

Jan. 14, 1936.

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2,027,992

COLLAPSIBLE PARTITION

Original Filed Oct. 31, 1930 4 Sheets-Sheet 1

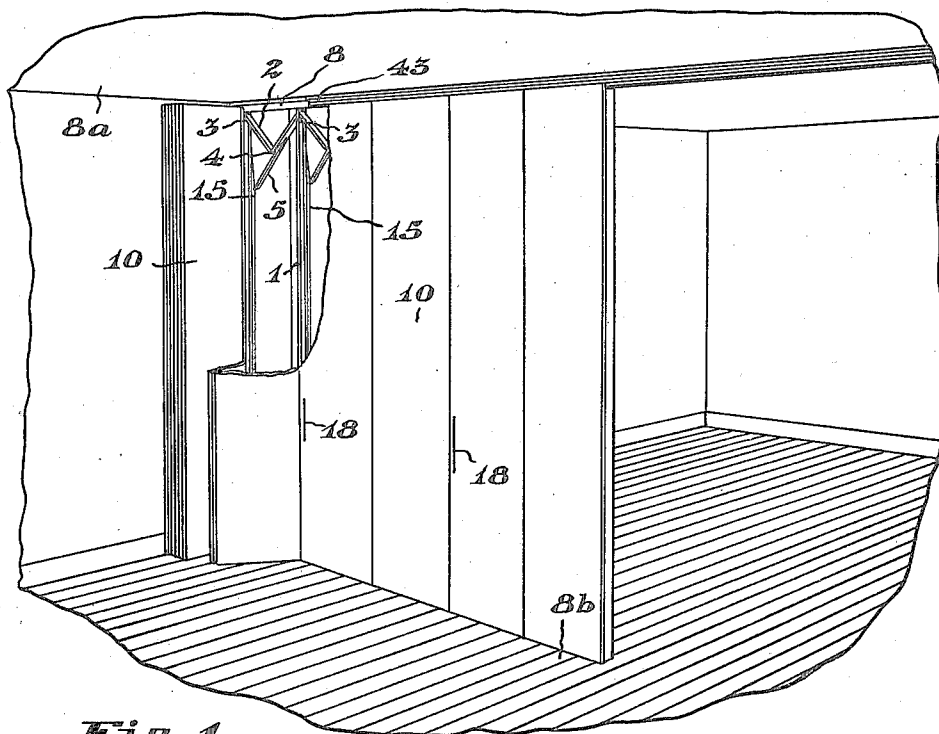


Fig. 1.

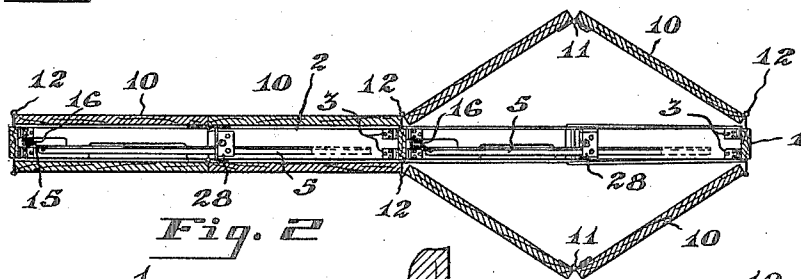


Fig. 2.

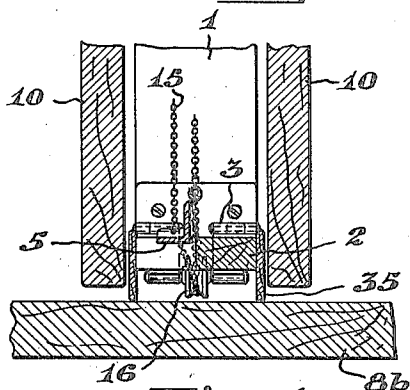


Fig. 3.

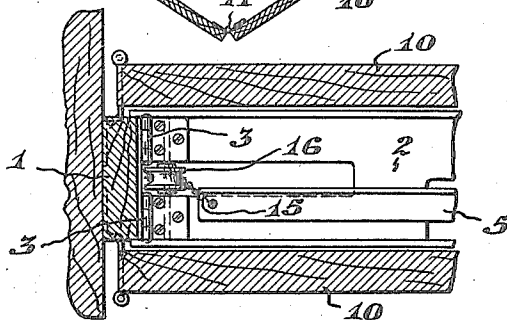


Fig. 4.

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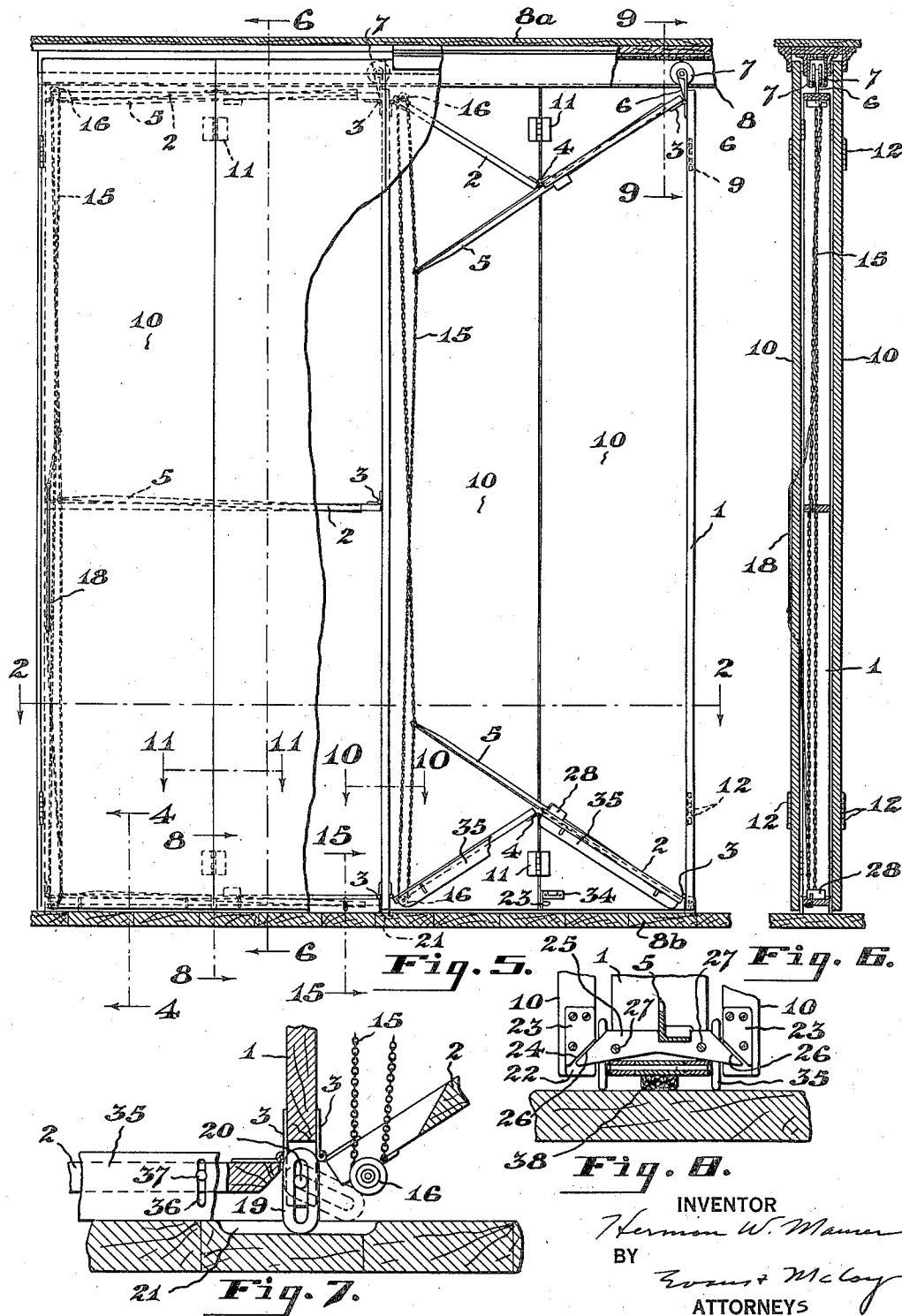
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COLLAPSIBLE PARTITION

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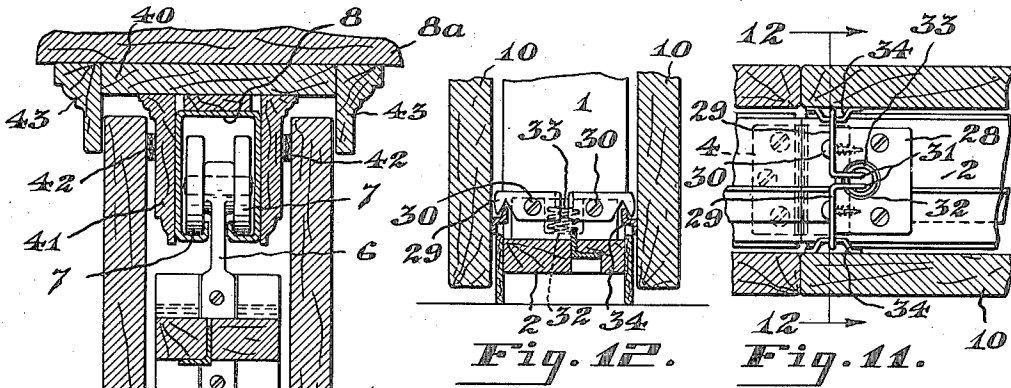
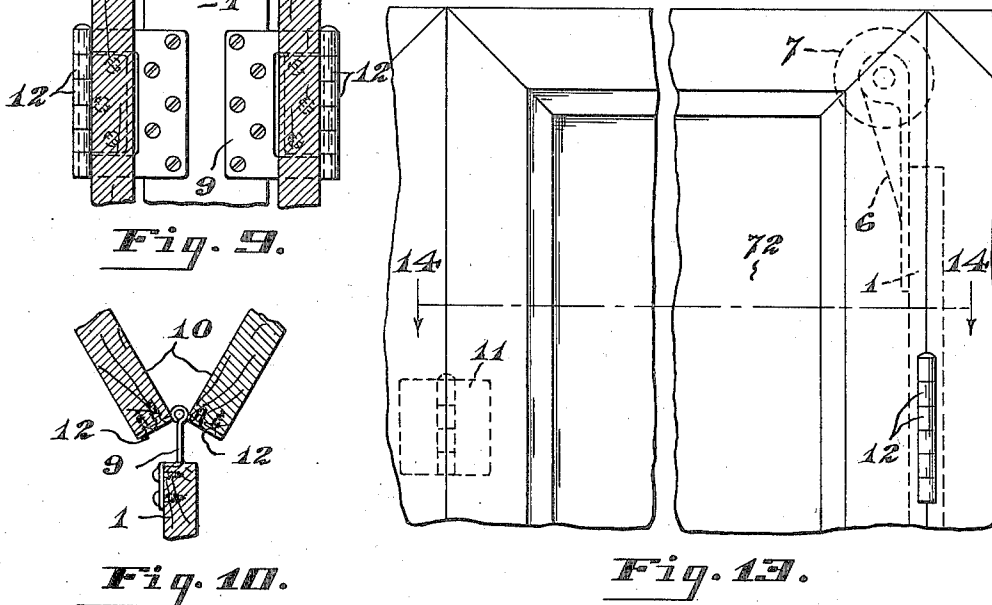
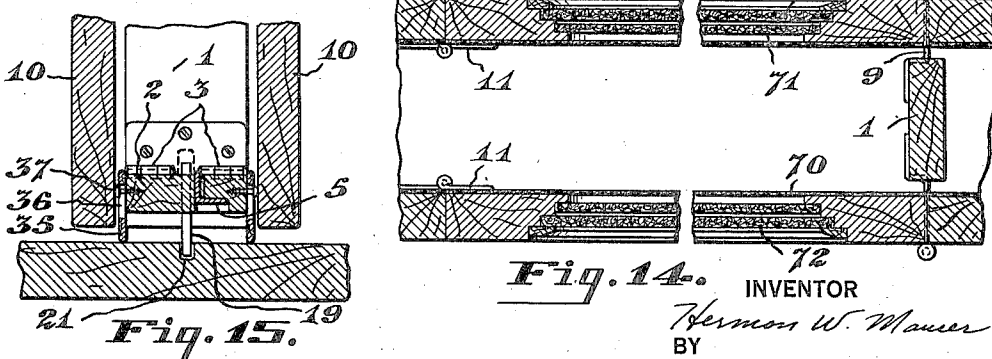
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COLLAPSIBLE PARTITION

Original Filed Oct. 31, 1930 4 Sheets-Sheet 3



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COLLAPSIBLE PARTITION

Original Filed Oct. 31, 1930 4 Sheets-Sheet 4

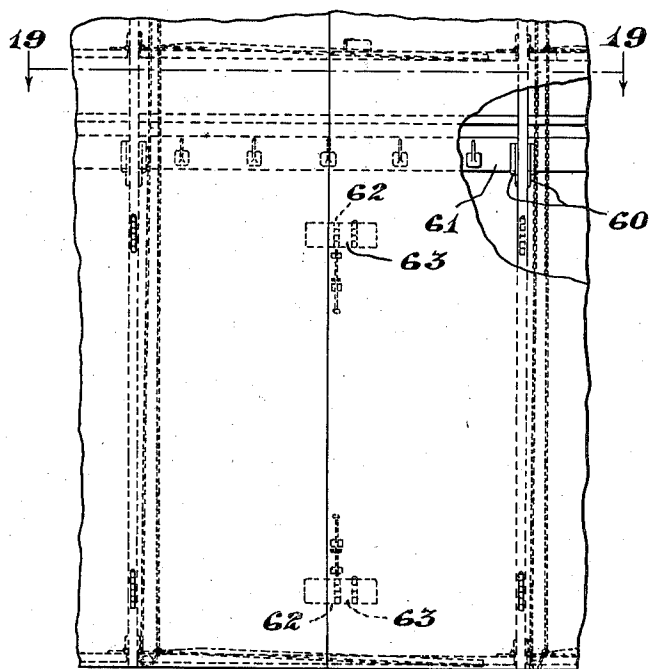


Fig. 18.

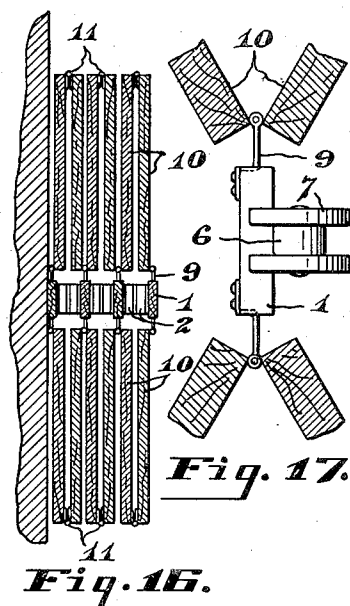


Fig. 16.

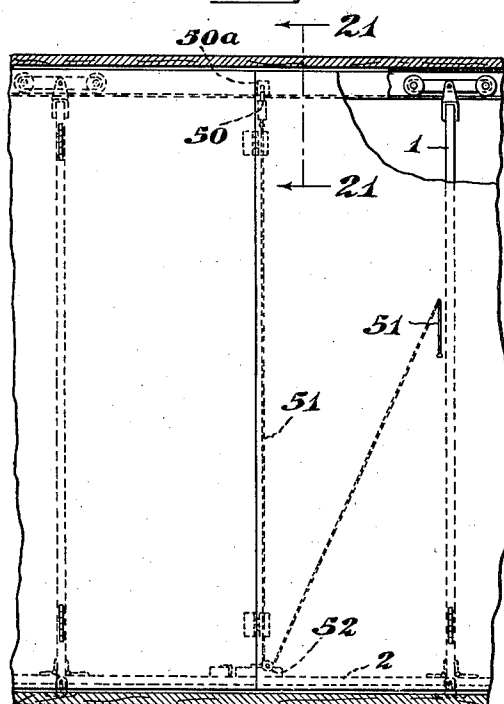


Fig. 20.

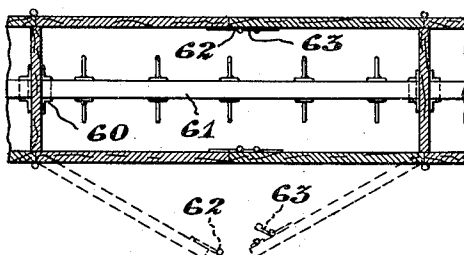


Fig. 19.

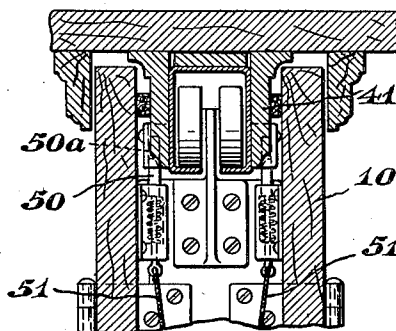


Fig. 21.

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COLLAPSIBLE PARTITION

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Application October 31, 1930, Serial No. 492,406

Renewed July 3, 1935

19 Claims. (Cl. 20-4)

This invention relates to partitions, and more particularly to collapsible partitions generally for use in temporarily dividing a large room into a plurality of smaller rooms or compartments.

One of the objects of the present invention is to provide a collapsible partition or wall which is simple in construction, economical to manufacture, and very efficient in operation.

Another object is to provide a collapsible partition or wall which may be quickly extended or collapsed to occupy a relatively small space, and which requires only a small space adjacent the sides thereof during the extending or collapsing operation.

Another object is to provide a collapsible partition or wall section which may be of any desired height and length, and which may be easily and quickly connected to one or more sections whereby partitions or walls of any desired length or dimension may be formed.

Another object is to provide a collapsible partition or wall embodying a plurality of individually collapsible sections whereby one or more sections may be collapsed to provide a desired opening without disturbing the extended position of the remaining sections.

A further object is to provide a collapsible partition embodying a plurality of individually collapsible sections, each of which is so constructed as to provide a dead air space between the sides thereof to dampen and materially reduce the transmission of sound therethrough.

A still further object is to provide a collapsible partition or wall composed of a plurality of individually collapsible sections, each of which is so constructed as to provide a sound absorbing dead air space between the sides thereof, portions or all of which space may be employed as a wardrobe or closet space when the section is in extended position.

With the above and other objects in view which will be apparent from the detailed following description, the present invention consists in certain features of construction and combinations of parts which will be clearly apparent to those skilled in the art to which the invention appertains.

In the drawings which illustrate suitable embodiments of the invention,

Figure 1 is a perspective view of the interior of a room showing a collapsible partition therein, certain sections of the partition being collapsed, other sections being partially collapsed, and other sections being in extended position, portions of

the partition sections being broken away to show the interior framework thereof;

Fig. 2 is a lengthwise section through a partition embodying two sections, one of the sections being shown extended and the other section being shown partially collapsed, taken substantially on the line 2-2 of Fig. 5;

Fig. 3 is a transverse section through a partition, the endmost section of which is secured directly to a wall structure;

Fig. 4 is an enlarged section taken substantially on the line 4-4 of Fig. 5, showing the relationship between the section and floor when the section is in extended operative position;

Fig. 5 is an enlarged vertical side view of a pair of sections, one of which is partially collapsed and the other of which is in extended position, portions of the side walls thereof being broken away to show the interior construction of the sections;

Fig. 6 is a vertical transverse section taken substantially on the line 6-6 of Fig. 5;

Fig. 7 is an enlarged section showing the method of attaching the lowermost operating bars to the vertical post common to a pair of partition sections;

Fig. 8 is an enlarged section taken substantially on the line 8-8 of Fig. 5, showing the cam means for initially swinging the panel portions outwardly during the collapsing operation;

Fig. 9 is an enlarged section taken substantially on the line 9-9 of Fig. 5 showing the means for supporting the partitions from the ceiling of a room;

Fig. 10 is an enlarged fragmentary transverse section taken substantially on the line 10-10 of Fig. 5 showing the means of securing the panel portions of each section to the common vertical column;

Fig. 11 is an enlarged fragmentary section taken substantially on the line 11-11 of Fig. 5 showing the latching means for preventing inadvertent collapsing of the portions of each section;

Fig. 12 is a section taken substantially on the line 12-12 of Fig. 11;

Fig. 13 is a fragmentary enlarged front elevation of the collapsible partition section showing the paneling for use in providing a sound-proof partition;

Fig. 14 is a horizontal transverse section taken substantially on the line 14-14 of Fig. 13 showing the soundproofing construction of the section;

Fig. 15 is an enlarged section taken substantially on the line 15-15 of Fig. 5 showing the

means for preventing sidewise movement of the extended partition section;

Fig. 16 is a horizontal transverse section showing a plurality of partition sections in completely collapsed position against a wall;

Fig. 17 is an enlarged view taken through the column interposed between and common to adjacent sections showing the panel portions of the sections in partially collapsed position;

Fig. 18 is a fragmentary front elevation of a collapsible partition in which a portion of the space between the side walls of the partition is used for a coat rack or closet, a portion of the side wall being broken away to show the interior construction;

Fig. 19 is a section taken substantially on the line 19—19 of Fig. 18;

Fig. 20 is a side elevation of a collapsible partition in which only bottom operating bars are used to collapse the partition; and

Fig. 21 is an enlarged section taken substantially on the line 21—21 of Fig. 20 in the case where only the bottom operating bars are employed.

The present invention contemplates an efficient collapsible partition of improved construction which is adapted particularly for use in churches, schools, gymnasiums, lodge rooms, etc. in which it is frequently desired to convert a large room into a plurality of smaller rooms or compartments.

The collapsible partition is arranged and constructed to occupy a relatively small space when collapsed and also is arranged and constructed so that it is not necessary to move furniture etc. near the partition to collapse the same or to extend it into position. Heretofore it has been necessary in collapsible partitions to move furniture etc. away from the sides of partitions in order to move the partitions to their collapsed positions, since in these prior constructions the partition sections were first collapsed at their free ends, thus requiring considerable space to collapse all the sections. Heretofore it was necessary to provide floor tracks for collapsible partitions, which were very objectionable because they caused undesired obstructions. In this invention a very rigid partition is provided which does not require the use of objectionable floor tracks and the like. The partition of the present invention, as will be later seen, embodies many other new and improved details of construction which materially tend toward simplicity of construction, economy of production and efficiency in operation.

Referring to the accompanying drawings in which like numerals refer to like parts throughout the several views, the collapsible partition embodies a plurality of individually collapsible partition sections, each of which is provided with a collapsible frame embodying relatively rigid collapsible members connected together as hereinafter more fully described, which frame is mounted in contiguous relation with the frames of the adjacent section.

In the construction shown in Figs. 1 to 17, inclusive, each frame or section unit embodies a pair of parallel vertical columns 1 interconnected by one or more collapsible horizontal end members 2, each column being common to two adjacent sections. The end members 2 are hingedly connected at their extremities to the vertical columns 1 by means of hinges 3 and are broken midway between their ends and connected together by hinges 4, which are arranged to hinge in the

direction opposite to the hinges 3. When the end members 2 are in operative extended position, the adjacent ends of their separated portions abut and lie in the same horizontal plane, and thus prevent the columns from being moved toward each other. However, when the portions of each end member 2 are hinged to move toward each other, it is evident that the vertical columns 1 may be moved toward each other to a collapsed position. One of the portions of each end member 2 is provided with a cantilever extension 5 preferably of angle iron rigidly secured thereto by any suitable means, which when the end member is in normal non-folded position overlies and rests on other portions of the end member. This extension 5, as will be hereinafter described, is employed to break the end members 2 and cause the same to fold to a collapsed position.

The number of end members 2 for each construction is dependent somewhat upon the height of the partition, and in some cases only one end member need be used for each section, as shown in Fig. 20. The right-hand section in Fig. 5 shows the use of two such end members, and the left-hand construction shows the use of three such end members. In the case of the construction shown at the right in Fig. 5, one end member is positioned at the uppermost end of the vertical column 1, and another is positioned at the lowermost end of the vertical column 1. In the left-hand section of Fig. 5 a third end member 2 is interposed between the endmost end members. In Fig. 20, the single end member 2 is positioned at the bottom of the section adjacent the floor.

Each column 1 has a trolley bracket 6 secured to its upper end which carries a pair of spaced trolley wheels 7. These trolley wheels are preferably arranged to move in suitable channels formed in a metal track 8 secured to the ceiling 8a of the room in which the partition is positioned and which extends between the opposite walls of the room.

Each vertical column 1 extends transversely of the direction of the collapsing movement and carries at each side edge two or more bifurcated hinge brackets 9. Each section has a pair of panels 10 which are hinged together by means of hinges 11 and, as shown in Fig. 11, a pair of such hinged panels are mounted at each side of the vertical columns 1 and are hinged thereto by means of hinges 12 which are carried by the bifurcated brackets 9. Each pair of panels 10 at each side of the column 1 are arranged to be folded outwardly toward each other into a collapsed position, such as shown in Figs. 2 and 16, and away from the panels on the opposite side of the section. Each column 1 has by means of the hinges 12 and brackets 9 a pair of panels hinged thereto at each side edge, one panel being one of the pair of panels of each section, and the other being one of the pair of panels of the next adjacent section, as shown in Fig. 10.

When the end members 2 are broken as in Fig. 5 by means of the cantilever arm 5, the panels 10 hinge outwardly as shown in Fig. 2, but when the end members 2 are in normal horizontal position each pair of panels lies flush with the pairs of panels in the next adjacent sections, and flush with each other in spaced relation to the panels on the opposite side of the section.

As shown in Figs. 3 to 7, inclusive, a rope or chain 15 is secured to the cantilever extension 5 to provide operating means therefor. This chain 15 preferably is endless and is arranged to ex-

tend over a pair of suitable pulleys 16, one of which is carried by a half portion of the upper end member 2 and the other of which is carried by the corresponding portion of the lower end member 2. The half portions are bifurcated at their hinged ends in order to receive the pulleys 16 over which the chain 15 is arranged to operate.

Secured to the chain 15 is a pull cord 18. A pull cord 18 is secured at its opposite ends to the chain and extends up through suitable openings formed in one of the doors 10 so that by pulling in one direction or the other on the cord the chain will be caused to move around the pulley 16 to raise or lower the cantilever extension chambers 5 as the case may be to either break the continuity of or force the half portions of the end members into contiguous relation.

When it is desired to collapse the partition section the pull cord 18 is actuated to move the cantilever extension members 5 and permit the half portions of the end members to be moved toward each other, thus permitting movement of the vertical columns 1 toward each other to cause outward collapsing movement of the panels 10. Conversely, when it is desired to move the partition section to its extended position the vertical columns 1 are moved away from each other to cause the side panels 10 to swing inwardly and then the pull cord 18 is actuated to cause the cantilever extension 5 to completely engage the underlying or overlying half portions of the end members 5 to thus prevent inadvertent collapsing of the partition section. As shown in Figs. 5 and 6, the partition sections are arranged to extend completely between the ceilings 8a and floor 8b of the room in which the partition is positioned, and in order to prevent the lower end of each vertical column 1 from swinging transversely of the guide tracks, each column 1 is bifurcated at its lower end to receive a slotted link 19. A suitable pin 20 is formed to extend between the legs formed by the bifurcation and to extend through the slot in the link 19 so that the link 19 may have a pivoted as well as a vertical movement.

The floor 8b is preferably provided at regular intervals corresponding with the extended spacing of the vertical columns 1 with suitable grooves 21, as shown in Fig. 7, into which the lower ends of the link 19 may drop by gravity when the columns 1 are extended to their maximum position. As shown in Fig. 7, the ends of the hinged portions of the end member 2 abut against the link 19 when the section is extended and prevent any hinging movement thereof, so that the link 19 will extend into the slot 21 and prevent any sidewise movement of the extended partition section. When the end members 2 are collapsed to permit the partition to be collapsed, it can be seen that the pressure against the link 19 is released and as the half portions swing upwardly the links 19 can be pivoted so that when the partition columns 1 are moved toward each other during the collapsing of the section, the link 19 may easily pivot as the column 1 is moved over the groove 21 so that the link 19 may slide on the floor 8b.

The vertical edge of one panel 10 of each pair of panels is preferably provided with a recess 22 at its extreme lower end which receives a cam plate 23 having a downwardly inclined edge 24, as shown in Fig. 8, and mounted on one of the half portions of the lowermost end member of each section is a suitable cam 25 having downwardly inclined edges 26 which are engageable

with the corresponding inclined edges 24 of the cam plates 23 attached to the panels at the sides of the sections. This cam 25 is preferably secured by means of suitable screws 27 to the portion of the end member 2 which carries the cantilever extension 5. When the cantilever extension 5 is moved upwardly to break the continuity of the portions of the end member 2 during the collapsing operation of each section, the surfaces 26 of the cam 25 strike and engage the corresponding surfaces 24 of the plates 23 secured to the opposite panels 10, and thereby cause the panels to swing outwardly to permit the collapsing of the section.

In order to prevent the panels 10 from being inadvertently hinged outwardly, suitable locking means controlled by the lowermost end member is provided. This locking means comprises a recessed supporting member 28 secured to the upper surface of the portion of the end member 2 which carries the cantilever extension 5, to which a pair of latch members 29 are pivoted by means of suitable screws 30. These latch members 30 are provided with finger portions 31 which extend over the recess 32 in the member 28 and are engaged by a suitable compression spring 33 positioned within the recess 32, the spring serving to hold the latches 30 in latching position.

As shown in Figs. 11 and 12, the latch members when the panels 10 of the section are in operative extended position, are arranged to engage suitable hooks 34 secured to the opposite panels 10 of each section. The latch members are provided with inclined surfaces which engage the hooks 34 so that as the panels are moved outwardly by the action of the cam 25 on the cam plates 23, the hooks 34 engage the inclined surfaces of the latches to cause the same to be tilted by reason of the compression spring 33 which resiliently resists such tilting action.

Each portion of the lowermost end member is provided with a pair of longitudinal strips 35 arranged to be positioned vertically and be moved relative to the portions of the end members. These strips 35 are provided with a plurality of vertical slots 36 and are secured to the side edges of the portions of the end member by means of suitable pins or screws 37 which extend through the slots 36 and into the portions of the end member 2. These strips 35 are so arranged that when the end member is in operative position to hold the section in extended position, they engage with the floor 8b to prevent draughts from being created from one side of the partition to the other, and to assist in preventing the transmission of noises between the rooms on the opposite sides of the partition.

As shown in Fig. 8, a suitable felt strip 38 may be secured to each portion of the lowermost end member 2 between the side strips 35 which, when the end member is in operative position as just described, will engage the floor 8b and also assist in preventing the transmission of noises between the rooms.

The channeled track 3 which supports the vertical column 1 and collapsible partition is preferably permanently attached to the ceiling 8a by means of a wooden strip 40, and to this strip 40 are mounted suitable moldings 41 which extend down the sides thereof, as shown in Fig. 9. Preferably secured to the inner sides of the opposite panels 10 are felt or other resilient strips 42 which, when the panels are in extended operative position, engage with the moldings 41 to

prevent the transmission of noises between the opposite sides of the partition.

It will be noted in Figs. 1 and 9, that additional moldings 43 are provided to extend from one side of the room to the other, parallel with the partition, and are arranged to extend or overlap with the upper edges of the panels 10 when the panels are in extended position, as viewed in Fig. 1, so that the panels cannot be collapsed when in the central portion of the room. As shown in Fig. 1, these side moldings 43 are broken away at one side of the room to provide a suitable space which permits the panels to be collapsed and moved toward each other only at that place. In other words, when it is desired to collapse the partition, the section adjacent and secured to the wall is first collapsed and the remaining sections are drawn toward the section being collapsed, and are progressively collapsed, so that the partitions can only be collapsed at one side of the room and not at any intermediate point. This is a very advantageous feature since it is not necessary to remove furniture and the like from adjacent the sides of the partition in the center of the room in order to permit the partition to be collapsed.

It may be desirable in some instances where both upper and lower foldable end members are used, to dispense with the side moldings 43, and in case this is desired, the latching means comprising the latches 29 and hooks 34 may be embodied in the upper end members 2, in addition to those used on the lower end members and in the same manner as described in connection with the lower end members.

In the case of the partition shown in Fig. 20, wherein only end members 2 are provided at the bottoms of the sections, it is preferable to provide a supporting bracket for the vertical columns of the four roller type, so as to prevent any possible turning movement of the vertical columns 1. In this construction the panels are latched against collapsing movement by means of spring pressed latch members 50 secured to their upper ends and arranged to be latched with latch-receiving members 50a secured to the molding members 41. These spring pressed latch members are preferably operated by means of a suitable pull cord 51 which extends downwardly to engage with a suitable roller 52 carried by one of the portions of the lowermost end member 2 and then upwardly and outwardly through an opening formed in the panel 10 of each pair of panels. By pulling on the pull cord 51 the latch is first released and then the continuity of the two portions of the end member is broken by reason of the roller member 52, which then permits each pair of panels to be swung outwardly into collapsed position. The latches 50 may be dispensed with, if desired, and the side moldings spaced from the track may be used to prevent inadvertent collapsing of the partition sections, or, if desired, the moldings may be omitted and the latches used as the sole means.

In many cases it is desired to have a fairly permanent partition which can be used only when it is desired to convert a number of small rooms into a large assembly room, such as in schools. In such cases the partition can be of fairly great width, thereby providing a relatively wide space between the panels 10 of the partition.

In installations of this character, the space between the panels of each section can be very successfully used for a wardrobe, coat closet or storage compartment. In Figs. 18 and 19, the

space between the panels 10 is shown as arranged for use as a coat closet. In such a construction the vertical columns 1 are provided with upwardly extending U-shaped members 60 at each side which are arranged to receive a horizontal coat hook bar 61. In order to convert the sections into a construction of this character, it is necessary to use a special hinge between each pair of panels 10 at each side of the partition. As shown in Fig. 19, these hinges may consist of an extending hinge plate 62 which extends beyond the edge of one of the panels, and a short hinge member 63 which is hinged to the other of the panels inwardly from the outer edge thereof, and a slidable hinge pin which is carried by the last mentioned panel. This offset arrangement of the hinge axis permits sufficient space for the hinge pin to be easily inserted through the hinge portions 62 and 63 when the coat hook bars 61 are removed and the panels 10 are in a collapsed position. It is obvious that where the partition is only occasionally collapsed, that the space between the side walls of the partition can be very easily used for a great many purposes, such as storage closets and coat closets, as just described.

In Figs. 13 and 14 the side walls of the partition are of a sound absorbing type. Each panel 10 is provided on its inner surface with a relatively hard, smooth-surfaced reflecting board 70 and with a layer or panel of felt or other loosely assembled fibres 71 spaced outwardly from the reflecting board 70 and with a third panel 72 comprised of loosely compressed fibres preferably of wood. The panels 71 and 72 of sound absorbing material are completely surrounded by suitable door styles forming a hollow, rectangular framework, as shown in the drawings.

In such a construction sound waves are materially damped and absorbed by the two outer panels 71 and 72, and the portion of the sound waves which do pass through the reflecting boards 70 are greatly damped and are reflected back and forth between the reflecting boards 70, so that sounds produced on one side of the partition, when it is in extended position, are practically inaudible on the other side of the partition.

In operation, when it is desired to move the collapsed partition to an extended position, the operator merely grasps the endmost section and pulls the partition across the room which causes the panels to be swung inwardly toward each other, each pair of panels being moved into contiguous relation. The operator does this until all of the sections are moved into an extended position. All the sections are thus moved to substantially their complete extended position; the operator actuates the pull cords 18 which causes the cantilever extension members 5 to engage with the portions of the end members 2 to lock the vertical columns 1 against collapsing movement. During this operation the links 19 drop into the corresponding grooves 21 formed in the floor 8b to prevent the partition from being moved sidewise. When it is desired to collapse the partition and convert the rooms at the opposite sides thereof into a single large assembly room, the operator starts with the section of the partition adjacent the wall to which one endmost partition is secured, and releases the pull cord 18 which in the case of the partition section shown in Figs. 5 and 6, causes the two endmost cantilever extensions 5 of the end members 2 to move toward each other, which causes the continuity of the half portions of the end members

to be broken, and the portions to be moved toward each other, thus causing the vertical columns 1 common to each pair of partitions to be moved toward each other. This collapsing movement occurs through the space provided by the moldings 43 adjacent the wall to which the partition is secured. The remainder of the partitions are then moved toward the collapsed partition until all of the partitions are collapsed, as shown in Figs. 1 and 16.

It is thus seen that the partition of the present invention is very rigidly reinforced through when in extended position without the use of objectionable floor tracks, and is so constructed as to be balanced and to be enclosed at the top and bottom while providing a substantial dead air space between the sides thereof.

It is to be particularly noted that the partitions when collapsed require a relatively small space for storage purposes, and furthermore that during the collapsing operation it is unnecessary to move any articles of furniture or the like away from the walls of the partition at any point beyond the break in the moldings 43, since the partition is only collapsed adjacent the one wall.

It is to be further noted that the partition of the present invention is very rigidly reinforced when in an extended position by the framework comprising the vertical columns and end members, and that the same can be very easily collapsed by merely actuating the end members in such a manner to break the continuity of the same.

It is to be further noted that the partition is very simple in construction and can be very easily operated, and that it does not require the use of any raised members or tracks on the floor of the room to hold the partitions against sidewise movement.

Although each partition section is shown in the drawings as having two sides composed of hinged panels, it is to be understood that a single series of panels may be employed, and, furthermore, that the invention is not limited to the use of two hingedly connected panels between each pair of columns, since a plurality of hingedly connected panels may be used to equal advantage. If desired, the columns may be guided by both upper and lower tracks, and in some cases they may be solely supported on a lower guide track instead of being suspended from an overhead track.

The partition is so constructed that it is only necessary to use one of the end members in the case of a relatively low ceilinged room, and that for rooms of greater height any desired number of end members may be used without affecting the ease of operation of the collapsible partition.

Furthermore, it is to be understood that the particular forms of apparatus shown and described, and the particular procedure set forth, are presented for purposes of explanation and illustration, and that various modifications of said apparatus and procedure can be made without departing from my invention as defined in the appended claims.

What I claim is:

1. In a foldable partition, a plurality of collapsible partition sections, each including a pair of vertical columns held against movement transversely of said partition, said columns being movable toward each other, a pair of panels for each side of said section normally lying in the same plane, each pair of panels being hingedly connected, one panel of each pair being hinged to one

of said columns and the other panel of each pair being hinged to the other of said columns, whereby when said pairs of panels are swung outwardly and the panels of each pair are swung toward each other said columns are moved toward each other to collapse said section, and means releasably engaged with said panels to normally prevent swinging movement thereof and to hold each pair in the same plane, and means to release said first mentioned means from engagement with said panels.

2. In a foldable partition, a plurality of collapsible partition sections, each including a pair of vertical columns held against movement transversely of said partition, said columns being movable toward each other, a pair of panels for each side of said section normally lying in the same plane, each pair of panels being hingedly connected, one panel of each pair being hinged to one of said columns and the other panel of each pair being hinged to the other of said columns, whereby when said pairs of panels are swung outwardly and the panels of each pair are swung toward each other, said columns are moved toward each other to collapse said section, and means for initially moving said pairs of panels outwardly away from each other to break the continuity of the panels of each pair and provide initial collapsing movement of said section.

3. In a foldable partition, a plurality of collapsible partition sections, each including a pair of vertical columns held against movement transversely of said partition, said columns being movable toward each other, a pair of panels for each side of said section normally lying in the same plane, each pair of panels being hingedly connected, one panel of each pair being hinged to one of said columns and the other panel of each pair being hinged to the other of said columns, whereby when said pairs of panels are swung outwardly and the panels of each pair are swung toward each other said columns are moved toward each other to collapse said section, and means releasably engaged with said panels to normally prevent swinging movement thereof and to hold each pair in the same plane, and means to release said first mentioned means from engagement with said panels, and move said pairs of panels outwardly away from each other to break the continuity of the panels of each pair and provide initial collapsing movement of said section.

4. In a foldable partition, an overhead track secured to the ceiling of the room containing said partition, and a plurality of partition sections, each section including a pair of vertical columns freely suspended from said track for sliding movement relative to said track and relative to each other, a pair of panels for each side of said section normally lying in the same plane, each pair of panels being hingedly connected together, one panel of each section being hinged to one of said columns and the other panel being hinged to the other column, whereby when said panels of each pair are swung toward each other away from the panels of the opposite pair said columns are moved toward each other to collapse said section, and means on said columns engageable with the floor of said room to hold said section against transverse movement when said section is in normal extended position, said means being disengageable from said floor at the initial collapsing movement of said section.

5. In a foldable partition, a plurality of collapsible partition sections, each including a pair of

vertical columns held against movement transversely of said partition and being movable toward each other, a foldable member extending between said columns to normally hold said columns in extended spaced relation, a pair of hingedly connected panels mounted at each side of said section, one panel of each pair being hinged to one column and the other panel of each pair being hinged to the other of said columns, means for folding said member whereby said columns may move toward each other and said panels of each pair may swing toward each other to collapse said section, and latch means carried by said foldable member releasably engageable with a panel of each pair to hold said panels against movement when said section is in extended non-collapsed position.

6. In a foldable partition, a plurality of collapsible partition sections, each including a pair of vertical columns held against movement transversely of said partition and being movable toward each other, a foldable member extending between said columns to normally hold said columns in extended spaced relation, a pair of hingedly connected panels mounted at each side of said section, one panel of each pair being hinged to one column and the other panel of each pair being hinged to the other of said columns, means for folding said member whereby said columns may move toward each other and said panels of each pair may swing toward each other to collapse said section, and means carried by said foldable member to impart initial swinging movement to said pairs of panels.

7. In a foldable partition, a plurality of collapsible partition sections, each including a pair of vertical columns held against movement transversely of said partition and being movable toward each other, a foldable member extending between said columns to normally hold said columns in extended spaced relation, a pair of hingedly connected panels mounted at each side of said section, one panel of each pair being hinged to one column and the other panel of each pair being hinged to the other of said columns, means for folding said member whereby said columns may move toward each other and said panels of each pair may swing toward each other to collapse said section, means releasably engaged with a panel of each pair to normally prevent swinging movement of said panels, and means to release said first mentioned means and to impart initial swinging movement to said pairs of panels.

8. A foldable partition comprising a fixed overhead track, a pair of side members extending longitudinally of said track, each being spaced transversely of said track, and a plurality of collapsible sections, each section including a pair of vertical columns suspended from and slidably mounted on said track, and a pair of hingedly connected panels hingedly mounted on each side of said columns, said panels extending between said side members and said track, said side members being of lesser longitudinal extent to provide spaces, whereby said panels may be swung outwardly therethrough and said columns moved toward each other to progressively collapse said sections.

9. A foldable partition extendible between the opposite walls and between the ceiling and floor of a room, said floor having regularly spaced recesses, comprising a fixed overhead guide track secured to said ceiling, a plurality of vertical columns mounted on said track for movement

toward each other, means carried by the lower ends of said columns and being engageable with said floor recesses to hold said lower ends against transverse movement when said partition is in extended position, a pair of outwardly swingable panels hinged to each column, the panels of one column being hinged to the panels of the next adjacent columns, whereby when said columns are moved toward each other the panels extending between adjacent columns swing toward each other and collapse said partition.

10. In a foldable partition, a plurality of collapsible partition sections, each including a pair of vertical columns held against movement transversely of said partition and being movable toward each other, a foldable member extending between said columns to normally hold said columns in extended spaced relation, a pair of hingedly connected panels mounted at each side of said section, one panel of each pair being hinged to one column and the other panel of each pair being hinged to the other of said columns, and means for folding said member whereby said columns may move toward each other and said panels of each pair may swing toward each other to collapse said section, said foldable member having a floating means thereon arranged when said member is in normal extended position to close the space between said member and the floor of the room in which said partition is located.

11. A foldable partition comprising a plurality of vertical columns, a horizontal track freely supporting said columns for sliding movement toward and relative to each other, foldable end frame members extending between said columns, spaced side walls for the opposite sides of said columns each comprising pairs of panels hinged to said columns, the panels of one column being hinged to the panels of the next adjacent columns, and means for imparting initial folding movement to said end frame members, whereby said panels of each wall may swing toward each other outwardly away from said partition and said columns moved toward each other to collapse said partition, the hinged connection between the panels of one column and the panels of the next adjacent columns being removable whereby said partition may be extended and the space between said collapsible side walls used for storage purposes.

12. A foldable partition comprising a plurality of vertical columns movable toward each other, extensible means extending between said columns for normally holding said columns in spaced relation and against movement toward each other, spaced side walls for the opposite sides of said columns, each side wall comprising pairs of panels hinged to said columns, the panels of one column also being hingedly connected to the panels of the next adjacent columns, the hinged connection of certain of said panels being removable whereby said partition may be extended and the space between said side walls used for storage purposes.

13. A foldable partition comprising a plurality of vertical columns movable toward each other, a plurality of hingedly connected panels extending between each pair of columns, one of said panels being hinged to one column and another of said panels being hinged to the next adjacent column, whereby said panels may swing toward each other during movement of the columns toward each other to collapse said partition, means for holding said columns in spaced position, and means carried by said last mentioned means to

normally prevent swinging movement of said panels, said last mentioned means permitting swinging movement of said panels only when said columns are moved toward each other.

5 14. A foldable partition comprising a plurality of vertical columns movable toward each other, a plurality of hingedly connected panels extending between each pair of columns, one of said panels being hinged to one column
10 and another of said panels being hinged to the next adjacent column, whereby said panels may swing toward each other during movement of the columns toward each other to collapse said partition, folding means extending between said
15 columns to hold said columns in spaced position with said panels in normal unfolded position, and means carried by said folding means to impart initial swinging movement of said panels upon initial movement of said columns toward each
20 other.

15 15. A foldable partition comprising a plurality of vertical columns movable toward each other, a plurality of hingedly connected panels extending between each pair of columns, one of said
25 panels being hinged to one column and another of said panels being hinged to the next adjacent column, whereby said panels may swing toward each other during movement of the columns toward each other to collapse said partition, means
30 releasably engageable with certain of said panels to normally prevent swinging movement of said panels, and means to release said first mentioned means and to impart initial swinging movement to said panels.

35 16. A foldable partition extendible between the opposite walls and between the ceiling and floor of a room, said floor having spaced recesses, comprising a fixed overhead guide track secured to said ceiling, a plurality of vertical columns
40 mounted on said track for movement toward each other, a pair of hingedly connected panels extending between each pair of columns, one of said panels being connected to one column and the other panel being connected to the other
45 column, whereby when said columns are moved toward each other the panels extending between adjacent columns swing toward each other to collapse said partition, and means at the lower
50 portion of said partition engageable and disengageable with the floor recesses during extend-

ing and collapsing movements of said partition whereby to hold said partition against transverse movement when said partition is in extended position.

17. A foldable partition comprising a plurality 5 of vertical columns movable toward each other, a plurality of hinge plates carried by each of said columns, and a pair of panels hingedly connected together and extendible between each pair of columns, one panel of one pair being hinged to
10 the hinge plates of one column and one panel of the next adjacent pair of panels being hinged coaxially with the said one panel to said hinge plates of said last mentioned column, whereby said
15 panels have a common pivotal axis and whereby said panels in extended position may substantially abut each other to conceal their supporting column and to provide a substantially continuous surface.

18. A foldable partition comprising a plurality 20 of panels, a series of hinges hingedly connecting each panel with the next adjacent panel, one series of hinges being operable in one direction and the next adjacent series of hinges being operable in the opposite direction, an overhead track,
25 means suspended from said track to support said partition, connections between said means and the alternate series of hinges whereby the panels of each pair of panels may be swung toward each other about their adjacent hinged connections,
30 and means at the lower portion of said partition operable when said panels are in extended position to hold said partition against transverse movement.

19. A foldable partition comprising an overhead track, a plurality of columns suspended from
35 said track and being movable toward and away from each other, hinge plates secured to each column and a pair of panels hinged to the hinge plates of each column whereby said panels have
40 a common pivotal axis and may substantially abut each other when extended to conceal their supporting column, each of said panels also being hingedly connected to a panel of the next adjacent column whereby when said columns are
45 moved toward each other the panels of each pair swing about their common pivotal axis toward each other to collapse said partition.

HERMAN W. MAURER. 50