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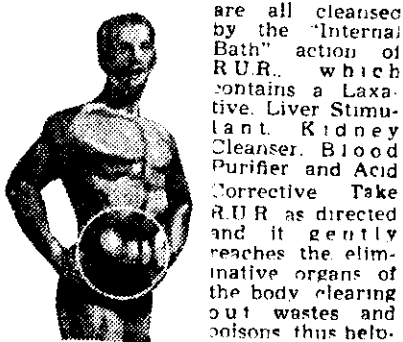
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## A PIANIST FROM NEW YORK

"YOU must be mighty sick of hearing what we've got back in the States, and I wouldn't like to add to the big number of things the boys have said on those lines. You've got something here that we haven't got there—here you relax and take it easy instead of going crazy to beat the other fellow the whole time. This idea of relaxing while you work seems pretty good to me. You work a bit and then you take time off for morning tea. The same in the afternoon. Over there you start in in the morning and steam right through to lunch and take a half an hour off to grab a sandwich and a cup of coffee, and then you steam right on again. You've certainly got something here."

This is according to a member of the U.S. Army, Corporal Harry Aronson, who will give a piano recital from 1YA on July 21. The speech was in reply to a question during an interview with *The Listener*, about a New Yorker's reactions to New Zealand's musical diet.

"Of course New York is a paradise for music," he said. "People here say to me 'Don't you feel the lack of concerts and recitals?' Well, what do you expect? Here you have a million and a-half people in the whole country against the seven million in New York city alone, and I'm expected to grumble because I can't pick up the daily paper and choose myself a concert. You've a limited number of artists here, and they work mighty hard. In New York there are so many artists of first rank—I mean of first world rank—that every night of the week you can have a choice from about a score of performances, including full symphony orchestras, opera and ballet, and there will still be thousands of struggling artists left over unheard. The life here is just not the same as in one of the biggest cities of the world; this life has its advantages just as that has."

For the last eight years, Harry Aronson has been broadcasting, teaching and giving recitals in New York. His most important broadcasting has been done over New York city's municipal station, the only non-commercial station in the city, and the counterpart of the main national stations in New Zealand.

Aronson considers Vladimir Horowitz, Toscanini's son-in-law, the most gifted pianist playing to-day. "That's the man

you should try to get over here after the war," he said. "When you've heard him you'll see what I mean. Of course he is already familiar to listeners through his recorded work. The English Bach expert, Harold Samuel—unfortunately, I heard him just the once—was the most amazing pianist I ever heard. He could play a whole Bach programme throughout an evening—not only that: he could play Bach programmes on and on for weeks in a series—and the enthusiasm at the end of the evening would be as great as you'd find at, say, a recital of the Liszt Concerto by a brilliant pianist. His death in 1937 was a real tragedy for music."



Corporal Harry Aronson: "New York is a paradise for music"

Students, he said, mostly go through a phase of going to concerts to hear a particular performer. Then, when they've heard all the famous artists and have hero-worshipped their fill, they begin to choose their concerts according to the type of music they are studying.

"Fifteen or 20 years ago, every young music student in the States would go to Europe to finish his musical education, and to be taught by the most famous teachers in the world," he said. "But that's all changed now. You just stay right in New York. Everything is there, or if it isn't already there, it comes there—all the most famous conductors and soloists and quartets and orchestras visit New York for short or long terms. In the old days you went to Germany for a good advertisement for yourself; now, you just stay right home."

In the years just before the war, English music had had a greatly increased popularity in the States, he told us. Elgar had been a favourite for a long time, but there were increased numbers of performances of the works of Bax, Walton, and Vaughan Williams and Delius.

He regrets that he has been unable to find in shops or libraries in this country any sheet music of the piano works of Charles Griffes, whom he considers one of the most admirable of modern American composers. He has, however, written to New York for some of this music, and so hopes to be able to play it here later, possibly at a public recital.

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