

CLAIMS:

1. A fastener for releasably securing a member, the fastener comprising:

a body including a shank and a recess, the recess configured for receiving the member;

5 a gate mounted to slide axially on the shank between a closed position closing a mouth of the recess for retaining the member, and an open position;

resilient means engaging the gate and the shank to urge the gate to the closed position, and

a pair of latches, the latches mounted on opposing sides of the gate, wherein
10 each latch is self-closing and engages the body for holding the gate in the closed position.
2. The fastener of claim 1 wherein the recess is disposed proximate one longitudinal end of the body.
3. The fastener of claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the recess is defined by a hook-
15 shaped portion of the body, the hook-shaped portion optionally having a non-reentrant form.
4. The fastener of any preceding claim wherein the latches are alike, each latch comprising a latch lever mounted by a pivot to rotate about a respective substantially transverse pivot axis.
- 20 5. The fastener of claim 4 wherein the latch levers are elongated generally axially and both substantially transverse pivot axes substantially lie in a transverse

plane.

6. The fastener of claim 4 or claim 5 wherein the pivot axes are disposed intermediate opposite first and second ends of the latch levers, one of the first and second ends of each latch lever abutting a shoulder on the shank.
- 5 7. The fastener of claim 6 wherein a slot extends through the shank and is substantially axially aligned, opposing ends of a latch spring received in the slot abut respective ones of the latch levers to urge the one of the first and second ends inwardly.
8. The fastener of any preceding claim wherein axles are held in respective
10 apertures in the body, each axle pivotably supporting one of the latch levers.
9. The fastener of any one of claims 1 to 7 wherein a one-piece retainer extends through each latch lever to define each pivot of the latch levers.
10. The fastener of claim 9 wherein channels in a periphery of the gate receive sections of the one-piece retainer.
- 15 11. The fastener of claim 9 or claim 10 wherein the one-piece retainer comprises a length of wire formed first in a U-shape with two parallel arms that are inserted through the latch levers before ends of the arms are bent together to form a loop to permanently retain the latch levers and latch spring.
12. The fastener of any preceding claim wherein the resilient means comprises a
20 helical spring that extends about the shank, one end of the helical spring engaging the gate and the other end engaging a fixture proximate one end of the shank.

13. The fastener of claim 12 wherein the fixture is held in an aperture that extends through the shaft, preferably substantially transversely to the shaft.
14. The fastener of claim 12 or claim 13 wherein the fixture comprises one end of
5 an elongate flexible member, such as a wire rope.
15. The fastener of any preceding claim further comprising a coupler having a hook-shaped end complementary to both the gate and hook-shaped end of the body, wherein the coupler is engaged with the fastener to protrude from an axial end
10 of the gate and is secured by sliding the gate to the closed position.