

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JOSHUA STEVENS, OF CHICOPEE FALLS, MASSACHUSETTS.

IMPROVEMENT IN BREECH-LOADING FIRE-ARMS.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. **44,123**, dated September 6, 1864.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, JOSHUA STEVENS, a resident of Chicopee Falls, in the county of Hampden and State of Massachusetts, have invented a new and useful Improvement in Breech-Loading Fire-Arms; and I do hereby declare the same to be fully described in the following specification and represented in the accompanying drawings, of which—

Figure 1 is a vertical and longitudinal section, and Fig. 2 a horizontal and longitudinal section, of a pistol provided with my invention. Fig. 3 is a transverse section of it, such section being taken through the spring-catch of the barrel and stock.

The nature of my invention consists in an arrangement and combination of a breech-elevating spring and a cartridge-shell discharger or starter in such manner that the said spring, while performing its function of elevating the barrel at its breech, shall retract the cartridge-shell discharger or starter for the purpose of either wholly or partially expelling from the barrel the shell or case of an exploded cartridge.

My invention also further consists in an arrangement of a spring-catch and its holding-notch with the barrel and the stock of the fire-arm, applied together, substantially as herein-after explained.

It is necessary to my invention that the barrel of the fire-arm should not only have a separate and stationary breech or recoil-abutment fixed to or making part of the stock, but that such barrel should be open at its rear end, and be so jointed to the stock as to be capable of being turned or moved relatively thereto in a manner to move the said open end or breech end away from the stationary breech or abutment sufficiently to permit the introduction of a cartridge into the rear end of such barrel.

In the drawings, A denotes the barrel, and B the stock, of a pistol, the two being hinged or jointed together at or near the front end of the stock—viz., at *a*, as shown in Figures 1 and 2. The lower part of the barrel, or that portion thereof which is to rest or fit into the stock, is provided with a cartridge-case starter or discharger, C, which, as represented in the drawings, is not only placed in a recess made within the barrel, and so as to be capable of sliding longitudinally therein, but at its rear end projects upward into a notch made in the rear

part of the barrel, and so as to abut against the body of the cartridge-case and be in front of its flange when such case may be in the barrel, the whole being as shown in Fig. 1. At or near its front end this cartridge shell or case discharger C is jointed or hooked to the free extremity of a spring, D, such spring being arranged within the stock and underneath the barrel, as shown in Fig. 1, and being at its rear end fastened to the stock.

Fig. 4 denotes a view of the rear extremity of the barrel. In this figure the countersunk space for reception of the cartridge-flange is exhibited at *d*; and, furthermore, the rear end of the barrel is here represented as furnished on one side with a notch, *e*, with which a spring-catch, *f*, is to operate in retaining the barrel in conjunction with the stationary breech *g*. The catch *f*, formed and arranged as shown in Figs. 1, 2, and 3, is drawn into the notch by the action of a spring, *i*. The notch opens transversely, or out of one side of the barrel. By placing the thumb on the end of the shank of the catch and pressing thereon the catch may be forced out of the notch of the barrel, after which the barrel will be tilted or thrown up at its rear end by the action of the spring D, the said spring in the meantime producing a retraction of the cartridge-case starter or discharger. At the period of the said movement of the spring-catch, should there be within the barrel a cartridge or the shell of a cartridge, it will be either wholly or partially forced backward out of the barrel by the discharger C while being so retracted. Thus it will be seen that the spring D will perform two functions at one and the same time—viz., that of elevating the barrel at its breech end and that of retracting the cartridge case or shell discharger, so as to either partially or wholly expel the said case or shell from the barrel. If, after the barrel may have had an exploded cartridge-shell removed from it in such manner, and a fresh cartridge substituted for such shell, we should press the barrel downward at its breech end and into the stock, the barrel at the part *m* of Fig. 4 will meet the spring-catch and force the latter aside until the notch *e* shall have descended to the proper level to receive the spring-catch. This having taken place, the spring of the catch will retract the said catch, so as to draw it down into the notch, and thereby lock the barrel, in con-