

(continued from previous page)

Worsley—to meet on the morning after the broadcast; and having heard the show played back (and shuddered slightly) to decide on the main outline of the next one. Then Ted Kavanagh would go away and write a draft at the week-end, and submit it to the BBC. After that the three "builders" sat down together on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday and hammered out the finished article. The three worked over the script line by line, discussing all the possibilities of the situations, re-twisting sentences, and putting in new gags. It is here that such a feature gets its speed and smoothness. "We need a funnier line here—when the Colonel makes his exit. How about something topical? Think boys!" So they think, and to someone's mind comes the title of the book that is the rage in America, "Forever Amber." "H'm, doesn't give much scope: how can 'Forever Amber' be tied up with the Colonel? Wait—the colour of ale and the colour of his moustache. Dear old Colonel. Still the same moustache—forever amber! There's your laugh." And there about eight hours for rehearsal.

Constant Polishing

And so it goes on. Work, work, and more work is put into what sounds so spontaneous over the air. "Ideas may come easily," says one appreciation of Kavanagh's work, "but only constant shaping, re-shaping and polishing give the lines their full effect and maintain the speed of production that makes the programme so consistently amusing." If you look at an *Itma* script carefully," says Worsley, "you will see that every situation or every entrance of a character is carefully planned, so that we get the maximum value out of the material around it and so that we get a good build-up for the next thing that happens. It is not just a lot of nonsense stuck together anyhow, as so many of our correspondents seemed to think."

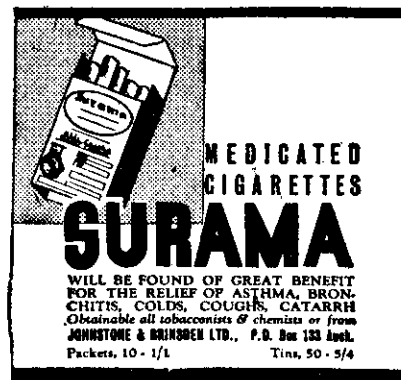
In other words, inspiration alone is a poor tool to depend upon. Inspiration plus perspiration gets there. As a very successful contemporary English playwright has said, the only way to get ideas is to sit down at your desk and dredge for them. But when you've fished them up, there is a lot of work to be done before they are ready for the market.

There is a lesson for radio writers and producers everywhere in the success of *Itma*—and for listeners. If listeners would get rid of the idea that these entertainments are things thought up on the spur of the moment, they would enjoy them more and encourage the entertainers.

Easy reading, it has been said, is damned hard writing. Easy listening, it might be said, is damned hard broadcasting.

NATIONAL FILM UNIT

"DISTRICT NURSE," the story of a woman who devotes her life to nursing in the out-backs of the East Coast, is featured in the current Weekly Review from the National Film Unit. She is both nurse and doctor, riding or motoring to lonely settlements to tend the sick and teach hygiene to mothers and children. Sometimes there are no roads, but this does not deter her. Other items are: "Co-Op Shops" (recently opened at Nae Nae), "Farewell to Achilles" at Auckland, "Mr. Nash Returns," and "Kiwis' First Game" (exciting Rugby at Auckland).



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The eternal feminine

*You're feminine once more dear lady,
so put away your overalls
and think about your underalls—
every one a Berlei—for the brave new line
is exciting but exacting
with its upswerving bosom
and its incurving waist.
(You'd never get by without a Berlei).
To arms then! The war may be done
but the struggle's just begun;
curves, curves, curves are on parade!
(Courage lady—just enlist a Berlei's aid).*

