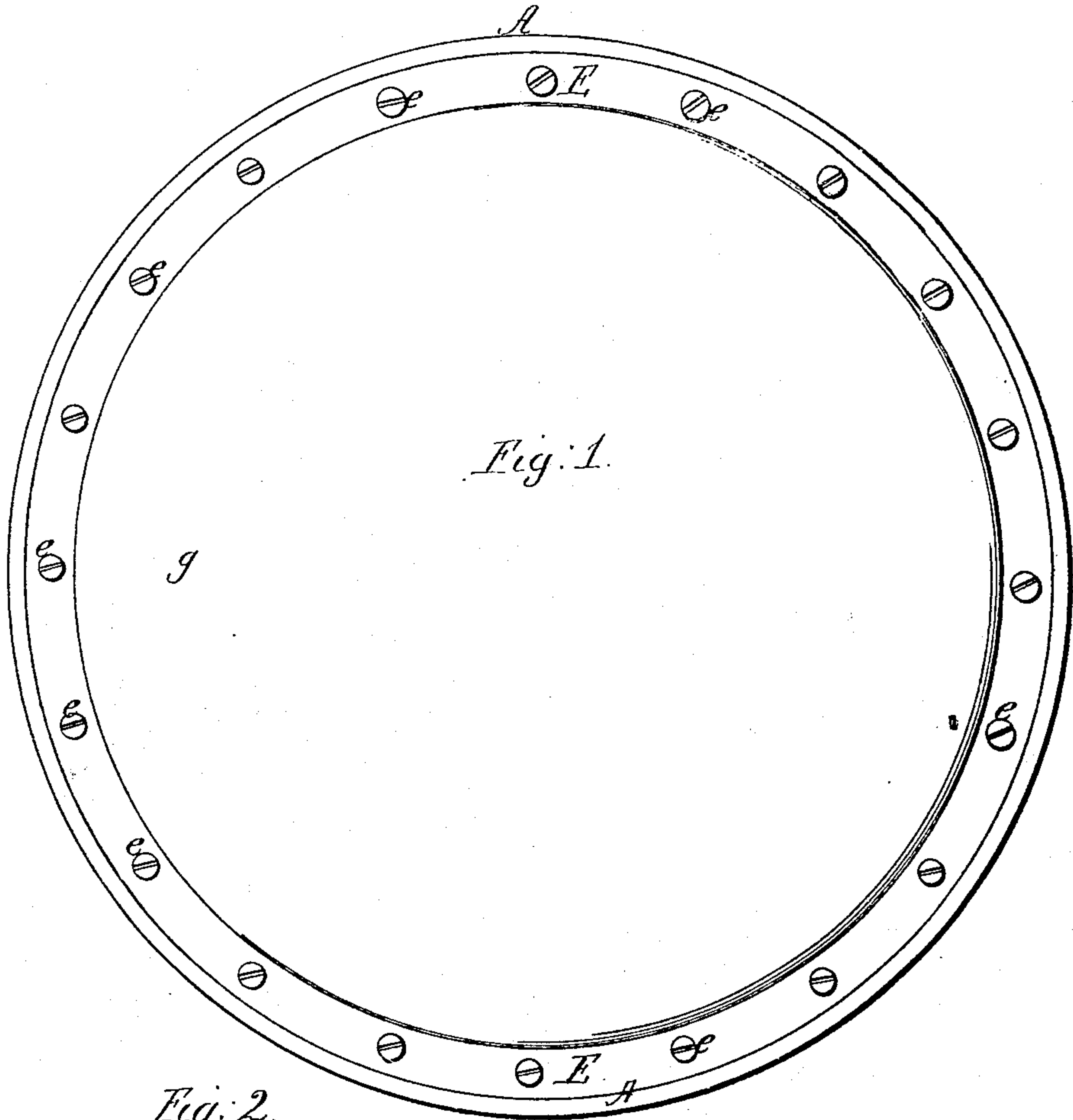


*L. Brown.*

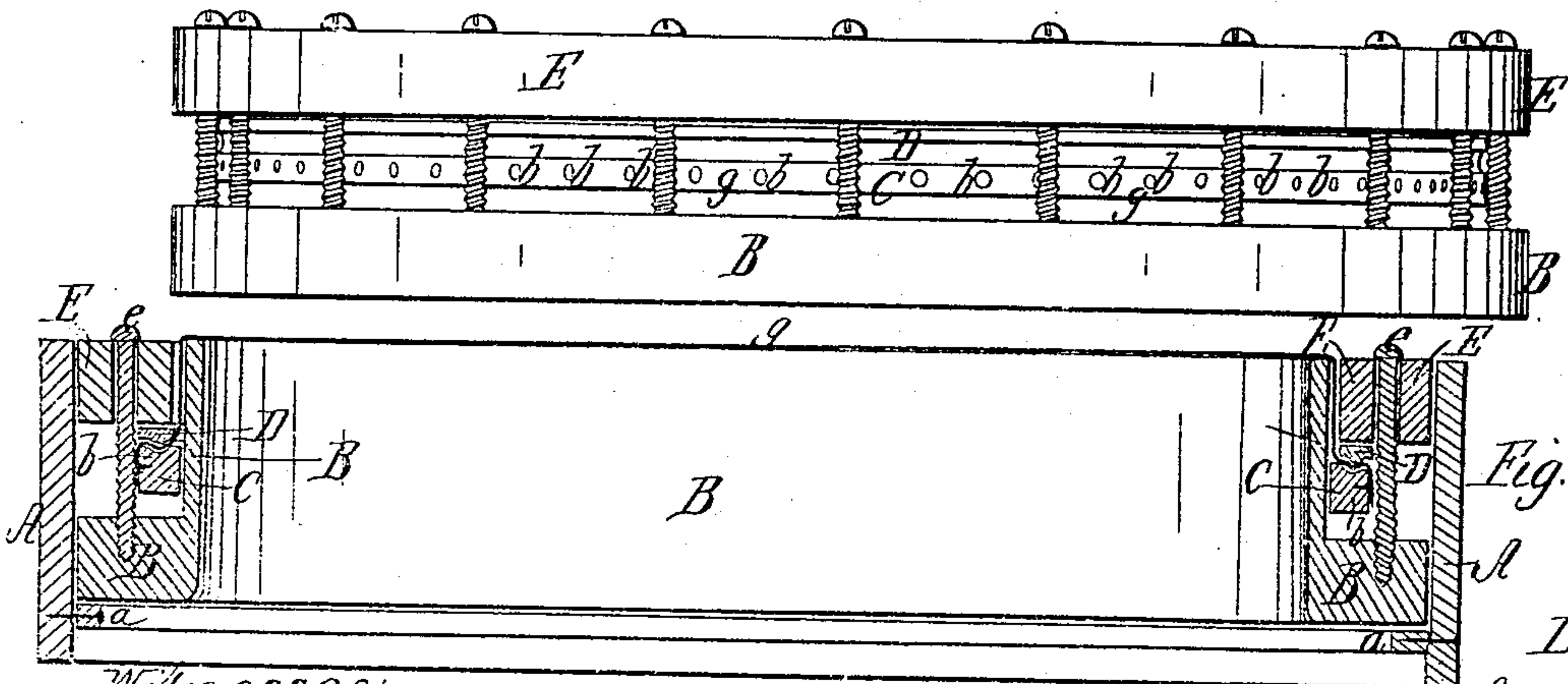
*Banjo.*

*N<sup>o</sup> 88,541.*

*Patented Apr. 6, 1869.*



*Fig: 2.*



*Fig: 3.*

*Witnesses;  
Edw. A. Dickins  
Geo F. Hannay*

*Inventors;  
Levi Brown  
P. Hannay*



# United States Patent Office.

LEVI BROWN, OF BALTIMORE, MARYLAND.

Letters Patent No. 88,541, dated April 6, 1869.

## IMPROVEMENT IN BANJOS.

The Schedule referred to in these Letters Patent and making part of the same.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, LEVI BROWN, of the city and county of Baltimore, in the State of Maryland, have invented a certain new and useful Improvement in Banjos, and other similar inusical instruments, having parchment heads, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description, reference being had to the accompanying drawing of the same, making part of this specification, in which—

Figure 1 represents a plan of the banjo, having my improvement applied thereto, but detached from the neck, or staff; and

Figure 2, a side view of the parchment head proper, detached from the enclosing rim; while

Figure 3 represents a vertical section, taken through the line *xx* of fig. 1, to show the construction and arrangement of the various parts, as also the method of fastening and tightening the parchment.

By reference to the drawing, it will be perceived that the neck, or staff of the banjo, and its connections, are omitted, as the invention has no relation to them whatever, it being confined solely to the method of fastening and tightening the parchment to the head; hence no allusion will be made to these parts in the specification, further than to say, in this place, that they are formed, arranged, and secured in the usual manner to the banjo-rim and parchment head.

Again, referring to the drawing, it will be seen that the outer rim, or shell *A* is represented as enclosing the frame, which constitutes the parchment head.

This rim *A* consists of a cylinder, of wood or other suitable material, provided on the inside, and near its lower edge, with a bead, *a*, to which it is securely attached in any well-known manner; or, if deemed better, the bead may form part of the rim itself.

Upon this bead *a* rests the frame *B*, in this way supporting and keeping the parchment head constantly in its proper relative position with regard to the upper edge of the rim *A*, that is to say, the parchment in a line flush, or nearly so, with its upper edge.

The frame, or parchment head consists of the annular head *B* proper, constructed as shown in fig. 3, and a sliding ring, *C*, which fits loosely over the outside and upper portion of the head *B*.

To the outer side of this ring *C*, the edge of the parchment is secured, by means of tacks *b*, or other suitable means; while on the upper side, a rounded groove is formed, for a purpose to be hereafter described.

In connection with these, and immediately over the ring *C*, is arranged another ring, *D*, having a rounded tenon on its under side, to correspond with the groove cut in the ring *C*, and into which it fits, so that when forced down by the driver *E*, (which also consists of a ring, made to fit loosely over the head *B*, and between the upper edge of the latter and the rim *A*, as shown in fig. 3, upon the ring *C*, they, through their respective groove and tenon, are made to seize or clamp the parchment, which passes between them, and to

hold it securely, thereby lessening the strain of the parchment on the tacks when tightened.

This tightening of the parchment head is effected through the agency of screws *e* passing through the driver *E*, into the lower portion of the head *B*, as shown in fig. 3, so that by turning them in the proper direction, the driver *E* and head *B* are drawn together, the former, in this operation, forcing down the ring *D* and its tenon into the groove of the ring *C*, until they are in perfect contact, with the parchment firmly clamped between them, in which condition they are then both forced down by the driver until the parchment is sufficiently strained, or tightened over the thin upper side of the head *B*, the outer edge of which is rounded off to prevent it from cutting the parchment as it is being tightly drawn down over it.

In constructing the banjo, the parts are all first made and fitted, ready to put together. At this stage, the parchment, properly prepared for the purpose, is attached by tacks to the outer edge of the ring *C*, and its edge then trimmed, the grooved side of the ring being placed next to the under side of the parchment. The ring is then slipped over the thin end of the head *B*, and the ring *D*, with its tenoned side down, passed in like manner over the parchment and the head *B*. This done, the driver *E* is then passed over the whole, and screwed down, as before mentioned, until the parchment has been sufficiently strained, or tightened, as illustrated in fig. 3, when the operation is complete, the head being then ready to receive its neck, or staff, and other appendages necessary to form the perfected instrument.

From the foregoing description, it will be apparent that the tenoned ring *D*, instead of being formed in a separate piece, may be formed on the lower side of the driver *E*, without in any way altering the principle of the invention.

It is also apparent that the invention is as applicable to tambourines, and other similar instruments, as to banjos.

Having thus described my invention,  
What I claim, is—

1. The arrangement of a groove on the upper side of the slide-ring *C*, to which the parchment is attached, when such is used in connection with a corresponding tongue, formed on the under side of the driver *E*, or its equivalent, (the slide-ring *D*,) whereby the parchment is firmly grasped between the two, and the strain of the parchment upon the tacks consequently materially reduced.

2. The arrangement of the bead *a* on the inside of the rim *A*, in combination with the head *B*, in the manner and for the purpose set forth.

The above specification signed by me, this 2d day of February, 1869.

LEVI BROWN.

Witnesses:

EDWD. DICKINS,  
P. HANNAY.