

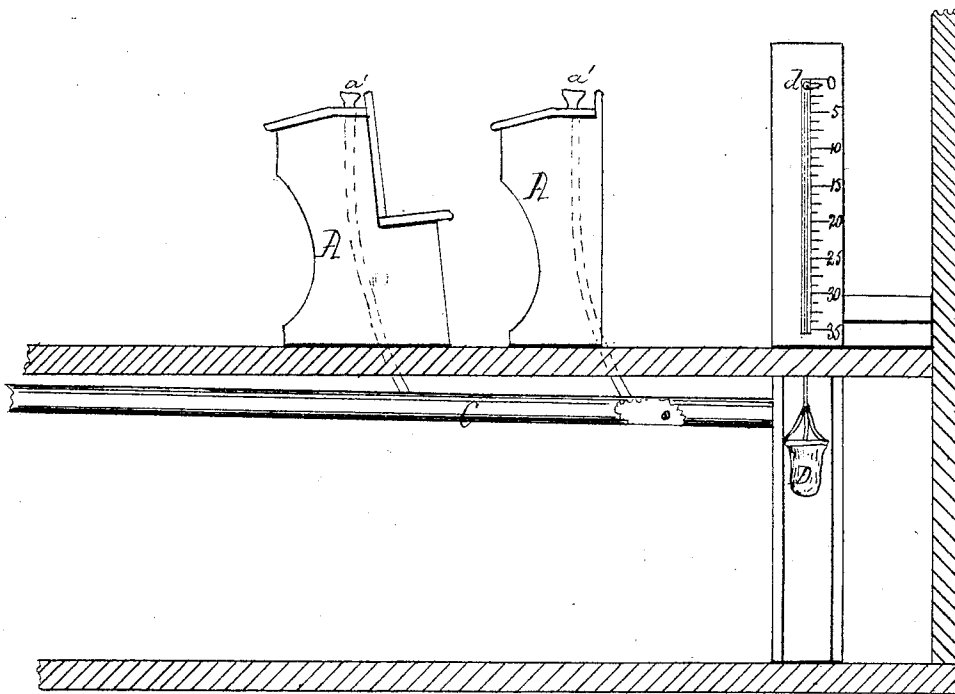
HUGH T. McALISTER.

Improvement in Voting Apparatus.

No. 125,316.

Patented April 2, 1872.

Fig 1



Witnesses
Alfred Nelson
H. H. Doubleday

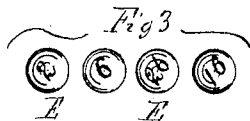
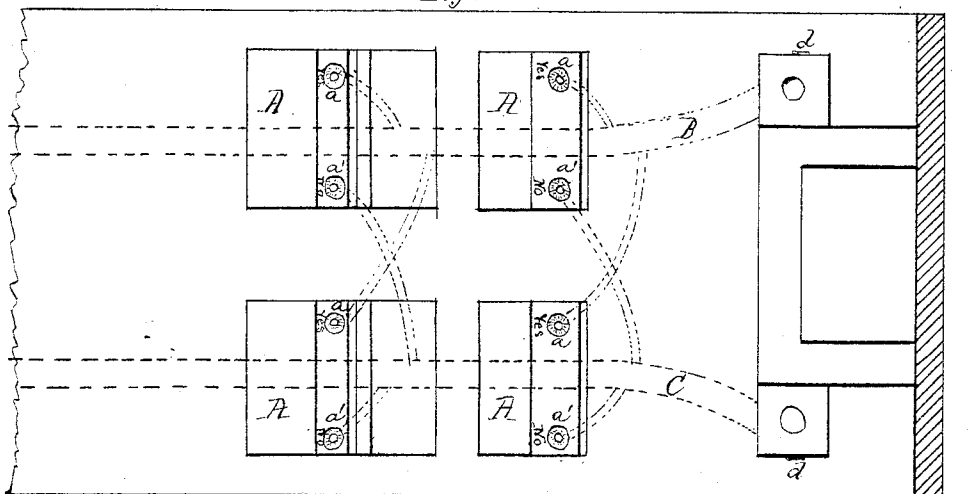


Fig 2



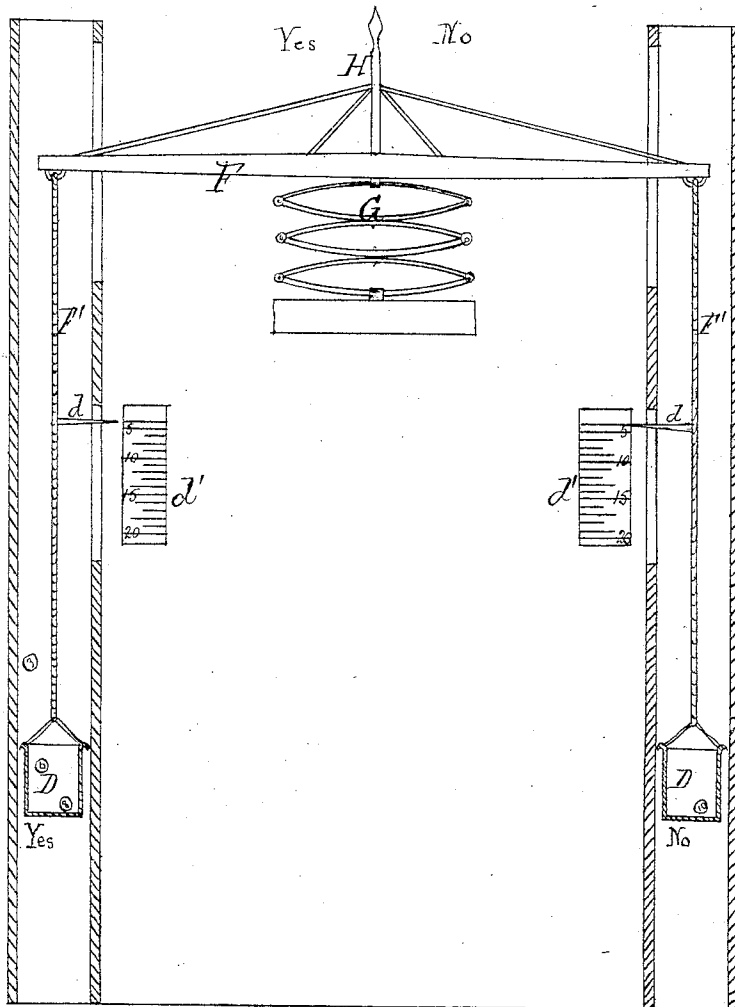
Inventor
Hugh T. McAlister
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Witnesses
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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

HUGH T. McALISTER, OF McALISTERVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA.

IMPROVEMENT IN VOTING APPARATUS.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. 125,316, dated April 2, 1872.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, HUGH T. McALISTER, of McAlisterville, county of Juniata, State of Pennsylvania, have invented a certain new and useful Improved Method of Voting, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description, reference being had to the accompanying drawing making part of this specification, in which—

Figure 1 is a side elevation, partly in section, of devices adapted to carry out my invention. Fig. 2 is a plan view of the same. Fig. 3 represents a series of balls or ballots employed in the system; and Fig. 4 represents a balance which I have invented for use in connection with my other improvements.

Various attempts have been made to invent a system of voting or recording votes in legislative and similar bodies with accuracy and dispatch. Among the methods which have been devised for this purpose are some in which each member votes by depositing, or causing to be deposited, a ball or ballot in a suitable receptacle, at one end or the other, as he wishes to vote yea or nay, of a balanced beam, or into one or the other of two spring-balances, in either case the ballot being registered by its weight. My invention relates to this class of voting mechanism, and consists in certain novel features of construction and operation of the devices employed, as will be hereinafter fully explained.

In the accompanying drawing, A represents the desks occupied by the persons who are to cast the ballots. Each desk is provided with two pipes, *a a'*, passing through the floor and connecting with pipes or conducts B C. The pipes *a* all lead into conduct B, while pipes *a'* all lead into conduct C. Each conduct terminates near the open mouth of a receiver, D, attached to a spring-balance having a pointer, which moves in front of a graduated scale as at *d*, Fig. 1. It will of course be understood that one of the pipes in each desk should be marked yea and the other nay, as in Fig. 2. E are the ballots. Each desk should be furnished with a number of balls marked, as in Fig. 3, with the numbers which correspond with the number of the desk. When a person wishes to vote he deposits a ballot in either of the apertures, as he intends to vote yea or nay, which ballot is at once conducted to its

proper pocket or receptacle, where it is registered by the fall of the pointer *d*, and when preferred both pockets may be connected with an index which shall indicate the result at a point in view of the whole house. After the ballots are deposited they may be taken out and examined by an attendant, when the vote of each person can be recorded on a suitably prepared list, so that each can see how every one voted.

It will be readily seen that this system of voting by numbered ballots possesses many advantages over any heretofore invented, as each vote can be accurately recorded, and all errors of whatever nature immediately corrected. Of course care must be taken that each desk is supplied with balls bearing a corresponding number; otherwise an inextricable confusion would result. Any means may be adopted for numbering the balls, and many other well-known systems of registering the ballots may be employed, without departing from the spirit of my invention.

In Fig. 4 I have represented a new construction of balance, which I have invented for the purpose of registering the ballots as they are polled. D are the receptacles or pockets into which the balls are delivered from tubes B C. Each pocket is attached to one end of a balance-beam, F, by means of links F'. Beam F is supported centrally upon a spring represented at G. In the drawing this spring is shown as being made of a number of elliptical pieces but any other desired or approved form of spring may be adopted if preferred; or what will perhaps be better, each end of the beam may be supported upon an independently-acting spring. H is an index-finger rising from the center of the beam. As the ballots are cast the beam will be depressed just in proportion to the number of balls deposited in both pockets, and the finger will show at all times which pocket contains the greater number of balls. Of course, the pointers *d* will indicate on the scales the number of ballots cast, both ayes and noes. The pointer H should be arranged in some conspicuous position in the hall, say behind the speaker's desk, and two scales, like those at *d'*, may be placed at the ends of the beam when it is thought best to register the number of ballots in view of the entire assembly.

When these devices are to be applied to buildings not specially constructed to receive them, and are placed upon the outside of walls, pipes may be employed to protect links from injury or displacement.

I am aware that machines have been invented for recording votes by means of ballots of uniform weight which were deposited in scales, the result being indicated by a pointer on a graduated index; but these devices as heretofore constructed were very complicated and consequently liable to derangement, being operated by a system of wires, pulls, and levers, requiring close attention on the part of the attendants to keep a ball in every receptacle; otherwise a member would fail to record his vote even though he pulled the knob in his desk, and in case an attempt had been made to use numbered ballots like mine, the result would have been still more disastrous, because even with the utmost care the attendants would put wrongly-numbered ballots in the receptacles, which would sometimes result in recording a member as having voted twice and would sometimes record a member as having voted when he was not present; whereas, under my arrangement of devices, each member has charge of his own ballots and can there-

fore see that he voted none but his own number; and further, his ability to vote is not dependent upon the faithfulness of an employé. I am also aware that tubes have been employed in hotels for conveying balls with messages from the various rooms to the office; but in that case there was no registering apparatus connected with the tubes. Hence I do not wish to claim broadly the use of tubes for the conveyance of ballots, nor the employment of numbered ballots.

What I claim as new is—

The herein-described combination of desks A, pipes B C, *a a'*, and scales or registering devices D *d* F, substantially as set forth, whereby each member may deposit his own ballot without leaving his seat, and without the employment of wires, levers, or other mechanical devices to effect the delivery of the balls into the proper channels, each desk being supplied with ballots bearing a corresponding number, substantially as and for the purpose set forth.

HUGH T. McALISTER.

Witnesses:

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JAMES CAVENY.