

LISTENER

Incorporating N.Z. RADIO RECORD

Every Friday

Price Threepence

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Soldiers Into Civilians

WE print to-day an interview with Lieutenant-Colonel Baker, D.S.O., Director of Rehabilitation. We print it because getting soldiers out of uniform is almost as difficult as getting them into uniform, and has to be done without the emotional aids that carried them into camp. Though it is not true any longer that when a war has been won the men who won it are forgotten, it is true that men go to war on a high wave of patriotism and return on a lower wave. Sometimes they return on a still dead sea, and while that has never been the case in New Zealand, it is as true here as anywhere else that returning is different from going away. It is something for which we all ought to prepare but for which most of us never do. We want to be just, and generous too, but we either leave it to others to do our thinking for us or we rush impetuously into foolish sentimentalities. It is not necessarily a kindness to a returned soldier to undertake to get him a good job. It may be the greatest unkindness to help him into a business or on to a farm. With many soldiers the first task is to restore the habit of looking after themselves—a kind of weaning process as Colonel Baker describes it—and with many others the problem is going to be to cushion the "bump" they will feel when they drop out of commissioned rank on to an office stool or factory bench. The better they have done their job as fighting men the harder many are going to find it to return to mufti, and it is the task not only of the Rehabilitation Department, but of the public in general, to do what Colonel Baker calls "cancelling out that disadvantage." It is something that we must begin thinking about now before our armies return, and Colonel Baker's remarks will help us to think—and if we have imagination, compel us.

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS

TUBERCULOSIS

Sir,—It is laudable that the Health Department has begun a campaign against tuberculosis, but I am amazed at the form these "messages" take. Instead of breaking down the barriers of prejudice and antipathy surrounding tuberculosis, the department's advertisement encourages ignorance of the disease.

Many people walk in daily terror of contracting the disease and take precautions to avoid mixing with people whom they know to have been or to be suffering from tuberculosis. Through this antipathy towards T.B. many lives have been made unnecessarily miserable, friendships have been broken, and homes wrecked. What of the thousands of persons suffering from the complaint unknown even to themselves who walk in crowded streets, travel in crowded trams and trains, and sit for hours in ill-ventilated theatres? There is the menace to society—the man who unconsciously spreads with every cough infection to be picked up by man, woman and child alike! The ex-sanatorium patient is rarely infectious, and if he is he knows precisely how to prevent the spread of the bacilli. But from the Health Department's advertisement in the newspapers the average person gets the impression he must shun people known to have active T.B. Is anyone going to stop and ask himself the meaning of that little word "active"? No! It is one thing to educate the public up to safeguarding themselves against T.B., but entirely another thing to do so at the expense of those of us who are at present fighting the disease. The ex-tuberculous patient must be absorbed into society once more if T.B. is to be eradicated from our midst.

We sufferers are the apostles in that fight against one of society's deadliest enemies, and can do more than anyone else to break down the wall of ignorance surrounding the disease. Why does the Health Department not say plainly that every living person harbours T.B. bacilli and that the protection against them is good general health? If the public is to be misled into believing that we who have had the disease are social pariahs we may as well be cast out as lepers.—

R.J.M. (Waipia).

HAIR-BRAINED

Sir,—

*The Folks who talked of Pacifism
And landed us in this Plight
Some of them had longish Hair
And some of them wore it tight.
A few of them were intelligent
But most of them were not.
Many of them were in Parliament
Where they talked a lot of Rot.
A good few were religious
And concluded they were sent
Straight from Heaven down to Earth
To preach Disarmament.
But what they didn't understand
Intelligent or not
Was that German Propaganda
Had got them on the Spot.
For They were just repeating
What the Boches told them to
It was only whispered in their Ears
There was nothing more to do.
That's how the Germans won the Peace
And will do so again
If we don't curb these chatterers
Or put them on a Chain!*

WEATHERWISE (Christchurch).

NEW ZEALAND WRITING

Sir,—On reading *New Zealand New Writing* I was struck by the thought that New Zealand writing more than that of any other country was matriarchal. Whether this is due to the fact that in New Zealand more mothers in their early middle age write, or whether mothers form the bulk of the reading public I do not know, but many of the stories in *New Writing* could as easily have been written by that class as by young men.

I do not wish to be misunderstood. I admire and respect these women, and sometimes think that mothers of half-grown families are the only sane and intelligent people in the country and the only ones entitled to a vote. But I am not sure that they are the best for art. Instead they should have the budgeting of the country. No matter what income a mother has control of, and no matter how bad a manager she is, she always distributes food, clothing, and pleasure, not perhaps equally but efficiently, and the children are given all the time and opportunity in her power to develop their talents. It seems to me that, if Parliament carried out the will of mothers, the mothers would be so busy putting their ideas into action instead of on paper that artists would spring up like daisies and New Zealand literature would be saved from sinking into an early middle-aged spread.

—OCTAGENARIAN (Dunedin).

VITAMIN BANDWAGON

Sir,—Thanks for the opportunity to reply to "Student." He overlooks the fact that the opposition of the average person to innovations in the past was based either on the fear (often well founded) that his means of livelihood would be adversely affected or on his lack of knowledge; but the medical profession could advance neither of these excuses for its opposition to all major discoveries. The average doctor established in practice to-day learned little about the vitamin question at University (it is only about 5 years since the Chair of Nutrition was established there), and as he is usually a very busy man he has, generally speaking, not been able to keep abreast of all the modern discoveries and at the same time acquire as much knowledge of nutrition and vitamins as is possessed by those enthusiasts who devoted their time solely to this one aspect.

I agree that co-operation of the public is essential, and it is here that radio can be of the greatest value. As one who has seen good results obtained by nutritional methods after orthodox medical methods had failed I would urge that a great deal more time be given to the subject by both branches of our radio service. It is noteworthy that "Student" is unable to justify the refusal of the medical profession to operate the Medical Services portion of the Social Security Scheme. Therefore my contention is unshaken.

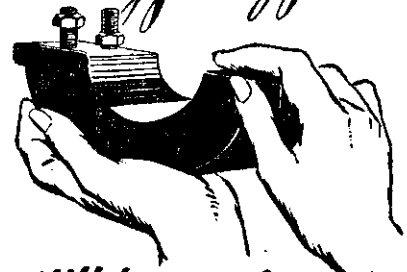
—JANUS (Upper Hutt).

(This correspondence is now closed.—Ed.)

THE BRAINS TRUST

Sir,—It is better than nothing that we should now be able to hear the BBC's Brains Trust direct from 2YA. But what's wrong with us? Haven't we got sufficient brains in this country to produce a New Zealand equivalent, or aren't they to be trusted to say the right things? Why do our radio authorities so often prefer the sanctified imported English article to the locally-made one?—STUPID (Wellington).

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