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### TELEPHONE ETIQUETTE.

It is announced from Chicago that many of the important western railroads are moving for the adoption of new rules in the operation of their telephone systems, and that hereafter employes who make tart answers to the public over the wire will be penalized, says the Atlanta Constitution. No such expressions as "get off the wire," "ring off," nor to mention others of a more blistering nature, will henceforth be tolerated.

The reform might well be extended to include all uses of the phone, whether by public service corporations, individual business houses or individual patrons themselves, remarks the Pendleton East Oregonian. The marvelous spread of the telephone within the past few years has given rise to conditions entirely without precedent, from the standpoint of social custom and the personal equation.

Men and women whose conduct and manners offer the last word in courtesy and gentility in the drawing room and even in business, often lose all grip of themselves once they get at the phone. The twin facts that one is not face to face with the other party and that the conversation has more or less the screen of anonymity, are not infrequently abused as palliating the grossest rudeness.

There is, of course, an element of humor in many of the situations thus created, with an occasional tincture of distinct ill breeding where the eavesdropper gets in his or her deadly work. And since the telephone, like all other devices of human origin, is by no means perfect, there are moments when exasperation appears to call for the nearest approach to profanity the well brought up individual allows himself.

But if we are to get the greatest efficiency out of the now established instrument for communication, it is well to remember that courtesy will facilitate business here no less than in face to face dealings with the world. The temper, inflamed language and selfishness wasted upon the telephone is a definite deterrent to getting the best results from it. When you have to use the wire it does no harm to bear in mind that here, as elsewhere, "speaking softly" is nine times out of ten, more effectual in getting what you want than "carrying a big stick."

### NEW SETTLERS' CLAIMS.

The need of local federal courts for considering the claims of new settlers in Oregon has been understood by the people of Oregon for a number of years. Under ordinary conditions, any matters involving the rights of a man who secures a claim, and fails to comply with one of the numerous regulations, required, must be settled by the federal courts, often sitting far away from the home of the new settler and involving a large expense for travelling, to say nothing of the disadvantage which any man may suffer from having to deal with people unfamiliar with local conditions.

The establishment of local federal courts, after the style of circuit courts will not only save time and expense, but will enable the officials to judge of conditions at first hand. This system will bring the government more closely in touch with the settlers. It has been the complaint often in the past that, although the conditions for obtaining land in Oregon are simple enough theoretically, the situation of the actual settler who goes out into a new section of country to build a home is often far from satisfactory.

It is impossible for anyone not familiar with the obstacles with which the settler has to contend to judge accurately of any difficulty which he may have in reclaiming his allotment. The special agents, often at a great loss to deal with situations as the federal court, because it often happens that one is not familiar with local conditions, and can not consequently be in complete sympathy with the settlers. A system of local courts, which shall have jurisdiction in all land cases and of which the officials are constantly in touch with local conditions, will do much to assist the settlers in making the desert blossom as the rose, and in building up the resources of the state.

### MOONEY'S WANDERING GHOST.

An O'er True Story.

Mooney, the bandit, had killed the agent, robbed a railway station at Preston, Idaho, and was to be executed by hanging. The tragedy was gruesome in its inception, more so in its continuance, for it seems not yet to have ended, though it was an act of more than twenty years ago. The direful facts having been so well established that there was no room for any doubt whatever, the law was permitted to have its straight course with little or no deviation from the line laid down in the statutes and indicated by the sentence of the judge.

But Mooney was obstinate. Like most mortals he did not want to die. He did all he could to captivate earthly influence, and falling in that tried his best to summon and secure an earthly and even spooky assistance. To this spine freezing end he threatened the sheriff that if he were executed he would haunt the town and people of Malad, the county seat where he was confined, through all the years to come.

To the best of the belief of the peo-

ple he is keeping his word, for not long after his execution things uncanny began to occur for which they could give no explanation other than the fearless and fear-filling actions of Mooney's ghost.

Once it took a psychological shape as this story will confirm: A resident of Malad was telling the writer that some time before that, the lone stage-driver was driving late one lonesome night along the silent sandy road near the place where Mooney's body had been buried. If not thinking of the weird tales abroad, his mind

was ready for an auto-rectal of any new story that might float out over the awe-stricken community. The weary horses were plodding headlong and slow. The drowsy driver occasionally jerked the limp lines and with a "gid-dap" stirred them momentarily. All at once he saw far down the dim-marked road a small light which seemed to be moving toward him. He thought at first it was some one carrying a lantern, but as they approached each other he saw apparently rolling on the ground, a ball of fire about the size of a common pumpkin, but shining bright as the moon. On it came; his skin began to be goose-fleshy. He wanted company. He tried to whistle, but his lips became stiff, and the puckering strings would not work. He straightened himself, clicked to the ponies, cleared his throat, rubbed his eyes, all to no purpose. The thing came rolling on toward him. He was expecting his team to shy and gathered his lines taut. With bated breath and stilled heart he sat in the seat of his rig till the abominable thing came on and on even between the feet of the animals and disappeared under the wagon. He looked out behind, but it was seen no more.

"Why did not the horses shy?" asked the writer.

"It is said horses cannot see such

things," remarked the story teller.

The parson had just returned from marrying a couple from Malad and was telling this same rector what he had done and whom he had united in matrimony.

"Well, this is the way he tells it himself," said the spinner of the boggy yarns. "He had been out in the country to see his girl and it was winter. The night being very cold, he believed he would be warmer to walk a little way, as he was returning. He dismounted and led his pony. Being grave,"

lay the grave of neighborhood disturbances, he thought he would remount and ride swiftly by the fearsome spot. Stopping his nag he turned to vault into the saddle, but saw that it was occupied. A man was sitting there motionless and voiceless. He commanded the occupant to dismount. There was no movement toward obedience. He felt his hat rising with his stiffening hair. His knees trembled; falteringly he stumbled on; looking back a time or two, he saw the silent specter still astride. On they went till the cemetery was passed. He looked again and the saddle was empty. Mooney had slid off silently as he had mounted and gone back to his grave."

J. D. GILLILAN.

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