

No. 706,891.

Patented Aug. 12, 1902.

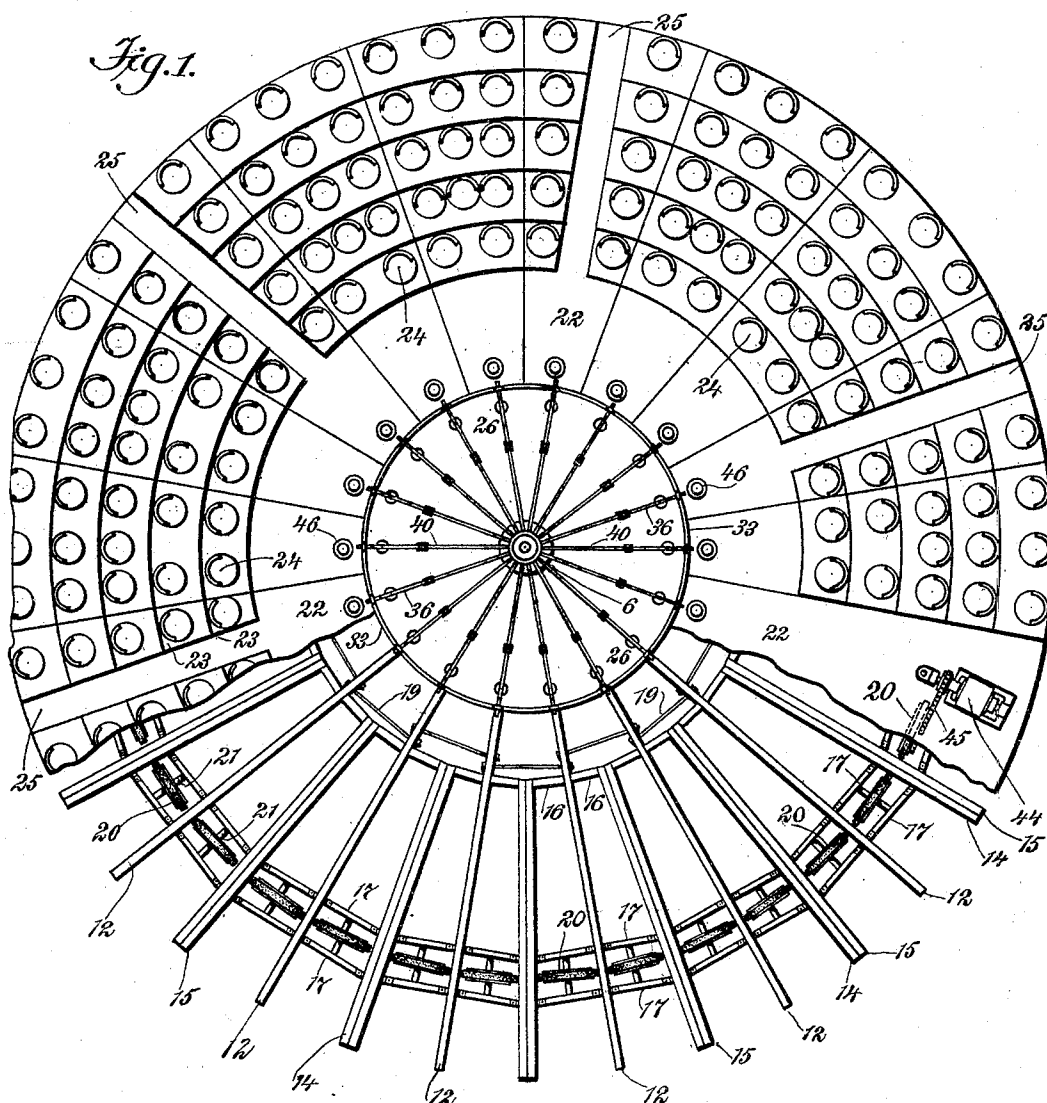
C. F. BRAMHALL.

PORTABLE REVOLVING THEATER.

(Application filed Jan. 7, 1902.)

(No Model.)

3 Sheets—Sheet 1.



WITNESSES:

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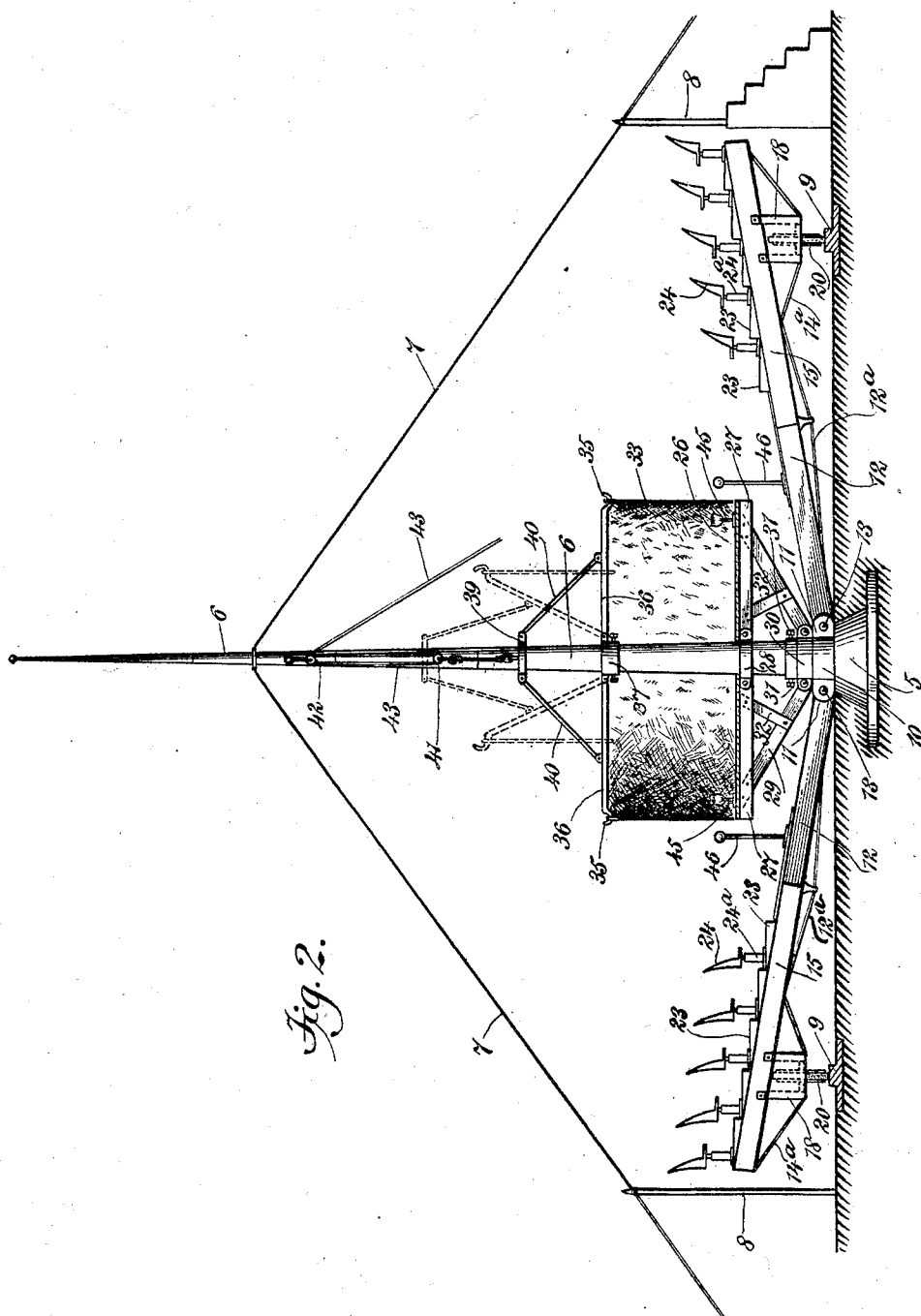


Fig. 2.

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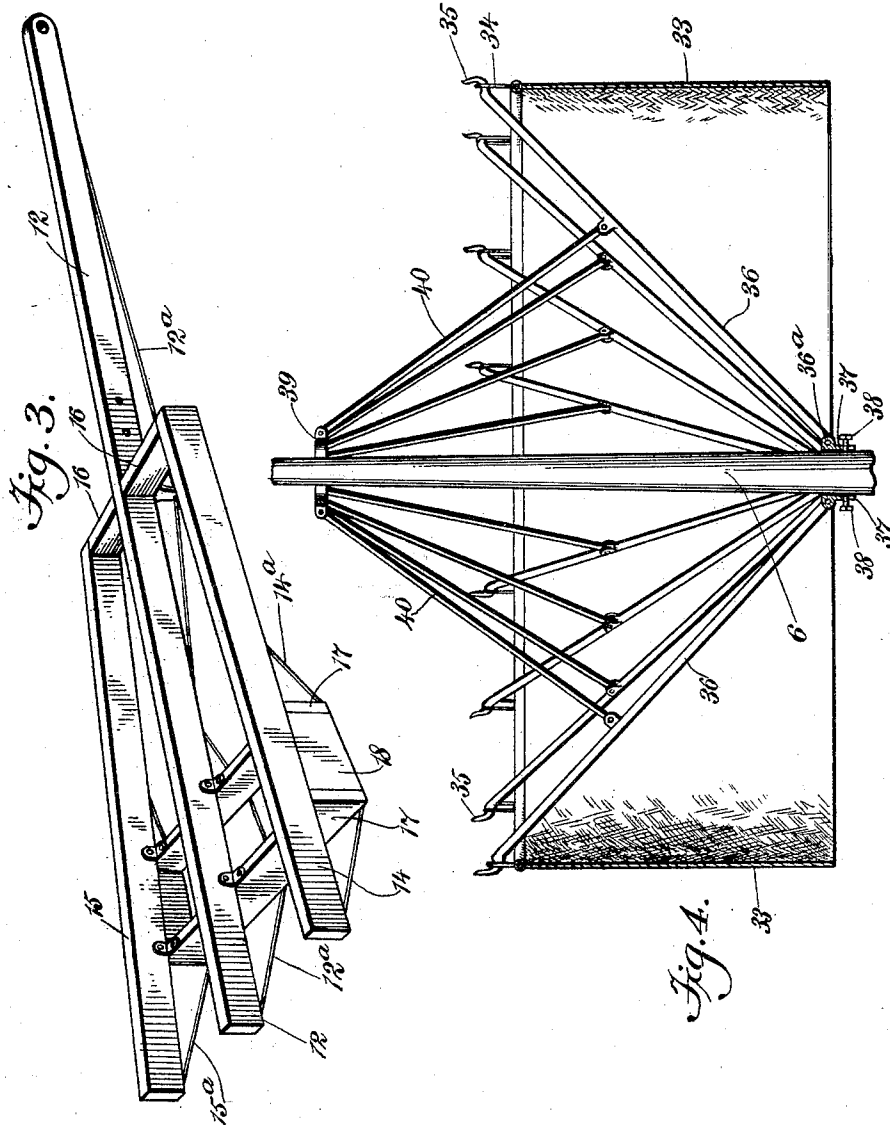
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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

CHARLES FRANKLIN BRAMHALL, OF KINGMAN, KANSAS.

PORTABLE REVOLVING THEATER.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 706,891, dated August 12, 1902.

Application filed January 7, 1902. Serial No. 88,754. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, CHARLES FRANKLIN BRAMHALL, a citizen of the United States, and a resident of Kingman, in the county of Kingman and State of Kansas, have invented a new and Improved Portable Revolving Theater, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description.

My invention relates to improvements in a portable revolving theater in which are embodied a central stationary stage and a circular revoluble auditorium, whereby a novel and picturesque place of amusement is provided in which the audience is slowly carried around the stage, so as to obtain a full and complete view of all proceedings which may be enacted in continuous performances on the stage, thus also serving to accommodate a large audience in a compact space or inclosure.

Further objects of the invention are to provide an improved curtain and means for easily and quickly operating the same, to construct the entire apparatus so that it may be conveniently taken apart for transportation or storage, to simplify the construction, and to secure great strength and stability in the various parts of the apparatus.

With these ends in view the invention consists in the combination, construction, and arrangement of parts, which will be hereinafter fully described, and defined in the claims.

Reference is to be had to the accompanying drawings, forming a part of this specification, in which similar characters of reference indicate corresponding parts in all the views.

Figure 1 is a plan view of my improved revolving theater with a part of the platform broken away to show the underneath supporting means. Fig. 2 is a vertical sectional elevation taken transversely through the middle part of the apparatus. Fig. 3 is a detail perspective view of one of the long radial arms or joists and the shorter joists associated therewith in order to properly support one of the wheeled frames or boxings. Fig. 4 is an enlarged sectional elevation through the curtain and the means for supporting and operating the same.

In the embodiment of the invention shown by the accompanying drawings I employ a

foot-block 5, which is represented by Fig. 2 as being buried in the ground, so as to lie flush with the surface thereof; but this is not essential, because the foot-block may be fixed in position by any suitable means. From this foot-block extends a vertical king-pole or mast 6 in hollow form and in suitable sections, which are united or interlocked together in any suitable way. This king-post or mast is fastened to the foot-block in any preferred way, and it extends upwardly above the stage and the auditorium for a suitable distance, so that it may also extend centrally through the roof, canopy, or tent 7, which serves to house or inclose the auditorium, the stage, and the other parts of the apparatus. This roof or canopy may be constructed of any suitable material—such, for example, as canvas—so as to resemble an ordinary tent, and in this event the lower portion of the tent-like canopy may be supported upon and by the series of poles 8, as shown more clearly by Fig. 2. Of course the king-pole or mast may extend above the tent, and to the upper protruding end thereof may be attached the guy ropes or cables adapted to strongly hold the king-post in place.

9 designates an annular track which is secured firmly to the ground or to the floor and is arranged in a position outside of the foot-block 5. Said annular track is concentric with the foot-block, and it may be constructed of any suitable material and in any desired way—as, for example, the track may be made of hard wood and in segmental sections, which may be united solidly together.

10 designates a collar, which is preferably of metal and is provided with a plurality of radial lugs or ears 11, said collar being loosely fitted on the lower extremity of the king-post or mast 6 and resting upon the foot-block 5, whereby the collar is free to rotate on the king-post or mast. To the lugs or ears 11 of this collar are connected the inner ends of the long radial arms or joists 12, such connection being preferably effected by means of the bolts 13 or their equivalents. (See Fig. 2.) Any desired number of these radial arms or joists 12 may be employed; but I prefer to employ a large number of said arms and to make them extend from the revoluble collar 10 to the outer surrounding wall of the tent

or to the annular series of posts 8. With each long arm or joist 12 is associated a pair of shorter arms or joists 14 15, the same being disposed on opposite sides of the long arms and occupying a slightly-converging relation thereto, thus also making the plurality of short arms 14 15 occupy positions radial to the king-post and the revoluble collar. Each pair of short arms 14 15 for each long arm or joist 12 is joined to said long arm by the transverse braces 16. Each long arm 12 and its pair of short arms 14 15 support the transverse frame which is formed by the side pieces 17 and the end pieces 18, said side pieces extending transversely across and beneath the series of three arms. The entire boxing formed by the pieces 17 18 is secured solidly and firmly to the arms 12, 14, and 15 in any suitable way, and these boxings for the series of long arms 12 are arranged endwise one to the other in practically annular form beneath the rotary platform, substantially as shown by Fig. 1. This endwise or abutting relation of the series of boxings enables them to be bolted securely and detachably together. The long arms 12, forming the main supports for the revoluble platform, are also separably united together by the stay-rods 19. (See Fig. 1.) By reference to said Fig. 1 it will be noted that the short side arms 14 15 of each long arm 12 is disposed in abutting or lapping relation to the corresponding bars of adjacent long arms 12, and these short bars may thus be secured firmly together—as, for example, by suitable through-bolts. The skeleton framework thus far described provides a rigid support for the platform adapted to carry the seats forming a rotary auditorium, and this framework may have its parts disconnected or separated to facilitate transportation of the apparatus or storage of the parts.

The radial arms forming the framework are inclined upwardly and outwardly, as shown more clearly by Fig. 2, thus bringing the outer ends of the arms on a plane above the stationary stage, which will be hereinafter described, and said outer ends of the arms are supported by means of the carrying-wheels 20. Said wheels have axles 21, supported in the side pieces 17 of the boxings. I prefer to employ two carrying-wheels in each boxing, which is attached to a radial section of the framework formed by one long arm 12 and a pair of shorter arms 14 15, and these wheels are arranged one after the other in tandem fashion. The wheels may be of any suitable construction; but I prefer to employ metallic wheels having channel-rims adapted to receive elastic cushioned tires, whereby the revolving platform may be carried with an easy motion, substantially free from jar and vibration. Of course the tandem arrangement of the wheels allows them to travel on the annular track 9, and the employment of the large number of wheels provides a secure and stable support for the rotary platform.

22 designates a platform which is laid and secured upon the series of radial arms forming the skeleton framework. The inner part of this platform may be slightly inclined; but the platform has a series of steps or rises at 23, said steps receiving the rows of seats, (indicated at 24,) said rows of seats being separated by the intervening aisles 25. (See Figs. 1 and 2.) The seats 24 may be of any usual or preferred construction; but, as shown by Fig. 2, each seat may have a tubular standard 24^a, adapted to be firmly fastened to a step on the platform, said seat being swiveled or rotatably mounted on said tubular standard. The platform is substantially circular in plan view, and the tiers of seats are disposed in circular order. Of course the rotary auditorium may be constructed of any desired size and capacity.

In order to strengthen the separable sections of the framework, I prefer to equip each long arm 12 with a truss-rod 12^a and to furnish similar truss-rods 14^a 15^a for the short arms 14 15, respectively. (See Fig. 3.)

26 designates the stationary stage, which is of circular form and is arranged in a central position within the revoluble auditorium. This stage is laid upon and supported by a framework comprising a series of radial horizontal joists 27, the inner ends of which are secured to a collar 28, fitted on the king-post or mast 6 at a suitable height above the revoluble collar 10. These horizontal stage-joists are braced by the inclined girders 29, that are fastened at the lower inner ends to a collar 30, which is adapted to rest upon the revoluble collar 10 and which is made fast to the collar or king-post by the set-screws 31 or their equivalents. (See Fig. 2.) The inclined braces 29 and the stage-joists 27 are connected and braced by the intermediate struts 32, whereby a simple and very strong framework is provided for supporting the stationary stage on the mast or king-post and in an elevated position with relation to the rotary auditorium.

33 designates a curtain, which may be made of any suitable material and which is preferably of circular form, the diameter of said curtain corresponding to that of the stationary elevated stage 26. This curtain is preferably made of pliable material, and to the upper edge of said curtain may be secured a series of loops 34, with which are engaged the hook-shaped outer ends 35 of the series of radial supporting-arms 36. These arms extend inwardly to a collar 37, which is fitted on the mast or king-post 6 and is made fast by the set-screws 38 to said mast or post at a suitable point above the stage. The supporting-arms 36 are pivoted at 36^a to the collar, and these arms are adapted to fold in an upward direction inwardly toward the mast to the position shown in dotted lines by Fig. 2 and in full lines by Fig. 4, whereby the curtain may be raised a suitable distance above the stage in order to expose the performance

which may be enacted thereon. Any suitable means may be adopted for simultaneously raising or lowering the curtain-supporting arms 36; but, as shown by Figs. 2 and 4, I employ a movable collar 39, a series of rods 40, and a tackle mechanism for raising and lowering said collar 39. The movable collar loosely embraces the mast or king-post, and it is placed at a suitable distance above the fixed collar 37. To this movable collar are pivoted the upper ends of the series of rods 40, the lower end of each rod being pivoted to a supporting-arm 36 at a point intermediate to the length of the latter. The tackle shown by Fig. 2 has a pulley-block 41, which is connected with the collar 39, another pulley-block 42, secured to the mast or king-post at a point above the curtain mechanism, and an adjusting-cable 43, which is reeved through the pulley-blocks in a manner to raise and lower said collar 39, whereby the elevation of the collar raises the arms 40 and the supporting-arms 36 in order to elevate the curtain.

Any desired mechanism may be employed for propelling the revoluble auditorium—as, for example, an electric motor, a gas-engine, or other form of motive-power mechanism. As shown by Fig. 1, the motor is indicated at 44, and from the shaft thereof is driven a chain 45, having suitable connection with one of the wheels 20; but of course this means for driving the apparatus may be modified within the skill of the constructor.

As shown by Fig. 2, the stage may be lighted by the footlights 45, and around the stage may be erected posts 46, which are supported in the auditorium and are adapted to contain colored lights. This is only one expedient which may be adopted for the illumination of the theater, and of course the interior may be illuminated electrically, by gas, or by any other suitable agent.

The circular platform is divided on radial lines into a plurality of tapering sections, the same being secured to the separable members of the skeleton frame by bolts or any other suitable fasteners, thus facilitating the attachment of the platform-sections to the frame-sections and the separation of the several parts of the apparatus.

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

1. In a portable theater, a revoluble framework comprising outwardly and upwardly inclined members, each made up of the side and central bars united by cross-pieces, adjacent members of said framework having the side bars thereof separably fastened together, and each frame member equipped with a carrying-wheel which is disposed between and jour-

naled in the cross-pieces thereof, and a stepped platform on the framework, combined with a central elevated stage below which are carried the inner ends of the central bars of said frame members, a central sleeve having said central bars of the frame members attached thereto, and means for rotating the framework and the platform.

2. A portable theater, comprising a vertical mast or post, a revoluble auditorium formed by upwardly-inclined framework sections or members provided with carrying-wheels near their outer ends, a sleeve or collar loosely fitted on said mast and having attached thereto the inner ends of the converging frame members or sections, a stationary stage directly attached to said mast above said sleeve or collar, an annular curtain supported on said mast above the stage, and means for raising the curtain to expose the stage, or for lowering the curtain to inclose the stage.

3. A portable theater, comprising a mast, a revoluble auditorium having a collar loosely mounted on said mast which is adapted to serve as the axis of rotation of said auditorium, a stage supported directly by said mast in an elevated position above the inner part of the auditorium, an annular curtain adapted to inclose said stage, and curtain-operating mechanism supported on the mast and adapted to raise and lower said curtain with relation to the stage.

4. A portable theater, comprising a central mast, a stage supported in a stationary position thereon, a circular auditorium revoluble around the stage and disposed in concentric relation to the mast and the stage, an annular curtain arranged to inclose the stage, supporting-arms pivoted on the mast above the stage and connected to said curtain, an adjustable collar guided on the mast and linked to the curtain-arms, and means for raising and lowering said adjustable collar.

5. A portable theater, comprising a mast, an elevated circular stage supported in a stationary position on the mast, a circular auditorium having seats disposed in tiers and revoluble around said stage, a circular curtain operatively fitted to the mast and disposed to inclose the stage, and means for bodily raising or lowering said curtain with relation to the stage.

In testimony whereof I have signed my name to this specification in the presence of two subscribing witnesses.

CHARLES FRANKLIN BRAMHALL.

Witnesses:

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LORENZO G. MORRIS.