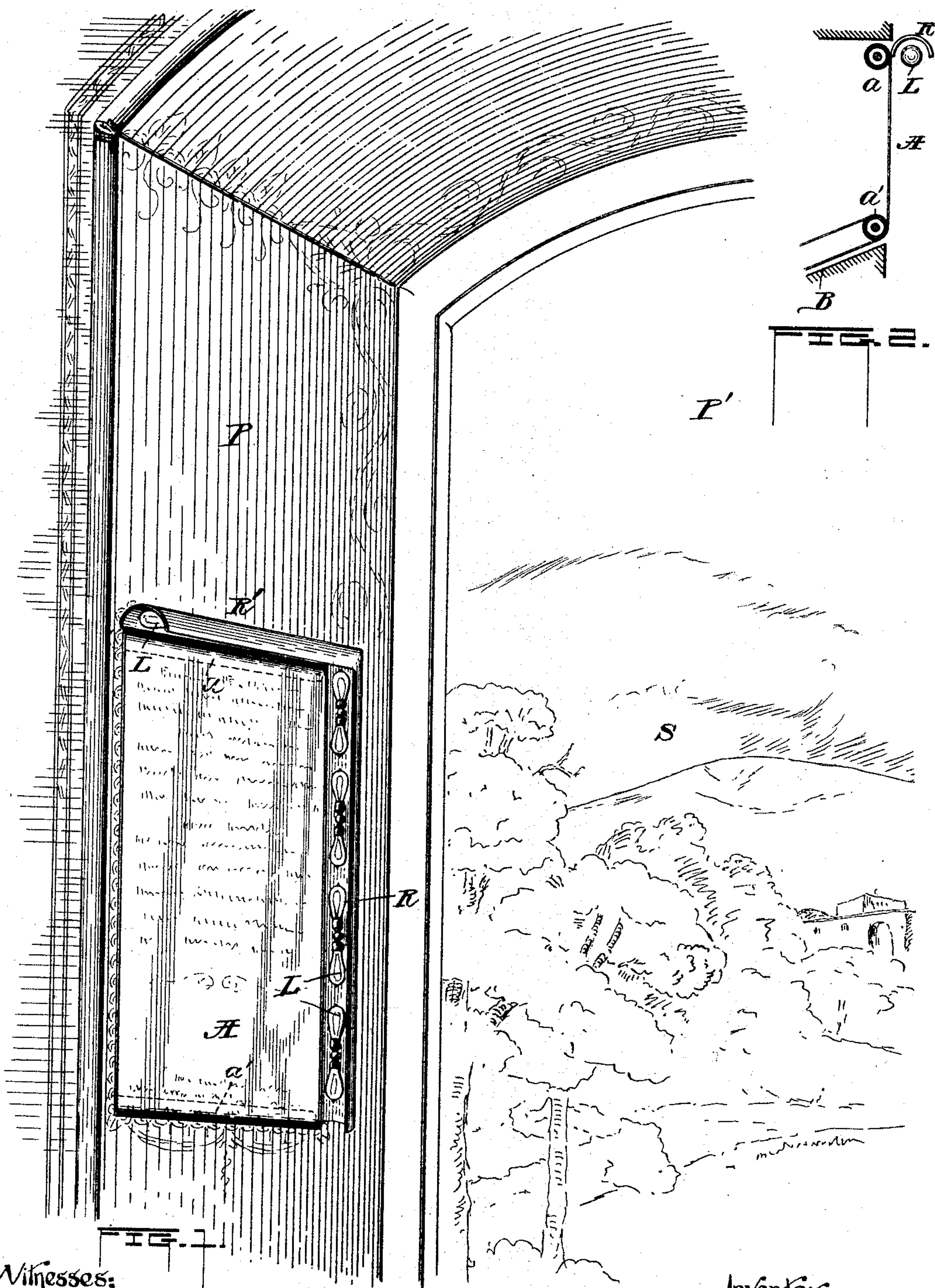


(No Model.)

S. MACKAYE.
APPLIANCE FOR THEATERS.

No. 490,489.

Patented Jan. 24, 1893.



Witnesses:

L. A. Connor &
Chas. E. Rindon

Inventor:

Stella Mackaye
By Buttrick & Dowell
attys

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

STEELE MACKAYE, OF CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, ASSIGNOR TO THE SPECTATORIA COMPANY, OF SAME PLACE.

APPLIANCE FOR THEATERS.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 490,489, dated January 24, 1893.

Application filed May 25, 1892. Serial No. 434,297. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, STEELE MACKAYE, a citizen of the United States, residing at Chicago, in the county of Cook and State of Illinois, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Appliances for Theaters, &c.; and I do hereby declare the following to be a full, clear, and exact description of the invention, such as will enable others skilled in the art to which it appertains to make and use the same.

My invention relates to stage appliances, and the object is to provide means by which the performance or scene which is being exhibited may be automatically explained or interpreted by a silent unfolding announcer without subjecting the audience to the annoyance incident to an oral explanation when required to render the performance or scenic exhibition intelligible and interesting to the audience.

The invention will be hereinafter described and particularly pointed out in the claims at the end of this specification.

Referring to the accompanying drawings, in which similar letters of reference are used to denote similar parts, Figure 1 represents a perspective view of a part of the proscenium of a theater illustrating my improvement applied thereto, and Fig. 2 is a detail fragmentary sectional view of parts of the device.

P, denotes one of the side flanges or walls of the proscenium of a theater or other similar structure, P' the proscenium opening, and S, scenery or scenic arrangements on the stage or stages in rear of such opening.

A, denotes a traveling sheet or strip of cloth, paper, or other suitable material, on which may be written or printed in any preferred manner or style any desired notice, advertisement, explanation, description, or interpretation, in brief, or in full, or outline of the order to be pursued, or the subjects embraced in any exercise or entertainment; such explanations or interpretations being adapted to be exhibited simultaneously with the presentation or exhibition of the performance or scenic arrangements, so that the audience may comprehend the meaning of various acts, scenes, part-scenes or representations without the necessity of an oral explanation, thereby dispensing with a public lecturer or inter-

preter and overcoming the objections incident to such practices, which are rendered necessary in presenting panoramas and various other entertainments wherein the meaning is not obvious to the ordinary observer.

L, L, denote a series of electric (or other suitable) lamps, bordering the sheet or strip A, at the side of the proscenium opening, and at the top of the sheet, said lamps being set in backings or reflectors R, R', which serve also as screens, permitting the light to fall on the announcing sheet only, and excluding the light from the proscenium opening so as not to interfere with the illumination of the picture, painting or scenic effect in the scenatorium. These deflectors R, R', may be of any desired form suitable for the purpose, but preferably consist of tin-plate or other metal strips having concave reflecting surfaces in which the lamps are set, as shown. The sheet or strip A may be wound upon an upper roller *a*, and pass thence over a lower roller *a'*, the latter being provided with a band wheel or pulley over which may be placed a belt or band B, which may connect with a similar pulley or wheel fixed upon a crank-axle or other suitable shaft, by which motion may be imparted to the roller *a'*, so as to cause the same to revolve at any desired rate of speed, for the purpose of moving the sheet and exhibiting the written or printed matter thereon at the proper time and in the desired order to conform to the order of arrangement or presentation of the scenic effects, performance, or exercise.

I am aware that a movable transparency bearing the words or score of an opera, play or other form of exhibition has heretofore been used to exhibit to the audience the words or other symbols of the utterances of the singers, players or speakers by causing the transparency to move past an opening arranged between the audience and the light, its movement being timed to bring the words as they are uttered past such opening. Hence I make no broad claim to such contrivances, but

What I do claim and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:—

1. An automatic announcer or silent interpreter for theaters and other places of amusement, comprising a sheet of cloth or other

suitable material bearing thereon the words that are to be uttered by the singers or performers and arranged in proximity to the proscenium opening in position to be moved so as to exhibit in the desired order the explanatory matter thereon simultaneously with the presentation or exhibition of the exercise or performance, a series of lamps arranged in the form of a border about said sheet, a backing in which said lamps are set adapted to throw the light upon the sheet and screen the proscenium opening, and means for moving the cloth past the lamps, substantially as described.

2. The combination with the proscenium of a theater or other similar structure, provided with an automatic announcing sheet or silent interpreter, consisting of a traveling sheet of

suitable material having the desired explanatory matter placed thereon, and mechanism for unfolding or drawing out the sheet so as to exhibit such explanatory matter in the desired order, of the reflector consisting of a metallic plate having a concave reflecting surface bordering the traveling sheet, and a series of lamps set in said reflector so as to throw the light upon the front of said sheet and screen the proscenium opening, substantially as described.

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

STEELE MACKAYE.

Witnesses:

POWEL CROSLEY,

SIDNEY CLARKE WHITE, Jr.