The Checkered Game of Life

THIS GAME represents, as indicated by the name, the checkered journey of life, and is intended to present the various vices and virtues in their natural relation to each other—the whole being embodied in an attractive and entertaining amusement, well calculated to interest youth or adults.

Each player (represented by his counter or man) starts at *the Cradle* or *Infancy*, and endeavors to reach *Happy Old Age* by the best course he can select, striving to gain on his journey that which shall make him the most prosperous, and to shun that which will retard him in his progress. The journey of life is governed by a combination of chance and judgment, the chance representing the circumstances in life over which we apparently have no control, but which are nevertheless governed to a great extent by the voluntary actions of our past lives. So in the game, the player oftentimes has choice of a number of moves which he can make to more or less apparent advantage, and at other times circumstances compel him to pursue a course greatly to his disadvantage ; but any such necessity can generally be traced to some false move made in the former part of the game, the effects of which could not be foreseen.

It will be seen that poverty lies near the cradle. Now in starting life it is not necessarily a fact that poverty will be a disadvantage, so in the game it causes the player no loss to pass through poverty; but if in more advanced age he falls into intemperance, and is thus carried to poverty, it is only by constant and renewed exertion that the lost ground can be regained.

The same of disgrace; a person may in early life be in disgrace for a time, through no fault of his own; but if, after having had the advantages of experience, he falls through idleness to disgrace, he will certainly need the helping hand of *Influence* to give him a *Fat Office* in order to start him again in the world. In this way many ideas are suggested by the peculiar arrangement of the several squares.

The game is arranged for four persons, although it may be played with equal interest by more or less, as the company may be. It is supplied with four differently colored counters, and four cards having record dials with rotary pointers, one counter and one for each player.

Also with a teetotum having six sides, each side numbered, and the number which is uppermost, after being twirled, denotes what move the player shall have, according to the

description of moves on the record dial cards. The teetotum is composed of a card and wooden pin, which being inserted in the card, forms a top.

It will be seen that some of the squares have numbers on them. Now the object of the game is this: Whenever any player moves on to a square bearing a number, he gains the amount of that number. which he must score on his record dial. The one obtaining 100 first wins the game.

RULES OF THE GAME

Each player has one of the colored counters.

After deciding the first move by lot, the moves go by turn from right to left.

The player having the first move twirls the teetotum, and the number remaining uppermost when the teetotum stops, indicates what his move shall be, according to the description of moves on the dial.

He accordingly enters his counter at *Infancy*, and there makes his first move immediately.

This leaves the square *Infancy* vacant for the next player to the left, who now twirls the teetotum, and entering at infancy, make the move designated by the teetotum.

Thus each player in his turn twirls the teetotum, and moves accordingly.

Now suppose, for example, No. 3 remains uppermost on twirling the teetotum. The move of No. 3 is one square diagonally in either direction , as the player may choose. But infancy being in the corner, there is no choice, and the move must necessarily be to *School*. Now on the square marked *School* it says “Go to College”, which means that the counter shall IMMEDIATELY be moved to *College*, i.e. instead of stopping at *School* it goes at once from *Infancy* to *College*. Now suppose that the next throw of the same player is 4, which gives a choice of going one or two squares up or down. From *College* two squares up would go to *Cupid*, which would immediately carry him to *Marriage*. One square up would go to the red square between *College* and *Cupid*. One square down would go to the red square between *College* and *Jail*. Two squares down would go to *Jail*. There is no loss in going to *Jail*, except the fact that it is moving back—always strive to advance.

When a counter is moved to a square having a hand on it, directions will be found on that square, carrying it to another, the position of which on the board is indicated by the index or hand pointing to it.

Thus a counter can never stop on a square having a hand on it.

If a player has a move which takes his counter to a square occupied by another counter, the first occupant must go to *Jail* : i.e., the counter taken up must be set back to *Jail*, from which to make a new start.

As will be seen, the most valuable squares are on the upper half of the board, the two highest being in the upper row. Consequently it is a loss to be thrown back towards *Infancy*.

If a player moves into *Prison*, under any circumstances, he must lose one move. For any person who is sent to *Prison* is interrupted in his pursuit of happiness.

Whoever moves to *Suicide* is thrown out of the game, leaving it to be contested by the remaining players, if more than two are playing. For how can any person continue to travel towards *Happy Old Age* after committing suicide?

The square marked *Speculation* is an exception to the rules, as follows :

If a player is on Speculation and throws 3 or 6, he goes to *Wealth*. If he throws any one of the other numbers, 1, 2, 4 or 5, he must move to *Ruin*.

Any player who moves on to a square containing a number, gains so many towards the game. The account of each player is very conveniently kept on the record dial by the rotary pointer. Thus when 5 is gained, move the pointer to 5; if 10 more, to 15; and so each time whatever is gained is added to the former amount.

Any player who reaches *Happy Old Age* gains 50, which is to be added to his amount. But as the winner must gain 100, the game is not concluded until some one has obtained that amount. Any player moving into *Happy Old Age* and not then having 100, continues to play, moving out the next time the same as from any other square; and he also has the right to move in again and count 50 more, the as into any other square

As *Happy Old Age* Is surrounded by many difficulties, 50 may oftentimes be gained as soon by a succession of smaller numbers as by striving for *Happy Old Age*. And as the player generally has a choice of several moves, the game becomes very interesting. fully equaling Backgammon or any other game into which the element of chance enters.

As a game for four players, the interest is increased for older persons if those sitting opposite play as partners, one keeping account for both, and each playing for the interest of the other.