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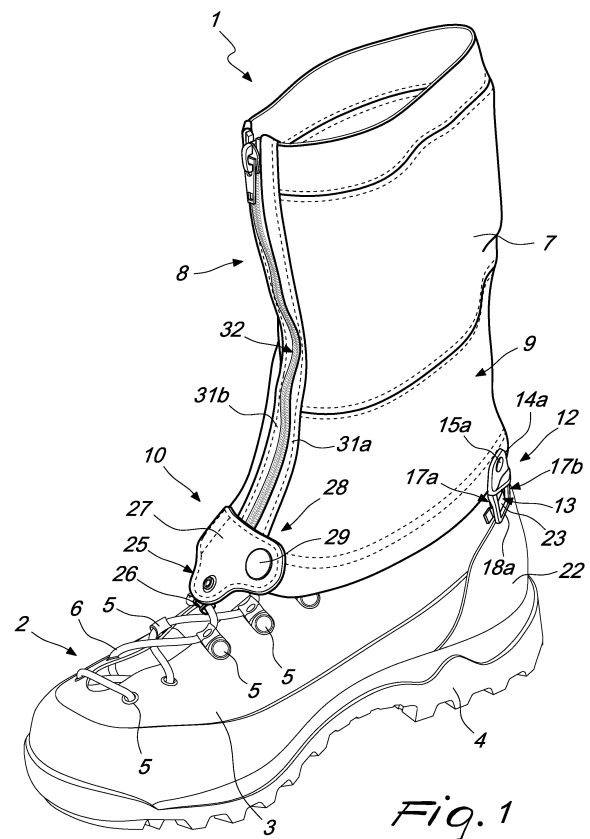
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(54) REMOVABLE GAITER FOR PROTECTING FOOTWEAR

(57) A removable gaiter (1) for protecting footwear (2) comprising an upper (3), enveloping the foot of the user, which is associated with a sole (4) and is provided with eyelets (5) for laces for tying (6).

The removable gaiter comprises an upper portion (7), which when deployed envelops the area (8) of the tibia of the user, and is connected to a lower portion (9), which when deployed envelops the area of the instep (10).

The lower portion (9) is provided, on the lower perimeter edge (11), with first means for temporary engagement (12) with complementarily-shaped grip means (13) associated with and protruding laterally from the upper (3) in an area above that of the heel (22) of the sole (4).



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Description

[0001] The present application relates to a removable gaiter for protecting footwear, in particular for limiting the infiltration of water/mud into the footwear and for protecting the areas of the instep and of at least some of the tibia of the user.

[0002] Nowadays Italian patent application no. 1019996900540874 is known which claims a gaiter for protection against the elements, generally tubular in shape, of the type comprising, firstly, a lower part which covers, at least partially, the bootleg of the footwear in a front area for introducing and enclosing the foot of a user and the edge of the lower end of which is designed to coincide with the edge of said bootleg and, secondly, an upper part designed to envelop the lower part of the leg of said user above the bootleg of the footwear, characterized in that an at least partially peripheral faceplate protrudes from at least one portion of the edge of the end of the corresponding lower part, constituting the extension of said edge so as to increase the extent of its protection beyond the latter.

[0003] This solution however has many drawbacks. In fact, the gaiter is fixed to the footwear by means of a strap which is passed under the sole; this solution is not optimal given that while walking the strap is subjected to continual impacts with the ground and therefore also with blunt objects present in the ground, which result in its rapid wear or breakage.

[0004] Alternatively, the use is indicated of a cable. However, this solution also presents a further drawback, which is that the cable might catch on objects protruding from the ground, constituting a hazard for the user who could trip while walking.

[0005] Furthermore, the use of straps or cables entails, for the user, the need to couple one end of the strap or cable using tension adjustment means 16 associated with the gaiter: this operation is not easy, since the user has to bend down in order to grasp this end and then tension it and couple it to the means.

[0006] This operation is inconvenient because it requires the user to use both hands, and these can only be used after a difficult rotation of the trunk, moreover performed in a bent position.

[0007] The aim of the present invention is to eliminate the above-mentioned drawbacks in conventional gaiters for footwear, by providing a removable gaiter that can be applied to the footwear rapidly, precisely and easily.

[0008] Within this aim, an object of the invention is to provide a removable gaiter that makes it possible to perform the coupling of the gaiter to the footwear using only one hand.

[0009] Another object of the invention is to provide a removable gaiter that makes it possible to perform the coupling of the gaiter to the footwear while maintaining a comfortable position for the body.

[0010] Another object of the invention is to provide a removable gaiter in which the above characteristics can

also be achieved in the step of disengaging the gaiter from the footwear.

[0011] Another object of the invention is to provide a removable gaiter that makes it possible to offer optimal protection of the areas of the instep and of part of the tibia of the user, so increasing comfort while walking.

[0012] Another object of the invention is to provide a removable gaiter that enables the user to walk safely, since there are no elements in the gaiter that, when the sole impacts against the ground, could catch on objects protruding from the ground which could cause the user to trip while walking.

[0013] Another object of the invention is to provide a removable gaiter that makes it possible to achieve a good impermeability for the areas of the instep and of part of the tibia of the user.

[0014] Another object is to provide a removable gaiter that, in addition to the foregoing characteristics, is also reliable and safe in use, and which can be provided in a simple manner with the usual and conventional machinery and plants.

[0015] This aim and these and other objects that will become more apparent hereinafter are achieved by a removable gaiter, for protecting footwear comprising an upper, enveloping the foot of the user, which is associated with a sole and is provided with eyelets for laces for tying, which is characterized in that it comprises an upper portion, which when deployed envelops the area of the tibia of the user, and is connected to a lower portion which when deployed envelops the area of the instep, said lower portion being provided, on the lower perimeter edge, with first means for temporary engagement with complementarily-shaped grip means associated with and protruding laterally from said upper in an area above that of the heel of said sole.

[0016] Further characteristics and advantages of the invention will become better apparent from the detailed description of a particular embodiment, illustrated by way of non-limiting example in the accompanying drawings wherein:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a gaiter according to the present invention, associated with an item of footwear;

Figure 2 is a perspective view of the gaiter of the invention, wherein the gaiter is disengaged from the footwear;

Figure 3 is a side view of the gaiter according to the invention with the gaiter associated with the footwear;

Figure 4 is a detail of the gaiter of the invention;

Figure 5 is a cross-sectional view of the gaiter of the invention taken along the line V-V in Figure 3 in the step of coupling first means for temporary engagement to grip means;

Figure 6 is a view similar to the previous one of the gaiter of the invention in the condition of full coupling between the first means for temporary engagement

and the grip means;

Figure 7 is a detail of the gaiter associated with the footwear;

Figure 8 shows the inside of the gaiter in the condition in which it is not associated with the footwear and in an open condition;

Figure 9 shows, in a condition similar to the previous figure, the outside of the gaiter;

Figure 10 shows the gaiter, of which the upper portion, when it is associated with the footwear, envelops the entire area of the tibia of the user.

[0017] With reference to the figures, the reference numeral 1 generally designates a removable gaiter for protecting footwear 2, particularly, but not exclusively, for the practice of hunting, cross-country skiing, trekking, alpine skiing, or safety in the workplace.

[0018] The footwear 2 is constituted by an upper 3, enveloping the foot of the user and optionally part of the tibia of the user, which is associated with a sole 4, and is provided with eyelets or lace-holes or holes 5 for laces for tying 6.

[0019] The removable gaiter 1 comprises an upper portion 7 which, when deployed, i.e. when the gaiter is associated with the footwear, envelops the area of the tibia 8 of the user.

[0020] The upper portion 7 is connected to a lower portion 9 which, when deployed, envelops the area 10 of the instep.

[0021] The upper portion 7 and the lower portion 9 can be made with the same soft material, which can be, for each one or separately, optionally partially or completely waterproof.

[0022] In the condition in which the gaiter is not associated with the footwear, the gaiter can be arranged on a plane that gives it a substantially frustum shape with curved lateral sides.

[0023] The lower portion 9 has, on the lower perimeter edge 11, first means for temporary engagement 12 which interact with complementarily-shaped grip means 13 associated with the footwear 2.

[0024] The first means 12 are constituted, in the embodiment shown, by two tabs 14a, 14b which are coupled, by means of an adapted rivet 15a, 15b, to the lower perimeter edge 11 of the lower portion 9 in an area adjacent to a vertical central axis 16 to the gaiter in the condition in which the gaiter is opened out on a plane.

[0025] Externally to the lower perimeter edge 11, a U-shaped fork 17a, 17b protrudes from each tab 14a, 14b, and a tooth 19a, 19b protrudes from its base 18a, 18b in the direction of the tab 14a, 14b and the free terminal end 20a, 20b thereof is facing away from the plane of arrangement of the lower portion 9.

[0026] The length of the teeth 19a, 19b is shorter than the length of the lateral wings 21a, 21b, 21c, 21d of the forks 17a, 17b.

[0027] The grip means 13 are associated with and protrude laterally from the upper 3 in an area above that

of the heel 22 of the sole 4 and are located, in the condition in which the gaiter is associated with the footwear, under the fork 17a, 17b.

[0028] The grip means 13 are each constituted by a band 23, advantageously metallic or made of a resilient material, shaped substantially like the Greek letter Q (omega) and arranged approximately parallel to the sole 4 transversely to the upper 3 at the heel area 22.

[0029] The shape of the teeth 19a, 19b and of each one of the bands 23 is such as to define, once the respective band 23 is associated with the upper 3, a sufficient space 24 to allow the tooth 19a, 19b to be inserted into it, the tooth 19a, 19b to then be locked on the upper perimeter edge 33 of the band 23, and the tooth 19a, 19b to then be disengaged from the band 23 following a simple pressure applied on the tooth 19a, 19b by a finger of the user or following a pressure applied on the tabs 14a, 14b in the direction of the upper 3 and subsequently in the direction of the sole 4.

[0030] The insertion of the tooth 19a, 19b in fact occurs when the user positions it under the corresponding band 23 at the space 24 and subsequently simply pulls the gaiter upward.

[0031] The disengagement between the first means for temporary engagement 12 and the grip means 13 can therefore occur simply by compressing the free terminal end 20a, 20b of the tooth 19a, 19b toward the upper and simultaneously pushing the gaiter downward.

[0032] Second means for temporary engagement 25 to at least one of the laces 6 are provided which are constituted, in the embodiment shown, by a hook 26 protruding from the vertex of a substantially triangular flap 27 one side of which is stitched to the gaiter at an end of the lower perimeter edge 11.

[0033] Third means for temporary engagement 28 of the lower lateral ends of the upper portion 7 and the lower portion 9 once coupled together are furthermore provided.

[0034] In fact, the cap 29 of an automatic press-stud is placed on the other face of the flap 27, outside the lower portion 9, and cooperates with an adapted socket 30 associated with the other face of the gaiter to which the flap 27 is fixed.

[0035] The tapes of a zipper 32 are associated with the lateral edges 31a, 31b of the upper portion 7 and the lower portion 9 to draw them together so as to envelop, when deployed, the areas of the instep 10 and of the tibia 8.

[0036] Thus it has been found that the invention has fully achieved the intended aim and objects, a gaiter having been provided that can be applied to an item of footwear rapidly, precisely and easily, while making it possible to perform the coupling to the footwear and disengagement using only one hand.

[0037] This coupling and disengagement can be performed while maintaining a comfortable position for the body without needing to rotate the trunk.

[0038] Once the gaiter is applied, excellent protection

and optionally a watertight seal is obtained for the areas of the instep and at least of part of the tibia of the user, so increasing comfort while walking, such walking lastly being safe since there are no elements in the gaiter that, when the sole impacts against the ground, could catch on objects protruding from the ground which could cause the user to trip while walking.

[0039] The invention is of course susceptible of numerous modifications and variations, all of which are within the scope of the appended claims.

[0040] Thus, for example, the height dimension of the upper portion 7 which when deployed, i.e. when the gaiter is associated with the footwear, envelops the area of the tibia 8 of the user can vary as a function of the degree of cover of the tibia that it is desired to have, such as for example shown in Figure 10.

[0041] Naturally the materials used as well as the dimensions of the individual components of the invention may be more relevant according to specific requirements.

[0042] The characteristics indicated above as advantageous, convenient or the like, may also be missing or be substituted by equivalent characteristics.

[0043] The disclosures in Italian Utility Model Application No. 202023000004497 from which this application claims priority are incorporated herein by reference.

[0044] Where technical features mentioned in any claim are followed by reference signs, those reference signs have been included for the sole purpose of increasing the intelligibility of the claims and accordingly, such reference signs do not have any limiting effect on the interpretation of each element identified by way of example by such reference signs.

Claims

1. A removable gaiter (1), for protecting footwear (2) comprising an upper (3), enveloping the foot of the user, which is associated with a sole (4) and is provided with eyelets (5) for laces for tying (6), which is **characterized in that** it comprises an upper portion (7), which when deployed envelops an area (8) of a tibia of the user, and is connected to a lower portion (9), which when deployed envelops an area (10) of instep, said lower portion (9) being provided, on a lower perimeter edge (11), with first means for temporary engagement (12) with complementarily-shaped grip means (13) associated with and protruding laterally from said upper (3) in an area above that of a heel (22) of said sole (4).
2. The removable gaiter (1) according to claim 1, **characterized in that** it comprises second means for temporary engagement (25) with at least one of said laces (6) and third means for temporary engagement (28) of the lower lateral ends of said upper portion (7) and said lower portion (9) once coupled together.

3. The removable gaiter (1) according to claim 1, **characterized in that** a zipper (32) is attached to lateral edges (31a, 31b) of said upper portion (7) and said lower portion (9) to draw the lateral edges together so as to envelop, when deployed, said areas (10) of the instep and (8) of said tibia.
4. The removable gaiter (1) according to one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** said upper portion (7) and said lower portion (9) are made with the same soft material, which can be, for each one or separately, partially or completely waterproof.
5. The removable gaiter (1) according to one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that**, in a condition in which said gaiter is not associated with said footwear (2), it can be arranged on a plane that gives it a substantially frustum shape with curved lateral edges (31a, 31b).
6. The removable gaiter (1) according to one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** said first means for temporary engagement (12) are constituted by two tabs (14a, 14b) which are coupled, by means of a rivet (15a, 15b), to said lower perimeter edge (11) of said lower portion (9) in an area adjacent to a vertical central axis (16) to said gaiter (1) in a condition in which said gaiter (1) is opened out on a plane.
7. The removable gaiter (1) according to one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that**, externally to said lower perimeter edge (11), a U-shaped fork (17a, 17b) protrudes from each one of said tabs (14a, 14b), and a tooth (19a, 19b) protrudes from its base (18a, 18b) in the direction of said tab (14a, 14b) and the free terminal end (20a, 20b) thereof is directed, once said gaiter (19) is associated with said footwear (2), externally to said upper (3).
8. The removable gaiter (1) according to one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** the length of said teeth (19a, 19b) is shorter than the length of the lateral wings (21a, 21b, 21c, 21d) of said fork (17a, 17b).
9. The removable gaiter (1) according to one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** said grip means (13) are associated with and protrude laterally from said upper (3) in an area that lies above that of the heel (22) of said sole (4).
10. The removable gaiter (1) according to one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** said grip means (13) are constituted by a band (23a, 23b), metallic or made of a resilient material, shaped substantially like the Greek letter Q (omega) and arranged substantially parallel to said sole (4) trans-

versely to said upper (3) at the heel area (22).

edges together so as to envelop, when deployed, said areas of the instep (10) and of the tibia (8).

11. The removable gaiter (1) according to one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** the shape of said teeth (19a, 19b) and of each one of said bands (23) is such as to define, once said bands (23) are associated with said upper (3), a space (24) to allow the insertion of said tooth (19a, 19b) into it. 5
12. The removable gaiter (1) according to one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** the shape of said teeth (19a, 19b) and of each one of said bands (23) is such as to allow said tooth (19a, 19b) to be locked onto the upper perimeter edge (33) of said band (23). 10 15
13. The removable gaiter (1) according to one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** the shape of said teeth (19a, 19b) and of each one of said bands (23) is such as to allow said teeth (19a, 19b) to be disengaged from said bands (23) following a pressure applied on said teeth (19a, 19b) by a finger of the user or following a pressure applied on said tabs (14a, 14b) in a direction of said upper (3) and subsequently in the direction of said sole (4). 20 25
14. The removable gaiter (1) according to one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** the insertion of said tooth (19a, 19b) occurs by the user positioning it under said band (23) at said space (24) and subsequently pulling said gaiter (1) upward. 30
15. The removable gaiter (1) according to one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** the disengagement between said first means for temporary engagement (12) and said grip means (13) occurs by compressing a free terminal end (20a, 20b) of said tooth (19a, 19b) toward said upper (3) and simultaneously pushing said gaiter (1) downward. 35 40
16. The removable gaiter (1) according to one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** said second means for temporary engagement (25) to at least one of said laces (6) are constituted by a hook (26) protruding from a vertex of a substantially triangular flap (27) one side of which is stitched to said gaiter (1) at an end of said lower perimeter edge (11). 45
17. The removable gaiter (1) according to one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** a cap (29) of an automatic press-stud is placed on a face of said flap (27) directed away from said lower portion (9) and cooperates with a socket (30) associated with another face of said gaiter (1) to which said flap (27) is fixed, tapes of a zipper (32) being associated with the lateral edges (31a, 31b) of said upper portion (7) and said lower portion (9) to draw the lateral 50 55

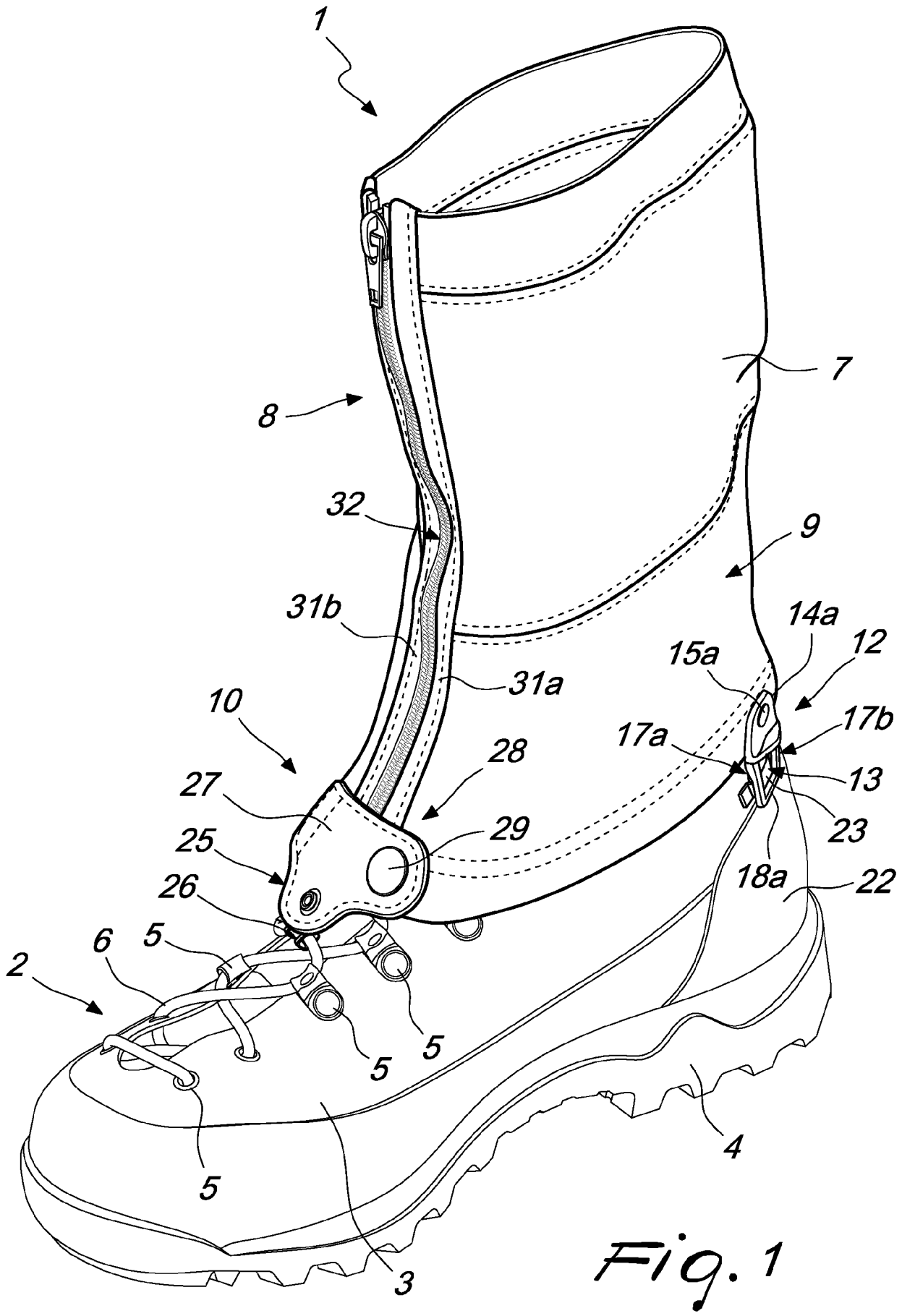
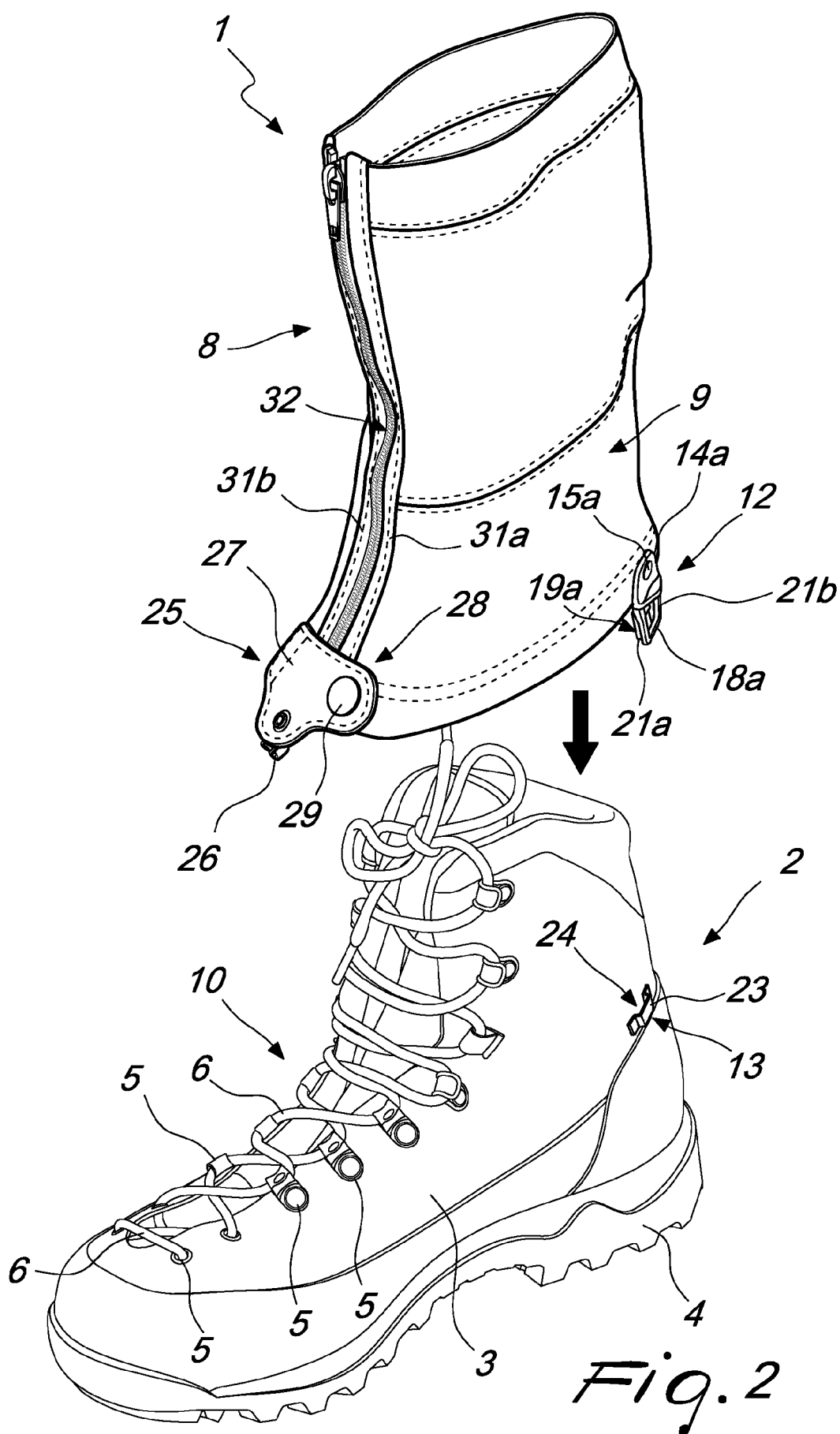


Fig. 1



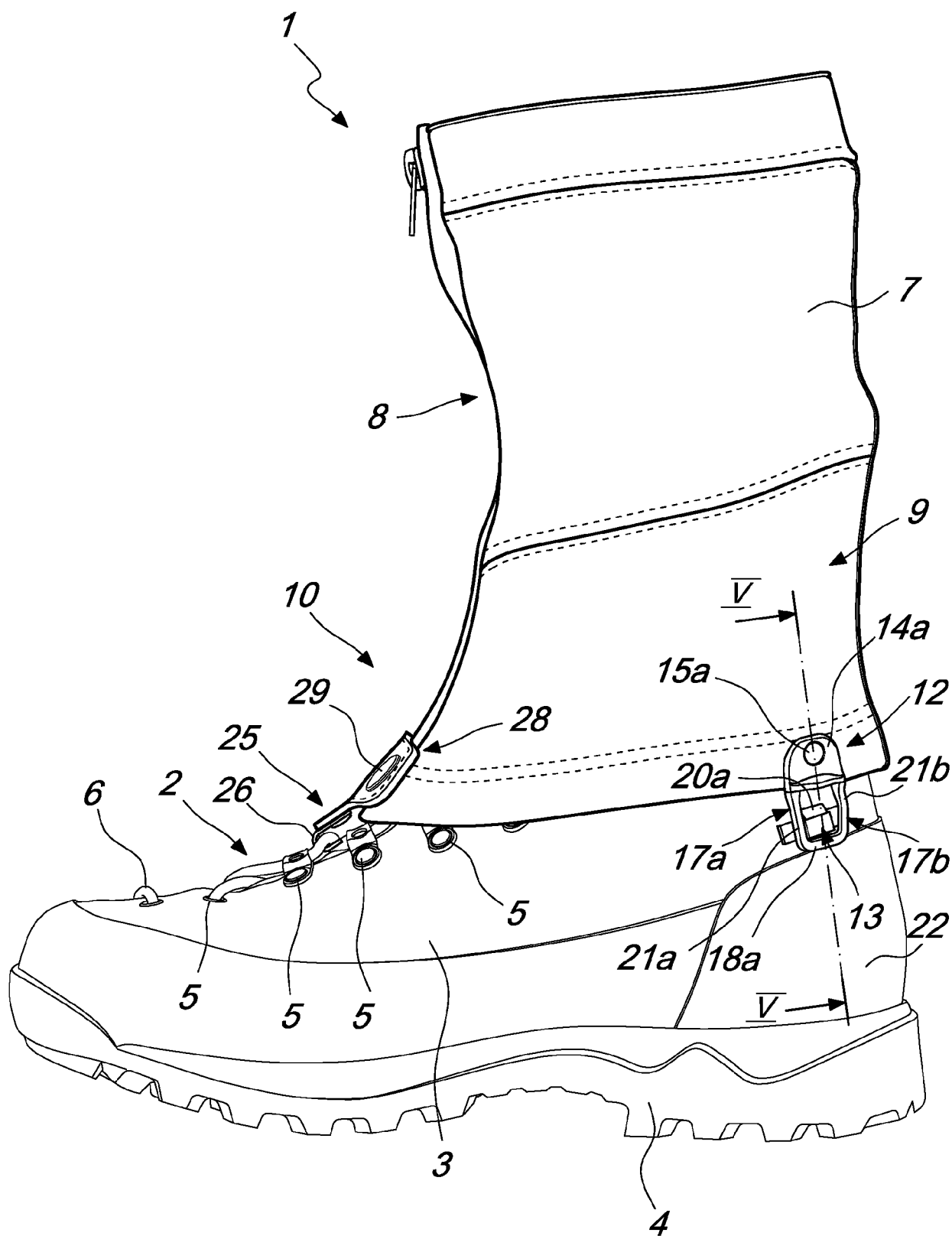


Fig. 3

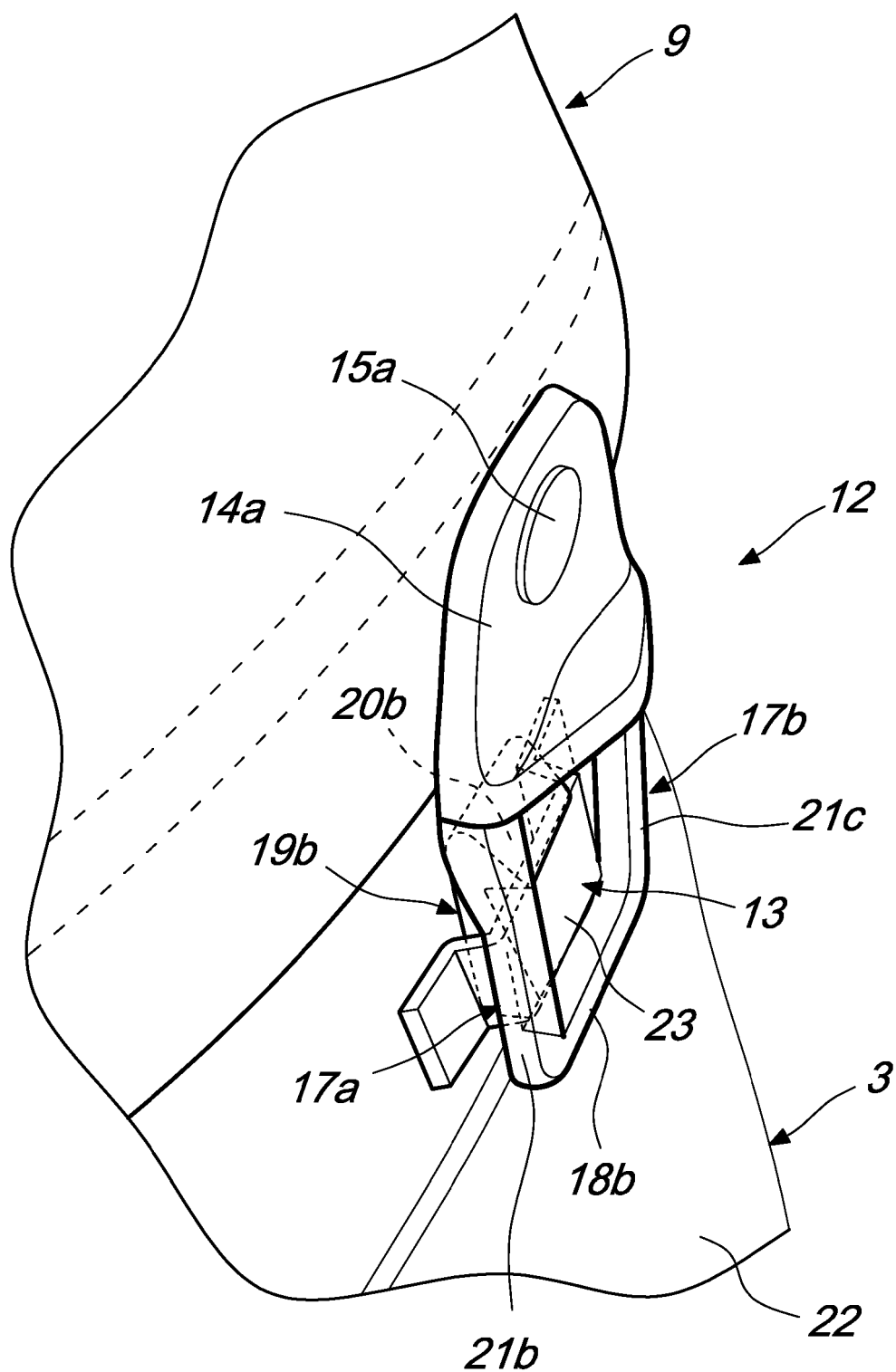


Fig. 4

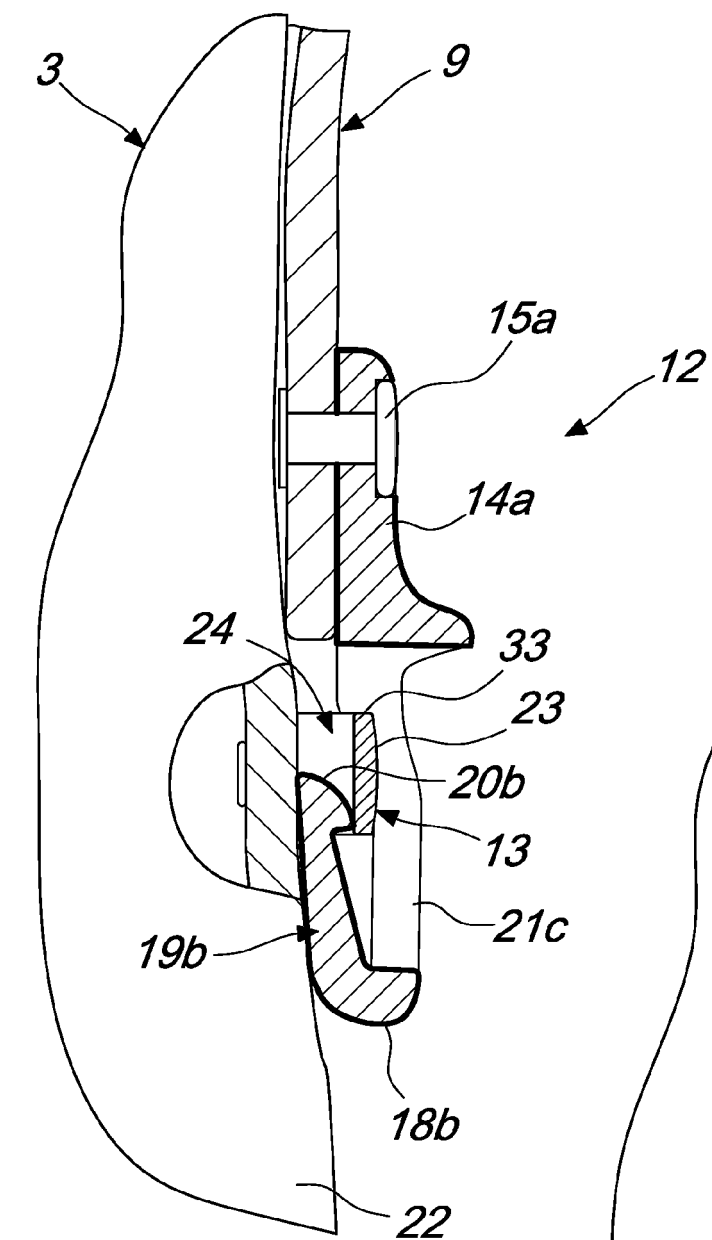


Fig. 5

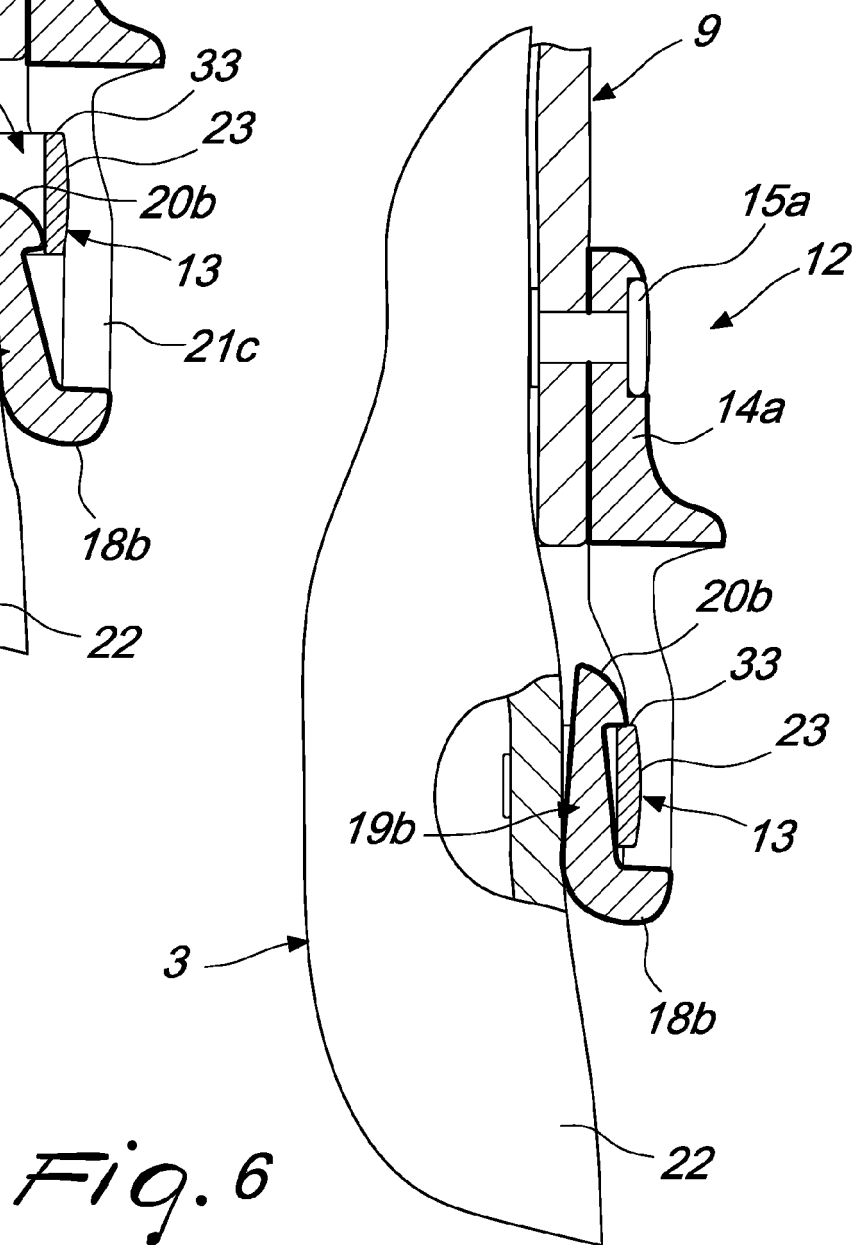


Fig. 6

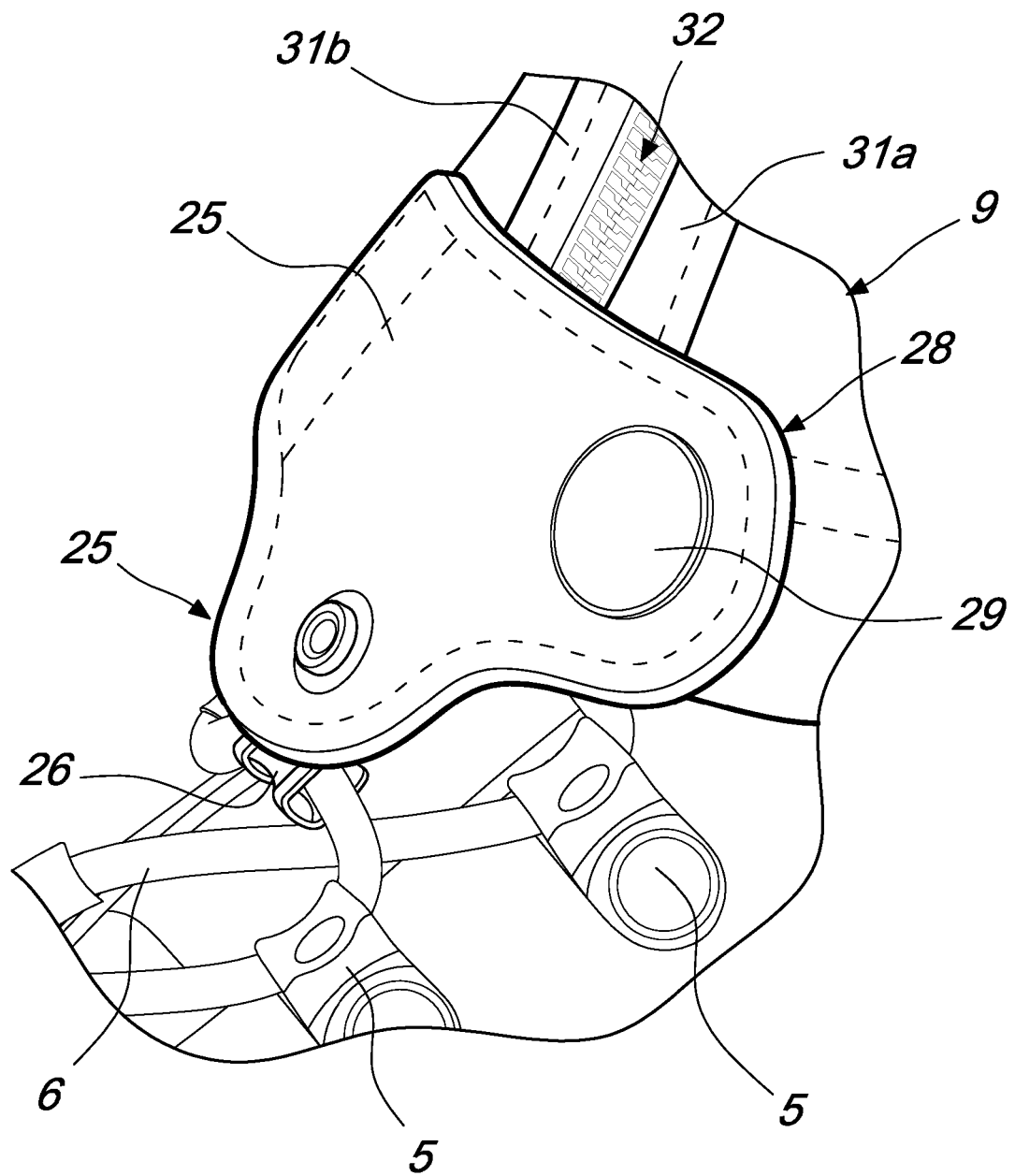


Fig. 7

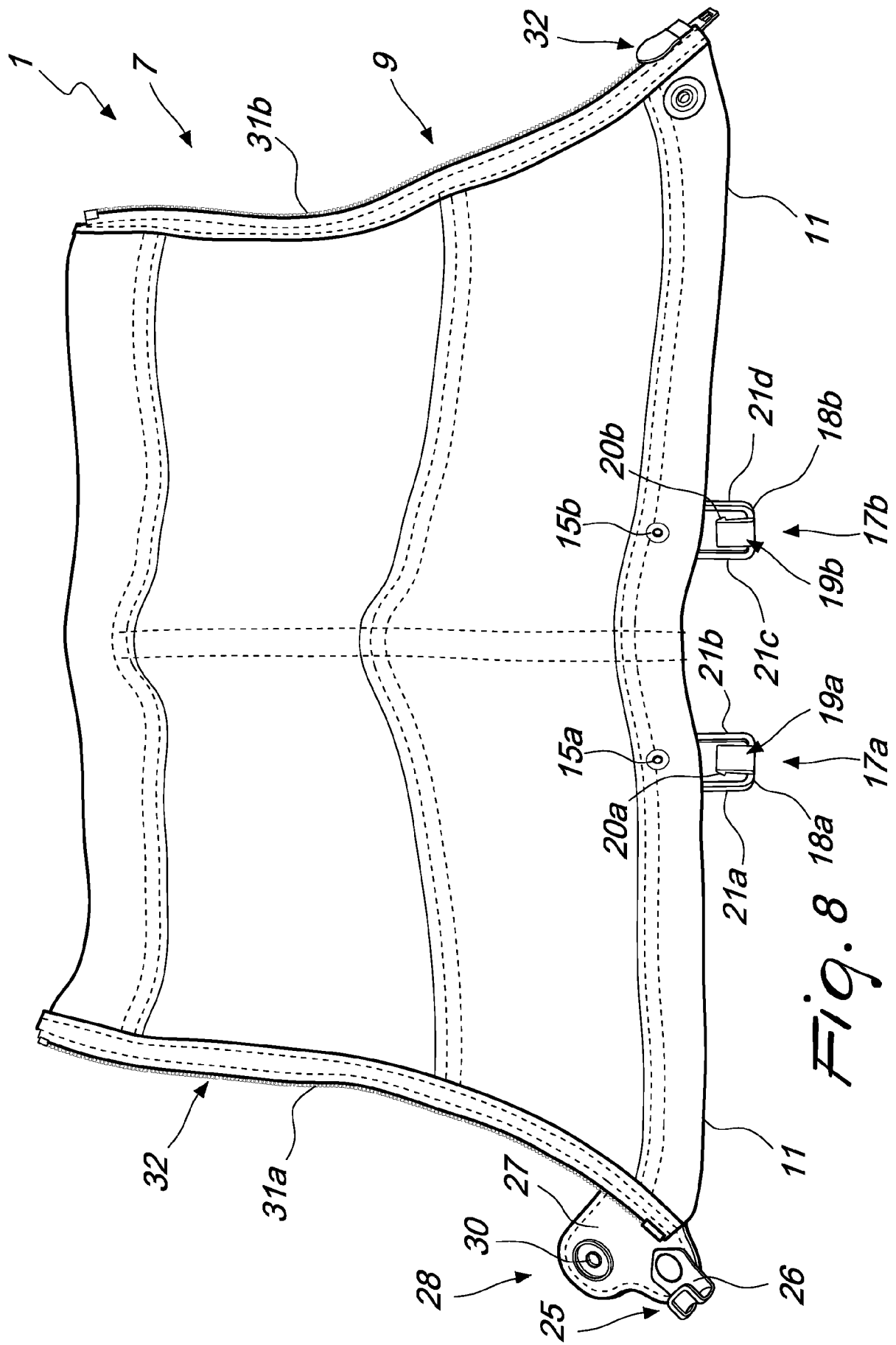


Fig. 8

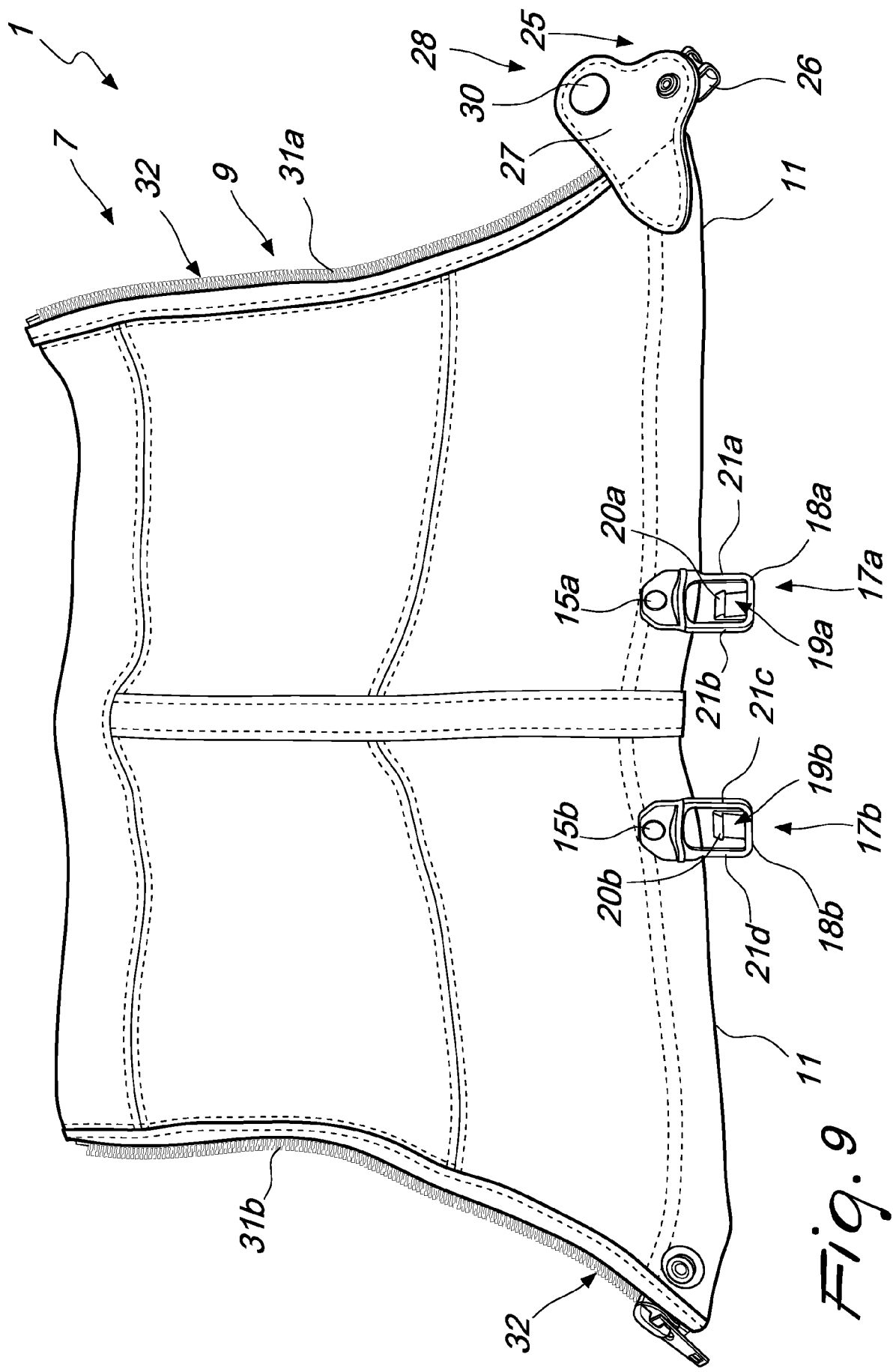
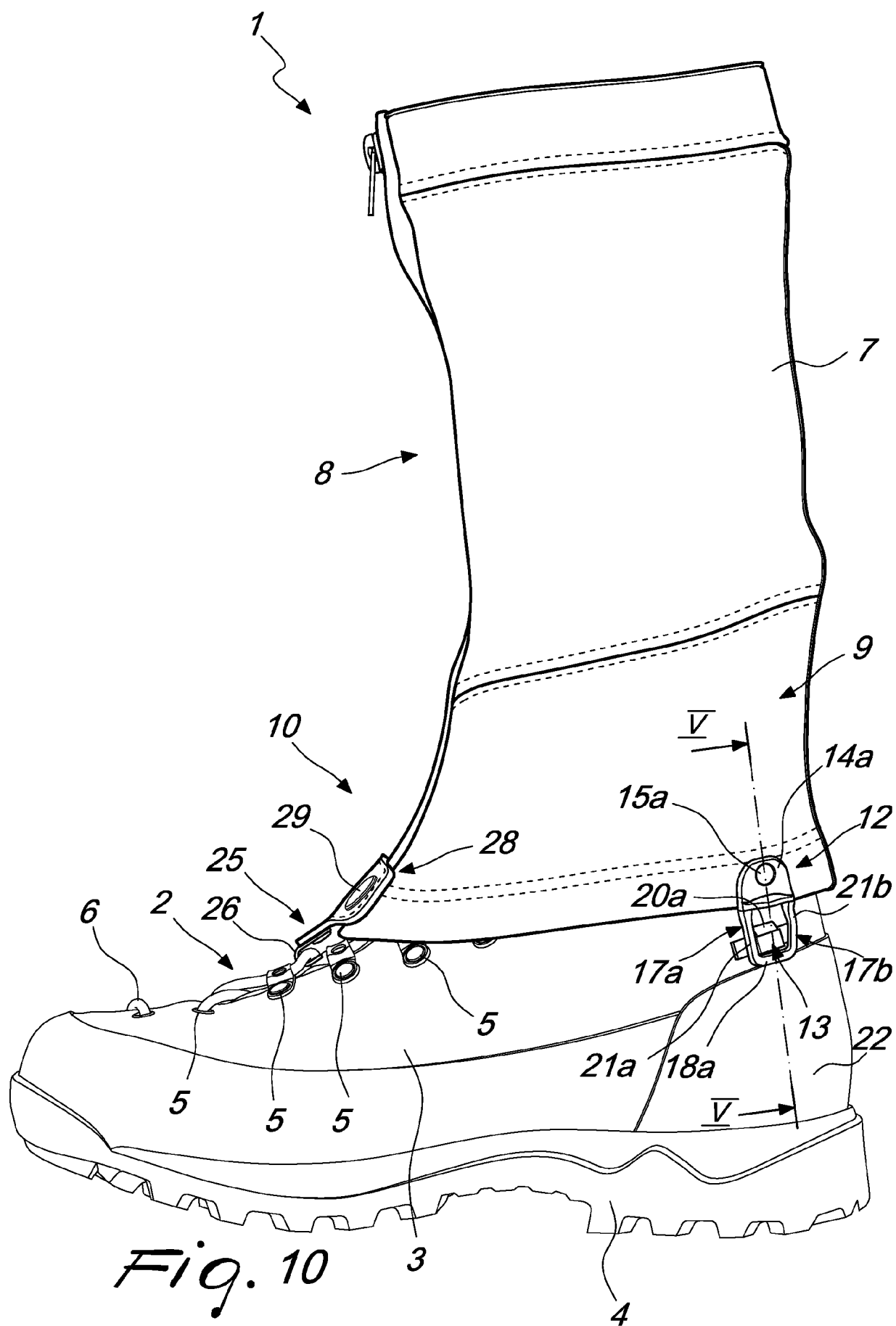


Fig. 9





EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number

EP 24 20 1263

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			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (IPC)
			A43B A44C A41D
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search		Date of completion of the search	Examiner
The Hague		27 February 2025	Papatheofrastou, M
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