

This Week's Special Article

Air Terror Startles England from Dreams of Peace

HITLER marches on Vienna! It was with that memorable Friday afternoon announcement, leaping at London from the front pages of every newspaper, that the British Government's policy toward the civilian population changed.

Until then we had known that there were factories manufacturing gas masks, that Paris had prepared its underground for the reception of the people in case of raids, that German houses were equipped with special air raid chambers. But in England—"this England that never did and never shall lie at the foot of a proud conqueror"—these precautions seemed rather quaint and unnecessary.

In less than a day the Government's policy of "tell 'em nothing" changed with such vigour that the man in the street found himself peering anxiously skyward for enemy planes that might be already on the way!

"Britain Must Be Prepared—YOU Must Be Prepared." So said the posters in every Underground. The possibility of air raids became the talk at every tea table. The newspapers, which had been inclined to tone down the reports of the horrible massacres in Barcelona and Shanghai, now began to print them in all their ghastly detail. What was happening in Spain and China could happen in

THIS article, written by Trevor Lane, describes the swift creation in England of a volunteer air raid patrol, one million strong. Mr. Lane was a member of the Paddington unit of the A.R.P. during his stay in London.

London and Bournemouth.

Within a few days the A.R.P.—Air Raid Precautions—had come into being. A hundred thousand recruits were wanted in London, a million in England. I joined the A.R.P. in Paddington and

found myself in a company several thousand strong—and more than half of them were women.

Paddington was proud to be the first district in London to organise an experimental "black out." Every volunteer was on the job that night—I'll never forget the eerie aspect of Praed Street, dirty, well-lighted, noisy Praed Street as the sirens sounded their mournful "lights out." Coloured signs faded, lights disappeared from windows, cars switched off their headlights. And with the darkness a strange silence fell, too.

Several houses in Westbourne Grove had been marked off as "victims." In them were people supposedly suffering from gas, old women petrified by the noise of falling bombs, children caught under debris. The whole thing was gruesome, but marvellously organised. Volunteers, looking rather ridiculous in their gas masks, dashed up and down stairs, bringing out victims and placing them in waiting ambulances. Houses had to be "decontaminated"—freed of poisonous gases—stretchers had to be rigged up, broken windows patched.

In the streets, searchlights streaked the sky, picking up the "enemy" planes, anti-aircraft guns

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In the Wake of the Week's Broadcasts

After a lapse of six weeks 4YA featured a studio play last Monday night. "The Antidote to Crime," written by Frank Cochrane and Cyril Roberts, and produced by Miss Anita Winkel, re-

**NOT VERY GOOD
BUT
WELCOME**

involved round the efforts of crooks to gain control of a mechanical invention which could recall from the ether the sounds of every happening and the echoes of every spoken word through the centuries. The play was interesting, though rarely as exciting as the plot might sound. A large cast took the parts well and a medley of sound effects was cleverly reproduced. Altogether, the presentation was a welcome change from recorded plays which have been favourites with 4YA for so long.

The well-known Dunedin patter comedians, Reno and White, had 15 minutes' freedom of the air from 4YA the other Wednesday night. This pair are as good at the patter game as anyone

**THEIR PATTERN
WAS
BELOW PAR**

and I enjoyed their smart repartee thoroughly. They wasted no time, and crammed as much as possible into their turn. So much for praise. When it comes to the actual dialogue I cannot be so complimentary. The gags were either old or obscure, and would probably have been given "the bird" in a concert hall. Reno and White have been heard in far happier episodes in the past, and I hope next time they broadcast they bring up their dialogue to the standard of their delivery.

I did not grudge one penny of my radio licence fee when Mr. Victor C. Peters, just back in Christchurch after a trip overseas, chatted from 3YA recently on "Pageants and Personalities

**FULL MARKS
FOR A
BRIGHT TALK**

Abroad." It was the best thing I have heard for many a day—fresh, witty, a little too jointed, but above all, "meaty" to a degree. Here is a prize tit-bit:—"What will Christchurch do for accommodation when Dr. Malcolm Sargent comes here to conduct? Obviously engage King Edward Barracks. All the sergeants go there!" And this was the conclusion of Mr. Peters's series of fascinating anecdotes: "A great singer, athlete, and gentleman was the other day refused admittance to a certain