# CONSTIPATION



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RADIO REVIEW

T is difficult to see how the con-These adventures we still praise for the triumph of the human race over its limitations. Other achievements like Sir Charles Kingsford Smith's flight over the Tasman open up great possibilities which are quickly explored. Twenty-five years ago, 3YA's commemorative programme vividly reminded us, the "Old Bus" fought a dangerous 141/2-hour passage through snow and cloud from Australia to New Zealand. Now in very truth the Southern Cross is an "Old Bus," as dated to our eyes as the Wright brothers' first plane, illustrated in the School Journal, was to the boys of the 1920's. A regular flight turns the Tasman into a lake and jet planes threaten to make it a puddle: all in 25 years. One may be forgiven here for listening to the facts rather than the manner of production. I did think, however, that in the bar-room small talk a real "Kiwi" voice might have been used with effect. The florid

sentimentality of the programme seemed to suit an exploit which must have hit the headlines throughout the world,

### Down from Olympus

AM old enough to remember Charlie Chaplin in The Gold Rush, back in the days when the old engine "Myrtle" chugged away and the arcs flared in the quest of Everest or of the operating box. To us, Chaplin was a South Pole can be utilised, genius, and to me he became something more, for years later when he came in for some doubtful publicity I found myself more disturbed than I would have been by the moral lapse of a friend. Chaplin represented, I suppose. The Artist, and all that was implied in that word stood or fell by his actions. Now, when the gods come down to converse with men as Chaplin did from 3YA in "Forty Years in Films," one is surprised that they are so ordinary. Irrationally one expects them to be as great at every occupation as they are at the one which made you exalt them. In fact, Chaplin as an ordinary man speaking about films was quite adequate, but despite all his explanations about the music in his pictures being a counterpoint to the sordid, one felt in the end that the mystery was locked in Chaplin himself, in his ability, as he said, to build his pictures around, thus extending, his own unique personality.

-Westcliff

#### Culture With Comfort

AS spring reluctantly approaches, we begin to be released once more from that odd dispensation by which the bulk of our "cultural activities" take place in the coldest and wettest part of the year. This gave added point to a hearing of Mr. Stanley Oliver's lively and informative talk (from 1YC) on the Royal Festival Hall. The picture it presented was almost Elysianthe acoustically-perfected hall, the airconditioning, the sponge-rubber seats with sound-absorbent bottoms, the orchestra in full view, the complete insulation, the never-crowded exits and (not least) the bars and dining-room. How different (to put it mildly) from our own frozen or steaming halls, the dead spots and booming echoes, the awful emptiness of empty seats, and the chairs which become instruments of torture in the second half. Not forgetting the desperate struggle for late transport, and the fast broken after a long tram journey. It is no doubt part of our celebrated "puritanism" that we have not learned to associate culture with comfort, Mr. Oliver's talk ended with a moving account of an ovation to Vaughan Williams—a reminder that greatness still exists, and has its proper setting.

#### Double Translation

AUTUMN HOLIDAY, the short play based on Chekhov's Lady With a Dog. was a translation in more senses than one. Besides dramatising the story, it transferred it from 19th Century Russia to modern England. The scene was now Lowestoft, and since there is a very special melancholy that broods over an English seaside resort in the off-season, the Chekhovian effect was to some extent preserved. Two middle-aged people on holiday fall in love: each is married, and not unhappily. There is no answer to the problem; and that is the point of the story. The play caught something of the shading and nuance of Chekhov, and the note of human unhappiness for which there is no cure; and to that extent. I suppose, it survived the double process of translation. But of the chief character, the middle-aged business man, I'm not so sure. As played by Wilfred Pickles, it was a tailormade part; but do north-country businessmen, even when in love, remark on the colours of sunsets and admit without shame to an interest in water-colour painting?

—M.K.J.

## Purely for the Ear

MUCH of the spoken material we hear on the air would be more easily and completely absorbed from the printed page, and this print-complex is reflected in many programme titles—Countrywoman's Magazine, Music Magazine, and titles of the Notebook, Album, Snapshot, or even Parade variety. All these have reference to the eye, rather than the ear, in their acquired, if not in their original meanings. Nevertheless, it was in one of these programmes, the latest number of Music Magazine, that excellent use of purely auditory material was made, giving us something that could not have been given as well in any other way. First, Layton Ring spoke about the music of Byrd, illustrating on the harpsichord the differences between the music as written, and as performed with suitable ornamentation intended by the composer. Then Maurice Clare, having

