

SHAKESPEARE INSPIRED

COMPOSER

EARLY in November the last concert of the year by the Burnside Symphony Orchestra will be given. It will also be the last concert at which the orchestra will be conducted by Dr. John Black, its founder, before his departure to an academic post overseas.

At all the orchestra's concerts Dr. Black has made a point of including unfamiliar or seldom played music in his programmes; and the choice for his farewell concert will be no exception to this rule.

The opening work is the overture to one of Mozart's lesser - known operas, "Idomeneo"; the symphony is Schumann's First; and two other items will be Bach's Church Cantata No. 53, "Schlaget Doch," and the unfamiliar "Die Loreley," by Liszt, for voice and orchestra.

It seems almost impossible for Dr. Black to plan a programme without including some music by Berlioz; and on this occasion his choice has fixed on two Shakespearian studies, "Romeo's Reverie," from Berlioz's "Symphony with Chorus," "Romeo and Juliet," and the "Funeral March for the Final Scene of 'Hamlet,'" the second of the two scenes Berlioz was inspired to write by a performance of "Hamlet."

If anything should have succeeded in correcting the former conventionally distorted and superficial idea of Berlioz as a literary and musical eccentric, of unequal and bizarre musical gifts and extravagant, Byronic temperament, instead of the great composer in his own right and own particular guise he is now recognised to be, it is the emphasis laid in these concert programmes on the variety and original strength of Berlioz's genius.

MUSIC

by DR. ENID ROBERTSON

From Shakespeare Berlioz drew the inspiration for some of his greatest masterpieces—not only his "Romeo and Juliet," but his "Beatrice et Benedicet," the "Lear" Overture, and his "Hamlet" music.

Neither simply a setting of parts of Shakespeare's text, nor a quasi-operatic version of the play, Berlioz's "Romeo and Juliet," which he called a "dramatic symphony," is a musical conception of Shakespeare's play in a new and unique form.

Vocal writing for chorus and soloists is varied with instrumental sections, the whole approximating to the classic, four - movement symphonic structure Berlioz admired in Beethoven.

"Romeo's Reverie," or "Romeo Alone," is a poetic and pensively beautiful instrumental interlude representing Romeo's recollection in solitude of his rapturous first meeting with Juliet. The emotional intensity is heightened by moving solo work for an oboe.