TELEGRAPH MONOPOLY

POWER OF A FEW TO BECOME RICH AT PUBLIC EXPENSE.

People Want the Government to Control the Telegraph, But Strong Lobby Interposes.

(By Hugh A. Hipple.)

To the student of trusts there is no more attractive field than the telegraph monopoly. It is illustrative, in the first place, because it illustrates to an unusual degree the power of a few men to enrich themselves at the expense of the public, and in the second place, because so much has been written on the subject that information in regard to it is comparatively easy to obtain.

The telegraph is nothing more nor less than an electric mail. It is so considered today in England, France, Germany, Russia, and in fact, all the leading nations of the world, except the United States. Were it not that private interests are involved, the proposition that it is the duty of the government to transmit correspondence in the most expeditious manner possible would never be questioned. So long ago as 1836 John C. Calhoun, in a report to the United States senate, said: "It must be borne in mind that the power of congress over the postoffice and mail is an exclusive power." These words have been cited and approved by the supreme court of the United States. Indeed, that court has gone further, and in an unanimous opinion delivered by Chief Justice Waite has said in regard to the powers of congress with reference to mails: "They extend from the horse with its rider to the stage coach; from the coach and steamboat to the railroad and from the railroad to the telegraph, as these new agencies are successively brought into use to meet the demands of increasing population and wealth." Congress itself has taken the same view of its powers, even though it does not exercise them, and since 1866 every telegraph line has been built under a contract which gives the government the right to take it over at any time upon paying the value of the material used in its constuction.

GOVERNMENT TELEGRAPH.

The people of the United States have repeatedly asked for a government telegraph. In 1888 a resolution was submitted to congress, which began as follows: "Whereas, Petitions bearing the signatures of more than 2,000,000 citizens of the United States request congress to pass a bill and provide for the establishment of a postal telegraph system, etc." Sixteen committees of congress have reported in favor of such a measure and only two against it. All the postmasters general of recent years have advocated it, except Mr. Gresham and Mr. Bissel, and Mr. Gresham admitted that "the same principle which justified and demanded the transference of the mail on many chief routes from the horse-drawn coach on common highways to the steam impelled vehicles on land and water, is equally potent to warrant the calling of the electro-magnetic telegraph in aid of the postoffice in discharge of its functions of rapidly transmitting correspondence and intelligence."

More than seventy bills have been introduced in congress for the establishment of a government telegraph, but they have all been defeated or buried. Just why all of them have failed to pass has never been satisfactorily explained unless the explanation given by Mr. Thurber in 1890 can be considered as satisfactory. When asked to explain it he gave the names of Gould, Sage, Ames, Dillon, Eckhert, Astor, Morgan, Corbin, Huntington and twelve other millionaires who were interested in the Western Union, and said that those ames explained why it was that the people could not own their own telegraph system. It is known that a strong lobby is maintained at Washington, and that franks are tendered to members of congress; but passes and franks, we are told, have no influence on legislators.

Upon the face if the returns the profits of the Western Union are by no means excessive. Its capital stock is $100,000,000. Upon this in 1896, it made a net profit of $6,090,151.26, or a little over 6 per cent. One is almost surprised to find capitalists like those whose names have been mentioned investing their millions in an enterprise which pays such paltry dividends. But a little study of congressional documents and official reports reveals some interesting facts. The original capital stock of the Western Union, at its organization in 1858, was $385,700. By 1863 some additional property had been purchased and enough additional stock issued to bring it up to $3,000,000, and as the war was then on and business was brisk the owners decided to still further increase the capitalization by issuing a a stock dividend of $3,000,000 more. The nation's extremity was their opportunity, and while brave men were giving up their lives at the front, they carried the news home to sorrowing relatives at rates which netted them a year dividend of 100 per cent on stock, water and all. With these profits they were able to purchase competing lines, each purchase being made the basis of an increase of stock vastly in excess of the value of the property purchased. But even this method of increasing their capital was too slow and from time to time, recourse was had to stock dividends. In 1864 the stockholders guaranteed themselves with $11,000,000 of additional stock, in 1865 with $5,000,000 and a little later $15,000,000. Whether the original owners ever put in a single dollar in addition to the capital with which they began business it is impossible to say, but Hon. John Wanamaker, ex-postmaster general, declares that "an investment of $1,000 in 1858 in Western Union stock would have received up to the present time stock dividends of more than $50,000, and cash dividends equal to $100,0000, or 300 per cent of dividends a year.

RATES COMPARED.

A comparison of the rates charged by the Western Union with those which prevail in other countries shows very clearly how the immense profits are made. In this country messages of ten words cost 25 cents to $1, and from 2 to 7 cents for each additional word. In Europe the usual rate is 10 cents for twenty words, and from ½ cent to 1 cent for each additional word. In Belgium the rate for additional words is less than ½ cent each. In France the charge is 10 cents for twenty words and 1 cent for each additional word. The average charge for a message in Germany is 12 cents. In England the rate is 1 cent a word, which includes delivery within the limits of any town, and within one mile of a postoffice n the country. A message of twenty words may be sent from any part of France to the French possessions in Africa, a distance of 2,000 miles, for 20 cents. For transmitting a similar message the same distance in this country the Western Union charges 90 cents.

But it is not necessary to cite foreign examples in order to show that the rates charged in the United States are excessive. The Baltimore & Ohio railroad maintained for a long time a telegraph system under tremendous competition, and according to the testimony of its officers made a profit out of the business. The following are examples of itstariff: New York to Baltimore, Philadelphia and Washington, 10 cents; New York to Chicago, 15 cents; New York to St. Louis, 20 cents; New York to New Orleans, 50 cents. The present Western Union rates are: New York to Baltimore, 25 cents; New York to Chicago, 40 cents; New York to St. Louis, 40 cents, and New York to New Orleans, 60 cents. The lines of the Baltimore & Ohio were ultimately sold to the Western Union for $5,000,000, not because they were unprofitable, but because the road was in financial straits and something had to be disposed of to avert disaster.

Some years ago an independent telegraph line was established between Chicago and Milwaukee. The company began with a charge of 1 cent a word and within two years, in spite of fierce competition, the stockholders had received 90 per cent of the cost of the line in dividends. Then the tariff was reduced to 5 cents for a message of ten words, and at this rate the business paid a dividend of 40 per cent a yeer.

WANAMAKER'S TARIFF SHEET.

After a most careful examination of the question, Postmaster General Wanamaker declared that "charges in any one state and between stations not more than 300 miles apart, should not exceed 10 cents for messages of twenty words or less, counting address and signatures, nor over 25 cents for any distance under 1,500 miles, nor over 50 cents for any distance." A syndicate of New York capitalists offered to build lines all over the country, supply the operators, charge the rates suggested and give the government 2 cents on each message to pay for its collection and delivery.

Mr. Wanamaker assumed that with low rates prevailing the telegraph would be used largely for family correspondence, and the assumption is undoubtedly correct. In Belgium, under high rates, only 13 per cent of the messages related to family matters; under low rates such messages formed 63 per cent of the whole. The president of the Western Union testified before a committee on congress in 1890 that "46 per cent of the total business is purely speculative stock jobbing, wheat deals in futures, cotton deals in futures, pool room, etc.; 34 per cent is legitimate trade; about 12 per cent is press business and about 8 per cent of it is social." In striking contrast to this was the committee report that "in Europe where the cheap system prevails two-thirds of all dispatches are on social or family matters." In Europe the people own the telegraph and use it principally for purposes of family correspondence; in America a few Wall street magnates own the telegraph and use it chiefly for gambling purposes.

Under government ownership, in addition to low rates the service would be extended in every direction. Instead of messages being delivered by boys who ought to be in school, they would be delivered by carriers similar to those who distribute the mail. Instead of operators being compelled to work from ten to fourteen hours a day, as many of them do now, the eight hour rule would prevail. Instead of the wages paid being the lowest for which employes can be induced to work, they would be reasonably liberal. Instead of employment being subject to the caprice of officials it would be governed by civil service rules. The change would benefit everyone except a few New York millionaires who control the Western Union, and who, unfortunately, seem to control congress.

T. J. Smith completed the purchase, at Galveston, Tex., of the Galveston, La Porte & Houston railroad by paying $275,000. Rumors say the Southern Pacific is backing the deal.

Funeral services were held at Chicago over the remains of Bishop Dugan, who died at St. Louis. Interment was in Calvary cemetery.

The Penwick distillery, Cheswick, Pa., was partially wrecked by a boiler explosion. Hugh Nulton and James Henderson were fatally scalded.

FARMER MADE $50,000

TOOK SIX THOUSAND ACRES ON WHICH TO DO IT.

An Experiment in Farming Which Shows the Business Advantage of Some Methods.

We know what the railroads did last year; we know what the manufacturers did; we know what the merchants did. In a year, then, like 1898, when records in so many branches of American industry were smashed, what did the American farmer do?

Balance sheets are, unhappily, scarce among farmers; the few which are taken are hard to get at; for these reasons the one here presented is of especial interest. It is not a paper farm; it is not a paper balance; nor is it a paper farmer who makes this showing. It is what no American review has ever before presented to its readers—an actual glimpse at the books and workings of a model American farm. This farm, located in the state of Iowa, contains 6,000 acres and its business is to produce corn.

With this introduction Frank H. Spearman says, in the Review of Reviews for March:

Laak first at the investment and note that the land was not bought in an early day for a song, but within three years and at the market price.

INVESTMENT—IOWA CORN FARM.

Land—6,000 acres at $30	$180,000.00
Buildings	42,021.64
Stock	17,701.21
Machinery	17,773.98
Total	$258,496.83

The operation of this farm for 1898 shows a net profit of over $50,000. Putting out of the comparison patents and good will, neither of which contributed to this result, what other line of business on an equal capitalization can make a better showing?

EXPENSE ACCOUNT OR THE FARM FOR 1898.

Labor	$13,921.96
House supplies	4,368.81
Beef	4,368.81
Taxes	1,553.06
Sundries	760.00
Freight	500.00
Twine	437.25
Hay	339.19
Insurance	200.00
Oil	169.62
Repairs	112.80
Legal expense	40.05
Fuel	7.20
Total	$23,794.04
Less credit by discount	105.00
Less road tax	43.26
Total	$ 149.26
Net expense of the Iowa farm for the 12 months of 1898	$23,644.78

GROSS RETURNS FROM FARM.

215,000 gushels of corn @ 30c	$64,500.00
20,000 bu. of wheat at 50c	10,000.00
28,000 bu. of oats for feed	7,850.00
Deduct the expenses	23,644.78
Net profit	$50,855.22

A particularly valuable comparison of the expense difference between running a corn farm and a wheat farm of equal size is afforded by the fact that the owner of the Iowa corn farm also owns and operates a 6,000-acre wheat farm in the Red river valley of North Dakota.

DAKOTA WHEAT FARM EXPENSE ACCOUNT.

Labor	$12,632.39
House supplies	1,718.31
Taxes	1,202.90
Repairs	1,084.78
Machines	1,062.00
Twine	987.25
Fuel	495.90
Beef	462.80
Sundries	649.10
Personal	254.38
Freight	206.69
Oil	135.82
Seeed	83.81
Hay	22.50
Net expense	$20,998.63

GROSS RETURNS FROM DAKOTA WHEAT FARM.

Credits by wheat shipments	$40,050.00
Less expense	20,998.63
Net profit in 1898	$19,051.37

For the wheat farm 1898 was an average year, the yield being 18 bushels per acre and the price an average one. It has produced for its owner 17 successive crops, one of which netted him $72,000.

The two expense accounts show curious differences. In Iowa men are hired for the entire crop season of eight months at $18 and board per month. In Dakota they are hired for the actual seeding in the spring and the harvesting in the fall at from $1.50 to $3 per day. In the end the labor, or money wage account, is about the same thing, as will be seen; but the house supply account is much heavier on the corn farm.

On the corn farm the item of repairs was nominal, the plant under present ownership being new, while the items of "repairs" and "machines" on the wheat farm represent the average annual expenditure for replacing and keeping up the machinery. Twine is naturally the larger item on the wheat farm. The Iowa farm supplies its own fuel. On the Dakota farm coal is requied.

Here, too, note that the corn farm is planted with 600 bushels of corn, costing $180, while to bed the wheat farm requires 8,000 bushels of wheat, worth in 1898 $8,000. Again, in Dakota 250 acres of oats barley feeds the 160 head of mules while in Iowa 150 acres of corn feeds the same number easily. These differences, together with the eed difference and the twine difference, sometimes handicap the profit account of the wheat farm $10,000 a year to start with.

The essentials of a profitable farm are good land, well drained, but not too rolling, and accessibility to reasonable transportation. Six thousand acres, being about three miles square, makes the largest farm which can be operated to advantage from a central station; a larger mileage simply means two or more farms.

About April 1 men and mules move on the fields in battalions. Four-horse seeders, four-horse harrows and six-horse gang plows maneuver for six weeks like an army, sowing small grain plowing and planting corn. The minute the small grain is sown 31 corn planters are put behind the plows, and in this work lies the success or failure of the crop. Note, for instance, the pains taken in selecting the corn.

A perfect stand of corn is the first requisite of a large yield. From a choice piece of land planted with selected seed about 2,000 bushels of the finest ears are taken. From these an expert selects 600 bushels. These ears are placed on racks in a building arranged especially for a seed house. Whatever the termometer registers in Iowa, the temperature in that seed house never falls below freezing. All this insures the highest possible germinating power in the seed, and that alone might, in case of a cold, wet spring, save the entire profit of the season by producing a good stand.

The planting must of necessity be done by machinery, and to secure the maximum yield three seed kernels must be dropped in each hill. If five drop in, that hill is lost to the profit account; if only one, it is partially lost.

But, perfect as American farming machinery is, it does not leave the actory perfect enough to insure against irregular planting. Patiently and by a series of exhaustive tests the planter plates are so adjusted to the size of the seed kernels for each year that they will deposit an average of 65 kernels to every 20 hills, and not more than four nor less than two in any one. So great are the precautions that before the seed is shelled the tips and butts of the seed ears are cut off to secure kernels of an even size.

Even after this delicate adjustment of the best machinery in the world, foremen follow the 31 planters and at intervals open hills to count the seed deposits and make sure that each machine is doing its work. In addition, a purse of $100 is split into eight prizes between the eight men who do the best work and whose teams mark the straghtest rows. With such method is it any wonder that the crop on this farm averaged 60 bushels per acre, against the average of 32 bushels as given Iowa by the government report for 1898?

When the 3,800 acres of corn are up and ready, 76 two-horse cultivators are put into it. The points in the first cultivation one way and in the second the other wai is to get as close as possible to the corn; but after the pains taken to place it there no clod must be left on a plant. The field hand must uncover it, and a foreman on horseback behind each 20 men is held responsible for his crew's work. In the third and final cultivation the earth is thrown up against the plant, the small weeds in the hill being smothered and the large ones pulled by hand. It will be of interest to merchants and to theological professors to learn that it is not the weed in the row, but the one in the hill which mars the beauty of the balance sheet.

The corn being now three feet high, the interlacing roots and the overhanging stalks prevent further cultivation. Into this field, approximating one mile in width and six miles in length, are sent in October 75 wagons and men for the husking. Thi stakes 60 days and a row of cribs 10 feet wide and 16 feet high, half a mile long, are required to hold the crop.

In harvesting the small grain it is threshed directly from the shock, saving the cost of stacking and handling. Elevators provide against heating. A further saving of from 5 to 8 per cent over the operations of the small farmer is effected by shipping to terminal point instead of selling to local grain buyers. Future options may also be sold against a growing crop on market bulges at a season when the small farmer could not ordinarily deliver his crop.

The soil is kept in a high state of fertility by a rotation of crops so arranged that each piece of land bears three crops of corn, next one of wheat in which clover is sown, next one of clover plowed under; then follow again the three crops of corn.

The clover is simply a fertilizer, a portion only of the first crop being cut for hay and the remainder plowed under to maintain the vitality of the soil. The large roots act as a subsoiler and the decomposing vegetable matter restores the nitrogen taken by the grain.

In order that the mavimum of field work may be obtained, no "chores" are required of the men other than the cleaning of their teams. These are fed, bedded and the barns cleaned by barn men. The results on this farm are are therefore secured by painstaking care and thorough methods.

The question is often asked, "What does it cost to produce a bushel of corn?" On this farm, the size of 35 ordinary farms, with a 60-bushel crop the cost was 9 cents per bushel to the crib. For shelling, shipping and commissions add another cent, making 16 cents in all. It is evident, however, that had this farm been divided into 35 farms, with 35 cooks and families, 35 dooryards and waste lands, the expense of raising a bushel of corn would have been nearer 16 to 18 cents.

In any event, the cost varies from year to year with the yield. The only fixed estimate which the farmer can give is the cost per acre for producing the crop. This remains always practically the same, and is, roughly speaking, $4.50 for small grain and $5 for corn.

The 1898 acreage of the farm was approximately as shown in the following brief table:

Corn	3,700
Wheat	1,200
Oats	700
Roads and trees	400

Some interest naturally attaches to the man behind the gun—the man who, in this instance, has demonstrated that nothing pays better than farming. While the element of foreign birth and of oreign descent which has done so much to develop the northwest is admirable, it will still be a gratification to learn that this successful farmer is not of that element, but that he is purely and distinctly American. He comes from the straightest New England stock and bears the name of one of its most famous families. His ancestral kindred were among the molders of the republic, and represented their country at the courts of England, Russia and France; sat in presidential cabinets, in congress and more than once in the White house. The record almost spells the name.

Less than 40 years of age,, he never saw a day's work on a farm until he bought one after he was 21. His success rather indicates that there still are farmers born, and that the capital and energy put into the manufacturing and merchandising businesses, if applied today to farming, will yield equally good returns.

CONSUMPTION OF BEER.

Some Startling Figures on the Subject.

The enormous increase in the production and consumption of beer in the last few years is attracting world-wide attention, and both distillers and wine manufacturers are complaining of the heavy inroads which this popular beverage is making in their business.

Although the per capita consumption in England is many times greater than in this country, it is rapidly growing here, and brewers predict that within the next five years the per capita consumption of beer in this country will be more than doubled.

The brewers of the United States pay more than one-fourth of the entire internal revenue, and the combined capital of the breweries is more than $220,000,000.

If all the breweries in the United States were combined their aggregate capital would be more than that of the sugar trust, tobacco trust, standard oil trust and coal trust combined.

Rudolph J. Boeckhoff of the Home Brewing company, St. Louis, has compiled a number of interesting statistics in regard to the production and consumption of beer, whch wil prove a revelation to a majority of people.

The annual output of the breweries of the world reaches the enormous total of 199,056,017 barrels, which, if put up in pint bottles, would fill 59,356,804,888 bottles. If these pint bottles were packed in cases of two dozen bottles each it would require 2,473,200,000 cases.

Allowing 1,000 cases to the car, they would fill 2,473,000 cars, which would make a train 98,928,0000 feet, or 18,717 miles long. If this train was separated and made into trains of 24 cars each it would require 103,000 locomotives to draw them, and at least 515,000 trainmen to handle them.

If these trains followed each other closely and were run at a rate of 20 miles an hour, it would take them 931 hours, or 39 days to pass a given point.

To make the cases in which to pack this amount of beer would require 17,312,401,484 feet of lumber one foot wide, and if the boards of this amount of lumber were laid end to end they would encircle the globe at equator more than 131 times. To construct these cases it would require 2,618,682 kegs of nails of 100 pounds each, or a total of 261,868,250 pounds of nails.

The annual production of beer in the United States is equal in value to five times the output of voal in the United States, twice the value of the wheat crop, twice the value of the corn crop, twelve times that of the production of pig iron, 20 times that of petroleum, 25 times the value of the production of copper, 100 times that of lead, 150 times that of zinc and 35 times the value of the lime produced in this country.

It is worth five times as much as the cotton crop of the United States, nine times as much as the oats crop, 40 times that of barley, 15 times that of potatoes, 150 times that of buckwheat, 125 times as much as the flax crop, 110 times as much as the orange crop, 46 times as much as the entire grape crop and three times as much as the total hay crops of the United States.

The world's output of beer is valued at six times as much as the hogs of the United States, four times as much as the cattle, 30 times as much as the annual production of wool, 20 times that of gold and 30 times that of the silver production of the United States.

It is worth 200 times as much as the molasses manufactured in this country, 19 times as much as the butter and 15 times the annual production of cheese in the United States.

The textiles manufactured in the United States are valued at only half as much as the world's output of beer and the annual output of leather in this country is worth only half as much as the beer produced in the world, and the annual output of distilled spirits in this country is worth only one-ninth as much.

The average annual consumption of beer for each inhabitant of the world is four and one-third gallons, but if the average consumption of the world was as great as that of the United States it would be nearly 12 gallons per capita.

If the world's per capita consumption was as great as that of Germany it would require an annual output of 1,254,193,548 barrels, and if it was as great as that of Great Britain it would require 1,765,161,284 barrels, instead of 199,560,000.

In the German empire there are 21,503 breweries and the annual sales of beer reach 51,710,719 barrels. In Great Britain and Ireland there are 8,278 breweries and the annual sales of beer reach 17,41,6293 barrels. In Austria and Hungary there are 1,725 breweries and 16,140,322 barrels of beer are sold annually.

In the United States there are 1,886 breweries and the sales of beer amount to 37,000,000 barrels annually. In Belgium there are 2,977 breweries and 7,000,000 barrels of beer are sold. In France there are 2,568 breweries and the annual sales amount to 7,100,000 barrels. Russia has 1,127 breweries and sells 3,700,000 barrels of beer. Denmark has 319 breweries and sells 1,500,000 barrels. Switzerland has 298 breweries and sells 1,400,000 barrels annually. Sweden has 531 breweries and sells 1,200,000 barrels. The Netherlands has 151 breweries and sells 1,170,000 barrels. Norway has 45 breweries and the sales amount to 470,000 barrels. Roumania with 33 breweries sells 270,000 barrels. British India has 37 breweries and sells 153,000 barrels. Luxembourg has 13 breweries and sells 106,000 barrels. Spain has 40 breweries and sells 77,000 barrels. Italy has 98 breweries and the sales of beer reach 68,000 barrels, while in Greece, where there are only nine breweries, 54,000 barrels of beer are sold annually. Bulgaria has 20 breweries and sells 40,000 barrels of beer, and servia, with 10 breweries, sells 41,000 barrels.

America has the largest breweries in the world, the average production of a brewery being 16,995 barrels, while those of Great Britain and Ireland average 8,738 barrels and those of the German empire only 2,405 barrels.

KNEW EDISON AS A TRAMP.

Death of D. O. Dyer Recalls an Incident in Life of the Inventor.

Jackson, Mich.—Derrick O. Dyer, for many years train dispatcher for the Michigan Central railroad, died at his home on the Belden road south recently from Bright's disease. Mr. Dyer had been a telegrapher for forty years. Just at the close of the war he was stationed at New Orleans. "One day," said Mr. Dyer some months ago, "a gawky-looking fellow walked in and asked if I wanted any help. I was in charge of the office at that time, and as we needed an operator I replied that if he could do the work he could get the place. He looked seedy in the extreme. His clothes never cost a large amount and were worn and frayed. The man's general makeup hardly suited me, but in those days we met all sorts of people, so I thought I'd give the man a chance to earn a few dollars, if nothing more.

"'Can you send and receive in good shape?' I asked him as he stood gazing about the room and looking at the instruments.

"'Oh, I guess I can do anything of that sort all right,' he said, and just to try him I replied: 'Sit down here a few minutes at this table. I am pretty well tired and want a smoke anyway.'

"'Say,' said the newcomer, 'I'd like a smoke myself if you have any spare tobacco. Mine gave out at the town below here.'

HE WAS A DANDY.

"I got him a cob pipe, filled it up and he sat down meanwhile and took up my pencil. I had meanwhile broken off the report which was coming in like a shower. I forget what it was about, but something, I remember, about Ben Butler. My light-haired friend lighted his pipe, swung one leg over the corner of the table, opened the key and leaned back in his chair and began to write. I watched him for a few moments, and then went to get a whiff of air, for it awful hot. It was over half an hour when I came back, but he sat there puffing away like a contented farmer, laying aside sheets of copy as if he was really resting.

"'Hard work,' I said, coming up to take my place again. 'Oh, no,' he drawled as he closed the key for a moment and lighted his pipe again. 'Such work as this never mothers me, some way. Lie down and take a nap and I'll finish this report.'

"I did, for I was pretty well beat out. He woke me up a couple of hours later to say '30' was in. His copy was like print, even and handsome. 'You will do all right, I guess. We give $10 per month.' He paid no attention to what I said and I spoke to him again and said: 'Are you a little hard of hearing?'

"He said he was. 'How do you take matter from the wire, then. I should think it would bother you.' 'It might some folks,' he said in his slow way, 'but it don't bother me any. Didn't you see I put my leg on the table when I began to "take." That's the way I hear. It's really easier than taking by the ear when you are used to it.'

IT WAS EDISON.

"What's your name, please; I must put it on the list with the other boys?

"'Tom Edison,' he said; 'but if you want to be exact but an "A" in.' I had never heard of Edison at that time, nor had anyone else, I guess; but it was he. He worked five months for me, then he wouldn't stay any longer.

"He didn't have any money when he left, but I gave him a $5 bill for a lot of machines he had invented while he was there. He slept the least of any man I ever knew. He did not mind about his meals. One each day seemed to do as well as three. Food seemed a matter of indifference to him. He would eat what was given him. I'll bet I have wakened in the night (we roomed together, for I liked him from the start) hundreds of times and found Edison pegging away on some little invention for the office. He was one of the slowest men I ever saw in a general way. He wouldn't hurry if the house was on fire. Generally I figured it out that he never slept over two to three hours in the 24.

"He was always broke, because he paid out his money to get things for his inventions. We all thought he was a bit daft in those days.

WAS DEAD BROKE.

"I remember his coming back to me one night looking blue. 'Say, dick,' he drawled out in a gloomy tone, 'I haven't got but 75 cents and it's five days to the pay wagon.' 'We couldn't get tick down there those times. I said, 'Never mind, I'll lend you what you need.' 'That wasn't what I mentioned the subject for,' he said. 'The idea is this: We get more than we ought to, don't we?' I said I guessed I wasn't beating the hotel any. 'Well, now, you see. I'll ive the next five days on that 75 cents. I won't go hungry, nor owe a cent at the end.' He did it. Some days he didn't eat at all, then he would buy a loaf of bread and a piece of meat, take them to our room and make two or three meals off that.

"Finally, one day he drifted off. I gave him a letter to help him, and it was a long time before I found him on the wire again. He said he had saved $75 and was going back north. He wanted to get a machine rigged up, he and was going home to do it."

When Edison became famous Mr. Dyer wrote him and received invitations to visit Menlo Park, but he never went. He was quite as odd in some things as was Edison, and quite a clever inventor himself. He never tired, though, of telling how Edison came in and took the message with one leg over the table and the corncob pipe in his mouth.

"He seemed to be in a state of absolute beatitude," said Mr. Dyer, laughing as he told the story.