

him, and then he is in all haste to have it patented; but now comes another terror on his mind, where can he find an honest Patent Agent to whom he can entrust his invention? Can he even trust the officials at the Patent Office? Is there not a clique there, who band themselves with patent brokers, and whenever they see a valuable invention such as his, keep back the knowledge of it, until they convey the secret to another party who pays them a handsome sum? Is there not, he thinks, a dozen ways in which venal clerks can rob him of his treasure? This is a very severe period of the patent fever, during which the patient is generally in a state of wild delirium. After the paroxysm has somewhat subsided, he feels that he cannot prepare the specification and drawings himself, he must have some one to take out the patent, and then too often he makes a hasty choice. Here then comes in a very peculiar phase of the disease; hitherto he has been in a state of nervous excitement, lest any person should surreptitiously steal his idea, but no sooner has this subsided than a reaction takes place, and he goes off with his model under his arm, and chooses for his solicitor—not the most upright man, or one of the most practical ability, but the one that will do it *cheapest*. Having deposited his model and given instructions to his solicitor to *claim everything*, by which he means the very elements themselves, if necessary, for a few days he will fall into a quiet calm, and indulge in castle-building to a great extent. A great difficulty arises in his mind at this stage as to the lowest sum he shall accept for the patent, or whether he shall dispose of it in Royalties, or, whether he shall work the invention himself and keep the monopoly in his own hands; but, should he be of a philanthropic turn of mind he may deem it charitable and christian-like to give it to the world in such a way that its benefit will be enjoyed in the shortest period of time; he may be willing even to lose a little for this laudable object. From this delectable state of mind he is aroused by the receipt of the specification, and to his astonishment finds that he can only claim, as original matter, but a few of the working parts of his machine and that the other claims were common property to all, and that he can only claim them in connection with one or two original improvements. After a good deal of discontent to himself and worry to his solicitor, who ultimately gives way and tries for some things he does not expect to get, just to ease his client's mind, the papers go to the patent office; the inventor feels now more resigned, and rather chuckles over the idea that those old and tried experts, the Examiners, will overlook the little claims that he has had inserted in rather an ambiguous way, that they might not appear too striking, he thinks they may slip in among the main points and not be noticed. The application having been forwarded and the receipt of the first fee acknowledged, week after week passes away and no further notice is taken of it—the inventor, if he had any doubts before about the honesty of Patent Office officials, that is, he did not think them *all* rogues, but now he is certain they are or there never would be so much delay if some one was not stealing his invention or this vexatious delay was merely to gain time for another person to forestal him. He casts severe glances at his solicitor, and throws out some sarcastic hints that there must be something wrong somewhere or his patent never would be delayed so long. After a delay of about six weeks, during which time the inventor has lost several pounds of flesh from

worry, and these investments he had in his mind's eye are slipping away, a short memorandum comes back to his solicitor to inform him what he knew would be the case,—that the claims are too broad, or, perhaps, that they interfere with previous inventions. About this time the nervous irritation of his client is assuming a chronic form, he is seldom seen to smile except in a sickly, ghastly way, and looks frequently as if he wanted to cry. He begins to think that his solicitor is incompetent and that if he had put the patent into another party's hands even had he paid more, it would have been wiser. He thinks too that his solicitor has no private influence with the commissioner, if he had, a private note ought to have settled the business at once. However, there is now no help for it, the broad claims are withdrawn, as well as those that interfered with other inventions, and the poor applicant finds that his invention robbed of all its borrowed plumage is a very sorry looking bird indeed. Sometimes he is informed that the thing is old, or impracticable, or not useful, and the patent is refused; but even in such case he never feels so bad as when his patent is stripped of other people's inventions.

But, even in case that the inventor obtains all he claims, and a patent is granted, how few indeed realize their hopes of profit—not one in a hundred. Too often is money and valuable time lost in endeavoring to carry out ideas of no practical benefit.

Now this brings us to a point where we can bring in, we trust, some useful advice to Canadian inventors of that class who too frequently put themselves and their families to a great pecuniary inconvenience, to take out patents that are perfectly worthless that can never be of any practical utility.

We do not address ourselves to those who can afford both time and means to indulge their inventive faculties, but we do speak, in all earnestness, to a large class of artisans who too often are put to great straits to obtain the means to take out a patent that can be really of no practical use.

Among other measures that we are bringing to the consideration of the industrial classes, we propose that to all members of Mechanics' Institutes pecuniary assistance should be granted to take out a patent, provided a committee of practical men considered the invention was really of a useful character; this would give the inventor time to realize on his invention, and his family would not be put to inconvenience for want of the money used for such purpose. It would also enable a man, who had really some useful invention laid by because he had not the means to take it out, to give the benefit of it to the world, and it would also stimulate others to put their ideas into shape from the knowledge that if their invention were really practical they could obtain assistance to patent it; of course if the money was borrowed from the resources of the Institute, legal interest would have to be paid and a certain security given, but no poor man would be necessitated to give up the half, of perhaps a valuable patent, for the sake of the loan of a few dollars to pay the patent fees. We are at present strongly urging the necessity of Canadian mechanics coming to the front and taking an active interest in Mechanics' Institutes, and, if they do so, most assuredly they will in a very short period reap the benefit.