

(No Model.)

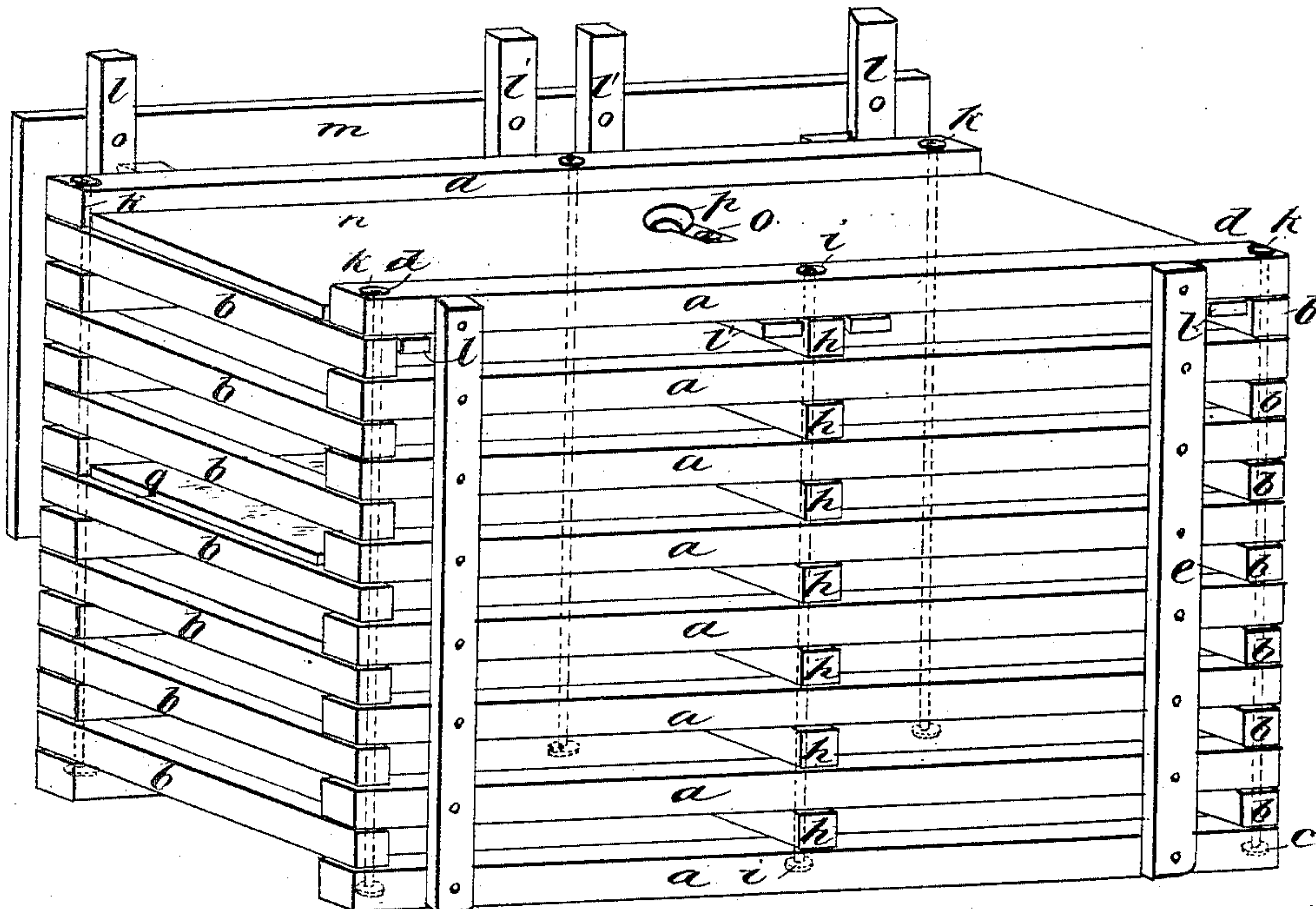
J. COLVILLE.

RETURN CRATE.

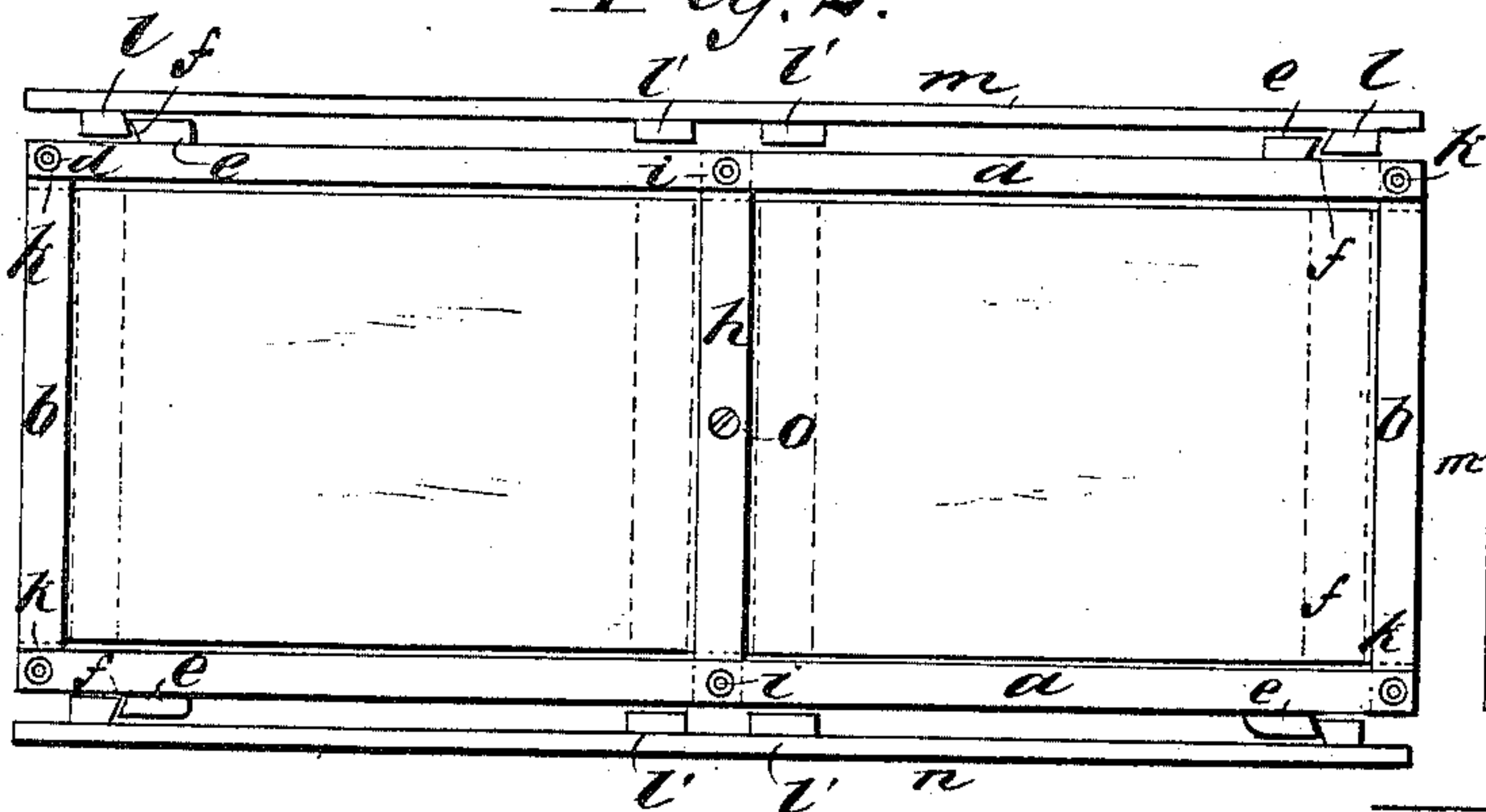
No. 339,045.

Patented Mar. 30, 1886.

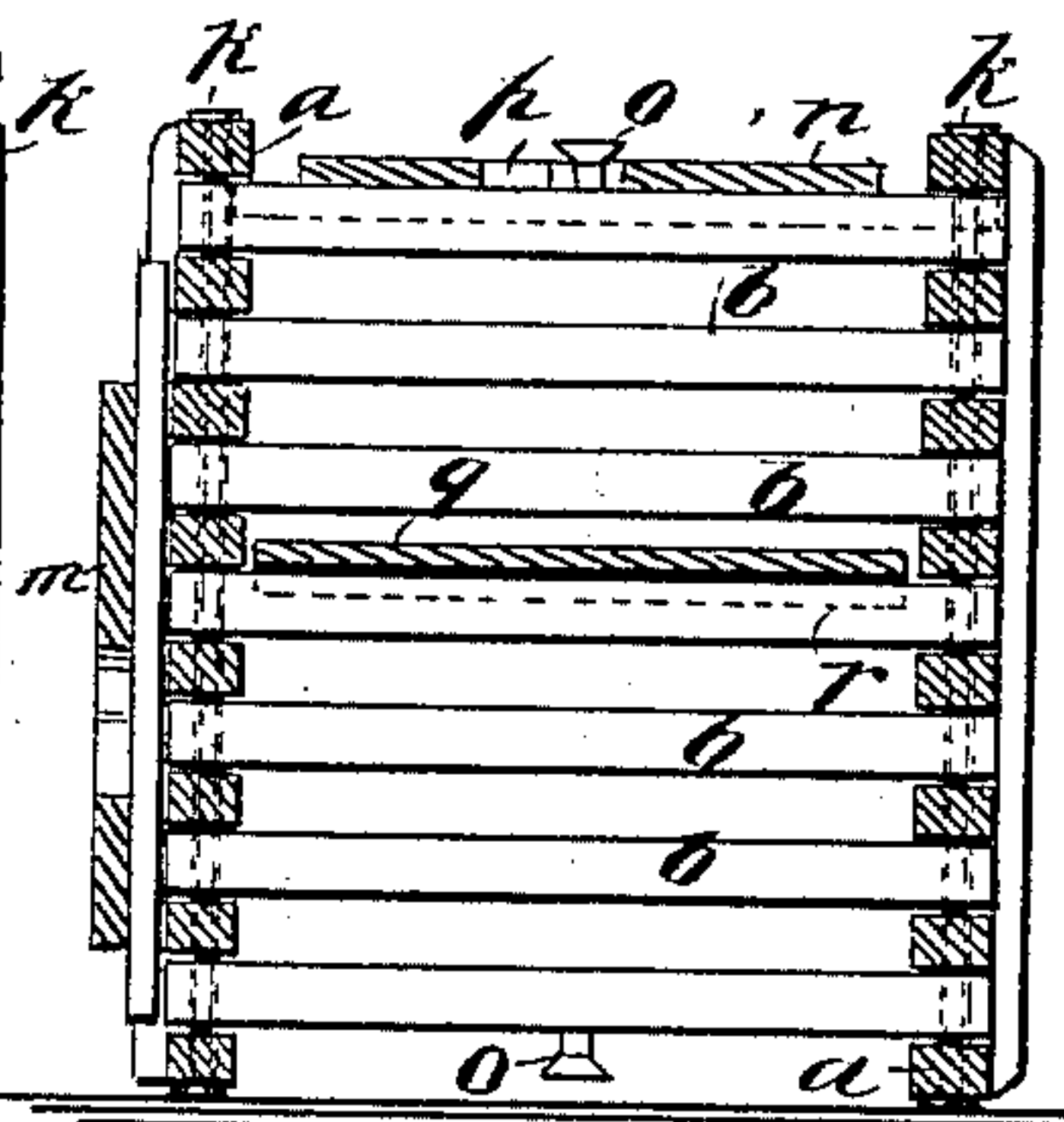
*Fig. 1.*



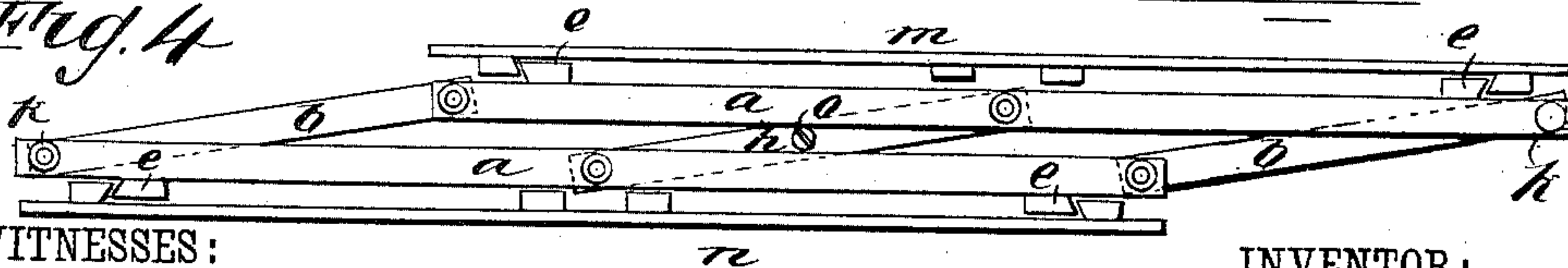
*Fig. 2.*



*Fig. 3.*



*Fig. 4.*



WITNESSES:

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# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JOHN COLVILLE, OF BRUNSWICK, GEORGIA.

## RETURN-CRATE.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 339,045, dated March 30, 1886.

Application filed November 20, 1885. Serial No. 183,429. (No model.)

*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that I, JOHN COLVILLE, of Brunswick, in the county of Glynn and State of Georgia, have invented a certain new and Improved Return-Crate, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description.

My invention relates to an improvement in that form of crate or box employed to transport fruit and vegetables and other like materials to market, which crates or boxes must either be broken up or returned empty to the original shipper. Consequently it is desirable that the crates be so constructed that they may be folded up to occupy the least possible space when they are so returned.

The invention consists of certain novel constructions and combinations of parts, to be hereinafter described, and specifically pointed out in the claims.

Reference is to be had to the accompanying drawings, forming part of this specification, in which similar letters of reference indicate corresponding parts in all the figures.

Figure 1 is a perspective view of the crate, the same being represented with the bottom removed and placed in position upon the side of the crate. Fig. 2 is a plan view of the crate, the bottom and top being removed and placed upon the sides of the crate, and the center partition being represented in place. Fig. 3 is a cross-sectional elevation of the crate. Fig. 4 is a view of the crate as it appears when unpacked and folded for return to the shipper.

The crate proper is composed of side bars, *aa*, and end bars, *bb*, the ends of which meet at the four angles of the crate, where they are overlapped, as shown, and held in place by a long rod, *k*, which passes through the ends of the strips or bars *a* and *b*, being formed at one end with a head, *c*, and passing through a plate, *d*, at the other, above which plate the end of the rod is flattened out by riveting, so that displacement will be prevented. Upon either end of each set of side bars there are cleats *ee*, formed with beveled faces *f*, said cleats serving as braces for the crates, and as the retaining-cleats for the bottom and cover of the crate, as will be hereinafter explained. In the longitudinal center of the crate there is a partition formed by bars *hh*, which are inserted between the bars *aa* and held in place by rods

*ii*, which are riveted in the same manner as the bars *k*.

The bottom *m* and cover *n* of the crate consist of a flat board or series of boards fixed upon four cleats, *ll* and *ll'*, the cleats *l* being at the ends of the cover and bottom, and their inner faces being beveled to fit over the beveled faces *f* of the cleats *e* when removed from the crate, so that they would be held in the position shown in Figs. 1, 2, and 4, upon the side of the crate, while the cleats *l'* are arranged to fit on either side of the upper and lower bar *h*. The cleats *l'* project outward from either side of the cover and bottom, but at unequal distances, the projection being greater upon one side than upon the other, so that, as the cover and bottom are narrower than the interior width of the crate, the longer projecting ends of the cleats may be fitted under the top bar on one side. Then the cover or bottom will be moved slightly away from that side until the shorter projecting ends of the cleats *l'* will fit under the upper or lower bar of the opposite side of the crate. The cover having been so placed in position is held against displacement by a screw, *o*, fixed upon the upper bar *h*, this screw passing through a slot, *p*, formed in the cover, which slot is so shaped that when the longer cleats *ll'* are inserted beneath the top bar, *a*, the screw *o* will pass up through the slot, and as the cover is pulled to the center of the crate the screw-head will pass into a narrower portion of the slot, wherein the shank of the screw will be closely embraced, so that the head of the screw will prevent displacement. When in this position, the slot might be sealed up to prevent all pilfering or tampering with the contents of the crate.

In some cases I have found it desirable to further divide the crate by a central partition, *q*, which is passed in through the end bars, *b*, and held in place by gravity, all lateral displacement being prevented by cleats *rr*, which fit against the sides of the bars *b* and *h*.

When the crate is to be returned to the shipper, the cover and bottom are removed, and the central partition, *q*, taken out, the cover and bottom being slid upon the sides of the crate so that their cleats *l* will engage with the cleats *e* of the crate proper. The crate is then folded over to the position shown in Fig. 4, in

which position it will occupy a comparatively small space.

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

1. A crate or box formed with bars *a* and *b*, united by rods *k*, the bars *a* being provided with cleats *e*, formed with beveled faces *f*, and the cover and bottom of the crate being provided with beveled-faced cleats *l*, substantially as described, and for the purpose specified.

2. The box or crate formed of bars *a b*, united by rods *k*, and being provided with beveled-faced cleats *e e*, in combination with covers *n*

and *m*, provided with beveled-faced cleats *l l*, substantially as described.

3. The box or crate formed of outer bars, *a* and *b*, united by rods *k*, and with inner bars, *h*, united to the bars *a* by rods *i*, said crate being provided with cleats *e*, in combination with the cover and bottom *m* and *n*, provided with cleats *l*, and formed with slot *p* and screws *o*, substantially as described.

JOHN COLVILLE.

Witnesses:

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T. H. PLAYER.