

CAUTION TO INVENTORS.

[From the Mining and Scientific Press.]

In a recent number of the "Official Gazette of the United States Patent Office" appears a special order from the Commissioner of Patents disbarring from practice before the Bureau a patent agent who had been guilty of gross misconduct. The attention of the office had been called to circulars published by this person, containing gross misstatements calculated to deceive the public, so that hereafter he will not be recognized as an attorney in the prosecution of cases in the Patent Office.

In connection with the order referred to, the Commissioner makes some pertinent remarks on the subject of specification writing, unreliable agents, etc., which are worthy of careful perusal by all inventors, as the statements made apply to agents and inventors in every part of the country. Coming from the source it does—the head of the Patent Department—the warning given should have weight enough to impress itself upon all inventors and cause them to be more careful in the future as to whom they entrust their interests. The Commissioner says

"No many complaints have been recently made of ignorance or neglect or fraud on the part of those professing to act as attorneys, that a repetition of the cautions heretofore given by the Office seems now necessary. The preparation of specifications in simple cases even requires technical knowledge, familiarity with the useful arts and with the patent law, and resources in the form of books of reference and records of inventions.

"Commissioner Burke (see Report for 1852, p. 451) said:

"No great aid is to be expected in drawing up the substance of the specification from any forms. The character of the devices described varies so widely, and the details to be embodied demand such a different consideration and expression in different cases, that the language adopted on one occasion can rarely be employed on another without great modification.

"There is hardly any class of documents in preparing which so little aid is to be derived from precedents; none where more depends upon skill, experience, and ingenuity, or where these are more indispensable.

"Yet a large percentage of the cases filed in the Office are prepared by men who have none of the requisites named, and little knowledge beyond mere forms. These are often subordinates dismissed from the Office or from private firms for incompetency or fault, or draftsmen or model-makers. The specifications filed by these attorneys are frequently so imperfect and obscure as to be unintelligible and utterly unfit for publication, and the preparation and conduct of these cases increase the labor of Examiners, and are a fraud upon the inventors.

"The Examiners of the Patent Office cannot undertake to do the work of attorneys by re-writing and correcting specifications. Their first duty is to see that the papers are in proper form, to notify the attorney when and where corrections are needed, and, of course, the more ignorant the attorney the more corrections are required, and the greater are the annoyance and trouble to which the Examiner is subjected. It is an Examiner's duty to reject an application if the thing claimed is old, or if the applicant has claimed too much, but it is no part of his duty to notify the attorney when he has claimed too little for his client. It is sometimes done, but it is oftener omitted, and the inventor of a valuable invention gets a worthless patent. Inventors are, therefore, urgently advised to avoid illiterate attorneys who advertise to work at the cheapest rates, but whose services are dear at any price, and to seek the aid of those whose experience and technical and legal knowledge

are based on a liberal education, and who are in good standing at the Patent Office and before the country.

"In all of our larger cities, where there is a demand for patent practitioners, there are men to be found who are willing and able to give inventors salutary advice, and inventors in any part of the country may find responsible parties able to give them advice as to the selection of attorneys of long and well-known standing.

"Inventors are particularly cautioned against men who claim to have special facility in the Office, or who intimate that money may be used to hasten or assure the allowance of their cases.

"Inventors who are tempted by circulars or letters containing intimations of the possession by those who issue them of secret influences in the Patent Office will do well to note the following remarks of Commissioner Fisher:

"Inventors ought to know that if they are foolish enough to pay their money upon such pretences, it will never reach the pockets of the Government officials for whom they suppose it to be designed. It goes no further than the unscrupulous attorney or agent, who, assuming to trade upon the supposed corruption of sworn officers, is willing to slander honest men, and destroy public confidence in the administration of public affairs, in order that he may enrich himself at the expense of his credulous client. Instances have come to my knowledge where money has been extorted from clients by agents after patents had been actually allowed, but not yet issued, upon the pretense that it was necessary to bribe the Examiner. I know of no case where the money went beyond the solicitor. No practitioner can assert with truth that he possesses any facilities by which he is enabled to procure patents in advance of any of his competitors beyond his knowledge of the forms and routine of the Office and his skill and care in the preparation of his cases. To take money from his clients under the pretense that it is to be used to procure such facilities is to add theft to falsehood. . . .

"It will be a safe rule to distrust those who boast of the possession of special facilities in the Office for procuring patents in a shorter time or with more extended claims than others."

"Inventors, when attorneys or others demand exorbitant fees for supposed secret or improper influences in the Patent Office, will do themselves and the Office a service by bringing such communication to the personal attention of the Commissioner.

"The caution of Commissioner Fisher, quoted above, has been embodied in pamphlets of attorneys; among others, in those of the very men against whom it was directed; and if the present caution meets with the same fate, inventors may understand that its appearance in a circular or pamphlet is by no means a guarantee of the ability or honesty of those from whom the circular or pamphlet emanates.

"The remedy for the evils arising from ignorant and dishonest attorneys is in the hands of the inventors themselves. Let them exercise the same caution and judgment in selecting a patent solicitor which a prudent man considers necessary in selecting any other professional man—a physician or conveyancer, for instance—for performing duties which demand experience and exactitude, and the Patent Office would soon be relieved from the time-consuming annoyances caused by unskilled pretenders, fewer worthless patents would be issued, and less vexation and cost would arise to applicants from the rejection of cases, meritorious in themselves, but unfit to issue merely by reason of the bad preparation of the papers."

The National Yellow Fever Commission recommend a system of national quarantine, under the direction of the United States Government.

The New York Clearing House and the United States Board of Trade approve of and will aid Sherman's endeavors to make resumption a success.

HOW TO FILE AND SET A HAND-SAW.

The following instructions, although somewhat wearisome, perhaps, to the mechanic, may be of practical use to some of our readers who are removed from saw-sharpening facilities: When a saw is in bad order, the teeth are irregular in length and pitch. This occurs through improper filing, and results in the saw working hard. The reason is that a saw irregularly filed or set, cuts only with the longest teeth and those that have the most set. To remedy these defects, it should be pointed and filed until the teeth are all of even length, and are pitched so that the front of each tooth is at right angles with the back of the saw. The saw is fastened into a clamp, which consists of a pair of jaws fixed upon a stand, and moved by screws. The ends of the teeth are brought to a level by running a flat file lengthwise of the blade. The best form to give the edge is a slight curve from end to end of the saw, making the middle slightly rounding outward, never hollow.

The handle of the saw when in the clamp should be to the left, and not be changed during the filing. The part held in the clamp should be filed completely before being moved, if the jaws are not long enough to hold the whole. On a rip-saw, the teeth will be filed square on a cross-cut, they are beveled upon alternate sides. Both sides should be filed without moving the saw, which may be done by changing the position and manner of holding the file. A beginner should provide a handle at least a foot long for his file; this will enable him to hold it steadily, which is very necessary for good work. The proper size for a file is three and one-half inches long for a saw having eight teeth to the inch. A saw is set before it is filed. The set given for easy cutting should be such as to make the cut as wide as twice the thickness of the blade.

Several good sets are sold at the tool shops which are self-regulating, and make even work. If only a few of the teeth are short, they need not be pointed, but may be touched with a few strokes at each filing, until the rest are worn down to them. If one has no clamp, a strip of hard wood may be laid upon each side of the saw, and the whole held tightly in a vice. In filing, the strokes should be made from the operator and not towards him. The file should be grasped firmly in the right hand, while the tip is held lightly between the finger and thumb of the other. A safe rule is to work slowly, and to test the teeth as the work progresses with a try square. As long as the faces are kept at right angles with blade of the saw, the backs must come out right.

THE COMPOSITION OF CURARE.—An inquiry, says *The Pall-Mall Gazette*, has lately been made by scientific experts in Brazil into the nature of "curare," the remarkable poison of the Amazon and other Indians, the preparation of which has hitherto been kept a "trade secret" by the Indian manufacturers in Amazonas. Professor Jovert, however, recently contrived to get an Indian expert to confide it to him, and show him the plants and mode of preparation, and himself succeeded in making it and ascertaining also the physiological action of each ingredient. One of these is the powdered outer bark of the *Strychnos castelneana* another the watery extract of the *Cocculus toxiferus* of Weddell. The watery extract of these barks is boiled down to a proper thickness, after adding leaves of an *aroides* of the *Phylodendron* genus, leafy twigs of a *menispermacea*, and four *piperaceae*. By the experiments made at the Rio Janeiro, *strychnos* rapidly paralyzes the motor nerves; the *aroides* has similar action; the *cocculus* paralyzes the muscles, and especially the heart, but acts much more slowly than the *strychnos*; the *menispermacea* is a general excitant of the nerves, and thus assists the more rapid action of the preceding ingredients; and the pepper renders the toxic qualities more active.

SIXTY clerks, one-half of them women, were discharged from the Patent Office at Washington Nov. 19th.