

CHESS SECRETS

Great Chess Romantics

Learn from Anderssen, Chigorin, Réti, Larsen and Morozevich

Craig Pritchett

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About the Author

Craig Pritchett is an International Master. Twice Scottish Champion, he has represented his country, four times on top board, in nine Chess Olympiads. He was a longstanding chess correspondent for the Scottish newspaper, *The Herald* (1972-2006), and completed a five year term as Schools Chess Development Director for Chess Scotland (2003-2008). Now active in seniors international chess, he won the gold medal for the best board one performance at the European Seniors Team Championships in 2011.

Also by the author:

Starting Out: Sicilian Scheveningen

Play the English

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Chess Secrets: Heroes of Classical Chess

Chess Secrets: Giants of Innovation

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Introduction

We are all romantics! Or who will be the first to deny it? If we know just one thing about Adolf Anderssen, the first of my five “great romantics”, it’s likely to be the fact that he won two of the most famous and most beautiful games ever played, later dubbed his “Immortal” and “Evergreen”. We don’t just crudely scramble for points when we sit at a chessboard. We also want to win magnificently. We surely all hope to create at least one work of great chess art in our own lifetime.

The essence of the romantic spirit in chess is primarily artistic. Inspired by a sense that chess is imbued with essentially aesthetic attributes, such as depth, wit, elegance, playfulness, paradox and lively combinations, the romantic regards the chessboard, much as an artist regards his or her canvas, as a rich expressive and communicative medium. The romantic often also delights in confounding convention, exuding a thoroughgoing scepticism towards all received wisdom.

The five great players in my book reflect this spirit in chess superbly. They don’t just play hard to win points (as we all do) but tend towards an exceptional artistry and an intense personal and logical purity in their best games. They have bucked many existing trends and set new fashions. In seeking to express great art and profound truths in chess, they have all occasionally bitten off more than they could chew and suffered abject disaster – but we all go off on wild goose chases. We are all human.

Chess knowledge may have accumulated through radically differing chess-historical time frames, but the romantic spirit itself has endured. Get to know and enjoy some of the greatest achievements of all five of the players I consider to have exhibited a high degree of romance in their approach to chess. Admire their passion, independence of mind, distrust of convention, and commitment to beauty. Be inspired to create more of your own works of immortal and evergreen chess art.

My five great romantics – in brief

Adolf Anderssen, by widespread acclaim the leading player in the world throughout most of the 1850s and into the 1860s, was the original romantic in a self-consciously

swashbuckling, pre-scientific age. Anderssen helped raise the art of attack and defence in Open Games to its mid-19th century apogee. At his best, perhaps the steeliest and most practically successful of all five of my great players (though Morozovich remains active and may still match him), Anderssen's legacy of fine combinations defined an era.

Mikhail Chigorin championed romance in the more rigorously scientific late-19th century. Others might turn from open play to more closed games of manoeuvre. Chigorin instead found new positional strengths in the old Evans and King's Gambits. Anticipating a richer, more eclectic, post-scientific age, Chigorin also successfully developed and pioneered many other highly original and forward-looking systems of play of his own, such as Chigorin's Defence against 1 d4, and 2 ♖e2 in the French Defence.

Richard Réti had a youthful fondness for open attacking play, especially the King's Gambit, but made his lasting name as a revolutionary, so-called "hypermodern", in the 1920s. His inspirational Réti's Opening led to the creation of an entirely new and lasting complex of Flank Openings. Réti, who was also a gifted composer of endgame studies, died tragically young, but left many studies and games of great beauty.

Bent Larsen bucked the mainstream in the mid-to late-20th century. The dominant Soviet school set the then sober, deeply researched, no nonsense, systems-based standard. Larsen, who instead explored many byways, regularly bamboozled top players by playing all manner of strange, unusual and neglected lines, such as 1 f4, 1 b3, Alekhine's Defence and the Vienna and Bishop's Openings. Larsen won many fine games in a grand, strategically-based, sweeping attacking style.

Alexander Morozovich, a tough, well-prepared, universally well-versed, 21st century chess sportsman, exhibited an early Larsen-like flair for handling slightly offbeat openings in a highly original fashion, but has subsequently matured (rather like Larsen did too) into a great master of much of the mainstream repertoire. His early interest in closed systems against the French Defence, and especially in Chigorin's Defence, harks back to Chigorin's example. Morozovich simply oozes exceptional brilliance and exquisite strokes in his best games.

A brief word on "style" in chess

Chess is not just an art. It is also a science and a competitive sport. Particularly as a result of the sporting point, some argue that "style" in chess, whether romantic, in-

novative, classically direct or anything else, is at best nebulous, possibly even non-existent. Such arguments tend to be based on a view that all anyone really does at a chessboard is seek to find and play the objectively “best” move in any given position, which is style-neutral. I consider this view unconvincing.

Commonsense, for a start, tends to suggest there is rarely any objectively “best” move in most positions, rather an often wide range of variously playable and unclear possibilities. While we may indeed seek to find and play what we consider to be “best” moves, we can hardly avoid making most “actual” moves in fuzzily unclear ways that reflect the way our brains work or, in other words, our playing “style”, however we might care to define that admittedly still slightly slippery concept.

To attempt to investigate such issues at greater length would require a different book on brain-function that embraced such subjects as neuroscience, psychology and even philosophy, in addition to chess. To cut to the quick, I consider that most chess players are sufficiently comfortable with the idea that “style” really exists, and has some real meaning to it, to do without that. The late British champion (and Scottish lawyer), R.F.Combe, once wrote interestingly on this theme in *The British Chess Magazine*, in 1948:

“In chess I was soon faced with a crucial problem, should I play like Capablanca, or ... in the style of Alekhine? Or again, was the teaching of Tarrasch the true faith, or should I follow the eclectic Lasker? ... It was not so bad when I got through a whole game as a disciple of Lasker, but often I would experience a change of faith in the course of a single game. Unknown to my opponent, Lasker would get up from my chair ... leaving Capablanca to take his place ... all very disconcerting.”

Combe’s words neatly emphasize that we can learn a lot from studying others’ styles. They also imply that, ultimately, we should seek to develop our own unique style of play in order to be truly comfortable. Moreover, due to the game’s essential sporting character – so that, say, an “attacking” player may frequently choose a “positional” solution, if he or she feels that it’s clearly the best way to win a game – we will often display a combination of sometimes quite different styles even “in the course of a single game”.

I don’t think that most of us have any real difficulty with Combe’s views on style. So, in reading this book, please don’t unrealistically expect to find “romance” oversimplistically written into every move of my five selected players’ games. Never forget, that in all of them, they were, like you in your own games, primarily out to win points. To repeat my main message, try more generally to appreciate, learn from and simply enjoy their “romantic” essence.

About the book's format and annotations

As in my previous two works in the *Chess Secrets* series, I have ordered my material around 35 extensively annotated main games. These, in turn, have been embedded in a chess biographical narrative that aims to provide sufficient background about the chess lives of my five great players, so as to indicate how their ideas drew from their respective pasts, peer groups and pressures, and then subsequently developed. My main focus is on the development of ideas in chess and how we might learn from that to benefit our own chess.

In annotating the 35 main games, I have tried to strike a readable balance between prose explanation and a “sufficiency” of variations. I like to see both. Without clearly worded explanations, it is hard to grasp the essence of game-plans and a game's critical ideas, transitions and transformations. Such narratives must be supported by a judicious choice of critical variations but not swamped by them.

My annotations also aim to bring the openings choices of my five players alive, in a way that shows not just what they themselves considered to be important but also points the reader to possible areas for their own research. When studying openings, it is vital to be alert to the best historical and currently existing ideas and to consider how they might be improved upon. In addition to the main games, I have therefore frequently referred to many other full or part games, complete with briefer overviews.

I have lastly also tried to be as objective as possible in sifting out not just the grandest moments in my annotations but also, wherever they may occur, occasional errors. As a practical player, I am only too well aware that minimizing errors as well as recovering from them is a supreme art in itself that all great players master much better than the rest of us. Don't decry errors, rather expect at least one or two to occur in most games of chess, even in some of the greatest games ever played, but above all learn from them!

I hope that my five biographical essays and game annotations meet all of these aims and perhaps, above all, that my readers simply enjoy this book.

Craig Pritchett,
Dunbar,
September 2013

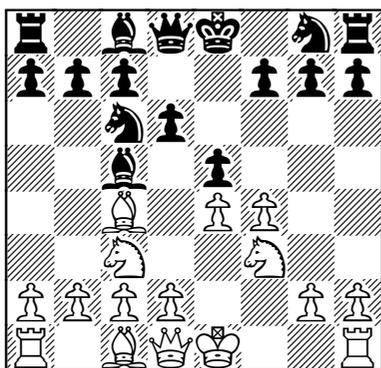
Game 12
M.Chigorin-H.Pillsbury
 Hastings 1895
King's Gambit

1 e4 e5 2 f4 ♘c5 3 ♖f3 d6 4 ♙c4

Black's solid second move has always been a popular alternative to accepting the gambit. Black relies on a solid centre and rapid piece deployment. Chigorin chooses White's most common and probably best counter - although it is more usually introduced by the move order 4 ♖c3 ♗f6 (4...♖c6 allows the interesting additional options, 5 ♖a4 and 5 ♙b5) 5 ♙c4 ♖c6.

After the sharper 4 c3, Black has a good choice between 4...♗f6 5 d4 exd4 6 cxd4 ♙b6, and if 7 e5 dxe5 8 fxe5 ♗d5, and 4...♙b6 5 d4 exd4 6 cxd4 ♙g4, in each case with spirited play in the centre.

4...♖c6 5 ♖c3



5...♗f6

Both players were apparently aiming

to contest the critical position that arises on White's ninth move. Otherwise Black can play 5...♙g4, and if 6 h3 ♙xf3 7 ♗xf3, which is similar to the game but quieter. White can probably hope to maintain no more than the slightest pull against this.

M.Chigorin-A.Albin, Monte Carlo 1902, then continued 7...♗h4+ 8 g3 ♗d4 9 ♗g2 ♗d8 (9...♗h5 is also interesting) 10 d3 c6 11 fxe5 dxe5 12 ♖f1 ♗f6 13 ♙g5 b5 14 ♙b3 a5 15 a3 ♗xb3 16 cxb3 b4 17 ♖a4 ♙e7 18 ♗c2 0-0 19 axb4 axb4 20 ♙xf6 ♙xf6 21 0-0-0 c5 and although it's unclear whether White really has anything, he eventually outplayed his opponent and won a lengthy end-game.

In later games Albin diverged with 7...♗d4 8 ♗g3 exf4!? 9 ♗xf4 (9 ♗xg7 ♗f6 10 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 11 ♖d1 ♖g8 12 ♖f1 ♖xg2 13 ♖xf4 ♖g1+ 14 ♖f1 ♖xf1+ 15 ♙xf1 0-0-0 16 d3 ♖g8 was good for Black in A.Neumann-A.Albin, Vienna 1904) 10 ♗g3 ♗g6 11 ♗xg6 hxg6 12 ♖d1 ♗e7 13 d3 c6 14 a4 a5 15 ♖f1 f6 16 ♗e2 ♗xe2 17 ♖xe2 ♖d7 18 c3 d5 19 exd5 cxd5?! (19...♗xd5! looks closer to full equality) 20 ♙b5+ ♗c6 21 d4 ♙d6 22 ♙e3 with a workable two bishop edge and an eventual win for White in R.Spielmann-A.Albin, Vienna 1907.

6 d3 ♙g4

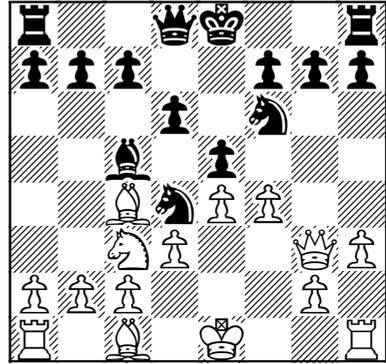
Apart from this logical continuation, which steps up the pressure on f3 and d4, Black can also play 6...a6, which provides a retreat square for Black's bishop on a7 and prepares ...b7-b5. White can

then choose from 7 fxe5 dxe5 8 ♖g5 (which some modern theorists regard as very slightly better for White), 7 ♜f1!?, 7 ♜d5!?, and Chigorin's favourite 7 f5, aiming at kingside domination, based on an eventual pawn-storm attack.

M.Chigorin-M.Judd, New York 1889, then continued 7...♞a5 8 ♖b3 ♞xb3 9 axb3 c6 10 ♚e2 ♖b6?! (better 10...b5, possibly followed by ...♞b7 and ...0-0 with prospects of queenside and central counterplay, while after 11 ♖e3 ♚b6 12 ♜d1 ♖b7 Black had no problems in M.Chigorin-D.Janowski, Ostend 1905) 11 ♖g5 ♖c7?! (effectively gifting White several tempi to set up his kingside juggernaut) 12 0-0 ♚e7 13 ♜h1 ♖d7 14 b4 ♜d8 15 ♚f2 ♖c8 16 ♜ae1 0-0 17 g4 ♜de8 18 ♜g1 ♜h8 19 ♚h4 ♖d8 20 ♜g3 h6 21 ♜h3 ♜g8 22 ♖xh6 and White won.

After 6...♖g4, White sometimes plays 7 ♜a4 in a bid to avoid the complications that arise in the main game. But this achieved little after 7...♖b6 8 ♖b5 0-0, and if 9 ♖xc6 bxc6 10 h3 ♖xf3 11 ♚xf3 d5 12 fxe5 dxe4 13 dxe4 ♜d7 14 ♖f4 ♚e7 15 ♚c3 ♜fe8, as in A.Minasian-S.Mamedyarov, European Championship, Batumi 2002, which was drawn. Black also obtained fully active play after 8 ♜xb6 axb6 9 c3 exf4 10 ♖xf4 ♜h5 11 ♖e3 ♜e5 12 ♖b5+ c6 13 d4 ♖xf3 14 gxf3 ♜g6 15 ♖e2 ♜hf4 16 ♚d2 ♚h4+ 17 ♜d1 0-0 18 ♜c2 f5, and even went on to win in Lim Yee Weng-Nguyen Anh Dung, Kuala Lumpur 2007.

7 h3 ♖xf3 8 ♚xf3 ♜d4 9 ♚g3



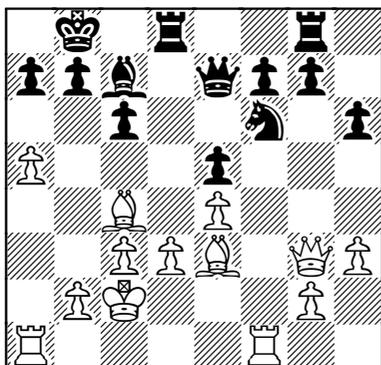
White offers an exchange (at least) to maintain his attacking initiative. A final judgment on the merits of this ambitious course has still to be clarified after well over a century of argument. Having invested a tempo putting the question to the bishop on his seventh move, however, White has no better move. After 9 ♚d1! Black simply plays 9...c6 with good chances. If White doesn't trust this line, he can try 7 ♜a4 earlier.

Pillsbury and Chigorin now plunge into one of the earliest and most critical practical tests of the variation in which Black accepts the sacrifice.

9...♜xc2+!?

Modern players nowadays tend to avoid Black's "grab". Of the alternatives, 9...♚e7 has perhaps been played most often, but the still under-investigated 9...0-0, an old Tartakower suggestion, may be better. Akiba Rubinstein later cast a huge shadow over 9...♚e7. Best play, however, after 9...0-0 is far less clear, while 9...exf4!? is also interesting.

A.Rubinstein-K.Hromadka, Mährisch Ostrau 1923, famously went 9...♖e7 10 fxe5 dxe5 11 ♖d1 c6 12 a4! ♔g8 13 ♗f1 h6 14 ♘e2 0-0-0 15 ♘xd4 ♙xd4 16 c3 ♙b6 17 a5 ♙c7 18 ♙e3 ♖b8 19 ♖c2 (with all points protected and free play on both flanks, White has a clear advantage)



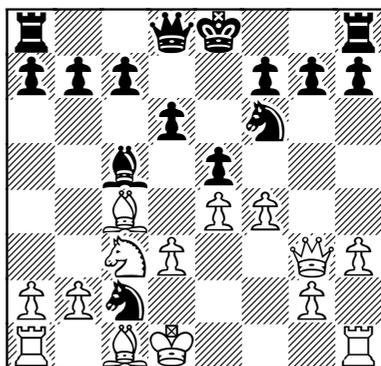
19...♖a8 20 ♗f3 ♘d5 21 ♙g1 ♘f4 22 ♗f2 ♙b8 23 g3 ♘xh3 24 ♗xf7 ♗d6 25 ♗b6! ♗d7 26 ♙c5 ♗xf7 27 ♙xd6 ♗f2+ 28 ♗xf2 ♘xf2 29 ♙c5 1-0. K.Hromadka-L.Prokes, Prague 1927, followed a similar course: 13...0-0-0 14 ♘e2 ♖b8 15 ♘xd4 ♙xd4 16 c3 ♙b6 17 ♖c2 and White won.

After 9...0-0 10 fxe5 dxe5, Tartakower's one-time recommendation, 11 ♙g5?! ♘xc2+ 12 ♖d1, is doubtful, following 12...♘xa1 13 ♘d5 ♙e7 (or even 13...♘h5!? 14 ♗g4 ♗e8) 14 ♘xe7+ ♗xe7 15 ♗f1 ♘h5!. Instead, J.Enevoldsen-R.Hartoch, Amsterdam 1966, continued 11 ♖d1!? b5 12 ♙b3 ♘xb3 13 axb3 b4 14 ♙h6 ♘e8 15 ♘e2 ♖h8 16 ♙e3 ♙d6 17 ♗f3 a5 18 ♗f1 and White eventually won (with some help from his oppo-

nent); A.Mista-V.Talla, Brno 2008, saw the remarkable 11 ♙h6!? ♘h5 12 ♗xe5 ♗h4+ 13 ♖d1 ♗f2 14 ♙b3 ♗xg2 15 ♗e1 ♘f3 16 ♗xc5 ♘xe1 17 ♖xe1 gxh6 18 ♗xh5 ♗g1+ 19 ♖d2 ♗xa1 20 ♘d1 and with Black's queen curiously incarcerated, White managed to win this game too. But all of this needs further test.

Tartakower also suggested 9...exf4!? 10 ♗xg7 ♗f8 11 ♖d1 ♗e7, reaching another position, whose complications have still to be fully resolved, after 12 ♗f1 ♔g8 (not 12...0-0-0? 13 ♗xf4!) 13 ♗h6 ♔xg2 14 ♙xf4, and now either 14...♘xc2 or 14...c6.

10 ♖d1

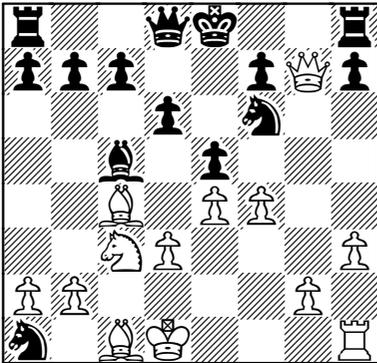


10...♘xa1

Even here, Black might consider the surprising 10...♘h5 11 ♗g4 ♘xa1 12 ♗xh5 0-0, as suggested by Thomas Johansson in *The Fascinating King's Gambit*. Before capturing on a1, Black jettisons his other knight in order to secure his kingside. The question then is whether he can create serious counterplay (by ...c7-c6 and ...b7-b5 or ...d6-d5,

say) before White rounds up the knight in the corner – or should White try 13 ♖f1, followed by f5, with the idea of f6? Throughout the entire history of this line, there seems to have been little or no mention of this possibility, let alone practical tests.

11 ♖xg7



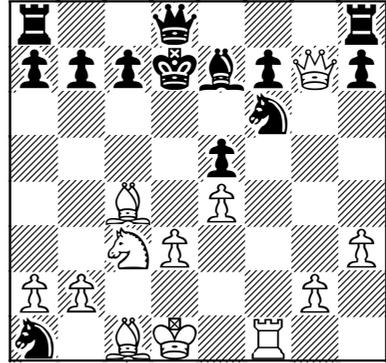
11...♔d7

This was an apparently new, typically gutsy, ambitious and complex try at the time. Pillsbury abandons his f-pawn in a bid to run his king to safety away from the kingside danger zone.

The only other option is 11...♖f8?!, but this probably just loses to 12 fxe5 dxe5 13 ♔g5 ♔e7 14 ♖f1. Then R.J.Fischer-M.McDermott, New York (simul) 1964, continued 14...♘h5? (or if 14...♘h5? 15 ♔xf7+ ♔d7 16 ♖xe5 wins – Chigorin) 15 ♘xe4 f5 16 ♖xh7 ♔xg5 17 ♖g6+ 1-0. Nigel Davies looked at 14...♖d4!? (14...♖d7 15 ♔xf6 0-0-0 allows 16 ♔xe5) 15 ♔xf6 0-0-0 16 ♖g4+ ♔b8 17 ♔xe7 ♖xc4 18 ♔c1 ♖xd3 19 ♔xf8 ♖xc3+ 20 bxc3, but White's king

appears to be able to escape all threats of perpetual check.

12 fxe5 dxe5 13 ♖f1 ♔e7



Pillsbury was probably still in his “book” and his unexpected novelty prompts White to go wrong on his next move. Bogoljubow and others subsequently pointed out that White can now win by playing 14 ♔g5!, and if 14...♘h5 15 ♖xf7 ♖e8 16 ♖f5+ (or 16 ♖e6+ ♔d8 17 ♔b5 c6 18 ♖f7) 16...♔d8 17 ♖xe5 (threatening ♔xe7+) 17...♖f8 18 ♖xe7+ ♖xe7 19 ♖xf8+ ♔d7 20 ♔xe7 wins, or 14...♖g8 15 ♖xf7 ♖xg5 16 ♖e6+ ♔e8 17 ♖xf6 ♖g7 18 ♖xe5 c6 19 ♖f3, and if 19...♖g5 20 ♖f8+! mates.

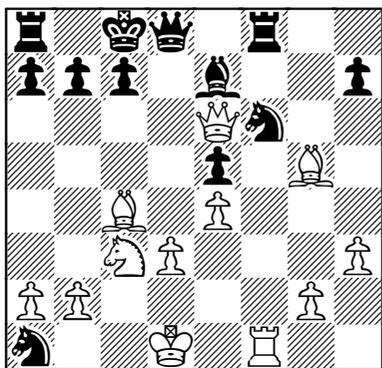
A later attempt by Black to improve, with 13...♖g8, also proved insufficient after 14 ♖xf7+ ♔c8 15 ♖xf6 ♖xg2 16 ♘e2! ♘c2 17 ♖e6 ♖f2 18 ♖h5 ♘d4 19 ♘xd4 ♖xd4 20 ♖e8+ ♔d7 21 ♖xa8 ♖f1+ 22 ♔c2 and White won in G.Maróczy-H.Wolf, Vienna 1904.

14 ♖xf7?

After this move the black king really can escape to the queenside. So Black

hangs on to his knight on f6 and remains, temporarily at least, a whole rook ahead. Nonetheless, White still has plenty of play, as the knight on a1 is unlikely to survive, and Black still has serious development problems, not least with his “extra” rook quite out of things for the moment on a8.

14...♔c8 15 ♖g5 ♜f8 16 ♚e6+



16...♔b8

Black correctly avoids 16...♚d7? 17 ♜xf6, and if 17...♙xf6 18 ♙xf6 ♚xe6 19 ♙xe6+ ♔b8 20 ♘d5, when despite the unusual material split, White’s well-placed bishops give him the advantage. Play might continue 20...a5 21 ♙f5 ♜a6 22 ♙xe5 ♜c6 23 ♘e3 and with Black’s knight still immobilized on a1, and d4-d5 threatening, White stands well.

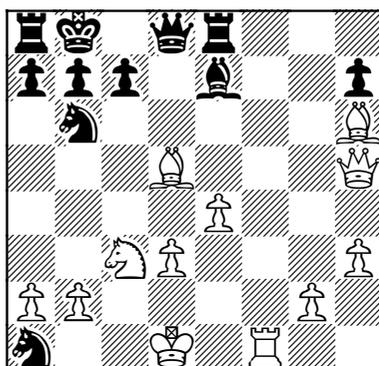
After the text move, Chigorin must in turn avoid 17 ♚xe5? ♘g8, when his initiative evaporates.

17 ♙h6 ♜e8 18 ♚xe5 ♘d7

Pillsbury switches his knight to b6, aiming to attack White’s strong bishop on c4. After the imprecise 18...♘g8,

White can exert much more pressure by playing 19 ♙g7, and if 19...♙d6 20 ♚h5. As played, White can still look forward to winning the trapped knight on a1, which would leave him with two pawns for his effective exchange sacrifice. Meanwhile Black’s pieces remain far from optimally developed, especially his queen’s rook.

19 ♚h5 ♘b6 20 ♙d5



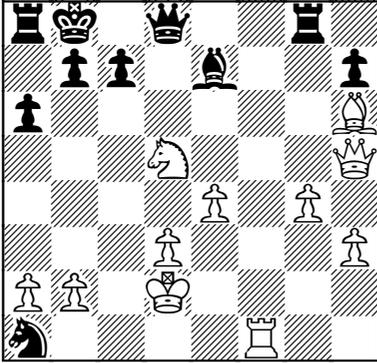
White would have preferred to retain his fine bishop (c4) and pawn (d3) placement, but he had no alternative.

20...a6

Black could already eliminate the centralized light-squared bishop by 20...♘xd5, when 21 ♘xd5 a5, intending ...♜a6, was suggested in the *Deutsche Schachzeitung*. Chigorin himself gave 21 ♚xd5!?, but both 21...a5 and 21...♙d6 seem at least sufficient against that. Pillsbury no doubt preferred to delay the knight capture to avoid drawing White’s knight to its most effective outpost on d5 until it was absolutely necessary. The clearly awful 20...c6?, allowing 21 ♙f4+

♙c8 22 ♖e6+ ♜d7 23 ♜d5! cxd5 24 ♖xd5, and wins, strikes a suitable note of caution for the defence.

21 ♙d2 ♜xd5 22 ♜xd5 ♖g8 23 g4



23...♖b4+?

So far Black has defended well, and here he could have forced an almost certain draw by 23...♖g5+ 24 ♖xg5 ♖xg5, and if 25 ♖f7 c6 26 ♖f4+ ♙a7 (not 26...♙c8? 27 ♜c7!) 27 ♖e3+ ♙b8 (*Deutsche Schachzeitung*), when White has nothing better than to take the perpetual check (28 ♖c5! ♖e5 29 ♖f8 ♖e8 30 ♖xe8 ♖xe8 31 ♖d6+ comes to the same). Objectively, this course was best. Instead, Pillsbury, whose desire to win, as here, occasionally led him to overestimate his winning chances in key battles, seems to have miscalculated. With the text he gives up his bishop in order to free his knight on a1, but this would have come completely unstuck if Chigorin had played correctly on his 25th move.

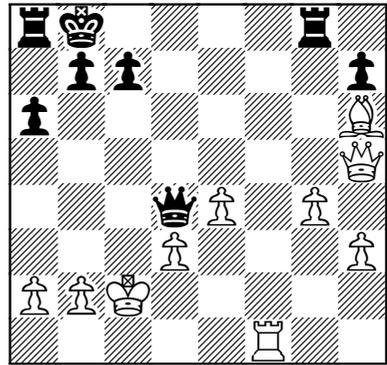
24 ♜xb4 ♖d4 25 ♜c2?

As it happens there was no need to move the knight. White probably wins

after 25 ♖f8 (Bogoljubow and others), and if 25...♖xb2+ (25...♖xf8 26 ♖xf8+ ♙a7 27 ♜c2! ♜xc2 28 ♖xa8+ ♙xa8 29 ♙xc2 leaves White two pawns up) 26 ♙e3 ♖c3 (or 26...♜c2+ 27 ♜xc2 ♖xc2 28 ♖d5! ♖h8 29 ♖d8+ ♙a7 30 ♖d4+ b6 31 ♖xh8) 27 ♖d5 ♖h8 28 e5!, when the passed e-pawn is very powerful.

The computer suggests that the remarkable 25 ♖a5!, and if 25...♖xb2+ 26 ♙d1 ♖c2+ 27 ♖d2 ♜c2 28 ♜xc2 ♖xc2 29 ♖c1, winning Black's queen, may be even more deadly. Turn on your own engines to check out the many complex and often beautiful lines that lurk here!

25...♜xc2 26 ♙xc2



26...♖g6!?

In changed circumstances, Pillsbury can now generate some serious pressure and aims to activate his rook on the third rank. But 26...♖d8 was perhaps a better way to proceed, and if 27 ♖f3 ♖a4+ 28 ♙c1 ♖xa2 (but not 28...♖d6? 29 ♖f8+ ♙a7 30 ♖c5+ ♖b6 31 ♖xa8+ ♙xa8 32 ♖f8+ ♙a7 33 ♖e3 and wins) 29 ♖g7 ♖a1+ 30 ♙d2. White probably re-

tains sufficient compensation for the exchange but no advantage.

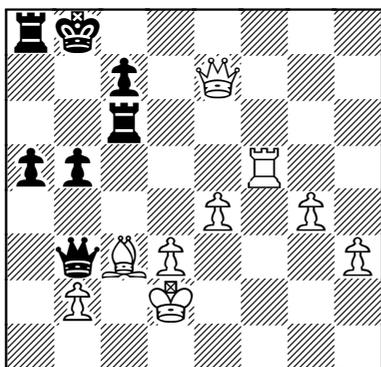
27 ♖d2 ♗d6 28 ♜f3 ♜a4+ 29 ♙c1 ♜xa2 30 ♙c3 ♜c6?!

And here Pillsbury should probably have preferred either the immediate 30...b5, with ideas of ...b5-b4, or else 30...♜a1+, followed by ...♜g1. Black's queen and rook (on c6) alone can't cause any trouble, so White effectively gains an extra tempo to consolidate.

31 ♜xh7 b5 32 ♜e7 ♜b3?

This, however, is a fatal error. Although White's passed g- and h-pawns have started to roll (so that Black is already worse), he might at least have tried the more urgent 32...♙b7.

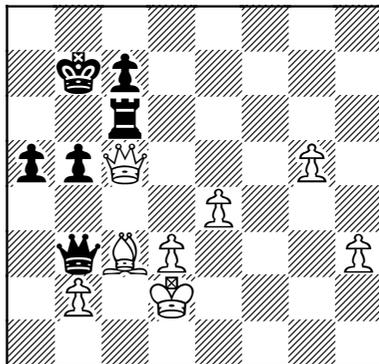
33 ♙d2 a5 34 ♜f5!



With his king and b-pawn completely secure, White can now attack on the queenside. Black's unsafe king cannot escape after 34...b4, because of 35 ♜b5+ ♙a7 36 ♜xc7+! ♜xc7 37 ♙d4+ ♙a6 38 ♜b6+ ♙a7 38 ♜xb4+ ♙a6 39 ♜xb3, when White has four passed pawns for the exchange and a straightforward win.

34...♙b7 35 ♜c5 ♜aa6 36 g5 ♜xc5 37 ♜xc5 ♜c6

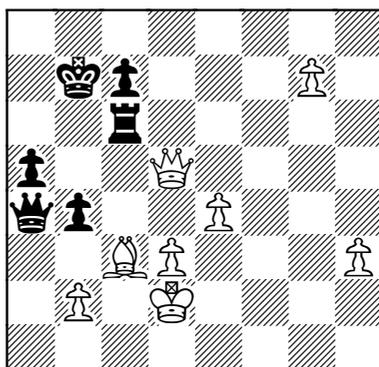
Or if 37...b4 38 ♙d4, threatening ♜b5+, and wins.



38 ♜d5!

White finishes neatly. Black can't exchange queens, as the advancing g- and h-pawns supported by the bishop would win easily. But with queens on, White can take advantage of the pin on Black's rook to advance his g-pawn.

38...♜a4 39 g6 b4 40 g7



White lose his bishop but obtains a second queen and wins comfortably,

following a series of ineffective Black spite checks.

40...bxc3+ 41 bxc3 ♖a1 42 g8 ♗xc3+ 43 ♔e2 ♗c2+ 44 ♔f3 ♗d1+ 45 ♔g3 ♗g1+ 46 ♔h4 ♗f2+ 47 ♔h5 ♗f3+ 48 ♗g4 ♗f6 49 ♗g5 ♗h6+ 50 ♔g4 ♗g7+ 51 ♗g5 1-0

Gunsberg loses too much ground in a revenge Evans Gambit

Chigorin's skill in the Evans Gambit may have been second to none but he displayed one quirk in this line. After 1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♗c6 3 ♙c4 ♙c5 4 b4 ♙xb4 5 c3 ♙a5, he invariably chose 6 0-0 rather than what we now consider to be the more accurate 6 d4. None of this made much difference until Lasker, at St Petersburg 1895-96, introduced the subtle sequence 6 0-0 d6 7 d4 ♙b6(!), which equalizes easily. Prior to that, defenders had almost automatically continued 7...exd4 8 cxd4 ♙b6, reaching the still unclear "normal" position (see also Games 5 and 6).

Chigorin played the White side of the normal position with exceptional power, a consideration that must have swayed Steinitz to search for alternatives to play against 6 0-0 in their two world championship matches. In 1889, Steinitz chose the ultra-provocative (possibly dubious) 6 0-0 ♗f6!?. In their 1892 encounter, he switched to the more conventional 6 0-0 d6 7 d4 ♙g4 and 7...♙d7. Despite reasonable results Steinitz failed to convince the chess community that either of these alternatives especially improved on

Black's prospects in the normal position.

While Anderssen generally tackled White's challenges (from the normal position) by playing the closed 9 d5, in a bid to control central space and develop slow but sure kingside pressure, Chigorin preferred the more fluid 9 ♗c3. Most modern theorists tend to sway towards Chigorin's preference (and Paul Morphy's before him), but the choice between these two approaches may nevertheless be no more than a matter of taste. Black may have an extra pawn but suffers a spatial deficit and development difficulties, not least on the queenside, in both lines.

If Steinitz declined to defend from the normal position against Chigorin in either of their two world championship matches, Gunsberg had fewer qualms. In their 1890 match, Gunsberg took on Chigorin's favourite 9 ♗c3 twice, winning both games. Gunsberg was actually dead lost in the second of these, but he played much better in the first, which proved a stern test. The players returned five years later to resume their difficult theoretical debate in this latter variation. Although Gunsberg got his improvement in first, this time Chigorin won, though perhaps not without a degree of good fortune.

From a difficult start, due entirely to Gunsberg's excellent opening preparation, Chigorin had to hustle and bruit his way back into this game, in an attempt to keep aflame the dying embers of his rapidly fading, early attacking