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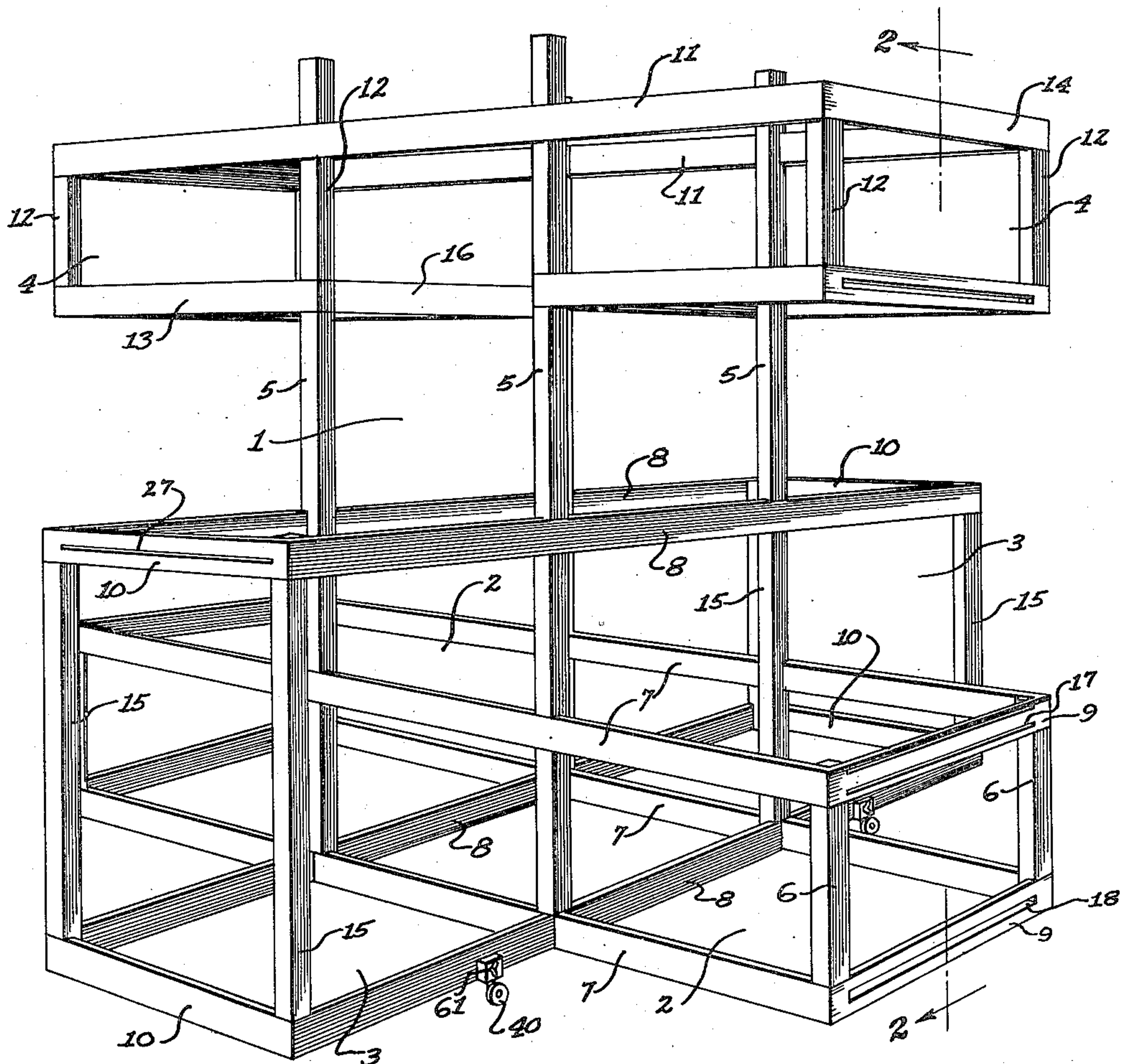
2,544,496

HOUSING AND TRAINING COOP FOR CHICKENS

Filed Sept. 22, 1947

4 Sheets-Sheet 1

Fig. 1



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Fig. 2

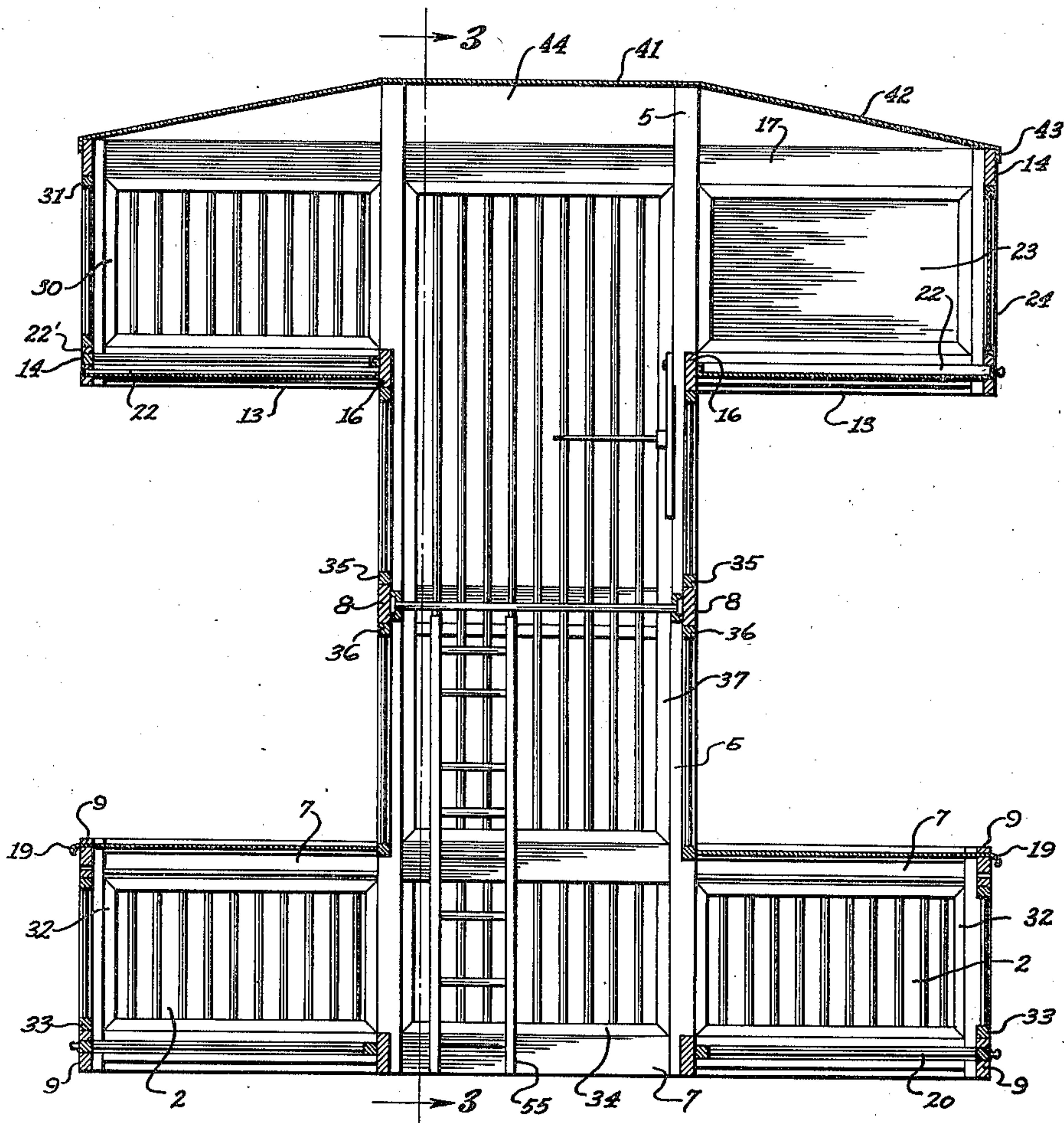
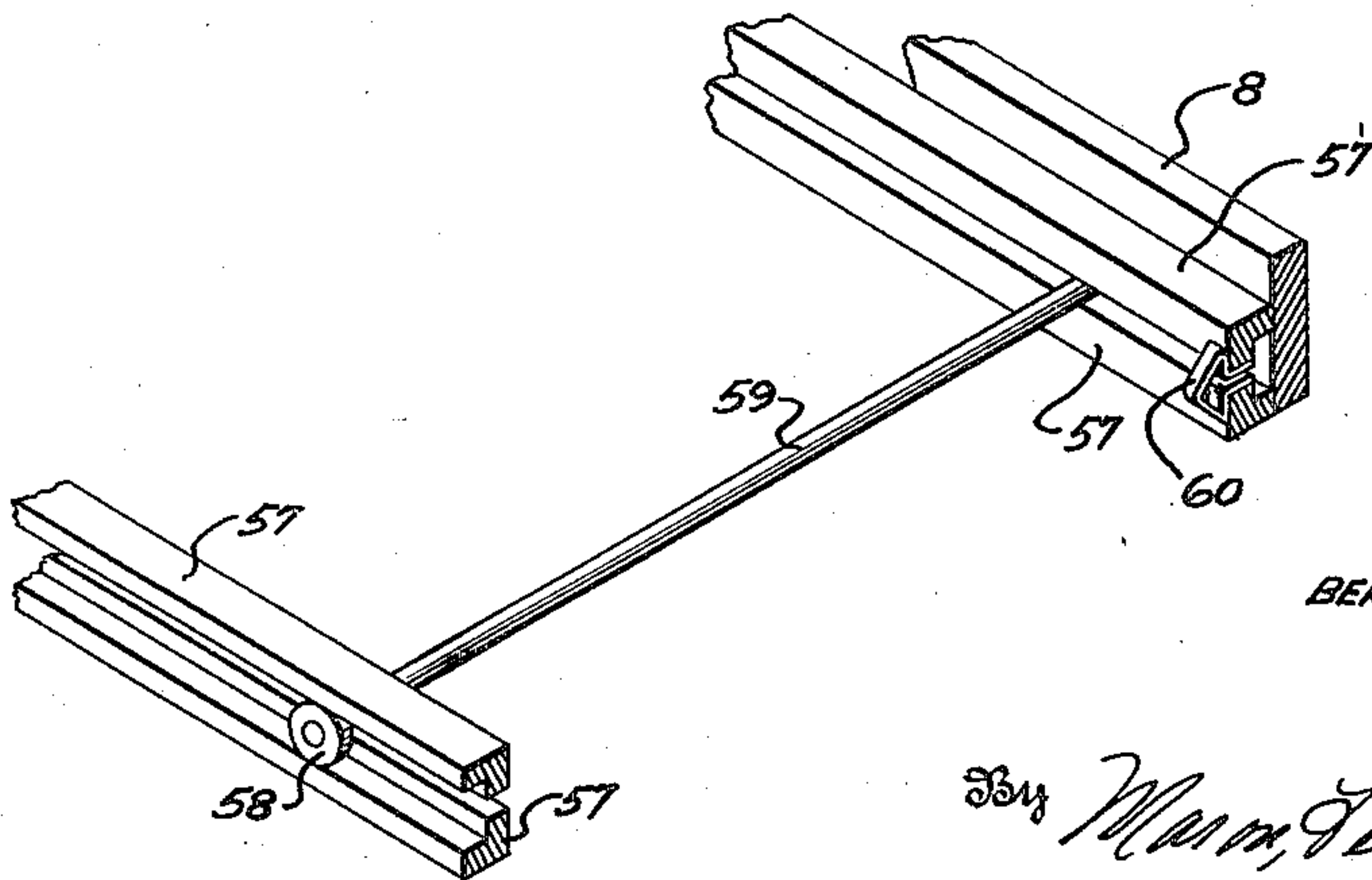


Fig. 4



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Fig. 3

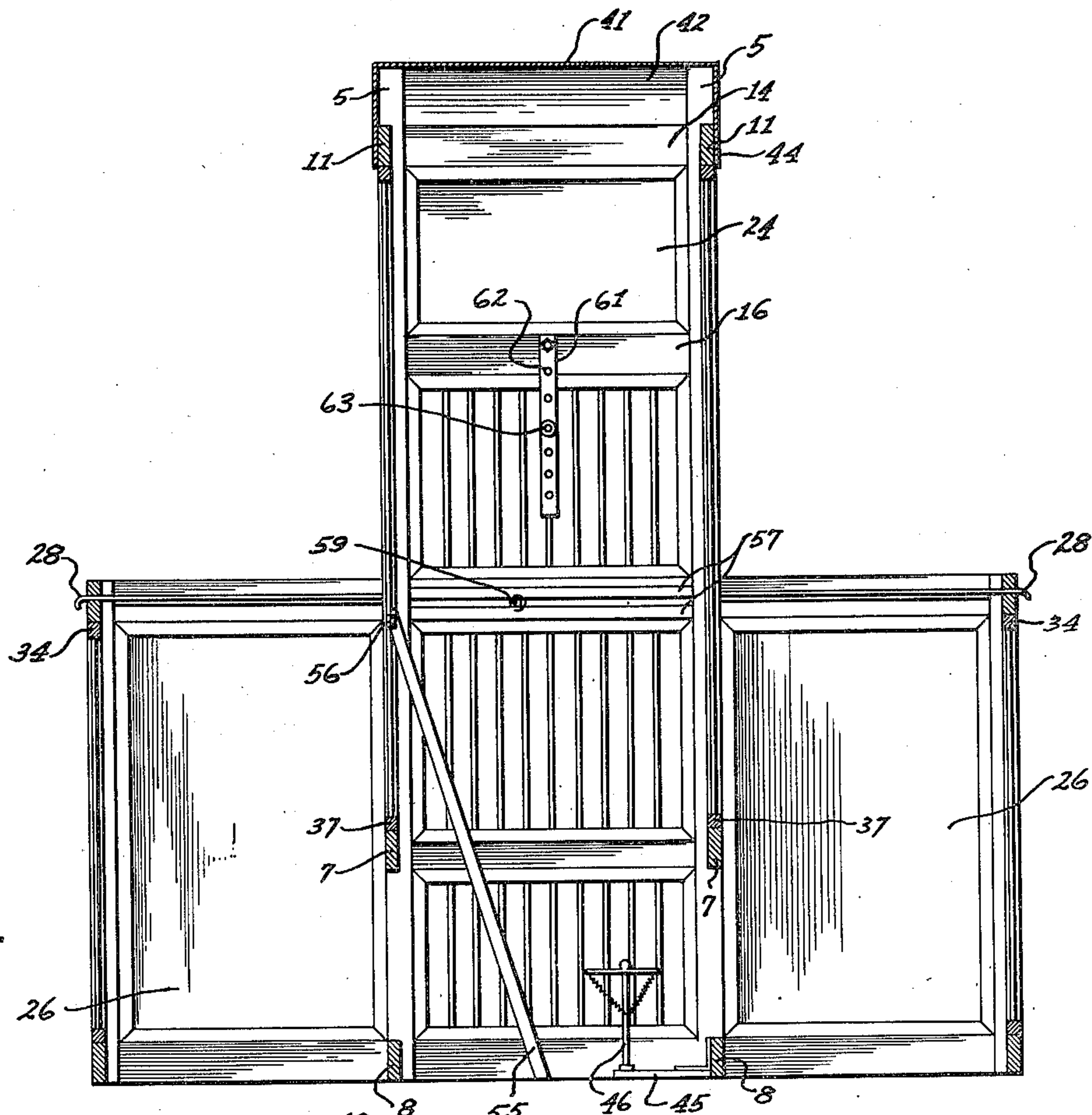
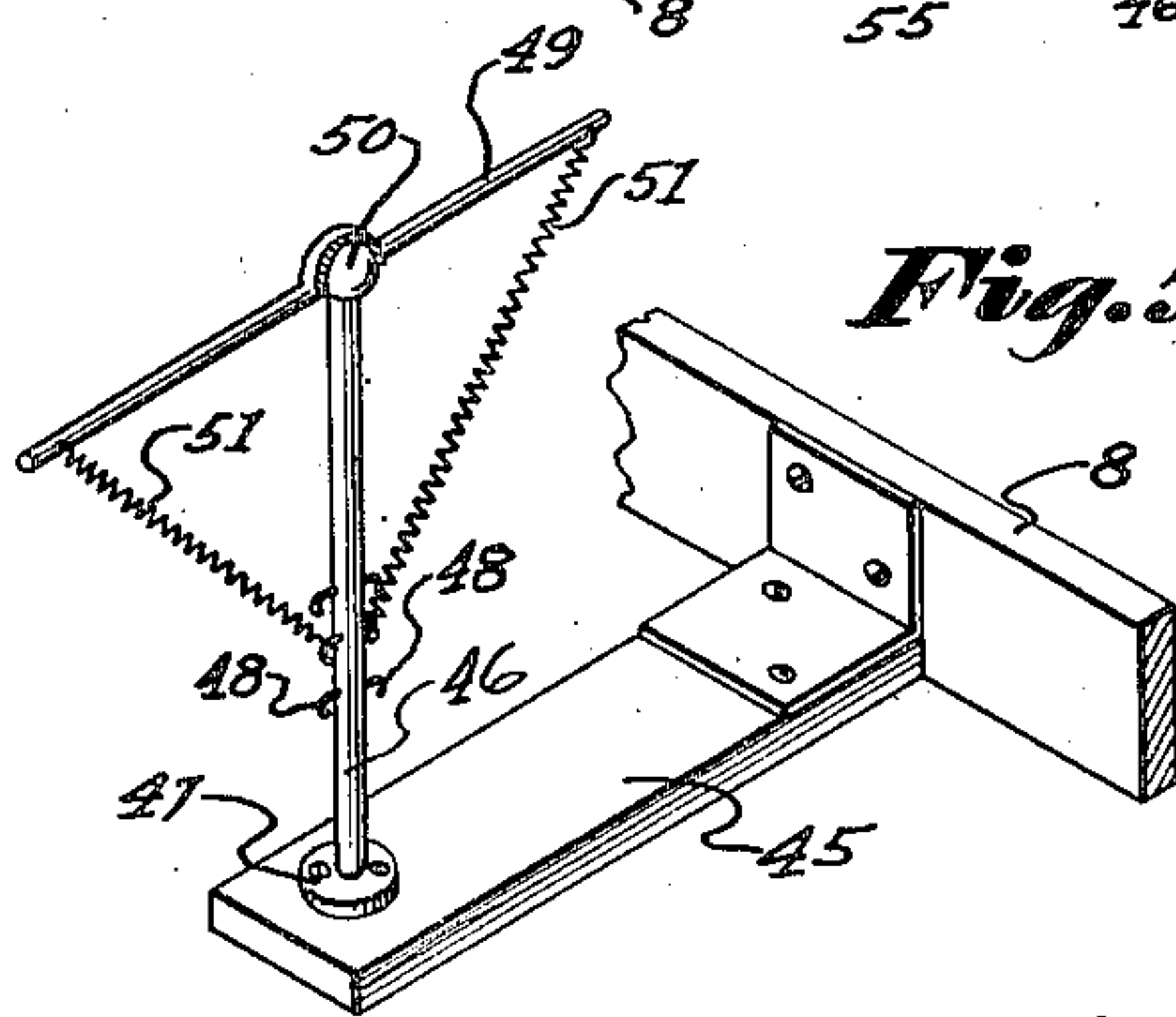


Fig. 5



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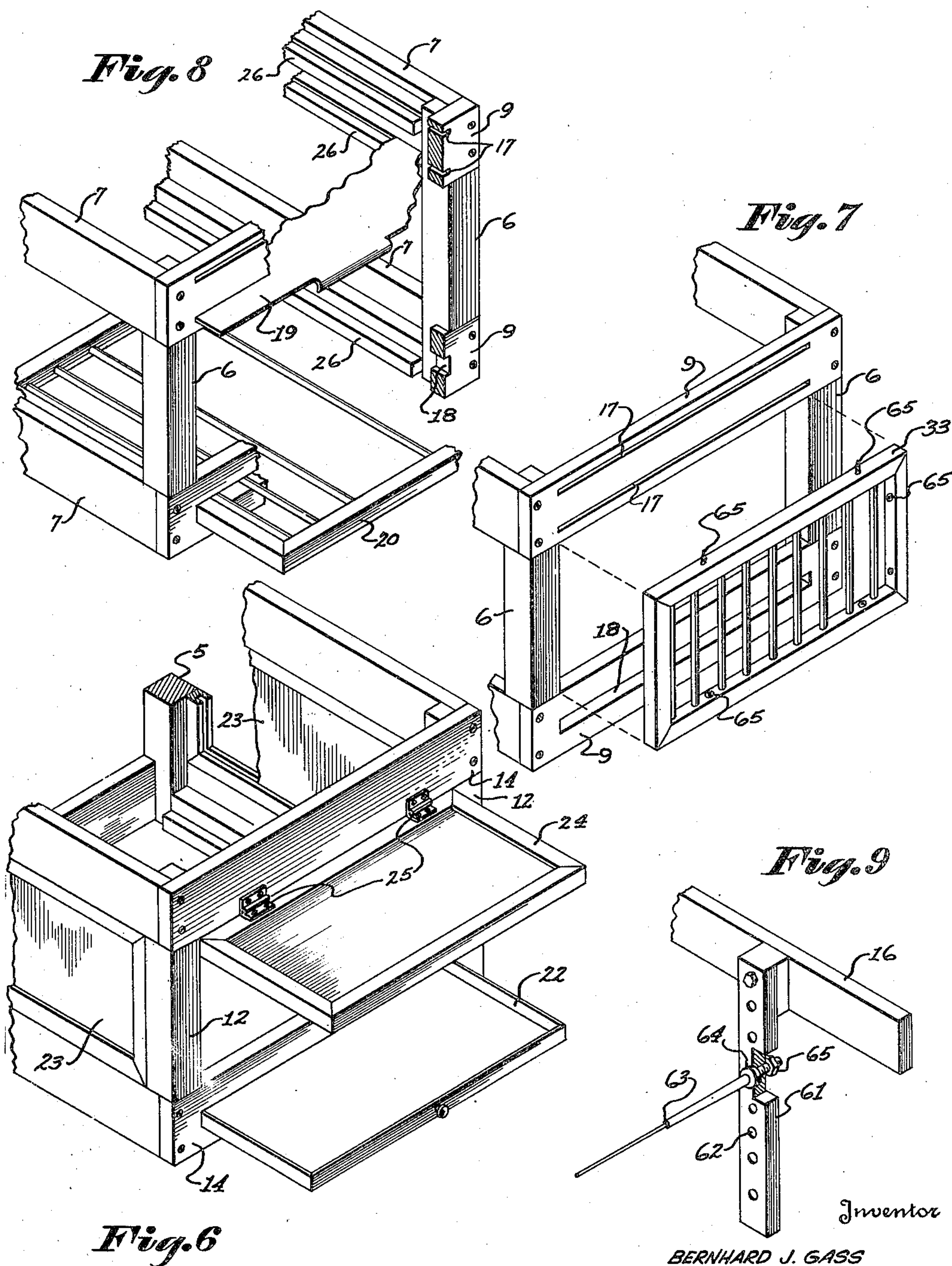
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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

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HOUSING AND TRAINING COOP FOR CHICKENS

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4 Claims. (Cl. 119-17)

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This invention relates to an exerciser housing device for poultry for the purpose of preserving and improving the condition particularly of the smaller muscles, particularly of the toes, legs and wing tips, which are accustomed to a substantial amount of exercise when the bird is in a free state in the course of the normal searching for food and avoidance of enemies in the woods or underbrush.

An object of the invention is to provide an exerciser coop particularly designed to cause the bird, confined in its normal pursuit of food and such forms of exercise as it naturally enjoys, to necessarily assume postures requiring the exercise of the smaller muscles.

A further object of the invention is to provide an exerciser or conditioner coop of simple and improved construction, occupying little space and adapted to be readily knocked down for storage or transportation as desired.

Further objects will more clearly appear in the course of the following detailed description.

The invention consists in the novel construction, arrangements and combinations of parts hereinafter more particularly described and claimed.

Four sheets of drawings accompany this specification as part thereof, in which like reference characters indicate like parts throughout.

In the drawings:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of the framework of the improved conditioner;

Figure 2 is a transverse vertical cross section taken substantially on the line 2—2 of Figure 1 of the finished coop;

Figure 3 is a vertical cross section substantially at right angles to that of Figure 2 and taken on line 3—3 of Figure 2;

Figure 4 is an enlarged fragmentary perspective showing the details of the improved horizontally sliding perch;

Figure 5 is an enlarged perspective view of the improved balancing perch;

Figure 6 is an enlarged fragmentary perspective view of the roosting coop;

Figure 7 is an enlarged fragmentary perspective end view of the right hand bottom exercising coop showing a possible mode of attachment of the side panels with respect to any of the coops;

Figure 8 is an enlarged fragmentary perspective similar to Figure 7, but showing the details for inserting the adjustable ceiling and floor panels; and

Figure 9 is an enlarged perspective view of the improved flexible perch.

Referring to the drawings which illustrate one practical embodiment of the present invention, a framework is provided to define a vertically disposed central shaft 1 having disposed about

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its ground end a plurality of exerciser coops 2—2 and 3—3, herein shown as arranged in the form of a cross and having additional coops 4 extending from the shaft and spaced above the exerciser coops, in which the fowls can roost and be protected from the weather.

As herein illustrated, the central well is defined by four corner posts 5, which corner posts are associated by transversely extending frame members 7 which are preferably formed with half-together joints and mortised in suitable slots cut in the vertical posts in accordance with good cabinet making practice. These transverse frame members 7 have their outer ends connected by short posts 6—6 and transverse spaced frame members 9—9. Frame members 8 are disposed perpendicularly with respect to frame members 7, and are spaced a substantially greater distance apart to define coops 3—3 of greater height than coops 2—2, these frame members being connected at their outer ends by frame posts 15 and end frame members 10.

The upper or roosting coops are similarly constructed except that as herein illustrated the upper frame members 11—11 extend the full length of the shaft and aligned coops, whereas the lower side frame members 13 extend only from the shaft posts 5 to the outer coop posts 12, the frame members being connected at their outer ends by end frame members 14—14 and the lower side frame members 13 being connected adjacent the shafts by the cross frame members 16.

The upper and right hand roosting coop 4 is enclosed with solid panels 23—23 and an end door 24 hinged to the upper frame member 14, as by hinges 25, and this coop is the bad weather roosting coop. It is further provided with a slidable floor in the form of a pan 22.

The opposite roosting compartment 4 intended for use in fair weather, is provided with a roosting floor in the form of a frame formed with a plurality of parallel spaced dowels, as illustrated in Figure 8, which frame is slidable through a slot 22', as hereinafter described in connection with other coops. A drip pan 22 is provided slidable beneath this roosting floor in a similar manner.

The right hand lower exerciser compartment 2 is provided with a slidable floor panel, as illustrated in Figure 8, comprising a frame 20 which is admitted through a slot 18 formed in the lower frame member 9, while the upper frame member 9 is provided with a plurality of parallel spaced slots 17 adapted to receive a sheet metal ceiling panel 19 the height of which ceiling panel above the floor panel 20 can be adjusted by selectively inserting this ceiling panel in one or another of the slots 17.

In connection with all of the slidable floor and ceiling panels, rabbeted support strips 26 will be

secured against the inner face of the adjacent frame members, as illustrated in this figure.

Removable and preferably interchangeable enclosure panels will be provided for the sides and ends of most of these coops, but some of the side panels are preferably made solid with a view to protecting the fowls from wind in certain of the coops.

Preferably, the floor panel of the lower small exerciser coop 2 will be provided, as illustrated in Fig. 8, with a floor panel comprising a frame 20 supporting a plurality of parallel spaced dowels, and in connection with this floor panel it is desirable that the spacing of these dowels be irregular, viz., one or more dowels should be omitted to create unequal spaces into which the bird, unless wary, will step, and creates an unnatural mode of locomotion in the bird, thus exercising unused muscles.

As herein illustrated, the smaller side-exercising coops 2-2 will be provided with open enclosure panels comprising frames 32 within which are loosely secured parallel spaced dowels 75. All of the dowels in both the enclosure panels and the floor panels were used, are preferably loosely fitted to their holes in the supporting frame with a view to permitting the rattling of the dowels when touched by the bird, as it has been observed that the birds greatly enjoy making noises, and by leaving the dowels loose so that they rattle, the birds are encouraged to move and create such noises, which they rapidly learn to do.

The side walls of the higher exerciser coops 3-3 are preferably enclosed by solid panels 26, while dowel panels 34 are used for the end openings of these coops. The tops of the exerciser compartments 3-3 are closed by slidable sheet metal ceiling panels 28 similar to the ceiling panels utilized in the smaller exercise compartments 2-2.

The side walls of the central shaft 1 between the lower tier of exercise compartments and the upper tier of roosting compartments, are enclosed by a plurality of open dowel frames 37 which extend from the transverse frame members 7-7 to the transverse frame members 11-11 and from the cross frame members 16 to the cross frame members 8, these open panels being identified in Figure 2 as panels 35 and 36.

It will be observed that by the form of frame construction described and illustrated, the passage between each of the exerciser coops and the central shaft, and between the central shaft and each of the roosting coops is impeded by a door sill formed by the frame members 7, 8, and 16, over which the fowl must step to get from any of these compartments into the central shaft.

It will also be observed that by reason of the adjustable ceiling panels in the exerciser chambers 2-2, the height of these chambers can be adjustably regulated to the height of the fowl to require the bird to assume a crouching position while moving in these particular coops, whereas in the exerciser coops 3-3 the bird is given a substantially greater amount of freedom and still further opportunity for exercise in a vertical direction while within the shaft or central compartment 1.

However, the central compartment 1 is preferably constructed of a dimension not to permit free flight of the bird, but sufficient to permit vertical hops, and this shaft is made substantially high as to exceed any possible single hop by the bird from the floor to the roosting coops.

To assist the bird in making this ascent and at the same time to further exercise the toe muscles, a series of assisting devices is provided herein shown in Figures 3, 4, 5 and 9.

At the bottom of the central shaft is permanently secured, as by a bracket 45, a vertical pedestal 46 having pivoted thereto a perch rod 49 pivoted as at 50 intermediate its ends and having in the ends of the rod associated with the pedestal by means of coil springs 51 adapted to counterbalance and normally maintain the perch rod 49 in stable horizontal position. The tension upon the perch rod 49 can be varied by using a plurality of spaced hooks 48 positioned on the rod 46 over which hooks the ends of the springs 51 can be selectively attached. This perch closely simulates a flexible bough and the bird upon lighting upon the perch is required to balance itself with its wings and foot muscles to acquire equilibrium. An inclined ladder 55 of conventional construction is provided extending from the ground and having the upper ends of its rail members provided with spring clips 56 adapted to engage adjacent vertical dowels in one of the side dowel panels of the central shaft.

Substantially at mid height of the central shaft is positioned a novel slidable perch which comprises a perch rod 59 having on its end rollers 58 adapted to slide in a guideway formed by the mortised supporting rods 57 secured against the inner face of the frame members 8-8, as is well shown in Figure 2. Spring clips 60 are provided for insertion in the slotway within which the perch rod 59 travels to limit the horizontal movement of this rod, which it will be observed is free to both rotate and slide horizontally, thus inducing considerable wing and toe exercise by the bird in adjusting itself on this perch.

Above this slidable perch is secured a flexible perch illustrated in detail in Figure 9, which comprises a bracket 61 provided with a plurality of spaced orifices 62, the flexible perch rod itself comprising a core of spring steel formed adjacent one end with a shoulder 64, and that end of the rod being threaded to receive a securing nut 65 by means of which the bracket 61 is engaged, the steel rod extending beyond the shoulder 64 in the opposite direction being tapered and covered with rubber or some similar suitable material. This perch is adapted to flex in much the same manner as a small twig, and by changing its vertical position at frequent intervals, requires the bird to exercise considerably in engaging the same in the course of its ascent to the roosting compartments.

Preferably, vertically adjustable casters 40 are provided having thumb screw clamps 61 by means of which the height of the bottom of the framework can be selectively adjusted above the floor or ground level.

The corner posts of the central shaft are preferably made of a length to extend above the upper transverse frame members 11-11, for the purpose of supporting a sheet metal roof 41 which is formed with sloping end portions 42, end wall members 43, and side walls 44 which side and end walls give substantial rigidity to this roof while at the same time permitting its ready removal when desired.

Various modifications in the proper sizes and particular location of the various coops will readily suggest themselves to those skilled in the art, as well as various modifications in the construction of the several parts. In general, it is desirable that the side and end panels be of the

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same size so as to permit interchange as desired and to suit particular conditions.

Having described the invention, what is claimed is:

1. An exercise coop for fowl comprising framework defining a vertically disposed shaft, a plurality of uniplanar coops surrounding and communicating with said shaft at the bottom thereof, some of said coops having tops adjustable in height with respect to the height of the tops of other coops and a second group of coops spaced above those first mentioned, communicating with said shaft, one of said last mentioned coops having weather-excluding outer walls.

2. An exercise coop for fowl comprising a framework defining a vertically disposed central shaft sufficiently restricted in area to preclude flight of the particular fowl, a plurality of exerciser coops each having a top and floor surrounding and communicating with the shaft at the bottom thereof, the tops of some of said bottom coops being higher above their floors than the tops of others and a plurality of roosting coops communicating with the shaft adjacent the top thereof.

3. An exercise coop for fowl comprising a framework defining a vertically disposed central shaft, a plurality of coops surrounding and communicating with said shaft at the bottom thereof, a plurality of coops communicating with said shaft adjacent the top thereof with removable panels for floors and to constitute the side walls of said shaft and coops each of said panels comprising a frame with a plurality of

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loosely fitting dowels, said dowels extending transversely of the frames in parallel spaced relationship.

4. An exercise coop for fowl comprising a framework defining a vertically disposed central shaft, a plurality of coops surrounding and communicating with said shaft at the bottom thereof, a plurality of coops communicating with said shaft adjacent the top thereof, said coops and shaft formed with removable floor and side wall panels, said panels each comprising a frame having spaced holes on their inner opposed faces, the holes in the floor frames being irregularly spaced and all of said frames having dowels arranged parallel with each other and with their ends loosely positioned in said holes.

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