

No. 638,544.

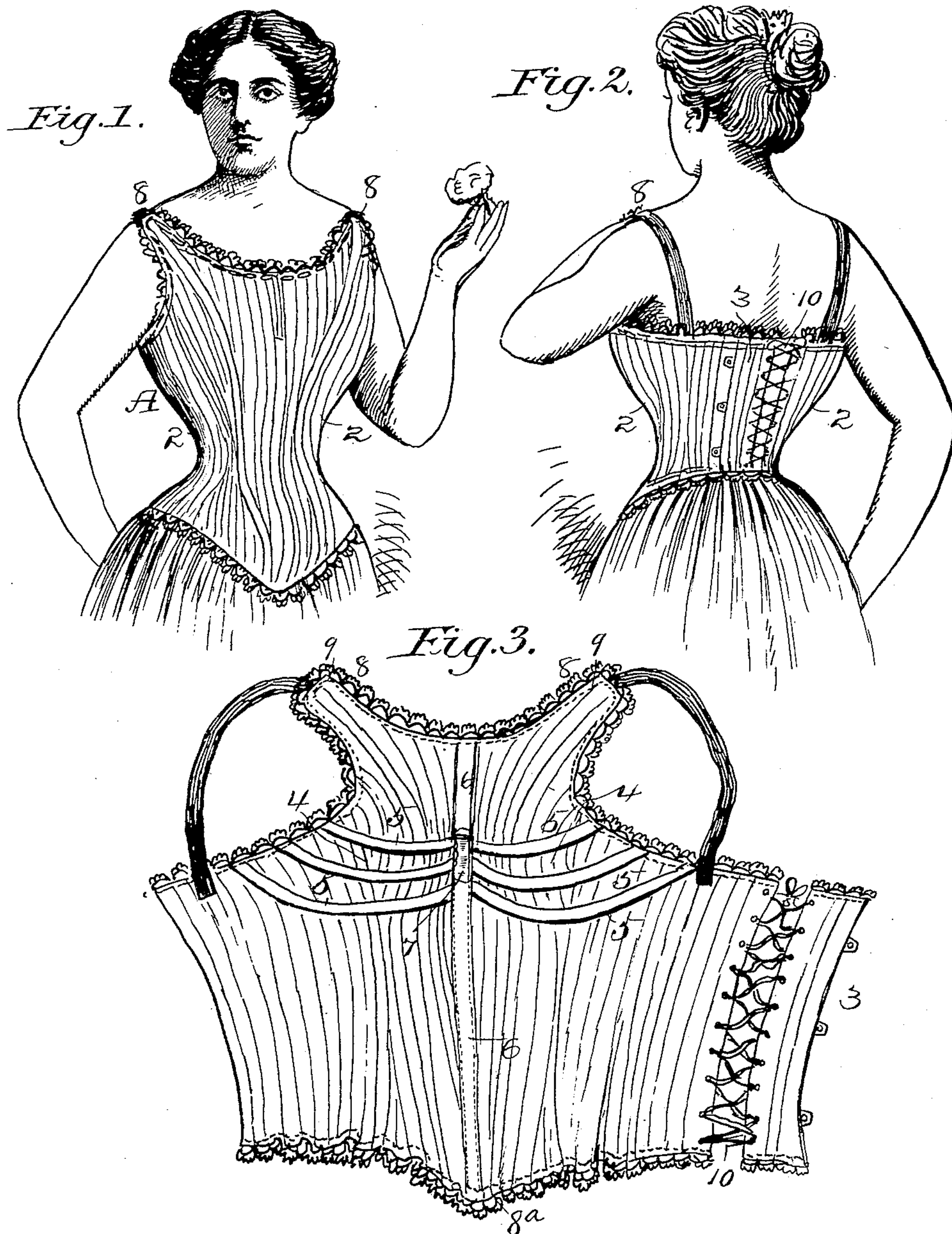
Patented Dec. 5, 1899.

M. L. BARCLEY.  
CORSET.

(Application filed Sept. 12, 1899.)

(No Model.)

2 Sheets—Sheet i.



WITNESSES  
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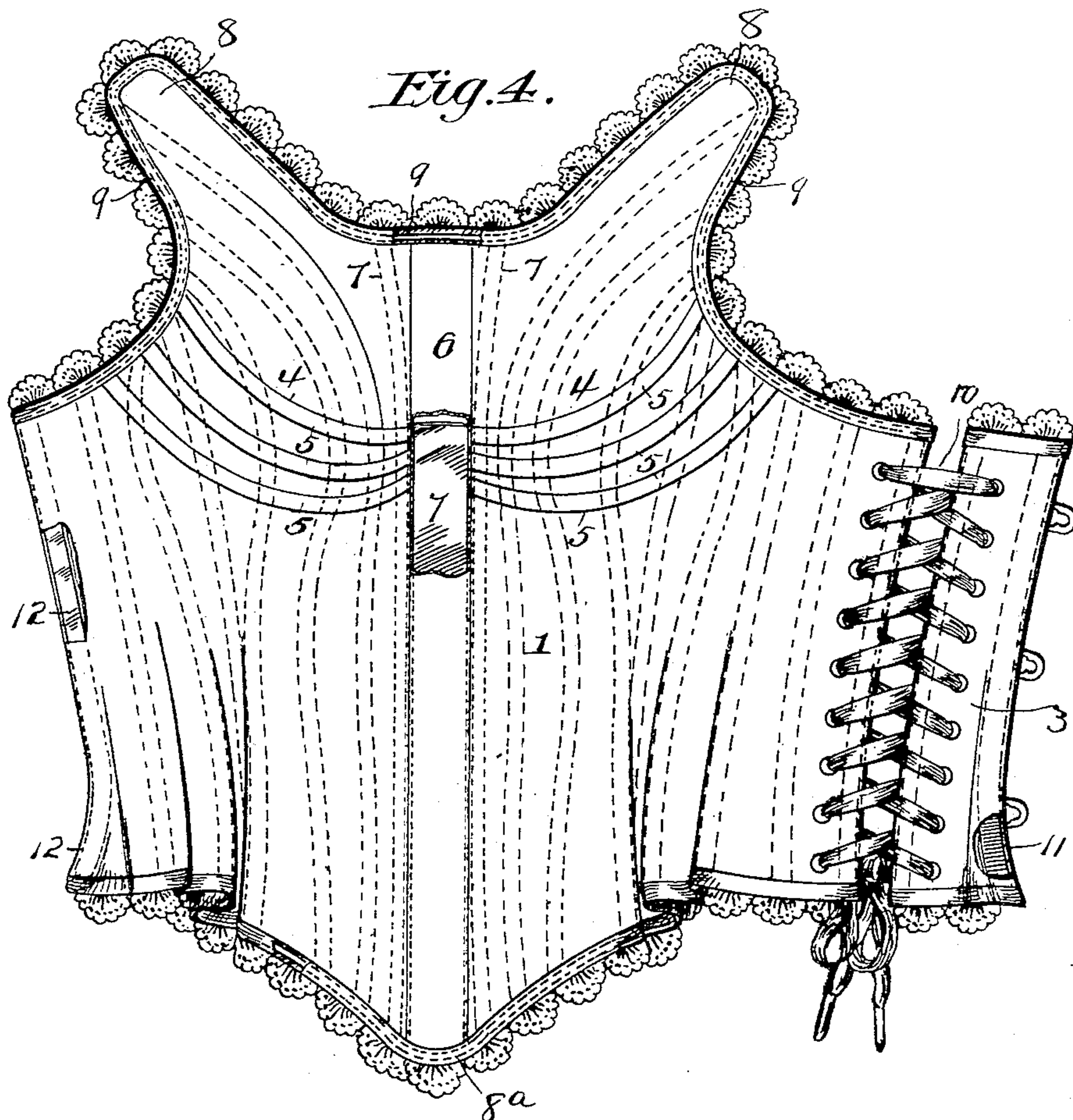
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# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

MARY L. BARCLEY, OF ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI.

## CORSET.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 638,544, dated December 5, 1899.

Application filed September 12, 1899. Serial No. 730,250. (No model.)

*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that I, MARY L. BARCLEY, of St. Louis, in the State of Missouri; have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Corsets; 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.

My invention relates to an improvement in corsets, the object of the invention being to so construct a corset having a closed front that it can be easily and quickly applied and readily fastened in the back by the wearer and so that it will conform to the shape of the bust of the wearer without liability of bunching her clothes in front or presenting a flat appearance in the back.

A further object is to provide a strong and durable corset which shall be light and pliable and not liable to lose its shape and which when in use will serve as a "dress-form" to sustain the dress in perfect symmetrical shape and give to the wearer the appearance of a full bust and perfect figure.

With these objects in view the invention consists in certain novel features of construction and combinations and arrangements of parts, as hereinafter set forth, and pointed out in the claims.

In the accompanying drawings, Figure 1 is a view in perspective from the front showing the corset applied to the body. Fig. 2 is a similar view from the rear showing the shoulder-sections terminating above the shoulders; and Fig. 3 is a view of the inner face of the corset, showing the latter open. Fig. 4 is an inner face view showing certain details.

A represents my improved corset, and it comprises a closed front portion 1, side portion 2, and a detachable back section 3, all of which are gored, boned, and corded. Each breast portion 4, formed in the upper part of the closed front portion 1, is provided on the inner face with a series of transverse radiating stiffening-strips 5. The stiffening-strips 5 of each set converge toward the center of the front portion 1 of the corset, and the respective sets of strips terminate at their inner ends at opposite sides of the central flexible portion 6, which extends from top to bottom of the corset exactly in the center thereof.

The stays 5 are disposed transversely to the longitudinal axis of the corset, extending from points near the upper end of that portion of the corset disposed centrally between the breast portions, and thus said stays radiate from the upper central portion of the corset. From a point at or near the inner ends of the upper strips of each series 5 the central flexible portion of the corset is made to form a pocket for the reception of a heavy steel 7, which extends from the lower end of the corset to a point in line with the inner ends of the upper strip 5 of each series, and thus separates the two breast portions and prevents them from being pulled out of shape. The heavy steel down the front also serves to give a flat appearance vertically and is bent inwardly at its lower end, so as to press against the lower part of the abdomen. Stays 7 7 at respective sides of the central steel are bent outwardly at points above the center, and thus prevent the upper portion of the central stay from pressing against the pit of the stomach.

The breast portions 4 are provided with upwardly-projecting shoulder-sections 8, provided along their outer edges with wires 9 of yielding pliable metal, which may be readily bent and cause the shoulder-sections 8 to conform to the shoulders of the wearer, perform the functions of shoulder-straps, and hug the form so closely as not to be visible through a light underwaist or body. The extreme lower edge of the closed front section 1 is preferably also provided with a yielding or pliable wire 8<sup>a</sup> for holding the lower portion of said section closely against the abdomen.

The detachable back section 3 is provided along one of its vertical edges with a series of holes so arranged as to aline with a like series of holes arranged along the vertical edge of one of the side sections 2, the two sections being united by a suitable lacing-string 10. The opposite edge of the section 3 and the vertical edge of the other section 2 are provided with the ordinary fastening means. The section 3 is made wider at the bottom than at the top, and the stay 11 at the free vertical edge thereof is bent outwardly at its lower end. The portion of the corset adjacent to the stay 12 is also widened at its lower end, and the lower end of said stay is bent out-



wardly in conformity with the lower end of the stay 12, and thus the back of the corset is made to curve outwardly below the waistline, which is very desirable.

- 5 In applying the corset the wearer will first place the same around her bust and then fasten the free edge of the section 3 to the adjacent section 2. This can be very easily accomplished by having the lacing-cord loose.
- 10 After the sections 2 3 shall have been locked together the wearer can very readily draw the lacing-string as tight as desired and secure it by tying.

My improved corset gives a round-waist effect, bringing the surplus clothing and flesh to the back instead of to the front, as is the case with other forms of corsets, especially those having closed fronts. The ability of avoiding the bunching of the clothes and flesh in the front is a very desirable and important result of my improved construction of corset, this result being largely due to the use of the detachable back section, which permits the wearer to pull the corset around her in a backward direction and then fasten it herself.

The construction herein described also produces a light flexible corset adapted to sustain and fill the dress properly, whether the wearer's figure be full or otherwise.

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

1. A corset comprising two sections, one a closed or continuous front and side portion, and a separate back section, lacing for adjustably securing one edge of the separate back section to one of the side portions of the corset, and fasteners secured to the other edge of the separate back section and the other side

portion, for detachably securing such parts together, substantially as set forth. 40

2. As a new article of manufacture, a corset comprising a body portion having upwardly-extending shoulder-sections, the latter terminating above the shoulders and a front portion extending downwardly from the waist as shown and yielding, pliable wires or equivalent devices embedded in the outer edges of said shoulder-sections and downwardly-extending front section whereby said sections can be bent or shaped to conform to and rest closely against the body of the wearer, substantially as set forth. 50

3. A corset having protruding breast portions and an independent series of stays transverse of the longitudinal axis of the corset in each breast portion, the stays of each series diverging from the upper central portion of the corset and having their outer terminals spaced apart along the upper edge of the side sections of the corset. 55

4. A corset having a closed front provided with a vertical flexible portion between the breast portions, a steel in said flexible portion terminating at its upper end below the top of the corset, and stays at respective sides of said central steel and projecting above the same, the upper portions of said stays bent outwardly to prevent the upper end of the central steel from pressing against the wearer. 60

In testimony whereof I have signed this specification in the presence of two subscribing witnesses. 70

MARY L. BARCLEY.

Witnesses:

J. S. VAN NORSTRAND,  
J. R. McDONOUGH.