

(No Model.)

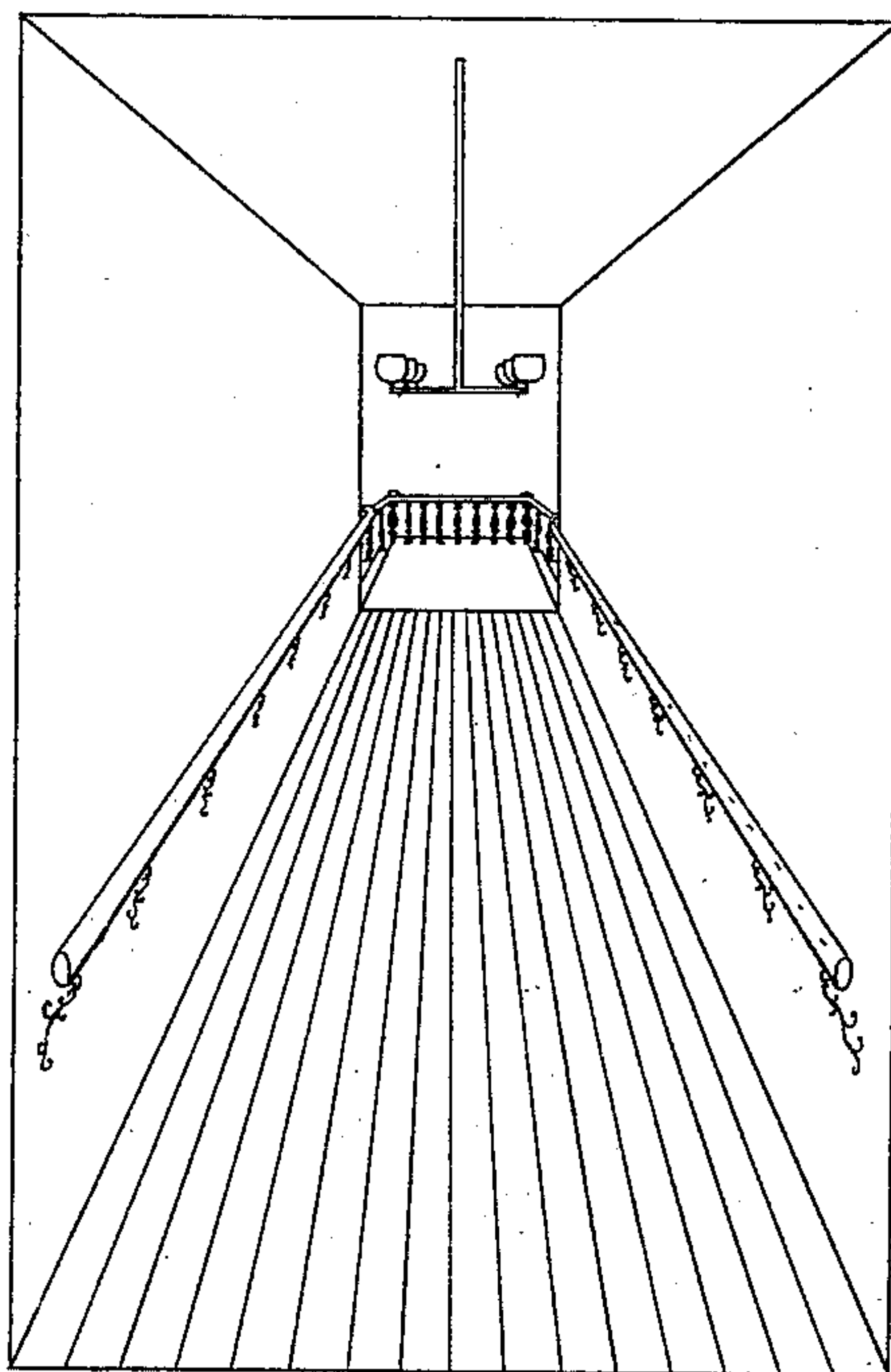
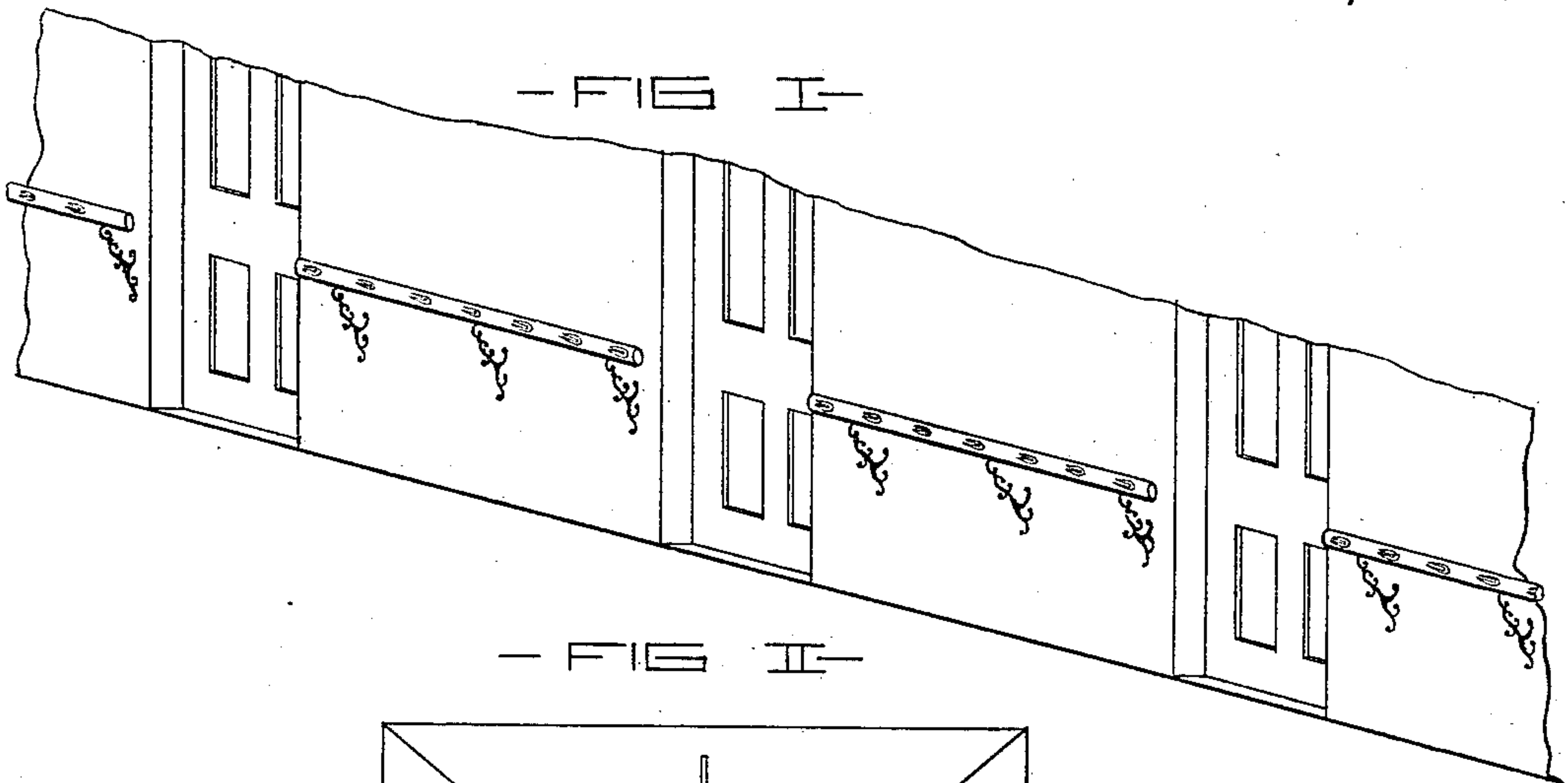
2 Sheets—Sheet 1.

E. H. HOWARD.

MEANS FOR FACILITATING SPEEDY EXIT FROM BUILDINGS IN CASE OF
FIRE OR ALARM.

No. 259,544.

Patented June 13, 1882.



- WITNESSES -

W. T. Collier

A. S. Barbour

- INVENTOR -

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(No Model.)

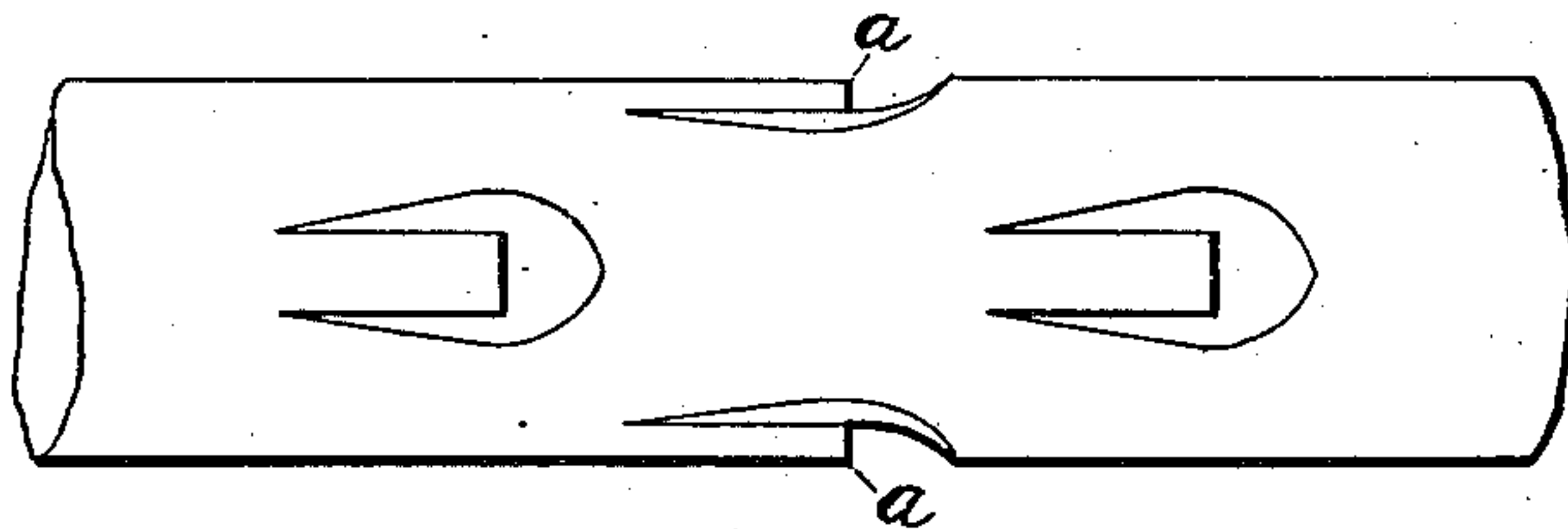
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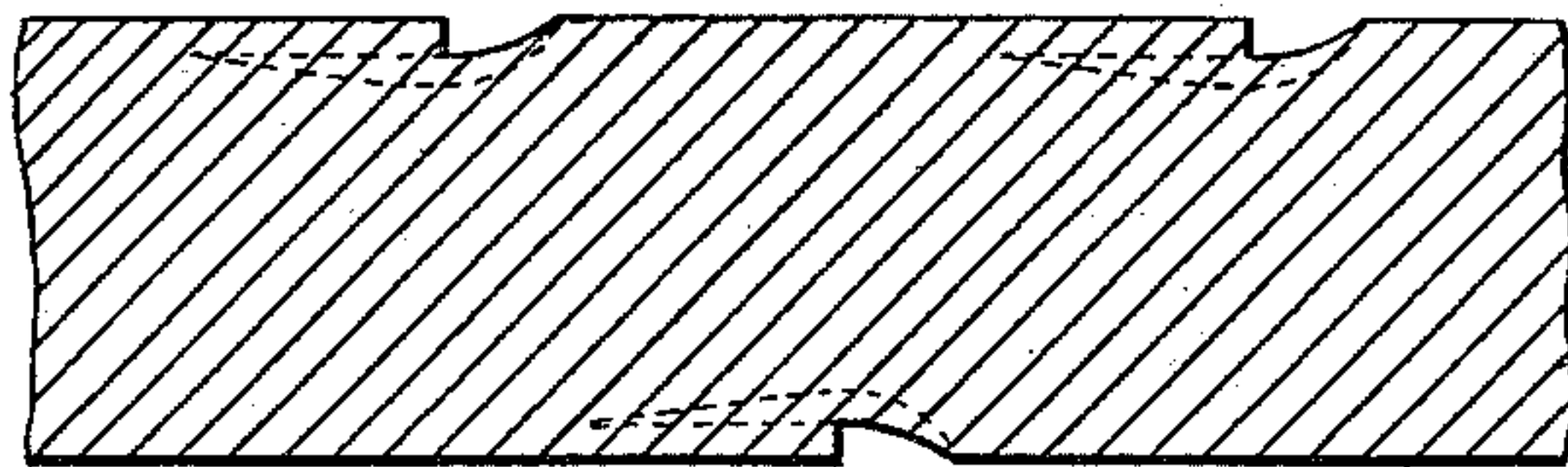
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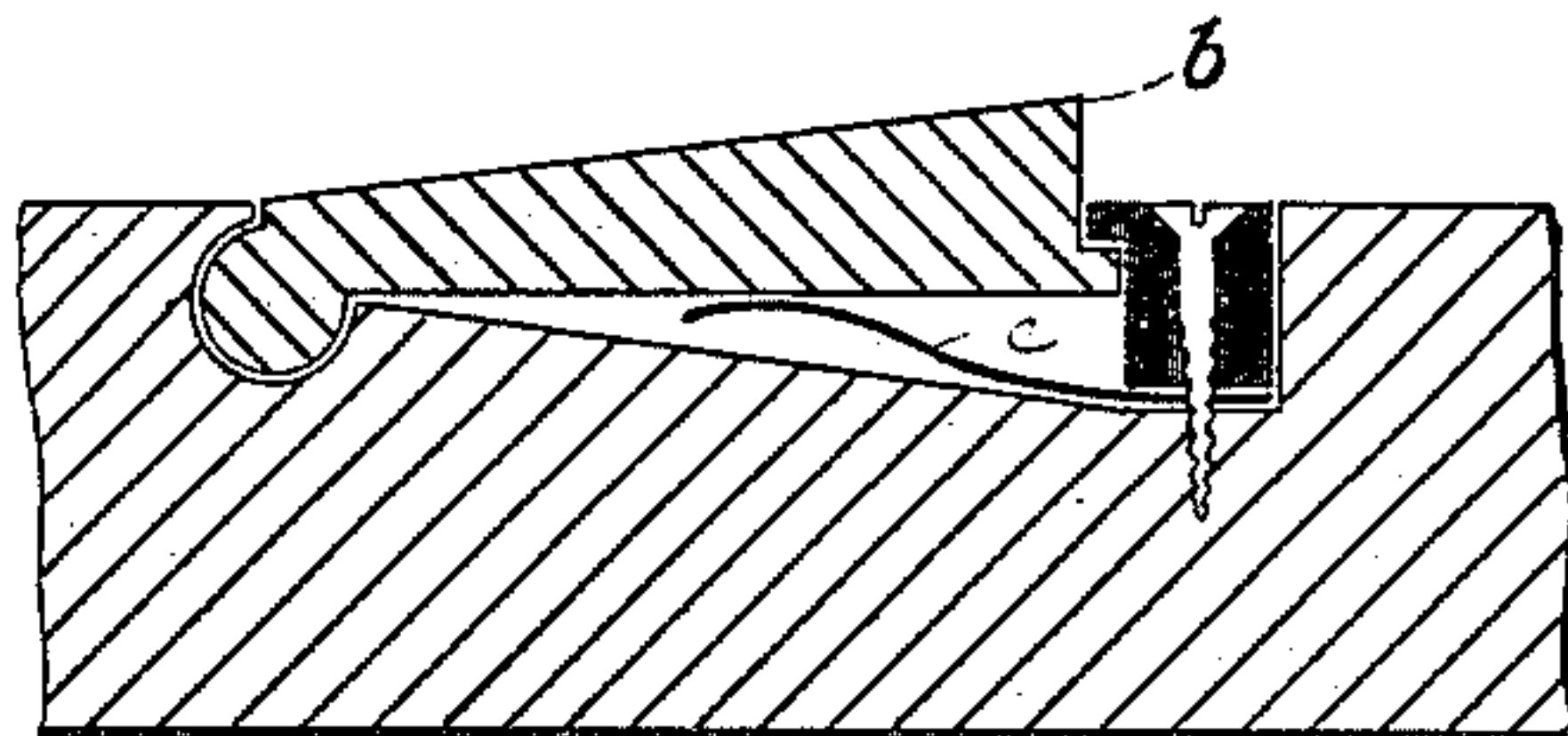
— FIG IV —



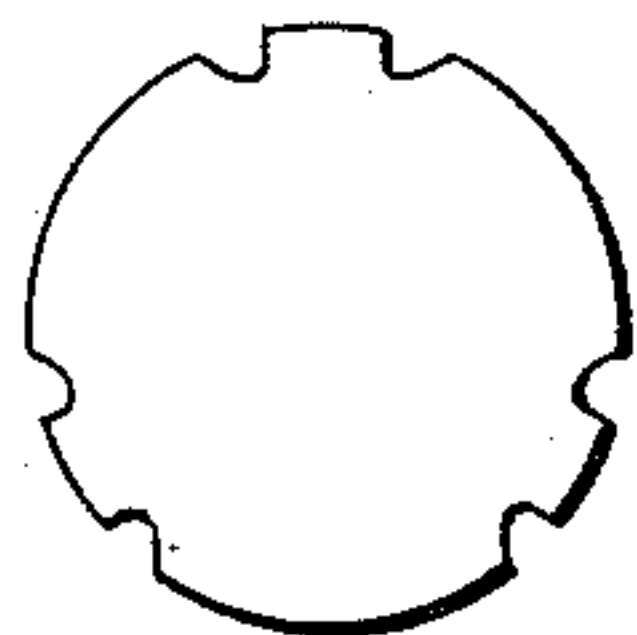
— FIG V —



— FIG VII —



— FIG VI —



— WITNESSES —

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

EDWIN H. HOWARD, OF BALTIMORE, MARYLAND.

MEANS FOR FACILITATING SPEEDY EXIT FROM BUILDINGS IN CASE OF FIRE OR ALARM.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 259,544, dated June 13, 1882.

Application filed March 3, 1882. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, EDWIN H. HOWARD, a subject of Great Britain, residing at Baltimore, in the State of Maryland, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Means of Affording or Facilitating Speedy Exit from Hotels and other Buildings in the Event of Fire or other Emergency; and I do hereby declare the following to be a full, clear, and exact description of the invention, such as will enable others skilled in the art to which it appertains to make and use the same, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, and to the letters or figures of reference marked thereon, which form a part of this specification.

This invention relates to a safety-rail for use in hotels, factories, tenement-houses, and elsewhere, whereby, in the event of alarm of fire or other emergency, to direct persons to the outer doorway or exit. In cases of sudden alarm the confusion attendant thereon, and often in case of fire the presence of smoke, cause persons to mistake the course or avenue leading to safety, and loss of life is the result. My invention is designed to afford a ready indication of the proper course or route to be pursued in order to reach the open air or street.

The invention consists in a rail constructed with indentations, or in other ways, whereby to present a smooth surface for the passage over it of the hand in one direction, and a rough or obstructed surface for the passage of the hand in the opposite direction, which rail is designed to be attached to the sides of corridors, passages, or other avenues of a building, or the stairways thereof elsewhere; but in all cases so as to lead to the outer doorway or exit. Thus a person seizing the rail and finding that the hand meets with a smooth surface, or with no obstruction is assured that in following the smooth rail he is advancing toward a place of safety, and however long or circuitous may be the course to be taken he need be in no danger of losing his way or failing to find the exit, as is often the case at present.

The invention may be embodied in various forms whereby to give the necessary information to the hand; and I do not limit myself to any special construction of the surface of the safety-rail, provided it is of such character as to present a smooth passage to the hand when moving in one direction and a rough or

obstructed surface for the hand when moved in the other direction.

In the accompanying drawings, Figure I represents my invention in its preferred form and attached to the side of a hotel-corridor. Fig. II shows the invention secured to both sides of a corridor or hallway unprovided with doors. Fig. III is a plan view of the rail as applied in Fig. II. Figs. IV, V, and VI show, on an enlarged scale, a rail constructed in my preferred mode. Fig. VII shows a modification of the invention.

Similar letters of reference indicate the same parts in the respective figures.

The rail as represented in Figs. I, IV, V, and VI is provided with a series of depressions, which leave projecting edges or surfaces *a*, which, when the hand is moved against them, indicate that the direction in which the hand is moving is not that which leads to the exit or place of safety, but that the rail must be followed in the opposite course. Fig. V shows a longitudinal section of such a rail, and Fig. VI an end view or transverse section. Fig. VII shows a modified construction of the rail, *b* being a hinged projection kept normally out from the surface of the rail by the spring *c*. The projections *b* serve the same purpose as the projecting edges or surfaces *a* of the other figures, and may be easily pressed in as the hand is moved over the rail in passing to the point of escape.

It will be seen that this invention, if availed of, affords an unerring guide to safety in the emergencies named, and in crowded hotels, factories, tenement-houses, and other places must in such cases greatly aid in facilitating escape from danger, and in saving life.

I claim as my invention—

1. The within-described safety-rail, presenting a smooth or rough or obstructed surface as the hand is passed over it in one direction or the other.

2. Combined with a building, corridor, avenue, or stairway, a safety-rail presenting a smooth or rough or obstructed surface as the hand is passed over it in one direction or the other, substantially as set forth.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature in presence of two witnesses.

EDWIN H. HOWARD.

Witnesses:

WM. T. HOWARD,
DANL. FISHER.