

(No Model.)

2 Sheets—Sheet 1.

G. W. BLACKBURN.  
FRUIT GATHERER.

No. 432,362.

Patented July 15, 1890.

Fig. 1.

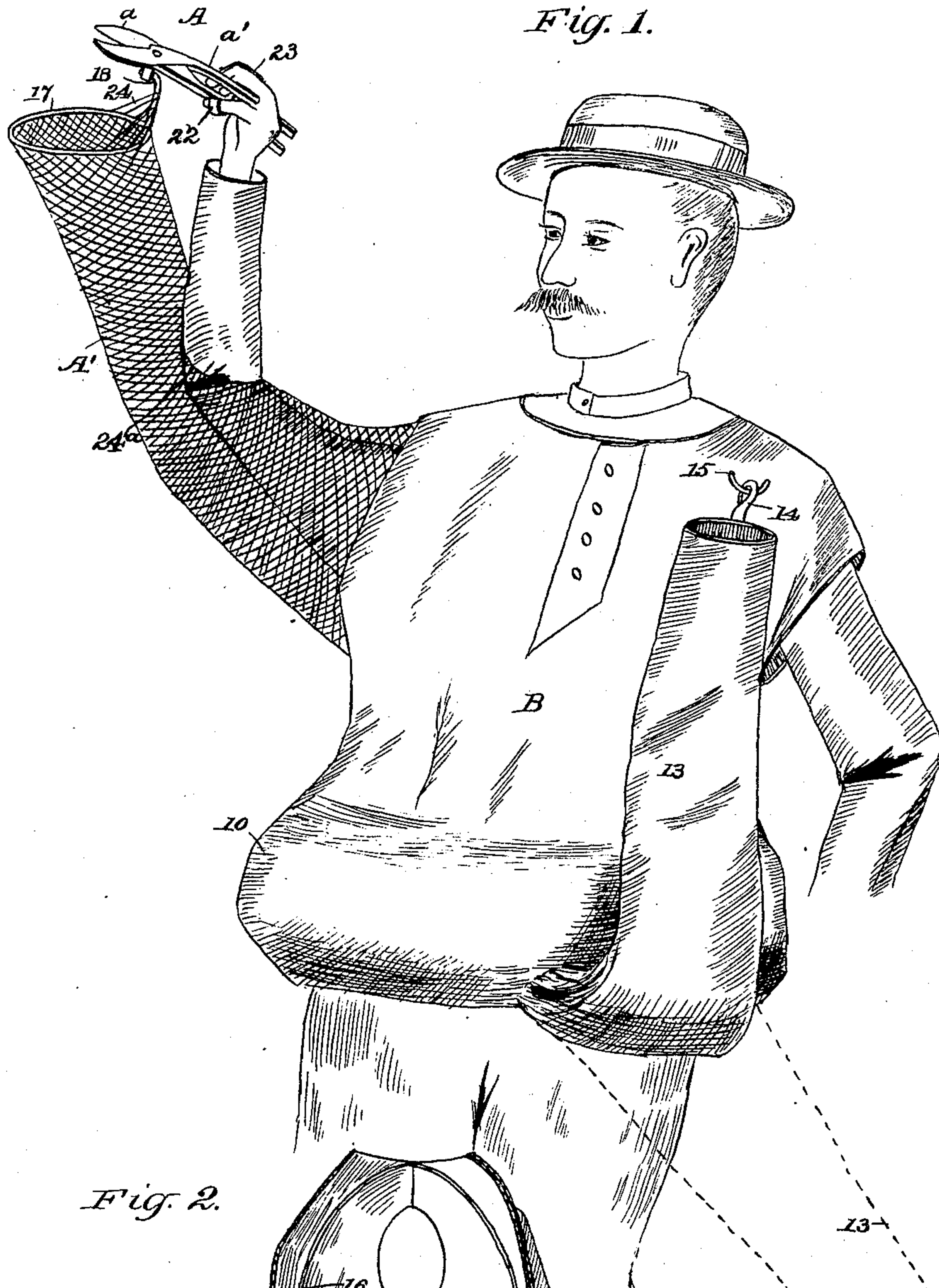
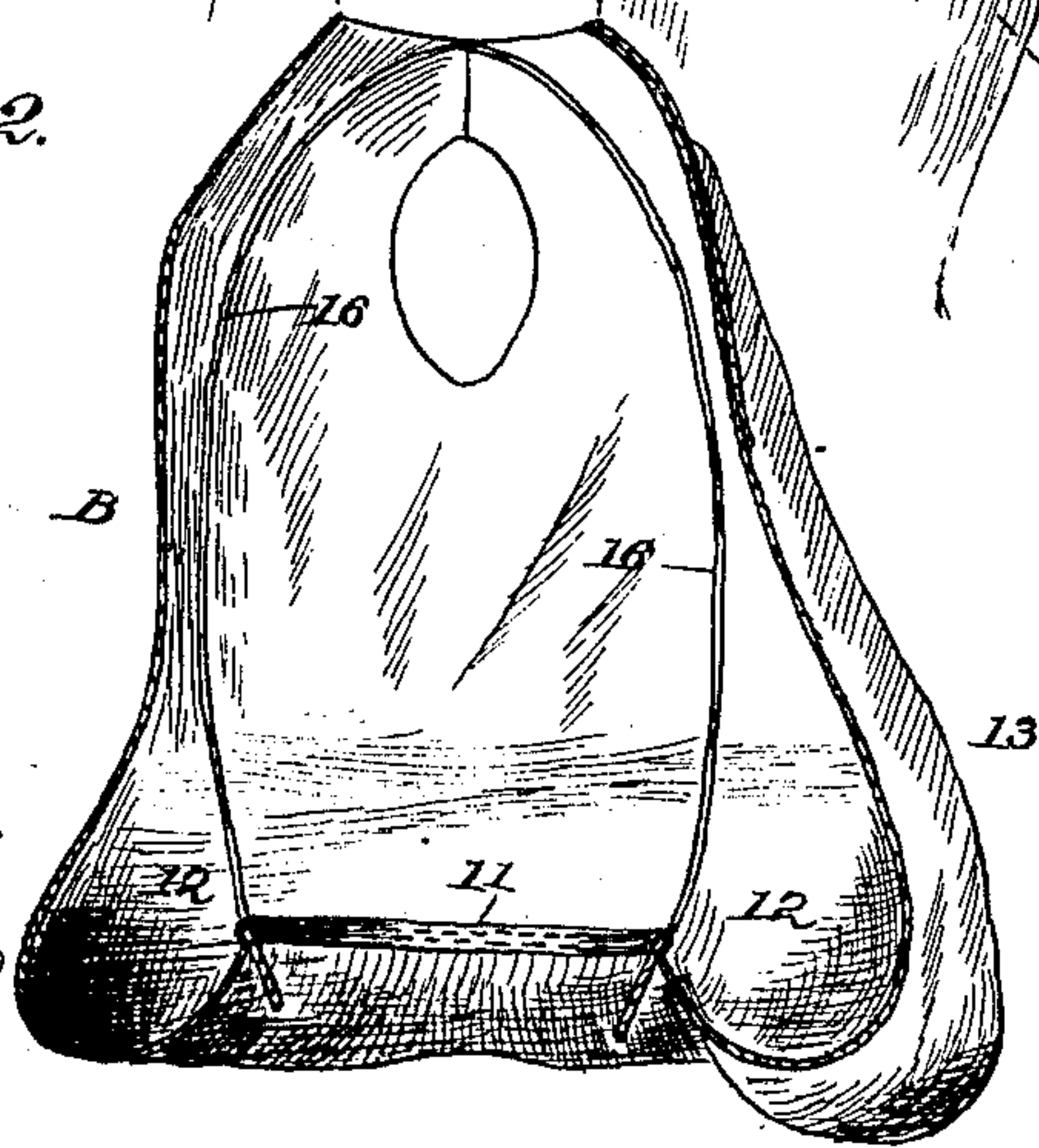


Fig. 2.



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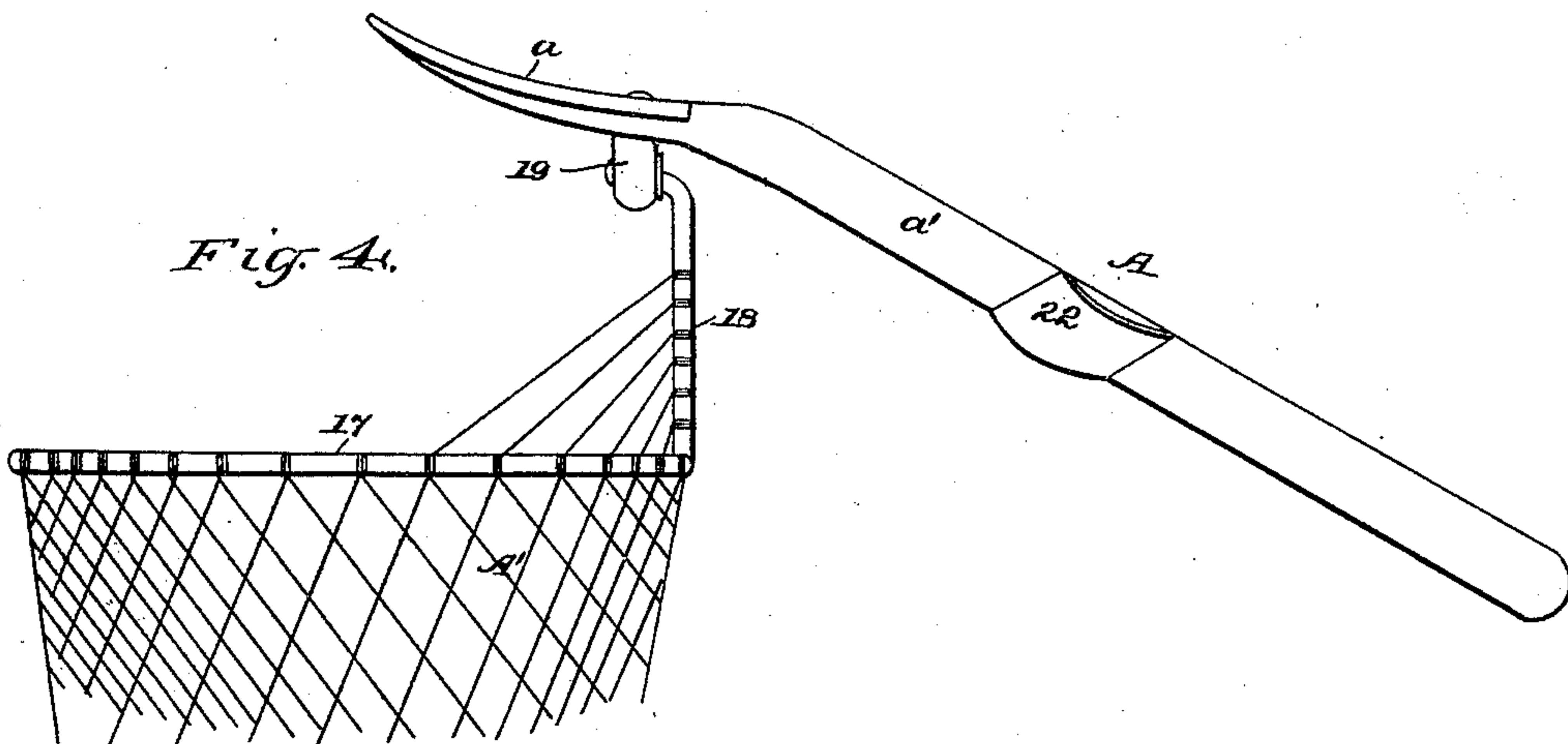
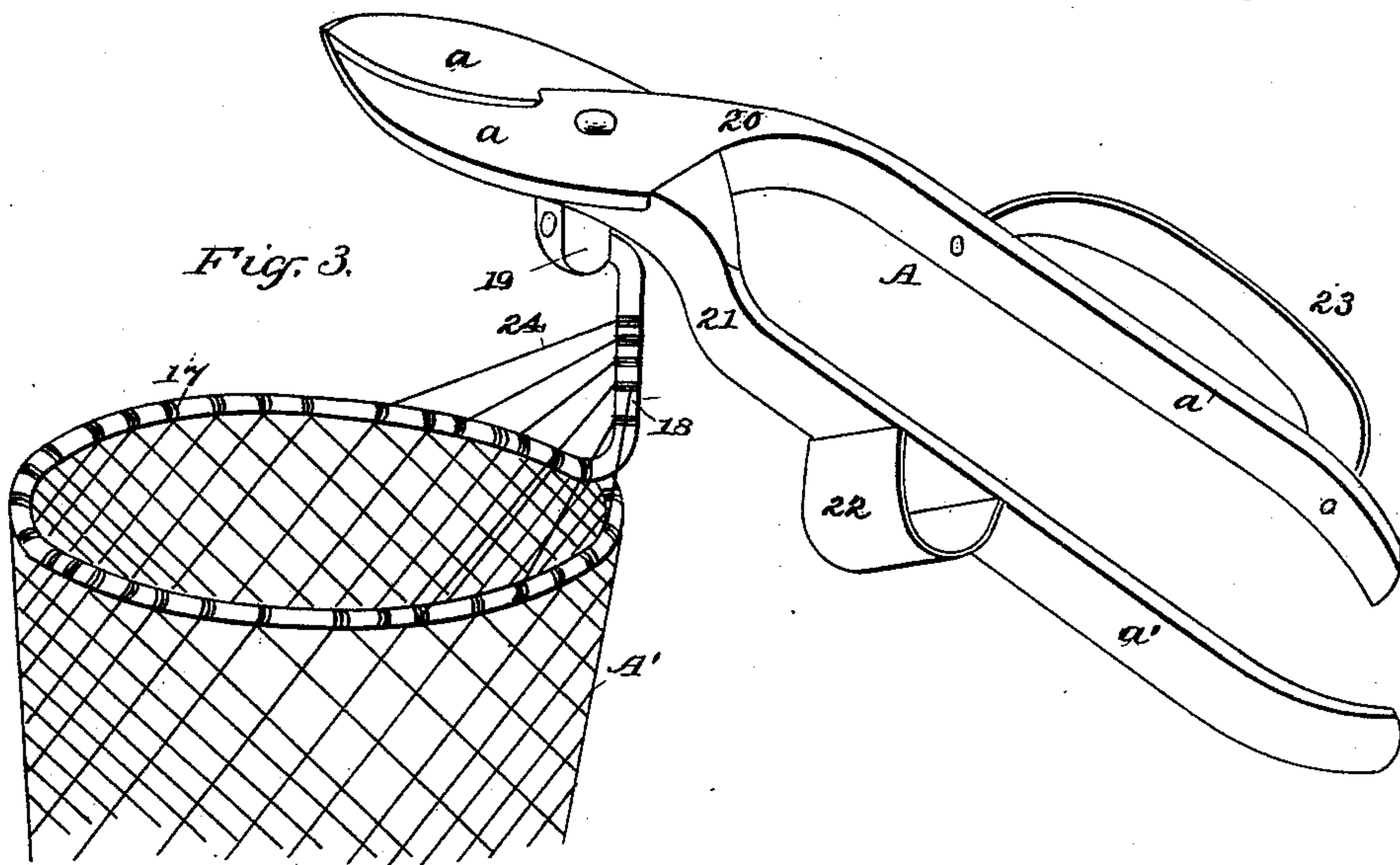
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*C. Sedgwick*

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# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

GEORGE W. BLACKBURN, OF SARASOTA, FLORIDA.

## FRUIT-GATHERER.

**SPECIFICATION** forming part of Letters Patent No. 432,362, dated July 15, 1890.

Application filed December 12, 1889. Serial No. 333,421. (No model.)

*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that I, GEORGE W. BLACKBURN, of Sarasota, in the county of Manatee and State of Florida, have invented a new and useful Improvement in Fruit-Gatherers, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description.

My invention relates to an improvement in fruit-gatherers, especially adapted for gathering citrous fruit, and has for its object to provide an implement with which fruit can be picked much more rapidly than with the ordinary form of pole-picker; and a further object of the invention is to provide a means whereby the fruit may be assorted as picked and carried conveniently in quantities upon the person of the operator and delivered when desired to any suitable receptacle.

Another object of the invention is to provide a means for cutting the stem close to the body of the fruit without injury from the cutter and for delivering the fruit without injury from the same to a commodious pocket formed in a garment worn by the operator.

The invention consists in the novel construction and combination of these several parts, as will be hereinafter more fully set forth, and pointed out in the claims.

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

Figure 1 is a perspective view of the device, illustrating its application. Fig. 2 is a central vertical section through the garment employed in connection with and forming a part of the implement. Fig. 3 is an enlarged perspective view of the cutter and attached conducting-tube or netting, and Fig. 4 is a side elevation of the said cutter and said tube.

In connection with the cutter A and conducting-tube A', to be hereinafter described, a garment B is employed, adapted to be worn by the operator, supported from the shoulders, and of sufficient length to extend below the waist. This garment is constructed somewhat in the form and nature of a sleeveless shirt, and may be made of canvas, calico, or other strong or suitable material, the garment

being of such size as to loosely fit the body of the wearer. The lower portion 10 of the garment is especially full, and the lower extremity is gathered in by means of a draw string or cord, as illustrated at 11 in Fig. 2, to closely fit the wearer's waist. The fullness of the garment near the bottom is such that it will fall downward below the waist, as best shown in Fig. 1, and form an inner pocket or receptacle 12, as shown in Fig. 2. In one side of this pocket portion of the garment an opening is made, and one end of a flexible chute 13 is attached to the walls of said opening, the other end being provided with a clip 14 of any suitable construction, whereby the chute is held in an upright position when the wearer is employed in picking fruit by attaching the clip to a suitable loop or staple 15, preferably located upon or near the shoulder of the garment. In order that the wearer of the garment may not be burdened or inconvenienced by the weight of the gathered fruit, the pocket 12 is supported from the shoulders of the wearer directly, and this is accomplished through the medium of straps 16, attached at their ends to the opposite sides of the waistband 11 and at the center of the loop portion to the shoulders of the garment. Two straps are employed, one passing from the front right-hand side of the waistband over the right shoulder to the back of the band, and the other being similarly located upon the left-hand side of the band.

To one sleeve-opening of the garment, preferably the right-hand sleeve-opening, the lower end of the conducting-tube A' is secured, which conducting-tube preferably consists of netting, as illustrated, and the upper end of the said conducting-tube or netting is attached, preferably, to an elliptical skeleton frame 17, which frame usually consists of a piece of round wire or iron bent upon itself to the above-mentioned shape, one end of the wire or rod being carried perpendicularly upward to form a post or standard 18, the upper extremity of which post or standard is bent at a right angle to the body in the direction of the center of the frame 17, and upon the horizontal extremity of the post the cutter A is pivoted, which is usually accom-



plished by passing the upper end of the post or standard 18 through an aperture in a stud 19, formed upon the under side of the cutter at the pivotal point of its blades. This cutter is capable of a lateral rocking movement upon the standard.

The cutter is constructed in substantially a like manner to a pair of scissors, and comprises two members 20 and 21, each member consisting of a blade-section  $\alpha$  and a handle-section  $\alpha'$ . The blade-sections of the cutter are upwardly curved, so that they present a convexed under face and a concaved upper face, and the handle-sections  $\alpha'$  have a downward inclination from their junction with the blade-sections, as best illustrated in the side elevation, Fig. 4. One handle-section has preferably attached to its outer side a loop 22, of sufficient size to admit the thumb of the operator, and upon the outer face of the opposite handle a larger loop 23 is formed capable of receiving the fingers.

To insure the fruit dropping into the conducting-tube or netting  $A'$ , a series of threads or wires 24 are secured at one end to the post or standard 18, and at opposite ends, one in advance of the other, to the skeleton frame 17. Thus a shield is formed for the rear portion of the frame, as best shown in Figs. 1 and 3.

In operation, when the garment is placed upon the body of the wearer, the left arm of the wearer is free, essentially, from the shoulder, as said arm passes out through the sleeveless opening of the garment. The conducting-tube  $A'$  serves as a sleeve for the right-hand side of the garment, and in that portion of the tube where the elbow of the wearer is located an opening 24<sup>a</sup> is formed of sufficient size to permit the passage of the forearm of the operator, as shown in Fig. 1. The handles of the cutter are grasped by the right hand of the operator, and as the forearm of the right hand is perfectly free he has no inconvenience in the manipulation of the said cutter.

The conducting-tube  $A'$  is of sufficient diameter to permit any fruit entered at the top to pass downward beneath the inclosed portion of the operator's arm and into the pocket 12 of the garment.

Before commencing the operation of picking, the chute 13 is secured in a vertical position, as illustrated in Fig. 1. As the left arm is perfectly free, as is also the greater portion of the right, should the fruit severed from the tree be marred or damaged it may be removed by the left hand and not permitted to enter the conducting-tube, and thus find its way into the pocket.

When the pocket 12 of the garment is filled, its contents may be readily emptied into any suitable and convenient receptacle by disconnecting the clip 14 from the loop or staple 15, whereby the chute is permitted to fall downward and its mouth to enter the receptacle,

and as the chute is located at the bottom of the pocket the contents of the latter, with some slight assistance on the part of the operator, will readily pass through the chute into the receptacle.

I desire it to be understood that a small pocket may be constructed upon one side of the garment to receive the cutters when not in use. The cutter-handles may also be bent inward at their ends in direction of one another to prevent undue strain being brought to bear upon the pivot of the blades.

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

1. In a fruit-picker, the combination, with a sleeveless body garment having a waistband carried upward within the same to form a pocket or sack and provided with a delivery-chute located at the bottom of said pocket, of a conducting-tube attached at its lower end to one sleeve-opening of the garment and provided with an opening at or near the center of its length and a cutter attached to the upper portion of said tube, substantially as shown and described.

2. The combination, with a sleeveless body garment having its waistband carried upward within the same to form an annular pocket and provided with a delivery-chute located at the bottom of said pocket, and shoulder-straps connected with the waistband, of a cutter and a tubular connection between said cutter and the interior of the garment, substantially as shown and described.

3. The combination, with a sleeveless body garment having an annular pocket formed at its base, provided with a flexible tubular outlet, of a cutter having its blades curved upward and its handles curved downward and a conducting-tube suspended beneath the blades of the cutter and connected with the pocket of the garment, substantially as shown and described.

4. The combination, with a sleeveless body garment having an annular pocket formed in its lower portion, said pocket being provided with a flexible delivery-chute, of a skeleton frame provided with an upwardly-extending post or standard, a conducting-tube attached at one end to the said skeleton frame and secured at its other end to one of the sleeve-openings of the garment, the said tube being provided with an opening at or near the center of its length, and a cutter pivotally attached to the said post of the frame, having upwardly-curved blades and downwardly-inclined handles, substantially as and for the purpose specified.

5. As an improved article of manufacture, a fruit-picker consisting of a sleeveless body garment formed with an annular pocket at its lower portion and provided with a flexible delivery-chute at the bottom of the pocket and means for attaching the said chute to the upper portion of the garment, shoulder-



straps attached to the waistband of the garment, a conducting-tube having a central opening in one side attached at its lower end to one sleeve-opening of the garment and at  
5 its upper end to a skeleton frame provided with an upright, and a cutter pivoted upon said upright, the blades of which extend over the upper portion of the tube, substantially as and for the purpose specified.

GEORGE W. BLACKBURN.

Witnesses:

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