C. A. VON CORT & S. A. SHEPHERD.

Sewing-Machine Treadle.

No. 214,266. Patented April 15, 1879.

Fig. 1.

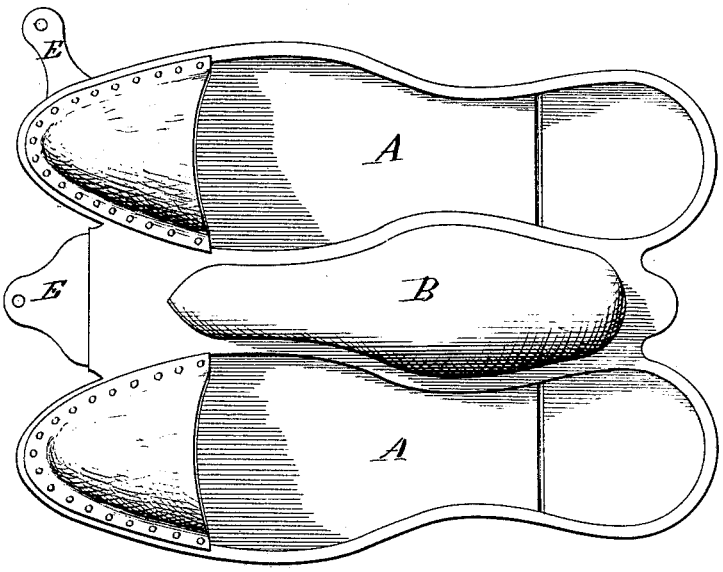


Fig. 2.

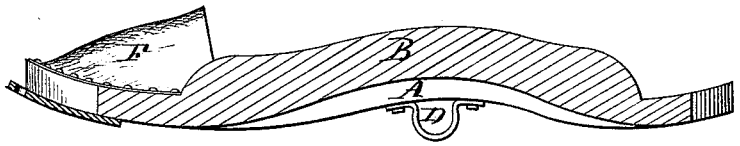
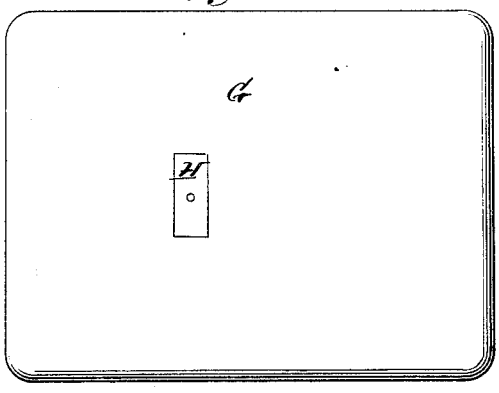


Fig. 3.



WITNESSES

John A. Lewis

D. P. Lowe

INVENTORS

C. Von Cort

S. A. Shepherd

ATTORNEY

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

CHARLOTTE A. VON CORT AND SARAH A. SHEPHERD, OF WASHINGTON, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

IMPROVEMENT IN SEWING-MACHINE TREADLES.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. **214,266**, dated April 15, 1879; application filed March 5, 1879.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that we, CHARLOTTE A. VON CORT, M. D., and SARAH A. SHEPHERD, of Washington, in the county of Washington and District of Columbia, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Sewing-Machine Treadles; and we do hereby declare that the following is a full, clear, and exact description of the invention, which will enable others skilled in the art to which it appertains to make and use the same, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, and to letters of reference marked thereon, which form a part of this specification.

This invention has for its object the diminishing of sickness and death among girls and women who operate sewing-machines.

For the past twenty-five years we have been investigating the physical and mental laws of health-culture and life forces, the causes of diseased humanity, and the remedies, and for the past ten years have been careful observers of the many evils resulting from operating on sewing-machines. In that time we have noted between four and five hundred cases. Many of those cases referred to have become permanently diseased, and suffer untold tortures. Others have died without knowing or even conceiving the cause of their troubles. We have seen some cases where the operator became partially insane, and others wholly so. Some are fretful, cross, self-willed, and stubborn—others guilty of such extreme recklessness as to prove insanity. We do not find one case where the health of the operator remains good, and where the functions of the body are undisturbed after operating a short time on any sewing machine. Six months generally develop alarming symptoms.

When the body is not perfectly healthy, the weak organs are sure to suffer, as the muscles leading to the weaker organs, being deprived of their electric life forces, cannot supply the necessary vitality to keep the body in natural running order. Others, while running the machine swiftly, experience ringing in the ears, and sharp pain over the eyes. The circulation is retarded over the whole body, which is bordering on paralysis. Others suffer pains in the limbs to such an extent that they are obliged to avoid the machine altogether.

Our object is to institute the proper remedy, as we know sewing-machines must and will be used; and we positively assert that girls and women are sacrificed in this way. We have satisfactorily discovered that the electric forces of the system, in connection with the iron treadle and steel plate, are the ever-growing source of trouble in operating sewing-machines.

We have made many experiments, and we have operated sufficiently to report from experience, and we know it is not the physical force needed to run the machine; neither is it the motion, as the motion under proper conditions would be beneficial. It is the electric current created by the friction, and the feet of the operator in contact with the iron treadle, and the hands with the steel plate. The treadle of the old spinning-wheel was wood; consequently there was no waste, and no cold feet. The wooden sandal naturally becomes warm from the system, and it being porous, and an element conducive to nature, it will assist the forces of the body, and the friction produced does no harm.

We are aware that rubber has been used as a lining for treadles; and this we consider just as objectionable as iron. We have seen many cases of disease from rubber coming in contact with the physical system.

The drawings accompanying this application fully illustrate the invention, in which—

Figure 1 represents a plan view of the sandal; Fig. 2, a cross-section; Fig. 3, the plate on which the operator's hands and material rest.

Our invention consists, first, of a wooden sandal, sprung into a convenient and applicable shape or form by a mechanical process of action, or to be worked into the desired form from a block of wood of a suitable kind, the best calculated for the purpose, the sandal or treadle A to have an attachment of metal at the front or toes E, projecting forward from the center, or at either side, securely fastened to the wood, for the purpose of holding the rod which works the machine; also, metallic

sockets D, fastened securely to the under side of the shoe-shaped sandal on each side, for the purpose of adjusting the treadle-bar on which the sandal works. This sandal is properly fitted or adapted to the sole of the feet or shoe worn, so that there will be no unnecessary strain on any particular nerve or muscle of the body.

The front or toes of the sandal may be either square or round, the sandal to be constructed and properly arranged for each foot, and around its edge the wood may be made to rise a half inch (more or less) above the surface bottom, and made smooth and oval.

In the center, between the foot-plates, a half inch (more or less) from the inner edge, the wood is raised to a suitable degree of about one inch or more in a smooth oval form, B, sloping off at each end down to the plate. This is for the purpose of protecting the feet and keeping them in proper position, and also for strengthening the sandal.

This sandal may have a piece of leather adapted to the front or toes, and securely fastened thereto, which may be one inch or more deep, so adapted that the toe of the foot or shoe may easily slip under the leather into the recess. This assists the feet in raising the treadle, which throws the force on the wheel.

The wooden plate G, (shown in Fig. 3,) upon which the operator's hands rest in holding the material, should have steel or other metal H inserted, for the purpose of proper security in working the needle. Both the sandal and the plate are made of wood, papier-maché, or any other similar material; but there is nothing so non-injurious as wood for the purpose.

Having thus fully described our invention, what we claim as new, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

A sandal formed of wood, papier-maché, or other similar material, with a central projection and toe-guards, in combination with a plate constructed of the same material, serving as a rest for the operator's hands upon the table of the treadle mechanism, substantially as described.

In testimony that we claim the foregoing as our own we affix our signatures in presence of two witnesses.

C. A. VON CORT.
S. A. SHEPHERD.

Witnesses:
J. McNAMEE,
H. J. ENNIS.