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A CONVENTION OF INVENTORS.

For several weeks past printed circulars have been sent through the mails addressed to prominent patent owners in the name of "The Resident Inventors of New York," signed by Mrs. M. A. Forbes as secretary, calling for a national convention of inventors, to meet at Lyric Hall, this city, on October 22 and 23.

The alleged objects of the convention, as stated in the call, are to protect inventors and owners of patents against the encroachments of an organized hostility to our patent laws. Also to promote the introduction of new inventions.

In accordance with the call, the "convention" began its sessions on the 22d ult., about fifty persons being assembled with the object, according to the New York Times, of forming an association to secure for themselves full legal rights and protection against piracy and infringement. Three lady inventors were present—Mrs. Cunningham, who has evolved a cloth cutting machine; Mrs. White, the mother of a washing apparatus; and Mrs. Jones, whose talent has found scope in various directions. Mrs. Adams, a lady who is about to bring a play into the world, and who is known better under the non de plume of Della Dusane, was also present, presumably with the intention of availing herself of the benefits of the society, which, when formed, will extend its privileges to authors. The temporary President, Mr. Dee R. Shryock, of the American Postal Telegraph Company, said that inventors were the people who advanced the interests, prosperity, and civilization of the country more than any other class. He alluded to the Wadleigh bill, now before the Senate, as being full of unjust discriminations and ungrateful selfishness which fell nothing short of infamy. Mrs. M. A. Forbes said that the Constitution of the United States did not provide for the protection of intellectual workers. There were powerful combinations to-day made expressly for the purpose of destroying the patent system. There existed, she said, nearly 100 Western railroad companies organized to utilize and appropriate, without paying, the work of the inventors, the grangers, the mill men, and the boot and shoe manufacturers, sanctioned and encouraged by the National Board of Trade. The measures that had been introduced into Congress since 1875 had been such as to render it imperative that the inventors of this country should organize to endeavor to secure the rights of intellectual workers, among whom authors and others might be included. During the proceedings Thomas L. Clingman, ex-member of Congress from North Carolina, came in, and stated that he was interested in the movements of the association, as he had taken out patents of electric light in America and Europe. He felt the necessity for patentees to protect themselves.

A committee of five elected Mr. J. A. Price, of Pennsylvania, President of the convention, and Mrs. M. A. Forbes Secretary, Mr. F. W. Warner being afterwards appointed Assistant Secretary. Mr. Price said he thought the broadest title of the association was that of American citizenship. A committee of fifteen to draught the constitution, by-laws, and regulations for the association was appointed, each member being made the representative of a State. A committee of three, to draw up memorials to send to Congress embodying the ideas of the association, was composed of Mr. Price, Mr. Warner, and Mrs. Forbes. A telegram from Mr. E. M. Marble, ex Commissioner of Patents at Washington, was then read. He offered to become permanent president of the association. An Irishman named King, who had been disturbing the harmony but relieving the monotony of the proceedings, violently opposed this offer. Hesaw no reason why Mr. Marble should thrust a telegram in such a manner upon them, and called the missive a "sugar coated pill." He preferred offering the post of president to Mr. John Kelly rather than to an ex-Commissioner of Patents at Washington.

On the second day, 23d of October, the disturbing element in the shape of the turbulent little Irish agitator, Mr. King, described by one of the ladies present as a "dynamiter and a bad man," only prevailed at the commencement of the proceedings. Mr. King surreptitiously departed when the payment of fees was announced. An old lady, Mrs. Harriet F. Donlevy, who is well known in many societies as a lover of argument for argument's sake, opposed many movements with scriptural quotations. A memorial was drawn up to Congress in respect to existing wrongs and threatened injustice to a most useful class of citizens. It was petitioned that skilled persons be employed to make a digest of all the matter in the library of the Patent Office, with abbreviations of all inventions, so arranged as to correspond with the classification in the office. It was also asked that the statute which limits the term of a home patent to that of the earliest expiring foreign one be repealed. It was urged that the President should be given power to conclude arrangements for an international union for reciprocal protection and legislation for patents. It was then decided that the title of the association should be the American Patent Protective Association, its objects being to foster inventive talent, stimulate inventive genius, facilitate inquiry, and diffuse information. The association proposes to establish bureaus of scientific and legal information, and to promote the introduction of valuable discoveries and improvements. Mr. E. M. Marble, ex-Commissioner of Patents at Washington, was unanimously elected president of the association; Mr. J. A. Price, First Vice-president; Mr. P. H. McNamee, Treasurer; and Mr. F. W. Warner, Recording Secretary.

We suppose the material support of the new institution is to come from the fees and commissions to be charged for the

introduction of inventions and the supply of legal information. In the matter of "fostering" inventive talent and "stimulating" inventive genius it would almost seem as if the proposed labor was superfluous, over thirty-two thousand applications for new patents being filed last year in the Patent Office. The existing laws appear to furnish all the stimulants required in that direction.

THE OIL STONE.

Twenty years ago the oil stone was found only on the joiner's bench and possibly on that of the machinist, and its sole use was the sharpening of the edges of tools. To-day its use has extended beyond this province of edging tools to that of grinding, reducing, finishing; in fact, invading the limits of the grindstone, emery, rottenstone, tripoli, and reaching almost to rouge. This stone, which is a slate known in science as novaculite—from novacula, a razor—is cut and dressed in hundreds of varying forms for differing purposes. In any hardware or mechanic furnishing store it may be found in all manner of shapes under the name of "slips," adapted for sharpening tools of all forms. In dentists' supply stores it may be seen in twenty or more cylindrical and circular forms, and so minute as to be used at a rapid rate of revolution even between the teeth of dental-suffering humanity. Some of these cylinders, ovoids, cones, and edged wheels are so minute that a pea looks large by their side; yet they are all veritable grindstones.

In the manufacture and finishing of the metals, the oil stone, or novaculite, plays an important part. Our recent exaction as to fits and measures can hardly be filled except by the use of this stone, and it is in demand for trueing turned surfaces and planed areas of iron and brass, slowly grinding down the imperfections left by the finish file and the corundum wheel. Recently its powder has largely usurped the place in mechanics' valuation of flour of emery or emery of the higher grades. It is found that a finish "for fit" can be readily obtained by its use in much less time than that by the scraper; and that it does not leave embedded particles of quartz or corundum to keep up a perpetual wear. This material is not strictly an oil stone; it can be used with any vehicle, water, benzine, or kerosene oil; it is amenable to all of these. Perhaps its best use is with water, especially when the stone is of the harder sorts, as the Ouachita.

MAKING WIND POWER AUXILIARY.

The subject of storing the wind power evidently attracts much attention, and many suggestions have already been made, but it is manifest that no one has brought forward as yet any plan for doing practically the work intended. The ingenious soul mentioned in our paper of October 13, who runs his arastras with a current of sand, deserves a world of credit, and in his own case has at his command the means desired, for out in New Mexico or Arizona (where he appears to be) sand is to be had in abundance, and is the only thing of which that can be said. But alas! our supply of sand is limited, nor have we always a hillside to which we can raise it, and what we need is something of which we can avail ourselves everywhere.

Now, though the full answer to the question of storage may be too much for us at present, yet if we can contrive to secure a portion of the wind power sufficient to practically reduce the expenses of running our machinery, while we have the same steady supply of power as now, we shall surely have made a step in advance. Some weeks since (July 28), we made some remarks on one means by which this might perhaps be accomplished. Let us see if figures will show us that the thing is possible to such an extent as to make it worth attempting. We will base our calculations on the same amount of power as that formerly assumed; that is, a factory needs and uses a steam engine which gives it twenty horse power as its regular motive energy. Acting on the plan which we propose, this engine serves as an air compressor, for no other presents itself whereby we may combine the action of the steam and the wind in the same movement. We need therefore a reservoir which shall be common to both, and it is at this point that we must begin our calculations.

For the sake of convenience it will probably be better to divide our space, two cylinders instead of one, though this of course is not necessary. A diameter of eight feet with a height of ten gives us in round numbers 500 cubic feet of contents. Such a reservoir, built of three-eighths iron, and sufficiently fitted to bear a pressure of sixty atmospheres, will cost about \$450. The two, therefore, holding 1,000 feet we may set at \$900.

This amount of air compressed to the degree stated will furnish twenty hore power steadily through a working day of ten hours, without needing renewal.

But we do not propose to supply it from the steam engine alone or chiefly; we will bring in the wind power. At such point as is convenient wind wheels are erected in number and extent as required. A simple, solid, durable, and inexpensive wheel can be built after the following plan:

A vertical hard wood shaft of twelve feet is firmly supported at top and bottom, where it revolves freely in common iron bearings. Six (or eight) blades project four feet, plain, solid, of inch pine board. We have thus a wind wheel, twelve feet high, and eight feet in diameter.

A semicircular shield, concentric with the wheel, but of larger diameter, is fitted with a movable vane. When the mill is to run at its full speed the vane is so set that, whichever way the wind blows, the revolving shield leaves constantly one-half of the mill exposed to its force, and the full