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open its new season—an opera of heavenly beauty, but subtle in its charms, and not one that a knowing promoter would risk in a "land without music." It was *Das Land ohne Musik* that preferred the lesser substance of the Savoy Operas to the works now favoured as never before in England; but we were reminded of the passage of time by the death, the other day, of Rupert D'Oyly Carte. A memorial service was held in the Savoy Chapel, and afterwards there was a group of elderly people talking on the lawn outside—some of the most famous Savoyards of the past, including Essie Spain, Leo Sheffield, and Decima Moore, the original Casilda of *The Gondoliers*. *The Manchester Guardian* said that none of those who were sitting by the lawn seemed to notice them. Meanwhile, two operas from Europe have just had their first performances in London. The Sadler's Wells company has produced *Simon Boccanegra*, the only important opera by Verdi that has not so far been performed here. In the past, many people thought it too sombre

reporter, he scratched a stave on a piece of paper and wrote down the opening notes of his new waltz (it is called "Here Comes the Waltz").



THE CHOCOLATE SOLDIER is shortly to be revived in London; it was lately done in America (where Straus now lives) but rehased with "modernisations" which the composer believes will be unnecessary in this country. (No comment from G. B. Shaw, whose *Arms and the Man* was the original of the libretto.)

Mr. Straus held court in a London hotel, complaining between his courteous answers to questions, of English draughts. "And why," he cried, "if there happens to be no draught, does someone have to rush and open a window?" Someone asked why the publicity people give his surname a double "s". "They are always wrong wherever I go," he said, sadly. "There is nothing to be done about it. I give in."

Composition Prizes

TWO prizes for composition have just been announced. One is for young composers, sex unspecified, and the other is for women composers. Dr. Vaughan Williams, presiding at the hundredth studio recital of the Committee for the Promotion of New Music, announced that a grant of 2,000 dollars had been made to the committee by Koussivitzky Music Foundation of Boston, Mass., and that 1,000 dollars of it was to be divided equally between two young composers in a competition for orchestral works of between 15 and 30 minutes' duration. The committee will act as organisers and adjudicators.

The prize for women is being offered by the Society of Women Musicians. Fifty years ago it could hardly have happened, but times have changed since a woman's music meant the pretty fiddle-faddles of Chaminade, Teresa del Riego, or the young Polish lady who wrote *The Maiden's Prayer*. Dame Ethel Smyth has changed all that, and nowadays instead of the faery and lady-like we have string-quartets, or fugues for clarinet, viola, trombone and percussion. Works by Elizabeth Lutyens and Elizabeth Maconchy have represented Britain at foreign festivals, and the chamber music of Priaulx Rainier (from South Africa) and Phyllis Tate is being listened to to-day with attention and something more. —A.A.

Food for Thought

"A. NAME mis-read in a cable the other day sent 100 New Zealand food parcels to the surprised and delighted inhabitants of Dorking, a town in Surrey. 'Borking'—said the cable announcing the parcel's destination; there is no such place, so the Post Office sent them to Dorking, only to find out later that they should have gone to Barking, a district just outside London. When the error was discovered, New Zealand generously sent 100 more parcels—for Barking this time. It's an ill wind that blows no one good."—George Henschel in a BBC talk.



DAME ETHEL SMYTH
No more pretty fiddle-faddles

to be a success in England, but tastes have altered, and sombreness is no disqualification any more. Smetana's opera, *The Kiss*, has also been produced for the first time, by the Carl Rosa Company (at Hammersmith). It was written 72 years ago. Another work from Czechoslovakia will also appear shortly in its first English version—Weinberger's *Schwanda the Bagpiper*. At the moment, four opera companies are performing in London—Covent Garden, Sadler's Wells, the Carl Rosa, and the English Opera Group (doing Benjamin Britten's new *Beggar's Opera* and *Albert Herring*).

Straus With One S

LAST year we had a visit from Richard Strauss, who came in the hope of negotiating for some of his royalties that were frozen by the war. This week, posters all over London are carrying the name of Strauss, and once again it is an old man, but the spelling is wrong. Oscar Strauss, composer of *The Chocolate Soldier* and *Waltz Dream*, is now 78, and has come to conduct a concert of Viennese Music in the Empress Hall at Earl's Court, which is nothing more nor less than the biggest shed available in London. For a

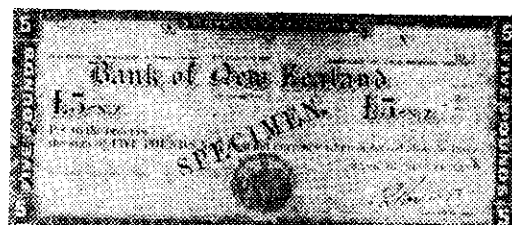


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