This invention relates to stretchers, shapers or hangers for expansible or shrinkable articles such as, by way of example, head gear to which the class of berets belongs. One object of the invention is the provision of a new and improved adjustable stretcher, shaper and hanger adapted to be inserted into and engage the interior circumference of a circular article such as a beret, to maintain the beret in proper shape and prevent it from shrinking after it has been laundered, the device including a hook by means of which it may be suspended. Another object of the invention is the provision of a circular device of the class described, manufactured of a unitary length of flexible wire and so constructed that the diameter of the circle may be varied, the device being further provided with means for releasably maintaining it in any given size or diameter to accommodate the article on which it is applied.

The above described as well as additional and more specific objects will be clarified in the following description wherein reference numerals refer to like-numbered parts in the accompanying drawing. It is to be noted that the drawing is intended solely for the purpose of illustration and that it is therefore neither desired nor intended to limit the invention necessarily to any or all of the exact details of construction shown except insofar as they may be deemed essential to the invention.

Referring briefly to the drawing, Fig. 1 is a front elevational view of the device of this invention, showing the device applied in a beret, the latter being shown in phantom.

Fig. 2 is a sectional view taken on the line 2—2 of Fig. 1.

Fig. 3 is a view of the device similar to Fig. 1, showing it in an adjusted position of reduced diameter.

Fig. 4 is a side view of the device, looking at Fig. 3 from right to left.

Fig. 5 is a sectional view taken on the line 5—5 of Fig. 1.

Referring in detail to the drawing, the numeral 10 indicates the device, which is formed or shaped into a circle out of a unitary length of resilient wire 11 which may be steel or any suitable material having the desired resiliency and durability. The length of wire is substantially greater than the circumference of the circle when fully expanded in diameter. Fig. 3 shows the circle at substantially reduced diameter, while Fig. 1 shows it at a diameter approximately intermediate its range. Thus, a portion of the circular wire always overlaps a portion at the other end of the end of the circular wire. To illustrate this feature, one end of the circular wire is indicated at 12 and the other end at 13, the degree of overlapping of these two ends varying with the diameter of the circle, as is obvious.

The extremity of the end portion 12 of the wire is deformed into a hanger or hook 14 by means of which the device may be suspended from a support, not shown. The extremity of the end 13 of the wire is deformed into a substantially radial finger grip or handle 15. It is to be noted that the hook 14 is formed by a radial bend or section 16 extending toward the center of the circle from the end 12, deformed by a bend or section 17 outward and forward from the plane of the circle thus providing at the base of the hook 14 a flanged piece 18. Thus, by grasping the two handles 15 and 18, urging them together will reduce the diameter of the circle, and spreading them apart will increase the diameter.

Resilient guide means are provided both for the purpose of maintaining the overlapping ends 12 and 13 at all times in a side-by-side relationship and also to lock the same releasably together to maintain the diameter of the circle in any adjusted position. These means comprise a pair of coiled springs 19 and 20. A portion of the former encircles the end of the wire, shown at 12, adjacent the hook section 16, together with the adjacent portion of the overlapping end 13 of the wire, with the hook shank or grip section 16 extending, at its upper end, between two adjacent coils of this spring, and the portion of the spring to the left, Fig. 1, of the section 16 encircling only the wire 11 adjacent thereto. Thus the two ends 12 and 13 are maintained slidably together and the force of the spring tends to resist sliding movement between them.

In a like manner, the spring 20 encircles, partly, the ends 12 and 13 at the portions thereof opposite the spring 19, and partly the single wire 11 to the right thereof, Fig. 1, with the grip 15 passing between two adjacent coils of the spring. The spring 19 functions in the same manner and for the same purposes as the spring 20.

Assuming that the numeral 21 indicates, in phantom, a circular article such as a beret whose circumferential edge is shown at 22 and which has a doubled back flange 23 on the inside thereof, as is usual, whose circumferential edge is shown at 24, and that the beret after having been laundered, the device is applied thereto in the following manner. By drawing the handles 15 and 18 apart to reduce the diameter of the circle sufficiently to insert it through the opening defined by the circle 24, the device is then inserted through this opening and then, by bringing the handles together the diameter of the device is increased until it engages the wall of the beret between the flange 23 and the top of the beret. In this condition, it is apparent that the hook 14 is positioned in a plane spaced forward from the plane of the thus flattened beret with the section 16 extending through the opening in the flange 23, that is, the opening 24. Thus the beret may be conveniently hung in stretched and shaped condition.

The device may, of course, be applied to other uses than the example given.

1. A device of the class described comprising a single length of resilient wire shaped into a circle and having a length substantially greater than the circumference of the circle thereby having the ends of the wire mutually overlapping and slidable with respect to each other in the plane of the circle, the extremities of said ends being deformed into handles extending radially inward of the circle, and means for releasably binding said overlapping ends together, one of said handles having a hook thereon extending radially outwardly beyond said circle and lying in a plane spaced from the plane of the circle, said means comprising a coiled spring having some coils thereof surrounding portions of said overlapping ends adjacent one side of one of said handles and other coils thereof sur-
3. The device set forth in claim 1, having an additional coiled spring having some coils thereof surrounding portions of said overlapping ends adjacent one side of the other of said handles and other coils thereof surrounding a portion of the wire on the other side of said other of said handles.

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