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Hints to Inventors and Patentees.

A correspondent asks three questions, which we will answer for his benefit and that of others. One is, "the best way of introducing inventions;" another is, "the selling of an invention before it is patented;" the other we give in his own words:—"Suppose a patentee sells the right to make and vend in the town of A, can the purchaser send the articles made under such contract into the town of B, there to be sold? Suppose a stranger calls on the purchaser residing in A, and buys a large quantity of the articles, may not the last purchaser sell where he pleases? if so, is not the sale of a right to make and vend in the town of A about equivalent to selling a right to make and vend any where? If so, where is the remedy, and what form should be the contract to guard against so extensive a use of what was intended to be a very limited grant?"

We will answer the last first. What does the law say? "Making, vending and using:" these are the rights of a patentee. Can any man, then, sell or use a patented machine or article in any place in the United States, without the consent of a patentee, or his assignee? No. The purchaser of the town of A may send his articles into B, to be sold, but if we owned the town of B, we should like to catch the fellow's agent from A selling on our beat, and A himself would not steer clear. Any person using a patented article, without the consent of the patentee, is liable to an action for using it. Every assignee of a patent has the exclusive right of it in the district which he has legally purchased. The assignee of the town of A is liable to an action if he sends articles to be sold into the town of B, which belongs to another assignee, and no one from the town of B can purchase in the town of A, and bring home the article to B and use it. Every assignee is sole proprietor of making, using, and selling his patented article in the town, State, or district of which he is assignee. No one in his district, &c., can make, use and sell the patented article without his consent. A grantee can bring an action and sue in a particular district in his own name. "A party may be held responsible for using, who gives to others to be consumed, the article that is the subject of a patent." It would be very curious justice, indeed, if the owner of the patent for the town of B, had his machinery burned down, when supplying a demand of 100 per week, if the owner of A could send over and supply his customers without being responsible.

No patent is held to be invalid by reason of the use or sale of the machine, &c., for two years prior to its being patented. No patentee can stop the use of a machine, if it has been in operation before he applied for a patent. All inventors ought to be aware of this fact, and make application for their patents as soon as possible. A caveat is not an application for a patent.

We know of no better way for a patentee to introduce his invention than by publishing a description of it in the Scientific American. Every man should push his invention into notice in every possible respectable way.

This answers the three questions of one correspondent, and in answering him we have done the same service to a number of others.

Virginia Cannel Coal.

We have examined a sample of the Virginia Cannel Coal, from the mines of Col. Wm. M. Peyton, on Coal River, Va. Having a knowledge of various kinds of coal, and having visited many of the mines in Britain and examined specimens of the Cannel Coal there, we have no hesitancy in saying that we are fully convinced that the Virginia coal is equal, if not superior to any of the foreign kind that we have ever seen. We have been informed that the supply is inexhaustible, and that parties in New York have purchased some of the property, with the ulterior object in view of supplying this city.

Cannel Coal is very different from the common anthracite or bituminous,—it burns with a clean, clear flame, and is the best coal for making gas; this is owing to the absence of nitrogen in it, hence there is no ammonia. In the making of coal gas, it is of the first importance, to ascertain the composition of the coal,—if it contains iron pyrites it is not good, for it will produce sulphuretted hydrogen; if it contains nitrogen, it will produce ammonia; these are not only deleterious gases, but they also injure the brightness of the light, hence they must be separated from the gas to be burned (carburetted hydrogen) before it can be used. A pure coal produces better and cheaper gas, because it does not entail the same expense in the manufacture. The analysis of pure Cannel Coal is—Carbon, 87.27; Hydrogen, 7.88; Oxygen, 4.85—100. We can thus see the importance of the Virginia Cannel Coal in the manufacture of gas. To burn in grates, it does not give out the same amount of heat as the anthracite, or common bituminous coal, but a piece of it in a grate nearly answers all the purposes of candles or lamps. In some of the rural districts of Britain, contiguous to the Cannel Coal beds, the poor people employ a lump of the coal for a lamp or a candle: a piece is placed on the fire, and it soon bursts out into a beautiful clear light, of a very pure flame. It was at such a fire as this, we suppose, where the great engineer, Telford, learned his first lessons, and described his own youthful efforts in the following lines,

"Take notice of the sober lad,  
All in the homely homespun clad,  
Who by the ingle hangs his head,  
And begs of neighbors books to read.

Heating of Railroad Cars.

Steam would afford a more agreeable warmth, and would be more evenly distributed through our passenger cars, than heat from stoves, as now arranged. The cars could be warmed by means of pipes passing through them, or by steam passing through a double flooring, or by having lined sides to the cars; and it could be let in or shut off, as required, for an agreeable temperature in the cars. In case of accidents, the bad effects of the overturning of stoves would be avoided, also the injury to health from exposure to open doors or windows, that is sometimes necessary, owing to the overheating of stoves. The pipes from the engine to the cars, and between the cars, could be screwed together quickly, and there should be a stop-cock for each car, to be used when any one has to be detached. The pipes might have sliding joints between the cars, suited to the play or variable distance of the cars; or, perhaps, gutta percha pipes, or hose, would answer between the cars. If the heat would not operate injuriously upon them, such hose would be best, perhaps, for connecting pipes. Boston, 1850. P.

[Count Rumford, we believe, was the first person who introduced steam for heating buildings. The heating of railroad cars by steam has been proposed to us before. In Volume 2 there is an illustrated description of heating cars by hot air, through pipes from the fire-box of the locomotive. The plan was invented by Mr. Townsend, of Albany: it contains all the essential features of the plan suggested above, only hot air, not steam, was to be employed. The steamship Asia has her saloon heated by steam pipes from the boilers, but although this does well for a steamboat, we see great difficulties in the employment of it to heat cars. The steam to be raised would be so much more work for the boiler and engineer, and the pipes would have to be of the best material, for they would have to stand the same pressure, nearly, as the boiler. If accidents from the overturning of stoves would be removed, another class would be added, viz., those from the bursting of pipes. The heating of cars by floor or side casing, is out of the question. Gutta percha would not answer, it cannot stand the heat; it is not good for belting, nor anything else in hot situations. Some horse harness made of it in London, stretched so beautifully, that it enabled the ponies to walk a hundred yards ahead of their drivers. Our correspondent is perfectly correct in suggesting the employment of steam as

the best means of heating the cars—it is the best—but the difficulties in the way of its application to railroad cars are so great that we, at present, cannot see any way whereby it can be economically employed.

The Sea Serpent.

Our opinion in regard to this marine prodigy is solicited by a lady subscriber, residing in Alabama. Hitherto we have been very skeptical as to the existence of these monsters, and, as yet, we have no positive or satisfactory knowledge concerning them.

There has been much respectable testimony brought forward to remove all doubt upon the subject, yet it is singular enough that no one connected with the department of Zoological science has ever seen one, nor is there any bones or fragments among any of the collections, in Europe or America.

In the year 1734 the Rev. Mr. Eedge, a gentleman of high character at that time as a spiritual teacher, represents that he saw one of these monsters, and gives a faithful account of its appearance, which, in many important particulars, corresponds with the sketch taken of one seen from the English ship Plumper, Dec. 31st, 1848, latitude 41° N., longitude 12° 31' W.; it was calculated as being about twenty feet long, black, sharp head, six or eight feet long—moved slow in the water, and had a mane, or something resembling it, on its back. The officers and crew of this vessel saw it, but it disappeared before any of the passengers on board could command a view. Dr. Newman, of England, wrote an essay on the Sea Serpent, and another very interesting one appeared in the London Zoologist several years since.

Various accounts have appeared from time to time, corroborating the earlier statements, and it is but a short time since we were informed that a gentleman of the highest respectability, and one known in this city, had seen one on the coast of Ireland. The Rev. Alden Bradford, in a letter to John Quincy Adams, at that time Secretary of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, says, after calling his attention to statements made under oath at that time by gentlemen of respectability,—“All this evidence, I think, cannot fail to establish the fact that a large sea serpent has been seen in the Penobscot Bay, and that the existence of such a monster could no longer be doubted.”

It is not known to what species of fish this monster belongs, neither is it improbable that in ancient times it was known as the "leviathan," (see Isaiah xxvii. 1; Job xxvi. 13.)

The Sea Serpent has been seen at different times near Castine, Me., Booth Bay Harbor, Boar's Head, Hampton Beach, Gay's Head, Mount Desert Rock, St. George's Banks, Portsmouth, N. H.; Plum Island, Newburyport, Duxbury, Lynn, and in other places, by multitudes. We believe it has been seen several times at Nahant, Mass., where it is said to be kept during the summer season, for the benefit of those who resort thither for sea bathing. Mr. Prince, formerly U. S. Marshall, in a private letter to Judge Davis, states that himself, wife and coachman saw the serpent, and concludes that a strange animal exists on our coast.

It is by no means improbable that a species of serpent, huge in proportion, may exist in the seas, although none has ever been captured; the evidence above presented would certainly tend to excite the belief; still, we would (as in the case of the "knockings,") "want the true and veritable avouch of our own eyes," before we could endorse him fully. Many persons, however, are prejudiced against the name of sea serpent; we do not see the reason for this,—as well call it the "sea serpent" as "leviathan," what's the odds? If such an animal exists at all, it is by no means common.

From California.

The Cherokee and Georgia Steamships arrived on the 5th inst. from Chagres, and between the two brought \$1,500,000 in gold. The yield of gold is as abundant as ever. The disturbances were smothered down and peace had been restored. Things appear in a very favorable light.

A Cheap Paper.

There are some men who always estimate the value of papers by their size. This shows a remarkable ignorance on their part. There is just as much difference in one paper from another as there is in coarse and fine cloth. A man may purchase five yards of cloth for the same amount that will only purchase one yard of a finer fabric; and would any man of sense suppose that the one yard was less valuable than the five? No. Well it is just the same with papers and periodicals. It is not the amount of paper, nor reading, by which a periodical's value should be estimated, unless it be mere news, and even this comes under our definition of valuation. It is the contents which constitute the true value of a paper.

There are some papers which are far more expensive than others, and of which the public are not always the best umpires. This is the case with scientific and mechanical papers. In America, all our periodicals are cheaper than those in any other part of the world. In France no paper like the Scientific American could be published for twice the sum of our subscription; and in England it would cost as much. The Journal of the Franklin Institute, published monthly, at Philadelphia, costs \$5 per annum; the London Patent Journal published weekly, costs 12 cents per number,—the Scientific American costs \$2 per annum, and only \$1.50 to clubs—the cheapest mechanical paper in the world.

Immoral Publications.

Our excellent cotemporary, the Boston Olive Branch, in referring to an infamous publication which has just been issued by a well-known house in this city, asks, "What shall be done? The answer is plain,—expose them! put them down! brand them with the infamy they deserve, and discourage their preparation, publication and perusal, by all fair and honorable means."

To the last part of this we say amen, with all our heart—we like the sentiment; but we do not endorse the idea that they should be exposed, for in this way the young become curious to know what are regarded as immoral publications, and seek for them with avidity. We received a copy of the work in question, and after ascertaining its character, we concluded not to speak of it at all. Publishers who scatter broad-cast among the editorial fraternity, publications pandering to the vilest sentiments of human nature, do not expect them to be noticed as fit companions for the youthful mind, or as suitable for introduction into the family circle. The more we talk or write about this or that publication as tending to corrupt the moral sensibilities of youth, the more eager they become to learn their contents. The human mind is "prone to evil as the sparks are to fly upwards," and while the seeds of moral disease are being sown in the community, the minds of our youth are liable to become infected. The Rev. Henry Giles, in a lecture on Books, delivered last winter before the Mercantile Library Association, uttered a sentiment which we have long cherished; it was to the effect that if we wished immoral books to circulate largely, have the ministers preach about them in the pulpit, and editors to write about them in the newspapers: keep silent in regard to them, and they soon die from their own rottenness. We regret that the press should be prostituted to such vile purposes, especially by publishers who claim to be respectable. In this instance we are disposed to be charitable, for we know the publishers deeply regret having any connection with this book.

The India Rubber Patent Case.

Horace H. Day has published a card in the Sun stating that the reports which have been published in some papers about the trial between himself and Mr. Goodyear, at Trenton, N. J., and noticed by us last week, are untrue, and the language attributed to Judge Grier, as expressed by him in the charge, is erroneous. The report of Judge Grier's charge was published in the Herald. It would have been well for Mr. Day to have pointed out the error, and not merely said, "many material things put in were never spoken by Judge Grier, and many left out which were spoken by him, being about as much alike as a cheese and a cart wheel."