



VOLUME XXXVII

JULY 5th—DECEMBER 27th, 1935.

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INDEX—VOLUME XXXVII

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The following abbreviations used after page numbers will save time and labour by indicating the nature of the reference, thus giving an idea of its value or otherwise, to the intending reader. *B.B.* = Broadcast Brevities. *Constr.* = Constructional article. *Corres.* = Correspondence. *Edit.* = Editorial. *Gen.* = General article. *H.T.* = Hints and Tips. *Illus.* = Illustration. *L.G.* = Listeners' Guide. *News* = News of the Week. *R.P.* = Readers' Problems. *S.P.* = Short paragraph *Appar. Commer.* = Apparatus, Commercial. *C.N.* = Club News. *F.G.* = Free Grid. *R.R.* = Random Radiations. *Rec. Commer.* = Receivers, Commercial. *Prelim. Art.* = Preliminary Article. *Parts* = List of Parts.

GENERAL INDEX

ABACS:

- VI. Transmission of Sidebands by a Tuned Circuit, 68
- VII. Design of Iron-cored Chokes and Transformers Carrying AC only, 84
- VIII. Design of Gapped Iron-cored Chokes and Transformers Carrying DC, 108
- IX. The Comparative Efficiency of Gapped and Ungapped Chokes and Transformers Carrying DC, 262
- Automatic Calculator, 7 (*Appar. Commer.*)
- Resistance and Condenser Calculation, 39
- Abyssinia, 423 (*B.B.*); 359, 395, 419, 584 (*C.T.*); 459 (*Edit.*); 470 (*S.P.*)
- Acoustics in the Open, 351 (*S.P.*)
- Accumulators, 23, 67, 120, 240 (*Corres.*); 42, 399 (*H.T.*); 290, 482 (*R.P.*); 478, 520 (*R.R.*)
- AC/DC Receivers, 281 (*R.R.*)
- Addis Ababa and Radio Reporters, 423 (*B.B.*)
- Aerial Development during Forty Years, 344, 368, 397, 468 (*Gen.*)
- Aerials, 300 (*H.T.*); 337 (*Corres.*); 360 (*R.P.*); 384 (*R.R.*)
- African Broadcasting Corporation, 615 (*C.T.*)
- Air-Cored Inductances, 490 (*Gen.*)
- Aircraft Landing Systems, 439 (*C.T.*); 567 (*Gen.*)
- All-Mains Receivers and Power Consumption, 432 (*R.R.*)
- Wave Receivers, 152, 536 (*R.R.*); 153 (*Gen.*); 477, 602 (*Corres.*)
- Amateur Performers in America, 91 (*R.R.*)
- Transmitters, 532 (*S.P.*)
- Transmitters and Licences, 467 (*C.T.*)
- Transmitters Repeat History, 491 (*C.T.*)
- America, 54, 78, 347, 370, 467, 584, 615, 639, 661 (*C.T.*); 407 (*B.B.*)
- and Wireless Traffic via England, 502 (*R.R.*); 517 (*C.T.*)
- American Annual Radio Prizes, 546 (*C.T.*)
- High Power Stations, 273 (*C.T.*)
- High Quality Receiver, 23, 67 (*Corres.*)
- Receiver Census by Telephone, 503 (*R.R.*)
- Receivers, 37 (*R.R.*); 78 (*News*)
- Amplifiers, L.F., 678 (*Pat.*)
- Screen-Grid, 608 (*Pat.*)
- Amsterdam and Wireless Masts, 347 (*C.T.*)
- Anglo-American Radio and Television Society, 422 (*C.N.*)
- Anode Current and Tuning, 42 (*H.T.*)
- Anti-Noise League, 78 (*News*)
- Apparatus Reviewed (*see under* APPARATUS, COMMERCIAL, and RECEIVERS, COMMERCIAL)
- Arabia, 192 (*C.T.*)
- Argentina, 107 (*C.T.*)
- Armistice Day, 467 (*C.T.*)
- Athlone to Relay America, 250 (*Gen.*)
- AT THE TRANSMITTING END, 438, 478, 508, 516, 540, 558, 581, 621, 660
- Atmospherics, 264 (*R.P.*)
- Australia, 273, 661 (*C.T.*); 651 (*B.B.*)
- Australia's Oldest and Youngest Operators, 273 (*C.T.*)
- Wave Changes, 439 (*C.T.*)
- Austria, 661 (*C.T.*)
- Automatic Guide, 661 (*C.T.*)
- Noise Level Control, 434 (*F.G.*)
- Record Changers (*see Record Changers*)
- Selectivity Control (*see A.S.C.*)
- Squeal Control, 408 (*F.G.*)
- Tuning Receiver, 154 (*S.P.*)
- Volume Control (*see A.V.C.*)
- Autumn Overhaul, 384 (*R.R.*)
- Avanti Ferranti, 504 (*F.G.*)
- A.R.R.L., 347 (*C.T.*)
- A.S.C., 377, 554 (*Gen.*)
- A.V.C., 122, 264, 482 (*R.P.*); 348 (*Gen.*); 433 (*Corres.*); 630 (*Pat.*)

BACKGROUND Noises, External (*see under* TROUBLE, EXTERNAL)

— Noises from Mains or Receiver (*see under* TROUBLE, INTERNAL)

Baffles (*see under* LOUD SPEAKERS)

- Balloons, 227, 314 (*F.G.*)
- Battery or Mains, 246 (*Gen.*)
- Receivers, 477 (*Corres.*)
- Receivers and H.T. Supply, 602 (*Corres.*)
- Receivers and Quality, 158 (*Corres.*)
- Baseball, 439 (*C.T.*)
- B.B.C.:
- Abyssinia, 359 (*C.T.*)
- Alan, A. J., 313 (*B.B.*)
- Alexandra Palace (*see under* TELEVISION)
- Alternative Programmes, 566 (*F.G.*)
- American Relays, 236 (*B.B.*)
- Ashbridge, Sir Noel, 479 (*B.B.*)
- Askew, Paul, 575 (*B.B.*)
- Autographs, 160 (*B.B.*)
- Autumn Plans, 260 (*B.B.*)
- Backward Children, 505 (*B.B.*)
- Bata, 652 (*R.R.*)
- Beaumaris Station, 384 (*R.R.*)
- Beerbohm, Max, 547 (*B.B.*)
- Bewley Station, 520 (*R.R.*)
- Bisley Broadcast, 91 (*R.R.*)

APART from the General Index, the following twelve classified indices, arranged alphabetically, are provided for the convenience of readers:—

- APPARATUS (Commercial).
- APPARATUS (Constructional).
- BOOKS.
- BROADCASTING STATIONS.
- LOUD SPEAKERS.
- RECEIVERS (Commercial).
- RECEIVERS (Constructional).
- SHORT WAVES.
- TELEVISION.
- TROUBLE (External Interference).
- TROUBLE (Internal).
- VALVES.

- Boulton, Dr. Adrian, 376 (*B.B.*)
- Breakdown Apologies, 423 (*B.B.*)
- Brewer, Charles, 457
- Bridgeman, Caroline Viscountess, 479 (*B.B.*)
- Bridgeman, Viscount, 219 (*C.T.*)
- Bridgewater, Leslie, 479 (*B.B.*)
- Broadcasting House, 376, 615 (*B.B.*)
- Broadcasting House Statistics, 376 (*B.B.*)
- Brooklands Broadcast, 359 (*C.T.*)
- Budapest Broadcast, 194 (*B.B.*)
- Burghead Testing, 601 (*B.B.*)
- Buses, 92, 651 (*B.B.*)
- Cairo Relay, 359 (*C.T.*)
- Cannell, J. C., 505 (*B.B.*)
- Carpendale, Vice-Admiral Sir Charles, 194, 238 (*B.B.*)
- Censorship of Programmes, 97 (*Edit.*); 200 (*Corres.*)
- Changes, 56 (*R.R.*)
- Christmas Holidays, 676 (*B.B.*)
- Christmas Programmes, 601 (*B.B.*)
- Cissies, 260 (*B.B.*)
- Clark, Edward, 376 (*B.B.*)
- Clark, J. Beresford, 92 (*B.B.*)

B.B.C.:

- Classify Broadcasts for Regular Hours, 655 (*Edit.*)
- Cock, Gerald, 160, 457, 547 (*B.B.*)
- Collins, Al, and Orchestra, 676 (*B.B.*)
- Conductors on Turntable, 324 (*F.G.*)
- Cup Final Broadcast, 358, 432 (*R.R.*); 423 (*B.B.*)
- Current Topics, 336 (*B.B.*)
- Cycling, 530 (*B.B.*)
- Dance Band Audition, 575 (*B.B.*)
- Dance Band Director, 92 (*B.B.*)
- Debates, 338 (*B.B.*); 520 (*R.R.*)
- Deputy Director-General, 238 (*R.R.*)
- Dog Damages, 651 (*B.B.*)
- Droitwich Heard in Australia, 651 (*B.B.*)
- Early Memories Broadcast, 313 (*B.B.*)
- Eckersley, R. H., 66 (*B.B.*)
- Edinburgh Announcer's Oversight, 547 (*B.B.*)
- Educational Broadcasts, 478 (*R.R.*); 530 (*B.B.*)
- Effects Department, 483 (*Edit.*)
- Egyptian Relay, 313 (*B.B.*)
- Empire Broadcasting, 1, 577 (*Edit.*); 15, 43, 230, 336, 376, 479 (*B.B.*); 82, 578 (*Gen.*); 604 (*R.R.*)
- Engineers' Self-effacement, 505 (*B.B.*)
- Errors in Scrapbooks, 638 (*F.G.*)
- Erratic Work in Control Room, 631 (*Edit.*)
- Experimental Broadcasts, 423 (*B.B.*)
- Flat Dance Band Transmissions, 602 (*Corres.*)
- Fletcher's Flying Squad, 676 (*B.B.*)
- Football Broadcasts, 376 (*B.B.*)
- Football Commentaries and Cold Feet, 674 (*R.R.*)
- Gilliam, Lawrence, 625 (*B.B.*)
- Graves, Cecil, 92, 625 (*B.B.*)
- Greene, Felix, 575 (*B.B.*)
- G.W.R. Centenary, 236 (*B.B.*)
- Hall, Henry, 15, 43, 160, 376, 407, 457 (*B.B.*)
- India Reception, 1 (*Edit.*); 120 (*Corres.*)
- In Town To-night, 505 (*B.B.*)
- Kelley, Kneale, 92 (*B.B.*)
- Keying of Programmes, 638 (*F.G.*)
- Johnstone, Maurice, 376 (*B.B.*)
- Lawrence, Brian, and Orchestra, 676 (*B.B.*)
- Little Nationals, 281 (*R.R.*)
- Lotbiniere, S. J., de, 160 (*B.B.*)
- Magic Lantern Idea, 530 (*B.B.*)
- Maida Vale, 92, 479, 615 (*B.B.*)
- Maschwitz, Eric, 92, 287, 505, 575 (*B.B.*)
- Master Mixer, 324 (*F.G.*)
- McCormick, Jack, and Orchestra, 676 (*B.B.*)
- "Memories," 547 (*B.B.*)
- Menzies, Major, 575 (*B.B.*)
- Murray, Gladstone, 66, 92 (*B.B.*)
- Music Hall Audiences, 313 (*B.B.*)
- Music Hath Charms Broadcast, 457 (*B.B.*)
- National Anthem, 43 (*B.B.*)
- Naval Review Broadcast, 91 (*R.R.*)
- New Dance Band, 160 (*B.B.*)
- New Mixer Panel, 336 (*B.B.*)
- New Year's Celebrations, 625 (*B.B.*)
- New Year's Resolutions, 676 (*B.B.*)
- New York Office, 236, 336, 575 (*B.B.*)
- News Agencies, 291 (*Edit.*)
- Nicolls, B. E., 194 (*B.B.*)
- Night Falls on Slow-on-the-Uptake Broadcast, 457 (*B.B.*)
- Norman, Ronald Collett, 407 (*B.B.*)
- North-Eastern Regional Station, 520 (*R.R.*)
- North Scottish Regional Testing, 601 (*B.B.*)
- Observatory, 504 (*B.B.*)
- O'Donnell, B. Walton, 194 (*B.B.*)
- Old Crocks' Race, 676 (*B.B.*)
- Olympia Broadcasting, 236 (*B.B.*)
- Olympia Religious Service, 194 (*B.B.*)
- Olympia Sideshows, 239 (*Gen.*)
- "On the Spot" Broadcast, 575 (*B.B.*)
- Opera Profests, 530 (*B.B.*)
- Outside Broadcasts and More Scope, 25 (*Edit.*)
- Paderewski, Ignace, 370 (*C.T.*)
- Parliamentary Responsibility, 652 (*R.R.*)
- Payne, Jack, 43 (*B.B.*)
- Performing Right Society, 160, 530 (*B.B.*)

B.B.C.:

- Pneumonia Plays, 566 (F.G.)
- Programme Preservation, 505 (B.B.)
- Programme Timing, 521 (R.R.)
- Programmes Relayed by Berlin, 359 (B.B.)
- Promenade Concerts, 66 (B.B.)
- Promotions, 194 (B.B.)
- Rat-Catcher Broadcast, 505 (B.B.)
- Raymond and Orchestra, 676 (B.B.)
- Recording Over Long Land Line, 15 (B.B.)
- Recording Rooms at Maida Vale, 479 (B.B.)
- Record and Alternative Programmes, 566 (F.G.)
- Records or Live Turns, 505 (B.B.)
- Reith, Sir John, 119, 194 (B.B.)
- Ribbon Microphones, 15 (B.B.)
- Robb, Eustace, 287 (B.B.)
- Robey, George, 676 (B.B.)
- Ronald, Sir Landon, 395 (C.T.)
- Roy, Harry, 191 (R.R.)
- Royal Christening Broadcast, 423 (B.B.)
- Royal Command Variety Performance, 358 (R.R.)
- Saturday Magazine, 313, 376 (B.B.)
- Scarlet Pimpernel Broadcast, 676 (B.B.)
- Schools Broadcast, 43 (B.B.)
- Schools for Mentally Defective Children, 505 (B.B.)
- Scott and the Antarctic, 119 (B.B.)
- Scottish Regional Interval Signal, 313 (B.B.)
- Scottish Signal Strength Variations, 43 (B.B.)
- Scrapbooks, 601 (B.B.)
- Scrapheaps and Scrapbooks, 547 (B.B.)
- Sharman's Shows, 160 (B.B.)
- Should Advertise its Programmes, 553 (Edit.)
- Siepmann, C. A., 66 (B.B.)
- Snooker Commentary from Thurston's, 547 (B.B.)
- Song Plugging, 433 (Corres.)
- Staff Changes, 66, 92 (B.B.)
- Standard Frequency Broadcasts, 120 (Corres.)
- Statistics at Broadcasting House, 376 (B.B.)
- Sunspot Control, 505 (B.B.)
- Symphony Orchestra Mystery, 194 (B.B.)
- Tallents, Sir Stephen, 66, 119, 313, 625 (B.B.)
- Tatfield, 313 (B.B.)
- Telescope, 505 (B.B.)
- "The Little Show" Broadcast, 458 (R.R.)
- Time Signal, 194 (B.B.)
- 25, Portland Place, 119 (B.B.)
- Ullswater Committee, 25 (Edit.); 92, 336, 457, 530, 651, 676 (B.B.); 152 (R.R.)
- Unemployed Conductors, 201 (F.G.)
- Unrehearsed Debates, 673 (R.R.)
- Use of Gramophone Records, 314 (F.G.)
- Variety of Music, 313 (B.B.)
- Verifications, 260 (B.B.)
- Volume Control, 483 (Edit.); 574 (Corres.)
- Wallace, Edgar, 575 (B.B.)
- Waterloo and Maida Vale, 15 (B.B.)
- Waterloo Studio, 457 (B.B.)
- Watt Bicentenary, 676 (B.B.)
- Wellington, R. E. L., 66 (B.B.)
- Welsh Relay Station, 384 (R.R.)
- Whitley Council, 119 (B.B.)
- Wildest Warwickshire, 423 (B.B.)
- Women Announcers, 37 (R.R.); 313 (B.B.)
- Wooky Hole Broadcast, 160 (B.B.)
- Wright, Kenneth, 376 (B.B.)
- Wynn, Roland, 359 (R.R.)
- Young Ideas Programme, 336 (B.B.)
- Becham, Sir Thomas, 504 (F.G.)
- Belgium, 107 (News); 219 (C.T.)
- Bell Telephone Co. and Load Lines, 432 (R.R.)
- "Best" Receiver, 432 (R.R.)
- Bias, Automatic, 360 (R.P.)
- Birth in Transmitter Room, 273 (C.T.)
- Blind Aids: Talking Books, 463 (Gen.)
- Landing at Heston, 459 (C.T.)
- Landing Systems for Aircraft, 567 (Gen.)
- Radio Playwrights, 651 (B.B.)
- Wireless for, 584 (C.T.)
- Blueprints for the Home Constructor, 605
- Bohemian Nights Entertainment, 665 (F.G.)
- Bombing of Power Stations, 411 (Edit.); 433 (Corres.)
- Bradford Experimental Radio Society, 422, 494 (C.N.)
- Braillard, Raymond, 615 (C.T.)
- Brazil, 370 (C.T.)
- Bridge Broadcast between U.S.A. and Buenos Aires, 467 (C.T.)
- Bringing an Old Set Up to Date; Ekco Model S.H. 25 DC, 412 (Gen.)
- Britain and Broadcasting: Leslie Bailey's Tour, 436, 464, 602, 492, 518, 560, 616 (Gen.); 546, 584 (C.T.)
- British Receivers Abroad, 44, 67 (Corres.); 107 (News)
- Broad Humour, 552 (F.G.)
- BROADCAST BREVITIES, 15, 43, 66, 92, 119, 160, 194, 236, 260, 287, 313, 336, 376, 406, 423, 457, 479, 505, 530, 575, 601, 625, 651, 676
- Broadcasting (see under B.B.C.)
- Stations (see under BROADCASTING STATIONS)
- Brussels Wavelength Bureau, 301 (C.T.)
- Buenos Aires Wavelength Plan, 261 (Gen.)
- Bulgaria, 301 (C.T.)
- Bulgin Circuits, 325 (C.T.)
- Bulldog and Wireless Danger, 376 (C.T.)
- Byrd, Admiral, 370 (C.T.)
- B.E.R.U., 107 (News)
- Books Received (see under BOOKS)

CABINETS, 311 (R.R.)

- Cairo Radio Conference, 370 (C.T.)
- Campbell Swinton, the Pioneer, 591 (Gen.)
- Car Radio, 78, 135, 419, 584, 661 (C.T.); 190 (R.R.)
- Radio in America, 563 (C.T.)
- Catalogues Received (see under BOOKS)
- Cathode Ray (see under TELEVISION and VALVES)
- Chelmsford Passes, 358 (R.R.)
- China, 648 (Corres.)
- Children, and Women Broadcasters, 503 (R.R.)
- Chinese Children's Hour, 337 (R.R.)
- Choke Design, 18 (Gen.)
- Input Filters, 644, 672 (Gen.)
- Choosing a Dealer, 435 (Edit.)
- a Milliammeter, 589 (S.P.)
- a Receiver, 162, 590 (Gen.); 600 (H.T.)
- the Intermediate Frequency, 26 (Gen.)
- Christmas, 577 (Edit.); 586 (F.G.)
- Christmas Issue, 577 to 607
- Radio Greetings, 615 (C.T.)

Cinema Quality, 44 (Corres.)

- CLUB NEWS, 422, 494
- Co-axial Cable, 312 (R.R.)
- Coils, Air-Cored, 490 (Gen.)
- Colonial Broadcasting Service, 651 (B.B.)
- Commercial Enquiries, 203
- Commercial Products (see under APPARATUS, COMMERCIAL and RECEIVERS, COMMERCIAL)
- Components (see under APPARATUS, COMMERCIAL)
- Compton Organ, 395 (C.T.)
- Condenser Testing, 42 (H.T.)
- Condensers for Very Long Wavelengths, 572 (R.P.)
- Contrast Expansion, 374 (Gen.); 433, 508, 574 (Corres.)
- Constructional Articles (see under APPARATUS, CONSTRUCTIONAL and RECEIVERS, CONSTRUCTIONAL)
- CORRESPONDENCE, 23, 44, 67, 120, 158, 200, 240, 280, 316, 337, 382, 433, 477, 508, 574, 602, 628, 648, 674
- Coughlin, Father, 517 (C.T.)
- Counter-Irritants, 504 (F.G.)
- Crocodile-clip Tool, 399 (Illus.)
- Croupiers and Music, 526 (F.G.)
- Croydon Radio Society, 422, 494 (C.N.)
- Wireless and Physical Society, 494 (C.N.)
- Crystal-Controlled Oscillators, 630 (Pat.)
- Fault-Detector, 300 (H.T.)
- Receiver Range, 23 (Corres.)
- Receivers, 238, 312 (R.R.); 382, 433 (Corres.); 411 (Edit.)
- Cup Final Broadcast, 504 (F.G.)
- CURRENT TOPICS, 10, 31, 54, 78, 107, 135, 192, 219, 245, 273, 301, 325, 347, 370, 395, 419, 439, 467, 491, 517, 546, 563, 584, 615, 639, 661
- Customs and Portables, 325 (C.T.)
- Czechoslovakia, 423 (B.B.)

DANCE Music, 191 (R.R.)

- Data Charts (see Abacs)
- Day and Night Range, 208 (R.P.)
- Deaf Aid Frequency Generator, 121 (Gen.)
- Aids, 155, 402 (Gen.)
- and Headphones, 432 (R.R.)
- Dealers: Whom to Choose, 435 (Edit.)
- Window Competition, 201 (F.G.)
- Death Ray, 191, 604 (R.R.); 301 (C.T.)
- Ray and Police, 324 (F.G.)
- Denmark, 31, 78, 273, 301, 467, 563 (C.T.)
- De Profundis, 619 (F.G.)
- Depth-Sounding Apparatus for Wreck-Location, 326 (Gen.)
- Development of the Wireless Aerial, 344, 368, 397, 468 (Gen.)
- Dials, Tuning, 338 (R.R.)
- Distant Reception Notes (see RECEPTION NOTES)
- Distortion (see under TROUBLE)
- Divorce and Wireless, 618 (R.R.)
- Does Broadcasting Serve Britain? (see Britain and Broadcasting)
- Dry-Contact Oscillators, 678 (Pat.)
- Dublin's New Announcer, 517 (C.T.)
- Dutch Scientist, 526 (F.G.)
- D.F., 326, 567 (Gen.); 439, 491 (C.T.); 608 (Pat.); 618 (R.R.)

EALING Radio Society, 494 (C.N.)

- Early Morning Broadcasting on Sunday, 347 (C.T.)
- Earth, 506 (Gen.)
- Earth's Axis, 615 (C.T.)
- Echoes in Public Address Systems, 503 (S.P.)
- Ekco Service Centre, 601 (C.T.)
- EDITORIAL COMMENT, 1, 25, 49, 73, 97, 125, 161, 209, 241, 265, 291, 317, 339, 361, 387, 411, 435, 459, 483, 509, 533, 553, 577, 609, 631, 655
- Educational and Talks Broadcasting Station, 339 (Edit.)
- Egypt, 359, 439 (C.T.)
- Electrical Interference (see under TROUBLE)
- Organ, 119 (B.B.)
- Electric Lighting Installations, 406, 500 (R.R.)
- Electrocutting, 301 (C.T.)
- Electron Theory, The, 573 (Gen.)
- Electronics, 573 (Gen.)
- Electrostatic Meter Faults, 392 (S.P.)
- Emergency Broadcasting, 411 (Edit.); 433 (Corres.)
- E.M.T. and R.C.A., 536 (R.R.)
- Empire Broadcasting (see B.B.C.)
- Broadcasts, 82 (Gen.)
- English from Foreign Stations, 44 (Corres.)
- Language and Wireless Nomenclature, 536 (R.R.)
- Esperanto, 301 (C.T.)
- Excess Filament Voltage Dangers, 146 (H.T.)
- Exide Luncheon, 439 (C.T.)
- Exponential Horns (see under LOUD SPEAKERS)

EXHIBITIONS:

- Berlin, 192, 325 (C.T.); 248 (R.R.)
- Berlin and Olympia Compared, 277, 306 (Gen.)
- Berlin: Fire, 248 (Illus.)
- Berlin Show Report, 266
- Berlin: Television Exhibits, 248 (R.R.)
- Bristol, 325 (C.T.)
- Brussels, 419 (C.T.)
- Edinburgh, 395 (C.T.)
- Glasgow: List of Exhibitors and Plan, 251
- Imperial Airways, 563 (C.T.); 615 (Illus.)
- Inventions, 370, 395 (C.T.)
- Lisbon, 639 (C.T.)
- Manchester, 325 (C.T.)
- Manchester: List of Exhibitors and Plan of Stands, 338
- Need for Demonstrations, 265 (Edit.)
- Olympia, 36, 152, 238 (R.R.); 66, 160 (B.B.); 97, 125, 161 (Edit.); 107, 135 (C.T.); 121 (Corres.); 346 (F.G.)
- Olympia: A Critic of Quality, 226 (Gen.)
- Olympia: Anti-Interference Illustrations, 192 (C.T.)
- Olympia: Diallist's Views, 249 (Gen.)
- Olympia: Electric Organ, 236 (B.B.)
- Olympia: Forecast—Car Radio, Playing Desks, Public Address and Miscellaneous Apparatus, 131 (Gen.)
- Olympia: Forecast—Components, 149 (Gen.)
- Olympia: Forecast—Gramophone Accessories, 152 (Gen.)
- Olympia: Forecast—Loud Speakers, 141 (Gen.)
- Olympia: Forecast—Receivers, AC Mains, 126 (Gen.)
- Olympia: Forecast—Receivers, All-Wave, 131 (Gen.)
- Olympia: Forecast—Receivers, Battery, 130 (Gen.)
- Olympia: Forecast—Receivers, Universal, 129 (Gen.)
- Olympia: Forecast—Valves, 159 (Gen.)
- Olympia: Imhof's Van (Illus.)
- Olympia: List of Exhibitors, 139, 206
- Olympia: Loud Speaker Improvements, 230, 274 (Gen.)
- Olympia: Mechanical Highlights, 234 (Gen.)

EXHIBITIONS:

- Olympia: Need for Scientific Section, 317 (Edit.)
- Olympia: New Receiver Designs, 210 (Gen.)
- Olympia: New Season's Components, 222 (Gen.)
- Olympia: Plan, 138, 207
- Olympia: Quality of Reproduction, 226 (Gen.); 280, 316, 382 (Corres.)
- Olympia: Religious Service, 194 (B.B.)
- Olympia: Scarcity of Novelties, 209 (Edit.)
- Olympia: Show Report, 168
- Olympia: Sideshows, 239 (Gen.)
- Olympia: Valves for 1936, 237 (Gen.)
- Olympia: Variety Broadcasting, 236 (B.B.)
- Olympia: Year's Factory Output Sold, 452 (F.G.)
- Paris, 245, 273 (C.T.)
- Paris: Baby Grand Receiver, 325 (Illus.)
- Paris Show Report, 328 (Gen.)
- Shipping, 273 (C.T.)
- Stoke-on-Trent, 347 (C.T.)

FACTORY Music, 526 (F.G.)

- Factory, The Receiver Through, 195 (Gen.)
- Farmer and Stock-Breeder Supplement, 370 (C.T.)
- Ferranti Factory: How a Receiver is Made, 195 (Gen.)
- Finland: 500 Kilowatts, 305 (Gen.)
- Fluorescent Screens, 23 (Corres.)
- Foundations of Wireless:
 - XXVI. More About the Frequency Changer, 21 (Gen.)
 - XXVII. The IF Amplifier: Filters, 46 (Gen.)
 - XXVIII. Detection and AVC, 70 (Gen.)
 - XXIX. Power for the Set, 94 (Gen.)
- Foreign Listening Ban in Germany, 301 (C.T.)
- Receiver Market, 316 (B.B.)
- Fotoliptofono, The, 527 (S.P.)
- Four Cardinal Points, The, 431 (Gen.)
- Frame-Aerials, 653 (R.P.)
- France, 10, 31, 54, 107, 192, 245, 301, 325, 347, 395, 584, 615, 639, 661 (C.T.)
- Anti-Interference Campaign, 325 (C.T.)
- Anti-Pirates' Campaign, 467, 491, 546 (C.T.)
- Licence Collection, 395 (C.T.)
- Listening Post, 301 (C.T.)
- Regional Scheme, 273 (C.T.)
- Radio University, 419 (C.T.)
- Wakes Up, 388 (Gen.)
- Franco-American Broadcasts, 615 (C.T.)
- Free Grid, 194 (B.B.); 508 (Corres.)
- Frequency Generator for Audio Tones, 121 (Gen.)
- or Wavelength, 337 (R.R.)
- Future of Broadcasting, 190 (R.R.)

GALLIPOLI and E.E.F. Dinner, 584 (C.T.)

- Ganging and Reaction, 42 (H.T.)
- a Receiver, 600 (H.T.)
- Superheterodynes, 122 (R.P.)
- Gangsters, 324 (F.G.)
- General Election, 471, 552 (F.G.); 520, 560 (R.R.)
- Generator for Audio Tones, 121 (Gen.)
- Germany, 31, 54, 395 (C.T.); 503 (R.R.)
- Through the Eyes of, 306 (Gen.)
- George II and Electrical Research, 34 (Gen.)
- Good Old Days Again, 57 (Gen.)
- Start for the New Set, 317 (Gen.)
- Gramophone Pick-ups (see Pick-ups)
- Record Changers (see Record Changers)
- Recording (see Recording)
- Greyhounds and Public Address, 135 (News)
- Guarantees, 311, 406, 453 (R.R.)

HAPPY Event, 273 (C.T.)

- Hartley Circuit, 572 (R.P.)
- Hayburn, F. S., 639 (C.T.)
- Headphones for the Deaf, 432 (R.R.)
- for Reception, 502 (R.R.); 609 (Edit.)
- Heavy Starting Current, 488 (H.T.)
- Herd, J. F., Obituary, 245 (C.T.)
- H.F. Stages, 482 (R.P.)
- High Fidelity (see Quality of Reproduction)
- Fidelity and Definition Cable, 312 (R.R.)
- Fidelity in the Home, 220 (Gen.)
- Quality (see Quality of Reproduction)
- Water Laws, 471 (F.G.)
- HINTS AND TIPS, 42, 144, 300, 399, 488, 600
- H.M.V. and the Railway Companies, 520, 604 (R.R.)
- Holland, 347, 661 (C.T.)
- Home Recording (see Recording)
- Hopper Upper, 458 (R.R.)
- Hospital Radio, 260 (B.B.); 337 (Corres.); 407 (C.T.)
- Hotel Receivers in New York, 238 (R.R.)
- How Sensitive Need a Set Be? 610 (Gen.)
- Howard Grand Receiver, 23 (Corres.)
- Howling (see under TROUBLE, INTERNAL)
- H.T. Accumulators (see Accumulators)
- Supply for Battery Receivers, 602 (Corres.)
- Huey Long, 347 (C.T.)
- Huizen Closes Down, 248 (R.R.)
- Hum (see under TROUBLE, INTERNAL)
- Hungary 423 (B.B.); 563 (C.T.)

I.B.U. (see U.I.R.)

- Iceland Telephone Service Opened, 135 (C.T.)
- I.D.A., 54 (C.T.); 260 (B.B.)
- I.E.E., 467 (C.T.)
- Impedance Measurement, 653 (R.P.)
- India, 395 (C.T.); 575, 651 (B.B.)
- Indian Broadcasting Service, 651 (B.B.)
- Inductances, Air-cored, 490 (Gen.)
- Infra-red Noctovision, 281 (R.R.)
- Instability (see under TROUBLE, INTERNAL)
- Installation Problems, 217 (Gen.)
- Institute of Physics, 78 (C.T.)
- Institution of Electronics: Coursey's Lecture on Electrolytic Condensers, 584 (C.T.)
- Interference (see under TROUBLE)
- International Broadcasting and Abyssinia, 411 (Edit.)
- I.R.E., 10 (C.T.)
- Ireland, 54 (C.T.)
- I.S.W.C., 494 (C.N.)
- Italy, 78 (C.T.)

JAPAN, 10, 301 (C.T.)
 Japanese Language and Broadcasting, 219 (C.T.)
 Jellicoe, Admiral of the Fleet Earl, 423 (B.B.)
 Johnson, Dr., Up-to-date, 552 (F.G.)
 Just Think What Two Can Do, 629 (Gen.)

KANIMBLA, 661 (C.T.)
 Kerr Memorial Lecture by David, 615 (C.T.)
 Kidnappers, 652 (R.R.)
 Kilocycles or Metres, 337 (R.R.)
 Knobs, 311 (R.R.)

LABORATORY Tests (see under APPARATUS, COMMERCIAL)
 Land Lines, G.P.O., 508, 603 (Corres.)
 Large-Deflection Tuning Indicator, 216 (Gen.)
 Laughter in Court, 491 (C.T.)
 League of Nations, 419 (C.T.)
 L.F. Amplifier Economy, 290 (R.P.)
 — Amplifier Tests, 300 (H.T.)
 — Amplifiers, 678 (Pat.)
 Licences: Amateur Transmitters, 467 (C.T.)
 — British, 439, 546, 639 (C.T.)
 — Danish, 31 (C.T.)
 — French, 31, 78, 301, 395, 467, 661 (C.T.)
 — German, 31, 54, 78, 325 (C.T.)
 — Norwegian, 517 (C.T.)
 — R.M.A. Forecast, 245 (C.T.)
 Listeners' Association, 604 (R.R.); 648 (Corres.)
LISTENERS' GUIDE, 16, 40, 62, 88, 114, 144, 166, 228, 256, 282, 308, 332, 354, 378, 400, 427, 450, 474, 498, 524, 550, 570, 594, 622, 646, 670
 Locating Wrecks, 326 (Gen.)
 Long Distance Reception, 120 (Corres.)
 — Huey, 347 (C.T.)
 Lost Milliwatts, 193 (Gen.)
 Loud Speaker Warnings from the Air, 639 (C.T.)
 — Speakers (see under LOUD SPEAKERS)
 Low Power Transmission Club Proposed in America, 563 (C.T.)
 Lucerne Plan and Germany, 503 (R.R.)

MAGNETRON Organ, 395 (C.T.)
 Mains or Battery, 246 (Gen.)
 — Trouble (see under TROUBLE, INTERNAL)
 Malaya, 575 (B.B.)
 Manchester, 54 (C.T.)
 Manufacturer's Products (see under APPARATUS, COMMERCIAL and RECEIVERS, COMMERCIAL)
 Manx Broadcasting Station, 219 (C.T.)
 Marconi, Guglielmo, 370, 615 (C.T.)
 — Works Busy, 78 (C.T.)
 Marine Wireless, 56 (R.R.)
 Married Man's Receiver, 434 (F.G.)
 Mast to Ground Communication, 407 (B.B.)
 McNeil's Infra-Red Noctovision, 281 (R.R.)
 Metal Rectifiers (see under VALVES)
 Meter Faults, Electrostatic, 392 (S.P.)
 Metres or Kilocycles, 337 (R.R.)
 Midland Autoclub, 287 (B.B.)
 Milk Episode, 566 (F.G.)
 Millimeter, Choosing a, 589 (S.P.)
 Modern Quality Receiver (see under RECEIVERS, CONSTRUCTIONAL)
 Modernising An Old Set; Ecco Model S.H.25.D.C., 412 (Gen.)
 Modulating Systems, 608 (Pat.)
 Morse, Learning, 67 (Corres.)
 Motor Boating (see under TROUBLE, INTERNAL)
 Multiple Signalling, 576 (Pat.)
 Murphy "Bookmaker's Friend" Receiver, 452 (F.G.)
 Music and Radio Merger, 135 (C.T.)

NATIONAL Acoustics Sunday, 407 (B.B.)
 — Radio Sunday, 407 (B.B.)
 Navy and Cheaper Radio, 584 (C.T.)
 N.B.C., 575 (B.B.); 639, (C.T.)
 Neon Indicators, 146 (H.T.)
 Neon Lamps (see under VALVES)
 New Apparatus (see under APPARATUS, COMMERCIAL)
 — Guinea, 54, 491 (C.T.)
 — Tuning Indicator, 418 (Gen.)
 — York Hotel Receivers, 238 (R.R.)
 — Zealand, 467 (C.T.)
 — Zealand Parliamentary Debates Broadcast, 584 (C.T.)
 News in Erse, 530 (B.B.)
 Newsagents and the B.B.C., 291 (Edit.)
 1935 Progress Figures, 656 (Gen.)
 90-Day Guarantees, 311 (R.R.)
 Northern Ireland, 467 (C.T.)
 North Manchester Radio Society, 494 (C.N.)
 Norway, 219, 439 (C.T.); 287, 457 (B.B.)
 Novelists and Wireless, 562 (R.R.)
 N.R.E.A., 273, 395 (C.T.)

OBITUARY, J. F. Herd 245, (C.T.)
 On the Spot (see under BROADCASTING STATIONS)
 Oscillation (see under TROUBLE, INTERNAL)
 Oscillator Output, 360 (R.P.)
 — Simple Test, 300 (H.T.)
 — Testing, 208 (R.P.)
 Oscillators, Crystal-Controlled, 630 (Pat.)
 — Dry-Contact, 678 (Pat.)
 Ostrich and Microwaves, 201 (F.G.)
 Output Choke Design, 18 (Gen.)
 — Transformers and Valve Age, 208 (R.P.)
 Overheated Waves, 479 (B.B.)

P.A., 220, 574 (Corres.); 351, 503 (S.P.); 406 (R.R.); 509 (Edit.); 552 (F.G.)
 Paderewski, Ignace, 370 (C.T.)
 Palestine, 419, 439 (C.T.); 575 (B.B.)
 — Broadcasting Company, 651 (B.B.)

Papua, 54, 491 (C.T.)
PATENTS, 576, 608, 630, 654, 678
 Peace Sold by Radio, 407 (B.B.)
 Penny-in-the-Slot Radio, 370 (C.T.)
 People's Receiver, 54, 639 (C.T.)
 Permanent Magnet Industry, 204 (Gen.)
 Permeability of Nickel Iron Alloys, 337 (Corres.)
 Phono-Reel, The, 557 (Gen.)
 Photocells (see under VALVES)
 Photograms of the Year, 615 (C.T.)
 Pick-up Accident, 370 (C.T.)
 — Terminals for HF Feed, 122 (R.P.)
 Picture Transmission, Miscellaneous, 370 (C.T.)
 Pirate Transmitters, 37 (R.R.)
 Pirates and P.M.G., 54 (C.T.)
 Ploughing Mystery, 227 (F.G.)
 Poland, 54, 192, 491 (C.T.)
 Police and Death Ray, 324 (F.G.)
 — Radio, 111, 406 (R.R.); 273, 491 (C.T.)
 Political Trivialities, 471 (F.G.)
 Polyglot Announcers in France, 584 (C.T.)
 — Stations, 54 (C.T.)
 Portables on Alps, 347 (C.T.)
 — and Customs, 325 (C.T.)
 — for Special Occasions, 346, 352 (F.G.)
 — "Just Think What Two Can Do," 629 (Gen.)
 — (see also under RECEIVERS)
 Portugal, 639 (C.T.)
 Portuguese People's Receiver, 639 (C.T.)
 Pounds, Yards and Quarts of Radio, 454 (Gen.)
 Poznan, 612 (S.P.)
 Prague, 665 (F.G.)
 Prison Radio, 219, 491 (C.T.)
 Progress in 1935, 656 (Gen.)
 Propaganda Station Proposed, 1 (Edit.)
 Push-Pull, 290 (R.P.)
 — Fed from Diode, 208 (R.P.)

Q.A.V.G. (see A.V.C.)
 Quality of Reproduction, 23, 44, 67, 121, 280, 316, 477 (Corres.); 35, 193, 220, 226 (Gen.); 399 (H.T.); 563 (C.T.)
 Queen Mary's Equipment, 502 (R.R.)

RADIO Data Charts (see Abacs)
 — INDUSTRY, 14, 45, 65, 118, 205, 231, 284, 307, 330, 353, 369, 398, 425, 473, 529, 569, 592, 645
 — Industry Forges Ahead, 636 (Gen.)
 — Maximo Arvo, 346 (F.G.)
 R.A.F., 31, 245, 615 (C.T.)
 Railroad Radio, 347 (C.T.)
RANDOM RADIATIONS, 6, 36, 56, 91, 111, 152, 190, 238, 248, 281, 311, 337, 358, 384, 406, 432, 458, 478, 502, 520, 536, 562, 604, 618, 652, 673
 R.C.A. and E.M.I., 536 (R.R.)
 Reaction Control, 208 (R.P.)
READERS' PROBLEMS, 122, 208, 264, 290, 360, 482, 572, 655
 Receiver, Choosing a, 162, 590 (Gen.)
 — Through the Factory, The, 195 (Gen.)
 — Specifications and Measurements, 454 (Gen.)
 Receivers Reviewed (see under RECEIVERS, COMMERCIAL)
 Recent Inventions (see PATENTS)
RECEPTION NOTES, 20, 104, 191, 254, 299, 343, 410, 446, 487, 549, 597, 635
 Record Changers, 346, 434 (F.G.); 433 (Corres.)
 Recorded and Live Programmes, 546 (C.T.)
 — Programme Rumour, 619 (F.G.)
 Recording, Commercial, 44 (Corres.)
 — for the Blind, 463 (Gen.)
 — at Home, 324 (F.G.); 553, 655 (Edit.); 674 (Corres.)
 — News Broadcasts, 347 (C.T.)
 — on Newsprint, 527 (S.P.)
 — with the Phono-Reel, 557 (Gen.)
 — Telephone Conversations, 5 (Gen.)
 — with Simplot Sound Discs, 630 (Appar. Commer.)
 Rectification: High and Low Voltage Compared, 133 (Gen.)
 Re-creating an Old Set (see Second-hand Receivers)
 Regent's Park Open-Air Theatre, 245 (C.T.)
 Reinartz Again, 563 (C.T.)
 Reindeer Stampede, 287 (B.B.)
 Relays, 31 (C.T.)
 — in Blackpool, 135 (C.T.)
 — Remote Control, 408 (F.G.)
 Reporter and Somnolence, 638, 665 (F.G.)
 Resistance Gadget, 488 (H.T.)
 Romania, 192 (C.T.)
 Roosevelt and Radio, 419 (C.T.)
 Roosevelt's Microphones, 563 (C.T.)
 R.S.G.B., 107, 347, 419, 615, 639, 661 (C.T.)
 R.S.N.I., 325 (C.T.)
 Russia, 107 (C.T.)

SCANDINAVIA, 273, 301, 439, 401 (C.T.)
 Science Museum, 439 (C.T.)
 — Museum Receiver, 337 (Corres.)
 Scott in the Antarctic, 536 (R.R.)
SCREENED Downloads and Ganging, 360 (R.P.)
 — Reaction Leads, 122 (R.P.)
 — Watch Wanted, 408 (F.G.)
 Screening in Steel-framed Buildings, 208 (R.P.)
 Screwdrivers and Systoflex, 42 (H.T.)
 Scribers, 146 (H.T.)
 Second-hand Receivers, 361, 387, 411 (Edit.)
 — Receivers: Circuit and Performance, 416 (Gen.)
 — Receivers: How to Retrim and Re-adjust Them, 514 (Gen.)
 — Receivers: Making a Choice, 415 (Gen.)
 — Receivers: Overhauling the Loud Speaker, 453 (Gen.)
 — Receivers: Re-creating an Old Set, 447, 495 (Gen.)
 Selectivity Control, 377 (Gen.)
 — Variable, 405 (Gen.)
 Sensitivity, Selectivity, Quality and Power, 431 (Gen.)
 — and the Set, 610 (Gen.)

Service Recorder, 56, 111 (R.R.)
 — Recording, 67, 120 (Corres.)
 Servicing, 458, 502, 618 (R.R.); 648 (Corres.)
 — by Aeroplane, 563 (C.T.)
 Set Reviews (see under RECEIVERS, COMMERCIAL)
 Sets (see under RECEIVERS)
 Ship as Broadcasting Station, 661 (C.T.)
 Ships Without Wireless, 358 (R.R.)
 Short Waves (see under SHORT WAVES)
 Signals Officers Dinner, 584 (C.T.)
 Silence Zone, 107 (C.T.)
 Silent Tuning, 654 (Pat.)
 Simultaneous Picture Transmission, 370 (C.T.)
 — Reception of Normal and Short Waves, 531 (Gen.)
 Slade Radio, 422 (C.N.)
 Sleeplessness Cured by Electricity, 408 (F.G.)
 Small Superheterodyne, The, 444 (Gen.)
 Smallest Receiver, 107 (C.T.)
 Smoothing (see under TROUBLE, EXTERNAL)
 Somnolent Reporter, 638, 665 (F.G.)
 S O S at Sea, 618 (R.R.)
 Sound-proof houses, 458 (R.R.)
 South Africa Broadcasting, 152 (R.R.)
 — American Broadcasting, 261 (Gen.)
 — Sea Islands Commentary, 504 (F.G.)
 Speaking Books, 463 (Gen.)
 — Newspaper, 527 (S.P.)
 Stampede of Reindeer, 287 (B.B.)
 Static (see under TROUBLE, EXTERNAL)
 Statistics, 661 (C.T.)
 — of Electric Lighting, 560 (R.R.)
 Stone-Age Methods, 434 (F.G.)
 Subterranean Aircraft Beacon, 567 (Gen.)
 Sun Spots and Telescope, 526 (F.G.)
 Superheterodyne, The, 122, 290, 482, 572 (R.P.); 278 (S.P.); 358 (R.R.); 399 (H.T.)
 — Choosing the Intermediate Frequency, 26 (Gen.)
 — Small Receivers, 444 (Gen.)
 — Whistles, 302 (Gen.)
 Sweden, 78, 439, 491 (C.T.)
 Swiss People's Receiver, 107 (C.T.)
 Switzerland, 78, 347, 370 (C.T.)

TALKING Books, 463 (Gen.); 676 (B.B.)
 — Newspaper, 527 (S.P.)
 Talks and Educational Broadcasting Station, 339 (Edit.)
 Taxi Radio, 419, 661 (C.T.)
 Technical Language, 278 (S.P.)
 Telecord, 5 (Gen.)
 Telephone Girl With Golden Voice, 7 (R.R.)
 — Load Lines as an Indicator of Broadcast Popularity, 432 (R.R.)
 Telescope and Sun Spots, 526 (F.G.)
 Television (see under TELEVISION)
 Test Oscillator, Simple, 300 (H.T.)
 Time Base Circuit, 367 (Gen.)
 Tone Compensation, 252 (Gen.); 316 (Corres.)
 — Control, 576 (Pat.)
 Town Criers, Mechanical, 238 (R.R.)
 Transatlantic Telephony Changes, 502 (R.R.); 517 (C.T.)
 Transmitters, 608 (Pat.)
 Transmitter and Receiver Difference, 572 (R.P.)
 Transmitter in a Bomb-proof Shelter, 612 (S.P.)
 Tuning, 608, 678 (Pat.)
 — Dials, 338 (R.R.)
 — Indicator, 146 (H.T.); 216, 418 (Gen.)
 — Knobs, 311 (R.R.)
 — Silent, 654 (Pat.)
 Two-Programme Reception, 531 (Gen.)
 — Sets for All, 517 (C.T.)

U.I.R., 10, 31, 419, 615 (C.T.); 56, (R.R.); 376, 407, 423 (B.B.)
 UNBIASED, 30, 87, 112, 140, 200, 227, 314, 324, 346, 408, 434, 452, 471, 504, 520, 552, 566, 586, 619, 638, 665
 Universal Receiver, 81 (Gen.)

VALVES (see under VALVES)
 Variable Selectivity, 2, 26, 405, 600 (Gen.); 653 (R.P.); 654, 678 (Pat.)
 Vocational Receivers, 346, 452 (F.G.)
 Voltage Measurement, 508 (Corres.)
 Volume Controls for Extension Loud Speakers, 391 (Gen.); 508 (Corres.)

WAPPING Fire, 434 (F.G.)
 Warsaw, 31 (C.T.)
 Waveband, Restricted, 360 (R.P.)
 Wavelength or Frequency, 337 (R.R.)
 — Nomenclature, 604 (R.R.)
 Weather and Wireless, 54 (C.T.)
 Whistles (see under TROUBLE)
 Wireless Classes, 301 (C.T.)
 — Engineer, The: American Appreciation, 660 (S.P.)
 — Engineer, The: Index of Technical Contributions, 573 (S.P.)
 — League, 563 (C.T.)
 — Statistics, 661 (C.T.)
 — Terms, 72 (S.P.)
 — World Diary, 467 (C.T.)
 Woman Engineer in America, 54 (C.T.)
 Wrecks, Locating, 326 (Gen.)

YEAR'S Progress, 656 (Gen.)

CLASSIFIED INDEX

APPARATUS (Commercial)

(For Receivers, Loud Speakers and Valves, see under respective headings)

Autolog, Hudsons, 384 (Review)
 B.A.T. Line Resistor, 45 (Review)
 Benjamin Valveholder, 118 (Review)
 B.R.C. Short-Wave Converter, 284 (Review)
 British Television Supplies, Ltd., Chassis for Variable-Selectivity IV, 523 (Review)
 Bryce Choke for Monodial, 104 (Illus. and brief details)
 B.T.S. Triple-Range S.W. Coil, 284 (Review)
 Bulgin Components, 118 (Review)
 — Five-Way Multi-Switch, 476 (Review)
 — Half-Watt Resistances, 507 (Review)
 — I.F. Transformer, 356 (Review)
 — Q.P.P. Output Choke, 45 (Review)
 Bulldog Giant Power Battery, 315 (Review)
 Burgess Snaplite, 677 (Review)
 Burne-Jones Magnum Multi-Contact Switch, 45 (Review)
 Calibrator, Hudson's Direct Reading Station, 384 (Review)
 Challis Television Mains Transformer, 45 (Review)
 Chapman Spiral Scale Indicator, 20 (Gen.)
 Claude Lyons B.A.T. Line Resistor, 45 (Review)
 Clix S.W. Valveholder, 315 (Review)
 Coils, Air-Cored, 490 (Gen.)
 Colvern Short-Wave Coils, 456 (Review)
 Compton Organ, 395 (C.T.)

Deaf Aid Frequency Generator, 121 (Gen.)
 Eddystone Components, 93 (Review)
 — Metal Cabinets, 375 (Review)
 Electrical Research Association's Short-Wave Interference Detector, 216 (Illus.)
 Epoch Microphone, 569 (Review)
 Erka Toroidal Mains Transformer, 375 (Review)

Ferranti AC 12C Amplifier, AC Push-Pull, 446 (Review); 470 (Correction)
 — Resistances, 677 (Review)
 Formo Short-Wave Coils and Condenser, 507 (Review)
 Fotoliptofono, The, 527 (Gen.)
 Frequency Generator for Audio Tones, 121 (Gen.)
 Fuller H.T. Accumulators, 456 (Review)

Generator for Audio Tones, 121 (Gen.)
 Goltone Bull-Dog Connectors, 569 (Review)
 Hinderlich Microphone Stand, 476 (Review)
 H. J. Bennett Microphone, 643 (Review)
 Hudson Direct-Reading Station Calibrator, 384 (Review)

Inductances, Air-Cored, 490 (Gen.)
 Kabi Ganged Switches, 569 (Review)
 — Ganged Potentiometer, 476 (Review)
 Lightning Calculator, 7 (Review)

Magnetron Organ, 395 (C.T.)
 Magnum Multi-Contact Switch, 45 (Review)
 Microfuses, Ltd., Low Current Fuses, 521 (Review)
 M.R. Microphone, 356 (Review)

Olympia Forecast, 149 (Gen.)
 — Exhibits, 222 (Gen.)
 P.A. in Theatres, 200 (Corres.)
 Peak High Voltage Condensers, 284 (Review)
 Presto Plug Adaptor, 507 (Review)
 Prism Portable Amplifier, 677 (Review)

Raymart Components, 677 (Review)
 Reliance Power Potentiometer, 93 (Review)
 — Turntable, 476 (Review)
 Rothermel's Noise-Master All-Wave Aerial, 624 (Review)

Scientific Supply Stores, Ltd., Components for the Short-Wave Two, 569 (Review)
 Shaftesbury "Bio-Tran" Microphone, 93 (Review)
 Siemens' New Ballast Resistor, 522 (Gen.)
 Simplat Sound-Recording Discs, 630 (Brief Details)
 Sound Sales Choke for Monodial, 104 (Brief Details)
 — Sales 485 K.C./S. Transformers, 315 (Review)
 Sterling H.T. Battery, 624 (Review)
 Strattons Eddystone Components, 93 (Review)

T.M.C. Varidep Microphone, 118 (Review)
 Utility Short-Wave Condensers, 375 (Review)
 Varidep Microphone, 118 (Review)
 Varley Air-Tune I.F. Transformer, 456 (Review)
 Varley Variable Selectivity Transformers, 653 (R.P.)
 Vexel Ribbon Microphone, 624 (Review)

Wavemeter for Ultra Shorts, 28 (Gen.)

APPARATUS (Constructional)

(For complete Receivers, see under RECEIVERS, CONSTRUCTIONAL.)

Air-cored Inductances, 490 (Gen.)
 Meter, Universal Test, 58 (Gen.); 117 (Correction); 200 (Corres.)
 Modulated Test Oscillator, 44, 158, 602 (Corres.)
 Monodial, 1938: Feeder Unit for Push-Pull Quality Amplifier, 299 (Announcement); 318 (Constr.)
 Oscillator, Modulated Test, 44, 158, 602 (Corres.)
 Push-Pull Quality Amplifier: Feeder Unit for 1936 Monodial, 299 (Announcement); 318 (Constr.)
 — Pull Quality Amplifier: Feeder Unit for Ordinary Receivers, 164 (Constr.); 200 (Illus.); 621 (Correction)
 Quality Amplifier, Push-Pull (see Push-Pull)

Resistance and Capacity Bridge, 614 (Parts); 632 (Constr.)
 Test Meter, 58; 117 (Correction); 200 (Corres.)
 Universal Test Meter, 58 (Gen.); 117 (Correction); 200 (Corres.)

BOOKS

Amateurs Handbook, The, 417
 British Standard Specification for Components for Radio-Interference Suppression Devices, 106
 Bulgin's Circuit Book, 643
 CATALOGUES RECEIVED, 48, 353, 356, 643, 650
 Cathode-Ray Tube at Work, The, John F. Rider, 497
 Claude Lyons' "Helping Hand" Catalogue, 353
 Collins' Wireless Diary, 546 (C.T.)

Electrical Encyclopedia, S. G. Blaxland Stubbs, 404
 Fundamentals of Radio, The, 148
 Goltone Catalogue, 356
 Guide to Amateur Radio, 419 (C.T.)

Handbook of the Radio Direction Finder, F. G. Loring, 624
 In Town To-night, J. C. Cannell, 505
 Interference Suppression, 9

Les Ondes Courtes et Ultra-Courtes: Lewis Application. P. Hémardinquer et H. Piraux, 255

Manchester Evening Chronicle Wireless Annual, 370
 Matter and Motion. A Supplementary Text-Book for Students of Elementary Physics and Chemistry, C. H. Creasey, 233
 Measurement of Inductance, Capacitance and Frequency, 53
 Modern Radio Communication, J. H. Reyner, 466

Noise. A Comprehensive Survey from Every Point of View, N. W. McLachlan, 199

Photo-Electric and Selenium Cells, 53
 Practical Electrician's Pocket Book, The 1936, 660

Radiotechnica, E. Montu, 233

Sullivan's "Electrical Standards" Catalogue, 650
 Television, 148
 — Really Explained, P. J. Risdon, 592
 Through the Weather House, 29

Wireless Engineer Technical Index, 573
 — Trader Year Book, 517 (C.T.)

BROADCASTING STATIONS

Addis Ababa, 395, 584, 639 (C.T.)
 Algiers, 347, 370, 395, 419, 615 (C.T.)
 American Stations, 245; 584 (C.T.)
 Athlone, 250, 517 (C.T.)

Brasov, 255 (Illus.); 661 (C.T.)
 Broadcasting Stations, List of (Ordinary Wavelengths), 24, 123, 288, 385, 480, 496, 547, 606
 — Stations, List of (Short Wavelengths), 124, 289, 385, 481, 607
 Brussels, 661 (C.T.)
 Budapest, 419 (C.T.)

Cologne, 78 (C.T.)
 Cracow, 563 (C.T.)

Fecamp, 347 (C.T.)

Geneva, 419 (C.T.)

Heilsberg, 31, 325 (C.T.)
 Huizen, 419 (C.T.)
 — Closes Down, 10 (C.T.)

Jerusalem, 419, 439 (C.T.)
 Juan-Les-Pins, 78 (C.T.); 618 (Illus.)

Leipzig, 78 (C.T.); 384 (R.R.)
 Lisburn, 92 (R.B.)
 Luxembourg, 395 (C.T.)

Moscow, 661 (C.T.)

Paris, Eiffel Tower, 107 (C.T.)
 — Radio Paris, 192, 419 (C.T.)
 Port Moresby, 491 (C.T.)

Radio Alger (see Algiers)
 — Cote d'Azur (see Juan-Les-Pins)
 — Maroc (see Rabat)
 — Normandie (see Fecamp)
 Rome, 419 (C.T.)

Saarbrücken, 395 (C.T.)
 Sottens, 517 (C.T.)
 Stockholm, 419 (C.T.)

Tokio, 419 (C.T.)

LOUD SPEAKERS

Baffles, 296 (Gen.)
 Balloons in Jutland, 295 (Illus.)
 Celestion Speakers, 72 (Gen.)
 Cone Diaphragm Distortion, 666 (Gen.)
 Cossor Extension Loud Speaker, 476 (Brief Details)

Extension Leads, 290 (R.P.)
 — Volume Controls, 391 (Gen.); 508 (Corres.)
 Extensions and Erratic B.B.C. Control Room, 631 (Edit.)

French Anti-Noise Campaign, 245 (C.T.)

Garden Nuisance, 111 (R.R.)
 Headphones as an Alternative, 609 (Edit.)
 H.M.V. Extension Model, 574 (Illus.)
 Hum, 408 (F.G.)

Impedance, Motional, 285 (Gen.)
 Infection from Loud Speaker, 471 (F.G.)

Location Problems, 241 (Edit.)

McLachlan's Polytechnic Lecture, 491 (C.T.)
 Motional Impedance, 285 (Gen.)

"Nuisance" Laws, 406 (R.R.)

Olympia Forecast, 141 (Gen.)
 — Improvements, 230, 274 (Gen.)

P.A., 602 (Corres.)
 — in Theatres, 200 (Corres.)
 Piezo-Electric Improvements, 608 (Pat.)

Remote Field-Feeds, 653 (R.P.)
 Rola Loud Speaker, 104 (Review)

Series for Safety, 300 (H.T.)
 Simple Tests, 146 (H.T.)
 Single-Cone Wide-Range Instrument, 515, 598 (Gen.)
 Sub-Harmonics, 666 (Gen.)

Town Crier Substitute, 238 (B.B.)

Volume Controls, 391 (Gen.); 508 (Corres.)

Warnings from the Air, 639 (C.T.)
 Wharfedale New Bronze Speaker, 117 (Review)
 Whiteley Electrical Radio Co's. Special Model for 1936, Battery Monodial, 362 (Review)
 Wide-Range Single-Cone Instrument, 515, 598 (Gen.)

RECEIVERS (Commercial)

Aerodyne, Model Aeromag, 6v. AC Superhet. Table, Automatic Tuning, 23 guineas, 420 (Review)
 Air King, Model 213, 7v. AC Superhet, Table, All-Wave, Push-Pull, 8 watts, 20 guineas, 383 (S.P.); 610 (Review)
 Andrea, Model I-A-5, 4v. AC, Superhet, Table, 13½ guineas, 310 (Review)
 Austrian Receivers (see Fidelio)

Burdnpt, Model "All-Wave," 3v. AC Straight, Table, 10 guineas, 472 (Review)

C.A.C. Model "Austin Super Six," 5v. AC Superhet, Table, 17 guineas, 528 (Review)

Cossor, Model 364, 4v. AC Superhet, Table, 11 guineas, 38 (Review)

Dynatron, Model CU63, AC/DC Superhet, Radiogram, 27 guineas, 330 (Brief Details)

— Model Toreador, AC/DC Console and Radiogram, 330 (Brief Details)

— Model TU63, AC/DC Superhet, Table, 16 guineas, 330 (Brief Details)

Ekco, Model S.H.25, 5v. DC Superhet, Table: How to Modernise it, 412 (Gen.)

Ever Ready, Model 5003, 4v. AC Superhet, Table, 14 guineas, 596 (Review)

Ferranti, Model Nova, 3v. AC Superhet, Table, 11 guineas, 116 (Review)

Fidelio, 3v. AC Superhet Reflex, Table, Westector, All-Wave, Reflex, 79 (Review)

Forbat High-Voltage AC/DC Receivers, 394 (Review)

G.E.C. Model AC 3v. Straight, Table, 9 guineas, 352 (Review)

— Model "Superhet Battery Four," Q.P.P. 1.5 watts, delayed AVC, 12 guineas, 556 (Brief Details)

Handiset (see Portables)

Hayberd, Model 4-Point, 4v. AC Superhet, Table, 14 guineas, (Review)

Higgs, Model A56R, 4v. AC Superhet, Table, 11½ guineas, 548 (Review)

— New Receivers, 39 (Brief Details)

H.M.V. Model 360 "Popular," 3v. AC Straight, 9 guineas, 366 (Review)

— Model 370, 3v. AC Straight Radiogram, 16 guineas, 462 (Illus. and Brief Details), 588 (Review)

— Record Cabinet, 462 (Brief Details)

Howard Grand Receiver, American, 23 (Corres.)

Hylvoltstar, Model 10, 8v. AC Superhet, Table, 35 guineas, 626 (Review)

Lampex Receivers, 61 (Gen.)

Lissen, Model Band-Spread Short-Wave Three, 3v. Bat. Straight Kit, £3 19s. 6d., 669 (Review)

Lotus, Model 333, 3v. AC/DC Superhet Midget, £4 17s. 6d., 422 (Brief Details)

Marconiphone, Model 245, 3v. AC Superhet Radiogram, 16 guineas, 516 (Illus. and Brief Details)

McMichael, Model 235, 3v. AC Superhet, 12 guineas, 33 (Illus. and Brief Details); 90 (Review)

Mullard, Model MU35, 5v. Universal Superhet, 12 guineas, 232 (Review)

— Receivers, 4 (Illus. and Brief Details)
 Murphy "Bookmaker's Friend" Receiver, 452 (F.G.)
 — Model A28C, 8v. AC Superhet, Console, £21 15s., 381 (Review)

National Radio Service Co's. Crystal Receiver, 443 (Illus.)

Olympia Forecast, 126 (Gen.)

— Designs, 210 (Gen.)

Philco, Model 98, 6v. AC All-Wave Superhet, 21 guineas, 64 (Review)

Philips, Model 575A, 4v. AC Superhet, Table, All-Wave, 18½ guineas, 500 (Review)

Portables: "Handiset" for Phones, 2v. Batt. Straight, £3 15s., 10 (C.T.)
 — "Wayfarer," 4v. Batt. Straight, 5 guineas, 409 (Review); 629 (Illus.)
 — "Empiric," 2v. Batt. Super-Regen., 5 guineas, 629 (Illus.)
 Prisma, 5v. Push-Pull AC Straight Radiogram, 45 guineas, 541 (Review)
 R.G.D., Model 704, 6v. AC Superhet Radiogram, 55 guineas, 564 (Review)
 Scott, Model Hi-Fidelity, Twenty-one Valve AC Superhet, Chassis, All-Wave, £145, 640 (Review)
 Ultra, Model 25, 3v. AC Superhet, 12 guineas, 202 (Review)
 Wayfarer (see Portables)

RECEIVERS (Constructional)

Compact Battery Two; Portable for Yachts, 240 (Parts); 242 (Constr.); 290 (R.P.)
 Imperial Short-Wave Six, 676 (Parts)
 Modern Quality Receiver (see Monodial, 1936)
 Monodial, 1936, Battery Model: 323 (Parts); 340, 362 (Constr.); 410 (Illus.)
 — 1936, Battery Model; Whiteley Electrical Co.'s Special Loud Speaker, 366
 — 1936, Modern Quality Receiver: 26, 50 (Prelim. Art.); 52 (Parts); 74, 98 (Constr.); 147 (Notes); 192, 417, 655 (Corrections); 290 (R.P.)
 — 1936, Modern Quality Receiver: Bryce and Sound Sales Choke, 104
 — 1936, Modern Quality Receiver: Linking Unit for Push-Pull Quality Amplifier, 318 (Constr.)
 — 1936, Modern Quality Receiver; 602 (Corres.)
 1936 Monodial (see Monodial)
 Portable Receiver: Radio Companion, 440 (Constr.); 508 (Notes); 395 (C.T.); 433 (S.P.); 629 (Illus.)
 — Three-in-One, 271 (Parts); 292 (Constr.); 574 (Corres.)
 — Two-valve Receiver for Yachts, 247 (Constr.)
 Radio Companion (see Portable Receiver, Radio Companion)
 Short-Wave Two, 497 (Parts); 510 (Constr.)
 — Components, 569 (Appar. Commer.); 653 (Correction)
 Single-Span Receiver, 281 (Corres.)
 Three-in-One Portable, The (see Portable, Three-in-One)

Variable Selectivity Four, 444, 593 (Prelim. Art.); 455 (Parts); 469 (Edit.); 460, 484 (Constr.); 653 (R.P.)
 — Selectivity Four: British Television Supplies Chassis, 523

Yacht Two-Valve Portable (see Portable for Yachts)

SHORT WAVES

Aerial Feeders, 11 (Gen.)
 Amateurs' Remarkable Intercommunication, 494 (S.P.)
 B.B.C. Daventry's Aerials, 479 (B.B.)
 — Tatsfield, 479 (B.B.)
 Below the Short-Wave Spectrum, 221 (S.P.)
 Blind Landing System at Heston, 439 (C.T.)
 Brussels Checking Station, 80 (Gen.)
 — Checking Station, August Chart, 350
 Death Ray, 301 (C.T.)
 80 Metres and Australia, 661 (C.T.)
 — -Metre Transatlantic Tests, 615 (C.T.)
 Electrostatic Amplification, A New Idea, 55 (Gen.)
 Empire Broadcasting and Shorter Wavelengths, 604 (R.R.)
 Five-Metre Amateur Transatlantic Tests, 661 (C.T.)
 — -Metre Field Days, 10, 219, 245 (C.T.); 272 (Gen.)
 — -Metre Transmission Range, 613 (Gen.)
 Frequency Doubler, 398 (S.P.)
 Geneva Anti-Propaganda Conference, 502 (R.R.)
 German Amateurs, 10 (C.T.)
 Golders Green Field Day, 31 (C.T.)
 How Best To Receive Them, 585 (Gen.)
 Imperial Short-Wave Six (see under RECEIVERS, CONSTRUCTIONAL)
 Interference Detector of Electrical Research Association, 216 (Illus.)
 — by Other Stations, 1 (Edit.) 120 (Corres.)
 I.S.W.C., 192, 422 (C.N.)
 Japanese Programmes, 301 (C.T.)
 Lissen Kit Set (see under RECEIVERS, COMMERCIAL)
 List of Short Wave Stations and Comments, 496 (Gen.)
 Listeners' Increasing Interest, 509 (Edit.)
 Long Distance Transmissions of Ultra-Short-waves, 478 (R.R.)
 Luton Ultra-Short Tests, 135 (C.T.)
 Marconi and Micro-waves, 281 (R.R.)
 Mast to Ground Communication, 407 (B.B.)
 Measuring Ultra-Short-Wavelengths, 320 (Gen.)
 Micro-waves: Ostrich, 201 (F.G.)
 — -Waves for Ships D.F., 113 (Gen.)
 Nomenclature, 604 (R.R.)
 Oscillators, 654 (Pat.)
 Paris Conference Plan, 502 (R.R.)
 Poland's New Service, 491 (C.T.)
 Reporter's Transmitting Set, 434 (F.G.)
 Short-Wave Broadcasting (See Weekly Notes)
 — -Wave Two: List of Parts, 497, 510
 Simultaneous Reception of Normal and Short Waves, 531 (Gen.)
 Snowdon Tests, 10, 31 (C.T.); 36 (R.R.)

Star Programme Broadcast, 245 (C.T.)
 Stratosphere Transmissions, 419 (C.T.)
 Sunspot Cycles, 478 (R.R.)
 Super-Regeneration on the Short-Waves, 393 (Gen.)
 Ten-Metre Amateur Transatlantic Telephony, 517, 661 (C.T.)
 — -Metre Reveillé, 449 (S.P.)
 — -Metres, 470, 494, 521 (S.P.)
 Tests Between Broadcasting House and Alexandra Palace, 423 (B.B.)
 Transatlantic 5-Metre Tests by Portsmouth Municipal College, 546 (C.T.)
 Transmitter Used by American Forest Scouts, 395 (Illus.)
 Ultra-Short-Wave Ban in America, 301 (C.T.)
 — -Short-Wave Generation Methods, 654 (Pat.)
 — -Short-Wave Link Between Broadcasting House and Alexandra Palace, 651 (B.B.)
 — -Short-Wave Measurements, 320 (Gen.)
 — -Short-Wave Rectifiers, 678 (Pat.)
 — Short Wavemeter, 28 (Gen.)
 Variable Conditions, 536 (R.R.)
 WEEKLY NOTES, 33, 80, 235, 269, 350, 366, 430, 440, 466, 494, 513, 521, 556, 664

TELEVISION

Aircraft Landing System, 618 (R.R.)
 American Figures, 54 (C.T.)
 — Plans, 37 (S.P.); 111 (R.R.)
 Anglo-American Radio and Television Society, 422 (C.N.)
 Audiences to be Televised, 530 (B.B.)
 Australian Plans, 491 (C.T.)
 Baird and E.M.I. Data, 361 (Edit.); 371 (Gen.)
 Baird's Kerr Lecture, 615 (C.T.)
 Barber's Shop Episode, 314 (F.G.)
 B.B.C. Alexandra Palace, 91 (R.R.); 160, 625, 651 (B.B.); 547 (C.T.)
 — Old Posters, 651 (B.B.)
 — Bus Service, 651 (B.B.)
 — Buys the Gear, 547 (B.B.)
 — New Department, 336 (B.B.)
 — Scandalous Performance, 638 (F.G.)
 — Staff Vacancies, 673 (R.R.)
 — Viewing Centres, 652 (R.R.)
 Berlin Exhibition, 192 (C.T.); 248 (R.R.)
 Broadcast Receivers not Obsolete, 631 (Edit.)
 Cathode-Ray, 678 (Pat.) (see also under VALVES)
 Cathode Ray: Time Base Circuit, 367 (Gen.); 477 (Corres.)
 — Transformer, Chassis, 45 (Appar. Commer.)
 — Enlarged Image, 414 (S.P.)
 — Tuning Indicator, 418 (Gen.)
 Co-Axial Cable, 312 (R.R.); 547 (B.B.)
 Cook, Gerald (see under GENERAL INDEX)
 Colour Television, 654 (Pat.)
 Cup Final Broadcast, 423 (B.B.)
 Demonstrations Needed, 387 (Edit.)
 Denmark Declines, 546 (C.T.)
 Eiffel Tower (see France)
 Enlarging Images, 286 (S.P.)
 Factory Spying System in Amsterdam, 661 (C.T.)
 February Tests, 562 (R.R.)
 Field-Glass System is Best, 273 (C.T.)
 Film System, 630 (Pat.)
 Flat Installation, 661 (C.T.)
 France: Eiffel Tower Plans, 347 (C.T.); 562 (R.R.)
 — Eiffel Tower Data, 559 (Gen.)
 — Eiffel Tower Public Viewing Rooms, 625 (Illus.); 673 (R.R.)
 — Eiffel Tower Service Inaugurated, 639 (C.T.); 673 (R.R.)
 German Mobile Outfit, 66, 67 (Illus.)
 Germany to America, 248 (R.R.)
 — and Peace, 54 (C.T.)
 G.P.O. and Special Cable, 547 (B.B.)
 High-Definition Cable, 336, 547 (B.B.)
 — -Definition Test Transmitter, 331 (Gen.)
 — -Fidelity and Definition Cable, 312 (R.R.)
 Hollywood's Plans, 491 (C.T.)
 Japanese Plans, 546 (C.T.)
 Light Valves, 678 (Pat.)
 Low-Definition Apparatus and Science Museum, 336 (B.B.)
 Marconi System, 630 (Pat.)
 Nipkow, Paul, 271 (Illus.)
 One System is Superior, 547 (B.B.)
 Paris Show, 245 (C.T.)
 Photo-Electric and Selenium Cells, 53 (Books)
 P.M.G. Statement re Baird and E.M.I., 219 (C.T.)
 Public Misunderstandings, 631 (Edit.)
 Review of Present Position, 142 (Gen.)
 Sarnoff's Views, 491 (C.T.)
 Scandinavian Plans, 219 (C.T.)
 Scanning Systems, 608 (Pat.)
 Tekade Mirror Screws, 392
 Television, 148 (Books)
 — Really Explained, 592 (Books)
 Temporary Station Suggested, 238 (R.R.)
 Tests between Broadcasting House and Alexandra Palace, 423 (B.B.)
 Thirty-line System Closes Down, 260 (B.B.)
 Violinist's Dilemma, 661 (C.T.)
 Velocity Modulation Transmitter, 576 (Pat.)
 Wide-Frequency Cable, 547 (B.B.)
 Yorkshire Television Association, 422 (C.N.)

TROUBLE (External Interference)

AC Mains Leakage, 653 (R.P.)
 Aerials and Interference, 604 (R.R.)
 Austrian Anti-Interference Campaign, 347 (C.T.)
 Crystal Receivers as a Source of Interference to Other Listeners, 488 (H.T.)
 Electric Lighting Installation Faults, 399 (H.T.)
 Fan Motor Cures, 382 (Corres.)
 French Anti-Interference Campaign, 219, 419, 546, 563 (C.T.)
 — Anti-Loud Speaker Nuisance Campaign, 245 (C.T.)
 G.P.O. and Electrical Interference, 49, 73 (Edit.); 240 (Corres.)
 — Engineer on Interference, 659 (Gen.)
 Hum in Loud Speakers, 408 (F.G.)
 I.E.E. Interference Conference, 517 (C.T.)
 — Committee, a Failure, 49, 73 (Edit.); 240 (Corres.)
 Interference Detector of Electrical Research Association, 216 (Illus.)
 — Menace Grows, 503 (R.R.)
 — Suppressors, 478 (Pat.)
 Mains-Borne Interference and Supply Companies, 339 (Edit.)
 N.R.E.A. Lecture, 419 (C.T.)
 Remedial Measures Available to the Listener, 136 (Gen.)
 Short-Wave Interference, 1 (Edit.); 120 (Corres.)
 Suppressing Electrical Interference, 659 (Gen.)
 Trolley-bus Troubles, 245, 639 (C.T.)
 Urgent Action Needed, 73 (Edit.)
 Wireless World Campaign Criticised, 135 (C.T.); 154 (S.P.)

TROUBLE (Internal)

Air-Cored Coils and Hum, 122 (R.P.)
 Crocodile Test Prods, 488 (H.T.)
 Electrostatic Metre Faults, 392 (S.P.)
 H.T. Voltage and Stability, 122 (R.P.)
 Meter Faults, Electrostatic, 392 (S.P.)
 Misuse of Receivers, 604 (R.R.)
 New-Valve Instability, 482 (R.P.)
 Phantom Resistance, 264 (R.P.)
 Smoothing, Tuned, 360 (R.P.)
 Testing Receivers, and Volume Controls, 488 (H.T.)
 Tuned Smoothing, 360 (R.P.)
 Volume Controls and Receiver Testing, 488 (H.T.)

VALVES

Adjustable Electrodes, 630 (Pat.)
 American 6B5 Valve, 8 (Gen.); 258, 280, 383, 477 (Corres.)
 Barkhausen-Kurz Adjustment, 630 (Pat.)
 Bases and Symbols, 548 (Gen.)
 Cathode-Ray, 654 (Pat.) (see also under TELEVISION)
 — -Ray: Fluorescent Screens, 23 (Corres.)
 — -Ray: Motor Industry, 279 (S.P.)
 — -Ray: Photoelectric Cathodes, 608 (Pat.)
 — -Ray: Renode, 489 (Gen.); 574 (Corres.)
 — -Ray: Time Base Circuit, 367 (Gen.); 477 (Corres.)
 — -Ray: Enlarged Image, 414 (S.P.)
 — -Ray: Tuning Indicator, 418 (Gen.)
 — -Ray: Ediswan Demonstration, 661 (Illus.)
 Data Supplement, 22nd November issue
 D.H. and I.D.H. Rectifiers, 600 (H.T.)
 Diodes and Coupling Condensers, 572 (R.P.)
 Distortion Standards, 280, 477 (Corres.)
 Dry-Contact Oscillators, 678 (Pat.)
 Electron Multiplier, The, 533 (Edit.); 539 (Gen.)
 Few or Many, 668 (Gen.)
 Filament Filters, 42 (H.T.)
 Fleming's Letter, 602 (Corres.)
 Floating-Grid Output Valve, 8 (Gen.); 258, 280, 383, 477 (Corres.)
 Fluorescent Screens for Cathode Ray Tubes, 23 (Corres.)
 Graham-Farish Short-Wave Valve, 392 (Review)
 Guide to Bases and Symbols, 548 (Gen.)
 Heater-Cathode Insulation, 360 (R.P.)
 Inaccessible Valveholders, 146 (H.T.)
 Input Resistance of a Diode or Triode Detector, 32 (Gen.)
 Light Valves, 678 (Pat.)
 Longevity, 111 (R.R.); 574, 648 (Corres.)
 Loose Bases, 264 (R.P.)
 Metal or Glass? 432 (R.R.)
 Modern Works, A, 534 (Edit.)
 Motor Industry and Cathode Ray, 279 (S.P.)
 Mullard Short-Wave and Ultra Short-Wave Transmitting Valves, 540 (Brief Details)
 New Power Output Valve, 105 (Gen.)

Oscillators, Dry-Contact, 678 (*Pat.*)
Olympia Forecast, 159 (*Gen.*)
— Exhibits, 237 (*Gen.*)
Osram U16 Rectifier, 650 (*Review*)
Photocell Guide, 661 (*C.T.*); 665 (*F.G.*)
Photocells, 576, 678 (*Pat.*)
Photo-Electric Cathodes, 608 (*Pat.*)
Pruning the List, 537, 648 (*R.R.*)
Rectifiers for Ultra-Short-Waves, 678 (*Pat.*)

Relationship of Amplification Factor, Impedance and Mutual
Conductance, 270 (*Gen.*)
Renode, The, 489 (*Gen.*); 574 (*Corres.*)
Second-Hand Receivers; Renewing Valves, 424 (*Gen.*)
Secondary Emission Multiplier, 533 (*Edit.*); 539 (*Gen.*)
Short Wave Types in Germany, 576 (*Pat.*)
Siemens' New Ballast Resistor, 522 (*Gen.*)
Symbols and Bases, 548 (*Gen.*)
Symptoms of Age, 208 (*R.P.*)

"362" Valves: A.C.P.X.50 Output, 567 (*Brief Details*)
— Valves: UFC AC/DC Heptode, 567 (*Brief Details*)
Thyratrons, 334 (*Gen.*)
Time to Renew, 264 (*R.P.*)
Tungsram APP4C Output Valve, 573 (*Review*)
Valves, 533 (*Edit.*)
What Valve Ratings Mean, 270 (*Gen.*)

ILLUSTRATIONS

ABERDEEN'S Aerials, 664
Abyssinian Emperor, 601
Addis Ababa Station, 470
Air Ministry Mobile Wireless Station, 656
Alexandra Palace, 142
Amateur Transmitter, G2YL, 494
— G5CV, 10
— G5ZN, 603
— Transmitter G5CV, on Snowdon, 10
American Applause Machine, 359
— Polyiron Coils, 373
Announcers, Frankfurt's Polyglot, 517
Applause Machine, 359
Army Signallers, 135
Atherton, Effie, 595
Automatic Tuning Receiver, 154

BABY Grand Receiver at Paris Exhibition, 325
Baird Television Transmission, 142
Balbon, André, 571
Ballad Concert, 570
Balloon Loudspeaker in Jutland, 295
Bangkok Telefunken Station, 449
Bangor Staff of B.B.C., 625
Bank Holiday, 115
Barcelona's Woman Announcer, 676
Bartlett and Rae Pianoforte Team, 524
Bath Pump-Room, 525
Beach Broadcasting from Côte d'Azur, 160
Beerbohm, Max, 671
Belgian P.M.G., 517
Berlin Amateur Announcers, 245
— Dramatic Control Panel, 547
— Exhibition Fire, 248
Best, Edna, 570
Big Ben, 670
Boars Head at Oxford, 646
Boris, Francina, 676
Bournemouth Pavilion, 333
Brasor Station, 255
Brumaire, 354
Budapest, 92, 333, 376, 407
Buenos Aires, 261

CAIRO, 378
Campbell Swinton, A. A., 591
Carlyle Cousins, 228
Car Radio at Marconiphone Works, 592
Centenary Pictures of G.W.R., 256
Chelmsford's Mast, 358
Copenhagen's New Broadcasting House, 575
Cork Cathedral, 313
Corney, Germaine, 671
Coury, Nellie, 494
Covent Garden, 400
Coward, Noel, 88
Crocodile-Clip Tool, 399
Crystal Palace Band Contest, 354

DANISH Dance, 144
Daventry Aerial, 82
De Profundis, 619
— Quincy, 427
Devon City Wireless Room, 658
D.F. on Trawler, 656
Dickens, Charles, 670
Dusolina Giannini, 229

EDEN End, 499
Ediswan Cathode Ray Tube Demonstration, 661 (*C.T.*)
Effects Studio, 119
Eisteddfod, 114
Empire Programme Department, 83

FIVE-metre Field-day in Kentish Town, 422
Forest Scouts Ultra-Short-Wave Transmitter, 395
Fraser, Sir Ian, 463

French Licence Stamp, 661 (*C.T.*)
Friday the Thirteenth, 252

G.B.S. in Finland, 260
Geneva Recording Cradle, 581
German Amateur Station, 419
— Announcers Competition, 107
— Mobile Television Outfit, 67
G.P.O. Switchboard, 657
Grace, Dr. W. G., 451
Grahamstown Transmitter, 406
Grand Prix, 229
Graves, George, 355
Green, Hughie, 308
Groves, Olive, 282
G.W.R. Centenary Pictures, 256

HALL, Henry, 15, 62, 144, 457
— Henry, and Band, 62
— Henry in "Music Hath Charms," 457
Handley, Tommy, 256
Harvest Festival Radio, 370
Henderson, Roy, 401
Hibberd, Stuart, 119
H.M.V. Radiogramophone in Science Museum, 439
Holmes, Leslie, 646
Hubert, Claude, 256
Hyden, Walford, 647

IMHOF'S Exhibition Van, 312
Interference Detector of Electrical Research Association, 216
Italian Army Wireless, 301
— Field Set in Abyssinia, 563

JACK Payne's Radio Party, 426
Jackson, Jack, 623
Japanese Woman Amateur, 584
Juan-Les-Pins Poster, 618
Jungtraujoch, 283

KALUNDBORG Embankment, 325
Keen, Malcolm, 570
Kentish Town Radio Society, 422
Keys, Nelson, 400, 551
Kiernan, Dr. T. J., 250
Konetzni, Amy, 427
Krish, Serge, 62
Kunz, Charlie, 525

"LADIES Only" Studio Party, 401
Lawrence, Gertrude, 88
Leaflet Transmitter, 656
Lehar, Franz, 308
Lindrum, Horace, 594
Lisburn Aerial Mast, 92
Little Show in Harlem, The, 474
Livingstone and Stanley, 550
Lloyd George, 114
Lopez, Luciano, 451
Lwow Studio en Fête, 530

MANCHESTER Studio, 191
Mantovani, 427
Marchesi, Blanche, 333
Marconi Diorama at Science Museum, 615

NAMIKO San, 551
N and K Receiver, 281
Naval Review, 40
N.B.C. Applause Machine, 359
— Street Broadcasts, 194
— Vice-President, 313

Nipkow, Paul, 271
Norwegian Engineer's Adventure, 287
Nottingham Police Radio Equipment, 491

OLD Crocks on the Road, 546
Olympia Anti-Interference Bureau, 219
On the Spot, 594

PADEREWSKI, Ignace, 475
"Please Teacher," 524
Police Radio, 192
Polish People's Crystal Receiver, 505 (*B.B.*)
Polyglot Announcers at Frankfurt, 517
Portable Midget at Olympia, 219
Potter, Gillie, 474
Poznan Time Signal, 521
Promenade Concert, 378

QUETTA, 276

RED Sarafan, 40
Regent's Park Open-Air Theatre, 245
Reindeer Stampede, 287
Reith Sir John, 15
Rocky Mountaineers, 622
Roy, Harry, 308

ST. Hilary's Church, 646
Salzburg, 114
Samuel, Sir Herbert, 15
Sarony, Leslie, 646
Scarlatti, Domenico, 308
Scott in the Antarctic, 498
Servicing by Aeroplane, 563
Shaw, G. Bernard, in Finland, 260
Short-Wave Interference Detector of Electrical Research
Association, 216
— Waves for Recalling Children, 347
Sibelius, 595
Snow Maiden, 622
Sokolova, Lydia, 282
Somerville, Mary, 66
Spanish Armada, 228
Stampede of Reindeer, 287
Stanelliphone, 423
Sten, Anna, 450
Strathmore Wireless Room, 657
Swedish Band, 647
Swiss Radio Orchestra, 623

TAJ Mahal, 167
Tallents, Sir Stephen, 66
Tekade Mirror Screws for Television, 392
Television in France, 639
— Looking-Rooms in Paris, 625
— Transmission by the B.B.C., 143
1066 and All That, 88
Trawler Direction-Finder, 656
Twain, Mark, 570
Two Leslies, 646

VERDI, 499
Vesuvius, 43
Vichy Casino, 166
Vienna, 63, 571

WAGNER, Winifred, 475
Welch, Elizabeth, 550
Western Brothers, 379
Wilno Effects Studio, 671
Wilson, Marie, 333
Winn, Anona, 63
Woman Broadcast Engineer, 36, 54, 584
Wood, Sir Henry and Orchestra, 145

YOUTH Sings Over the Frontier, 450

AUTHORS

ABRAHAMS, J. Godchaux, 496
Aisberg, A., 328
Auditor, The, 16, 40, 62, 88, 114, 144, 166, 228, 256, 282, 308,
332, 354, 378, 400, 427, 450, 474, 498, 524, 550, 570,
594, 622, 646, 670

BAILEY, Leslie, 436, 464, 492, 518, 560, 616, 662
Beatty, R. T., M.A., B.E., D.Sc., 68, 84, 108, 262

CATHODE RAY, 35, 57, 81, 278, 374, 405, 431, 454, 506, 573,
591, 629, 668
Cocking, W. T., 2, 26, 50, 74, 98, 147, 153, 164, 318, 340, 362,
444, 460, 484
Coombes, J. E. M., 334
Corbett, B. D., 554
Crawley, Lt.-Col. Chetwode, M.I.E.E., 656

DENT, H. B., 28, 272, 393, 510
Diallist, 6, 36, 56, 91, 111, 152, 190, 238, 248, 281, 311, 337,
358, 384, 406, 432, 458, 478, 502, 520, 536, 562, 604,
618, 652, 673

EXER, D., 20, 104, 191, 254, 299, 343, 410, 446, 487, 549, 597,
635

FREE GRID, 30, 87, 112, 140, 200, 227, 314, 324, 346, 408, 434,
452, 471, 504, 526, 552, 566, 586, 619, 638, 665

GRAHAM, M. S., 133, 193

HARRIES, J. H. Owen, 105
Heptode, 82

KINROSS, R. I., 377

LUCIFER, 292

MACCARTHY, Desmond, 367
MacLachlan, W., 447, 495
McLachlan, N. W., D.Sc., 155, 296, 402, 606
Martin, Ernest, M., 58
Megacycle, 33, 80, 235, 269, 350, 366, 430, 440, 466, 494, 513,
521, 556, 603

NICOLL, R. S., 216
Norman, M. W., 274

PARSONS, D. R., 613
Partridge, N., B.Sc., A.M.I.E.E., 644, 672

REYNER, J. H., B.Sc., A.M.I.E.E., 11, 331, 348, 418, 440, 568
Rollason, Norman, 515, 598

SCHRAGE, W. E., 557 (*Gen.*)
Scroggie, M. G., B.Sc., A.M.I.E.E., 246, 252, 270, 302, 320,
424, 537
Slee, J. A., 344, 368, 397, 468
Smith, H. F., 136, 217
— Maxwell G., 391
Sowerby, A. L. M., M.Sc., 21, 46, 70, 94, 610
Strafford, F. R. W., 285

THOMSON, E., C., 389, 578

WANDERING Wave, 305, 612
Wayne, John, 531
Wilhelmy, H. J., 306

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CONTENTS

	Page
Editorial	1
Variable Selectivity	2
Recording Telephone Conversations	5
Random Radiations	6
New Output Valve	8
Current Topics	10
Feeders for Short Wave Reception	11
Broadcast Brevities	15
Listeners' Guide for the Week ..	16
Design of Output Chokes (Con- cluded)	18
Foundations of Wireless XXVI..	21
Principal Broadcasting Stations..	24

EDITORIAL COMMENT

Interference with Empire Reception

India Takes a Hand

IN our issue of 17th May we referred to the distressing interference with short wave reception caused by morse stations, complaints of which from abroad were reaching us in large numbers. In our issue of 26th April we also published a letter from Mr. H. R. Meredith, discussing conditions of reception in Patna, India.

Mr. Meredith has now written further to us on the subject and has forwarded a number of cuttings from Indian newspapers, showing how seriously the matter is regarded there. It will be remembered that in our Leader we said that mere complaints of interference served little purpose, as it was no help in locating the source of trouble and we appealed to readers to endeavour to identify the interfering stations wherever possible. It is, therefore, of particular interest to learn that the Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs in India is taking steps to this end, for he has recently issued a statement saying that the matter has been under observation for some time, and that it is realised that considerable interference is experienced, usually from telegraph stations. It is stated that identification of the interfering stations must first be made and then representations can be forwarded to the administrations controlling them. The Department of Posts and Telegraphs is taking this course of action.

We hope that this example will be followed elsewhere. If official bodies join in an effort to clear short wave broadcasting channels and particularly Empire transmissions from this interference, a very valuable improvement in reception conditions may be ex-

pected to result. Listeners all over the world should bestir, first themselves, and then their proper authorities, to action.

This does not mean that individual efforts to identify interfering stations should be slackened because authorities may be prepared to undertake the work officially. In many places the authorities may not have the necessary facilities, and in any case, successful efforts on the part of listeners to identify offenders and report them is the best possible evidence to the authorities that the listening communities view these interruptions of the short wave programmes seriously.

Propaganda Wireless

Proposals for this Country

A STATEMENT has recently been published to the effect that a scheme is on foot and approaching realisation for the establishment of a broadcasting station in England, the avowed object of which is to broadcast propaganda to counter continental broadcasts which are inimical to the interests of communities here.

However sympathetically such a proposal might be received it can be stated without fear of contradiction that there is not the remotest chance of a licence being granted for the establishment of such a station here, and those who are promoting the scheme are evidently doing so in ignorance of the position. The State has vested a monopoly of Broadcasting in the B.B.C., and this was done for the very purpose of ensuring that stations should not be set up by independent bodies.

It would be intolerable if concessions were made which permitted independent propaganda broadcasting when the very principle is offensive to national opinion in this country.

Variable Selectivity

By W. T. COCKING

SINCE the requirements of selectivity and quality are conflicting, it is clear that the ideal receiver would be fitted with variable selectivity in order that the optimum conditions for any and every station may be realised. The attainment of variable selectivity has hitherto proved difficult, but it is shown in this article that it is by no means hard to obtain a wide range of control if the design be carried out correctly.

AT a time when the attainment of the highest standard of quality demands the retention of modulation frequencies up to 10,000 c/s and the requirements of selectivity necessitate the sacrifice of frequencies higher than 4,000 c/s, it is clear that some compromise between selectivity and quality is essential. The most pleasing result to the ear is not secured by perfection of reproduction if this entails a large degree of interference, nor is it given by complete absence of all interference if this leads to the absence of the entire upper register from the reproduction. Most listeners prefer a compromise between the two extremes, for few will dispute that a pleasanter effect is obtained when the quality is sacrificed only as far as is necessary to reduce interference to the point at which it is not intrusive although it may not be completely inaudible.

It will be clear, therefore, that since the interference conditions are different for every station, and even vary frequently for each station, the optimum degree of selectivity must also vary for every station, and will be different for the reception of the same station in different localities. The ideal receiver would consequently be fitted with continuously variable selectivity so that its characteristics could be altered at will to suit the particular receiving conditions existing at any moment and in any district. This has

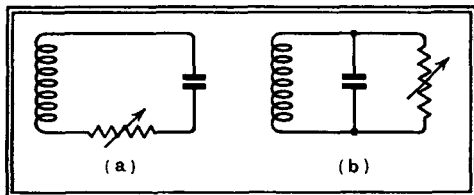


Fig. 1.—The selectivity of a single circuit can be varied by means of a series variable resistance, (a) of low value or a shunt resistance, (b) of high value.

long been recognised, but it is surprisingly difficult to devise a means of varying the selectivity of a receiver which is satisfactory from all points of view, and it is only recently that any considerable degree of success has attended the efforts of designers.

There are two distinct methods of

obtaining variable selectivity. With the first, the inherent selectivity is of such an order that no serious degree of sideband cutting occurs, and it is increased when necessary by the application of reaction. This method has been adopted in the Single-Span receivers so far described in *The Wireless World*, and it has the great merit of simplicity. It is, however, open to the objection that the degree of selectivity obtainable is limited by the appearance of self-oscillation. With the second method, the inherent selectivity is made as high as the designer judges necessary for the avoidance of interference, and it is reducible by some means for reception under conditions of moderate or little interference. A much wider range of control is possible in this way, and it is the means to be adopted which we have now to consider.

Methods of Varying Selectivity

Since the selectivity of a tuned circuit depends upon the $Q (= \omega L / R = \text{reactance} / \text{resistance})$ of the circuit, and the inductance must normally be fixed, an obvious method of varying the selectivity is to vary the resistance. This may be done in two ways: a variable resistance of low value can be connected in series with the circuit as shown in Fig. 1 (a), or one of high value in parallel as in Fig. 1 (b). Where only a single circuit need be controlled, either of these methods is satisfactory, although open to the objection that the sensitivity must vary also. When we remember, however, that the IF amplifier of a modern superheterodyne may contain as many as six tuned circuits, we can see that the control of one circuit alone is likely to have little effect. Even if its selectivity were completely destroyed, the remaining circuits would normally cause excessive sideband cutting. Each circuit must be controlled if satisfactory results are to be secured, and the difficulties of controlling six circuits by this means are obvious, for six variable resistances, each independently screened, and ganged for operation by a common spindle, would be needed!

Now, in IF amplifiers the tuned circuits are usually arranged in coupled pairs, and it is well known that the degree of selectivity obtained depends very greatly upon

Improving the Standard of Quality

the coupling. If a pair of tuned circuits be coupled loosely together, the resonance curve takes the form shown by curve A of Fig. 2, while if "optimum" coupling be used, the curve is broadened to the shape shown by B. If the coupling be still further increased, two humps appear (curve C) and the system becomes of the band-pass type. Unless the coils are of low Q it is inadvisable to couple them very tightly, otherwise the trough between the peaks becomes very pronounced. On the other hand, unless the circuits have a large value of Q the selectivity with loose coupling will be low.

Ideally, therefore, the resistance of the

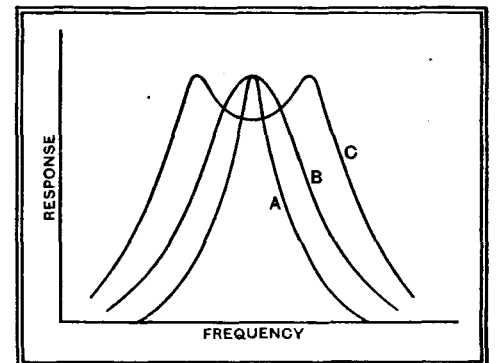


Fig. 2.—The resonance curve given by a pair of coupled tuned circuits varies with the degree of coupling. With loose coupling, it is sharp (A) but with optimum coupling (B) it is still single-peaked, while with tighter coupling (C) two peaks appear.

circuits should be increased with the coupling so that the double-hump appears only as a minor irregularity in an otherwise flat-topped response curve. So much depends on the band-width required, or, rather, the ratio of the resonance frequency to the band-width, that it is impossible to lay down any hard and fast rule, and experience shows that with a fairly high resonance frequency a variation of resistance is unnecessary for high quality sound reproduction.

Before going more deeply into this question it is as well to consider methods by which the coupling can be varied. The chief systems of coupling are shown in Fig. 3. With common capacity coupling (a) the band-width is controlled by the capacity of the condenser C, and it would appear that this would offer a simple means of obtaining continuously variable coupling by the use of a variable condenser for C. There are two objections to this,

Variable Selectivity—

however, and the first and less serious is the difficulty of obtaining a condenser of large enough capacity, since a variation of some 0.005 μF . would be needed. The second objection is that the response is not

to intermediate frequencies of the order of 465 kc/s, for it is not difficult to demonstrate that with a lower frequency of some 110 kc/s it is desirable to increase the circuit resistance with the coupling in order to prevent the appearance of exces-

of 2,000 μH is needed. Coils having this order of inductance and unscreened gave resonance curves of the type shown in Fig. 5 when used with a VMP4 valve and having only the load of a valve voltmeter on the secondary. Curve A is for the case of untapped coils with optimum coupling, and a stage gain as high as 300 times is obtainable. The curve is not quite symmetrical, for it gives an attenuation of 7.5 times at 10 kc/s off resonance on one side as compared with six times on the other. The gain, however, is rather high for safety in a practical receiver in even one IF stage, and with two stages it would probably be impossible to maintain stability. It was reduced, therefore, by tapping down both primary and secondary, to 91.5 times, and the resonance curve then became B. A considerable improvement in selectivity is evident, for the attenuation at 10 kc/s off tune now becomes 16 times and 14 times for the two sides, and it is very clear that the losses in the external circuit are playing an important part.

When an attempt was made to screen a transformer of this nature, however, many difficulties arose. Owing to the large field

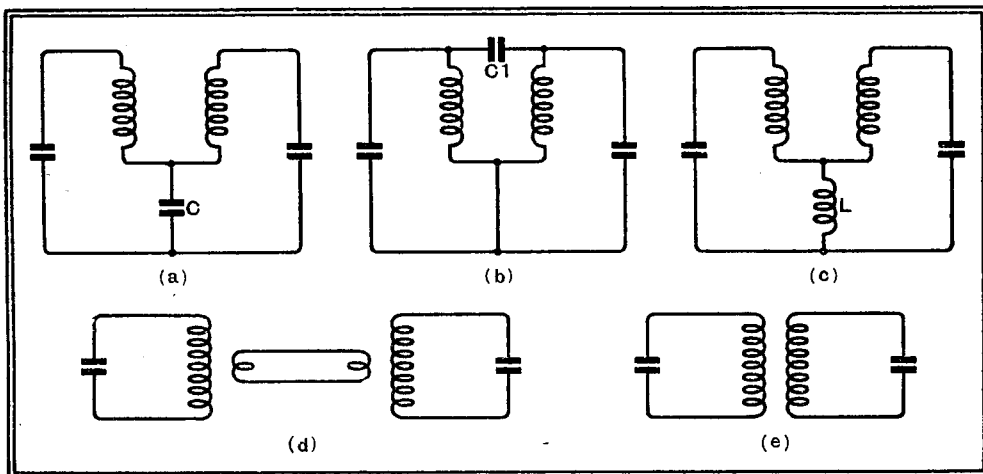


Fig. 3.—The chief methods of coupling circuits are shown here. At (a) the coupling is by common capacity and at (c) by common inductance, whereas with (b) a top-end capacity coupling is used. The link-filter is shown at (d) and mutual inductance coupling at (e).

broadened by an increase in coupling an equal amount on either side of resonance. Referring to Fig. 4, if A be the response curve with loose coupling, that with tight coupling takes the form of curve B. It can be seen that if a change be made in the coupling, the receiver must be retuned so that the carrier frequency lies in the centre of the resonance curve.

Filter Couplings

When top end coupling is used (b) the capacity of the coupling condenser C_1 is of more manageable proportions, being of the order of 1 μF . This circuit still suffers from the objection that the peaks do not open out symmetrically about the resonance frequency, but to one side, as in Fig. 4. The second peak occurs on the other side of resonance, however, and this applies also to inductive coupling (c), which has also the objection that a small variometer L would be needed to alter the coupling. Another and at first sight attractive circuit is link coupling (d), but this again suffers from the same disadvantage in the manner in which the peaks open out.

When we turn to the fifth circuit (e) in which the coupling is provided by the mutual inductance between the two coils, we find that, as long as the coupling is due to this alone, the peaks open out symmetrically, and we obtain the type of curve exhibited by Fig. 2. This system of coupling is thus the only one which theoretically can give the desired results, and, as practice amply supports theory, it is accordingly the only method which need be considered.

Before we can consider the precise arrangement which we can adopt, it is necessary to decide on the coils which are to be used, for the degree of coupling necessary will depend on their efficiency. We shall, moreover, confine the discussion

sively prominent humps in the response curve. Moreover, the use of low intermediate frequencies is less prevalent than formerly on account of the greater ease of elimination of second-channel interference with a moderately high frequency.

In designing a coil we have not only to consider the efficiency of the coil alone but its efficiency when connected in circuit and used with its tuning condenser. At the frequencies under consideration, dielectric losses in the condenser, valve-holder and valve base are by no means negligible, and profoundly influence the choice of a coil. Compactness is also a point of importance, and it is hardly practicable to employ a coil with a larger overall diameter than one inch, nor one having a length much greater than this figure. The use of an iron-core of suitable type, therefore, becomes very desirable.

Owing to its comparatively low losses an air-dielectric trimming condenser is de-

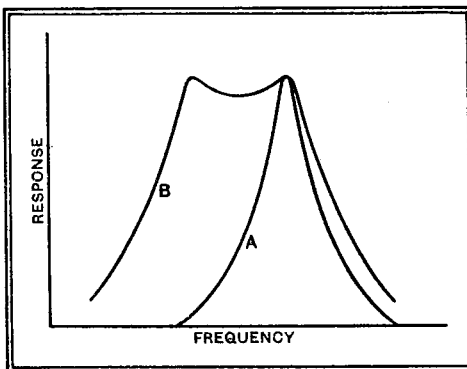


Fig. 4.—Certain methods of coupling give an unsymmetrical opening of the peaks. Curve (A) shows the results with loose coupling, and (B) when it is tight enough for the two peaks to appear.

sirable, but types at present available of suitably small dimensions have a capacity no more than 65 μF . For resonance at 465 kc/s with this capacity an inductance

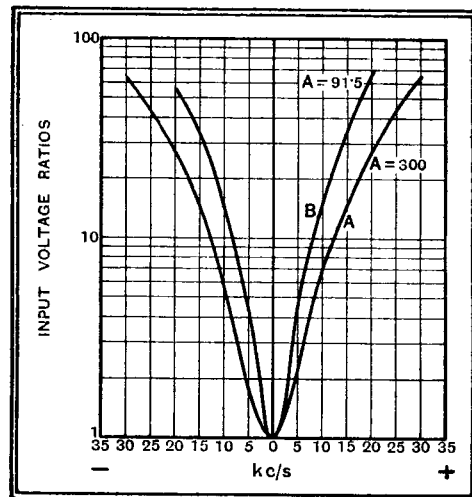


Fig. 5.—The results obtained with unscreened coils of 2,000 μH . inductance with air-dielectric trimmers are shown here for two different degrees of coupling.

of the high-inductance coils, the screen considerably lowered the efficiency, and it also proved difficult to obtain sufficiently loose coupling between the two coils in a can of reasonable dimensions, while the physical dimensions of the air-dielectric trimmers added to the difficulties. Now experience had shown that it was possible to produce a considerably more efficient coil, although of lower dynamic resistance, if its inductance were lower, for in the given winding space it was possible to employ greater sectionalisation. A coil of 500 μH inductance was found to be about the optimum when wound with Litz wire in ten sections. It is out of the question with such a coil, however, to employ an air-dielectric trimmer, for the capacity required to tune it to resonance is some 300 μF .

The question arose, therefore, as to whether the more efficient coil would still be better if it were tuned with a mica-