

kind of battery to use for such? A. A simple way to make a burglar alarm is to construct a spring key with a rounded knob on the top thereof, and set it in the casing of the window, so that the rounded knob projects beyond the casing when the contact points of the key are separated. A cavity is made in the edge of the sash to receive the rounded knob projecting from the back of the key when the window is closed, so as to permit of the circuit remaining open so long as the window is closed. When the window is raised, the engagement of the sash with the rounded knob will push the key forward, bringing its contact point against the fixed contact. The spring key and its fixed contact lead to a battery and a bell, and when the key makes a contact in the manner described, the bell will be rung. If desirable, the wires may also include a part of an annunciator. The key for a door will be arranged with a pin projecting through the door casing, to be engaged by the door when closed, so that it will push the key forward, away from its fixed contact, thus keeping the circuit open while the door is closed. By this arrangement, when the door is open, the pressure on the pin being released, the key will move forward, and make the contact as in the other case. If desirable, two parallel wires may be run to each window and door in a room, and the spring key will be attached to one of these wires, and the fixed contact to the other wire, so that whenever a key is made to complete the circuit, an alarm will be given. The battery commonly used with the burglar alarm is the Leclanche. The Fuller battery is also an excellent battery for this purpose. 2. Would also like to know how to make a simple interrupter for induction coil. A. You can make a simple interrupter for an induction coil by connecting a coarse file with one of your battery wires, drawing the other battery wire along the face of the file. If you desire to make an electro-magnetic interrupter, you may take a small magnet wound with coarse wire, attach its armature to a flat spring, and place a small auxiliary spring on the back of the armature spring. Support in front of the auxiliary spring an adjustable contact point, connect the contact point with one of your battery wires and the armature spring with the other. 3. How is mercury sold, and how much is it worth? A. The price of mercury is 75 cents per pound. It is usually sold in large quantities in wrought iron flasks containing 100 pounds each.

(29) C. W. M. asks: Do you know of any substance that, if placed between a magnet and a piece of steel, will destroy the attraction of the steel to the magnet? A. No substance having the required property has been discovered.

(30) G. L. F. asks: 1. Can hair be permanently removed by electricity? A. We believe it has been done. 2. How is the operation performed? A. By means of a platinum wire made incandescent by the passage of electricity. The wire is thrust down by the side of the root of the hair. 3. Is it painful? A. We believe it is not extremely painful.

(31) L. W. B. writes: 1. I have seen it stated that the rifles used by the sharpshooters in the late civil war weighed as much as a hundred pounds; now, is this so, and where can I learn their construction, etc.? A. They were of various weights, but, we believe, none of them weighed one hundred pounds. There is a good article on rifles in Appleton's Cyclopaedia. 2. In filling the lining of a fireproof safe with plaster of Paris, will it make any difference whether it is put in dry, or mixed with water and poured in? A. It should be put in dry. 3. Where can I find out all about archery? A. You can find out much about it in works on the subject, which are sold at the principal book stores.

(32) W. C. C. writes: We have constructed a number of carbon batteries in which we used red flower-pot clay for our porous cups, the batteries being excited by electro-pion fluid. For a short time they seem to give considerable current, gradually decreasing in quantity. The fluid turns a dark green color, and gives off sulphureted hydrogen gas; at the same time, purple crystals form inside the porous cups. The batteries have been charged as directed; the carbons placed in the porous cups and filled with electro-pion fluid, and the zincs in the outer jar, which is filled with water. A. The green color of the solution indicates that your battery is exhausted, and the generation of hydrogen shows that your zinc is not perfectly amalgamated. The zinc should be amalgamated thoroughly, and the fluid should be changed when exhausted. Possibly your jars are too porous. Try filling a portion of the walls of the jars with paraffine. To accomplish this, you will need to have the jars clean, dry, and hot.

(33) J. D. asks: 1. What will remove from paper the impression in red ink of a rubber stamp? I have tried an ink eraser of two liquids, being, I am told, the first, dilute acetic acid, and the second lime water, but it leaves the impression in pale brown. A. Remove the oily material of the ink with ether or naphtha, then try a bleaching powder. 2. What would be the cost of maintaining an ordinary Edison incandescent lamp by chemical battery? A. We are unable to give the exact figures, but the cost to run a single lamp is much more than that of gas. 3. How many cells, and what kind, would be best, cleanest, and most convenient for a private dwelling? A. This depends of course upon the number of lamps you use, their resistance, and the manner in which they are connected up in the circuit. Probably the bichromate form of Bunsen battery is the best. They work fairly well for one week without renewal.

(34) J. D. C. asks: 1. Does a body passing through air create friction? A. Yes. 2. Is there friction in air? A. Yes.

(35) C. S. B. writes: 1. In the dynamo described in SUPPLEMENT, No. 161, if, instead of the outside of the field magnets being made straight at the lower end, they are made bracket-shape, or provided with outwardly projecting flanges, will the magnetism collect at the flanges instead of where it is needed? A. The magnetism would be liable to be dissipated by the lateral extension of the poles. 2. Which gives the more sound for the same weight of metal—a bell or a gong? A. For the same weight of metal, the gong will give the louder sound.

(36) Miss A. C. asks: 1. What kind of coal produces gaslight? A. Bituminous. 2. How is gas secured? Is it by propelling it into a gasometer, or by what process? A. Gas is made by distilling bituminous coal in a closed retort, conducting the gaseous products through a washing and purifying machine to a gasometer. It is forced through the main and service pipes by the pressure of the gasometer. Coal gas, when very poor in carbon, is sometimes carbureted by the employment of gasoline or naphtha. 3. Does any other matter mix in with the gas while securing it? A. See answer to No. 2. 4. When in general gasometer, how is gas propelled into the houses? Since the gasometer is filled, how can the gas be prevented from receding? A. The gas is prevented from receding by valves or water traps. The pressure created in the retorts is sufficient to carry the gas into the gasometer against the pressure of the gas contained by the gasometer; but in most gas works a machine called a gas exhauster is employed to take the gas from the retorts, and force it into the gasometer. 5. And is there any danger of explosion from overpressure of gas? A. There is no danger of explosion from overpressure of gas, as the pressure is very slight—the greatest pressure being equal to a column of water 1 to 2 inches high. Gas when mixed with air forms an explosive compound, which is sufficiently powerful, when ignited, to destroy the gasometer. 6. Has the gasometer any compartments? A. Generally, gasometers have no compartments. They are sometimes, however, made in two sections arranged telescopically, so as to increase the capacity of the gasometer without making the water reservoir too deep.

(37) W. A. D.—We think the statement of the experiment of causing an iron beam to swing to and fro by hitting it with pith balls is a little fanciful. No doubt the iron beam could be set into vibration by means of the cork pellets, if thrown at regular intervals, and synchronously with the vibrations of the bar; but we do not think that any tremendous results would be secured by bombarding an iron beam with pith pellets.

(38) G. A. H. writes: I have a clinical thermometer which from frequent use has become almost illegible, from the wearing off of the black markings of the scale. Will you please give me a recipe for a permanent preparation by which I can mark it again? A. Probably the marks on your thermometer are engraved, and the black filling has been removed. You can refill the engraving marks by rubbing the scale over with asphaltum varnish, leaving the varnish only in the engraved marks. The surplus on the surface of the scale may be removed by a cloth wet with a little turpentine.

(39) R. L. N. asks what the red substance is that dentists use for plates for artificial teeth, and how it is worked. Will you also state what book will give me some information on dentistry? A. The substance referred to is rubber colored with vermilion. Previous to vulcanizing, it is very plastic, and may be forced into warm moulds. For dental work the moulds are generally made of plaster of Paris. After the mould is filled and secured, it is placed in a vulcanizer, which is simply a small steam boiler, and is allowed to remain in the vulcanizer under a steam pressure of 100 pounds, or a temperature of 320°, for one hour.—You can procure books on Dentistry from any of the dental depots in this city or in Philadelphia.

(40) B. A. L. asks: Can you give me a receipt for a lacquer or varnish for varnishing an old theodolite? Would one of shellac varnish colored with lampblack be suitable? Would it stand wear any length of time? A. You can color the brass parts of your instrument black, by dipping them in a solution consisting of sulphate of copper ¼ ounce, hyposulphite of soda ¼ ounce, dissolved in one pint of water. Clean the articles thoroughly, and heat them in the solution. More hyposulphite of soda renders the articles darker, and the addition of more sulphate of copper renders the color gray. Another method of giving brass articles a dark color is to dip them in a solution of arsenic and muriatic acid. These articles, after being colored, may be protected by a very thin coat of shellac varnish or lacquer. Either of the above stains for brass wears well.

(41) W. T. P. writes: I wish to construct a pair of cylinders to condense oxygen and hydrogen gases for lime light use. What thickness should one 16 inches in diameter and 48 inches long be made of, either steel, iron, or copper, to hold a pressure of 250 pounds per square inch? A. Your cylinders should be made of three-sixteenths steel riveted and brazed. We think you have selected a size larger than is necessary for ordinary use. If you make your cylinders 12 inches in diameter, and 3 feet high, they will contain about 24 feet of gas each. Your cylinders, if made of the dimensions given, have a capacity of 558 cubic feet each. 2. How many cubic feet of gas would such cylinder hold at above pressure? A. At 250 pounds pressure, each cylinder will contain about 90 cubic feet of gas. 3. Please give a rule to find the pressure for each doubling of the cylinder's capacity. A. When you have created a pressure in your cylinder of 15 pounds, it will contain 558 feet of gas; when you have doubled the pressure, it will contain 1116 feet. When you have increased the pressure to 60 pounds, it will contain 2232 feet, and so on.

(42) P. S. K. W. asks what to use to make a thin coating on wood so that hot oil will not penetrate it. A. Use an alcoholic solution of gum shellac.

(43) A. R. asks how to obtain instruction book on mechanical drawing. A. Probably in no other work is there so much furnished for the price as in Professor MacCord's papers, published in the SUPPLEMENT. We have these papers, containing 450 special engravings, stitched in paper, for \$2.50, or bound in cloth for \$3.50.

(44) J. K. M. S. desires a receipt for some liquid which, if applied in small quantities, will kill a tree. A. Use kerosene or turpentine around the roots.

(45) R. V. G. asks: 1. Are there any lead pencils made so that the marks will not rub off if you varnish them over? A. Ordinary pencil marks can be preserved by coating them over with a solution of collodion to which 2 per cent of stearine has been added. 2. Have you any book treating on the subject of acids? A. Fownes' Chemistry, which is an excellent authority, we can send you for \$3.50. 3. A recipe for putting metal leaf on wood. A. Coat the wood with a size made as follows: To ¼ pound parchment cuttings or cuttings of white leather add 3 quarts water, and boil it in a proper vessel till reduced to nearly half the quantity; then strain through a sieve.

(46) E. A. B. desires the receipt of a good glue for pasting labels on the backs of library books. A. Strong glue, 50 parts, is dissolved with a little turpentine in a sufficiency of water over a gentle fire; to the mixture is added a thick paste made with 100 parts of starch. It is applied cold, and dries rapidly.

(47) L. N. T. asks: What preparation is used to gild the edges of writing paper, and how is it applied? A. A camel's hair pencil is dipped into white of egg mixed with water, and with this the dry edges of the paper are moistened; gold leaf is then taken up on a tip brush, and applied to the moistened edge, to which it instantly adheres. When all three edges have been gilded in this way, and allowed to remain a very few minutes, take a burnisher formed of a very smooth piece of hard stone, and rub the gold very forcibly, which gives a high degree of polish.

(48) K. H. H. desires a receipt for a freezing mixture—one that will freeze or bring water as near the freezing point as possible, and be capable of being re-used several times, so as to render its cost as inexpensive as possible compared to the practical results to be attained therefrom. A. Use:

Nitrate of ammonia.....1 part.
Water.....1 ..
The mixture should be made in a thick vessel, well clothed, to prevent the accession of external heat; and the substances to be acted on should be contained in a very thin vessel, so as to expose it more fully to the action of the mixture. See also Freezing Mixtures, in SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN SUPPLEMENT, Nos. 89, 252.

(49) S. R. B., Jr., desires a recipe for polishing horns. A. First scrape with glass to take off any roughness, then grind some pumicestone to powder, and, with a piece of cloth wetted and dipped in the powder, rub them until a smooth surface is obtained. Next polish with rottenstone and linseed oil, and finish with dry flour and a piece of clean linen rag. The more rubbing with the stone and oil, the better the polish. Trent sand is used in the Sheffield factories. It is a very fine and sharp sand, and is prepared for use by calcining and sifting.

(50) H. W. O. writes: 1. I wish to mix graphite and pulverized asbestos with lead. Is there anything that I can add to make them adhere when the lead is heated to a low state of fusion? A. Nothing but a mechanical mixture of these three ingredients can be made. 2. I would like to granulate the lead at low heat without hardening it. Antimony and tin both make it hard, and for this reason cannot be used for the purpose required. A. The addition of bismuth, tin, and cadmium will lower the fusing point of lead.

(51) G. H. desires (1) a recipe to bleach fish scales. A. The application of hydrogen peroxide (see SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN SUPPLEMENT, No. 339) would bleach the scales, provided that fat and oily matter was first removed by washing with alkalies. 2. What is magic compound to clean carpets? A. Carpets are frequently cleaned by the following process: Take a pailful of clean cold spring water, and put into it about 3 gills of ox gall. Take another pail of clean cold water only. Then rub the carpet with some of the ox gall water, using a scrubbing brush, which will raise a lather. When a convenient sized portion is done, wash the lather off clean with a rag or cloth dipped in pure water. When all the lather has disappeared, rub the part with a clean dry cloth. The magic compound probably consists of a concentrated solution of ox gall.

(52) M. C. B. asks (1) what the process is for extracting the oil from the PalmiChristi bean? A. The beans are heated in an iron tank and then pressed. 2. Whether the cake or residue is of any value after the oil is expressed? A. The cake is frequently used as feed and for a fertilizer. 3. Are there any manufacturers in the United States? If not, where are they located? A. St. Louis is the center of the castor oil industry in this country. Information as to the cultivation of the bean is given in SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN SUPPLEMENT, No. 186, under title of "The Castor Bean Plant."

(53) J. A. T. asks: What will remove or prevent the collection of coating in hot beer pipes commonly called beerstone? A. The pipes may be cleaned by washing out with a strong hot solution of soda.

(54) R. E. M. asks a receipt for preserving the juice of lemons for six months or longer. A. Add a small quantity of benzoic acid or salicylic acid. Either of these agents will prevent decomposition.

(55) A. I. asks for a paint that will resist the action of a strong solution of sulphuric acid, and where it can be purchased. A. A coating of liquid asphalt, made by melting asphaltum, will resist the action of sulphuric acid. This substance can be procured from dealers in tar and like materials in your city.

(56) W. H. S. writes: I have some valuable papers from which ink stains were taken by means of acids, but by so doing ruined the finish or enamel. How can I reglaze it? A. The sizing of paper consists of a mixture of glue and alum water. For your purpose a little gum arabic dissolved in water and passed over the erased surface is perhaps as good a remedy as you can easily try.

(57) J. A. H. asks for a varnish or coating that may be used to prevent wood from absorbing moisture in refrigerators. A. Use shellac varnish prepared by dissolving white shellac in alcohol. 2. A

recipe for a varnish of a light shade, that will bear washing off with water, to be used on muslin or linen, and berolled and unrolled often without cracking? A. The addition of a small amount of glycerine to the foregoing can be used for the purpose mentioned, but it is not very satisfactory. The waterproof flexible varnish is generally prepared by dissolving 1½ ounces pure India rubber in 1 pint of chloroform, ether, or carbon disulphide.

(58) E. C. M. gives the following description of a simple open circuit battery devised by him: Take an ordinary fruit jar and place in it a number of pieces of broken electric light carbons, hundreds of which can be picked up in the street after the lamps have been trimmed. One of the bottom pieces is securely bound with one end of a gutta percha covered wire, which, going up to the top, makes the connection with binding screw on cover, the cover being made of wood or hard rubber. Next an ordinary Leclanche battery zinc is suspended from the cover of the jar, reaching down to within an inch or two of the carbons. The exciting fluid is a solution of sal ammoniac and water. E. C. M. says he now uses this battery in connection with a burglar alarm which works very satisfactorily. [We presume uncoppered carbons are used in this battery, as sal ammoniac would attack the copper, and the solution would be weakened.]

(59) J. H. L. asks: If a rocket was fired in a vacuum, would it rise or remain stationary? The rocket is supposed to be an ordinary practicable rocket, and the vacuum an infinite theoretical vacuum. A. It would remain stationary.

(60) J. N. B. writes: Some time ago some one asked for a simple method of filling barometer tubes so as to get the bubbles out, without boiling the mercury. For ordinary weather glasses, I have had fair success as follows: Place a little tuft of raw cotton (clean and fine) in the bottom (i. e., top when filled) of the tube, to which is tied a small thread; then fill the tube as full as possible, and pull the tuft of cotton out slowly. All air bubbles in the mercury will condense into the cotton, and a clean solid tube will appear. After the cotton is out, fill up to overflowing, press a small piece of thick leather over the end, and invert into a cup of mercury, etc.

(61) W. G. T. writes: Will you please inform me if at any time the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN or the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN SUPPLEMENT has given directions for the construction of an electric motor of about one-half horsepower or over? If so, please inform me when it was issued. A. You will find descriptions of electric motors in SUPPLEMENT, Nos. 323, 212, 267, and 259. The dynamo electric machine described in SUPPLEMENT, No. 160, will answer for a motor, if you wind the armature with No. 16 instead of No. 18 wire, and wind the magnet with No. 14 wire, employing only about four layers.

(62) W. H. B. says: Will you please tell the cause of the following: In one corner of our cellar the concrete floor has been thrown up, just as though there had been an eruption under the floor. The floor is 4 inches thick, and we cannot find out why it has acted so. A. This may be caused by the upward pressure of water in the ground or by the lateral expansion of the concrete. Even if water is not shown, the air under the pavement may be subjected to a great pressure by the increased amount of water below it, the height of the latter being constantly changed by wet or dry states of the weather.

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

B. E. N.—No. 1 is magnetic iron sand, and may be valuable as an iron ore. An analysis, costing \$15.00, would be necessary to determine this. 2. The red particles may be fragments of garnets or colored quartz. The sample is sand containing iron.

INDEX OF INVENTIONS

For which Letters Patent of the United States were Granted, December 22, 1885, AND EACH BEARING THAT DATE. [See note at end of list about copies of these patents.]

Acid, alpha-naphtholsulphonic, Vollbrecht & Mensching.....	333,810
Acid, manufacture of beta-naphthylamine sulpho, H. Prinz.....	332,829
Acid, nitronaphtholsulphonic, Vollbrecht & Mensching.....	333,836
Air and gas compressor valve, W. H. Worthen....	333,866
Alloy or compound in producing the same, metallic, H. J. F. Niewerth.....	332,736
Anchor bolt, W. S. Craig.....	332,701
Ankle support, G. C. McEwen.....	332,727, 332,728
Annunciator, D. S. Foote.....	333,063
Annunciator and circuit, telephone, J. Houlehan.....	333,814
Axle box, L. Leirer.....	332,809
Axle nut, adjustable, J. H. Steen.....	333,039
Axle, vehicle, I. W. Archibald.....	333,840
Back band, J. W. Gardner.....	332,888
Bark cutter, J. C. Hagerty.....	332,797
Bark-cutting machine, J. C. Hagerty.....	332,796
Bark mill, W. A. Woods.....	332,854
Bed bottom, spring, H. Quaid.....	332,750
Bed, folding, Slater & Eaton.....	332,956
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Bobbin winder, A. V. Abercrombie.....	332,771
Boiler. See Steam boiler. Vertical tube boiler.	
Boiler water tube, Wetmore & Bratt.....	333,843
Boilers, feeding fuel to, S. W. Valentine.....	332,975
Bolt. See Anchor bolt.	
Bolt blank machine, J. R. Blakeslee.....	332,869
Bookbinding, manufacture of compound fabric for, S. Barlow.....	332,778

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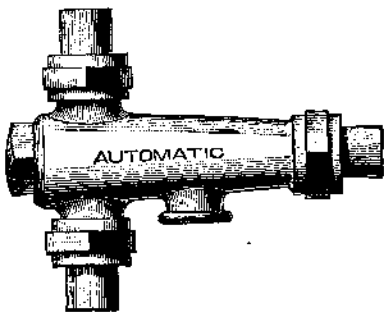
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