

ARTHUR BLISS FESTIVAL

AN opportunity to hear a wide selection of works by Sir Arthur Bliss, many of which have not been performed before in New Zealand, will be given by a Festival of his works to be held in Christchurch. A general introduction to the composer will be given in a BBC interview by Stephen Black (YCs, Wednesday, September 19, 7.30), and the Festival itself starts with performances of his *Music for Strings* (1936) and his gentle *Pastorale* (1929), a setting of pastoral poems for voice, flute,



BBC photo
Sir Arthur Bliss

strings and drum, both works being played as the first half of a National Orchestra subscription concert (YCs, September 20, 8.0). The next day members of the Orchestra, and other soloists, with James Robertson at the piano, will give an afternoon chamber music concert at the University (delayed broadcast, YCs, Sunday, September 23, 7.0).

Dr. Vernon Griffiths, Professor of Music at Canterbury College, who initiated these festivals of music by English composers a few years ago, here introduces this year's composer:

"Bliss exemplifies the spirit of that generation of Britain's youth whose energy, impetuous for a new life, was diverted for a time by the 1914-18 war in which so many, like Butterworth, went to their death: the men he commemorated later in *Morning Heroes*.

"He fought with them. He survived: and 'Rout' has the joyous exuberance of Armistice Day. The cause of contemporary music, including that by British composers, owes much to him. Certainly his own music should be heard for its vitality and for the example it sets of craftsmanship in the expression of musical ideas."

In the chamber music concert the clarinet quintet, reputed to stand beside those of Mozart and Brahms, and the viola sonata, which demands great virtuosity, will be the main works. Interspersed with these are "Madam Noy" and "Rout," for small combinations of wind and strings, and "Seven American Poems." Marked "Allegro fantastico," "Madam Noy" tells how

*Old Madam Noy hath stolen forth
To the church on the sands nigh
Perrinporth . . .*

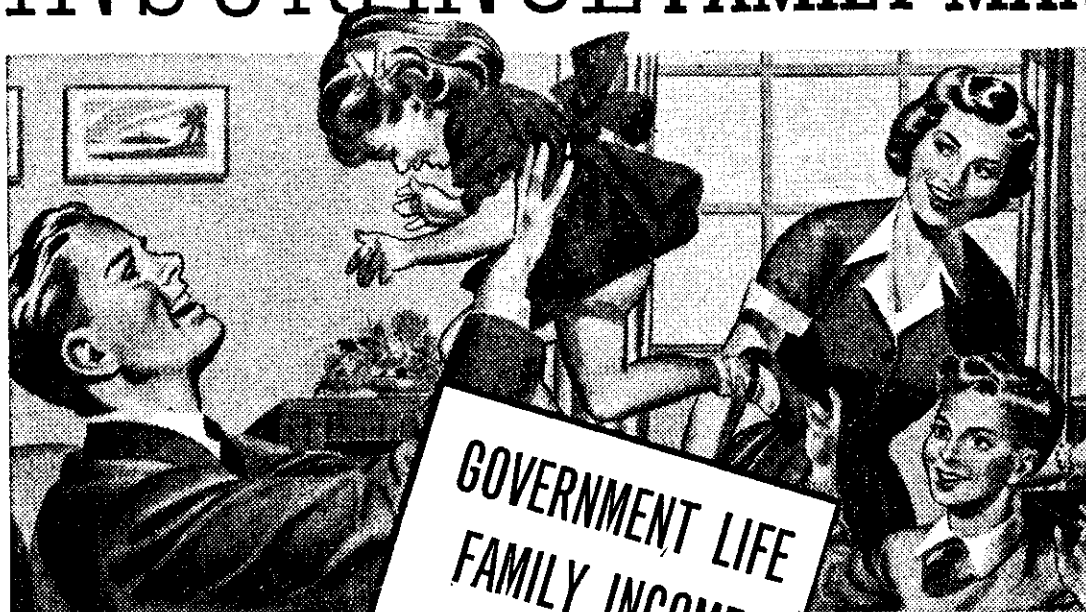
*When she's sure that she's quite alone,
She grubs in the sand 'til she finds
a bone.*

In "Rout" the listener must imagine someone watching a carnival from an open window. Borne on the wind come snatches of song and revelry. "Tacca da Remino" sings the voice, "Stun stan stun."

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