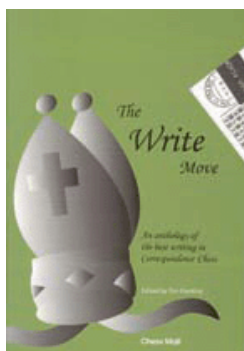




## COLUMNISTS

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Tim Harding



*The Write Move*  
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## Trials of a Touring Chess Master: Zukertort in Dublin, 1879

Exhibition tours of chess clubs by great masters in the late nineteenth century (and since then) were their bread-and-butter work, especially in the days when matches and tournaments were infrequent. This often meant travelling by train or boat in cold weather, staying in chilly and uncomfortable hotels to minimise expenses, and not seeing much of the cities they visited. The games played were usually simultaneous exhibitions, sometimes blindfold, and could have provided little professional satisfaction in terms of the quality of games or opposition. Local hospitality might have provided some compensation. The games played on such occasions rarely if ever found their way into print or into currently available databases. Usually local newspaper columns are the only places that such games are preserved.

This article deals with the forgotten visit to Dublin in 1879 of Johannes Zukertort, then arguably the world's strongest player. (He had won the Paris 1878 tournament while Steinitz was inactive, except as a writer.)



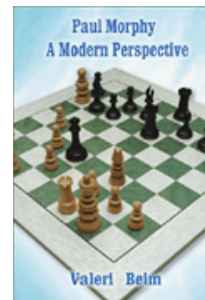
Johannes Zukertort

This was Zukertort's only visit to Ireland. Although it lasted about nine weeks, his Irish exhibitions received almost no attention outside the country, except for one brief report in *The Field*, short references in the *Chess Player's Chronicle* and the publication of two of the master's losses in the *Illustrated London News*. ChessBase's [Mega Database 2008](#) has no games at all played by Zukertort in 1879. His tour is not mentioned in *Der Großmeister aus Lublin, Wahrheit und Legende über Johannes Hermann Zukertort* ['The Grandmaster from Lublin, reality and legend concerning J. H. Zukertort' (Berlin 2005)]. Master biographies rarely refer to all exhibition trips; probably the authors, Cezary W. Domanski and Tomasz Lissowski, found it hard to get information.

Recently, the *Irish Times* and its weekly edition, going back to the start of publication, have become available in a searchable digitised form, thus making it possible to discover much that was previously hidden away in poor-quality microfilms, where you had no hope of finding chess reports unless you knew exactly where to look. I also found some references to his visit in the Dublin Chess Club papers. In this article I shall present some of the more colourful details of his visit and a few games; a fuller account, with source references and more games, will appear in print later this year in *Quarterly for Chess History 14*, along with an account of Steinitz's Irish visit two years later.

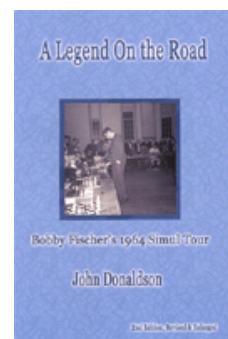
Zukertort probably travelled from London, where he had been living since 1872. He was thirty-six years old. Originally from Lublin, his family had moved to Breslau in Prussia (now Wroclaw in Poland), where he had the opportunity to hone his chess play in duels with the great Adolf Anderssen.

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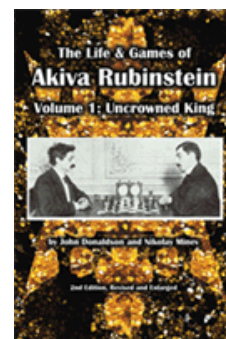
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Zukertort's mother was Polish and his father was a Protestant missionary of Jewish origin, so he really belonged nowhere. Furthermore, travelling from place to place to play chess, he was used to being a stranger in a strange land, so maybe going from London to Dublin (then the second city of the British Empire) seemed less peculiar than some of his previous transitions. Anyway, he probably expected to spend only a few days in Ireland.

He would have made the train journey across England and Wales, from London's Euston Station, via Crewe and Chester to north-west Wales. Transition after transition: from Wales proper, the train crosses Brunel's famous Britannia bridge across the Menai Straits, near Bangor. Constructed in 1849, this greatly shortened the journey time to Ireland. Then the train crosses the large island of Anglesey, through the place that probably has the longest railway station name-board:

*Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwillantysiliogogogoch*. Finally, you come to the port of Holyhead, which is actually on another small island, Holy island, reached by a causeway. This is a journey I did many times before the Ryanair era; if you want to bring a car to Ireland from Britain, it is one of the three available routes. It takes many hours – time best passed with a good book or a pocket chess set. Then the mail-boat crossing to Kingstown (now Dun Laoghaire) in south Dublin would have taken another three or three and a half hours, followed by a further twenty minute rail journey on the suburban train to central Dublin. No wonder Zukertort checked into a hotel near the railway station.

It should be said that 1879 was hardly a high point in Irish chess. The strongest Irish-born players, James Mason and Rev. George Alcock MacDonnell, were in America and London respectively, and the only young Irish-based player capable of giving them a good game, James Alexander Rynd, was not playing at that time.

In 1879 there was a small circle of keen players around the City of Dublin Chess Club (founded 1867) and the club at the Dawson Street YMCA, in addition to which there was a small university chess club. Also two of Ireland's other cities had chess clubs: Belfast and a fairly recently founded club in Cork. The number of chess clubs in Ireland greatly expanded in the late 1880s.

Thanks to the interest created by Zukertort's visit, Alfred S. Peake was able to begin a chess column in the *Weekly Irish Times*, sister paper of the *Irish Times*. The column began on 25 January 1879, announcing the forthcoming visit, but petered out in 1882. Zukertort probably arrived in Dublin on 29 or 30 January. The Dublin club match book records that he played two consultation games at the club on the 30th but they are not preserved. During his visit he undoubtedly played many games of chess other than in public exhibitions and some of the games that were published do not match the lists of players in the formal events.

This article concentrates on his two principal engagements, which were contrasting in every way (except that some of the opponents were the same).

#### **The great exhibition: 31 January and 1 February**

Zukertort's principal engagement was to give a blindfold simultaneous exhibition with twelve opponents, on Friday 31 January, followed by a regular simultaneous display the following evening. These were reported at length in the *Irish Times*. The blindfold simultaneous was a spectacular novelty for Dublin; in 1865 Steinitz had played blindfold against a few opponents but, according to *The Chess Player's Chronicle*, "no such large number of games had ever before been played in a similar manner in Ireland, and the exhibition caused much astonishment to the distinguished attendance of guests."

The blindfold simultaneous started at 3pm, in Leinster Hall, 35 Molesworth Street, a building (owned by the Society of Friends) where the club now had its premises. Zukertort's opponents were seated a long table down the middle of the hall; he handicapped himself further by taking the black pieces in half the games. Peake acted as teller. The *Irish Times* gave a very detailed description of the proceedings, from which I shall quote at length.

"Herr Zukertort's chair was placed on a raised platform at some distance from the table, and he remained seated during the contest with his back to his antagonists. A teller passed around the table announcing to Herr

Zukertort the number of each player and the move made by him. This process was continued in regular succession from 1 to 12 and then began again. When a move was announced the blindfold player described his rejoinder to it, and the teller passed on to the next board. This operation generally took from eight to ten minutes. Herr Zukertort almost invariably gave his reply immediately.”



*Lord Randolph Churchill*

The Conservative Party politician Lord Randolph Churchill MP (father of Sir Winston) sat at board one; he was now almost 30 years old. ‘Lord’ was a courtesy title in his case, as the younger son of a duke. He never held a title in his own right, so he was a commoner, and thus was able to be a member of the House of Commons. His parents were among the spectators at the first session of the blindfold display. The *Irish Times* states that his father, the 7th Duke of Marlborough (then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland) watched about half an hour of the play, while the Duchess of Marlborough, accompanied by General Sir John Michel, Commander of the forces in Ireland, stayed until a quarter past five. “The distinguished visitors occupied seats at the head of the table where the players were placed, in close proximity to Lord Randolph Churchill’s board”.

“A dinner break was taken at a quarter past six, when all games were still in progress; one player who blundered two pieces had not yet resigned. Play resumed at 8pm. During the course of play, Zukertort occasionally made slips by repeating moves he had already made and was held to the penalties. On the other hand, he ‘had often to correct wrong announcements of play, which he did with extraordinary promptitude’. The reporter observes that Zukertort should have been given reciprocity in the penalties, but perhaps the mistakes (which seemed to confuse him) were by the teller (Peake) rather than the players. The *Irish Times* also objected to ‘the consultation which went on for a long time among his adversaries and their friends’, until this was stopped late in the evening. The first player to lose was Charles Lewis, whose play was exceedingly feeble; he resigned after 17 moves. At move 18 Zukertort offered a draw in a level position to Hon Horace Plunkett, but the latter declined and ultimately lost.

“At a quarter past eleven it became apparent from the rate at which play was progressing – between four and five moves an hour on each board – that the match could not be finished last night... Sir John Blunden drew his game by agreement. Major Creagh and Mr Pim offered to do likewise, but Herr Zukertort declined... Lord Randolph Churchill, the Hon Mr Plunkett. Captain Wallace and Mr. Woollett continued to play on. At a quarter to twelve the last-mentioned player won his game by a brilliant combination.”

#### ***Johannes Zukertort – Marcus S. Woollett***

Blindfold simultaneous, Dublin 31 January 1879

Queen’s Gambit Declined [D37]

[A. S. Peake, *Weekly Irish Times*, 8 February 1879; also in the *Illustrated London News*, 22 March 1879]

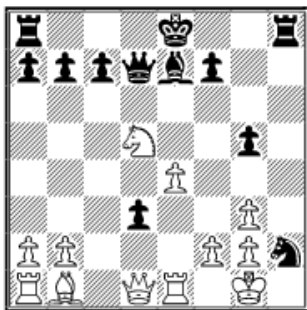
**1 d4 d5 2 e4 e6 3 Nf3 Nf6 4 Nc3 Nc6 5 e3 Be7 6 Bd3 Nb4 7 Bb1 dxc4 8 Ne5 Nd3+ 9 Nxd3 cxd3 10 0-0 Bd7 11 e4 e5 12 dxe5**

Peake: Had the Doctor been playing with an equal he would hardly have taken this bait.

**12...Ng4 13 Bf4 g5 14 Bg3 h5 15 Nd5**

Threatening e6 and Nxc7+ winning the exchange.

**15...h4 16 e6 hgx3 17 exd7+ Qxd7 18 hgx3 Nh2 19 Re1**



**19...d2!**

“A pretty move,” exclaimed the Doctor after a slight pause. “If I now take P, you check with Kt, I must take and you win by playing Q to R6.”

**20 Re3 Qc6 21 Qxd2 Rd8 22 Rc3 Qh6 23 f3 Bc5+ 24 Rxc5 Nxf3+ 25 gxf3 Qh1+ 26 Kf2 Rh2+ 27 Ke3 Qg1+ 0-1**

At the close of play that night, after the reporter had to leave, several players who had lost positions then resigned, the others being adjourned for resumption the following afternoon. Two of the players failed to appear and Zukertort was awarded wins by default, and the remaining games were completed on the Saturday afternoon, Zukertort finishing with a score of +8 –3 –1. Only six of the twelve games are preserved in full, and two of the wins are partially known. Of the wins which are fully preserved, the best was the game that follows.

#### ***Lord Randolph Churchill - Johannes Zukertort***

Blindfold simultaneous, Dublin 31 January 1879

Three Knights Game [C40]

[*Weekly Irish Times* 22 February 1879]

**1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Nc3 f5?!**

TH: Zukertort gets the game out of the books.

**4 d3 Nf6 5 Bg5 Bb4 6 Be2 d6 7 0-0 0-0 8 h3 Kh8 9 Nd5 fxe4 10 dxe4 Bc5 11 c3 Be6 12 Nxf6 gxf6 13 Bh4 Qd7 14 Kh2 Qg7 15 Nd2**

Peake: 15 g4 is a much better move.

**15...Qh6 16 Bh5 Rg8 17 g4 Rg7 18 Rg1 Rag8 19 Rg2 f5 20 f3 fxg4 21 fxg4**



**21...Qxh5! 22 Bf6**

TH: if 22 gxh5 Rxc2+ 23 Kh1 Rg1+ 24 Qxg1 Rxc1+ 25 Rxc1 Bxc1 26 Kxc1 Bxa2 and Black eventually wins.

**22...Qh6 23 Qf3 Qf4+ 24 Qxf4 exf4 25 g5 Rf8 26 Bxc7+ Kxc7 27 b3 f3 28 Rg3 Ne5 29 Rf1 Be3 30 Rxc7 Nxf3+ 31 Nxf3 d5 32 exd5 Bxd5 33 Kg3 Rxf3+ 34 Rxf3 Bxf3 35 Kxf3 Bxc5 36 Ke4 Kf6 37 c4 Ke6 38 a4 Be7 39 Kf4 c5 0-1**

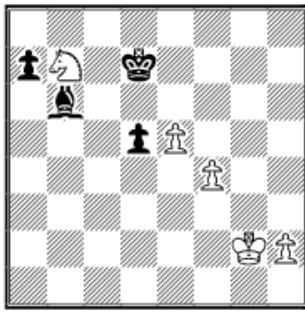
Churchill resigned after the close of play that night.

An interesting ending arose in one of the adjourned games, Zukertort first missing a win when a pawn down and then being lucky to save the game.

#### ***C. Tuthill - Johannes Zukertort***

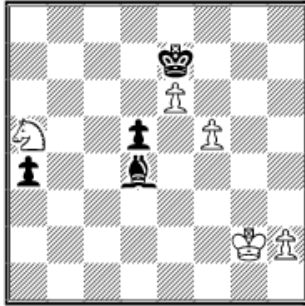
First blindfold simul Dublin (11), 31 January 1879

[*Weekly Irish Times* 15/2/1879; notes by Tim Harding]



A somewhat tricky ending since both players have “outside passed pawns”. White should win by 45 h4! because if both sides queen, then e6+ settles the matter.

**45 f5? a5 46 Nd6 Bd4 47 Nb7 a4 48 e6+ Ke7 49 Na5**

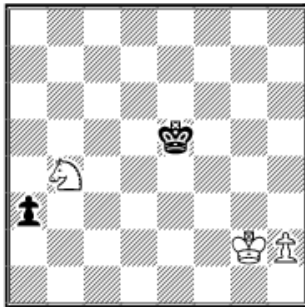


**49...Bb2?**

Peake: “The correct line of play forcibly presents itself as 49...Bc3.” Indeed, despite the pawn minus, this would be winning for Zukertort after 50 Nc6+ Ke8! and the knight cannot stop the a-pawn (not 50...Kd6 51 Na7 Bf6 when 52 Nc8+ probably draws).

**50 Nc6+ Kf6 51 Nb4 Ba3 52 Nxd5+ Kxf5 53 e7 Bxe7 54 Nxe7+ Ke4 55 Nc6 a3 56**

**Nb4 Ke5**



**57 Kg3**

Peake: Herr Zukertort expressed it as his opinion that White might perhaps have won by 57 h4 and the following pretty play: 57...Kf5 (Black may adopt other modes of play which may possibly draw the game. We recommend the position to the student, as it is one that will bear a thorough sifting.) 58 Kg3 Kg6 59 Kg4 Kh6 60 h5 Kg7 61 Kg5 Kh7 62 h6 Kh8 63 Kg6 Kg8 64 h7+ Kh8 65 Nc6 a2 66 Ne5 a1Q 67 Nf7 mate.

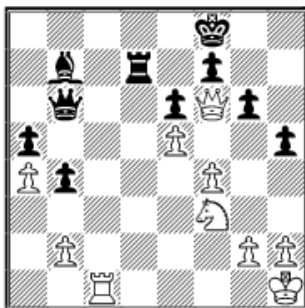
**57...Kd6 58 Kg4 Kc5 59 Na2 Kc4 60 h4 Kb3 ½-½**

In another of the adjourned games, Zukertort missed a win, then went for perpetual in the wrong way and could have been mated.

### ***Johannes Zukertort – Major Creagh***

First blindfold simul Dublin (2), 31 January 1879

[*Weekly Irish Times* 22/2/1879; notes by Tim Harding]



Here Zukertort could have launched a strong attack by 29 f5!, but instead he seemed to play for a draw.

**29 Nh4?! Kg8 30 f5 Qd4 31 Rg1 exf5**

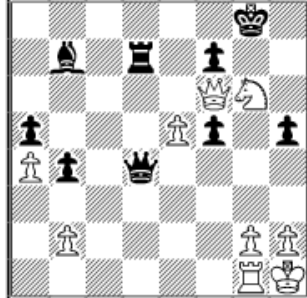
Black could also consider 31...Qf2 or 31...Qf4. Now comes a strange episode of mutual oversight by the players. 32 Nxf5 gxf5 33 Qg5+ is perpetual, but Zukertort (blindfold, of course) goes for the draw in the wrong way and his opponent overlooks

forced mate!

**32 Nxc6??**



**32...fxg6**



The missed opportunity 32...Bxg2+!! is not mentioned in the contemporary reports.

**33 Qxg6+ Rg7 34 Qe8+ Kh7 35 Qxh5+ Kg8 ½-½**

White draws by perpetual check.

It seems that, not fully recovered from his exertions the previous night, Zukertort apparently found it hard to focus on the positions in the second session, although with fewer games and fewer opponents one would expect it to have been easier for him. Or perhaps endgames are harder for the blindfold player?

The full list of players, openings and results was as follows (the players on the odd numbered boards having the first move):

1	Lord Randolph Churchill	lost
2	Major Creagh	drawn
3	Hon. H. C. Plunkett	lost
4	Mr. Cairns	lost
5	J. B. Pim	forfeited (did not return on Saturday)
6	Charles Lewis	lost
7	Mr. Goodbody	lost
8	Capt. Wallace	lost
9	Capt. Melhado	forfeited (did not return on Saturday)
10	Mr. Woollett	won
11	Mr Tuthill	drawn
12	Sir John Blunden, Bart.	drawn

Thus, as the *Irish Times* reported on the Monday, “ended this remarkable struggle, from which Herr Zukertort emerged with the highest credit to himself”.

The *Irish Times* reporter on 3 February also wrote: “we understand that Zukertort intends leaving Dublin tonight, but we hope that the members of the University and Dawson Street clubs will not allow him to depart without measuring their skill against his.” There is no information about whether such events occurred; it is possible. What surely detained the grandmaster was an invitation from the Churchills too good to refuse, an invitation to a grand dinner party at Dublin Castle on 5 February. The paper’s report on the sixth largely consists of long lists of the guests, including Zukertort.

Yet he did not leave soon afterwards. On the 15th February, the *Weekly Irish Times* joked: “We hear Dr Zukertort still tarries. What will his cross-Channel friends say to this. After all, dear dirty Dublin has some attractions. If he remains much longer we predict a happy future for him, in this his adopted country. Faith he has a little of the brogue already.”

He played some more games in his hotel and at the Dublin club, including a curious simultaneous on Wednesday 19 February where seven members of the club simultaneously played two games (White and Black) against him. This apparently took three hours and was not blindfold. So, overall Zukertort played 14 and scored +9 =4 –1. The loss was to Tuthill and the draws to Captain Melhado (both games), William Henry Stanley Monck (a strong correspondence player) and the other game to Tuthill. Among the players he beat 2-0 were Plunkett and Woollett.

On 21 February, Zukertort was unanimously elected an Honorary Member and was the club's guest at its annual dinner in the Shelbourne Hotel on Thursday 27 February, for which members paid 10 shillings each (half a pound). The Dublin club minutes also record that the club gave their permission for Zukertort to advertise a further blindfold display as being under their auspices. Preview reports in the *Irish Times* on 5 and 6 March make it clear that the object was to enable spectators to watch the games, and so presumably to raise money for Zukertort. It said on the 5th that 'the champion leaves Dublin on Saturday evening next', meaning 8 March, the day after the simultaneous. On the 6th it also said that: 'We may mention that since Mr Morphy gave up playing public chess, and since Herr Steinitz refused to engage in tournaments, Herr Zukertort is entitled to the rank of chess champion of the world, having taken first prize at the Paris tourney last year'.

### **The fiasco: 7 March**

The event on 7 March turned out to be a fiasco. The choice of venue (Earlsfort Terrace ice skating rink) was unsuitable and those in charge of making the arrangements clearly did a poor job. Both the low temperatures and the audibility of announcements proved a problem. Again Zukertort expected twelve opponents but two failed to turn up. Eventually he played against three members of the Dublin Chess Club, five members of the Dawson Street Club and two unattached players, and his result was not as good as on the previous occasion, although arguably the opposition was weaker. Peake described in the *Weekly Irish Times* what happened on each board; the players whose behaviour he criticised were not members of the club he belonged to, the Dawson Street Club. Here are some extracts.

"Board 1. Mr Little won his game, being in consultation with a couple of other good players. For this reason we don't include this game in the score."

"Board 3. Captain Hibbert sat opposite this board, a reminder from Howard Staunton being at his side. We must protest in the strongest manner against this foolish child's play. Who ever heard of anything like it before? It is impossible for a blindfold player to acquaint himself of the movements and unrightness of the competitors. It rests, therefore, all the more on their honour to uphold the laws of fairness and manliness. This game, although won by the mover of the pieces, does not count in the score."

Therefore, while the *Irish Times* said Zukertort won only half the games, Peake discounted those two that went against the champion who on his reckoning made a positive score of  $+5 - 2 = 1$ . Peake added further remarks about interruptions during the event, and that onlookers should remember they are not competitors, pointing out that advice actually caused Captain Wallace on board four to spoil his game. One of the games Zukertort lost was because his opponent played well. This was not Zukertort's only loss to this player during his stay in Dublin.

### **Johannes Zukertort – G. D. Soffe**

Earlsfort Terrace blindfold simul, Dublin 7 March 1879

Evans Gambit [C52]

[Notes by A. S. Peake in the *Weekly Irish Times*, 22 March 1879, and P. T. Duffy in the *Illustrated London News*, 26 April 1879]

**1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 b4 Bxb4 5 c3 Ba5 6 0-0 Nf6 7 d4 0-0 8 Ba3 d6 9 dxe5 Nxe4 10 Qc2**

Duffy: The preceding moves are all 'book', but Black's next is hardly so good as 10...Nc5.

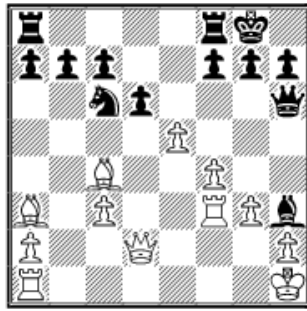
**10...Ng5 11 Nxg5 Qxg5 12 f4**

Duffy: All this seems to gain time and is promising enough, but it exposes the white king too much for safety.

**12...Qh6 13 Nd2 Bb6+ 14 Kh1 Be3**

Peake: 'A good move, opening up White's king'.

15 g3 Bh3 16 Rf3 Bxd2 17 Qxd2



17...Nxe5

Peake: Finely played, winning a pawn, and the exchange.

Duffy: One does not often see such strokes as this delivered by the opponents of 'blindfold' chessplayers.

18 Be2 Nxf3 19 Bxf3 Rab8 20 g4 f5 21 g5 Qg6 22 c4 Rfe8 23 Bb2 Bg4 24 Bd5+ Kh8

Duffy says 'and White resigned' but Peake had more moves:

25 Re1 Rxe1+ 26 Qxe1 Re8 27 Bxg7+ Kxg7

Not to be caught in this little trap. It will be observed that taking the bishop with the queen loses the game at once.

28 Qc3+ Kf8 0-1

Let us now turn to what the daily paper said. The acoustics in the ice rink, which probably had a high ceiling, were the first problem. Zukertort's table was at first set too far from the players for him to hear the announcement of the moves distinctly, and he had to move closer. Even then, according to the *Irish Times*, "it was not easy for him to catch the words of the teller, or for the latter to understand Herr Zukertort owing to the echoes of the hall; which multiplied the footfalls of the numerous boys who were continually coming and going, whence, whither, or with what purpose was not clear."

More seriously still, everyone felt cold, especially Zukertort who was away from the main group of people. After three hours there was an interval. "When rising from play Herr Zukertort bitterly complained of the cold, to the discomfort caused by which he ascribed a couple of injudicious moves he had made." He returned for the 8 pm resumption with an overcoat and a rug for his legs. At least the public attendance was somewhat better for the evening session than it had been earlier.

The *Irish Times* reporter chiefly blamed the "gentlemen having charge of the arrangements" who were clearly unfamiliar with preparing a hall for a public audience. It is probably significant that Peake's report did not say anything about the difficult physical conditions, which leads one to think that he must have been one of those persons whose negligence was attacked in the *Irish Times*.

Not only was it bitterly cold (as one might expect in a skating rink in winter!) and the hall itself clearly unsuitable, but the tables had been placed at such a distance from the lights that the "pieces were hardly visible". Worst of all perhaps was the noise and disturbance of the audience. "The spectators persisted in crowding round the table so closely that the teller could hardly be heard outside the ring."

Zukertort frequently had to ask for moves to be repeated, but he was said to have been very accurate; when there were disputes he was able always to call out the moves. The reporter believes Zukertort was incorrect in thinking that pieces were moved during the adjournment. His accent was perhaps a problem:

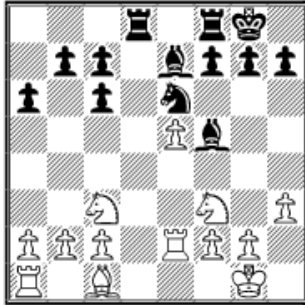
"The mistakes arose, we believe, from the difficulty which the players had in hearing the champion, and also from the confusion of his pronunciation of the words "king" and "queen". Some pieces were, however, moved, and a great deal of consultation went on. This was all very unfair [but] ... Zukertort was not the only person inconvenienced by the arrangements... Taking everything into account the quality of the play was higher than could have been expected; Herr Zukertort, however, playing below his usual blindfold force."

*D. Middleton - Johannes Zukertort*



TH: It is not absolutely certain that this is from the display at the skating rink, but it is known that on 7 March Middleton had white and lost.

**1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Ba4 Nf6 5 d4 exd4 6 e5 Ne4 7 0-0 Be7 8 Re1  
Nc5 9 Bxc6 dxc6 10 Qxd4 Bf5 11 Re2 Ne6 12 Qxd8+ Rxd8 13 Nc3 0-0 14  
h3**



**14...b5**

The doctor's imperfect English at this point caused a misunderstanding. Mr M. understood him to say P to K Kt4, and this error was not discovered until the 19th move.

**15 g4 Bg6 16 Be3 h6 17 h4 f5 18 exf6  
Rxf6 19 Nh2**

Here White went to take the pawn which stood on his board at g5, and on the doctor's mind at b5. The position was now rectified, but, of course, White's plan of campaign was completely overthrown.

**19...Bd6 20 h5 Bh7 21 f3 Bxh2+ 22 Kxh2 Rxf3 23 Rae1 b4 24 Kg2 Rf6 25  
Nd1 Be4+ 26 Kg3 Bf3 27 Rf2 Bxd1 28 Rxf6 gxf6 29 Bxh6 Kf7 0-1**

"The game was continued for some time longer, and Black ultimately won."

The only further mention of his visit in Irish papers is that the *Irish Times* on 8 April reported briefly that: 'Herr Zukertort has left the Grosvenor Hotel, Westland Row, to play a chess tournament at Burslem'. So if this is right, and they were not just belatedly reporting his departure of 8 March, he must have been in Ireland a little over nine weeks. The only plausible explanations are that he fell ill, or had a love affair, the former perhaps being the more likely. In fact, the chess column of the *Glasgow Weekly Herald* stated on 22 March that Zukertort fell ill in Dublin during his visit and had to stay on for a while. It certainly sounds from the account of his display on the 7th March that he could have caught pneumonia on that occasion.

#### Postscript: a query

Is any reader in Philadelphia willing to spend a couple of hours looking up something for me in the Free Library there? This is for a future column. If so, will they please email me c/o [ChessCafe.com](http://ChessCafe.com) and I will supply details privately. Thank you.

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