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3,429,254

TEA BAG DISPOSERS

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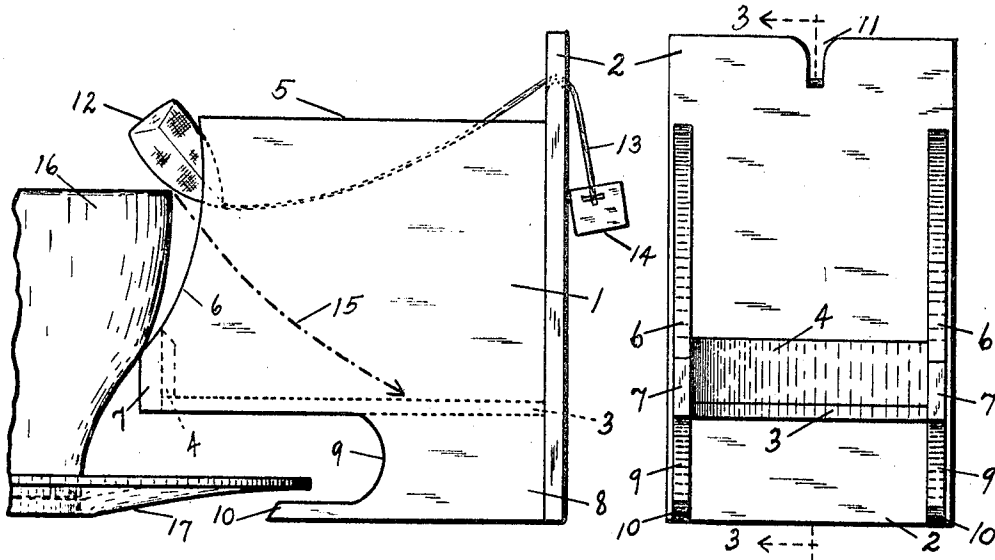


Fig. 1

Fig. 2

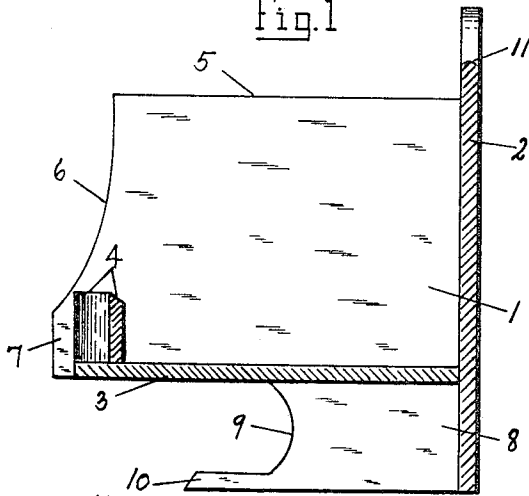


Fig. 3

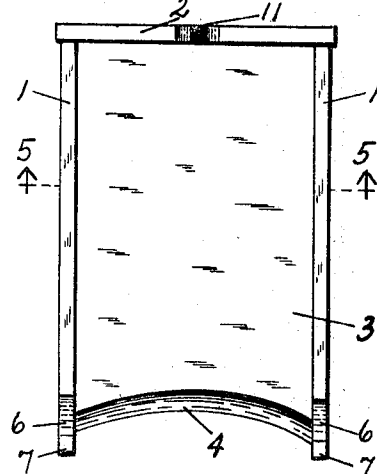


Fig. 4

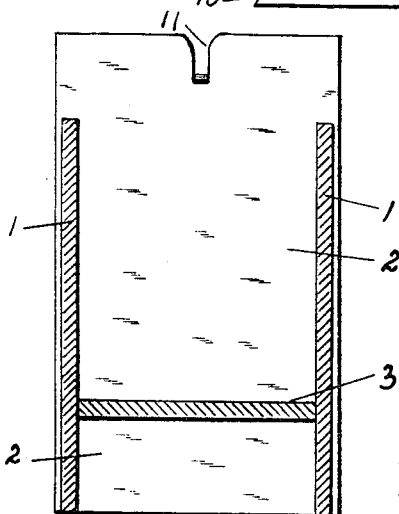


Fig. 5



Fig. 6

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**TEA BAG DISPOSERS**

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4 Claims

**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

My invention relates to a device wholly independent in structure and capable of standing on its own legs, whether or not in operational proximity to a cup, or cup and saucer, and having a compartment of sufficient capacity for the reception of a plurality of steeped tea bags that may be transferred to it from such cup through channeled means while held aloft or through slidable contact against a portion of said cup, the provisions being such that no drippings from said bag in the course of such transfer will collect anywhere except in said compartment.

This invention is designed as a further improvement on the respective devices disclosed in my pending applications for United States Letters Patent, filed on Aug. 15, 1967, bearing Ser. No. 660,807, and on Oct. 31, 1967, bearing Ser. No. 679,473, relating, as here, to means for the transfer of tea bags from cups to another receptacle after brewing has been accomplished therewith, with protection against dripping on any surface between or adjacent to these respective containers and against any possible stains as a result thereof on any impressionable fabric. In conventional practice, by merely holding the bag aloft by gripping the string at its free end, this untidy dripping is practically unavoidable, principally because of the fact that the combination of such string with a soggy bag at the other end will, in the hands of the transferor, not prevent the latter from swaying in unwanted direction, the lack of control in that respect being because of the absence of rigidity necessarily inherent in the fine string.

The object of this improvement is the creation of a receptacle or disposer of very simple construction and consequently at little expense, to which such transfer could be made with perfect safety against outside drippings with very little handling and without the necessity of holding the bag aloft in that process, and to have such disposer applicable, with equal efficiency and without change of design, to all types of conventional cups, with or without a saucer underneath, including those in the mug category.

Other features of my invention and of the application thereof, and further details of my improvement will be set forth as this specification proceeds. It is understood, however, that the invention is not limited to this particular disclosure, but is susceptible of many changes and modifications which may be made by those skilled in the art without departing from the spirit and scope of this invention.

For a more particular description of my invention, reference is to be had to the accompanying drawings, forming part hereof, in which:

FIG. 1 is a side elevation of my device, showing it in operational position alongside a cup and saucer underneath depicted in fragmentary form, and showing also in connection therewith a tea bag about to hop over from the top edge of the cup to the inside of the disposer, a position it would assume in the course of a transfer thereof to the latter by pulling the centralized string in guided position at the other end, and in which figure there is depicted through a dot-and-dash line the trajectory this

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bag will take in its flight from one to the other, so to speak, avoiding in such movement any intervening contact with said disposer until at rest in the well of the latter.

FIG. 2 is a front elevation of my device.

FIG. 3 is a vertical section taken along the line 3—3 of FIG. 2, looking in the direction of the arrows.

FIG. 4 is a plan view of my device.

FIG. 5 is a cross section taken along the line 5—5 of

FIG. 4, looking in the direction of the arrows.

FIG. 6 is a fragmentary view of my device, bottom up, showing merely the front portion of the flooring of its compartment in back of extensions of the side walls, and where the concavity of the front facing of said compartment and of the front edge of said flooring are clearly indicated as being coterminous.

Throughout the drawings, similar reference characters indicate similar parts.

In the accompanying drawings my improved device consists of a well or compartment to which a steeped tea bag may be transferred from a cup, formed by the sides 1, the back 2, the bottom or flooring 3, the front edge of which is coterminous with the facing 4 in their concaved design, the top edge of which facing is beveled or slanted toward said well and is considerably lower than the top edges 5 of said sides as can readily be compared in FIGS. 1 and 3. Meeting these top edges and proceeding in a downward direction are the edges 6, which are so curved from said juncture as to reach a more frontward position at its lower end, where it connects with the top of the vertical edge of the extensions 7 of the sides 1, protruding as these extensions do frontward beyond the end positions of the facing 4. Below the sides 1 are the walls 8, being in fact a continuation of the sides 1, with the back 2 similarly at their rear to the very bottom of the disposer. At the front of the walls 8 are the concaved edges 9 of the understructure of said well, recessed a considerable distance from the front edge of the extension 7, below which are the toes 10 designed to give perfect stability to the disposer in its standing position. At the top of the back 2 is the centrally located indent 11, sufficiently flared to facilitate the ready insertion therein of the conventional string attached to the tea bag, the base of which indent is rounded as shown to facilitate the crosswise movement of the string thereon and is calculated to be on a higher plane than that of the top edge of any conventional cup, even with a saucer underneath. For illustrative purpose as to manner of operation, a tea bag assembly is shown in FIG. 1, consisting of the bag 12, the fine string 13, and the stapled card at its free end bearing usually some legend or advertisement indicated as 14. Along with this tea bag assembly a dot-and-dash line 15 is shown in FIG. 1 to indicate the trajectory taken by the bag after it has arrived at the top edge of the cup in its plunge toward the well of the disposer, energized by a pulling of the string downwardly after emergence crosswise from the indent 11. In this FIG. 1 a conventional cup 16 and underlying saucer 17 are shown alongside my device as illustrative not only of the operational relationship between these objects but of the wide margin prevailing in my device toward the use of various types and heights of cups and any saucer underneath, making it practically of universal application.

In pointing out the novelties of the particular construction followed in my device and the benefits flowing therefrom, it might first be noted that the concaved facing 4 is high enough to dam any liquid that may accumulate from drippings even of a plurality of tea bags transferred to said well, and yet it is obviously below the height of the ordinary cup. On the other hand the back 2 is high enough not only to give plenty of room, in conjunction with

the sides 1, for the housing of a number of used bags, but also to provide more effective leverage by way of the indent 11 for lifting the bag out of the cup for its ultimate plunge toward said well as aforescribed. In fact any extra height of said back will not matter so far as operational efficiency is concerned. The extensions 7 serve the purpose of keeping the opposing surfaces of the cup and of the facing 4 sufficiently apart to avoid any scarce droplets from rubbing off from the former on to the latter. Such droplets could only gather on the top edge of the cup in a sort of shaving operation as the bag frictionally passes over it in the position shown in FIG. 1, and which will then gravitate either along the internal or external surface of the cup down to the saucer without any chance whatsoever of getting on to any external surface of my device in the course of the transfer as explained above. It might here be parenthetically observed that this so-called shaving operation of the bag by the top edge of the cup is only as to a side of the bag where any oozing therefrom would be negligible, the saturation being concentrated at the bottom of the bag. The gap aforementioned between the opposing surfaces of the cup and facing, regulated by extensions 7 as shown in FIG. 1, is of conservative dimension, sufficient for the purpose already referred to, yet not too wide as would thereby preempt the landing position the bag would reach in said well at the end of the trajectory course taken by it when transferred according to the method shown in FIG. 1. Nevertheless, as a sort of automatic adjustment, should the disposer be casually positioned a somewhat greater distance from the cup than that regulated by extensions 7, a subsequent downward pull on the string after its positioning in indent 11, primarily for the purpose of thereby transferring the bag from the cup, will simultaneously push the disposer toward the cup as far as these extensions will permit, this forward movement through the string operation being made possible by the slight resistance or tug of the saturated bag yet in the bottom of the cup at its other end, facilitated by the roundness of the edge at the base of indent 11. One of the principal novelties in the instant improvement is the unencumbered entrance into said well from the top edge of any conventional cup, including those of the mug or other cylindrical type, the narrow facing 4 being so low down as to be considered practically no part of the entrance and hence no portal obstruction whatsoever. Consequently, the withdrawal of the bag from the cup for ultimate transfer will require an initial movement to no greater height than that of the cup in use, for at any such level the entrance to said well will be open. Such movement, tantamount to a lifting operation, is of a sliding nature, supported by the surface of an inner side of the cup. Should anyone with steady hand prefer to transfer the bag solely through the air, without resort to the centrally disposed sliding operation afforded by use of the indent 11, he will have no difficulty in depositing said bag in said well by simply transporting the same aloft all the way to and through said entrance or, for that matter, to and through the open top of said well. On the other hand, the sliding operation by use of said indent is so accurate, completely automatic, and dripping protected, that one would prefer to follow that method where he could even go through an execution thereof with his eyes shut after he has gotten hold of the string to place it in the indent 11, sufficiently flared to be detected by touch. Although I have the top edge of the facing 4 beveled in the direction of the well to channel any drippings thereto that may have landed thereon, this is simply an extra precaution as to any such incident that may occur if one were carelessly to swing a soggy

bag in that region in any instance where its transfer was made merely through the air, especially when at the same time the cup and disposer were not kept in operative contact with each other.

Having described my invention, what I claim is:

1. In a disposer, operationally positionable without the support of any other unit nor forming any part thereof, for channeled transfer thereto of steeped tea bags, led in that movement by their attached strings, and so conveyed from a conventional cup or the like while held aloft or with slidable contact against the surface of said cup in the path of such movement, means for effecting such transfer, consisting of a well or compartment for the reception of a plurality of such bags, composed of a front facing lower in height than that of such cup and of concaved form in positionable relationship to the convexity of said cup; parallel sides joined at their front ends by said facing, of greater height than the latter and with their front edges sufficiently curved to compensate for the opposing bulge of such cup when placed in juxtaposition therewith; a back to said compartment, joined to the rear ends of said sides and of at least equal height therewith; and a bottom covering the area reaching transversely between said sides and longitudinally between said facing, at its base, and said back; the said compartment being otherwise foundationally supported by an understructure formed by a continuation of said back and said sides to the lowest level of said structure, the said sides in that lower region also having a lateral recess of sufficient depth and width underneath said bottom to provide ample clearance for the part of a conventional saucer protruding laterally beyond the bulge of such cup when in central position therewith, and also having toes sufficiently extended to permit said disposer to stand alone and unsupported at all times.

2. In a disposer as described in claim 1, having a centrally aligned channel in integrated structure rearward of said facing, introduced by a flare or sufficient sweep for easy detection by sight or touch on a plane preferably higher than that of the top edge of such cup and through which the said string may be supportedly guided when such transfer is accomplished through said sliding operation.

3. In a disposer as described in claim 1, where the edges of said sides within the vertical distance of said facing are slightly further forward than the curved portion of such edges, to act as a measured standoff with resulting gap between said facing and the opposing side of a cup in juxtaposition therewith, sufficient only to confine to the exterior surface of said cup any drip from said bag that may have gathered thereon in the act of such transfer, so that it will course to the saucer rather than leap over to the external surface of said facing.

4. In a disposer as described in claim 1, where the top-edge of said facing is beveled in the direction of said compartment as precaution in channeling thereto any dripping that may have landed thereon in the course of such transfer.

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