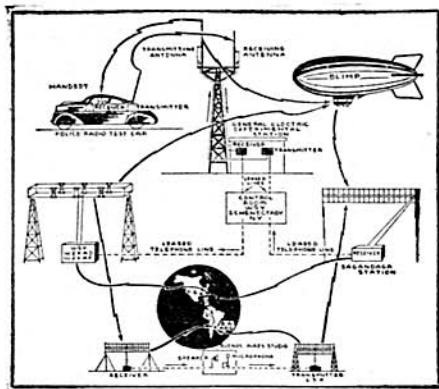


THE RADIO MONTH



Thomas A. Edison—inventor of radio!



The 6,000 mile dirigible, car, radio hook-up.

EDISON—INVENTOR OF RADIO

DURING the celebration, last month, of a Half Century of Electrical Progress, at Schenectady, N. Y., a unique radio conversation between the blimp "Resolute" and a police radio test car was tied in with station LSX in Buenos Aires in a three-way 6,000 mile tie-up. During this conversation, the work done by the late Thomas Alva Edison in 1886 with radio telegraphy was discussed.

An investigation of this date by *Radio-Craft* revealed that Edison was granted a patent on a wireless (radio) system for communicating between moving trains and the telegraph wires running along the right of way. He called this system the "grasshopper telegraph" and the patent (No. 350,234) is the first known radio patent.

This disclosure places the date of the first development of radio at 1886 instead of the date of 1901 at which time Marconi sent his famous "S" across the Atlantic and which most people consider as the beginning of radio. It also makes radio an American invention instead of a European one.

ATWATER KENT DROPS RADIO

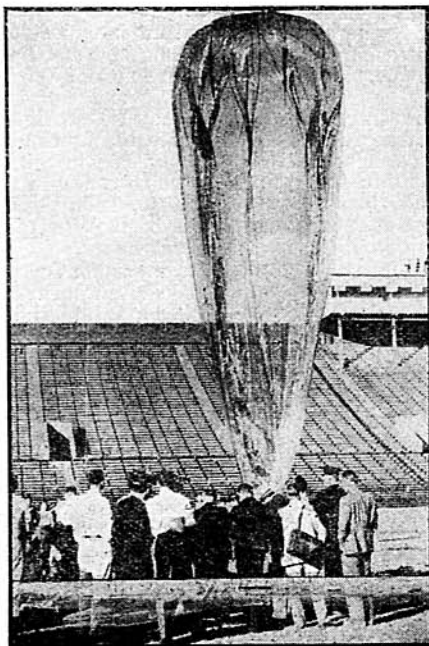
ACCORDING to a reliable report received last month, the Atwater Kent Mfg. Co., one of the oldest manufacturers of radio broadcast receiving equipment, has decided to discontinue the manufacture of radio equipment.

This is a surprising move on the part of one of the old timers in the industry, and while no definite information is available at this time as to what new lines of activities the company will enter, it is rumored that it will concentrate on the electric refrigerator business. However, from sources close to A. Atwater Kent, founder and president of the concern, it is learned that he may be preparing to retire from business, as he has already accumulated a large fortune.

RADIO AND THE CELLOPHANE BALLOON

LAST month, Professor Jean Piccard who is well known for his work in flying into the stratosphere to record cosmic ray activity, and other scientific phenomena, tried a new way to reach high altitudes by sending aloft a "pilotless" pink cellophane balloon which was equipped with recording devices and a radio transmitter which would automatically send records of the height, wind velocity, barometric pressure, cosmic ray activity, etc.

Unfortunately, the automatic transmitter failed shortly after the start of the flight which prevented a running record of the flight to be made.



AIR CRASH AFTERMATH

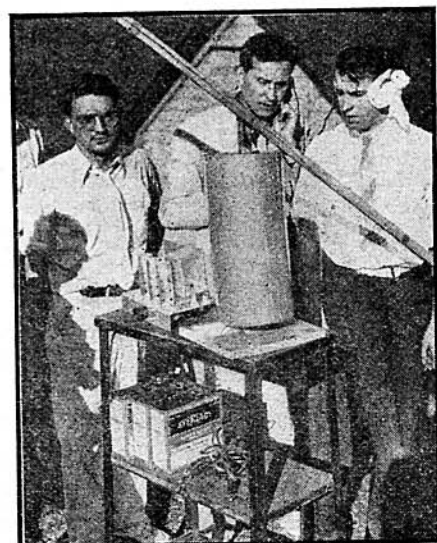
A SENATE committee report last month recalled an air catastrophe reported in these columns in August 1935 and again in January 1936. We refer to the tragic crack-up of the TWA air liner "Sky Chief" in which Senator Bronson Cutting and four fellow passengers were killed.

The Senate Committee, which has heard witnesses and taken testimony for many months, has finally issued a report which reads, in part:—"The pilot was dependent on three aids to navigation furnished by the Bureau of Air Commerce; dependability of the northeast leg of the Kansas City radio range; normal operation of the radio station MRL at Kirksville, Mo., and the best efficiency on the three rotating light beacons on the last 20 miles southwest of Kirksville airport." The report concludes tersely: "All three failed him."

The Senate Committee recommended to the Secretary of Commerce "That he thoroughly overhaul the Bureau of Air Commerce with a view to improving its administrative officials." Two specific instances of inefficient administration were cited with a suggestion that the two men in question be replaced.

This Senate report thus completely vindicates the Air Line, placing the entire blame on the Air Commerce navigation aids. Thus the situation parallels that of a lighthouse on a treacherous coast with the light out on stormy night—the responsibility for an accident would rest entirely with the lighthouse keeper and his superiors.

This fatal accident points out vividly the importance which radio is assuming in many diversified industries, only one of which is aviation.



Above, Piccard's automatic transmitter failed. Left, the pink cellophane stratosphere balloon.