ECONOMIC VALUE OF ELECTRIC LIGHT AND POWER

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Trieste

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BY

A. R. FOOTE,

CINCINNATI, O.

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PREFATORY.

REASONS FOR WRITING THIS BOOK.

I thought it necessary that some things should be said for the electric industry in the interest of those who are, or should become, users of Electric Service.

I felt that I could say those things. This made it my duty to say them.

Now that I have said them, it will quickly appear that there are those who can say them better than I have done; also, that there are others who are not in accord with what I have said. Both classes of critics are aware that in our day of civilization there is no monopoly of the expression of thought, therefore I have a reasonable hope that in due time I shall hear from them freely and fully.

I design this book to be of service—

1st. To those who are interested in obtaining state or municipal legislation. Such legislation should place the *Electric Service* of a city on the basis of a *Public Improvement*, entitled to special privileges, in order to secure the service for users, on terms and under economic conditions best calculated to properly serve the interests of all citizens.

2d. To those who are, or are about to become, interested in Electric Central Stations, and desire to increase their facilities until they realize the full possibilities of their opportunity. To do this, they need assistance in creating a correct public opinion regarding their undertaking; in guiding the action of Municipal Authorities; in securing Customers; and in interesting Capitalists, on whom they must depend for the means with which to develop their industry.

3d. To manufacturers, to assist them in opening new fields for the use of their apparatus, and extending its use where a beginning has been made.

With these objects in view, I have made no reference to any inventor, system, or manufacturer, by name, in a way to render the book less useful to one than to another. The Electric Industry comprehends all workers in its department of effort.

I have made no reference to Storage Batteries, for the reason that their possibilities are so great, the progress being made in their development and application to practical uses is so marked, and their economic value so special, I consider their department of the subject worthy of special treatment.

At the suggestion of my publishers I requested *Allen V. Garratt*, Secretary and Treasurer of the National Electric Light Association, to write an appendix of "*Mechanical and Electrical Terms Explained in Untechnical Language*," for the benefit of unprofes-

sional readers, I have endeavored to exclude technical terms as much as possible from the text of the book.

Believing as I do, that money spent for education is put to its highest economic use, I feel it be to right to ask the attention of every reader to the advertisements of Electrical Publications. They are the true Banyan Trees of the Electric Industry.

My presentation of the economic possibilities of Electric Light Power is not a prophecy; it is not even a vision; it is the practical outcome of that which is. Pledged to its realization, seeds of promise are already thickly planted throughout the civilized world.

To show the basis of my representations, I have gathered, at random, a few leaves from the fast-spreading Banyan Trees of Electrical Knowledge. Among them will be found some facts—firmly fixed as are the rock base of mountains; and some fancies, ephemeral "as a whiff of rifle smoke upon the mountain air."

I believe the true functions of government to be *to regulate and control, not to own and operate*, commercial industries. In considering this branch of the subject, I have used the phrase, "Commercial Monopolies," as one best calculated to arrest attention and induce discussion.

As it is more necessary for representatives to be popular than wise, politicians are not the best teachers for the people. There are indications that the desire to be popular is leading many politicians to favor measures which are the embodiment of economic unwisdom. To