

ALBRIGHT, Andrew, inventor and manufacturer, was born in Dryden, N. Y., June 23, 1831. His father was of German and his mother of Dutch descent and both were natives of Belvidere, N. J. Mr. Albright, Sr., was a farmer noted for his industry and enterprise, and was at the time of his death one of the wealthiest men in his section of the state. He was a man of great intelligence, and remarkable ingenuity and skill; without having learned any trade he could shoe a horse, make a pair of boots, mend a plow, and do many other things as well as a



skilled mechanic. Andrew's boyhood was chiefly passed on his father's farm. His instruction under teachers, always hindered by the short term of the country schools, closed at the age of eighteen, when he left the district school. Until 1866 he continued to live on his father's farm, becoming himself a well-to-do farmer, a calling for which, however, he had no particular attachment. He was of a fertile and observant turn of mind and his great delight was to make improvements or remedy defects in the implements in use on the home farm. One day while using a harness trimmed with leather coverings which had become shabby and ragged,

a thought occurred to him that a substitute ought to be found that would be less liable to become soiled and injured. To this circumstance can be attributed the introduction of rubber-covered mountings. His ideas soon took practical shape, but success was not attained without many struggles on the part of the inventor. Without any knowledge of the manu-

facture of saddlery hardware, or the manufacture of rubber, either raw or vulcanized, in 1867 he went to New Brunswick, N. J., and commenced experimenting in the Novelty rubber company's factory. He met with much opposition, receiving no encouragement from experts, who pronounced his projects visionary, and were extortionate in their charges for services rendered him in his experiments. Encountering so much opposition from those on whom he was in a measure dependent, and being at times pressed for funds with which to continue his experiments, it required great force of character on his part to carry out his purpose. Even when he applied for a license to use vulcanized rubber to Mr. David A. Ropes, vice-president of the India rubber comb company, who had charge of the license department under the Good-year patents, he found that gentleman, who was considered an authority on all subjects pertaining to vulcanized rubber, unwilling to grant a license even after he had had one of the foremost experts examine into the feasibility of using hard rubber for harness mounting coverings. Mr. Albright worked on, however, never doubting, and finally got his license, although even then all difficulties were not removed; the prejudice of those who had used other coverings had still to be overcome. During this period he showed business tact and foresight, until after a time all obstacles were surmounted, and to-day rubber-covered mountings are extensively used, not only in this country but in Europe, South America, Mexico and Australia. This invention fully disproved the old adage, "There is nothing like leather." He is also the in-

ventor of rubber bound and set brushes which his firm, the Rubber & Celluloid harness trimmings company, manufacture, and also of a great part of the machinery used in manufacturing his inventions. Being naturally sympathetic, he has always been ready to assist by advice, and otherwise, inventors who were struggling as he had done. He is interested financially in many other manufacturing industries in Newark, principally, however, in those devoted to manufacturing his own inventions or those of inventors whom he had helped. His business ability proving equal to his inventive genius, he has accumulated a large fortune. Probably no words of commendation which Mr. Albright ever received have been so welcome as those from Mr. H. B. Goodyear, a brother of Charles, in a letter written from the Paris exposition of 1878, where he says, "I think you deserve more credit than any licensee that has ever taken up any branch of the hard-rubber business." Though a great part of his time is devoted to his engrossing business, he still finds leisure to occupy himself in the advancement of the commercial and educational interests of Newark, his home; has been a member of the Board of trade, and was active in promoting the interests of the Newark library association. In 1874, without solicitation on his part, he was unanimously nominated to represent his district in the legislature, and in 1880 he was again unanimously nominated, against his own wishes, as democratic candidate for congress in his district, but of course was defeated on both occasions, as the district was strongly republican. In the convention which nominated Ludlow for governor, and again in the convention of 1883 which nominated Leon Abbett, he was strongly supported for governor. Mr. Albright is characterized by a sanguine temperament, indomitable will and great perseverance. His blunt and outspoken manner has sometimes led him into controversies, but he has seldom made an enemy and never lost a friend. He possesses the good wishes of all in his employ and received moral support from them whenever he engaged in legal contests for the protection of his patent rights. He married in 1878 Elmira, daughter of William Crasper of Dryden, N. Y., and two children, a girl and boy, have blessed the union. From a struggling inventor of 1866 he has attained a high position as a wealthy and much honored manufacturer. His home surroundings stamp him as a man of public spirit and taste, and his fine collection of paintings and curios mark him as a liberal patron of the arts.

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