

TO TALK UNDER THE OCEAN.

A Telephone Line to Europe Would Have to be an Inch Thick.

It was Prof. Sylvanus Thompson of London that set electricians talking again about what is known as submarine telephony. He was in the United States some months ago, and he declared his belief that a cable so constructed as to make what the electricians call self-induction balance and neutralize certain other elements of difficulty in the problem would render it possible to talk from the Old World to the New. Practical electricians see small prospects of results from Prof. Thompson's suggestion, as it would cost some millions of dollars to test the accuracy of his theory. He admits that his special form of cable would be costly and difficult to make and lay.

It is generally held by electricians that a cable with a thick enough conducting core properly insulated would carry the human voice under the ocean. Some electricians guess that the cable, insulating coat and all, should carry speech under the Atlantic must a foot in diameter. This is arguing from known facts, but unless difficulties might arise. When the electrician has taken into account all he knows he is sometimes balked in practice by the development of things that he does not know. The building of such a cable, or of that suggested by Prof. Thompson, is believed to be a long way off.

The only man who has suggested a method of sending human speech under the ocean by means of cables now in use is J. J. Carty, a widely known electrical engineer of this city, who set forth his theory in a lecture about five years ago. Another man thought the idea of sufficient practical importance to have it patented. When Mr. Carty thinks so perhaps the other fellow will hear from him.

When a telegraph operator cables across the Atlantic there is an appreciable length of time between the communication of the impulse here and the recording of it on the other side, and the second impulse must be withheld until such time has elapsed. For this reason the human voice cannot be directly transmitted by cables now in use, for a single syllable would communicate hundreds of tiny impulses to the cable, and they would jostle one another, so to speak, in such fashion that no clear record would be made upon the other side. Mr. Carty suggested that the message be first talked into a phonograph upon one side of the Atlantic; that the phonograph then be connected with the cable, and turned at so slow a rate that the impulses shall not crowd one another. A slowly moving phonograph on the other side would receive the message, and, having its record, would be revolved rapidly enough for the sound to be received by the human ear.

Mr. Carty believes his plan perfectly sound in theory, but he admits that it would take a long time to send such a message. No experiment has been tried to demonstrate its practicability, partly because Mr. Carty is too busy earning a living in the service of a telephone company to take six months off for devising the necessary machinery for the experiment, and partly because the cable companies are not likely to trouble themselves about such a matter.

WOMAN'S SOPRANO VOICE.

Why She Can Reach Much Higher Tones Than Are Possible For Man.

The scientist who discovered in the human larynx the anatomical reason why a woman has a soprano voice and a man a bass one was a woman, Mrs. Emma Seiler, and Mrs. Seiler has already been praised in the columns of PROGRESS. She was a German, born in Wurtzburg. Left a widow with two children to support, she resolved to become a teacher of singing, but suddenly lost her voice. Then she determined to find out why; also to discover, if possible, the correct method of singing, so that others might not lose their voices. For this purpose she studied anatomy. She dissected larynx after larynx and spent years in her search, trying to find for one thing why woman's head tones could reach high C while men had no soprano tones. At length her search was rewarded. She discovered under the microscope one day two small, wedge-shaped cartilages whose action produces the highest tones of the human voice. She made her discovery public. It excited great attention among scientists. Her own brother, a physician, praised the treatise in the highest terms till he found his own sister had written it. Then he dashed it down, saying in a rage that she would better be attending to her housework. Mme. Seiler's portrait, in marble relief, is in possession of the American Philosophical Society of Philadelphia, of which she was a member. She wrote, among other books, "The Voice in Singing" and "The Voice in Speaking." She died in 1886.

Too Much Praise.

To be generous in praising another's good qualities is praiseworthy, and it is to be hoped that no one will be rendered less generous by a story like the following:—

An Irishman who was working on a new railway said one day to the foreman:—

"Do yer want any more hands, sir? I've got a brother at home that wants a job."

The foreman asked him what sort of a workman his brother was.

"Faith, sir," Pat replied, "he's as good a man as meself."

"All right, tell him to come on."

"Wholes I'm axing you for my brother, there's me poor old father at home wanting a job at the same time, yer honor."

"Well, and what sort of a man is your father, Pat?"

"Be jabbers, sir, he's as good as two of us."

"Oh, well," said the foreman, "tell your father to come, and you and your brother can stay away."

A Slander Refuted.

"It takes a war, or, at least something as theatrical as war, to bring out the patriotism of women," said the oracular man. "Of plain, everyday work for the good of the country they haven't the least idea."

"I happen to know better than that," said the other man. "I know the wife of a congressman who took the manuscript of a tariff speech her husband was intending to perjure, and gave it to the girl to light the fire with."

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IT WAS JUST HIS LUCK.

The Tramp Wished He Had Not Been Too Lazy to Take off his Boots.

They were two elderly maiden ladies and they lived alone in a Wisconsin home. Their income was derived from extensive timber lots, and they were reputed to be wealthy.

One of them had a good business head, and the other was hopelessly dependent upon her sister's judgment, both sharing in common a horror of having money in the house. Often money came into their possession too late in the day to bank, and the hiding places they devised were original, to say the least.

A nephew had visited them while on a hunting expedition and had left behind him a pair of boots. These Margaret (the dependent one) had placed in a little store-room which opened from off the kitchen, intending to give them to the first tramp who came along. A few days afterward Harriet received a large sum of money, and casting around for a place to hide it one night, her eyes fell upon the boots, and straightway she tucked the roll of bills well down in the toe of one of them. A neighbor calling later, she went home with her, not thinking to tell Margaret what she had done.

In a little while there was a rap at the kitchen door, and when Margaret opened it, she saw a pitiful, ragged object, who asked feebly for something to eat. She gave him some food, and then noticing that he was poorly shod, she thought of the boots, and forthwith handed them to the tramp. He thanked and blessed her in the regulation way, and she, with a heart glowing in the knowledge of a good deed performed, sat down in her favorite rocker to await her sister's return. In the course of an hour or so Harriet came in, and sat down in the twilight lit room to discuss her visit, and incidentally the neighbors' shortcomings: finally she said:

"Did anyone call while I was out?"

"Nobody, except a poor, wretched-looking man who came begging at the back door."

"Did you give him anything?"

Here Margaret blushed guiltily, for she had received numerous injunctions from her sister to turn tramps unceremoniously out, and she knew only too well the lecture that was sure to follow.

"Yes," she answered, hesitatingly, "I gave him some bread, and—and the old boots that Henry left here."

"What?"

Harriet bounded out of her chair as if shot from a catapult.

"You gave him the boots! In Heaven's name which way did he go?"

"I—I don't know. I didn't think you would care. You ought to have seen how miserable he looked. Henry told me to give them away."

"Care! Told you to give them away!" almost shrieked Harriet. "Do you know there was \$500 in the toe of one of those boots?"

Margaret quietly fainted in her chair, and Harriet, leaving her to "come to" as best she could, rushed out of the house.

In a little while the neighborhood was aroused, but no one could find the tramp.

The next day the town marshal overtook him several miles beyond the village, trudging wearily along with the boots (which were many sizes too big for him) on his feet.

The marshal commanded him to halt, covering him with a revolver at the same time.

The tramp lost no time in obeying.

"I didn't steal 'em. A woman giv' 'em ter me las' night."

"It don't matter. Take 'em off, I say."

The tramp sat down by the wayside and laboriously did as commanded.

The marshal took the boots and hurriedly searched the toes. The money was there intact.

The marshal flung the boots back to the astonished tramp and put the bills in his pocket; then he galloped out of sight. The tramp scratched his head a minute.

"Jes' my darn luck! I was wonderin' why that toe didn't wrinkle down to my feet like tuther an', an' 'fore I cud investigate that blame highwayman had ter cum erlong an' rob me. Wonder how they knew the money was there?"

Why She Wanted to Dream.

It is not often that much excitement is caused by the winning of a large stake at Monte Carlo, more especially in the salon wherein are the trente-et-quarante tables. But a few weeks ago the decorous quiet which usually reigns in the salon d'or was amusingly ruffled. While the solemn function of displaying, mixing, and shuffling the cards which precedes the beginning of the play was being gone through, a gentleman walked up to the tables, deliberately counted out twelve one-thousand franc notes, and placed them on black.

This somewhat unusual occurrence of staking a maximum before the play for the day had begun naturally attracted some attention, and a bystander remarked to the punter:

"Rather bold play, sir."

"Well," said the player, "I dreamt last night that I saw this table exactly as it now, and on the first coup black won."

The cards being duly cut, the tailleur proceeded, watched by the onlookers with unusual interest, to deal out the cards for the first coup; and black won!

A suppressed "Oh!" from bystanders greeted the announcement, "Rouge perd!" and then from across the table came, in tones of agonized entreaty, a lady's voice:

"What did you have for supper last night? Do tell me!"

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GIBBS WAS SURPRISED.

And was More Excited than Mr. Asquith was Last Saturday.

Gibbs was a commercial traveler, and had gone on a journey to the North. A few days afterwards the Gibbs household was increased by one—a boy. As the mother was very ill, the doctor was requested to write out a telegram informing Gibbs of the addition to his family, and also his wife's illness, and asking him to return home with as little delay as possible.

This was done, and the telegram was given to the servant to send off. That intelligent girl, being unable to read, put the message in her pocket and forgot all about it. The next day Gibbs paid a flying visit home, and was gratified to find his wife and family getting on nicely. After staying at home a few hours he took his departure without anything having been said about the telegram, which his wife naturally supposed he had received.

A day or two after he had gone the servant found the message in her pocket, and after consulting her favorite Bobby, she decided to send it off at once without saying a word to anyone about the delay. That night Gibbs, upon returning to his hotel, was horrified when the following telegram, bearing that day's date, was placed in his hand:—

"Another addition, a son; your wife is very ill; return at once."

"Another!" he gasped. "Great Jupiter! impossible!"

He rushed to the station and took the next train home, and, dashing into the house in a state of frenzy, demanded to know what had happened. The servant confessed all. The next day there was a vacancy for an intelligent, honest girl at the Gibbs establishment.

No Trace of a Plot.

"Nothing succeeds like success," runs the saying, but there are times when a lack of success has been of great value. In the time of William III. Mr. Trevelyan, a poet, was taken before the Earl of Nottingham on suspicion of having treasonable papers. "I am only a poet," protested the poor man, "and these pages are only my roughly sketched play."

The earl, however, carefully looked over the papers in question before liberating the poet. Finally he returned the sheets to the delighted author.

"I have heard your statement," said the earl gravely, "and I have read your play. As I cannot find the least traces of a plot in the one or the other, you may go free."

With this unflattering tribute to his innocence, the poet departed with his plotless play.

A Peaceable Rascal.

The Javanese manner of settling quarrels is original. When one man has offended another, the party gives notice that he is angry by drawing in the sand before the door of the offender a circle with a straight line across it, indicating that his affection, which would have been eternal, has been cut in two. Friends of both parties then shut them up. They parley a while, then pretend to be born again, prattle as little children, and finally as men become reconciled and embrace. Should one be refractory and refuse to be conciliated, he is ostracized by the community so effectually that he is soon brought into terms. It is just possible that our enlightened citizens might consider this method better than knocking arguments and certain much cheaper than going to law.

The Philosopher and the Potato-Bugs.

The late Bronson Alcott, the transcendentalist philosopher, and his next door neighbor at Concord, had potato-fields on both sides of their dividing stone wall, and the fields were overrun with bugs. One day, as Alcott and his neighbor were picking off the potato-bugs, the latter Concordian brought out a pail of hot water and scalded a lot of them, whereupon Alcott asked, "Who gave you, my dear neighbor, the right to put those fellow-creatures to death?" But look here, Mr. Alcott," said the neighbor, looking at the pail into which the philosopher was rapidly raking the beetles on his side, "what do you do with your potato-bugs?" "Oh," answered Alcott, "I just take them down to the wall here, and throw them over that!"

Rudyard Kipling on Canada.

Rudyard Kipling says of Canada: "It is a great country—a country with a future. There is a fine, hard, tough, bracing climate—the climate that puts iron and grit into men's bones; and there are all good things to be got out of the ground if people will work for them. Why don't Englishmen think more of it as a field for English capital and enterprise? Surely there is an excellent opening both for the investing and the emigrating Briton there. Things don't perhaps move quite so fast as in the United States; but they are safer, and you are under the flag you know, and among men of the slower stock and breed. Send your folks to Canada; and if they can't go themselves, let them send their money—plenty of it."

A Hard Thing to Prove.

The widow of an army officer went to the pension office for the purpose of drawing her pension. She presented the usual certificate to the effect that she was still alive.

"This certificate is not right," said the official.

"What is the matter with it?"

"Because it bears the date of December 21st, but your pension was due December 12th."

"What kind of a certificate do you want?"

"We must have a certificate that you were alive on the 12th day of December. Of what use is this one that says you were alive on the 21st day of December—six days later?"

"I hope, sir, you will assist a poor man whose house and everything that was in it, including me family, sor, was burned up two months ago last Thursday, sor."

The merchant to whom this appeal was addressed, while very philanthropic, is also very cautious, so he asked: "Have you any paper or certificate to show that you lost anything by the fire?"

"I did have a certificate, sor, signed before a notary public, to that effect, but it was burned up, sor, in the house with me family and the rest of me effects."

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