

answered by simply saying one or the other, or by a yes or no, as is sometimes the case in a question on which a wager is pending. Such disputes usually arise from a misunderstanding, or a difference in statement of the terms, rather than in a variance of opinion as the actual question at issue. Fires are started both ways, with the ash pit door or with the furnace door open, according as the fire is laid, the attention to be given it and the time. Ordinarily a fire under a boiler should, if possible, be lighted on top of the kindling material, so that the first combustion shall be perfect to start the draught. The top door should be open that the fresh air may reach the flame and prevent dense smoke. When the kindling wood is well on fire, open the lower door a little way to clear the smoke from the ash pit and establish a draught through the grating. Then put on coal and shut the upper door, opening the lower door enough to keep the fire bright. With a little management in this way a fire may be started under a house heating boiler without filling the house with smoke. In starting a fire under the grate, with the ash pit door open, the fuel must be more carefully laid to insure a draught to start with, and the initial progress is then frequently accompanied with puffs of smoke.

(11) H. R. F. asks what chemicals, if there are any, will separate tannic acid from gelatine, also what will dissolve common tanned leather? A. It is one of the first illustrations frequently employed in the study of chemistry, that tannic acid and gelatine make a chemical, and not a mechanical, compound, and become an insoluble one. The gelatine and tannic acid cannot be recovered back from such compound; nor can tannic acid, fibrine, and gelatine, of which tanned leather is made, be ever brought back to their original condition after being once made into leather. There are some adherents in Germany of a theory that tanning is a mechanical and not a chemical combination, but it has never been proved. A great difficulty with the subject lies in the fact that there is much difference in the action and power of combination of the tannins obtained from different substances, for reasons which are not understood; the tannin from gambier, valonia, sumac, etc., can be washed out of a skin to a certain extent in a way which cannot be accomplished when the tanning is done with oak or hemlock bark.

(12) R. G. P. asks how many Grenet batteries it will take to run a boat 20 ft. long by 4 ft. in beam, and 21 in. deep, and how many miles an hour. A. About 3,000 ordinary sized Grenet cells would be required to develop a speed of 6 to 7 miles an hour. If you want to use batteries, you need special large sized low-resistance cells, and of these far fewer would be needed, say 350 cells.

(13) T. E. writes: We have a barge sunken; her decks are tight, but 24 feet below the surface of the river. In pumping her out, please tell me which will require least power—to pump the water above the decks, and discharge it 23 feet below the surface, or to pump it above the surface of the river? A. The same power will be required, assuming the water to be discharged exactly at the surface level in the second case supposed. If discharged above the surface, the extra height represents extra power.

(14) L. L. asks how frozen glue is made, such as is used by leather manufacturers. A. Frozen glue is what its name denotes. The glue while gelatinous is sliced, placed on nets and allowed to freeze by natural cold. Of course the process can only be conducted in cold weather. The product is porous and much more bulky than hard glue, but is a better article, as it dissolves more easily. It sells largely in New England, where it is preferred by buyers to the hard glue.

(15) J. H. P. asks: 1. The kind of iron and the mixture for making malleable iron. A. No. 5 and 6 iron mixed, or scrap and No. 6. 2. The best kind of scale to put in the annealing cans, and how long should it take to anneal a round piece, say one-half inch thick. A. Forge scales or pulverized hematite, anneal 4 to 6 days at red heat. See SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN SUPPLEMENT, No. 399, "Malleable Iron Castings."

(16) M. E. P., Kentucky, asks: Is there any means of patching or resilvering mirrors, which I could do at home? A. Clean the bare portion of the glass by rubbing it gently with fine cotton, taking care to remove any trace of dust or grease. If this cleaning be not done very carefully, defects will appear around the place repaired. With the point of your knife cut upon the back of another looking-glass around a portion of the silvering of the required form, but a little larger. Upon it place a small drop of mercury; a drop the size of a pin's head will be sufficient for a surface equal to the size of the nail. The mercury spreads immediately, penetrates the amalgam to where it was cut off with the knife, and the required piece may now be lifted and removed to the place to be repaired. This is the most difficult part of the operation. Then press lightly the renewed portion with cotton; it hardens almost immediately, and the glass presents the same appearance as a new one.

(17) G. H. W., Waterville, Me., asks: 1. How can I remove tincture of iron stain from a cotton fabric, and indelible ink stain from linen? A. Use dilute hydrochloric acid in order to remove the iron stain, and javelle water or some of the hypochlorites for the ink stain. See "Table for Removal of Stains and Grease Spots," in SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN SUPPLEMENT, No. 158.

(18) W. G. McC., Lake Forest, Ill., asks how to make a white ink. A. For writing on black or dark paper, use the finest or lightest zinc or white lead in a weak solution of gum arabic or dextrine. For writing on blue paper, tinted with ultramarine, use a solution of oxalic acid.

(19) A. M., Lowell, Mass., wants the manner or process of curling feathers worn on ladies' bonnets. A. When the curl has come out by washing the feather or getting it damp, place a hot flat iron so that you can hold the feather just above it while curling. Take a bone or silver knife, and draw the fibers of the feather between the thumb and the

dull edge of the knife, taking not more than three fibers at a time, beginning at the point of the feather and curling one-half the other way. The hot iron makes the curl more durable.

(20) A. C. M. asks: Will two cells of Grenet battery (size of zincs $2\frac{3}{4}$ by $4\frac{1}{4}$ in.) have sufficient power to run a one candle power electric lamp? A. Four cells would be necessary to give satisfactory results.

TO INVENTORS.

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INDEX OF INVENTIONS

For which Letters Patent of the United States were Granted,

March 15, 1887,

AND EACH BEARING THAT DATE.

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

Adjustable table, G. Zaccome..... 359,340
Alarm. See Belt alarm. Druggist alarm. Railway crossing alarm.
Ambulance spring, Hauser, Jr., & Ritzler..... 359,388
Atomizer, M. F. Sallade..... 359,288
Auger bits, die for making, W. C. Johnson..... 359,338
Automatic gate, J. C. Rock..... 359,404
Awning for windows or doors, Thalheimer & Kantner..... 359,293
Axle and wheel, J. Pettinger..... 359,403
Ball, detonating, S. Armstrong..... 359,490
Band cutter and feeder, O. Anderson..... 359,487
Barium binoxide, making, A. Brin..... 359,423
Basins, device for preventing clogging of catch, L. E. Dingler..... 359,244
Baskets, handle for peach, S. C. Case..... 359,241
Bell, electric, F. B. Wood..... 359,309
Belt alarm, loose, J. Paff..... 359,402
Bench. See Wash bench.
Bicycle, B. Kelsey..... 359,448
Bicycle brake, Hazen & Hildreth..... 359,536
Bin. See Flour and meal bin.
Blackening on ladies' shoes, device for applying, H. M. Wirz..... 359,527
Board. See Stove board.
Boat. See Torpedo boat.
Boat indicator, A. Leith..... 359,511
Bogs, apparatus for cutting, C. E. Patterson..... 359,541
Boiler. See Steam boiler.
Boiler cleaner, A. De Camp..... 359,501
Boiler tube cleaner, C. F. Bower..... 359,383
Book holder, A. Dom..... 359,245
Books, making indexed, E. C. M. Rand..... 359,463
Boring machine, C. McNeal..... 359,270
Boring tool, metal, G. W. Tower..... 359,296
Bottle attachment, J. F. H. Sugg..... 359,412
Bottlestopper, Woodham & Ockenden..... 359,373
Bowling alley, Reisky & Wolff..... 359,542
Box. See Fare box. Letter box. Musical box.
Paper box. Wagon box.
Box or tub fastener, J. H. Burt..... 359,344
Brake. See Bicycle brake. Car brake.
Breastpins, pin tongue for, Hasler & Haberl..... 359,320
Brick mould sanding machine, H. & G. Martin..... 359,267
Brush, H. E. Fowler..... 359,250
Bucket, minnow, C. E. Bateman..... 359,311
Buckle, back band, Garrett & Sanford..... 359,254
Bustle, H. O. Canfield..... 359,240
Bustle, J. Wertz..... 359,302
Caliper gauge, J. Tickell..... 359,295
Can. See Milk can.
Car brake and starter, E. Giroux..... 359,336
Car coupling, J. F. & W. J. Rowley..... 359,577
Car coupling, S. B. Fyler..... 359,253
Car coupling, S. Wells..... 359,481
Car door, J. W. Peters..... 359,281
Car seat, H. S. Hale..... 359,354
Car spring, G. W. Morris..... 359,359
Car starter and brake, Mahan & Hendrix..... 359,366
Car, stock, G. D. Burton..... 359,346
Car, wheel, W. W. Snow..... 359,382
Cars, fare box for street, Wherry & Turman..... 359,482
Carburetor, F. Well..... 359,585
Carding engines, bend for, G. & E. Ashworth..... 359,529
Case. See Document case.
Caster pod, C. V. Pleukharp..... 359,362
Casting ingots, bars, etc., apparatus for, F. H. Daniels..... 359,349
Casting rivets, mould for, J. Whitley..... 359,484
Castings, mould for the production of metallic, J. Whitley..... 359,483
Chain, E. Vieille..... 359,413
Cigar bunching machine, F. C. Smalstig..... 359,473
Cigar tip protector, P. Mish..... 359,358
Clamp for moulder's flasks, D. Frawley..... 359,251
Clasp, W. E. Moore..... 359,459
Cleaner. See Boiler cleaner. Boiler tube cleaner.
Cleat or rope fastener, F. Kruegermann..... 359,538
Cloth cutting machine, P. Howe..... 359,570
Clothes drying frame, R. Orr..... 359,275
Clothes line, J. Cavanagh..... 359,427
Coin counter with automatic locking device, J. L. Townsley..... 359,523
Coloring matter, manufacture of red, A. Romer..... 359,576
Cooler. See Milk cooler.
Copying apparatus for manuscript, R. J. Wallace..... 359,582
Cornstalk cutter, W. Walker..... 359,300
Cotton or hay press, C. D. Neeb..... 359,515
Coupling. See Car coupling. Pipe coupling. Thill coupling. Tire coupling.
Crank wheels, device for applying foot power to, J. C. Clark..... 359,559
Creamer or milk pitcher, H. Wettstein..... 359,304
Crushing and grinding mill, J. F. Winchell..... 359,588
Cuff holder, E. Zoller..... 359,528
Cultivator, J. Chaifant..... 359,242
Cultivator, C. S. Guilkey..... 359,535

Cultivator, A. J. Nelson..... 359,460
Cultivator, J. W. Robinson..... 359,285
Cultivator attachment, H. C. Pratt..... 359,518
Cup. See Oil cup.
Cutter. See Band cutter. Cornstalk cutter.
Desk, L. Smith..... 359,474
Desks, ink well for school, M. S. Smith..... 359,331
Document case or record cabinet, etc., J. C. Lang..... 359,451
Door plate, knocker, and letter receiver, combined, W. A. Moore..... 359,458
Dough, machine for sheeting, J. H. Mitchell..... 359,273
Drill. See Seed drill.
Druggist alarm, M. Toulmin..... 359,581
Dumb waiter, E. M. Foster..... 359,437
Ear muff, A. L. Britton..... 359,425
Eggs, device for turning, S. H. Raymond..... 359,327
Electric circuits, apparatus for testing, A. D. Wheeler..... 359,338
Electric motor, E. P. Clark..... 359,429
Electrode and shield, cautery, D. H. Goodwillie..... 359,606
Elevator. See Sucker rod elevator.
Engine. See Wind engine.
Explosives, primer for igniting, L. Bagger..... 359,491
Fabrics, machine for plicating and packaging, P. H. Watson..... 359,584
Fare box, J. S. Capers..... 359,346
Faucet or cock, W. R. England..... 359,246
Feeder and sifter, combined, J. T. Burkett..... 359,496
Fence, H. Rong..... 359,580
Fence, C. N. Town..... 359,297
Fence post, D. Bowen..... 359,589
Fence post, R. Datesman..... 359,434
Fence post, J. E. Hunt..... 359,257
Fence wire strainer, W. Orr..... 359,464
Fender. See Vehicle fender.
File holder and rack, P. S. Dusenbury..... 359,560
Filter, in sections, cleansing, J. W. Hyatt..... 359,258
Filter, water, A. J. Kaiser..... 359,259
Filtering apparatus, D. Fitz Gerald..... 359,249
Firearm, A. Chuch..... 359,428
Fire escape, Wilcox & Merrill..... 359,526
Fire kindler, R. Miller..... 359,272
Flour and meal bin, portable, T. J. Cox..... 359,247
Frame. See Clothes drying frame.
Frame for pictures, mirrors, etc., F. Damlos..... 359,816
Fruit jar, R. E. King..... 359,449
Gauge. See Caliper gauge. Surface and marking gauge.
Game register, E. Griswold..... 359,562
Garden rake, G. W. Hertzel..... 359,255
Garment supporter, R. H. Sink..... 359,365
Garment supporter, C. Sisson..... 359,366
Garments, elastic gore or section for, J. Kendrick..... 359,336
Gas engines, electric igniter for, N. C. Bassett..... 359,552
Gas, incandescent, C. A. Von Welsbach..... 359,524
Gas, manufacture of, A. Taylor..... 359,335
Gate. See Automatic gate.
Gate, M. B. Mills..... 359,398
Generator. See Steam generator.
Glass beveling machine, T. F. Gilroy..... 359,439
Glass lamps, manufacture of, P. Arbogast..... 359,483
Glass mould, M. L. Blackburn..... 359,553
Glue, machine for cutting, D. Jarves..... 359,391
Governor, engine, E. Verstraete..... 359,299
Graduating machine, G. F. Ballou..... 359,378
Grain binder, Miller & Ellinwood..... 359,271
Grain binder conveyor, W. P. Essig..... 359,247
Grain binding machines, grain adjusting device for, H. J. Case..... 359,426
Grain separator, N. Hollinger..... 359,563
Grain separator and grader, E. A. Mueller..... 359,514
Grinding the scores in tack dies, machine for, A. E. Convers..... 359,533
Gunpowder, E. Schultze..... 359,289
Hair springs to collets, fastening, E. Hunziker..... 359,390
Hame fastener, I. W. & H. L. Bowman..... 359,494
Hame fastener, H. H. Brandes..... 359,422
Handle. See Tool handle.
Harrow, smoother, and seeder, combined, J. M. Poore..... 359,363
Harrow, spring tooth, W. S. Lawrence..... 359,539
Harrow, wheel, J. A. Van Tassel..... 359,478
Harrow, wheel, W. Wilkes..... 359,339
Harvester, cotton, O. T. Bugz..... 359,554
Harvester cutting apparatus, T. S. Houger..... 359,266
Hay drag, W. B. Null..... 359,462
Heating apparatus for buildings, E. N. Gates..... 359,561
Hinge for mirrors, friction, J. F. Buzzell..... 359,555
Hoisting apparatus for mines, T. Poore..... 359,517
Hoisting jack, D. B. Scott..... 359,405
Holdback iron for wagon tongues, A. Smith..... 359,367
Holder. See Book holder. Cuff holder. File holder. Label holder. Rein holder. Spool holder.
Hook. See Snap hook. Suspension hook.
Horse power, J. A. Spencer..... 359,475
Horse powers, lag iron for, H. Moody..... 359,399
Horse rake, J. Dunkin..... 359,584
Hub attaching device, J. Kent..... 359,262
Hydraulic elevator valves, operating mechanism for, N. C. Bassett..... 359,551
Hydrocarbon, process of and apparatus for refining, E. D. Kendall..... 359,357
Indicator. See Boat indicator. Station indicator.
Ingot, compound, E. Wheeler..... 359,337
Iron. See Holdback iron.
Iron beams, fastening objects to, C. B. Axt..... 359,310
Iron, pile for skelp, W. G. Howell..... 359,508
Jack. See Hoisting jack. Lifting jack.
Jar. See Fruit jar.
Joint. See Rail joint.
Knife. See Roller knife.
Knitting machine, circular, J. Byfield..... 359,556
Knitting machines, cam cylinder for, J. B. Paxton..... 359,325
Label holder, J. E. Lathrop..... 359,265
Lace fastening, T. T. Danforth..... 359,438
Lamp, double reservoir, C. H. Denison..... 359,502
Lamp, electric, C. Seal..... 359,328
Lamp, gas, G. H. Ulmann..... 359,370
Lamp or gas heating attachment, C. B. White..... 359,415
Lamp, overhead or ceiling, A. M. Silber..... 359,344
Lamps, adjustable overflow device for, O. J. Heyne..... 359,567
Lamps, overflow device for, O. J. Heyne..... 359,568
Lantern, L. F. Betts..... 359,341
Lath for turning balls, wheels, etc., G. F. Ballou..... 359,380
Lathes, slide, G. F. Ballou..... 359,381
Lathes, drilling fixture for, G. F. Ballou..... 359,375
Lathes, gear cutting device for, G. F. Ballou..... 359,377
Lathes, work clamp for slide, G. F. Ballou..... 359,376
Lathes, work holder for, G. F. Ballou..... 359,379
Lead, manufacture of white, E. V. Gardner..... 359,352
Letter box, T. S. Scoville..... 359,548
Level, spirit, W. C. Thatcher..... 359,580
Lifting jack, P. J. Abbott..... 359,436
Lifting jack, A. A. Strom..... 359,411
Lock. See Nut lock. Permutation lock. Seal lock. Time lock.
Lock, M. S. Otis..... 359,276
Loom, circular, G. Wasserman..... 359,414
Loom shuttle, B. Scarles..... 359,545, 359,546

Lubricant, J. B. C. Barbanson..... 359,418
Lumber, etc., device for binding together, J. T. Barber (r)..... 10,817
Malt drying apparatus, W. S. Plummer..... 359,264
Measuring fabrics and printing the measures thereon, machine for, A. H. Sutton..... 359,368
Measuring textile fabrics, etc., machine for, Sutton & Watson..... 359,579
Measuring textile fabrics, etc., machine for, P. H. Watson..... 359,563
Metal, mechanism for forming ingots, bars, rods, etc., from fluid, F. H. Daniels..... 359,348
Metals, uniting, F. A. Godfrey..... 359,519
Metallic table for machine tools, F. W. Taylor..... 359,369
Milk can, E. Pabst..... 359,401
Milk cooler, H. Kennen..... 359,261
Mill. See Crushing and grinding mill.
Mining machine, B. A. Legr (r)..... 10,618
Mould. See Glass mould.
Mole trap, J. H. Marlin..... 359,454
Mothproofing hair, J. & J. Ruch, Jr..... 359,287
Motor. See Electric motor. Pressure motor.
Mower, lawn, G. M. Williams..... 359,580
Mowing machine attachment, W. S. Fox..... 359,351
Muffler, T. E. Hill..... 359,389
Music leaf turner, J. Herron..... 359,566
Musical box, E. Parr..... 359,278
Musical instrument, automatic, E. Parr..... 359,279
Nail machine, D. C. Stover..... 359,522
Nail machine, wire, H. B. Happe..... 359,564
Nut lock, Dambach & Hannan..... 359,385
Oar, J. Wright..... 359,373
Oil cup, E. Lunkenheimer (r)..... 10,819
Ordinates, apparatus for placing and obtaining the mean value of, J. G. Claud-Mantle..... 359,499
Ore and rock crushing and pulverizing machine, H. Bradford..... 359,495
Oxygen from air, apparatus for obtaining, L. Q. & A. Brin..... 359,424
Pad. See Shoulder pad.
Paper and process for the manufacture thereof, felt, F. Beck..... 359,581
Paper, etc., apparatus for drying, G. L. Jaeger..... 359,446
Paper box, C. W. Elliott..... 359,435
Paper calendaring machine, P. R. Thom..... 359,294
Paper pulp screen, Russell & Cragin..... 359,548, 359,544
Pasting machine, J. R. Watson..... 359,301
Permutation lock, E. O. Daniels..... 359,350
Piano action, T. Cahill..... 359,557
Pipe connection, Jones & Winniatt..... 359,394
Pipe coupling, W. G. Davis..... 359,500
Pipe moulding apparatus, McNeal & Stineruck..... 359,269
Play with rotating gig, G. Fischer..... 359,317
Plow, E. H. Inzer..... 359,321
Plow, T. Pate..... 359,465
Plow, gang, F. M. Hinchman..... 359,356
Pneumatic dispatch tube, electrical, J. F. McLaughlin..... 359,540
Pneumatic dispatch tube systems, carrier for electro, J. F. McLaughlin..... 359,456
Pocket, detachable watch, C. A. Burbank..... 359,343
Post. See Fence post.
Pot. See Tea or coffee pot.
Power. See Horse power.
Press. See Cotton or hay press.
Press and seaming machine, combined, H. Pattinson..... 359,280
Presser foot and attachment holder, combined, J. P. Lavigne..... 359,452
Pressure motor, fluid, G. Westinghouse, Jr..... 359,308
Pressure regulator for water supply mains, D. C. Cregier..... 359,315
Printing machine, oscillating cylinder, J. T. Hawkins..... 359,442
Printing machine, plate, S. F. Millard..... 359,513
Propeller shafts, stern bearing for, J. J. Townsend..... 359,298
Protector. See Cigar tip protector. Sleeve protector.
Pump, D. J. Nysewander..... 359,516
Pump, force, R. Bean..... 359,419
Push button and thermostat, combined, Keffer & McDowell..... 359,260
Rail joint, J. W. Storrs..... 359,521
Railway crossing alarm, S. P. Van Nort..... 359,371
Railway signal, M. W. Long..... 359,512
Railway tie, metallic, T. Gleason..... 359,410
Railway track and truck, W. F. Goodwin..... 359,507
Railways, conduit for traction rope or endless cable, Z. P. Boyer..... 359,421
Railways, crossing for cable, H. H. Lynch..... 359,386
Railways, etc., bridge for elevated, G. H. Pegram..... 359,467
Rake. See Garden rake. Horse rake.
Register. See Game register. Telephone register.
Regulator. See Pressure regulator.
Rein holder, D. Goff..... 359,555
Rim turner, G. A. Kollenberg..... 359,263
Rock drilling machine, combined hand and engine power, J. C. Stevens..... 359,578
Roller knife, W. Weber..... 359,490
Roofs of buildings, protecting, G. F. Gavitt..... 359,318
Rug, E. H. Eisenhart..... 359,503
Safe, bottle, D. Getleson..... 359,438
Sash fastener, F. W. Mix..... 359,274
Saw and planer, combined, H. F. Burkhardt..... 359,497
Sawmill set works, A. B. Landis..... 359,264
Scraper, road, F. W. Hubbard..... 359,537
Screen. See Paper pulp screen.
Seal lock, T. F. Anderson..... 359,488
Seal lock, J. A. Kirby..... 359,450
Seat. See Car seat.
Secondary batteries or accumulators, positive pole plate for, Farbak & Schenck..... 359,248
Seed drill, F. Reyner..... 359,470
Separator. See Grain separator.
Separator, W. L. Card..... 359,498
Sewing machine, J. Keith..... 359,578
Sewing machine tension device, B. C. Bedell..... 359,420
Sewing machines, binding attachment for, C. T. Jones..... 359,572
Sewing machines, welt guide for shoe, E. F. Arnold..... 359,239
Sewing with wire, machine for, L. Hall..... 359,563
Shafts, manufacture of crank, J. B. Stanwood..... 359,290
Shears. See Sheep shears.
Sheep shears, F. Frielinghaus..... 359,252
Shingle and making the same, wooden, S. J. Johnson..... 359,571
Shoelace fastening, H. B. Ten Eyck..... 359,477
Shoulder pad, E. Goldman..... 359,441
Signal. See Railway signal.
Skate fastening, E. H. Barney..... 359,493
Skimmer, telescopic, P. L. Kimball..... 359,510
Sled propeller, F. F. Foster..... 359,504
Sleeve protector, H. Smadbeck..... 359,380
Snap hook, C. H. Smith..... 359,407
Snap hook, A. N. Sperry..... 359,463
Spindle. See Spinning spindle.
Spinning spindle and support therefor, J. Booth..... 359,342
Spool holder, W. P. Clarke..... 359,480
Spool or bobbin, enameled, S. D. Keene..... 359,447
Spring. See Ambulance spring. Car spring.

Squaring, leveling, etc, combination tool for, D. W. Warnock.....	359,372
Stage effects, apparatus for producing, G. W. Davis.....	359,243
Stamps and labels, apparatus for applying postage, G. Phillips.....	359,326
Station indicator, H. L. Shidder.....	359,329
Steam boiler, J. A. Caldwell.....	359,558
Steam generator, J. B. Stanwood.....	359,333
Stethoscope, F. M. Blodgett.....	359,382
Stopper. See Bottle stopper.	
Stove, T. Burkhard.....	359,314
Stove, E. Butler.....	359,532
Stove board, A. I. Griggs.....	359,553
Stovepipe shelf, N. Linsley.....	359,574
Sucker rod elevator, C. C. Stover.....	359,291
Supporter. See Garment supporter.	
Surface and marking gauge, combined, E. Walker.....	359,336
Suspension hook, G. W. McGill.....	359,324
Switch. See Telephone switch.	
Table. See Adjustable table. Metallic table.	
Table, D. Mitchell.....	359,457
Table leaf support, O. Colvin.....	359,432
Table leaf support, Kaufhold & Genter.....	359,322
Tanning and other purposes, treatment of hides and skins for, E. P. Nesbit.....	359,380
Tea or coffee pot, F. C. Taylor.....	359,232
Telegraph system, police, Mehren & Carroll.....	359,575
Telephone cabinet, C. Balloch.....	359,492
Telephone register, C. A. Wittenberg.....	359,307
Telephone switch, C. A. Hitchcock.....	359,356
Telephone toll collectors, return attachment for, C. Wittenberg.....	359,306
Temperature, electrical apparatus for regulating, C. W. Johnson.....	359,392
Thill coupling, I. C. Hart.....	359,387
Tie. See Railway tie.	
Time lock, C. H. Shaffer.....	359,549
Tire bender, H. B. Keiper.....	359,509
Tire coupling, wagon, J. J. Pinkham.....	359,361
Toaster, T. W. Ball.....	359,417
Toboggan, W. G. Shepard.....	359,406
Tool handle, G. D. Mosher.....	359,400
Torpedo boat, electric, H. M. Bennett.....	359,313
Trap. See Mole trap.	
Trellis, C. Schwend.....	359,547
Tube. See Pneumatic dispatch tube.	
Tubes, screw cap for collapsible, H. M. Wirz.....	359,305
Type writing machines, copy holder for, A. S. Pattison.....	359,466
Umbrella, E. J. Colby.....	359,431
Urinal, J. H. Stevens.....	359,834
Valve, tubular well, N. E. Hildreth.....	359,444
Vehicle, C. L. Peirce.....	359,488
Vehicle fender, R. M. Stivers.....	359,476
Vehicle wheel, W. C. Hodnett.....	359,445
Vehicles, mud fender for, G. W. Atkins.....	359,530
Wagon box, F. Fisher.....	359,436
Warp threads, machine for drawing in, L. P. Sherman.....	359,471
Wash bench, folding, F. Hanson.....	359,566
Washing machine, J. W. Roberts.....	359,519
Washing machine, J. M. Shoaf.....	359,472
Washing machine, G. H. Waldo.....	359,479
Washing purposes, hand rubber for, McGovern & Hewitt.....	359,268
Watch case pendant, E. F. Margot.....	359,897
Watch pinion cutting machine, E. A. Marsh.....	359,323
Water closets, flushing apparatus for, W. H. Newell.....	359,461
Weighing machine, automatic grain, Weber & Harrison.....	359,525
Wheat and analogous grain, machine for reducing, Wilcox & Phillips.....	359,536
Wheel. See Car wheel. Vehicle wheel. Wind wheel.	
Whip socket, G. P. Rose.....	359,286
Wind engine, H. J. Philpott.....	359,282
Wind wheel, S. H. Heatwole.....	359,443
Winding bobbins, attachment for, J. Pappa.....	359,277
Window, J. S. Philstrom.....	359,363
Wire barbing machine, O. J. Ziegler.....	359,435
Wire fastener, W. Orr.....	359,463
Wire, machine for automatically forming rings from, J. Add.....	359,416
Wire rope machine, J. B. Stone.....	359,409
Wire ropes, manufacturing, J. B. Stone.....	359,410
Wire stretcher, H. M. Beckley.....	359,312
Wood, composition for preserving, Briseley & Finch.....	359,384
Woodworking machine, A. D. Linn.....	359,453

DESIGNS.

Ash receiver, J. G. Lyon.....	17,181
Collar, detachable, L. Robinson.....	17,188
Corsets, ornamentation of, C. A. Griswold.....	17,179
Dish, T. B. Atterbury.....	17,132
Hat rack, hall, T. Hertwig.....	17,180
Knit fabric, J. H. Osborne.....	17,193
Moulding, F. Mankey.....	17,182
Panel, F. Mankey.....	17,183
Pulley, R. Osterhorn.....	17,187
Railway rail, Wharton, Jr., & Samuel.....	17,190
Rug, A. Petzold.....	17,196
Steam radiator, hot closet, C. Rohlf.....	17,197
Tableware, J. E. Miller.....	17,186
Trimming, H. Rosenthal.....	17,189

TRADE MARKS.

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Box bands, corrugated steel, J. K. Barton.....	14,163
Corsets, I. & S. H. Rosenberg.....	14,171
Dermal emollient, A. G. Wilbur & Co.....	14,174
Finger rings, Sinner & Sherrill.....	14,172
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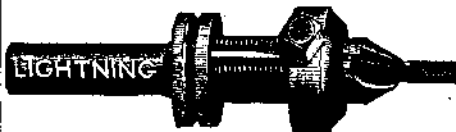
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