The Wardenclyffe Magnifying Transmitter Recreation Project

By Ernst
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Introduction

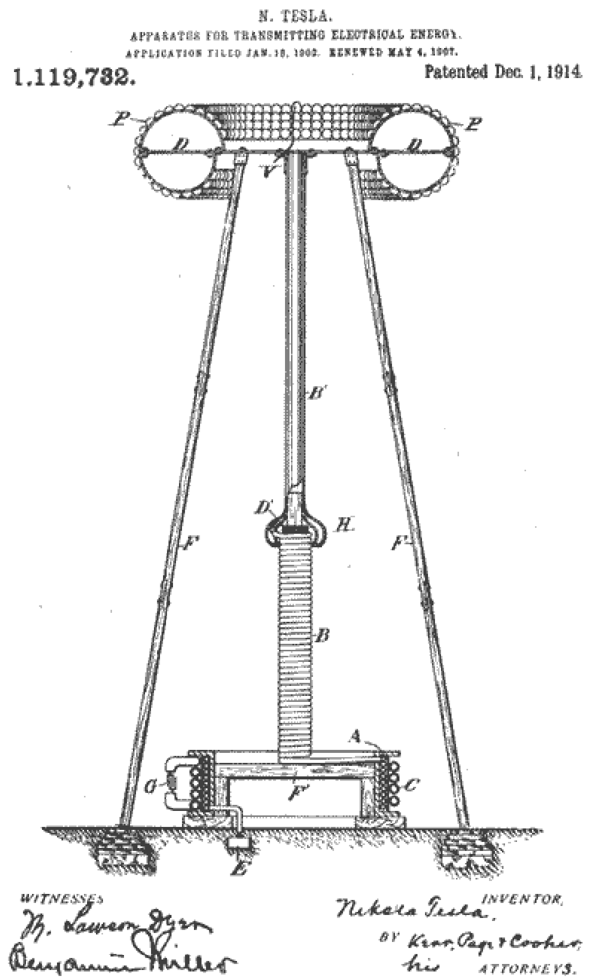
There are many theories about Nikola Tesla's greatest invention, most of them are not based on all available material from the inventor himself. This is an attempt to do just that. We go through all of Nikola Tesla's writings and drawings to recreate what he called his greatest invention, the self-regenerative resonant transformer which later became known as “the magnifying transmitter”.
We will provide proof of how this transformer was supposed to operate and that it was intended to not just transmit electrical energy but also generate it.
Most relevant parts of articles written by Nikola Tesla can be found in the appendices.

When studying his work it is very important to view the entire time-line from about 1880 up to about 1920, so to keep everything in perspective. The first half of this time-line you will find in “The problem of increasing human energy” and in a few later articles. You will read that after the introduction of the rotating magnetic field and the poly phase system he focused his attention on “obtaining energy from the ambient medium” or “to create a self-acting-engine”.
Almost all of his research until 1900 was focused on this and a system for distribution of this energy.
The magnifying transmitter was the end product of both of these, as it was a combined system for generating and distribution of electrical energy.
In itself it is not yet a “self-acting machine”, because it does not run on the energy that it produces. There for two more parts are needed.

The author of this document can be contacted at

https://www.youtube.com/user/themage00000 where also some short videos can be found of related experiments.

The electrical diagram



One of the most common mistakes is that it is assumed that patent 1,119,732 is depicting a magnifying transmitter.
There is absolutely no chance that this is true. Tesla does not call this apparatus a magnifying transmitter anywhere in the patent text, nor it this machine capable of fulfilling all of Tesla's claims, nor does it match Tesla's description of the magnifying transmitter. But it does have a few things in common.
As stated in the introduction, the magnifying transmitter did two things; it generates and it distributes electrical power. The system that is described in this patent does only one of these things, it distributes electrical power.
It does therefor show a number of important attributes of the magnifying transmitter:

- a three coil resonant transformer
- a system designed to minimize losses

Also note the capacitor (G) shunting the primary coil. This is, in Tesla's words, to show that harmonic oscillations are being used. To me it shows something more; the primary capacitor is placed as close to the primary coil as possible and connected with very thick wires. This is essential as I will show later.
Now that we know what is NOT a magnifying transmitter, of course we need to know what IS. Here we get the help of Leland Anderson who has copied a number of documents from the Tesla Museum in Beograd, and provided them to “Electric Spacecraft” issue 26 of 1997. These documents show a number of diagrams, a few letters and some notes by Tesla that we can be sure of concern Wardenclyffe.

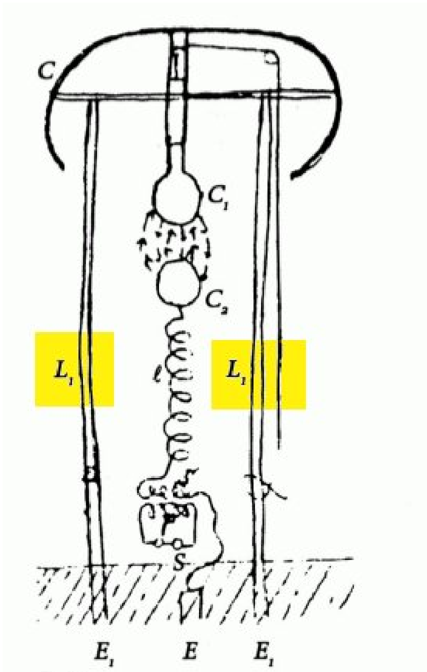
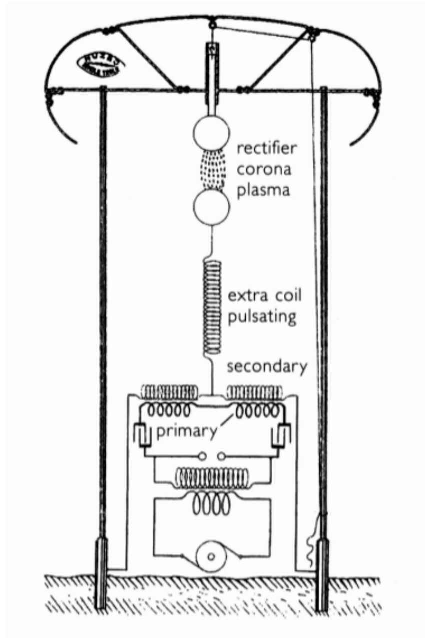


Fig. 4



Here are two of these diagrams. The most important things that we see here and that differ from the patent are
- the supports are inductors
- there is something going on at C_1 and C_2, the “rectifier, corona, plasma”.

Also note that the height of C_1 can be adjusted. As we can read in the Colorado Springs Notes and the 1901 article (see appendices), this would alter its capacity, bringing it more or less into resonance. It is thus a means of controlling its power.

Now that we have established that there is a difference between the patent and Wardenclyffe, we need to find out if this one is a magnifying transmitter. The answer can be found in various writings but most notably here in an article from 1905, Jan 7th.

It is, essentially, a freely vibrating secondary circuit of definite length, very high self-induction and small resistance, which has one of its terminals in intimate direct or inductive connection with the ground and the other with an elevated conductor, and upon which the electrical oscillations of a primary or exciting circuit are impressed under conditions of resonance.

This is pretty clear, a magnifying transmitter has: *a freely vibrating secondary circuit* and *a primary or exciting circuit.* Looking at the first picture these circuits can easily be recognized and this is supported by the accompanying text:
The primary circuit is $E\text{-}S\text{-}l\text{-}C_2$,
The secondary circuit is $E_1\text{-}L_1\text{-}C\text{-}C_1$.
A third image from this set provides additional proof:

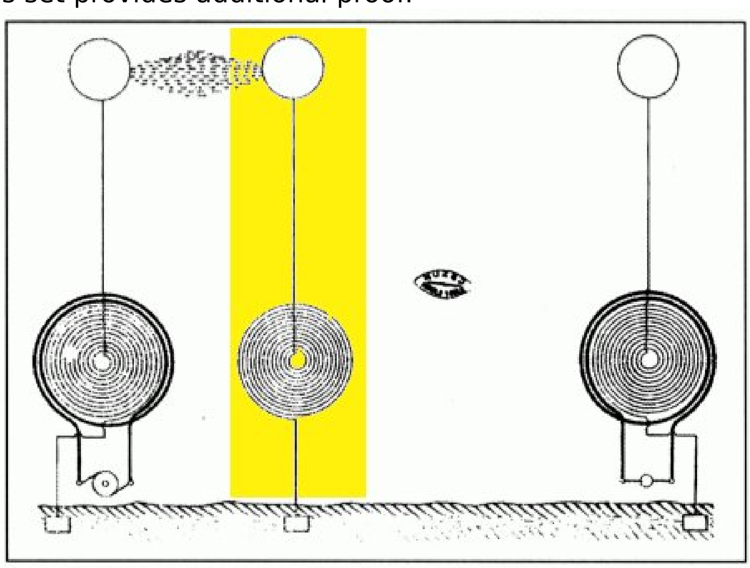


Fig. 7

The circuit in yellow is the secondary circuit.
This establishes with certainty that Wardenclyffe was a magnifying transmitter.
Just before the Wardenclyffe project started, Tesla performed various experiments in Colorado Springs of which he held a diary. Seeing the whole time line, it is logical to assume that these experiments were to establish the precise parameters for the Wardenclyffe project.
We do know that Tesla transformed this entire laboratory into one big magnifying transmitter, producing tens of megavolts and taking out the Colorado Springs generator.
Some of the diagrams from this diary show similar set-ups:

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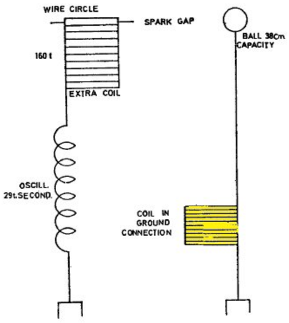

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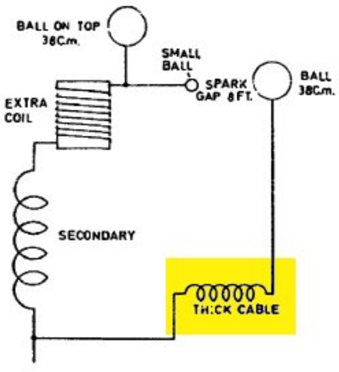

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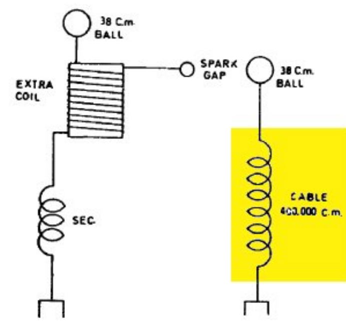
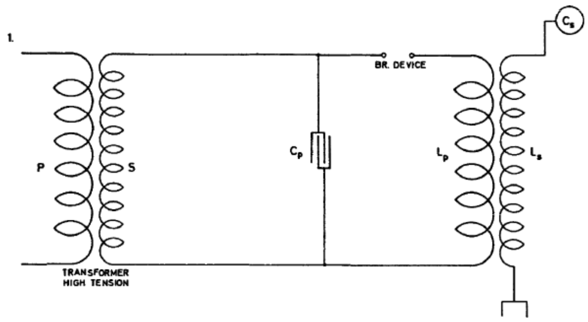


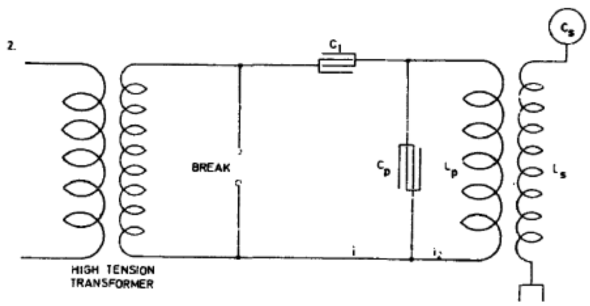
A number of details can be seen in the Wardenclyffe diagrams that create the possibility to use several frequencies at the same time. This is done to facilitate the sending of private messages which is outside the scope of this document.
The basic diagram for a magnifying transmitter consists of the following parts:

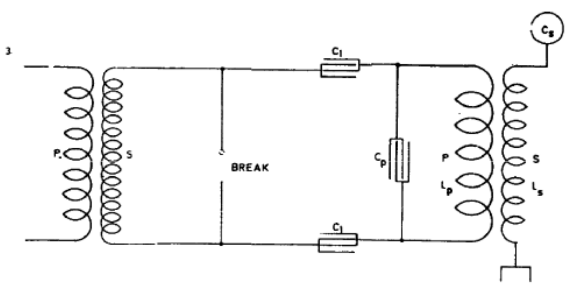
- a primary or excitation circuit (A), consisting of
  - a primary circuit (B), consisting of
    - a high voltage source
    - a spark-gap
    - a charge/discharge capacitor
    - a resonant coil
    - a primary capacitor
    - a primary coil
  - a secondary circuit (B), consisting of
    - a ground connection
    - a secondary coil
    - an extra coil
    - a top-load
- a secondary circuit (A), consisting of
  - a ground connection
  - the magnifier coil
  - a top-load

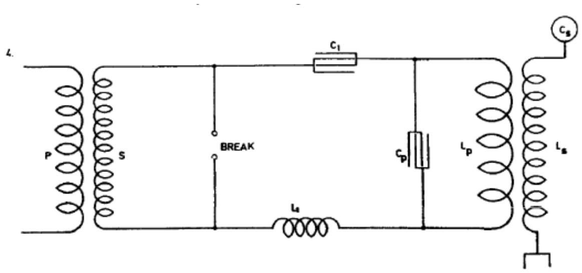
The names 'primary circuit' and 'secondary circuit' are used twice in the above overview, this may make things a bit confusing at first but it will all become clear later. To keep them apart I have assigned an A and a B to them.
Let's go through these parts, starting with

the primary circuit (B)









In the Colorado Springs Notes we can read how this circuit is designed and exactly what the considerations were. The first diagram can be found on page 56. This is still frequently used by 'Tesla coilers' mainly for its simplicity. Note that in this diagram the break device and C_p can be exchanged. In most cases this variation is to be preferred as the spark-gap then also protects the high voltage transformer. That is, unless a rotating spark-gap is being used.
In all the other diagrams the break-device (spark-gap) is in this place.

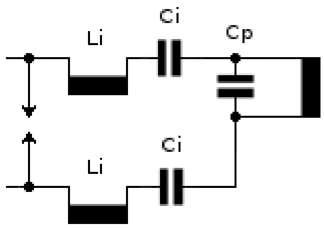
Going from left to right through the last diagram, we first see a high voltage transformer. We need such a transformer because we use a spark-gap.
We need a starting voltage of between 4,000 and 15,000 Volts. Higher voltages, up to about 100 KV introduce complications, but they can of course be used. With still higher voltages the complications make things impractical.

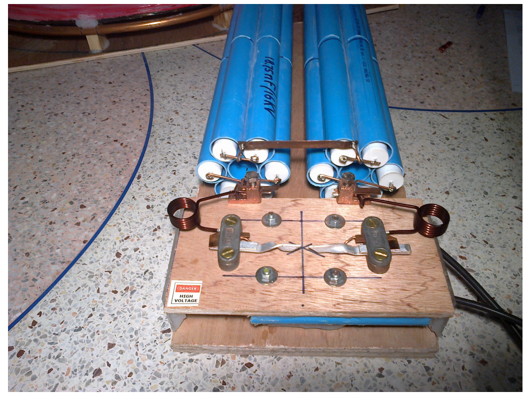
The break-device can be a spark-gap in its most simple form; two opposing electrodes. Nothing fancy is really needed.
Experiments with magnetic quenching have shown that this puts considerable stress on the transformer which few (no ?) transformers can handle.
A rotating spark-gap does not provide good protection to the transformer and for this reason I suggest not to use them for this application.

Next we see C_1 and L_1, these need to be carefully tuned to the operating frequency. Any size for C_1 will do, but Tesla found that it is advantageous to make it twice the capacitance of C_p. This means that L_1 is half the inductance of L_p.

C_p and L_p form the resonance circuit. These determine the working frequency of the entire system. These should be connected with thick and short cables.
In my design I have gone one step further and made this circuit symmetrical. I can not say if that improves anything, but as Tesla did so on a number of other occasions I thought “if it doesn't help, it won't hurt”.

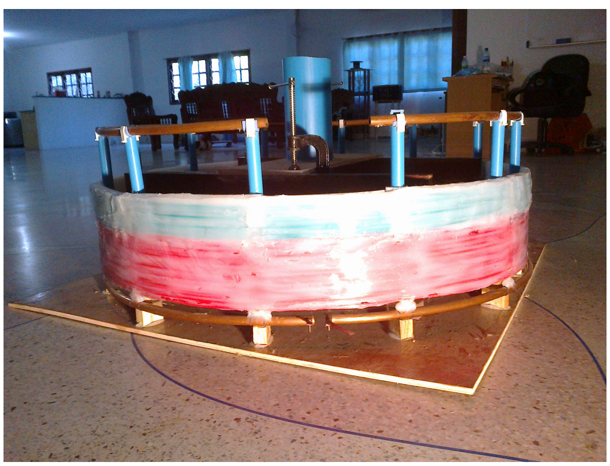
Making this the final result:





the secondary circuit (B)

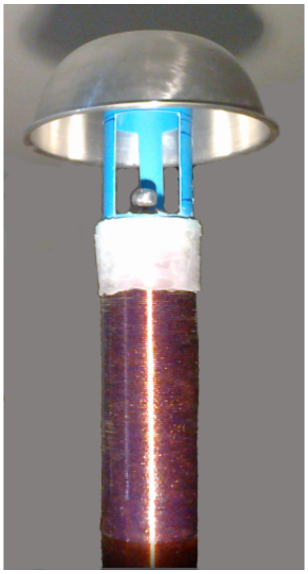
This circuit is simply two coils in series with a ground connection at one end and a top-load on the other. Knowing the working frequency of this system we can calculate the associated wavelength. It is essential that this circuit is 3/4 of this wavelength, measured from ground to top-load.
The coil nearest to the ground connection is the secondary which must be in close coupling with the primary coil L_p. Tesla wound them on the same frame, and of course that is by far the easiest option. The coil must be designed and built so that its self resonance frequency equals the working frequency. This sounds more difficult than it is. Just wind a few more turns than calculated and slowly take them of, measuring the SRF after every modification.
Care must be taken insulating the windings as the voltage between two adjacent wires may get a few thousand volts.



Here a picture of my replica. The lower copper tube is the primary coil. The red and green windings are the secondary coil. The green windings are slightly more separated and better insulated.
The top copper tube is not connected but it is part of a system to protect these coils from the high voltage generated in this system.
This coil, together with the primary circuit (B) forms a more or less standard resonance transformer with no top-load.

Knowing the wire length in this coil and its connections we can determine the wire length remaining for the extra coil. We design this coil so that it requires a small top-load to get into resonance at the working frequency. So the extra coil together with this small top-load form again a system that resonates at the same frequency that is used all through this system.

It is this extra coil where the fun starts. This extra coil acts as a swing, receiving 'small' pushes from the secondary coil. These pushes add up making the swing go higher and higher until a voltage is reached at which the losses equal the power that is being supplied.
Having a small top-load electricity easily escapes causing purple streamers at about 500 KV. That is if the top windings of the coil are sufficiently insulated. As the top of the coil has a very small curvature, purple streamers emerge from there long before reaching 500 KV.

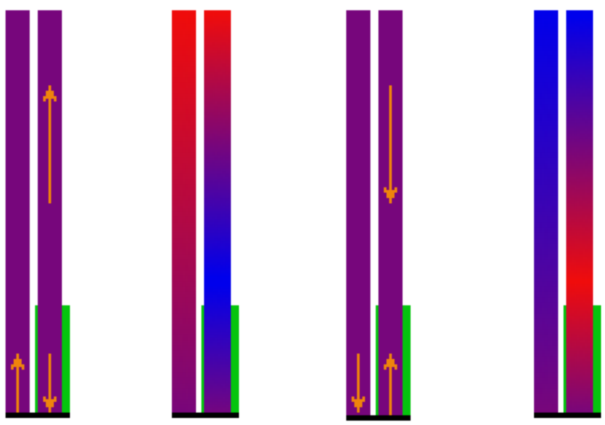


Here we see the replica. The windings on the higher end of this coil are spaced with (blue) nylon wire. The white mass on the top windings is silicone kit providing insulation.
The small ball at the top of the coil is the top-load. By raising or lowering this top-load, its capacity can be adjusted. We do this in order to get the system resonating at the working frequency.

By carefully insulating this end of the extra coil and the wire connecting it to its top-load we can easily reach 500 KV.

If we could only avoid those purple streamers from occurring, the voltage could be raised into the millions.

The bigger, half ball, is half the top-load of the secondary circuit (A).



This picture shows the current flow and charge distribution in the magnifier coil (left of each pair) and the combined secondary and extra coil (right of each pair).
Purple indicates a neutral charge, blue a low (negative) charge and red a high (positive) charge.
Black is the ground connection and the secondary coil is indicated with green. In this replica the lower high voltage point is in the lower region of the extra coil.

It should be noted that, because the secondary and extra coil cover 3/4 wavelength, the current through these coils moves partly in opposite direction.

In the lower 1/3 of the combined wire length the current flows up when in the upper 2/3 the current flows down and vice versa.
For this reason the lower 1/3 of these coils combined must be wound in opposite direction (for example CW) of the upper 2/3 (for example CCW). If this is not done, the magnetic fields oppose and a lot of power is lost.
Tesla does not address this issue directly, but he does mention that he found it to be preferred that the secondary and extra are separated on the high voltage point. This would make the magnetic fields uniform in both coils. A further improvement would be to wind the secondary and extra in opposite direction.
I have noticed that, if this is done correctly, oscillations continue in these coils long after the power has been disconnected. Therefor a note to the experimenter:

The coils must be discharged before they can be handled safely.

The secondary circuit (A)

In this circuit resides the actual working principle of the magnifying transmitter. First of all the entire circuit length has to be 1/4 wavelength so that together with the secondary circuit (B) it completes one wavelength, making the top-loads of both these systems move synchronously. Provided of course that the magnifier coil together with this big top-load have the same resonance frequency as the working frequency of this system.

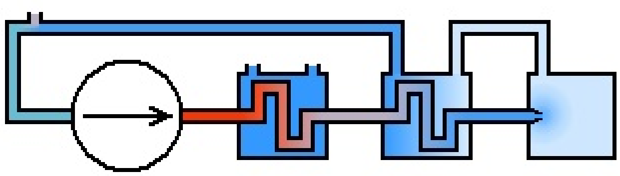
This top-load shields the smaller top-load with the same voltage all the time, which prevents discharges from the smaller top-load. And this in turn makes that the voltage can rise well into the millions.

After the rim has been removed from the top-load that you see in the picture, this top-load will not produce streamers before reaching about 3 MV.

Mapping the diagram on Tesla's writings

First we need to look at the original name of this device, self-regenerative resonant transformer.
We know what a resonant transformer is, but what is the 'self-regenerative' doing here.
For this we turn to a process devised by Dr. Carl Linde for air liquifaction, called regenerative cooling.

Dr. Carl Linde's regenerative cooling



In the above image, air is compressed (the compressor is the circle), increasing its temperature (red). The hot, high-pressure air is first cooled to near ambient (mauve) by ground water in a heat exchanger (left-most square). The ambient-temperature high-pressure air then further cooled by a second heat exchanger (middle square) to below ambient temperature (blue). The cool, high-pressure air is then allowed to expand through an expansion nozzle, which causes it to become very cold (pale blue), into an insulated collection vessel (right-most square).

Von Linde's trick was to pipe the cold ambient-pressure air from the collection vessel (or at least that portion of it that didn't liquefy) back to the second heat exchanger and use it to cool the ambient-temperature high-pressure air coming from the first heat exchanger. The more the high-pressure air is cooled before expansion, the colder the ambient-pressure air will be after expansion, further cooling the high-pressure air, making the ambient-pressure air even colder... positive feedback. The longer it runs, the colder it gets.

What we see here is that the intermediate result is used to precondition the next step.

Tesla's regenerative voltage multiplication

Tesla is doing something very similar. In the first round, the extra coil generates a certain voltage in its top-load. This will induce the same voltage in the top-load of the magnifier coil. The magnifier coil will then make sure that this voltage is present in the next step. Because of this shielding voltage, the extra coil will produce a higher voltage until the input power can be released. This in turn raises the voltage of the outer top-load, and just as von Linde's regenerative cooling, this process raises the voltage higher, the longer it runs.

Does "The Problem of Increasing Human Energy" describe a magnifying transmitter?

We look at the time-line and the story-line and compare this to the articles of 1897-01-27, 1898-11-30, 1904-05-05, 1905-01-07.

We see:

The Problem of Increasing Human Energy.	
17: 2 solutions	1898: line 3 and 7
22: A departure from known methods	1898: line 48 and 1904: line 40
100: pumping water	1898: line 15
140: Rotating Magnetic Field (indicating time)	1898: line 2
152: A characteristic feature is "Freely vibrating secondary"	1905: line 9
386: Conducting properties of air	1898: line 32
414: Completion is near	1897: line 9 and 1904: line 52 and 93

Further:
1898: line 23 links this article to Wardenclyffe
1904: line 9 links this article to the Magnifying Transmitter
1904: line 36 links this article to Wardenclyffe
1904: line 33 is an explicit reference to the 1900 article
1904: line 56 hints at over-unity
1905: line 7 links this article to Wardenclyffe
1905: line 56 hints at even more over-unity

With all these links, I think it is safe to assume that this article is indeed describing Tesla's magnifying transmitter.

Outline

(articles in the appendices are referred to by the publication date / line number, in blue)

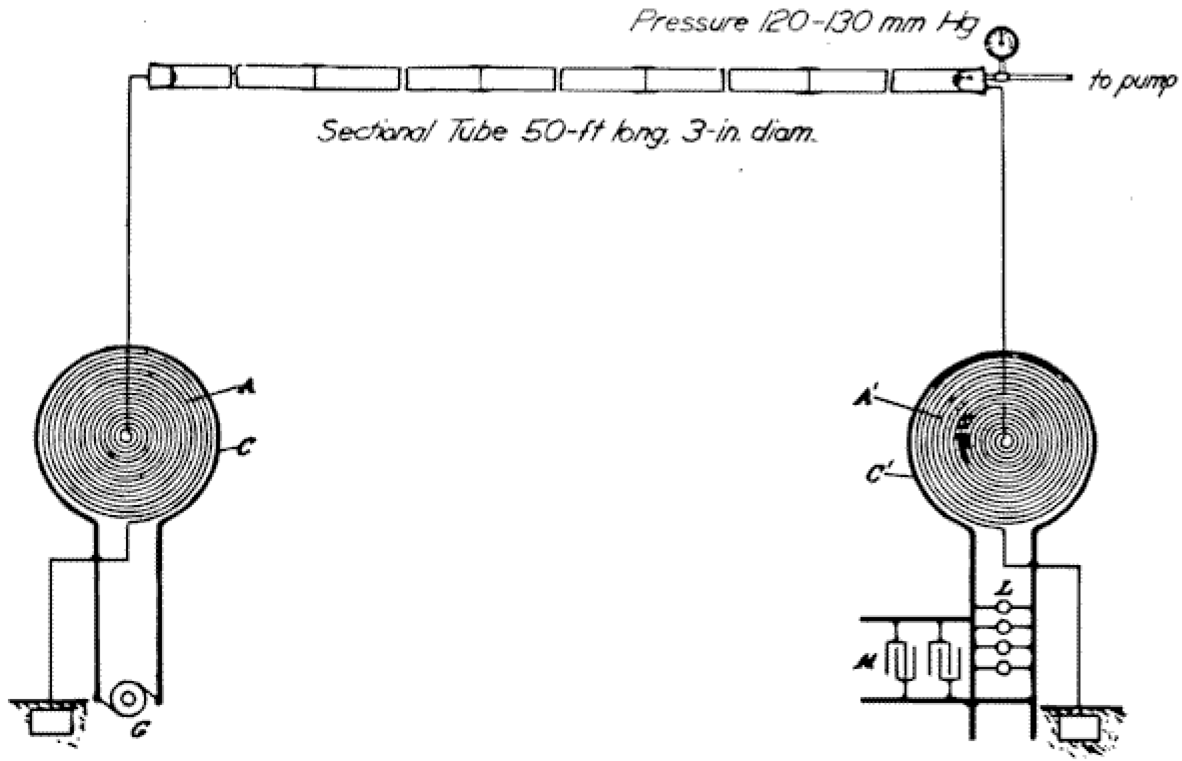
The possibility of generating energy from the ambient medium occurred to Tesla in the latter part of 1883 (1891-05-20/27-29)(1892-02-03/1-8)(1983-02-24/8-9)(1897-01-27/1-9)(1900/12-13,15-20,137,414).
After the invention of the rotating magnetic field, the introduction of which took a lot of his time. (1898-11-30/2)(1900/140)
First experiments in this line started in 1891. (1900/143)
The self-acting machine consists of 5 parts. (1898-11-30/46-49)(1900/172)
The first part is the mechanical or electrical oscillator. (1900/161-170,173,323)
The second part is the compressor. (1900/174)
The third part makes the whole into a refrigerating machine. (1900/151-153,181-188)

The fourth and fifth part are not described anywhere, but as the first 3 parts create the 'sink' and transmit electrical energy, we can safely assume that the fourth part would collect the transmitted energy and the fifth part would feed it back into the first.

At this point we notice references to Dewar and Linde. (1900/155,181-188)
Looking back at the parts that have been described it is logical to assume that this third part creates a regenerative loop. This implies that the magnifier coil, or to be more precise the secondary circuit (A) is this third part.

The main channel for distribution is through the Earth. (1893-02-24/26-31)(1900/260)

In order to facilitate industrial quantities a second channel through the air *can* be utilized, closing the circuit. (1893/75-76)(1898-11-30/31-34)(1900/220,386)



"This is a diagram representing the arrangement of apparatus as in a practical experiment which I performed before G.D. Seeley, Examiner in Chief, U.S. Patent Office, on the 23rd of January, 1898. This experiment illustrates a great departure I had made a little prior to that date." (Nikola Tesla On His Work With Alternating Currents and Their Application to Wireless Telegraphy, Telephony, and Transmission of Power, p. 125) However, 32 years later Tesla makes clear that he did not plan to use this channel. (1932/1-9) But this may be a later insight.

An overall description of the magnifying transmitter. (1893-02-24/51-55)(1905/9-12)

A sink to receive energy. (1900/83,98-117)

Conversion of energy received in the sink. (1898-11-17/6-7)(1900/125,150)

The letter dated November 5, 1903 to J.P. Morgan (see appendices) may indicate that the original plan for Wardenclyffe (being a self-regenerative resonant transformer) was altered in the process and changed to a simple system for telluric transmission as in the patent 1,119,732. The reason being that it did not work in this set up. It obviously did work in Colorado Springs, but that system was altered to fit into a single tower and altered again to fit into the available budget (in September 1901, see Rare Notes).

Interesting side notes:

- Reference to the pancake-coil as a turbine (1900/146). This sheds light on how Tesla sees induction.
- 1/4 wavelength (1900/274-276). This can also be found in patent teksts and the Colorado Springs Notes.
- Reference to the 1900 Century Magazine article (1904/33). Note "every word of which was carefully weighed". Tesla is telling us to study this article carefully, it may contain more information than it shows at first glance.
- In 1902 Tesla writes in a "dear Luka letter" (see appendices) that he originally intended to reveal his method of obtaining energy in the 1900 article.

US Patents filed 1909-1916

I suspect that these patents are filed for the purpose of documenting the working principles of Wardenclyffe.
It concerns these patents:

1909:

1,061,142	Fluid propulsion
1,061,206	Turbine

1913:

1,113,716	Fountain

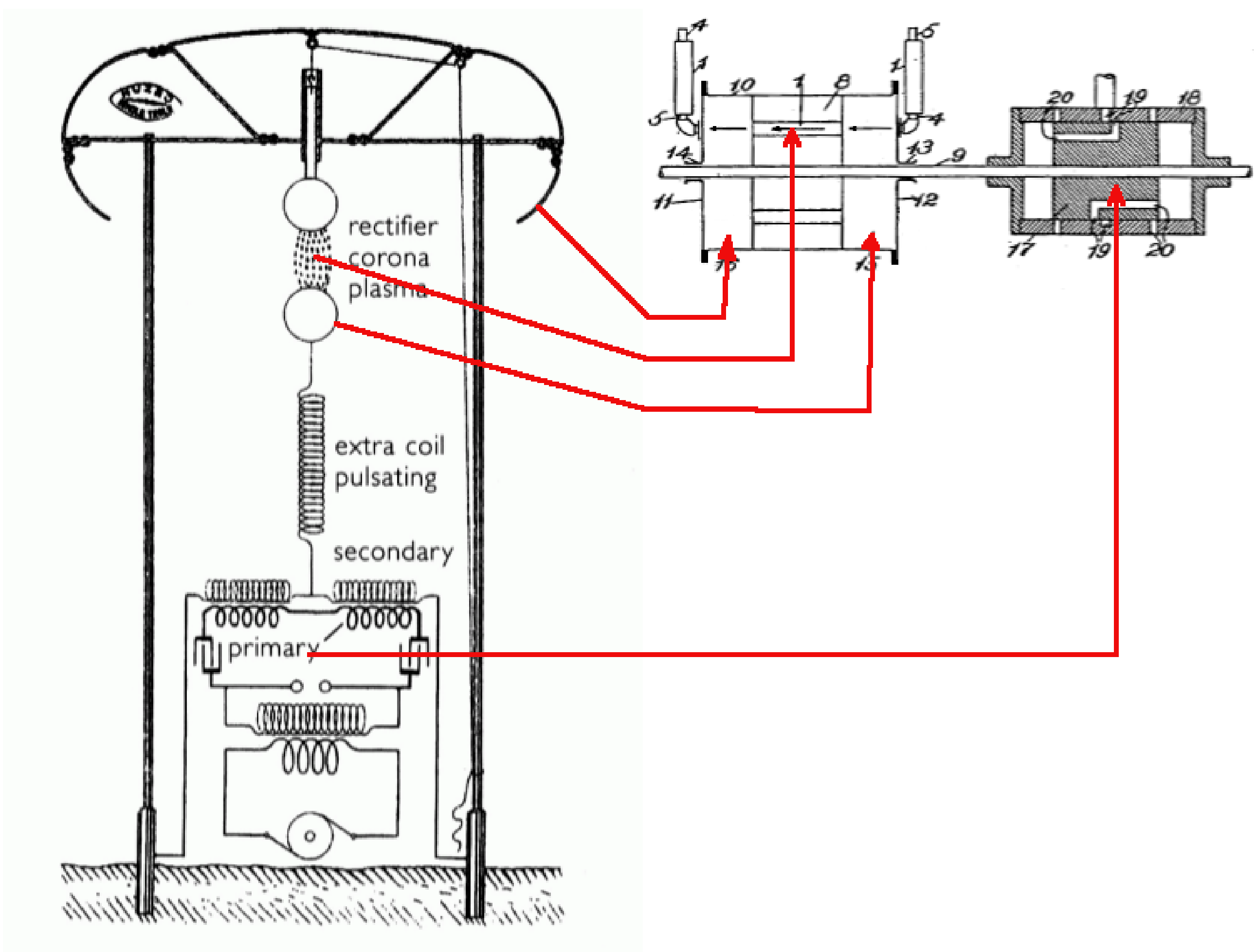
1914:

1,209,359	Speed indicator

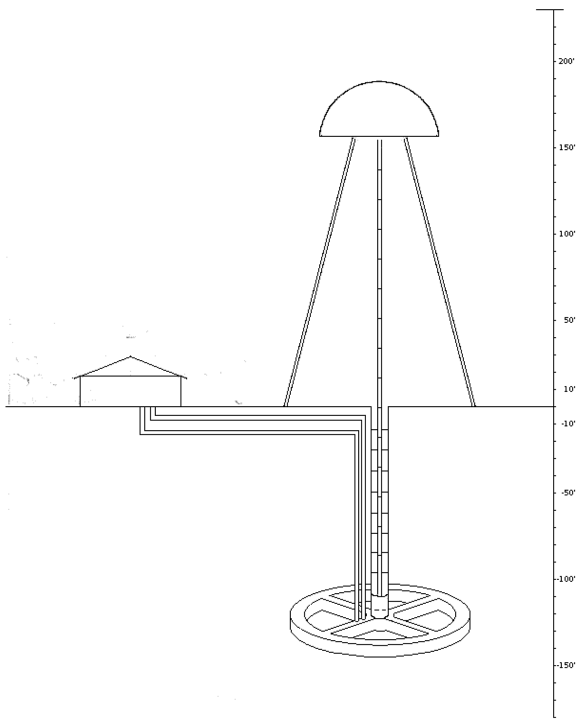
1916:

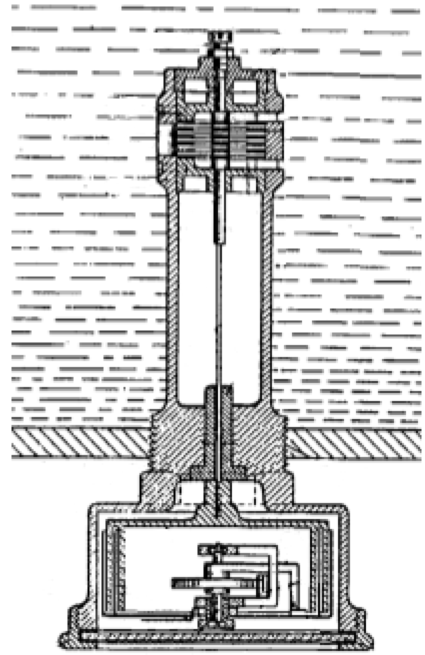
1,266,175	Lightning protector
1,274,816	Speed indicator
1,314,718	Ship's log
1,329,559	Valvular conduit
1,365,547	Flow meter
1,402,025	Frequency meter

This is still to be worked out properly but for starters:
1,266,175 explains how discharges from a top-load can be prevented by an enveloping electric field
1,329,559 mapped on a 'rare notes' image:

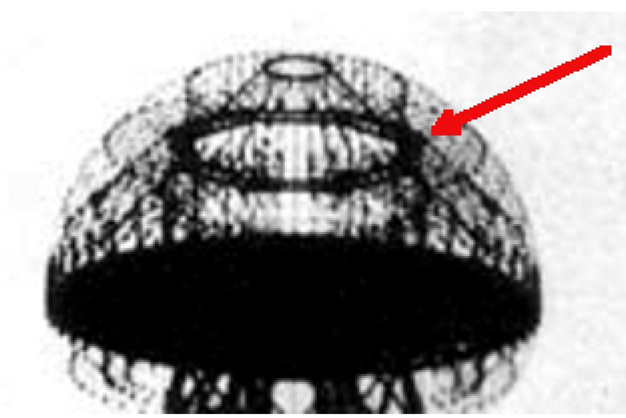


1,365,547 compared to a (enhanced) Leland Anderson drawing:





This requires a flat spiral coil in the top of the Wardenclyffe tower, which was indeed present:



1,113,716 shows in a way how a vortex can be used to draw down conditions that exist in a higher region (for example the ionosphere...)

Conclusion

By going through all available writings and drawings of Nikola Tesla we can establish with certainty

- the working principles of the magnifying transmitter
- that the 1900 Century Magazine article describes the magnifying transmitter
- that the Colorado Springs experiments were to establish the precise parameters for the Wardenclyffe project
- since the 1900 Century Magazine article describes a process of obtaining energy from the ambient medium, we must conclude that the magnifying transmitter does do this. Also it is obvious that a system that distributes limited resources to everyone all over the world will never find acceptance. And besides that we find a number of statements that could be interpreted as that the Wardenclyffe tower will make tens or even hundreds of millions horse powers available while it takes no more than ten thousand.

Also that it is likely that the original plan for Wardenclyffe to be a “self-regenerative resonant transformer” was abandoned around May 1902 and it was changed into a system for telluric transmission.

Appendices

Please note that these are not the full articles. Only the most relevant parts are copied here.

1891-05-20: Experiments with Alternate Currents of Very High Frequency and Their Application to Methods of Artificial Illumination

For years the efforts of inventors have been directed towards obtaining electrical energy from heat by means of the thermopile. It might seem invidious to remark that but few know what is the real trouble with the thermopile. It is not the inefficiency or small output—though these are great drawbacks—but the fact that the thermopile has its phylloxera, that is, that by constant use it is deteriorated, which has thus far prevented its introduction on an industrial scale. Now that all modern research seems to point with certainty to the use of electricity of excessively high tension, the question must present itself to many whether it is not possible to obtain in a practicable manner this form of energy from heat. We have been used to look upon an electrostatic machine as a plaything, and somehow we couple with it the idea of the inefficient and impractical. But now we must think differently, for now we know that everywhere we have to deal with the same forces, and that it is a mere question of inventing proper methods or apparatus for rendering them available.

In the present systems of electrical distribution, the employment of the iron with its wonderful magnetic properties allows us to reduce considerably the size of the apparatus; but, in spite of this, it is still very cumbersome. The more we progress in the study of electric and magnetic phenomena, the more we become convinced that the present methods will be short-lived. For the production of light, at least, such heavy machinery would seem to be unnecessary. The energy required is very small, and if light can be obtained as efficiently as, theoretically, it appears possible, the apparatus need have but a very small output. There being a strong probability that the illuminating methods of the future will involve the use of very high potentials, it seems very desirable to perfect a contrivance capable of converting the energy of heat into energy of the requisite form. Nothing to speak of has been done towards this end, for the thought that electricity of some 50,000 or 100,000 volts pressure or more, even if obtained, would be unavailable for practical purposes, has deterred inventors from working in this direction.

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But there is a possibility of obtaining energy not only in the form of light, but motive power, and energy of any other form, in some more direct way from the medium. The time will be when this will be accomplished, and the time has come when one may utter such words before an enlightened audience without being considered a visionary. We are whirling through endless space with an inconceivable speed, all around us everything is spinning, everything is moving, everywhere is energy. There must be some way of availing ourselves of this energy more directly. Then; with the light obtained from the medium, with the power derived from it, with every form of energy obtained without effort, from the store forever inexhaustible, humanity will advance with giant strides. The mere contemplation of these magnificent possibilities expands our minds, strengthen our hopes and fills our hearts with supreme delight.

1892-02-03: Experiments with alternate currents of high potential and high frequency

We shall have no need to *transmit* power at all. Ere many generations pass, our machinery will be driven by a power obtainable at any point of the universe. This idea is not novel. Men have been led to it long ago by instinct or reason; it has been expressed in many ways, and in many places, in the history of old and new. We find it in the delightful myth of Antheus, who derives power from the earth; we find it among the subtle speculations of one of your splendid mathematicians and in many hints and statements of thinkers of the present time. Throughout space there is energy. Is this energy static or kinetic? If static our hopes are in vain; if kinetic—and this we know it is, for certain—then it is a mere question of time when men will succeed in attaching their machinery to the very wheelwork of nature. Of all, living or dead, Crookes came nearest to doing it. His radiometer will turn in the light of day and in the darkness of the night; it will turn everywhere where there is heat, and heat is everywhere. But, unfortunately, this beautiful little machine, while it goes down to posterity as the most interesting, must likewise be put on record as the most inefficient machine ever invented!

1893-02-24: On Light and Other High Frequency Phenomena

So, the atom, the ulterior element of the Universe's structure, is tossed about in space eternally, a play to external influences, like a boat in a troubled sea. Were it to stop its motion it would die: matter at rest, if such a thing could exist, would be matter dead. Death of matter! Never has a sentence of deeper philosophical meaning been uttered. This is the way in which Prof. Dewar forcibly expresses it in the description of his admirable experiments, in which liquid oxygen is handled as one handles water, and air at ordinary pressure is made to condense and even to solidify by the intense cold: Experiments, which serve to illustrate, in his language, the last feeble manifestations of life, the last quiverings of matter about to die. But human eyes shall not witness such death. There is no death of matter, for throughout the infinite universe, all has to move, to vibrate, that is, to live.

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In connection with resonance effects and the problem of transmission of energy over a single conductor which was previously considered, I would say a few words on a subject which constantly fills my thoughts and which concerns the welfare of all. I mean the transmission of intelligible signals or perhaps even power to any distance without the use of wires. I am becoming daily more convinced of the practicability of the scheme; and though I know full well that the great majority of scientific men will not believe that such results can be practically and immediately realized, yet I think that all consider the developments in recent years by a number of workers to have been such as to encourage thought and experiment in this direction. My conviction has grown so strong, that I no longer look upon this plan of energy or intelligence transmission as a mere theoretical possibility, but as a serious problem in electrical engineering, which must be carried out some day. The idea of transmitting intelligence without wires is the natural outcome of the most recent results of electrical investigations. Some enthusiasts have expressed their belief that telephony to any distance by induction through the air is possible. I cannot stretch my imagination so far, but I do firmly believe that it is practicable to disturb by means of powerful machines the electrostatic condition of the earth and thus transmit intelligible signals and perhaps power. In fact, what is there against the carrying out of such a scheme? We now know that electric vibration may be transmitted through a single conductor. Why then not try to avail ourselves of the earth for this purpose? We need not be frightened by the idea of distance. To the weary wanderer counting the mile-posts the earth may appear very large but to that happiest of all men, the astronomer, who gazes at the heavens and by their standard judges the magnitude of our globe, it appears very small. And so I think it must seem to the electrician, for when he considers the speed with which an electric disturbance is propagated through the earth all his ideas of distance must completely vanish.

A point of great importance would be first to know what is the capacity of the earth? and what charge does it contain if electrified? Though we have no positive evidence of a charged body existing in space without other oppositely electrified bodies being near, there is a fair probability that the earth is such a body, for by whatever process it was separated from other bodies—and this is the accepted view of its origin—it must have retained a charge, as occurs in all processes of mechanical separation. If it be a charged body insulated in space its capacity should be extremely small, less than one-thousandth of a farad. But the upper strata of the air are conducting, and so, perhaps, is the medium in free space beyond the atmosphere, and these may contain an opposite charge. Then the capacity might be incomparably greater. In any case it is of the greatest importance to get an idea of what quantity of electricity the earth contains. It is difficult to say whether we shall ever acquire this necessary knowledge, but there is hope that we may, and that is, by means of electrical resonance. If ever we can ascertain at what period the earth's charge, when disturbed, oscillates with respect to an oppositely electrified system or known circuit, we shall know a fact possibly of the greatest importance to the welfare of the human race. I propose to seek for the period by means of an electrical oscillator, or a source of alternating electric currents. One of the terminals of the source would be connected to earth as, for instance, to the city water mains, the other to an insulated body of large surface. It is possible that the outer conducting air strata, or free space, contain an opposite charge and that, together with the earth, they form a condenser of very large capacity. In such case the period of vibration may be very low and an alternating dynamo machine might serve for the purpose of the experiment. I would then transform the current to a potential as high as it would be found possible and connect the ends of the high tension secondary to the ground and to the insulated body. By varying the frequency of the currents and carefully observing the potential of the insulated body and watching for the disturbance at various neighboring points of the earth's surface resonance might be detected. Should, as the majority of scientific men in all probability believe, the period be extremely small, then a dynamo machine would not do and a proper electrical oscillator would have to be produced and perhaps it might not be possible to obtain such rapid vibrations. But whether this be possible or not, and whether the earth contains a charge or not, and whatever may be its period of vibration, it certainly is possible—for of this we have daily evidence—to produce some electrical disturbance sufficiently powerful to be perceptible by suitable instruments at any point of the earth's surface.

Fig. 185.

Assume that a source of alternating currents be connected, as in Fig. 21 / 185, with one of its terminals to earth (conveniently to the water mains) and with the other to a body of large surface P. When the electric oscillation is set up there will be a movement of electricity in and out of P, and alternating currents will pass through the earth, converging to, or diverging from, the point C where the ground connection is made. In this manner neighboring points on the earth's surface within a certain radius will be disturbed. But the disturbance will diminish with the distance, and the distance at which the effect will still be perceptible will depend on the quantity of electricity set in motion. Since the body P is insulated, in order to displace a considerable quantity, the potential of the source must be excessive, since there would be limitations as to the surface of P. The conditions might be adjusted so that the generator or source S will set up the same electrical movement as though its circuit were closed. Thus it is certainly practicable to impress an electric vibration at least of a certain low period upon the earth by means of proper machinery. At what distance such a vibration might be made perceptible can only be conjectured. I have on another occasion considered the question how the earth might behave to electric disturbances. There is no doubt that, since in such an experiment the electrical density at the surface could be but extremely small considering the size of the earth, the air would not act as a very disturbing factor, and there would be not much energy lost through the action of the air, which would be the case if the density were great. Theoretically, then; it could not require a great amount of energy to produce a disturbance perceptible at great distance, or even all over the surface of the globe.

Now, it is quite certain that at any point within a certain radius of the source S a properly adjusted self-induction and capacity device can be set in action by resonance. But not only can this be done, but another source S1 Fig. 21, similar to S, or any number of such sources, can be set to work in synchronism with the latter, and the vibration thus intensified and spread over a large area, or a flow of electricity produced to or from the source S1 if the same be of opposite phase to the source S. I think that beyond doubt it is possible to operate electrical devices in a city through the ground or pipe system by resonance from an electrical oscillator located at a central point. But the practical solution of this problem would be of incomparably smaller benefit to man than the realization of the scheme of transmitting intelligence, or perhaps power, to any distance through the earth or environing medium. If this is at all possible, distance does not mean anything. Proper apparatus must first be produced by means of which the problem can be attacked and I have devoted much thought to this subject. I am firmly convinced that it can be done and hope that we shall live to see it done.

1897-01-27: On Electricity

We have to evolve means for obtaining energy from stores which are forever inexhaustible, to perfect methods which do not imply consumption and waste of any material whatever. Upon this great possibility, which I have long ago recognized, upon this great problem, the practical solution of which means so much for humanity, I have myself concentrated my efforts since a number of years, and a few happy ideas which came to me have inspired me to attempt the most difficult, and given me strength and courage in adversity. Nearly six years ago my confidence had become strong enough to prompt me to an expression of hope in the ultimate solution of this all dominating problem. I have made progress since, and have passed the stage of mere conviction such as is derived from a diligent study of known facts, conclusions and calculations. I now feel sure that the realization of that idea is not far off. But precisely for this reason I feel impelled to point out here an important fact, which I hope will be remembered. Having examined for a long time the possibilities of the development I refer to, namely, that of the operation of engines on any point of the earth by the energy of the medium, I find that even under the theoretically best conditions such a method of obtaining power can not equal in economy, simplicity and many other features the present method, involving a conversion of the mechanical energy of running water into electrical energy and the transmission of the latter in the form of currents of very high tension to great distances. Provided, therefore, that we can avail ourselves of currents of sufficiently high tension, a waterfall affords us the most advantageous means of getting power from the sun sufficient for all our wants, and this recognition has impressed me strongly with the future importance of the water power, not so much because of its commercial value, though it may be very great, but chiefly because of its bearing upon our safety and welfare. I am glad to say that also in this latter direction my efforts have not been unsuccessful, for I have devised means which will allow us the use in power transmission of electromotive forces much higher than those practicable with ordinary apparatus. In fact, progress in this field has given me fresh hope that I shall see the fulfillment of one of my fondest dreams; namely, the transmission of power from station to station without the employment of any connecting wire. Still, whatever method of transmission be ultimately adopted, nearness to the source of power will remain an important advantage.

1898-11-17: High Frequency Oscillators for Electro-Therapeutic and Other Purposes

With regard to the electrical actions in general, and by analogy, it was reasonable to infer that the physiological effects, however complex, might be resolved in three classes. First the statical, that is, such as are chiefly dependent on the magnitude of electrical potential; second, the dynamical, that is, those principally dependent on the quality of electrical movement or current's strength through the body, and third, effects of a distinct nature due to electrical waves or oscillations, that is, impulses in which the electrical energy is alternately passing in more or less rapid succession through the static and dynamic forms.

1898-11-30: Tesla Describes his Efforts in Various Fields of Work

As to the idea of rendering the energy of the sun available for industrial purposes, it fascinated me early but I must admit it was only long after I discovered the rotating magnetic field that it took a firm hold upon my mind. In assailing the problem I found two possible ways of solving it. Either power was to be developed on the spot by converting the energy of the sun's radiations or the energy of vast reservoirs was to be transmitted economically to any distance. Though there were other possible sources of economical power, only the two solutions mentioned offer the ideal feature of power being obtained without any consumption of material. After long thought I finally arrived at two solutions, but on the first of these, namely, that referring to the development of power in any locality from the sun's radiations, I can not dwell at present. The system of power transmission without wires, in the form in which I have described it recently, originated in this manner. Starting from two facts that the earth was a conductor insulated in space, and that a body can not be charged without causing an equivalent displacement of electricity in the earth, I undertook to construct a machine suited for creating as large a displacement as possible of the earth's electricity.

This machine was simply to charge and discharge in rapid succession a body insulated in space, thus altering periodically the amount of electricity in the earth, and consequently the pressure all over its surface. It was nothing but what in mechanics is a pump, forcing water from a large reservoir into a small one and back again. Primarily I contemplated only the sending of messages to great distances in this manner, and I described the scheme in detail, pointing out on that occasion the importance of ascertaining certain electrical conditions of the earth. The attractive feature of this plan was that the intensity of the signals should diminish very little with the distance, and, in fact, should not diminish at all, if it were not for certain losses occurring, chiefly in the atmosphere. As all my previous ideas, this one, too, received the treatment of Marsyas, but it forms, nevertheless, the basis of what is now known as “wireless telegraphy.” This statement will bear rigorous examination, but it is not made with the intent of detracting from the merit of others. On the contrary, it is with great pleasure that I acknowledge the early work of Dr. Lodge, the brilliant experiments of Marconi, and of a later experimenter in this line, Dr. Slaby, of Berlin. Now, this idea I extended to a system of power transmission, and I submitted it to Helmholtz on the occasion of his visit to this country. He unhesitatingly said that power could certainly be transmitted in this manner, but he doubted that I could ever produce an apparatus capable of creating the high pressures of a number of million volts, which were required to attack the problem with any chance of success, and that I could overcome the difficulties of insulation. Impossible as this problem seemed at first, I was fortunate to master it in a comparatively short time, and it was in perfecting this apparatus that I came to a turning point in the development of this idea. I, namely, at once observed that the air, which is a perfect insulator for currents produced by ordinary apparatus, was easily traversed by currents furnished by my improved machine, giving a tension of something like 2,500,000 volts. A further investigation in this direction led to another valuable fact; namely, that the conductivity of the air for these currents increased very rapidly with its degree of rarefaction, and at once the transmission of energy through the upper strata of air, which, without such results as I have obtained, would be nothing more than a dream, became easily realizable. This appears all the more certain, as I found it quite practicable to transmit, under conditions such as exist in heights well explored, electrical energy in large amounts. I have thus overcome all the chief obstacles which originally stood in the way, and the success of my system now rests merely on engineering skill.

Referring to my latest invention, I wish to bring out a point which has been overlooked. I arrived, as has been stated, at the idea through entirely abstract speculations on the human organism, which I conceived to be a self-propelling machine, the motions of which are governed by impressions received through the eye. Endeavoring to construct a mechanical model resembling in its essential, material features the human body, I was led to combine a controlling device, or organ sensitive to certain waves, with a body provided with propelling and directing mechanism, and the rest naturally followed. Originally the idea interested me only from the scientific point of view, but soon I saw that I had made a departure which sooner or later must produce a profound change in things and conditions presently existing.

1900-06-00: The Problem of Increasing Human Energy - With Special References to the Harnessing of the Sun's Energy.

From the very beginning three ways of drawing energy from the sun were open to man. The savage, when he warmed his frozen limbs at a fire kindled in some way, availed himself of the energy of the sun stored in the burning material. When he carried a bundle of branches to his cave and burned them there, he made use of the sun's stored energy transported from one to another locality. When he set sail to his canoe, he utilized the energy of the sun applied to the atmosphere or the ambient medium. There can be no doubt that the first is the oldest way. A fire, found accidentally, taught the savage to appreciate its beneficial heat. He then very likely conceived of the idea of carrying the glowing members to his abode. Finally he learned to use the force of a swift current of water or air. It is characteristic of modern development that progress has been effected in the same order. The utilization of the energy stored in wood or coal, or, generally speaking, fuel, led to the steam-engine. Next a great stride in advance was made in energy-transportation by the use of electricity, which permitted the transfer of energy from one locality to another without transporting the material. But as to the utilization of the energy of the ambient medium, no radical step forward has as yet been made known.

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But, whatever our resources of primary energy may be in the future, we must, to be rational, obtain it without consumption of any material. Long ago I came to this conclusion, and to arrive at this result only two ways, as before indicated, appeared possible—either to turn to use the energy of the sun stored in the ambient medium, or to transmit, through the medium, the sun's energy to distant places from some locality where it was obtainable without consumption of material. At that time I at once rejected the latter method as entirely impracticable, and turned to examine the possibilities of the former.

....

A DEPARTURE FROM KNOWN METHODS—POSSIBILITY OF A "SELF-ACTING" ENGINE OR MACHINE, INANIMATE, YET CAPABLE, LIKE A LIVING BEING, OF DERIVING ENERGY FROM THE

MEDIUM—THE IDEAL WAY OF OBTAINING MOTIVE POWER.

When I began the investigation of the subject under consideration, and when the preceding or similar ideas presented themselves to me for the first time, though I was then unacquainted with a number of the facts mentioned, a survey of the various ways of utilizing the energy of the medium convinced me, nevertheless, that to arrive at a thoroughly satisfactory practical solution a radical departure from the methods then known had to be made. The windmill, the solar engine, the engine driven by terrestrial heat, had their limitations in the amount of power obtainable. Some new way had to be discovered which would enable us to get more energy. There was enough heat-energy in the medium, but only a small part of it was available for the operation of an engine in the ways then known. Besides, the energy was obtainable only at a very slow rate. Clearly, then, the problem was to discover some new method which would make it possible both to utilize more of the heat-energy of the medium and also to draw it away from the same at a more rapid rate.

I was vainly endeavoring to form an idea of how this might be accomplished, when I read some statements from Carnot and Lord Kelvin (then Sir William Thomson) which meant virtually that it is impossible for an inanimate mechanism or self-acting machine to cool a portion of the medium below the temperature of the surrounding, and operate by the heat abstracted. These statements interested me intensely. Evidently a living being could do this very thing, and since the experiences of my early life which I have related had convinced me that a living being is only an automaton, or, otherwise stated, a "self-acting-engine," I came to the conclusion that it was possible to construct a machine which would do the same. As the first step toward this realization I conceived the following mechanism. Imagine a thermopile consisting of a number of bars of metal extending from the earth to the outer space beyond the atmosphere. The heat from below, conducted upward along these metal bars, would cool the earth or the sea or the air, according to the location of the lower parts of the bars, and the result, as is well known, would be an electric current circulating in these bars. The two terminals of the thermopile could now be joined through an electric motor, and, theoretically, this motor would run on and on, until the media below would be cooled down to the temperature of the outer space. This would be an inanimate engine which, to all evidence, would be cooling a portion of the medium below the temperature of the surrounding, and operating by the heat abstracted.

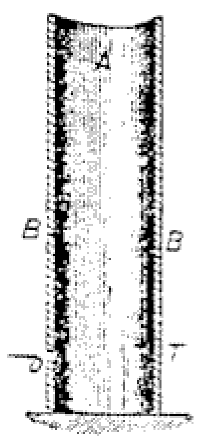

DIAGRAM *b*. OBTAINING ENERGY FROM THE AMBIENT MEDIUM

A, medium with little energy; *B*, *B*, ambient medium with much energy; *O*, path of the energy.

But was it not possible to realize a similar condition without necessarily going to a height? Conceive, for the sake of illustration, [a cylindrical] enclosure T, as illustrated in diagram b, such that energy could not be transferred across it except through a channel or path O, and that, by some means or other, in this enclosure a medium were maintained which would have little energy, and that on the outer side of the same there would be the ordinary ambient medium with much energy. Under these assumptions the energy would flow through the path O, as indicated by the arrow, and might then be converted on its passage into some other form of energy. The question was, Could such a condition be attained? Could we produce artificially such a "sink" for the energy of the ambient medium to flow in? Suppose that an extremely low temperature could be maintained by some process in a given space; the surrounding medium would then be compelled to give off heat, which could be converted into mechanical or other form of energy, and utilized. By realizing such a plan, we should be enabled to get at any point of the globe a continuous supply of energy, day and night. More than this, reasoning in the abstract, it would seem possible to cause a quick circulation of the medium, and thus draw the energy at a very rapid rate. Here, then, was an idea which, if realizable, afforded a happy solution of the problem of getting energy from the medium. But was it realizable? I convinced myself that it was so in a number of ways, of which one is the following. As regards heat, we are at a high level, which may be represented by the surface of a mountain lake considerably above the sea, the level of which may mark the absolute zero of temperature existing in the interstellar space. Heat, like water, flows from high to low level, and, consequently, just as we can let the water of the lake run down to the sea, so we are able to let heat from the earth's surface travel up into the cold region above. Heat, like water, can perform work in flowing down, and if we had any doubt as to whether we could derive energy from the medium by means of a thermopile, as before described, it would be dispelled by this analogue. But can we produce cold in a given portion of the space and cause the heat to flow in continually? To create such a "sink," or "cold hole," as we might say, in the medium, would be equivalent to producing in the lake a space either empty or filled with something much lighter than water. This we could do by placing in the lake a tank, and pumping all the water out of the latter. We know, then, that the water, if allowed to flow back into the tank, would, theoretically, be able to perform exactly the same amount of work which was used in pumping it out, but not a bit more. Consequently nothing could be gained in this double operation of first raising the water and then letting it fall down. This would mean that it is impossible to create such a sink in the medium. But let us reflect a moment. Heat, though following certain general laws of mechanics, like a fluid, is not such; it is energy which may be converted into other forms of energy as it passes from a high to a low level. To make our mechanical analogy complete and true, we must, therefore, assume that the water, in its passage into the tank, is converted into something else, which may be taken out of it without using any, or by using very little, power. For example, if heat be represented in this analogue by the water of the lake, the oxygen and hydrogen composing the water may illustrate other forms of energy into which the heat is transformed in passing from hot to cold. If the process of heat transformation were absolutely perfect, no heat at all would arrive at the low level, since all of it would be converted into other forms of energy. Corresponding to this ideal case, all the water flowing into the tank would be decomposed into oxygen and hydrogen before reaching the bottom, and the result would be that water would continually flow in, and yet the tank would remain entirely empty, the gases formed escaping. We would thus produce, by expending initially a certain amount of work to create a sink for the heat or, respectively, the water to flow in, a condition enabling us to get any amount of energy without further effort. This would be an ideal way of obtaining motive power. We do not know of any such absolutely perfect process of heat-conversion, and consequently some heat will generally reach the low level, which means to say, in our mechanical analogue, that some water will arrive at the bottom of the tank, and a gradual and slow filling of the latter will take place, necessitating continuous pumping out. But evidently there will be less to pump out than flows in, or, in other words, less energy will be needed to maintain the initial condition than is developed by the fall, and this is to say that some energy will be gained from the medium. What is not converted in flowing down can just be raised up with its own energy, and what is converted is clear gain. Thus the virtue of the principle I have discovered resides wholly in the conversion of the energy on the downward flow.

FIRST EFFORTS TO PRODUCE THE SELF-ACTING ENGINE—THE MECHANICAL OSCILLATOR—WORK OF DEWAR AND LINDE—LIQUID AIR.

Having recognized this truth, I began to devise means for carrying out my idea, and, after long thought, I finally conceived a combination of apparatus which should make possible the obtaining of power from the medium by a process of continuous cooling of atmospheric air. This apparatus, by continually transforming heat into mechanical work, tended to become colder and colder, and if it only were practicable to reach a very low temperature in this manner, then a sink for the heat could be produced, and energy could be derived from the medium. This seemed to be contrary to the statements of Carnot and Lord Kelvin before referred to, but I concluded from the theory of the process that such a result could be attained. This conclusion I reached, I think, in the latter part of 1883, when I was in Paris, and it was at a time when my mind was being more and more dominated by an invention which I had evolved during the preceding year, and which has since become known under the name of the "rotating magnetic field." During the few years which followed I elaborated further the plan I had imagined, and studied the working conditions, but made little headway. The commercial introduction in this country of the invention before referred to required most of my energies until 1889, when I again took up the idea of the self-acting machine. A closer investigation of the principles involved, and calculation, now showed that the result I aimed at could not be reached in a practical manner by ordinary machinery, as I had in the beginning expected. This led me, as a next step, to the study of a type of engine generally designated as "turbine," which at first seemed to offer better chances for a realization of the idea. Soon I found, however, that the turbine, too, was unsuitable. But my conclusions showed that if an engine of a peculiar kind could be brought to a high degree of perfection, the plan I had conceived was realizable, and I resolved to proceed with the development of such an engine, the primary object of which was to secure the greatest economy of transformation of heat into mechanical energy. A characteristic feature of the engine was that the work-performing piston was not connected with anything else, but was perfectly free to vibrate at an enormous rate. The mechanical difficulties encountered in the construction of this engine were greater than I had anticipated, and I made slow progress. This work was continued until early in 1892, when I went to London, where I saw Professor Dewar's admirable experiments with liquefied gases. Others had liquefied gases before, and notably Ozlewski and Pictet had performed creditable early experiments in this line, but there was such a vigor about the work of Dewar that even the old appeared new. His experiments showed, though in a way different from that I had imagined, that it was possible to reach a very low temperature by transforming heat into mechanical work, and I returned, deeply impressed with what I had seen, and more than ever convinced that my plan was practicable. The work temporarily interrupted was taken up anew, and soon I had in a fair state of perfection the engine which I have named "the mechanical oscillator." In this machine I succeeded in doing away with all packings, valves, and lubrication, and in producing so rapid a vibration of the piston that shafts of tough steel, fastened to the same and vibrated longitudinally, were torn asunder. By combining this engine with a dynamo of special design I produced a highly efficient electrical generator, invaluable in measurements and determinations of physical quantities on account of the unvarying rate of oscillation obtainable by its means. I exhibited several types of this machine, named "mechanical and electrical oscillator," before the Electrical Congress at the World's Fair in Chicago during the summer of 1893, in a lecture which, on account of other pressing work, I was unable to prepare for publication. On that occasion I exposed the principles of the mechanical oscillator, but the original purpose of this machine is explained here for the first time.

In the process, as I had primarily conceived it, for the utilization of the energy of the ambient medium, there were five essential elements in combination, and each of these had to be newly designed and perfected, as no such machines existed. The mechanical oscillator was the first element of this combination, and having perfected this, I turned to the next, which was an air-compressor of a design in certain respects resembling that of the mechanical oscillator. Similar difficulties in the construction were again encountered, but the work was pushed vigorously, and at the close of 1894 I had completed these two elements of the combination, and thus produced an apparatus for compressing air, virtually to any desired pressure, incomparably simpler, smaller, and more efficient than the ordinary. I was just beginning work on the third element, which together with the first two would give a refrigerating machine of exceptional efficiency and simplicity, when a misfortune befell me in the burning of my laboratory, which crippled my labors and delayed me. Shortly afterward Dr. Carl Linde announced the liquefaction of air by a self-cooling process, demonstrating that it was practicable to proceed with the cooling until liquefaction of the air took place. This was the only experimental proof which I was still wanting that energy was obtainable from the medium in the manner contemplated by me.

The liquefaction of air by a self-cooling process was not, as popularly believed, an accidental discovery, but a scientific result which could not have been delayed much longer, and which, in all probability, could not have escaped Dewar. This fascinating advance, I believe, is largely due to the powerful work of this great Scotchman. Nevertheless, Linde's is an immortal achievement. The manufacture of liquid air has been carried on for four years in Germany, on a scale much larger than in any other country, and this strange product has been applied for a variety of purposes. Much was expected of it in the beginning, but so far it has been an industrial ignis fatuus. By the use of such machinery as I am perfecting, its cost will probably be greatly lessened, but even then its commercial success will be questionable. When, used as a refrigerant it is uneconomical, as its temperature is unnecessarily low. It is as expensive to maintain a body at a very low temperature as it is to keep it very hot; it takes coal to keep air cold. In oxygen manufacture it cannot yet compete with the electrolytic method. For use as an explosive it is unsuitable, because its low temperature again condemns it to a small efficiency, and for motive-power purposes its cost is still by far too high. It is of interest to note, however, that in driving an engine by liquid air a certain amount of energy may be gained from the engine, or, stated otherwise, from the ambient medium which keeps the engine warm, each two hundred pounds of iron-casting of the latter contributing energy at the rate of about one effective horsepower during one hour. But this gain of the consumer is offset by an equal loss of the producer.

Much of this task on which I have labored so long remains to be done. A number of mechanical details are still to be perfected and some difficulties of a different nature to be mastered, and I cannot hope to produce a self-acting machine deriving energy from the ambient medium for a long time yet, even if all my expectations should materialize. Many circumstances have occurred which have retarded my work of late, but for several reasons the delay was beneficial.

One of these reasons was that I had ample time to consider what the ultimate possibilities of this development might be. I worked for a long time fully convinced that the practical realization of this method of obtaining energy from the sun would be of incalculable industrial value, but the continued study of the subject revealed the fact that while it will be commercially profitable if my expectations are well founded, it will not be so to an extraordinary degree.

DISCOVERY OF UNEXPECTED PROPERTIES OF THE ATMOSPHERE—STRANGE EXPERIMENTS —TRANSMISSION OF ELECTRICAL ENERGY THROUGH ONE WIRE WITHOUT RETURN—TRANSMISSION THROUGH THE EARTH WITHOUT ANY WIRE.

Another of these reasons was that I was led to recognize the transmission of electrical energy to any distance through the media as by far the best solution of the great problem of harnessing the sun's energy for the uses of man. For a long time I was convinced that such a transmission on an industrial scale, could never be realized, but a discovery which I made changed my view. I observed that under certain conditions the atmosphere, which is normally a high insulator, assumes conducting properties, and so becomes capable of conveying any amount of electrical energy. But the difficulties in the way of a practical utilization of this discovery for the purpose of transmitting electrical energy without wires were seemingly insuperable. Electrical pressures of many millions of volts had to be produced and handled; generating apparatus of a novel kind, capable of withstanding the immense electrical stresses, had to be invented and perfected, and a complete safety against the dangers of the high-tension currents had to be attained in the system before its practical introduction could be even thought of. All this could not be done in a few weeks or months, or even years. The work required patience and constant application, but the improvements came, though slowly. Other valuable results were, however, arrived at in the course of this long-continued work, of which I shall endeavor to give a brief account, enumerating the chief advances as they were successively effected.

The discovery of the conducting properties of the air, though unexpected, was only a natural result of experiments in a special field which I had carried on for some years before. It was, I believe, during 1889 that certain possibilities offered by extremely rapid electrical oscillations determined me to design a number of special machines adapted for their investigation. Owing to the peculiar requirements, the construction of these machines was very difficult, and consumed much time and effort; but my work on them was generously rewarded, for I reached by their means several novel and important results. One of the earliest observations I made with these new machines was that electrical oscillations of an extremely high rate act in an extraordinary manner upon the human organism. Thus, for instance, I demonstrated that powerful electrical discharges of several hundred thousand volts, which at that time were considered absolutely deadly, could be passed through the body without inconvenience or hurtful consequences. These oscillations produced other specific physiological effects, which, upon my announcement, were eagerly taken up by skilled physicians and further investigated. This new field has proved itself fruitful beyond expectation, and in the few years which have passed since, it has been developed to such an extent that it now forms a legitimate and important department of medical science. Many results, thought impossible at that time, are now readily obtainable with these oscillations, and many experiments undreamed of then can now be readily performed by their means. I still remember with pleasure how, nine years ago, I passed the discharge of a powerful induction-coil through my body to demonstrate before a scientific society the comparative harmlessness of very rapidly vibrating electric currents, and I can still recall the astonishment of my audience. I would now undertake, with much less apprehension that I had in that experiment, to transmit through my body with such currents the entire electrical energy of the dynamos now working at Niagara—forty or fifty thousand horse-power. I have produced electrical oscillations which were of such intensity that when circulating through my arms and chest they have melted wires which joined my hands, and still I felt no inconvenience. I have energized with such oscillations a loop of heavy copper wire so powerfully that masses of metal, and even objects of an electrical resistance specifically greater than that of human tissue brought close to or placed within the loop, were heated to a high temperature and melted, often with the violence of an explosion, and yet into this very space in which this terribly-destructive turmoil was going on I have repeatedly thrust my head without feeling anything or experiencing injurious after-effects.

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After demonstrating the practicability of this method of transmission, the thought naturally occurred to me to use the earth as a conductor, thus dispensing with all wires. Whatever electricity may be, it is a fact that it behaves like an incompressible fluid, and the earth may be looked upon as an immense reservoir of electricity, which, I thought, could be disturbed effectively by a properly designed electrical machine. Accordingly, my next efforts were directed toward perfecting a special apparatus which would be highly effective in creating a disturbance of electricity in the earth. The progress in this new direction was necessarily very slow and the work discouraging, until I finally succeeded in perfecting a novel kind of transformer or induction-coil, particularly suited for this special purpose. That it is practicable, in this manner, not only to transmit minute amounts of electrical energy for operating delicate electrical devices, as I contemplated at first, but also electrical energy in appreciable quantities, will appear from an inspection of Fig. 4, which illustrates an actual experiment of this kind performed with the same apparatus. The result obtained was all the more remarkable as the top end of the coil was not connected to a wire or plate for magnifying the effect.

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In order to attain the best results it is essential that the length of each wire or circuit, from the ground connection to the top, should be equal to one quarter of the wave-length of the electrical vibration in the wire, or else equal to that length multiplied by an odd number.

...

I was confident, however, that with properly designed machinery signals could be transmitted to any point of the globe, no matter what the distance, without the necessity of using such intermediate stations. I gained this conviction through the discovery of a singular electrical phenomenon, which I described early in 1892, in lectures I delivered before some scientific societies abroad, and which I have called a "rotating brush." This is a bundle of light which is formed, under certain conditions, in a vacuum-bulb, and which is of a sensitiveness to magnetic and electric influences bordering, so to speak, on the supernatural. This light-bundle is rapidly rotated by the earth's magnetism as many as twenty thousand times per second, the rotation in these parts being opposite to what it would be in the southern hemisphere, while in the region of the magnetic equator it should not rotate at all. In its most sensitive state, which is difficult to obtain, it is responsive to electric or magnetic influences to an incredible degree. The mere stiffening of the muscles of the arm and consequent slight electrical change in the body of an observer standing at some distance from it, will perceptibly affect it. When in this highly sensitive state it is capable of indicating the slightest magnetic and electric changes taking place in the earth. The observation of this wonderful phenomenon impressed me strongly that communication at any distance could be easily effected by its means, provided that apparatus could be perfected capable of producing an electric or magnetic change of state, however small, in the terrestrial globe or environing medium.

DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW PRINCIPLE—THE ELECTRICAL OSCILLATOR—PRODUCTION OF IMMENSE ELECTRICAL MOVEMENTS—THE EARTH RESPONDS TO MAN—INTERPLANETARY COMMUNICATION NOW PROBABLE.

I resolved to concentrate my efforts upon this venturesome task, though it involved great sacrifice, for the difficulties to be mastered were such that I could hope to consummate it only after years of labor. It meant delay of other work to which I would have preferred to devote myself, but I gained the conviction that my energies could not be more usefully employed; for I recognized that an efficient apparatus for, the production of powerful electrical oscillations, as was needed for that specific purpose, was the key to the solution of other most important electrical and, in fact, human problems. Not only was communication, to any distance, without wires possible by its means, but, likewise, the transmission of energy in great amounts, the burning of the atmospheric nitrogen, the production of an efficient illuminant, and many other results of inestimable scientific and industrial value. Finally, however, I had the satisfaction of accomplishing the task undertaken by the use of a new principle, the virtue of which is based on the marvelous properties of the electrical condenser. One of these is that it can discharge or explode its stored energy in an inconceivably short time. Owing to this it is unequaled in explosive violence. The explosion of dynamite is only the breath of a consumptive compared with its discharge. It is the means of producing the strongest current, the highest electrical pressure, the greatest commotion in the medium. Another of its properties, equally valuable, is that its discharge may vibrate at any rate desired up to many millions per second.

[See Nikola Tesla: Colorado Springs Notes, page 324, Photograph III.]

FIG. 6. PHOTOGRAPHIC VIEW OF THE ESSENTIAL PARTS OF THE ELECTRICAL OSCILLATOR USED IN THE EXPERIMENTS DESCRIBED

I had arrived at the limit of rates obtainable in other ways when the happy idea presented itself to me to resort to the condenser. I arranged such an instrument so as to be charged and discharged alternately in rapid succession through a coil with a few turns of stout wire, forming the primary of a transformer or induction-coil. Each time the condenser was discharged the current would quiver in the primary wire and induce corresponding oscillations in the secondary. Thus a transformer or induction-coil on new principles was evolved, which I have called "the electrical oscillator," partaking of those unique qualities which characterize the condenser, and enabling results to be attained impossible by other means. Electrical effects of any desired character and of intensities undreamed of before are now easily producible by perfected apparatus of this kind, to which frequent reference has been made, and the essential parts of which are shown in Fig. 6. For certain purposes a strong inductive effect is required; for others the greatest possible suddenness; for others again, an exceptionally high rate of vibration or extreme pressure; while for certain other objects immense electrical movements are necessary. The photographs in Figs. 7, 8, 9, and 10, of experiments performed with such an oscillator, may serve to illustrate some of these features and convey an idea of the magnitude of the effects actually produced. The completeness of the titles of the figures referred to makes a further description of them unnecessary.

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However extraordinary the results shown may appear, they are but trifling compared with those which are attainable by apparatus designed on these same principles. I have produced electrical discharges the actual path of which, from end to end, was probably more than one hundred feet long; but it would not be difficult to reach lengths one hundred times as great. I have produced electrical movements occurring at the rate of approximately one hundred thousand horse-power, but rates of one, five, or ten million horse-power are easily practicable. In these experiments effects were developed incomparably greater than any ever produced by human agencies, and yet these results are but an embryo of what is to be.

That communication without wires to any point of the globe is practicable with such apparatus would need no demonstration, but through a discovery which I made I obtained absolute certitude. Popularly explained, it is exactly this: When we raise the voice and hear an echo in reply, we know that the sound of the voice must have reached a distant wall, or boundary, and must have been reflected from the same. Exactly as the sound, so an electrical wave is reflected, and the same evidence which is afforded by an echo is offered by an electrical phenomenon known as a "stationary" wave—that is, a wave with fixed nodal and ventral regions. Instead of sending sound-vibrations toward a distant wall, I have sent electrical vibrations toward the remote boundaries of the earth, and instead of the wall the earth has replied. In place of an echo I have obtained a stationary electrical wave, a wave reflected from afar.

Stationary waves in the earth mean something more than mere telegraphy without wires to any distance. They will enable us to attain many important specific results impossible otherwise. For instance, by their use we may produce at will, from a sending-station, an electrical effect in any particular region of the globe; we may determine the relative position or course of a moving object, such as a vessel at sea, the distance traversed by the same, or its speed; or we may send over the earth a wave of electricity traveling at any rate we desire, from the pace of a turtle up to lightning speed.

With these developments we have every reason to anticipate that in a time not very distant most telegraphic messages across the oceans will be transmitted without cables. For short distances we need a "wireless" telephone, which requires no expert operators. The greater the spaces to be bridged, the more rational becomes communication without wires. The cable is not only an easily damaged and costly instrument, but it limits us in the speed of transmission by reason of a certain electrical property inseparable from its construction. A properly designed plant for effecting communication without wires ought to have many times the working capacity of a cable, while it will involve incomparably less expense. Not a long time will pass, I believe, before communication by cable will become obsolete, for not only will signaling by this new method be quicker and cheaper, but also much safer. By using some new means for isolating the messages which I have contrived, an almost perfect privacy can be secured.

I have observed the above effects so far only up to a limited distance of about six hundred miles, but inasmuch as there is virtually no limit to the power of the vibrations producible with such an oscillator, I feel quite confident of the success of such a plant for effecting transoceanic communication. Nor is this all. My measurements and calculations have shown that it is perfectly practicable to produce on our globe, by the use of these principles, an electrical movement of such magnitude that, without the slightest doubt, its effect will be perceptible on some of our nearer planets, as Venus and Mars. Thus from mere possibility interplanetary communication has entered the stage of probability. In fact, that we can produce a distinct effect on one of these planets in this novel manner, namely, by disturbing the electrical condition of the earth, is beyond any doubt. This way of effecting such communication is, however, essentially different from all others which have so far been proposed by scientific men. In all the previous instances only a minute fraction of the total energy reaching the planet—as much as it would be possible to concentrate in a reflector—could be utilized by the supposed observer in his instrument. But by the means I have developed he would be enabled to concentrate the larger portion of the entire energy transmitted to the planet in his instrument, and the chances of affecting the latter are thereby increased many millionfold.

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TRANSMISSION OF ELECTRICAL ENERGY TO ANY DISTANCE WITHOUT WIRES—NOW PRACTICABLE—THE BEST MEANS OF INCREASING THE FORCE ACCELERATING THE HUMAN MASS.

The most valuable observation made in the course of these investigations was the extraordinary behavior of the atmosphere toward electric impulses of excessive electromotive force. The experiments showed that the air at the ordinary pressure became distinctly conducting, and this opened up the wonderful prospect of transmitting large amounts of electrical energy for industrial purposes to great distances without wires, a possibility which, up to that time, was thought of only as a scientific dream. Further investigation revealed the important fact that the conductivity imparted to the air by these electrical impulses of many millions of volts increased very rapidly with the degree of rarefaction, so that air strata at very moderate altitudes, which are easily accessible, offer, to all experimental evidence, a perfect conducting path, better than a copper wire, for currents of this character.

Thus the discovery of these new properties of the atmosphere not only opened up the possibility of transmitting, without wires, energy in large amounts, but, what was still more significant, it afforded the certitude that energy could be transmitted in this manner economically. In this new system it matters little—in fact, almost nothing—whether the transmission is effected at a distance of a few miles or of a few thousand miles.

While I have not, as yet, actually effected a transmission of a considerable amount of energy, such as would be of industrial importance, to a great distance by this new method, I have operated several model plants under exactly the same conditions which will exist in a large plant of this kind, and the practicability of the system is thoroughly demonstrated. The experiments have shown conclusively that, with two terminals maintained at an elevation of not more than thirty thousand to thirty-five thousand feet above sea-level, and with an electrical pressure of fifteen to twenty million volts, the energy of thousands of horse-power can be transmitted over distances which may be hundreds and, if necessary, thousands of miles. I am hopeful, however, that I may be able to reduce very considerably the elevation of the terminals now required, and with this object I am following up an idea which promises such a realization. There is, of course, a popular prejudice against using an electrical pressure of millions of volts, which may cause sparks to fly at distances of hundreds of feet, but, paradoxical as it may seem, the system, as I have described it in a technical publication, offers greater personal safety than most of the ordinary distribution circuits now used in the cities.

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It is probable that we shall soon have a self-acting heat-engine capable of deriving moderate amounts of energy from the ambient medium. There is also a possibility—though a small one—that we may obtain electrical energy direct from the sun. This might be the case if the Maxwellian theory is true, according to which electrical vibrations of all rates should emanate from the sun. I am still investigating this subject. Sir William Crookes has shown in his beautiful invention known as the "radiometer" that rays may produce by impact a mechanical effect, and this may lead to some important revelation as to the utilization of the sun's rays in novel ways. Other sources of energy may be opened up, and new methods of deriving energy from the sun discovered, but none of these or similar achievements would equal in importance the transmission of power to any distance through the medium. I can conceive of no technical advance which would tend to unite the various elements of humanity more effectively than this one, or of one which would more add to and more economize human energy. It would be the best means of increasing the force accelerating the human mass. The mere moral influence of such a radical departure would be incalculable. On the other hand if at any point of the globe energy can be obtained in limited quantities from the ambient medium by means of a self-acting heat-engine or otherwise, the conditions will remain the same as before. Human performance will be increased, but men will remain strangers as they were.

1901-01-30: Tesla's New Discovery

"It is well known that an electric circuit compacts itself like a spring with a weight attached to it. Such a spring vibrates at a definite rate, which is determined by two quantities, the pliability of the spring and the mass of the weight. Similarly an electric circuit vibrates, and its vibration, too, is dependent on two quantities, designated as electrostatic capacity and inductance. The capacity of the electric circuit corresponds to the pliability of the spring and the inductance to the mass of the weight."

"Exactly as mechanics and engineers have taken it for granted that the pliability of the spring remains the same, no matter how it be placed or used, so electricians and physicists have assumed that the electrostatic capacity of a conducting body, say of a metallic sphere, which is frequently used in experiments, remains a fixed and unalterable quantity, and many scientific results of the greatest importance are dependent on this assumption. Now, I have discovered that this capacity is not fixed and unalterable at all. On the contrary, it is susceptible to great changes, so that under certain conditions it may amount to many times its theoretical value, or may eventually be smaller. Inasmuch as every electrical conductor, besides possessing an inductance, has also a certain amount of capacity, owing to the variations of the latter, the inductance, too, is seemingly modified by the same causes that tend to modify the capacity. These facts I discovered some time before I gave a technical description of my system of energy transmission and telegraphy without wires, which, I believe, became first known through my Belgian and British patents."

"In this system, I then explained, that, in estimating the wave-length of the electrical vibration in the transmitting and receiving circuits, due regard must be had to the velocity with which the vibration is propagated through each of the circuits, this velocity being given by the product of the wave-length and the number of vibrations per second. The rate of vibration being, however, as before stated, dependent on the capacity and inductance in each case, I obtained discordant values."

"Continuing the investigation of this astonishing phenomenon I observed that the capacity varied with the elevation of the conducting surface above the ground and I soon ascertained the law of this variation. The capacity increased as the conducting surface was elevated, in open space, from one-half to three-quarters of 1 percent per foot of elevation. In buildings, however, or near large structures, this increase often amounted to 50 percent per foot of elevation, and this alone will show to what extent many of the scientific experiments recorded in technical literature are erroneous. In determining the length of the coils or conductors such as I employ in my system of wireless telegraphy, for instance, the rule which I have given is, in view of the above, important to observe."

"Far more interesting, however, for men of science is the fact I observed later, that the capacity undergoes an annual variation with a maximum in summer, and a minimum in winter. In Colorado, where I continued with improved methods of investigations begun in New York, and where I found the rate of increase slightly greater, I furthermore observed that there was a diurnal variation with a maximum during the night. Further, I found that sunlight causes a slight increase in capacity. The moon also produces an effect, but I do not attribute it to its light."

"The importance of these observations will be better appreciated when it is stated that owing to these changes of a quantity supposed to be constant an electrical circuit does not vibrate at a uniform rate, but its rate is modified in accordance with the modifications of the capacity. Thus a circuit vibrates a little slower at an elevation than when at a lower level. An oscillating system, as used in telegraphy without wires, vibrates a little quicker when the ship gets into the harbor than when on open sea. Such a circuit oscillates quicker in the winter than in the summer, though it be at the same temperature, and a trifle quicker at night than in daytime, particularly if the sun is shining."

"Taking together the results of my investigations I find that this variation of the capacity and consequently of the vibration period is evidently dependent, first, on the absolute height above sea level, though in a smaller degree; second, on the relative height of the conducting surface or capacity with respect to the bodies surrounding it; third, on the distance of the earth from the sun, and fourth, on the relative change of the circuit with respect to the sun, caused by the diurnal rotation of the earth. These facts may be of particular interest to meteorologists and astronomers, inasmuch as practical methods of inquiry may result from these observations, which may be useful in their respective fields. It is probable that we shall perfect instruments for indicating the altitude of a place by means of a circuit, properly constructed and arranged, and I have thought of a number of other uses to which this principle may be put."

1904-05-05: The Transmission of Electrical Energy Without Wires

Impossible as it seemed, this planet, despite its vast extent, behaved like a conductor of limited dimensions. The tremendous significance of this fact in the transmission of energy by my system had already become quite clear to me. Not only was it practicable to send telegraphic messages to any distance without wires, as I recognized long ago, but also to impress upon the entire globe the faint modulations of the human voice, far more still, to transmit power, in unlimited amounts, to any terrestrial distance and almost without loss.

With these stupendous possibilities in sight, and the experimental evidence before me that their realization was henceforth merely a question of expert knowledge, patience and skill, I attacked vigorously the development of my magnifying transmitter, now, however, not so much with the original intention of producing one of great power, as with the object of learning how to construct the best one. This is, essentially, a circuit of very high self-induction and small resistance which in its arrangement, mode of excitation and action, may be said to be the diametrical opposite of a transmitting circuit typical of telegraphy by Hertzian or electromagnetic radiations. It is difficult to form an adequate idea of the marvelous power of this unique appliance, by the aid of which the globe will be transformed. The electromagnetic radiations being reduced to an insignificant quantity, and proper conditions of resonance maintained, the circuit acts like an immense pendulum, storing indefinitely the energy of the primary exciting impulses and impressions upon the earth of the primary exciting impulses and impressions upon the earth and its conducting atmosphere uniform harmonic oscillations of intensities which, as actual tests have shown, may be pushed so far as to surpass those attained in the natural displays of static electricity.

Simultaneously with these endeavors, the means of individualization and isolation were gradually improved. Great importance was attached to this, for it was found that simple tuning was not sufficient to meet the vigorous practical requirements. The fundamental idea of employing a number of distinctive elements, co-operatively associated, for the purpose of isolating energy transmitted, I trace directly to my perusal of Spencer's clear and suggestive exposition of the human nerve mechanism. The influence of this principle on the transmission of intelligence, and electrical energy in general, cannot as yet be estimated, for the art is still in the embryonic stage; but many thousands of simultaneous telegraphic and telephonic messages, through one single conducting channel, natural or artificial, and without serious mutual interference, are certainly practicable, while millions are possible. On the other hand, any desired degree of individualization may be secured by the use of a great number of co-operative elements and arbitrary variation of their distinctive features and order of succession. For obvious reasons, the principle will also be valuable in the extension of the distance of transmission.

Progress though of necessity slow was steady and sure, for the objects aimed at were in a direction of my constant study and exercise. It is, therefore, not astonishing that before the end of 1899 I completed the task undertaken and reached the results which I have announced in my article in the Century Magazine of June, 1900, every word of which was carefully weighed.

Much has already been done towards making my system commercially available, in the transmission of energy in small amounts for specific purposes, as well as on an industrial scale. The results attained by me have made my scheme of intelligence transmission, for which the name of "World Telegraphy" has been suggested, easily realizable. It constitutes, I believe, in its principle of operation, means employed and capacities of application, a radical and fruitful departure from what has been done heretofore. I have no doubt that it will prove very efficient in enlightening the masses, particularly in still uncivilized countries and less accessible regions, and that it will add materially to general safety, comfort and convenience, and maintenance of peaceful relations. It involves the employment of a number of plants, all of which are capable of transmitting individualized signals to the uttermost confines of the earth. Each of them will be preferably located near some important center of civilization and the news it receives through any channel will be flashed to all points of the globe. A cheap and simple device, which might be carried in one's pocket, may then be set up somewhere on sea or land, and it will record the world's news or such special messages as may be intended for it. Thus the entire earth will be converted into a huge brain, as it were, capable of response in every one of its parts. Since a single plant of but one hundred horse-power can operate hundreds of millions of instruments, the system will have a virtually infinite working capacity, and it must needs immensely facilitate and cheapen the transmission of intelligence.

The first of these central plants would have been already completed had it not been for unforeseen delays which, fortunately, have nothing to do with its purely technical features. But this loss of time, while vexatious, may, after all, prove to be a blessing in disguise. The best design of which I know has been adopted, and the transmitter will emit a wave complex of total maximum activity of ten million horse-power, one per cent. of which is amply sufficient to "girdle the globe." This enormous rate of energy delivery, approximately twice that of the combined falls of Niagara, is obtainable only by the use of certain artifices, which I shall make known in due course.

For a large part of the work which I have done so far I am indebted to the noble generosity of Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan, which was all the more welcome and stimulating, as it was extended at a time when those, who have since promised most, were the greatest of doubters. I have also to thank my friend, Stanford White, for much unselfish and valuable assistance. This work is now far advanced, and though the results may be tardy, they are sure to come.

Meanwhile, the transmission of energy on an industrial scale is not being neglected. The Canadian Niagara Power Company have offered me a splendid inducement, and next to achieving success for the sake of the art, it will give me the greatest satisfaction to make their concession financially profitable to them. In this first power plant, which I have been designing for a long time, I propose to distribute ten thousand horse-power under a tension of one hundred million volts, which I am now able to produce and handle with safety.

This energy will be collected all over the globe preferably in small amounts, ranging from a fraction of one to a few horse-power. One its chief uses will be the illumination of isolated homes. I takes very little power to light a dwelling with vacuum tubes operated by high-frequency currents and in each instance a terminal a little above the roof will be sufficient. Another valuable application will be the driving of clocks and other such apparatus. These clocks will be exceedingly simple, will require absolutely no attention and will indicate rigorously correct time. The idea of impressing upon the earth American time is fascinating and very likely to become popular. There are innumerable devices of all kinds which are either now employed or can be supplied, and by operating them in this manner I may be able to offer a great convenience to whole world with a plant of no more than ten thousand horse-power. The introduction of this system will give opportunities for invention and manufacture such as have never presented themselves before.

Knowing the far-reaching importance of this first attempt and its effect upon future development, I shall proceed slowly and carefully. Experience has taught me not to assign a term to enterprises the consummation of which is not wholly dependent on my own abilities and exertions. But I am hopeful that these great realizations are not far off, and I know that when this first work is completed they will follow with mathematical certitude.

When the great truth accidentally revealed and experimentally confirmed is fully recognized, that this planet, with all its appalling immensity, is to electric currents virtually no more than a small metal ball and that by this fact many possibilities, each baffling imagination and of incalculable consequence, are rendered absolutely sure of accomplishment; when the first plant is inaugurated and it is shown that a telegraphic message, almost as secret and non-interferable as a thought, can be transmitted to any terrestrial distance, the sound of the human voice, with all its intonations and inflections, faithfully and instantly reproduced at any other point of the globe, the energy of a waterfall made available for supplying light, heat or motive power, anywhere-on sea, or land, or high in the air-humanity will be like an ant heap stirred up with a stick: See the excitement coming!

1905-01-07: The Transmission of Electrical Energy Without Wires as a Means for Furthering Peace

That electrical energy can be economically transmitted without wires to any terrestrial distance, I have unmistakably established in numerous observations, experiments and measurements, qualitative and quantitative. These have demonstrated that is practicable to distribute power from a central plant in unlimited amounts, with a loss not exceeding a small fraction of one per cent, in the transmission, even to the greatest distance, twelve thousand miles—to the opposite end of the globe. This seemingly impossible feat can now be readily performed by any electrician familiar with the design and construction of my "high-potential magnifying transmitter," the most marvelous electrical apparatus of which I have knowledge, enabling the production of effects of unlimited intensities in the earth and its ambient atmosphere. It is, essentially, a freely vibrating secondary circuit of definite length, very high self-induction and small resistance, which has one of its terminals in intimate direct or inductive connection with the ground and the other with an elevated conductor, and upon which the electrical oscillations of a primary or exciting circuit are impressed under conditions of resonance. To give an idea of the capabilities of this wonderful appliance, I may state that I have obtained, by its means, spark discharges extending through more than one hundred feet and carrying currents of one thousand amperes, electromotive forces approximating twenty million volts, chemically active streamers covering areas of several thousand square feet, and electrical disturbances in the natural media surpassing those caused by lightning, in intensity.

...

As stated in a recent article (Electrical World and Engineer, March 5, 1904), I have been since some time at work on designs of a power plant which is to transmit ten thousand horse-power without wires. The energy is to be collected all over the earth at many places and in varying amounts. It should not be understood that the practical realization of this undertaking is necessarily far off. The plans could be easily finished this winter, and if some preliminary work on the foundations could be done in the meantime the plant might be ready for operation before the close of next fall. We would then have at our disposal a unique and invaluable machine. Just this one oscillator would advance the world a century. Its civilizing influence would be felt even by the humblest dweller in the wilderness. Millions of instruments of all kinds, for all imaginable purposes, could be operated from that one machine. Universal time could be distributed by simple inexpensive clocks requiring no attention and running with nearly mathematical precision. Stock-tickers, synchronous movements and innumerable devices of this character could be worked in unison all over the earth. Instruments might be provided for indicating the course of a vessel at sea, the distance traversed, the speed, the hour at any particular place, the latitude and longitude. Incalculable commercial advantages could be thus secured and countless accidents and disasters avoided. Here and there a house might be lighted or some other work requiring a few horse-power performed. What is far more important than this, flying machines might be driven in any part of the world. They could be made to travel swiftly because of their small weight and great motive power. My intention would be to utilize this first plant rather as means of enlightenment, to collect its power in very small amounts, and at as many places as possible. The knowledge that there is throbbing through the earth energy readily available everywhere, would exert a strong stimulus on students, mechanics and inventors of all countries. This would be productive of infinite good. Manufacture would receive a fresh and powerful incentive. Conditions, such as never existed before in commerce, would be brought about. Supply would be ever inadequate to demand. The industries of iron, copper, aluminum, insulated wire and many others, could not fail to derive great and lasting benefits from this development.

...

Over five years have elapsed since that providential lightning storm on the 3d of July, 1899, of which I told in the article before mentioned, and through which I discovered the terrestrial stationary waves; nearly five years since I performed the great experiment which on that unforgettable day, the dark God of Thunder mercifully showed me in his vast, awe-sounding laboratory. I thought then that it would take a year to establish commercially my wireless girdle around the world. Alas! my first "world telegraphy" plant is not yet completed, its construction has progressed but slowly during the past two years. And this machine I am building is but a plaything, an oscillator of a maximum activity of only ten million horse-power, just enough to throw this planet into feeble tremors, by sign and word—to telegraph and to telephone. When shall I see completed that first power plant, that big oscillator which I am designing! From which a current stronger than that of a welding machine, under a tension of one hundred million volts, is to rush through the earth! Which will deliver energy at the rate of one thousand million horse-power—one hundred Falls of Niagara combined in one, striking the universe with blows—blows that will wake from their slumber the sleepiest electricians, if there be any, on Venus or Mars! . . . It is not a dream, it is a simple feat of scientific electrical engineering, only expensive—blind, faint-hearted, doubting world! . . . Humanity is not yet sufficiently advanced to be willingly led by the discover's keen searching sense. But who knows? Perhaps it is better in this present world of ours that a revolutionary idea or invention instead of being helped and patted, be hampered and ill-treated in its adolescence—by want of means, by selfish interest, pedantry, stupidity and ignorance; that it be attacked and stifled; that it pass through bitter trials and tribulations, through the heartless strife of commercial existence. So do we get our light. So all that was great in the past was ridiculed, condemned, combated, suppressed—only to emerge all the more powerfully, all the more triumphantly from the struggle.

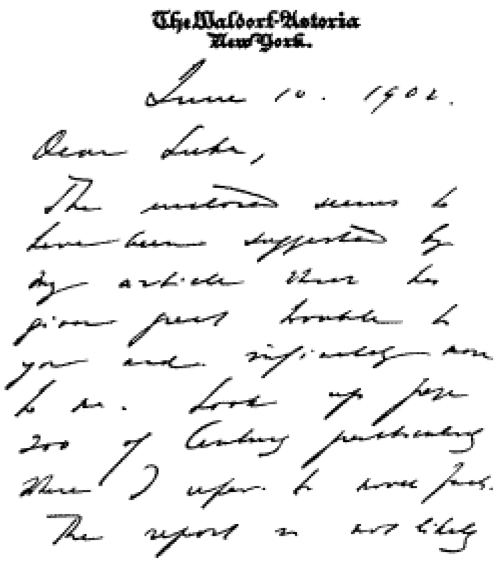
1912-07-06: The Disturbing Influence of Solar Radiation On the Wireless Transmission of Energy

Bearing, then, in mind, that the receiver is operated simply by currents conducted along the earth as through a wire, energy radiated playing no part, it will be at once evident that the weakening of the impulses could not be due to any changes in the air, making it turbid or conductive, but should be traced to an effect interfering with the transmission of the current through the superficial layers of the globe. The solar radiations are the primary cause, that is true, not those of light, but of heat. The loss of energy, I have found, is due to the evaporation of the water on that side of the earth which is turned toward the sun, the conducting particles carrying off more or less of the electrical charges imparted to the ground. This subject has been investigated by me for a number of years and on some future occasion I propose to dwell on it more extensively. At present it may be sufficient, for the guidance of experts, to state that the waste of energy is proportional to the product of the square of the electric density induced by the transmitter at the earth's surface and the frequency of the currents. Expressed in this manner it may not appear of very great practical significance. But remembering that the surface density increases with the frequency it may also be stated that the loss is proportional to the cube of the frequency. With waves 300 meters [1 MHz] in length economic transmission of energy is out of the question, the loss being too great. When using wave-lengths of 6,000 meters [50 kHz] it is still noticeable though not a serious drawback. With wave-lengths of 12,000 meters [25 kHz] it becomes quite insignificant and on this fortunate fact rests the future of wireless transmission of energy.

1932-07-10: Tesla Cosmic Ray Motor May Transmit Power 'Round Earth

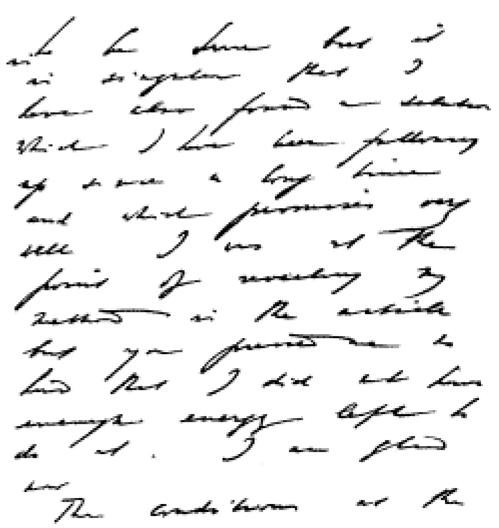
I also asked him if he is still at work on the project which he inaugurated in the '90's of transmitting power wirelessly anywhere on earth. He is at work on it, he said, and it could be put into operation. . . . He at that time announced two principles which could be used in this project. In one the ionizing of the upper air would make it as good a conductor of electricity as a metal. In the other the power would be transmitted by creating "standing waves" in the earth by charging the earth with a giant electrical oscillator that would make the earth vibrate electrically in the same way a bell vibrates mechanically when it is struck with a hammer. "I do not use the plan involving the conductivity of the upper strata of the air," he said, "but I use the conductivity of the earth itself, and in this I need no wires to send electrical energy to any part of the globe."

Letters

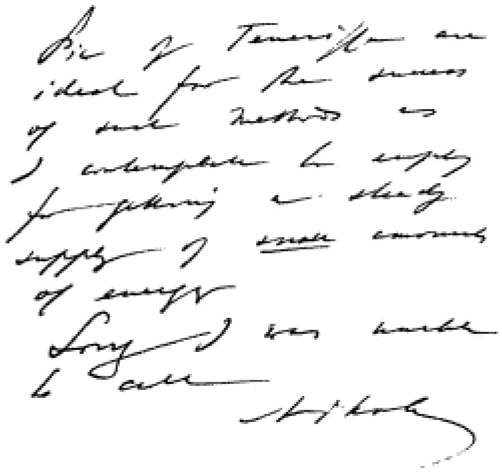


The Waldorf-Astoria
New York.

June 10, 1902
Dear Luka,
The invention seems to
have been suggested by
my article which has
given great trouble to
you and infinitely more
to me. Look up page
200 of Century particularly
where I refer to novel facts.
The report is not likely



to be true but it
is singular that I
have also found a solution
which I have been following
up since a long time
and which promises very
well. I was at the
point of revealing my
method in the article
but you pressed me to
find that I did not have
enough energy left to
do it. I am glad
now.
The conditions at the



Pic of Teneriffe are
ideal for the success
of such methods as
I contemplate to employ
for getting a steady
supply of small amounts
of energy.

Sorry I was unable
to call.

Nikola

Letter dated November 5, 1903

(no original found yet)

Dear Mr. Morgan:-

The enclosed bears out my statement made to you over a year and a half ago. The old plant has never worked beyond a few hundred miles. Apart of imperfections of the apparatus design there were four defects, each of which was fatal to success. It does not seem probable that the new plant will do much better, for these faults were of a widely different nature and difficult to discover.

As to the remedies, I have protected myself in applications filed 1900-1902, still in the office.

Yours faithfully,

N. Tesla

Patents

1,061,142 FLUID PROPULSION.

1,061,142. Specification of Letters Patent. Patented May 6, 1913.

Application filed October 21, 1909. Serial No. 523,832.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, NIKOLA TESLA, a citizen of the United States, residing at New York, in the county and State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Fluid Propulsion, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description.

In the practical application of mechanical power based on the use of a fluid as the vehicle of energy, it has been demonstrated that, in order to attain the highest economy, the changes in velocity and direction of the movement of the fluid should be as gradual as possible. In the present forms of such apparatus more or less sudden changes, shocks and vibrations are unavoidable. Besides, the employment of the usual devices for imparting energy to a fluid, as pistons, paddles, vanes and blades, necessarily introduces numerous defects and limitations and adds to the complication, cost of production and maintenance of the machine.

The object of my present invention is to overcome these deficiencies in apparatus designed for the propulsion of fluids and to effect thereby the transmission and transformation of mechanical energy through the agency of fluids in a more perfect manner, and by means simpler and more economical than those heretofore employed. I accomplish this by causing the propelled fluid to move in natural paths or stream lines of least resistance, free from constraint and disturbance such as occasioned by vanes or kindred devices, and to change its velocity and direction of movement by imperceptible degrees, thus avoiding the losses due to sudden variations while the fluid is receiving energy.

It is well known that a fluid possesses, among others, two salient properties: adhesion and viscosity. Owing to these a body propelled through such a medium encounters a peculiar impediment known as “lateral” or “skin resistance”, which is twofold; one arising from the shock of the fluid against the asperities of the solid substance, the other from internal forces opposing molecular separation. As an inevitable consequence, a certain amount of the fluid is dragged along by the moving body. Conversely, if the body be placed in a fluid in motion, for the same reasons, it is impelled in the direction of movement. These effects, in themselves, are of daily observation, but I believe that I am the first to apply them in a practical and economical manner for imparting energy to or deriving it from a fluid.

The subject of this application is an invention pertaining to the art of imparting energy to fluids, and I shall now proceed to describe its nature and principles of construction of the apparatus which I have devised for carrying it out by reference to the accompanying drawings which illustrate an operative and efficient embodiment of the same.

Figure 1 is a partial end view, and Fig. 2 is a vertical cross section of a pump or compressor constructed and adapted to be operated in accordance with my invention.

In these drawings the device illustrated contains a runner composed of a plurality of flat rigid disks 1 of a suitable diameter, keyed to a shaft 2, and held in position by threaded nut 3, a shoulder 4 and washers 5, of the requisite thickness. Each disk has a number of central openings 6, the solid portions between which form spokes 7, preferably curved, as shown, for the purpose of reducing the loss of energy due to the impact of the fluid. The runner is mounted in a two part volute casing 8, having stuffing boxes 9, and inlets 10 leading to its central portion. In addition a gradually widening and rounding outlet 11 is provided, formed with a flange for connection to a pipe as usual. The casing 8 rests upon a base 12, shown only in part, and supporting the bearings for the shaft 2, which, being of ordinary construction, are omitted from the drawings.

An understanding of the principle embodied in this device will be gained from the following description of its mode of operation. Power being applied to the shaft and the runner set in rotation in the direction of the solid arrow the fluid by reason of its properties of adherence and viscosity, upon entering through the inlets 10 and coming in contact with the disks 1 is taken hold of by the same and subjected to two forces, one acting tangentially in the direction of rotation, and the other radially outward. The combined effect of these tangential and centrifugal forces is to propel the fluid with continuously increasing velocity in a spiral path until it reaches the outlet 11 from which it is ejected. This spiral movement, free and undisturbed and essentially dependent on the properties of the fluid, permitting it to adjust itself to natural paths or stream lines and to changes its velocity and direction by insensible degrees, is characteristic of this method of propulsion and advantageous in its application. While traversing the chamber enclosing the runner, the particles of the fluid may complete one or more turns, or but a part of one turn. In any given case their path can be closely calculated and graphically represented, but fairly accurate estimate of turns can be obtained simply by determining the number of revolutions required to renew the fluid passing through the chamber and multiplying it by the ratio between the mean speed of the fluid and that of the disks. I have found that the quantity of fluid propelled in this manner is, other conditions being equal, approximately proportionate to the active surface of the runner and to its effective speed. For this reason, the performance of such machine augments at an exceedingly high rate with the increase of their size and speed of revolution.

The dimensions of the device as a whole, and the spacing of the disks in any given machine will be determined by the conditions and requirements of special cases. It may be stated that the intervening distance should be the greater, the larger the diameter of the disks, the longer the spiral path of the fluid and the greater its viscosity. In general, the spacing should be such that the entire mass of the fluid, before leaving the runner, is accelerated to a nearly uniform velocity, not much below that of the periphery of the disks under normal working conditions and almost equal to it when the outlet is closed and the particles move in concentric circles. It may also be pointed out that such a pump can be made without openings and spokes in the runner, as by using one or more solid disks, each in its own casing, in which form the machine will be eminently adapted for sewage, dredging and the like, when the water is charged with foreign bodies and spokes or vanes especially objectionable.

Another application of this principle which I have discovered to be not only feasible, but thoroughly practicable and efficient, is the utilization of machines such as above described for the compression or rarefaction of air, or gases in general. In such cases it will be found that most of the general considerations obtaining in the case of liquids, properly interpreted, hold true. When, irrespective of the character of the fluid, considerable pressures are desired, staging or compounding may be resorted to in the usual way the individual runners being, preferably, mounted on the same shaft. It should be added that the same end may be attained with one single runner by suitable deflection of the fluid through rotative or stationary passages.

The principles underlying the invention are capable of embodiment also in that field of mechanical engineering which is concerned in the use of fluids as motive agents, for while in some respects the actions in the latter case are directly opposite to those met with in the propulsion of fluids, the fundamental laws applicable in the two cases are the same. In other words, the operation above described is reversible, for if water or air under pressure be admitted to the opening 11 the runner is set in rotation in the direction of the dotted arrow by reason of the peculiar properties of the fluid which traveling in a spiral path and with continuously diminishing velocity, reaches the orifices 6 and 10 through which it is discharged.

When apparatus of the general character above described is employed for the transmission of power, however, certain departures from structural similarity between transmitter and receiver may be necessary for securing the best result. I have, therefore, included that part of my invention which is directly applicable to the use of fluids as motive agents in a separate application filed January 17, 1911, Serial No. 603,049. It may be here pointed out, however, as is evident from the above considerations, that when transmitting power from one shaft to another by such machines, any desired ratio between the speeds of rotation may be obtained by proper selection of the diameter of the disks, or by suitably staging the transmitter, the receiver, or both. But it may be stated that in one respect, at least, the two machines are essentially different. In the pump, the radial or static pressure, due to centrifugal force, is added to the tangential or dynamic, thus increasing the effective head and assisting in the expulsion of the fluid. In the motor, on the contrary, the first named pressure, being opposed to that of supply, reduces the effective head and velocity of radial flow toward the center. Again, in the propelled machine a great torque is always desirable, this calling for an increased number of disks and smaller distance of separation, while in the propelling machine, for numerous economic reasons, the rotary effort should be the smallest and the speed the greatest practicable. Many other considerations, which will naturally suggest themselves, may affect the design and construction, but the preceding is thought to contain all necessary information in this regard.

It will be understood that the principles of construction and operation above set forth, are capable of embodiment in machines of the most widely different forms, and adapted for the greatest variety of purposes. In the above, I have sought to describe and explain only the general and typical applications of the principle which I believe I am the first to realize and turn to useful account.

I do not claim in this application the method herein described of imparting energy to a fluid, having made this discovery the subject of a copending application Serial No. 735,914.

What I claim is:

1. A machine for propelling or imparting energy to fluids comprising in combination a plurality of spaced disks rotatably mounted and having plane surfaces, and enclosing casing, ports of inlet at the central portion of said casing and through which the fluid is adapted to be introduced to the axial portions of the disks, and ports of outlet at the peripheral portion of the casing through which the fluid, when the machine is driven by power, is adapted to be expelled, as set forth.

2. A machine for propelling or imparting energy to fluids, comprising in combination a volute casing provided with ports of inlet and outlet at its central and peripheral portions, respectively, and a runner mounted within the casing and composed of spaced disks with plane surfaces having openings adjacent to the axis of rotation.

3. A rotary pump, comprising in combination a plurality of spaced disks with plane surfaces mounted on a rotatable shaft and provided with openings adjacent thereto, a volute casing enclosing the said disks, means for admitting a fluid into that portion of the casing which contains the shaft and an outlet extending tangentially from the peripheral portion of said casing.

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

NIKOLA TESLA.

Witnesses:

M. LAWSON DYER,

DRURY W. COOPER.

N. TESLA.

FLUID PROPULSION.

APPLICATION FILED OCT. 21, 1909.

1,061,142. Patented May 6, 1913.

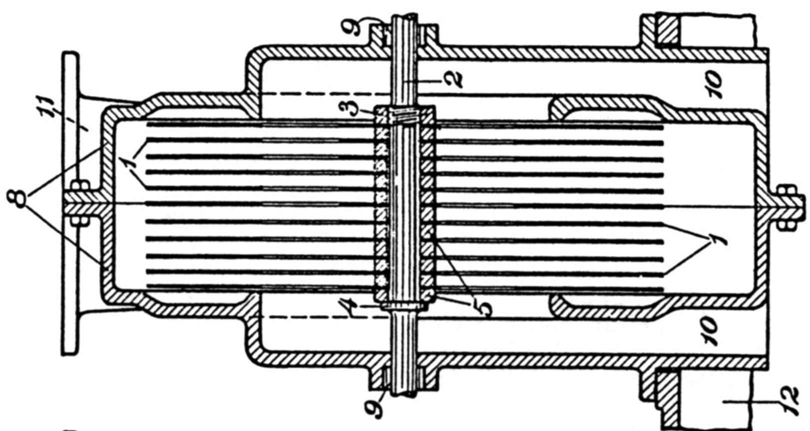


Fig 2

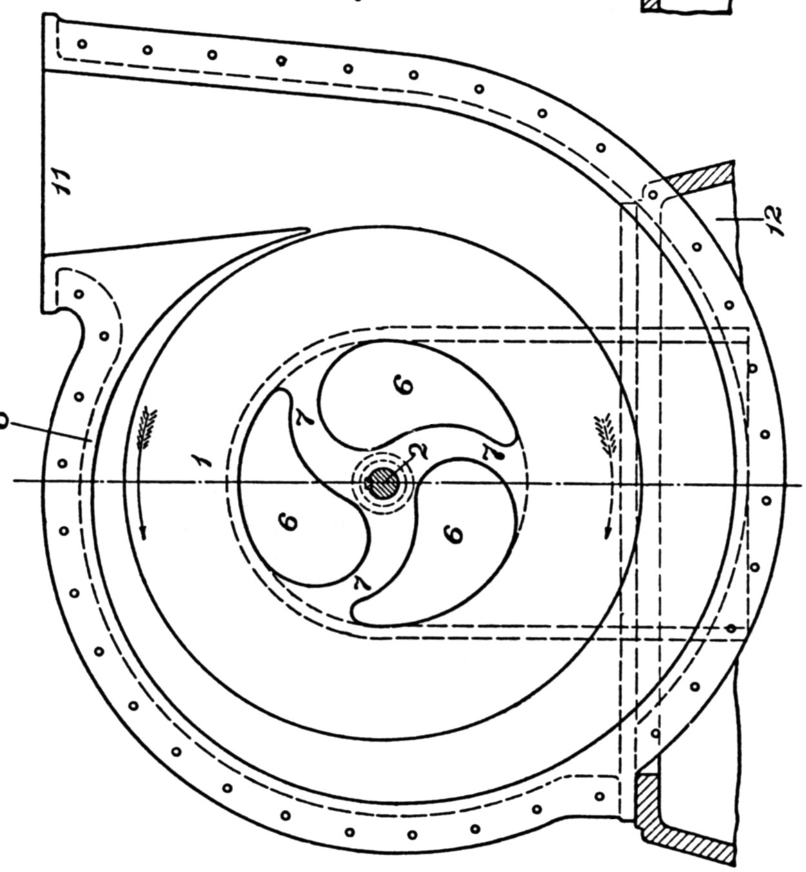


Fig 1

Witnesses:
R. Diaz Buitrago
S. S. Dunham

Nikola Tesla,
Inventor

By his Attorneys
Kerr, Page, Cooper & Hayward

Th

1,061,206 TURBINE.

1,061,206. Specification of Letters Patent. Patented May 6, 1913.

Original application filed October 21, 1909, Serial No. 523,832. Divided and this application filed January 17, 1911. Serial No. 603,049.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, NIKOLA TESLA, a citizen of the United States, residing at New York, in the county and State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Rotary Engines and Turbines, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description.

In the practical application of mechanical power, based on the use of fluids as the vehicle of energy, it has been demonstrated that, in order to attain the highest economy, the changes in the velocity and direction of movement of the fluid should be as gradual as possible. In the forms of apparatus heretofore devised or proposed, more or less sudden changes, shocks and vibrations are unavoidable. Besides, the employment of the usual devices for imparting to, or deriving energy from a fluid, such as pistons, paddles, vanes and blades, necessarily introduces numerous defects and limitations and adds to the complication, cost of production and maintenance of the machines.

The object of my invention is to overcome these deficiencies and to effect the transmission and transformation of mechanical energy through the agency of fluids in a more perfect manner and by means simpler and more economical than those heretofore employed. I accomplish this by causing the propelling fluid to move in natural paths or stream lines of least resistance, free from constraint and disturbance such as occasioned by vanes or kindred devices, and to change its velocity and direction of movement by imperceptible degrees, thus avoiding the losses due to sudden variations while the fluid is imparting energy.

It is well known that a fluid possesses, among others, two salient properties, adhesion and viscosity. Owing to these a solid body propelled through such a medium encounters a peculiar impediment known as “lateral” or “skin resistance,” which is twofold, one arising from the shock of the fluid against the asperities of the solid substance, the other from internal forces opposing molecular separation. As an inevitable consequence a certain amount of the fluid is dragged along by the moving body. Conversely, if the body be placed in a fluid in motion, for the same reasons, it is impelled in the direction of movement. These effects, in themselves, are of daily observation, but I believe that I am the first to apply them in a practical and economical manner in the propulsion of fluids or in their use as motive agents.

In an application filed by me October 21st, 1909, Serial Number 523,832 of which this case is a division, I have illustrated the principles underlying my discovery as embodied in apparatus designed for the propulsion of fluids. The same principles, however, are capable of embodiment also in that field of mechanical engineering which is concerned in the use of fluids as motive agents, for while in certain respects the operations in the latter case are directly opposite to those met with in the propulsion of fluids, and the means employed may differ in some features, the fundamental laws applicable in the two cases are the same. In other words, the operation is reversible, for if water or air under pressure be admitted to the opening constituting the outlet of a pump or blower as described, the runner is set in rotation by reason of the peculiar properties of the fluid which, in its movement through the device, imparts its energy thereto.

The present application, which is a division of that referred to, is specially intended to describe and claim my discovery above set forth, so far as it bears on the use of fluids as motive agents, as distinguished from the applications of the same to the propulsion or compression of fluids.

In the drawings, therefore, I have illustrated only the form of apparatus designed for the thermo-dynamic conversion of energy, a field in which the applications of the principle have the greatest practical value.

Figure 1 is a partial end view, and Fig. 2 a vertical cross-section of a rotary engine or turbine, constructed and adapted to be operated in accordance with the principles of my invention.

The apparatus comprises a runner composed of a plurality of flat rigid disks 13 of suitable diameter, keyed to a shaft 16, and held in position thereon by a threaded nut 11, a shoulder 12, and intermediate washers 17. The disks have openings 14 adjacent to the shaft and spokes 15, which may be substantially straight. For the sake of clearness, but a few disks, with comparatively wide intervening spaces, are illustrated.

The runner is mounted in a casing comprising two end castings 19, which contain the bearings for the shaft 16, indicated but not shown in detail; stuffing boxes 21 and outlets 20. The end castings are united by a central ring 22, which is bored out to a circle of a slightly larger diameter than that of the disks, and has flanged extensions 23, and inlets 24, into which finished ports or nozzles 25 are inserted. Circular grooves 26 and labyrinth packing 27 are provided on the sides of the runner. Supply pipes 28, with valves 29, are connected to the flanged extensions of the central ring, one of the valves being normally closed.

For a more ready and complete understanding of the principle of operation it is of advantage to consider first the actions that take place when the device is used for the propulsion of fluids for which purpose let it be assumed that power is applied to the shaft and the runner set in rotation say in a clockwise direction. Neglecting, for the moment, those features of construction that make for or against the efficiency of the device as a pump, as distinguished from a motor, a fluid, by reason of its properties of adherence and viscosity, upon entering through the inlets 20, and coming in contact with the disks 13, is taken hold of by the latter and subjected to two forces, one acting tangentially in the direction of rotation, and the other radially outward. The combined effect of these tangential and centrifugal forces is to propel the fluid with continuously increasing velocity in a spiral path until it reaches a suitable peripheral outlet from which it is ejected. This spiral movement, free and undisturbed and essentially dependent on the properties of the fluid, permitting it to adjust itself to natural paths or stream lines and to change its velocity and direction by insensible degrees, is a characteristic and essential feature of this principle of operation.

While traversing the chamber enclosing the runner, the particles of the fluid may complete one or more turns, or but part of one turn, the path followed being capable of close calculation and graphic representation, but fairly accurate estimates of turns can be obtained simply by determining the number of revolutions required to renew the fluid passing through the chamber and multiplying it by the ratio between the mean speed of the fluid and that of the disks. I have found that the quantity of fluid propelled in this manner, is, other conditions being equal, approximately proportionate to the active surface of the runner and to its effective speed. For this reason, the performance of such machines augments at an exceedingly high rate with the increase of their size and speed of revolution.

The dimensions of the device as a whole, and the spacing of the disks in any given machine will be determined by the conditions and requirements of special cases. It may be stated that the intervening distance should be the greater, the larger the diameter of the disks, the longer the spiral path of the fluid and the greater its viscosity. In general, the spacing should be such that the entire mass of the fluid, before leaving the runner, is accelerated to a nearly uniform velocity, not much below that of the periphery of the disks under normal working conditions, and almost equal to it when the outlet is closed and the particles move in concentric circles.

Considering now the converse of the above described operation and assuming that fluid under pressure be allowed to pass through the valve at the side of the solid arrow, the runner will be set in rotation in a clockwise direction, the fluid traveling in a spiral path and with continuously diminishing velocity until it reaches the orifices 14 and 20, through which it is discharged. If the runner be allowed to turn freely, in nearly frictionless bearings, its rim will attain a speed closely approximating the maximum of that of the adjacent fluid and the spiral path of the particles will be comparatively long, consisting of many almost circular turns. If load is put on and the runner slowed down, the motion of the fluid is retarded, the turns are reduced, and the path is shortened.

Owing to a number of causes affecting the performance, it is difficult to frame a precise rule which would be generally applicable, but it may be stated that within certain limits, and other conditions being the same, the torque is directly proportionate to the square of the velocity of the fluid relatively to the runner and to the effective area of the disks and, inversely, to the distance separating them. The machine will, generally, perform its maximum work when the effective speed of the runner is one-half of that of the fluid; but to attain the highest economy, the relative speed or slip, for any given performance, should be as small as possible. This condition may be to any desired degree approximated by increasing the active area of and reducing the space between the disks.

When apparatus of the kind described is employed for the transmission of power certain departures from similarity between transmitter and receiver are necessary for securing the best results. It is evident that, when transmitting power from one shaft to another by such machines, any desired ratio between the speeds of rotation may be obtained by a proper selection of the diameters of the disks, or by suitably staging the transmitter, the receiver or both. But it may be pointed out that in one respect, at least, the two machines are essentially different. In the pump, the radial or static pressure, due to centrifugal force, is added to the tangential or dynamic, thus increasing the effective head and assisting in the expulsion of the fluid. In the motor, on the contrary, the first named pressure, being opposed to that of supply, reduces the effective head and the velocity of radial flow toward the center. Again, in the propelled machine a great torque is always desirable, this calling for an increased number of disks and smaller distance of separation, while in the propelling machine, for numerous economic reasons, the rotary effort should be the smallest and the speed the greatest practicable. Many other considerations, which will naturally suggest themselves, may affect the design and construction, but the preceding is thought to contain all necessary information in this regard.

In order to bring out a distinctive feature, assume, in the first place, that the motive medium is admitted to the disk chamber through a port, that is a channel which it traverses with nearly uniform velocity. In this case, the machine will operate as a rotary engine, the fluid continuously expanding on its tortuous path to the central outlet. The expansion takes place chiefly along the spiral path, for the spread inward is opposed by the centrifugal force due to the velocity of whirl and by the great resistance to radial exhaust. It is to be observed that the resistance to the passage of the fluid between the plates is, approximately, proportionate to the square of the relative speed, which is maximum in the direction toward the center and equal to the full tangential velocity of the fluid. The path of least resistance, necessarily taken in obedience to a universal law of motion is, virtually, also that of least relative velocity. Next, assume that the fluid is admitted to the disk chamber not through a port, but a diverging nozzle, a device converting wholly or in part, the expansive into velocity-energy. The machine will then work rather like a turbine, absorbing the energy of kinetic momentum of the particles as they whirl, with continuously decreasing speed, to the exhaust.

The above description of the operation, I may add, is suggested by experience and observation, and is advanced merely for the purpose of explanation. The undeniable fact is that the machine does operate, both expansively and impulsively. When the expansion in the nozzles is complete, or nearly so, the fluid pressure in the peripheral clearance space is small; as the nozzle is made less divergent and its section enlarged, the pressure rises, finally approximating that of the supply. But the transition from purely impulsive to expansive action may not be continuous throughout, on account of critical states and conditions and comparatively great variations of pressure may be caused by small changes of nozzle velocity.

In the preceding it has been assumed that the pressure of supply is constant or continuous, but it will be understood that the operation will be, essentially the same if the pressure be fluctuating or intermittent, as that due to explosions occurring in more or less rapid succession.

A very desirable feature, characteristic of machines constructed and operated in accordance with this invention, is their capability of reversal of rotation. Fig. 1, while illustrative of a special case, may be regarded as typical in this respect. If the right hand valve be shut off and the fluid supplied through the second pipe, the runner is rotated in the direction of the dotted arrow, the operation, and also the performance remaining the same as before, the central ring being bored to a circle with this purpose in view. The same result may be obtained in many other ways by specially designed valves, ports or nozzles for reversing the flow, the description of which is omitted here in the interest of simplicity and clearness. For the same reasons but one operative port or nozzle is illustrated which might be adapted to a volute but does not fit best a circular bore. It will be understood that a number of suitable inlets may be provided around the periphery of the runner to improve the action and that the construction of the machine may be modified in many ways.

Still another valuable and probably unique quality of such motors or prime movers may be described. By proper construction and observance of working conditions the centrifugal pressure, opposing the passage of the fluid, may, as already indicated, be made nearly equal to the pressure of supply when the machine is running idle. If the inlet section be large, small changes in the speed of revolution will produce great differences in flow which are further enhanced by the concomitant variations in the length of the spiral path. A self-regulating machine is thus obtained bearing a striking resemblance to a direct-current electric motor in this respect that, with great differences of impressed pressure in a wide open channel the flow of the fluid through the same is prevented by virtue of rotation. Since the centrifugal head increases as the square of the revolutions, or even more rapidly, and with modern high grade steel great peripheral velocities are practicable, it is possible to attain that condition in a single stage machine, more readily if the runner be of large diameter. Obviously this problem is facilitated by compounding, as will be understood by those skilled in the art. Irrespective of its bearing on economy, this tendency which is, to a degree, common to motors of the above description, is of special advantage in the operation of large units, as it affords a safeguard against running away and destruction. Besides these, such a prime mover possesses many other advantages, both constructive and operative. It is simple, light and compact, subject to but little wear, cheap and exceptionally easy to manufacture as small clearances and accurate milling work are not essential to good performance. In operation it is reliable, there being no valves, sliding contacts or troublesome vanes. It is almost free of windage, largely independent of nozzle efficiency and suitable for high as well as for low fluid velocities and speeds of revolution.

It will be understood that the principles of construction and operation above generally set forth, are capable of embodiment in machines of the most widely different forms, and adapted for the greatest variety of purposes. In my present specification I have sought to describe and explain only the general and typical applications of the principle which I believe I am the first to realize and turn to useful account.

What I claim is:

1. A machine adapted to be propelled by a fluid consisting in the combination with a casing having inlet and outlet ports at the peripheral and central portions, respectively, of a rotor having plane spaced surfaces between which the fluid may flow in natural spirals and by adhesive and viscous action impart its energy of movement to the rotor, as described.

2. A machine adapted to be propelled by a fluid, comprising a rotor composed of a plurality of plane spaced disks mounted on a shaft and open at or near the same, an enclosing casing with a peripheral inlet or inlets, in the plane of the disks, and an outlet or outlets in its central portion, as described.

3. A rotary engine adapted to be propelled by adhesive and viscous action of a continuously expanding fluid comprising in combination a casing forming a chamber, an inlet or inlets tangential to the periphery of the same, and an outlet or outlets in its central portion, with a rotor composed of spaced disks mounted on a shaft, and open at or near the same, as described.

4. A machine adapted to be propelled by fluid, consisting in the combination of a plurality of disks mounted on a shaft and open at or near the same, and an enclosing casing with ports or passages of inlet and outlet at the peripheral and central portions, respectively, the disks being spaced to form passages through which the fluid may flow, under the combined influence of radial and tangential forces, in a natural spiral path from the periphery toward the axis of the disks, and impart its energy of movement to the same by its adhesive and viscous action thereon, as set forth.

5. A machine adapted to be propelled by a fluid comprising in combination a plurality of spaced disks rotatably mounted and having plane surfaces, an enclosing casing and ports or passages of inlet and outlet adjacent to the periphery and center of the disks, respectively, as set forth.

6. A machine adapted to be propelled by a fluid comprising in combination a runner composed of a plurality of disks having plane surfaces and mounted at intervals on a central shaft, and formed with openings near their centers, and means for admitting the propelling fluid into the spaces between the disks at the periphery and discharging it at the center of the same, as set forth.

7. A thermo-dynamic converter, comprising in combination a series of rotatably mounted spaced disks with plane surfaces, an enclosing casing, inlet ports at the peripheral portion and outlet ports leading from the central portion of the same, as set forth.

8. A thermo-dynamic converter, comprising in combination a series of rotatably mounted spaced disks with plane surfaces and having openings adjacent to their central portions, an enclosing casing, inlet ports in the peripheral portion, and outlet ports leading from the central portion of the same, as set forth.

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

NIKOLA TESLA.

Witnesses:

M. LAWSON DYER,

WM. BOHLEBER.

N. TESLA.

TURBINE.

APPLICATION FILED JAN. 17, 1911.

1,061,206. Patented May 6, 1913.

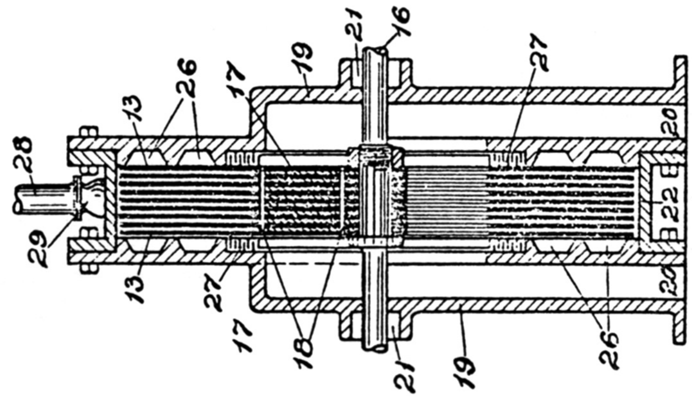


Fig. 2.

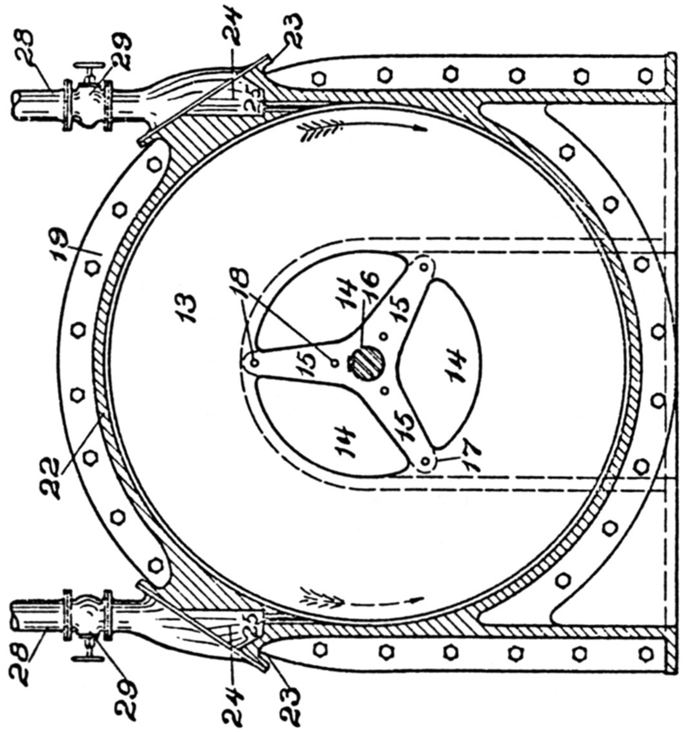


Fig. 1.

Witnesses:
R. Diaz Buitrago
Wm. Bohleber

Nikola Tesla, Inventor

By his Attorneys
Kerr Page Cooper & Hayward

Th

1,113,716 FOUNTAIN.

1,113,716. Specification of Letters Patent. Patented Oct. 13, 1914.
Application filed October 28, 1913. Serial No. 797,718.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, NIKOLA TESLA, a citizen of the United States, residing at New York, borough of Manhattan, county and State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Fountains, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description.

It has been customary heretofore in fountains and aquarian displays, to project spouts, jets, or sprays of water from suitable fixtures, chiefly for decorative and beautifying purposes. Invariably, the quantity of the issuing fluid was small and the pleasing impression on the eye was solely the result of the more or less artistic arrangement of the streamlets and ornaments employed. The present invention is a departure from such practice in that it relies principally on the fascinating spectacle of a large mass of fluid in motion and the display of seemingly great power. Incidentally, it permits the realization of beautiful and striking views through illumination and the disposition of voluminous cascades which, moreover, may be applied to useful purposes in ways not practicable with the old and familiar devices. These objects are accomplished by the displacement of a great volume of fluid with a relatively small expenditure of energy in the production and maintenance of a veritable waterfall as distinguished from a mere spout, jet or spray.

The underlying idea of the invention can be carried out by apparatus of widely varied design, but in the present instance the simplest forms, of which I am aware, are shown as embodiments of the principle involved.

In the accompanying drawing, Figure 1 is a top plan and Fig. 2 a vertical central sectional view of an appliance which I have devised for the purpose. Fig. 3 and Fig. 4 illustrate corresponding views of a similar device of much simpler construction.

Referring to the first, 1 represents a receptacle of any suitable material, as metal, glass, porcelain, marble, cement or other compound, with a central hub 2 and a conical conduit 3, flared out at the top and provided with openings 4 at the bottom. In the hub 2 is inserted a shaft 5 rotatably supported on ball bearings 6 and carrying at its lower end a friction pulley or gear wheel 7. To the upper end of the shaft is fastened a casting 8, preferably of some non-corrosive alloy, with blades 9 constituting a screw which is shown in this instance as the best known propelling device; but it will be understood that other means may be employed. A motor 10 is suitably mounted so as to transmit through wheel 11, by friction or otherwise, power to the pulley or wheel 7. Openings 4 may be covered with removable strainers and receptacles 1 may be provided with convenient connections, respectively, for cleaning and renewing the liquid. It is thought unnecessary to show these attachments in the drawing.

The operation will be readily understood. Receptacle 1 being filled to the proper level with water or other fluid, and the power turned on, the propeller blades 9 are set in rotation and the fluid, drawn through the openings 4, is lifted to the horizontal flared out top of conduit 3 until it overflows in the form of a circular cascade.

In order to prevent the wetting of the bearings of shaft 5, the central hub 2 of receptacle 1 is made to project above conduit 3. The latter is funnel shaped for reasons of economy, and also for the purpose of reducing the speed and securing a smooth and even overflow. As the lift is inconsiderable, little power is needed to keep in motion a great volume of water and the impression produced on the observer is very striking. With the view of still further economizing energy, the bottom of receptacle 1 may be shaped as indicated by the dotted lines 12, in Fig. 2 so as to increase the velocity at the intake of the propeller.

To convey an idea of the results obtainable with a small apparatus, properly designed, it may be stated that by applying only 1/25 of a horse-power to the shaft and assuming a lift of eighteen inches, more than one hundred gallons per minute may be propelled, the depth of the fluid passing over the flared top of conduit 3, one foot in diameter, being nearly one-half inch. As the circulation is extremely rapid the total quantity of liquid required is comparatively small. About one tenth of that delivered per minute will be, generally, sufficient. Such a cascade presents a singularly attractive appearance and this feature may be still further enhanced by artistic grouping of plants or other objects around it, in which case the whole contrivance may be hidden from view. Particularly beautiful displays, however, are obtainable by illumination which may be carried out in many ways. To heighten the effect, a colored, opalescent or phosphorescent fluid may be employed. Sterilizing, aromatic or radio-active liquids may also he used, when so desired. The usual fountains are objectionable in many places on account of the facility they afford for the breeding of insects. The apparatus described not only makes this impossible but is a very efficient trap. Unlike the old devices in which only a very small volume of water is set in motion, such a waterfall is highly effective in cooling the surrounding atmosphere. To still improve this action the free end 13 of the rotating shaft may be utilized to carry any kind of fan. The water may, of course, be artificially cooled.

The device described may be modified in many ways and also considerably simplified. For example, the propeller may be fixed directly to the shaft of the motor and the latter supported conveniently from above when many of the parts illustrated in Fig. 1 and Fig. 2 may be dispensed with. In fact, receptacle 1 itself may be replaced by an independent tank or basin so that the entire apparatus will only consist of a funnel shaped conduit, motor and propeller as a unit. Such a construction is shown in Fig. 3 and Fig. 4 in which 3 is a conical vessel provided with intake openings 4 and resting on a substantial base. A motor 14, carrying on a strong shaft 5 a propeller 9, is fixed to supports 15 which extend from the inner side of conduit 3 and may be integral with the same. Obviously, to insure perfect working the weight of the moving parts and axial reaction of the propeller should be taken up or balanced as by a thrust bearing 16, or other means.

Apparatus of this description is especially intended for use in open basins or reservoirs in which it may be placed and put in action at short notice. When it is desired to produce large and permanent waterfalls the conduit 3 may be formed by masonry of appropriate architectural design.

The invention has an unlimited field of use in private dwellings, hotels, theaters, concert halls, hospitals, aquaria and, particularly, in squares, gardens and parks in which it may be carried out on a larger scale so as to afford a magnificent spectacle far more captivating and stimulating to the public than the insignificant displays now in use.

I am well aware that artificial water falls have heretofore been exhibited and that fountains in which the same water is circulated are old and well known. But in all such cases independent pumps of small volumetric capacity were used to raise the water to an appreciable height which involved the expenditure of considerable energy, while the spectacle offered to the eye was uninteresting. In no instance, to my knowledge, has a great mass of fluid been propelled by the use of only such power as is required to lift it from its normal level through a relatively short space to that from which it overflows and descends as a cascade, nor have devices especially adapted for the purpose been employed.

What I claim is:

1. An artificial fountain consisting of an unobstructed conduit having an elevated overflow and adapted to be set in a body of water, and a propelling device for maintaining a rapid circulation of the water through the conduit.

2. An artificial fountain comprising in combination an unobstructed conduit having an elevated overflow and adapted to be set in a body of fluid, a propeller within the conduit for maintaining a rapid circulation of the fluid through the same, and a motor for driving the propeller.

3. The artificial fountain herein described, comprising in combination a receptacle, a central hollow conduit with an elevated overflow placed herein, a propeller within the conduit, and a motor for driving the propeller, so as to maintain a rapid circulation of fluid through the conduit.

4. The artificial fountain herein described, comprising in combination, a receptacle, a conduit with elevated overflow set therein, a central hub extending up through the conduit, a rotary shaft extending therethrough, and a propeller carried by the shaft for maintaining a rapid circulation of fluid through the conduit.

5. An artificial fountain comprising in combination with an unobstructed passage from the normal to the elevated fluid levels, of a propeller for maintaining a rapid circulation of the fluid through such passage and producing thereby a cascade with the expenditure of little energy.

6. An artificial fountain comprising a funnel shaped conduit adapted to be set in a body of fluid, and having openings near the lower end, and a propeller supported within the conduit and adapted when in operation to maintain a rapid circulation of water through the same.

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

NIKOLA TESLA.

Witnesses:

M. LAWSON DYAR,

WM. BOHLEBER.

N. TESLA.

FOUNTAIN.

APPLICATION FILED OCT. 28, 1913.

1,113,716. Patented Oct. 13, 1914.

2 SHEETS—SHEET 1.

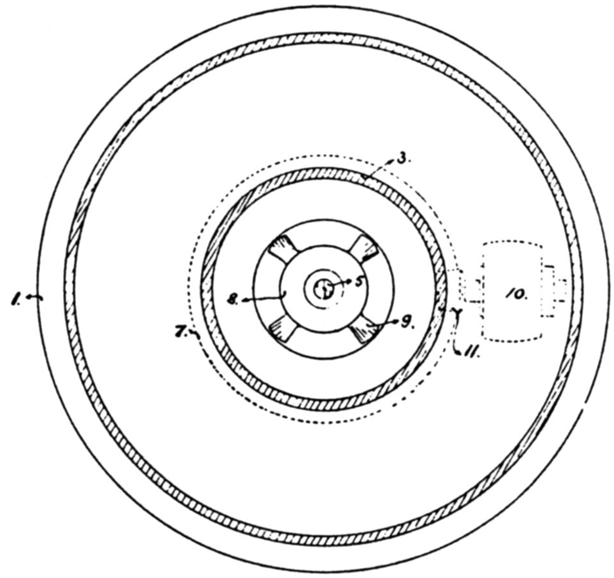


Fig. 1

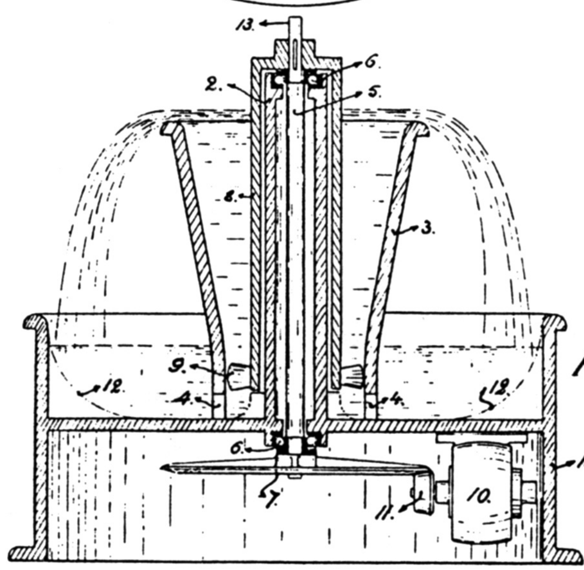


Fig 2

WITNESSES:

Wm Bohleber

INVENTOR.

Nikola Tesla

BY

Kerr Page Cooper & Hayward

ATTORNEYS

Th

N. TESLA.

FOUNTAIN.

APPLICATION FILED OCT. 28, 1913.

1,113,716. Patented Oct. 13, 1914.

2 SHEETS—SHEET 2.

Fig. 3.

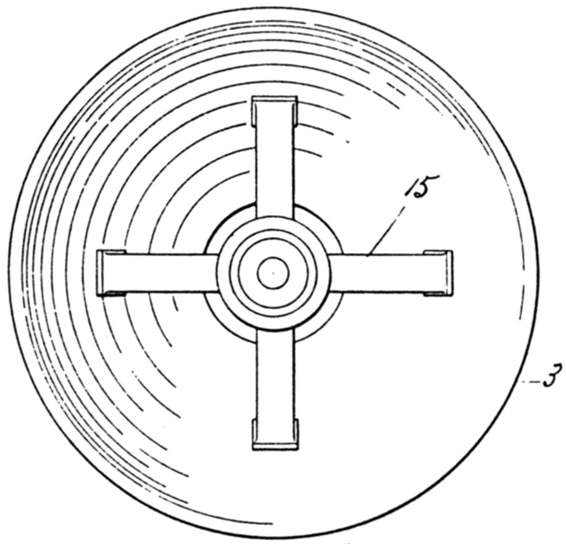
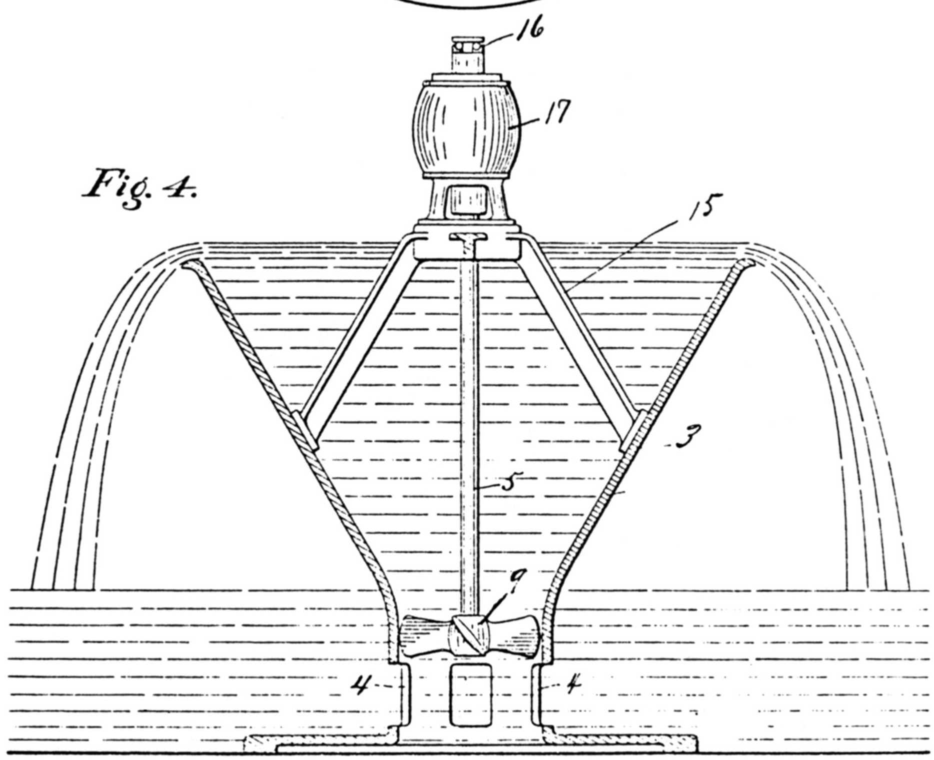


Fig. 4.



WITNESSES:

R. Diaz Buitrago

Wm. Bohleber

INVENTOR.

Nikola Tesla

BY

Kerr Page Cooper & Hayward

ATTORNEYS

Th

1,119,732 APPARATUS FOR TRANSMITTING ELECTRICAL ENERGY.

1,119,732. Specification of Letters Patent. Patented Dec. 1, 1914.

Application filed January 18, 1902. Serial No. 90,245. Renewed May 4,1907. Serial No. 371,817.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, NIKOLA TESLA, a citizen of the United States, residing in the borough of Manhattan, in the city, county, and State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Apparatus for Transmitting Electrical Energy, of which the following is a specification, reference being had to the drawings accompanying and forming a part of the same.

In endeavoring to adapt currents or discharges of very high tension to various valuable uses, as the distribution of energy through wires from central plants to distant places of consumption, or the transmission of powerful disturbances to great distances, through the natural or non-artificial media. I have encountered difficulties in confining considerable amounts of electricity to the conductors and preventing its leakage over their supports, or its escape into the ambient air, which always takes place when the electric surface density reaches a certain value.

The intensity of the effect of a transmitting circuit with a free or elevated terminal is proportionate to the quantity of electricity displaced, which is determined by the product of the capacity of the circuit, the pressure, and the frequency of the currents employed. To produce an electrical movement of the required magnitude it is desirable to charge the terminal as highly as possible, for while a great quantity of electricity may also be displaced by a large capacity charged to low pressure, there are disadvantages met with in many cases when the former is made too large. The chief of these are due to the fact that an increase of the capacity entails a lowering of the frequency of the impulses or discharges and a diminution of the energy of vibration. This will be understood when it is borne in mind, that a circuit with a large capacity behaves as a slackspring, whereas one with a small capacity acts like a stiff spring, vibrating more vigorously. Therefore, in order to attain the highest possible frequency, which for certain purposes is advantageous and, apart from that, to develop the greatest energy in such a transmitting circuit, I employ a terminal of relatively small capacity, which I charge to as high a pressure as practicable. To accomplish this result I have found it imperative to so construct the elevated conductor, that its outer surface, on which the electrical charge chiefly accumulates, has itself a large radius of curvature, or is composed of separate elements which, irrespective of their own radius of curvature, are arranged in close proximity to each other and so, that the outside ideal surface enveloping them is of a large radius. Evidently, the smaller the radius of curvature the greater, for a given electric displacement, will be the surface-density and, consequently, the lower the limiting pressure to which the terminal may be charged without electricity escaping into the air. Such a terminal I secure to an insulating support entering more or less into its interior, and I likewise connect the circuit to it inside or, generally, at points where the electric density is small. This plan of constructing and supporting a highly charged conductor I have found to be of great practical importance, and it may be usefully applied in many ways.

Referring to the accompanying drawing, the figure is a view in elevation and part section of an improved free terminal and circuit of large surface with supporting structure and generating apparatus.

The terminal D consists of a suitably shaped metallic frame, in this case a ring of nearly circular cross section, which is covered with half spherical metal plates P P, thus constituting a very large conducting surface, smooth on all places where the electric charge principally accumulates. The frame is carried by a strong platform expressly provided for safety appliances, instruments of observation, etc., which in turn rests on insulating supports F F. These should penetrate far into the hollow space formed by the terminal, and if the electric density at the points where they are bolted to the frame is still considerable, they may be specially protected by conducting hoods as H.

A part of the improvements which form the subject of this specification, the transmitting circuit, in its general features, is identical with that described and claimed in my original Patents Nos. 645,576 and 649,621. The circuit comprises a coil A which is in close inductive relation with a primary C, and one end of which is connected to a ground-plate E, while its other end is led through a separate self-induction coil B and a metallic cylinder B' to the terminal D. The connection to the latter should always be made at, or near the center, in order to secure a symmetrical distribution of the current, as otherwise, when the frequency is very high and the flow of large volume, the performance of the apparatus might be impaired. The primary C may be excited in any desired manner, from a suitable source of currents G, which may be an alternator or condenser, the important requirement being that the resonant condition is established, that is to say, that the terminal D is charged to the maximum pressure developed in the circuit, as I have specified in my original patents before referred to. The adjustments should be made with particular care when the transmitter is one of great power, not only on account of economy, but also in order to avoid danger. I have shown that it is practicable to produce in a resonating circuit as E A B B' D immense electrical activities, measured by tens and even hundreds of thousands of horse-power, and in such a case, if the points of maximum pressure should be shifted below the terminal D, along coil B, a ball of fire might break out and destroy the support F or anything else in the way. For the better appreciation of the nature of this danger it should be stated, that the destructive action may take place with inconceivable violence. This will cease to be surprising when it is borne in mind, that the entire energy accumulated in the excited circuit, instead of requiring, as under normal working conditions, one quarter of the period or more for its transformation from static to kinetic form, may spend itself in an incomparably smaller interval of time, at a rate of many millions of horse power. The accident is apt to occur when, the transmitting circuit being strongly excited, the impressed oscillations upon it are caused, in any manner more or less sudden, to be more rapid than the free oscillations. It is therefore advisable to begin the adjustments with feeble and somewhat slower impressed oscillations, strengthening and quickening them gradually, until the apparatus has been brought under perfect control. To increase the safety, I provide on a convenient place, preferably on terminal D, one or more elements or plates either of somewhat smaller radius of curvature or protruding more or less beyond the others (in which case they may be of larger radius of curvature) so that, should the pressure rise to a value, beyond which it is not desired to go, the powerful discharge may dart out there and lose itself harmlessly in the air. Such a plate, performing a function similar to that of a safety valve on a high pressure reservoir, is indicated at V.

Still further extending the principles underling my invention, special reference is made to coil B and conductor B'. The latter is in the form of a cylinder with smooth or polished surface of a radius much larger than that of the half spherical elements P P, and widens out at the bottom into a hood H, which should be slotted to avoid loss by eddy currents and the purpose of which will be clear from the foregoing. The coil B is wound on a frame or drum D1 of insulating material, with its turns close together. I have discovered that when so wound the effect of the small radius of curvature of the wire itself is overcome and the coil behaves as a conductor of large radius of curvature, corresponding to that of the drum. This feature is of considerable practical importance and is applicable not only in this special instance, but generally. For example, such plates at P P of terminal D, though preferably of large radius of curvature, need not be necessarily so, for provided only that the individual plates or elements of a high potential conductor or terminal are arranged in proximity to each other and with their outer boundaries along an ideal symmetrical enveloping surface of a large radius of curvature, the advantages of the invention will be more or less fully realized. The lower end of the coil B—which, if desired, may be extended up to the terminal D—should be somewhat below the uppermost turn of coil A. This, I find, lessens the tendency of the charge to break out from the wire connecting both and to pass along the support F'.

Having described my invention, I claim:

1. As a means for producing great electrical activities a resonant circuit having its outer conducting boundaries, which are charged to a high potential, arranged in surfaces of large radii of curvature so as to prevent leakage of the oscillating charge, substantially as set forth.

2. In apparatus for the transmission of electrical energy a circuit connected to ground and to an elevated terminal and having its outer conducting boundaries, which are subject to high tension, arranged in surfaces of large radii of curvature substantially as, and for the purpose described.

3. In a plant for the transmission of electrical energy without wires, in combination with a primary or exciting circuit a secondary connected to ground and to an elevated terminal and having its outer conducting boundaries, which are charged to a high potential, arranged in surfaces of large radii of curvature for the purpose of preventing leakage and loss of energy, substantially as set forth.

4. As a means for transmitting electrical energy to a distance through the natural media a grounded resonant circuit, comprising a part upon which oscillations are impressed and another for raising the tension, having its outer conducting boundaries on which a high tension charge accumulates arranged in surfaces of large radii of curvature, substantially as described.

5. The means for producing excessive electric potentials consisting of a primary exciting circuit and a resonant secondary having its outer conducting elements which are subject to high tension arranged in proximity to each other and in surfaces of large radii of curvature so as to prevent leakage of the charge and attendant lowering of

potential, substantially as described.

6. A circuit comprising a part upon which oscillations are impressed and another part for raising the tension by resonance, the latter part being supported on places of low electric density and having its outermost conducting boundaries arranged in surfaces of large radii of curvature, as set forth.

7. In apparatus for the transmission of electrical energy without wires a grounded circuit the outer conducting elements of which have a great aggregate area and are arranged in surfaces of large radii of curvature so as to permit the storing of a high charge at a small electric density and prevent loss through leakage, substantially as described.

8. A wireless transmitter comprising in combination a source of oscillations as a condenser, a primary exciting circuit and a secondary grounded and elevated conductor the outer conducting boundaries of which are in proximity to each other and arranged in surfaces of large radii of curvature, substantially as described.

9. In apparatus for the transmission of electrical energy without wires an elevated conductor or antenna having its outer high potential conducting or capacity elements arranged in proximity to each other and in surfaces of large radii of curvature so as to overcome the effect of the small radius of curvature of the individual elements and leakage of the charge, as set forth.

10. A grounded resonant transmitting circuit having its outer conducting boundaries arranged in surfaces of large radii of curvature in combination with an elevated terminal of great surface supported at points of low electric density, substantially as described.

NIKOLA TESLA.

Witnesses:

M. LAWSON DYER,

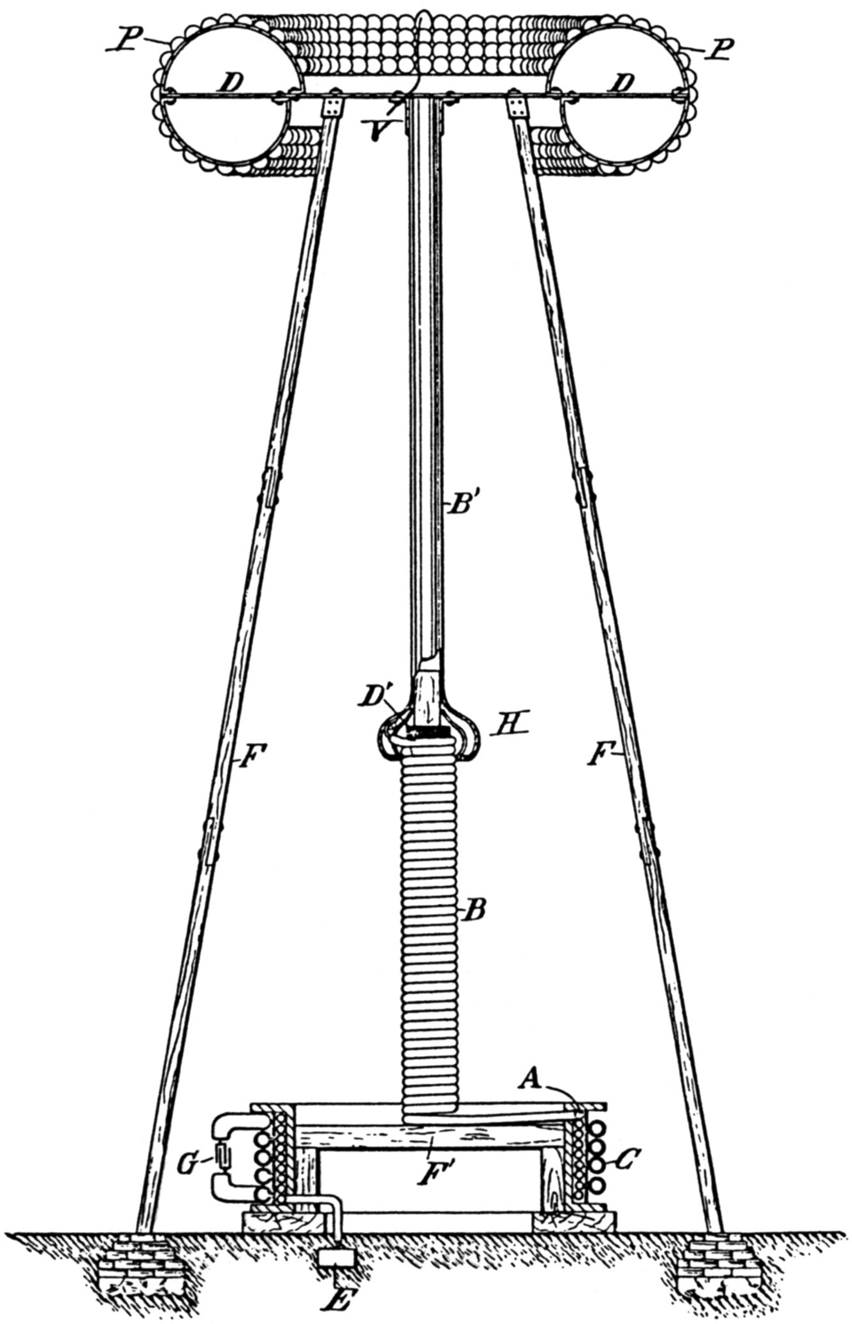
RICHARD DONOVAN.

N. TESLA.

APPARATUS FOR TRANSMITTING ELECTRICAL ENERGY.

APPLICATION FILED JAN. 18, 1902. RENEWED MAY 4, 1907.

1,119,732. Patented Dec. 1, 1914.



WITNESSES:
M. Lawson Dyer
Benjamin Miller.

Nikola Tesla, INVENTOR,
BY Kerr, Page & Cooper,
his ATTORNEYS.

Th

11,865 METHOD OF INSULATING ELECTRIC CONDUCTORS.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Reissued Letters Patent No. 11,865 dated October 23, 1900.

Original No. 655,838, dated August 14, 1900. Application for reissue filed September 21, 1900. Serial No. 30,722. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, NIKOLA TESLA, a citizen of the United States, residing in the borough of Manhattan, in the city, county, and State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Methods of Insulating Electric Conductors, of which the following is a specification, reference being had to the accompanying drawings.

It has long been known that many substances which are more or less conducting when in the fluid condition become insulators when solidified. Thus water, which is in a measure conducting, acquires insulating properties when converted into ice. The existing information on this subject, however, has been heretofore of a general nature only and chiefly derived from the original observations of Faraday, who estimated that the substances upon which he experimented, such as water and aqueous solutions, insulate an electrically-charged conductor about one hundred times better when rendered solid by freezing, and no attempt has been made to improve the quality of the insulation obtained by this means or to practically utilize it for such purposes as are contemplated in my present invention. In the course of my own investigations, more especially those of the electric properties of ice, I have discovered some novel and important facts, of which the more prominent are the following: first, that under certain conditions, when the leakage of the electric charge ordinarily taking place is rigorously prevented, ice proves itself to be a much better insulator than has heretofore appeared; second, that its insulating properties may be still further improved by the addition of other bodies to the water; third, that the dielectric strength of ice or other frozen aqueous substance increases with the reduction of temperature and corresponding increase of hardness, and, fourth, that these bodies afford a still more effective insulation for conductors carrying intermittent or alternating currents, particularly of high rates, surprisingly-thin layers of ice being capable of withstanding electromotive forces of many hundreds and even thousands of volts. These and other observations have led me to the invention of a novel method of insulating conductors, rendered practicable by reason of the above facts and advantageous in the utilization of electrical energy for industrial and commercial purposes.

This method consists in insulating an electric conductor by freezing or solidifying and maintaining in such state the material surrounding or contiguous to the conductor, using for the purpose a gaseous cooling agent circulating through one or more suitable channels extended through or in proximity to the said material.

In the practical carrying out of my method I may employ a hollow conductor and pass the cooling agent through the same, thus freezing the water or other medium in contact with or close to such conductor, or I may use expressly for the circulation of the cooling agent an independent channel and freeze or solidify the adjacent substance in which any number of conductors may be embedded. The conductors may be bare or covered with some material which is capable of keeping them insulated when it is frozen or solidified. The frozen mass may be in direct touch with the surrounding medium, or it may be in a degree protected from contact with the same by an enclosure more or less impervious to heat. The cooling agent may be any kind of gas, as atmospheric air, oxygen, carbonic acid, ammonia, illuminating-gas, or hydrogen. It may be forced through the channel by pressure or suction produced mechanically or otherwise. It may be continually renewed or indefinitely used, being driven back and forth or steadily circulated in closed paths under any suitable conditions as regards pressure, density, temperature, and velocity.

To conduce to a better understanding of the invention, reference is now made to the accompanying drawings, in which—

Figures 1, 3, 6, 7, 8, and 9 illustrate in longitudinal section typical ways of carrying out my invention; and Figs. 2, 4, 5, and 10, in section, or partly so, constructive details to be described.

In Fig. 1, C is a hollow conductor, such as a steel tube, laid in a body of water and communicating with a reservoir *r1*, but electrically insulated from the same at *j*. A pump or compressor *p*, of any suitable construction connects *r1* with another similar tank *r2*, provided with an inlet-valve *v2*. The air or other gas which is used as the cooling agent entering through the valve *v2* is drawn through the tank *r2* and pump *p* into the reservoir *r1*, escaping thence through the conductor C under any desired pressure which may be regulated by a valve *v1*. Both the reservoirs *r1* and *r2* are kept at a low temperature by suitable means, as by coils or tubes *t1 t1* and *t2 t2*, through which any kind of refrigerating fluid may be circulated, some provision being preferably made for adjusting the flow of the same, as by valves *v1*. The gas continuously passing through the tube or conductor C being very cold will freeze and maintain in this state the water in contact with or adjacent to the conductor and so insulate it. Flanged bushings *i1 i2*, of non-conducting material, may be used to prevent the leakage of the current which would otherwise occur, owing to the formation of a superficial film of moisture over the ice projecting out of the water. The tube, being kept insulated by this means may then be employed in the manner of an ordinary telegraphic or other cable by connecting either or both of the terminals *b1 b1* in a circuit including the earth.

In many cases it will be of advantage to cover the hollow conductor with a thick layer of some cheap material, as felt, this being indicated by C3 in Fig. 2. Such a covering, penetrable by water, would be ordinarily of little or no use; but when embedded in the ice it improves the insulating qualities of the same. In this instance it furthermore serves to greatly reduce the quantity of ice required, its rate of melting, and the influx of heat from the outside, thus diminishing the expenditure of energy necessary for the maintenance of normal working conditions. As regards this energy and other particulars of importance they will vary according to the special demands in each case.

Generally considered, the cooling agent will have to carry away heat at a rate sufficient to keep the conductor at the desired temperature and to maintain a layer of the required thickness of the substance surrounding it in a frozen state, compensating continually for the heat flowing in through the layer and wall of the conductor and that generated by mechanical and electrical friction. To meet these conditions, its cooling capacity, which is dependent on the temperature, density, velocity, and specific heat, will be calculated by the help of data and formulae familiar to engineers. Air will be, as a rule, suitable for the use contemplated; but in exceptional instances some other gas, as hydrogen, may be resorted to, which will permit a much greater rate of cooling and a lower temperature to be reached. Obviously whichever gas be employed it should before entering the hollow conductor or channel be thoroughly dried and separated from all which by condensation and deposition or otherwise might cause an obstruction to its passage. For these purposes apparatus may be employed which is well known and which it is unnecessary to show in detail.

Instead of being wasted at the distant station the cooling agent may be turned to some profitable use. Evidently in the industrial and commercial exploitation of my invention any kind of cooling agent capable of meeting the requirements may be conveyed from one to another station, and there utilized for refrigeration, power, heating, lighting, sanitation, chemical processes, or any other purpose to which it may lend itself, and thus the revenue of the plant may be increased.

As to the temperature of the conductor, it will be determined by the nature of its use and considerations of economy. For instance, if it be employed for the transmission of telegraphic messages, when the loss in electrical friction may be of no consequence, a very low temperature may not be required; but if it be used for transmitting large amounts of electrical energy, when the frictional waste may be a serious drawback, it will be desirable to keep it extremely cold. The attainment of this object will be facilitated by any provision for reducing as much as possible the flowing in of the heat from the surrounding medium. Clearly the lower the temperature of the conductor the smaller will be the loss in electrical friction; but, on the other hand, the colder the conductor the greater will be the influx of heat from the outside and the cost of the cooling agent. From such and similar considerations the temperature securing the highest economy will be ascertained.

Most frequently in the distribution of electricity for industrial purposes, as in my system of power transmission by alternate currents, more than one conductor will be required, and in such cases it may be convenient to circulate the cooling agent in a closed path formed by the conductors. A plan of this kind is illustrated in Fig. 3, in which C1 and C2 represent two hollow conductors embedded in a frozen mass underground and communicating, respectively, with the reservoirs R1 and R2, which are connected by a reciprocating or other suitable pump P. Cooling coils or tubes T1 T1 and T2 T2 with regulating-valves *v′ v″* are employed, which are similar to and serve the same purpose as those shown in Fig. 1. Other features of similarity, though unnecessary, are illustrated to facilitate an understanding of the plan. A three-way valve V2 is provided, which when placed with its lever l as indicated allows the cooling agent to enter through the tubes *u1 u2* and pump P, thus filling the reservoirs R1 R2 and hollow conductors C1 C2; but when turned ninety degrees the valve shuts off the communication to the outside through the tube *u1* and establishes a connection between the reservoir R2 and pump P through the tubes *u2* and *u3*, thus permitting the cooling agent to be circulated in the closed path C1 C2 R2 *u3 u2* P R1 by the action of the pump. Another valve V1 of suitable construction, may be used for regulating the flow of the cooling agent. The conductors C1 C2 are insulated from the reservoirs R1 R2 and from each other at the joints J1 J2 J3, and they are furthermore protected at the places where they enter and leave the ground by flanged bushings I1 I1 I2 I2, of insulating material, which extend into the frozen mass in order to prevent the current from leaking, as above explained. Binding-posts B1 B1 and B2 B2 are provided for connecting the conductors to the circuit at each station.

In laying the conductors, as C1 C2, whatever be their number, a trench will generally be dug and a trough, round or square, as T, of smaller dimensions than the trench, placed in the same, the intervening space being packed with some material (designated by M M M) more or less impervious to heat, as sawdust, ashes, or the like. Next the conductors will be put in position and temporarily supported in any convenient manner, and, finally, the trough will be filled with water or other substance W, which will be gradually frozen by circulating the cooling agent in the closed path, as before described. Usually the trench will not be level, but will follow the undulations of the ground, and this will make it necessary to subdivide the trough in sections or to effect the freezing of the substance filling it successively in parts. This being done and the conductors thus insulated and fixed, a layer of the same or similar material M M M will be placed on the top and the whole covered with earth or pavement. The trough may be of metal, as sheet-iron, and in cases where the ground is used as the return-circuit it may serve as a main, or it may be of any kind of material more or less insulating. Figs. 4 and 5 illustrate in cross-section two such underground troughs T' and T'', of sheet metal, with their adiathermanous enclosures, (designated M' and M'', respectively,) each trough containing a single central hollow conductor, as C' C''. In the first case the insulation W' is supposed to be ice obtained by freezing water preferably freed of air in order to exclude the formation of dangerous bubbles or cavities, while in the second case the frozen mass W'' is some aqueous or other substance or mixture highly insulating when in this condition.

It should be stated that in many instances it may be practicable to dispense with a trough by resorting to simple expedients in the placing and insulating of the conductors. In fact, for some purposes it may be sufficient to simply cover the latter with a moist mass, as cement or other plastic material, which so long as it is kept at a very low temperature and frozen hard will afford adequate insulation.

Another typical way of carrying out my invention, to which reference has already been made, is shown in Fig. 6, which represents the cross-section of a trough, the same in other respects as those before shown, but containing instead of a hollow conductor any kind of pipe or conduit L. The cooling agent may be driven in any convenient manner through the pipe for the purpose of freezing the water or other substance filling the trough, thus insulating and fixing a number of conductors *c c c*. Such a plan may be particularly suitable in cities for insulating and fixing telegraph and telephone wires or the like. In such cases an exceedingly-low temperature of the cooling agent may not be required, and the insulation will be obtained at the expense of little power. The conduit L may, however, be used simultaneously for conveying and distributing any kind of gaseous cooling agent for which there is a demand through the district. Obviously two such conduits may be provided and used in a similar manner as the conductors C1 C2.

It will often be desirable to place in the same trough a great number of wires or conductors serving for a variety of purposes. In such a case a plan may be adopted which is illustrated in Fig. 7, showing a trough similar to that in Fig. 6 with the conductors in cross-section. The cooling agent may be in this instance circulated, as in Fig. 3 or otherwise, through the two hollow conductors C3 and C4, which if found advantageous may be covered with a layer of cheap material *m m*, such as will improve their insulation, but not prevent the freezing or solidification of the surrounding substance W. The tubular conductors C1 C2, preferably of iron, may then serve to convey heavy currents for supplying light and power, while the small ones *c' c' c'*, embedded in the ice or frozen mass, may be used for any other purposes.

While my invention contemplates, chiefly, the insulation of conductors employed in the transmission of electrical energy to a distance, it may be, obviously, otherwise usefully applied. In some instances, for example, it may be desirable to insulate and support a conductor in places as is ordinarily done by means of glass or porcelain insulators. This may be effected in many ways by conveying a cooling agent either through the conductor or through an independent channel and freezing or solidifying any kind of substance, thus enabling it to serve the purpose. Such an artificial insulating-support is illustrated in Fig. 8, in which *a* represents a vessel filled with water or other substance *w*, frozen by the agent circulating through the hollow conductor C'', which is thus insulated and supported. To improve the insulation on the top, where it is most liable to give way, a layer of some substance *w'*, as oil, may be used, and the conductor may be covered near the support with insulation *i i*, as shown, the same extending into the oil, for reasons well understood.

Another typical application of my invention is shown in Fig. 9, in which P' and S' represent, respectively, the primary and secondary conductors, bare or insulated, of a transformers, which are wound on a core N and immersed in water or other substance W, containing a jar H, and, as before stated, preferably freed of air by boiling or otherwise. The cooling agent is circulated in any convenient manner, as through the hollow primary P', for the purpose of freezing the substance W. Flanged bushings *d d* and oil-cups *e e*, extending into the frozen mass, illustrate suitable means for insulating the ends of the two conductors and preventing the leakage of the currents. A transformer as described is especially fitted for use with currents of high frequency when a low temperature of the conductors is particularly desirable, and ice affords an exceptionally-effective insulation.

It will be understood that my invention may be applied in many other ways, that the special means here described will be greatly varied according to the necessities, and that in each case many expedients will be adopted which are well known to engineers and electricians and on which it is unnecessary to dwell. However, it may be useful to state that in some instances a special provision will have to be made for effecting a uniform cooling of the substance surrounding the conductor throughout its length. Assuming in Fig. 1 the cooling agent to escape at the distant end freely into the atmosphere or into a reservoir maintained at low pressure, it will in passing through the hollow conductor C move with a velocity steadily increasing toward the end, expanding isothermally, or nearly so, and hence it will cause an approximately-uniform formation of ice along the conductor. In the plan illustrated in Fig. 3 a similar result will be in a measure attained, owing to the compensating effect of the hollow conductor C1 and C2, which may be still further enhanced by reversing periodically the direction of the flow in any convenient manner; but in many cases special arrangements will have to be employed to render the cooling more or less uniform. For instance, referring to Figs. 4, 5, and 6, instead of a single channel two concentric channels L1 and L2 may be provided and the cooling agent passed through one and returned through the other, as indicated, diagrammatically, in Fig. 10. In this and any similar arrangement when the flow takes place in opposite directions the object aimed at will be more completely attained by reducing the temperature of the circulating cooling agent at the distant station, which may be done by simply expanding it into a large reservoir, as R3, or cooling it by means of a tube or coil T3 or otherwise. Evidently in the case illustrated the concentric tubes may be used as independent conductors if insulated from each other and from the ground by the frozen or solidified substance.

Generally in the transmission of electrical energy in large amounts, when the quantity of heat to be carried off may be considerable, refrigerating apparatus thoroughly protected against the inflow of heat from the outside, as usual, will be employed at both the stations and when the distance between them is very great also at intermediate points, the machinery being advantageously operated by the currents transmitted or cooling agent conveyed. In such cases a fairly-uniform freezing of the insulating substance will be attained without difficulty by the compensating effect of the oppositely-circulating cooling agents. In large plants of this kind when the saving of electrical energy in the transmission is the most important consideration or when the chief object is to reduce the cost of the mains by the employment of cheap metal, as iron or otherwise, every effort will be made to maintain the conductors at the lowest possible temperature, and well-known refrigeration processes, as those based on the regenerative principle, may be resorted to, and in this and any other case the hollow conductors or channels instead of merely serving the purpose of conveying the cooling agent may themselves form active parts of the refrigerating apparatus.

From the above description it will be readily seen that my invention forms a fundamental departure in the principle from the established methods of insulating conductors employed in the industrial and commercial application of electricity. It aims, broadly, at obtaining insulation by the continuous expenditure of a moderate amount of energy instead of securing it only by virtue of an inherent physical property of the material used as heretofore. More especially, its object is to provide, when and wherever required, insulation of high quality, of any desired thickness, and exceptionally cheap, and to enable the transmission of electrical energy under conditions of economy heretofore unattainable and at distances until now impracticable by dispensing with the necessity of using costly conductors and insulators.

What I claim as my invention is—

1. The method of insulating electric conductors herein described which consists in imparting insulating properties to material surrounding or contiguous to the said conductor by the continued action thereon of a gaseous cooling agent, as set forth.

2. The method of insulating electric conductors herein described which consists in reducing to and maintaining in

a frozen or solidified condition the material surrounding or contiguous to the said conductor by the action thereon of a gaseous cooling agent maintaining in circulation through one or more channels as set forth.

3. The method of insulating electric conductors herein described which consists in surrounding or supporting the conductor by material which acquires insulating properties when in a frozen solidified state, and maintaining the material in such a state by the circulation through one or more channels extending through it of a gaseous cooling agent, as set forth.

4. The method of insulating an electric conductor which consists in surrounding or supporting said conductor by a material which acquires insulating properties when frozen or solidified, and maintaining the material in such state by passing a gaseous cooling agent continuously through a channel in said conductor, as set forth.

5. The method of insulating electric conductors, which consists in surrounding or supporting the said conductors by a material which acquires insulating properties when in a frozen or solidified state, and maintaining the material in such state by the continued application thereto of a gaseous cooling agent, as set forth.

6. The method of insulating conductors herein set forth which consists in surrounding or supporting the conductors by a material which acquires insulating properties when in a frozen or solidified state, and maintaining the material in such state by the circulation of a gaseous cooling agent through a circuit of pipes or tubes extending through the said material as set forth.

7. The method of insulating electric conductors which consists in laying or supporting the conductors in a trough or conduit filling the trough with a material which acquires insulating properties when frozen or solidified, and then causing a gaseous cooling agent to circulate through one or more channels extending through the material in the trough so as to freeze or solidifying the material, as set forth.

8. The method of insulating electric conductors which consists in embedding the same in a moist or plastic compound which acquires insulating properties when in a frozen or solidified state, and maintaining the compound in such state by circulating a gaseous cooling agent through one or more channels extending through the compound, as set forth.

9. The method of insulating electric conductors which consist in laying or supporting the conductors in a trough or conduit, filling the trough with a material which acquires insulating properties when frozen or solidified, protecting the trough from the surrounding medium in which it is laid by an adiathermanous enclosure, and then freezing or solidifying the material surrounding the conductors and maintaining the same in such state by circulating a gaseous cooling agent through one or more channels extending through the same, as set forth.

NIKOLA TESLA.

Witnesses:

DRURY W. COOPER,

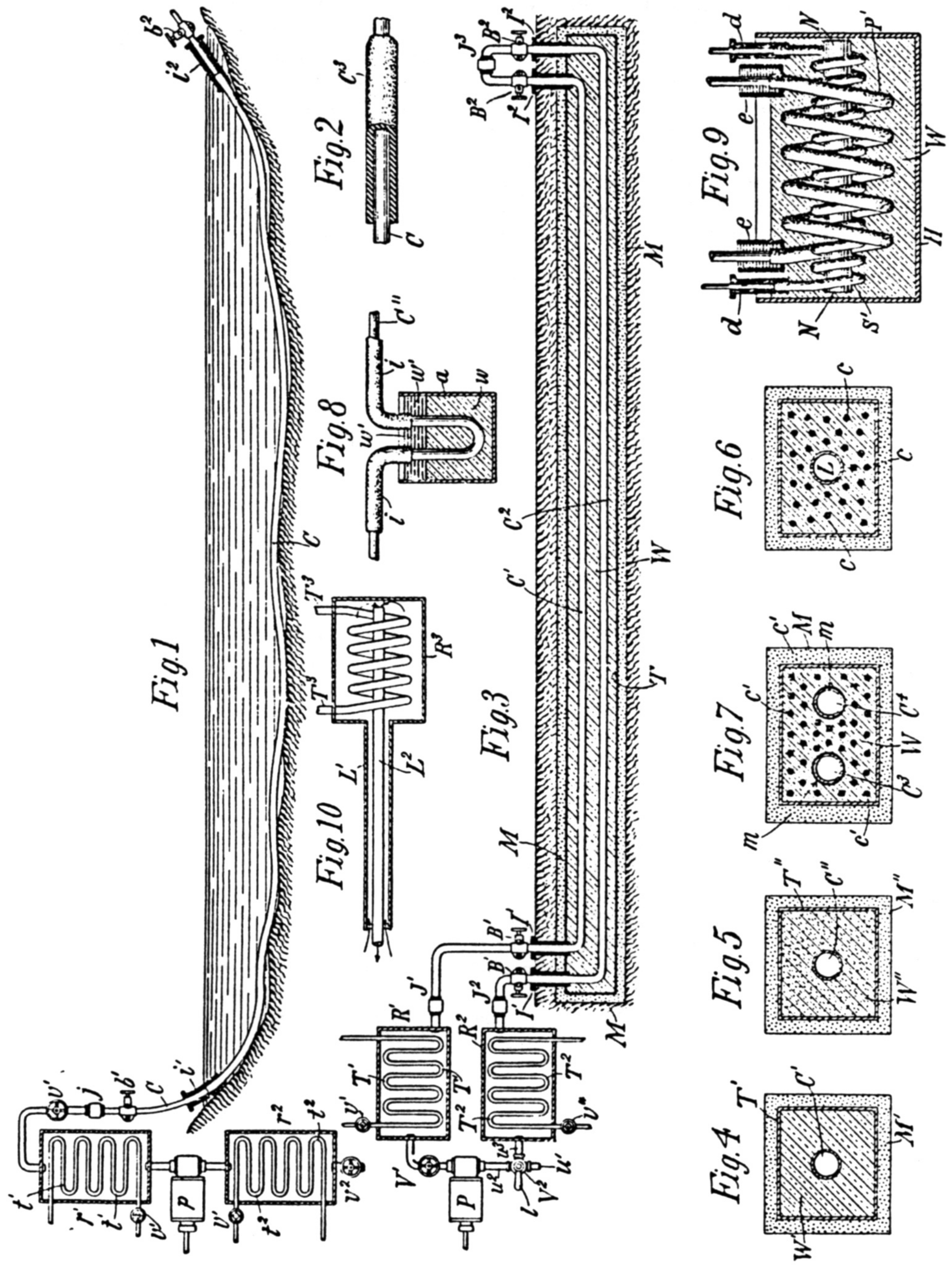
JOHN C. KERR.

No. 11,865. Reissued Oct. 23, 1900.

N. TESLA.

METHOD OF INSULATING ELECTRIC CONDUCTORS.

(Application filed Sept. 21, 1900.)



Witnesses:
Raphaël Netter
Benjamin Miller

Nikola Tesla Inventor

by Kerr Page & Cooper Attys.

Th

1,209,359 SPEED-INDICATOR.

1,209,359. Specification of Letters Patent. Patented Dec. 19, 1916.
Application filed May 29, 1914. Serial No. 841,726.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, NIKOLA TESLA, a citizen of the United States, residing at New York, in the county and State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Speed-Indicators, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description.

In the provision of speed indicators, that give direct readings of rate of motion,—for example shaft speeds in terms of revolutions per minute or vehicle speeds in miles per hour—it is obviously important that the instrument be simple, inexpensive and durable, and that its indications be correct throughout a wide range of speed. Likewise it is very desirable that its operation shall be subject to little or no appreciable deviation from accuracy under normal or expected extraneous changes, such as those of atmospheric density, temperature, or magnetic influence, in order that the structure may be free from any complications incident to the employment of specific means compensating for such varying conditions.

My present invention supplies a speed measuring appliance amply satisfying commercial demands as above stated, in a structure wherein the adhesion and viscosity of a gaseous medium, preferably air, is utilized for torque-transmission between the driving and driven members.

More particularly, my invention provides a rotatable primary and a mechanically resistant or biased pivoted secondary element, cooperating through an intervening fluid medium to produce, inherently, without the use of compensating instrumentalities, angular displacements of the secondary element in linear proportion to the rate of rotation of the primary, so that the reading scale may be uniformly graduated. This latter advantage is secured through the application of novel principles, discovered by me, which will be presently elucidated.

In investigating the effects of fluids in motion upon rotative systems I have observed that under certain conditions to be hereafter defined, the drag or turning effort exerted by the fluid is exactly proportionate to its velocity relative to the system. This I have found to be true of gaseous and liquid media, with the distinction however, that the limits within which the law holds good are narrower for the latter, especially so when the specific gravity or the viscosity of the liquid is great.

Having determined the conditions under which the law of proportionality of torque to speed (rather than to the square of the speed or to some higher exponential function of the same) holds good, I have applied my discoveries in the production of new devices—essentially indicators of speed but having wider fields of use—which are, in many aspects, superior to other forms of speedometers.

Specifically I have devised rate-of-motion indicators which comprise driving and driven members with confronting, closely-adjacent, noncontacting, smooth, annular surfaces of large area, coacting in the transmission of torque through the viscosity and adhesion of interposed thin films of air,—mechanical structures offering numerous constructive and operative advantages. Furthermore, by properly designing and coordinating the essential elements of such instruments I have secured substantial linear proportionality between the deflections of the indicating or secondary element and the rate of rotation of the driving or primary member.

The conditions more or less indispensable for this most perfect embodiment of my invention—that is to say, embodiment in a speed indicator approximating rigorous linear proportionality of deflection to speed—are:

1. The arrangement should be such that the exchange of fluid acting on the system is effectively prevented or minimized. If new fluid were permitted to pass freely between the elements there would be, as in a pump, with the rise and fall of velocity, corresponding changes of quantity and the torque would not vary directly as the speed, but as an exponential function of the same. Broadly speaking, such provision as is commonly made in hydraulic brakes for free circulation of fluid with respect to the rotative system, with the attendant acceleration and retardation of the flow, will generally produce a torque varying as the square of the speed, subject however, in practice, to influences which may cause it to change according to still higher powers. For this reason confinement of the fluid intervening between the primary and secondary elements of the system so that such active, torque transmitting medium may remain resident, and not be constantly renewed, is vital to complete attainment of the desired linear proportionality.

2. The spaces or channels enclosing the active medium should be as narrow as practicable, although within limits this is relative, the range of effective separation increasing with the diameter of the juxtaposed rotative surfaces. My observations have established that when the spacing is so wide as to accommodate local spiral circulation in the resident fluid between the confronting areas, marked departures from rigorous proportionality of torque to speed occur. Therefore in small instruments with primary members of but few inches diameter, it is desirable that the channels should be as narrow as is mechanically feasible with due regard to the importance of maintaining the noncontacting relation of the rotative parts.

3. The velocity of the fluid relative to the system should be as small as the circumstances of the case will permit. When a gas such as air is the active medium, it may be 100 feet per second or even more, but with liquids speeds of that order cannot be used without detriment.

4. The bodies exposed to the action of the fluid should be symmetrically shaped and with smooth surfaces, devoid of corners or projections which give rise to destructive eddies that are particularly hurtful.

5. The system should be so shaped and disposed that no part of the moving fluid except that contained in the spaces or channels can effect materially the torque. If this rule is not observed the accuracy of the instrument may be impaired to an appreciable degree, for even though torque transmission between the confronting surfaces is proportional, there may yet be a component of the rotary effort (through the fluid coacting with the external surfaces) proportional to an exponential function of the speed. Hence it is desirable that by a closely investing casing, or other means, the torque-transmitting effect of fluid outside of the channels between the rotative parts be minimized.

6. In general the flow of the medium should be calm and entirely free from all turbulent action. As soon as there is a break of continuity the law above stated is violated and the indications of the device cease to be rigorously precise.

These requirements can be readily fulfilled and the above discoveries applied to a great many valuable uses, as for indicating the speed of rotation or translation, respectively, of a shaft, or a vehicle, such as an automobile, locomotive, boat or aerial vessel; for determining the velocity of a fluid in motion; for measuring the quantity of flow in steam, air, gas, water or oil supply; for ascertaining the frequency of mechanical and electrical impulses or oscillations; for determining physical constants; and for numerous other purposes of scientific and practical importance.

The nature and object of the invention will be clearly understood from the succeeding description with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

Figure 1 represents a vertical cross section of a speed indicator or hand tachometer embodying the above principles; Fig. 2 is a horizontal view of the instrument disclosing part of the scale, and Figs. 3 and 4 are diagrammatic illustrations showing modified constructions of the main parts in a similar device.

Referring to Fig. 1, 1 is a pulley-shaped metal disk from three to four inches in diameter constituting the freely-rotatable primary element. It is fastened to a driveshaft 2 which is turned to fit a hole in the central hub 3 of the casting 4. A ball bearing 5 set in a recess of the former, serves to take up the thrust against the shoulder 6 of the shaft and insures free running of the same. In close proximity to the disk 1 is the thin shell 7 in the form of a cup, this being the secondary element of the system. It is made of stiff and light material, as hard aluminum, and is fixed to a spindle 8, supported in nearly frictionless bearings or pivots 9 and 10. As before remarked the spacing between the two elements, (1 and 7), should best be as small as manufacturing conditions may make feasible. By way of example, a separation,—in an instrument of the diameter suggested,—of say .015” to .025” will be found effective for working purposes and also within a reasonable range of inexpensive mechanical attainment. Still smaller spacing is, however, theoretically desirable. One of the bearings aforesaid is screwed into the end of the shaft 2 and the other into a plug 11 in a slotted tubular extension 12 of a casting 13. The running bearing in the shaft, though not of perceptible influence on the indications, may be replaced by a stationary support behind and close to shell 7, as at 8. A torsional spring 14 is provided, for biasing the pivoted element 7, having its ends held in collars 15 and 16, which can be clamped, as by the set screws shown, the one to the spindle 8 and the other to the plug 11. The bearings 9 and 10 are capable of longitudinal adjustment and can be locked in any position by check nuts 17, and 18, but this refinement is generally unnecessary. The castings 4 and 13, in the construction specifically shown, when screwed together form a casing that closely invests the rotative system. This casing forms one available means for preventing communication of torque from the primary element 1 to the secondary member 7 through the medium contacting with the external surfaces of both, to any extent sufficient for materially modifying the torque due to the films between the elements, but other means to this end may be substituted. The chamber enclosed within the casting should be airtight for highest accuracy in order that the density of the contained medium may remain constant, although in the vast majority of cases where air is used as the active agent, the slight effects of ordinary changes of temperature and density of the external atmosphere can be ignored, as they are in a measure neutralize by the concomitant variations in the resilience of the torsional spring and as they do not seriously affect the proportionality of deflections observed. However, when great precision is essential, a seal 19 of suitable packing, paste or amalgam may be employed. Obviously the working parts may be contained in a separate, perfectly tight reservoir filled with fluid of any desired character, the rotating member or disk 1 being driven by a magnet outside. This expedient has been adopted in numerous instances and is quite familiar. The casting 4 has a window or opening 20, closed by a piece of transparent substance, such as celluloid, for enabling the readings to be made on the scale which is engraved upon or glued to the rim of the indication-controlling element or shell 7. The shaft 2 is armed with a steel or rubber tip 21, and a handle 22 of fiber or other material is fastened to the central hub of casting 13, completing the hand tachometer.

Fig. 2 in which like numbers designate corresponding parts is self-explanatory.

Attention may be called to the pointed index 23 placed in the opening 20 and marking, when the instrument is not in use, zero on the scale. The latter can be readily put in proper position by turning the collar 16 to the desired angle.

As described the device is adapted for use in the manner of an ordinary hand tachometer. In taking the revolutions of a shaft, the tip 21 is placed firmly into the central cavity of the former, as usual, with the result of entraining the disk 1 and bringing it to full speed by friction. The active medium, preferably air, in the narrow channels between the rotating and pivoted members, by virtue of its adhesion and viscosity, is set in circular motion by the primary element, and, giving up the momentum imparted to it on the light secondary shell 7, causes the latter to turn until the torque exerted is balanced by the retractile force of spring 14. Care should be taken to employ a spring the resistance of which increases linearly with displacement, so that the deflections are exactly proportionate to the torsional effect, as otherwise the indications will not be true to scale, even though the instrument be perfect in other respects. In order that the torque should vary rigorously as the speed, the fluid particles in the minute channels between the rotating and pivoted members should move in circles and not in spirals, as necessarily would be the case in a device in which pumping action could take place, and either by making both the primary and secondary elements effectively-imperforate to prevent central admission of air, or otherwise so constructed and conditioned that air may not freely pass from center to periphery between the elements of the moving system unchanging residence of a definite body of the active medium within the system is insured. Where pumping action,—that is to say, acceleration or retardation of fluid movement other than circularly with the primary element,—takes place the deflections increase more rapidly than the speed. It follows that centrifugal force, which is the essential active principle in pumping, must be negligible to avoid compression of the air at the periphery which might result in a sensibly increased torque. To appreciate this, it should be borne in mind that the resistance of a circular strip of the active area would, under such conditions, be proportionate to the fourth power of the diameter so that a slight compression and attendant increase of density of the medium in the peripheral portion would cause a noticeable departure from rigorous proportionality. Experience has demonstrated that when the space is very narrow, as is indispensable for the fullest attainment of the desired proportionality, the centrifugal effect of the active fluid, be it gaseous or liquid, is so small as to be unobservable. The inference is that the actions in the narrow space between the rotative members are capillary or molecular and wholly different in principle from those taking place in a pumping device in which the fluid masses are alternately retarded and accelerated. The scale, which, as will be apparent from the preceding, is uniform in an instrument best embodying my invention, may be so graduated that each degree corresponds to a certain number of revolutions per unit of time, and for convenience, (in shaft-speed indicators as herein shown), the constant is made a round number, as 100. The establishment of this relation through the adjustment of the torsional spring is facilitated by varying the distance between the parts 1 and 7, thus modifying the torque and consequently the deflection, (the torque varying inversely as the distance) while always keeping within the range throughout which linear proportionality is attainable. In calibrating it is necessary to make but one observation comparative with some positive standard and to plot the balance of the scale accordingly. The conditions above set forth being realized, the reading will be accurately proportionate to the speed and the constant will be correct through the whole range contemplated in the design. Therein lies a very important advantage bearing on manufacture and introduction of devices of this character over those now in use which are based on an empirical scale, tedious to prepare, and unreliable. When desired, the instrument may be rendered dead beat through magnetic or mechanical dumping, but by making the torque very great, and the inertia of the secondary element very small, such objectionable complication may be avoided. With a given separation the turning effort is proportionate to the product of the velocity of rotation, the density of the fluid and the aggregate area of the active surfaces, hence by increasing either of these factors the torsion can be augmented at will. It obviously follows that the pull exerted on a circular disk will be as the third power of the diameter and one way of attaining the object is to use a large plate. Other and better ways are illustrated in Figs. 3 and 4 in which the rotating and pivoted elements are composed of interleaved disks or cylinders. The first arrangement permits an indefinite increase of the torque, the second commends itself through the facility of adjustment of the force by varying the active area.

For many reasons it is decidedly advantageous to employ air as the agent in an instrument intended for popular purposes, especially those involving rough use and inexpert handling, since thereby the cost of manufacture may be kept low, the need for ensealing minimized and susceptibility of the parts to easy disassembling and replacement attained. It is, therefore, desirable that the annular confronting surface of the elements,—whether of disk or cylindrical form,—be sufficiently extensive for securing ample torque to make the instrument approximately dead beat and to minimize the percentage of error due to mechanical imperfections.

The foregoing description contains, I believe, all the information necessary for enabling an expert to carry my invention into successful practice. When using the indicator in the manner of an ordinary vehicle speedometer, as in an automobile, the shaft 2 is rigidly or flexibly geared to the driving axle or other suitable part and readings are made in miles per hour, as is customary. As will be apparent many other valuable uses may be served, since the primary element may be connected in suitable electrical or mechanical manner with any rotating part, the speed of which may be translated through a linearly proportionate constant into the desired terms of time and quantity, and the reading scale may be calibrated in such terms. It will also be evident that by accurate workmanship, following the teachings of my invention, instruments at once simple, rugged, and scientifically accurate may be constructed for a very wide range of uses in either huge or tiny sizes; and, since the commercial requirements of accuracy in many fields gives a reasonable range of permissive error, manufacturing considerations may lend to deviations from strict observance of some of the conditions that I have indicated as best attaining a rigorous proportionality of reading. The provision of simple mechanical elements, cooperating primarily only through the viscosity and adhesiveness of the air films intervening therebetween and substantially free from need for ensealing and from error caused by changes of extraneous conditions, especially temperature, affords striking commercial advantages unattainable in any form of speedometer of which I am aware. Therefore while I have described in detail for the purpose of full disclosure a specific and highly advantageous embodiment of my invention, it will be understood that wide variations in the mechanical development thereof may be made without departure from its spirit within the scope of the appended claims.

What I claim is:

1. In combination, fixed supporting means, disconnected alined driving and driven shafts rotatably mounted in said supporting means, relatively thin spaced rigid pieces of material rigidly connected to and arranged coaxially about said driven shaft with broad surfaces opposite each other, and other relatively thin spaced rigid pieces of material rigidly connected to and arranged coaxially with the driving shaft, and being alternated with the first-mentioned pieces between them and having their broad surfaces adjacent to and spaced from the broad surfaces of said other pieces, said pieces all arranged in air, through which torque is frictionally transmitted from the second-mentioned pieces to those first-mentioned.

2. In combination, in a speedometer, disconnected alined driving and driven shafts, a fixed support, said shafts being mounted in said support, a coiled spring having one end secured to said fixed support and the other end secured to said driven shaft, relatively thin spaced rigid pieces of material rigidly connected to and arranged coaxially about said driven shaft with their broad surfaces opposite each other, other relatively thin spaced rigid pieces of material rigidly connected to and arranged coaxially with the driving shaft, and being alternated between said first-mentioned pieces and spaced therefrom, and an air body filling the spaces between said pieces and constituting the torque-transmitting friction medium therebetween.

3. In combination, in a speedometer, disconnected alined driving and driven shafts, a frame having bearings for said shafts, a coiled spring whose inner end is secured to said driven shaft and having its outer end secured to said frame, spaced rigid pieces of material rigidly connected to and arranged about said driven shaft, and other spaced rigid pieces of material rigidly connected to and arranged about said driving shaft, the former pieces being alternated between the latter pieces in spaced relation with their broad surfaces in close juxtaposition, and

with the interspaces between said spaced pieces forming a convoluted air-containing channel therebetween open to the surrounding air.

4. In combination, disconnected alined driving and driven shafts, a fixed support, bearings therefor in said support, a coiled spring having one end secured to the driven shaft and its other end secured to said fixed support, a cup-shaped body secured to one end of said driving shaft coaxially, spaced rigid relatively thin plates secured to said body in parallel relation to each other, another cup-shaped body secured coaxially to said driven shaft and enclosing said plates at their outer edges in spaced relation thereto, other spaced rigid relatively thin plates secured to the second-mentioned body and extending between the first-mentioned plates in spaced relation thereto, and an air body filling the spaces between said pieces frictionally to transmit torque from the driving structure to the driven structure.

5. The combination with means for support and driving and driven shafts rotatably supported thereby, of means to transmit torque from the driving shaft to the driven shaft comprising opposed material-pieces respectively connected with the driving shaft and the driven shaft and arranged to present toward each other relatively-extensive, non-contacting, closely-adjacent surfaces, and a gaseous medium in which said pieces work, said gaseous medium serving frictionally to connect the said opposed material-pieces for transmission of torque from the driving shaft to the driven shaft.

6. In combination, driving and driven elements suitably supported and having confronted annuli always presenting to each other relatively-extensive, non-contacting, closely-adjacent surfaces, said surfaces disposed in a gaseous friction medium, whereby the driving member, by its rotation, induces rotary motion of the driven member through the drag of the gaseous medium intervening between said annuli.

7. In combination, driving and driven elements having in opposed, closely adjacent, non-contacting relation, relatively extensive friction surfaces, and an interposed gaseous body, through which the driving member frictionally drags the driven element.

8. In a speedometer, the combination with supporting means, separately-rotatable driving and driven shafts mounted therein, biasing means for the driven shaft, and means to indicate rotary displacement of the biased shaft in terms of speed, of pieces rotatively carried by said respective shafts, having relatively-extensive, non-contacting, closely-adjacent surfaces arranged to confront each other, and a gaseous medium intervening between said confronting surfaces to coact therewith frictionally to transmit torque from the driving shaft to the biased driven shaft.

9. In a speedometer, the combination of a primary element rotatable at varying speeds, having a plurality of spaced annuli, a biased secondary element, arranged for separate rotary movement and adapted and arranged to indicate speed variations by the extent of its displacement, said secondary element having a plurality of spaced, thin, light annuli, the annuli of said two elements interleaved in non-contacting, closely-adjacent relation always to present toward each other extensive friction surfaces, and an air body, through the films of which, intervening between said annuli, rotation of the primary element may induce speed-indicating displacement of the secondary element.

10. A speedometer wherein a primary, variable-speed element, and a biased, speed-indication-controlling secondary element, that are suitably supported for separate movement, have opposed extensive friction surfaces in non-contacting juxtaposition for frictional communication of power from the primary element to the secondary element through a gaseous medium that intervenes between said friction surfaces.

11. An air drag speedometer, wherein a primary, variable-speed element and a biased speed-indication-controlling secondary element, that are suitably mounted for separate rotary movement in an air-containing casing, have opposed, extensive friction-surfaces in non-contacting juxtaposition, for frictional communication of torque from the primary element to the secondary element through the medium of the casing-contained air.

12. In a speedometer, the combination of an air containing casing, a primary element and a secondary element mounted in said casing for separate movement, said elements having extensive surfaces exposed toward each other in closely contiguous but non-contacting relation for frictional communication of power to one from the other through the intervening air, means resiliently to resist displacement of the secondary element, and means to indicate displacement of the secondary element in terms of speed.

13. In combination, in a speedometer, disconnected shafts respectively carrying driving and driven elements that have annuli affording continuous extensive friction surfaces in always confronting non-contacting closely-spaced

relation, the driven element being light and biased by a light spring, for ready response to torque transmitted frictionally by air, and the air film-spaces between the elements constituting an open tortuous channel; and an air containing casing enclosing the driving and driven elements, its contained air body forming the sole effective means of torque transmission between the elements.

14. In a speedometer, the combination of rotatable driving and driven elements having in opposed, closely-adjacent non-contacting relation, relatively extensive friction surfaces, means to bias the driven element, means to indicate rotary displacement of said driven element in terms of speed, a casing enclosing said elements and containing air, said contained air body extending in films between the friction surfaces, and forming the sole effective means of torque transmission between the driving and driven elements.

15. In combination, driving and driven elements having in opposed non-contacting relation relatively extensive friction surfaces so closely adjacent that through an interposed gaseous body the driving member frictionally drags the driven member with a torque linearly proportionate to the speed of the former.

16. A rate indicator wherein a freely-rotatable primary and a biased, indication-controlling secondary member, suitably supported for separate movement, have opposed, non-contacting surfaces in such close proximity that through an intervening viscous fluid medium torque is transmitted to the secondary member in linear proportion to the speed of the primary.

17. A rate indicator wherein a freely rotatable primary and a biased, indication-controlling secondary element, suitably supported for separate movement are operatively linked through an intervening viscous and adhesive air body, said elements having opposed, extensive non-contacting surfaces so closely adjacent that the torque transmitted to the secondary element through said air body is substantially in linear proportion to the speed of the primary element.

18. In a speed indicator the combination of two rotatively movable driving and driven members having opposed non-contacting extensive surfaces confining between them a practically constant body of torque-transmitting fluid medium, said surfaces being so closely proximate that the torque transmitted from the driving to the driven member is substantially proportional to the rate of rotation of the former.

19. A speed indicator comprising, in combination, a rotatable body, a second angularly movable body, means to resist displacement of the latter proportionately to the torque applied thereto, and a fluid medium interposed between them, said bodies having opposed annular surfaces in such close proximity that pumping of the medium therebetween is prevented and the deflections of the second body are made proportionate to the speed of the other.

20. A speed indicator, comprising, in combination, a rotatable, variable speed primary element, and a light, pivoted, torsionally-resisted, indication-controlling secondary element, suitably mounted for separate movement and operatively linked with the former through an interposed gaseous medium, said elements having opposed, annular, non-contacting surfaces so extensive and closely proximate that the whirling medium exerts a strong and steady turning effort upon the secondary element, substantially in linear proportion to the speed of the primary.

21. The combination, in a rate indicator, of a freely rotatable primary and a torsionally-resisted indication controlling secondary member mounted for separate movement, with their opposed non-contacting symmetrical surfaces confining therebetween a resident fluid body and arranged in such close proximity that the fluid, entrained in circles by the rotating primary exerts a torque on the secondary member in substantially linear proportion to the speed of the former.

22. In combination, in a speed-indicator, a rotatable primary element, a biased secondary element, a fluid body between and around them, said elements having opposed non-contacting extensive surfaces in such close proximity that the resident fluid body therebetween transmits torque to the secondary in substantially linear proportion to the speed of the primary element, and means for minimizing the rotary effort transmitted through the fluid around the elements.

23. A rate indicator comprising a structure confining a substantially unchanging body of fluid and including an extensive annular surface of a freely rotatable member, arranged to impart circular motion to the fluid, and a confronting annular surface of an indication-controlling angularly-displaceable member, arranged to take up momentum of the fluid, said surfaces being so closely proximate that the torque transmitted through the fluid is proportional to the speed of the rotatable member.

24. A speed indicator comprising two elements mounted for separate movement in a fluid medium, one of the elements being freely rotatable at varying speeds, and the other pivoted and biased against angular displacement, said elements having opposed non-contacting extensive symmetrical surfaces in such close proximity that torque is transmitted through the intervening fluid body in substantially linear proportion to the speed of the primary element, and a member surrounding said elements and minimizing the flow of the fluid along the exterior surfaces of said secondary element.

25. In a device of the character descried, the combination of a rotatable primary element, a spring-biased secondary element, a casing surrounding the same and a fluid body filling the casing, said elements having opposed non-contacting annular surfaces in such close proximity that the rotary effort exerted through the fluid body on the secondary element is proportionate to the speed of the primary element, some parts of said casing being so closely proximate to said elements as to minimize torque-transmitting flow of the fluid along the exterior surfaces of the secondary element.

26. An air drag speedometer wherein a rotatable primary variable-speed element and a biased pivoted secondary element, mounted for separate movement in an air-containing casing, have opposed extensive smooth annular surfaces in such close juxtaposition that torque is transmitted through the air intervening between said surfaces in substantially linear proportion to the speed of the rotatable primary element.

27. A speed indicator comprising a closed fluid-filled casing, primary and secondary elements mounted therein, the one for rotation and the other for torsionally resisted angular displacement, said elements having opposed non-contacting extensive annular surfaces forming therebetween a smooth intervening channel wherein confined fluid may move in circles under the influence of the primary member, and between them and the interior surfaces of the casing surrounding channels wherein fluid contiguous to the secondary element may receive circular movement from the primary element, said surfaces being so closely proximate that torque transmission through the fluid is linearly proportionate to the speed of the primary element.

28. The combination, in a speed indicator, of a closed casing, a fluid body and two rotatively-movable members therein, means for rotating one of the members, means for resisting displacement of the other, and means controlled by the last named member for reading its displacement in terms of speed, said two members having opposed, non-contacting imperforate annular surfaces in such close proximity as to confine therebetween a film of fluid through which torque is transmitted to the resistant member in linear proportionality to the speed of the rotatable member.

29. The combination with a closed fluid containing casing, of a plurality of symmetrical bodies with smooth surfaces rotatably mounted therein, means for torsionally restraining some of said bodies, and means for rotating the others, said bodies being placed with their surfaces in such close proximity to each other and to the walls of the casing that the rotating bodies will cause an even and undisturbed circular motion of the fluid and transmit torque to the torsionally restrained bodies in proportion to the speed of the others.

30. In a speed measuring instrument, the combination of driving and driven members having in opposed closely adjacent non-contacting relation relatively extensive smooth friction surfaces, and an interposed gaseous body through which the driving member frictionally drags the driven member.

31. A tachometer comprising, in combination, a rotatably mounted shaft, a smooth annular body fixed thereto, a similar pivoted body, a torsion spring for the latter, indicating means movable with said pivoted body, and an air-containing casing, said bodies having their annular surfaces in such close, non-contacting proximity that the intervening air transmits torque to the pivoted body in substantially linear proportion to the speed of the rotatable body.

32. A tachometer comprising, in combination, a rotatably mounted shaft, a primary element carried thereby, a pivoted secondary element, a torsion spring therefore permitting its angular displacement substantially in proportion to the torque, indicating means operated by the pivoted element and graduated with substantial uniformity, and a fluid-containing casing closely investing part of said rotative system, the opposed surfaces of the elements being so closely proximate to each other and to part of the casing that the fluid-transmitted torque causing deflections of the pivoted body is substantially proportionate to the speed of the primary element.

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

NIKOLA TESLA.

Witnesses:

M. LAWSON DYAR,

THOMAS J. BYRNE.

N. TESLA.

SPEED INDICATOR.

APPLICATION FILED MAY 29, 1914.

1,209,359. Patented Dec. 19, 1916.

Fig. 1.

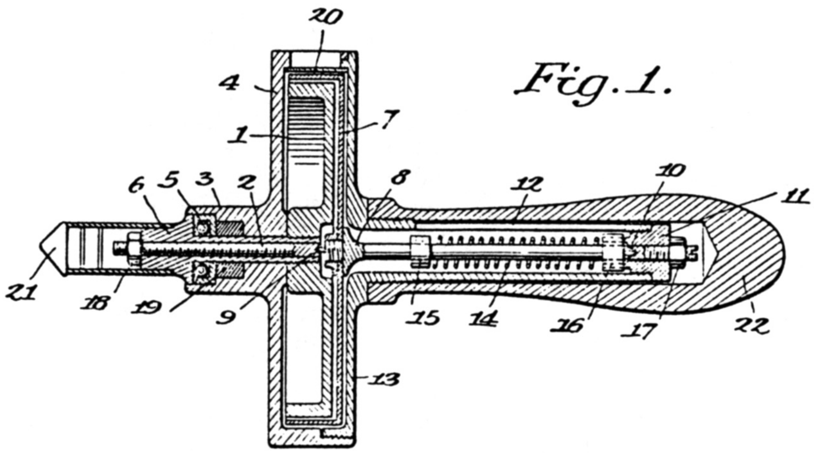


Fig. 3.

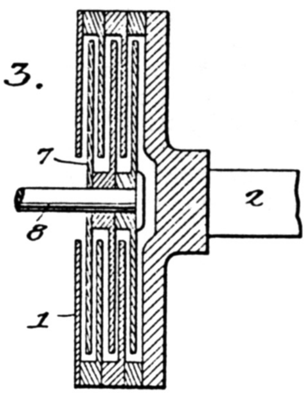


Fig. 4.

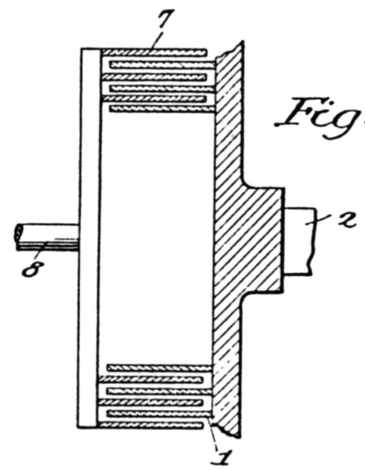
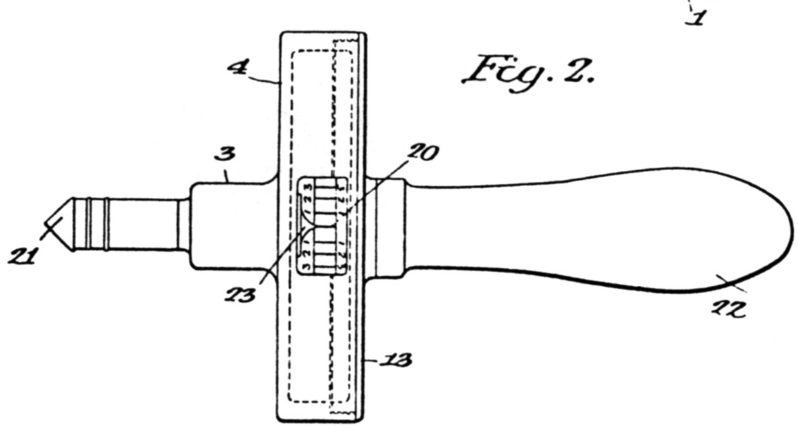


Fig. 2.



Inventor:

Nikola Tesla

Kerr, Page, Cooper & Hayward (signature)

Attorneys

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1,266,175 LIGHTNING–PROTECTOR.

1,266,175. Specification of Letters Patent. Patented May 14, 1918.
Application filed May 6, 1916. Serial No. 95,830.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, NIKOLA TESLA, a citizen of the United States, residing at New York, in the county and State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Lightning-Protectors, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description.

The object of the present invention is to provide lightning protectors of a novel and improved design strictly in conformity with the true character of the phenomenon, more efficient in action, and far more dependable in safe-guarding life and property, than those heretofore employed.

To an understanding of the nature of my invention and its basic distinction from the lightning rods of common use, it is necessary briefly to explain the principles upon which my protector is designed as contrasted with those underlying the now-prevailing type of lightning rod.

Since the introduction of the lightning rod by Benjamin Franklin in the latter part of the eighteenth century, its adoption as a means of protection against destructive atmospheric discharges has been practically universal. Its efficiency, to a certain degree, has been unquestionably established through statistical records but there is generally prevalent, nevertheless, a singular theoretical fallacy as to its operation, and its construction is radically defective in one feature, namely its typical pointed terminal. In my lightning protector I avoid points, and use an entirely different type of terminal.

According to the prevailing opinion, the virtue of the Franklin type of lightning rod is largely based on the property of points or sharp edges to give off electricity into the air. As shown by Coulomb, the quantity of electricity per unit area, designated by him “electrical density” increases as the radius of curvature of the surface is reduced. Subsequently it was proved, by mathematical analysis, that the accumulated charge created an outward normal force equal to to 2π times the square of the density, and experiment has demonstrated that when the latter exceeds approximately 20 C. G. S. units, a streamer or corona is formed. From these observations and deductions it is obvious that such may happen at a comparatively low pressure if the conductor is of extremely small radius, or pointed, and it is pursuant to a misapplication of these, and other, truths that the commercial lightning rod of today is made very slender and pointed. My invention, on the contrary, while taking cognizance of these truths, correctly applies them in the provision of a lightning protector that distinctively affords an elevated terminal having its outer conducting boundaries arranged on surfaces of large radii of curvature on two dimensions. The principles which underlie my invention and correct application of which dictate the form and manner of installation of my protector, I will now explain in contrast with the conventional pointed lightning rod.

In permitting leakage into the air, the needle-shaped lightning-rod is popularly believed to perform two functions: one to drain the ground of its negative electricity, the other to neutralize the positive of the clouds. To some degree it does both. But a systematic study of electrical disturbances in the earth has made it palpably evident that the action of Franklin's conductor, as so commonly interpreted, is chiefly illusionary. Actual measurement proves the quantity of electricity escaping even from many points, to be entirely insignificant when compared with that induced within a considerable terrestrial area, and of no moment whatever in the process of dissipation. But it is true that the negatively charged air in the vicinity of the rod, rendered conductive through the influence of the same, facilitates the passage of the bolt. Therefore it increases the probability of a lighting discharge in its vicinity. The fundamental facts underlying this type of lightning-rod are: First, it attracts lightning, so that it will be struck oftener than would be the building if it were not present; second, it renders harmless most, but not all, of the discharges which it receives; third, by rendering the air conductive, and for other reasons, it is sometimes the cause of damage to neighboring objects; and fourth, on the whole, its power of preventing injury predominates, more or less, over the hazards it invites.

My protector, by contrast, is founded on principles diametrically opposite. Its terminal has a large surface. It secures a very low density and preserves the insulating qualities of the ambient medium, thereby minimizing leakage, and in thus acting as a quasi-repellent to increase enormously the safety factor.

For the best and most economical installation of protective devices according to my invention, those factors and phenomena that dictate size, number of protectors and physical qualities of the apparatus must be grasped by the installing engineer, and preliminary, for full understanding of the principles of my invention, these should be briefly explained.

Economical installation, of course, demands that the protective capability of any given equipment be not needlessly greater than is required to meet the maximum expectancies under the conditions surrounding the particular building to be protected, and these depend, partially, as I shall show, upon the character of the landscape proximate to the building site.

In the drawings, Figures 1 to 4 inclusive, are diagrams requisite to illustration of the facts and conditions relevant to the determination of specific installations of my invention, and Figs. 5 to 8 illustrate construction and application of the protectors. Specifically:

Fig. 1 is a landscape suited for purpose of explanation; Figs. 2, 3 and 4 are theoretical diagrams; Figs. 5 and 6 illustrate forms of improved protectors; and Figs. 7 and 8 show buildings equipped with the same.

In Fig. 1, 1 represents Lord Kelvin's "reduced" area of the region, which is virtually part of the extended unruffled ocean-surface. (See "*Papers on Electrostatics and Magnetism*" by Sir William Thomson). Under ordinary weather conditions, when the sky is clear, the total amount of electricity distributed over the land is nearly the same as that which would be contained within its horizontal projection. But in times of storm, owing to the inductive action of the clouds, an immense charge may be accumulated in the locality, the density being greatest at the most elevated portions of the ground. Assuming this, under the conditions existing at any moment, let another spherical surface 2, concentric with the earth, be drawn—which may be called "electrical niveau"—such that the quantities stored over and under it are equal. In other words, their algebraic sum, taken relatively to the imaginary surface, in the positive and negative sense, is *nil*. Objects above the "niveau" are exposed to ever so much more risk than those below. Thus, a building at 3, on a site of excessive density, is apt to be so hit sooner or later, while one in a depression 4, where the charge per unit area is very small, is almost entirely safe. It follows that the one building 3 requires more extensive equipment than does the other. In both instances, however, the probability of being struck is decreased by the presence of my protector, whereas it would be increased by the presence of the Franklin rod, for reasons that I will now explain.

An understanding of but part of the truths relative to electrical discharges, and their misapplication due to the want of fuller appreciation has doubtless been responsible for the Franklin lightning rod taking its conventional pointed form, but theoretical considerations, and the important discoveries that have been made in the course of investigations with a wireless transmitter of great activity by which arcs of a volume and tension comparable to those occurring in nature were obtained ("Problems of Increasing Human Energy" *Century Magazine* June 1900 and Patents 645,576, 649,621, 787,412 and 1,119,732) at once establish the fallacy of the hitherto prevailing notion on which the Franklin type of rod is based, show the distinctive novelty of my lightning protector, and guide the constructor in the use of my invention.

In Fig. 2, 5 is a small sphere in contact so with a large one, 6, partly shown. It can be proved by the theory of electric images that when the two bodies are charged the mean density on the small one will be only π2/6 = 1.64493 times greater than that on the other, (See "*Electricity and Magnetism*" by Clerk Maxwell). In Fig. 3, the two spheres 7 and 8 are placed some distance apart and connected through a thin wire 9. This system having been excited as before, the density on the small sphere is likely to be many time that on the large one. Since both are at the same potential it follows directly that the densities on them will be inversely as their radii of curvature. If the density of 7 be designated as *d* and the radius *r*, then the charge *q* = 4π*r*2*d*, the potential *p* = 4π*rd* and the outward force, normal to the surface, *f* = 2π*d*2. As before stated, when *d* surpasses 20 C. G. S. units, the force *f* becomes sufficiently intense to break down the dielectric and a streamer or corona appears. In this. case *p* = 80π*r*. Hence, with a sphere of one centimeter radius disruption would take place at a potential *p* = 80π=251.328 E. S. units, or 75,398.4 volts. In reality, the discharge occurs at a lower pressure as a consequence of uneven distribution on the small sphere, the density being greatest on the side turned away from the large one. In this respect the behavior of a pointed conductor is just the reverse. Theoretically, it might erroneously be inferred from the preceding, that sharp projections would permit electricity to escape at the lowest potentials, but this does not follow. The reason will be clear from an inspection of Fig. 4, in which such a needle-shaped conductor 10, is illustrated, a minute portion of its tapering end being marked 11. Were this portion removed from the large part 10 and electrically connected with the same through an infinitely thin wire, the charge would be given off readily. But the presence of 10 has the effect of reducing the capacity of 11, so that a much higher pressure is required to raise the density to the critical value. The larger the body, the more pronounced is this influence, which is also dependent on configuration, and is maximum for a sphere. When the same is of considerable size it takes a much greater electromotive force than under ordinary circumstances to produce streamers from the point. To explain this apparent anomaly attention is called to Fig. 3. If the radii of the two spheres, 7 and 8, be designated *r* and R respectively, their charges *q* and Q and the distance between their centers D, the potential at 7, due to Q is Q/D. But 7, owing to the metallic connection 9, is at the potential Q/R = *q*/*r*. When D is comparable to R, the medium surrounding the small sphere will ordinarily be at a potential not much different from that of the latter and millions of volts may have to be applied before streamers issue, even from sharp protruding edges. It is important to bear this in mind, for the earth is but a vast conducting globe. It follows that a pointed lightning-rod must be run far above ground in order to operate at all, and from the foregoing it will be apparent that the pointing of the end, for supposed emissive effect, is in part neutralized by the increasing size below the extreme end, and the larger the rod, for reduction of electrode resistance, the more pronounced in this counter-influence. For these reasons it is important to bear in mind that sufficient thickness of the rod for very low electrode-resistance is rather incompatible with the high emissive capability sought in the needle-like Franklin-rod, but, as hereinafter set forth, it is wholly desirable in the use of my invention, wherein the terminal construction is intended for suppression of charge-emission rather than to foster it.

The notion that Franklin's device would be effective in dissipating terrestrial charges may be traced to early experiments with static frictional machines, when a needle was found capable of quickly draining an insulated electrified body. But the inapplicability of this fact to the conditions of lightning protection will be evident from examination of the simple theoretical principles involved, which at the same time substantiate the desirability of establishing protection by avoiding such drainage. The density at the pointed end *f* should be inversely as the radius of curvature of the surface, but such a condition is unrealizable. Suppose Fig. 4 to represent a conductor of radius 100 times that of the needle; then, although its surface per unit length is greater in the same radio, the capacity is only double. Thus, while twice the quantity of electricity is stored, the density on the rod is but one-fiftieth of that on the needle, from which it follows that the latter is far more efficient. But the emissive power of any such conductor is circumscribed. Imagine that the “pointed” (in reality blunt or rounded) end be continuously reduced in size so as to approximate the ideal more and more. During the process of reduction, the density will be increasing as the radius of curvature acts smaller, but in a proportion distinctly less than linear; on the other hand, the area of the extreme end, that is, the section through which the charge passes out into the air, will be diminishing as the square of the radius. This relation alone imposes a definite limit to the performance of a pointed conductor, and it should be noticed that the electrode resistance would be augmented at the same time. Furthermore, the efficacy of the rod is much impaired through potential due to the charge of the ground, as has been indicated with reference to Fig. 3. Practical estimates of the electrical quantities concerned in natural disturbances show, moreover, how absolutely impossible are the functions attributed to the pointed lightning conductor. A single cloud may contain 2 x 1012 C. G. S. units, or more, inducing in the earth an equivalent amount, which a number of lightning rods could not neutralize in many years. Particularly to instance conditions that may have to be met, reference is made to the *Electrical World* of March 5, 1904, wherein it appears that upon one occasion approximately 12,000 strokes occurred within two hours within a radius of less than 50 kilometers from the place of observation.

But although the pointed lightning-rod is quite ineffective in the one respect noted, it has the property of attracting lightning to a high degree, firstly on account of its shape and secondly because it ionizes and renders conductive the surrounding air. This has been unquestionably established in long continued tests with the wireless transmitter above-mentioned, and in this feature lies the chief disadvantage of the Franklin type of apparatus.

All of the foregoing serves to show that since it is utterly impracticable to effect an equalization of charges emissively through pointed lightning-rods under the conditions presented by the vast forces of nature great improvement lies in the attainment of a minimized probability of lightning stroke to the area to be protected coupled with adequate conductivity to render harmless those strokes that may, notwithstanding, occur.

Furthermore, a correct application of the truths that have thus been explained with reference to the familiar pointed type of lightning-rod not only substantiates the theoretical propriety of the form in which I develop my improved lightning protector, but will lead the installing engineer properly to take cognizance of those conditions due to location of the building, with respect to surrounding earth formations and other buildings, probabilities of maximum potential-differences and charge-densities to be expected under the prevailing atmospheric conditions of the site, and desirable electrode resistance and capacities of the protectors installed.

The improved protector, as above stated, behaves in a manner just opposite to the Franklin type and is incomparably safer for this reason. The result is secured by the use of a terminal or conducting surface of large radius of curvature and sufficient area to make the density very small and thereby prevent the leakage of the charge and the ionization of the air. The device may be greatly varied in size and shape but it is essential that all its outer conducting elements should be disposed along an ideal enveloping surface of large radius and that they should have a considerable total area.

In Fig. 5, Fig. 6, Fig. 7 and Fig. 8, different kinds of such terminals and arrangements of same are illustrated. In Fig. 5, 12 is a cast or spun metal shell of ellipsoidal outlines, having on its under side a sleeve with a bushing 13 of porcelain or other insulating material, adapted to be slipped tightly on a rod 14, which may be an ordinary lightning conductor. Fig. 6 shows a terminal 15 made up of rounded or flat metal bars radiating from a central hub, which is supported directly on a similar rod and in electrical contact with the same. The special object of this type is to reduce the wind resistance, but it is essential that the bars have a sufficient area to insure small density, and also that they are close enough to make the aggregate capacity nearly equal to that of a continuous shell of the same outside dimensions. In Fig. 7 a cupola-shaped and earthed roof is carried by a chimney, serving in this way the twofold practical purpose of hood and protector. Any kind of metal may be used in its construction but it is indispensable that its outer surface should be free of sharp edges and projections from which streamers might emanate. In like manner mufflers, funnels and vents may be transformed into effective lightning protectors if equipped with suitable devices or designed in conformity with this invention. Still another modification is illustrated in Fig. 8 in which, instead of one, four grounded bars are provided with as many spun shells or attachments 18, with the obvious object of reducing the risk.

From the foregoing it will be clear that in all cases the terminal prevents leakage of electricity and attendant ionization of the air. It is immaterial to this end whether it is insulated or not. Should it be struck the current will pass readily to the ground either directly or, as in Fig. 5, through a small air-gap between 12 and 14. But such an accident is rendered extremely improbable owing to the fact that there are everywhere points and projections on which the terrestrial charge attains a high density and where the air is ionized. Thus the action of the improved protector is equivalent to a repellent force. This being so, it is not necessary to support it at a great height, but the ground connection should be made with the usual care and the conductor leading to it must be of as small a self-induction and resistance as practicable.

I claim as my invention:

1. A lightning protector consisting of an elevated terminal, having its outer conducting boundaries arranged on surfaces of large radii of curvature in both dimensions, and a grounded conductor of small self-induction, as set forth.

2. A lightning protector composed of a metallic shell of large radius of curvature, and a grounded conductor of small self-induction, as described.

3. Apparatus for protection against atmospheric discharges comprising an earth connection of small resistance, a conductor of small self-induction and a terminal carried by the same and having a large radius of curvature in two dimensions as, and for the purpose set forth.

4. In apparatus for protection against atmospheric discharges an insulated metallic shell of large radius of curvature supported by a grounded conductor and separated from the same through a small air-gap as, and for the purpose described.

5. A lightning protector comprising, in combination, an elevated terminal of large area and radius of curvature in two dimensions, and a grounded conductor of small self-induction, as set forth.

6. In apparatus for protection against lightning discharges, the combination of an elevated metallic roof of large area and radius of curvature in two dimensions, and a grounded conductor of small self-induction and resistance, as described.

7. As an article of manufacture a metallic shell of large radius of curvature provided with a sleeve adapted for attachment to a lightning rod as, and for the purpose set forth.

8. A lightning protector comprising an ellipsoidal metallic shell and a grounded conductor of small self-induction, as set forth.

9. In apparatus for protection against atmospheric discharges a cupola-shaped metallic terminal of smooth outer surface, in combination with a grounded conductor of small self-induction and resistance, as described.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature.

N. TESLA.

LIGHTNING PROTECTOR.

APPLICATION FILED MAY 6, 1916.

1,266,175. Patented May 14, 1918.

Fig. 1.

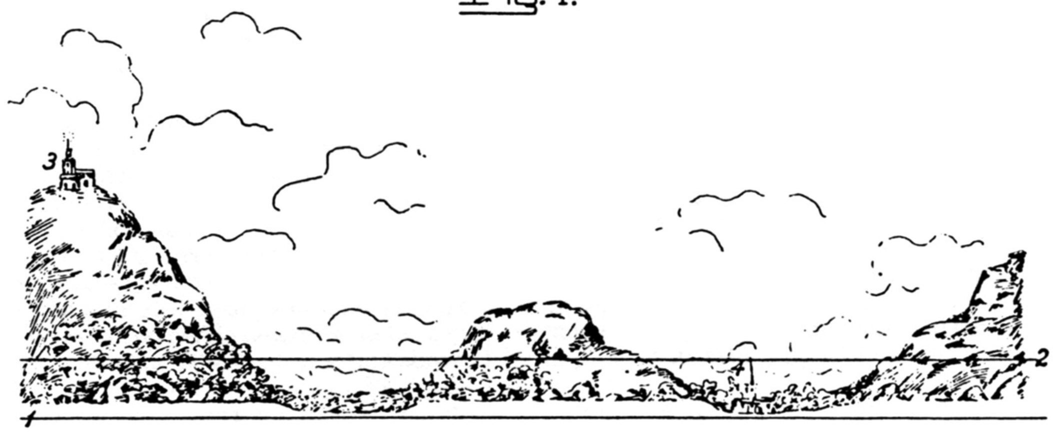
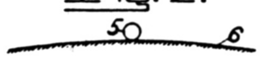


Fig. 3.

Fig. 2.



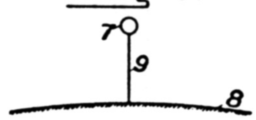


Fig. 4.

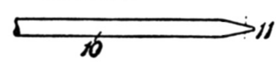


Fig. 5.

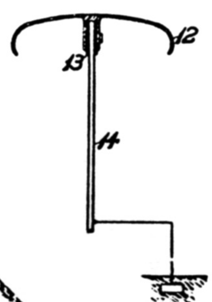


Fig. 6.

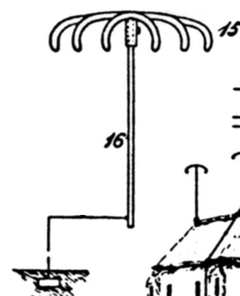
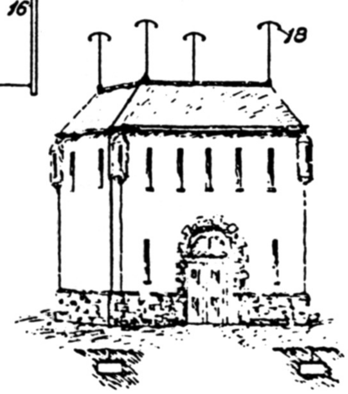


Fig. 7.

Fig. 8.



WITNESSES:

John B. McGuire

William P. Johnson

INVENTOR.

Nikola Tesla

BY Kerr, Page Cooper & Hayward

his ATTORNEYS

Th

1,274,816 SPEED–INDICATOR.

1,274,816. Specification of Letters Patent. Patented Aug. 6, 1918.
Application filed December 18, 1916. Serial No. 137,691.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, NIKOLA TESLA, a citizen of the United States, residing at New York, in the county and State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Speed-Indicators, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description.

Among the desiderata of speedometer construction are these: that the torque exerted upon the secondary, or indication-giving, element shall be linearly proportional to the speed of the primary member rather than to the square of the speed (as instanced in centrifugal speedometers); that the torsional effect at low speeds shall be strong and steady so that particular delicacy of construction may not be necessary and that minute causes of theoretical errors (such as bearing-friction, spring-inequalities and the like) may be negligible in effect; that the torque may be substantially unaffected by changes of extraneous conditions, as of temperature, atmospheric density and magnetic influence; that the instrument be inherently dead-beat and relatively insensible to mechanical vibration; and that ruggedness, simplicity and economy, for attendant durability, manufacturing facility and low cost, be attained. My present speedometer realizes these advantages and provides, also, an appliance that is suitable for great, as well as very small, velocities, exact in its readings, uniformly graduated as to scale, and unaffected by changes of temperature or pressure within as well as without.

In my Patent No. 1,209,359, dated December 19, 1916, I have described a new type of speed measuring instrument wherein the adhesion and viscosity of a gaseous medium, preferably air, is utilized for torque-transmission from a primary driving to a secondary pivoted and torsionally restrained member under conditions such that the rotary effort exerted upon the latter is linearly proportional to the rate of rotation of the former. The principles of that invention find place in my present construction. Such “air-drag” speedometers have been found capable of meeting satisfactorily the commercial requirements for both large and small instruments respectively adapted to measure relatively high and low speeds, but nevertheless it is true that although such instruments, when built for high-speed indication, may be of sturdy construction, they must, when designed for low-speed measurement, be built with great precision and delicacy. This because the inertia of the secondary element must be kept extremely small for desirable promptness of response to very slow starting speeds and consequent feebleness of the turning effort. In some instances, therefore, it is highly desirable to employ a transmitting medium giving a much greater torque than air with concomitant extension of the low-range of accurate speed reading, quickness of response, practicable decrease of size of parts and lessening of sensitiveness to disturbances such as vibration of the instrument as a whole.

All of the stated objects I accomplish by employing as the torque-transmitting medium between the driving and driven elements a body of suitable liquid, (*e.g.*, mercury) under conditions (as set forth in my prior application referred to) proper to secure linear proportionality of deflections, and, further, by making provision automatically to compensate for the changes in the viscosity of the liquid that accompany variations of temperature. The latter equipment is unnecessary in my air-drag speedometer, but mercury and other liquids of relatively great density that might be employed for my present purposes have not the quality of approximate self-compensation for temperature changes that inheres in air, owing to the fact that the viscosity of such a liquid decreases rapidly as its temperature rises, and so to a successful “mercury-drag” instrument temperature compensation is requisite.

The underlying ideas of this invention can be carried out in various ways and are capable of many valuable uses, but for purposes of disclosure, specific reference to a form of speed indicator designed for use on an automobile is adequate.

As in the structure described in my stated prior application, I provide driving and driven members with confronting, closely-adjacent, non-contacting, smooth, annular friction surfaces, co-acting for transmission of torque through the viscosity and adhesion of interposed thin films of a suitable medium—in this case mercury—under conditions to prevent free exchange of fluid acting on the system, to prevent its local circulation and eddying, to maintain its flow calm and non-turbulent, and to secure as low velocity of the medium with respect to the system as the circumstances of the case may make desirable. These conditions all aid in the attainment of rigorous linear proportionality of deflection of the secondary to the speed of rotation of the primary element under given temperature conditions. Additionally, by suitable construction I make it possible to obtain a nearly perfect compensation for temperature changes so that the deflections may be rigorously proportionate to speed within limits of temperature variation wider than I believe likely to occur in the practical use of the instrument. I attain this compensatory result by providing thermo-responsive means to vary the effective area of the secondary element upon which the medium acts in approximately inverse proportion to temperature-effected changes of viscosity of the medium, and as a preferred specific means to this end, I dispose a body of the liquid beyond, but communicating with, the active portion of the liquid medium and of such quantity that, in effectively the same measure as viscosity and, consequently, the torque is diminished or increased with temperature changes, the active liquid-contacting area of the secondary member is enlarged or reduced owing to the expansion or contraction of the fluid.

In the drawing Figure 1 is a top view of a speedometer;

Fig. 2 is a central vertical section therethrough;

Fig. 3 shows a spring adjusting arrangement; and

Fig. 4 and Fig. 5 are diagrams explanatory of the compensating principle.

In Fig. 4 the primary or driving member is a cup 10 carried by a freely rotatable vertical shaft 11. Within it the cylinder-formed secondary member 12 is mounted on a spindle 13, journaled in jewels 14 and 15 of negligible friction, for pivotal displacement against the restraint of a spiral spring 16, connected at its ends respectively to fixed support 17 and spindle-collar 18, so that by pivotal displacement of the secondary cylinder against the resisting spring tension, the torsional effort exerted on the secondary member may be measured. The spring is such that its displacements are linearly proportionate to the force applied. The lower portion 19, of the cup-chamber is a reservoir filled with the liquid, 20, as mercury, and the liquid normally extends part way up the very narrow interspace 21 between the two elements to contact with less than the whole of their confronting friction surfaces. With mercury as the medium, in an instrument with a secondary cup of one inch diameter I find an interspace-width of 0.05 inch to be satisfactory.

It will now be seen that when shaft 11 is rotated the mercury in the cup is entrained and in turn produces a drag upon the pivoted member 12, the torsional effort being directly proportionate to the active area, viscosity of the fluid and the speed of rotation and, inversely, to the width of the interspace 21 or distance between the rotated and pivoted surfaces. If v be coefficient of viscosity, A the active area, s the speed and d the distance between the juxtaposed rotating and pivoted surfaces, all of the quantities being expressed in proper units, then the twisting force

$F = vAs/d$ dynes.

When, through changes in the external conditions or work performed on the fluid, the temperature of the same is raised, two effects, separate and distinct, are produced. In the first place, the viscosity is diminished according to a certain law, reducing correspondingly the torque, on the other hand, the fluid expands thereby enlarging the areas of the active, or liquid-contracting, surfaces of the elements with an attendant increase of rotary effort. Obviously, then, if it is possible so to relate these actions that they mutually annul each other upon any change of temperature, a complete compensation may be obtained. This result, I have ascertained, can be almost perfectly realized with a liquid, as mercury, by properly proportioning the volume of the chamber-contained, or compensating, component 20c of the liquid and the component 20a of the liquid in the interspace 21. With a view to simplifying this explanation, be it supposed that the force F is wholly due to the liquid component 20a (the drag exerted on the bottom face of cylinder 12 being assumed to be negligible and the bearings to be frictionless). It will be evident that under these conditions the active area will increase as the volume of the fluid. Perfect compensation would require that upon a rise of temperature, the active area, and therefore the torsional effort, be augmented in the same ratio as viscosity is diminished. In other words, the percentage of decrease of viscosity divided by that of increase of area should be the same for all temperatures. Attention is called to the table below showing that, with mercury as the medium, the value of this fraction at ordinary temperatures is about, or not far from, 20.

Temperature C.	Volume of fluid.	Viscosity of fluid.	Percentage of increase of V.	Percentage of decrease of *v*.	Value of ratio.
T	V	*v*	*a*	*b*	*a*/*b*
-20	0.996364	0.018406	-0.3636	-8.2718	22.75
-15	0.997273	0.018038	-0.2727	-6.1029	22.38

-10	0.998182	0.017681	-0.1818	-4.0074	22.04
-5	0.999091	0.017335	-0.0909	-1.9722	21.70
0	1.000000	0.017000	0	0	21.35
5	1.000909	0.016663	0.0909	1.9107	21.02
10	1.001818	0.016361	0.1818	3.7603	20.68
15	1.002727	0.016057	0.2727	5.5505	20.35
20	1.003636	0.015762	0.3636	7.2706	20.00
25	1.004546	0.015477	0.4546	8.9564	19.70
30	1.005455	0.015202	0.5455	10.5750	19.38
35	1.006365	0.014937	0.6365	12.1410	19.07
40	1.007275	0.014680	0.7275	13.6470	18.75
45	1.008185	0.014433	0.8185	15.1031	18.45
50	1.009095	0.014194	0.9095	16.5073	18.15

This means to say that if the total volume of the liquid is twenty times that contained in the interspace between the elements, the two opposite effects, one increasing and the other reducing, the torque, will approximately balance. This fact is borne out by practical tests and measurements, which have demonstrated that by constructing for this volumetric ratio deflections very closely proportionate to the speed are obtained through a range of temperature variations far greater than ordinarily occurring. For commercial purposes it is quite sufficient to employ a ratio of approximately the stated value as the error involved in a small departure therefrom is inconsiderable. When necessary or desirable, greater precision can be obtained by taking into account four secondary effects, due to expansion or contraction of the walls, which slightly modify the torque; first, changes in the volume of the reservoir; second, in the distance between the opposed surfaces; third, in active area and, fourth, in velocity. Increase in the former two tend to diminish, the latter to augment, the viscous drag. A satisfactory ratio in a cylindrical type of instrument has been found to be about 24.

Fig. 5 illustrates a different arrangement, exemplifying the same principle of employing a reservoir-contained liquid body as the thermo-responsive means to compensate for viscosity changes of the active liquid. In this case a spindle-carried disk 12' serves as a secondary element, while the primary member consists of a hollow shell 10' with annular surfaces 23 confronting the disk surfaces and encompassed by an annular chamber 20', so that under rotation the mercury body fills the chamber and occupies peripheral portions of the interspaces 21 between the flat confronting surfaces. It is hardly necessary to remark that since there are two such interspaces 21, the calculation of capacity of the reservoir or chamber 20', beside considering the form of the device, must take account of the active mercury body in both interspaces.

In Figs. 1 to 3 a complete commercial instrument embodying my invention is shown. Specifically, 25 is a tube threaded at 26 and carrying at the top a casing head 27 the whole forming a housing for enclosure of the moving parts. The driving shaft 28 carries a cylindrical cup 29 in the bottom of which is screwed a plug 30, turned down as 31 for the purpose of providing the reservoir 32. The cup 29 is closed at its upper end by a tight fitting cover 33, having an upwardly extending shank 34, carrying a pinion 35 to drive suitable wheelwork 36 of the odometer contained in the lower part of the head 27. This structure, providing the primary element, is rotatable in ball-bearings 37 and 38 fixed in tube 25 and adjustable by means of nuts 39.

The secondary element is made of a very thin metal cup 40, inverted and secured to slender spindle 41 mounted in jeweled bearings 42 and 43, respectively carried in a cavity of plug 30 and by a frame arm 43'. A running bearing 42 can usually be employed without detriment, but a fixed bearing may be used if desired. The weight of the secondary member with its movable attachments should be so determined that the upward thrust against jewel 43 is very slight. The torsional twist of secondary cup 40 is resisted by a spiral spring 44 lodged in a turned recess of a frame plate 45, having one of its ends connected to collar 46 fast on the spindle 41 and the other to a split ring 47 spring-gripping the wall of the recess in plate 45. By inserting pincers in holes 48 (Fig. 5) and contracting the ring it is freed sufficiently for adjustment to bring the spindle-carried indicator 49 to point to zero of the graduated scale 50 that, if all of the principles of my invention are best embodied, may be made uniformly graduated. The scale is carried on plate 45 and, together with the support 43', is held in place by a rim 53 that suitably carries the glass cover 52. The odometer may have any suitable number of indicating elements of different orders suitably geared, the two hands 54 and 55 sweeping over graduated dials 56 and 57, typifying any suitable construction.

It will be apparent that the high torque at low speed developed through the mercurial transmitting medium makes the instrument very effective as one for use on automobiles, and while it is true that with a heavy fluid, as mercury, the range of velocity of the medium throughout which proportionality of torque to speed, under the described conditions, is rigorously linear falls below the range available where air is the medium, a construction presenting the friction surfaces of the elements in a cylinder-form as suggested in Figs. 2 and 4 permits of the use of a suitably constructed device with a small-diameter secondary to measure very high speeds without imparting to the medium a linear velocity beyond its stated range. For the successful use of mercury in the present described instrument (or other rotary devices) it is important that the mercury be pure, the surfaces contacting therewith smooth, clean and non-granular (preferably nickel-plated or made of non-corrosive, high grade steel) to minimize abrasion and keep the mercury clean, and that the linear velocity of the mercury be kept low, preferably below six feet per second, in order that it may not break up into minute droplets or apparently-powdered form.

What I claim is:

1. In combination, driving and driven elements, having opposed, closely-adjacent, non-contacting friction surfaces; a liquid body interposed between active areas thereof through which the driving element frictionally drags the driven one and thermo-responsive means for varying the active area of the secondary in approximately inverse proportion to the thermo-effected variations in viscosity of the liquid.

2. In a temperature-compensating speed indicator, the combination of variable speed primary and movement-restrained secondary elements that are suitably supported for separate movement and have opposed friction surfaces in close but non-contacting juxtaposition; an interposed liquid body contacting normally with active areas of said surfaces less than the whole thereof, and thermo-responsive means for varying the liquid-contacting areas of said elements approximately inversely to the thermo-effected variations of liquid viscosity.

3. In a temperature-compensating speed indicator, the combination of variable speed primary and movement-restrained secondary elements that are suitably supported for separate movement and have opposed closely-adjacent non-contacting friction surfaces; an interposed liquid body and thermo-responsive means for varying the active areas of said surfaces in predetermined proportion to thermally-effected changes of liquid viscosity.

4. In a temperature-compensating speed indicator, the combination of variable speed primary and movement-restrained secondary elements that are suitably supported for separate movement and have opposed closely-adjacent non-contacting friction surfaces; a liquid body partially filling the interspace between said surfaces, and thermo-responsive means for varying the liquid quantity within in said interspace in predetermined inverse ratio to thermo-effected changes of liquid viscosity.

5. The combination with driving and driven elements having opposed, closely-adjacent, non-contacting friction surfaces and an interposed liquid body contacting with active portions thereof, of a compensating liquid body communication with the said interposed or active one, and proportioned to vary the effective contact area of the active liquid approximately inversely to its temperature-effected viscosity changes.

6. The combination with freely movable driving and movement-resisted driven elements, having friction surfaces in opposed, closely-adjacent non-contacting relation, of means providing a reservoir, communicating with the interspace between said elements, and a liquid body having a reservoir-filling component and an active torque-transmitting component that normally, partly occupies said interspace, these components proportioned volumetrically for temperature-effected change of the contact area of the active component in approximately inverse ratio to the attendant changes of liquid viscosity.

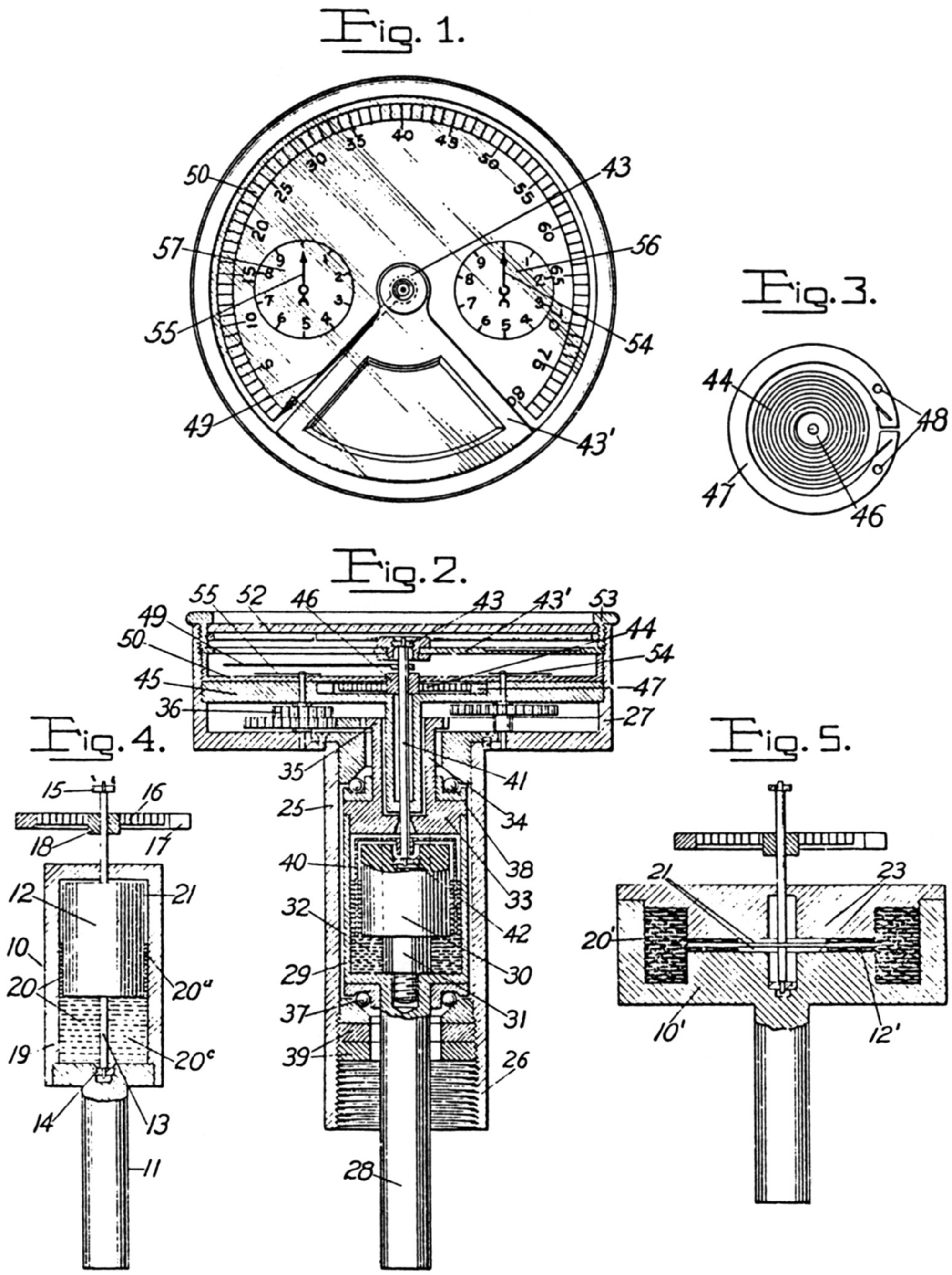
7. In a temperature-compensating speed indicator, the combination of a freely rotatable cylindrical cup; a cylinder-formed member in the upper portion thereof, pivoted and spring-restrained; and a body of mercury filling the reservoir-portion of the cup below the pivoted member and extending partially in the narrow interspace between the cup and cylinder.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature.

NIKOLA TESLA.

N. TESLA.
SPEED INDICATOR.
APPLICATION FILED DEC. 18, 1916.

1,274,816. Patented Aug. 6, 1918.



Inventor
Nikola Tesla
By his Attorneys
Forée Bain & May.

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1,314,718 SHIP'S LOG.

1,314,718. Specification of Letters Patent. Patented Sept. 2, 1919.
Application filed December 18, 1916. Serial No. 137,690.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, NIKOLA TESLA, a citizen of the United States, residing at New York, in the county and State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Ship's Logs, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description.

My invention provides a ship's log of novel and advantageous construction and operation, designed to give instantaneous rate-readings, as in knots, or miles per hour. The customary log is trailed astern, twisting the flexible connector that drives a revolution-counter on the vessel, and many disadvantages of such arrangement are obvious.

In my instrument I combine very advantageously a propeller rotatable proportionately to vessel-speed and a speed indicator driven by it and reading directly in the desired terms, preferably upon a substantially uniformly-graduated scale.

In the drawings, Figure 1 diagrams the log in use;

Fig. 2 shows it in vertical section;

Fig. 3 illustrates speed-indicator parts with the casing broken away;

Fig. 4 is a section on line 4—4 of Fig. 3;

Fig. 5 is a section on line 5—5 of Fig. 2.

Fig. 6 shows in section a turbine form of propeller, and

Fig. 7 is a section on line 7—7 of Fig. 6.

To the vessel 10, preferably near its bow, is suitably affixed a tube or barrel, 11, with a threaded plug 12 closing its lower end, where the tube preferably dips below the level of the boat's keel. At the top—near the deck or other point of observation—the speed-indicator 13 is mounted, its casing 14, that carries all of the moving parts being detachably secured, as by screws 15, to the top-flange 16 of the barrel. A boss 17 on the underside of casing 14 supports the ball bearing 18 for the primary element of the indicator and a seal 19 for its flexible driveshaft 20 that connects preferably through a slip-joint squared union, 21, to a propeller-driven part. The propeller may be of common form as shown in Fig. 2, at 22, with its shaft 23 horizontally mounted in the bracket 24 spanning the tubular passage 25 of a housing 26 that fits neatly in the barrel and is held in register with ports 27 and 28 by guide-ribs 29. Such a propeller drives the shaft 20 through bevel gears 30.

More advantageously in some respects, however, a turbine propeller of simple construction may be employed, as shown in Figs. 6 and 7. The rotor in this instance has a vertical shaft 23' and the wheel 22' is formed of thin, parallel, closely-spaced disks each having a central opening. The wheel is arranged in a cylindrical housing 26' that has inlet nozzles 31 and outlet ports 32 so disposed that the water enters the interspaces between the disks tangentially to rotate the wheel and finds escape through the ports 32 that communicate with the central orifices of the disks. This type of construction has many advantages due to its reliability and efficiency, but preferable it should be constructed to permit the disks and casing to be readily cleaned, casing 26' being made in two horizontal sections bolted together as at 33, each section having a detachable head 34.

A flexible and longitudinally elastic sleeve, 35, of coiled strip metal is fastened at opposite ends by threaded caps 36 and 37 to the boss 17 and to a threaded part on the propeller casing, so that the propeller mechanism is supported from the indicator casing for removal therewith.

By suitably constructing the submerged parts of bronze, enameling them, or otherwise making them substantially immune to corrosion, adequate durability is attained, and the facility of removal for cleaning, oiling, repairs, etc., makes the under-water parts easy to maintain in good order. The pliant shaft, slip-connected at one end and its stout protective sleeve, strong yet flexible and extensible frees the bearings from strain and makes the connection uniformly efficient under changes of conditions as to temperature, etc.

The speed indicator 13 preferably provides as its primary element 41 a multiple-walled cup, fast on shaft 20, and as a secondary, or indication-giving, member a lightly-constructed pivoted, multiple-walled inverted cup structure 42, with the annular walls interleaved in closely adjacent non-contacting relation for transmission of turning effort from the one to the other through intervening films of the casing-contained fluid medium, as air, in approximately linear proportion to the speed of the primary. Specifically the secondary cups are dependent from an arm 43 projecting from spindle 44, having jewel bearings in yoke 45 carried by bridge-piece, 46, that spans the casing 14, and the dial 47, calibrated according to a suitable constant to read in knots, or miles per hour or other units of rate, is borne by the cup-structure below a fixed hand 48 visible through the sealed cover-glass 49. A coiled spring 50, connected at its ends respectively to the pivoted secondary element and to a fixed support, resists the pivotal displacement of the indication-giving member. The light secondary element, quickly and accurately responsive approximately directly proportionately to the speed of the propeller-driven primary member, and little affected by tremors, temperature changes and other extraneous influences, gives adequately accurate readings in the desired terms, showing instantaneously changes of the vessel's speed.

What I claim is:

1. In ship's log, a barrel having water flow openings near its bottom, a speed-indicator detachably secured to one end of the barrel, a flexible shaft for the speed-indicator, a propeller connected to the shaft-end, a housing for the propeller, registering with the water-flow openings, and a sleeve surrounding the shaft uniting the housing and casing, for extraction of the propeller-parts when the speed-indicator is removed from the barrel.

2. In a ship's log, a barrel, a speed indicator having a casing secured detachably to the upper or observation end of the barrel, a propeller having a housing and adapted to pass through the barrel, a flexible shaft slip-fitted to connect the propeller and speed indicator, and a flexible sleeve connecting the propeller-housing and indicator-casing.

3. In a ship's log, the combination of a barrel having waterflow openings near its bottom, a speed indicator having a casing detachably secured to one end of the barrel, a shaft for said speed indicator extending centrally through the barrel, a propeller for the shaft end, a housing for the propeller, said housing being smaller than the barrel, and a sleeve surrounding the shaft uniting said housing and said indicator casing for effecting extraction of the propeller parts when the speed indicator is removed from the barrel.

4. In a ship's log, a barrel, a speed indicator having a casing secured detachably to the upper end of the barrel, a propeller having a housing and adapted to pass through the barrel, there being registering openings near the bottom of the barrel and in said housing for water-flow to the propeller, a flexible shaft connecting said propeller and speed indicator and making axially slidable connection with one thereof, and a flexible and axially expansible sleeve connecting the propeller housing and the indicator casing for extraction of the propeller parts when the speed indicator is removed from the barrel.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature.

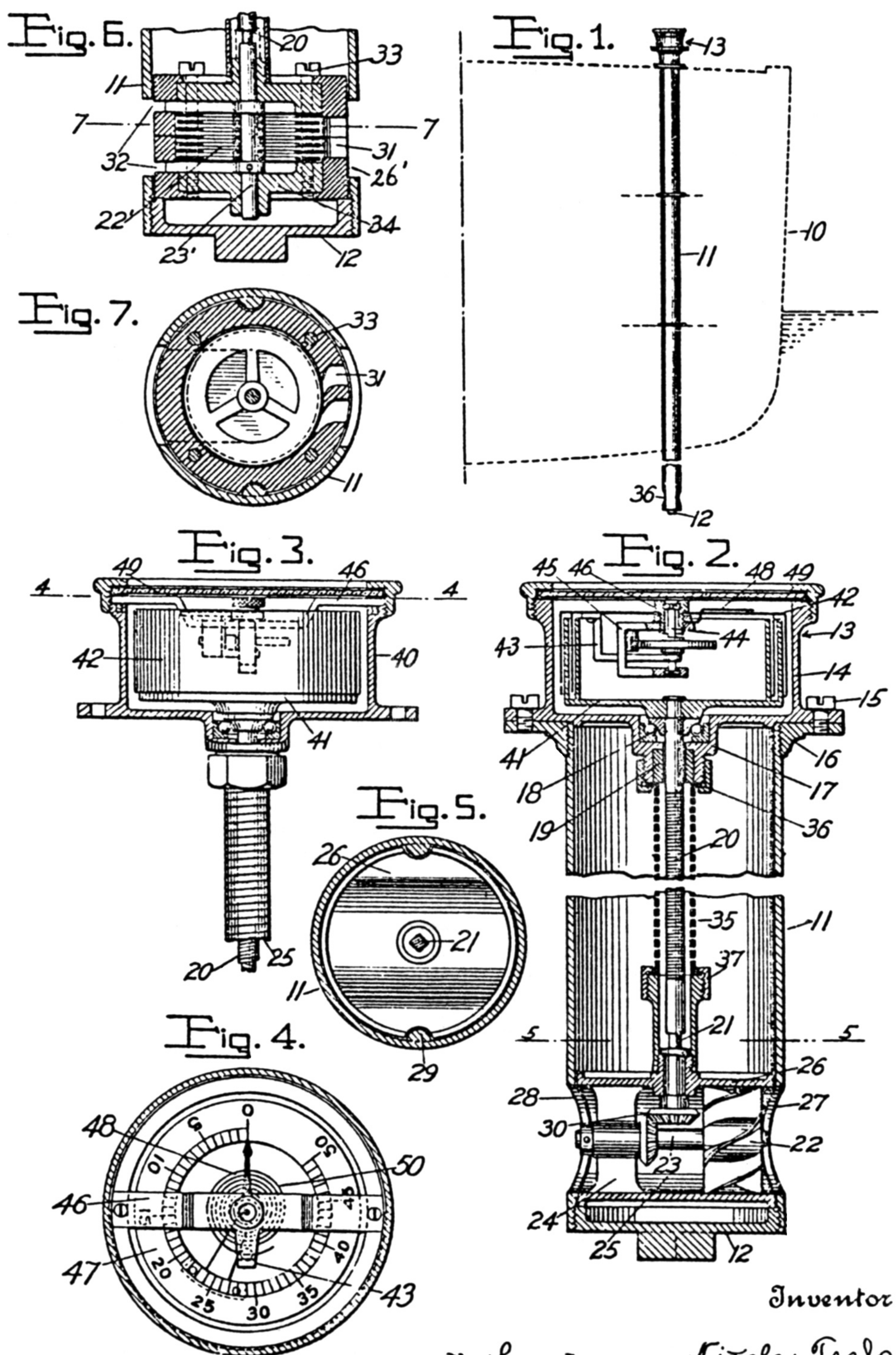
NIKOLA TESLA.

N. TESLA.

SHIP'S LOG.

APPLICATION FILED DEC. 18, 1916.

1,314,718. Patented Sept. 2, 1919.



Inventor

By his Attorneys Nikola Tesla

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1,329,559 VALVULAR CONDUIT.

1,329,559. Specification of Letters Patent. Patented Feb. 3, 1920.
Application filed February 21, 1916, Serial No. 79,703. Renewed July 8, 1919. Serial No. 309,482.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, NIKOLA TESLA, a citizen of the United States, residing at New York, in the county and State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Valvular Conduits, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description.

In most of the machinery universally employed for the development, transmission and transformation of mechanical energy, fluid impulses are made to pass, more or less freely, through suitable channels or conduits in one direction while their return is effectively checked or entirely prevented. This function is generally performed by devices designated as valves, comprising carefully fitted members the precise relative movements of which are essential to the efficient and reliable operation of the apparatus. The necessity of, and absolute dependence on these, limits the machine in many respects, detracting from its practical value and adding greatly to its cost of manufacture and maintenance. As a rule the valve is a delicate contrivance, very liable to wear and get out of order and thereby imperil ponderous, complex and costly mechanism and, moreover, it falls to meet the requirements when the impulses are extremely sudden or rapid in succession and the fluid is highly heated or corrosive.

Though these and other correlated facts were known to the very earliest pioneers in the science and art of mechanics, no remedy has yet been found or proposed to date so far as I am aware, and I believe that I am the first to discover or invent any means, which permit the performance of the above function without the use of moving parts, and which it is the object of this application to describe.

Briefly expressed, the advance I have achieved consists in the employment of a peculiar channel or conduit characterized by valvular action.

The invention can be embodied in many constructions greatly varied in detail, but for the explanation of the underlying principle it may be broadly stated that the interior of the conduit is provided with enlargements, recesses, projections, baffles or buckets which, while offering virtually no resistance to the passage of the fluid in one direction, other than surface friction, constitute an almost impassable barrier to its flow in the opposite sense by reason of the more or less sudden expansions, contractions, deflections, reversals of direction, stops and starts and attendant rapidly succeeding transformations of the pressure and velocity energies.

For the full and complete disclosure of the device and of its mode of action reference is made to the accompanying drawings in which—

Figure 1 is a horizontal projection of such a valvular conduit with the top plate removed.

Fig. 2 is side view of the same in elevation.

Fig. 3 is a diagram illustrative of the application of the device to a fluid propelling machine such as, a reciprocating pump or compressor, and

Fig. 4 is a plan showing the manner in which the invention is, or may be used, to operate a fluid propelled rotary engine or turbine.

Referring to Fig. 1, 1 is a casing of metal or other suitable material which may be cast, milled or pressed from sheet in the desired form. From its side-walls extend alternatively projections terminating in buckets 2 which, to facilitate manufacture are congruent and spaced at equal distances, but need not be. In addition to these there are independent partitions 3 which are deemed of advantage and the purpose of which will be made clear. Nipples 4 and 5, one at each end, are provided for pipe connection. The bottom is solid and the upper or open side is closed by a fitting plate 6 as shown in Fig. 2. When desired any number of such pieces may be joined in series, thus making up a valvular conduit of such length as the circumstances may require.

In elucidation of the mode of operation let it be assumed that the medium under pressure be admitted at 5. Evidently, its approximate path will be as indicated by the dotted line 7, which is nearly straight, that is to say, if the channel be of adequate cross-section, the fluid will encounter a very small resistance and pass through freely and undisturbed, at least to a degree. Not so if the entrance be at the opposite end 4. In this case the flow will not be smooth and continues, but intermittent, the fluid being quickly deflected and reversed in direction, set in whirling motion, brought to rest and again accelerated, these processes following one another in rapid succession. The partitions 3 serve to direct the stream upon the buckets and to intensify the actions causing violent surges and eddies which interfere very materially with the flow through the conduit. It will be readily observed that the resistance offered to the passage of the medium will be considerable even if it be under constant pressure, but the impediments will be of full effect only when it is supplied in pulses and, more especially, when the same are extremely sudden and of high frequency. In order to bring the fluid masses to rest and to high velocity in short intervals of time energy must be furnished at a rate which is unattainable, the result being that the impulse cannot penetrate very far before it subsides and gives rise to movement in the opposite direction. The device not only acts as a hinderment to the bodily return of particles but also, in a measure, as a check to the propagation of a disturbance through the medium. Its efficacy is chiefly determined; first, by the magnitude of the ratio of the two resistances offered to disturbed and to undisturbed flow, respectively, in the directions from 4 to 5 and from 5 to 4, in each individual element of the conduit; second, by the number of complete cycles of action taking place in a given length of the valvular channel and, third, by the character of the impulses themselves. A fair idea may be gained from simple theoretical considerations.

Examining more closely the mode of operation it will be seen that, in passing from one to the next bucket in the direction of disturbed flow, the fluid undergoes two complete reversals or deflections through 180 degrees while it suffers only two small deviations from about 10 to 20 degrees when moving in the opposite sense. In each case the loss of head will be proportionate to a hydraulic coefficient dependent on the angle of deflection from which it follows that, for the same velocity, the ratio of the two resistances will be as that of the two coefficients. The theoretical value of this ratio may be 200 or more, but must be taken as appreciably less although the surface friction too is greater in the direction of disturbed flow. In order to keep it as large as possible, sharp bonds should be avoided, for these will add to both resistances and reduce the efficiency. Whenever practicable, the piece should be straight; the next best is the circular form.

That the peculiar function of such a conduit is enhanced by increasing the number of buckets or elements and, consequently, cyclic processes in a given length is an obvious conclusion, but there is no direct proportionality because the successive actions diminish in intensity. Definite limits, however, are set constructively and otherwise to the number of elements per unit length of the channel, and the most economical design can only be evolved through long experience.

Quite apart from any mechanical features of the device the character of the impulses has a decided influence on its performance and the best results will be secured, when there are produced at 4, sudden variations of pressure in relatively long intervals, while a constant pressure is maintained at 5. Such is the case in one of its most valuable industrial applications which will be specifically described.

In order to conduce to a better understanding, reference may first be made to Fig. 3 which illustrates another special use and in which 8 is a piston fixed to a shaft 9 and fitting freely in a cylinder 10. The latter is closed at both ends by flanged heads 11 and 12 having sleeves or stuffing boxes 13 and 14 for the shaft. Connection between the two compartments, 15 and 16, of the cylinder is established through a valvular conduit and each of the heads is similarly equipped. For the sake of simplicity these devices are diagrammatically shown, the solid arrows indicating the direction of undisturbed flow. An extension of the shaft 9 carries a second piston 17 accurately ground to and sliding easily in a cylinder 18 closed at the ends by plates and sleeves as usual. Both piston and cylinder are provided with inlet and outlet ports marked, respectively, 19 and 20. This arrangement is familiar, being representative of a prime mover of my invention, termed “mechanical oscillator”, with which it is practicable to vibrate a system of considerable weight many thousand times per minute.

Suppose now that such rapid oscillations are imparted by this or other means to the piston 8. Bearing in mind the proceeding, the operation of the apparatus will be understood at a glance. While moving in the direction of the solid arrow, from 12 to 11, the piston 8 will compress the air or other medium in the compartment 16 and expel it from the same, the devices in the piston and head 11 acting, respectively, as closed and open valves. During the movement of the piston in the opposite direction, from 11 to 12, the medium which has meanwhile filled the chamber 15 will be transferred to compartment 16, egress being prevented by the device in head 12 and that in the piston allowing free passage. These processes will be repeated in very quick succession. If the nipples 4 and 5 are put in communication with independent reservoirs, the oscillations of the piston 8 will result in a compression of the air at 4 and rarefaction of the same at 5. Obviously, the valvular channels being turned the other way, as indicated by dotted lines in the lower part of the figure, the opposite will take place. The devices in the piston have been shown merely by way of suggestion and can be dispensed with. Each of the chambers 15 and 16 being connected to two conduits as illustrated, the vibrations of a solid piston as 8 will have the same effect and the machine will then be a double acting pump or compressor. It is likewise unessential that the medium should be admitted to the cylinder through such devices for in certain instances ports, alternately closed and opened by the piston, may serve the purpose. As a matter of course, this novel method of propelling fluids can be extended to multistage working in which case a number of pistons will be employed, preferably on the same shaft and of different diameters in conformity with well established principles of mechanical design. In this way any desired ratio of compression or degree of rarefaction may be attained.

Fig. 4 exemplifies a particularly valuable application of the invention to which reference has been made above. The drawing shows in vertical cross section a turbine which may be of any type but is in this instance one invented and described by me and supposed to be familiar to engineers. Suffice it to state that the rotor 21 of the same is composed of flat plates which are set in motion through the adhesive and viscous action of the working fluid, entering the system tangentially at the periphery and leaving it at the center. Such a machine is a thermodynamic transformer of an activity surpassing by far that of any other prime mover, it being demonstrated in practice that each single disk of the rotor is capable of performing as much work as a whole bucketwheel. Besides, a number of other advantages, equally important, make it especially adapted for operation as an internal combustion motor. This may be done in many ways, but the simplest and most direct plan of which I am aware is the one illustrated here. Referring again to the drawing, the upper part of the turbine casing 22 has bolted to it a separate casting 23, the central cavity 24 of which forms the combustion chamber. To prevent injury through excessive heating a jacket 25 may be used, or else water injected, and when these means are objectionable recourse may be had to air cooling, this all the more readily as very high temperatures are practicable. The top of casting 23 is closed by a plate 26 with a sparking or hot wire plug 27 and in its sides are screwed two valvular conduits communicating with the central chamber 24. One of these is, normally, open to the atmosphere while the other connects to a source of fuel supply as a gas main 28. The bottom of the combustion chamber terminates in a suitable nozzle 29 which consists of separate piece of heat resisting material. To regulate the influx of the explosion constituents and secure the proper mixture the air and gas conduits are equipped, respectively, with valves 30 and 31. The exhaust openings 32 of the rotor should be in communication with a ventilator, preferably carried on the same shaft and of any suitable construction. Its use, however, while advantageous, is not indispensable the suction produced by the turbine rotor itself being, in some cases at least, sufficient to insure proper working. This detail is omitted from the drawing as unessential to the understanding.

But a few words will be needed to make clear the mode of operation. The air valve 30 being open and sparking established across terminals 27, the gas is turned on slowly until the mixture in the chamber 24 reaches the critical state and is ignited. Both the conduits behaving, with respect to efflux, as closed valves, the products of combustion rush out through the nozzle 29 acquiring still greater velocity by expansion and, imparting their momentum to the rotor 21, start it from rest. Upon the subsidence of the explosion the pressure in the chamber sinks below the atmosphere owing to the pumping action of the rotor or ventilator and new air and gas is permitted to enter, cleaning the cavity and channels and making up a fresh mixture which is detonated as before, and so on, the successive impulses of the working fluid producing an almost continuous rotary effort. After a short lapse of time the chamber becomes heated to such a degree that the ignition device may be shut off without disturbing the established regime. This manner of starting the turbine involves the employment of an unduly large combustion chamber which is not commendable from the economic point of view, for not only does it entail increased heat losses but the explosions cannot be made to follow one another with such rapidity as would be desirable to insure the best valvular action. When the chamber is small an auxiliary means for starting, as compressed air, may be resorted to and a very quick succession of explosions can then be obtained. The frequency will be the greater the stronger the suction, and may, under certain conditions, reach hundreds and even thousands per second. It scarcely need be stated that instead of one several explosion chambers may be used for cooling purposes and also to increase the number of active pulses and the output of the machine.

Apparatus as illustrated in Fig. 4 presents the advantages of extreme simplicity, cheapness and reliability, there being no compressor, buckets or troublesome valve mechanism. It also permits, with the addition of certain well-known accessories, the use of any kind of fuel and thus meets the pressing necessity of a self-contained, powerful, light and compact internal combustion motor for general work. When the attainment of the highest efficiency is the chief object, as in machines of large size, the explosive constituents will be supplied under high pressure and provision made for maintaining a vacuum at the exhaust. Such arrangements are quite familiar and lend themselves so easily to this improvement that an enlargement on this subject is deemed unnecessary.

The foregoing description will readily suggest to experts modifications both as regards construction and application of the device and I do not wish to limit myself in these respects. The broad underlying idea of the invention is to permit the free passage of a fluid through a channel in the direction of the flow and to prevent its return through friction and mass resistance, thus enabling the performance of valve functions without any moving parts and thereby extending the scope and usefulness of an immense variety of mechanical appliances.

I do not claim the methods of and apparatus for the propulsion of fluids and thermodynamic transformation of energy herein disclosed, as these will be made subjects of separate applications.

I am aware that asymmetrical conduits have been constructed and their use proposed in connection with engines, but these have no similarity either in their construction or manner of employment with my valvular conduit. They were incapable of acting as valves proper, for the fluid was merely arrested in pockets and deflected through 90°, this result having at best only 25% of the efficiency attained in the construction herein described. In the conduit I have designed the fluid, as stated above, is deflected in each cycle through 360°, and a co-efficient approximating 200 can be obtained so that the device acts as a slightly leaking valve, and for that reason the term “valvular” has been given to it in contrast to asymmetrical conduits, as heretofore proposed, which were not valvular in action, but merely asymmetrical as to resistance.

Furthermore, the conduits heretofore constructed were intended to be used in connection with slowly reciprocating machines, in which case enormous conduit-length would be necessary, all this rendering them devoid of practical value. By the use of an effective valvular conduit, as herein described, and the employment of pulses of very high frequency, I am able to condense my apparatus and secure such perfect action as to dispense successfully with valves in numerous forms of reciprocating and rotary engines.

The high efficiency of the device, irrespective of the character of the pulses, is due to two causes: first, rapid reversal of direction of flow and, second, great relative velocity of the colliding fluid columns. As will be readily seen each bucket causes a deviation through an angle of 180°, and another change of 180° occurs in each of the spaces between two adjacent buckets. That is to say, from the time the fluid enters or leaves one of the recesses to its passage into, or exit from, the one following a complete cycle, or deflection through 360°, is effected. Observe now that the velocity is but slightly reduced in the reversal so that the incoming and deflected fluid columns meet with a relative speed, twice that of the flow, and the energy of their impact is four times greater than with a deflection of only 90°, as might be obtained with pockets such as have been employed in asymmetrical conduits for various purposes. The fact is, however, that in these such deflection is not secured, the pockets remaining filled with comparatively quiescent fluid and the latter following a winding path of least resistance between the obstacles interposed. In such conduits the action cannot be characterized as “valvular” because some of the fluid can pass almost unimpeded in a direction opposite to the normal flow. In my construction, as above indicated, the resistance in the reverse may be 200 times that in the normal direction. Owing to this a comparatively very small number of buckets or elements is required for checking the fluid. To give a concrete idea, suppose that the leak from the first element is represented by the fraction 1/x, then after the *n*th bucket is traversed, only a quantity (1/x)n will escape and it is evident that X need not be a large number to secure a nearly perfect valvular action.

What I claim is:

1. A valvular conduit having interior walls of such conformation as to permit the free passage of fluid through it in the direction of flow but to subject it to rapid reversals of direction when impelled in the opposite sense and thereby to prevent its return by friction and mass resistance.

2. A valvular conduit composed of a closed passageway having recesses in its walls so formed as to permit a fluid to pass freely through it in the direction of flow, but to subject it to rapid reversals of direction when impelled in an opposite sense and thereby interpose friction and mass resistance to the return passage of the same.

3. A valvular conduit composed of a tube or passageway with rigid inferior walls formed with a series of recesses or pockets with surfaces that reverse a fluid tending to flow in one direction therein and thereby check or prevent flow of the fluid in that direction.

4. A valvular conduit with rigid interior walls of such character as to offer substantially no obstacle to the passage through it of fluid impulses in one direction, but to subject the fluid to rapid reversals of direction and thereby oppose and check impulses in the opposite sense.

5. A valvular conduit with rigid interior walls formed to permit fluid impulses under pressure to pass freely through

it in one direction, but to subject them to rapid reversals of direction through 360° and thereby check their progress when impelled in the opposite sense.

6. A valvular conduit with rigid interior walls which permit fluid impulses to flow through it freely in one direction, formed at a plurality of points to reverse such fluid impulses when impelled in the opposite direction and check their flow.

7. A valvular conduit with rigid interior walls having pockets or recesses, and transversely inclined intermediate baffles to permit the free passage of fluid impulses in one direction but to deflect and check them when impelled in the opposite direction.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature.

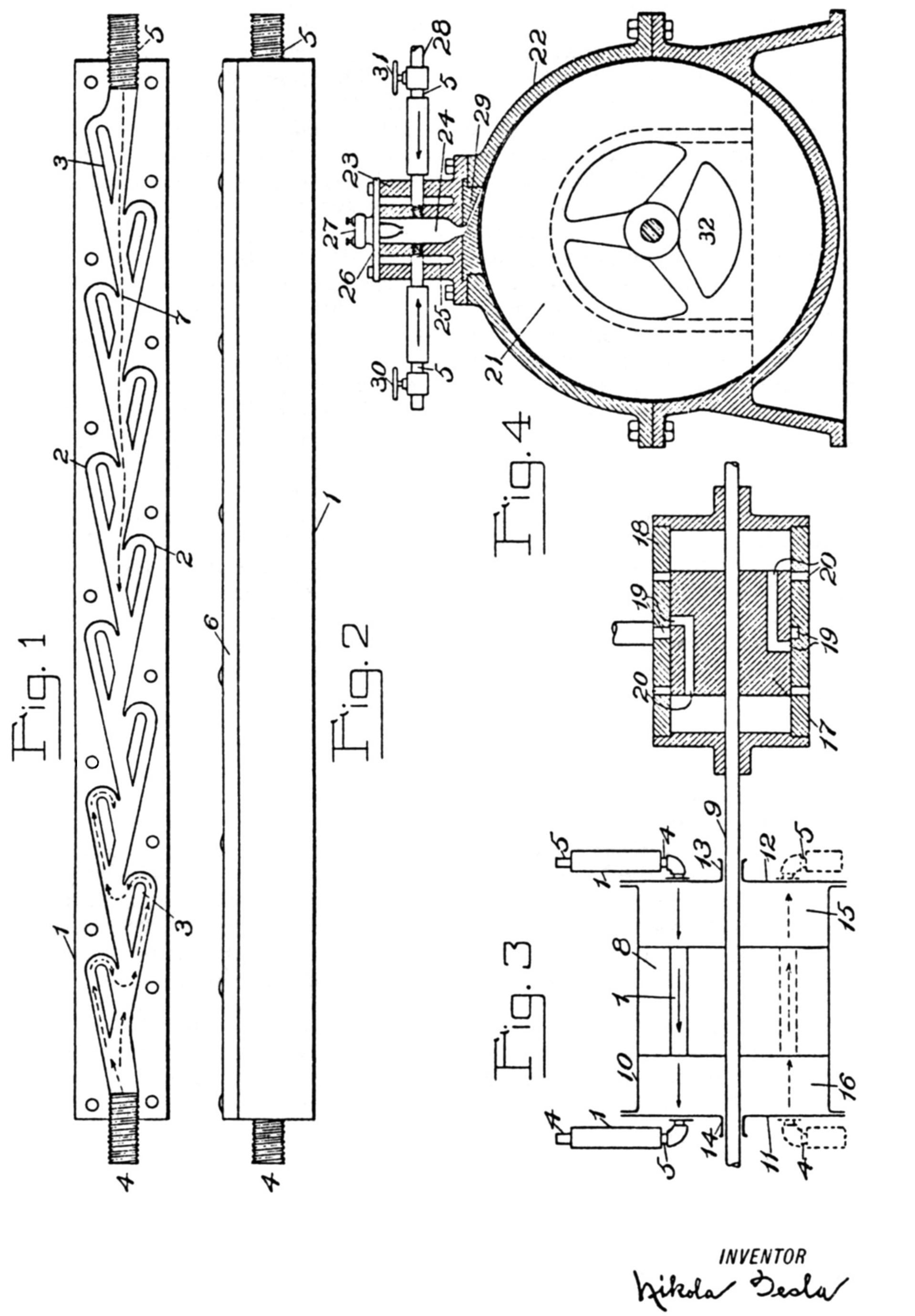
NIKOLA TESLA.

N. TESLA.

VALVULAR CONDUIT.

APPLICATION FILED FEB. 21, 1916. RENEWED JULY 8, 1919.

1,329,559. Patented Feb. 3, 1920.



INVENTOR

Nikola Tesla

BY

Spear, Page, Cooper & Hayward

ATTORNEY

Th

1,365,547 FLOW-METER.

1,365,547. Specification of Letters Patent. Patented Jan. 11, 1921.
Application filed December 18, 1916. Serial No. 137,688.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, NIKOLA TESLA, a citizen of the United States, residing at New York, in the county and State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Flow-Meters, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description.

My invention relates to meters for measurement of velocity or quantity of fluid flow. Its chief object is to provide a novel structure, simple, inexpensive and efficient, directly applicable to a conduit through which the fluid flows, and arranged to give instantaneous readings in terms of velocity, or quantity.

In the drawings I have shown a single embodiment of my invention in desirable form, and therein—

Figure 1 is a central, vertical section showing the device in use;

Fig. 2 is a plan detail of the indicating instrument with parts in section;

Fig. 3 is a horizontal section on line 3—3 of Fig. 1, and

Fig. 4 is an enlarged section on line 4—4 of Fig. 1.

Assuming that the flow of liquid 10 through a main 11 is to be measured as in gallons per hour, or feet per second, the main is tapped as at 12 and into the threaded orifice is screwed the body-casting of the flow-meter 13. This casting has a threaded waist 14, centrally apertured to receive the bearing bushing 15, the upper portion of the casting being formed as a shell 16 for incasing the indicating mechanism, and its lower portion prolonged as a tube 17, terminating in a head 18 to receive the flow-driven element. The latter, I prefer, shall be a turbine of the type commonly identified by my name. Illustrating simply its essential elements, the rotor, 19, is made up of centrally apertured parallel disks 20, closely spaced and mounted on a shaft, 21, extending through a shell 22 confined within the head 18 above the plug 23 that closes the bottom of the head and carries an adjustable step-bearing screw 24. Inlet nozzles 25, in the wall of head 18, direct the liquid to the disks tangentially to set the latter in rotation and the water finds escape through the outlet passages 26 of the shell 22 and ports 27 of the head 18. Preferably the length of tube 17 should be such as to dispose the turbine rotor approximately at the center of the main, and of course the turbine will rotate at a rate linearly proportional to the velocity of the fluid at that point, according to a practically-determined constant.

Turbine shaft 21 connects with shaft 30 of the indicator, that preferably is of minimal diameter for the work to be done and that passes through the long bushing 15 for direct connection with the indicator 31. The primary element, 32, of this indicator, directly mounted on said shaft 30, preferably comprises a cup having multiple vertical walls 33 in concentric arrangement, these being interleaved with inverted cup walls 34 of a secondary element 35, that is pivoted and torsionally restrained and that bears a movable element of the reading scale. Specifically, the secondary element may have its inverted cup walls made of very thin aluminum mounted on arm 36, affixed to the spindle 37 that runs in jewel bearings carried by a yoke 38, supported on a bridge piece 39 spanning the casing 16. A coiled spring 40, at one end fast to the spindle 37 and its other end adjustably secured in split stud 41, on bracket 38, resists displacement of the secondary element which carries on its top a reading scale 43, graduated in terms of gallons per hour, feet per minute, or other units of measurement. This dial moves below the stationary pointer 44 that is visible through the sight-glass 45, carried by the cover cap 46 and tightly sealed. By constructing the indicator in accordance with principles fully explained in my Patent No. 1,209,359 the primary element, acting through the viscous or adhesive properties of air or other fluid medium filling the casing, is caused to displace the scale-bearing member against the tension of its spring substantially in linear proportion to the speed of rotation of the primary element, and by observing the conditions requisite to make the torque bear a rigorously linear proportion to the speed, and making the spring to permit deflections proportionate directly to the turning effort, the scale may be graduated uniformly without the employment of any compensating mechanism to this end.

The pressure or density of the gaseous fluid medium in the casing 60 should not be subject to change under varying conditions of pressure within the main, or the readings might be seriously inaccurate; nor, obviously, should escape of the liquid from the main into the indicator casing be permitted. To seal the running bearing of shaft 30 adequately to withstand very considerable pressures, I make what I term a “mercury-lock” by the following provision: the shaft 30 is made of fine steel of great and uniform density and the bushing 15 is preferably of hard copper, these having diameters leaving a clearance of only a few thousandths of an inch,—much too small for the capillary admission of mercury. These surfaces are treated for amalgamation with mercury. The bearing-portion of the shaft 30 is thinly copper plated, and then both bearing surfaces are coated, in a quickening solution, with mercury, after which the mercury-filmed parts are assembled. In this way, as sought graphically and exaggeratedly to be represented in Fig. 4, the mercury body 50 is introduced into the very narrow clearance, and although it is a unitary seal in its resistance to the passage of air or water, it may practically be regarded as forming two mirror-surfaced films between the bushing 15 and the copper plating 51 of shaft 30. I have found such a mercury lock makes a very effective and enduring seal while permitting adequately free rotation of the shaft.

The combination of turbine rotor and air drag indicating mechanism as above described is especially advantageous in that the small turbine, developing a high shaft speed under even rather slow fluid flow, insures that the speeds of the primary element will be ample to result in high torque, so that the indicator may be of relatively rugged construction. Furthermore, the practical insensibility of the air drag instrument to temperature changes, without special compensating mechanism, makes very simple construction available for many and variant uses. And since linear relationships exist between the rate of liquid flow, turbine-rotation and indicator-displacement, accurate marking of the scale in uniform graduations depends only upon the establishment of certain easily-ascertainable constants for any given conditions.

What I claim is:

1. A flow-meter comprising a body having a pipe engaging portion, a lower head of smaller diameter and an upper casing, a vertical shaft extending through said body, a disk-turbine in said head directly connected with said shaft, said head having inlet and outlet openings to the turbine disks, and indicating means comprising a rotatable primary element directly connected with said vertical shaft and a torsionally-restrained secondary element displaceable by the first and equipped to show its displacement in desired terms.

2. In a device of the character described, the combination of a body fitting having an intermediate part for pipe engagement, a lower head, and an upper shell, a shaft passing vertically from said shell to said head, a pressure-resisting seal for said shaft adjacent said pipe engaging portion of the body, an indicator in said shell comprising a rotatable primary member having a vertical axis and directly connected with the upper end of said shaft, a torsionally-restrained secondary element displaceable by the first, said secondary element associated with a scale for showing its deflections in desired terms, and a horizontal disk-turbine rotor in said head, said rotor directly connected with the bottom of said shaft, said head having inlet and outlet openings to the rotor disk.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature.

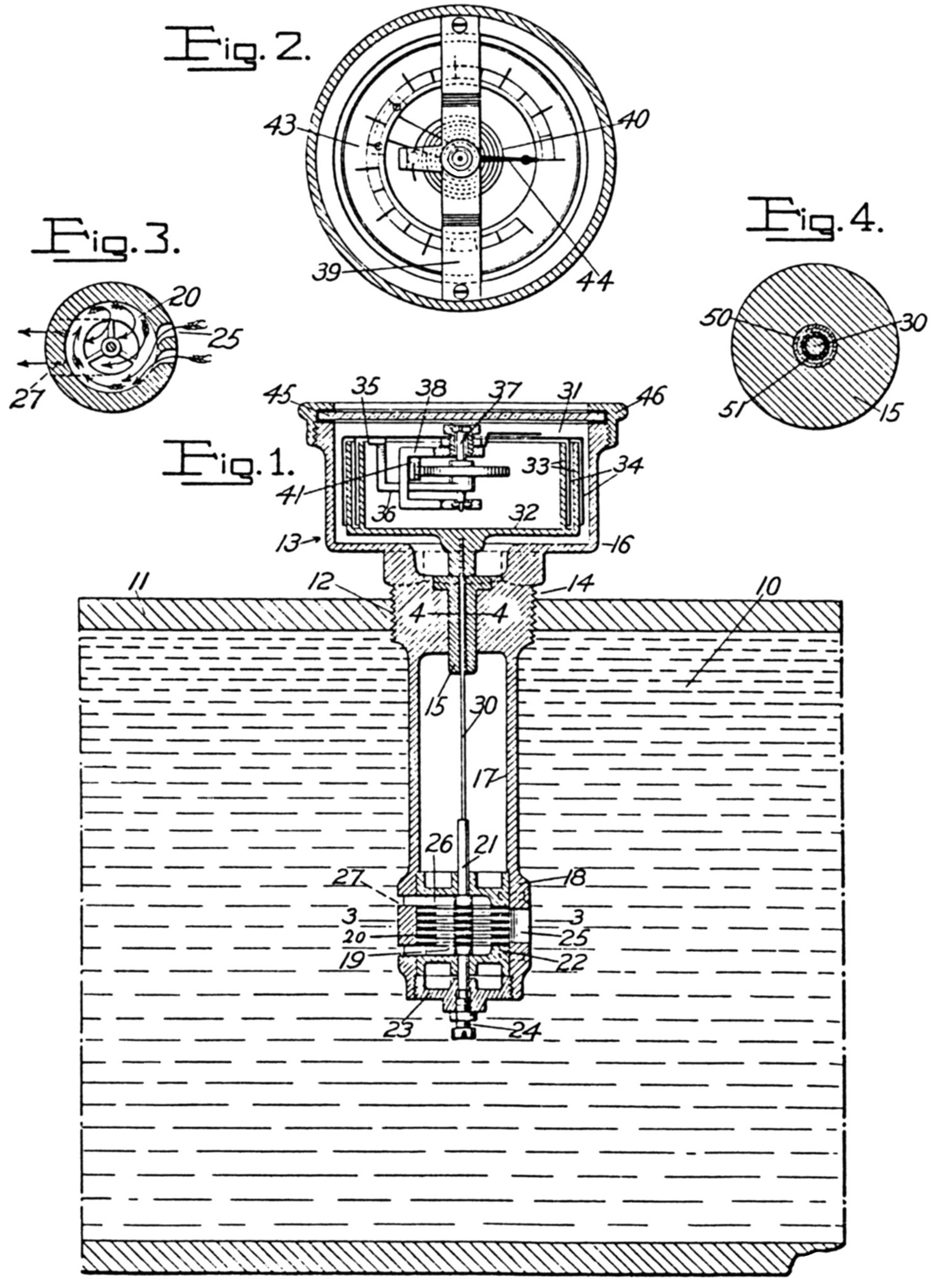
NIKOLA TESLA.

N. TESLA.

FLOW METER.

APPLICATION FILED DEC. 18, 1916.

1,365,547. Patented Jan. 11, 1921.



Inventor
Nikola Tesla
By his Attorneys
Forée Bain & May

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1,402,025 FREQUENCY METER.

1,402,025. Specification of Letters Patent. Patented Jan. 3, 1922.
Application filed December 18, 1916. Serial No. 137,689.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, NIKOLA TESLA, a citizen of the United States, residing at New York, in the county and State of New York, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Frequency Meters, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description.

In many instances in practice it is very desirable and important to ascertain the frequency of periodic currents or electric oscillations and therefrom the speed of rotation or reciprocation of the generating or controlling apparatus.

The devices commonly used at present for this purpose and designated “frequency meters” generally consist of reeds or bars tuned to respond to impulses of definite periods, or a direct current dynamo coupled to the alternating generator or frequency controller and connected with an instrument, of voltmeter construction, graduated to indicate the instantaneous frequency of the current. Both of these forms are objectionable from many points of view, being subject to various limitations of practical availability and to disturbing influences, all so well known to experts as to dispense with the necessity of enlarging upon them on this occasion.

My invention has for its object to provide a frequency meter of great accuracy, structural simplicity, wide range of use, and low cost, all adequate to meet the pressing demand for a commercial and scientifically satisfactory instrument of improved form.

In the drawings, wherein I have illustrated a single embodiment of my invention for purposes of disclosure,—

Fig. 1 is a central vertical section through the frequency meter, with diagrammatic extension to indicate an available manner of connecting it to a two-phase generator;

Fig. 2 is an end view;

Fig. 3 is a side elevation with the cover in section, and Fig. 4 is a side elevation of the instrument from its reading side.

It will be understood that the specific construction of instruments embodying my invention may be modified in many ways according to the demands of the electrical or mechanical environment in which it is to be used, and while I shall describe in detail a specific construction, illustrated in the drawing, it is without intent to limit my invention in its broader aspects to matters of detail.

5 represents diagrammatically a two-phase generator, typifying the machine controlling the frequency to be measured, and having suitable connection by wires 6 with the synchronous-motor element of the frequency meter, indicated as a whole by 7. The motor, 8, will of course have field poles and armature bars appropriate to the character of the current supplied from the generator 5, the motor being of the split-phase, two-phase, or other type, as needed. A frame 10, having lugs 11, or other means of support, provides a cup-formed shell 12 with a top wall 13 furnished with a central bearing tube 14 and with suitable supporting means, as 15, for the stationary field structure 16. A cap 17, screw threaded at 18, and suitably packed, hermetically seals one side of the motor casing into which the connecting wires are led through any suitable sealing and insulating bushings 19.

For accuracy and promptness of response to frequency-variations, the armature structure 21, as a whole, with its attachments should be of very light weight and so equipped that its work is minimized. Hence it is important both that the construction of the armature element be designed with reference to smallness and consequent lightness of parts, and that its frequency-indicating equipment be of a character imposing the lightest load on the armature. Specifically, the armature laminae 22 are carried on a light disk 23, fixed to the vertical shaft 24, so that is supported by ball bearings 25 and 26, in tube 14, and, above the wall 13, carries the driving member of the indicator device 28. This appliance comprises, as its primary element, 29, a non-magnetic disk 30, of brass, say, having annular spaced, concentric walls 31, and as its secondary element, 32, a pivoted part including very light, annular walls 33 interleaved with the walls 31 and affording extensive smooth friction surfaces, very closely adjacent to, but not contacting with, the kindred surfaces of the primary member so that through the thin films of fluid, preferably air, intervening between them, torque may be transmitted from the primary to the secondary element in substantially linear proportion to the speed of the primary. Posts 35, mounted in the top wall of the frame, support a bridge piece 36 that carries a bearing yoke 37, affording upper and lower jewel bearings 38 and 39, the former contained in a bushing 40 threaded for adjustment in the yoke and set by a nut 41, such bearings receiving the spindle 42 from which extends, rigidly, the arm 43 carrying the annular walls of the secondary element. A spiral spring 44, fixed at one end to the shaft 42 and at its other end clamped adjustably in the split stud 45 on bracket 37, permits rotary displacement of the secondary element, substantially in linear proportion to the force applied. A scale 48, printed on or otherwise affixed to the outermost wall of the secondary element, is graduated in units of frequency and its indication point is determined by a fixed pointer 49 that is fixed at the edge of a transparent sealed window 50 of the casing shell 51 of cup formation, that is secured in sealed relation to the wall 13 as by packed screws 52 engaging bosses 53 on the bridge piece 36 so to complete the hermetic enclosure of the chamber containing the indicating elements. Such hermetic closure is not necessary in many instances but may be desirable.

In my copending application Serial No. 841,726 filed May 29th, 1914, Patent No. 1,209,359 I have set forth in detail certain laws the observance of which results in attainment of rigorous proportionality of deflections to speed in an “air drag” instrument, and all of such conditions may be observed to advantage in constructing the indication-giving element of the frequency meter.

It will be noted that an instrument as herein described has many structural and operative advantages. The translating instrument, giving the frequency-reading, when constructed for use of air as the transmitting medium, may be of size to give ample torque, but if desired the ensealed mechanism may be operated in air or other, preferably inert, gases of more than atmospheric density for increase of the torque. The air drag instrument is substantially unaffected in accuracy by temperature changes, without special compensating mechanism, and is therefore practically insensible to the heating effect of the subjacent motor, and the double-chamber construction segregating the motor and translating device prevents the latter from being affected by air-currents engendered by the motor-operation. Furthermore, the indicator structure may be made immune to magnetic influence and eddy currents, however intense, by making its secondary element of appropriate nonshrinkable, insulating material, as compressed fiber, although in many instances the partition 13, acting as a shield for the indicator obviates the necessity for such provision. The small size, low cost and ease of maintenance, due to the simplicity of the construction are especially desirable.

What I claim is:

1. In a frequency meter, the combination of a synchronous motor, and a speed-responsive device, having a primary element connected to the armature shaft, and a pivoted torsionally-restrained secondary element, deflectable in substantially linear proportion to the speed of the primary and calibrated in terms of electrical frequency.

2. In a frequency meter, the combination of a synchronous motor and a speed-responsive device, said motor having and armature of light construction and said speed-responsive device comprising a primary element carried in rotation by said armature, and a torsionally-restrained secondary element, these elements having extensive confronting, closely adjacent friction surfaces, cooperating through interposed films of a fluid medium for displacement of said secondary element in substantially linear proportion to the speed of rotation of the primary element.

3. In a frequency meter, the combination of a synchronous motor and a speed-responsive device, the former having an armature of light construction and the latter comprising a primary element, carried in rotation by said armature, and a torsionally-restrained secondary element, these elements having extensive confronting, closely adjacent friction surfaces, cooperating through interposed films of air for displacement of said secondary element in substantially linear proportion to the speed of rotation of the primary element, said secondary bearing a scale calibrated in terms of frequency.

4. A frequency meter comprising, in combination, a synchronous induction motor, having a shell carrying the field, and a rotatable armature within the chamber of said shell having its shaft extended through said shell; and a speed-responsive device, comprising a closed casing, a non-magnetic primary element mounted upon said armature shaft, a separately mounted secondary element pivoted and torsionally restrained, said elements having opposed, closely adjacent non-contacting surfaces, co-operating through interposed films of a fluid medium through which torque is transmitted to the secondary in approximately linear proportion to the speed of the primary member, and a visible scale uniformly graduated in terms of frequency carried by the secondary

member.

5. A frequency meter comprising a sealed, air-containing casing divided into two compartments, a shaft extending into both compartments, a synchronous motor in one compartment adapted to drive said shaft and an indicating device in the other, said device having a primary rotatable element connected with the shaft, a separately mounted, indication-controlling element and a spring restraining the latter, said elements having extensive, confronting, closely adjacent, non-contacting surfaces cooperating through the interposed air films for displacement of the secondary, at all ordinary temperatures, approximately in linear proportion to the speed of the primary element.

6. In a frequency meter, the combination of a synchronous motor having an armature of light construction, a speed-responsive device comprising a primary element carried in rotation by the said armature and a torsionally-restrained secondary element, said elements having extensive confronting closely adjacent friction surfaces cooperating through interposed films of air for displacement of said secondary element in substantially linear proportion to the speed of rotation of the primary element, and a wall interposed between the armature of the motor and the speed-responsive device for shielding the latter from air disturbance caused by rotation of the former.

7. A frequency meter comprising a casing divided into two compartments, a shaft extending into both thereof, a synchronous motor in one compartment adapted to drive said shaft and a speed-responsive device in the other having a primary element connected for rotation with said shaft, a separately mounted, torsionally-restrained indicating element, said elements having extensive confronting, closely adjacent, non-contacting surfaces cooperating through interposed gaseous films for displacement of the secondary, approximately in linear proportion to the speed of the primary element.

8. In a frequency meter, the combination of a synchronous motor and a speed-responsive device, said motor having a light armature and a shaft, and said speed responsive device comprising a primary element of non-magnetic material carried by the armature shaft and a torsionally-restrained secondary element, these elements having extensive, confronting, closely adjacent, non-contacting surfaces cooperating through interposed films of a fluid medium for displacement of the secondary element in approximately linear proportion to the speed of the primary element, and a containing structure ensealing the speed responsive device.

9. In a frequency meter, the combination of a synchronous motor having an armature of light construction, a speed-responsive device comprising a primary element carried in rotation by the said armature and a torsionally-restrained secondary element, said elements having extensive confronting, closely adjacent friction surfaces cooperating through interposed films of air for displacement of said secondary element in substantially linear proportion to the speed of rotation of the primary element, and means interposed between the armature of the motor and the speed-responsive device for shielding the latter from air disturbance caused by rotation of the former.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature.

NIKOLA TESLA.

N. TESLA.

FREQUENCY METER.

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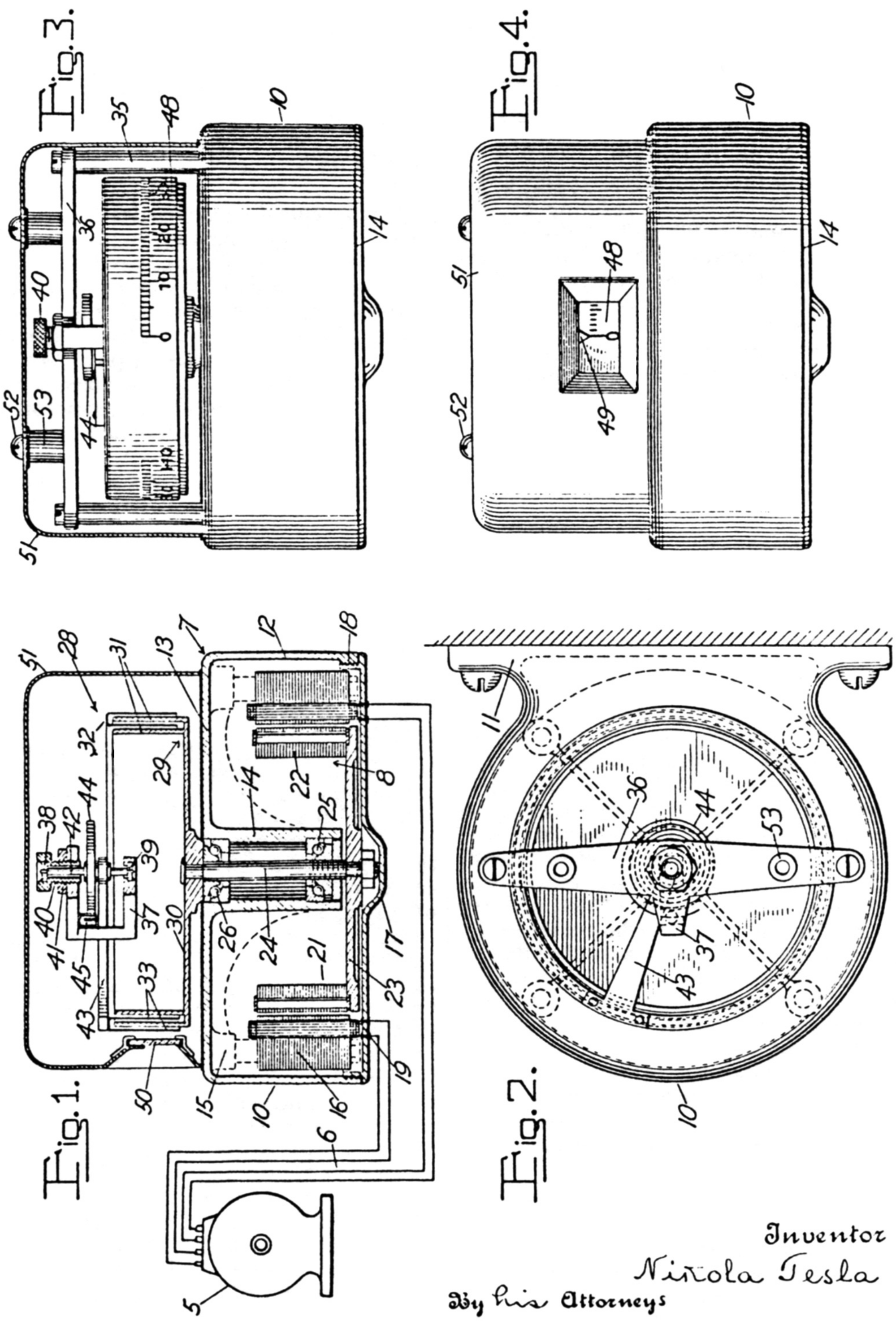

Inventor

Nikola Tesla

By his Attorneys

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