

P. H. SESSOMS.
Game Apparatus.

No. 153,459.

Patented July 28, 1874.

FIG. I.

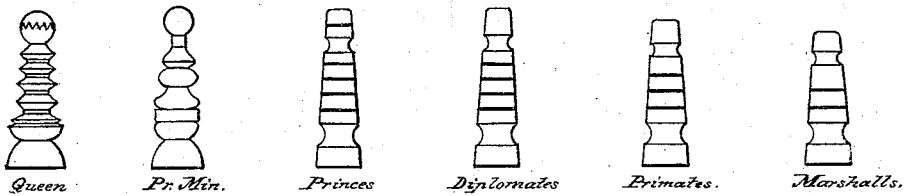
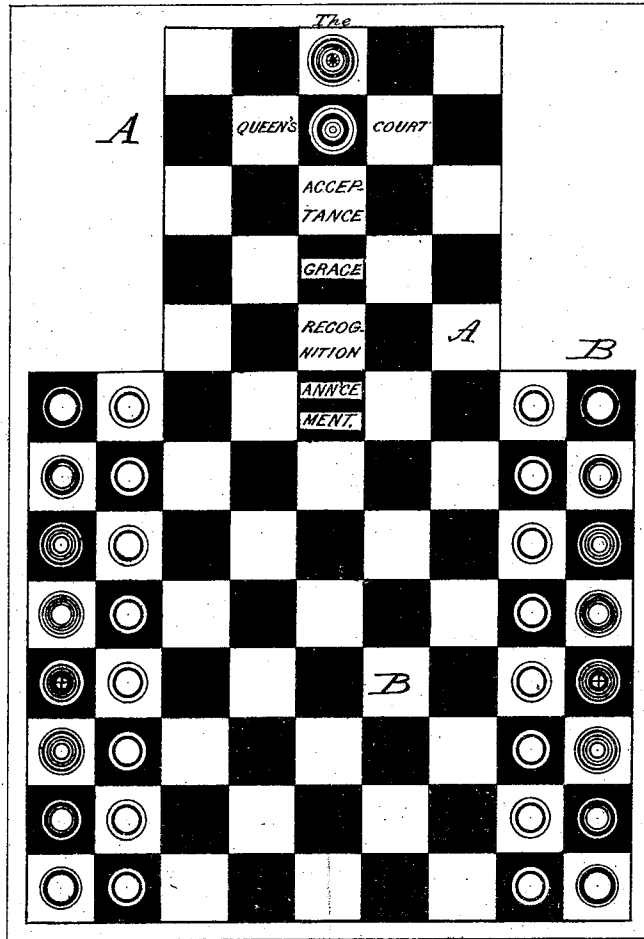
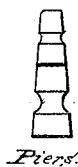


FIG. II.

WITNESSES:

A. H. Norris.
Geo. E. Smith Jr.



Princes.

INVENTOR:

P. H. Sessoms.
By James L. Norris.
Atty.

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

PRESTON H. SESSOMS, OF COLERAIN, NORTH CAROLINA.

IMPROVEMENT IN GAME APPARATUS.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. **153,459**, dated July 23, 1874; application filed June 27, 1874.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, PRESTON H. SESSOMS, of the town of Colerain, in the county of Bertie and State of North Carolina, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Games, of which the following is a specification:

My invention relates to a new and improved game, somewhat resembling the ordinary game of chess in its general features, which I denominate the "Royal Comedy;" and it consists of a board checkered or marked in a novel and peculiar manner, and there appertains thereto a set of men or figures to be employed in combination therewith, as will be fully hereinafter described.

In the drawings, Figure 1 represents a view of the board, and Fig. 2 is a view of the different men or figures to be employed in connection therewith.

The board consists of two rectangular diagrams, A B, checkered or marked out in squares, and colored alternately black and white, as in the ordinary checker or chess board. One of these diagrams contains seventy-two squares, the other contains twenty-five squares, the diagrams adjoining each other, as shown in the drawing. Through the center of the board A B, running horizontally, is a line of squares made more prominent than the rest, by being distinguished with certain appellations or titles, the purpose of which will be hereinafter explained. The men or figures to be used in connection with my improved board consists of a series of figures similar to the ordinary chess-men, and marked or varied to indicate their different ranks or titles in any convenient manner. These are designated as follows, their respective ranks following each other in the order named, viz: Queen, prime ministers, princes, diplomates, primates, marshal, and peers. These pieces or figures are thirty-four in number, thirty-two of which are apportioned or divided into two divisions, one division for each player. Each of these divisions contains one prince, one diplomate, two primates, four marshals, and eight peers. These are placed upon the board, occupying positions upon the two rows or series of squares, upon opposite sides of the large diagram, as shown, at the commencement of

the game. The peers occupy the entire front of each inner row of squares. The remaining figures or pieces are placed as follows, namely: The marshals occupy the squares at each end of the outer row, on opposite sides; the primates the squares adjoining these, in each outer row or series; and the prince and diplomate the remaining intermediate or central squares in the same row or series. The queen and prime minister occupy positions at the extreme end of the "line of intercession," which is the center line in the smaller division or diagram, as shown, the prime minister being placed directly in front of the queen.

All of these pieces have different functions or offices to perform, or rather are capable of different movements across the face of the board in playing the game.

The peers, which are lowest in rank, can only be moved directly forward, forward right or left diagonally across the board, one square at a time, in either direction. In the course of the game, should any of them travel entirely across the board, so as to arrive at the opposite series of squares at any point, the player will have the privilege of forming a prince, diplomate, primate, or marshal of the same, if he has been so unlucky as to have lost either of these pieces during the course of the game. In the absence of the prince or diplomate it will be impossible to carry on the game to a victorious end; and to supply the place of these, if lost, the peers are allowed this promotion when they have been successfully moved entirely across the board. This is done in order to render the game more interesting and exciting, and to afford the losing party a chance to repair his losses.

The marshals may be moved indefinitely, right or left, obliquely, so long as no other figure may be in their path. These pieces, however, can only be moved over the large diagram B, and are not allowed to travel upon the queen's board, or smaller diagram A.

The primate may be moved horizontally and perpendicularly across the board indefinitely, if no other pieces should obstruct their course, and may be moved on the queen's board A; but only for the purpose of checking the progress of the opponent's prince or

diplomate along the line of intercession, or to drive a diplomat from his position in the queen's court.

The prince and diplomat may be moved indefinitely in any unobstructed straight line, and both move on the queen's board or smaller diagram A only by the line of intercession. Each party may capture his opponent's pieces whenever he can dislodge them by any of his men, in the same manner as in the ordinary game of checkers. This, however, is not compulsory upon the capturing party.

In playing this game the main object of each opposing party is to capture the queen. The four squares in front of the prime minister on the line of intercession are denominated, respectively, "announcement," "recognition," "grace," and "acceptance." The function of the diplomat is advance against the queen's prime minister, and open a passage for the prince to the queen. In order to accomplish this the piece must be moved along the line of intercession, stage by stage, until the capture of the prime minister is effected. While in the line of intercession the piece is not liable to capture by the opponent's pieces. After arriving at the square of announcement, the next move of this piece will be into the square of recognition. The player, if desiring, can revert his attention to another part of the board for awhile, or, if necessary, can abandon, for the time being, his project. From the square of recognition, at one move, he captures the queen's prime minister. These two prime ministers forthwith take their respective positions in the queen's court, which have already been designated in the description of the board. This act, however, is not considered a move—it is a natural consequence following the capture of the prime minister. Preparations are now complete, so far as the part of the diplomat is concerned, for the advance of the associate prince. The two diplomats cannot occupy positions on the queen's board simultaneously, provided neither one is a nullity. A nullity I will explain further on. This rule applies equally forcibly to the diplomat and prince. The diplomat is the pioneer of the prince. The former precedes the latter to make overtures and preparations for the prince's reception. The prince, now being properly represented in the queen's court, promulgates his intent of making an effort to capture the queen, by planting himself, as his prime minister did, on the square of announcement. Thence crossing the interjacent boundary of the two boards to the square of recognition, it is optional with the prince whether to make consecutive moves along the line of intercession or not. If he deems it favorable to his interest, the player can transfer his operation for awhile to another part of the board, and eventually again return to his prince, and resume the march, provided the prince is not displaced, in the interim, by the maneuvering pieces of his ad-

versary; or, if disposed, he can relinquish his project on his own account, and return to the large board. From the square of recognition he advances forward to the square of grace. His prospect at this station is fair and bright. Thence forward to the square of acceptance. Here his suit is, indeed, auspicious, and his assurance strong. In his next and final act, provided no hostile interposition counteracts, he captures the queen. But in this onward career of the diplomat and prince there are many adverse circumstances to be encountered, which disturb and retard their progress, and very frequently repulse them, frustrated, from the queen's board.

In view of this end, the marshals may take position near the intervening boundary of the two boards, in direct communication with the line of intercession, and, by bearing upon the same, in immediate advance of the diplomat or prince, check his further progress. Diplomat or prince cannot occupy or cover over a square of the line of intercession thus under the bearing of a marshal. Marshals cannot capture the diplomat or prince while on the queen's board, nor can the latter pieces, thus conditioned, capture the marshals combating them.

The primates are also designed to check the approach of the diplomat and prince to the queen's court. In view of this performance, they are commissioned (one or both of them, as the case may require) to cross the interjacent boundary of the boards at any point optional with them, and operate upon the queen's board. In this capacity they operate upon the line of intercession in the same manner as the marshals, though from different boards; they check and repulse, but cannot capture. It is the prerogative of the primates to impel the diplomat from the queen's court, which is accomplished by bearing upon the square on which the latter is situated, when it becomes compulsory with some to abandon it. Marshals can extend their authority no further than the square of acceptance. While primates are on the queen's board they exercise unmolested sway in the capacity in which they are sent to serve. They are not affected by the bearing of the prince or diplomat. On the queen's board no piece exercises any influence on the large board. On entering the queen's board the primates must invariably halt on the first square reached until the next move, as a manifestation of respect. When a prince or diplomat, or both, are on the queen's board A, the associated primates cannot go. When a prince or diplomat is on the queen's board the opposing prince or diplomat cannot go. When a diplomat is routed from the queen's court the prime minister returns to his former position.

In the apparently closing condition of the game, when a diplomat is installed in the queen's court, and his prince has reached with safety the square of acceptance, and, in all

probability, at his very next effort he will capture the queen, the primate operating upon this board may plant himself upon the extreme square of the outward corner of the same board, whence he can direct his authority to the queen's locality, and avert the anticipated capture. In this exigency a marshal may come to the rescue, and, from the proper square on the large board, exercise his power on the square of acceptance, and repulse the prince from his position. The queen and her prime minister are liable to capture only by, respectively, the prince and diplomate. They are themselves incapable of capture; they are passive.

The diplomate or prince, while on the line of intercession, being checked by a marshal or primate bearing upon the square in his immediate front only, may retain his position until he can remove the obstruction, and then proceed; but when the square on which he stands also is under the bearing of another hostile primate or marshal, he must thus either recede or digress. In either case he becomes divested of all power, and so remains until he recovers the large board. His project of capturing the queen or her prime minister, as the case may be, for the time being fails. He recovers at leisure and unrestrained the large board to be reinstated. Until the reinstatement, which is effected upon his immediate arrival on the large board, he is regarded as naught, and, thus conditioned, can be no hindrance to any piece that may pass that way, or even wishes to occupy the square on which he stands. He is a nullity. A diplomate being dislodged from the queen's court, is powerless until he returns to the large board. In

this respect, as in case of the prince, he is a nullity. A prince having his diplomate ejected from the queen's court, while he himself is on the way to the same, becomes a nullity. A primate, or primates, having checked and repulsed a prince or diplomate from the line of intercession, or diplomate from the queen's court, becomes divested of his authority, which he regains on his recovery of the large board, and which is accomplished as in the case of the prince. Until replaced he is a nullity. If the diplomate or prince recedes on his own accord, the primate, if on the queen's board, becomes a nullity also.

Princes, diplomates, and primates, at peculiar periods of their career, are converted into nullities. A nullity exercises no power. They are unexposed to the attacks of other pieces. They are harmless and unharmed. Their opponents are regardless of them. In recovering the large board, however, they must observe the rules of regular moving, and a move made by them is regarded as a distinct operation of the game.

What I claim is—

The improved game apparatus herein described, consisting of a board having divisions or diagrams A B, checked or marked as shown and set forth, and the movable figures or pieces marked and formed to indicate their rank, substantially as described.

In testimony that I claim the foregoing I have hereunto set my hand this 18th day of May, 1874.

P. H. SESSOMS.

Witnesses:

R. C. SMITH, M. D.,
W. S. WILLOUGHBY.