

No. 638,265.

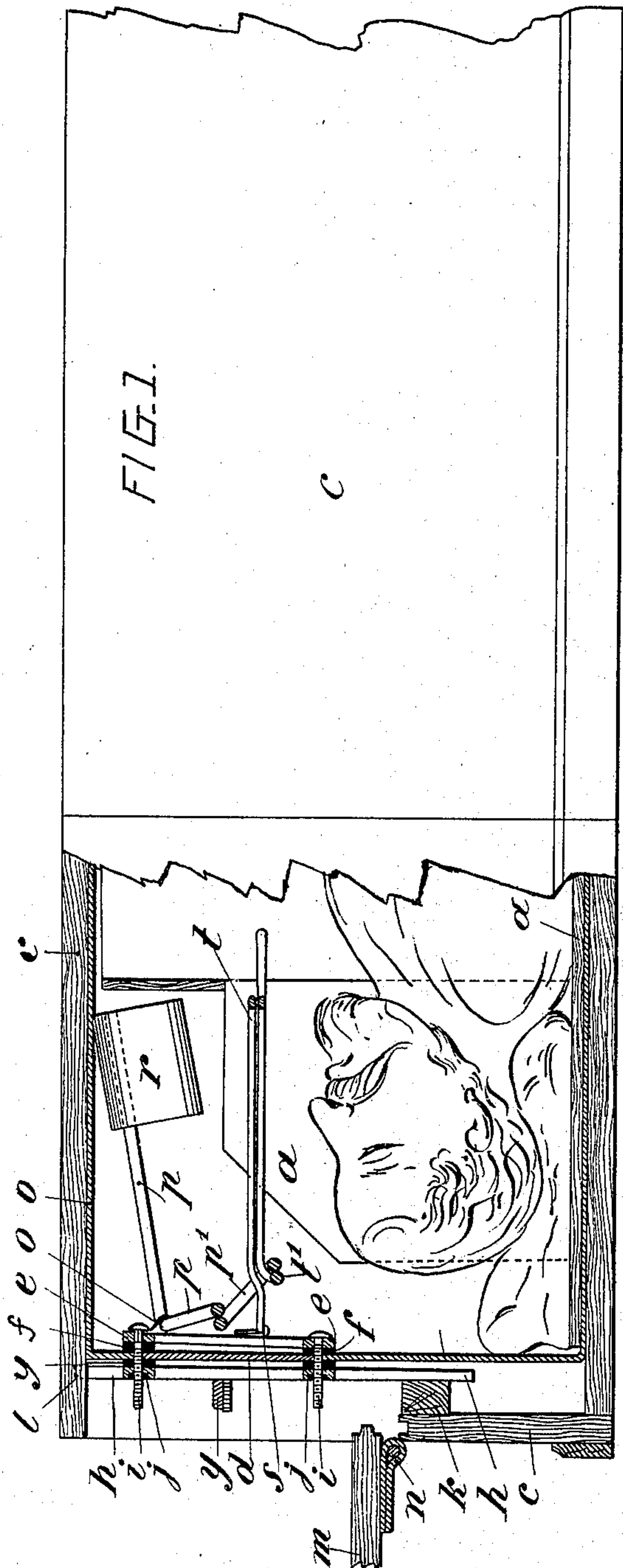
Patented Dec. 5, 1899.

M. C. H. NICOLLE.
COFFIN.

(Application filed Oct. 5, 1899.)

(No Model.)

2 Sheets—Sheet 1.



WITNESSES:
Ella L. Giles
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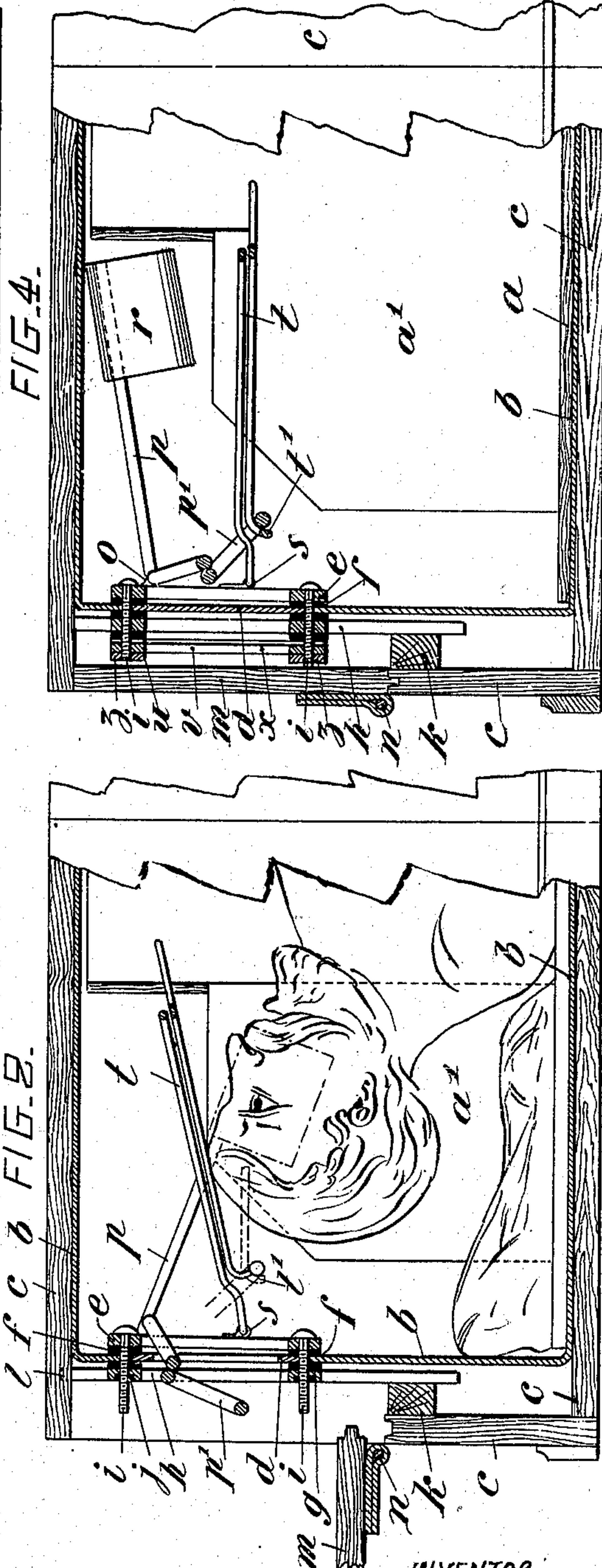


FIG. 2.

INVENTOR
Marie Constant Hippolyte Nicolle
BY
Richardson
ATTORNEYS

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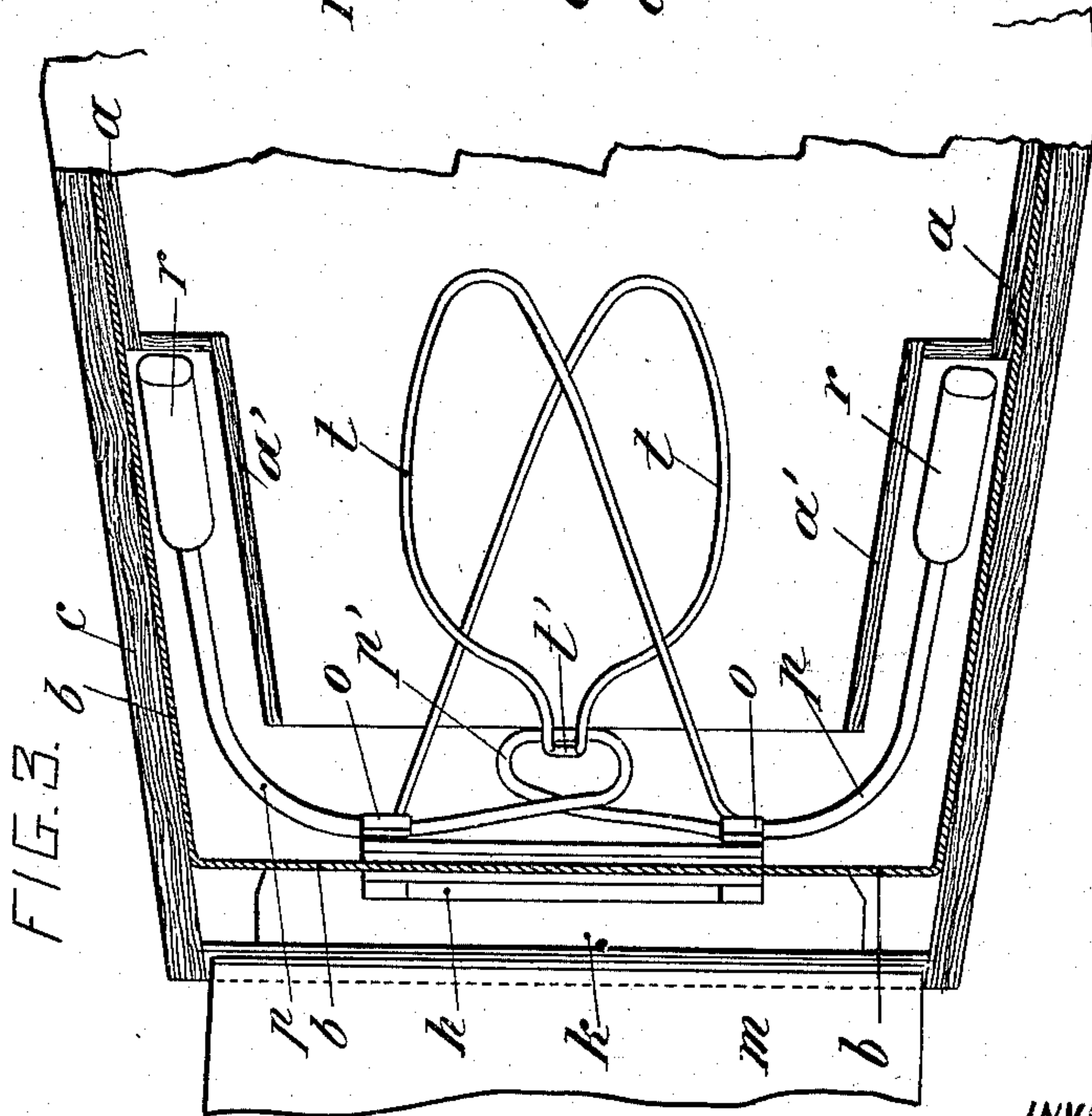
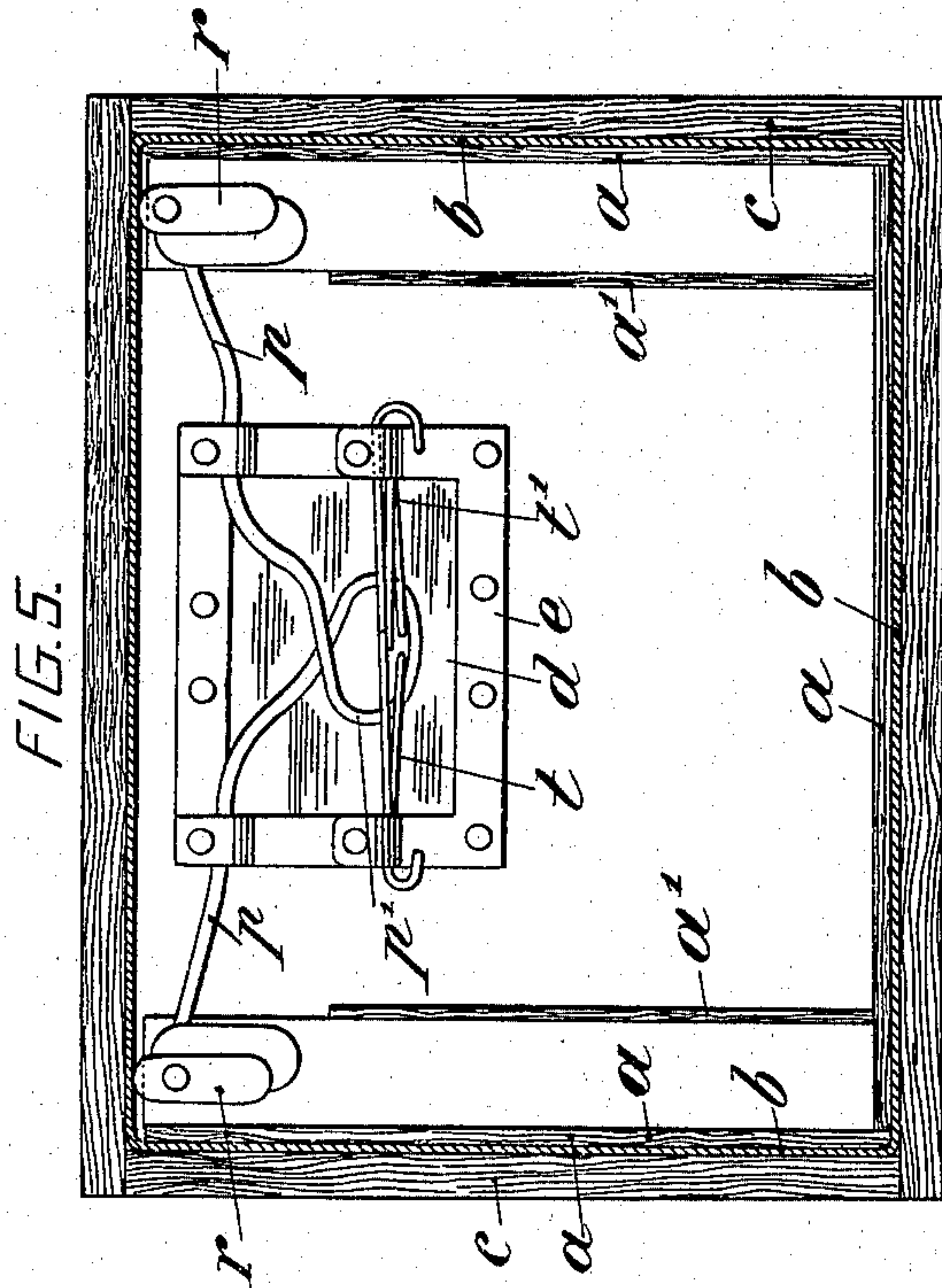
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WITNESSES:
Ella L. Giles
Almon

INVENTOR
Marie Constant Hippolyte Nicolle

BY *Richard R.*

ATTORNEYS

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

MARIE CONSTANT HIPPOLYTE NICOLLE, OF CESNY-BOIS-HALBOUT,
FRANCE.

COFFIN.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 638,265, dated December 5, 1899.

Application filed October 5, 1899. Serial No. 732,701. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, MARIE CONSTANT HIPPOLYTE NICOLLE, independent gentleman, of Cesny-Bois-Halbout, (Calvados,) in the Republic of France, have invented Improvements in Coffins, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description.

This invention relates to improvements in coffins.

I have devised an improved coffin which permits the body to be kept during a certain time until decomposition sets in and, moreover, enables the person inclosed in the coffin to give warning if there has been a mistake.

My invention will be readily understood from the following description, reference being had to the accompanying specimen drawings, in which—

Figure 1 is a side view of my improved coffin with parts removed to show the interior. Fig. 2 shows the mechanism displaced by the movement of a resuscitating person. Fig. 3 is a plan of the coffin, parts of the covers being removed to show the interior. Fig. 4 illustrates the method of closing the coffin after the fact of decease has been positively ascertained. Fig. 5 is a transverse section of the coffin, showing the mechanism therein.

Like letters of reference indicate corresponding parts throughout the figures of the drawings.

As shown in the drawings, my improved coffin comprises an interior envelop *a* of wood, a lining *b* of lead or the like, and an exterior envelop *c*.

At the head of the coffin the interior envelop *a* is not closed, and the sides *a'* are brought toward each other to permit the working of the mechanism, as will be explained hereinafter.

The lead lining *b* is provided at the head end of the coffin with a glazed window *d*, mounted in a gas-tight frame. A metallic frame *e*, resting on a caoutchouc washer or packing *f*, is arranged at the interior against the glass *d* and the leaden envelop *b*. Similarly, on the outside there are a caoutchouc washer or packing *g* and a metallic frame *h*. Bolts *i*, provided with caoutchouc washers, extend through the frames *e* and *h* and the

envelop *b* and receive on the outside nuts *j*, which are let in flush within the thickness of the frame *h*. The frame *h* is attached at each side at its lower part to a transverse piece *k*, and its upper part rests within a slot or groove *l*, cut in the lid. The exterior envelop *c* of the coffin is provided in front of the window *d* with a small door *m*, which is adapted to turn upon the hinges *n*. A kind of double lever *p* is mounted by means of two ears or lugs upon the interior frame *e*. The central part of the said lever *p* forms a handle or folded part *p'*, while the free ends receive counterweights *r*, preferably of lead. An arrangement *t*, supporting a hook *t'*, which engages in the handle *p'* to maintain the counterweights *r* elevated, is also hinged by means of ears or lugs *s* upon the frame *e*.

When a body is placed in the coffin, the counterweights *r* are lifted and maintained in this position by means of the hook *t'*, engaging in the handle *p'*. The door *m*, arranged at the head of the coffin, is left open, so that through the window *d* the decomposition of the corpse can be watched.

If a mistake has been made, the supposed corpse will be able to obtain air and summon assistance in the following manner: At the time of recovery the person will naturally raise the head. In making this movement the person strikes the arrangement *t* and releases the hook *t'* from the handle *p'*. This handle, thus liberated by the action of the counterweights *r*, swings against and breaks the glass *d*. The person can then breathe, since the glass being broken air is now admitted to the interior of the coffin. Moreover, the glass in breaking makes sufficient sound to attract attention, or I can also by the breaking of the glass set in motion any convenient apparatus for sounding an alarm. For example, I arrange upon the projecting parts of the bolts *i* a bar or arm *y*, lying in the path of and adapted to be pushed away by the handle *p'*, so as to put in operation a gong or any other suitable sound-producing device.

If the decomposition of the corpse sets in, it is then certain that death has taken place. Before removing the coffin for burial the window *d* is covered with a sheet of caoutchouc

u or other suitable packing and a plate of sheet-iron v, which is supported by a metallic frame x, held in place by means of nuts z, engaging the projecting ends of the bolts i, as shown in Fig. 4 of the drawings. When this has been done, the small door m is closed and secured by screws to the lid of the coffin, which can then be transported in the usual manner.

The shape, details, accessories, materials, and dimensions of my improved coffin can be varied without departing from the nature of my said invention.

I claim—

1. In combination in a coffin, a transparent fragile pane in the head thereof, a pivoted arm adapted to break said pane, means for holding said arms away from the pane, said means being actuated by the person in the coffin.

2. In combination in a coffin, a transparent fragile pane therein, a pivoted lever having an end adapted to swing in contact with said pane to break the same, means for holding said arms away from the glass, said means

extending above the head-rest in said coffin to be released by the person in said coffin. 25

3. In combination in a coffin, a fragile pane in the head thereof, a bell-crank lever pivoted in proximity thereto having one arm weighted and its opposite arm adapted to swing in contact with said pane, and a pivoted catch adapted to hold the latter arm away from the glass with the weighted arm raised, said catch extending above the head of a person in said coffin, substantially as described. 30 35

4. In combination in a coffin, a fragile pane in the head thereof, means arranged in said coffin for breaking said pane and a door adapted to close the end of said coffin and cover said pane, substantially as described. 40

The foregoing specification of my improvements in coffins signed by me this 21st day of September, 1899.

MARIE CONSTANT HIPPOLYTE NICOLLE,

Witnesses:

EDWARD P. MACLEAN,

MAURICE HENRI PIGNET.