No. 791,354. PATENTED MAY 30, 1905.

M. S. MERKLEY.

CATAMENIAL APPLIANCE.

APPLICATION FILED JAN. 6, 1904.

Fig. 1.

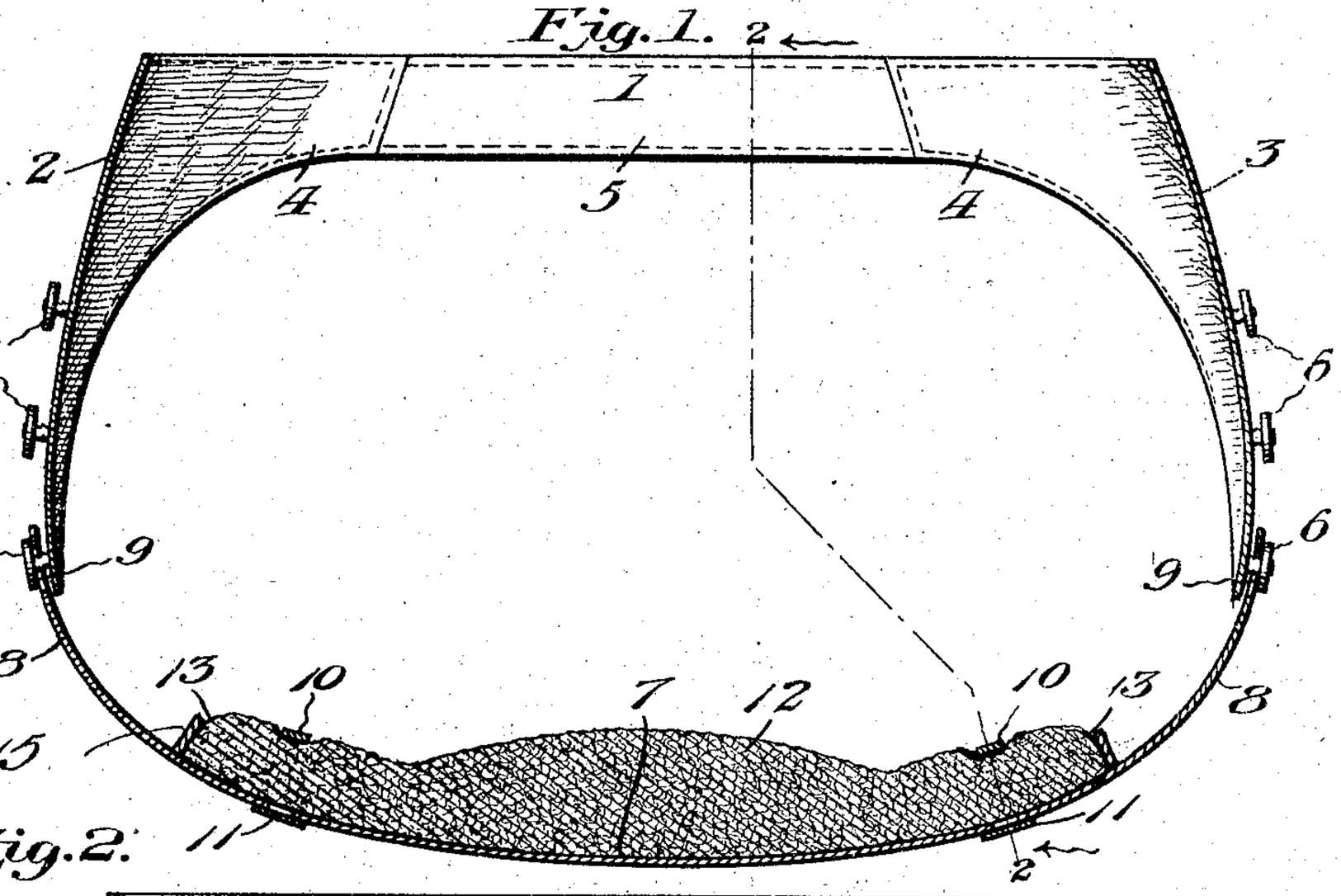


Fig. 2.

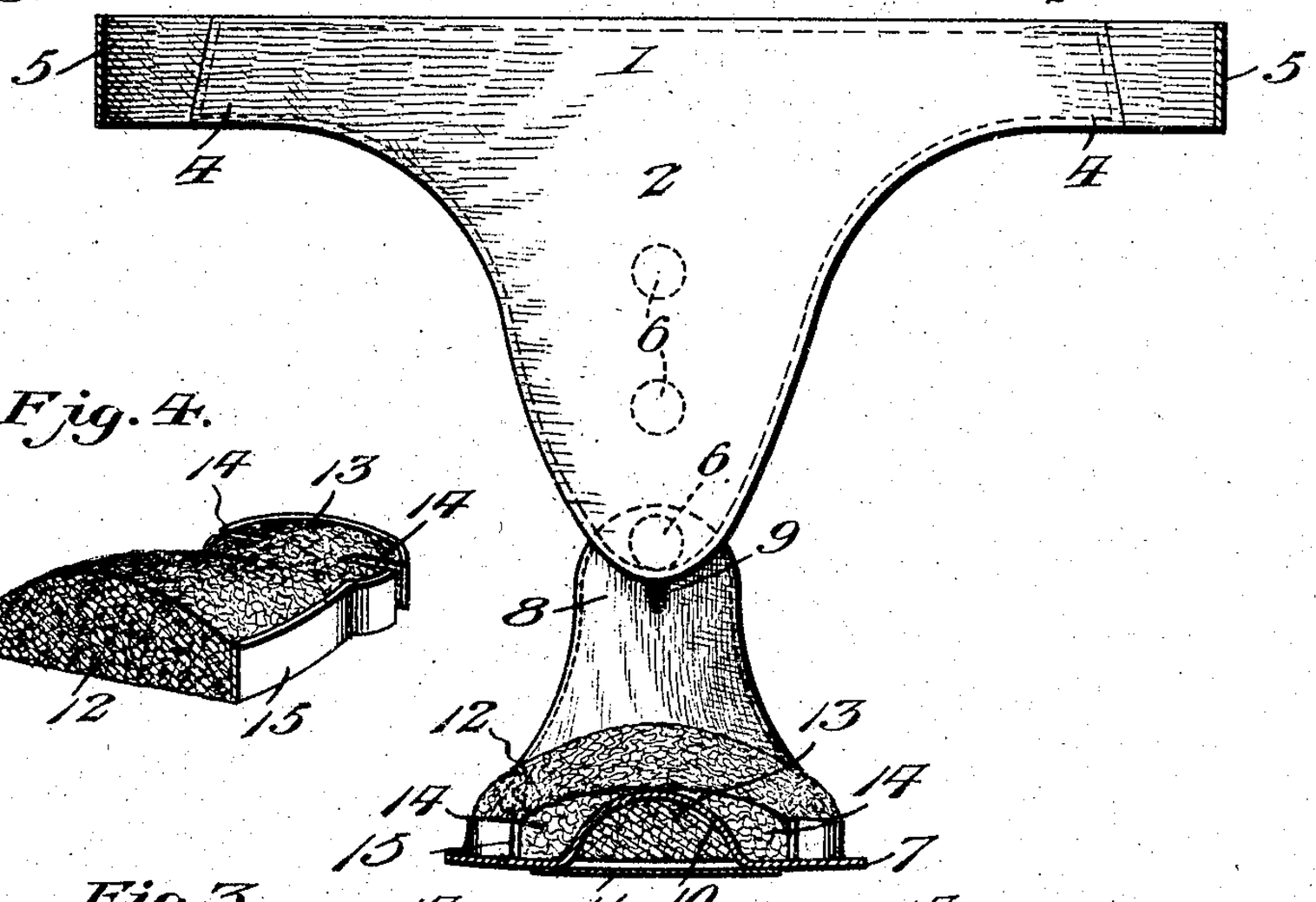
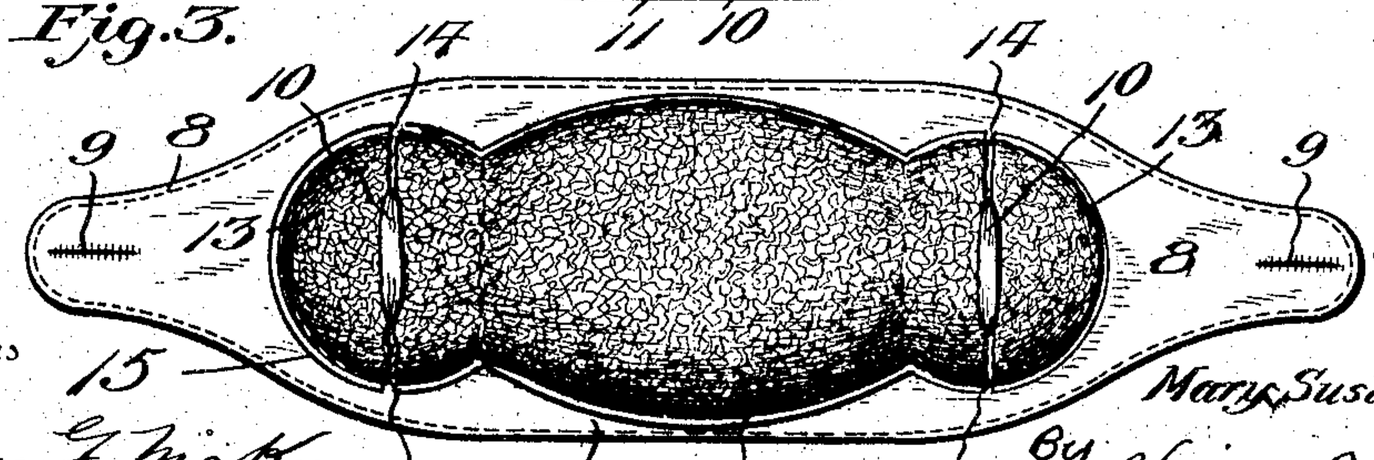


Fig. 4.

Fig. 3.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

MARY SUSAN MERKLEY, OF BROOKLYN, NEW YORK.

CATAMENIAL APPLIANCE.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 791,354, dated May 30, 1905.

Application filed January 6, 1904. Serial No. 187,940.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, MARY SUSAN MERKLEY, a citizen of the United States, residing at Brooklyn, in the county of Kings and State of New York, have invented new and useful Improvements in Catamenial Appliances, of which the following is a specification.

This invention relates especially to that class or kind of catamenial appliances which consist of a suitable supporting means carrying an absorbent body which is held by said supporting means in juxtaposition to the opening to the vaginal canal for the purpose of collecting and retaining the excrement.

The object of the invention is to provide a device of the character or type mentioned which will be simple in form, light in weight, which will effectively and completely absorb the menstrual flow and retain the same in such a manner as to effectually prevent contact of the absorbent pad with the limbs or clothing of the wearer.

A further object is provide an appliance which will not sag or hang away from the wearer, but will when properly adjusted keep in close touch with the parts, so that none of the flow will escape the absorber and the comfort in wearing the appliance will be increased.

The invention consists in the improved appliance to be hereinafter described, the novelty of which will be fully set forth and distinctly claimed.

I have fully and clearly illustrated the invention in the accompanying drawings, forming a part of this specification, and wherein—

Figure 1 is a section view from front to rear of the improved appliance, the bandage or carrying-piece and the absorbent pad carried thereby being shown in longitudinal section. Fig. 2 is a transverse vertical section on the line 2 2 of Fig. 1. Fig. 3 is a top plan view of the bandage or napkin and the absorbent pad secured in position for service thereon. Fig. 4 is a detail perspective view, partly in section, of one end of the absorbent pad.

Referring to the drawings, 1 designates a belt adapted to be arranged about the waist of the wearer, said belt comprising front and rear depending portions 2 3 of suitable textile material, said portions being substantially triangular in form and provided at their upper extremities with oppositely-extending strips 4, connected by elastic strips 5, which when the belt is in position are arranged at the sides of the wearer and serve to hold said belt securely and snugly in position and also to permit the belt to accommodate itself to the movements of the body without binding or chafing. On each of the depending front portions 2 3, on the outer side thereof, are a series of buttons 6, said buttons being arranged in a vertical line at substantially the center of said depending portions and spaced apart from each other, whereby an adjustment of the bandage is provided, as will be hereinafter more fully set forth.

The improved bandage and absorbent pad employed in connection therewith will now be described. This bandage consists of a web 7 of suitable impervious waterproof material, preferably of soft elastic rubber or rubber-coated fabric, of proper width and length and tapered from its central or body portion toward its ends to provide oppositely-directed reduced portions 8, each of which is provided at a point adjacent its terminal with an eye or buttonhole 9, said eyes being arranged to engage the buttons on the front and rear of the belt to hold the bandage in position. It will be seen that by providing a plurality of buttons, as heretofore mentioned, a means is afforded for adjusting the bandage toward and away from the wearer, the ends of said bandage being fastened over the buttons at such an elevation as to arrange the bandage at the position desired with relation to the body. At each end of the body portion of the bandage the web is provided with a pair of transversely-extending parallel slits or incisions to provide a retaining-loop 10, arranged to receive and retain one end of the absorbent pad, to be more fully described hereinafter. In order to close the opening formed in the bandage by raising the loop to retain the pad, a strip of

material 11 is stretched over said opening upon the rear or under side of said bandage, as clearly shown in Figs. 1 and 2.

12 designates the absorbent pad, which constitutes an important feature of the invention. This pad consists of a block or slab of that material known in the trade as "sponge-rubber," which material is particularly adapted for the use to which it is placed. This block is formed to constitute a central body portion which is substantially elliptical in form and is adapted to rest closely against the parts adjacent to the opening of the vaginal canal, so as to meet and absorb any fluids emitted therefrom. At the ends of the body portion of the block are formed attaching-heads 13 13, adapted to be engaged by the loops 10, whereby the pad is held in position. In order to prevent displacement of the pad from the bandage incident to the movements of the wearer, each of the heads 13 is formed on opposite sides thereof with inwardly-directed slits 14 14, which are adapted to receive the loops 10, and it will be seen that owing to the elasticity of the pad when the same is placed in position the portions of the pad adjacent or on either side of the slits will be expanded, whereby the pad will be retained in place and its accidental removal obviated. It will also be seen that these head portions or extensions 13 constitute convenient grasps for removing the soiled pad from the bandage, in view of the fact that the body portion will receive the flow and the said heads be left clean, which obviates the necessity of the hands coming into contact with the excrement in removing the pad.

While the structure of the sponge-rubber is such that practically only those portions of the pad coming into contact with or which are closely adjacent the parts will be saturated with the flow, it is very desirable that some means be provided which will prevent all danger of the flow held by the pad from coming into contact with the limbs of the wearer to insure cleanliness, prevent chafing, and to obviate soiling the clothes. To accomplish these purposes, I provide the sponge-rubber pad with a binding or edge facing 15, consisting of a strip of impervious material, as clearly shown in Fig. 4, which when the pad is in position lies with its lower edge upon the upper surface of the bandage and effectually confines the fluid to the absorbent pad. This binding may be formed integral with the edges of the pad or cemented thereto in any well-known manner.

A great advantage will be found in the employment of sponge-rubber over absorbent materials previously used, the rubber being much easier to clean thoroughly than any other absorbent heretofore used. Ordinary sponge has always been found objectionable, owing to the fact that it is difficult to thoroughly cleanse the same because of the very fine interstices in which the excrements become lodged and are almost impossible to remove satisfactorily. However, in the sponge-rubber there are only the ordinary larger cells and pores to collect the flow and none of the very fine interstices, as in natural sponge fiber. For this reason the flow may be thoroughly and quickly removed from the pad without long and laborious washing and rinsing, which is under the circumstances a disagreeable task. The sponge-rubber is also much softer and pliable than any other absorbent suitable to the purposes and will not harden or cake, as will natural sponge, during use or incident to continued washing.

Having thus fully described the invention, what is claimed as new is—

1. A catamenial pad composed of an absorbent material and having an integral impervious marginal facing.

2. A bandage comprising a body, and an absorbent pad having an edge facing of impervious material, said facing being independent of the body.

3. A catamenial pad composed of sponge-rubber and having an integral vulcanized marginal facing.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature in presence of two witnesses.

MARY SUSAN MERKLEY.

Witnesses:

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