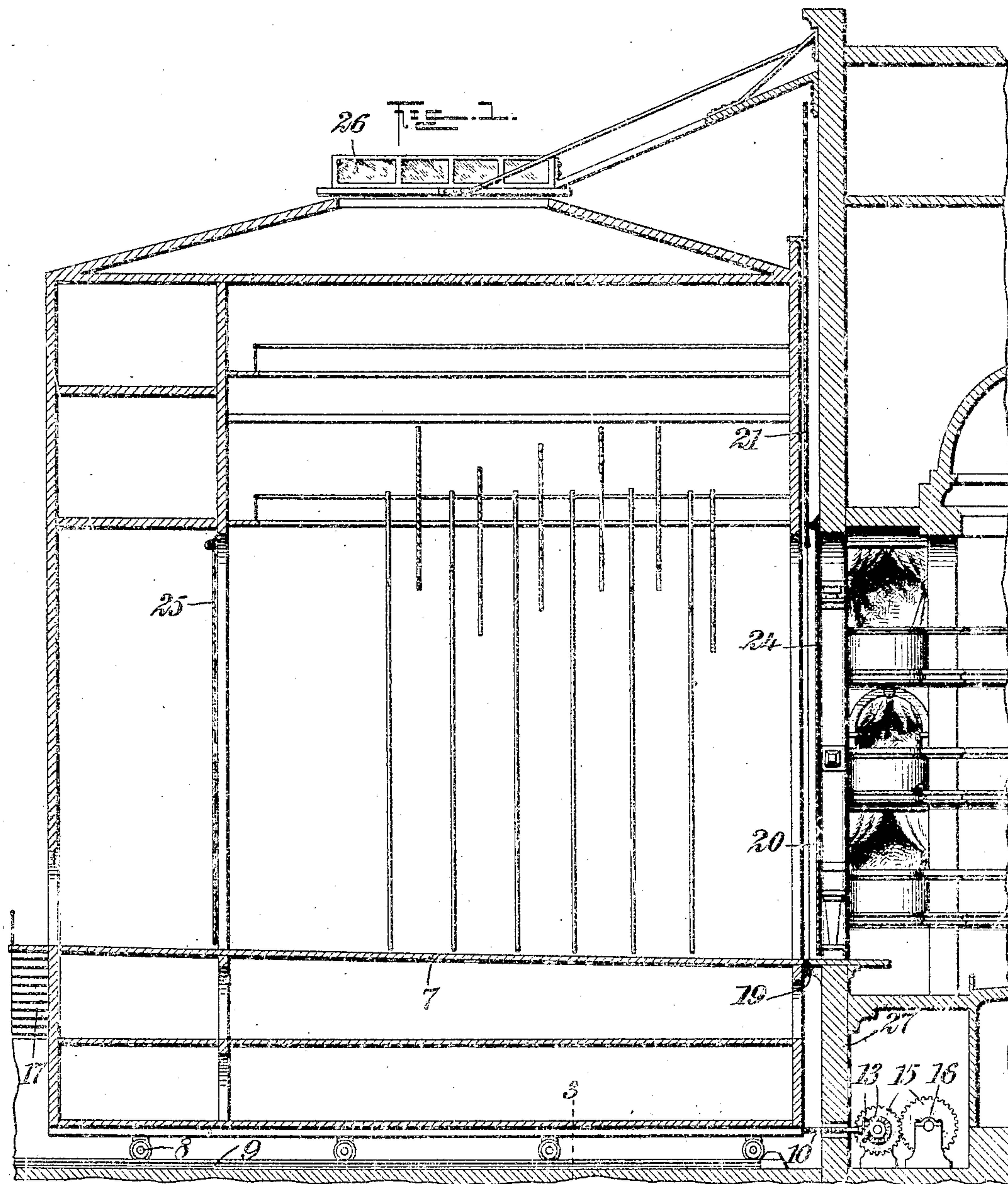


No. 786,711.

PATENTED APR. 4, 1905.

A. M. ANDERSON.  
THEATER APPLIANCE.  
APPLICATION FILED NOV. 15, 1904.

3 SHEETS—SHEET 1.



WITNESSES:

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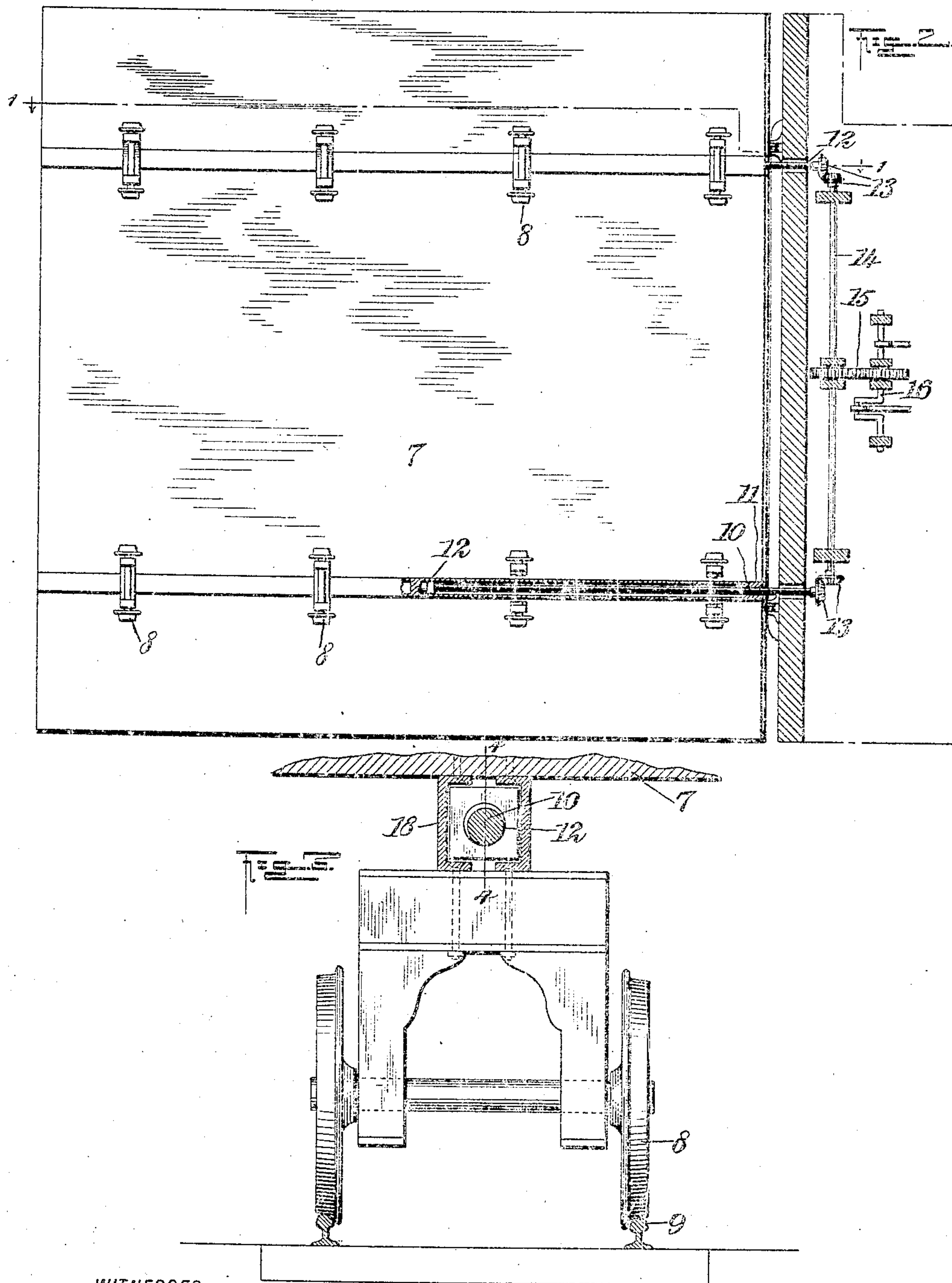
ATTORNEYS

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3 SHEETS--SHEET 2.



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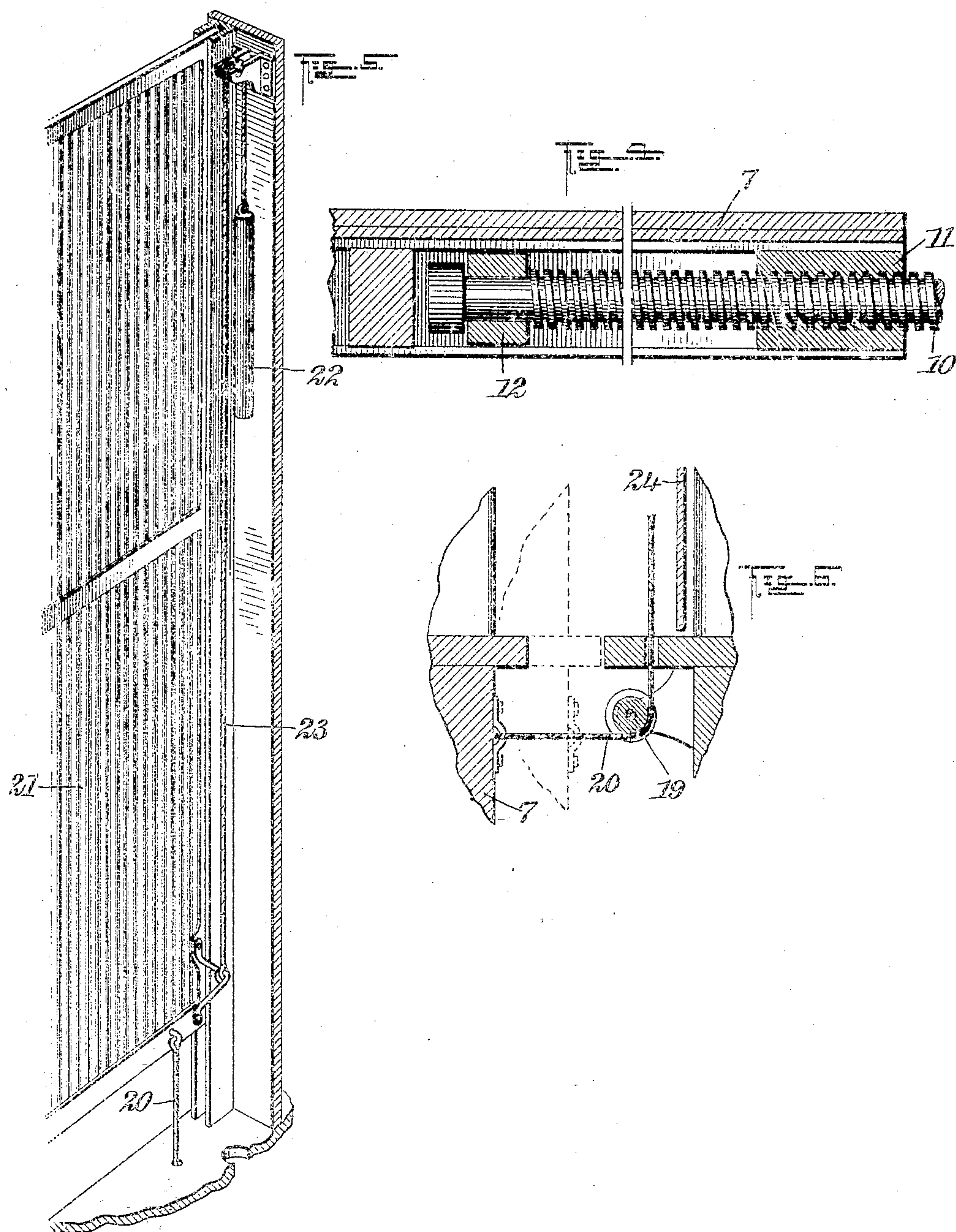


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# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

AUGUST M. ANDERSON, OF MOORHEAD, MINNESOTA.

## THEATER APPLIANCE,

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 786,711, dated April 4, 1905.

Application filed November 15, 1904. Serial No. 232,326.

*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that I, AUGUST M. ANDERSON, a citizen of the United States, and a resident of Moorhead, in the county of Clay and State of Minnesota, have invented a new and Improved Theater Appliance, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description.

My invention relates to a theater appliance for the purpose of preventing panics in theaters in case of fire. Panics are caused by the sight of flames and the smell of smoke and may be prevented by the removal of these causes. My invention has this for its principal object, as will appear in the subjoined description. Further objects will appear below.

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

Figure 1 is a sectional view on the line 1 1 of Fig. 2 of the stage of a theater with a preferred form of my invention applied and certain parts adjacent to the stage being shown. Fig. 2 is a sectional view showing the bottom of my improved stage. Fig. 3 is a sectional view on the line 3 3 of Fig. 1. Fig. 4 is a sectional view on the line 4 4 of Fig. 3. Fig. 5 is a perspective view showing a metallic fire-shield; and Fig. 6 is a sectional view, on an enlarged scale, showing the details of mechanism for operating the shield.

In the drawings, 7 represents a stage which is mounted on wheels 8 to travel on a track 9.

10 is a screw-threaded shaft mounted in bearings to prevent its longitudinal movement and placed in threaded engagement with a nut 11, secured to the bottom of the stage.

12 is a bearing located in a cavity in the under side of the stage, adapted for receiving the end of the shaft 10 and preventing vibration thereof when the shaft is turning. The shaft 10 is operated by gearing 13 from a rotating shaft 14, which in turn is operated by means of gearing 15, connected with a shaft 16, operated by any suitable motor.

Upon the back of the stage 7 is preferably located a flight of steps 17, which is normally outside of the theater.

The shaft 10, nut 11, and bearing 12 are preferably contained within a casing formed

of channel-irons 18. (Shown by Fig. 3 attached to the bottom of the stage 7.)

19 is a roller attached to a stationary part of the house and over which passes a flexible cord, cable, or chain 20, connected to the bottom of a steel or other effective fire-shield 21, which is normally held in a raised position above the proscenium-arch and is counter-weighted by means of a counterweight 22, attached to the bottom of the shield by means of a cord, cable, or chain 23. An ordinary asbestos curtain at the front of the stage is represented by 24, a rear curtain by 25, and a skylight by 26. These two curtains are operated independently of the other parts mentioned, but form a necessary part of the apparatus. The skylight 26 is stationary, but is so situated as to afford an outlet for the smoke from a fire below.

The operation will be obvious. Upon the presence of fire being discovered the motor attached to the shaft 16 will be started, or, if desired, the motor may be continuously operating and the power may be shifted onto the shaft 14 in any desired manner. This will cause the screw-shaft 10 to operate in the nut 11 and carry the stage, with all parts attached thereto, back through an opening in the rear. The partition 27 and all parts in front of the stage will of course remain stationary. In its movement backward the stage through the instrumentality of the connection 20 will pull down the fire-shield 21, and the asbestos curtain 24 should go down with it or before it in order that the audience may not see that anything unusual has happened. Of course the stage may move rearwardly a distance equal to the height of the fire-shield 21.

It will be seen that while this arrangement is not intended to prevent fires, but merely to prevent panics, it will assist in the extinguishment of the fires by reason of the clearing of the space behind the curtains, thus permitting the fire department to have a clear space for working. If the audience discovers that the stage has been withdrawn, they will reason that as the shield is lowered and the stage is some twenty-four feet back from the shield there is no need to rush for the exits. It is not reasoning, but the sight of smoke and



flames, that always causes a panic and consequent loss of life.

While I have illustrated and described a preferred embodiment of my invention, it is  
5 to be understood that the latter is not limited thereto, as many modifications may be made.

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

1. The combination of a theatrical stage,  
10 and means for moving it, comprising a nut connected with the stage, a screw-shaft threaded in said nut, and a revolving shaft for operating said screw-shaft.

2. A theatrical stage mounted on wheels and  
15 having a nut, in combination with a rotatable screw-threaded shaft passing through the nut.

3. A theatrical stage movably mounted and having a casing attached to the bottom thereof, a nut fixed in said casing, a journal slidably  
20 mounted in the casing, and a screw-shaft threaded in said nut and journaled in said journal.

4. The combination of a theatrical stage,

means for moving it bodily, a fire-shield, and means for transmitting motion from the stage 25 to the fire-shield.

5. The combination of a theatrical stage, means for moving it bodily, a fire-shield, and a connection from the stage to the fire-shield for automatically moving the shield by means 30 of the motion of the stage.

6. The combination of a stage, means for moving it, a vertically-movable metallic curtain, and a flexible connection from the stage to the curtain. 35

7. The combination of a stage, means for moving it, a vertically-movable curtain, a flexible connection from the stage to the curtain, and a stationary skylight.

In testimony whereof I have signed my name 40 to this specification in the presence of two subscribing witnesses.

AUGUST M. ANDERSON.

Witnesses:

AXEL LARSEN,  
JUSTUS SWANHOLM.