

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

CATHERINE H. BURCH, OF ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI.

GAME APPARATUS.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 499,317, dated June 13, 1893.

Application filed October 14, 1892. Serial No. 448,870. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, CATHERINE H. BURCH, of the city of St. Louis, State of Missouri, have made a new and useful Improvement in Game Apparatus, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description.

The improvement relates to that class of games which involve the use of a top and a board or other supporting surface upon which the top is spun, and whose position, at the end of its movement, determines the game, and it consists partly in the construction of the board or other supporting surface, and partly in the construction of the top, all substantially as hereinafter set forth and claimed, aided by the annexed drawings, making part of this specification, in which—

Figure 1 is a plan of the board with the top in position thereon; Fig. 2 a vertical cross-section of the board on the line 2—2 of Fig. 1, and Fig. 3 a side elevation of the top in an upright position.

The same letters of reference denote the same parts.

A represents the board. It is preferably circular, and at its periphery the board is provided with an upright flange, B, which serves to retain the top upon the board. The upper surface of the board is flat with the exception of the central portion C which is preferably slightly crowned. This portion is also preferably, say by enameling it, made smoother than the annular portion D, which surrounds the portion C and is inclosed by the flange B. The portion D is, by means of suitable lines, or marks, *e*, divided into spaces E. These spaces are preferably of the same size, and the lines, *e*, which define the spaces, are preferably in directions which are radial with reference to the center of the board, substantially as shown. The spaces, E, in some manner, and to suit the special character of the game being played with the device in question, are marked to distinguish them from each other. One mode of marking is indicated in Fig. 1. It consists in legends, inscriptions, or mottoes, F, which appear upon the spaces respectively, and which may be considered, for instance, as prophecies or answers to the players, as presently explained.

G represents the top. It has this peculiar-

ity: By means of its point, *g*, and handle, *g'*, it can be spun in an upright position in the manner of an ordinary top. Its body, *g*², however, is cylindrical, or substantially cylindrical, to enable the top, when turned upon its side, to form a wheel or roller which is adapted to roll upon the board.

Fig. 1 shows the top in two positions, in an upright position (full lines), and turned upon its side (broken lines).

The game is played as follows: Any number of persons can participate; each of the players can spin the top for himself or any one can spin the top for the rest; the top is spun for the several players in succession, and, in initiating the spinning, the top is placed upon the central portion C of the board; its gyration, aided by the convexity of the portion C, causes the top to move off from the portion C and in various directions over the annular portion D of the board, after the manner of an ordinary top when spun; the uncertainty of its movement is increased whenever the top encounters the flange B, and also whenever the top turns upon its side which is liable to occur when the top encounters the flange B; the convexity of the portion E, or its being raised as described, prevents or hinders the top from returning onto the portion C, and if it does return thereonto the top, by reason of the described convexity is again directed therefrom, and it ultimately, in practice, usually comes to a rest upon some one of the spaces E, and the answer, or point scored, is found in, or determined by, whatever legend, character, or marking, the space in question bears. For instance, suppose the top comes to a standstill upon the space E'; this space bears the inscription commencing with the words "In plans for;" the inscriptions, on account of the scale of the drawing, do not appear in full; this particular inscription in its entirety is supposed to be "In plans for the future you ask what is best; my simple advice is, go West, sir, go West." This is an answer to the person spinning, or for whom the top is spun. The top may be regarded as the means by which the player makes his inquiry, and whatever appears upon the space the top rests upon may be considered the answer to the in-

quiry. Or, again, the game may be styled, for instance, the circle of fate, or the parlor prophet, and the top may be considered the prophet and the inscription the words uttered
5 by the prophet.

It is obvious that the spaces E may be marked or characterized, or be made to bear any preferred inscription, to suit the special character of any variety of game being played
10 with the present apparatus.

The described relative smoothness of the central portion, C, of the board is also of assistance in directing the top onto the annular portion D of the board. The cylindrical shape
15 of the top-body causes the top, when turned upon its side, and which is apt to take place at the end of the spinning, to be transformed into a roller or wheel, and as such to roll freely over the board. This as stated increases the

uncertainty of the location of the point of rest of the top. The crowned central portion also hinders the top when rolling as described from coming to a rest thereupon.

I claim—

The herein described game apparatus, consisting of the board and the top; said board having the smooth crowned central portion, the horizontal annular portion having the marked spaces E thereon, and the peripheral flange; and the top having the cylindrical
25 30 body, substantially as described.

Witness my hand this 12th day of October, 1892.

CATHERINE H. BURCH.

Witnesses:

C. D. MOODY,
A. BONVILLE.