

## DEVELOPMENT OF UTILITIES REAL MIRACLE

Charles L. Henry Relates His Story of Fifty Years' Development.

### PROGRESS IN INDIANA

BLOOMINGTON, Jan. 11.—The development of public utility service in Indiana was described as a "half century miracle" today by Charles L. Henry of Indianapolis, president of the Indiana Public Utility Association, in an address before students of Indiana University assembled in general conference in Indianapolis as examples to prove his points. He recalled that he was graduated from the University School of Law in 1872, fifty years ago, and said that most of his time since his graduation has been spent in the public utility business. Ferry-boats, toll bridges and toll roads were the first public utilities in the Middle West, he said. Turning to the utilities of today, he

added: "In the year 1876 for the first time I witnessed an exhibit of a small plant producing incandescent electric lights in the old Union Station at Indianapolis. This was just after the holding of the Centennial World's Fair in Philadelphia. There was no commercial plant furnishing electric light at that time. The development of the industry has been one of the wonders of the world. No longer do we hear of the tall oil dip and the kerosene lamp. All have faded into the past. About the beginning of the Civil War the kerosene lamp was first brought into my old boyhood town of Pendleton, and the man who sold them has told me that my mother bought the first one used in the town.

"To give you an idea of development

of the electric light since 1876, I may say that in Indianapolis the two companies furnishing electricity now supply more than 77,000 customers. These companies estimate that there are more than 1,250,000 electric lights in use in Indianapolis."

Mr. Henry reviewed the development of electric railways, beginning with the first use of the electric car in Richmond, Va., in 1888. Since that time 1,800 miles of electric railways have been developed in Indiana. Twelve of these are interurban railroads, Indiana being the only state in the country having a daily average of 21,000 passengers. He introduced the subject of the telephone by saying, "One morning I read in my paper an account of the use of the telephone instrument. After I had read it I stopped to consider a moment and arrived at the sage conclusion that it was absolutely a falsehood made out of whole cloth."

Mr. Henry made a strong plea for public regulation of the utility industry by the State commission system in use in Indiana, and urged in favor of private ownership of public utility companies for the sake of economy and efficiency. On the latter point he said, "The general opinion is that public ownership is bad policy, that it is practically impossible to have public utilities of any kind managed under city ownership, largely because it is almost impossible to prevent political manipulation of their management. There is no longer any doubt in the minds of those who have thoroughly investigated the matters that not only better but cheaper service can be given to the public by ownership and management than under municipal ownership and management."

Mr. Henry's address was the first of a series arranged jointly by the School of Commerce and Finance and the Indiana Public Utility Association. He spoke last night at a meeting of the Faculty Club, and at noon today before the Rotary Club of Indianapolis. On Friday after noon, W. A. Fairser, editor of the American Gas Journal, New York, will address students of the department of journalism. Friday evening, Charles N. Thompson of Indianapolis will address the students of the school of law on the subject, "Aspects of Public Utility Law." The annual meeting of the Public Utility Association will be held at the university on Saturday.

## MEN AND BUSINESS

By RICHARD SPILLANE

P HILADELPHIA, Jan. 11.—In the hope of promoting economy, the bureau of business research of Harvard University got detailed profit and loss statements from 305 department stores covering the fiscal year 1920. From these it appears the average total expense was 25.9 per cent of net sales and the average net profit 1.9 per cent of net sales.

The operating expenses in 268 of these establishments in percentage of net sales 100 per cent were as follows:

Salaries and wages.....	13.9%
Rent.....	1.9%
Advertising.....	2.0%
Interest (on capital, borrowed and capital owned).....	.6%
Supplies.....	2.1%
Stock purchased (heat, light, power, delivery).....	.6%
Unclassified.....	.0%
Traveling.....	.3%
Communication.....	.2%
Repairs.....	.3%
Depreciation, losses from bad debts.....	.4%
Other depreciation.....	.5%
Professional services.....	.1%
General expenses.....	.2%
Gross profit.....	25.8%
Net profit.....	1.9%

Of the salaries and wages as tabulated from the reports of 110 of the department stores and based on net sales 100 per cent the divisions were:

Administration and genl. execu. 1.5%

Office..... 1.2%

Occupancy..... .6%

Delivery..... 1.7%

Receiving, marking and showroom..... 2%

Inside selling, direct..... 6.3%

Indirect..... 11.1%

Delivery..... 5.5%

Total salaries and wages..... 13.9%

A DEPARTMENT store man of wide experience to whom these figures were submitted said they were representative of the average expense. The public, he declared, had the power to effect some economies which would tend to lower prices somewhat if they would use that power. The largest field for econ-

omy, he added, was in delivery of goods. "But," he said, "the people except in rare instances will not buy where they have to pay extra for delivery. My observation is that the people each succeeding year wants things that are a little better than the year before and that each year the department store grows more and more in public confidence."

"There are many expenses to a department store which we strive to decrease, but the department store at the same time saves a lot of money for the public through collecting and centering in one establishment for each individual the interesting and useful products of the world."

"Did you notice the item 'Buying' in that Harvard compilation? I wonder if the people know what buying means to a department store? We have seventy buyers here to whom the study of buying in certain lines has been a life's work. We have seventy men in New York. We have thirty-five in another city. All of these have assistants."

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"Unquestionably it costs the customer to wait on the customer promptly. The customer then buys with more assurance. If you don't watch this element of time in selling, your costs mount higher and higher. Socially, in a period like the holiday season when we, for instance, had 5,000 persons employed."

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