

N. Thompson Jr.
Life Preserving Seat.
No 12,108. *Patented Dec. 19. 1854.*

Fig. 1.

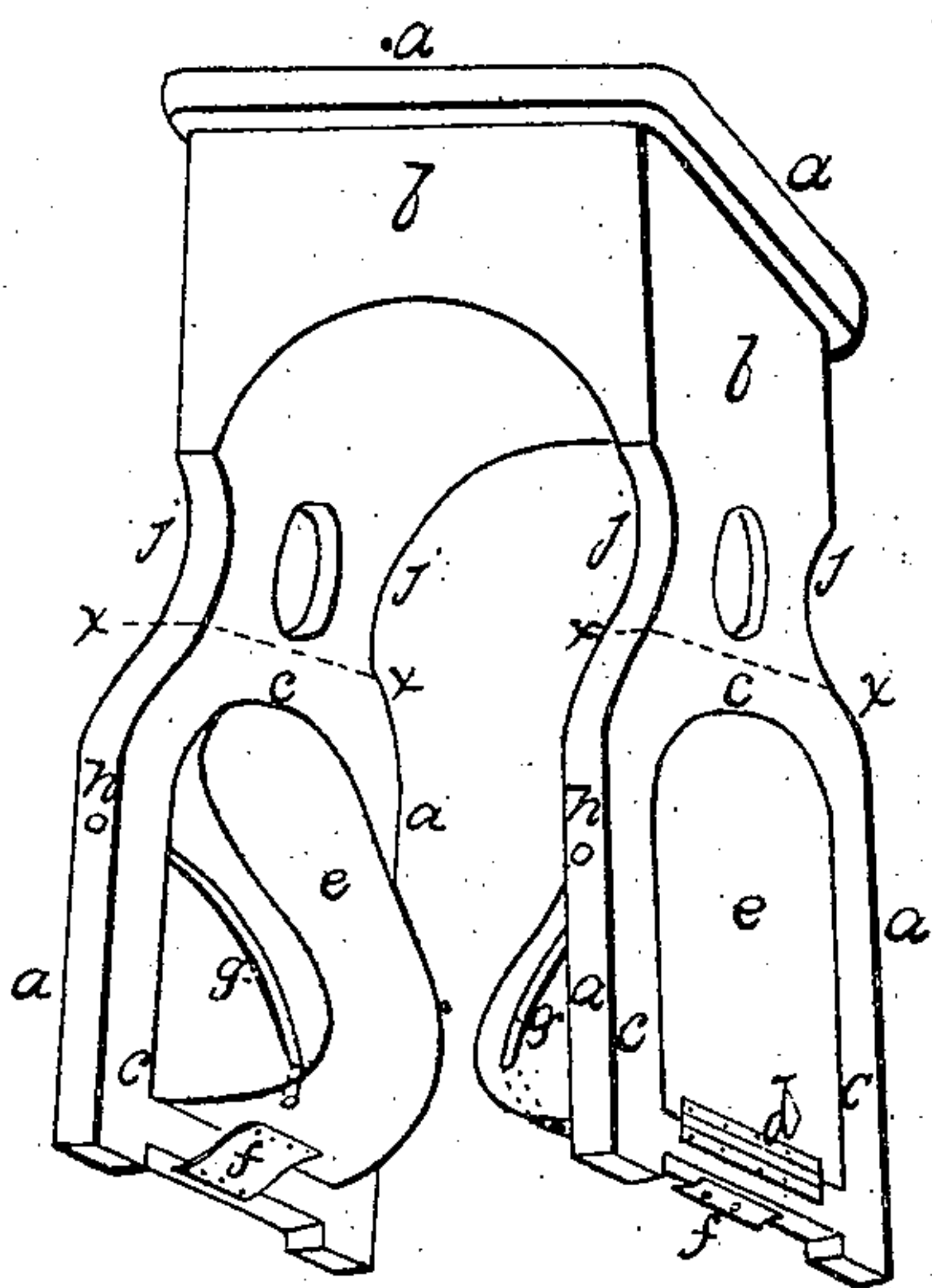


Fig. 4.

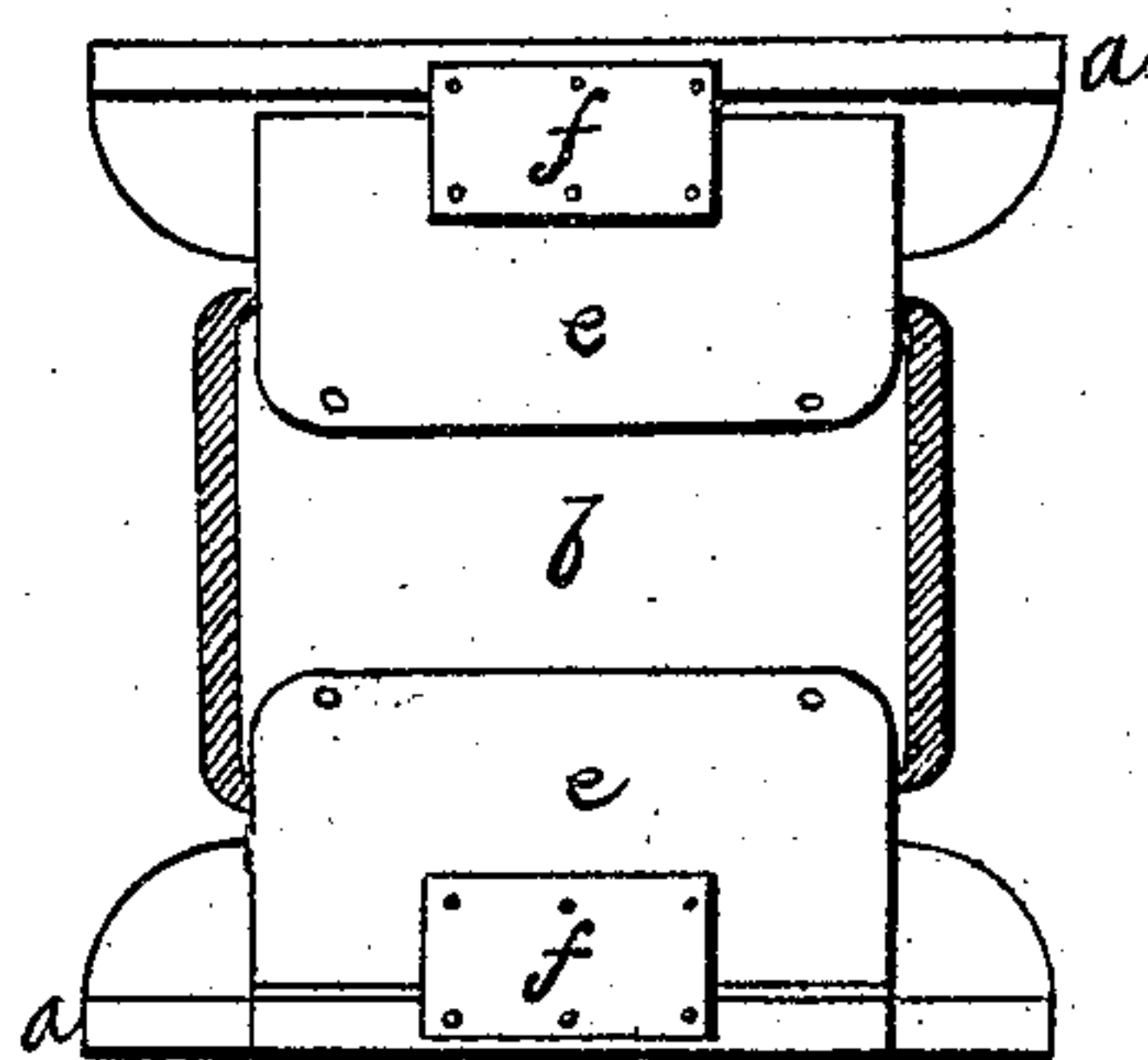


Fig. 2.

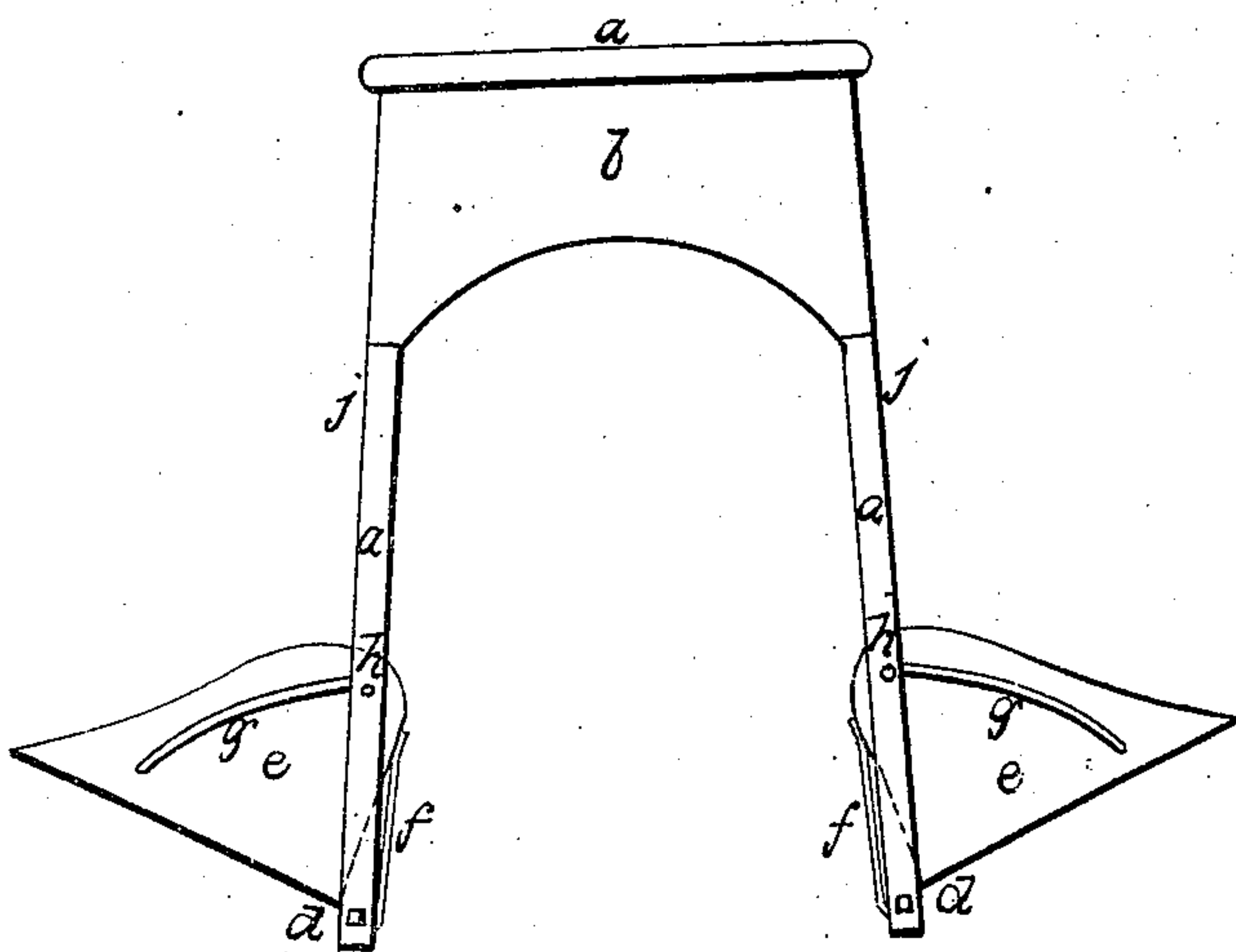
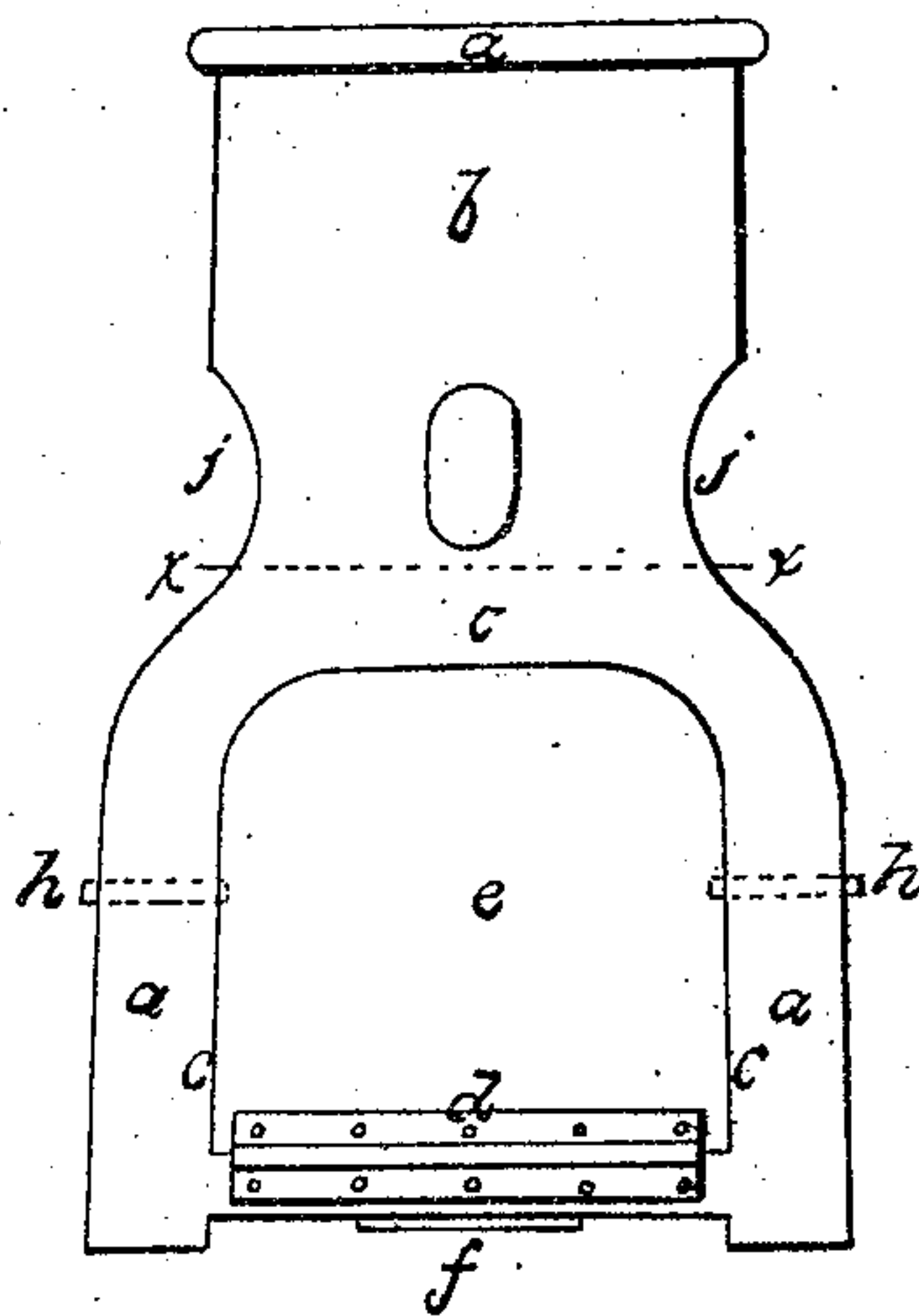


Fig. 3.



UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

NATHAN THOMPSON, JR., OF WILLIAMSBURG, NEW YORK.

IMPROVEMENT IN LIFE-PRESERVING SEATS.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. 12,108, dated December 19, 1854.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, NATHAN THOMPSON, JR., of Williamsburg, Kings county, State of New York, at present residing in the city of London, England, have invented a new and useful Life-Preserving Seat, which I have denominated the "Adjustable-Bottom Life-Seat;" and I declare that the following specification, taken in connection with the drawings, is a full and exact description thereof.

In the drawings, Figure 1 is a perspective view of the seat as it appears either when clasped around the user or when in use as a seat or bench. Fig. 2 is a side view of the same with the bottom buoyants opened out in the position that they assume when the seat is in the act of being clasped around the waist. Fig. 3 is an end view of the article with the buoyants at bottom in the same position as in Fig. 1, and Fig. 4 is a view of the seat turned upside down.

The same letters refer to the same parts in all the figures.

The object of my invention is to secure a perfectly reliable nautical life-preserver having all the good qualities of sufficient buoyancy, strength, and durability, while it at the same time supports the body of the user upright in the water and serves also as a good seat when not wanted as a life-preserver, when in addition to these properties it has the further advantage of instantaneous adjustment to the body without any loosening of catches or opening and closing springs or without any of the belting and buckling always incident to the adjustment of ordinary life-preservers.

In order to attain these objects, the nature of my invention consists in combining with a buoyant-topped life-preserving seat adjustable-bottom buoyants acting substantially in the manner hereinafter specified.

In constructing this nautical life-seat I take any ordinary wooden stool of proper dimensions and make the top thereof buoyant in any known way, either by air-chambers or cork or otherwise. Between the legs of this seat or in openings cut therein, if the legs be solid, I attach two other buoyants in such manner that one part of each thereof is in the same plane as the stool-legs, or nearly so, while the other sides thereof meet or thereabout under the center of the seat, said buoy-

ants being so secured that while attached they may be moved away from each other in order that the body of a person may be forced between said buoyants, opening them out away from each other, and that said buoyants may then close or be shut into their former position, thus clasping the body between the top buoyant and the two adjustable-bottom buoyants.

In the drawings, *a a a* represent the body of an ordinary seat, legs, and top, the latter being made buoyant by air-chambers, cork, or their equivalents inserted in the space under *b b b*. Openings *c c c* are cut on the leg, and to the bottom edge of these openings are secured by proper hinges *d d d* two adjustable buoyants *e e*, which are free to turn on said hinges from the position they are represented as holding in Fig. 1 to that which they occupy in Fig. 2, and vice versa. To the bottom of each buoyant is secured a piece of elastic stuff whose other end is secured to the bottom of a leg of the seat, as at *fff*. In these buoyants are also formed grooves *g g g*, into which project pins *h h*, which are secured in the legs. These pins and grooves form stops, limiting the motion of the bottom buoyants and also sustaining them in position whether said buoyants are opened or closed. These buoyants may be water-tight chambers of any material, or they may be constructed of light wood or cork, and from the grooves are formed small holes *i i i*, which permit the grooves to free themselves from water when taken on board after use, or from spray which might enter them while on a ship's deck and form into ice, thus locking the buoyants and impairing the efficiency of the seat. Small recesses *j j j* are cut in the legs, so as to fit under the armpits and center the body of a person using the seat as a life-preserver.

When it is desired to apply the article to the body, it is lifted in both hands and pressed against the chest. The bottom buoyants then open outward on their hinges, and as soon as the body of the person gets far enough in these same buoyants are closed by the elastics, thus adjusting themselves and clasping the life-preserver closely around the person.

When a person is floated in this life-seat, it is evident that he will have no tendency to upset or be rolled over by a wave. He will be

able to use both legs and arms for progressing and will be well protected from floating pieces of wreck. The pins and hinges will transfer the buoyant power of the bottom chambers to the legs of the seat, and the elastics will prevent all risk of derangement of the position of the life-preserver around the body.

It is scarcely necessary to state that the form and proportion of this seat and the materials of which it is constructed, either in whole or in parts, and the manner in which it is put together, may all be varied without differing from the principles of my invention, and also that bolts or catches might be added thereto, so that a party, when in the water, might, if he desired, bolt each bottom buoyant firmly into the position as shown in Fig. 1.

Any species of spring might be applied in lieu of the elastics so long as it permitted the buoyants to open and then tended to close them. The position of the hinge might also be changed; but in no place does it answer so good a purpose as when located at the bottom, as herein shown. Other kinds of stops might be substituted for the pins and grooves, and both stops and hinges might be dispensed with wholly, provided bolts, as above explained, were employed. All these changes would still come within the scope of my invention; but the latter would not serve as useful a purpose as if the construction with elastics and stops and the present position of hinges were adhered to.

Sometimes I intend to attach the bottom buoyants to the legs by several elastics or springs and use no hinges, in which case these buoyants will move out and in parallel to themselves, or nearly so, instead of turning as on a pivot; and I further intend at times to saw the stool-legs into two, as shown by dotted lines at $x\ x$, and secure the buoyants firmly to the bottom of the legs. These bottoms are then to be attached by any known kind of spring-hinges to the upper part of the seat and will open and shut as the buoyants now shown in the drawings do. These changes will, however, be mere modifications, as the adjustable-bottom buoyants, in combination with the buoyant top, are the essence of my invention.

Having thus fully described my new nautical life-seat, I claim as of my own invention and desire to have secured to me by Letters Patent of the United States—

The combination of adjustable buoyant bottoms acting and secured substantially as herein described with a buoyant top, whereby is constituted a life-preserving seat having properties substantially such as are herein set forth.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand, in the city of Paris, on this 15th day of November, A. D. 1854.

NATHAN THOMPSON, JR.

In presence of—

T. BASSET,

2 Rue Drauot, Paris.

C. MACRUE.