

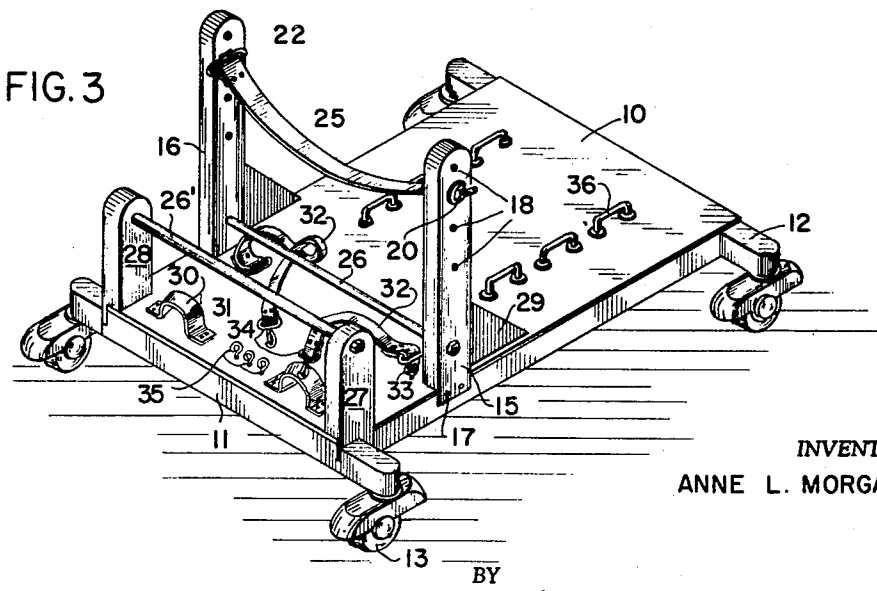
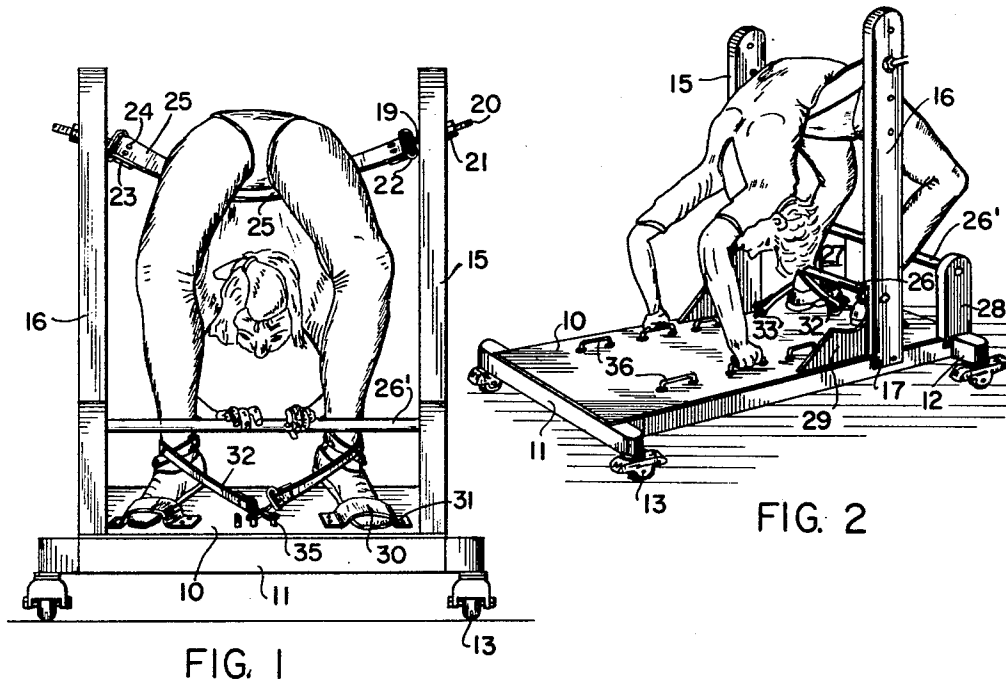
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BACK BEND STRETCHER

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**BACK BEND STRETCHER**

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4 Claims. (Cl. 272-57)

This invention relates to the maintenance of the body in healthy condition suitable for the performance of various physical activities requiring that the muscles be loose and the body flexible and capable of movement involving including grace, poise and ease which portrays the aesthetic and evokes appreciation thereof from an audience.

The invention relates specifically to equipment used by dancers and other performers for stretching and exercising the muscles of the back for keeping them loose, flexible, and suitable for the performance of various physical activities requiring not only a sound body but complete control of the muscles including those of the back.

Equipment has been produced and used in bending and stretching the muscles of the back to obtain the required degree of flexibility but this equipment has proven inadequate and has required a teacher or attendant to assist in the bending and flexing operations and has involved many hours of hard labor as well as at times resulted in injury to the person taking the exercises.

It is an object of the invention to provide apparatus or equipment by which an individual may properly exercise to bend and stretch the muscles in the upper middle and lower portions of the back and thus obtain a looseness of the muscles and suppleness not otherwise obtained, and all without the attendance or assistance of another person.

Another object of the invention is to provide a portable device or apparatus of simple, practical, and inexpensive construction, capable of being used to give varying degrees of bending exercise to the back, as well as apparatus which can be adjusted to suit persons of different heights and sizes.

Other objects and advantages of the invention will be apparent from the following description taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawing wherein:

FIG. 1 is a perspective illustrating one application of the invention in use;

FIG. 2, a front elevation thereof; and

FIG. 3, a top plan view.

Briefly stated, the invention is a generally rectangular platform mounted on wheels or rollers for portability, and having at each side near one end an upright post between which the upper portions of which is adjustably mounted a body supporting strap and in cooperative relation near the front end of the platform are foot receiving members by which the feet may be anchored forwardly of the post to the base, whereby the body may be bent backwardly while the feet are anchored to the base, two groups of three spaced hand grips being attached to the base on the opposite side of the posts from the foot receiving members to permit the person to apply sufficient pressure to produce slight or necessary bending of the back, a number of bars being provided one ahead of the foot receiving members and slightly higher so that such bar can be gripped and a second bar in a low position between the upright posts so that each of the bars may be gripped to produce back bending and muscle stretching.

With continued reference to the drawing a platform 10 of generally rectangular construction is provided on which an individual seeking to bend the back and increase its flexibility may take the desired exercises.

The platform 10 is supported by front and rear cross bars 11 and 12 with supporting wheels, rollers or casters

13 beneath the end portions of each. The platform is being secured to such cross bars in any desired manner.

At the sides of the platform are mounted spaced posts 15 and 16 fastened in place in any desired manner as for example by bolts and nuts 17 securing the posts to the cross bars 12. The upper ends of the posts are provided with spaced openings 18 with the openings in one post at the same level as the openings in the other and in which openings are mounted attaching members 19 having threaded shanks 20 and attaching nuts 21 and with right angular heads 22 received in reversely bent loop forming extremities 23 secured by rivets 24 of a strap 25, preferably of a substantial width corresponding to several vertebrae of the back of the individual using the device in order to provide an adequate support for the back.

The posts 15 and 16 are provided with a horizontal bar 26 between their lower portions a few inches from the platform 10 which bar serves as a brace between the posts as well as an element which can be gripped by the hands of the person using the device.

At the front end of the platform a pair of short posts 27 and 28 are provided, one at each corner of the platform on the bar 11, being attached to the platform in any desired manner. A horizontal bar 26 is mounted between the lower portions of the posts 15 and 16, and a horizontal bar 26' is mounted between the upper ends of the shorter posts 27 and 28 at the front of the device, such bars also being conveniently located in a position to be gripped by the person using the device.

A pair of leather or other flexible material, toe or fore-foot sockets 30 are provided under which the toes of the person using the device can be inserted such flexible anchor members being secured in place by fasteners 31. In order to retain the feet anchored in such sockets a pair of flexible straps 32 are attached to eye bolts 33 near each of the posts 15 and 16 and such straps are adapted to be looped around the ankles and provided with snap or other fasteners 34 for attachment to eye bolts 35 in line with the toe receiving socket members 30.

The person desiring to take back-bending exercises may place his feet in the sockets 30 as described and lean rearwardly over and upon the strap 25. In this position pressure to produce a positive bending may be applied by gripping handles 36 attached in spaced relation along each side of the platform 10.

It will be apparent from the foregoing that a device is provided for bending or exercising the back and for flexing the muscles and a device by which the desired exercises may be taken without requiring the time of a teacher or attendant with reduced possibility of injury.

It will be obvious to those skilled in the art that various changes may be made in the invention without departing from the spirit and scope thereof and therefore the invention is not limited by that which is illustrated in the drawing and described in the specification, but only as indicated in the accompanying claims.

What is claimed is:

1. Apparatus for forcibly bending and exercising the back and muscles of the body comprising a portable roller supported platform, spaced uprights on said platform, a relatively wide yieldable strap located across the space between and adjustably connected to said uprights at a height and in a convenient position to provide a comfortable support for the intermediate area of the back, flexible retainers on said platform at one side of said strap by which the feet may be anchored in fixed location on said platform, a gripping bar mounted in fixed relation adjacent the lower portion of said uprights above said platform and serving the dual function of maintaining said posts in spaced relation and as a gripping bar, a

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second gripping bar mounted on said platform forwardly and at a slightly higher elevation than the first, and a series of hand grips along each side edge of the platform at varied distances from said supporting strap by which gripping action may be varied.

2. Apparatus for exercising the back and muscles of the body comprising a platform, spaced uprights on said platform, a relatively wide flexible strap located across the space between and connected to said spaced uprights at an elevation above said platform in a convenient position to provide a support for the back of a person exercising the body, quick detachable anchoring means near the lower portions of said posts by which the feet of a person exercising may be retained with the upper part of the body of the person disposed downwardly over said platform, a gripping bar mounted in fixed relation adjacent the lower portion of said posts above said platform and adapted to be gripped to apply pressure to the muscles of the back, a second gripping bar forwardly of the first and a series of hand grips at varying distances along the platform near each side adapted likewise to be gripped in the exercising procedure.

3. The structure of claim 2 in which said anchoring means for the feet includes means providing flexible re-

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tainers for the toes and strap means for encircling the ankles.

4. Apparatus for forcibly flexing and exercising the back and other muscles of the body comprising a platform structure having two pairs of spaced uprights on said platform, one pair supporting a horizontal gripping bar near said platform and a relatively wide yieldable flexible body supporting strap adjustably mounted near the top thereof, the other pair of said uprights supporting a gripping bar at their upper ends, each of said bars being positioned to be gripped by a person supported in exercising position by said strap, said bars being disposed at substantially different levels and in generally parallel relation, means for securing the feet to said platform including feet receiving straps and additional straps fastenable around the ankles, said straps being attached to said platform, and spaced means located more remotely from said foot securing means for further gripping by the hands when the body of the user is in an arched position.

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