

transport or engaging stage hands, or moving bulky scenery and masses of costumes about the country. Miss Draper travels light—two or three suitcases are sufficient for her personal and professional wardrobe. She can arrive at a theatre four or five minutes before the curtain goes up—and be in plenty of time for her performance. She uses practically no make-up.

NOR is there any worry about authors and royalties. Miss Draper creates all her own sketches. In her time she has created about 50, containing 150 characters, though she seldom uses them all. She denies that she ever consciously observes people with a view to copying them. Her characters are original creations, drawn from her own imagination and understanding of life. If she liked, she could probably be a great novelist or playwright.

This is acknowledged by other artists. A. P. Herbert, the famous novelist, said of her: "Confound the woman! That three-piece sketch about Mr. Clifford has as much meat in it as a Shakespearean tragedy. Mr. Eugene O'Neill might have made a seven-hour drama out of it. Men have concocted protracted trilogies out of much less material."

And once, after listening to a Draper performance, the late Sir James Barrie remarked: "If I could remember half the lines in that sketch I could make five or six good plays out of it."

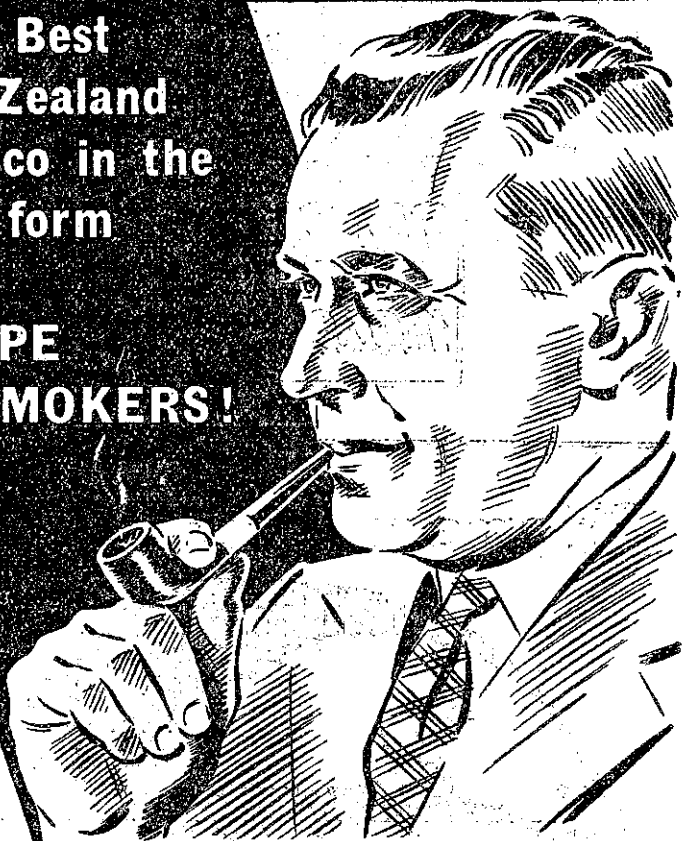
Just how remarkable that tribute was is shown when it is put alongside Ruth Draper's own explanation of her methods. "As the idea of a character grows in my mind I may work out a form on paper and jot down a few sub-titles, but my sketches are never written down in any completeness. I just work as I go, and may alter lines or adopt new ones as I present the character on the stage, to suit the reactions of the audience. Although I am frequently sent manuscripts for my consideration, I rarely even read them lest I should find myself absorbing other people's ideas. Henry James once wrote a sketch for me. It was very clever, but quite unsuitable for my work."

And finally, Ruth Draper has steadfastly turned down handsome offers from film companies, broadcasting services and gramophone recording companies. She feels that her art would be lost in any medium which tended to make it wooden or mechanical. She must have the audience in the theatre to act as her prompter in everything she does.

THE Australian Broadcasting Commission announces that Australian tours have been arranged for eight Australian artists. The first of these tours began this month, and the other artists will leave at varying intervals between now and September. The artists who have been chosen are:—Miss Strella Wilson, Mr. Colin Crane, Miss Mabel Nelson and Mr. Colin Thompson, Mr. Raymond Beatty and Miss Heather Kinnaird, Mr. Clement Q. Williams and Miss Enid Conley.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S station at Bratislava has been augmented by several new studios, two of which have been treated acoustically to give an open-air effect and the atmosphere of a cathedral.

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SYDNEY DE VRIES, popular Dutch baritone, is back in Australia after an absence of two years, during which he toured the Dutch East Indies and America. The Australian Broadcasting Commission has engaged him for an inter-State tour. Following his Sydney season he will visit Brisbane. Then will follow seasons in Hobart, Melbourne, Perth and Adelaide. Syd-

ney de Vries has now broadcast in 12 countries. Since leaving Australia he has sung in Java, Singapore, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Tokio, Hollywood, Chicago and New York. In New York he was frequently engaged by the NBC. On one programme he sang a duet with Lily Pons, and was also associated in other programmes with well-known artists of American radio and stage.