J. V. PRIOR.

VOTING MACHINE.

APPLICATION FILED MAR. 26, 1910.

995,093. Patented June 13, 1911.

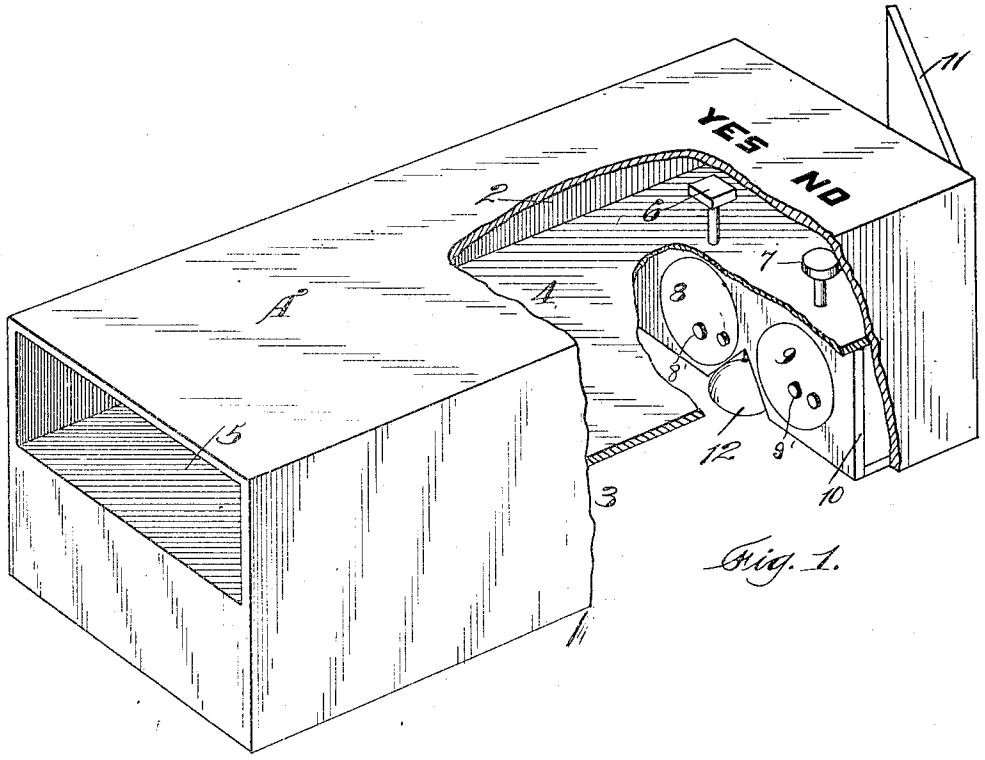

Fig. 1.

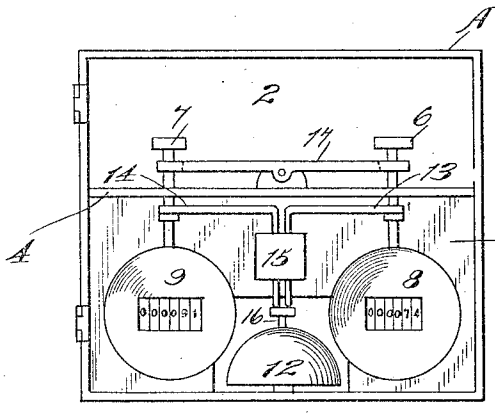

Fig. 2.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

JOHN VINCENT PRIOR, OF SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA.

VOTING-MACHINE.

995,093. Specification of Letters Patent. Patented June 13, 1911.

Application filed March 26, 1910. Serial No. 551,778.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, JOHN V. PRIOR, citizen of the United States, residing in the city and county of San Francisco and State of California, have invented new and useful Improvements in Voting-Machines, of which the following is a specification.

This invention relates to voting machines.

It is the object of my invention to provide a simple, compact, portable device, particularly adapted to be used in lodge rooms and associations where an expensive voting machine would be inappropriate and inconvenient; to provide primarily a voting machine wherein the voting mechanism, and the keys by which the same is operated, are entirely concealed, so that the voter may record his vote without being observed by on-lookers.

It is also an object of my invention to combine a concealed voting mechanism and a signal device whereby the voter is prevented from repeating his vote by the giving of an alarm or signal at each registration of his vote.

The invention consists of the parts and the construction and combination of parts as hereinafter more fully described and claimed, having reference to the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figure 1 is a perspective view partly broken away of the device with the door open. Fig. 2 is an end view of the device with the door open.

It is customary in lodge rooms, assembly halls and other meeting places where associates gather at frequent intervals and conduct voting exercises, that such expedients as writing on slips of papers, or voting by the ball system, are commonly employed. This frequently results in placing some of the voters in an embarrassing position, as they are not given sufficient secrecy to prevent the nature of their votes being known, and they are often compelled, for that reason, to vote against their honest convictions.

In the present embodiment of my invention, I employ a suitable case A, divided off into upper and lower compartments 2 and 3 by a horizontal plate 4. The forward end of the casing is left open, as at 5, so that the hand of a person may be easily inserted into the casing and thrust sufficiently far therein to enable one to depress either of keys 6 or 7, which are connected by respective stems to counters 8, 9, mounted in a transverse wall 10 in the lower compartment 3. The rear end of the casing A, near which the counters 8 and 9 are mounted, is preferably provided with a closable door 11, which may be opened by the proper officer so that the accumulated votes of the two counters 8, 9 may be instantly observed after the voting has been completed. It will be seen, therefore, that by the use of this device it may be either left upon a suitable stand in a convenient portion of the hall so that the voters may walk up to it and pass either hand into the upper key chamber 2 and actuate either of the keys 6 or 7, or the box, if desired, may be carried around by the voting clerk and presented to each of the voters individually, who may then register his vote in the before described manner. Consequently, it is impossible for any one to detect which of the concealed keys the voter has depressed, and he is thus at perfect liberty to use his own free, unrestrained, judgment in casting his vote.

In order to prevent the voter from voting twice on either key, or on both keys successively, there is disposed in the wall 10 of the casing a suitable bell 12. Push rods 13 and 14 are connected respectively to the stems of the keys 6 and 7 and are adapted to pass through a suitable guide 15 and bear upon the tappet 16 of bell 12, thus both of the keys 6 and 7 actuate upon the one tappet 16 and ring the one bell 12. Therefore, the audible sound is precisely the same whether either of the keys is struck, and no one can detect which has been struck. Preferably the keys 6 and 7 are made of different shape or form, as, for instance, the key 6 is here shown as being square or polygonal, and the key 7 is shown as being circular. Other suitable shapes and forms may be adopted as desired to suit conditions.

In order to facilitate voting and not rely upon the memory of the voter as to which key is negative or positive, there is suitably inscribed upon the top of the case A the word "Yes" over key 6, and "No" over key 7.

The device is simple, inexpensive and well adapted to the needs of associations, lodges, unions, or other bodies where the expense of a large voting machine would be burdensome and unnecessary.

Fig. 2 shows the device supplied with a

pivoted lever 17 beneath the keys and adapted to prevent the simultaneous depression of both.

As clearly shown in Fig. 1 of the drawing, the horizontal plate 4 is located about midway between the vertical walls of the polygonal casing A, thus leaving an open chamber extending from the forward closing wall adjacent the end 5 of the box to the small partition or transverse wall 10. The rear face of the counters 8 and 9, which are substantially flush with the partition 10, are provided with setting knobs 8′ and 9′, whereby the counters may be readjusted at such frequent intervals as is necessary. Access is readily had to the setting knobs 8′ and 9′ of the counters by reaching up into the chamber below the horizontal plate 4 and at the same time the setting knobs 8′ and 9′ are normally concealed and not accessible when the casing A is deposited upon a table, or is being carried around by the ballot clerk.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim and desire to secure by Letters-Patent, is:

1. A voting machine including a rectangular case having a horizontal passage or tunnel in the upper part with an opening in front to admit the hand and arm, a closed compartment beneath the rear end of the tunnel, registering devices contained therein, vertically depressible actuating push rods extending into the tunnel in line above the registers, having heads or keys distinguishable from each other by touch, a fulcrumed lever to prevent the depression of but one key at a time, and a single audible signal, and arms carried by the push rods to sound the signal by the depression of either rod.

2. A voting machine including a rectangular case having a horizontal passage or tunnel in the upper part with an opening in front to admit the hand and arm, a closed compartment beneath the rear end of the tunnel, registering devices contained therein, vertically depressible actuating push rods extending into the tunnel in line above the registers, having heads or keys distinguishable from each other by touch, indicating characters marked upon the top of the case in line above the keys, a fulcrumed lever to prevent the depression of but one lever at a time, and a single audible signal and arms carried by the push rods to sound the signal by the depression of either rod.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand in the presence of two subscribing witnesses.

JOHN VINCENT PRIOR.

Witnesses:
JOHN J. BRADY,
EDWARD R. HEALY.