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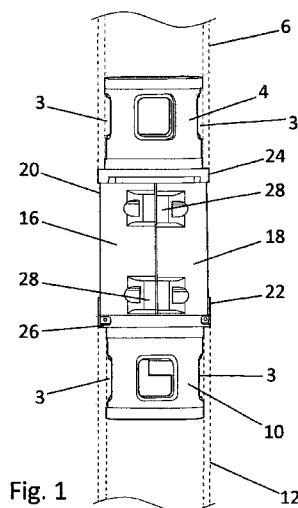


Fig. 1

(57) Abstract: A hinge assembly for connecting together upper (6) and lower (12) separable sections of a column comprises an upper member (2) for attachment to the lower end of an upper column section (6) and a lower member (8) for attachment to the upper end of a lower column section (12). A hinge connects the upper (2) and lower (8) members of the hinge assembly to permit pivotal movement of the upper hinge member about a first axis from a generally vertical position to or towards a generally horizontal position whereby an upper column section (6) connected to the upper member (2) can move from a generally vertical position towards or to a generally horizontal position. A plurality of cover members (16, 18) are positioned about the entire circumference of the upper and lower members of the hinge with each cover member connected for pivotal movement relative to the hinge about a generally horizontal second axis which is positioned at or close to its lower edge, whereby each such cover member (16, 18) can pivot relative to the lower member (8) of the hinge to expose fully the upper hinge member (2) and to enable the upper hinge member and column section (6) attached thereto to pivot from its initial generally vertical position to a generally horizontal position. One such cover member is pivotal to a locking position in which it engages a lower part of the upper hinge member to prevent unwanted further pivoting of the upper hinge member and a column section connected thereto.

