No. 627,569. Patented June 27, 1899.

C. E. BROWN.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENT.

(Application filed Feb. 27, 1899.)

(No Model.)

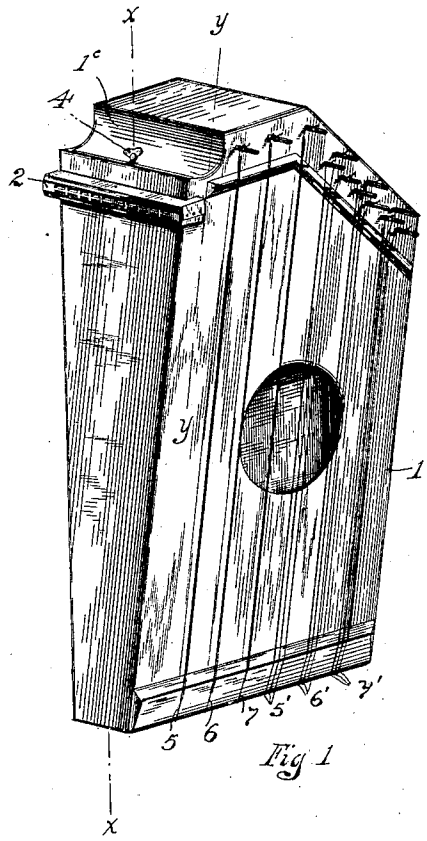


Fig. 1

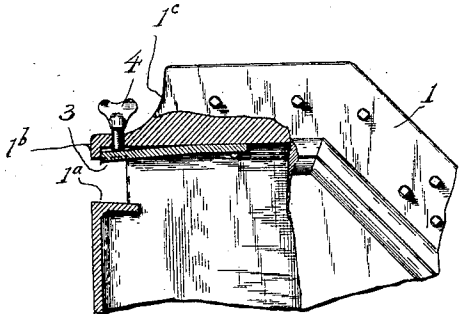


Fig. 2

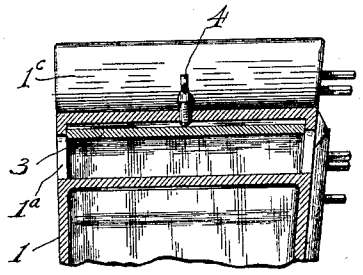


Fig. 3

Witnesses
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THE NORRIS PETERS CO., PHOTO-LITHO., WASHINGTON, D. C.

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

CARL E. BROWN, OF COLUMBUS, OHIO, ASSIGNOR OF ONE-HALF TO WILLIAM W. McCALLIP, OF SAME PLACE.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENT.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 627,569, dated June 27, 1899.

Application filed February 27, 1899. Serial No. 706,993. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, CARL E. BROWN, a citizen of the United States, residing at Columbus, in the county of Franklin and State of Ohio, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Musical Instruments; and I do hereby declare the following to be a full, clear, and exact description of the invention, such as will enable others skilled in the art to which it appertains to make and use the same.

The primary object of my invention is to provide a musical instrument that may be played upon by persons who cannot through circumstances devote the time and patience necessary to acquire sufficient technical skill to play with abandon upon instruments of the nobler sort.

Collaterally it is also my object to provide an instrument of such simple and economical form as to be within the reach of persons of small or moderate means.

My invention consists of a cithern-like instrument having an opening extending to the interior thereof adapted to receive a mouth-harp, so that the tones of the mouth-harp are introduced into the body of the cithern-like instrument, and thereby pleasingly modified.

It also consists in a cithern-like instrument having separately-grouped bass and chord strings and an opening through the wall of the cithern-like instrument combined with a mouth-harp connected with said opening, so that the tones thereof are introduced into the body of the instrument, as hereinafter set forth and claimed.

Further, my invention consists in certain details of construction hereinafter set forth and claimed.

In the annexed drawings, in which I have illustrated one embodiment of my invention, Figure 1 is an isometric perspective of the instrument. Fig. 2 is a sectional view of a fraction of the upper portion of the instrument, taken on a plane indicated by the line $x\ x$, Fig. 1. Fig. 3 is a sectional view taken on the line $y\ y$, Fig. 1.

Like characters of reference on the several views denote corresponding parts.

1 designates the cithern-body; but in the instance shown it is made larger at its upper end, so as to be sufficiently deep to take in all the reed-holes of the harmonica or mouth-harp 2 when the latter is in its seat. Across this larger end of the cithern and parallel to the end thereof is cut or formed an opening 1^a, and to the inner side of the upper wall of the cithern adjacent the opening is secured a clamping-piece 3, the outer part being movable, so as to be capable of being sprung down by the end of a thumb-screw 4, passing through the upper end of the cithern. As harmonicas are of different thickness, a small lip 1^b will be cut or formed on the upper wall, so that an opening between the clamping-piece and the upper wall shall not appear when the clamping-piece is depressed upon the mouth-harp.

The mouth-harp 2 is of the ordinary kind and when placed in the opening 1^a may be held in place by simply turning the thumb-screw down, thus depressing the clamping-piece and pinching the mouth-harp against the lower edge of the opening.

The corner of the cithern above the seat of the mouth-harp is cut out or recessed at 1^c to afford room for the nose of the player as he moves his lips back and forth across the mouth-harp.

The cithern is furnished along its ends with appropriate bridges, across which are stretched to tuning-pins the bass strings 5, 6, and 7, preferably tuned for convenience in manipulating, as dominant, (inverted,) tonic, and subdominant, respectively, and the strings 5′, 6′, and 7′, each in series of three, tuned to form harmonizing chords, the relative position of the chords so formed to each other being the same as the relative position of the bass strings to each other; but this arrangement may be varied and the bass strings be placed in formal order, as tonic, subdominant, and dominant, with harmonizing chord strings in corresponding arrangement, the essential thing with my invention being the separate grouping of the bass strings and of chord strings. The strings of course are to be attuned to the key of the harmonica, whatever that may be, so that a harmonious accompaniment to a melody upon the harmonica may be picked upon the strings.

The purpose in separately grouping the fundamental or bass strings and the chord

strings is to promote facility in manipulating them. When so grouped, the position of the strings is more adapted to the natural or open position of the hand, the fundamental strings being picked with the thumb and the chords with the first or other finger of the same hand. This grouping of the strings also enables the more ready finding of the strings and insures the making of the proper interval between the picking of the bass and the picking of the chord and therefore the keeping of better time. This facilitating of the picking of the strings is important when it is considered that the attention of the performer must be directed to two things at the same time and the difficulty of doing either or both things should be rendered as slight as possible.

When the fundamental string is grouped with the chord strings, the hand must be contracted and cramped and the thumb is so near the chord-picking finger that there is a tendency to pick the chord too soon after picking the bass string, and, moreover, the player is likely to pick both the chord and bass simultaneously when intending to pick the chord alone, thereby marring in at least two respects the effect desired.

As hereinbefore intimated, the location of the harmonica in an opening in the cithern, so that the tones are emitted into the latter and emanate at the sound-hole, greatly broadens and gives body to the tones of the harmonica and so renders the instrument far more pleasing and interesting in its effect.

By the expression, "cithern-like instrument" as used in my claims I mean a stringed instrument in which there is no fretted finger-board and in which the strings are always open strings and always picked as such.

From the foregoing it is observed, therefore, that practically the only skill required to produce very pleasing music upon this instrument is that required to play a mouth-harp, and this is so easily acquired that most children through their own efforts and without instruction soon possess it.

What I claim, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

1. A cithern-like instrument provided with an opening extending to the interior thereof and having means to removably receive a harmonica or mouth-harp in said opening so that the tones of said harmonica or mouth-harp may be introduced into the body of the cithern-like instrument, substantially as described.

2. A cithern-like instrument provided with an opening extending to the interior thereof and a harmonica or mouth-harp attached thereto in said opening so that the tones from the harmonica or mouth-harp shall be introduced into the body of the cithern-like instrument, substantially as described.

3. A stringed instrument provided with an opening to receive a wind instrument so that the tones of the wind instrument shall be modified by the stringed instrument, said stringed instrument being recessed adjacent said opening, substantially as indicated at 1[c] for the purpose explained.

4. A cithern-like instrument having separately-grouped bass and chord strings and provided with an opening extending to the interior thereof combined with a harmonica or mouth-harp connected with said opening, substantially as and for the purposes set forth.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature in presence of two witnesses.

CARL E. BROWN.

Witnesses:
G. W. ALFRED,
GEO. M. FINCKEL.