

Notes & Queries

HINTS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Names and Address must accompany all letters, or no attention will be paid thereto. This is for our information, and not for publication. References to former articles or answers should give date of paper and page or number of question. Inquiries not answered in reasonable time should be repeated; correspondents will bear in mind that some answers require not a little research, and, though we endeavor to reply to all, either by letter or in this department, each must take his turn. Special Written Information on matters of personal rather than general interest cannot be expected without remuneration. Scientific American Supplements referred to may be had at the office. Price 10 cents each. Books referred to promptly supplied on receipt of price. Minerals sent for examination should be distinctly marked or labeled.

(1) E. B. asks how to copper sheet pieces of sheet iron. A. Clean the article thoroughly by treatment in a bath of muriatic acid 1 part, water 4 parts, to remove all scale. Wash in hot water and tumble in sawdust wet with a solution of sulphate of copper in water, to which add as much sulphuric acid as is equal to the weight of the dry sulphate of copper. Use about 2 ounces of each to a gallon of water. You may also copper work that cannot be easily tumbled by dipping in the above solution hot. The work must be clean and free from grease.

(2) J. F. L. asks how to remove stains made on piece of linen by paraffine varnish, or coal tar such as used in roofing, etc. A. Paraffine is soluble in alcohol and ether. You will succeed best with a warm solvent. We would also suggest a trial with coal tar benzol. Moisten the cloth with the liquid all around the spot, and so work up to it. Do not pour directly upon it.

(3) E. L. C. V. desires (1) a recipe for a furniture (walnut and ebonized) polish not varnish. A. Mix thoroughly olive oil 1 pound, refined oil of amber 1 pound, and tincture of henna 1 ounce. Keep the mixture in a well stoppered glass bottle. Apply with a tuft of raw cotton and rub dry with a cotton rag. 2. What can be used to clean fly specks from lacquered brass work (chandeliers) without injury to the luster? A. Old ale is a good thing to wash any gilding with, as it acts at once on the fly dirt. Apply it with a soft rag.

(4) A. J. M.—When the minerals or rocks to be polished have been trimmed off as near to the desired shape as possible by means of a small steel hammer, the faces are first roughly ground on metal plates with the addition of coarse emery powder and water. When a smooth surface has thus been obtained, the final polish is effected by grinding on plates of glass with fine emery or rouge. This method is of course very slow, and is used only where occasional specimens are treated. Where any number are to be polished, a lathe is employed. The laps or wheels rotate horizontally, and are made of cast iron, copper, or lead, according to the hardness of the mineral under treatment. Where slices or large sections are to be made, a steel diamond saw is used. Lathes for amateur use are now manufactured, and cost from \$50 to \$250. The slicing apparatus costs from about \$35 upward. If you only care to polish an occasional specimen, or make a few rock sections for examination under the microscope, a cast iron plate, 8 inches in diameter, a plate of thick glass about the same size, cut preferably square, and an assortment of different grades of emery powder, will constitute the necessary outfit.

(5) C. S. L. asks: 1. Can a vacuum be held in a glass jar or any other kind of jar? A. It can be held, and is in incandescent electric lamp bulbs. 2. After pumping the air out, how can it be kept out? A. It can be kept out by hermetically sealing the jar. 3. How can you tell when the air is all expelled? A. By a pressure gauge attached to the tube, through which the air is pumped out.

(6) T. H. asks (1) a formula for the volume in cubic feet per minute escaping from a gas well, the pressure and opening being given. A. Assuming pressure of gas to be given in pounds per square inch within a few inches of the opening of the pipe, we have:

Q = 9.8 A √(h/d)

Q=cubic feet per second, A=area of cross section of pipe in square inches, h=pressure of gas, d=pressure of air which may be taken at 15 pounds per square inch. 2. The length of pipe and pressure given, a formula for volume discharged in cubic feet per minute. A. Assuming pressure of gas to be given in pounds per square inch at beginning of pipe:

Q = 9.8 A √(h / (1 + 18 * (0.025 * l/d - 1)))

Q=cubic feet per second, A=area of cross section of pipe in square inches, h=pressure of gas in pounds per square inch, d pressure of air which may be taken at 15 pounds, l=length of pipe in feet, d=diameter of pipe in feet or fraction thereof.

(7) L. W. asks: 1. What is meant by a 10 per cent solution, 5 per cent solution, etc.? A. A ten per cent solution means ten parts of substance in one hundred of solution, and the same for other percentages. 2. In formulae giving a certain number of "parts" of a salt, and a certain number of parts of water or other liquid, how are these parts taken, by weight or by volume? A. The term "parts" in formulae generally means parts by weight, whether referring to liquids or solids.

(8) A. S.—The plant, from your brief description, is undoubtedly a tall form of Aralia heterophylla, which is the only species shrubby at the base. Its leaves are merely bipinnate, while those of the shrubby A. spinosa are tripinnate. The other species of Aralia are herbaceous and unarmed.

(9) W. N. asks: What effect has common salt and water on steel in hardening, no matter how heavy or light the brine? A. The addition of salt to water raises the boiling point and makes it a more efficient and rapid cooler of the metal. Hence it is liable to crack heavy pieces, and tends to make the hardening penetrate deeper.

(10) C. P.—Indian red is made by calcining iron sulphate. It is a more or less pure iron peroxide.

(11) A. E. S.—We can send you "Fur, Fin, and Feather," with game laws of each State, for fifty cents. The following is an excellent harness liquid blacking: Dissolve by heat 4 ounces glue or gelatine and 3 ounces gum arabic in 3/4 pint water; add 7 ounces molasses and 5 ounces ivory black in fine powder; gently evaporate over a water bath until of a proper consistence, stirring all the time. Keep in corked bottles.

(12) E. N. asks how to produce cold in a small ice chest without the use of ice. A. Use one of the numerous freezing mixtures, such as equal parts of ammonium nitrate and water; or, eight parts of sodium sulphate with five parts of hydrochloric acid.

(13) J. T. P. asks how to cleanse and whiten harness lines made of Russia leather. A. Sponge the leather with dilute solution of oxalic acid, and then dress well with oil. The acid must be used sparingly, as it never benefits the texture of leather.

(14) W. S. A.—Gelatin, starch, and Irish moss soaked in warm water are among the substances generally used in making ice cream bricks. Ice mixed with the former requires a greater degree of heat to cause it to melt, and hence bricks of ice cream thus made stay hard longer on exposure than will ordinary ice cream.

(15) W. asks what curd soap is. A. Curd soaps contain no resin, and are generally made from tallow or lard, in about the proportions, fat 9 parts, alkali 1 part, and from 5 to 8 parts of water.

(16) E. P. E. asks: 1. What is the glue or liquid used for sticking fringes and plush on card for New Year? A. A good quality of glue dissolved in hot water is generally used. 2. Also the liquid used to gilt the edges of cards? A. A composition consisting of four parts of Armenian bole, and one of candied sugar, ground together with water to a proper consistence, and laid on by a brush with the white of an egg. This coating, when nearly dry, is smoothed by the burnisher. It is then slightly moistened by a sponge dipped in clean water and squeezed in the hand, after which gold leaf is applied. 3. The mixture to bronze gas fixtures? A. Mix vinegar or dilute sulphuric acid (1 acid, 12 water) with powdered black lead in a saucer or open vessel; apply this to the brass with a soft plate brush by gentle brushing. This will soon assume a polish, and is fit for lacquering. The brass must be made slightly warmer than for lacquering only. A little practice will enable the operator to bronze and lacquer with once heating. The color, black or green, varies with the thickness of black lead.

(17) A. O. R. desires a recipe of a compound that would harden wood, so that an article made of maple or any other wood, and in general of a shell-like form, would be capable of enduring considerable rough treatment. A. It has been found that wood acquires a remarkable hardness and toughness when it is placed in tanks and covered with quicklime, which is gradually slaked with water. Wood, such as is used in mines, takes about a week to become thoroughly impregnated.

(18) G. S. H. asks how to laundry shirts to give the fine gloss to the bosoms. A. Take of white wax 1 ounce, spermaceti 2 ounces, melt them together with a gentle heat. When you have prepared a sufficient amount of starch, in the usual way, for a dozen pieces, put into it a piece of the polish about the size of a large pea, using more or less, according to large or small washings. Or thick gum solution (made by pouring boiling water upon gum arabic) may be used. One tablespoon to a pint of starch gives clothes a beautiful gloss.

(19) E. C. N. writes: I have a white chip hat which is slightly sunburned. The local bleachery says it cannot be bleached. Is there not some way of making it white again? A. Straw hats and bonnets are bleached by putting them, previously washed in pure water, and still moist, into a box with burning sulphur; the fumes which arise unite with the water on the bonnets, and the sulphurous acid thus formed bleaches them.

(20) G. W. C. asks how to make water containing carbonate of lime soft and fit to drink. A. Boil it, and allow to settle and pour off. See "How to Soften Hard Water," contained in SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN SUPPLEMENT, No. 270. See also the articles on this subject in SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN SUPPLEMENT, Nos. 280, 348, and 392.

(21) E. R. asks what to use to polish cows' horns. A. Having scraped the work perfectly smooth and level, rub it with very fine sand paper, repeat the rubbing with a bit of felt dipped in finely powdered charcoal with water; and lastly, with rotten stone or putty powder and finish with a piece of soft wax leather, damped with a little sweet oil; or still better, rub it with subnitrate of bismuth by the palm of the hand.

(22) A. W. asks: 1. How can I remove paints from the floor of a room that has been used for a store room for the sale of paints? A. Take 1 pound American pearl ash, 3 pounds quick stone lime, slake the lime in water, then add the pearl ash, and make the whole about the consistence of paint. Lay the mixture over the whole body of the work which is required to be cleaned, with an old brush; let it remain for 12 or 14 hours, when the paint can be easily scraped off.

(23) N. B. asks: 1. Does the gradual, instead of instantaneous, disappearance of a fixed star behind a planet prove that the planet has an atmosphere? A. Not wholly. The condition of our at-

mosphere, the declination from the zenith, and the diameter of the telescopic aperture may have some influence in graduating the occultation. 2. Is it necessary that the star should change its color? A. If the light was affected by a planetary atmosphere, there would probably be a slight change in color. Diffraction may also have a share in the visible phenomena. 3. Mention a good work on taxidermy. A. Maynard's Manual of Taxidermy, which we can furnish for \$1.50.

(24) J. M. E. asks: An armature is running 1,200 revolutions per minute, carrying a load of 1,200 lamps. Will it require more power to run it 1,800 revolutions, carrying the same load, with the lamps at the same intensity, leaving bearing friction out of consideration? A. In general terms, a higher speed increases intensity of current and hence involves increased mechanical resistance. The lamps would also give more light at the higher speed. The friction of the air would increase at a higher speed. If the dynamo was of such construction that the lamps gave the same light at 1,800 as 1,200 revolutions, then the resistance to rotation, apart from that offered by the air and bearings, would be the same.

(25) A. J. M. asks an easy and simple means for cutting and polishing all kinds of ores, minerals, etc. A. A grindstone to cut to shape, a leathered board, with fine flour of emery to finish, and another leathered board, with crocus for polishing, is the most simple arrangement that we know of.

(26) H. M. asks (1) the best method to enlarge eye of an emery wheel from 1/4 to 1 inch. A. Chuck the wheel in a lathe and turn out the eye with a hard tool or, better, a diamond tool, with a very slow motion. 2. What is best to apply to gum belting that is glossy and begins to scale off or crack? A. We know of no restoration for gum or rubber belting that scales off or cracks. If it is new, it is of poor quality. If it is old, there is no help for it but renewal.

(27) S. H. J. writes: I have 6 inch reflecting telescope, mounted equatorially. How shall I set it relative to the north pole, so that the star following motion will always keep the star in field of view? A. You should have some means of moving the frame of the polar axis in azimuth and altitude, sufficient for the last adjustment. Then observe Polaris in its east or west position of mean altitude with the declination axis horizontal. Get the star in the center of the field, clamp the declination axis, and turn the telescope 180° on its polar axis. The difference in position in altitude is double the distance of correction required. When Polaris is on the meridian, the horizontal difference in the field is twice the correction required in azimuth. 2. In looking at the sun, I have hitherto used smoked glass as a protection for the eye, but it is very easily spoiled by a touch, rubbing off the carbon film. Where can I buy black glass that may be ground to a thin plate and used in lieu of smoked glass? A. You can buy colored glass for eye pieces at any optical establishment. A solar eye piece composed of 2 prisms cemented together is the best. The dark blue colored glass is the best.

(28) B. M. R. asks how to clean a white goat skin rug. I am afraid warm soap suds may injure the skin, though it is just what the long white hair needs. A. One washing with warm (not hot) suds will not materially hurt the skin itself. The skin may not seem quite so soft after the washing, but if the washing is done quickly, the skin will rinsed in cold water, and dried with only moderate warmth, being frequently turned and shaken, the difference will hardly be perceptible.

(29) S. R. D. writes: I have a gold solution for plating. I wish to separate the gold from the cyanide of potassium. A. Acidify in open air with excess of hydrochloric acid, add protosulphate of iron, heat, filter out precipitated gold, wash, dry, and ignite. Be careful not to inhale evolved gases.

(30) H. J. C. desires (1) a receipt for frost-proof ink. A. Aniline black 1 drachm, rub with a mixture of concentrated hydrochloric acid 1 drachm, pure alcohol 10 ounces. The deep blue solution obtained is diluted with a hot solution of concentrated glycerin 1 1/2 drachms, in 4 ounces of water. This ink does not injure steel pens, is unaffected by concentrated mineral acids or strong alkalies, and will not freeze at a temperature of 22 or 24 degrees below zero. 2. A receipt for liquid glue made without acid. A. An excellent liquid glue is made thus: Take of best white glue 16 ounces, white lead dry, 4 ounces, rain water 2 pints, alcohol 4 ounces. With constant stirring dissolve the glue and mix the lead in the water by means of a water bath. Add the alcohol, and continue the heat for a few minutes. Lastly pour into bottles while it is still hot.

(31) J. W. V. asks what material potters use to give a gloss or polish to their wares, something in the shape of a powder placed in their furnaces. A. Doubtless you refer to the salt glaze, which consists simply in throwing dry salt into the furnace while the articles are being baked. Other glazes are produced by dipping the articles into a specially prepared mixture, substantially glass ground into fine powder and suspended in water, receipts for which can be found in any of the works on pottery.

(32) C. W. S. desires a recipe for making lithographic ink. A. Melt 10 ounces of wax, 8 ounces of shellac, 5 ounces of mastic, 4 ounces each of pure tallow and hard tallow soap, 1/2 ounce Venetian turpentine. Mix with these 2 1/2 ounces of lamp-black. This ink is rubbed up with water like water-colors, and forms an emulsion. You will find numerous receipts given in the "Techno-chemical Receipt Book," which we can send you, postpaid, for \$2.

(33) C. L. G. asks how to produce the harder grades of lithograph crayons. Several of the published formulas result in a good crayon for rough work, but not hard enough for fine work. A. We would advise the following: Pure wax 4 parts, dry white tallow soap 2 parts, white tallow 2 parts, gum lac 2 parts, lampblack enough to give a dark tint; occasionally, copal varnish 1 part. Concerning the de-

tails of preparation, see the article on Lithography, in Ure's Dictionary. For white wax we would recommend beeswax.

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

J. M. U.—The sample of ore sent does not contain copper or any other valuable metallic ingredient.—W. G.—The specimen appears to be infusorial earth, and is of value as a polishing powder.—J. S. L.—The specimen is calcite, or crystallized carbonate of lime. It is of no value.

TO INVENTORS.

An experience of forty years, and the preparation of more than one hundred thousand applications for patents at home and abroad, enable us to understand the laws and practice on both continents, and to possess unequalled facilities for procuring patents everywhere. A synopsis of the patent laws of the United States and all foreign countries may be had on application, and persons contemplating the securing of patents, either at home or abroad, are invited to write to this office for prices, which are low, in accordance with the times and our extensive facilities for conducting the business. Address MUNN & CO., OFFICE SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN, 361 Broadway, New York.

INDEX OF INVENTIONS

For which Letters Patent of the United States were Granted,

August 31, 1886,

AND EACH BEARING THAT DATE.

[See note at end of list about copies of these patents.]

Adding machine, electro magnetic, C. W. Weiss... 348,437
Agricultural fork, D. Stotlemeyer... 348,300
Air brake attachment, E. W. McKenna... 348,289
Alarm. See Fire alarm.
Alarm lock, W. G. Bennett... 348,262
Armpit shield, H. C. Frank... 348,390
Asphaltic concrete for paving purposes, apparatus for preparing, F. V. Greene... 348,492
Asphaltic concrete for paving purposes, device for manufacturing, F. V. Greene... 348,493
Automatic sprinkler, W. T. Montgomery... 348,531
Axle box, L. S. Van Schaumburg... 348,432
Barrel making machine, W. P. Tracy... 348,481
Bed bottom, spring, S. D. Tuttle, Sr... 348,529
Bed clothes holder, H. O. Thomas... 348,308
Beehive, C. H. Beeler, Jr... 348,308
Belt guide, J. A. Ingram... 348,285
Belt or pad, medical electric, McGrady & Sloane... 348,406
Bit braces, machine for applying heads to, C. H. Amidon... 348,182
Blacking box, combination, A. M. Lee... 348,468
Blower, W. G. Brownson... 348,488
Boat. See Life boat.
Bobbin reamer, E. H. Perrigo... 348,412
Boiler. See Steam boiler.
Boiler cleaner, Millar & Feeny... 348,530
Boiler furnace, steam, J. Ham... 348,468
Boiler or vessel lined with lead for use in treatment of fibrous substances, C. W. Flodqvist... 348,457
Bolt. See Flour bolt.
Bookcase, extension, J. D. Walsh... 348,252
Book holder, H. Crocker... 348,382
Boot, D. G. Phalan... 348,283
Boot and shoe heel, R. F. McConnell... 348,472
Bottle stopper, L. Graf... 348,461
Bouquet holder, A. McLane... 348,382
Box. See Axle box. Blacking box.
Brake. See Car brake. Railway brake.
Brake lever, J. W. McPherson... 348,229
Brick and tile, method of and apparatus for manufacturing, J. C. Anderson... 348,445
Brick from clays of different colors, manufacture of ornamental, J. C. Anderson... 448,443
Brick kiln, W. Radford... 348,413
Brick machine, S. L. Shellenberger... 348,425
Bricks, etc., method of and apparatus for making, J. C. Anderson... 348,414
Bridge, C. F. T. Kandler... 348,467
Bridge guard, W. C. Newman... 348,410
Bridles, combined brace for brow bands and winkers for, C. A. Harmstead... 348,207
Broom, sue, Light & Luscher... 348,469
Brush, paint, A. Barber... 348,506
Buckle, Burgess... 348,186
Buckle, S. J. Scovill... 348,351
Buckle, harness, F. Benoit... 348,310
Burner. See Candle burner. Gas or vapor burner.
Button setting instrument, F. H. Richards... 348,236, 348,23
Camera. See Photographic camera.
Candle burner, H. Bove... 348,577
Caps, case for holding Scotch, McLoughlin & Brewster... 348,228
Car brake, automatic, G. H. Poor... 348,234
Car brakes, clutch for street, W. V. Willson... 348,306
Car coupling, A. M. Gregory... 348,519
Car coupling, J. L. Schoenberger... 348,248
Car coupling, Webb & Kellogg... 348,368
Car coupling, automatic, Smith & Motes... 348,479
Car motor, street, A. L. Rich... 348,416
Car spring, R. Vose... 348,251
Car starter, N. J. Roberts... 348,238
Card setting machine, S. Midgley... 348,529
Carding machines, doffer cleaner for, W. Merritt... 348,498
Carding machines, lap feeding device for, W. Schofield... 348,419 to 348,421
Carpet cleaner, F. H. Good... 348,460
Carpet stretcher and tacker, combined, E. Schmidt... 348,350
Carriage seat, J. A. Russell... 348,240
Carriage spring, baby, J. F. Butler... 348,378
Carrier. See Trace chain carrier. Yarn carrier.
Cart, road, F. Becht... 348,447
Cartridge extractor for breakdown guns, J. Deeley, Jr... 348,452
Cartridge shells, device for trimming, R. White... 348,441
Case. See Book case. Organ case. Powder case. Show case. Watch case.
Catch, safety, W. S. Andrews... 348,371
Centrifugal machine for extracting water from coils of wire, etc., E. Cabbie... 348,316
Cereals, preserving, J. Flnke... 348,320
Chair, E. J. Smith... 348,244
Chasing mill, B. Kane... 348,524
Checks, machine for delivering and adding, L. T. Weiss... 348,369

Chlorine, producing, G. Rumpf..... 348,448
 Churn, J. Lasswell..... 348,531
 Cigar and ash holder, combined, A. Mahor..... 348,471
 Cigar lighter and perfumery ejector combined, H. Munk..... 348,409
 Cigar rolling machine, O. Hammerstein..... 348,206
 Cigar tip, A. S. Rosenbaum..... 348,347
 Cleaner. See Boiler cleaner. Carpet cleaner.
 Clothes rack, W. P. Brooks..... 348,510
 Cock, ball, H. C. Weeden..... 348,364
 Comb. See Curry comb.
 Corn husker, T. I. Ludwig..... 348,528
 Cotton packer, J. T. Dulany..... 348,490
 Cotton waste picker, J. P. Hillard..... 348,394
 Coupling. See Car coupling.
 Cream raising apparatus, Moseley & Pritchard..... 348,540
 Crupper former, L. Dare..... 348,319
 Crutch, C. Copeland..... 348,267
 Cultivator, D. D. Funk..... 348,518
 Cultivator, Hench & Dromgold..... 348,208
 Cultivator, G. H. Sawyer..... 348,242
 Curry comb, H. F. Sawtelle..... 348,241
 Cutter. See Harvester cutter.
 Cutter head, W. A. Woodroffe..... 348,367
 Digger. See Potato digger.
 Door check and buffer, combined, Gabet & Koehlinger..... 348,275
 Door check and holder, N. R. Thomas..... 348,428
 Doubling frames, cleaning and tension equalizing device for silk, A. Muller..... 348,406
 Drilling machine, W. Seng..... 348,422
 Electric circuits, cut-out for, J. M. Fairchild..... 348,455
 Electric circuits, switch for, Fairchild & O'Connor..... 348,456
 Electric generators, regulator for dynamo, Deprez & Carpentier..... 348,385
 Electric lights or gas or oil lamps, suspending, J. N. B. Moore..... 348,407
 Electrode for electric batteries, S. L. Trippe..... 348,432
 Elevator and carrier, C. J. Knighton..... 348,323
 Engine. See Rotary engine. Steam engine.
 Engravers' use, block for, E. S. Stehman..... 348,299
 Excavating machine, A. Boschke..... 348,376
 Extractor. See Stump extractor.
 Eyeglasses, D. V. Brown..... 348,449
 Faucet, automatic filling, U. Bachmann..... 348,372
 Feeder, stock, Wilder & Arkland..... 348,305
 Fence, L. H. Colbert..... 348,318
 Fence machine, Macy & Gilbert..... 348,288
 Fence, metallic, C. F. Purdie..... 348,409
 Fence post, iron, M. D. Cummings..... 348,383
 Fence wire stretcher, C. R. & M. E. Summers..... 348,248
 Fence wire tension device, D. F. Reinheimer..... 348,294
 Fences, machine for making slat and wire, G. W. Beagle..... 348,184
 Fertilizer distributor, J. R. Audony..... 348,507
 File, L. Muller..... 348,290
 Filter, H. Roeseke..... 348,534
 Fire alarm, automatic, T. H. Prescott..... 348,473
 Firearm sight, W. Lyman..... 348,224
 Fire kindler, D. W. Johns..... 348,326
 Floor cleaning machine, J. F. Cameron..... 348,317
 Flour bolt, J. J. & E. T. Faulkner..... 348,199
 Flue thimble and stopper, W. P. Walter..... 348,435
 Folding table, L. H. & D. W. Goodnow..... 348,201
 Fork. See Agricultural fork.
 Frame. See Harvester frame. Window frame.
 Fruit and flower picker and holder, T. C. Stark..... 348,357
 Furnace. See Roller furnace.
 Fuse for shells, percussion, J. M. Bowyer..... 348,314
 Gauge. See Planer knife gauge. Pressure gauge. Surface gauge.
 Gas or vapor burner, C. A. O. Rosell..... 348,348
 Gas regulator, A. Ford..... 348,339
 Gate. See Hydraulic gate.
 Gate, N. D. Combs..... 348,489
 Gate, L. D. Wade..... 348,414
 Glass polishing machine, P. Bernard..... 348,311
 Glove and making the same, W. W. Whitaker..... 348,409
 Governor, steam engine, W. L. Collamore..... 348,266
 Grain binders, ejector for automatic, W. N. Whiteley..... 348,255
 Grain separator, G. A. Dawson..... 348,515
 Grinding mill, H. Cutler..... 348,384
 Grinding mills, feed mechanism for, H. Haire..... 348,205
 Guard. See Bridge guard.
 Gun carriage, machine, J. G. Accles..... 348,160
 Gutter heading device, P. Shackleton..... 348,423
 Hair crimper, G. H. Blakesley..... 348,263
 Hammers, die for making, H. H. Warren..... 348,362
 Handle for cutlery and other articles, J. H. La Fave..... 348,330
 Harness pad machine, J. W. Jones..... 348,327
 Harness pad tree, R. J. Welles..... 348,253
 Harvester, J. F. Appleby..... 348,259
 Harvester, Hoover & Brown..... 348,495
 Harvester cutter, D. Benett..... 348,261
 Harvester frame, W. N. Whiteley..... 348,301
 Harvester, grain binding, J. F. Seiberling..... 348,353
 Hay loader, D. C. Jewett..... 348,358
 Hay rake, horse, W. D. Miller..... 348,230
 Headlight, A. C. Handlan, Jr..... 348,464
 Heater. See Steam heater.
 Hinge, coach, Hincks & Johnson..... 348,212
 Hinge, gate, C. W. Cole..... 348,381
 Hinge, spring, L. Bommer..... 348,312
 Hitching post, T. P. Rodgers..... 348,475
 Hobby horse, J. A. Conover..... 348,513
 Hoisting machine, differential, T. F. Flinn..... 348,200
 Holder. See Bedclothes holder. Book holder. Bouquet holder. Cigar and ash holder. Sash holder. Surgical needle holder. Tool holder.
 Hook. See Rein hook. Whiffletree hook.
 Hoop pointing and lapping machine, F. L. Wilson..... 348,367
 Horse power, G. Sowers..... 348,246
 Hydraulic gate or water regulator, C. H. Colquhoun..... 348,266
 Ice machine, F. Diener..... 348,192
 Ice road machine, C. C. Stephenson..... 348,502
 Incubator, W. H. Worswick..... 348,368
 Indicator. See Station indicator. Steam engine indicator.
 Iron, making sheet, R. G. Wood..... 348,258
 Jack. See Lifting jack.
 Joint. See Railway rail joint.
 Kiln. See Brick kiln.
 Knitting machines, yarn carrier for, J. Stewart..... 348,503
 Knob attachment, F. A. Hollenbeck..... 348,494
 Ladder, extension, J. C. Winsor..... 348,237
 Lamp, G. W. McGill..... 348,405
 Lamp shade, H. S. Myers..... 348,233
 Lamp, suspension, W. R. Noe..... 348,291
 Land roller and stalk cutter, R. Horton..... 348,284
 Life boat, A. L. Shears..... 348,424
 Lifter. See Transom lifter.
 Lifting jack, A. Souders..... 348,480
 Light. See Headlight.
 Lock. See Alarm lock. Nut lock. Sash lock.
 Lock and seal for trunks, A. N. Towne..... 348,358
 Locomotive tenders, safety attachment for, C. W. Dikeman..... 348,454
 Loom let-off mechanism, J. & J. Nightingale..... 348,353


Loom stop motions, filling fork for, J. A. Platt..... 348,389
 Lubricator, W. W. Cole..... 348,451
 Mail bags, combined fastener and label for, R. H. Barnitz..... 348,374
 Mason's hawk, R. R. Coursen..... 348,208
 Measure, automatic grain, W. Looney..... 348,287
 Medicinal aerated water, J. V. Riggs..... 348,344
 Medicine, pile remedy, J. W. Goodson..... 348,278
 Medico electrical apparatus, J. R. Hard..... 348,465
 Meter. See Water meter.
 Mill. See Chasing mill. Grinding mill. Sawmill.
 Motor. See Car motor. Water motor.
 Mowing machine, A. C. Rogers..... 348,239
 Music leaf turner, T. H. Garland..... 348,323
 Musician's exercising device, J. Caesar..... 348,379
 Muzzle, stock, A. Wesson..... 348,438
 Nests, gate for hens, W. S. Spaulding..... 348,356
 Net, fly and mosquito, J. H. Fisher..... 348,338
 Nut lock, J. L. Pope..... 348,235
 Nut lock, L. R. Ritter..... 348,345
 Nut lock, L. S. Shellenberger..... 348,426
 Oil cloth rubbing machine, J. Rice et al..... 348,417
 Ores, jig box for separating, F. T. Freeland..... 348,517
 Organ case, W. S. Votey..... 348,505
 Packing for pistons, plungers, etc., F. M. Ludlow..... 348,527
 Padlock, L. Hillebrand..... 348,521
 Paint, etc., separator for dry, R. E. Gray..... 348,324
 Painting machine, C. A. Rosenblatt..... 348,335
 Pantaloon stretcher, J. Grant..... 348,303
 Paring and stoning peaches, machine for, W. A. C. Oaks..... 348,532
 Pen, fountain, W. H. Hildebrand..... 348,395
 Perforating machine, H. Wallace..... 348,434
 Phenyl-methyl oxyquinoline, production of, H. Von Perger..... 348,483
 Photographic camera, A. G. Tisdell..... 348,301
 Pianos, folding lamp shelf for, R. Prause..... 348,343
 Picker. See Cotton waste picker. Fruit and flower picker.
 Pipe. See Tobacco pipe.
 Pipe covering, non-conducting, R. Burns..... 348,187
 Plane, variable bench, A. Fales..... 348,198
 Planer knife gauge, A. Potter..... 348,341
 Planter, check row corn, J. K. Voorhees..... 348,250
 Planter check rower, corn, Litterer & McKinniss..... 348,470
 Planter, corn, M. A. Spafford..... 348,536
 Planter, hand corn, Esterly & Poe..... 348,387
 Plastic material with gold, etc., lining plates of, H. Barnes..... 348,188
 Plow, W. Dillen..... 348,193
 Plow and planting mechanism, combined, W. S. Greeuing..... 348,204
 Plow, shovel, J. W. Webster..... 348,436
 Plow, steam, W. Lay..... 348,481
 Plow, sulky, C. Anderson..... 348,487
 Plow, sulky, J. Moseley..... 348,231
 Poisons, receptacle for, T. Mayhew..... 348,227
 Post. See Fence post. Hitching post.
 Potato digger and separator, combined, I. W. Hoover..... 348,214
 Powder case, E. A. Kittell..... 348,525
 Power. See Horse power.
 Pressure gauge, recording, F. A. Jones..... 348,219
 Printing and adding machine, check, Koch & Kruse..... 348,496
 Printing machines, paper feeding device and cutter for, D. L. Wortendyke..... 348,506
 Printing machines, throw-off mechanism for oscillation, F. Van Wyck..... 348,302
 Printing on pyroxyline compounds, Lefferts & Hyatt..... 348,222
 Prison cells, construction of, P. W. Herzog..... 348,210
 Propelling canal boats, A. Schausten..... 348,296
 Pulley, band saw, W. H. Dodge..... 348,289
 Pulley covering, wooden, W. H. Dodge..... 348,270
 Pulp, machine for forming hollow ware from, H. Parker..... 348,292
 Pump, beer, H. C. Montgomery..... 348,333
 Pump bucket, endless chain, G. H. Shellaberger..... 348,286
 Pump for wells, D. K. Keller..... 348,286
 Pump, force, J. W. Van Order..... 348,361
 Punch and die for trimming shells, R. White..... 348,440
 Punching and eyeletting machine, C. A. Corman..... 348,190
 Quilling machine, J. & J. Nightingale..... 348,336
 Rack. See Clothes rack.
 Rack and table, combined, L. M. Eirick..... 348,271
 Railway brake, electro magnetic, C. J. Van Der poele..... 348,360
 Railway, electric, Short & Nesmith..... 348,476
 Railway frog crossing, P. C. Dunn..... 348,516
 Railway rail joint, C. Wilcox..... 348,434
 Railway signal, S. B. Fyler..... 348,322
 Railway track, portable, F. Peteler..... 348,533
 Railways, grip for cable, H. Casebolt..... 348,380
 Rake. See Hay rake.
 Razor strop, J. A. Wilson..... 348,486
 Reflecting view and spyglass, H. F. A. Grimm..... 348,279
 Refrigerating rooms, apparatus for, C. C. Hutchinson..... 348,523
 Refrigerator, F. A. Masters..... 348,404
 Refrigerators, refrigerator buildings, etc, ice tank for, J. Castell..... 348,450
 Rein hook, check, G. B. N. Dow..... 348,194
 Riveting machine, F. M. Jeffery..... 348,397
 Roller. See Land roller.
 Rolling mills, feeding table for, R. W. Hunt..... 348,216
 Rotary engine, R. H. Isbell..... 348,217
 Sash balance, J. A. Rogers..... 348,500
 Sash fastener, H. Powell..... 348,342
 Sash holder, J. H. Felmlee..... 348,273
 Sashholder, W. M. Valentine..... 348,431
 Sash lock, T. A. L. Moore..... 348,334
 Sawmill, band, G. M. Hinkley..... 348,280
 Sawmill carriage, G. W. Robinson..... 348,295
 Sawmill, combined band and circular, G. M. Hinkley..... 348,281
 Saw teeth, method of and device for turning down the points of, I. N. Kendall..... 348,220
 Saws, supporting wheel for band, G. M. Hinkley..... 348,283
 Scaffold, adjustable, S. Tucker..... 348,359
 Screw cutting machine, C. A. Weller..... 348,395
 Seal, self-fastening, E. J. Brooks..... 348,509
 Seat. See Carriage seat.
 Seeder and cultivator, combined, B. M. Johnson..... 348,399
 Seeding machine, A. & J. Hinman..... 348,213
 Separator. See Grain separator.
 Sewing machine, Ramsden & Ellis..... 348,474
 Sewing machine trimming attachment, C. H. Willcox..... 348,485
 Shade fixture, B. Handforth..... 348,338
 Shaft bearing, anti-friction, A. Giesler..... 348,392
 Sheet metal vessels, machine for wiring the edges of, D. James..... 348,396
 Shell, F. Pope..... 348,340
 Shoe vamps, machine for marking, L. Cote..... 348,514
 Shook binder, F. A. Eimerick..... 348,197
 Showcase for holding spectacles and eyeglasses, A. L. Smith..... 348,354
 Signal. See Railway signal.
 Signals, apparatus for producing flash, J. Borro..... 348,313
 Skate, roller, O. F. Tucker..... 348,249
 Springs. See Car springs. Carriage spring.
 Spring equalizer, A. Esp..... 348,272

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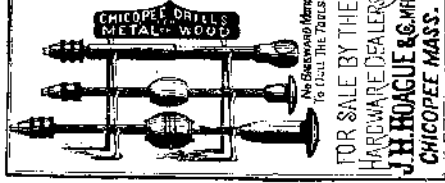
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