

## Making the Home Safe For the Homemaker

Defective Electric Wiring a Constant Menace and the Cause of Much Loss

Every man desires to make his home the safest place on earth. Nevertheless it is a tragic fact that thousands of fatal accidents occur in households every year, simply because the homes themselves, or the appliances used in them, are unsafe. Defective electric wiring is one of the commonest causes of these fatalities. As a result of careless, inefficient, or cheap installation of electric fixtures, many homes are in constant danger of destruction by fire. Worse still, the inmates of these homes are exposed to danger of serious, if not fatal, electric shocks. Electric wiring should only be done by competent and conscientious electricians. If workmen possessing these qualifications are not obtainable, it is better to stick to kerosene lamps, dirty and dangerous though they be.

But even when wiring is properly done it is essential that householders should know how to avoid dangers that are inherent in the use of electricity in the homes. The following quotations from a circular issued by the United States Bureau of Standards are of value in this important particular:

"Portable wires to lamps, pressing irons, fans, and other electrical devices used about the house can not of course, be either out of reach or guarded by exterior metal covers . . .

Portable wires in general, impose a greater shock hazard than other parts of the electrical installation. It is largely on account of such wires that the grounding of circuits is so necessary and that the use of sufficiently low voltages for interior wiring is essential. . . . A satisfactory degree of protection is, however, provided by the use of heavy fibrous covers over the insulating coverings of portable cords, and, where cords are used only as pendants, by placing them sufficiently high and making them sufficiently short so that they cannot be much handled or moved about.

The deterioration of such cords, varying with the moisture and the amount of handling to which they are subjected, should be very carefully watched and when an abrasion of the protective covering is noted, the conditions should be promptly corrected. If the cord is very much bent or kinked in handling, there is also the possibility that some of the cord strands will be broken and later pierce the insulating covering and the outside protective covering, thus exposing these almost invisible strands to the contact of persons and imposing a shock hazard on the users. . . . Where the surfaces are very damp and especially where the air may be moist with steam, as in bathrooms, kitchens and laundries, the conditions are especially bad for the deterioration of the cord as well as for the severity of the shock in case the cord is abraded or otherwise injured. For this reason, cords should have special waterproof coverings where used in laundries, bathrooms, and similar places and, in general, the floor on which users stand in such places should be covered with



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### AVOIDING ELECTRIC SHOCKS

The illustration shows the possible danger from shock by the passage of electricity from the metallic, ungrounded fixture C (see insulating ring at base of fixture A), through the body to the grounded water faucet B. Leakage from defective electric appliances is especially dangerous in bath rooms, toilet rooms, kitchens, laundries, etc., because of the frequent dampness of these rooms and the exposed plumbing. If at all possible, it is advisable to have the electric lights in such rooms placed out of reach, controlling them by wall switches near the entrance and well away from all plumbing or other grounded fixtures. It is always dangerous to handle electric switches or appliances when the hands are wet, or even moist.

dry wood, rubber, or other insulating material, and caution observed in handling the cord.

"The use of such cords with portable devices by persons while in bathtubs, or who are likely to touch laundry tubs, kitchen ranges, or other grounded objects, is particularly dangerous. . . . Accidents under these circumstances frequently prove serious or fatal."

### Housing Reform

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While striving to build improved homes in proper localities, we must not forget the "Black Spots" in our cities, where the death rates are high. It is true we work to eradicate these in time by town planning, but it is imperative for the sake of those groveling in the "Black Spots" that we do something to let in daylight and fresh air, and that something at once.

The problem of existing insanitary areas can not be considered before the erection of new dwellings, but both must be dealt with if we are to immediately grapple with the many health and social problems of what are known as slums. We strongly contend that consideration be immediately given to these insanitary "Black Spots" which are the centres of high death rates, due to density of population and all the evils which accompany it. "The greater proximity of man to man, the greater is the mortality" is an axiom laid down by Farr, which finds confirmation by every health administrator.

These "Black Spots" are the centres of tuberculosis and infantile mortality. They are the malignant tumors of

social evils; there, families are huddled together in one or two rooms each, in the tenements. Neither the health visitor, the social worker nor the physician can do much material good whilst the sad conditions found there continue to exist. The united efforts of all these uplifting agencies can do very little material good, unless first man's environments are improved. Pause to consider—place a good healthy man or woman in the evil environments of these "Black Spots". Compel him or her to breathe its vitiated atmosphere, eat and sleep in its dirty and foul rooms and live day in and day out in the company of those condemned to reside therein, and then remember that, not all your social workers, sanitarians, nor the numerous array of those striving to improve him, could avail much to prevent his downfall, unless at the same time, the environment itself is improved. What then shall we say of those who, from their birth, know nothing better and have breathed nothing purer, brighter or more uplifting than the air in these "Black Spots"?

Reader, ask yourself the question: If it were my misfortune, through financial stress, to be compelled to reside in one of these "Black Spots", what would be the effect on my physical and moral condition?

After considering the answer, and in view of your reply, then strive for an immediate improvement of the housing conditions in your locality or the nearest "Black Spot". If you do, then your community life will be improved and ennobled and each province will rise to a higher standard of citizenship, and, e'er long, Canada will be moving forward to attain a

higher standard of national efficiency of which she will have every reason to be proud.—C. A. Hodgetts, M.D.

## Cutting Forest So As To Perpetuate Crop

Conservative Estimates Made For Forest of British Columbia

To maintain the forest capital intact the annual cut must not exceed the annual growth. In British Columbia, it is very much less than the amount which could be cut without endangering the productive capacity of the forest. British Columbia includes a large area and contains so many different site classes that it is difficult to make anything more than a rough estimate of its growth. Moreover, the probable loss from fires must be considered. Again, where natural regeneration is depended upon for reforestation, all degrees of restocking occur, fully restocked areas are the exception rather than the rule. Also, a certain percentage of the area forested with merchantable stand contains mature and overmature timber where the decay approximately offsets the increment.

Selected areas on the coast that were fully restocked have been found to produce an annual increment of 1,000 board feet per acre in forty years growth. Obviously, this figure is much too high for a general average even for the coast where the rate is exceedingly high as compared with the interior. Taking the foregoing factors into consideration, it has been assumed that the average annual increment might be estimated at 100 board feet per acre, over approximately 50,000,000 acres of comparatively accessible timber-land, under reasonably effective protection from fire. This assumption will give 5,000,000,000 board feet as the total average annual increment for British Columbia, and, consequently, this amount could be cut annually without endangering the present forest capital. This is approximately five times the actual annual cut. The results of the investigations undertaken by the Commission of Conservation show that there is 95,580,000 acres capable of producing merchantable timber, but a large part of this area is commercially inaccessible at the present time. With the development of transportation lines, large areas, especially in the interior, will become more accessible. On the whole, therefore, the estimate of 5,000,000,000 feet is considered conservative.—From "Forest Resources of British Columbia", shortly to be published by the Commission of Conservation.

### STICKING TO ONE VARIETY

"Previous to taking up illustration work with the Commission of Conservation in 1917, I was sowing a mixture of different kinds of oats, but since, I have sown American Banner, I find that I have increased yields and my crop is more profitable than it previously was."—Extract from report received from farmer conducting illustration work for the Commission of Conservation, in Dundas county, Ont.