

Botanist Looks Ahead

IN this age of atomic energy, jet propulsion and vitamin pills, scientists still have some surprises up their sleeves. This is revealed by Dr. V. J. Chapman, M.A., Ph.D. (Cantab.), F.L.S., Professor of Botany at Auckland University College, in a series of talks to be broadcast by 1YC on Fridays, starting on April 15 at 8.0 p.m. The general title is *Botany and Mankind*, and the series will be broadcast later by other YC stations.

Dr. Chapman came to New Zealand in 1946 from Cambridge University. He has specialised in the botany of salt marshes, mangrove swamps and seaweeds, and has written 54 papers on botanical subjects. He is the author of two books published in England—*An Introduction to the Study of Algae* (1944), and *Economic Uses of Seaweeds* (1950)—and he is at present preparing for publication a detailed study of the mangrove swamps of the Waitemata and Manukau Harbours. He is a member of the Auckland Drainage Board and City Council. And he also produces plays!

From what Dr. Chapman has to say in one of his talks it would not be ridiculous to predict that the working man of the future will come home to a meal of protein processed from the local algae

farm. For the growing of algae under controlled conditions is believed to be one of the most promising ways of overcoming the world's food shortage. Dr. Chapman explains that these green unicellular organisms multiply greatly under ideal conditions, and their growth can be hastened by artificial means. When harvested the algae should yield from 20 to 60 tons of food an acre annually, and this greatly exceeds the yield of any present-day agricultural field crop. The algae food is directly edible, either as a soup or cooked like spinach, and it tastes like raw lima beans or pumpkin.

Other talks by Dr. Chapman concern the origin of life, the origin of New Zealand flora, and how botany helps the grower. One talk on forest regeneration includes an interesting account of an investigation of the Dominion's kauri forests.

Traditionalism in Art

A survey of contemporary art and literature in Britain is given in another YC talks series by M. K. Joseph, senior lecturer in English at Auckland University College. This series will start from 1YC on Thursday, April 14, at 8.0 p.m., and is called "On Second Thoughts." Mr. Joseph spent ten years in Britain from 1936 studying at Oxford



DR. V. J. CHAPMAN



M. K. JOSEPH

University, and served during the war years in the Army. He was able to visit England again last year and also saw a little of Spain, France and Italy.

Trends in English new writing have altered a good deal since 1946, Mr. Joseph observes. "Younger writers," he says, "although using modern techniques in a discreet sort of way, have broken with the 'new romanticism' of the immediate post-war period and are follow-

ing traditional patterns in their subjects, making them more acceptable to the man in the street." This is reflected in the decline of Dylan Thomas's reputation. While *Under Milk Wood* and his *Collected Poems* were still selling briskly, he was being accused—along with Edith Sitwell and W. R. Rodgers—of "artificiality," of being a "romantic decadent."

The new plays of 1954 were not exciting but sober, workmanlike and interesting. What distinguished them most was

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