

No. 835,968.

PATENTED NOV. 13, 1906.

W. J. MENNES.

APPARATUS FOR STRETCHING FINGERS.

APPLICATION FILED FEB. 28, 1906.

Fig. 1.

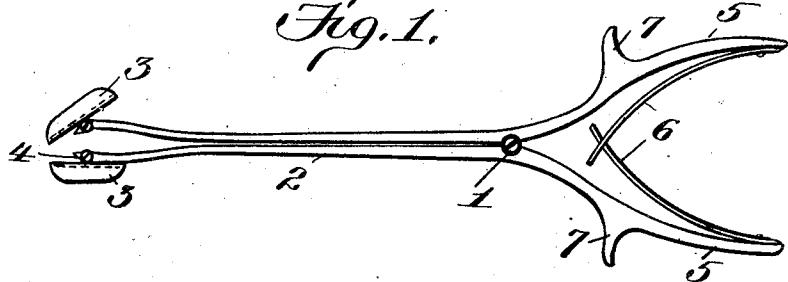


Fig. 2.

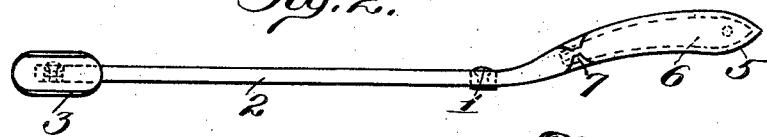
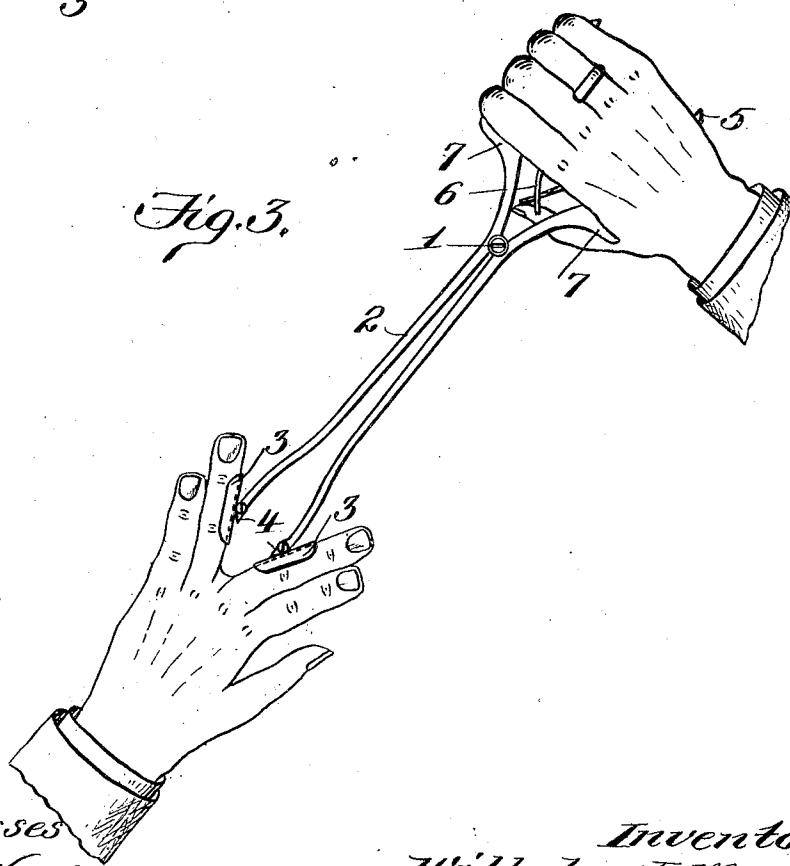


Fig. 3.



Witnesses

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

WILHELM JOHANNES MENNES, OF AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS.

APPARATUS FOR STRETCHING FINGERS.

No. 835,968.

Specification of Letters Patent.

Patented Nov. 18, 1906.

Application filed February 28, 1906, Serial No. 303,553.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, WILHELM JOHANNES MENNES, music teacher, a subject of the Queen of the Netherlands, residing at 2^e Sweenickstraat No. 10, Amsterdam, in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, have invented a certain new and useful Improved Apparatus for Stretching Fingers, of which the following is a specification.

This invention relates to an apparatus for stretching or tensioning the fingers or extending the opening between the fingers, and has for its object to extend the sinews, muscles, and ligaments of the fingers in order to render them longer, slacker, and more supple, whereby their dexterity, quickness, and strength are increased, and they therefore become better suited for playing the piano, organ, or violin and for operating type-writing machines and telegraphic apparatus.

Since heretofore a troublesome and lengthy course of training was required to develop the sinews, muscles, ligaments, and joints of the fingers and hands, the apparatus forming the subject of the present invention fills a long-felt want.

The apparatus is constructed as a pair of tongs, which are provided at the ends of their longer arms with pivotally-mounted spoon-shaped plates, the oscillation of which is limited by stops or projections, while their shorter arms, whereby they are grasped and which are held apart by flat springs, are provided on the outside with horn-like projections in order to prevent slipping off, on the one hand, and to facilitate pressing of the tongs on the other hand. The sinews, muscles, and ligaments by the treatment with the finger-stretching tongs become supple, dexterous, and strong in an incredibly short time, while the joints become loose and free in their movements by the stretching of the ligaments.

The apparatus is shown in the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figure 1 is a plan, and Fig. 2 is a side elevation, of the tongs in their closed position, while Fig. 3, which is drawn to a somewhat smaller scale, illustrates the use of the tongs between the second and third fingers of the hand.

The arms of the tongs are hinged at the point 1. The long arms 2 are straight and are slightly bent outward at the ends, where

they are provided with spoon-shaped plates 55 3, hinged thereto, which may be termed "finger-grips," and the oscillation of which is limited, so that the plates in one extreme position lie against the longer arms of the tongs and in the other extreme position 60 against a stop or projection 4, arranged on the end of each arm in such a manner that the angle formed by the two extreme positions is about sixty-five degrees. During the extension of the fingers the plates 3 lie on the inside against the joints of the fingers, Fig. 3.

Between the short arms 5 of the tongs, by means of which the tongs are grasped by the other hand, are arranged flat springs 6, which fit into each other fork-like and tend to press 70 together the tongs and necessitate a uniform application of force during the pressing together of the tongs.

On the outside of the shorter arms are provided horn-like projections 7, which serve 75 for preventing the tongs from slipping out of the hand and for enabling the tongs to be pressed into the openings between the fingers. As shown in Fig. 2, the short arms 5 are bent upward somewhat from the joint 1. 80 In order that when the tongs are laid flat on a table the fingers of the hand grasping the short arm of the tongs can find room beneath these arms.

The tongs are used as follows: One arm, 85 with the elbow and the hand, is laid flat on the table, while the tongs are grasped with the other hand. The finger-grips are now moved between two fingers of the hand which is lying down flat in such a manner 90 that the tongs lie in the middle of the finger-opening and the finger-grips lie against the first joint of the finger. If now, as shown in Fig. 3, the short arms of the tongs be pressed together, the long arms open, and the finger-opening is extended, and the sinews, muscles, and ligaments of the respective fingers are stretched. The pressing together of the short arms must take place very slowly and only so long as the fingers can be moved 100 apart without pain. The tongs are held in this position for about a minute, and then the finger-grips are allowed to rest on the second joint of the said fingers, whereupon they can be again extended for about a minute at this joint. After this the tongs are applied in the same manner between two other fingers, and so on between all the fin-

gers of one and then between all the fingers of the other hand.

The length of the long arms of the tongs is made such that their ends can be separated about eight inches from each other, which is necessary in order to allow the first finger (index-finger) and the little finger to be extended at the same time. In this position the finger-grips come to rest in their other outermost positions on the stops 4 and then cannot turn farther.

The short arms are formed in such a manner that while they are pressed together the hand assumes the position most favorable for pianoforte-playing, in which motion the sinews move directly over the joints.

Even the mere pressing together of the tongs is a very good gymnastic exercise for the whole hand, and especially for each member thereof.

By using the tongs once daily in the manner described splendid results can be obtained in a month, after which the treatment only requires to be repeated once a week in order 25 to keep the sinews and muscles supple.

Having thus described my invention, I declare that what I claim is—

1. An apparatus of the class described, including arms pivotally connected to each other, concaved plates pivotally connected adjacent to one extremity of each arm, means for limiting the movement of said plates on the arms, and tension means acting upon said arms in a direction to bring together said extremities of said arms. 30

2. An apparatus of the class described, comprising a pair of tongs associated side by side with respect to each other and pivotally connected, spoon-shaped finger-pieces pivotally connected to the ends of said tongs, and 40 stops for limiting the movement of said finger-pieces.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand in presence of two subscribing witnesses.

WILHELM JOHANNES MENNES.

Witnesses:
THOMAS HERMANUS VERHAVE,
AUGUST SIEGFRIED DOCES.