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METHOD OF AND APPARATUS FOR IRONING SHIRTS AND THE LIKE

Filed July 17, 1962

4 Sheets-Sheet 1

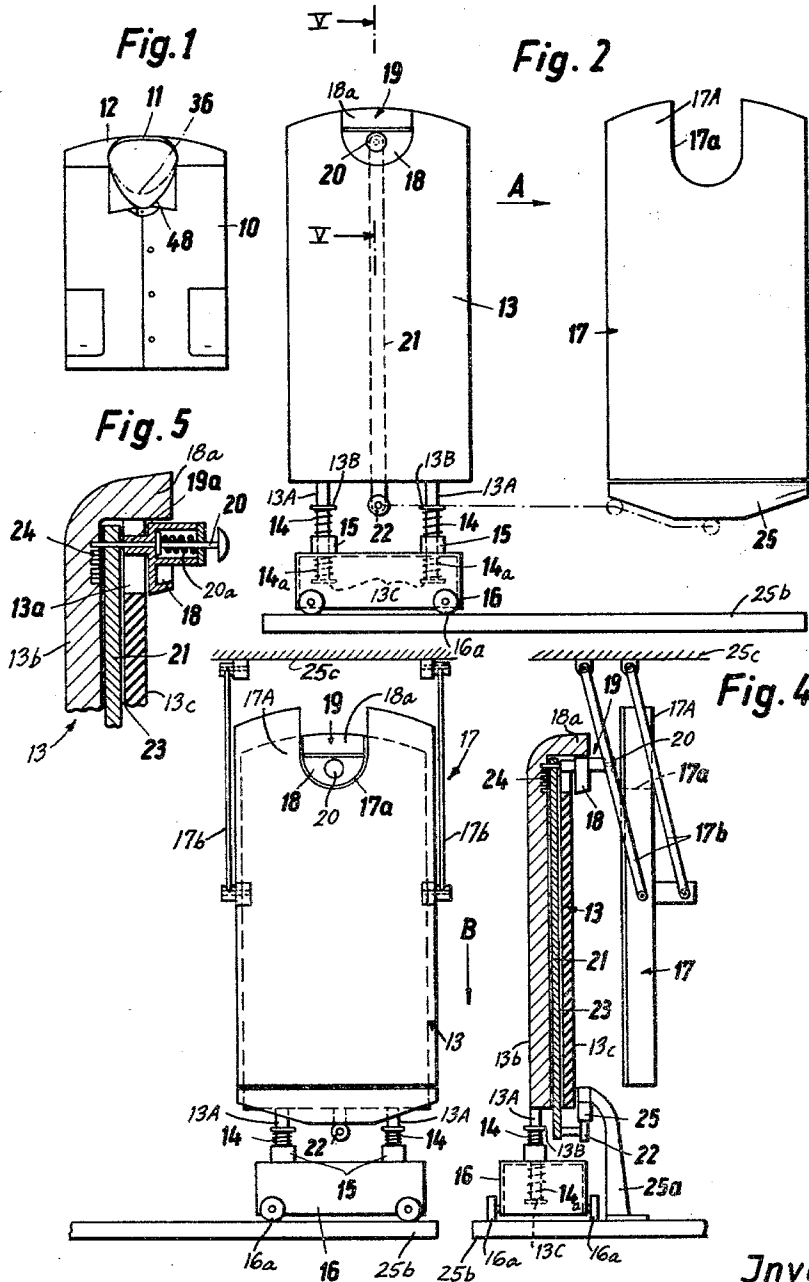


Fig. 3

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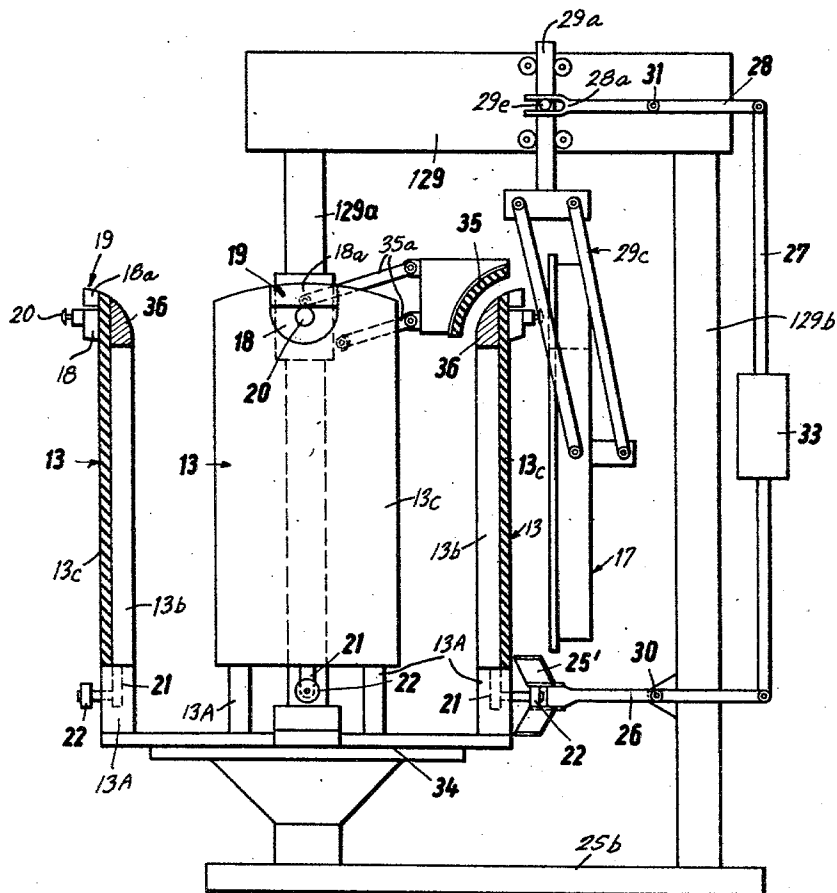
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Fig. 8



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Fig. 9

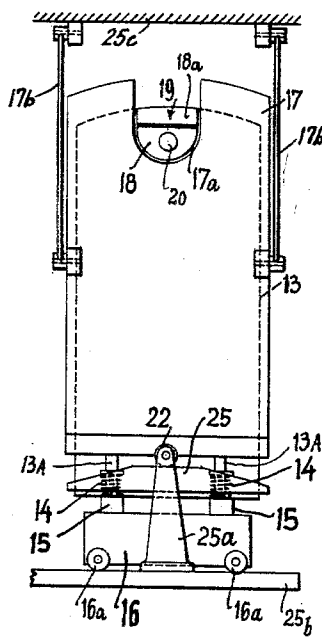


Fig. 10

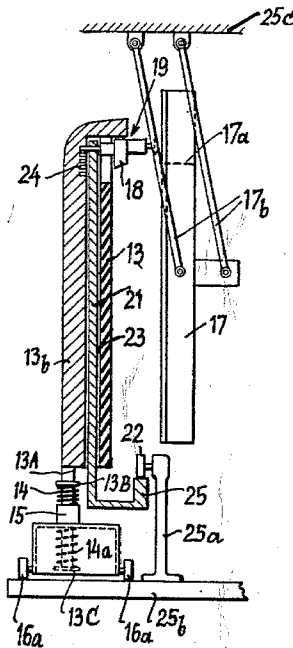
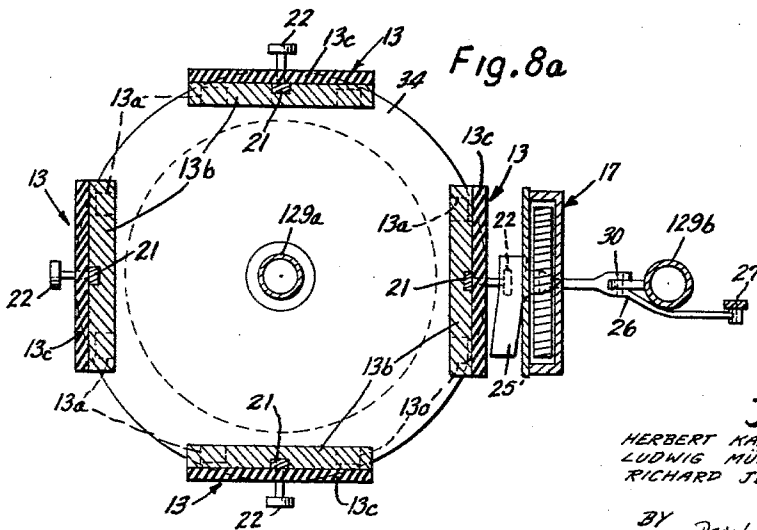


Fig. 8a



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METHOD OF AND APPARATUS FOR IRONING SHIRTS AND THE LIKE

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19 Claims. (Cl. 223—57)

The present invention relates to ironing of textile articles in general, and more particularly to a method of and to an apparatus for ironing and creasing of shirts and similar articles of apparel. Still more particularly, the invention relates to a method of and to an apparatus for ironing selected sections of shirts, robes, dresses and similar articles of apparel, especially front sections, shoulder sections and collars. The apparatus of our invention can be utilized in laundries as well as in shirt and garment manufacturing plants in which the articles of apparel are ironed prior to packaging and shipping.

It is an important object of our invention to provide an apparatus for automatic or semiautomatic ironing of shirts and similar articles of apparel wherein the front section, the collar and the shoulder section of an article of apparel may be ironed in a single step.

Another object of the invention is to provide an apparatus of the just outlined characteristics wherein certain elements which iron the collar may be rapidly adjusted for ironing of differently dimensioned collars.

A further object of the invention is to provide an apparatus for ironing shirts and similar articles of apparel wherein a pair of cooperating ironing members is automatically adjusted with respect to each other when the apparatus is converted for ironing of articles with larger or smaller collar sizes.

An additional object of the instant invention is to provide a novel motion transmitting mechanism which automatically adjusts an article-supporting ironing member with respect to a cooperating second ironing member or vice versa when the collar engaging elements are adjusted for use in connection with different collars.

Still another object of the invention is to provide an ironing apparatus which is constructed and assembled in such a way that, while the operator or operators slip articles of apparel onto one or more momentarily idle article-supporting ironing members, at least one article-supporting ironing member may be moved into operative engagement with a complementary ironing member so that the articles of apparel may be ironed without any or with exceptionally short interruptions between consecutive ironing operations.

An additional object of the invention is to provide a method of ironing shirts and similar articles of apparel in an apparatus of the above outlined characteristics.

With the above objects in view, the invention resides in the provision of an ironing apparatus, particularly for ironing front sections, shoulder sections and collars of shirts and similar articles of apparel. This apparatus comprises at least one article-supporting first ironing member including a male ironing element which latter comprises a fixed portion receivable in the rear portion of the opening in a collar and an adjustable portion which is receivable in the front portion of the opening in a collar and which is movable toward and away from the fixed portion for adapting the male ironing element to the collar size of an article of apparel supported by the first ironing member, a second ironing member including a female ironing element having a cutout adapted to receive the male ironing element, and motion transmitting

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means operatively connected with the adjustable portion of the male ironing element for automatically adjusting the position of one of the ironing members with respect to the other ironing member when the male ironing element is introduced into the cutout of the female ironing element and for thereby insuring that a collar surrounding the male ironing element is pressed against the female ironing element.

In accordance with our method, an article of apparel is slipped onto the first ironing member so that its collar surrounds the male ironing element, the adjustable portion of the male ironing element is then adjusted to adapt the male ironing element to the collar size of the article supported on the first ironing member, the male ironing element is then introduced into the cutout of the female ironing element, and the position of one ironing member is automatically adjusted with respect to the other ironing member so that the collar portion disposed between the two ironing elements is compressed if the one and/or the other ironing member is heated.

The novel features which are considered as characteristic of the invention are set forth in particular in the appended claims. The invention itself, however, both as to its construction and its method of operation, together with additional objects and advantages thereof, will be best understood from the following detailed description of certain specific embodiments with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

FIG. 1 is a front elevational view of an ironed shirt whose shoulder section, collar and front section are assumed to have been ironed in accordance with the method of our invention;

FIG. 2 is a front elevational view of an apparatus which embodies one form of our invention and which comprises two ironing members one of which is reciprocable in a vertical plane and the other of which is swingably suspended on a roof bar or the like;

FIG. 3 is another front elevational view of the apparatus, showing the ironing members in a position they assume when the reciprocable ironing member is moved into registry with the swingable ironing member;

FIG. 4 is a side elevational view of the structure shown in FIG. 2 or 3 with the reciprocable ironing member shown in vertical section;

FIG. 5 is an enlarged fragmentary transverse vertical section through the reciprocable ironing member as seen in the direction of arrows from the line V—V of FIG. 2;

FIG. 6 is a front elevational view of a modified ironing apparatus which comprises a horizontally reciprocable ironing member and a vertically reciprocable ironing member, the apparatus being shown in idle position when the horizontally reciprocable ironing member is moved away from the other ironing member;

FIG. 7 is another front elevational view of the modified apparatus, showing the ironing members in operative position;

FIG. 8 illustrates a different apparatus in which a group of four article-supporting ironing members is mounted on a turntable so that they may be consecutively moved into registry with a swingable ironing member; and

FIG. 8a is a horizontal section through the apparatus illustrated in FIG. 8.

FIG. 9 is a front elevational view of a further apparatus which constitutes a slight modification of the apparatus shown in FIGS. 1 to 4; and

FIG. 10 is a side elevational view of the structure shown in FIG. 9 with the reciprocable ironing member shown in vertical section and further showing the means for suspending the other ironing member.

Referring now in greater detail to the drawings, and

first to FIG. 1, there is shown a shirt 10 having a collar whose rear portion 11 is ironed in such a way that it is coplanar with the central portion of a shoulder crease 12. The collar 48 shown in FIG. 1 is a large size, for example size 18, and a smaller collar size (for example, size 12) is indicated in phantom lines at 36. The difference between the sizes 12 and 18 is assumed to be about 6 cm.

FIG. 2 shows an ironing apparatus which embodies one form of our invention. This apparatus comprises an article-supporting first ironing member or block 13 which includes a composite male ironing element 19 adapted to be received in the opening of a collar forming part of a shirt (not shown) when the shirt is slipped onto the ironing member 13. This ironing member is vertically reciprocally connected to a wheel-mounted conveyance here shown as a dolly 16 by means of two vertical legs or uprights 13A which are reciprocable in bearing sleeves 15 provided on the conveyance 16. Each leg 13A carries a pair of stop collars 13B, 13C respectively disposed above and below the associated bearing sleeve 15. Coil springs 14 on the legs 13A operate between the upper collars 13B and the respective bearing sleeves 15 to permanently bias the ironing member 13 in upward direction, and similar coil springs 14a are provided on the legs 13A between the bearing sleeves 15 and the respective lower collars 13C to permanently bias the member 13 in downward direction. The springs 14, 14a maintain the ironing member 13 in a position of equilibrium at a certain distance from the dolly 16 but permit upwardly or downwardly oriented movements of the legs 13A and of the ironing member in response to compressive forces transmitted thereto by a roller follower 22 which is adapted to cooperate with a fixed cam 25 (see FIG. 4).

When the collar of a shirt supported by the ironing member 13 is being ironed, the male ironing element 19 cooperates with a female ironing element 17A forming part of or connected to a second ironing member or block 17 which is swingably suspended on arms 17b (see FIG. 4) so that it can oscillate in directions at right angles to the direction in which the ironing member 13 is movable with the dolly 16. In FIGS. 2 and 3, the dolly 16 is movable from the left to the right or vice versa. The female ironing element 17A is provided with a cutout 17a which may fully receive a collar surrounding the male element 19.

Referring to FIG. 5, it will be noted that the composite male ironing element 19 comprises a fixed portion 18a which is rigid with the block 13 and which is receivable in the rear portion of the opening in a collar forming part of an article of apparel supported by the ironing member 13, and an adjustable portion 18 which is movable toward and away from the fixed portion 18a, thus enabling the male ironing element 19 to fit snugly into collars of different sizes. The adjustable portion 18 fits into the front portion of the opening in a collar. The ironing element 19 further comprises means including a spring biased bolt 20 and recesses 24 for arresting and for locking the adjustable portion 18 in selected position of adjustment. The recesses 24 are formed in the rear panel 13b of the ironing member 13, and this rear panel may be integral with the fixed portion 18a of the male ironing element 19. The bolt 20 is provided with a knob by means of which its tip may be withdrawn from a selected recess 24 against the bias of a helical spring 20a, whereupon the adjustable portion 18 may be moved to a new position of adjustment before the spring 20a compels the tip of the bolt 20 to enter another recess 24 as soon as the knob is released. FIG. 5 shows that the rear panel 13b is provided with five recesses 24 and that the tip of the arresting bolt 20 is received in the uppermost recess which would mean that the male ironing element 19 is adjusted to enter into the opening of a collar size 12, 12½ or 13. The next lower recess 24 receives the bolt 20 when the male ironing element 19 is to enter the opening of a collar

size 13½, 14 or 14½, and so on. The lowermost recess 24 receives the bolt 20 when the element 19 should fit into the opening of a collar size 18 or larger.

The neck 19a of the adjustable portion 18 is preferably rigidly secured to a vertically reciprocable motion transmitting member in the form of an elongated bar 21 which is slidably guided in a vertical groove 23 provided in the front side of the rear panel 13b, and the lower end of the bar 21 extends downwardly and beyond the ironing member 13 to support the aforementioned roller follower 22. It will be noted that the padded and heatable front panel 13c of the ironing member 13 is provided with a cutout 13a which slidably guides the neck 19a to permit adjustments of the portion 18 with respect to the fixed portion 18a. The bolt 20 is axially movably guided in the neck 19a and in a horizontal bore provided at the upper end of the bar 21. This bar transmits movements of the adjustable portion 18 to the roller follower 22 so that the latter assumes a new position of adjustment whenever the adjustable portion 18 changes its position with respect to the fixed portion 18a.

When the dolly 16 is caused to move in a direction indicated in FIG. 2 by the arrow A, the ironing member 13 is advanced into registry with the swingable ironing member 17 and the latter may be swung in an anticlockwise direction, as viewed in FIG. 4, to move the female ironing element 17A into abutment with the outer side of a collar which is assumed to have been placed onto the male ironing element 19 in a preceding operation. During such movement of the dolly 16, the follower 22 is engaged by the suitably configured face of the cam 25 and shifts the legs 13A in the respective bearing sleeves 15 (arrow B in FIG. 4) to thereby adjust the vertical position of the ironing member 13 and to make sure that the surface bounding the cutout 17a in the female ironing element 17A actually abuts and presses against the outer side of a collar on the male ironing element 19. In other words, the bar 21, the roller follower 22 and the cam 25 constitute a motion transmitting means for vertically adjusting the movable ironing member 13 with respect to the ironing member 17 in a fully automatic way and in response to movements of the adjustable portion 18 with respect to the fixed portion 18a of the male ironing element 19. The ironing operation is then carried out in the customary manner by heating the panel 13c and/or the ironing member 17. The cam 25 is fixed to a stationary bracket 25a which is mounted on a base plate 25b. This base plate may be provided with rails, channels or other guideways for the wheels 16a of the dolly 16. The arms 17b which swingably support the ironing member 17 in suspended position are articulately secured to a roof bar 25c or the like (see FIG. 4). The positions which the ironing members 13, 17 assume when the female ironing element 17A engages with the adjustable portion 18 of the male ironing element 19 or with a collar supported by the male ironing element are shown in FIG. 3, i.e., the adjustable portion 18 is snugly received in the cutout 17a of the female ironing element 17A.

If desired, the cam 25 may be secured to the block 17. In such instances, the configuration of the cam face must be selected in a way to make sure that the position of the ironing member 13 is properly adjusted at the time the ironing member 17 is swung in an anticlockwise direction (as viewed in FIG. 4) to move the surface surrounding the cutout 17a into compressing engagement with the outer side of a collar on the male ironing element 19. It is equally possible to interchange the positions of the follower 22 and cam 25, see FIGS. 9 and 10.

It will be noted that the apparatus of FIGS. 2 to 5 utilizes a vertically reciprocable and horizontally movable article-supporting ironing member 13, and a swingable complementary ironing member 17 which latter may be moved in a plane perpendicular to the plane in which the ironing member 13 can move on the wheels 16a. All vertical adjustments of the ironing member 13 are fully

automatic and are brought about by the cam 25 in cooperation with the follower 22 and bar 21 in response to manual adjustments in the position of the movable portion 18 with respect to the fixed portion 18a. All that an operator has to do is to adjust the position of the portion 18 by selecting a given recess 24 for the bolt 20 in order to make sure that the male ironing element 19 properly fills the opening in a collar, to thereupon move the ironing member 13 into registry with the ironing member 17, and to swing the ironing member 17 toward the ironing member 13. Of course, the movements of the dolly 16 along the base plate 25b and the oscillatory movements of the ironing member 17 toward or away from the ironing member 13 may be brought about by remote control, for example, by a suitable mechanical, pneumatic, hydraulic or electric control system of any known design which is not illustrated in FIGS. 2 to 5.

FIGS. 6 and 7 illustrate a modified ironing apparatus wherein the legs 13A of the horizontally reciprocable article-supporting ironing member or block 13 are rigidly fixed to the dolly 16. Otherwise, the construction of the ironing member 13 and of its male ironing element 19 is the same as described in connection with FIGS. 2 to 5.

The other ironing member 17 is suspended in a supporting linkage constituting a parallel motion mechanism and including a lower two-armed lever 26 which is rockable about a horizontal pivot pin 30 secured to a bracket 30a extending upwardly from the base plate 25b, a vertical connecting rod 27 which carries a counterweight 33 and which connects the right-hand arm of the lever 26 with the right-hand arm of an upper two-armed lever 28, a horizontal pivot pin 31 for the lever 28 which is carried by a plate-like support 29 mounted on the base plate 25b, a vertical shaft 29a which is reciprocally guided by rolls 29b carried by the support 29, an inverted U-shaped frame 29c articulately secured to the lower end of the shaft 29a, and horizontal pins 29d which turnably support the block 17 in the frame 29c. The shaft 29a carries a pin 29e which cooperates with the bifurcated left-hand arm 28a of the upper lever 28 to make sure that the ironing member 17 is adjusted vertically when the roller follower 22 at the lower end of the motion transmitting member 21 engages with a suitably configured cam 25' on the left-hand arm of the lower lever 26.

When the dolly 16 is moved in a direction indicated by the arrow A (FIG. 6), the follower 22 engages with the cam 25' and raises the ironing member 17 to the dotted-line position 32 (arrow C) because the parallel motion mechanism 26, 27, 28 transmits motion to the pin 29e, to the shaft 29a and to the frame 29c. The cutout 17a of the female ironing element 17A can now receive the male ironing element 19 in such a way that a collar which surrounds the element 19 is ready for ironing. Such position of the ironing elements 17A, 19 is shown in FIG. 7. The counterweight 33 insures that vertical displacements of the ironing member 17 require a comparatively small force.

It will be noted that the ironing apparatus of FIGS. 6 and 7 differentiates from the apparatus of FIGS. 2 to 5 in that it embodies a horizontally reciprocable ironing member 13 and a second ironing member 17 which is reciprocable vertically (arrow C) and which is preferably swingable in or with the frame 29c so as to move its female ironing element 17A into engagement with the male ironing element 19 when the ironing members 13, 17 are aligned in a manner as shown in FIG. 7. The follower 22 is fixed to the member 21 but the cam 25' is yieldable to thereby transmit motion to the ironing member 17 when engaged by the follower.

Of course, the positions of the cam 25' and the follower may be interchanged if desired. It is equally possible to extend the motion transmitting member 21 upwardly and beyond the ironing member 13 and to provide the parts of the cam and follower means 22, 25' at a

level above the ironing member 17. In accordance with another modification of our invention, the cam and follower means 22, 25' may be replaced by other types of mechanical motion transmitting and adjusting means, by a hydraulic, pneumatic, electrohydraulic, electropneumatic or electric system.

Referring finally to FIG. 8, there is shown a further ironing apparatus which includes four equidistant movable article-supporting ironing members or blocks 13 mounted on a turntable 34 adapted to revolve about the axis of a vertical column or shaft 129a forming part of a supporting structure further including a crosshead 129, a second column 129b and a base plate 25b. The ironing members 13 are arranged in such a way that their front panels 13c and male ironing members 19 face outwardly (i.e. away from the axis of rotation of the turntable 34) and that the angular spacing between the adjacent ironing members 13 equals 90 degrees. As in the apparatus of FIGS. 6 and 7, each ironing member 13 carries a downwardly extending motion transmitting member 21 provided at its lower end with a roller follower 22, and each motion transmitting member 21 is adjustable in response to adjustments in the position of the adjustable lower portion 18 with respect to the fixed upper portion 18a of the corresponding male ironing element 19. The legs 13A of the ironing members 13 are rigidly secured to the turntable 34.

The construction of the swingable ironing member 17 is analogous to that of the ironing member 17 shown in FIGS. 6 and 7. This ironing member is suspended in a swingable frame 29c carried by a vertically reciprocable shaft 29a provided with a motion transmitting pin 29e that receives motion from the bifurcated left-hand arm 28a of an upper two-armed lever 28 pivoted at 31 and articulately connected with a rod 27. This rod is provided with a counterweight 33 and its lower end is articulately connected to a lower two-armed lever 26 which pivots about a pin 30 and which carries a cam 25' adapted to cooperate with the follower 22 of that ironing member 13 which is momentarily in registry with the ironing member 17. The parts 26, 27, 28 together constitute a parallel motion mechanism which cooperates with the motion transmitting means 21, 22, 25' to adjust the position of the ironing member 17.

The column 129a supports a specially configured padded ironing member 35, hereinafter called crease forming member, which is suspended on arms 35a and which is swingable in a vertical plane toward and away from the rear panel 13b of that ironing member 13 which is momentarily aligned with the ironing member 17. This crease forming member 35 is adapted to engage the shoulder section and the nape section of a shirt on an ironing member 13 and to cooperate with the ironing member 17 to form in the shirt a crease 12 (see FIG. 1). The member 35 is heatable in any conventional way (not shown), and the upper portion of the rear plane 13b on each ironing member 13 is provided with a metallic liner 36 constituting the shoulder portion of the respective rear panel and preferably assuming the form of a plate adapted to engage the inner side of the shoulder section which is being ironed by the member 35. Thus, the member 35 cooperates with each ironing member 13 to iron the shoulder section and the nape section of a shirt; the member 35 also cooperates with the ironing member 17 to form the crease 12; and the iron members 13, 17 cooperate to iron the front section of a shirt and to simultaneously iron the collar.

It will be understood that the ironing members 13, 17 may be disposed horizontally if desired, i.e. the column 129a and the shaft 29a may be horizontal.

An important advantage of the improved ironing and crease forming apparatus is that it can be readily adjusted to iron shirts, blouses, robes, dresses, and other articles of apparel with different collar sizes. When a shirt is being ironed, it is placed onto an ironing member 13

in such a way that its collar surrounds the male ironing element 19, that its rear section is adjacent to the rear panel 13b, and that its front section is adjacent to the front panel 13c. By properly adjusting the distance between the portions 18, 18a, an operator insures that the collar and the sections adjacent to the collar assume requisite positions preparatory to the actual ironing step.

Many conventional ironing apparatus for shirts and similar articles of apparel utilize a non-adjustable male ironing element which is normally dimensioned to fit into a collar size 12 or 13. If such apparatus are utilized for ironing of shirts with collar size 14 or larger, it is not possible to iron the entire front section and the major part of a collar in a single operation because the rear portion of the collar and the shoulder section must be moved out of the range of the ironing member in order to make sure that the front portion of the collar is in proper position. Therefore, it is necessary to complete the ironing operation by hand, particularly along the shoulder section and, of course, such operation requires more time than if the entire shirt is ironed by the apparatus. In addition, if the entire shoulder section is not or cannot be ironed at the time the apparatus irons the front section, it is not possible to form the shoulder crease 12 so that this crease, too, must be ironed by hand.

By utilizing an adjustable male ironing element 19, the apparatus of our invention can be rapidly and conveniently converted for ironing of different shirts regardless of the collar size, and the entire front section may be ironed in a single operation inclusive of forming the shoulder crease. Furthermore, by being provided with means for adjusting the position of the female ironing element with respect to the male ironing element, or vice versa, in response to each adjustment in the position of the movable portion 18, the ironing members 13, 17 in the apparatus of our invention will automatically assume optimum positions for an ironing operation.

In order that an apparatus may properly iron shirts with different collar sizes, it is necessary that the front panel 13c be provided with a flat or substantially flat outer side, and that the ironing member 17 be provided with a flat outer side which then cooperates with the outer side of the front panel 13c. In addition, and as shown in FIGS. 3, 4, 7 and 8, the upper portion of the ironing element 17A should extend beyond the upper portion of the ironing member 13 regardless of whether the shirt collar on the male ironing element 19 is size 12 or 18. This enables the crease forming member 35 to cooperate with the ironing members 13, 17 and to form a shoulder crease 12.

The importance of properly ironing the collar and the adjacent sections of a shirt hardly requires explanation since many customers are very meticulous as regards the shape and finish of the collar and will avoid purchasing a shirt whose collar is not ironed to perfection. When a shirt is placed onto the ironing member 13 of FIG. 5, the inner section of the collar surrounds the portions 18, 18a and the shirt is thereupon buttoned down including the collar button so that, as soon as the position of the portion 18 is adjusted, the inner section of the collar fits snugly about the male ironing element 19. The outer collar section with its flaps is folded away from the inner section so that the inner section may be engaged by the surface surrounding the cutout 17a when the ironing members 13, 17 are moved to the position of FIG. 3. In a subsequent ironing step, the ironing member 17 cooperates with the flat front panel 13c and with the male ironing element 19 to iron the front section of the shirt and the inner section of the collar. If the apparatus is provided with a crease forming member 35, the latter automatically forms the crease 12 when it is pressed against the ironing members 13 and 17.

Without further analysis, the foregoing will so fully reveal the gist of the present invention that others can, by applying current knowledge, readily adapt it for

various applications without omitting features that, from the standpoint of prior art, fairly constitute essential characteristics of the generic and specific aspects of this invention and, therefore, such adaptations should and are intended to be comprehended within the meaning and range of equivalence of the following claims.

What is claimed as new and desired to be secured by Letters Patent is:

1. An ironing apparatus, particularly for ironing front sections, shoulder sections and collars of collared shirts and similar articles of apparel, comprising a first ironing member including a female ironing element provided with a cutout; an article-supporting second ironing member including a male ironing element adapted to extend into the opening of a collar of an article of apparel supported by said second ironing member, said male ironing element receivable in and withdrawable from said cutout so that the collar placed on said male ironing element may be pressed against said female ironing element when the cutout receives the male ironing element, said male ironing element comprising a fixed portion and an adjustable portion which is movable toward and away from said fixed portion for adapting the male ironing element to the collar size of an article of apparel supported by said second ironing member; and motion transmitting means operatively connected with said adjustable portion for automatically adjusting the position of one of said ironing members with respect to the other ironing member when said male ironing element is introduced into said cutout so as to insure that the collar surrounding said male ironing element is pressed against said female ironing element.

2. An ironing apparatus, particularly for ironing front sections, shoulder sections and collars of collared shirts and similar articles of apparel, comprising an article-supporting first ironing member including a male ironing element, said ironing element comprising a fixed portion receivable in the rear portion of the opening in the collar of an article of apparel supported by said first ironing member and an adjustable portion which is receivable in the front portion of the opening in the collar and which is movable toward and away from said fixed portion for adapting the ironing element to the collar size of an article of apparel supported by said first ironing member, a second ironing member including a female ironing element having a cutout adapted to receive said male ironing element, one of said ironing members movable with respect to the other ironing member so as to introduce or to withdraw said male ironing element from said cutout; and motion transmitting means operatively connected with said adjustable portion for automatically adjusting the position of one of said ironing members with respect to the other ironing member when said male ironing element is introduced into said cutout and for thereby insuring that the collar surrounding said male ironing element is pressed against said female ironing element.

3. An apparatus as set forth in claim 2, further comprising a wheel-mounted conveyance for said first ironing member, means for rigidly connecting said first ironing member to said conveyance so that the conveyance may advance said first ironing member into registry with and away from said second ironing member, and a linkage operatively connected with and supporting said second ironing member, said motion transmitting means comprising cam and follower means for automatically adjusting the position of said linkage when said first ironing member is in registry with said second ironing member.

4. An apparatus as set forth in claim 3, wherein said motion transmitting means further comprises a motion transmitting member secured to and movable with said adjustable portion, said cam and follower means having cooperating parts respectively mounted on said motion transmitting member and on said linkage.

5. An ironing apparatus, particularly for ironing front sections, shoulder sections and collars of collared shirts and similar articles of apparel, comprising an article-supporting first ironing member including a front panel and a male ironing element, said ironing element comprising a fixed portion receivable in the rear portion of the opening in the collar of an article of apparel supported by said first ironing member and an adjustable portion which is receivable in the front portion of the opening in the collar and which is movable toward and away from said fixed portion for adapting the ironing element to the collar size of an article supported by said first ironing member, said front panel having a substantially flat outer side adjacent to the front section of an article supported by said first ironing member; a second ironing member including a female ironing element having a cutout adapted to receive said male ironing element, one of said ironing members movable with respect to the other ironing member so as to introduce or to withdraw said male ironing element from said cutout and said second ironing member having a substantially flat outer side adjacent to the outer side of said front panel when said male ironing element is introduced into said cutout so that said front panel and said second ironing member may iron the front section of an article supported on said first ironing member; and motion transmitting means operatively connected with said adjustable portion for automatically adjusting the position of one of said ironing members with respect to the other ironing member when said male ironing element is introduced into said cutout and for thereby insuring that the collar surrounding said male ironing element is pressed against said female ironing element.

6. An ironing apparatus as set forth in claim 5, wherein said first ironing member has a shoulder portion adjacent to said male ironing element and located at the inner side of the shoulder section of an article supported on said first ironing member, and further comprising a crease forming member movable toward and away from said shoulder portion for forming a crease in the shoulder section of the article.

7. An ironing apparatus as set forth in claim 6, wherein said shoulder portion is a metallic plate.

8. An ironing apparatus, particularly for ironing front sections, shoulder sections and collars of collared shirts and similar articles of apparel, comprising at least two first ironing members each including a male ironing element and each of said ironing elements comprising a fixed portion receivable in the rear portion of the opening in the collar of an article of apparel supported by the respective ironing member and an adjustable portion which is receivable in the front portion of the opening in the collar and which is movable toward and away from said fixed portion for adapting the respective ironing element to the collar size of an article supported by the respective ironing member; turntable means mounting said ironing members so that the ironing members can rotate about a common axis of rotation and that the ironing elements face away from said axis; a second ironing member adjacent to said supporting means and comprising a female ironing element having a cutout adapted to receive one of said male ironing elements at a time; means for adjustably supporting said second ironing member; and motion transmitting means operatively connected with said adjustable portions for automatically adjusting the position of said second ironing member when the male ironing element of one of said first ironing members is introduced into said cutout and for thereby insuring that the collar surrounding that male ironing element which is received in said cutout is pressed against said female ironing element.

9. An ironing apparatus as set forth in claim 8, wherein said first ironing members are equidistant from each other, wherein the supporting means for said second ironing member comprises a parallel motion mechanism, and wherein said motion transmitting means comprises a fol-

lower operatively connected to and movable with each of said adjustable portions and a cam fixed to said parallel motion mechanism, said cam located in the path of the respective follower when one of said male ironing elements is introduced into said female ironing element so that the follower shifts the parallel motion mechanism and thereby adjusts the position of said second ironing member.

10. An ironing apparatus as set forth in claim 9, wherein each of said first ironing members comprises a shoulder portion adjacent to the respective male ironing element and located at the inner side of the shoulder section of an article supported on the respective first ironing member, and further comprising a crease forming member and means for supporting said crease forming member so that the latter is movable toward and away from the shoulder portion of that first ironing member whose male ironing element is introduced into said cutout.

11. An ironing apparatus, particularly for ironing front sections, shoulder sections and collars of collared shirts and similar articles of apparel, comprising an article-supporting first ironing member including a male ironing element, said ironing element comprising a fixed portion receivable in the rear portion of the opening in the collar of an article supported by said first ironing member and an adjustable portion which is receivable in the front portion of the opening in the collar and which is movable toward and away from said fixed portion for adapting the ironing element to the collar size of an article of apparel supported by said ironing member; a conveyance for said ironing member; means for reciprocally connecting said ironing member to said conveyance; a second ironing member comprising a female ironing element having a cutout adapted to receive said male ironing element; and motion transmitting means for automatically adjusting the position of said first ironing member when said male ironing element is introduced into said cutout and for thereby insuring that a collar surrounding said male ironing element is pressed against said female ironing element, said motion transmitting means comprising a motion transmitting member connected with and movable by said adjustable portion, a follower mounted on said motion transmitting member, and a cam located in the path of said follower when said conveyance is moved to introduce said male ironing element into said cutout.

12. An ironing apparatus as set forth in claim 11, further comprising means for oscillatably supporting said second ironing member in suspended position.

13. An ironing apparatus as set forth in claim 11, wherein the means for reciprocally connecting said first ironing member to said conveyance comprises at least one spring-biased leg.

14. An ironing apparatus as set forth in claim 11, wherein said male ironing element comprises means for arresting and locking said adjustable portion in a plurality of positions of adjustment with respect to said fixed portion.

15. An ironing apparatus as set forth in claim 11, wherein said first ironing member comprises a rear panel which is rigid with said fixed portion and a padded heatable front panel, said front panel having a substantially flat outer side, said second ironing member having a substantially flat outer side adjacent to the outer side of said front panel when said male ironing element is received in said cutout.

16. A method of ironing shirts and similar articles of apparel in an ironing apparatus wherein an article supporting first ironing member is provided with an adjustable male ironing element and wherein a second ironing member is provided with a female ironing element having a cutout for the male ironing element, comprising the steps of introducing the first ironing member into an article of apparel so that the collar surrounds the male ironing element; adjusting the male ironing element to the size of the collar; introducing the male ironing element into

the cutout of the female ironing element; and simultaneously adjusting the position of one ironing member with respect to the other ironing member so that the collar is compressed between the ironing elements.

17. A method as set forth in claim 16, further comprising the step of pressing the ironing members against each other at the time the male ironing element is introduced into the cutout of the female ironing element and thereby ironing the front section of an article supported on the first ironing member.

18. A method as set forth in claim 17, further comprising the step of subjecting the shoulder section of the article to the action of a crease forming member to form a shoulder crease in the shoulder section.

19. An ironing apparatus, particularly for ironing front sections, shoulder sections and collars of collared shirts and similar articles of apparel, comprising an article-supporting first ironing member including a male ironing element, said ironing element comprising a fixed portion receivable in the rear portion of the opening in the collar of an article of apparel supported by said first ironing member and an adjustable portion which is receivable in the front portion of the opening in the collar and which is movable toward and away from said fixed portion for adapting the ironing element to the collar size of an ar-

article supported by said first ironing member; a second ironing member including a female ironing element having a cutout adapted to fully receive said male ironing element and extending beyond said first ironing member when said male ironing element is received in said cutout, one of said ironing members movable with respect to the other ironing member so as to introduce or to withdraw said male ironing element from said cutout; and motion transmitting means operatively connected with said adjustable portion for automatically adjusting the position of one of said ironing members with respect to the other ironing member when said male ironing element is introduced into said cutout and for thereby insuring that the collar surrounding said male ironing element is pressed against said female ironing element.

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