

over boulders, where 26 hours of continuous driving may move us 30 miles—go with me in the summer on a similar fight against time and distance, made against the handicap of deep ruts, sand and parching heat. Listen to the roar of huge gas wells liberating the gas of prehistoric marshes where saurian monsters once bellowed, look at the spouting geysers of oil, stored in the ancient rocks of earth since the dawn of creation, now loosed and claimed for the uses of civilized man. Listen to the pulsing beat of huge drills, straining at groaning cables as they bite their way down to the hidden treasure—and in the small hours of the night see hills and valleys and prairies, aglow with twinkling lights, pulsing with activity which never rests or pauses. Adventure?—**Indeed.**

There's another opportunity for women in the life insurance business: A few years ago a girl friend of mine made the remark that she was going into business — would be a bookkeeper, cashier, stenographer—anything that would help her meet business men. What chance had she to meet a real man among the idlers of the

world—the card playing, dancing men.

And so, to women who use their profession as a stepping stone to matrimony, what better opportunity could you ask than the life insurance business.

There's the opportunity for independence. No matter where she finds herself, nor in what financial condition, she can immediately begin to earn her living. Having gained her training in the greatest school of today's wide world—The life insurance business. For, in the language of Bobby Burns:

To catch Dame Fortune's golden smile
Assiduous wait upon her,
And gather gear by every wile,
That's justified by honor.

Not for to hide it in a hedge,
Nor for a train attendant,
But for the glorious privilege—
Of being Independent.

—From "Life Association News."

Fires Caused by Electricity

There are every week throughout the world a large number of fires caused by electric irons. Between seven and eight per cent. of all fires are due to electricity and of this percentage nearly half are due to electric irons. The National Fire Protection Association, U.S.A., in their Quarterly, for July last, mention that in one week in 1918 the reports of electric fires in the United States were segregated, so that the electrical causes of fires could be sub-divided, and the result shows that any household where an electric iron is in use should have, as an adjunct, at least one hand fire extinguisher if not other first-aid fire appliances.

During the week referred to, 540 fires were ascribed as due to electricity. An analysis of these showed that 252 or 47 per cent. were from electric irons, and 82 or 15 per cent. were due to flexible cords. This left 206 or 38 per cent. for all other electrical hazards combined.

The electric pressing iron is undoubtedly one of the most prolific single causes of fire known. When properly used, it is as safe as the old-fashioned smoothing iron, but under the influence of carelessness, it becomes an exceedingly dangerous device. Various features have been added in the attempt to make it fool-proof, but none has thus far proved to be satisfactory.

The misuse of flexible cords, where employed as extensions or circuits or where exposed to severe mechanical injury is responsible for 15 per cent. of our electrical fires. The ordinary householder finds this to be easily handled and not necessarily unsightly, consequently the temptation to the amateur electrician is very great, and leads quite unconsciously to innumerable hazards. Such violations of proper practices are not found when making inspections of new equipments, but are very common in those which have been used for any length of time. Through ignorance, the user of the equipment generally believes himself to be safe, and when attention is called to the hazard he often shows an inspector an extension which has been in use for five or ten years without ever having blown a fuse. Nevertheless, this practice constitutes an ever-present potential hazard, and the older the installation the more serious the hazard is usually found to be.

This consideration leaves 38 per cent. of the electric fires in the week under discussion to be accounted for. Seventy-six of the fires noted were in attics, basements or on side-walls, chiefly

attics and basements, and practically all were traceable to mechanical injury or to inexperienced tampering and proves again the necessity for the installation of first-aid fire appliances in every house using electricity. It is a well-known fact that open wiring is much more subject to unauthorized additions than are either concealed knob and tube or conduit installations. It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that some of these fires were from cord extensions, but several reports indicated the wires to have been subject to mechanical injury.

Defective switches, fixtures, etc., were responsible for nineteen fires and the crossing of trolley or high-tension wires with service wires for 11. Motors were shown to have caused six fires, one of the latter with a loss of £5,000, resulting from the ignition by a fan motor or some hangings in a store, and one was started by the fan motor in a motion picture booth. Defective installation at outlets or other definitely stated locations caused 15 fires, and the remainder were due to a great variety of defects or carelessness, the most interesting being the placing of lamps in beds to warm them. In three cases the absence of lamp guards, resulting in the breakage of lamps, was responsible for a blaze; two of these were in manufacturing plants and one was in a dry-cleaning establishment, where inflammable liquids were used.

Electricity probably has more safeguards thrown around it and receives more inspection than any other hazard, but statistics show it to be still the cause of more fires than spring from any other single hazard.

The figures quoted show beyond a doubt that an almost unbelievably large percentage of electrical fires are due to the careless use or to the absolute misuse of materials and devices, while very few are due to defects in the original installation or in the materials and devices. It would, therefore, seem that education of the public as to the electrical hazards constitutes the only remedy; this is obviously a very long and difficult undertaking.

When users and owners of electrical equipment have learned that these must not be added to or changed except by electricians, and that although "farther's son" can instal a front door bell which works, it does not follow that he can qualify as

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