

### GOVERNMENT OWNERSHIP OF TELEGRAPH LINES

(Continued from Page 12.)

have a right to a protected service that only the government can give, to the use of wires without the delays that special interests now secure at times and to the lower rates now necessary and possible."

It is perfectly obvious that this is sound economic doctrine, against which there can be no argument, except the interests of special privilege. No one would now dare to question the wisdom of having a government monopoly in the transportation and delivery of mail matter. And once that principle is established, it follows, naturally, that the government should control and operate the other facilities for the transmission of messages.

Considered as means of communication, ease in which is one of the chief aims of civilization, there is no difference in principle between a letter and a telegram, between a tele-

gram and a telephone message. The differences are of method only. The secrecy, dispatch and economy which are achieved in the handling of mail by the government are as much needed in the other departments of communication, and inevitably will be achieved in the same way.

The most obvious benefits are those of economy, to be reflected in a lowering of rates. It has been estimated that a government-controlled telegraph system, conducted as an adjunct to the postoffice, could be run profitably at rates one-third of those now exacted from the public. If the present rates were maintained, Mr. Wanamaker declares, the profits in four years would liquidate the purchase price.

Lower rates, he points out, would be made possible by economies of operation. Every telegraph office in the country could be closed; the business would be done in postoffices and by postal employes. Every letter box, in a properly conducted system,

would be a telegraph station; a telegram dropped into a pillar-box, with proper stamps affixed, would be forwarded immediately upon collection; and in the business districts of cities these collections are made twice an hour, and sometimes four times an hour. The use of stamps would make unnecessary the complicated system of bookkeeping the telegraph companies must now employ. Scientific methods of utilizing the wires at hours when they carry little commercial business—as has been started in the matter of night letters—would permit still lower rates.

And the public would benefit not only from a cheapened services, but from a vastly extended service. There are thousands of communities where there is now no telegraph station, because the companies can not get enough business to make the opening and manning of an office profitable. Yet these places have postoffices, and the government could add either telegraph or telephone equipment at comparatively small cost. In this way country districts now remote from telegraph communication would be brought in instant touch with the outside world.

In brief, wherever there are mail facilities there could be, and should be, telegraph or telephone facilities. And that result can be achieved only by making the telegraph system part of the postal system.

As postmaster general, Mr. Wanamaker urged four great projects, and has seen three of them established. Rural free delivery infringed no powerful special privilege, and therefore met no organized opposition, though millions of dollars were wasted because the routes were chosen for political instead of economic reasons.

The postal savings bank, opposed by the banking interests, is being established in only a fragmentary way. The parcel post, while a vast improvement, is primitive when compared with the systems abroad. There remains the government-owned telegraph system, the coming of which depends only upon the force which public opinion chooses to put behind the demand.

For an economic truth, once launched, is irresistible. Every day it takes on new strength, as the people become educated to its meaning and effect, and its ultimate triumph is inevitable. Mr. Wanamaker has reviewed the telegraphic project at an effective time, for it will have close public scrutiny because of its bearing upon the most insistent problem of the day—the cost of living.

not biased prejudice for or against the accused.

The case was called about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and was delayed because Colonel Pleasant declared that Mr. Farrar, father of the slain boy, desired to be present at the hearing. The case went over for several minutes, during which Mr. Farrar was communicated with and stated that he did not wish to hear the case reviewed. The case was again called and Judge Gautier, attorney for defense, presented an application of approximately 500 names, in which the Farrar family or the Spearing family—that of Farrar's widow—was not represented.

Judge Gautier stated that he understood that Mrs. E. H. Farrar, jr., was in sympathy with the commutation of the sentence, but that she had been advised not to place her signature on the application, due to the fact that her family did not desire the notoriety, nor were they in favor of the commutation of the sentence. However, two letters were placed before the board from the senior Farrar. One was a copy of the letter sent to the governor, asking that a reprieve be granted the murderer until the pardon board could pass on the matter. The other was a letter to the board from Mr. Farrar. The letter to the board says:

"I sent you inclosed copy of a letter addressed by me in my own behalf and in behalf of the members of my family to his excellency, Luther E. Hall, governor of the state, asking him to reprieve Rene Canton, whose execution was fixed for Dec. 6, and to send his case before your honorable body for consideration as to whether his sentence should be commuted to imprisonment for life. The governor granted this request for the reasons stated in my letter, and the matter is now before you.

"From a purely theoretical point of view the wishes of the family against whom a crime has been committed should play no part in determining whether the criminal should be punished at all or to the extent of his punishment, because the interests of society are alone involved in such a question, and not the feelings or sentiments of individuals. But you are called upon also to advise the governor as to the quality of mercy that he shall dispense in the execution of his high office, and the dread sentence of the law should never be carried out until it is found that the case is one which

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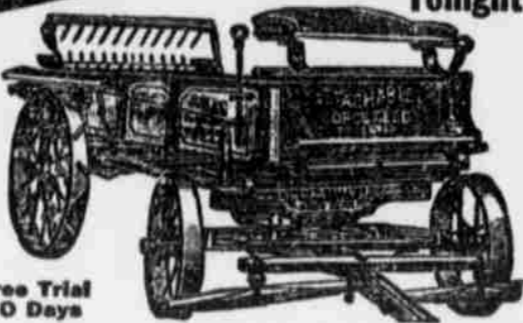
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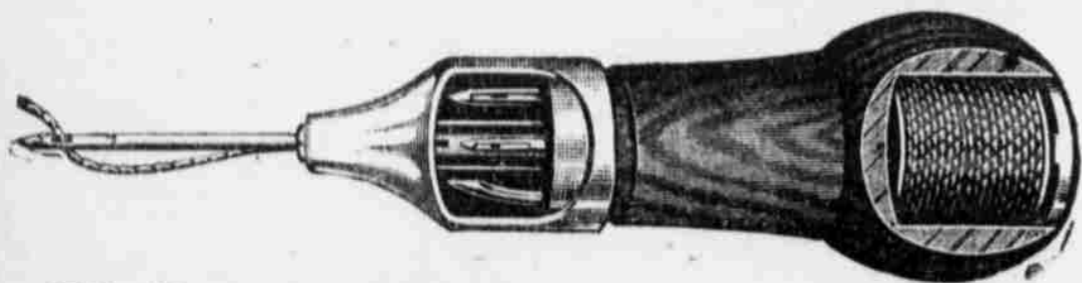
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### A FATHER'S PATHETIC LETTER

The New Orleans Picayune tells of a father's pathetic letter in this story of a terrible tragedy:

That Rene Canton's hope of life hangs on the thin thread of technicalities, and not on the mercy visited upon him by the bereaved father and family of Edgar Howard Farrar, jr., was the declaration made by Judge Chretien when he sat as a member of the pardon board to hear the application for a commutation of the sentence of death to life imprisonment. If, when he was attacked by Farrar, he believed that he was being arrested for crime, and shot out of malice for the law and his accused, it was murder, but if he struck back in self-defense it was manslaughter and the sentence should be commuted, stated Judge Chretien.

"If there is murder in this case, I want this man hanged," declared Judge Chretien. "If there is not murder, I want the sentence commuted." And from the general opinion as intimated by Lieutenant Governor Barret and Attorney General Pleasant, the other members of the pardon board, it was their general concurrence that the case should be tried on its principles and