

THE TELEGRAPH'S RISE.

THE FIRST MESSAGE THAT EVER WENT OVER A WIRE.

Reminiscences of Professor Morse Given to the Public by One of His Earliest Friends—Interesting Incidents Related from John W. Kirk.

Morse had possessed himself of a little room in the east end of the Capitol, and there, attracted by active, the new attaché of the postoffice department, found him, a thin, spare, careworn, anxious man, in the midst of confining himself to a room and apparent debility. A congressional committee was on its way to see him and examine in practical operation the machine which he had promised would transmit intelligent messages between distant points.

"Now, gentlemen, what shall we send over the wire?" ejaculated the old man. "Pick out your own message and I'll show you how simple this whole thing is and how it accomplishes everything that I've claimed."

"Mr. Brown, of Indiana, is here." Prof. Morse beat over his instrument and pegged away. Tick, tick, tick-tick-tick went the electric tapping, and then a moment later came the same rattling line of signals upon an adjoining machine—the indentation Morse registered.

"The old man grabbed the slip of paper as it came released from the instrument, scanned it eagerly, and then, with the air of an emperor whose crown is self-won, he thrust the fluttering white scrap forward.

"See!"—and he displaced another sheet on which his dot and dash sign manual appeared.

"Read. Take this for a guide and you'll find printed there the very words you asked transmitted."

"The delegation did as directed, and sure enough they spelled out so the sensational goings-on of 'Mr. Brown of Indiana.'"

"Converted? Those congressmen converted! Well, hardly. This is the recollection of Mr. Kirk. 'One of them hunched me and winked in a superior and knowing sort of way, while another whispered: 'That's what I call pretty thing' and a third remarked right out loud: 'It won't do. That doesn't prove anything.' Poor Morse's heart was almost broken. His triumph was turned all to bitterness. Every one of his visitors went away more skeptical than ever."

Morse worked only the harder after his failure to convince the wise men from congress by the test of his five mile loop. Day by day more poles were set and more wire was stretched, and Annapolis Junction—half way to Baltimore—was just about reached when the Whig national convention of May, 1844, opened in Baltimore. Here, at the suggestion of his friend, Mr. John W. Kirk, Morse saw opportunities beyond any that had come to him before. On the morning that the convention opened he was able by dint of work by night as well as by day, to get connection through to Annapolis Junction from his little Washington machine shop. He had placed a bright young fellow at the Annapolis Junction, and with instructions to see information of what the convention had done just as soon as the afternoon Baltimore train arrived at the junction and telegraph it all to Washington.

Of course the capital was in a ferment; every citizen was anxious for the news from Baltimore; but till trains should arrive from the scene it was recognized that nothing could be known. The earnest old fellow spent that eventful afternoon all alone, save for the companionship of John Kirk.

Suddenly there came an animated clicking. He who was most interested bent forward as if intent on catching something in the slip of paper that crept out from the register. There was almost agony in his face as, snail like, the paper halted and hesitated, spurted a little, stood still, made false starts and then started more till—the message completed—Morse rose erect, looked proudly about him, and said as grandly as though he were distributing kingdoms:

"Mr. Kirk, the convention has adjourned. The train for Washington has just left Annapolis Junction. And the ticket!"—he hesitated, holding final proof of his victory beyond all disputing—"the ticket—the ticket is Clay and Fremont."

"You are quizzing us," was the quick retort he heard when this was proclaimed outside. "It's easy enough for you to guess that Clay is at the head of the ticket, but Fremont—why the devil's Fremont?"

"Only know," was the dignified answer, "that it is telegraphed me so from Annapolis Junction, where my operator had the news five minutes ago from the train that is bound this way bringing the delegates."

In those days the twenty miles from Annapolis Junction to Washington made up a trip of an hour and a quarter for the exceptionally fast trains, such as that which was bringing the Whig delegates to Washington. Long before the journey was over the newspapers—enterprising even in those days—had extras on the streets, and the newsboy was crying lustily the chronicle that Morse had caught flashing through twenty miles of air. A great crowd of people was at the station. The extras, with their characteristic legend "By Telegraph," had whetted public curiosity to the keenest edge. Out of the jammed train came the delegates piling, each anxious to be foremost in sending abroad to friends the inspiring news that fortune was with Harry of the west. And how dumfounded they were, falling in very type before them the story they believed exclusively their own. How but by a miracle could the news have gained such headway? "By telegraph," so they read in the headlines of the journals. "By telegraph!" That pestiferous Morse! They had seen the wires stretching along the track all the way from Annapolis Junction into Washington; they had seen it, and they had joked about it glibly. "How!" It was hard to realize. But—but what can a man do when he can't do anything? The doubters and scoffers became enthusiastically dumb.

S. F. B. Morse had won. When he next appeared in public the people showered him with huzzas. He was no longer a dreamer; he was a doer; and there were honors for him destined.—New York Times.

An Electric Clock. A new thing out is a clock, with ordinary works, that will run for a year without attention. An electric battery concealed in the case winds up the clock from day to day, or week to week, as the need may be. Once in a great while the battery must be renewed, but that is all the care the clock calls for.—Chicago Herald.

TWO AMERICAN TRAITS.

We Are a People of Runagates and Profigate Spendthrifts.

Two of our national characteristics are going to preserve the equilibrium of these blessed United States. In the first place the American love of danger, in the second place the American indifference to home. Few Americans, who are the most reckless of mortals, are only happy when tempting fate or daring Providence through some medium of mental excitement and personal danger. It will be difficult to convince future historians of us as a race that we did not prefer riding on a can of dynamite to reposing on an innocuous down cushion. The love of self preservation which is implanted in man seems to be entirely subservient to the love of peril in the average American. A rather nervous individual recently assured me that the tremor which assailed him when he first began to travel on the elevated railroads in New York always added a zest to his ride, and when custom wore away that feeling he was quite wretched.

"What did you wish should happen to you?" I asked, to humor what I believed to be an affectation.

"Just what did happen the other day," he responded, with a slight shrug of his shoulders. "I wanted to be in an accident. I never have been in an accident and I have done some pretty risky things. It is probably the same feeling that impels a boy to skate on thin ice, walk on peaked fences and scot across a railroad track when the engine's coming. My theory is that half of the great inventions are the results of innate recklessness. The inventor of electricity may have been a thinker, but he was a boy first! And do you believe a timid woman would ever have dreamed of building an L road? She likes it now she has got it, for the gentler sex are proverbial for rushing in where angels fear to tread, and who among your acquaintances would hesitate to cross the ocean in four days if any means could be invented to condense the voyage to these brief dimensions?"

The fact is, this person is thoroughly American. We do like to be scared. As to the second characteristic, the indifference to home, we shall never be anything but roamers. Perhaps as Americans become more and more imbued with foreign customs they will cultivate the "ancestral hall" feeling and throw out those roots which must cling to the hearthstone where their fathers have sat before them. The American constitution, the laws of this happy country, are not exactly in accord with family roof trees, however much they may be with the genealogical specimens, but why as soon as a rich man has builded himself a palace and filled it with treasures he wants to get out and build another is unaccountable, save that, being American, he cannot help himself.

It is not merely the unrest of possession that seizes him. He is impelled by a love of change, that natural fickleness which makes him dissatisfied with that particular side of the street or the architectural plan of certain rooms, and so in a brace of years the palace is to let furnished or it is in the market, and milord, with his family, wandering in the four quarters of the globe.—Boston Herald.

What Physicians and Lawyers Earn.

Says a west side physician: "Probably the most lucrative medical practice in Chicago is worth about \$25,000 a year. That is the best the most successful physician in Chicago can do. Doctors do not earn as much as lawyers. I mean the successful ones. I suppose there are a dozen or more lawyers in town who make more than \$25,000 a year, and a score or so enjoy an income of from \$15,000 to \$20,000 a year. You can count on the fingers of your two hands the number of doctors making \$10,000 a year. One of them is a colored man, whose practice is largely among white people. Yet the average earnings of the physicians of the city probably exceed the average earnings of the lawyers. The average in both professions is startlingly low, probably not to exceed \$1,000. There are hundreds of good openings for physicians in the growing country of the west, but young men persist in clinging to the city, where many of them eke out an existence on an income of \$300 or \$400 a year, waiting for something better to turn up."—Chicago Herald.

Russian Cities' Fire Department.

The same precautions against fire are taken in Moscow and St. Petersburg, but that were in use a century ago. Scores of fire towers are everywhere seen. They run up about seventy-five to 100 feet, are built like a lighthouse, with winding stairway, and have a platform all around the top, where the watchman patrols day and night. If a fire is discovered a signal is given and the fire department turns out. It was only recently that St. Petersburg, the capital, with hundreds of millions of government property, secured a steam fire engine. And that is a poor, old fashioned affair. The hand engine does service there yet, as in most other cities in the empire. When a fire breaks out the streets are cleared for such a department display as an American town would make; people go wild, talk loud, get in the way, and when the fire burns out the department goes back to watch the towers for another signal.—Moscow Cor. New Orleans Times-Democrat.

New Passenger Coaches.

"We don't like to put new passenger coaches on through service," said an old railroad man to me. Asked for a reason he said: "Through passengers have a bad habit of putting their feet on the new push, spilling it in a very short time. We always run the new coaches in the local service for about a year and then they are in about the right shape for long trips. Passengers going a short distance don't have that inclination to elevate their feet that other people have, and usually the cars are too full to turn over the seats."—Buffalo News.

Foot and Meter.

According to Mr. E. G. Ravenstein, the English foot is used as the standard of length by countries having 461,000,000 inhabitants, the meter by 347,691,000 people, and the Castilian foot by 5,905,000. Denmark and Russia are the only countries in continental Europe which have not adopted the meter.—Frank Leslie's.

ARTS OF DIVINATION.

The Trivialities to Which the Old Astrologers were Prepared to Go.

It is astonishing into what trivial detail astrologers were prepared to go. There is something, for instance, delightfully rich in interrogating the planets as to the whereabouts of a lost dog. And yet this was done, as related by William Lilly, who gives full particulars as to his method and success. His account is worth quotation. After drawing the usual plan of the state of the heavens, he continued: "I was into, was what part of the city they should search; next, if he should ever recover him. The sign of Gemini is west and by south; the quarter of heaven is west; Mercury, the significator of the dog, is in Libra, a western sign, but southern quarter of heaven, tending to the west.

"The moon is in Virgo, a southwest sign, and verging to the western angle; the strength of the sign Gemini examined I found the planet to signify the west, and therefore I judged that the dog ought to be westward from the place where the owner lived, which was at Temple Barre; therefore I judged that the dog was about Long Acre or upper part of Drury Lane. In regard that Mercury, significator of the beast, was in a sign of the same triplicity that Gemini his ascendant is, which signifies London, and did not apply to a triangle of the cup of the sixth house, I judged the dog was not out of the lines of communication, but in the same quarter; of which I was more confirmed by the sun and Saturn, their trine aspect. The sign where Mercury is in is Libra, an avery sign.

"I judged the dog was in some chamber or upper room kept privately or in great secrecy, because the moon was under the beams of the sun, and Mercury, moon and sun were in the eighth house, but because the sun on Monday following did apply by true dexter to Saturn, lord of the ascendant, and moon to sextile of Mars; having exaltation in the ascendant, I intimated that in my opinion he should have his dog again, or news of his dog upon Monday following, or seeing in where angels fear to tread, and who among your acquaintances would hesitate to cross the ocean in four days if any means could be invented to condense the voyage to these brief dimensions?"

Closing the Moscow University.

The university inspector, Briegerof, is known as very narrow minded. During a concert given by the students he said to one of the singers: "You are drunk." "Your offensive expression is not deserved," was the reply. "I never touch drink." "Then you are a dirty scoundrel," was the inspector's reply, for which the student boxed his ears. On the morning following the procurator of Moscow, Count Kapsist, assembled the students and addressed them, saying: "Who among you should wish to justify the proceedings of your colleague under arrest is requested to rise and say so." There was no response, probably because the speech was not clear enough in its expressions to be readily understood. Then the count added: "Since every one of you is a scoundrel!" That word was followed by a storm of indignation. "Scoundrel yourself!" "Down with him!" "Out with him!" "Brigadier must go!" "The council is infamous!" "The by laws must be amended!" and other cries were uttered in passionate vehemence. The greater number of the 1,500 students assembled succeeded in reaching the street, and forming groups awaited further developments. Soldiers were posted near the university beforehand, and a great many lookers on were crowded in the streets.

Then Russian savagery was displayed to its fullest extent. The cavalry, without a word of warning, charged upon the crowd, wounding, trampling down and killing a great number. I saw an old lady, with her gray haired professor, whose room was that street, ruthlessly snatched and trodden down. The natural result of such outrages was that the infuriated populace charged back upon the soldiers, driving them back by the sheer impetus of their numbers, though without weapons of any kind. Meanwhile, the professors of the university, afraid of the number of students that had remained in the building, had recourse to the usual procedure in similar cases—the butchers of the district, who entered the hall brandishing their long knives. Under the countenance of their patrons, the professors, they proceeded to commit unspeakable outrages upon whosoever had the misfortune to incur their displeasure. Two hundred students were imprisoned. The next walked the streets in groups, singing their songs. At 11 o'clock on the morning following the students assembled peacefully on the Boulevard, when the porters and scavengers, with orders from police headquarters, appeared and proceeded to renew the outrages upon the students as on the previous day, at which scuffle one student was killed. Then the students discontinued attending the university.—Moscow Letter.

Educational Progress in Africa.

The first school in Western Africa upon the plan of the German popular schools was opened at Karamoos. Among the thirty-two pupils there are several sons of King Behi, the native ruler. Like all the negroes of the region he complains terribly at the exorbitant cost of the education of his boys, which cannot fail, he says, making his exchequer bankrupt. The fee is settled at seventy-five cents a month a pupil, which, with the usual rule of compounding for a number of pupils from the same family, will bring the amount due by his majesty for the education of his seven princes to something like \$4 a month, an immense sum for a royal darkey's treasury. The progress made by the pupils in general is said to be satisfactory in the three "R's," but class singing is not good. Believing is too natural an exercise for the black boys to allow them to have any pleasure in civilized choros singing.—Chicago News.

England Near at Hand.

You have only to cross Niagara river to find old English ways and customs. The bishop of Niagara is his lordship, and you will find the natives of Fort Erie talk of their lively neighbors on this side as "the Americans," just as if they didn't live in a part of America themselves. In their spelling they are particularly English, you know. They put a into parlor and an extra g into wagon. Americans we spell jail with a j, an an, an I and an l, they preferably make it g, j, l, but they get there all the same.—Buffalo Courier.

Floating Gardens of Cashmere.

The floating gardens on the rivers are formed by the long sedges being interwoven into a mat, each being superimposed thereupon and the stalks finally cut under water, thus releasing them from the bottom of the lake. They are usually about 30 by 12 yards in size. A dishonest Cashmiri will sometimes tow his neighbor's garden away from its moorings and appropriate its produce, which generally includes cucurbitaceous fruits and vegetables and a fine description of grapes.—The Highlands of India.

BROKEN ANCHORS.

Where the junk shop's shadows sleep,
And the spiders brood and spin,
Broken anchors rusting lie
With the wreckage of the deep.
Silent here the streets' loud din;
Silent here the roar of sea,
But uprise strange wraiths to me,
And imploring voices cry:
"Let us lie and rust and mold;
Human junk shops everywhere
Fester 'neath your outer sky.
In the crazy race for gold
Human souls are sold bare!
Deadlier wrecks, in sadder fate,
Break beneath the storms of hate;
While despairing voices cry!"
—Edgar L. Waterman.

HEWITT ON PHYSICAL CULTURE

Opposed to Pugilistic Resorts, but in Favor of Boxing Gloves.

One of the vital questions affecting the rising generation which fathers and mothers often consider, and are in great doubt about, is what form of exercise their boys and young men should be encouraged to take. The Herald advised its correspondents some time ago to get opinions on the subject from men of prominence.

Mayor Abram M. Hewitt said: "I am a physical wreck, and I ought to have been in my grave ten years ago. Yet I made a speech, as you recall to me, a few seasons ago to the members of the Young Men's Christian association on the subject of physical culture. I believe that I would today be a strong, hearty man if I had early acquired, and constantly practiced, reasonable athletic exercises. I was instrumental in establishing the gymnasium in the Christian association's building, and I decidedly countenanced the introduction there of boxing gloves at a time when they were so opposed. Sparring is now a countenanced sport there, but brawlers, lechers and fighters don't get into the premises, and the sparring is as gentlemanly as checkers.

"But since I have been the mayor I have cleaned New York city of pugilistic resorts. You remember that the Bowery used to be dotted with drinking saloons with roped rings at their rear, wherein nightly boxing matches were the attraction for gatherings of luns and noivies. There shall be no pugilistic exhibitions in this town by professional pugilists, except of so mild a sort that the law is not violated thereby. Any combats of fight, no matter if the gloves are as big as pillows, shall be prevented. But sparring for exercise is quite another thing. I see no good reason for the discontinuance of sparring by boys and young men in reputable gymnasiums, in their homes, or anywhere that it is not surrounded by vicious persons. Our next girls' school in their parents' parks and at approved halls, but that does not imply a desire on their part to go to disreputable dance halls for the diversion. The same should be true of boxing by the boys. No, no; don't forbid the boxing gloves. Encourage all manly and becoming sports, and only stop them within the borders of propriety."—Boston Herald.

The American at Dinner.

Americans are hospitable, in a certain way, but are somewhat fastidious. Whether they dine at clubs, or at home, they display their hospitality by elaborate menus which comprise too many dishes for a man's taste or digestion. This is not the epicurean idea. There is more merit in a dinner where the quality of food, its cookery and service are attended to, and the most enjoyable banquet is that where not five courses are exceeded. Look at the menus of some large banquets and you will find that they average ten courses, and it is not uncommon to see a dinner at a club or house exceed twelve courses, with every procurable dish in the market. The American is not a heavy eater, and his digestion is more frequently than imperfect. He can, consequently, but simply taste the various dishes, or else gorge himself like a child at Christmas. Such elaborate dinners are often considered horseshoe because one cannot leave the table with satisfaction.

It is no little art to give a real enjoyable dinner. The people here are too busy to become good dinner givers, for it requires an idea to be successful at this. Our wealthy men do not entertain at home, and at the clubs they are often lavish without approaching epicureanism. More attention is now paid than formerly to menu cards and service. A menu card should be original, simple and elegant. So many of them are gaudy and over ambitious that they destroy the effect desired. It is pleasant to begin dinner after glancing at a refreshing menu card. It should always be typical, if possible, of the object of the dinner, and then a dinner should never be served without flowers, which are important to many of the arrangements.—William Lucas in Globe Democrat.

Buying a Pony in Tibet.

Traveler—Oh, Aga! (masters of horses) will thou sell a pony? Master of the String kindly—We are going to Calcutta and a ask 1,000 rupees each. What will the gentleman offer? Traveler—Ask him how much a pound—mane and tail included—he will take. Saye (in ecstasies of laughter, almost unable to articulate to the shikari)—The sahib wishes to know how many piece a see the pony is worth. Master (looking posed)—The pony is of iron legs and fat abdomen; he is a rajah's horse. I will take 500 rupees. Traveler—Tell him the horse squints and does not talk Hindostani. How can an English gentleman ride such an animal? Master (beginning dimly to apprehend a joke and breaking into a Tibetan smile)—Very well! I will reduce his price to 250 rupees. Traveler—Tell him I will give him 250 rupees and a choval of millet beer.—The Highlands of India, by Maj. Gen. D. J. F. Newall.

His Self Baiting Nose.

I heard a funny story recently of an actor some time ago, who was playing in a farce, in which it was necessary for him to use a large dough nose. One night when he got to the theatre he found no flour, and sent the boy out for some. Zack came the boy, the nose was made and whipped on. Presently, to the horror of the actor, the nose began to swell, till at length, in the midst of an important passage, it burst and fell to the ground. It had been made of soft raising flour, and the heat of the actor's face had accomplished the catastrophe.—New York Post.

The German Reichstag.

The relative strength of parties in the German Reichstag, which differs very little from what it was at the beginning of the last session, is: Conservatives, including Imperialists and Free Conservatives, 117; Clericals or Center, 101; Poles, 13; National Liberals, 59; Liberals, Progressists, or Radicals, 34; Social Democrats, 11; Independents, including the Alsace-Lorrainers, 22; total, 397.—Chicago News.

Letting Well Enough Alone.

Landlady—June, pass Mr. Dumley the salt for his egg.
Dumley—Thanks, not any salt. This egg is none too fresh as it is.—New York Sun.

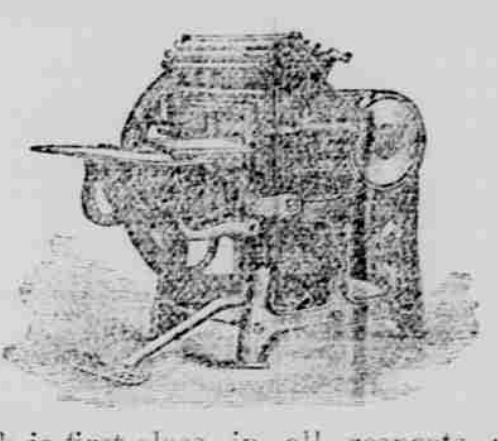
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