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54 **A curtain.**

57 A curtain comprises a relatively rigid support rail (1) and a plurality of flexible strands (2) suspended therefrom. The rail (1) is formed in two or more sections (3, 4) having their adjacent ends pivotally connected together by means of a bracket (5) so that the adjacent rail sections (3, 4) are pivotal between a fully extended position in which they are co-linear and a fully folded position in which they are folded towards each other to be generally parallel.

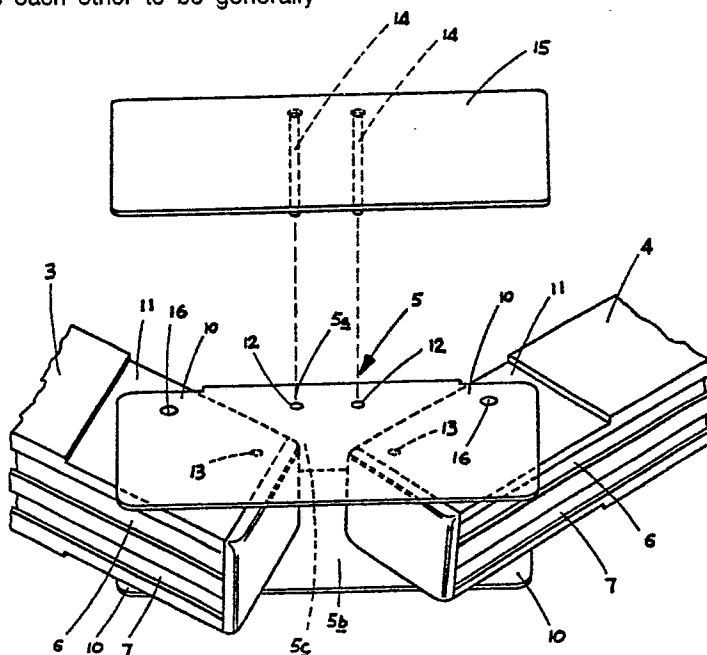


FIG. 3

A CURTAIN

The present invention relates to a curtain comprising a relatively rigid support rail and a plurality of flexible strands, strips or the like (herein referred to generally as strands) suspended from the rail.

In use, the support rail of such a curtain is mounted above the opening of a door or window so that the strands hang down across the opening. Many different types of such curtains are already known. One such example is shown in my earlier U.K. Patent Application, published under No. 2180151A, in which a plurality of the strands are mounted on a slider which is itself mounted in a track in the support rail. The curtain also has a plurality of strands which are fixed relative to those on the slider.

By moving the slider (i.e. by drawing the strands attached thereto), the lateral extent of the curtain can be varied between a maximum, at which the strands are arranged right across the opening, and a minimum at which at least a part of the opening is clear of the strands.

Naturally, the support rail must be of a length corresponding to at least the maximum lateral extent of the curtain. For a doorway, therefore, the support rail may need to have a length of about one metre. Whilst there are no particular difficulties in producing the support rails of such lengths, there is the problem that the curtains may be somewhat awkward to carry from the shop at which they are bought.

It is therefore an object of the invention to obviate or mitigate the abovementioned disadvantage.

According to the present invention there is provided a curtain comprising a relatively rigid support rail and a plurality of flexible strands (as herein defined) suspended therefrom, wherein the support rail is formed in two or more rail sections having their adjacent ends pivotally associated together so that the adjacent rail sections are pivotal between a position in which they are co-linear and a position in which they are folded towards each other.

Other preferred features and advantages of the invention will be apparent from the following description and the accompanying claims.

The invention will be further described by way of example only with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:-

Figure 1 shows one embodiment of a curtain according to the invention in a fully extended position;

Figure 2 shows the curtain of Figure 1 in a fully folded position;

Figure 3 is a fragmentary perspective view, on an enlarged scale, of the curtain of Figure 1 in a partially folded position; and

Figure 4 is a fragmentary sectional view, on an enlarged scale, of the curtain of figure 1 taken along line IV-IV.

Referring to the drawings, a curtain shown therein comprises a support rail 1 from which are suspended a plurality of beaded strands 2. The support rail 1 is formed in two rail sections 3 and 4 which are pivotably connected together by a bracket 5.

Each rail section 3 and 4 has two parallel tracks 6 and 7 (Figure 3). The strands 2 on each rail section 3 and 4 are arranged in two sets 8 and 9. The set 8 of each rail section is mounted on a slider (not shown) which is movable along the length of track 6 of the respective sections as depicted by the double-headed arrow A. Each set 9 is fixed in position at the opposite end of the rail 1 to the other set 9.

The strands 2 are beaded strands comprising beads 2a threaded onto lengths of pliable filamentary material 2b.

The bracket 5 is shown in more detail in Figure 3 and will be seen to be a generally U-shaped member having two limbs 5a and 5b connected by an integral web 5c. The bracket 5 is provided at each end with a pair of longitudinally extending lugs 10. Recessed end regions 11 of the rail sections 3 and 4 are respectively pivotably mounted on bolts 16 extending between a respective pair of the lugs 10 so that the sections 3 and 4 are pivotably movable between a fully extended position as shown in Figure 1 in which the sections 3 and 4 are co-linear and a fully folded position as shown in Figure 3 in which the sections 3 and 4 are folded towards each other to be generally parallel.

In the fully extended position of the rail 1, the adjacent ends of sections 3 and 4 are in abutting relationship and their upper end faces bear against the inner face of the web 5c. This ensures sufficient strength for the rail 1.

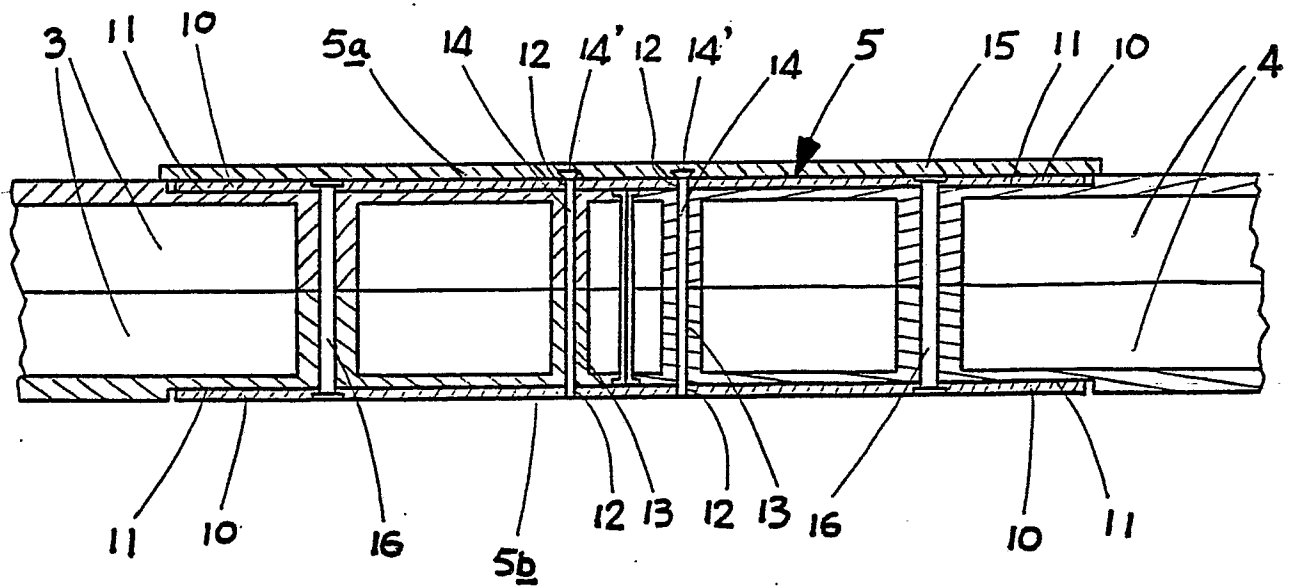
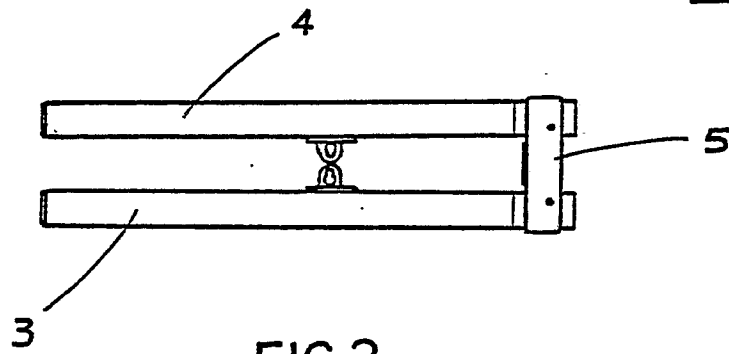
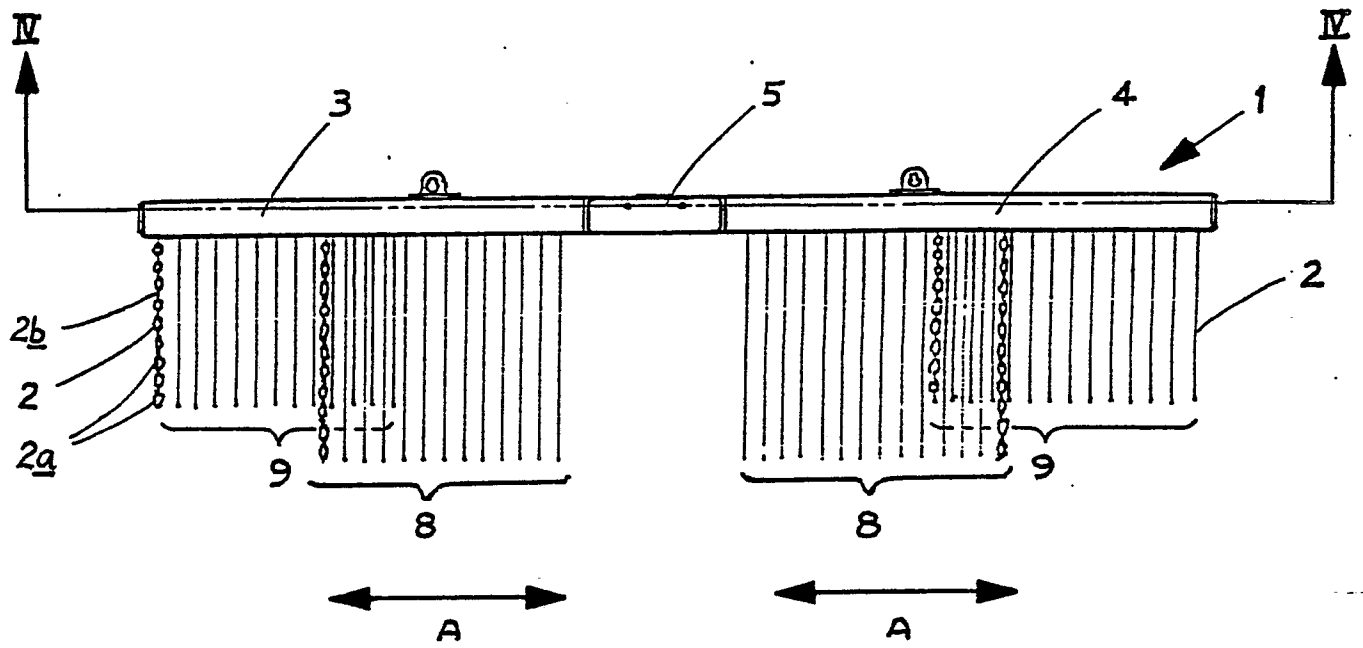
Referring now to Figure 4, a pair of aligned holes 12 are provided in each of the lugs 10 towards the centre of the bracket 5, adjacent the ends of the sections 3, 4. Two through bores 13 are provided in the respective adjacent ends of the rail sections 3 and 4, the bore 13 of each rail section being in alignment with a respective pair of the holes 12 when the rail 1 is in the fully extended position. To maintain the rail 1 rigidly in the fully extended position, a respective locking pin 14 is

inserted through each pair of aligned holes 12 and the associated bore 13, the pins 14 being snugly received in the holes 12 and bore 13. The pins 14 are conveniently carried on a plastics plate 15 in which expanded heads 14' of the pins 14 are embedded when the plate 15 is moulded.

The invention is described by way of example only and various modifications to the described embodiment may be made without departing from the scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims. For example, the bracket 5 may be replaced by a hinge comprising two plates each connected to a respective rail section, the plates being pivotally attached to one another.

Claims

1. A curtain comprising a relatively rigid support rail (1) and a plurality of flexible strands (2) suspended therefrom, wherein the support rail (1) is formed in two or more rail sections (3 and 4) having their adjacent ends pivotably associated together so that the adjacent rail sections (3 and 4) are pivotal between a position in which they are co-linear and a position in which they are folded towards each other.
2. A curtain as claimed in claim 1, further comprises means (14 and 15) for locking the rail sections (3 and 4) in the position in which they are co-linear.
3. A curtain as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the adjacent rail sections (3 and 4) are each pivotably mounted on a bracket (5) which provides a connection between the sections.
4. A curtain as claimed in claim 3, wherein the bracket (5) is of generally U-shaped cross-section with limbs (5a and 5b) connected by a web (5c), the bracket (5) has at each end a pair of lugs (10) provided as extensions of the limbs (5a and 5b), and each rail section (3 and 4) is pivotably mounted on a pair of the lugs (10).
5. A curtain as claimed in claim 4, when dependent on claim 2, wherein said locking means (14 and 15) comprises a locking pin (14) inserted through a hole (12) provided in each limb (5a and 5b) and a bore (13) provided in an end of a said rail section (3 or 4) which is received between the lugs (10).
6. A curtain as claimed in claim 5, wherein a said pin (14) is mounted on a plate (15).
7. A curtain as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 6, comprising at least one first set of strands (8) which are movable relatively along the support rail (1) and at least one second set of strands (9) which are fixed against movement along the rail (1).
8. A curtain as claimed in claim 7, wherein each rail section (3 or 4) comprises a said first set (8) and a said second set (9) of strands.
9. A curtain as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, having two said rail sections (3 or 4).
10. A curtain as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, wherein said strands (2) comprise beaded strands.



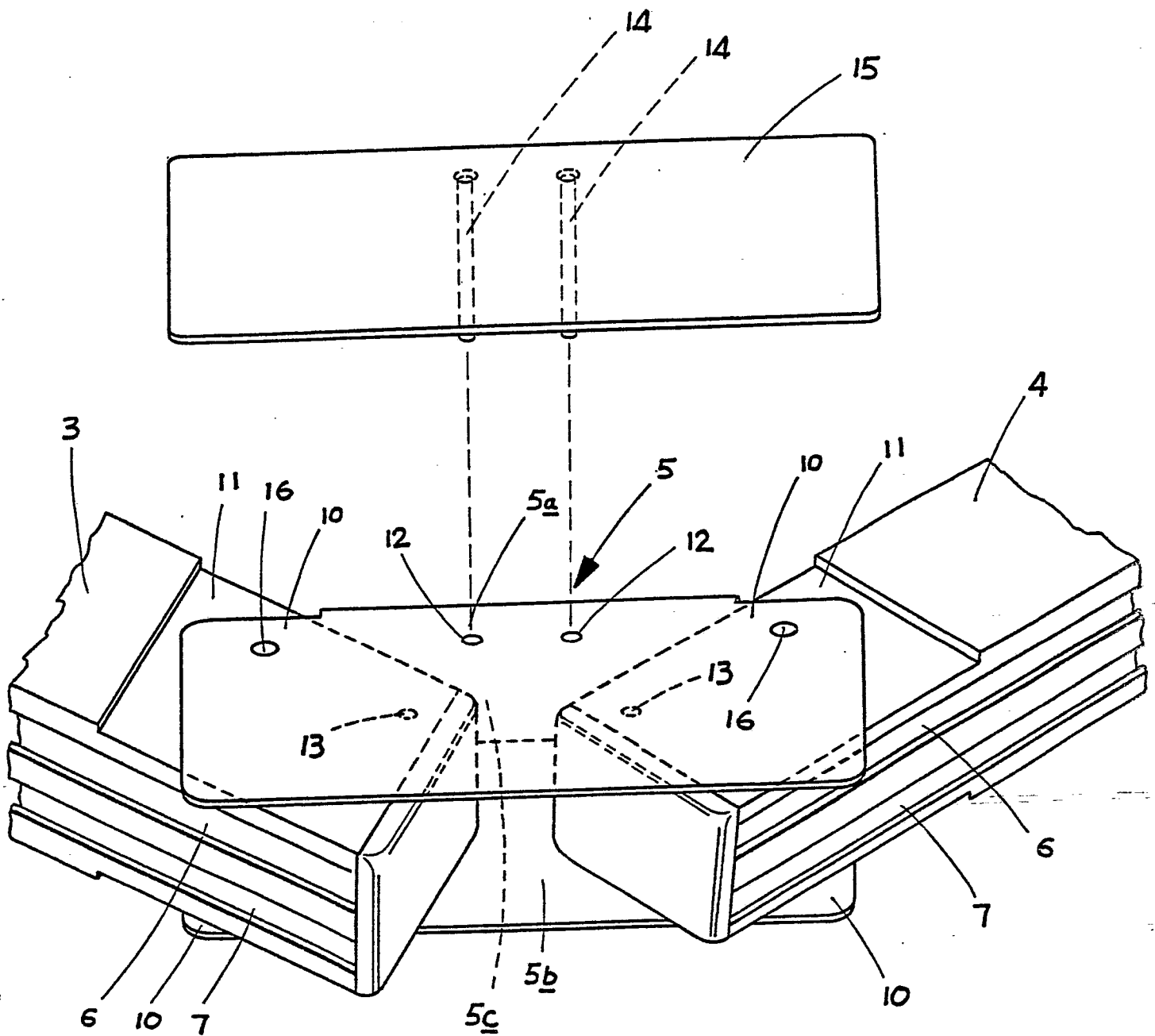


FIG. 3



DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl.4)
X	US-A-1 758 600 (GRASSI) * Page 1, lines 39-101; page 2, lines 1-30; figures 1-5 * ---	1,9,10	A 47 H 23/05
D,A	GB-A-2 180 151 (LUI) * Page 1, lines 114-125; page 2, lines 1-60; figures 1-7 * -----	7,8	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int. Cl.4)
			A 47 H
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 19-12-1988	Examiner SCHOLS W.L.H.
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS			
X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document		T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document	