

RADIO HAS ITS CAMP FOLLOWERS



OUR camp is the most isolated in the North Island. It is also one of the largest. Therefore the radio is our chief contact with home-town—our theatre, sports ground, newspaper and amusement centre. We have hundreds of electric sets in camp. Each radio is a fraternising point for those whose interests are in common. I want to tell you what the soldier is thinking about radio—what he listens to, and what he would like to listen to.

No Time for Serials

Firstly, our listening hours are restricted. "Lights out" is at ten o'clock each night. We can listen only between five and ten o'clock, except on Sundays when we may usually listen all day. Thus we are somewhat at the mercy of the programme organisers. In daytime, only the National stations can be picked up. Evenings, the nearer small stations and

Commercials can be received. Men find new life in camp. Many, for the first time, really listen to the radio. It becomes something more than a background for dinner conversation and source of news. Camp creates many new radio fans; soldiers who are eager to learn something and improve their knowledge. I know of two former swing fans who now have fresh joys of rhythm and melody per medium of the symphony. Favourites of these two are Dvorak's New World Symphony, and—wonder of wonders—the classical symphony No. 4 by Brahms. They are really listening. Radio serials are not very acceptable in camp. A soldier cannot be sure of hearing each episode, so he prefers short plays.

Sunday Variety

Most chaps go to bed between nine and ten o'clock. This is the most popular time of all, providing any feature does not wander past the time when the orderly sergeant turns off the light. The dance enthusiasts bemoan the fact that swing programmes are generally broadcast when they should be asleep. Radio education is the only non-visual education that the soldier knows. Perhaps some features could be introduced that incorporate an interesting and instructive insight into the appreciation of such things as orchestral music, drama and travel.

Sunday afternoon is radio time in camp. While the soldier suns himself and mends his socks, the radio gives him his pleasure. As it is daylight the National stations are the only stations available. Taken as a whole, the programmes are varied and pleasant. But these, the fighting man considers, could be further broadened. The radio matinee programme could be played, the "Music from the Theatre" ballet series could be repeated with safety. But chamber music, so sweet and satisfying to the aesthetist, has more than its share on evening programmes without inclusion in the middle of Sunday afternoon broadcasts. This, please bear in mind, is the opinion of only one man in khaki, but in a future article I hope to give you a report on what a hundred soldiers think about listening to the radio in camp.

—Tom McKinley



★ THE GREEN HORNET STINGS AGAIN! Listeners to the ZB stations will be interested to hear that a new series of "The Green Hornet," the popular radio thriller heard some time ago, will soon be released by the Commercial Stations. Watch for starting dates.



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