AN ODD KIND OF CLUB.

IT RESEMBLES A FULL FLEDGED TELEGRAPH COMPANY.

An Amateur Organization, the Members of Which Have Their Houses Connected by Wires, So That They May Communicate with Each Other by Telegraph.

One of the most novel or unique organizations in Brooklyn is one that has recently gained a new lease of life through the infusion of new and vigorous blood and by a thorough reorganization. It is called the Phenix Morse Telegraph club, and is perhaps the only one of its kind in the United States. The old organization was formed in 1879 and started in life under the name of the Phenix club. It was inaugurated by a number of young people, some of whom were engaged in occupation as telegraphers, and others of different vocations, who took pleasure in studying the mysterious language of dots and dashes. A private telegraph line was established and connected with the residences of the members. A busy wire it was too. The hum of conversation, if it can be termed such, was constant throughout the evening. Stories were passed over the electrical current, jests and jokes bandied, chess and checkers played by individuals who liked this sort of recreation, and in fact as good a time was usually passed as if the members were brought in contact with each other by person in one room.

Jokes of an innocent character were also carried on over the circuit, which had the advantage in so far as to allow the perpetrator to remain unknown or making it unnecessary to flee from the wrath of the person upon whom it was inflicted. Quite a number of these are stock property among the old members, who relate them to friends with as much gusto and enjoyment as if they had occurred only yesterday. One of these is to the effect that two members after practicing with another in the early evening, during which the sender transmitted the Morse characters as fast as he could, or as telegraphers would say "rushed" the receiver, notwithstanding the protests of this unfortunate disciple of America's noted inventor. The latter promised himself that a speedy revenge would follow, and sought to find some means whereby he could make the "rusher" as uncomfortable as he had been previously.

The practicing finally came to an end, and the receiver waited until an unearthly hour of the morning, when he supposed his victim had gone to bed and when the click of a sounder would strike the gloom and quiet with the distinctness of a blow from a trip hammer. At about 3 o'clock in the morning he went to the instrument and began to call his victim in a manner which would indicate that a fire had perhaps broken out or that the transmitter had serious need of aid in some dire calamity. He called in this furious style until he had awakened the sleeper, who jumped up out of bed and went to the instrument, expecting to hear that something dreadful had happened. He answered the call quakingly. His indignation can be imagined when the query came slowly and distinctly:

"Will you please tell me the time; my clock has run down."

His answer is not recorded, but it is safe to assume that the immediate vicinity became as warm as a hot box of an overheated wheel.

The organization went on in the even tenor of its way until two or three years ago, when it began to languish, partly on account of a defection of members who moved away from the city or because the remaining persons would not shoulder in the proper or necessary manner the worry and expense of conducting such and organization. Then came another club which was purely social in its character and which was also called the Phenix club. It may have been that the similarity of names caused a bond of friendship to be established or that some of the members of this body were capable of handling a key and working the electrical current. However this may be, the two organizations were amalgamated and a new order of affairs brought about thereby. The name was changed to the present one, and under which it started out with bright and prosperous auspices.

A flat, corner of Marcy avenue and Fulton street, has been made the headquarters of the club, and which may be termed the main office of this amateur telegraph company. Here are located the battery room, which furnishes the powerful fluid by which the wire is worked, and another, which is called the operating room, in which are placed four sets of instruments and a double practicing outfit. A galvonometer, whereby the wire is measured, so that the whereabouts of any trouble on the line can be detected, is also included in this space. Meetings and social gatherings are held in a larger room running off from this one. Eighty cells of battery work the circuit, which covers a distance of nearly eighteen miles in this city, mainly in the upper residence section.

The old "string" was overhauled by an experienced lineman recently and put in sufficiently substantial shape in order to enable it to more readily resist the wear and tear of a line in a large and busy city. The circuit is placed along the housetops on the route, and trouble of any kind or, as an operator would say, "bugs" are rarely met with or experienced. Twenty-three so called "offices" are on the circuit, all of which have their calls in the same manner as do the stations of a telegraph company.

Among the present members of the club are practical telegraphers of skill and records for sending and receiving. Considerable rivalry exists between them, and it is proposed at some future time to have a tournament for fast transmitting and also for skill and ability in receiving the Morse characters. Classes will be established in order to give every one a chance. One of the fastest senders in the country is the secretary of the organization, Mr. Frank L. Catlin.—Brooklyn Eagle.

Recollections of Oxford.

My not being at a public school has, I have no doubt, strengthened my love of my university and my college. In my time the "head masters" had not had everything their own way. It was possible to enter Oxford at the age of nineteen—it was nothing wonderful to get a scholarship before eighteen or even earlier still. And to be scholar and fellow of Trinity from 1841 to 1847 was something to be. It was indeed a circle to look back to of which fifty years ago I was chosen a member, a circle of which a man is much to be blamed if he is not wiser and nobler for having been one. But love of the foundation, the feeling of membership, of brotherhood, in an ancient and honorable body, the feeling of full possession in one's college as a home, the feeling of personal nearness to a benefactor of past times, all that gathers round the scholarship that was something worthier than a mere prize, the fellowship that was something worthier than a crammer's wages—all this, I hope, has not even yet utterly vanished, but under the hands of one reforming commission after another, such feelings have undoubtedly greatly weakened in the Oxford to which I have come back.

In the unreformed university, the unreformed college in which I had the happiness to spend my youth, we had time to learn something, because we were not always being taught. We were not kept through our whole time, vexed by examination after examination, examined in this subject one term, in that subject the next term, all ingeniously combined for the better forgetting of one thing before the next was taken in. We had one examination, and a searching one, the successful passing of which could not seem to any but a fool to be the goal of study, but which, by the reading it required, gave a man the best possible start for study in several branches of knowledge.—Edward A. Freeman in Forum.

A Question to Puzzle Over.

He was a "likely" looking Afro-American, and as he boarded the elevated train at Twenty-eighth street attracted no small amount of attention. He betook himself to one of the cross seats, facing the rear of the car. As he settled himself comfortably, one of the two male passengers seated opposite said to his companion in what was evidently intended to be an undertone, but which was nevertheless plainly audible, "Do your people permit colored folks to ride in first class compartments in public conveyances?" What the reply to the question may have been will never be known. As for the occasion of the query, he did not betray by so much as the movement of a muscle or the quiver of an eyelash that he had overheard what had been said.

But just before Bleecker street was reached he straightened himself up and addressed the inquirer. "Dis yere ain't no question of the Fiftyent' 'mendments," he said. "I knows right plain dat me and my race has all de rights ob de white peoples to ride in dese yer keers so long as we got de money and 'haves ourselves. So dat ain't de question. But what I would like to have you gemmens tell is dis, How kin a man be colored when he's born so?"

And as he stalked out of the car the passengers all looked at one another and wondered if they had been given a new problem in socio-political economy to puzzle over.—New York Times.

Where "Red Tape" Counts.

Said one of the oldest and most successful legal practitioners of the city bar to one of his rising young students a short time ago: "My dear young fellow, never fail to remember that in the successful career of a lawyer there is no one item so important to his reputation as 'red tape.' You may smile at this remark, but it is as true as Holy Writ, and the proper use of it in binding up a legal document has saved many a court paper from being handed back for perfection or revision to its legal sponsor. In earlier life I practiced in the court of one of the most particular judges in the commonwealth. I presented, as I believed, a well prepared report which I asked for confirmation, and to my surprise the judge unfolding it and looking it over found a hundred and one faults and directed me to prepare another one, 'but in better form,' as he said. I was utterly nonplussed.

"My time was so limited it was utterly impossible. An idea struck me. That night in my office I put on a showy outside wrapper, with a hand indorsement of the title, with the most liberal supply of the widest red tape that I could find in graceful bows. The next morning I nervously presented it again. The judge received it smiling, adding: 'That is the correct way all papers for the court should be drawn up.' There's nothing like red tape."—Philadelphia Press.

The Governor's Quills.

The governor of this commonwealth signs every bill with a quill. This isn't because he is fonder of that particular kind of pen, but it is rather in obedience to a well established custom that has obtained with the chief magistrates of the last decade. There are always a few members of the legislature that have the collector's passion, and requests are regularly received by Private Secretary Roads from lawmakers and others for pens that the governor has used for signing bills. Accordingly dozens of these quills are purchased ever so often, and the governor makes his signature each time with a new pen, which is carefully preserved and set aside for the next quill hunter that calls.—Boston Globe.

Isinglass.

It is said that the manifestly corrupted word, "isinglass," owes its change from a foreign to its English dress to the popular fancy, which, finding the Dutch term, "huizenblas" (sturgeon bladder), meaningless in English, quietly changed it into "isinglass" and secured its easy remembrance from association with the "icing" purposes for which it is used and the "glassy" appearance it presents.—Chambers' Journal.

Breakers Ahead.

"Yes, I shall embark on the sea of matrimony myself before long."

"Then you'll soon be a-marryin her, won't you?"—Kate Field's Washington.

THE REAL LOBBYIST.

THE WOMEN ARE NUISANCES JUST THE SAME AS THE MEN ARE.

There Has Been a Great Deal of Romance Circulated About the Lobbyists, and It Is Time That the Truth Was Known. The Real Thing Is Very Disappointing.

"Show me a lobbyist" was the request of a friend who was walking through the Capitol with the writer. This visitor was a reader of the newspapers, a man of intelligence, and a believer in most of the interesting stories he had read about the number, ingenuity, boldness, skill and usefulness of the body of lobbyists that is supposed to be almost a necessary part of the legislative machinery.

I showed my visitor a lobbyist. He was one of the best known of the lot about the Capitol. He was leaning back against the corridor wall, opposite the entrance of the house of representatives, with his hands thrust into the pockets of a pair of trousers that were so raveled about the heels that they might be said to wear whiskers without provoking the remonstrances of the most thorough detester of slang.

If this man had an overcoat it was hung up somewhere, but the dusty condition of his rather thin frock coat, which carried the polish on its back that ought to have been on his very disreputable looking shoes, justified the conclusion that he was not finding an overcoat necessary this winter. He was a spare man, with a gaunt face, crossed by a white mustache stained at the ends with tobacco juice. His shirt was not clean, and he showed a good deal of it, but he wore a white tie, which only added emphasis to his otherwise forbidding lack of neatness. When he moved away from his place against the wall to meet a member of congress who had come out of the chamber upon the call of one of the doorkeepers to see him, his gait was a slouching one, and he might have been mistaken for any other loafer about the hall if he had not been so much more repulsive than the others.

My friend was disappointed. He could not understand when I told him that this man was one of the best of the lot of lobbyists about the Capitol, that he had been a member of congress, that he was, therefore, entitled to the privilege of the floor, and that the house of representatives has never yet had the sense to makes its rules so strong as to keep out this man and several others just like him who are well known to be nothing more than strikers and lobbyists who linger here to pick up odd jobs to help them hang on to a miserable existence. They do not, one ought to be thankful, thrive as they are popularly supposed to do. If the public knew what a mistake the professional lobbyist is they would be driven to sawing wood or working on the railroads, or into doing some other useful and laborious business.

Then I showed my friend another lobbyist. This was a thin, sliding fellow, with a gray close beard, who toed in as he walked quickly along the passage, and who glanced furtively about as he went, as if watching to pounce down upon some one. This man was not an ex-member of congress; but he had been an employee of the house many years ago, and had been caught taking money to enable a corporation to reach, through the door of which he had charge, the men who were to be purchased to get through a subsidy bill. He was dismissed, and he at once went into the service of the corporation that had led to his disgrace.

He is in that employment still, and he associates with a great many senators and representatives who do not know, or have forgotten that others know, his odious history. He is an errand runner and a sneaking watcher of members who are to be encouraged to vote this way or the other on bills to be reported or killed. He would buy a member without hesitation if it were safe to buy him, but he is cautious. He finds out his venal man before taking any risks. He is not ingenious, nor is he bold. He follows the instructions of the corporations that keep him here, and he gets off in the course of the year very well indeed if he does not get kicked out of a gentleman's house more than half a dozen times.

The female lobbyist is, generally speaking, a myth. The women who come to the Capitol as promoters of the bills for pensions or for claims, come on their own account, and the only skill they exhibit is that which consists in so persistently bothering the members who have introduced their bills for them that they undertake to have them passed in order to get rid of terrible afflictions. The marvelous woman of charming manners that cannot be resisted is to be found only in the syndicate stories. The women who undertake to promote legislation are, almost without exception, bunglers and failures. Few women know enough about the ways of legislation or the ways of the legislators to qualify them to undertake lobby work or to approach members to direct their actions, except by the most vulgar species of blackmail made possible by contributory immorality.

Generally speaking, the lobbyist is a fraud and an unnecessary nuisance. He exists mainly because most people do not know anything about the methods of legislation, and because nearly everybody interested in a bill not public believes that the lobbyist is a creature who can tide over difficulties and remove them. As a rule the employment of one of the throng of disreputable lobbyists, and most of them are disreputable on their faces, is prejudicial to the legislation they are employed to promote. They thrive on account of the general ignorance about the legislative methods of procedure.—Washingson Cor. Providence Journal.

PLACES OF WORSHIP.

CATHOLIC.—St. Paul's Church, sk. between Fifth and Sixth. Father Carney, Pastor Services: Mass at 8 and 10:30 A. M. Sunday School at 2:30, with benediction.

CHRISTIAN.—Corner Locust and Eighth Sts Services morning [illegible] Elder A. Galloway pastor Sunday School 10 A. M.

EPISCOPAL.—St. Luke's Church, corner Third and Vine. Rev. [illegible] Grimes pastor Services: 11 A. M. and [illegible] Sunday School at 2:30 P. M.

GERMAN METHODIST [illegible] Gothic. Rev. [illegible] Pastor. Services 11 A. M. and 7:30 P. M. Sunday [illegible]

PRESBYTERIAN [illegible] corner Sixth and [illegible] pastor Sunday [illegible] at 11 A. M. [illegible] The Y. [illegible] Sabbath evening at [illegible] the church. All [illegible] greetings.

FIRST METHODIST [illegible] and Pearl. Rev. [illegible] Services: 11 A. M. [illegible] 8:30 A. M. Prayer [illegible] ing.

GERMAN PRESBYTERIAN [illegible] Ninth. Rev. [illegible] Services [illegible] hours. Sunday [illegible] M.

SWEDISH [illegible] SAL.—Granite [illegible] tween Fifth and Sixth.

COLORED BAPTIST.—St. Olive, sk. between Tenth and Eleventh. Rev. A. Foswell, pastor. Services 11 A. M. [illegible] 7:30 p. m. Prayer meeting Wednesday evening.

YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION Rooms in [illegible] block. Gospel meeting, for men only, every Sunday afternoon at 4 o'clock. Rooms open week days from 8:30 A. M. [illegible] P. M.

SOUTH PARK TABERNACLE.—Rev. [illegible] Wood, Pastor. Services Sunday [illegible] and 7:30 P. M. Preaching, 11 A. M. and 7:30 P. M. prayer meeting Tuesday evening. Conference Friday night. All are welcome.

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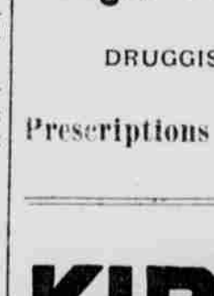

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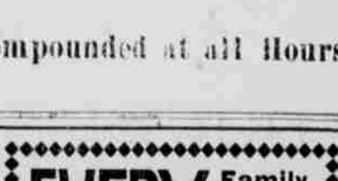

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