

(No Model.)

2 Sheets—Sheet 1.

R. STRAUSS.
SAFETY APPARATUS FOR THE PRESERVATION OF THE DEAD
UNTIL THEIR BURIAL.

No. 315,569.

Patented Apr. 14, 1885.

Fig 1

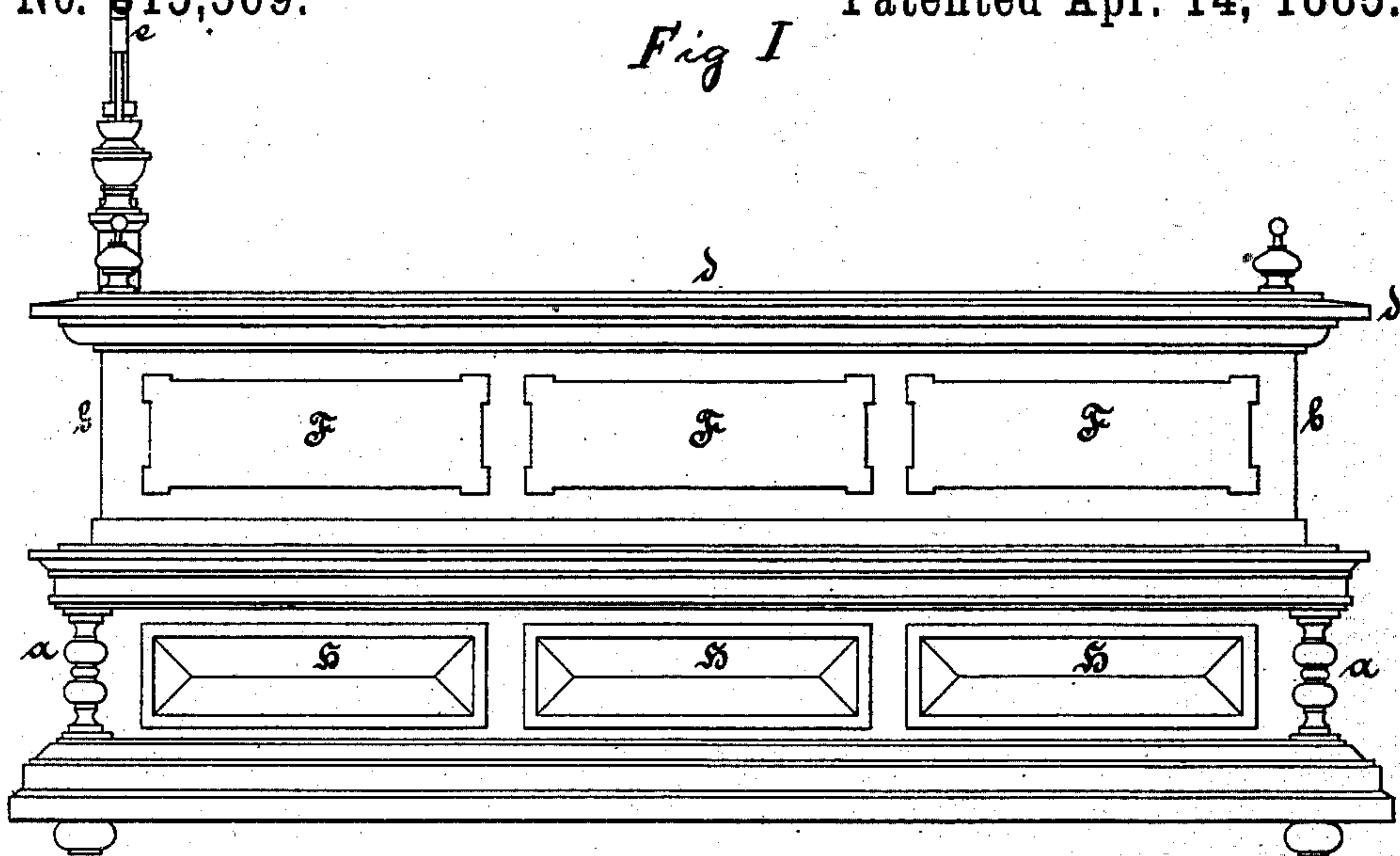


Fig 2

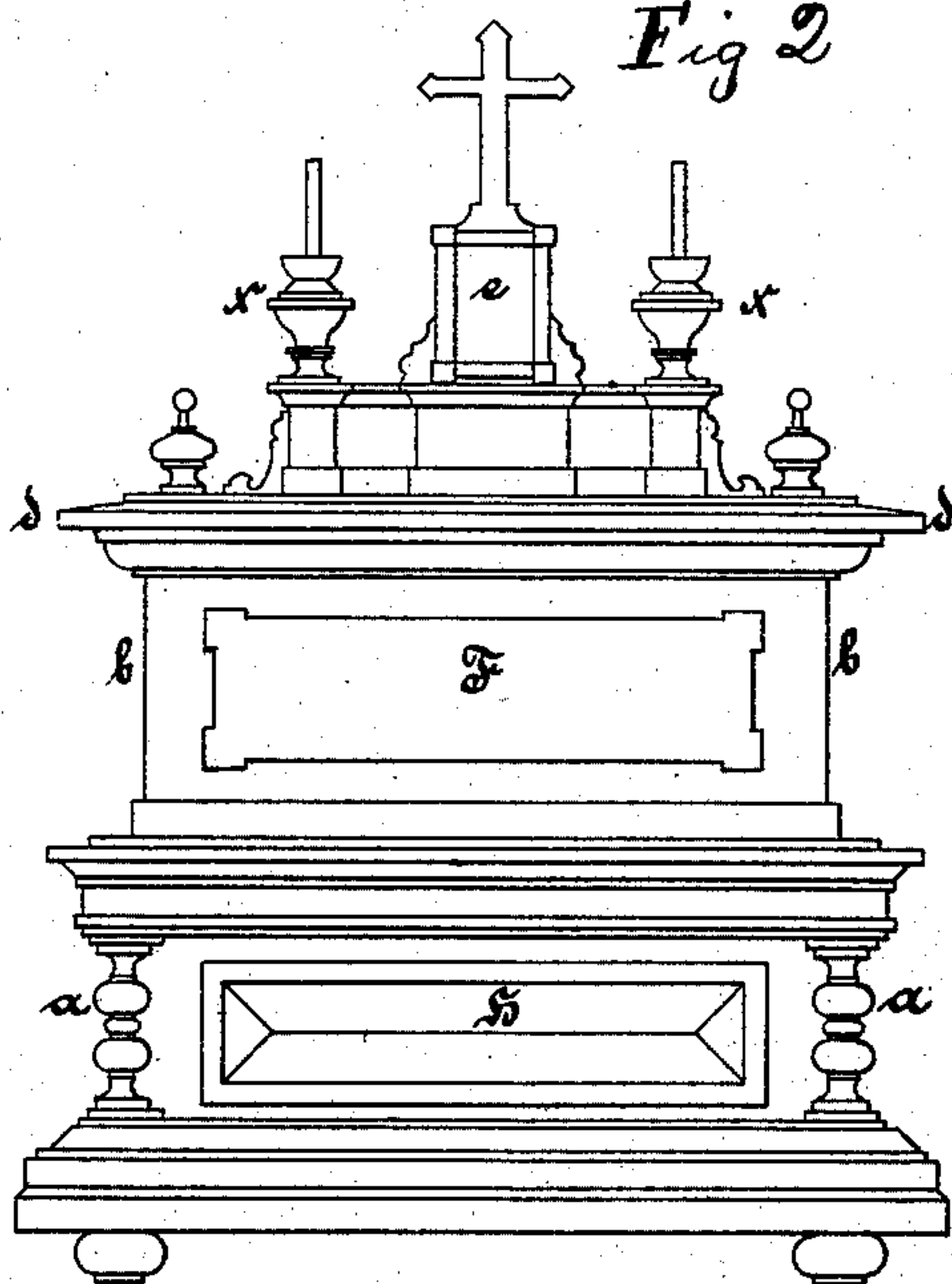
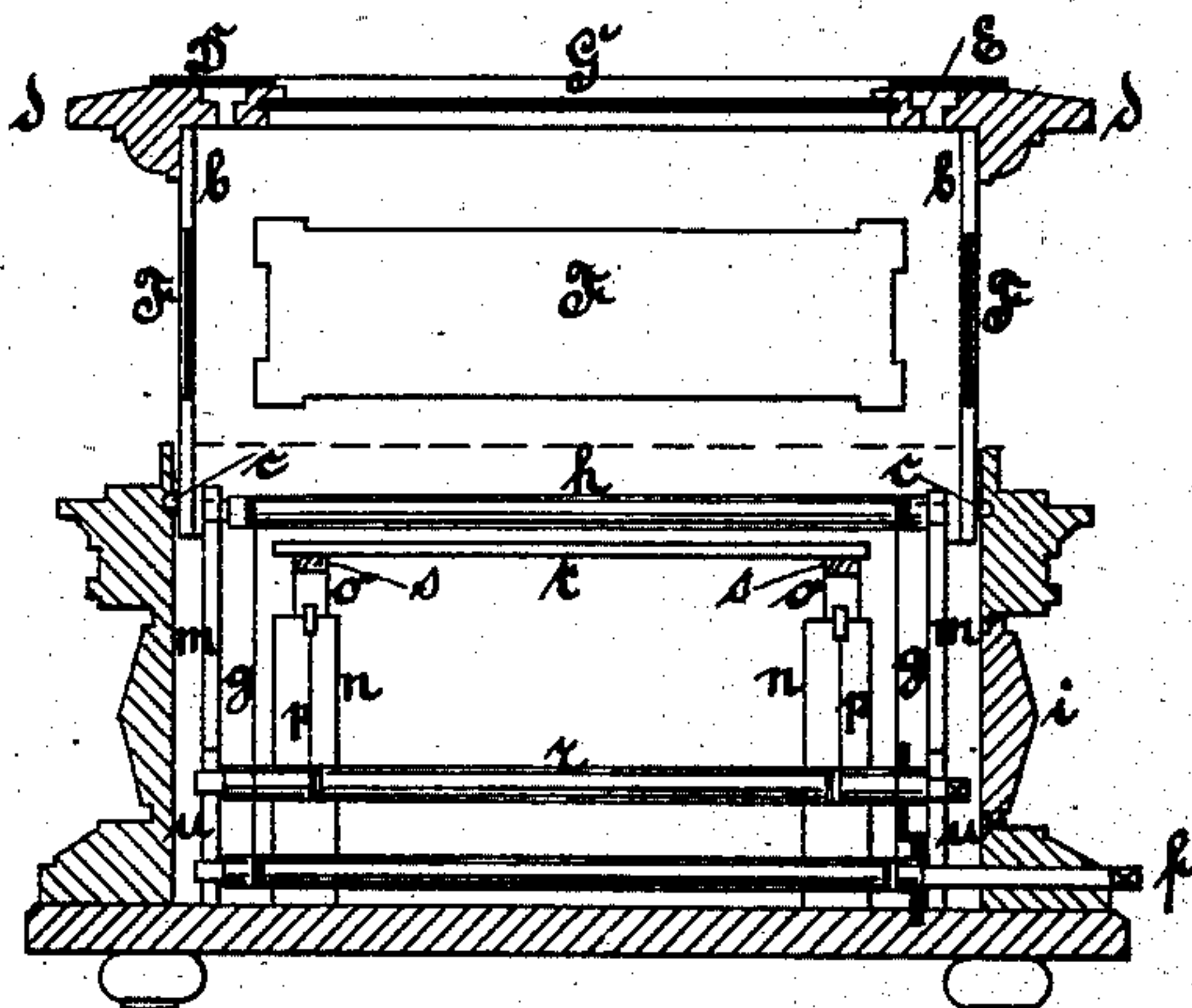


Fig 3.



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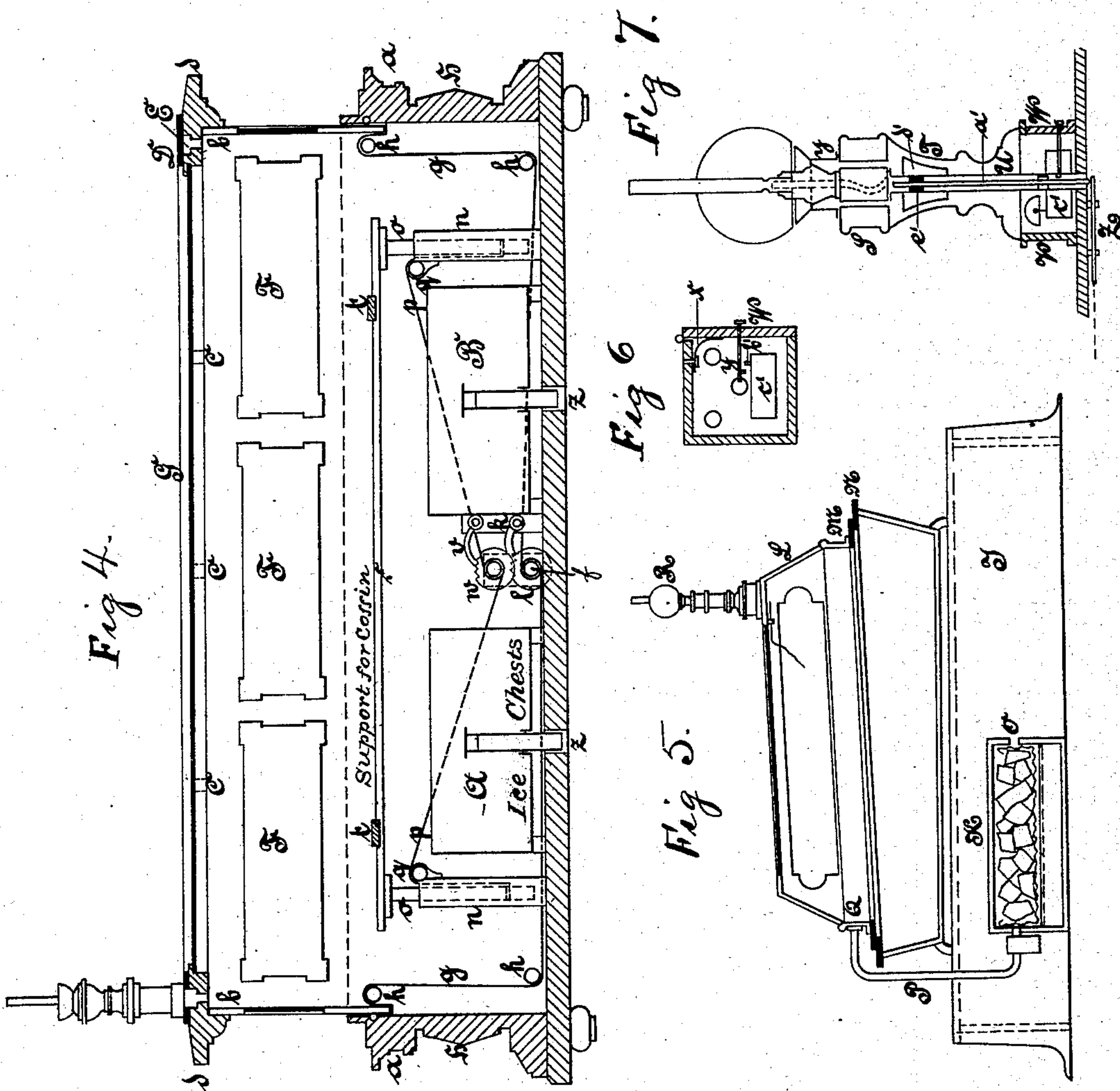
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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

RICHARD STRAUSS, OF SCHWEIDNITZ, PRUSSIA, GERMANY.

SAFETY APPARATUS FOR THE PRESERVATION OF THE DEAD UNTIL THEIR BURIAL.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 315,569, dated April 14, 1885.

Application filed June 17, 1884. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, RICHARD STRAUSS, a subject of the King of Prussia, residing at Schweidnitz, in the Province of Silesia and Kingdom of Prussia, German Empire, have invented a certain new and useful Improvement in Safety Apparatus for the Preservation of the Dead Until Their Burial, of which the following is a specification, reference being had therein to the accompanying drawings.

This safety apparatus for the preservation of the dead until their burial is for the purpose of destroying all vapors injurious to health emanating from the corpse, avoiding any danger of infection and preventing (especially in the case of persons dying of epidemic diseases) poisonous matter from being conveyed to persons in the immediate neighborhood by insects, &c. It is a well-known fact that in rooms in which corpses are kept until their interment, the air, owing to the vapors and gases emanating from the corpse, becomes so dangerous and injurious to health that infectious diseases and even deaths have frequently been attributed to it. In cases of death by extremely dangerous infectious diseases the corpse can certainly be preserved in remote rooms, which nobody is allowed to enter, and which can be well ventilated; but in most cases the relations of the deceased want to see the latter during the short space of time between death and burial. If the inspection of the corpse in rooms frequented by many persons is to be free from danger in all respects, then the coffin in which the deceased is preserved should have a perfectly air-tight-closing appliance, should admit of a convenient observation of the corpse, and should, in case that it is only apparent death, have an appliance by means of which the bad air developed in the coffin can be destroyed and a fresh supply of air can be continually led into it, so that the person apparently dead may not be deprived of this most necessary of all benefits for maintaining life; but as the construction of such a coffin is not only very expensive, but also attended with many difficulties, and not attainable, perhaps, in many cases, my endeavors have been directed toward constructing an apparatus that would combine all the good qualities just mentioned in itself.

The apparatus accords in appearance with the solemnity of a death-room, and is made in the shape of a catafalque in sizes suitable for all coffins.

The following description and the accompanying drawings will serve to explain this safety apparatus in all its parts and its inner arrangement likewise.

Figure 1 represents a side elevation of a corpse-cooler embodying my invention. Fig. 2 represents an end elevation of the same. Fig. 3 represents a vertical transverse section on the line *x x* of Fig. 1. Fig. 4 represents a vertical longitudinal section on the line *y y* of Fig. 1. Fig. 5 represents a modification. Fig. 6 represents in horizontal section a life-saving apparatus. (Shown more fully in vertical section in Fig. 7.)

In the box-shaped receptacle *a*, which consists of four side walls and one bottom, the middle part, *b*, open at the top and bottom and provided with panels *F*, is inserted in such manner that the india-rubber packing-ring *c*, attached to the inner face of the lower part, *a*, of the case will form a hermetic joint with said middle part, *b*. The lid *d*, with the upper piece, *e*, Figs. 1 and 2, is likewise fitted as airtight as possible onto the middle part, *b*, and thus these three pieces form together a complete corpse-preserving device.

According to the height or size of the coffin or under part of the coffin containing the free-lying corpse, the middle part, *b*, with the lid *d* can be moved up and down or telescoped, as by turning the shaft *f* to the right or left, as required. The four cords *g g g g*, which are fastened with one end to the above-mentioned shaft but with the other end to the middle part, *b*, passing over the guide-rollers *h' h'' h''' h''''*, are wound upon the shaft *f* and thus raise the entire middle part, *b*. In order to let it down again in case a low coffin is employed, or in order to remove it, it is necessary to lift the latch-lever *k* out of the little cog-wheel *l*, whereupon the middle part, *b*, owing to its weight, falls of itself, and in order to prevent its falling too fast the winch-handle need but be put onto the shaft and held fast.

m m are bearing-standards for the guide-roller *h*.

The raising and lowering of the appliance

for the reception of the coffin is effected in the same manner.

The letter *n* designates hollow pillars in which the supporting-rods *o* move. To the latter are fastened the cords *p*, which run in guide-grooves formed in said pillars, and passing over the guide-rollers *q* are wound on or off the shaft *r*. The rods *o* on each side are connected by the longitudinal bars *s*, and above these again the sliding cross-bars *t* are laid so that they may be shoved toward or from each other according to the length of a coffin.

The letter *u* designates the bearing-standards for the two winding-up shafts *f* and *r*, while *v* designates a pawl and *w* a ratchet-wheel for these two shafts, *r*. The two lamps *x* are placed on the lid, and, as seen in Fig. 7, are completely closed by the globe *y*, so that the air they need for burning must be sucked up from the interior of the apparatus. The fresh air penetrates uninterruptedly through the opening *Z* in the bottom of the apparatus, passes first through the two ice-chests *A B*, goes through the openings *C C* into the channel *F*, which runs round the lid *d* and escapes into the two lamps *x*, where it is immediately burned. These lamps thus effect an uninterrupted ventilation; fresh air continually passes into the coffin, and the bad air is consumed. At the same time these lamps contribute materially to give the whole apparatus a solemn appearance.

F F are glass plates set in air-tight, through which the deceased can be observed continually. The lid *d* is likewise provided with a large glass pane, *G*.

In order to be able to read off the temperature in the apparatus conveniently from outside, a thermometer can be fixed inside close to the glass panes.

H H are fillings which, when extraordinary lightness of the apparatus is required on account of transport, can be made of oil-cloth, &c., as in general the whole under part of the apparatus can be made of light frames covered with the same material. When complete, the apparatus may be conveniently carried by two persons. As it can be taken to pieces, it can be transported through the narrowest rooms.

If the whole apparatus has to be as cheap as possible, and yet the effect remain the same, then, as Fig. 5 shows, the common coffin is placed on a simple wooden frame, *I*, covered with cloth, under which is the ice-chest *K*. In this case only one coffin-lid, *L*, which is provided with a glass pane, is necessary, which can be made to fit all sizes of coffins by means of air-tight frames *M N*, that are laid under. The air enters the ice-chest at *o*, passes through it and through tube *P*, and penetrates at *6* into the coffin, out of which it is sucked up by the lamp and consumed. The process is therefore just the same as that already described of the artistically and solemnly fitted up safety apparatus.

In Fig. 7 the already-mentioned lamp is represented in vertical section as connected with

a so-called "saving apparatus" for persons apparently dead.

The whole lamp, and especially the oil-reservoir *S*, in which are a number of air-holes going right through, rests on a hollow tin casing, *T*, in which is a tube, *u*, that goes through the lid of the coffin into the latter. The tin casing *T* rests on a wooden box fastened firmly to the coffin-lid, and the door of this box has the tendency to fly open to the outside by means of spring *x*, but is kept back by stud *y*, latched into tube *U*. In case, then, that the person apparently dead, whose extremities are connected by strings with the bolt *Z*, makes on awakening the slightest convulsions, the bolt *Z* slides back, the bar *a'* falls downward and strikes on stud *y*, whereby the latter is latched out of tube *U* and the spring *X* forces the door *W* open. But besides this, in springing back, the stud *y* presses on the spring *b'* of an alarm, *c*, which causes the latter to sound, and according to its inner construction, to keep on ringing loud for several hours. In the upper part of the tin casing *T* a glass pane is set, through which a piece of suitably-prepared material, *e'*, fastened to the bar *a'*, can be observed. In case of decomposition of the corpse commencing, this material changes its color (becomes brown) at once, and this is therefore a sure sign of actual death. This last-described saving apparatus can likewise be employed in cases when the person apparently dead has been buried. The tin casing *T*, with the tube *U* and the falling bar *a'*, need in this case only be lengthened so much that the lamp *R*, with the alarm *c'* and the prepared material *e'*, reaches above the grave-mound, and for protection against outer influence is covered with a strong wire fencing that can be locked.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim as new, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

1. In combination with the stationary lower part, *a*, of a corpse-preserver, a part, *b*, vertically movable therein, and a shaft, cords, pulleys, pawl, and ratchet, whereby said part *b* may be raised for inspection, held in an elevated position, and lowered at will, substantially as set forth.

2. In combination with an air-tight corpse-preserving apparatus, a lamp supported thereby and provided with tubes which allow the foul air to be drawn up from said apparatus by the lamp and consumed thereby, substantially as set forth.

3. A coffin-supporting frame, in combination with a shaft, cords, and pulleys, and rods attached to said frame and vertically movable in tubular pillars by the rotation of said shaft, as set forth.

4. The combination of a bolt arranged to be attached to a supposed corpse, with a bar, *a'*, caused to drop by the withdrawal of said bolt, the door *W*, which flies open thereupon, the

stud or rod *y*, carried by said door, and alarm mechanism tripped and caused to operate by the withdrawal of said stud or rod, substantially as set forth.

- 5 5. The combination of an air-tight coffin-receptacle with an ice-box arranged in a lower part of the apparatus, and a pipe, P, which makes communication between said ice-box

and said coffin-receptacle, substantially as set forth.

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

RICHARD STRAUSS.

Witnesses:

ALEXANDER SPIELMANN,
CARL FIEDLER.