



SONNETS OF A

TELEPHONE

GIRL

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BY
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ILLUSTRATIONS BY
JNO. CHILL



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SONNETS
OF A TELEPHONE
GIRL



“ Number? ”

Sonnets of a Telephone Girl

By
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Illustrated by
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By E. A. Brininstool

SONNETS OF A TELEPHONE GIRL.

i.



HAVE to sit here every blessed day
And holler "Number?" and it ain't no
fun

To hear folks kick, as lately they have done
Since things began a-goin' the wrong way.

We have to say "Line's busy," and a lot

Of other trash, you bet, that isn't so,

And tell folks who get mad that we "forgot

That they was at the other end," you know.

My! but us girls we get it in the neck

From kickers, when their 'phone is out of
gear!

I wish to goodness gracious you could hear

The things folks say. Some of 'em swear
they'll wreck

Their 'phone if it "ain't fixed up right
away"—

And gee! you ought to hear what others say!

II.

THE other day a fellow called for Red
Three nine, three one, and I just answered, "What?"

And "Number, please?" and my! that fellow
got

So mad at me that he just swore and said:
"Connect me with "600" right away;

I'll bet I'll make it hot enough for you!"

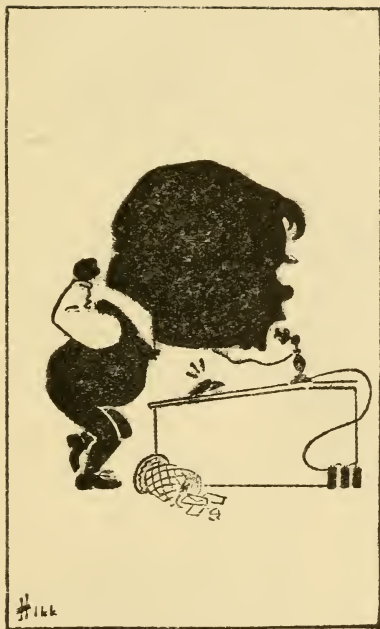
But I just laughed; we hear that every day,
And not a blessed thing does our boss do.

Sometimes, when kicks come flyin' in too fast,
They'll send a fellow out to "test the line,"

And for about a week the 'phones work fine,
And people they forget about the past;

And then, first thing we know, why, us girls
hear,

"Hello, there, Central! My 'phone's out of
gear!"



III.

I WISH'T I had a beau like one girl's got,
Who calls him up a dozen times a day,
And I hear every blessed word they say;
And my! he calls her "honey," and a lot
Of awful sweet things that I like to hear.

I hope some fellow, soon will know enough
To call me "tootsy-wootsy," "pet" and "dear,"
And "angel," and a lot of that sweet stuff!

His name is "Willie," 'cause I heard her say
It to him kind of lovin'-like and low.

My! but I wish't that fellow was my beau,
And I could be right with him every day!
And lay my head right on his heavin' breast,
And smile at him and—he would do the rest!



IV.



HERE'S one man in this town who's mad
at me,

And gee! my nerves are just a-shakin'
yet!

I didn't hardly think a man could get
Rip-roarin' mad so all-fired easily.

He rung me up and asked for Main two-three;

"Line's busy," I replied; I heard him groan,
Then holler back, "Come off! you can't fool me;

Give me that number or I'll smash this
'phone!"

He didn't get it, and I listened there

To hear what happened. Then there came a
crash,

The sound of somethin' bustin', then—ker-
smash!

The jangle of a bell, some words of swear,

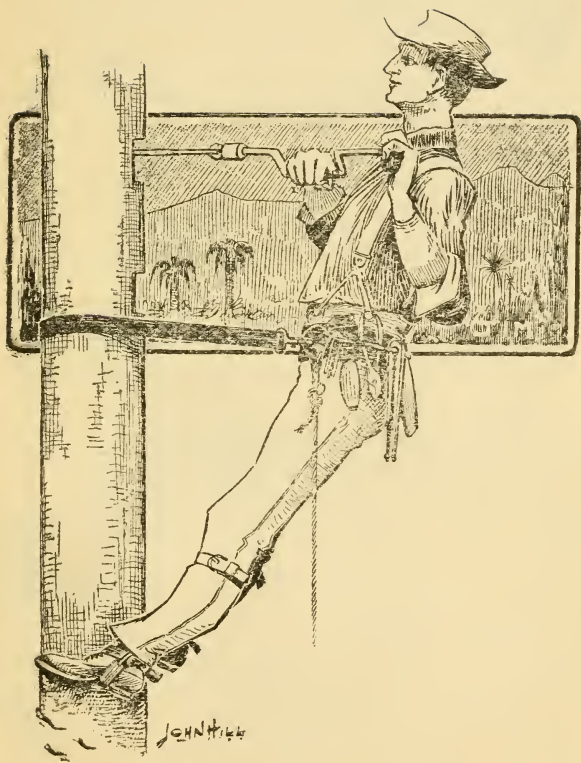
Then silence. And I smiled, because I knew
'Twas one less 'phone to pay attention to!



V.

ONE of the linemen is a chap named Jim,
And, oh, he's just as handsome as can be!
And he acts like he was dead stuck on me,
And I know I'm completely gone on him.
And when they send him out to fix the breaks,
And he rings in to see if they're all right,
He talks so sweet to me that it just makes
Me want to have him hug me good and tight.

Sometimes I wonder if he'll marry me,
And then my head begins to swim and whirl;
I hope that I won't be a hello girl
Forever; and I'll bet a cooky, he
Would have me now, if I would only say
"Yes," when he smiles and looks at me that
way.



VI.

WHEN I plugged on the Blue today I
heard
Two women talkin' of a weddin', and
The dresses that they talked about was grand,
And you can bet I took in every word!
But when 'twas gettin' interestin', then
I kicked myself, because I couldn't stay
And hear it, for a dozen horrid men
Rung in and wanted someone right away.

Oh, dear me, suz! I wish't that I could get
A chance to hear them talk again, about
That weddin' and that slick trousseau, with-
out
Somebody breakin' on the line. I bet
That I could get some pointers. Maybe I
Will have a weddin' myself by and by!



VII.

THEY sent to 'Frisco for some girls to
come
Down here, because the kicks come in so

fast,

It looked as if the business wouldn't last,
And everything was gettin' on the bum.
There's eighteen of 'em, and they think they're
fly!

They say they're "experts" and can discount
us,

But, just the same, that talk's all in your eye,
When they say they can end this awful muss.

They've been here now a month, and I can't see
But what things go just as they did before;
Complaints come in with just that same old
roar,

And things are as bad as they used to be.

It's "Number?" "Waiting!" "Busy," "Don't
reply,"

"Line's out of order; ring up by and by."



VIII.



'WAS yesterday, I think, that me and
Jim

Was gabbin' for awhile across the
'phone,

And while we thought we had the line alone
Some mean thing hollered, "Cut it out with him,
And give me Main three nine nought—under-
stand?"

And then he said, "You girls there make me
sick!"

And I just told him "Line is busy," and

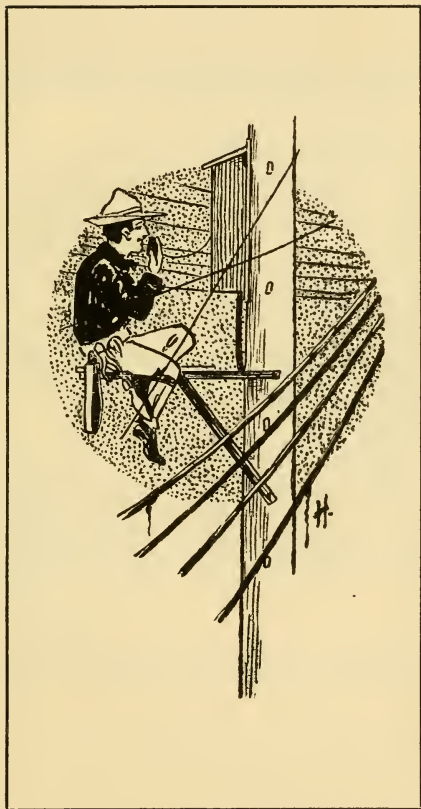
You just ought to have heard that fellow
kick!

Five minutes later he called up again,

And I said "Waiting?" fourteen time or more,
And then he yelled at me and ripped and
swore

So much I wouldn't get his number then

At all, but I sat there and chewed my gum,
And stopped my ears when I heard swear-
words come.



IX.



HE other day when I plugged in I heard
Some nice man say, "Hello, my little
pet,"

And I replied at once, "That's me, you bet!"
And, oh! I tell you what, my heart was stirred!
I thought I'd made a mash, and he thought I
Was his best girl named Kate, and when I said
That wasn't my name—gee! how he did try
To shower awful words upon my head!

Now when that fellow call up his sweet Kate,
I make connections with the brewery, and
He'll stand and swear and blow to beat the
band,
And wait and wait and wait and wait and wait,
But he don't get her number, for I sing
"Line's busy," every time I hear him ring.



20	21
27	28
-	-

BREWERY
OFFICE

ORDER

H.

X.

LAST night while I sat dozin' in my chair,
A horrid man called, "Say, sis, wake
up, quick,
And give me East Three Nine — the kid is
sick!"

And soon I heard him yell, "Is doctor there?"
And 'cuz nobody answered, he come back

At me, a-screechin' "What's the matter, say?"
I told him that the line was out of whack,
Because the mean thing yelled at me that way.

It's just a heap of fun to have folks call
A number, when we know they're in a yank,
And when we find it's some old measly crank,
Not to connect the mean old thing at all,
But keep him yellin' there "Hello, hello!"
And laugh to hear him rip around and blow!



XI.



HERE'S one old man who calls up every
day,
Who's always just as nice as he can be;
He always says "Good mornin,' sis," to me,
And never gets mad at me if I say:
"The party that you called for don't reply,"
He's such a jolly, good, old gentleman,
And so kind-hearted, that I always try
To get his number for him, if I can.

Us girls would get your number twice as quick
If you would only give us half a show,
And not be always actin' just as though
You wanted an excuse to make a kick.
You fellows who keep "knockin'" us can't get
Served as you could if you would quit, you
bet!

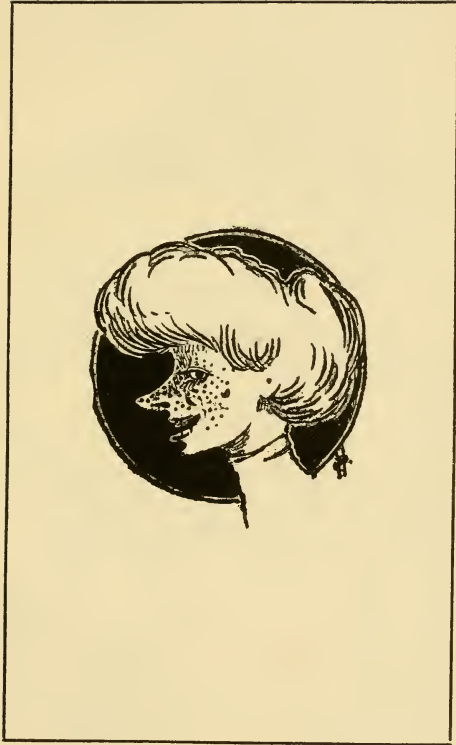


XII.



HAT girl who runs the board across from
here,
Was makin' goo-goo eyes at Jim today,
And doin' of her best to have him stay
Around, where she could whisper in his ear.
Her hair is red, and she is freckled, too,
And great big warts stick out upon her hand,
And on one cheek an ugly mole has grew,
But she can talk, you bet, to beat the band!

I'd like to get my fingers in her hair,
Whenever I see her smile up at Jim,
And try her best to make a mash on him,
And talk so sweet while he's a-standin' there.
I love him ten times more, I know, than she,
And — I just hope some time he'll marry me!



XIII.

I 'M GETTIN' sicker of this job each day,
I don't hear anything but kicks, and I
Just wish that folks could know the rea-
son why

Their telephones keep cuttin' up this way.

My head is buzzin' like a top right now

From hearin' people yell, " This blamed old
'phone

Is out of gear; what ails it anyhow? "—

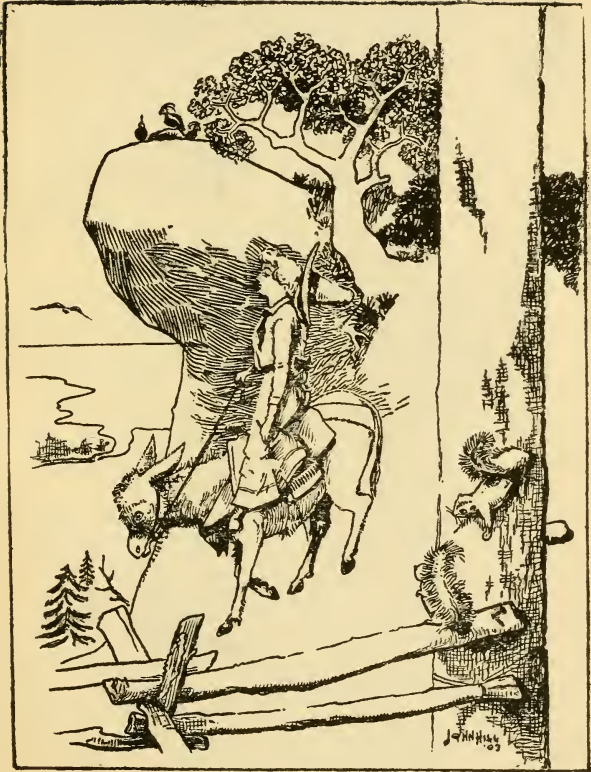
I wish't they'd ever let us girls alone!

I've said " Line's busy " ninety times today,

And hollered " Number? " fourteen hundred
times.

No wonder that I feel just like three dimes,
And want to quit my job and run away!

I'd like to go where " hello girls " ain't known,
And folks don't ever have a telephone.



XIV.

LAST Sunday night I didn't have to go
To work, and Jim called at our house
to see

If I would take a walk, and him and me
We strolled out to a quiet place we know,
Where no one couldn't see us, and then Jim
He kissed me, called me "pet," and told me
how
He loved me, and I snuggled up to him,
And — oh, I wish't that I was right there now!

I wish't that no one ever would come near
This office — not a soul but me and Jim,
And I could always snuggle up to him,
Then he would hold my hands and call me
"dear,"

And every time somebody rung, why, then
I'd say, "Line's busy now; call up again!"



XV.



HAT fellow who calls up his sweet Kate,
he

Rung in one day and asked to speak to
her.

(I guessed it might be for the theater)
And so I said to myself mentally,
“I’ll fix you, mister man,” and hitched him on
A line I knew an Irish girl named Kate
McCarthy worked — a great, big Amazon,
And told the girls to all plug in and wait.

Then pretty soon he called, “Hello, dear Kate;
Can you go to the theater tonight?”
And she said “Faix, I wush’t, bedad, I might,
But who are yez thot wants to make a date?”
And when the dude got next to it — oh, gee!
He swore, and said he’d put a head on me!

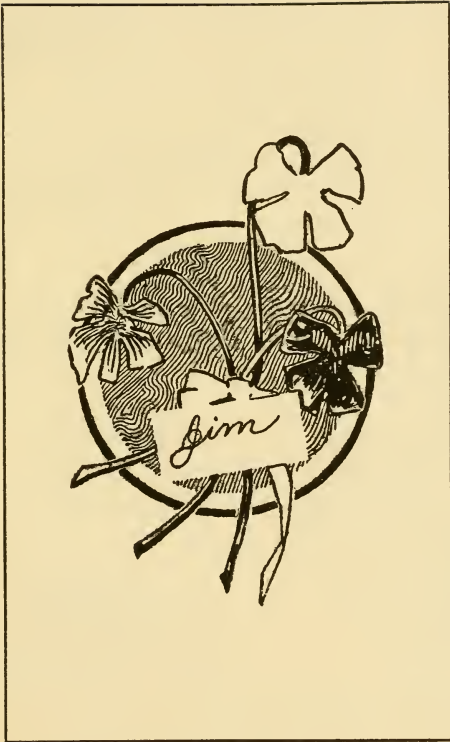


XVI.

WHEN that red-headed girl came in today
She gave a bunch of violets to Jim,
As he was startin' out, and smiled at
him —

I wish she wouldn't try to be so gay!
I ain't afraid a bit that she will cut
Me out, 'cause she's as homely as can be,
And Jim don't love her any I know, but
I wish't he'd take his posies all from me.

I told her I thought she was gettin' gay,
And she was rattled then so badly that
She didn't hardly know where she was at,
And didn't have a blessed thing to say.
She knows that I am just dead stuck on Jim,
And I don't want her monkeyin' 'round him!



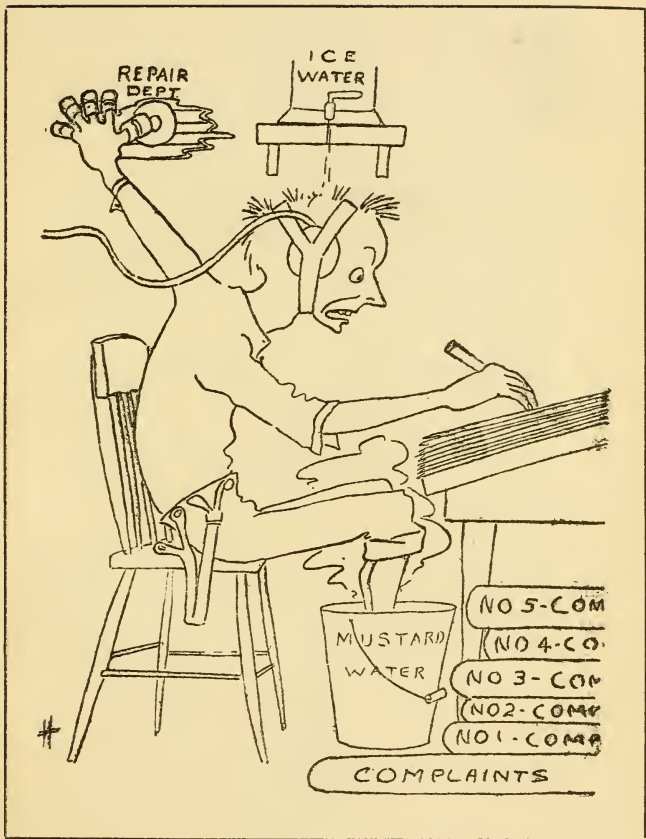
XVII.



H, JOY! the boss has placed an order now
That folks can't kick to us girls any
more.

No longer will we hear that daily roar
That telephones don't work. I'm glad the row
That's been a-goin' on has been transferred,
And that one chap must answer every kick,
Because us hello girls, you bet, have heard
Enough of that blamed stuff to make us sick.

I bet that chap will wish that he could die
When he hears forty hundred times a day
Some "knocker" ring him up and holler,
" Say,
My telephone don't work; can you tell why? "
Gee! in six weeks he'll be so rattled that
I'll bet three dimes he won't know where he's
at!

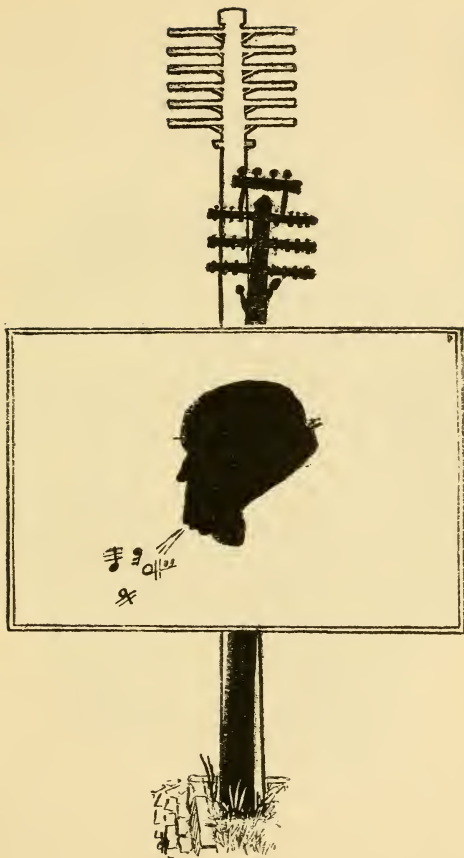


XVIII.

THEY'S trouble at the office now. They
say
Another company's goin' to start up
here,

And it has put our boss up on his ear,
And he is gettin' crosser every day.
You bet if a competitor should come
To this town, and should try to get a few
Subscribers from them, things 'round here would
hum,
And telephones work better than they do!

But just as long as they have got a cinch,
And are the whole cheese, why, of course, you
know
That they ain't goin' to spend a lot of dough
Improvin' things, nor give in a blamed inch!
If folks don't like the service, they can go
To thunder, or not put in 'phones, you know!



XIX.



HEY'VE put me onto night work now,
and it
Ain't any fun to start out in the dark,
And walk way out alone to Eastlake park
At 2 o'clock, when it comes time to quit.
Sometimes I'm awful scared, for who can tell
But what some Jack-the-Kisser might grab
me,
And no one'd ever hear me if I'd yell,
And tell the horrid thing to let me be.

Then how I'd wish so much that Jim was there!
He'd grab that big stiff by the throat, and slam
Him on the sidewalk, and then he would lam
It to him, and he'd whirl him through the air,
And they'd be just a grease-spot left of him,
When he had passed out of the hands of Jim!



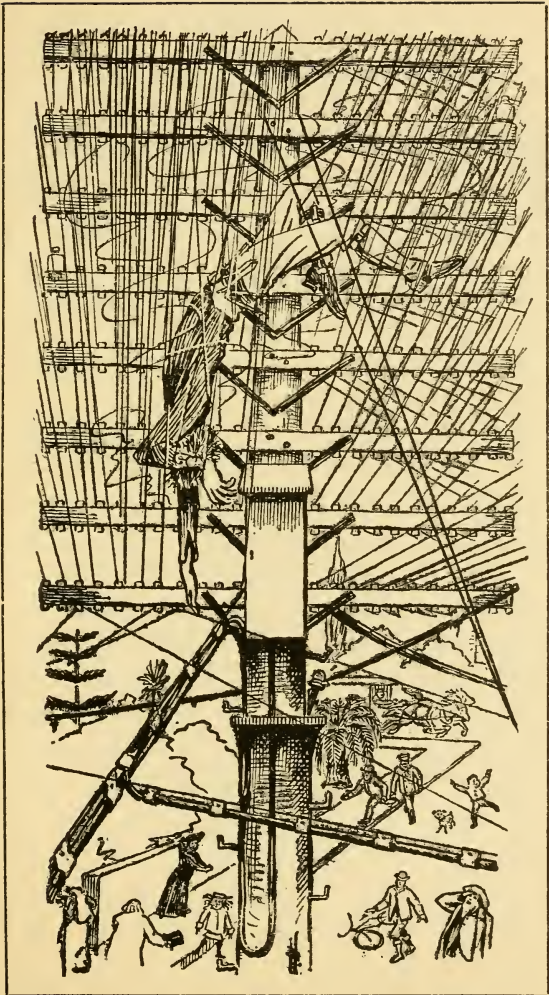
XX.

THIS mornin' some one called me up and
said:
“ You'd better send the ambulance out
here,

One of your linemen's 'lectrocuted near
My house, and I'm afraid the chap is dead.”
And oh! I jumped, and was most scared to death,
Because I was afraid it might be Jim,
And you can bet I drew a good, long breath,
When they 'phoned back and said it wasn't
him!

There wouldn't be no use for me to live
If anything should happen to my Jim,
Life wouldn't be worth much now without
him —

In fact, I'm almost pretty positive
That I might have committed suicide,
If they had said it was my Jim that died!

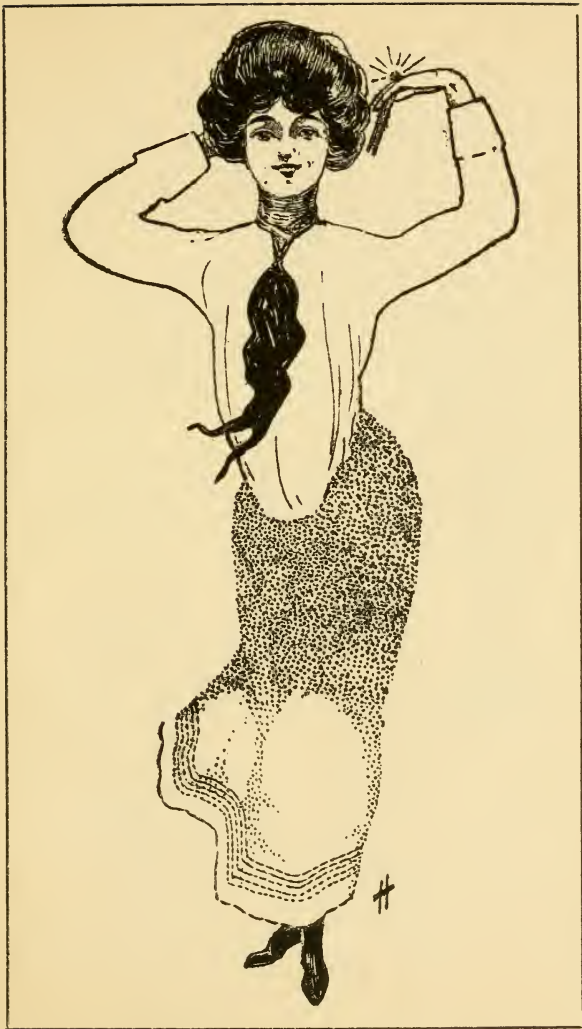


XXI.

'M GOIN' to quit the company today!
I've hollered "Number?" for the last,
last time;

No more I'll have to say "Line's busy," I'm
Engaged. I wonder what the boss will say?
That freckled and red-headed girl, I bet
Will be a-feelin' awful jealous now,
But she won't stand no chances anyhow
Of gettin' Jim, but she will have to set
Here hollerin' "Hello!" while Jim and me
Are married, and as happy as can be!

I'm glad that I won't have to hear no more
Blamed telephone complaints. 'Twill kind of
seem
As if this was a nightmare or a dream,
For things will be so different than before.
Oh, it will be slick not to have to say
"Hello!" and "Number?" every blessed
day!



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