



—S. P. Andrew, photo.

MR. FELIX SWINSTEAD.

... "What are your piano stools like?"

**E**VERY little bit of practical effort to produce music in some form or other must everywhere be encouraged. If people can produce music themselves—even a little—they can get greater pleasure from listening to music."

Mr. Swinstead broke off as a steward crossed the floor of the hotel lounge, carrying a large, framed photograph, and hung it on the wall. Mr. Swinstead's eyes dwelt on it for a moment.

"For instance," he said, "I know that is a fine photograph of a girl over there that they have just put up. I have tried to take one myself.

"It is the same with music."

### His Question

**EXAMINER** in Music for Trinity College, London, Mr. Felix Swinstead, now visiting New Zealand, put aside my next question on the composing of music for a moment and asked one himself:

"What are your piano stools like?"

He is to broadcast illustrated music talks during his stay in New Zealand from the four main National stations, and will give lecture-recitals in schools as well.

He plays and speaks on "Mood in Music" from 1YA on August 5; on "Form in Music" from 2YA on August 30; on "The Left Hand in Piano-Playing" from 3YA on November 13; and on "How the Composer Works" from 4YA on November 24.

"In Australia they have very fine pianos," said Mr. Swinstead, "but their music stools are awful. Not in one centre in Australia did I find a stool that stood up and down."

**T**HE stool, of which nobody in the audience takes the slightest notice, may play a most important part in a pianist's recital. Yet in many places, says Mr. Swinstead, musicians are given only the one stool. It must do for both long people and short people. The spiral-swivelled

# NEED MUSIC GO SIDEWAYS

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stool is not satisfactory either. As you play, the chair jolts loose. And position matters very much to the player. Wrong position means that he does not get the correct muscular conditions.

"When I played in one place in Australia," said Mr. Swinstead, "they gave me the stool that Moiseiwitsch used. They had cut down the legs of it for him because he is a short man, much shorter than I. I could not use it.

"I gave my recital sitting on a beer-box, with the top of the stool on it to make it comfortable."

### No Short Cuts

**T**HIS done with, Mr. Swinstead began to speak again of modern musical composition. For him there are no short cuts in composing. All the great masters have founded their style on that of their predecessors before they developed their own individuality.

There was a tendency after the war for a new school of thought to grow up. Some composers said: "We can disregard all this early work. We can begin where Ravel and Debussy finished." They got a cheap notoriety by being outre, but no music written in this method will last.

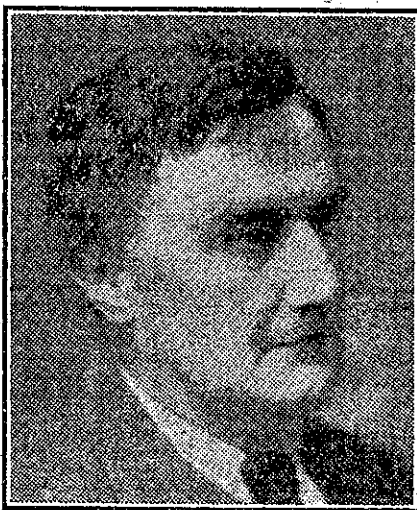
"**Y**OU must go back to the masters," said Mr. Swinstead. "There never will be another composer who is greater than Bach and Beethoven. There never can be."

The evolution of music is like the evolution of the motor-car. It began with the combustion engine and the pneumatic tyre. It came to a certain point until it reached perfection. Now nothing can be added but certain refinements and graces.

The manufacturers tried ultra-streamlines and found they had gone too far. They could, no doubt, make one to go sideways, but what would be the use of that?

What use is it to make music "go sideways"?

**S**OME new composers, Vaughan Williams and Delius, have evolved new ideas, but first they had to go through the mill. To listen to some modern writers, one might imagine that the laws of harmony and counterpoint are no longer needed for composers. That, says Mr. Swinstead, is all wrong. Vaughan Williams, for instance, learned his harmony from (Contd. on page 42.)



VAUGHAN WILLIAMS.

Learned harmony as a choir boy.