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AMERICAN AND OTHER PATENTED INVENTIONS.

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Information to Inventors who wish to obtain Patents in England.
By the Editor.

Inquiries are frequently made of the Editor, by persons who wish to secure patents in England and France for their inventions, and it has been his design to give some general information upon that subject in the Journal. The present article, however, is not considered as fulfilling this intention, but merely as bringing to notice one point of considerable importance in the business. The patent law of the United States provides for the granting of patents to inventors, only, or to their heirs, administrators, or assignees; and a patent obtained by any other person, is invalid. In England, patents are granted for what is *new there*, without regard to who was the inventor of it; if invented in a foreign country, the term *new*, applying to its novelty in the realm. Whoever, therefore, first takes a new invention to that country, can obtain a patent, and defend his right. It consequently becomes a point of great importance, that those inventions which are deemed worth the expense of an English patent should not be divulged here before steps have been taken to secure the right on the other side of the Atlantic.

The Editor has, in several instances, prepared and transmitted the requisite papers to England, his situation being such as to offer special facilities for so doing. Owing to this, and to his general pursuits, he has become the depository of more information respecting the modes of procedure than has fallen to the lot of most other persons; his

connexion with the Patent Office of the United States, also, brought to his notice many things calculated to throw light upon this subject.

There are many persons who make it their special business to visit the United States' Patent Office, that they may be able to turn the inventions of others to their own advantage, either at home or abroad; at home, by making some unimportant change in the form of machines that they see there, and then diffusing them in some part of the Union remote from the residence of the original inventor: abroad, by sending to England and France, accounts of such inventions as they believe will sell in those countries.

This subject has been brought afresh to the notice of the Editor, by a letter received from a correspondent in New York, Wm. Serrell, Esq., Civil Engineer; a gentleman from England, and who was frequently employed there in preparing specifications and drawings for the Patent Office; and who has, in several instances, been engaged by American inventors in the same business. In a letter dated March 3d, in which he mentions this fact, he observes, that, "The short period since my first agency of this kind, and the little publicity I have yet sought, are reasons why the number of these transactions is yet small. Still I have the pleasure to say that late arrivals bring advice from my friend in London, that two of such patents are in progress towards profitable sale; but I regret to add, the same letter states that one patent is likely to be interfered with, if not set aside, through some circumstances that will be fully understood by the annexed extract from the letter itself, which extract I hand you, believing that you may consider it of sufficient importance for insertion in your excellent Journal."

Extract from a Letter dated "London, 14th December, 1833."

"It may be of use to apprise inventors of mechanical improvements in the United States, that it is essential to the security of their interests, if they design to take out patents for their inventions in this country, not to disclose the secret of their inventions in the United States, until they have secured a patent here. There are many ingenious mechanics in the United States in correspondence with their friends in this country, constantly on the watch to seize any thing new, and likely to be useful, to transmit the particulars to their friends, and thus forestall the rights and interests of the original inventor."

As a commentary upon the foregoing extract, the following fact may be stated. An American had obtained a patent in the United States, and had assigned the right thereto, in England, to a fellow citizen for twenty thousand dollars; the assignee, however, arrived there too late, as some one had obtained the description from the office here, had transmitted it, and obtained a patent.

There is now before the British Parliament a new law to regulate the granting of patents. It passed the House of Commons at the last session, and was read a second time in the House of Lords, but the Lord Chancellor, wishing to examine its details with more care than

was then possible, it was postponed. It will undoubtedly be completed at an early period; when we shall give its provisions, with such other matter respecting foreign patents, as may appear to us important.

Observations on the Explosion of the Boilers of the Steam-boat New England. By THOMAS EWBANK, of New York.

FOR THE JOURNAL OF THE FRANKLIN INSTITUTE.

Although the explosion of these boilers is, as I believe, justly attributed to an excessive pressure of steam, there is room to suppose that one remote source of the calamity may be found in the inferior quality of a portion of the copper of which they were formed. The grain or texture exhibited in several parts appeared to me on examination to be very different from that of good malleable copper. In order, however, that its quality may be more fairly tested, I have transmitted to the committee of the Franklin Institute on explosions* specimens taken from different parts of the boiler, that they may be essayed by the apparatus of the Institute adapted to that purpose. Of these specimens No. 1 is from the inside ridge of one of the furnace doors. See *j* in fig. 1 of the cuts attached to the report of the Board of Examiners.† Nos. 2 and 3 are from the joint of the vertical flue, or steam chimney, where it was connected to the horizontal flues. This vertical flue was formed of iron, the oxide of which may be seen on one side of these specimens. This joint was two or three inches above the horizontal flues, or about on a level with the lowest gauge cock. No. 4 is from one of the water legs. No. 5, I took from the outside of one of the boilers, near the centre of its length, and on a level with the top of the arches. No. 6 formed part of the shell or roof. The quality of this appears very bad. No. 7 is similar to No. 5. No. 8 formed part of one of the stays.

It should be observed that as No. 6 is from the roof, or shell, and therefore entirely remote from the influence of the fire in the furnace, or flues, it could not be injured by heat from them. In originally forming this part of the boilers, there could be no necessity for annealing the copper, as is the case in working several of the other parts. The quality of the copper from which this specimen was taken, could not therefore be injured by the makers of the boilers, and any defect in it is not attributable to them.

If the metal had been overheated in the process of its manufacture, as is sometimes the case, its malleability would, in a great measure, have been destroyed, even when in an annealed state, and as it was *hard rolled*, it would of course have been rendered still more brittle. Judging from the appearance of the fractures of several specimens, and especially of those which have broken without previous indentation, such as No. 6, it would seem that the copper was either alloyed, or that its tenacity was injured in manufacturing.

* See minutes of the monthly meeting of the Institute for February of this year, p. 159, vol. xiii.—*CON. PTE.*

† See this Journal, page 58, vol. xiii.