No. 731,347. PATENTED JUNE 16, 1903.

A. J. ESCUDÉ.

RACE STARTER.

APPLICATION FILED MAR. 2, 1903.

NO MODEL. 2 SHEETS—SHEET 1.

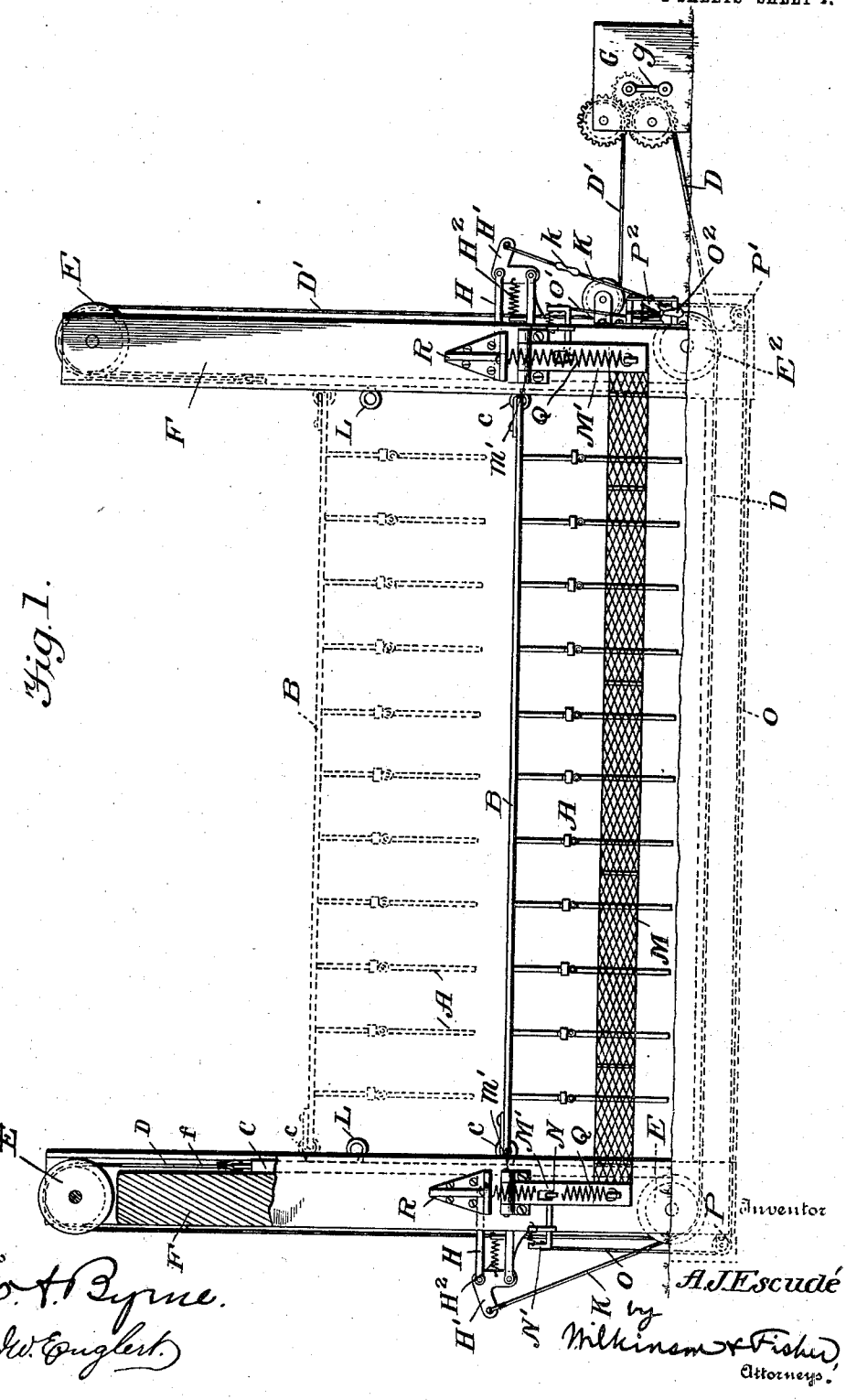


Fig. 1.

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NO MODEL. 2 SHEETS—SHEET 2.

Fig. 2.

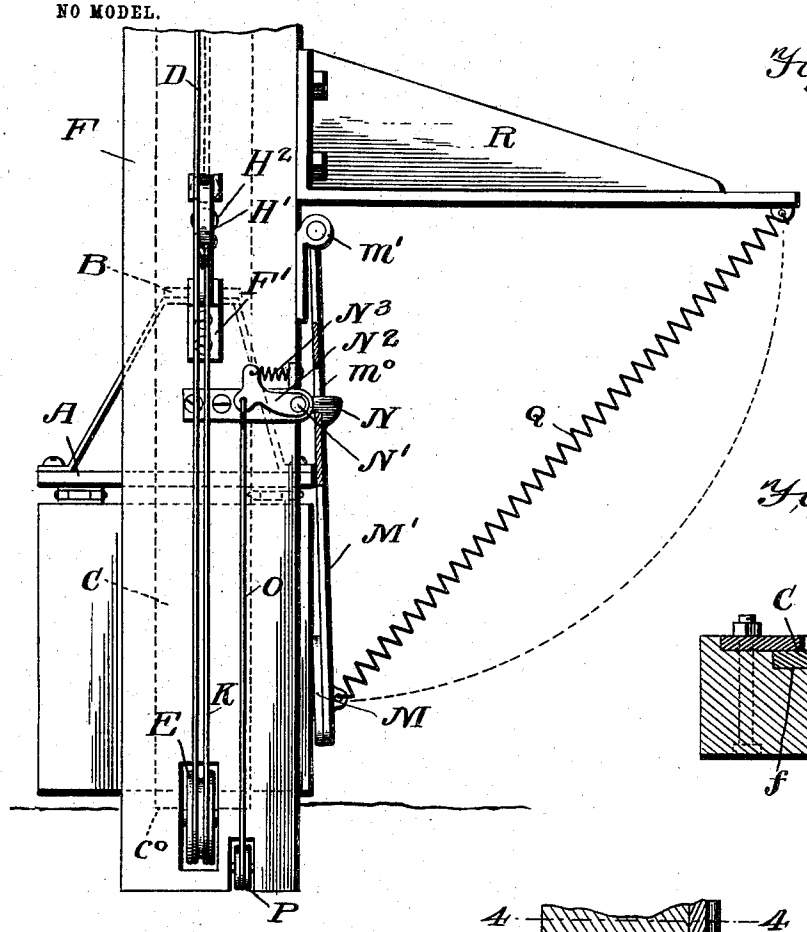


Fig. 4.

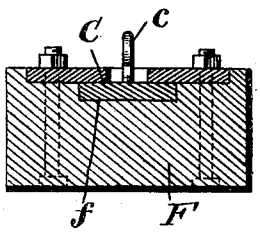
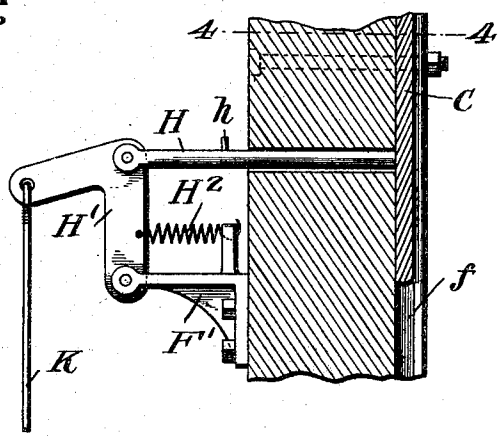


Fig. 3.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

ALPHONSE JULES ESCUDÉ, OF NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA.

RACE-STARTER.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 731,347, dated June 16, 1903.

Application filed March 2, 1903. Serial No. 145,807. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, ALPHONSE JULES ESCUDÉ, a citizen of the United States, residing at New Orleans, in the parish of Orleans and State of Louisiana, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Race-Starters; and I do hereby declare the following to be a full, clear, and exact description of the invention, such as will enable others skilled in the art to which it appertains to make and use the same.

My invention relates to improvements in starters for race-tracks. In practice at race-tracks there is great difficulty in getting the horses started together, and numerous devices have been employed to secure the object in view, but so far as I am aware without complete success. My invention is intended to obviate various difficulties experienced in practice in this connection, and it will be understood by reference to the accompanying drawings, in which the same parts are indicated by the same letters throughout the several views.

Figure 1 is a front view of my improved apparatus, parts being broken away. Fig. 2 is an end view, on an enlarged scale, showing parts of the apparatus illustrated in Fig. 1. Fig. 3 shows the mechanism for keeping the counterweights connected to the stalls from dropping, and Fig. 4 shows a cross-section along the line 4 4 of Fig. 3.

A represents a series of stalls suspended from a beam B, which is connected by eyes *c* to the weights C, which weights travel in guide-grooves *f* (see Figs. 3 and 4) in the frame F. These weights are suspended by wire ropes D and D′. The rope D passes over the pulley E at the top of one end of the frame and then under the lower pulley E′, thence underground beneath the track to the pulley E^2, whence it is led to the windlass G. The opposite weight is attached to the rope D′, which passes over a corresponding pulley E and is led down to the windlass, so that turning the handle *g* will wind up both ropes D D′ and will raise the stalls to the position indicated in dotted lines in Fig. 1. When the stalls are in this position, (indicated by the dotted lines,) the pin H (see Fig. 3) will be pressed forward by the spring H^2, connected to the bell-crank lever H′ and to the bracket F′, and this pin will pass under the lower end of the weight C and will hold the said weight, and with it the stalls, in the elevated position until released, as will hereinafter be described. A stop *h* may be provided on top of the pin H to prevent it from being forced in too far. There is also a pin H in the bell-crank lever H′ on the other side of each of the end frames F, and these two bell-crank levers are connected together by a cord K, kept at the required tension by a turnbuckle *k*, or they may be knotted together at the required tension.

Assuming that the stalls are in the elevated position indicated by the dotted lines in Fig. 1, simply pulling outward on this cord K will cause both bell-crank levers H′ to pull out the pins H far enough to allow the weights C, and with them the stalls, to drop to the lower position. (Indicated by the full lines in Fig. 1.)

Should it be desired not to use the stalls, the ends of the beam B may be secured to eyes L, provided in the two end frames F.

M represents a net, which is stretched across the track in front of the stalls. The net is carried by the arms M′, each pivoted at *m′* to one of the end frames. These arms are slotted at m^0 to receive the catches N, and these catches are, in effect, crank-arms on the shaft N′, which shaft carries the crank-arm N^2, normally drawn upward by the spring N^3. These crank-arms may be drawn down by the cords O and O′, respectively, which are both connected to the handle O^2.

The cord O passes under a pulley P and thence underground beneath the track to another pulley P′ and thence upward to a third pulley P^2. The opposite cord O′ is connected to the corresponding crank-arm and is led directly down to a pulley similar to the pulley P^2 and is connected to the handle O^2. By pulling on this handle the catch N is raised up in the slot M^0, becoming disengaged from the arm M′, and the latter is drawn upward by means of the spring Q, connected to the bracket R. Thus when these catches N are released the net automatically swings upward, thus clearing the track.

In practice the parts are in the position in-

dicated in full lines in Fig. 1, and the horses are drawn up in the stalls A. When it is desired to make a start, the handle O^2 is pulled on, releasing the net and clearing the track. The net will remain in the lifted position until it is pulled down by hand or in any other convenient way.

In order to remove the stalls from the path of the horses on the first stretch, it is only necessary to wind up on the handle *g* of the windlass G, when the stalls will be raised to the position indicated in dotted lines in Fig. 1, where they will be clear of the heads of the jockies. As soon as the stalls are raised to the desired height the pins H will snap under the ends of the weights C and will thus lock the stalls in the elevated position until the cord K be pulled on, when the stalls will drop to the initial position ready for another start.

It will be evident that posts may be used in place of the end frames and that wide variations may be made in the construction of the frame. It will also be evident that the stall-partitions may be hinged to or suspended from the beam B in any desired way.

It will be obvious that various modifications might be made in the herein-described apparatus without departing from the spirit of my invention.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim, and desire to secure by Letters Patent of the United States, is—

1. In an apparatus of the character described, the combination with an end frame at each side of the track and weights sliding in said end frames, of a beam connecting said weights, and a plurality of stall-partitions suspended from said beam, and means for raising and lowering said beam, substantially as and for the purposes described.

2. In an apparatus of the character described, the combination with an end frame at each side of the track and weights sliding in said end frames, of a beam connecting said weights, a plurality of stall-partitions suspended from said beam, spring-catches supporting said weights and with them said beam in the elevated position, means for simultaneously tripping said catches and allowing said weights to fall, and means for simultaneously hoisting said weights, substantially as described.

3. In an apparatus of the character described, the combination with an end frame at each side of the track and weights sliding in said end frames, of a beam connecting said weights, a plurality of stall-partitions suspended from said beam, spring-catches supporting said weights and with them said beam in the elevated position, means for simultaneously tripping said catches and allowing said weights to fall, and a windlass with ropes and pulleys connected thereto for simultaneously hoisting said weights and stall-partitions, substantially as described.

4. In an apparatus of the character described, the combination with the end frames, one at each side of the track, and the slotted arms pivoted thereto, of a net attached to the lower ends of said arms and spanning the track, springs normally tending to swing said arms upward about their pivots, pivoted spring-catches engaging in the slots in said arms and holding said arms in the lower position against the action of said springs, and means for simultaneously tripping said catches and thus releasing said arms, allowing the net to swing upward, substantially as described.

5. An apparatus of the character described, comprising an end frame at each side of the track and weights sliding in said end frames, a beam connecting said weights, and a plurality of stall-partitions suspended from said beam, and means for raising and lowering said beam, arms pivoted to the end frames, a net attached to the lower ends of said arms and spanning the track, springs normally tending to swing said arms upward about their pivots, spring-catches for holding said arms in the lower position against the action of said springs, and a cord connecting said spring-catches and passing over suitable rollers, whereby said spring-catches may be simultaneously released, substantially as and for the purposes described.

6. An apparatus of the character described, comprising an end frame at each side of the track and weights sliding in said end frames, a beam connecting said weights, a plurality of stall-partitions suspended from said beam, spring-catches supporting said weights and with them said beam in the elevated position, means for simultaneously tripping said catches and allowing said weights to fall, means for hoisting said weights, arms pivoted to the end frames, a net attached to the lower ends of said arms and spanning the track, springs normally tending to swing said arms upward about their pivots, spring-catches for holding said arms in the lower position against the action of said springs, and a cord connecting said spring-catches and passing over suitable rollers, whereby said spring-catches may be simultaneously released, substantially as and for the purposes described.

7. An apparatus of the character described, comprising an end frame at each side of the track and weights sliding in said end frames, a beam connecting said weights, a plurality of stall-partitions suspended from said beam, spring-catches supporting said weights and with them said beam in the elevated position, means for simultaneously tripping said catches and allowing said weights to fall, a windlass with ropes and pulleys connected thereto for simultaneously hoisting said weights and stall-partitions, arms pivoted to the end frames, a net attached to the lower ends of said arms and spanning the track,

springs normally tending to swing said arms upward about their pivots, spring-catches for holding said arms in the lower position against the action of said springs, and a cord connecting said spring-catches and passing over suitable rollers, whereby said spring-catches may be simultaneously released, substantially as and for the purposes described.

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

ALPHONSE JULES ESCUDÉ.

Witnesses:
HENRY JOSEPH GASSIE,
HUBERT MARION ANSLEY.