

A.R.P. PRACTICE IN EGYPT

Night Exercises For New Zealanders

New Zealand troops in Egypt have recently been put through a series of air raid precaution exercises, mock alarms being sounded at unexpected times to make the men familiar with the routine. The following description is by an official observer:—

"In the daylight or darkness, in the middle of a meal or during a parade, the alarm put us to the test at unexpected moments. We shared with the whole of Egypt, civilian and military population alike, the experience of a week of mock air raid and black-out exercises.

"In the New Zealand camp realism was achieved by strict observance of black-out rules and anti-gas precautions. Active defence sections, special pickets and decontamination squads were trained in their duties. Umpires went their rounds to note and correct faults and to mark out pretended gas-contaminated areas. Friendly aircraft played the role of enemy raiders.

"The striving after realism reached its height on the last night, when the shattering detonation of 'bombs,' exploded throughout the camp, shook us out of our beds. The rattle of gas alarms followed.

"Each tent was required to attend to its own black-out after dark, while vehicles travelled with lights shielded by blue-painted glass. Chinks of light through walls of wooden buildings were carefully obscured. Mechanically-minded members of my own unit devised switches which threw rooms lit by electricity into comparative darkness when outside doors were opened.

"The authorities pronounced the black-out exercises a success, for the people of Cairo and of every other city and town in Egypt were quick to realize their responsibilities. From a high-flying plane only the silver ribbon of the Nile was visible in the Cairo area. Air raid warnings were obeyed more and more promptly and smoothly. In the city they were the signal to take cover, and people streamed into shelters and other places of safety, leaving footpaths deserted and traffic at a standstill."

SPINSTERS' CLUB

Sunday Gatherings Popular With Men On Leave

The Spinster's Club in Wellington is continuing to extend hospitality to men from the services on leave from camp on Sunday afternoons. Last Sunday 200 men were present and a most enjoyable time was spent with music, singing and games, a delicious buffet tea being served from tea wagons. The entertainment was held in Miss Mildred Harris's studio, and came to an end in time for the men to catch their trains back to camp at night. The organization for these afternoons is in the hands of the secretary, Miss Peggy Hyams.

At their fortnightly meetings members form a working "bee" to knit comforts for the soldiers, balaclavas, socks, mittens, mufflers and pull-overs being made. The quilt, containing the signatures of well-known citizens, is also progressing.

Requests for "pen friends" from soldiers overseas also receive attention at the meetings and numerous letters are dispatched for each mail. Magazines and parcels are being sent regularly to Trentham military camp and to the men overseas. At the last meeting Mrs. L. M. Hyams was elected president and Miss Lorna Akroyd chairman.

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