Signor Marconi’s Magic Box: The Most Remarkable Invention Of The 19th Century & The Amateur Inventor Whose Genius Sparked A Revolution. 312 pp., illus., index. Cambridge, Mass.: Da Capo/Perseus Books, 2003. $25 (cloth). Bruce J. Hunt. Bruce J. Hunt. Search for more articles by this author. Stephen P. Weldon Current Bibliography of the History of Science and Its Cultural Influences 2005, Isis 96 (Oct 2015): 1–242. https://doi.org/10.1086/isis.96.3652364. Close Figure Viewer. Signor Marconi’s Magic Box book. Read 12 reviews from the world's largest community for readers. The world at the turn of the twentieth century was in the throes of “Marconi-mania” brought on by an incredible invention that no one could quite explain, and by a dapper and eccentric figure (who would one day win the newly minted Nobel Prize) at the center of it all. At a time when the telephone, telegraph, and electricity made the whole world wonder just what science would think of next, the startling answer had come in 1896 in the form of two mysterious wooden boxes containing a device one Guglielmo Marconi had rigged up to transmit messages “through the ether.” It was the birth of the rad Signor Marconi’s Magic Box. How an Amateur Inventor Defied Scientists. 17 The End of the Affair. 18 Farewell the Pigeon Post. 19 The Power of Darkness. 20 The Hermit of Paignton. 21 The King’s Appendix. It was the most fabulous invention of the nineteenth century. The public and the popular newspapers regarded it as nothing short of miraculous, and the leading scientists of the day in Europe and America, whose discoveries had made it possible, could not understand how it worked. Wireless in its pioneer days had nothing to do with home entertainment: no speech or music was transmitted.