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Extension of a Patent Beyond Fourteen Years,

The eighteenth section of the Patent Law enacts, that whenever any patentee of an invention or discovery shall desire an extension of his patent beyond the term of its limitation (14 years), he may make application therefor, in writing, to the Commissioner of Patents, setting forth the grounds for it.—The patentee shall furnish a statement in writing, under oath, of the ascertained value of the invention and of his receipts and expenditures, sufficiently in detail to exhibit a true and faithful account of loss and profit in any manner accruing to him from and by reason of said invention. And if, upon a hearing of the matter, it shall appear to the full and entire satisfaction of the Commissioner, having due regard to the public interest therein, that it is just and proper that the term of a patent should be extended, by reason of the patentee, without neglect or fault on his part, having failed to obtain, from the use and sale of his invention, a reasonable remuneration for the time, ingenuity, and expense bestowed upon the same, and the introduction thereof into use, it shall be the duty of the Commissioner to renew and extend the patent by making a certificate thereon of such extension.

We have here quoted the substance of the law governing the extension of patents, and if it means anything, it means that whenever a patentee has been reasonably paid for his invention, no extension can be granted; it is therefore a question of fact, and does not require the legal acumen of a lawyer to expound its meaning, or to manœuvre at the Department, for the purpose of baffling the Commissioner with astute suggestions respecting "mechanical combinations" or "precise arrangements." Some two years since a patentee of an improved machine for hulling clover seed, presented to the Department in Washington, in writing, an application for an extension of his patent, paid into the Treasury forty dollars, and showed conclusively, as we believed at the time, that he had not been remunerated properly, according to the spirit and intention of the law. The application was quietly conducted, and his success was based upon a fact which he supposed was clearly exhibited in his written statements. We will simply add, "the case was rejected and the forty dollars passed into the Treasury."

It sometimes turns out that the very men appointed to expound the law, prove to be the most ignorant of its intent. This is the most charitable construction we can put upon such cases, for it would be ungenerous to suppose that there existed "behind the throne a power greater than the throne itself."

It is a notorious fact that, many parties who have grown rich—immensely rich—by the sale and use of patents, have had no difficulty in obtaining extensions. Now such cases make us feel as if there was one law for the rich and influential, and another for the poor and simple honest patentees. It is greatly to be regretted that such cases do happen, for they are anything but honorable to our country. Where the fault lies we are not prepared to state just now; we merely state the fact in order to direct attention to an evil, so that a remedy may be provided for it, by those who have the power to do so; there should be no favors shown to one inventor more than to another; we advocate the application of law to all equally, without favor, at all times and in all cases.

Extension of the Woodworth Patent.

As we stated last week, there is no doubt at all about the contemplated effort that is about to be made to get the Woodworth Patent extended, for seven years more, at the present Session of Congress. We have been informed that parties are now in Washington endeavoring to get the votes and influence of Members of Congress in making a new Bill to extend this patent, for the period mentioned, beyond the time when its present term of extension shall expire. It is confidently predicted by those interested in the extension, that the application will be successful, and many men

decidedly opposed to it as a matter of principle, believe that Congress will pass such a Bill. They say—"every man has his price; the owners of the Woodworth patent have money, and know how to use it; and if the history of the past is worth anything at all, there is the strongest ground for believing that what has been done once by that body may be done over again." Thus they speak, but we believe they are mistaken. The patent has been twice extended, once by the Patent Office, and once by special Act of Congress. It has five years to run yet, and how its owners should be so alert on taking time by the forelock now, is not a mystery.

We like to see inventors rewarded, and none have such claims upon their genius as their own children. William Woodworth has long been in the grave, and were his descendants alone to be benefitted, we would not say a word against the extension, but overgrown monopolies are an injury to the whole people of the Union, and it is well known that a number of overbearing and overgrown monopolies are upheld and sustained by this patent. The extension about to be applied for is intended to sustain those monopolies and perpetuate an evil which should not be tolerated in the Republic.

The Committee on Patents should be empowered to send for witnesses to examine them in reference to this patent; there should be no secret work allowed about it, and we believe there will not be. We would not say a word against the extension of a patent for a useful invention, where the patentee has not been rewarded for his genius, time, and labor, and we know there are many such cases, and before this patent should be again extended, it would be no more than right for members of Congress to inquire if there are not many inventors who have been denied every favor, against the broadest claims of sympathy. We are the advocate of inventors' rights, but truth, right, and justice for the whole people claim our fondest regards, and in speaking against the extension of this patent, we are actuated solely by such considerations as would make us feel guilty if we held our tongue.

The Fire Annihilator.

It was contended by Dr. Colton, in his lecture in Tripler Hall, that if the Annihilator was successful but once, it should inspire confidence in its merits. This we do not believe, for he was quite successful in extinguishing a little flame, and yet that was no proof of its utility. A quart of water will put out a small fire, so will a wet blanket, and so will the Annihilator. At one experiment made in London, by Mr. Phillips, the Annihilator exploded, to the great danger of the lives of those invited to witness its operation. In No. 1, this volume of the Scientific American, we mentioned our tears respecting the explosive nature of the igniting substances, and the account about this explosion in London, published only a few weeks ago, confirms the opinion we previously expressed. A recent experiment made in Cincinnati was an entire failure, as was another in the Champ de Mars, at Paris. Mr. Phillips was present at the experiment in Paris; the building was 40 by 25 feet, and made of wood, upon which a dozen Annihilators expended their powers in vain. The fire was brought down apparently extinguished by such a united force, but all at once the flames burst out again, and it was found necessary to call in the aid of the firemen.

The management of the patent in this country does not meet with our approbation; it is evident that the Company wish to make the most they can out of it.

"There is one objection of great weight against this instrument—there is first to be purchased a machine, always to be in order; there is next to be purchased the compound, or charge, which constitutes the annihilating principle. The right to manufacture this compound is reserved as an especial privilege, and retained at distant places. A single charge not proving efficient, you must put in another. If the charges are not perfect, or the machine out of order, and you have rested securely on their power, you are at the mercy of the element. It cannot be safe to induce a reliance on such elements on which there are so many contingencies. A fire bucket of water—water to be readily had, without money or price

—immediately applied, will arrest nine-tenths of the fires, and this is much more than can be said of the new instrument."

With the sincere object in view of doing good to the community, we state that our only desire in saying so much upon this subject, is to impress upon the minds of our people the necessity of not trusting too much in the Annihilator. A liberal supply of water always on hand, and a sleepless vigilance to prevent fires taking place, are the sure and certain annihilators. Persons having Annihilators on their premises, would be liable to become careless of fires, from a vain confidence that if one took place it could be so easily extinguished, and at so little expense. Experience has afforded us an abundance of testimony to make us repose but very little confidence in the utility of the Annihilator.

That a successful experiment can be made, and may be made with the Annihilator, we do not doubt. It is easy to make a successful experiment when all means are employed, and all the designs have been laid to make it successful. But that is no proof of general utility, or even moderate success.

Science of Man.—Eating Human Flesh.

A recent book on New Zealand affords the pleasant information that human flesh is tough, and, to be palatable, requires more cooking than any other meat—but, once "done to a turn," it is of singular tenderness and sweetness. A voyager by the name of Jenkins endeavored to save the life of a young female slave, who was about to be killed and eaten in New Zealand. He offered any quantity of pigs for her, but the chief said, "A piece of Maori's flesh is much better than pork," and he killed her and ate her. The same account mentions a highly civilized New Zealander who had become partner in an English commercial house. He had in his younger days been addicted to human flesh, and, being a very candid and really high-minded man, he admits, that, though he has now acquired totally different tastes, the habit with which he partook of cannibal feasts—especially when the fleshy part of a young female was served up—is still a matter of by no means disagreeable recollection to him.

A celebrated New Zealand Chief, educated in England—and educated well—after he returned home, became involved in war with a neighboring tribe, and his education seemed but to have deepened his cannibal ferocity. After his first war feast, it was remarked that he was more addicted to the human banquet than any of his followers.

The taste for any kind of food seems to be acquired. Food esteemed a luxury by one race, is loathed by another; but it has been remarked that all cannibal races have a peculiarly fierce and repugnant look in comparison with the non-man-eating races. There are some who lament over the decrease of the inhabitants of the Pacific Isles, and attribute their decrease to the evil influence of civilization. This is a great mistake,—cannibalism left the root of self-destruction among those races. Why? It is well known that in any country where the females are greatly disproportioned to the males—in fewer number—that a decrease in the number of inhabitants is the certain result. This is the case with the native races of the Pacific Isles,—the males are about 100 to 80 females. More females were destroyed than males during their native wars, and they have a hard and bitter lot. Civilization has ameliorated the condition of the females, and a turning point may not be far distant, at which the Pacific native races may stop decreasing. This opinion is adverse to all those who have written upon the subject, but they all state, too, that the mixed races always dwindle away (a mixture between the whites and the Pacific native races). The Pitcairn Islanders, however, afford an irresistible argument against such conclusions. They have increased—are a mixed race—and are splendid specimens of moral and physical men.

Cure for Consumption.

Phosphate of Lime, the new remedy for consumption, is now for sale at the drug stores in a precipitated form; it can be used by suspension in cod-liver oil. Cod liver oil has become a great curative, according to the prescriptions of some physicians, but it surely

would require a great deal of blind faith from us to believe that it has such general merits as some physicians attribute to it. Pure olive oil, from its very nature, being identical in principle with the carbon principle of the fat of man, appears to us to be far better adapted, as a physical remedy, for man than any other kind of oil whatever. It is easy of digestion, sweet, and pleasing to the taste. The only difficulty will be to get it pure; but there is also very little pure cod-liver oil to be found.

Kossuth.

This illustrious exile arrived at this port in the Humbolt, on Friday last week, and received a public welcome into this city on Saturday. It was one of the greatest, if not the greatest public demonstration ever witnessed in New York. All the hearts and houses of our city seemed to have been thrown open to bid him welcome. Never have we witnessed such enthusiasm towards any man, and we have never heard so many favorable remarks respecting the appearance of any public hero. It is not for us to say anything about the procession, or to present any speeches made to him or by him. His personal appearance is winning. He has large full and light eyes, although he is dark haired, and of a dark complexion. But his eyes reveal a most kindly nature, and are an index of a great mind. He is not tall, is of a firm but slight build, graceful in his movements, and there is an air of shrewdness also about him which wins confidence at once. It is our opinion, from reading his speeches, that he is the greatest of living orators, and were he as well acquainted with the English language as he is with his own native Magyar, he could carry every assembly in our country along with him, with a perfect whirlwind of enthusiasm. What the end of these things is to be we cannot tell; we have no hope of seeing Hungary an independent State; it cannot be done, that is our opinion. An agitation to make it a constitutional State under Austria, as it was, would ultimately be successful, we think; this is our only hope.

Post Office Matters.

By the Report of Postmaster General Hall, we learn that the gross revenues of this Department for the fiscal year, including appropriations for franked matter and foreign postages, collected for and payable to the British post-office, amounted to \$6,727,866 78.

The expenditures for the same period (excluding \$20,589 49 paid for mail services on the Ohio and Mississippi rivers in 1832 and 1833, and the amount paid to the British post-office for foreign postages collected for and payable to that office) amounted to \$6,024,566 79; leaving a balance of revenue over the proper expenditures of the year of \$703,299 99.

The receipts for postages during the year (excluding the foreign postages collected for and payable to the British post-office) amounted to \$6,345,747 21, being an increase of \$997,610 79, or 18'64 per cent. over the like receipts for the preceding year.

The operation of the new Postage Law during the first quarter, shows a large falling off in the amount of postage received.

The surplus of the revenue now on hand is, however, so large, that no further appropriation from the treasury, in aid of the revenues of the Department, is required for the current fiscal year; but an additional appropriation for the year ending June 30, 1853, will probably be found necessary. The postmaster recommends adherence to the present letter rates, and advises against a further reduction until justified by the revenue of the Department. He also recommends that the rates of postage on printed matter be so revised as to render them more simple, and more uniform in their operation upon all classes of printed matter.

Fancy Job Printing.

Messrs. Oliver & Bro., 89 Nassau street, have the greatest assortment of beautiful designs for handbills, circulars, blanks, cards, etc., we have ever seen. Inventors, manufacturers, and merchants, will please bear the above fact in mind.

Prof. Page's Electro Magnetic Engine has been recently patented in England; we shall notice this at greater length, next week, along with other inventions patented abroad.