

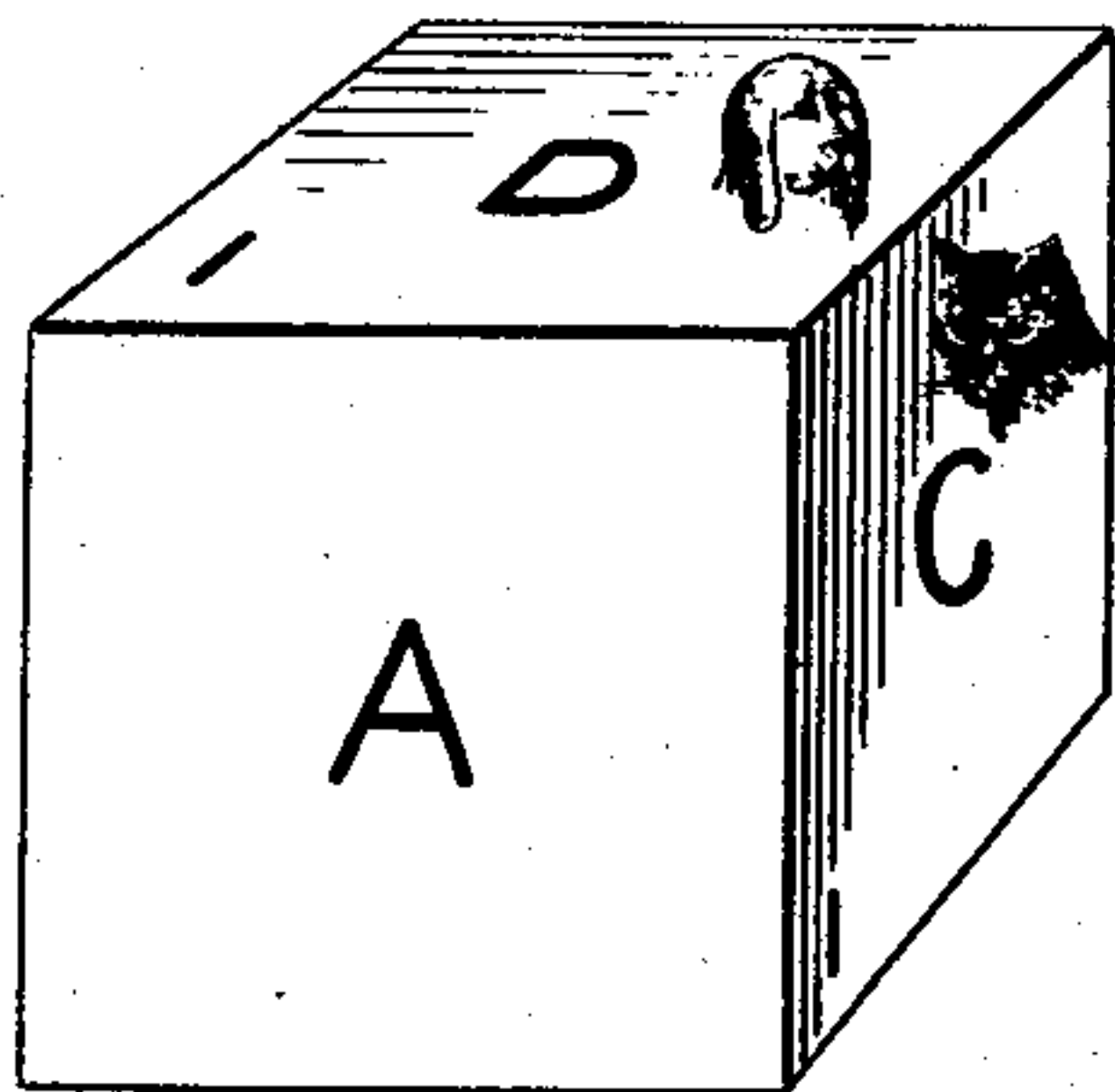
(No Model.)

R. W. FOSTER.  
SPELLING BLOCK.

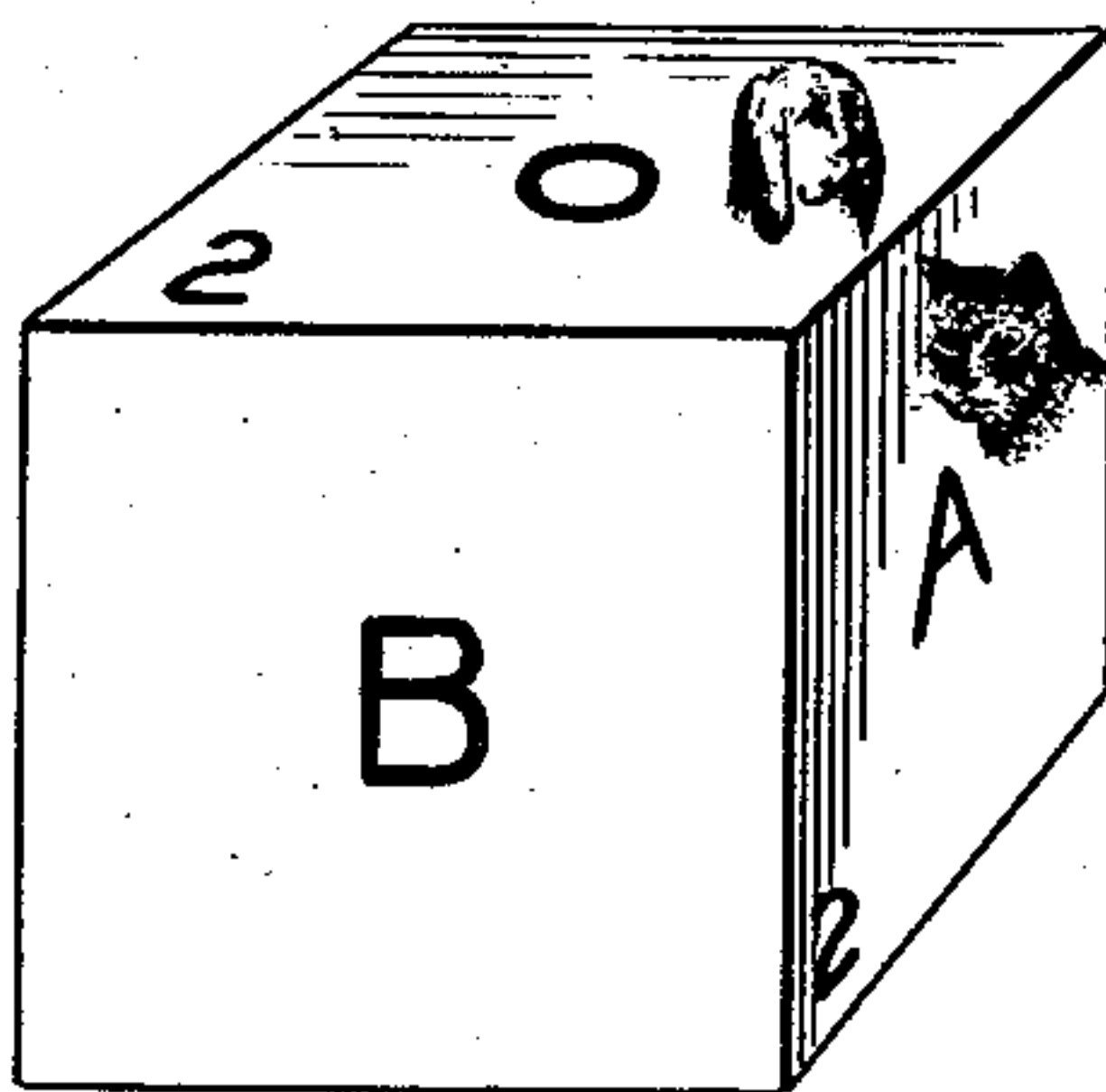
No. 557,307.

Patented Mar. 31, 1896.

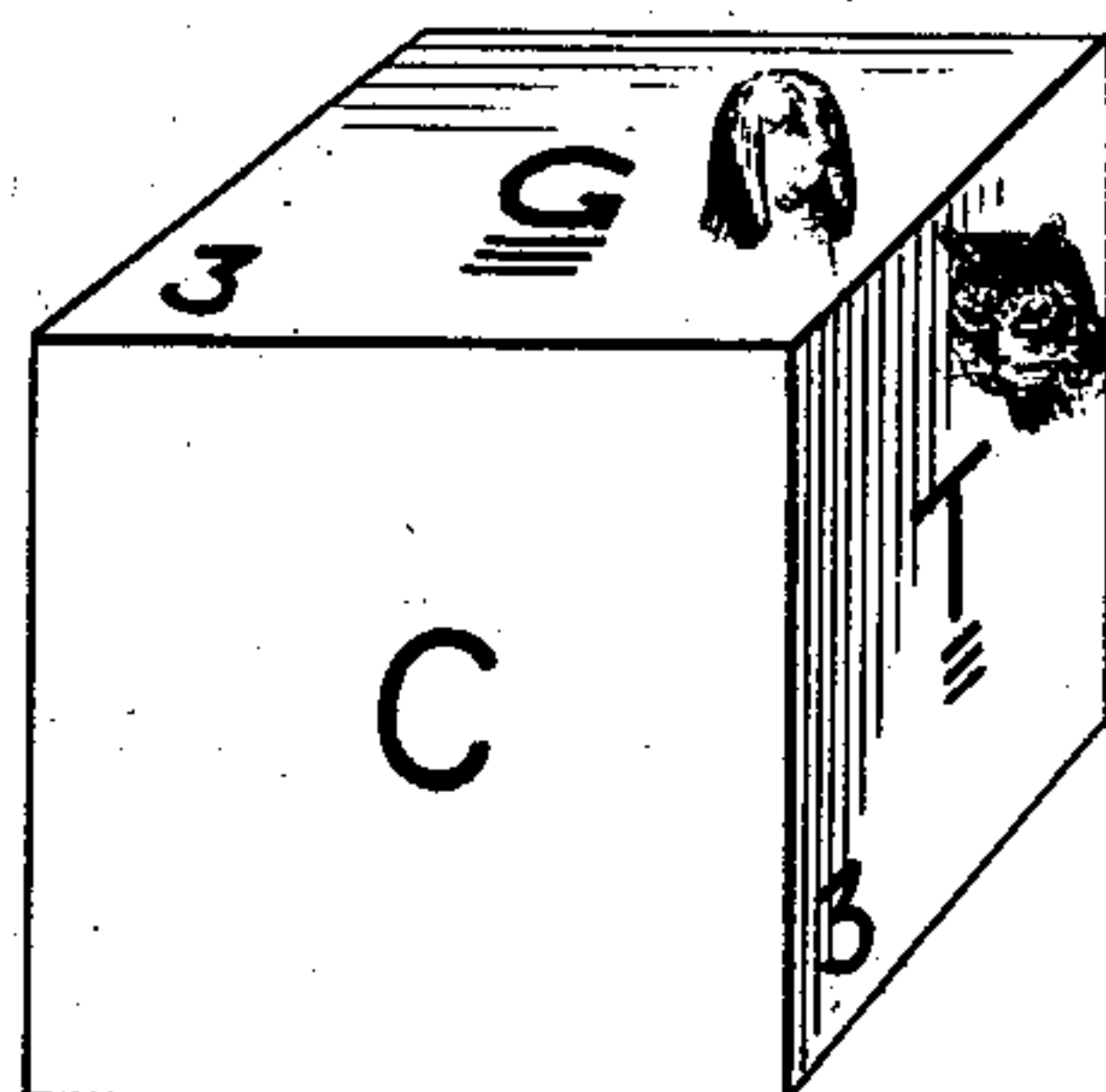
*Fig. 1.*



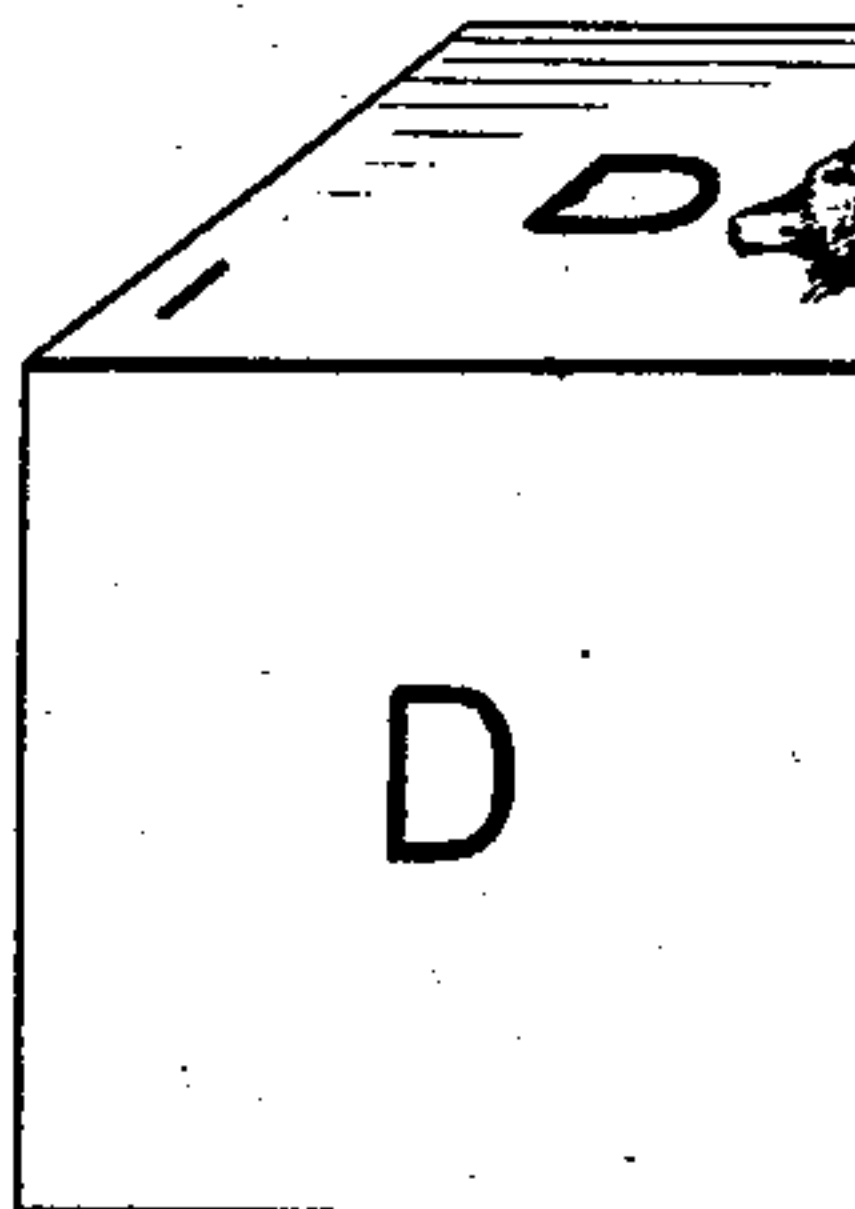
*Fig. 2.*



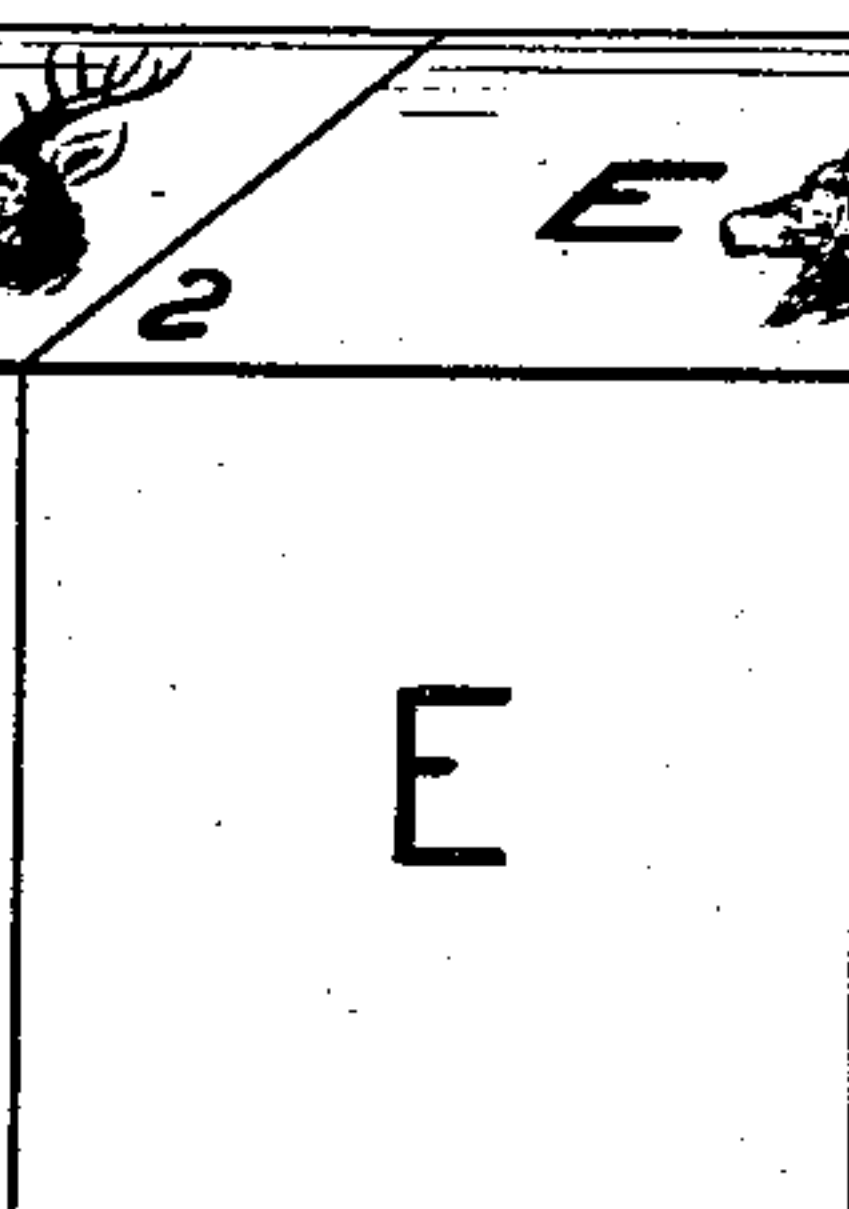
*Fig. 3.*



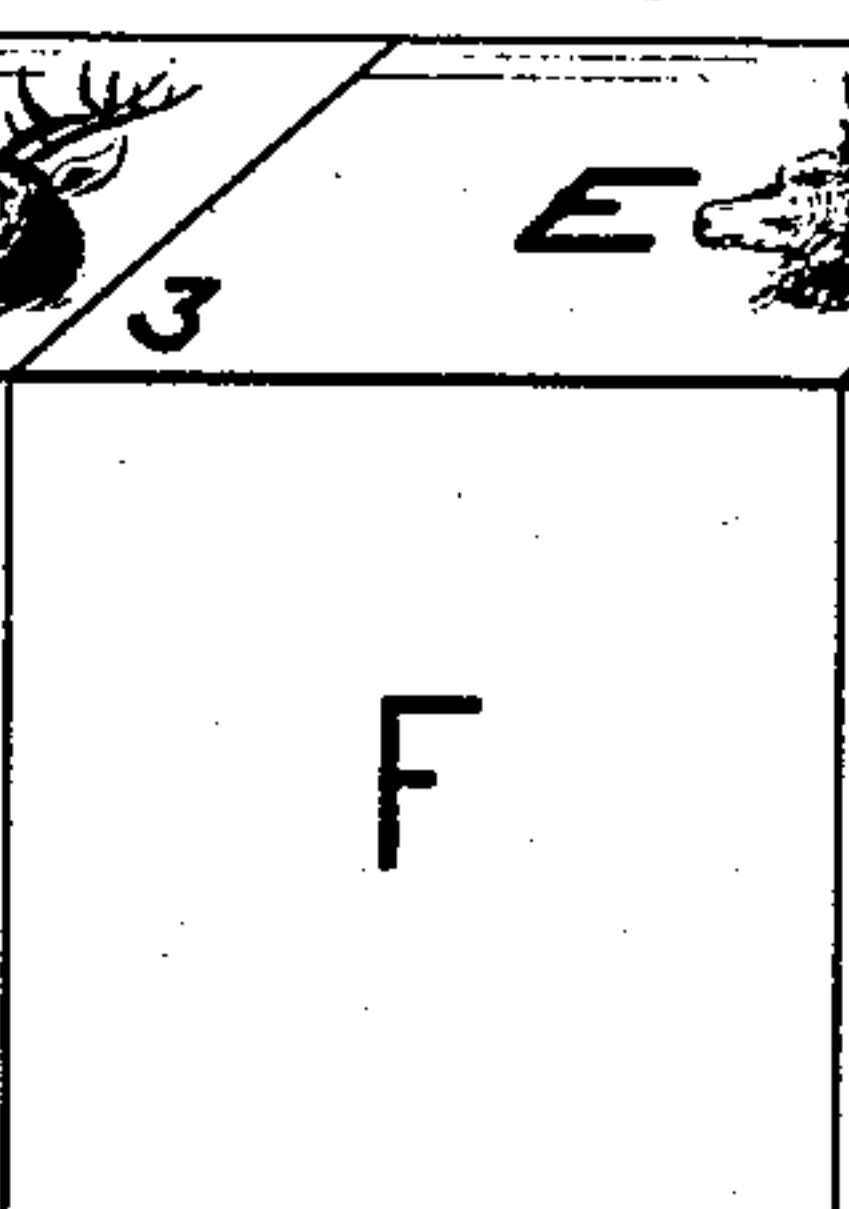
*Fig. 4.*



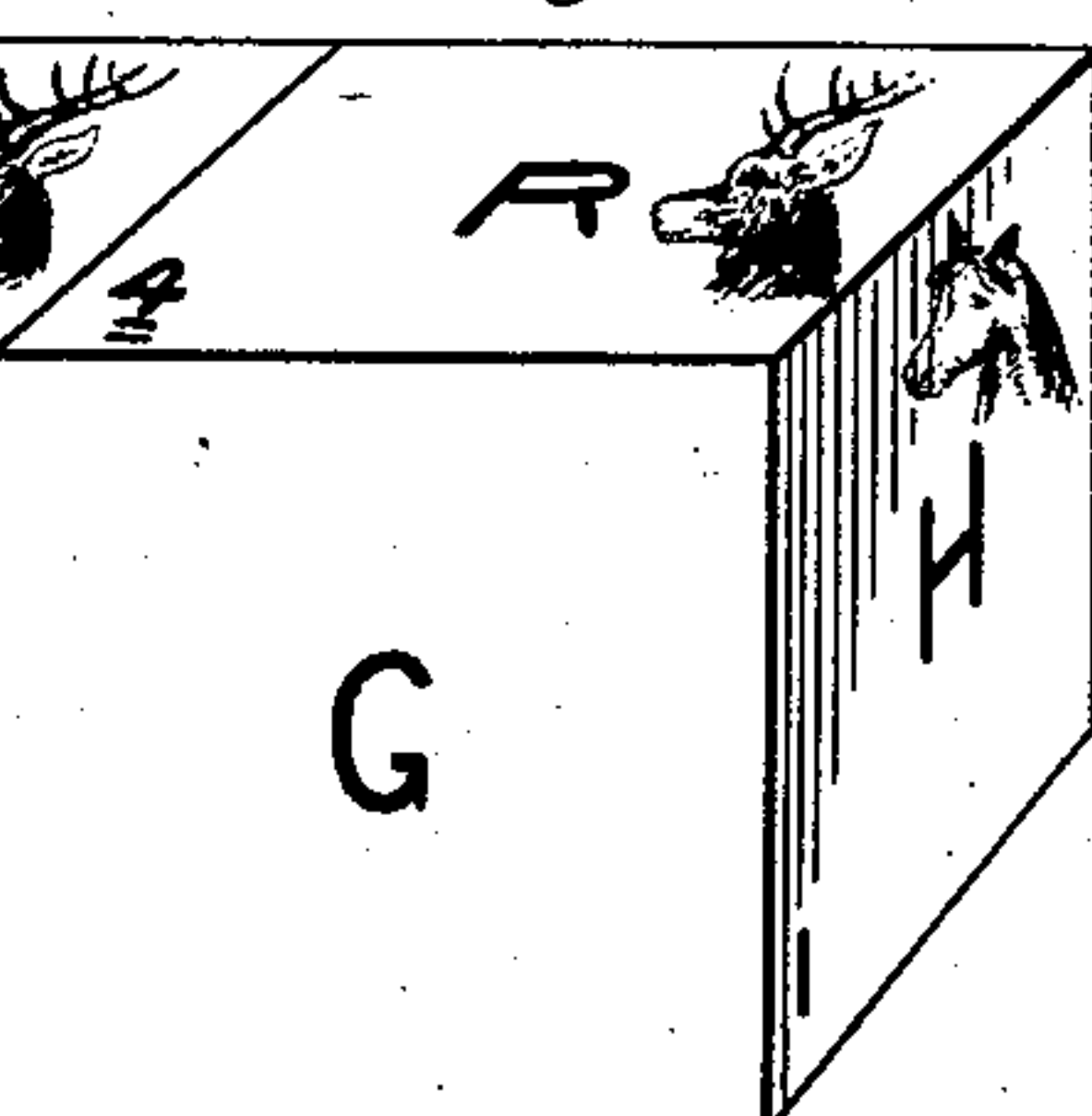
*Fig. 5.*



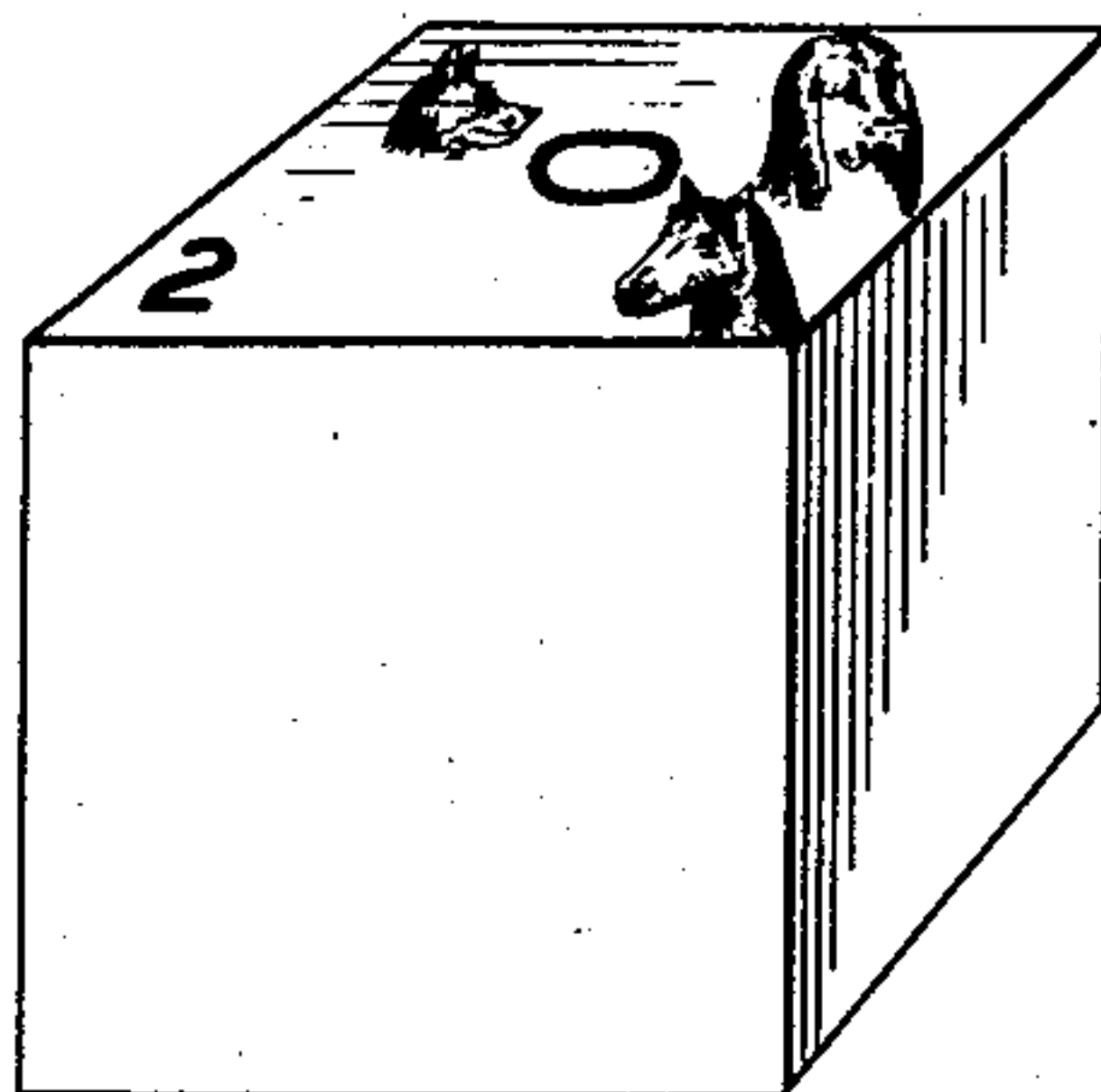
*Fig. 6.*



*Fig. 7.*



*Fig. 8.*



*Witnesses:*

*Walter E. Lombard.*  
*N. B. Lombard*

*Inventor:*

*Ralph W. Foster*

# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

RALPH W. FOSTER, OF BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS.

## SPELLING-BLOCK.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 557,307, dated March 31, 1896.

Application filed November 4, 1895. Serial No. 567,907. (No model.)

*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that I, RALPH W. FOSTER, a citizen of the United States, residing at Boston, in the county of Suffolk and Commonwealth of Massachusetts, have invented new and useful Improvements in Spelling-Blocks; and I do hereby declare that the following is a full, clear, and exact description of the invention, which will enable others skilled in the art to which it appertains to use the same, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, which make a part of this specification.

Heretofore spelling-blocks have been used upon which have been placed letters of the alphabet, numbers, and pictures; but never has this been done in such a manner as to provide for the correct spelling of any word by simply arranging the blocks in numerical order.

The object of my invention is the instruction and amusement of children; and it consists in so combining, upon the surfaces of blocks, letters, numbers, and pictures that when the blocks are arranged in numerical order the letters will be in order to correctly spell the word represented by the pictures.

To illustrate, I take a lot of blocks, and upon one face of one of the blocks I place the letter "D," the number "1," and a picture of a dog; upon one face of another block I place the letter "O," the number "2," and a picture of a dog, and upon one face of still another block I place the letter "G," the number "3," and a picture of a dog. When the blocks thus numbered are placed in numerical order, the letters spell in proper order the word "dog," represented by the pictures, Figures 1, 2, and 3. In this way blocks may be prepared for spelling any word capable of being represented pictorially—for example, the word "deer," Figs. 4, 5, 6, and 7.

The picture representing the word to be spelled must be separately or severally combined with each letter of such word, and each combination must be given a number showing the numerical position of the letter in the spelling of the word. Each letter must be combined with the picture representing the word being spelled as often as such letter occurs in the spelling of the word, and such

combinations must each receive a different number, thus showing the several positions of such letter in such spelling—for example, the letter "e" in "deer," Figs. 5 and 6.

That the pictures may be brought into line for spelling purposes the same picture must be placed upon as many different blocks as there are letters in such spelling. For example, the word "dog" requires three (3) blocks and the word "deer" requires four blocks.

To show the number of letters employed in spelling a word, any conventional sign may be used. The last block of the word may be marked to indicate that it is the last block, and that therefore the number upon that block shows not only the number of letters in the word, but also that the letter upon that block is the last letter in the word. This is desirable and useful, as it shows when the spelling is completed. For this purpose I underscore the letter, as in Fig. 3, or the number, as in Fig. 7.

Taking a set of twenty-five (25) cubic blocks and reserving one face of each block for the letters of the alphabet as these are usually placed upon blocks, we can with the remaining one hundred and twenty-five (125) faces spell, as described, the following words: "ape," three; "bear," four; "buffalo," seven; "camel," five; "cat," three; "cow," three; "deer," four; "dog," three; "elephant," eight; "fox," three; "giraffe," seven; "goat," four; "hare," four; "horse," five; "jackal," six; "kangaroo," eight; "lion," four; "mouse," five; "ox," two; "panther," seven; "pig," three; "rat," three; "sheep," five; "tiger," five; "wolf," four; "whale," five; "zebra," five. This is the simplest form of my invention. By applying the principle further we may group upon the same surface, about a letter numbered as described, several pictures, in which that letter occupies the same numerical position when the words represented by the pictures are spelled—for example, the letter "o" in the words "fox," "goat," "horse," Fig. 8. In this way a set of blocks could be prepared to spell a greater number of words.

I have used cubic blocks in the above description; but the blocks may be of any shape, or flat surfaces may be prepared in the same



manner. Cards thus prepared might be used readily as a game.

I have used the Arabic numbers "1," "2," "3," "4," &c., to indicate the order of arrangement for purposes of spelling, as described; but any system of numbers or marks might be employed—for example, "I," "II," "III," "IIII," &c.—or the order of arrangement might be indicated by a regular variation in the size, color or position of the pictures, letters, blocks or surfaces or any of them. For instance, the picture in Fig. 1 might be placed at the top of the block, in Fig. 2 a little lower down on the block, and in Fig. 3 a little lower down still; or in Fig. 1 the picture might be small, in Fig. 2 a little larger, in Fig. 3 a little larger still; or the order of arrangement might be indicated by employing a repetition or repeating of the pictures. For example, in Fig. 1 there might be one dog, in Fig. 2 two dogs, and in Fig. 3 three dogs.

The mode of application, the sort of blocks or surfaces and the designs to be employed are merely incidental and a matter of taste.

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

1. A block, upon one of whose faces are combined or grouped a picture representing a word, a letter used in spelling such word, and the number showing such letter's numerical position in such spelling—substantially as described.

2. A block, upon one of whose faces are combined or grouped a letter used in spelling two or more words, and occupying the same numerical position in such spelling, the number showing such position, and the pictures representing such words—substantially as described.

3. A block, upon one of whose faces are combined or grouped a picture representing a word, and the last letter used in spelling such word, said letter being marked to indicate

that it is the last letter—substantially as described.

4. A block, upon one of whose faces are combined or grouped a picture representing a word, the last letter used in spelling the word and some symbol to indicate that such letter is the last letter, and such block the last block, used in such spelling—substantially as described.

5. The combination of as many blocks as there are letters used in spelling a word, upon one face of each block there being combined or grouped a picture representing such word, together with one of the letters used in spelling such word and the number indicating the numerical position of such letter in such spelling—substantially as described.

6. A lot of blocks, upon whose faces are combined or grouped letters, numbers and pictures in such a way that, when those faces, upon which appear the same picture, are placed in numerical order, the letters will be in order to correctly spell the word represented by the picture—substantially as described.

7. A lot of blocks, upon whose faces are combined or grouped letters and pictures, with any system of marks to indicate the order of arrangement of the letters for the purpose of spelling the word represented by the pictures, substantially as described.

8. A lot of blocks, upon whose faces are combined or grouped letters and pictures, said letters and pictures, or the letters, or the pictures, being of such variation in the matter of size, number, color or position, that, the pictures being placed in an order indicated by such variation, the letters will be in order to correctly spell the word represented by the pictures, substantially as described.

RALPH W. FOSTER.

Witnesses:

DUDLEY P. BAILEY,  
ALBERT E. AVERY.