

May 29, 1923.

L. W. BUSCH

1,456,913

FORK

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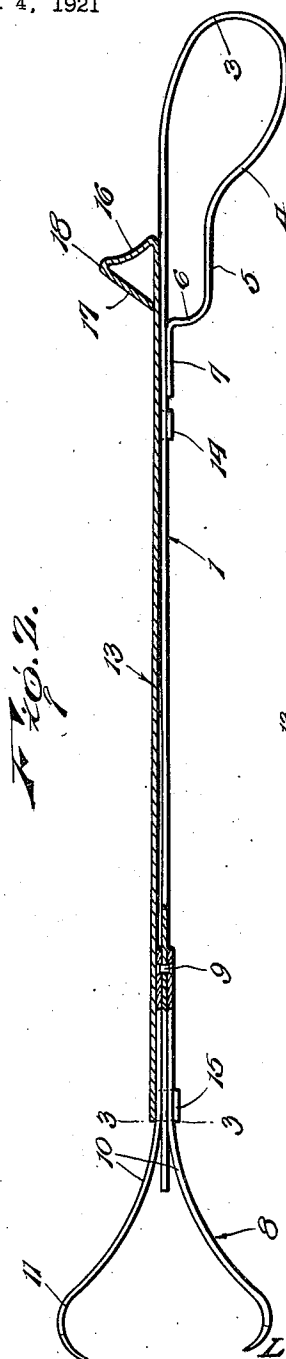
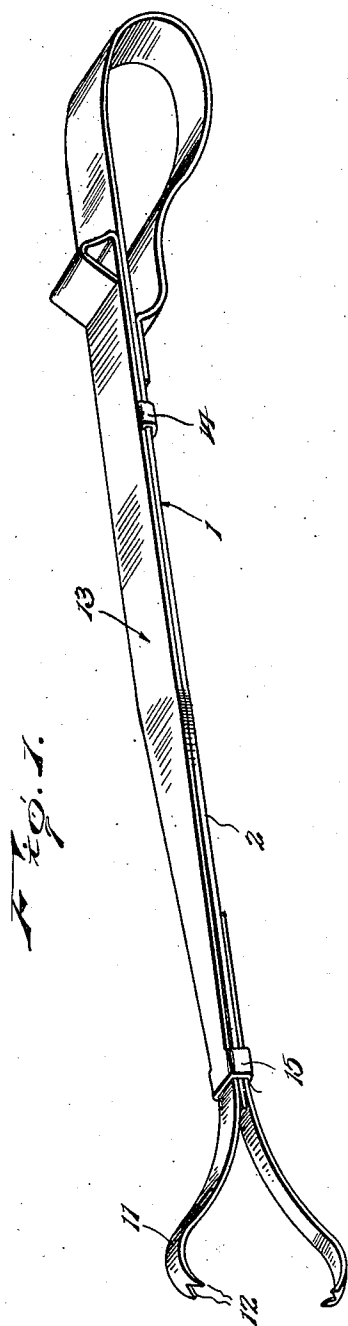


Fig. 3.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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FORK.

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To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, LOUIS W. BUSCH, a citizen of the United States, residing at Toledo, in the county of Lucas and State of Ohio, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Forks, of which the following is a specification.

This invention relates to improvements in forks and more particularly to forks of that type which are designed for use in removing pickles, olives, and the like from bottles, jars or other containers. It is a well recognized fact that the ordinary fork cannot be successfully employed for this purpose, or at least with any degree of satisfaction, because food stuffs such as olives and pickles are usually relatively closely packed in their containers and cannot be readily dislodged by vertically inserting the tines of the ordinary fork and lifting upwardly upon the fork, and even where the articles are finally loosened, it is a difficult matter to elevate them from the container as the least contact with the walls or mouth of the container is liable to dislodge them from the fork. Therefore it is the primary object of the present invention to provide a fork of simple construction and capable of being readily and conveniently manipulated and which may be employed with satisfaction in removing articles such as those above referred to from their containers even when relatively closely packed or where the mouth of the container is somewhat restricted.

Another object of the invention is to so construct the fork that it may be conveniently manipulated with one hand and caused to securely grip the article to be elevated from its container regardless of the size of the article, within reasonable limits.

In the accompanying drawings:

Figure 1 is a perspective view illustrating the preferred form of the invention;

Figure 2 is a vertical longitudinal sectional view through the fork illustrated in Figure 1;

Figure 3 is a vertical transverse sectional view on the line 3—3 of Figure 2.

In that form of the invention shown in the drawings, the fork comprises a handle member which is indicated in general by the numeral 1 and which is preferably formed from a single length of bar metal and is therefore flat sided. This member is preferably of uniform width throughout its intermediate and rear portion but the forward

portion thereof is gradually tapered or decreased in width in the direction of its extremity, as indicated by the numeral 2. The said rear portion of the handle member is curved downwardly and thence bent along curved lines in a forward direction, as indicated by the numeral 3, thence upwardly as at 4 in the direction of the under side of the handle member then preferably substantially parallel to the under side of the handle member as indicated by the numeral 5, thence upwardly at right angles as at 6, and finally forwardly at right angles to the portion 6, as indicated by the numeral 7 and secured in any suitable manner to the said under side of the handle member. It will now be evident that the handle member is in this manner provided with a grip portion by which it may be readily grasped in the hand and conveniently held while the fork is being manipulated.

The forward end portion 2 of the handle member supports the prongs of the fork which prongs are indicated in general by the numeral 8, and the said prongs are preferably formed from spring leaves which are riveted or otherwise secured at their inner ends, as at 9, to the upper and under sides of the said portion 2 of the handle member 1. From their attached rear ends the prongs extend along lines curving upwardly and downwardly respectively above and below the said handle member, as indicated by the numeral 10, and are thence curved inwardly toward each other as indicated by the numeral 11, the portions 11 terminating in one or more teeth indicated by the numeral 12. By reason of their inherent resiliency, the prongs 10 tend to spread apart and away from the upper and under sides of the handle member 1 so that their teeth 12 are normally relatively widely separated but means is provided, as will now be explained, for springing the shanks of the prongs 10 inwardly toward each other and toward the portion 2 of the handle member so as to move their teeth 12 toward each other and thus grip the article of food to be lifted by the fork.

The prong contracting means above referred to comprises a member 13 which is likewise preferably formed from a single length of bar metal or stamped from a sheet of such material and which is disposed flat against the upper side of the handle member 1. Near its rear end the member 13 is pro-

vided at its opposite longitudinal edges with integral lugs 14 which are turned over the corresponding edges of the intermediate portion of the handle member 1 and thus maintain these parts assembled with each other, at the same time permitting sliding movement of the member 13 upon the said handle member 1. At its forward end the contracting member 13 is likewise provided with lugs 15 at the opposite edges, which lugs are bent to engage about the lateral edges of the prongs 10 and the forward portion 2 of the said handle member 1, and in this manner the forward end of the contracting member is slidably connected with the forward end of the handle member and likewise held in sliding engagement with the prongs 10 forwardly of the attached end 9 of the said prongs. It will now be evident that when the contracting member is slid in a rearward direction upon the handle member, the lugs 15 will be correspondingly shifted with relation to the shanks of the prongs 10 and thus the prongs will be permitted to spread apart through their inherent resiliency. On the other hand when the contracting member 13 is slid in a forward direction, the lugs 15 will ride forwardly along the shanks of the prongs 10 and will spring these prongs inwardly toward each other thus causing their toothed forward ends 12 to approach each other and grip the article to be lifted by the fork.

In order that the contracting member 13 may be manipulated conveniently, the rear end portion thereof is bent upwardly and forwardly upon itself as indicated by the numeral 16 and thence downwardly and forwardly as at 17 with its extremity in engagement with the upper side of said member, and in this manner a thumb piece 18 is provided at the rear end of the said con-

tracting member, the portions 16 and 17 constituting shoulders against which the thumb may be brought to bear for the purpose of in the first instance sliding the contracting member forwardly along the handle member and in the latter instance sliding it rearwardly along the said handle member. Of course in the first referred to movement of the contracting member the prongs of the fork will be caused to grip the article to be lifted and in the latter instance the prongs will be permitted to spread apart and release the article. It will also be evident at this point that the hand grip provided at the rear end of the handle member affords a means whereby the device may be securedly held in the hand while the thumb is engaging the thumb piece 18 for the purpose of adjusting the contracting member 13.

Having thus described the invention, what is claimed as new is:

In an implement of the class described, a handle member, prongs having shanks secured at their inner ends to opposite sides of the handle member, the shanks being resilient and beyond their point of attachment being sprung outwardly in opposite directions away from the handle member and having terminal gripping portions directed inwardly toward each other, and means slidably mounted upon the handle member and including an element embracing the said shanks of the prongs whereby when the said means is slid in the direction of the attached ends of the shanks, the shanks will be permitted to spread apart through their resiliency and when the means is slid in the opposite direction the shanks will be moved inwardly toward the handle member against their resiliency.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature.
LOUIS W. BUSCH. [L.S.]