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Detailed table of contents for the Scientific American Supplement No. 1107, listing articles by subject (I. ARCHAEOLOGY, II. ATHLETICS, etc.) and page numbers.

IMPORTANT AMENDMENTS TO THE UNITED STATES PATENT STATUTES.

A bill, H. R. 10,223, embodying important amendments to the Patent Statutes of the United States, has recently been enacted by Congress and became a law on the day of the inauguration of our new President.

The first amendment enacts that publication or patenting of an invention here or abroad, more than two years prior to the application for a patent in the United States, will prevent the obtaining of a patent here.

Another amendment, really subsidiary to the above, establishes a plea to the effect that such publication or patenting is a valid defense in a patent suit.

About the most radical of the amendments applies to section 4,887 of the patent statutes. Hitherto an inventor could patent abroad and then at any time within the life of his foreign patent or patents could obtain a patent here.

The theory of the old provision for limiting the life of a patent here by the term of a foreign patent to the same inventor has been much discussed. The limitation of the period, however, often worked great injustice to the patentee, and it is for his benefit that it is done away with.

The old system of giving to an applicant for letters patent successive periods of two years each for action on pending applications afforded an opportunity of keeping a patent application alive for years.

A somewhat more technical amendment provides that a properly acknowledged assignment, grant or conveyance of a patent shall be prima facie evidence of its execution.

Another amendment fixes the period over which an accounting for damages may extend. Hitherto this has been a very variable quantity. Sometimes it was fixed by the laws of the State within which the action was brought.

bought it simply to use as a weapon to obtain damages as hard to disprove as to prove.

Again, accountings are too often used to frighten parties to the suit into a settlement. Such a settlement may barely pay the expenses of the accounting; the amount paid may be but a tithe of the damages allowed by the master, but the moral effect in inducing other alleged infringers to pay royalty is very great.

A brief résumé of the amendments may be thus put: The inventor, if he finds that his invention has been published or patented, must apply for his patent within two years of the date of such publication or patenting.

These amendments are the results of the work of the American Bar Association, and carry with them a weight of authoritative backing that is seldom found in parallel cases.

At the end of the amendments thus far considered, and which may be grouped together, comes an entirely new statute. It provides that whenever the head of any department of the government shall request the Commissioner of Patents to expedite the forwarding of an application for a patent, such head of a department must be represented before the Commissioner in order to prevent the improper issue of a patent.

The bill, when first presented to Congress, received a good deal of criticism from attorneys and others, but rarely has a bill ever received such a strong backing, and the fact that it was the production of the committee of the Bar Association appointed to formulate and present the bill brought it at once to the favorable consideration of Congress.

THE PROPOSED MAMMOTH RELIEF MAP OF THE UNITED STATES.

A resolution was recently passed by the Senate and favorably reported by the library committee, which provided for the appointment of a commission of five to investigate the practicability of building a mammoth ground map of the United States.