

# THE WINTER JOURNEY

"A SET of songs that will make you shiver," was how Franz Schubert described to a friend his song-cycle *The Winter Journey*, which YC listeners will hear at 7.30 p.m. on Sunday, October 27, in a presentation by the baritone, Donald Munro, with Doris Sheppard at the piano.

Set to *Winterreise* poems of Wilhelm Müller, the songs were composed in 1827, and Schubert was still correcting the final proofs of them when he died the following year. They tell of the wanderings and increasing despair of a rejected lover, and Schubert has sustained the sombre mood of the poems throughout the cycle.

Many authorities attach an autobiographical significance to *The Winter Journey*, citing the effect on Schubert of Beethoven's death early in the same year the cycle was written, or mentioning Schubert's own approaching illness and death, his poverty and attacks of depression. It is also argued to the contrary that he had composed songs of tragic mood even in his happiest days, and that the consistent seriousness of *The Winter Journey* is "... sufficiently explained by the effect of the poems themselves on a mature and very sensitive artist."

In Sunday's broadcast, as an interlude between the first and second volumes of the 24 songs that make up *The Winter Journey*, Donald Munro will give a talk on various aspects of the cycle.

Also on Sunday, October 27, the classical music at 2.0 p.m. from YAs. 3YZ and 4YZ will include a recent recording—thought to be the first—of a concerto by a neglected contemporary of Schubert's: the Irishman John Field. Field, who is mainly remembered in histories of music for his creation of the nocturne, was one of the greatest pianists of the 19th century. He was particularly considered so in Russia, where he spent most of his adult life.



JOHN FIELD (1782-1837)

N.Z. LISTENER, OCTOBER 18, 1957.



He was also highly regarded as a composer; his stylistic similarity to Chopin, however, has largely led to neglect of his music.

The concerto to be heard next Sunday—the first of Field's seven concertos—was performed for his English debut at the Philharmonic concerts in 1832. It has been described as "a typical romantic effusion of pianistic (if not orchestral) brilliance." This performance of Field's Concerto No. 1 in E is by the young American pianist Sondra Bianca, with the Philharmonia Orchestra of Hamburg conducted by J. Randolph Jones.

## Opera by Britten

Fourth in the series of modern English operas being broadcast this month is Benjamin Britten's *The Little Sweep*, the opera from his entertainment for children, *Let's Make an Opera*.

Britten and Eric Crozier, his librettist, created their entertainment with the idea that the true entertainment is active, not passive, that if the audience could participate in the problems and labour of creating an opera their enjoyment and understanding would be greater. This Part One of *Let's Make an Opera*, where the audience joins in the rehearsal of the opera to come—though quite easily separated from *The Little Sweep*—is largely responsible for its unique character.

The story of *The Little Sweep* itself is simple. Three musical scenes tell the tale of Sam, the unhappy sweep-boy, who is rescued from the cruel chimney-sweep and his mate by some adventurous children, and given the chance for a new and happy life. In the performance to be heard from all YCs at 8.0 p.m. Tuesday, October 22, the part of Sam is taken by the boy soprano David Hemmings, Rowan by Jennifer Vyvyan (soprano), Miss Baggott by Nancy Thomas (contralto), Black B-b by Trevor Anthony (bass) and Clem by Peter Pears (tenor), with other soloists and the choir of St. Allyn's and the English Opera Group Orchestra conducted by Benjamin Britten.



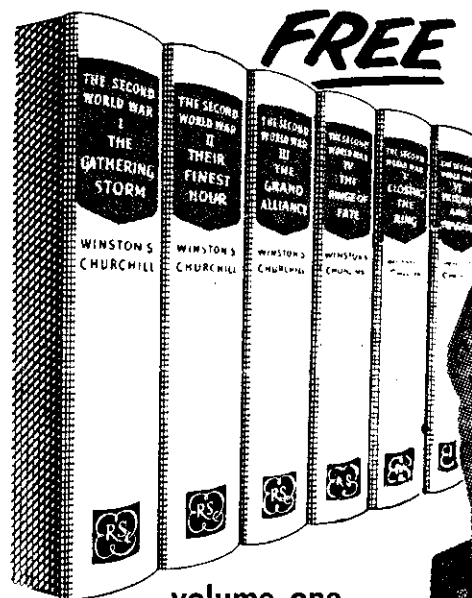
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