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Intended for

"O wad some power the giftie gie us;
To see oursel's as ithers see us."

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PLAN TO DISTRIBUTE MUSIC AROUND TOWN

k, 1884

YOU CAN HAVE IT IN YOUR
OWN HOME AT SO MUCH
PER —

Just Turn on the Switch and Let
Classical or Popular Strains Flow
Into Your Parlor—In Time You
May Have the Whole Band, if
You Wish.

The latest mechanical marvel that bids
fair to drive the opponents of "canned
melody" into a frenzy is the "telharmoni-
um," an invention which, according to
the promoters, is to distribute music
throughout the city in much the same
manner as electricity is circulated for
heating and lighting purposes at the
present time. The promoters of the
scheme have applied to the Board of Es-
timate for a franchise to lay wires
through the streets, and in all proba-
bility that privilege will be granted with-
in the year.

When the application was received by
the board several weeks ago, the matter
was referred to Harry P. Nichols, chief
engineer of the bureau of franchises, for
investigation. Since that time Engineer
Nichols has examined the plant of the
company at Broadway and Thirty-ninth
street, Manhattan, and has questioned
the corporation officials on the principles
of the new system.

The engineer in the formal report to
the board last Friday explains the plan
as follows:

"The principles involved in the con-
struction of the apparatus and the pro-
duction of the music are purely scientific.
The equipment of the company will con-
sist of a distributing plant and a central
station. The distributing plant, of course,
will consist of cables or wires in the
streets, either laid in conduits or strung
on poles with house or building connec-
tions. This is the part for which the
authority is asked in the City of New
York. The central station contains the
apparatus used to generate and control
the music. This consists of, first, numer-
ous alternating current dynamos, so con-
structed that each produces a current of
different frequency of pulsation or cur-
rent waves; and, second, keyboards simi-
lar to that of a piano, upon which the
musicians play in order to produce any
class of music within the range of the
apparatus. The keys are really electric
switches, each controlling an electric
circuit of one or more dynamos. The
frequency of pulsation of the current
produced by each dynamo is identical
with the frequency of sound waves re-
quired to produce a certain musical tone.
These electrical waves are changed into
sound waves by means of the ordinary
telephone receiver. Thus, when the play-
er closes the electric current by oper-
ating the keys upon the keyboard, he
completes an electric circuit which car-
ries the electric waves produced by the
dynamos to the point of music outlet,
such as a dwelling, hotel, restaurant, mu-
sic hall, etc. At the point of music out-
let, a telephone receiver is attached. Here
the pulsation of the current is changed
by means of the diaphragm in the tele-
phone receiver into sound waves having
the same frequency as that of the cur-
rent in the wire. The music thus pro-
duced may be made to imitate closely
other musical instruments, such as piano,
flute, violin, etc. Representatives of the
company state that when a more com-
plete equipment is installed it will be
quite possible to imitate a full orchestra.

"The present plant at Broadway and
Thirty-ninth street consists of 145 dyna-
mos and one keyboard. The President of
the company states that other keyboards
are ordered, and it is expected that the
same will be put in place within a few
weeks. Ten or twelve places outside of
the central station are now connected
by means of the wires leased from the
New York Telephone Company, but the
company states there are a number of
inconveniences involved in this arrange-
ment. It is proposed by the company,
should it get the franchise, to lay its
own wires in the streets, which may be
connected to subscribers' houses or places
of business. Each subscriber will be
provided with one or more outlets, which
may be governed by him as to the kind
of music and volume of the same. He
will be furnished with a switch by which
he can regulate the music either soft or
loud. Another switch will govern the
class of music—that is, he may, by turn-
ing the switch in one direction, get the
effect produced by the piano, or by turn-
ing the switch in another direction, he
may get the effect produced by an or-
chestra."

The representatives of the corporation,
which is called the Cahill Telharmonic
Company, declare that they have not the
slightest idea of what to charge for mu-
sical service, owing to the fact that the
plan is entirely new. Engineer Nichols
suggests that the company be given a
franchise for twenty-five years upon the
following terms:

\$12,500 within thirty days after the sign-
ing of the contract.

\$12,500 within thirty months after the
signing of the contract.

During the first five years, one per cent.
of the gross receipts, to be not less than
5,000 per annum.

During the second five years, two per

cent. of the gross receipts, to be no less
than \$10,000 per annum.

During the third five years, three per
cent. of the gross receipts, to be not less
than \$20,000 per annum.

During the fourth five years, four per
cent. of the gross receipts, to be not less
than \$30,000 per annum.

During the remaining five years, five
per cent. of the gross receipts, to be not
less than \$50,000 per annum.

In addition to the above, the engineer
recommends that the franchise provide
for the free installation of the apparatus
and free service in Bellevue and Allied
Hospitals, and should the Board of Edu-
cation deem that the system would be
of advantage in the assembly halls of the
public schools, for entertainment or in-
struction, the city should be furnished
with service at one-third the rates
charged to the general consumer.