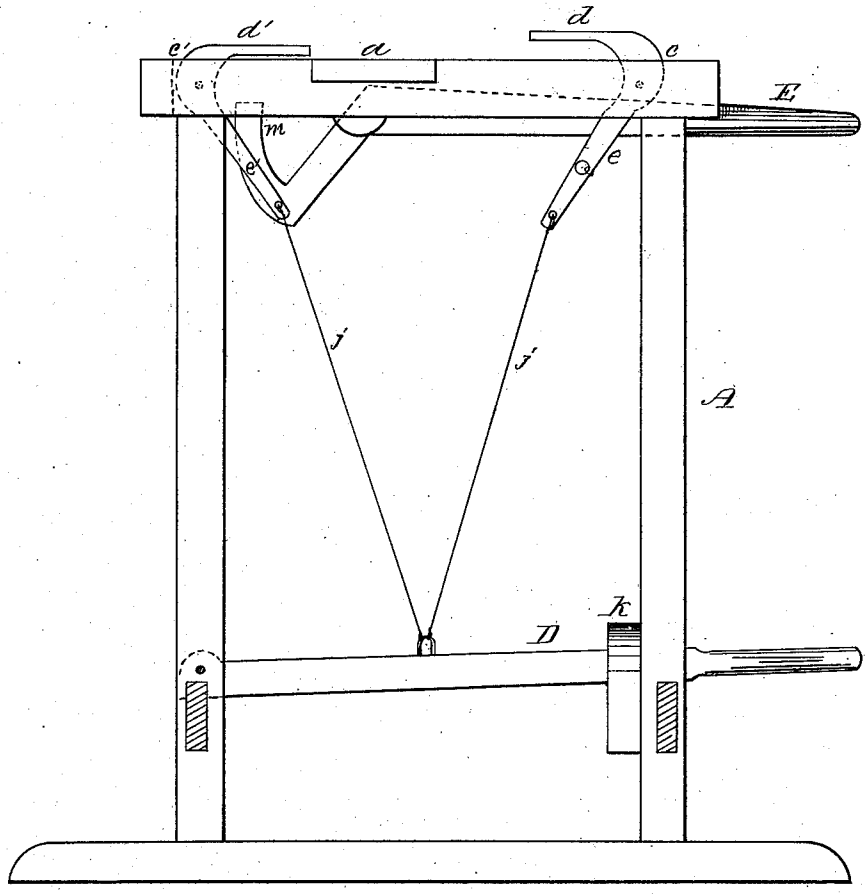
2 Sheets--Sheet 1.

J. G. MEEKER.

Machine for Stretching Hat-Bodies.

No. 168,272. Patented Sept. 28, 1875.

Fig. 1



WITNESSES:

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2 Sheets--Sheet 2.

J. G. MEEKER.

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Fig. 2.

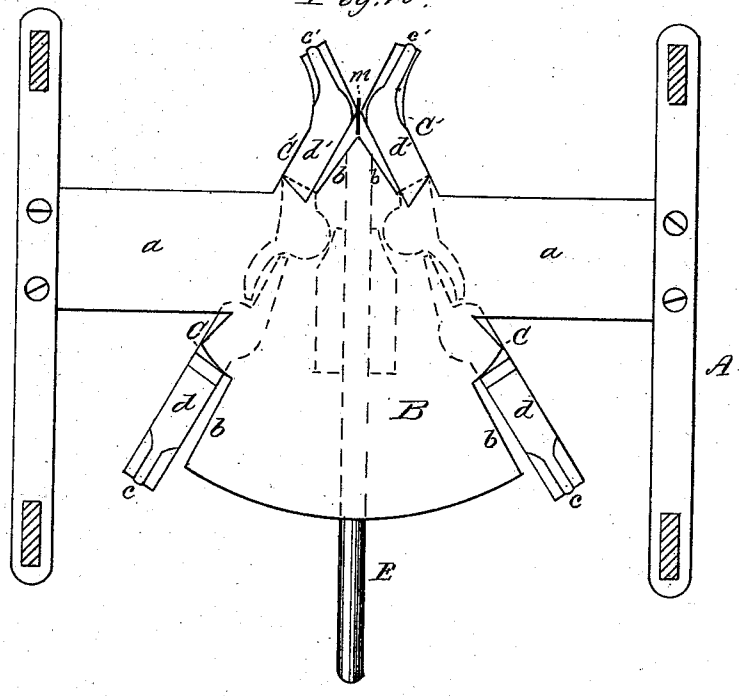
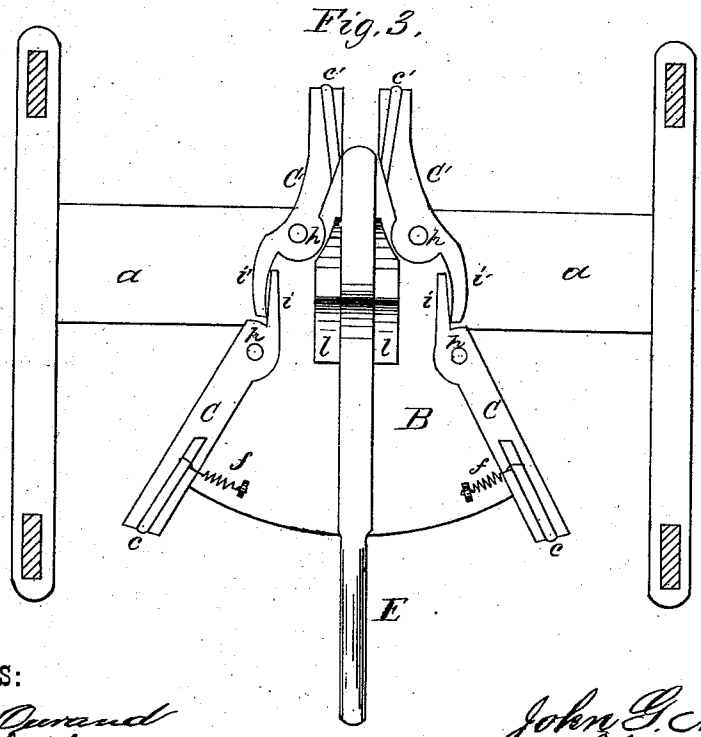


Fig. 3.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JOHN G. MEEKER, OF DANBURY, CONNECTICUT, ASSIGNOR OF ONE-HALF HIS RIGHT TO D. W. MEEKER, OF SAME PLACE.

IMPROVEMENT IN MACHINES FOR STRETCHING HAT-BODIES.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. **168,272**, dated September 28, 1875; application filed July 21, 1875.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, JOHN G. MEEKER, of Danbury, in the county of Fairfield and State of Connecticut, have invented a new and valuable Improvement in Machines for Stretching Hat-Bodies; and I do hereby declare that the following is a full, clear, and exact description of the construction and operation of the same, reference being had to the annexed drawings, making a part of this specification, and to the letters and figures of reference marked thereon.

Figure 1 of the drawing is a representation of a side elevation of my improved machine. Fig. 2 is a top-plan view of the same. Fig. 3 is a plan view, showing the under side of the table and levers.

This invention has relation to machines for stretching hat-bodies; and consists in pivoted lever-arms of peculiar construction, operated by a wedge-shaped lever, two of the lever-arms being so arranged with relation to the others as to communicate motion thereto in the process of stretching the hat-body.

My invention also consists in providing such lever-arms with pivoted clamps, which bite and hold the hat-body while being stretched, and operated by means of a hand or foot lever, as will be hereinafter more fully described.

In the drawings, A represents the frame of the machine, upon the top of which is secured a cross-piece, *a*, with a table, B, of the form nearly corresponding to that of the hat-body when folded, and is cut away, as shown at *b*, to form seats for the lever-arms C C′, which are slotted at their outer ends to receive pivoted clamps *c c′*. These clamps are provided with face-plates *d d′* and curved arms *e e′*, and are kept raised from off the table, when not in use, by suitable springs *f*. The arms C C′ act as levers, and are pivoted at *h* to the under side of the table, such levers having fingers *i i′*, which bear upon one side of the finger of the opposite lever, as shown in Fig. 3 of the drawings, by which motion is communicated from one lever to another. The face-plates *d d′* of the clamps are brought down and held firmly upon the hat-body by chains, wire rods, or other suitable connections *j*, secured to the ends of the curved arms *e e′*, and to the center of a hand or foot lever, D, the outer end of said lever being hinged to one of the cross-braces of the frame A, and held in its position, when pressed down, by the catch *k*. A curved lever, E, is pivoted to brackets *l* upon the under side of the table B, and has a wedge-shaped arm, *m*, which is brought between the arms C′, forcing them outward. The fingers *i′*, coming in contact with fingers *i* of the levers, also force the arms C and clamps *c* in the same direction.

It will be seen that the hat-body, before being placed upon the table, is folded in shape similar to a cone, and by the relative position of the clamps the hat-body will be stretched most at the rear end of the table, the two clamps *c c* stretching the hat at the brim, while the clamps *c′ c′* stretch it at the tip.

The clamps, if desired, may be adjustable to the different sizes of hats by simply lengthening or shortening the distance between the pivots, or by arranging the clamps to move on a slide or bar.

Having now fully described the construction and operation of my invention, what I claim as new, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

1. The pivoted lever-arms C C′, with fingers *i i′*, in combination with the wedge-shaped lever E, arranged to operate substantially as specified.

2. The pivoted lever-arms C C′, provided with fingers *i i′*, carrying the pivoted clamps *c c′*, operated by the intermediate connections *j j*, and lever D, in combination with the wedge-shaped lever E, substantially as and for the purpose set forth.

In testimony that I claim the above I have hereunto subscribed my name in the presence of two witnesses.

JOHN G. MEEKER.

Witnesses:

WILLIAM BURKE,

LYMAN PLATT.