



NEW YORK, MARCH 17, 1849.

Inventors and Inventions.

One of the best articles that we have ever read upon the rights and wrongs of inventors, appeared in the Tribune of the 3d inst. The author of it understands his subject well and speaks the truth with "all boldness." There is not a more deeply injured class of men than inventors. It is too common for people utterly devoid of genius themselves or too lazy to exert it, to sneer at the studious, inventing man and laugh at his labors. Men of an inventive turn of mind, are generally of an enthusiastic temperament, and no man can be eminent without such a disposition. Owing to this fact, many of their schemes fail as well as those of other men. How often are such failures the subjects of rejoicing to brainless neighbors, people of too blunted minds to appreciate the labors or mental qualities of the inventor. On the other hand when some beautiful and simple invention is brought before the public, it is quite common to hear men throwing aspersions on its merits. Well has the author of the article referred to above, hit off this class. He says: "Some inventions are so simple and apparently so obvious, that the general wonder is, how they escaped detection so long. Of them it is common to hear petty boasters assert that they could bring scores of such things to light as easily as kiss their hands; (an expression of ancient vaunters.) But let them try to perform what they are so confident of being able to do, and they'll find out one thing which they do not seem to know—viz., that it is much easier to ridicule than realize an original idea however small or trifling,—to deride a simple contrivance, than to produce one. The plainest devices cost their authors a great deal more than can be imagined by those who glance at results and measure value by imposing show and complexity. Pins are small affairs, but the machines that now make them were not conceived by small-sized intellects. The inventors and improvers of nails and gimlets, have higher claims to fame than all the monarchs that ever reigned. And happy for Humanity would it be if those now reigning, and their supporters too, were compelled to earn their bread by nail and gimlet making."

The claims of inventors are now beginning to attract more attention, and such pens as that of him who wrote the above sentences, will do much to enforce those claims and defend their rights.

Many poor inventors have suffered by professed friends—friends who were friends to get the invention from the inventor, and then let him starve, if he pleased. Many societies got up for the avowed purpose of protecting inventors, have turned out to be their plunderers. We are pledged in principle and duty to advocate and defend the rights of the true inventor, and happy are we to grasp the friendly hand of a co-laborer—one who can bring experience and talent to overthrow the most doughy champion of wrong.

In a number of instances, good and useful inventions are denied protection, while some that are insignificant are promptly shielded by "seal and patent." This has happened in a great number of instances with those who have applied for patents. Some good things have been rejected for an apparent want of novelty, while others have been protected for useless novelty.

Report of the Commissioner of Patents.

The whole number of applications for patents made during the past year was 1628, and no less than 607 caveats have been filed. This is 95 more patent applications and 74 more caveats filed than during 1847. The ratio of applications will increase with the increase of population. The Commissioner says, "a much larger proportion of applications are rejected than patents granted, but some may yet be reconsidered and passed." The excess of

receipts over all disbursements is \$8,670 85. The number of applications waiting to be examined January 1st, was 539, a reduction of 359 from the 1st of August. This shows that the increase of the Examining force at the Patent Office will soon be upon a level with the applications, and inventors will not be held so long in suspense as formerly. Mr. Burke justly and boldly alludes to "the remorseless invasion of the rights of patentees by persons having no claims nor pretensions to the name of inventor." He says that "the wilful infringer of a patent right is as base and corrupt as a common thief—that he is impelled by the same corrupt intent, and should be hunted from society with the same inexorable perseverance." Bravo! say we, to these sentiments.

A great number of inventions have been presented of an inferior character and others of a very superior character. This will always happen. Mr. Burke says, that a person had recently applied to him to know how he could be protected in the way to make Russia Sheet Iron—the secret of which he had found out. Our laws grant a patent to none but the inventor, but in this case willingly would we see Congress grant him a patent for it—he deserves it—our country would be benefited by it. In England he would receive full encouragement and Protection. The Commissioner recommends to Congress the lowering of patent fees to foreigners. This is good. Did our country know what a benefit would result from it—a law would soon be passed for that purpose. We intend to agitate it. We request attention to the following part of the Report.

"It has come to the knowledge of the undersigned, since his last report, that one method of evading the rights of patentees in the United States, is the setting up of machines in Canada, or other neighboring British provinces, where the articles manufactured by such machines are fabricated, and are then brought into the United States and sold, to the great injury of the American patentee.—As the sale of the products of a patented machine has been decided by our courts not to be an infringement of the patent, the patentee has no remedy in the case now under consideration.

The protection, therefore, of our own citizens holding patents under this government would seem to require some legislation for the suppression of these fraudulent practices carried on within the limits of a foreign jurisdiction. A provision authorizing the seizure and forfeiture of all fabrics and manufactures which have been produced in a foreign jurisdiction, by machines protected by patents in the United States, and brought into this country for sale, would probably be an adequate remedy against such a violation of the rights of the American patentee."

The Commissioner does not refer to British subjects, but Americans who have fled across the lines to pursue a more than privateer calling. We disagree with the Commissioner in respect to the manner of arresting the evil—it cannot be done in the way he recommends. Suppose a vessel comes here with lasts from England, where Mr. Blanchard's patent has expired—what is to be done? Suppose from Canada—how is it to be settled, that they were made by Mr. Blanchard's machine? No way that we can imagine. Now all this must be done in justice, if such a bill would be passed. Our plan is to accomplish the object by treaty. We believe that our Government and the British Government would soon arrange the matter, just let them enter upon it in a proper spirit. Our navigation laws will soon be reciprocal and so might our Patent Laws. As nations speaking the same language and possessing like mechanical tastes, our patent laws should be reciprocal. This would effectually root out the interlopers in Canada. We believe that the Canadians, would go for the measure. We shall refer to some points of this able report again.

Diplomatic Smuggling.

An article appeared a short time ago in one of our leading papers, stating that one of our diplomatic agents abroad had been detected in smuggling British goods, as articles for his family. We do not believe that there is a particle of truth in the whole story.

The Discoverer of Etherization.

We have received a very interesting Report on the discovery of the Lethon, from the pen of Dr. Edwards, of the House of Representatives, the author of the drug-inspection law now in operation, which protects the community from adulterated medicines which used to be manufactured abroad for the American market. Dr. Edwards was chairman of a select committee to whom was referred the memorial of Dr. Wm T. G. Morton, of Boston, asking compensation from Congress for his discovery of the anesthetic property of sulphuric ether. The report embraces an elaborate examination of Dr. Morton's claim to the honor of a discovery, disputed now, it is well known, by Dr. Charles T. Jackson, of Boston, as it was also disputed by the late unfortunate Horace Wells, of Connecticut, and it is this inquisition and the result which gives the report so much interest. The judgment of the committee is, that Dr. Morton is entitled to the merit of discovery, and the merit they award him accordingly. "The great thought," says the Report, page 29, "was of producing insensibility to pain; and the discovery consisted in that thought, and in verifying it practically by experiment. For this the world is indebted to Dr. Morton."

We heard that the French Institute conferred, a short time ago, an honorary distinction upon Dr. Jackson for the discovery of the letheon. Our Congress has awarded, after a full investigation, the honor to another, and they have had the best means of investigation.—"Honor to whom honor is due."

More about Balloons.

The Presse, of Vienna, Austria, has the following:—"Venice is to be bombarded by balloons, as the lagunes prevent the approaching of artillery. Five balloons, each twenty-three feet in diameter, are in construction at Treviso. In a favorable wind the balloons will be launched and directed as near to Venice as possible, and on their being brought to vertical positions over the town, the fire will be given by electro magnetism. Each of the five bombs affixed to the balloon is in communication by means of a long isolated copper wire with a large galvanic battery placed on the shore. The fusee is ignited by connecting the wire. The bomb falls perpendicularly, and explodes on reaching the ground. By this means twenty-five bombs a day may be thrown, supposing the wind to be favorable. An experiment made at Trevis on the 9th, succeeded completely."

We suppose that the Austrians wish to try the experiment with the Viennese which Marshal Jourdan tried with the Austrians in 1794 as it is said that he obtained the victory of Fleuries over the Austrians by reconnoitring their position by means of a balloon.

Among the singular announcements of the day, connected with this subject, is one from a Mr. Brown, of Portland Place, London, who requests that American and English capitalists will join him in establishing "a balloon railway from Washington, in the United States to any particular spot in California." Mr. Brown states that the distance, 3000 miles, on favorable occasions, may be accomplished by hundreds of balloons in three days!

Another gentleman announces that he possesses important information, known only to himself, "where gold may be obtained in pure lumps from an ounce to a pound weight and upwards, and sufficient to ballast a ship in a few hours, without deviating far from the ordinary course of vessels." This "valuable secret" the gentleman will disclose "on easy terms."

Mr. Brown wishes to do something *brown* no doubt. His balloon is anticipated by Mr. Pennington, who exhibited a cigar balloon a few years ago at Washington, and beside our New York Revoloidal Spindle Air Propeller, will be on her second trip to California before Mr. Brown is able to get here from London. Uncle Johnny should stick to Portland Place. If he ventures to balloon it, we are afraid that when he gets up, he may get to land, but not to port.

A new bell weighing 10,000 pounds, for our City Hall has arrived from Andrew Meeneely's Foundry at west Troy N. Y.

Blanchard's Invention.

To New England belongs the credit of having invented two machines that have produced complete revolutions in two departments of American industry. We allude to the Cotton Gin of Whitney, and the machine invented for turning irregular forms by Thomas Blanchard. This latter machine is a beautiful invention in more respects than one. It can whittle out the spoke of the rolling carriage. It can turn out the stock of the rifleman's gun. It can turn out the last that shapes the dainty slipper for the lightsome foot of a Cinderella, and it can copy the bust of statesman or hero. During the inauguration Mr. Blanchard was in Washington and had some splendid busts of Henry Clay and General Taylor. The finish of the busts exhibited perfection in machinery, a perfection in copying denied to man with all his heaven born genius. Some of the ladies in Washington were so fascinated with the splendid likenesses, that they pressed their glowing lips to the marble from love to the originals, and this was certainly a great compliment to the inventor of the machine—yea more, it was, unwittingly to them, doing homage to his genius.

The Electric Light, &c.

Our contemporary the "Independent Monitor," Tuscaloosa, Alabama, enquires of us, "What has become of the Electric Light of Mr. Paine?" We cannot tell. Has our friend read our opinion regarding its probable utility?

We see the receipt which we published about a year ago for welding iron and steel, flourishing around among our contemporaries as a recent French invention. The new composition candles too, which we arranged and cooked up in 100 words from a specification covering 5 pages of English manuscript, is going round too, fully credited to another paper, that should not, but does make free trade a good trade in other people's property. Well we can afford to "lend our lantern."

Patent Case.—Blanchard's Patent.

The case of Blanchard's patent, wherein Mr. Eldridge, of Philadelphia, was the defendant, for an alleged infringement of the aforesaid patent, was brought to a termination before Judge Kane in the U. S. Circuit Court, Philadelphia, on the 8th inst. This has been a tedious and a very troublesome case. We have been informed that Judge Kane delivered the best and most scientific view of Mr. Blanchard's patent that has ever been presented.—He ordered a commitment to be issued unless Mr. Eldridge will say that he will never again infringe, and will pay the costs.

Utica Mechanics Fair.

The mechanics of Utica, N. Y. have been holding their Annual Fair. Complaints have been made against some of the prominent manufacturing establishments for not sending articles to the exhibition. We have heard complaints recently against the Utica mechanics for their want of spirit, "they do not exhibit the same spirit now that they did a few years ago." This should not be—they have good men and true in that city and they must wake up and move onward with more elastic steps.

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