former 402 so as to be spaced outwardly from the primary winding within the oil filled transformer chamber.

The cathode 43 in the form of a longitudinally slotted tube which is embedded in the peripheral wall portion 183, this being achieved by moulding the insulator around the cathode. The cathode has eight equally spaced longitudinal slots 191 so that it is essentially comprised of eight cathode strips 192 disposed between the slots and connected together at top and bottom only, the slots being filled with the insulating material of insulator 183.

Both the anode and cathode are made of nickel plated mild steel. The outer periphery of the anode is machined to form eight circumferentially spaced flutes 193 which have arcuate roots meeting at sharp crests or ridges 194 defined between the flutes. The eight anode crests 194 are radially aligned centrally of the cathode strips 192 and the perimeter of the anode measured along its external surface is equal to the combined widths of the cathode strips measured at the internal surfaces of these strips, so that over the major part of their lengths the anode and cathode have equal effective areas. This equalization of areas generally have not been available in prior art cylindrical anode/cathode arrangements.

As most clearly seen in FIG. 27 the upper end of anode 42 is relieved and fitted with an annular collar 200 the outer periphery of which is shaped to form an extension of the outer peripheral surface of the fluted anode. This collar is formed of an electrically insulated plastics material such as polyvinyl chloride or teflon. A locating pin 205 extends through collar 200 to project upwardly into an opening in upper insulating plate 182 and to extend downwardly into a hole 210 in the cathode. The collar is thus located in correct annular alignment relative to the anode and the anode is correctly aligned relative to the cathode.

The annular space 195 between the anode and cathode serves as the electrolyte solution chamber. Initially this chamber is filled approximately 75% full with an electrolyte solution of 25% potassium hydroxide in distilled water. As the electrolysis reaction progresses hydrogen and oxygen gases collect in the upper part of this chamber and water is admitted to maintain the level of electrolyte solution in the chamber. Insulating collar 200 shields the cathode in the upper region of the chamber where hydrogen and oxygen gases collect to prevent any possibility of arcing through these gases between the anode and cathode.

Electrolyte chamber 195 is divided by a tubular membrane 196 formed by nylon woven mesh material 408 stretched over a tubular former 197 formed of very thin sheet steel. As most clearly illustrated in FIGS. 20 and 21 former 197 has upper and lower rim portions 198, 199 connected by circumferentially spaced strip portions 201. The nylon mesh material 408 may be simply folded around the upper and lower insulators 182, 183 so that the former is electrically isolated from all other components of the cell. Material 408 has a mesh size which is so small that the mesh openings will not pass bubbles of greater than 0.004 inch diameter and the material can therefore serve as a barrier against mixing of hydrogen and oxygen generated at the cathode and anode respectively while permitting the electrolytic flow of current between the electrodes. The upper rim portion 198 of the membrane former 197 is deep enough to constitute a solid barrier through the depth of the gas collection chamber above the electrolyte solution level so that there will be no mixing of hydrogen and oxygen within the upper part of the chamber.

Fresh water is admitted into the outer section of chamber 195 via an inlet nozzle 211 formed in upper closure plate 178. The electrolyte solution passes from the outer to the inner sections of chamber 195 through the mesh membrane 408.

Nozzle 211 has a flow passage 212 extending to an electrolyte inlet valve 213 controlled by a float 214 in chamber 195. Valve 213 comprises a bushing 215 mounted within an opening extending downwardly through upper closure plate 179 and the peripheral flange 185 of upper insulator 182 and providing a valve seat which cooperates with valve needle 216. Needle 216 rests on a pad 217 on the upper end of float 214 so that when the electrolyte solution is at the required level the float lifts the needle hard against the valve seat. The float slides vertically on a pair of square section slide rods 218 extending between the upper and lower insulators 182 and 183. These rods, which may be formed of polytetrafluoroethylene extend through appropriate holes 107 through the float.

The depth of float 214 is chosen such that the electrolyte solution fills only approximately 75% of the chamber 195, leaving the upper part of the chamber as a gas space which can accommodate expansion of the generated gas due to heating within the cell.

As electrolysis of the electrolyte solution within chamber 195 proceeds, hydrogen gas is produced at the cathode and oxygen gas is produced at the anode. These gases bubble upwardly into the upper part of chamber 195 where they remain separated in the inner and outer compartments defined by membrane and it should be noted that the electrolyte solution enters that part of the chamber which is filled with oxygen rather than hydrogen so there is no chance of leakage of hydrogen back through the electrolyte inlet nozzle.

The abutting faces of upper closure plates 178, 179 have matching annular grooves forming within the upper closure inner and outer gas collection passages 221, 222. Outer passage 222 is circular and it communicates with the hydrogen compartment of chamber 195 via eight ports 223 extending downwardly through top closure plate 179 and the peripheral flange of upper insulator 182 adjacent the cathode strips 192. Hydrogen gas flows upwardly through ports 223 into passage 222 and thence upwardly through a one-way valve 224 (FIG. 19) into a reservoir 225 provided by a plastic housing 226 bolted to top closure plate 178 via a centre stud 229 and sealed by a gasket 227. The lower part of housing 114 is charged with water. Stud 229 is hollow and its lower end has a transverse port 228 so that, on removal of a sealing cap 229 from its upper end it can be used as a filter down which to pour water into the reservoir 225. Cap 229 fits over a nut 231 which provides the clamping action on plastic housing 226 and resilient gaskets 232, 233 and 234 are fitted between the nut and cover, between the cap and the nut and between the cap and the upper end of stud 229.

One-way valve 224 comprises a bushing 236 which projects downwardly into the annular hydrogen passage 221 and has a valve head member 237 screw fitted to its upper end to provide clamping action on top closure plate 178 between the head member and a flange 238 at the bottom end bushing 236. Bushing 236 has a central bore 239, the upper end of which receives the diamond cross-section stem of a valve member 240,