Aug. 11, 1959 J. M. JENKS 2,899,229

CHILD PROOF CABINET LOCK

Filed Nov. 29, 1956

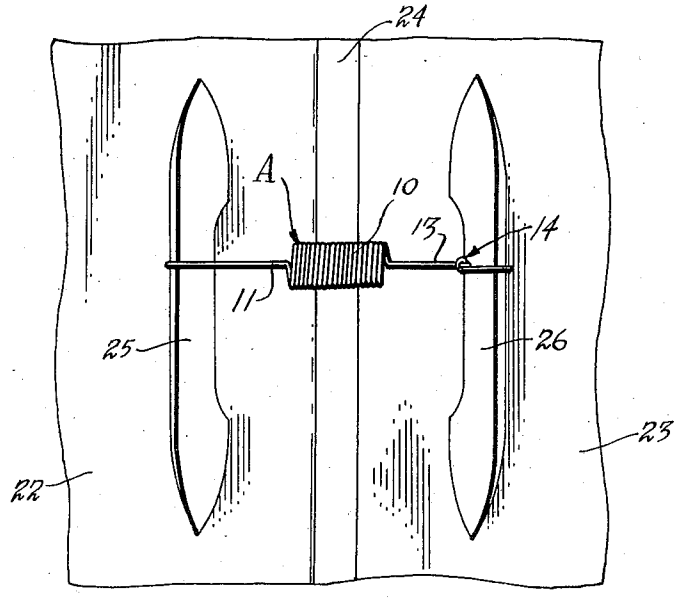


FIG. 1

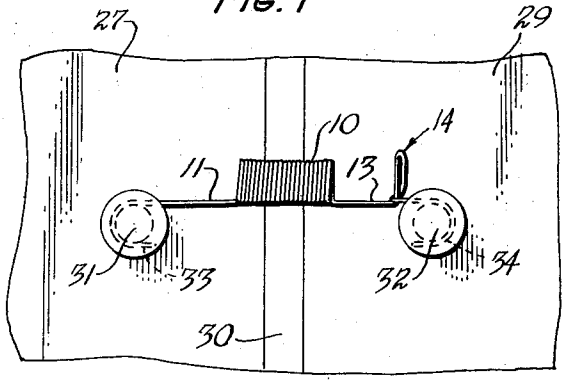


FIG. 2

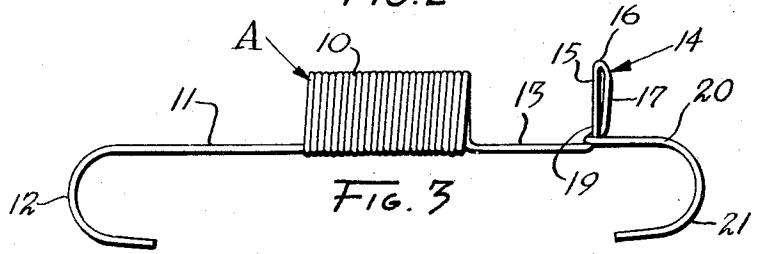


FIG. 3

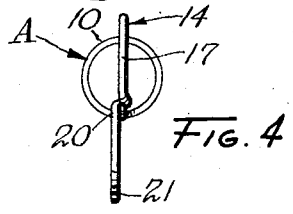


FIG. 4

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United States Patent Office 2,899,229
Patented Aug. 11, 1959

2,899,229

CHILD PROOF CABINET LOCK

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Application November 29, 1956, Serial No. 625,018

1 Claim. (Cl. 292—288)

This invention relates to an improvement in child proof cabinet lock and deals particularly with an attachment engageable between handles of adjoining cabinet doors to prevent these doors from being accidentally opened.

Considerable trouble and damage is caused by small children opening cabinet doors and removing the contents therefrom. In some instances the cabinets are used to contain items which are actually injurious to the infant. For example, some products used for cleaning in the kitchen are extremely caustic in nature and would be extremely injurious if taken internally by the child. Even though no actual injury is caused to the child himself the contents of the cabinets are often spilled or broken, causing not only a waste of the materials but also requiring considerable time to clean up after the removal of the articles from the cabinet has been discovered. It is this difficulty which the present device is designed to eliminate.

It has been found that children between approximately one and four to five years in age are often able to open the doors of cabinets, appliances and the like and take particulart delight in doing so. Unless a child of that age is under constant supervision or unless positive locks are provided on the cabinets, the situation is difficult to remedy. Foolproof locks are usually impractical for use on cabinet doors used for the storage of articles which are in every day use. It is also extremely difficult to watch the child every instant of the day and it is also difficult to train the child not to touch the doors of cabinets. However, simple locks of the type disclosed herein do not require any particular difficulty to lock and unlock and still have proven extremely effective in preventing the child from opening the doors of such cabinets.

A feature of the present invention resides in the simplicity of the construction. In view of the fact that the device is extremely simple in its form, it may be produced for a modest sum. For this reason locks of the type in question are practical to purchase and use as the cost of such locks is usually greatly overbalanced by the savings effected to the contents of the cabinet.

A feature of the present invention resides in the provision of a lock which includes an expandable and contractable spring which is usually in compressed condition when relaxed and which is provided with hook-shaped ends designed to hook upon the handles or knobs of adjoining cabinet doors. This spring is carefully designed to possess sufficient resilience so that it is difficult for the child to disengage but still is easy for the housewife to engage or disengage when it is desired to open the cabinets or to lock the same.

A feature of the present invention resides in the provision of a simple structure including a pair of opposed hooks having a spring interposed therebetween and having a handle member projecting from at least one of the hooks so as to simplify the operation of expanding the spring when it is to be engaged or disengaged. The

projecting handle provides a means of grasping the lock which would otherwise be difficult to grasp with the fingers and, accordingly, forms an important part of the present invention.

A further feature of the present invention resides in the fact that the lock may be applied either to cabinet doors of the type which are hinged at opposite ends and which closes against a common intermediate frame or in holding doors closed which are of the slidable type and which slide away from one another in the opening operation.

These and other objects and novel features of the present invention will be more clearly and fully set forth in the following specification and claim.

In the drawings forming a part of the specification:

Figure 1 is a front elevational view showing the adjoining portions of a pair of cabinet doors provided with operating handles and showing the lock in place thereupon.

Figure 2 is a view similar to Figure 1 but showing the lock applied to knobs rather than operating handles.

Figure 3 is an elevational view of the lock removed from operating position.

Figure 4 is an end view of the lock illustrated in Figure 3.

The device is extremely simple in form and it is this simplicity which makes it operable for its intended purpose. Costly locks would not normally be applied to cabinet doors but particularly where they are only necessary during certain hours of the day and also where their use is limited to a certain age of child. It is normally considered that by the time the child reaches the age where the lock would be easy to manipulate, the child would have a deeper sense of responsibility and could normally be depended upon not to disobey an order not to remove articles from the cabinet.

The lock includes a coil spring **10** which is formed of spring wire such as piano wire or the like and which is provided with a shank **11** projecting from one end thereof. The shank **11** terminates in a hook end **12**, the radius of curvature of the hook end or the size of the bight being sufficient to encircle portions of the door operating hardware. A second shank **13** is normally aligned with the shank **11** and connects the other end of the spring **10** with a handle loop **14**. This handle loop may be formed in various ways but is shown in the drawings as including a generally right angularly extending portion **15** which is bent at **16** and reversed in direction to form a reversely extending portion **17** which is generally parallel to the portion **15**. The end of the portion **17** may be looped about the base of the portion **15** as indicated at **19** and the wire may be bent to form a shank extension **20** which is substantially aligned with the shank **13**.

The shank **20** terminates in a reversely turned hook **21** which is sufficiently large to encircle a portion of the door operating hardware. The distance between the hook ends **12** and **21** is, in relaxed condition of the spring **10**, slightly less than the distance between the door handles and knobs as will be later described.

Figure 1 of the drawings indicates a pair of door panels **22** and **23** which either close against a parting rail **24** or else extend in edge abutting relation with a flange on one door overlying a portion of the other door. A pair of vertically elongated handles **25** and **26** are mounted upon the doors **22** and **23** in parallel relation. These handles are normally spaced apart a distance sufficient so that either handle may be conveniently grasped without interference from the other handle. In other words, in most instances, these handles are approximately four inches apart although obviously this is a matter of choice.

The lock A which has been described may be applied to the handle **25** and **26** by placing the hook end **12** around one portion of the handle **25**. The handle **14** is next grasped between the thumb and fingers and the other end of the lock is moved to the right, stretching the spring **10** until the hook **21** can clear the other handle **26**. The hook is then placed into position with the hook end partially embracing the handle **26**.

When thus engaged, the lock can only be removed by stretching the spring **10**. While this is not difficult, it is an operation which is not quickly learned by the child. Furthermore, the spring is stiff enough so that while it can be easily stretched by an adult or an older child, it is somewhat difficult for the small child to stretch. For this reason, the lock is effective in holding the doors closed.

In the event the child attempts to open one of the doors, the spring forming a part of the lock is expanded to some extent permitting the door to open slightly. However, the extent to which the door may be opened is not sufficient to permit the child to remove the contents and as soon as the pulling force is stopped, the two doors swing back into closing position. Thus the lock forms a spring closing means for holding the cabinets closed as well as a lock.

Figure 2 of the drawings shows a similar construction including a pair of door panels **27** and **29** having a parting rail **30** therebetween. Knobs **31** and **32** are mounted on the doors **27** and **29**, respectively. The spring A is attached by placing the loop ends **12** and **21** about the reduced diameter shanks **33** and **34** of the knobs **31** and **32**, respectively. This requires a stretching of the spring end and the doors are then effectively held closed in the manner previously described.

While the device has been described as being particularly useful when applied to cabinet doors, it may also be used effectively on drawers, such as those used in desks, dressers and the like. The lock used for such purposes is usually longer than that used for cabinet doors, but is otherwise the same. The lock limits the extent to which the drawers may be pulled out relative to each other to a very short distance.

In accordance with the patent statutes, I have described the principles of construction and operation of my child proof cabinet lock, and while I have endeavored to set forth the best embodiment thereof, I desire to have it understood that obvious changes may be made within the scope of the following claim without departing from the spirit of my invention.

I claim:

A child proof cabinet clasp for use upon cabinet doors having spaced door handles thereupon, the clasp comprising a coil spring having oppositely directed substantially aligned shanks at opposite ends thereof, single hook ends on said shanks, and a grip means on one of the shanks and formed therefrom, the hook ends and grip means being substantially in a common plane, the hook ends extending in one direction from said shanks and said grip means extending in the opposite direction therefrom.

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