

was originally granted, or whether it should be extended with the possible extension of the foreign patent.

The Circuit Courts of the United States have uniformly held that the American patent lapsed with the expiration of the original term of the foreign patent, and was unaffected by any possible extension of the latter. Thus, if John Smith took out a Canadian patent for five years with the privilege of extending it to ten or fifteen years on payment of fees, and subsequently took out an American patent, these courts have held that the American patent must expire absolutely at the end of the first five years, whether the Canadian patent was extended or not. The Supreme Court has swung the pendulum to the other extreme, holding that the American patent shall run for fifteen years absolutely, whether the Canadian patent is kept alive for that term or is permitted to lapse.

Perhaps, of all those who will be benefited by the change, Edison is the greatest gainer. A large number of his patents of five or six years ago have been held invalid under the former construction of the law on account of prior patents granted him in foreign countries. Now some of them will be of fabulous value. One patent alone on what is known as the system of electrical distribution by multiple arc, covers, it is said, every incandescent electric light plant in the country. It is impossible to run an incandescent plant on any other principle. This patent was regarded as void from the beginning because of a previous Italian patent. Now it is good for a monopoly of the incandescent electric lighting business until 1895. Not only does it cover the future, but the past as well, for Edison can collect royalties from all rival companies for the plants operated during the last two years.

The Otto gas engine patents have been sustained in England after costly litigation, but overthrown in Germany after an equally hard fight. Their United States patents were reported void on examination, because of previous Italian patents. Now, if they are to be overthrown, it must be after a prolonged struggle on the merits of the case as was done in Germany. Hundreds of American investors, and investors in American patents, who have only put their money into the manufacture of patented articles after having been advised by their lawyers that they might safely do so without being compelled to pay ruinous tribute to the owners of prior patents with broad claims, because said prior patents were worthless in view of previous foreign patents granted for short terms, see ruin staring them in the face.

### UNDERGROUND WIRES.

MENTION was recently made in these pages of the fact of the incorporation in this city of the Toronto Incandescent Electric Lighting Company, of which Mr. Frederic Nicholls, of this journal, was promoter, and a provisional director. In behalf of his company Mr. Nicholls, a few days ago, addressed a letter to the Mayor of Toronto anent the matter of awarding contracts for lighting the city by electricity, in which he stated that his company had secured from the Edison Electric Light Company the right to use all their valuable patents. It was stated in this letter :—

We have observed that the corporation is about to apply to the Legislature for power to compel all electric wires to be carried under-ground, and as we desire to recognize the neces-

sity for adopting such a course in the interest of the city generally, we are prepared, in the inception of this company, to conform to the requirements of the city in this respect. We therefore beg to apply for permission to lay our wires under-ground, with the necessary pipes and conduit boxes, along such streets as may be prescribed by the council, so that we may be enabled to supply light throughout the city without delay. You are, of course, aware that this will involve a much greater expense in establishing the system throughout the city, but if the city determines to impose this condition upon all companies, so that all will be treated alike, we will adopt the under-ground wires as part of our system.

Regarding the placing of their wires under-ground, Mr. Nicholls stated to a reporter :—

We have recognized the fact that the time will shortly arrive when the regulations of the city will require that all electric light and other wires shall be placed under-ground. We think it would be extremely unpopular to apply to the Council at this juncture for the right to erect poles, and string wires along our principal streets, and as we are anxious to engage in the business of electric lighting with the least possible delay, we have appealed to the City Council for the privilege of running our wires under-ground. Of course this will entail a very much greater expense than if we were to run them from pole to pole, and we do not think that the Consumers' Gas Company, which have applied for the privilege to erect poles and string wires, should be granted this privilege, as it would place them in such a position as would enable them to operate at a very much less expense. If, however, the Council agree to give them the right to erect poles we should be accorded the same privileges, in order to secure the benefit of competition to the citizens, and not perpetuate a monopoly. But in the event of our placing our wires under ground the Consumers' Gas Company should be compelled to adopt a similar course, with the wires which they propose to run, since they have determined to engage in the business of electric lighting. All we ask is to be placed upon the same footing as any other company, and we have taken the initiative by offering from the inception to bury our wires in the interests of citizens generally.

### CANADIAN TEXTILE INDUSTRIES.

THE following is a list (compiled from Biggar's Textile Directory) of the cotton mills of Canada, giving the number in each province and the total capacity in spindles and looms :

	Mills.	Looms.	Spindles.
New Brunswick.....	5	2,161	89,000
Nova Scotia.....	3	768	35,500
Ontario.....	10	3,465	159,900
Quebec.....	7	4,888	235,300
Total.....	25	11,282	519,700

There are in Canada twelve factories manufacturing carpets, rugs and mats, their total capacity being 187 handlooms and 44 power looms. This does not include the handloom weavers, of whom there are 109 in Ontario and many in Quebec and the other provinces. There are three factories engaged in making haircloth, the total capacity being 65 looms.

The following are the statistics, partly estimated, of the woolen mills :

	Sets of Cards.	Looms.	Spindles.	Knitting Machines.
British Columbia..	1	5	400	....
Manitoba.....	2	5	480	....
New Brunswick...	64	134	5,500	50
Nova Scotia.....	76	222	9,520	49
Ontario.....	655	2,461	144,220	1,191
Prince Ewd Island.	27	70	3,300	12
Quebec.....	304	861	37,760	661
Total.....	1,129	3,758	201,240	1,963