

C41

□ **Paul Morphy**

■ **C.P's / Two allies**

Casual game; Opera Box (1) 1858
 [A.J. Goldsby I]

(Annotated specifically for "You Tube.")
 All of the analysis was meticulously checked with Fritz 12, and then I went over it again with several other chess engines, most notably Houdini.

One of the most brilliant games of all time, and also one of my favorites. (Played in Paris, France.)

I have my own web page on Paul Morphy. (The best way to find them? Go to the "Google" website, and type in: "chess, Paul Morphy, Goldsby," and then hit enter ... there are LOTS of matches!)

My web page on this game is:
http://www.ajschess.com/lifemasteraj/morph-two_am.html.

Paul Morphy was White and two nobles (royalty/blue-bloods) teamed up here to play the Black side of this game.

White opens with his KP, as did most players of this particular era of chess.

1.e4 e5 ; (symmetry / center)

When this game was played, this was the way that nearly everyone began a game of chess.

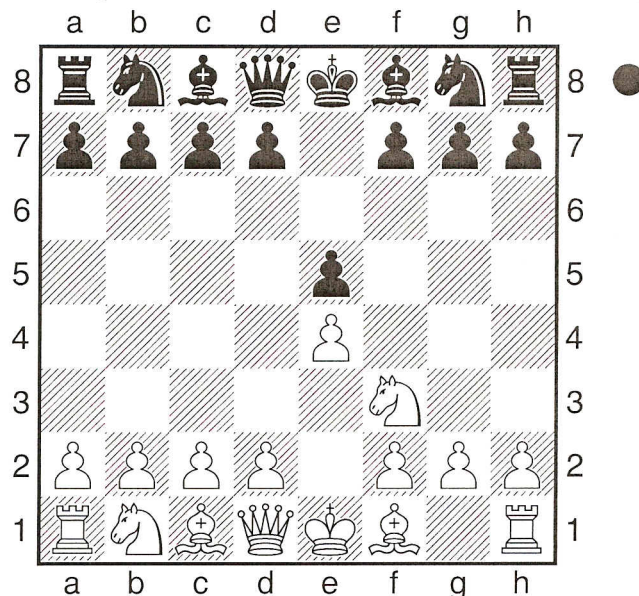
[Today, one could expect to see:

1...c5 ; (counterplay /Q-side) (The Sicilian Defense, many systems.) as this is popular with both the amateur and the master-level player.]

2.Nf3 , (Center, dev. K-side)

This is probably the best second move for White in this position, although many other moves are playable here for White.

[Also popular - at that time - was the try of: 2.d4!?, blowing the game wide open.]



Now Black must find a way to defend his KP ... or possibly he will try to counter-attack

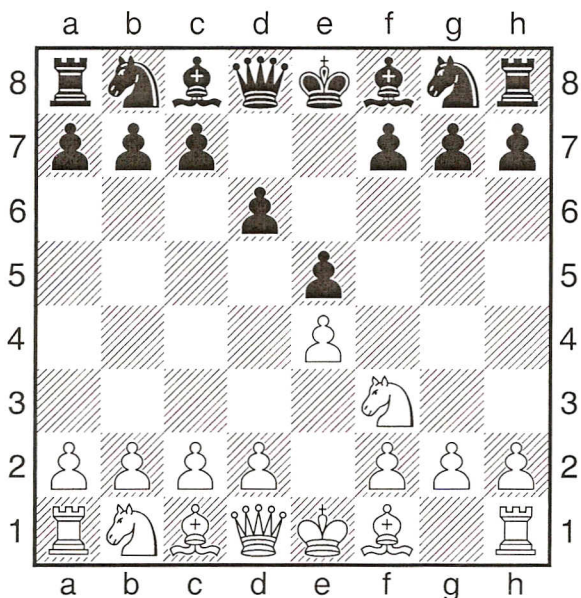
White's King-Pawn here.

2...d6 ; (Defends d6, opens the QB.)

Today, this is known as ...

"The Philidor Defense,"

[GM Bent Larsen made this opening <briefly> popular in the 1960's and early 1970's.]



In Morphy's day, this was probably played to get Paul Morphy out of his 'book'.

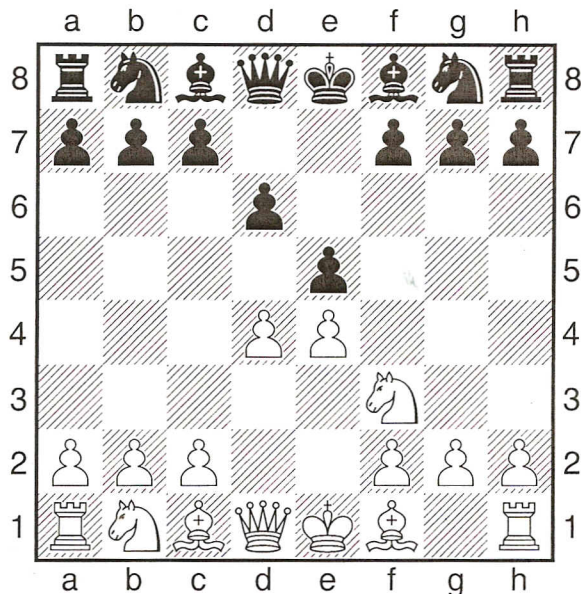
3.d4! , (pawn break, center)

This is definitely best, as White attempts to break down the e5-square, which is Black's strong point in the center.

[OK is 3.Nc3 , Drawish?]

[

Also good is: 3.Bc4± , (f7)
with some pressure for White.]



Morphy seemed to know EXACTLY what was correct ... if he had a weakness, it was in closed positions, he certainly had a great affinity for the open game in chess.

3...Bg4!? ; (Development, Pin.)

This is probably not the best move for Black. (To say the least!)

[The "Power-Book" recommends that Black (instead) play:

3...exd4 ; 4.Nxd4 Nf6 ;
5.Nc3 Be7 ; 6.Be2 a6 ;
7.Be3 0-0 ; 8.0-0± , (space)
with a small advantage for White.

A nice game in the DB would be:
 Andrei Popelyshev (2340) -
 Aelita Enderjukova (Unrated!?!);
 [C41]
 Open Champ / (Round #9)
 Moscow, RUS; 1995. (1-0, 32 m.)]
 [.

A reliable opening manual gives
 the following continuation:
 3...Nf6 ; 4.Nc3 Nbd7 ;
 5.Bc4 Be7 ; 6.O-O O-O ;
 7.a4± , ('±') with an edge.

[See MCO-15, page # 133;
 column # 01, and all notes.]

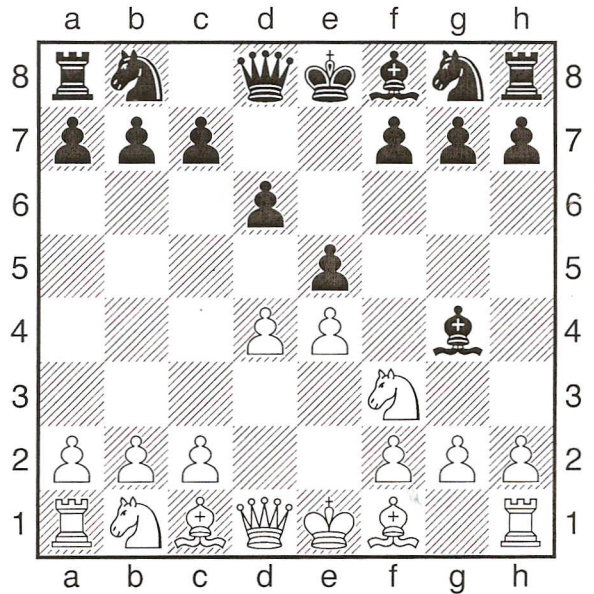
Now after 7...c6; de Firmian
 gives 8.Re1±. However, both
 Fritz-12 and I like 8.h3!

This is, of course, the recent game:
 GM Dmitrij Jakovenko (2736) -
 GM Baadur Jobava (2713); [C41]
 FIDE World Cup; (Round # 3.1) /
 Khanty Mansiysk, RUS; 03,09, 2011.
 (White ground out the win in a long
 and complicated game.)]

(Diagram)

Of course, any good chess prog
 will now show a sizable edge for
 White. (Use any available engine.)

4.dxe5 Bxf3 ; (Forced!?)
 Black does this in order not to



lose a Pawn ...

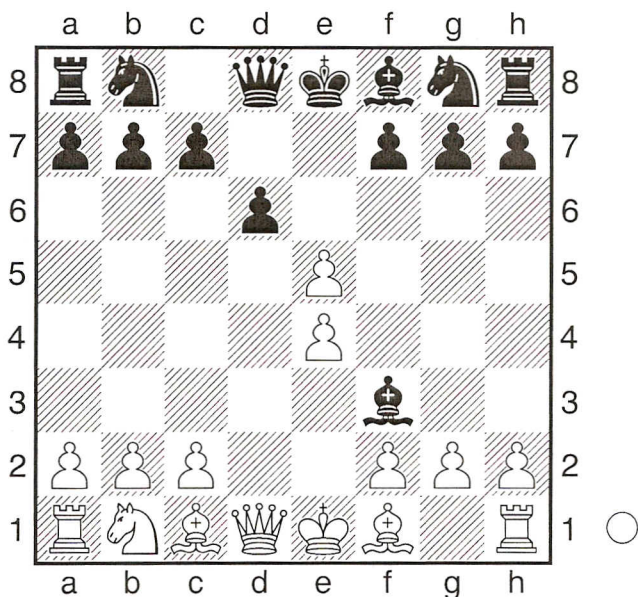
[Of course, Black should not play:
 ≤4...dxe5? ; 5.Qxd8+ Kxd8 ;
 6.Nxe5± , (Probably "+/-")
 and White has won a Pawn.]

[.

 The Fritz engine recommends:
 (>/=) RR4...Nc6 ; 5.exd6 Bxd6 ;
 6.h3± , (+ 1 Pawn)
 with the better game for White.]

(Diagram)

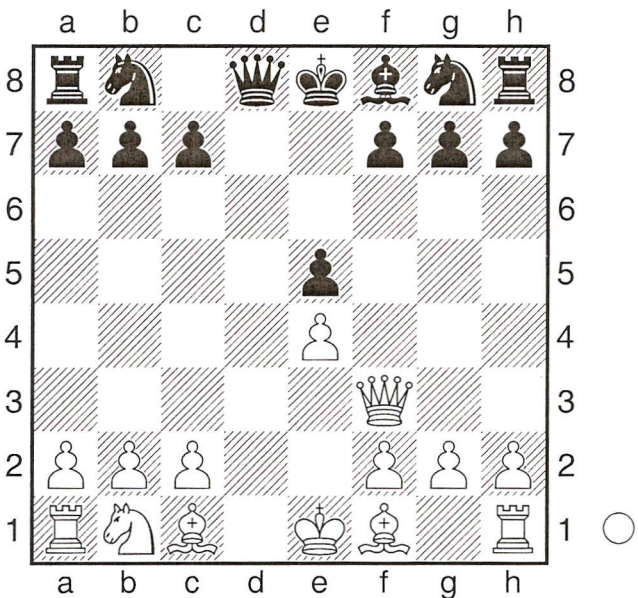
The problem with this move is that
 Black has given up his Bishop, he
 (they) have extended at least two
 tempi to swap off a key, light-squared
 defender and forced White to bring
 out his Queen, as well.



Of course, White will capture with the Queen, there was no point in White wrecking his K-side pawns.

5.Qxf3 dxe5 ; (material)

With this, Black regains the button.



Now the position LOOKS rather tranquil here, but appearances are deceiving!

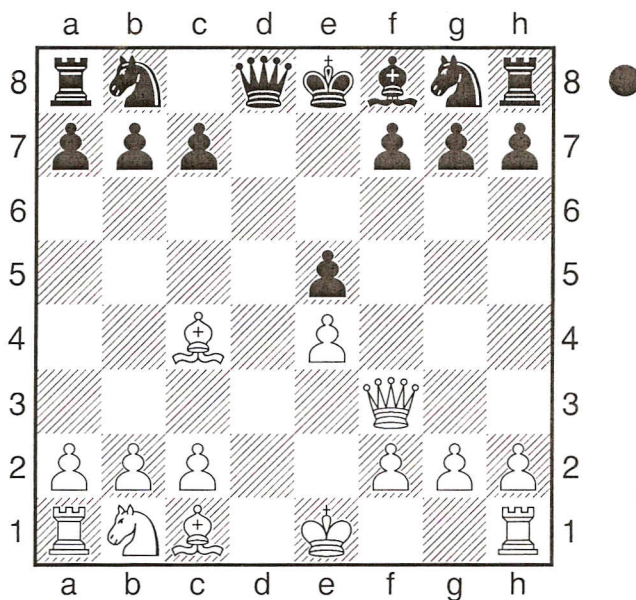
6.Bc4! ,

Here is one move ... that accomplishes all four of the opening principles ... and threatens mate as well!

[Many engines like: RR6.Qb3± , for White at this point. (This is possibly an improvement over the actual game.)]

[. *****

Color annotation: 6.Bc4!±]



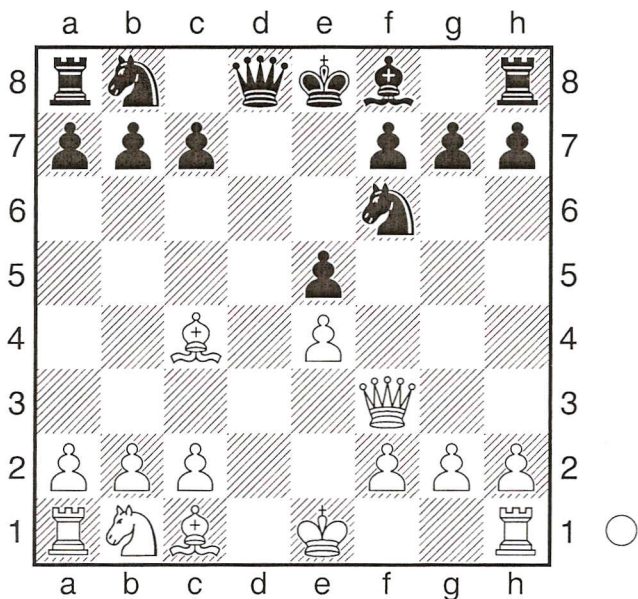
How can you ask more of a move than this?

6...Nf6!? ; (A natural move!?)

Black plays the most normal move possible, but in lieu of the verdict of many of the chess engines, this play

has to be labeled as an error here.
(I.e., "6...Nf6?")

[Most likely, Black's best line was: 6...Qf6! ; 7.Qh3 Nc6 ; 8.Nc3± , (White is better.).]



This is the current position.

White to play ...

what move would you make in this particular position?

7.Qb3! , (Surprise!!!)

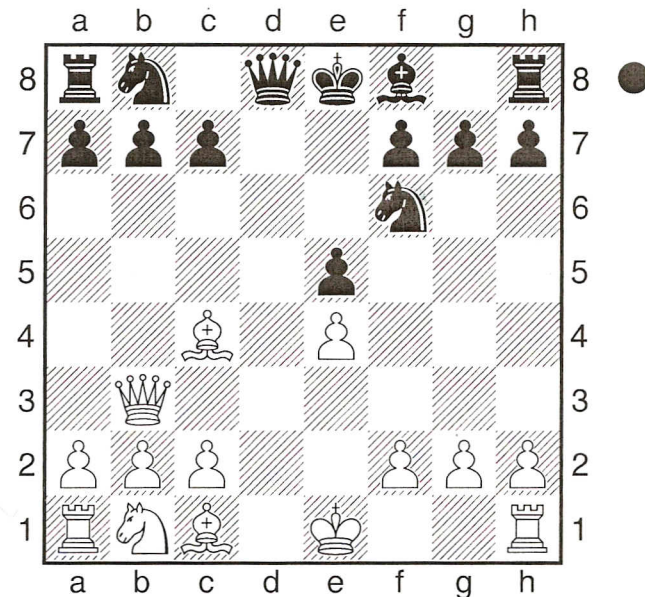
All of the books will always tell you that you (the dogma) ... that you almost NEVER move any piece twice in the opening phase of a chess game! However, here, we have an exception to that idea.

[Most of my students (if they

have never seen this game before) will {instead} choose: 7.Nc3± , or even 7.0-0. here.]

[. *****

Color commentary: 7.Qb3!]



Morphy was a true genius at chess. He intuitively understood something that the Russians elaborated nearly 100 years later, to wit: DOUBLE-ATTACKS ARE THE CORE OF EVERY TACTICAL OPERATION!!!

Here, after the shocking Queen shift, White suddenly has TWO threats ... that are nearly impossible for Black to satisfactorily meet in this position.

7...Qe7 ; (Best!? Maybe - '!')

Black actually does well here, and seems to come up with a way to try and save his game.

[Black thinks to save himself with:
 ≤7...Qd7? ; 8.Qxb7 Qc6 ;
 9.Bb5!+- , (material)
 when Black loses the ♔.]

8.Nc3!! , (Why not take @b7?)
 White thumbs his nose at winning one Pawn here ... or really disdains ANY kind of material gain, here.

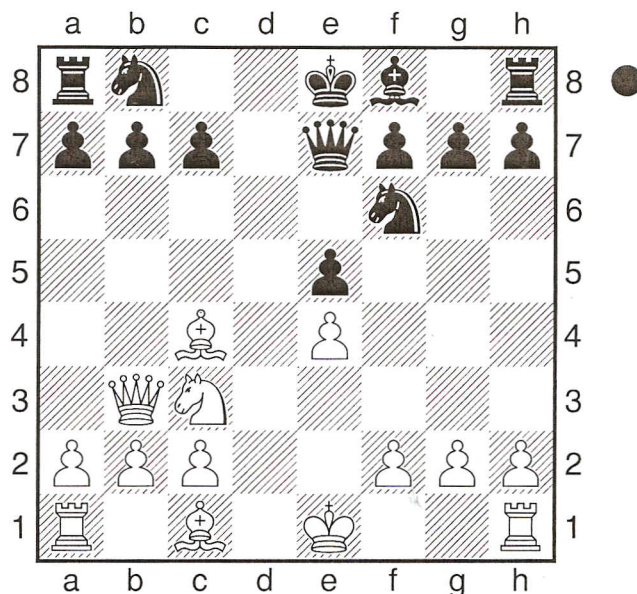
[Instead, after the continuation of:
 RR8.Qxb7 Qb4+ ; 9.Qxb4 Bxb4+ ;
 10.c3+- , White only wins a Pawn.]
 [.

 Most chess engines still choose:
 RR8.Bxf7+! Qxf7 ; 9.Qxb7+- ,
 and White win win quite a bit of material ... from this position.]

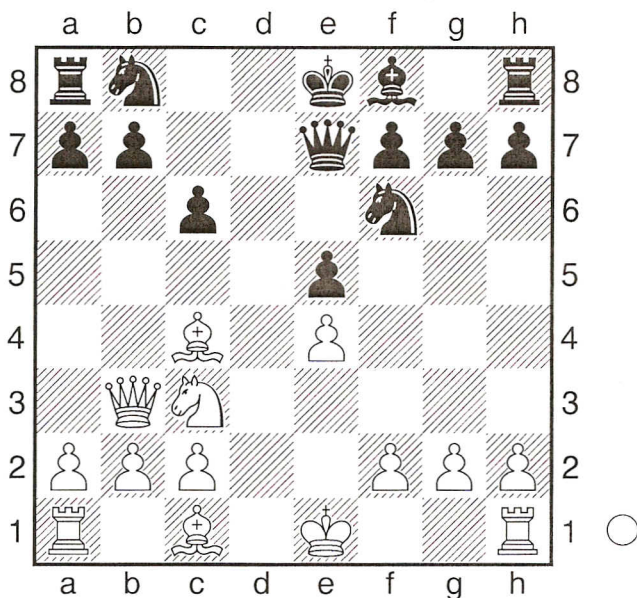
(Diagram)

The simple FACT is that ...
 for a great many years ...
 even the computers would not even consider this move!

8...c6! ; (Best / "Box" / Forced.)
 Fritz 12 shows this as best ...
 which refutes what many other masters have thought about this move.



[≤8...Nbd7? ; 9.Qxb7+-]

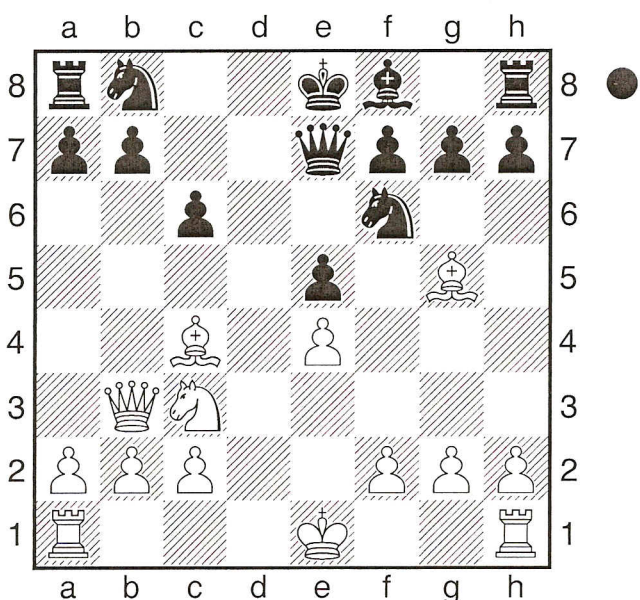


With his last move, Black keeps White's pieces off both b5 and d5; while (laterally) protecting b7.

9.Bg5! , ("Pin ... and win.")

This is, without any doubt,
White's best move here.

[Many chess engines - to
include Fritz 12 - seem to prefer:
≤9.0-0!?± , (w/advantage)
when White is much better.]



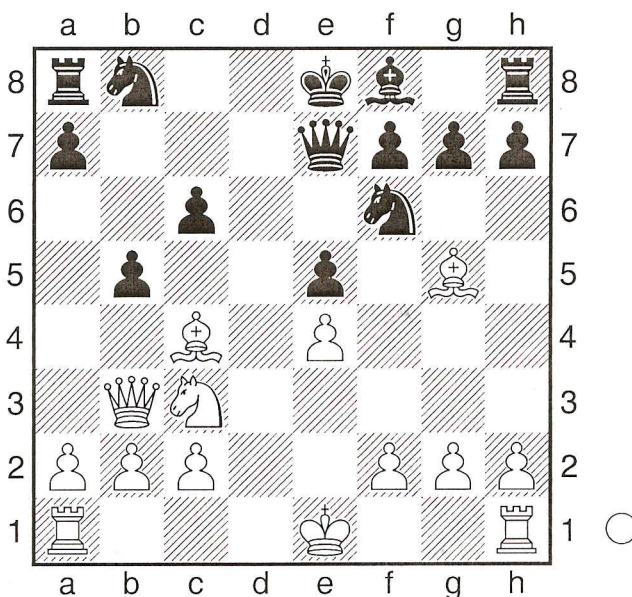
Now Black's entire King-side is
completely tied in knots here.

9...b5!? ; (Maybe - '!')

An energetic idea by Black, if
White retreats, then Black will
have a fairly good game.
(This is the second or third choice
of many of the modern engines.)

[The best that the machine can
come up with is: 9...Na6 ;

10.Bxf6 gxf6 ; 11.Bxa6 bxa6 ;
12.Qc4 Qc5 ; 13.Qxa6+- ,
White wins a Pawn - & the game.]



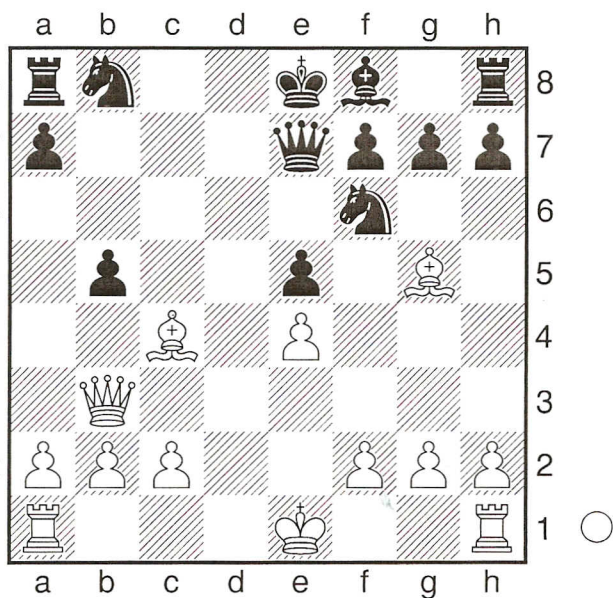
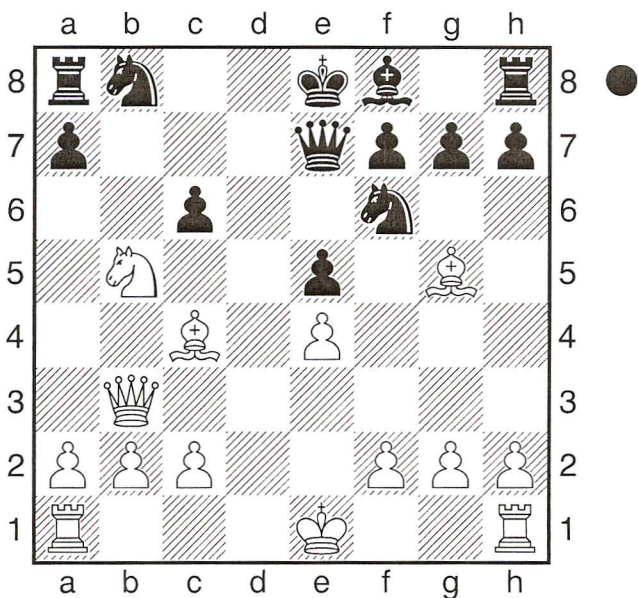
Unfortunately for Morphy's two
opponents here, Paul does not
even use the concept: "retreat,"
it is just not a part of his overall
chessical vocabulary.

10.Nxb5!! , (Maybe - '!!!') Stunning!
Morphy does not hesitate to sacrifice
anything ... (Have gun - will travel?).

[≤10.Be2 Nbd7 ; 11.a3±]

(Diagram)

When I first saw this game, I thought



that White's last move was wrong ...
of course, I failed to even guess
what Paul Morphy had in mind for
his opponents!

10...cxb5!? ; (Accepting the sack.)
One thing that is NOT commonly
understood about this game ...

[The mighty machine recommends:
♞10...Qb4+! ; 11.Qxb4 Bxb4+ ;
12.c3 cxb5 ; 13.Bxb5+ Ke7 ;
14.cxb4+- . (White is+ 2 ♖'s.)

and although White probably
has won a decisive amount
of material, perhaps Black
can continue the struggle, if
he is so minded here.]

The code of chivalry (in chess) that
was (more or less) in effect back then,

was that Black should always accept
these type of sacrifices.

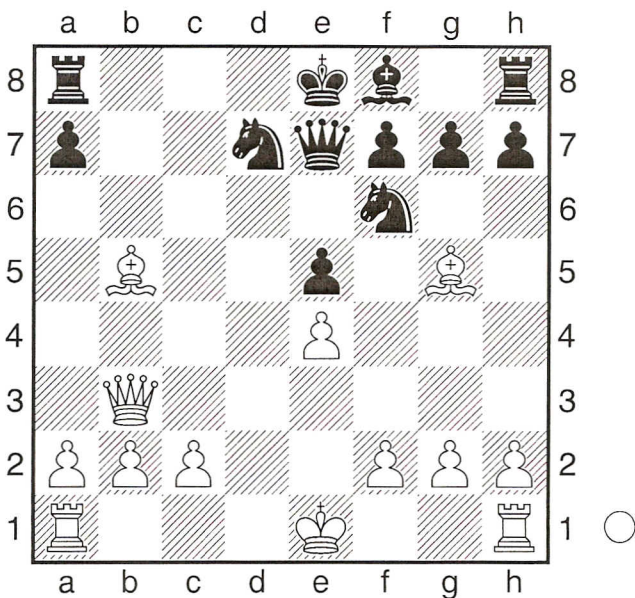
White's next might be the only
semi-obvious move of the whole
game

11.Bxb5+ Nbd7 ; (Forced!)
Black had no choice here.

[≤11...Kd8? ; 12.0-0-0+ Kc7 ;
13.Rd3!+-]

(Diagram)

The allies/consultation team of
The Count of Isouard and The
Duke of Brunswick did not want
to lose material ... and the King
(obviously!) could not venture
out into the open board.



12.0-0-0! , (Correct!)

Many of my students pick castling King-side, but this would be a much less energetic continuation than what Morphy actually played.

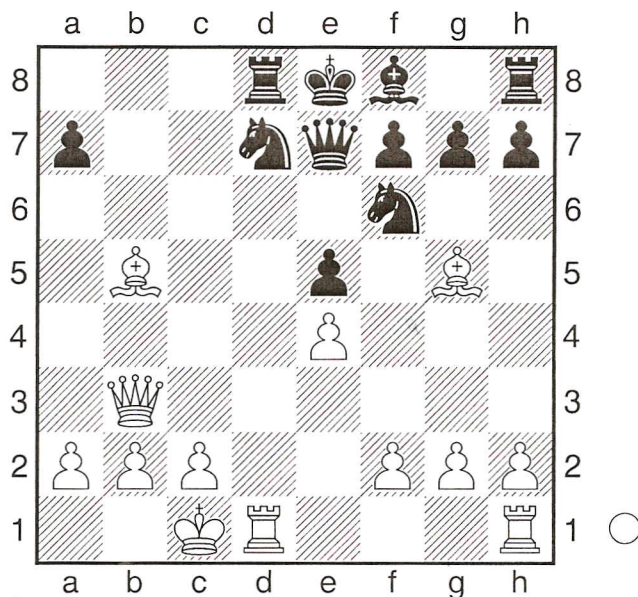
[The try of: 12.0-0!?, (♔ safety.) may yet still win for White, but is certainly less accurate than the continuation of the actual game.]

12...Rd8 ; '♞' (Probably best.)

This looks forced, the human reaction in such positions is to try and defend as long as possible. (Chess engines often play the strategy of "give-away" ... all in an attempt to avoid mate ... or simply prolong the game.)

[The machine prefers ...Rd8; but Black will still lose, for example:

RR12...Qc5!? ; 13.Bxf6 gxf6 ; 14.Bxd7+ Ke7 ; 15.Kb1 Bh6 ; 16.Rd5+- , and White wins.]



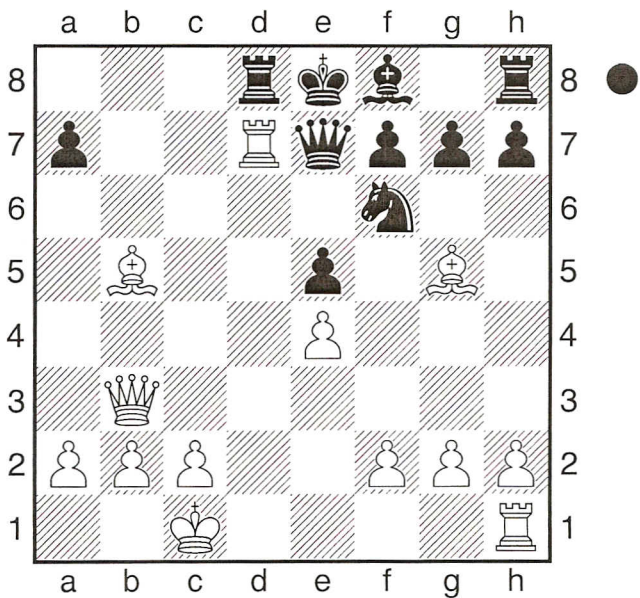
Black looks to be defending ... how does White break through?

"White to move and win."
13.Rxd7!! , (Forceful & best!)

A common reaction by many students is to double on the d-file here.

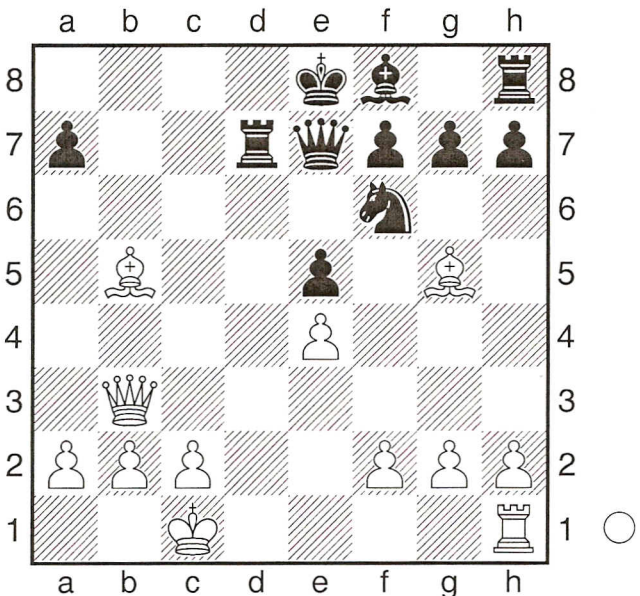
[A few years back, a young student of mine found 13.Rd3 here ... this also wins for White:
13.Rd3 a6 ; 14.Bc6 Qb4 ; 15.Qxb4 Bxb4 ; 16.Rhd1+- .]

This will win, but Morphy finds



a much better way!

13...Rxd7□ ; (Forced/best.)
Not much choice here.

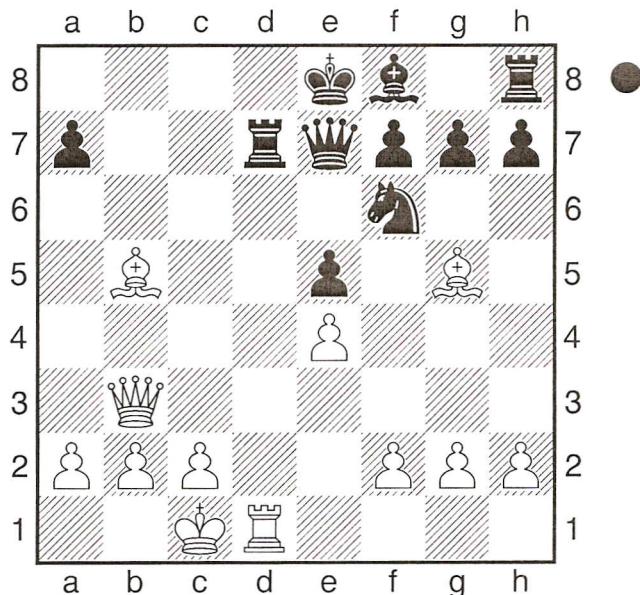


At first glance, Black appears to be OK here. However, upon deeper

inspection, it becomes obvious that Black will have grave difficulties getting his K-side pieces into play.

Now White brings up the reserves.
14.Rd1 , (Exploiting the pin.)
White stacks up on the d-file.

[Many of my students (in the past) have opted for the continuation of:
≤14.Bxf6!? Qxf6 ; 15.Rd1 Bd6 ; 16.Qh3± , w/ the better game. (Black will have some drawing chances, due to the endgame of opposite-colored Bishops.)]

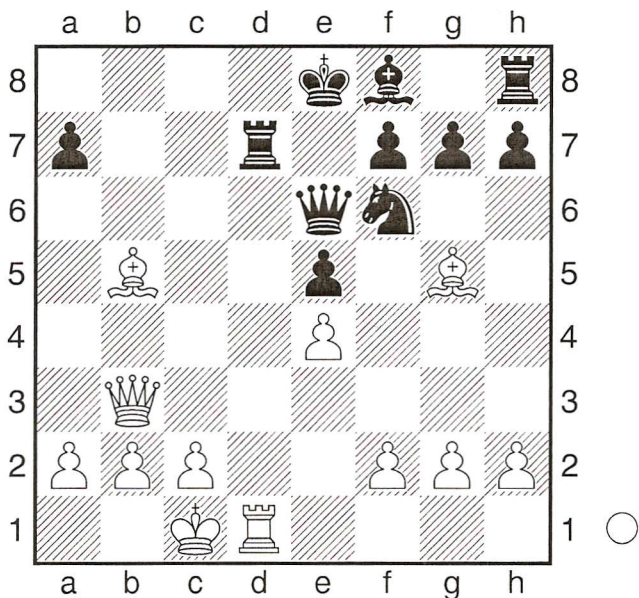


Now it is clear that White must regain some of his material.

14...Qe6 ; (What else here?)

Short of going beserk ... and throwing away material, there isn't much better here for Black.

[An amazing line would be:
 ≤14...Qb4? ; 15.Bxf6 Qxb3? ;
 16.Bxd7#! , & Black is mated.]

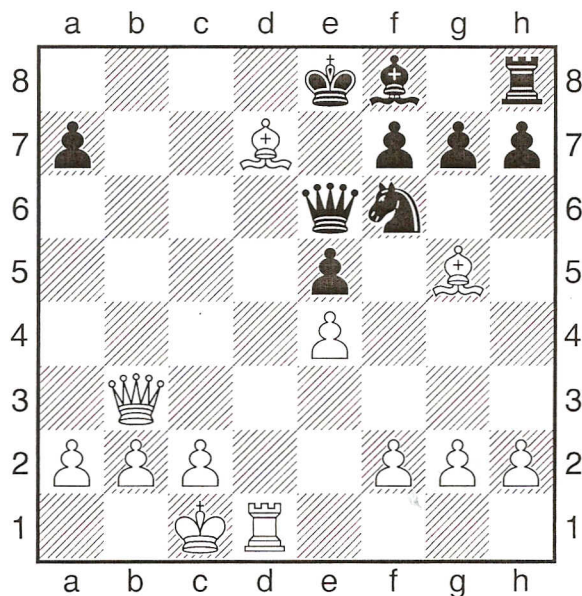


This is the current position.

15.Bxd7+! , (Good! / Unexpected!!)

A 'normal' player might have exchanged Queens here ...

[A mere mortal might have played:
 ≤15.Qxe6+!? fxe6 ; 16.Bxf6 gxf6 ;
 17.Rxd7 Bh6+ ; 18.Kd1 0-0 ;
 19.Bc4+- , with a won game.]



and tried to get the Rook back.
 But Morphy was exceptional!!!

Now White finishes brilliantly ...
 anything less, would be a big disappointment for all of Paul Morphy's many fans!

15...Nxd7 ; **16.Qb8+!** Nxb8 ;
17.Rd8# .

Take a look at the final position:

(Diagram)

This is true economy of force, White has mated his opponent with his last two available pieces!!!!

