H. C. VION.

Electric Apparatus.

No. 28,793. Patented June 19, 1860.

Plate 1.

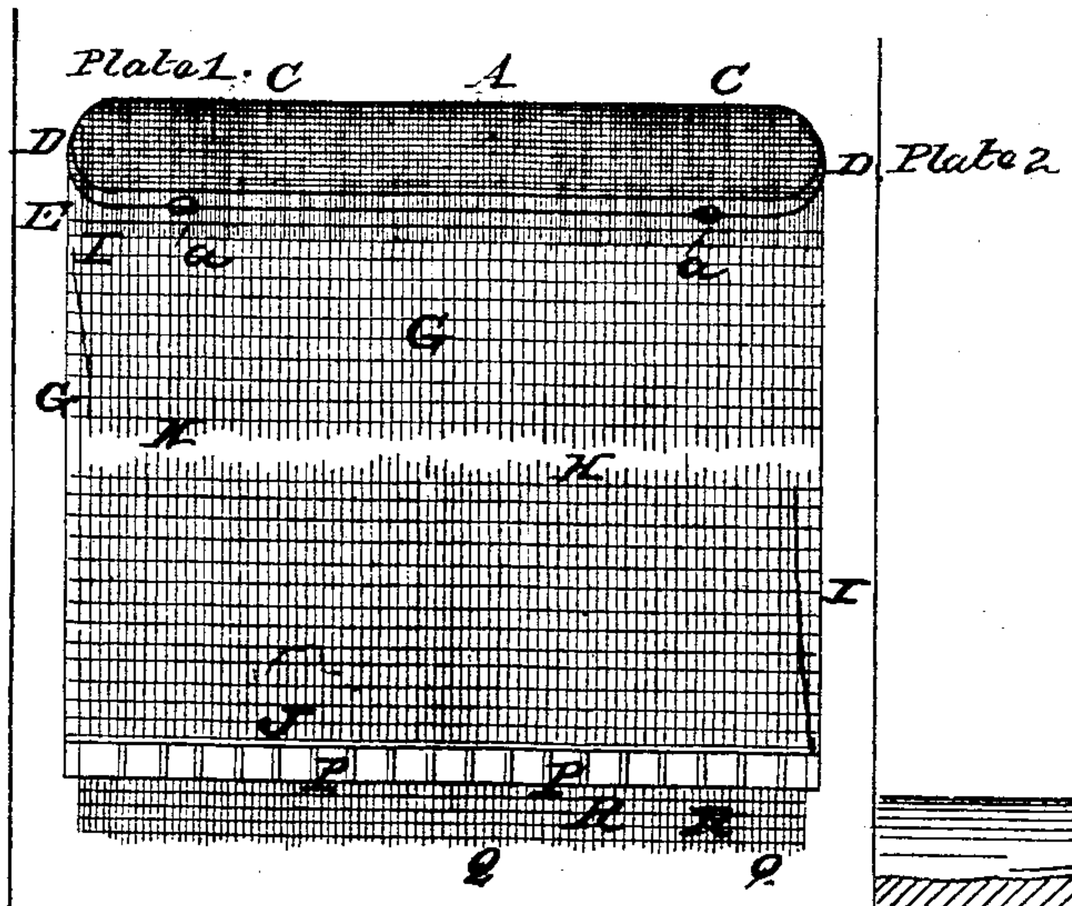


Plate 2.

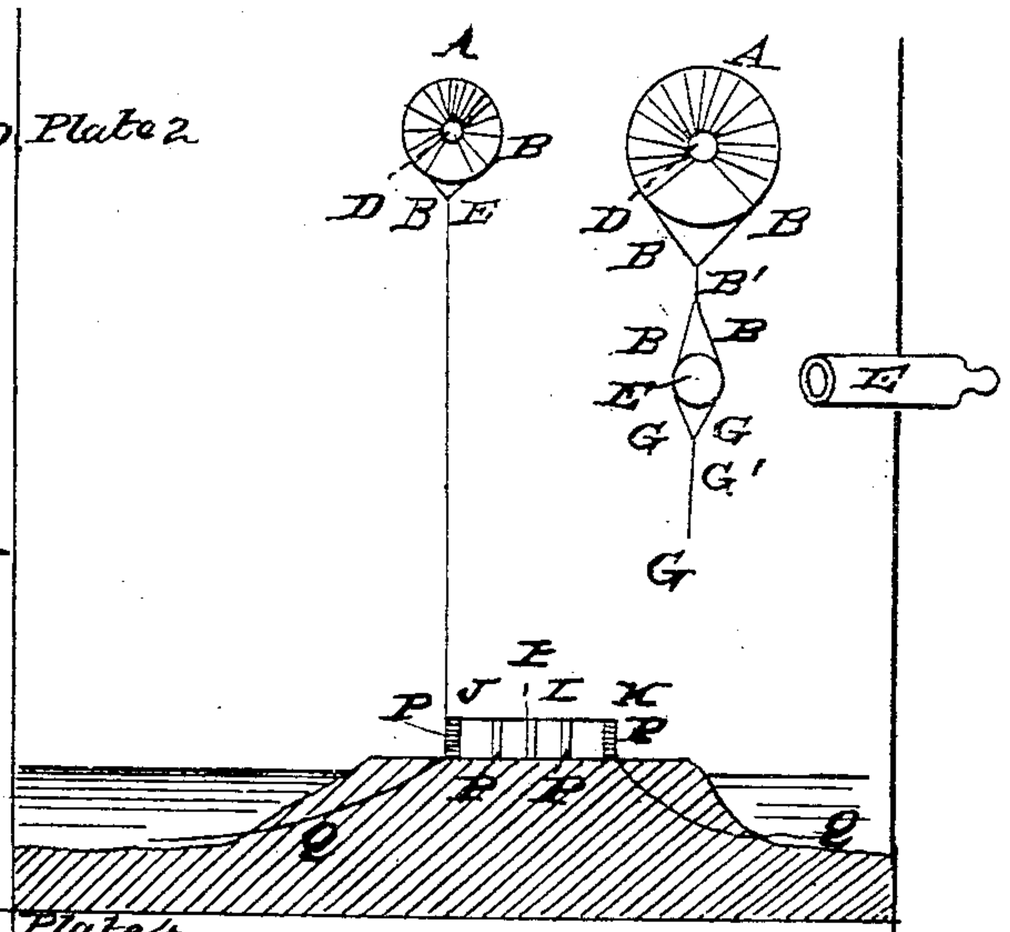


Plate 3.

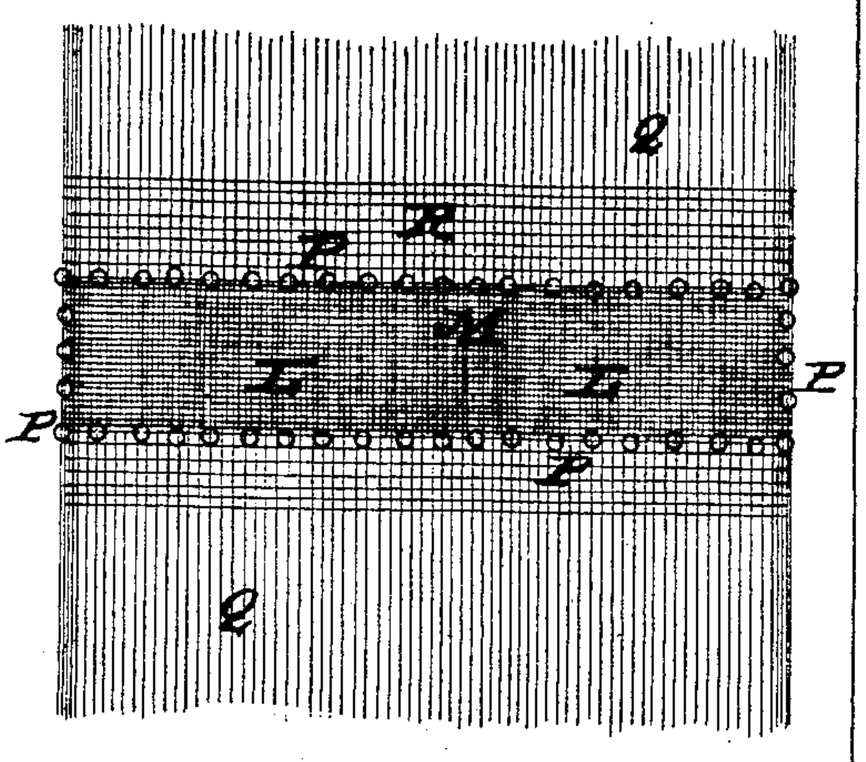


Plate 4.

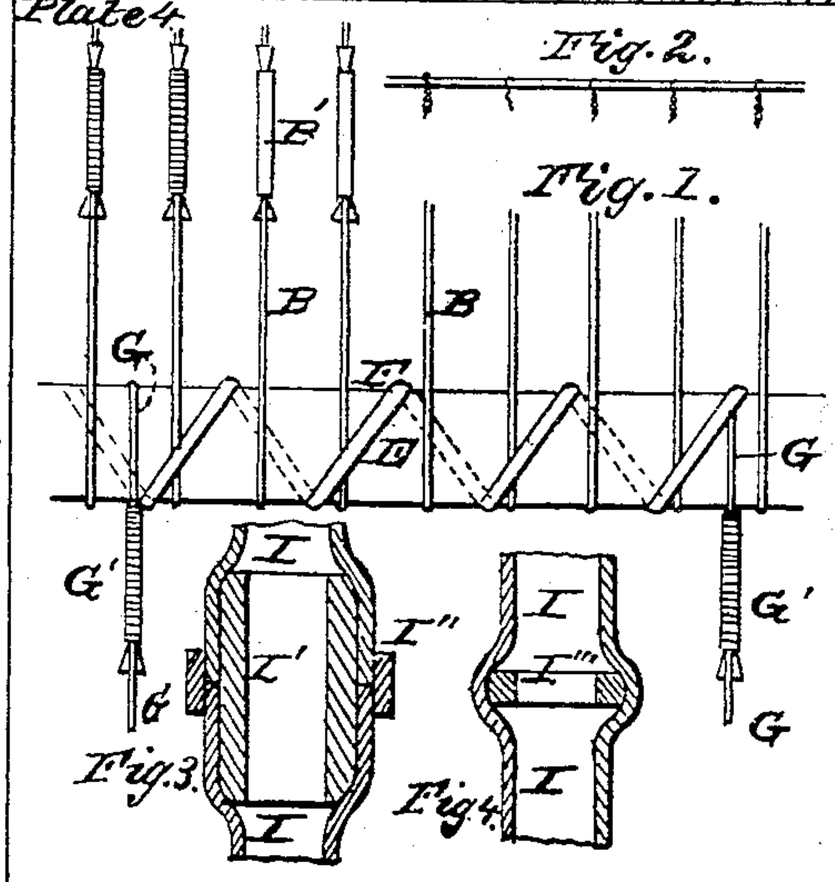


Fig. 2.

Fig. 1.

Plate 5.

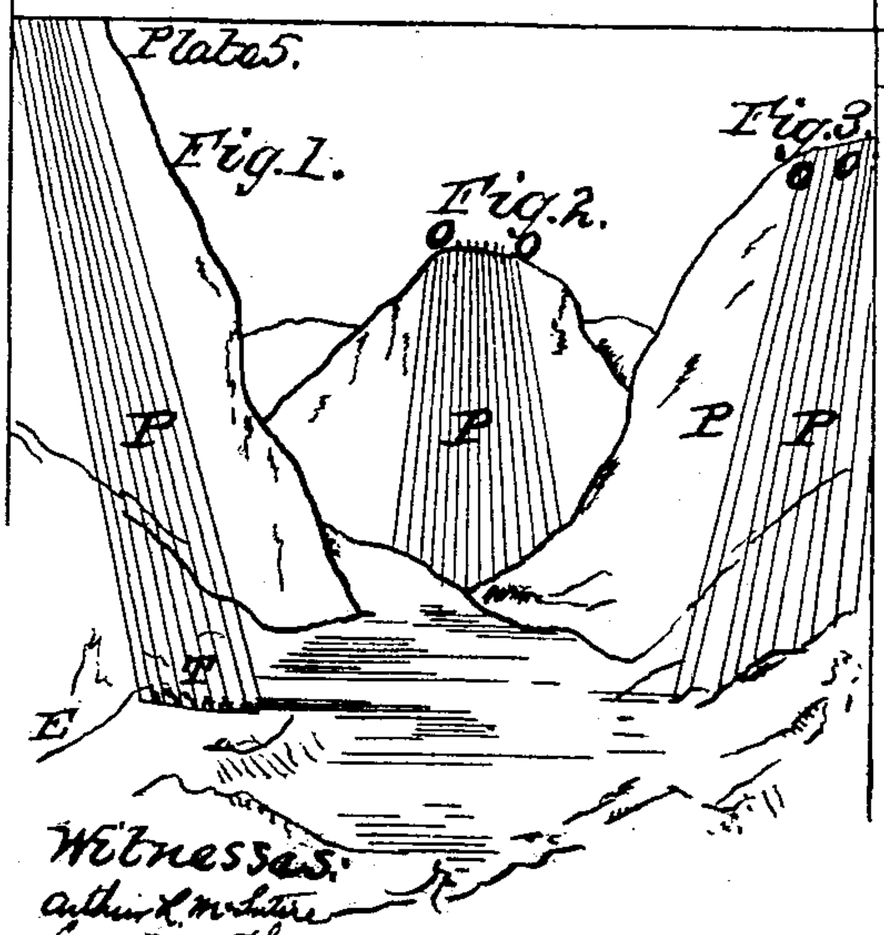
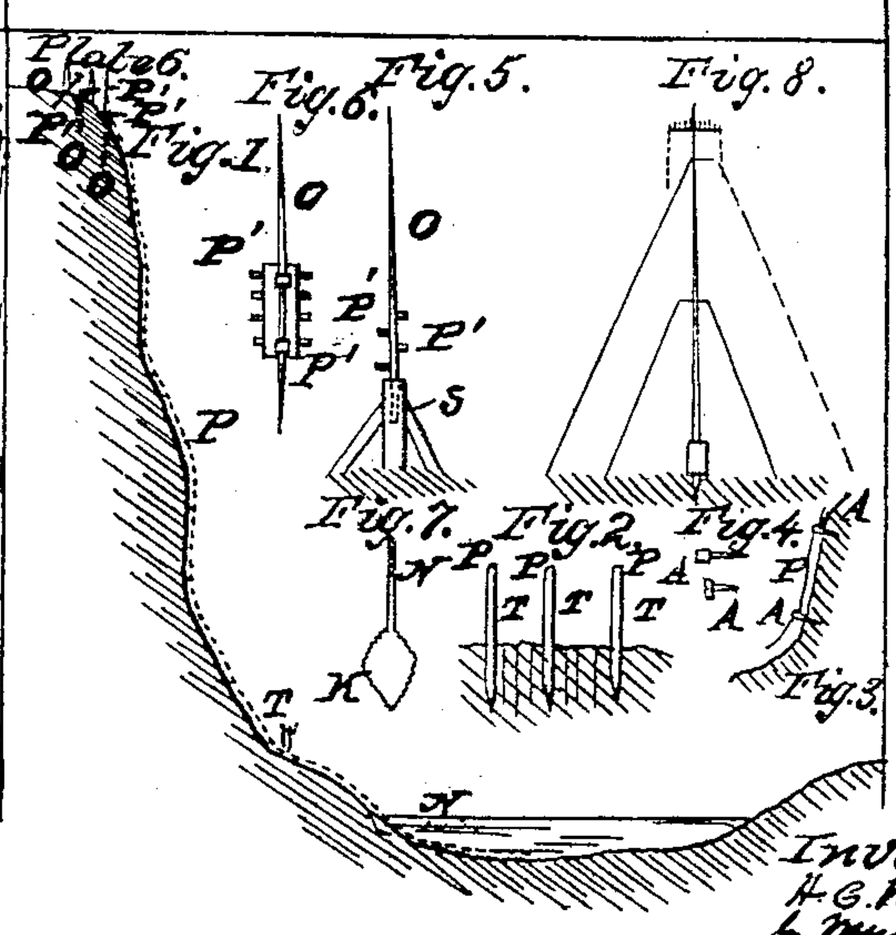


Plate 6.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

H. CHARLES VION, OF PARIS, FRANCE.

IMPROVED METHOD OF UTILIZING ATMOSPHERIC ELECTRICITY.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. **28,793,** dated June 19, 1860.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, HIPPOLYTE CHARLES VION, of Paris, in the Empire of France, engineer, have invented a new Mode of Obtaining Atmospheric Electricity and Terrestrial Electricity and its Industrial Applications; and I do hereby declare that the following is a full, clear, and exact description of the same, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, making part of this specification, in which—

Plate 1 represents a front elevation; Plate 2, a side elevation of an aerostat, in combination with certain other devices for obtaining atmospheric and terrestrial electricity; Plate 3, a plan of the device for obtaining terrestrial electricity; Plate 4, detached portions of the apparatus. Plate 5 shows a front view, and Plate 6 a vertical section and various details of the apparatus when applied in mountainous regions, the use of an aerostat being dispensed with.

The object of my invention is to form an electric pile of great power by using the positive electricity contained in the atmosphere, and the negative electricity contained in the earth, so as to make the electricity therein contained available for industrial purposes.

To enable others skilled in the art to make and use my invention, I will proceed to describe its construction and operation.

A is aerostat of a tubular form closed at both ends. It is made of suitable material, so as to be impervious to air. Its dimensions are such as to give it great ascensional power when filled with gas.

a a are valves in the surface of the aerostat, to be opened when the inflation of the aerostat should become too great.

A long india-rubber tube, I, communicates with the interior of the aerostat, being attached to the latter, near one end of its ends D, as seen in Plate 1, while the lower end of the tube I is attached to a gasometer, (not shown in the drawings.) The gasometer is to be fed with hydrogen gas, produced by the action of the pile itself, the negative wires of which (afterward to be described) enter a body of water at or near the base of the apparatus and decompose the water so as to produce the hydrogen gas. As the aerostat is supposed to be at a considerable height the tube I must be of corresponding length, and is constructed of a number of tubes, short wooden tubes I′ being inserted where the tubes I are joined, and a fastening-ring, I″, being slipped over each of the joints, as seen in Fig. 3 of Plate 4. At certain distances the tube I is fastened to the net-work of the positive wires (afterward to be described) in order to secure the tube against the action of the wind, and at each of these fastening-places a washer, I‴, is inserted in the tube in order that the tube shall not be compressed by the wire or other means employed to fasten it to the net-work of positive wires. (See Fig. 4, Plate 4.)

The aerostat is surrounded with a net-work of wires, one layer of the wires, C, being parallel with the axis of the aerostat and fastened to rings D at both ends of the aerostat, and the other layer of wires, B, extending partially around the aerostat at right angles to the wires C. One end of each of the wires B extends around an iron tube, E, some distance below the aerostat and meets the other end of it between the tube E and the aerostat. The two ends are fastened together by a ligature, B′. (See Fig. 1, Plate 4.) Each end of the tube E terminates into a ball, *e*. The wires B are fastened to the surface of the tube E by means of a helical wire, F, wound around the tube and across the wires B, as seen in Fig. 1, Plate 4. The upper ends of long vertical wires G are also wound around cylinder E, each wire G between two of the wires B, and the ends secured by a ligature, G′, as seen in Fig. 1, Plate 4. The helical wire F is also wound across the wires G, so as to keep them in their places on tube E.

The vertical wires G, which are to be the conductors of the positive electricity of the atmosphere, must be of a length proportionate to the desired efficacy of the electric pile, and the size and ascensional power of the aerostat must, of course, be adequate to sustain the weight of and keep suspended the wires G, (a weight still further increased by the horizontal cross-wires H, with which the vertical wires G are interlaced, in order to form a net-work not liable to be deranged by the action of the winds or similar influences.) The two outside wires, G, are stronger than the rest of them, and their lower ends are fastened to dyna-

mometers of any suitable construction. These dynamometers are attached to the ends or a massive iron cylinder, J, and they serve to indicate the tension in the outside wires, G, and the corresponding ascensional power of the aerostat. According to the reading of these dynamometers the aerostat has to be supplied (through tube I) with more or less gas. The lower end of each of the wires G is wound around the cylinder J, and secured by ligatures similar to those ab ve described. The wires G are all insulated (by a coating of gutta-percha or similar substance,) except where they are in contact with tube E and with cylinder J, and a similar insulating coating is laid on cylinder J, after the lower ends of the wires G have been fastened to it.

Another cylinder, K, similar to J, is placed at some distance from and parallel to cylinder J. It is connected with cylinder J by wires L, wound around both cylinders and interlaced with cross-wires M. The wire-work L M and cylinders are insulated (in a manner already described) against outside influences, so that the only electric communication between the two cylinders will be through the wires L. The two cylinders are placed upon insulated columns P. The cylinder K may be used as a substitute for cylinder J, and vice versa, whenever repairs become necessary. Insulated branch wire or wires are attached to the cylinders J K and wires L, so as to conduct the positive electricity obtained from the atmosphere by means of the above-described apparatus to wherever it is desired for industrial purposes. The insulated wires Q (interlaced with cross-wires R) are placed on the ground underneath and parallel to the positive wires L. Both ends of each of the wires Q are sunk into the earth or submerged in water, and fastened to a metallic plate coated with a metal not subject to oxidation. These wires Q are the conductors for the negative electricity of the earth, and a branch wire or wires attached to the wires Q serve to transmit the negative terrestrial electricity to wherever it is wanted for industrial or other purposes.

By uniting to the ends of the positive and the negative branch wire or wires a powerful electric current will be obtained, one pole of which is the atmosphere and the other the earth, and may be applied to any suitable useful purpose.

I will now proceed to describe the modification of the above-described apparatus when to be applied in mountainous countries.

P represents the positive electric copper or other metal wires coated over with an insulating substance. The upper ends of each of the positive wires is soldered to a prompter, O, at P′, Figs. 1, 5, and 6, Plate 6. The lower portion of each of the positive-wires is secured to an insulator, T, Fig. 2, Sheet 6. The positive wires are held above the ground by joints A, Figs. 3 and 4, Sheet 6, projecting from the soil at suitable distances from each other. The wires P are intended to follow the inequalities of the ground on which they are laid.

The prompters O, Figs. 5 and 6, Sheet 6, are iron rods sharpened to a point and silvered or coppered at their upper ends. The lower part of the prompter is fastened into a pole, S, covered with tar, which isolates the prompter and holds it in a firm position. A large metallic plate may be soldered to each prompter, as shown in Fig. 6. The positive wires may be soldered to the rod of each prompter or to the plate which is fastened thereto.

One or more branch lines, E, are soldered up to the positive wires to transmit the positive atmospheric electricity for which the wires P are the conductors to any desirable point.

N are negative iron or other metal conductors coated with an insulating substance. The upper ends of these wires rest on the ground near the positive insulators. The lower ends of these wires are soldered to a metallic plate or plates, V, Fig. 7, Plate 6, coated with a metal not subject to oxidation. The negative wires are sunk into the ground at very great depth or into wells, rivers, or into the sea. The negative electric branch wires are attached to the negative conductors N in the same manner as the positive branch wires are to the positive conductors. The branch wires and the soldering are coated over with an insulating substance. They are intended to carry the negative terrestial electricity to any desired point.

What I claim as my invention, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

1. The peculiar arrangement of means herein specified, whereby I am enabled to use the positive electricity contained in the atmosphere and the negative electricity contained in the earth, and thus form an electric pile of considerable power and make the electricity therein contained available for industrial purposes, as set forth.

2. The combination of an aerostat and vertical wire-work with a tube, I, for admitting gas into the aerostat, in the manner and for the purposes above set forth.

CHARLES VION.

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