



"RECORD MONTHLY"
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RECORD PUBLISHING CO.
 P.O. BOX 175, CHRISTCHURCH



• ALFRED TENNYSON

EDINBURGH FESTIVAL

Tennyson's "Enoch Arden"

RECITATION with piano accompaniment can seldom these days be contemplated without horror. Meat and drink to Anna Russell, redolent of potted palms and church socials, the musical monologue (we thought, as we prepared to attend its funeral) was dead. Surprisingly, though, the Edinburgh Festival programmes for this year include a notable example of the genre—Richard Strauss's "melodrama" of Tennyson's *Enoch Arden*, with Sebastian Shaw as narrator and Nina Milkina at the piano. *Enoch Arden* will be heard, together with another recording from this year's Festival, at 7.0 p.m. from all YCs on Sunday, October 7.

Strauss's music, which makes skilful use of leading motives, is not continuous but, apart from the preludes to the first and second parts of the work, is brought

in at appropriate moments. The story is the familiar one of the sailor, happily married and with several children, who goes abroad to better his fortune and, not being heard of for ten years, is presumed dead by his wife. After much persuasion, she eventually marries the sailor's best friend. Enoch returns at last (his long silence is never clearly explained) to find his wife living in comfort and with a child by his friend. Enoch refuses to make himself known, and so disturb their happiness but, before he dies, he begs his landlady to tell his wife he loved her to the end, sending blessings also to his children and to his friend.

The story is that Queen Victoria was much disturbed by Enoch's condoning of bigamy, and drove to see the author at Farringford Manor, on the Isle of Wight, to tell him so. After Tennyson had explained his point of view and shown her the tomb of the man whose story was the basis of his poem, the Queen was silent for a long while. At length she drew herself up and said, as she turned to go, "God bless him. He did right, after all."

On Sunday evening, too, we are to hear the famous soprano Irmgard Seefried, singing the Schumann song cycle *Woman's Life and Love*, and a group of five Brahms lieder, which includes four of his beautiful love songs. Piano accompaniments are by Erik Werba. The Schumann song cycle is set to a very sentimental sequence of poems by Chamisso. The humble adoration the poems breath for the chosen male is today right out of date, but Schumann's beautiful music transcends the banality of the poems. We see the singer first as the bride tremulous on her wedding day, then as the young wife looking with passionate devotion at her husband, and as the young mother bouncing her child on her knee. The last song is poignant for, as the voice of the young widow ceases, the piano, in an epilogue, movingly recalls the melody of the first song when the future was bright with happiness.

Also on the programme will be the Schumann Sonata in A Minor, Op. 105, and the Brahms Sonata No. 3, both for violin and piano. The performers are Wolfgang Schneiderhan (violin) and Carl Seemann (piano).



• CARL SEEMAN

Flying's the way to travel



Mrs. Fletcher's flying again!

That's the third time this year she's been to see her grandchildren! It's amazing how the older folk have taken to the air. Mrs. Fletcher says she enjoys the journey that she used to dread. The flight's so comfortable, so clean, and so quick that she's not the least bit tired. She arrives fresh and smiling. From the moment Mrs. Fletcher buys her ticket she hasn't a worry in the world. Everything's arranged for her. Yes, all the Mrs. Fletchers and their husbands will tell you that flying's the way for older folk to travel.



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