H. W. C. PROMMEL.

SANITARY TOOTHPICK DISPENSER.

APPLICATION FILED MAY 8, 1914.

1,146,447.

Patented July 13, 1915.

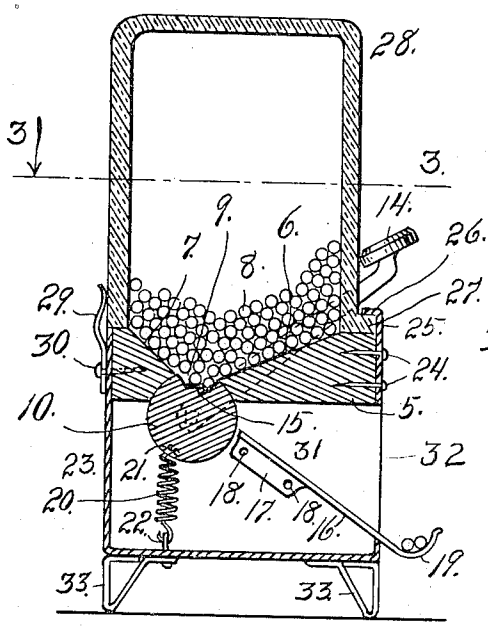

Fig. 1.

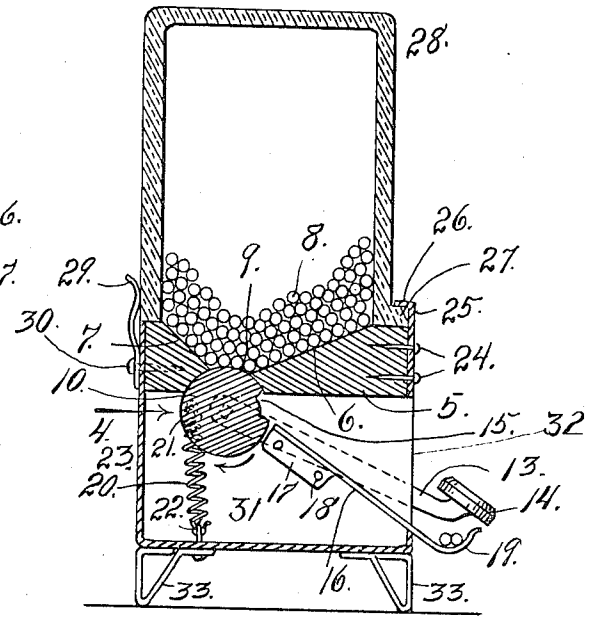

Fig. 2.

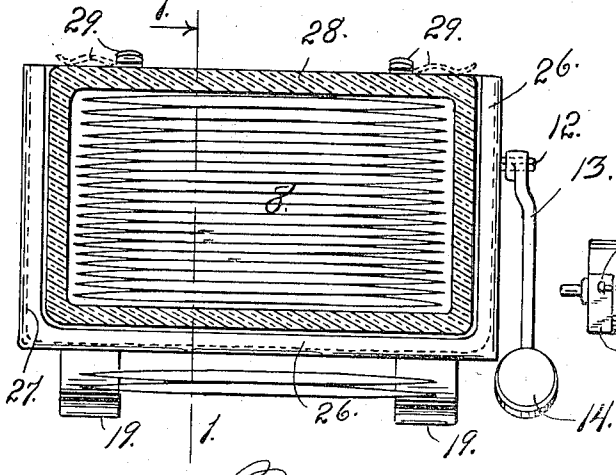

Fig. 3.

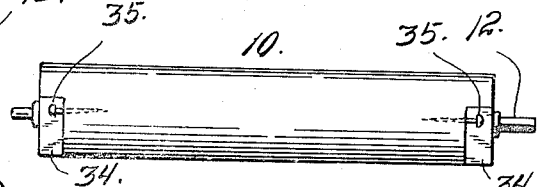

Fig. 4.

Witnesses

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SANITARY TOOTHPICK-DISPENSER.

1,146,447. Specification of Letters Patent. Patented July 13, 1915.

Application filed May 8, 1914. Serial No. 837,197.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, HAROLD W. C. PROMMEL, citizen of the United States, residing in the city and county of Denver and State of Colorado, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Sanitary Toothpick-Dispensers; and I do 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, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, and to the characters of reference marked thereon, which form a part of this specification.

My invention relates to improvements in sanitary tooth pick dispensers, my object being to provide a device of this character which shall possess both sanitary and economical features.

In my improvement, the tooth picks are concealed at all times except when removed for use by the operator of the device, and the latter is so constructed that a predetermined number only may be removed at each operation.

By virtue of my improved construction, it becomes impossible for the person who supplies himself with tooth picks to touch any of the picks except those which are removed by the operation of the machine, and which are intended for him individually.

Heretofore, as is well known, it is customary in restaurants, hotels and in public eating houses generally, to have a quantity of tooth picks exposed in an open receptacle so that it is impossible for the person supplying himself with one or more picks, to avoid touching others which still remain in the receptacle. It is evident that under this practice, it is impossible that the tooth picks shall be perfectly clean and free from germs. Furthermore, where tooth picks are kept in an exposed receptacle, they become soiled by reason of the settling of dust thereon, as upon all other articles. Heretofore, so far as I am aware, no provision has been made to overcome this difficulty or to provide a sanitary device of the character stated. Hence, my object is to overcome this difficulty, and to this end the construction consists of a body member in which is mounted a rotary device containing a recess adapted to hold a limited number of tooth picks, the said recess normally registering with an opening in the bottom of the receptacle in which a quantity of tooth picks is located. This rotary member is journaled in the body of the article and one of its journals extends outwardly, and to it is attached a forwardly projecting crank arm, which, when pressed downwardly, actuates the rotary member to remove a number of picks which are caused to move downwardly, where they are caught and may be removed by the operator of the device. The rotary member is spring retained in its normal position, and consequently, as soon as the pressure on the crank arm ceases, it will be automatically returned to its original position. The container member of the device consists of an inverted box composed of glass and normally securely held in place in such a manner that it is impossible for dust, dirt or foreign matter of any kind to reach the tooth picks within the container. This container member is readily removable and replaceable for the purpose of supplying the device with tooth picks whenever it may be necessary to do so.

Having briefly outlined my improved construction, I will proceed to describe the same in detail, reference being made to the accompanying drawing, in which is illustrated an embodiment thereof.

In this drawing,—Figure 1 is a vertical section taken through my improved sanitary tooth pick dispenser on the line 1—1, Fig. 3, the device being shown in its normal position. Fig. 2 is a similar section, showing the movable parts of the device in the position they occupy after the rotary member has been actuated to discharge a number of tooth picks and before the rotary member and the parts connected therewith have been returned to their normal position. Fig. 3 is a horizontal section taken on the line 3—3, Fig. 1, looking downwardly. Fig. 4 is a detail elevation of the rotary member of the device, shown on approximately the same scale as in the other views; this is a view looking in the direction of arrow 4, Fig. 2.

The same reference characters indicate the same parts in all the views.

Let the numeral 5 designate a body member which may be composed of a block of wood, whose upper portion has surfaces 6 and 7 downwardly inclined from their opposite sides, forming a sort of hopper shaped recess. These surfaces facilitate the downward movement of the tooth picks 8 toward the opening 9 in the block; the said

opening being located between the lower edges of the parts of the block having the inclined surfaces 6 and 7. The portion of the body 5 of the device where the opening is located, is shaped to fit the segment of an approximately cylindrical rotary member 10 which is journaled in the opposite sides of the device, just below the body member 5. One of the journals which I will designate by the numeral 12, is exposed at one side of the device and to it is made fast a crank arm 13 which extends forwardly, its forward extremity being equipped with a disk shaped finger piece 14 to facilitate the operation of the rotary member by downward pressure on the crank arm. This rotary member is provided with a recess 15 which, when in its normal position (see Fig. 1), registers with the opening 9 in the bottom of the body member, and is of such size as to receive a limited number of tooth picks. As shown in the drawing, this recess is of such size as to hold but two tooth picks of the character illustrated in the drawing.

For convenience of illustration, I have shown picks of the character which are cylindrical, or approximately cylindrical in shape between their pointed portions, which are relatively long. This character of pick is well adapted for use with a device of this class, as they move easily within the receptacle and readily adjust themselves for dispensing purposes. Furthermore, these picks are substantial, and much more desirable for use than any other character of wood pick with which I am familiar.

Arranged in front of the rotary member 10 and adapted to receive the tooth picks dispensed by the rotary member as soon as the recess 15 has moved into such position as to discharge the picks, are two downwardly inclined members 16, which are attached to the opposite sides of the structure below the body member 5. As illustrated in the drawing, each of these members 16 consists of a flat piece of metal having a downwardly bent lip 17 at its upper extremity which is secured to the opposite sides of the structure by means of fastening devices, as rivets 18. These two members 16 are so spaced as to receive and support the tooth picks when discharged by the rotary member, the pointed extremities of the picks only engaging the said arms, which are turned upwardly at their outer and lower extremities, as shown at 19, to retain the picks in place until removed.

In order that the rotary member 10 shall be normally maintained in the position shown in Fig. 1, and shall be automatically returned to its normal position after the tooth pick dispensing act, I provide two coil springs 20, whose upper extremities are connected with the rotary member as shown at 21, while their lower extremities are connected with the bottom of the device, as shown at 22. These springs are so arranged that when the rotary member is in its normal position, the springs are under sufficient tension to maintain the said member securely in such position. They are also so arranged that as the rotary member is turned in the direction indicated by the arrows in Figs. 1 and 2 for the purpose of removing tooth picks from the receptacle, the springs will be placed under further tension, as they will be stretched or distended (see Fig. 2). Hence, as soon as the pressure on the lever arm 13 ceases to act, the recoil of the springs will return the rotary member to its normal position. As illustrated in the drawing (see Fig. 4), the lower portion of the rotary member is recessed at its opposite ends as shown at 34, and small nails 35 are driven into the member, leaving their head portions exposed within the said recesses for convenience in connecting the upper extremities of the springs 20. It is evident, however, that these springs may be connected in any suitable manner; it is also evident that the particular spring construction for retaining the rotary member in its normal position may be varied at will, without departing from the spirit of the invention.

To the body 5 of the device is secured a downwardly extending casing member 23, which as illustrated in the drawing, is composed of sheet metal, whose upper portion is secured to the body member by means of fastening devices 24. The upper portion of this member 23 extends slightly above the upper surface of the member 5 as shown at 25, and is provided on the front and two opposite sides of the device with an inwardly extending horizontally disposed flange 26 adapted to receive exteriorly projecting flanges 27 formed on the lower front and side edges of the transparent container member 28, which consists of an inverted box or cup which is applied to the casing member 23 of the structure by first inserting its side flanges beneath the corresponding side flanges 26 of the casing member and moving the container member forwardly until the front flange enters the groove or recess formed by the corresponding front flange 26 of the body member. When the container member is in this position, the spring retaining devices 20 which are pivotally connected with the body of the device as shown at 30, are moved upwardly into engagement with the rear surface of the container, these retaining devices being composed of leaf springs and being under sufficient tension to maintain the container securely in place. It will be understood that during the insertion of the container member as heretofore explained, the retaining devices 29 will be in the position indicated by dotted lines in Fig.

3. Also, before removing the container member for the purpose of supplying it with tooth picks, the retaining devices 29 must be again moved to said position.

The casing member 23 extends downwardly from the body member and forms a chamber 31 below the body member and in which the rotary member is located. This chamber is closed at the bottom, rear and at both sides, but is open in front as shown at 32, thus giving access to the operating parts of the device and also allowing the tooth picks to move freely into position at the outer extremities of the arm 16.

In order to support the device in a stable position, the bottom of the casing member 23 may be equipped with legs or supporting brackets, 33.

From the foregoing description, the use and operation of my improvement will be readily understood. In order to obtain tooth picks as they are needed, it is only necessary to press downwardly on the outer extremity of the lever arm 13, by which a partial rotary movement will be imparted to the rotary member 10, said movement being of sufficient magnitude to move the recess 15 to a position just below the bottom of the body member 5, whereby the tooth picks therein are allowed to roll out of the recess and downwardly upon the arms 16 and into the position illustrated in the drawing, from which they may be removed. As soon as the pressure on the lever arm ceases to act, the recoil of the springs 20 returns the rotary member to its normal position, ready for another tooth pick dispensing operation.

In order to supply the device with a quantity of tooth picks whenever it becomes necessary, the spring retainers 29 are first moved downwardly to the position shown in Fig. 3, after which the transparent container member 28 is removed, and a quantity of tooth picks placed therein, after which the container is returned to its normal position. It should be explained, however, that during the return of the container to its position in connection with the body of the device, the body member should be inverted and the container applied when in a corresponding position, in order to maintain the tooth picks in place during the attachment of the container.

Attention is called to the fact that the specific construction of the members 5 and 23 is not essential, and may be varied within the scope of the appended claims. For instance, the members 5 and 23 instead of being separate as described, may be cast as an integral device, which may be the preferred form of construction.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim is,

1. A dispenser of the class described comprising a relatively stationary body member, a spring retained movable ejector, a casing connected with the body member and extending below the same, a container extending above the body member, the casing having side inwardly turned flanges forming grooves, and the container having side flanges adapted to engage said grooves, and retaining means applied to the body member and adapted to engage the container member in the rear, substantially as described.

2. A dispenser of the class described comprising a relatively stationary body member, a spring-retained movable ejector, a casing connected with the body member and extending below the same, a container extending above the body member, the upper extremity of the casing having grooves formed therein, and the container having parts adapted to engage said grooves, and retaining means applied to the body member and adapted to engage the container member in the rear, substantially as described.

3. A dispenser of the class described, comprising a relatively stationary body member having a bottom opening, an ejector having a recess communicating with the opening in the body member, a casing connected with the body member and extending below the same, a container extending above the body member, the upper extremity of the casing having grooves formed therein, the container having parts adapted to engage said grooves, whereby the said container is slidably removable.

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

HAROLD W. C. PROMMEL.

Witnesses:
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