



## COLUMNISTS

*The Kibitzer*

Tim Harding

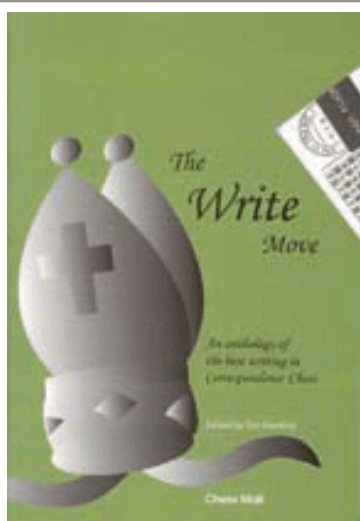
## Chess in the Year 1907

As usual, my January column presents a review of chess a century ago. The year 1907 saw the rise of a new generation of masters including Capablanca and Rubinstein, but the major tournaments of the year were all held in Europe. The principal chess event in America, Dr. Emanuel Lasker's defence of the world title against Frank Marshall, proved anti-climactic as the American champion failed to mount sustained resistance, let alone a serious challenge.

The Lasker-Marshall match was played between 26 January and 6 April, but there were only fifteen games. The requirement was to win eight games and Lasker took the first three. Thereafter, Marshall twice managed to draw three games in a row, but he never looked like winning even one game. Summing up in *The Field* on 27 April, Leopold Hoffer wrote that Marshall was not of the same calibre as his opponent, and the contest cannot be regarded as a world championship match "for any other except advertising purposes."



Emanuel Lasker



*The Write Move*  
by Tim Harding

At the start, however, it was regarded as a serious match. Marshall had defeated Lasker at their first meeting, in Paris 1900, and then he won the Cambridge Springs 1904 tournament ahead of Lasker, their individual game being a draw. So the American appeared to be a credible challenger, but match play against a single opponent is very different from a tournament. Dr. Siegbert Tarrasch, expecting to be Lasker's next challenger, prepared a book on the match, analysing the games and no doubt hoping to derive some ideas therefrom about how to beat Lasker. In the 1930s, William F. Streeter translated parts of Tarrasch's analyses and the condensed version of that booklet was published by Chess Digest in 1972. The following year Tarrasch did play Lasker and was also defeated, although not without putting up a bit of a fight.

Marshall employed the Ruy Lopez in game one, but lost. In the rest of the match he opened 1 d4. With black he played the French Defence throughout, scoring four draws and three losses. He used the MacCutcheon variation (3 Nc3 Nf6 4 Bg5 Bb4) when allowed, but this can hardly have surprised the world champion, as Lasker had played a two-game thematic correspondence match with J. L. MacCutcheon himself. In some games, Lasker avoided the line and played the unusual 4 Bd3.



Frank Marshall

Statistics are misleading, however. Marshall could have won some of the games, especially the seventh, where he had a winning endgame, and in game eight Marshall missed a strong attacking chance with 17...Bd5. Lasker was greatly superior to his opponent in the endgame, but Marshall also made serious tactical mistakes. In game twelve, where Marshall rapidly obtained a bad position with Black, his nineteenth move set a crude one-move trap that was simply refuted, leaving Lasker a piece ahead, but Marshall played on to

move 46. Then Marshall threw away a piece at move eleven of the fourteenth game with a suicidal unsound piece sacrifice, apparently because of a simple miscalculation that an 1800-rated player wouldn't make.

***Frank Marshall – Dr. Emanuel Lasker***

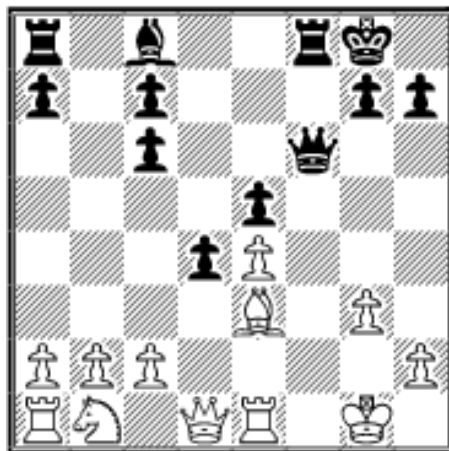
First match game, New York, 26.01.1907

Spanish [C65]

**1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 Nf6 4 d4 exd4 5 0–0 Be7 6 e5 Ne4 7 Nxd4 0–0 8 Nf5 d5 9 Bxc6 bxc6 10 Nxe7+ Qxe7 11 Re1 Qh4 12 Be3 f6 13 f3 fxe5! 14 fxe4 d4 15 g3**

Tarrasch believed that 15 Qe2 dxe3 16 Qxe3 was correct; he wrote that White stood much better although that is not clear. In his recent book [Why Lasker Matters](#), GM Soltis gives 15 Qd2, which comes to the same thing.

**15...Qf6!**



Tarrasch wrongly thought that Black missed a win by 15...Qh3, but Soltis (and others) show that 16 Qd2 (once more) holds.

The fatal moment. After 16 Bd2 Qf2+ 17 Kh1 Bh3 18 Rg1 Bf1! (threatening Be2 and Bf3) 19 Be1 Qe3 20 Nd2 Be2 21 Qc1 Bf3+ 22 Nxf3 Qxf3+ 23 Rg2 Qf1+ is perpetual check, but this probably looked too risky to Marshall. Alternatively, Réti preferred 18...h5 (claiming Black wins), but then White has 19 Na3 Bg4 20 Rf1!, although Soltis reckons he found a drawing line for Black with 20...Bxd1 21 Rxf2 Rxf2 22 Rxd1 Re2 23 Ba5 Rf8 24 Bxc7 Rff2.

**16 Bxd4?!**

Whatever Marshall thought was happening on 16 Bd2, he totally misjudged the coming endgame after this move, although objectively it should not lose.

**16...exd4 17 Rf1 Qxf1+ 18 Qxf1 Rxf1+ 19 Kxf1 Rb8!**

Lasker's rook manoeuvre (moves 19-21) has rightly been much admired, but may have led to an overestimation of his position at the end of it.

**20 b3 Rb5! 21 c4?**

According to Kasparov, 21 Nd2! would save White, e.g. 21...Rc5 22 Rc1 Ba6+ 23 Kf2 (23 Ke1? Rc3!) 23...Bd3 (23...Rc3 24 Nb1!) 24 Nf3 Rxc2+ 25 Rxc2 Bxc2 26 Nxd4 Bxe4 27 Ne6 Bb1 28 a3 Ba2 29 Nc5 etc. Soltis gives 21...Rh5.

**21...Rh5! 22 Kg1 c5 23 Nd2 Kf7 24 Rf1+**

Soltis gives this check a question mark, though he doesn't show a clear improvement for White. After 24 a3 a5 (else b2-b4) 25 Rb1 Bg4, Black can still play for a win.

**24...Ke7 25 a3**

Kasparov thinks this is the wrong time to get active.

**25...Rh6! 26 h4**

Soltis suggests 26 Ra1 a5 27 h4.

**26...Ra6 27 Ra1 Bg4! 28 Kf2 Ke6 29 a4 Ke5**



**30 Kg2 Rf6 31 Re1 d3 32 Rf1 Kd4 33 Rxf6 gxf6 34 Kf2 c6 35 a5 a6**  
(Zugzwang!) **36 Nb1 Kxe4 37 Ke1 Be2 38 Nd2+ Ke3 39 Nb1 f5 40 Nd2 h5 41 Nb1 Kf3 42 Nc3 Kxg3 43 Na4 f4 44 Nxc5 f3 45 Ne4+ Kf4 46 Nd6 c5 47 b4 cxb4 48 c5 b3 49 Nc4 Kg3 0-1**

A few other events are worth a brief mention. Early in 1907, Mieses won a small international tournament at the Vienna Chess Club (10-26 January). A

curiosity was the New York State annual six-day event, which this year was played on a river steamer to Quebec and back. A publishing highlight was Mrs. W. J. Baird's problem collection book *The Twentieth Century Retractor*, a fine piece of chess printing. Retractor problems, in which she specialised, involved an element of retro-analysis: take back a move and then find a mating continuation. If there had been FIDE titles for composition in her day, Mrs. Baird (nee Edith Winter Wood, 1859-1924) would have been a grandmaster.

In February, the Great Britain vs. United States cable match for the Newnes Trophy was revived after a three-year interval. The American team won. One of the games in which they were successful was played "over-the-board" in London, Howell then being resident in England. This famous miniature was

published around the world.

**Clarence S. Howell – Reginald P. Michell**

ENG-USA cable match, London 1907

Italian Game [C54]

**1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 c3 Nf6 5 d4 exd4 6 cxd4 Bb4+ 7 Nc3 Nxe4  
8 0–0 Bxc3 9 d5 Bf6**

9...Na5 “seems the proper reply” – *Illustrated London News* of 9 March 1907, but 9...Bf6 is right! After 9...Na5 10 bxc3, White has a huge plus score, e.g. 11...Nxc4 11 Qd4 Ncd6 12 Qxg7.

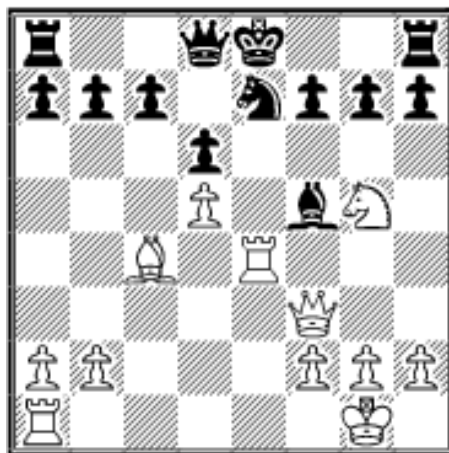
**10 Re1 Ne7 11 Rxe4 d6**

11...0–0 was recommended in the *ILN*.

**12 Bg5 Bxg5 13 Nxc3 Bf5?**

Black should play 13...h6!.

**14 Qf3!**



**14...Qd7**

It is perhaps surprising that Michell did not know the game W. Cohn-L. Forgács, Barmen-B 1905. Forgács decided to give up two pieces for the rook by 14...0–0 15 Rxe7 Qxe7 16 Qxf5, but White won fairly quickly.

In the 10<sup>th</sup> Correspondence Olympiad, O. Kallinger won a game against G.

Mishnaevsky of Israel in which Black played 14...Bxe4 15 Qxf7+ Kd7 16 Qe6+ Ke8 and offered a draw, evidently believing that White had only perpetual check! That game continued 17 Qxe4 Qd7 (17...h6 18 Bb5+) 18 Re1 Kf8 19 Bb5 c6 20 dxc6 bxc6 21 Bd3 (threat Qf3+) 21...Nd5 22 Qf3+ Nf6 (22...Kg8 23 Bf5 and Be6#) 23 Bc4 d5 (23...Re8? 24 Ne6+ Rxe6 25 Bxe6 Qc7 26 g4 h6 27 h4) 24 Qa3+ Kg8 25 Re7 Qg4 (25...Re8 26 Rxd7 Re1+ 27 Bf1 Nxd7 28 Qd6!) 26 Qd6!! Rf8 (26...dxc4 27 f3! Qc8 28 Ne6 Nh5 29 Qe5+-; or 26...Ne8 27 Bxd5+; or 26...Ne4 27 Bxd5+) 27 h3 Qc8 28 Ba6 Qf5 29 Bd3 Qc8 30 Rc7 1–0.

**15 Bb5! Qxb5**

If 15...c6 16 dxc6 bxc6 17 Bxc6 Qxc6 18 Rxe7+.

**16 Qxf5 f6 17 Rae1 fxg5 18 Rxe7+ Kd8 19 Qxg5 Kc8 20 Qg4+ Kd8 21 a4!  
1-0**

On 23 March, the seventh in the cable match series between British and American university students was drawn 3-3. Capablanca, then at Columbia, was on top board, but was lucky to draw with his opponent, H. J. Rose of Oxford.

***José Raúl Capablanca – Herbert Jennings Rose***

USA-ENG University cable match, 1907

Ruy Lopez [C63]

**1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 f5!?**

Unusual for those days.

**4 d3 Nf6 5 0-0 fxe4 6 dxe4 d6 7 Nc3 Be7 8 h3 0-0 9 Ng5**

Hoffer, in *The Field*, suggested 9 Bc4+, followed by h3 to secure a retreat for this useful bishop.

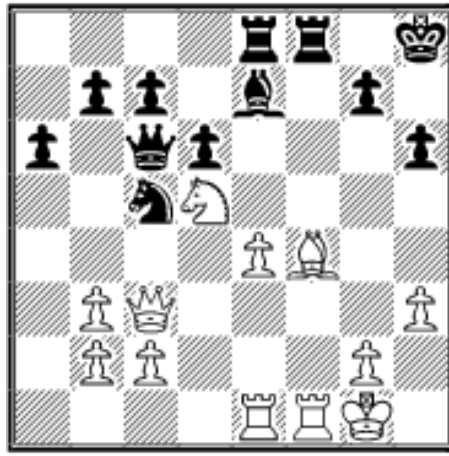
**9...Qe8 10 f4**

Hoffer thought he could still have played Bc4+, followed by h3.

**10...h6 11 Bc4+ Kh8 12 Ne6 Bxe6 13 Bxe6 Nd4 14 Bb3 Nxb3 15 axb3 Qc6  
16 Qe2**

Hoffer rightly pointed out that “16 Qd3 could have been played at once. He lost a move with the queen later on.”

**16...exf4 17 Bxf4 a6 18 Rae1 Rae8 19 Qd3 Nd7 20 Nd5 Nc5 21 Qc3**



**21...Ne6**

Hoffer thought Black “could have ventured here on a less complicated variation with 21...Nxe4 22 Nxe7 Rxe7 &c., with a number of possibilities, without incurring any risk” – but what is wrong with 22 Qxc6 bxc6 23 Nxc7 winning a pawn?

**22 Qd2 Nxf4**

22...Bg5 simplifies and White’s e-pawn begins to look like a serious long-term weakness. The game continuation is not dissimilar.

**23 Nxf4 Qc5+ 24 Kh1 Bg5 25 Ng6+ Kg8 26 Qd3 Rxf1+ 27 Rxf1 Bf6 28 e5**

Capablanca decides to ditch his liability, but he has a losing position.

**28...dxe5 29 b4 Qc6**

Black avoids the trap 29...Qxb4?? 30 Qd5+ Kh7 31 Rxf6.

**30 Qb3+ Qe6 31 Qg3 Bg5 32 Nh4?**

Both players overlook the crushing reply to this.

**32...Bxh4?**

Capablanca would have had to resign in reply to 32...Qc4.

**33 Qxh4 e4 34 Re1 Qe7?!**

Hoffer observed that the passed pawn is stronger with the queen on the board.

**35 Qxe7 Rxe7 36 Kg1 Kf7 37 Kf2 Kf6 38 Ke3 Ke5 39 Rd1 h5 40 Rd4 Kf5 41 Rd5+ Kg6 42 Rd4 ½-½**

Black agreed a draw as there is no obvious way to make progress. If 42...h4, for example, White need not exchange into the king and pawn ending (is it drawn?) but could just wait.

Rose was less fortunate in the match played earlier in the week between Combined Universities and the House of Commons. The students won 4½-

1½, but Rose was beaten by Andrew Bonar Law, who was later to be Prime Minister of Britain. According to Hoffer's account in *The Field*, the politician had the better of the first two thirds of the game "but gave way in the latter part, and Mr. Rose should have won it but for an oversight in the ending."



Siegbert Tarrasch

The largest chess gathering of the year was the congress in Ostend, Belgium that ran for several weeks. Hoffer had a large part in the organisation, so the event was reported at great length in *The Field* for several weeks. The top section, restricted to first prize-winners in major tournaments, was originally intended to decide an official challenger for Lasker's title, but the world champion declined to be involved in that scheme. Eventually the championship event had only six players, who played each other four times, alongside which there was a large international tournament. Additionally, there were events for amateurs including a Ladies' International. In the champion group, Tarrasch came out on top with 12½/20 ahead of Schlechter 12, Marshall and Janowsky 11½, Burn 8 and Chigorin 4½. The great Russian was in the last months of his life and only came in as a late substitute for Maróczy who withdrew. The start was delayed while Chigorin hurried from Moscow; he only won a single game, but it was against the first prize winner.

The amateur international was in fact played before the master tournaments, starting at Easter; according to Hoffer, this was a late addition to the programme. The winner was The English-based German player George Schories ahead of Hector Shoosmith from London; both were invited to the master event following, but were outclassed in the company. Ossip Bernstein (a Russian lawyer born in 1882) won the massive event with 19½/28, tied with Akiva Rubinstein (also born 1882), while Mieses (who led until near the end) and Nimzovitch tied for third. Among the generation of young masters, the ageing Blackburne creditably managed +1 in this mammoth event.



Akiva Rubinstein

In the Ladies event, wrote Hoffer, “an earnestness and sportsmanlike spirit prevailed; the games were well contested and the result was watched with keen interest.” Nearly all the competitors were from the U. K. There was a surprise in round one when the London-based Irishwoman Miss Kate Finn, twice British Ladies Champion and the leading female player of the decade (in western Europe at least), had replaced Mrs. Anderson, probably at short notice, and she lost to Mrs. Curling (the former Miss Ellis), throwing the event wide open. After nine rounds, Mrs. Curling had 8 points with Miss Finn second on 6. Eventually they tied on 9/11 and were due to play off in England later (but this did not happen until April 1908, when Miss Finn won 2-0 with one draw). The second series of amateur events was not a success in terms of numbers or strength of entries, as Hoffer explained in the *1908 Yearbook of Chess*, partly because the dates did not suit people who wished to play in the British Chess Federation congress, held in London in August. It is noteworthy that the future Irish Champion J. J. O’Hanlon did play in the A Section, winning the following miniature.

***Griffiths – O’Hanlon***

Ostend amateur A, 1907

Scotch Game [C45]

*Illustrated London News* 24 August 1907

**1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 d4 exd4 4 Nxd4 Bc5 5 Be3 Qf6 6 c3 Nge7 7 Bc4 Ne5 8 Bb3**

8 Be2 is much better.

8...Qg6 9 0-0 d5



10 Nf5 dxe4 11 Ng3 Bg4 12 Qc2 Nf3+ 13 gxf3 Bxf3 14 Bxc5 Qg4 15 Nd2 Qh3 0-1

H. E. Atkins won the British Championship, held at the Crystal Palace in Norwood, south London, by steady play. There was some disappointment that the leading ladies from Ostend did not enter. Mrs. Herring retained her title, but only after a play-off with Mrs. Houlding.

In August-September, a very strong tournament was held at Carlsbad (Karlovy Vary) with only Lasker and Tarrasch of the top players absent. This was Chigorin's swansong and he could only manage 7½ points. After his good play early in the year, Mieses also failed, but here Rubinstein's rising star shone still brighter. He won with 15/20 after a long rivalry with Maróczy who flagged at the end and finished on 14½. They were followed by Leonhardt 13½, Nimzovitch and Schlechter 12½ etc.; Marshall scored only 50%. In October, Teichmann won a small master tournament in Berlin. *The Field* reported on 7 December that Rubinstein had declined an invitation to visit because of other engagements. In particular, he no doubt wished to contest the all-Russian tournament in Lodz, 1907/8, which brought him another first prize. At the end of the year Lasker was supposed to come to Europe on an exhibition tour, but was detained and did not make the trip until early 1908.

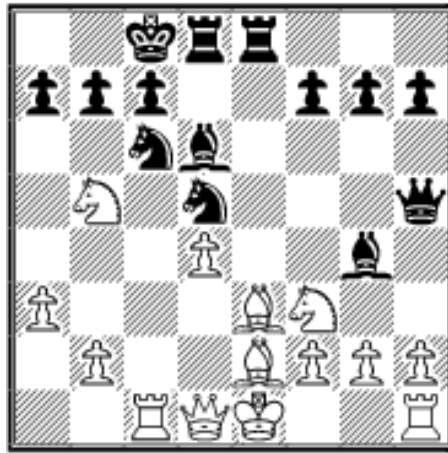
Here are some more miniature games from 1907, mostly taken from the *Illustrated London News*.

### ***Jacques Mieses – Taubenhaus***

Ostend masters, 1907

Center Game [C21]

1 e4 e5 2 d4 exd4 3 c3 d5 4 exd5 Qxd5 5 cxd4 Nc6 6 Nf3 Bg4 7 Be2 0-0-0  
8 Nc3 Qh5 9 Be3 Nf6 10 Rc1 Bd6 11 a3 Rhe8 12 Nb5 Nd5



**13 Rxc6 bxc6 14 Nxa7+ Kd7 15 Ne5+ 1-0**

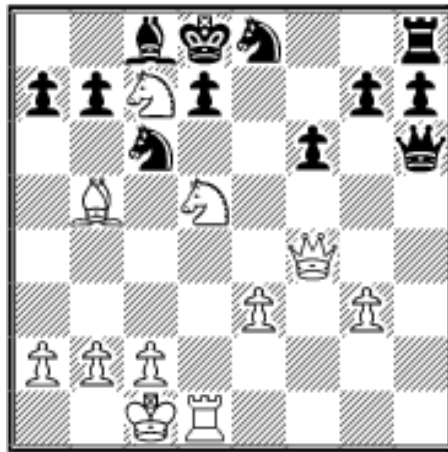
*Joseph Blackburne – Ward*

British ch, London, 1907

Scotch Game [C45]

**1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 d4 exd4 4 Nxd4 Bc5 5 Be3 Qf6 6 Nb5 Bxe3 7 fxe3 Qh4+ 8 g3 Qxe4 9 N1c3 Qxh1 10 Nxc7+ Kd8 11 Qd6 Nf6 12 Nxa8 Ne8 13 Qf4 f6 14**

**0-0-0 Ne5 15 Nd5 Qxh2 16 Bb5 Nc6 17 Nac7 Qh6**



**18 Ne6+ dxe6 19 Nb6+ Ke7 20 Nxc8+ Kf8 21 Qf3 Ne5 22 Qe4 Qg6 23 Qb4+ 1-0**

*W. E. Allnutt – E. G. Sergeant*

City of London Club ch, 1907

French Defence [C01]

*ILN 23/3/1907*

**1 e4 c5 2 c3 e6 3 d4 d5 4 Bd3 Nc6 5 Nf3 dxe4 6 Bxe4 Nf6 7 Bg5 Qb6 8 Bxf6 gxf6**

**9 0-0 f5?!**

Leaves a hole at e5 and shuts the QB out of the game. 9...Qxb2 would be more consistent with move seven.

**10 Bxc6+ bxc6 11 Ne5 Bd6 12 Nd2 Bxe5 13 dxe5**

Threatening N-c4-d6+ and Qh5.

**13...Ba6**



There is no other move but ... the bishop is both useless and doomed.

**14 c4 0-0-0 15 Qc2 Rd4 16 b3 Rg8 17 Rfd1 Qc7 18 Nf3 Rdg4**

18...Rxd1+ 19 Rxd1 Rd8 affords a better chance than this, which yields but an illusory attack, and leaves the king defenceless.

**19 g3 Qe7 20 Rd6 Kc7 21 Rad1 Bc8 22**

**b4 cxb4 23 Qa4**

White forces the game in good style.

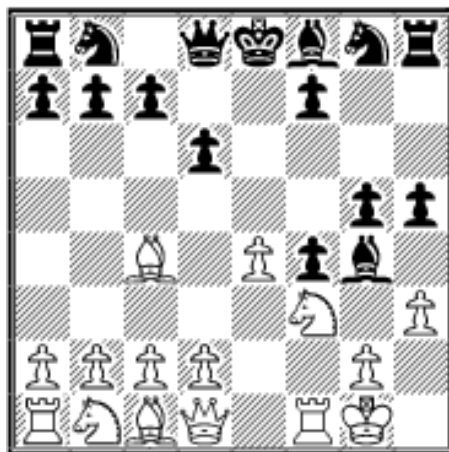
**23...Rxc4 24 Qxa7+ Bb7 25 Rd7+ 1-0**

*Dr. J. A. Kester – R. A. Hart*

San Antonio Chess Club, Texas 1907

King's Gambit [C37]

**1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 Nf3 g5 4 Bc4 d6 5 0-0 Bg4 6 h3 h5**



The Middleton Counter Gambit: "A new opening with which America is amusing itself. It leads to some exciting positions, but clearly can only be played by agreement."

**7 hxg4 hxg4 8 Nh2 g3 9 Ng4 Rh4**

9...Nf6 at once seems stronger.

**10 d4 Nf6 11 Be2 Nxe4 12 Bf3 f5 13 Re1 Qe7 14 Bxe4 fxe4 15 Rxe4 1-0**

At the very end of the year, on 28 December, was played the most suitable game to round off this article: Rubinstein's "Immortal Game."

*Gersz (Georg) Rotlewi – Akiva Rubinstein*

Lodz, 1907

Queen's Pawn Game [D40]

**1 d4 d5 2 Nf3 e6 3 e3 c5 4 c4 Nc6 5 Nc3 Nf6 6 dxc5 Bxc5 7 a3 a6 8 b4 Bd6**

**9 Bb2 0–0 10 Qd2?**

Better 10 cxd5 exd5 11 Be2 (Schlechter), 10 Qc2 (Tartakower) or 10 Bd3.

**10...Qe7! 11 Bd3 dxc4 12 Bxc4 b5 13 Bd3 Rd8 14 Qe2 Bb7 15 0–0 Ne5! 16 Nxe5 Bxe5 17 f4**

17 Rfd1?! Qc7 18 f4? Bxc3 19 Rac1 was suggested in Kmoch's book on Rubinstein, but then comes 19...Nd5 (Razuvaev).

**17...Bc7 18 e4?**

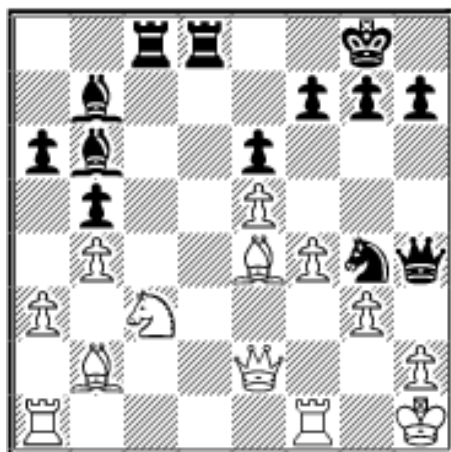
This opens the way to the coming attack by giving Black access on the a7-g1 diagonal.

**18...Rac8 19 e5 Bb6+ 20 Kh1 Ng4!**

White is already lost.

**21 Be4**

If 21 Qxg4? Rxd3 and ...Rc3. Or 21 Bxh7+ Kxh7 22 Qxg4 Rd2–+. Or 21 h3 Qh4 22 Qxg4 Qxg4 23 hxg4 Rxd3 threatening ...Rh3#. Finally, if 21 Ne4 Qh4 (some annotators give 21...Rxd3, which is also good enough.) 22 h3 Rxd3, e.g. 23 Qxd3 Bxe4 24 Qxe4 Qg3 25 hxg4 Qh4#.

**21...Qh4 22 g3**

Now comes a scintillating combination.

**22...Rxc3!! 23 gxh4**

If 23 Bxc3 Bxe4+ 24 Qxe4 Qxh2#. Or 23 Bxb7 Rxg3 24 Rf3 (24 Bf3 Nxb2–+) 24...Rxf3 25 Bxf3 Nf2+ 26 Kg1 (26 Kg2 Qh3+ 27 Kg1 Ne4+ 28 Kh1 Ng3#) and now all the books give 26...Ne4+, which does win, but the strongest is 26...Qh3, checkmating in at most 12 moves according to Fritz8.

**23...Rd2! 24 Qxd2**

If 24 Qxg4 Bxe4+ 25 Rf3 Rxf3–+ or 24 Bxb7 Rxe2 25 Bg2 Rh3–+. Against 24 Bxc3 the quickest win is by 24...Bxe4+ and if 25 Qxe4 Rxh2#.

## 24...Bxe4+ 25 Qg2 Rh3!! 0-1

If 26 Rf3 Bxf3 27 Qxf3 Rxh2#, or 26 Rf2 Bxf2 27 Qxe4 Rxh2# or 26 Bd4 Rxh2+ 27 Kg1 Bxd4+ etc.

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