

CROSSED WIRES OF RIVAL PHONES.

The movement which has been on foot for several weeks with a view to the reduction of the rates of the Rocky Mountain Bell Telephone company culminated in what was referred to as a business men's meeting at the Commercial club on Monday night, but which, before the proceedings were over, assumed all the aspects of a mere hostile demonstration on the part of the Utah Independent company.

While the meeting was ostensibly a public one, those who attended were there by invitation, Mr. Murray receiving his invitation as a citizen and not as an official of the Bell company, and it was noticeable that of the directorate of the Independent company, seven of the nine were present, and in the body of the meeting were about a score of the company's employees. Before the proceedings had gone far, citizens not connected with either of the companies came to the conclusion that they had no business there, and that the meeting was instigated for the purpose of airing the grievances of the Independent company. This fact was made palpable when Mr. C. F. Strickley presented the following resolution which had evidently been carefully prepared some days before:

"We, the undersigned business men and telephone users in Salt Lake City, Utah, agree to discontinue the use of the Rocky Mountain Bell Telephone company's telephones on and after January 1, 1905, unless said company agrees to and does meet competition.

"Further, that the chair appoint a committee of five to wait upon the Rocky Mountain Bell Telephone company and present these resolutions as coming from the business men of this city, and report their answer at another meeting to be held at this club November 28."

Mr. Simon Bamberger entered a protest against the resolution, stating that he considered himself insulted by this cut and dried resolution, as he had come to the meeting under the impression that it was to be an unblinded affair, and that no discrimination was to be shown in favor of or against either of the telephone companies. As a substitute for the resolution, Mr. Bamberger moved the appointment of a committee of five to investigate telephone rates, and this motion was carried.

Mr. W. H. Gray and Mr. W. C. Lyne, a stockholder in the Bell company, also spoke strongly against the resolution.

When the real intent of the meeting became apparent through the introduction of the resolution, many of the citizens present were disgusted with the farcical turn things had taken. The most conspicuous figure at the meeting was Manager Elmer B. Jones, of the Independent company, whose remarks practically amounted to an attack upon the Bell company and an urgent plea for the support of his company. In the course of his speech, Mr. Jones made several remarkable statements, which did not appear in the newspaper reports of the proceedings. He stated, among other things, that out of \$90 gross on a yearly telephone rate, the Bell company was compelled to send \$46 to Boston. He based this on the fact that the American Bell Telephone company owns 51 per cent of the local company's stock. The fact that six of the directors live here and that the Boston interests receive 6 per cent on their stock just as other stockholders do was not brought out by Mr. Jones. Mr. Jones made the further statement that the Independent company did not propose to give party line service and that the lowest rate possible for special line service would be \$2.50 per month. This brought from Mr. Murray the statement that there would not be 20 per cent of the telephones of his company in residences, were it not for the fact that owing to their party-line system, they were enabled to furnish telephones at \$1 per month, and that people who could afford to pay that amount would be unable

to stand a rate of \$2.50 monthly. Mr. Murray also stated that the rates of his company were based on the fact that a man who uses a telephone fifty times a day should pay more than the man who uses it twice, and that the number of residence telephones supplied at the cheap rate made the business telephones that much more valuable.

In this connection Mr. Marriot and Mr. Bamberger made the statement that under the dollar rate, most of their employees were enabled to have telephones at their homes, which were a great convenience to employers.

Mr. Jones then condemned party lines, his argument being that when so many people could have telephones, it would force merchants to employ an extra clerk to call up the customers who preferred to do their shopping by telephone. In reply to this, Mr. Marriot stated that instead of extra expense the telephone orders enabled him to start his wagons early in the morning, resulting in a great saving of time and money to the firm.

In explaining the difference in the rates of business and residence phones, Manager Murray stated that out of 6,800 telephones 4,200 residences and 2,600 business, the Bell company had only installed at present 811 telephones, which cost \$60 or over a year, all of the rest being below that rate, and 3,000 at \$1 per month.

Mr. Jones concluded his remarks by stating that he did not appeal to those present from a sentimental or a patriotic point of view, though he could show that every dollar's worth of stock was held in Salt Lake, but that he appealed to them from a business point of view. "If our company is allowed to die," said Mr. Jones, "you will be in the grasp of a monopoly."

Mr. Bamberger could not see where the condition would be different if the Bell instead of the Independent system were allowed to die.

The meeting did not accomplish any definite results, and most of the citizens lost interest when the true nature of it was revealed by Manager Jones' remarks in opposition to the Bell company and his manifest intention of advertising the Independent system.

AN UNWELCOME VISITOR.

A Prize Story.

"So you have come at last?" said Herbert Mainwaring.

"As you see," said the visitor.

Mainwaring raised himself on his elbow, and scrutinized the newcomer. Then he laughed bitterly.

"So you are quite an ordinary individual after all!" he said.

"Oh, quite!" said the visitor, and there was silence for a while.

"I have been waiting for you—seeking for you for years," said Mainwaring at last, speaking deliberately now, evidently with increasing difficulty. "But I thought to find in you someone—well, someone rather imposing. I had a right to expect that, you know, for you parted Elise and I. And, great Heaven! now that we meet you grin at me, and I—I am a sick man."

The visitor still smiled complacently, despite the fact that the man in bed had lashed himself into a fury.

"I may not be much to look at," he said; "still, there is something irresistible about me."

"Pah!"

The invalid made a movement as if he would have struck at his visitor; but the nerveless arm fell impotent at his side. He was very weak.

He lay quite still for some time, his burning eyes fixed on the cold, impassive face of the other occupant of the sick-room.

"Shall I tell you what you are?" Mainwaring asked at last.

"As you please."

"Well, then, you're a most infernal coward.

We were happy enough, Elise and I, until you came between us. She was all the world to me. I was everything to her. We were content to live simply and solely for each other. Then your accursed shadow fell on our path. I saved her from you once, you remember, when you were with her in the carriage, and the horses ran away? But you triumphed in the end, with your schemes and your craven persistence. And she—she went away with you!"

Mainwaring's manhood left him for a moment; his voice broke in a sob. But still his visitor smiled sardonically, as, indeed, he had done all through the interview.

"When that happened," the weak voice of the sick man continued, "I swore I would never rest till I found you—the cause of my ruined happiness. Life had no savor left for me without Elise. There was but one thing left for me to do—to find you. And oh! I have searched for you for so many weary years, but I was always disappointed. You seemed to escape me by hair-breadths.

"When you were away at the war, I followed you, and out there I even saw you; but you always managed to avoid me.

"How I longed to get at you, then! I wanted to meet you face to face, while I was yet a strong and healthy man. The conflict would, perhaps, have been more equal then. But no, the crowning infamy is mine. I meet my enemy and am powerless!"

The weak voice dragged itself into silence at the end of a sobbing sigh.

Then Mainwaring turned almost fiercely on his visitor.

"It was like you," he said bitterly, "to force yourself upon such a man as I am now. Why did you come? Was it to gloat over your triumph? Was it that you might enjoy your joke to the full? If so, the laugh is with you. Oh, yes; the laugh is with you!"

"It always is," said the visitor, bending over the bed now; "but I did not come to gloat. I came to fetch you, for it is time, and Elise awaits you."

A beautiful smile lit up the face of Herbert Mainwaring, and he and his visitor passed out of the chamber together.

For the name of the visitor was Death!—The New Yorker.

A minister was one day walking along a road, and to his astonishment saw a crowd of boys sitting in front of a ring with a small dog in the centre. When he came up to them, he put the following question: "What are you doing with that dog?" One of the boys said: "Whoever tells the biggest lie wins it." "Oh," said the minister, "I am surprised at you boys, for when I was like you I never told a lie." There was silence for a while, until one of the boys shouted: "Hand him up the dog!"

Mrs. Tittle—"Wasn't it disgraceful the way these women talked during the play last night?"

Mrs. Tattle—"Well, I should say so. Sarah Snookins was trying to tell me the fuss in the Brindles family, and those two women made such a clatter I couldn't hear more than half she said."—Boston Transcript.

Gerald—"Mamma, can you change fifteen cents for me?"

Mother—"How do you wish it changed, dear?" Gerald—"Into a quarter."—Puck.

Binks—"Are you going to get a new suit this fall?"

Jinks—"No, my tailor says he can't afford it."—Cincinnati Tribune.