

USES AND ABUSES OF THE TELEPHONE

Some of the Peculiarities of a Much Misunderstood Modern Convenience—A Few of the Difficulties Operators of The New Brunswick Telephone Company Have to Contend With



MAIN EXCHANGE SWITCHBOARD, ST JOHN, N. B.

This will serve to give some idea of the size of this board and the method of operating. Note the two supervisors who are standing up, and the chief operator and her assistant seated at the chief operator's desk. These four members of the staff are employed to keep the service running smoothly and prevent inattention on the part of the regular operators seated at the switchboard.

Considering the popularity of the telephone today, it being installed in every place of business and a great many private residences, it is probably the least understood of any of the modern conveniences and less care taken to comprehend its intricate workings. While much has been written and more said on the street, from time to time relating to the telephone operator, the general tendency has been to give the impression that her work was one of continuous round of pleasure. It is far from this, but her duties, though bound in a closely established routine, are subject to interruption by incidents often of a most annoying nature. Who has not heard of some of the unreasonable requests which are made of her every day? Yet records of different companies show as much novelty as ever and draw from the patient operator the will, "Will people never learn how to use the phone?" One of the most frequent causes of errors in the transmission of numbers, for instance, Mr. Hurryup, who has been detained at the post office talking business, rushes to his office and has immediate need for the phone. Too busy to look at the telephone directory, he depends on his memory and proceeds something like this: "Hello, Central, give me 461. 'What?' '461, I suppose. I would want to talk to Mr. Hurryup.' 'Hello! This is Mr. Hurryup speaking.' 'What? Don't know me? Say, who's speaking?' 'Oh, they've given me the wrong number.' 'He hangs up the receiver, treats the office staff to a fine exhibition, and calls Main 25 or 28, instead of 27. Main who are in the habit of using the phone a lot will trust to memory and call Main 25 or 28, instead of 27. Now, the party that called up will insist that the number they called was 27 and all the powers of persuasion will not convince him that he made an error. What about this? Are you guilty?"

What Telephone Users Can Do to Help the Service. There are three parties to a telephone call—the person making the call, the telephone company, and the person called. It is not sufficient that one, or two of the above parties do their work properly. The co-operation of all three is necessary. Telephone users may help the telephone service by consulting the telephone directory before making calls, thus preventing the many errors due to calling numbers from memory. By speaking directly into the transmitter in a clear, distinct voice. By separating the figures of the telephone number when making a call, for example: Main one-two-three-four. By correcting the operator if she repeats the number incorrectly. By holding the telephone receiver to the ear until the called party answers, or some report is given from the Central Office. By being ready to talk when the called party answers. As a matter of course, the person making the telephone call should not oblige the party to wait his convenience. By answering telephone calls promptly. If there is unusual delay in answering the telephone, the operator may report, "Don't Answer," to the party calling. By always giving name of exchange before the number, for example, Main 41 or West 41. In telephone operating, the human element must be considered. The public is human and its inflection conveys whatever impression each gets of the other. Under such conditions, courtesy both on the part of the operating force and the public is like oil to machinery—necessary to prevent friction. The number of the party calling, in an opening immediately over the light. A "plug" is inserted and the number desired is asked for by the operator. When given, the connection is made and the number wanted is rung. After waiting twenty seconds another ring is given and a third and final call is made at the end of another twenty seconds. If the party called does not answer, perhaps the party calling has by this time met patients and hung up the receiver. This is made known to the operator by a red light which flashes in front of her, so she removes the plug, or in the language of the telephone "takes down the connection." By the time Mr. Hurryup breaks in and wants to know who has called him. In a multiple switchboard such as is used in St. John every one of the operators of the board can reach every subscriber in the city by inserting a plug into a jack or opening in the board directly in front of her. This means that any one of the operators may call any phone she wishes. When the subscriber calls central, however, his light flashes at one place only, so he is always answered by the same operator. In Mr. Hurryup's case, he was called by operator No. 1 at one end of the board into whose position Mr. Hurryup came, but when by reason of delay in answering this call Mr. Hurryup had to ask who rang him, his query would be answered by the No. 16 operator into whose position Mr. Hurryup's line came. Probably the worst offender is the forgetful man who neglects to put the receiver on the hook after using. This is immediately reported to the chief operator as "Phone out of order," because no operator can ring it. The number is put up on the "trouble board," or hospital and the phone is put out of commission. In the meantime if on a party line all the phones on that line are out of use. A man is immediately despatched from the office to locate the trouble and in the case of a four-party line a call on all the instruments on this line may have to be made before he can clear the trouble. When a phone is put in the hospital and the subscriber discovering the receiver off replace it and then wishes to use the phone he is quickly made cognizant of the fact, for on putting the receiver to the ear he hears a peculiar noise between a buzzing and a click; this in-

more, she cares little what conversations are carried on over the wires—no more than a subscriber cares what conversation is passing between passengers in the adjoining seats on the street cars. But when will all the aforesaid subscribers get the truth fixed in their minds? A careful investigation of wrong number calls show that 90 per cent of the errors are made by the subscribers. This is a matter that all users of the phone should carefully consider. We have rushes of business just as the street cars, the stores, and the post offices do. Yet a man who will patiently wait in line two or three minutes to be allowed to deposit his money in some one's bank will become "disgusted with such service," if he occasionally has to wait in line fifteen seconds to get an operator to connect him with his residence, that he may inform them he "will be a little late to dinner." Ask yourself these questions: Does any other company or store in town wait on me so uniformly promptly, or cause me so little direct loss of time, as does the Telephone Company? Can I get the services of a street car, a clerk, a salesgirl, a cashier, or of anyone else, nearly so quickly whenever I want them, as I can those of a telephone operator? For every time I have to wait more than five seconds, how often do I get into three seconds or less. It is easier for an operator to establish a connection than reply "Line busy." Recollection of this simple fact, perhaps, would save the operator the asperities of a state of mind evoked by a hasty conclusion that the operator was in a hurry. Follow a call into the main exchange, for example. You ask for a certain number. The operator immediately informs you that the line is busy. How does she know? Simply by a little auditory "click" in the receiver when she tried to plug in the line. How does she know? How long it has been in use, or how long it is likely to be "busy." All the information she possesses is a "click," but it is sufficient to advise her that some one of the 50 other operators in the exchange has a prior call from that number. Had the line been clear, the effort to complete the connection would have been no greater than that required to get the "click," hence the task of informing a caller that the line is busy is just so much extra labor—in fact, it involves a double burden, as the subscriber will usually repeat the call until he is able to transact his business. Obviously, therefore, the desire of the operator to establish the connection when it is first called for. She has no motive in doing otherwise. Whenever there is "trouble" of any sort The New Brunswick Telephone Company, for its own sake as well as for the sake of its subscribers, is anxious to get right after it. The longer "trouble" exists the more difficult and expensive it is to repair and the greater the loss of business to the company. So it is a distinct favor to the New Brunswick Telephone Co. to make an investigation. The girl insisted she had on both occasions rung up the right number. Still on the face of the evidence of his own knowledge, the party calling doubted the truth of this assertion. Inquiries by an official of the company to whom complaint had been made discovered the fact that B. was visiting the evening in question. When the phone rang, being alone in the room at the time he answered it, not knowing Mr. Jones, he naturally thought that the party calling had been given a wrong number, so from force of habit answered as he did, his own phone number being 48. This is a case where both the party calling and Mr. B. would have claimed the operator had given a wrong number had the circumstances not been thoroughly investigated by the company. These are only a few of the requests made of the operators, whose work is laid out for her in accordance with the number of regular calls she should handle if not delayed by unreasonable and thoughtless patrons. She is not a human encyclopedia. Further-

WHAT IS THE ANSWER? Ask your Grocer

COOK ANSWERS PEARY'S CHARGE

ON BOARD S. S. OSCAR II. AT SEA, Sept. 17 (via Marconi wireless to Cape Race, N. F.)—(By the people of America to have the fullest confidence in my conquest of the Pole. I have records of observations made by me which will prove my claim. I shall be glad again to set my foot on American soil. This was the brief message which Dr. Frederick A. Cook today asked the Associated Press to give to his countrymen as he nears home on the steamer Oscar II. bound from Christiania, Norway, for New York. The Oscar II. is due here some time next Monday. Dr. Cook discussed freely with the Associated Press correspondent today the assertion of Commander Peary that he (Cook) never reached the North Pole, and drew from him a detailed story of the cause that brought about dissension between the two explorers. When he departed for the North, Dr. Cook said, he left a depot of provisions at Annotok, north of Etah, in charge of Rudolph Franke and several Eskimos. Franke had instructions to go south about a whale and return later. This he did, but missed the returning vessel owing to a slight illness. He was taken aboard Peary's ship, the Roosevelt, and proceeded North. Commander Peary found my supply depot at Annotok, Dr. Cook continued, "and the Eskimos in charge told him that I was dead, which they fully believed to be true at the time. Peary picked two men in charge of the depot, boatwain Murphy and another, Henry Whitney, the New Haven hunter, also remained there. Murphy had orders not to search for me, but to wait for the return of the Eskimos. The following spring from the relief party. When I returned from the Pole, unexpectedly, Harry Whitney was the first to see me and to tell me what had happened. Whitney was placed in possession of the facts concerning my journey to the Pole, on the condition that he would not inform Commander Peary or his men of them. At the same time the Eskimos who had accompanied me were told to maintain the strictest secrecy. When I went into the depot there was a dispute between myself and Murphy, who delivered to me written instructions he had received from Peary, although he himself could neither read nor write. These instructions showed that he was making a trading station of my depot, the contents of which had been used in trading for furs and skins. Dr. Cook said he was intensely annoyed at this alleged wrongful use of his supplies and threatened to kick out Murphy and his companion. Finally, however, he consented to their remain-

close friends, not connected with my family, who volunteered to do so as a favor and who will see that the coffin is demobilized and will remain in sight of the rest of my body has been consigned until my ashes have been taken therefrom. I desire them to see that my ashes are placed in the inner receptacle, likewise now provided, and turned over to them for delivery to my beloved wife or whoever she may designate, or in the event of her prior death, sealed by the attending friends and temporarily left in the crypt of the crematory. There, as soon as possible, but before the disposition of my property has been made, the receptacle originally containing my ashes to be placed in an outer receptacle, also now provided, surrounded by photographs of those dearest to my heart and person at the time of my death, not forgetting those of my departed parents, my aunt Clara Hansen and my late father-in-law, Dr. Jones E. Harman, as well as my own. I desire it properly inscribed and securely and tightly soldered on the outside in the presence of my trustee friends who volunteer the act of kindness, and the whole, at the convenience of my beloved wife, deposited within the marble urn at the Lathera crematory, Middle Village, L. I. After bequeathing to his wife and property at 211 East Eighteenth street, Manhattan, and the contents of the house and stable at Atlantic Highlands, the testator makes the provision concerning his horses. He directs that fund be set aside out of his estate to pay his daughter \$2000 a year and give "our friend" Adele Heuel \$500 and an income of \$25 a week. He gives his ward, Emma A. Bonine, \$500 outright and an income of \$25 a month, after January 15, 1913, the latter contingent on her being married respectably, being respectable if single or being in a respectable business. The grandson, Grevel E. W. Acker, is to have the income of the residue until he is 25 years old and the capital after that time if he "leads a respectable life, indulges in no excesses and doesn't smoke paper cigarettes." The testator makes about fifty bequests of what he calls "souvenir trinkets" to his friends, and among them is a cigarette holder. He wills his "marine clothing" to his wife, and if she doesn't want it it is to be distributed among such servants at the Nook as it will fit. If they don't want the "marine clothing" any one else may have it who writes. Mr. Grevel wrote out the following death notice on April 24, 1909, leaving the date blank: "Even in death I greet you, my friends, and invite you to attend my funeral at St. Mark's German Lutheran church, Sixth street, between First and Second avenues, Incineration private to those who wish. I am, please! If you wish to betoken your remembrance of me do so a year hence at Lot 2, Map 1, Lutheran cemetery, L. I. Cordially and fraternally, WILLIAM GREVEL." The day after Grevel's death the notice was taken to a newspaper office for publication in the obituary column, with the date of his funeral, Thursday, August 10, filled in. Following it was the notice by the officers of City Lodge, F. and A. M., asking the members to attend.

BARS CIGARETTES BY PECULIAR WILL Grevel Makes Odd Condition in Disposing of Estate

Stepdaughter's Son to Get Residue if He Modifies His Smoking and Leads an Ordinary Life.

NEW YORK, Sept. 15.—The will of William Henry Maximilian Grevel, a wealthy and eccentric man who lived at 85 East Tenth street and died at Atlantic Highlands, N. J., on August 17, was filed for probate yesterday. It will give about thirty pages and nearly half of it is taken up with directions regarding the disposition of Grevel's body. The residue of the estate goes to Grevel E. W. Acker, the son of his adopted daughter, Ida Jeanette Acker, on condition that he abstains absolutely from the use of "paper cigarettes." Grevel leaves a large stable of horses at his country estate to his wife, Wilhelmina Grevel, providing that no one but her coachman or her friend Adele Heuel or herself drives any of them. If any reputable citizen of Monmouth county sees any one else driving the horses and makes affidavit to that effect they are to be returned to the estate and be sold at public or private sale as the executors think best, with the provision that they are not to be driven in the county. The money realized on the sale of the horses is to be turned over to the Overseers of the Poor of Monmouth county to be used for the persons under his charge. Concerning the funeral services and burial the testator says: "I direct that the funeral services be brief and conducted under Masonic offices. I desire that my body be enclosed in a coffin even now provided by me and to be taken in an undertaker's wagon to the nearest crematory by two

GIRL BURNED TO DEATH IN A PRAIRIE FIRE

Does 6 Hours' Washing in 3 Hours—Without Extra Effort—Without Boiling. Naphtho Soap eliminates overnight soaking of clothes, boiling and old-time scrubbing. With cold or lukewarm water Naphtho does a six-hour washing in three hours, without extra effort, hustling or injury to yourself. Naphtho is not a cold-water soap exclusively—it's just as good in boiling water. Naphtho makes the clothes clean, pure, sweet and does away with Wash Day Slavery.