O. WELLS. 2 Sheets—Sheet 1.

Self-Waiting Table.

No. 206,845. Patented Aug. 6, 1878.

Fig. 1.

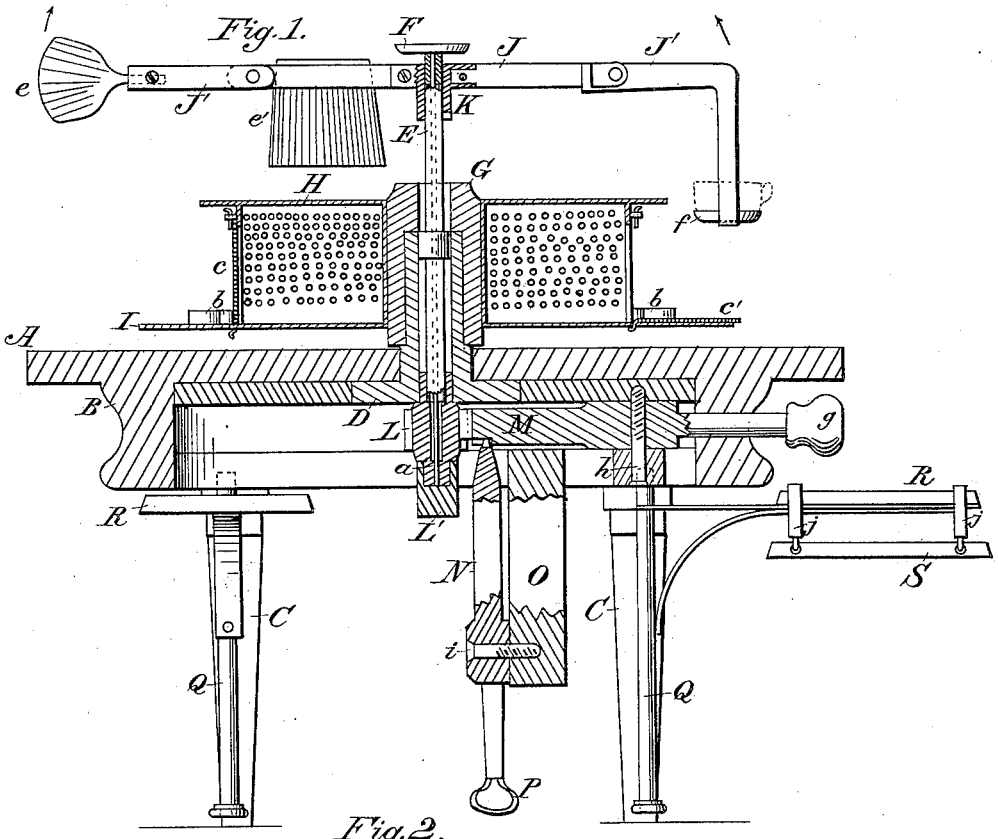
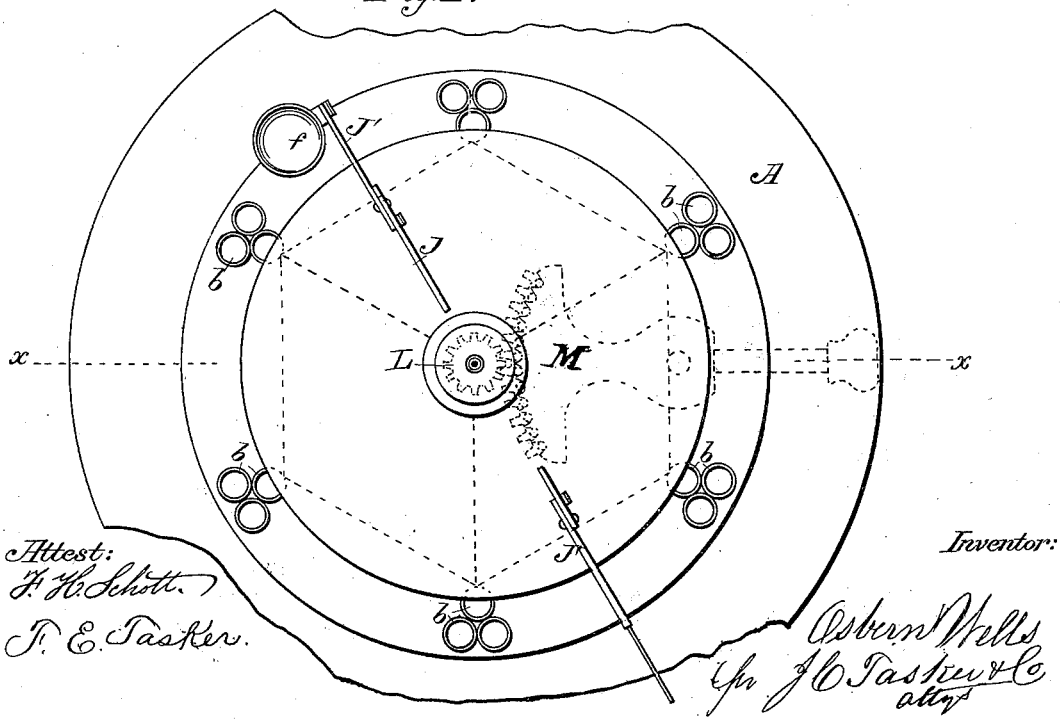


Fig. 2.



Attest:
F. H. Schott.
T. E. Tasker.

Inventor:
Asbern Wells
by J. C. Tasker & Co
attys

N. PETERS, PHOTO-LITHOGRAPHER, WASHINGTON, D. C.

2 Sheets—Sheet 2.

O. WELLS.

Self-Waiting Table.

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Fig. 3.

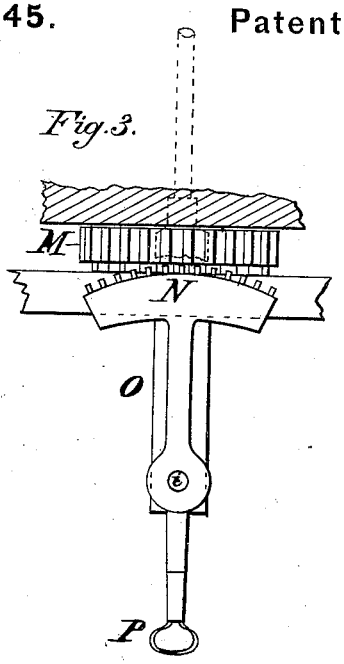


Fig. 5.

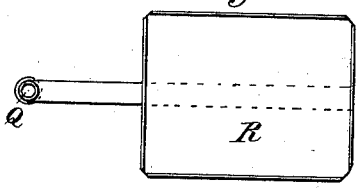


Fig. 4.

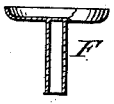


Fig. 6.

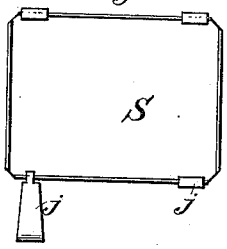
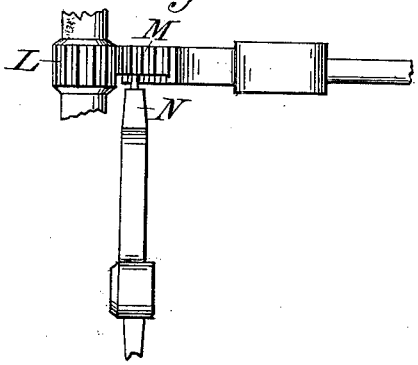


Fig. 7.



Attest:
F. H. Schott.
T. E. Tasker

Inventor:
Osborn Wells
per J. C. Tasker & Co.
attys

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

OSBERN WELLS, OF NEWBERRY, SOUTH CAROLINA.

IMPROVEMENT IN SELF-WAITING TABLES.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. **206,845**, dated August 6, 1878; application filed June 24, 1878.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, OSBERN WELLS, of Newberry, in the county of Newberry and State of South Carolina, have invented certain new and useful Improvements in Self-Waiting Tables; and I do hereby declare that the following is a full, clear, and exact description of the invention, which will enable others skilled in the art to which it appertains to make and use the same, reference being had to the accompanying drawings, and to letters of reference marked thereon, which form a part of this specification.

This invention relates to that class of labor-saving devices usually called "self-waiting tables," the object being to dispense wholly with the attendance of servants at the table during meals, thus enabling families and others to enjoy greater privacy, and at the same time to be as well helped as if attended by a retinue of servants; and the invention consists in the construction and arrangement of devices by which the food and other articles are expeditiously carried from one part of the table to another, and in the means used for protecting the food and persons seated at the table from the attacks of insects, all of which will be hereinafter fully described, and then specifically pointed out in the claims.

In the drawings, Figure 1 is a vertical transverse section through the table and its appurtenances on the line *x x* of Fig. 2. Fig. 2 is a plan view of the table-top and its rotating central safe and accompanying devices. Fig. 3 is a detail of a part of the apparatus, showing the construction and arrangement of the gear which operates the rotating part of the table. Fig. 4 represents, partly in section, the lamp or bouquet holder, which is placed upon the upper end of the central rotating shaft. Fig. 5 shows one of the swinging waiters, which are attached to a shaft journaled beside one or more of the table-legs. Fig. 6 is a pan for the reception of dirty dishes or other articles, and which is hung beneath the waiter by means of detachable hooks. Fig. 7 is a side view of the segmental levers and pinion for operating the waiting portion of the table.

The table-top A is of circular or other form, and may be constructed in the ordinary manner, and placed upon a supporting-bed, B, formed of wooden segments, and with its periphery turned to form moldings of any ornamental shape desired. Into this bed is inserted, and strongly secured thereto, the legs C, which may be three or more in number, according to the size of the table. Secured to and passing up through the center of the table is the hollow support D, through which the rotating shaft E passes. This shaft is also hollow, to allow the passage through it of the spindle *a*, which supports the lamp-stand or bouquet-holder F. A sleeve, G, freely turning, provided with an internal shoulder, encircles and rests upon the top of the hollow support D. This sleeve carries the circular or polygonal safe H, which is provided with the encircling circular bottom I, of greater diameter than the safe, so as to leave a margin all around outside the safe-doors. Upon this margin, at the angles between the doors, may be placed the stands *b*, which serve as supports for salts, pepper-boxes, and other condiments.

The safe-doors *c* are hinged at the bottom, so that when open, as shown at *c'*, Fig. 1, they lie flat upon the margin of the bed I. These doors, together with the partitions between the different compartments of the safe, are formed of perforated metal sheets, or of wire-gauze secured to a suitable frame-work, so as to give free passage to air through the whole structure, thus securing perfect ventilation.

A cap, K, provided with sockets, into which are inserted the jointed or telescopic arms J, is placed upon the top of the shaft E. These arms J extend at right angles to the shaft, and parallel with the surface of the table nearly to its periphery, the extension-pieces J′ being jointed thereto, as shown in the drawing, or having a telescopic movement, the part J being tubular, and the extension J′ sliding out and into it, so as to bring the articles attached to their extremities nearer to or farther from the persons surrounding the table, as may be desired. To some of these arms are attached fans or brushes *e* and *e'*, while others carry at their extremities the waiters *f*, by means of which articles placed thereon are carried to any desired point in the circumference of the table.

In order to give motion to the devices above named, a short tubular pinion, L, is employed, the lower journal or step of which is carried in the cross-piece L′, secured to the bottom of

the table, while its upper end has a bearing in the hollow support D, and is bored out to receive the lower end of the shaft E.

Pivoted upon the pin *h* is a horizontally-placed segment, M, having a handle, *g*, which passes through a slot in the side of the bed B, and into convenient proximity to the hand of a person sitting at the table. This segment M is provided with teeth upon its periphery, which engage with the teeth of the pinion L. It is therefore evident that a movement of the handle *g* to the right or left will rotate the pinion, which, carrying with it the shaft E, will cause the arms J and their attachments to perform an evolution about the table, so that a person, by moving the handle, may carry an article placed upon one of the waiters to the opposite side of the table, or any other point in its circumference desired.

As the hands of a person attending to the wants of others about the table are generally fully employed, it becomes necessary to provide some other means of imparting rotation to the pinion. This I accomplish by forming an additional set of teeth upon the under side of the segment M, into which enter the teeth of the vertically-swinging segment N, pivoted by the pin *i* to the pendant O, which is secured to and depends from the table-bed.

To the lower end of the arm of the segment N is secured a stirrup, P, by placing the foot in which, and giving the segment a swaying movement, the pinion and its attachments are caused to rotate the same as if actuated by the handle *g*.

Pivoted in steps secured to the legs of the table, with upper bearings in the under side of the frame, are the removable cranes Q, which carry the waiters R. These waiters, it will be seen, may be swung under the table out of the way, and are designed for carrying dishes and articles of food. Suspended beneath these waiters by means of the straps *j* are the pans S, which serve as receptacles for empty dishes, &c.

The advantages of this construction and arrangement for a self-waiting table may be summed up as follows: The segment moved by the foot operates waiters and fans, and a device is also provided for accomplishing the same purpose by hand when desired, so that the waiters and fans may be put in motion, at pleasure, either by hand or foot. In either case the means of operation is invisible to guests or others seated at the table, as the machinery is all placed beneath it. The peculiar construction of the rotating safe upon the top of the table admits of perfect ventilation—the walls, doors, and partitions being all perforated for that purpose. This safe is readily turned by hand so as to bring any part thereof before the person who is waiting upon the table. The various kinds of food are put into the different compartments, and that portion containing the kind desired is turned so as to be in front of the person who dishes out the food. Between the doors of the safe, and upon the projecting bottom, are placed the stands to receive the condiments, thus serving the purpose of the ordinary custom. The doors of the safe, when open, lie perfectly flat upon the bottom, thus allowing dishes to be removed from it without obstruction, as they are entirely out of the way. The safe also answers as a turn-table to carry any article placed upon it to another part of the table. Two of the horizontal arms are generally provided with fans and brushes, which may be kept gently moving in alternate directions by the action of the foot upon the stirrup. Any number of fans or brushes may be attached to the other arms, if desired; but these arms are generally provided with waiters attached to their extremities, which are used for the purpose of sending dishes to persons sitting around the table, or receiving dishes from them. The stand placed on the top of the shaft in the middle of the table is used as a lamp-stand or to support a vase of flowers, and may be supported upon a rod passing down through the shaft and resting upon the piece L′, so that the stand shall not revolve with the shaft, as such rotation might be dangerous when lamps using petroleum-oil are used. The swinging cranes, with their attached waiters, may be used to support dishes, but when not required are swung under the table out of the way. The pans attached to these waiters will be found very useful for holding empty dishes until after the meal is finished, when they may be gathered up and removed.

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

1. In a self-waiting table, the combination of the shaft E, carrying arms J and their attachments, pinion L, and segment M, provided with the operating-handle *g*, substantially as described.

2. In a self-waiting table, the vertical shaft E and pinion L, in combination with the toothed horizontal segment M and vertically-swinging segment N, provided with stirrup P, as and for the purpose described.

3. The rotating safe composed of the circular top H and enlarged bottom I, provided with stands *b*, connected to the top by the perforated sides, having folding doors *c* and vertical partitions, substantially as shown and described.

4. In a self-waiting table, the combination of the support D, rotating shaft E, spindle *a*, support L′, and stationary stand F, as and for the purpose specified.

5. The cranes Q, provided with waiters R and suspended pans S, in combination with the table-legs and bed, as and for the purpose set forth.

In testimony that I claim the foregoing as my own I hereunto affix my signature in presence of two witnesses.

OSBERN WELLS.

Witnesses:
E. A. DICK,
FRED E. TASKER.