March 8, 1927.

A. H. LOCKWOOD

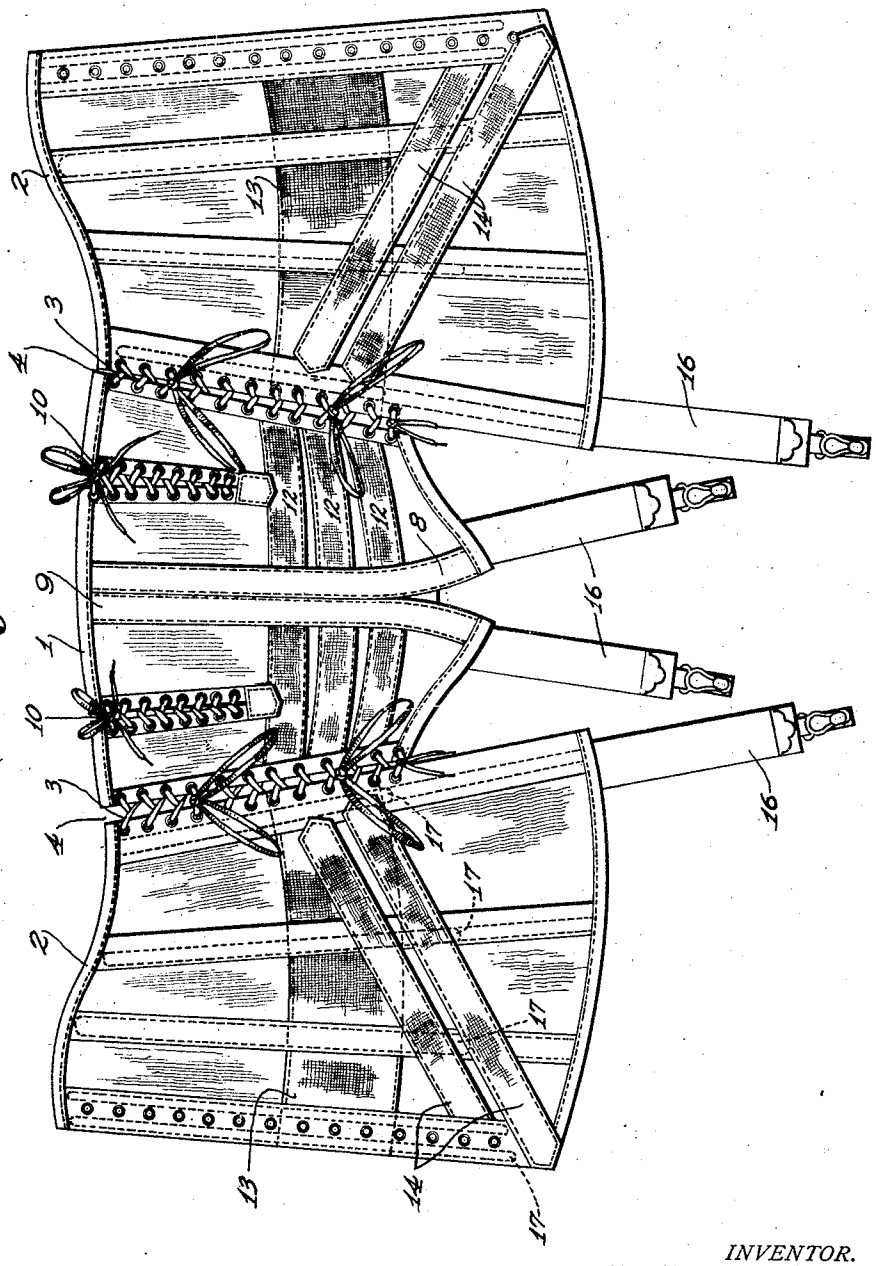
1,620,264

MATERNITY CORSET

Filed Aug. 29, 1921

2 Sheets-Sheet 1

Fig. 1



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March 8, 1927.

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2 Sheets-Sheet 2

Fig. 2

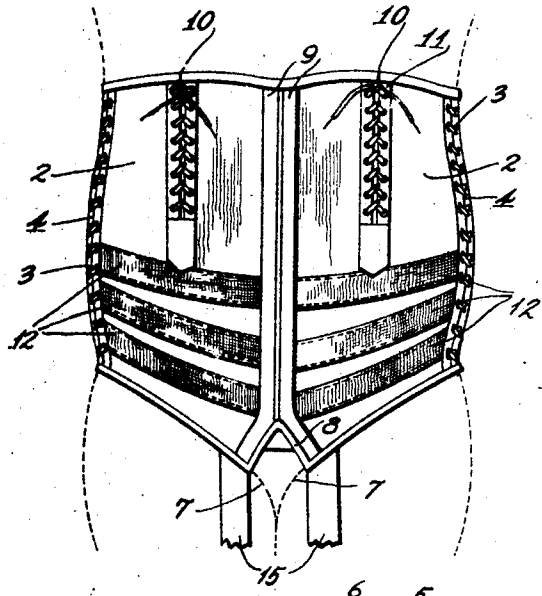
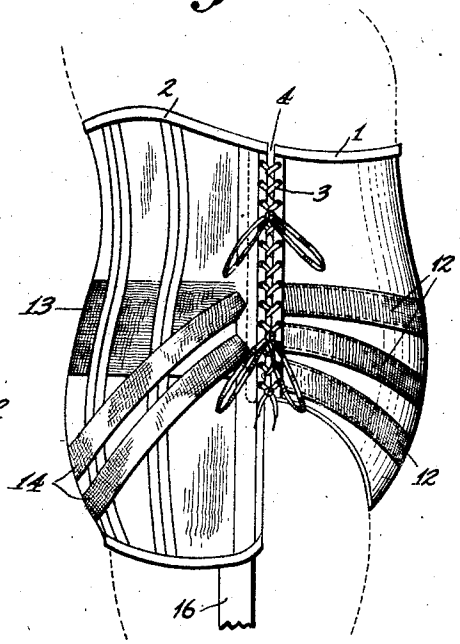


Fig 3



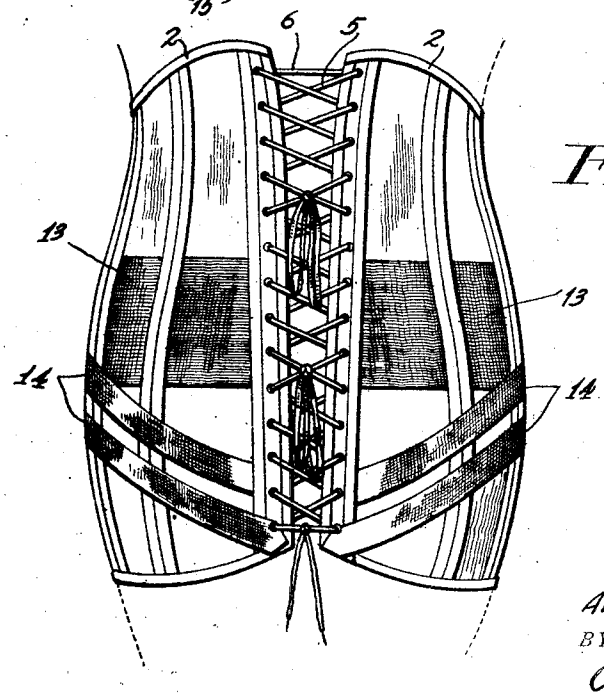


Fig. 4

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Patented Mar. 8, 1927. 1,620,264

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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MATERNITY CORSET.

Application filed August 29, 1921. Serial No. 496,205.

This invention is a maternity corset, so constituted that it is adapted to be worn during all stages of pregnancy, and is especially adapted for properly sustaining the prospective mother prior to childbirth, although equally applicable for use during the periods immediately thereafter.

Maternity corsets, as now generally constructed, in the main, are intended not so much to give proper support, but more especially to suit the requirements of oversensitive persons, who, because of false modesty, desire at all times, and particularly during the latter stages, just prior to confinement, to maintain the substantially normal appearance of the figure. As a result of this feeling on the part of women, the question of figure is the primary consideration with the majority of corsetières.

Corsets, however, have been suggested of which it was claimed that they would properly support the abdomen, but, in many of these instances, these corsets were designed to draw in the abdomen through a pressure directly against the same, which pressure was exerted over the hips. In other words, many maternity corsets are made quite long, so as to extend downwardly over the figure to a point below the crotch and they are so constituted that they may be laced tightly about the hips and over the abdomen in such manner as to force the abdomen back in a direction toward the spinal column.

It will be understood, however, that if a long, straight corset is laced tightly about the hips, it will serve to force the hips together, thereby not only forcing the unborn child into an abnormal position, but also effecting an abnormal protrusion of the abdomen.

It manifestly appears that corsets which depend on the tightening of the lower portion of the corset about the hips for the purpose of pressing back the abdomen, operate upon mechanical principles entirely opposed in their action to each other.

Long continued experimentation and practical experience, coupled with a thorough understanding of physiology and medical practice, have lead me to conclusively believe that in order to properly function, a maternity corset must be so constructed, that it will permit of the natural broadening of the hips, and normal curve of the abdomen, as development progresses, and at the same time will support the abdomen of the prospective mother, in such manner as to relieve the stomach tissues and muscles from undue weight and consequent fatigue.

I have also observed, that in the later stages of pregnancy, just preceding birth, the weight on the abdomen of the patient causes her to stoop, so that she walks with a stooped figure, which is invariably accompanied with a forward bending of the body at the hips, this being manifested by a protrusion of the buttocks. As soon as a patient acquires this habit of slightly stooping primarily, for the purpose of relieving pull on the muscles, the actual pull becomes greater than before and the patient experiences pronounced lassitude, usually accompanied by mental depression. If the patient can realize natural support at all times, while maintaining a correct upstanding carriage, the problem may be dealt with much more readily than otherwise, and more comfort can be had than could possibly be obtained with a stooping figure.

With these considerations in mind, the corset of the present invention is so constituted that it will, above all things, cause the wearer to maintain a correct upstanding posture.

In conjunction with this important feature, the corset is further constructed to permit of a natural expansion through the hips while holding them firm. Another very important advantage and one of the salient features of this invention resides in the fact that the corset, instead of being made very long in the front and constructed to bridge across the crotch from one leg to the other, is so shaped that it will closely conform to the contour of the abdomen with the lower edge of its front portion so cut that said lower edge will closely conform to the groin lines. This is a very important feature, since it permits the lower portion of the front of the corset to properly conform with the abdomen throughout, and particularly so over the lower abdomen. By this construction, the corset actually reaches down after the manner of a sling under the abdomen, and partakes of a position wherein it is capable of artificially carrying the weight which would otherwise be imposed entirely upon the abdominal muscles.

In order that this weight may be properly carried, the corset is preferably provided with a series of carrying bands, which

extend in diverging or fan shaped relation over the lower abdomen and form a sort of sling, in which the weight is carried. The weight imposed on the sling is communicated thereby substantially to the waistline and preferably above the hips of the wearer to a belt portion incorporated in the corset structure and adapted to encircle the body of the wearer, so that said weight is properly distributed in such manner as to not cause constriction at any point and particularly so as not to force the hips together, but rather to hold the sacro-iliac region firm.

In the preferred form of corset made in accordance with this invention, I unite with the belt portion, adjacent the point of uniting of the abdominal carrying bands, back retaining bands which extend rearwardly and downwardly and terminate at the back of the corset in a point where they will directly overlie the lower portion of the buttocks.

The function of these bands is, in the main, two-fold. They serve, in the first place, to retain the lower end of the spinal column in such position that the wearer will not have a tendency to lean forward and protrude the seat as by bending at the hips. In the second place, they cooperate with the abdominal carrying bands to collectively form therewith a sling passing uninterruptedly below the base of the sacrum upwardly over the hips and downwardly over the lower abdomen.

From a mechanical standpoint, it will appear that with this construction, the weight carried by the abdominal carrying bands will be transmitted upwardly and over the hips and downwardly over the lower end of the spine, so that the whole weight will, in fact, be carried on the hips where it can be most comfortably borne and will be distributed in such manner across the back of the body, as to minimize fatigue and making it extremely comfortable and natural for the wearer to maintain at all times, a correct, upright, anatomical poise.

The corset of this invention is provided with suitable openings, for adjustment, and lacings cooperate with these openings to maintain them in the desired adjustment.

Features of the invention, other than those specified, will be apparent from the hereinafter detailed description and claims, when read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

The accompanying drawings illustrate one practical embodiment of the invention, but the construction therein shown is to be understood as illustrative, only, and not as defining the limits of the invention.

Figure 1 is a view of a corset embodying this invention, unlaced at the back and laid out flat.

Figure 2 is a front elevation of the corset in place on a wearer.

Figure 3 is a side elevation of the structure as shown in Figure 2; and,

Figure 4 is a back view of the structure as shown in Figures 2 and 3.

The corset of the present invention may be conveniently constructed in three major sections, namely, a front or abdominal section 1, and two back sections 2. The front section is adjustably associated along each of its lateral edges with the back sections by means of lacings 3, which may be regulated to control the size of side openings 4, the front portion being preferably of such width that when a garment is in position on the wearer, the openings 4 will overlie the sides of the body. The contiguous edges of the back sections 2 are adapted to be united by lacings 5, as shown in Figure 4, and through the manipulation of this lacing, the back opening 6 may be regulated. It will be noted particularly from Figures 2 and 3, that the corset is made quite low at the top, so as not to extend above the bust line, but to leave this part of the figure uncovered and unencumbered. In practice, the corset is constructed, so as to extend upwardly to a position below the bust, whereby no constriction of these parts is effected.

As clearly apparent from Figures 1 and 3, the bottom or lower edge of the corset is somewhat irregular, the front section 1 being of appreciably less depth than the back sections 2. The back sections 2 are made sufficiently long to extend downwardly over the hips of the wearer to or slightly below the crotch line, so as to overlie the hips and the seat, whereas the front section is so configurated along its lower edge and proportioned that the contour of such edge will closely simulate the groin lines of the wearer and the front section is of such depth that when the garment is in place on the wearer, the lower edge of such section on either side of the medial line thereof, will coincide with and overlie the groin lines. In other words, the front section is so shaped that its lower edge will cling to the groin lines designated 7 in Figure 2, and thereby enable said section to closely conform to the lower abdomen.

The lower portion of the front section and in the medial line thereof is preferably provided with a reentrant portion 8 for obvious reasons and particularly so as not to unduly constrict the pelvic region.

In pratcice, I may, if so desired, provide the front section 1 with a laced or hooked opening in the medial line thereof, but a much better construction results if the front section is closed along its medial line as shown in the drawings. In any event, I preferably reinforce the vertical medial portion of the front section by seam tapes 9

thereon, as shown in Figure 1, and while stays may, if desired, be positioned beneath these tapes, a far better construction results if the stays are omitted.

The front section of the corset is adapted to closely conform to the portion of the body which it overlies and to this end, it is shaped or cut during manufacture to substantially the contour desired. Adjustment, however, may be obtained in the upper portion by means of openings 10 provided with lacings 11. The lower portion of this section is, however, preferably without openings, since the greatest weight must be carried by this portion and openings would, in practice, cause chafing or discomfort to the wearer. In order that the weight may be properly carried by the lower portion of the front section, the same is preferably reinforced by means of a plurality of carrying bands 12. The rear ends of these carrying bands are firmly secured along the side openings 4 of the corset and thence extend to the medial line of the front section in diverging or fan-like relation and are firmly sewed to the garment throughout their entire extent, so as to form what may be graphically referred to as a fan-like sling, which is hung at its opposite ends from the sides of the body over the hips and substantially at the waist-line, forwardly and downwardly under and over the lower abdomen. By this construction, a sling of relatively broad expanse is positioned over the front and under the lower abdomen and the weight imposed upon this sling is carried from the hips. This is a very important feature in the corset of this invention, since it properly distributes the weight and lends natural comfort to the wearer.

In order that the strain of the carrying bands 12 may be properly withstood at the lateral edges of the front section 1, each of the back sections is provided with a belt portion 13, substantially at the waist-line thereof and firmly incorporated in the garment during manufacture. When the garment thus formed is positioned on the wearer, the pull of the carrying bands 12 is transmitted through the lacing of the side openings 4, directly to the belt portion 13, which extends about the back of the body and over the lumbar region and furnishes a firm support for the sling referred to.

The corset as thus far described has been found through its application to numerous patients, to give unusual results in the proper sustaining of the weight without fatiguing the wearer. However, in the preferred construction, I find that even better results can be obtained by incorporating in the structure of the corsets tapes or bands 14 which may be referred to as back retaining bands. These bands are preferably sewed into the back sections 2 in such manner that they will extend from the belt portion 13 adjacent the side openings 4, diagonally downward across the back sections to the lower edge of the corset at the back opening 6 as clearly shown in Figures 1, 3 and 4. The back sections are made of such length that at the back opening, their lower portions will overlie the lower end of the spine, so that the back retaining bands will extend under the lower end of the spinal column, and below the buttocks, to the waist-line adjacent the side openings 4, and directly opposite the ends of the carrying bands 12. When a corset thus constituted is in position on the wearer, it will appear that aside from the front sling referred to, a back sling is also formed, which extends from one side opening 4 diagonally downward in the form of the bands 14 across the lacing of the back opening and upwardly again through the other bands 14, to the waist-line adjacent the other side opening.

This back sling, moreover, extends downwardly and under the base of the spine and under the buttocks and when employed in conjunction with the front sling referred to, effects an unusual mechanical result, never before utilized in corset construction, in that the two slings operating in conjunction with one another may be said to pass from one hip downwardly and under the lower abdomen to the other hip and thence downwardly and under the base of the spine to the beginning.

The advantage of this construction is that the front sling is supported by the back sling and vice versa and the abdominal weight is imposed directly on the hips or are above the hips at the waist-line. To put the matter in another way, the hips carry the load in such manner that the broadening of the hips is in no wise hindered. It may be noted in this regard if the front section of the corset was made as long as the back section, as shown in Figure 1, the lacing of the back opening tightly would produce the same effect as pulling the strap tightly around the hips at the crotch line. This would manifestly force the hips together and if the patient were well advanced in the stages of pregnancy, the child would be forced into an abnormal position. However, in making the front section of the corset short, as shown, and causing it to closely conform to the groin on either side of the medial line thereof, the tightening of the laces to bring the corset closely into conformity with the figure would not serve to force the hips together, but will, in contradistinction, serve to provide a supporting uplift of the lower abdomen without compression. This is the desideratum of the medical profession, but has, prior to this corset, never been obtained in maternity corsets.

Corsets have been suggested which aim

to produce this result, but, in every instance, they have been so constructed that they either never would produce it, or if they did at the start, they would not long continue to do so, because they are improperly mechanically designed and will not stand up or hold their shape under wear. They invariably sag and produce more compression than support with consequent discomfort to the wearer and harm to the unborn child, due to unnatural lines.

The corset of the present invention may be provided with front garters 15 and side garters 16, although, if desired, these garters may be omitted.

Moreover, in the preferred manner of making the corset, the back sections 2 are preferably provided with stays 17, but I preferably use no stays in the front section. Stays in the front section, I find, in many instances, injure the breast and epigastric region, especially when they are positioned at or near the top. Moreover, they tend to impart the detrimental straight lines to the front of the corset, so common in prior garments.

By the formation of the corset in the manner described, I am enabled to obtain a snug fit in all cases, across the lower abdomen and give proper support without the employment of stays.

Moreover, the snug fit of the abdominal portion of the front section about the pelvic girdle and over the bony portion of the pelvis, without the employment of stays, gives great relief from sacro-iliac pains common during pregnancy are practically unknown by patients wearing the corset of this invention.

When the double sling arrangement referred to is employed, practice has shown that aside from supporting the abdominal portion of the wearer, the buttocks of the wearer is so held that a bending of the figure at the hips and protruding of the buttocks because of this bending or stooping posture, is entirely eliminated as the patient finds comfort when occupying a proper upright anatomical poise, when either sitting or standing.

Corsets have been heretofore suggested which have associated therewith a pouch adapted to extend over the lower abdomen and supported on a belt reaching about the back. Such devices, however, are entirely impractical and do not embody the present invention, for the reason that the pouch formation positively precludes the device from conforming to the lower abdomen or extending along the groin lines. The convex lower edge of the pouch forces the pouch up so that it is worn high, and, in practice, produces a pressure instead of a lifting action. The lower edge of the abdominal portion of the corset of this invention is made concave at both sides of the medial line so as to conform to the groin lines and thereby enable the front section to reach well in under the lower abdomen and come into a position where it is capable of furnishing the desired support.

This invention should not be confused with certain corsets of the prior art which were years ago suggested as helpful in assisting in supporting the abdomen either during periods of pregnancy or otherwise, by utilizing straps or bands which pass through the crotch of the wearer or about the legs to hold the corset down. Corsets from time to time in the past have been made which embody straps or broad band portions which extend between the legs for the purposes specified but my experience has conclusively shown that corsets of this character are not only torture to wear, particularly in warm weather, but are unsanitary and completely undesirable, particularly for the prospective mother. The corset of the present invention, in contra-distinction, has a front portion which extends downwardly and terminates at the groin line of the wearer in a substantially free edge, as clearly shown in the drawings. True, garters are secured to this edge, but to all intents and purposes, such edge of the corset is a free edge as distinguished from prior supporting bands and straps which pass between the legs. The back portion of the present corset does not overlie the front of the legs and this feature, together with the short front portion, allows the wearer to sit without creasing the corset at the groin line or in front of the legs as is almost universally the case in corset construction.

It will be understood that the specific invention described may be modified in formal respects, such as by the substitution of equivalents, and that parts of the complete article described may be used alone, or in other environments, without departing from the spirit or substance of the broad invention, the scope of which is commensurate with the appended claims.

Having thus fully described the invention, what I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:

1. A corset embodying a closed front portion and a back portion adapted collectively to encircle the torso of a wearer, a belt section positioned at the waist line and incorporated in the back portion, and weight carrying bands incorporated in and extending across the front portion of the corset over the lower abdomen, said bands extending between the termini of the belt section where they are secured and being fanned out toward the medial line of the front portion whereby a sling is provided which transmits the strain to the belt section above the hips.

2. A corset embodying a closed front and a back portion adapted collectively to encircle the torso of a wearer, retaining bands incorporated in the back portion and extending from above the hips downwardly over the base of the buttocks to substantially below the base of the spine, and weight carrying bands incorporated in and extending across the abdominal portion of the corset between the termini of the said retaining bands, said weight carrying bands being fanned out toward the medial line of the abdominal portion.

3. A closed front corset having an abdominal portion covering the lower abdomen with its edges adapted to conform to the groin lines of the wearer and a back portion adapted to overlie the hips and buttocks, abdomen supporting bands incorporated in the front of the corset and extending across the same, said bands terminating at the sides substantially above the hips and being fanned out at substantially the medial line of the abdominal portion, and a back belt section incorporated in the corset extending from substantially the termini of said bands across the back of the corset from each side whereby the belt section serves as a substantial support for said bands, which function, together with the belt, as an abdomen supporting sling.

4. A corset provided with a laced opening in the medial line of the back, supporting bands incorporated in the front of the corset extending across the same and terminating at the sides, and retaining bands incorporated in the back of the corset and extending from each side at a point above the hips of the wearer backward and downwardly below the base of the spine and over the base of the buttocks to the back opening adjacent the lower edge of the corset.

5. A corset provided with a laced opening in the medial line of the back and laced openings at each side of the body, supporting bands incorporated in the front of the corset, extending across the same and terminating at the side openings, a belt section extending across the back of the corset from each side opening to the back opening, and additional supporting bands incorporated in the back of the corset and extending from each side opening above the hips of the wearer to the back opening adjacent the lower edge of the corset.

6. A corset embodying closed front portion and a back portion adapted to collectively encircle the torso of a wearer, said front portion extending downwardly below the waistline to the groin line of the human body and there shaped to conform with the groin lines of the human body on the opposite sides of the medial line of the front portion, a belt section positioned at the waistline and incorporated in the back portion, weight carrying bands incorporated in and extending across the front portion of the corset over the lower abdomen, said bands extending between the termini of the belt section and being fanned out toward the medial line of the front portion, whereby a sling is provided which transmits the strain to the belt section above the hips.

7. A corset embodying a closed front portion and a back portion adapted to collectively encircle the torso of a wearer, said front portion extending downwardly below the waistline to the groin line of the human body and there shaped to conform with the groin lines of the human body on the opposite sides of the medial line of the front portion, a belt section positioned at the waistline and incorporated in the back portion, weight carrying bands incorporated in and extending across the front portion of the corset over the lower abdomen, said bands extending between the termini of the belt section and being fanned out toward the medial line of the front portion, whereby a sling is provided which transmits the strain to the belt section above the hips, and retaining bands incorporated in the back portion and extending from the termini of the belt portion downwardly over the base of the buttocks to substantially the medial line of the back portion.

8. A corset embodying a closed front portion adapted to overlie the front of the human body and extending downwardly below the waistline over the abdomen and terminating in lower edges which are shaped to coincide with and conform to the groin lines of the human body, a back portion adapted to overlie the back and sides of the wearer and extending downwardly below the waistline to overlie the hips and buttocks of the wearer, a belt section positioned approximately at the waistline and incorporated in the back portion, fabric weight carrying bands incorporated in the front portion and extending across the same and fanned out toward the medial line of the front portion, whereby a sling is provided which transmits the strain on the bands to the belt section over the hips.

9. A corset embodying a closed front portion which extends downwardly below the wasteline to the groin lines of the wearer and the lower edges of which front portion are shaped to conform to and overlie the groin lines of the wearer, a back portion adapted to overlie the back and sides of the wearer and to extend downwardly below the waistline to overlie the hips and buttocks, said back portion comprising two sections laced together in the medial line of the back, lacings for adjustably securing together the lateral edges of the front portion and the corresponding lateral edges of the back portion, a plurality of weight carrying bands

incorporated in and extending transversely of the front portion and fanned out toward the medial line of the front portion, and a plurality of retaining bands incorporated in the back portion and extending upwardly and laterally from the opposite sides of the central back opening and adjacent the bottom thereof to the lateral edges of the back portion to points substantially juxtaposed with the termini of the weight carrying bands of the front portion.

10. A corset embodying a closed front portion which extends downwardly below the waistline to the groin lines of the wearer and the lower edges of which front portion are shaped to conform to and overlie the groin lines of the wearer, a back portion adapted to overlie the back and sides of the wearer and to extend downwardly below the waistline to overlie the hips and buttocks, said back portion comprising two sections laced together in the medial line of the back, lacings for adjustably securing together the lateral edges of the front portion and the corresponding lateral edges of the back portion, a plurality of weight carrying bands incorporated in and extending transversely of the front portion and fanned out toward the medial line of the front portion, and a plurality of retaining bands incorporated in the back portion and extending upwardly and laterally from the opposite sides of the central back opening and adjacent the bottom thereof to the lateral edges of the back portion to points substantially juxtaposed with the termini of the weight carrying bands of the front portion, and belt sections extending transversely across the two sections of the back portion at substantially the waistline thereof.

11. A corset having a front portion extending downwardly from a point above the waistline to the groin lines of the wearer and there terminating in edges which are shaped to conform to and overlie the groin lines of the wearer, and garters depending from the lower edges of said front portion, said lower edges being otherwise free from attachment.

12. A corset having a front portion extending downwardly from a point above the waistline to the groin lines of the wearer and there terminating in edges which are shaped to conform to and overlie the groin lines of the wearer, and garters depending from the lower edges of said front portion, said lower edges being otherwise free from attachment, and a back portion secured to the front portion at the sides of the body and extending downwardly below the waist line to overlie the buttocks and having free lateral edges extending downwardly over the hips of the wearer below the lower edges of the front portion.

13. A corset having a front portion extending downwardly from above the waistline to the groin lines of the wearer and there terminating in edges which are shaped to conform to and overlie the groin lines of the wearer and to leave the front legs below the groin line and the crotch of the wearer unencumbered by close fitting corset structures.

14. A corset having a front portion extending downwardly from above the waistline to the groin lines of the wearer and there terminating in edges which are shaped to conform to and overlie the groin lines of the wearer, and a back portion secured to the front portion at the sides of the body and extending downwardly below the waist line to overlie the buttocks and having free lateral edges extending downwardly over the hips of the wearer below the lower edges of the front portion, to leave the front of the legs below the groin lines and the crotch of the wearer unencumbered by close fitting corset structures.

In testimony whereof I have signed the foregoing specification.

ALEATHA H. LOCKWOOD.