



RADIO

Obsolescence is No Worry To Purchaser of Radio

Television and Static Free Broadcasting Are Both So Far in the Future That Consumers May Forget Them

DEMONSTRATIONS of successful television and improved static-free radio have brought inquiries from readers who are worrying about whether they should buy new radio sets, of present type, or whether they ought to wait for combination television-radio sets of superior type.

The answer, agree manufacturers, is that television and the new system of broadcasting that eliminates static interference are both so far in the future that there is no need for delay.

Both television and the new broadcasting system, invented by Major Edwin H. Armstrong, work on ultra-high frequency waves. This means that their range of reception is not much over the line-of-sight distance from a tall skyscraper like those in New York; say over a distance of about 50 miles. On some rare occasions there may be freak reception over longer distances—as in the recent case of British television programs being received on Long Island—but for real service 50 miles is nearly the maximum.

Along with this limited reception is the difficulty of using high frequency television, or static-free radio on a nationwide network. It requires very cost-

ly special coaxial cable to handle the high frequencies over wires and a nationwide link of such cable is distinctly in the future. It probably will come eventually but the development is years away.

All of which means that the programs of television and the new radio system will be distinctly local affairs and in terms of entertainment this means that the extravagant, costly radio shows with high-priced talent probably will be the exception. The high cost of the better radio programs is justifiable only when a vast nationwide audience can be reached.

To answer the question one can say "Your 1939 radio will have years of service lasting as long as the set remains in operation."

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ORNITHOLOGY

Nest Protection Aids Eider Ducks' Return

EIDER-down quilts and pillows used to be made from the down of eider ducks. They aren't any more, because merciless hunting by the commercial down gatherers has made eider ducks

very scarce. There is considerable danger that the species may be exterminated.

In the face of this un-cheerful situation, a report from the little Baltic republic of Esthonia is encouraging. On the tiny island of Filsand and its neighboring reefs is a great rookery of several kinds of sea birds, including about 700 eider ducks.

Less than thirty years ago there was only one pair of the ducks. Then a measure of protection was given them, which has been greatly increased since the war-time birth of the republic through the zeal of two ornithologists, Arthur Toom and F. E. Stoll. Protection given during Czarist days helped the eider duck colony to grow to a population of 50. The efficacy of the protection given under the new republican regime is shown by more recent figures: 600 in 1933, and 700 at the close of 1938.

The adult ducks need little assistance, but their young and eggs have many enemies, particularly several species of gulls that permanently inhabit the island and the reefs, and during migrating times the great northern raven. The gulls are kept from increasing to overwhelming numbers by raiding their nests and destroying the eggs. The eider ducks themselves have learned to frustrate their raven foes by sitting tight on the nests while the latter are about.

The human population of the island has a history of increase almost as remarkable as that of the ducks. At the beginning of the eighteenth century a Dutch ship was wrecked on the hitherto uninhabited island. The captain and the survivors of the crew settled there, took wives and reared families, until now there are 170 persons living on Filsand, all descended from this original group. They have all become interested in the preservation of the eider ducks and willingly assist the efforts of the ornithologists.

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