

occasion to study the *Record* all the descriptions of the things patented are massed together in one part of the book, while all the illustrations of them, to which reference is made, are massed together in another part. Following the previous style, all the descriptive matter is printed two columns to the page, while the illustrations occupy three columns. It does not seem to have occurred to the manager of the printing bureau that it is of great importance that the description of an invention and the illustration of it should be contiguous to each other, and that this could have been effected by setting the type of the descriptive matter three columns to the page instead of two. This is a feature which, we presume, will be corrected in subsequent issues.

It is to be hoped that greater promptness will be shown in issuing the subsequent numbers of the *Record* than has characterized that to which we here allude. This number contains a record of transactions occurring in the month of January, and it should have been presented to the public in the early days of the following month—February—but it did not make its appearance until after the middle of March; and the transactions for the month of February, as officially announced in the *Record*, have not yet seen the light. This is to be regretted.

The annoyance which those interested might otherwise feel because of this delay in the appearance of the *Record* is avoided by those who read the CANADIAN MANUFACTURER, which gives the list of Canadian patents dated down to within a day or two of the date of publication. Thus all the patents dated after the middle of a month are recorded in the issue of the CANADIAN MANUFACTURER which appears on the first Friday of the ensuing month, and all patents dated previous to the middle of the month, are recorded in the issue of the third Friday of that month. This is an enterprising feature of this journal, which inventors, patent attorneys, and all others interested will appreciate.

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It was formerly held that by common law an author had a perpetual right in the products of his intellect. This is now denied, and the whole matter has become the subject of statute, so that now, unless the provision of the law designed to secure to the author the exclusive ownership of the results of his labor are strictly complied with, the product is public property. We shall now see what may be copyrighted, and the method thereof.

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England was as much a part of our system of jurisprudence as it was that of Great Britain. Strictly speaking, the United States has no common law. The Constitution declares that the judicial power of the United States extends to all cases arising under the Constitution, the laws of the United States and treaties. There was no principle which pervades the Union and has the authority of law that is not embodied in the Constitution and Acts of Congress. However, as the common law was the substratum on which the Constitution was founded, we must go to the common law for a definition and an interpretation of its terms.

All the States with the exception of Louisiana, have adopted the English common law as their local law, subject to statutory alterations, and only to such extent as suits its conditions. This will effectually answer the complaint of many who cannot see the necessity in the study of the law of spending so much time on study of the common law of England from the commentaries of Blackstone. When it is remembered that this magnificent body of unwritten law (so called because in its origin not so far as known the subject of legislative enactment) was the law of the Colonies prior to the Revolution, was the birthright for which the great war of independence was fought, is the source of interpretation of our constitution, our laws and treaties, in so far as they use voids and expressions to which the common law alone gives a meaning, became the law (subject to statutory changes) of all but one of the States of the Union. We are prepared to assign it the place it deserves in the estimation of the student—the foremost and best.—W. C. Sprague, in *American Artisan*.

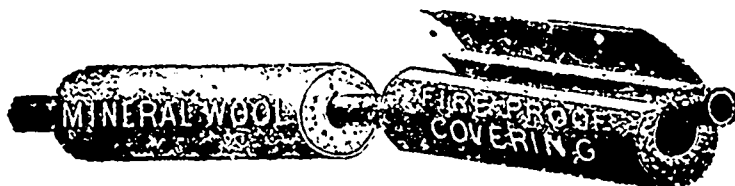
WORK OF THE PATENT OFFICE.

THE report of the Commissioner of Patents, United States, is a most interesting document, both as a record of what has been accomplished, and as suggesting improvements in practice that would be of no little importance to inventors and to the public. During the last year there were granted patents, including design patents, to the number of 21,236 to the citizens of the United States, together with nearly 2,000 additional granted to foreigners. One of the most striking facts with reference to this evidence of American inventive genius is the geographical distribution of these patents over the country. As might be expected, Yankeeedom stands at the head of the list in the number of inventions compared with the population, and as might also be anticipated, Connecticut—the home of the wooden nutmeg and the papier mache ham—stands pre-eminent among the States, with Massachusetts an exceedingly good second.

In the Southern States the art of invention does not flourish, reaching its lowest degradation in South Carolina, where there was only one patent issued last year to more than 23,000 inhabitants, as against very nearly one to 1,000 in Connecticut. Another very interesting feature of the report shows graphically the growth of invention as compared with the population of that country. Up to 1850 progress was slow, but at that epoch the industrial spirit seemed to seize upon the American people, and invention began to increase. There are two periods in the last half century when inventors were stirred to extraordinary activity; one of these was during the Civil War, from 1860 to 1866, during which time the number of patents issued considerably more than doubled, the result, doubtless, of the stimulation of inventions concerning the arms and munitions of war.

One other such tremendous increase in invention is to be noted, and its cause can almost with certainty be ascribed to the advent of

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