

on its advertisers. And television's inability to transmit detail is a serious drawback from the advertiser's point of view. A dress designer, for instance, cannot show the subtleties of cut, cloth, and colour; a furniture-manufacturer has difficulty showing the difference between his products and those of the opposition. To compare it with other media, the best that television can do to-day with its small image is the equivalent of a 45-to-48-line half-tone block; when the picture is enlarged to 18 in. by 24 in. it is no better than a 24-line half-tone. Any newspaper can print half-tones of 65 to 85 lines. And television's present rudimentary colour processes allow a picture of no more than about 35 lines, while a magazine with good paper has no trouble reproducing colour photographs of 125 lines. To attract advertisers, television authorities in the United States so far have charged small rates and sometimes nothing at all. Faithful colour television with detailed reproduction will come only with higher line definition; and until that standard is adopted television is not likely to be given the financial support from advertisers so indispensable to its success.

Future Programmes

But, in spite of all these difficulties, the question seems to be not whether there will be television, but what programmes will be televised. All the cheapness and ease of production which is the advantage of present-day radio fly out of the window when television is introduced. All the crowd scenes, the shipwrecks, the train smashes, the earthquakes, and the fires of the radio play, with television have to be more than imagination stimulated by the dialogue; they have to be

seen. At once the question of expense rises. When it is remembered the huge amounts of money spent by Hollywood on even the poorest-grade films it is obvious that television could not afford to spend similar amounts for perhaps an hour's entertainment. Drama, grand opera, musical comedy would need elaborate stage settings, expensive costumes, careful lighting, trained orchestras and perhaps weeks of rehearsals—all to produce a programme that can be repeated once or twice at the most. Nor is the showing of films likely to help solve the problem. Here again the question of finance rises. Immense profits from films are made because only a limited number of people can see them at a sitting. No person will go to a theatre to see a film he has already seen on his television receiver—and it will be possible for a whole country to see the latest film success (costing perhaps £3,000,000 to make) with just one television showing. Where would the film producers' profits come from?

Programmes, it seems, will not be able to advance far beyond the dual or solo turns, the comedians, the tap dancers, and the singers; the politician making a speech; the personalities in the news; sports events; and some news shots. These are simple to televise. But their entertainment value is limited, and, unless programme matter can be extended, it is difficult to know what will happen when the novelty has worn off. As other problems have been solved by science, so, no doubt, will the problems of television be solved—sooner or later. Then, but not until then, a new art form will have been established.