

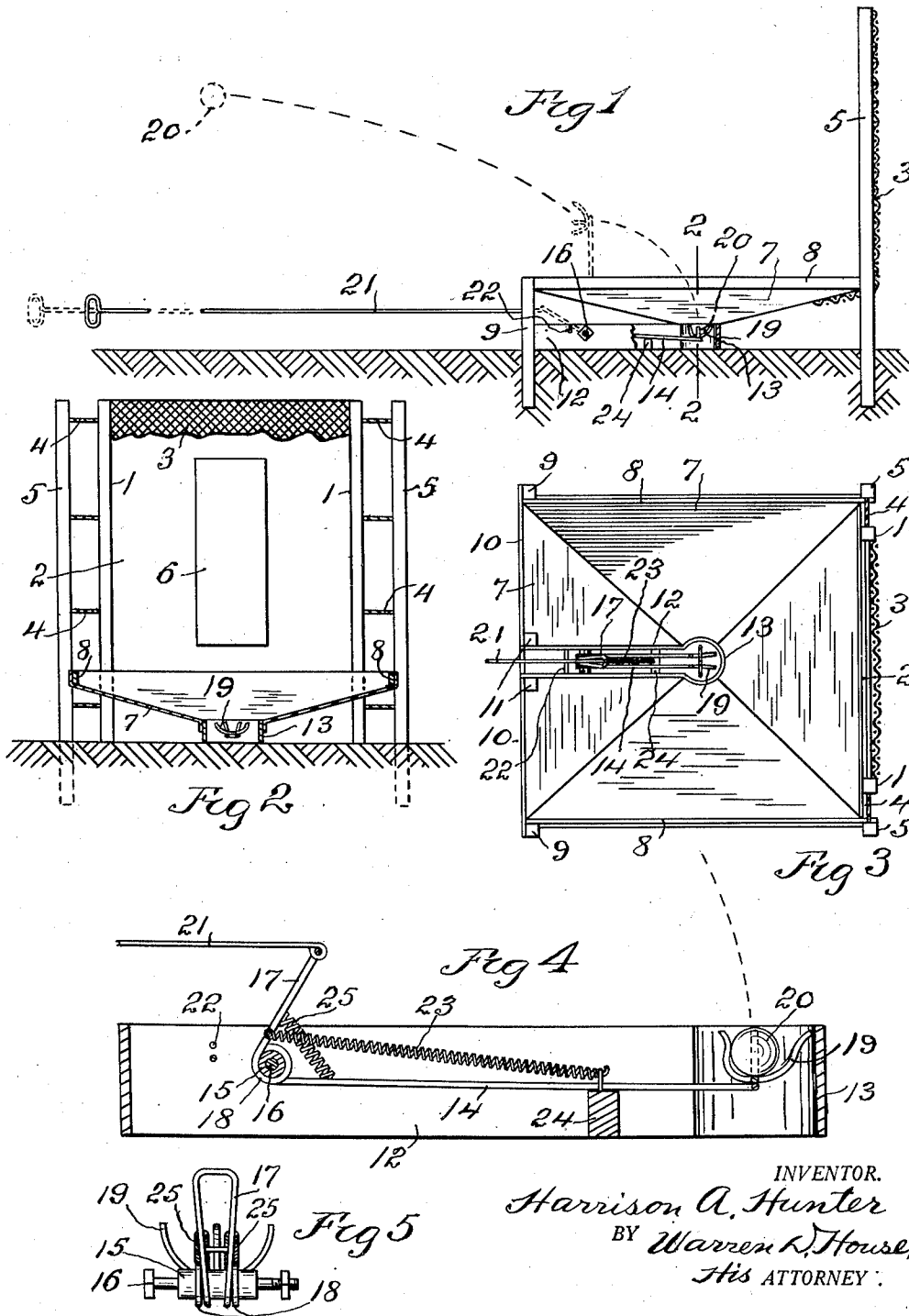
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BALL CATCHING AND THROWING APPARATUS

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BALL CATCHING AND THROWING
APPARATUS

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2 Claims. (Cl. 273-26)

My invention relates to improvements in ball catching and throwing apparatus. It relates particularly to an apparatus having a target against which a ball is projected from a distant place and which catches the projected ball and throws it back toward the place from which it was originally projected.

My improved apparatus is adapted for use in catching and throwing back a base ball which has been thrown at the target, or for use in catching and throwing back a golf ball which has been struck from a distant place.

One of the objects of my invention is the provision of a novel apparatus of the kind described which will enable a person to practice pitching with a base ball, or to practice driving or approaching with a golf ball, and with which he can operate the apparatus so as to have the projected ball returned to him, thus dispensing with the employment of a catcher or a caddy for the purpose.

A further object of my invention is the provision of a novel apparatus of the kind described, which is simple, cheap, durable, not likely to get out of order, and which is efficient in operation.

Still another object of my invention is the provision of a novel ball catching and throwing device.

The novel features of my invention are hereinafter fully described and claimed.

In the accompanying drawing, which illustrates the preferred embodiment of my invention,

Fig. 1 is a side elevation, partly broken away, of my improved apparatus.

Fig. 2 is a section on the line 2-2 of Fig. 1.

Fig. 3 is a top view of the apparatus, partly broken away.

Fig. 4 is an enlarged longitudinal vertical section of the ball catching and throwing device.

Fig. 5 is a rear elevation of the pivoted catching and throwing member, enlarged, and parts connected therewith.

Similar characters of reference designate similar parts in the different views.

My invention provides an upright target provided with two vertical side bars 1 to which are attached the vertical side edge portions of a sheet 2 of canvas or other suitable material against the back of which is disposed wire netting 3 attached to the bars 1, and which serves to reinforce the sheet 2.

The bars 1 are retained in a vertical position by ropes 4 attached to two posts 5 disposed at opposite outer sides of and spaced from the bars

1.

For use as a guide, corresponding to the home plate, for a person pitching or throwing a base ball at the target, there is marked off on the front and middle of the sheet 2 a vertical rectangular portion 6, Fig. 2.

As a means for retrieving balls projected from a distant place there is provided in front of and adjacent to the target a receiving and ball guiding means comprising, as shown, a square funnel shaped receptacle consisting of a sheet 7, of canvas, burlap or other suitable material, one side edge of which is attached to the posts 5 at the lower end of the target sheet 2, the two side edges being attached to two horizontal bars 8, the rear ends of which are fastened to the posts 5, and the front ends of which are fastened to two posts 9 set in the ground. The front edge of the sheet 7 is attached to two horizontal transverse bars 10 attached to the posts 9 respectively, and to two spaced apart posts 11 at opposite sides respectively of the middle of the sheet 7.

The ball catching and throwing means comprises the following described parts. A rectangular box like frame 12 is mounted on the ground between and extends rearwardly from the posts 11, the rear end of the frame being arcuate, as shown in Fig. 3. The lower portions of the sheet 7 are fastened to the upper edge of the arcuate portion, designated by 13, so as to guide the balls, which bound from the target onto the sheet 7, into such arcuate portion.

The front portion of the sheet 7 has an opening registering with the frame 12 for the passage therethrough of an arm 14 of a doubled wire member which is coiled around a pipe 15 pivoted on a transverse horizontal bolt 16 which extends through opposite sides of the frame 12. Extending at an angle to the arm 14 upwardly and toward the target sheet 2 is an inverted U shaped arm 17. The arms 14 and 17 and the coiled portion 18 of the doubled wire member constitute a lever which is provided in the arcuate portion 13 of the frame 12 with ball catching means comprising upwardly flaring fingers 19 at the free end of the arm 14.

A ball 20, which may be a base ball or a golf ball, that has been projected against the target sheet 2 and has bounded therefrom onto the retrieving sheet 7, is guided by the latter downwardly and falls upon the fingers 19 which catch and releasably hold the ball.

For swinging the arm 14 upwardly and rearwardly, so as to have the fingers 19 throw the ball back toward the place from which it was originally projected, a member 21, comprising a

wire or rope is attached to the arm 17 and extends to the place from which the ball was projected. The person who is projecting the balls from such place, after a ball has been projected and fallen onto the sheet 7, pulls the member 21, thus swinging the lever 14—17 to the position, shown in dotted lines in Fig. 1, in which position the arm 17 of the lever will strike a transverse pin 22 mounted in the sides of the frame 12 at the rear of the bolt 16, thus stopping the arm 14 of the lever and causing the ball 20 to be thrown rearwardly toward the place from which it was originally projected, thus enabling the operator to catch or otherwise easily recover the ball which he projected, either by throwing or with a golf club, if it is a golf ball.

For retracting the lever 14—17 to the ball catching position, a coil spring 23 is attached to the arm 17 and to a cross bar 24 across the frame 12 between the bolt 16 and the arcuate portion 13. To reenforce the lever, two coiled compression springs 25 extend between the arms 14 and 17.

In practising with a base ball, the operator, standing at a place in front of and distant from the target, throws or pitches the ball at the portion 6 on the target sheet 2. The ball will bound from the sheet 2 onto the guiding receiving sheet 7, and will pass upon the fingers 19. The operator by pulling the operating member 21 will swing the arm 14 upwardly to the position shown in dotted lines in Fig. 1, where the arm will strike the pin 22, at which time the ball 20 will be thrown from the fingers 19 toward the operator, who recovers the ball preparatory to another projection of it.

If the practising is being done with a golf ball, the operator strikes the ball with the desired golf club, so as to project the ball against the target or upon the sheet 7, which thus serves as a green. The ball will be guided upon the fingers 19, after which it can be thrown by the arm 14 operated by pulling the member 21, as hereinbefore described, whereby the ball is thrown back to the operator.

After the arm 14 has been so swung to throw a ball, the spring 23 retracts the lever to the initial catching position, shown in Fig. 4.

As shown in Fig. 1, the screen wire 3, which reinforces the target canvas 2, may be extended under and attached to the rear portion of the burlap sheet 7.

From the foregoing description, it will be understood that with my improved apparatus, an ex-

ceedingly simple structure is provided in the operation of which when a ball is thrown against the target 2, it will bound therefrom, and will fall into the funnel in which it will be guided onto the fingers 19 of the throwing lever 14, and that the latter upon being swung by the operating member 21, will, uncontrolled by the ball, throw the ball so caught, without intervening interference, back to the place from which it was originally thrown by the operator.

Many modifications of my invention, within the scope of the appended claims, may be made without departing from the spirit of my invention.

What I claim is:—

1. In an apparatus of the kind described, a target, a funnel shaped receptacle disposed horizontally in front of said target in a position for catching a ball thrown from a distance forward of said target and striking and bounding from said target, and having a bottom elongated opening extending longitudinally in front of said target, a lever below and adapted to be swung upwardly through said opening from a normal lower inactive position and having means which, in the inactive position of said lever, will catch a ball passing downwardly through said opening, said lever when operatively upwardly swung from said inactive position will throw the ball so caught back to the place from which the ball was thrown, and an operating member attached to said lever and extending to said place for so operatively swinging said lever upwardly through said opening from said inactive position.

2. In an apparatus of the kind described, a target, a funnel shaped receptacle disposed horizontally in front of said target in a position for catching a ball thrown from a distance forward of said target and striking and bounding from said target, and having a bottom elongated opening extending longitudinally in front of said target, a lever below and adapted to be swung upwardly through said opening from a normal lower inactive position and having means which, in the inactive position of said lever, will catch a ball passing downwardly through said opening, said lever when operatively upwardly swung from said inactive position will throw the ball so caught back to the place from which the ball was thrown, an operating member attached to said lever and extending to said place for so operatively swinging said lever upwardly through said opening from said inactive position, and means for retracting said lever to said inactive position.

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