

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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APPARATUS FOR UTILIZING EFFECTS TRANSMITTED FROM A DISTANCE TO A RECEIVING DEVICE THROUGH NATURAL MEDIA.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 685,955, dated November 5, 1901.

Original application filed June 24, 1899, Serial No. 721,790. Divided and this application filed September 8, 1899. Re-issued May 29, 1901. Serial No. 82,317. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, NIKOLA TESLA, a citizen of the United States, residing at the borough of Manhattan, in the city, county, and State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Apparatus for Utilizing Effects Transmitted from a Distance to a Receiving Device Through the Natural Media, of which the following is a specification, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, which form a part of the same.

This application is a division of an application filed by me June 24, 1899, Serial No. 721,790, in which a method of utilizing effects or disturbances transmitted through the natural media from a distant source is described and made the subject of the claims. The invention of my present application consists in the apparatus hereinafter described and claimed, by the use of which the method claimed in my said prior application may be practiced and by means of which results hitherto unattainable may be secured.

Several ways or methods of transmitting electrical disturbances through the natural media and utilizing them to operate distant receivers are now known and have been applied with more or less success for accomplishing a variety of useful results. One of these ways consists in producing by a suitable apparatus rays or radiations—that is, disturbances—which are propagated in straight lines through space, directing them upon a receiving or recording apparatus at a distance, and thereby bringing the latter into action. This method is the oldest and best known, and has been brought particularly into prominence in recent years through the investigations of Heinrich Hertz. Another method consists in passing a current through a circuit, preferably one inclosing a very large area, inducing thereby in a similar circuit, situated at a distance, another current and affecting by the same in any convenient way a receiving device. Still another way, which has also been known for many years, is to pass in any suitable manner a current through a portion of the ground, as by connecting to two points of the same, preferably at a considerable distance from each other, the two

terminals of a generator and to energize by a part of the current diffused through the earth a distant circuit, which is similarly arranged and grounded at two points widely apart and which is made to act upon a sensitive receiver. These various methods have their limitations, one, especially, which is common to all, being that the receiving circuit or instrument must be maintained in a definite position with respect to the transmitting apparatus, which often imposes great disadvantages upon the use of the apparatus.

In several applications filed by me and patents granted to me I have disclosed other methods of accomplishing results of this nature, which may be briefly described as follows: In one system the potential of a point or region of the earth is varied by imparting to it intermittent or alternating electrifications through one of the terminals of a suitable source of electrical disturbances, which to heighten the effect has its other terminal connected to an insulated body, preferably of large surface and at an elevation. The electrifications communicated to the earth spread in all directions through the same, reaching a distant circuit, which generally has its terminals arranged and connected similarly to those of the transmitting source, and operates upon a highly-sensitive receiver. Another method is based upon the fact that the atmospheric air, which behaves as an excellent insulator to currents generated by ordinary apparatus, becomes a conductor under the influence of currents of impulses of enormously high electromotive force which I have devised means for generating. By such means air strata, which are easily accessible, are rendered available for the production of many desired effects at distances, however great. This method, furthermore, allows advantage to be taken of many of those improvements which are practicable in the ordinary systems of transmission involving the use of a metallic conductor.

Obviously whatever method be employed it is desirable that the disturbances produced by the transmitting apparatus should be as powerful as possible, and by the use of certain forms of high-frequency apparatus which

I have devised and which are now well known important practical advantages are in this respect secured. Furthermore, since in most cases the amount of energy conveyed to the distant circuit is but a minute fraction of the total energy emanating from the source, it is necessary for the attainment of the best results that whatever the character of the receiver and the nature of the disturbances as much as possible of the energy conveyed should be made available for the operation of the receiver, and with this object in view I have heretofore, among other means, employed a receiving-circuit of high self-induction and very small resistance and of a period such as to vibrate in synchronism with the disturbances, whereby a number of separate impulses from the source were made to cooperate, thus magnifying the effect exerted upon and insuring the action of the receiving device. By these means decided advantages have been secured in many instances; but very often the improvement is either not applicable at all or if so the gain is very slight. Evidently when the source is one producing a continuous pressure or delivering impulses of long duration it is impracticable to magnify the effects in this manner, and when, on the other hand, it is one furnishing short impulses of extreme rapidity of succession the advantage obtained in this way is insignificant, owing to the radiation and the unavoidable frictional waste in the receiving-circuit. These losses reduce greatly both the intensity and the number of the cooperative impulses, and since the initial intensity of each of these is necessarily limited only an insignificant amount of energy is thus made available for a single operation of the receiver. As this amount is consequently dependent on the energy conveyed to the receiver by one single impulse, it is evidently necessary to employ either a very large and costly, and therefore objectionable transmitter, or else resort to the equally objectionable use of a receiving device too delicate and too easily deranged. Furthermore, the energy obtained through the cooperation of the impulses is in the form of extremely-rapid vibrations and because of this unsuitable for the operation of ordinary receivers, the more so as this form of energy imposes narrow restrictions in regard to the mode and time of its application to such devices. To overcome these and other limitations and disadvantages which have heretofore existed in such systems of transmission of signals or intelligence is the object of my invention, which comprises a novel form of apparatus for accomplishing these results.

The apparatus which is employed at the receiving-station, described in general terms, consists in the combination of a storage device included in a circuit connecting points at a distance from the source of the disturbances and between which a difference of potential is created by such disturbances, a receiving-

circuit connected with the storage device, a receiver included in such receiving-circuit, and means for closing the receiving-circuit at any desired moment, and thereby causing the receiver to be operated by the energy with which the storage device has been charged.

The best form of apparatus for carrying out my invention of which I am now aware and the manner of using the same will be understood from the following description and the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figure 1 is a diagrammatic illustration of such apparatus, and Fig. 2 a modified form or arrangement of the same.

At any two points in the transmitting medium between which there exists or may be obtained in any manner through the action of the disturbances or effects to be investigated or utilized a difference of electrical potential of any magnitude I arrange two plates or electrodes so that they may be oppositely charged through the agency of such effects or disturbances, and I connect these electrodes to the terminals of a highly-insulated condenser, generally of considerable capacity. To the condenser-terminals I also connect the receiver to be operated in series with a device of suitable construction which performs the function of periodically discharging the condenser through the receiver at and during such intervals of time as may be best suitable for the purpose contemplated. This device may merely consist of two stationary electrodes separated by a feeble dielectric layer of minute thickness, or it may comprise terminals one or more of which are movable and actuated by any suitable force and are adapted to be brought into and out of contact with each other in any convenient manner. It will now be readily seen that if the disturbances, of whatever nature they may be, cause definite amounts of electricity of the same sign to be conveyed to each of the plates or electrodes above mentioned either continuously or at intervals of time which are sufficiently long the condenser will be charged to a certain potential and an adequate amount of energy being thus stored during the time determined by the device effecting the discharge of the condenser the receiver will be periodically operated by the electrical energy so accumulated; but very often the character of the impulses and the conditions of their use are such that without further provision not enough potential energy would be accumulated in the condenser to operate the receiving device. This is the case when, for example, each of the plates or terminals receives electricity of rapidly-changing sign or even when each receives electricity of the same sign, but only during periods which are short as compared with the intervals separating them. In such instances I resort to the use of a special device which I insert in the circuit between the plates and the condenser for the purpose of conveying to each of the terminals of the latter electrical charges

of the proper quality and order of succession to enable the required amount of potential energy to be stored in the condenser.

There are a number of well-known devices, either without any moving parts or terminals or with elements reciprocated or rotated by the application of a suitable force, which offer a more ready passage to impulses of one sign or direction than to those of the other or permit only impulses of one kind or order of succession to traverse a path, and any of these or similar devices capable of fulfilling the requirements may be used in carrying my invention into practice. One such device of familiar construction which will serve to convey a clear understanding of this part of my invention and enable a person skilled in the art to apply the same is illustrated in the annexed drawings. It consists of a cylinder A, of insulating material, which is moved at a uniform rate of speed by clockwork or other suitable motive power and is provided with two metal rings BB', upon which bear brushes *a* and *a'*, which are connected, respectively, in the manner shown to the terminal plates P and P', above referred to. From the rings B B' extend narrow metallic segments *s* and *s'*, which by the rotation of the cylinder A are brought alternately into contact with double brushes *b* and *b'*, carried by and in contact with conducting-holders *h* and *h'*, which are adjustable longitudinally in the metallic supports D and D', as shown. The latter are connected to the terminals T and T' of a condenser C, and it should be understood that they are capable of angular displacement as ordinary brush-supports. The object of using two brushes, as *b* and *b'*, in each of the holders *h* and *h'* is to vary at will the duration of the electric contact of the plates P and P' with the terminals T and T', to which is connected a receiving-circuit, including a receiver R and a device *d* of the kind above referred to, which performs the duty of closing the receiving-circuit at predetermined intervals of time and discharging the stored energy through the receiver. In the present case this device consists of a cylinder made partly of conducting and partly of insulating material *e* and *e'*, respectively, which is rotated at the desired rate of speed by any suitable means. The conducting part *e* is in good electrical connection with the shaft S and is provided with tapering segments *f f*, upon which slides a brush *k*, supported on a conducting-rod *l*, capable of longitudinal adjustment in a metallic support *m*. Another brush *n* is arranged to bear upon the shaft S, and it will be seen that whenever one of the segments *f* comes in contact with the brush *k* the circuit including the receiver R is completed and the condenser discharged through the same. By an adjustment of the speed of rotation of the cylinder *d* and a displacement of the brush *k* along the cylinder the circuit may be made to open and close in as rapid succession and remain open or closed

during such intervals of time as may be desired. The plates P and P' through which the electrifications are conveyed to the brushes *a* and *a'* may be at a considerable distance from each other and both in the ground or both in the air or one in the ground and the other in the air, preferably at some height, or they may be connected to conductors extending to some distance or to the terminals of any kind of apparatus supplying electrical energy which is obtained from the energy of the impulses or disturbances transmitted from a distance through the natural media.

In illustration of the operation of the devices described let it be assumed that alternating electrical impulses from a distant generator, as G, are transmitted through the earth and that it is desired to utilize these impulses in accordance with my method. This may be the case, for example, when such a generator is used for purposes of signaling in one of the ways before enumerated, as by having its terminals connected at two points of the earth distant from each other. In this case the plates P and P' are first connected to two properly-selected points of the earth, the speed of rotation of the cylinder A is varied until it is made to turn in synchronism with the alternate impulses of the generator, and, finally, the position of the brushes *b* and *b'* is adjusted by angular displacement, as usual, or in other ways, so that they are in contact with the segments *s* and *s'* during the periods when the impulses are at or near the maximum of their intensity. Only ordinary electrical skill and knowledge are required to make these adjustments, and a number of devices for effecting synchronous movement being well known and it being the chief object of my present application to set forth a novel apparatus embodying a general principle a detailed description of such devices is not considered necessary. I may state, however, that for practical purposes in the present case it is only necessary to shift the brushes back and forth until the maximum effect is secured. The above requirements being fulfilled, electrical charges of the same sign will be conveyed to each of the condenser-terminals as the cylinder A is rotated, and with each fresh impulse the condenser will be charged to a higher potential. The speed of rotation of the cylinder *d* being adjustable at will, the energy of any number of separate impulses may thus be accumulated in potential form and discharged through the receiver R upon the brush *k* coming in contact with one of the segments *f*. It will be of course understood that the capacity of the condenser should be such as to allow the storing of a much greater amount of energy than is required for the ordinary operation of the receiver. Since by this method a relatively great amount of energy and in a suitable form may be made available for the operation of a receiver, the latter need not be very sensitive; but of course when the im-

pulses are very feeble, as when coming from a great distance or when it is desired to operate a receiver very rapidly, then any of the well-known devices capable of responding to very feeble influences may be used in this connection.

If instead of the alternating impulses short impulses of the same direction are conveyed to the plates P and P', the apparatus described may still readily be used, and for this purpose it is merely necessary to shift the brushes b and b' into the position indicated by the dotted lines, while maintaining the same conditions in regard to synchronism as before, so that the succeeding impulses will be permitted to pass into the condenser, but prevented from returning to the ground or transmitting medium during the intervals between them, owing to the interruption during such intervals of the connections leading from the condenser-terminals to the plates.

Another way of using the apparatus with impulses of the same direction is to take off one pair of brushes, as b, disconnect the plate P from brush a and join it directly to the terminal T of the condenser, and to connect brush a with brush a'. When thus modified, the apparatus appears as shown in Fig. 2. Operated in this manner and assuming the speed of rotation of cylinder A to be the same, the apparatus will now be evidently adapted for a number of impulses per unit of time twice as great as in the preceding case. In all cases it is evidently important to adjust the duration of contact of segments s and s' with brushes b b' in the manner indicated.

When the apparatus I have described is used in connection with the transmission of signals or intelligence, it will of course be understood that the transmitter is operated in such a way as to produce disturbances or effects which are varied or intermitted in some arbitrary manner—for example, to produce longer and shorter successions of impulses, corresponding to the dashes and dots of the Morse alphabet—and the receiving device will respond to and indicate these variations or intermittences, since the storage device will be charged and discharged a number of times corresponding to the duration of the successions of impulses received.

Obviously the special appliances used in carrying out my invention may be varied in many ways without departing from the spirit of the same.

It is to be observed that it is the function of the cylinder A, with its brushes and connections, to render the electrical impulses coming from the plates P and P' suitable for charging the condenser (assuming them to be unsuitable for this purpose in the form in which they are received) by rectifying them when they are originally alternating in direction or by selecting such parts of them as are suitable when all are not, and any other device performing this function will obviously answer the purpose. It is also evident that

a device such as I have already referred to which offers a more ready passage to impulses of one sign or permits only impulses of the same sign to pass may also be used to perform this selective function in many cases when alternating impulses are received. When the impulses are long and all of the same direction, and even when they are alternating but sufficiently long in duration and sustained in electromotive force, the brushes b and b' may be adjusted so as to bear on the parts B B' of the cylinder A, or the cylinder and its brushes may be omitted and the terminals of the condenser connected directly to the plates P and P'.

It will be seen that by the use of my invention results hitherto unattainable in utilizing disturbances or effects transmitted through natural media may be readily attained, since however great the distance of such transmission and however feeble or attenuated the impulses received enough energy may be accumulated from them by storing up the energy of succeeding impulses for a sufficient interval of time to render the sudden liberation of it highly effective in operating a receiver. In this way receivers of a variety of forms may be made to respond effectively to impulses too feeble to be detected or to be made to produce any sensible effect in any other way of which I am aware—a result of great value in scientific research as well as in various applications to practical use.

What I claim as my invention, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

1. In an apparatus for utilizing electrical effects or disturbances transmitted through the natural media, the combination with a source of such effects or disturbances of a charging-circuit adapted to be energized by the action of such effects or disturbances, a storage device included in the charging-circuit and adapted to be charged thereby, a receiver, and means for causing the receiver to be operated by the energy accumulated in the storage device at arbitrary intervals of time, substantially as described.

2. In an apparatus for utilizing electrical effects or disturbances transmitted through the natural media, the combination with a source of such effects or disturbances of a charging-circuit adapted to be energized by the action of such effects or disturbances, a storage device included in the charging-circuit and adapted to be charged thereby, means for commutating, directing or selecting the current impulses in the charging-circuit, a receiving-circuit, and means for discharging the storage device through the receiving-circuit, substantially as described.

3. In an apparatus for utilizing electrical effects or disturbances transmitted through the natural media, the combination with a source of such effects or disturbances of a charging-circuit adapted to be energized by the action of such effects or disturbances, a condenser included in the charging-circuit

and adapted to be charged thereby, means for commutating, directing or selecting the current impulses in the charging-circuit, a receiving-circuit, and means for discharging the condenser through the receiving-circuit, substantially as described.

4. In an apparatus for utilizing electrical effects or disturbances transmitted through the natural media, the combination with a source of such effects or disturbances of a charging-circuit adapted to be energized by the action of such effects or disturbances, a storage device included in the charging-circuit and adapted to be charged thereby, means for commutating, directing or selecting the current impulses in the charging-circuit so as to render them suitable for charging the storage device, a receiving-circuit, and means for discharging the storage device through the receiving-circuit, substantially as described.

5. In an apparatus for utilizing electrical effects or disturbances transmitted through the natural media, the combination with a source of such effects or disturbances of a charging-circuit adapted to be energized by the action of such effects or disturbances, a condenser included in the charging-circuit and adapted to be charged thereby, means for commutating, directing or selecting the current impulses in the charging-circuit so as to render them suitable for charging the condenser, a receiving-circuit, and means for discharging the condenser through the receiving-circuit, substantially as described.

6. In an apparatus for utilizing electrical effects or disturbances transmitted through the natural media, the combination with a source of such effects or disturbances of a charging-circuit adapted to be energized by the action of such effects or disturbances, a storage device included in the charging-circuit and adapted to be charged thereby, means for commutating, directing or selecting the current impulses in the charging-circuit so as to render them suitable for charging the storage device, a receiving-circuit, and means for discharging the storage device through the receiving-circuit at arbitrary intervals of time, substantially as described.

7. In an apparatus for utilizing electrical effects or disturbances transmitted to a distant receiving-station, the combination with a source of such effects or disturbances of a circuit distant from the source and adapted to have current impulses set up in it by the action of the effects or disturbances, a storage device, means for commutating, directing or selecting the impulses and connecting the circuit with the storage device at succeeding intervals of time synchronizing with the impulses, a receiving-circuit, and means for periodically discharging the storage device through the receiving-circuit, substantially as described.

8. In an apparatus for utilizing electrical effects or disturbances transmitted to a dis-

tant receiving-station, the combination with a source of such effects or disturbances of a circuit distant from the source and adapted to have current impulses set up in it by the action of the effects or disturbances, a condenser, means for commutating, directing or selecting the impulses and connecting the circuit with the condenser at succeeding intervals of time synchronizing with the impulses, a receiving-circuit, and means for periodically discharging the condenser through the receiving-circuit, substantially as described.

9. In an apparatus for utilizing electrical effects or disturbances transmitted through the natural media, the combination with a source of such effects or disturbances of a circuit connecting points at a distance from the source between which a difference of potential is created by such effects or disturbances, a storage device included in such circuit and adapted to be charged with the energy supplied by the same, a receiving-circuit connected with the storage device, a receiver included in such receiving-circuit, and means for closing the receiving-circuit and thereby causing the receiver to be operated by the energy accumulated in the storage device, substantially as described.

10. In an apparatus for utilizing electrical effects or disturbances transmitted through the natural media, the combination with a source of such effects or disturbances of a circuit at a distance from the source which is energized by such effects or disturbances, a storage device adapted to be charged with the energy supplied by such circuit, means for connecting the storage device with the said circuit for periods of time predetermined as to succession and duration, a receiving-circuit connected with the storage device, a receiver included in such receiving-circuit, and means for closing the receiving-circuit and thereby causing the receiver to be operated by the energy accumulated in the storage device, substantially as described.

11. In an apparatus for utilizing electrical effects or disturbances transmitted through the natural media, the combination of a circuit connecting points at a distance from the source between which a difference of potential is created by such effects or disturbances, a storage device included in such circuit and adapted to be charged with the energy supplied by the same, a receiving-circuit, a receiver included in such circuit, and means for connecting the receiving-circuit with the storage device for periods of time predetermined as to succession and duration and thereby causing the receiver to be operated by the energy accumulated in the storage device, substantially as described.

12. In an apparatus for utilizing electrical effects or disturbances transmitted through the natural media, the combination of a circuit connecting points at a distance from the source between which a difference of potential is created by such effects or disturbances, a

storage device adapted to be charged with the energy supplied by such circuit for succeeding and predetermined periods of time, a receiving-circuit, a receiver included in the receiving-circuit, and means for connecting the receiving-circuit with the storage device for periods of time predetermined as to succession and duration and thereby causing the receiver to be operated by the energy accumulated in the storage device, substantially as described.

13. In an apparatus for utilizing electrical effects or disturbances transmitted through the natural media, the combination of a circuit connecting points at a distance from the source, between which a difference of potential is created by such effects or disturbances, a condenser included in such circuit and adapted to be charged by the current in the same, a receiving-circuit connected with the condenser, a receiver included in such receiving-circuit, and a device adapted to close the receiving-circuit at arbitrary intervals of time and thereby cause the receiver to be operated by the electrical energy accumulated in the condenser, substantially as described.

14. In an apparatus for utilizing electrical effects or disturbances transmitted through the natural media, the combination of a charging-circuit distant from the source and energized by the effects or disturbances, a storage device included in the charging-circuit, means included in the charging-circuit and acting in synchronism with the impulses therein for commutating, directing or selecting the impulses, a receiving-circuit and means for periodically discharging the storage device through the receiving-circuit, substantially as described.

15. In an apparatus for utilizing electrical effects or disturbances transmitted through the natural media, the combination of a charging-circuit distant from the source and energized by the effects or disturbances, a condenser included in the charging-circuit, means included in the charging-circuit and acting in synchronism with the impulses therein for commutating, directing or selecting the impulses, a receiving-circuit and means for periodically discharging the condenser through the receiving-circuit, substantially as described.

16. In an apparatus for transmitting signals or intelligence through the natural media from a sending-station to a distant point, the combination of a generator or transmitter adapted to produce arbitrarily varied or intermitted

electrical disturbances or effects in the natural media, a charging-circuit at the distant point adapted to receive corresponding electrical impulses or effects from the disturbances or effects so produced, a storage device included in the charging-circuit, means included in the charging-circuit and acting in synchronism with the impulses therein for commutating, directing or selecting the impulses so as to render them suitable for charging the storage device, a receiving-circuit and means for periodically discharging the storage device through the receiving-circuit, substantially as described.

17. In an apparatus for transmitting signals or intelligence through the natural media from a sending-station to a distant point, the combination of a generator or transmitter adapted to produce arbitrarily varied or intermitted electrical disturbances or effects in the natural media, a charging-circuit at the distant point adapted to receive corresponding electrical impulses or effects from the disturbances or effects so produced, a condenser included in the charging-circuit, means included in the charging-circuit and acting in synchronism with the impulses therein for commutating, directing or selecting the impulses so as to render them suitable for charging the condenser, a receiving-circuit and means for periodically discharging the condenser through the receiving-circuit, substantially as described.

18. In an apparatus for transmitting signals or intelligence through the natural media from a sending-station to a distant point, the combination of a generator or transmitter adapted to produce arbitrarily varied or intermitted electrical disturbances or effects in the natural media, a circuit at the distant point adapted to receive corresponding electrical impulses or disturbances from the disturbances or effects so transmitted, a storage device included in such circuit and adapted to be charged thereby, a receiving-circuit connected with the storage device, a receiver included in the receiving-circuit and a device for closing the receiving-circuit at arbitrary intervals of time and thereby causing the receiver to be operated by the energy accumulated in the storage device, substantially as described.

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'APPARATUS FOR UTILIZING' EFFECTS TRANSMITTED FROM A DISTANCE TO A RECEIVING DEVICE THROUGH NATURAL MEDIA.

(Application filed Sept. 8, 1899. Renewed May 29, 1901.)

(No Model.)

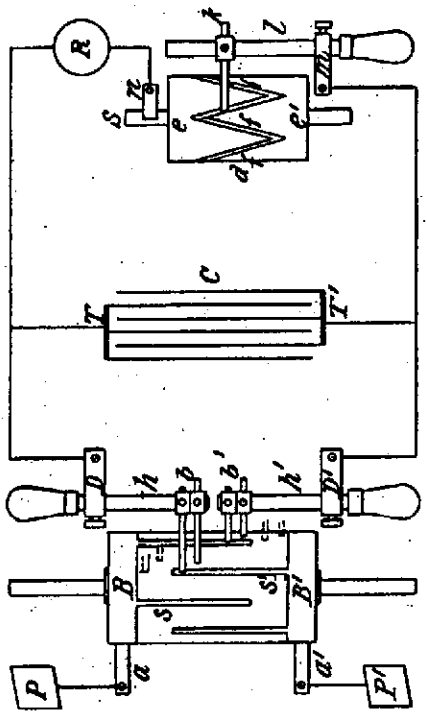


Fig. 1

(G)

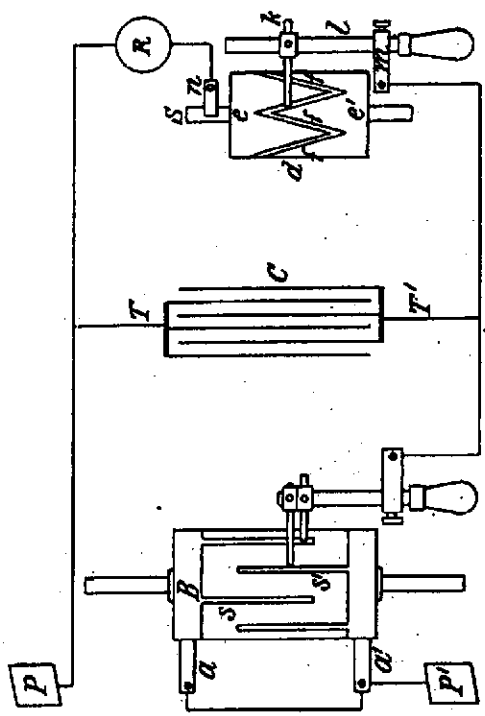


Fig. 2

(G)

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