L. S. HOWARD.

ILLUMINATING SYSTEM FOR THEATRICAL DISPLAY.

APPLICATION FILED JAN. 7, 1911.

993,251. Patented May 23, 1911.

Fig. 1.

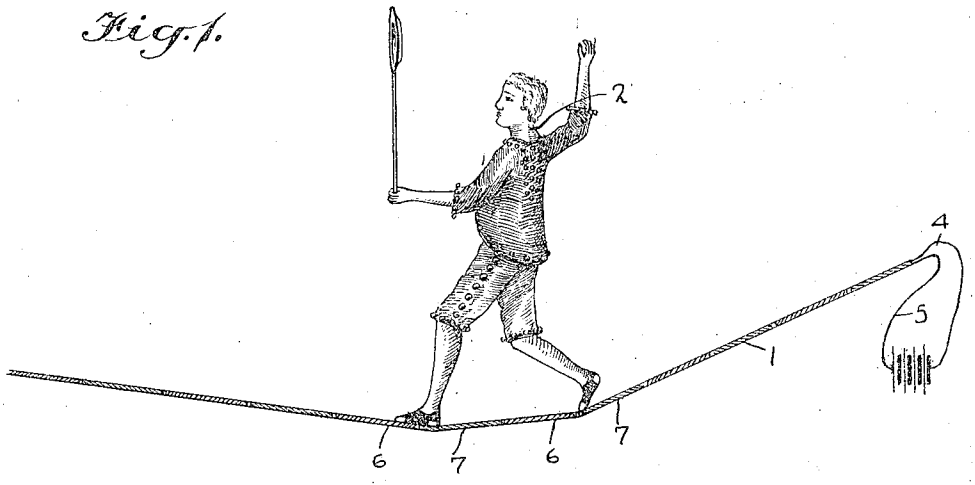


Fig. 2.

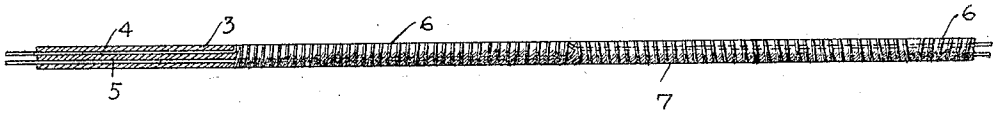
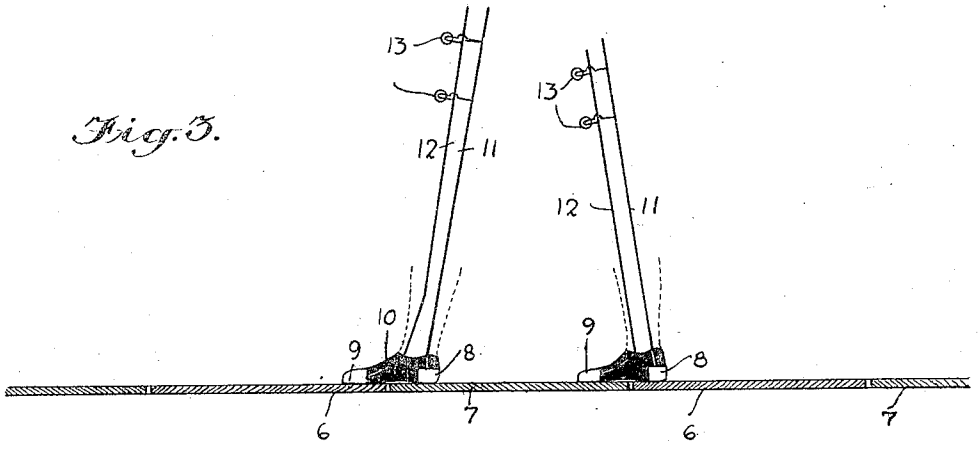


Fig. 3.



WITNESSES

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ILLUMINATING SYSTEM FOR THEATRICAL DISPLAY.

993,251. Specification of Letters Patent. Patented May 23, 1911.

Application filed January 7, 1911. Serial No. 601,259.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, LOUIS SAMUEL HOWARD, a citizen of the United States, and a resident of Wichita, in the county of Sedgwick and State of Kansas, have invented a new and Improved Illuminating System for Theatrical Display, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description.

This invention relates to a new and improved means whereby a theatrical performer, such as a tight-rope walker, can automatically cause a series of lights to appear and disappear on his apparatus or clothing, in a manner corresponding to his movements.

An object of this invention is to provide an illuminating system which will be simple and inexpensive, and which will be highly attractive and spectacular in its appearance.

A further object of this invention is to provide a support, such as a tight-rope, on which a person is adapted to perform, having sections of electrical contacts so arranged that the movements of the performer will make and break connections between lights placed on his clothing, person, or apparatus.

These and further objects, together with the construction and combination of parts, will be more fully described hereinafter and particularly set forth in the claims.

Reference is to be had to the accompanying drawings forming a part of this specification, in which similar characters of reference indicate corresponding parts in all the views, and in which—

Figure 1 is a side view in elevation; Fig. 2 is an enlarged detail view of the supporting rope, partly in section to show the underlying structure; and Fig. 3 is a diagrammatic illustration showing the manner in which the circuits are completed.

Referring more particularly to the separate parts of the invention as embodied in the form shown in the drawings, 1 indicates a suitable support, which may be either a tight-rope or a slack-rope, and on which one or more exhibitors 2 may perform. It will be noted that this rope is of a peculiar structure, in that it has a body portion 3, on which are provided conducting members 4 and 5 extending from opposite sides of a source of electricity, indicated diametrically in Fig. 1. These conducting members are so arranged as to have alternately-disposed exposed contacts, whereby the circuit may be completed by bridging the gap between two sections. Any suitable manner of producing these exposed contacts may be used. In this case, I have shown the wires 4 and 5 spirally wound on the body portion 3, so as to form alternate sections 6 and 7, the sections 6 being formed of continuations of the wires 4, and the sections 7 being formed of continuations of the wires 5. In order to complete the circuit, the exhibitor is provided with heel and toe contacts 8 and 9, which are insulated from the body by a non-conducting overshoe 10, and are connected either in series, or, preferably, in parallel by means of wires 11 and 12, with electric lights 13 arranged in suitable attractive positions on the exhibitor's clothing, and also, if desired, on his person and apparatus.

The use of the device will be readily understood when taken in connection with the above description. As the exhibitor performs on the rope 1, in moving back and forth, if either foot at any time should bridge the space between two of the sections 6 and 7, so that if each of the contact tips on his foot should come in engagement with sections of opposite sign; the circuit would be completed through the source of electricity, and the lights connected to the tips on that particular foot, so that they would be illuminated. As soon as the operator lifts his foot, so that both of the tips are out of contact with the different sections, then the lights corresponding to that particular circuit will be cut off. If the foot should be entirely on one section, it can readily be seen that the lights will not be supplied with the necessary current to illuminate them. All of the lights on the performer and his clothing and apparatus may be connected to both sets of contact tips on his feet, or a certain series of lights may be connected to the contacts on one foot, and another series to the contacts on the other foot. It will thus be seen that as the performer goes back and forth, the lights will be alternately flashed and eliminated in a spectacular manner, which will be highly attractive.

While I have shown one embodiment of my invention, I do not wish to be limited to the specific details thereof, but desire to be protected in various changes, alterations and modifications which may come within the scope of the appended claims.

Having thus described my invention, I

claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent:—

1. The combination with a rope having a pair of wires spirally wound in alternate sections so as to form exposed contacts, of a source of electricity connected to opposite sides of said wires, a series of lights adapted to be carried by a performer, and means engaging said wires so as to make and break the circuit through said lights and said source of electricity.

2. The combination with a rope having a pair of wires spirally wound in alternate sections so as to form exposed contacts, of a source of electricity connected to opposite sides of said wires, a series of lights adapted to be carried by a performer, and plates carried by the feet of said exhibitor adapted to engage said wires, said plates being connected electrically to said lights so as to make and break the circuit between said source of electricity and said lights.

3. The combination with a rope having a pair of wires spirally wound in alternate sections so as to form exposed contacts, of a source of electricity connected to opposite sides of said wires, a series of lights adapted to be carried by a performer, and heel and toe plates on each foot of said performer, connected electrically to said lights and adapted to make and break the circuit between said lights and said source of electricity.

4. The combination with a rope having a pair of wires spirally wound in alternate sections so as to form exposed contacts, of a source of electricity connected to opposite sides of said wires, a series of lights adapted to be carried by a performer, heel and toe plates on each foot of said performer, connected electrically to said lights and adapted to make and break the circuit between said lights and said source of electricity, and means for insulating said heel and toe plates from said performer.

5. The combination with a suspended flexible rope, having contacts arranged thereon in sections, alternate sections being connected to opposite sides of a source of electricity, paraphernalia adapted to be carried by an exhibitor having a plurality of electric lights, and contacts, electrically connected to said lights carried by said exhibitor, adapted to engage said sections so as to produce a complete circuit through said source of electricity and said lights when said separate contacts engage electrically opposite sections.

In testimony whereof I have signed my name to this specification in the presence of two subscribing witnesses.

LOUIS SAMUEL HOWARD.

Witnesses:
HAROLD SHEPPARD,
S. J. MCCABE.