

HINTS TO CORRESPONDENTS

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(8877) A. J. R. writes: I have a small machine requiring about 1/4 horse power to operate, and which we run continuously, and am desirous of getting some economical power to operate and run it, and write to ask if there is anything on the market more economical and satisfactory than the gasoline engine, and would it be possible to so arrange gears as to run the machine by clock-work, or weight or spring? A. There is no power in a small way so good or so cheap to run as a gasoline motor. You should have for your work one of a half horse power. Weights or springs have to be wound up, and only give out power for a very short time, and not all that is put into them in winding. They have been tried for useful work, and have been given up as only suitable for clocks, small fans, and for turning images and goods in show windows.

(8878) H. H. asks: Will you please tell me how much air compressed to 100 pounds pressure will expand when released? The quantity of air released to reduce pres-sure one pound. A. The air released from 100 pounds pressure will expand 41/4 times its volume. The quantity released to reduce the pressure one pound must be 0.068 of the volume of the air holder.

(8879) W. V. H. writes: In closed you will find drawing describing at the bottom what it will do. Please explain why the motor reverses when wire is connected at 4. A. When one cell is used in your Porter motor as shown in your diagram, the motor runs as a series motor. When you connect the second cell, the armature or the field, as you may look at it, is reversed, and the direction of the rotation of the armature is reversed. To reverse the current in both field and armature does not reverse a motor; to reverse one of these alone does reverse the motor.

(8880) F. A. H. writes: I am producing, in an induction coil, alternate currents in the secondary by employing, instead of the usual contact breaker, the change from highest to lowest resistance in the primary, just as is done in the telephone with the transmit. ter in series with the primary of the coil. 1 learned from you some time since that these secondary currents could be made pulsating direct by the use of a condenser. This has been argued against by others whom I have since been in connection with. Will you kind ly advise me just how to accomplish the desired results, either with the contact breaker or, for instance, the transmitter, should it be possible? A. With a condenser attached to an induction coil, the spark at the break of the circuit in the vibrator is made much longer than the spark at the making of the circuit through the primary. Hence if the spark terminals are drawn apart so far that no spark passes on the closing of the primary circuit, only the spark at the break can pass and that will always be in one direction. The secondary current becomes a pulsatory unidirectional current. When the spark terminals are near enough to each other, the secondary current passes both at the make and at the break of the primary circuit, and an alternating pulsatory current is produced in the secondary winding.

(8882) O. F. asks: Will two coils of insulated copper wire attract one another when an electrical current is passed through them in the proper directions? What is the maximum of attraction obtainable expressed relatively to the weight of the coils? A. A coil of wire carrying a direct electric current is an electromagnet, and two such coils will at-tract each other as two electromagnets will The attraction depends upon distance, do. mode of winding, amount of iron on the cores, etc. To determine the attraction of the coils you would use you should make and try them. You cannot use the alternating current in an electromagnet.

(8883) A. G. P. asks: For a magnet with cores $1\frac{1}{4}$ x 5-16 inch what size wire should I use to get the strongest magnetism when wound the multiple-wire method? Will a magnet wound this way be as strong as one wound the regular way? About what is number of pounds pull on the tailpiece of a guitar when the instrument is in tune? Α. There is no need to wind a small bar of iron by a multiple wire to obtain its magnetic saturation. Use any convenient number of wire from 20 to 24 and wind the spool to a depth of ¼ to 1-3 inch. Then two to four cells of battery will make it lift its full load. The theoretical lifting power would be 15 pounds which it is not probable you can reach. We are not able to give the pull upon the tailpiece of a guitar. If you have a spring balance, you can easily measure it by taking each string separately and tuning it to its note with one end attached to the hook of the balance. Get the strain in pounds for each string, and add the separate pulls together. You can do the same thing by using weights or stones instead of a balance and weighing them. The exercise of your ingenuity will enable you to do your own investigating, and be of more benefit to you than if we could tell you directly.

(8384) I. C. R. asks: What will make silk waterproof and stiff at the same time? A. After the silk has been soaked in glue and dried, it should be digested for several hours in a solution of alum ; this will make the glue insoluble, and therefore waterproof. Or the glue may be rendered insoluble by digesting the treated silk in a weak solution of formaldehyde. Casein can be used in place of the glue: after drying the treated silk, the casein can also be rendered insoluble by formaldehyde.

(8885) H. K. asks: How can I connect 12 31/2-volt lamps, consuming between 50 and 60 amperes each, on a 108-volt alternating current? Lamps are a trifle over 1 candle power. A. You cannot connect 12 31/2-volt lamps economically to a circuit with 108 volts in it. The twelve lamps have 42 volts in series. You can connect them in series to a resist ance, or inductance coil, and thus light them. You should apply to the company furnishing the current for the connection, and they will fit you out with the proper apparatus. Such low-voltage lamps are made for battery use, and ought not to be put on a high-voltage circuit.

(8886) D. H. F. asks: What percent age of shrinkage is there in the casting of brass? That is, how much larger should the pattern be to give the proper dimensions? A. The shrinkage allowance on patterns for casting brass should be 3-16 of an inch per foot in length or diameter.

(8887) F. S. P. asks: Can you furnish me with a recipe giving full directions for making Flemish oak finish? A. The wood is smoothly surfaced, and a solution of copperas containing one ounce in two quarts of water is brushed over. Follow this with an oil stain mixed with sienna or umber and drop black to color desired. Finish by waxing the wood one or more coats to get the desired effect, leaving the grain rubbed off smooth and open.

(8888) C. J. S. asks: Can you tell me how to make an electro-magnet to be used on 100-volt alternating current? A. An electromagnet cannot be used upon an alternating They are employed with a direct current. current. The alternating current flows first in one direction and then in the opposite direction through the circuit, so that the poles of the magnet are reversed at each alternation.

(8881) C. D. S. writes: We have a pancake griddle using charcoal which is not Such an arrangement is not serviceable. Upon opening the circuit they ampere. The peeling off from some of the work is prob-(8889) S. G. asks: What is used in quite well, since they have so large an area of I would like to convert it into an ably due either to imperfect cleaning of the a success. carbon. Three cells in series will have three the mantle of the Welsbach which gives to it object or by using too strong a current. electrical one. The size is 2 feet 5 inches by its brilliancy, and in what manner is it ap-plied; and also what change or action is it, times the voltage of one: in multiple they 1 foot 3% inches. How much and size of failure with the copper was due to the use of will have the same voltage as one cell. The the nitrate of copper, with which it is practisteel wire would be required to raise it to amperes cannot be given since they depend chemically or physically, that causes the the right heat at 110 volts pressure? A. We cally impossible to do any plating. mantle to glow so brilliantly? A. The Welsupon the resistance of the external, as well as sulphate, copper acetate, or copper carbonate, do not advise you to attempt the winding of upon the internal resistance of the cells. 7. bach mantle is made in the following manner an electrical griddle. The danger of fire is together with sufficient notassium cvanide to I have read that some damage might be done A net is woven out of thread, and this is then make the double salt, is the proper material to too great. Special asbestos insulation is reto a storage battery by overcharging, but that use. See "SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN Cyclopedia of Receipts," article on "Electro-metallurgy." thoroughly impregnated with a solution of the quired by the underwriters for such articles, there is always more or less damage done by mixed nitrates of thorium and cerium, in the and you would find it far cheaper in the end over-discharging. Could you please explain how to purchase an article made to conform to the proportions of 99 per cent of the former to (8896) H. M. H. asks if hard woods 1 per cent of the latter. It is put on the marthis (over-discharging) damages the battery requirements of the insurance companies. can be used in the manufacture of wood pulp. and is there any way in which to prevent it ket in this shape. Now, when a match is do not know the temperature of a griddle nor How fine wood is ground for the pulp? To by simply observing the lead plates or the sultouched to it, the thread burns away, and do we know the allowance to be made for rawhat process is the wood submitted after being phuric acid and water in which the plates are diation in such a large surface exposed to the the nitrates are decomposed to the respective immersed, in a simple home-made cell not ground, and in what shape is the pulp put for oxides and there remains therefore a coheren air. Much practical experience in designequipped with measuring instruments? (the market? A. Hard woods are not used; A. web of these oxides having just the shape and ing cooking utensils is needed to answer your spruce and the other pines give the best pulp: structure of the original net. Primarily, the Over-discharging injures a storage battery by question. You will probably need to use from linden and aspen give a whiter pulp, but of luminosity is caused by the high temperature, converting too much of the active material. 5 amperes to 15 amperes at the various heats. inferior quality. After grinding, the mass is It reduces a battery to too feeble a condition. just as is the case with the ordinary lime You would then require 22 ohms of wire so It may even be carried so far that it is scarce beaten to complete the disintegration and hard arranged as to be cut out by a switch to light, the heat rays of the flame being raised woody masses are separated. The pulp is ly possible to charge the cell properly again. See Treadwell's "Storage Battery" for more to light rays. Just why a mixture of thoria 7 1-3 ohms. You can obtain griddles of all then collected in endless screens and pressed sizes from the American Electric Heating Cor- and ceria, containing one per cent of the latter, poration, 1137 Monadnock Block, Chicago, 11. gives the maximum intensity of illumination, instruction upon these matters. No storage between rolls.

has not been definitely proven, though various theories have been advanced. Measurements with a thermo-element show that in the same zone of the Bunsen flame, this mixture will attain a higher temperature than either thoria or ceria or any other earth, if alone; while this does not explain why it attains a higher temperature, it does explain why there is greater luminosity.

(8890) D. McK. asks: How much does a bushel of vermilion red weigh? How (8890) D. McK. much does a bushel of yellow ocher weigh? What is the specific gravity of red lead? What is the specific gravity of white lead? Do of white potter's clay. Grind the mixture to vermilion red and red ocher mean the same thing? A. Ocher is very variable in character and weight: a Winchester bushel will weigh dry. After this, it is burned in an oven. A from 125 pounds to 170 pounds. As Venetian red is also equally variable, its weight will also vary, but runs somewhat higher than carbonate of soda, fused and powdered, mois-ocher. The specific gravity of red lead is about tened and dried, 20 pounds. To 45 pounds of 9: of white lead, about 6.5. Venetian red is made by burning ocher; the term red ocher is rather unusual, but it would probably be the same as Venetian red.

(8891) C. T. J. asks: 1. What is the equivalent of one II. P. in man power: i. e. about how much man power equals one II. P.? A. For constant work a horse power is equal to the work of 8 men. 2. What is the reason that two platinum strips are always placed in the acidulated water to be decomposed by an electric current? Why couldn't two strips of any other metal that is a conductor of electricity be used? A. Platinum is employed as electrodes in decomposing water because it is not attacked chemically by either the oxygen or hydrogen of the water when they appear upon it as nascent gases. It is the cheapest metal, if not the only one, of which this is true. Hydrogen can be collected by the use of carbon electrodes; but the oxygen combines with the carbon to form carbon dioxide, which can be collected if desired. Oxygen cannot be collected from carbon. 3. Could a small electric motor, say $\frac{1}{12}$ or $\frac{1}{22}$ II. P., to be run on a 110-volt, 51/2 or 6 ampere, alternating current, incandescent lighting circuit, be started and stopped by means of a switch only, or would a rheostat also be necessary as with the larger sized motors on circuits of higher voltages? A. A small electric motor is usually provided with the proper coils for starting and running at two or three speeds in the machine itself. The switch then has three or four points, and is fastened to the frame of the motor. It is more convenient to place these in a separate place in a large motor. 4. Would you please state the difference between the induction coil used in connection with the X-rays and telephony, and the inductance coil used in wireless telegraphy? A. An induction coil has two windings, the primary and the sec-ondary. A current in the primary induces another current in the secondary, of a different voltage and current strength in amperes. Such are Ruhmkorff coils and transformers gener-An inductance coil has a single windally. ing, usually without iron, to act as a restraint upon the rush of the current through the cir-This it does by the counter electromocuit. tive force produced in the coil by its self-induction. Its effect is produced not merely by its resistance in ohms, but also by the impedance due to the reactance of the turns of the coil upon the current. 5. About what would be The heat is lost, since we do not live up there. the voltage and the amperage of a Wimshurst frictional electric machine having its two circular discs of glass 16 inches in diameter (each), the glass being 1-16 inch thick? (Machine gives a spark $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 inches long.) A. The voltage corresponding to a given length of spark cannot be stated in exact figures. It depends upon a number of factors : whether plates or balls are employed as terminals, and their size in each case; also upon both temperature and pressure of the atmosphere. A good discussion of this is to be found in Thompson's "Elementary Lessons." About 28,000 volts are usually given as the pressure needed to force a spark through one inch of dry air. 6. About what would be the voltage and the amperage of a No. 4 Laclede sal ammoniac cell? What would it be, and how is it calculated, for a battery of three such cells in series, in multiple? A. The Laclede cell has about 1.4 volts on open circuit, as do all the various forms of sal ammoniac cells. On nickel adhere better. I tried it, but did not closed circuit it quickly falls to 1 volt or less, if the current is as great as two-tenths of an

battery should be run for work without having the proper instruments for indicating its condition.

(8892) G. J. V. asks what are the ingredients used in the manufacture of lava insulators; also enamel on the backs of resistance plates. A. The enamels used on insulators are the same as are used on dishes. There are many formulas. A good one is: Take quartz, 100 pounds, calcined and ground; borax glass, ground, 50 pounds. Mix, fuse in a crucible, and let cool slowly. Powder 40 pounds of this glass, and mix with 5 pounds a fine paste in water. Apply to a clean surface, and let it stand in a warm dry place to glaze can be put upon this by using a powder of white glass 125 pounds, borax 25 pounds, this add 1 pound soda. Mix thoroughly and dry. Then reduce to a fine powder. Dust the surface of the enamel while still moist with this powder, and then bake. Several coatings of the glaze may be put on, one after another. The lavas are made of fine clays baked as porcelain is treated. For many receipts for doing this see "Cyclopedia of Receipts."

(8893) O. C. S. writes: A friend of mine claims that the wheels of a railroad car slip sideways only when rounding a curve. claim that they also have what I shall call, for want of a better expression, a rotary slip; that on a slow-moving train the outer wheels slip, while on a faster train the inside wheels slip. What are the facts in the case. A. The wheel flanges of railway cars bear against the outer rail when rounding a curve by their momentum, and against the inner rail when strongly pulled by the locomotive. The inner and outer wheels both slip, the inner one forward and the outer one backward, according to the conditions of running on a curve. The centrifugal force at high speed throws the greater weight on the outer wheels, when the inner wheels slip forward.

(8894) C. E. H. asks: If we take a Bunsen burner using good fuel gas, capable of 700 heat units per cubic foot, and burn this with a naked flame, the heat resulting from each cubic foot of gas consumed would be diffused into the surrounding atmosphere, and would raise the temperature as high as 800 units. Now, if we take the same burner and surround it with a sheet metal tube after the marner of an ordinary gas radiator, and in addition to the tube place two or three metal deflector plates at a convenient distance above the flame, so as to have as much radiating surface as possible, we find under these conditions the temperature of the surrounding atmosphere is raised very much higher than it would with the naked flame, although we are using the same burner and producing approximately the same number of heat units per cubic foot of gas. How do you explain this increased efficiency for heating? A. Your difficulty with the difference in the heating power of gas when burned with an open flame or with a radiator is easy of explanation. When the open flame is used, the heat is carried up to the ceiling in a strong current of air, and the upper part of the room is much hotter than the lower part. A radiator does just what its name implies_ stops the rising of the heat. The heat of the flame is communicated to the metal of the radiator, and this acts as the real heater. It sends out the heat, down and all around with equal facility. You can test this with a thermometer, and see how the air below the radiator is heated. With the open flame the space below the flame is cold, by reason of the draft of cold air drawn in to feed the flame. Radiant heat travels down as easily as it rises. Convection currents of air always rise, and carry the heat up with them.

(8895) G. H. B. says: I have just commenced to nickel-plate, and am plating for large stove firm; they have all one can do. I have turned out some fine work, but some of the nickel will peel off. As I am a beginner, I have used nickel salts and single salts for the exposed parts. I was told to plate the pieces in nitrate of copper first, to make the get any copper plate on. Please tell me the best way to get the best results of platings.

Copper

Scientific American

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(8897) A. F. S. asks: Does not liquid oxygen as produced by liquid air become opaque to magnetism, that is, is it slightly attracted by a magnet? A. Oxygen was discovered to be a magnetic substance by Faraday in 1849, by noting that it was attracted to a magnet pole just as iron is, though to a lesser degree. Becquerel was the first to call attention to the subject in recent times. In 1892 Dewar, having 695Water St., Seneca Falls, N.Y. produced liquid oxygen in large quantity, renewed the matter and showed that liquid oxygen has about one-thousandth of the magnetic moment of iron. Liquid oxygen is shown in a tube swinging to the pole of a magnet, in Sloane's "Liquid Air," page 337, but the language used in the text describing the experiment is not correct. It should read : "Oxygen was discovered to be magnetic by Faraday." The fact is just the opposite of the statement of the book

(8898) R. R. J. asks what voltage is required to jump a spark gap of 1/4 inch, and if the voltage is in direct proportion to the width of spark gap. Also, how to determine the number of oscillations and wave length wireless telegraph system as mentioned in SUPPLEMENT No. 1383. Siemens & Halske system or any sys-A. The voltage necessary to force a tem. spark through 1/4 inch of air varies greatly with the shape of the terminals, as points, balls or plates; and with the pressure, moisture, and temperature of the air. Thus a spark 1-5 inch long was produced between balls 1-10 inch in diameter by 16,200 volts; and between balls 1 inch in diameter by 18,900 volts pressure. The subject quite fully treated in Thompson's The subject is "Elementary Lessons." The methods of meas uring lengths of electrical waves will be found in papers given before the American Institute of Electrical Engineers. Prof. Pupin has pre sented several papers upon these topics, which we cannot abstract in a letter.

(8899) S. M. G. inquires whether a jump spark coil can be made by single windings instead of primary and secondary windings. If so, what size wire and how heavy insulation is best for a current of 5 to 8 volts pressure? A. A coil can be made for gas lighting and similar small uses with one winding; but a jump spark of sufficient length to make a sure ignition in a gas engine should be an induction coil with primary and secondary windings. A spark coil with one winding may be made with a core 10 inches long, covered with paper. The winding should be of cotton-covered magnet wire, say No. 14, of which 300 feet or thereabout may be wound on. The spark is given at the breaking of the circuit, and is due to self-induction. Each layer may be separated from the adjacent layers by brown paper, not very thick. No very definite rules are required, as there is a great difference to be noted among these coils. The battery may vary, and as it runs down, more cells may be attached.

(8900) A. B. C. asks for a formula for oxidizing linseed oil without litharge; want to have oil very heavy and bright, and entirely free from fat. A. Keep the oil at a temperature of somewhat over 130 deg. C., while a current of air is passed through or over it: then increase the temperature until the oil begins to effervesce from evolution of products of combustion. By continued boiling the oil becomes very thick and may be drawn out into elastic threads, which are very sticky, but do not produce a greasy stain in paper.

(8901) R. F. D. asks: In the Planté type of cell, how many square inches of positive plate surface are reckoned for one am-pere-hour? By Planté type I understand that metallic leaden plates are immersed in the elec trolyte, which I suppose is correct. A. The Planté type of secondary cell is defined by Foster in his "Electrical Pocket Book" to be "con structed of lead plates so designed as to present a large surface area to the action of the electrolyte, the active material being formed on the plates, either electrically by charging and dis-are i charging, commonly called forming, or chemi-in all cally." The same authority gives a formula for calculating the theoretical capacity of a cell per pound of active material. This is the better way of expressing it, since to base the capacity upon the surface will not take the thickness into account. The practical results given are: For lead peroxide and the same weight spongy lead per ampere hour: 0.53 ounce for a ten-hour rate of discharge : 0.62 ounce for a five-hour rate of discharge; 0.70 ounce for a three-hour rate of discharge; 1.00 ounce for a one-hour rate of discharge. These numbers are for plates of ordinary thickness and an electro- B. F. BARNES COMPANY, Rockford, Ill. lyte of the density of 1.200. (8902) P. S. B. wants to know the composition and the method of manufacture. of carborundum. A. The mixture from which carborundum is produced consists primarily of coke and sand, to which is added a small amount of salt to facilitate fusion, and a small amount of sawdust, which evolves gases upon heating, and these gases tend to keep the mass more porous and thus facilitate the escape of the carbon monoxide gases later produced. This mixture is packed between the two carbon poles carrying the current, there being, however, a central core of coke placed directly between the carbon poles, providing thus a conductor for the current and so overcoming the difficulty of starting up, and also keeping the internal resistance more uniform by breaking up the arc into numerous small arcs. Carborundum is a silicide of carbon; the formula is CSi,







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supplying water manipulated and Without questi al and durable w