This invention relates to cigarette cases of the type having a rectangularly shaped and dished plate forming one closure side of the case and a pair of flap sections or covers, which are likewise hinged, hingedly connected to parallel edges of the plate and forming the closure for the other side of the case. The aspect ratio of the plate and the shapes of the pair of flap covers or sections are usually made so that the case strikingly resembles a mailing envelope. One of the objects of this invention is to provide a simple and inexpensive catch or fastening arrangement for the two flap covers which, in addition, will be sturdy and made so that the case will not be put out of order by the rather abusive and careless treatment devices of this character usually received. An allied object is to provide a catch arrangement which would dispense with the need of a separate pin or other extra part, and in which one of the catch elements is an aperture and the other cooperative element is punched out of the metal of the flap cover; not only is this a less expensive catch means but the possibility of the pin becoming loose and inoperative is obviated. It is a further object of this invention to devise a catch or fastener that will facilitate and make easier in operation, the one-hand opening and closing of the case, which is a desirable feature of this type of cigarette case. Another object of the invention is to provide a simple retainer for holding the cigarettes in place within the case, and to provide such a retainer and arrangement that when the case is opened, the end portions of the cigarettes will be exposed for ready and facile abstraction from the case. A still further object of the invention is to provide a simple arrangement for the retainer enabling it to be snapped into position retaining the cigarettes firmly in place and out of retaining position when it is desired to reload the case with cigarettes.

While the above statement of some of the objects of the invention and the ensuing description and illustration refer to a cigarette case, it is evident, and so intended, that the invention may apply equally well to any other case, container or compact, and irrespective of the particular article or articles contained therein.

For the attainment of these and such other objects as may appear hereinafter, I have shown an embodiment of my invention on the accompanying drawing, wherein:

Fig. 1 is a rear view of the case with the flap sections in open extended position;

Fig. 2 is a rear view of the case with the flap sections in open extended position;

Fig. 3 is an elevational view of a portion of the case, showing particularly the retainer plate in loading position.

Fig. 4a is an enlarged detail, in section, of the catch mechanism, in the position of the flaps as they are about to be snapped close; Fig. 4b shows the flaps in closed or locking position; Fig. 4c shows the flaps in position as the case is being opened;

Fig. 5 is an enlarged detail, in plan, of the protuberant element of the catch arrangement; and

Fig. 6 is a front view of the protuberance shown in Fig. 5.

The rectangularly shaped and dished plate constitutes one of the closing sides (more particularly, the front) of the case. Along one (preferably the larger, as shown) edge of the front plate, there is articulated, as by a spring-pintle hinge, a minor flap cover; to the parallel edge of the plate is articulated by a similar spring-pintle hinge, a major flap. In the usual manner in which the case would be held and operated, the minor flap would be the upper one, as shown in Fig. 1. Also, in the closing position of the two flaps, the minor flap would overlie the major flap as likewise appears in Fig. 1; so that the minor and major flaps may be termed, respectively, "upper" and "lower" in both the sense of positional relation and also in the sense of overlying relation.

The upper or minor flap is considerably smaller than flap and also differs therefrom in outline, as will be at once apparent from Fig. 2. For one thing, flap has a V-shaped cut-out or re-entering angle as shown, the intersecting point of which, like the tip of flap, is centrally positioned. The reasons for this particular formation of the flaps will be presently set forth.

The dimensions of the two flaps are such that there is a slight overlapping, as shown in Fig. 1, with the smaller or minor flap in overlying relation to simulate the appearance of an envelope.

The front plate and the pair of rear flaps are so shaped that sufficient clearance is provided within the case when the plate and flap sections are brought into closing relation, for holding cigarettes.

Within the case provide a retaining member...
The protuberance is punched out to provide side walls or braces 11, see 2, 3, 4, and 5, which side braces are undercut (12) to form the said leading edge 14 into a projecting lip.

The parts, namely, upper flap 3 and lower flap 5, are shown in Fig. 4a in their respective and relative positions as the case is being closed. It will be observed that the upper flap 3 is pressed downwardly the lower flap 5 is caused, by the transmission of pressure at point A, to bow slightly. This causes a movement of the rest point A of the upper flap relative to the top surface of the protuberance, in a rightward direction (as viewed in Fig. 4a) until point A, which is the leading edge of aperture 13 as already mentioned, falls off the top of the protuberance and snaps over the leading edge of lip 14 as shown in Fig. 4b. It should be noted that the flaps are held in locked position by reason of both the bowing or springing of the lower flap (as mentioned) and the urgency of the two hinge springs 25, in opening the case, pressure is exerted upon the lower flap 5 which becomes bowed slightly under the direct pressure of the finger (or thumb) and causes a movement of the protuberance downwardly in aperture 13 of the upper flap. Inasmuch as the undercutting or recess 12 is slight and the overhanging lip 14 is very thin, a small movement (or pressure upon the lower flap) suffices to remove the protuberance from under said aperture to the lower edge of the upper flap (see Fig. 4c). Continued pressure on the lower flap removes its protuberance entirely from the abutting relation of Fig. 4c, and frees the upper flap which thereat flies open under the urgency of hinge spring 2.

Cigarette cases are subjected to rather rough and careless treatment and, in order that a fastening arrangement may be made in a manner to withstand rough treatment and abuse. Unless the catch mechanism is properly devised, it will soon go out of order. Consider, for example, the protuberance 15, Fig. 4a; it must withstand considerable pressure at the point A as pressure is placed upon the upper flap in the closing operation; which pressure, as already explained, is transmitted by the protuberance 15 to the lower flap 5 of which the protuberance is an integral part. Unless protuberance 15 is properly made, this exertion of pressure at point A will inevitably and soon squash the protuberance by pushing it down, back into the plate from which it had been punched. I have been able to devise and make a protuberance which will withstand this rather severe punishment. A three-sided or U-shaped slit a, b, c, Fig. 5, is made and the tongue of the slit is punched and formed into the protuberance 15 as shown, Figs. 5, 6, and 4a. The said walls or braces 11 of the protuberance, in addition to serving as abutments between their recessed points 12, Fig. 4a, also serve to support and strengthen the arch or bump of the protuberance.

In a device of the class described, the combination of a rectangular dished plate, major and minor dished flaps connected to parallel edges of the said plate by spring hinges, the minor flap being centrally provided with an aperture spaced...
from the distal edge of the flap to provide a
distal portion and the major flap being centrally
provided near its distal edge with a protuber-
ance punched out of the metal of the major flap
with brace walls at each side, the arch of the
protuberance facing the distal edge of the major
flap with the leading edges of the protuberance
including its said side brace walls faced away
from the said distal edge of the major flap, the
said side braces of the protuberance being pro-
vided with a slight recess to form the said lead-
ing edge of the protuberance into a slightly pro-
jecting lip, the said flaps overlapping each other
with the minor flap overlying the major flap,
the said aperture and said protuberance being
so distanced from the hinged connections of the
respective flaps to the said plate that as pressure
is applied to the minor flap to turn it in a clock-
wise direction relative to its hinge connection, the
said distal portion of the minor flap rests upon
the said arch of the protuberance to turn the
major flap in a counterclockwise direction rela-
tive to its hinge connection and against the
spring thereof, the two flaps turning relatively to
each other until the said distal portion of the said
flap slips off the said protuberance arch of the
major flap and snaps under the said projecting
lip of the protuberance.

EMANUEL HAMMERLING.