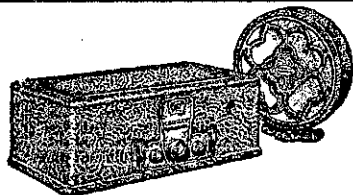


Street Lighting at Glen Falls

THE street lighting system at Glen Falls, New York, is controlled by wireless. A transmitting plant using only one wavelength is used while five receiving sets capable of picking up the transmitter's wave only respond to the signals sent out. It is necessary to operate the transmitting plant only fifteen seconds a day to illuminate a whole town.

In the power house the transmitting plant is kept, and the panel containing the equipment is accommodated with two switches, one marked "on" and the other labelled "off." The first switch sets the transmitter in operation for 5sec., while the second turns the transmitter off, but, however, it operates automatically for 10sec. The five receiving sets are installed in various parts of the town. When it is time for the lights to be extinguished the operator at the power house turns the "off" button on, and, at the proper moment the lights go out.



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Was Radio Known in Shakespeare's Day?

Views of an English Writer

NONSENSE, surely; but not from the angle taken by a writer to the Christmas issue of "World Radio." The following article from his fluent pen is both entertaining and instructive, and well worth the perusal of all interested in the greatest dramatist the world has ever known.



RIGHT at the very outset I think this question may be answered in the affirmative; for although there are no absolutely direct allusions to radio in Shakespeare's plays, there are many very significant sentences scattered through them which clearly suggest to me that the great dramatist was thoroughly familiar with radio in all its branches. I have, in fact, evolved a little theory of my own, showing how Shakespeare became an addict to wireless—a theory whose possibilities were suggested to me after a discussion I had the other day with a friend, a pro-Bacon fanatic, who pointed out to me that that delightful little oral test for sobriety which comes in Love's Labour's Lost—I refer to the word "honi orificabilitudininitibus"—can be anagrammatised into the sentence, "It is I—I, F. Bacon, author—built in it." This, my friend explained, was Bacon's cryptic method of announcing to the world that his identity as rightful author of the play was "built in" (or, as we should say, immured, or concealed) beneath this sesquipedal monstrosity.

IT is, however, no part of my present task to plunge into the Bacon-Shakespeare controversy, but it has occurred to me that if the author (whichever of the two he was) of the plays intended cryptically to convey information on one vitally important matter, he might similarly have acted with regard to another. Anyway, that is the assumption I have worked upon, and so, by means of references which may easily be interpreted to refer to radio, I have constructed the following hypothetical little story, the protagonist of which I will call Bacspeare in order to avoid treading on anybody's corns.

Bacspeare, then, like so many of us, began his radio experiences with a small, home-made crystal set. In Othello (Act V. sc. 2) he refers to "one entire and perfect chrysolite"—an obvious allusion to a particularly effective crystal he had obtained; while in "The Merchant of Venice" (Act VI. sc. 1) he makes mention of "a harmless necessary cat"—"cat," of course, being the term employed, owing to the exigencies of metre and scansion, to express the necessary (and harmless) "cats-whisker." That there were kind-hearted speculative builders in Shakespeare's day is proved by the line in "Henry VIII." Act IV. sc. 2), "Give him a little earth for charity!" obviously indicating his intention of providing for the needs of a prospective tenant with a listening set.

Subsequent trouble with his aerial ensued, for in "The Tempest" (Act I. sc. 2) he euphemistically anathematizes it as "my quaint Ariel!" I suggest that Ann Hathaway made it

"quaint" by hanging the washing on it, and so interfering (since damp clothes are conductors of electricity) with the insulation. The trouble, however, was only temporary, for later on in the same scene Prospero is made to exclaim, "It works. Come on. Thou hast done well, fine Ariel!"

At a later eriod it is obvious that Bacspeare introduced a thermionic valve into his set, and at once experienced trouble with it—his "glow-worm," as he prettily and poetically termed it. In "Hamlet" (Act I. sc. 5) we have a thinly-veiled reference to the running-down of his accumulator in the words, "The glow-worm...gins to pale his uneffectual fire," whereafter it is evident that he called in the local radio-expert to locate the fault from the line in the same play (Act II. sc. 2), "Find out... the cause of this defect," a task which I imagine the electrician carried out a la Harry Tate, for Bacspeare was assuredly alluding to the incident when he wrote (ibid., Act III. sc. 4), "This sport to have the engineer..."

Next came upon the scene that familiar "fan" friend, whom we all know so well; the fellow who always insists on "improving" our set for us, whether we want him to or not. Bacspeare's friend clearly wanted to increase the range of the set, at which the dramatist was at first manifestly delighted, since in "King John" (Act II. sc. 1) he somewhat modestly says, "I am not worth this coil that's made for me." However, he subsequently experienced difficulty with it, becoming exasperated and petulant. At least, that is how I interpret the little outburst of temper in "The Tempest" (Act I. sc. 2), displayed in the protest, "Who was so firm, so constant, that this coil would not infect his reason?"

THAT he eventually became the possessor of a thoroughly efficient and powerful set is demonstrated in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" (Act II. sc. 1), where he says "I'll put a girdle round about the earth in forty minutes!" meaning to imply, of course, that in that time he could successively pick up all the stations east and west of him, until he had completed the earth's circumference. In addition, he had similarly acquired a very satisfactory loud-speaker, as is shown by the line in "Henry VIII." (Act IV. sc. 2), "I wish no other speaker."

Such is the story I have constructed to prove Bacspeare's possession of a receiving-set, as fully equipped as anything we have to-day. Let me now go on to show what a zealous listener he was to the daily programmes. Take the Children's Hour. To what else can he have been covertly alluding in "Hamlet" (Act I. sc. 5) when he exclaims, "Oh, my prophetic soul! My uncle!" or in "A Winter's Tale" (Act IV. sc. 2), when he speaks of "songs for me and my aunts"—as clear a re-

ference to the chorus-songs which are sometimes broadcast, and in which the children listening are invited to join, as you could hope to find.

Again, I feel quite sure that Bacspeare had a B.B.C. Symphony Concert in mind when he wrote the line in "The Merry Wives of Windsor" (Act II. sc. 1), "Faith, thou hast some crotchets in thy head now!" while I am equally sure that he was voicing his disappointment over an unsuccessful attempt to broadcast the song of the private nightingale belonging to some Beatrice Harrison of his day, when he sadly repines in "Two Gentlemen of Verona" (Act III. sc. 1), "There is no music in the nightingale!" Also it seems quite apparent that certain prominent actors in his time were enticed from their legitimate sphere in the theatre to perform before the microphone, as witness the line in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" (Act II. sc. 1), which speaks of "certain stars shot madly from their spheres."

FURTHER, it is not too much to infer that at least two well-known present-day personalities in the radio world had their counterparts in Bacspeare's day. His whimsically apt description of "Queen Mab" in "Romeo and Juliet" (Act I. sc. 4) "In shape no bigger than an agate..." clearly refers to the Tudor prototype of the B.B.C.'s present dramatic critic, whose meagre and attenuated frame is a constant source of anxiety to his many friends. Similarly, the allusion in "Henry V." (Act IV. chorus) to "a little touch of Harry in the night" is evidently intended to imply the existence of some Elizabethan Job Henry.

FINALLY, Bacspeare was transparently alluding to television experiments when he wrote in "Measure for Measure" (Act II. sc. 2) the words, "his glassy essence—like an angry ape—plays such fantastic tricks," while I think that we may safely conclude that he was summing-up the television position of the day when he observed in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" (Act V. sc. 1), "The best in this kind are but shadows."

And that's that. I end as I began, by affirming that radio undoubtedly was known in Shakespeare's day, an assertion which, by virtue of the hidden lights I have now produced, I trust I have successfully and incontrovertibly Q.E.D'd.

IT is said that a new station will probably be on the air soon. The station will be opened by the Caroline Bay Association, and will have a power of 100 watts. If such a thing happens it should be a big advertisement for Timaru.