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and loss of the Far
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been known for more than 100 years. U.S.A. and Germany were first in the field, but

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AUCKLAND FESTIVAL

THIS is one of three articles written for "The Listener" by BESSIE POLLARD. Each will discuss in outline an important symphonic work to be heard at one of the Auckland concerts of the National Orchestra on August 15, 18 and 20.

(2) Tone Poem, "Death and Transfiguration" Richard Strauss

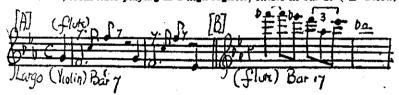
RICHARD STRAUSS'S tone poem *Death and Transfiguration*, Op. 24 (written in 1889, and performed for the first time at Eisenach on June 21, 1890), was first composed, and later explained in a poem by Alexander Ritter, now printed in the score. The text of this poem, in brief, tells of a man lying helf-conscious in a dim poverty-stricken little room; he is racked with fever, awaiting death. As a flickering candle casts uncertain shadows, the exhausted man dreams of his childhood, the hopes and illusions of his youth, and the relentless foes who blocked his path at every turn. Then Death strikes and out of darkness rises the glorious and exalted music of the heavenly spaces.

The tone poem is cast in a free sonata form, and divides roughly into four main sections: (1) Introduction, (2) Statement of themes, (3) Fantasia section—where secondary motifs are heard, and (4) Restatement and Coda.

The opening theme is a syncopated figure heard in the strings-



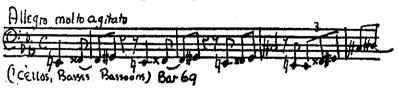
Two important motifs make their appearance shortly afterwards. The first of these, heard from violins and answered by flute, appears in bar 7 ("A" below), while the other, from flute playing in a high register, enters in bar 17 ("B" below)—



A simple oboe melody, of great charm and appeal, is announced in bar 30-



The second section—Allegro molto agitato—introduces a turbulent figure in the basses (below), culminating in wildly dissonant chords—



I quote two fine themes from the latter portion of the work—the powerful full orchestral motif in bar 97 ("A" below), and the broad melody from strings in bar 300.



Death and Transfiguration, Op. 24, by Richard Strauss, will be heard at the second Auckland concert of the National Orchestra, conducted by Anderson Tyrer, for Thursday, August 18.