The Coyote---Pernicious or Beneficial?

By Claude T. Barnes, M. S. P. R.

WHILE the hatred of most stock-raisers toward the coyote is resolute and relentless, there is, in the minds of those whose interests are more varied, an indifference about the matter, which results from a wider appreciation of the animal's habits. It is, perhaps, always hard for a man to disregard his own interests for that of the majority; but, as we shall see, there is very likely a method of handling the coyote, which imposes no great sacrifice upon the rancher and yet which forces the coyote into a mode of life which at once makes it praiseworthy instead of oppressive.

In the western portion of the United States are a few large dusky gray wolves; and, therefore, the term, "coyote," from the early Mexican "coyotl," meaning "prairie wolf," is a popular and convenient name for the smaller family. In fact the coyote has several designations, among them being "prairie wolf," "coyotl," from the ancient Mexican, "coyoti," from the Mexican of today, and "Ky," among the Apache Indians. Whatever its name, however, it is the jackal of the old world. It is intermediate in size between the foxes and the larger wolves; and is characterized chiefly by a sharp pointed muzzle like that of a collie dog, heavy, upright ears and moderately long, bushy tail. The pelage is thick, especially at this time of the year; and that there is considerable demand for coyote skin rugs is evinced by the fact that a hundred or more are constantly on display at Salt Lake furrier establishments. The color is dirty gray with tinges of red about the head, neck and legs; and with black hairs on the shoulders and back.

The reddish tint varies, considerably being one of the leading means of detecting the different species, of which there are about a dozen, though the marks and distribution of each type are, as yet, largely undetermined. Following is a list showing the region from which each specimen was taken: Canis latrans (say), Iowa; C. nebracensis (Merriam), Nebraska; C. lestes (Merriam), Nevada; C. frustror, (Woodhouse), Indian Territory; C. mearnsi, (Merriam), Arizona; C. estor, (Merriam), San Juan, Utah; C. cagottis, (H. Smith), Mexico; C. ochropus (Eschtltz), California; C. peninsulae (Merriam), Lower California; C. microdon, (Merriam), Mexico; C. vigilis, (Merriam), Mexico, and C. goldmani, (Merriam), Mexico.

From the above it is seen that coyotes are in one type or another distributed over a vast territory; in fact they are known to occur from the Mississippi valley to the Pacific coast and from Costa Rica to Athabasca on the north. There are eight species in the United States, but as their individual characteristics are not yet known to science, it were impracticable to consider the different types separately. They are all coyotes, though some forms like the Canis latrans, being larger and stronger than others, are more harmful to cattle than are the smaller species as Canis estor and Canis microdon, which usually confine their ravages to rabbits and other such mammals.

THE ORIGINAL SNEAK.

In Utah and the surrounding states, wherever there is waste land, there also is the coyote, sneaking after living things and running from them, winning his livelihood, not by courage and the muscular ferocity that crushes at a blow, nor by the fierce endurance that follows and tires and finally drags down, but by fearful cunning aided by a stomach, which is not at all particular. In fact, he represents nature's transition from a wolf to a fox with less boldness of the one and less craftiness of the other. He is artful enough, however, to know, for instance, that you cannot see him on an ordinary wasteland background as long as he does not move; and thus he will sit minutes at a time watching you from some knoll, having every appearance of a bush or weathered rock. When he does move, it is with much deliberation, though finally he starts into his favorite dog-trot, which even a gun shot will, at times, be unable to make him vary. Ordinarily, he trots along easily—a lean hungry looking wretch with all the insolence of a hoodlum and the cunningness of a thief. If you follow him, he jogs away, rapidly, but if you give up the pursuit and return, he stops and follows you back with the curiosity of a Paul Pry.

It is observed, the world over, that the establishment of homes in remote districts, results in restricting the number of larger wolves; but the effect is not the same upon the coyotes, which, except in a few cases, have thrived with the advancement of civilization, and, in some regions in the west, actually increased in number. The introduction of poultry, domestic mammals and semi-domestic birds like the English sparrow, has afforded the coyotes an increased food supply, which not only precludes the danger of starvation but also counteracts largely the success of the hunter. Furthermore, the coyotes are ordinarily too canny to be caught with traps or deceived with poison, for though many old hunters tell of killing hundreds of big gray wolves with poisoned buffalo meat, it was seldom that a coyote skin was procured though they were much more numerous than the wolves.

COYOTE'S REAL HOME.

The great basin is really the coyote's home, for most of the land, hereabout, is uncultivated; stock ranges are extensive, sagebrush, chaparel, weeds and creek beds covered with tall grasses afford excellent hiding places; jack rabbits, squirrels, and, in some places as at Vernal, prairie dogs, are all plentiful; and sheep graze on every hillside and plateau. Though bounties are being paid, no decrease in the number of the coyotes is noticeable, and, therefore, other methods must sooner or later be resorted to, if the extermination of the species be deemed advisable.

The habits of the coyotes are interesting. They inhabit all zones, from the lower Boreal, through the transition, the upper and lower Sonoran and the semi-arid parts of the tropical. In the summer, the mountain species wander above the timber line, though severe winters readily drive them into the valleys. One of their favorite haunts, in this vicinity, is the lake shore between Salt Lake and Ogden, where summer and winter, their yaps and howls can be heard in the nighttime. They slink away into holes and dry creek bottoms, during the day; but just after sunset and before sunrise their howling is most peculiar and prolonged. One coyote can give the impression of a dozen; and, when several join in, the concert is incessant and indescribable.

Coyotes breed only once a year, the mating season being late in January; and the period of gestation like that of the whole genus canis, is about 63 days. The young are born in dens, which are usually enlarged badger holes along stream embankments or among the rocks of the hillside. I one time, however, found a coyote den in the middle of a ploughed field just north of Layton. The hole was about eight feet long with two openings, though at no point was it far beneath the surface. Seven little coyotes were in it; and after the first scare, they became quite playful until growth brought out their untamable instinct. The young number from four to nine, and, in rare cases, more. They play about their den during June; desert it in July, and, finally, by the first of August, shift for themselves. In this region, if the den is placed away from the frequented track of man, the young have every chance to reach maturity undisturbed, as there are few large animals about, which would relish a coyote meal.

Photo by A. E. Dugmore.

COYOTE—THE ISHMAEL OF THE DESERT.

ARE LONE HUNTERS.

Though Lewis and Clark, Say, Richardson and others reported that the coyotes hunted mostly in packs, these days, they are seen usually singly or in pairs, in the day time, and in numbers together mostly only at night. At times, however, when running down a deer, or antelope, a pack may appear, and, on rare occasions, as many as three may engage in the capture of a single rabbit. Such incidents are, however, the exceptions, not the rule.

The food of the coyote is more varied than one would suppose. Of course, animal matter constitutes the greater part of its fare, but this is varied with some vegetable and fruit. In the desert lands of Utah, where mere existence is a sharp-toothed, savage fight from the start, the coyote is glad to devour anything that he can get in his jaws. He likes rabbit meat, but the desert rabbits are themselves hungry, alive—away. He occasionally snuffs the presence of a bird's nest in the parching desert sands; but, when nothing better can be had, he pounces upon a lizard which he gulps down while it still wriggles. He will even eat the fruit of prickly pears (Opuntia) and mesquite beans, or stand on his hind legs and gather choke cherries and manganitas. He becomes gaunt, leathery, almost savage; his sun-scorched hair stands up in stiff bristles and he looks dusty, sandy, worn away. He skulks along the arroyos snapping his white teeth in the wild desert air as much at home as the three-horned toad (Phrynosoma), which he devours.

SOMETIMES EATS FRUIT.

So much for the coyote in the desert, which, after all, I am inclined to believe is the true haunt of our shaggy prowler. In the more fertile valleys of Utah, the coyote cultivates a better taste and enjoys a more agreeable fare. Here, he is not forced to live on juniper berries, manzanitas, and prickly pears, though he sometimes does eat watermelons, peaches, apricots, grapes and other fruits.

He is not a vegetarian, however, for he partakes greedily of almost any kind of animal food, the variety ranging from birds and snakes to fish and crustaceans. Kingsley says that, "In a fair fight, the coyote will kill a rattlesnake, by watchfulness, a feint, and a sudden spring at the throat."

During August, he must devour hundreds of Rocky Mountain locusts and grasshoppers, for in Utah most of the birds and perhaps some mammals live on them at this time. If John of ancient days ate locusts and wild honey with a relish, it is not unreasonable to suppose that a mere coyote these days will devour readily the grasshoppers that are toasted brown on dry lucerne stocks. The remains of a large cricket (Stenopelmatus fasciatus) was once found by Vernon Bailey in a coyote's stomach; and Baird in writing of Canis Latrans in his "Mammals of North America," tells of the coyote's eating grasshoppers. He says:

"The wolf as a similitude of starvation and poverty is, perhaps, unequaled, as is indicated by the character of its increment; this shows that the animal is, at some seasons, in some localities, forced to live upon the cactus fruit and grasshoppers and other matter even more indigestible and more opposite than these, and which must be as little palatable to its natural taste as the thorns that encase its food are disagreeable to its lips."

PARTIAL TO FISH.

The coyote often searches the shores of sloughs and ponds for small crabs and crustaceans; and he eats greedily the fish which are run onto our fields by irrigating canals with defective headgate screens.

That the coyote has many beneficial habits, is a fact soon granted by those who have given its food any special attention at all. In Utah we are troubled with thousands of white-tailed jack rabbits (Lepus campestris) which oppress the farmers in some districts to such extent that work becomes discouraging and farming a burden. The coyote is the rabbit's greatest foe, as many as a hundred of them being included in his annual fare.

CRAFTY COURSING.

Nothing evinces his craftiness better than the method he employes in capturing a rabbit. Two or three of them, together, trot along until a rabbit is sighted when one of them starts at full speed in pursuit. The other two seek some knoll or elevated point from which they watch the chase and learn the general lay of the big circle in which the fleeing rabbit is bound to run. One of them saunters off to meet it on its return; takes up the chase, while the first coyote rests. The race goes on, each coyote taking part until finally the exhausted rabbit is taken. The coyotes gather; and, contrary to their habit, have no discord in sharing equally the meal. Sometimes only two accomplish the task of capturing a bunny, yet I have never heard of the larger animal's forbidding the smaller from enjoying a portion of the prize.

A single coyote catches a rabbit by lying in bunches of grass or behind bushes near a regular run, and pouncing upon it as it saunters by; and as coyotes are usually alone, this is by far the most frequent method of capture.

The good the coyote does, by waring on these rodents is inestimable; in fact men who are most familiar with conditions in the west attribute the abundance of jack rabbits to the systematic destruction of coyotes.

THE FESTIVE PRAIRIE DOG.

On the way to Vernal, Uintah, county, I happened upon many prairie dog "towns," the interesting little inhabitants being so tame that at times the driver cracked one with his whip. Many wild horses and coyotes gazed at us from distant flats; and the interesting subject of the life of these prairie dogs (Cynomys ludovicianus) became the topic of conversation. I was informed that sometimes the coyote captures one by hiding behind a clump of weeds or bunch of grass some little distance from the burrow. When the unsuspecting dog, in feeding, approaches near enough, a few bounds enables the coyote to seize it.

The vegetation over these "towns" is invariably short, the only exceptions being a weed here and there permitted to grow to maturity on the dirt cone at the mouth of a burrow. These are usually horse nettles (Solanum rostratum.) Mexican poppies (argenmone) or Euphorbia (Euphorbia marginata,) all of which are capable of affording shade without obstructing the view. All other weeds and grases are cut to the ground; and I am informed that the dogs abandon a "town" if the weeds become so dense that they are unable to kep them down.

J. H. Grant tells how a coyote captured a prairie dog, as follows:

"The coyote started at one end of the town and ran at lightning speed in a straight line until he cut off one from its burrow. When the prairie dog saw that it could not get to its hole, it stopped and began to kick until the coyote caught it and killed it in very much the same way that a dog kills a rat."

"EPICUREAN" MENU.

The coyote is known to eat, besides rabbits and prairie dogs, the following mammals: Pocket mice (Perognathus); chipmunks (Eutamias); pocket gophers (Thomomys); voles (Microtus); woodchucks (Marmota); ground squirrels (Ammosphermophilus, Callospermophilus and Spermophilus); wood rats (Neotoma); kangeroo rats (Dipodomys and Perodipus) and rice rats (Oryzomys). The prey upon these mammals is not of spasmodic occurrence, but lasts incessantly throughout the year. The resulting benefit to the farmers vies with that bestowed by the Swainson hawk and other rodent-eating birds and mammals.

GREAT SCAVENGER.

The coyote is useful, also, as a scavenger. Deceased cattle that succumb by the wayside in the outlying districts, and dead cattle and horses that are dragged out of town, are stripped tothe bone in a single night, thus making the usual, lingering, deleterous stench, impossible. I have seen a pack of them visit a slaughter house regularly each night to devour every scrap of refuse that the magpies were unable to carry off in the day. When thus prowling and quarreling in the moonlight, they are fine shots for a rifle; and it is an interestng fact that when one is killed, the others, if hungry, will return to eat him. Such an fact shows how nearly the coyote approaches the hyeana, one of the lowest of nature's scavengers.

Not always is the coyote so praiseworthy in its habits, for, at times, it destroys not only domestic but also wild animals, which assist man in his warfare against insects and rodent pests. Among them are weasels and skunks, though few people will regret the loss of either, beneficial as they may sometimes be. Skunks kill chickens as well as destructive rodents.

PATROL FOR LAME DUCKS.

The coyotes do, however, destroy considerable game. Our California quail (Lophortyx Californicus) which run about in the brush on the hillsides, are killed by the wholesale by them, while grouse and wild ducks are captured on the nest, both birds and eggs being gobbled with a relish. Coyotes make, in fact, a regular patrol along the shore of Great Salt lake, where duck shooting is good, there to capture and eat wounded birds.

In some parts of the west they capture antelope and deer in exactly the same manner that they chase down a rabbit. The great scarcity of these animals gives little opportunity for such chases; and then it is much easier to worry a cow from her calf.

Mr. Ernest Ingersoll, in the Popular Science Monthly tells how a coyote attacked a doe antelope and her fawn, as follows: "I remember at a place where I was encamped for two or three nights in southwestern Wyoming, the round ledge of a butte-face just across the creek was the home in a family of these wolves, and I often saw the mother lying at the mouth of their den, and the four whelps glecfully romping in the sunshine.

"The father of the family kept out of view at first; but later I caught sight of him in pursuit of a doe antelope and her fawn. The doe was bounding away over the plain, keeping the little one, which seemed to understand its part perfectly, close to her hind legs.

"Following her closely ran the wolf, often making a dash to the right or left to get at the fawn; but each time the brave little mother, whisking abruptly, would present to him her lowered head and make a dash at his skull with her sharp fore hoofs. Thus she retired, but I fancy that the pursuer's longer breath and varied tactics won the day at last."

Many years ago, in the days of the early pioneers, coyotes fed mostly on young buffalo, antelope and deer; but the introduction of domestic animals has not only changed the diet of these predaceous prairie wolves but also driven the buffalo to its doom. There may also be a quality and a test about the new food which are partly to blame for the coyote's destruction of our farm animals; but, however, there is no doubt that the depredations are of great economic import.

AS A ROOST ROBBER.

Hens, ducks, geese and turkeys are slain with a craftiness that well shows the leading characteristic of the coyote. At times, it lurks, about in the weeds or bushes until a fowl comes near when it seizes it at a bound. Turkeys, which are wont to ramble far afield in search of grain, grasshoppers, and insecsts, frequently fall, the victims of the coyote's cunningness. At other times, especially at night, it will approach farm buildings, slowly and cautiously, from the leeward side, and, when satisfied that no danger lurks in the shadows, actually snatch chickens from their roost in the hen house. Some report having seen a coyote dash full speed into a yard, grab a chicken by the neck, and rush away before anyone could interfere. Such, however, is exceptional for the animal is naturally more stealthy than daring, more wary than rash; therefore it must be believed that such audacity is manifested only in most thinly populated districts where the coyote is extremely hungry. Dr. Kennerly in writing to the Smithsonian Institution from El Paso, says, however:

"Sometimes coyotes exhibit so much boldness as to come within the suburbs of the town, and prowl around among the houses in search of food, while it is yet light, rarely being disturbed by the dogs with which they seem to live on quite familiar terms. Indeed, we have been assured by some of the inhabitants along the Rio Grande that it is not at all uncommon for the coyote to cohabit with the domestic bitch; but notwithstanding we made great efforts to procure or even see the offspring resulting from this intercourse, we did not succeed in finding one where the proof was indubitable."

It might be well to point out, en passant, in support of the above, that Huxley says there is no difference of any importance between the skull of a coyote and that of a domestic dog.

A coyote has been known to seize a sucking pig and carry it away, in fact several of them, in a single night; but a grown hog is seldom tackled by a coyote, alone.

AFRAID OF A LIGHT.

After repeated experiments on a farm near the lake shore at Kaysville, I am thoroughly convinced that nothing is quite so efficacious in keeping the coyotes away from the chicken roost at night as a lantern hung on a pole in a conspicuous place. A pack of a

Utah Independent Telephone Company---A Model System.

IT IS the proud boast of Utah that she has operating within her boundaries a telephone system which is at once the surprise of visitors and the comfort of citizens, for in fact, the world over, one cannot find another telephone that has the rapidity of connection, the clear purity of tone, transmission and the general satisfaction of service which characterize the Utah Independent. One who has traveled throughout this continent and in Europe will know this statement to be true if he ever be so fortunate as to visit our prosperous city. It is the perfection of modern telephoning, the acme of modern inventiot.

The Utah Independent Telephone company stands today as one of the leading institutions of its character in the west. This plain, well established fact is the means of arousing public pride in the success of this concern when it is considered that its executive office is located in Salt Lake City and its career from the incipient organization of the company has been safely and wisely guarded by men of this city whose identity is established by their education and residence.

The beginning of the telephone operation in Salt Lake City was of such modest character that it gave no evidence of what time would bring in the development in this line, or of what would be accomplished by those who were to get their inspiration from the crude beginning of the early telephone days of this city. Recalling the start in this line, the improvement from time to time, and the present-day development, one can even now hardly realize the stupendous results that have been secured by fostering this great adjunct of commercial, mercantile and industrial prosperity.

The development of the interests of the company in Salt Lake City has not stopped with the convenience furnished the business and social life, but it has also been the means by which hundreds have secured employment and added to the great benefit that accrues each year from the expenditure of large sums of money.

The growth of the company's business since 1902 has been very rapid. The institution had in the beginning only two exchanges and about 1,200 subscribers. The company now operates thirteen exchanges and has more than 11,000 subscribers in the state.

On the question of civic pride the management has always stood to the front and in the character of buildings constructed and in the character of underground conduits, has displayed a great interest in the appearance and welfare of the cities in which it operates.

This company was established in the city of Salt Lake in 1903 and at the present time is located in one of the finest buildings within the limits of the city, being built entirely of steel, brick and stone and designed to withstand the most rigid exactions of the fire underwriters' association.

The company has more than 6,000 subscribers in the city of Salt Lake, and the prosperous condition of the city and its increasing importance as a commercial center are producing a phenomenal development in the service of the Independent company both for local and long distance business. The long distance service of the company is without comparison and the local service is the finest in the western country.

The men who are at the head of the Utah Independent Telephone company have been identified with the growth and progress of the city for a number of years, being without exception home people. It has been due to their unselfish devotion to the welfare of the city that such an institution came into existence, and by their efforts it has grown from a small beginning, until today it has become an absolute necessity for the business man.

One noteworthy fact regarding the company is that many of its employes have been with it since the beginning. The executive officers of the Independent have also been actively connected with the institution for many years.

The officers and directors of the company are composed of the following well known business men of the city: H. A. Harvey, president and director; Walter mar Van Cott, managing director; Heber J. Grant, director; S. J. Fenton, director; Lawrence Green, director; George T. Odell, director; John D. Spencer, director; James H. Moyle, director; Benjamin R. Howell, secretary and treasurer.

The executive officers of the Independent are: H. A. Harvey, president; Fred B. Jones, general superintendent, and D. B. Macintosh, auditor, and upon these three gentlemen falls practically all of the responsibility for the maintaining of the details of the excellent service.

The writer is informed that it is the intention of the company to increase its rural subscription, and it has its representatives in the field. Already the service extends from Eureka on the south to Preston, Idaho, on the north and cities not yet favored are using every insistence possible to encourage the installation of local exchanges. It is the tasting of luxury after poverty, the enjoying of comfort after tolerating inconvenience and annoyance; in fact in comparison with other systems the Independent stands pre-eminently at the head.

This extension of rural lines comes at an opportune time, for now all territory covered by the company is being rapidly settled by a prosperous and progressive people and the eager rural citizens are more than ready to receive the phone with the pure tone. It is expected that soon all important outlying cities will have the Independent telephone service.

Indeed, in the country or in the city the telephone is these days a necessity in every home.

Some of us have heard the old folks talk of the time when the railroad first came to the town and of their first fearsome ride on the train. They wondered at the novelty of what has now become so commonplace and essential. Just so will our children wonder when they hear us tell the story of the telephone, of the first nervous attempts we made to use the then clumsy and elaborate apparatus. The boys and girls are growing up thinking of the telephone as constituting as essential a part of life's equipment as the daily papers or even the dinner plate.

We use the telephone much more commonly than the train or any other great modern invention. A prominent Salt Lake business man said the other day: "Under the present administration of the Independent Telephone company there has been wrought a complete revolution in public appreciation of the instrument. Whereas it used to be a thing before which we stood in awe, taking off our hats, now it is a thoroughly democratic possession, a popular necessity." This very popularity and use has made us forget how delicate and complicated an instrument a modern telephone is. Its minute currents and delicate parts must of necessity be so constructed and arranged as to be susceptible to the most precise adjustment, while at the same time it must be fitted to stand the steady use and the heavy strain of modern business and social life.

The instrument hangs on your wall or stands on your desk as a tiny door that a single motion on your part swings open and puts you in the presence of whomsoever you choose out of thousands of people of the city and the suburbs. This is the secret of the value of the telephone to you—not that you have a box on the wall, but that this box and instrument gives you access to the telephone track that goes to almost every home and individual you may wish to reach.

The value of the telephone to the subscriber can, therefore, be measured only by the extent of the system.

Superb as the "Independent" telephone service has been, since its inception, it was encumbered in its infancy by a limited subscription list; but now it has risen to such a height that continued prosperity is assured. It seems that always people preferred the "Independent" to any other line and would wait for minutes at a time in order to satisfy their preference; but in the beginning many friends were still on the older lines. As a rule a person has a phone for the purpose of chatting with the wife from the office, or conversing with relatives. Where one had one phone and another, another, the inconvenience was for a time great. This is rapidly being overcome now in the following manner. A group of relatives and friends who all use phones for the purpose of chatting with each other, gather together and agree, everyone, to install the phone with the pure tone, meaning by that the "Independent." The result is most satisfactory and everyone uses the telephone which has few party lines, no blurred tone and an instantaneous connection.

The Independent connection is the pride of the company, for usually it is only a few seconds from the time the receiver is lifted until central says "Number, please." Members of the company are constantly on the watch to perfect the system, men being employed to call from different parts of the city and test with a stop-watch any tardiness on the part of central. Reports are made regularily and slow operators disposed of.

In fact, the telephone system is the measure of a telephone's value. You do not judge of the value of the postage stamps by its size or appearance but by the fact that it enables you to send a letter to any place in the United States or England. You cannot judge of the value of the telephone by the instrument in the house or in the office, but by the number of people that may be reached through the door or over the track which it offers. Thoughtful people realize—though many people forget this—that you are not paying for an instrument alone, but for the service of many willing hands.

Two things determine the value of the telephone system to you—its extent and its efficiency. Your telephone is only one station on a road with thousands of stations; but it gives you the right to reach any of these stations in a few moments. It is almost an awesome thought that as you stand before your instrument this telephone system enables you with a single motion of the hand and the swift uttering of not more than a dozen words to project yourself across space and into the presence of any of these thousands of people, practically into almost any home or office in this city or state.

Every hour of the day your telephone becomes of greater value, as new subscribers are put into connection with you. From January 1 to date your telephone gained hundreds of new stations. If a railroad ticket were extended to as many stations as that, its price would be increased proportionately, but this has not been the case with the Independent telephone in Salt Lake City.

With these many thousands of delicate, complicated instruments, and the stupendously intricate network reaching everywhere like the nerves of the body, running out from all the nerve centers, the exchange, it is no small problem to keep the system at its highest efficiency. Yet the well known standards of this company have been maintained, material and equipment is only of the best, and constant vigilance is exercised all unknown to the subscribers to maintain all parts of the system at the most perfect efficiency.

With the advent of the new year the prospects for the Independent Telephone company could not be brighter. During the panic of last year the company showed a continual increase, notwithstanding most business enterprises were hanging to the last straw. This year has been a prosperous one in the company's history; and 1909 with its vast extension of rural systems will be one of greater progress still.

Well managed by Utah men, employing many of our Utah people, the Utah Independent is regarded as a home enterprise. Let its superb service be continued and thousands more of Utah citizens will combine to give it a happy new year.

OPERATING ROOM OF UTAH INDEPENDENT TELEPHONE CO.

THE SCENE ABOVE IS THAT OF A TELEPHONE OPERATING ROOM AS COMPLETE IN ITS EQUIPMENT, AS SATISFACTORY IN ITS SERVICE, AS ANY TO BE FOUND IN THE WORLD, BEING THE BEST THAT MODERN INVENTION PRODUCES, IT NECESSARILY DEMANDS THE RESPECT OF ALL WHO ARE FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO ENJOY ITS SERVICE AS ONE OF THE MOST CONTENTING PARTS OF HOME AND BUSINESS LIFE. FEW PEOPLE APPRECIATE HOW WONDERFULLY EFFICIENT AND COMPLETE THE SYSTEM IS.

THIS OPERATING ROOM, WHICH IS RECOGNIZED BY ALL AS A MODEL OF MODERN TELEPHONING, IS ON THE UPPER FLOOR OF THE INDEPENDENT TELEPHONE BUILDING ON STATE STREET. FORTY OR FIFTY GIRLS ARE COMFORTABLY SEATED BEFORE A LONG OPERATING TABLE WHICH EXTENDS ALMOST AROUND THE LARGE ROOM. AS WITH OTHER SYSTEMS, EACH GIRL RECEIVES ALL THE CALLS FROM A CERTAIN NUMBER OF TELEPHONES AND CONNECTS THE PARTY CALLING WITH ANY OTHER ON THE EXCHANGE. THE SYSTEM IS PERFECT; AND FURTHERMORE, ABSOLUTELY SECURE.

ONE MAY TALK OVER THE INDEPENDENT 'PHONE WITH ABSOLUTE KNOWLEDGE THAT CENTRAL AT NO TIME AFTER THE CONNECTION IS MADE IS LISTENING. AT EVERY MOMENT SHE IS WATCHED OR OVERHEARD BY A MONITOR AND SOMETIMES BY AS MANY AS FIVE. TWO RELIABLE GIRLS WALK CONSTANTLY UP AND DOWN BEHIND THE ROW OF SEATED "CENTRALS." AT A CENTRAL DESK SIT TWO MORE TRUSTWORTHY GIRLS WHO BY MEANS OF FLASH LIGHTS IN FRONT OF THEM CAN TELL INSTANTLY WHEN A CALL IS MADE, AND BY PRESSING A CERTAIN BUTTON, LISTEN TO EVERY WORD "CENTRAL" SAYS TO THE CUSTOMER. DETECT JUST WHEN CENTRAL SHUTS HERSELF OFF AND IN FACT KEEP PERFECT WATCH WITHOUT "CENTRAL'S" KNOWING THAT EYES AND EARS ARE UPON HER. THE CUSTOMER IS THUS CERTAIN THAT NONE BUT THE PARTY HE CALLED IS LISTENING TO HIS CONVERSATION. THE "INDEPENDENT" HAS NEVER HAD ANY "PARTY" LINES TO ANY EXTENT; AND THUS ABSOLUTELY PRIVATE CONVERSATION IS GUARANTEED IN THIS RESPECT.

BESIDES THE MONITORS, ABOVE, TWO ASSISTANT CHIEF OPERATORS, SEATED AT A CENTRAL DESK, HAVE EXACTLY THE SAME MEANS OF WATCHING ALL THAT GOES ON, AS DO THE MONITORS AT THEIR DESK.

OTHER FEATURES DISTINGUISH THE "INDEPENDENT" OPERATING ROOM. WHEN "CENTRAL" RINGS FOR A PARTY, A GREEN LIGHT FLASHES INSTANTLY, IF THE RING SOUNDED PROPERLY AT THE OTHER END; BUT IF THE BELL, OR SOMETHING IS OUT OF ORDER, CENTRAL KNOWS IT EVEN BEFORE THE PARTY SHE CALLED, FOR THE GREEN LIGHT DOES NOT FLASH AT ALL.

AT ANOTHER DESK ARE TWO "INFORMATION" GIRLS, YOUNG LADIES OF MARVELOUS MEMORY AND GOOD EDUCATION, WHO ANSWER EVERY QUESTION FROM "WHAT TIME IS IT?" TO "IS THE TRAIN ON TIME?" FURTHERMORE, THESE TWO GIRLS CALL UP HALF OF SALT LAKE EVERY MORNING AND, UNLIKE THE DEAR OLD ALARM, THEY WILL NOT RUN DOWN, BUT PERSIST IN RINGING UNTIL MR. SNOOZER GETS OUT OF BED AND TELLS THEM SO. ONCE UP, THE CHANCES ARE THAT HE WILL MEND HIS OLD TIME WAYS AND STAY UP. ALL THAT IS NECESSARY IS TO TELL "INFORMATION" THE TIME, THE NIGHT BEFORE.

A LOUNGING ROOM WITH MISSION FURNITURE AND A HOSPITAL ROOM WITH A BATH, COMPLETE THE EQUIPMENT OF THIS MODEL OPERATING ROOM. THE EIGHTY GIRLS ARE ALL HEALTHY AND RELIABLE; AND THOUGH NONE OF THEM ARE IN THE SLIGHTEST MISTRUSTED, IT IS TO GUARANTEE ABSOLUTE PRIVACY AND THE BEST OF SERVICE THAT THE WORLD AFFORDS, THAT A PERFECT SYSTEM OF ESPIONAGE IS EMPLOYED.