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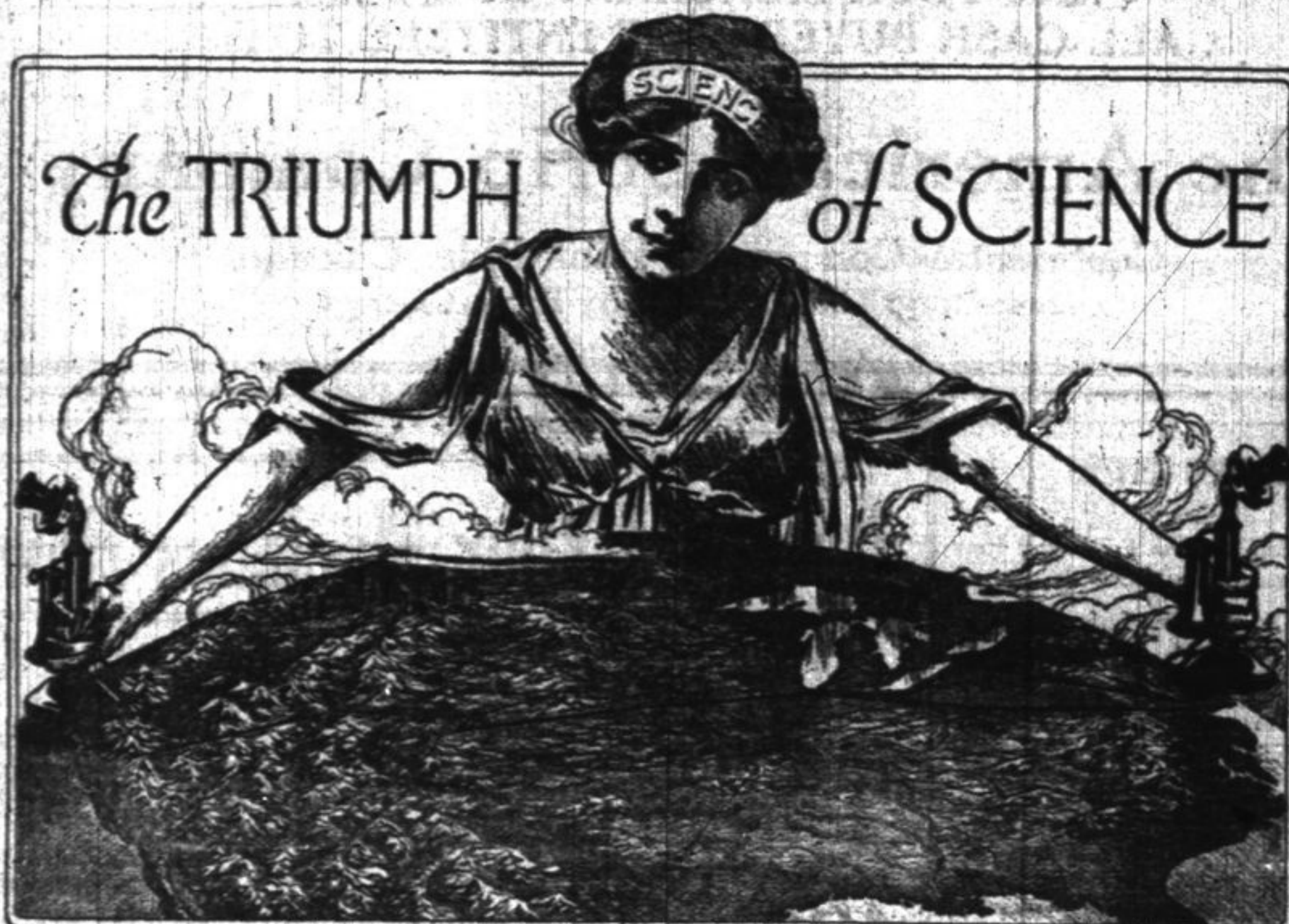


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**T**HIS busy, progressive nation is today at the dawn of a new era of commercial and social development. The means by which the human voice, with its slightest inflections and indications of personality, can be carried across the continent *instantly*, have been provided. Talking by telephone from New York to San Francisco is now an accomplished fact.

The celebration of this latest and greatest triumph in the art of telephony has just taken place. Within a short time the public will have ready for its use, the product of American brains, American initiative and American scientific and technical skill, a transcontinental telephone service, the equal of which is not even approached in all the other nations of the world.

It is a splendid scientific achievement of the very highest character. The power that sends the human voice over the telephone is scarcely greater than that of a breath, yet the means have been provided by which this tiny, almost imaginary impulse, made up of as many as 2,000 separate vibrations a second, can be picked up by a delicate instrument, conserved over a distance of 3,400 miles, and reproduced perfectly and *instantly* across the continent. The human voice has been made to travel as fast as light, faster than sound unaided by technical apparatus; indeed, it rivals **THOUGHT** even, in the swiftness of its flight.

The imagination can but feebly grasp, much less attempt to measure, the far-reaching significance of such a tremendous accomplishment. One hundred million people will have for their daily use a system of communication that knows no East, no West, no North, no South. Dialects, provincialisms, sectional prejudices, must eventually yield to the closer union, the better under-

standing, the more intimate comradeship that the human voice establishes. The *neighborliness* of a whole nation is advanced by the brushing away of the physical restraints of centuries.

This contribution to the future happiness and prosperity of a more closely united people has not been brought about, however, by the overcoming of a few isolated, concrete difficulties. Its success has depended upon the exercise of the highest engineering and technical skill and the solution was found only in the cumulative effect of improvements great and small, in telephone, transmitter, line, cable, switchboard, and every other piece of apparatus or plant required in the transmission of speech.

In this work the experimental and research department of the Bell System of which this Company is a part, has been engaged ever since the telephone became a commercial possibility, less than 40 years ago. With no traditions to follow and no experience to guide, this department, which is now directed by a staff of over 550 engineers and scientists, including former professors, post graduate students, scientific investigators—the graduates of 140 universities—has created an entirely new art—the art of telephony, and has given to the people of this country a telephone service that has no equal.

It has required vast expenditures of money and immense concentration of effort, but these have been justified by results of immeasurable benefit to the public. The transcontinental telephone line, 3,400 miles long, joining the Atlantic and Pacific, is part of the Bell System of 21,000,000 miles of wire connecting 9,000,000 telephone stations, located everywhere throughout the United States. Composing this system are the American Telephone and Telegraph Company and Associated Companies and connecting companies, giving universal service to 100,000,000 people.

Truly, This is The Triumph of Science



Chicago Telephone Company

Two men volunteered to take on Tom Kane's burro and make the trip. "And while you're in Silent Valley," Drake said, yielding to a sudden inspiration, "take this \$20 and get some grub for the camp."

"There's still some locked up in the cook house," said another. "It's old Tom Kane's lookout, so we didn't exactly feel like taking it."

Drake turned to Tubbs quickly. "Distribute the food as far as it will go," he said.

Tubbs looked suddenly serious. "I guess you better leave that to me," he said in a low voice. "I know where it will do the most good." He winked slyly.

Meantime John Dorr, Everett and Tom Kane were spending long hours in discussing what was to be done to save the "Master Key" to Ruth. Tom once more went over the exact situation at the mine and asserted that unless prompt measures were taken not only would there be actual distress, but likely rioting.

"You know some of the worst ones hang with Wilkerson," he said grimly, "and they might at any time take it into their heads to do a little dynamiting. Dynamiting is mighty dangerous stuff around several thousand dollars' worth of machinery, and if they blew up the workings there wouldn't be any mine left, you see."

"I see," said Everett at last. "Not having the papers, I can't put this deal through the way I want to eventually. But something must be done on the spot."

"In the way of money?" asked Kane harshly.

"Precisely," Everett assented with all cheerfulness. "Now I'm going to loan John Dorr here \$5,000 today for the 'Master Key' mine. Then—"

John shook his head. "That isn't business-like," he protested.

Everett fixed his keen eyes on him. "Any reason why I shouldn't loan money to Miss Ruth Gallon's manager and guards?" Any reason why you, looking after her interests, should refuse help in fixing up her affairs?"

Dorr flushed. "I didn't mean it that way. It seems as if I kind of messed things up myself, and I—I thought I might get 'em set right by myself."

"You called on me, and I'm the doctor," said Everett authoritatively. He pulled out his wallet and commenced counting out bills. "I came prepared for this, for I thought there might be an emergency."

"But who will take charge of it? Who will go to the mine?"

The broker laughed at him. "Not you. You'd be in a fight in three minutes, especially if Wilkerson turned up. Tom Kane is our man." He turned on the old man abruptly. "Will you take this money and go?"

The old cook stared at the crisp bills and then at Dorr. "I ain't handled paper worth that much lately," he remarked. "But if you want me to go in there and feed them people and get 'em back to work and keep things going till John can fix things up here I'll go."

On his way to the mine Harry Wilkerson's courage, newly fired by a last conversation with Jean Darnell, commenced to ebb.

Drake and Tubbs received him with unaffected relief. A few words sufficed to make the status of affairs plain. Tubbs looked at his superior with strained anxiety in his bleared eyes. Dull and sodden with liquor as he was, he understood perfectly that everything depended on the next few days. The engineer had lived in mining camps and on the desert all his life, and he knew the passions engendered by the arid mountains and the

"The sooner you let the miners know and get things settled the better."

Wilkerson licked his dry lips. The battle was on. He broke the silence by saying gruffly, "Call 'em up here, Bill!"

Nothing loath, Tubbs went out on the porch, and his hoarse tones resounded through the little valley. Instantly men appeared from doorways, came from a dozen places in response to that call. And women, clutching their children, peered out to see what was a'the air.

When the men were gathered before him Wilkerson stepped forward and commenced to speak. He could not break their sullen silence, and after a few words of generalities, he mastered his courage and shouted: "I am the owner of this mine! I have the deeds right here!"

The effect of this was far other than he had expected. Not a murmur came from the still, motionless throng. It was as if they had not heard him. In a lower tone he repeated it, "I am the owner of the 'Master Key' mine and all that goes with it!"

He held up the papers, and Bill Tubbs looked at them and gravely nodded his head, as much as to say that he had inspected them and could vouch for their authenticity. Still no sound from the miners.

There is a quality in the silence of the crowd of earnest men that is more questioning than any word could be. The men who had worked and toiled for old Tom Gallon, who had been deceived and baffled, who had had their loyalty tested to the utmost, now demanded through their imperious silence that Wilkerson open up his mind to them. If he was indeed the owner of the "Master Key," what did he intend to do?

"You'd better say some more quickly," warned Drake in a low tone. And Wilkerson, completely bewildered, set the match to the powder. He stepped forward with as ugly a look as he could assume and cried: "Now tell me what you want?"

Instantly the air was filled with roars of rage and disappointment.

Fifteen minutes later Harry Wilkerson was sweating within the cabin. With a shaking hand he poured himself out a tumbler of Tubbs' whisky. He had promised the miners' back pay, steady work, full wages and food. He must make good, and he did not know how.

"Tubbs," he said sharply, "you must find out what men we can trust. Say nothing, but get all the information you can. I'll make it worth the while of the men who'll stick by me."

Again the engineer chuckled fatuously. "They'll all stick by ye," he said sagely, "so long as ye pay 'em like you said ye would."

It was late in the afternoon when Tom Kane appeared on the mill wagon. The driver had already informed him of how affairs were going, and the cook wasted no time. He climbed down from the high seat, jerked his battered case out of the wagon and made straight for his shanty. Within five minutes he had divested himself of his black clothes and donned his official overalls and apron. Then he appeared on the porch as calm and unconcerned as though he had not been away.

In no time at all a couple of dozen miners had gathered to shake hands and swap news. Naturally their biggest item was Wilkerson's presumption of ownership.

At this Tom Kane laughed scornfully. He derided the papers, evinced the miners for being fools easily taken in and stated in set terms that he, Tom Kane, actually held the place of authority.

This soon came to Wilkerson's ears, and he hurried down the hill to stop what he knew to be a dangerous session. Instantly the old cook locked horns with him, pookpooked him to his face, called him names of peculiar violence and offered to fight him on any terms.

Before long the camp was in an uproar, and it was due to certain cooler heads that trouble did not ensue immediately. These men insisted that there was time to settle the dispute of ownership, forced Wilkerson to withdraw his command that Kane leave the mine instantly and managed to bring a semblance of peace out of disorder. Kane bowed his neck to the yoke of their authority, but dispatched a trusty messenger to the station with a telegram to John to come as soon as possible. Wilkerson resorted to a scene which was eventually to threaten the very existence of the "Master Key." He sent Drake south to confer with a desperado whom he knew, who could gather a band of Mexicans like himself on short notice, ready for anything that promised loot.

"Tell Jose to be here tomorrow night," he instructed him. "I'll want about twenty men well armed."

Drake rode away as from destruction, cursing the luck that had put him in the power of such a man.

In response to Kane's message John Dorr, Ruth Gallon and Everett left Beverly Hills for Silent Valley. They arrived the third day after the cook, and from the moment they were recognized the miners dropped their attitude of sullen waiting and thronged about their mistress, cheering and shaking hands. When they had got into the big house Kane arrived, apron and all, to report on the situation.

"It's come to a showdown," he remarked. "Wilkerson has several of the worthless fellows here and a lot of half breeds back in the hills. He knows I have that money of yours, and he's promised it to the Mexicans if they help him. You see, Wilkerson will keep his skirts clear that way. He can say that it was a raid by bandits."

"How soon does all this happen?" drawled John.

Kane glanced at him curiously. He understood that warning not to frighten Ruth and went on airily. "Oh, I reckon just as soon as Wilkerson gets Tubbs weaned from that bottle of his."

But when Ruth had gone to her own rooms the cook wasted no words in smoothing things over.

"You're got to act and act quick," he told John and Everett. "It ain't the time for fooling. Toubt may do the business, for those Mexicans are impatient. Remember that Wilkerson has the keys to the powder house, and he has all kinds of chance to lay his traps."

"I don't think he expected us so soon," John remarked.

"A good cook always has grub for people that drop in unexpected like," was the grim response. "Just take a peek down there now."

Through the window John saw that the camp was quietly but surely dividing into two parties. The elder miners were gathered about the cook shanty. Around the office stood a dozen or so malcontents half drunk, under the leadership of Tubbs. "No

The Old Cook Offered to Fight Him on Any Terms.

was wholly drunk, and on the porch talking to Wilkerson were a couple of Mexicans.

"It looks as if they meant to rush the camp," Dorr said thoughtfully. He proceeded to arm himself, and Everett quietly followed suit.

"I'm going to talk to the boys first," said Dorr. He left the bungalow and strode off down the hill, followed by the cook. A gun was fired up by the mine tunnel mouth.

"That's a signal that the Mexicans are making trouble," Kane shouted. "Look out for dynamite in the shaft, John!"

Without a word further Dorr leaped down from the porch of the cook shanty and started up the hill, followed by a dozen faithful supporters. Other shots were fired. Wilkerson appeared at the tunnel mouth and then vanished inside. John sprang upon the trestle and rushed after him.

Instantly a band of Mexicans materialized half way down the hill, fired a few shots and retreated. John paid no attention to them, but kept on.

Once within the tunnel he saw a faint gleam of light ahead of him. He understood that Kane was right. Wilkerson was playing a desperate game in blowing up the shaft and then in the ensuing confusion allowing the bandits to loot undisturbed.

A few yards farther on John stopped. A dark figure rushed by him toward the open air. But the little glow of light remained. For a moment Dorr hesitated, then he leaped forward and began trying to extinguish a lighted fuse.

He had almost succeeded when a bullet whizzed by him; then a second splattered up, the rock overhead. He turned and fired blindly in the direction of the shots and resumed his task. The fuse was short, but he succeeded in extinguishing it and started back. He met a fusillade of bullets. He dashed on toward the mouth of the tunnel and suddenly emerged on Wilkerson, who, not being able to see into the murk of the shaft, was firing blindly into the opening.

With a shout John leaped for the man whom he now knew to be seeking his life. Before Wilkerson could fire another shot he was caught in a mighty embrace and then began a short sharp struggle high in the air.

John Dorr for the first time in his life knew the absolute and terrific elystr for killing that sometimes comes to a man. It was either his life or Wilkerson's. And no one should interfere with his revenge. He threw himself on the man with but one object in view—to slay him bare handed.

Wilkerson fought desperately, and for the moment had the advantage. The lofty trestle was an ill place for a heavy man like Dorr to fight on, and the other's agility and lithe quickness seemed about to win when John by a sudden unexpected and desperate maneuver caught him and threw him clear into the air, breaking his clutch with a terrific blow. Then he jerked him to the edge of the trestle and flung him over.

Standing erect, John drew the air into his tortured lungs and let out a tremendous yell of triumph.

Ruth Gallon heard that barbaric yell and shuddered. Tom Kane stared upward at the figure on the trestle, and his open mouth seemed lifeless, for he, too, shared in the moment's blood lust.

And on the rocks below Wilkerson's figure sprawled grotesquely, its white and darkening face turned sightlessly to the sky.



"I guess that'll fix 'em!"

remorseless desert. What would Wilkerson do? Was he strong enough to handle these men who were ready for anything, even to bloodshed if aroused?

Wilkerson had lost his sense of fear oddly enough. As he had come into the camp a dozen miners had recognized him and scowled. He had felt their hatred, and it fed the man's sinister passion to do harm, to hurt, to destroy. Now he faced Drake and Tubbs arrogantly.

"It won't be long till those chaps find out who's the boss," he said. With a significant look at Drake he pulled out the forged deeds and handed them to Tubbs.

"Those mean that I'm legally the owner of the 'Master Key' mine," he announced.

The engineer peered at them dully. He haltingly mumbled over some of the legal phrases at the beginning, saw the names Thomas Gallon and Harry Wilkerson prominently displayed. He was impressed. He did not understand the purport of the papers. He did understand that Wilkerson was smiling with the insolence of triumph achieved. He grinned slowly and passed the papers back.

"I guess that'll fix 'em," he said huskily.

"I guess it will," was the rejoinder. Tubbs seemed thoughtful, glancing out of the window now and again. Drake voiced his feeling.