electricity as a factor in human industry. It began in 1879 and lasted some four or five years. It was during this period that electric lighting, motive power, and all kindred branches of applied science were growing most rapidly, and the effect of this on the Patent Office is, indeed, most marked. So much for a little view of what the Patent Office has done. At present it is overcrowded with work and an extra force of examiners is needed. The patent suits of the last half-dozen years have brought to public notice a considerable number of points in Patent Office procedure and Patent Office law which ought to be changed for the mutual benefit of inventors and the public.

The commissioner makes several valuable and important suggestions, which, if carried out, would be most salutary in their effect. First among them is the proposition that two years of publication either in a patent or otherwise act as a bar to any attempt to secure a patent for the thing involved. Two years of public use are now required, and the determination of what is public use is a source of endless difficulty. If publication constituted a similar bar a vast deal of litigation would cease, and we should not be treated to the spectacle of patents granted for things which have long been known, if not persistently used.

Two other provisions would be peculiarly useful in application, one of them abrogating the now existing law that the expiration of a prior foreign patent invalidates the American patent. If coupled with suitable time limits set upon the application for American and foreign patents, this would enable American inventors to take advantage of the longer term of life of American patents, without sacrificing them by short term foreign patents, or by neglect to comply with some of the conditions imposed upon the patentee in other countries. The other important amendment suggested is that no patent shall in any case live for more than twenty years from the date of the first application, joining to this provision one shortening the time allowed for action upon applications.

Such a law would effectually prevent the abuses of Patent Office practice that have of late been forced into unpleasant prominence, by compelling rapid action on the part of litigants. Occasionally this might work injustice to one of them, but as a rule it would be equally fair for all parties concerned, and would not only diminish the period of exasperating and expensive litigation, but would prevent the public being imposed upon by deliberate efforts to keep applications pending in the office. Still other propositions looking to patent reform are made by the commissioner, but these are of so much practical value that they deserve especial commendation.

As a whole they are just to the inventor, and will tend to check the abuses of patent law that at present render the patents themselves of questionable value - except to the litigious. Another provision that increases the definite importance of a patent that has been granted, and tends to check applications made in questionable faith, should be cordially greeted by every inventor and every reputable patent attorney in the country. The opinion of patent sharks need scarcely be taken into account. *The Electrical World.*

A WORD TO INVENTORS.

We have frequently been asked by inventors who have succeeded in producing small articles of more or less merit, and for which there appears to be a demand, what is the best method to pursue in order to put them on the market

This is a question which has puzzled a great many, and especially those who, with small means, are unable to go into the manufacturing of their speciality on a large scale, without parting with a controlling interest in their patent to another party in order to raise the necessary capital with which to push the business, a transaction which many object to on account of the possible and probable consequences which often follow, viz., the loss not only of the patent right, but of all share in future business.

In nine cases out of ten it is far better for the inventor, and he will realize more from his invention, to sell out entirely, and turn his attention to some other business, or the production of a new patentable article. That is in case he has no money with which to develop and place his invention on the market.

The only difficulty in this is that a majority of inventors set too high a value upon their invention. They think they have the world in their hands, and are disposed to hold on to it, unless some one comes along who is foolish enough to pay an unreasonable price for the patent. This is where they are often mistaken, and it would be far better for them to accept a *bona fide* offer, even though it is but a fraction of their ideal value of the article.

The fact is that no invention, however valuable at the time it is produced or perfected, is sure of a monopoly, or even a fair competing chance for a great while, and the sooner the inventor disposes of it the better off he is. Thousands of inventions have been dead failures, and never returned to the inventor one dollar, simply because, thinking that he held a monopoly, and that the world was bound to him, he has held on to it, unable himself to put it upon the market, and alike unwilling to allow any one else to do so for a reasonable consideration, until some one else has come out with something equally good, and possibly an improvement, and he finds himself without a ladder, and another man making money which he might have had, had he used better judgment and good sense.

Another way in which a mistake is make is in starting out on too large a scale. If you have a really valuable patented article, there is very little difficulty about finding a market for it, if you are not too hasty. It is better to begin in a small way and gradually increase, than to begin by forming a large stock company and beginning too large. We are speaking in reference to the inventor's interests. If he can get his goods manufactured so that he can handle them himself, even though in a small way at the start, if his invention is worth anything he will soon be able to increase his business, and can then hold control of it himself. As a rule, we are of opinion that it is better to contract with some reliable firm for the manufacture of the article, than to go to the expense of putting in the necessary machinery, etc., to do it for yourself.

By doing it in this way, you are saved the care and management of a shop, and have more time to devote to pushing the sales of the article, and the difference in the cost is very little, hardly sufficient to compensate for the possible saving.

It also gives you the use of the capital which would be required to fit up and maintain a shop, with which to push the business, and at a time when it is needed, too.

After the business has grown sufficiently large to warrant it, then there is time enough to put in a plant, and you will be better able to do so, and you will be in a position to know what is required.—London Eng., *Manufacturer.*

A bill protecting foreign exhibitors of patented articles at the Chicago World's Fair from all possible prosecution for infringement has been passed by the United States Senate, and is pending and reported sure to pass in the House. The bill reads as follows: "That no citizen of any country shall be held liable for the infringement of any patient granted by the United States or any trade mark registered in the United States where the act complained of is performed in connection with the exhibition of any article or thing at the World's Columbian Exposition at Chicago."

We are to-day on the very eve of electrical developments in the line of transmission of power that are destined, perhaps, to change profoundly our industrial methods. Until now the world has been wont to rely upon steam, or directly upon water-power, to drive the machinery of its great manufactories. Since the electric motor has sprung into prominence, much has been said regarding its use for bringing to the dwellers of our great cities the energy of distant waterfalls; but, until very recently, comparatively little has been done, and to-day the list of plants purely for the transmission of power is not very extensive. All this is to be changed radically and permanently.—*The Electrical World.*

A German inventor has devised a means of producing a light far superior in strength to either oil or electricity. It is by means of air driven through pumice stone, the latter having been impregnated with benzine. The benzine gas thus obtained is then carried through a fine magnesium powder, and proceeds upward through a pipe to be consumed in a small flame of a claimed 400,000-candle power. The apparatus for producing this light consists of a blast engine for driving the air through the pumice, and a number of other accessories, all of which take up but a small space, and which are enclosed in a glass case for protection from the elements, as the light is especially designed for coast illumination. The arrangement is especially adapted for giving an intermittent light, the consumption of magnesium being small, depending on the power of the light required. The apparatus can be used without condensers, fog arrangements or reflectors, although the use of lenses further strengthen the power of the light.

The application of electricity as a motive power in the manufacturing arts is being rapidly extended, and is now being successfully introduced in the textile industry. An account was recently given