

ENGINEERING INVENTIONS.

A car coupling has been patented by Mr. Jacob Rhule, of Pittsburg, Pa. This invention covers an improvement on a former patented invention of the same inventor, to adapt the coupling for use with drag heads of different lengths, and to strengthen and stiffen the draught plate and the angular brace by which it is sustained.

A guide bar for stub switches has been patented by Mr. Frank Nemacheck, of Appleton, Wis. The guide bar has a cylindrical body, with flattened apertured ends, two of them being employed with each switch rail, and so attached that the rails will be positively guided in alignment with the main rails, and the switch be prevented from clogging.

A locomotive boiler has been patented by Mr. Middleton G. Fuller, of Ten Mile Hill, S. C. This invention embraces a live steam pipe for each engine, having a throttle valve, the valves being detachably connected to a single operating lever, so that with one throttle valve the engineer is able to supply steam simultaneously to both engines, or to only one when the other engine is disabled.

AGRICULTURAL INVENTIONS.

A double shovel plow has been patented by Mr. William R. Craig, of Columbia, Tenn. This invention covers a novel construction and combination of parts constituting a double shovel plow not liable to become choked with rubbish, and of which the handles can be readily adjusted at any desired height.

A lever for sulky plows has been patented by Mr. Earl W. Drake, of Poynette, Wis. Combined with a main or lifting lever is a spring-actuated auxiliary lever pivoted to the main lever and adapted to carry the plow, whereby it is designed a sulky plow will do as good or better work in stony ground than can be done with the ordinary walking plow.

MISCELLANEOUS INVENTIONS.

A sash fastener has been patented by Mr. John F. Pool, of Mount Carmel, Ill. The invention provides for the use of catch locks on the sashes and book catches on the window frame, making a fastening which is automatic, and dispenses with the necessity of sash weights and cords.

A gate hinge has been patented by Mr. James H. Davis, of Danville, Ky. It is a hinge adapted for a gate to be opened by a person approaching it from either side, the invention covering certain novel features of construction, making such hinges capable of more general use.

A flower stand has been patented by M. Herbert L. Starks, of Preston, Conn. This invention covers a novel construction of stand for flowers or house plants, designed to set before a window and made to revolve for more conveniently caring for the plants, the shelves being held to rotate in a free and level manner.

A combination bracket washstand has been patented by Messrs. Gayger D. Tolman and Lorenzo D. Roberts, of Shawano, Wis. It has a folding wash bowl support, consisting of a rod bent to form a circle and secured to a sleeve, with a removable pitcher shelf, and other novel features, making supports for various toilet articles.

A kitchen table and cabinet have been patented by Mary S. Brack, of El Paso, Texas. The cabinet is attached to one end of the table, and forms an integral part thereof, the whole being designed as a piece of furniture with which invalids or weak persons may accomplish considerable work without inconvenience or fatigue.

A window screen has been patented by Mr. George H. Gould, of West Lebanon, Me. This invention covers certain novel features of construction and combinations of parts in a simple and inexpensive screen, which may be quickly applied to or removed from a window frame, and is adapted to fit windows of different widths and heights.

A flash light signal has been patented by Mr. William H. Thompson, of Richmond, Va. This invention is designed to provide a simple and efficient visual signaling apparatus for use for fire alarm or police signals, and consists in a novel construction and arrangement of parts in connection with operative electrical devices.

A vehicle forms the subject of a patent issued to Mr. Wilbur H. Weston, of Newburg, N. Y. The invention consists of a carriage body having the front part of its sides inclined inward, and doors fitted on the inclined parts, making an improved vehicle, permitting easy ingress and egress, without danger of soiling the dress on the carriage wheels.

A mast hoop has been patented by Mr. Thomas Clapham, of Roslyn, N. Y. It is a detachable open mast hoop, consisting of a spring-metal rod bent upon itself to form an approximately open circle or hoop, making a mast which can be readily attached to or detached from a sail, and the latter be conveniently unbent or bent.

A blanket clasp has been patented by Mr. Donald Walker, of Caledonia, N. Y. It is made of a piece of spring wire bent upon itself in novel form, to be quickly applied to a blanket when in position over the harness, and is designed to effectively retain the blanket in contact with the harness, without piercing or otherwise injuring either.

A mode of securing the fastenings of drilling tools has been patented by Mr. John H. Whaling, of Kingman, Kansas. This invention covers an improved form of coupling designed to prevent the accidental separation or disconnection of the tool or drill from its shaft or rod, the coupling being capable of resisting the great pressure or vibrations to which such tools are subjected.

A balance staff for watches has been patented by Mr. Charles Morlet, of Hoboken, N. J. It

consists of a spindle having a shoulder or collar and with a screw thread, a roller screwing on the threaded part of the spindle and against the hub or cross bar of the balance wheel, making a simple and durable spindle for carrying the balance wheel, and facilitating an accurate and quick adjustment or removal thereof.

A combined artificial flower and perfume receptacle has been patented by Mr. Christopher Watson, of New York City. Any suitable form of bottle serves as a support for the flower structure, the petals being suitably arranged and secured by paste or glue to the sides or neck of the bottle, there being also a wrapping around the lower portion of the bottle, with moss-like fiber applied over the wrapping.

A propeller has been patented by Mr. Louis Greget, of New York City. The vessel is constructed with twin hulls, suitably spaced, combined with two series of paddles operated alternately, each series by two crank shafts, the blades of the propellers having a pitch designed to obviate back pressure, and the construction being calculated to give a high rate of speed.

A permutation lock has been patented by Messrs. Conrad A. and Svend E. Johannesen, of Erie, Pa. Combined with two dials and tumblers arranged in connection therewith, a spring plate and ratchet are arranged between the lock case and the outer dial, and an inversely arranged spring pawl plate and ratchet between the dials, with other novel features, the lock being especially applicable for use on post office boxes, as well as safes and doors.

A combined water tower, extension ladder, and fire escape has been patented by Messrs. Achilles Kalinski, Edwin Crippen, and Marcus T. Cashen, of New Orleans, La. It has telescoping pipes which carry ladders, the whole, when at place of operation, to be operated by hydraulic or pneumatic pressure or by chemical gas, the apparatus to be mounted on a truck and adapted to be run quickly to a fire either by horse or steam power.

SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN BUILDING EDITION.

AUGUST NUMBER.—(No. 34.)

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

- Elegant plate in colors of a dwelling at Glen Ridge, N. J., with floor plans, sheet of details, etc. Cost, eight thousand five hundred dollars.
- Plate in colors of a fire engine house of moderate cost. Details and floor plans.
- Perspective view and floor plans of a residence at Black Rock, Conn. Cost, six thousand dollars.
- Sketch of an uptown block of attractive residences, New York City.
- Floor plans and perspective elevation of two Queen Anne cottages, lately completed at Bath Beach, Long Island. Cost, four thousand dollars each.
- Design and floor plans for a two thousand dollar house lately built at Bridgeport, Conn.
- Perspective and floor plans of an attractive residence lately built at Bridgeport, Conn. Cost, two thousand eight hundred dollars.
- A six hundred dollar cottage built lately at Bridgeport, Conn. Perspective and floor plans.
- Plans and perspective view of a seaside cottage lately erected at Bath Beach, Long Island. Cost, three thousand five hundred dollars.
- Engraving and floor plans of a neat little double house lately erected at Bridgeport, Conn., costing one thousand eight hundred dollars.
- A country residence in France. Perspective and plans.
- Engraving of the palatial stables of Mr. D. Edgar Crouse, Syracuse, N. Y.
- Plans and perspective for a carriage house, barn, etc. Cost, two thousand two hundred dollars.
- Elevation and floor plans for a double house costing complete four thousand two hundred dollars.
- New Congregational Church at Beckenham, Kent, England.
- Page of designs of New England residences.

Miscellaneous contents: Vegetable glue.—Fourth of July fires.—The slag water closet.—Rust in water pipes.—Laying out the joints of an elliptical vault, illustrated.—The tulip and other trees.—Architectural school houses.—Hanging baskets.—To estimate the power of a stream.—Manufacturing progress in the South.—How to grow quinces.—Mixed wheats.—New ceiling for the Assembly chamber of the New York State Capitol.—Transplanting large pines.—Galveston artesian wells.—Poisonous wall paper and carpets.—The testing of Portland cement.—The humming bird.—Manila hemp in plaster.—A perfect hen house.—Examination questions for plumbers.—Road improvements.—The "Patten" metallic shingles and siding plates, illustrated.—The pool of Bethesda.—Carl Pfeiffer.—Creosote wood preserving stains.—House heating by hot water circulation, illustrated.—Ohio's largest poplar.—Mortar.—Irrigating wheels.—Liquid fish glue.

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Notes & Queries

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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.

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Minerals sent for examination should be distinctly marked or labeled.

(1) Locomotive Mechanic asks: 1. Will you kindly inform me what is an easy and very cheap mode of separating and collecting in quite large quantities, the oxygen from atmospheric air into covered vats or other suitable holders, and so that the remaining nitrogen, etc., may pass off into the circumambient

atmosphere, or, if desired, into another holder? A. No such method is known. See Brin's process, described in SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN SUPPLEMENT, No. 623, which we can send you for ten cents. 2. If the covered holder, thus containing the pure oxygen gas only, be sunk or rests in a tank of water, in same manner as illuminating gas in an ordinary holder, which latter rises or falls when the gas fills or empties it through pipes, would the oxygen in question escape through the water in the tank? A. Not to any appreciable extent. 3. What is the specific gravity of oxygen gas, and of atmospheric air, and of common illuminating gas, and of water, fresh and salt, respectively? A. Oxygen gas 1.10563, air the standard for gases 1.000, illuminating gas 0.425 to 0.700. Water is generally taken as a new standard for solids and liquids and is called 1,000. Then salt water of the ocean would be about 1.0274. Water is 816 times heavier than air.

(2) S. H. B. writes: I want to make transparent some thin bond paper to use for tracing drawings; is there any liquid that will do the work and not leave the paper in a greasy state? A. Equal quantities of turpentine and Canada balsam or mastic varnish, or a mixture of spirits of turpentine 6 parts, resin 1 part, boiled nut oil 1 part, by weight, may be used to make tracing paper by application with a brush or sponge.

(3) S. O. N. asks how to make platinum sponge and platinum black, and can they be purchased in market, and where. A. Platinum sponge is made by adding to a solution of platinum chloride some chloride of ammonium and an equal volume of alcohol. The precipitate is filtered out and ignited. Platinum black is made by warming platinum chloride with caustic potash and alcohol, or by dipping the platinum solution into a boiling mixture of three volumes glycerine and two volumes caustic potash solution (sp. gr. 1.08). Dealers in chemicals can supply both forms of platinum.

(4) H. P. B. asks for a formula for silvering the inside of small glass balls. A. Melt together ½ ounce lead and ¼ ounce tin, immediately add ¼ ounce bismuth, skim off the dross, remove from fire, and before it cools add 5 ounces mercury, and stir well. Keep in a clean glass. To use strain through a linen rag and pour into globe, and move around so as to coat its whole surface. The globe must be perfectly clean. Or, make an alloy of 3 ounces lead, 2 ounces tin, and 5 ounces bismuth. Put into globe and melt over a spirit lamp, moving the globe in all directions so as to coat the entire surface. Finally pour off the excess.

(5) F. C. L. asks: 1. In what portion of the United States are the common dust or heat whirlwinds most numerous? Where do they attain their largest size, and how large? A. In Kansas and Colorado they are most numerous and probably of greatest severity. 2. Do they ever become of dangerous or destructive strength? A. They are very destructive both of life and property. 3. Have any photographs of our tornadoes ever been taken, and if so where can they be obtained? A. For full treatment of the subject and reproductions of instantaneous photographs of tornadoes, we refer you to John P. Finley's most interesting book on "Tornadoes," which we can send you for \$1.

(6) W. H.—Beeswax alone may be used for polishing handles, etc., in the lathe. It may be tempered to any degree of softness by heating with turpentine. This must be done with great care to avoid a conflagration.

(7) H. P. R. asks for a recipe for a cement to use in fastening the glass bottom in a photographer's developing dish, one that will withstand the action of chemicals. A. Use sealing wax, melted over the joints with a hot iron, and apply the glass hot.

(8) R. C. says he has negatives which have begun to crystallize. Others have an olive green color in the shadows. The crystallization is due to hyposulphite in the film, which has not been sufficiently washed out. Wash the plates in cool changing water for an hour. The olive green color may arise from the use of an old fixing bath or in not sufficiently washing out the developer. Try soaking the plates in the following:

Alum	2 oz.
Citric acid	1 oz.
Water	10 oz.

for about five or ten minutes. It may clear the shadows.

(9) E. C. R. asks: 1. If the speed of an armature is increased above its critical speed, does the current increase in quantity as well as tension? Which the most? A. The current increases in tension; its increase in quantity follows the same ratio. 2. What is the horse power of the S. E. motor, using 8 cells, plates 5 x 7? A. About one-thirtieth horse power. 3. Can I make the motor do twice as much work by supplying it with twice as many amperes of current? A. Yes, provided you do not overheat the wires. 4. I have an induction coil composed of a bundle of (No. 18 soft iron) 5½ inches long and ½ inch in diameter, which is surrounded by 4 layers of C. C. No. 22. The secondary is of 18 layers, 10 of No. 32 and 8 of No. 38, about 4,000 feet in all. The coil is 1½ inches in diameter. It is wound carefully with layers of shellac between each layer of wire. Would you please inform me from these data what size spark I can get from it? Also whether a condenser increases the size of the spark? A. The condenser increases the size of the sparks. You should get a spark ¼ to ½ inch in length. Use about 1 square foot of tin foil in your condenser. It will not be dangerous. 5. If in using the S. E. motor as a dynamo, I should turn the armature at the rate that 16 cells should turn it as a motor, would it give the quantity of current that 8 cells of the same size would give if I should use the same machine for both purposes? A. There is no necessary relation between the speeds when used as a motor and generator.

(10) F. M. D. writes: 1. I have a bicromate battery of six cells, the carbon plates are 2 x 5 in. and zincs are the same size, how large an incandescent lamp ought it to run? A. About 4 candle power. 2. Can I charge a storage battery with this battery? A. Yes. 3. Please describe how to make a

storage battery in as simple language as possible, with dimensions of lead plates, and the time necessary to charge it.

(11) C. W. asks for a recipe for making substitute for white wine vinegar, will esteem it a favor.

(12) H. Poe asks for a composition for picture frames. A. Various formulae are used. We give two: 1. Seven pounds glue are boiled in 3 1/2 pints water...

(13) J. H. asks: 1. To what extent must I enlarge the motor described in SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN SUPPLEMENT, No. 641, to run a small skiff, also what battery to use?

(14) J. L., Jr., asks what the specific gravity of water in a vacuum is. A. The specific gravity of water is the standard for solids and liquids and is 1.000.

(15) A. J. W. writes: I want to know of some substance that is a complete insulator of the magnetic current, such if placed between the poles of a magnet and the armature, will not itself be attracted to the magnet nor permit the armature to be.

(16) J. B. H. writes: I have been troubled lately by accumulation of lime from water passing through water front in kitchen range. The clogging is so serious that sufficient pressure was made twice to rupture inch lead pipe.

(17) A. S.—The observed phenomenon was not a rainbow. The colored circle around the moon as seen when light fleecy or cirrus clouds are passing is properly called a halo, when very close a corona.

(18) F. T. R. asks: Which will produce the most horse power—two engines 12 inches in diameter and 12 inches stroke, or one engine 15 1/4 inches diameter 17 inches stroke, all conditions being equal?

(19) T. E. & S. ask: What is the proper speed for a sixty inch circular saw to cut 15,000 feet of lumber per ten hours? A. The saw should have a speed of 600 revolutions per minute, for best effect.

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.

INDEX OF INVENTIONS

For which Letters Patent of the United States were Granted August 14, 1888, AND EACH BEARING THAT DATE.

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

Album with separable leaves, photographic, H. A. M. Dittmar..... 387,629

Aluminum bronze and other alloys, preparing, P. Heroult..... 387,876
Armor plates, etc., hardening and tempering, A. Evrard..... 387,712
Automatically-closing can, G. A. Poole..... 387,959, 387,960
Axle bearing, D. E. Hull..... 387,719
Axle washer, automatic, C. M. Hubbard..... 387,888
Axles, sand band and clip for vehicle, N. S. Ketchum..... 387,646
Back band hook, E. G. Bennett..... 387,849
Baling press, H. W. Schwarzburg et al..... 387,923
Barrels, device for venting, Nicklas & Beyer..... 387,902
Basket, fruit, J. H. Marvil..... 387,895
Basket, provision, J. Goldsmith..... 387,639
Batteries, apparatus for charging and discharging secondary, M. Pfatischer..... 387,988
Batteries, electrolyte for galvanic, D. H. Fitch..... 387,679
Battery. See Galvanic battery.
Bearing for oscillating disks, crank, J. Thomson..... 387,829
Beating engine, C. Aitchison..... 387,840
Bed bottom, spring, A. Huber..... 387,787
Bessemer converters, apparatus for introducing sand or other powdered or granulated substances into, J. J. Fronheiser..... 387,952
Billiard tally, E. D. Waterbury..... 388,006
Blanket clasp, D. Walker..... 387,834
Block. See Carriage top prop block.
Blotter, roller, Campbell & Shaw..... 387,968
Board. See Multiple switch board.
Boiler. See Locomotive boiler. Steam boiler.
Boiler, Orewiler & Larcomb..... 387,805
Bolting reel, G. A. Gilbert..... 387,872
Book, T. C. Ranshaw..... 387,917, 387,918
Boots or shoes, staple for, E. H. Buckley..... 387,854
Box. See Tobacco box.
Brake. See Car brake.
Bridge bars, upsetting, F. H. Smith..... 387,824
Bridge, draw, W. J. Briggs..... 387,708, 387,852
Brush for washing tumblers, etc., revolving, J. M. Mungiven..... 387,728
Bucket, conveyer, F. A. Lockwood..... 387,649
Bucket, feed, A. M. Smith..... 387,821
Buckle, F. W. Hoffmann..... 387,881
Bugs, cultivator attachment for gathering potato, J. Hunt..... 387,720
Buildings, heating and ventilating, W. N. Heaton Burner. See Gas burner.
Calendar, H. S. Hack..... 387,784
Can. See Automatically closing can.
Can heading machine, J. G. Hodgson..... 387,880
Car brake, A. Reese..... 387,695
Car coupling, W. R. Chadsey..... 387,766
Car coupling, G. W. Pero..... 387,916
Car coupling, J. Rhule..... 387,999
Car, dumping, Barber & Finigan..... 387,618
Car heater, R. Whelan..... 387,937
Car heater, railway, Lanning & Young..... 387,956
Car heating, system of, C. L. Kline..... 387,722
Car motor, railway, W. M. McDougall..... 387,726
Car mover, L. B. Gifford..... 387,871
Car starter, J. H. Parmelee..... 387,807
Car starter, J. H. Parmelee..... 387,914
Car wheel, L. M. Bullitt..... 387,855
Car wheel, W. G. Richards..... 387,813
Cars, cable grip for railway, J. H. Pendleton..... 387,906
Cars, equalizing device for, H. J. Tate..... 387,827
Car, grip and brake gear of cable tram, N. H. Richards..... 387,920
Cars, grip for cable railway, J. H. Pendleton, 387,911, 387,912
Cars on cable railways, attachment for, J. H. Pendleton..... 387,990
Carpet fastener, R. W. Howerton..... 387,882
Carpet stretcher, J. Story..... 387,990
Carriage top prop block, A. A. Lines..... 387,898
Carrier. See Endless carrier.
Cart, dump, Bex & Heunsch..... 387,850
Cart, road, J. G. Gay..... 387,637
Cartridge capping and decapping implement, W. M. Farrow..... 387,868
Cartridge shells, making, H. S. Maxim..... 387,651
Cartridges, percussion cap for gun, W. Lorenz..... 387,723
Case. See Organ case.
Casting beam blanks, mould for, E. M. Butz..... 387,784
Casting teeth of diamond saws, mould for, W. F. Myer..... 387,986
Casting the teeth of diamond saws, mould for, T. A. Jackson..... 387,644
Centering machine, S. B. Minnich..... 387,901
Centrifugal machine, T. H. Muller..... 387,901
Chain, detachable, J. F. McCreary..... 387,680
Charcoal, apparatus for the manufacture of, J. Scherffius..... 387,817
Check hook, J. S. Matchette..... 387,883
Check row machines, attaching device for, L. Scofield..... 387,819
Chimney cowl, H. Heisel..... 387,832
Cigar mould, C. F. T. Melzer..... 387,796
Clamp. See Paper hanging clamp.
Clasp. See Blanket clasp. Parcel clasp. Pocket book clasp.
Cleaner. See Seed cotton cleaner.
Clock synchronizing system, electric, C. J. Hexamer..... 387,974
Clock system, electric, Warner & Bennett..... 387,704
Clocks, circuit closer for electric, C. D. Warner..... 387,703
Closet. See Water closet.
Cloth, machine for beelting, D. Stewart..... 387,749
Clothes rack, D. K. Barnhart..... 387,758
Clutch, friction, J. C. Potts..... 387,810
Comb lid, J. D. Ripson..... 387,921
Combined gauge and square, E. K. Beckwith..... 387,966
Combustion and extinguishing sparks, promoting, R. H. Coleman..... 387,623
Conveyer, J. F. Simmons..... 387,820
Copy holder, E. A. Bennett..... 387,706
Core drill, J. F. Gourley et al..... 387,680
Corn husker, T. H. Mehring..... 387,795, 387,985
Corset, L. Weed..... 387,753
Coupling. See Hose coupling. Thill coupling. Vacuum apparatus coupling.
Crimping tongs, L. L. Sagendorph..... 387,658
Cuff, apparel, W. Kahler..... 387,700
Cultivator, S. Draper..... 387,778
Cultivator, C. A. Swearingen..... 387,751
Cultivator and harrow, H. G. Cady..... 387,856
Cultivator, orchard and vineyard, G. W. Campbell..... 387,765
Cup. See Oil cup.
Cuspidor, F. B. Clench..... 387,622
Cutter. See Paper cutter.
Cutter head, S. J. Shimer..... 387,925
Cutter heads, tool holder for, S. J. Shimer..... 387,924
Dental plugger, D. D. Peabody..... 387,855
Digger. See Post hole digger.
Distance instrument, J. B. Faucette..... 387,633
Door, W. A. Schussmann..... 387,688
Door check, W. D. Scarborough..... 387,735
Door mat, Fischer & Ewald..... 387,678
Door mat, W. Smith..... 387,928
Doors, device for hanging, W. A. Schussmann..... 387,697
Draught regulating device for plows and cultivators, A. Lyon..... 387,689

Drier, W. McPherson..... 387,652
Drill. See Core drill.
Drum, heating, I. H. Fry..... 387,715
Drum, heating, J. J. Sullivan..... 387,750
Drum, winding or driving, Diescher & McGill..... 387,775
Dust collector, J. S. Ash..... 387,617
Electric currents, measuring alternating, O. B. Shallenberger..... 388,004
Electric currents, meter for alternating, O. B. Shallenberger..... 388,003
Electric cut-out, J. A. Powers..... 387,732
Electric machines, regulator for dynamo, Buckingham & Lemp..... 387,853
Electric motor, B. A. Fiske..... 387,714
Elevator. See Water elevator.
End gate, F. Selle..... 388,002
Endless carrier, A. L. Middleton..... 387,727
Engine. See Beating engine.
Exercising machine, C. M. Bartholomew..... 387,845
Extractor. See Lemon juice extractor.
Eye bar upsetting apparatus, F. H. Smith..... 387,822
Eye bar upsetting machine, F. H. Smith..... 387,823
Eye, face, and lung protector, P. Baggerly..... 387,843
Eye protector, A. P. Cole..... 387,703
Feather renovator and sorter, H. O. Mooney..... 387,800
Feed rack, G. W. Light..... 387,891, 387,892
Feed water heater and filter, P. Rohan..... 387,696
Fence machine, W. A. Clary..... 387,860
Fence stay binder, wire, Newbanks & Shvilar..... 387,691
Filter, centrifugal, R. L. De Lisser..... 387,865
Fire escape, A. F. Bedell..... 387,619
Fire escape, W. J. Debus..... 387,772
Fire escape, rope, R. P. Lovejoy..... 387,650
Fire extinguishing compound, E. G. Penrose et al..... 387,915
Flash light signal, W. H. Thompson..... 387,932
Flour stand, H. L. Starks..... 387,825
Folder, sheet metal, M. J. Stark..... 387,746
Frame. See Picture frame.
Furnace. See Glass smelting furnace. Hydrocarbon furnace.
Gauge. See Combined gauge. Mercury pressure gauge.
Galvanic battery, E. M. Hewett..... 387,642, 387,643
Galvanic battery, G. T. Woods..... 387,839
Galvanic battery jar, B. Overlack..... 387,654
Garment stays, pocket for, L. Moschowitz..... 387,958
Gas burner, regenerative, J. W. Baker..... 387,844
Gas, manufacturing, G. S. Dwight..... 387,676
Gate. See End gate. Hatchway gate.
Gate, Park & Sanders..... 387,730
Gearing, F. J. Sprague..... 387,745
Geographical globes, apparatus for facilitating the reading of, Moreon & Durand..... 387,967
Glass smelting furnace and regenerator, Schlachter & Heintz..... 387,818
Glue, can for liquid, C. M. Martin..... 387,982
Grain separator, E. W. Flagg..... 387,869
Grinding machine, F. C. Hall..... 387,874
Harvester, corn, W. A. Conner..... 387,862
Harvesters, header attachment for, H. Bryan..... 387,763
Hatchway gate, elevator, Nickum & Bunker..... 387,653
Hat trimming machine, S. T. Newman..... 387,692
Hay press, A. Veilleux..... 387,867
Hay stacker, J. J. Wagaman..... 387,934
Heater. See Car heater. Feed water heater.
Hide scraping machine, A. Ott..... 387,908
Hinge, gate, J. H. Davis..... 387,771
Hoe, J. N. Parker..... 387,906
Hoisting heavy weights, machine for, M. V. B. Davis..... 387,636
Hoisting machine, Long & Atchley..... 387,687
Holdback, vehicle, E. Walrath..... 387,935
Holder. See Copy holder. Paper bag holder. Pen holder. Rein holder. Shade holder. Stovepipe holder.
Hook. See Back band hook. Check hook. Hoop. See Mast hoop.
Horse detaching device, A. T. Teakles..... 387,684
Horse power, G. E. Burt..... 387,945
Hose coupling, J. Miller..... 387,899
Houses, apparatus for moving, F. B. Duffey..... 387,630
Houses, portable cooling apparatus for, R. F. Humiston..... 387,954
Hub boring machine, F. B. Deming..... 387,773
Hydrocarbon furnace, B. A. Moody..... 387,799
Ice shaving machine, C. C. Clawson..... 387,861
Incubator, W. P. Shepard..... 387,742
Iron. See Sad iron.
Jack. See Wagon jack.
Jar. See Galvanic battery jar.
Jar caps, machine for securing linings to, F. W. Perry..... 387,808
Jar fastener, T. B. Howe..... 387,683
Kitchen table and cabinet, M. S. Brack..... 387,760
Knitting machines, stop mechanism for, M. C. Yarwood..... 387,672
Lamp, F. Meyrose..... 387,897
Lamp, Argand, L. J. Atwood..... 387,756
Lamp for lighthouses, oil, J. R. Wigham..... 387,939
Lamp, reservoir, Evans & Ross..... 387,361
Lantern, J. H. Burrell, Jr..... 387,944
Lantern, W. W. Hutchins..... 387,976
Lantern, rotatable signal, G. Madden..... 387,980
Lantern, tubular, F. Dietz..... 387,970
Lasting machine, Sinning & Avery..... 387,926
Lathing, metallic, B. Scarles..... 387,740
Lemon juice extractor, E. Baltzley..... 387,942
Lifter. See Pie plate lifter.
Liquid mixer, Fulton & Cornelius..... 387,634
Lock. See Permutation lock.
Lock, H. Van Hoenbergh..... 387,833
Locomotive boiler, M. G. Fuller..... 387,780
Locomotive coupler, A. P. Massey..... 387,725
Locomotive feed pipes, cleaning strainers of, J. M. Wallis..... 387,668
Looms, shuttle and operating device therefor for narrow ware, Cooke & Botomley..... 387,863
Looms, weft fork for, I. Jackson..... 387,788
Mast hoop, T. Clapham..... 387,767
Mat. See Door mat.
Mat, E. R. Landon..... 387,979
Measuring machine, coin released height, N. W. Hartwell..... 387,717
Mercury pressure gauge, F. T. Sutley..... 387,663
Meter. See Water meter.
Metal bars, machine for straightening, grinding, and polishing, J. Farmer..... 387,971
Metal hanging machine, J. Tetlow..... 387,665
Middlings purifier, J. Huxtable..... 387,955
Middlings purifier, V. Monnier..... 387,798
Molasses cups, hinged cover for, A. Taplin..... 387,826
Mould. See Cigar mould.
Moulding machine, T. B. Harkins..... 387,716
Mortars, pestle for, J. D. Belton..... 387,847
Motor. See Car motor. Electric motor.
Multiple switch board, M. G. Kellogg..... 387,645, 387,888 to 387,890
Music leaf turner, L. Bernhard..... 387,707
Musical instrument, mechanical, M. Gally..... 387,656
Oil cup for burning crude petroleum oil, R. W. Smith..... 387,927
Oil in stoves, etc., apparatus for vaporizing and burning, C. A. Weirs..... 387,669

Oils, device for burning crude petroleum and other, J. T. Rader..... 387,811
Ore concentrators, belt or endless apron for, I. A. Woodbury..... 387,964
Organ case, C. H. Hubbell..... 387,884
Organs, pneumatic action for, I. Bassett..... 387,846
Package for containing and displaying merchandise, J. E. Cowles..... 387,769
Packing for piston rods, C. W. Mills..... 387,900
Paper bag holder, W. M. Nix..... 387,729
Paper boxes, machine for making and printing tubes or shucks for, G. M. Griswold..... 387,953
Paper cutter, G. H. Clarke..... 387,612
Paper finishing roll, J. D. Pickles..... 387,693
Paper hanging clamp, J. F. McAfee..... 387,792
Parcel clasp, W. S. Rock..... 387,737
Passenger mileage recorder, S. M. West..... 387,938
Pavements, laying artificial, J. W. Mack r'ght..... 387,724
Pen holder, reservoir, I. Leutner..... 387,886
Permutation lock, C. A. & S. E. Johannesen..... 387,789
Photographic print register, J. W. Alderige..... 387,841
Picture frame, E. Erschell..... 387,779
Pictures, etc., line or cord for suspending, G. Hookham..... 387,975
Pie plate lifter, A. L. Pomeroy..... 387,731
Pipe welding ball, A. M. Saunders..... 387,759
Pipes, machine for making cement, V. Hepp..... 387,641
Planing machine, wood, J. Baillie..... 387,757
Plastic material while planing them into sheets, securing blocks of, F. Curtis..... 387,947
Plow attachment, J. B. Tension..... 387,699
Plow, double shovel, W. R. Craig..... 387,770
Plows, clearing attachment for, M. B. Sutley..... 387,962
Plows, lever for sulky, E. W. Drake..... 387,777
Plumbers' traps, return vent protector for, W. B. Ryan..... 387,961
Pocketbook clasp, S. Zinn..... 387,965
Pole tip, vehicle, F. A. Aldrich..... 387,754
Post for veranda railings, J. G. Schahfer..... 387,660
Post hole digger, W. Heaton..... 387,640
Power. See Horse power.
Press. See Baling press. Hay press. Stamping or embossing press.
Pressure or differences of pressure, apparatus for indicating and recording, C. Herschel..... 387,877
Printer's ink roller, F. E. Lang..... 387,647
Printing machines, sheet delivery apparatus for, C. B. Cottrell..... 387,768
Propeller, L. Greget..... 387,783
Propeller for vessels, H. B. Allison..... 387,616
Propeller, screw, T. T. Woodruff..... 387,671
Protector. See Eye protector. Eye, face, and lung protector.
Pumps, spring motor for, Reed & Frazee..... 387,736
Punching machine, check, J. N. Williams..... 387,705
Pyrotechnic helmet, C. B. Rockwood..... 387,657
Rack. See Clothes rack. Feed rack.
Railway bridge danger signal, J. W. Steele..... 387,747, 387,748
Railway, cable, J. H. Pendleton, 387,907 to 387,910, 387,991, 387,994, 387,995
Railway grip and crossing, cable, J. J. Graff..... 387,782
Railway heads, evener for, C. A. Upton..... 387,701
Railway passenger mileage register, O. E. Michaud..... 387,898
Railway rails, manufacture of, Meysenburg & Wostenholm..... 387,797
Railways, driving mechanism for endless cable, J. Walker..... 387,835
Railways, gripping device for cable, J. H. Pendleton..... 387,992, 387,993, 387,996, 387,997
Railways, means for picking up and dropping cables in cable, J. H. Pendleton..... 387,998
Railways, traction device for, J. H. Pendleton..... 387,913
Railways, traction device for cable, J. H. Pendleton..... 387,989
Rake tooth, A. E. Roberts..... 387,815
Reaping machine, G. H. Howe..... 387,684
Receptacle for use in outhouses and like places, T. W. Carrico..... 387,857
Recorder. See Passenger mileage recorder.
Reel. See Bolting reel.
Refrigerator vehicle, W. E. Beard..... 387,943
Register. See Photographic print register. Railway passenger mileage register.
Rein holder, C. W. Gilman..... 387,638
Rice machine, E. Eches..... 387,667
Roll, calendering, S. A. Hodgman..... 387,879
Roller. See Printer's ink roller.
Rowing apparatus, A. G. Smith..... 387,743
Ruching, machine for manufacturing, C. G. Hill..... 387,875
Sad iron, H. S. Pease..... 387,603
Sash balance, J. Sjostrom..... 387,682
Sash fastener, J. F. Pool..... 387,809
Sawing machine, W. P. Langley..... 387,648
Saws, device for setting, gauging, etc., the teeth of, W. N. Harsen..... 387,875
Scale, automatic coin controlled ticket printing weighing, E. H. Amet..... 387,642
Scale, weighing, A. Taylor..... 387,831
Scoop, crumb or dust, J. Pusey..... 387,734
Screen. See Window screen.
Screw, clamp, P. A. Whitney..... 388,000
Screw, countersinking, J. T. Rider..... 388,000
Seed cotton cleaner, L. F. Carr..... 387,674
Separator. See Grain separator.
Sewing machine feeding mechanism, R. D. Tucker..... 388,005
Sewing machine welt guide, R. D. Tucker..... 387,963
Sewing machines, needle for book, Smyth & Reynolds..... 387,744
Shade holder, L. J. Atwood..... 387,755
Sheathing and lath, combined wooden, T. H. Brown..... 387,967
Shoe, C. E. Diehl..... 387,948
Signal. See Flash light signal. Railway bridge danger signal.
Sleigh knee, O. L. Dodge..... 387,950
Sleighs, shifting bar for, A. T. McDonel..... 387,836
Smoke consumer, R. H. F. Sewall..... 387,681
Smoke consumer, E. Dobson..... 387,866
Sower, seed, H. Amundson..... 387,941
Spark arrester, R. H. Coleman..... 387,624, 387,625
Spring. See Vehicle spring.
Stables, floor for, J. E. Dustin..... 387,632
Stamping or embossing press, J. Thomson..... 387,830
Stand. See Flour stand. Wash stand.
Staple machine, H. E. Cunningham..... 387,946
Steam boiler, P. Donald..... 387,776
Steam through pipes, device for controlling the flow of, S. Braggins..... 387,851
Stone, apparatus for manufacturing artificial, Jochum & Ehrhardt..... 387,721
Stone, apparatus for transporting and setting, D. McDonald..... 387,794
Stove, W. F. Zimmermann..... 387,940
Stove for domestic purposes, gas, J. Galli..... 387,870
Stove, gas, P. J. Van Wie..... 387,686
Stovepipe holder, W. S. Welsh..... 387,837
Stove, vapor, F. J. Hubbard..... 387,786
Stoves, cut-off for gasoline, P. A. Reedy..... 387,656
Stoves or furnaces, heat regulator for, L. D. Farra..... 387,713
Switches, guide bar for stub, F. Nemachek..... 387,803