

(No Model.)

H. A. SHELDON.
POST OFFICE BOX.

No. 510,199.

Patented Dec. 5, 1893.

Fig. 1

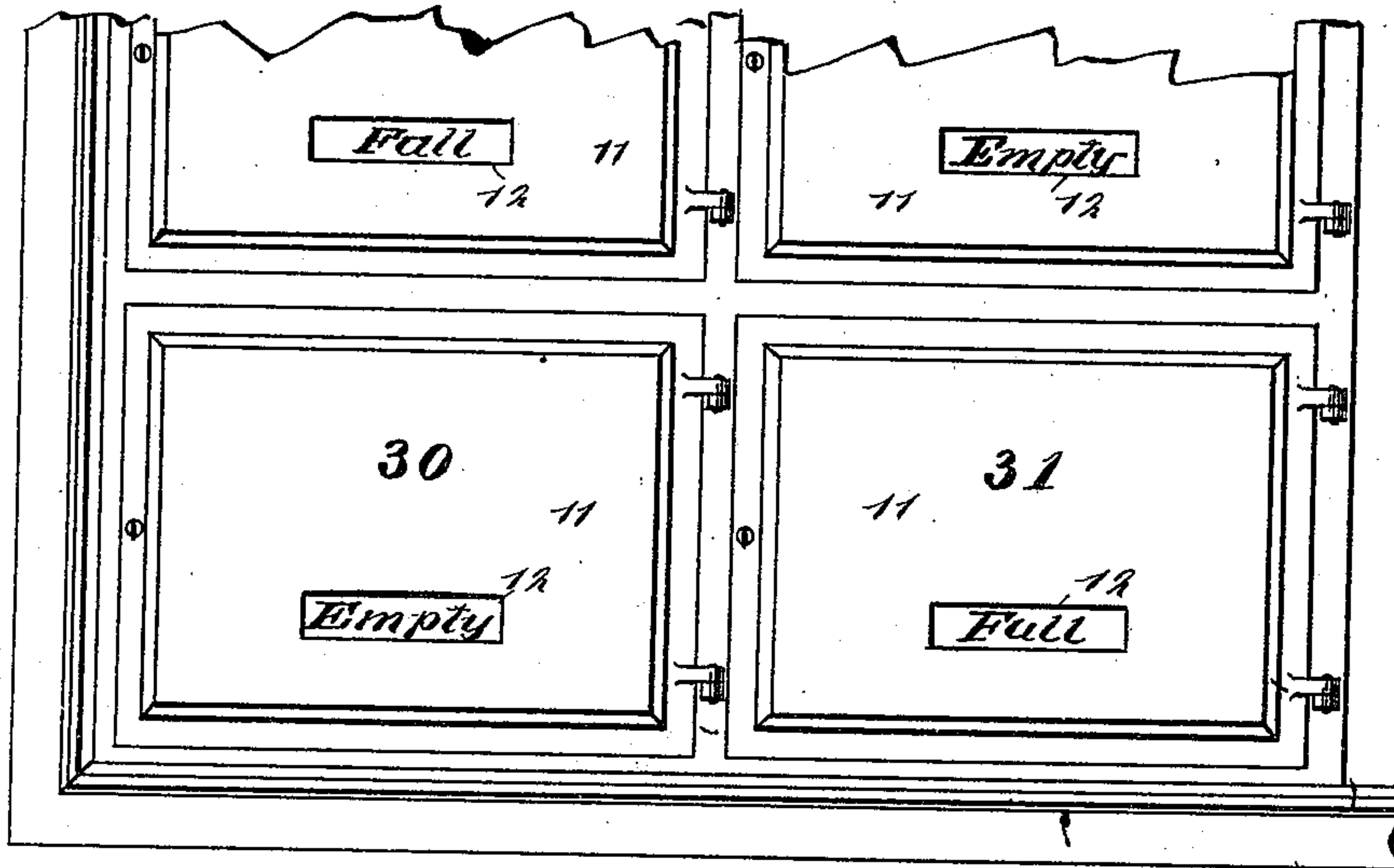
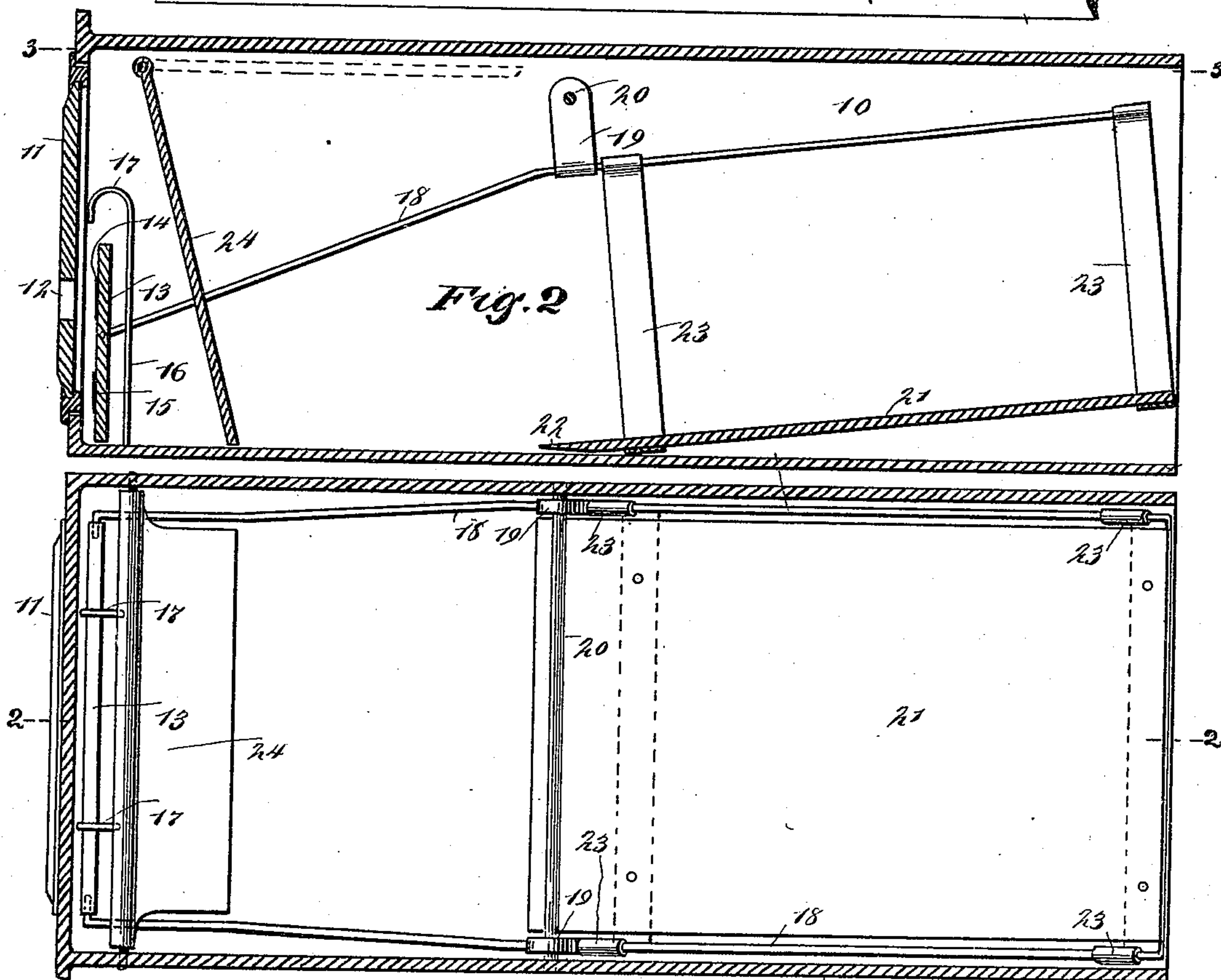


Fig. 2



WITNESSES:

J. A. Beigtherm
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Fig. 3

INVENTOR

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ATTORNEYS.

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

HENRY A. SHELDON, OF ARCADIA, RHODE ISLAND.

POST-OFFICE BOX.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 510,199, dated December 5, 1893.

Application filed February 25, 1893. Serial No. 463,697. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, HENRY A. SHELDON, of Arcadia, in the county of Washington and State of Rhode Island, have invented a new and Improved Post-Office Box, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description.

My invention relates to improvements in that class of letter boxes which are arranged in tiers in post offices, to receive mail matter, the boxes being for the use of private individuals. As these boxes are usually arranged it is easy for a person to look into them and see whether or not there is any mail in the boxes, and ascertain to whom the mail is directed and perhaps from whence it came.

The object of my invention is to provide attachments for such boxes which will enable the proprietor of the box to tell at a glance whether or not the box contains any mail matter, and also to arrange the attachments so that no person can look into the box.

Reference is to be had to the accompanying drawings forming a part of this specification, in which similar figures of reference indicate corresponding parts in all the views.

Figure 1 is a front elevation of several boxes arranged in the usual way and provided with my improvements. Fig. 2 is an enlarged detail longitudinal section of a box provided with my improvements, the section being taken on the line 2—2 in Fig. 3; and Fig. 3 is a sectional plan of the box on the line 3—3 in Fig. 2.

The boxes 10 are of the usual kind, and are arranged in tiers in the usual way, the boxes having at their front ends swinging doors 11, each of which is provided with a horizontal slot 12 in which appears the word "Full" or "Empty" or words of similar import, these words being carried by a sign and displayed when the box contains the mail matter or is empty, the sign being automatically raised and lowered, as hereinafter described. The words "Empty" and "Full" are arranged one above another, as shown at 14 and 15 in Fig. 2, on a sign or plate 13 which moves vertically, parallel with the door 11 and behind the slot 12. The sign is held to move between the door and the guide bars 16 which are arranged behind the sign and are curved over the top of the sign, as shown at 17, and the movement of the sign is limited by the floor

of the box and the curved top portions of the guide bars. The sign is carried by swinging rods or levers 18 which extend longitudinally of the box and on opposite sides thereof, the levers being fulcrumed in hangers 19 which are pivotally suspended on a cross rod 20 extending transversely through the box near the center and top.

A platform 21 is arranged in the lower rear portion of the box and rests normally at a slight inclination, its inner edge being beveled or tapered, as shown at 22 in Fig. 2, so that it will lie snugly upon the floor of the box. This platform is suspended from the rear ends of the rods or levers 18 by means of hangers 23, and the sign 13 is slightly heavier than the platform 21, so that when there is nothing on the platform, the sign will drop into the position shown in Fig. 2, and the word "Empty" will register with the slot 12 so that a person looking at the front of the box will know that the box contains nothing. When, however, any mail matter is placed in the box, it depresses the platform 21, thus tilting the rods or levers 18 and raising the sign so as to display the word "Full," or other similar word printed on the sign, and the proprietor will then be aware that there is something in the box.

The door may be made of any suitable opaque material or it may even be made of transparent glass, as the box is provided with a swinging blind 24 which is arranged near the front end of the box and is pivoted near the top of the box, this blind being adapted to swing vertically, as shown by dotted lines in Fig. 2. If the door is opaque, the sign 24 prevents the contents of the box from being seen when the door is open, and if the door is transparent the blind acts as a shield in the manner specified.

It will be seen that my improved attachments may be easily applied to any ordinary post office letter box, and that the sign will always be automatically operated so that a person may tell, by a glance at the front of the box, whether or not there is anything in it and no person can tell what the box contains.

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

1. The combination, with a letter box hav-

ing a slotted front, of a movable sign held to slide opposite the slot in the front of the box and provided with characters on its face to indicate whether or not the box is empty, and
5 a lever mechanism for actuating the sign by the weight of mail in the box, substantially as described.

2. The combination, with a letter box having a slotted front, of a movable sign held to
10 slide opposite the slot and having characters thereon to indicate whether or not the box is empty, a swinging counterbalanced platform arranged within the box and adapted to be depressed by mail matter, and an operative
15 lever connection for moving the sign by the movement of the platform, substantially as described.

3. The combination, with a letter box having a slotted front, of a vertically movable
20 sign held to move opposite the slot and having characters to indicate whether or not the box is empty, a vertically movable platform

arranged within the box, and swinging levers fulcrumed in the box and connected at one end with the sign and at the opposite end
25 with the platform, substantially as described.

4. The combination, with a letter box having a slotted front, of a vertically movable sign held to slide opposite the slot, guide bars arranged behind and extending above the
30 sign, a swinging platform arranged within the box, and tilting levers fulcrumed in the box and connected at one end with the sign and at the opposite end with the platform, substantially as described.

5. The combination, with the letter box having a door, of a swinging blind arranged within the box and opposite the door, substantially as described.

HENRY A. SHELDON.

Witnesses:

ANSON GREENE,

MARY F. SHELDON.