(No Model.) 2 Sheets—Sheet 1.

E. & U. S. DE MOULIN.

INITIATION APPARATUS FOR SECRET SOCIETIES.

No. 555,499. Patented Mar. 3, 1896.

Fig. 1.

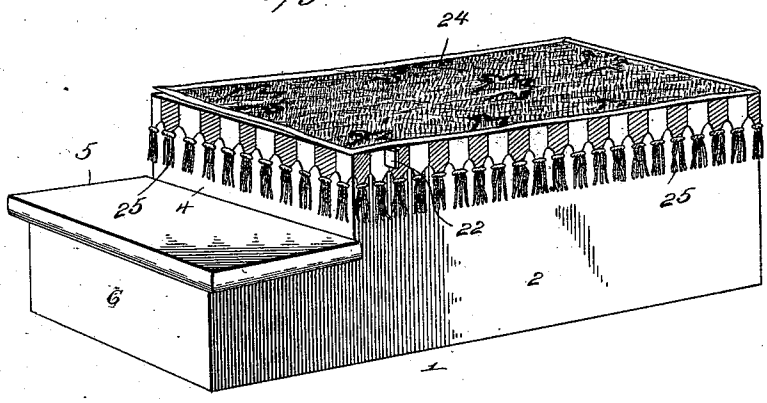
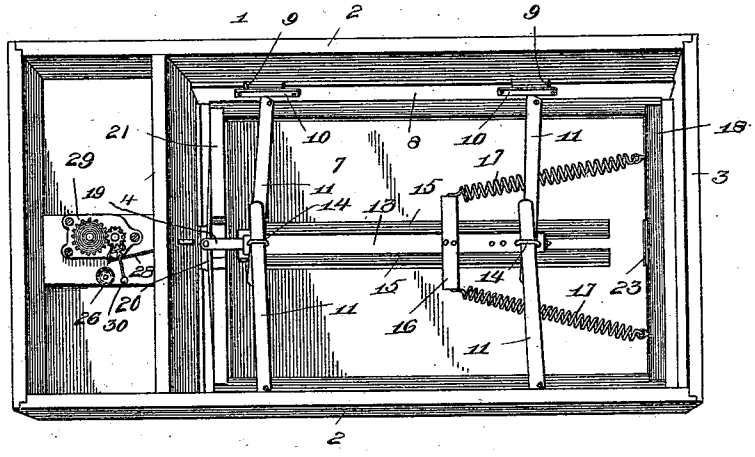


Fig. 3



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(No Model.) 2 Sheets—Sheet 2.

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Fig. 2.

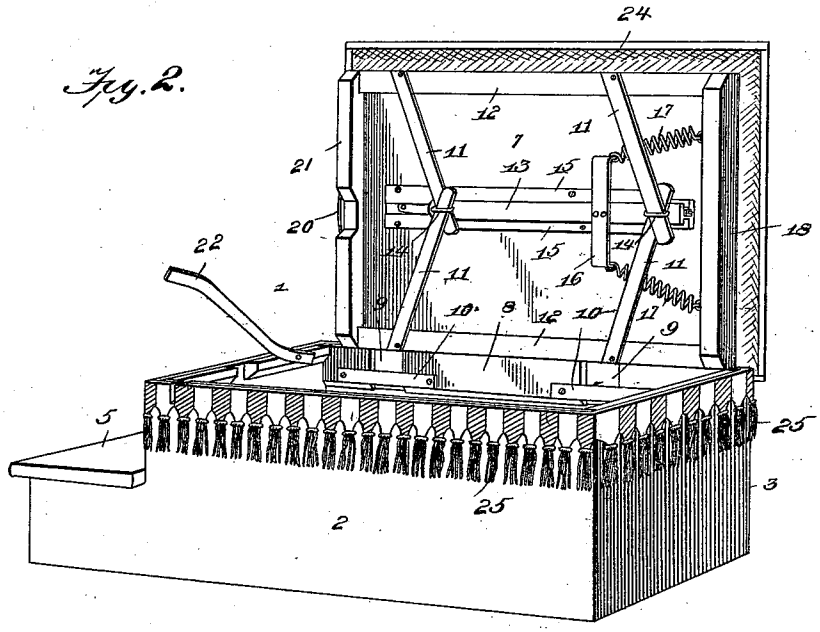


Fig. 4.

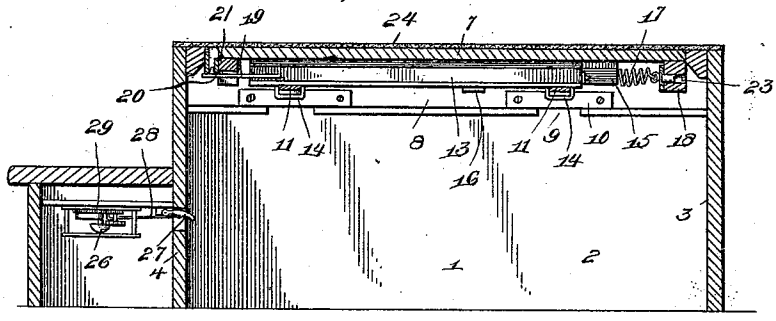
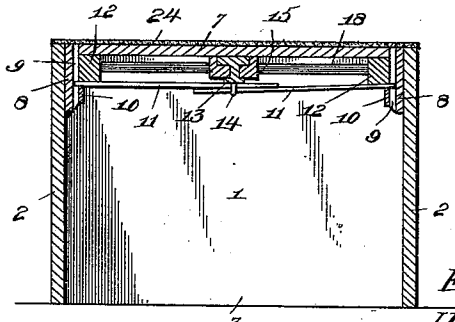


Fig. 5.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

EDMUND DE MOULIN AND ULYSSES S. DE MOULIN, OF GREENVILLE, ILLINOIS.

INITIATION APPARATUS FOR SECRET SOCIETIES.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 555,499, dated March 3, 1896.

Application filed June 12, 1895. Serial No. 552,581. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that we, EDMUND DE MOULIN and ULYSSES S. DE MOULIN, citizens of the United States, residing at Greenville, in the county of Bond and State of Illinois, have invented a new and useful Initiation Apparatus for Secret Societies, of which the following is a specification.

The invention relates to improvements in initiation apparatus for secret societies.

The object of the present invention is to provide for secret societies an initiation apparatus which will be simple and inexpensive in construction, and which will be capable of surprising a candidate without the least danger of injuring him in any wise, and which will present an appearance that will not arouse his suspicion or in any wise warn him of its operation.

The invention consists in the construction and novel combination and arrangement of parts, hereinafter fully described, illustrated in the accompanying drawings, and pointed out in the claims hereto appended.

In the drawings, Figure 1 is a perspective view of an apparatus constructed in accordance with this invention. Fig. 2 is a similar view, the platform being raised to show the operating mechanism. Fig. 3 is a perspective view looking at the bottom of the stand. Fig. 4 is a vertical longitudinal sectional view. Fig. 5 is a transverse sectional view.

Like numerals of reference indicate corresponding parts in all the figures of the drawings.

1 designates a substantially rectangular stand constructed in the form of an open box and composed of similar sides 2 and ends 3 and 4 and provided at its front end with a step 5, which is supported by longitudinal extensions of the sides 2 and a connecting end piece 6.

The stand is provided with a rectangular platform 7 at its top, and has longitudinal cleats 8, secured to the inner faces of the sides 2 and located at the upper edges thereof and forming a support for the platform, which is adapted to fit within the upper edges of the stand and to have its upper face flush with the same. The longitudinal cleats 8 are provided with recesses 9, and have metal plates 10 secured at the bottoms thereof to strengthen the cleats, and the platform is supported by pivoted locking-bars 11 arranged in pairs at each side of the platform and pivoted at their outer ends on the lower faces of longitudinal strips or battens 12. The outer ends of the pivoted bars 11 are cut at an angle and project beyond the side edges of the platform when the bars are disposed transversely of the platform, as illustrated in Fig. 3 of the accompanying drawings, and rest upon the cleats 8, or rather the strengthening-plates thereof, to support the platform in an elevated position.

The inner ends of the pivoted supporting-bars 11 are loosely connected with a longitudinal slide 13 by being arranged in loops or keepers 14 thereof, and the slide is spring-actuated, and when the apparatus is tripped is adapted to swing the pivoted supporting-bar out of alignment to the position illustrated in Fig. 2 of the accompanying drawings, whereby the outer ends of the bars 11 will be drawn inward, leaving the platform unsupported and causing it to drop to the floor or other support. The longitudinal slide 13 is arranged in ways 15 formed by grooved or other strips, and it is provided with a transverse piece forming laterally-projecting arms 16, to which are connected spiral springs 17, which have their outer ends secured to a transverse strip or batten 18 at the rear end of the platform. The pivoted supporting-bars 11 are held in substantial alignment to cause their outer ends to project from the platform to support the same by a resilient catch 19, mounted on the front end of the slide 13 and adapted to engage a metal plate 20, secured to a front transverse strip 21 of the platform.

The apparatus is tripped by an operating-lever 22, located at the front of the stand and fulcrumed at one side thereof and projecting through an opening of the other side of the stand a short distance, as illustrated in Fig. 1 of the accompanying drawings; and this operating-lever is arranged to engage the spring-catch 19, to withdraw its lug from engagement with the plate 20, to cause the spiral spring 17 to reciprocate the slide and release the platform.

The surprise and astonishment of a candidate are intensified by the explosion of a blank

cartridge, which is placed in a chamber 23, located at the rear end of the platform in the transverse batten or strip 18 and arranged to be engaged by the rear end of the slide 13, which is provided with a suitable firing pin or projection for exploding the cartridge.

The falling of the platform starts an alarm-bell 26 ringing. A lever 27 is fulcrumed on a support and is located at the inner side of the step and projects through an opening of the front side or wall 4 and is adapted to be engaged and depressed by the platform, as clearly illustrated in Fig. 4 of the accompanying drawings; and the lever is connected by a rod 28 with bell-actuating mechanism 29. The inner end of the rod 28 is provided with a pawl or arm, which, when the lever is set, as illustrated in Fig. 4 of the accompanying drawings, interlocks with the gearing of the actuating mechanism and prevents a bell-hammer 30 from striking the bell; but as soon as the lever is thrown downward or inward by the platform the actuating mechanism oscillates the bell-hammer and rings the bell.

The platform is provided with a suitable carpet or flexible covering 24, projecting beyond the sides and ends of the platform, and completely concealing the fact that the platform is arranged within the sides and ends of the stand, and forms a trap-door. The stand is also designed to be ornamented by a border of fringe 25, which may be made to conceal partially the projecting end of the tripping or operating lever.

A candidate is placed on the platform, and at the desired time the apparatus is tripped, causing the platform to drop and a cartridge or cap to explode, and it will be seen that the alarm mechanism is automatically operated when the platform falls, and is adapted to surprise and startle a candidate without liability of injuring him in any manner, and that the purpose of the apparatus is entirely concealed from the candidate.

Other objects and advantages of the invention will be readily understood by those skilled in the art to which it appertains, and we desire it to be understood that changes in the form, proportion, and the minor details of construction may be resorted to without departing from the principle or sacrificing any of the advantages of this invention.

What we claim is—

1. In an apparatus of the class described, the combination of a stand in the form of an open box, a platform arranged within the stand, located at and closing the top thereof and adapted, when unsupported, to fall precipitately to the bottom of the stand, locking devices for rigidly supporting the platform at the top of the stand, alarm mechanism automatically operated by the falling of the platform and adapted to startle a candidate, and means for tripping the platform, substantially as described.

2. An apparatus of the class described, comprising a stand, a platform arranged within the top of the stand and adapted, when unsupported, to fall to the floor, means for rigidly supporting the platform at the top of the stand and for tripping the same by hand, and a flexible covering concealing the platform and projecting beyond the edges thereof, substantially as and for the purpose described.

3. In an apparatus of the class described, the combination of a stand, provided at its top with a platform arranged to fall, when unsupported, to the floor or other supporting-surface, pivoted supporting-bars located at opposite sides of the platform and arranged to project beyond the edges thereof to engage the stand for supporting the platform, a spring-actuated slide connected with the inner ends of the supporting-bars and adapted to swing the same out of engagement with the stand to cause the platform to fall, and means for locking and for tripping the slide, substantially as described.

4. In an apparatus of the class described, the combination of a stand, a platform arranged within the top of the stand and adapted to fall, when unsupported, the pivoted supporting-bars arranged at opposite sides of the platform and adapted to project beyond the same to engage the stand, a spring-actuated slide connected with, and adapted to swing the supporting-bars out of engagement with the stand, a cartridge-receiving chamber located in the path of the slide, whereby the latter is caused to explode a cartridge, and means for setting and tripping the slide, substantially as described.

5. In an apparatus of the class described, the combination of a stand, a platform arranged to fall within the stand, pivoted supporting-bars located at opposite sides of the platform, and adapted to project beyond the same for engaging the stand, a reciprocating spring-actuated slide connected with the inner ends of the supporting-bars and adapted to swing the same out of engagement with the stand to cause the platform to fall, a catch for locking the slide against movement, and a lever arranged to engage the catch for tripping the slides, substantially as described.

6. The combination of a stand, a platform arranged to fall within the stand, means for rigidly supporting and for tripping the platform by hand, a bell, a bell-hammer mechanism for actuating the bell-hammer, and a lever connected with the actuating mechanism and holding the same normally out of operation and arranged to be engaged by the platform in falling, whereby the actuating mechanism is released, substantially as and for the purpose described.

In testimony that we claim the foregoing as our own we have hereto affixed our signatures in the presence of two witnesses.

EDMUND DE MOULIN.
ULYSSES S. DE MOULIN.

Witnesses:
JOSEPH E. WRIGHT,
JOHN MCALISTER.