(No Model.) 2 Sheets—Sheet 1.

C. B. JEFFERSON.

STAGE APPLIANCE.

No. 524,174. Patented Aug. 7, 1894.

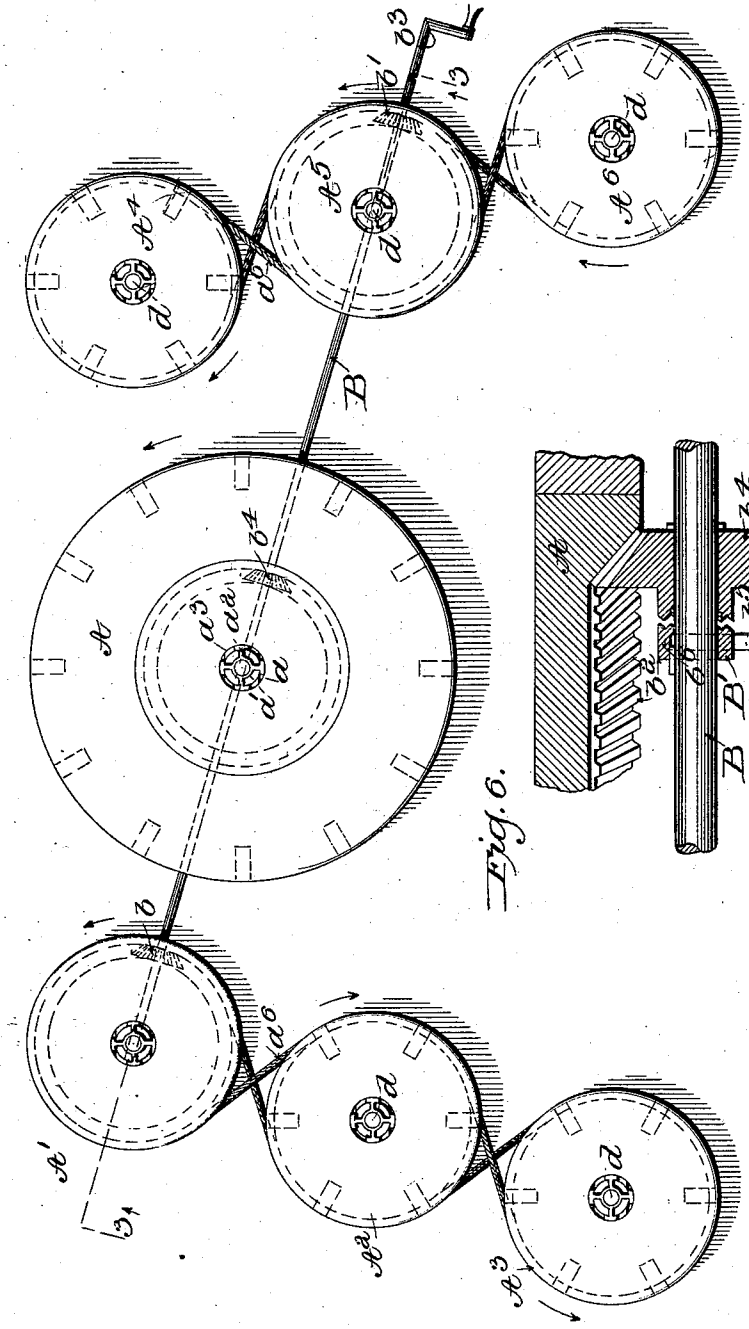

Fig. 1.

Fig. 6.

Witnesses
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(No Model.) 2 Sheets—Sheet 2.

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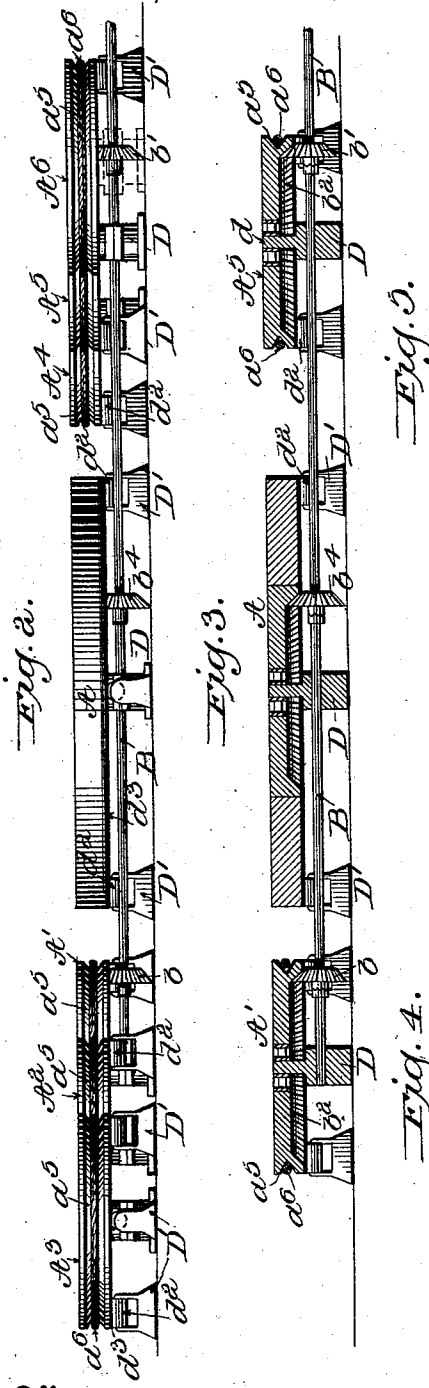

Fig. 2.

Fig. 3.

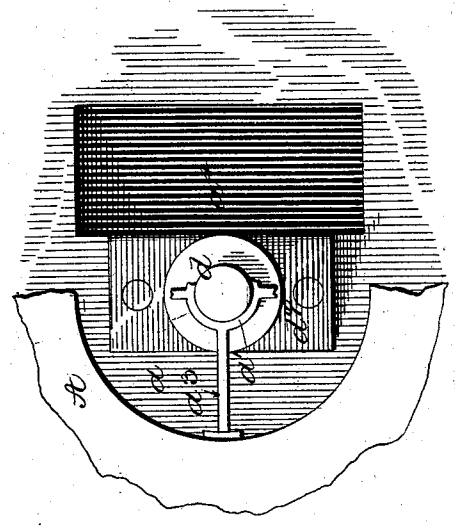

Fig. 5.

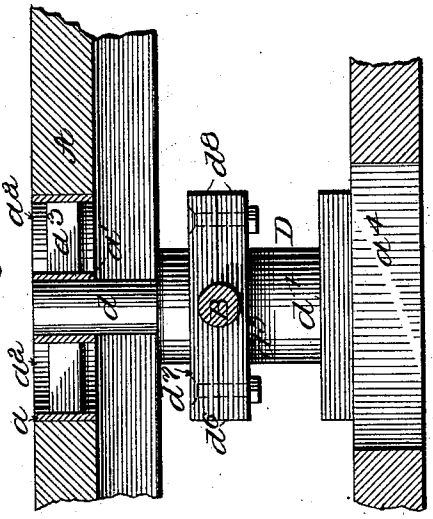

Fig. 4.

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STAGE APPLIANCE.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 524,174, dated August 7, 1894.

Application filed February 13, 1894. Serial No. 500,033. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, CHARLES B. JEFFERSON, a citizen of the United States, residing at Buzzard's Bay, in the county of Barnstable and State of Massachusetts, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Stage Appliances; and I do hereby declare the following to be a full, clear, and exact description of the invention, such as will enable others skilled in the art to which it appertains to make and use the same.

My invention relates generally to devices for producing scenic changes upon a stage and particularly to that class in which turn-tables are used, for changing the scenes, one of which is presented to the audience and the other ready or in course of preparation for presentation while the other is in sight of the audience.

The main objects of my invention are to produce illusory effects and to improve upon the general construction of this class of devices, particularly with the object in view of making the parts easily separable and handled so that they can be readily transported from place to place.

Other minor objects will be set forth in the specification.

The invention consists of constructions and combinations, all as will more fully appear from the subjoined description and the novelty will be pointed out in the claims, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figure 1, represents a top plan view showing the manner of arranging the tables upon a stage; Fig. 2, a front elevation of the device shown in Fig. 1; Fig. 3, a section through the tables in a line parallel with the shaft. Fig. 4, is an elevation partly in section, showing the wheel, its bearing and part of the floor. Fig. 5, is a top plan of the matters shown in Fig 4; and Fig. 6, is a detail of a portion of one of the wheels having a gear member, showing its relation to the clutch and gear on the shaft.

My preferred manner of arranging the tables is shown in Fig. 1. In the center is a large table A, that forms the back ground of the stage. On each side are the series of tables A′, A^2, and A^3; and A^4, A^5 and A^6; running toward the front of the stage at an angle toward the side nearest to them, so that the scenery upon each table will be seen by the audience. The scenery is placed upon the tables in any desired manner. The tables are provided with a central opening a, that may be of sufficient diameter to receive a spider hub a', having sufficient openings or spaces a^2 between the radial arms a^3, to allow light to be passed upwardly through them from below the stage through openings a^4 in the floor of the stage. Through these openings a^2 and a^4 many scenic effects can be produced by means of calcium or electric lights, also water and fountain effects, and by rapidly shifting colored plates in front of the lights and turning the tables many engaging effects can be obtained. All of the smaller tables are provided with a peripheral groove a^5 for the reception of a gearing cable a^6, preferably one for each series. This cable is wound around the tables of its series so that the first will revolve in one direction, the next in the opposite direction, and the third in the same direction as the first. The series upon the opposite side is arranged preferably to run in a direction the reverse of the series just described. That is the tables A′ and A^4, A^2 and A^5, and A^3 and A^6, which are opposite one another on opposite sides of the stage revolve in reverse directions. The object of this arrangement is to confuse the sight of the audience by the apparent multiplicity of directions in which the scenes are turning, thereby accomplishing an effect without the audience determining how it is done. This result may be produced in various ways, but I prefer to apply power to table A′, of the left hand series and table A^5 of the right hand series, by means of a shaft B extending diagonally across the stage and carrying gear wheels b and b', which engage with a corresponding gear b^2, on the under side of the tables A′ and A^5. Power applied to this shaft by turning the crank in the direction of arrow b^3 will cause the table to move in the direction pointed out by the arrows in juxtaposition to the tables. The center table A may also be geared by its gear b^2 to a wheel b^4 on shaft B, and be rotated

at the same time as the other tables, the effect produced on one side being a dissolving view and on the other side a dissolving view in part and an appearing view in part. The audience seeing these divergent effects will not be able to follow the different phases thereof, and before they realize what is going on, the entire scene that was before them has been changed and a new and entirely different one produced. By reversing the movement of the crank the next time the scene is changed an entirely different effect is produced. The gear wheels, b, b' and b^4 are preferably fixed longitudinal but free to revolve upon the shaft B, and all of them when so arranged are connected with a friction clutch B′ in any well well known manner, preferably by having one member b^5 upon the gear wheel and the other member b^6 splined upon the shaft, so that any of the wheels A A′ and A^5 may be thrown out of gear when it is desired to rotate either of the series, or both series, or one of the series, and the middle or central table or the central table alone. Or when desired by a proper manipulation of the clutches while the shaft is turning, one part of the tables can be made to rotate a number of times, another part of them to rotate a greater or less number of times, and another part to stand still or partially rotate all at the same time, thereby producing many varied effects. For example, the series of tables on the left hand side may be made to turn twice, that on the right hand side may remain stationary, while that on the left hand side is making one revolution, and by turning while the other is making a revolution, while at the same time the center table may remain stationary or be moved a part of the way around. It is obvious that many very desirable and brilliant effects may be produced in this manner, especially in combination with the lights projected through the openings in the tables.

The gear b^2 upon the central table is preferably of the same size as the gears b^2 upon tables A′ and A^5, so that the great arc of table A will be brought to the front at the same time that the lesser arcs of the series are being brought into position. This causes the periphery of the table A to move much more rapidly than the periphery of the tables of the series and will cause a swivel that will distract the audience's attention or keep it moving from the slower to the faster moving tables or the reverse. These tables are simple in construction and have no appendages that can be broken. The gear b^2 slants upwardly and inwardly from the periphery, concealing it from view and avoiding any danger of the apparel or persons of stage people becoming entangled in the gearing to their damage.

In transporting the tables from place to place, the number of the gear on the tables will be protected from damage by blows that would ruin the teeth of the gear if placed upon the periphery of the table. The center bearing of these tables is a pin d on a standard or post D. The tables can therefore be placed upon or taken off their bearings by unskilled help and without loss of time, as no attachments or detachments are necessary. If it be desired to support the edge of the table a series of friction rollers d^2 is placed under a running face d^3 on the under side of the tables. These friction rollers are supported by bearing blocks D′ secured to the stage floor in any desired way.

The posts D are preferably formed of a base d^4 having at the lower half d^5 of journal box d^6 and the pin d having the upper half d^7 of journal box d^6 said halves being secured together by flanges d^8 or other well known means. The three posts D are secured to the floor in any desired way on an oblique line so that shaft B will pass under the center of the tables with which it is geared, thereby keeping the half gears b b' and b^4 in proper alignment for gearing with the other half upon the tables.

I am aware that a device for reversing scenes consisting of two tables to form the back scene and two side tables, one on each side of the stage for the side scenes, is old. In such a device the two tables for carrying the back scene must be dressed half on one table and half on the other and the reverse of what they will appear when changed to face the audience. This is a difficult thing to do as the stage-setter cannot arrange the complete setting as it afterward appears to the audience as is the case with my device wherein the whole scene is set out of sight of the audience exactly as it will appear to the audience when turned. Another disadvantage is that the space between the tables cannot be fitted up with properties, whereas in my device any properties and especially large properties like a ship floating in a tank of water, can be placed upon the table and turned toward the audience, which could not be the case if the back scenes were mounted upon two tables. The central table can also be rotated independently of the series of side tables and the series of side tables independently of each other and the central table thus permitting of a change in the rear scene without altering the side scenes or changing one or both of the side scenes without altering the rear scene, advantages not permissible when the tables are geared to move together.

What I claim as new is—

1. In a device for producing scenic effects upon the stage in which pivoted tables adapted to carry a scene upon the half of the table presented to the audience while the other half of the table is being prepared for the next change of scene, are used: the combination of a series of pivoted tables arranged on each side of the stage and extending from

the front toward the rear and a large central table located between the said series of side tables and near the rear of the stage for the purpose set forth.

2. In a device for scenic effects upon the stage having an opening in the floor, a table on said stage and having one or more vertical openings; and a central bearing for said table to bring one or more of said openings in the table over the opening in the floor.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature in presence of two witnesses.

CHARLES B. JEFFERSON.

Witnesses:

GLEN MACDONOUGH,

F. M. CHAPMAN.