

possible to switch off without making the loud click which is usually made (I presume they are what is known as "tumbler" switches), if instead of being done with a jerk, it is done with a continuous movement; the hand retaining hold until the switch is quite over. The difference is like that between unlocking a door suddenly and doing it gently - the one way being loud & the other silent.

I wonder if you would mind giving your servants who switch off the lights at night a direction to this effect? It would be a great boon to me.

Very truly yours,
Herbert Spencer

Spencer died Dec 8, 1903

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5 Percival Terrace,
Brighton,

January 15, 1903.

Dear Mr Knowles,

I want to ask a small favour of you - one which would merely entail on you the giving of a direction to one of your servants, but which means a great deal to me.

Let me explain first that I am a wretched sleeper. For very many years past my best nights are what most people would call very bad. One fact is that if awakened,

even within a very short time of going to sleep, I cannot get any more for perhaps hours. Though not disturbed by any continuous sound, such as that made by the wind or sea, I am at once awakened by a sudden noise - even the dropping of a cinder from the fire will do this, so that I am obliged to have the fire extinguished before settling down for the night, even in this cold weather.

In the same way it has happened on two or three occasions just lately that I have when on the

point of dropping off, been awakened by what appears to have been the switching off of your electric light in two places adjacent to my room, which is at the back of the drawing room on the first floor. The walls being good conductors of sound, the click made in this switching are quite audible on this side, but of course no one but a very light sleeper, such as I unfortunately am, would be awakened by it.

The favour I have to ask is not a great one. I believe it is quite