This invention relates to handbags and has particular reference to devices such as frame structures and latch thereof.

One object of the invention is to provide a handbag frame structure comprising a spring latch having an interchangeable latch concealing ornament, finger piece, cam member or lock part which is reliably secured in place by the action of a deformable or resilient member, all in an improved and simplified relation of the parts, and with the interchangeable element having one or more of the characteristics mentioned.

An important object of the invention is the provision of a handbag frame structure having a spring latch which would ordinarily interfere with or obstruct the attachment to or fabrication on a frame member of a fabric covering member, the latch having the ordinarily interfering part separately attachable as by a resilient snap action with a relatively noninterfering part of the lock, in an improved manner.

Another object of the invention is the provision of a device of the character described wherein the normal use of the latch tends to cause the interengaged parts thereof, including the interchangeable part, to move toward interengaging position.

Another object of the invention is the provision of a device of the nature set forth wherein the interchangeable part and the mounting or base part of the latch on one frame member are both adapted for latching engagement with the companion frame member for increased reliability and thinness and compactness of the latch.

A further object of the invention is the provision of a device of the class alluded to having few and simple parts, and which is durable and reliable in construction, highly advantageous for use in the manufacture of handbags, and neat, compact, and convenient in normal use.

Other objects and advantages of the invention will become apparent as the specification proceeds.

With the aforesaid objects in view, the invention consists in the novel combinations and arrangements of parts hereinafter described in their preferred embodiments, pointed out in the subjoined claims, and illustrated in the annexed drawing, wherein like parts are designated by the same reference characters throughout the several views.

In the drawing:

Figure 1 is a somewhat enlarged vertical sectional view showing a device embodying the invention.

Fig. 2 is a fragmentary bottom plan view of the latch and mounting thereof.

Figs. 3 and 4 are respectively sectional views taken on the lines 3—3 and 4—4 of Fig. 2, but showing the device in normal horizontal position.

Fig. 5 is a perspective isometric fragmentary view of a channel frame element showing a fabric member fitted around the broken away angle plate or base member.

Fig. 6 is a diagrammatic fragmentary view showing in dot-dash lines a means for clamping a channel frame member to secure the bag body thereto.

Fig. 7 is a perspective isometric view showing a device embodying the invention with the interchangeable part of the latch ready to be attached in place.

Fig. 8 is a sectional view of the device similar to that of Fig. 1, and showing a modification of the invention.

Fig. 9 is a fragmentary diagrammatic perspective view of the spring element.

Fig. 10 is a bottom plan view of the device shown in Fig. 8.

The advantages of the invention as here outlined are best realized when all of its features and instrumentalities are combined in one and the same structure, but, useful devices may be produced embodying less than the whole. It will be obvious to those skilled in the art to which the invention appertains, that the same may be incorporated in several different constructions. The accompanying drawing, therefore, is submitted merely as showing the preferred exemplification of the invention.

Referring in detail to the drawing, 10 denotes a device embodying the invention. The same may be in the nature of an article such as a handbag having a bag body 11 and a frame comprising U-shaped frame members 12, 12 hinged together as at 13 for movement toward and away from each other to close and open the bag body. By making the frame members of channel form, the bag body may be tightly received in the channel formations or the latter may be clamped thereon in the usual manner. In certain instances the channel members are covered with fabric members 14 as of textile or the like to conceal the metal.

For releasably latching the handbag closed, a latching device may be provided which is generally of the spring type and may be mounted on the frame member 12 for releasable engagement with the frame member 11 or with a projection 15 thereon. The fabric member 14 could be easily
provided with a small hole for the projection 15 to extend therethrough. But considerable difficulty occurred in fitting the fabric of a member 14 around the shank or base part of the latch which generally overlies the fabric to a considerable degree. If a marginally closed hole such as 16 were cut in the fabric member 14 to snugly enclose a base part 17 for the latch, it would be impossible to pass the much larger latch through such hole. If the hole 16 were cut large enough to pass the latch, an unfinished hole would result showing the metal of the frame member. Hence it has been customary to provide slots forming tongues in the fabric, which tongues were worked in under the latch and glued to the frame member. This obviously necessitated a considerable amount of skilled labor to obtain a neat finish. These difficulties, which are described as representative of problems in the manufacture of handbags where a latch may interfere with or obstruct the manipulation of a fabric associated with the metal frame member, are avoided by the present invention.

Since a latch as used in ladies' handbags is an important feature of distinctiveness and ornamentation, the invention permits the handbag to be constructed complete with the attachment of the decorative latch part according to the choice of the purchaser. Hence a manufacturer's stock can be readily changed to suit, and in fact, the interchangeable latch part may be secured by the retailer to suit the purchaser.

While such considerable variety in handbag style is permitted, the main part of the handbag including the bag body and frame is not changed at all and is used directly as taken from the manufacturer's stock.

In the handbag industry, the frames and latches are made by one concern, and the fabrication of the handbag bodies therewith is done by the handbag manufacturer. The latter demands a type of frame which shall not require any woodworking of metal.

The invention is valuable with highly polished frames as well as with fabric covered frames.

Since the frame with the latch initially secured thereto is relatively expensive, a manufacturer will carry as little stock as possible, because of the style factor in the latch. With the present invention, the manufacturer may carry an ample stock of frames, and purchase the much more expensive latches as the need therefor arises with varying styles.

Referring again in detail to the drawing, the channel frame member 12 may have an opening 18 in the back thereof of the same size and in register with the hole 16 in the fabric member 14. Extending longitudinally in the frame member 12 is an elongated initially torsioned spring element 19 which may be of rectangular cross section. A base part or anchorage 20 may be in the nature of an angular plate having an arm 17 extending snugly through the marginally closed hole 16 of the fabric and radially loosely through the channel opening 18. At its lower end, the arm 17 may have an eye 21 nonrotatingly fitting around the spring element 19. The latter serves to secure the arm 17 to the frame member and forms a spring pinlike therefor, one end 22 being bent and abutting a side wall of the channel so that the spring element 19 tends to swing the plate 23 counterclockwise. The other arm 23 of the plate 23 is outside of the channel member and projects laterally thereof and is adapted to overlie the companion frame member 11 in the closed position of the handbag.

Mounted on the plate 20 is an interchangeable member 24 which may comprise a plate 25 having secured to the underside thereof a plate 28 to form a socket therewith. One end of the plate 25 may be thickened as at 27 to form a cam adapted to override the frame member 11 or its projection 15 as the case may be. The plate 26 may have one or more openings 28 and the arm 23 may have one or more deformable or resilient tongues 29 adapted to lock into the recesses 24 of the device 24 from the arm 23 which is snugly slidably received in the socket. The plate 26 may also have an opening 30 and the arm 23 may have a therewith aligned opening 31, both openings affording ample depth to receive the projection 15, and permitting the device 24 to be thin and compact. Since the device 24 is secured in operative position by a movement toward the right, the engagement of the cam part 27 with the projection 16 tends to move the device 24 onto its mounting to avoid accidental release. Since the device 24 projects laterally beyond the frame member 11, it may be used as a finger piece to swing the device 24 upward against the tension of the spring 19 to thus release the latch.

It will now be seen that the fabric element snugly engages around the plate 20, and that the latch part 24, which is substantially larger than the arm 23, overlies and conceals the plate 20 and the marginal parts of the fabric 14 at the opening 16. The fabric may be applied first to the frame member, or it may be applied after the plate 20 is mounted in place. In any event, the handbag 10 is made up of the interchangeable ornamental latch part, chosen by the purchaser, is secured in place by a simple slide movement.

The invention possesses a further advantage in respect to the clamping of the frame members on the bag body 31. Where, heretofore, the latch was initially secured to the frame, the handbag manufacturer used clamping jaws one of which had a large cut out to clear the latch. The result was that the adjacent portion of the frame was left unclamped, or required a separate clamping operation. With the present invention, the manufacturer may use a uniform clamping jaw 32, and a companion clamping jaw 33 having a cut out 34 which is only relatively small, being only sufficiently large to clear the relatively narrow arm 23. Thus the channel member 12 may be clamped with a single operation, substantially throughout. And the jaw 32 may be used with different frames because the element 23 is of uniform size; and the use of cut outs of different sizes can be avoided.

In Figs. 8 to 10 is shown a modification of the invention whereby a latching part such as 24 may be secured directly to a channel back means. Other advantages will be later pointed out.

The device 35 comprises a wire spring member 36 having a U-shaped bend 37, offset from the wire as at 38, and the bight of the bend being offset as at 39 to form a tongue for engagement part, One or both bent ends 39 of the spring member 35 may act like that at 22 to similarly torsionally actuate the spring. The offset parts 38 may be curved toward each other to clampingly engage the end edges of the opening 18 of the channel back through which the part 37 projects upward and laterally in the general manner of the plate 28. A pair of plates 41, 42 from a socket to receive the part 37, with the portion 39 engaging 75.
in an opening 43 of the plate 42. The latter may also have an opening 44 for releasably engaging a part 15, or the plate 41 may have a cam part 45 shouldered at 46 to directly engage the channel 11, so that the projection 15 may be dispensed with. The latching device may be used with different types of frames.

To allow for possible lack of sufficient resilience in the portion 39 in engaging in the recess 43, the plate 42 may be secured to the plate 41 only at one end as by riveting or spot welding at 47 beyond the opening 43, whereby the resilience of the plate 42 may permit it to move to afford the requisite space for the portion 39 in its passage between the plates 41 and 42.

It will now be seen that we have provided a device which fulfills the objects of the invention and is well adapted for practical use. It will be noted that the lock may include the means 24, or 24 and 15, or 24 and the spring 19 or the element 20.

We claim:

1. A device including a latch portion having an interchangeable ornament comprising a thin flat casing open at one end, a movably mounting member having an anchor element of thin strip material slidingly fitted into the casing through said open end, one of the anchor and casing elements having an opening and the companion element having a yieldable tongue adapted to engage in said opening to prevent removal of the casing element in normal use of the latch portion, said anchor element and one wall of the casing element having registering holes whose common axis is at right angles to the plane of the casing element, said holes being adapted for the removable engagement therein of a catch projection which normally acts in opposite direction to said tongue and affords a supplemental interconnection between the elements when engaged in said holes, the opposite wall of the casing element being closed and being externally ornamented.

2. A latch device of the type that is spring mounted on one handbag channel frame member and horizontally overlies the companion frame member for downward engagement with a top catch casing element of the latter, including a movable mounting member having a spring actuated upright arm and a generally horizontal arm forming an anchor element, an interchangeable ornament comprising a flat casing open at one end, the top wall of the casing element being ornamented and having a projecting finger piece portion remote from the open end of the casing element, the anchor element being slidingly fitted in the casing element through said open end, said casing and anchor elements having means for interconnecting the same against removal of the casing element, said interconnecting means comprising a yielding portion to facilitate easy interconnection of the elements, the bottom wall of the casing element and said anchor element having registering holes having an axis at right angles to the plane of the casing element so as to be adapted to receive a top catch element, said casing element having at its inner side a cam face for the catch element leading to said holes.

3. A latch device of the type that is spring mounted on one frame member for downward snap engagement with a top catch element of a companion frame member, including a mounting member having an anchor portion, an interchangeable ornament member having a flat casing open at one end for snugly receiving the anchor portion, the latter and the casing having interconnecting means comprising a portion that is deformable to cause the interconnection, the casing having a hole in its under side to receive a catch element, and the casing having at its under side a cam face for the catch element leading to said hole.

4. A device including an interchangeable ornament member comprising a flat relatively thin casing open at one end and having a top ornamental wall, said top wall having a concealing portion extending beyond the open end of the casing and a finger piece portion extending beyond the opposite end of the casing, said bottom wall having a plurality of spaced holes, one of said holes providing means for the securing of the casing on a swingable mounting member that is insertable into the casing through said open end, and the other hole being adapted for the engagement therein of a catch, and the casing having on its under side a cam face leading substantially from the finger piece to the catch receiving opening.

5. A device including an interchangeable ornament member comprising a relatively flat casing open at one end, said casing having an ornamental top wall having portions projecting beyond the ends of the casing for providing a finger piece portion and a concealing portion with the latter being at said open end of the casing, and a mounting member having arms at right angles to each other, the first arm having an eye portion adapted to non-rotatably slidably receive a torsion spring of a handbag frame, the second arm being slidable into said casing through said open end thereof, means comprising a readily deformable portion for interconnecting the casing and the second arm to prevent removal of the casing, the concealing portion overlying the first arm, said mounting member and said interchangeable ornament constituting a latch element, said latch element having an opening at the bottom of the casing to releasably engage with a catch, and said casing having on its underside a guide face for the catch leading to said bottom opening.

6. A device including a finger piece latch member for interchangeable connection to a ladies' handbag, said finger piece member being in the nature of a relatively flat casing simulating a plate and adapted to be spring mounted on one side of a handbag frame for downward movement and latching engagement with a projection on the other side of the handbag frame, with an end portion of the casing extending beyond the projection to be engageable by a finger tip for upward unlatching movement, said casing being open at one end opposite said finger tip end and having a top ornamental wall having a concealing portion projecting beyond the open end of the casing to conceal the mounting of the latter, and the casing having means intermediate the ends thereof adapted for releasable snap engagement with the mounting when the latter is inserted in the casing, the lower wall of the casing having means intermediate the ends of the casing for releasably engaging said projection.

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