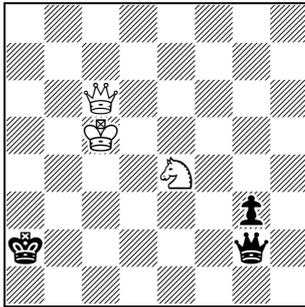


## The Chess Endgame Studies of Richard Réti : Queens

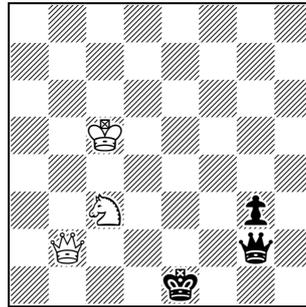
John Beasley, 14 January 2012, minor corrections 2 March

7.1 (M 46)



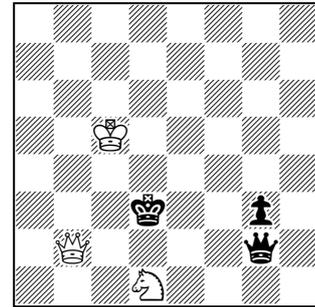
White to play and win

7.1a



After 5 Ke1

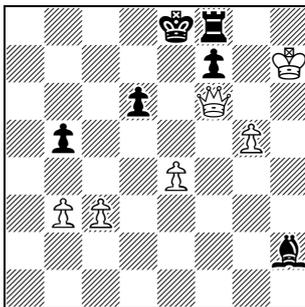
7.1b



After 9...Kd3

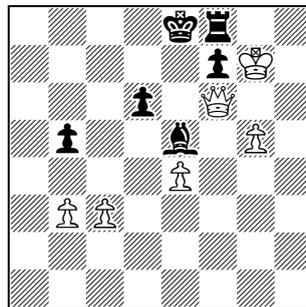
7.1 (*Wiener Tagblatt*, 1925) looks trivial, **1 Nc3+** for **2 QxQ**, but **1...Ka1** sets a stalemate trap and it will be the first of many. **2 Qa4+/Qa6+ Kb2** **3 Qa2+ Kc1** (second stalemate trap) **4 Qb1+ Kd2** **5 Qb2+ Ke1** (third stalemate trap, see 7.1a) **6 Qc1+ Kf2** **7 Nd1+ Kf3** (7...Ke2 8 Qb2+ and as after move 9 below) **8 Qc3+ Ke2** (8...Ke4 9 Qd4+ with 9...Kf3 10 Qd5+ or 9...Kf5 10 Ne3+, 8...Kf4 9 Qf6+ Ke4 and again 10 Qd4+) **9 Qb2+ Kd3** (fourth stalemate trap and the most elegant of the four, see 7.1b) **10 Qb3+ Kd2/Ke2** (10...Ke4 11 Qd5+) **11 Qa2+ Kd3** **12 Nb2+** (the queen can do no more, but the knight takes up the baton) **Ke3/Ke2** (12...Kc3 13 Na4+) **13 Nc4+ Kf3** **14 Ne5+** and at last the capture of the queen will be possible. Stalemate defences like this had been explored before, but nothing like as intensively.

7.2 (M 48)



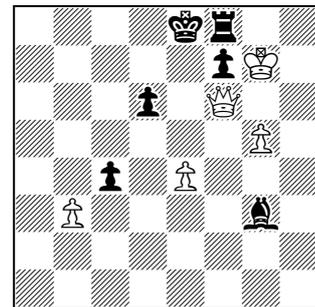
White to play and win

7.2a



After 2 Kg7

7.2b



2...Bg3, after 3...bxc4

If White can disentangle himself in 7.2 (1st Prize, *Shakhmaty*, 1928/I) he can expect to have a routine win. Even counting Black's rook and bishop as approximately equivalent to White's queen, which in truth they aren't, White is already a pawn up, and Black will not find it easy to defend his b-pawn. However, the natural attack **1 Qf1** can be met by **1...Be5**, and after **2 Qxb5+ Ke7** the threat of mate on h8 will force White to settle for perpetual check. Better is **1 Kh6** threatening to extricate the king by Kh5 and Kg4, but is not **1...Be5** still a nuisance? It is, and it compels White to backtrack and play **2 Kg7** (see 7.2a).

If now **2...Bxf6+** then **3 gxf6**, after which the rook will fall and White will win the pawn ending. This leaves **2...Bh2/Bg3** as the only moves to avoid immediate material loss, and White advances by **3 c4**. If **3...b4** then **4 c5** undermining Black's support for e5, hence **3...bxc4** and we have 7.2b.

**4 bxc4**, perhaps? No, **4...Be5**, and White has no good move (**5 c5 Bxf6+ 6 gxf6 dxc5** and it will be Black who wins). White must throw his e-pawn to use up a tempo, **4 e5**, and now **4...Bxe5 5 bxc4** gives the burden of moving to Black. He has only **5...Bxf6+ 6 gxf6 Rh8 7 Kxh8 Kd7** hoping for **8 Kg7 Ke6** winning, but of course White has seen this one before: **8 Kg8 Ke6 9 Kg7**.

And because 7.2a is a position of reciprocal zugzwang, there is a note that **1 Kg7** can be met by **1...Be5** after which we have 7.2a with White to play, though I would expect the move **1 Kg7** to be tried only by a cook-hunter because it does nothing to further White's strategic aims.