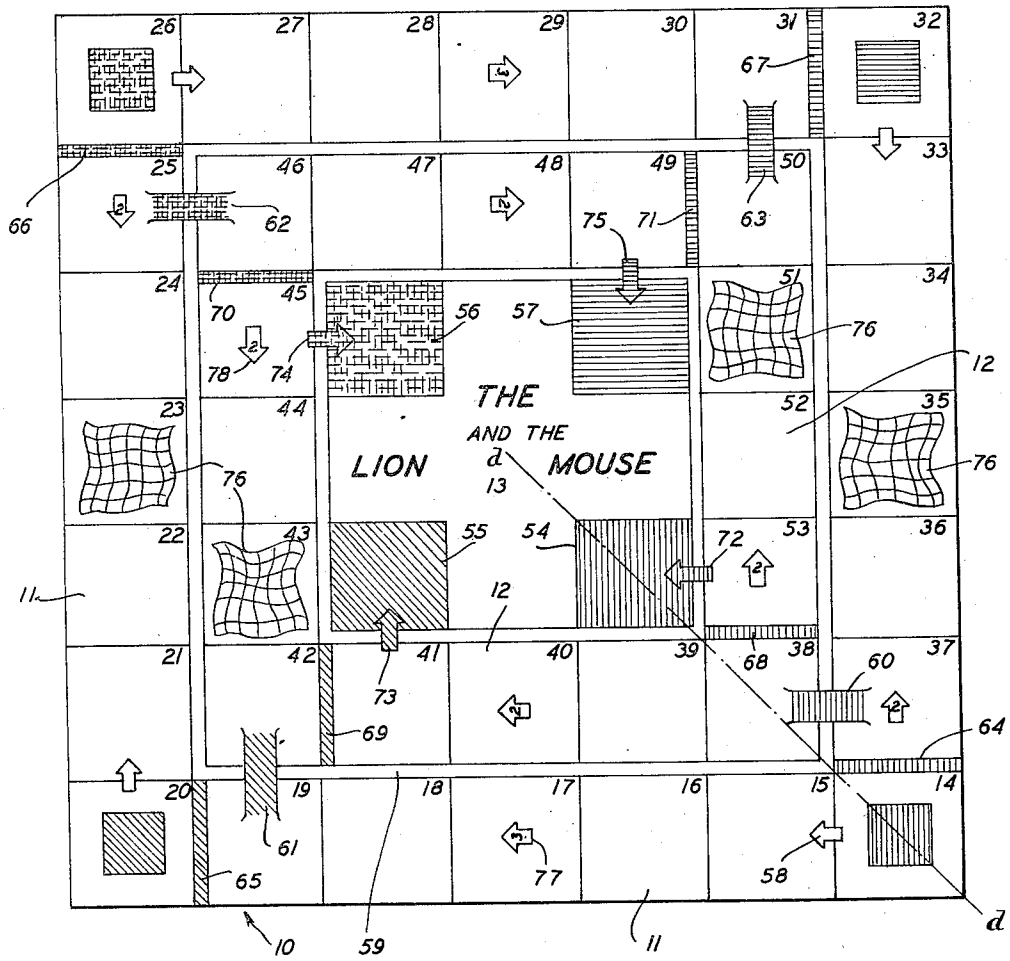
Oct. 12, 1948. M. BRUCK 2,451,196

BOARD GAME DEVICE

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FIG. 1.



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FIG. 2.

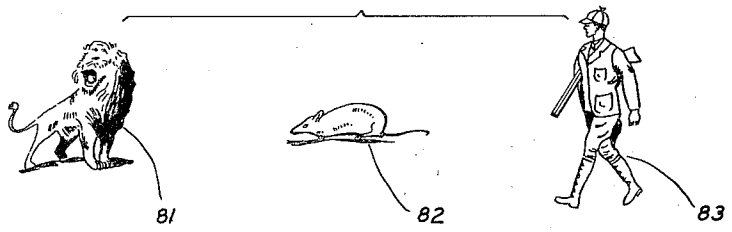
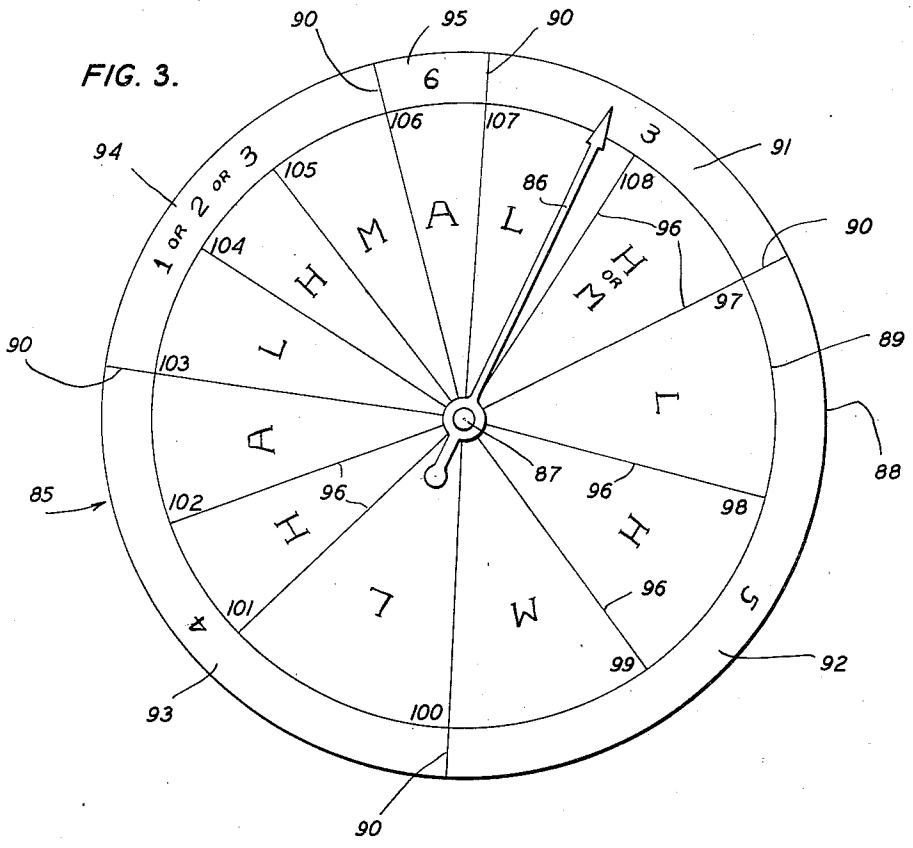


FIG. 3.



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BOARD GAME DEVICE

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8 Claims. (Cl. 273—134)

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The invention relates to a board game and is intended to provide a game of skill, luck and amusement. It aims to enact the Aesopian fable of the Lion and the Mouse according to which the tiny mouse, caught but released by the lion, shows her gratitude by freeing the lion who has fallen in the hunter's trap net.

A further object of the invention is to provide a game board having novel marking and directive features which are related to the playing pieces used in the game.

Another object is to provide a novel spinner for use in the game wherein the pointer indicates the kind of piece and the number of steps it is to be moved.

Further objects and details of the invention will be apparent from the description given hereinafter and the accompanying drawing illustrating an embodiment thereof by way of example.

Fig. 1 is a top plan view of one form of arrangement of the game board for four players,

Fig. 2 is a perspective view of a set of playing pieces for use in the game, four sets of similar configuration but differing in color being provided, and

Fig. 3 is a top plan view of a spinner to determine the moves of the pieces in the game.

Referring now to Fig. 1, the board 10 in its preferred form is a square although other shapes may be used. The total area of the board comprises an outer ring zone or course 11, an inner ring zone or course 12, and a central field 13. The zones are divided in steps or squares herein denoted, for reference purposes, with the numerals from 14 to 53 and corner areas 54, 55, 56 and 57 are marked in the central field 13. The squares 14, 20, 26 and 32 are corner squares whereas the squares 15 to 19, 21 to 25, 27 to 32, and 33 to 37 are intermediate squares of the outer zone 11. Similarly, squares 38, 42, 46 and 50 are corner squares and 39 to 41, 43 to 45, 47 to 49 and 51 to 53 are intermediate squares of the inner zone. In this connection it is to be noted that it is immaterial how many intermediate squares are provided between each two adjacent corner squares of either the outer or inner zone. At each corner square, an arrow, such as 58 in connection with square 14, indicates the direction in which the playing pieces are to be advanced as it will be described hereinafter. A demarcation line 59 which may be illustrated e. g. as a river, separates the outer from the inner zone. Passage markings 60, 61, 62 and 63 which may simulate bridges indicate where the demarcation line may be crossed. Each of these passage

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markings connect one of the corner squares of the inner zone with the adjacent intermediate square of the outer zone on that side of the also adjacent corner square of the outer zone which is not provided with a direction arrow. For instance, the passage marker 60 connects the inner zone corner square 38 with the intermediate square 37 which is adjacent the outer corner square 14. Between each corner square of the outer zone and the adjacent intermediate square from which the bridge leads to the adjacent inner corner square, a barrier or fence marking is provided. Thus, barrier marking 64 is located between the squares 14 and 37. The other barrier markings are denoted by the numerals 65, 66 and 67 respectively. Similarly, a second set of barrier markings 68, 69, 70 and 71 separate each one of the inner zone corner squares from its adjacent intermediate square on the side of the passage marking opposite the adjacent barrier marking of the outer zone. For instance, barrier or fence marking 68 separates corner square 38 from intermediate square 53 so that the bridge 60 is located between both barriers 68 and 64. From each intermediate square adjacent a barrier marking of the inner zone an entrance marking guides to the adjacent corner area of the central field. In the illustrated embodiment these entrance markings are in the shape of arrows 72 to 75. Selected ones of the intermediate squares e. g. the squares 23, 43, 51 and 35 are provided with other symbols indicating lion traps such as the nets 76. The number of traps and their location in relation to each other is immaterial. In addition, other intermediate squares may have signs to direct a playing piece reaching such square a predetermined number of squares forward or backward. Thus, for instance, the arrow 77 with the numeral "3" therein is intended to send a playing piece three steps or squares onward to either square 20 or 42 whichever, according to the rules hereinafter explained, will be in the forward direction of the piece. Arrow 78, on the other hand, will return a piece to square 43 with trap 76. Symbols, preferably colors, are used to co-ordinate the outer corner square, and the corner area of the central field, which are located on the same half-diagonal *d—d* of the board, and the adjacent passage and entrance markings to each other. The adjacent barrier markings may or may not be provided with the same symbol. In Fig. 1 colors are shown according to the chart of the Rules of Practice of the U. S. Patent Office. Hence, the vertical hatching of the square 14, area 54, barriers

64 and 68, bridge 60 and arrow 72 indicates a red color, whereas the corresponding parts in connection with the corner square 20 are green, those with corner square 26 are yellow, and those with corner square 32 are blue.

A characteristic of the described board consists in the fact that pieces traveling the same ring course from different starting points have overlapping paths of equal length, and this being true with regard to the outer ring course 11 as well as to the inner ring course 12.

Four sets of playing pieces, shown in Fig. 2, are provided for use with the board just described. Each set comprises at least one piece 81 simulating a lion, at least one piece 82 simulating a mouse, and at least one piece 83 simulating a hunter. It is preferred to have one lion, one mouse and two hunters in each set in order to balance the chances. However, it is also possible to play the game with e. g. only one hunter or even more than two hunters in each set. All the pieces constituting a set are provided with the same symbol, the symbols of the sets, however, are different from each other and correspond to those of the corner groups on the board respectively. Thus, if colors are used as such symbols on the board the same colors will be applied to the sets of pieces, meaning in the present case that there will be a red, a green, a yellow, and a blue set.

Although it is possible to use any conventional means for determining the length of a move of a playing piece in connection with my game, I have found that the game becomes much more interesting if it is not left to a player's discretion which of his various pieces he will move when it is his turn. My invention comprises, therefore, also a device in the form of a spinner whereby the length of a move as well as the kind of a piece which is to be moved will be determined by spinning a pointer. The spinner according to my invention has the further advantage that by its design and arrangement chances of the game can be more or less balanced as desired. The spinner shown in Fig. 3 comprises a circular chart 85 and a pointer 86 rotatable about the chart center 87. A ring zone is formed between an outer circle 88 and an inner circle 89. This zone is divided by a first set of radii 90—five in the present case—in a corresponding number of sections 91 to 95, each provided with a figure indicating the number of steps a playing piece may be moved. In the illustrated embodiment there appear the numbers "3" to "6" in the sections 91, 93, 92 and 95 respectively, whereas the fifth section 94 allows either one or two or three steps. The spaces between each two radii 90 and the inner circle 89 may be divided by a second group of radii 96 and by the radii of the first group in a number of sectors, in the present case twelve, denoted by reference numerals 97 to 108 respectively. Most sectors are provided with a mark relating it to a particular kind of playing piece. Thus the sectors 97, 100, 103 and 107 are marked with an L to identify these sectors with the lion piece of the player for whom the pointer has been rotated, and the pointer 86 having come to rest on sector 107 and section 91 indicates that the player's lion piece is to be advanced three steps according to the number on section 91. Similarly, sectors 98, 101 and 104 are provided with an H which stands for "hunter," and sectors 99 and 105 with an M for "mouse." The sector 108 with the legend "H or M" leaves the player the choice whether he will move the lion or the mouse, whereas sectors 102 and 106 having the letter "A" for "any" leave an entirely free choice as to the piece which may be moved. It will be noticed that the numbers, sizes and markings of the sectors associated with each section are very different. The illustrated arrangement has been selected as particularly well suited to furnish a highly interesting game with balanced chances, notwithstanding a great variety of possibilities. It is, of course, also possible to provide the sections with markings indicating pieces to be moved, and the sectors with markings indicating the number of steps to be taken.

Rules of the game

The game in the illustrated arrangement of the board is intended for four players. Each of them selects a set of pieces with which he will play, and is preferably so seated that the corner with the color of his set is in front of him. Each player's object is to finish first in playing the lion and the mouse of his set from his starting point, i. e., the outer corner square of the color of the set, in the direction of the arrows 58, that means clockwise around, first, the outer and, then, the inner ring to the equally colored central corner area or lion's den of the same color. If the lion is caught in a trap, the mouse of his color will try to free him. Each hunter helps his own mouse, does not hunt his own lion, but tries to prevent lions and mice of other colors from reaching their goal.

The players play in turn. The moves are determined by operating the spinner of Fig. 3. The piece indicated by the spinner is moved as many squares as the spinner points out. All pieces are moved only forward with the exceptions stated hereinafter. A hunter can pass over any bridge and any wall. The lions and mice can cross only the bridges of their own color and cannot pass the barriers of their color. However, a hunter may take the mouse of his color along when he reaches or passes a square occupied by the mouse. If a piece reaches an arrow 77 or 78 it is advanced or set back as many steps as the number in the arrow indicates. If a hunter reaches a square occupied by one or more than one line of another than the hunter's color the lion or lions are chased, i. e. moved e. g. five steps backward. If a lion reaches a square occupied by one or more than one hunter of a color other than that of the lion, the hunter or hunters are killed, that means removed from the board and can be returned to the game only at their respective starting points. With the exception of a lion and a hunter of different color, more than one piece may occupy the same square.

If a lion gets on a square marked as a trap 76, e. g. square 43, he is caught and cannot move until freed by the mouse of its color. In order to free the lion the mouse may be moved forward or backward, and may be moved one step rather than as many as the spinner indicates. Furthermore, while the lion is trapped, the mouse may be moved in his stead when otherwise the lion would have to be moved. The mouse frees the lion by reaching the square where he is trapped, whereupon the lion is to be advanced one square.

If a mouse and a hunter of different colors come together on the same square, the mouse is trapped until a hunter of its color reaches or passes the square to take it along. While a mouse is trapped, a hunter of its color moves instead of it.

When a lion reaches his den he does not leave it anymore. A throw of the spinner indicating

"lion" is, then, disregarded and the spinning is repeated until the pointer calls for another piece. A mouse reaching the den may be moved backward when the lion of her color is trapped. If both the lion and the mouse of the same color are trapped, a hunter of their color may be moved regardless what piece the spinner may indicate.

The foregoing rules have been found very satisfactory to render the game highly interesting, but may of course be changed if so desired. The game may, of course, be made for use by any other number of players, e. g. five or six, in which event the board may have a five- or six-cornered contour, or it may even be round, provided that the above-mentioned characteristic is maintained. On the other hand, the game can be played by less players than provided for by the number of starting points or corners on the board.

Although I have illustrated and described only one arrangement of the game, it will be apparent that many alterations and modifications are possible without departure from the spirit and essence of my invention which for this reason shall not be limited but by the scope of the appended claims.

I claim:

1. A game board having a border, a demarcation line parallel to said border, an outer zone between said border and said demarcation line, an inner zone on the side of the demarcation line opposite said border, each of said zones being divided into a plurality of starting areas and intermediate areas, there being as many starting areas in the outer zone as there are in the inner zone, the number of intermediate areas between each two adjacent starting areas of the outer zone being the same, the number of intermediate areas between each two adjacent starting areas of the inner zone being the same, as many end areas in the field enclosed by said inner zone as there are starting areas in each of said zones, each starting area of the outer zone being in line with one of the starting areas of the inner zone and one of said end areas, markings indicative of barriers one between each starting area and one of its adjacent intermediate areas so that there is one barrier marking intermediate each two subsequent starting areas, other markings indicative of passages over the demarcation line, each passage marking connecting a starting area of the inner zone with the intermediate area adjacent the barrier marking of the coordinate starting area of the outer zone, and third markings indicative of traps in selected ones of said intermediate areas.

2. A board game as claimed in claim 1 further comprising fourth markings indicative of entrances, one from each of the intermediate areas adjacent the barrier marking of the co-ordinate starting area of the inner zone to the adjacent one of the said end areas between the board center and the inner zone.

3. A game board as claimed in claim 1 comprising markings directing from selected ones of the intermediate areas to other selected areas.

4. A game board as claimed in claim 1 wherein each group comprising as members a starting area of the outer zone, the passage marking adjacent said starting area, and the nearest one of said end areas is provided with a symbol occurring in connection with each member of the group, and the symbol of each group differing from those of the other groups.

5. A game board as claimed in claim 1 wherein said starting areas of the outer zone are provided with different colors, and each passage marking, and the nearest one of said end areas are provided with the same color as the starting area adjacent said barrier marking of the outer zone.

6. A game board as claimed in claim 1 wherein said starting areas of the outer zone are provided with different colors, and each passage marking, the inner and outer zone barrier markings adjacent said passage marking, and the nearest one of said end areas are provided with the same color as the starting area adjacent said barrier marking of the outer zone.

7. A rectangular game board having a border, a demarcation line spaced from and parallel to said border, an outer zone between said border and said demarcation line, an inner zone on the side of the demarcation line opposite said border, each of said zones being divided in four corner areas and a plurality of intermediate areas adjacent one another between each two corner areas, four end areas in the field enclosed by said inner zone, markings indicative of barriers one between each corner area and one of its adjacent intermediate areas so that there is one barrier marking intermediate each two subsequent starting areas, other markings indicative of passages over the demarcation line, each passage marking connecting a corner area of the inner zone with the intermediate area adjacent the barrier marking of the co-ordinate corner area of the outer zone, and third markings indicative of traps in selected ones of said intermediate areas.

8. A square game board, having an outer circumferential zone, an inner circumferential zone and a central field, the zones being divided in corner squares and intermediate squares, said central field having distinctive corner areas, a barrier marking on one side of each corner square of each zone, the barrier marking of each outer corner square and the barrier marking of the adjacent inner corner square being located on the same half-diagonal of the board through said outer and inner corner squares, a passage marking between the barrier markings of each pair from the outer to the inner zone, and trap markings on selected ones of said intermediate squares, the outer corner square and the corner area located on the same half-diagonal, and the adjacent passage marking being equally colored but differently from the other outer corner squares.

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