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CONGRESS AND THE INTERNATIONAL PATENT CONVENTION.

The SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN has published from time to time notes upon the International Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property.

While our patent statutes have always provided for the influence of foreign publication upon priority, the convention of 1883 marked the first real effort to place patents upon an international basis.

Thus it has come to pass that while the patentees of the United States in their dealings with the patent offices of countries of the convention receive a direct benefit from it, and while their applications for foreign patents are numerous enough to justify the United States in maintaining to the best of its ability the terms of the agreement, the element of reciprocity is lacking for want of legislative action.

Under existing practice, foreign patents can be taken out without reference to the convention, and the majority of foreign applications are so presented. The practice of the United States Patent Office is, fortunately, such as to make it very easy to do this.

By the terms of the convention there is a six and seven months period allowed, which sometimes is of great advantage; that is, a patent can be applied for in one country, and if within six months, or for countries beyond the sea, seven months, an application is made in another country for the same invention, the date of that application is practically set back to the date of the parent application.

In practice this seven months term of priority, as it is termed, is frequently made use of, notably between America and England, but it is obvious that it must operate only in our favor.

ference proceedings in Washington, that a case came up in which the foreign inventor was estopped from taking advantage of the convention under the decision of the Attorney-General of April 5, 1889, which we have already cited and explained.

The convention affects the right of importation of patented articles. Under its provisions the importation of patented articles from abroad into any country where a patent for the same has been issued, does not involve forfeiture of the patent.

It will be of great service to the inventors of America if Congress would take the necessary steps and make the convention valid for America. Already complaints are being received from abroad of this inaction.

The proper committees in Congress should certainly take the matter into consideration, and it would be well for the inventors of America, and it would contribute to the dignity of the country, to take definite action in approving and accepting the terms of the convention.

THE ANNUAL BICYCLE EXHIBITION AT THE GRAND CENTRAL PALACE, NEW YORK.

In every annual bicycle exhibition of late years the prediction has been made that the bicycle has reached its full organic development, and that future exhibitions will show but little change except in the matter of details.

This conviction is strengthened by the fact that the present exhibition is remarkably free from what might be called the "freak" bicycle. Inventive genius, which a few years ago was making persevering efforts to devise a bicycle that should differ in its organic construction from the type which was rapidly gaining exclusive control of the field, has now directed its attention to the beautifying of its external appearance and the perfecting of its mechanical details.

Commencing with the frame, it is noticeable that the tubing is slightly larger, an inch and an eighth and an inch and a quarter being common. Nearly fifty per cent of the high grade wheels have D tubing for the rear forks, and a few use tubing of an oval section, both being adopted with a view to reducing the tread, which has been brought down to about four and a half inches in many of the wheels.

There has been an all round advance in the construction of the bearings. Balls are slightly larger, and the rider who has more than his share of "nerves" will appreciate the introduction of ball retainers, which enable each set of balls to be removed with its own cup, and prevent the possibility of their being lost during a general clean-up of the machine.