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**"Human nature's
a funny thing"**

—says Mrs. Rawlins

They realised that nice things need care, and they knew a harmless way to keep them white. Believe me, **Reckitt's BLUE** in the final rinse is the safe way to keep linens a good colour."

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KNOW YOUR CLASSICS

THIS is one of a further series of articles written for "The Listener" by BESSIE POLLARD. As with the preceding series, published some time ago, the aim is to help the student and the interested listener towards a more complete appreciation of good music.

(17) Prometheus Overture, Op. 43 (Beethoven)

ONE of Beethoven's first works to have any connection with the theatre was the music for the ballet *Prometheus*, commissioned by Salvatore Vigano, the most famous dancer and ballet impresario of his day. The first performance took place in Vienna in March, 1801, with enormous success, further enhancing Beethoven's growing reputation at that time. In all, the music consisted of an Overture, an Introduction and 16 incidental numbers; the Introduction movement is said to foreshadow the "storm" section of the *Pastoral Symphony*, while, in the Finale, there appeared a theme which Beethoven later used in the Piano Variations, Op. 35, and in the *Eroica Symphony*. Of this *Prometheus* music, the Overture alone has survived.

The Overture begins with an *Adagio* introductory section of about 16 bars, beginning with a series of commanding chords, which usher in a tender oboe theme of great loveliness—



In bar 17 the Overture proper (*Allegro molto con brio*) starts with the bubbling main theme of the work, announced pianissimo by first violins—



The second subject, more subdued and lyrical in character, is heard in thirds from the woodwind, starting in bar 49—



After some working-out of the second subject, a strong viola theme, with the characteristic Beethoven "loud-soft" sudden alternations, is heard, commencing in bar 81—



A strong climax is reached in bar 101, when the following passage, slightly reminiscent of the second subject, makes its appearance—



All this quoted thematic material is more or less developed as it appears—almost immediately following the exposition or "statement of material" section, Beethoven seems to substitute a completely varied restatement section for the more orthodox development, or "working-out" section.

Prometheus Overture, Op. 43, by Beethoven, will be heard from Station 4YA on Sunday, May 8, at 9.22 p.m.

NEW ZEALAND LISTENER, APRIL 29