

*J. O. West,
Hoop Skirt.
No. 111,998.*

Patented Feb. 21, 1871.

Fig. 1.

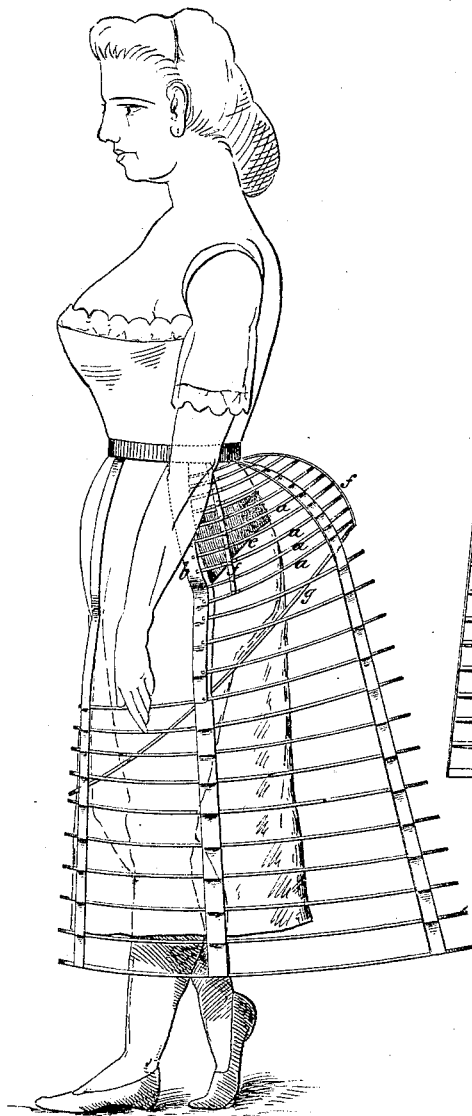
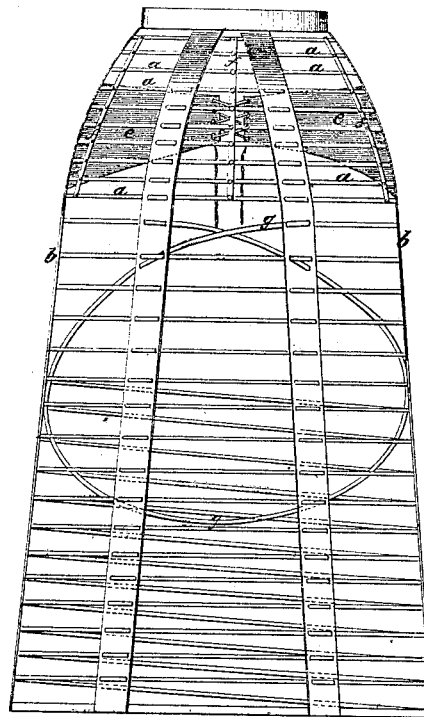


Fig. 2.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JAMES O. WEST, OF NEW YORK, N. Y.

IMPROVEMENT IN HOOP-SKIRTS.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. **111,998**, dated February 21, 1871.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, JAMES O. WEST, of the city of New York, in the county and State of New York, have invented new and useful Improvements in Hoop-Skirts; and I do hereby declare that the following is a full, clear, and exact description of thereof, which will enable others skilled in the art to make and use the same, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, forming part of this specification.

This invention relates to improvements in hoop-skirts; and it consists in a novel construction of the same, calculated to form by the arrangement of the hoops and an adjusting-band a prominent and effective adjustable bustle, all as hereinafter described.

Figure 1 is a side view of my improved skirt, and Fig. 2 is a rear elevation of the same.

Similar letters of reference indicate corresponding parts.

In the prevailing style of dress it is desired to have the skirt to hang as nearly vertical at the front as possible, but swell out prominently at the back of the waist and downward therefrom. In order to produce a skirt which will maintain the dress in this form without padding or the application of attachments other than what properly belong to the skirt as ordinarily constructed, or as nearly so as possible, I propose to arrange the upper hoops, *a*, which constitute the part of the skirt answering for the bustle, to extend only from one hip suspending-strap *b* to the other around the back, and I attach the broad back-straps *e* to the said suspending-strap *b*, so as to extend across the back and buckle or lace together to draw the straps *b* back for swelling out the bustle and confining the skirt in front as closely to the person as possible, and preventing it from swelling out thereat beyond the vertical line. This is greatly facilitated by having the hoops *a* extend only as far forward as the hip suspending-strap *b*, whereas if extending around the front, as heretofore, they would limit the action of the straps *e* in throwing the bustle out.

In order the better to maintain the hoops *a* in the shape required for the bustle, and es-

pecially to prevent them from gathering or being forced together up against the center of the back, and to some extent at the hips, especially when the wearer is sitting, I attach the strong metal braces *f* to them transversely, as shown, which make a durable frame-work capable of retaining the required form; but as a further protection against this contingency, and also for the better control of the front of the skirt at the lower part against protruding too much, the diagonal hoop *g* may be connected to or form part of this frame, so that the said front part may be in a measure suspended from it. This connection, however, may be employed or not, as preferred; without it my improvements are applicable to skirts not having the said diagonal hoop.

The braces *f* may be extended over a greater or lesser number of hoops or ribs *a*, as found best, provided they are not extended so far downward as to interfere with the seat when the wearer sits on one, or cause the dress to be lifted up too high at the back; but the said braces may be extended down three or more of the ribs if a joint be made at or about the present termination of the lower ends, or if they be wholly detached and the extension be made by entirely independent braces, either of which arrangements I propose to make use of for the purpose of amplifying the bustle.

It will be seen that the bustle and back of the skirt below it may be readily adjusted to protrude more or less, as required, by the adjustment of the straps *e*, which bearing against the back of the wearer draw the straps backward more or less, and also hold them snugly against the hips, thereby limiting the spread of the skirt sidewise, drawing it in at the front and forcing it out backward.

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

The hoops *a*, braces *f*, and the back-straps *e*, fastening in front, combined, as described, with the side suspending hip-strap *b* of a hoop-skirt, for the purpose specified.

JAS. O. WEST.

Witnesses:

GEO. W. MABEE,
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