

No. 633,018.

Patented Sept. 12, 1899.

F. S. LOTTO.
THEATRICAL APPLIANCE.

(Application filed Jan. 12, 1899.)

(No Model.)

3 Sheets—Sheet 1.

Fig. 1.

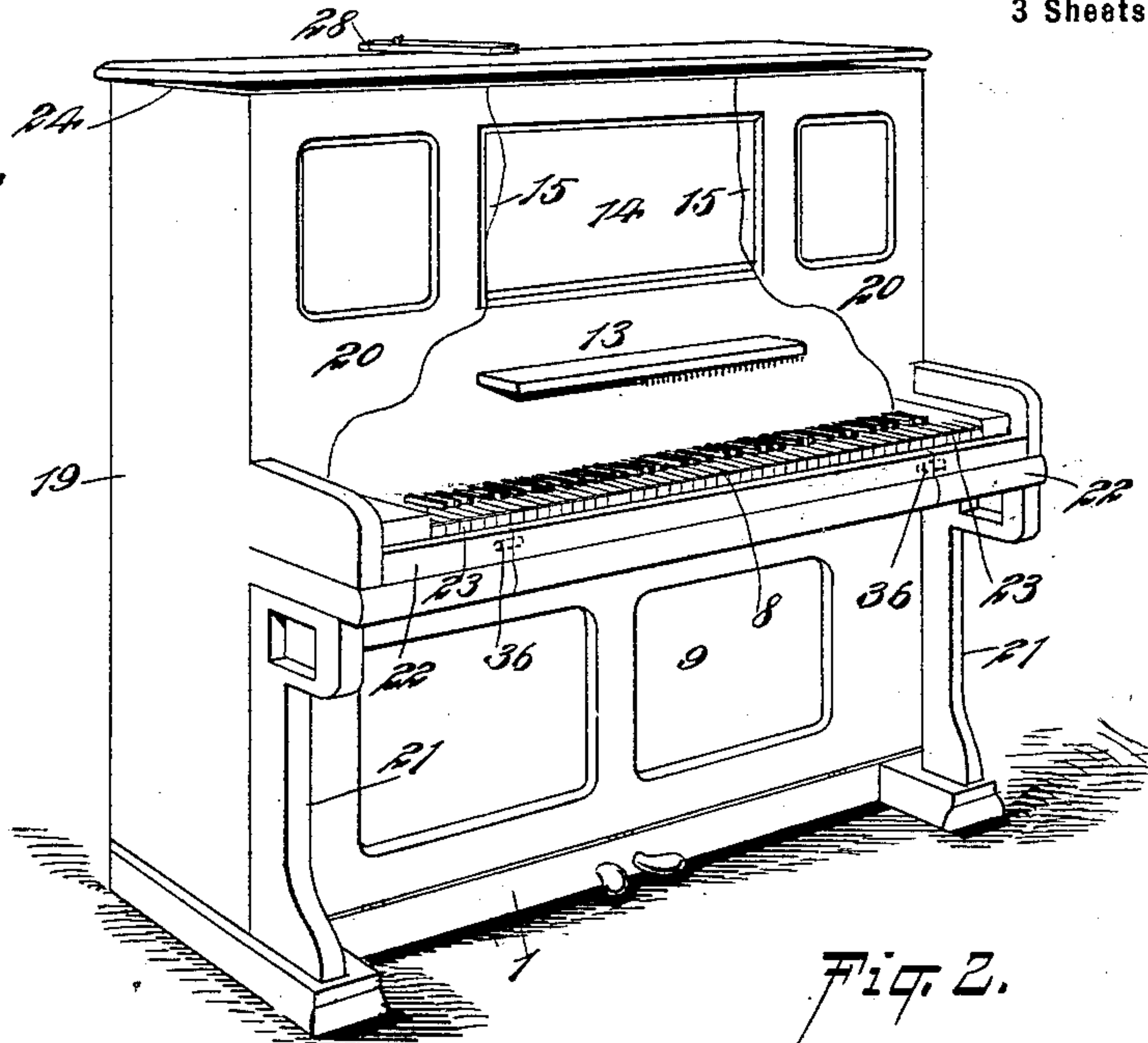
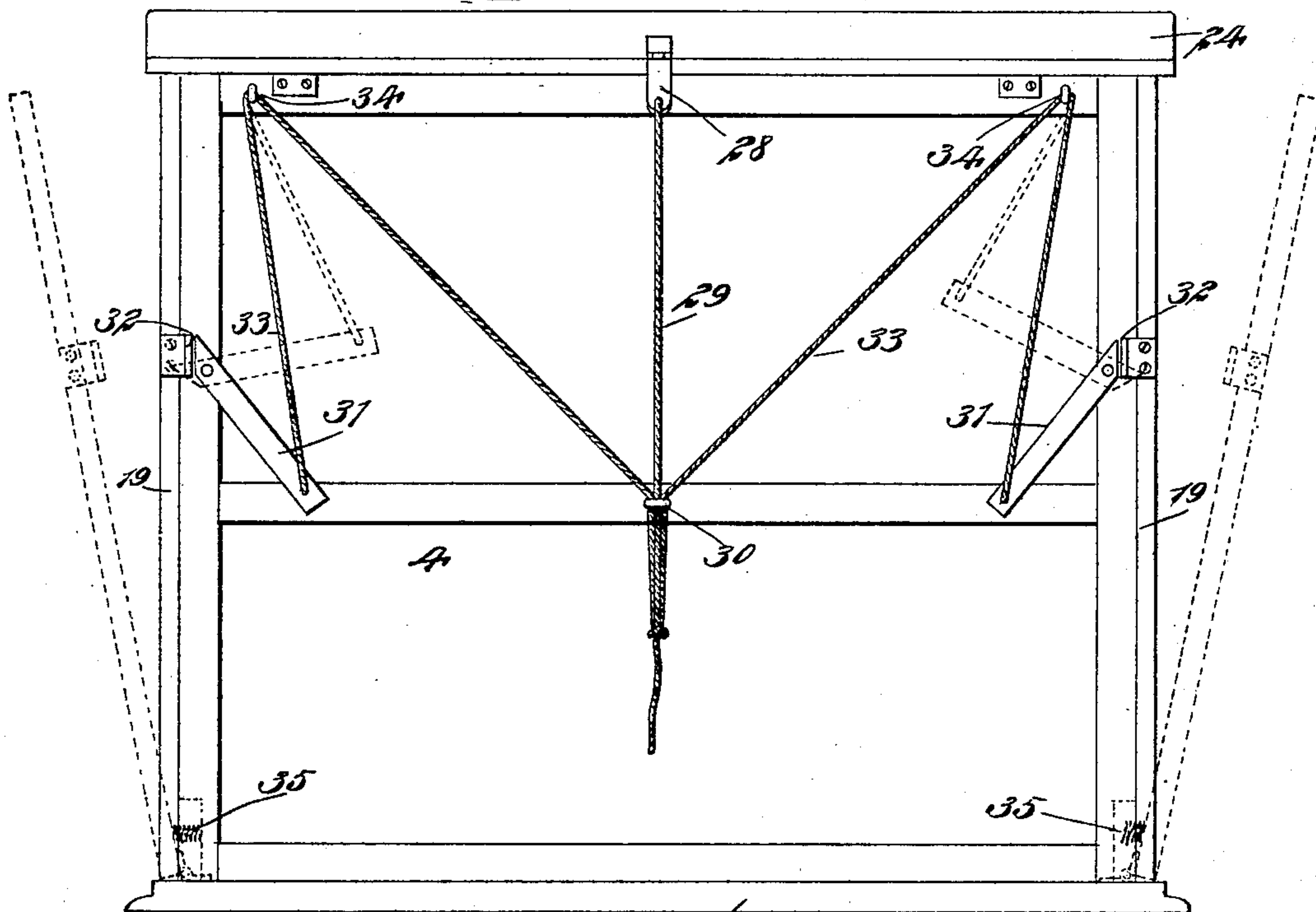


Fig. 2.



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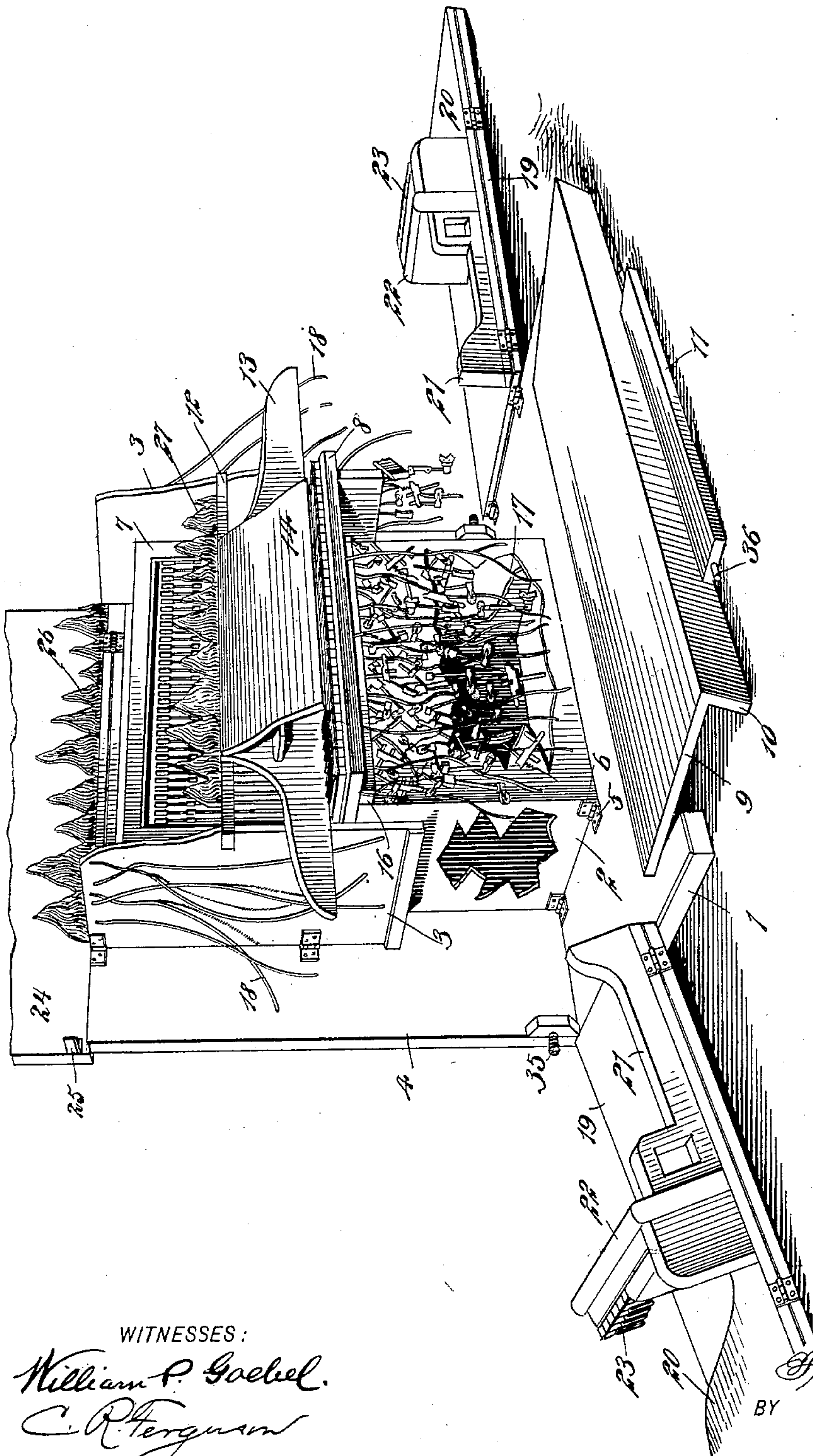


Fig. 3.

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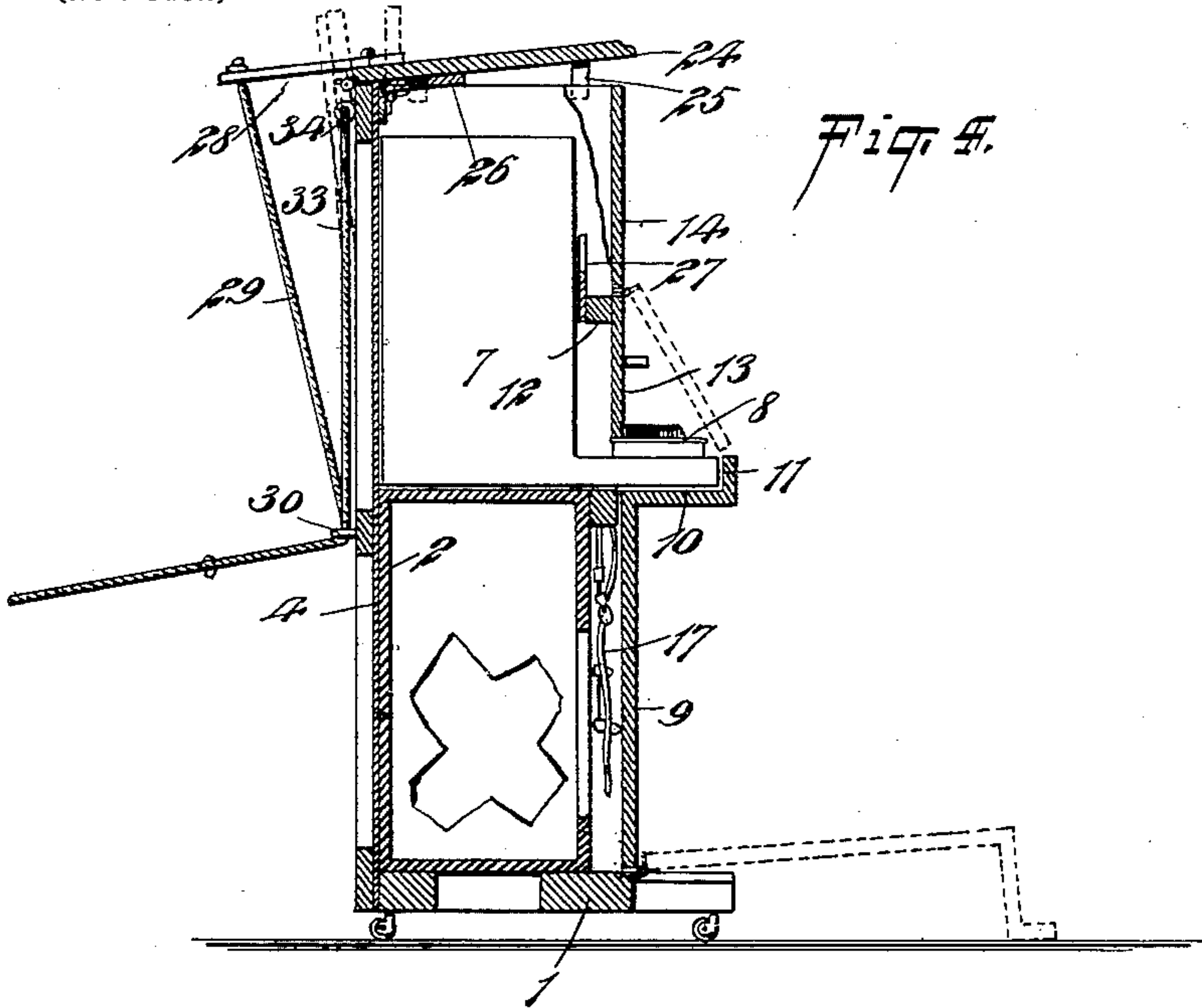


Fig. 5.

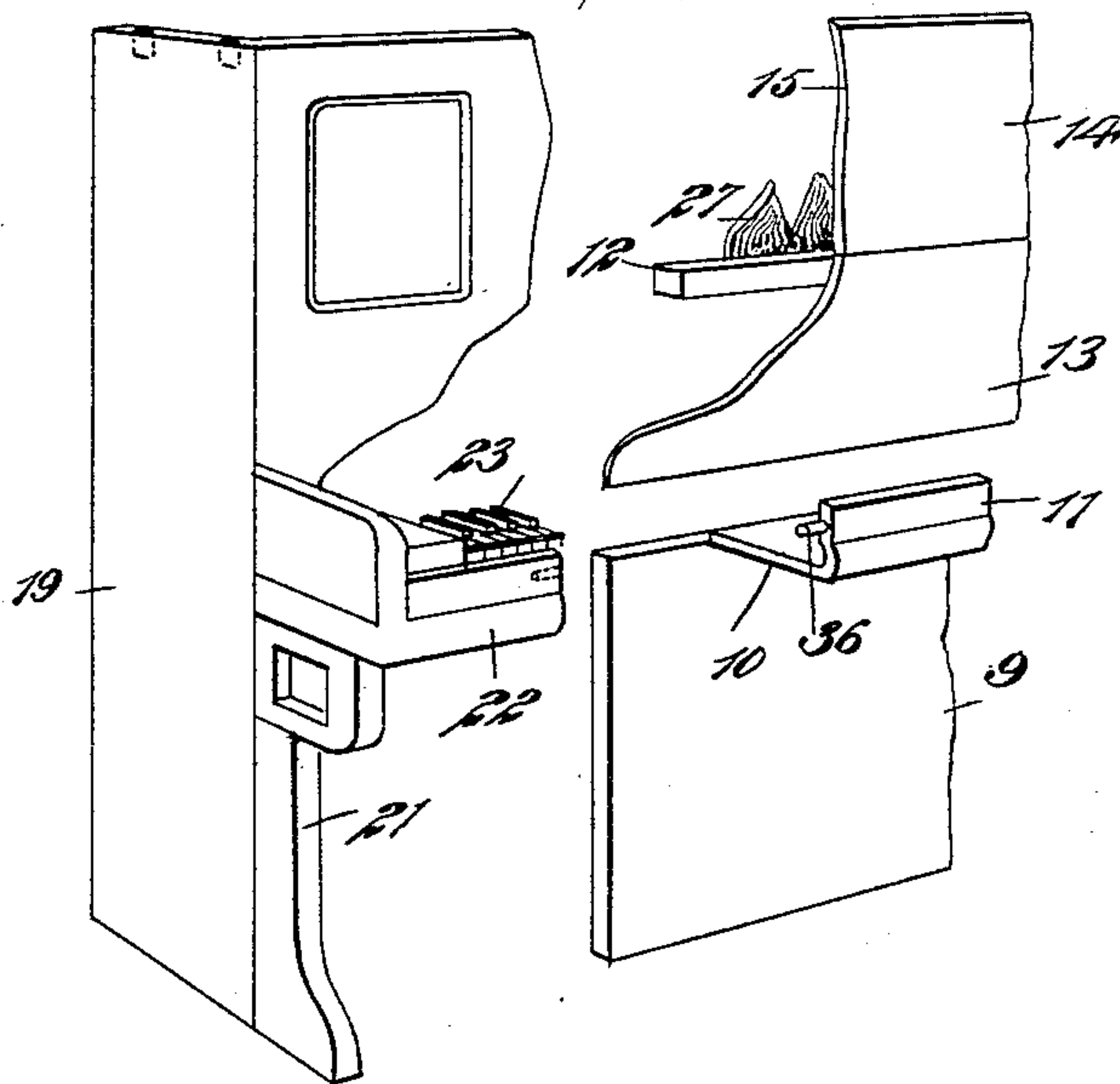
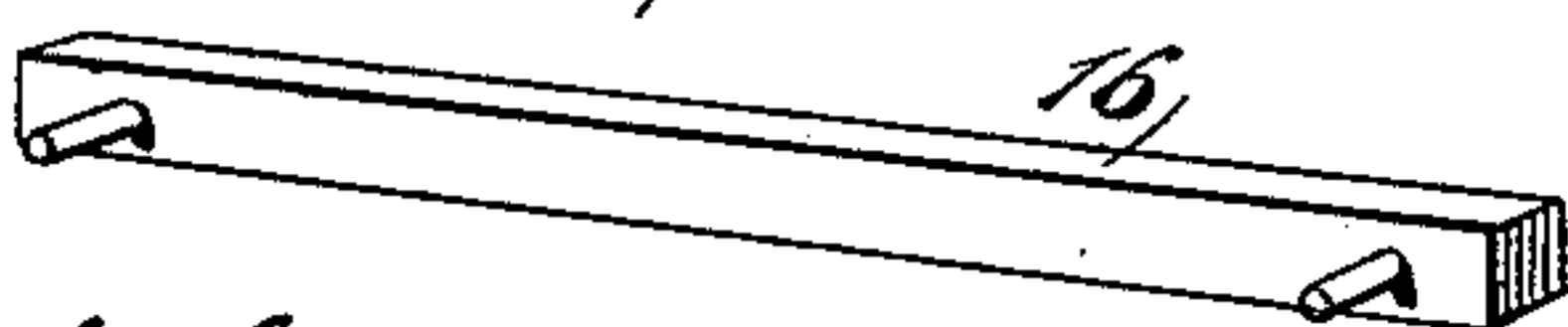


Fig. 6.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

FREDERIC S. LOTTO, OF NEW YORK, N. Y.

THEATRICAL APPLIANCE.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 633,018, dated September 12, 1899.

Application filed January 12, 1899. Serial No. 701,953. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, FREDERIC S. LOTTO, of the city of New York, borough of Manhattan, in the county and State of New York, have
5 invented a new and Improved Theatrical Appliance, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description.

This invention relates to appliances particularly employed in theatrical plays and
10 stage illusions, and the object is to provide an appliance of this character which when all the parts are assembled will be an exact representation of a complete piano, but having the case so arranged that under certain
15 conditions certain parts will become disengaged from other parts and fall, giving the instrument the appearance of a wreck, but a complete or perfect musical instrument arranged in the case will remain intact.

20 I will describe a musical instrument embodying my invention and then point out the novel features in the appended claims.

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

Figure 1 is a perspective view of an instrument embodying my invention and showing the parts in their assembled position. Fig. 2
30 is a back view thereof. Fig. 3 is a perspective view showing the parts in wrecked position. Fig. 4 is a vertical section of the instrument. Fig. 5 is a perspective view showing several of the parts separated to clearly
35 illustrate how they are to be connected; and Fig. 6 is a perspective view of a bar for supporting false strings, hammers, and keys, as hereinafter more fully described.

Referring to the drawings, 1 designates the
40 base of the appliance, upon which is mounted a box 2, having irregular openings in its ends and front. Extended upward from the ends of the box 2 are inner end pieces 3, and secured to these inner end pieces and extended
45 to the base 2 is a back board 4. For convenience in transportation it is desirable that these several parts shall be separable one from another. Therefore I have shown the box 2 as removably secured to the base 1 by means
50 of plates 5 6, having interlocking lugs through which bolts or pintles may pass. The back

board 4 is secured to the inner end boards 3 in a similar manner.

Removably mounted on the box 2 is a small piano 7 of what is termed the "yacht type." 55 This piano 7 has its keyboard 8 extended outward at the front. Having hinge connection with the base 1 at the front of the box 2 is a bottom front board 9, having an outwardly-extended portion 10 to engage underneath 60 the keyboard 8 of the piano 7 and an upwardly-extended flange 11 designed to engage against the front of said keyboard 8. This flange 11, however, is shorter than the outwardly-extended portion 10 for a purpose 65 to be hereinafter stated.

Removably secured to the inner end boards 3 and to a cross-bar 12, removably secured to said end boards, is a top front board consisting of a lower section 13 and a hinged section 70 14. The bottom edge of the section 13 of the upper front board will rest upon the keys of the piano 7 and the section 14 when in its vertical position will extend to the top of the end boards 3 or on a line with the top thereof. 75 This section 14 is considerably shorter than the distance between the end boards 3, and its ends are made irregular, as indicated at 15, to indicate breaks when the several parts are disconnected. 80

Removably connected to the box 2 underneath the keyboard 8 is a bar 16, from which several false strings 17 are hung, and also connected with several of the strings are false hammers and keys. False strings 18 are also 85 loosely hung on the outer sides of the inner end boards 1. Hinged to the ends of the base 1 are the outer end boards 19, and hinged to the front edge of each outer end board 19 is a section 20, adapted when the outer end board 90 is in its vertical position to engage its irregular edge with the irregular edge of the section 14 of the upper front board, and also hinged to the front edge of said outer end boards are legs 21 and a keyboard 22, upon 95 which false keys 23 are mounted. When the outer end boards are in their vertical position, the ends of the keyboard 22 will engage against the ends of the keyboard 8, so that the false keys in connection with the oper- 100 ating-keys of the piano 7 will give the appearance of an ordinary seven-octave piano.

Hinged to the top of the back board 4 is a cover 24, having lugs 25 adapted to engage in holes in the upper ends of the outer end boards 19 when the several parts are assembled, and also having a spring-hinge connection with the upper edge of the back board 4 is a bar 26, which is cut in irregular forms at the top and painted to represent flames. A similar flame-board 27 is attached to the cross-bar 12. Extended rearward from the cover 24 is an arm 28, from which a cord or rope 29 extends downward through a staple 30 on the back board at about the center, and pivotally connected to the back board are push-levers 31, which normally have a downward and inward incline. Their outer ends are inclined or beveled, so as to be in a normal position in vertical line with the edge of the back board, and these beveled ends of the levers are adapted to engage with angle-plates 32, attached to the rear edges of the outer end boards 19. From the inner ends of the levers 31 cords or ropes 33 extend upward through eyes 34 at the top of the back board and then downward through the eye 30, and below this eye 30 it will be found convenient to unite, by means of a knot or otherwise, the several cords or ropes, as plainly indicated in Fig. 2. At the bottom of the back board 4 are springs 35, which when the outer end boards 19 are in their vertical position will engage against the inner sides thereof, and the office of these springs is to give a quick outward movement of the outer end boards when released.

When the several parts are in their vertical or assembled positions, dowels 36 at the ends of the flange 11 will engage in sockets formed in the ends of the false keyboard 22 and the lugs 25 will engage in the ends of the outer end boards 19 and the section 14 of the upper front board will be held by the sections 20 of the outer end boards. When the several parts are in the position described, of course the false strings, keys, and flame-boards will be entirely inclosed or hidden, and the device will have all the appearance of an ordinary piano.

The several movable parts described may be termed a "collapsible casing." In this particular instance it is designed that the several parts shall appear to be separated by explosion. Therefore immediately upon the explosion of gunpowder or the like taking place a person behind the piano, by drawing upon the cords or ropes 29 and 33, will throw the cover 24 upward, releasing the end boards 19, and then the levers 31 will start the outer end boards and the springs 35 will give them impetus to throw them quickly downward, and of course at this time the part 14 and the bottom front board 9 will be released and fall, disclosing the several loosely-hanging strings and the flame-boards, it being understood that when the explosion takes place Greek fire or the like will be burned, which will show through the irregular openings in the box 2 and also illuminate the flame-boards and

other parts of the instrument. When the cover 24 is in its closed or partly-closed position, it will hold the flame-board 26 downward, but as soon as the said cover is swung open the spring-hinges will move the flame-board 26 to its vertical position.

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

1. A theatrical appliance, comprising a musical instrument within a false casing, consisting of several irregular sections detachably connected together so as to represent a true casing for the instrument when assembled, but which will fall apart when released, and means for holding the sections in temporary connection, substantially as specified.

2. A theatrical appliance, comprising a musical instrument, having a false casing consisting of several separable sections, some of which have irregular or broken edges, and false strings in the instrument normally inclosed by the false casing, substantially as specified.

3. A theatrical appliance, comprising a base, a piano supported on said base, a top front board having an outwardly-swinging section with its end in broken line, outer end boards hinged to the base, sections hinged to said outer end boards and adapted to engage with the ends of the upper front board, and false keyboards hinged to said outer end boards, substantially as specified.

4. A theatrical appliance, comprising a base, a piano supported on said base, an upper front board having a swinging section, a bottom front bar having swinging connection with the base, outer end boards having swinging connection with the base, false keyboards having swinging connection with said outer end boards and adapted to engage with the ends of the piano-keyboard to form continuations of the ends thereof, and false strings suspended below the keyboard of the piano, substantially as specified.

5. In a theatrical appliance, a base, a piano supported on said base, a false top board having a hinge connection, a bottom front board having connection with the base, end boards having hinge connection with the base, sections on said end boards for engaging with the upper front board, keyboards hinged to said end boards and adapted to engage with the piano-keyboard, a back board, a cover hinged to the back board and adapted for locking engagement with the end boards, and means for disengaging the parts so that the movable parts may swing on their hinges, substantially as specified.

6. A theatrical appliance, comprising a base, a box removably supported on said base, a piano supported on said box, a back board, a bottom front board hinged to the base, end boards hinged to the base, an upper front board having a hinged section, sections hinged to the end boards for connecting with the upper front board, false keyboards hinged to

the end boards for engaging with the piano-keyboard and form continuations of the ends thereof, dowels on an outer projection of the bottom front board for engaging in sockets
5 in the false keyboards, lugs on the cover for engaging in holes in the upper ends of the end boards, and false strings loosely suspended from the instrument, and normally hidden when the parts are assembled, substantially as specified.
10

7. A theatrical appliance, comprising a base, a box on said base having irregular openings through its walls, a piano supported on said box, an upper front board having a

hinged section, a flame-board inward of said 15 upper front board, a swinging bottom front board, swinging outer end boards, a back board, a cover hinged to said back board, a flame-board having a swinging connection at the upper portion of the back board, means 20 for detachably holding the several parts in their assemble position, and means for disengaging said connections, substantially as specified.

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