



ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL

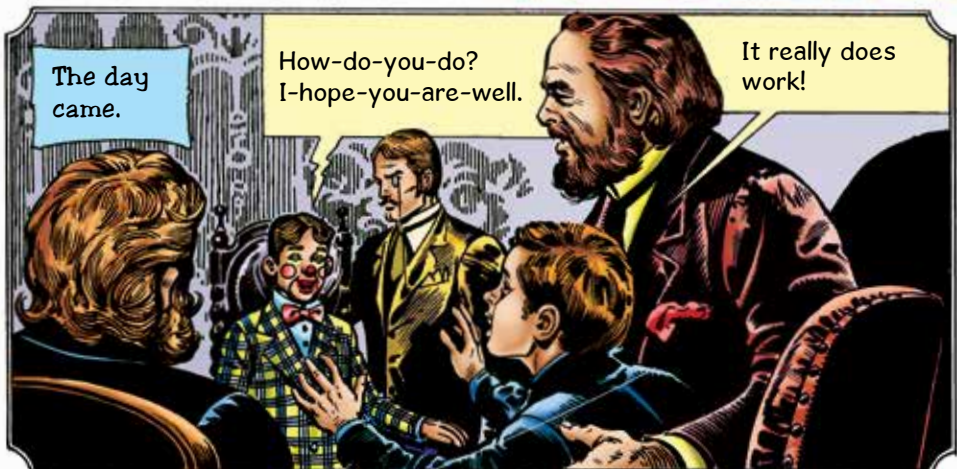
In 1876 a great centennial talk was held in Philadelphia. The guest of honor was Dom Pedro, Emperor of Brazil. Dom Pedro tried a new invention by which the human voice could be carried over a wire.



Dom Pedro thought it was the most remarkable thing in America. But most people thought it only a toy without any useful purpose.

THE  
TELEPHONE







At home, Mr. Bell made his older sons an offer.

My boys, if you can make a figure that talks, I'll give you a prize!

Great!  
We'll do it!



We don't know how the Baron's figure works, but we can figure out from father's books how a person talks. We'll make it that way!



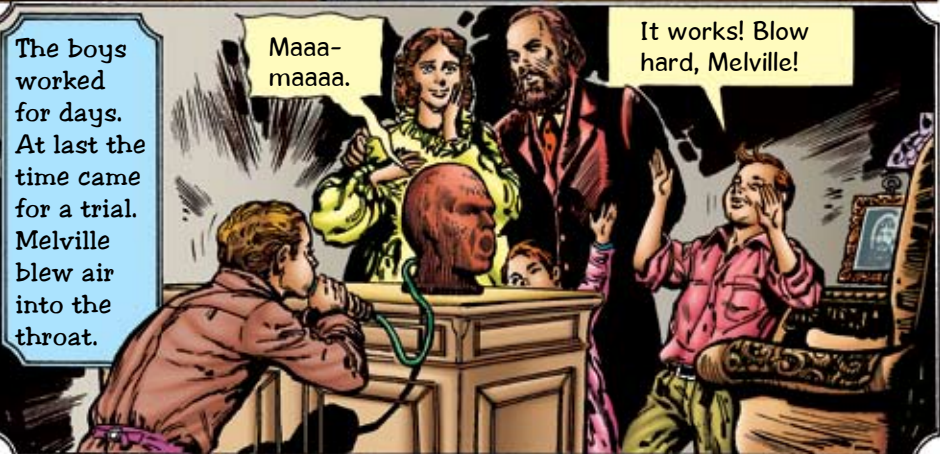
You make the throat with the larynx and vocal cords. I'll make the head of gutta-percha\*, with the mouth and tongue.



The boys worked for days. At last the time came for a trial. Melville blew air into the throat.

Maaa-maaaa.

It works! Blow hard, Melville!



\* a tough plastic substance from the latex of several Malaysian trees that resembles rubber

So Mr. Bell gave up his London career, and they sailed for America. Aleck performed at the ship's concert.

Will ye no come back again?



They reached Quebec on August 1, 1870.

Smell that air! You'll be well in no time!

I'm sure you're right.



They settled near Brantford, a town in Ontario.

A perfect spot to rest. We'll hang a hammock here, Aleck.



And with pillows and a blanket, this will make a perfect sofa seat!



Aleck did a lot of resting there. Also a lot of studying and thinking.



During the winter, he felt well enough to try to work out some of his idea.

Listen to the vibration of the strings. I am using them as tuning.



I hope to work out a harmonic telegraph system so that several messages could be sent at once over one wire.

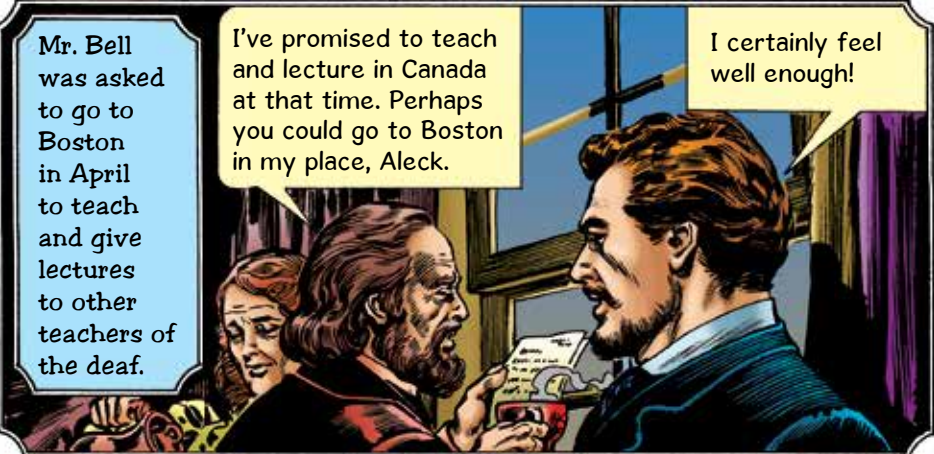
That would be of great value to the telegraph companies.



Mr. Bell was asked to go to Boston in April to teach and give lectures to other teachers of the deaf.

I've promised to teach and lecture in Canada at that time. Perhaps you could go to Boston in my place, Aleck.

I certainly feel well enough!



And you know my theories, my methods, and my alphabet of visible speech as well as I do.

Thank you, father. I would like to go to Boston.

