

## File Bodies Raymond Keene

Some games of chess are decided solely and simply because one side gains control of an open file with rooks and the queen, and then proceeds to dominate it as a springboard for invasion of the opponent's camp. One of the most celebrated examples of this strategy was the game won by the ingenious world champion Alexander Alekhine against one of his main rivals, Aron Nimzowitsch, at San Remo 1930. Less well known is a victory by Richard Reti on a similar theme — which actually precedes the Alekhine masterpiece by several years. This week I give the Alekhine game and the Reti version as the puzzle.

The notes to this game are based on those by Garry Kasparov in his *My Great Predecessors* series (Everyman Chess).

### Alekhine–Nimzowitsch: San Remo 1930; French Defence

**1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 e5 c5 5 Bd2 Ne7 6 Nb5 Bxd2+ 7 Qxd2 0-0 8 c3 b6** This move is unsuccessful as Black does not succeed in exchanging his light squared bishop. **9 f4 Ba6 10 Nf3 Qd7 11 a4 Nbc6 12 b4 cxb4 13 cxb4 Bb7 14 Nd6 f5** This is the decisive strategic error. Black's only chance lay in obtaining some more space with 14... a5 15 Bb5 axb4 16 0-0 after which White has to waste some time regaining his pawn. **15 a5 Nc8** If 15... bxa5 then 16 b5 Nd8 17 Rxa5. **16 Nxb7 Qxb7 17 a6 Qf7 18 Bb5** (see diagram 1) Now the game is effectively over. Black is unable to defend the c6- and c7-squares. **18... N8e7 19 0-0 h6 20 Rfc1 Rfc8 21 Rc2 Qe8** If 21... Nd8 then 22 Rac1 Rxc2 23 Rxc2 Rc8 24 Rxc8 Nxc8 25 Qc3 Ne7 26 Qc7 winning. **22 Rac1 Rab8 23 Qe3 Rc7 24 Rc3 Qd7 25 R1c2 Kf8** A desperate idea in a desperate position. **26 Qc1** Following the tripling of the major pieces on the c-file, White's pressure becomes unbearable. **26... Rbc8 27 Ba4** (see diagram 2) The last link in the positional attack started with 15 a5. In

Diagram 1

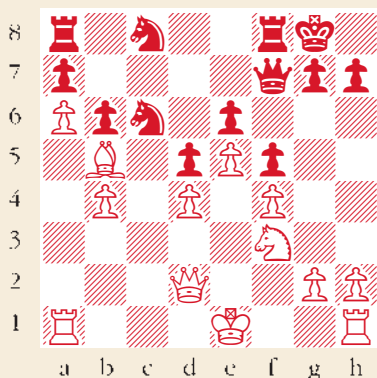
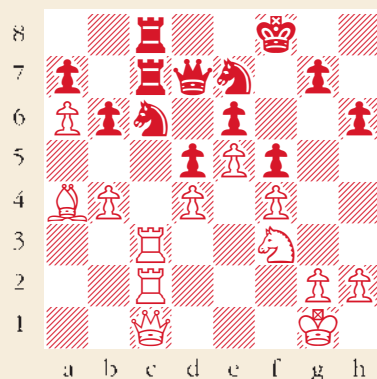


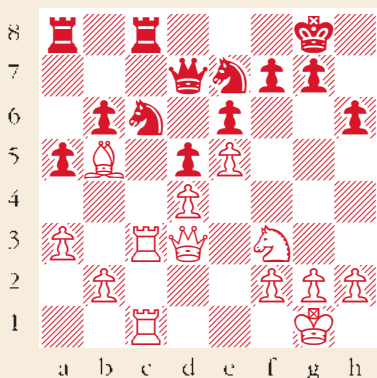
Diagram 2



order to save the piece threatened by b5 Black must sacrifice the b-pawn. After this he succeeds in protecting the important squares with his king but still loses as a consequence of zugzwang. **27... b5 28 Bxb5 Ke8 29 Ba4 Kd8 30 h4 h5 31 Kh2 g6 32 g3** Black resigns

The victim exclaimed, 'He treats us like children!'

### Puzzle No. 56



White to play. This position is from Reti–Spielmann, Vienna 1928. How did White increase the pressure decisively? Answers to me at *The Spectator* by Tuesday 10 February or via email to victoria@spectator.co.uk or by fax on 020 7961 0058. The winner will be the first correct answer out of a hat, and each week I shall be offering a prize of £20. Please allow six weeks for prize delivery.

**Last week's solution:** 1 Bd2  
**Last week's winner:** V.A. Smith, London N10