

Business and Personal.

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Notes & Queries

(1) E. A. G. asks: What is the number of strings used in common pianos, also the size and material from which the wire is made? A. There are generally three strings for each note, some of the lower notes having two or one. The strings are made of steel wire, and some of them are wound with fine copper or iron wire.

(2) T. & D. say: We have built a steam yacht, and are greatly disappointed in her speed. We want her to go at least 10 or 12 miles an hour. The hull of boat is 31' in length, 6 1/2' beam, depth in center 3 1/2'. We have a horizontal returned flue boiler 5' long, 30' in diameter. Number of flues 44, 2 inches diameter, firebox width 28', height 18', length of grate 19'. We have an upright engine 5 x 5. We have an eagle wing propeller 28' 3/4' pitch, and with a steam pressure of 120 lbs., 210 revolutions per minute, we gained 5 miles an hour. We can gain a greater speed by using a different propeller. A. We judge from your account that the machinery is not sufficiently powerful to obtain the speed you desire—as the propellers you have used seem to have worked with a very moderate slip, if, as we understand you, the speed was estimated when running against the current.

(3) D. E. S. asks how to make nitro-glycerin? A. To a mixture of nitric and sulphuric acids, successively add small quantities of glycerin. The nitro-glycerin falls to the bottom of the vessel. Acids of the purest quality should be used, and the introduction of foreign matters carefully avoided, otherwise slow decomposition may occur, which will result in spontaneous explosion.

(4) P. E. D. asks how to bleach Panama hats? Also how to dye felt hats black? A. To bleach Panama hats, wash the goods clean, and while slightly damp, expose to the fumes of burning sulphur in a closed vessel. To color one dozen hats, take 12 lbs. logwood, 1 lb. sulphate of iron, and 3/4 lb. verdigris. Digest the logwood for some time. Add the sulphate of iron and the verdigris. Dip the hats in the bath several times and hang in the open air. By the peroxidement

of the iron with the atmospheric oxygen the hats will be more completely blackened. When fully dried wash thoroughly in running water.

(5) E. C. P. asks for a recipe for dyeing woolen pants black? A. To dye black, allow 1 lb. of logwood to each lb. of goods to be dyed. Soak the logwood over night in soft water, then boil it an hour, and strain the water in which it is boiled. For each lb. of logwood, dissolve 1 ounce of blue vitriol in warm water sufficient to wet the goods. Saturate the goods in this and then immerse in the logwood dye. Drain the goods and dry in the shade. When dry set the color by putting them into hot water in which has been dissolved a tea-cupful of salt to three gallons of water. Let the goods remain in until cold, then dry, without wringing out.

(6) C. W. W. says: I have been using plaster of Paris moulds for casting small objects in fusible metal. I find that the upper part of moulds does not fill as perfectly as the lower part, and that the metal becomes agitated even when the moisture is thoroughly excluded from the mould. A. See article on casting in fusible metal on p. 272, No. 17 of the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN SUPPLEMENT. If the alloy is of low fusibility the mould should be sufficiently heated at the time of pouring in the metal to prevent too rapid cooling. If the mould is double, care should be taken to provide a sufficient number of air vents. The agitation is due to the escape of steam from the mould.

MINERALS, ETC.—Specimens have been received from the following correspondents, and examined, with the results stated:

R. F. G.—It is mostly iron pyrites with a little copper, but may contain more valuable metals.—S. M. S.—Answered August 11, p. 92.—C. A. C.—The shining scales are mica—a mineral consisting of silica, alumina, and potash. The other fragment appears to be a variety of serpentine—composed of silica, magnesia, and water.—Dr. M. P.—We could not well give an opinion as to the proper proportions of assay flux for the ore without having seen it. By following the rules you can best determine this for yourself by experiment.—W. T. J.—No. 1 is mica schist. No. 2 contains mica, feldspar, quartz, and epidote (red)—a silicate of iron and manganese.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED.

The Editor of the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN acknowledges, with much pleasure, the receipt of original papers and contributions upon the following subjects:

- On the Man of War of the Future. By G. V.
On a Prehistoric Stone Wall. By J. C. W.
On the Axial Motion of the Earth. By J. P.
On the Postage Cancellation Problem. By H. P. S.
On the Adiabatic Curve. By R. A.
On a Curious Appearance of Aniline Red. By W. J. W.
On the Medicinal Uses of Chalk. By T. C. T.
On a Problem of Circles and Lines. By J. M. R.
On Geometrical Problems. By K. N. H.
On Bees and Hives. By Mrs. L. E. C.
On Leaks in Gas Pipes. By M. A. J.
On Curving a Base Ball. By T. E. H.
Also inquiries and answers from the following:
A. H. P.—E. B. E.—A. L. R.—F. B. S.—J. L. S.—W. D. S.—J. O. G.

HINTS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We renew our request that correspondents, in referring to former answers or articles, will be kind enough to name the date of the paper and the page, or the number of the question.

Correspondents whose inquiries fail to appear should repeat them. If not then published, they may conclude that, for good reasons, the Editor declines them. The address of the writer should always be given.

Inquiries relating to patents, or to the patentability of inventions, assignments, etc., will not be published here. All such questions, when initials only are given, are thrown into the waste basket, as it would fill half of our paper to print them all; but we generally take pleasure in answering briefly by mail, if the writer's address is given.

Hundreds of inquiries analogous to the following are sent: "Who makes machines for cutting veneers? Who publishes books on torpedoes and explosives? Who makes or sells lubricants for heavy machinery?" All such personal inquiries are printed, as will be observed, in the column of "Business and Personal," which is specially set apart for that purpose, subject to the charge mentioned at the head of that column. Almost any desired information can in this way be expeditiously obtained.

OFFICIAL

INDEX OF INVENTIONS FOR WHICH Letters Patent of the United States were Granted in the Week Ending July 24, 1877, AND EACH BEARING THAT DATE. [Those marked (r) are reissued patents.]

A complete copy of any patent in the annexed list, including both the specifications and drawings, will be furnished from this office for one dollar. In ordering, please state the number and date of the patent desired, and remit to Munn & Co., 37 Park Row, New York city.

- Adding machine, M. M. Smith. 193,425
Alkali, process, etc., Hall & Hine. 193,330
Animal trap, C. M. Orton. 193,419
Auger, D. E. Henderson. 193,406
Bag holder, J. G. Shurtz. 193,351
Baggage check, H. A. Deralsmes. 193,441
Bale tie, E. Wilson. 193,361
Bed bottom, J. I. Spencer. 193,567
Bee hive, R. McInturf. 193,377
Beer preserver, A. Redman. 192,550
Binder for books, H. H. Edwards (r). 7,315
Binder, temporary, P. England. 193,442
Boat, canal, W. P. Fest. 193,402
Boats, propelling, J. H. Hetzler. 193,511
Boiler feeder, R. Garstang. 193,502
Book and cover, J. R. & H. H. Edwards. 193,494

- Boot and shoe machine, H. G. Thompson. 193,466
Boot and shoe machine, J. W. Hatch. 193,446
Boot and shoe mechanism, Hatch & Thompson. 193,445
Boot and shoe machine, J. Keats. 193,517
Bottle for blacking, S. S. Newton. 193,381
Box and book shelf, D. Lathrop. 193,399
Braid rolls, clasp for, J. Cookcroft. 193,457
Bridle, C. H. Williams. 193,584
Broiler and toaster, A. C. Bolton. 193,393
Brush, J. Kistler. 193,419
Buggy, J. H. Farrell. 193,497
Building blocks, J. Thompson. 193,572
Burglar alarm, I. B. Woodruff. 193,390
Butter firkin, A. Pope. 193,549
Buttons, L. Millaux. 193,537
Can and carrier, I. S. Coffin. 193,321
Can for paints, H. H. Hull. 193,408
Cans for petroleum, E. Waters. 193,387
Candle stamp, I. Lavenson. 193,372
Cap, M. Maris (r). 7,807, 7,808
Car brake, A. Winston. 193,435
Car coupling, T. D. Baldwin. 193,471
Car coupling, E. B. McCarty. 193,531
Car starter, C. H. Thompson. 193,356
Carbureting gas, C. A. Sirie. 193,561
Carding engine, G. E. Taft. 193,571
Carriage, S. Gibson. 193,444
Cartridge, blasting, P. Castellanos. 193,483
Cartridges, J. D. Wilkinson. 193,494
Cartridges, J. Lee. 193,524
Caster, S. E. Bauder. 193,472
Chain link, E. Nortemann. 193,543
Chair, J. White. 193,433
Chuck, A. B. Smith. 193,424
Churn, Brown and Roberts. 193,473
Churn, J. Harris. 193,332
Churn, H. G. Fongeu. 193,403
Churn, W. Knaggs. 193,450
Cigar machine, C. H. Schneider. 193,463
Clasp, G. H. Leonard. 193,337
Clock, I. B. Woodruff. 193,391
Clothes pounder, R. E. Kenyon. 193,513
Clothes pounder, G. L. Fisher. 192,499
Coal box, C. Hymers. 193,336
Cock, C. H. Scofield. 193,556
Coffee cleaner, P. McAuliffe. 193,416
Collar box and toy bank, H. N. Parker. 193,420
Compasses, E. S. Ritchie. 193,552
Cooking utensil, Clark & Wells. 193,486
Copying press, E. Gill. 193,404
Copying press, J. A. Powlett. 193,346
Corn stalk cutting implement, J. Wahner. 193,579
Corset, G. L. Du Laney. 193,491
Cotton gins, W. O. Watson. 193,500
Cultivator, C. McGee. 193,532
Dental drill, E. Osmond. 193,456
Dental engines, E. Telle. 193,429
Desk, school, J. R. Payne. 193,459
Draft equalizer, R. Hoadley. 193,513
Draw pull, W. A. Wright. 193,587
Drum and stove, L. R. Houchens. 193,335
Egg beater, L. Eberhart. 193,493
Electro-magnetic motor, A. Shedlock. 193,335
Engravers' routing machine, V. & J. Royle, Jr. 193,555
Evaporating pan, J. W. Miller. 193,539
Exercising machine, J. P. Marsh. 193,523
Exploding mining powders, P. Castellanos. 193,485
Fan, J. Miller. 193,379
Faucet, W. B. Tweedle. 193,430
Fence barb, wire, H. B. Scutt. 193,557
Fence, barbed, G. H. Hunt. 193,370
Filtering and cooling apparatus, J. W. Webb. 193,432
Fire and burglar alarm, Corning & Reid. 193,588
Firearm, F. W. Tiesing. 193,574
Firearm, Forehand & Wadsworth. 193,367
Fire escape, I. D. Cross. 193,459
Fire escape, J. F. Green. 193,506
Fire escape ladder, H. B. Walbridge. 193,431
Fire place, O. F. & O. C. Mehurin. 193,341
Fire place grates, F. S. Bissell. 193,473
Fish plates, railroad, Weed & Messinger. 193,388
Flood gate and fence, A. Watson. 193,358
Furniture, J. A. Whitaker. 193,359
Fuse, percussion, E. H. Plumacher. 193,345
Game apparatus, J. F. Spence. 193,427
Gas apparatus, W. S. Hill. 193,407
Gas torch, E. L. Megill. 193,585
Gas apparatus, W. M. Cosh. 193,397
Gate, A. T. & A. D. McComb. 193,580
Gate fastening, C. P. Snow. 193,565
Gate hanger, N. H. Sherrill. 193,559
Glassware, G. W. Blair. 193,314
Glassware, W. Buttler. 193,317
Governor for steam engines, P. Carriere. 193,481
Governor, gas, C. W. Isbell. 193,515
Governor, gas, Plass & McManus. 193,548
Graintally, etc., A. C. Lintz. 193,414
Grate back, W. A. Holbrook. 193,514
Grinding machine, J. M. Poole (r). 7,809
Grinding paper knives, Worcester & Prentice. 193,437
Guide board, J. T. Hart. 193,405
Gymnastic instrument, C. Klemm. 193,449
Hair crimper, J. Leeming. 193,413
Hame, M. Turley. 193,575
Hame terret, R. C. Smith. 193,564
Harvester, G. & L. Sweet. 193,385
Hay elevator, J. L. Malcolm. 193,415
Hides, tanning, F. Knapp. 193,521
Hides and skins, B. F. Larrabee. 193,412
Hog trap, T. C. & H. V. Weaver. 193,468
Hoisting apparatus, W. Hawkins. 193,333
Hook for chandeliers, G. W. Woodward. 193,585
Horse hay rake, H. C. Velle. 193,400
Hose nozzle, Koegler & Nicoll. 192,522
Hot air furnace, A. J. Robinson. 193,553
Hydraulic elevator, G. Ball. 193,392
Ice creeper, F. Leuthy. 193,452
Ice instrument, E. Burgin. 193,479
Incubator, T. M. Davis. 193,490
Injector for boilers, W. Sellers (r). 193,316
Insect destroyer, F. J. McDonald. 193,417
Iron and steel manufacture, J. Reese. 193,551
Iron scrap, converting, A. J. Moxham. 193,540
Ironware, enameling, Quinby & Whiting. 193,422
Key, W. H. Taylor. 193,569
Lamp rest, Clark & Kintz. 193,438
Lamps, D. G. Mark. 193,376
Lamps, Lewars & Klaitz. 193,525
Last, J. T. Poole. 193,421
Leather-punching apparatus, W. P. Willoughby. 193,583
Leg, artificial, C. Collins. 193,396
Life buoy, etc., G. Dreyer. 193,365
Lightning rod, L. Adams. 193,469
Lock, T. Fox. 193,500
Lock, Overmyer & Huston. 193,544
Locomotive engines, fire box, H. E. Woods. 193,586
Lubricator, E. McHugh. 193,333
Mash rake, A. J. Guthrie. 193,507
Mattress box, J. H. Gallagher. 193,501
Medicinal compound, Fixmer & Janssen. 193,528
Millstone dressing, S. Ross. 193,554
Mining shaft indicator, C. O. Richardson. 193,462
Molding match plate, T. F. Hammer. 193,508
Moulding tool, J. H. Lewis. 193,373
Mowing machine, H. L. Hopkins. 193,448
Nail plate feeder, Tyrrell & Evans. 193,577
Navigation of, W. B. Johns. 193,516
Oil well machinery, F. A. Segerdahl. 193,423
Oven, Wilson & Ahlenius. 193,360
Ozone generator, H. Spengelow. 193,386
Packing for piston rods, J. Byers. 193,313
Paper clip, E. J. Wright. 193,389
Paper envelope machine, E. J. Frost. 193,327
Paper, lining, C. L. Crum. 193,364
Paper maker's save-all, R. A. Morton. 193,344
Partition, G. W. Tripp. 193,573
Pavement, E. Jacques. 193,409
Pegging jack, C. M. Sparhawk. 193,353
Pencil sharpener, G. H. Park. 193,545
Piano action, J. W. Evans. 193,325
Piano action, J. D. Elliot. 193,495
Pinchers, M. M. Pettes. 193,547
Pin machine, A. R. Sprout. 193,428
Planing machines, E. D. Barrett. 193,313
Planter, corn, J. Feldmeyer. 193,498
Planter, corn, G. B. Lynch. 193,527
Planter, corn, W. M. Steel. 193,465
Plotting table, engineer's, A. R. Crandall. 193,398
Plow, cultivator, Bennett & Height. 193,362
Plow, snow, G. Royal. 193,384
Pneumatic signal, F. Boyd. 193,474
Potatodigger, J. Norton. 193,542
Preserving food, J. Harvey. 193,509
Printers' lead shaver, Blomgren & Hawkinson. 193,515
Printing machine, H. Montgomery. 193,538
Printing presses, J. A. Carruth. 193,432
Pumping apparatus, C. Laburthe. 193,371
Quartz-crushing machine, H. Gebhardt. 193,503
Radiators, J. N. Matlock. 193,529
Railroad switch, McMahan & Craik. 193,534
Railway frog, E. H. Brvant. 193,363
Refrigerator, R. H. Lucas. 193,575
Refrigerator, G. F. Smith. 193,563
Refrigerator car, J. Tiffany. 193,357
Rock drill hole cleaner, G. F. Gass. 193,328
Rotary engine, G. Lilly. 193,383
Sad iron holder, R. Lanstrom. 193,451
Sand pump, reel, D. C. Brawley. 193,394, 193,475
Sand pump reel, W. H. H. Morris. 193,418
Saw-filing machine, A. S. Eastham. 193,492
Saw teeth, machine for setting, R. Heusch. 193,512
Sawing machine, J. A. Chandler. 193,395
Scales, A. Turnbull. 193,576
Scarf, E. Peltz. 193,546
Scarf retainer, J. A. Eshleman. 193,496
Seal, H. Clarke. 193,320
Sewage tanks, E. Gettman. 193,504
Sewing machine, F. H. Brown. 193,477
Sewing machine, Keats & Clark (r). 7,806
Sewing machine attachment, H. Lombard. 193,453
Shade roller, A. M. Smith. 193,425
Show box, R. Dreyfus. 193,396
Show case, J. Hey. 193,334
Shutter worker, J. Aborn. 193,311
Sirup, etc., H. L. Bowker. 193,476
Skirt supporter, L. S. Weed. 193,582
Slate, C. C. Shepherd. 193,464
Sled, H. F. Morton. 193,380
Sleigh knee, A. A. Abbott et al. (r). 7,812
Sole machine, S. Henshall. 193,447
Sole edges, G. F. Read. 193,447
Spark arrester, F. M. Stevens (r). 7,810, 7,811
Spelter retorts, E. H. Richter. 193,461
Spinning machine spindle, L. Cheetham (r). 7,814
Spinning wheel, J. A. & E. S. Smith. 193,562
Springs, clip, E. M. Simmons. 193,352
Spur, A. Mills. 193,342
Stage scenery, H. F. Parsons. 193,457
Steam boiler, J. Gates. 193,329
Steam boiler, W. R. Michener. 193,373
Steam generator, W. Lowe. 193,526
Stirrup, C. E. Wallin. 193,467
Stove, A. J. Baker. 193,470
Stove, F. Morandi. 193,343
Stove pipe thimble, T. Shuman. 193,560
Sugar, L. H. Witte. 193,436
Syringe, C. E. Griswold. 193,368
Tanning, F. Knapp. 193,520
Tanning, J. Foley. 193,443
Thill, adjustable, S. Gilzinger. 193,505
Thill, R. C. Millings. 193,336
Thrashing machines, E. J. Clanton. 193,319
Ticket holder, Pinney and Hodge. 193,382
Tobacco, plug, E. R. Hearn. 193,510
Toy, W. S. Reed. 193,460
Traveling bag, A. L. Krick. 193,523
Truck and skid, T. Loring. 193,374
Truck, car, G. Crompton. 193,439
Truck, H. R. Ferris. 193,401
Vacuum pans, D. B. Cobb. 193,488
Valve and gear, G. F. Blake (r). 7,813
Valve, I. Munden. 193,455
Valve, T. Poore. 193,388
Valve gear, F. L. Jones (r). 7,805
Valve gear, Davis & White. 193,440
Valve, E. B. Kunkle. 193,411
Valve, T. Shaw. 193,558
Vinegar generator, Eisenbeis & Nau. 193,324
Vulcanized fiber, W. Courtenay. 193,322, 193,323
Wash stand, C. C. Hall. 193,369
Washing board, Taylor & Baker. 193,570
Washing machine, Cady & Wolfe. 193,450
Watches, H. Abbott. 193,312
Water closet, F. E. Kernochan. 193,410
Water wheel, J. S. Ladow. 193,454
Welding tubing, H. C. Evans. 193,400
Well boring apparatus, C. H. Robinson. 193,343
Well check valve, W. J. Sherrif. 193,380
Well-pumping apparatus, J. E. Nale. 193,541
Whiffletree, J. Irvine (r). 7,804
Whip, G. E. & S. D. Ely. 193,399
Whip socket, M. S. Tarkington. 193,563
Wick raiser, W. N. Weeden. 193,581
Windlass, G. M. Patten. 193,458
Windmill, D. C. Stover. 193,354
Window screen, G. & F. H. Saxton. 193,349
Woodworking machine, C. J. Hardee. 193,381
Wrench, J. H. Snyder. 193,506
Writing case, D. Lothrop. 193,340
Yoke, horse, J. Boyer. 193,316

DESIGNS PATENTED.

- 10,102 to 10,107.—CARPETS.—J. Fisher, New York city.
10,108.—CIGAR BOX.—S. Lowenthal, Cincinnati, Ohio.
10,109 to 10,120.—CARPETS.—E. J. Ney, Lowell, Mass.
10,121.—PICTURE FRAME.—L. Pattberg, Jersey city, N. J.
10,122.—BUTTER COOLERS.—B. T. Steinhardt, New York city.
10,123 to 10,128.—CARPETS.—C. W. Swapp, Lowell, Mass.
10,129.—HEATING STOVES.—J. A. Lawson, Troy, N. Y.
10,130.—CARD BASKET.—P. Rosenbach, Brooklyn, N. Y.

[A copy of any one of the above patents may be had by remitting one dollar to MUNN & Co., 37 Park Row, New York city.]