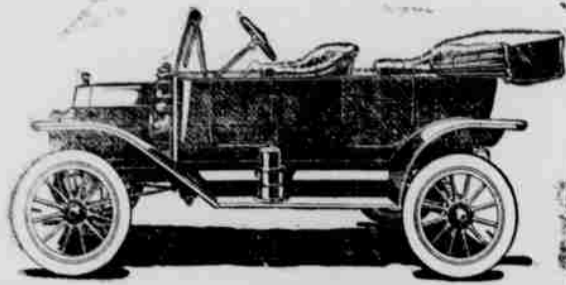


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THE TELEPHONE A MYSTERY.

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The telephone business is not like any other business on the face of the earth. It is the most remarkable combination of science and mystery, of human and mechanical, of wire and wits, of highly skilled specialists and the general public.

Any little child can be the engineer of a telephone talk train. Any little baby can send its cooings hundreds of miles along the wire to its father at the other end. And yet, at the mystery end of the telephone, not even John J. Carty, master of telephone science, can explain or even comprehend some of the phenomena of a telephone exchange.

I once asked Alexander Graham Bell if he really understood the workings of a telephone receiver, and he replied: "Why, of course not. Nobody does." I also asked Mr. Emile Berliner if he could explain exactly what happened in a telephone transmitter, and he replied: "No, I can't. It is as great a mystery today as it was thirty years ago."

Think of the marvel of it! Here is an intricate network of wires and disks and electric currents and electric lights and keys and jacks and bells and cords and cables. This mechanism is so delicate that it is actually operated by the slightest sound. It is not set in motion by steam or gasoline, but by breath. The slight vibration of the vocal cords is actually the power that puts the vast telephone mechanism in operation.

A telephone system is an immense and widespread mechanism of voice machinery. There is nothing else like it. It stands by itself as a marvelous thing which any one can use and which nobody can understand.—Herbert N. Casson in Mountain States Monitor.

The Bogus Beggar.

Several prominent literary men of Paris conceived the idea of making investigations among the beggars on the boulevards by disguising themselves as members of the begging fraternity and soliciting alms. They succeeded beyond their utmost expectations, both in discovering fraud cases of counterfeit cripples and blind men, and by the liberal fees which they themselves received. A good story is told of a number of these bogus beggars calling upon the Duc d'Aumale, with appeals for relief, to each one of whom the duke gave 5 francs. At last, however, a genuine beggar appeared, to whom the duke said: "I have received about twenty mendicants of letters today, and I recognized them all, in spite of their rags, but I don't know you. You must be a bogus literary man. Get out!"

Boiling Criminals to Death.

Boiling criminals to death was once a legal mode of execution in England for counterfeiting and later for committing murder by poisoning. An act of parliament passed in 1531 provided that convicted poisoners should be boiled to death, though this form of punishment was not applied to any other class of murders. The law was in force about fifteen years, and under it three persons were boiled to death, one a cook who put poison in food intended for his parish poor and another a maid who poisoned her mistress. A Dublin paper of Feb. 28, 1709, said that "twelve coiners (counterfeiters) were seized in the act of coining and, having been tried and found guilty, were four hours afterward boiled in oil, three of them women."—Dallas News.

The Minister's Parting Shot.

The minister had just preached his farewell sermon to the congregation with whom he had had much trouble.

"How beautiful," said a visitor to one of the deacons, "and how appropriate for a farewell sermon."

"Think so?" said the deacon gruffly.

"Why, yes. What better text could he find than 'In my Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you.' By the way, where is he going?"

The deacon smiled sourly as he answered, "He becomes chaplain of the state penitentiary."

The Merit of Pauline.

Pauline, who had been attending school for two weeks, was telling her parents about the naughtiness of her classmates.

"That's bad," said her mother, "and did the teacher have to speak to you too?"

"No'm," said Pauline; "she had to speak to all the class but me this afternoon."

"Good," replied her mother.

"What did she say?"

"Why," answered Pauline, "she said, 'Now, children, we will all wait until Pauline is in order.'"



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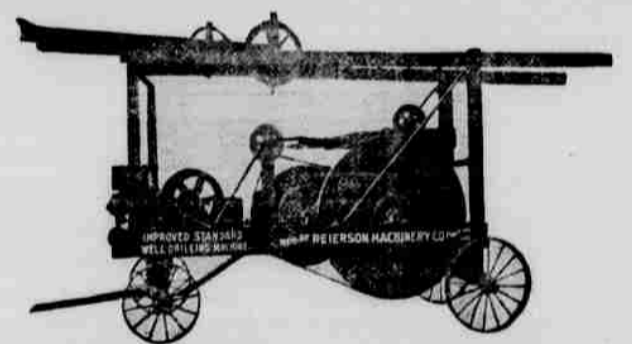
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