Apr. 3, 1923.

1,450,176

A. HOPKINS

SUSPENDING ELEMENT

Filed Apr. 17, 1922

Fig. 1.

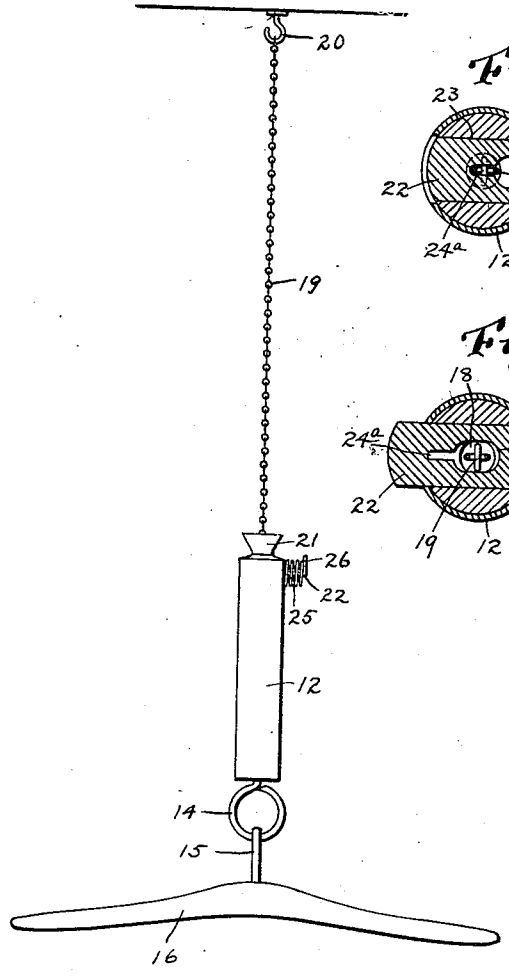
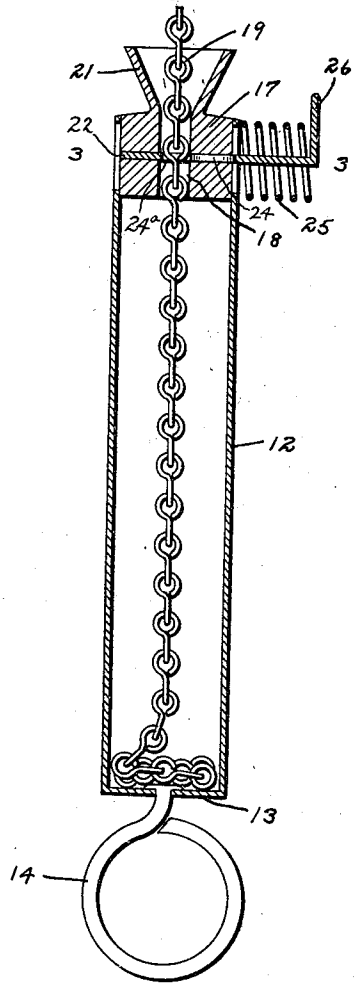


Fig. 3.

Fig. 4.

Fig. 2.



Inventor:
Alfred Hopkins
by Wright Brown Quinby & May
Attys.

Patented Apr. 3, 1923. 1,450,176

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

ALFRED HOPKINS, OF BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, ASSIGNOR TO HOPKINS MANUFACTURING COMPANY, OF BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, A CORPORATION OF MASSACHUSETTS.

SUSPENDING ELEMENT.

Application filed April 17, 1922. Serial No. 554,086.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, ALFRED HOPKINS, a citizen of the United States, residing at Boston, in the county of Suffolk and State of Massachusetts, have invented new and useful Improvements in Suspending Elements, of which the following is a specification.

This invention relates to a device for suspending a garment from an overhead support, in such manner that the suspended garment may be freely moved about while it is being cleansed, pressed, or otherwise treated by an operator. It is customary in garment cleansing and renovating establishments to place a garment to be treated on a suitable hanger formed to engage the garment, and to connect the hanger with the lower end of a chain secured to and depending from an overhead support, the chain and hanger suspending the garment so that the operator may conveniently manipulate and treat it without being obliged to sustain the weight of the garment.

My invention has for its object to enable the operator to suspend the garment at any height that may be desired, by varying the height of the point of connection between the hanger and the chain, without causing the chain to extend and dangle loosely below the hanger when the latter is raised on the chain.

To this end the invention is embodied in a receptacle forming a member of a suspending device which includes a chain depending from an overhead support, the receptacle being provided at one end with a coupling part, adapted to engage a garment hanger, and at its opposite end with a clutch, adapted to releasably grip the chain at a point above the lower end of the latter, so that the receptacle and hanger may be adjusted vertically on the chain, the receptacle being formed to store the free end portion of the chain below the clutch and above the coupling part, so that said free end portion does not extend below the hanger, and does not interfere with a garment on the hanger.

Of the accompanying drawings forming a part of this specification,—

Figure 1 is a side view of a garment-suspending device which includes an element embodying the invention.

Figure 2 is a longitudinal section of the said element, and a side view of a portion of the chain.

Figure 3 is a section on line 3—3 of Figure 2, showing the clutch in chain-gripping position.

Figure 4 is a view similar to Figure 3, showing the clutch in chain-releasing position.

The same reference characters indicate the same parts in all of the figures.

In the drawings, 12 represents an elongated receptacle, preferably formed as a tube, adapted to be grasped by an operator's hand, the receptacle having a closed end 13, to which is fixed a coupling part 14, such as an eye, adapted to engage a hook 15 on a garment hanger 16. The opposite end of the receptacle is formed by a tubular head 17, having a contracted bore 18, which forms a guide for a chain 19, depending from an overhead support 20. The head 17 is preferably provided with a flaring or trumpet-shaped extension 21, which contains a similarly formed extension of the bore 18, and permits the free end of the chain to be readily inserted in the receptacle.

The receptacle is provided at its upper end with a clutch, adapted to automatically grip the chain 19 in such manner as to lock the receptacle to the chain, the clutch having means whereby it may be rendered inoperative, to permit a vertical adjustment of the receptacle on the chain. The clutch is preferably a flat plate 22, adapted to slide in a guide 23, in the head 17, and provided with an oblong slot 24, formed to permit the chain to pass freely through it. The clutch is provided with a spring 25, interposed between the receptacle 12 and a thumb-piece 26, formed on the clutch plate. Said spring normally holds the clutch plate in the position shown by Figures 1, 2 and 3, one end of the slot 24 being pressed closely against the chain, and pressing the latter against one side of the bore 18, thus locking the receptacle to the chain.

The clutch plate is movable by pressure of the operator's thumb on the piece 26, to displace the clutch from its normal position to that shown by Figure 4, the slot 24 being thus moved to position to permit the chain to pass freely through it, or in other words,

to permit the receptacle to be freely moved upward and downward on the chain. When the clutch is engaged with the chain, the receptacle 12 constitutes an extension of the acting portion of the chain, between the support 20 and the clutch.

The receptacle is formed to store a loose inactive portion of the chain loosely between the clutch and the coupling part 14, so that a considerable portion of the length of the chain may be accumulated inactively in the lower portion of the receptacle, and supported by the closed end 13 thereof, as shown by Figure 2.

It will now be seen that the operator grasping the receptacle 12 in one hand, and displacing the clutch 22 by the thumb of the same hand, is enabled to adjust the receptacle on the chain at any desired height, so that the hanger 16 may be supported at any height required by the form of the garment, and the nature of the work being performed thereon. When the pressure on the clutch is released the spring automatically causes the clutch to grip the chain and lock the receptacle thereto.

Whatever may be the length of the chain, the inactive portion thereof, below the clutch, is stored above the hanger, and does not interfere with a garment on the latter.

The slot 24 is preferably provided with a narrow extension 24^a at one end, adapted to receive the upper portion of a chain link. The under side of the plate 22 is thus adapted to bear on and be supported by the lower portion of the same link.

It is obvious that the receptacle, the coupling part at one end of the receptacle, and the clutch at the opposite end, constitute a suspending element which may cooperate with a chain to suspend articles other than clothes hangers.

I claim:

1. A suspending element adapted to cooperate with an elongated chain suspended from an overhead support, said element comprising an elongated receptacle, open at one end to receive a chain, and closed at its opposite end to support a loose portion of the chain, a clutch at the open end of the receptacle, adapted to automatically grip the chain at various distances from its support, said clutch having means whereby it may be rendered inoperative, to permit vertical adjustment of the receptacle on the chain, and a coupling part at the lower end of the receptacle, adapted to engage a suspended article, the arrangement being such that a portion of the chain depends loosely from the clutch, and is confined in the receptacle by the closed end of the latter.

2. A suspending element comprising an elongated tubular receptacle, closed at one end, a tubular head fixed to the opposite end of the receptacle, and having a contracted chain-guiding bore, which is flaring at its upper end, a slidable clutch plate movable in a transverse guide in said head, and provided with an elongated slot, and with a spring normally holding the plate in position to cause one end of the slot to grip a chain suspended from an overhead support, and passing through said guide, the clutch plate having a thumb rest whereby it may be manually displaced to permit vertical adjustment of the receptacle on the chain, and a coupling part fixed to the closed end of the receptacle, and adapted to engage a suspended article, the said receptacle, when the clutch is engaged with the chain, constituting an extension of an acting portion of the chain between the overhead support and the clutch, and being formed below the clutch to receive and store a loose inactive portion of the chain.

3. A suspending element substantially as specified by claim 2, the slot in said clutch plate being provided with a narrow extension formed to receive the upper portion of a chain link.

In testimony whereof I have affixed my signature.

ALFRED HOPKINS.