No. 662,708. Patented Nov. 27, 1900.

L. J. CARTER.

THEATRICAL APPLIANCE.

(Application filed Jan. 22, 1900.)

(No Model.)

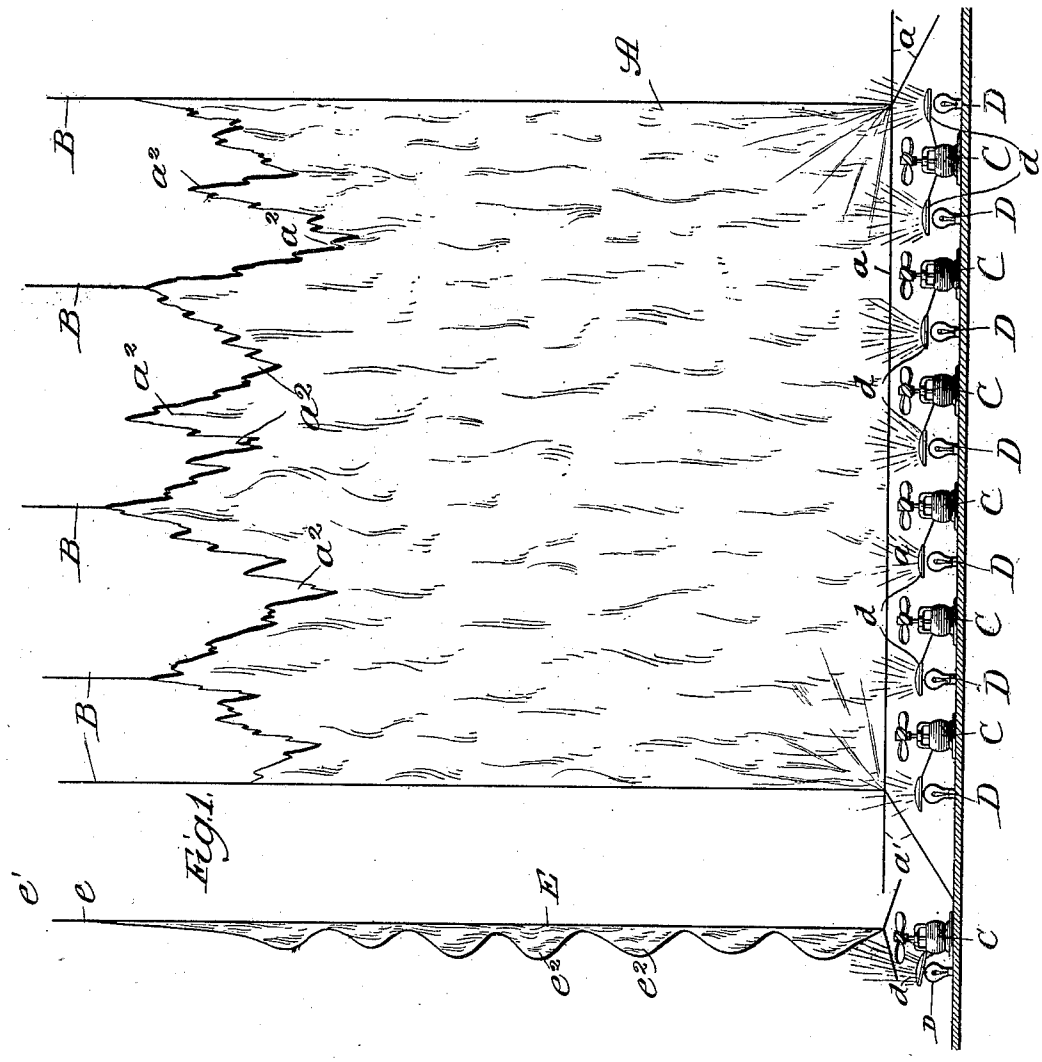


Fig. 1.

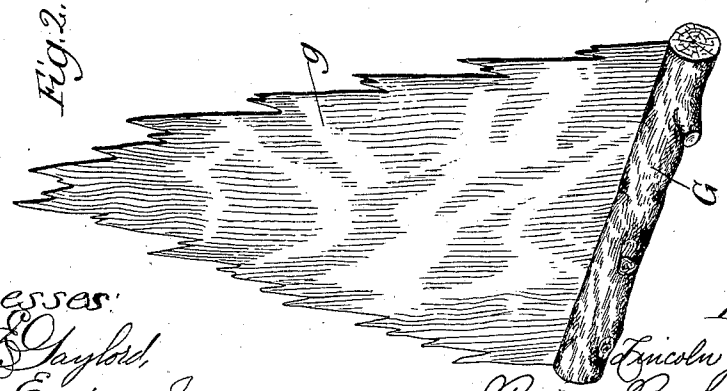


Fig. 2.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

LINCOLN J. CARTER, OF CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.

THEATRICAL APPLIANCE.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 662,708, dated November 27, 1900.

Application filed January 22, 1900. Serial No. 2,286. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, LINCOLN J. CARTER, a citizen of the United States, residing at Chicago, in the county of Cook and State of Illinois, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Theatrical Appliances, of which the following is a specification.

My invention relates to that class of theatrical appliances intended to represent certain stage effects—such, for instance, as the burning of a house—and to create in the minds of an audience the impression that a portion of the scenery and stage is actually on fire, all of which will more fully hereinafter appear.

The object of the invention is to provide a simple, economical, and efficient appliance for the purpose of producing a fire effect on the stage of the theater; and the invention consists in the features and combinations hereinafter described and claimed.

Figure 1 is a front elevation of one type of appliance constructed and arranged in accordance with my improvements, and Fig. 2 a perspective view of a detail hereinafter described.

In the art to which this invention relates it is well known that many attempts have been made by calcium lights and Greek fire to represent and give the effect of a fire on the stage, but that such effects do not produce in the minds of a beholder the impression of an actual fire. In order to overcome these objections, other appliances have been made in which a flame was actually used; but as this is dangerous to the safety of the theater and its patrons it has become practically obsolete. My improvements are intended to overcome these objections and provide a simple, economical, and efficient appliance which will produce in the mind of a beholder the effect of an actual fire.

In constructing my improvements I take one or more sheets of cloth A, preferably white silk, and stretch it across the stage, and at the bottom portion a provide it with a rope or other element by which it may be stretched very taut and secured to the stage by means of the side wires or ropes a'. The upper end of this sheet of white silk is cut in an irregular manner—serrated, as it were—so as to represent tongues of flame. Cords B are provided of a very fine gage or degree, so as to be invisible to an audience, and carried up to the roof of the stage. These cords should be taut enough to support a number of the loose ends of the upper portion of the sheet. Arranged underneath the sheet and practically below the stage-level is a series of fans C, so arranged that as they are rotated, preferably by an electric motor, they produce a current of air which is blown up along both sides of the sheet of silk, giving it a waving effect and carrying such loose ends, as a^2, upwardly and allowing them to wave loosely in the air. A set of electric lights D is also provided and arranged in a trough directly under the cloth. These lights should be inclosed in colored globes or pieces of colored glass d should be arranged thereover and of such color, preferably red that when the light is cast on the sheet and the sheet waved it will appear as if it were a tongue of flame. The waving effect of the sheet obtained by the fans is such that portions of the sheet are brought into the rays of light and others remain in shadow, and the tongues or loose ends flapping at the upper portion are also brought into the light and into the shadow, so that the light at different times covers long and short surfaces and very easily deceives the mind of the beholder into thinking that it is an actual flame of fire.

Arranged at one side of the sheet is a supplementary strip E, having its point e connected with the flies by an invisible cord e'. Under this strip, which is serrated on one side and straight on the other, is arranged a fan D, a light C, and a piece of colored glass d. This strip waving for the entire length and the projecting ends e^2 at one side thereof waving laterally, as well as longitudinally, make it appear when the light is cast thereon as if it were a flame creeping up the side of the stage.

To represent falling embers or logs of fire, I provide a piece of material G, constructed so as to represent a log of wood in any desired shape, either in rustic or any other shape, gilded on its outer surface. This log is provided with a piece of silk g, cut in irregular pattern along its edges, so as to represent tongues of flame. By dropping this over the

flies through the light and air it will seem as if it were a piece of wood on fire.

I claim—

1. In an appliance of the class described, the combination of a sheet of flexible material, air-supply mechanism arranged underneath so as to wave the same, and a light arranged to cast a glow or glows on the sheet, whereby during its waving it represents a sheet of fire, substantially as described.

2. In an appliance of the class described, the combination of a sheet of flexible material arranged across a stage having its lower end drawn tight and its upper end cut in an irregular pattern to represent tongues of flame, fan mechanism arranged underneath the sheet so that in operation they give it a waving effect, light mechanism arranged to throw a glow or glare on the sheet so that during its waving it is cast into the light and shadows and represents a sheet of flame or fire, substantially as described.

3. In an appliance of the class described, the combination of a sheet of flexible material such as silk drawn across a stage, having its lower end drawn taut and its upper end loose and cut in an irregular or serrated manner so as to represent tongues of flame, invisible cords connecting a plurality of the tongues with the upper portion of the stage, a series of fans arranged directly under the sheet of silk so that in operation they give it a waving effect, light mechanism arranged underneath the sheet so as to throw a glare or glow on the portion of the sheet brought into the light at various periods and intervals and thereby represent a sheet of fire or flame, substantially as described.

4. In an appliance of the class described, the combination of a sheet of flexible material, means for waving the same, means for casting a glow or glare of light on the sheet, whereby during its waving motion it represents a sheet of fire or flame, substantially as described.

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