

not preaching on the subject of honesty and morals, for every inventor will make the utmost attempt to dodge the fraudulent man without much advice, and yet inventors are apt to run to any agent, so long as he has his sign up and is known to be reliable. The requisite that is too often overlooked, the one that is most difficult of attainment, and the one that is the most important, is mechanical knowledge with experience; or in other words, the perfect attorney must be a mechanical expert, while the second condition, equally as important but readily recognized by all inventors, is a knowledge of and an experience in the patent law, court decisions and the patent office rules of practice. The third qualification is literary ability.

How few attorneys are graduates of a technical college or school; how few have been scientific students further than in acquiring a superficial knowledge by private study—almost worse than none:—how few are qualified for membership in any of the scientific or mechanical, or engineering societies; how few could write an article for a technical periodical without its being lodged in the waste basket; and how few, therefore, could prepare such a clear, exact and complete description of an alternating current dynamo, or, of a steam engine releasing gear, or of a bicycle, or of a printing machine or of a typewriter that would stand the critical examination which occurs when experts for a purchaser of the patent, or before the courts criticise it; the specification and claims are literally torn to pieces by the experts. The whole value of the patent, assuming the invention to be novel and valuable, depends absolutely and alone upon the exact meaning rendered by the wording of the specification and claims. How many hundreds of attorneys have attempted this task, not even realizing their own incapability; because a man with a little knowledge of a subject usually thinks he knows all about it. No other profession calls for such experts. Take an electrical engineer; his specialty is electricity and consequently he need know little about bridges—that is, about civil engineering. Or, consider a chemist. He requires no knowledge about printing machines, that is, of mechanics. Or let the profession be that of a mining engineer. What does he know about law? Again, how little the lawyer pure and simple, who naturally spends his time in suits over real estate, debts, damages, etc., etc., knows about agricultural machines. Men of any profession seldom undertake cases in some other line. The most perfect patent attorney is he who is versed in all departments of science, engineering and mechanics, because one day he will have, say, a kinetoscope invention to be patented, and the next day, a new process of dyeing; the next day, an electric motor case, and then a linotype machine,