

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

ALEXANDER JOHNSON, OF PEKING, CHINA.

DEVICE FOR CATCHING MAIL-BAGS.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 778,671, dated December 27, 1904.

Application filed June 21, 1904. Serial No. 213,548.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, ALEXANDER JOHNSON, a citizen of the United States, residing at Peking, China, have invented a certain new and useful Improvement in Devices for Catching Mail-Bags, of which the following is a specification.

My invention relates to a new and useful improvement in mail-bag-catching devices, and has for its object to provide a device carried by the mail-car which will operate in conjunction with a latch attached to a stationary support, whereby the mail-bag may be caught by the moving car without striking the bag.

With these ends in view this invention consists in the details of construction and combination of elements hereinafter set forth and then specifically designated by the claim.

In order that those skilled in the art to which this invention appertains may understand how to make and use the same, the construction and operation will now be described in detail, referring to the accompanying drawings, forming a part of this specification, in which—

Figure 1 is a section through a portion of a car, showing my device in the act of detaching and catching a bag; Fig. 2, a section through the horizontal support, showing a bag suspended from the latch; Fig. 3, a perspective view of the latch and a portion of the basket in which the bag is caught; Fig. 4, a side elevation of the basket.

It is the usual practice now in mail-cars to catch a mail-bag by having an arm pivoted to the car which strikes the mail-bag in the center, and the operator moves the arm inward, carrying the mail-bag into the car. The principal disadvantage of this system is that the arm striking the mail-bag while the train is coming at a great speed is liable to injure the mail-matter, particularly in case of packages containing frail articles.

My invention is for the purpose of avoiding the mail-bag being struck, it simply being detached automatically and allowed to drop into the basket and then carried into the car.

A represents a support.

B is a ring depending from the horizontal member of the support.

C is a latch which is provided with a finger D, which protrudes through the ring or eyelet B, and the mail-bag E is provided with a

ring E', adapted to hang upon the protruding end of the finger D.

F is an arm pivoted in the mail-car and adapted to be thrown out horizontally. G is a basket suspended from the outer end of this arm, and this basket may be made of rope or any other material having a large mesh to do away with any resistance to the air.

H is a contact-arm extending upward from the arm F, and the latch C is provided with a heel end C', and thus when the arm F is thrown outward the basket G will pass so that the bag E will hang directly over the same, and at that time the contact-arm H will strike the heel end C' of the latch and withdraw the finger D from the ring E' of the bag and the bag will then drop into the basket and may be carried into the car. The latch is provided with two fingers D, extending out from the opposite sides, so that said latch may be reversed when the train is traveling in the opposite direction.

Of course I do not wish to be limited to the exact construction here shown, as slight modifications could be made without departing from the spirit of my invention.

Having thus fully described my invention, what I claim as new and useful is—

In a device of the character described, a support provided with a horizontal member, a ring or eyelet depending from said horizontal member, a latch pivoted to the horizontal member, a finger formed with a latch adapted to protrude through the eyelet, a mail-bag, a ring secured to the mail-bag adapted to pass over the protruding end of the finger, a heel end provided upon the latch upon the opposite side of the pivot, a movable arm adapted to be thrown out horizontally from the car, a basket carried upon the outer end of said movable arm, a contact-arm carried by the movable arm and adapted to strike the heel end of the latch to disengage the mail-bag when the basket is underneath the same, as specified.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto affixed my signature in the presence of two subscribing witnesses.

ALEXANDER JOHNSON.

Witnesses:

G. W. DROLLETTE,
HENRY P. FLETCHER.