

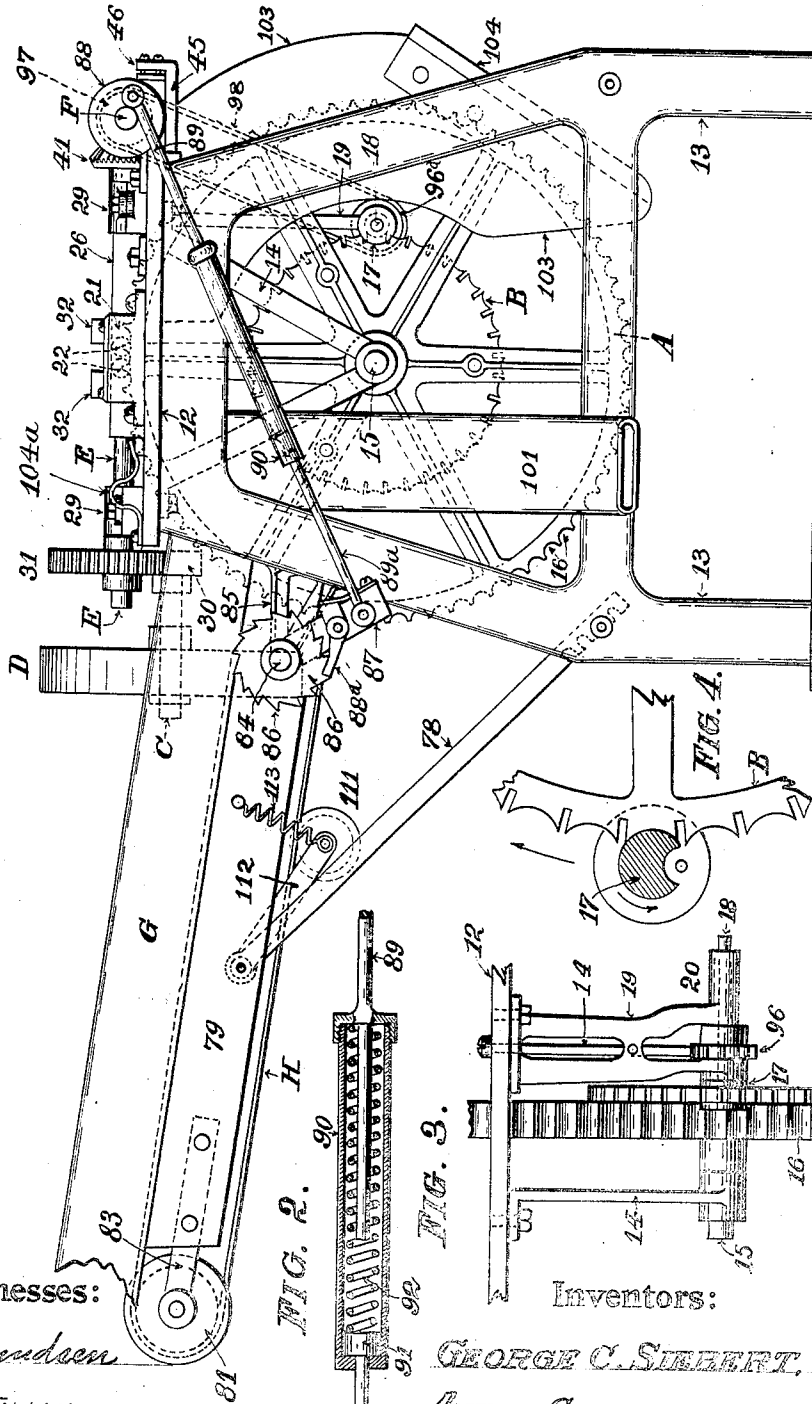
G. C. SIEBERT & A. GERSTMAYR.
MACHINE FOR CRACKING NUTS.
APPLICATION FILED DEC. 26, 1911.

1,062,742.

Patented May 27, 1913.

4 SHEETS—SHEET 1.

FIG. 1.



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4 SHEETS—SHEET 2.

FIG. 5.

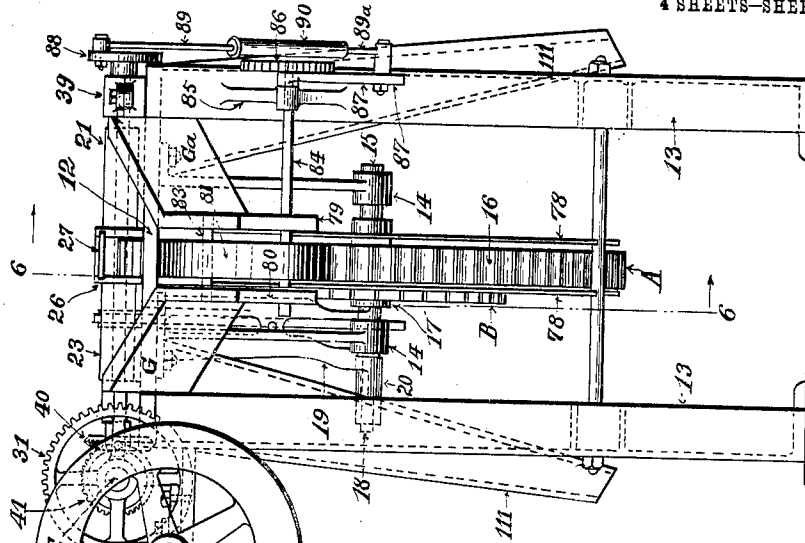
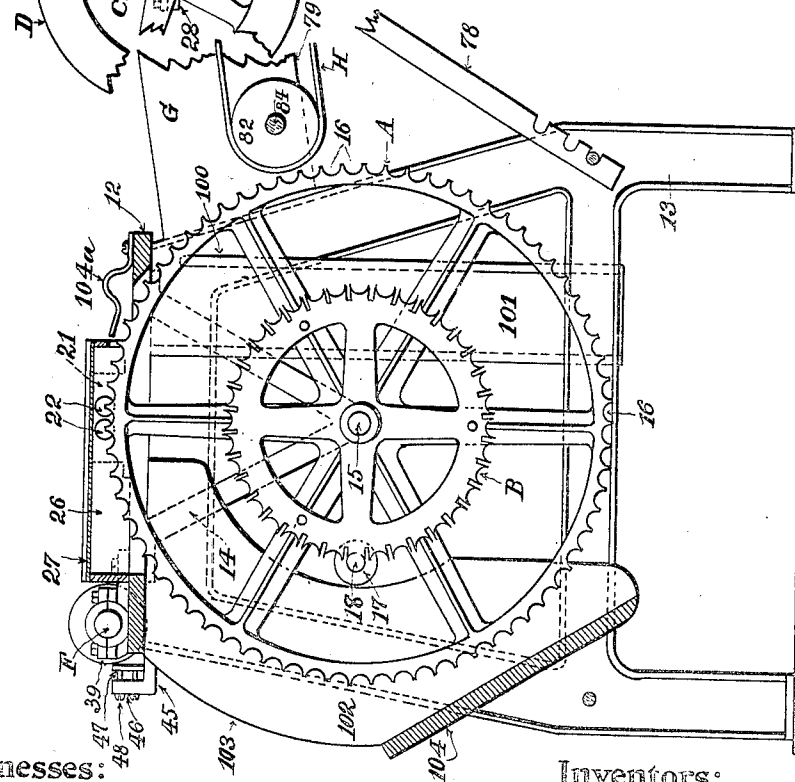


FIG. 6.



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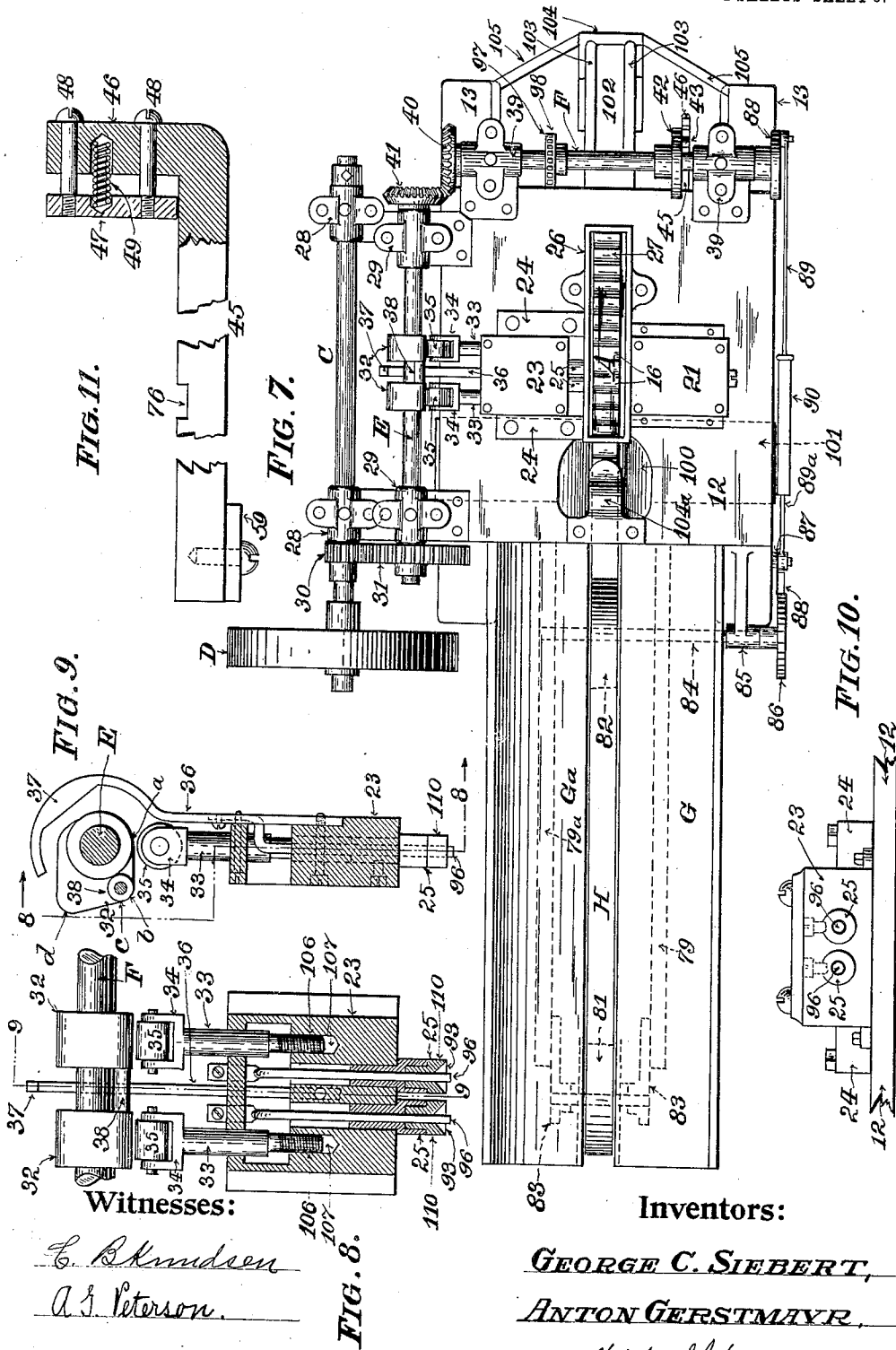
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4 SHEETS—SHEET 3.



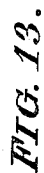
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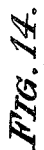
1,062,742.

4 SHEETS—SHEET 4.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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MACHINE FOR CRACKING NUTS.

1,062,742.

Specification of Letters Patent.

Patented May 27, 1913.

Application filed December 26, 1911. Serial No. 667,898.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that we, GEORGE C. SIEBERT and ANTON GERSTMAYR, citizens of the United States, and residents of Chicago, in Cook county, State of Illinois, have jointly invented certain new and useful Improvements in Machines for Cracking Nuts; and we do hereby declare that the following description of our said invention, taken in connection with the accompanying sheets of drawings, forms a full, clear, and exact specification, which will enable others skilled in the art to which our said invention appertains to make and use the same.

This invention has general reference to nut-cracking machines; and it consists, essentially, in the novel and peculiar combination of parts and details of construction, as hereinafter first fully set forth and described, and then pointed out in the claims.

The object of this invention is the production of an efficient, serviceable, durable, and very effective machine for cracking all kinds of vegetable nuts; which will automatically adjust itself to all sizes of such nuts, and crack them with a degree of uniformity which has not heretofore been successfully accomplished.

In the drawings already referred to, which illustrate the preferred embodiment of our invention, and which serve to fully disclose our invention, Figure 1 is a side elevation of this nut-cracking machine. Fig. 2 is a sectional view of a portion of the connecting rod which operates the feed-belt actuating mechanism. Fig. 3 is a fragmental elevation of a portion of the feed wheel, the Geneva-gear mechanism, and those parts immediately connected therewith. Fig. 4 is a view of a portion of the Geneva-gear wheel and the pinion that rotates the same intermittently. Fig. 5 is an end elevation of the complete machine. Fig. 6 is a longitudinal sectional elevation of the same on the indirect line 6—6 of Fig. 5, a portion of the conveyer-trough being broken away. Fig. 7 is a plan of the machine. Fig. 8 is a plan, partly in section, of the mechanism that contains the cracking rams, the section being taken on line 8—8 of Fig. 9. Fig. 9 is a sectional view on line 9—9 of Fig. 8. Fig. 10 is an end elevation of the slide containing the cracking rams. Fig. 11 is an elevation of the sliding bar detached, the figure being drawn on an increased scale and

partly broken for lack of space. Fig. 12 is a plan, partly in section on line 5—5 of Fig. 13, of the abutment plungers and the rack and pinion mechanism connected therewith, the table top of the machine being omitted to disclose the underlying parts. Fig. 13 is a sectional elevation of the same on line 4—4 of Fig. 12. Fig. 14 is an end elevation of a portion of the table top, the sliding bar, the dog, and the racks that operate the gearing shown in Fig. 13.

Like parts are designated by the same characters and symbols of reference in all the various figures.

This machine comprises a table top 12, mounted on suitable standards or legs 13. From this table top depend two brackets 14, having bearings at their lower ends to receive a shaft 15, upon which is fixedly mounted a feed wheel A; and attached to this feed wheel and concentric therewith, there is secured a so-called Geneva gear wheel B, which latter gear wheel is smaller in diameter than the feed wheel so that the latter wheel will move at its periphery through twice the distance of the former wheel.

The feed wheel A has in its face or outer periphery of its rim a series of approximately semi-circular depressions or pockets 16, which are sufficiently large to accommodate nuts of all kinds. This feed wheel is operated by the one-cog pinion 17 of the Geneva gearing engaging the notches in the said gear wheel, to rotate the latter gear wheel one notch for every revolution of said pinion. This pinion 17 is secured to a shaft 18, journaled in a bearing 20, formed on a bracket 19, secured to the under side of the table top 12, as best shown in Fig. 3; and which holds the Geneva gear wheel rigidly except when the cog on the pinion engages one of the notches in the wheel B, as already described, to produce the step-by-step movement peculiar to the Geneva gearing.

The feed wheel A presents the nuts located in the depressions 16 thereof to the cracking mechanism comprising the following mechanism: Upon the table top 12, at one side of the projecting portion of the feed wheel A there is secured a preferably rectangular block 21, which is bored longitudinally to receive one or more abutment plungers 22, which plungers are spaced to

correspond to the pitch of the depressions 16 in the feed wheel, their axial lines coinciding with the pitch line of said feed wheel A. Upon the opposite side of the feed wheel there is located a slidable block 23, which is mounted between guides 24, and which carries at its end adjacent to the feed wheel two cracking rams 25, Figs. 8 and 9, which rams are spaces to coincide with the spacing of the abutment plungers 22; and they are so located that their axial lines aline with those of the latter plungers.

Upon the table top and surrounding that part of the feed wheel that protrudes the same, there is a casing 26, having a glass or other transparent cover 27, to enable the action of the nut cracking mechanism being observed, the longitudinal walls of said casing being perforated to permit the abutment plungers and the cracking rams to enter the space in said casing.

The mechanism for reciprocating the sliding member 23, and also for other mechanisms hereinafter to be referred to, comprises the following elements: At the back of, and below the table top 12, there are located two back bearings 28, Fig. 7, wherein is journaled a main driving shaft C, receiving its rotative motion from any desired source, not shown, by a pulley D. Upon the table top, and at one margin thereof, there are further bearings 29, wherein is journaled a counter shaft E, parallel to the shaft C, and from which it receives its rotary motion through the intervention of a gear pinion 30, secured to the main shaft and a spur gear wheel 31, fastened upon one end of said counter shaft E. Upon the counter shaft E there are located, preferably two cams 32; and to the slide 23 there are secured two rods 33, having double eyes 34, wherein are journaled anti-friction rollers 35, which rollers are engaged by said cams and move the slide 23 by a step-by-step movement in one direction, said slide being retracted by a rod 36, having a hook 37, engaged by a wrist pin 38, located between the cams 32, said rod 36 being secured to the under side of the slide 23.

The mechanism for operating the abutment plungers 22 include the following elements: At one end of the table top 12 there are located bearings 39, wherein is journaled a transverse shaft F, which carries at one end a bevel gear wheel 40; and at the end of the counter shaft C adjacent to the bevel gear wheel 40 and meshing therewith, there is a corresponding bevel gear wheel 41. On the shaft F there is mounted a crank disk 42, having a roller pitman 43, said shaft F receiving rotary motion from the counter shaft E.

Underneath the table top 12 there are provided suitable guides 44, in which there is movably arranged a sliding bar 45, the outer

end of which is bent at right angles to afford a hook 46, there being adjacent to this hook a strike-plate 47, movably held to the hook 46 preferably by screws 48, a spring 49, being interposed between the hook and the plate to afford yielding resistance to said hook, when the roller pitman 43 strikes said plate at a predetermined moment of the revolution of the shaft F. Adjacent to the guides 44 there is a further guide 53, which has two parallel grooves or ways 53^a, wherein are located movable rack-bars 54, 55. These rack-bars have at one of their ends hooks 56, to which one end of the springs 57 is hitched, the other ends of said springs being secured to attaching devices, such as shown at 58 in Fig. 13. These springs in their normal condition are under tension or expanded, and they function in a manner hereafter to be explained.

At the end opposite that having the hook 46, the sliding bar 45 has a laterally extending bar 59, which engages the base-plates 59^a of the hooks 57 on the racks, to pull the racks in one direction. These racks engage pinions 60, 61, which pinions are secured to shafts 62, 63, having suitable bearing in the fixed block 21, as clearly shown in Fig. 12. Upon these shafts there are also secured spur-gears 64, 65, which, in turn, engage pinions 66, 67, mounted upon screw-shafts 68, 69, which are also journaled in bearings in said fixed block 21. These screw-shafts have coarsely threaded portions 70, 71; and in the bores of the abutment plungers 22 there are correspondingly screw-threaded nuts wherewith the externally screw-threaded portions 70, 71, engage so that when said shafts 66, 67, are rotated in one direction the plungers 22 will move outwardly in the block 21, and when rotated in the opposite direction, said plungers will be retracted, the latter position being the normal one and illustrated in Fig. 12, said plungers being prevented from rotation by any desired means, not shown. At the side of the sliding bar 45 there is a groove or channel 72, in the guide 44, wherein is located a dog 73, pivoted in said guide by a pivot 74, said dog having a laterally extending catch 75, constructed to engage a notch 76 in the sliding bar 45, to retain the latter in its normal position. Upon the periphery of the crank disk 42, there is a protuberance 76^a, shown in Fig. 13, which protuberance when reaching the tail 77 of the dog 73 will depress said tail and thereby lift the catch 75 out of the notch 76 in the sliding bar 45, to release the latter bar.

As heretofore stated, the normal position of the sliding bar and the racks is the one in which the latter elements have retracted the abutment plungers, as illustrated in Figs. 12 and 13, the springs attached to the racks being in tension. Now, as soon as the

sliding bar 45 is released these springs will be permitted to relax and pull the racks 54, 55, in the direction shown by arrows in Fig. 12, thereby rotating the gear mechanism and the screw-shafts in the manner already described. Assume now that in the depressions in the feed wheel A, which are in line with the abutment plungers and the cracking rams, there are nuts to be cracked, it follows that the springs 57 will pull the racks until the abutment plungers bear upon said nuts, and that if one nut is longer than the other, the rack governing the plunger acting upon that particular nut will not travel as far as the other rack which latter rack will then pull the sliding bar along until the corresponding plunger comes to a stop against the shorter nut. As soon as the cracking rams have advanced and cracked the two nuts in the peripheral depressions of the feed wheel, the wrist pin 43 of the crank disk 42 reaches the plate 47 and acting thereupon, will pull the rod 45, and with it, the two racks and the abutment plungers and the cracking rams back to their normal position, the catch on said dog will engage the notch in said sliding bar and hold the same in normal position.

We shall now describe the action of the cracking rams 25, that cooperate with the abutment plungers to crack the nuts placed between them: The counter shaft E being rotated, the cams 32 thereon advance the sliding block 23, the portions of the cams embraced between the points *a-b*, performing this function, and then come to rest for a short space of time as the cams rotate from the points *b* to the points *c*. Then the portions of the cams between the points *c-d*, will further advance the sliding block 23 (and the cracking rams) which advance performs the cracking operation and is at all times uniform in the distance moved, after which the crank roller 38 acting upon the curved portion of the bar 36 will retract the sliding block 23 to its normal position. The timing of these various movements is as follows: First the feed wheel rotates a distance equal to two depressions in the periphery thereof and leaves the same in position for the cracking rams to enter these depressions which takes place as soon as the feed wheel stops, said cracking rams making their first advance and come to rest a short distance within the casing 26. At this moment the protuberance 76^a on the crank disk 42 reaches the tail 77 of the dog 73 and trips the same thereby releasing the sliding bar 45 and with it the racks and move the abutment plungers in position as already described. Immediately after these plungers have come to rest and have clamped the nuts between them and the cracking rams, the latter will make their final advance and thereby crush or break the shells of said

nuts, the cracking rams and the abutment plungers will now retract in unison, and these cycles will be repeated as long as the machine is being kept supplied with nuts and the moving parts kept in motion.

The nuts to be cracked are placed in a trough attached to the machine and supported thereon by bars 78. This trough includes two inclined members G, G^a, having downwardly extending skirts 79, 79^a, in spaced parallel relation. Between these skirts there is located a conveyer belt H, which is trained over pulleys or drums 81, 82, the former being at the rear end of the trough and the latter at the forward end thereof. The pulley 81 has a shaft rotating in bearings 83 extending from the rear end of the skirts, while the pulley 82 is mounted on a shaft 84, journaled near one end in a bearing 85, projecting from one of the legs 13. At this end of the shaft 84 there is secured a ratchet wheel 86, and adjacent to this ratchet wheel there is mounted upon said shaft a rocking arm 87, carrying a pivoted dog 88^a which engages the teeth in said ratchet wheel 86 and moves the same in one direction. This rocking arm 87 is operated by a crank disk 88, fastened at the forward end of the transverse shaft F and connected to said rocking arm by a connecting rod 89. This connecting rod is yieldingly constructed so that should any obstruction be met by the conveyer belt, the rod will be prevented from moving the rocking arm. The preferred construction of this connecting rod is shown in Fig. 2, and includes a tube 90, to which one end of the rod 89 is secured. In this tube there is a loosely fitting piston 91, secured at one end to the rod 89^a, the other end of said rod 89^a being pivoted to the rocking arm 87. In this tube there is a spiral spring 92, which bears at one end upon said piston, and functions in an obvious manner.

In order that the nuts to be cracked are properly centered between the cracking rams and the abutment plungers the engaging ends of these parts are countersunk or cone-shaped as shown at 93 in Fig. 8, and at 94 in Fig. 12; and in order that no parts of shells from the nuts may be retained in these cone shaped ends, knockouts are provided, as follows: The abutment plungers 22, as stated, are tubular structures, and at the ends of the screw shafts 70, 71, there are formed extensions or rods 95, which when the plungers are in retracted position, project slightly beyond the ends of said plungers, as shown in Fig. 12. These screw shafts do not move longitudinally, hence when they are rotated and the plungers are moved outwardly, their ends will be within the bore of the plungers, and when returning, the ends of the rods 95 will dislodge any fragments of the nut-shells that may

have located in the countersinks 94. The knockouts for the cracking rams comprise rods 96, secured at one end upon the table top 12 and passed through the bores of the rams 25 to project slightly beyond the ends thereof. The operation of these knockouts is substantially the same as the described operation of those of the abutment plungers so that a detailed description thereof is deemed superfluous.

As hereinbefore stated, the Geneva gear pinion rotates the gear wheel B together with the feed wheel A; and this pinion is rotated by a sprocket wheel 96^a, mounted on the pinion shaft 18, and connected to a sprocket wheel 97 mounted on the transverse shaft F, Figs. 1 and 7, by a link belt 98. The nuts to be cracked are carried forward by the conveyer belt H toward the feed wheel A; but in order to prevent too great an accumulation of nuts adjacent to the pickup portion of said feed wheel, there is placed at the sides of this wheel and a suitable distance above the pulley 82, a transverse wall 100, which forms, as it were, a dam. Whenever more nuts are conveyed forward than what the feed wheel can take care of, the surplus nuts will pass over this dam and drop into chutes 101, and out of the same into suitable receptacles, not shown, placed underneath the ends of said chutes, and from which they may be removed and returned to the trough by elevating mechanism of any desired and approved construction, or in any other convenient manner.

The cracked nuts are carried around by the feed wheel until they can drop off by gravity, into a chute 102. This chute includes two curved side members 103, and an inclined bottom member 104, which chute conducts the cracked nuts to a suitable receptacle, not shown, placed underneath said chute 102. This chute is secured in position by braces 105, Fig. 7, or any other efficient means.

In order that the nuts to be cracked may be properly placed in the semi-circular depressions of the feed wheel, there is located upon the table top adjacent to the end of the casing 26, a curved guard 104^a, constructed of resilient metal underneath which the nuts will pass and be straightened when required, before reaching the cracking mechanisms.

It will be observed that by constructing and operating the abutment plungers as described, that is to say, advancing them by means of feed screws independently of springs, these abutment plungers cannot be pushed back when the cracking rams are operating upon the nuts and that these abutment plungers are, in fact, positive stops or abutments, in contradistinction to nut-cracking devices in which the plungers are advanced by springs and held by clutch

mechanism or friction to prevent retraction, which mechanisms are not always positive locking means and are liable to slip or get out of order, especially when very hard nuts are being cracked. In our present device the springs 57 furnish, by contraction, means only sufficient to rotate the screw shafts in one direction to advance the abutment plungers, said plungers being retracted by mechanism entirely independent of said springs.

It will be further observed that each rack has its own spring and controls its own plunger independently of the other, which accounts for it that nuts of different lengths will be properly clamped between the abutment plungers and the cracking rams, and that they all receive the same amount of pressure from the cracking rams when being cracked.

In the foregoing description we have disclosed, and in the drawings we have shown two abutment plungers and two cracking rams, which are ample for all practical purposes; but it is evident that a greater number of these sets of elements may be arranged in this machine if desired; or that but one set may be installed where a somewhat cheaper machine is a desideratum.

In order that the antifriction rollers 35 on the sliding block 23 may bear equally on the cams 32, adjustment is provided by screw threading the rods 33, as shown in Fig. 8 at 106, and entering these rods in internally screw-threaded bores 107, in said slide 23, the manner of making adjustment being by rotating the parts 33 in the proper direction.

For the purpose of providing for compensation for wear of the cracking rams and the abutment plungers at their operating ends, we provide these members with removable heads 110, which heads are preferably made from hardened steel, and held in position by screws, or other suitable means not shown, so that they may be readily removed and replaced when desired or occasion demands. And in order that slack in the conveyer belt may be taken up automatically, we provide the trough G, G^a, with an idler pulley 111, having an axle journaled in links 112, pivoted to, and depending from, the skirts 79, 79^a, and having a spring 113, to pull the links toward the skirts and thereby keep the conveyer belt automatically taut.

Having thus fully described this invention, we claim as new and desire to secure to us by Letters Patent of the United States—

1. In a machine for cracking nuts, the combination, of a rotatable feed wheel constructed to receive the nuts to be cracked, mechanism for intermittently rotating said feed wheel located at the side of the said feed wheel, cracking rams located at the side of said feed wheel and constructed to ad-

vance by a step-by-step movement, abutment plungers located at the side of the feed wheel opposite the cracking rams and in alinement with the latter, screw-mechanism for advancing and retracting said abutment plungers, and mechanisms for advancing and retracting said cracking rams, said screw-mechanism including a crank and racks and gearing connected thereto to move said screw mechanism in one direction, and spiral springs constructed to move said racks and gearing in the opposite direction.

2. In a machine for cracking nuts, the combination, of a rotatable feed wheel having pockets in its periphery constructed to receive nuts to be cracked, mechanism constructed to rotate said feed wheel by a step-by-step movement, abutment plungers located at one side of said feed wheel, screw-shafts constructed to advance and retract said abutment plungers, cracking rams at the opposite side of said feed wheel and constructed to coact with said plungers, means for rotating said screw-shafts in two opposing directions, and means for advancing the cracking rams by a step-by-step movement, said screw mechanism including a rotatable shaft, a crank on said shaft, racks, operated by said crank in one direction, gearing connecting said racks to said screw shafts, and springs constructed to move said racks in the opposite direction.

3. In a machine for cracking nuts, the combination, of a rotatable feed wheel, pockets in the periphery of said feed wheel constructed to receive the nuts to be cracked, abutment plungers at one side of said feed wheel against which said nuts are held, cracking rams at the other side of said feed wheel in alinement with said abutment plungers and coöperating therewith, means for advancing said abutment plungers, means for positively locking the said abutment plungers in advanced position, means for retracting said abutment plungers, means for imparting a step-by-step rotative movement to said feed wheel, and means for imparting a step-by-step advancing movement to said cracking rams, said positively locking means for the rams in this advanced position including rotatable screw shafts located in, and in screw-threaded engagement with, said plungers, and means for rotating said screw shafts in two opposing directions.

4. A machine for cracking nuts, including, in combination, one or more abutment plungers, a block wherein said abutment plungers are longitudinally movable, said plungers being hollow bodies, a screw-shaft in each hollow body for advancing and retracting said plungers, a rack and gearing for each plunger, means for moving each rack in one direction independently of the other rack, and means for conjointly retracting said racks to normal position.

5. In a machine for cracking nuts, one or more abutment plungers, a block wherein said abutment plungers are longitudinally movable, said plungers being tubular bodies, a shaft in each plunger in screw-threaded engagement therewith, a pinion on each shaft, a spur gear for each pinion, a further pinion connected to each spur gear, a rack constructed to engage the latter pinion, a spring for, and connected to, each rack to pull the same in one direction by contraction, and means for retracting said racks and retensioning said springs.

6. In a machine for cracking nuts, an abutment plunger, a block wherein said plunger is longitudinally movable, said plunger being a tubular body, a shaft having an externally screw-threaded part in screw-threaded engagement with said tubular body, an extension on said shaft projecting beyond the end of said tubular body when in retracted position, a pinion at the other end of said shaft, a longitudinally movable rack, gearing connecting said rack to said pinion, means for moving said rack in one direction, and separate means for moving said rack in the other, opposing direction.

7. In a machine for cracking nuts, the combination, of a rotatable feed wheel having in its periphery approximately semi-circular depressions, gear mechanism constructed to rotate said feed wheel by a step-by-step movement, an abutment plunger constructed to coact with said feed wheel, screw-mechanism constructed to advance and retract said plunger during the time that said feed wheel is at rest, a cracking ram constructed to advance toward said abutment plunger when at rest in projected position, mechanism for advancing said cracking ram by a step-by-step movement, rack and pinion mechanism and gearing for rotating said screw-mechanism, and means for retracting said abutment plunger and the cracking ram simultaneously but independently of each other.

8. In a machine for cracking nuts, the combination, of a rotatable feed wheel constructed to receive nuts to be cracked, mechanism attached to said feed wheel to impart an intermittent rotary movement thereto, means for urging said nuts toward said feed wheel by frictional contact without positively carrying said nuts to said feed wheel, a dam in front of said feed wheel constructed to prevent overcrowding of nuts at the pickup portion thereof and to permit the surplus nuts to pass over the apex of said dam, chutes at the sides of said feed wheel constructed to receive said surplus nuts and to convey them out of the machine, means for positioning nuts picked up by said feed wheel, and means for cracking said nuts in said position.

9. In a machine for cracking nuts, an abutment plunger for positioning the nuts for cracking, said plunger being a cylindrical body, and means for moving said plunger toward and from said nuts, said means including a screw-threaded shaft constructed to engage said abutment plunger, a rack located below said screw shaft, gearing connecting said rack and said screw shaft to rotate the latter shaft, a spring connected to said rack, a sliding bar constructed to engage said rack, said sliding bar being pulled in one direction by said rack and said spring, mechanism for moving said sliding bar in the opposite direction to normal position, means for locking the sliding bar in normal position, and means for tripping the locking mechanism to release the sliding bar, whereby said spring will move said sliding bar in one direction by contraction, and the sliding bar will move the rack in the opposite direction to normal position and retension said spring.

10. In a machine for cracking nuts, an intermittently rotating feed wheel constructed to receive nuts to be cracked in pockets therein, a cracking ram located at one side of said feed wheel, an abutment

plunger located at the opposite side of said feed wheel in alinement with said cracking ram, and means for advancing and retracting said abutment plunger, the latter means including a rack, gearing connecting said rack to said plunger, a tensioned spring constructed to pull said rack in one direction when relaxing, to advance said abutment plunger, a rotating crank, a sliding bar connected to said crank at one end and to said rack at its other end, a locking device constructed to lock said sliding bar in normal position, means connected to said rotating crank constructed to trip said locking device when said cracking ram has made an advance, said sliding bar having a plate wherewith said crank contacts, to retract said sliding bar, said rack, and retension said spring.

In testimony that we claim the foregoing as our joint invention, we have hereunto set our hands in the presence of two subscribing witnesses.

GEORGE C. SIEBERT.
ANTON GERSTMAYR.

Witnesses:

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FRIEDA T. LEBERSTEIN.