

GROWTH OF THE TELEPHONE.

Millions of Instruments Are in Use in This Country.

Washington.—Statistics issued at the close of the year 1906 show that there were in use in the United States alone more than 7,000,000 telephones, while an aggregate of a little more than 6,000,000 miles of wire was used for telephone service.

The telephone industry gives employment to 90,000 persons in the United States, an increase of 171 per cent. in six years, while during the same period the number of STATIONS has increased 329 per cent. and the wire mileage 249 per cent.

There is little doubt that much of this increase is due to the general adoption of the so-called message rate system in place of the flat annual charge formerly in vogue. By making the charges proportional to the number of calls the use of the telephone has been widely extended both because of the greater willingness of people to become subscribers under such conditions and because the system gives an incentive to the local telephone companies to give good service and encourage the use of the telephone.

Another cause for the increase in the number of telephones in use is doubtless the extending number of large business buildings in various cities, since the telephone is an absolute necessity in the modern tall building, making it possible to transact business as well from the twentieth story as from the ground floor. The installation of the telephone in every suite in the modern hotel and large apartment house accounts for a portion of the increase.

SHAVES HUSBAND TO BUY RUG.

Head of Family Undergoes Torment to Help Wife Get Carpet.

Trenton, N. Y.—When the new rug is laid in Grace Baptist church, about four yards of it will be consecrated to the fortune of Henry Lonsdale. Every thread represents a whisker which Lonsdale submitted to a razor wielded by his wife.

Mrs. Lonsdale is a member of the Ladies' Aid society, which planned to buy the church carpet on the self-denial plan. There is some difference of opinion on this point, the men asserting that Lonsdale showed himself a martyr, while the women are congratulating the wife.

While other women baked bread and sewed, Mrs. Lonsdale decided she would shave her husband, and charge him 15 cents for the operation. It is not on record how Lonsdale first received the proposition, but the fact that he consented to act the victim is proof that his wife has the true religious spirit.

For four months did Lonsdale go through the shaving process. He once believed that a shave once a day was a necessity, but under the skillful manipulation of his wife he discovered that he could get along on three shaves a week.

Only once did Mrs. Lonsdale ask: "Does the razor hurt?" He did not swear; he did not groan, but the look of anguish was enough.

"APPLE SEED JOHNNY."

Tramp Who Is Making Himself Benefactor to Coming Generations.

Tresbein, O.—There wandered through this village last week an old tramp who a generation or two hence may come to be regarded as a second "Apple Seed Johnny." He is planting nut trees, so that the youth of the land in years to come will not be deprived of shellbarks and walnuts.

Not many years ago there was hardly a farm in the east that did not have at least one walnut tree, and there was not a stream which did not have growing along its banks hundreds of shellbark and hickory trees.

The demand for black walnut timber and the need for hickory wood in carriage manufacturing have made both these varieties of trees exceedingly scarce, and it will not be long before the joy of gathering the nuts will be lost to most children.

During the last three years the old tramp has been planting thousands of nuts. He seeks the out of way spots, since he wants the trees to have a fair chance to grow. The rocky sides of hills and the abandoned land at the edges of creeks are sought out, and when their benefactor is but a memory brown-cheeked youngsters will reap the fruits of his kindness and bless him.

Hatch Plot in Land Office.

Washington.—Hatching chickens in the file cases in one of the rooms of the general land office by the use of heat from a fue leading from the boilers that produce the electric power for the building is a new industry in which three women clerks have been engaged with great interest recently.

One of the women converted a file box into an incubator by substituting for it a box stuffed with cotton and containing three eggs.

She ascertained that the average temperature was 93 degrees, just right according to the books. But one night the fue got too hot and the eggs were cooked.

Dolly Bloom a Great Cow.

New York.—The world's record of milk production for a year by a single cow has been broken by the Guernsey Dolly Bloom, according to the report of Secretary William H. Caldwell, which was submitted at the annual meeting of the Guernsey Cattle club here. Dolly Bloom's record for the year was 17,297 pounds, or about 2,023 gallons. She is owned by F. A. Ames, of Boston.

NEW YORK CITY'S DEBT.

More Than Half as Great as That of the National Government.

New York.—The total bonded debt of the United States is only \$25,000,000, and that of New York city is already more than half that of the national government. At the present rate of increase the metropolis will have the larger indebtedness in five years.

The total debts of all the states in the union amount only to \$234,314,190, less than half that of the single city of New York. The total state, county and city indebtedness of the entire United States is less than three times that of the city of millionaires.

The great military powers of the world are much concerned over China and her debt, and yet China has borrowed only \$613,000,000, against \$500,000,000 for New York. The entire Dominion of Canada owes only \$271,000,000, about equal to New York's increase in four years.

Next to New York the 25 large cities of the United States, in the order of their population, are as follows: Chicago, Philadelphia, St. Louis, Boston, Baltimore, Cleveland, Buffalo, San Francisco, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, New Orleans, Detroit, Milwaukee, Washington, Newark, Jersey City, Louisville, Minneapolis, Providence, Indianapolis, Kansas City, St. Paul, Rochester, Denver and Toledo.

Their population, according to the census of 1900, was about 9,600,000, against 3,437,000 for Greater New York. It is not likely that this proportion has changed much. Now, the total bonded indebtedness of these 25 cities is about \$417,000,000, almost 100,000,000 less than that of the metropolis!

This means that the per capita debt of the citizens of New York is \$145.35, against \$43.45 for those of the other large cities. Boston with \$116 and Cincinnati with \$114 come the nearest to approaching New York's record, while Chicago and San Francisco, owing only \$12 per capita each, make the best showing.

IN SCHOOL WITH HER SON.

Iowa Woman Proves Herself a Clever High School Pupil.

Clinton, Ia.—Not long ago a 50-year-old Iowa editor started his college course at the State university and now an Iowa woman is going through high school with her son. Perhaps the only case of mother and son attending public school together is that of Mrs. Elta Feldman and Worth Feldman, classmates in the Sioux City high school.

Finding her son somewhat indifferent to the joys of student life Mrs. Feldman has adopted the course of studying side by side with him. It was two years ago that Mrs. Feldman first tried the plan by attending eight school. She and her son graduated to the sixth grade of the Armstrong school, where both are now doing good work.

Mrs. Feldman is said by her instructors to be an especially apt pupil, her interest in class work being much greater than that of the average student.

Mrs. Feldman is the owner of a quarter of a block at Fifth and Court streets, whereon she has 11 houses. While attending school she employs a housekeeper, while Mr. Feldman is the superintendent of her realty interests. She has been in the restaurant business in Sioux City, having kept three different eating places during her business career.

JOHN BULL GROWS TEMPERATE.

Decrease in Consumption of Spirits Not Attributable to Slow Business.

Washington.—Consul F. W. Mahin, of Nottingham, notes that the "wave of sobriety" observable in Great Britain during several recent years has been attributed to various causes, about which he writes:

"One of these was the business depression which the country has suffered. But this supposition is not sustained by the official statistics for 1906. The year was exceedingly prosperous and satisfactory in all lines of business, yet the consumption of spirits distinctly declined in comparison with 1905, when business was relatively dull. In 1906 the consumption was 0.92 of a proof gallon per head of the British population, against 0.93 and 0.99 in the preceding two years, respectively, and 1.17 in 1900. The true explanation of the sobriety wave is evidently that public sentiment favorable to moderation in the use of alcoholic liquors is steadily growing in this country."

REDUCTION IN OPIUM.

Area Under Cultivation in India is Curtailed.

Calcutta.—In making his budget statement in the legislative council E. N. Baker, who anticipates a surplus of \$3,871,000 for the coming year despite the reduced uniform salt tax of one rupee per maund, said that the opium revenue was doubtful, but it had been decided to reduce the area under cultivation.

For education the budget provision, he said, is the highest ever made. Although nothing is allowed for free education in primary schools, the secretary of state is prepared to consider a suitable scheme and to authorize it if the financial position permits. Army charges are reduced and though causes for anxiety are not wanting and the need for ceremony is unceasing, the prospects in the coming year are full of hope.

SCHOOL HABITS IN PERSIA.

Boys Sit on Floor and Recite Lessons as if Chanting.

Oriental children have their marbles, their skipping rope and the little toy plows into which cats and kittens are harnessed for play. They enjoy life fully as much as do American children. When the boys are 10 years old they are sent to school in the nearest mosque. Parents will sometimes take a boy to school and deliver him over to the gentle care of the teacher with these words: "His bones are mine, but his flesh is yours. Teach him and punish him as you see fit."

When boys go to school they usually sit in two rows. One row sits along one wall, books in hand, and the other row along the opposite wall. The teacher sits in the middle of the room. They do not use chairs, but sit on the floor, which is covered with a reed matting. When they are studying their lessons they sway their bodies backward and forward as if they were in a rocking chair and read with a loud voice in a staccato style as if they were chanting.

They have neither blackboards nor slates, but use paper and reed pens in learning to write. They put their left knee on the floor and set their right one up for a desk to rest the paper on. They use the Arabic alphabet and read and write from right to left instead of from left to right. They also begin their books at the back, reading forward. The ability to read a single Persian book is considered in Central Asia to be the sign of a liberal education. The attendance at school is voluntary, no one being compelled to send his boys if he prefers to keep them at home.

THE FIRST CURTAIN CALL.

Voltaire One to Whom Original Honor Was Paid.

At the first performance in Berlin of Gerhart Hauptmann's "Jungfrau von Hirschofberg" the author was repeatedly called before the curtain, and the incident caused inquiry as to when and where the practice of honoring an author in that way originated.

The Berliner Tageblatt gives this answer: "The first call took place on the evening of February 26, 1743. On that memorable evening Voltaire's 'Merope' was performed for the first time in Paris. The author was known to the Paris public, but nothing that they had seen of him had pleased them so much as 'Merope,' and the enthusiasm found expression in noisy demands to see the author. In a letter Voltaire says this of the incident: 'They dragged me out and led me by force to the box occupied by the Duchesse de Villars and her daughter-in-law. The whole theater seemed to have gone mad—all shouted to the duchesse to kiss me. The noise became so great that the lady finally obeyed. So I was like Alain Châtier, publicly kissed, but he was asleep, while I was wide awake. Now authors answer similar calls by appearing before the curtain. They gain insofar that they can be seen better by their audience, but they must dispense with the duchess' kiss—at least in public."

"Graveyard Cocktail."

Some curious drinks that men call for in saloons, says the Philadelphia Record, were observed the other day by a man who stood at the end of the bar and took in everything that happened. The usual whiskies and beers were frequent, but he also noticed that a number of men asked for egg in milk and egg in sherry. "You sell a lot of eggs here," he observed to the bartender. "You bet we do," answered the man behind. "Hundreds of men drink egg drinks only. There are several men who come in here that order egg in beer. Now they get away with that awful mess I can't understand, but they drink it down as though they liked it. One man that comes in here has them all skinned. He always takes the most outlandish mixtures of stout and milk. Let's the limit for a crazy drinker, and heads my list of curious booze artists. We call his drink the 'graveyard cocktail.'"

Friday Not Always Unlucky.

Is Friday unlucky? Gladstone, Beaconsfield, Washington, Bismarck, Fahrenheit and Surgeon were born on Friday. Henry VIII gave Cabot his commission which led to the discovery of North America. Columbus actually discovered this continent and the pilgrim fathers landed at Plymouth Rock on Friday. Once more: The first newspaper "ad" and the first newspaper printed by steam power (the London Times) appeared both on a Friday; while the stamp act was repealed in England on the same day of the week. With Charles Dickens Friday was an especial favorite.

The Humorist Didn't.

"It must be pretty difficult to originate five or six jokes per day," suggested the casual visitor. "It must so," assented the cheerful press humorist. Do you know of anybody who does it?"—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Classifying Him.

"Of course, he's an illiterate fellow, but he's excessively proud. He boasts that he was 'born and bred in old Kentucky.'" "Good thing he wasn't born in Georgia; he couldn't have been bred there. He'd have been a cracker."

GLORIA AMERICANA!

Darkey in Hawaii Who Trusted in the Old Flag.

"I remember," said the globe trotter in the hotel corridor, "an odd instance of gloria Americana. If I may be so up-to-date in treating of our flag and its history. A party of us were traveling in the mountains of Haiti. A revolution had started that morning. All at once one of our party drew rein with an ejaculation and pointed to a lone ridge where you would suppose nothing but an eagle would make its habitation. And there, sure enough, was the banner of that noble fowl—an old tattered stars and stripes fluttering on a bamboo pole. We felt that we ought to pay our respects and at the same time learn who put Old Glory in that wild place. After 15 minutes' search we found a path that zigzagged up the ridge, and discovered an old negro sitting before a wretched hut smoking his pipe while he kept his eye on the flag."

"What's the flag for?" I asked. "Perfection!" said he. "heah dey hab begin anudder revolution, so I put it up. I come heah 22 year ago an' hab dat wit' me. Yes, sah, I'm Goorgy as cook on a steamer out of Savannah. Like de place? Oh, yah. Plant yam an' coffee an' cassava. Resolutions don't trouble dis nigger. Ebery time deh resolute up goes dat deh flag an' dat's all der is to it."

BIG EUROPEAN BANQUETS.

Aberdeen Dinner With 2,400 Guests—Feast for French Mayors.

The 1906 club banquet to the colonial ministers at the Albert hall, with its 1,600 guests, is certainly of imposing scale, but it is scarcely, as stated by a contemporary, the "second largest dinner on record," the premier place being awarded to Lord Strathcona's Aberdeen dinner, at which the guests numbered 2,400 says the Westminster Gazette.

Some years ago the Lady Burdett-Coutts feasted 2,000 people at her house at Highgate. King Edward being among her guests. A little later his royal highness (as he then was) was one of 3,000 guests who sat down to a dinner in London. 2,500 were present at the banquet in honor of the Right Honorable A. J. Balfour in Waverly market, Edinburgh, some time ago.

But even such gargantuan feasts cannot compare with the banquet in 1889 at the Palais de l'Industrie, Paris, which was enjoyed by 13,000 mayors of French towns, in addition to 2,000 other diners; nor with the feast Sir Watkin W. Wynne once gave in Wynnstay Park to 15,000 neighbors, a banquet at which 96 hogheads and 1,440 bottles of ale were consumed.

The Money End.

"Maurice Grau told me," said a composer, "that he owed his success to the fact that he produced opera solely from the business, never from the musical or artistic standpoint."

"Frank, wasn't it?" Most men in his line use his method, but hypocritically pretend to be artists.

"Poor Grau in our discussion said that he went at music as a certain perfumer went at perfumes—not with the primary idea of producing something excellent, but with the primary idea of producing something novel, bizarre, profitable."

"This perfumer, he explained, said one day gaily to a friend:

"Hurray! I'm doing a pushing business. I'll be rich in a year. I've invented a new perfume that smells just like gasoline."

"But," said his friend, "but I don't—er—quite see the point."

"The stuff is selling like hot cakes," said the perfumer. "Men and women alike are buying it. You see, it tickles their vanity. They go about redolent of gasoline and people think that they own automobiles."

Just the Reverse.

The owner of the ranch in one of the arid regions of the great west was entertaining an eastern relative. "He showed him over his broad acres, spoke of the difficulties that had been overcome in making the desert blossom as the rose, and outlined his plans for the future."

"But is it possible," asked the visitor, "to make more than a bare living on such land and in such a climate as this?"

"It is. I have made considerably more than a bare living on this land."

"I am glad to hear it, Cyrus. Then you have something laid up for a rainy day, have you?"

"Not exactly," rejoined the host, with a laugh. "On the contrary, with the help of an occasional rainy day, I have managed to lay something by for the dry days."—Cleveland Leader.

The Almighty Dollar.

A recent headline, "Rule of the Dollar," has suggested the inquiry, Who originated the familiar phrase, "the almighty dollar?" It was Washington Irving, in "The Creole Village," which he published in 1837. The phrase became so popular and excited so much controversy in consequence of a doubt whether the adjective were irreverent, that its author had to explain 18 years later that he intended "no irreverence, even to the dollar, which he is well aware is becoming daily more and more an object of worship." "Dollar" is certainly one of the world's greatest words now, and it is difficult to realize that it only means "valley," the "thal" having been named after the thalchimal, in Bohemia, in whose valley it was first coined in the sixteenth century.—London Chronicle.

HENRY JAMES ON GUM-CHEWING.

A Quid Needed to Help Lubricate Through the Long Sentences.

When I became aware indeed it was to see them all disfigured by their use of their weapon: aware, I mean, that each member of the group, while he or she talked or listened, was primarily occupied after the manner of a ruminant animal. They were discussing Wagner in short under the inspiration of chew-gum, and though "Parafal" might be their secondary care the independent action of their paws was the first.

Slow, resolute, inexorable, eternal, it had yet managed for a little, amid their talk, to beguile suspicion; but once detected it spoiled for me, I confess, not only the quality of that exhibition but the very fact of it, which had been dearer to me still; since, obviously, I could now, indifferent to this value, do nothing but ask myself if a sense for manners were the more likely to be rooted in a gentleman rolling his bolus about while he talked to a lady, or in a lady who rolled hers about while he was so engaged.

Where, definitely, were the civilities, as one expects women to embody them, when such practices and such paterances as those were part of the training for them? What address, what response, what pleasantness of propriety in general, might be held to consort, for a woman of whatever age, with her having not to "mind" that her interlocutor of whatever condition, should chew in her face for sweet freedom or with his having not to mind that she should chew in his?—Henry James, in Harper's Bazar.

THE JOLLY JESTERS.

They Have a Bout with the Watermelon.

"Mr. Middleman, ah destrye to propound a question."

"Very well, Mr. Tambo."

"Why do dey designate dat beautiful southern vegetable as ah watermelon?"

"That's easy. Because it makes your mouth water."

"Nowhar near de answer. It's called ah watermelon because yo' cut it in de spring."

"Speakin' ob de spring reminds me," broke in the other end-man. "Ma ole daddy went out to git some water one day an' he done fell in ah spring."

"Was he drowned?"

"He warn't sactly drowned, but it done killed him."

"That's strange. He fell in the spring and was killed?"

"Yessah."

"But he wasn't drowned?"

"No, sah."

"Well, did he die in the spring?"

"No, sah; he died in de fall."

"Our golden voiced tenor, Mr. Vio. Lett will contribute dat heart-touching ballad entitled, 'Warden, Brush Those Locks Away; I Yearn for Liberty.'"—Harper's Weekly.

Vandal at Shelley's Grave.

A correspondent who visited the Protestant cemetery at Rome the other day reports an act of silly vandalism at Shelley's grave. "As we wandered about," says the correspondent, "we saw for about half an hour a young man tourist sitting on Shelley's grave, carefully occupied in cutting the marble with a sharp instrument."

"We thought he was restoring the lettering, but, coming to his side, we found that he had cut his own name (which I will not give), New Zealand, April, 1907. I love thee, close to the inscription on the flat white marble surface. He had then soaked with ink his own work, leaving the disgraceful fruits of his vandalism for all who visit this interesting place. How any professing admirer of Shelley could be guilty of such conduct passes belief."

Easy Mathematics.

"Yes," said the man in the Rookery the other day, "he looks to me like a shiftless sort of a proposition."

"He is," answered the salesman. "Why, he's had four different jobs during this last year."

"Is that so?" queried the other. "How'd you find out that he'd have four of them?"

"Oh, he's let it out in little things he's said at different times," answered the salesman, "and I found it out by just putting two and two together."

"Oh, I see," smiled his friend. "Well, that's easy, two and two does make four, sure enough."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Women's Change in Literature.

The world is waiting for the woman author, who need not be great, but only natural and down-right, to reveal to it (as a male world) the true inwardness of a woman's nature, her feelings toward other women, what attracts her in men, and who repels, how she really feels when she is kissed by a man, and how she feels when she is not kissed, and a thousand other things which a man author can only guess at and in no case can expound. Here, surely, is a chance for a woman writer.—Academy.

Afraid to Come Back.

"How can Skinnem afford to stay so long in Europe?"

"It's a good deal cheaper than it would be to come back here and pay his debts."—Detroit Free Press.

Behind His Back.

Bacon—Did you call me a liar? Ebert—Not so you could notice it.—Yonkers Statesman.

FIRE AS A SOCIETY EVENT.

How a Female Reporter Described the Blaze for Her Paper.

Kansas City.—The regular reporter was taking a vacation, according to the Neodesha Sun, and the editor was busy in the office, so when it was learned that on the previous evening there had been a fire in a remote part of the city the young lady who writes the society news was sent to bring in a report of it for the paper. She came into the office an hour later with the following very interesting account:

"Quite a number of people in this part of the city attended a fire last night at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Blank, in Thirteenth street. Some went in carriages and buggies, but a majority walked. The alarm was sounded about 9:30 and many who attended the fire had just returned from church, consequently they were already dressed for the occasion."

"Mr. Blank was not at home, being out of the city on business; hence the affair will be quite a surprise to him when he returns. Mrs. Blank wore a light percale kimono and had her hair done up in kid curls."

"The firemen responded readily and worked heroically to subdue the seething flames. Most of them were young and fairly good looking. They were dressed in oilcloth coats cut short, with trousers to match. Their hat rims were narrow in front and broad behind and sagged down in the rear. The chief's hat was ornamented with an octagonal brass spike which stuck up above his head like a horn, giving him the appearance of a unicorn."

"When the flames broke out through the second story and cast a lurid hue over the surrounding buildings, the view was one never to be forgotten. At a late hour the sightseers went home and all felt that they had passed an evening full of interest and excitement."

DOES A HEN SIT OR SET?

Presbyterian Ministers, Discussing English, Wrestle with Problem.

Philadelphia.—Does a chicken sit or set? was the momentous question that the Presbyterian Ministerial association was called upon to solve.

Rev. Dr. Henry G. Martin, of the West Grove Presbyterian church, made an address on "The Minister and His English," in which he called attention to the numerous grammatical errors made by clergymen in their pulpits.

When the speaker sat down Rev. Walter E. Oakford, of the Reformed Episcopal church, voiced a query which he said had been puzzling him for a long time.

"We set a hen," said Mr. Oakford, "but when once set I would like to know whether she is sitting or setting."

Forty of the ablest Presbyterian ministers in the city were present, and their faces became grave as their minds wrestled with the problem. But Dr. Martin came to the rescue. He clarified the mental atmosphere of doubt with the following explanation:

"The hen is set upon the eggs, but after that she sits upon them," he explained, and the serious countenances of the clergymen relaxed.

In his address Dr. Martin called attention to many grammatical errors made in the pulpit. He said that although it would be humiliating, every pastor would be benefited if he enlisted the aid of a cultured man or woman to take heed of his errors and privately inform him of them after the service.

VALUE OF A RIGHT LEG.

Held by Surgeon Decrease Boy's Value Only 15 Per Cent.

Jersey City, N. J.—At just "how much do you value a right leg, on which you have a foot, and maybe toes with corns that smart and burn and tickle when damp weather comes?"

When you are a half block from a speeding, tantalizing trolley car and making excellent time in its direction you think that the leg is invaluable, but the crudity of your estimate is impressed with severity on you when you realize that to be without that leg is only to detract 15 per cent. from your ability to get along in the world, according to a statement made by an expert on such matters, Dr. William J. Arlitz, a surgeon in St. Francis hospital. The physician testified to this in a suit for damages tried in the circuit court brought for a six-year-old boy.

The surgeon claimed that boys of tender years, when presented with a cork or wooden leg in exchange for one of the foot-bearing kind, with the accompanying corns and bunions, were able to become as proficient in its use that its presence was unknown to the ordinary observer, and that it could be detected only by careful examination.

"Why, boys can play baseball, ride a bicycle, run up and down stairs, and I have even seen one lad walk a slack wire after he had become accustomed to the use of the leg," said the surgeon.

Stops Work Till Eggs Hatch. Detroit, Mich.—Rather than disturb a pair of robins who are setting on a couple of eggs Contractor E. E. Hartford has suspended operations on a house he is building on Goowin avenue. The nest was discovered in the skeleton of a window in the second story.

"I am very fond of birds," said Mr. Hartford, "and my men and I will see to it that the construction of the house does not interfere with the nest."