# Scientific American.

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#### HINTS 'TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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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 This is for our information and not for publication.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.
 In quitrics not auswered 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.
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price. Minera s sent for examination should be distinctly marked or labeled.

(7787) R. E. W. asks: 1. Could a 110 volt direct current be used in the Thompson-Tesla coil described in SWPPLEMENT, No. 1087, by putting on an automatic circuit breaker operated by the magnet of the coil or would it be necessary to change the direct current into an alternating current ? A. You can use a 110 volt direct current to run an induction coil, but it should be controlled by a resistance box, so that only perhaps 30 to 60 volts may be broken by the circuit breaker. 2. About how many amperes would it take to run the above coil proper, using a 110 volt direct circuit ? A. The amperes will vary with the adjustment of the rheostat. Begin with the resistance all in and turn out resistance till the tube is properly energized. It may require four to ten amperes. An X-ray tube requires more current as the vacuum rises in it. 3. Why is the 2-inch iron pipe slotted ? A. To prevent the eddy currents which would circulate around a tube heating it unduly. 4. In the secondary of the high tension transformer, about how many pounds of wire will be required for each of the ten ections? A. About four pounds per coil are required. 5. Could the air gap in the high frequency coils be filled with any substance such as paraffine or sealing wax? Paraffine oil is the best substance to be used. 6. Would you mention one or two SUPPLEMENTS in which I could find articles on an induction coil to be operated by a 110 volt direct current and giving a 3 or 4 inch spark ? A. We have no plans for such a coil. Bonney's "Induction Coils," price \$1 by mail, will give you the information you need.

(7788) C. H. writes: In many places nower is used to run mills in the daytime. Can power be put into the storage battery and used to help out at night to light the streets and dwellings? Can it be done from a direct current 110 volts, and what loss would this be in storing electric power, also the expense of a battery that could be used 5 hours, and what could be got from it on the incandescent lamp? A. The SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN has had a great many articles on this matter. It is easily possible to charge a storage battery by day when a mill is running and use the electricity from it in the night when the mill is shut down. Each installation of this sort differs from others, and we cannot give any instructions so that a man not an expert in electrical work could put the machinery and lamps in place. An engineer should be employed to oversee the work and to determine what shall be done. He will give figures of cost which will differ in different places. The cost will be more than for oil or gas.

of one cell. If by electric bell batteries you mean dry cells, it will not be possible to run a fan for any length of time hy them.

(7791) R. F. P. writes: In answer to query number 7758, I would say that he may find a description with illustrations and working drawings for the building of a telegraph sounder, as well as several other electrical instruments, in Trevert's "Ex erimental Electricity," price 85 cents by mail.

(7792) W. H. T. writes: 1. I am about to construct a sectorless Wimshurst machine, and would like to know a few facts about the revolving glass disks and ask a few questions. Two disks, which are 18 inches in diameter and composed of double thickn of window glass, are pierced centrally with a 1/4 of an Ferracute Machine Co., Bridgeton. N. J., U. S. A. Full inch hole; would a fixed iron spindle, 1/4 of an inch in diameter, be sufficient to support the weight of the glass Photographs Recent Eclipse of Moon; four views 50 disks? I intend to have the spindle fixed and at least 12 inches long, the glass disks attached to wooden bosses, which are also pierced centrally with a hole 1/4 of an inch in diameter, the pulleys for the rotation of the plates being also attached to bosses. Am I right? A. We should advise a much larger spindle than one 1/4 inch in thickness upon which to run the plates of a Wimshurst machine. So thin a rod will vibrate and bend, and the parts which turn upon it will wear much faster than they will upon a larger bearing. You had better make the spinndle as thick as 34 inch. 2. How large in diameter should the bosses be, so as to have enough surface for the cement to act, so as to occasion no danger of the wooden boss and the glass disk separating when revolving at an ordinary speed ? A. The bosses may well be 3 inches in diameter. 3. Would it be best to give the glass disks and also the glass supports a coat of thin shellac? Would it increase the efficiency? A. A coat or more of shellac will prevent the wood from absorbing moisture and so benefit it. 4. Would a machine of this size have sufficient length of spark and output to produce the X-rays in a suitable tube? A. A machine with 18-inch plates will energize a small X-ray tube. 5. I have read from some papers-I can't remem ber the name-that a fluorescent screen for X-ray work can be made by coating a piece of cardboard with glue and then sprinkling white oxide of zinc on it. Is that true ? A. No. The fluorescent screen should be made of calcium tungstate. 6. Is there any place where I can procure a vacuum tube similar to the ones used by Mr D. McFarlane Moore in his system of vacuum tube illumination? A. Dealers in X-ray apparatus can make long vacuum tube for you. You could not probably find these tubes in market. 7. I would like to know the voltage (approximately) of a spark in air under normal atmospheric conditions, 1 inch in length; also, one of 8 inches ? A.-Volts

Spark between oints, 1 inch	20,000
Spark between points, 8 inches	87,000
Spark between points, 1/4 inch spheres, 1 inch	22,000
Spark between points, 1/4 inch spheres, 8 inches	95,000
Spark between points, 1/2 inch spheres, 1 inch	31,000
Spark between points, 1/2 inch spheres, 8 inches	95,000
Spark between points, 1 inch spheres, 1 inch	44.000
Spark between points, 1 inch spheres, 8 inches	99.000
Spark between points, 2 inch spheres, 1 inch	51,000
These numbers are given from actual measureme	nts by
Steinmitz, with an alternator.	

(7793) A. F. J. asks: 1. Can I lift an iron weighing 500 pounds from a well 80 feet deep with a magnet on an alternating current? A. You cannot make a lifting magnet with an alternating current. direct current must be employed. 2. Would an iron ball weighing 1,000 pounds sink to the bottom of the ocean say at a distance of 2 miles? A. A piece of iron of any size or weight will sink to the bottom of the ocean, no matter how deep it is, if it is put into the water.

(7794) J. M. C. writes : Please describe an alternating current, i. e., does an alternating current flow in one direction only, or does it flow alternately in one direction and then in the other? A. The latter. The word "alternating" implies that sort of motion.

(7795) J. R. McC. writes: I started to make the induction coil described in "Experimental Science," but cannot get any No. 36 copper wire. Could I obtain as good results by using No. 24, which is the finest I can obtain here? A. No; you may not use No. 24 wire in place of No. 36 in an induction coil, and get any results worth having. With the larger wire you will have only  $\frac{1}{16}$  as many turns in the coil as with the finer, and about  $\frac{1}{32}$  inch spark, which is not worth making a coil for.

(7796) A. A. A. asks: 1. How quick and how accurate, and what is the present means of determining ranges of 5 or 6 miles between vessels at sea ? I might offer something to ascertain the distance (within a few feet) in less than 15 seconds at distances of from 1/4 to 10 miles. A. Various forms of range-finders are in use. They usually depend upon the solution of a triangle, where base is a base line of known length on the ship, and whose base angles are the angles observed between the line and the distant object. The accuracy will depend upon the distance of the object, being less the greater the distance 2. Has aluminium ever been used in the place of silk for covering hydrogen gas balloons? Its weight being 2000 times that of air, could it be used as a covering in a balloon of 8-foot diameter which would require aluminium of about 1-100 of an inch thickness, and what would the strength and impermeability be compared to silk? A. The weight would be about 27 pounds, and the alu-

70 feet to reach the place where the temperature is the same all the year through. Below this level the temperature rises as one descends at the rate of 1° for a descent of from 30 feet to 90 feet. This difference is due to the material of the earth. If it be a good conductor of heat the distance is greater than if it be a poor conductor of heat. The average distance is 53 feet to produce a rise of 1°.

(7798) A. H. Y. asks: What ought it to cost for running 500 volt 1/2 horse power motor from electric railway service line, motor running 104 hours a month with about 1/4 horse power resistance or load ? Company charges 10 cents per 1,000 watt hours with 5 per cent for cash in limited time after first of month. A. We reply to your inquiry as towhatyou ought to pay for current for your motor that it is not apparent that you are being overcharged. Motors often take more current than they are supposed to take. We have seen a motor using its full current as rated when it was running with no load. If you put an ammeter in circuit, you can find what current you use and can tell what your bills ought to be.

(7799) M. B. T. writes : I have a primary coil 12 inches long, 2 inches soft iron wire core, 2 layers No. 12 B. & S. wire 260 turns. Could I make about a 4 or 5 inch spark coil with ordinary magnetic interrupter, and what wire would be best for the secondary. Could I make it with No. 34 double cotton covered wire wound with proper insulating precautions, or would some finer wire be more economical? A. We should advise large dimensions for a 5-inch induction coil. You should also use a finer wire than No. 34 for the secondary. Use silk covered wire. You would better get Bonney's Induction Coils, price \$1 by mail, and follow its directions with care.

(7800) S. H. L. asks : Is there any shade of color that cannot be detected by the eye that can be seen through colored glasses? Said colors to be on colored paper. A. It is possible that such a colored glass might be found, though we have not seen any reference to any such discovery. There are numerous substances which can be put on paper which will become visible when light of the proper color falls upon the paper. These are fluorescent substances. You will find these described in Wright's Light, price \$2.00, and in Wright's Optical Projection, price \$2.25.

#### TO INVENTORS.

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## INDEX OF INVENTIONS

For which Letters Patent of the United States were Issued for the Week Ending

#### **JANUARY 2, 1900**

#### AND EACH BEARING THAT DATE.

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

	Electric furnace. F. E. Hatch
Adjustable limit gage, J. D. Cox, Jr	Electric heater, F. Bain
Air brake coupling, automatic, G. J. Netter 640,405	Electric transformer, Packard & Wiswell
Air drying apparatus, A. T. Perkins 640,318	Electric wire molding or trough, H. Lee 640,575
Air propeller, A. Duffner, Jr	Electrical apparatus, coin controlled, J. Patter- son
Air sterilizing, drying, and cooling system, Per-	
kink & Weber	Electrical energy by alternating currents distri-
Amidobenzaldehyd, making, Homolka & Stock 640,564	buting, M. I. Pupin
Anchor, folding, W. McBride 640,360	1. Pupin
Anilin compounds, making amidobenzyliden, Homolka & Stock	I. Pupin. Electrotype or stereotype block, E. L. Wilson 640.346 Elevator. See Hydraulic elevator.
Animal catching and holding implement. J. S.	Elevator. See Hydraulic elevator. Elevator accumulator, plunger, G. H. Reynolds 640,589
	Elevator speed regulator, hydraulic, W. W. Doo-
Animal trap, C. A. Wever	little
Apple juice, making concentrated, C. Graef 640,289 Auger, earth, P. Hesselius	Rotary engine Steam engine. Gas engine.
Automatic adjustable die. F. H. Stahl	Rotary engine. Steam engine. Engine cylinder, gas, J. W. Lambert640,667, 640,668 Engine igniter, gas, C. R. Alsop
Bag. See Paper bag. Bag or purse frame B yom Figen 640 195	Engine igniter, gas, C. R. Alsop
Bailer, W. Plotts	
Bag, or purse frame, B, vom Eigen	Engines       Gata         Adams       640,351         Envelop, G. H. Randall.       640,459         Explosive engine, G. W. Lewis       640,470         Explosive engine, G. W. Lewis       640,471         Explosive engine, G. W. Lewis       640,473         Engine, G. M. Lewis       640,474         Fancerade motor       1.6         Fean engine mill, P. Poyneer       640,583         Feathering into, These sparsetus for commaschine, 540,583
Barrels, pipes, or cylinders, apparatus for mak-	Envelop, G. H. Randall 640,489
	Explosive engine, G. W. Lewis
Battery electrodes, fuses, etc., connector for, W.	Extension table. Curl & McAnlis
Mills	Fan, cradle motor, L. G Rogers et al 640,703
Bearing, antifriction, M. C. Merker	Faithing mill, P. Poyneer for compacting
Battery electrodes, fuses, etc., connector for, W.       640,479         Mills       640,272         Battery element, electric, F. R. Wiley       640,272         Bearing, antifriction, M. C. Merker       640,272         Redstead brace and tightener, E. Attaway       640,272         Beelive, F. Danzenbaker       640,272         Bell fastener, J. M. Cavins       640,171         Bicycle, E. Lee       640,171         Bicycle, R. A. Merrow       640,574         Bicycle brake, J. F. Moen       640,680         Bicycle can's haft, C. Gorman       640,680         Bicycle driving mechanism, J. W. Rogers.       640,640         Bicycle driving mechanism, J. Tracy       640,241	Faithers into tubes, apparatus for compacting, C. T. Thompson
Beehive, F. Danzenbaker	Feed water heater, I. C. Lanphear 640,475
Bell fastener, J. M. Cavins	Feeder, storm boiler (1) (2) Whitney 640,434
Bevel, G. L. Griswold 640,194	Feeding device, poultry, W. D. Smith
Bicycle, E. E. Lee	Fence post, Spoore & Raub
Bibycle brake, J. F. Moen	Fence weaving implement, C. A. Taylor
Bicycle crank shaft, C. Gorman 640,649	& Fry
Bicycle driving mechanism, J. W. Rogers 640,702	
Bicycle handle bar, J. Tracy 640,241 Bicycle lock C H Masten 640,297	Fender, J. R. Reece
Bicycle handle bar, J. Tracy. 640,241 Bicycle lock, C. H. Masten. 640,207 Bicycle lock and wrench, combined, L. L. Powell 640,227	Filter, C. F. Hoyt
Bicycle pump, pneumatic, J. Lister	Filter, J. D. King 640.665
Bicycle saddle, J. C. Fleming	Filter, J. J. Mayer
Bicycle saddle post, J. B. L. McKenzie 640,483	Filter, electric water, Teter & Heaney 640.335
Bicycle sadule post, 3r. D. L. McReizlett, 199,360 Bicycle sadule post, 3r. D. L. McReizlett, 199,360 Bicycle support, J. Booth	Fercinizer Grier, J. F. BUSSEIIS.         640620           Filter, C. F. Hoyt.         640288           Filter, J. D. King.         640.689           Filter, J. J. Mayer.         640.679           Filter, C. F. Vogler.         640.789           Filter, C. F. Vogler.         640.353           Filter, C. F. Vogler.         640.353           Filter water, A. G. Sheak         640.421           Firearm, magazine, B. Burton.         640.627           Fireescape, F. H. Arnesen.         640.627           Fireo occape, I. H. Arnesen.         640.621           Fireo occape, I. H. Arnesen.         640.621
Bicycle support. J. Booth	Fire escape, F. H. Arnesen
Bicycle support, A. E. Conti	Fire escape ladder and water tower J. W. Fall 640,645 Fish filvering machine, J. A. Stoddart
Bicycle support, W. H. Hart, Jr	Fish fibering machine, J. A. Stoddart
Bicycle support, V. A. Pernot. 640.487	Fluid compressor. J. B. Sample
Bicycle umbrella attachment, F. J. Converse 640.446	Fluid compressor, J. B. Sample
Bicycle wheel, Berg & Nilson	Forceps, umbillical, E. V. Acheson
Bit. See Bridle bit. Coal bit.	Forceps, umbillical, E. V. Acheson
Bicycle subport, V. A. Ferluct. 4044 Bicycle wibeel, Berg & Nilson. 40.74 Bicycle wibeel, Berg & Nilson. 40.77 Billiard cushon, G. Kern, (reissue). 11,799 Bit. See Bridle bit. Coal bit. 610,667 Biackboard support, J. S. McClung. 640,667	ing furnace. Electric furnace. Furnace, J. W. Rumpf
Boat, C. H. Sawyer	Furnace, J. W. Rumpf
Boiler, G. H. Drake	Gage See Adjustable limit gage. Boiler gage.
Boiler, G. H. Drake	Water gage.
Boiler gage, steam, J. T. Forgey	Game apparatus, F. G. Slemmer
Boiler stay bolt, steam, F. W. Johnstone	Garment clash E D Hinkley 640658
Bolt. See Boiler stay bolt.	Garment hanger, J. F. Brock
Bonnet, F. E. Thornton	Gas analysis, apparatus for, G. E. Thomas 640.601
	Gas apparatus, acetylene, A. F. Gaienne
Book stitching machine, F. P. Rosback	Gas apparatus, acetylene, A. F. Gaienne
Boot or shoe attachment, D. W. Perry 640,317 Bottle, non roflighte, V. Crusor 640,275	Gas, automatic pressure regulator and cut off for, T. H. J. Leckband
Bottle, non-refillable, V. Cruser	T.H.J. Leckband
Box. See Junction box. Match box. Paper	Hood
DOX.	Gas engine, G. W. Lewis 640,393, 640,394, 640,672, 640,673
Box machine, W. H. Wussow	Gas engine, rotary, J Straszer
Box machine, G. A. Barnes	Gas generator, acetylene, O. H. Hampton 640,558
window bracket	Gas generator, acetylene, O. H. Hampton
Brake. See Car brake. Bridle bit, B. Allen, Jr	
Bucket and lid holder, H. B. Shaw 640,331	(Continued on page 30)
DUCKET ANU NU HONGET, LL. D. SHAW	(Centrinade die page 50)

ſ		
	Bung hole fitting, W. Homann	640,286
	Burial casket. Z. T. Boicourt.	640.624
	Bung hole fitting, W. Homann Bung stopper, Mueller & Farner Burial esket, Z. T. Boicourt Burner. See Gilburner. combined M. L. Horn Butten pitte and murper, combined M. L. Horn	
	butter plate and wrapper, combined, bi. 1. Horn-	640,287
5	ing Button, W. H. Lease Button, cellar, S. A. Grant Button, cuff, W. L. Manran	640.476
	Button, collar, S. A. Grant	640,476 640,651 640,298
ł	Button, cuff, W. L. Mauran	640.298
ĺ	Cabinet, kitchen, S. I. Underwood	640.420 640.509
	ing. putton, W. H. Lease Button, collar, S. A. Grant. Button, collar, S. A. Grant. Button, cuff, W. L. Marran. Cabinet, kichen, S. I. Underwood. Cable terminal, J. N. Byers. Cable terminal, W. Callahan. Calculating device, R. Naish. Camera, photographic, F. W. Livermore	640.532
	Calculating device R Neigh	640,533
	Camera, photographic, F. W. Livermore	640.677
	Can. See Oil can.	
	Can filling machine, W. Gebhardt Can opener, H. O. Anton Carbady bolster, R. W. Oswald Carbody bolster, R. W. Oswald Carbody bolster, M. B. Schaffer Carbake, E. F. Campbell Car coupling, W. F. Richards. Car, dumping, A. Torrey Carside bearing, S. P. Bush. Car starter or mover, G. D. Rowell Car wheel, boltless steel tired, W. W. Snow Cars or locomotives, device for replacing derail	640.375 640.255
	Canal, pleasure, P. Boyton	640,255 640,439
	Car body bolster, R. W. Oswald	640,691 640,327
	Car broke E E Campbell	640,327
	Car coupling. W. F. Richards	640.368 640,225
	Car, dumping, A. Torrey	640,337 640,267 640,227 640,227
	Car side bearing, S. P. Bush	640,267
	Car wheel, boltless steel tired, W. W. Snow	640,425
	Cars or locomotives, device for replacing derail-	
	ed, J. B. Newton	640,311
	Carriage, child's, J. K. Gerrich	640,695 640,193
	Carton or packing box, F. Danzenbaker	640,451 640,496
	Cartridge loading apparatus, G. E. Standish	640,496 640,181
	Caster, W. I. Stilwell.	640,499
	Car wheel, boltless steel tired, W. W. Snow Cars or locomotives, device for replacing derail- ed, J. B. Newton Carbureter, E. D. Parrott Carton or packing box, F. Danzenbaker Cartoridge loading apparatus, G. E. Standish Caster R. J. Stilwell Caster, W. I. Stilwell Cellulose by sulfite process, obtaining useful pro- ducts from liouors resulting from manufac-	
	ducts by sume process, obtaining user in pro- ducts from liquors resulting from manufac- turing, C. D. Ekman. Chain making machine, D. Roche	640,186
	Chain making machine. D. Roche	640,591
	Chair. See Combination chair.	
	Check controlled apparatus, Kolb & Vogel	640,390
	Chock, mooring and towing, D. E. Ford	640.552
	Choke bore forming device, A. G. Adelman	640,301 640,552 640,518 640,549
	Chair. See Combination chair. Check controlled apparatus. Kolb & Vogel Checke kontrolled apparatus. Kolb & Vogel Checke barife, M. W. Miracle Checke bore forming and towing, D. E. Ford Checke bore forming device, A. G. Addelman Chute feet mechanism. coal. F. H. Emery Clamp. See Nope clamp.	640,549
	Clamp, J. L. Taylor,	640.500
	Chutte feet mechanism, coai, r. H. Emery Clamp, See Rope clamp, Clasp, See Garment clasp, Clasp, See Garment clasp, Cleaner. See Flue or stovepipe cleaner. Clinnice mechine motor R. Andorson,	
	Cleaner. See Flue or stovepipe cleaner. Clipping machine motor, P. Anderson Cloth cutter, electric, F. Gardner Clothes line reel, C. P. Wilkinson Clothes wringer, W. T. Bradley Coal bit, J. Morgan Coaster and truing gage, combined, T. E. Ward- well	640,620
	Cleth cutter, electric, F. Gardner	640.192 640.342
	Clothes line reel, C. P. Wilkinson	640,342
	Cool bit I I Morgan	640,440 640,481
	Coaster and truing gage, combined, T. E. Ward-	
	well.	640,607
	well. Coating oxidizable metal wire with gastight coat- ing, F. O. Schott. Cock and faucet and means for diminishing waste	640,419
	Cock and faucet and means for diminishing waste	
	therefrom, R. H. Staples	640,497 640,202
	Coin freed apparatus, G. Igersheimer Coin receiving, sorting, and indicating machine.	<b>0</b> 40,202
	E. Moriarity	640,683
	Combination obein V W Bogons	640,435 640.323
	Cooking utensil, W. A. Van Deusen	640.605
	Coin receiving, sorting, and indicating machine, E. Moriarity. Coin receiving, sorting, and indicating machine, E. Moriarity. Coin receivatele, I. B. Abrahams Combination chair, Y. W. Rogers. Cooking utensil, W. A. Van Deusen Copy holder, O. R. Winslow H. W. F. Daboy	640,605 640.347
ľ	Cooking uton chair, Y. w. Rogers	640,409
	walls, metal. W. F. Parker	640,410
	walls, metal, W. F. Parker. Coupling. See Air brake coupling. Car coup- ling. Hose coupling. Pipe coupling. Crank wheel, D. Sanfork. Orate, shipping, R. I. Stewart. Gream separator, centrifuzal, J. J. Berrigan. Cream separator, centrifuzal, C. L. Kneeland Grib for building piers, walls, etc., J. G. Haentges Culinary roaster. T. M. Lynch. Culityator, M. & A. Sattley. Cultivator. C. Tanner. Cup. See Drinking cup. Curtain fature. J. P. Kane.	,
	ling Hose coupling. Pipe coupling.	640,594
	Crate, shipping, R. I. Stewart	640.600
	Cream separator, centrifugal, J. J. Berrigan	$640,600 \\ 640.358$
	Cream separator, centrifugal, C. L. Kneeland	640,572 640,377
	Culinary roaster. T. M. Lynch	640.305
	Cultivator, M. & A. Sattley	640,305 640,325
	Cultivator, C. Tanner	640,239
	Curtain fixture. J. P. Kane	640,662
	Curtain pole, W. H. & C. W. White	640,723
	Curtain stretcher, W. A. Mayr	640,723 640,214 640,266
	Cultivator. C. Tanner Cup. See Drinking cup. Curtain fixture, J. P. Kane Curtain pole, W. H. & C. W. White Curtain stretcher, W. A. Mayr. Cut of, rain water. J. Boutin Cutter. See Band cutter. Cloth cutter. Hoof cutter. Paper cutter, Rotary cutter. Desk, writing, G. H. Rogers Die. Automatic adjustable die. Wire coiling	-10,400
	cutter. Paper cutter, Rotary cutter.	C40 000
	cutter. Paper cutter. Rotary cutter. Desk, writing, G. H. Rogers	640,226
	die.	
	Die stock C Dilly	640,639
	Display rack, carnet, W. Elev	640.428 640.187
•	Distance finder, R. L. Marshall	640,679
	Dish washer, C. H. Sterling. Display rack, carpet, W. Fley Distance finder, R. L. Marshall. Distillation of hydrocarbons, apparatus for con- tinuous fractional. H. A. Frasch.	640.292

Dish wa	asher, C. H. Sterling, rack carpot, W. Eley, be finder, R. L. Marshall, out of hydrocarbons, apparatus for con- cous fractional, H. A. Frasch, raught kiln, H. A. Wheeler, t equalizer, J. Rusk, See Grain drill. Rock drill, apparatus, high speed, E. Watel, machine, C. Schmidt, g cup, collapsible, S. M. Royer, and roasting furnace, vertical automate.	640.428
Display	rack, carpet, W. Eley.	640,187
Distanc	e finder, R. L. Marshall (	540,679
Distillat	tion of hydrocarbons, apparatus for con-	
tinu	ous fractional, H, A. Frasch	640,292
Door, ve	ertically adjustable barn, F. Hering (	540.385
Downdr	raught kiln, H. A. Wheeler	540,246
Drough	t equalizer. J. Rusk	040,592
Drill 8	see Grain drill. Rock drill.	10 /91
Drilling	machino C Schmidt	D40.401
Drinkin	$\mathbf{a}$ cun collapsiale S M Rover	540 418
Drying	and roasting furnace, vertical automatic,	510,110
I St	toveken f	340 715
Drving	kiln, F. G. Perkins.	640.319
Dust clo	oth holder, W. F. Schrev	40,707
Dve. br	<ul> <li>Kill, F. G. Perkins.</li> <li>own sulphur, O. Hansmann.</li> <li>H. Iligen.</li> <li>cable terminal, W. L. Candee</li></ul>	640.559
Dye vat	, H. Illgen	540,20B
Electric	cable terminal, W. L. Candee640,363 to 6	640,365
Electric	e currents, rate indicator for, J Harris (	640,466
Electric	discharges, apparatus for producing, M.	
Otto	e furnace. F. E. Hatch	640,694
Electric	furnace, F. E. Hatch	40,283
Electric	beater, F. Bain	Li U, Zao
Electric	meter device, C. D. Haskins	010.155
Flootric	mine molding on though U Loo	CH0 175
Flootric	meter device, C. D. Haskins. transformer, Packard & Wiswell wire molding or trough, H. Lee cal apparatus, coin controlled, J. Patter-	O IG DIO
Electric	apparatus, com controlled, 5. 1 atter-	SAO 216
Electric	al distribution system, A. S. Hubbard	640,565
Electric	cal energy by alternating currents distri-	
buti	ng, M. I. Pupiń	540,515
Electric	al transmission by resonance circuits, M.	
I. Pı	upin	540.516
Electro	type or stereotype block, E. L. Wilson (	640,346
Elevato	r. See Hydraulic elevator.	003 019
Flovato	r accumulator, plunger, G. H. Reynolds. O	040,009
little	or. See Hydraulic elevator. or accumulator, plunger, G. H. Reynolds ( or speed regulator, hydraulic, W. W. Doo- e	640 544
Engine.	See Explosive engine. Gas engine.	
Rota	arv engine. Steam engine.	
Engine	cylinder, gas, J. W. Lambert640.667. (	640.668
Engine	igniter, gas, C. R. Alsop	640,252
Engine	ignition device, gas, G. W. Lewis640,392, 6	640,395
Engines	s. drum attachment for traction, A. L.	
Ada	ms.	40,351
Envelop	$\rho$ , G. H. Kalluali	240,409
Explosi	ve engine J A Secor	540 711
Extensi	ion table. Curl & McAnlis.	40.635
Fan. cra	adle motor, L. G. Rogers et al.	40,703
Fanning	g mill, P. Poyneer	40,588
Feather	rs into tubes, apparatus for compacting,	
C. T.	. Thompson	640.719
Freed wa	ater heater, L. C. Lanphear	140,475
Feeder,	boiler compound, L. E. Jones	40,306
Feeder,	device poultry W D Smith	340,484
Fence n	s. drum attachment for traction, A. L. ms. p. G. H. Randall	40 235
Fence w	reaving implement, C. A. Taylor	\$40.240
Fences.	ost, Spoore & Raub	
& Fr	y	540,307
Fencing	machine, wire, G. Schultz	540,329
Fender,	J. R. Reece	540,700
Fertilize	er arier, J. F. Bussells	40.628
Filter, C	J. R. Reece.	240,288
Filtor T	J. D. King	340.570
rince, J	majoi	10.013

(7789) H. P. J. asks: Could you give a formula for something that will really prevent mildew in sails? A. Dissolve 1 pound zinc sulphate in 40 gallons water, and then add 1 pound sal soda. When dissolved, 2 ounces tartaric acid are added. This holds the partially separated zinc carbonate without neutralizing the excess of alkali used. The canvas, etc., should be soaked iu this solution for 24 hours, and then dried without wringing.

(7790) C. A. R. asks: Can an 1/8 horse power electric fan be operated by electric bell batteries, and how many batteries will it require? A. The number of cells required to run an eighth horse power electric fan depends upon the voltage for which the motor was in middle latitudes it is about 60 feet, and in the Arctie wound. This is marked on the motor somewhere. To regions it is probably 100 feet below the surface of the

minium would be more impervious than the silk though not so strong.

(7797) J. L. asks: 1. Can you let me know a scientific way for testing the vitality of wheat? A. Plant the seed to be tested in moist soil in a flower potto the same depth as in the field. Keep the flower pot at a temperature not exceeding 80°. Under these conditions the wheat will germinate if any vitality remains in it. 2. How deep would I have to go into the earth to reach one degree hotter in the surrounding atmosphere ? A. The depth of the stratum of no change of temperature during the year varies with the latitude. At the equator it is only a foot or two below the surface, find the number of cells, divide the voltage by the voltage earth. At your place you will have to go down probably