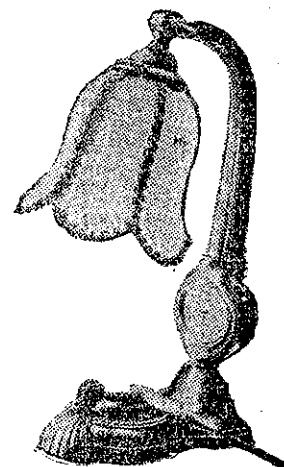


RADIO

The Safest Of All Electrical

The attention of the public was recently drawn to the dangers of interfering with the electrical supply mains by the regrettable fatality which occurred when a young man in Brooklyn was electrocuted while listening on a crystal set attached to the power mains. Below appears a summary of the evidence brought forward at the Coroner's inquest, and also the opinions of two of the leading electrical and radio authorities on the question of radio installation and the resulting electrical hazard.

Appliances



Under certain conditions it is dangerous to operate a set from a table or pendant type lamp socket.

"A CRYSTAL set is a perfectly safe instrument for anyone to use, but if the user, under the mistaken idea that he is improving the working of the set, connects it to the source of electric power in the house, an action which is absolutely unnecessary, he is creating an extremely dangerous condition and running a very grave risk of being electrocuted."

These remarks were made by Mr. T. B. McNeil, S.M., coroner at the inquest on Leigh Holdsworth Auton, the young man who was electrocuted when listening-in recently in a bath at his boardinghouse in Brooklyn, Wellington.

It appears that the deceased had taken a crystal set into the bathroom with him. He had connected the aerial terminal of his set to the mains by running a length of bell wire attached to the "phase" or live terminal of the hot-point switch in his own room through the door, down the passage, and into the bathroom. For an earth he twisted a length of wire around a tap. In adjusting the set a short circuit through his body direct to earth was in some way established, and he was instantly killed.

Apparently deceased was using the mains as an aerial. It appears that he had been in the habit of doing this in his bedroom, where he used the wire mattress of his bed as an earth. That the practise was a very dangerous and a foolish one was stressed by the Coroner: "Although one doesn't like to say it because this young man has lost his life, it is a most foolish act and one almost certain to lead to fatal results. It is to be hoped that owners of sets will take warning

Some Important Don'ts

THE "don'ts" for householders are many, but some of the most important are—

Don't interfere with the plug connection to hot point or lighting point.

Don't interfere with the set while the current is on.

Don't remove the earth wire from the set; it may serve the dual purpose of earth for the radio circuit and protection for the whole set.

Don't under any circumstances use the power supply mains (as was done in the Brooklyn fatality) for aerial or earth wires.

Don't, if the supply plug is in an unsuitable position put in extensions; call in a licensed electrician.

Don't under any conditions use such material as bell wire or other low-grade material to connect your set with the plug.

Don't, if a fuse blows out, replace it yourself. If you have a spare fuse-holder fitted with fuse wire, you may replace the defective one with it, but if you haven't, call in a registered wireman.

connection with the tragedy, and on the question of misuse of electrical apparatus generally, Mr. G. Lauchlan, Assistant General Manager of the Wellington City Council's Electricity Department and chairman of a special committee set up some time ago to investigate the question of radio-set installation, revealed many interesting facts.

The Brooklyn tragedy is of a type fortunately uncommon, and the lesson was so severe that none who read of it will be likely to repeat the folly of connecting a crystal set with the supply mains.

Unfortunately, however, there are many instances of electric radio sets being wrongly connected to the power supply. Over the last few months an increasing number of complaints concerning the blowing out of house-lighting fuses has been received by the Electricity Department. In one month over 20 cases were recorded of people who had reported that their houses, or a portion of them, were in darkness.

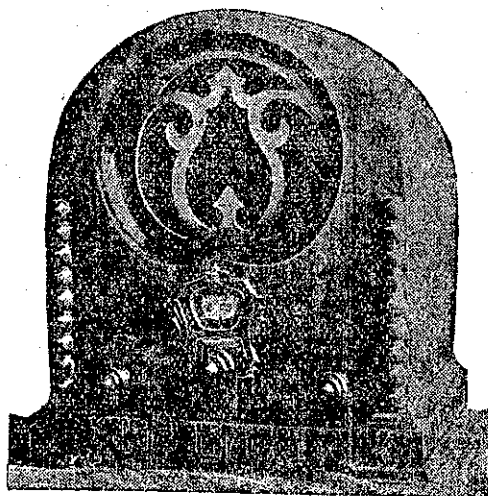
On investigation, it was found that defective radio sets were at the foot of the trouble. These had been wrongly installed or had been interfered with after installation by people who knew nothing of electrical hazards.

In one case an amateur had connected his set, which he had built himself, to a wall-socket by means of several lengths of flex, joined by adaptors. The lead, which passed through two doors, was affixed to the wall by bent-over nails. As would be expected, the house fuse burnt out. His installation was contrary to at least three major regulations.

IN another case, ordinary bell-wire was used to connect the set to the mains—a practice so ridiculous that were it not so dangerous it would be laughable. To an electrician, makeshifts such as these are horrifying—as they would be to the persons themselves if they only knew a little more—and it is this obvious ignorance which makes the few accidents which do occur so pitiful.

The operation of all electric radios from lamp-sockets is in certain circumstances dangerous, and should be discouraged. It is legal only for demonstration purposes, and then only if there is no earthed object, other than the set earth, nearby.

This prohibition is necessary because lamp-socket adaptors may be inserted in two ways—a right and a wrong (*Concluded on page 10.*)



"... All-electric sets, correctly installed, are absolutely harmless, and are the least dangerous of all electrical appliances...."

from this very tragic occurrence.

"My endeavour," he said, "is to draw the attention of the public to the fact that these electrical contrivances when properly used are perfectly harmless. It is when they are misused that they become dangerous."

When interviewed in