The Romance of Our News Supply.

BY WILLIAM G. FITZGERALD.

NE almost despairs of conveying, in a single article, an adequate idea of the fascinating romance of the news supply to this country. When one of our dashing war correspondents, fired with feverish enthusiasm, performs a feat that astonishes Europe, or when cricket lovers are enabled to follow, almost over by over, Stoddart's Antipodean innings, then, indeed, the public appreciate the marvels of modern journalism. For the rest, it is mere exemplification of the aphorism that familiarity breeds contempt ; or at least, indifference.

I can hardly do better than commence with a brief description of the system of ocean telegraphy, whereby news is transmitted from the uttermost ends of the earth. I must also acknowledge my indebtedness to Sir John Pender, G.C.M.G., M.P., who personally gave me much assistance. Here is given a reproduction from a photograph of the original message sent over the first Atlantic cable, the day after the cable was laid, August 17th, 1858. It is from the Cunard agent to the headquarters of his company in England, announcing that the mail steamers, *Europa* and *Arabia*, had been in collision, but that both ships and passengers were safe. This cable was never opened for public business, although 732 messages were sent through it with much difficulty.

Within the brief period of thirty years, 152,000 miles of cable have been laid on the beds of ocean and sea, at a cost of about forty millions sterling. The most important system is that known as the Eastern Telegraph Company, presided over by Sir John Pender. This company own 51,325 miles of cable, and their actual capital represents something like £15,000,000 sterling. The staff at home and abroad, exclusive of messengers and servants, number 1,790, besides the 600 men who are employed on the fleet of nine cable-repairing ships.

The Eastern and its allied companies have 124 stations in various parts of the world, and carry 2,100,000 messages per annum. At Porthcurnow, near Penzance, is the training school for operators, who, when properly qualified, are drafted to the various stations. While no probationer is sent to Aden, unless he volunteers to go, and Accra, on the West Coast of Africa, is a sort of white man's grave, there is a perfect crowd of applicants for posts at the station of Carcavellos, near Lisbon. The Eastern Telegraph Station at this place is a magnificent old château, purchased from the Marquis Morgado d'Alagoa ; it is most beautifully situated, and the staff attend to the vineyards

Atlantic Telegraph Company.

Valentia Station.

Received per the Atlantic Telegraph Company, the following Message, this 17th *day of* Augst 1858 Tuesday

Commenced 12 56
Finished 1 21
Recd by Lundy & Brill

Ward Whitehouse Mr Cunard wishes telegraph McIver Europa collision Arabia put into St Johns no lives lost will you do it to stay anxiety now arrival
De Santy

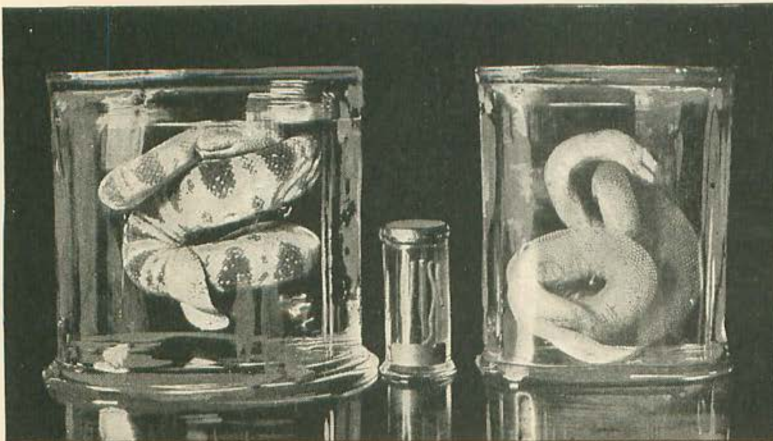
FIRST MESSAGE CABLED ACROSS THE ATLANTIC.

in their spare time, the produce being sold every season to a firm of London wine merchants. During 1894, for example, the produce was 1,528 gallons, which realized 687,000 reis.

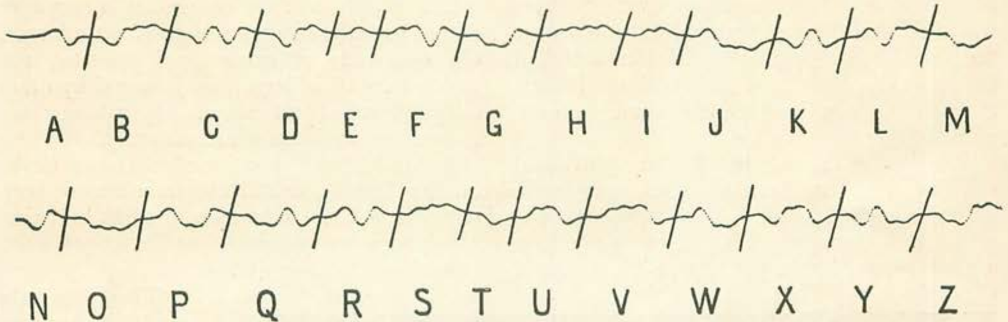
I am assured that the cable between Lands End and Lisbon gives more trouble than any other, owing to the frequent breakages at such great depths as 3,000 fathoms. The Eastern maintenance bill, by the way, is between £80,000 and £100,000 a year. I should mention that the cable varies in thickness, the shore end weighing, perhaps, four tons to the mile, while the weight of that part which swings across valleys in the bed of the deep sea averages but thirty hundredweight to the mile.

MARINE GROWTHS—FOUND ON A CABLE "FAULT."

The enemies of the cable are many and various. Sometimes a shark will bite at it savagely, leaving a few teeth in the coating as a memento of the encounter. During repairing operations in the Red Sea, the grapnels brought up a whale's skeleton weighing a ton or so. Then there are ships' anchors, submarine volcanoes, erratic currents, and continuous friction to contend with. The most successful and persistent enemy, however, was until recently the Teredo boring worm, some specimens of which are shown in a bottle between the snakes. I show these snakes as *bonâ-fide* sea-serpents, found coiled round the cable. How these reptiles came to be at the bottom of the sea at all has not transpired; which makes the matter the more interesting. I also reproduce a photograph of some marine growths of fairy-like beauty found upon a cable "fault" in the Straits of Malacca. Even the Teredo worm has now been baffled by the use of brass ribbon. The fact of a breakage is very easily discovered, but the way in which the spot is localized is simply marvellous. I cannot possibly describe the technical routine; let it suffice to say that the galvanometer test is applied, and then a cable-ship is dispatched to within perhaps a few hundred yards of the actual breakage, when she uses her grapnels until the broken lengths are brought up. Before the final splice is made, messages are sent from the ship in mid-ocean to the nearest shore station. On certain occasions, cable messages are interpreted at the receiving - station by means of a brilliant spark which plays along a scale; but almost


SOME ENEMIES OF THE CABLE.

every message flashed from continent to continent is now recorded by that wondrous instrument known as the "syphon recorder," invented by Lord Kelvin. The principal parts of this instrument are a light rectangular coil of silk-covered wire and a powerful magnet. The coil is suspended between the poles of the magnet, so that when excited by the electric current from the cable it swings on a vertical axis. Its movements are recorded on a paper ribbon drawn at a uniform speed before the point of a fine glass syphon, no thicker than a human hair, which conducts a stream of ink from a reservoir on to the paper ribbon. The marking end of the syphon responds to and multiplies every movement of the coil, leaving on the ribbon an ink trail, which is an exact and permanent record of the movements of the coil under the influence of the currents from the cable, but which the uninitiated might mistake for the trail of a partially disabled blue-bottle that had only just escaped an inky grave. My meaning will be better understood on glancing at the cable alphabet which is reproduced here. The syphon records from 250 to 300 letters per minute.



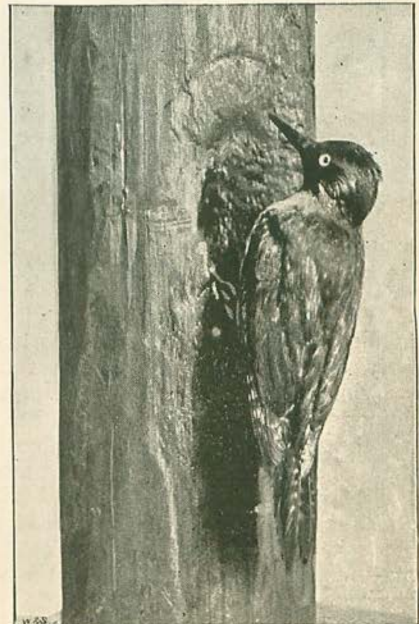
THE CABLE ALPHABET.

Perhaps no single telegraph system passes through such diverse countries as that of the Indo-European Telegraph Company. This line extends from London to Lowestoft; then it dips under the sea to Emden, on the German coast, whence it passes through Germany to the Russian frontier. From this point, the wire passes by way of Warsaw, Rowno, Odessa, the Caucasus, and Tiflis to the confines of Persia, and again by Tauris to Teheran, where it joins the Indian Government line, which runs from the Persian capital to Bushire, on the Persian Gulf. From the last-named town wires run through Beloochistan, completing the route by connecting up at Kurrachee.

This great line obviously has much to contend with. Flocks of wild geese fly against it on the snow-swept steppes of Russia; nomad tribes of the Caucasian districts make firewood of the poles; and the unscrupulous inn-keepers of Georgia will deliberately cause faults in the wires, in order to create a boom in the post-horse trade.

It will interest sportsmen to learn that "grouse protectors," or rattling sheets of tin, have to be hung on some of the telegraph wires on the new West Highland Railway, near Crianlarich. The noise made by these "protectors" warns the birds of a danger, and prevents them from hurling themselves in full flight against the pitiless wires.

In the accompanying illustration, an enemy of the Post Office telegraphs is depicted *flagrante delicto*. Here we see a small



WOODPECKER ATTACKING A TELEGRAPH POLE.

section of a Norway fir telegraph pole, three years old and deeply creosoted, and with a green woodpecker mounted near a big hole in the side. The story, as told me by Mr. J. C. Lamb, the courteous Assistant Secretary of the General Post Office, is as follows :—

"The pole stood at Shipston-on-Stour, and was perfectly sound and hard. It was 7¼in. in diameter at the point attacked by the bird, and the hole was 6½in. deep, with an oval opening 4in. high, by 3in. broad. Many other poles in the vicinity were similarly attacked, and, of course, they had to be removed lest they should topple over in the first high wind. One of the woodpeckers was shot, and then stuffed and mounted near the hole. It is thought that the bird attacked the pole in the hope of finding insects therein, being misled by the humming of the wires."

Practically the whole of the provincial work of the great London news agencies is done through the Post Office, where there is a special department for it. I reproduce here a view of the News Gallery at the General Post Office, which is simply bewildering to the ordinary person, owing to the ceaseless clatter and whir of the instruments. Under normal conditions, the number of telegraphists on duty in the news division varies from fourteen between eight and nine o'clock in the morning, to about 140 between six and eight o'clock in the evening, when the bulk of the newspaper work is dealt with. At 10 a.m. the staff numbers about forty, and at 2 p.m. about ninety.

THE NEWS GALLERY AT THE GENERAL POST OFFICE.

There are twenty-three news circuits, and by an elaborate system of classification a vast number of messages are dispatched with surprisingly little trouble, the rate of speed varying from 300 to 450 words per minute. At each circuit in the busy news division there is a Wheatstone Automatic Transmitter, through which paper ribbon, prepared by pneumatic perforating instruments, is passed by clock-work. There are fifty-five perforating instruments, each capable of punching eight ribbons simultaneously. Each of these eight ribbons can be run through several automatic transmitters; and in this way, one slip, passing successively through four transmitters, might supply sixteen provincial newspaper offices with the same message in two minutes. On occasions of exceptional pressure, the punching staff is largely augmented by other telegraphists; and about 515 ribbons are sometimes prepared simultaneously.

I should have mentioned that the clerks in the Intelligence Department also keep registers of the clients of the news agencies, which registers are altered at Christmas, when annual contracts expire.

The whole world is focused, so to speak, on an unpretentious building in the Old Jewry; this is Reuter's Agency, whose name is indeed a household word. Baron de Reuter, then plain Mr., made his first important *coup* by reporting the announcement which electrified Europe on January 1st, 1859, when the Emperor Napoleon III. made use of the following ominous and threatening words to the Austrian Ambassador: "I regret that my relations with your Government are not as good as formerly; but I beg you to inform the Emperor, your August Master, that my personal sentiments towards him have undergone no change." The despatch containing this message was not at first credited, but confirmation soon came, and Reuter's had the honour of foreshadowing to the world the beginning of the great struggle that ended at Solferino.

When President Abraham Lincoln was shot by Wilkes Booth, on the night of April 14th, 1865, Atlantic cables were not working, consequently the mail steamers were the only means of quick communication between the United States and this country. All that night Reuter's agent waited for the announcement of Lincoln's death, which was known to be imminent. The President passed away at 7.30 next morning, and at that hour, too, a great steamer was leaving for England. Feeling that the occasion called for special measures, the energetic agent hired a fast tug and pursued the departing steamer until he was near enough to cast on her deck a tin canister containing the mournful tidings. This was the only intimation of Lincoln's death received by the mail.

In the early days of this world-renowned news agency, incoming Atlantic mail steamers were met by swift yachts off the extreme south-western coast of Ireland. Despatches inclosed in tin cans of special construction were then thrown overboard by the officers of the steamer, and picked up by the yachts, after which the messages were conveyed with all possible expedition to the nearest telegraph station for transmission to London. To still further expedite the receipt of this news, Mr. Reuter obtained the construction of a telegraph line from Cork to Crookhaven, a long stretch of wild, rough country, which would otherwise have had to be traversed by coach. This arrangement proved of the utmost value during the American Civil War.

The moment a telegram from the cable offices, or other sources, is received at Reuter's, it is registered in a book by the timekeeper, who sits in a box at the foot of the stairs leading to the editorial department. The message is then passed on to the senior editor on duty, who knows precisely what to do with it. It may be satisfactory or doubtful, inadequate, or unsuitable for publication. In the case of a doubtful message, the editor keeps it back and probably cables for confirmation to half-a-dozen different centres. Ordinarily, messages are immediately transcribed in manifold, one copy being placed on the editor's file for reference, while the other is taken in hand by an operator, who dispatches its contents by the "piano transmitter"—of which more hereafter—to the offices of the great London newspapers, all of which receive it *simultaneously*, set up in printed columns by a miracle of latter-day electrical mechanism.

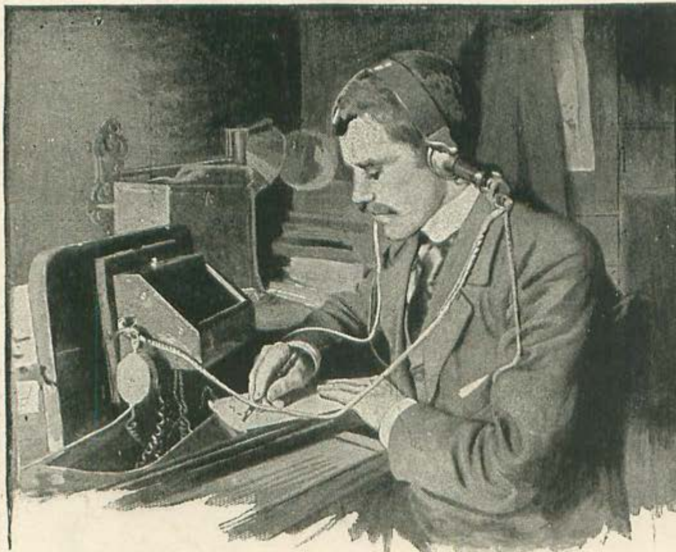
The re-transmission of messages is left entirely to the senior editor's discretion. He knows perfectly well that news of such an event as the loss of H.M.S. *Victoria* must be dispatched all over the world; while dicta on bi-metallism are of special interest to India and the United States. As well as receiving news from their own column-printing machines (actuated by the "piano transmitter" at Reuter's), newspapers also receive the same despatches by hand. For this purpose the famous agency keep a staff of about sixty-five boys in uniform, who come on duty at various times simply because the work goes on night and day. These messengers are paid extra if they run: for example, the office of the *Morning Post*, at the corner of Wellington Street, Strand, is supposed to be half an hour's walk from Reuter's, whereas at a run the return journey is supposed to take but forty-five minutes. Times and distances are regulated with great nicety; and cycles are used for the conveyance of messages to far-off newspapers like the *Pall Mall Gazette*, in Charing Cross Road. In the picture on the next page the chief of the messenger staff is seen handing despatches to one of the corps of cyclists.

THE EDITOR'S ROOM AT REUTER'S.

Some idea of the enormous amount of money spent in the collection and transmission of news may be realized if we take the Deeming trial case at Melbourne. During the three weeks of this trial, Reuter's agent cabled whole columns of the *Times* at 3s. 4d. per word. This rate has, I believe, been since reduced. At any rate, the "special" far exceeded his limit of £200 per day.

THE CYCLIST MESSENGERS.

Not the least interesting feature to be seen at Reuter's is the Paris Telephone Room, shown in our illustration. In this strangely silent, padded chamber, the operator sits before the sensitive plate, with a pair of telephones affixed to his ears helmet-wise. He is seen taking down messages in shorthand as fast as his Paris colleague can speak, but he himself also dictates messages into the instrument in a marvellously articulate voice. The first intimation of the assassination of President Carnot was received at this instrument. As one might imagine, strange and comical misunderstandings sometimes occur in these *vivâ voce* messages. The Paris stenographers were once told, as distinctly as might be, that the Metropolitan Police had issued an order for muzzling stray dogs *(chiens errants)*. What they wrote down, however, was *chats et rats* (cats and rats), and this was printed in the French newspapers. On another occasion, on being apprised of the fact that the French smack *L'Aurore (Dawn)* had been spoken off Scarborough, the Paris stenographers reported for the satisfaction of French fishermen that *L'Horreur* — possibly the latest thing in sea-serpents—had been seen in British waters.



AT THE PARIS TELEPHONE.

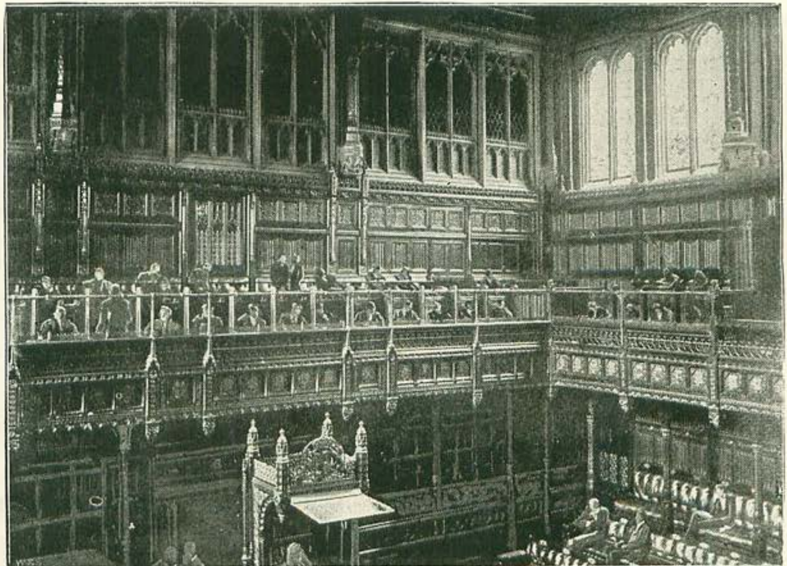
Among the many other remarkable Reuter despatches may be mentioned the news of the disastrous battle of Isandlwana, when Lord Chelmsford's camp was rushed by 15,000 Zulus, and a large part of the British force cut to pieces. By order of the then Governor of the Cape, Sir Bartle Frere, the message was conveyed by mail steamer to St. Vincent—there being no cable to South Africa at that time—and telegraphed thence, in a mysterious combination of Latin, French, and German words, to Reuter's head-quarters, where, although received at 1 a.m., it was translated and pre-

pared for the morning papers. Then, again, Reuter's agent at Durban walked into the telegraph office in that town one night, and wired to London the ignominious details of Majuba Hill. Surely there is something impressive in the spectacle of a man calmly sending off messages that are destined to stir a nation from end to end.

I will now proceed to touch on the system of the Exchange Telegraph Company, so well known by their wonderful tape machines. The head-quarters are at Cornhill, while the chief editorial office is in the Haymarket. This company started in 1872 with 200 machines, costing £10 each, and licensed by the Postmaster-General. The tape machine is an American invention, and at the time of its introduction into this country there were no fewer than 1,500 similar instruments at work in New York. The director of the company, Captain Davies, told me many entertaining stories about his former fierce struggles with the Post Office and the committee of the Stock Exchange, but they would scarcely be relevant to my subject. And yet both of these institutions receive royalties from the company, the one for concessions granted, and the other for the privilege of quoting its prices to hundreds of subscribers. The system of the Exchange Telegraph Company may be briefly described as the collection of news from about 1,200 correspondents, and its dissemination in classes to newspapers, clubs, exchanges, offices, and private individuals, who may take and pay for as much or as little as they please.

The Haymarket branch is the great receiving house for news. Hence come news telegrams on every conceivable subject from all parts of the kingdom; law reports from the office in the crypt of the Law Courts, and Parliamentary news from the Reporters' Gallery at the House of Commons. Here is a view of the Reporters' Gallery, with the representatives of our great newspapers hard at work taking down speeches and descriptions of "scenes," the notes being subsequently transcribed in a rather dismal-looking room provided with seven or eight big tables, writing materials, cane-bottomed chairs, and electric lights. The Exchange Telegraph Company have a Post Office wire direct from the Gallery at the House of Commons to their Haymarket branch; and in our next illustration the chief editor, Mr. John Boon, a veteran journalist, is seen dictating the detail of the Budget to an operator, who sits at the "piano transmitter," and who is causing hundreds of wonderful little machines in clubs all over London to simultaneously click out, on their paper tapes, neatly printed accounts of Sir William Harcourt's latest fiscal scheme. I may say that one transmitter could actuate thousands of subscribers' machines, at any distance, were it not that the Post Office vetoes a wider extension of the system.

The tape machines have clock-work mechanism, but their type wheels are rotated by electricity, and controlled by the transmitting apparatus; they cost from £8 to £20 each, and are made in lots of fifty, at the Exchange Company's works in Devonshire Street, Bishopsgate. They print at the rate of from thirty-five to forty words per minute, and some of them print about 4,000,000 words without needing repair. Perhaps the most astonishing thing about this system is that any number of tape machines can be

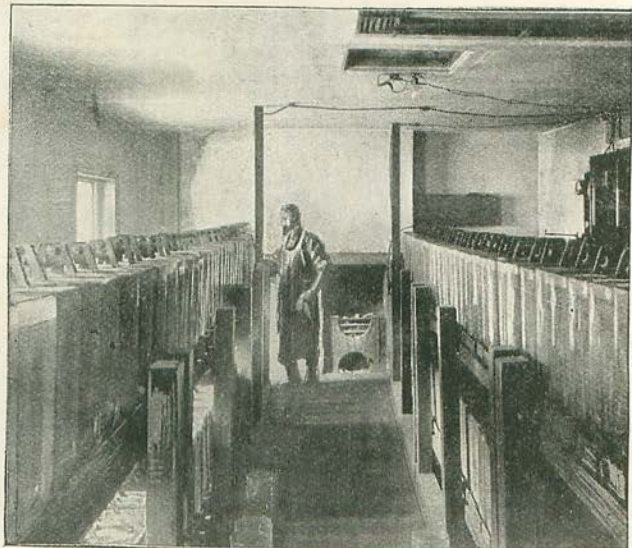


THE REPORTERS' GALLERY AT THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

DICTATING THE BUDGET.

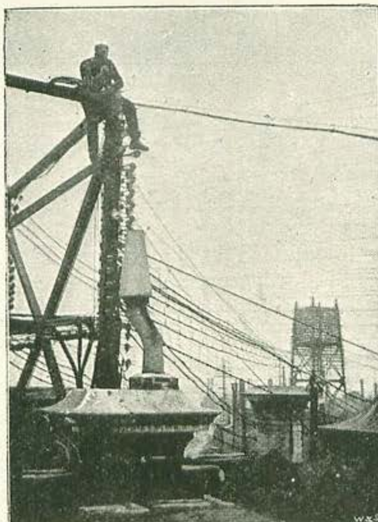
operated from a single transmitter, even though those machines be scattered all over the Metropolis.

Thinking it would interest lovers of statistics, I induced Mr. Higgins, the company's electrical engineer, to prepare for me a few figures respecting the instruments. It seems that 13,557 miles of paper tape were used last year, besides 590 miles of the broad paper band used in the column-printing machines at the newspaper offices, the sum total being equal to 18,867 miles of tape. The column printer is also controlled by the transmitter, and can record 9,000 words per day; it was suggested by Colonel Hozier, of Lloyd's, who pointed out how awkward it was to read long and important messages from the tape. The company used to generate their own electricity, but the power at the Haymarket branch is now rented from an electric light corporation. The accumulators at Cornhill, however, are still charged on the premises by a Pelton water-wheel; and a view of one of the battery rooms is the next illustration. Last Boat Race Day the Exchange Company laid a cable under the river, and had twelve temporary telegraph stations all along the course, so that the result of the race was signalled to London, and re-transmitted to about 800 subscribers within *three seconds* of the judge's decision. Even this enterprise, however, is eclipsed by the ingenious notion of Mr. Saunders, the late M.P. for Walworth, and founder of the Central News Agency, who, when the University Boat Race aroused far more enthusiasm than it does now, procured a concession from the Cambridge University, whereby he was enabled to place a monstrous drum of four and a half miles of wire in the stem of the Cambridge steamer, and pay it out as the little vessel proceeded from Putney to Mortlake with the racing crews. By this means, minutely descriptive reports could be dispatched continuously to the Metropolis. It was Mr. Saunders, too, who caused temporary telegraph wire and Morse instruments to be set up all along the route followed by the procession to St. Paul's Cathedral, on the occasion of the Thanksgiving Service after the recovery of the Prince of Wales from typhoid fever. Mr. Saunders knew full well that the streets would be impassable, and he wanted a descriptive report of the scene *en route*. This is the only occasion on which the tap of a Morse instrument has been heard within the walls of the Cathedral itself.


ONE OF THE BATTERY ROOMS.

Winter is a bad time for the Exchange Telegraph Company's tape machines, for not only does the wind then blow the wires together, but the stout telephone wires of phosphor bronze are apt to break beneath a load of snow and fall on them. The accompanying view of "overhead London," taken above the smoke-line, shows one of the linesmen engaged in his perilous duty of repairing the wires on the roof of Bartholomew House. Altogether, about 750 tape and telephone instruments are worked by the wires attached to this frame.

The extraordinary pains taken by representatives of news agencies to outwit their rivals and be first in the field are well worthy of note. At by-elections attempts are made to introduce a confederate into the counting-room, who shall announce, by secret signals from the window, the name of the successful candidate. This move was once found out at Walsall, so the window was carefully guarded. Not to be beaten, one enterprising journalist ascended the stairs, hammered the door, and roared "Fire"! In the panic that followed, he received from his fellow-worker inside, not only the result of the election, but a bundle of 200 other telegrams wherewith to block the wire against all comers after the dispatch of the message. In fact, it has often happened that the result of an election has been wired to London and sent as an item of news back to the constituency whence it came just as the Mayor was introducing the successful candidate to the people from the Town Hall balcony.



"OVERHEAD LONDON."

Another agent disguised himself as a beggar, stood beneath the window of the counting-room, and received from his confederate above—ostensibly as charity—a penny, whereon was scratched the initials of the successful candidate. Yet another artful pressman caused his rival to be regarded with loathing by both parties, pointing him out to the Conservative agent as a Gladstonian emissary, and to the Liberal agent as an unscrupulous Tory.

"Tapping" racing news that is passing over Post Office wires is all but impossible now; but a racing message may be stopped in the interest of a certain person if that person will but penetrate the gutta-percha covering and hang a piece of copper wire on the unprotected line. I am told that during the Egyptian campaign officers complained that the heliograph signals—mere flashes of light though they are—were read and translated by a "special," who promptly made copy of them and wired them home to his newspaper. This correspondent was observed at Suakin standing on a sandy hillock and watching the intermittent flashes playing afar off on shady spots.

On Derby Day, probably 150 pressmen and forty Post Office clerks are actually engaged in reporting the race, there being eight special wires from the course, and several temporary telegraph offices established in vans, besides the central post office behind the grand stand. The next illustration shows the racing intelligence department at the Exchange Company's Haymarket office. The result of a race is just being received by the operator in the foreground, who is taking it down on "flimsy" as fast as the Morse instrument taps out the letters. Simultaneously, the operator at the "piano transmitter" is dispatching the news to hundreds of clubs and newspapers in London; and the man at the telephone is speaking to the Brighton office. I should mention that every telegraphist perfectly understands the mysterious tapping language of the instrument.

Carrier or homing pigeons are sometimes employed to convey the result of a race, but they are not to be relied upon. Sometimes the bird will make for the nearest tree and try to peck the "flimsy" message from its leg; and at the Waterloo coursing meeting—for which pigeons are hired at a guinea each—it often happens that a man armed with a rifle has to be stationed at the home cote to shoot at and bring down sundry ornithological messengers, who are probably circling and manœuvring above in a most exasperating manner. Pigeons were successfully employed, however, when Captain Webb swam across the Channel. Two baskets, each containing

RECEIVING THE RESULT OF A RACE.

correspondents figure a lighthouse-keeper, wool-stapler, publican, prison warder, tailor, organist, and Government spy. This latter agency has to deposit £500 with the Post Office in order to cover the cost of all telegrams sent to them during the twenty-four hours: for the correspondents, instead of paying for the news-telegrams they send, merely hand in a filled-in form giving the number of words and other details. The face value of these forms is assessed daily, and a Post Office bill sent in for instant settlement.

ten birds, were taken in the boat that accompanied the swimmer, and each pigeon carried a message of about 400 words.

There seems to be no end to the wonderful side of this subject. In the accompanying illustration Mr. Higgins, the electrician of the Exchange Telegraph, is seen following on the tape a description of a big match at Lord's. The operator actually on the ground is transmitting the report to the Haymarket branch, whence it is simultaneously despatched to all the clubs and newspapers. No expense is spared on our news supply. When the Central News representative interviewed at Tokio an officer who had been in the thick of the famous battle of the Yalu River, the mere telegraphing of his descriptive despatch cost £115.

When local pressmen are not available as correspondents for the great London news agencies, the latter appoint schoolmasters or clergymen, many of whom, however, have strange notions as to the intrinsic value of news. In the Press Association's list of

Many are the excellent stories told by the managers of news agencies anent Mr. Gladstone, whose disappearance from public life, by the way, meant a loss of £2,000 a year to the Press Association. About twelve years ago Mr. Gladstone was going from London to Edinburgh, accompanied by a "P.A. Special," who travelled in the same carriage. When the train reached Preston several local magnates were found to be in waiting, being desirous of presenting an address with the

FOLLOWING A MATCH AT LORD'S.

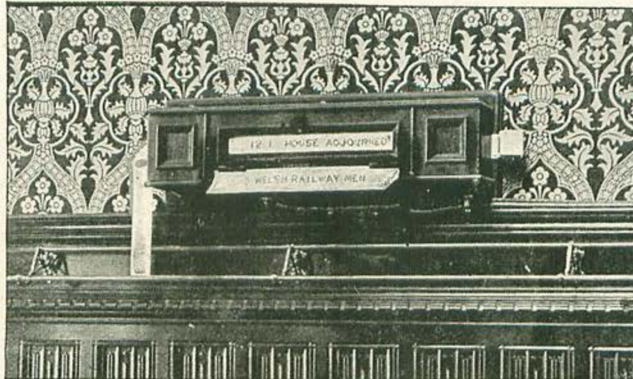
THE SMOKING-ROOM AT THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

object of eliciting a short speech from the great statesman on "Protection and Free Trade." The moment Mr. Gladstone commenced to reply, however, the train started, and the boarding party beat an undignified retreat. Nothing daunted, the right hon. gentleman turned to the astonished reporter sitting near him, and after thanking him for the address, proceeded to make an important statement on a somewhat uninteresting subject, as the train sped swiftly through the country. The journalist put one-third of a column of matter on the wire when he reached Edinburgh, much to the subsequent amazement of the Preston correspondents of the big dailies, who declared that no such speech had been made.

On another occasion, in 1880, when Mr. Gladstone was in the height of his glory, and was followed about the country by a nimble squadron of ninety reporters, the great Liberal leader was announced to speak in an immense temporary wooden structure at West Calder. The Central News people had arranged for a special train to run from Edinburgh to West Calder and back again, in order to convey the reporter and his eight columns or so of copy in hot haste to the telegraph office. "I'll run the enjun richt oop to the hall," remarked the local station-master confidentially to the Central News man, "and the driver shall whustle and whustle till ye come out."

This plan was faithfully carried out, with the result that Mr. Gladstone was startled and disconcerted in the middle of a fine burst of eloquence by the piercing and sustained shriek of a locomotive, apparently at very close quarters. Loud cries of "Shame!" arose, but the deafening sound did not cease until the reporter rushed out and waved his copy triumphantly. The funniest part of the whole affair, though, was that next morning the indignant Liberal papers appeared with aggressive head-lines telling of "Scandalous Tory Tactics."

The last two illustrations given here show the smoking-room of the House of Commons, where is now fixed the Exchange Telegraph Company's annunciator, whereby legislators sitting at their ease in this luxurious apartment can tell at a glance what is going on in the House itself. It is said that the party Whips regard this ingenious instrument with marked disfavour, since it obviates the necessity of frequent visits to the Legislative Chamber.



THE NEW ANNUNCIATOR IN THE SMOKING-ROOM.