D. A. TOPPI.

BILL OF FARE.

APPLICATION FILED FEB. 7, 1913.

1,068,609.

Patented July 29, 1913.

3 SHEETS—SHEET 1.

Fig. 3.

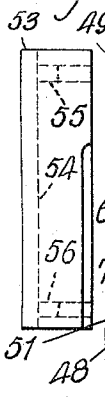
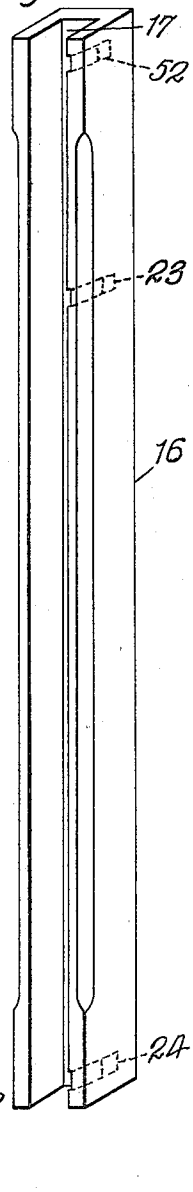


Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.



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3 SHEETS—SHEET 2.

Fig. 7.

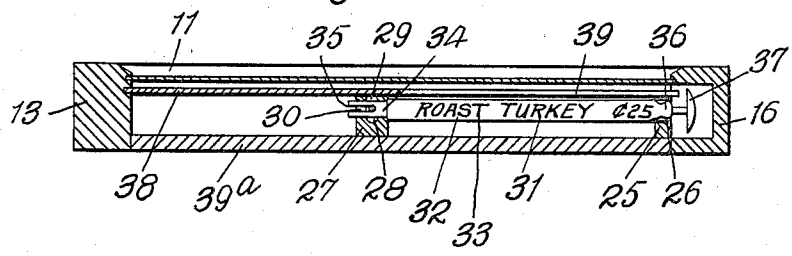
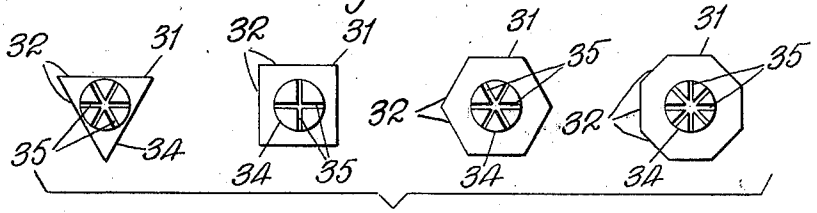


Fig. 4.

Fig. 5.



Fig. 6.



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3 SHEETS—SHEET 3.

Fig. 8.

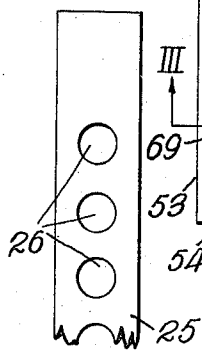


Fig. 10.

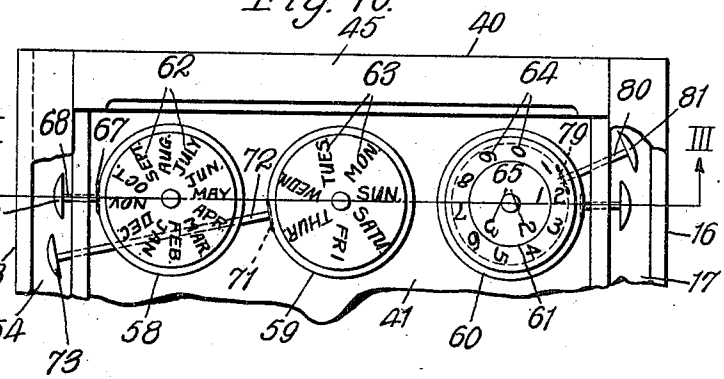


Fig. 11.

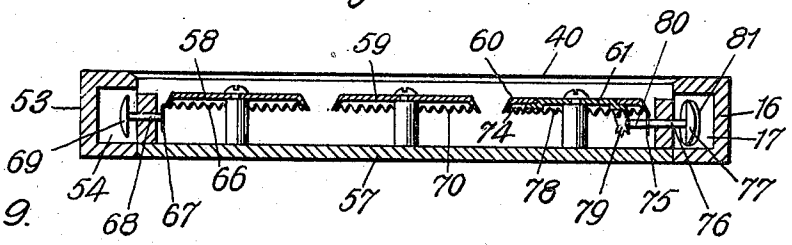


Fig. 9.

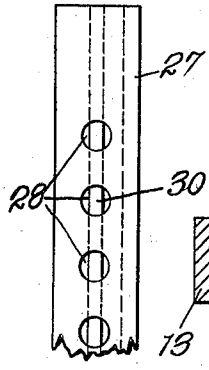
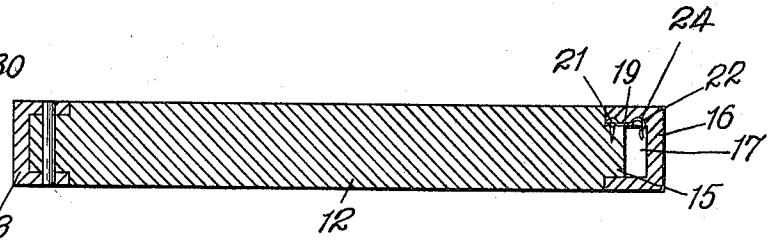


Fig. 12.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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BILL OF FARE.

1,068,609. Specification of Letters Patent. Patented July 29, 1913.

Application filed February 7, 1913. Serial No. 746,830.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, DOMENICO A. TOPPI, a subject of the King of Italy, and a resident of New York, county and State of New York, have invented a certain new and useful Improvement in Bills of Fare, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact specification.

This invention relates to a class of devices adapted for use particularly in public dining rooms.

My invention has for its object primarily to provide a device, or bill of fare designed to be employed for displaying to the guests of public dining rooms the menu of the meals served therein, and which will permit the names of the various dishes to be readily changed as frequently as desired in compliance with the variations of the kind of food products served at different intervals, thus obviating the necessity for producing separate lists of the dishes at each time the menu is changed. This is accomplished mainly by providing a frame in which are mounted a plurality of alined adjustable members, or rods, each having the names of a number of the food products indicated separately thereon, and each of the members is adapted to be independently rotated for changing the menu.

Another object of the invention is to provide means whereby the members may be manually adjusted and rotated; and still another object of the invention is to provide means which serves to permit the month, day and date of each separate menu to be shown on the bill of fare.

A further object of the invention is to provide a form of bill of fare of a simple and efficient construction, and which is susceptible of being made in various sizes and shapes.

A practical embodiment of the invention is represented in the accompanying drawing forming a part of this specification in which similar characters of reference indicate corresponding parts in all the views, the said invention being more fully described hereinafter and then pointed out in the appended claims.

In the drawing, Figure 1 is a face view, partly in section and partly broken away, of one form of bill of fare embodying my invention. Fig. 2 is a perspective view of one of the removable side bars of the frame of the device. Fig. 3 is a face view of the short removable side bar used in conjunction with the extension of the device. Fig. 4 is a longitudinal side view of one of the adjustable rods used in the device. Fig. 5 is an end view of the rod. Fig. 6 illustrates a number of views showing the various shapes in which the bodies of the rods may be made. Fig. 7 is a section taken on the line II—II of Fig. 1. Fig. 8 is a fragmentary side view of one of the supporting strips employed in the device. Fig. 9 is a fragmentary side view of another supporting strip used in the device. Fig. 10 is a fragmentary view of one form of the extension of the device. Fig. 11 is a section taken on the line III—III of Fig. 10, and Fig. 12 is a section taken on the line IV—IV of Fig. 1.

The device, or bill of fare has a frame 10 formed of a top transverse bar 11, a bottom transverse bar 12, and rigidly held to the corresponding ends of both of said bars is a side bar 13. Extending from the opposite end of the transverse bar 11 is a tongue 14 which is formed by reducing, or cutting away part of one or both of the surfaces of said bar, and extending from the opposite end of the transverse bar 12 is a similar tongue 15 which is also formed by reducing or cutting away part of one or both of its surfaces. Detachably held upon the tongues 14 and 15 of the transverse bars 11 and 12 is a second side bar 16, and one edge of said side bar is longitudinally slotted so as to provide a groove 17 therein for reception of the tongues, 14 and 15. Serving as means to yieldingly hold the side bar 16 to the tongues 14 and 15, in each of said tongues is provided a catch 18 and 19 respectively. The catches 18 and 19 are alike in formation, and each of said catches is preferably composed of a strip of spring metal having one end secured to pins 20 and 21 one of which is driven through each of the tongues. Upon the opposite end of each of the spring metal strips is provided a head, as 22, and in the inner surface of the grooved edge of the side bar 16 are notches 23 and 24. The notches 23 and 24 are arranged to register with the heads 22 of the catches 18 and 19 so that when the tongues 14 and 15 of the transverse bars are received in the groove 17 of the side bar 16 the heads of the catches

will engage the notches 23 and 24 for removably holding the side bar 16 to the transverse bars 11 and 12.

To the transverse bar 11 adjacent to the tongue 14 thereof is secured one end of a supporting strip 25, and the other end of said supporting strip is likewise held to the transverse bar 12 adjacent to its tongue 15. At spaced intervals through the strip 25 are a number of openings 26. Spaced in parallel arrangement from the supporting strip 25, and to the transverse bar 11 is held one end of a second supporting strip 27. The opposite end of the supporting strip 27 is likewise held to the transverse bar 12. Through the supporting strip 27 are also a number of openings 28, each of which is in alinement with one of the openings 26 of the supporting strip 25. One edge of the supporting strip 27 is longitudinally slitted, at 29, and in said slit is held a wire 30 which is disposed so as to be directed diametrically across each of the openings 28.

In each of the openings 26 of the supporting strip 25, and in each of the corresponding openings 28 of the supporting strip 27 is disposed a member, or rod 31. There may be any suitable number of the rods 31, and each of said rods is slidably as well as being rotatably held in the openings. The rods 31 are alike in formation, and the body of each of said rods may be polygonal in shape so as to provide a plurality of faces 32. On one or more of the faces 32 of each of the rods 31 is indicated in any suitable manner the name of one of the food products, as 33, of the menu being served so that the total series of names exposed to view upon the rods collectively constitute the complete menu. One end of each of the rods 31 may be reduced, at 34, and through the free end of each of said reduced portions are one or more slots 35 which are disposed crosswise with relation to each other. Upon the opposite end of each of the rods 31 may be provided a head 36, and serving as means to permit each of said rods to be manually shifted, extending from each of the heads 36 is a knob, or button 37.

In arranging the menu the side bar 16 is removed by the exertion of slight force from the tongues 14 and 15 of the transverse bars 11 and 12. The rods 31 are disposed in classified order so that each rod is guided through one of the openings 26 of the supporting strip 25, and the rod is then directed so that its reduced end portion will be passed through the corresponding opening 28 of the supporting strip 27 in a manner for the wire 30 to be seated in one of the slots 35 of the reduced end of the rod. By applying the side bar 16 upon the tongues 14 and 15 of the transverse bars 11 and 12 so that the knobs 37 will be disposed in the groove 17 of said transverse bar all of the rods 31 will be held against displacement. In order to change the menu the side bar 16 is similarly removed from the tongues 14 and 15 of the transverse bars. By gripping the knobs 37 one or more of the rods 31 may be directed so as to free the reduced end portions thereof from the wire 30. The rods 31 are rotated to expose to view the names thereon of the desired food products, and the transverse bar 16 is then re-arranged upon the tongues 14 and 15, as above explained.

As shown in Fig. 1 of the drawing, in the frame 10 may be provided a plate, as 38, of cardboard, or other suitable material, and through one part of said plate is an opening 39 of a size whereby the exposed faces of all of the rods 31 are displayed therethrough. Upon the second portion of the plate 38 may be indicated part of the menu representing the dishes "cooked-to-order", while on the rods 31 may be indicated the food products of the menu which are prepared and "ready to serve", or in instances the plate 38 may be dispensed with, and the rods 31 are then employed for displaying the menu in entirety. If desired, in the frame 10 may also be provided a second plate 39^a to serve as a back for the rods 31 and the supporting strips 25 and 27.

Serving as means to permit the date of each separate menu to be designated on the bill of fare, provided at the top of the frame 10 is an extension 40. The extension 40 consists of a substantially rectangular plate 41 having its lower edge held to the transverse bar 11 of the frame, and through the plate 41 are a plurality of openings 42, 43, 44, through one of which is shown the "month" through the second opening is shown the "day" and through the third opening is shown the "date" of the menu. Held to the top edge of the plate 41 is a transverse bar 45 having tongues 46 and 47 projecting from its ends, and said tongues are formed by reducing, or cutting away part of one or both of the surfaces of said bar. The tongue 46 of the bar 45 is in alinement with a tongue 48 which is formed by reducing or cutting away part of the end of the transverse bar 11 which is opposite to the tongue 14 thereof and also reducing, or cutting away the part of the end portion of the side bar 13 which is held to said transverse bar 11. The tongue 47 of the bar 45 is in alinement with the tongues 14 and 15 of the top bar 11 and the bottom bar 12, respectively. In each of the tongues 46, 47, 48 is provided a spring catch, as 49, 50, 51 all of which are similar in construction and operate in a like manner to the catches 18 and 19. As illustrated, the removable side bar 16 is of sufficient length so that the tongue 47 of the bar 45 will be received in the longitudinal groove 17 thereof, and in the inner surface of the grooved edge of said removable side bar is a notch 52

adapted to receive the head of the catch 50 for engagement therewith to detachably hold the side bar 16 to the transverse bar 45 the same as it is held to the transverse bars 11 and 12.

On the tongue 46 of the transverse bar 45 and on the tongue 48 of the bar 11 and bar 13 is a detachable short third side bar 53. The short side bar 53 is similarly formed to the removable side bar 16, and said bar 53 has groove 54 lengthwise in one of its edges. Adjacent to each end of the detachable side bar 53, and in the inner surface of its grooved edge are two notches 55 and 56 which are arranged so as to be registered with the catches 49 and 51 of the tongues 46 and 48 whereby the heads of the catches will engage the said notches for removably holding the side bar 53 to the tongues 46 and 48 in a like manner to the detachable holding of the side bar 16 to the bill of fare, as heretofore explained.

Slightly spaced from the plate 41 of the extension 40, and held to the transverse bars 11 and 45, is a supporting plate 57. For the purpose of indicating through the openings 42, 43, 44, of the plate 41 the month, day, and date of the menu being served, to the plate 57 are pivoted four disks, or wheels 58, 59, 60, 61. On one face of the disk 58 are designated the months of the year, as 62, and said disk is adapted to be rotated so that each month may be registered with and displayed through the opening 42 of the plate 41. On one face of the disk 59 are indicated the days of the week, as 63, and this disk is adapted to be rotated so that one of the days may be registered with and shown through the opening 43 of the plate 41. On the disk 60 is indicated a series of numerals, as 64, from "0" to "9" inclusive, and said disk is adapted to be rotated so that one of the numerals may be registered with and displayed through the opening 44 of the plate 41. Through the disk 60 is an opening, as shown, and in said opening is pivotally held the disk 61. On a part of one face of the disk 61 are indicated the numerals "1, 2, 3," as at 65, and said disk is adapted to be rotated whereby one of the numerals "1, 2, 3" may be registered with and shown through the opening 44 of the plate 41 simultaneously with the display of one of the numerals of the disk 60, thus any date from 1 to 31 may be shown through the opening 44 by revolving the disks 60 and 61 correspondingly.

In order to permit each of the disks 58, 59, 60, 61 to be rotated separately, upon the face of the disk 58 opposite to the names of the months 62 thereon, is provided an annular toothed rack 66, and in mesh with said rack is a star gear, or pinion 67 held on one end of a rod 68. On the opposite end of the rod 68 is a head 69 to allow the rod to be readily rotated for revolving the rack 66 and the disk 58. Upon the face of the disk 59 opposite the names of the days 63 thereof, is an annular toothed rack 70, and in mesh with said rack is a star gear, or pinion 71 held on one end of a rod 72. On the opposite end of the rod 72 is a head 73 for permitting the rod to be rotated to revolve the rack 70 and the disk 59. Upon the face of the disk 60 opposite to the numerals 64 is an annular toothed rack 74, and in mesh with said rack is a star gear, or pinion 75 held on one end of a rod 76 having a head 77 on its other end whereby the rod may be rotated for revolving the rack 74 and the disk 60. Upon the face of the disk 61 which is opposite to its numerals 65 is also an annular toothed rack 78 in mesh with which is a star gear, or pinion 79 held upon one end of a rod 80, and on the other end of said rod is a head 81 for allowing the rod to be rotated for revolving the rack 78 and disk 61. Any desired month, day of the week, or date may thereby be displayed through the openings 42, 43, 44, of the plate 41 of the extension 40 after the side bar 16 of the frame 10 has been removed, as hereinbefore explained, and after the removal of the side bar 53 in a like manner from the tongues 46 and 48. As shown, the rods 68 and 72 are disposed so that the heads thereof will be received in the groove of the removable side bar 53 when replaced on the tongues 46 and 48, and the rods 76 and 80 are disposed so that the heads thereof will be received in the groove of the side bar 16 when replaced on the tongues 14, 15 and 47 of the transverse bar 11, 12 and 45, respectively.

In the foregoing description, I have embodied the preferred form of my invention, but I do not wish to be understood as limiting myself thereto, as I am aware that modifications may be made therein without departing from the principle, or sacrificing any of the advantages of this invention, therefore I reserve to myself the right to make such changes as fairly fall within the scope of the appended claims.

Having thus described my invention, I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent:—

1. In a bill of fare of the character described, two spaced supporting strips, each having a plurality of openings therethrough and each of the openings of one strip being in alinement with one of the openings of the second strip, a plurality of rods disposed between the strips and each being adjustably held in two of the alined openings of the strips, each of said rods having a polygonally formed body to provide a number of faces for indicating names thereon and each of said rods having a number of slots disposed crosswise in one end thereof,

a wire provided on one of the strips for engagement with one of the slots of each of the rods to rigidly hold the rod when adjusted in the openings, and a frame inclosing the strips and the ends of all of said rods.

2. In a bill of fare of the character described, two spaced supporting strips, each having a plurality of openings therethrough and each of the openings of one strip being in alinement with one of the openings of the second strip, a plurality of rods disposed between the strips and each being adjustably guided in two of the alined openings of the strips, each of said rods having a polygonally formed body to provide a number of faces for indicating names thereon, means provided on one of the strips and serving to rigidly hold each of the rods when adjusted in two of the openings of said strips, a transverse bar secured to the top ends of the supporting strips, a second transverse bar secured to the lower ends of the supporting strips, a side bar fastened to one of the corresponding ends of both of the transverse bars, a second side bar, and means serving to removably attach the second side bar to the opposite ends of said transverse bars.

3. In a bill of fare of the character described, two spaced supporting strips, each having a plurality of openings therethrough and each of the openings of one strip being in alinement with one of the openings of the second strip, a plurality of rods disposed between the strips and each being adjustably guided in two of the alined openings of the strips, each of said rods having a polygonally formed body to provide a number of faces for indicating names thereon, means provided on one of the strips and serving to rigidly hold each of the rods when adjusted in two of the openings of said strips, a transverse bar secured to the top ends of the supporting strips, a second transverse bar secured to the lower ends of the supporting strips, a side bar fastened to one of the corresponding ends of both of the transverse bars, a second side bar, two catches, one provided upon the opposite end of each of said transverse bars and serving to removably hold the second side bar thereto.

4. In a bill of fare of the character described, two spaced supporting strips, each having a plurality of openings therethrough and each of the openings of one strip being in alinement with one of the openings of the second strip, a plurality of rods disposed between the strips and each being adjustably guided in two of the alined openings of the strips, each of said rods having a polygonally formed body to provide a number of faces for indicating names thereon and each of said rods having a number of slots disposed crosswise in one end thereof, a wire provided on one of the strips for engagement with one of the slots of each of the rods to rigidly hold the rod when adjusted in two of the openings, a transverse bar secured to the top ends of the supporting strips, a second transverse bar secured to the lower ends of the supporting strips, a side bar fastened to one of the corresponding ends of both of the transverse bars, a second side bar, two catches, one provided upon the opposite end of each of said transverse bars and serving to removably hold the second side bar thereto.

This specification signed and witnessed this sixth day of February A. D. 1913.

DOMENICO A. TOPPI.

Witnesses:
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Copies of this patent may be obtained for five cents each, by addressing the "Commissioner of Patents, Washington, D. C."