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ABSTRACT

An indexing mechanism has an indexing shaft (4) rotatably supported on a base block, and a ratchet wheel (8) provided in its circumference with indexing teeth (13) arranged at intervals, and fixedly mounted on the indexing shaft (4). A worm wheel (7) is fixedly mounted on the indexing shaft (4), and a rotating shaft is supported for rotation on the base block (2) with its axis of rotation extending perpendicularly to the axis of rotation of the indexing shaft (4). A worm (18) is fixedly mounted on the rotating shaft (15) in engagement with the worm wheel (7). A holding pawl (26) is supported on the base block (2) for turning between a working position where the tip thereof engages the indexing tooth (13) and an idle position where the tip thereof is disengaged from the indexing teeth (13). A reversible servomotor (21) is coupled with the rotating shaft (15) to rotate the indexing shaft (4) through the worm (18) and worm wheel (7). The servomotor (21) is controlled so as to turn the indexing shaft (4) in the normal direction so that a desired one of the indexing teeth (13) of the ratchet wheel (8) is turned beyond a desired indexed position where the desired indexing tooth (13) engages the tip of the holding pawl (26) and to turn the indexing shaft (4) in the reverse direction to bring the desired indexing tooth into engagement with the tip of the holding pawl (26).