

in harmony toward a given end are much more effective than the same people dispersed and each laboring as a unit unrelated to the others. From this point of view the Bell Telephone Laboratories have in themselves the benefits of organization, but the gain is doubly marked, since they in turn are a working branch of a larger system, the whole of which is functioning toward a single end.

In America, the telephone is an institution of the people. Nowhere else is the service so nearly universal in the extent of territory covered, nowhere else is it so good, nowhere else is it so generally used and its use increasing so rapidly. The number of telephone calls completed last year was upward of twenty billions. Even at this, there is no sign that we are even approaching the point of saturation in the use of the telephone. The daily telephone traffic at present represents, on an average, one call by one out of every two persons in the country, and this use will increase steadily.

To care for the demands of the future, the size and complexity of the plant of the Bell System must grow steadily. Moreover, it is our ideal to work for constant improvement in apparatus, in methods, and therefore in service, until in the ultimate, any subscriber can reach any other subscriber, even if thousands of miles away, as readily and promptly as though he were in an adjoining room.

The future possibilities of the telephone appeal to the imagination. Growth will always bring new problems as it has in the past—problems as numerous and vital as at any period in our development. The multiple switchboard, the underground cable, the long overland toll cable, the carrier current systems, are our answers today to the demand for telephone service. We smile as we view a little fifty line switchboard of 1880 in the light of the 10,000 line board of today, but a steadily increasing demand means that we are even now in the midst of rapid progress. Increases in the size of the telephone plant