



First Auckland Concert

N Saturday, March 4, the NZBS National Orchestra, conducted by Dr. Edgar Bainton, will present the first public concert of the 1950 season at Auckland. In this article BESSIE POLLARD discusses one of the works featured in the programme.

Prelude a L'Apres-midi d'un Faune Debussy

EBUSSY'S Prelude to Stéphane Mallarmé's L'Après-Midi d'un Faune has been described as "one of the subtlest examples of orchestral writing in existence." It was written during the years 1892-94, when the composer was 30, and the poem on which the work is based is rather vague and mysterious. (An excellent translation can be obtained in A. I. Ellis's Stéphane Mallarmé in English Verse.)

The Prelude begins with a flute theme suggesting the faun's pipe-



The flute is answered in Bar 4 by horns, accompanied by harp and muted strings ("A" below), and following a repetition of the flute melody, by an oboetheme in Bar 14 ("B" below)—



Bar 44 introduces a section of impassioned beauty. This begins-



The woodwinds, against a syncopated string accompaniment, give out what may be termed the second theme, in Bar 54 (below). The strings take it over a few bars later, against a rich background of harp, woodwind and horns—



The final section of the work begins with the flute playing the opening theme in augmentation (longer note values), accompanied by harp and sustained strings—



Debussy's "Prélude à l'Après-midi d'un Faune" ill be presented at the first Auckland concert of the National Orchestra's 1950 season, on March 4. On the same programme the Orchestra will present Elgar's "Enigma" Variations (discussed in "The Listener" of 27.8.48) and the Brahms Symphony No. 1 in C Minor ("The Listener," 2.9.49).