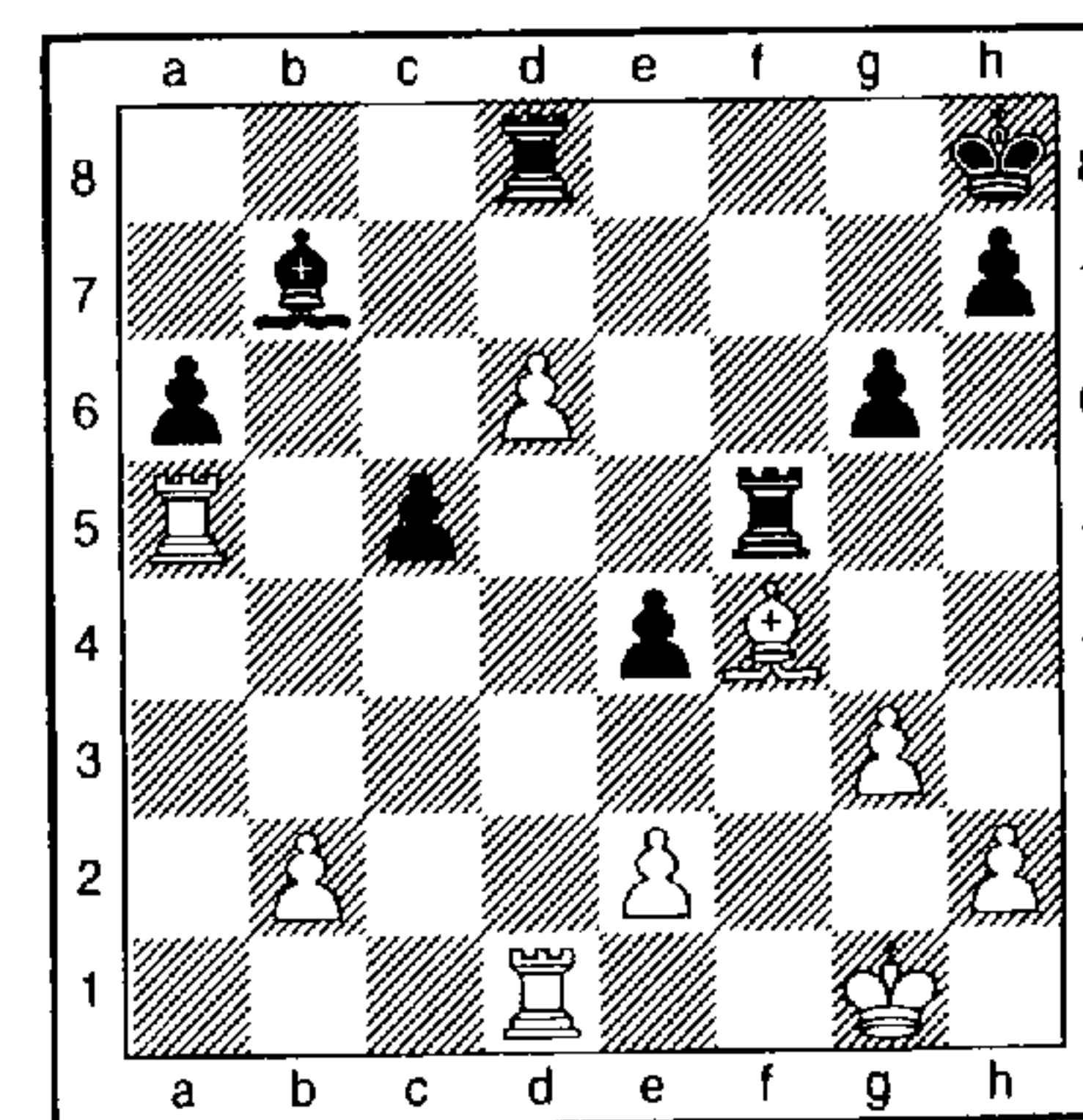
An experienced player often chooses a particular continuation, being not at all sure that it is the best of all those possible, but solely on the basis that it gives the best practical chances.

Benjamin Blumenfeld

The choice of a move in questionable situations, examined in the preceding chapter, was complicated by the fact that each possibility was insufficiently convincing, and did not guarantee success. In the examples offered below we encounter another type of difficulty in making a choice – when several continuations are highly promising and strong, and it is not easy to decide which of them deserves preference. Essentially it is a question of different approaches to the conversion of an advantage. Such examples provide good tests for determining the style of a player, and the typical way in which he handles a position.

Keres – Richter
Munich 1936

174



Q 7-4. What should White play?

White has a decisive positional advantage, but this does not mean that he can play 'any

old way' (such an attitude to the conversion of an advantage is completely unacceptable, and leads to the loss of many important points).

It is easy to find two variations, leading to almost the same position with an extra pawn for White:

a) 29 ♙e3 c4 30 ♙b6 ♖d7 31 ♖xf5 gxf5 32 ♙c5(c7) ♗g7 (33 ♖f1 was threatened) 33 ♖d4 ♙c6 34 ♖xc4 ♙b5 35 ♖c2.

b) 29 h4 ♗g7 30 ♙g5! (weaker is 30 ♗f2 ♗f7 31 ♗e3 ♗e6) 30...♖d7 31 ♙e7 c4 (31...♗f7 32 ♖f1) 32 ♖xf5 gxf5 33 ♖d4 ♙c6 34 ♖xc4 ♙b5 35 ♖c2.

It seems to me that, after overcoming certain technical difficulties, White should win. However, we should not stop at the plans that immediately come to mind – there are very probably also other possibilities.

29 e3!, for example, is very strong. 30 g4 is threatened, if 29...h5 there follows 30 h3, while if 29...c4, then 30 ♖xf5 gxf5 31 ♖d4, and White eliminates the c-pawn in a more advantageous version compared with the variations examined above.

In playing this, it is essential to reckon with the opponent's only active resource – the sacrifice of the exchange: 29...g5 30 g4 ♖xf4 31 exf4 gxf4. But, as a simple calculation shows, Black's connected passed pawns are not dangerous: 32 ♖xc5 e3 33 ♖c7 e2 34 ♙e1 ♙f3 35 d7 ♗g7 36 h3 and 37 ♗f2 (or immediately 36 ♗f2 ♙xg4 37 ♖g1 h5 38 h3) with an easy win.

I will permit myself a slight digression. In 1973 in Moscow a match took place between three teams from our country: first, second and youth teams. In this match I



played two draws with Keres. He, of course, was playing for the first team, and I for the youth team. One of the games was unusually fascinating (the grandmaster attacked and sacrificed, and I successfully defended), while the other, by contrast, was short and tedious. To this day I remember how, during a joint analysis of the second one, which appeared completely uninteresting, Paul Petrovich showed one new possibility after another, which he had considered during the game. Later, when I studied his games, I realised that this was no accident. Keres always endeavoured to find as many candidate moves as possible, and only then embarked on a specific calculation. Such a way of thinking sometimes led to the dividing of his attention onto continuations which might have been rejected on general grounds, but on the other hand it often helped the grandmaster to discover completely unexpected possibilities.

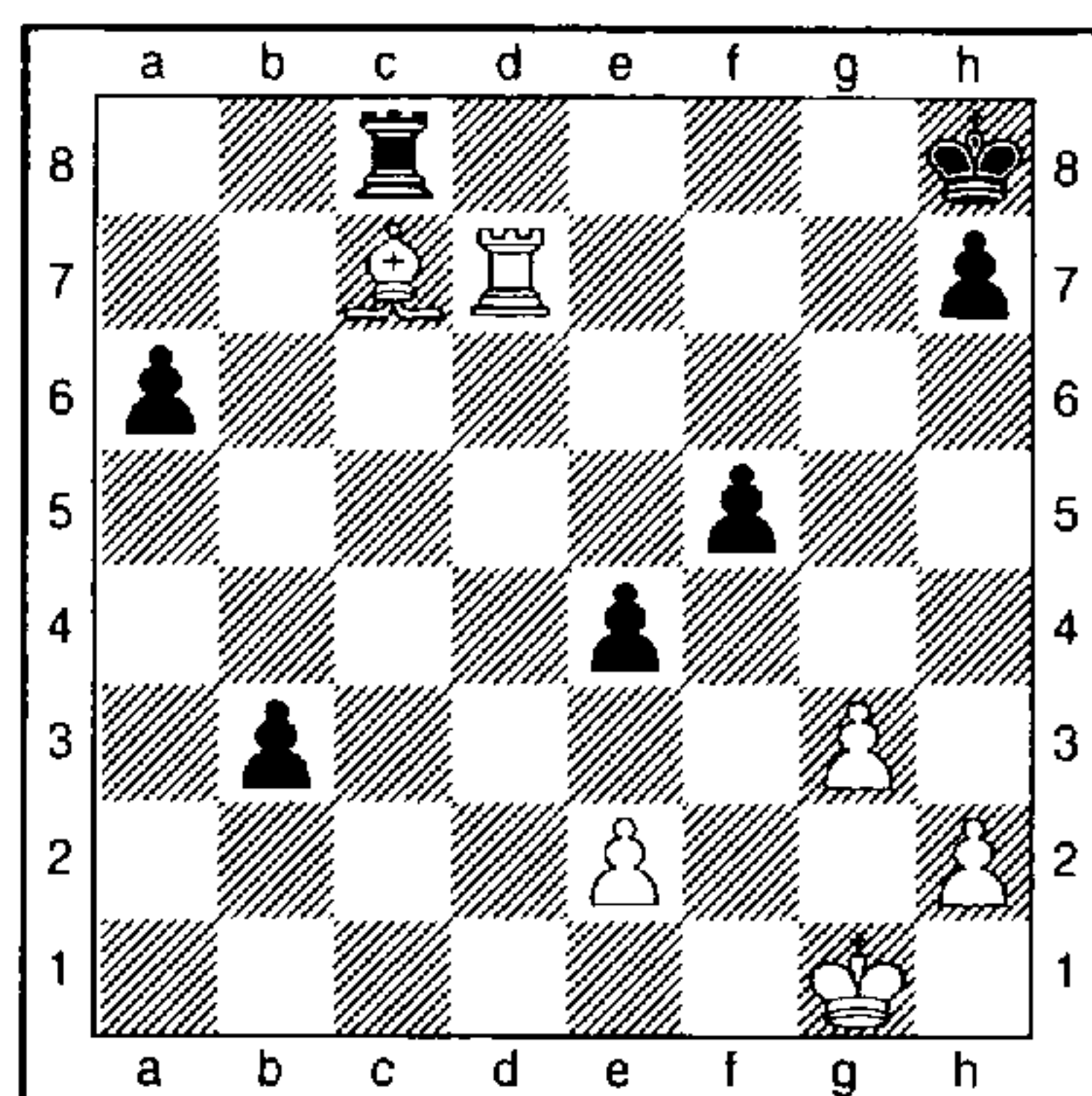
That is also the case here: the search for resources hidden in the position enabled Keres to find a pretty combination.

29 **b4!** **cxb4**
 30 **xf5** **gxf5**
 31 **d7** **xc6**
 32 **xc1!** **xd7**
 33 **d1** **b3**
 34 **xc7**

It is important to maintain control of the b8 square. Incorrect was 34 **g5?** **b8** 35 **xd7** **b2**.

34 ... **c8**
 35 **xd7**

175



Bad is 35...**b2?** 36 **e5+** and 37 **xb2**. White has won a piece and should win, although the position still retains some sharpness.

35 ... **g8**
 36 **e5** **c5**

The rook is aiming for b5. As Keres pointed out, other tries are no better: 36...**c2** 37 **b7** (37 **f2** is also strong) 37...**xe2** 38 **xb3**, or 36...**a5** 37 **g7+!** **f8** 38 **a7** **c2** 39 **xa5** **b2** 40 **xb2** **xb2** 41 **xf5+** and 42 **f2**.

37 **g7+!**

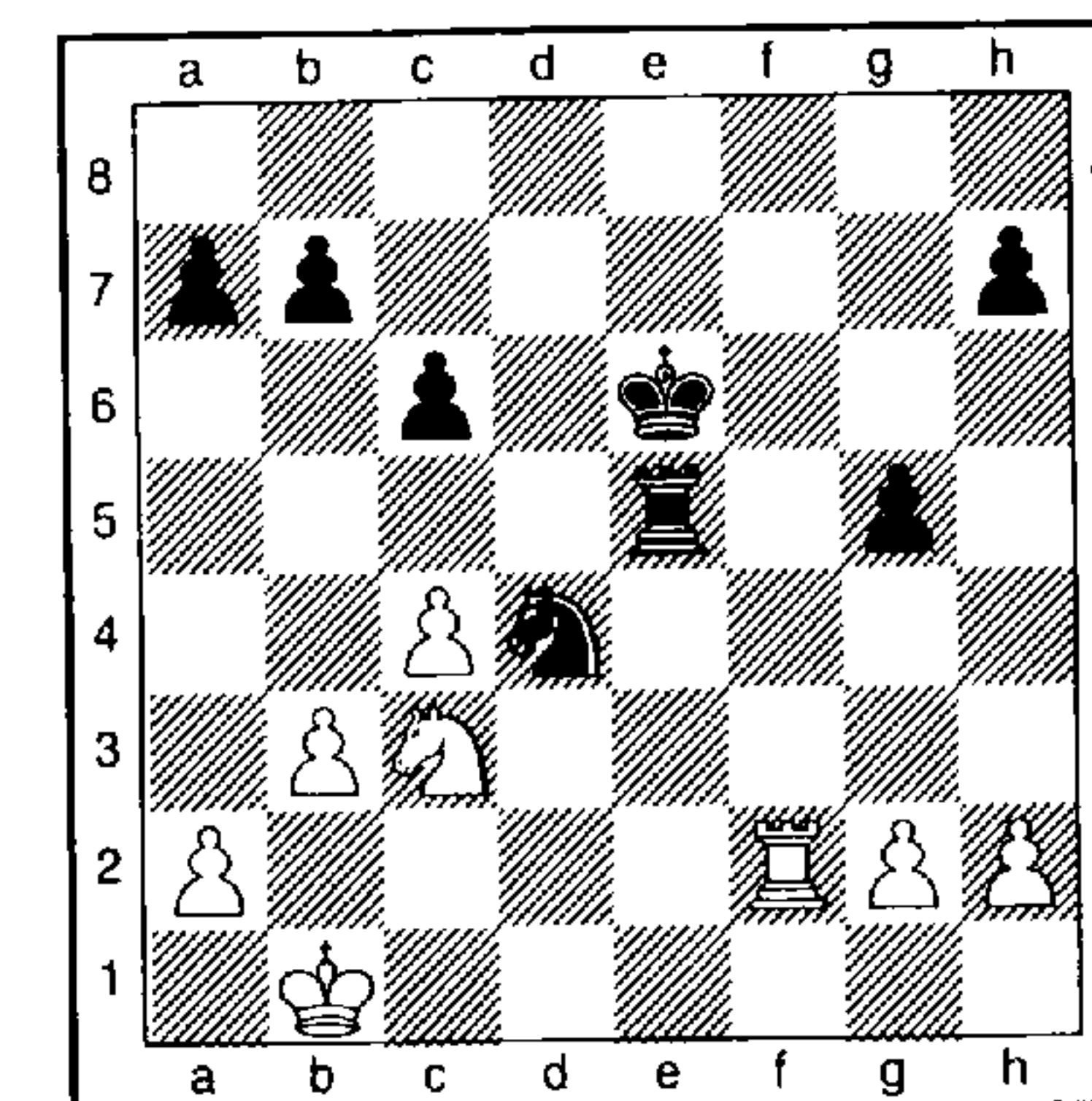
Again tactics! '37 **d4** **b5** 38 **b2** was, apparently, also good enough to win, but in this case Black could still have created some counterplay. White forces the exchange of rooks and takes play into an ending with a bishop for two pawns. Here, it is true, quite accurate calculation is required, but this ending is won almost by force' (Keres).

37 ... **f8**
 37...**h8?** 38 **f6!**
 38 **d6+** **xg7**
 39 **xc5** **f7**
 40 **a3** **e6**
 41 **f2** **d5**



Stein – Hort
 Biel 1981

176



42 **e3** **c4**
 43 **d2**

43 **g4!?** **fxg4** 44 **xe4** **c3** 45 **f4** is also strong.

43 ... **e3+**

Otherwise 44 **e3**.

44 **xe3**

Again Keres chooses the way that demands specific calculation. 44 **c1** **c3** 45 **b2+** was perfectly possible.

44 ... **c3**
 45 **f4** **a5**
 46 **g4!**

In this way White wins an important tempo compared with 46 **xf5?**.

46 ... **fxg4**
 47 **e4** **a4**
 48 **e5** **b2**
 49 **xb2+** **xb2**
 50 **e6** **a3**
 51 **e7** **a2**
 52 **e8** **a1**
 53 **h8+** **a2**
 54 **xa1+** **xa1**
 55 **xg4** **b2**
 56 **g5** **c3**
 57 **h6** **d4**
 58 **xh7** **e5**
 59 **g6**

Black resigns. His king is just a little too late. In the aesthetic sense, the way of converting the advantage found by Keres was certainly superior to all the others. It was also strong objectively. But from the practical viewpoint I am not sure how advisable it was. I think that few modern players would have taken that course. Firstly, it was not so easy to discover. In addition, in the calculation of the combination or in the evaluation of its unusual final position, a mistake might have crept in. The alternative ways were easier to find and check.

Q 7-5. It is Black to move. How would you continue?

The active placing of Black's pieces gives him a positional advantage. But it is much more fragile than in the previous example: the slightest inaccuracy, and it will disappear. Which is what in fact happened in the game: 28...**h5?** 29 **c1!** **f5** 30 **xf5** **xf5** 31 **e4** **g4** 32 **c5+** **e5** 33 **xb7** **e3**. Draw.

A highly important principle in the conversion of an advantage is the optimal restriction of the opponent's possibilities, the suppression of any counterplay, of any useful operations aimed at improving his position. In order to successfully put this principle into effect, it is necessary to use 'prophylactic thinking'.

Let us ask ourselves what White wants. His choice is very restricted. Attacking the knight is pointless: 29 **d2** **e1+** 30 **b2** **e5**. Obviously the only sensible operation is to play the king to the centre: **b1-c1-d2-d3**. It is this that should be prevented.

28 ... **e1+!**
 29 **b2** **h5**



Having forestalled the opponent's intentions, Black now calmly strengthens his position. It is not easy for White to defend. For example, if 30 ♖f8 there follows 30...♗g1 31 ♖f2 ♖e5 32 ♗e2 ♗xe2 33 ♖xe2+ ♖d4, and the dominating position of Black's king guarantees him a great advantage in the rook ending.

A quite different way of handling the position is also possible. The black king is much more active than its white opponent, which is especially perceptible in a pawn or knight ending (Mikhail Botvinnik once remarked: 'A knight ending is the same as a pawn ending'). Artur Yusupov suggested 28...♖xf5!?. White replies 29 ♖xf5 (29 ♖d2 ♖f1+ 30 ♖b2 ♖e5 is unfavourable for him).

Now Black would like to take with the knight, but after 29...♗xf5 30 ♗e4! g4 31 ♗c5+! (weaker is 31 ♗g5+ ♖e5 32 ♗xh7 ♗e3 33 ♖c1 ♗xg2 34 ♖d2 ♖f4 35 ♖e2 ♗h4 36 ♖f2 ♗f3 37 ♖g2 ♗e1+ 38 ♖f1 ♗d3 39 ♗f8 ♖f5! with the threat of 40...♗c1) 31...♖e5 32 ♗xb7 it is doubtful whether Black can win.

This means that he must play 29...♖xf5!, intending 30...♖e5 and 31...♗f5. Events can develop roughly as follows: 30 ♖c1 ♖e5! 31 ♖d2 ♗f5 32 ♖d3 (if 32 ♖e2 or 32 g3, then 32...♖d4 is strong) 32...♗h4 33 g3 ♗f3 34 h3 ♗g1 35 h4 gxh4 36 gxh4, and now 36...♖f4, 36...♗f3 or 36...h5.

The concluding position of this variation is highly promising for Black. But is it won? Could not White have played more accurately somewhere earlier? It is clear that here everything hangs by a thread: the slightest additional touch, strengthening the defence, and the game ends in a draw.

But it is also possible to try and strengthen Black's play. It is noticeable that he delayed slightly – his knight did not immediately end up on the necessary square f5. Of course, it would be desirable to take on f5 with the knight. It is this that explains the recommendation of Vadim Zviagintsev: 28...h6! (at

first sight a mysterious move, wouldn't you agree!) 29 ♖c1 ♖f5. After 30 ♖xf5 ♗xf5 31 ♖d2 (31 ♗e4 is now pointless – the g5 pawn is defended) 31...♗h4 Black should win.

However, the exchange on f5 is not obligatory – 30 ♗d1! (but not 30 ♗e4 ♖e5) is much more accurate. For example, 30...♖xf2 31 ♗xf2 ♗f5 32 ♗d3, intending 33 ♗c5+ or 33 ♖d2 ♗h4 34 ♗e1. Little is changed by 30...♖e5 31 ♖d2 ♖xf2+ 32 ♗xf2 ♗f5 33 ♖d3, since if 33...♗h4 there is 34 ♗g4+ or 34 g3 followed by ♗g4+. We see that the pawn on h6 is far from ideally placed.

Even so, Zviagintsev's idea is logical – simply it must be put into effect somewhat differently. I suggest 28...b6! (another mysterious move!) 29 ♖c1 ♖f5! White's position is difficult: 30 ♖xf5 ♗xf5 or 30 ♗d1 ♖xf2 31 ♗xf2 ♗f5 32 ♗e4 h6, threatening either to attack the pawns (33...♗h4 or 33...♗e3), or to penetrate with the king onto the 4th rank.

So, fundamentally different approaches to the exploitation of the advantage are possible. Which one appeals most to you? The first is purely technical (restricting of the opponent's possibilities, the unhurried strengthening of the position), it does not demand deep calculation, and therefore it allows time and effort to be conserved. The second approach, transposing into a knight ending, is much more concrete and requires careful checking. The quiet pawn move on the queenside, preparing the exchange of rooks in the most favourable version, can be found only as a result of a thorough delving into the secrets of the position.

At the start of the chapter 'I seek a win' I mentioned the dual character of the process of converting an advantage: on the one hand, accuracy and good technique are required, and on the other hand the ability somewhere to cut short the manoeuvring, and to find and calculate a specific way to

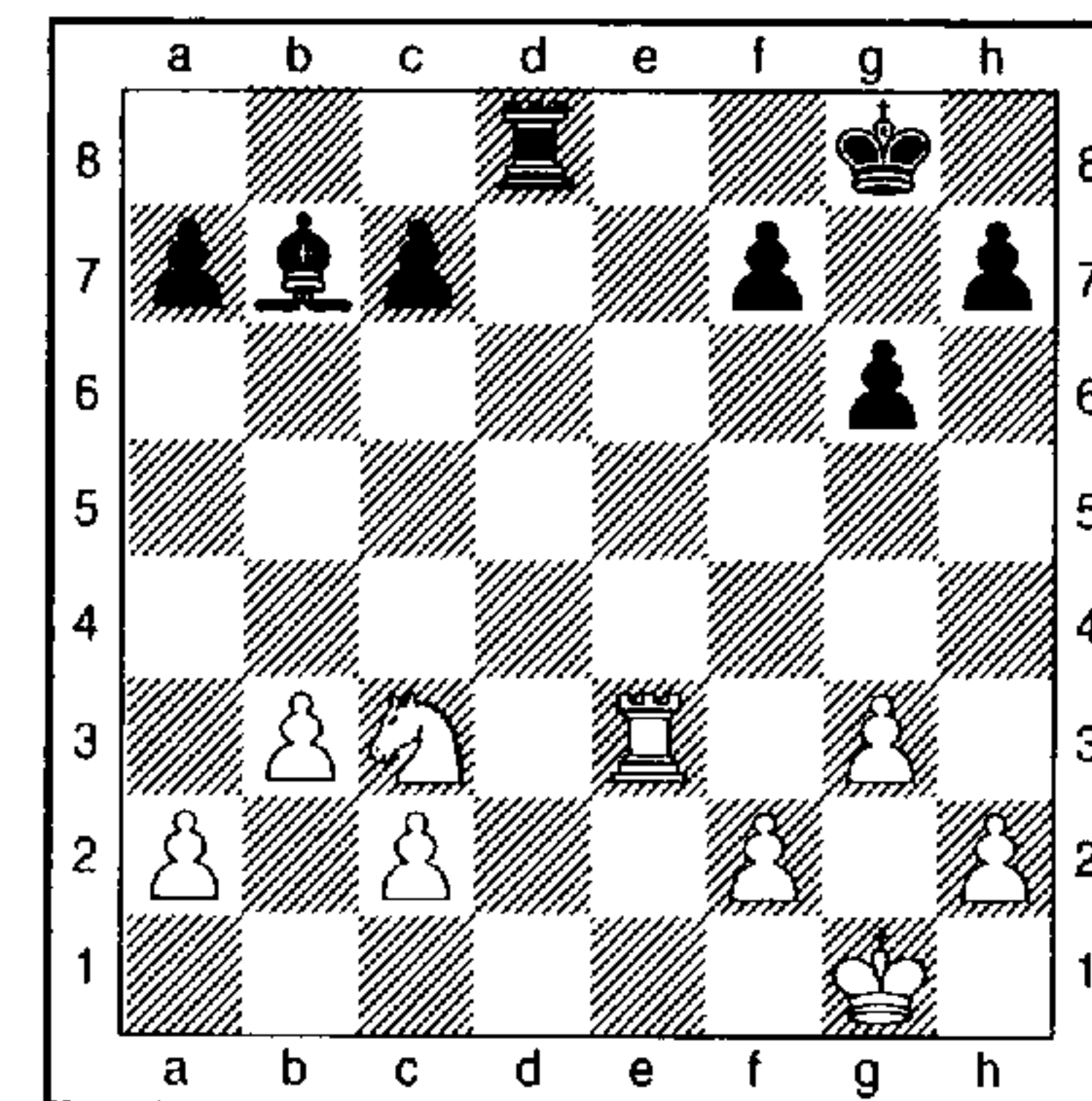


the goal. It is not easy to sense which attitude is more correct at a particular moment. In the given example both approaches seem equivalent to me, but this does not often happen.

And one more comment. The exchange of rooks changes sharply the pattern of the position and the character of the subsequent play. **The transformation of a position is one of the subtle and difficult procedures in the conversion of an advantage. What is required here is flexible and dynamic thinking, precise evaluation (often it is not easy to weigh up whether the change in the position is advantageous to us) and, as the above example demonstrates, an accurate calculation of variations.**

Miles – Ristic
Belgrade 1988

177



Q 7-6. What should White play?

White is a healthy pawn to the good, and the black pawns on the queenside are separated. It is clear that the position is won. It is necessary only to eliminate the opponent's counter-chances, associated with the insecure position of the white king and the activity of the enemy rook. It would be good

to transfer the king to e1. Thanks to a tactical subtlety, this can be done immediately.

23 ♖f1! ♖d2
24 ♖e2! ♖a6
25 ♖e1!

Black has no great hopes of saving the game.

This little combination solves all White's problems. But without it, for him to make progress is not so easy. Incorrect, for example, is 23 ♖e7 ♖f3 (less good is 23...♖d2 24 ♖e2) 24 ♖xc7? ♖d2, or 23 ♖e2? ♖a6 (23...♖f3), or 23 ♖d3? ♖e8 – in every case the opponent gains counterplay. Even so, it is hard to imagine that there is only one way of converting the extra pawn. There must surely also be other paths to the goal, even if they are slightly less convincing. Let us suppose that we have not noticed the combination. Then 23 b4! can be recommended, preparing to bring the king to the centre. After 23...♖d2 24 ♖e2 ♖d4 25 a3 White has to reckon with ...c7–c5 and ...a7–a5 in one version or another, but this hardly eases Black's position.

Now let us see what happened in the game.

23 f4?! ♖a6

Otherwise 24 ♖f2.

Q 7-7. What would you play now?

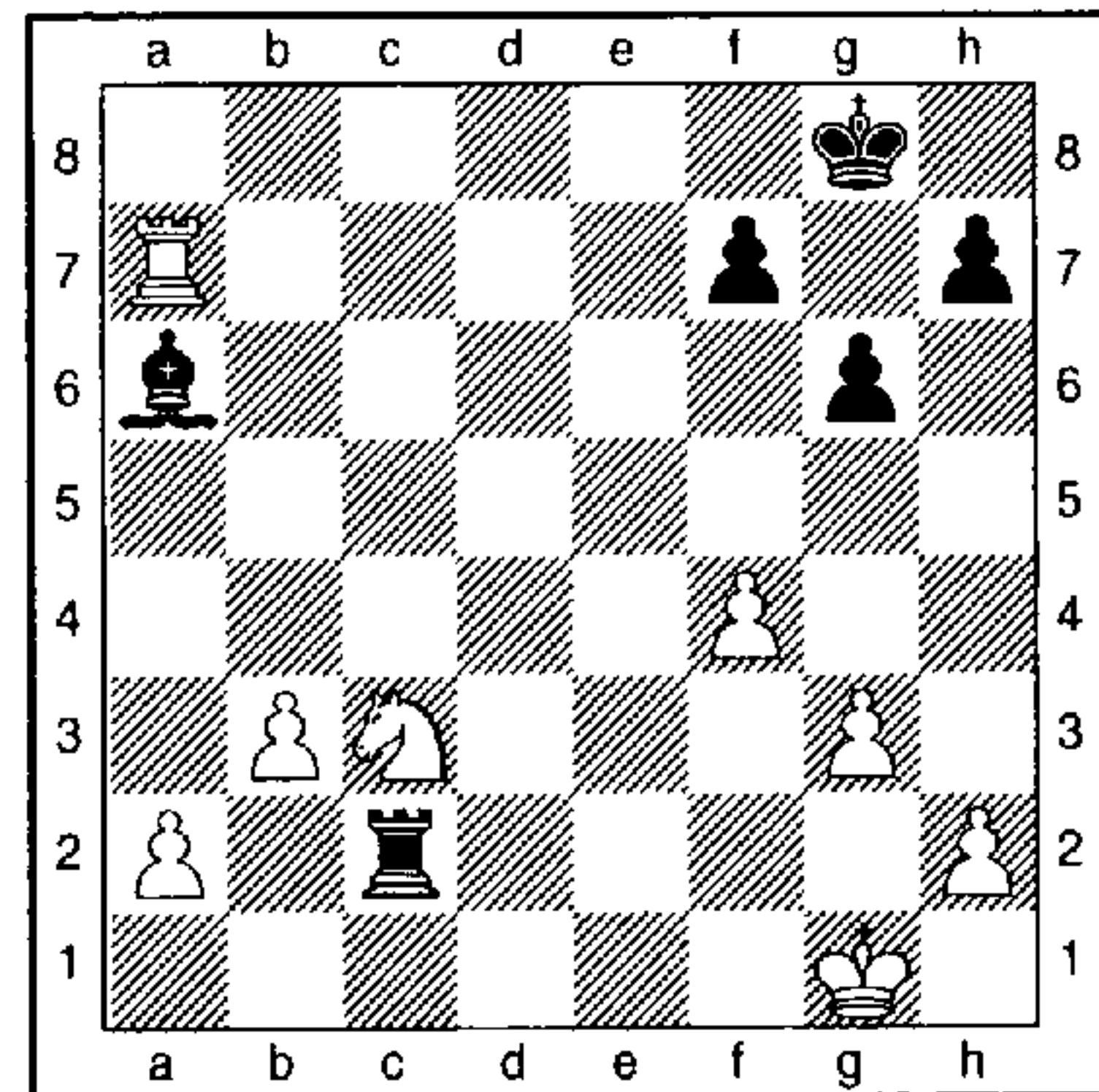
Tony Miles rejected 24 ♗e4 because of 24...♖d1+ 25 ♖f2 ♖f1+! 26 ♖g2 ♖c1! He chose the cautious 24 ♖f3, intending 25 ♖f2 and 26 ♖g2 followed by bringing the king to the centre. The drawback to his plan is its slowness – Black gains time to improve his position.

It often happens that, after missing a clear and comparatively simple win, we can correct our mistake only by deciding on a risky combination or on forcing play, demanding deep and accurate calculation. This thought, put forward by Tarrasch, is discussed in detail in Volume 2 of this



series, 'Tactical Play'. As applied to the present game, this signifies that the active try 24 ♖e7! ♖d2 25 ♖xc7 ♖xc2 26 ♖xa7 should be examined. White does after all win a second pawn. Of course, the opponent's counterplay, associated with the fact that the white king is cut off on the back rank, cannot be underestimated, and therefore the calculation must be continued.

178



Now ...♗d3 suggests itself (immediately or after a couple of rook checks). But after 26...♖c1+ 27 ♖f2 ♖c2+ 28 ♖e1 ♗d3 the capture of the knight is not threatened in view of 30 ♖d2, and therefore the pawn can be removed from attack by 29 h4! If instead 26...♗d3, then 27 ♖d5. Black cannot reply 27...♗e4 because of 28 ♖f6+, and 27...♗f5 28 ♖e7+ or 27...♖g7 28 ♖b4! ♖c1+ 29 ♖f2 is also bad. Finally, 27...♖d2 (or 27...♖b2) is strongly met by 28 ♖f6+ ♖g7 29 ♖e8+ ♖f8 30 ♖d6, or 28 g4!? ♖g7 29 g5, threatening a mating attack: ♖f6 and ♖a8. In all these variations White should win.

However, Black has a better defence: 26...♗c8! with the idea of 27...♗h3. Now 27 ♖e4 parries the threat: 27...♗h3? 28 ♖g5. The opponent replies 27...h6, 27...♗e6 or 27...♗f5, maintaining the tension. For example, 27...♗f5!? 28 ♖f2 (after 28 ♖g5!?

h6!? 29 ♖xf7 ♗h3 30 ♖xh6+ ♖f8 Black will probably regain a couple of the four(!) missing pawns, retaining hopes of saving the game) 28...♖b2 29 g4 ♗b1 30 g5 ♖f8! (but not 30...♗xa2? 31 ♖a8+ ♖g7 32 ♖g4, and the king is in a mating net), or 30 ♖a8+ ♖g7 31 g5 f5! As you see, despite White's great material advantage, the outcome remains unclear.

Grandmaster Viorel Bologan pointed out an important way of improving White's play in this variation. Instead of 26 ♖xa7 he does better to choose 26 ♖d5! Then neither 26...♖xc7 27 ♖xc7 followed by 28 ♖f2, nor 26...♖xa2 27 ♖xa7 (threatening 28 ♖b4) 27...♖a1+ 28 ♖f2 ♖f1+ 29 ♖e3 (29 ♖g2 ♖a1 with the threat of 30...♗f1+) 29...♖e1+ 30 ♖d4 promises Black any real chances of a draw.

24 ♖f3 ♖g7
25 ♖f2 h5!

Unfortunately, 25...♖f6 is bad in view of 26 ♖e4+ followed by 27 ♖c5 or 27 ♖d2.

26 ♖g2 ♗b7+
27 ♖f1 h4

But here it made sense to play 27...♖f6 28 ♖e1 ♖f5, since after 29 ♖d2 ♖xd2 30 ♖xd2 ♖g4 White would have lost the h2 pawn. The advantage would still have remained on his side, but it is not easy to judge whether it is sufficient for a win. It would have been all the more difficult to do this when determining the character of the forthcoming play on the 24th move, so that there we were dealing with another problem of the practically insoluble type.

28 ♖e1 ♖f6

28...hxg3 29 hxg3 ♖h8 came into consideration.

29 ♖d2 ♖xd2

Here too it was not yet too late to avoid the exchange of rooks. Generally speaking, a rook and bishop in an open position are usually a little stronger than rook and knight



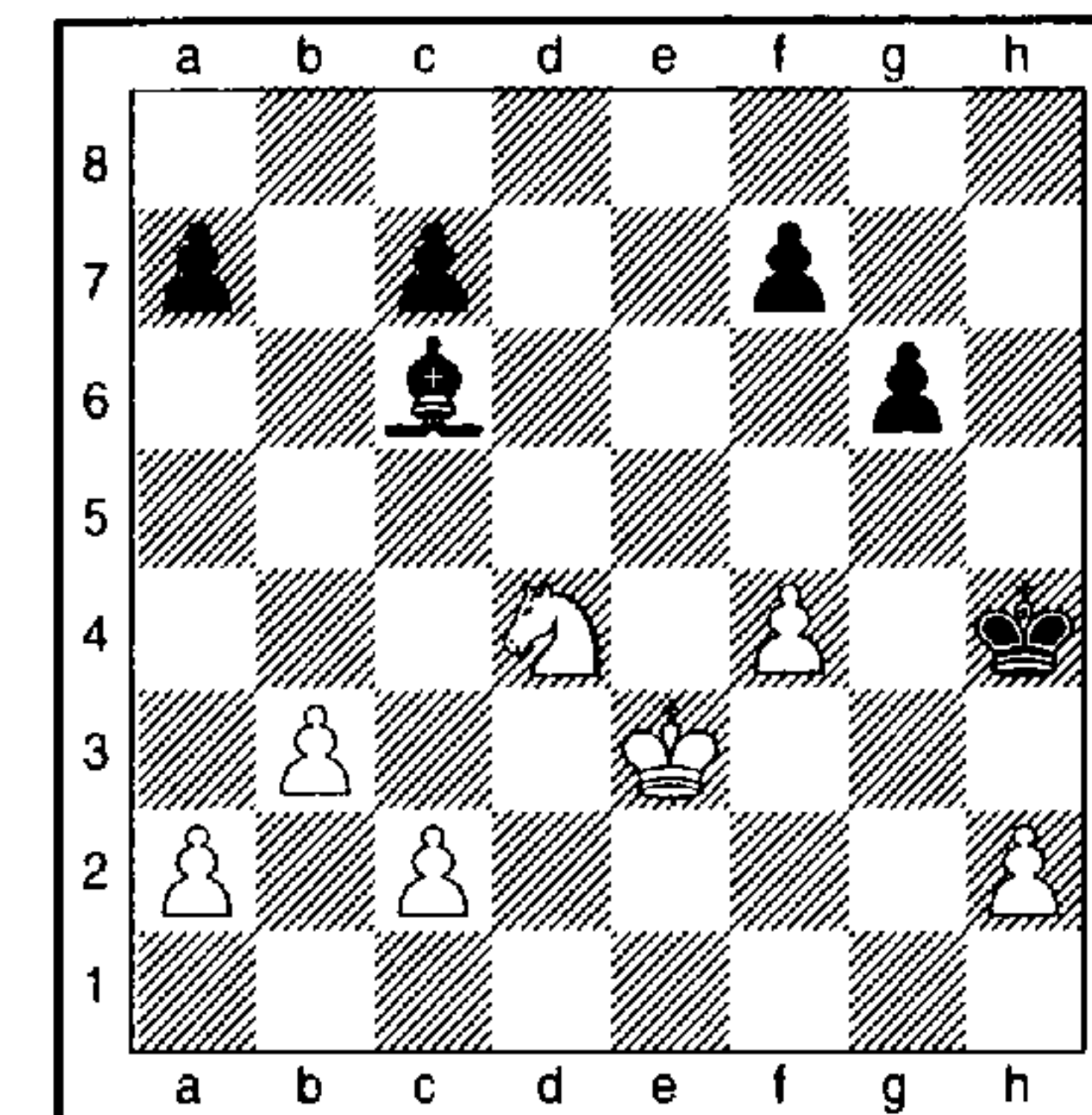
– this factor could to some extent (of course, not fully) have compensated for the missing pawn. By exchanging rooks, Black hopes to exploit his more active king, but the weakness of the queenside pawns makes his defence more difficult.

30 ♖xd2 ♖f5
31 ♖e3 ♖g4
32 gxf4

In Miles's opinion, 32 ♖b5! was stronger.

32 ... ♗c6
33 ♖e2 ♖xh4
34 ♖d4

179



34 ... ♗d7?!

34...♗e8! was much more tenacious. Now Black's position becomes lost. I give the conclusion of the game with short explanations by Miles.

35 ♖f3+! ♖h5
36 c4

36 ♖g5! ♗e8 37 ♖e4 ♖h4 38 ♖f6 or 38 ♖f2 was simpler.

36 ... f6
37 c5 ♖g4
38 ♖d4

Threatening 39 c6, later exploiting the weakness of the c7 pawn.

38 ... c6

39 b4 a6
40 a4 ♖h3
41 ♖f3

Much weaker was 41 f5 g5! 42 ♖f3 ♗e8! with the idea of ...♗h5+ and ...♖xh2.

41 ... ♗e6
42 ♖d2! ♖xh2
43 ♖e4 f5
44 ♖g5 ♗b3

44...♗d7 45 ♖f2! is completely bad for Black.

45 ♖f3+ ♖g3
46 ♖e5 g5

After 46...♗xa4 47 ♖xg6 Black no longer has any hopes: 47...♖g4 48 ♖d4 ♗c2 49 ♖e5 ♗d3 50 ♖e7 ♗e4 51 ♖g8! etc.

47 fxf5 ♗xa4
48 g6 f4+

48...♗b3 49 g7 f4+ was more accurate, but this too would not have saved Black: 50 ♖d4 ♗e6! 51 ♖xc6! f3 52 ♖e7 f2 53 ♖f5+ ♗xf5 54 g8♖+ ♖h2 55 ♖c4! ♗h3 56 ♖xa6.

49 ♖d3! ♗b3
50 ♖c4 ♗a2
51 g7 ♗b1+
52 ♖d4 ♗h7
53 ♖d2! ♗g8

If 53...f3 the most accurate is 54 ♖e3!

54 ♖e5 ♖f2

Or 54...f3 55 ♖d6 ♗d5 56 ♖c7.

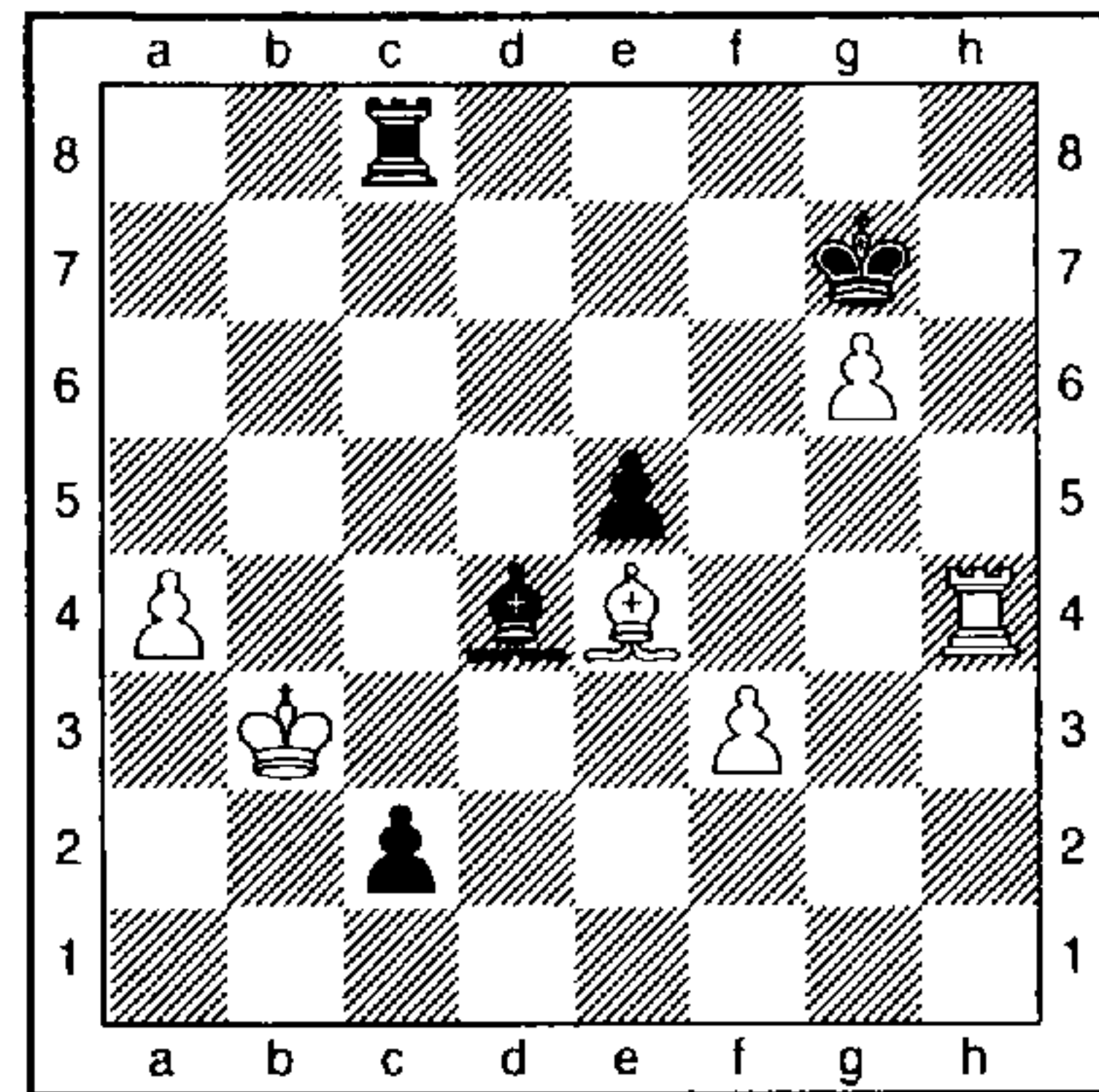
55 ♖xf4 ♖e2
56 ♖f3 ♗d5
57 ♖e5 ♖d2
58 ♖xc6 ♖c3
59 ♖e7

Black resigns.

see next diagram



E 7-2
180



White to move



A Memorable Loss

Modern day technique is nothing other than the games of the past, old discoveries, that have been classified and become customary.

Igor Zaitsev

I think that nearly all chess players share the illusions of the author of these lines with regard to their own games. Many of our wins are logical, and the ideas carried out in them are interesting and instructive. Our losses, by contrast, are accidental and are explained by either inadequate opening knowledge, or a series of inexplicable mistakes. It is not surprising that, in their books and articles, authors usually give only games they have won. My books are no exception. The game which we will now analyse has for a long time been engraved in my memory as a model of good technique. But, alas, not by me, but by my opponent.

Ubilava – Dvoretzky Tbilisi 1979

- | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|
| 1 | e4 | c5 |
| 2 | ♘f3 | e6 |
| 3 | d4 | cxd4 |
| 4 | ♘xd4 | ♘f6 |
| 5 | ♘c3 | ♘c6 |
| 6 | g3 | |

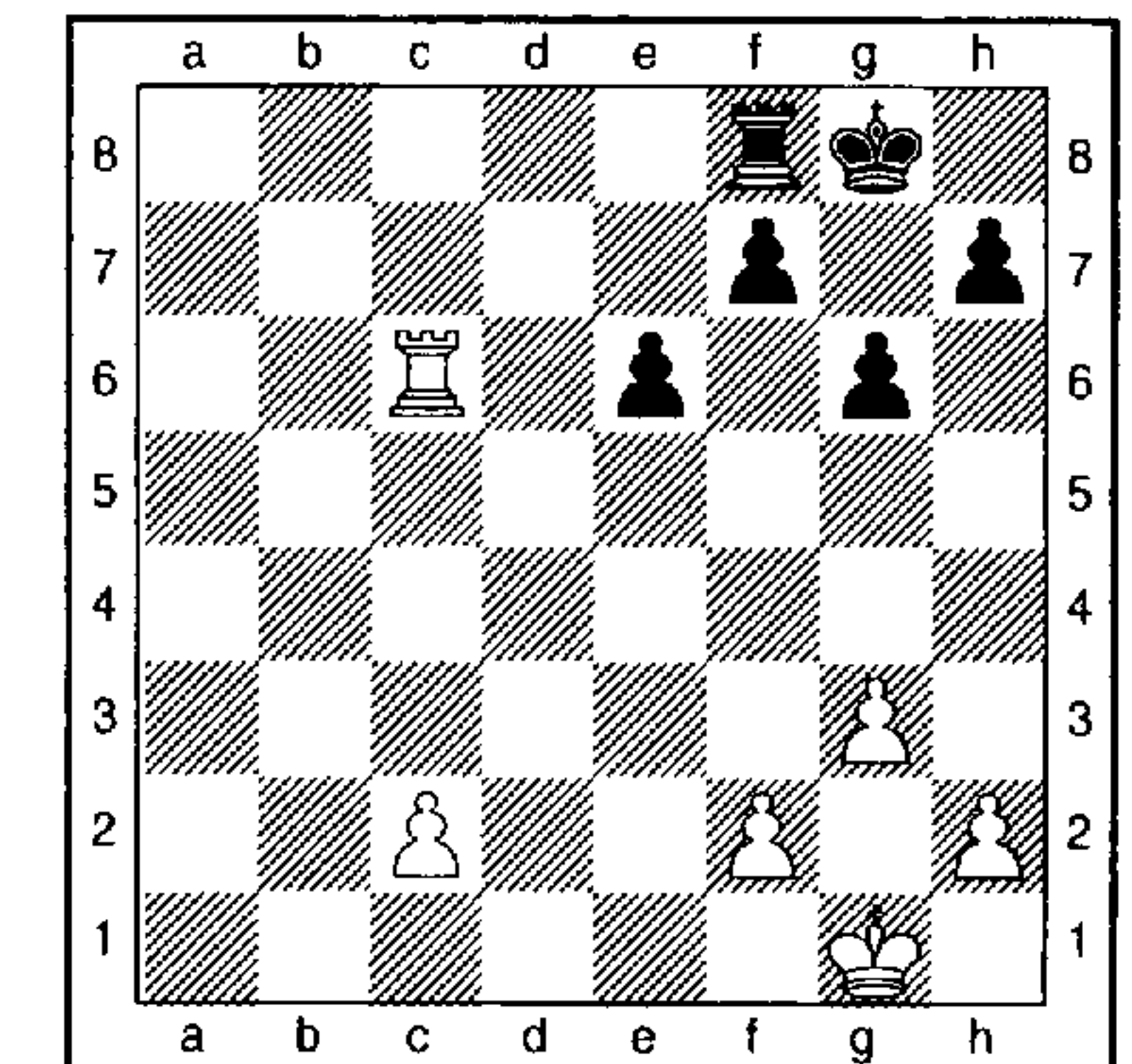
White is the first to deviate from the main opening lines. In reply it was possible to switch to a Scheveningen set-up, but, unfortunately, I did not employ 'normal' Sicilians as Black.

- | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|
| 6 | ... | d5 |
| 7 | exd5 | ♘xd5 |
| 8 | ♙g2 | |

This game was played at the time of a difficult crisis for Black in this opening variation. Not long before this it had been thought that he had a draw in the long forcing variation which occurred, for example, in the game Schubert–Dolmatov (Euro-

pean Junior Championship, Groningen 1977/78): 8...♙b4 9 0–0 ♘xc3 10 bxc3 ♙xc3 11 ♘xc6 ♜xd1 12 ♜xd1 ♙d7 13 ♜b1 ♙xc6 14 ♙xc6+ bxc6 15 ♙a3 a5! 16 ♜b7 ♙b4 17 ♙xb4 axb4 18 ♜dd7 0–0 19 ♜xb4 ♜xa2 20 ♜c4 ♜a6 21 ♜c7 g6 22 ♜4xc6 ♜xc6 23 ♜xc6.

181



Yes, such is modern opening theory – analyses sometimes reach deep into the endgame!

Incidentally, in this dead-drawn position Dolmatov did not want to agree immediately to a draw, and he began playing for a win as Black! The most staggering thing was that he did in fact succeed in outplaying his opponent and in winning – what told was his greatly superior understanding of the endgame. You will find the conclusion to this game in the chapter about endgame traps in Volume 1 of this series, 'Endgame Analysis'. But soon it was found that White could



interpose a very strong exchange: 10 ♖xc6! (instead of 10 bxc3?!). In the event of 10... ♗xd1 11 ♖xd1 ♖xd1 12 ♖xb4 the black knight cannot escape from d1. Black also stands clearly worse after 10... ♖xd1 11 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 12 ♖xd1+ followed by 13 ♔f4. There remains 10... bxc6 11 bxc3 ♔xc3, hoping for 12 ♔a3 ♔xa1 13 ♔xc6+ ♔d7 14 ♔xa8 ♗xa8 15 ♗xa1 f6 with equality. However, as was shown by the later game Glek–Maksimenko, Varna 1989 (it can be found in the 48th volume of 'Informator'), White gains a great advantage by continuing 12 ♔xc6+! ♔d7 13 ♗f3!

Instead of 9... ♖xc3, Black has tried 9... ♔xc3, but the position after 10 ♖xc6 bxc6 11 bxc3 ♔a6 12 ♖e1 does not appeal to me – the dark-square bishop, which has no opponent, is just too dangerous.

Thus, it suddenly became unclear how Black should defend. It was this problem that I tried to solve in my preparations for the game.

8 ... ♖xc3

A recommendation of Yevgeny Sveshnikov comes into consideration: 8... ♖db4!?

9 bxc3 ♖xd4

If 9... ♔d7 I was not afraid of 10 ♖b5 ♗a5 11 ♖b1 a6 12 ♖d6+ ♔xd6 13 ♗xd6 0–0–0 14 0–0 e5!, when both 15 ♔g5? ♔e6! 16 ♔xd8 ♖xd8 winning the queen, and 15 ♖xb7? ♔e8! are bad for White. However, I was concerned about the reply 10 ♖b1!

10 ♗xd4!

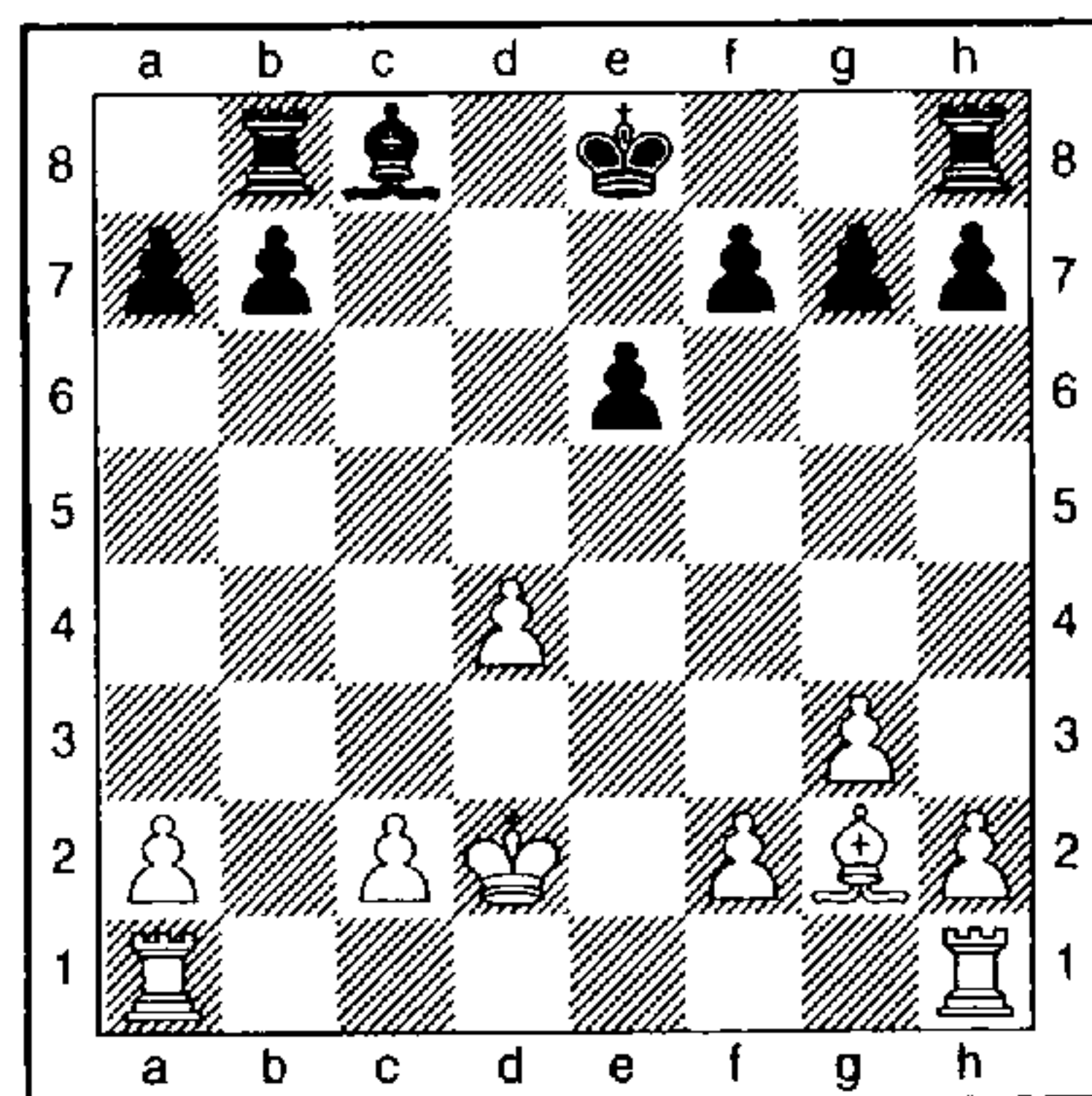
Weaker is 10 cxd4? ♔b4+.

10 ... ♗xd4

After 10... ♔e7 the endgame is also in White's favour.

11 cxd4 ♔b4+
12 ♔d2 ♔xd2+
13 ♖xd2 ♖b8

182



Q 7-8. What should White play?

At home I had considered this position to be acceptable, and it was only at the board that I sensed how unpleasant it was.

14 ♖hb1!

The most accurate move. It is quite easy to find, if you ask yourself how Black wants to develop (prophylactic thinking!).

Quite probably, by ...b7–b6 and ...♔b7. The standard method of play for White with such a formation is the advance of the rook's pawn, in order to open the a-file and create a weakness for the opponent at b6 (we saw this technique, for example, in the game between Znosko-Borovsky and Alekhine in the chapter 'What is meant by a strategic plan?'). From this it follows that the white rook should remain on a1.

But why not a2–a4 immediately? The point is that Black also has another way of developing: ...♔d8–c7 and ...♔d7–c6. Now if 14... ♔d8 there follows 15 ♖b3! The rook wants to attack the a-pawn, forcing ...a7–a6, an undesirable move for Black, and also with the king at c7 an unpleasant check at c3 is possible.

14 ... b6
15 a4 ♔b7

Q 7-9. What should White play?



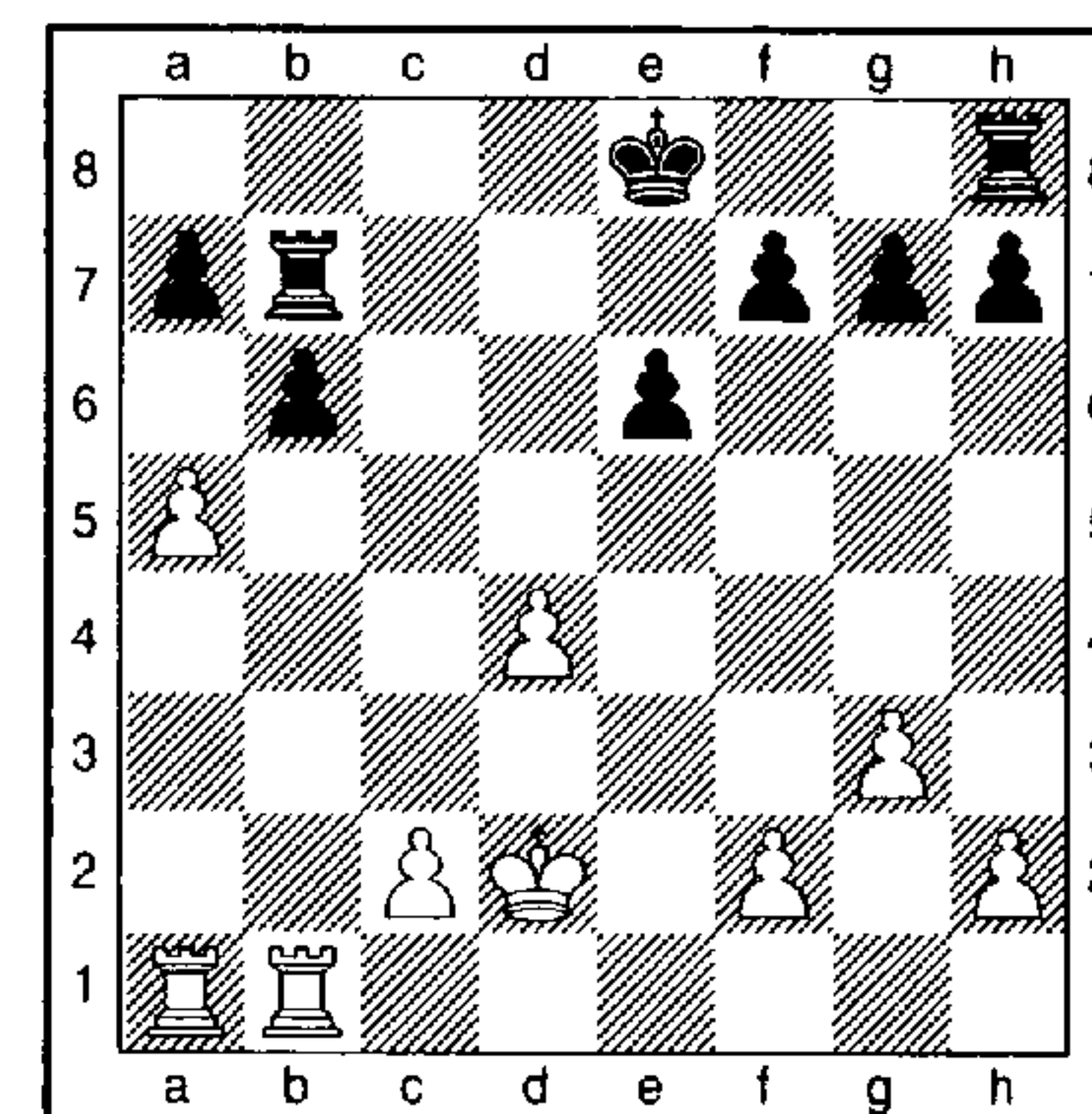
Here my opponent committed what was perhaps his only inaccuracy in the game.

16 ♔xb7

The exchange eases Black's defence somewhat. I was more afraid of 16 ♔f1!, since I did not see where I could place my bishop. For example, 16... ♔e7 17 a5 ♔e4 18 axb6 axb6 19 ♖b2 followed by ♔e3 and c2–c4.

16 ... ♖xb7
17 a5

183



Q 7-10. What should Black play?

It is said that on one occasion the well-known theoretical physicist, Academician Yakov Frenkel, was shown a curve on a graph, obtained as the result of an experiment, and was asked to substantiate theoretically its behaviour. He did this without any particular difficulty. Later it transpired that the graph had accidentally been turned upside down. The mistake was corrected, and after a little thought Frenkel also gave an explanation for the new form of the curve. Experienced commentators are not inferior to academicians – they can equally easily substantiate theoretically (or condemn) any move, irrespective of whether it is correct or not.

Take, for example, the reasons explaining

why I played 17... ♔d7. Black's b6 pawn is weak, and both his rooks will be tied to its defence. By taking his king to the queenside to the defence of the pawn, Black frees one of his rooks.

Alas, the move in the game is in fact a mistake, and possibly the decisive one. After this, how can you believe conventional logic!

It was essential to play 17... ♔e7! The explanation, as usual, involves prophylaxis. White would like to advance his pawn to c4, gaining control of the 5th rank and constantly threatening his opponent with c4–c5. On e7 the king does not block the d-file – Black plays ...♖d8–d6 and in the event of c2–c4 he immediately places his second rook on this file, attacking the d4 pawn. Defending it is inconvenient – White has to move a rook to a passive position, lifting the attack on the b6 pawn. Or, he has to avoid c2–c4. In both cases Black's defence is made easier.

17 ... ♔d7?!
18 axb6 axb6
19 c4! ♖c8

It was not yet too late to play 19... ♖d8! followed by 20... ♔e7.

20 ♔d3 ♖c6
21 ♖b5!

Threatening 22 c5 with an eternal pin on the b-file. Here I spent a long time calculating the variation 21... ♔c7 22 ♖a6 ♖b8 (with the idea of 23... ♔b7) 23 c5 ♖b7 24 ♔c4 bxc5 25 ♖xc6+ ♔xc6 26 ♖xb7 ♔xb7 27 dxc5 ♔c6. White has an outside passed pawn, but there does not appear to be a win, e.g. 28 f4 f6 29 ♔d4 h5 30 h3 ♔c7! (not 30... ♔b5? 31 f5!). However, he is not obliged to go into the pawn endgame – instead of 22 ♖a6, stronger is 22 f4 (or 22 h4), and if 22... ♖b8 23 c5! bxc5 24 ♖a7+, or 23... ♖b7 24 ♖ab1. I was able to find only one acceptable plan of defence: the rather exotic arrangement of my rooks on c6 and d6.

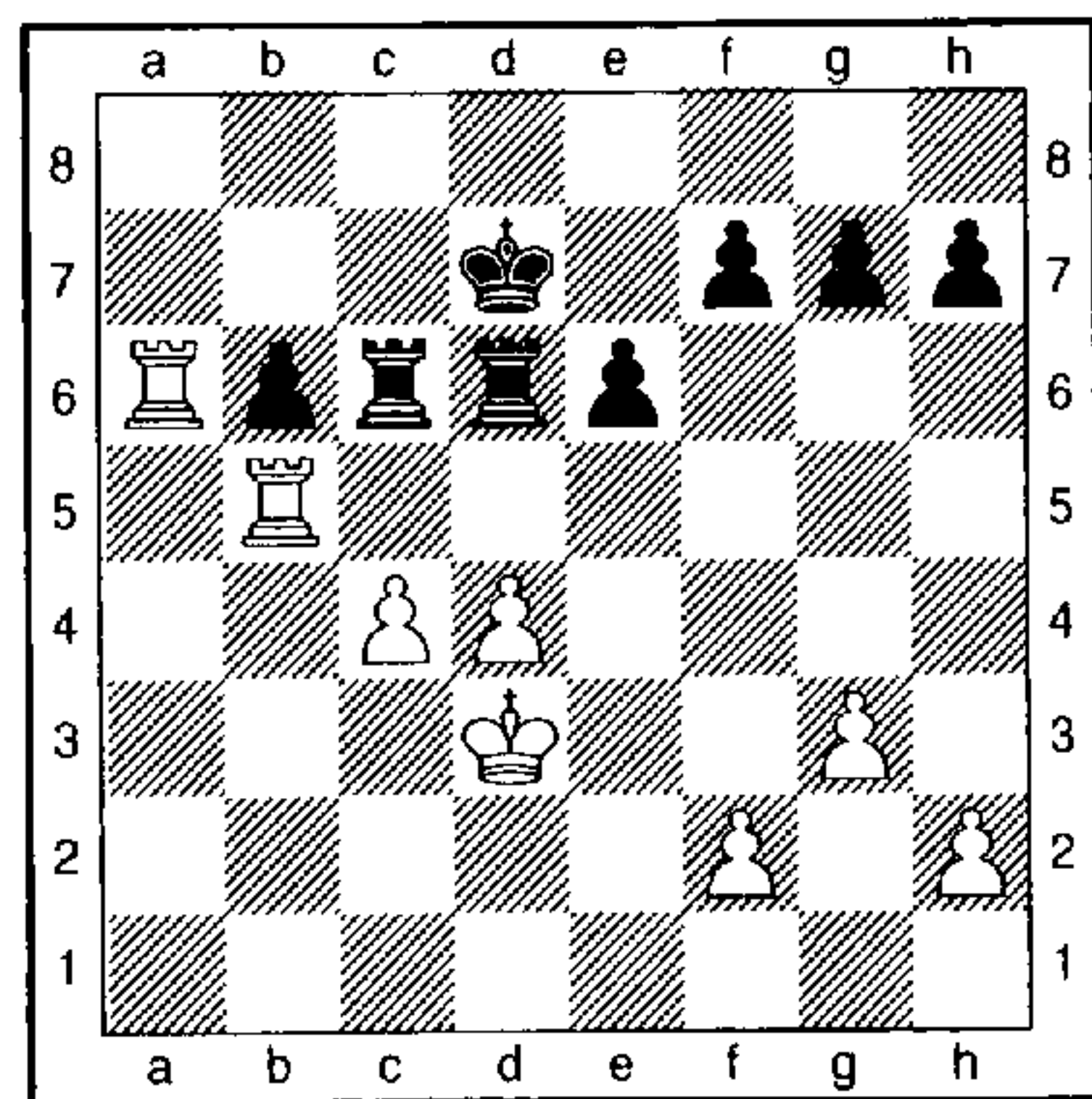


21 ... ♖bc7
 22 ♖a4 ♖d6
 23 ♖a6!

Good technique: **before undertaking anything, the pieces should be placed on the best squares and the opponent tied down as much as possible.** Of course, the rook is much more active at a6 than at b4. White does not fear 23...♖dc6 in view of 24 ♖b4. The faultiness of Black's 17th move is now especially obvious: the c4 pawn, in contrast to the d4 pawn, is easily defended.

23 ... ♖cc6

184



24 h4!

Elizbar Ubilava launches a pawn offensive on the kingside (it could also have been begun with 24 g4! or 24 f4!). I have already mentioned several times previously **'the principle of two weaknesses' – an important procedure for the conversion of an advantage.** To achieve complete success at one point (in the given instance – win the b6 pawn) is not usually possible. Activity must be developed on another part of the board, in order to create there a new weakness (vulnerable pawn, file for the invasion of a rook, and so on). By attacking the second weakness, and then if necessary again switching the attack to the first, it is easier to

shake and then breach the opponent's defences.

24 ... h6
 25 h5

It is possible that 25 g4 was slightly more accurate, but objectively the move in the game is not weaker.

25 ... f5!?

This was the idea of my previous move (otherwise White would have continued g3–g4, f2–f4 and g4–g5, etc.). Now the advance of the pawns is hindered, and my king acquires a comfortable shelter at f6. 26 d5 exd5 27 cxd5 ♖e7 or 27...♖c8 is not dangerous for Black.

26 f3! ♖e7
 27 g4 fxc4
 28 fxc4 ♖f6

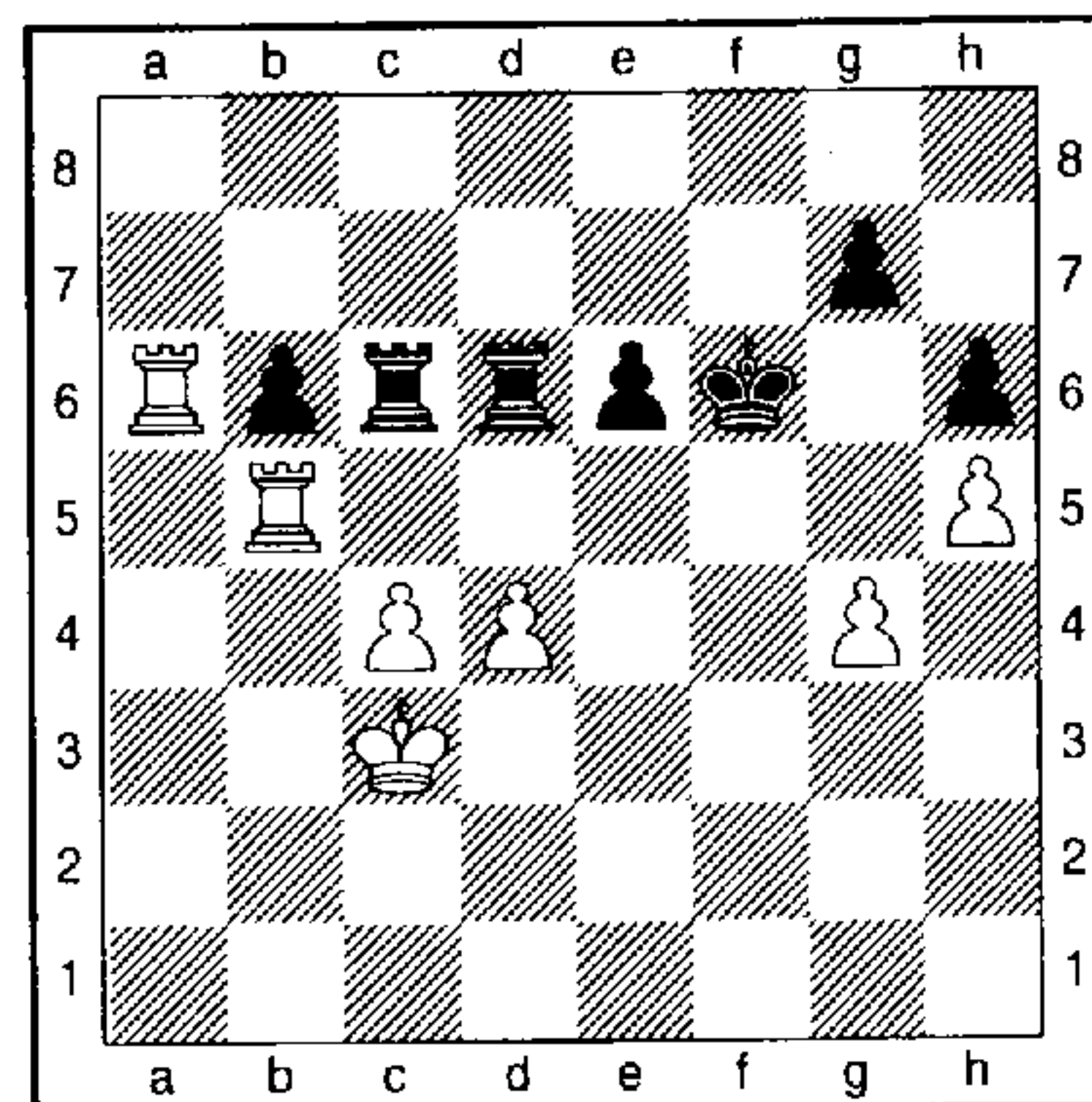
Q 7-11. What should White play?

Black has managed to prevent g4–g5. If 29 ♖a7, then 29...♖c5? is dubious in view of 30 ♖xb6! ♖xb6 31 dxc5, but on the other hand he has the manoeuvre 29...♖c8! and 30...♖cd8.

How then can White make progress? Which weapon out of the extensive arsenal of endgame techniques can he make use of on this occasion? Of course, zugzwang!

29 ♖c3!

185



29 ... g6?!

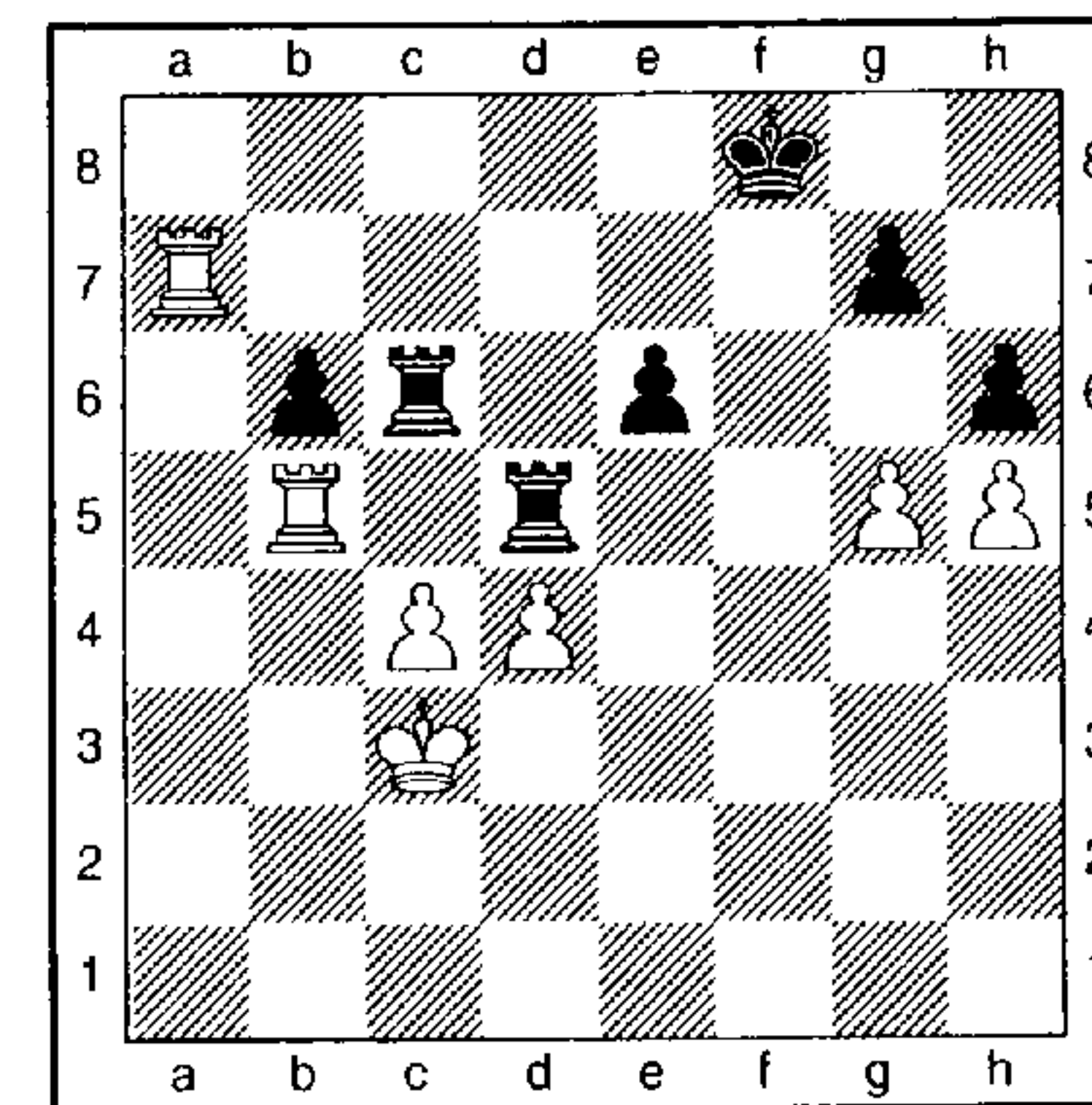
The opponent would have had to solve more difficult problems after 29...♖e7. In the event of 30 ♖a7+!? ♖d7 (30...♖f6 31 ♖b7 is bad for Black) 31 ♖xd7+ ♖xd7 32 g5 ♖e7 Black's position would have remained difficult, but perhaps not hopeless.

I was afraid of 30 g5, overlooking the elegant defence 30...♖d5!

Q 7-12. How can White continue playing for a win?

Nothing is given by 31 ♖axb6 ♖xb6 32 ♖xb6 ♖xg5. A draw results from 31 ♖xd5 exd5 32 c5 hxg5 33 ♖xb6 ♖xb6 34 cxb6 ♖d6 35 ♖d3 ♖c6 36 ♖e3 ♖xb6 37 ♖f3 ♖b5, when, as it is not hard to check, the pawns queen simultaneously. There only remains 31 ♖a7+! ♖f8!? (after 31...♖d7 32 ♖xd7+ ♖xd7 33 g6 or 33 gxh6 White has a clear advantage, while if 31...♖d6, then 32 ♖xb6 ♖xb6 33 cxd5 and 34 ♖xg7 is decisive).

186



Now 32 ♖xb6? ♖xb6 33 cxd5 (hoping for 33...exd5? 34 g6) is wrong in view of 33...hxg5!

Vadim Zviagintsev's suggestion is interesting: 32 c5! e5! 33 ♖xb6 exd4+ 34 ♖d3 ♖dxc5 35 ♖bb7 (but not 35 ♖b8+? ♖c8

36 ♖bb7 ♖xg5). After 35...hxg5 36 ♖f7+ ♖g8 37 ♖xg7+ ♖h8 Black's position looks extremely dangerous, but it would appear that he can nevertheless hold on: 38 ♖gd7 (38 ♖h7+ ♖g8 39 ♖hd7 ♖f5) 38...♖c3+! (38...♖c8? 39 h6 with the inevitable 40 ♖h7+ ♖g8 41 ♖ag7+ ♖f8 42 ♖h8 mate) 39 ♖e4 ♖e3+ 40 ♖d5 (40 ♖f5 ♖f3+ followed by ...♖cf6) 40...♖ce6 41 h6 ♖g6!

The strongest continuation is 32 ♖xd5! exd5 33 g6! ♖xc4+ 34 ♖d3. White later picks up the d5 pawn, achieving a decisive advantage.

He probably also wins by 32 ♖d3! ♖xg5 33 c5 ♖xh5 34 ♖xb6 ♖c8 35 ♖xe6 (recommended by Viswanathan Anand).

30 ♖d3! gxh5
 31 gxh5

Again zugzwang!

31 ... ♖e7

Q 7-13. What should White play?

The white rook has splendidly carried out its duties on b5. Now it needs to be switched to the kingside for an attack on the h6 pawn. The g6 square provides a convenient invasion point.

32 ♖b1! ♖d7

32...♖c5 is bad in view of 33 ♖a7+! ♖f6 34 ♖xb6! ♖xb6 35 dxc5.

33 ♖g1 ♖c7

Again 33...♖c5 is not possible on account of 34 ♖g7+ ♖c6 35 ♖aa7.

34 ♖g6

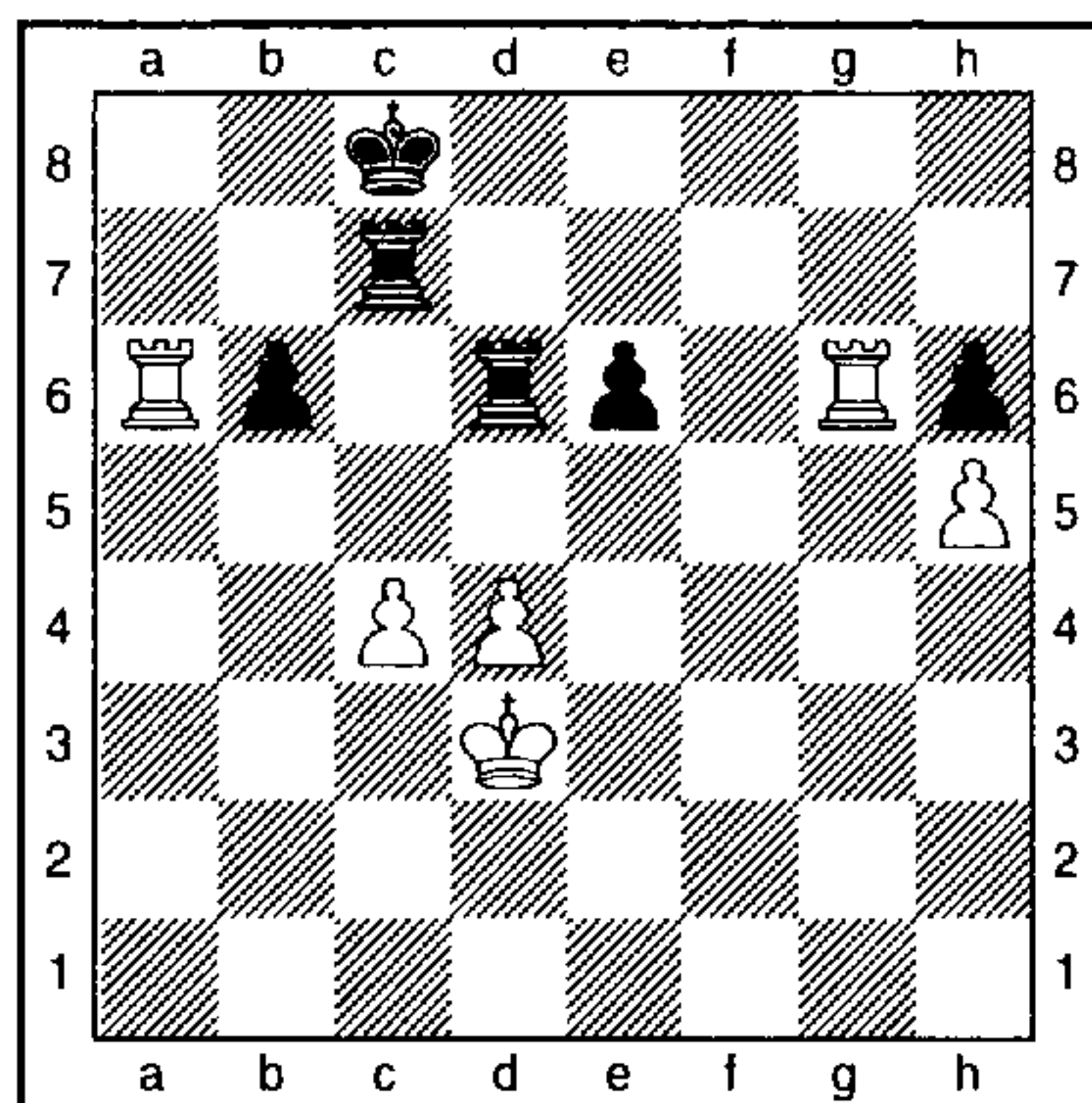
34 ♖g7+ ♖c6 35 ♖xc7+ ♖xc7 36 ♖a7+ is also strong, although after 36...♖c8 White has to reckon with 37...b5 or 37...e5 38 d5 b5.

34 ... ♖c8

34...♖dc6 35 ♖a4 or 35 ♖xh6 ♖xc4 36 ♖xb6 was no better.



187

**Q 7-14. What should White play?**

A highly important principle in the technique of converting an advantage is the suppression of the opponent's counterplay! Ubilava sees that in the event of 35 $\text{R}x\text{h}6?$! $\text{R}c\text{d}7$ the play becomes sharper. So as to guarantee the safety of his central pawns, he temporarily rejects the win of material and forces the exchange of one pair of rooks.

35 $\text{R}g8+$! $\text{K}b7$
 36 $\text{R}ga8$ $\text{R}dd7$

36... $\text{R}c\text{d}7$ 37 $\text{R}6a7+$ $\text{K}c6$ 38 $\text{R}c8+$ would have led to mate.

37 $\text{R}6a7+$ $\text{K}c6$
 38 $\text{R}xc7+$ $\text{K}xc7$

38... $\text{R}xc7$ 39 $\text{R}h8$ $\text{R}g7$ was slightly more tenacious, but after 40 $\text{R}xh6$ $\text{R}g3+$ 41 $\text{K}e4$ $\text{K}d7$ 42 $\text{R}h8$ (or 42 $\text{R}g6$) all the same Black's position would have been hopeless.

Q 7-15. What should White play?

'You have to possess great presence of mind, in order not to seize the booty immediately, but to do this after several strong preparatory moves' (Rudolf Spielmann). Ubilava is not in a hurry to attack the h6 pawn, since if 39 $\text{R}h8?$! there follows 39...b5 or 39...e5 40 d5 b5, and again Black

acquires hopes of saving the game.

39 $\text{K}e4!$ $\text{K}d6$
 40 $\text{R}b8!$

After 40 $\text{R}h8?$! either 40... $\text{R}c7$ or 40... $\text{R}g7$ 41 $\text{R}xh6$ $\text{R}g4+$ was possible. By drawing the black king to the defence of the b6 pawn, White gains the important e5 square for his king.

40 ... $\text{K}c6$

The sealed move. Here the game was adjourned, and Black resigned without resuming.

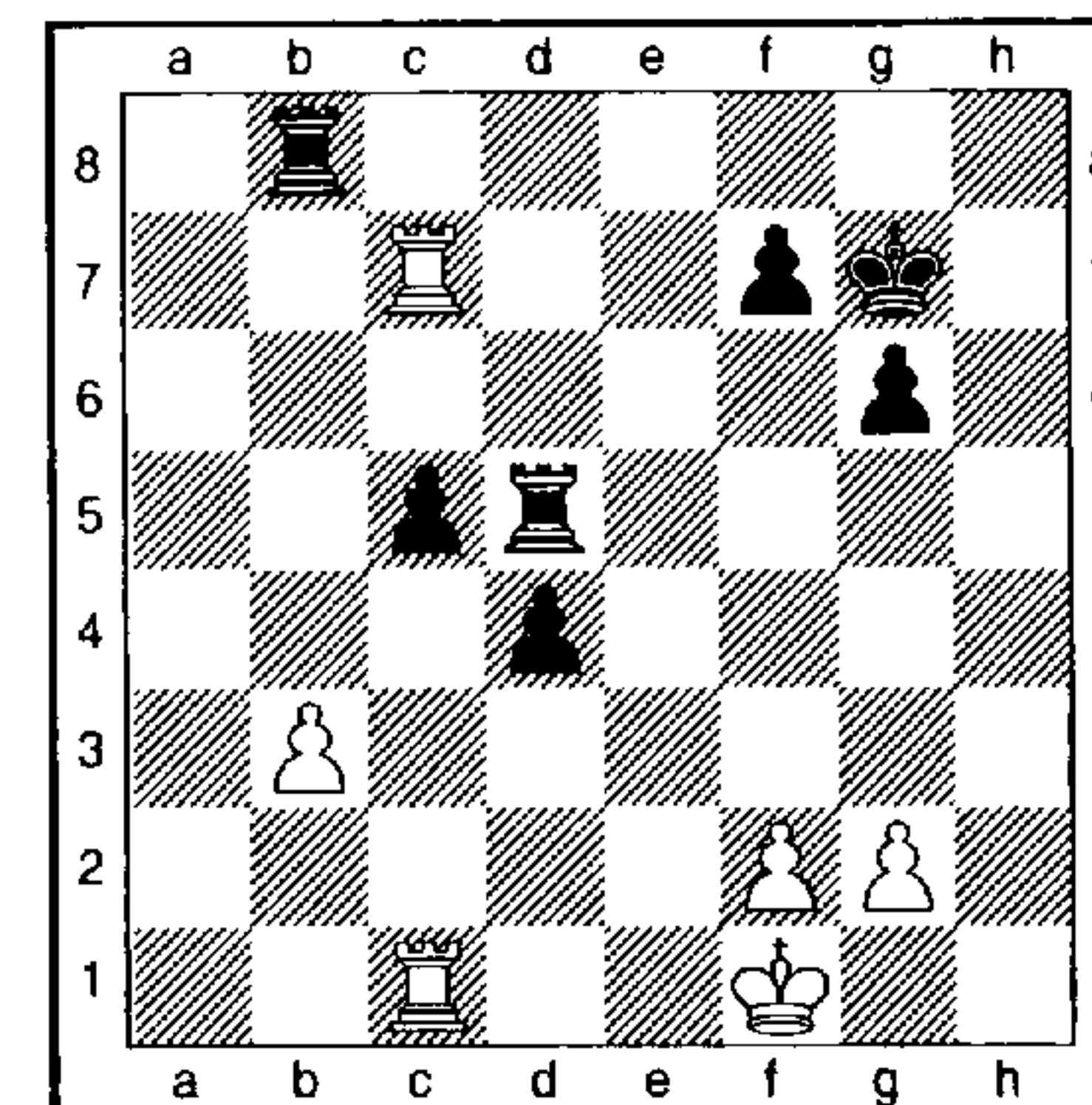
I think that to the reader who has carefully played through this game, it will no longer be necessary to explain what is meant by technique and how important it is for every player to possess good technical mastery.

By studying even a well-annotated game in a book or magazine, it is not easy to see and sense all its problems, in the way that the players saw and sensed them. You will approach this, if you try independently to solve the same tasks that they solved. It was this form of training (I conventionally call it 'a game with questions', and I constantly use it in sessions with pupils of any standard) that was offered to you here. In the analysis of the Ubilava–Dvoretsky game you had to reply to eight questions (there could certainly have been even more). Some of your answers probably did not coincide with mine. In such cases you must either agree with my answers, and admit the mistake made in your calculation or reasoning, or else uphold your point of view, trying to support it with concrete analysis. In both cases the benefit from the work done is unquestionable.



E 7-3

188



Black to move

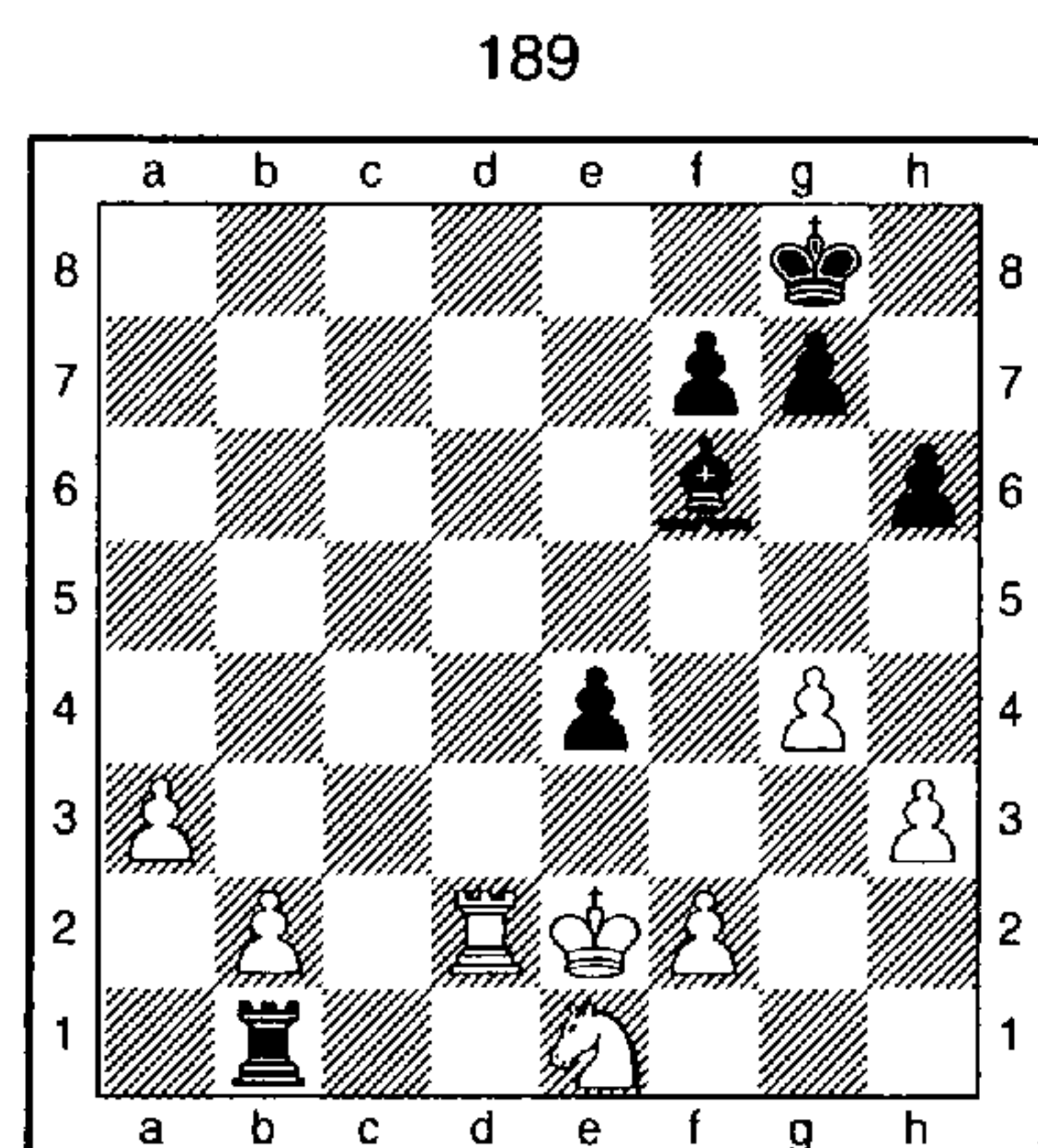


When Technique Lets You Down

We often overlook mistakes, but if we are unable to notice them when another person points them out, this indicates that we are not capable of reasoning sensibly.

Michel Montaigne

Sax – Am.Rodriguez
Interzonal Tournament, Subotica 1987



How should this position be evaluated? White's extra pawn is compensated to a considerable extent by the activity of the black pieces, and therefore a draw seems the most probable outcome.

For the moment it is unfavourable to take on b2. After 36... Bxb2? 37 Bxb2 Qxb2 White has the very strong 38 Qc2! , preparing 39 Qe3 (also, the direct 38 a4 Qd4 39 a5 Qf8 40 Qc2 Qc5 41 a6 Qe7 42 Qa3 Qd7 43 Qb5 Qc6 44 Qc3 is not too pleasant for Black). And 36... Qxb2? does not work due to the pin: 37 Bd8+ Qh7 38 Bb8 .

36 ... Qh7?!

The move made by Amador Rodriguez, although objectively not a mistake (since it

does not throw away the draw), nevertheless looks strange. It runs counter to a very important principle of endgame play, which states: **the king in the endgame is a strong piece, which should take an active part in the play.** By moving his king off the 8th rank, Black creates the threat of ... Qxb2 . But what is the point, if all the same White has no other way, apart from b2–b4, of strengthening his position?

It was more logical to play either 36... g6!? , preparing ... Qg7 and at some point ... f7–f5 , or 36... Qf8!? followed by ... Qe7 . By centralising his king, Black would have improved his situation in the event of the transition into a minor piece or rook ending.

37 b4 Qc3!

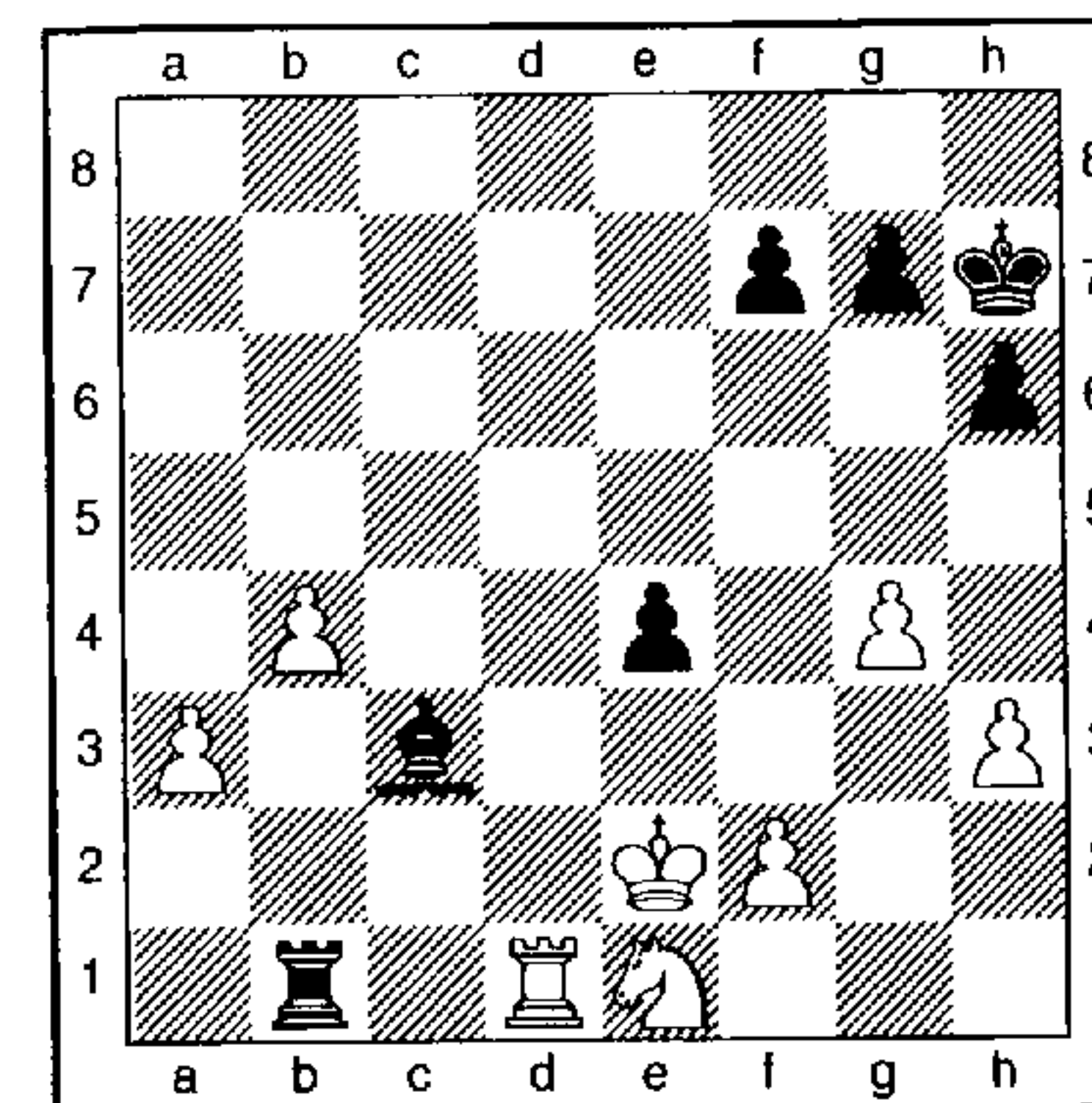
After 37... Bb3 38 Qc2 Qb2 39 Qd4 Qxd4 40 Qxd4 Bxa3 41 Qxe4 Qxh3 42 Qe3 (42 Qd2 Bf3) 42... Qh4 43 Qg3 f5 (or 43... h5) 44 b5 fxg4 45 b6 Qh5 46 Bb3 Qe5+ 47 Qd3 Qe8 48 b7 Bb8 49 Qe4 Qg6 Black may not be losing, but the variation looks too dangerous for him. Especially since White can also play differently: 39 h4 (instead of 39 Qd4) or 38 Ba2 (instead of 38 Qc2).

38 Bd1

see next diagram



190



Q 7-16. How should Black defend?

Here the decisive mistake was made.

38 ... Bb2+?

Black is consistent in his errors. First he moved his own king to the edge of the board, and now he drives the opponent's king forward. 38... Bb3! was essential. Gyula Sax gives the variation 39 Qc2 Bb2 40 Bc1 g6 41 Qe3 f5 42 a4 Qxb4 (42... f4+? 43 Qxe4 Qd2 does not work because of 44 Bd1 Qxc2 45 Qd3) 43 Qxb4 Bxb4 44 Ba1 , without supplying the final position with any evaluation. It is quite possible that it is won, although 44... Bb3+ still needs to be checked. However, it is not hard to improve Black's defence, and, moreover, in several ways.

For example, it is not essential to move the rook from b3 – here it is well placed, preventing the white king from going to e3. Let us play 39... g6!? immediately. It is not easy for White to make progress – after all, 40 a4 Bb2 41 Bc1 Qxb4 is bad for him, and 40 Bd7 Bb2! 41 Qxf7+ Qg8 42 Bc7 Bxc2+ 43 Qd1 Bd2+ 44 Qc1 Bd3 also does not work. In the event of 40 Bc1 Black can try, for example, 40... f5 41 a4 f4 .

However, there is no point in Black avoiding the variation suggested by Sax, since it by

no means gives White the advantage. As was pointed out by Bologan, after 39 Qc2 Bb2 40 Bc1 g6 41 Qe3 f5 42 a4 very strong is 42... Qf6! (with the terrible threat of ... Qg5+) 43 f4 exf3 44 Qd3 (44 Qxf3 Qg5) 44... Bb3+ 45 Qc4 Bc3+ , and Black wins.

39 Qe3 Ba2
40 Qxe4!

If now 40... Bxa3 , then 41 Qd3 Bb3 42 Qd5! with an easy win.

40 ... Be2+

This was Rodriguez's idea – Black picks up the knight. But the pieces in play nevertheless remain equal – since White has an 'extra king', which is not at all inferior in strength to the bishop. The decisive word will be said by the queenside pawns, supported by the king.

41 Qf3!

It is important that the f2 pawn should be defended.

41 ... Qxe1
42 Qxe1 Qxe1
43 b5 Qa5

There is no way of saving the game – the king is too far away. For example, 43... Qg6 44 b6 Qa5 45 b7 Qc7 46 Qe4 Qf6 47 Qd5 Qe7 48 Qc6 Qd8 49 a4 Qb8 50 Qb6 .

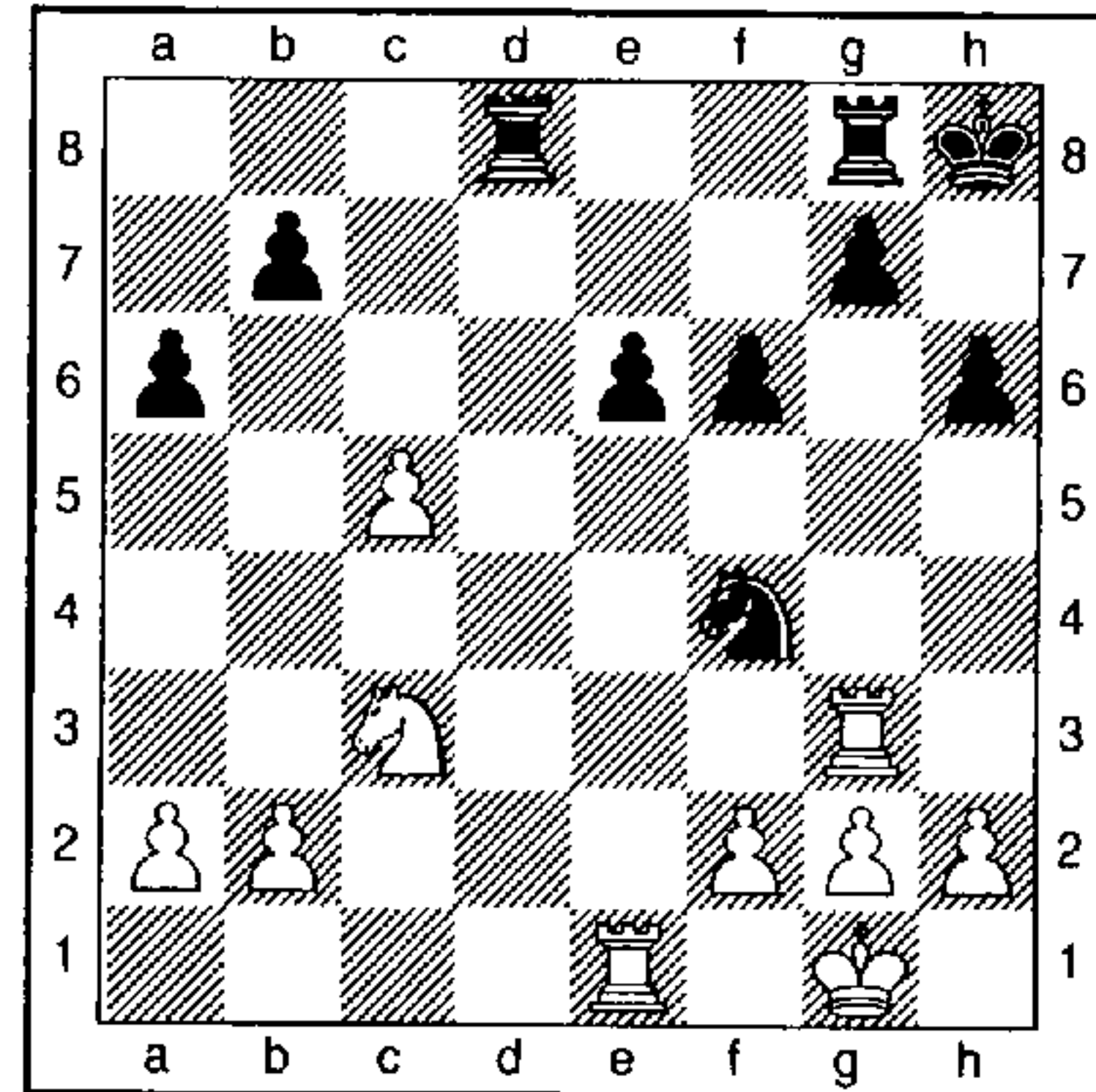
44 Qe4 Qg6
45 Qd5 Qe1
46 f3 Qg5
47 b6 Qh4
48 b7 Qg3
49 a4 Qxh3
50 a5 Qb8
51 a6 g6
52 Qc6 h5
53 gxh5 gxh5
54 Qb6

Black resigns.



Chiburdanidze – Alexandria
World Championship Match, 3rd Game,
Borzhomi/Tbilisi 1981

191



Q 7-17. What should Black play?

Nana Alexandria has conducted the middle-game excellently. In the resulting simple position her control of the d-file gives her the better chances.

Let us employ prophylactic thinking. White's queenside pawns are vulnerable. She would like to set up there the pawn chain a3–b4–c5, which would not be easy to disturb. This plan can be easily forestalled by 26...d4! 27 a3 a5! with a decisive advantage. Black is threatening 28...c8 or 28...e5 followed by 29...d3; 28 b5? or 28 d4? is bad because of 28...e2+!

26 ... e5?

Generally speaking, this is a useful move, creating the threat of 27...d3, but it is untimely. White easily parries the threat, simultaneously strengthening her position. We see once again that the technique of converting an advantage is impossible without a constant striving to restrict the opponent's possibilities.

This and Black's subsequent inaccuracies are partly explained by shortage of time

(roughly half an hour for 15 moves). I have already said earlier, but I will repeat it once more, that time trouble does not provide an excuse – a player should be able to control his or her time expenditure. In the present game Nana knew the first 15 moves and made them quickly, but on the next ten moves (which, though good ones, were not too difficult to find) she spent about two hours. Clearly impractical!

27 b4! d2

27...d4 28 a3 g8 also came into consideration, hoping for 29 e3? d3 30 b1 b2! and 31...c4, attacking the base of the pawn chain – the a3 pawn. However, White could have parried the opponent's intention with the accurate 29 f1!

28 e3

The quiet 28 a3 g8 29 e3 was perfectly possible, e.g. 29...d3 30 e2 b2 31 d2 d2 32 e2 xe2 33 d2 c4 34 a4. The same position would also be reached now after 28...g8 29 a3. In order to avoid it, Alexandria goes in for the exchange of blows invited by the lady world champion.

28 ... d3!?
29 d4! xe1
30 d2 c2

Q 7-18. What would you have played now?

One of the problems that a player in an inferior position constantly has to decide is the choice between active and passive ways of defending. Usually preference should be given to active defence (this will be covered in more detail in later chapters), but, of course, by no means always. In the given instance White would have done better to defend passively: 31 b3! d8 32 f1 d1 33 g3 d4 34 b2.

31 d3?! xb4

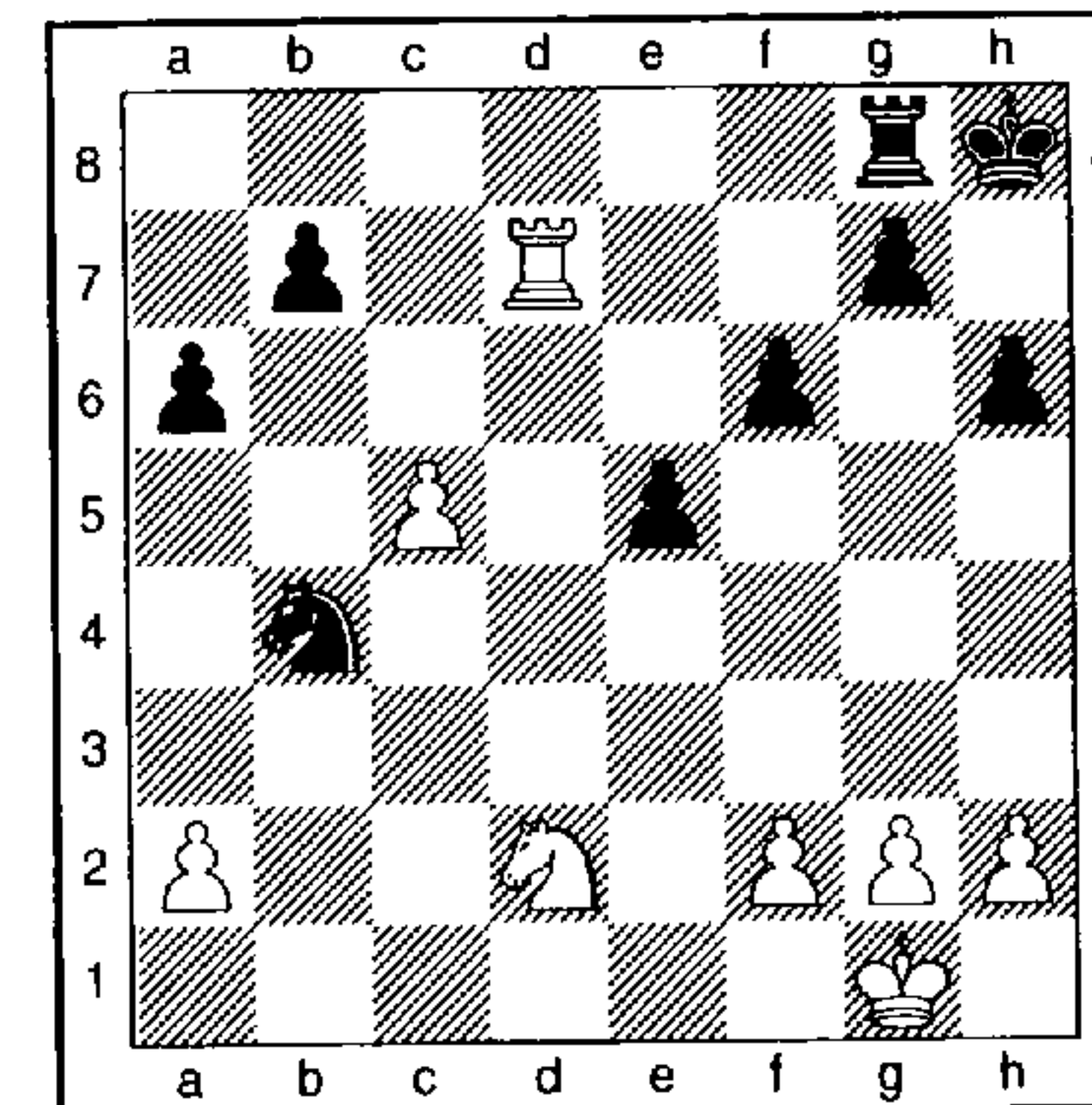
To observe from the auditorium the play of his pupils is a difficult strain on a trainer's



nerves. Such as seeing, for example, that on this last quite obvious move Nana spent five whole minutes, and that when she was seriously short of time.

32 d7

192



32 ... c6??

In time trouble the soundest continuations should be chosen. Nana could have forcibly transposed into an endgame with four pawns against three on one wing, which would have promised her an easy game, even when short of time. The game would probably have been adjourned; with rooks and knights on the board, or in the event of the exchange of rooks, Black would have retained good winning chances (whereas the rook ending with such material is drawn). The following variation suggests itself: 32...xa2 33 xb7 d8 (33...c8 34 b3 a5 35 a7 b8 is also strong) 34 b2 c3, threatening 35...e4 or 35...c8.

Alexandria saw this variation, but, fearing that she would be unable to win this ending, spent her last minutes searching for other ways (again, clearly impractical). Of course, Nana no longer had the time to check carefully the idea she found.

33 xb7 d8
34 f1 d5

35 c7!

Maya Chiburdanidze sees through her opponent's idea. After the natural 35 b6 Alexandria was intending 35...d4! 36 g3 (36 xa6? e2+ 37 h1 d1) 36...a5 37 c6 c5, and Black wins a pawn, while retaining the queenside pawns. Alas, even this plan is faulty: instead of 37 c6? stronger is 37 b8+ h7 38 c8 with equality.

35 ... xc5
36 g4!

Black's extra pawn is completely neutralised by the unpleasant pin on the c-file. The march of the white knight to f5 or h5 is threatened.

36 ... g6
37 e3

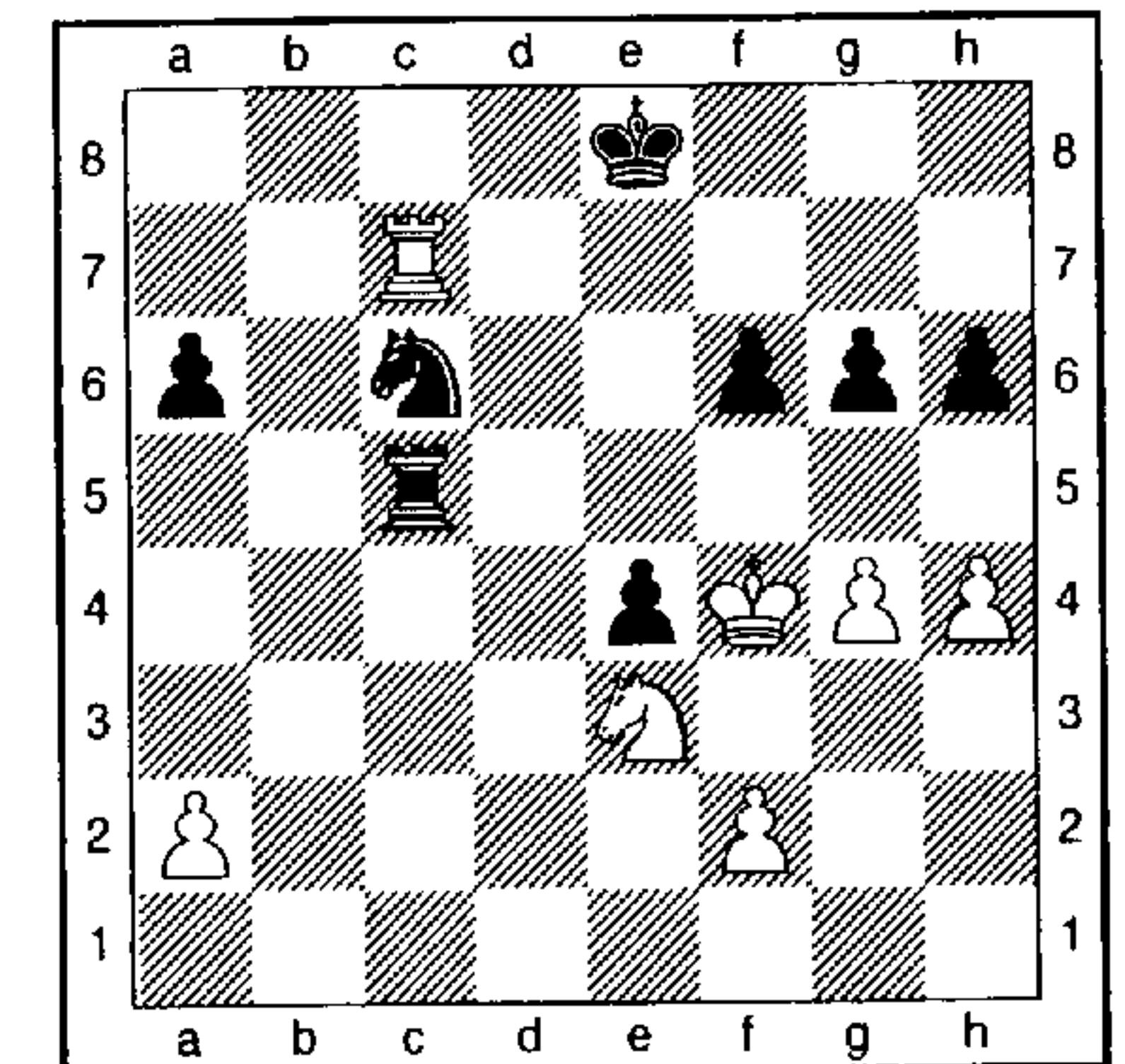
Weaker is 37 f7 c4.

37 ... g8
38 h4 e4?!

An unnecessary weakening – the f4 square is conceded to White's king, and her chances are now preferable.

39 g2 f8
40 g3 e8
41 f4

193



This move was sealed. In our analysis of the adjourned position we decided to avoid the



natural 41...g5+, to which White does not reply 42 ♖g3 (with the idea of 43 h5) 42...♙c3! 43 h5 ♘d4!, but simply 42 hxg5 hxg5+ 43 ♖xe4 ♙e5+ 44 ♖d3, retaining some pressure, since 44...♗b4+ 45 ♖d4 ♗xa2 46 ♗d5 is dangerous for Black. We found another way, which was objectively stronger, and also less obvious, and it could have been overlooked by our opponents.

41 ... h5!

The lady world champion thought for a long time and decided to give up playing for a win.

42 gxh5 gxh5
43 ♖xe4

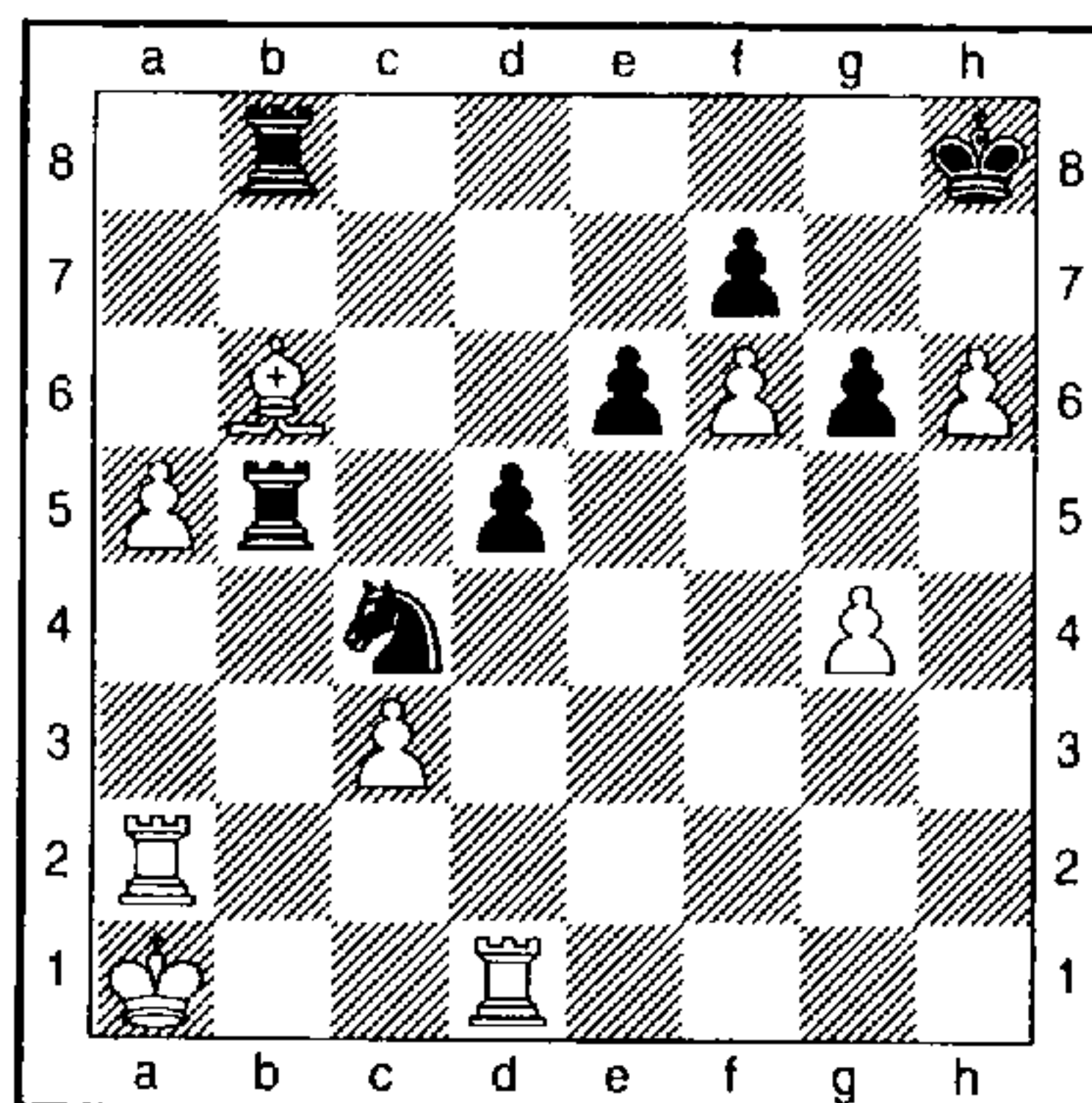
Nothing was achieved by 43 ♗f5 ♖d8! 44 ♙f7 (44 ♙h7 ♙c2 45 ♙xh5 ♙xf2+ 46 ♖xe4 ♗e7!) 44...♙c2 45 ♙xf6 ♙xf2+ 46 ♖xe4 (46 ♖e3 ♙f1) 46...♗e7!, when Black is out of danger. In our analysis we also considered 43 a3!? a5 44 ♖xe4 (if 44 a4, then 44...♗e5! 45 ♙xc5 ♗d3+ 46 ♖xe4 ♗xc5+ and 47...♗xa4) 44...♙e5+ 45 ♖d3 ♙c5!, and Black holds the position without difficulty. The situation is similar to that which would have resulted after 41...g5+, but there Black did not have any counterplay, whereas here the h4 pawn is vulnerable (after a possible ...♗e7-g6).

43 ... ♙e5+
44 ♖d3

Drawn on White's proposal. After 44 ♖d3 ♙c5! 45 ♖d2 (45 ♙b7 ♙a5!) 45...a5 she is unable to strengthen her position.

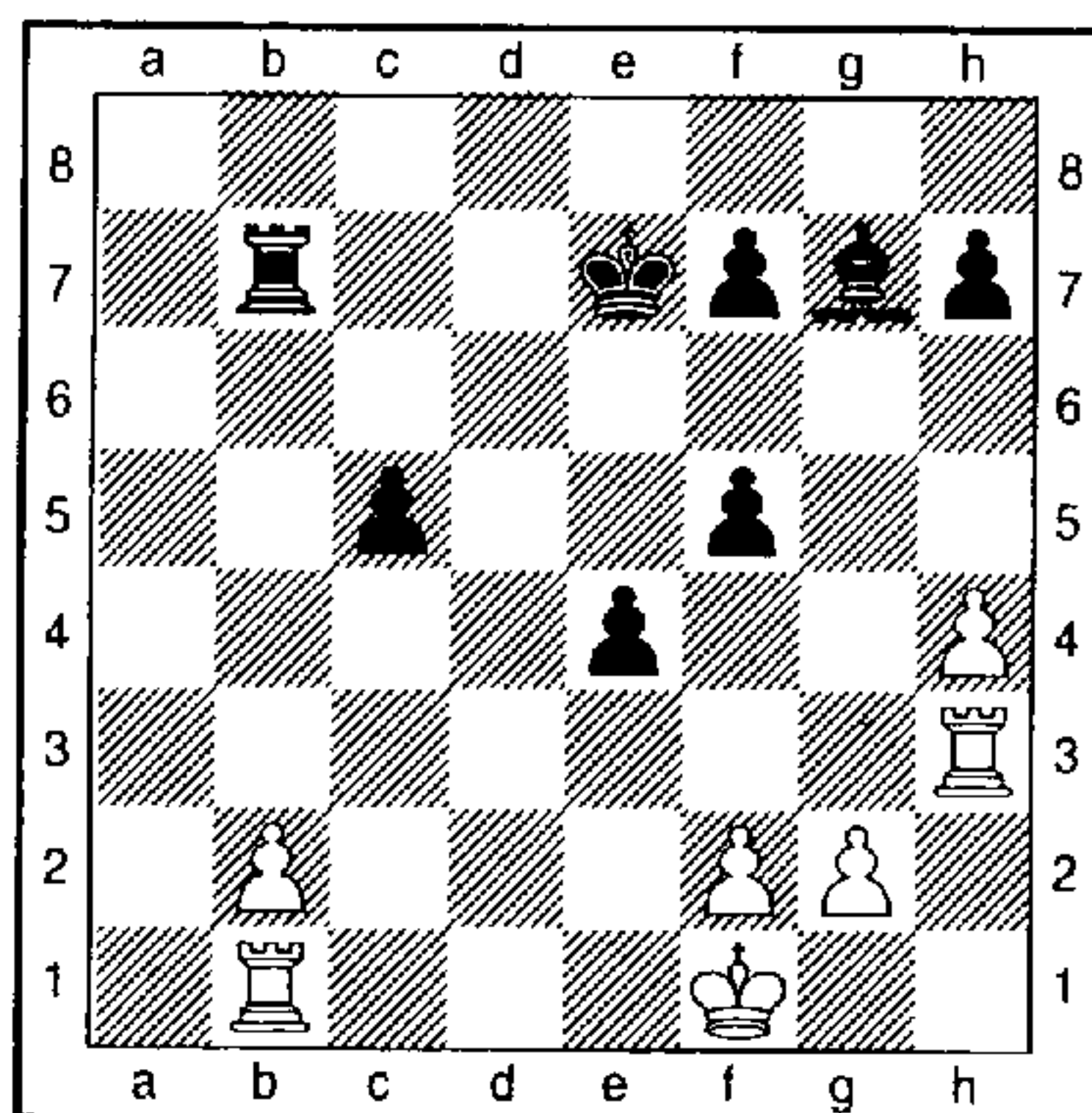
This ending shows that a chess player's arsenal consists (or more correctly, should consist) of not only chess techniques. It also includes the technique of behaving at the board, and rational ways of seeking and taking decisions.

E 7-4
194



Black to move

E 7-5
195



Black to move



The Scales Tipped

The most difficult thing that there is in chess is to choose one move out of several apparently equally good ones, and there is nothing more unjust, than on the conclusion of such a game to declare to the opponent (as sometimes happens), with some or other degree of justification, that he was in fact bound to lose.

Siegbert Tarrasch

'Simple positions' are not in fact simple at all. To play them assuredly, good technique is needed, but even it does not give a complete guarantee of success. Many problems facing us are not of a technical, but a creative nature. Here, as in other stages of the game, you have to overcome the fierce resistance of your opponent, guess his ideas, devise your plans and seek the most accurate tactical ways of carrying them out. Even the most technically accomplished players are sometimes unable to withstand the tension of the struggle, and are unable to avoid serious, sometimes fatal mistakes, to say nothing of isolated inaccuracies.

The game which we will now examine is a good illustration of this. We will follow how Yasser Seirawan – a strong grandmaster with a subtle positional understanding and excellent technique – lost an ending where he was a healthy pawn to the good.

Seirawan–Van der Wiel
Wijk aan Zee 1983

1	c4	e6
2	♗c3	c5
3	♗f3	♗f6
4	g3	b6
5	e4	♙b7
6	♙e2	

Q 7-19. What would you play as Black?

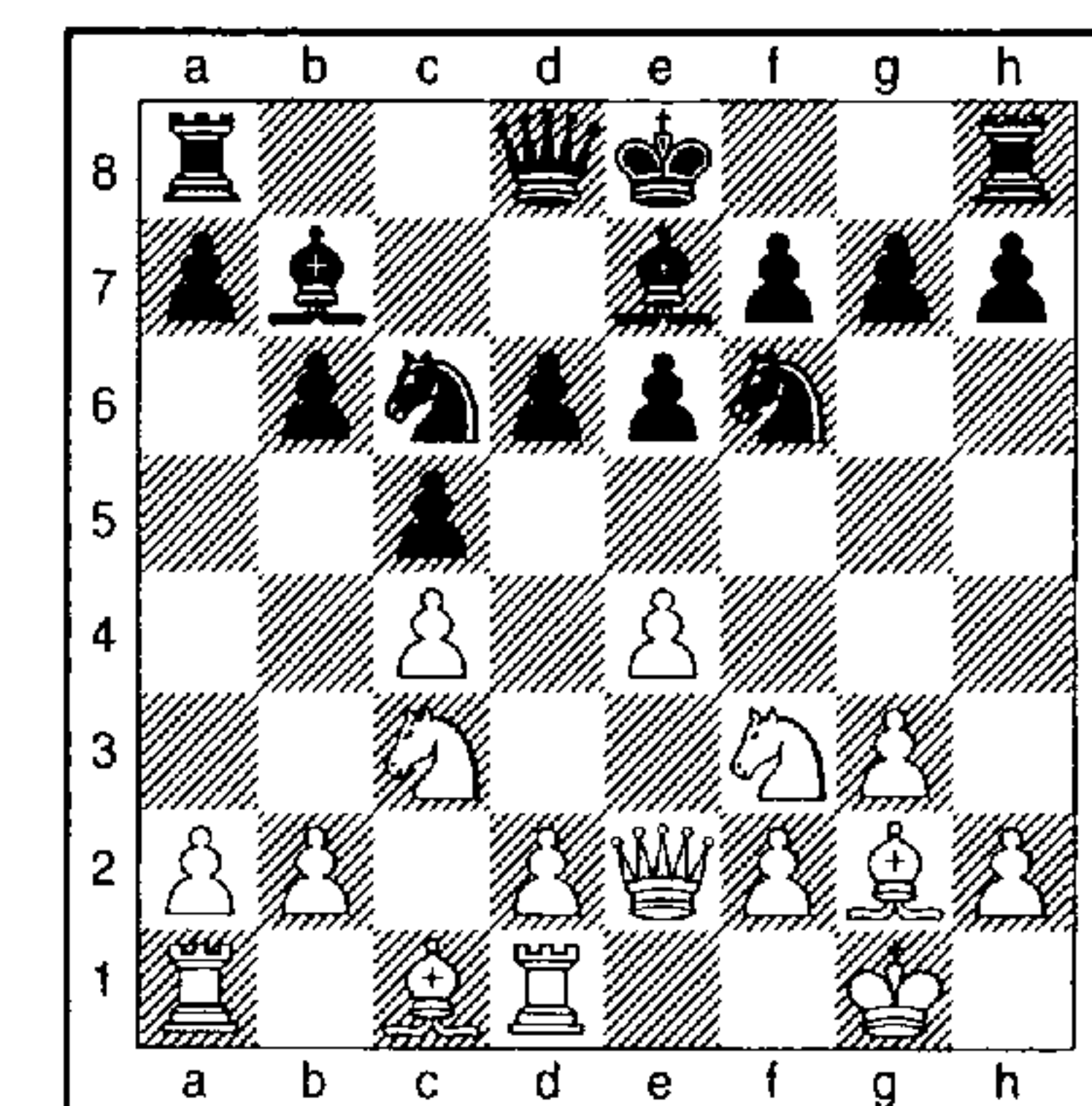
White is obviously intending 7 d4 cxd4 8 ♗xd4 followed by ♙g2 and 0-0. The game Petrosian–Psakhis (Interzonal Tournament, Las Palmas 1982) developed as follows:

6...d6 7 d4 cxd4 (7...♗c6!?) 8 ♗xd4 g6? (better 8...a6) 9 ♙g2 a6 10 0-0 ♗bd7 11 ♙d1! ♙b8 12 a4! ♙g7 13 a5, and White had a great positional advantage.

Of course, if you like playing 'hedgehog' positions with Black, you can allow d2-d4. But it is better to approach things in an unprejudiced way: in the given instance it is not difficult to forestall the opponent's plan, by making a normal developing move – so why reject it?

6	...	♗c6!
7	♙g2	d6
8	0-0	♙e7
9	♙d1	

196



Again White wants to play d2-d4. The simplest way of maintaining the balance in the centre is 9...e5! with a roughly equal game.



Q 7-20. Analyse the consequences of 9...♞d4.

Objectively the knight move to d4 is perhaps no weaker than 9...e5, but it is far more risky, since it demands an accurate calculation of the combinative complications and (which is even more difficult) a correct evaluation of their consequences.

9 ... ♞d4!?
10 ♞xd4 cxd4
11 ♞b5!

11 e5 ♙xg2 12 exf6 ♙xf6 13 ♙xg2 dxc3 14 dxc3 ♜c7 leads to a roughly equal position.

It is not so easy to evaluate the quiet 11 ♞b1 e5 12 d3. White plans f2–f4 and ♞d2–f3. Black should not wait passively, but the centre is closed, and on the queenside the opponent has no weaknesses. I think that the only way of not conceding the initiative is to begin counter-action on the kingside: 12...h5! 13 f4 h4.

11 ... e5
12 ♞xd4!?

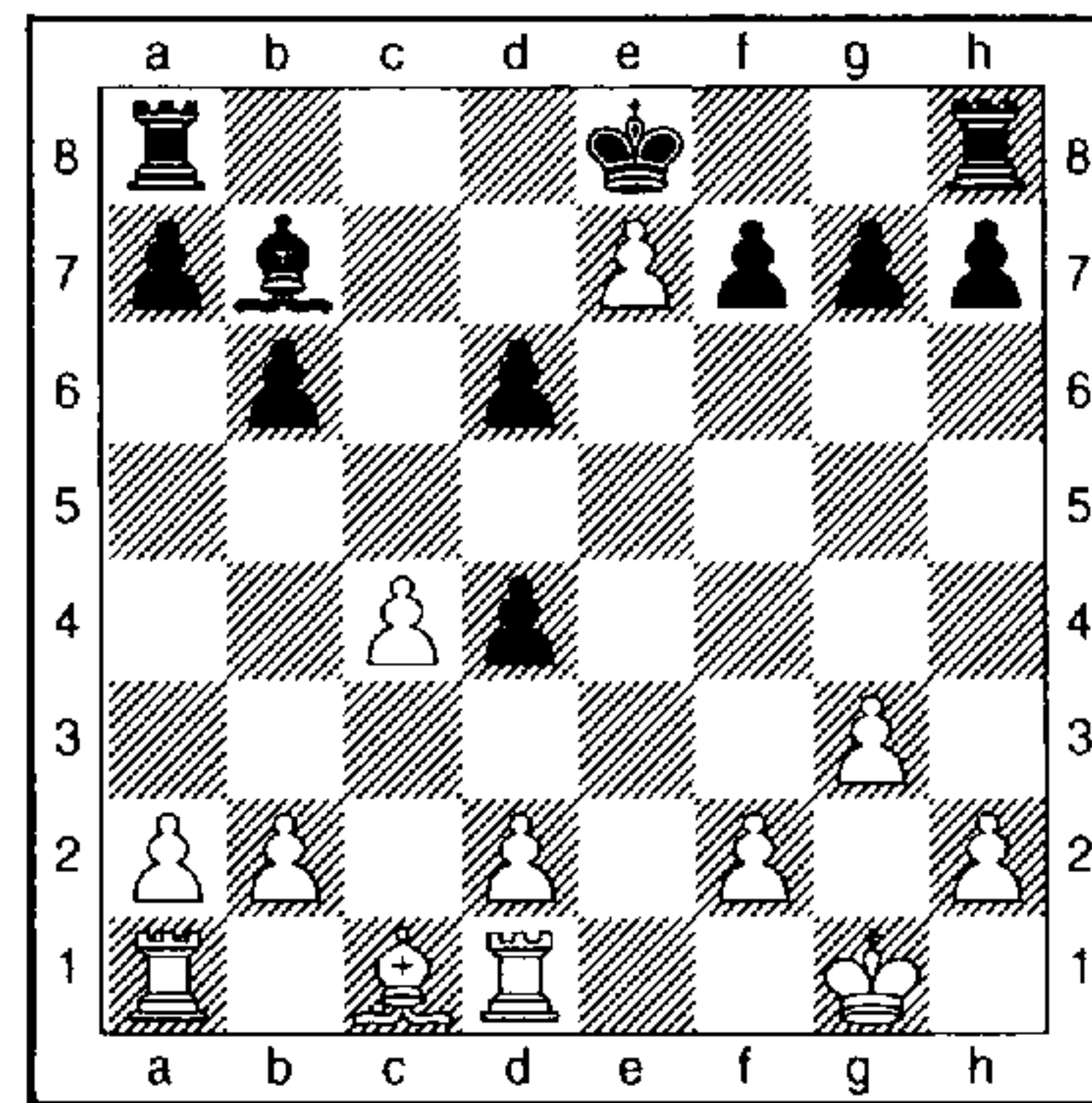
This tempting move is questionable. Serious consideration should have been given to 12 d3! In the event of 12...a6 the combination 13 ♞xd4! would have gained in strength compared with the game. And if 12...0–0 White could have replied 13 f4 a6 14 ♞a3 with, as it seems to me, slightly the better position (after castling, the idea of ...h7–h5–h4 no longer has any point, of course).

12 ... exd4
13 e5 ♙xg2

13...dxe5? is bad: 14 ♙xb7 ♞b8 15 ♙c6+ and 16 ♜xe5.

14 exf6 ♙b7
15 ♜xe7+ ♜xe7
16 fxe7

197



Q 7-21. What should Black play?

When analysing the consequences of 9...♞d4, Black should have reached this position, which if White wishes can be reached by force. It is on the evaluation of it that the evaluation of Black's 9th move also largely depends.

16...♙xe7?, as played in the game, is incorrect in view of 17 b3! with the threat of 18 ♙b2. Black cannot avoid the loss of a pawn.

As was shown by John Van der Wiel, correct was 16...d3! 17 ♞e1 ♙f3 18 ♞e3 ♙e2 19 b3 ♙d7 20 ♙b2 f6 and 21...♞he8 with equality. In view of this variation, Van der Wiel suggested that the opponent should have taken on e7 not with his queen, but with his pawn. After 15 fxe7 ♜xe7 16 ♜xe7+ ♙xe7 17 b3 things reduce to the position from the game that is advantageous to White. He also judges 15...♜d7 16 ♞f1 to be in his favour (now if 16...♜c6 there is 17 f3).

I do not agree with this last evaluation. Black would have retained good counterplay by 16...♜f5! (threatening 17...♙f3) 17 f3 d3 18 ♜e3 ♙d7 19 b3 ♞he8. And this means that the knight thrust on move 9 was objectively not a mistake.

16 ... ♙xe7?



17 b3! ♞he8

If 17...d5 there follows 18 ♞e1+! ♙d7 19 ♙b2 dxc4 20 bxc4 and, thanks to the intermediate check, the rook is unable to defend the d4 pawn.

18 ♙b2 d3
19 ♙xg7 ♙d7

Q 7-22. What should White play?

Little is promised by 20 ♞e1?! ♙f3 (20...d5!?) 21 ♞e3 ♞xe3 22 fxe3 f5 or 22...♙e2, when White's extra pawn is hardly felt at all.

20 ♞dc1!

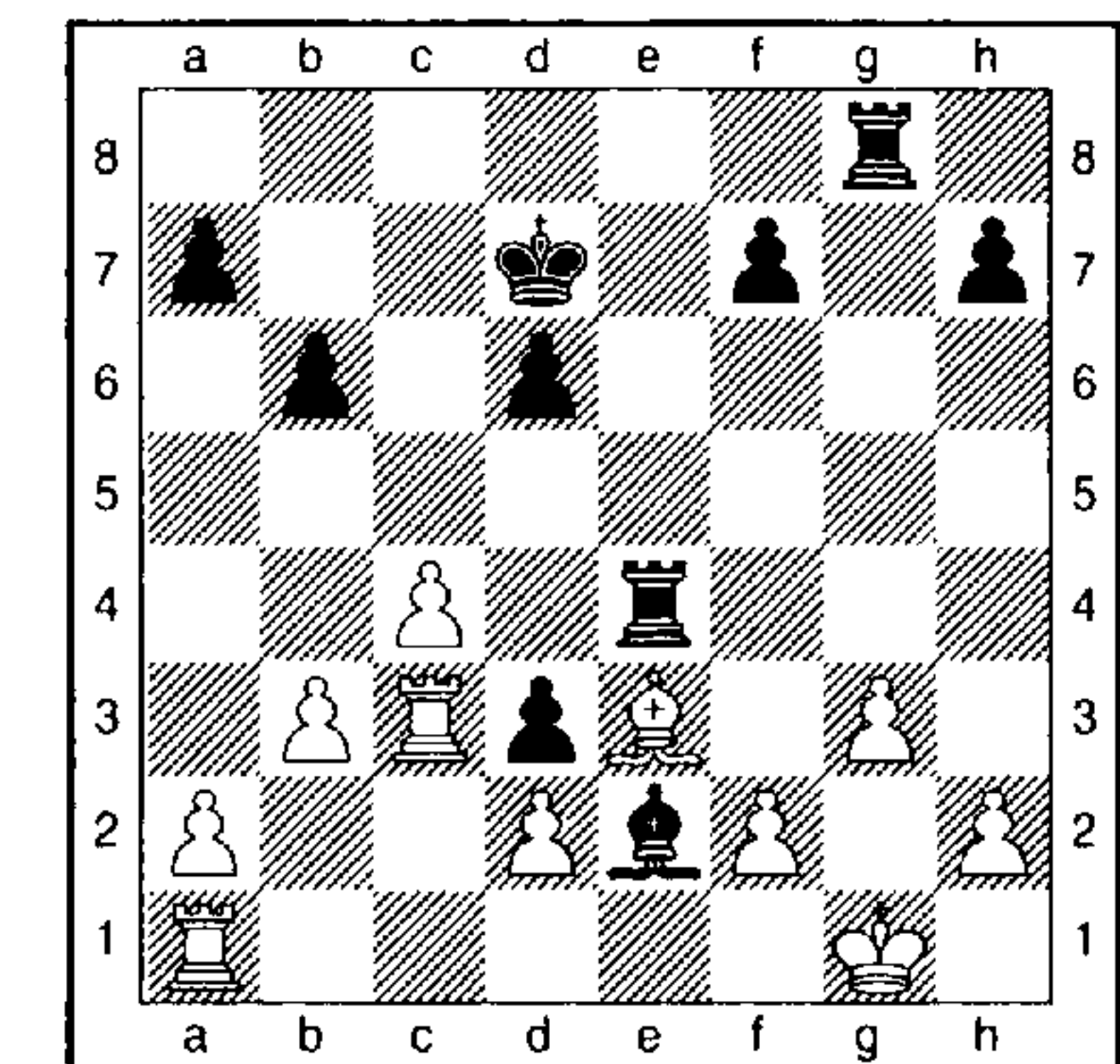
An excellent manoeuvre! The rook is switched to c3 in order to tie the bishop to the defence of the d3 pawn and thus hinder the opponent's counterplay on the e-file (if now 20...♞e2, then 21 ♙h6, with the idea of shutting in the rook by ♙e3). It will also be harder for Black to decide on ...d6–d5, since he has to reckon with the reply c4–c5. In addition, from c3 the rook will take part in White's planned offensive on the queenside. Can more be asked of one move?

20 ... ♙f3
21 ♞c3 ♙e2
22 ♙d4

Many players, especially those with an intuitive way of thinking, are not accustomed to prolonged tension, and they typically relax after they have successfully solved the main problems. How else can one explain this and some of the subsequent inaccuracies, committed by Seirawan? There was no need to transfer the bishop to a more solid position – it was more logical with 22 a4! to immediately begin an offensive on the queenside.

22 ... ♞e4
23 ♙e3 ♞g8

198



Q 7-23. How should White continue?

Unexpectedly the opponent has acquired the dangerous threat of ...f7–f5–f4, against which urgent measures have to be taken.

24 f3!

It is important to vacate the f2 square for the king. After 24...♙xf3 25 ♞xd3 White retains an obvious advantage. Also bad is 24...♞xe3 25 dxe3 d2 26 ♙f2 d1 ♜ 27 ♞xd1 ♙xd1 28 ♞c1 – the bishop is trapped, and the rook ending is won for White.

24 ... ♞h4!?

Black does not allow the enemy king to go to f2.

25 ♙g2?!

Again White follows a good move with a superficial one. For the second time Seirawan incorrectly delays his attack on the queenside. Why defend the f3 pawn, if all the same it cannot be taken (25...♙xf3? 26 ♙f2)? Very strong was 25 b4!, e.g. 25...d5! (25...f5 26 f4 ♞hg4 27 ♞a3; 25...♙c6 26 b5+ ♙b7 27 a4) 26 cxd5 ♞xb4 27 ♙f2 with the inevitable invasion by the white rook onto the 7th rank.

25 ... f5
26 f4

Forced. Black was threatening 26...f4



27 ♔f2 fxg3 28 hxg3 ♖f4, and if 26 ♔f2 there would have followed 26...♖f4.

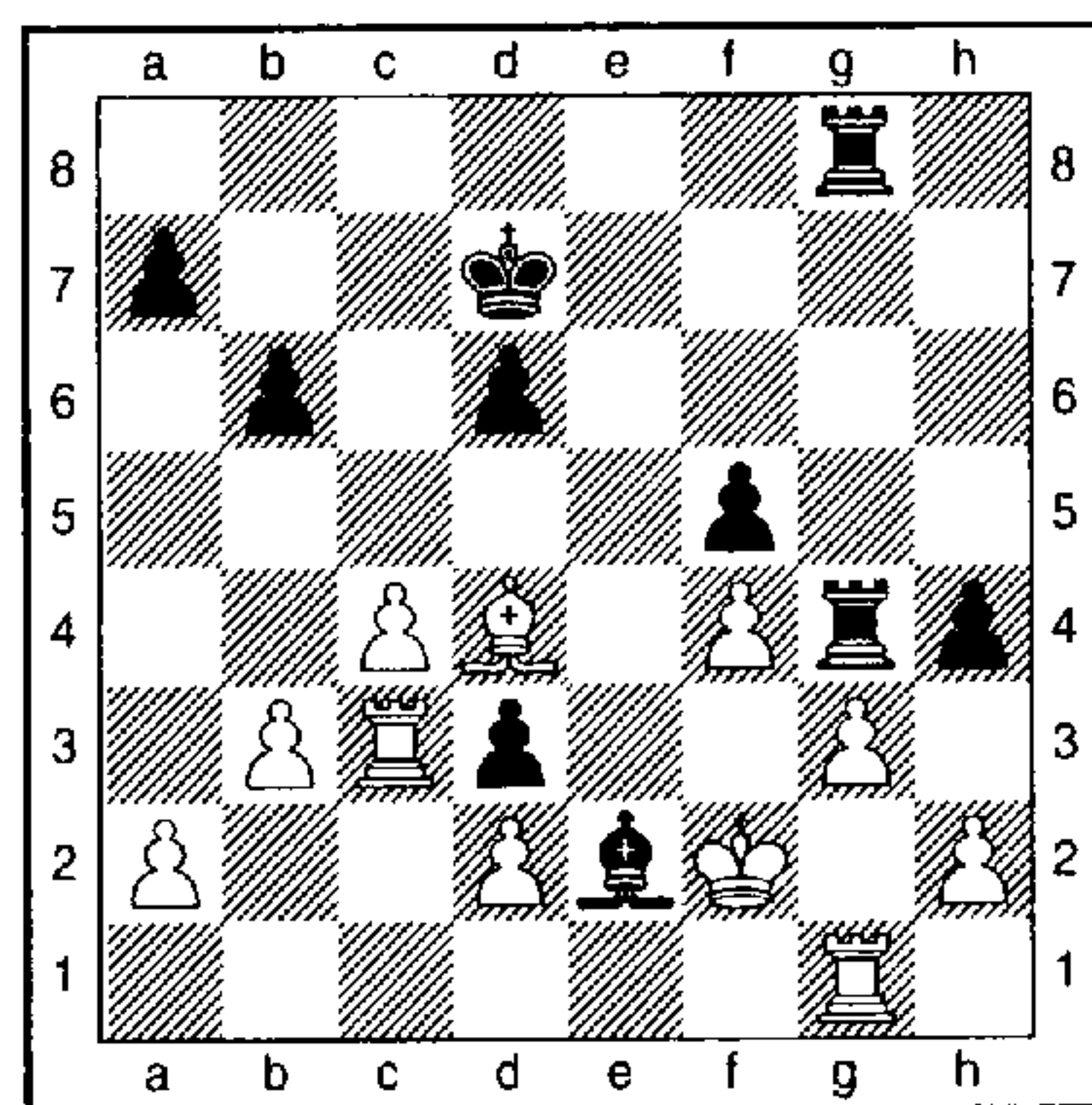
26 ... ♖hg4
27 ♔f2

It is now obvious that with his 25th move White lost an important tempo.

27 ... h5
28 ♖g1 h4
29 ♔d4

White has to reckon with the threat of 29...hxg3+, and if 30 hxg3 ♖h8, intending 31...♖h2+ 32 ♖g2 ♖h1.

199



Q 7-24. What should Black play?

It is clear that he must renew the threat of counterplay on the h-file, by placing a rook on g6. But which rook? Van der Wiel failed to solve this problem.

29 ... ♖4g6?!

29...♖8g6! was correct. We will see the explanation a little later.

30 ♖cc1

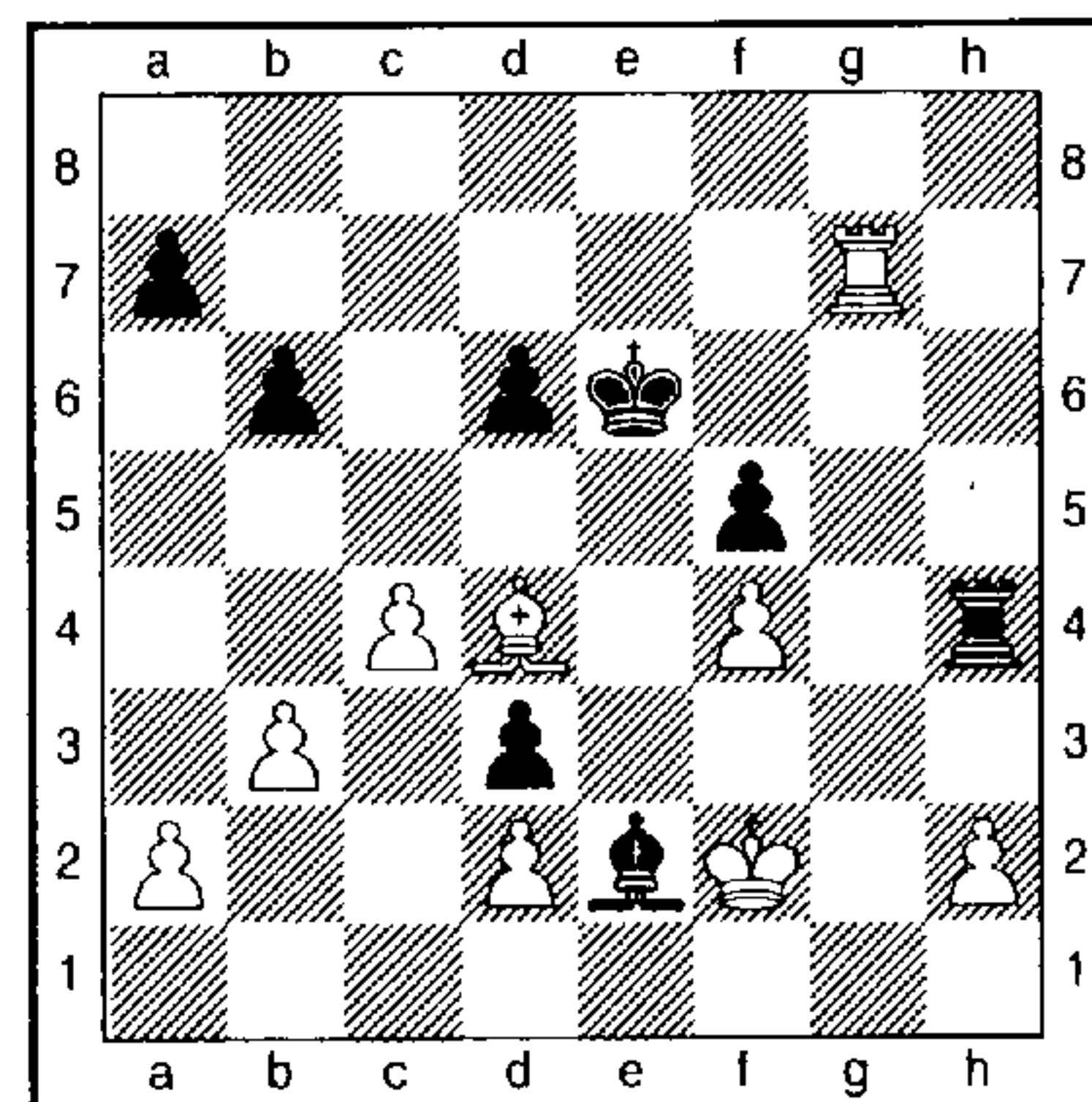
If 30 b4?!, then Black has the unpleasant 30...♖h6 31 ♖a3 hxg3+ 32 hxg3 a5! 33 bxa5 bxa5 34 ♖xa5 ♖h2+ 35 ♖g2 ♖h1, when it is not easy for the king to hide from the pursuit.

30 ... ♖h6
31 gxh4!

After 29...♖8g6! 30 ♖cc1 ♖h6 the black rook would have remained at g4, and White would not have had this advantageous relieving of the tension, as well as 31 h3!?, another possible move here. To be fair I should mention that, by continuing 31 a4 ♔c6 32 b4, White would still have retained the advantage.

31 ... ♖xg1
32 ♖xg1 ♖xh4
33 ♖g7+ ♔e6

200



Q 7-25. What should White play?

The critical moment of the game. Now it was possible to transpose into a won ending with opposite-colour bishops by 34 ♖g6+! (it is useful first to drive the black king back) 34...♔d7 35 ♔g3! ♖g4+ 36 ♖xg4 fxg4 37 f5 ♔e7 38 ♔f4, or 36...♔xg4 37 ♔h4 ♔e6 38 h3! ♔f3 39 ♔g5 (Van der Wiel). It should be mentioned that even the less accurate 34 ♔g3 does not throw away the win, e.g. 34...♖g4+ 35 ♖xg4 fxg4 36 ♔f2! followed by ♔e3 and b3-b4-b5.

34 ♔e3?? ♖h3!

Obviously, Seirawan had only reckoned on 34...♖xh2+? 35 ♔g3 ♖h1 36 ♖xa7 and he overlooked his opponent's simple reply, preventing the white king from moving



forward and creating the threat of 35...♖f3+ 36 ♔g2 (36 ♔e1 ♖f1 mate) 36...♖xe3! 37 dxe3 d2.

Such oversights cost a player dearly. He immediately becomes overwhelmed by emotions: disillusionment, resentment at the 'unjust' turn of events, and anger directed at himself. It can be very hard to retain your composure and soberly evaluate the changed situation. As a result, new mistakes follow...

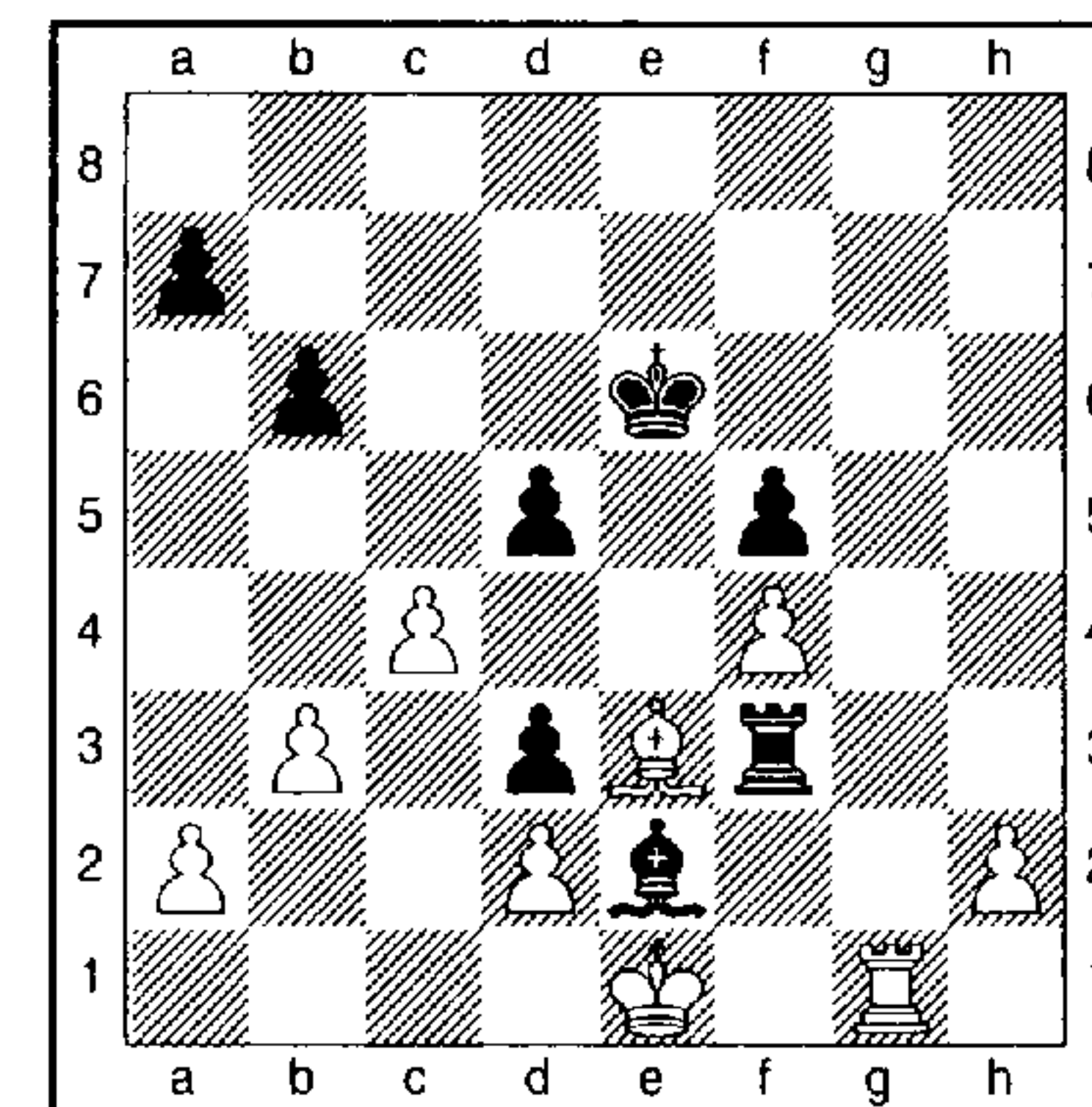
Now White should have realised that his last move had irretrievably thrown away all winning chances and that it was time to think about a safe way to draw. Then he would have played 35 ♖g3 ♖xh2+ 36 ♖g2 with equality.

35 ♔e1?! ♖f3
36 ♖g1

36 ♔f2 ♖xf4 37 ♖xa7 ♖e4 was risky for White.

36 ... d5!

201



Q 7-26. What should White play?

Black is threatening 37...d4! 38 ♔xd4 ♖xf4. The f5 pawn becomes passed, and by moving to f4 it deprives the bishop of the important e3 square. Despite White's extra pawn, his position will be difficult. The

reason is that the opponent retains an attack, and attacks with opposite-colour bishops are extremely dangerous even when there is little material left on the board. He should have exchanged on d5: 37 cxd5+! ♔xd5. This position is also dangerous, but nevertheless White has a clear way to draw, and not only one way:

38 h4!? ♖h3 (38...♔e4 39 ♖h1) 39 ♔f2 ♔e4 40 ♖g3! ♖h1+ (40...♖h2 41 ♖e3+) 41 ♖g1 ♖h3 (41...♖h2? 42 ♔g3 ♖h3 43 ♔f2) 42 ♖g3;

38 ♔f2!? ♖xf4 39 ♖g7 ♖e4 40 ♖d7+! ♔c6 41 ♖d4 ♖e8 42 ♔e3 and 43 ♔f2.

37 h4? d4!
38 ♔xd4 ♖xf4
39 ♔f2 ♖e4
40 ♖g7 f4
41 ♖xa7 ♔g4+
42 ♔f1 ♖e2
43 ♖a6 ♖xd2
44 c5 ♔f5!

Not 44...♖d1+? 45 ♔g2 d2 46 ♖xb6+ ♔e5 47 ♖d6, but 44...♖c2! would also have won.

45 cxb6 ♔e4

All Black's forces take part in the attack.

46 ♖a4+

Also hopeless is 46 ♔e1 ♖d1 followed by 47...d2.

46 ... ♔f3
47 ♖xf4+ ♔xf4
48 b7 ♖d1+
49 ♔e1 ♖xe1+
50 ♔xe1 ♔e3

White resigns: after 51 b8♖ d2+ 52 ♔f1 d1♖+ he is mated.

In conclusion I should mention that, when he lost a pawn, Van der Wiel did not go onto the defensive, but, on the contrary, played aggressively and skilfully maintained the tension, which was what, in the end, provoked his opponent's mistakes.



A Course in Tactics

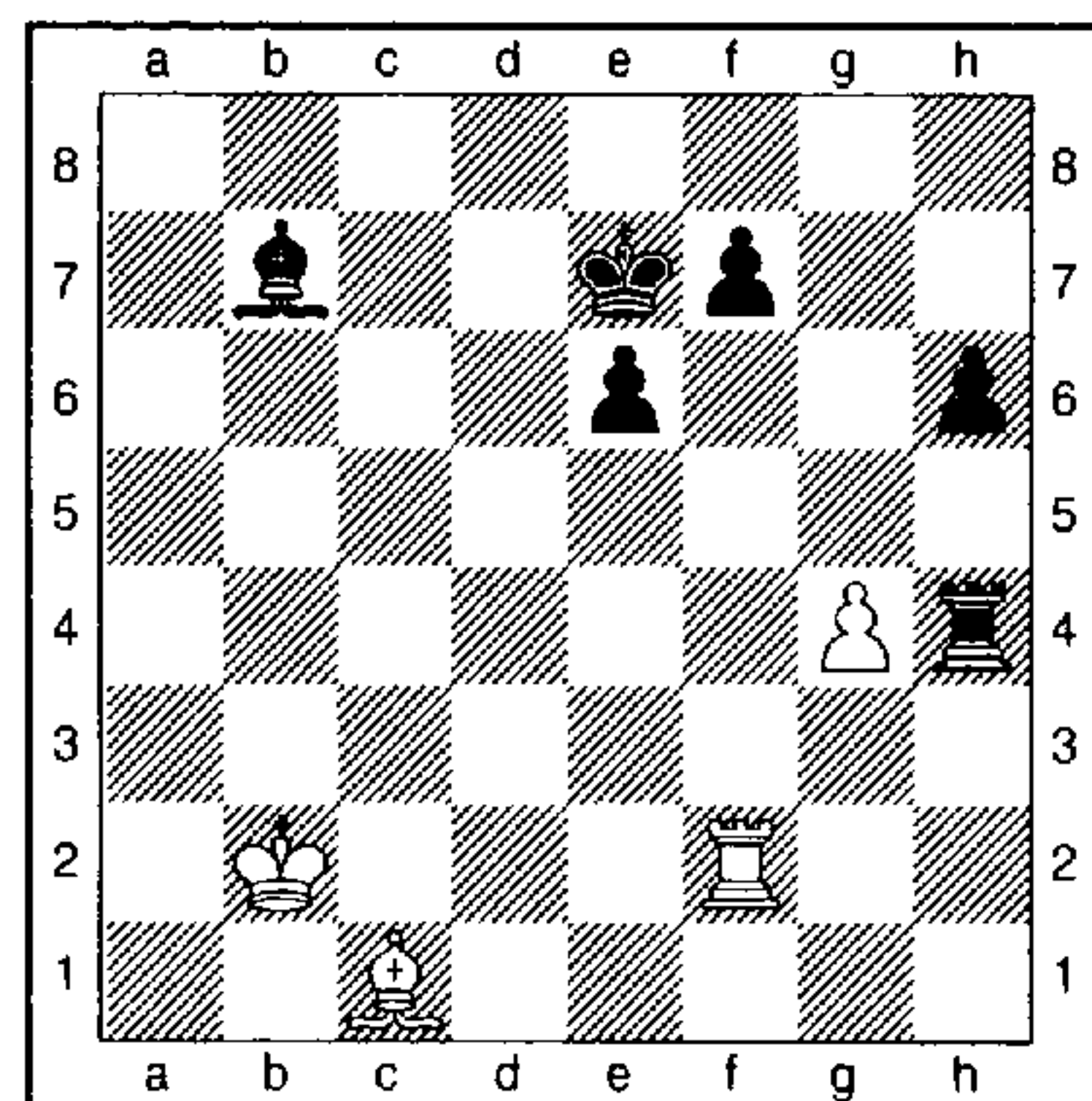
The ability to find combinations is an integral characteristic of good play, just as much as a knowledge of the openings or skill in conducting the endgame.

Rudolf Spielmann

Psychologists consider that the best form of relaxation is by no means idleness, but the temporary switching to another form of activity. For this reason I am inviting you, not for long, to break off our discussion of strategic or technical problems in favour of a lighter and more pleasant occupation – a search for tactical blows and combinations. In simple positions tactics probably play no less a role than in the middlegame, but they are usually rather different in character. Here there are far fewer mating combinations, but on the other hand specifically endgame themes appear: stalemate, fortress, and, in particular, pawn promotion.

Dvoretsky – Albur
Dubna 1970

202



Q 7-27. What should White play?

With his last move the opponent made a mistake (41...♔d7-e7? instead of 41...♔d7-

e8!), which White was able to exploit.

42 g5! h5
43 g6! f6
44 ♔g5!!

The bishop is immune (44...fxg5?? 45 g7), and a draw becomes inevitable.

44...♖g4 45 ♔xf6+ ♔d6 46 g7 e5 47 ♖f5 h4

If 47...♔e6 the simplest reply is 48 ♖g5, since after 48 ♔g5?! ♔xf5 49 g8♗ ♔e4 the bishop at g5 is lost.

48 ♖xe5 (threatening 49 ♔g5) 48...♔d5. Draw.

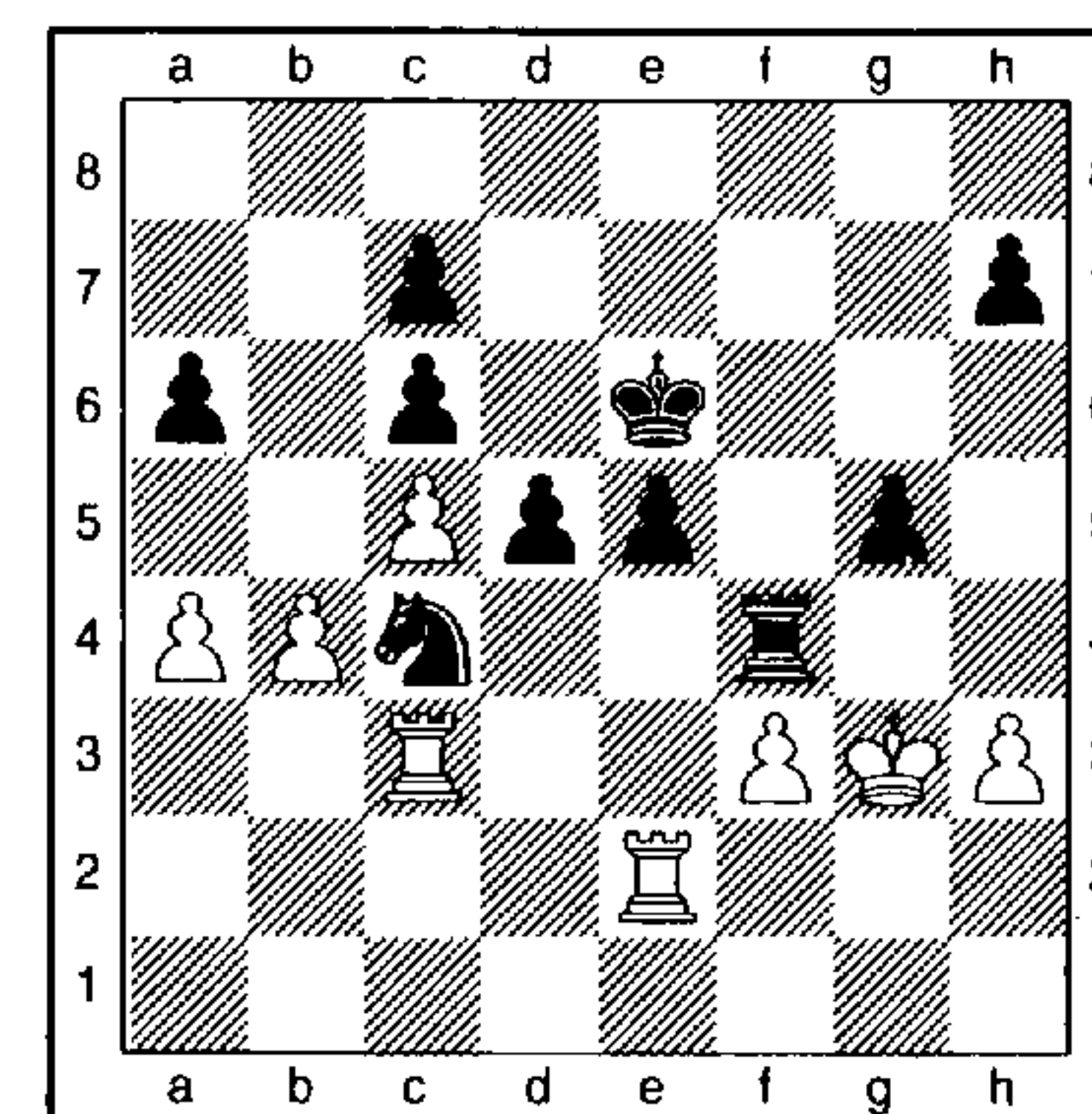
In this unpretentious combination two tactical procedures are used: double attack and interference – take note of them. The first is in general an extremely important one in chess. A chapter is devoted to it in Volume 2 of this series – ‘Tactical Play’. The second plays a major role in the endgame, where it is used not only as a tactical, but also a strategic device. Remember at least the ‘bridge’ in the basic Lucena position (rook and pawn against rook) or rook endings that transform into the endgame rook against pawns – they are described in Volume 1 of this series – ‘Endgame Analysis’.

see next diagram



K. Ivanov – Dvoretsky
Friendly game, Moscow 1964

203



Q 7-28. What should Black play?

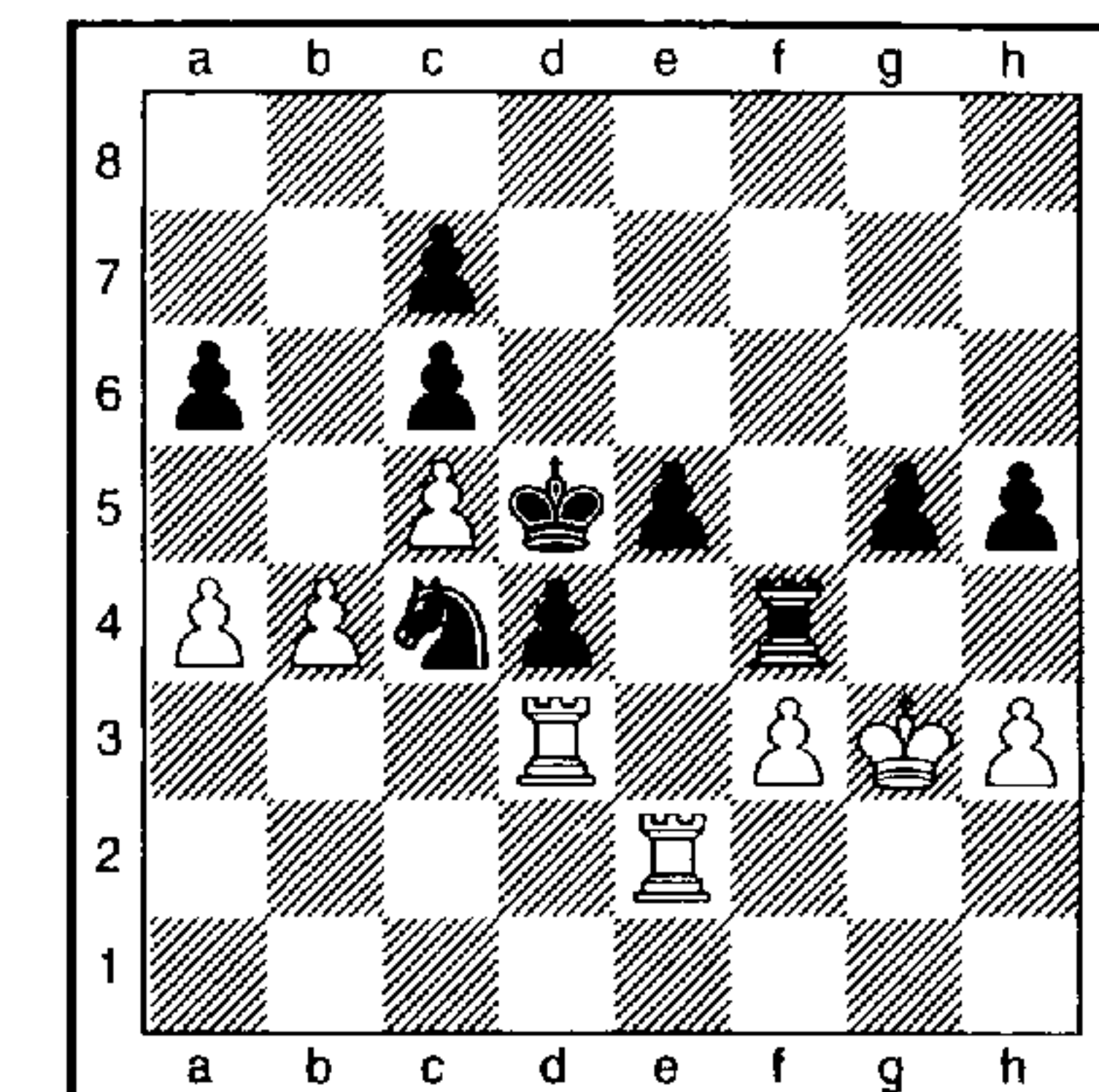
Black has a great positional advantage. Of course, he can act in various ways, e.g. 35...h5 or 35...♖d4. But I was attracted by the elegant move in the game, enabling me to activate my king.

35 ... d4!
36 ♖c1

In the event of 36 ♖xc4 d3 Black regains his rook (37 ♖ee4 ♖xe4 and 38...d2).

36 ... ♔d5
37 ♖d1 h5
38 ♖d3

204



38 ... ♔e3!

Again ‘tactics at the service of strategy’. For the second time Black sacrifices his knight, and now it has to be taken. 39...♔c4 or 39...h4+ 40 ♔f2 e4 is threatened.

39 ♖xe3 ♔c4

The rook is regained, and the rook ending is won.

40 ♖xe5 h4+!
41 ♔f2 ♔xd3
42 ♖xg5 ♔c3
43 ♖g7 d3
44 ♖g1

If 44 ♖xc7, then 44...♖d4 (interference!) 45 ♔e1 ♔c2.

44 ... ♖xb4
45 ♔e3 ♖b2?!

45...d2 would have won more simply.

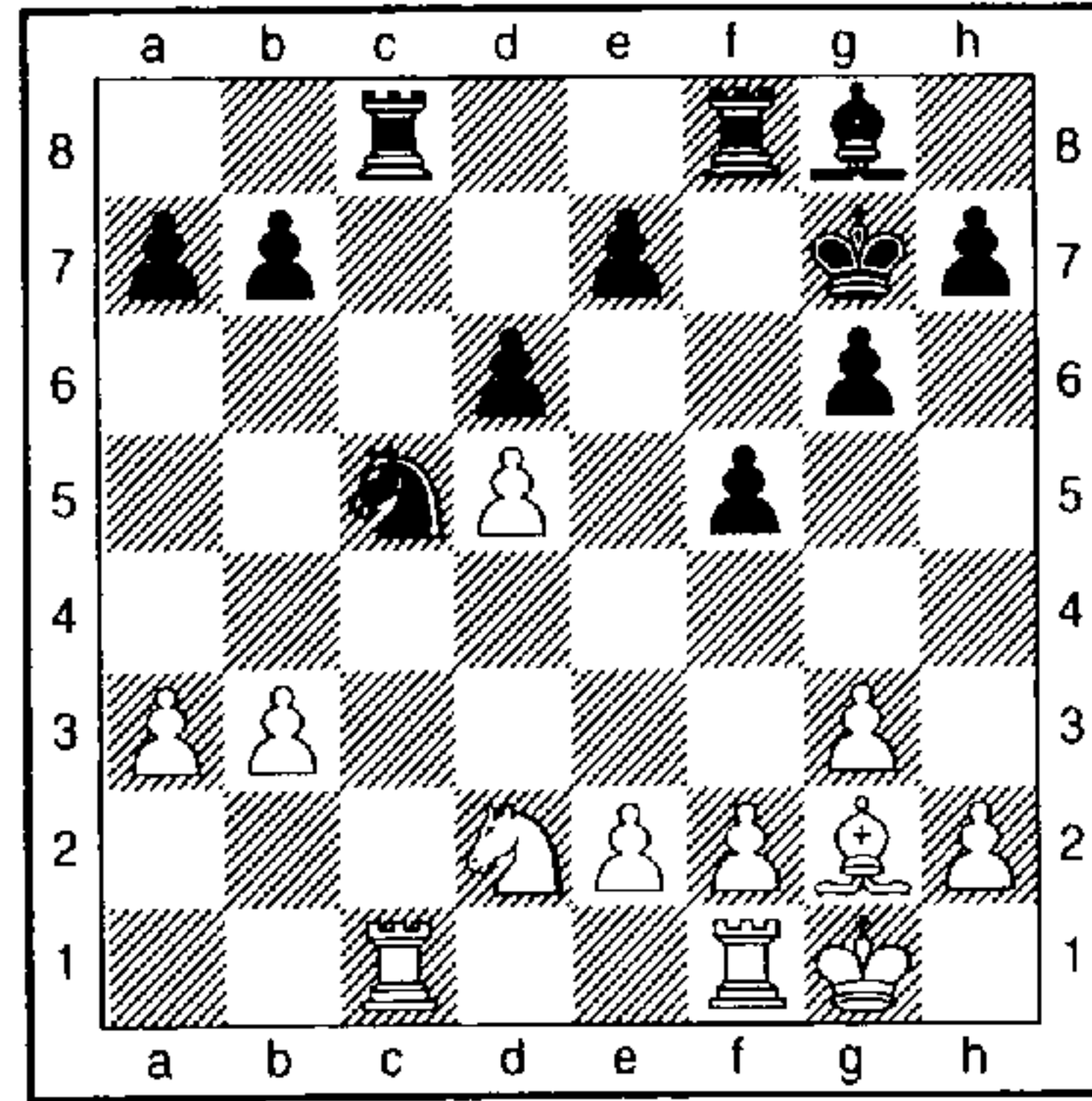
46 ♖e1 ♔c2?!

White resigned, not noticing that he could still have put up some resistance by 47 ♖a1. However, after 47...a5!? 48 f4 d2 49 ♔e2 ♖b4 50 ♖a2+ ♔c3(b3) his position is all the same hopeless.



C. Hansen – Yusupov
Groningen 1992

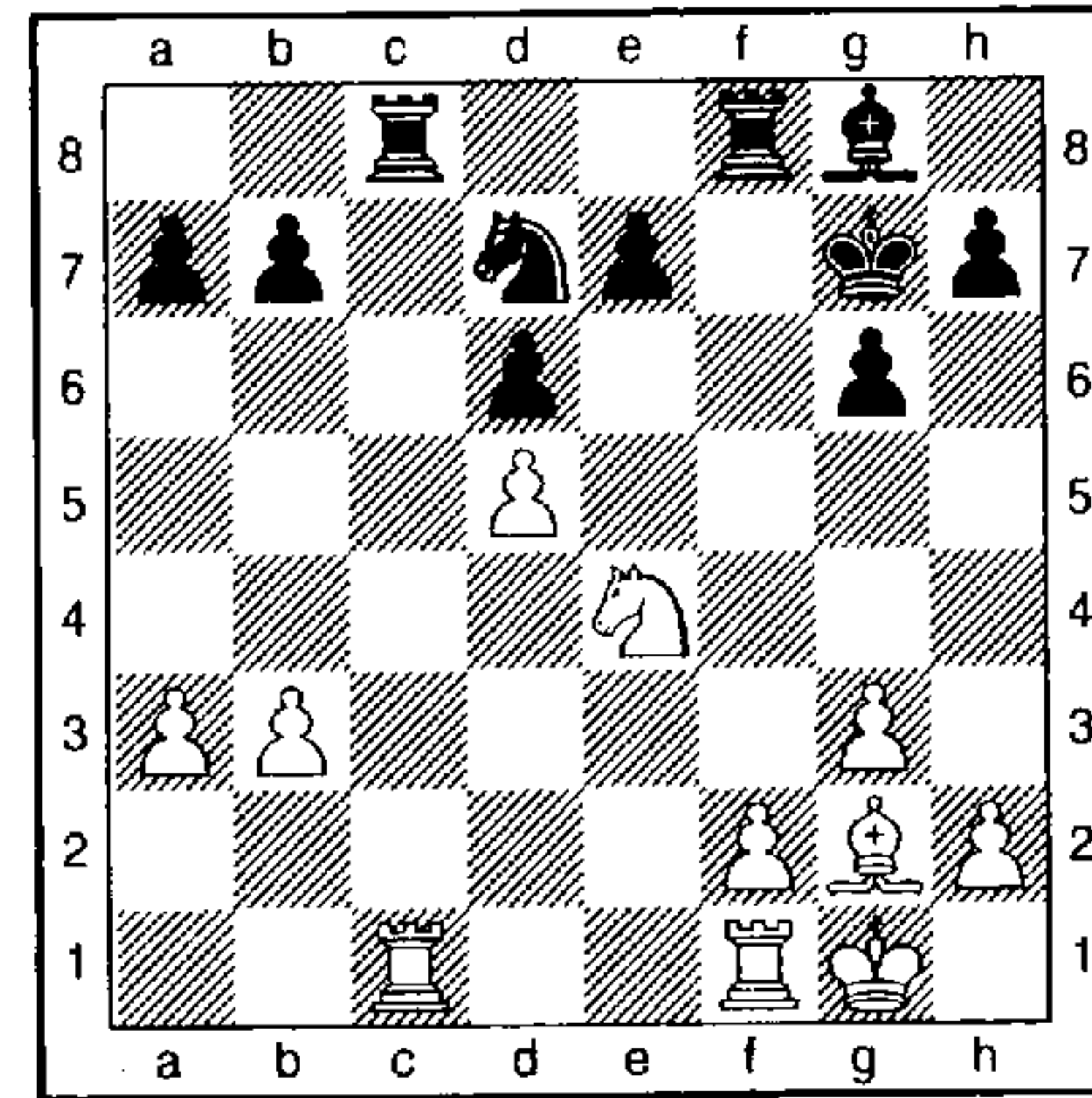
205



tries to solve the problem of the d5 pawn in a tactical way.

21 dxe4

206



Q 7-29. What should Black play?

The main defect of White's position is his d5 pawn. It is blocking the diagonal of the g2 bishop, transforming into a 'bad' one. But he also does not want to lose it, and this may well happen. After all, the ill-fated pawn has broken away from White's main forces, as is emphasised by Yusupov's next move.

19 ... d7!

An excellent manoeuvre. 20... f6 or 20... b6 is threatened. If, taking into account the topic of this chapter, you were looking for tactics for Black, you would have been wrong (the combination still lies ahead). Both in training, and in a practical game, try to start in your searches from the demands of the position, and not from a viewpoint adopted beforehand (the origin of which is sometimes uncertain).

20 e4 fxe4

Now 21 xe4 f6 or 21 xc8 xc8 22 h3 c7 is clearly unfavourable. In the event of the immediate 21 h3 the following variation is possible: 21... xc1 22 xc1 e5 23 c7 xd5 24 xe7+ f7 25 xf7+ xf7 26 g2 f3+ , and Black wins. Curt Hansen

Q 7-30. What should Black play?

Of course, he would like to take on d5. Yusupov rejected 21... xd5! , after calculating the variation 22 xc8 (22 g5 xb3) 22... xc8 23 xd6 xg2 24 xc8 xf1 25 xf1 , in which White not only regains his pawn, but also simultaneously attacks two enemy pawns.

And yet that is what Black should have played. In the final position of the variation the white knight is trapped on a completely empty board: 25... a6! 26 xe7 (... f8-e8-d8 was threatened) 26... b6! 27 a4 a5! , with the deadly threat of 28... f7 . An amazing finish!

21 ... b6?
22 c3

By defending his d5 pawn, White has almost equalised. After 22... a6 Black could still have set his opponent some problems, but he played less accurately.

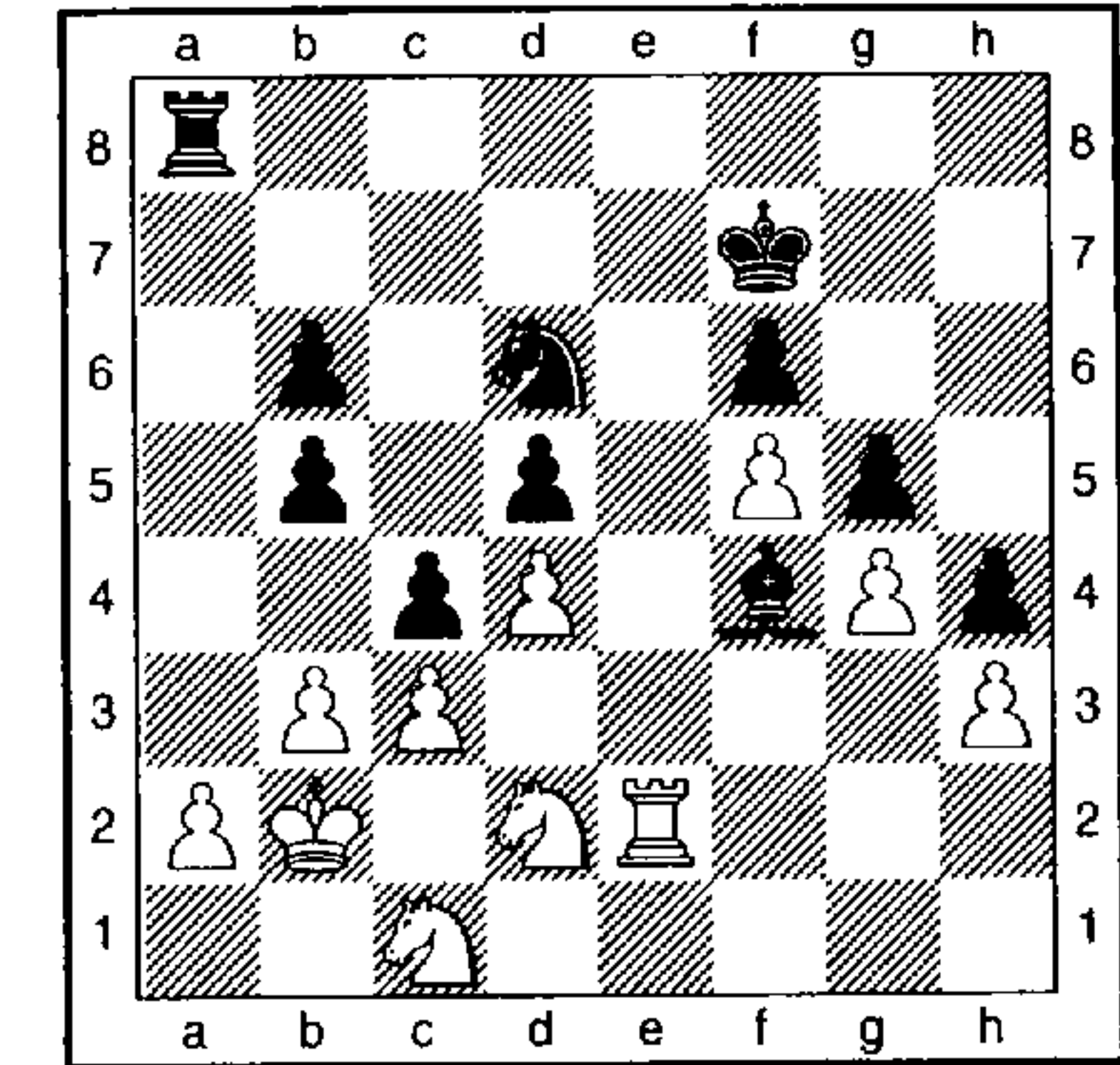
22 ... c7?!
23 b5! xc1
24 xc1 xd5

Draw. 25 xd5 xd5 26 c7! (26 xa7?)



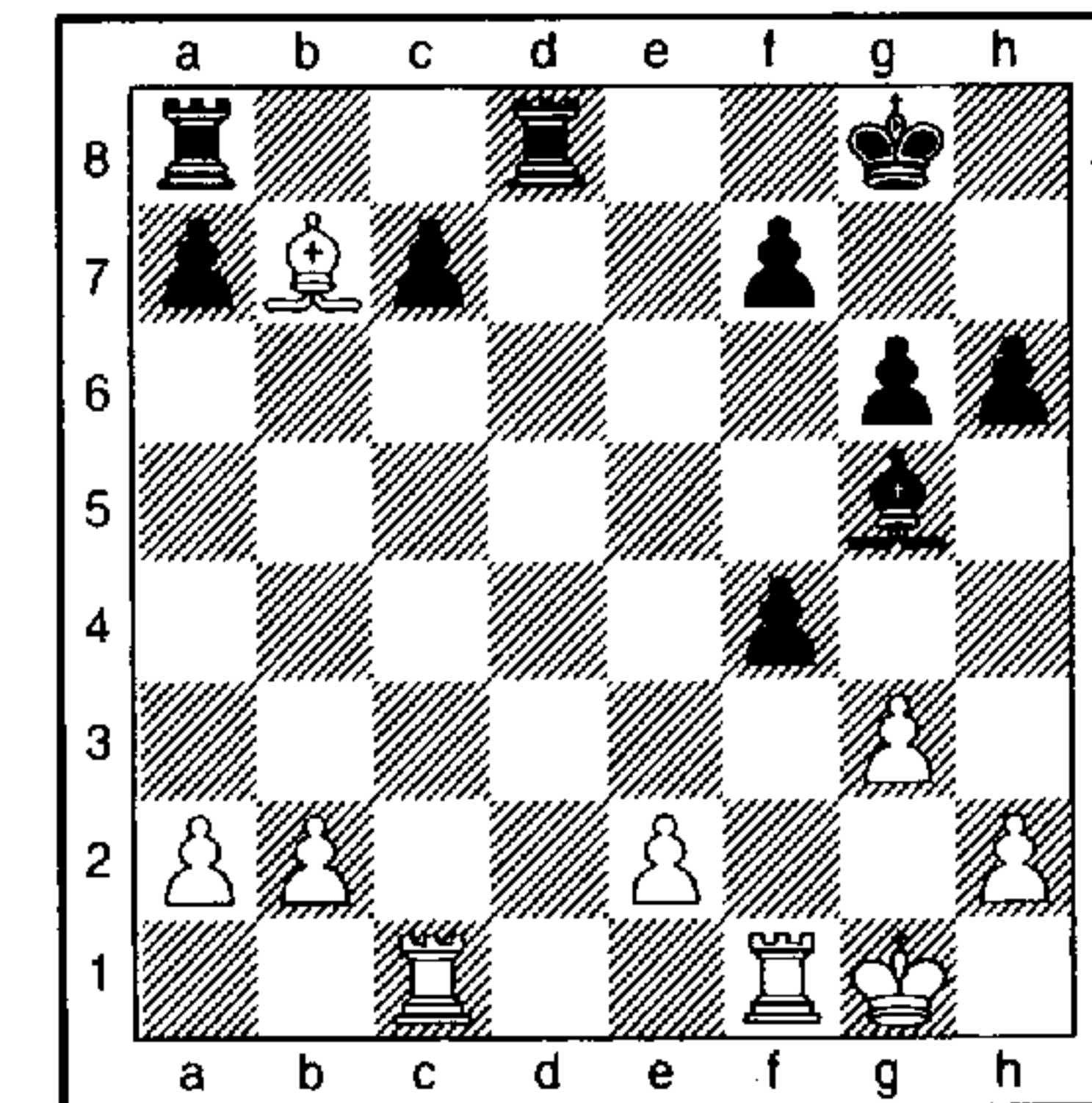
f3) 26... f5 27 xd5 xd5 28 c7 b5 29 xe7+ is possible, but the immediate 25 c7 is simpler, with equality.

E 7-7
208



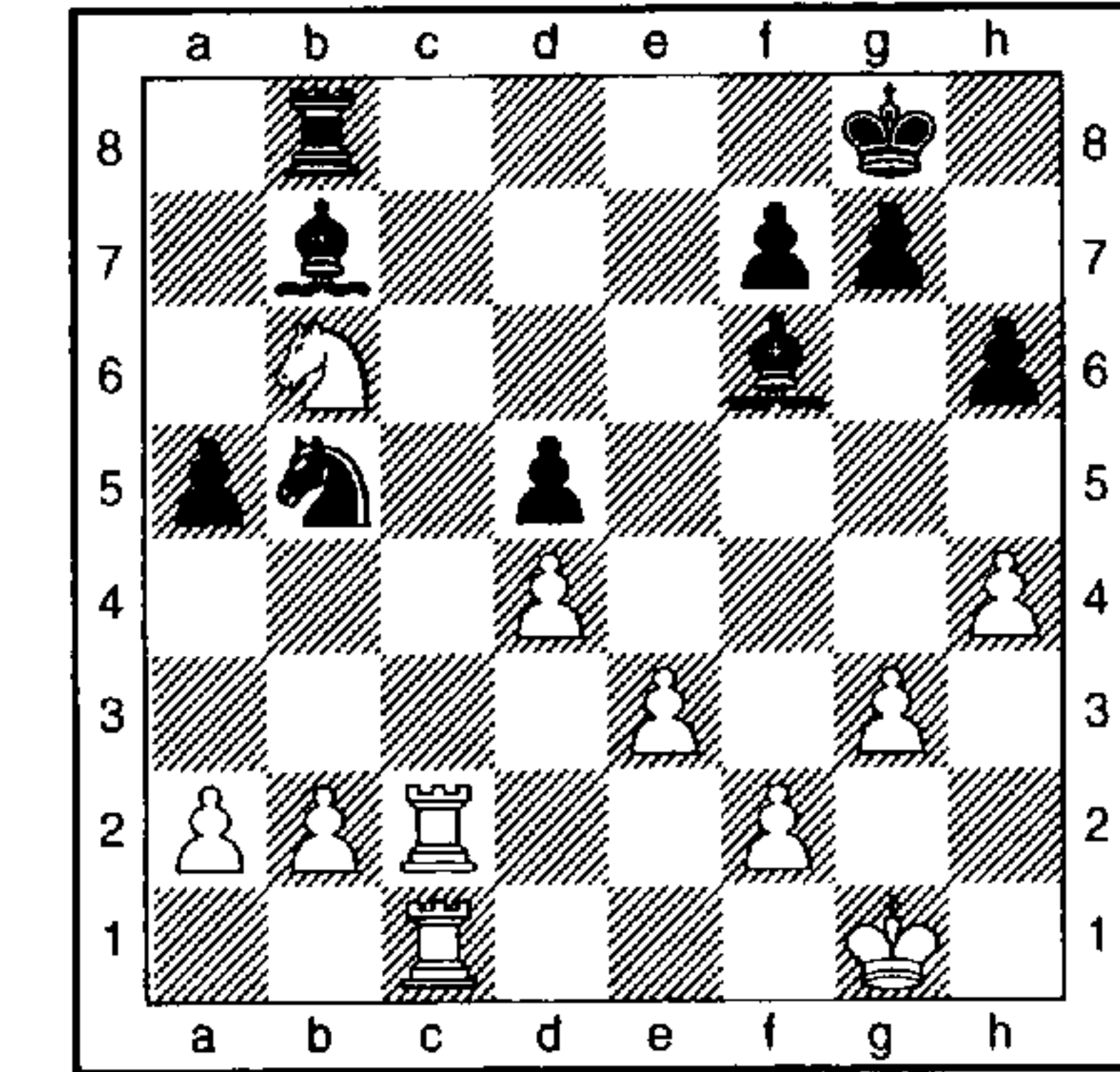
Black to move

E 7-6
207



Black to move

E 7-8
209



Black to move



Defend Actively!

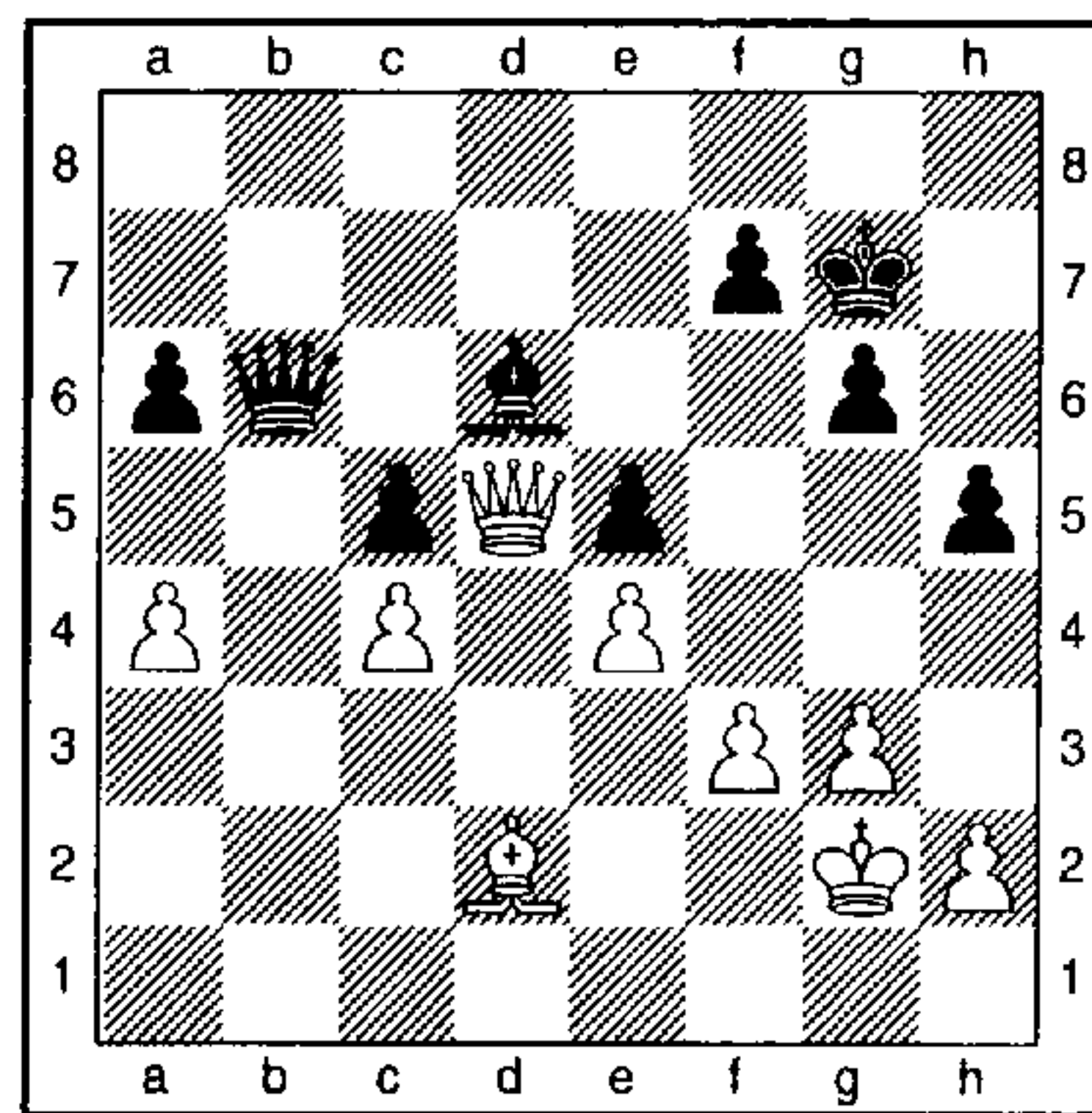
A counterattack is never premature.

Saviely Tartakower

The problem of defending difficult positions was discussed in detail in the previous volume of this series, 'Tactical Play'. There attention was mainly devoted to the art of sharply changing the unfavourable course of events, diverting the opponent from the consistent realisation of his advantage. Active strategy is justified not only in the middlegame, but also when there is a small number of pieces on the board.

Gabdrakhmanov – Yusupov
USSR Schoolboys Championship,
Riga 1977

210



Black stands badly, since he has a bad, very bad bishop. But even such positions can be successfully defended.

46 ... ♗c7!

It is important to free the queen for active measures. For example, 47 ♗e3 ♖b2+ 48 ♗f2 ♗a5! 49 ♖xc5 ♗c3 with sufficient counterplay.

47 ♗c3

Q 7-31. How should Black continue?

Passive defence is unpromising: 47...f6 48 ♖d7+ ♗g8 49 ♗d2 ♖d6 50 ♖e8+ ♗g7 51 ♗h6+!, or 47...♖d6 48 f4 with a great advantage to White. Therefore Artur decides on a material sacrifice.

47 ... ♗b3!!
48 ♗xe5+ ♗xe5
49 ♖xe5+ ♗g8
50 ♖xc5 ♖c2+
51 ♖f2

White returns one of his two extra pawns, since he does not see how he can suppress the opponent's counterplay after 51 ♗h3 ♖e2!

51 ... ♖xc4
52 a5 ♖b4!

It is important not to allow the enemy queen to go to d2.

53 ♖a2 ♖e1

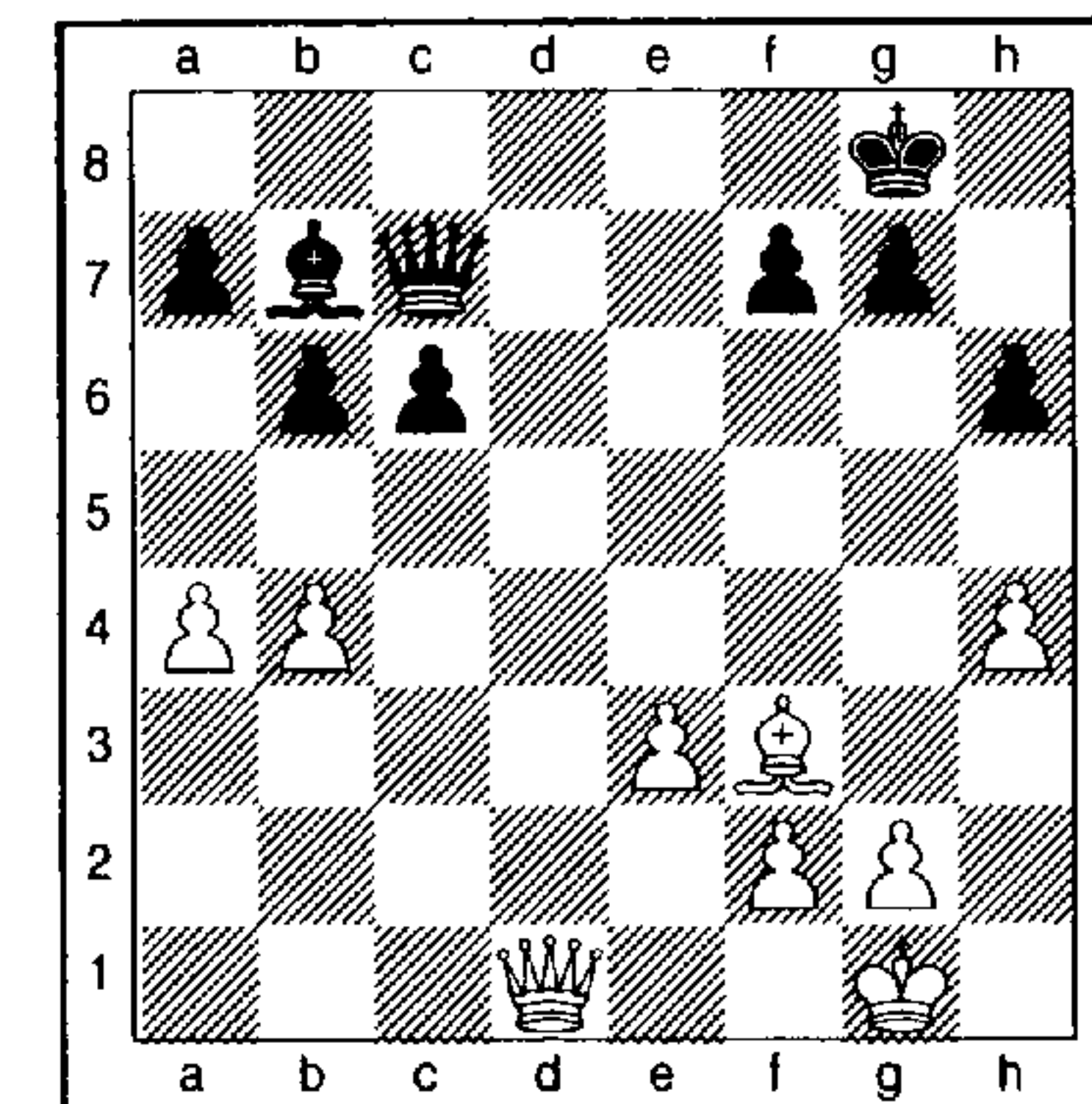
White's forces are tied down, and his extra pawn is not felt at all. The game later ended in a draw.

see next diagram



Portisch – Timman
Candidates Match, 1st Game,
Antwerp 1989

211



Q 7-32. What would you play as White?

As in the previous example, White's advantage is determined by his more active bishop and queen. But whereas there the black bishop was chronically 'bad', here it has real chances of coming into play after ...c6-c5 or ...♗c8-e6. It immediately becomes clear what White must prevent.

Before analysing the various prophylactic moves, let's consider the transition into a queen ending by 26 b5. In the event of 26...cxb5 27 ♗xb7 ♖xb7 28 ♖d8+! ♗h7 29 ♖d3+ and 30 axb5 one of White's pawns holds two black pawns, which secures him a definite positional advantage. 26...c5 27 ♗xb7 ♖xb7 is stronger. After 28 ♖d6 Black experiences some difficulties, since for the moment he cannot play actively: 28...c4 29 ♖c6 or 28...♖e4 29 ♖b8+ ♗h7 30 ♖xa7 is unfavourable for him. White, meanwhile, wants to strengthen his position by f2-f3 and e3-e4. But the queen is too mobile a piece for it to be shut out of play for a long time. 28...♖c8 (29 ♖c6 ♖d8; 29 h5 ♖g4) or the waiting move 28...h5 followed by

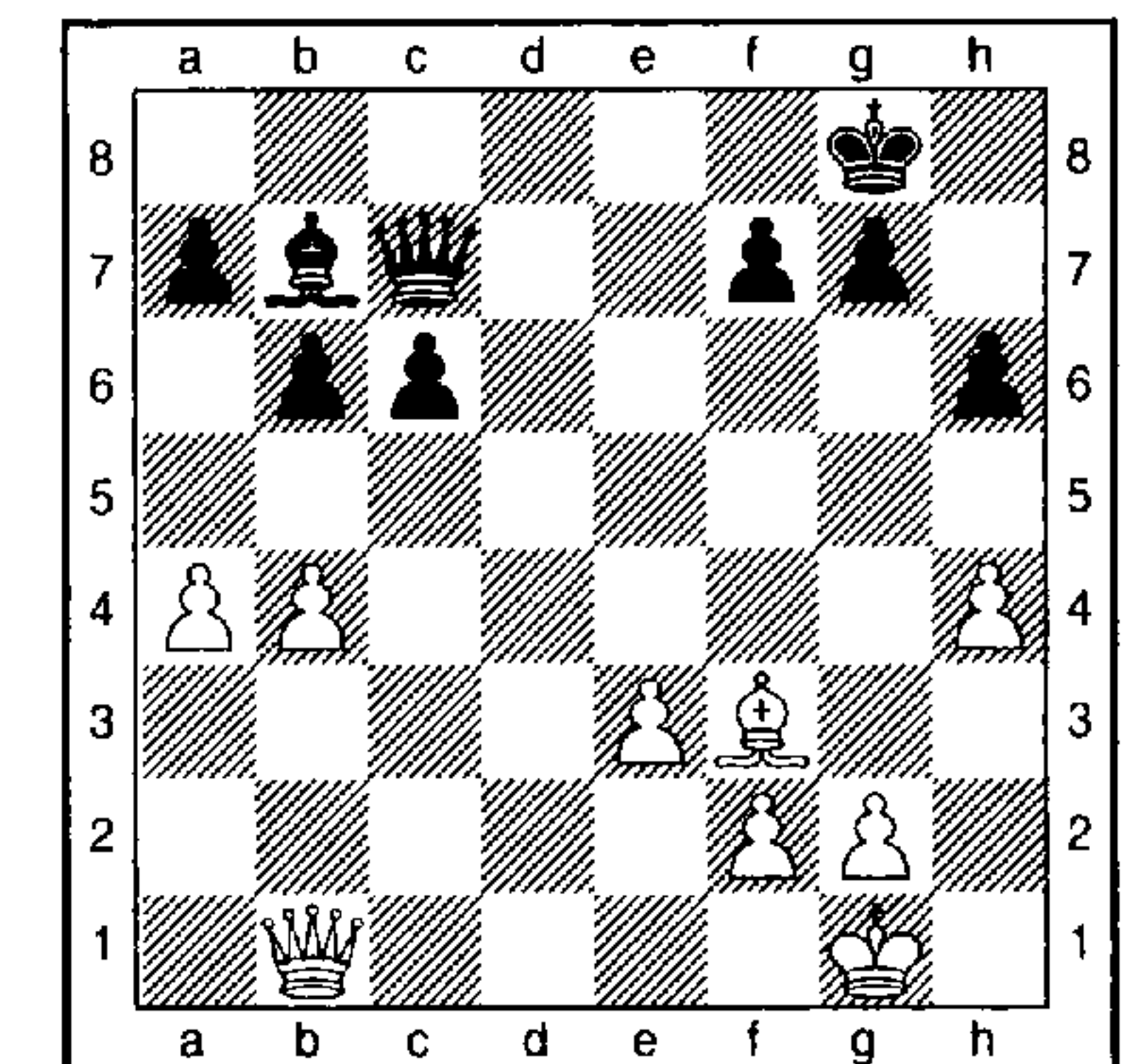
...g7-g6 is possible. Here Black is hardly in danger of losing.

Now about prophylactic moves. You will remember that two attempts to activate the bishop must simultaneously be prevented. If White plays 26 ♖b3?!, not allowing 26...c5, then Black replies 26...♗c8. The move chosen by Lajos Portisch, 26 ♖c2?!, was also unsuccessful, since in this way White does not succeed in preventing ...c6-c5. There followed 26...c5! 27 ♗xb7 ♖xb7 28 bxc5 ♖c6! 29 ♖d3?! (preferable was 29 h5! or 29 f3!?, intending e3-e4 and ♗f2-e3) 29...bxc5 30 ♖d8+ ♗h7 31 ♖d3+ ♗g8 32 ♖d8+ ♗h7 33 ♖d3+ g6 34 ♖c4 ♗g7 35 ♗f1 ♖b6, and the Hungarian grandmaster had to defend for a further 70 moves in an inferior queen ending.

There was only one way for White to retain the initiative.

26 ♖b1!

212



Q 7-33. How should Black defend?

Now 26...c5? 27 ♗xb7 ♖xb7 28 bxc5 is bad for Black, and White wants to play 27 ♖e4 with the threats of 28 b5 and 28 ♖e8+.

After 26...♗c8?! 27 ♖e4 the following variations are possible:

27...♗d7 28 ♖e7 ♖c8 29 a5! c5 (29...♖e8



30 ♖d6) 30 bxc5 bxc5 31 ♙d5, or 31 a6 c4 32 ♙b7 ♖e8 33 ♖c5 with a winning position;

27...c5 28 ♖e8+ ♖h7 29 ♙e4+ (weaker is 29 h5 ♖d7!, when if 30 ♙e4+ there is the reply 30...f5) 29...g6 (29...f5? 30 ♙d5) 30 bxc5 bxc5 31 h5 ♙f5 32 ♙d5 ♖g7 33 e4, and Black experiences great difficulties.

Annotating the game in the magazine 'New in Chess', Luc Winants suggested that 26...a5 27 bxa5 bxa5 28 ♖c2 ♖d6 followed by 29...♖f8 was a better defence. To me his recommendation seems unsuccessful. Instead of 28 ♖c2? White can play much more strongly: 28 ♖f5 ♙c8 29 ♖c5 or 28 ♖e4 ♖d7 29 ♖e5. In addition, the exchange of pawns on a5 is not obligatory – the direct attack is tempting: 27 ♖e4! (threatening 28 b5) 27...axb4 28 ♖e8+ ♖h7 29 ♙e4+ g6 30 h5, e.g. 30...c5 31 hxg6+ fxg6 32 ♖xg6+ ♖h8 33 ♖xh6+ ♖g8 34 ♖g6+ ♖f8 35 ♖f6+ ♖g8 36 ♙d3.

These variations enable us to sense how unpleasant Black's position would have become after the accurate prophylactic move by the opponent. In order to solve his problems, we must also remember about prophylaxis, but from the other side – defend actively, sacrificing a pawn if necessary.

26 ... ♖e7!

The white queen wanted to occupy the important e4 square – Black takes control of it. It is true that 27 ♖e4 is possible even now: after 27...♖xe4 28 ♙xe4 there inevita-

bly follows 29 b5, winning a pawn. But this is nothing terrible, since in the bishop ending the black king comes quickly into play: 28...♖f8 29 b5 ♖e7 30 bxc6 ♙a6 followed by ...♖d6, and at the least Black does not stand worse.

27 ♖f5 is not at all dangerous. The simplest is 27...♖xb4! 28 ♖d7 ♖e1+ 29 ♖h2 ♖xf2, and things end in perpetual check.

27 h5

In 'Informator' Jan Timman considers 26 ♖b1!, and recommends defending by 26...♖e7 27 h5 ♖f8. While the first move of his variation is correct, the second is wrong: Black loses after 27...♖f8? 28 ♖h7 ♖xb4 (28...♖e5 29 b5) 29 ♖h8+ ♖e7 30 ♖b8!

What then can be done? A simple, but elegant tactical idea comes to Black's aid.

27 ... ♙c8!
28 ♙xc6 ♙g4

Black regains his pawn and equalises.

Thus the attempt by White to force events did not lead to anything. He should act in an unhurried manner: 27 g3!, intending a4–a5 and ♙g2 (or ♖g2), followed, depending on circumstances, by play on the kingside, exploiting the pin on the h1–a8 diagonal, or the invasion of his queen on a7 after the opening of the a-file. Although all this looks a little abstract, for the opponent no easy way of untying himself is apparent, the pressure on his position remains, and this means that White retains practical chances of success.



Failure to Take the Initiative

An open file often resembles an open wound.

Saviely Tartakower

I have already emphasised many times that a demonstration of good technique turns out to be especially convincing, when the opponent does not offer a fierce resistance. It is this picture that we see in the following game. After the exchange of queens a roughly equal position arose, and then Black was gradually outplayed. The reason was his unjustified passivity, which White exploited by good technique.

Nesis – Franzen

Correspondence 1979–83

1	d4	♖f6
2	c4	e6
3	♖f3	b6
4	g3	♙b7
5	♙g2	♙e7
6	♖c3	♖e4
7	♙d2	♙f6
8	♖c2	

8 0–0 0–0 9 ♖c1 is also often played. It is quite probable that the opponent will exchange on d2 – then, by refraining from ♖c2, White saves a tempo. However, this is of no particular significance, and the entire opening variation has the reputation of being rather harmless, almost drawn. However, one who would most probably not agree with this evaluation of the variation is Anatoly Karpov, who has gained numerous wins in it. He likes manoeuvring in slightly favourable, quiet positions, looking out for and exploiting the slightest inaccuracy by his opponent.

8	...	♖xd2
9	♖xd2	d6
10	♖d1	

10 d5 or 10 0–0 0–0 11 e4 is more often played.

10	...	♖d7
11	0–0	0–0
12	e4	g6
13	♖fe1	♙g7
14	b3	♖e7
15	♖h4	

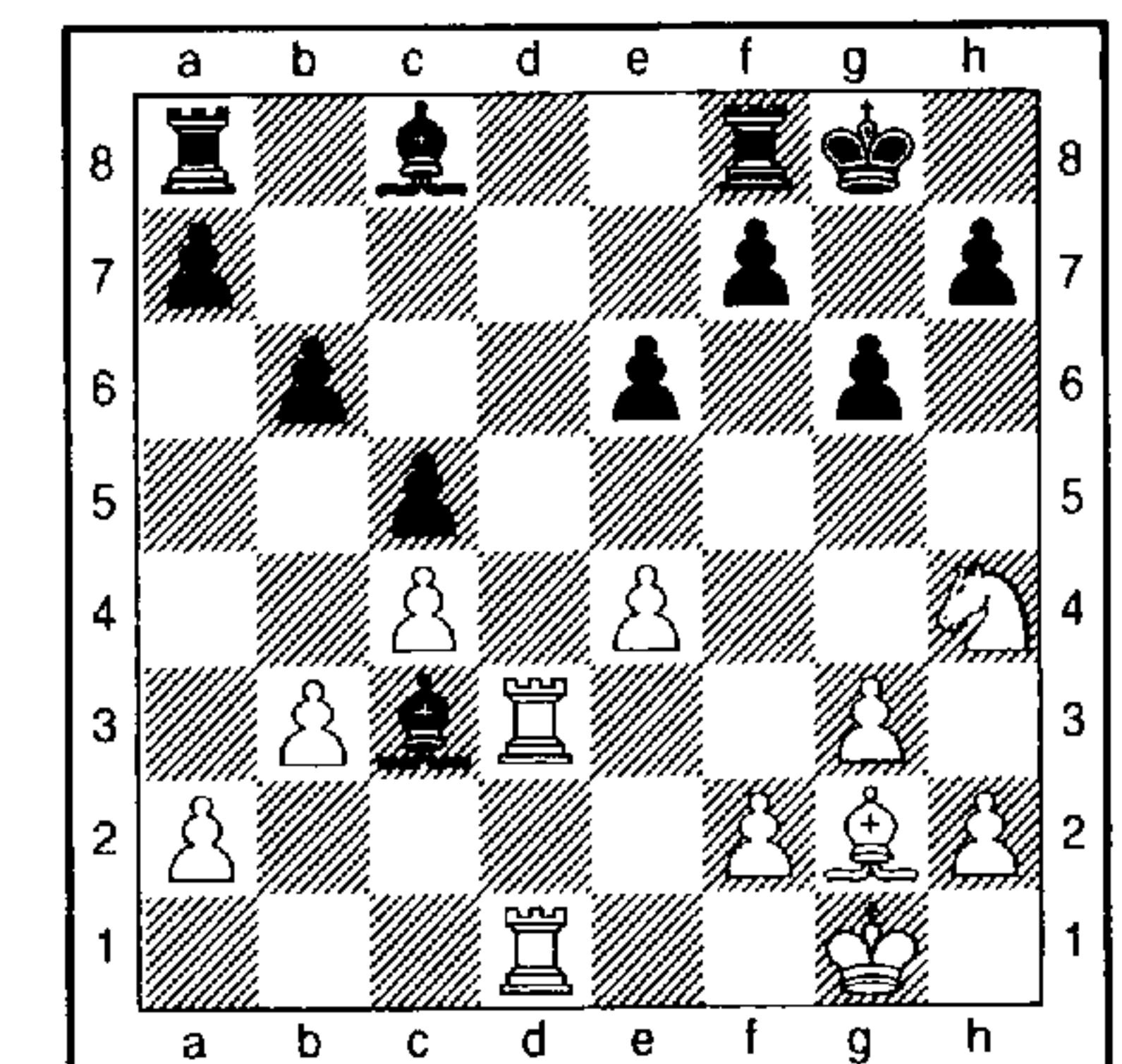
Up till now White's moves were purely developing and were not connected with any definite plan (in such positions both d4–d5 and h2–h4–h5 can be expected). But now he finally decides on a concrete idea: f2–f4. The opponent hurries to land a counter-blow in the centre, before it is completely occupied by the white pawns.

15	...	c5!
16	dxc5	dxc5
17	♖xd7	♖xd7
18	♖xd7	♙xc3
19	♖ed1	♙c8

This modest retreat is not forced. The more natural 19...♙c6 is also quite possible, not fearing either 20 ♖7d6 ♖ac8, or 20 ♖c7 ♖ac8!? 21 ♖xa7 ♖fd8.

20 ♖7d3

213





Q 7-34. What should Black play?

If White should succeed in advancing e4–e5, he will gain a positional advantage. For example, 20...♙d4? 21 e5! ♖b8 22 ♘f3, or 20...♙g7? 21 e5 ♖b8 22 f4.

20 ... ♙e5!

Now White can no longer seize space on the kingside with impunity. If 21 f4, then 21...♙d4+ and 22...e5, while if 21 ♘f3 there follows 21...♙c7 (21...♙g7 is also not bad) 22 e5 ♙b7 23 ♖d7 ♖ad8, preparing 24...♙c6 or 24...♙xf3 25 ♙xf3 ♖xd7 26 ♖xd7 ♙xe5.

21 ♙f1!?

By removing his king beforehand from a possible check, White renews the positional threat of 22 f4. For example, 21...♙b7? 22 f4 ♙d4 (22...♙f6 23 e5 ♙xh4 24 ♙xb7) 23 e5 ♙xg2+ 24 ♙xg2 followed by 25 ♘f3.

It made sense, with the same idea, to move the king into the corner, so as not to obstruct the f1–a6 diagonal, which the opponent will soon try to open.

21 ... ♖b8

Premature is 21...b5 22 cxb5 a6 23 b6 or 23 ♘f3.

22 f4 ♙c7

Now 23 e5 suggests itself, but then Black develops dangerous counterplay on the queenside by playing either 23...a6 24 ♘f3 b5 25 ♘d2 ♙a5, or 23...b5 24 cxb5 ♖xb5 followed by ...♖b4 and ...♙a6). Therefore Gennady Nesis begins prophylactic measures, aimed at reinforcing his c4 pawn. The knight cannot be used for this aim – for the moment it is needed on the kingside, to prevent the opening of lines (23 ♘f3 a6 24 ♘d2 e5!).

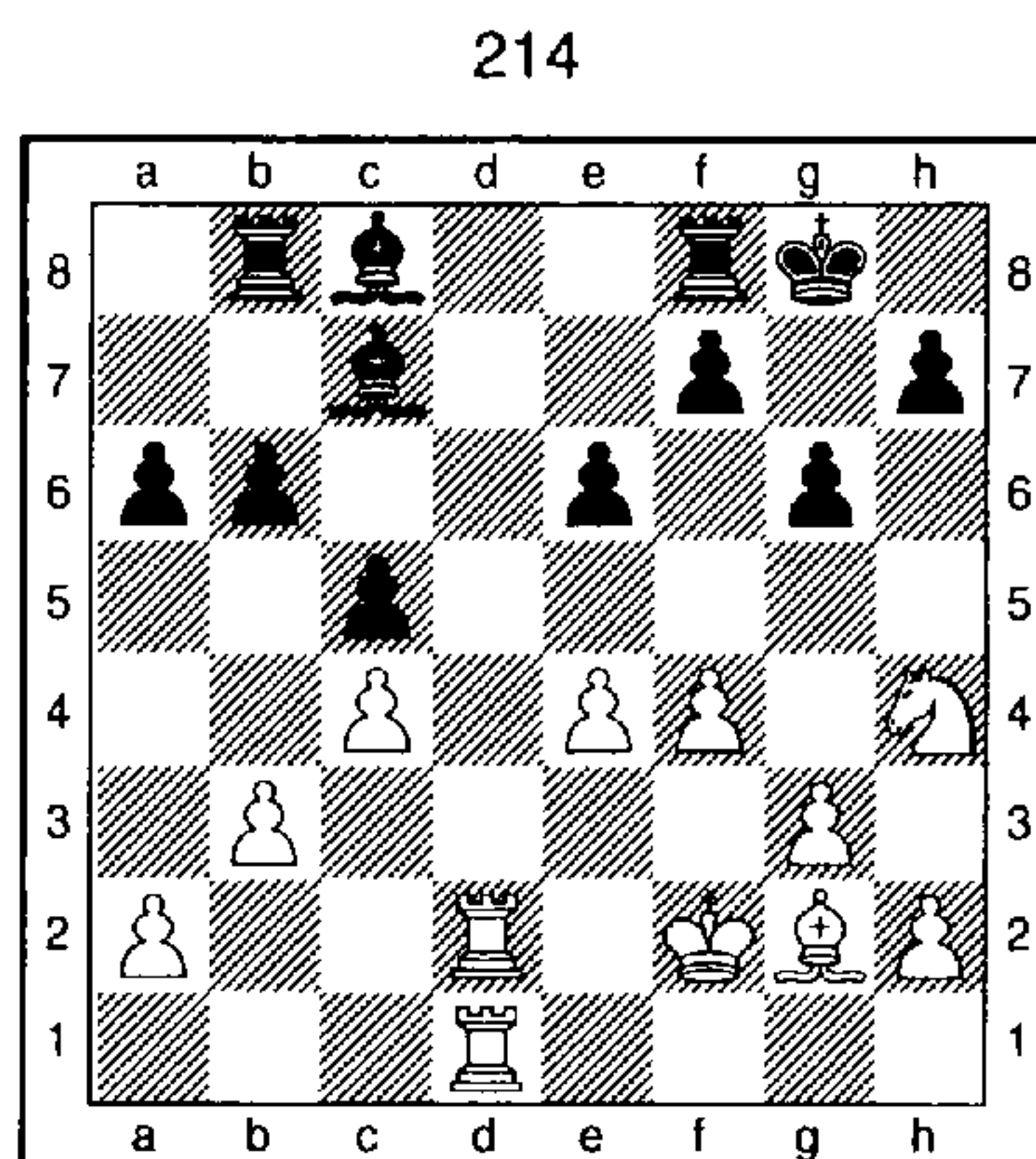
23 ♖3d2!?

It seems to me that 23 ♙f3 is slightly more accurate.

23 ... a6

Hardly any stronger was 23...f6 24 ♙f3 g5 25 ♘g2 or 23...b5 24 cxb5 ♖xb5 25 ♙f3.

24 ♙f2



White is ready to reinforce his c4 pawn by ♙f1. And yet the opponent could have initiated counter-action by 24...e5 25 f5 b5 26 ♙f1 ♙a5! 27 ♖c2 (the bishop must not be allowed to go via c3 to d4, but if 27 ♖d3, then 27...bxc4) 27...♙d8!

But why is it necessary to play actively? In the given instance it is not only a matter of psychology, but of a striving to divert White from the systematic strengthening of his position. Here an objective chess factor also tells: the existence of Black's two bishops. They are of little use if the position remains closed, and static – in order to exploit them, the play must be sharpened, and lines opened.

24 ... ♙g7?!

25 ♙e3

25 ♘f3 came into consideration.

25 ... e5

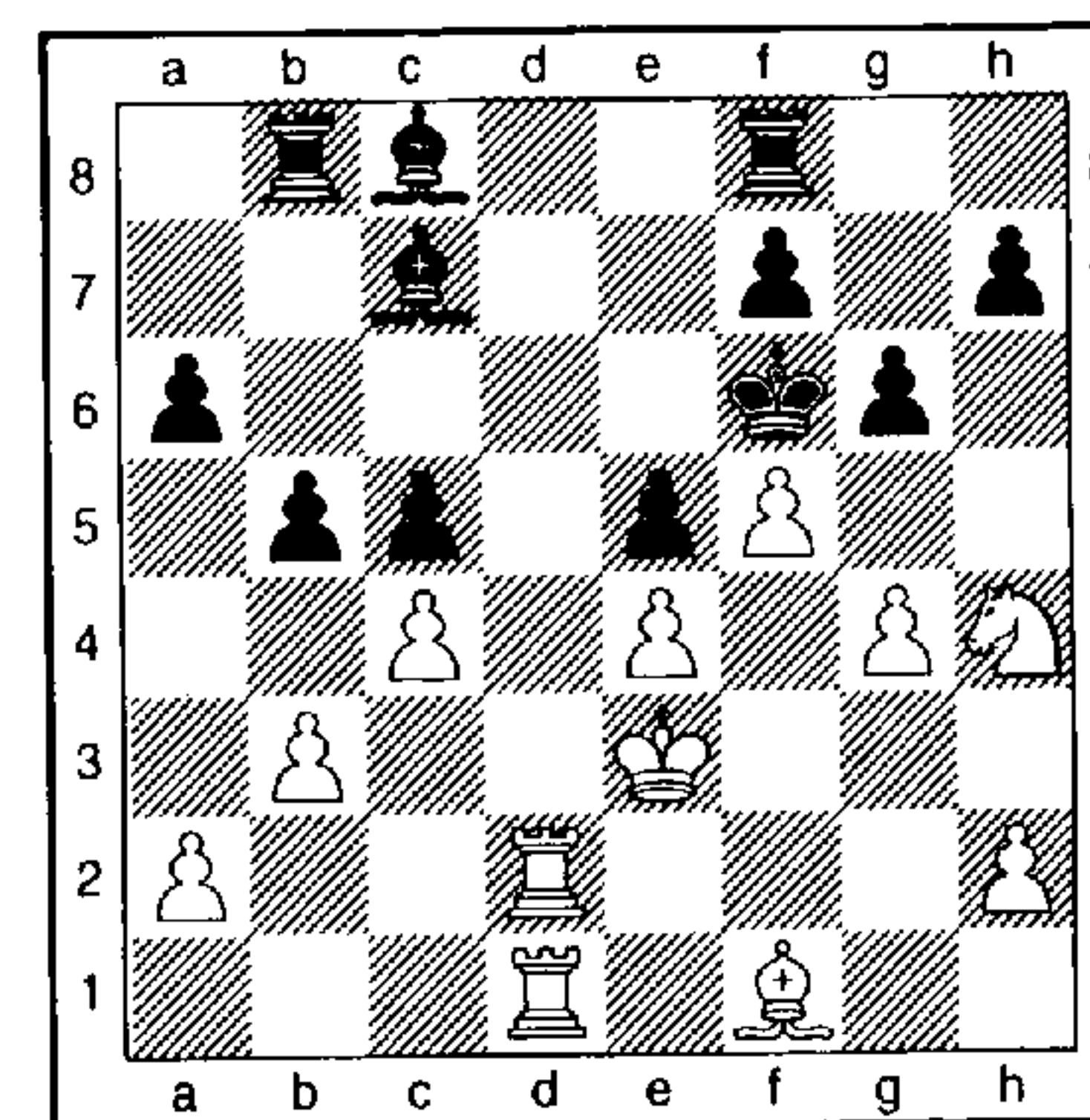
26 f5 b5

27 ♙f1 ♙f6

Again 27...♙a5 28 ♖c2 ♙d8 suggested itself.

28 g4

215



Q 7-35. What should Black play?

Earlier too Black played insufficiently energetically, and now comes a serious positional mistake.

28 ... ♗xf5?

After this exchange a static position with a clear advantage to White is reached. And yet active counterplay was still possible.

It is true that the undermining move 28...h5?! is dubious in view of 29 ♗xh5 ♙g5 (29...♗xf5 30 ♘xf5 ♙xf5 31 ♖f2) 30 ♗xg6! ♙xh4 31 g7 ♖g8 32 h6, and the white pawns are too strong. For example, 32...♙g4 33 ♙e2 ♙xe2 34 ♙xe2! ♙h5 35 ♖g1 ♙xh6 36 ♖d3 with inevitable mate.

Black should have decided on a bold raid by the king into the opponent's position after the g4 pawn: 28...♙g5! 29 ♘f3+ ♙xg4. Of course, it cannot be claimed that the king is safe here, but even so a mate is not possible and the outcome remains unclear.

29 ♗xf5

A questionable move, since for some time the knight will remain on the edge of the board. 29 ♘xf5! was very strong. If 29...♙xf5 30 ♗xf5 ♖fd8, then either 31 ♖d7 with the threat of ♙e2–h5, or 31 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 32 ♖xd8 ♙xd8 33 cxb5 with a won bishop ending.

29 ... ♙e7

30 ♙f3!

Black is deprived of counterplay, his two bishops being destined for ever to remain passive. Now White can unhurriedly improve the placing of his pieces. He vacates the e3 square for the manoeuvre ♘g2–e3–d5.

30 ... ♖d8

31 ♖xd8 ♙xd8

32 ♘g2

Chasing after the pawn is wrong: 32 ♖d5? ♙b7! 33 ♖xe5+ ♙d7 34 ♘g2 ♙f6 35 ♖xc5 ♙d4.

32 ... f6

33 ♘e3 ♙d7

34 ♘d5+ ♙e8

35 ♙e2 b4

In the event of 35...♙c6 (with the idea of 36...♙xd5) White could have chosen between the quiet 36 ♙g4! ♙xd5 37 ♖xd5 ♙e7 38 ♙h5, and the more forcing 36 cxb5! ♙xb5 37 ♘xf6+! ♙xf6 38 ♖d6 ♖b6 (no better is 38...♙xe4+ 39 ♙xe4) 39 ♖xc6 ♖xc6 40 ♙xb5 ♙d7 41 ♙g4 ♙d6 42 ♙xc6 ♙xc6 43 ♙h5.

36 h4!

Two files are available to White's rook: 'd' and 'g', but it is not easy to invade on either of them. But if he can advance his pawn to h6, obtaining an outpost at g7, the threat of an invasion on the g-file will grow greatly in strength.

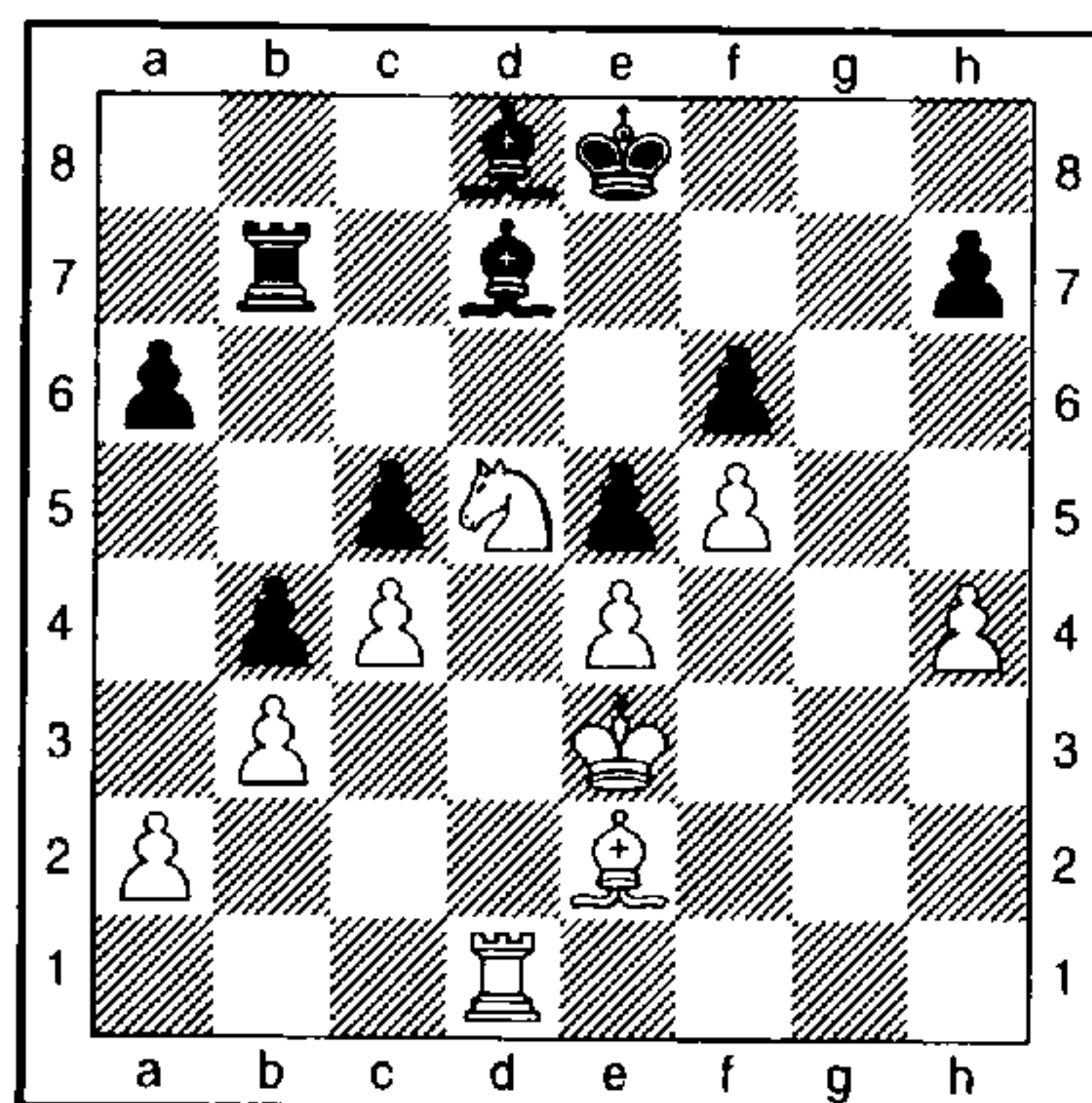
36 ... ♖b7

37 ♙e3

see next diagram



216

**Q 7-36. How should Black defend?**

37...♙c6? is a mistake on account of 38 ♙h5+ ♜f8 39 ♘xb4. In order to hinder the implementation of White's plan, Black should have played 37...♜f8!, and if 38 h5 h6! 39 ♖g1 ♙e8, covering all the invasion squares.

37 ... a5?

The opening of the a-file does not give Black anything, whereas now the opponent carries out his plan unhindered.

38 h5 ♜f8

Perhaps here too Black should have tried 38...h6 39 ♖g1 ♜f8, but after 40 ♖g6 ♙e8 41 ♖xh6 ♜g7 42 ♖g6+ ♙xg6 43 fxg6 it is hard for him to defend against the threatened knight manoeuvre to f5.

39 h6 a4

40 ♙h5

40 ♖g1 was premature because of 40...♙e8.

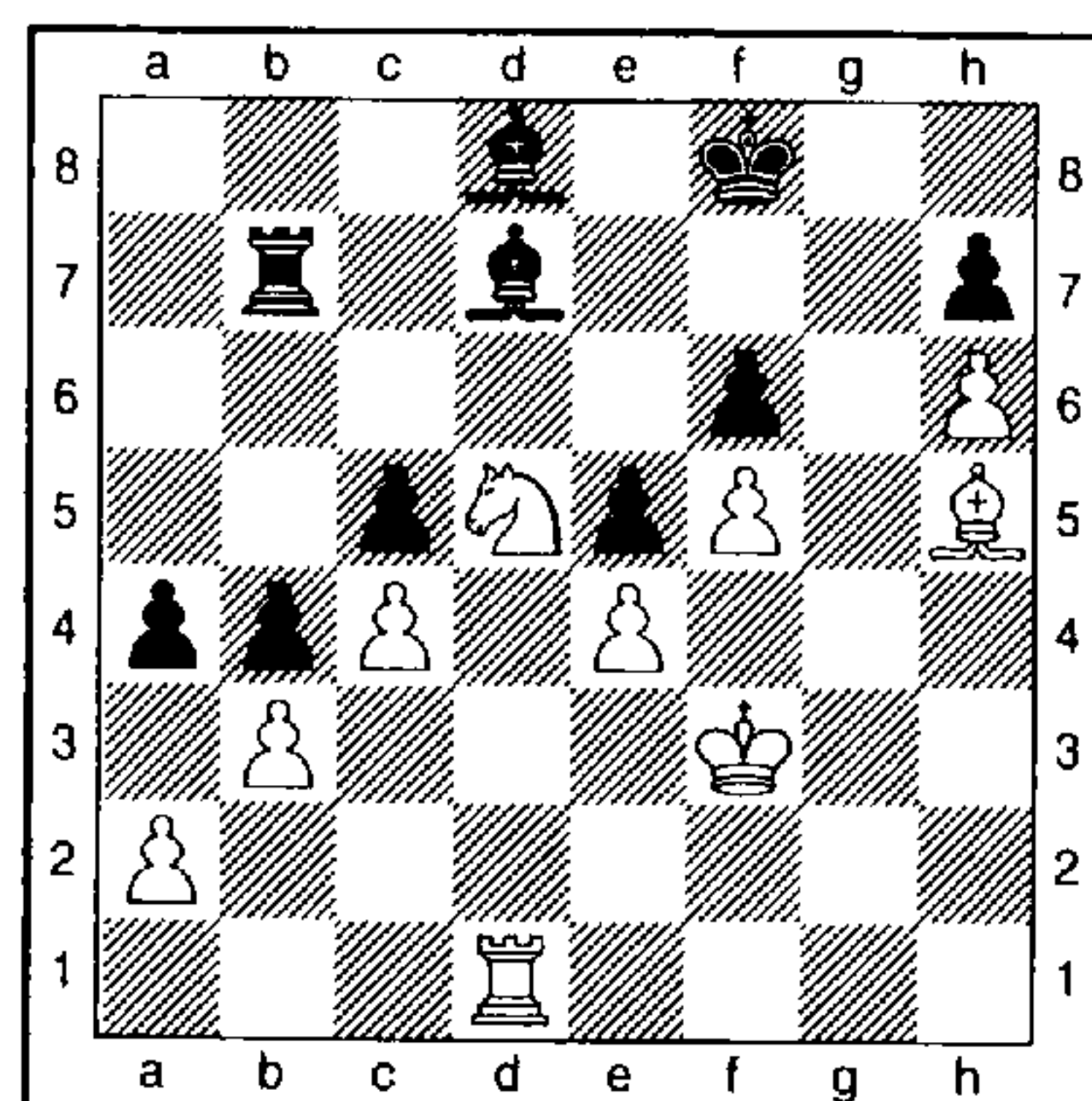
40 ... ♖a7

41 ♜f3!

An economic way of parrying the only attempt at counterplay, 41...axb3 42 axb3 ♖a3, after which there now follows 43 ♘e3! ♜e7 44 ♖g1 ♖xb3 45 ♖g7+ ♜d6 46 ♖xh7, and the h-pawn queens.

41 ... ♖b7

217

**Q 7-37. How should White continue?**

He must break through on one of the open files, but for the moment this is not possible. 42 ♖g1 ♙c6 is pointless. 42 ♘e3 with the threat of 43 ♖d6 is tempting, and if 42...♜e7? 43 ♙g6! But Black replies 42...♙e7! 43 ♖g1 ♙d8 44 ♖g7 ♙c6.

Noticing that this defence works only with the rook at b7, White plays for zugzwang.

42 ♖d2! a3

43 ♖d1!

Here is that zugzwang.

43 ... ♖a7

44 ♘e3

Again zugzwang. With the rook at a7 nothing is achieved by 45 ♖d6 ♜e7, but what move can Black make now? After 44...♖b7(c7) 45 ♖d6 or 44...♙e7 45 ♖g1 the rook breaks into the opponent's position.

44 ... ♖c7

45 ♖d6 ♙e7

46 ♖b6 ♖c8

47 ♘d5 ♙c6

48 ♖a6

Threatening 49 ♖a7.

48 ... ♙xd5

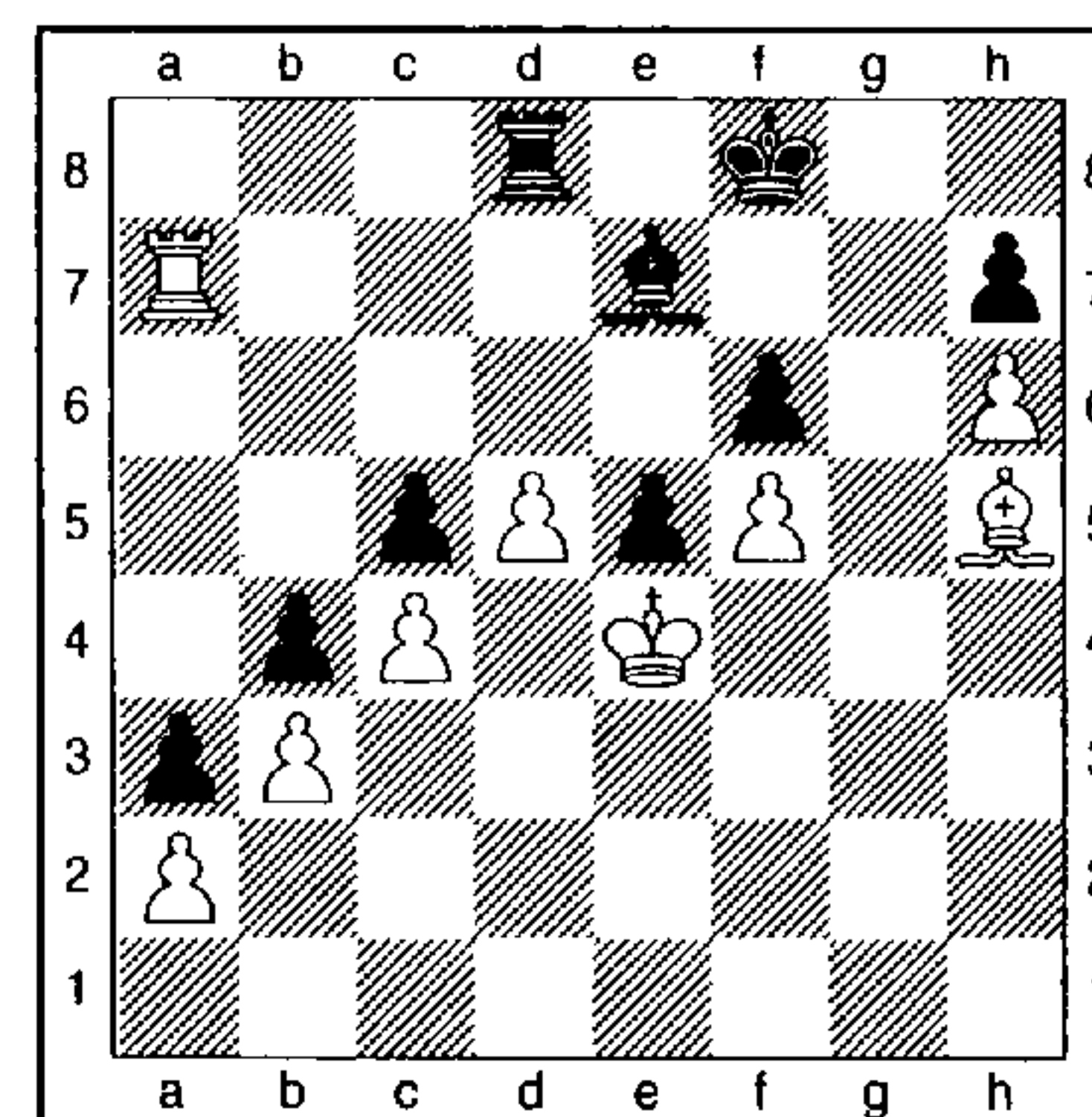
49 exd5 ♖d8

50 ♖a7 ♖d6



51 ♙e4 ♖d8

218



52 ♙g6!

After strengthening his position to the maximum, White lands a concluding blow that has been in the air for a long time.

52 ... hxg6

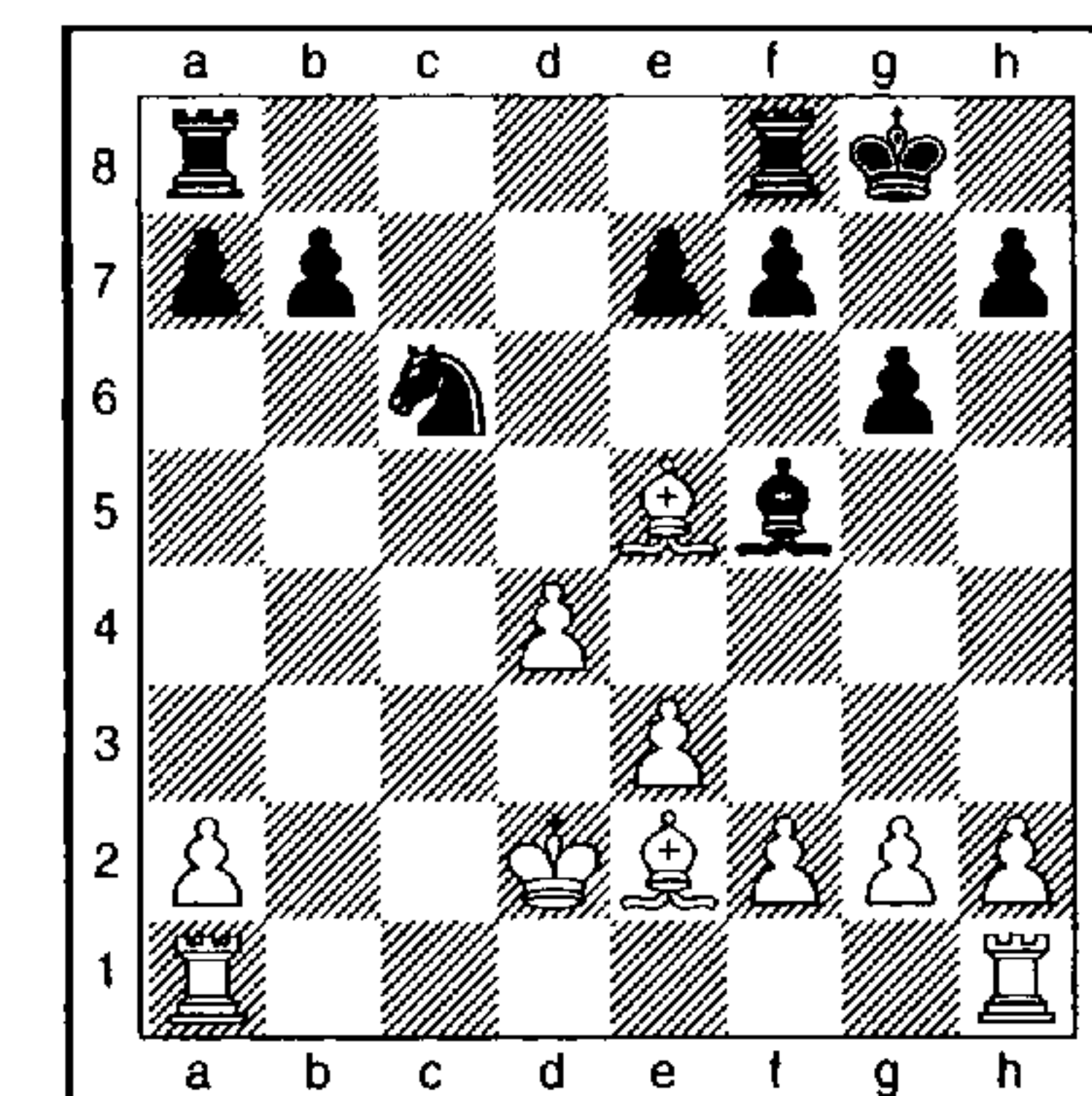
53 fxg6 ♖e8

54 d6

Black resigns.

E 7-9

219



White to move



Turning Points

*Real life is, to most men, a long second-best,
a perpetual compromise between the ideal and the possible.*

Bertran Russell

The game which I would now like to show you took what was at first sight a smooth and not too interesting course. White quickly seized the initiative, transposed into a favourable endgame, and retained the advantage right to the very end. Although victory appeared to be close, he was nevertheless unable to win. In such cases a commentator usually indicates one or two points, where in his opinion it was possible to play more strongly, gives a few variations illustrating the course of the battle, and at that considers that he has done his job.

But an encounter between top-class grandmasters is usually much more complicated and profound than it appears at the first approximation. Many of the problems that they have to solve at the board do not reduce to the analysis of short variations and the estimation of simple positional considerations, but are of a problematic, creative nature. It can be extremely difficult to disclose the critical moments of the battle, but if this can be done, the information obtained significantly enriches our understanding of the chess struggle, and helps us to master the game.

I should like to emphasise that the study of any serious problem, facing the players, should not be purely analytical. It is important to disclose the reasons that forced them to take a particular decision, and the psychological factors which aided or hindered them in finding the best move.

The analysis of the present game was stimulated by an interesting commentary by Victor Korchnoi, published in the magazine

'New in Chess'. Some of the grandmaster's variations and evaluations seemed to me to be insufficiently convincing, and I tried to improve on them. Subsequently I showed the game to many of my pupils, and during these sessions I was able to correct and deepen the picture of the struggle. As a result, instructive, in my view, material was obtained, illustrating on the one hand the problem of the technique of converting an advantage, and on the other hand – different approaches to the defence of an inferior position.

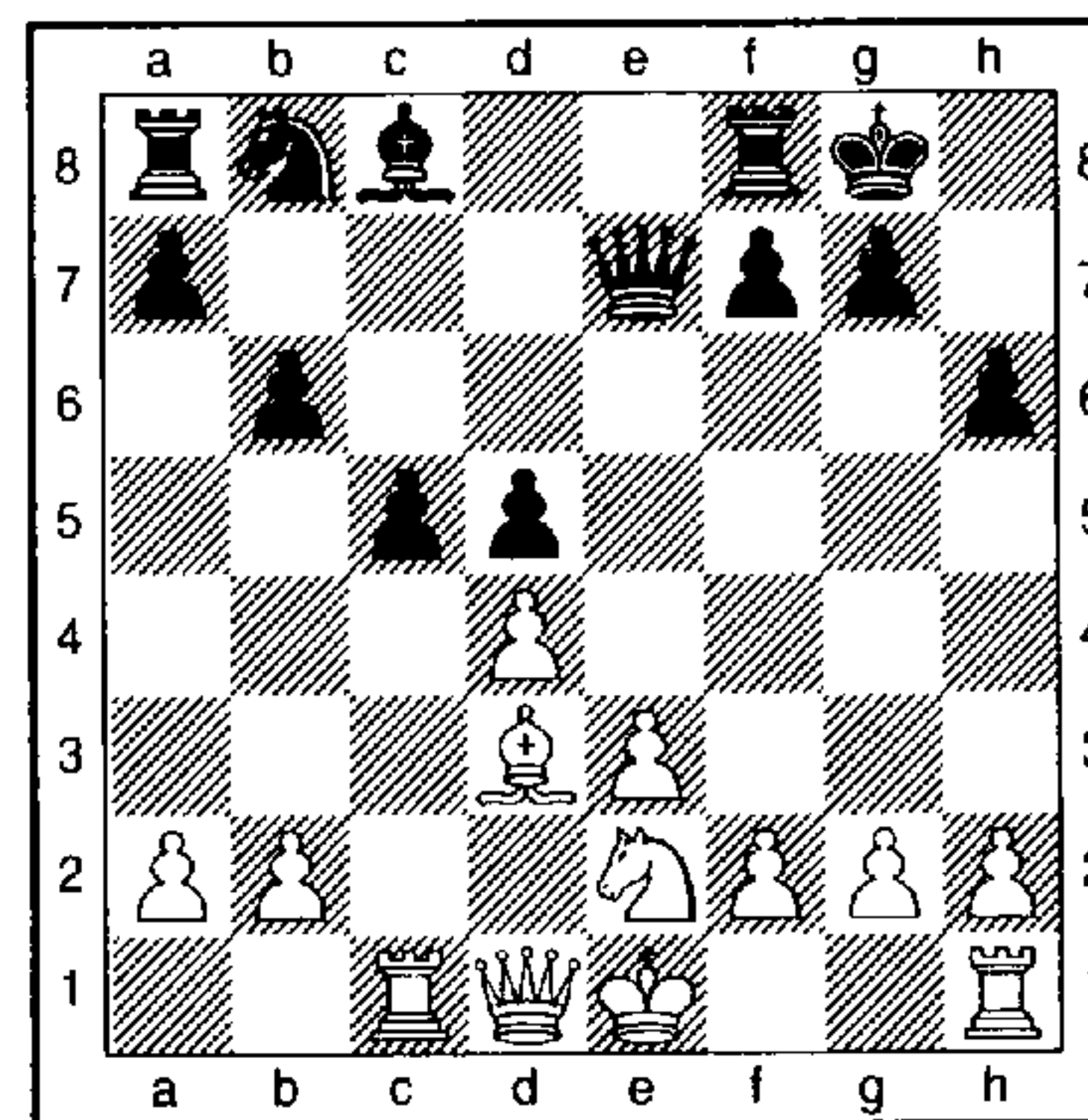
Korchnoi – Belyavsky Tilburg 1986

1	d4	d5
2	c4	e6
3	♘c3	♘f6
4	♙g5	♙e7
5	e3	h6
6	♙h4	0–0
7	♞c1	b6
8	cxd5	♘xd5
9	♙xe7	♞xe7
10	♘xd5	exd5
11	♙d3!?	c5
12	♘e2	

see next diagram



220



By delaying the development of his king's knight, White has gained the opportunity to play it to e2 and later to f4 (or c3), to set up pressure on d5.

12 ... ♙b7?!

An unsuccessful solution to Black's opening problem. But the natural 12...♙e6 13 0–0 ♘d7 is also dubious – White does not play 14 ♞a4?! c4! with counterplay (Mikhailchishin), but 14 ♘f4! and at some point ♘xe6, obtaining a slightly better position (Korchnoi).

Korchnoi recommends the principled reply 12...c4!? 13 ♙b1 ♘d7, and if 14 b3 ♙a6. But the more restrained 12...♘d7 also comes into consideration, not determining for the moment the positions of the bishop and the c-pawn.

13 0–0 ♘d7
14 ♞a4 a6

If 14...c4, then not 15 ♙b1?! a6 16 ♞c2 ♘f6, but 15 ♙f5! ♘f6 16 b3 with advantage to White.

15 ♙f5! ♘f6

15...b5 16 ♞a5.

16 ♞a3

16 dxc5 bxc5 17 ♞a3 is less accurate because of 17...♞e5.

16 ... g6

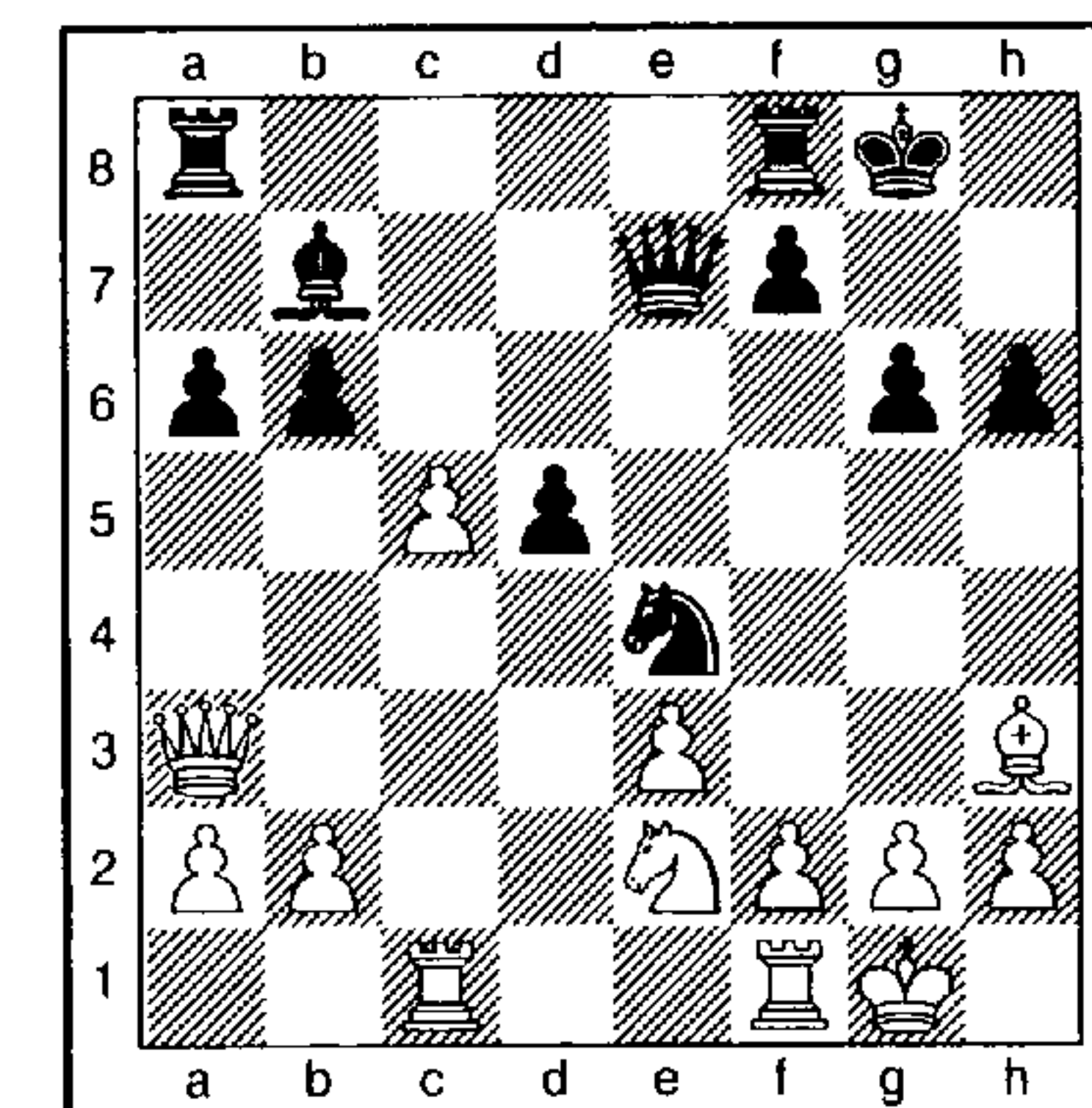
16...♙c8 17 ♙b1! ♙g4 18 f3 leads to a difficult position for Black.

17 ♙h3 ♙e4

After 17...♙c8 18 dxc5 ♙xh3 19 gxh3 ♞d7 20 ♙g2 Black has no compensation for the lost pawn.

18 dxc5

221



Q 7-38. With what would you recapture on c5?

For the first (but not the last) time in this game we encounter a problem of choosing between an active, although risky, and a passive way of defending.

18 ... ♘xc5

By playing this, Alexander Belyavsky showed that for the moment he was intending to restrict himself to passive defence in a strategically inferior position.

Why not recapture on c5 with the pawn? Because after 19 ♘g3! (but not 19 f3? ♘d2 20 ♞fd1 ♘c4 21 ♞xc4 dxc4 22 ♞d7 ♞h4!) this pawn will be lost. Korchnoi gives the variation 18...bxc5 19 ♘g3! ♘g5 20 ♞xc5 ♘xh3+ 21 gxh3 ♞h4 22 ♞d4 ♞xh3 23 ♞c7 and evaluates the position as difficult for Black. However, after 23...♙c8 (not 23...♞ab8? 24 ♞a7) he retains some tactical

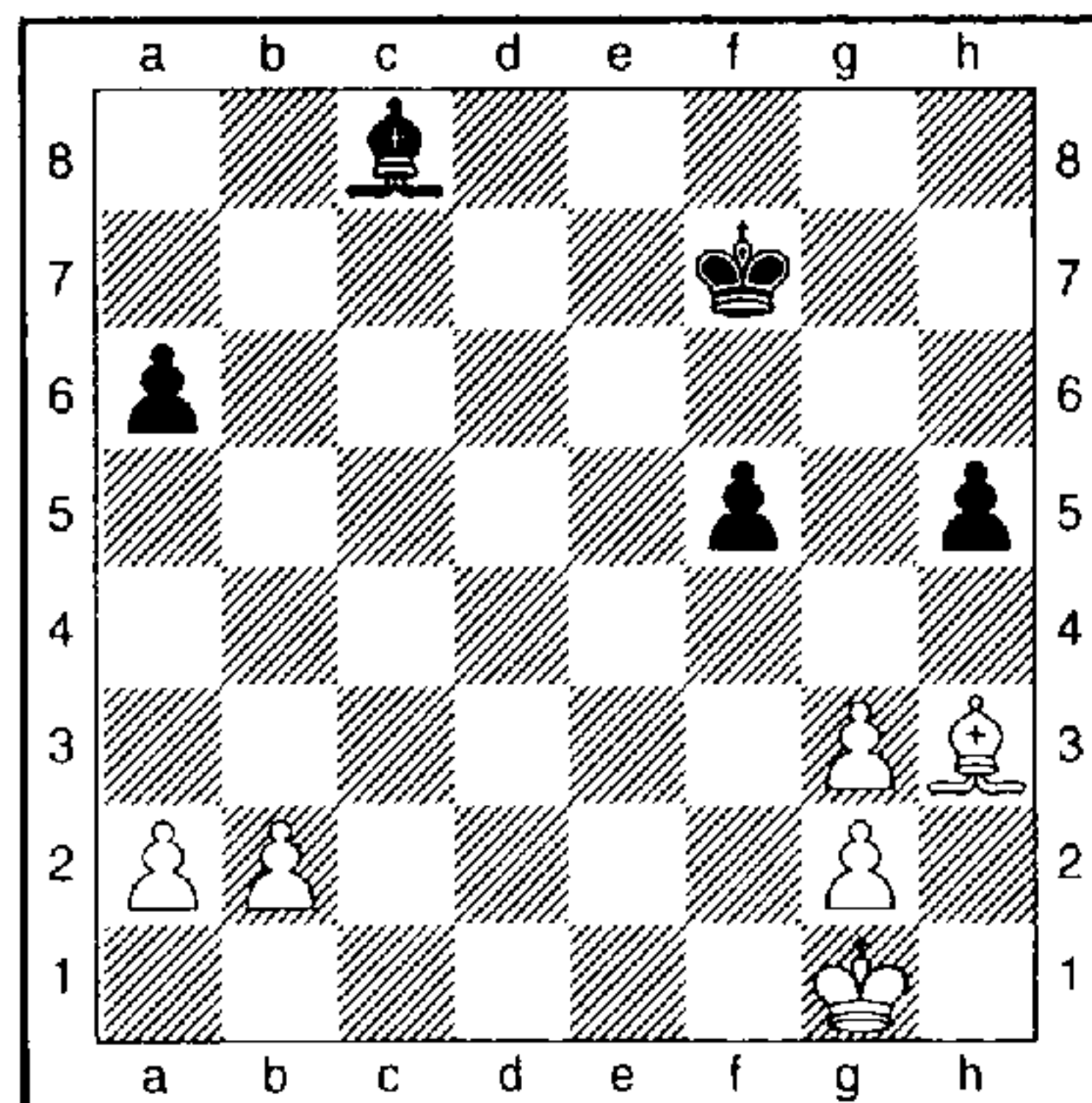


counter-chances in view of the slightly open position of the opponent's king.

The evaluation of the concluding position is debatable, and it is hard from afar to determine how great is White's advantage in it. I discussed this problem with several leading grandmasters, and their opinions differed. Thus Robert Hübner said that he would have definitely gone in for a sharpening of the play, since the path chosen by Belyavsky seems completely unpromising. But Artur Yusupov was more inclined to agree with Korchnoi's evaluation. He added that, from the purely practical viewpoint, Belyavsky probably considered it advisable to defer active play until a later point, when his opponent (who was 22 years old than him) would tire and would possibly be in time trouble.

Black's resources are not exhausted by the variation given above. During a joint analysis with Yusupov, an unexpected idea suddenly struck me: not to exchange the bishop on h3, but try to shut it out of the game. Here is an approximate variation, illustrating this idea: 19...♖xg3! (instead of 19...♖g5) 20 hxg3 f5 21 ♖xc5 ♖xc5 22 ♖xc5 ♖ac8!? (22...h5 is also possible, but not 22...g5?! 23 g4 h5 24 f3!) 23 ♖fc1 ♖xc5 24 ♖xc5 ♖c8 25 ♖xc8+ ♖xc8 26 f3 h5 27 e4 dxe4 28 fxe4 ♖f7 29 exf5 gxf5.

222



You have to agree that the resulting position is highly amusing. I must admit that never in my life have I seen such a strange bishop. Further checking enabled Yusupov and me only to refine, but not refute this idea. The opponent can reject the win of material and choose 21 g4!? ♖ac8 22 gxf5, retaining the better chances. If this position does not satisfy Black, he can change the move order: 20...h5!? (instead of 20...f5). Now 21 g4 leads after 21...♖c8! 22 gxh5 ♖xh3 23 gxh3 ♖g5+ 24 ♖h2 ♖e5+! 25 f4 ♖xh5 to double-edged play.

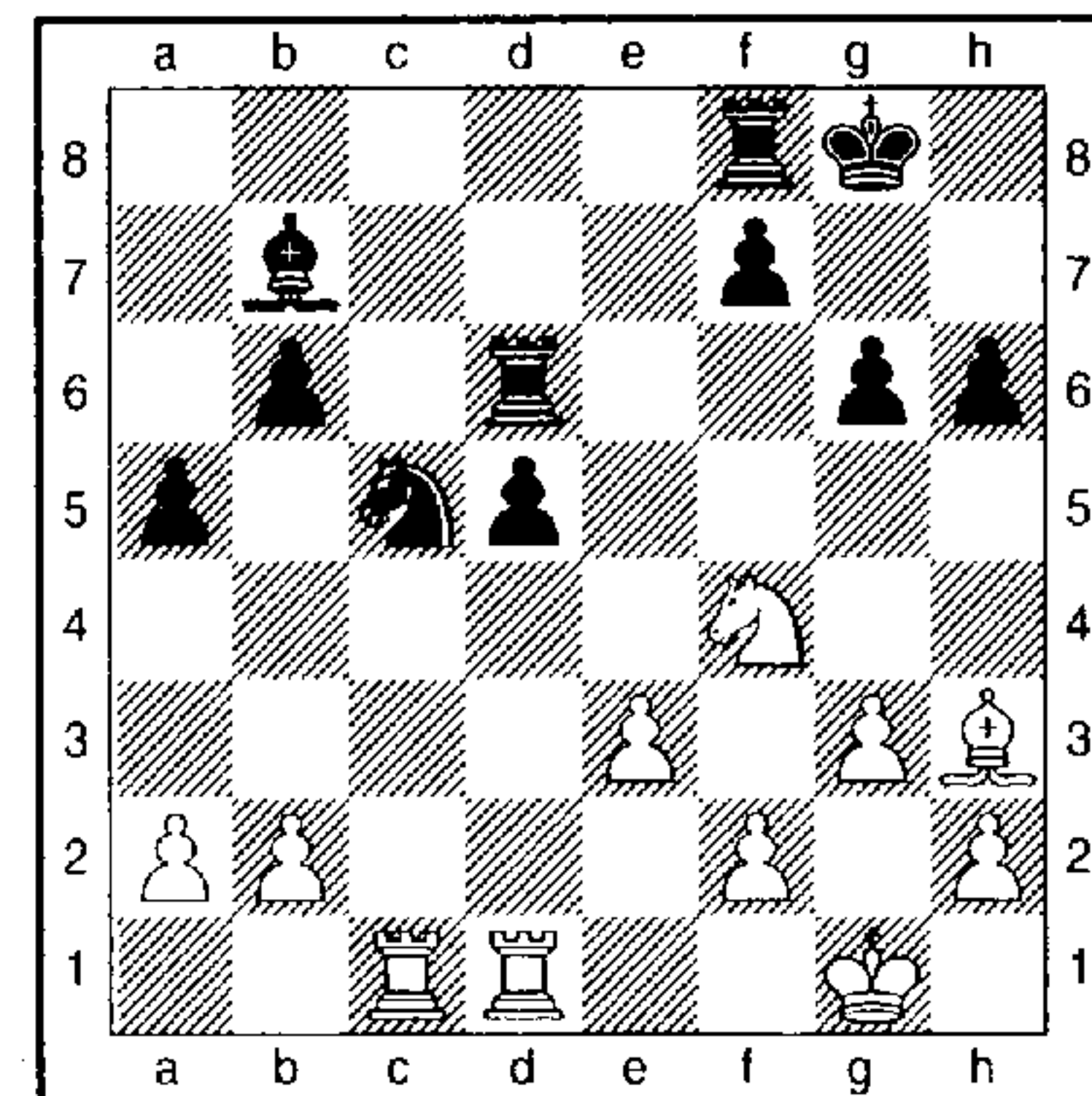
Since 21 g4 is not dangerous, it means that White should go in for the critical variation 21 ♖xc5 ♖xc5 22 ♖xc5 f5! 23 ♖c7. After 23...♖f7 24 ♖xf7 (weaker is 24 ♖fc1 ♖e8!) 24...♖xf7 25 f3! Black still experiences some difficulties. But he also has available the straightforward try 23...♖c8! with the idea of ...g6-g5-g4, e.g. 24 ♖fc1 g5 25 ♖1c6 g4 26 ♖g6+ ♖h8, and the position is most probably drawn.

19	♖b4!	♖d6
20	♖fd1	a5
21	♖f4!	♖xf4
22	♖xf4	♖ad8
23	g3	

The exchange of queens has emphasised White's positional advantage. Now he takes measures to bring his bishop back into play.

23	...	♖d6
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223



24 ♖d3!?

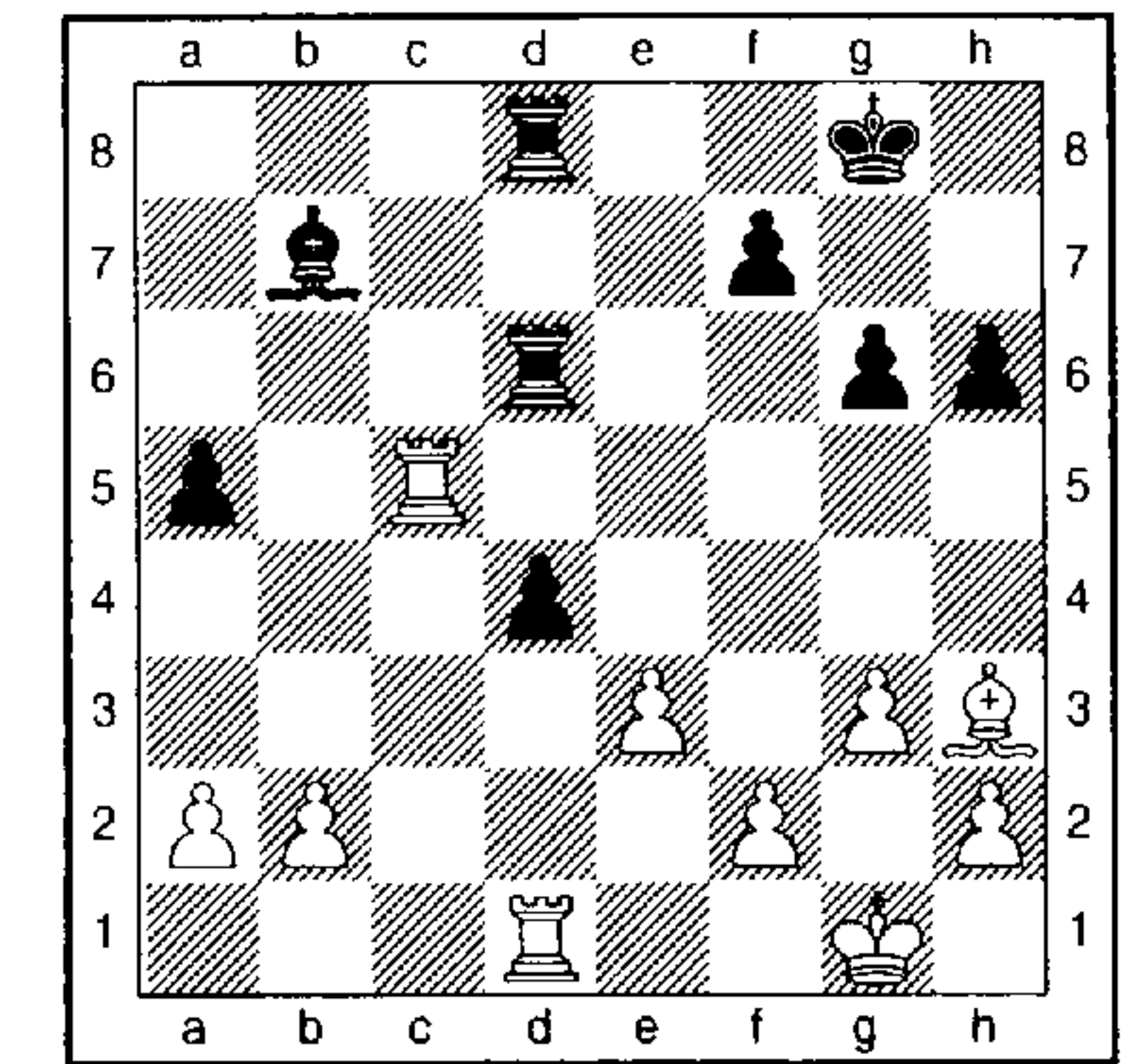
'The knight on c5 is the key to the black defence and White forces Black to remove it from its favourable position', writes Korchnoi. He obviously considers the move made to be the strongest.

Indeed, after Belyavsky's reply 24...♖e4?! the white rook gained the opportunity to invade on c7. If 24...♖c8?, then 25 ♖xc5 ♖xh3 (25...bxc5 26 ♖g2) 26 ♖e4 ♖e6 27 ♖c3. At first I thought that Black can defend the invasion squares by 24...♖a6 25 ♖g2 g5, preparing at an appropriate moment to exchange rooks by ...♖c8. However, as grandmaster Loek Van Wely rightly pointed out, White retains a clear positional advantage by playing 26 ♖e5! followed by ♖f3-d4.

Even so, I do not consider Korchnoi's evaluation to be undisputable. Firstly, the attempt to keep the knight at c5 by 24...♖c6! can be considered. In the variation 25 ♖e5 ♖c7 (25...♖d6? 26 ♖c4) 26 ♖g2 (26 ♖d7? ♖xd7 27 ♖xd7 ♖xd7 28 ♖c7 ♖c5) 26...♖d8 27 ♖c4! ♖a4!? 28 b3 ♖dc8 29 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 30 ♖xd5 ♖b2 31 ♖b1! (31 ♖b5? ♖xc4 32 bxc4 ♖xc4 33 ♖xc4 ♖xc4 34 ♖xb6 ♖c2 with a draw) 31...♖xc4 32 bxc4 ♖xc4 33 ♖xb6 White remains a pawn up. But the defence can be improved, by playing 26...♖e8! (instead of 26...♖d8).

Secondly, White has to reckon with the pawn sacrifice 24...d4!? 25 ♖xc5 bxc5 26 ♖xc5 ♖fd8.

224



Q 7-39. Can Black go in for this position?

Korchnoi claims that White wins by 27 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 28 exd4 ♖xd4 29 ♖xa5 ♖d1+ 30 ♖f1 ♖f3 31 ♖e5. But after 31...g5! (preventing 32 ♖e3 and 33 f4) 32 h3 f5! the win still has to be demonstrated (I suspect that it does not exist at all).

Even stronger for Black is 30...♖d5! (instead of 30...♖f3) 31 ♖c5 (31 b3 ♖e4; 31 ♖a4 ♖f3) 31...♖xa2 32 b4 (32 f4 ♖b1 33 ♖c2 ♖b3) 32...♖e6! 33 ♖g2 ♖d5+ 34 f3 ♖xf3+ or 34...♖d2+ with a probable draw.

White can improve on this variation by choosing 27 ♖xa5!? (instead of 27 ♖xd4) 27...♖f3 28 ♖d2! (28 ♖xd4 leads to a position with which we are already familiar: 28...♖xd4 29 exd4 ♖xd4 30 ♖f1 ♖d1 31 ♖e5 g5!) 28...♖c6 29 exd4 ♖c1+ 30 ♖f1. White is three(!) pawns up, but even here the outcome is still not altogether clear. For example, 30...g5 31 h3! ♖b1, and in the event of the superficial 32 b3? Black forces a draw by 32...♖c8 33 ♖c5 ♖e8 34 ♖e5 ♖c8. If 32 ♖f5 there follows 32...♖d5, and in view of the threats of 33...♖c4 or 33...♖e6 White has to part with the exchange, which, however, retains the advantage for him. But 32 ♖a3! ♖d5 33 f4! is stronger.

However, this variation does not yet exhaust



Black's defensive resources. He can try 27...dxe3 28 Bxd6 Bxd6 (less good is 28...exf2+ 29 Qxf2 Bxd6 30 Qe3) 29 fxe3 Bd1+ 30 Qf1 Bb1!? followed by ...Qe4 (or immediately 30...Qe4). I think that he has quite real chances of saving the game.

24 ... Qe4?!
25 Bc7 Qa6

Q 7-40. What should White play?

Belyavsky was probably hoping for 26 Qf4?! Bfd8 27 Qg2 Qf6 followed by 28...g5.

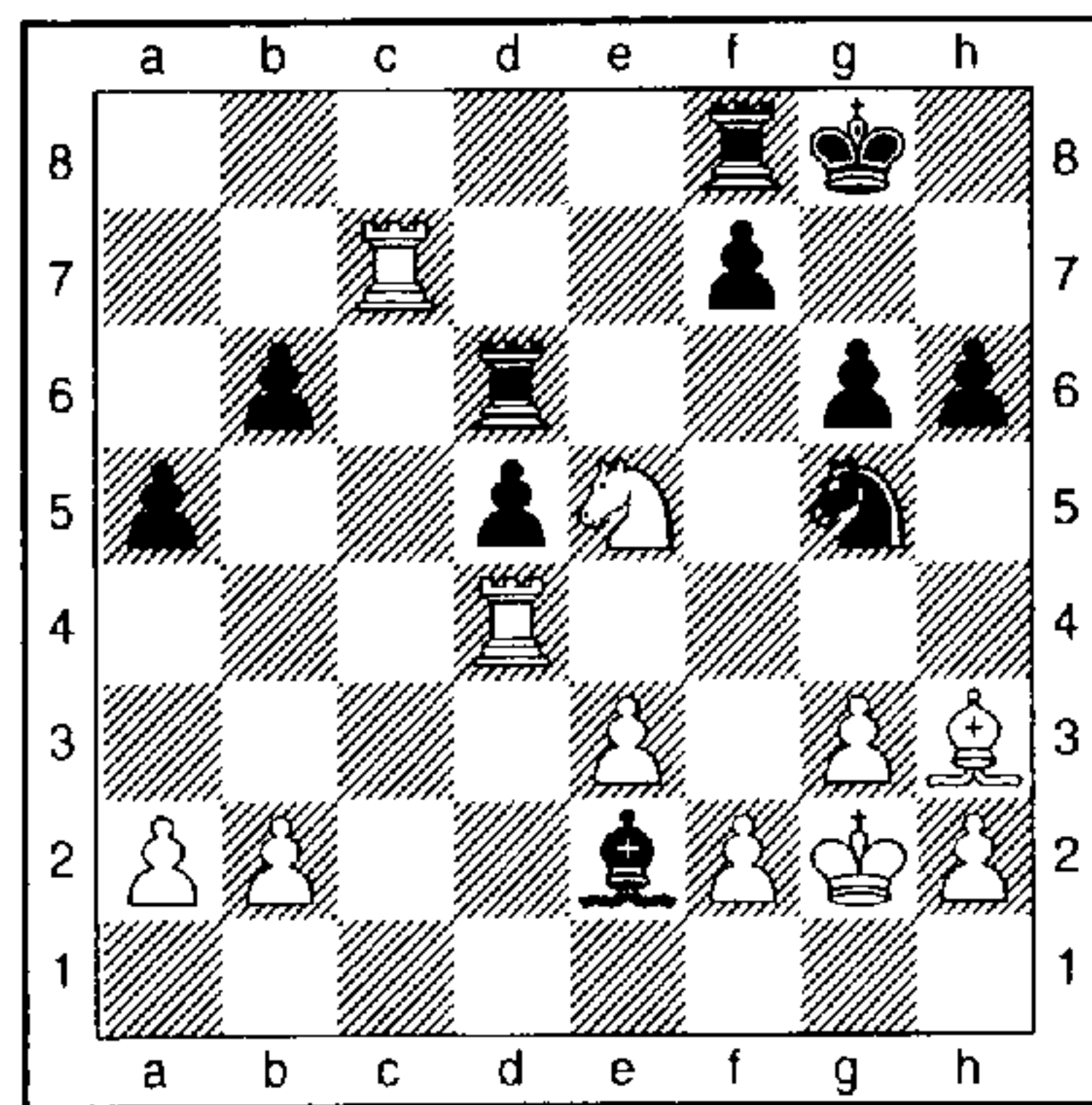
26 Qe5!

Excellent play. The white knight begins to coordinate with the rook that has invaded the 7th rank.

26 ... Qe2
27 Re1

This restrained move is explained by White's unwillingness to give the opponent counter-chances after 27 Bd4!? (with the positional threat of f2-f3 and Qf2) 27...Qg5, e.g. 28 Qd7? f6! 29 Qxg6 Bf7. Instead of 28 Qd7 White can consider 28 Qg2, intending 29 f4.

225



Here are a few variations:

- a) 28...Qxh3 29 Qxh3 Qf1+ 30 Qh4 g5+ (otherwise 31 g4) 31 Qh5 Qe2+ 32 g4 Qg7 33 h4;
- b) 28...f5 29 Bd2 Qa6 30 f4 Qe4 31 Bdc2;

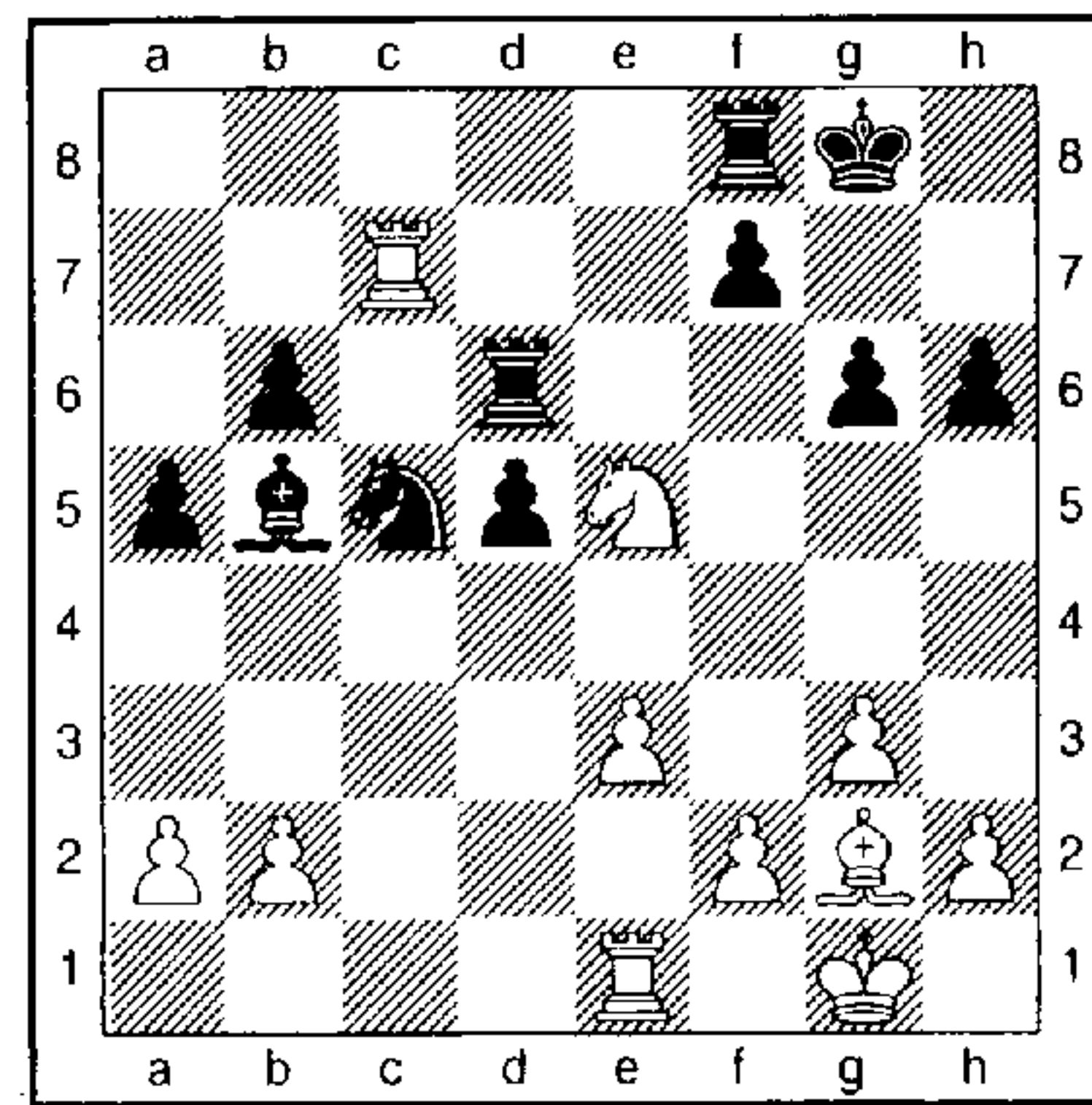
c) 28...f6 29 Qxg6 Qf3+ 30 Qf1 Qxh3 31 Qe7+ Qf7 (31...Qh8 32 Bb4) 32 Qf5+ (or 32 Qc8+) 32...Qe6 33 Qg7+ Qe5 34 Bb7+. If this analysis is correct, then 27 Bd4 must be deemed objectively stronger than 27 Re1.

But this by no means signifies that this is how White should have played. Emanuel Lasker once remarked that 'In chess effort and achievement must in each moment be in the right proportion. Hence he who tries for the impossible, loses ground...' Did it make sense, in a favourable situation, to sharpen the play? After all, the expected bonus from 27 Bd4 compared with 27 Re1 is not so great, and in the resulting tense play it is easy to miscalculate.

Thus, for example, at the end of the first variation it is easy to miss the unexpected manoeuvre 32...Qb5?! with the idea of ...Qe8 (instead of 32...Qg7). In fact it is not so terrible in view of 33 f4! (but not 33 h4? Qe8! 34 hxg5 f6+) 33...Qe8 34 f5! Much more dangerous is 32...f5!, intending 33...fxg4 or 33...Qb5, when it is not easy to offer White good advice (33 Bc6? Bxc6 34 Qxc6 Qg7; 33 Qg6 Bff6 34 Qe7+ Qf8; 33 Bd7 Bb6! 34 B4xd5 fxg4).

27 ... Qb5
28 Qg2 Qc5

226



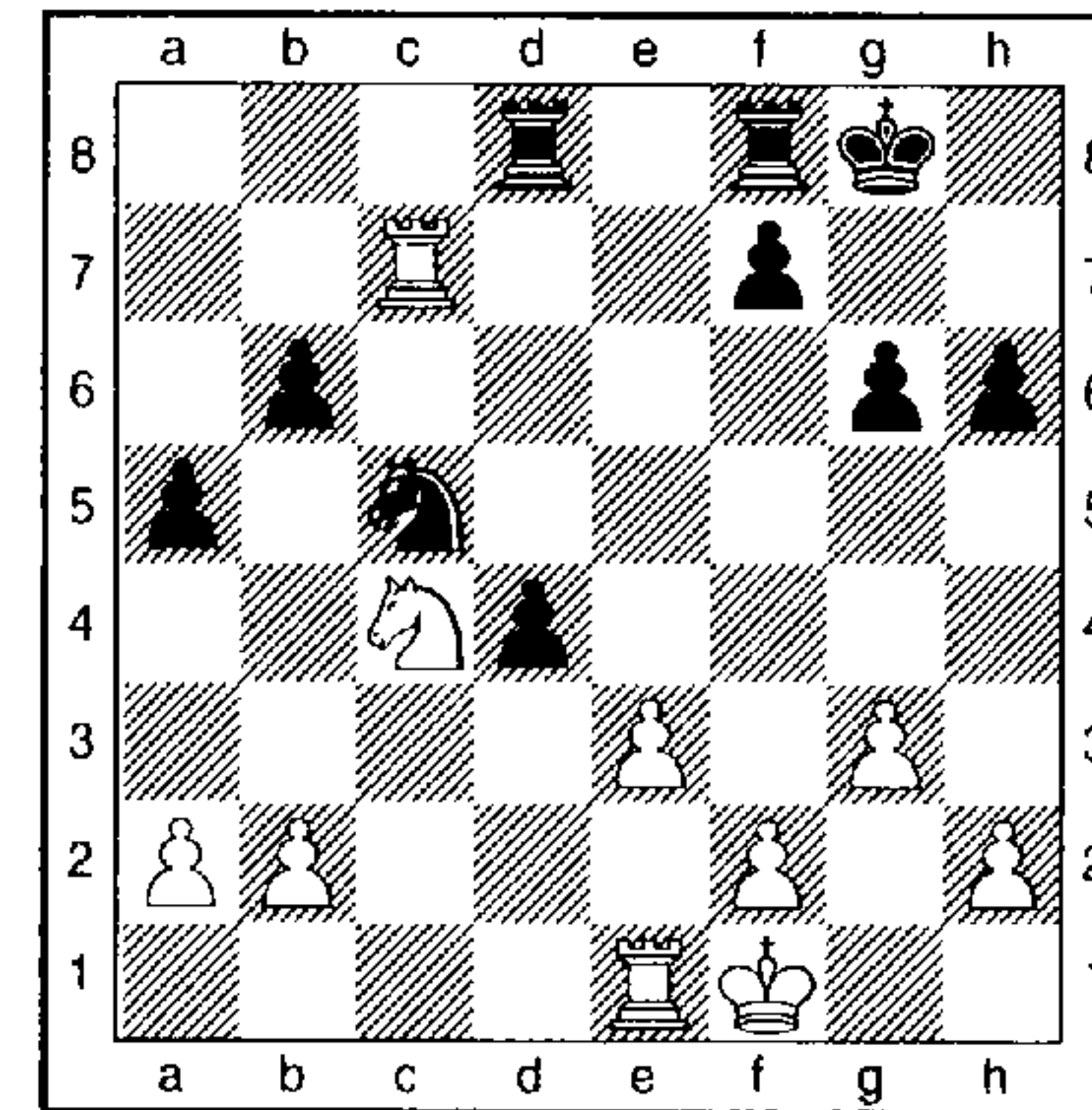
29 Qf1!

'White realises that he has to exchange the bishops, after which the black position is hopeless.' (Korchnoi)

I think that also strong was 29 Bd1 Qe6 30 Bb7! (but not 30 Bc2 Bfd8, when the game becomes equal) 30...d4 (30...Qg7 31 f4 with advantage) 31 Qh3! Qg5 32 Qf1 Bb8 (no better is 32...Qxf1 33 Qxf1) 33 Bxe8+ Qxe8 34 exd4 f6 35 Qc4 Qf3+ 36 Qh1 Bxd4 37 Bxd4 Qxd4 38 Qxb6, retaining good chances of converting the extra pawn.

29 ... Qxf1
30 Qxf1 d4
30...Qe6 31 Bd7.
31 Qc4 Bdd8

227



Q 7-41. What should White play?

Remember how we said that in the conversion of an advantage there usually comes a point when you need to make an effort, calculate variations, and choose the most accurate way to win. It is such a situation that has now arisen.

32 exd4?

A vexing mistake. White wins a pawn, but loses a considerable part of his advantage. The reason for the mistake was frankly

explained by Korchnoi.

'Up till this moment I am satisfied about my play in this game. But here I thought that the moment had come to slacken the reins and to decide the game with technical means. The time for technique had not yet arrived. The correct move was 32 Qxb6. Why did I reject this? Because of 32...Qd3 33 Bb2 dxe3 and now 34 fxe3 could be met by 34...Qe5, when Black has the e5 square for his knight and the white pawn structure has been split. (34...Qe5? 35 Bc5 Bd1+ 36 Qg2, winning the a5 pawn, therefore 34...Bfe8 is better – Dvoretsky.)

'And 34 Bxe3 would be met by 34...Qxb2. Unfortunately I had not calculated this latter line far enough, as after 34...Qxb2 White can achieve a decisive advantage with 35 Qd7 Bc8 36 Ba7 and now:

- A) 36...Bfd8 37 Bb7 and the threat Qf6+ decides;
- B) 36...Ba8 37 Bb7 Qc4 38 Bb7 Qd6 39 Qxf8 Qxb7 40 Qxg6.'

32 ... Bxd4

32...Qe6 would appear to be weaker: 33 Bb7 Bxd4 34 b3! a4 35 Bxb6.

33 Qxb6 Bb8!
34 Bxc5

If 34 Bc6 there follows 34...Qd3 35 Bd1 Qe5(b4). As was shown by Mikhalchishin, also unconvincing is 34 Qc8 Qa6 (34...Qe6? 35 Qe7+ Qg7 36 Bxe6) 35 Qe7+ Qf8 36 Ba7 Bd6 37 b3 Qb4 with counterplay (if 38 Bxa5 Bd7).

34 ... Bxb6

35 Bc2

35 b3 a4.

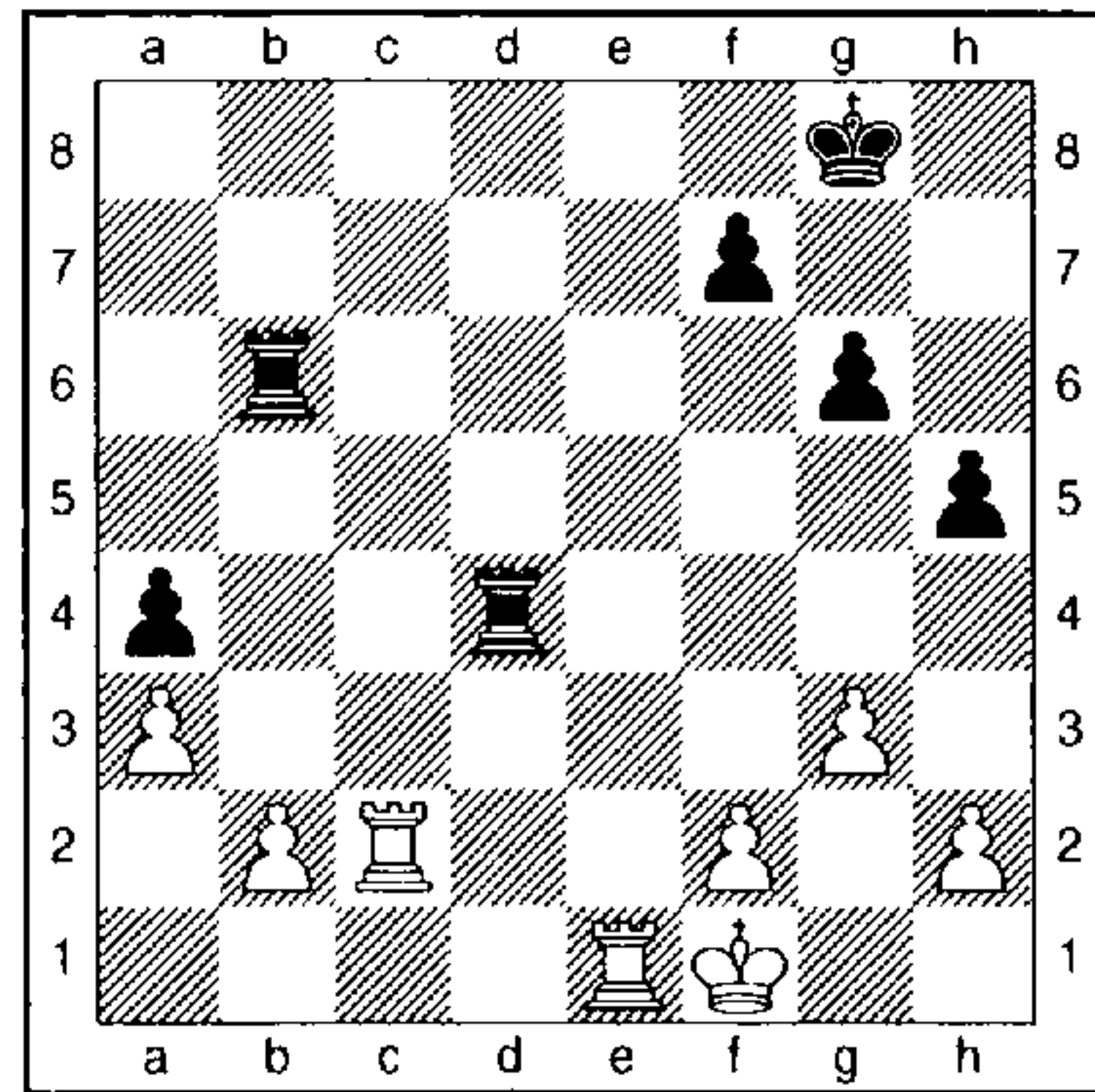
35 ... a4

36 a3 h5

see next diagram



228



'All rook endings are drawn', half-jokingly, half-seriously remarked Tarrasch. And although in the resulting position White still retains winning chances, the present game once again confirmed the German grandmaster's thesis – in the end it nevertheless concluded in a draw.

37 ♖e7

37 h4 was more steady, fixing the kingside pawns. Now the opponent could have replied 37...h4!?, but apparently Belyavsky did not like the position arising after 38 ♖c8+ ♕g7 39 ♖cc7 ♖f6 40 ♕e2 or 40 ♖b7, and he tries to maintain his rook on the b-file. However, instead of 39...♖f6 there is 39...hxg3! 40 ♖xf7+ ♕h6 41 hxg3 ♖xb2 with quite good drawing chances.

37 ... ♖d1+
38 ♕g2 ♖d5
39 ♖a7 ♖d4

Belyavsky sticks (probably because of time trouble) to waiting tactics. Serious consideration should have been given to 39...♖db5!? 40 ♖xa4 ♖xb2 41 ♖xb2 ♖xb2 42 ♖b4 ♖a2 43 ♖b3 g5!? or 43 a4 ♕g7 44 h4 f6 and 45...g5. This would have led to roughly the same positions that could have arisen later in the game, but in a slightly more favourable version for Black.

White's play can be improved by 40 ♖cc7 ♖f5 41 ♖ab7! The obvious 41...♖cb7 is less accurate in view of 41...♖c6!? 42 ♖xa4 g5! 43 ♖b3 ♖c2 44 ♖f3 ♖xf3 45 ♕xf3 ♖xb2. Understandably, at the board, with restricted time for thought, it was extremely difficult to take account of all these subtleties.

40 h4 ♕g7
41 ♖c3 ♖f6
41...♖xb2? 42 ♖f3.
42 ♖b7

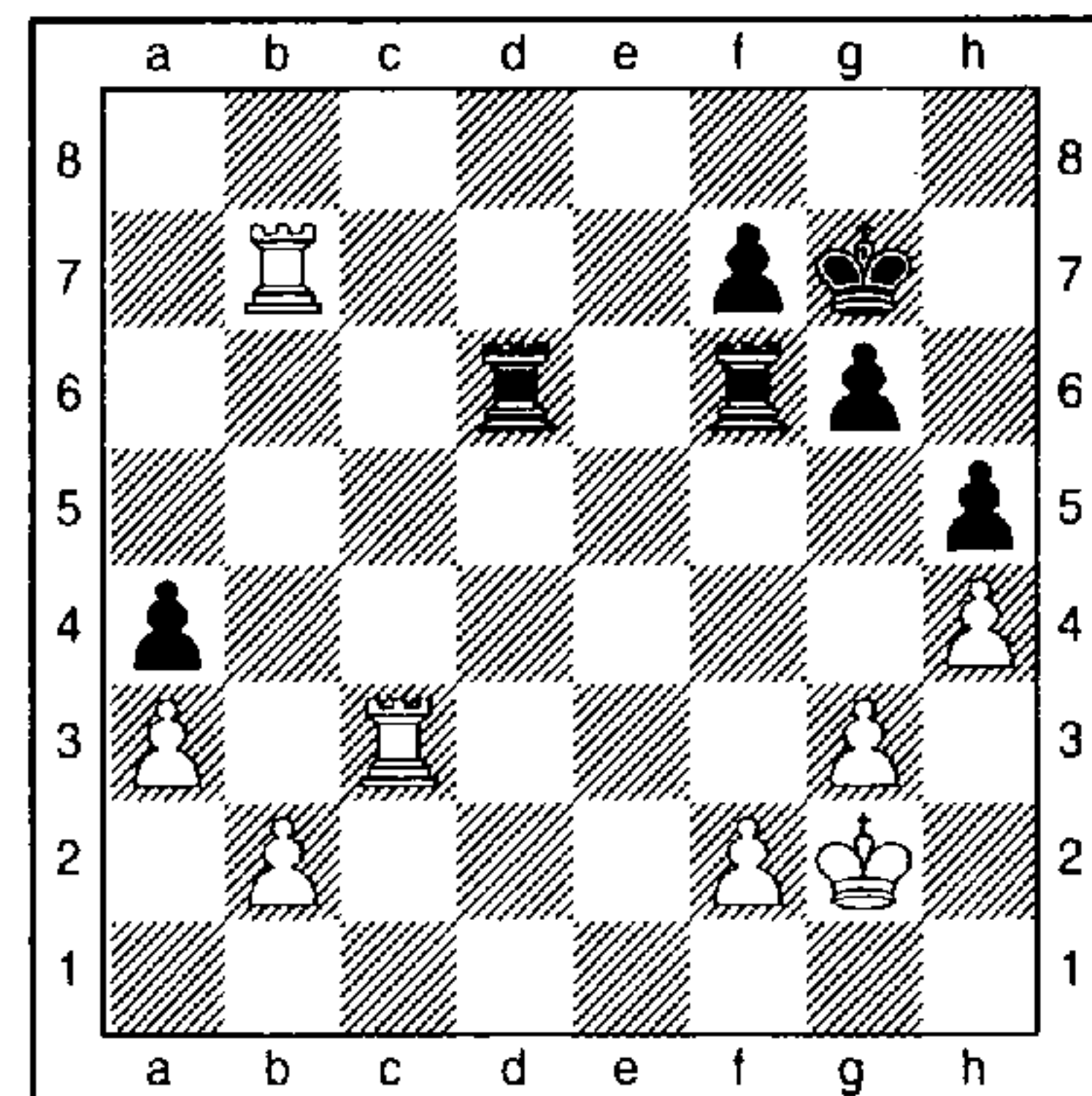
The sealed move. Both players judged the adjourned position to be won for White. Korchnoi based this on the following interesting variation, although, in my view, it is not entirely forced:

42...♖d2 43 ♖f3 ♖xf3 (why not 43...♖c2! 44 ♖xf6 ♕xf6, gaining a couple of tempi?) 44 ♕xf3 ♖c2 45 ♕e3 ♕f6 46 b4! (46 f3!?) 46...♖c3+ (46...axb3 47 ♖xb3 must also be carefully checked, especially as, if he wished, White could have forced this position with 46 ♖b4 followed by 47 ♖xa4 ♖xb2 48 ♖b4) 47 ♕d4 ♖xa3 48 ♖a7, and the white b-pawn, in his opinion, is bound to decide the outcome.

Belyavsky makes an interesting attempt to take his opponent for a ride, and it unexpectedly easily succeeds.

42 ... ♖dd6!

229



43 ♖c2?!

43 ♖f3? ♖b6! is pointless. After 43 ♖b4 ♖d2 (43...♖b6 44 ♖cc4) 44 ♖f3 ♖xf3 45 ♕xf3 ♖c2 46 ♕e3 ♕f6 (46...f6!?) the white rook at b4 is positioned slightly worse than at b7 (b2–b4 is not possible), and this factor concerned Korchnoi. The position after 46 ♖xa4 (instead of 46 ♕e3) 46...♖xb2 47 ♖b4 ♖a2 48 a4 appeared to him to be drawn due to the plan of ...f7–f6 and ...g6–g5. But, in his notes to the game, he remarked that, in Belyavsky's opinion, White should still win this ending. In addition, apart from 48 a4 possible is 48 ♖b3, intending to defend all the pawns along the 3rd rank (♕e3, f2–f4) and then proceed with the king to the queenside.

The resulting ending is undoubtedly very interesting and deserving of a special analysis. I am not convinced that all such positions are definitely won for White.

43 ... ♖d4
44 ♖b4?

The rook should have been returned to c3. After the move played the position becomes drawn.

44 ... ♖xb4
45 axb4 ♖d6
46 b3

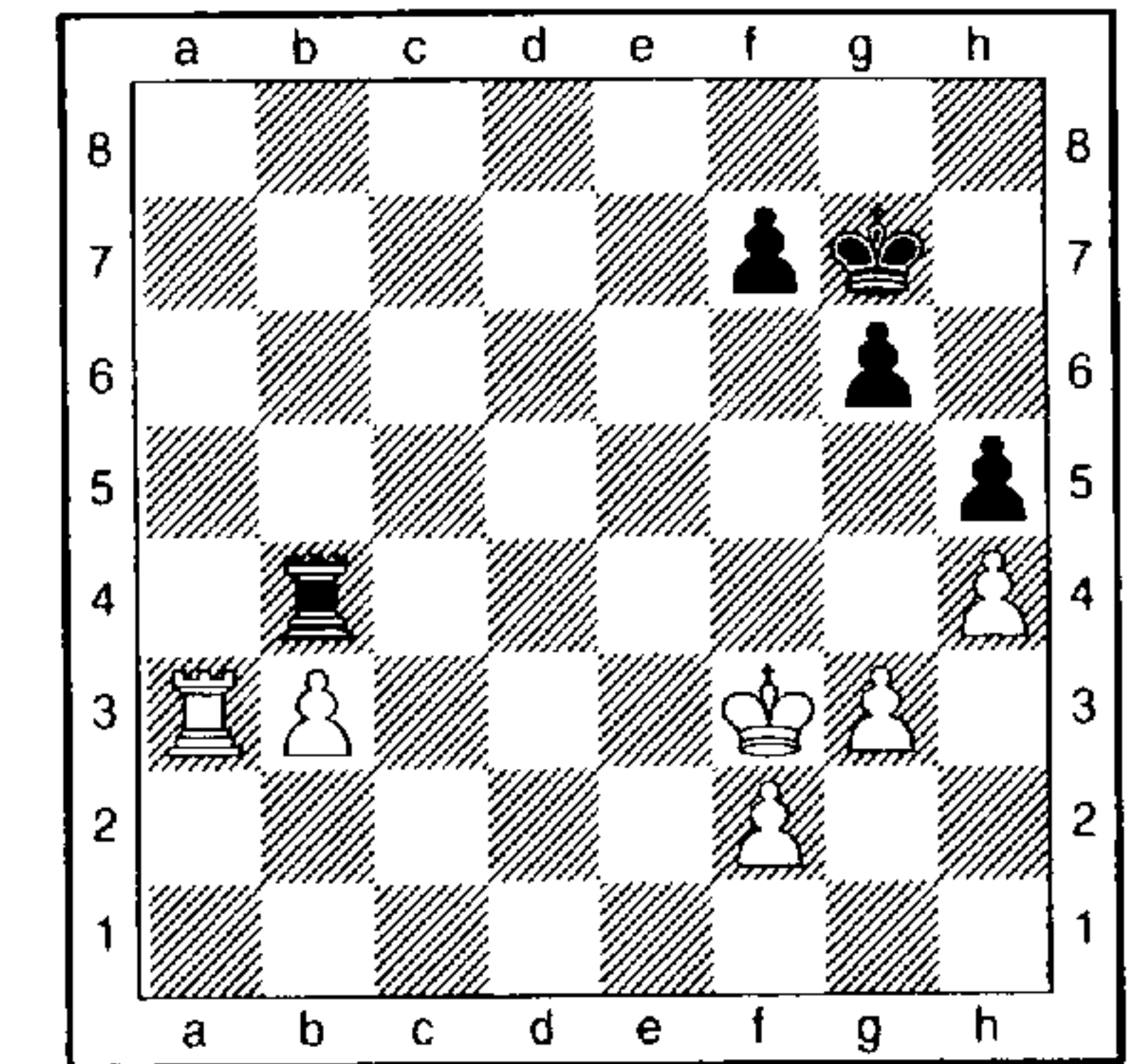
46...♖d4 was threatened.

46 ... a3!

Apparently it was this that Korchnoi did not take into account. Black would have lost after 46...axb3? 47 ♖b2 ♖d3?! 48 b5.

47 ♖a2 ♖b6
48 ♕f3 ♖xb4
49 ♖xa3

230



Q 7-42. How should Black defend?

The white king wants to go to the aid of its passed pawn. Black must urgently set up counterplay on the kingside.

49 ... f6!
50 ♕e3 g5
51 f4 gxh4
52 gxh4 ♕g6
53 ♕d3 ♕f5
54 ♕c3 ♖xf4
55 ♖a4 ♖f3+
56 ♕b2 ♖h3
57 ♖c4 ♕e6
58 b4 f5
59 b5 ♕d5
60 ♖f4 ♕d6
61 ♕c2 ♕c7

Draw.

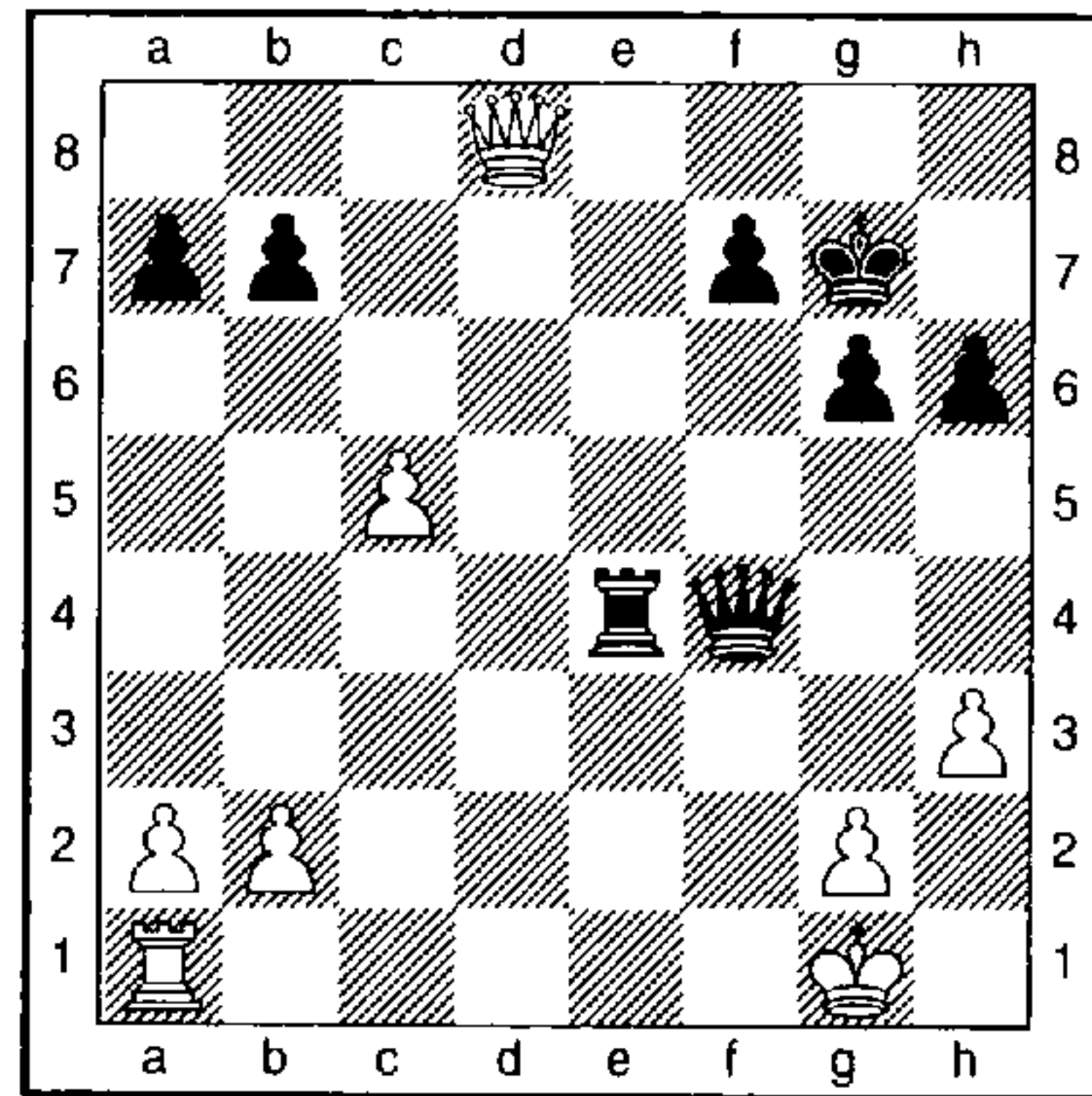


Exercises for Analysis

He who is unable to work is doomed to fail. With talent alone nothing can be done.

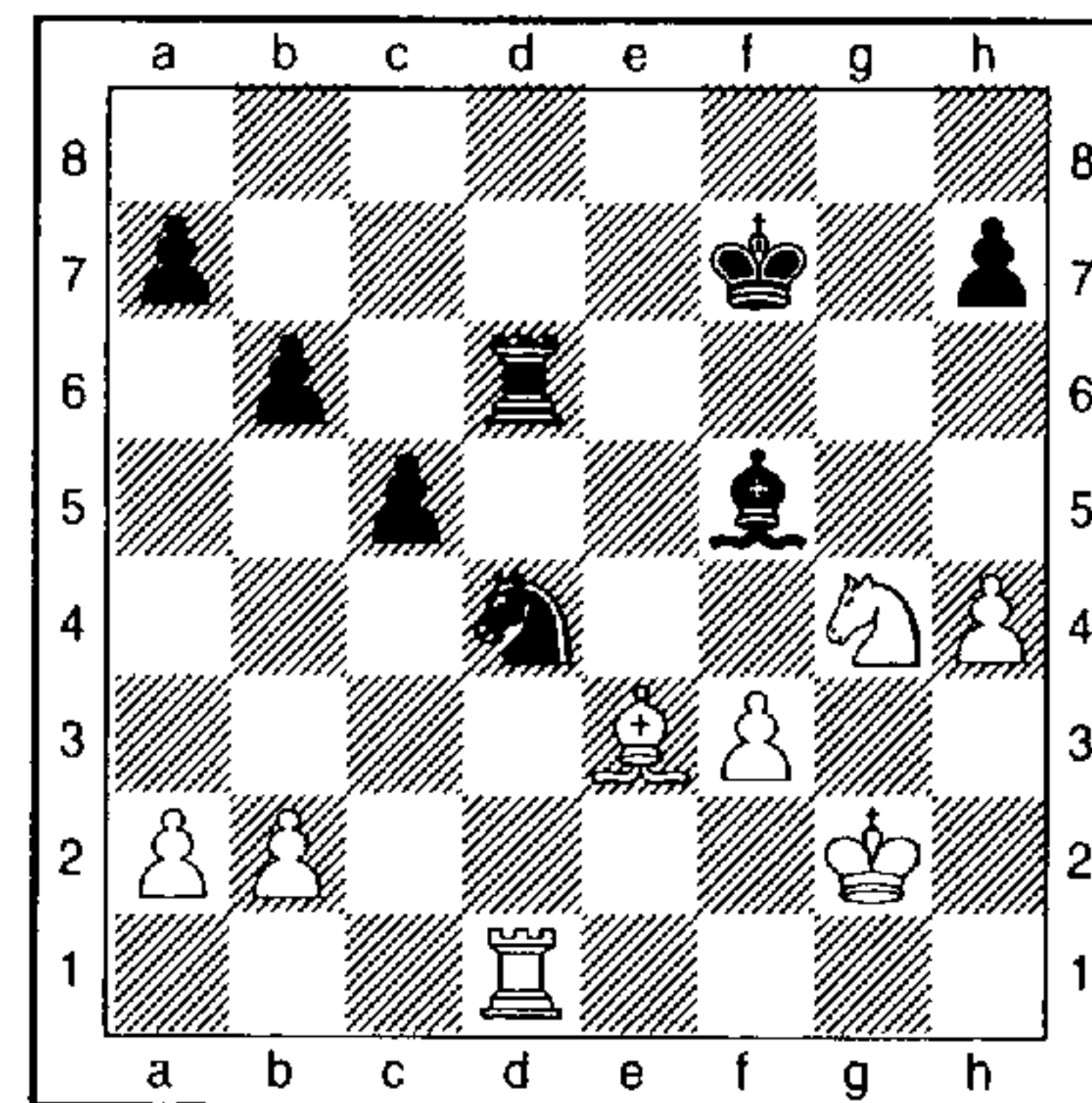
Mikhail Botvinnik

E 7-10
231



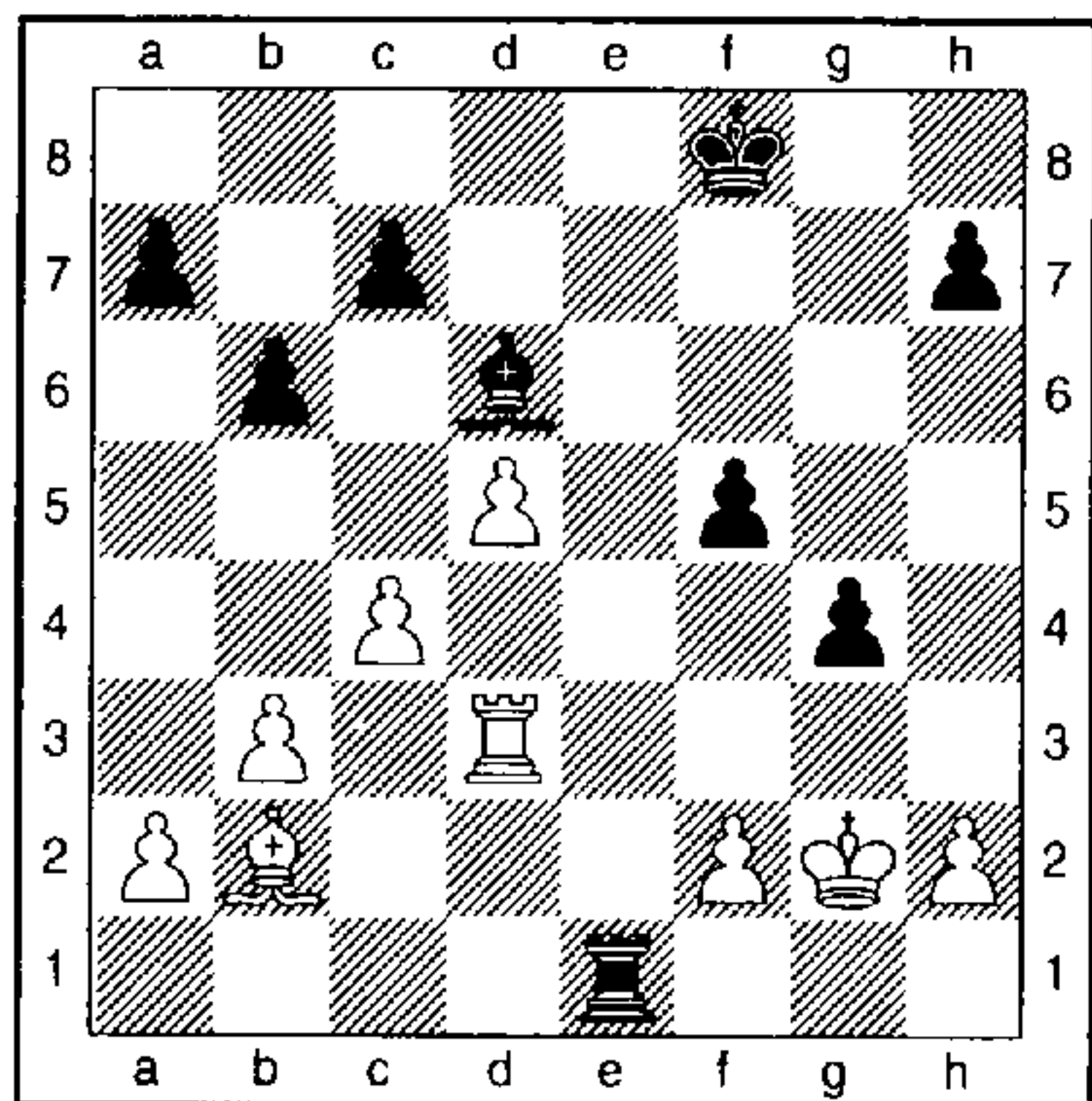
White to move

E 7-12
233



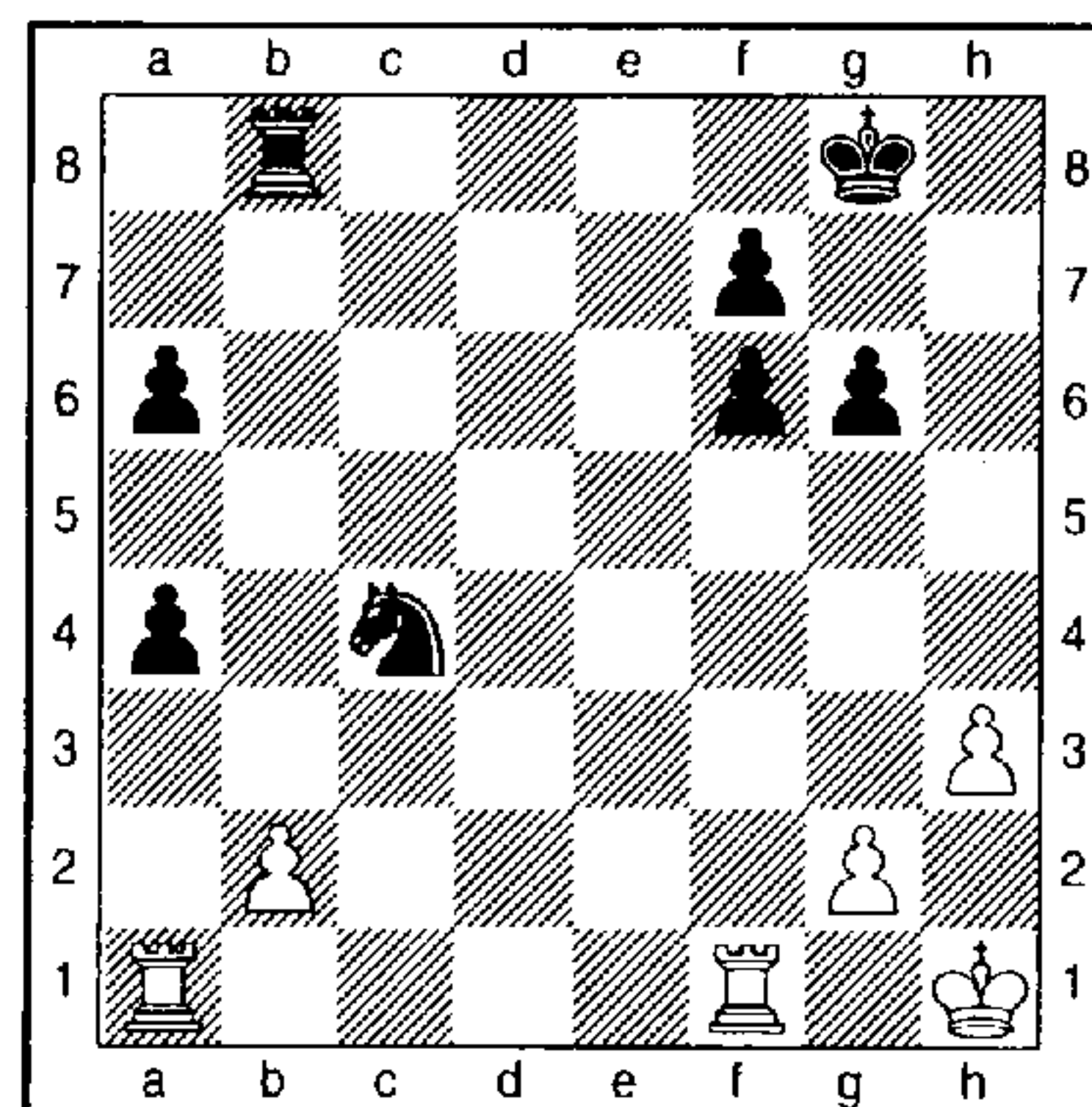
Black to move

E 7-11
232



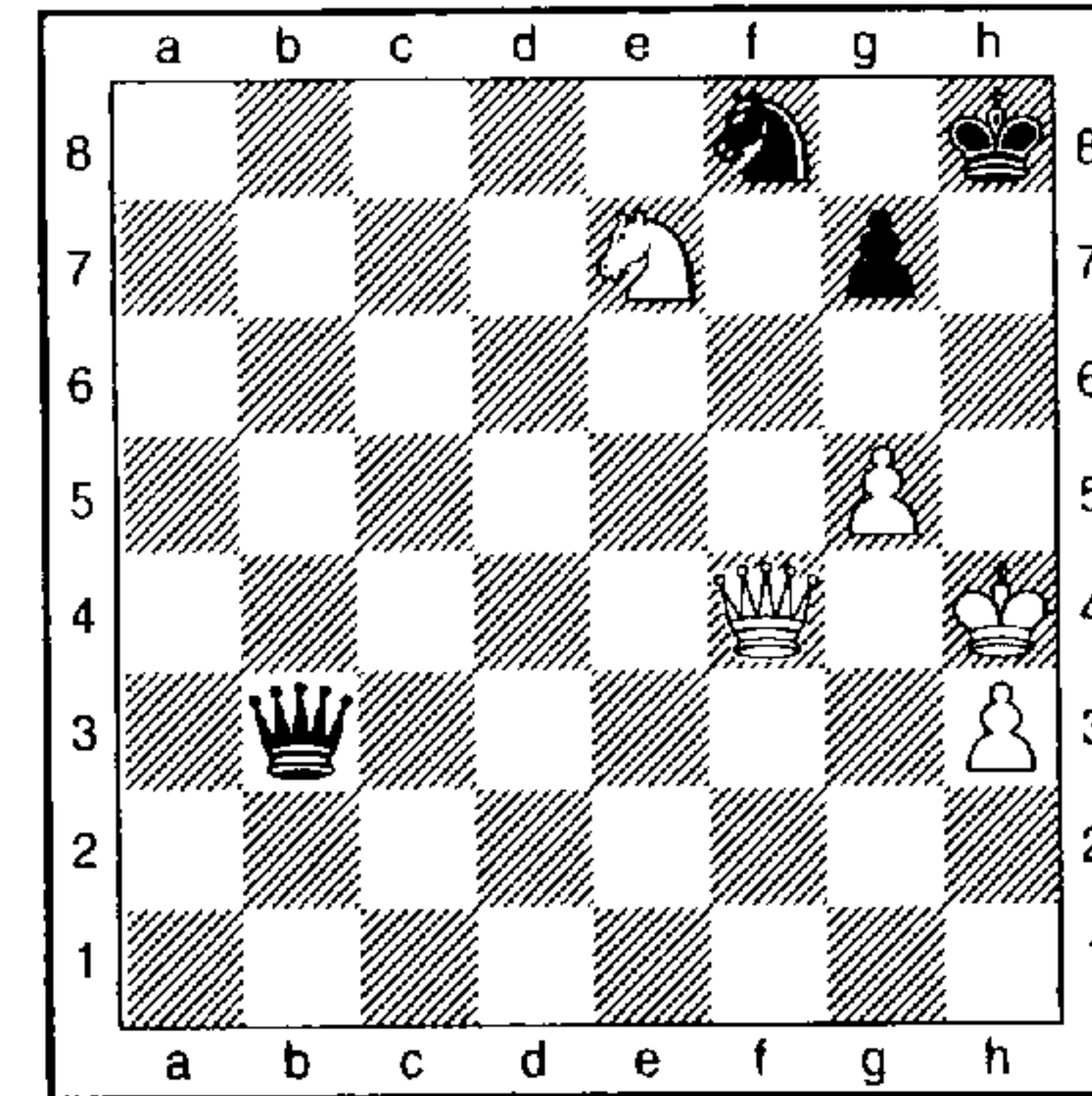
White to move

E 7-13
234



White to move

E 7-14
235



Black to move



Solutions to Exercises

E 6-1. Dvoretsky–Veselovsky (Moscow Team Championship 1967).

White's plan is obvious – in some or other order he must develop his queen at a4 and his bishop at a3, place his rook at b6 or b8, and then bring his second rook to the queenside.

But what can Black do here? For the moment the central advance ...d6–d5 is not dangerous because of the reply ♖a3. It would probably be advantageous for him to play ...♙h3, exchanging the strong bishop at g2. For this reason the natural 17 ♚a4?! would be a significant inaccuracy.

It is not difficult to prevent the exchange of bishops by 17 ♜e1?! (17...♙h3 18 ♙h1). But it is a pity to waste a tempo – after all, the rook move does not in itself come into White's plans.

17 ♙a3!

The best positional moves usually assist the implementation of your own plans and simultaneously hinder the opponent's. The continuation in the game satisfies both of these demands. While intensifying the pressure on the queenside, White simultaneously preserves his light-square bishop from exchange. In the event of 17...c5 the knight obtains an excellent outpost at d5. Even so, that is probably what Black should have played.

17 ... ♜fe8
18 ♚a4 ♚c7
19 ♚a8 f5

My opponent avoided the planned 19...♜d7 (with the idea of 20...d5), apparently because of 20 ♜b8 d5 21 ♜fb1 dxc4 22 dxc4, when 22...♙xc4? 23 ♙xc6 is bad for Black.

20 ♜b8 ♙f8

If 20...e4!? there follows 21 ♙f4 exd3 22

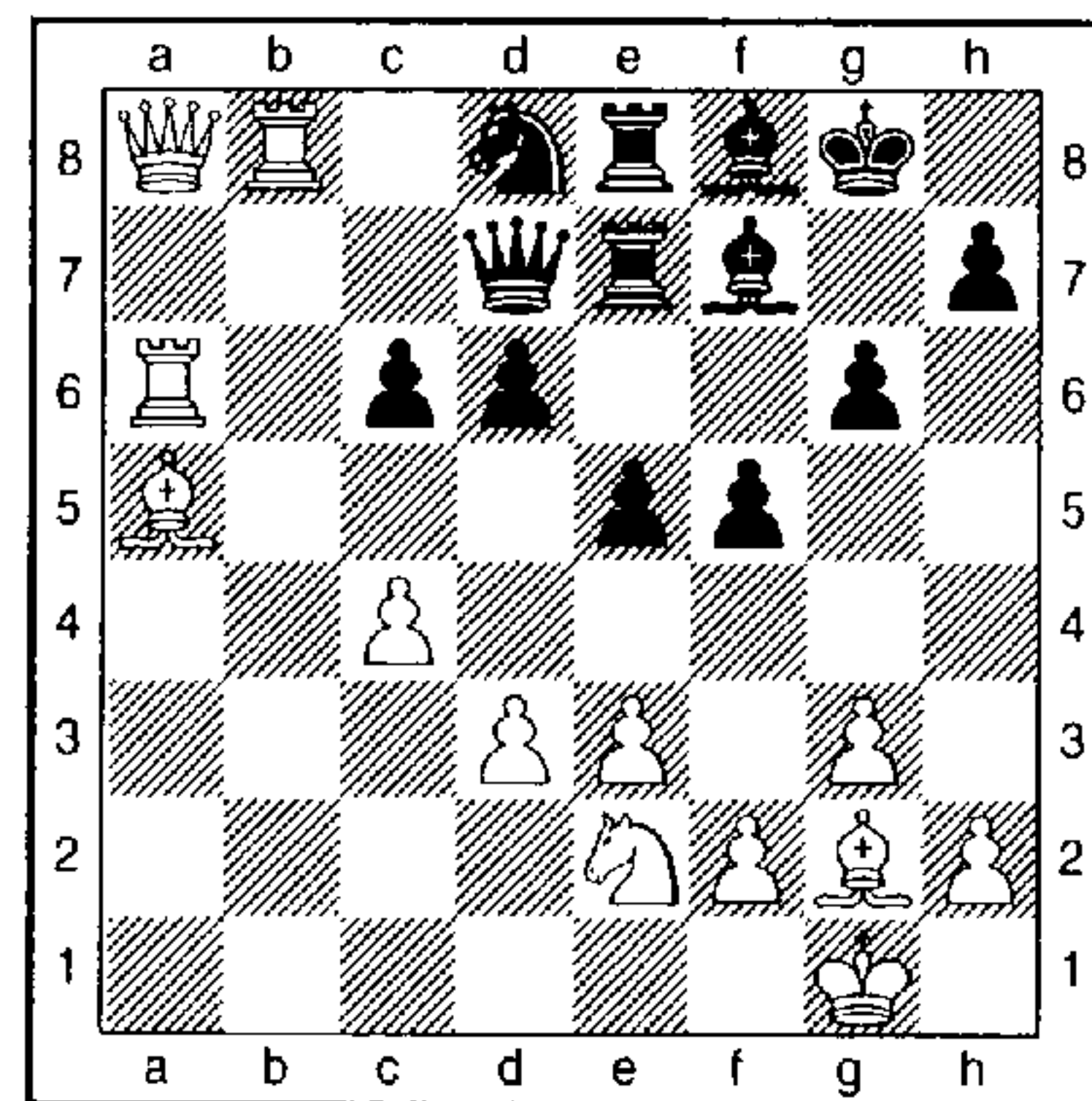
♙xe6 ♜xe6 23 ♜d1, or 21...♙f7 22 dxe4 fxe4 23 ♜fb1.

21 ♙b4 ♚a7?
22 ♜a1
22 ♙xd6.
22 ... ♚d7
23 ♜a6 ♙f7

23...c5 was more tenacious.

24 ♙a5
Black resigns. The concluding position is rather picturesque.

236



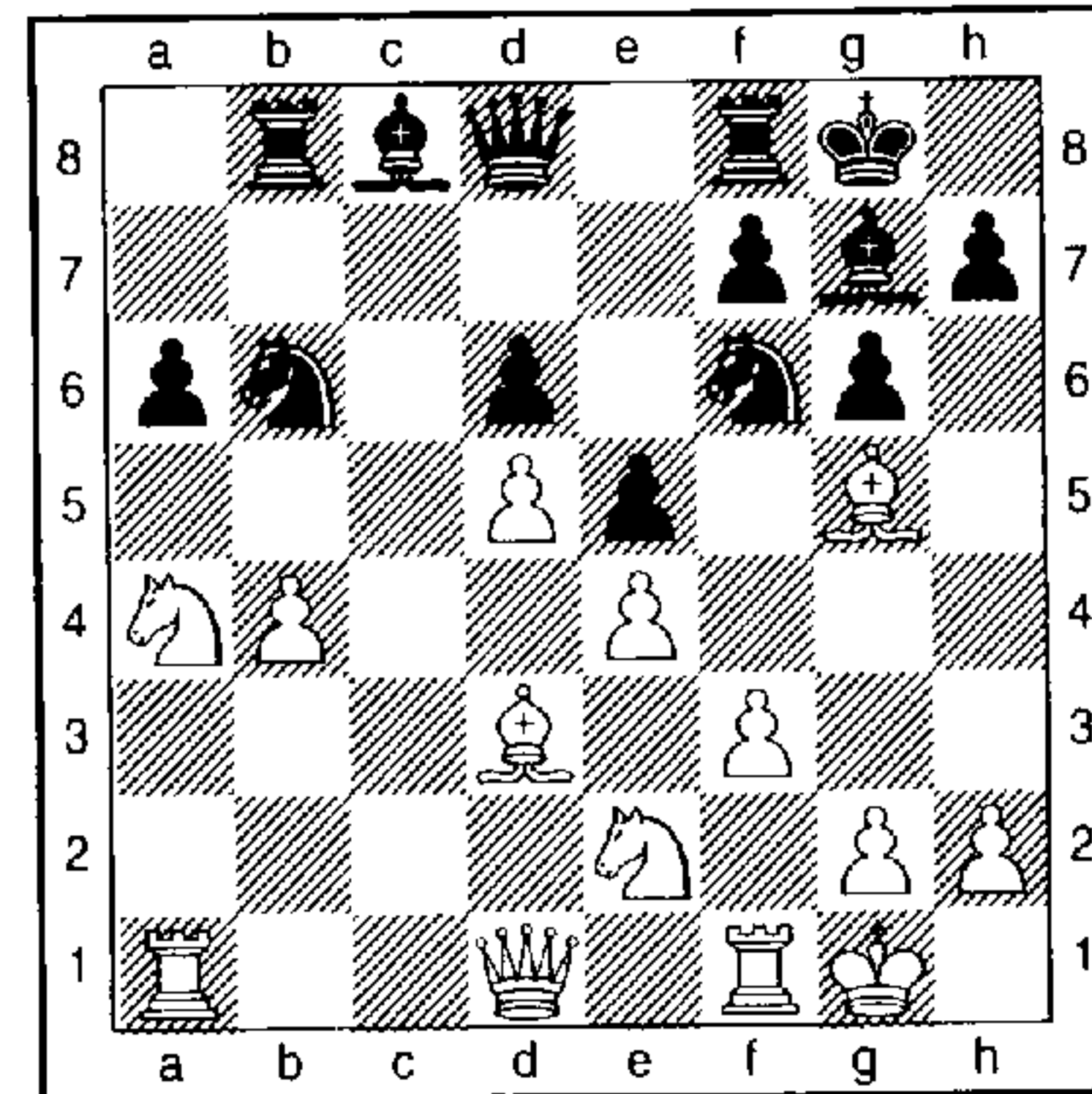
E 6-2. Dolmatov–Kupreichik (Minsk 1982).

The routine 12 0–0?! is incorrect – the opponent replies 12...♙d7! followed by ...0–0, ...♚b8, ...♜fc8 and ...♙c4. The plan of manoeuvring the knight to a5 also allows Black to gain counterplay: 12 ♙c1?! ♙d7 13 ♙b3 ♜c8 and then 14...♙c4 15 ♙xc4 bxc4.

White must immediately, before the bishop goes to d7, undermine the strong b5 pawn, in order to increase his spatial advantage and deprive the opponent of play on the queenside.

12 a4! bxa4
13 ♙xa4 0–0
14 0–0 ♜b8

237



Now the simple 15 ♚d2! or 15 ♙d2! would have consolidated White's positional advantage. Dolmatov played the incautious 15 ♙e3?!, which allowed Kupreichik to sharply complicate the play with a knight sacrifice: 15...♙bxd5! 16 exd5 ♙xd5.

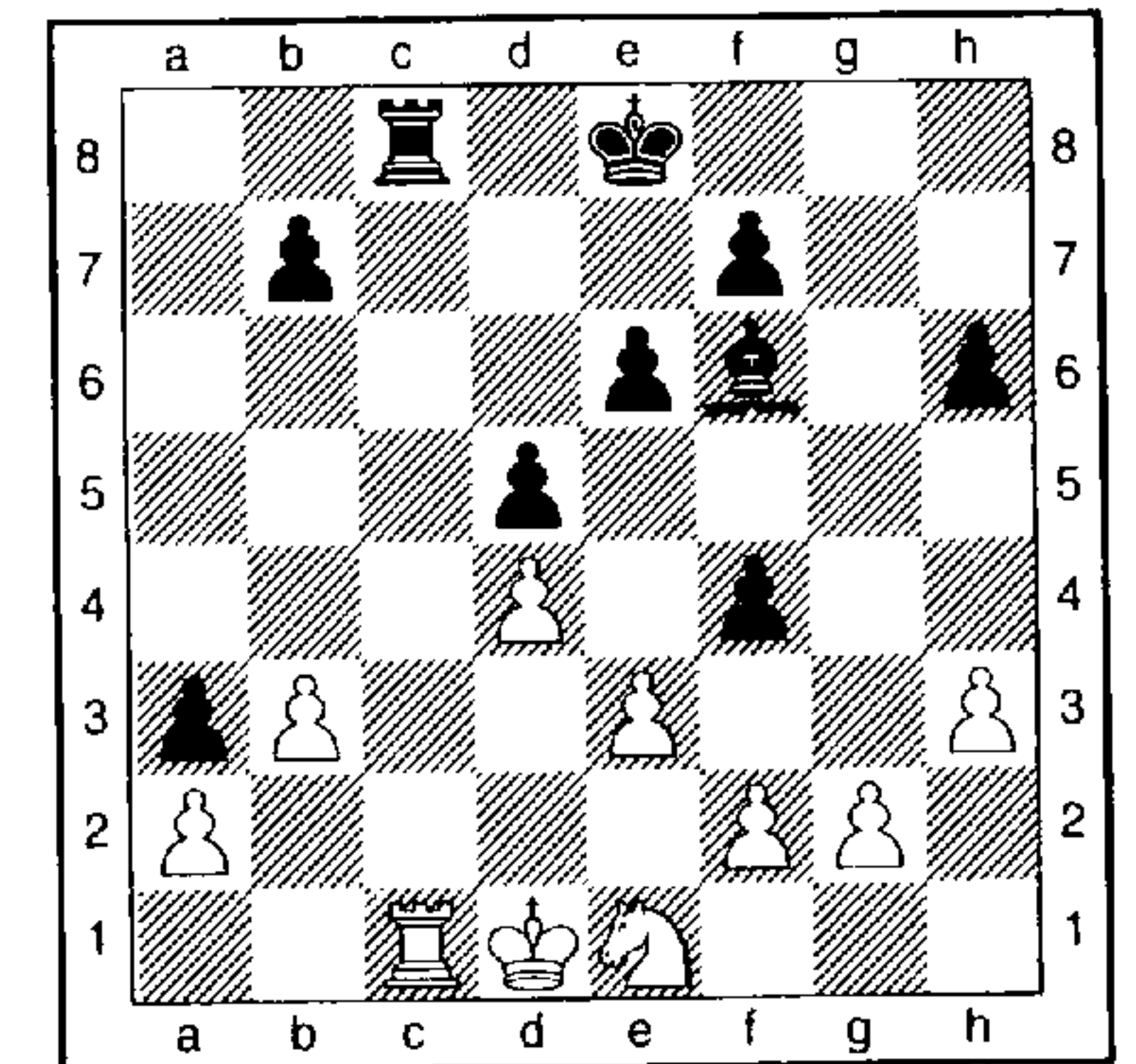
White did not become flustered, but blocked the opponent's central pawns by 17 ♙a7! ♜xb4 18 ♙e4 ♙f6 19 ♙ac3 ♙xe4 20 fxe4, and in the following sharp skirmish he nevertheless won.

E 6-3. Muravyev–Dvoretsky (Moscow Championship 1967).

On the queenside White has an obvious advantage – the a3 pawn is weak. Black must create counterplay on the other side of the board.

24 ... ♙f4!
25 ♜xc8+ ♜xc8
26 ♜c1

238



26 ... ♜b8!

One pair of rooks must be retained – otherwise there will be nothing with which to disturb White's kingside. Black intends, after exchanging pawns on e3, to then play ...♙e7–d6, ...♙e7 and ...♜g8.

27 ♙d3 fxe3 28 fxe3 ♙e7 29 b4 ♙d6 30 ♙c2 ♙e7 31 ♙b3 ♜g8 32 ♜c2 ♜g3 33 ♜e2 f5! The position is unclear – the threat of 34...f4 ensures Black real counter-chances. He later even went on to win this game.

E 6-4. Dvoretsky–Lerner (Training game, Moscow 1980).

I want by b2–b4 to undermine the opponent's pawn chain on the queenside. The game went 18...♜d7?! 19 b4 (19 ♚a4! was even stronger) 19...c4 20 ♚a4 with the better chances for White.

Konstantin Lerner could have been the first to do the undermining – by attacking my central pawns.

18 ... ♙f6!
19 ♚xg6+ ♚xg6
20 ♙xg6 fxe5
21 fxe5 ♙g7!
22 ♙h5

Otherwise 22...♜fe8.

22 ... ♜f5



23 ♖f3 ♜xe5

The two sides' chances are equal.

E 6-5. Belyavsky–Dvoretsky (Zonal Tournament, Vilnius 1975).

The passed d-pawn definitely needs to be blockaded. In such situations Nimzowitsch liked to use his knight as a blockader, but here after 12...♗e8 13 ♗e4 or 13 ♖f3 White would have retained an appreciable advantage.

12 ... ♗d6!

In cramped positions one should aim for exchanges. Black intends 13...♖c7 and then 14...♗fe8. The knight remains at f6, in order to hinder the activation of the opponent's knight. The opponent cannot play 13 ♗xf7? ♜xf7 14 ♗xd6 because of 14...♗g4!

13 ♖f3 ♖c7
14 ♗xd7 ♖xd7

Now 15 ♗g5 is pointless because of 15...♗e5. The position is almost equal and the game soon ended in a draw.

E 6-6. Kozlovskaya–Carvajal (Interzonal Tournament, Rio de Janeiro 1979).

The game was adjourned at this point, and its outcome depended on the move sealed by Black. The Indian player was greedy.

1...♜xa3? 2 ♜c1! In the event of the capture on e5 the position would have remained unclear, whereas now White wins by force. She wants to advance her c-pawn – the one furthest from the black king, but first, as one is supposed to, she places her rook behind the passed pawn, so as not to allow the opponent's rook there.

2...♗e8 3 c6 ♗d8 4 c7+ ♗c8 5 d6. Black resigned in view of 5...♜d3 6 ♜c6 followed by 7 ♜xa6 or 7 ♜b6.

Black should have been thinking not of winning material, but of blockading the menacing passed pawns.

1 ... ♜c2!
2 c6 ♗e7!
3 ♜xe5+ ♗d6

The pawns are halted and it is now White who has to seek a way to draw.

E 6-7. Henley–Bellon (Surakarta/Denpasar 1982).

White has just played ♗f4–d2, freeing his rook from having to defend the a5 pawn and preparing 26 ♗c3 followed by a pawn offensive on the kingside. To neutralise this plan, Black must oppose the c3 bishop with his own bishop from f6, and then offer the exchange, depriving the opponent of the advantage of the two bishops.

25 ... f5!
26 ♗c2 ♜d7
27 ♗c3 ♗f6

White's advantage is insignificant, and a draw is the most probable outcome.

In the game Black did not find the correct plan and he encountered great difficulties.

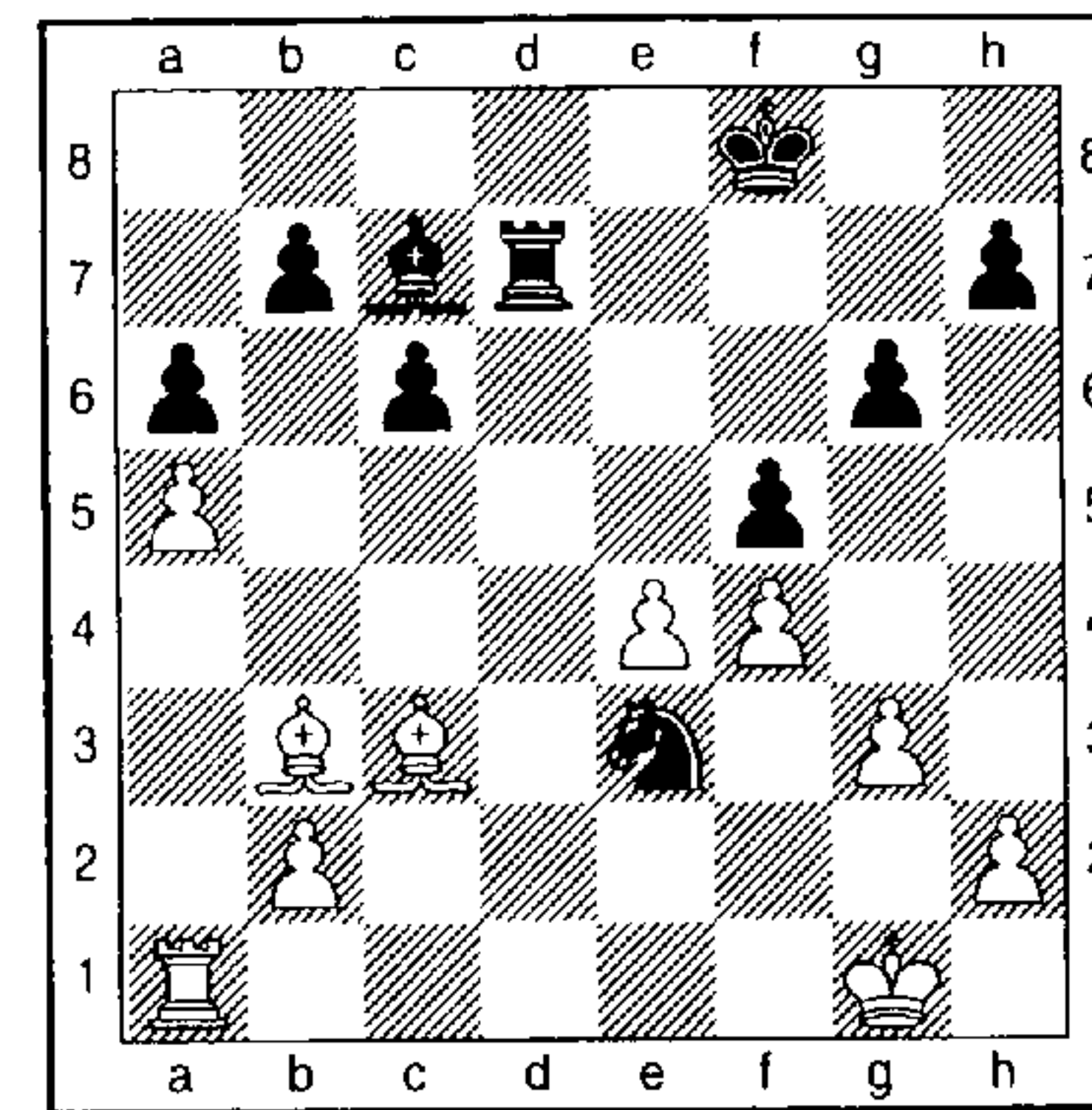
25...♜d7? 26 ♗c3 ♗c7 27 f4 f5! The best chance! 27...♗g4 28 h3 f5 29 ♗xf5 gxf5 30 hxg4 fvg4 31 ♗f2 would have led to a hopeless ending. White follows up by switching his rook to the h-file and, after tying the opponent's rook to the defence of his pawns, advances his own central pawns. 28 ♗c2 ♗g4?! The restrained 28...♗f7 was preferable.

29 e4! fxe4? Now Black loses the exchange. Ronald Henley recommends 29...♗e3 30 ♗b3+ ♗f8. Can you decide how White should play in this case?

see next diagram



239



If 31 ♗e6 Black replies 31...♜d8!, not allowing 32 ♗c8, and if 32 ♜e1, then 32...♗c2. In reply to 31 ♜e1 neither 31...♗b8? 32 ♗b4+ ♗g7 33 ♗c5 nor 31...♗d6? 32 ♜xe3 ♗c5 33 ♗f2 ♜d3 34 ♗b4! will do, but there is the simple 31...♜d3! The strongest continuation is 31 ♗f2! ♗g4+ (31...♜d3 is more tenacious) 32 ♗e2! ♗xh2 (32...fxe4 33 ♗e6; 32...♜e7 33 ♗b4) 33 ♜h1 ♗g4 34 exf5 gxf5 (34...♜e7+ 35 ♗f3 gxf5 36 ♗b4) 35 ♗e6, and 35...♜e7 is not possible because of the same pin 36 ♗b4. The power of the white bishops in this variation is impressive!

30 ♗b3+! ♜d5. 30...♗f8 31 ♗e6 is totally bad for Black.

31 h3! ♗e3 32 ♗f2 ♗f5 33 ♜d1 ♗e7 34 ♗f6! ♗f7 35 ♗xe7 ♗xe7 36 ♗xd5 cxd5 37 ♜xd5 ♗e6 38 ♜g5 b5 39 axb6 ♗xb6+ 40 ♗e2 e3 41 b3. Black resigns.

E 6-8. Lazarichev–Dvoretsky (Moscow Championship Semi-Final 1971).

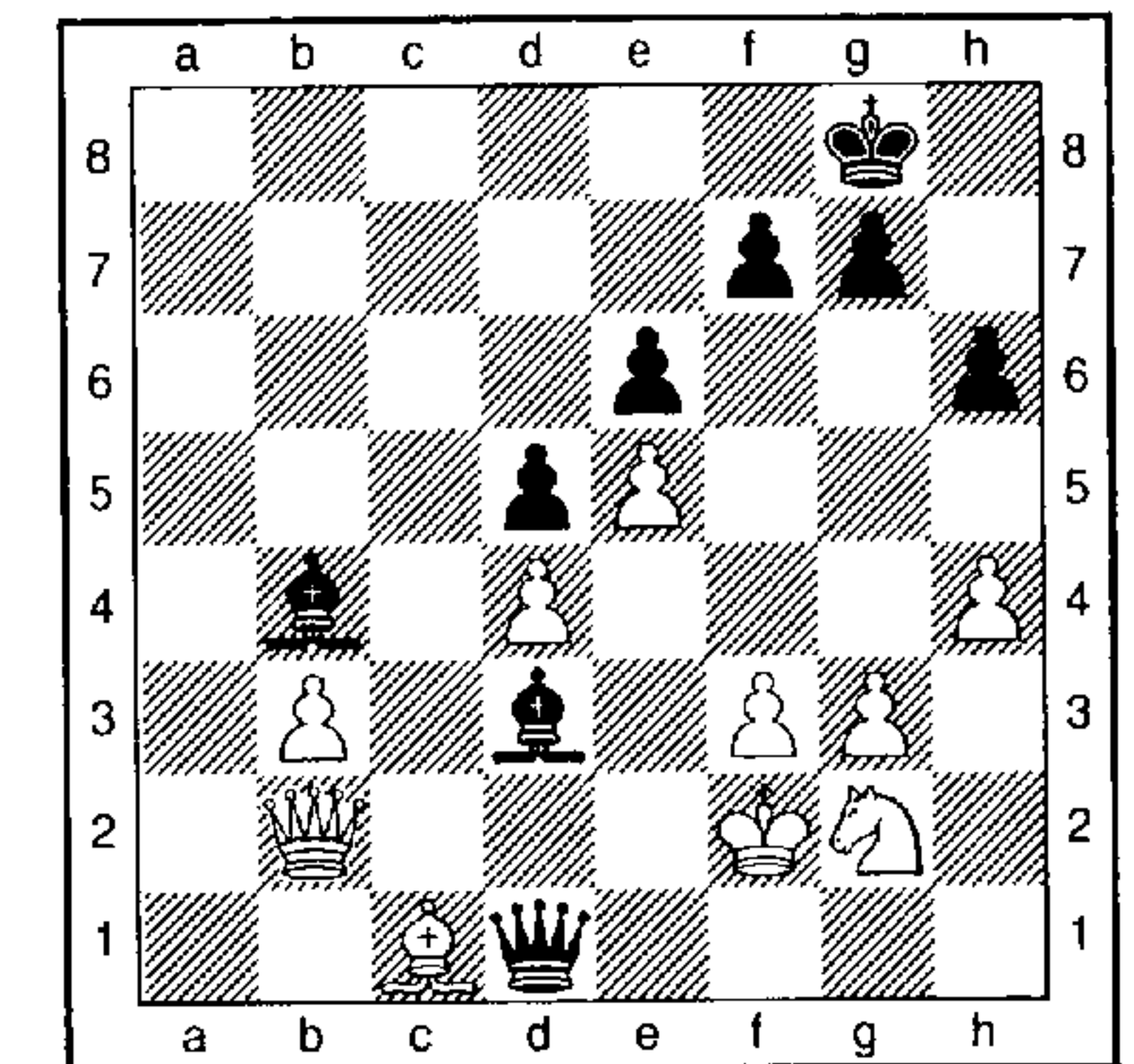
Black has an undisputed advantage, and the only question is how best to convert it. By making some waiting move, he can play for zugzwang. However, after 41 ♗d2 ♖b1 42 ♖b3! White's defences somehow hold – he intends 43 ♗e3 followed by 44 ♖xb1

♗xb1 45 ♗d3.

The most direct way to the goal is a positional pawn sacrifice, enabling both bishops to be activated.

40 ... b3!!
41 axb3 ♗b4
42 ♗g2 ♗d3

240



The white king is in terrible danger. I felt that the threats created by my queen and two bishops would be impossible to parry, and I did not bother calculating any further. I had to do this at home, since here the game was adjourned. Home analysis confirmed the absolute correctness of the pawn sacrifice.

43 ♗f4 ♖f1+ 44 ♗e3 ♗b5 with the deadly threats of 45...♖g1+ and 45...♖e1+;

43 ♗e3 ♖e1+ 44 ♗g2 ♗c3 45 ♖a3 ♗xd4; 43 ♗e3 ♗f1! 44 ♗f2 (44 ♗f4 ♖e1+ 45 ♗e2 ♗xe2) 44...♗c3! and wins, but, of course, not 44...♗a3? 45 ♖d2 or 45 ♗e3;

43 g4 ♖f1+ 44 ♗e3 (44 ♗g3 ♗e2) 44...g5! 45 hxg5 hxg5, and there is no defence against 46...♗a3!

43 h5!? White sealed this move and then resigned without resuming. I had prepared the following variation:

43...♖f1+ 44 ♗e3 ♗b5 45 g4 (45 ♗f4 ♖g1+; 45 ♖c2 ♖g1+ 46 ♗f4 ♖xd4+; 45



♖f4 ♗e2 46 ♘h4 ♗e7! 47 ♗e3 ♗b5!) 45...♗g1+! (weaker is 45...♗d3+? 46 ♖f4 ♗c3 47 ♗f2 ♗xd4 48 ♗d2) 46 ♖f4 ♗f1 47 ♘h4 (47 ♘e3 ♗a3!) 47...♗e7!

E 6-9. Kotov–Levenfish (17th USSR Championship, Moscow 1949).

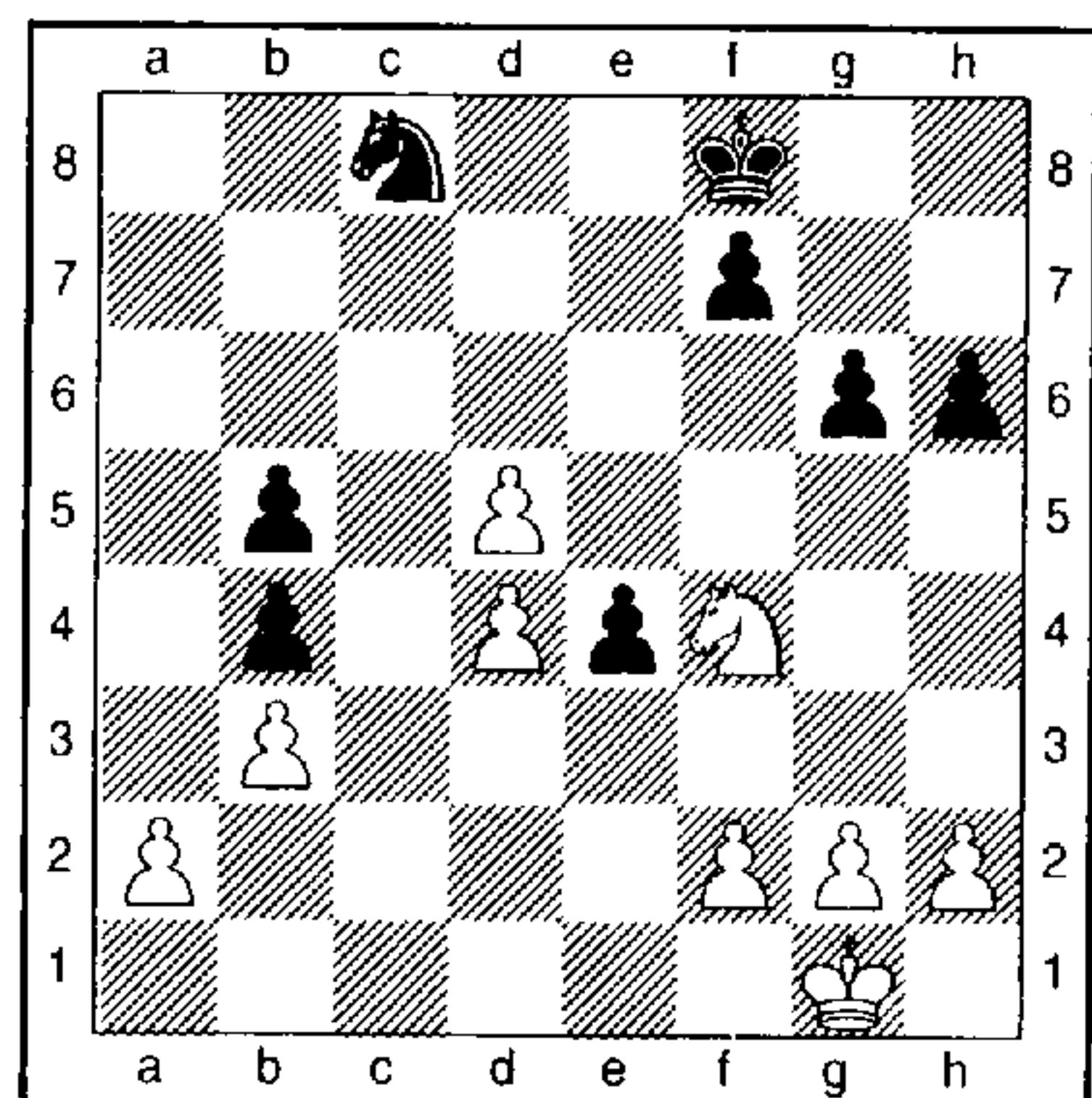
28 ♗d4! ♗xd4
29 exd4

It is essential for White to exchange the black queen, even at the cost of spoiling his pawns. From e5 it was controlling the entire board, and in particular the important invasion square c7.

In order to appreciate the true worth of White's idea, we must examine the best defence: 29...♘d6 30 ♖c7 ♗b5. From here play can develop as follows:

31 ♖xe7 ♗f8 (less good is 31...♖c8 32 ♗xb5 and 33 g4) 32 ♖c7 ♖c8 33 ♖xc8+ ♘xc8 34 ♗xb5 axb5.

241



35 d6! Black faces an unpleasant choice between 35...♘xd6 36 ♘d5 ♘f5 37 ♘xb4 ♘xd4 38 a4 and 35...♘b6 36 f3! exf3 (36...g5? 37 ♘h5 exf3 38 ♘f6!) 37 gxf3 ♗e8 38 ♘d3 ♘d5 39 ♗f2!? In both cases he retains real chances of a draw, but the path to it is by no means strewn with roses.

Grigory Levenfish played much more weakly and finished up in a lost rook ending.

29...g5? 30 ♖c7 ♗b5 31 ♖xb7 gxf4 32 ♖xe7 ♖c8 (32...♗d3!?) 33 ♗xb5 axb5 34 h4! f5 35 ♖e5 ♗g7 36 ♖xf5 e3 37 fxe3 fxe3 38 ♗f1 ♖c2 39 d6 ♖xa2 40 d7 ♖a8 41 ♗e2. Black resigns.

E 6-10. Dvoretsky–Klovans (43rd USSR Championship, Yerevan 1975).

16 ♗a3!

The d6 bishop is formally classed as 'bad'. But in some cases from c5 it can support Black's planned attack against the white king. And more important, after its departure from the board the weakness of the central e5 pawn will be felt. This means that, by offering the exchange, White is acting in accordance with the well-known strategic principle: *'meet a flank attack of the opponent with active play in the centre'*.

16 ... c5?!

Now Black's position becomes difficult. Stronger was 16...♗xa3 17 ♗xa3 fxd3 18 fxd3 ♗h3!, retaining good chances of equalising.

17 a5 c4

17...♗g4? 18 axb6 fxd3 did not work because of 19 fxd3 ♗xf3 20 ♖f1.

18 ♗a2 ♗xa3

19 ♗xa3 ♘d7

20 ♗b4!?

White has achieved an obvious positional superiority. 20 d4!? exd4 21 ♘xd4 was also strong.

20 ... cxd3

21 cxd3 ♗h8

In severe time trouble Black has nevertheless managed to devise a little trap: after 22 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 23 ♖xe5 he had prepared 23...fxg3 24 fxg3 ♗h3! However, even here after 25 ♗f4! White has a great advantage.

22 ♗b5! ♖b8

23 ♘xe5 ♘xe5



24 ♗xe5 fxd3
25 fxd3 ♗f2+

25...♗f5 was more tenacious.

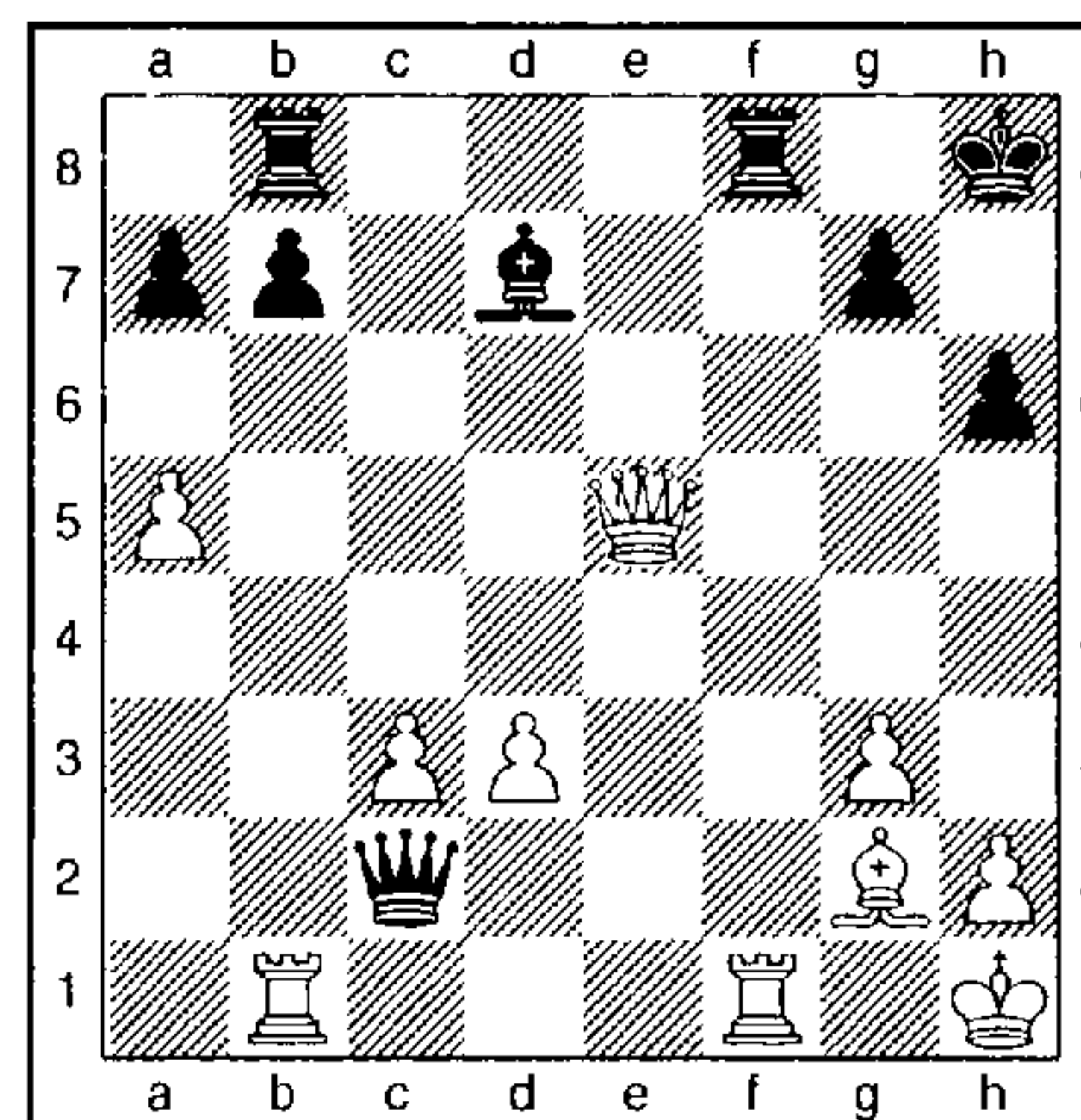
26 ♗h1 ♗d7

27 ♖f1

The prelude to a decisive combination.

27 ... ♗c2

242



28 ♗d6! ♖fd8

29 ♖xb7 ♖xb7

The main variation of the combination looked as follows: 29...♗h3 30 ♗e4 ♗g2+ 31 ♗xg2! ♖xd6 32 ♖xb8+ ♗h7 33 ♗e4+ ♖g6 34 ♖h8+! ♗xh8 35 ♗xg6 ♗g8 36 ♖e1. Alas, I missed the fact that after 30...♗f1 31 ♖xb8 ♗g2+! 32 ♗g1! Black gives perpetual check by 32...♗d1+! 33 ♗xg2 ♗e2+. The correct combination is 30 ♗xh3! ♖xd6 31 ♖xb8+ ♗h7 32 ♗f5+ g6 (the variation 32...♖g6 33 ♖h8+! is already familiar to us) 33 ♗e6! h5 34 ♖f7+ ♗h6 35 ♖h8+ ♗g5 36 h4 – mate!

30 ♗xb7

Black lost on time. White would have won more forcibly by 30 ♖f8+ ♖xf8 31 ♗xf8+ ♗h7 32 ♗e4+ g6 33 ♗f7+ ♗h8 34 ♗f6+!

E 6-11. Chernin–Andrianov (Tallinn 1981). White stands better. After playing a4–a5, he

will open the a-file for his rook and attack the b6 pawn – the base of the opponent's pawn chain. It is more difficult to arrange an attack on the d3 pawn – if the bishop goes to f5, it can always be harassed by ♘h4.

White's bishop is stronger than its opposite number, since it:

- a) fortifies the kingside;
- b) strengthens his future control of the a-file;
- c) has good strong-points at d5 and c6.

Therefore Black should exchange bishops.

19 ... ♗h3!

On formal grounds, Nikolai Andrianov reckoned that his bishop had better prospects than his opponent's bishop. By avoiding the exchange, he loses the thread of the play and allows Alexander Chernin to strengthen his position unhindered.

It is curious that the motifs described above were not implemented in the game – White did not even advance a4–a5, and the play took on a quite different character. It often happens that way: the opponent sees the strategic threat impending over him, endeavours to divert you from implementing it, and succeeds in so doing, but at a high price – new possibilities are opened to you on another part of the board. It is stupid not to exploit them, by persisting with your previously intended plan.

19...♗g4?! 20 ♗c1! ♗g6 (20...♗h5 21 ♗f4 h6 22 ♖fe1) 21 ♗d2 ♗f5 22 ♘h4 ♗h5 (better 22...♗c8) 23 h3 ♗c8 24 ♖ae1! (threatening 25 ♗f3) 24...h6 (not 24...♗xh3 25 ♗xh3 g5 26 ♘g2!) 25 f4 ♖xe1 (25...g5 was more tenacious, but after 26 ♗f3 g4 27 ♗d1 White's advantage is obvious) 26 ♖xe1 g5 (26...♖e8 27 ♗f3) 27 ♗f3 g4 28 ♖e5!, and White soon won.

E 6-12. Bronstein–Dvoretsky (Tbilisi 1980).
22 g3!

By removing the threat to his pawn, White retains some positional advantage, based



on his control of the d-file and the strength of his bishop at b3, which defends his king and puts pressure on Black's kingside.

In the game David Bronstein made the less accurate move 22 f3?! For a moment the e3 pawn was left undefended, and this factor allowed me to equalise, by forcing the exchange of bishops.

22...♙c6! 23 ♖7d6 ♙a4! 24 ♙xa4 ♖xa4 25 e4 ♖fa8 26 ♖xb6 ♖xa2+ 27 ♗xa2 ♖xa2+ 28 ♙xa2 h5. Draw.

E 6-13. Chernin–Gindin (Kharkov 1975).

The advantage is with White, and therefore the positional sacrifice 29 f5?! is simply not necessary. Also incorrect is 29 fxe5? dxe5 (threatening 30...♙xd1) 30 ♙xf8 ♖xd3. The exchange of light-square bishops is in principle advantageous to White, but here it does not work: if 29 ♙f3? there follows 29...♙xf3 30 ♖xf3 d5!!

29 ♖f1!

This rook move creates the strong positional threat of 30 f5.

29 ... ♙h6
30 ♙f3! ♙xf3
31 ♖xf3

Chernin has carried out the advantageous exchange, without allowing the opponent any tactical chances. Now he wants to increase the pressure on the weak d6 pawn by 32 ♖d5 and 33 ♖fd3. White has an undisputed advantage.

31...b5!? 32 cxb5 d5 33 ♖xd5 ♗b6+ 34 ♙g2 ♖xd5 35 exd5 ♗xb5 36 d6 exf4 37 ♗d4+ ♙g7 38 ♗xf4 ♗a5 39 ♗b4!, and White won.

E 6-14. Chernin–Dvoiris (Podolsk 1993).

30 h4?! suggests itself, but the move does not achieve its aim in view of 30...♖c7! – after defending his weak f7 pawn, Black prepares 31...♙e5.

30 ♙d2!!

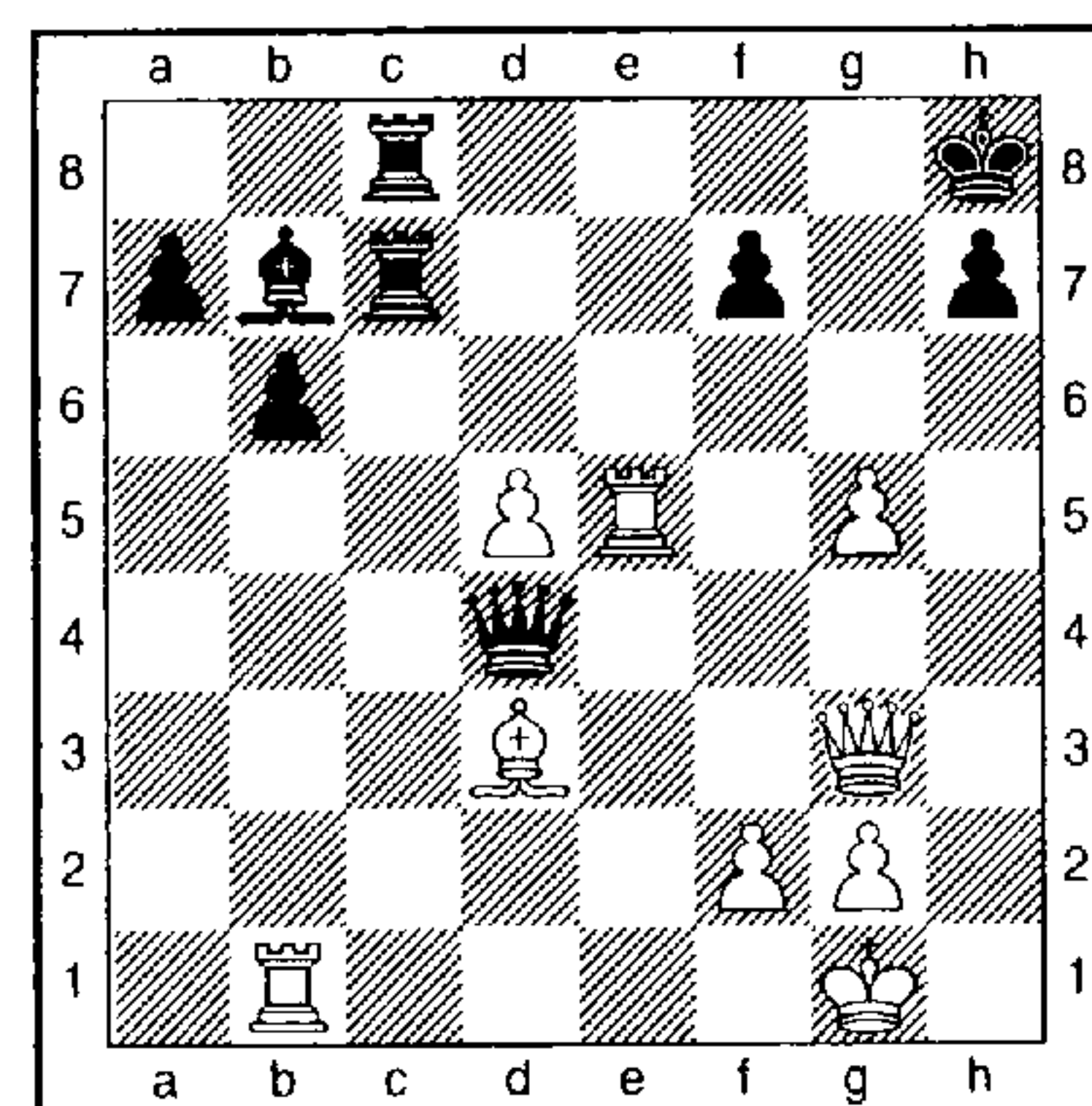
The terrible threat of 31 ♖xf6 ♗xf6 32 ♙h6+ forces the opponent to make a decisive weakening of his kingside.

30 ... g5
31 ♖f5

After subsequently overcoming his opponent's tenacious resistance, in the end White succeeded in winning.

31...♖c7! (31...h6 32 h4 was even worse; now if 32 h4 there is the reply 32...♙c8) 32 ♗g3! (threatening 33 ♖xf6!) 32...♖ac8 (32...h6 33 h4 ♙c8 34 hxg5 or 34 ♖xf6) 33 h4 ♙h8 34 ♙xg5 (34 hxg5 is also strong, intending either to transfer the rook along the route e1–e4–h4, or to play ♙f4 followed by d5–d6) 34...♙xg5 35 hxg5 (the main threat now is 36 ♗e5+ ♙g8 37 d6) 35...♗e7 36 ♖e5 (36 d6 ♗e4 37 ♗e5+ ♗xe5 38 ♖xe5 would also have won) 36...♗b4! 37 ♙c2 ♗c3 (37...♗d4 38 ♖d1) 38 ♙d3 ♗d4.

243



39 d6!? (39 ♗h3 was premature because of 39...f6, but this move could have been prepared by 39 ♖be1!) 39...♖c3 40 ♖e3 ♖d8 41 ♗h3 ♗g7 42 d7 ♙c6 43 ♙f5 ♖xe3 44 ♗xe3 f6 45 ♖c1 ♙xd7 46 ♖c7 ♖e8 47 ♗f3 ffg5 48 ♖xd7 ♗a1+ 49 ♙h2 ♗e5+ 50 g3 ♖e7 51 ♙e6! Black resigns.



E 6-15. Gavrikov–Chernin (1st match game, Moscow 1985).

33 ... ♖d8!

The rook has no invasion squares on the c-file, and so it moves to the neighbouring file. 34...♖d3 35 ♖e3 ♗g1+ is threatened. 33...♙c5? would have been a serious inaccuracy on account of 34 ♖g2! and 35 ♙h2.

34 ♙g2 ♖d3

Black's attack is irresistible. Weaker was 34...♙c5 35 ♗f1.

35 ♗a8+
35 ♖e3 ♖d2+.

35 ... ♙f8
36 ♖f2 ♗xb3
37 ♗c8 ♗d5+
38 ♙h2 ♖d2

White resigns.

E 6-16. Chechelian–Dvoretzky (USSR Spartakiad, Moscow 1979).

The only way of bringing the queen's rook into play is the manoeuvre ...♖a5–e5.

21 ... ♖a5!
22 ♙d3 ♖e5

If 22...♙b4 there is the strong reply 23 ♙e4!

23 ♖fe1 ♖xe1+
24 ♖xe1 ♙b4
25 ♖e2 ♖d8
26 ♙c2 ♙f8
27 ♙f2 g6!

Thanks to the advantage of the two bishops, Black retains real winning chances.

E 6-17. Dvoretzky–Shpilker (Moscow Team Championship 1976).

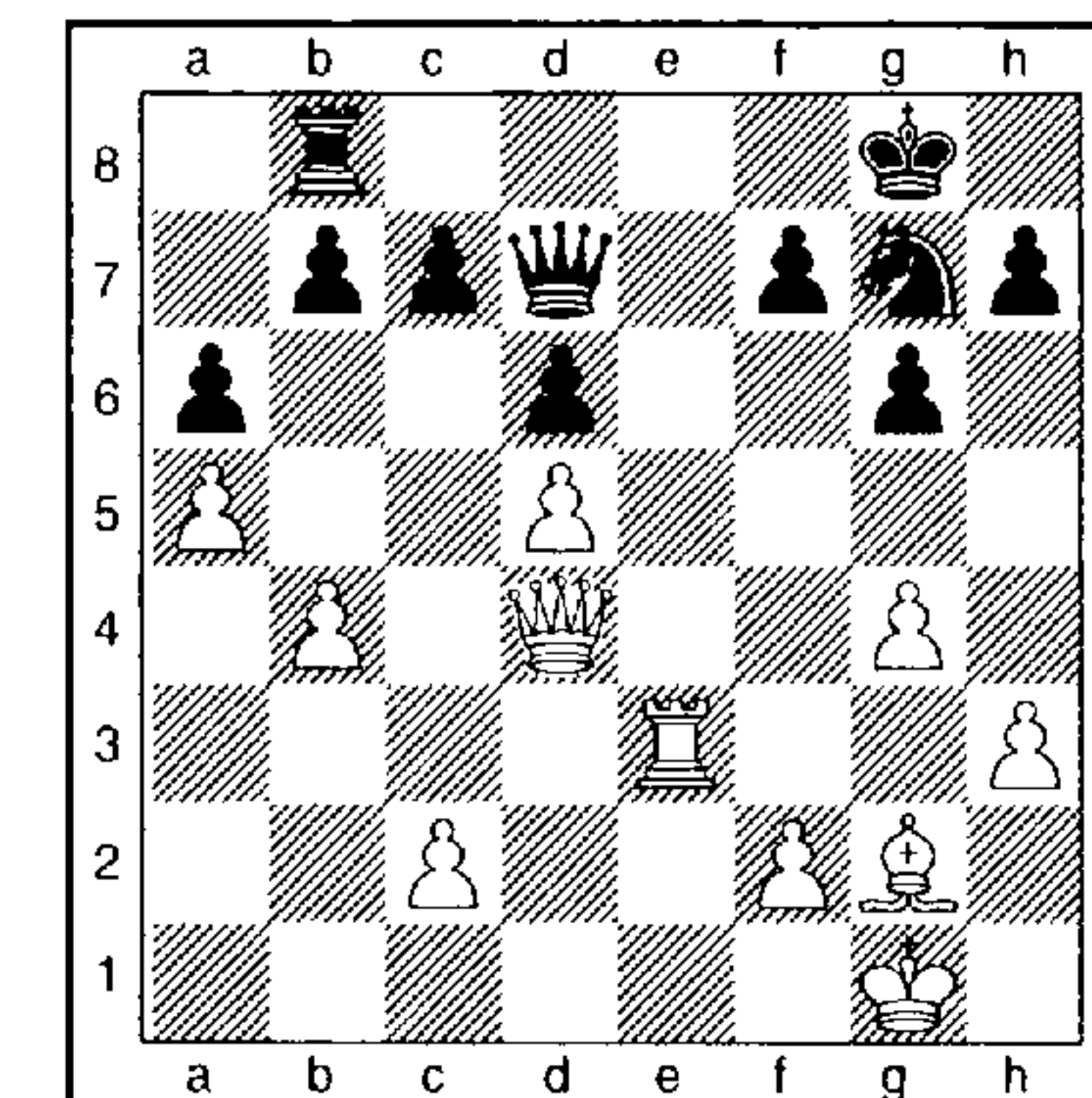
17 ♖e3!

In this unusual way White connects his rooks and prepares to play ♙d5 in the most favourable situation.

17 ... ♖e6
18 ♙d5 ♗d7

19 ♗a1! ♙xd5
20 exd5 ♖xe3
21 ♖xe3 ♙h5
22 g4 ♙xd4
23 ♗xd4 ♙g7

244



White's overwhelming positional advantage is determined not only by the more active placing of his pieces, but mainly by the queenside pawn formation. A similar black pawn set-up, cramped by the white pawns at a5 and d5, occurs in certain opening variations, for example (on the opposite flank) in one of the main lines of the Caro-Kann Defence. Strategically it is very unfavourable. Any move by a black pawn leads to the creation of weaknesses. But if they remain in situ, the pawns will be attacked either by the opponent's pieces, or his pawns (for example, by c2–c4–c5–c6).

24 ♗a7

A tempting queen sortie, but 24 c4!? was probably simpler.

24 ... ♗c8
25 ♙f1

If 25 c4 the reply 25...b6! is unpleasant.

25 ... ♖a8?

Too passive! 25...h5!? should have been tried.



26 ♖d4 ♖d7
 27 c4 ♜e8?!
 28 ♜xe8+ ♞xe8
 29 ♖a7 ♖c8
 30 c5 ♞f6

No better was 30...c6 31 dxc6 ♖xc6 32 ♙g2 d5 33 ♖b8 followed by 34 ♖d8.

31 c6 bxc6
 32 dxc6 ♞d5
 33 ♖xa6

Black resigns.

E 6-18. Dvoretsky–Novikov (USSR Championship Semi-Final, Voronezh 1973).

35 ♙h6!

With this move White immobilises the enemy knight, and together with it the queen. Now Black has virtually no sensible moves – he can only move his rook. In such a situation the conversion of an advantage is made significantly easier.

35 ... ♜g8
 36 h4 ♜c8

36...♞g7 37 ♙xg7 ♜xg7 38 b6 or 38 ♜c6 is hopeless for Black.

37 g3?!

It is pleasant to be able to enjoy the opponent's complete helplessness, but it was time to switch to a direct assault: 37 f4! followed by 38 f5.

37 ... ♜g8
 38 ♙g2 ♜c8
 39 g4!? ♜g8
 40 ♜a3 ♞d8

If 40...♖d6 White wins by 41 ♖xd6 exd6 42 ♜a7+ ♙f6 43 f4.

41 ♖f4+ ♙e8
 42 b6 ♖b5
 43 ♖c7 ♖e2
 44 b7!

Black resigned, since after 44...♖xg4+ 45 ♜g3 ♖e4+ 46 ♙h2! the king hides from the checks, and 46...♞xb7 47 ♖xb7 ♖xh4+ 48 ♙g1 ♖xh6 leads to mate: 49 ♖b8+ ♙f7 50

♜f3+ ♙g7 51 ♖e5 mate.

E 6-19. Podgaets–Dvoretsky (USSR Championship First League, Odessa 1974).

29 ... ♜f3!

A rare picture: complete zugzwang in the middlegame – the opponent has only pawn moves left.

30 c4 ♙h6

White resigns.

E 6-20. Dolmatov–Taborov (Qualifying Tournament for the World Junior Championship, Sochi 1978).

21 ♖g1!

By not allowing the opponent to strengthen his position with 21...♖b6 and 22...♜fd8, White achieves a positional advantage. His next move will be 22 ♜d1 with unpleasant pressure on the isolated d5 pawn.

Unfortunately, Dolmatov played the weaker 21 ♖d3?!, and after 21...♖b6 22 ♜d1 ♜fd8 23 ♞3d4 ♞xd4 24 ♞xd4 the game became equal.

E 6-21. Dvoretsky–Korelov (Minsk 1978).

White is threatening to play 38 ♞a4 ♙b1 39 ♞xb6 ♙xa2 40 ♞a4, when the b3 pawn is immune because of the fork on c5. To parry this threat, Black must retreat his king to e7 or f7.

37 ... ♙e7!

In the subsequent play I was unable to find a way to gain an advantage. Perhaps 38 g5!? should have been tried. The elimination of the kingside pawns shortens the front line, which is usually advantageous to the side who has a knight against a long-range bishop.

38 ♞a4 ♙b1
 39 a3 ♙c2
 40 ♞xb6 ♙xb3
 41 ♞c8+ ♙d7
 42 ♞d6 ♙e6
 43 ♞b7



43 ♞f5 ♙xc4 44 ♞xh6 ♙d3 45 ♞f5 c4.

43 ... ♙xc4

44 ♞xa5

No better was 44 ♞xc5+ ♙d5 45 ♞b7 a4 46 ♙f5 ♙d3+ 47 ♙f6 ♙e2.

44 ... ♙b5

Not 44...♙d5? 45 ♞b7 c4 46 ♞c5+. The d5 square must remain accessible to the black king.

45 ♞b3

If 45 ♞b7 there follows 45...♙d5!, but, of course, not 45...c4? 46 a4!

45 ... c4

46 ♞d4+

If 46 ♞c5+, then 46...♙d5 47 e6 c3!

46 ... ♙d5

47 ♞e2 ♙a6!

48 a4

Nothing was achieved by either 48 ♙f5 ♙c8+ 49 ♙f6 ♙xg4, or 48 ♞c3+ ♙d4 49 e6 ♙c8 50 e7 ♙d7.

48 ... ♙c8

49 a5

Draw, in view of the variation 49...♙c5 50 g5 hxg5+ 51 ♙xg5 ♙b5 52 ♙f4 ♙xa5 53 ♙e3 ♙b4 54 ♙d2.

E 6-22. Dolmatov–Psakhis (Qualifying Tournament for the World Junior Championship, Sochi 1978).

The plan found by Dolmatov is typical of such set-ups. White secures the strategically important c4 square for his bishop.

16 b3! b5

16...♞c5!? 17 ♙c4 ♜d8! came into consideration. Since all the same it is not possible to prevent the bishop from going to c4, Black should at least have strengthened his control of d5 and at the same time set his sights on the e4 pawn.

17 a4! bxa4

18 ♞xa4

Black's position has become difficult. It is hard for him to undertake anything, whereas the opponent can calmly strengthen his

position. The attempt in the game to prepare castling proves a failure.

18 ... ♞h5?

19 ♙c4

Here Lev Psakhis saw that after 19...0–0 20 ♞h4! he has no satisfactory way of parrying the threat to his g6. 19...♞f4 20 ♙xf4 exf4 21 e5 is also hopeless. He has to admit his mistake and return his knight to f6.

19 ... ♞hf6

20 ♙b4 ♙c6

21 ♞c3 ♜b8

22 ♙a3 ♙b5

If 22...♖a5 Dolmatov was intending 23 ♙d6! ♖xc3 24 ♙xb8 ♞xb8 25 ♖c8+ ♙e7 26 ♖c7+ ♞fd7 27 ♞xe5!

23 ♞d2!

A knight on c4 will be no less dangerous than the bishop.

23 ... ♙f8

24 ♙xf8 ♙xf8

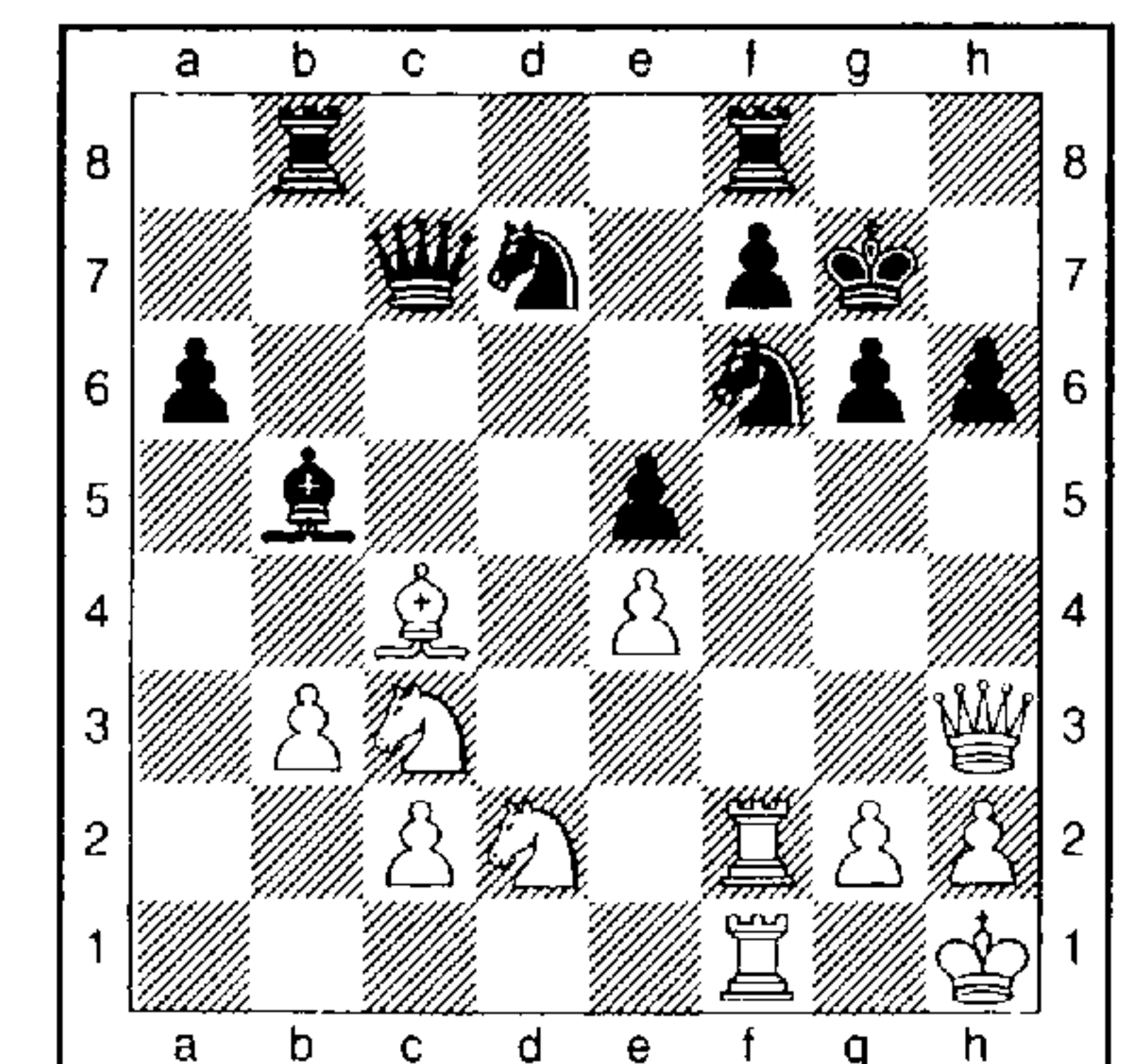
25 ♜f2 ♙g7

26 ♜ef1

Black has managed to evacuate his king, but during this time White has built up terrible pressure on the f-file. 27 ♞d5 is threatened.

26 ... ♜hf8

245



27 ♜xf6!

♞xf6



28 ♖xf6 ♜bd8

Not 28...♗xf6 29 ♘d5+.

29 ♜f2

White has won two minor pieces for a rook and now he easily converts his advantage.

29...♞c5 30 ♞g3 ♜d4 31 h3 f6 32 ♗h2 ♙c6 33 ♘f3 ♜xc4 34 bxc4 ♞xc4 35 ♘h4 g5 36 ♘f5+ ♗h7 37 ♞d3 ♞c5 38 ♜d2 ♜f7 39 ♘d5 a5 40 c4 a4, and Black resigned.

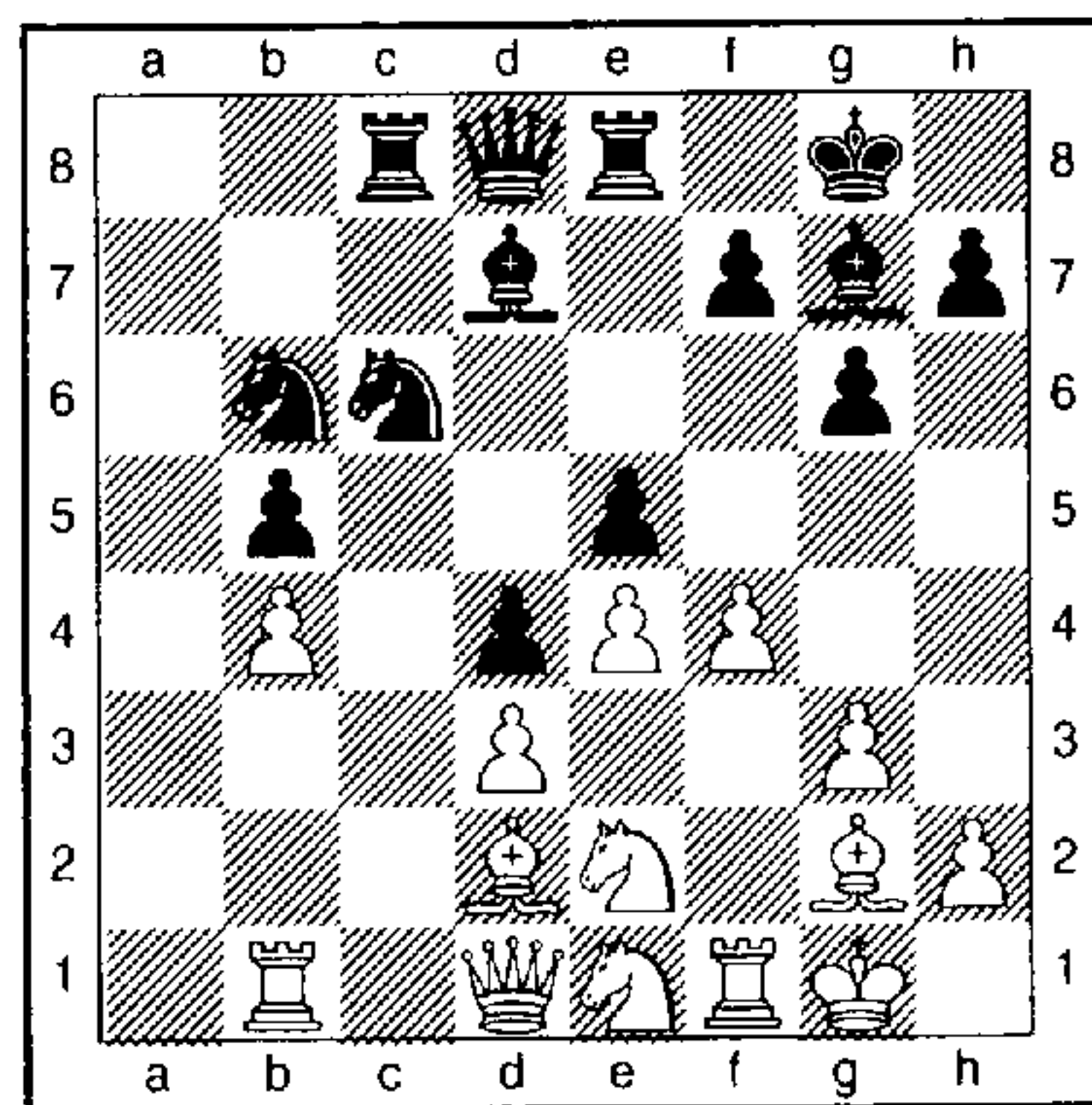
E 6-23. Kozlov–Dvoretsky (USSR Cup, Tbilisi 1976).

The knight on e7 is badly placed – it should be transferred to a4, where it will be much more active.

18 ... ♘c8!
19 ♘e1 ♘b6
20 f4 ♜c8
21 ♞d1

But what would you play now?

246



After reaching a4, the knight will not be averse to advancing further. In order to seriously threaten an invasion on c3, the g7 bishop must be included in the battle for this square, by lengthening its diagonal.

21 ... exf4!
22 gxf4 ♘a4

Also important is the fact that now the

advance of either of the white e- or f-pawns leads to the conceding of important central squares. Black's position is better.

Unfortunately, in the game I played less strongly and allowed the opponent to complicate matters.

21...♘a4? 22 f5! (threatening both 23 ♞b3, and 23 g4) 22...f6 23 h4. White prevents ...g6–g5. The attempt to force events on the kingside by 23 ♞b3+ ♗h8 24 fxg6 hxg6 25 ♘f3 was premature in view of 25...♗h7 26 ♘h4 ♙e6 27 ♞d1 ♙h6!, with an excellent position for Black.

23...gxf5!? If the opponent should succeed in playing g3–g4, Black's position will be without any prospects. In order not to concede the initiative completely, he has to go in for positional concessions.

24 exf5 ♘e7 25 ♞b3+ ♗h8 26 g4 ♙c6 27 ♜c1 ♙d5! 28 ♜xc8 ♙xb3 29 ♜xd8 ♜xd8 30 ♘g3 ♘d5, and a complicated position with chances for both sides was reached.

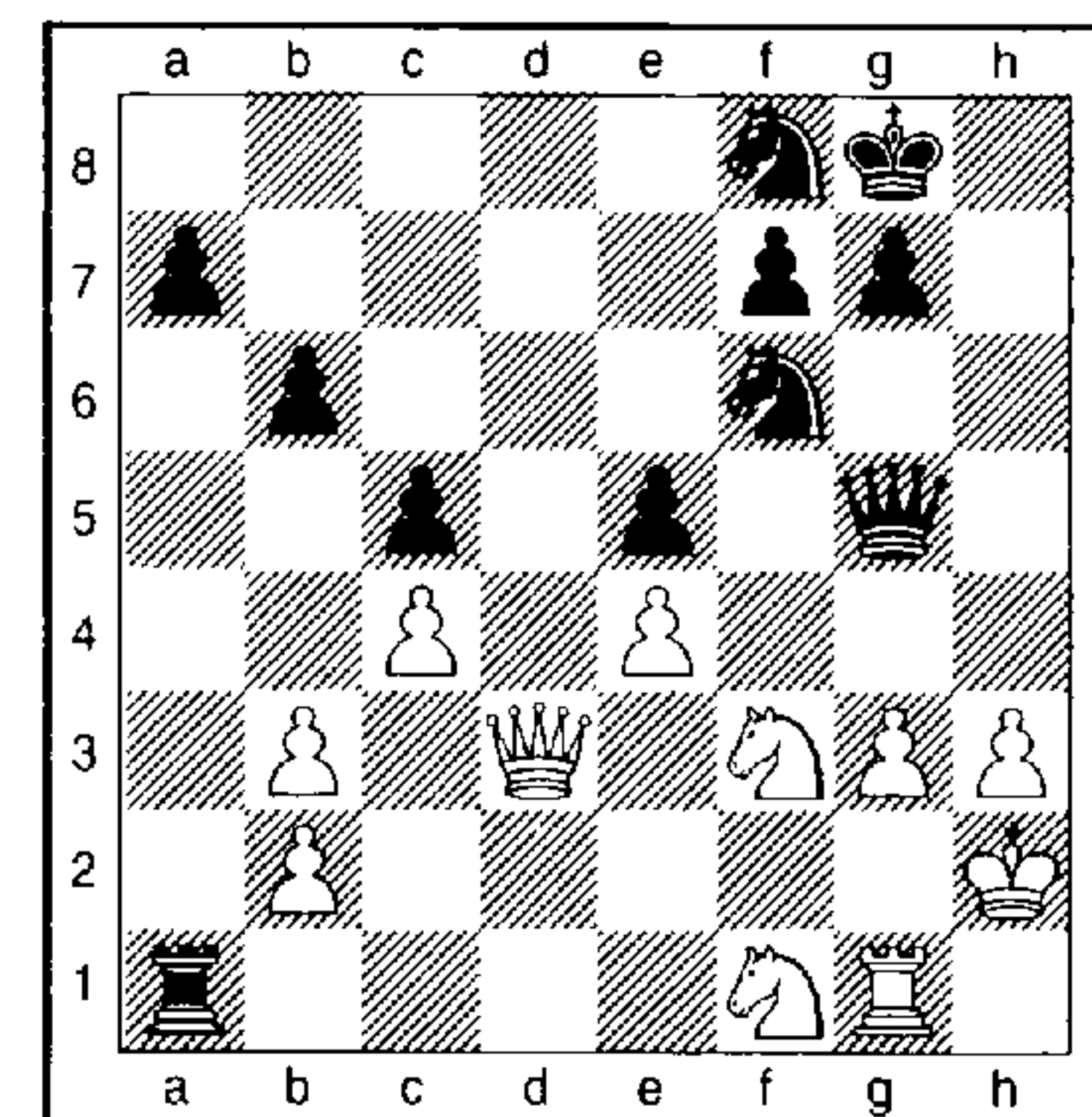
E 6-24. Gunsberg–Steinitz (World Championship Match, 10th Game, New York 1891).

The first world champion observed the weakness of the central d4 square and decided to direct his knight there. In the game his plan proved to be a complete success.

34...♘f8 35 ♞e3 ♞g6 (35...♘e6!?) 36 ♜g2 ♘e6 37 ♜e2 ♘d4 38 ♜f2 (38 ♜e1 ♘c2) 38...♜a2! 39 ♘f3 ♘xf3+ 40 ♞xf3 ♞xe4 41 ♞xe4 ♘xe4 42 ♜e2 ♘g5 43 ♗g2 ♘e6. White resigns.

Was the opponent really condemned to such a submissive defeat? Of course, the move made by Wilhelm Steinitz, 34...♘f8, is a logical one, but it has a slight drawback – for an instant it weakens the e5 pawn, which is now defended only by the queen. To try and exploit this factor, let us play 35 ♘f3!

247



If 35...♞h5, then 36 g4. 35...♞g6 36 ♘e3! (sunder than 36 ♘xe5 ♞h5 37 ♘c6 ♘g6) 36...♜xg1 37 ♘f5! leads to equality. 35...♞c1 suggests itself, in the hope of 36 ♞e2 ♜a2 37 ♜g2 ♘d6d7 followed by ...♘e6–d4. But White can play more energetically: 36 ♘d2!? ♞xb2 37 ♜xa1 ♞xa1 38 ♞d6 with counterplay that probably compensates for the sacrificed pawn.

Let us return to the initial position and see whether we can't improve Black's play. In the first instance we must consider the most active move, creating a direct threat.

34 ... ♞h5!

Threatening 35...♘g4+ 36 ♗g2 ♞xh3+! 37 ♗xh3 ♘f2+. Now 35 g4 ♞g5 is clearly in Black's favour. If 35 ♗g2 he can now reply 35...♘f8!? 36 ♘f3 ♘e6, but 35...♞d1! is even stronger.

35 ♘e3!?

Again a pawn sacrifice is the only way of avoiding a complete bind. But here it is less effective than after 34...♘f8?!

35 ... ♜xg1
36 ♗xg1 ♞xh3
37 ♘f5 ♞g4!?

Black should win.

In the olden days even the great players would sometimes approach a position in too static a manner. This is understandable: in the overwhelming majority of games, their opponents were significantly inferior in class and did not put up a worthy resistance, and so there was no need for a thorough checking of the ideas they conceived.

In our times there has been a sharp rise in the average standard of play, and in particular in the art of defending difficult positions. The opponent is ready to exploit the very first chance offered to him, of changing the unfavourable course of events. Therefore it may no longer be sufficient to find a sensible idea – you must find the most accurate way of implementing it, and in so doing you must without fail reckon with possible counterplay for the opponent.

E 6-25. Bondarevsky–Botvinnik (Leningrad/Moscow 1941).

White wants to support his e5 pawn by 15 ♙f4 and then capture on d4. Black must find an effective counter-plan. Let us first see how Mikhail Botvinnik solved this problem.

14...♞g8!? 'Possibly the decisive move! By creating threats against White's kingside, Black forces the exchange of queens, after which he inevitably seizes control of the centre' – Botvinnik.

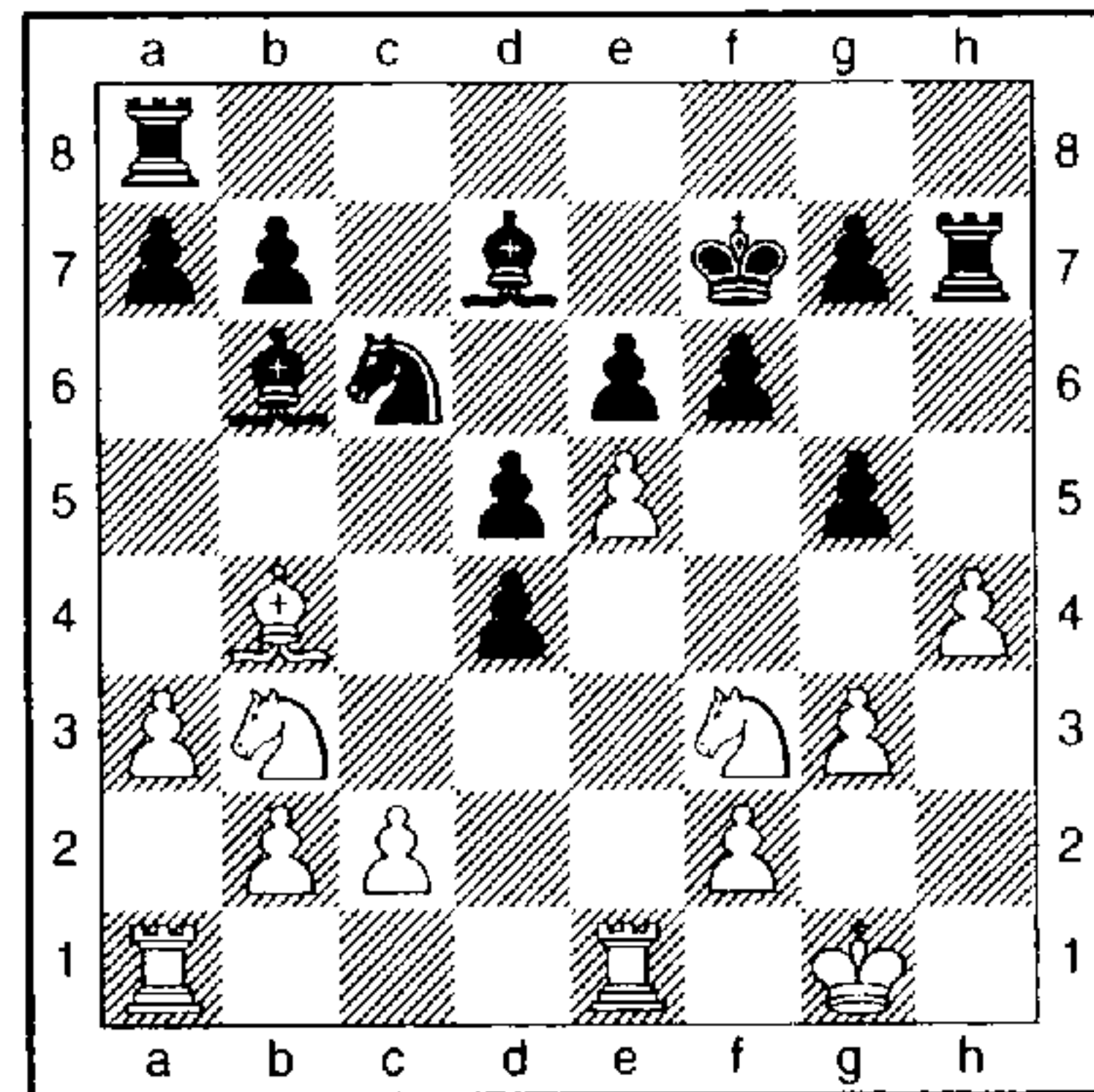
15 ♙d2. If 15 ♙f4 there follows 15...♞h7 16 ♘bxd4 (16 ♜ad1 ♞h5 and 17...g5) 16...♘d4 17 ♘xd4 g5!

15...♞h7 16 ♙b4 g5 17 ♞xh7 ♜xh7.

see next diagram



248



18 exf6? By giving up his only outpost in the centre, White ends up in a strategically hopeless position. 18 hxg5, the move that suggests itself, was at the same time the best. Botvinnik gives the variation 18...fxe5 19 Qxe5+ Qxe5 20 Rxe5 Qc7 21 Re2 e5 with an overwhelming advantage. But the rook is not obliged to retreat – with the exchange sacrifice 21 Rxe5! followed by Qxd4, Igor Bondarevsky could have successfully defended.

18...gxf6 19 hxg5 e5! 20 gxf6 Qxf6 21 Qd6 Re8 22 Qh4 Rg8! 23 Qh2 (23 Qf1 was more tenacious) **23...Qf5 24 Re2 d3 25 Rd2 dxc2 26 f4 Qe3 27 Qxe5+ Qxe5 28 fxe5+ Qe7 29 Rf1 c1Q!** White resigns, since if 30 Rxc1 Black wins by 30...Rhx4+. The plan chosen by Botvinnik is original and strong, but even so, in my view, it is insufficiently convincing (cf. the note to White's 18th move). Therefore I checked a more direct attempt to attack the enemy centre.

14 ... Rh5!
15 Qf4 Qc7!

Also tempting is 15...Qh8!? (threatening 16...g5) 16 Qg2! Qh7 17 Rad1 (17 Qbxd4? Qxd4 18 Qxd4 g5) 17...Rh8. However, the consequences of 18 Qbxd4 are not alto-

gether clear, e.g. 18...Qxd4 19 Qxd4 g5 (19...Qxe5 20 Qxe5 fxe5 21 Qf3 e4 22 Rxe4!) 20 Qxh7 R8xh7 21 hxg5 fxg5 22 g4! Rh4 23 Qg3, or 18...Qxd4 19 Qxd4 Qxd4 (19...g5 20 Qxh7 R8xh7 21 hxg5 fxg5 22 Qe3) 20 Qxd4 g5 21 Qd2 gxh4 22 g4 Rxe5 23 Rxe5 fxe5 24 Qxe5.

16 g4 Qxe5
17 Qxe5 Rxe5
18 Qxe5+ fxe5

Black has a strategically won position. It is interesting that in this variation too a positional exchange sacrifice could not be avoided.

E 6-26. Dolmatov–Pasman (European Junior Championship, Groningen 1977).

Why didn't White make the obvious move 18 Rad1, and only then think about what to do? But after 18...e6 Black has the unpleasant strategic threat of ...g6–g5–g4. By attacking the knight at f3, he drives away the only defender of the central e5 pawn. It cannot be supported by Qf1 on account of ...Qxh3.

Dolmatov finds a way of consolidating his forces and preventing the opponent's counterplay.

18 Qa4!!

After defending his b2 pawn, White is threatening to capture on b7. His bishop can now move to f1, since the f3 knight is protected by the queen. But more important, the queen is transferred to e3, preventing ...g6–g5 and supporting the e5 pawn, after which the knight will occupy the central d4 square.

If a player is able to penetrate deeply into the secrets of a position and find the key to its solution, the further play will normally develop in his favour.

18 ... Rb8
19 Rad1

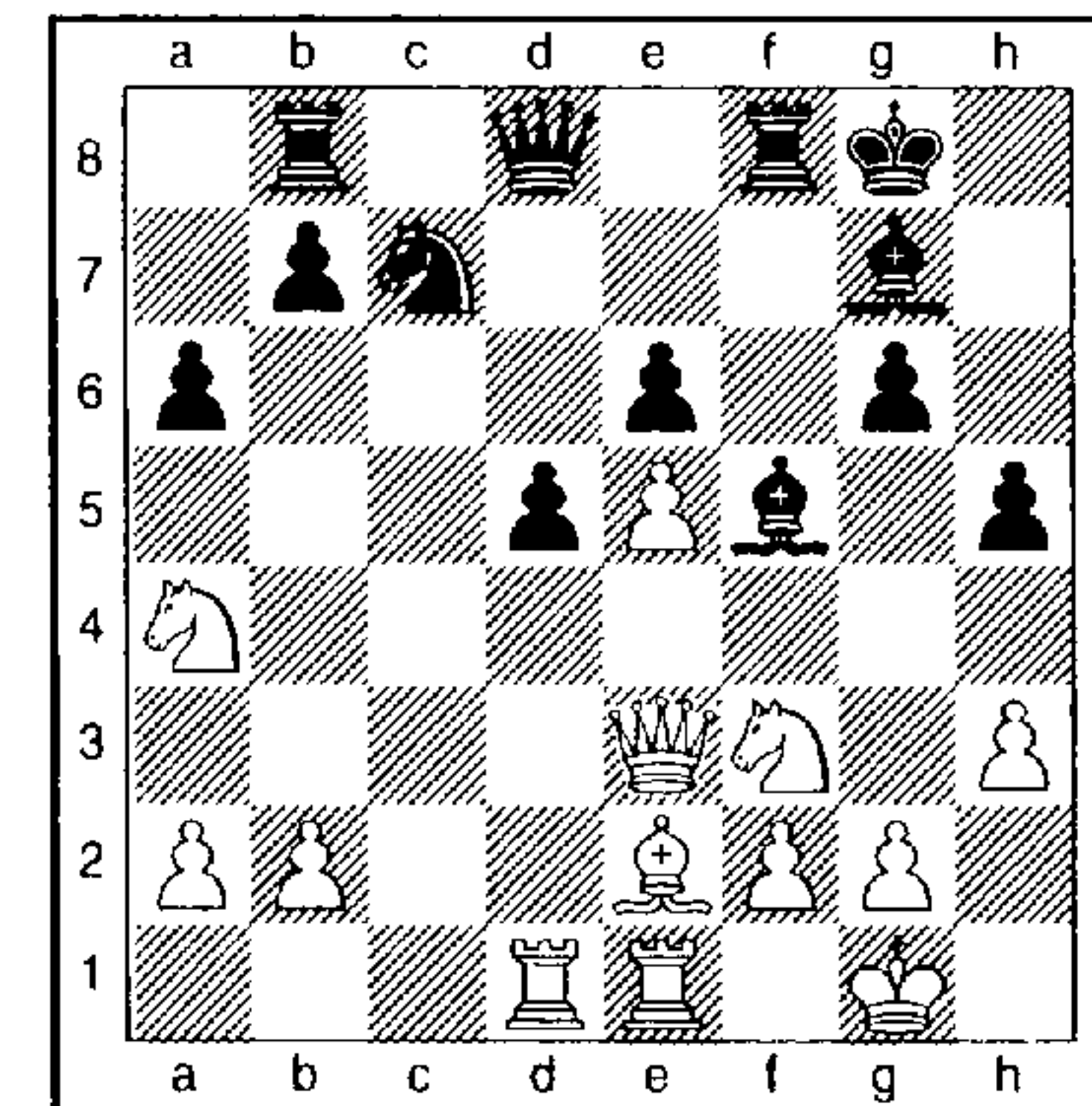
More accurate than 19 Qe3 Qe6.

19 ... e6



20 Qe3

249



20 ... Qc2
20...Qh7!? 21 Qg5+ Qg8, preparing 22...Qh6, came into consideration.

21 Rd4 Rf5?

The exchange of the bishop for the knight at a4 would merely have weakened the g6 pawn. However, 21...Qe4 was much more tenacious, to exchange the bishop for the strong knight at f3.

22 Qc3 Qf8
23 Qd2

23 Qc1 Qe4 24 Qxe4 dxe4 25 Qxc7 exf3 26 Qxf3 is also good.

23 ... Qe4
24 Qxe4 dxe4
25 Rxe4 Qd5?
26 Qd4 Qh6
27 Qd1 Rxf2
28 Qxe6 Qe3
29 Qxf8 Qxd1
30 Qd7 Qe3
31 Rxe3

Black resigns.

E 6-27. Andrianov–Mateu (Moscow–Catalonia Match 1981).

White wants to play b2–b3, opening the second rank for his rook at a2. He then plans e2–e3 (or e2–e4) and Qd2. If he succeeds in carrying out this program, he will gain control of the strategically important c4 square and gain the advantage.

That is what happened in the game: **19...Qe7?! 20 b3 Qe4** (20...Qhf6 followed by ...Qe4 was preferable) **21 Qxe4 Rxe4 22 e3 Re7 23 Qd2 Rd8 24 Rd1 Qhf6 25 Qb2 Qe8 26 Qc4 Qxb2 27 Rxb2** with the better chances for White. Nikolai Andrianov later went on to win.

Instead of the cautious 22...Re7 Black could have tried 22...c4!?, but here too the initiative would appear to remain with White: 23 Qd4! cxb3 24 Ra4 Qxd4! 25 Rxb4! Ree8 (25...Qc3 26 Rxe4 Qc5 27 Rxc4 b2 28 Qxb2 Qxb2 29 Rb1 Qg7 30 Rb6 with advantage) 26 exd4! Rab8 27 Qa3 Rxb4 28 Qxb4 Rb8 29 Qxd6 Rb5 30 Qc7 Qhf6 31 d6 Qd5 32 Qxd5 Rxd5 33 Rb1 Rb5 34 Qf1.

What can Black do to counter the opponent's plan? The direct 19...b3?! is dubious in view of 20 Ra3. I see two good solutions. Firstly, he can attack the c4 square before the knight gains the right to go to d2.

19 ... Qb8!?
20 b3 Qb5!

Secondly, after b2–b3 the c3 square is weakened – this will tell if a black knight reaches e4.

19 ... Qhf6!?

There was nothing for the knight to do at h5. 20 b3 Qe4 is now unfavourable for White, while after 20 Qf4 he has to reckon with 20...Re4 21 Qc2 c4.

20 Qd2 Qe5
21 Qc2 c4!
22 Qxc4 Rc8
23 b3 Qfd7

Threatening 24...Qxc4 25 bxc4 Qe5 (or

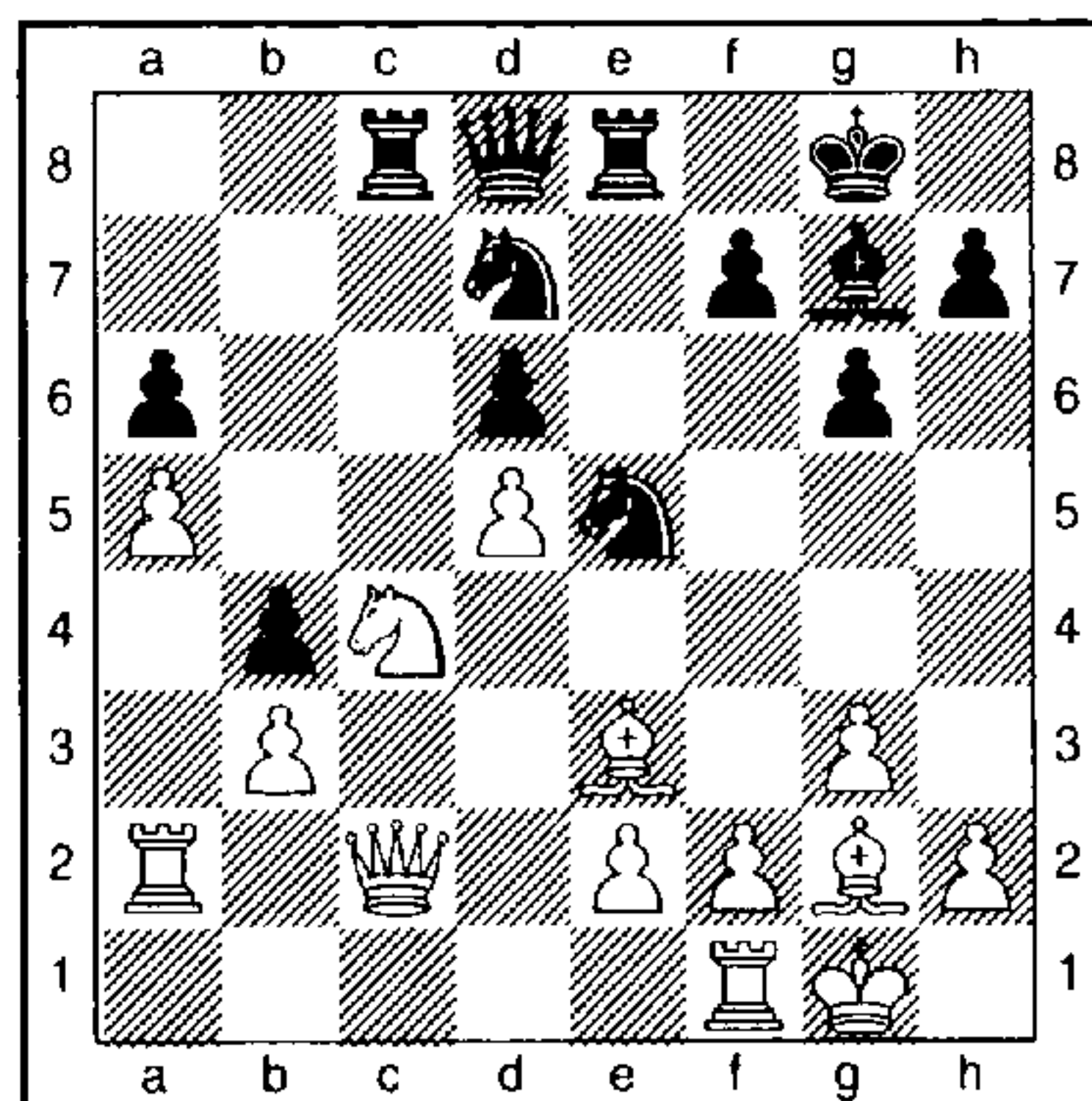


25...♘c5).

24 ♔e3

24 ♖a4 ♘xc4 25 bxc4 b3!; 24 ♔b2 ♘xc4 25 bxc4 ♖b8!

250



24 ... ♘xc4
25 bxc4 ♖xe3!

The exchange sacrifice enables Black to gain complete control of the dark squares.

26 fxe3 ♘c5

Black has more than sufficient positional compensation for the sacrificed material.

E 6-28. Gulko–Dvoretsky (Zonal Tournament, Vilnius 1975)

19 b3!?

Black wanted to begin play on the queenside with ...c5–c4 or ...b4–b3 followed by ...♖e8–b8–b4. After forestalling his opponent's activity, White can now calmly prepare an offensive in the centre (♖ae1, ♖c2 etc.).

However, the breakthrough in the centre also works immediately.

19 ♔xf6!? ♔xf6
20 f4 ♘d7
21 e5! dxe5

If 21...♔g7 there follows 22 ♘c4 dxe5 23 d6 ♖d8 24 fxe5, after which White attacks the

weak f7 square.

22 d6 ♖d8

22...♖c6 23 fxe5 ♔xe5 24 ♔f3.

23 ♘d5

The pawn sacrifice, a standard one in such positions, has enabled White to create dangerous threats.

Which course should be preferred – prophylactic or sharply attacking? I don't know; I think that here it is a matter of taste.

Other continuations, in my view, are weaker. For example, in the event of 19 a5 (with the threat of 20 ♔xf6 ♔xf6 21 f4 ♘d7 22 ♔d3 and 23 ♘c4) White has to reckon with a positional pawn sacrifice: 19...c4!? 20 ♖xb4 ♖ab8 21 ♖d2 ♘fd7 (intending 22...♘c5), or 20 ♖fc1 c3 21 bxc3 b3.

The game continuation was unconvincing: 19 ♖ac1?! b3! 20 ♘c4 ♘xc4 21 ♔xc4 ♘d7 (21...♖eb8 22 e5!? dxe5 23 d6) 22 ♖fe1 ♖eb8 – White's advantage became less perceptible than before.

E 6-29. Eingorn–Dolmatov (USSR Championship First League, Kharkov 1985).

16...♘e5 suggests itself, but after 17 ♖xh7! ♖g7 18 ♖h5+ the play favours White, who regains his pawn, defends his f3, and forces the black king to remain in the centre.

16 ... 0–0–0!!

A brilliant move. Without trying to cover the c-file, Dolmatov complete his development and renews the threat of ...♘e5.

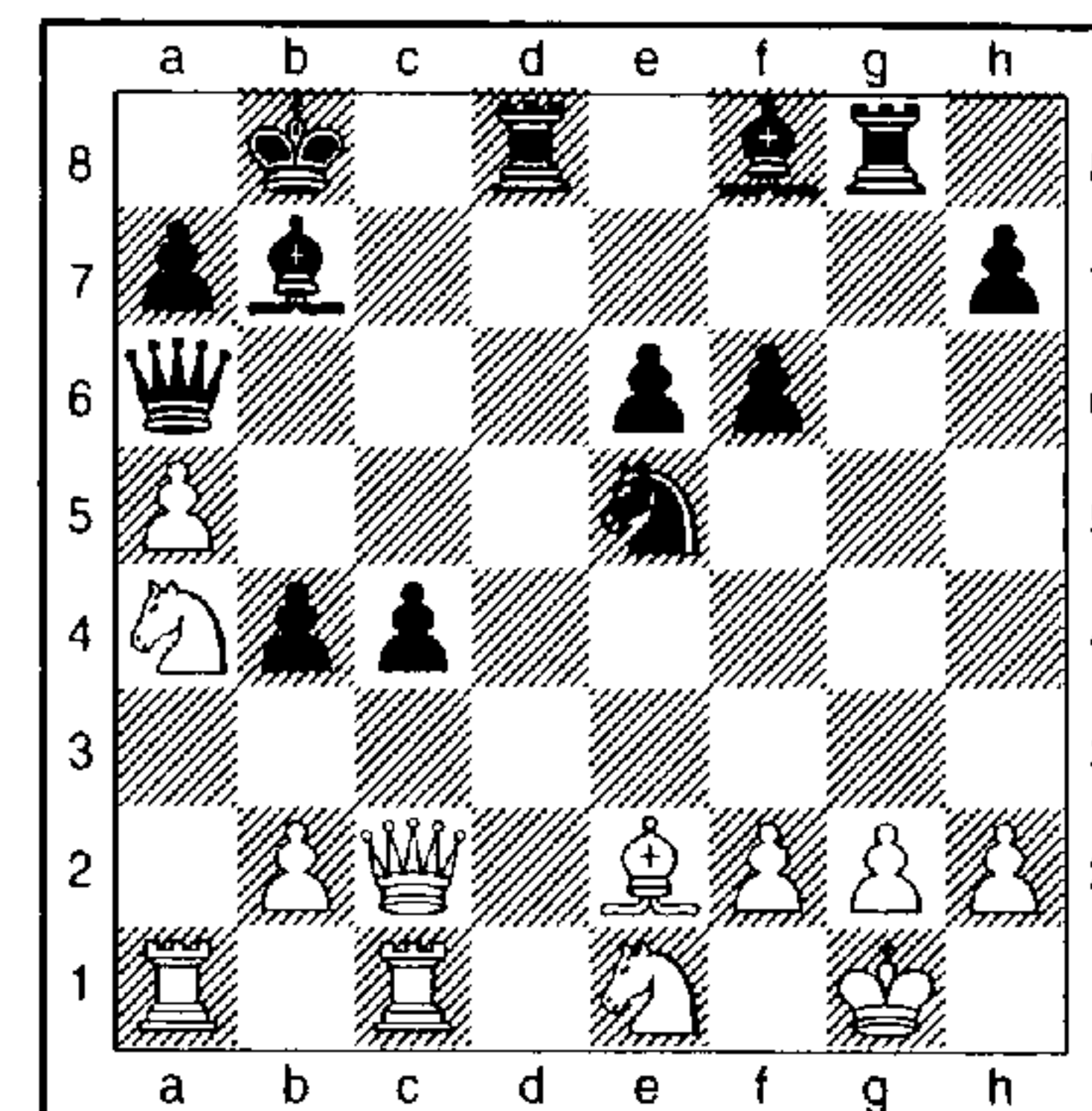
17 ♖fc1

If 17 ♔xc4, then 17...♖c6 with the terrible threat of 18...♖xg2+. A possible variation is 18 ♔xe6 ♖xc2 19 ♖fc1 ♖xc1+ 20 ♖xc1+ ♔b8 21 ♔xg8 ♔h6, when White loses a piece. Black also has the advantage after 17 ♖fd1 ♔b8.

17 ... ♔b8
18 ♘e1 ♘e5



251



It is now clear that the initiative is held by Black. If 19 f4 there follows 19...♖c6! The best chances of a successful defence were offered by 19 ♔xc4.

19 ♖xh7?! ♔d6
20 ♖h3 ♖c6
21 f4 ♘g6

White resigns.

E 6-30. Dolmatov – Rashkovsky (53rd USSR Championship, Kiev 1986).

If Sergey had played as dynamically as in the previous example, he would have won.

30 ♖d6!

The variations are easy to calculate: 30...♖b1+ 31 ♔f2 h6 32 ♖d8+! ♔h7 33 ♖c7, 30...♖e8 31 ♖c7 ♖d8 32 ♖a6, or 30...♖e8 31 ♖c7 ♖f6 32 ♖d7 ♖d8 33 ♖c8. The opponent has no satisfactory defence.

Unfortunately, White delayed.

30 h3? The instinctive desire to safeguard the king is quite understandable, but now Black too is able to solve the same problem.

30...h6 31 ♔h2. 'It has long been known that by just marking time a game cannot be won. The way to victory lies through the initiative.' (Isak Lipnitsky). The disregarding of this principle cost Dolmatov dearly – the advantage soon passed to his opponent.

31...♔h7 32 ♖c6 e5 33 ♖d6 (better 33 ♖c4) 33...♖b7 34 a5 ♖d7 35 ♖e6 ♖xe6 36 ♖xe6 ♖d2 37 ♔c5 ♘h4 38 ♔h1 ♖xg2 39 ♔xa7 ♖a2 40 ♔b8 ♘xf3 41 ♔xe5 ♖xa5, and Black won the endgame.

E 6-31. Farago–Langeweg (Olympiad, Malta 1980).

First let us see how the game went.

31 ♔xd7? ♖xa1 32 ♘xa1 ♖a6! Most probably White did not see or he underestimated this intermediate move, reckoning only on 32...♖xd7? 33 ♘c2 followed by the manoeuvre of the knight to f5.

33 ♔b5?! The balance would have been maintained by 33 ♘c2! ♖xc4+ 34 ♔d1 ♘d7 35 ♖xg5+.

33...♖xa1 34 ♖xg5 ♖g1. Black regains the pawn and obtains a positional advantage, since his knight is significantly stronger than the opponent's 'bad' bishop.

35 ♖e3 ♖xg2+ 36 ♖f2 ♖h3 37 ♔d3?! ♖h1 38 ♔e2 h4! 39 gxh4 ♘h5 40 ♔d2 ♖a1 41 ♖e1 ♖b2+ 42 ♔d1 ♘f4 43 h5 ♖b1+ 44 ♔d2 ♖b2+ 45 ♔d1 ♖h2?! There was a quicker win by 45...♖b1+ 46 ♔d2 ♖d3+ 47 ♔c1 ♖xf3 48 ♖h4+ f6 49 h6 ♖f1+ 50 ♔c2 ♖e2+ and 51...♘d3 with inevitable mate.

46 h6 ♖xh6 47 ♖g3 ♖h1+ 48 ♔c2 ♖g2+ 49 ♖xg2 ♘xg2. The winning plan in such endings is standard and simple: the breakthrough by the king into the enemy position via the kingside. And if it is met there by the white king, the knight heads for the c3 pawn. 50 ♔d3 ♔f6 51 ♔e8 ♔g6 52 ♔e2 ♘f4+ 53 ♔e3 ♘h5 54 ♔a4 ♔g7 55 ♔d7 ♘f4 56 ♔d2 ♔h6 57 ♔e3 ♔g5 58 ♔e8 f6 59 ♔d7 ♔h4 60 ♔f2 ♘d3+ 61 ♔g2 ♘b2 62 ♔b5 ♘d1 63 ♔d7 ♘e3+ 64 ♔f2 ♘xc4. White resigns.

Thus, the exchange on d7 handed the initiative to Black. What should have been done? There comes to mind the sacrifice of material for the sake of an attack on the



king: 31 ♖xg5. For example, 31...♗xa4 (an unclear position arises after 31...♗xa4?! 32 ♗xa4! ♗xa4 33 ♘e3 ♗d7 34 ♘f5+ ♗d8 35 ♗xf6+ ♗c7 36 ♘e3) 32 ♗xa4 ♗xa4 33 ♘e3 ♗d7 34 f4! ♗b8 35 fxe5 dxe5 36 d6+ ♗xd6 37 ♘d5+. Unfortunately, this clever idea is refuted by 31...b5!

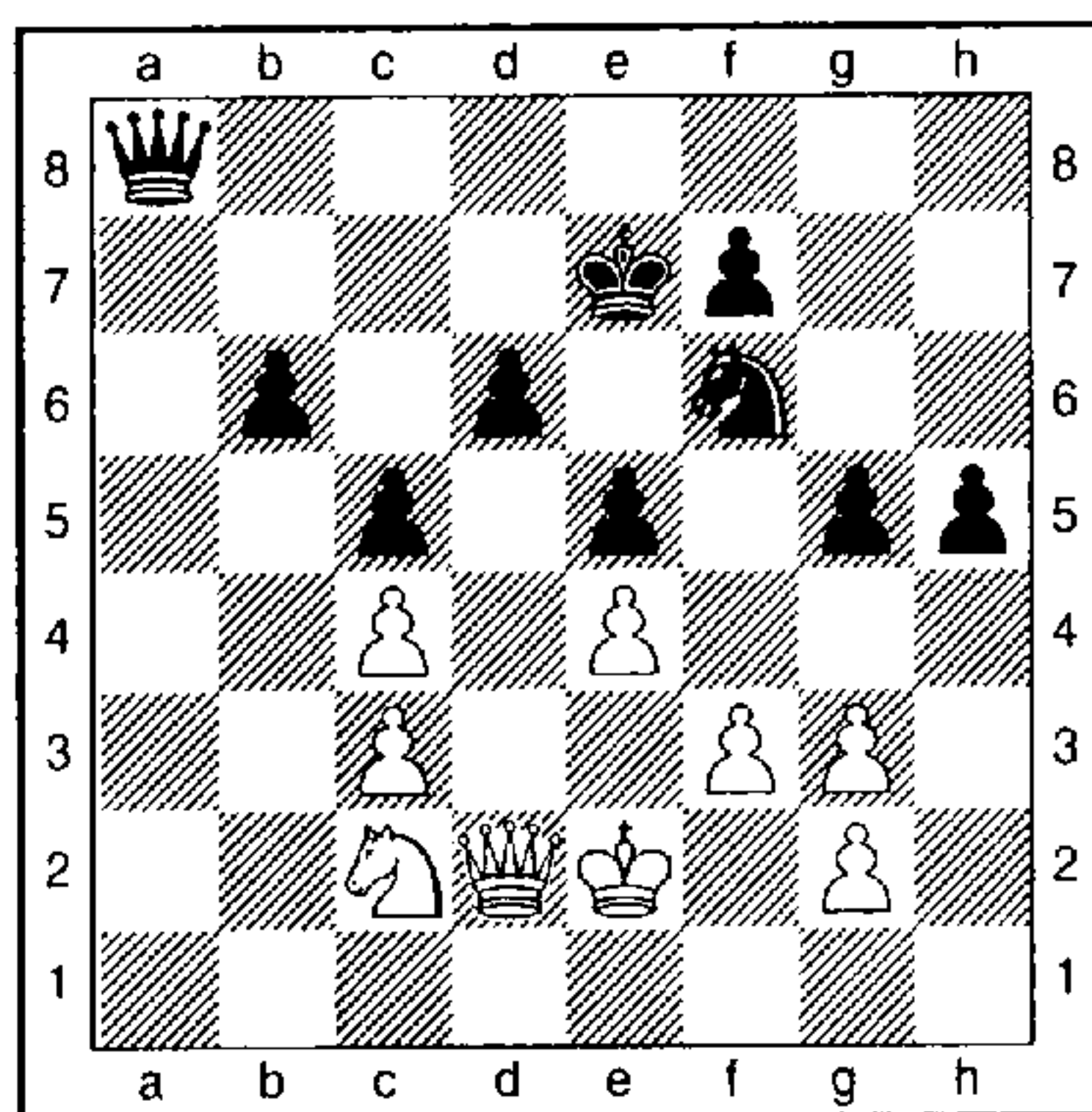
In order to seize the initiative, White should decide on a positional pawn sacrifice.

31 ♗c6! ♗xc6
32 dxc6

Less accurate is 32 ♗xa8 ♗xa8 33 dxc6 ♗xc6 34 ♗xg5 ♗a4 35 ♘e3 ♗a2+.

32 ... ♗xc6
33 ♗xa8 ♗xa8

252



The draw resulting after 34 ♗xg5 ♗a2 35 ♘d3 ♗b1 is now not enough for White – he has the right to hope for more.

34 ♘e3!

How the position has changed! The knight goes to f5, after which under attack will be not only the g5 pawn, which was already hanging in all variations, but also the d6 pawn. And in the event of 34...♘e8 the knight changes course and goes to d5. It is doubtful whether Black can save the game.

E 6-32. Andrianov–Kharitonov (Tallinn 1981).

White is the exchange up, but his king feels uncomfortable. For example, 19 ♗xd4? cxd4 20 ♗xd4 ♗c8.

19 f3!

White prepares 20 ♘f2. Andrianov rejected this move, fearing the bishop move to e2, but he was wrong!

19 ... ♗e2
20 ♗xd4!

Weaker is 20 exd4? ♗xf3+.

20 ... cxd4
21 ♗xd4 ♗a6
22 ♘f2 ♗c8
23 ♗d1

White has consolidated, retaining a healthy extra pawn. *The timely return of part of your extra material is a typical way of converting a material advantage.*

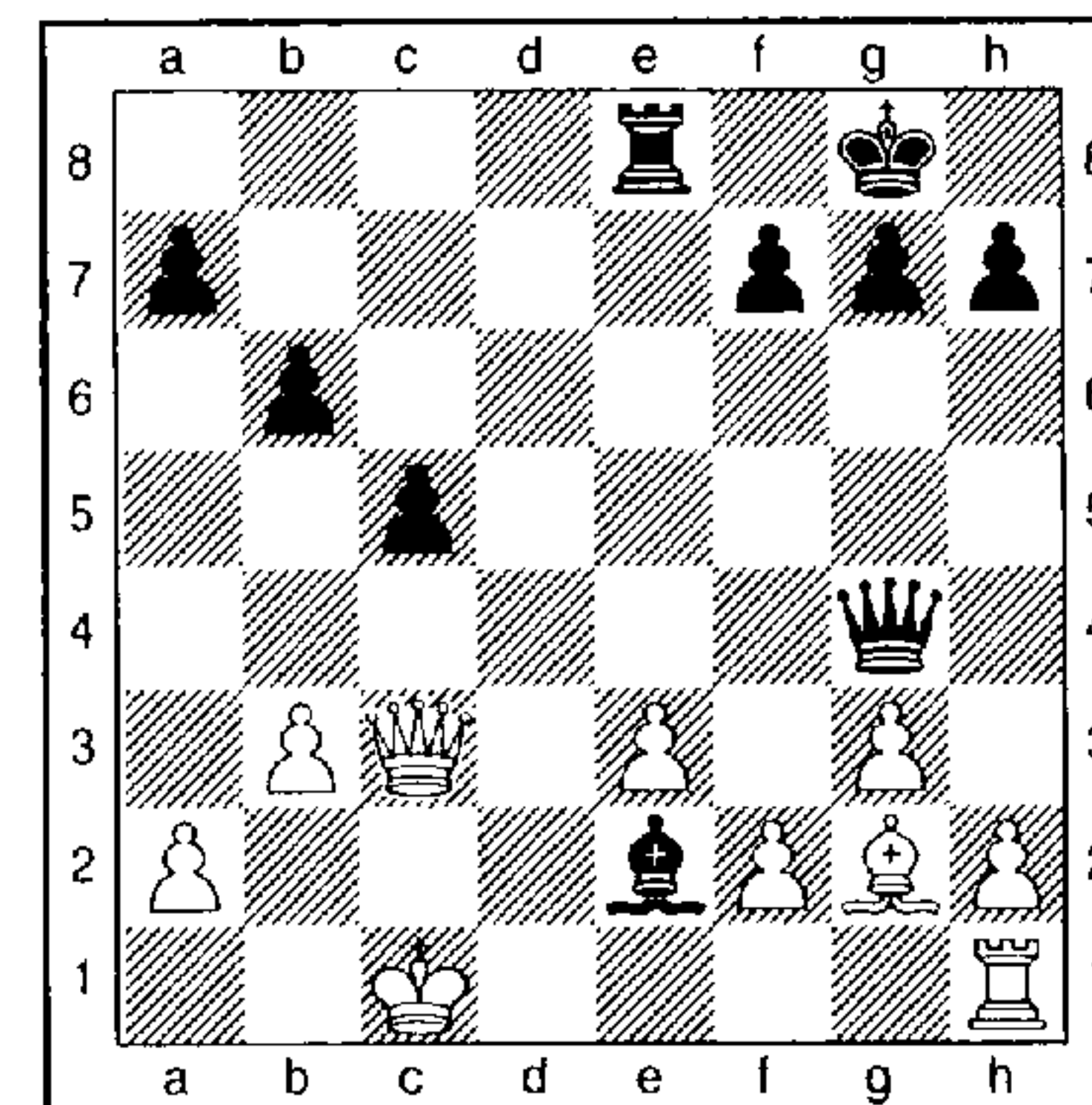
For a long time I considered 19 f4?! (involving the same idea of 20 ♘f2) to be bad because of 19...♗g4 20 ♗d2 (20 ♗d2? is even worse) 20...♘f3+ 21 ♗xf3 ♗xf3 22 ♗g1 ♗e8. However, in fact the accurate queen move 20 ♗b2! retains the advantage for White (now 20...♘f3+? 21 ♘f2 is pointless).

The position which you have been solving is of some interest for the theory of the Queen's Indian Defence. It was evaluated as unclear in the 31st volume of 'Chess Informator', and on the basis of this evaluation the entire opening variation (1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 b6 4 g3 ♗a6 5 b3 ♗b4+ 6 ♗d2 ♗xd2+ 7 ♗xd2 d5) came to be judged unpromising for White.

The game went 19 ♗d2?!, to which the opponent responded with the excellent prophylactic move 19... ♗e8!, preventing the advance of the f-pawn. White took his king to the queenside, but after 20 ♘d1 ♗g4+ 21 ♘c1 ♘e2+ 22 ♗xe2 ♗xe2 Black regained the exchange and obtained the better position.



253



23 ♗e1 ♗f3 24 ♗xf3 ♗xf3 25 ♗c2 b5?! 26 ♗d1 c4? Too hasty. An escape square for the king should first have been made.

27 bxc4 bxc4 28 ♗d4 ♗h1+ 29 ♗d1 ♗a8 (otherwise 30 ♗d8 is strong) 30 ♗d7 ♗f8 31 ♗d5 ♗b8 32 ♗b7 ♗a8 (better 32...♗c8) 33 e4! The threat is 34 ♗xf7. The advantage is again with White.

E 6-33. Tseshkovsky–Gufeld (Zonal Tournament, Vilnius 1975).

There is a dazzling array of tempting possibilities. In the game, alas, Vitaly Tseshkovsky made the worst choice and immediately transformed an overwhelming position into a lost one.

35 ♗f8+?? ♗xf8 36 b8♗ ♗f6! The white king suddenly finds itself in mortal danger.

37 ♗xa7 (37 ♗xf8+ ♗xf8 38 ♗c3 ♗f5! would not have helped) 37...♗d3! 38 ♗d1 ♗xe1+. White resigns.

35 ♗g3? ♗b6+ 36 ♘h1 is also incorrect – Black can force a draw by 36...♗xg2+ 37 ♗xg2 (37 ♘xg2 ♗xb7+) 37...♗xe1, but he also has the right to play for a win by 36...♗d4!? 37 ♗d1 ♗xb2 38 ♗f2 ♗b5.

A double rook ending with an extra pawn for

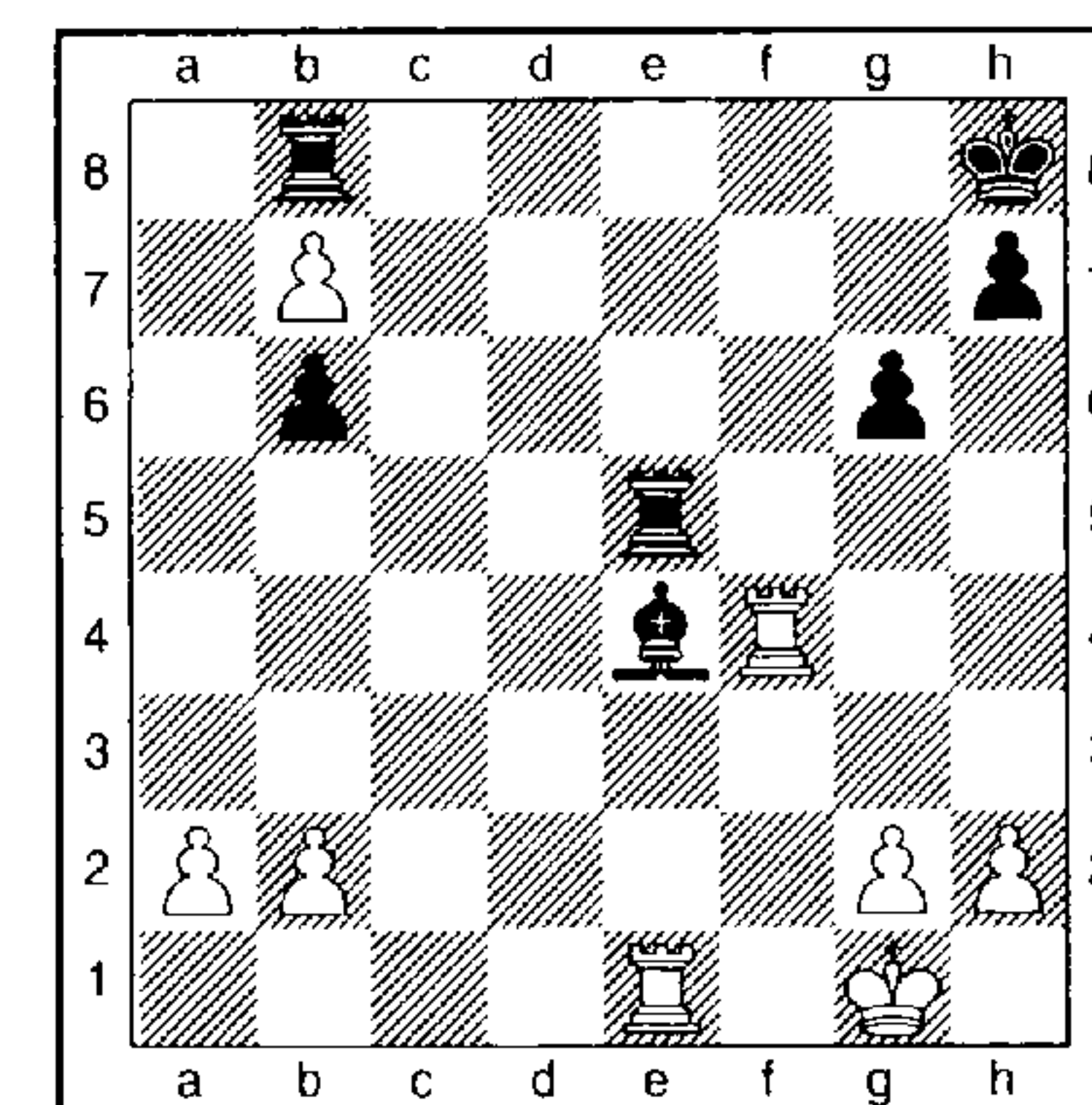
White arises after 35 ♗c3!? ♗b6+ (if 35...♗a5, then 36 ♗d4! is strong) 36 ♗f2 ♗c5 37 ♗xc5 ♗xc5 38 ♗xe4 ♗xb7. It is not worth asking whether the pawn advantage can be converted. All the same no one knows the exact answer, the outcome in such cases depending on the technical mastery demonstrated by the two sides in the subsequent play. It is more important to ask whether or not we have missed any other candidate moves.

35 ♗b4! ♗b6+

35...♗xb7? (with the faint hope of 36 ♗xe5? ♗xf1+!) 36 ♗f8+ or 36 ♗c3(d4) is hopeless for Black. 35...♘g8 36 ♗xe4 ♗xe4 37 ♗xe4 ♗xb7 38 ♗e6+ ♘h8 39 ♗e5+ ♘g8 40 b3 leads to roughly the same situation as in the 35 ♗c3 variation with an extra pawn for White, but with the queens on. The presence of the queens is obviously to White's advantage, since his king, in contrast to its opposite number, is securely covered by pawns.

36 ♗xb6 axb6
37 ♗f4

254



Again a double rook ending (or simply a rook ending) with an extra pawn is reached. The difference compared with the previous variation is that the black pawn has moved from



a7 to b6. This change is advantageous to White, and it greatly increases his winning chances.

E 6-34. Nunn–Andersson (Interzonal Tournament, Szirak 1987).

Black obviously stands well, and the only question is, how well. What resources does he have available? The direct 27...♙xd5 28 ♖xd5 ♜xc2 (28...♖b8 29 ♜c5) 29 ♖d2 does not promise him anything significant. Ulf Andersson found the cunning move 27...♖b8!?, the point of which is the trapping of the queen after 28 ♙xb7? ♖xb7. White's only reply is 28 ♜c4, when 28...♜xc4 29 ♙xc4 f3 is strong.

But before dwelling on this tempting continuation, let's think whether or not Black has any other ideas. He can, for example, pin the bishop on the d-file, provoking c2–c4 and depriving the queen of the c4 square.

27 ... ♖b8!
28 c4?

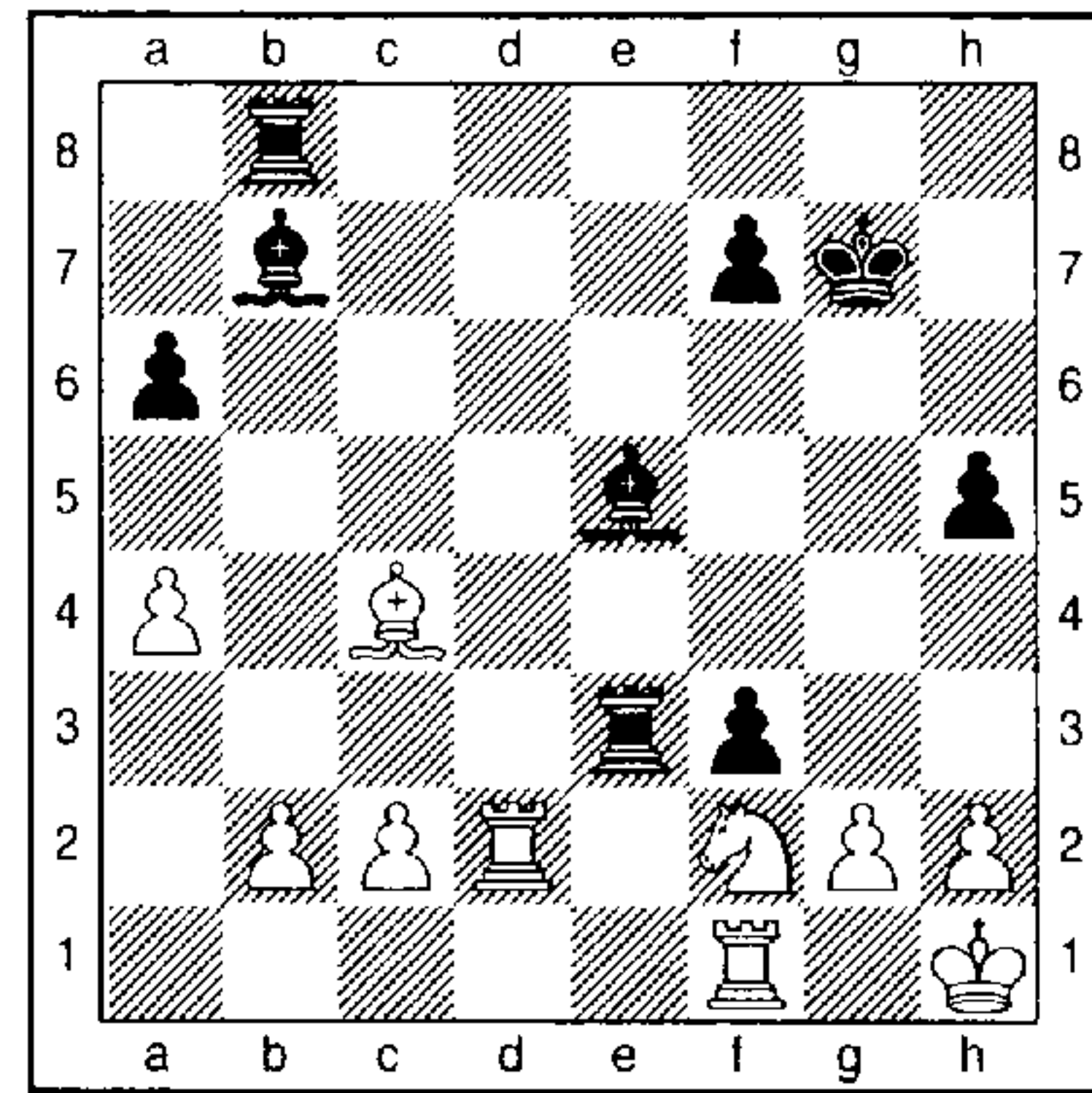
It is better to take on b7, parting with the exchange, although here too White's position remains difficult. After 28 ♙xb7 a5! 29 ♜b5 ♖xd2 he has no time for 30 c3 in view of the threat of 30...♖xf2! 31 ♖xf2 ♜xb7! Also hopeless is 30 ♘d1 ♖xc2 31 ♘e3 fxe3 32 ♙f3 ♖xb2. The ending arising after 28 ♜xb7!? ♜xb7 29 ♙xb7 ♖xd2 30 ♙xa6 (30 ♘d1 a5!? 31 ♘e3 fxe3) 30...♖xc2 is also difficult to save: 31 ♘d1 ♖b3 or 31 ♘d3 f3!

28 ... ♖b8!

White suffers great loss of material.

Now we must compare the outcome of the above variation with that which occurred in the game.

27...♖b8!? 28 ♜c4! ♜xc4 29 ♙xc4 f3.



30 ♙d5? After this move White's position becomes hopeless. 30 gxf3! ♙xf3+ (30... ♖xf3 31 ♙d5) 31 ♘g1 was essential. I do not see how Black can win here – he has to reckon with 32 ♙d5 or 32 ♘d1. In the 27...♖b8! variation he achieved more.

30...♖e2! 31 ♖d3 ♙xd5 32 ♖xd5 ♖xb2 33 gxf3 ♖bxc2 34 ♘g2 ♙f4 35 ♖xh5 ♙e3 36 ♖e5 ♖xf2+ 37 ♖xf2 ♙xf2 38 ♖d5 ♖a2 39 ♘f1 ♙e3 40 ♖a5 ♖f2+. White resigns.

E 6-35. Dolmatov–Khalifman (53rd USSR Championship, Kiev 1986).

White has to show that his control of the central e-file is worth more than the opponent's possible counterplay on the h-file. In the game he failed to cope with this task, and after 39 ♖8e7? ♜h7 40 ♖xg7+ ♜xg7 41 ♙e2 ♙e4 the players agreed to a draw.

Nothing would also have been achieved by 39 ♖xf8+? ♘xf8 40 ♜e3? (40 ♜c3 is better), since Black has the reply 40...♜h5!, parrying the threat of mate to his king and simultaneously attacking the opponent's king.

The solution to the position is the rapid switching of the white queen to the key square e6.

39 ♜e3! ♖h7

39...♜h5 40 ♜e6+ ♖gf7 41 ♖xf8+ ♘xf8 42 ♜xd6+.

39...♖xe8 40 ♜xe8+ ♘h7 41 ♙d3! ♜xd3 42 ♜h5+ ♘g8 43 ♖e8 mate.

40 ♜e6+ ♜xe6
41 ♖xf8+ ♘xf8
42 ♖xe6

In the ending White should win, e.g. 42...♖h1+ 43 ♘f2 ♖h2+ 44 ♘e3 ♖g2 45 f5 ♖xg3 46 ♘f4 followed by 47 ♖xd6.

E 6-36. Dvoretzky–Mukhin (Alma Ata 1976).

34 ♘e3!

By creating the threat of 35 ♘xd5!, White wants to force the exchange of the knight at c4 – the opponent's only active piece. After 34...♘xe3 35 ♖xe3 things are bad for Black, but the continuation in the game is no better.

34...a6 35 bxa6 ♜xa6 (35...bxa6 36 ♘xd5) 36 ♘xd5 ♘b2 (36...♙c6 37 ♘f6+!) 37 ♖d2 ♘xa4 38 ♘c7 ♜a5 39 ♘xe8. Black resigns in view of 39...♖xe8 40 ♙xf7+!

E 6-37. Stefansson–Dolmatov (New York 1989).

The exchange of queens is unfavourable for Black both on e3 (the opponent's pawns are repaired), and on b6 (the queenside is seriously weakened). Therefore he has to move his queen.

21 ... ♜a5!

Black has the advantage – he intends 22...♘f5, and he is not afraid of 22 ♙b4 ♜c7 23 ♙d6 ♜c8.

Dolmatov played the weaker 21...♜xe3? 22 fxe3 ♙c6 (22...♙xb5 23 axb5 b6 24 ♙c7 or 23...♘c8 24 ♙c7! ♖d7 25 b6) 23 ♙xc6 ♘xc6 24 ♘f2 ♘e7 25 e4! dxe4 26 fxe4, and obtained an inferior ending, which he later managed to draw.

E 6-38. Raetsky–Bologan (Bern 1997).

12 ... a4!

This exercise could have been included in the chapter 'Routes for the rook'. The black rook comes out to a5, and it transpires that the opponent is unable to save his central e5 pawn.

13 ♜e3 (better practical chances were offered by 13 ♖ad1!? ♖a5 14 ♘e4 ♘dxe5 15 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 16 f4) 13...♖a5 14 ♜c3 ♜b4! 15 ♘e4 ♘dxe5 16 ♘xe5 ♖xe5 17 ♖fd1 ♖a5 18 ♜xb4 ♘b4 19 a3 ♘a6 20 f4 e5 21 fxe5 ♖xe5, and Black won.

E 6-39. Ageichenko–Dvoretzky (Moscow 1967).

Black's main threat is 37...b4!, e.g. 37 bxa4? b4! or 37 ♘c3? b4! (less good is 37...axb3 38 cxb3 b4? 39 axb4 ♘xb4+ 40 ♘d2) 38 ♘xa4+ ♘a6. In the game there followed 37 ♘f4? b4! 38 ♜xe6 ♜xe6 39 ♘xe6 axb3 40 cxb3 bxa3 41 ♘c3 ♘e3 (threatening 42...♘d1+) 42 b4 ♘xb4 43 ♘c5 dxc5 44 dxc5+ ♘xc5 45 ♙d4+ ♘b5 46 ♘b3 a2. White resigns.

There was only one way of defending against the pawn breakthrough.

37 b4!

It is very hard for Black to convert his slight material advantage.

E 6-40. Yusupov–Inkirov (Sofia 1984).

15 e4!

This immediate blow in the centre is the only way to gain an advantage. It cannot be deferred even for one move: 15 ♘b2?! ♖xc5 16 e4 ♘a6! (16...dxe4? 17 ♘xe6 fxe6 18 ♖d8+ with a mortal pin along the 8th rank) 17 ♘b3 dxe4! 18 ♘xc5 (18 ♙xa6 ♙xb3) 18...♘xc5, and Black has full compensation for the sacrificed exchange.

15 ... ♙d7

After 15...♖xc5 16 exd5 all the same the



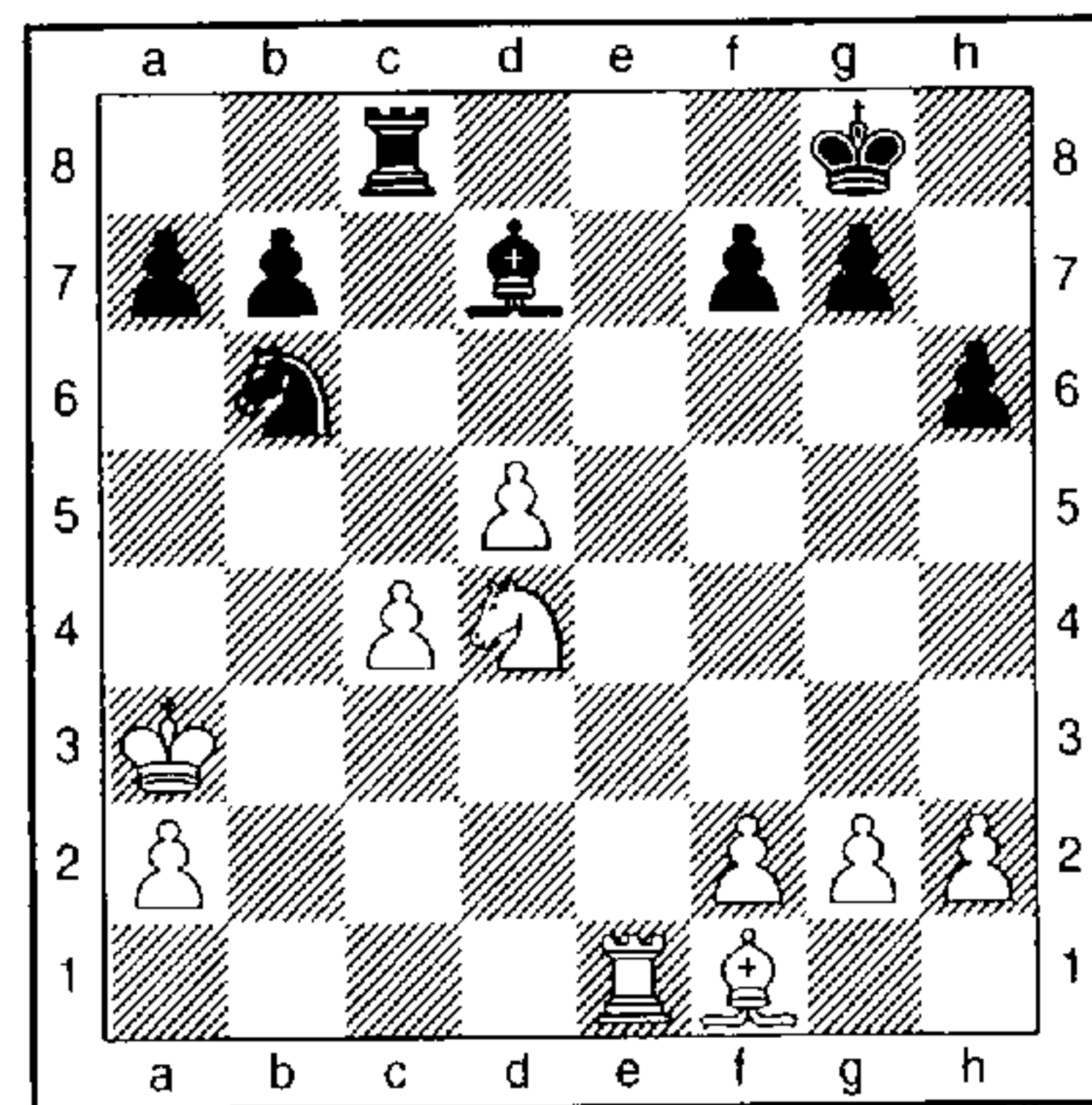
bishop has to move, since both captures on d5 lose: 16... Rxd5 ? 17 Qc4 or 16... Qxd5 ? 17 Qb3 ! Qxb3 18 Rd8+ . And after 15... dxe4 16 Qxe6 fxe6 17 Qc4 Qf7 18 Rhe1 Black's position is left in ruins.

16 exd5 Rxc5
 17 c4 Qa6
 If 17... b5 ? there is the reply 18 Qb3 .
 18 Qb2

White has retained his extra pawn and has a won position, although he still has to overcome some technical difficulties, involving the blockade of his central pawns on the dark squares.

18... Re8 19 Qe2 Rcc8 20 Rhe1 Qc5 21 Qf1 ! Rxe1 (better 21... b6) 22 Rxe1 Qa4 + 23 Qa3 Qb6 .

256



24 Qb4 ! a5+ 25 Qxa5 Qxc4+ 26 Qb4 . Also tempting is 26 Qxc4 Rxc4 27 Qb3 Rc2 28 Qb6 ! In the endgame the king is a strong piece!

26... Qb6 27 d6 Qd5+ (27... Ra8 !? 28 Qb5 !) 28 Qb3 Rc3+ 29 Qb2 Rc5 ?! (29... Rc8 was more tenacious) 30 Re5 ! (threatening 31 Qb3) 30... Qb6 31 Rxc5 Qa4+ 32 Qa3 Qxc5 33 Qb4 Qe4 34 Qb5 Qxb5 35 Qxb5 Qf6 (35... Qf8 36 Qa5 Qe8 37 Qb6) 36 Qc3 Qf8 (36... Qd7 37 Qe4 and 38 Qc5) 37 Qb5

Qe8 38 Qb6 Qd7 39 Qxb7 Qxd6 40 a4 Qd7 41 Qe4+ ! Qd5 42 Qc7 Qf8 43 a5 Qe6+ 44 Qb6 . Black resigns.

E 6-41. Chernin–Kaidanov (USSR Championship Semi-Final, Irkutsk 1983).

Another instant, and Black will block the b-file by 27... Qb4 , after which the position will become drawish. Drastic measures are needed.

27 Qxb6 !! Rxb6
 28 Rxb6 Qe8
 29 Rxa6

The positional queen sacrifice has secured White a decisive superiority. His rooks are operating freely in the enemy rear (he is threatening Rxa5 , Rb7 etc.), whereas the opponent's pieces are unable to break free. The a4 pawn is immune because of 30 Qe7+ .

29... h5 30 Rxa5 Qh7 31 Ra7 Qe6 32 Rb6 Rc6 33 a5 Qh6 34 Rxf7 h4 35 Rxc6 h3+ 36 Qf2 Qxc6 37 Rf5 Qa4 38 Rxe5 Qxa5 39 Rh5+ Qg6 40 Rhx3 Qa1 41 Rh4 Qf7 42 Rf4+ Qe6 43 Qg2 Qe1 44 Re4+ Qf7 45 h4 Qd2 46 Qf4 . Black resigns.

E 6-42. Yusupov–Dvoretsky (Training game, Moscow 1979).

What is White threatening? To take the a7 pawn? Well, this threat is not hard to parry, if only by playing 25... a6 .

But it turns out that White has a more serious threat – the manoeuvre Qc3–b5(e2)–d4 with an attack on the f5 pawn, which is hard to defend. For example, 25... a6 26 Qe2 ! Qf7 (26... Qh5 27 Qf2) 27 Qd4 , and the king is forced to walk into a pin, to g6.

For the sake of the f5 pawn's safety, Black does not begrudge giving up the less important a7 pawn.

25 ... Qf7 !
 26 Qxa7



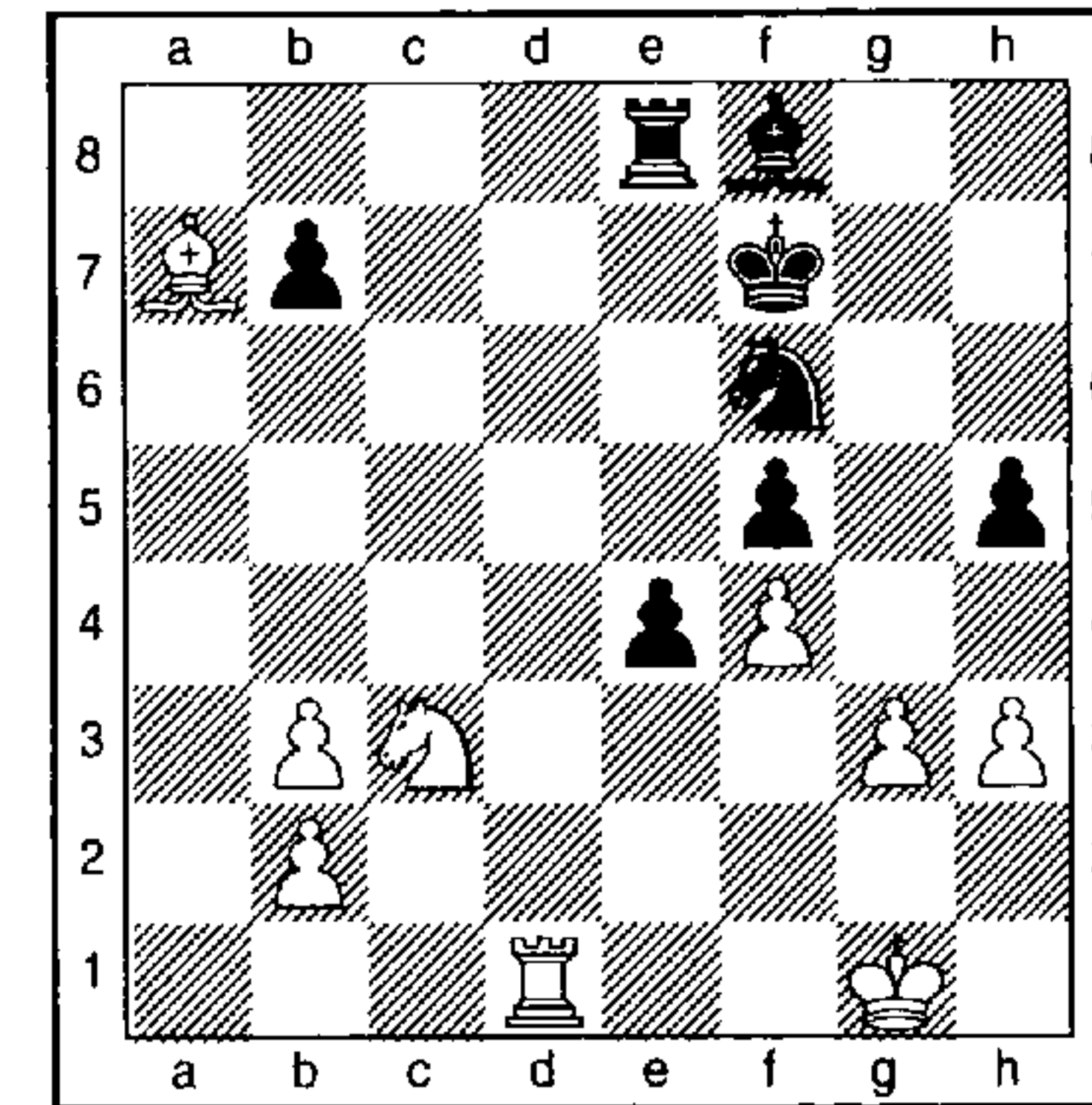
If 26 Qb5 (or 26 Qe2), then 26... Qf8 ! 27 Qd2 a6 28 Qd4 Qg6 followed by ... h6–h5 .

26 ... Qf8
 27 Qd1

Of course, not 27 Rb6 ?? because of 27... Qc5+ .

27 ... h5

257



The f5 pawn is now out of danger, and at the same time Black has prevented for ever the undermining move g3–g4 . The position is equal, since White's extra pawn is doubled and is not felt at all.

28 Qf2 Qe7 29 Qd4 Rd8 30 Qe2 Qe6 31 Qb5 Qf7 32 Rd2 Rd5 33 Qc3 Rd8 34 Qf2 Rxd2+ 35 Qxd2 Qe6 36 Qd4 Qd5 37 Qe2 Qb4+ 38 Qc3 Qc5 39 Qe5 Qe3+ 40 Qe1 Qc5 . Draw.

E 6-43. Campora–Hazai (Nis 1985).

White has to defend against 21... c4 . He decided to stabilise the situation in the centre and on the queenside by 21 c4 ?! Qxb3 (21... bxc4 ? 22 Qxa5 Qxa5 23 Qxc4) 22 axb3 . His strategy proved successful after 22... bxc4 ?! 23 bxc4 Qc8 24 f3 Rb8 25 b3 Qg7 26 Ra3 Qe7 27 Qf2 Qh4 (remember: we saw exactly the same situation on the kingside in the game

Dolmatov–Hernandez from the chapter 'Don't forget about prophylaxis!') 28 Rh1 h5 29 gxh5 f5 30 Qc1 Qf6 ?! 31 Rhx4 ! Qhx4 32 Qg5 Qh2 33 Qh6+ Qh8 34 Qg5 with a winning position.

Black played badly. He should have continued 22... Qh4 ! (threatening 23... Qc8) 23 Qf1 b4 ? No active plan for the opponent is apparent, whereas Black will gradually prepare ... f7–f5 , which gains particularly in strength after the highly probable move g2–g3 .

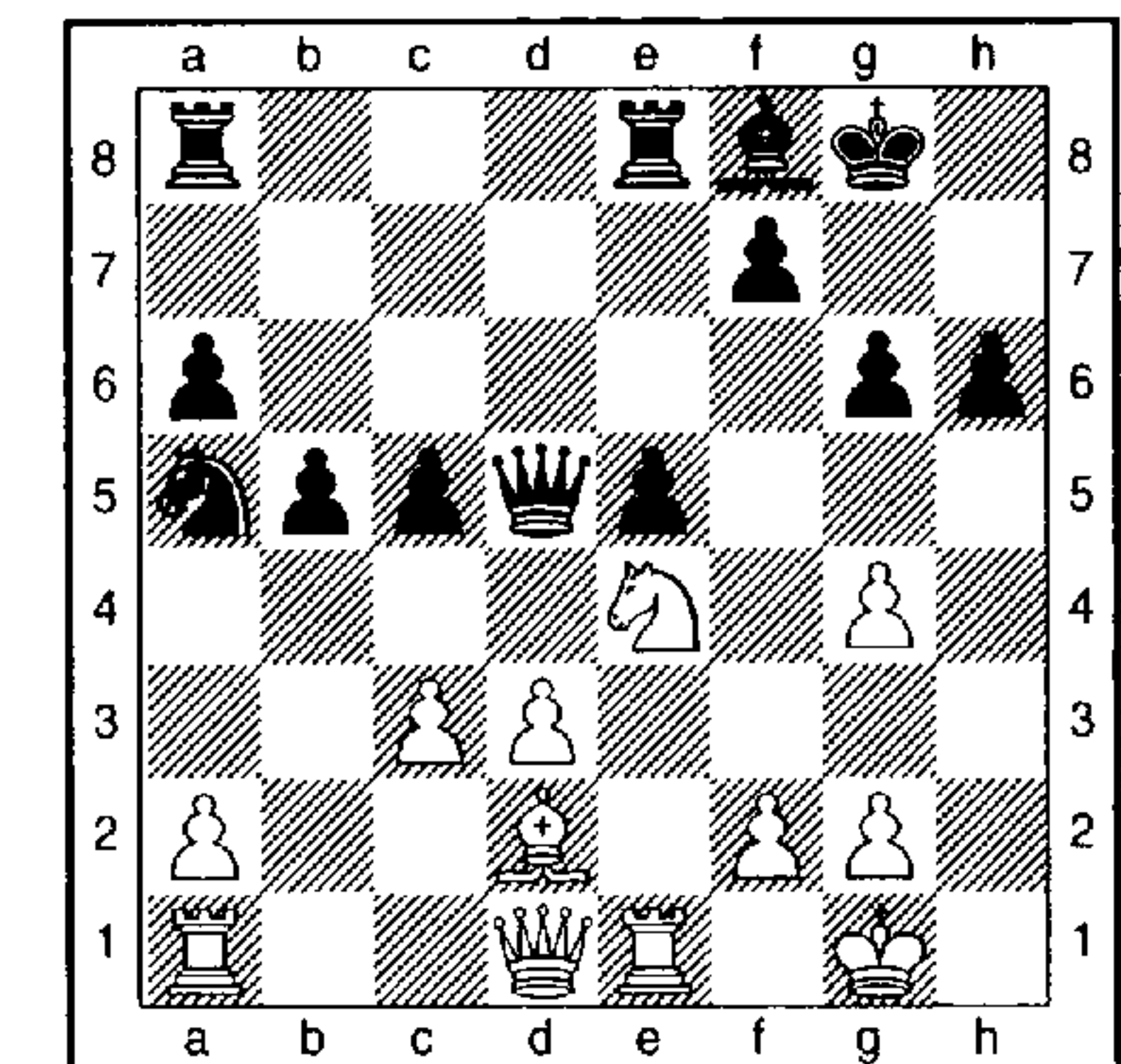
In order not to concede the initiative, White should decide on a positional pawn sacrifice.

21 Qd5 ! dxc3
 22 bxc3

Much weaker is 22 Qxc3 ? b4 .

22 ... Qxd5
 23 exd5 Qxd5
 24 Qe4

258



Let's evaluate the position that has resulted. The white g3 knight has come into play, whereas the black knight at a5 is doing nothing, and in some cases may even be in danger (c3–c4). A check at f6 is threatened, and this square cannot be defended by the bishop in view of 25 Qxh6 . The counter



exchange sacrifice 24... ♖xd3 leads after 25 ♜f6+ ♜h8 26 ♜xe8 ♜xe8 27 ♜e3 (or 27 ♜f4) 27... ♖xd1 28 ♜axd1 to a better ending for White. But otherwise with his next move he will bring out his queen to f3 with gain of tempo, and then play ♖h3 or g4–g5. It is obvious that the dynamic compensation for the sacrificed pawn is quite sufficient.

E 6-44. Dolmatov–Lputian (53rd USSR Championship, Kiev 1986).

White must aim for the exchange of queens.

30 ♖c6!

If 30 ♖b5? the opponent replies 30... ♖e6, intending 31... ♖g4 or 31... ♜d4. But now it is more difficult to avoid the exchange: if 30... ♖a5 there follows 31 ♜c1 with the threats of 32 ♜xc8, 32 ♜xa7 and 32 ♖xf3.

30 ... ♖xc6
31 ♜xc6

The position favours White – he wants to take on f3 or a7.

Dolmatov was greedy and immediately took the a7 pawn. After 30 ♜xa7? ♖c4 it transpired that the initiative had passed to his opponent and was not easy to extinguish. For example: 31 ♖b5 ♖c3 32 ♖f1 ♜e8! 33 ♖f2 ♜d4, or 31 ♖d1 ♜c3 32 ♜f1 (32 gxf3 ♜xe1 33 ♖xe1 ♜e8) 32... ♖e2 33 ♜f2 ♜a6.

31 ♖d6 ♜c3?! Now White forces a draw. Smbat Lputian avoided 31... fxc2 because of 32 ♖c5, but wrongly so – here he would have retained some advantage.

32 ♜c5! (of course, not 32 ♜c7? ♖g4) **32... f2+ 33 ♜xf2 ♜xe1 34 ♜xe1 ♜e8 35 ♜e7 ♖xa4 36 h3 ♜xe7 37 ♖xe7.** Draw.

E 6-45. Vilner–Romanovsky (3rd USSR Championship, Moscow 1924).

Black intends ...c6–c5, supporting his bishop. After this the opponent will have no counterplay, and Black will gradually prepare the opening of the f-file by ...f7–f6. That

is in fact how the game developed.

32 ♜b1? c5 33 ♜f3?! It was better to place the bishop on d1 and the pawn on f3.

33... ♖d8 34 h4 ♖e7 35 ♜g1 ♜f8 36 ♜d3 ♜h7 37 ♜fg3 ♜d6 38 ♜1g2 f6 39 gxf6 ♜xf6 40 ♜g5 ♖f7 41 ♜c2 ♜f4 42 ♜h2 ♜df6 43 ♜gg2 ♜xf2 44 ♜d1 ♜d4 45 ♜c1 ♜f1 46 ♜c2 ♜6f3 47 ♖d2 ♜c3+ 48 ♜b1 ♖f3 49 ♜e2 ♜xb3+ 50 axb3 ♖xb3+ 51 ♜c1 ♜b2+, and mate next move.

Could White have avoided such a dismal fate? 32 f4? ♜b2+ and 33... exf4 was incorrect, but he should have ventured a sacrifice of the exchange.

32 ♜xd4! exd4

Now Pyotr Romanovsky considers only 33 ♜xd4 ♖c7! 34 ♖d2 ♜ee8 with the idea of 35... ♜bd8 (35 ♜d7 ♖e5 is completely bad). But why take the pawn, opening the d-file, of which the enemy rook will gain control? It is better to keep the position closed.

33 f4!

It is not possible to prevent e4–e5, after which Black's exchange advantage will hardly be felt.

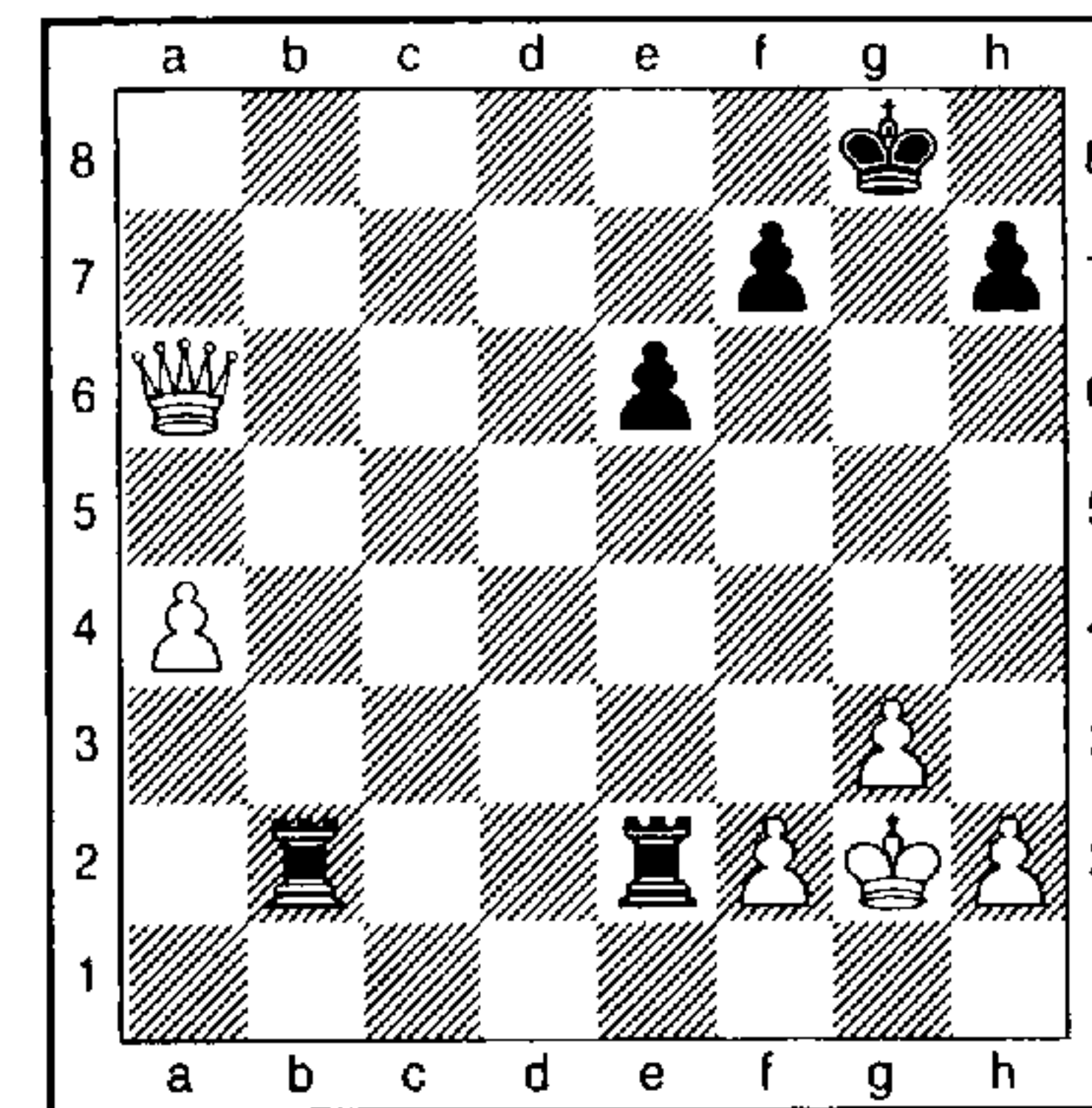
E 6-46. Espig–Dvoretsky (Vilnius 1978).

White can win a pawn in various ways. 22 ♖xa6? ♜xc3 23 ♖xd6 ♜c8 is completely harmless. 22 ♜xg7 suggests itself, and was in fact played in the game. But after **22... ♜xg7 23 ♖d4+ ♜g8 24 ♖xd6 ♜b2 25 ♖xa6 ♜cc2 26 a4 ♜xe2** the position is drawish – Black can always stop the opponent's passed pawn by doubling rooks on the a-file.

see next diagram



259



There followed **27 ♖c8+ ♜g7 28 ♖c5 e5** (28... h6!?) **29 a5 ♜a2 30 ♜f1 ♜e4 31 h4 h6 32 h5 ♜a1+ 33 ♜g2 ♜a2 34 ♜h3 ♜ea4 35 ♖xe5+ ♜g8 36 ♖e8+ ♜g7 37 ♖e5+.** Draw. For the rooks to coordinate effectively, they must have the possibility of doubling on some file or jointly attacking some pawn. With the bishops on the board this is significantly more difficult – the white bishop deprives the rooks of important squares (e.g. b2 and a1), and it can defend a pawn, making it pointless for the rooks to attack it. This means that the exchange of bishops should be avoided.

22 ♜d4!

Black's position probably remains defensible, but it is not easy for him to hold it. At any event, only here does White retain practical chances of success. Here are some approximate variations:

22... ♜f8 23 ♖xa6 ♜bb8 (23... ♜c2 24 a4) **24 ♜a7! ♜a8 25 ♖b7** (threatening 26 a4) **25... ♜a3 26 h4!** White operates using a familiar method of exploiting an advantage – 'the principle of two weaknesses'. After tying down his opponent on the queenside, he intends a pawn offensive on the kingside, in order to create new weaknesses there and to switch when it is convenient to an attack against the black king.

22... ♜bb8 23 ♖xa6 ♜c5 24 ♜e5! ♜a8 25 ♖b7. Here too Black experiences serious difficulties.

E 6-47. Simagin–Abramson (Vladimir 1960).

The threat of 18... a4 has to be parried – Black plays this even in reply to 18 hxg6? And if 18 ♖d3?!, then 18... ♖xd3 19 ♜xd3 ♜xh5.

18 ♜h4!!

A splendid prophylactic move! If 18... a4 there is now 19 ♜c4!, and in some cases another reaction is also possible: ♜xf6 followed by ♜xb4. But White not only defends – he doubles rooks on the h-file, preparing an attack on the king. For example: 18... ♜xh5 19 ♜xg7 ♜xg7 20 ♜c4! (less convincing is 20 g4 a4!) 20... ♖c5 21 ♜dh1 followed by 22 g4 ♖xc4 23 gxh5.

18 ... ♜db8?

Obviously, Black did not guess the opponent's main idea – he avoided 18... a4 because of the reply 19 ♜xf6 (which in fact is unconvincing in view of 19... axb3) and so he defends beforehand his b4 pawn.

18... ♜dc8! was much more tenacious – the c4 square must be taken under control. Simagin would have replied 19 hxg6, not fearing 19... a4 20 ♜xf6. After 19... hxg6 20 ♜dh1 a4 21 ♜xf6 ♜xf6 (21... axb3? 22 ♜h8+) 22 ♜xb4 ♖d7 23 ♜c4 the compensation for the sacrificed pawn would appear to be insufficient.

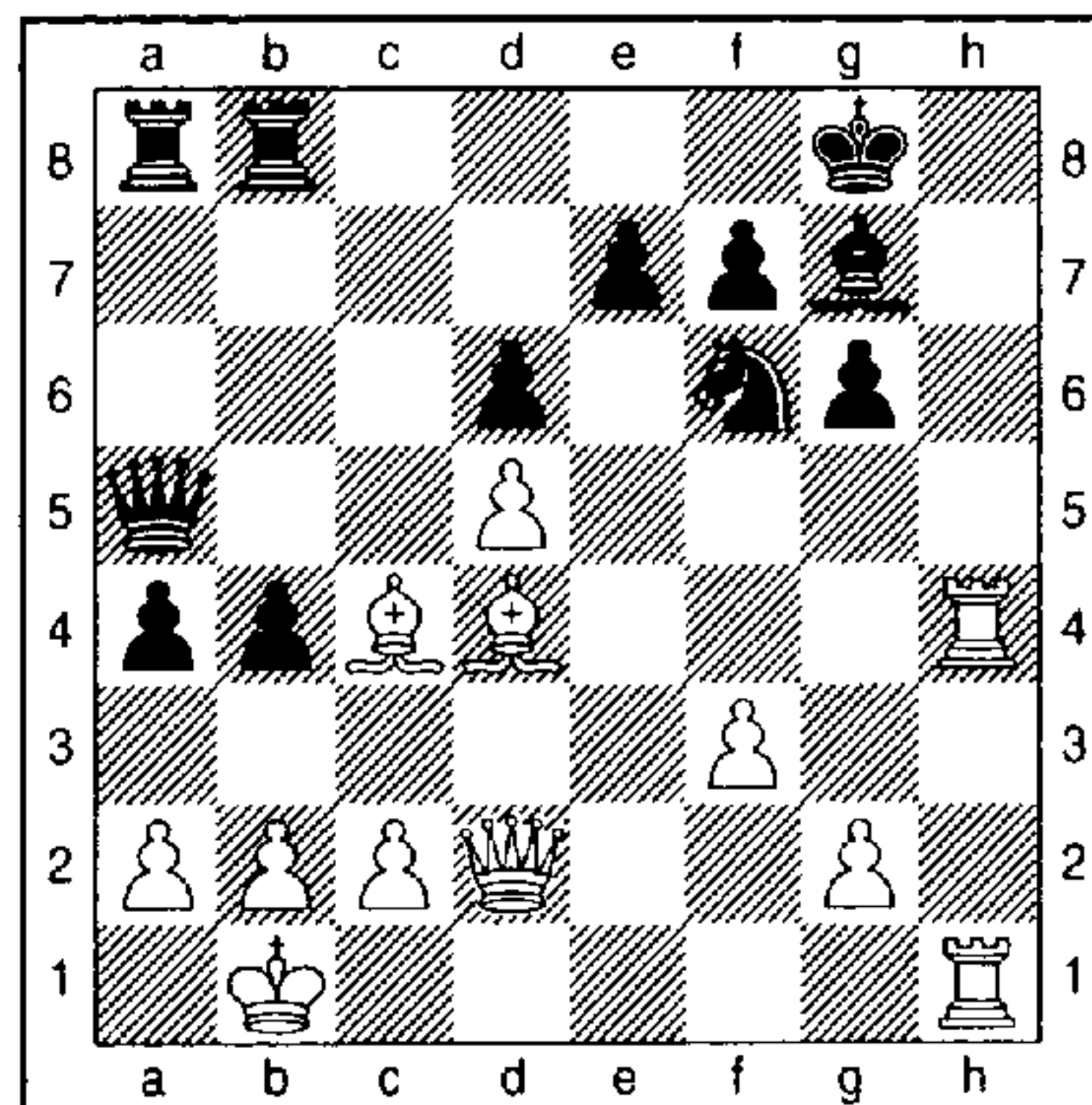
Black can also try 19... fxc6 (so as if 20 ♜dh1? to have 20... a4 21 ♜xf6 axb3!). Then White should switch to exploiting the weaknesses on the e-file. Quite good, for example, is 20 ♖d3!? ♖xd3 21 cxd3 with a clearly better endgame for White. Also very strong is 20 ♖e1! ♖d7 21 ♖e2!?, gaining the c4 square for the bishop. 20... a4 (instead of 20... ♖d7) leads to a lost position after 21 ♖e6+ (21 ♜xf6!?) 21... ♜f8 22 ♜e1! (but not 22 ♜xf6? exf6! 23 ♖xd6+ ♜g8,



when White has to give perpetual check by 24 ♖e6+ ♜f8 25 ♜d6+, since if 24 ♜xb4? there is the reply 24...♜e2) 22...♜e8 (22...♜c7? 23 ♙xf6) 23 ♙c4!

19 hxg6 hxg6
20 ♜dh1 a4
21 ♙c4! ♜a5

260



22 ♜h6!! ♙xh6
23 ♜xh6 g5

23...♜f8 24 ♜h8+ ♜g8 25 ♜xg8+ would have led to mate, while after 23...e5 24 dxe6 ♜e5 the ending is completely hopeless for Black.

24 ♜h8+ ♜g7
25 ♜1h7+ ♜g6
26 ♙d3+ ♜e4
27 ♙xe4+

Black resigns.

E 7-1. Karpov–Kavalek (Olympiad, Nice 1974).

Of course, one very much wants to play 31 g5, defending the h6 pawn and shutting in the black bishop. But after 31...♜a5 the a2 pawn has to be given up (one hardly wants to play 32 ♜a1 ♜a3+ 33 ♜e2).

The threat of 31...♜a5 is easily parried by 31 ♜c3. Then Black exchanges on g4.

So which is correct, to increase your

positional gains at the cost of a pawn, or retain material equality with a slightly smaller positional advantage? Before turning to a concrete analysis, try to make your choice intuitively.

31 g5! ♜a5
32 ♜b1!

Apart from this move pointed out by Karpov, also very strong is 32 ♙d1! ♜xa2 33 ♙b3 (intending c4–c5) 33...♜a5 34 ♜c3 ♜f7 35 ♜b4 ♜c5 36 ♜a1 (36 ♜e1; 36 ♙a4).

32 ... ♜f7!?

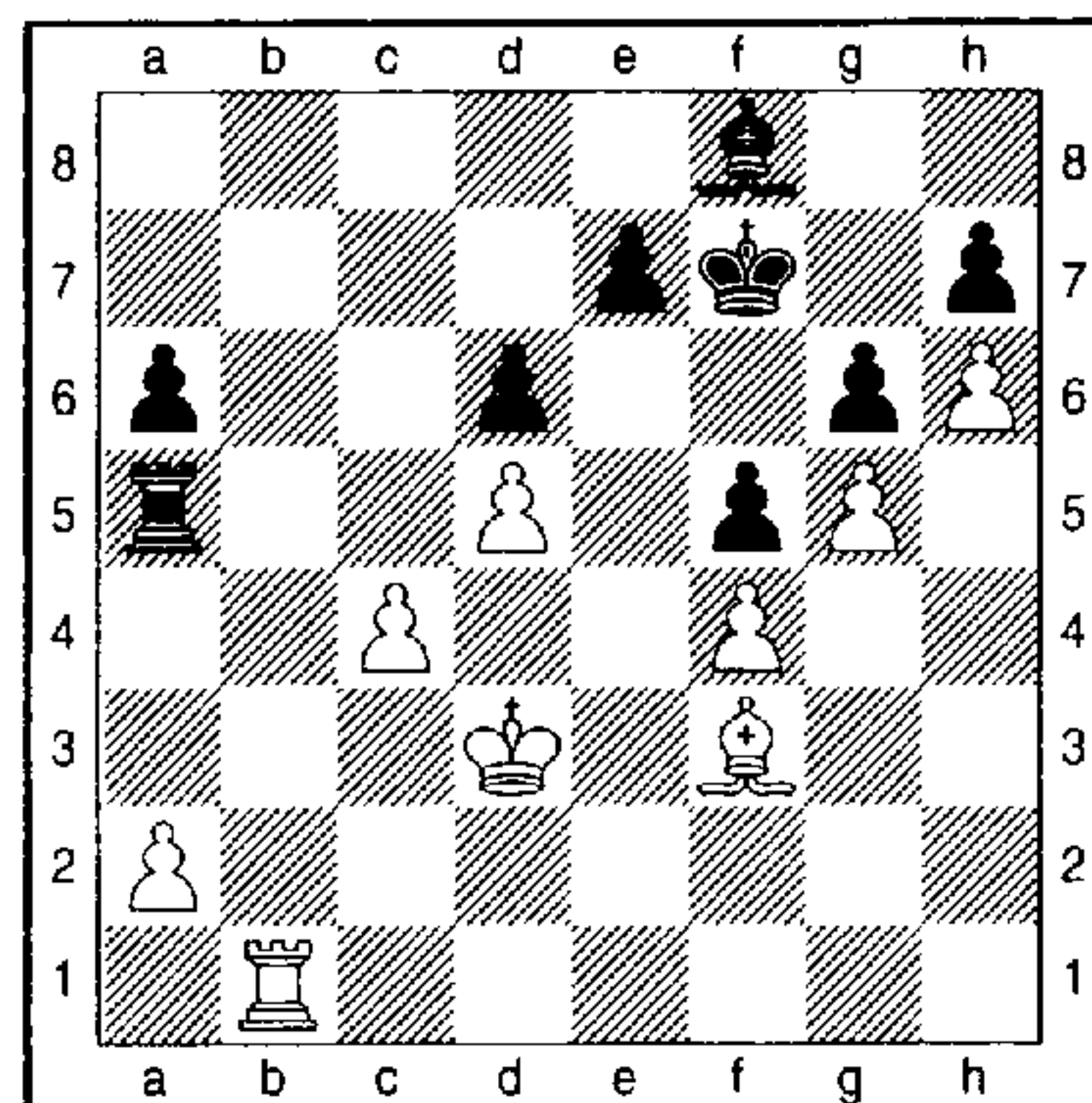
Things are easier for White after other continuations. Here are some variations, taken from Karpov's collection of selected games.

32...♜xa2 33 c5! ♜a3+ 34 ♜e2 dxc5 (34...♜c3 35 c6; 34...♜a2+ 35 ♜e1 ♜a3 36 c6! ♜xf3 37 ♜c1!) 35 d6 exd6 36 ♙d5+ ♜h8 37 ♜b8.

32...♜a3+ 33 ♜b3 ♜xa2 34 c5 dxc5 35 d6 e6 36 d7 c4+! 37 ♜xc4 (37 ♜c3? ♜c2+! 38 ♜xc2 cxb3+ 39 ♜xb3 ♙e7) 37...♜d2 38 ♜b7 ♙e7 39 ♜b8+ ♜f7 40 ♜h8 ♜xd7 41 ♜xh7+.

32...♜a3+ 33 ♜b3 ♜xb3+ 34 axb3 a5 (34...♜f7 35 b4 e5 36 dxe6+ ♜xe6 37 ♙d5+ ♜d7 38 ♙g8 ♜e8 39 ♜d4 ♙e7 40 ♜d5 ♜f8 41 ♜e6) 35 ♜c3 ♜f7 36 ♜b2 e5 37 dxe6+ ♜xe6 38 ♙d5+ ♜d7 39 ♜a3 ♙e7 40 ♜a4 ♙d8 41 ♙g8 ♜e8 42 ♜b5.

261



33 ♙d1!

Karpov considers only 33 ♜b2 ♜a3+ 34 ♜b3 (34 ♜e2 ♜c3) 34...♜xa2 (33 ♜b3 ♜xa2 leads to the same position a move sooner) 35 c5 dxc5 36 d6 c4+ (36...♜e6 37 ♜b8; 36...♜a4 37 ♙d5+ e6 38 ♜b7+ ♜e8 39 ♙c6+ ♜d8 40 ♜b8 mate) 37 ♜xc4, and now 37...exd6 38 ♙d5+ ♜e8 39 ♜b8+ ♜e7 40 ♜b7+ ♜d8 41 ♜xh7 with a decisive advantage for White. But Black's defence can be improved: 37...♜e6! 38 ♜b8 ♜a4+ 39 ♜d3 ♙xh6! 40 dxe7 ♜xe7 41 ♜b7+ ♜e6 42 gxh6 ♜xf4 43 ♜e3 ♜h4 44 ♜xh7 ♜f6 with a draw since the last white pawn will soon disappear from the board.

In my opinion, White's advantage is so significant, that there is no point in him going in for tense variations, the outcome of which hang by a thread. The manoeuvre of the bishop to b3 enables him to solve the problem by simple means.

33 ... ♜xa2
34 ♜b8 ♜a3+

Bad are both 34...♜f2 35 ♙a4 with the threat of 36 ♙d7 (or 36 ♙e8+ ♜g8 37 ♙d7) and 34...♜a5 35 ♙b3 followed by ♜c3–b4 and ♙a4. There is simply nothing that Black can move.

35 ♙b3 a5
36 c5! a4

If 36...dxc5 the simplest is 37 ♜c2 a4 38 ♙c4 and 39 d6+.

37 c6!

The white pawn promotes to a queen.

Karpov did not sacrifice the pawn, but played more cautiously. Let us see how the game proceeded.

31 ♜c3 fxg4
32 ♙xg4 ♜f7

As was pointed out by Karpov, passive defence also came into consideration: 32...♜c7!? 33 ♙e6+ ♜h8 34 f5 (threatening 35 ♜b1! ♙xh6 36 f6! exf6 37 ♜b8+)



34...♜b7! Black wants to play 35...♜b8 and 36...gxf5, and if 35 ♙f7 there follows 35...♙xh6! 36 ♜xh6 ♜g7.

33 ♙e6+ ♜f6
34 ♙g8 ♜c7!

34...♙xh6? 35 ♜xh6 ♜g7 36 ♜xh7+ ♜xg8 37 ♜xe7 would have led to a lost rook ending for Black. But now the e7 pawn is defended, so that 35...♙xh6 is already threatened.

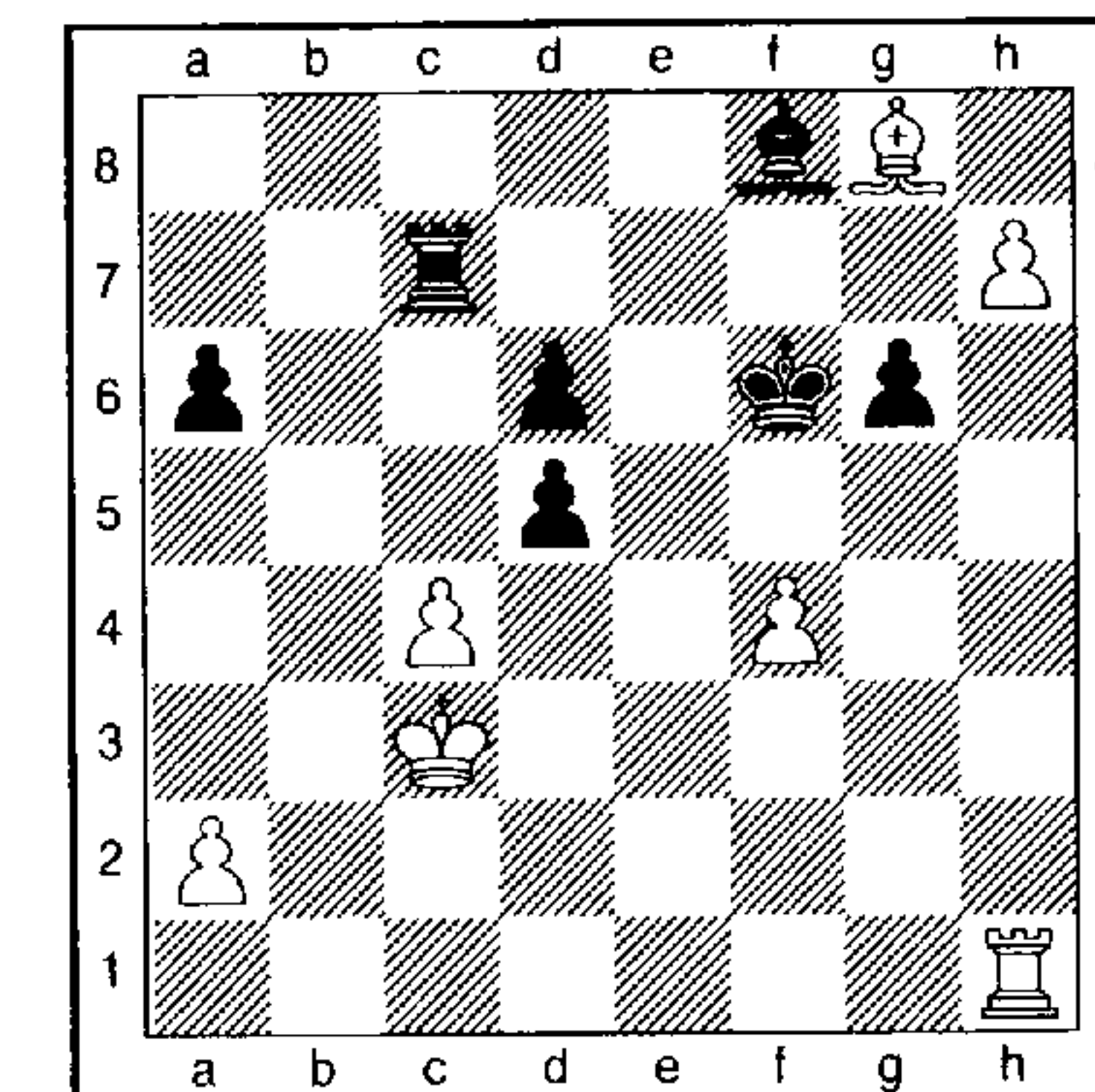
35 ♙xh7 e6!

Hopeless is 35...♜f7 36 f5! g5 37 f6! exf6 38 ♙f5! ♜g8 39 h7+ ♜h8 40 ♜b1 (Karpov).

36 ♙g8 exd5
37 h7

37 ♙xd5? ♜h7.

262



37 ... ♙g7?

The decisive mistake. 37...♜xc4+! 38 ♜d3 ♙g7 was essential. Now nothing is achieved by 39 h8♜? ♙xh8 40 ♜xh8 (hoping for 40...♜g7? 41 ♙xd5 ♜c5 42 ♜g8+ ♜h7 43 ♙b3) because of 40...♜c8! and 41...♜g7. After 39 ♙xd5 ♜c5 (39...♜c8) 40 ♙e4?! ♜h5! things again end in a draw. After 40 ♜e4! ♙h8 White still retains some chances of success, but even so a draw is the most likely outcome.

38 ♙xd5 ♙h8 39 ♜d3 ♜f5 40 ♜e3 ♜e7+



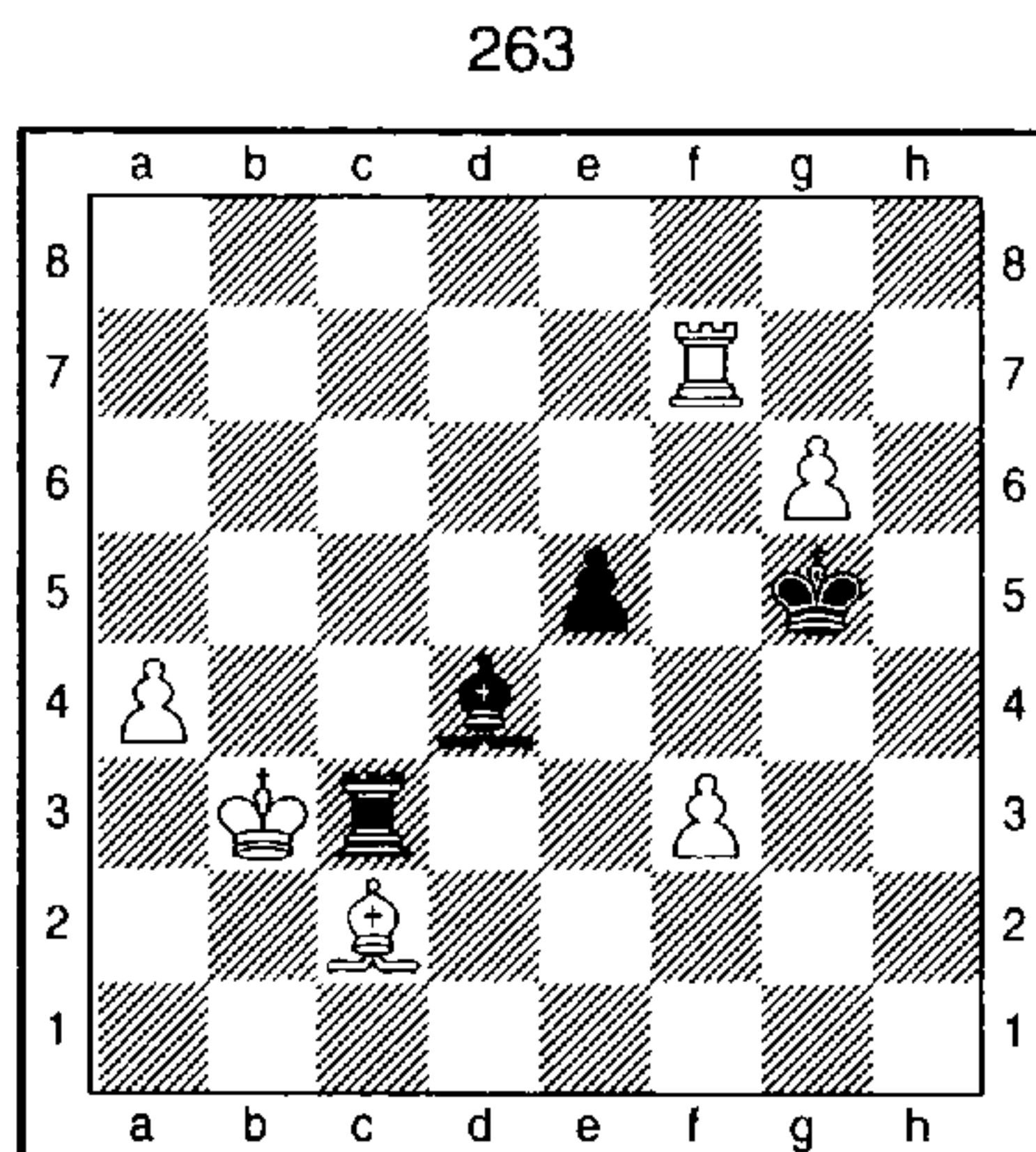
41 ♖f3 a5 42 a4 ♜c7 43 ♙e4+ ♖f6 44 ♜h6 ♜g7 (44...♙g7 45 ♜xg6+ ♖xh7 46 ♜g1+ ♖h6 47 ♜h1+ ♖g7 48 ♜h7+ and 49 ♜xc7) 45 ♖g4. Black resigns.

Let us return to the dilemma, with which we began. 'The readers can choose, according to their taste, between the move in the game and the continuation analysed' (Karpov). I think that the conclusion is clear: the future world champion did not play the best way. But it is hard to criticise him – he did after all win!

And one more thing. The analysis from Karpov's book, of which I made use, is full of complicated and pretty variations. Only here and there was I able to correct and add to it. But Karpov is a player of intuitive style, who is not too fond of delving into the details of a position. How can this be explained? I think that I will not be wrong, if I express the hypothesis that many variations were found by Karpov's trainer, grandmaster Igor Zaitsev – who very much likes delving into a position in a search for hidden combinative subtleties.

E 7-2. Dvoretsky–Taeger (Bad Wiessee 1997)

54 ♜h7+ ♖f6
54...♖f8? 55 ♜h8+; 54...♖g8? 55 ♙d5+.
55 ♜f7+ ♖g5
55...♖e6 56 ♙f5+ ♖d6(d5) 57 ♜d7+ ♖c6
58 ♖xc2 is hopeless for Black.
56 ♙xc2 ♜c3+



It is not hard to find the winning variation 57 ♖b2!? ♜xf3+ 58 ♖a2! ♜xf7 59 gx7 ♙c5 60 ♖b3! (but not 60 a5?? ♖f6 with a draw) 60...♖f6 61 ♖c4. Instead of 58...♜xf7 Black can try 58...♜g3, but after 59 a5 he would appear to be doomed. For example, to 59...♜g4 (with the idea of 60...e4) there is the strong reply 60 ♙f5.

I preferred a different, combinative way, demanding a slightly deeper calculation, but on the other hand more forcing.

57 ♖b4! ♜xc2
58 g7 ♜c8
59 ♜f8 ♙c5+
60 ♖b5 ♜xf8
60...♙xf8 61 g8♖+.
61 gxf8♖ ♙xf8
62 a5 e4

Nothing would have been changed by 62...♙d6 63 a6 ♙b8 64 ♖b6 (with the deadly threat of 65 ♖b7) 64...e4 65 fxe4.

63 fxe4 ♙d6
63...♙g7 64 ♖c5 ♖f4 65 ♖d5! would not have helped.
64 a6 ♙b8
65 ♖b6 ♙g3
66 ♖c6!

The ideal square for the king. From here it is



ready to help both of its pawns. The bishop is forced to abandon the h2–b8 diagonal (66...♙b8 67 ♖b7), allowing the e-pawn to advance.

66 ... ♙f2
67 e5 ♖f5
68 ♖d6

Black resigns.

E 7-3. Kuenitz–Dvoretsky (Bad Wiessee, 1997).

Any position with an extra pawn promises Black good winning chances, but everywhere the battle still continues, e.g. after 34...♜b5 35 ♖e2 or 34...d3 35 ♜1xc5 ♜xb3 36 ♜c1! However, he has a combination, leading to a forced win.

34 ... d3!
35 ♜1xc5
35 ♜7xc5? d2.
35 ... ♜h8!!
36 ♖g1

36 ♜xd5 ♜h1 mate; 36 ♖e1 d2+; 36 g3 ♜xc5 37 ♜xc5 ♜h1+ 38 ♖g2 d2.

36 ... ♜dd8!
37 ♜c1 d2
38 ♜d1 ♜de8!

Of course, not 38...♜he8? 39 ♖f1. Now the capture of the d2 pawn is not possible because of mate.

39 ♜f1 ♙e1
40 ♜d7 ♜h1+!

White resigns.

E 7-4. Suetin–Dvoretsky (Vilyandi 1972).

The direct 35...♙xb6 36 axb6 ♜5xb6? is incorrect in view of 37 g5! with an unclear position – the black king is shut out of the game, and the f7 pawn is weak. It is essential to separate White's kingside pawns.

35 ... g5!

35...♙xb6 36 axb6 g5! is also good. Now the conversion of Black's advantage does not provide any difficulties.

36 ♜b1 ♜xb1+ 37 ♖xb1 ♙xb6 38 axb6 ♜xb6+ 39 ♖c2 ♜c6 (threatening 40...d4 or 40...♜c4) 40 ♜a7 ♖g8 41 ♖d3 ♜c4 42 ♜a8+ ♖h7 43 ♜a7 ♖xh6 44 ♜xf7 ♖g6 45 ♜f8 ♜xg4 46 f7 ♖g7. White resigns.

E 7-5. Van der Wiel–Dolmatov (European Junior Championship, Groningen 1978/79).

Winning the b-pawn at the cost of the exchange of rooks (29...♜xb2?! or 29...♙xb2?!) is unfavourable for Black. He will gain a great advantage, if he can prevent the rook at h3 from switching to the queenside.

29 ... c4!

Now if 30 ♜a3 there follows 30...c3 31 b3 c2 and 32...♙b2. Little better is 30 ♜c1 ♜b4 followed by 31...♙xb2 or 30 b4 c3.

Unfortunately, in the game Dolmatov played less accurately.

29...♖e6? 30 ♜a3! (30 ♖e2? c4!) 30...f4 (30...c4 31 ♜a6+) 31 ♜a4 f5 32 b4! (32 f3 ♙d4 33 b4 ♖d5) 32...♙c3 33 ♜a6+ ♖e5 34 b5 ♙b4 35 ♜h6. Draw.

This game was played in the first round. Who could have thought that the inaccuracy committed by Dolmatov at the start of the event would cost him the title of European Champion. In the remaining twelve rounds he scored eight wins with four draws. Quite a lot, but John Van der Wiel won one game more and became the winner.

E 7-6. Skvortsov–Dvoretsky (Moscow 1970).

18...fxg3? 19 ♜xc7 or 18...♜ab8?! 19 ♜xc7 leads to an unclear position.

18 ... f3!!
19 ♜xc7?

This loses immediately. After 19 ♙xa8 fxe2 20 ♙f3 exf1♖+ 21 ♜xf1 ♜d2 or 19 ♜c2!? fxe2 20 ♜xe2 ♜ab8 Black would have remained a healthy pawn to the good, but the play would still have continued.

19 ... ♙e3+!



White resigned in view of 20 ♖h1 fxe2 21 ♖e1 ♖d1.

E 7-7. Razmyslov–Dvoretsky (Moscow Team Championship 1967).

34 ... ♖b4!
35 cxb4

If 35 ♖b1, then 35...♖b5! is very strong.

35 ... ♖c3+!!

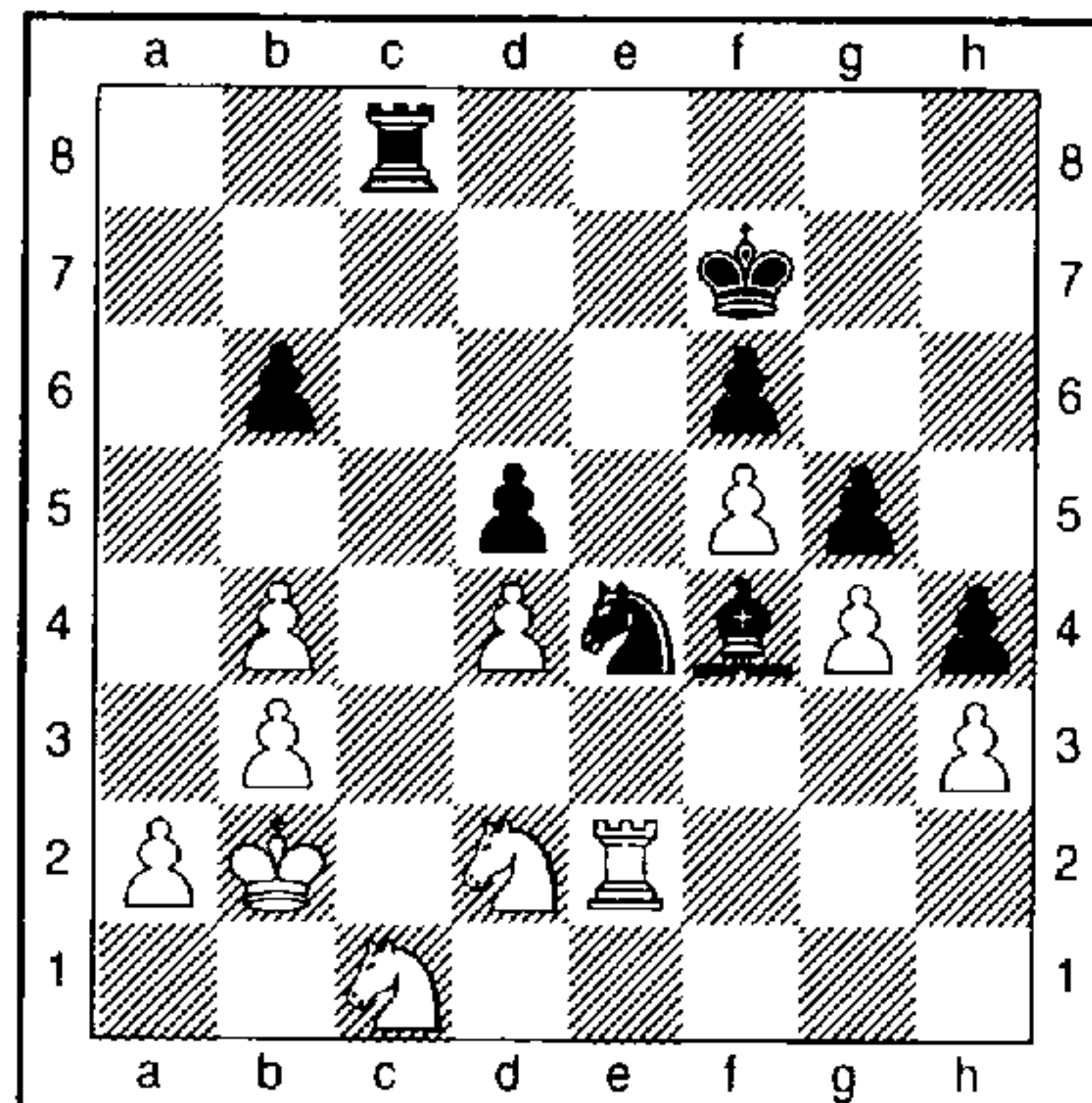
36...♗xd2 36 ♖xd2 c3+ 37 ♖xc3 ♖e4+ suggests itself, but after 38 ♖d3 ♖xd2 39 ♖xd2 b5 40 ♖d3 the position on the board is a fortress. The black rook cannot break into the opponent's position, since if ...♖e8 there is always ♖e2.

36 ♖xc3 ♖c8+

36...♖b5+ also wins, e.g. 37 ♖b2 ♖xd4 38 ♖f2 ♖c8 39 ♖b1 ♖c2 40 ♖e2 ♖xd2 41 ♖xf4 ♖d1+, or 37 ♖d3 ♖c8 38 ♖e1 (38 ♖c4 ♗xc1 39 ♖c2 dxc4+ 40 bxc4 ♗a3 41 cxb5 ♖xc2 42 ♖xc2 ♗xb4) 38...♖c3+ 39 ♖e2 ♖xd4+!? 40 ♖d1 ♖c2.

37 ♖b2 ♖e4!

264



White loses a piece.

38 ♖xe4 ♗xc1+ 39 ♖b1 dxe4 40 a4 e3 41 ♖c2 ♖xc2 42 ♖xc2 e2. White resigns.

E 7-8. Vyzhmanavin–Yusupov ('Kremlin stars' tournament, with a time control of 25 minutes for the game, Moscow 1995).

Black's position is uneasy, with 28 ♖d7 and 28 ♖c5 threatened. But he has available a combination on the theme of double attack.

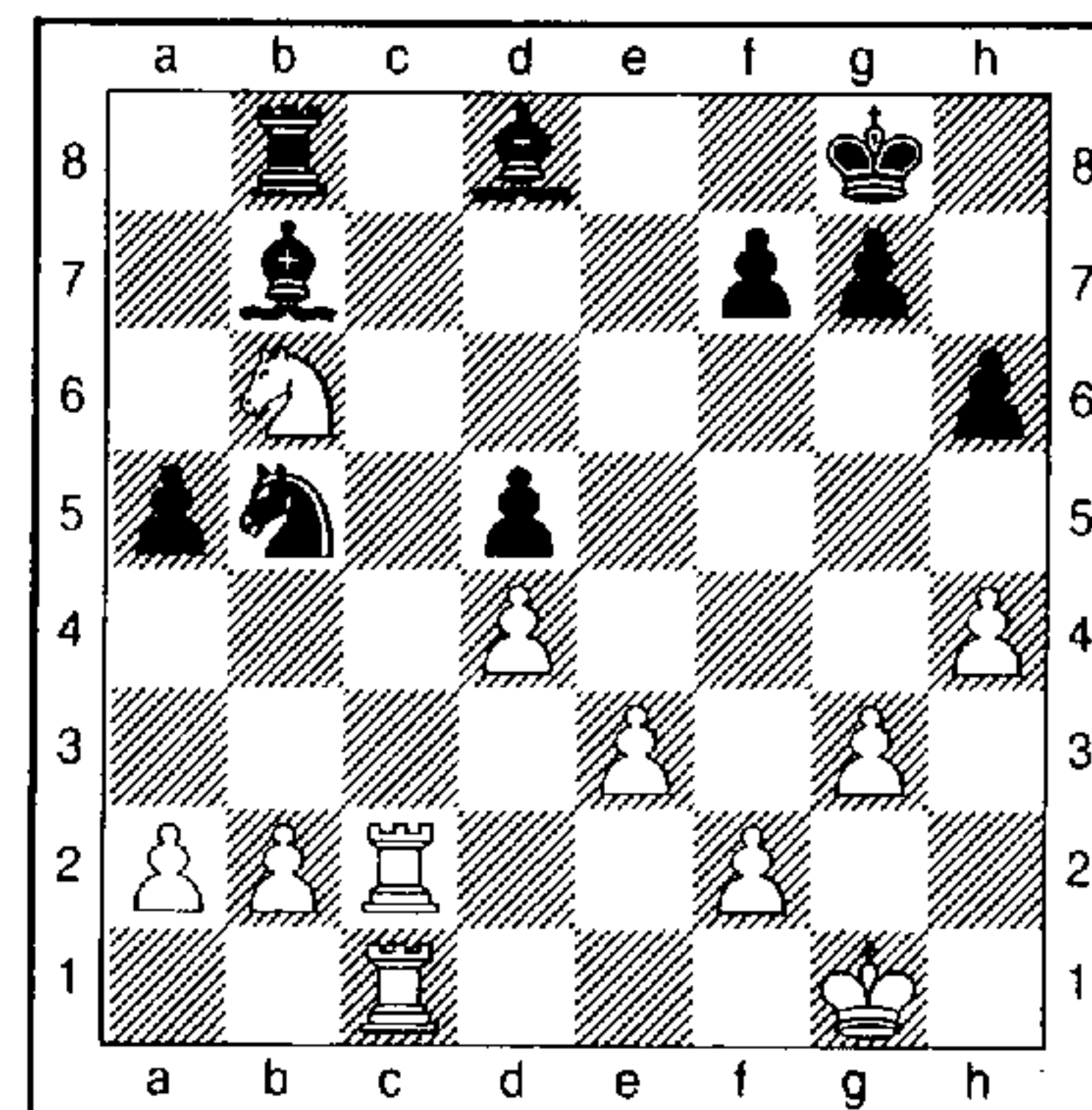
27 ... ♗xd4!?
28 exd4?! ♖xd4

If the rook moves somewhere on the c-file, there follows a knight check at e2, and it cannot go to d2 because of the fork on f3. 29 ♖d7 ♖d8 does not help. Black restores the material balance and equalises the game.

This was a good practical chance, although objectively White could have retained the advantage by 28 ♖d7! ♖d8 29 ♖c5! (nothing is achieved by 29 a4 ♖xd7 30 axb5 ♗b6) 29...♗xc5 30 ♖xc5 ♖d6 31 ♖xa5.

Yusupov did not notice the combination and played 27...♗d8?

265



It was White's turn for a combination: 28 ♖xd5!, and if 28...♗xd5 29 ♖c8 with a decisive advantage.

Instead of this Alexey Vyzhmanavin chose 28 ♖d7? ♖a8 29 ♖c5 ♖d6 and did not achieve anything in particular. Yusupov subsequently outplayed his opponent and won.



'Rapid chess' is an attractive spectacle, but its chess worth is paltry. In the analysis of almost any rapid game it is not hard to find numerous similar errors.

E 7-9. Zviagintsev–Karasev (St Petersburg 1994).

In the event of 16 ♗g3?! e5! 17 dxe5 ♖fd8+ or 17 ♗xe5 ♖xe5 18 dxe5 ♖fd8+ White's rooks remain separated, and his king feels uncomfortable. So as not to concede the initiative, White should probably not win a pawn, but, on the contrary, sacrifice one by 17 f3! exd4 18 e4, but after 18...♗e6 the position remains unclear.

Vadim Zviagintsev played much more strongly.

16 g4!! ♗e4

If 16...♗e6 or 16...♗d7, then 17 ♗g3, and the two bishops ensure White an enduring advantage. No better is 16...♖xe5 17 gxf5 ♖c6 18 fxe4 hxg6 (18...fxg6 19 f4) 19 ♖ab1 (19 h4?! e5!) 19...♖ab8 20 ♖hc1.

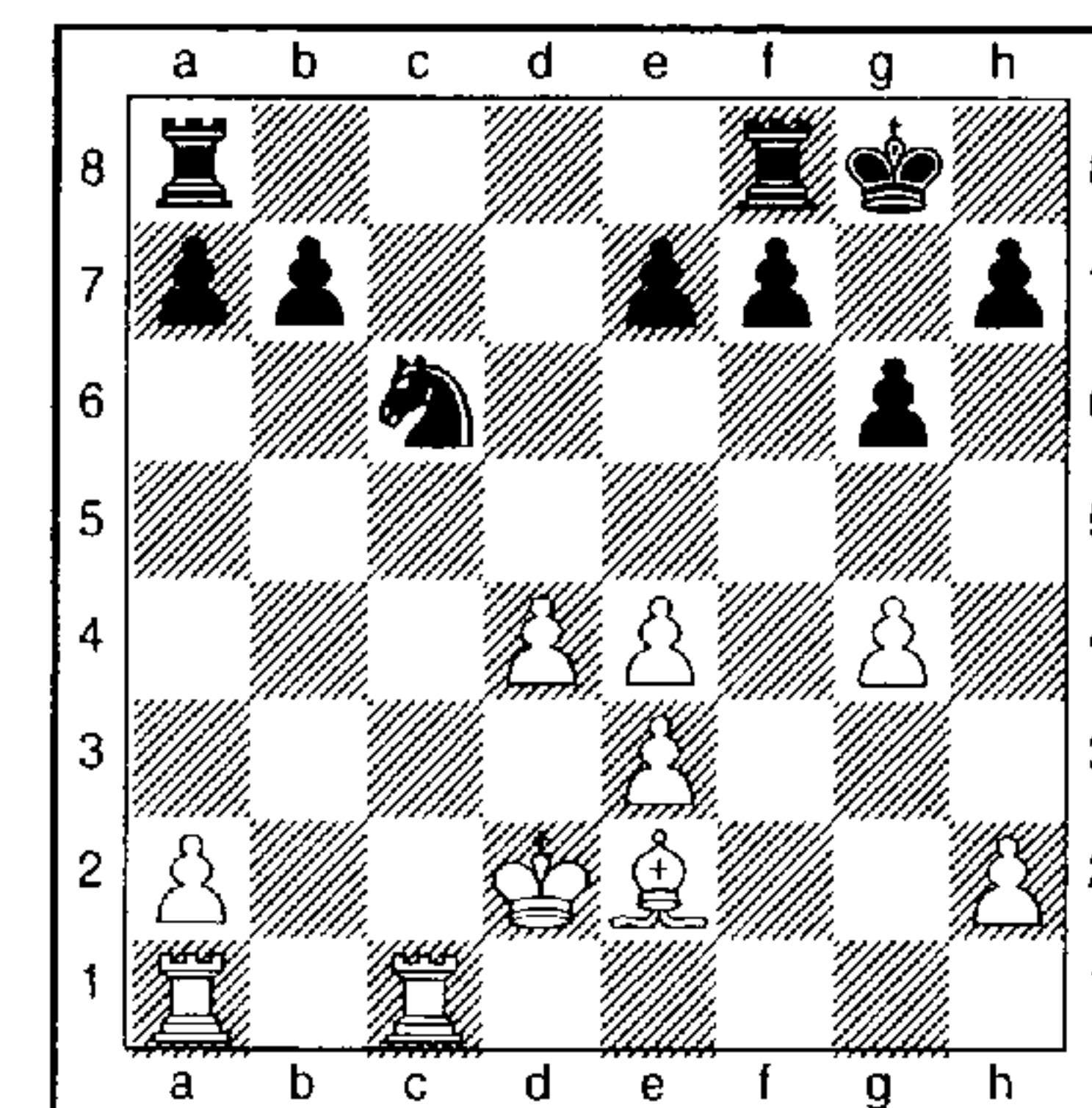
17 f3 ♖xe5

17...♗d5 18 ♗g3.

18 fxe4 ♖c6

19 ♖hc1

266



The knight has no strong points and is

markedly weaker than the bishop. Black faces a difficult defence.

19 ... ♖fc8?!

19...♖fd8 is better, hindering White's important advance e4–e5.

20 e5 ♖c7

21 ♖c5 ♖d8

22 ♖ac1 ♖cd7

23 ♗f3 ♖b4

24 a3

24 ♖b5! was stronger.

24 ... ♖a6

As Tarrasch said: 'Der Springer am Rande ist immer die Schande' (A knight on the rim is grim). But after 24...♖d5 25 ♗xd5 ♖xd5 26 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 27 ♖c7 e6 28 ♖xb7 ♖a5 29 ♖b3 the rook ending with an extra pawn is most probably won.

25 ♖a5!

There is nothing that Black can move, and his position is completely hopeless.

25 ... e6

26 ♖b1 ♖g7

27 ♖xb7 ♖xb7

28 ♗xb7 ♖b8

29 ♖d3

Of course, not 29 ♖xa7? ♖d7.

29 ... ♖d7

30 ♗g2 ♖c7

31 ♖c5??

Practically any move was good (31 g5; 31 e4; 31 ♖a4), only not the move in the game, with which at the last moment White throws away a seemingly guaranteed win.

31 ... ♖xc5

32 dxc5 ♖f8??

The opponent overlooks his good fortune. After 32...♖a6! 33 ♖c4 ♖c7 34 c6 ♖f8 35 ♖c5 ♖e7 the fortress constructed by Black is impossible to destroy.

33 ♗b7

Black resigns.



E 7-10. Dvoretsky–Arkhipov (Moscow Team Championship 1978).

Black is threatening not only 28...♖e3+, but also 28...♖e5, after which it will be not easy for White to defend his queenside pawns. For example, 28 ♖f1?! ♖e5! or 28 ♖d3?! ♖e5! 29 ♖c3 ♖xc3 30 bxc3 ♖e7!? with advantage to Black (but not 30...♖f6 31 ♖f1+! ♖e6 32 ♖b1).

The queen must be deprived of the central e5 square.

28 ♖d5!

Draw. Black has to reckon with 29 ♖f1 and 29 ♖xb7. If 28...♖e5 there follows 29 ♖xe5+ ♖xe5 30 ♖c1 ♖e2 31 b4.

E 7-11. Polugayevsky–Korchnoi (Candidates Semi-Final Match, 2nd Game, Evian 1977).

White's position is highly unpleasant. 35...♖e2 is threatened. In the game there followed 35 ♖c3 ♖c1 36 ♖d2 ♖c2 37 a4 f4 38 h3 f3+ 39 ♖f1 h5 40 hxg4 hxg4 41 ♖e1 (the sealed move). White resigned without resuming, since after 41...♖b2 there is nothing he can move, and Black simply brings up his king.

Lev Polugayevsky's only saving chance was the exchange of one of the opponent's active pieces.

35 ♖e3! ♖xe3

If 35...♖b1 there follows 36 ♖e5.

36 fxe3 ♖e7

37 h3 h5

38 ♖c3

It would appear that Black does not have a win.

E 7-12. Alburdt–Dvoretsky (Kiev 1976).

28...♖g6, with the threats of 29...♖xg4 and 29...h5, looks tempting. In the event of 29 h5 (an attempt to parry the second threat) 29...♖g8 the h-pawn becomes vulnerable, which tells in the variation 30 ♖xd4 ♖xg4!

31 ♖c3 ♖xh5+. Therefore White plays 29 ♖xd4, and now he no longer has to fear 29...♖xg4. If 29...cxd4, then 30 ♖xd4? h5 31 ♖d5 loses to 31...♖xg4+! 32 fxg4 ♖e4+. However, there follows 30 h5 ♖d6 31 ♖g3 followed by 32 ♖f4, and Black's advantage would appear to be merely symbolic.

Much more dangerous for the opponent is the switching of the bishop to the a8–h1 diagonal, with the aim of pressing on the weak f3 pawn.

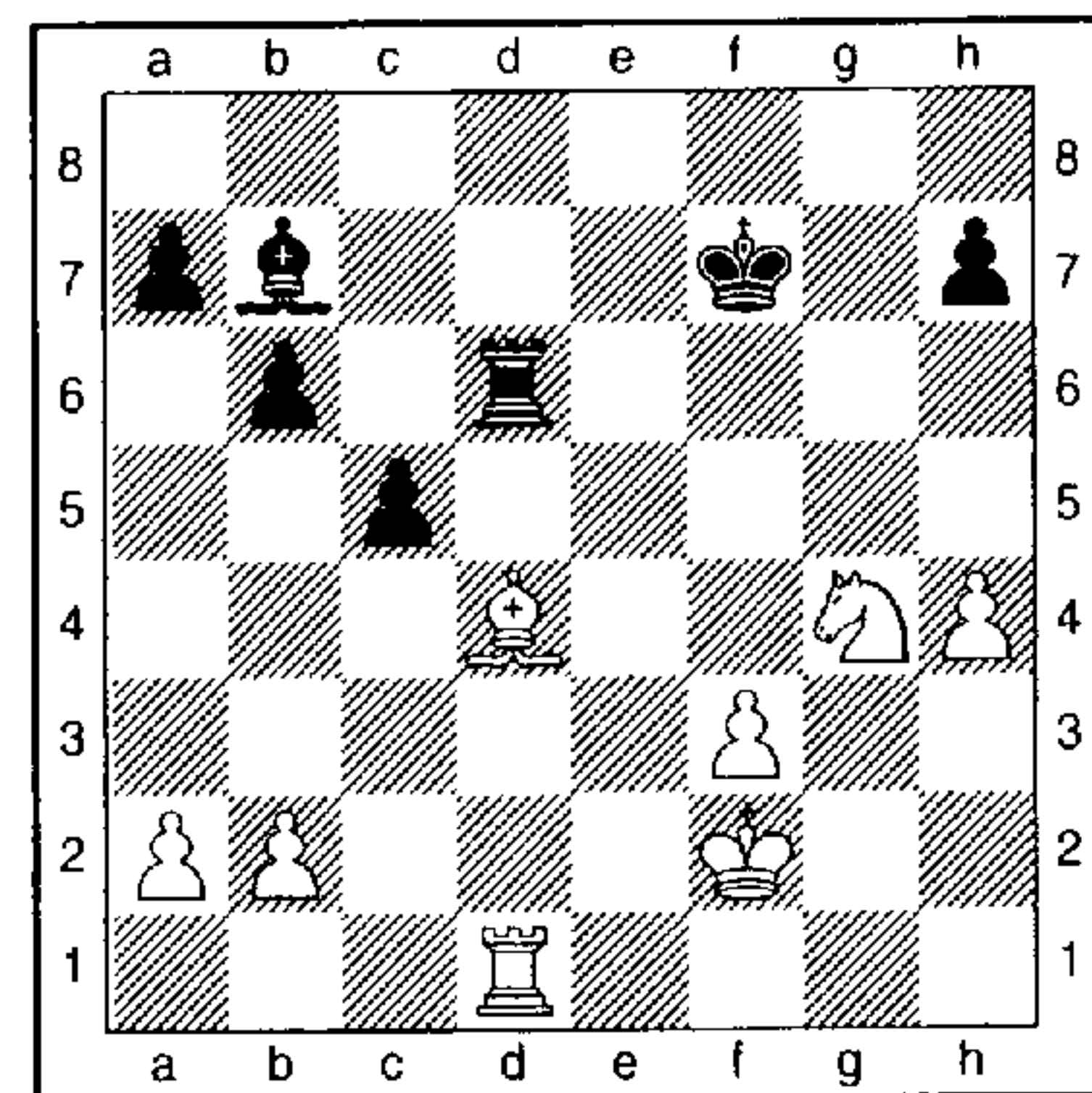
28 ... ♖c8!

29 ♖f2 ♖b7

30 ♖xd4?

This exchange aggravates White's difficulties – his remaining knight will be much weaker than the enemy bishop. In addition, the hope disappears of exploiting the drawing tendencies of opposite-colour bishops.

267

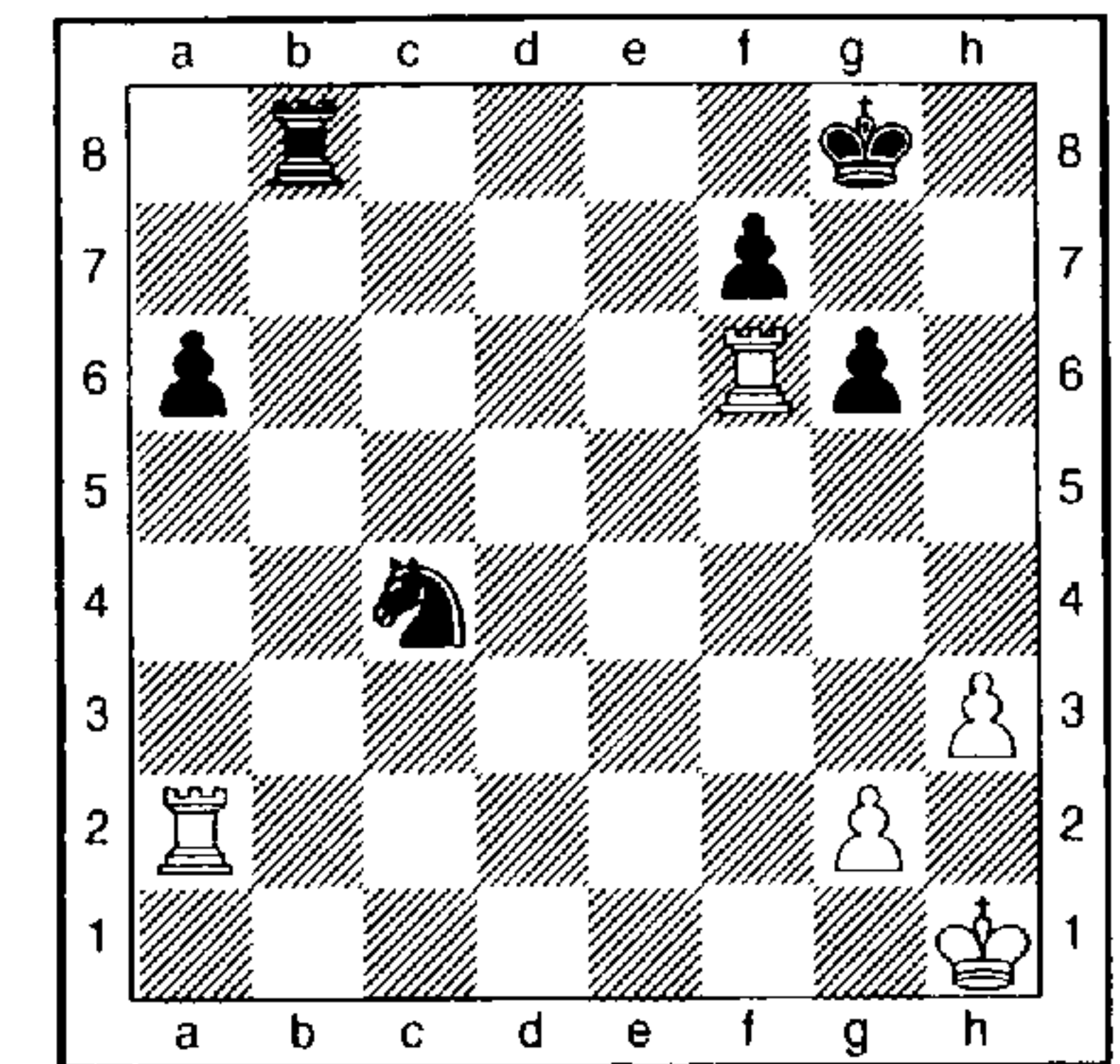


An additional little exercise: with what should Black capture on d4?

Usually rook and bishop coordinate better than rook and knight, so that, in principle, it was logical to play 30...cxd4. Unfortunately, there is the unpleasant reply 31 ♖c1!, after which there is no convenient way of suppressing the activity of the white rook. This means that Black has to agree to the exchange of rooks, which in itself is not



268



at all bad, since his king immediately comes into play.

30 ... ♖xd4!

Now it is hard to offer White any good advice. Subsequently I successfully converted my positional advantage.

31 ♖d3 ♖e6 32 ♖e3+ ♖d6 33 h5 ♖d2+ 34 ♖g3. A desperate attempt to create counterplay. 34 ♖e2 ♖xe2+ 35 ♖xe2 ♖e6 and 36...♖f5 is hopeless for White.

34...♖c8! 35 ♖e5?! 35 ♖f6 ♖f5 36 ♖f4 was slightly more tenacious, but here too after 36...♖b1 White stands badly.

35...♖e6 36 f4 ♖xb2 37 f5 ♖xa2 38 ♖f4 ♖f2+ 39 ♖g5 ♖b1 40 ♖f7+ ♖d5 41 ♖h6 ♖e4 42 f6 ♖d4 43 ♖e1 c4 44 ♖d1+ ♖c5 45 f7 c3 46 ♖e1 c2 47 ♖h4 b5. White resigns.

E 7-13. Dolmatov–Ftacnik (Moscow 1985). White must choose what position to go in for. Dolmatov accurately solves this problem.

28 ♖xa4!

In reply to 28 ♖xf6?! White has to reckon with both 28...♖xb2 29 ♖xa4 ♖e3, and 28...♖xb2 29 ♖xa6 ♖b3.

28 ... ♖xb2

28...♖e3 29 ♖f3 is pointless.

29 ♖a2!!

Not 29 ♖xa6? f5 30 ♖b1 ♖b4. By retaining all three pawns on the kingside, Black has the right to hope for a draw. It is important for White to eliminate the f6 pawn – the a-pawn that remains on the board does not present any danger and will sooner or later be lost.

29 ... ♖c4

30 ♖b1 was threatened, so that the opponent has no time for 29...f5. In the event of 29...♖b6 30 ♖b1 ♖c4 31 ♖xb6 ♖xb6 32 ♖xa6 ♖d5 33 ♖d6 the f6 pawn is lost, and a won ending for White is reached.

30 ♖xf6

Black can still put up a lengthy resistance, but after the loss of the f6 pawn his position is objectively very difficult.

At one time Alexander Alekhine played several endings with the material 'two rooks against rook and knight'. Here is how he summed up the experience he gained:

'In each case the winning procedure had the same characteristics:

- 1) restriction of the knight by binding and, eventually, pinning it;
- 2) gradual undermining of the strong points, which, as a rule, happen to be in the middle;
- 3) threats to exchange rooks, which always means a step forward – especially if the knight-party does not possess passed pawns.

Other tactics, such as centralisation of the king, freeing of pawns etc., are, of course, common with those of all types of end-games.'

It is clear that these 'instructions' cannot be used automatically, point by point – not everything in them is applicable to the given position. Even so, a knowledge of Alekhine's theory significantly facilitates our understanding of the subsequent play.

30...a5 31 ♖h2 ♖b5 32 ♖a6 ♖g7 33 ♖f2



♠e5 34 ♖f4 ♖c5 (defending against 35 ♖a4) 35 ♖a7 ♖g8 36 ♖f2 (now White is threatening 37 ♖a2 ♖c4 38 ♖c2 or 37...♖c6 38 ♖c7) 36...♖d5 37 ♖a2 ♖c4 38 ♖c2 ♠e5 39 ♖ac7! The threat of exchanging rooks enables White to overcome the first line of defence – to win, finally, the a5 pawn.

39...♠d7 40 ♖c8+ ♖g7 41 ♖d8! ♖f6 42 ♖a2 g5? This pawn move weakens Black's position and makes things easier for his opponent. 42...♖g7 43 ♖a8 ♖d6 was more tenacious.

43 ♖a8 ♖g6 44 ♖2xa5 ♖xa5 (if the rook moves, then 45 ♖g8+ is decisive) 45 ♖xa5 f6 46 ♖g3 ♠e5 47 ♖f2 ♠d3+ 48 ♖e2 ♠f4+ 49 ♖f3 ♠e6 50 ♖e4 ♠f4 51 ♖a2 ♠e6 52 ♖d2 ♠f4 53 ♖c2 ♠e6 54 ♖d2 ♠f4 55 ♖f2! ♠e6 56 ♖f3 ♠g7 57 g4 ♠e6 58 ♖c3 ♖g7 (58...♠f4 59 h4) 59 ♖c6 ♠f4 60 ♖f5 ♠d5 61 ♖d6 ♠e3+ 62 ♖e6 ♠g2 63 ♖d2 ♠e3 64 ♖f2. Black resigns.

E 7-14. M.Gurevich–Andersson (Leningrad 1987).

Completely bad is 111...♠e6? 112 ♖g4 with the irresistible threat of 113 ♖h5 mate. In the game there followed 111...♠h7? 112 ♖g4! (threatening 113 ♖c8+) 112...♖c2 (112...♖b7 113 ♠g6+ ♠g8 114 ♖e6+ ♖f7 115 ♠e7+ ♠f8 116 ♖xf7+ ♠xf7 117 g6+) 113 ♖f3!, and Black resigned, since after 113...♖a2 114 ♠h5 or 113...♖c4+ 114 ♠h5 ♖a2 115 h4 he ends up in zugzwang – any move by the queen leads to loss of control of either the a8 square, or the a2–g8 diagonal. On the basis of these variations, Mikhail Gurevich, annotating the game in 'Informator', judged Black's position to be lost. In fact this is not so. A pretty way to draw was found by Alexander Khalifman.

111 ... ♠h7!!

112 ♖xf8

Black wanted to exchange knights by 112...♠g6+. 112 ♖f5+ g6 113 ♖xf8 ♖xh3+ leads to stalemate, while after 112 ♖e4+ g6 the position is drawish.

112 ... ♖c4+
113 ♠g3 ♖d3+!

White is forced to block the check with his queen, after which it will not be difficult to win back the knight. But this must be done in the most accurate way, otherwise the black king will end up in a mating net. For example, Black loses after 113...♖c3+ 114 ♖f3 ♖e5+? (114...♖e1+! 115 ♠g4 ♖b4+!) 115 ♠g4 ♖xe7 in view of 116 g6+! ♠g8 117 ♖a8+ ♖f8 118 ♖d5+ ♠h8 119 ♖h5+.

114 ♖f3

More cunning than 114 ♠g4 ♖e4+ 115 ♖f4 ♖xe7.

114 ... ♖d6+
115 ♠g4 ♖b4+!!

Interposing this check is the whole point! The immediate capture of the knight would have led after 116 g6+! to the already familiar mate. But now White is forced to move either his king or his queen from the best square, and the mating construction collapses. For example, 116 ♠h5 ♖xe7 117 g6+ ♠g8 118 ♖a8+ ♖f8 119 ♖d5+ ♠h8, and the h5 square is inaccessible to the queen.

116 ♖f4 ♖xe7
117 g6+ ♠g8

There is no longer a forced mate, and Black has every right to count on a draw.

Unfortunately, the study composed by Khalifman has a secondary solution (it was pointed out by Sergey Dolmatov). 111...♠d7!? 112 ♖g4 ♖d3 113 g6 (113 ♖e6 ♖d4+ 114 ♠h5 ♖d1+ 115 ♠g6?? ♠f8+) 113...♖b5 is perfectly possible.



Index of Exercises by Thinking Skills and Types of Problems to be Solved

This thematic index will help you to choose appropriate exercises for training in the field that interests you. Many exercises can be used for various aims and therefore they appear simultaneously in several sections of the index.

Imagination, combinative vision

Questions: 6-10, 6-12, 6-33, 6-34, 6-58, 6-64, 7-6, 7-27, 7-28, 7-30, 7-38
Exercises: 7-3, 7-6, 7-7, 7-8

Taking account of the opponent's resources

Questions: 6-27, 6-56, 6-62, 6-71, 6-72, 6-74, 7-3, 7-14, 7-20, 7-25
Exercises: 6-13

Deep or multi-variational analysis

Questions: 6-7, 6-16, 6-61, 6-64, 6-65, 6-70, 7-4, 7-7, 7-12, 7-20, 7-30, 7-38, 7-39, 7-41
Exercises: 6-25, 7-2, 7-14

Candidate moves

Questions: 6-4, 6-15, 6-16, 6-17, 6-30, 6-37, 6-51, 6-52, 6-57, 6-61, 6-63, 6-69, 6-70, 6-76, 7-7, 7-11, 7-12, 7-32, 7-33, 7-37
Exercises: 6-24, 6-31, 6-32, 6-33, 6-34, 6-35, 6-44, 7-6, 7-13

Comparison

Questions: 6-56, 7-24
Exercises: 6-12, 6-34

Initiative

Questions: 6-5, 6-13, 6-17, 6-46, 6-62, 6-64, 6-67, 6-68, 7-35, 7-38
Exercises: 6-3, 6-27, 6-29, 6-30, 6-31

Attack on the king

Questions: 6-32, 6-33, 6-34, 6-36, 6-63, 7-3
Exercises: 6-8, 6-14, 6-15, 6-47

Defence

Questions: 6-9, 6-16, 6-27, 7-10, 7-16, 7-18, 7-21, 7-24, 7-26, 7-31, 7-33, 7-35, 7-36, 7-38, 7-39, 7-42
Exercises: 6-3, 6-7, 6-21, 6-39, 6-45, 7-11, 7-14

Arrangement of the pieces, manoeuvres, regrouping

Questions: 6-9, 6-16, 6-27, 7-10, 7-16, 7-18, 7-21, 7-24, 7-26, 7-31, 7-33, 7-35, 7-36, 7-38, 7-39, 7-42
Exercises: 6-5, 6-6, 6-7, 6-14, 6-15, 6-16, 6-17, 6-20, 6-22, 6-23, 6-26, 6-38, 7-10, 7-12

Play with the pawns, pawn structure

Questions: 6-2, 6-3, 6-5, 6-7, 6-11, 6-13, 6-38, 6-39, 6-41, 6-44, 6-48, 6-50, 6-53, 6-54, 6-59, 6-67, 6-68, 6-75, 7-3, 7-17, 7-19, 7-26, 7-34, 7-42
Exercises: 6-2, 6-3, 6-4, 6-28, 6-40, 7-1, 7-4, 7-5, 7-9

Exchanges

Questions: 6-4, 6-11, 6-15, 6-17, 6-18, 6-20, 6-21, 6-22, 6-23, 6-24, 6-36, 6-40, 6-42, 6-52, 6-56, 6-62, 6-75, 7-1, 7-5, 7-9, 7-14, 7-25, 7-41
Exercises: 6-1, 6-9, 6-10, 6-11, 6-12, 6-13, 6-31, 6-36, 6-37, 6-44, 6-46, 7-11

Positional sacrifices

Questions: 6-7, 6-19, 6-62, 6-76, 7-31, 7-39
Exercises: 6-8, 6-41, 6-43, 6-45, 7-1



Transformation of the position

Questions: 6-3, 6-7, 6-9, 6-50, 6-76, 7-1, 7-4, 7-5, 7-12, 7-20, 7-38

Exercises: 6-4, 6-9, 6-28, 6-40, 6-43, 7-9, 7-13

Prophylaxis

Questions: 6-2, 6-19, 6-24, 6-25, 6-29, 6-33, 6-38, 6-39, 6-42, 6-43, 6-44, 6-45, 6-46, 6-50, 6-53, 6-56, 6-57, 6-59, 6-60, 6-74, 7-5, 7-8, 7-10, 7-15, 7-17, 7-19, 7-23, 7-32, 7-34, 7-36

Exercises: 6-1, 6-18, 6-19, 6-20, 6-21, 6-26, 6-28, 6-39, 6-42, 6-47, 7-1, 7-4, 7-5, 7-10

Strategic thinking, planning

Questions: 6-1, 6-6, 6-26, 6-28, 6-29, 6-31, 6-54, 6-66, 6-73, 7-10, 7-22

Exercises: 6-22, 6-23, 6-24, 6-25, 6-26, 6-27

The technique of converting an advantage

Questions: 6-11, 6-52, 6-69, 6-70, 6-71, 6-72, 6-76, 7-1, 7-4, 7-5, 7-6, 7-7, 7-11, 7-12, 7-13, 7-14, 7-15, 7-17, 7-25, 7-28, 7-37, 7-41

Exercises: 6-18, 6-19, 6-24, 6-32, 6-33, 6-34, 6-35, 6-44, 7-1, 7-4, 7-5, 7-13

Index of Players

(numbers refer to pages)

Abramson 219	Ehlvest 47
Adams 115	Eingorn 118, 210
Ageichenko 215	Espig 218
Akopian 36	Euwe 109
Alburt 174, 226	
Alekhine 90, 92, 109	Farago 211
Alexandria 166	Filipowicz 69
Andersson 214, 228	Franzen 181
Andrianov 47, 201, 209, 212	Ftacnik 227
Arkipov 226	
Asztalos 92	Gabdrakhamov 178
	Gavrikov 203
Bellon 198	Gedevanishvili 120
Belyavsky 78, 186, 198	Georgadze 126
Bologan 215	Gheorghiu 102
Bondarevsky 207	Gik 69
Botvinnik 83, 207	Gindin 202
Bronstein 56, 82, 201	Grigorian, L. 40
Browne 102	Gufeld 213
Bykov 62	Gulko 210
	Gunsberg 206
Campora 217	Gurevich, M. 228
Carvajal 198	
Chechelian 203	Hansen, C. 176
Chernin 201, 202, 203, 216	Hazai 112, 217
Chiburdanidze 166	Henley 198
	Hernandez 72
Damljanovic 123	Hort 151
Davcevski 30	
Djindjhashvili 56	Inkiov 215
Dolmatov 19, 21, 46, 58, 72, 78, 79, 115, 118, 126, 196, 204, 205, 208, 210, 211, 214, 215, 218, 223, 227	Ivanov, K. 175
Dvoiris 202	
Dvoretzky 9, 23, 38, 42, 52, 62, 63, 66, 69, 82, 83, 85, 86, 120, 143, 147, 157, 174, 175, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 203, 204, 206, 210, 215, 216, 218, 222, 223, 224, 226	Kaidanov 216
	Karasev 225
	Karolyi 58
	Karpov 144, 220
	Kavalek 220
	Keres 149
	Khalifman 214

Kharitonov 21
 Kholmov 23
 Klovans 52, 2
 Korchnoi 186, 226
 Korelov 204
 Kotov 200
 Kozlov 206
 Kozlovskaya 198
 Kuenitz 223
 Kupreichik 25, 40, 196
 Kurajica 66

 Langeweg 211
 Lazarichev 199
 Lerner 21, 197
 Levenfish 200
 Lipnowski 55
 Lputian 218

 Makarychev 42
 Mateu 209
 Miles 56, 153
 Mochalov 79
 Mukhin 215
 Muravyev 197

 Nesis 181
 Nikitin 38
 Novikov 204
 Nunn 214

 Orekhov 36

 Pasma 208
 Petrosian 56, 86
 Petursson 10
 Podgaets 204
 Polovodin 54
 Polugayevsky 143, 226
 Pomar 144
 Portisch 179
 Psakhis 205

 Raetsky 215
 Rajna 123

 Richter 149
 Ristic 153
 Rodriguez, Am. 164
 Romanovsky 218

 Sanakoev 107
 Sax 164
 Schmid 103
 Seirawan 169
 Shmulenson 107
 Shpilker 203
 Simagin 219
 Skvortsov 223
 Smyslov 103
 Sokolov 23
 Stean 151
 Stefansson 215
 Steinitz 206
 Suetin 23, 223

 Taborov 204
 Taeger 222
 Timman 130, 179
 Timoshchenko 9
 Tseshkovsky 147, 213

 Ubilava 157
 Uhlmann 112

 Van der Wiel 97, 169, 223
 Vasyukov 85
 Veselovsky 196
 Vilner 218
 Vukic 30
 Vyzhmanavin 224

 Yusupov 10, 19, 25, 55, 97, 130, 176, 178,
 215, 216, 224

 Zavyalov 63
 Znosko-Borovsky 90
 Zviagintsev 225