

The Electrical Engineer



TO most men, what a world of mysteries surrounds the Electrician—what knowledge of hidden powers of subtle secrets—commander of mighty forces and wielder of invisible wands! What a glamour is cast about this wonderful wizard who can make a seemingly inert wire propel a train, produce light, heat—to write and even speak! And before our brains have ceased to whirl from thinking of these things he suddenly tells us how he sends signals without wires—conquering space as he has already conquered time—how to make a new light that penetrates all things, new methods of combating disease, of preserving foods, and a thousand and one possibilities of adding to the comforts and lessening the tribulations of everyday life.

Man's ceaseless attempt to penetrate the future prompts him to ask, "How long will this continue?" "Where, when and how will it end?" On all sides is seen a rapid and continual growth of human activities in this later conquest of nature: Taking the last fifty years as a measure of the immediate future, what sights and sounds and ways of wondrous cunning may not greet the heedless boy of today. A prophecy would read like a tale from the Arabian Nights. Alladin, however, instead of carrying a lamp, would push a button or pull a switch.

As will be seen, we have built up a pretty dense halo around our electrical engineer—so dense, in fact, that he has been lost to sight. This is characteristic of the general public. In the glare of lights and whirl of machinery, the men who make these things possible are quite often forgotten, or remembered only in the abstract.

But the electrical engineer does not mind it. He realizes that a halo is a pretty convenient thing at times. It has been the sole means of maintaining a reputation and holding a position for a good many people in times past. A halo so dense that you can stick pins in it is very frequently needed when one thinks of all the things an electrical engineer is called upon to do and to know.