



FIGURE 1.—DR. RICHARDSON'S VOICE-CONTROL APPARATUS.

A, the U-tube; B, the reservoir bottle; C, one of the mouthpieces; a, a, cork floats; b, b, luminous markers; c, rubber cork; d, flexible tube, armored with metal; e, rubber gas-pipe tip; f, rubber cork.

## TWO SHORT TALES FROM A HISTORY OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS

—FOR GLENN

Speaking of the marvellous borderlands of science, Einstein was of course wrong in his wars with Niels Bohr over the small matter of the quantum world, weightless motes, spores -- a dandelion head, a globe, a universe, light years apart -- invisibly threaded together in clandestine correspondence, so whatever excited one sub-sub of an atom, Bohr shouted, also shivered through its distant Siamese space-time other. *Pshh*, said Einstein, that's claptrap. Spooky action-at-a-distance only makes sense if you are talking vehicle, tenor, metaphor. Are we talking about metaphors, Bohr? What have you been reading, *Wuthering Heights*? The single thing Einstein in fact conceded to at this point, being another Danish butter cookie from Mrs. Bohr, Margrethe, who, years later, also proved instrumental in persuading Niels to let bygones be

bygones. Early wireless apparatuses. Another bold move. Up there in their heyday with the siren theremin, lusty Madame Blavatsky and medicinal cocaine, these experiments aimed to help mediums contact the other shadow world of the dead. Hookahphone hybrids, the invention of free radicals, no roaming charges. One such instrument drew Sir Arthur Conan Doyle by the Midnight Flyer, express from Chicago to Winnipeg, Winnipeg being believe it or not, the last sub-zero stop on the séance circuit, circa 1919. (Just as I thought, he thought, stepping from station into vapour of ice fog. The atmospheric pressure up here is totally dense.) In his notebook, he wrote: *Fifty odd phenomena, including telekinesis table levitation telepathy & tapping (in some old morse code). All recorded under highly controlled conditions -- fraud impossible.* The medium, Eusapia (pronounced with a glottal stop), wore blush T-strap pumps, also noted. Mind you don't tangle the U-tube, Arthur, she said, it's hooked right to the rubber rig entropic, that's my heart. (Accidents can obviously happen with any contraption composed of confounding figures and parts, *Aa, Bb, Cc, etc.*) *Confounding parts!* we heard Bohr shout. He was in another room, hammering at the last intractable problem in physics, the sub-sub mechanics of secret loneliness.

—Christine Wiesenthal