TELEPHONE TYRANNY

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF MUCH-USED INSTRUMENT.

Minor Discomforts Saved by That Weird Contrivance on the Wall—Reducing a Gas Bill by Telephone—A Man's House No Longer His Castle If He Has a Telephone—It Disturbs One's Meals and Demands an Immediate Answer—Importunate Trustees Break Into a Home Evening.

BY MARGARET E. SANGSTER.

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Undoubtedly the telephone is a great convenience. Whoever has had it in the house would sacrifice many luxuries rather than go without it. Time and strength and letter-writing and telegrams, and all sorts of minor discomforts are saved us by this weird contrivance on the wall, this mysterious tube into which we speak; this odd receiver which brings us voices from afar. We want to talk with a friend, to ask after her sick husband, or about her absent son; we are confronted by an emergency and obliged to leave home suddenly, or unexpected guests arrive, and the dinner must be nicer, with an added course or two—in every case the telephone is our friend. Certainly we should hate to do without it, this link that through the power of applied science binds us closer to our comrades on the road. It is a great convenience, and to some of us an indispensable necessity.

Take for example the woman's club. How on earth could a club president, or secretary, or the chairman of an important committee, get on and manage her work and communicate with her fellow members if there were not the telephone? Everybody knows that a club, however small, finds opportunity for endless discussion and arrangement and rearrangement, at other times than when in session. The telephone makes this conference possible and easy; it is a boon of boons to the club woman.

Once in a personal experience, once only, and the incident lives in memory as startling, the telephone was found successful in reducing the amount of an exorbitant gas bill! Householders know how difficult an enterprise this is, how seldom accomplished. On previous occasions letters had proved abortive, and interviews had found officials adamant, but the talk over the telephone, a party wire at that, proved immediately reassuring. The percentage asked for was granted; the obnoxious bill was reduced to its rightful proportions.

If you want a doctor in the dead of night, it is not now needful for the anxious inquirer to leave home and hasten to the doctor's door. The telephone will ring a signal at the doctor's head, and he will rise from his bed, tell you what to do, or come himself in half the time it used to take to get him to the patient. When there is sudden illness in the home, you cry blessings on the telephone, and they are heartfelt.

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And yet, it has its drawbacks. There is a tyranny of the telephone that has done something to make life less simple than it used to be. There are moods in which one wishes she had never seen, never heard, never touched or handled the little affair which has done more than any other single agent to rob life of privacy and independence.

We have often heard that a man's house is his castle. It is, and it isn't. It depends on whether he has a telephone.

You may bolt, you may bar, you may lock at your will,
But the telephone demon will pounce on you still.
No shutters exclude him, no key keeps him back,
At the sound of the bell, he is here on your track.

To cut off the service is the only way to exorcise the invisible imp who disturbs you at your meals, breaks in on your prayers, and demands an instant answer to his summons with a peremptory haste, not unlike the old challenge of the footpad on Hounslow Heath: "Your money or your life!" For instance:

You have had its aid. You have planned to admit nobody; you wish to rest, to relax, to let life's flood-tide refresh you, since too much work, too much talk, too much distraction of business has brought your powers to the ebb. In vain is your planning and precaution. The telephone rings and you take down your receiver.

Aunt Frances, Uncle Jonathan and the children are on their way to spend the day with you. They have just decided that they can come to-day, and will be with you about noon. Now you love your kinsfolk, and John's, too. You like Aunt Frances better than any other of John's aunts, and Uncle Jonathan is an "old dear." The children are objectionable when you have a headache and are tired; they are stirring children, always on the rampage; always meddling; not well-trained, or well-bred, and you would willingly omit them from the programme, but Aunt Frances is a devoted mother, who never leaves her brood at home.

To put them off for a day would give offense, be misunderstood, and hurt John, who is most loyal to his own people, and always delighted to have them under his roof. Therefore you fly around, dust chairs and tables, get out the best china, make a salad, order ice cream, and slip into a fresh and dainty frock. No time to relax till Jonathan and Frances shall depart. But for the telephone they would have notified you via Uncle Sam's mail, and you would have had your rest day as you meant to have it without hindrance or interruption.

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Here is John's side of it. I address John. John is a good citizen, I hope.

Perhaps you belong to the public in some detail of your life. Most of us do. Very few of us escape wholly from some obligation to the community in which we live, and we are constantly reminded that the wishes of the individual must be subordinate to the good of society. After a full and trying business day, a day of strife and care, you eat your supper, put on dressing gown and slippers and unfold your newspaper. The lamp sheds a soft glow over the room. Your wife sits opposite you, in her hands a bit of dainty needlework. In the parlor across the hall your pretty daughters are entertaining a lad or two of the neighborhood. You can see them by lifting your eyes; you hear the soft murmur of their voices. Such an evening at home takes a man to Arcady. Your heart is beating time to the old lilt:

"'Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home,
A charm from the skies seems to hallow us there
That seek through the world is not met with elsewhere."

Hackneyed as the lines have become, familiar to the commonplace they are very beautiful. They bubble up like spring water through green moss, and keep sweet and fresh the sentiment of love for the home, that is so deeply rooted in every true heart.

Into this sphere of peace there penetrates a clamorous appeal, not very loud, but very positive.

You go to the telephone.

"Hello!"

"Hello! Is this you, Mr. Morrison?"

"Yes, Mr. Shackelford."

Mr. Shackelford proceeds:

"There is to be a meeting of the trustees of the church, a called meeting, at my house in 15 minutes. It is most important. We depend on you. You know about —— and —— and it won't do for you to be absent. In 15 minutes, please. Good-by."

Or, if it is not a church meeting, it's a borough meeting, or a political gathering of some description; or else a group of people promise to come to you on their way back from wherever they happen to be, and the sum of it is that you lose your home evening. It is gone; it has fled before the telephone.

Well, there is a seamy side to nearly all of life's tapestry. We reap certain benefits, but we pay the price. This telephone-tyranny annoys us a little, but it would be like going back to Noah's Ark to do without it.

PRESENT FOR A MAN.

A Case for Pipes May Be Made by Deft Fingers at Small Outlay of Time and Trouble.

Ladies who like to make presents for their gentlemen friends will find such a pipe-case as we illustrate very acceptable. It can be fashioned from the top of a pair of long kid or suede gloves, or a piece of new kid may be used. There are two pieces, one being

PIPE CASE.

cut longer than the other at the top of the bowl part, so that it may be buttoned over. The kid should be lined with satin, the edges of which should be turned in and slip-stitched a trifle below the edges of kid; then the two pieces are placed together and machine-stitched close to the edge all round. A small buttonhole is worked in the flap, which is fastened to a button on front part.

BITS OF FASHION.

Black, dark blue and brown gowns require light gloves, ruffles, a light vest or yoke and undersleeves, but the new millinery may correspond with the gown, relieved with the lighter tone, and flowers of corresponding color to the millinery, but no colored trimmings on a dark gown of solid coloring.

And hats—there never were so many radical changes. It's as if the whole world millinery were in a state of upheaval. Big hats appear here and there—half-shame-faced before the tiny, tip-tilted things we've been accustomed to and liked for their saucy little style.

A new brown is around town—brilliant in comparison with the rather lifeless color we usually mean by brown. It is especially pretty in the horsehair hats, as the ruddy tint in it takes the light best in horsehair.

The revival of an old fashion is the sailor hat with wide crown and narrow brim. The favorite way of trimming them is to drape on a veil of mousseline de soie in one of the new, rich shades.

Tiny three-cornered hats for wee tots are trimmed with three prim rosettes of baby ribbon—one on each place where the brim turns up.

Light weight wash flannels have polka dots of color or white embroidered at regular intervals over the cloth.

Lots and lots of pale blue hats—the shade that goes with everything—are worn.

CERTAINLY GRAND SAVING.

Unexpected Yet Eminently Satisfactory Result of a Trick on the Gas Meter.

Mr. Macpherson's gas bills were sore quarterly trials. "Man, they're simply exor-r-bitant," he remarked one day to his friend MacTaggart.

But MacTaggart was a man of resource, and suggested a remedy.

"Ye see, it's this way," he said. "In the gas meter there are a lot o' wee wheels which revolve as the gas passes through, and so cause the amount consumed to be registered. Noo, every nicht when ye gang to bed and turn oot the licht, ye maun just blaw doon the pipe, and the wee wheels will revolve in the opposite direction and subtract from the amount of gas ye've been using. Man, ye'll save pounds!" Macpherson paid for exorbitant gas bills religiously during a month.

Then came the gas inspector on his usual round. He examined the register, looked at the entry for the previous quarter, and then referred to his book. Again he looked from one to the other, and his air became one of the greatest perplexity.

"Whaur's the matter?" said Mr. Macpherson, who was standing by.

"Weel, Mr. Macpherson," said the gas inspector, "I dinna ken what's been happening to your gas meter, but I find the company owes ye exactly £1 15s 11d."

If milliners would confine their window displays to 98-cent hats, it would do much to induce bachelors to take a hand in the matrimonial game.

It is unfortunate that petroleum has not proved as effectual in exterminating mosquitoes as it has in propagating colleges.—Washington Star.

It's an easy matter to gauge a man's wisdom. Draw him into a discussion, and if he agrees with you, of course he's very wise.

SCIENCE SIFTINGS.

Prof. Reickenbach is said to have proven that 30 persons in 100 can see, in the dark, colored rays from the human body and flashes from a magnet.

The "flicker" sometimes noticed in lightning proves to be due to the fact that several flashes—sometimes five or six—follow one path too rapidly to be separated by the eye. The trails shown in photography of very bright flashes are caused by incandescence produced in the air for a very brief period.

A new product of the electric furnace has been introduced in France under the designation calstonite. It is a double carbide of barium and calcium, produced by M. J. Cartier, an electro-metallurgist of Mancioux, which decomposes on contact with water, like calcium carbide.

A stereoscopic star chart is the successful novelty of T. E. Heath, the English astronomer. The stars in a given section of the heavens are drawn from two points of view that are supposed to be 26 years apart, and under a large stereoscope the double view gives a rough but very instructive impression of the stars floating in space at an approximation to their relative distances, instead of as points against the dark background of the sky. The result is a most interesting one.

Electric waves and sensitive receivers offer a means of performing a variety of operations at a distance. Prof. E. D. Branly has been trying to attain such results, and has shown the Paris academy an apparatus by which he can start an electric motor, cause incandescent lamps to glow, and cause an explosion. These effects may be produced or discontinued in any desired order, one after another. They were chosen arbitrarily for experiment, and it is possible to bring about at a distance other mechanical action or series of actions, or to work a complicated machine.

NOT CENSUS QUESTIONS.

Were you ever happy, and who was to blame?

Are you black or white, and how do you account for it?

Do you eat patented breakfast foods or just plain sawdust?

Do you think that the high price of eggs is due to the foul-strike?

Did you ever hear a theater joke, and what did you take to remove the effects?

What is your age, and how many years is it since you celebrated that birthday?

Did you ever love your wife so much that you would like to eat her, and are you sorry that you have not done so?

RUMORED OF ROYALTY.

Earl Nelson, who is in his eighty-second year, is the only living peer who was a member of the house of lords when Queen Victoria came to the throne.

King Edward's reign has by no means brought joy to the heart of London tradespeople. A leading trade paper laments the fact that a great portion of the trousseau of Princess Margaret of Connaught was purchased in Paris.

There is something in the soft round cheek and the direct outlook of Princess Margaret's candid eyes that recalls the early portraits of the great queen, and there are traits of character that bear the same stamp, such as truthfulness, clear insight, earnestness of purpose, and last, not least, "saving common sense."

England's future king, Prince Edward of Wales, now 11 years old, possesses a child's habit of saying the unexpected thing. When visiting King Edward, the other day, the king asked him what he was studying, and the little prince said: "All about Perkin Warbeck." Asked who Warbeck was, the prince replied: "He pretended he was the son of the king, but he wasn't; he was the son of respectable parents."

There is a singular coincidence about the two English royal princesses named Louise. They are both the daughters of British monarchs, they are of very fair complexion and both married out of the blood royal. Each also selected Scottish peers—the dukes of Argyll and Fife—both of whom are as fair-skinned as their wives. Still further goes the coincidence, for neither of the royal duchesses has presented her husband with a male heir.

HISTORICAL BITS.

Cromwell is said to have originated the board of trade idea.

Sugar, when first introduced into England, was only used for the purpose of making medicines more palatable.

Wire drawing was invented by Rudolph of Nuremburg in the early part of the fifteenth century. Wire was first made in England in 1663.

Bombs, it is said, were first thrown March 24, 1580, on the town of Wachtendenck, in Guelderland. The historian Hone says "the invention is commonly attributed to Gaalen, bishop of Muenster."

In 1592, in England, butchers were compelled by law to sell their beef for a half penny a pound and mutton for three farthings. The butchers of London sold penny pieces of beef for the relief of the poor, every piece two pounds and a half, sometimes three pounds for a penny.

Darwin Refuted.

Father—Yes, my son; according to Darwin, our ancestors were monkeys.

Kindergarten Geoffrey—But, papa, I don't believe that. I shall be an ancestor myself some time, and I'm not a monkey.—Judge.

A factory lockout is merely a case of shaking hands.