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MULTI-COMPARTMENT CABINET STRUCTURE
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1. Claim.

2. Claims. (Cl. 312—298)

This invention relates to an improvement in distribution cabinets, more particularly to cabinets having a plurality of individual compartments therein.

In many types of establishments, particularly manufacturing plants, it is frequently desirable to provide some device whereby laundry, tools or other equipment may be left by individuals in locked compartments, to which only they have access, and yet whereby the agent of the laundry company, or tool or equipment distributor or custodian, will be enabled, when required, to open all the compartments at once.

In the past, it has often been necessary for the person in charge to have a master key which opens a large number of individual cabinets. Such a procedure is slow and cumbersome, requiring as many manipulations of the locks as there are individual cabinets.

It is among the objects of this invention to provide a cabinet which obviates this disadvantage and which is nevertheless so constructed that individuals may have access only to their own compartments.

It is a more particular object of this invention to provide means on said cabinet by which the opening and closing of the entire plurality of compartments, in unison, may be controlled by only one lock, notwithstanding the provision of different locks for the individual compartments.

Another object is to achieve these results by means of a construction which is mechanically simple, relatively inexpensive to manufacture, staunch and reliable in operation, and attractive in appearance.

In accordance with this invention, there is provided a cabinet, usually of tall, narrow dimensions, containing a plurality of closely adjacent superposed compartments and individual closures for these compartments. The closures or doors are hinged to the cabinet along a common vertical hinge axis and each is provided with a locking tongue reciprocally mounted and adapted to project from the free edge thereof. A common keeper for the tongues is hinged to the cabinet along a vertical hinge axis and adapted to be locked in a position overlying the tongues. Thus, when the keeper is in its locked position, it detains the individual closures by bearing against their respective tongues. If the user of one of the compartments wishes to gain access thereto, then by means of his individual key he can cause the tongue of his compartment closure to retract so that it no longer projects beyond the free edge of the closure. The individual compartment can then be opened.

In aid of the aforementioned objects of this invention, there is also provided a spring-loaded ball projecting beyond one of the horizontal edges of each closure and a corresponding socket at the other horizontal edge of each closure, so positioned that each ball fits into the socket in the edge of the adjacent closure. This permits the entire bank of closures to be swung open or closed as a single unit, while still allowing the individual closures to be opened independently of one another.

In the accompanying drawings constituting a part hereof, in which like reference characters indicate like parts,
ing in the center where they might be locked by a single common keeper, or by two keepers side-by-side. In such a case, of course, each bank of closures would open in a different direction.

These and other changes in the details of the device may be made without departing from the principles herein set forth, and the invention is therefore to be broadly construed and not to be limited except by the character of the claims appended hereto.

Having thus described my invention and illustrated its use, what I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:

1. In a distribution cabinet, a pair of side walls, a rear wall, a series of horizontal partitions extending between the side walls and defining a plurality of closely adjacent superposed compartments, a plurality of individual closures for the compartments, the closures being hinged to the cabinet along a common vertical hinge axis, a locking tongue reciprocally mounted on each closure and adapted to project from the free edge thereof, a common keeper for said tongues hinged to the cabinet along a vertical hinge axis and means for locking said keeper in a position overlying said tongues, and yieldable interengaging means carried by adjacent closures to permit movements thereof in unison when the tongues of said closures are released from said keeper.

2. In a distribution cabinet, a pair of side walls, a rear wall, a series of horizontal partitions extending between the side walls and defining a plurality of closely adjacent superposed compartments, a plurality of individual closures for the compartments, the closures being hinged to the cabinet along a common vertical hinge axis, a locking tongue reciprocally mounted on each closure and adapted to project from the free edge thereof, a common keeper for said tongues hinged to the cabinet along a vertical hinge axis, and means for locking said keeper in a position overlying said tongues.

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