

(No Model.)

P. J. KEENAN.

LETTER BOX.

No. 359,870.

Patented Mar. 22, 1887.

Fig. 1.

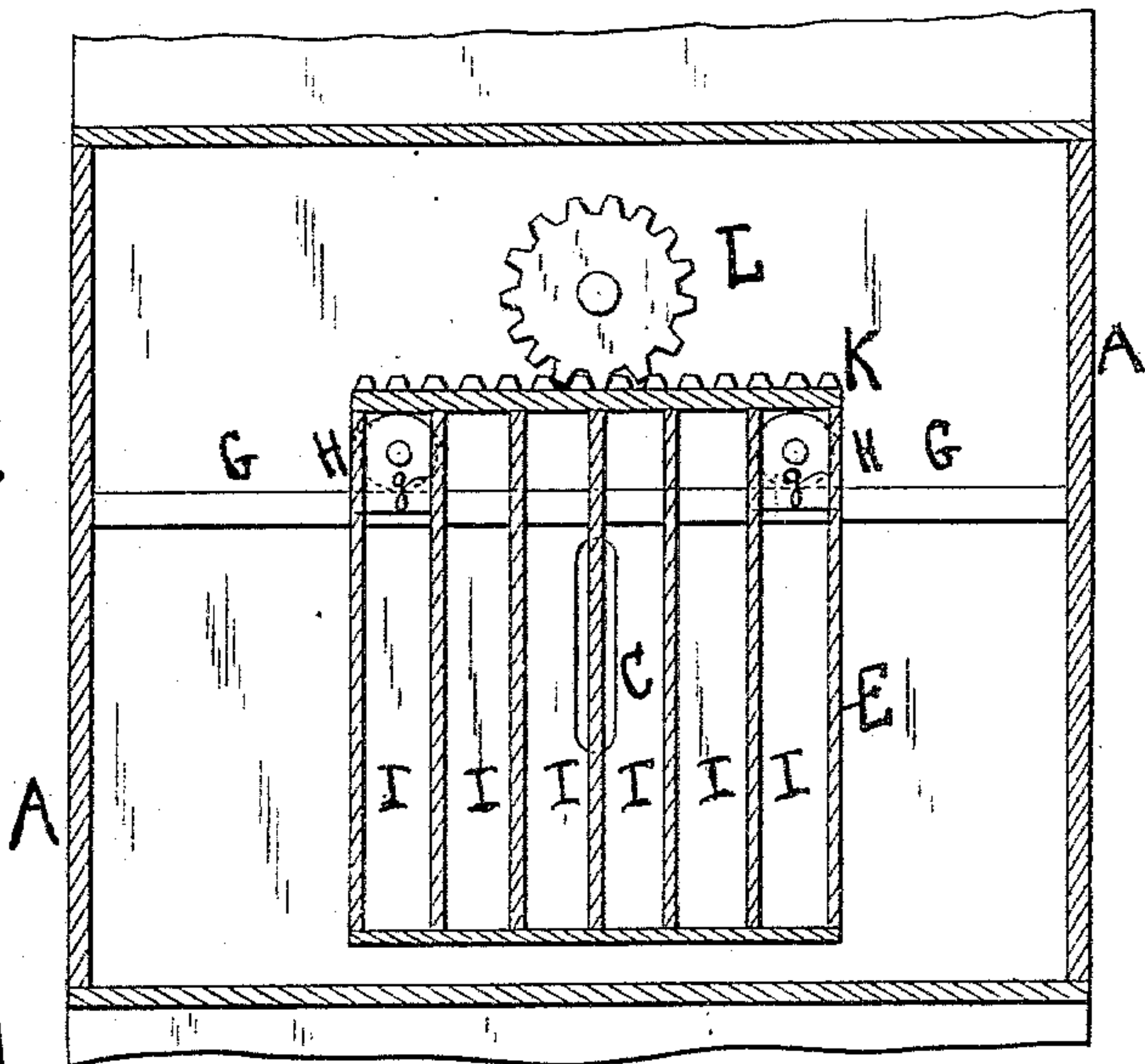


Fig. 4.

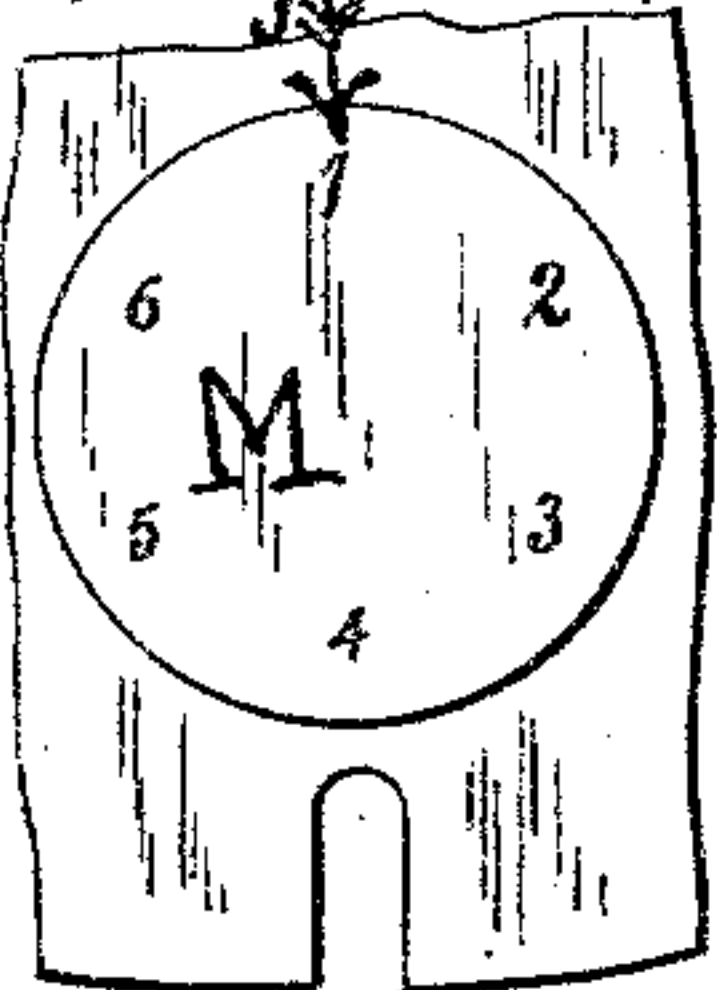
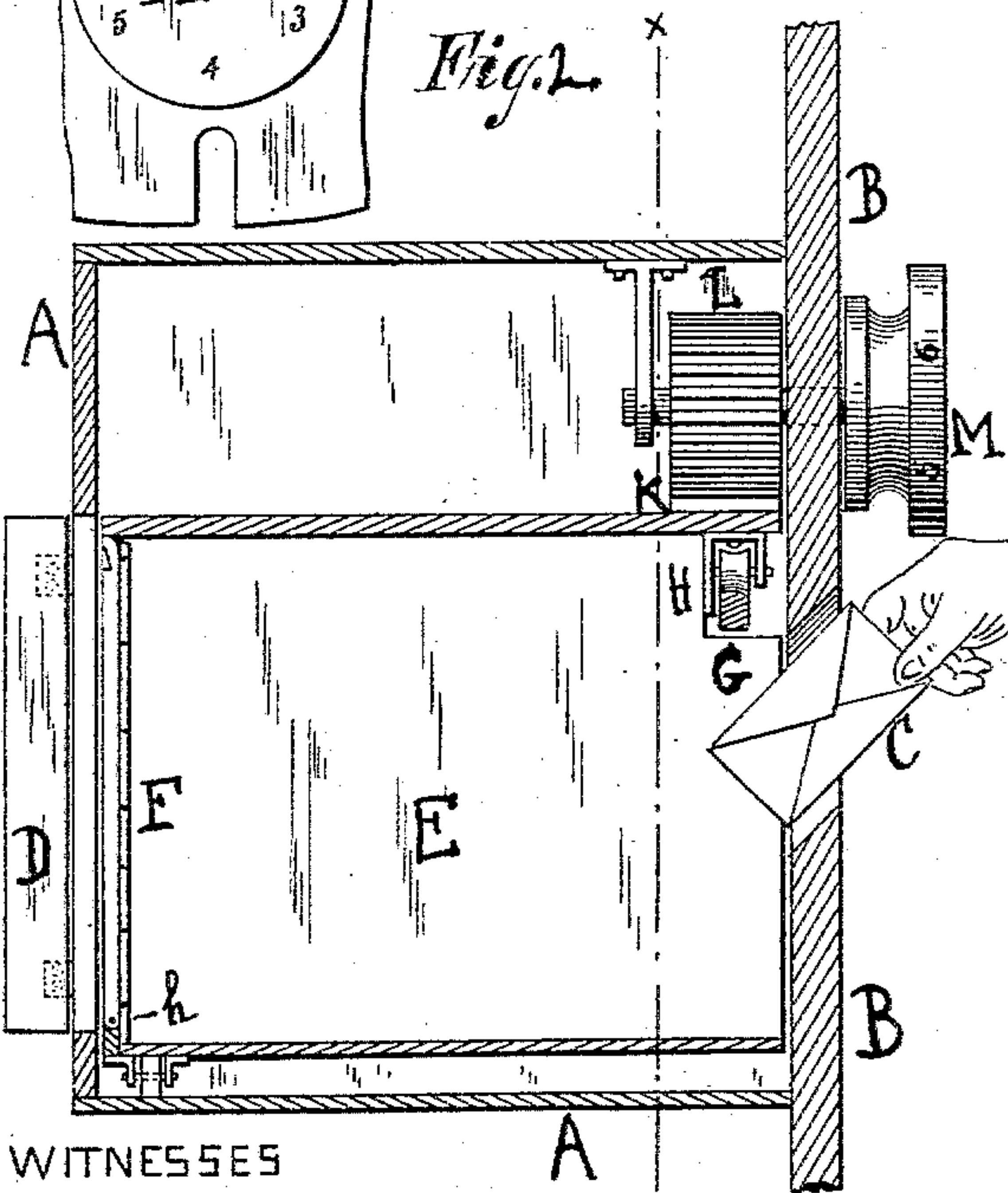


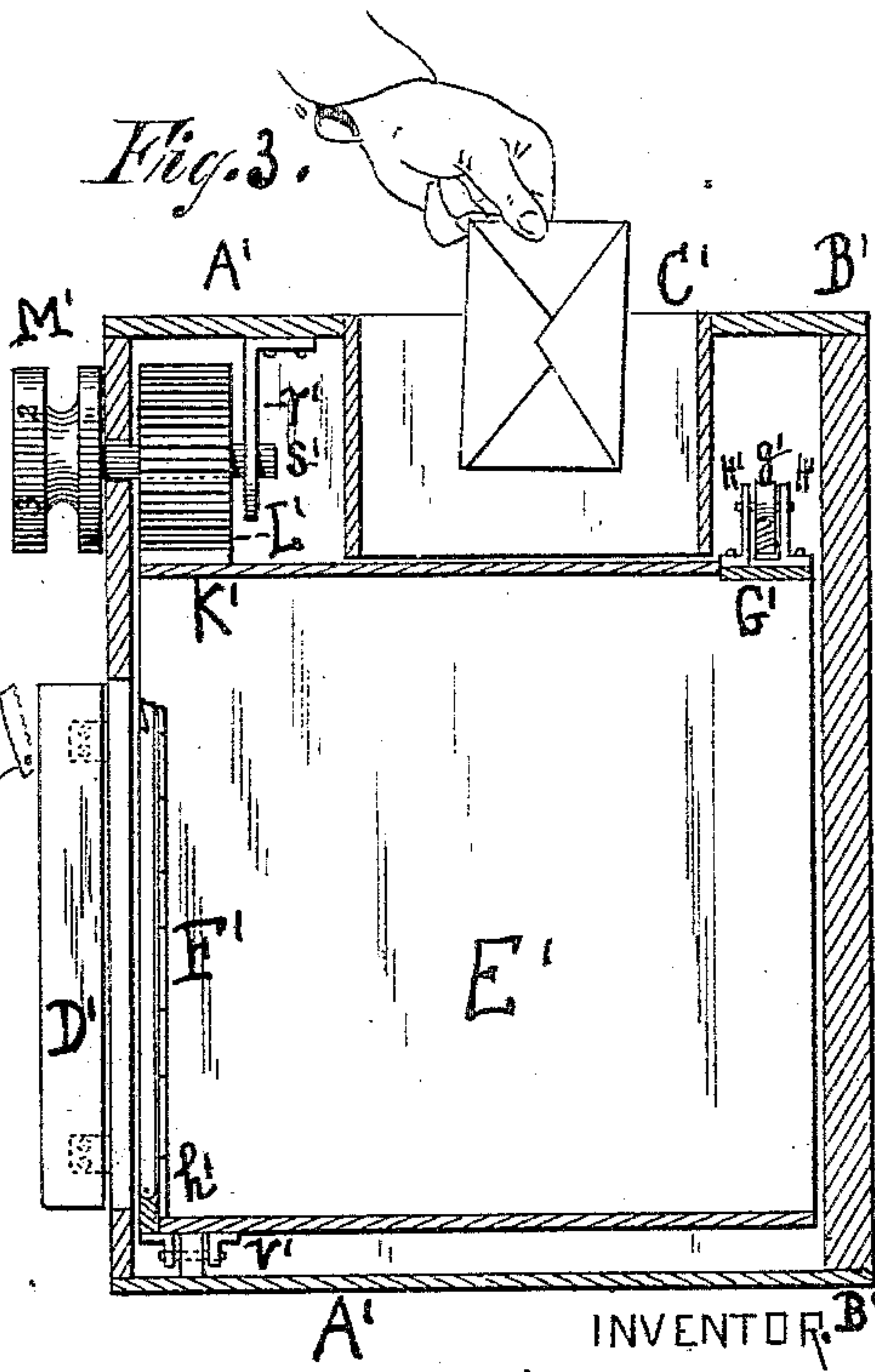
Fig. 2.



WITNESSES

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Fig. 3.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

PATRICK J. KEENAN, OF JERSEY CITY, NEW JERSEY, ASSIGNOR TO
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LETTER-BOX.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 359,870, dated March 22, 1887.

Application filed January 22, 1884. Serial No. 118,313. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, PATRICK J. KEENAN, a citizen of the United States, residing at Jersey City, in the county of Hudson and State of New Jersey, have invented a new and useful Improvement in Letter-Boxes, of which the following is a specification.

Figure 1 is a vertical cross-section of my improved letter-box on the line X X, Fig. 2. Fig. 2 is a vertical section of the box from front to back. Fig. 3 is a vertical section of a modification of the box with the letter-drop on the top thereof instead of on the front. Fig. 4 is a detail front view of the outside turning-knob.

This invention relates to an improvement in letter-boxes, such as are adapted to be fastened on the inside of office-doors, or in hallways and the like, and into which letters are dropped through a slit.

Heretofore when it has been desired that the separate tenants of an apartment or office should have their letters delivered by the postman into different private receptacles a separate slit and separate box for each tenant has been necessary.

My invention consists, principally, in combining with a single slit or opening any desired number of boxes, which are arranged to be moved past the slit by an outside turning-knob until the desired box is opposite the slit, when the letter may be dropped into it. Said boxes are locked and opened by separate keys.

In the drawings, the letter A represents a casing or box of any desired material, which is permanently fastened to the door or wall B, in which is the slit or opening through which the letters are dropped. The box A is so arranged that its back wall, D, swings outward. Inside the box A, a short distance from the wall D, and running through to the wall B, is the movable series or nest of letter-boxes E, six in number in the drawings, though this number may be increased or diminished without changing the principle on which my device operates. This nest of letter-boxes E forms a compact whole, and is hung on the fixed bar G, extending from side to side of the box A, by means of the hangers H H, fastened to the structure E at each end, and provided with wheels or rollers g g, which run along the bar G, and hold the structure E sus-

pended, so that it is readily moved backward and forward along the bar. The separate boxes I are open on the side toward the slit C, and at the back are closed by doors F, arranged to be locked when in the closed and upright position, and to swing open on pivots h when unlocked, thus giving access to the interior of the box. The front portion of the boxes I is surmounted by a toothed rack, K, which fits into and is moved backward and forward by a toothed wheel, L. This wheel L has a shaft extending through the wall B, rigidly attached to the knob M on the outside of said wall, so that when the knob M is turned the wheel L moves with it and in the same direction. The knob is numbered, as shown in Fig. 4, on its surface to correspond with the numbers of the various letter-boxes inside, the arrangement being such that when, for example, the number 1 on the knob is under the arrow, as shown, the box No. 1 will be opposite the open slit.

Fig. 3 shows the modified form of my letter-box, arranged so that letters can be dropped through a slit in the top of the box, but in mode of operation substantially the same as the box shown in Fig. 2. This modified form is used when the box is fastened to a solid wall—B', for example—so that the letters must be taken out from the front instead of at the back, as is done when it is fastened to a door.

In the drawings, A' represents the fixed box, and E' the interior movable box divided into the separate letter-boxes running back and forth on wheels V' at its bottom, upon one side and near each end, and suspended on the other side from hangers H', containing grooved wheels g', running on the fixed bar G', as heretofore described.

L' represents the notched wheel supported by the hanger r', and K' is the toothed rack into which the wheel works, while C' is the slit through which letters are dropped. The shaft S' of the wheel runs through the wall of the box A' and expands into or is rigidly connected with the turning outside knob, M', which operates in the same manner as the knob M, already described.

The arrangement of the pivoted box-cover F' and the outer wall, D', is the same as that described in Fig. 2.

The operation of my device is as follows:

The postman having a letter for box No. 4, turns the knob M until the number 4 is immediately under the arrow. Box No. 4 is by this turning brought opposite the letter-slit and the letter is dropped in. The owner of box No. 4 opens the back D, and with his private key unlocks the inner box, No. 4, and obtains his letter. In the modified form of box shown in Fig. 3 the operation is substantially the same. The box of the desired number is brought opposite the slit by turning the handle, the letter is dropped in, and the box can

be opened by opening the back D' and unlocking the door F', as already described.

I claim—

The combination of an outside turning-handle, an inner toothed wheel moving therewith, and a series of letter-boxes moved by said wheel past an open letter-slit, all substantially as described.

PATRICK J. KEENAN.

Witnesses:

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