March 21, 1950 H. O. STILSON 2,501,359

EXTENSIBLE AND CONTRACTIBLE ENCLOSURE DEVICE

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FIG. 1.

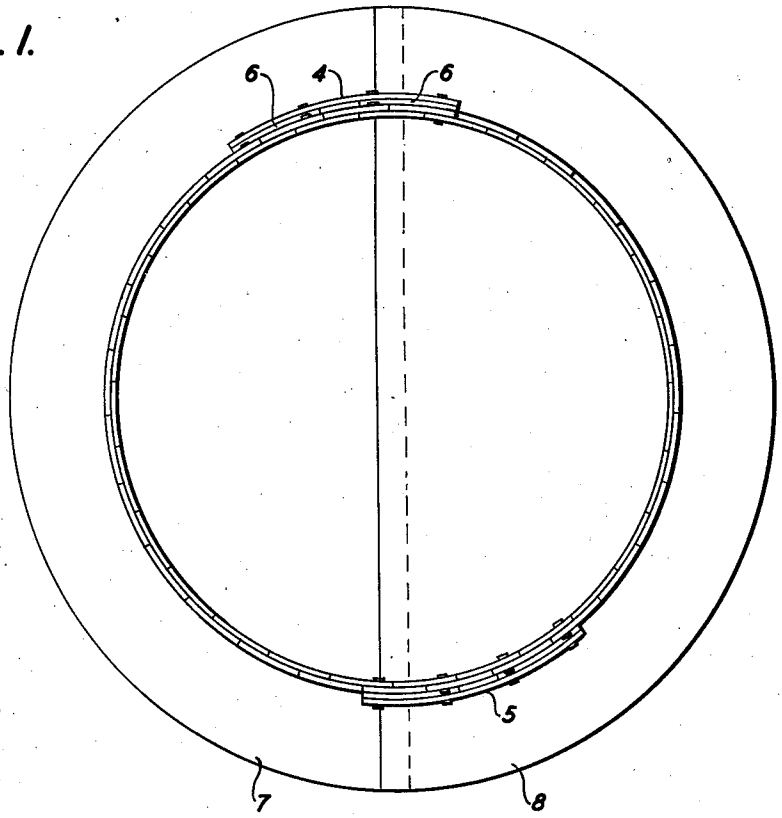
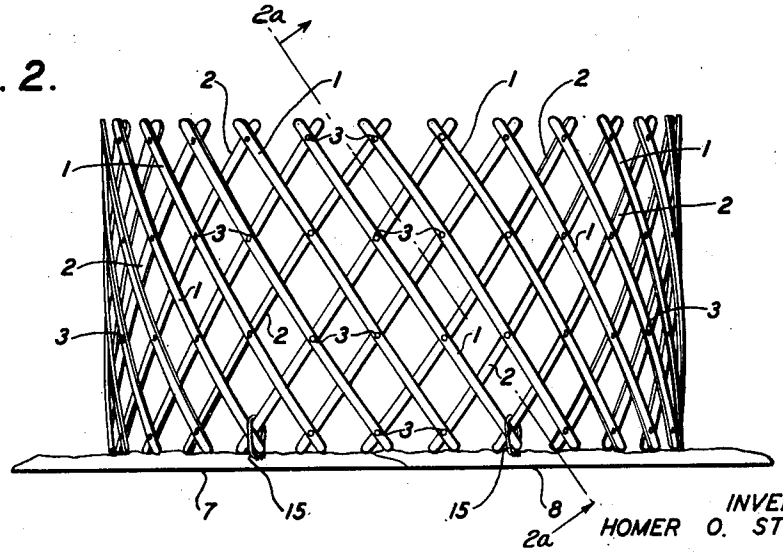


FIG. 2.



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FIG. 3.

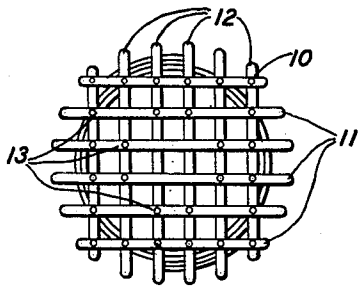


FIG. 6.

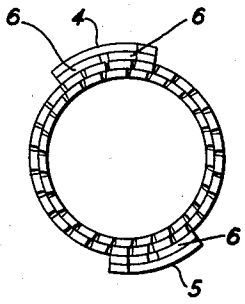


FIG. 4.

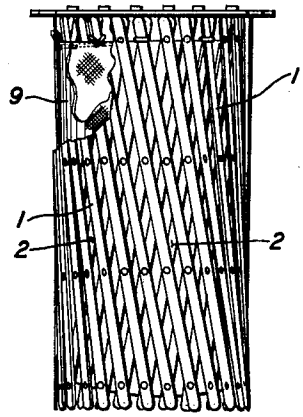


FIG. 7.

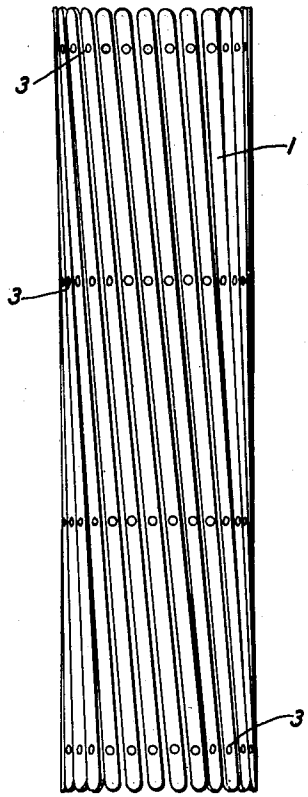


FIG. 5.

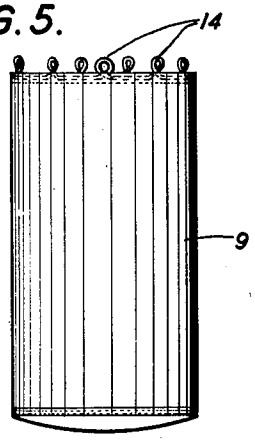




FIG. 2a.

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EXTENSIBLE AND CONTRACTIBLE ENCLOSURE DEVICE

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Application March 27, 1946, Serial No. 657,587

1 Claim. (Cl. 5—99)

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This invention relates to means and ways for providing an enclosure which is adapted to be readily changed in size in order to make a pen for children, animals, etc., and also to make a receptacle which can be enlarged or reduced in size to receive articles; for instance, the means can be employed as a clothes hamper, the size of the means being made greater as the number of clothing articles therein are increased.

The well known lazy tongs is adapted to some degree in the device of this invention, that is, a system of jointed bars are employed which are capable of great extension, the system being in the form of a complete circle, or having endless sides which are curved. The bars are so pivoted and arranged, that a person can readily extend the curved sides by merely pulling upon the sides so as to provide an enclosure of small or large area; the device being returned to a small neat cylinder by merely pushing inwardly upon the curved sides of the device.

The device of this invention has a great many possible uses, but it is believed that its greatest use would probably be in providing an enclosure for children, that is, to provide a play pen, and when not so used, it can be used as a laundry basket or the like for retaining dirty clothes, etc., until wash day.

One of the principal objects of this invention is to present a new and novel enclosure device that is readily varied in diametric size by a very simple pulling or pushing operation, a device that is simple and sturdy in construction, and a device which is economical to make and to manufacture.

Other objects, advantages and features of my invention will appear from the accompanying drawings, the subjoined detailed description, the preamble of these specifications and the appended claim.

Applicant is about to illustrate and describe one of the possible forms of this invention in order to teach one how to make, use and otherwise employ the same, but it is to be understood that the drawings and description thereof are not to limit the invention in any sense whatsoever except as the same is limited by the appended claim.

In the drawings:

Fig. 1 is a plan view of the device or enclosure-like wall showing it provided with a mat so as to make a suitable play pen for a child,

Fig. 2 is a side elevational view thereof,

Fig. 2*a* is an elevational view, partly in section, taken substantially along line 2*a*—2*a* of Fig. 2,

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Fig. 3 is a plan view showing the device when used as a clothes hamper, a top cover being provided,

Fig. 4 is a side elevational view of the device as shown in Figure 3,

Fig. 5 is an elevational view of a flexible bag which may be placed in the device when used as a pen or hamper,

Fig. 6 is an enlarged plan view of the device, but shown without a cover, and

Fig. 7 is an elevational view of the device shown in Fig. 6; both of these latter figures show the device pushed together so as to form a cylinder of small diameter.

The device is illustrated as having a number of biased bars or strips 1, which in Fig. 2, are shown as inclined to the left; and a number of other similar bars or strips 2 which are shown as inclined to the right. The left and right inclined bars are pivoted together at the points indicated at 3 by any suitable means, which means may be double headed rivets. The pivot points and their rivets are arranged, as shown, and constitute sufficient binding force to hold the device together as a cylinder with endless walls and yet allow the bars to move freely upon their various pivot points in order to either form an enlarged cylinder or a diminished cylinder; or one having an extremely small diameter and thus be sized for easy storage or for easy carriage.

In order to make the device easier to handle, the side strip 4 and the side strip 5 are provided, these strips serving as handles or grab bars. The strips are spaced from the device by the short spacer strips or shims 6. Thus, by grabbing the handles, the device can be made large or small by merely pulling or pushing the handles.

When the device is used as a play pen for a child, a soft mat may be provided. Such a mat is shown as comprising two halves, the section 7 and the section 8. This mat need not be larger than the fully expanded pen, but may be smaller when the pen is expanded to its full size. Then the device is used as a clothes hamper, as shown in Figs. 3 and 4, with the bag 9 (shown in Fig. 5) a top reticulated cover 10 is provided.

The top cover 10 is formed in lattice fashion and has the horizontal bars 11 and the vertical bars 12 jointed or joined together at the pivot points 13 which may also be double headed rivets; thus this cover may be squeezed to a small compass by merely pressing the two opposite corners together. The bag 9 has a plurality of hanger designed loops 14 at the top thereof so that the

bag can be hooked onto the top of the bar ends and thus be held in proper place within the device. Note, that this device provides a ventilated laundry receptacle, therefore, this device has a further use after the child grows old enough so as not to need a play pen. When used as a play pen, any suitable means, such as stakes, pins, etc., may be employed for holding the device to the ground or floor, or to the mat so that the device will not overturn. Such a means to prevent overturning of the device may be the cords 15, these cords being spaced about the pen at every fourth or fifth bottom bar couple, the cords being fastened to the bars by tying them into loops and the bottoms of the loops may be tied to the stakes where stakes are used, or to safety pins which are fastened to the top surface of the mat.

It is, of course, understood that various changes and modifications may be made in the details of form, style, design and construction of the whole or any part of the specifically described embodiment of this invention without departing from the spirit thereof, such changes and modifications being restricted only by the limitations clearly expressed in the following claim.

I claim:

A variable enclosure device comprising an endless reticulated wall made of a plurality of left and right inclined bars pivoted together at certain points where they cross one another, a pair of elongated handle means on the outer side of the wall for ease in pushing and pulling the device to change its diameter, each handle consisting of a narrow strip spaced outwardly from its respective bar to which it is attached.

HOMER O. STILSON.

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