

tially, however, the various requirements, but as a climax to all, we arrive at the item of responsibility, and it is right here that the question of honesty arises. A man may avoid crime or frauds and yet do much harm where only the most vigorous investigation could prove that he slighted some important step in applying for a patent. Here then is a loophole whereby the competent attorney may be irresponsible. Suppose for example that, while examining the citations he should find that the claims could be broadened or left as they are with reasonable expectation of allowance; but was too busy with something that paid better, to devote the proper time and thought, or was too anxious to get at least some kind of a patent even if it were not the best in view of the state of the art. I say that such an action or want of proper action illustrates what I mean by one of the worst kind of frauds generally called, however, by a better sounding name—irresponsibility. Perhaps again, the attorney might think that the invention was of no practical or money value and that little responsibility rests upon him, and finally, the old plea suggests itself—that he will never be found out.

In order to make an attorney have a true and strong sense of responsibility, he should make the assumption that the patent, if obtained, will be worth many thousand dollars; or he should assume that the invention belongs to himself and at the same time that it is worth a million dollars. Then he will strive for the best claims. How many of us, who are solicitors have been perfect in this respect? On the other hand, I am not referring to the matter of offering opinions to the inventor as to the value, and to the too much overvaluing of the invention in his eyes so as to encourage him to apply. This procedure is a dishonest trick, where the invention is known to be worthless; but, having decided for good reasons to apply, the solicitor should keep in mind the best interests of the client, and if he does not, he may work as much real injury as if he were, out and out, fraudulent.

In spite of all his consideration of the qualifications, many an inventor may still hold that such remarks about experts may well apply to difficult cases like automatic telephone exchange systems, polyphase electric motors, Corliss engine improvements, processes in electro-metallurgy, mathematical instruments of precision, etc., but when it comes to little devices which may be named by the hundred, any one can understand the same and be a suitable attorney, provided only he knows patent law and practice, and has ordinary intelligence. This is false logic. What is true of one kind of invention is true of another, except in degree. Even in simple devices, the mechanical expert is needed. No simpler device could probably be suggested than the bicycle frame,