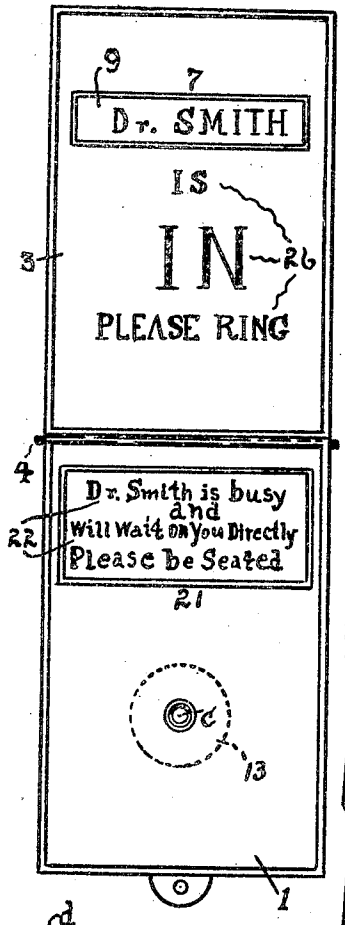
Feb. 12, 1924. 1,483,724

O. G. GERNER

OFFICE INDICATOR

Filed March 30, 1923

Fig. 1.



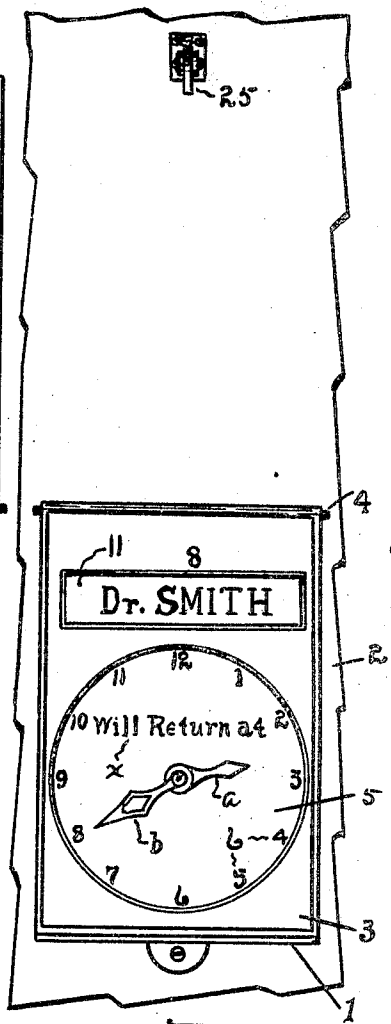


Fig. 2.

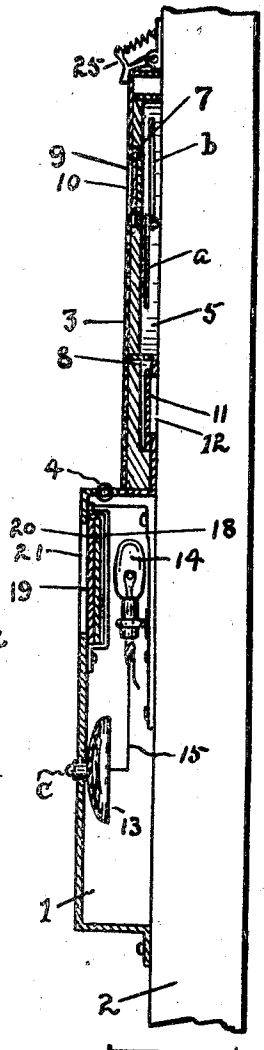


Fig. 3.



Fig. 4.

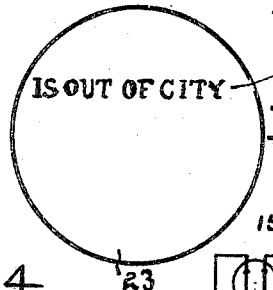


Fig. 5.

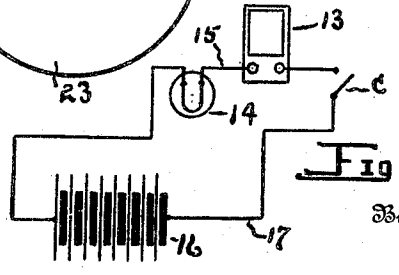


Fig. 6.

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Patented Feb. 12, 1924. 1,483,724

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

OTTO G. GERNER, OF MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA.

OFFICE INDICATOR.

Application filed March 30, 1923. Serial No. 628,710.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, OTTO G. GERNER, a citizen of the United States, residing at Minneapolis, in the county of Hennepin and State of Minnesota, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in an Office Indicator, of which the following is a specification.

This invention relates to a device for use of professional and other office people, to be displayed for indicating the presence of an individual at his customary place, or absence and probable time of his return, or absence for an indefinite period, and is particularly of advantage in instances where two or more individuals have private offices or consulting-rooms communicating with a main waiting room, since a client, patient or other inquiring person or visitor may be automatically informed of the absence or may be readily brought into communication with the particular individual wanted without confusion or inquiry, and without requiring the presence of an attendant.

The object of the invention is to provide a simple, compact and convenient device bearing the name of the individual, which may be placed in a conspicuous position and may be quickly set to indicate his presence in his private office or consulting-room; also may be set to indicate the hour of his return, if temporarily absent, or that he is on a vacation, or is ill, or out of the city, or other specific information denoting an indefinite term of absence; another object being to provide an audible signal for calling the individual from his private office to the waiting-room, and means operating automatically for answering the signal, and requesting the visitor to be seated, should the individual be engaged and not able immediately to answer in person. The invention also includes certain compartments for the exhibition of placards or announcement-plates bearing information relating to the name of the individual, his presence, or absence from the office.

With the foregoing objects in view the invention presents a novel construction, combination and arrangement of parts, as described herein and claimed, and as illustrated in the accompanying drawing, wherein,—

Fig. 1 is a front view of the device when the movable casing has been swung upwardly and after the electric buzzer has been sounded. Fig. 2 shows the device mounted upon a wall or other support, the movable casing being swung downwardly. Fig. 3 is a view of the device in longitudinal section and secured to a support, the movable casing being swung upwardly. Fig. 4 is a sectional view of the disc-shaped announcement-plate shown in Fig. 5. Fig. 5 is a front view of the announcement-plate. Fig. 6 illustrates an electrical circuit.

Referring now to the drawing, the device consists in part, of an upright, stationary box or casing 1 adapted to be secured to a wall 2 or other support, and a movable casing 3, hinged or pivoted as indicated at 4, to the top of the stationary casing 1.

The movable casing 3 is provided with a circular recess 5 opening on one of its sides, the face or bottom of said recess being provided with words of information *x* and with hour-numerals 6; also hour and minute-hands *a* and *b* being provided therein and arranged on a pivot to be swung manually to indicate to a visitor the expected time of return, if the individual is temporarily absent from the office, said casing 3 for this purpose being first swung downwardly to a position at the front of the stationary casing, as shown in Fig. 2. The movable casing is also provided with compartments 7 and 8.

Numeral 9 indicates a name-plate adapted to be inserted in the compartment 7 or to be removed therefrom, an aperture 10 being provided in the wall of the casing so that the name may be seen.

Numeral 11 indicates a second name-plate, corresponding to the name-plate 9, adapted to be inserted in the compartment 8, or to be removed therefrom, an aperture 12 being provided in the wall at the opposite side of the casing from the aperture 10, to permit the name to be visible.

Numeral 13 indicates an electric buzzer provided with a push-button *c*, and at 14 is indicated an incandescent lamp, these being mounted in the stationary casing and being in communication by means of an electrical conductor 15 energized by any suitable source of electrical supply, as the electrical battery 16, an electrical conductor 17 leading from the latter to the buzzer, and

it will be understood that, by use of the buzzer, illumination will occur within the casing.

Numeral 18 indicates a compartment which is provided in the stationary casing, adjacent to the the lamp 14, for receiving two glass plates 19 and 20 to be disposed side-by-side, an aperture 21 being formed in the wall of this casing to permit an unobstructed view from the front, the plate 19 nearest to the outer side of the casing being translucent, and the plate 20, adjacent to the lamp, and designated as an announcement-plate, being provided with words indicated at 22 (Fig. 1) tending to inform the visitor that the individual is engaged, temporarily, and requesting the visitor to be seated; and it will be understood that, on account of the provision of the transparent plate, the words indicated at 22 thereon will not be visible to the visitor until after the buzzer has been sounded; also that the act of sounding the buzzer will cause, co-incident therewith, an illumination of the casing, the brilliancy of the illumination being sufficient in degree to permit the words 22 to be plainly visible. While glass has been specifically mentioned for use in constructing the plates 19 and 20, any other suitable material may be used, the important feature being that the words indicated at 22 will not be visible until the casing has been illuminated.

Numeral 23 indicates an announcement-plate of disc-form provided with words 24, informing the visitor that the individual is out of the city, and after the casing 3 has been swung downwardly to the position shown in Fig. 2, it may be placed, to cover the dial, in the recess 5 and may be removably secured therein by its flange *d* which may engage in circular wall of said recess.

It will of course be understood that other announcement-plates, and any desired number of them, may be used, each being adapted to be substituted for the plate 23, said plates bearing varying data and announcing reasons why the individual is absent from the office, this feature being of especial advantage in instances where a waiting room is used in common by two or more individuals, as a time saving feature and tending to avoid annoyance. Also it will be understood that the name-cards 9 and 11 may be removed from their compartments and other name-cards substituted. Also the announcing words indicated at 22, for the transparent plate 20, may be changed, if desired.

In the use of the device, an individual upon entering his office, may swing the casing 3 upwardly to be held by the catch-member 25, and it is obvious that the side of the casings then exposed to view will exhibit words indicated at 9 and 26, representing that the individual is in his private office and requests a vistor to "please ring," the translucent glass 19 in the aperture 21 at that time appearing as a blank and the words at 22 not being visible. However, upon pressing the push-botton *c* the buzzer will be sounded and the words indicated at 22 will then be visible, informing the visitor that the individual "is busy" but will be in attendance "directly," and invites the visitor to be seated, the advantage of this construction being that, in operation, the signal, and illumination and announcement 22 saves the time of the individual and dispenses with the personal services of an attendent.

Upon leaving his office the individual may release the casing 3 from its spring-catch and swing it downwardly, and if his absence is to be temporary he may set the hands *a* and *b* to indicate the intended time for his return, and if his absence is to be for an indefinite period he may place the disc-shaped announcement-plate 24 in the recess 5, thereby covering the numerals 6 and hands *a* and *b*, and giving a reason for his absence, or such information as may be provided for a plate of similar form to the plate 24, which as above mentioned, may be substituted for said plate 24.

While I have described details of construction, I do not wish to be understood as limiting myself in this respect, and changes in size, form, proportion and minor details may be made, said changes being determined by the scope of the invention as claimed.

What I claim as my invention is,—

1. In an office indicator, a stationary, upright casing, a second casing hinged to the top and adapted to be swung downwardly to the front or to be swung upwardly from the stationary casing, a name-plate and words of information and a numbered dial on the side of the second casing that is exposed when said casing has been swung downwardly to the front of the stationary casing, an obscured announcement-plate provided with words and a movable push-button on the side of the stationary casing adapted to be exposed when the second casing has been swung upwardly, a name-plate and words of direction on the second casing adapted to be exposed when said second casing has been swung upwardly, hands pivoted to the second casing centrally of the dial, and means operative by a movement of the push-button for directing rays of light to the obscured announcement-plate.

2. In an office indicator, a stationary, upright casing, a second casing hingeably connected and adapted to be swung downwardly to the front or to be swung upwardly from the stationary casing, a catch for holding the second casing when it has been swung

upwardly, a name-plate and words of information and a numbered dial on the side of the second casing that is exposed when said casing has been swung downwardly, an obscured announcement-plate provided with words and a movable push-button on the side of the stationary casing adapted to be exposed when the second casing has been swung upwardly, a name-plate and words of direction on the second casing adapted to be exposed when said second casing has been swung upwardly, hands pivoted to the second casing centrally of the dial, an incandescent lamp in the casing, an electrical signal-member, an energized, normally open electrical circuit including said lamp and signal-member, said electrical circuit being adapted to be closed by a movement of the push-button for causing illumination of the announcement-plate.

3. In an office indicator, a stationary, upright support, a second support hingeably connected with and adapted to be swung downwardly to the front or to be swung upwardly from the stationary support, a catch for holding the second support when it has been swung upwardly, an obscured announcement-plate provided with words and a movable push-button on the side of the stationary support adapted to be exposed when the second support has been swung upwardly, a name-plate and words of direction on the second support adapted to be exposed when said second support has been swung upwardly, and means operative by a movement of the push-button for causing rays of light to be directed to the announcement-plate.

In testimony whereof, I have affixed my signature in presence of two witnesses.

OTTO G. GERNER.

Witnesses:
W. E. SAGE,
H. O. KALLESTAD.