

No. 797,105.

PATENTED AUG. 15, 1905.

E. E. GRAVES.
GAME APPARATUS.
APPLICATION FILED NOV. 19, 1904.

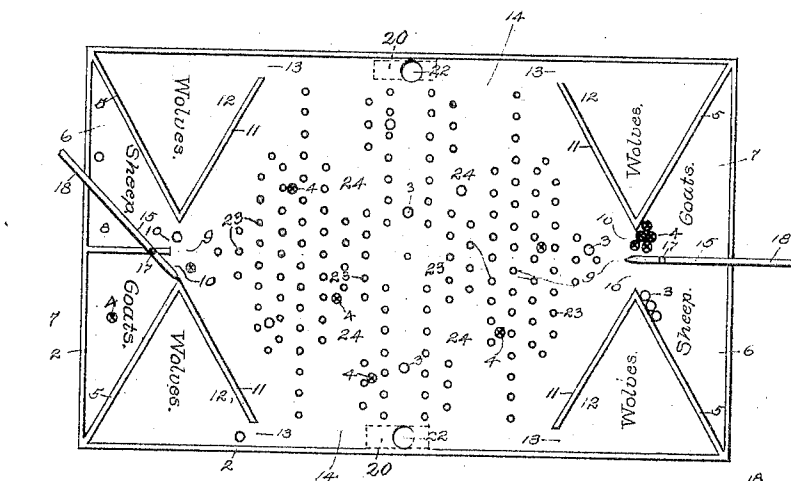


Fig. 1.

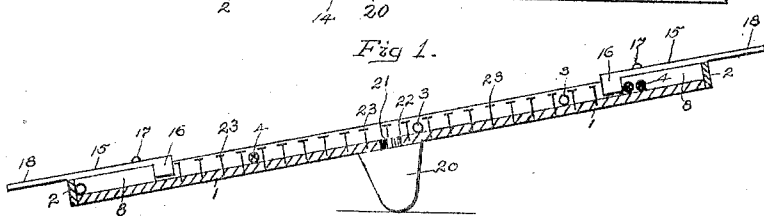


Fig. 2.

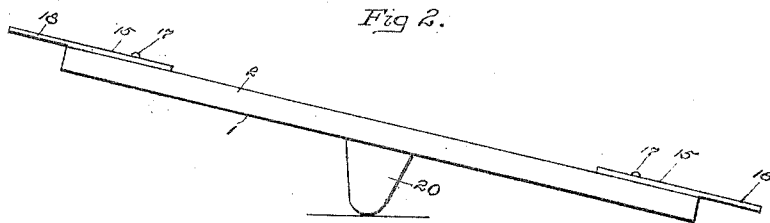


Fig. 3.

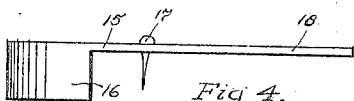


Fig. 4.

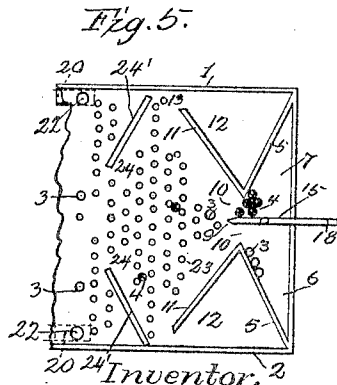


Fig. 5.

Witnesses.
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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

EUGENE E. GRAVES, OF BLACK RIVER, NEW YORK, ASSIGNOR OF ONE-HALF TO JOSEPH MARRIAN, OF WATERTOWN, NEW YORK.

GAME APPARATUS.

No. 797,105.

Specification of Letters Patent.

Patented Aug. 15, 1905.

Application filed November 19, 1904. Serial No. 233,513.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, EUGENE E. GRAVES, a citizen of the United States, residing at Black River, in the county of Jefferson and State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Game Apparatus, of which the following is a specification.

This invention relates to game apparatus, the object of which is to provide a simple and attractive game device adapted for the amusement and entertainment of adults and children, in the operation of which a great deal of skill may be displayed, and wherein the player who can see and act the quickest as he carries the details of the game into effect may gain an advantage over an opponent less alert and skilful.

The object of the invention is to provide a game apparatus which is reversible or double in order to facilitate the playing of the game by two persons sitting at opposite sides of a table, thus avoiding long delays between the innings of the different contestants, as well as to obviate the necessity of shifting the board from one to the other or of the contestants changing places at each turn in the playing.

The invention embodies, essentially, a base or game board, preferably rectangular in form, having combined therewith a series of obstructions and deflecting elements which influence the movements or course of travel of a series of rolling elements, such as balls, together with a pivoted member in the nature of a gate or door centrally disposed at each end of said base or board and adapted to be operated by the players for the purpose of directing or separating the gravitating elements into certain pens or yards, forming terminal receiving-compartments therefor. The base or board is mounted upon a pair of legs or rockers attached to the under side of the board substantially midway of the length and near the outer edges of the board in such manner that the board may be tilted or adjusted by the players from either end, thereby giving said board a suitable angle or inclination to cause the rolling elements to gravitate or rapidly move from one end of the board through or over the obstructions and deflectors to the other end, at which the player is to exert his skill in dividing and corralling them in their respective pens or yards.

The invention further consists of a series of pens or inclosures at each end of the board,

each of which has a small gap or opening for the purpose of admitting a stray animal or ball, and thus preventing the player from corralling and counting such stray piece.

With the above and other objects in view, the nature of which will more fully appear as the description proceeds, the invention consists in the novel constructions, combination, and arrangement of parts hereinafter fully described, shown in the drawings, and set forth in the claims.

In the accompanying drawings, forming a part of this specification, Figure 1 is a plan view of the game apparatus embodying my invention. Fig. 2 is a central longitudinal section through Fig. 1, showing the manner of inclining the board and also the manner of attaching the legs or rockers. Fig. 3 is a side elevation showing the inclination of the board in the reverse direction. Fig. 4 is an enlarged detail view of the pivoted gate. Fig. 5 is plan view of the apparatus with a portion broken away, illustrating a slight modification.

Similar reference-numbers represent corresponding parts throughout the several figures.

In the drawings, 1 represents a base or board which is rectangular in form and of even width throughout its length. The board 1 is surrounded by a fence 2, which consists of a flange extending upward from the upper surface of the board and serving as an effective means of retaining the series of rolling members 3 and 4, representing animals, preferably in the form of balls or marbles, in place on the board and preventing accidental escape. At each corner of the board the fence 2 meets the fences or flanges 5 of the small inclosures 6 and 7, which for the purpose of describing the game may be termed "fields" or "pastures," in which the balls 3 and 4, which represent sheep and goats, are primarily placed. When the board is tilted for the purpose of playing the game, the inclosures 6 and 7 at the lower end of the board are termed "corrals" or "pens." The inclosures 6 and 7 are separated by a fence or flange 8 and communicate with the main field or wooded tract in the middle of the board by means of a central and common discharge-throat 9. The partition fence or flange 8 does not extend to the throat 9, and therefore the balls 3 and 4 must pass through the nar-

row gaps or spaces 10 as they roll toward the main field. To the fences or flanges 5 are joined the flanges or guides 11, which extend in an angular line toward the surrounding fence 2, together with which the fences 5 and 11 form the triangular inclosures or dens 12. Between the outer ends of the flanges or guides 11 and the fence 2 is provided a gap 13 large enough for one of the balls or rolling elements to freely pass through into the said inclosures 12, into which an occasional ball will stray and become separated from the rest of the flock.

Nearly all of the surface of the main field 14 in the central portion of the board between the oppositely-disposed fences or flanges 11 is studded over with a plurality of obstructions 23, preferably in the form of pins, the same being intended to represent a wooded tract or field, the pins being the trees, across and through which the balls, representing animals, are obliged to travel from the pastures at the top or upper end of the board to the yards or pens at the lower end, into which they are to be corralled for safe keeping. These pins are placed on the board, so as to be encountered by the balls immediately after they pass through the central discharge-throat 9, and as the balls strike against the pins they are deflected in different directions, and their progress is therefore impeded. The spaces between the several pins are wide enough to admit of the free passage of the balls. In this main field or wooded tract I have shown a series of open or clear spaces 24, from which the pins have been omitted, the object in providing these open or unobstructed spaces or areas being to accelerate the travel of the rolling elements which chance to pass over said portions of the board or main field and cause them to reach the corraling-pens at the lower or farther end of the board in less time than the balls which take their course of travel through the central portion of the board, where the pins or trees are more thickly and evenly set. By this means the player is required to exercise more alertness and dexterity in order to effect the separation of the different kinds of balls or animals and the corraling of them in their respective pens or yards. As a result of the employment of the latter feature the ball first to emerge from a pasture through throat 9 is frequently the last to reach the final corraling-pen.

The fence or flange 8, which extends longitudinally of the board at each end in connection with the end portions of the outer fence 2 and the fences or flanges 5, forms the pens or inclosures 6 and 7, in which the balls are adapted to be corralled. Balls of different color or other distinguishing characteristics are employed—as, for instance, white balls or marbles are used to represent sheep, while the colored or striped balls represent goats,

said balls being represented, respectively, by the numerals 3 and 4. The object in providing the two pens or inclosures 6 and 7 at each end of the board being for the purpose of receiving the white and colored balls, respectively, representing sheep and goats, the division fence or flange 8 is placed at right angles to the outer fence 2 substantially in the center of the board and extends to a point near the entering space or throat 9, which is formed by the convergent inner ends of the flanges or fences 5 and 11. The division-fence 8 and the fences 5 form the gaps or spaces 10, through which the balls or animals may pass to and from the final pens or yards 6 and 7. Between the inner ends of the fences 8 and the fences 5 is arranged the pivoted member or part 15, forming a swinging gate or door, adapted to open or close one at a time the gaps or spaces 10. This gate 15 in its preferred form is provided with a single wing 16 of a length substantially that of the spaces 10, and when placed in position it extends slightly above the fences 8 and 5. This movable member or gate 15 is preferably pivoted to the inner end of division-fence 8 by means of the screw or pin 17 and is provided with a longitudinally-projecting handle or stem 18, which is made long enough to extend out over the end of the board to enable the operator to freely and rapidly operate said gate without interference with the fences 2 and 8. The construction of the pivoted member 15 may be varied from that herein described and shown; but the present form has proved to be the most practicable, and is therefore preferred.

Instead of the open or clear spaces 24 shown in the main or wooded field and described above I may prefer to employ a series of deflecting flanges 24', laid flat or set on edge for the purpose of retarding or varying the course of travel of the rolling elements. These deflecting members may consist of narrow strips of wood or other suitable material set on edge the same as the other fences or flanges, or they may consist of thin flat pieces, over which the animals may leap instead of being deflected or guided by them.

In order to make the game interesting, I have found it important to form the spaces or gaps 10 with some care. If they are made just wide enough for one ball to pass through freely, the whole group or flock will become clogged at this opening, and it is difficult to dislodge or start them. I have accordingly regulated the width of said gaps, so that it is slightly less than the diameters of two balls, and by this means when the player places the balls in the pens at the opposite end of the board and inclines the board toward him the balls will all rush for the gaps 10, and while in most instances they clog and block the passages 10 yet by slightly jarring or shaking the board a part if not all of the balls will

roll out into the main field and thence toward the final receiving-pens.

The pivoted members or gates 15 are preferably made so that they are readily detachable. This is done so that in case one gate should become lost or broken the game may be played from either end of the board by simply shifting the one gate. If two gates are employed at the same time, the opposite player or the individual player can regulate the passage or exit of the balls from the upper end of the board by swinging the gate back and forth while the other player (or himself) is engaged in manipulating the gate at the lower end of the board in his efforts to separate and corral the balls as they arrive at the entrance to the final pens.

In order to play consecutive innings of the game either by one person or alternately by two or more persons without reversing the board, a pair of legs or rocking members 20 are provided. These members are capable of being attached to or detached from the board by means of the dowel-pin 21, the latter being inserted into the hole 22, which passes through the base of the board 1 substantially in the middle and near the outer sides of the board, as shown in Figs. 1 and 2 of the drawings. It will be seen that by this arrangement of the legs 20 the board may be tilted or inclined toward either end at an angle which will cause the balls to roll or gravitate the whole length of the board without requiring to be touched by a player to urge them on. When the balls or animals have all been corralled in their respective pens or yards at the lower end of the board, the same player or another person engaged in the game may tilt the board in the opposite direction, and the rolling elements will then roll the other way, and by using the gate pivoted at the other end of the board the player may try his skill at separating and corraling the homecoming animals, as described. If only one person is playing the game, the board may be shifted end for end, allowing it to partially revolve upon the legs 20, and then tilted and played, as just explained. If a lone player prefers, he may gather the balls from the lower pens and return them by hand to the upper fields and play the succeeding innings without reversing the board. In experimenting with my game apparatus it has been found that the angle of inclination of the board should be about fifteen to twenty degrees in order to make the game interesting. It is obvious that other forms of legs or inclining means may be employed to accomplish the desired results; but I prefer to use the form described and shown herein.

In playing the game the main object is to catch the white and colored balls, representing sheep and goats, respectively, and by means of the pivoted gate or member direct

the balls into their respective pens. Each player takes his turn in regular order until they have all had a given number of innings. The player corraling the largest number of white and colored balls in their respective pens makes the largest score and wins the game, the balls corralled in the several innings being added to obtain the final score. The marbles or balls which by accident escape or roll into the triangular pens 12 by passing through the gaps or spaces 13, which are intended to represent wolf-dens or similar unsafe places, are to be regarded as penalties in the game, and each one so escaping or straying is to be counted as so many points against the player losing the same. Before beginning the game the players may arrange among themselves as to what the penal number or value of the stray balls shall be.

Balls of several colors, representing as many different animals or points, may be employed, and a variety of scoring values may be assigned to the several colors and by such arrangement make the game more interesting; but the preferred embodiment of the game is as herein described.

It will be seen by reference to the drawings and from the foregoing description of the game that there is room for considerable skill and dexterity in manipulating the pivoted member or gate in order to successfully separate and corral the different balls into their respective pens or yards. In order to handicap a skilful player, the inclination of the board may be increased to any desired extent, and thus give all of the players an equal chance.

In order to separate and spread the balls immediately after they leave the corrals or pens, the pins or deflecting elements 23 at each end of the main field or wooded tract 14 are arranged in converging rows, in which the pin forming the apex is placed directly in front of and central with the discharge-throat 9. When the balls roll out of the pens, they impinge against the pins and are deflected in different directions. This results in the scattering and mixing of the balls of different kinds before they are acted upon and causes them to make many zigzag movements in their travel through the wooded field, thus tending to excite the player and make it more difficult for him to successfully corral the animals by use of the pivoted gate.

I do not desire to be limited to the details of construction and arrangement herein set forth, and accordingly reserve the right to change, modify, and vary the construction within the scope of the appended claims.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim as new, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

1. A game apparatus comprising a board

having centrally-disposed supporting means to render the board inclinable toward either end, surrounding fences projecting above the face of said board, a series of rolling elements adapted to traverse said board when inclined in any direction, a series of obstructions and deflecting elements on the upper side of said board, against which said rolling elements impinge, separate pens at each end of the board, and a pivoted gate or cut-off member so disposed as to be manipulated at will to divert said rolling elements into separate yards or pens at one end of said board, substantially as shown and described.

2. A game apparatus, comprising a board capable of being tilted or inclined toward either end, a surrounding fence, a series of pens at each end of the board communicating with a common central inclosure, a series of rolling elements, a plurality of obstructing and deflecting elements arranged upon the surface of said central inclosure, against which said rolling elements are adapted to impinge, and a pivoted member operable by hand for diverting the rolling elements into different receiving-pens, substantially as shown and described.

3. A game apparatus, comprising an inclined board surrounded by an upwardly-extending fence or flange, a pair of pens at each end of the board communicating by means of a central opening or throat with the main field, a plurality of rolling elements representing two or more kinds of animals, a series of deflecting and obstructing elements arranged within said main field, against which the rolling elements are adapted to impinge as they gravitate along the surface of said board, a pivoted gate or door adapted to open or close the entrance from the main field to either of said pens, and thereby divert said rolling elements into their respective pens, substantially as described.

4. A game apparatus, comprising a board with a surrounding fence, a series of legs or rocker elements adapted for inclining said board in opposite directions, a group or groups of obstructing elements fixed upon the upper surface of said board, a series of rolling elements adapted to impinge against, and to be deflected by said obstructing elements, separate yards or pens at each end of said board, a main inclosure or field between said yards or pens, convergent corraling-fences arranged at each end of the main inclosure, discharge or entrance throats formed by the inner ends of said convergent fences through which said rolling elements may pass, pivoted members or gates so disposed as to be adapted to admit or release said rolling elements to and from the end pens, and a series of yards or dens adapted to receive or entrap a straying member of said rolling elements, substantially as shown and described.

5. A game apparatus, comprising a board adapted to be inclined toward either of its two ends, a surrounding fence, a double inclosure at each end of said board, the inclosures at the upper end representing separate pastures for different kinds of animals, and the inclosures at the lower end representing corrals or pens for receiving the animals when they come home, a series of rolling elements representing animals, a main or central field provided with fixed obstructions representing trees, adapted to scatter and retard said rolling elements as they traverse said field, a pivoted member or gate so disposed relatively to the corrals or pens as to be adapted to be operated by hand for diverting the rolling elements into their respective corrals or pens, substantially as shown and described.

6. A game apparatus, comprising a board with a surrounding upwardly-projecting fence, rolling elements adapted to traverse the board, obstacles arranged in the paths traversed by the rolling elements, means for inclining said board in opposite directions and thereby causing said rolling elements to gravitate from the upper to the lower end of said board, inclosures at each end of the board, convergent corraling-fences separating the said inclosures from a central field, and a pivoted member constituting a gate interposed between the inner ends of the corraling-fences and comprising a blade or wing, and an operating-handle, substantially as shown and described.

7. A game apparatus, comprising a rectangular board with a surrounding fence, means comprising a pair of unyielding legs for inclining said board toward either end thereof, inclosures representing pastures at the upper end and pens at the lower end of said board, a main field representing a wooded tract between said pastures and said pens, a plurality of obstructions arranged upon the surface of said field or tract, rolling elements adapted to traverse the board, and to impinge against said obstructions, triangular dens having narrow openings communicating with said main field or tract, and adapted to receive and entrap the rolling elements when they stray from their course, and pivoted members to be operated by hand for directing the rolling elements into their respective pens, substantially as shown and described.

8. A game apparatus of the class described, the combination with a rectangular base or board having a surrounding fence, of a pair of unyielding supporting-legs adapted for inclining said board toward either end, convergent corraling and dividing fences at or near each end of the board, pens or fields at the opposite extremes of said board, rolling elements adapted to gravitate from the fields at the upper end, to the receiving-pens at the

lower end of said board, obstacles arranged between said fields and pens adapted to deflect and vary the course of the rolling elements, a pivoted member at the upper end of the board adapted to be operated by hand to regulate the egress of the rolling elements, and a like pivoted member at the lower end of the board adapted to be operated by hand for di-

recting the rolling elements into separate pens, substantially as shown and described.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature in presence of two witnesses.

EUGENE E. GRAVES.

Witnesses:

EDGAR D. BLOODOUGH,

HARRY DE WALLACE.