

Walton's Violin Concerto

ON Tuesday and Saturday, August 22 and 26, the National Orchestra, conducted by Michael Bowles, will present two concerts at Christchurch. The Saturday programme includes Mozart's Symphony No. 39 in E Flat; Divertimento for Strings by Michael Bowles; Petite Suite (Debussy); and the first New Zealand performance of William Walton's Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, in which the soloist is Alfredo Campoli. In this article BESSIE POLLARD discusses the last-named work in outline.

JASCHA HEIFETZ commissioned William Walton to write for him this Violin Concerto, which was to be reserved for the virtuoso's exclusive use for two years. It was performed for the first time at Cleveland, Ohio, on December 7, 1939, under Artur Rodzinski.

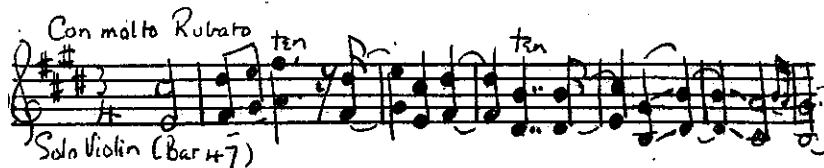
The first movement—*Andante Tranquillo*—the slowest in tempo of the three which comprise the work, is cast in a considerably modified Sonata form. The main subject of the movement is really a composite one—below the solo violin, bassoons and 'cellos give out a most important counter-theme—



The second subject, simple melodically and rhythmically, is announced by the orchestra—



The second movement—*Presto capriccioso alla Napolitana*—is a brilliant Scherzo and Trio, the opening theme of which requires dazzling virtuosity from both orchestra and soloist. The almost Viennese waltz cast of the second theme (below) is a perfect foil for the restless energy of the first—

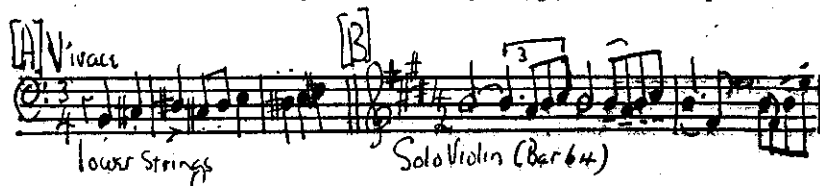


The Trio section—subtitled *Canzonetta*—is slower in tempo; its lovely main melody, announced first by horn, is then taken over by the soloist—



Although the Finale—*Vivace*—is expanded to take within its stride a long reference to the main theme of the first movement, nevertheless, one is conscious throughout of Walton's economy with his thematic material, and views with admiration its skilful manipulation.

Two themes dominating the Finale are sharply contrasted: "A" below gives the first, heard in 'cellos and basses, later joined by bassoons; the rhapsodic second subject ("B" below) is accompanied at first by strings, horn and harp—



The inclusion of themes from the opening movement ensures that fine unity which is evident throughout the Concerto.

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