

Speaking Through Space.

When the great gathering of Sunday-school workers were on their way to the convention in the Holy Land, last spring, the Editor of the 'S.S. Times,' Mr. Chas. Gallaudet Trumbull, wrote an interesting series of letters entitled 'On the Way to Jerusalem,' which were published weekly in that paper. In one of these (issue of May 28) he gives the following vivid account of the exchange of messages between ships at sea by the Marconigraph:—

'While writing in my stateroom on Monday afternoon, March 28, on these letters to the home people, a deck steward knocked and announced, 'The Kaiserin Maria Theresia, sir!' I hurried on deck, and there she steamed, not a mile away, bearing directly down upon our port side, cutting our course at right angles. My next move was a run for the Marconi instrument room. Finding it in full operation, I hunted up Mrs. Trumbull, and together we had the experience of seeing and hearing a message sent off through space from our own steamer to the sister boat. At 4:53½ o'clock the operator began transmitting the message which readers of the 'Sunday-School Times' saw in the issue of April 2. White sparks of lightning leaped fiercely and with ear-stinging intensity from the instrument with each dot and dash of the Morse alphabet, as my message sped on its way. After a few minutes of uninterrupted transmission, our operator stopped, threw up an arm of his instrument, opened the end covering of his receiver, and waited.

'Have you finished the message?' I asked.

'No; I've sent about half,—now I'm waiting to see if he has it all, or whether he wants any words repeated.'

Presenting came a faint clicking of the receiver,—so faint that we hardly noticed it after the noisy report of the transmitting. But in a few seconds—'All right; go on with the rest,' read our operator, and down came the arm, up went the cover closing the receiver, and the rapid fire of transmission began again.

'He's a German, and receiving very well,' commented Mr. Furness as the sparks continued. Finally he waited again, his receiver open.

'What's the word after "schools"? The words from "schools" to "Psalmist"? So that sentence was sent again, and then the distant boat repeated the cable address of the 'Sunday-school Times' which I had used,—'Suntime, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and it showed that he had it perfectly.

'Shall send harbor?' came a question in faintly flickering waves. Not understanding it, Mr. Furness inquired further.

'Shall I send this message from the next harbor?' came the query. Our answer to this arranged for the cabling of the message from Athens, the Maria Theresia's next port, to Philadelphia.

The other boat at this time was steaming twenty miles an hour; our own, sixteen miles. At nine minutes past four the report O K flickered from our receiver, and the Jerusalem pilgrims' greetings to North America had taken a flying start toward their goal.

Mrs. Trumbull and I stepped out from the little cabin and scanned the horizon for the Maria Theresia. Not a sign of her was visible. Yet from the door of the Marconi room came the sharp reports that told of the conversation still going on. And some people profess to believe that the day of miracles is past!

Half an hour later I visited the Marconi room. The sparks were more fiercely intense, showing the increased pressure that was re-

quired for the increasing distance, and the answering flutter of the receiver was very faint. It is a new experience, unlike any other in the world to stand by a Marconi instrument after the receiver has been thrown open and the operator waits for an answer to a question he has just sent off through the ether to his invisible correspondent. One waits in dead silence. The recording tape is motionless, or moves quickly, as the operator wills. No response; wheels and levers are still. Then just a faint tap, tap, and we know that some one is speaking. The telephone, telegraph, submarine cable, seem commonplace. They are connected all the way. But here is something that ends at the mast-head, yet links ships that pass unseen and unheard save for this call of the ether. It deepens a man's faith to see it.

The band of the passing boat had played an American hymn, by her captain's orders, we learned from the invisible courier. And the captains of the two vessels exchanged compliments, while the captain of the Maria Theresia sent to the Hon. Herbert Clark, our conductor, a message of greeting to the Jerusalem pilgrims.

The intervening mountainous land by which the distant boat was passing made it necessary to terminate the communication sooner than would have been the case in open sea. Shortly after five o'clock Mr. Furness 'spark-ed' the words 'good-by,' and the dialogue was ended.

How the Governor Signed the Pardon.

(Eugene Field, in the 'Chicago News.')

Everybody was afraid of the old governor, because he was so cross and surly. And one morning he was crosser and surlier than ever, because he had been troubled for several days with a matter which he had already decided, but which many people wished to have reversed. A man, found guilty of a crime, had been imprisoned, and there were those who, convinced of his penitence, and knowing that his family needed his support, earnestly sought his pardon. To all these solicitations the old governor replied, 'No,' and, having made up his mind, the old governor had no patience with those who persisted. So the old governor was in high dudgeon one morning, and when he came to his office he said to his secretary: 'Admit no one. I am weary of these senseless importunities.'

Now, the secretary had a discreet regard for the old governor's feelings, and it was seldom that his presence of mind so far deserted him as to admit of his suffering the old governor's wishes to be disregarded. He bolted the door and sat himself down at his modest desk, and simulated intense enthusiasm in his work. His simulation was more intense than usual, for never before had the secretary seen the old governor in such a harsh mood.

'Has the mail come? Where are the papers and the letters?' demanded the old governor, in a gruff voice.

'Here they are, sir,' said the secretary, as he put the bundle on the old governor's table. 'These are addressed to you privately; the business letters are on my desk. Would you like to see them now?'

'No, not now,' growled the old governor; 'I will read the papers and my private correspondence first.'

But the old governor found cause for uneasiness. The papers discussed the imprisoned man, and these private letters came from

certain of the old governor's friends, who strangely enough, exhibited an interest in the self-same prisoner. The old governor was disgusted.

'They should mind their own business,' muttered the old governor. 'The papers are officious, and these other people are impertinent. My mind is made up—nothing shall change it.'

Then the old governor turned to his private secretary, and made him bring the business letters, and presently the private secretary could hear the old governor growling and fumbling over the pile of correspondence. He knew why the old governor was excited; many of these letters were petitions touching the imprisoned man.

'Humph!' said the governor at last. 'I'm glad I'm done with them. There are no more, I suppose.'

When the secretary made no reply the old governor was surprised. He wheeled in his chair and searchingly regarded the secretary over his spectacles. He saw that the secretary was strangely embarrassed.

'You have not shown all,' said the governor, sternly. 'What is it you have kept back?'

Then the secretary said: 'It is nothing but a little child's letter—I thought I would not bother you with it.'

The governor was interested. A child's letter—what could it be about? Such a thing had never happened before.

'A child's letter! Let me see it,' said the governor; and, although his voice was harsh, somewhat of a tender light came into his eyes.

'Tis nothing but a scrawl,' explained the secretary, 'and it comes from the prisoner's child—Monckton's little girl—Monckton, the forger, you know. Of course there's nothing in it—a mere scrawl; for the child is only five years old. But the gentleman who sends it says the child brought it to him and asked him to send it to the governor.'

The governor took the letter, and he scanned it curiously. What a wonderful letter it was, and who but a little child could have written it! Such strange hieroglyphics and crooked lines—it was a wonderful letter, as you can imagine.

But the old governor saw something more than the hieroglyphics and crooked lines and rude pencilings. He could see in and between the lines of the little child's letter a sweetness and a pathos he had never seen before, and on the crumpled sheet he found a love like the love his breaved heart had vainly yearned for, oh! so many years.

As the old governor looked upon the crumpled page, and saw and heard the pleadings of the child's letter, he thought of his own little one—God rest her innocent soul! And it seemed to him as if he could hear her dear baby voice joining with this other's in truthful pleading.

The secretary was amazed when the old governor said: 'Give me a pardon blank.' But what most amazed him was the tremulous tenderness in the old governor's voice and the mistiness behind the old governor's spectacles, as he folded the crumpled page and put it carefully in the breast-pocket of his great-coat.

'Humph!' thought the secretary, 'the old governor has a kinder heart than any of us suspected.'

When the prisoner was pardoned and came from his cell, people grasped him by the hand and said: 'We saved you.'

But the secretary knew, and the old governor, too—God bless him for human heart!—they knew that a dimpled baby hand opened those prison doors.