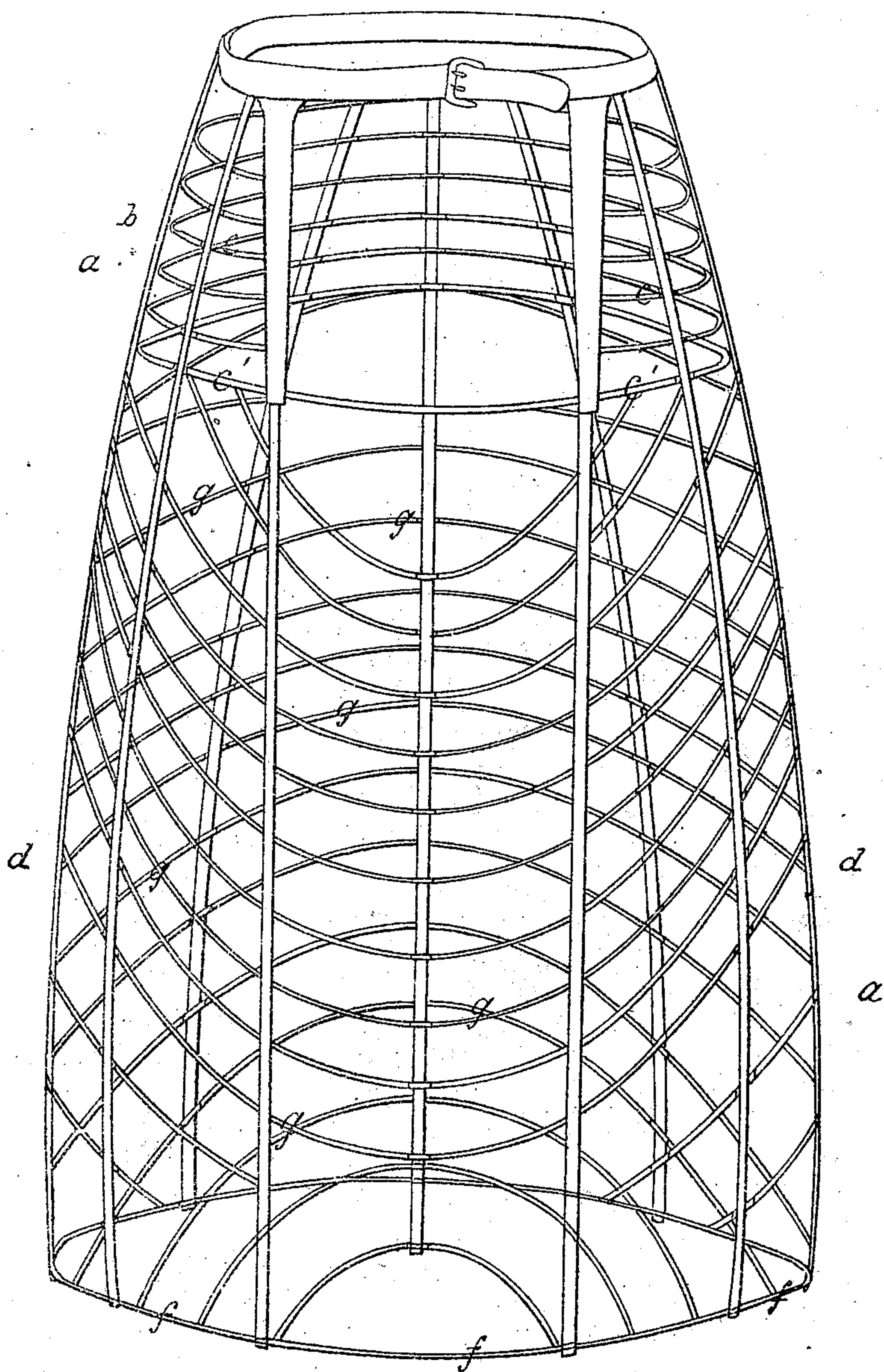


A. J. Colby.
Hoop Skirt.

N^o 52,390.

Patented Feb. 6 1866.



Witnesses

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

AUGUSTUS J. COLBY, OF NEW YORK, N. Y.

IMPROVEMENT IN SKELETON-SKIRTS.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. 52,390, dated February 6, 1866.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, AUGUSTUS JAMES COLBY, of the city, county, and State of New York, have invented a new and useful Improvement in Hoop-Skirts; and I do hereby declare that the following is a full, clear, and exact description thereof, which will enable those skilled in the art to make and use the same, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, forming part of this specification.

In the wearing of hoop-skirts as now constructed, with a series of springs arranged in parallel horizontal planes secured together by side bands or strips, much annoyance has been heretofore experienced in adjusting or arranging the skirt about the person when sitting or lying down, leaning against a chair or table, &c., the skirt, when touched or brought in contact upon one side with some fixed object flying up upon the other or opposite side in direct proportion thereto, and to such a height as to often cause an exposure of the under-garments to such a degree as to be not only quite distasteful but considerably embarrassing to the wearer before the skirt could be properly arranged to suit the position that the wearer is occupying, and oftentimes it could be accomplished only with great difficulty and trouble, the various springs being so disturbed that when the person arose from the seat it was necessary to again adjust the skirt.

To remedy and obviate the above objections and disadvantages to the now prevalent mode of making hoop-skirts, as before stated, has been the object of many experiments, investigations, and inventions, but all of which have practically failed, it being necessary, in connection with any construction of the skirt adopted, to avoid the said objections, that the flexibility, lightness, and freedom of motion to the skirt should be always retained, in order to have it a success; but by the present invention a practical and thoroughly successful mode of constructing a hoop-skirt is produced, by which the objections to the present style of hoop-skirts are entirely obviated; and it consists in a novel arrangement of the various springs constituting the skirt, whereby when any one side or portion of the skirt is brought in contact with a fixed object, as in sitting or lying down, leaning against a chair or table, &c., in lieu of throwing the other or opposite

side or portion up, as is now the case, the tendency is more to pull it down, if any effect is produced upon it at all, as will be more readily apparent by an inspection of the figure in the accompanying plate of drawings, which is an elevation of the front portion of a skirt made according to my improvement in connection with the following description:

a a in the drawings represents a hoop-skirt made according to my improvements, with the same general form and outline as the ordinary skirts, and the various springs of which are secured together by bands or strips running up and down its length, with clasps or other suitable holding devices at each intersection of the springs therewith.

The upper portion, *b*, of the skirt—say for about one-third of its length—is formed of a series of equidistant or parallel springs, *c c c'*, and placed at any desired distance apart, and the remaining portion *d*, between the lower spring, *c'*, of this series of horizontally-arranged springs and the spring *f*, forming the bottom edge of the skirt, is made of a series of springs, *g g g g*, arranged parallel to each other, or nearly so, but at an inclination to the vertical axis of the skirt, or, in other words, to the direction of its length, said springs gradually increasing in length as you approach the lower spring forming the bottom edge of the skirt until a spring constituting a complete circle in itself is reached. When on ordinary-sized skirts they gradually decrease in length to and from the same toward the lower spring, *f*.

The ends of the springs, consisting of only a portion of the circumference of a circle, are secured in any of the ordinary modes to the lower spring of the upper horizontal series, or to the bottom spring of the skirt, according as they are either above or below the inclined spring, having a complete circle, or nearly so, or of the greatest length.

From the above description of the manner in which I arrange the springs constituting the skirt, by placing them at an angle to the direction of its length or its vertical axis, it is obvious that when the skirt is worn and the wearer desires to sit or lie down, or to lean against a table, chair, or any other fixed device, in lieu of the skirt then being thrown out or up, as has heretofore been the case, upon the opposite side to that where the pressure is

thus brought to bear upon the springs, it receives no perceptible movement; the compression of the springs, in lieu of acting straight across the skirt and in horizontal planes, or nearly so, as heretofore, being made either to act up or downward, according as the springs are secured at their ends to the bottom spring of the skirt, or the lower one of its horizontal series at its upper portion; but it is, of course, manifest that by transferring the force of the compression of the springs in an entirely different direction from that in which it is imparted thereto its effect upon the opposite side of the skirt is thereby greatly and almost, if not entirely, diminished, each compression of the springs, when arranged in an inclined position, serving more to pull the skirt down or cause it to "hug" the floor or ground than to fly or be thrown upward, as is obvious without further explanation.

It is not necessary that I should herein enumerate the many advantages which arise from constructing a hoop-skirt in the manner described, whereby the results specified are successfully obtained, as they are so plainly obvious to all persons, whether accustomed to

the wearing of them or not, and the superiority of such a skirt over the now prevalent and most general skirts worn, as well as its desirability, are also apparent.

In lieu of arranging the springs constituting the upper portion of the skirt in parallel horizontal planes, as described, they may be arranged in inclined positions, as specified, for the lower portion of the skirt; but as the springs at such a height are of so short a diameter, and thus are affected but very little by any compression of the skirt, I do not deem it necessary.

I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent—

A hoop-skirt made of a series of springs arranged at a vertical inclination to the central vertical axis or direction of the length of the skirt, substantially in the manner described, and for the purposes specified.

The above specification of my invention signed by me.

AUGUSTUS J. COLBY.

Witnesses:

C. L. TOPLIFF,
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