

You probably have heard something to-night for the first time, and I am not the least bit surprised that you have not got much to say, when I first saw it I was the same.

I first saw this invention on an electrical line just outside Chicago, but in a rather different form from what it is to-day. To-day it is applied to steam locomotives; there it was applied to an electric line.

I have followed this thing pretty closely since its inception and I do not think that there is any one able to speak of the details better than myself. During the last five or six months I have not been in such close touch with it as I was previously.

There are a great many details to work out and a great many have been solved, but there are still some to solve and I have no doubt when it is stretched over a considerable mileage there will be many more difficulties to solve. It is like starting to walk or drive down a crowded street, you do not see the way clear ahead at the commencement, but as you go along you are able to thread your way through the difficulties which present themselves. All these things have to have a commencement, and when you commence you do not see all the obstacles in the way, but the way opens out as you go along, and that is how it will be with this system when it is applied.

There is no doubt that all over the world, in connection with steam lines and electric lines, with the fast traffic we now have there is a strong sentiment for some method of controlling trains outside the manual operation of the engine driver. I saw an account the other day where the State lines of Prussia are making tests every day with a view to making it possible to control trains by some other means than the engine driver seeing signals beside the track. They have, for a great number of years, been experimenting with signals operated in the cab. In some parts of England, owing to the track signals sometimes being obscured by fog, experiments along these lines have been made, but they have not yet been able to arrive at any satisfactory solution to the difficulties met with in inventing an absolute cab signal. There is the difficulty of making contact with the moving vehicle automatically.

There is a device in the New York Subway—a mechanical trip,—which would be absolutely useless where the line is exposed to the elements and there is always the danger that some part of the apparatus may be broken and carried away thus rendering the device useless, and that is the reason why the specifications for automatic safety devices drawn up by the Railway Board states that clear indication shall be received at all times in the cab. Mr. Prentice's device is the only one I know of which gives a clear indication at all times to the engineer that the track is clear or not to run on, and he is not