

to leave trains of solder cooling in the form of wires. This will require a few trials to succeed well and make the wire even. 2. How to true or correct the balance of platform scales. A. Scales made by different makers require different treatment. You had better write to the makers of your scales for directions.

(573) X. T. Y. D. asks: 1. Can I assay copper ore by pulverizing, dissolving in sulphuric acid, and precipitating with iron? A. You cannot dissolve copper ore as you describe. Sometimes it is dissolved by the use of bromine or chlorate of potash with acids. The copper can be precipitated with clean pure iron wire. 2. I have some fine wood cuts; how can I varnish them so that the printing on the other side will not show? A. Size the pictures with white glue and varnish with dammar varnish.

(574) H. S. W. asks where he can obtain information in regard to building a boat called a "Barnegat sneakboat." A. The usual length of a Barnegat sneakboat is 12 feet, width 4 feet, square stern 34 inches wide, 7 inches deep. Midship depth 16 inches, low sides. Flaring canvas deck. Cockpit, 7 feet long by 19 inches wide, with wood combing. Rowlocks raised 8 inches and made to fold in when not in use. Can be clinker built, with frame, or, as often built, like a skiff, for which see SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN SUPPLEMENT, Nos. 25 and 26, "How to Build Skiffs."

(575) B. S. asks: 1. Has it not been proved theoretically and practically that to obtain the highest efficiency of an hydraulic propeller, the water must be ejected above and not below the water line? A. No. This is theoretically and practically a failure. 2. Has by practical tests any considerable success ever been attained with an ejection below the water line? A. All efforts at hydraulic propulsion have heretofore proved failures. 3. Where can I find the best records of such tests? A. See SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN SUPPLEMENT, Nos. 354, 415, on hydraulic propulsion.

(576) E. L. A. asks: 1. Is the eight-light dynamo described in SUPPLEMENT, No. 600, large enough to charge storage batteries sufficient to run 20 incandescent lamps? A. Yes, it will charge them at a reasonably good rate, say at 8 to 10 amperes. 2. If not, how many will it run, 16 candle power? A. The dynamo will run 8 to 10 such lamps. 3. How many storage batteries will be required? A. For fifty-volt lamps you will need twenty-five cells in series. 4. What SUPPLEMENTS describe storage batteries and how to make them? A. Nos. 688, 459, 600, 625, 626, and many others.

(577) W. A. R. asks: Is the bottom of a kettle of boiling water hotter or colder than the water when boiling, the kettle remaining on the fire? A. It is hotter than the boiling water.

(578) J. E. A. writes: 1. Has there ever been a locomotive driven by electricity generated with a galvanic battery? A. Many years ago experiments were tried by Dr. Page in this direction, but the expense of driving such motors proved too great. 2. If so, what battery was used? A. We presume a copper zinc couple excited by sulphuric acid was used. 3. What galvanic battery will give the best results in driving an electric motor, where cost is no consideration? A. A large Bunsen battery is about the best.

(579) C. F. J. writes: Can you advise me how to treat a steel woven-wire mattress so that it will withstand the action of dampness and not rust when used in a small yacht? The cloth-covered mattress placed on it will sometimes be perceptibly damp to the touch. A. We can only suggest painting or varnishing. These will tend to preserve it, but will not be very effectual.

(580) J. S. Van D. writes: 1. There is a small glass globe (about 2 in. in diameter) exhibited in show windows, containing a revolving fan made with diamond shape wings covered with tin foil or silver leaf, suspended vertically in globe. It may be a vacuum, and motion caused by light or heat; tell me cause of motion, and how they are constructed. A. See our SUPPLEMENT, Nos. 13, 26, 37, 69, etc., for description, etc., of radiometer. The motions of the molecules of highly rarefied air in the globe cause it to rotate. 2. Will city illuminating gas under pressure blown upon lime without the aid of oxygen produce intense heat enough to make the Drummond light, to be used for magic lantern purposes? A. No; you must use oxygen gas. 3. Would the gas produce more heat on lime by having the tube through which the gas passed highly heated previous to its being burned at the nozzle or jet? A. Yes; but hardly intense enough to produce a good light.

(581) H. C. W. writes: I have a few ordinary lime crystals, and I wish for curiosity to color them blue or pink or some other colors. I read some time ago that the Germans have some method. Can you furnish me with the information? A. We doubt if you will succeed in coloring your crystals. Try aniline colors dissolved in water, in which you may boil the crystals.

(582) C. J. L. asks: What causes the musical sound produced on the tumblers partly filled with liquid and rubbed on the rim with the finger? Is there any preparation placed on the finger? A. The friction of the finger makes the glass vibrate and produce sound. The finger should be wet, or resin may be applied to it.

(583) A. S. E. asks: 1. In a frictional electric machine plate, will shellac decrease the amount of electricity generated? A. No; but if applied to the glass plate, it would soon rub off. If then the partially stripped glass plate is used, an interference of positive and negative electricity may ensue, so as to cut down the amount produced. 2. What is the formula for making the chromates of Fe, Zn, Cu, etc.? A. Treat the hydrated oxides of the metals with aqueous solutions of chromic acid in cases where the desired chromates are soluble; where insoluble, mix the soluble salts of the metals with potassium chromate, both in aqueous solution. 3. Is there any SUPPLEMENT of the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN containing directions, etc., for making frictional machines? A. No. 4. If, in an electrical machine, two plates are made to revolve in different directions on either side of a fixed plate, does the electric

city generated amount to more than when the plates revolve the same way? Also, effect of middle plate turning in opposition to other two? A. It is a matter of experiment. You do not clearly state the conditions. 5. Can a chemist practice assaying in his own name, without being a graduate of any licensed college, or having a diploma? A. Yes.

(584) J. M. W. asks if there is any known article that will clean the hands of printers of either ink or colors, without injury to the skin? A. Caustic soda or kerosene oil may be used for printer's ink. The former must be dilute or it will affect the skin unpleasantly. Other inks yield to oxalic acid, javelle water, etc.

(585) G. H. F. asks for a simple rule for reducing Fahrenheit scale to Centigrade. A. Subtract 32°, expressing degrees below 0° F. as minus quantities; multiply the result by $\frac{5}{9}$; the result will be the equivalent in Centigrade degrees.

(586) I. M. G. asks if powder, such as is used in revolver cartridges, becomes dead with age? Does any kind of powder die? I have a loaded revolver that has not been shot off for about fifteen years; would it be dangerous? A. Powder does not become dead with age. It may deteriorate by dampness. It would probably be risky to fire off your revolver, on account of deterioration of metal, rusting and clogging of the barrel, etc.; the nipples, if it is not a cartridge-loaded weapon, are probably so filled with rust, etc., that they would have to be cleaned out before discharging the piece.

(587) J. C. A. writes: 1. Can petroleum be exploded in its own volume in a strong closed vessel without a supply of air? A. Petroleum is not explosive. If placed in a vessel with a sufficient quantity of air for its combustion, it might by heating be made to give some sort of an explosion. 2. Would the pressure be increased much by introducing a certain quantity of air, and if so, how much air is requisite to do so, and how much would the pressure be increased? A. In general terms it should first be made into gas. Even then it would be hard to explode when mixed with air, because a large proportion of air, 25 to 50 volumes, would be required, which involves the introduction of a large quantity of inert nitrogen. Quite a high pressure is developed instantaneously by these explosions, possibly as high as 100 lb. to the square inch. 3. Would the oil, or the oil and air, if kept in a strong and tight vessel, retain its pressure any length of time, or would it gradually die out? A. Pressure could be maintained for any length of time in a tight vessel.

(588) A. R. H. asks: 1. What is the best temperature to run paraffine wax at? A. 150° to 200° F. 2. What is it made from? A. Coal, shales, ozocerite, etc. 3. How to stop its shrinking or becoming hollow when it cools? A. Let it cool slowly and add more melted paraffine to supply the deficiency.

(589) C. R. C. writes: Will you please give me a receipt to color white pastebord the color of leather, or something that will not lose its color in damp weather? A. Soak in solution of coppers and then in ammonia.

(590) E. N. S. asks: 1. Would solenoids of iron wire wound about the projecting ends of the core of an electro-magnet give good results as pole pieces? A. Not very good, from want of solidity and imperfect contact. 2. Would amalgamating the zincs of a gravity or other form of blue vitriol battery interfere with the working of the battery? If not, why are they not usually amalgamated? A. No. It is unnecessary, and hence is not done, as it would involve useless labor and expense. Your barometer would not work as you describe. Study hydrostatics, and you will see where the fallacy occurs.

(591) W. A. S.—The mineral sent is magneticon ore. Try it with a magnet, and you will find the powder adhere.

(592) O. T. asks whether common fertilizing bone dust is burned into charcoal, or is it used without burning? A. No; it is used as ground. 2. Is it injurious to vegetables, especially potatoes? A. No; it is beneficial. 3. What is the cause of so many green and bitter potatoes? A. Climatic and other conditions are, we presume, responsible.

(593) S. H. B. writes: 1. I am making a machine in which two rollers work in a liquid not quite as thin as water, but just as wet. Wooden rollers split, metal ones are too heavy. Can you give me instructions how to make them, to be waterproof, and that I can cast to shape desired, or can turn up and drill in lathe? I would like something with as low specific gravity as can be. A. We would suggest celluloid, ivory, or glass as material for your rollers. 2. I have seen in the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN and several other valuable mechanical journals "Way to Cover Solder Marks on Brass Work;" have tried several of these wrinkles, but they will not "wink." The sulphate of copper trick is a total failure. It makes the work black wherever there is any solder. Can you give me anything on that line of solder? A. The sulphate of copper "trick," as you term it, should have some effect, if the black deposit is polished off with a burnisher. You may cover the spots in a rather inefficient way by giving them a coating of orange shellac in alcohol.

Books or other publications referred to above can, in most cases, be promptly obtained through the SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN office, Munn & Co., 361 Broadway, New York.

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INDEX OF INVENTIONS

For which Letters Patent of the United States were Granted

March 19, 1889,

AND EACH BEARING THAT DATE.

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

Air ship, H. A. J. Rieckert..... 399,783
 Anchor, Duren & Bills..... 399,853
 Arm support for bookkeepers, adjustable, R. Hynitzsch..... 399,998
 Axle lubricator, car, C. A. Howard..... 399,899
 Bag. See Paper bag. Tobacco bag.
 Bagasse furnace, W. W. Sutcliffe..... 400,016
 Barrels, scuttle for, J. B. Eatman..... 399,657
 Bars, machine for changing the angle of the ranges of Z and angle, W. E. Highfield..... 399,896
 Basins and baths, secret supply, waste, and overflow for, W. H. Newell..... 399,691
 Basket or carrier, I. J. W. Adams..... 399,811
 Bath. See Portable bath.
 Bearing, anti-friction, T. R. Ferrall..... 399,692
 Bed, folding, L. C. Butterfield..... 399,832
 Bed, spring, F. M. Jeffery..... 399,902
 Bedsteads, crib attachment for, V. Fitz..... 399,680
 Beehive, F. M. Clement..... 399,742
 Belt fastener, W. G. Avery..... 399,962
 Belts, hinge joint for electric, N. Warrell..... 399,954
 Belting, G. F. Page..... 400,005
 Belting, machine, G. F. Page..... 400,006
 Bicycle, T. O'Brien..... 399,774
 Billiard table rail and cushion, C. G. Brockway..... 400,082
 Bin. See Flour bin.
 Binder, temporary, J. F. Brown..... 399,737
 Blower, electric blast, H. H. Blades..... 399,822
 Bluing package, T. F. Conklin..... 399,974
 Board. See Ironing board.
 Boats in series, launching, C. W. Delon..... 399,848
 Boiler. See Wash boiler.
 Boiler, J. H. Cunningham..... 399,975
 Boiler, J. T. Smith..... 399,941
 Bolster spring for wagons, E. Cliff..... 399,838
 Bolt heading machine, E. Burdall, Jr..... 399,828
 Bolting reel, W. E. Gorton..... 399,874
 Bomb, signal, R. H. Earle..... 399,854
 Book, account, E. G. Stevens..... 400,014
 Book carriage and protector, L. C. Leith..... 399,759
 Book cover, F. F. Brailleur..... 399,734
 Book mark, H. L. Mehrer..... 399,768
 Books, cutting attachment for check, H. R. Wilson..... 399,969
 Boot tree, A. M. Moore..... 399,684
 Boots and shoes, manufacture of, G. H. Clark..... 399,887
 Bottle wiring machine, Schrader & Sturm..... 399,787
 Bottles, spreader and stopper for, E. Pomeroy..... 399,927
 Box. See Fare box. Journal box. Mail box. Paper box.
 Brake. See Car brake. Vehicle brake. Wagon brake.
 Brake shoe, S. Hatt..... 399,665
 Brick machine, R. F. Robison..... 399,698
 Bridges, rails, etc., apparatus for indicating the deflection of, O. Leuner..... 399,676
 Buckle, S. C. Tucker..... 400,018
 Buildings, construction of, J. E. Rankin..... 399,778
 Burial case, J. H. Walker..... 399,851
 Burner. See Gas burner. Hydrocarbon burner. Oil burner.
 Burnishing machine, G. B. Kelley..... 399,669
 Cables, electric alarm signal for, Woodring & Gilbert..... 400,028
 Can filling and packing apparatus, S. L. Gregg..... 399,884
 Cans, mechanical lid shutter for, B. Wesselmann..... 399,714
 Car brake, C. Mayer..... 399,764
 Car brake, B. L. Wright..... 400,029
 Car brake, street railway, W. B. Clark..... 399,740
 Car platforms, die for forging the followers of extensive railway, Reilly & Bergman..... 399,930
 Car, stock, E. U. Benedict..... 399,821
 Cars, switching or transferring, Armit & Seabee..... 399,815
 Carcasses, device for spreading, G. P. Schmidt..... 399,833
 Card for buttons or studs, C. G. Bloomer..... 399,824
 Card grinding machine, S. A. Prescott..... 399,694
 Carriage curtain fastener, S. P. Scott..... 399,934
 Cart spring, road, F. Drifill..... 399,852
 Cartridge belt, T. C. Orndorff..... 399,924
 Cartridge and other belts, fastening for, A. Mills..... 399,915
 Cartridges and cartridge magazines, belt for holding, A. Mills..... 399,916
 Cartridges for transportation and distribution, packing, T. C. Orndorff..... 399,923
 Case. See Burial case. Needle or pin case. Note case.
 Cash recorder, J. M. Warner..... 399,853
 Chair. See Rail chair.
 Chart, percentile measurement, F. Swain..... 400,017
 Churn, P. C. Barlow..... 399,728
 Churn, W. D. Makemson..... 399,761
 Churn closure, J. McDermid..... 399,681
 Cigar vending apparatus, W. C. Doubleday..... 399,851
 Cigarettes, machine for dipping, C. H. & W. B. Whitaker..... 399,808
 Cleaner. See Grain cleaner. Seed cleaner.
 Clip. See Halter bolt clip. Whiffletree clip.
 Clock, alarm, A. Bannatyne..... 399,725
 Clock, repeating, E. Bannatyne..... 399,647
 Clutch, friction, E. Boehme..... 399,733
 Clutch, friction, H. Erdman..... 399,858
 Coal elevator, J. Chase..... 399,835
 Cocoon, apparatus for reeling silk from the, E. W. Serrell, Jr..... 399,837
 Cocoons, apparatus for separating waste floss from, E. W. Serrell, Jr..... 399,836
 Coffee, apparatus for preparing liquid, C. Wagner..... 399,803
 Coffee mill, E. H. & C. Morgan..... 399,686
 Coffee pot, E. B. Lobach..... 399,998
 Coffin, A. Weckmiller..... 400,023
 Coins, pad for convenience in handling and picking up, A. E. L. Szlenger..... 399,940
 Collar, horse, W. Cosbie..... 399,841
 Composing stick, Ludington & Leland..... 399,911
 Concentrator, F. Sletcher..... 399,791
 Condenser, ejector, N. W. Wheeler..... 399,715
 Cot, folding, C. T. Segar..... 399,935
 Cotton, machine for opening, cleaning, and ginning seed, J. R. Montague..... 400,002
 Coupling. See Pipe coupling. Thill coupling.
 Cover fastener for vessels, J. H. Cassidy..... 399,834
 Cultivator, J. G. Gaither..... 399,868
 Cultivator, E. J. Landes..... 399,757
 Cultivator, A. Lewis..... 399,910
 Curtain attachment, J. Emmert..... 399,867
 Curtain holder, Nolley & Wyatt..... 399,773
 Cutter. See Meat cutter. Root cutter.
 Die. See Screw cutting die.
 Dish, covered, G. Jones et al..... 399,758

Draught equalizer, J. P. McDowell..... 399,786
 Draught evener, J. W. Gamble..... 399,882
 Drawer guide, W. Horrocks..... 399,762
 Dust collector, A. Gessl..... 399,884
 Dust collector, T. Watson..... 399,713
 Earth, apparatus for raising and moving, H. A. Carson..... 399,970
 Edger, gang, H. C. Robb..... 399,831
 Electric conductor, A. A. Brooks..... 399,826
 Electric light support, Schardt & Jones..... 399,786
 Electric machine, dynamo, J. W. Balet..... 399,646
 Electric machine, dynamo, E. Thomson..... 399,640
 Electric motors, friction gear for, C. J. Van Depoele..... 399,950
 Electrical distribution by secondary batteries, F. King..... 399,755
 Elevator. See Coal elevator. Hydraulic elevator.
 End gate, wagon, E. A. Waltz..... 400,022
 Engine. See Gas engine. Rotary engine. Steam engine.
 Equalizer four-horse, A. C. Wilson..... 399,718
 Exercising apparatus, W. Sachs..... 399,699
 Explosive charge, high, J. W. Graydon..... 399,878
 Eye shade, T. H. Harrison..... 399,882
 Fabrics, ornamenting, M. L. Hiller..... 399,897
 Fan, power, P. Murray, Jr..... 399,689
 Fare box, T. L. Beaman..... 399,820
 Fence, H. W. Barber..... 399,648
 Fence, W. W. Campbell..... 399,833
 Fence, E. F. Shellabarger..... 399,839
 Fiber or silver, machine for forming balls of, W. B. Lee..... 399,909
 Fibers, machine for cleaning vegetable, T. Villamor..... 399,802
 File, newspaper, H. A. Shearer..... 399,704
 Filter, A. Wilbur..... 399,857
 Filter, water, J. Grant..... 399,875
 Filtering apparatus, Gehrke & Wohlfahrt..... 399,983
 Fire alarm circuits, coupling and automatic circuit breaker for, J. J. Cannan..... 399,738
 Fire escape, W. J. Smith..... 399,709
 Fish lines, sinker for, J. E. Gage..... 399,868
 Flour bin, F. Sanderson..... 399,785
 Fluids and semi-fluids by means of compressed air, forcing, Johnson & Hutchinson..... 399,994
 Flush tank, J. Lawson..... 399,674
 Food warmers, cup for, S. Clarke..... 399,741
 Frame. See Lantern frame.
 Fruit driers, rotary fan for, J. W. Cassidy..... 399,973
 Fruit grader, V. Rattan..... 399,779
 Furnace. See Bagasse furnace.
 Furnace for working zinc ores, L. Kleemann..... 399,995
 Furnace grate, M. H. Moskovita..... 399,888
 Furnaces, etc., rotary bottom or grate applicable to, W. J. Taylor..... 399,797
 Fuse for ordnance shells, electrical, J. W. Graydon..... 399,879
 Fuses, circuit closing device for electrical torpedo, J. W. Graydon..... 399,876
 Gauge. See Siding gauge.
 Game apparatus, Rogers & Bartlett..... 400,011
 Game wheel, G. Wilkening..... 399,717
 Gas burner, W. P. Tibbens..... 399,948
 Gas engine, S. Lawson..... 399,907
 Gas, making, W. J. Taylor..... 399,796
 Gas producer, W. J. Taylor..... 399,798
 Gasogene or apparatus for making aerated beverages, L. G. & S. M. Chinnery..... 399,739
 Gate. See End gate. Railway gate.
 Gate, M. W. Foster..... 399,981
 Generator. See Steam generator.
 Gluten and starch, obtaining, H. Barker..... 399,727
 Governor, steam engine, O. H. Castle..... 399,853
 Grain binder, J. F. Seiberling..... 399,703
 Grain binders, tension device for, J. S. Gibbs..... 399,872
 Grain cleaner, E. Bryan..... 399,827
 Grain sampler, B. F. Morningstar..... 399,887
 Grater, nutmeg, C. O. Blood..... 399,823
 Gun, revolving pneumatic, J. W. Graydon..... 399,868
 Halter bolt clip, C. C. Schwane..... 399,788
 Hammock suspension device, J. D. Pritchard..... 399,928
 Harrow, C. E. Bement..... 399,781
 Harrow and cultivator, rolling, A. J. Adamson..... 399,644
 Harvester reel, A. O. Carman..... 399,852
 Harvesters, shock forming table for corn, A. N. Hadley..... 399,988
 Hat and clothes rack, Brechbill & Ensign..... 399,875
 Hat sweat band, W. F. Beardslee..... 399,729
 Hay rake, horse, J. M. McClintock..... 399,765
 Heater. See Lunch heater.
 Heel nailing machine, J. H. Pope..... 399,777
 Hinge, L. V. Benet..... 399,964
 Hinge, R. E. Nolley..... 400,008
 Hinge, friction, E. Haines..... 399,751
 Hitching post, B. G. Knapp..... 399,904
 Holder. See Curtain holder. Knife blade holder. Spoon holder. Tumbler holder. Twine holder. Vignette holder.
 Hook. See Suspender hook.
 Horse blanket, A. H. Kinder..... 399,672
 Horse checking device, F. T. Aikins..... 399,961
 Horse checking device, W. P. Smith..... 399,708
 Hose nozzle, J. Clifford..... 399,654
 Huller. See Pea huller.
 Hydraulic elevator, electrically controlled, C. Whittier..... 399,716
 Hydrocarbon burner, F. B. Meyers..... 399,770
 Indicator, alternate current, Thomson & Wightman..... 399,801
 Inhaler, E. Jahr..... 399,901
 Inhaler and respirator, C. Breuillard..... 399,736
 Inkstand, E. Davis..... 399,844
 Insecticide composition, T. Manahan..... 399,999
 Internasal tube, D. H. Goodwillie..... 399,985
 Iron into malleable iron or steel, converting crude, G. L. Robert..... 400,010
 Ironing board, H. C. Perry..... 399,925
 Ironing table, A. Riersen..... 400,009
 Journal box, W. W. Worswick..... 399,721
 Knife blade holder, S. V. Ellis..... 399,855
 Ladder and scaffold attachment, extension, I. H. Raser..... 400,008
 Lamp socket, incandescent electric, C. E. Egan..... 399,748
 Lantern frame, F. D. Spear..... 399,944
 Lantern, tubular, W. Westlake..... 399,807
 Last, J. W. Lamphier..... 399,846
 Leather dressing, J. J. Hayward..... 399,893
 Level, plumb, A. B. Ewing..... 399,854
 Lock. See Nut lock. Seal lock.
 Lock for trunks, etc., J. J. Sager..... 399,784
 Locomotive for single rail railways, A. Mallet..... 399,679
 Loom for weaving unspun plant stalks, P. De Hemptinne..... 399,745
 Loom picker check, Davidson & Bannister..... 399,656
 Loom stop motion, J. J. McComish..... 399,917
 Lubricator. See Axle lubricator.
 Lumber rack, G. Streich..... 400,015
 Lunch heater, T. O'Mahony..... 399,922
 Machinist's blocking, C. E. Pollard..... 399,898
 Mail bag fastening, J. S. Goodwin..... 399,966
 Mail box and punch, W. Wleek..... 400,026
 Mattresses, etc., woven wire, D. H. & J. F. Gall..... 399,867
 Measuring wheel, rotary, R. J. Buchanan..... 399,984

Meat cutter, A. Shepard 399,790
Mechanical movement, Dodson & Richards 399,746
Medicine, catarrh remedy, P. S. Cheshler 399,886
Metal, device for upsetting and bending, M. Kennedy 399,903
Metallic wheel, T. Hill 399,989
Mill. See Coffee mill.

Stone planing machine, W. E. Sidnell 399,706
Shove, W. B. Ginnis 399,767
Stove, combined box and cooking, J. McMaster 399,918
Stove for heating sad irons, J. E. Winter 399,719
Strap, trace, and lace trimmer and cutter, J. Bradley 399,965
Strength tester, coin-controlled, G. S. Eding 399,942

DESIGNS.
Collar, C. W. Dater 18,965
Desk, F. A. Coffin 18,964
Hanging stand, J. L. Leavitt 18,972
Mirror frame, H. Berry 18,963
Revolver handle, C. A. Davis 18,966
Screw head, E. G. S. Itmann 18,973
Type, C. E. Hever 18,967, 18,968
Type, E. Lauschke 18,969 to 18,971

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