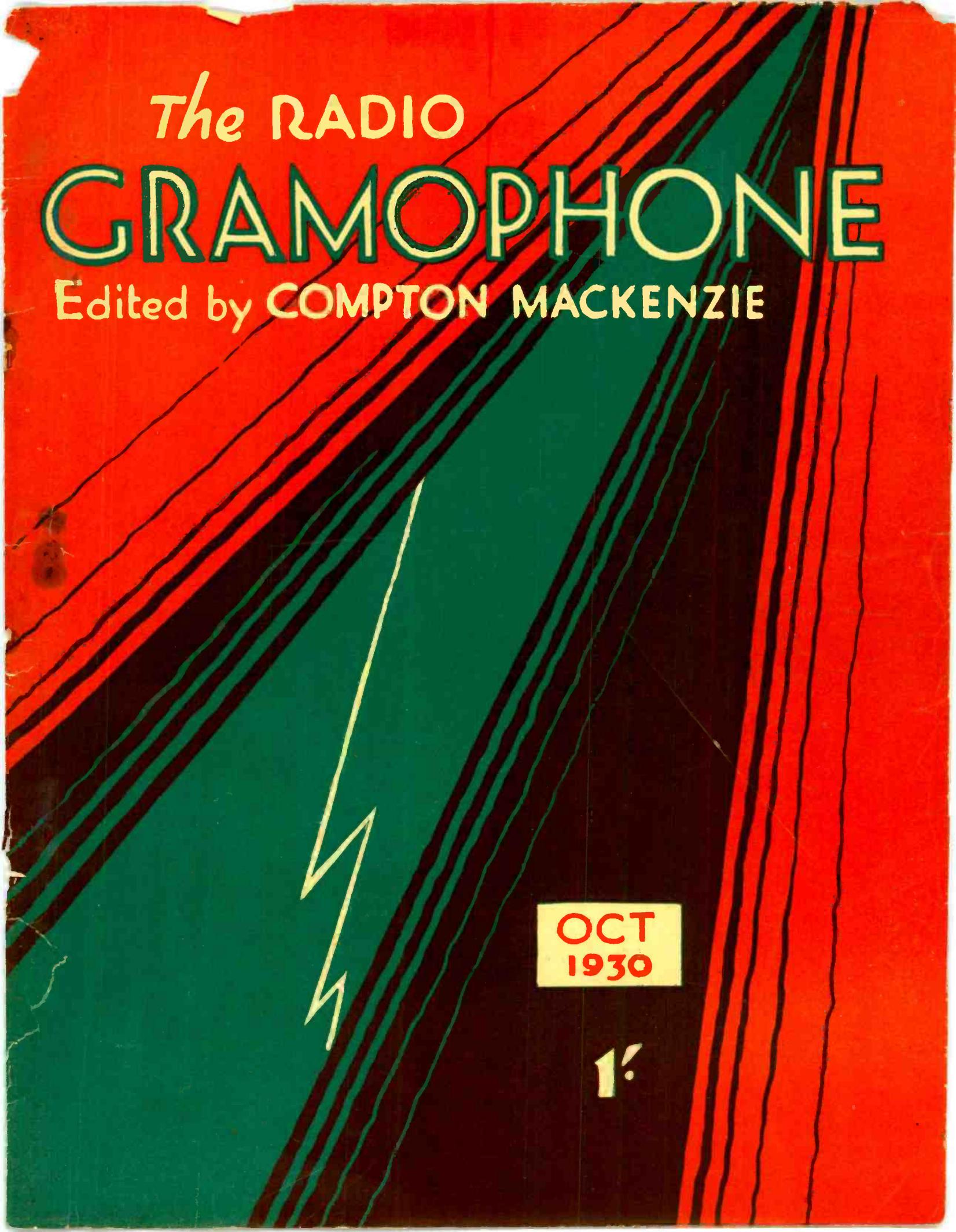


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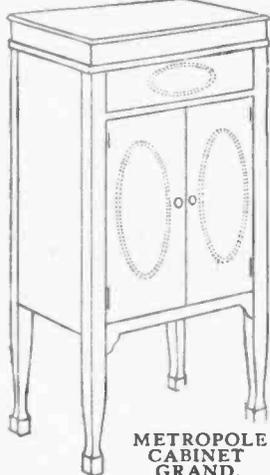
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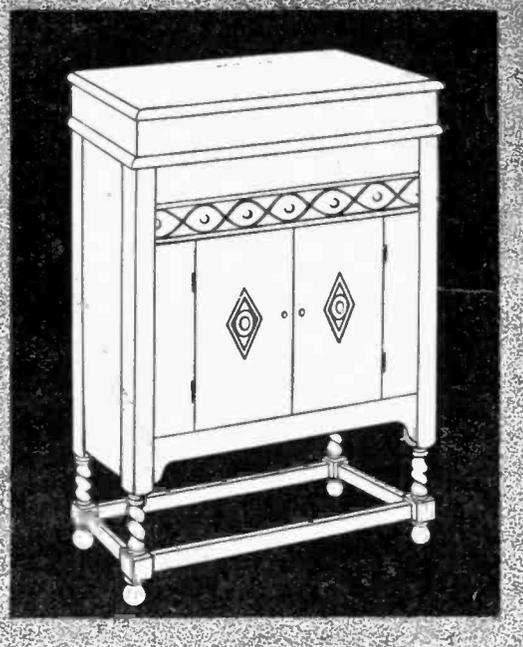
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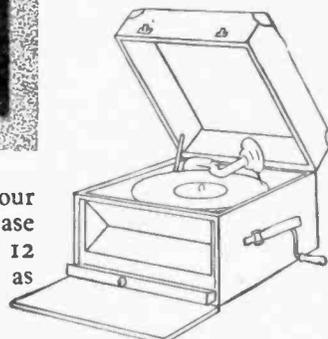
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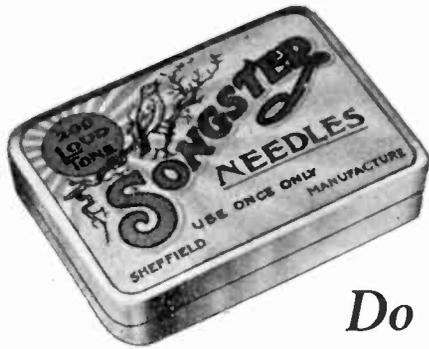
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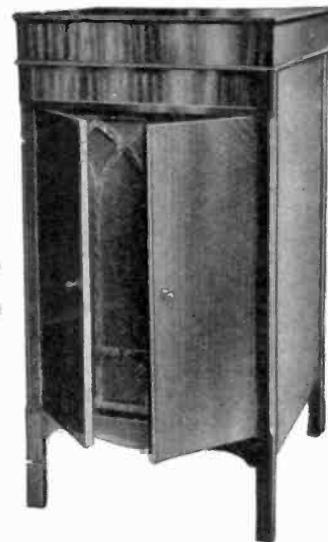
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Vol. VIII.

OCTOBER, 1930

No. 89

EDITORIAL

THE *Piano Concerto in G minor* of Saint-Saëns published by the Vocalion Company on three Broadcast Twelves at a florin a piece is definitely the most successful enterprise which lies to the credit of this courageous and determined effort to put within reach of the public popular classics at a really popular price. I have played this Concerto through on the Balmain with a Vitz mica sound-box. I have played it through on the splendid large Chromogram instrument which the Micro-Perophone Company has sent me. I have played it through on the electric machine with a moving-coil loud speaker, and on each of these three instruments I find it good. The recording of the piano, and the relation of the piano to the orchestra is not inferior to any that I have heard and Mr. Reginald Paul's performance as soloist and Mr. Stanley Chapple's handling of the orchestra are both admirable. Finally, the surface is now as good as any other surface. Many of my readers (I hope I am not being too confident in assuming that we still have so many readers from six years ago) will remember the time when the only piano concertos of which we possessed records were this Saint-Saëns *Concerto in G*, Grieg's *Concerto in A*, and Liszt's *Hungarian Fantasia*. Of those three works the Saint-Saëns and Grieg were both boiled down to fit into two double-sided black label H.M.V. discs, the price for which at the date when they were published was 7s. 6d. a piece. In those days the public was apparently prepared to pay 15s. for a mutilated concerto. Indeed, as a member of the public I paid that price myself. The recording was as good as recording could be at that date, but to put on those old discs nowadays is to make one ask oneself how it was ever possible to deceive oneself into enjoying such productions. But we did succeed in deceiving ourselves, or at any rate I did, for all those discs have the grey lines which, like the grey hairs of the human head, betray the wear and tear of life. The first complete piano concerto to be published was Beethoven's Fifth, *The Emperor*, with Frederick Lamond as soloist, and I well remember one of the people at H.M.V. telling me that it was hopeless to expect that they would ever get their money back from the publication of such

a work in full. From the advent of electrical recording the piano concertos gained more than almost any form of musical composition, and we have had plenty of them since.

The list of these Broadcast Twelve classics which have been issued up to date by the Vocalion Company is a significant index of what really are the most popular musical classics. They began with Grieg's *Piano Concerto in A* which, as I said at the time, looked like becoming the National Anthem of the B.B.C. I do not feel at liberty to quote the number of records that were sold of this piece, but the figures were impressive, so impressive that I have never felt the least hesitation in arguing for the production of more and more musical classics at a really popular price. The Grieg *Piano Concerto* was followed up by Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony*, Schumann's *Piano Quintet*, Liszt's *Hungarian Fantasia*, and now by this Concerto of Saint-Saëns which has provided the text for these remarks. It is, perhaps, surprising to find the Schumann *Piano Quintet* included, but it may be remembered that a shortened version of that Quintet was one of the most successful publications of the Vocalion Company, and in those days it was published on four single-sided pink label records at a cost of 7s. 6d. a piece. If it sold at that price, as I assume it did, the Company would be justified in thinking that it would sell in complete form at 6s. for three discs. When I first praised the spirit of enterprise which inspired this experiment of cheap popular classics I received a certain number of letters to tell me that they did not wear well. I should have been more discouraged by this information if I had not been receiving at the same time letters complaining about the wearing quality of nearly every make of record. Of late these complaints have been much fewer, and I think we may assume that for various reasons wear on records is at present definitely less than it was. Perhaps more people are learning to use fibre needles. Undoubtedly, many people found salvation in the Burmese Colour needle, which reminds me that the inventor of the Burmese Colour needle has put out a needle made of some kind of hard wood called the Electrocolor which seems to stand up to heavy recording better than the Burmese

Colour needles, and has perhaps an even better tone. However, the vogue of the steel needle is not yet seriously threatened by any of its rivals, and I think we may assume that with the growth of electrical recording steps have been taken to grapple with that problem of wear and tear. Then, I also received complaints about the surface noise, and undoubtedly there was a good deal of surface noise on the first Broadcast Twelves, but there is really no more of it now with this Saint-Saëns Concerto than on the average more expensive disc.

A black H.M.V. disc which I am tempted to call the best orchestral record ever published crept modestly out in the middle of last month. This is a record of Arturo Toscanini conducting the New York Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra in the Overture of *The Barber of Seville*. The combination of discipline with what may really be called mesmerism that can compel a large orchestra to play such perfect crescendos in the recording studio belongs to Toscanini alone of living conductors. When THE GRAMOPHONE was first published there were Toscanini records in the Italian H.M.V. list, and in those days I always claimed that they were the best orchestral records to be bought. Single-sided red celebrities they were, and they included a movement from Beethoven's *First Symphony* and a movement from one of Mozart's symphonies. In those days it did not seem to me that any conductor could compare with Toscanini in the way he made his Milan orchestra do what he wanted, and I was always asking for his records in England without response. I do not know how many recordings we have of the *Barber of Seville*, but after this one none of them will have for me any more life than an empty soup plate. Here is a standard by which we shall be able to judge any performance of this overture for years to come, and I wish that Rossini himself in his old green coat could hear this performance, which has all the precision of a perfect mechanism, and at the same time an abundance of authentic life. In these days when, if we may believe the literary critics, works of genius are being spawned as fast as herrings, the superlative is losing its meaning, and I shall not attempt to compete with their encomiastic orgies. I hope, however, that I have said enough to persuade readers to lose no time in obtaining this record, and if they already possess records of the Overture to *The Barber of Seville*, so much the better. They will appreciate this version all the more.

Among recent compositions that which has scored the most indubitable popular success is Ravel's *Bolero*. Polydor was first over here with a recording and Victor next with Koussevitsky and the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Neither of these versions was published in this country, which has allowed Columbia to be first in the field with a performance by Willem Mengelberg and his Concertgebouw Orchestra. I have not heard the Polydor or

Koussevitsky version, but I understand that the latter combines *accelerando* with *crescendo* like Sir Henry Wood at a recent performance in Queen's Hall. I foresee the makings of a pretty controversy on this point. Mengelberg follows the composer's intention by maintaining absolutely rigid time from start to finish of those two twelve-inch light blue discs, and Mengelberg must, I think, be considered right. At the same time, if at concert performances audiences are going to demand *accelerando* as well as *crescendo* it will be a severe temptation to every conductor to give them *accelerando*, for undoubtedly the instinct is to accelerate any dance of bolero time. On gramophone records, at any rate, so long as we have to be content with four minutes a side, the maintenance of strict time will always be an advantage because the excitement of the *accelerando* will inevitably be broken by having to turn over or change the disc. Even as it is we lose the full effect of the *crescendo*, which on account of the breaks sounds jerky, so that between each side of the record there is a comparatively quicker increase of volume than while the side is being played. It would be interesting to know what the sales of these two discs reach because it would afford a clue to the relationship between concert audiences, radio audiences, and gramophone audiences. To judge by the success of Ravel's *Bolero* with concert audiences and radio audiences those Columbia discs should be best sellers. I wonder when we shall see in gramophone lists a heading like this:

RAVEL'S *BOLERO*.—Fifth impression nearly exhausted. Sixth impression in preparation.

Seriously, I think it would be worth while letting the public know the sales of these outstanding works. It might administer a salutary shock to hear of the wretched sales which reward some of the finest enterprises of the recording companies. Not that I am blaming the public. So long as the gold standard is maintained, so long will it become increasingly difficult to find the necessary 39s. to buy such a work as that wonderful transcription by Felix Weingartner of Beethoven's *Hammerklavier Sonata*. The title of this mirrors the resentment which Beethoven felt at having to call a splendid new grand piano with which he had just been presented by Messrs. Broadwood by such a ridiculous name as pianoforte, or by the even more ridiculous name piano. Imagine if we translated piano literally into English and talked about our new Steinway soft, or even our new Bechstein softloud. It is a pity when we were able to invent such a descriptive and at the same time beautiful word as harpsichord, and such an exquisite word as virginals, and such a comparatively beautiful and descriptive word as clavichord, we should fall back on such an imbecile word as pianoforte, which has no more literary merit than hurdy-gurdy and less onomatopœic value. However, since Beethoven himself was not able to impose

hammerklavier on the Germans as a name for the instrument which gave him so much pleasure, we may as well give up repining about the existence of such an imbecile word as piano in English. I am going to say boldly that this orchestral transcription by Weingartner has helped me to realize the beauty of the *Hammerklavier Sonata* as I never realized it before. I daresay if one could have the advantage of listening to Schnabel playing time after time the *Twenty-ninth Sonata* on the instrument for which it was written this orchestral transcription would add nothing to one's pleasure and awe. But such an experience being quite outside the grasp of the average man he will certainly benefit like myself from this transcription, now that it is available for the gramophone. It must be remembered that Beethoven was deaf when he wrote the *Hammerklavier Sonata*, and I think it might also be claimed that he did not feel completely satisfied with the effect of that divine *adagio sostenuto* on the instrument for which he wrote it, for we are continually being reminded all through of the *adagio molto e cantabile* which he wrote for the *Ninth Symphony* four years later. There is, too, both in the music of the *Sonata* and of the *Ninth Symphony* much that reminds us of that sublime *Mass in D* which was also being composed between 1818 and 1822, and which like the *Hammerklavier Sonata* was dedicated to the Archduke Rudolph. Strains of this music seem to float all the time through the two great *Quartets in C sharp minor* and *A minor*, which the *Grand Fugue*, also dedicated to the Archduke Rudolph, seems to carry the fugue in the last movement of the *Hammerklavier Sonata* that further step beyond mortality which Beethoven himself was to take from flesh to spirit a year later. Perhaps the very fact that Beethoven should have sought to express his ultimate and ineffable thoughts through different musical forms is an objection to transcribing a work written for a piano, but let us leave these ethics of æsthetics on one side. The proof of the pudding is in its eating, and the justification of Felix Weingartner's experiment is its success. There is nothing here which cheapens a great piece of music, and there is much that enriches it. Dull will be the imagination and obscure the vision of the man who listens to that *adagio sostenuto* which occupies four sides of the discs without feeling reassured of the purpose of life. A correspondent recently wrote to tell me that since he has grown to appreciate Brahms he has grown to care less and less for Wagner. There are moments in listening to Beethoven when Brahms, Wagner, Mozart, Haydn, Handel, and Bach appear equally trivial in comparison, and when the only music to which I can turn without feeling that I have lost some of the spiritual knowledge I had gained is the music of Palestrina.

There have been several exceptionally good vocal records this month, especially a Parlophone disc of

Gerhard Hüsch singing in German *Pari siamo* and *Cortigiani vil razza dannata*. I did not have the good fortune to hear this barytone at Covent Garden this year where he made a great success as Dr. Falke in *Die Fledermaus*. I fancy that he is a singer of the very first rank, and I advise all connoisseurs of good singing to buy every record of his that appears. Usually I dislike Verdi's operas sung in German as much as I dislike them in English, but Gerhard Hüsch is far too good for any prejudice like this to interfere with one's appreciation. Note, too, this month an exquisite ten-inch black label H.M.V. of Elisabeth Schumann singing Mozart's *Wiegenlied* and two songs which I do not remember being recorded before, *Warnung* by Mozart and *Wir hat das Liedlein erdacht* by Mahler. Another singer in the H.M.V. list who looks like being a really good contralto is Miss Margaret Carlton, and Mr. Keith Falkner gives a very fine performance of two of Handel's arias. Finally, among vocal discs Mr. W. Brownlow's second record should be noted. He sings *Now sleeps the crimson petal* beautifully, and on the other side of this ten-inch dark blue label Columbia *Weep you no more* from Seven Elizabethan Lyrics by Roger Quilter.

There have been a number of speaking records this month, of which I consider Miss Agnes Bartholomew's reciting of *Tam o' Shanter* on a twelve-inch Parlophone to be the most remarkable achievement. This is such a difficult poem to recite even tolerably well that to recite it very well for the gramophone is a great feat. There will, of course, be many readers who would rather run five miles than hear *Tam o' Shanter* at all. There must also be many readers whose minds have been illuminated by Burns's great poem. To them I recommend this disc, while at the same time regretting that where a few cuts were made they should usually have been cut from the parts nearest the bone. There is something wild in quoting six lines from *Tam o' Shanter* in the Parlophone bulletin and letting Miss Bartholomew change "Cutty-sarks" to "evil thoughts" in the middle of those six lines.

Although, personally, I was disappointed by the records which Henry Ainley has made for the H.M.V. of four of Hamlet's speeches, I feel that I can safely recommend them as perfect examples of a certain style of elocution. I am convinced that nobody could give us this kind of Hamlet more authoritatively than Henry Ainley, but it happens to be the kind of Hamlet who I do not believe ever existed outside the four walls of a theatre. I was reproaching Mr. Gielgud last month for using a plus-fours manner in *Macbeth*, and these records of Mr. Ainley make me realize why the young modern actor's ambition is to play Hamlet as if he were playing golf. Well, here is elocution suave and melodious as a violoncello, but somehow or other it sounds to me too good to be true. Still, it is

traditional English elocution in the grand style with a perfect voice to support it, and I doubt if any of us will hear four of Hamlet's speeches better done in that style than they are on these two plum-coloured discs. Neither Miss Sybil Thorndike nor Mr. Lewis Casson appeals to me in their two scenes from *Macbeth* on a twelve-inch plum-coloured H.M.V. disc, and surely by this time it ought to be possible to record a knock on the door that sounds like a knock on the door instead of a boy banging a biscuit tin. The human speaking voice, from the point of view of the gramophone, offers a fascinating topic for discussion, and I wish I could discover why Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's talk on the subject of spiritualism on another twelve-inch plum-coloured H.M.V. should move me more than an actor and actress like Mr. Henry Ainley and Miss Sybil Thorndike in some of Shakespeare's greatest speeches.

There has been a windfall of Scots and Irish records this month which our reviewers, bowed beneath a weight of October records thick as leaves in Vallombrosa, have showered over me. Being partly responsible for the seven Gaelic records published by Columbia I am invidiously placed to criticise them. My object was to make this collection both as regards the singers and the songs they sang representative and as far as possible to avoid songs which had previously been recorded. I should like to persuade some of our English readers to try one of J. C. M. Campbell's records, for I think they would agree with me that this performance without accompaniment does provide a genuine thrill which Wordsworth expressed in his immortal Highland Reaper singing "of old unhappy far-off things and battles long ago," even though like Wordsworth they may ask at the end, "will no one tell me what she sings?" Many southerners dislike what they find the nasal quality of Gaelic singers. They will find none of that in Mr. Campbell; indeed, if I may give the young singer a kindly warning, it is that he should be careful to keep his throat well open. The records of Miss Margaret MacInnes also are sung without accompaniment, and from her as from Mr. Campbell listeners will get a thrill which transcends the unfamiliarity of the language. Mr. Hugh Mackay is already known to Southern audiences, but allowing for my fondness as a godparent, I do think that these two Columbia records he has made are his best. Then we have records by Mr. J. M. Bannerman, the Captain of the Scottish Rugby Fifteen and also of the Oxford Fifteen. His records represent the Gaelic singer rather in the intimacy of a room than on the concert platform, but they also reveal a delightful personality of which his friends will be glad to have this souvenir. The record of Mr. Stewart MacInnes is another for the room rather than the concert hall. Two records of Miss Morag MacDonald in some of Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser's collec-

tion reveal the danger which is always inherent in elaborating these simple melodies with a too rich accompaniment, though for Southern ears which cannot follow the words these accompaniments will often save these Gaelic songs from monotony. Miss MacDonald has a clear, bright soprano, but she must beware of losing the power to convey emotion in her anxiety to preserve her technique. Last, but by no means least, the two records of the London Gaelic Choir under the conductorship of Mr. J. S. MacIntyre, will demonstrate that exile even in London, so far from spoiling them, has actually made their performance more moving.

Some time ago when Columbia brought out a record of Mr. Richard Hayward singing *The Ould Orange Flute* in the traditional ballad style, I suggested that his invaluable preservation of these relics of an age of simpler amusements would gain by banishing the piano as an accompaniment. Mr. Hayward has taken my advice, and these two last Columbia records of his (DB209-10) are sung to the appropriate harp accompaniment of Miss Pauline Barker, with the exception of the marvellous *Ould man of Killyburn Brae* who is given and thoroughly deserves a violin and flute as well. I regard these records of Mr. Hayward as among the most precious in the whole of my collection, and I beg readers to give themselves the treat of enjoying what is the equivalent of five rare old prints of bygone Ulster. Mr. W. F. Watt's Irish records are already popular, and the eight new songs now published by Columbia will increase his popularity. *Donnegan's Daughter* is as merry a song as you will hear, and with *The Darlin' Girl from Clare* on the other side makes DB207 a disc to secure at once.

I have left myself little space to speak of the Parlophone and Regal supplements. I have already mentioned Miss Agnes Bartholomew's remarkable recitation of *Tam o' Shanter*, and of these five ten-inch Parlophone discs I select for special mention *Mrs. McLeerie's County Visit* (R737) and *Dandie, the sheep dog* and *The Bogle* (R736). Pipe-Major Ross has made three good bagpipe records in the half-crown red Parlophone Series, and an arrangement of Burns's *Jolly Beggars* by Ian MacPherson and Company in the same series (E3704) only just misses being a very remarkable performance indeed. As it is we get a good steel engraving of one of Wilkie's *genre* pictures, but it is not quite up to the original canvas. Of the Parlophone Irish records *Mickie at Ellis Island* by Jimmy O'Dea and Harry O'Donovan (E3681) is a little gem, and on the other side *Mrs. Mulligan and the motor-car* is nearly as good. Of the records in the Regal Irish Supplement some, like *Rambles through Ireland*, are unnecessarily blatant; but I have no heart to criticise when I get a rousing rebel disc like the *Boys of Wexford* and the *Rallying Song of the Republic* sung with the verve of Seamus O'Doherty.

COMPTON MACKENZIE.

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BURIED TREASURE—II

By ALEX. McLACHLAN

(With acknowledgments to the co-operation of H. S. Brown)

PURSUING our eager quest through the Columbia lists, we come next to a mighty nugget of rare and unique worth, which once kindled yet rarer hopes—still alas! unrealised. When Columbia issued the first nine of the 48 Preludes and Fugues of Bach, the consecutive order of the recording and the absence of any selection from the remaining numbers, led to a supposition that the other 39 were to follow in due course, and I can only say that if ever they do, and transpire to be as divinely played and perfectly reproduced as these nine, they will form the very foundation stone of any serious gramophile's library and a stone "beyond all jewels shining" to boot.*

When a small and defenceless boy, I was once taken for my sins to hear a Bach recital by a pianist of the "old school" (some college primeval I have since imagined) and my recollection is that after waiting, chilled and subdued, in an atmosphere about as pregnant with pleasurable anticipation as a mortuary ante-room, we were presently confronted by an individual strongly reminiscent of Blackstone's "sour ecclesiastic," a gentleman evidently nursing a bitter grudge against mankind with a special resentment against his audience then present. This engaging creature, after glowering angrily at us one and all, sat himself at an instrument bearing all the outward semblance of a piano, and then busied himself for some agonising hours with what, to my youthful comprehension, sounded like a petulant and aggrieved rattling of desiccated bones. And when, at long last, I was led in a semi-comatose condition from that hall of horror, I remember reflecting that at least eternal damnation could hold nothing worse in store than this.

Ah me! what evil has not been wrought by imperipient performers who lack the art and insight to show us more than the dry bones of Bach and whose playing savours far more of an anatomical dissection than a musical recital. But to those whose quest of Bach has been hitherto baffled by those disciples of Mr. Venus, I say unhesitatingly that Miss Harriet Cohen's playing of these works will be as the breath of revelation, disclosing with a sudden dazzling clarity all the boundless poesy, the warm humanity, the infinite musicality lying inherent in what seemed so barren and austere. Truly, under her exquisite fingers the dry bones live and the people

that walked in darkness are enabled to see a great light. Listening to these six delightful records, one feels it incredible that the intense imaginative and emotional qualities of Bach's music, here revealed to us without any sense of strain or exaggeration and with that supreme artistry which conceals art, should by so many musicians be passed by on the other side. How much is lost by taking the academic approach to Bach may be estimated from these records of some really epoch-making playing.

I envy no man the task of exercising a choice among these nine things of beauty. The witchery of revelation begins at once with the first Prelude in C—that one upon whose bareness Gounod took pity, superimposing his Ave Maria, a procedure which, listening to Miss Cohen, seems a particularly inexcusable case of painting the lily. How irresistible is the jubilant Prelude of No. 2 in C minor, with its ensuing Fugue, so redolent of a stately dance. And what a sunny pastoral fragrance has the C Sharp Prelude, which somehow prompted a subconscious recollection of:

"With many a curve my banks I fret
By many a field and fallow,
And many a fairy foreland set
With willow weed and mallow."

Then the C Sharp Fugue, a sort of recollection in tranquility of the emotions depicted in the Prelude. Before the C Sharp Minor—the Holy of Holies—as before the E Flat Minor (whose ineffable Prelude the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra have recorded in orchestral form) I stand mute: such high eloquence, such heart-searching and soul-disturbing beauty as are here enshrined baulk my ineffectual pen. It is perhaps the finest thing in the entire Columbia catalogue: let that Company in its benignity issue the remainder, played (this is a *sine qua non*) by Miss Cohen, and if possible on dark blue labels!

Beethoven's *Quartet in F (Op. 18 No. 1)* is scarcely neglected treasure, I admit: *que diable va-t'il faire dans cette galère?* Well, simply this: the work was electrically recorded by the Lener Quartet on L1842-4 at the time of the Centenary Issues; but it was quite recently *again* recorded by the same players, the new records being issued under the same numbers and slipped unostentatiously into the catalogue. They are in every respect a great advance on the Centenary issue, having the advantage of the amazing advance which Columbia electrical recording has made since that time (and we thought it unsurpassable then!).

*Since writing above, Nos. 10-17, recorded by Evelyn Howard-Jones, have been issued by Columbia on LX35-38. A.M.L.

It is a delightful work with a slow movement (the Romeo and Juliet) among the finest of its kind. The Lerner playing is of their accustomed standard and quality.

The diffident manner in which Columbia superseded old by more modern recordings—"without saying nothing to nobody"—caused, to my own knowledge, many fine things to be overlooked. This quartet is a case in point and L1001 bearing a superb electrical recording of the *Magic Flute* Overture by the L.S.O. under Sir Thomas Beecham is another outstanding example. The conductor's "grip" of the music is consummate; he invests those introductory chords with a profound and moving significance and his reading of the "symphonic fugue," more deliberate than is now conventional, is marked by his accustomed individuality and fertility of musical idea.

This momentary digression has merged me almost imperceptibly into orchestral works, and among these I find several calling for discussion in these Articles. To my surprise and sorrow, I have found many homes into whose fastnesses L1986 has never penetrated. This all-English record contains on one side Purcell's *A Trumpet Voluntary* for solo trumpet, brass, organ and drums (a pungent mixture for soft palates but right sterling fare—good Bellocian stuff—for men of mettle). What a tune is that with which the trumpet majestically leads off the ball! Those who know *Polly* (the Beggar's Opera sequel) will recognise in this tune the theme of the Wedding Chorus *These twain linked for ever* at the end of that charming work: in the score the tune is labelled *The Temple* and has a few variations from the melody as here presented. There is a martial middle section with some splendid drum work and the whole orchestra has the big tune to conclude with. On the back is Walford Davies' *Solemn Melody* in its proper form—solo 'cello, organ and orchestra. This is a general favourite, of course, composed originally for the Milton tercentenary, and inspired perhaps by those grand lines entitled "At a Solemn Musick" which Parry set so memorably for eight-part chorus. Walford Davies' music, if it *does* aim at it, misses some of the austere nobility of Milton's verse; is indeed a trifle on the luscious side; but it is lovable stuff of enduring qualities and if the musician can hardly fail to notice the composer's apparent indecision about his point of climax, only the heartless pedant irresponsible to broad, rich melody, is likely to take serious affront at it. The orchestra in these two pieces is the redoubtable Hallé, and of the recording I need say no more than that Captain Barnett admitted it to his highly exclusive "ultra-brilliant" category.

"Fillip me with a three-man beetle" an ye will for the confession, but I am a lover of Mendelssohn. Nay, more, so whole-hoggedly do I wallow in my shame that (blind and deaf to the plain proof demon-

strated by our young Chelsea sparks that he is a miserable German Jew who cannot hold a candle to the newly-fledged composer of the latest "Satire for 4 bassoons and side drum") I mulishly persist in regarding him as one of the great masters. Of his Symphonies I revel especially in the *Italian* and the *Scotch*, and the latter is the better scored. Columbia's recording of this Symphony on four 4/6 records (9887-90) last year was, I believe, the "first ever" as regards this work. Like the supremely beautiful *Hebrides* Overture (Col. 9843-4) this Symphony enshrines impressions gleaned on the composer's visit to Scotland and very picturesquely has he transmuted into sound those Caledonian sights and scenes and the emotions they inspired.

The solemn Introduction (woodwind, horns and violas) evokes for us at once the sombre majesty of Scottish scenery; it is the music of contemplation on lofty crag and in deep glen, of "Teviot's side and Branksome tower," and the ensuing Allegro is as redolent of moss and heather, burn and brake and fell. All the strange, lovely beauty of the north is in this music, mingling ever and anon with a warlike element, so that the first movement becomes a national drama in miniature, an immemorial epic of "Old unhappy far-off things, and battles long ago"; of ancient feuds and old romance, set amid the grandeur of this wild Celtic landscape.

In the *Scherzo*, one of his most delicious, Mendelssohn shows us how a German can write a true Scotch tune. The principal melody, introduced by the clarinet, is of genuine folk-song flavour, and almost comically reminiscent of "Charley is my darling," and there is a bewitching contrasted tune in the strings, which foot it fealty to a most tripping dance-measure. This movement, contained on a single side, is a sure "nap" and may be confidently placed on the turntable whenever two or three who delight in concourse of sweet sounds are gathered together. I am persuaded in my heart that the lovely Adagio is a nocturne: a lyric song of pure romance by moonlit oriel in castle keep, disturbed by the intermittent strains of a stately march—a funeral march, perhaps—which intrudes a little of the stark terror of Celtic legend into the serenity of the picture. If there be any melody more wistfully haunting than the principal tune of this Adagio I do not know it, and should, I think, be hard put to it to find it. The Finale, Allegro Vivacissimo, was originally marked "guerriero" and that is how I feel it should be interpreted, militantly, as the music of the summoning and gathering of the clans, the flash and clash of broadsword and battle-axe, the "knell for the onset." Nothing of frenzy is here, only a grim, set, purposefulness, a stern onward tread, more terrible far than mere noisy savagery, and overwhelming in its implications. For once here is a Finale which truly crowns the work and I deplore that exigencies of space or some other reason necessitated slightly "cutting"

the noble Epilogue which concludes the Symphony in a glorious burst of triumphal song in the Major key.

I have lingered over the Scotch Symphony because I love it and am very reluctant to find fault with a recording which has afforded me much unalloyed pleasure, but I wish Felix Weingartner had not kept *quite* so tight a hand on the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Classic poise and restraint are virtues to admire, but Mendelssohn neither calls for, nor responds to, the unbending severity of treatment here meted out to him: it simply tends to make him sound

tame, which is the last thing that is true of the Scotch Symphony. It is hard to resist an impression that every tendency on the part of the players to "get away with it" is remorselessly checked by a deprecatory gesture from the conductor. But the innate beauty and romance of the music do survive and, with a little supplementing of the conductor's version out of our own imagination, these records will prove a source of happiness and enjoyment to gramophiles, middle brow and upwards, for many a long day.

(To be Continued.)



THE GRAMOPHONE AND THE SINGER

(Continued)

By HERMAN KLEIN

Some Effects of Operatic Pessimism

IT is useless endeavouring to disguise the fact that, where opera is concerned, we are suffering at the present time from an acute "inferiority complex." Let us admit that there may be some reason for it; that we are entitled to feel in rather low spirits when we realize how far behind other great nations we are in the pursuit of this form of musical recreation, and how regularly all our best laid plans for its amelioration "gang agley." Yet ought we really to allow ourselves to become so terribly downhearted over our operatic status? Ought we to be so hopeless and pessimistic as we are about the future of this art in our land, just because it is less capable here of resisting the effects of the world-slump than it is in countries where it rests upon stronger and deeper foundations?

My reply is an emphatic negative. It is my fixed opinion that the love of opera is as firmly ingrained in the hearts of British musical amateurs as it is in those of any other civilized people; that it only needs to be wisely, sensibly, unselfishly exploited to flourish as greatly in our midst as it does anywhere in Europe. Glance through the pages of the Index to Volume VII. of THE GRAMOPHONE, and judge for yourself whether, in the list of works arranged under the names of composers, the proportion of operatic selections is not representative and adequate. That only indicates, of course, that it held its own, from June, 1929, to May, 1930, with the rest of the sources from which the gramophone companies culled its popular and profitable collection. But it does not mean that the tremendous increase in the numbers of high-class instrumental recordings—the vast growth in the demand for symphonic, orchestral, and chamber music of the finest type—has lessened

in any degree the appreciation of the glorious gems of the lyric repertory. Comparison between the respective qualities of the execution in these different departments is another matter and does not enter into the pros and cons of the present discussion. I am wanting only to demonstrate that, if the outlook for operatic enterprise seems worse than it was a year or two ago, there is still the same interested public ready to support opera, provided opera is put before it in a systematic manner and not in the confused, hydro-headed, higgledy-piggledy fashion that it has been of late.

There have been, and there still are, too many Richards in the field. I pointed this out six months ago, just before the London opera season began, when things looked more promising than they look, or are supposed to be looking, now. In the April number of this journal I made the suggestion that the Covent Garden Opera Syndicate and the Imperial League of Opera (otherwise Sir Thomas Beecham) should merge their interests, instead of wasting their energies by opposing each other. It may be that we shall learn before these lines appear in print that they have done so; but at the time I am writing no announcement to that effect has been officially made. Meanwhile, it must be confessed that the "Improving Operatic Outlook" which I ventured to depict in the article referred to was not precisely realized by the events that followed; nor was my anticipation so much in the nature of a prediction as of a fervent expression of hope. Somehow, I am always inclined to take an optimistic rather than a pessimistic view where opera is in question, hence my particular unwillingness to subscribe to the latter when the trade of the Empire is bad, when over-

taxation is rife, when people have no money to spare for luxuries that they will not miss or cannot easily dispense with.

One must not, of course, be blind to facts. If the German season at Covent Garden was a brilliant success (and is, in consequence, to be longer next year), it is equally certain that the Italian season was a brilliant failure. Nobody really wanted to hear *Martha* or the *Traviata* or *L'Amore dei Tre Re*, or even *Norma* and *Andrea Chénier*; but people went to them for the sake of the artists who sang in them, without filling the house for the second performance. To submit to the bygone usages and customs of the "star system" is not the way to restore Italian opera to its place in the favour of the British public, whatever its efficacy with the American. Then, on the other hand, what is the good of recommending new operas by English composers as a means of attracting Promenade Concert audiences to the opera house at a delicate juncture like this, when musical tastes are, so to speak, in the melting-pot and the whole future of opera as a national concern is at stake? Yet that is what I saw advocated in the *Musical Times* for August, in the form of an "open letter" to an imaginary English opera composer. It was, in point of fact, a lengthy editorial from the pen of "Feste," containing, amid much justifiable criticism and contempt for present-day operatic methods, a distinctly chauvinistic appeal on behalf of the stage works of Vaughan Williams, Gustav Holst, and others (including incidentally Eugene Goossens). As if these were the men—however consummate their ability or their readiness to take Feste's jocular advice and write down to the level of Covent Garden musical tastes—to rescue operatic enterprise in this country from its present *impasse*! *Hugh the Drover*, *The Perfect Fool*, *At the Boar's Head*, and *Savitri* may be masterpieces if you like; they might even "make admirable wireless operas." But it has been conclusively shown that they need, like delicate plants, a favourable atmosphere as well as a special soil to foster their drawing powers. Fifty years ago Carl Rosa tried a like experiment under much more advantageous conditions with new operas by Cowen, Goring Thomas, Mackenzie, and Villiers Stanford. Some of those works were actually beautiful, and for their beauty I loved them. But what did they permanently accomplish for English opera; and where are they to-day? No, it is not to the composers and their works, any more than to the singers, the conductors, or the impresarios, that we have to look for the final establishment of opera upon a firm and lasting basis, but to the British people themselves. And by the people I naturally mean the State. I was not always a believer in the virtue of State support for opera. On the contrary, I opposed it years ago because I feared that it involved interference with artistic freedom and progress. Now I think otherwise, because I know that opera on a worthy repre-

sentative scale cannot possibly be made to pay in England without a subsidy from the State, if it will not do so in those countries where it forms an essential part of the lives of the people. As we have lately seen, it cannot be made to escape some loss even in Italy, France, Germany, and Austria, where the yearly aid from State or Municipality is fairly generous. The heavy costs of production and the comparatively low prices charged for admission (not so much the salaries paid to the artists, chorus, and orchestral players) are mainly responsible for the deficit in those cases. A few thousand pounds per annum, guaranteed to one big central organization carrying on opera under the right direction in London and the provinces all the year round, would secure at any rate a practicable working scheme and possibly an enduring institution.

But is there any chance, you ask, of such aid being forthcoming at the hands of a British Government? That is a very important question, and one that cannot be answered off-hand. It is, to a certain extent, involved in the working out of the political situation and in that return of national prosperity which presents by far the most vital problem of the moment. I have lost faith in individual schemes, not merely because they have hitherto spelt failure and stopped short of success at the critical moment, but because somehow the personal element has been too conspicuously in evidence and the motives at the back of such projects have not invariably seemed to be free from the taint of selfishness. But, meanwhile, there have been of late one or two little signs of good augury for the cause of opera; as, for instance, the efforts of the gifted wife of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in presenting special operatic programmes at her "At Homes" at Downing Street with Covent Garden and Carl Rosa artists, and pleading eloquently by word of mouth for the better support of opera in our benighted land. Nothing definite can be said, of course, but influences such as this, pointing in the right direction, may turn out to have a very real value when the time comes.

HERMAN KLEIN.

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TURN TABLE TALK

Comparison

There may still be some dark spots in the gramophone industry, but enlightenment has spread in the van, or the wake, of progress during the last few years, and in one respect, for which we may take a little credit, the attitude of the trade has radically changed. The Gramophone Contests which we organised in 1923 and held in public in 1924 and 1925 were regarded with scornful alarm by the trade in general, as being likely to benefit only the smallest and most obscure manufacturers who had nothing to lose by submitting their wares to a comparative test. The Columbia and Gramophone Companies held aloof altogether, and that was the chief reason why the enterprise was not continued every year.

But a gradual change has improved matters and now it seems quite natural for Messrs. Alfred Imhof to have the big downstairs showroom so fitted up that customers can hear the latest electrical models of H.M.V., Columbia and other manufacturers side by side displaying their gramophone and radio proficiency under identical conditions. So, too, at Messrs. Keith Prowse in Bond Street—where, by the way, the new Electramonic models are attracting a lot of attention—and doubtless in most of the leading showrooms all over the country.

No manufacturer ought to flinch from comparison with his rivals; no dealer ought to say, "Oh, I daren't stock that make of gramophone or I should never sell any of the others or shift my stock." That sort of canny, defeatist attitude is our chief danger at this moment, and thanks to the courage and spirit of the few it is being overcome. That is why it is so good to hear that large increases in the sale of Imperial records during the last six months are reported, so that night shifts have been necessary to cope with the demands on the factory. Here is a pioneer firm that has gone from strength to strength and is paying no attention to the jeremiahs.

Progress

It would probably take an article as long as the new Ekco roof sign, and this is 400 feet long, to describe the adventures of two of our staff during their visit to the new works of E. K. Cole Ltd., at Southend-on-Sea.

It is significant that in 1922 the floor space occupied by the Ekco works was only 150 square feet, whereas to-day the total area under cover is 80,000 square feet, and another nine acres of land are available for further extensions. Few people realise the number of operations that are necessary before a modern all-electric receiver is ready to be despatched to the dealer, and it is remarkable that such efficient sets are so low in price. In the Ekco factory a product, whether it be a set, an eliminator or a component part, seldom travels over the same ground twice. At one end of the works we see the various components, coils, chokes, transformers, etc., being made and tested before being passed on to the assembly benches. By the time the finished article reaches the packing department at the other end of the shop it has gone through scores of operations and passed a number of exacting tests all of which are carried out by experienced hands.

In between the B.B.C. broadcasting hours, gramophone records are broadcast through a private transmitter which can be "picked up" in any part of the works. One of the first things to be noticed was that all workers engaged on wiring operations used resin as flux. This is most important in the manufacture of coils, transformers, and any component where fine gauge wire is being used. Even in the wiring up of sets, where the connecting wire is of larger gauge, resin should always be used if corrosion is to be kept down to a minimum.

Perhaps the outstanding feature of the whole of the Ekco organisation was the apparent contentment of the employees. This is, no doubt, due to the ideal conditions under which they

work. The management have their employees' interests at heart. This is good policy. A contented mind is a willing worker; a willing worker means good production and possibly, in this case, good reproduction.

B.B.C. at Queen's Hall

The Proms. will come to a brilliant end on Saturday night, and a glance through the programmes shows how often the works performed and the performers chosen are already included within the range of recorded music. In the last three weeks we have had Tatiana Makushina, Keith Falkner, Arthur Catterall, Myra Hess, Roy Henderson, Adila Fachiri, Jelly d'Aranyi, Lamond, Irene Scharrer, Francis Russell, Berkeley Mason, Elsie Snoddy, Kathleen Long, Kate Winter, Stuart Robertson, Gordon Walker, Ethel Bartlett, Rae Robertson, the English Singers, Harriet Cohen, Sylvia Nelis, Leonard Gowings, Frank Titterton, Pouishnoff, Muriel Brunskill, Norman Allin, Lauri Kennedy, Robert Easton, Maurice Cole, Olga Haley, George Parker, Leon Goossens, Margaret Balfour and Horace Stevens as soloists, and of the remaining fourteen doubtless a fair proportion has made records at one time or another. The Proms. have a more intimate connection with the favourites of the gramophone than any other series of concerts; and Mrs. Rosa Newmarch's "Concert-Goer's Library" (Oxford University Press) of which the third volume, containing Suites, Ballet Suites, Rhapsodies, Fantasias and Miscellaneous Dances, is just published (3s. 6d.), forms a more comprehensive companion to works that have been recorded or are likely to be recorded for the gramophone than perhaps any other published books.

On the 22nd of this month the Wednesday Symphony Concerts of the new B.B.C. Orchestra at its full strength of 114 players will start at the Queen's Hall, and with only six exceptions will occupy every Wednesday evening till May 6th. The best seats cost £8 for the series and the balcony seats two-and-a-half guineas (or, say, 2s. 3d. a concert.)

But merely by writing to E. M. G. Gramophones Ltd. any reader of THE GRAMOPHONE can obtain an invitation to enjoy any of the Symphony or of the remaining Promenade Concerts in the restful luxury of the panelled room at 11, Grape Street, where the radio reception is of course of the very highest standard.

Alfred Clark

The election of Mr. Alfred Clark to succeed Mr. E. Trevor L. Williams as Chairman of the Gramophone Company was one of those obvious things on which none the less everyone concerned should be congratulated. Our very staunch friend, Mr. Clark, who contributed so delightful a story of his forty years with the gramophone to our Christmas Number last year, is the right man in the right place, and has the example of a much loved and wisely inspired predecessor to emulate.

Equally fitting is the election of Sir Landon Ronald to the Board of Directors. No one more suited by nature or experience could have been found than this staunch champion of the music loving gramophonist.

Columbia

One of the London stores had an interesting exhibition of Columbia products the other day—a series of show-cases showing the materials of which records are made, the various processes of manufacture and a particularly interesting set of Columbia record labels from all over the world. Subsequently every day for a week a programme of records enlivened by a lecturer and lighting effects and interchanging scenery was used to illustrate "Music in Many Lands," the whole thing being so ingeniously carried out that it might well be imitated by dealers in other parts of the country.

Frederica

Those marvellous Richard Tauber records as well as the Edith Lorand one that Parlophone gave us prepared the way for Lehar's opera which came to the Palace Theatre in London last month; and the audience seemed to be familiar with *Oh Maiden, my Maiden* before Joseph Hislop sang it. But *Why did you kiss my heart awake* which Lea Seidl sings at the end of the second act took everyone by surprise. It was sung with a pathetic charm which it would not be unfair to compare with that of Yvonne Printemps in the *Farewell Song* in *Mozart*, and when it was seen that the singer was genuinely overcome with her emotion the audience was delighted to recall Lea Seidl again and again, if only to see her dabbing real tears from her eyes.

She and the grave Hislop and the music and a certain amount of pretty scenery and dancing will carry *Frederica* to success, though all the rest is poor stuff, and the story of Goethe's early love affair of so little interest to us that one critic at least thought the hero was Wagner.

Gramophone Societies' Reports

Most of the Societies started their season last month, the *Liverpool and District* with "Some Decca Classical Records," the *Leeds* with an informal programme, the *South East London* with "The Songs of Brahms" and so on. Where a syllabus has been printed it is possible to see how much the members owe to their honorary secretaries and committees: the *Liverpool and District G.S.*, of which our Editor is patron, is a notable example, and other secretaries might well write to Mr. J. W. Harwood, 44, Bardale Road, Mossley Hill, Liverpool, for a copy.

Although we have little space for reports we are keenly interested in the Society movement and will gladly put readers in touch with the nearest Society to their homes. Many are new formations; the *Downham Gramophone Society*, for instance, which only started last year, has nearly paid the debt on its gramophone, has already a good library of records, for its members, and has drawn up its programme for meetings up to the middle of next June.

Edgar Jackson

One of the dance enthusiasts who hastened to congratulate us on Edgar Jackson's reviews of dance records wrote from Czecho-Slovakia, and in view of the wild and beautiful English with which he crowned our reviewer's efforts we feel that a Lissenden caricature is justified. There is, however, one word in a rhapsodical passage about Stravinsky's *Rag Time* and Louis Armstrong which is open to doubt. "Do we know," asks our correspondent, "if Louis Armstrong can not be the inspiration for a new composer? Do we know if this new unknown composer will not bring us some new musical treasures—a milestone in the history of music?" Should that word be millstone or milestone?

Philip Lewis

It appears that the Decca October list is the last for which Mr. Philip Lewis is responsible since he has now left the service of the Decca Record Company. His reign at the Chenil Galleries may not have been without its worries and anxieties; but what a brave and inspiring show he has made out of his enviable opportunities; what bold gestures, what

vision, what triumphs, what glittering failures! The complete set of Brandenburg Concertos that started in the Brunswick days and never reached the public: the building up of a catalogue out of nothing but a musician's enthusiasm and the keen judgment of a born impresario; the excellent bulletins and leaflets; the *Façade*, the Delius, the Rachmaninov, the Handel *Concerto grossi*: the capture of Olga Olga, of Leslie Heward, Basil Cameron, Ambrose's Band, and a score of other notable additions to the team—all this Decca history, from the music-lover's point of view, is pivoted on the personality of the Recording Director, and our readers must have appreciated, as we did, the refreshing air of knight-errantry that Philip Lewis brought into the gramophone world.

Edison Bell

Nothing conveys the sense of continuity in that grand old firm of Messrs. Edison Bell better than some photographs that reached us showing the cricket team of 1902 and the Edison Bell Veterans of 1930 who took the field the other day and administered a good beating to this year's Edison Bell team. Five of the 1902 players turned out—W. F. Robbins, T. Hough, P. Willis, C. R. Johnstone and W. Attwood, and to these might have been added F. W. Pleasance, now manager of the Alpha Works, and W. T. Forse, now of Columbia. This is a gallant event in gramophone history.



EDGAR JACKSON

Electrocolor

"Why Burmese Colour Needle and why Electrocolor?", the inventor was asked at the Press demonstration the other day. Mr. Ramsay explained that being a lecturer in psychology at Grahamstown University and being bound on a journey to Burma he coloured his prickly thorn needles during the fourteen processes of hardening them and called them Burmese, much as Ernest Worthing derived his surname from the fact that his foster-parent hap-

pened to have a first-class ticket for Worthing in his pocket when he took the fateful handbag out of the cloak-room.

"Electrocolor" (a) because the new needle goes through an electrolytic process and (b) because it was tried out in America first. The American reports, by the way, were extremely and elaborately laudatory; and so far as we can judge from the reports received from readers the new needle has fully justified all that is claimed for it. What was particularly cheering at the Keith Prowse demonstration was that Mr. Ramsay claimed no finality of achievement, merely an improvement on the B.C.N.; and a novelty offered to the public with so little extravagance is all the more likely to receive an honest and sympathetic welcome on all sides.

Miniature Scores

The latest Eulenburg scores issued by Messrs. Goodwin and Tabb are of Vivaldi's *Flute Concerto in D major* (1s. 6d.), Lalo's *Le Roi d'Ys Overture* (2s.) and Boieldieu's *Caliph of Bagdad Overture* (1s. 6d.) The last comes opportunely with the H.M.V. record reviewed this month.

Davidsbündler

The September number of *Disques* (Philadelphia) contains an appreciative review of Miss Fanny Davies's three records of Schumann's *Die Davidsbündler-Tänze*, not yet issued by Columbia in this country.

Gramophone Repairs

Readers often enquire how they can get a footing in the gramophone business, their only qualification being an interest in records. It would be useful if we knew of dealers or of institutions who were prepared to put novices of this kind through a course of practical and theoretical training in the technical and commercial side of the gramophone, and we should welcome any trustworthy information of this kind. There are, of course, the evening classes in the Gramophone and Radio at the Northern Polytechnic, London, N.7, which started on September 22nd and run on till April on Thursday evenings, the fee being only £1. But obviously these are geographically impracticable for many people.

Modern Music Club

There are probably far more people in this country who are keenly interested in modern music and feel that it ought to be available on gramophone records than we have ever been able to discover, and the National Gramophonic Society has so far failed to rally any large section of its members to ask for and to buy records of any composer later than Brahms, except for the really popular works of Debussy, Elgar, Ravel and Arnold Bax. Perhaps the new club that is being started by Messrs. Keith Prowse at their Bond Street headquarters will do better, for it is to confine its activities to modern music. If sufficient members join the club they will be in a position to demand the recording of any work that they desire from the N.G.S. and to get it.

Mouth Organs

The Editor has been paying tribute to the mouth organ in his *Sunday Pictorial* articles lately, and suggesting a competition to discover the best harmonica band in the country. An elaborate scheme on the League system was mooted not long ago, with an instruction book that made it easy for those ignorant of musical notation to tackle all sorts of compositions; but it came to nothing, and the slow growth in popularity of the mouth organ is only hastened by such events as the visit (and the sound-film) of Borrah Minnevitich and his Harmonica Rascals a few months ago and by the present vogue of the dance-tune *Harmonica Harry*, in succession to *Piccolo Pete*.

Messrs. Hohner, who have almost a world monopoly of this musical instrument, are said to have turned out in 1929 no less than thirty million of them.

Imhof's at Queen's Hall.

The tickets for the great Imhof gramophone recital at the Queen's Hall on October 9th at 8.30 p.m. are nearly all gone, but any reader of THE GRAMOPHONE who applies *quickly* to Messrs. Alfred Imhof, 112, New Oxford Street, London, W.1, will receive preferential treatment. The whole range of H.M.V. models will be used, and Walter Glynne will make a "personal appearance." Twenty-five years ago, by the way, the late Alfred Imhof gave a gramophone recital to an audience of 3,000 at Holborn Town Hall.



Analytical Notes and First Reviews



CHAMBER MUSIC

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

DB1434 (12in., 8s. 6d.).—A. Busch and R. Serkin: *Sonata for Violin and Piano, in G (Bach)*.

A strong, pure performance, in excellent classical style. The pianist is too retiring, and in the slow movements he and the recorders have not found how to make the piano sustain—one of the most difficult things remaining for recorders to get at. The tone otherwise is to be praised, and especially does the violinist's appreciation of style please me. The two slow movements are particularly worth hearing.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

The next meeting of the National Gramophonic Society will take place at the London Headquarters, Messrs. Murdoch's Salons, 463, Oxford Street (nearly opposite Selfridge's), at 8 p.m. on Wednesday, October 29th.

POLYDOR.

95346-9 (12in., 26s.).—Bern Trio: *Piano Trio in D, Op. 70, No. 1 (Beethoven)*.

This is the "Spirits" trio (the wonderful slow movement got it the name). It has three movements only, and is great and gripping music. The movements run thus: first, on two sides, second on three, last on two and a fill-up for side 8. For the 4th time, I raise the plaint: why not have put the last movement on one record, and filled in the fourth side of the *Largo* with something better than the Liszt piano transcription of Schubert's *Lindenbaum*, which occupies the last side of the last record here? (This piano piece is noticed separately, under the *Instrumental* heading.) Could we not get up a public petition to all the companies, begging them, wherever a movement takes two or four sides to put it on one or two records respectively? In any case, why fill up a chamber music record with a piano piece? A single Beethoven trio movement would have been the thing, or a Mozart, or, for contrast, a modern example.

The Bern Trio consists of Messrs. Josef Hirt, Alphons Brun, and Lorenz Lehr. I am afraid the cello and piano are rather too retiring in tone always to balance with the violin. There is pleasant, well-bound work, but not great distinction and pulling power, nor does the recording bring up the sound very much in the way of amplifying it. The *Largo* is a masterpiece of mysterious suggestion. The players show to better advantage here, though the piano tone does not body or last very well in a slow *p*. The last movement finds them in quite good form. Here one notices the rather penny-plain piano tone. Worthy work, but not quite up to the highest recording standards.

W. R. A.



ORCHESTRAL

DECCA.

T120-1 (12in., 4s. 6d. each).—The Decca String Orchestra, conducted by **Ansermet**: *Grand Concerto in D minor, No. 10* (Handel). **First and Second, Fourth and Fifth Movements.**

¶ We welcome the continuation of Decca's *Concerto Grosso* series. Here 120 contains the Overture and a gravely intimate *Air*, and 121 a crisp *Allegro* and a particularly engaging *Gavotte*. In this last the violins, on a run down, seem to "fluff" a trifle. The body and blend are sustainedly good, the surface not offensive (with fibre) and some charming delicacy is achieved in the recording. The Handel works have some weak movements now and again, but all in this selection can be fully recommended. My only little grouse is that the *Gavotte*, alone on the fourth side, takes but one minute fifty seconds. There is room for another short movement; could not one have been added? It is the more necessary to ask for full sides, in view of the enormous increase of recordings, the impossibility of affording all we want, and the problem of storing all we extravagantly buy. The Editor has appealed, so far in vain, for cheap reprints (though we acknowledge with full thanks such comparatively cheap editions as these four-and-sixpenny classics, and the Broadcast Twelve two shilling series). Shall we ever have an "omnibus" album of records, similar to the literary omnibuses now almost as numerous as London's red L.G.O. fleet?

TF135-6 (12in., 9s.).—**Leon Zighera**, and **Orchestra**, conducted by **A. Bernard**: *Violin Concerto in E* (Bach) (Eulenburg).

The first record contains the opening movement, and 136 the other two. This is a capital choice of a popular work. All concerned play with point and rhythmic verve. The soloist fluffs a few notes: or it may be that they do not perfectly record. The fiddle is a dangerous customer: so much may happen between the bow and the finger. The orchestra is naturally small, but is quite sufficient. I could have wished for still clearer definition: there is a slightly muffled effect at times, however sharp my fibre. Side two seems clearer than side one. That splendid, mystic slow movement is sensitively felt and balanced: 136 is worth getting for this alone. The pace at the end of this movement is, however, a little faster than at the start. In the finale the soloist's tone remains rather fragile, when it might have come out more forcibly. The impulse is good, if the tone less than fully rounded. The two records hold a lot of pleasure, and I commend them.

POLYDOR.

27189 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**State Opera Orchestra, Berlin**, conducted by **H. Weigert**: *Overture to Die Felsenmühle* (Reissiger).

Reissiger was a mild post-Weberian composer of good sound operatic melodrama. He has two connections with Weber: he succeeded him as conductor at Dresden, and he wrote "Weber's Last Waltz." This overture, which has been broadcast several times, is pleasant, mild stuff, tuneful and solidly orchestrated. The recording has a good deal of colour, but the chamber employed is not quite right in reverberation-period. The poise of the playing pleases me.

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

B3482 (10in., 3s.).—**Berlin State Opera Orchestra**, conducted by **Schmalstich**: *Overture to The Caliph of Bagdad* (Boieldieu).

D1808 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—**Chicago Symphony Orchestra**, conducted by **Stock**: *Träume* (Wagner, arr. Thomas) and *Overture to Russlan and Ludmilla* (Glinka).

D1835 (12in. 6s. 6d.).—**Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York**, conducted by **Toscanini**: *Overture to The Barber of Seville* (Rossini).

C.1752-4 (12in., 13s. 6d.).—**New Symphony Orchestra**, conducted by **Goossens**: *Scènes de Ballet, Op. 52* (Glazounov).

D1856 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—**L.S.O.**, conducted by **Coates**: *Kamarinskaya* (Glinka).

The recording is light and clear. There are no trumpets or trombones, hence, partly, the thinness of the effect; but that is much more due to the poverty of the orchestration. The miniature score is just issued by Eulenburg at 1s. 6d. Look at the tum-tum stuff the poor seconds and violas have to play! Some of us have a sort of affection for this "Star Folio" type of overture, from old days, but it scarcely seems worth while repeating performances of it, even when they are so neatly recorded as this of the Berlin Orchestra.

Dreams, originally a song, was described by the composer as a study for *Tristan*, and we find part of it in the love-duet which fills most of the second act of the drama. In this and the Glinka overture the Chicago orchestra shows its solid worth. There might perhaps have been more swagger and excitement in the overture. I like the way in which all is kept within good tonal bounds. The lower strings are here, and the upper are natural. My instrument makes a very good thing indeed of this recording of the music. It should be remembered that Glinka's orchestration is a little scratchy: the balance is not always fine.

The Rossini is a month's "nap." This is a ripe fruit of recording, but a still finer study in conducting. One can feel the clever hand on the reins—as, for example, two-thirds of the way through side two, when the second theme comes again (clarinet). The gentle way in which all sway together here is delightful—exquisitely so, to anyone who has handled a baton, and knows the labour needed to bring a band to that point of balance. There are three or four tiny differences in the notes from those which my *Philharmonia* score gives. Possibly there are two versions. The overture, by the way, was not written for *The Barber*, but was clapped on to that opera when its own was lost.

Glazounov has been done rather well lately by Columbia. His *Seasons* were recorded in full, and now here are three more discs of his attractively tuneful if not very original music, cleverly, though a bit heavily, orchestrated: good light recreations for those who do not care to stray far from the Delibes-Gounod-Tchaikovsky ballet line. The first record contains *Préambule*, *Scherzino*, *Marionettes* and *Danse Orientale*; the second, *Mazurka* and *Pas d'action*; and the last, *Valse* and *Polonaise*. In light music especially, I think one needs to try for oneself before deciding which record to have, if one cannot buy all. I do not find that Glazounov wears well, in this or in his bigger music, but here he is sure of reasonably wide acceptance, at least for a time, since he has a well-bodied sense of stage-musical effect. The *Oriental Dance* shows up his lack of real originality. Most of the titles are sufficiently explanatory. The *Pas d'action* is a good example of the opulently-scored sentimental slow air. I think this and the last two movements show the composer's hand in its best form; and all the records have a bright clearness and an absence of sting that is welcome. Most welcome of all is Mr. Goossens, too rarely heard in these days. There are some works that he would conduct better than almost anyone else. I wish the recorders would give him a free hand to choose two or three.

I see that Glinka's piece is given on the label as *Komarinskaya*, but I have always seen it spelt with a *s* as the second letter. Perhaps there are two ways. I have an idea that this merry piece was recorded in pre-electrical days, but have no catalogue entry of it. Now it is richly presented, and this early specimen of native art in Russia, built on local themes (a wedding song and dance), though there is nothing much in it but a rather inconsequent bustling gaiety, pleases by its easy-going simple-mindedness, and, recorded in this dapper, sharp-set fashion, will probably be reckoned one of the most genial things of the month.

COLUMBIA.

DX86 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Symphony Orchestra**, conducted by **Bruno Walter**: **Overture to The Mastersingers** (Wagner).

LX50-4 (12in., 32s. 6d.).—**Symphony Orchestra**, conducted by **Prof. R. Kajanus**: **Second Symphony** and **Intermezzo** from **Karelia Suite** (Sibelius).

LX55-6 (12in., 13s.).—**Concertgebouw Orchestra**, conducted by **Mengelberg**: **Romeo and Juliet** (Tchaikovsky).

DX110-1 (12in., 9s.).—**Brussels Royal Conservatoire Orchestra**, conducted by **D. Defauw**: **Mephisto Waltz** (Liszt) and **Introduction to Fervaal** (d'Indy).

DX87 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Symphony Orchestra**, conducted by **Wood**: **Prelude in C sharp minor** (Rachmaninov, arr. Wood), and **Volga Boat Song** (arr. Wood).

Walter's recent G minor Mozart symphony was one of the most interesting recordings I have heard this year, whether one liked all of his reading or not. It had subtlety, and the recording showed a quality that many products do not. So has this record of the great overture. The bass strings, a weakness in most old records, have much of the largeness of life on my instrument. In the lighter moments the violins muse pleasantly and flexibly on the love-theme. The pace is deliberate: there is no aim at mere showy glory: here are the grave and (in their own estimation) reverend seigniors, and here too is the romantic flush of the lovable music, and its youthful eagerness.

The Sibelius enterprise is an extremely important and happy one. I understand that the Finnish government, not content with handsomely pensioning their great composer for life when he was little over thirty, and organising national celebrations of his fiftieth and sixtieth birthdays, is subsidising the gramophonic reproduction of his works. There is a rumour that the British Government . . . but I fear it is only a rumour. I regard Sibelius as one of the half dozen biggest and most original living composers, and feel that we cannot too heartily welcome the opportunity of deepening our knowledge of his music. We may not at once deepen understanding, for he seems at times to make a world of his own, unfamiliar to any of us; but it is never an ugly, formless, freakish world, such as so many extremists would shape. I would emphasise the truths that Sibelius has great if unusual conceptions of beauty, immense strength, a self-hewn, self-contained way of thought, and some of the most remarkable orchestral ideas of any composer who ever lived. As a shaper of idea-and-orchestral-dress-in-one, I doubt if any living composer other than Elgar is his match.

The movements stand thus: first, on 50; second, on 51 and half of 52; third, on 52 and half of 53; last, on half of 53 and half of 54. One has the same old complaint to make on behalf of one's fellow-low-purses—that by putting the *Karelia* movement (one side) with the three-side second movement, one could have got the linked third and fourth movements on two discs, instead of, as now, having to buy three. There is a lot of remarkable orchestration, much work in the depths which I cannot quite fully get out (but I am speaking, be it remembered, without the score, and only a general recollection of the work, which is quite insufficient to enable me to remember

the details of orchestration); but, trusting the general impression of the ear, there is ample impressiveness and sonority in the recording, which is conducted by a countryman of Sibelius's, the director of the municipal orchestra of Helsingfors, and head of music in the city's university, a valuable apostle of the master's music all his long life (he is 75). The slow movement of this symphony especially leaves an impression of strength, almost of ferocity, reminding us a little, in this respect, of *Finlandia*. National traits are Sibelius's obedient humble servants, as they ought to be, not he their slave, as some of the Russians became. Here is something to bite on. The last movement is less original than the others. I have sometimes found in Sibelius a sudden comparatively weak movement, but even that does not lack superficial interest: only it does not get down to meanings as the great majority of his movements do. I am sure this second symphony will be found most attractive: the opening bars should engage interest and arouse pleasure at once. Mark the orchestration always: in this composer's thought it is an essential part of the texture. The colours are recorded with fidelity. The *Scherzo* has its special tang, and the finale moves in broad sweeps of emotion—for there is plenty of breadth and feeling in Sibelius. The *Karelia* movement is a stimulating, dance-like, folksy piece, with climax and dying-away. The suite from which it is taken (epitomising some qualities of the people in the other side of Finland from that to which Sibelius belongs) goes well in piano duet form, as also does the *King Christian* music (Breitkopf). I heartily commend Sibelius, in his fulness, to the attention of every thoughtful music-lover. He will repay it!

After music of this calibre, Tchaikovsky's tone-poem seems a little thin mentally, though all its sincere feeling and pleasing portrait-painting must be liked. Mengelberg does Tchaikovsky splendidly, and it is a good thing to have at least one or two of the tone-poems recorded, especially when they are so opulently done as this. The composer tried the subject of *Romeo and Juliet* first when he was thirty, and revised the music a decade later. He disciplined himself here: there is emotion, but not so much of the wilder elements. The introduction suggests Friar Lawrence (Side 1). With the second side the family feud begins. Halfway through this side is a typical Tchaikovsky love-theme, very happily led in and followed: the composer's orchestration was always sure and easy. But does not this kind of music cloy after a while? The second disc develops the themes, the emotion and the strife: and so it ought to develop the drama. Shakespeare does, but does Tchaikovsky? The motives are there, elemental and sharp-cut, and their use is interesting to the musician. Does the drama quite come through? The last idea is most effective, funereally, but taken as a whole, are the elements combined and touched to greatness? Those who like the music already will find it brought vividly before them in the recording, though those high strings do not quite spring to full-toned life.

The *Mephisto Waltz* is perhaps best known in pianoforte form. Into its mild devilment one need not enter analytically. The Brussels orchestra sounds a shade muffled, but has ample energy, and some nice strung moments are found. The wind scarcely makes so firm a job of it. Many will be much more interested to hear a bit (one side) of d'Indy, a composer wrongly neglected. He is getting on for eighty, and has been recorded scarcely at all. His *Istar* variations have been broadcast once or twice, but they ought to be better known. His Franckian sympathies (he is well known as the old master's chief apostle) do not lead to mere imitation. He has a romantic bias that should be popular, if only he were more often performed. This prelude to his opera *Fervaal* (produced in the nineties) is a tender, fragrant piece, in which the muted strings are fairly well recorded. The conductor's conception pleases me very much. May we have some more d'Indy, please?

There is little need to do more than mention Sir Henry's robust (there is another name for it!) transcriptions. He is always gay and rich in his dealings with the orchestra, and for the money one could not expect better recordings.

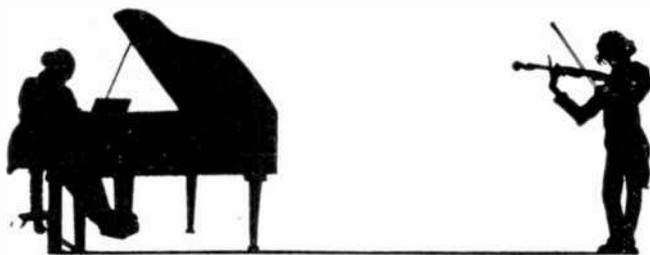
PARLOPHONE.

E11039-40 (12in., 9s.).—**Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra**, conducted by **G. Brecher**: **Overture to Der Freischütz** (Weber); and **State Opera Orchestra, Berlin**, conducted by **Weissmann**: **Prelude to Un Ballo in Maschera** (Verdi).

E11042 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—**Berlin Orchestra**, conducted by **Weissmann**: **Ingrid's Lament**, and **Solveig's Cradle Song**, from **Second Peer Gynt Suite** (Grieg).

The *Freischütz* on three sides gets plenty of time to breathe. With the gently sweet (rather mild-drawn) horns, the strong-pulling strings, and the demonic touch later, this is a satisfying recording, perhaps a shade less "fat" than we could get here, but creamy. Brecher, German-Czech (1879), was trained in Leipzig, conducted there, and has directed opera in other important centres. The name "Gewandhaus" takes one back to J.S.B.'s day, when the old man was cantor at the Thomas School, and the famous concerts at that hall began. I should be glad to hear again this orchestra, which I see Furtwängler regularly conducts. Collectors of Verdiana will like the tasty *Prelude*, with its delicate orchestration and simple tunes. It ranks among the two or three best recordings of the month. The Grieg music is crisply done, with a good measure of distinction, though scarcely the finest string tone. I like best the resource and style in the performance: the sense of breadth and sway, the theatre-touch.

W. R. ANDERSON.



INSTRUMENTAL

PIANO.

On Parlophone E11043 **Rosenthal** plays two Chopin *Waltzes*, *Op. 64, No. 2*, and the familiar *E minor*. There is a rather drily tinkling effect here, as if not all the tone of the keys were being tested. This is a serious drawback to the pleasure to be got from easy, expert and long-aged management of the shape of the music. If for some tastes he lingers over-long in the *rubato*, there are, after all, scores of ways of doing Chopin and, so long as he is not taken in and done for, an artist may treat him as he likes, provided he persuades us of his artistry, in recognising and glorifying the composer's.

Solomon—for short—plays, on Col. LX57 (12in., 6s. 6d.), Liszt's *Au bord d'une source*, and a *Study in F minor*. The pretty water-music has not, I should expect, been better recorded. This player has youthful enthusiasm, and in this type of music, where depth is not demanded, he shows a clean pair of heels, and a clean conscience too. The piano, save for a high note or two not scaling perfectly with the rest, comes out most enjoyably. A capital record of light sentiment.

Note that the last record of the Beethoven trio, listed under *Chamber Music*, contains a solo piano piece. It is Polydor, 95349 (12in., 6s. 6d.), and on this one side **Raoul von Koczalski** plays a transcription of Schubert's *Lindenbaum* song, by Liszt. We can't escape from these things this month! Polydor has done some outstanding piano reproductions. This is not very interesting music, and though the piano tone is strong and most of it very lifelike, there is a heaviness that seems a little unnatural: though one has to take into account the rumbles which Liszt thought appropriate here.

In four instrumental records, so far to hand, I have seven pieces played on strings or piano, three of which were written for those instruments. In Mr. Crabtree's section you will find, will you not, some similar proportion of sung pieces, arranged from piano and fiddle and orchestral music. . . . or will you not? If not, why not? If so, why? And why, in general? On H.M.V. E563 **de Greef** plays Moszkowski's *Waltz in A*, *Op. 34* (10in., 4s. 6d.). The player's style is so well known that I need not say more about it. Most of the piano's strings record well, but a few sound tubby, and one or two bell-like. On the whole, very good recording of the player, and not quite so good, though still of praiseworthy modern quality, of the instrument.

Professor Egon Petri, Busoni's famous pupil, and one of the most powerful of pianists, in strong-meat music, plays on H.M.V. B3508 (10in., 3s.) two of Liszt's transcriptions of Schubert songs—*The Trout*, and *To be sung on the water*. Liszt was extraordinarily clever at transcription—perhaps the cleverest musician we have had, in that line—and this player shows his work in the best light. I like the piano tone, except on the highest notes, the light and shade in the water music, and some other light touches in the other song. For the tunes' sake this record is worth having, though it is possible to find more finely shaded melody playing, I think. I hope we shall have Mr. Petri in some piano music soon, and at the same cheap prices. It is curious that de Greef costs 4s. 6d. and Petri only two-thirds of that: now, is Petri presumed by the producers to be only two-thirds as good as de Greef? Because if so . . .!

From black to plum, from plum a swoop to red. **Backhaus** comes out on the most expensive disc (DA 1018, 10in., 6s.). He plays a *Tango* by Albeniz, and Schumann's *Aufschwung* (*Soaring*). He is excellently recorded. Perhaps a gayer temperament might make the *Tango* go with more seductive waywardness, but this is a musicianly performance. I have not the music: is there some arrangement and amplification of what Albeniz wrote? The Schumann goes solidly, yet with ample force and easy impetus. This is an outstanding reproduction.

Mark Hambourg's monthly contribution is threefold—a *Waltz* and a *Hungarian Dance* by Brahms, and a *Slavonic Dance* by Dvorak (C2007, 12in., 4s. 6d.). Of these I like best his playing of the Dvorak, all except the middle section (about the middle of the record), where he spoils the rhythm. The music is made "drawing-roomy," but it can stand that. The waltz just lacks breathing-time and poise. The dance has its appropriate swagger, but a few more notes might have been got into their right places. The recording continues to do this player exceptionally good justice.

Lamond is here again (H.M.V., D1871, 12in., 6s. 6d.), with Chopin's *Tenth Nocturne*, and—heavens!—Liszt's transcription of Rossini's *Cujus animam*. I doubt if I could have guessed that choice in ten tries. Why do distinguished pianists rake up these Lisztian frivolities? They are clever arrangements, but surely, surely, there is enough original piano music, without trotting out such stuff as this. Mr. Lamond's Chopin seems increasingly stereotyped, his *rubato* stiff and unreal. Yet he can get down to rich things in a satisfying way. Why is this? We may be grateful for his amiable gentleness, and for the good recording, though there are not many shades of tone to reproduce. In the Liszt the piano is less lifelike. I cannot think that Chopin is Lamond's soul-mate.

VIOLIN AND VIOLONCELLO.

The sisters **Beatrice and Margaret Harrison** join in two arrangements for 'cello and violin: one of Strauss's song *Morgen*, and the other of a piece called *O Sanctissima*, by Kreisler out of Corelli (B3471, 10in., 3s.). A pianist (not named) is also heard. The sentiment of the song comes out strongly, and the other piece has its serious charm, with a touch of warmth in the bowing. Two nice little tunes, and a pleasant bit of duetting, recorded in a way that seems to me to do both justice to the mellifluous playing.

VIOLIN.

These two records (Col. DB226-7, 10in., 3s. each) are a mixed bag, for on one side of each **Elsie Avril** plays folk-dance airs on the fiddle, and on the other side **Joan Sharp** plays Morris jigs on the pipe and tabor (drum), those forerunners of the one-man-band we remember, and a familiar combination on the village green in medieval England. I judge Miss Avril to have an excellent style for dancing to (she plays alone). The pipe has a tone between that of the penny whistle and the flute. The effect is not so exhilarating as that of the fiddle, but these records have their value in helping to conjure up the right atmosphere for folk-dance meetings and exhibitions. The titles of the pieces may be given: on 226, *Jockie to the Fair* and *Old Mother Oxford* (violin), and *The Fool's Jig*, with *The Old Woman Tossed up* (pipe and tabor); on 227, *Running Set*, a selection of airs (violin), and *Ladies' Pleasure* and *None so Pretty* (pipe and tabor).

VIOLONCELLO.

A new Grainger piece (new to me, at any rate) arouses pleasant anticipations. On C1929 **Beatrice Harrison** plays his *Youthful Rapture*, and Hughes' (Herbert, presumably) *Bard of Armagh*, which I take it is a transcription of a song. This tune is tender, intimate, and evocative—worth getting to know. Grainger's music is rather vague, and not impressive. It does not sound very much like the Grainger we know, but I suppose it can be no other. It has too much the air of a wandering, thirsting ballad gone askew. There is an orchestral accompaniment, which is rather thin.

On Polydor 27200 (12in., 4s. 6d.) **Hans Boteermund**, with an orchestra conducted by Melichar, plays Bruch's *Kol Nidrei*. The piece goes best with the orchestra, and this record shows a sensitive touch, excellent, varied tone, especially aloft, and a general musicianly style that, recorded with fidelity, makes the disc one to bank on, for those who have not already got a recording of this popular piece.

Gaspar Cassado, whom we remember gratefully for his Schubert transcription with orchestra, a while ago, has a small record (Col. LB 5, 10in., 4s. 6d.), on which he plays Harty's *Butterflies*, and a *Serenata Napoletana* by Sgambati. These have piano accompaniment, and the player's address is admirable. He uses light tone adroitly. One of the best bits of easy playing and recording of the month.

ORGAN.

G. D. Cunningham plays on the organ of St. Margaret's, Westminster, an *Aria* and a *Gavotte* by Wesley, and Bach's chorale prelude on *Rejoice now, all ye Christian men* (B3483, H.M.V., 10in., 3s.). Wesley is welcome, for he was in a great tradition, and had a soul for gentle music as well as noble. The first two pieces use the quiet, pure organ tone, of which we might well have more in records, though the first pedal stop heard is not very good. The Bach is a bit of gently glowing spiritual effervescence, simply and effectively registered. Mr. Cunningham should be asked to do a short series of the chorale preludes, which contain some of Bach's most beautiful, exegetical writing. Some good notes on the hymns on which they are based would be necessary, for one needs to know what idea the composer is developing. This cheap bit of good recording should not be missed, especially by those who are not easily satisfied with recorded organ tone.

On H.M.V. C1971 (12in., 4s. 6d.) **Stanley Marchant**, playing his St. Paul's organ, gives us a Bach *Fugue in A minor* edited by Best, and a pleasing *Tuba Tune* by Norman Cocker, a sub-organist at Manchester Cathedral, I believe. The player has evidently taken great pains to be clear, and succeeded as far as anyone can, from an echoing cathedral. The pedals, as usual, sound rather dim in the fugue. In the *Tuba Tune*, the painstaking is just a little obvious, and the rhythm becomes stiff. There is a good blow of sound at the end—one of the

fullest and best blends you may expect on a record. But listen to the final echo—just about four seconds of it, as far as one can compute without seeing when the player took his fingers off the keys. Remembering that this echo does not only perform at the end, but is jogging on behind the procession the whole time, we shall not expect too much from cathedral organs, or any organs not intended to stand up to the high demands of the microphone. You may even, if you hear enough organ records, come to believe that organists could help to devise an instrument that would, on its side of the account, perform as nearly perfectly as may be—leaving the microphone's side to the expert committee. And in a few years it may seem odd that once certain people were so vehement about what could and could not be done in organ construction—all without the shadow of a pretence of producing proof of any scientific qualifications, and equally without being able to claim a moment's experience as a practising organist. Is it not wonderful how far some people can persuade themselves, if they only shout loud enough? And is it not equally funny that they should expect to persuade sensible folk by reiterated exhibitions of shallow thinking and technical incompetence?

W. R. ANDERSON.



TO POPULARISE THE STRING BAND

Slowly the printed and spoken word in education is being linked up with the actual thing that is talked about—sound made manifest. The latest move is that H.M.V. is recording some of the numbers of the *Polychordia* strings-teaching method devised and successfully operated by Mr. James Brown, and published by Stainer and Bell. Mr. Brown is working for the string orchestra, and his method is systematic, copious and complete. It can be operated wherever a few willing people, of any age, can lay their hands on fiddles of any size. It is cheap, and I have satisfied myself that it is efficient, for at competition festivals I have had the pleasure of judging classes in which *Polychordia* music has been used. It is a commonplace of present-day knowledge that once in our land string playing was as usual an accomplishment as dancing or bridge-playing is now—though perhaps the standard of performance was not always high; but nearly everybody did try to play. We want more fiddlers! I wonder if listening to the London String Players or the Wireless String Orchestra makes people want to handle a fiddle? The school orchestra is one practical means to an end whose importance even wireless has not brought sufficiently strongly to our minds: the end of personal performance, which is possible for 95 per cent. of us, either through voice or fingers. The first H.M.V. records of the *Polychordia* pieces, capably played by a string band under Mr. Brown, consist of little pieces from various early books in the series. B3514 contains numbers from the *Arundel Suite* by Sebastian H. Brown, the son of the founder of the system; and B3515 has four other little pieces. It should be emphasised that the system and its music are not merely for schools: there are flourishing little adult string groups in Cotswold villages and elsewhere, for whom a trained visiting teacher lights the flame of enthusiasm, and whose own happy efforts, with his periodical help, keep it burning bravely. These records will show them what to aim at, and will, I greatly hope, stimulate others to want to start or join an elementary string orchestra. Any so minded will find Mr. James Brown, care of Stainer and Bell, 58, Berners Street, W.1, the most helpful counsellor and sustainer.

W. R. A.

VERDI'S REQUIEM

H.M.V. D 1751/60 (12in., 65s., in an album).—La Scala Orchestra and Chorus, with Fanelli, Cattaneo, Lo Giudice, and Pinza, conducted by Sabajno: Requiem Mass (Verdi).

The album, which I am told contains analytical notes, has not arrived as I review this welcome work. I shall not anticipate the analysis, but just greet the enterprise and comment on the production as a whole. For those who may not wish to buy the whole work, and so will not get the album, I may note that it was Verdi's idea that a *Requiem* should be a tribute, by a group of Italian composers, to Rossini's memory; and I have heard the curious statement that the work was to be handed down to posterity to be performed every hundred years, on the anniversary of the great man's death, in Bologna Cathedral: not, it is to be hoped, once a century only! Most of those who contributed numbers are unknown here. Verdi wrote the *Libera me*, the final number. The result, as might have been expected, was a hotch-potch of styles, and the project of issuing the music under one cover was dropped. When, five years later, the poet Manzoni died, Verdi was moved to undertake a *Requiem* himself, and he added six numbers to his original *Libera me*. The whole consists of the *Requiem* and *Kyrie* (two sides); the very long *Dies Irae* sequence, with its subdivisions (nine sides); *Domine Jesu* (two sides); *Sanctus* (one side); *Agnus Dei* (one side); *Lux aeterna* (one side); and *Libera me* (four sides). The division of the sides could have been bettered in one respect—by filling the last side of the fifth record of the *Dies* with the *Sanctus*, and putting the *Domine Jesu* on one disc. All four soloists are heard in the first, second, and third numbers; the chorus alone in the fourth (*Sanctus*); the female soloists in the fifth; the three lower-voiced soloists in the sixth, and the soprano in the last.

The work is a late one (it came after *Aida*, and before the two final and greatest operas: Verdi was then just over sixty), and it is the composer's greatest sacred work. Some may mildly query the word "sacred"; it has been urged that the operatic habit runs through the music. This is a matter of great interest, but there is no space to discuss it here. It is a magnificently Italian *Requiem*, and splendid Verdi; if it is not like any of our English sacred music, that is not necessarily against it. We know Verdi to have been a man tremendously earnest and upright in his art, one whom we honour as a Grand Old Man, as much in the character of his life as of his composition. The concentration on dramatic, even lurid ideas of religious emotion passes many of us by nowadays, but if the *Requiem* would maybe fail to make you or me a better creature, it cannot, I think, fail to enliven the musical sense and interestingly broaden the mind with regard to a great composer's craftsmanship, and his outlook on the alliance of his art with typical religious thoughts. The first page of the *Dies* is a splendid sample!

There is in the chorus work some excellent delicacy, though the voices, like those of nearly all Italian choristers, are not of our British standard of steadiness and purity; and one does not expect to hear all the Latin words. The tenor has not one of my favourite types of tone. Pinza is a sound bass, and Cattaneo a good mezzo-soprano, but again not a perfectly steady one. One rather wishes the mezzo part had been for a big contralto, though. The soprano is a good soaring, flexible member, with rather sharp-set tone. I am afraid there can be no doubt that Italian singing of the day is not on the highest plane. Covent Garden confirms the belief, each year. Compare the Germans and the Italians, taking any half-dozen of the notables on each side, and there can be no two opinions, surely, where lies the finest singing and the best mental power. But these Italians have the great advantage, in a work operatically conceived, that they are daily engaged in performing opera, and so probably their interpretation is as good as any country could give us; but I wish some of them would sing less nasally and without any more *vibrato* than the emotion demands. Pinza, at the end of side four, for instance, makes the voice express keen emotion, whatever else he may do with it at other times. This record, the beginning of the *Dies*, is excellent as a curiosity-piquer; after hearing it, one feels one positively must hear the rest of that extraordinary movement. In some ways one notes the likeness between this and parts of *Othello*—the latter's *Credo*, for instance, gives the pagan side of the shield, on the reverse of which is imprinted the *Dies* music. *Tuba mirum* (side 4) is famous for the trumpets. Few composers have ever got a greater thrill out of any religious picture: there is all the power of Italian painting here. The soloists sound best together in such places as the *Rez* (side 7), and the chorus, when one does not listen too keenly to the individual parts, can sway the tone in a very satisfying way, which shows their ample experience. The *Domine Jesu*, a charming six-eight movement, shows up some inequalities of the soloists; but how rarely do we hear any oratorio with a perfectly balanced quartet? The men here are stronger than the women; but Pinza is a very big bass, and the tenor, in his most effective department, can overtop most other high voices, I imagine. The *Sanctus* gives the double choir a fine lusty run. The voices seem to lose a little in focus, through distance, perhaps, and partly, I think, through unsteady tone—a defect which shows also in the *Agnus*, in which the soprano and alto sing in octaves, with choral interludes. The effect, with these soloists, is not very happy. The *Finale* has one or two recollections of former themes. Early on side 19 the choir starts a fugue, sung with ample point and nervous energy. The orchestration throughout is a study of the first interest, and I am glad that most of it has been recorded so boldly, though there are times when one feels that the conductor is holding the band back, and some when the choir, as I have noted, might have come forward tonally, with advantage.

W. R. A.

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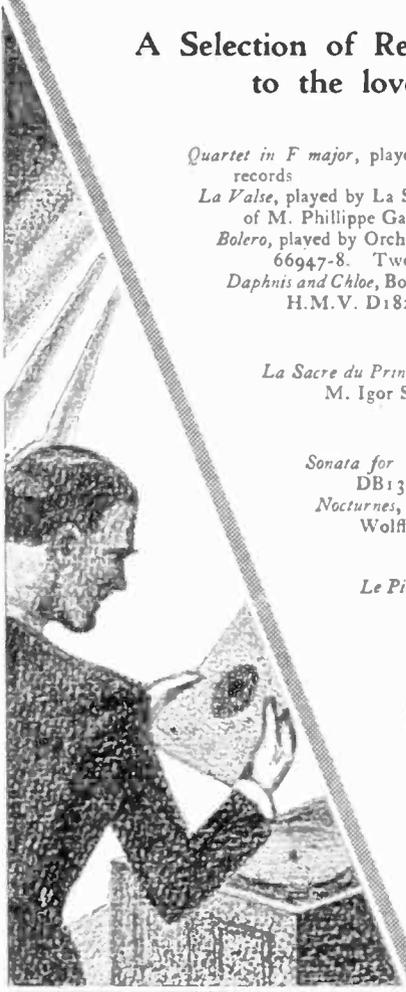
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OPERATIC AND FOREIGN SONGS (SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER ISSUES)

ELISABETH RETHBERG (soprano) and **FRIEDRICH SCHORR** (baritone).—*Sieh' Ev'chen! Dächt' ich doch* and *Hat mann mit dem Schuhwerk* from Act 3, Sc. 1 of *Die Meistersinger* (Wagner). In German. Orch. acc. H.M.V. DB1421, 12in., 8s. 6d.

ELISABETH RETHBERG (soprano).—*Zigeunerlied* from Act 1 *Gypsy Baron* (Joh. Strauss) and *Heilige Quelle* from Act 2 of *Marriage of Figaro* (Mozart). In German. Orch. acc. Parlo. RO20115, 10in., 4s. 6d.

EMMY BETTENDORF (soprano).—*Caro mio ben* (Giordani) in Italian and *Melody in F* (Rubinstein), in German. Organ and orch. acc. Parlo. E11044, 12in., 4s. 6d.

Love Waltz (Heymann-Liebmann) and *Speak not of Love eternal* (Granichstädt—Marischka). In German. Organ and Orch. acc. Parlo. E11045, 12in., 4s. 6d. Leaflets of words.

ROSE PAULY-DREESEN (soprano).—*Leonora's Aria* from *Fidelio* (Beethoven). In German. Orch. acc. Parlo. E11036, 12in., 4s. 6d.

MARGARETE BÄUMER (soprano).—*O Hall of Song* and *Away from him!* from Act 2 of *Tannhäuser* (Wagner). In German. Orch. acc. Parlo. E11035, 12in., 4s. 6d.

JOVITA FUENTES (soprano).—*One fine day* and *Death of Butterfly* from *Madame Butterfly* (Puccini). In Italian. Orch. acc. Parlo. E11047, 12in., 4s. 6d.

MAY BLYTH (soprano), **HENRY WENDON** (tenor) and **RICHARD WATSON** (bass).—*Finale* from Act 3 of *Aida* (Verdi). In Italian. Orch. acc. Decca K533, 12in., 3s. 6d.

Garden Scene from Act 3 of *Faust* (Gounod). In French. Orch. acc. Decca K535, 12in., 3s. 6d.

Elisabeth Rethberg and Friedrich Schorr.—It is good to be able to begin the autumn reviews under this head with something superlatively excellent. No less could fairly be said of this faultless rendering of the "footstool duet" from the third act of *Die Meistersinger*. It brings out in full glory one of the loveliest inspirations that Wagner ever put into a score; in other words, it is a perfect musical realisation of the scene, with the clear, silvery tones of the impulsive Eva and the sly humour of the mischievous Sachs everywhere intact. Both voices fall gratefully on the ear; the melodious repartee is a joy throughout; and the words—ye gods! what a lesson to some of our thick-speaking native singers! Who was responsible for the instrumental recording deponent knoweth not, but it is admirable.

Elisabeth Rethberg.—The all-round nature of the German operatic training—one night tragedy, the next comedy or even farce—explains the capacity for contrasts such as versatile women like Elisabeth Rethberg and Lotte Lehmann can furnish. From Wagner to Johann Strauss and back to Mozart seem to be entirely natural transitions. The gifted Elisabeth demonstrates it in this interesting record (that is, if you don't miss her Eva) by her bird-like, brilliant singing of the *Zigeunerlied*, so suggestive of the pent-up energy of the canary; followed by a turn to the serious in the air for the Countess which we know best under its Italian title of *Porgi amor*. This last is quite beautifully phrased, slow without being dragged, minus appoggiaturas, of course (as

is the modern fashion), and always simple, unaffected, touching in its pathos. The tone is immaculate and ravishing throughout.

Emmy Bettendorf.—To the genius who invents orchestral accompaniments for Parlophone, as I have frequently observed, all popular music of the past is fair game for manipulation. I know not whether the same mind that invents new harmonies for *Caro mio ben* furnished an entirely fresh and elaborate vocal version of Rubinstein's famous *Melody in F*; but here is Emmy Bettendorf accepting both in their new dress and, what is more, singing them in her most delightful manner. Even Giordani himself would have found it difficult to resist the fascination of the extra touches and the intensely Teutonic sentiment. But as to Rubinstein I am not so certain. He was a man of Leonine moods, and would have roared his loudest when that superfluous, intrinsic male chorus "chips in" in the *coda*, and converts the whole thing into a cheap *opérette* number. The lovely voice of the soloist, adding a double charm to the well-known tune, has nearly saved the situation when this catastrophe occurs, albeit the *tesitura* is low for her. In the end she conquers; but even then one feels inclined to ask, "Was it really worth while?" The companion disc contains less familiar material. Love is the eternal theme of both songs (we should term them ballads), and the accomplished vocalist idealizes them, as she does everything, by her graceful, artistic singing. Her waltz rhythm in the first is irresistible, and in the second she balances accounts with what is apparently a high-class jazz orchestra. Why not try it and hear what it sounds like?

Rose Pauly-Dreesen.—This soprano's tone is somewhat pinched and thin at moments, and, despite her obvious artistic qualities, does not altogether enable her to satisfy in *Fidelio's* great air, *Abscheulicher*. She seems to be more of a lyric than a dramatic singer, and her style reveals little charm. Her diction, too, lacks the dignity that is so wonderfully embodied in the rhythm of Beethoven's tremendous theme, "Ich folg' dem innern Triebe, ich wanke nicht." The accompaniments are well played under Dr. Weissmann.

Margarete Bäumer.—The pieces given in this record represent the most declamatory portions of Elisabeth's task in *Tannhäuser*, and on the gramophone one seldom hears them to such advantage as in the present instance. Frä. Bäumer has an organ of full, round proportions and her methods are undeniably impressive. *Dich theure Halle* tells us nothing particularly new; but the effect of the outburst where the heroine protects the misguided champion of the Venusberg from the anger of the outraged Minnesingers is singularly fine.

Jovita Fuentes.—Evidently a sweetly attractive Spanish Butterfly. She really sounds like the charming little geisha who had the misfortune to arouse the infatuation of Pinkerton and fall genuinely in love with him. Her voice is by no means powerful, but it is exceedingly pretty and very carefully trained. Her *One fine day* is conceived in the right spirit, while in the scene preceding the suicide she is just emotional enough, without being over-tearful. Her intonation is absolutely correct.

May Blyth, Henry Wendon, Richard Watson.—Why English artists should sing operatic excerpts for the gramophone in a foreign language, when there is no need to do so, passes my comprehension. They may be assured that no foreign singer (especially French) would ever think of using an English text except under the strongest compulsion. The kind of Italian and French displayed in these excerpts from *Aida* and *Faust* offers no excuse for deserting the mother-tongue, which is quite beautiful enough when properly treated. What increases my objection is the indistinctness that results from inferior pronunciation. The *Aida* selection is in every way better than the *Faust*. The latter ought hardly to be entitled the "Garden Scene," since it only begins at Meplustopheles's invocation to the night and the flowers, and concludes with his promise of Marguerite's avowal at the window, which, under the circumstances, Faust is not allowed a chance of over-hearing. Much lovely music is thus omitted.

SIGISMUND PILINSKY (tenor).—Arise then, mighty Rome, anew from *Rienzi* (Wagner) and Lord, in the starry spheres from *The Prophet* (Meyerbeer). In German. Orch. acc. and chorus. Parlo. E11037, 12in., 4s. 6d.

RICHARD TAUBER (tenor).—I live for your love and Wonderful, so wonderful from *Frederica* (Franz Lehar). In German. Orch. acc. Parlo. RO20116, 10in., 4s. 6d. Leaflet of words.

VILLABELLA (tenor).—Parsesuse fille from Act 1 and Duel Trio from Act 4 of *Faust* (Gounod). In French. Orch. acc. and chorus. Parlo. E11033, 12 in., 4s. 6d.

ALESSANDRO VALENTE (tenor).—Si, fui soldato from *Andrea Chénier* (Giordano) and *Serenata* (Mascagni). In Italian. Orch. acc. H.M.V. B3486, 10in., 3s.

ALFRED PICCAVER (tenor).—Am stillen Herd and Prize Song from *Die Meistersinger* (Wagner). In German. Orch. acc. Polydor 95351, 12in., 6s. 6d.
Torna a Surriento (de Curtis) and Di te (Tirindelli). In Italian. Orch. acc. Polydor 90150, 10in., 4s. 6d.

KARL AUGUST NEUMANN (baritone).—Largo (Handel) and Die Himmel rühmen (Beethoven). In German. Organ acc. Polydor 23029, 10in., 3s.

ALEXANDER KIPNIS (bass).—Mondnacht (Schumann) and Traum durch die Dämmerung (R. Strauss). In German. Piano acc. Col. LB4, 10in., 4s. 6d.

KATE HEIDERSBACH (soprano) and **MAX LORENZ** (tenor).—Das süsse Lied verhält und Ist dies nur Liebe, Love Duet from *Lohengrin* (Wagner). In German. Orch. acc. H.M.V. C1899, 12in., 4s. 6d.
O Fürstin and Doch welch ein seltsam neues lieben from *Tannhäuser* (Wagner). In German. Orch. acc. H.M.V. C1897, 12in., 4s. 6d.

MARIA LUISA FANELLI (soprano), **PIERO PAULI** (tenor) and **G. MASINI** (bass).—Forma ideal and Amore, mistero, from Act 4 of *Mefistofele* (Boito). In Italian. Orch. acc. and chorus. H.M.V. DB1440, 12in., 8s. 6d.

GERHARD HÜSCH (baritone).—Pari siamo and Cortigiani, vil razza dannata from *Rigoletto* (Verdi). In German. Orch. acc. Parlo. E11034, 34in., 4s. 6d.

Blick ich umher from Act 2 of *Tannhäuser* (Wagner) and Papageno's Song from Act 2 of *The Magic Flute* (Mozart). In German. Orch. acc. Parlo. E11046, 12in., 4s. 6d.

BEATE MALKIN (soprano), **TINO PATTIERA** (tenor), **HELENE JUNG** (mezzo-soprano) and **PAUL SCHÖFFLER** (baritone), with orchestra and chorus of the State Opera House, Berlin, conducted by **DR. WEISSMANN**.—Operas in Brief No. 1, *Il Trovatore* (Verdi). In German. Parlo. E11048-50, 12in., 4s. 6d. each.

Sigismund Pilinsky.—A robust Polish tenor with a resonant if not invariably steady tone. He is better in early Wagner than in Meyerbeer. The Prophet's spirited appeal to his followers sounds like a lachrymose bit of special pleading; it requires much more energy and animation to give it due effect. The ringing high notes are, however, well sustained, while the choruses add interest to these uncommon selections.

Richard Tauber.—Two airs from Franz Lehar's new light opera *Frederica*, recently done in English at the Palace Theatre. I have not heard Joseph Hislop sing them, so I cannot possibly make comparisons. I only know that they are perfectly suited to Richard Tauber's unique style and that he infuses into them rather more masculine vigour and *entrain* than is his wont. He has, moreover, the able support of the orchestra of the Berlin State Opera House.

Villabella, Rouard, Billot, with Chorus.—Two excerpts from *Faust*, capitally sung by French artists in their own language. They have the resonant clang of the theatre, and

the duel trio goes with abundant spirit, as does also the Easter hymn of the first act.

Alessandro Valente.—An excellent tenor, this, who declaims well without shouting. His fine voice does easy justice to the *Si fui soldato* (*Andrea Chénier*) and lends a certain charm to Mascagni's *Serenata*, which is not the one heard from behind the curtain in the *Prelude to Cavalleria Rusticana*. The orchestra of La Scala, under Carlo Sabajno, plays the accompaniments.

Alfred Piccaver.—With his magnificent voice and facile, listless manner, this notable tenor makes Wagner sound like mere child's-play. The sole drawback lies in the fact that he does not convince us he is in dead earnest. Nevertheless, it is a double pleasure to listen to Walther's songs when mastered with such consummate ease and this proving that Wagner knew exactly what the human voice was capable of doing. Piccaver sings admirably in German and maintains an amazing flow of vibrant, steady if slightly nasal tone. The two Neapolitan ditties on the companion disc are equally effective of their kind.

Karl August Neumann.—A marked tremolo is scarcely the right adjunct for the interpretation of Handel's *Largo* and Beethoven's *Creation's Hymn*. Otherwise, a fine baritone voice and unusually good organ accompaniment impart value to this effort.

Alexander Kipnis.—This accomplished basso never disappoints; he sticks to the lofty standard that has won him his great reputation as an interpreter of opera and *lieder*. Schumann's *Mondnacht* is a difficult song for a man with a heavy voice to sing, but we find it here given with a refinement and restraint, a depth of expression, a beauty of tone, that a Gerhardt or a Hempel might envy. The Strauss *lied* is sung and enunciated with the same meticulous care.

Kate Heidersbach and *Max Lorenz*.—Evidently an inexperienced Lohengrin and a talented Elsa. Both possess the kind of bright, musical voice that tells well in the love duet, and the only actual blemish is the excessive speed at which they occasionally press on the *tempo*. Love duets ought not to be hurried. The instrumental part is beautifully executed by the Berlin State Opera orchestra under Clemens Schmalstich. Even better, though, is the general rendering of the scene from the second act of *Tannhäuser*, because here impetuosity and pure feeling go hand in hand without marring the musical symmetry.

Maria Fanelli, Piero Pauli, and G. Masini.—These highly original ensemble, sung with the Scala chorus, from the episode of the Classical Sabbath in Boito's *Mefistofele*, should please all admirers of that most interesting and (in this country) much-neglected opera. The three solo voices have all the necessary distinction, and there is a dramatic breadth of treatment such as I have seldom heard in this music.

Gerhard Hüsch.—Yet another sympathetic, clever German baritone! In Wolfram's *Fantasy* he displays ripe intelligence and undoubted artistic feeling; in the Papageno air a style replete with crisp, merry, comic spirit, enhanced by the tuneful charm of a celeste accompaniment. What more would you have? For my part I would like only to see as well as hear Hüsch.

Operas in Brief, No. 1.—Apparently Berlin is going to send us a series of the capital *potpourris* of popular operas which it knows so well how to manufacture. It starts with that well-worn evergreen, *Il Trovatore*—a greater favourite still by a long way in Germany than it remains over here—and all the tit-bits are nicely dovetailed into the sample mosaic. Who devises these things is not stated, but they are very skilfully assembled, and Dr. Weissmann and his forces are not ashamed to put their best work into them, for they get their *quid pro quo* not only in the pecuniary sense, but in the knowledge that the Germans positively adore good *potpourris*. The whole opera is boiled down into three records. I can assure you it is all quite excellent and most amusing.

HERMAN KLEIN.

FAUST IN ENGLISH

(Col. DX.83-103, 12 in., 4s. 6d. each. In Album with Libretto, £3 16s. 6d.)

It is many years since Pathé issued the complete opera in French. Some nine or ten years ago the Gramophone Co. brought out an Italian version. The present Columbia album is the first complete recording in English and the first to be electrically recorded. The well-known text of Henry Chorley, familiar (at least in parts) to all music-lovers, is used. It is a comparatively poor text and parts of it are even stupid. Now and then the artists alter a word or two, generally with advantage. Thus Siebel corrects a silly remark in the Flower Song. But what on earth possessed Faust to alter a sentence that is grammatically correct in order to sing "Let me, *thy* willing slave, attend *you* home to-day"?

A copy of Chorley's libretto is supplied free with the album of records. It is prefaced with a few notes on the opera and a synopsis of the plot which might with advantage have been more accurate. The proofs, too, might have been more carefully read, since the text contains errors, typographical and otherwise. Moreover it may confuse the reader-listener in three places. On record DX91, No. 7, most of the recitative printed before the cavatina is sung after it. On record DX95, No. 15 too much of the text has been cut after the ballad, while the recitative which precedes the Jewel Song is actually recorded on side No. 16, and not on side No. 15 as printed.

The cast is as follows: Margarita, **Miriam Licette**: Siebel, **Doris Vane**: Martha, **Muriel Brunskill**: Faust, **Hedde Nash**: Mephistopheles, **Robert Easton**: Valentine, **Harold Williams**; Wagner, **Robert Carr**: Chorus of Students, Soldiers, Spirits, People, etc., the **B.B.C. Choir**. Here there will be noticed an innovation; the mezzo rôle of Siebel has been allotted to a soprano. This is not at all a bad idea, for the voices of most Siebels are far too ponderous.

The actual recording was done "in a public hall," and excellently done too. It is on the loud side and yet it does not seem to have led to any appreciable distortion of the singers' voices. Noteworthy features are the excellence of the orchestral recording and the happy balance between voice and orchestra.

The main point of interest in the performance lies in the fact that the opera is conducted by **Sir Thomas Beecham** (save for four sides which presumably had to be re-recorded); its most striking feature is its abundance of life and "go." With Beecham in command *Faust* speeds on its way; the action never drags; the music never becomes a soporific. Possibly this speeding up is carried rather to excess and fails to preserve a just balance between the slower passages and the quicker ones. Nevertheless, the chief honours are due to the conductor and his orchestra.

The dominating figure in the opera is Mephistopheles. Musically it calls for a bass voice of exceptional range. This does not inconvenience Mr. Easton to any extent, though he is not always comfortable on his high notes. But a faithful rendering of the part demands an ability to portray character which this singer does not possess. His opening utterance reveals him as a bass of ample power and splendid voice. His subsequent work continually reminds one of this, but of nothing else. This is no Mephistopheles. There is nothing in the least sinister or sardonic about him. It is to be regretted that an artist gifted with such an admirable and appropriate voice should have given such a humdrum performance.

The singing of both Miss Licette and Mr. Nash is a little unequal; the tenor in particular often does less than justice to the recitatives. But in the more lyrical passages both these artists are quite at home and give of their best. The comparatively minor part of Valentine is safe in the able hands of Harold Williams; but his unconventional ending to *Even bravest heart* will surely not find many admirers. A special word of praise is due to the B.B.C. choir, who make the soldiers' chorus go with a rare swing and contribute largely to the success of the fair scene.

H. F. V. L.



CHORAL

COLUMBIA.

The Choir of the Festival of English Church Music (400 voices), DB214-6 (three 10in., 3s. each).—These three records have been made in the Central Hall, Westminster, by the combined church choirs which took part recently in the first Festival organised by Dr. Sydney Nicholson, who recently resigned his post of organist of Westminster Abbey to found St. Nicholas College at Chislehurst, as a permanent school of English church music. Dr. Nicholson has conducted the full choir of four hundred voices for these records. He has obtained excellent tone, and, though the choir is a scratch one, and large, excellent attack. On DB214 is the *Te Deum* of Stanford's famous B flat Service, perhaps still the worthiest example of our time. The climax of this is the best moment of these records. The weakest spot is *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace*. S. S. Wesley was a true church musician, and his father Samuel, was a still greater man; but S. S. was not at his most inspired in this anthem. With it, however, on DB215 is a *Nunc Dimittis* by that noble genius Orlando Gibbons, the wonderful climax of which is well realised; and two verses of the hymn *Jesus, where'er Thy people meet*, sung to the glorious tune *Wareham*. It is splendidly done, and the singing of the second half only of the last verse in unison is a real breakaway from rigid ideas. On DB216 are Sterndale Bennett's *God is a Spirit and Lord, for Thy tender mercy's sake*, sometimes attributed to Farrant. To this is sung a very fine polyphonic *Amen*, recently discovered, I believe. Still more might be made of it.

The recording is excellent throughout. There is a slight tendency to blast—hardly enough to mention, but choral recording is still slightly behind other recording in this respect.

H.M.V.

The Chorus and Orchestra of the State Opera, Berlin, conducted by **Clemens Schmalstich**. C1946 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—On one side is a very fine performance, very well recorded, of a curious, unexpected affair: a selection from the choral parts of the Finale of Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*. They start with the presentation by full orchestra of the great tune of the Finale, then jump to (after the B flat military march) the full choral statement of it; continue with the first part (17 bars) of the following *Maestoso*; then go to the *Prestissimo*, and continue to the end of the Movement. On the other side Beethoven's *Creation Hymn* is equally well done. I should place this record, among continental choral records, not lower than next best to the recent Julian Choir records.

The Choir of the Temple Church, London, with organ. B3453 (10in., 3s.).—Certainly this record of *How lovely is thy dwelling-place*, from Brahms's *German Requiem*, is by far the best from the Temple Church. It is on a small scale: rather like a view through a reversed telescope. The organ is like a faraway echo of the orchestra. The Choir is actually tonally different from a big chorus, as are a few strings from those of a symphony orchestra. But, accepting it as that, it is a beautiful piece of work. The climax in the middle might have been worked up a little more.

The Kentucky Singers (octet of men), unaccompanied. B3536 (10in., 3s.).—Theoretically this is an ideal negro spiritual record (without quite the depth of Paul Robeson) and at least a very good record indeed; and *Swing low, sweet chariot* and *Witness* (both arr. Randolph) are well chosen and contrasted.

PARLOPHONE.

The Choir and Organ of St. Margaret's Church, Lee. E6342-7 (six 10in., 2s. 6d. each).—This is a remarkable set of hymn records—by far the best I remember, with one qualification: the hymn is primarily for communal singing, and in normal conditions is therefore to be sung absolutely straightforwardly, any effects being of the broadest and most sparing. Many, even most, church organists and choirs still regard it as their job to observe as sensationally as possible the absurd dynamic variations which are indicated in *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, and which are extremely irritating to anyone who tries to join in lustily. As long as we clearly understand that these records are obviously intended merely to be listened to as choral works, we may welcome them. The treatment of each hymn is exactly like the good, intelligent singing of a fairly straightforward part-song. There is genuine life and genuine musicality such as I never remember hearing before. It would hardly be worth while describing each hymn in detail. Examples which will show as much as I can show without playing the records to you are: verse 2 of *Jesu, lover of my soul*, lines 1-2 unison, 3-4 in harmony, 5-6 unison, 7-8 in harmony; verse 3 of *Rock of ages*, line 4 given to the tenors. These two hymns are on E6346, sung to the familiar tunes *Hollingside* and *Redhead* respectively. The chanting of Psalm 23 is better than usual, but not really first-rate; it is too slow. Mr. Fred Leeds (Mus. Bac., Cantab., etc.) is "at the organ," and has excellent control. The recording is almost as good as any yet of this type. I feel more and more that the tendency of lower voices to obscure the higher is likely to be due to the weaker recording of higher harmonics—especially when the boys' production is a little—however little, as here—hooty.

C. M. CRABTREE.



SONGS

H.M.V.

Keith Falkner (barytone). C1940 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—If big voices well produced can now be recorded almost perfectly, that must be to the good. But if the singer's mouth is only six inches or so from the microphone—as I know it has been in some instances—commonsense suggests that the effect will be of his singing straight into one's ear. These considerations are at least suggested by this record played with a Wilson horn. The songs are two Handel arias: *The people that walked in darkness* from *The Messiah* and a good less familiar one, *What tho' I trace*, from *Solomon*. Such records by Keith Falkner are among the highest of their class—perhaps even unrivalled. I think he can still go a little further without exaggeration in this style. H.M.V. have done well in engaging Lawrence Collingwood to conduct the orchestra for such records as this and the next one.

Florence Austral (soprano). E561 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—You don't know the whole power of this great Wagnerian soprano, some would say the greatest, until you have heard her in such a delicate thing as Spohr's *Rose softly blooming* (from *Azor and Zemira*). Miss Austral is as nearly the perfect operatic singer as may be. She sings this air most lightly and sensitively, yet without a trace of discomfort, with lovely tone, and with the little decorations perfect. Every soprano should know this record—though one is occasionally anxious about intonation and diction. The other song is *Everywhere I go*, by Easthope Martin, but different from any other of his I can think

of. Not unlike Viennese light opera, there is something of a thrill in hearing it sung thus.

Peter Dawson (bass-barytone). C1988 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Elgar's *Sword Song* from *Caractacus* is a song that, short of militarist incitement, I should like to see universally popular. It is a lesson to composers, and connoisseurs, of the popular conventionally blustering type of song. If Elgar is ever as English as they say, it is here. Here is not merely ferocity, but the real wild devil-may-care temper. Nearly half-way through, there is a phrase in the orchestra, a gesture so real as to make you see the sword flashing. Dawson is no mean interpreter of such a song. With it he gives an English version of Glinka's *Midnight Review*; less at home, yet good. Tricks of pronunciation get if anything worse; but I find a warning to hearers is needed that it is absurd to judge every word of an unfamiliar song on one hearing. The orchestra is of the best.

John McCormack (tenor). DA1119 (10in., 6s.).—Two songs from McCormack's film, *Song o' my heart: The Rose of Tralee* (Spencer and Glover) and *Ireland, Mother Ireland* (O'Reilly and Loughborough). There's no denying that it does one's heart good—for a time—to listen to McCormack's voice, when it has a chance, and to hear his singing of anything which has the palest tinge of Irishness. But how much longer would we turn to his records if he would give us more true Irish songs! Perhaps for ever—at any rate, too long for good business, I suppose. Of emotional-lyrical types of song there are none in the world equal to Irish folk-songs. If we can't have some of those from McCormack, it is something to have one with a little blood in it, and another with some family likeness. The accompaniments are effectively played by an orchestra.

Essie Ackland (contralto). B3460 (10in., 3s.).—A good record of *Darby and Joan* (Molloy) and *My Treasure* (Trevalsa), both with simple organ accompaniment.

Stuart Robertson (bass-barytone). B3477 (10in., 3s.).—What is the ideal policy for the recording of good British songs of yesterday and to-day, in which Stuart Robertson and H.M.V. have at very long last started, and dare we hope will continue, to set the pace? Surely the policy which this record suggests; an established favourite, old or new, on one side, on the other a potential favourite. Such a record will, surely, appeal strongly to a very large number of radio listeners who have taken to many straightforward contemporary British songs. Actually, this setting by Hubert Parry of the words of the well-known humorous Scottish folk-song, *The Laird o' Cockpen*, may be questioned. But you can't miss its humour, moreover it definitely grows on you, which is generally a sign of art of a high order. Parry's favourite melisma, or flourish on one syllable, in the last line of a stanza has exquisite opportunity and point here, e.g. on the "lo-ong pedigree" and when the lass turns away. Robertson sings it as effectively as usual, though I don't think he's done anything else quite so notably as his *Ethiopia*—is it because he knew that better? But his *The Pretty Creature* (Storace, arr. Lane Wilson) is quite the best of it. Storace is one of our eighteenth-century men who would fully repay more attention.

Derek Oldham (tenor). B3488 (10in., 3s.).—If any man or woman more than another is born to sing—by which I mean more than use his voice—it is the Russian. Both singer and composer seem to show this. Whatever one thinks of most of Rachmaninoff's music, for instance, almost every song of his has a lovely controlled rapture. You may think *In the silent night* fairly good at once; after two or three hearings it will take full hold of you. We may be grateful to Derek Oldham for giving it us (in English, of course), though he leaves its impetuosity and thrill to our imagination. In this later-romantic type he must be much freer—much more *lift*, surge, rise and fall, is wanted—the very notes show it. We can also be grateful to him for giving us an English record—the only one, as far as I can see—of Grieg's *I love thee* (*Ich liebe dich*). Moreover, it is decidedly well done; he is much freer—is it again because he knows it better? But he can put yet more into such songs.

COLUMBIA.

Dame Clara Butt (contralto). PX1-2 (two 12in., 8s. 6d. each), and PB3-4 (two 10in., 6s. each).—Dame Clara Butt has never been better recorded, and she gives us rather more variety in the singing of certain of these songs than in some recent records. On PX1 are *O. lovely night* (Ronald) accompanied by violin, 'cello, harp, piano and organ, and *A perfect day* (Jacobs-Bond) with piano, and 'cello *obbligato*. On PX2 she is joined by a very good chorus of men, and orchestra, in *God save the King* and *Land of hope and glory*. PB3 has *Annie Laurie* and *Kathleen Mavourneen*, PB4 *Rose in the Bud* (Forster) and *The Rooks* (Waterford), all four with piano.

Norman Allin (bass). DX106 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Allin adapts himself almost as well to *The Midshipmite* (Adams) and *The Powder-monkey* (Watson) as to such parts as *Hunding*.

Trevor Schofield (boy soprano), with organ. DB223 (10in., 3s.).—All who have enjoyed this choirboy in the past, will like him in *A hymn of the homeland* (Haweis and Sullivan) and *Lead kindly light* to one of its well-known plain hymn settings, Purday's tune.

PICCADILLY.

Dale Smith (barytone). 5060 (10in., 2s.).—This is the record which "Peppering" displayed in August, and I agree unconditionally about it. Perhaps excepting another of Dale Smith's own records, it is by far the best English Schubert record I know. There are not a great many to compare it with, and those who know Schubert's *Whither? (Wohin?)* and *By the Sea (Am Meer)* may feel it is still more to say that the singing is worthy of the songs. Special qualities are sensitiveness, finesse, and at any rate in *Am Meer* depth. The general excellence owes much to the warm, sympathetic tone-colour, which is Dale Smith's own, but strongly suggests Plunket Greene's conceptions, and which seems to me to be recorded to the very life. Dale Smith uses the excellent Fox-Strangways English translations. *Whither?* is on the slow side, but I must admit that it grows on you, and possibly even you find more in it than you thought there was. Gerald Moore accompanies this one with all its limpidity, and the other song almost as well. I am a little doubtful about the surface of this record.

DECCA.

Frank Titterton (tenor). F1877 (10in., 2s.).—The piano is, perhaps for the first time on records, here given somewhere near its proper place, with the result of the true ensemble, instead of something little different from the old recording. The real proof of this is that, though the voice is recorded decidedly loud and forward, yet we hear every note of the piano distinctly. The piano recording might even bear comparison with most solo records. Titterton almost gets a real thrill out of the end of Sanderson's *Until*, which tells anyone who needs telling, that he is to be reckoned with. The other song is Eric Coates's *I heard you singing*.

REGAL.

Evelyn Griffiths and **Charles Hawtreay** (girl and boy sopranos, duets). MR142 (10 in., 2s. 6d.). This second record is far superior to almost all choir-boy records we have had, though the music is not quite ideal, *I don't want to play in your yard* and *Hush! here comes the dream man*. The latter at any rate has not the perfection of taste that is, in children's songs, of first importance, and the singing lapses once or twice. But records very little better would be welcome indeed.

C. M. CRABTREE.

BAND RECORDS

The Columbia series of British *Regimental Marches* is continued on two further records made by the **National Military Band** (Nos. DB238-9). The playing is crisp and the recording is good.

Of the unclassified marches the two best brace are those played by the **Grenadier Guards Band** and the **Life Guards Band** respectively. This is mainly due to the fact that in both cases the bands succeed in imparting to the music that swinging lilt which is so bound up with and yet so distinct from strict tempo. None of the four marches is anything out of the ordinary, but all are pretty good average specimens of their kind, and the recording is good in each case. The former band play *Faithful and Bold* and *The Middy* (Col. DB230), and the latter play *Distant Greeting* and *The Thunderer* (Broadcast "Twelve" 5186). The last mentioned is by Sousa, but is not one of his finest efforts by any means.

The popularity of the *Stein Song* is by no means exhausted, yet evidently for two more military band versions of it are issued this month. Neither of these is first class. The **Coldstream Guards Band** play it too fast, and are much to be preferred in *Old Comrades*, which occupies the reverse side (H.M.V. 3530). The other version is played by the **Irish Guards Band** on Parlophone No. E6334, and by comparison with the records made for the same company by their **Massed Military Bands** this record is no credit either to band or company. Both playing and recording are too woolly. The reverse side of this record contains *The Mad Major*, a good march worthy of better treatment.

The Decca Company's unnamed **Military Band** play *Preciosa* and *La Ritarata Italiana* (F1779). The former is described on the label as composed by Weber and arranged by Devery. I suppose this is the Weber, and that this march is taken from the music he wrote to Wolff's "Preciosa," though "Grove" only mentions an overture, four choruses, one song and three melodramas and dances. If so, it is neither a good march nor good Weber. The latter is quite well-known to me, but I fancy under a different title. At any rate, it is a good march and is well played and recorded.

"Composer unknown" are words I have never seen on a record label before. They are applied to a march called *Prince Eugen* played by **The Bombardiers** on Regal No. MR98. It is a fairish march and is spiritedly played and well recorded. On the reverse is *The Blue Danube Waltz*. This is very unsuitable music for the military band medium, but **The Bombardiers** struggle as gallantly and manfully with it as I, an ex-gunner, could wish.

I cannot find anything to say in favour of the latest record to be made by the **Band of the Salvation Army Supplies Depot** except that although neither *The Scout Leader* nor *Beautiful Canaan* is a really first-class march they both deserve much better treatment than they receive. The band, as if to show off their prowess, set off at an absurd pace and merely succeed in exposing their many weaknesses. The whole effect in addition is blatant and shrill. For this probably the playing and recording share the blame. I give the number of this record merely so that readers can avoid it. It is Regal MR138.

The latest small Broadcast record (No. 606) contains *Down South* and *In the Sudan (a Dervish Chorus)*. The latter is described as by Seber. Surely this is a misprint for Sebek. The playing of the **Welsh Guards Band** and the recording are both quite good.

Lastly, we come to the one and only record without any martial element whatever in its composition—Amy Woodforde-Finden's *Pagoda of Flowers* played by the **Coldstream Guards Band** (H.M.V. C1972)—and what a piece of mawkish sentimentality it is. Shades of *William Tell*, the *Flower Maidens* and umpteen *intermezzi*! Playing and recording are first-class.

W. A. C.

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MISCELLANEOUS

A Selection

Between the deep sea of "serious" records and Mr. Edgar Jackson I must use both elbows to make a niche for "miscellaneous" which comprises more records in number than all the other sections of reviews. Admittedly they are mostly records that are thrust upon the public and eagerly bought without much regard for their quality—established favourites, and topical novelties; but here are a few that I think any reader would find his friends liking, whether he did himself or not:—

War Marching Songs, **Debroy Somers Band**, Col. DX112, 12in., 4s. 6d. Stirringly played, and well sung by **Dan Donovan** and male quartet.

A Musical Jig-saw, **Regal Cinema Orchestra**. Col. DX105, 12in., 4s. 6d. An ingenious piece of carpentry that will prove a teaser even to the quick-witted.

She was poor but she was honest and *Don't send my boy to prison*, **Billy Bennett and Chorus**, Regal MR147, 10in., 2s. 6d. New versions, sung with appropriate truculence.

I thowt mebbe I would, and I did and *What care I?* **Stanley Holloway**, Decca F1875, 10in., 2s. Two of his best pseudo-yokel efforts.

They all fall in love and *My love affair*, **Blaney and Farrar**, Col. DB219, 10in., 3s.

Frederica

There are five songs from Lehar's light opera, now running at the Palace Theatre, published by Chappell, as well as a piano selection. Goethe's three, *Oh Maiden, my Maiden, Wayside Rose* and *I live for your love*, were sung in the German production by **Richard Tauber**, whose record of the first two was published by Parlophone (R20101), with also an orchestral version by the **Edith Lorand Orchestra** (E10958). Both were first-class. They now are issued by Columbia sung in English by **Heddle Nash** (DX115, 12in., 4s. 6d.), who would be well enough if we had not Tauber's pianissimos to contrast with his. He sings them as well as Joseph Hislop does at the Palace. **Albert Sandler and his Orchestra** also couple these two tunes on Col. DB258 (3s.), well played. **Marek Weber and his Orchestra** couple *Maiden, my Maiden* with *The Child from Alsace*, the duet at the beginning of the second act (H.M.V. B3333, 3s.), also well played. More interesting is the Decca record (F9109, 2s.), on which **Norton Collyer** sings *Oh Maiden* in English, and **Desirée Ellinger**, *Why did you kiss my heart awake*, the song that brings down the curtain in the second act—and also the house, as **Lea Seidl** sings it. But somehow, when sung "cold" it sounds ineffective, through no fault of Miss Ellinger's. There is a *Selection* played by **De Groot and his Orchestra** containing *Wayside Rose, Alsace* and *Maiden my Maiden* (H.M.V. C2011, 12in., 4s.-6.) which since it has *Thine is my whole heart* from Lehar's *Land of Laughter* on the reverse, is an attractive proposition.

Finally there is the new Tauber record of *I live for your love* and the waltz song *Wonderful*, sung of course in German and reviewed by Mr. Klein.

Orchestral

Some of the best playing and recording is devoted to music that most people already have; for instance, the astonishing *Triumphal March* from Verdi's *Aida* played by the **Berlin State Opera Orchestra** under **Dr. Weissmann** (Parlo. E11041, 12in., 4s. 6d.) with all the power of the trumpets, the *Raymond Overture* of **Percy Pitt** and a **Symphony Orchestra** (Col. DX104), which has, however, a shade too much resonance, and the *Waltz of the Hours* and *Variations from the Coppelia* of Delibes (H.M.V. C1939), which **Clemans Schmalstich** conducts; and **Marek Weber and his Orchestra** in Gauwin's clever selection from Puccini's *La Bohème* (H.M.V. C2012).

Other records seem to me less interesting than the labels suggest; for instance, *The Merry Widow Selection*, **London Theatre Orchestra** (Col. DX64) and its latest successor *Land of Laughter*, **Ilja Livschakoff Orchestra** (Polydor 27196), an interesting contrast in Lehar's early and recent work; *My Darling* waltz from Strauss's *Gipsy Baron* **Berlin State Opera Orchestra** under **Dr. Blech** (H.M.V. C1842); the **Dajos Bela Orchestra** in Translateur's *Vienese Life* and Finck's *Traum-ideale* waltzes (Parlo. E11025).

Jack Hylton and his Orchestra in concert arrangements of *Handsome Gigolo* and *Thine is my whole heart*—which is from Lehar's *Land of Laughter*—are over from last month (H.M.V. C1970) and should be in any selected list: for here are two good melodies of the moment freshly orchestrated and played with all the polish and with less than all the boisterousness that one associates with Jack Hylton.

Each is twelve inch and costs 4s. 6d.

The **Regal Salon Orchestra** follows Beethoven with an equally ambitious *Memories of Mozart* (Regal MX16, 12in., 4s.) which comes off fairly well; and the **New Empire Orchestra** is to be congratulated in three Ketelbays, *In a Chinese Temple Garden*, *In a Persian Market* and *The Clock and the Dresden Figures* (Decca K523, 12in., 3s. 6d.) at the price, though surface is not worthy of playing or recording.

Ten-Inchers

Among the ten-inch orchestrals there is only one serious contribution, the **Hastings Municipal Orchestra** under **Basil Cameron** in Suppé's *Morning, Noon and Night* (Decca F1886, 2s.), pretty good value at the price.

Of the rest, first place goes to the **Orchestra Mascotte** in two favourite old waltzes *Valse Bleue* and *Tesoro mio* brought instrumentally up-to-date (Parlo. R747, 3s.); but there are plenty of good restaurant music records such as **Albert Sandler and his Orchestra** in *Falling in love again* and *Farewell, I kiss your hand* (Col. DB246, 3s.) which is rather over amplified; **Reginald King and his Orchestra** in *Chant Hindou* and *Hymn to the Sun* (H.M.V. B3414, 3s.); **Pierre Fol and his Salon Orchestra** in *Valse Triste* and *Rustle of Spring* (Decca F1890, 2s.); *Rose-Beetle goes a-wooing* by **Armandola** and *Siciliana* by **Schmalstich** (H.M.V. B3507, 3s.).

Thurban's *Alpine Fantasy* *Voice of the Bells* is very effectively played by **Frank Westfield's Orchestra** (Parlo. E6325, 2s. 6d.) and suggests the "Pitz Palu" film; while those who like bird noises will find the **Sandor Joszi Novelty Orchestra** in *Vienna Birds* waltz and *In a Bird Shop* (Parlo. E6333, 2s. 6d.) charmingly done, and the popular **Jean and Pierre Gennin** with the **Bournemouth Municipal Orchestra** (Col. DB178, 3s.) very agile and shrill in their piccolo duets of two banal compositions. Those who are lucky enough to be tone-deaf will thoroughly enjoy an **Original Marimba Band** in *Little Snow Whites Wedding* and *Dance of the Tea Dolls* (Parlo. E6336, 2s. 6d.). Is it not possible to tune the marimba? **King Nawahi's Hawaiians** (Col. DB248, 3s.) have two new titles, *Mani Girl* and *Mani no laka di* to add to your collection: but **Roy Smeck's Hawaiian Trio** (Imp. 2326, 1s. 6d.) stick to topicalities with *It happened in Monterey* and *When it's springtime in the Rockies*, and are sure of their sales.

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Piccadilly Still Up

The standard of endeavour of the Piccadilly Celebrity bulletins deserves the widest support, and the September dozen (10in., 2s. each) contains **Joseph Holbrooke** in another record of his own compositions, *Rangoon Rice Carriers* and *Dance from "The Enchanter"* (5078), piano solos which are new to the gramophone. They are not very impressive and the recording is on the mushy side; but it is profoundly right that our contemporary composers should record their works and that we should buy their records, if only for reference purposes.

Florence Brine is a new-comer with a very attractive soprano voice (5080). Leroux's *Le Nil* (in French) and Max Reger's *Mariae Wiegenlied* (in German, wrongly labelled) are not novelties, but Reger's *The Quiet of the Woods* is, and this disc should find its way into every collection of *lieder*.

Harold Fairhurst's violin solos of the Brahms-Joachim *Hungarian Dance* in G minor No. 1 (vaguely labelled), the Cartier-Kreisler *La Chasse* and Schubert's *The Bee* (5079) are over-amplified perhaps, but at any rate cannot be turned into flute solos by any sound-box. The **Emory University Glee Club** continue their series with the favourite *Water Boy* and *Steal away* (5084), which have the qualities and defects of the rest; the **Casano Octette** is good in Debussy's *Golliwoog's Cake Walk* and Dvorak's *Slavonic Dance No. 10* (5075), though neither is suitable for an octet; and among the singers **Richard Norton** (5083) stands out in Sanderson's *You along o' me* and Schumann's *Two Grenadiers* (in English). It would be churlish to ask for a better surface in these cheap records, but at least we can demand more care in labelling.

A New Record

The 8 in. Solex records come from the same stable as Homochords and Sternos and claim to play "longer than the longest 10in. record." This is a foolish claim in view of the Broadcast Twelves and Gold Label Winners; but it is quite true that these neat little discs have so many grooves to the inch that they can play up to about 3½ minutes without in the least threatening the label; and if you judge record value by the price per minute, there is no need to reflect upon the probable disadvantages of the Solex system. The dozen records issued last month contained all the usual tunes sung and played with quite enough skill and volume to ensure their success with the public.

The fact that the labels are equipped with "stroboscopic" lines to ensure correct playing speed only concerns those whose electric lighting has an alternating current; but it is a noteworthy innovation.

Pirates of Penzance

The series of "vocal gems" from avoy operas on Broadcast Twelves is continued with *Pirates of Penzance* (5182), clearly and efficiently sung, not without the charm and life that these lovely songs demand. Other discs that seem excellent value at a florin are vocal selections from the films *Paramount on Parade* and *Mammy* (5181), two attractive waltzes *The Kiss* and *Falling in love again* played by **The Manhattan Melody-makers** (2586), who also contribute the two best fox-trots from "The Big Pond" (2585), and **Al Benny's Broadway Boys** in *Shoo the Hoodoo away* and *With my guitar and you* (2581). These are all safe purchases, and radio listeners will be glad of **Tom Jones and his Orchestra** on 5185.

Among the 8in. Broadcasts at 1s. 3d. are the 3rd and 4th parts of *Cheery Song Memories* (603) done in capital style, and three outstanding dance records—*Sing, you sinners* and *Song of Swanee* (609), *King of Jazz Selection* (598) and *I'm singing my way* and *When it's springtime* (607). **Val Layton** (600) and **Bob and Alf Pearson** (599) are particularly good value, and a special word is due to **Al Benny** (602) for his graceful singing of *The Golden Gates of Paradise*. There are plenty of other records in these lists which are not quite so successful.

Singing

Benedict's *Lily of Killarney* survives after nearly seventy years, and the Vocal Gems sung by a **Light Opera Company** are a friendly reminder of *The Cruiskeen Lawn*, *The Moon hath raised*, *The Colleen Bawn* and the rest of them (H.M.V. C2000, 12in., 4s. 6d.); and the same artists, nominally speaking, turn without effort to *King of Jazz* and *High Society Blues* (H.M.V. C1990). This might easily have been better.

The theme song merchants are dealt with elsewhere, but there are four stalwarts who can be praised without reserve: **Maurice Chevalier** in two of his "Big Pond" songs (H.M.V. B3517, 3s.), **Charles Buddy Rogers** in two of his "Safety in Numbers" songs (Col. DB242, 3s.), **Carl Brisson** in two songs from "Songs o' Gums" (Decca F1893, 2s.) and **Dennis King** in *Without a son* from "Great Days" and *Blue is the night* from "Their own Desire" (H.M.V. B3523, 3s.).

Florence Oldham in *Prisoner of love* and *Meet me in my dreams to-night* (Col. DB240, 3s.), **Gracie Fields** in *I just can't figure it out at all* and, with Spanish accent, in *Fonso, my hot Spanish Knight* (H.M.V. B3565, 3s.), **Melville Gideon** in *What have I done?* and *To be forgotten* (Parlo. R731, 3s.), **Jack Smith** (whose magic seems to have a weakened spell) in *Where can you be* and *You may not like it* (H.M.V. B3540, 3s.) and **George Metaxa** in *Blue Pacific Moonlight* and *One night alone with you* (H.M.V. B3549, 3s.), all have their familiar styles and adoring publics. I think the first and last songs in this group are likely to be hits.

Raymond Newell has *The song of the tinker* and *I travel the road* (Col. DB228, 3s.), ordinary ballads faultlessly sung; and another singer who is worthier of better things but does wonders with such popular affairs as *Gipsy Melody* and *Say a little prayer for me* (Parlo. E6348, 2s. 6d.) is **John Curtis**, to be heard also in *I don't need atmosphere* and *Give me back my heart*. Well as he does them, these songs should be left to **Arthur Terry** who is very reliable and pleasant (Parlo. E6329 and 6340, 2s. 6d. each).

The vocal section is always strong in the Regal lists and for real slush it would be hard to beat **Billy Elliott**, "American black-faced star" (Regal MR152, 2s. 6d.) and **Tom Darby** and **Frank and James McCravy** (MR146), who have to be heard to be believed.

Sentimental too, but betraying the well-trained voice, are *When you're smiling* and *Mother's smile* by **Terence O'Neill** tenor (Radio 1378, 8in., 1s. 3d.). This should prove a best seller.

A good dialect record with a genuine ring is made by **Billie Richardson**, a West Country humorist, in *Soft as Oi looks* and *Wot's ther price o' swedes* (Regal MR153, 2s. 6d.).

Will Fyffe

I doubt whether **Will Fyffe** has ever got his personality into the microphone so successfully as in *Daft Sandy* (Col. DX107, 12in., 4s. 6d.). I have never seen him do this song and talk, but even on the record one can see how well the sketch of a "softie" is built up: in its way a little masterpiece.

Comic Records

Clapham and Dwyer in their familiar sketch *On Photography* (Col. DB243, 3s.) are just themselves, full of that oddly untiring foolishness. **North and South** in *Tuning In* (Parlo. R748, 3s.) provide an excellent opportunity for the engineers to prove their mettle and advertise their firm, fading other Parlophone records in and out while a rather futile dialogue goes on; but any weaknesses are forgiven when you come to the excellent joke at the very end of the record. *A Brass Band Rehearsal* by **The Laughter-Makers** with a brass band very much in evidence (Regal MX15, 12in., 4s.) must be voted a creditable failure. It is well enough spoken and played, and the recording is brilliant; but the material is not good enough for a twelve inch.

Instrumental

Raie da Costa drops instinctively into my basket with her jolly *King of Jazz Medley* (H.M.V. B3538, 3s.), but her 12in. record of Liszt's *Rigoletto Paraphrase* (H.M.V. C1967, 4s. 6d.) ought to have gone to W.R.A. to appraise. It is a brilliant performance. **Patricia Rossborough**, another pianist with a masculine touch, gives us two new tunes from "Follow a Star," *The first week-end in June* and *If your kisses can't hold the man you love* (Parlo. R752, 3s.) which presumably we shall soon get in many other forms. Recording is a trifle hard.

Billy Mayerl has **Van Phillips's** clarinet to help him to make a soothing alluring record of *Sing, you Sinners* and *Any time's the time to fall in love* (Col. DB224, 3s.).

Of the cineorgans **Reginald Foort** is lightest and best in *The King's Horses* and *A Bench in the Park* (H.M.V. B3552, 3s.) with tap-dance effects; **Edward O'Henry** in *Sanderson Songs* (H.M.V. B3551, 3s.) and **Terance Casey** in *Father's Favourites No. 2* (Col. DB249, 3s.) most pleasantly reminiscent. The rest are not up to much.

Rudy Starita on the xylophone, with vibraphone effects and piano and accordeon accompaniment, makes the most delightful record of *The clatter of the clogs* and *The dancing tailor* (Col. DB247, 3s.). The accordeon is inclined to groan and lag, but the pace is undeniably smart.

If you want to compare banjo methods you must get **Mario de Pietro** in *Lollipops* and *Pep* (Decca F1894, 2s.) and **Ernest Jones** in *La Vivandière* and *Joy Dance* (Col. DB236, 3s.), but the cheaper disc is much the more attractive.

De Groot on his violin and **Herbert Dawson** on his organ are a strong combination, and with two songs like *Drink to me only* and *Songs of Araby* (H.M.V. B3511, 3s.) they are playing for safety. Obviously a best seller, but de Groot is really rather insolent with his tempo.

Drama

Sybil Thorndike and **Lewis Casson** have recorded their interpretation of *The Letter Scene* and *The Murder Scene* from *Macbeth* (H.M.V. C1991, 12in., 4s. 6d.) for posterity, and play the parts of Lord Nelson and Lady Hamilton in the new Columbia descriptive ballad arranged by Joseph Batten on a foundation of Braham's ballad *The Death of Nelson*, which is sung by **Francis Russell** (Col. DX85, 12in., 4s. 6d.). **Stuart Hibberd** of the B.B.C. is heard as Narrator, and the chorus, orchestral and "noises" are cleverly used to enhance a really ingenious scenario.

Much more open to detailed criticism but, on the whole, much more attractive is **Widdicombe Fair** treated dramatically by Weston and Lee and played with spirit and indeterminate dialect by **The Regal Dramatic Players** (Regal MR145, 2s. 6d.).

Sir Harry Lauder

Four more Lauder re-recordings are available—the popular *Saturday night* and *Bella the Belle o' Dunnoon* on Zono. GO96 (10in., 3s. 6d.) and *I think I'll get wed in the summer* and *Back, back to where the heather grows* on GO95. The rest of the Zonophone list is on the usual lines and beautifully recorded; **Douglas Byng** has another of his doubtfully amusing records, *Mexican Minnie* and *Sport* (5672, 2s. 6d.), and **Macphail Blair** sings eight Gaelic songs with piano or orchestral accompaniments (5683-6, 2s. 6d. each), the *Eriskay Love Lilt* and *My Islay Lassie* being on 5685, with real charm for a southern ear.

Duets

Norah Blaney and **Gwen Farrar** with **Arthur Young** as accompanist are welcome back again and in *They all fall in love* and *My love affair* (Col. DB219, 3s.) are well suited, better than in *What Angelina says, goes* and *The moon is low* (DB241). All the usual duettists sing the usual songs in their various bulletins, but if you like extremely odd mouth-noises made with irresistible good humour, try **Max** and **Harry Nesbitt** in *Zululand* and *Every time my sweetie passes by* (Decca F1887, 2s.).

Old Timers

G. H. Elliott makes a most effective record of *Lily of Laguna* and *Little Dolly Daydream* (Radio 1386, Sin., 1s. 3d.), the two that were so well done some months ago by **Kit Keen** who now gives *My little Octoroon* and *I may be crazy* (Col. DB229, 3s.) in his clear easy style. Less easy but quite effective are **Robert English** in *De ole banjo* and *Mammy* (Parlo. E6339, 2s. 6d.) and **The Jolly Old Fellows** in parts 3 and 4 of *Ragtime Memories* (Regal MR144, 2s. 6d.); and **Reg Grant** in *Little Annie Rooney* and **Bertha Willmott** in *Daddy wouldn't buy me a bow-bow* (Parlo. E6341, 2s. 6d.) continue the Parlophone series of old-time variety. **Vernon Watson** is ambitious in five of **Albert Chevalier's** songs (H.M.V. C1922, 12in., 4s. 6d.) but he is not that better than **James Craig's** *Winner* record at 2s., noticed in August. **Gerald Adams** and chorus are adequate in *Daisy Bell* and *Break the news to Mother* (Regal MR143, 2s. 6d.).

Tangos

Of the tangos *Corazon* played by the **Orquesta Tipica Argentina Pizarro** (Decca F1825, 2s.) has the best rhythm. It has the clean-cut precision that is so essential to the good dance tango. It is backed by *Todavia*, which has a vocal refrain running right through it. Good value for the enthusiast. The Parlophone contribution (R733, 3s.) *Retirao* and *Puentequito de Plata*, played by the **Orquesta Tipica Francisco Canaro** is quite a conventional rendering of two obviously good tango airs. It is interesting to note the difference in the German Polydor record (Polydor C40059, 3s.). The rhythm is much more blurred and verging on the blues, but, musically, both sides are pleasant to listen to. *Ich will deine Kameradin sein* is sung by a woman and *Erika* by a man. Both are very charming, but lack the Latin fire of the Decca and Parlophone records.

Sacred

A second record made in the crypt of St. Martin-in-the-Fields contains readings by **Rev. Pat McCormick** and the singing of *Praise the Lord* and *Praise, my soul, the King of Heaven*, with descant, by a choir conducted by **Arnold Goldsbrough** and a string orchestra (Decca K534, 12in., 4s. 6d.). It is a pity that the recording is not beyond criticism, for this is the sort of undertaking that will give pleasure to thousands of people. So, no doubt, will *The Story of David* as told in a semi-dramatic way by **E. R. Appleton**, the director of the Cardiff broadcasting station, whose Silent Fellowship voice is so well loved (Col. DB237, 3s.), but I had better not say what I really think about it or about "Scotland's Supreme Gospel Singer," **Dugald McNeill** (Regal MR141, 2s. 6d.).

Christian Science Hymns

H.M.V. has just issued four favourite hymns that were recorded in the Mother Church, the First Church of Christ, Scientist, at Boston, Mass. The singer was the contralto soloist of the church, Miss **Florence Middaugh**, and the accompaniments were played on the organ by **Claude E. Saunler**. The 12in. disc gives a fine reproduction of *Saw ye my Saviour?* the well-known Communion Hymn, set by Brackett to Mrs. Eddy's words; and therewith one entitled *Love* (also a poem by Mrs. Eddy) set to music by Root. On a 10in. disc are *The Stranger of Galilee* and *Oh, He whom Jesus loved has truly spoken*, both hymns that owe a certain attractive charm to their affinity with the old ecclesiastical cadences characteristic of the "negro spirituals." In these the sympathetic voice of the soloist appears to find greater scope for variety than in the hymns first mentioned. The rich quality of her tone makes all alike fall gratefully upon the ear, but one feels that the inspiring Communion Hymn might have roused her to a more exalted level of expression. The recording is in every case perfect.

PEPPERING.



Reviewed by
EDGAR JACKSON

DANCE BANDS

COLUMBIA (3/-)

Fine singing by Bing Crosby in New Paul Whiteman Records.

Paul Whiteman and His Orchestra.
Great Day (from the film "Great Day") (v) (Amer.).
Without a song (from the film "Great Day") (v) (Amer.).
(Col. CB116)

Old New England moon (waltz) (v) (Amer.).
Sittin' on a Rainbow (v) (Amer.).
(Col. CB120)

You brought a new kind of love for me (fox-trot) (from the film "The Big Pond") (v) (Amer.).
Livin' in the sunlight (fox-trot) (from the film "The Big Pond") (v) (Amer.).
(Col. CB117)

After months with but a single record now and again, Paul Whiteman's Band at last gets, with six titles, the prominence in the Columbia lists which it deserves.

And not the least interesting feature of the records is that the singing in four of them—"Great Day," "Without a song," "You brought a new kind of love for me" and "Livin' in the sunlight"—is by Bing Crosby, possibly the world's greatest rhythm singer.

As far as the band is concerned the records are good examples of its many excellent qualities. The beautiful, full, sonorous, tone and fine balance of the very musicianly ensemble, and the usual Whiteman ambitiously colourful orchestrations, are very prominent. Against these attributes it has to be admitted that in some of the records the rhythm is on the weak side, probably due to the fact that the band has lately been doing a good deal of concert work, making pictures, and playing only occasionally for dancing, and it seems that, in consequence, the dance rhythm has to some extent been sacrificed for concert effect.

"Great day" is probably the best of the six. The number is based on the negro spirituals and of the kind which causes the plantation singers to work themselves into a frenzy. If you have seen and heard the negro chorus in "Sing you sinners" in the film "Honey," you will know what I mean. Whiteman catches the atmosphere perfectly. The record opens with the verse sung with real negro fervour by Bing Crosby which is

followed by the refrain sung by male chorus. As the record proceeds the abandon increases working up to a climax in a wonderful chorus featuring a great hot trumpet lead against a rhythm from the ensemble which burns everything up as it goes along. This is one of the few occasions when the band really shows that it can be rhythmical in the fullest meaning of the word.

I like next "You brought a new kind of love to me" possibly because the tune—which I think is certain to be a hit—appeals to me. With a pleasing absence of unnecessary meandering about with lengthy introductions which mean nothing, the record goes quickly into the chorus, the melody of which for the first and last eight bars is sweetly played on saxophone with bold and effective trumpet stops. The verse by the ensemble sounds inspiringly big with the brass taking the lead, but rather lacks rhythm. As in "Livin' in the sunlight," Bing Crosby's vocal chorus is supported by guitar rhythm and very neat celeste *obbligato* which would have been even more effective if it had been a little more prominent. The saxophone *obbligato* is the making of the last chorus.

Space forbids a detailed review of the other titles, but all are excellent of their kind, the fine sonorous ensemble showing to most pleasing effect in the waltz.

Guy Lombardo and His Royal Canadians.

Be careful with those eyes (v) (Amer.).
(Col. CB121)
You're the sweetest girl this side of Heaven (v) (Amer.).
(Col. CB123)

"Be careful with those eyes" is a fascinating record. There is nothing really startling about it, it is just one of those tuneful, rhythmical little songs, and Lombardo has given it a natty, rhythmical treatment which gets inside you. You find yourself haunted by the melody for hours afterwards. The extreme neatness with which this band plays has never been put to better usage. Some others make such a business of doing nothing: nobody can say Lombardo does nothing in this

record, and he takes it all with a simple dexterity.

"You're the sweetest girl" has Ireland stamped all over it, including the melodious vocal refrain by a clear Irish tenor with a delightful brogue. The performance is sentiment from beginning to end, and has absolutely no rhythm for dancing, but is very pleasing to listen to.

Jack Payne and His B.B.C. Orchestra.

Shoo the Hoodoo away (One-step) (from the film "Swing High") (v).
With my guitar and you (from the film "Swing High") (v).
(Col. CB107)
Give me back my heart (from the film "Symphony in Two Flats") (v).
Beware of love (Fox-trot) (from the film "Women Everywhere") (v).
(Col. CB114)

Jack Payne is in good form this month.

"Shoo the Hoodoo away" is another of those lively rhythm numbers inspired by the plantation singing of the negroes, and Jack Payne's version is bright and rhythmical in the manner likely to ensure a good sale.

The others are sweet melody numbers, but Jack Payne—and this is one of the things I like most about the Band—keeps clear of the sleepy sentimental mode and gets both rhythm and brightness into the performances. If the band has not the greatest appreciation of rhythmic style from the fan's point of view, it is at least rhythmical in a general sense and the fact that it is a good musicianly outfit is too well known to need stressing here.

It puzzles me why they take the trouble to state on the labels that Jack Payne sings the refrains in both titles on CB114 while, although they are much better, the singers on CB107 are made to preserve a discreet anonymity.

Kit-Cat fires a fine English band—to make way for Americans?

Ray Starita and His Band.

I don't wanna go home (v).
I've got a feeling (v).
(Col. CB118)
One night alone with you (v).
In a quiet corner (v).
(Col. CB122)

This is Ray Starita's British Band which went to the Kit-Cat a few weeks ago expecting to stay a long time, only to find itself dis-

placed co-incident with the arrival from America of Johnny Hamp and His Kentucky Serenaders. The Kit-Cat will doubtless claim that British musicians have not lost as a whole by the American importation, as a new English band has taken Starita's place. Possibly that is true as regards numbers of musicians employed, but here is the question I should like to ask: How much was Ray Starita being paid, and how much is the English band which takes his place getting?

The records are in every way good commercial propositions. They show unusually good tone quality, fullness and balance in ensemble, and a good, bright style of dance rhythm. They prove that the band was a thoroughly musicianly outfit and quite worthy of its job at the Kit-Cat. Professional circles, whose judgment is usually sound, were strong in their praise of it.

"I don't wanna go home" is a comedy number with an amusing vocal chorus by an inebriated gent and some like comedy effects by trumpet and trombone which are rather cheap. "I've got a feeling" is by far the better performance.

The titles on CB122 are respectively the first and second prize winning numbers of the competition for the best English song run by the Glasgow "Evening News." Both are sweet melody numbers.

The band is unusually well recorded.

Debroy Somers Band.

The Barmaid's Song (v).
(Col. CB121)

All right if you want the tune.

The Four Bright Sparks.

If your kisses can't hold the man you love
(from "Follow a Star") (v).

H.M.V. (3/-)

Jack Hylton makes and breaks records.

Jack Hylton and His Orchestra.

Fine Alpine Milkman (v).
I don't wanna go home (v).
(H.M.V. B5874).

Around the corner (v).
When it's springtime in the Rockies (waltz) (v).
(H.M.V. B5873)

Scottish Medley.
The Chum song (v)
(H.M.V. B5872)

One night alone with you (v).
A quiet little corner (v).
(H.M.V. B5871)

The King's horses (v).
Harmonica Harry (v).
(H.M.V. B5875)

Without my gal (v).
What a perfect night for love (v).
(H.M.V. B5883)

The Pick up (fox-trot) (from the film "Safety in Numbers") (v).
My future just passed (fox-trot) (from the film "Safety in Numbers") (v).
(H.M.V. B5882).

Sam sat with Sophie (v).
Song of Swanee (v).
(H.M.V. B5881).

Great Day (from the film "Great Day") (v).
Without a song (from the film "Great Day") (v).

(H.M.V. B5879)

Eighteen titles by one band in one month is probably a record, and shows more conclusively than anything else the demand here is for Hylton's band. With such deci-

The first week-end in June (from "Follow a Star") (v).

(Col. CB124)

Arthur Young (piano) is always interesting, and Len Fillis (guitar) has touches here and there. Excepting for these the records are more likely to appeal to the general public than the rhythmically enlightened. They are very effective as a whole, but more for their simplicity and tunefulness than for modern rhythmic ingenuity or style. Rudy Starita is assisting the rhythm with wire brushes on side drum this month, as well as featuring xylophone, etc. Van Phillips is very pleasing when he plays straight, but he shouldn't attempt to be hot on either clarinet or saxophone for even a bar—it's not in his line to-day.

Billy Milton, who has greatly improved, sings the refrain in "The first week-end in June,"; Betty Bolton in the other title.

Ipaua Troubadours.

Promises (v) (Amer.).
(Col. CB119)

Columbia Photo Players.

My future just passed fox-trot (from the film "Safety in Numbers") (v) (Amer.).
(Col. CB123)

Ben Selvin and His Orchestra.

Dancing with tears in my eyes (waltz) (v) (Amer.).

(Col. CB119)

Both the fox-trots are well played. American, commercial, straight, sweet melody performances. Nothing happens except a bit of rhythm in the last choruses.

The waltz is an excellent rendering. The vocal chorus is well sung by a contralto voice.

The recording is improved, but there is still too much resonance in most of the discs and their fierce loudness will probably overtax most gramophones.

"Scottish Medley" is in one or another of the March measures throughout. H.M.V. label it fox-trot, but I have it from a usually well informed source that the official in charge of the responsible department is about to take a course of lessons in dancing, and that from now onwards the company may be expected to distinguish a march from a fox-trot, and thus be in a position to label their records accordingly.

Ambrose does it again.

Ambrose and his Orchestra.

You brought a new kind of love to me (from the film "The Big Pond") (v).

Livin' in the sunlight, lovin' in the moonlight
(from the film "The Big Pond") (v).
(H.M.V. B5857)

Beware of love (from the film "Women Everywhere") (v).

The "Free and Easy" (from the film "Free and Easy") (v).
(H.M.V. B5869)

With my Guitar and you (from the film "Swing High") (v).

Shoo the Hoodoo away (from the film "Swing High") (v).
(H.M.V. B5877)

Ambrose is keeping it up. Here are six more records, all so good in every way, that it is difficult to speak too highly of them.

From a legitimate musical point of view the band is worth any praise. But that does not essentially infer a good record. Every month we get American commercial type records which are beautifully played, but the only impression they leave is one of emptiness. The reason is that, relying too much on light sentiment, they become sleepy and lack personality and effectiveness.

Ambrose records are full of personality, and it is obtained by featuring a style which, while it would perhaps be going too far to term it as hot, certainly leans very much in that direction, and, with its slow tempo and drag rhythm, is delightfully stylish. I only hope it is as fully understood and appreciated by the general public as it is by the musicians and fans whose idol this band is rapidly becoming.

I do not think there is much to choose between the records.

"The 'Free and Easy'" is perhaps the hottest of the six. It is played in medium fox-trot tempo. Among the high spots are a fine violin chorus by Eric Siday.

Then there is "Shoo the Hoodoo Away" (see also under Columbia—Jack Payne—on page 237), the outstanding feature of which is the negro style of singing by little Ella Logan. She sings the verse in great style and in the following chorus carries on with hot scat breaks against the solo by Sam Brown. This youngster is getting really clever and has a very keen sense of rhythm. The only thing wrong with her seems to be that she was born white instead of black.

"You Brought a New Kind of Love" has some good orchestration, particularly in the last chorus in which the brass sounds very effective in chromatic passage in broken rhythm.

Max Bacon, playing the melody against the beat on tubular bells, and a fine touch of hot alto saxophone by Joe Crossman, are the more

All are fox-trots except where otherwise stated.

v—With vocal refrain.

Amer.—American Artists recorded in America.

Ger.—German Artists recorded in Germany.

obvious novelties of "With my Guitar" which is a most tuneful performance throughout.

"Livin' in the sunlight" gives all sorts of people a chance in hot solos including Joe Crossman on saxophone, Sylvester Ahola (trumpet) and Eric Siday on his violin, and it is difficult to decide which gives the better show.

Max Bacon, whose drumming has been a conspicuous feature in most of the records, has a neat break in "Beware of Love" and a word must be said for the excellent piano of Bert Reed and string bass of Dick Escoto.

The vocal choruses by Sam Brown are by no means the least pleasing parts of the records. He is now easily the all round best British singer of popular songs in light rhythmic ballad style, even though he still goes off the deep end at times and gives us a taste of his version of English as she is spoke—a nice example of which is found in "With my Guitar" which instrument, according to Sam, is a Git-tar. They won't think so much of you, Sam, in those select society circles where your august conductor holds such sway, if you go on like this.

Fine style in original vocal effects.

Waring's Pennsylvanians.

Let me sing and I'm happy (from the film "Mammy") (v) (Amer.).

Looking at you (from the film "Mammy") (v) (Amer.).

(H.M.V. B5870)

"Looking at you" is the usual sort of thing we get so often from this band. Well played from a legitimate point of view and, in style, sweet melody if you like the kind of thing, and want to be nice about it, or, rather rhythm-less, sleepy and over sentimental if you don't like it and want to be nasty.

"Let me sing and I'm happy" is a quite different proposition. It is not only much brighter and better in rhythmic style, but has some good ideas well carried out. The most effective of these are the two vocal choruses. The first is harmonised by a female trio who know how to sing in rhythm. The second features the same trio and a male voice. The male voice sings a phrase and the female voices answer in "scat" singing, carrying out the suggestion contained in words sung by the male voice. For instance, the male voice sings "Won't you sing a funny song with crazy words, that roll along" and the trio replies with an excellent hot rhythmic phrase. Then the male voice sings "Let's hear you sing a sad refrain of broken hearts that loved in vain" and again the trio replies appropriately. This female trio is as good as anything I have heard. Its phrases are cleverly constructed of modern rhythm and harmony, and sung with refinement, but a real sense of rhythm. This is a record worth getting.

Johnny Hamp arrives in England—and disappoints.

Ted Weems and His Orchestra.

Mysterious Mose (v) (Amer.).
(H.M.V. B5884)

Ted Weems', which to-day is the best American dance band featured in the H.M.V. list, has the happy knack of combining in these novelty numbers good modern rhythmic style with a characteristic presenta-

tion, and if "Mysterious Mose" falls short of the band's "What a Day" (issued some months ago) in the former attribute, or of its "Piccolo Pete" in the latter, it is still an excellent record. The "spooky" vocal chorus, if unoriginal in conception, is never the less effectively carried out.

On the reverse is :-

Johnny Hamp's Kentucky Serenaders.

Nobody cares if I'm blue (from the film "Brights Lights") (v) (Amer.).

(H.M.V. B5884)

—the interest of which lies in the tunefulness of the number and the fact that the band opened at the Kit-Cat the middle of last month.

As a band, Johnny Hamp's, judging by its records (at time of reviewing I hadn't heard it at Kit-Cat, but they tell me it's pretty bad) is only fair.

Rudy Valie and His Connecticut Yankees.

I still remember (v) (Amer.).

My heart belongs to the girl who belongs to somebody else (Waltz) (v) (Amer.).

(H.M.V. B5876)

Old New England Moon (Waltz) (v) (Amer.).
(H.M.V. B5880)

More sex appeal and sentiment from both Rudy Vallee in his singing and the style of the band, piled on, not only in the waltzes, but the fox-trot. In spite of its very slow tempo and sentimental drawl, the fox-trot nevertheless has a rather pleasing lilt for lazy dancing—particularly if your partner happens to be sympathetic to you?

On the reverse of B5880 is :-

Leo Reisman and His Orchestra.

I remember you from somewhere (v) (Amer.).
(H.M.V. B5880)

and, excepting that it played by a very much better band, is not unlike Rudy Vallee's "I still remember." It is in slow drag tempo, has a nice lazy lilt, and the same sentimental appeal.

This sort of thing sells well amongst the sentiment loving public, particularly the younger members of the fair sex, but will not interest those who like and understand the advanced rhythmic side of the subject which, after all, is the healthier and more intelligent feature.

PARLOPHONE (3s.)

Artistic beauty in Arthur Schutt's sweet melody numbers.

Arthur Schutt and His Orchestra.

Montana Call (from the film "Montana Moon") (v) (Amer.).

The moon is low (from the film "Montana Moon") (v) (Amer.).

(Parlo. R713)

Arthur Schutt has made ambitious orchestrations, which are on the symphonic side, the feature of his records of these two rather lovely sweet melody numbers, but at the same time has not forgotten to back them up with good dance rhythms.

The band is a combination got together for the sessions, and there is little need to add that one with an advanced knowledge of modern rhythmic music and musicians such as the famous pianist, Arthur Schutt, possesses has not failed to gather a star combination around himself.

The performances are in all ways of class decidedly above the usual dance records and

their musical beauty will appeal strongly to those who appreciate the genuinely artistic.

Arthur Schutt, a very fine arranger and almost certainly personally responsible for these excellent orchestrations, is featured in brilliant, but all too short, solo pianoforte passage.

Joe Venuti's New Yorkers.

Dancing with tears in my eyes (v) (Amer.).

(Parlo. R744)

The melancholy suggestion of the title is denied by a bright rhythmical performance. Joe Venuti (violin), Ed Lang (guitar), Adrian Rollini (bass saxophone) and Tom Dorsey (trombone) are recognisable amongst the obvious star artists comprising the combination. Venuti and Dorsey are both featured in modern style rhythmic solos. All round, a decidedly good record.

For backing see "Hotel Pennsylvania Music."

A batch of good "smooth melody" records.

Hotel Pennsylvania Music.

Gee, but I'd like to make you happy (from the film "Good News") (v) (Amer.).

If you're not kissing me (from the film "Good News") (v) (Amer.).

(Parlo. R727)

There's happiness over the hill (Fox-trot) (from the film "Swing High") (v) (Amer.).

With my guitar and you (from the film "Swing High") (v) (Amer.).

(Parlo. R719)

The Kiss waltz (Waltz) (from the film "Dancing Sweeties") (v) (Amer.).

(Parlo. R744)

My heart belongs to the girl who belongs to someone else (Waltz) (v) (Amer.).

(Parlo. R742)

Roof Garden Orchestra.

I love you so much (from the film "The Cuckoos") (v) (Amer.).

(Parlo. R743)

Let me sing and I'm happy (from the film "Mammy") (v) (Amer.).

Looking at you (from the film "Mammy") (v) (Amer.).

(Parlo R729)

Anchor's aweigh (One-step-March) (v) (Amer.).

Around the corner (6-8) (Amer.).

(Parlo. R728)

Sam Lanin's Famous Players and Singers.
Rollin' down the river (v) (Amer.).

(Parlo. R742)

Mia Cara (from the film "The Big Pond") (v) (Amer.).

Into my heart (from the film "In Gay Madrid") (v) (Amer.).

(Parlo. R726)

Little white lies (Fox-trot) (v) (Amer.).

(Parlo. R743)

Dark night (from the film "In Gay Madrid") (v) (Amer.).

- Santiago* (6-8) (from the film "In Gay Madrid") (v) (Amer.).
(Parlo. R725)
- Singing a song to the stars* (from "Easy Going") (v) (Amer.).
- Live and love to-day* (from the film "Madam Satan") (v) (Amer.).
(Parlo. R741)

Ed Loyd and His Orchestra.

- Living in the sunlight, loving in the moonlight* (from the film "The Big Pond") (v) (Amer.).
- You brought a new kind of love to me* (from the film "The Big Pond") (v) (Amer.).
(Parlo. R718)

These are all very straightforward American commercial melody performances, mostly in slow tempo. Some have more dance inspiration in their rhythm than others, but taken all round this is not their strongest point. Now and again there are short solos where the individuals attempt a little rhythmic originality, but this sort of thing is generally conspicuous by its absence. From a legitimate viewpoint all are well played and ideal for those who like straight melody.

I have made a general attempt to place the bands in order of merit, taking their records as a whole, and also the records in order of merit under each band. This hasn't worked out very well as, although the Roof Garden and Sam Lanin's, as bands, become

respectively second and third, Lanin's "Rollin' down the river," the Pennsylvanian's "Gee, but I'd like to make you happy," and the Roof Garden Orchestra's "I love you so much" are, I think, the three best. They have better rhythm and more scope is given for showing individual style. "I love you so much," though put out as played by the Roof Garden Orchestra, is, I am convinced, by **Smith Ballew's Orchestra**, but though a good record, cannot be compared with his wonderful version of "Sing, you sinners" reviewed last month. "Santiago," "Around the corner," "Anchor's aweigh" are labelled fox-trot, but are nothing of the kind. The first and second are 6-8's, the third a one-step-march. Isn't it hopeless?

Arthur Rosebery and His Dance Band.

- The Pick up* (from the film "Safety in Numbers") (v).
- My future just passed* (from the film "Safety in Numbers") (v).
(Parlo. R746)
- That Night in Venice* (v).
- Gypsy Melody* (Waltz) (v).
(Parlo. R739)

Straightforward commercial dance records. The band is showing much better ensemble, and is altogether more finished than when I had cause to criticise its previous records in the August issue.

REGAL 2/6

Billy Cotton makes a Hit at Ciro's and on the Radio.

Billy Cotton and His Band.

- Dance of the wooden shoes* (from the film "No, No, Nanette") (v).
- I've gotta have you* (v).
(Regal MR156)
- That Rhythm Man* (v).
- Sittin' on a Rainbow* (v).
(Regal MR157)

Its title is an obvious indication of the kind of tune "Dance of the Wooden Shoes" is—another of those little intermezzo-ish, marionette affairs which are tuneful in a rather finicky way way to listen to, and as fox-trots for dancing make excellent polkas. Bill Cotton opens it in the conventional manner and gets through only about two bars before introducing the twiddly bits on the xylophone, which we always get with tunes of this sort. I settled down to three minutes of semitiredom. And that's where Bill had me. He played pretty and did nothing until after the vocal chorus when he shot me out of my chair with a hot trumpet supported by a most inspiring negro dance rhythm from the rest of the band. It is really a fine piece of work, and its introduction into a number of this sort most unexpected. It is the making of a record which otherwise would have been on the insipid side.

"I've gotta have you" and "Sittin' on a Rainbow" are both bright rhythmical dance records containing plenty to interest the discriminating listener. They open with a steady lilting rhythm, and when a record opens with good rhythm it usually has it all through. The trumpet is outstanding for modern style, particularly in the former title, while in both the violin is most effective in hot *obbligatos* to the vocal choruses.

"That Rhythm Man" is the weakest of

the four. Rhythmically the band is at sea at the start, and although it gets better in this respect as the record proceeds it never falls into a very happy well knit sense of lilt. The orchestration is hot, but in parts old fashioned—the arranger appears to have been listening to some of the hot stomps and

rags which the Palais bands delighted in playing some three or four years ago.

The band generally, as I have said in previous issues, is not only a musicianly outfit but has the courage and enthusiasm to make a bold attempt to lift itself from the rut of drab commerciality and, if it stumbles at some of the high fences it sets itself, it usually manages to take the majority cleanly. It is a band for which I have a great admiration. One cannot have much but contempt for those who never do else but play for safety and merely get through by attempting nothing. Bill Cotton sets an ambitious standard. He hasn't built his reputation on a presumed public ignorance. He knows what's what and plays for those who also know. It is the best paying policy in the end. The public may not know what is good in dance music before it hears it, but when it does it recognises it, a fact conclusively proved by the unexpected popularity of this band's broadcasts from Ciro's Club.

To return to the records, I must say that I don't like the recording. There is too much resonance.

The Midnight Minstrels.

- I'm falling in love again* (waltz) (from the film "The Blue Angel")
- I love you so much* (from the film "The Cuckoos") (v).
(Regal MR155)

It has always struck me as being rather a pity that strings have never been really fashionable in dance bands, because string tone is very lovely. What can be more inspiring than a really large string section, a dozen or so violins? Paul Whiteman had at one time, when his band was something over thirty strong, eight violins, I think, but somehow the fashion never caught on.

Possibly it will be said that stringed instruments are unsuitable for dance music. That is nonsense. There is no recognised instrument which is unsuitable for dance

THE BEST OF THE MONTH.

HOT DANCE BANDS.

- Jersey lightning* by *Luis Russell and His Orchestra*. (Parlo. R740, New "Rhythm-Style" Series, No. 42.)
- That's where the south begins* by *Spike Hughes and His Dance Orchestra*. (Decca F1906.)
- Walkin' the dog* by *Ed Lang's Orchestra*. (Parlo. R740, New "Rhythm-Style" Series, No. 41.)

[DANCE BANDS.

- Free and easy* (The) by *Ambrose and His Orchestra*. (H.M.V. B5869.)
- Great Day and Without a song* by *Paul Whiteman and His Orchestra*. (Col. CB116.)
- Kiss waltz* by *Adrian Schubert's Salon Orchestra*. (Imperial 2324.)
- Let me sing and I'm happy* by *Waring's Pennsylvanians*. (H.M.V. B5870.)

- Livin' in the sunlight* by *Ambrose and His Orchestra*. (H.M.V. B5857.)

- Livin' in the sunlight and You brought a new kind of love for me* by *Paul Whiteman and His Orchestra*. (Col. CB117.)

- Montana call and The moon is low* by *Arthur Schutt and His Orchestra*. (Parlo. R713.)

- One night alone with you* by *Jack Hylton and His Orchestra*. (H.M.V. B5871.)

- Shoo the Hoodoo away and With my guitar* by *Ambrose and His Orchestra*. (H.M.V. 5877.)

NOVELTY AND COMEDY DANCE RECORDS.

- Fine Alpine milkman and I don't wanna go home* by *Jack Hylton and His Orchestra*. (H.M.V. B5874.)

- Harmonica Harry* by *Jack Hylton and His Orchestra*. (H.M.V. B5875.)

- Mysterious Mose* by *Ted Weems and His Orchestra*. (H.M.V. B5870.)

- Tickling the strings* by *King Nawahi's Hawaiians*. (Col. DB285.)

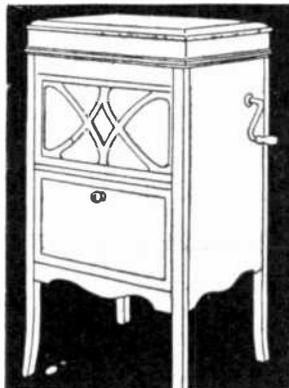
HOT PIANO SOLOS.

- Shiv'ry stomp* by *Seeger Ellis*. (Parlo. 714, New "Rhythm-Style" Series, No. 40.)
(Omitted from last month.)

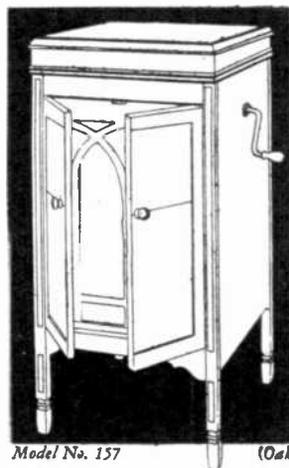
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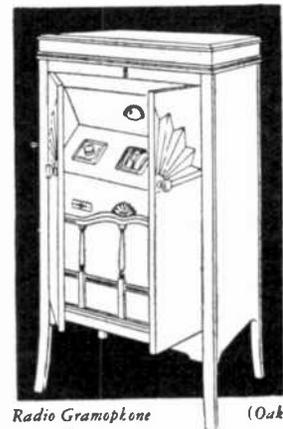
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Conducted by Arnold Goldsbrough
Reading by the Rev. Pat McCormick
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Praise The Lord! Ye Heavens, Adore Him (Haydn) K.534 12-inch 3/6
- The Westminster Military Band**
The Gondoliers. Selection in Two Parts. F.1891 2/-
- Richard Watson—Bass**
(In English, with Orchestral Accompaniment)
Within These Sacred Bowers
O Isis and Osiris (both from "The Magic Flute") F.1889 2/-
- Norton Collyer**
(Tenor, with Pianoforte Accompaniment)
Oh! Maiden, My Maiden
- Desirée Ellinger**
(Soprano, with Orchestral Accompaniment)
Why Did You Kiss My Heart Awake? (both from "Frederica") F.1909 2/-
- Lou Abelardo**
(The Velvet-Voiced Tenor, with Instrumental Accompaniment)
Handsome Gigolo
Exactly Like You F.1896 2/-
- Carl Brisson**
(Vocal, with Instrumental Accompaniment)
It's You I Love
Why? (both from "Sons o' Guns") F.1893 2/-
- The Three Ginx**
(English Rhythm Singers, with Pianoforte Accompaniment)
Take Your Hands Out of Your Pockets
Can I Help It? (film "The Golden Calf") F.1907 2/-

- Pierre Fol and His Salon Orchestra**
Rustle of Spring (Sinding) F.1890 2/-
Valse Triste (Sibelius)
- The Million-airs**
*The Blue Angel, Selection
*The Great Day, Selection F.1897 2/-
*The King of Jazz, Selection
Intro. :—(1) A Bench in the Park (2) I like to do things for you (3) Song of the Dawn (4) Happy Feet
*It Happened in Monterey (film "The King of Jazz") F.1895 2/-
- Spike Hughes and His Dance Orchestra**
That's Where the South Begins (Fox Trot)
Funny, Dear, What Love Can Do (Fox Trot) F.1906 2/-
"Classics of Jazz"
No. 5. Sure as You're Born (Fox Trot)
No. 6. Everything is Peaches Down In Georgia (Fox Trot) F.1910 2/-
- The Rhythm Maniacs**
*Without A Song (Slow Fox Trot)
*Great Day (Fox Trot) (both from film "The Great Day") F.1899 2/-
*Livin' in the Sunlight (Fox Trot) (film "The Big Pond")
*Anytime's the Time to Fall in Love (film "Paramount on Parade") F.1898 2/-
*With Vocal Refrain.

DECCA
SUPREME RECORDS

music, provided it is in the hands of someone who knows how to manipulate it in the desired manner. And there I think we have the point. Instrumentative may mean much or little, but the way the instruments are played means everything.

This question of string tone was brought to my mind by this record of the waltz from the Emil Jannings picture, "The Blue Angel." The string tone is very pleasing

in the opening, and again later in the trumpet refrain. The record, which introduces also a pleasing guitar passage, is generally full and tuneful throughout, but the feature which remains in my mind is the very pleasing tone of the strings.

The fox-trot is full and orchestral in effect. If its rhythm and style were half as good as its tonal quality it would be an outstanding disc.

DECCA 2/-

The Rhythm Maniacs in good form.

The Rhythm Maniacs.

Livin' in the sunlight (fox-trot) (from the film "The Big Pond") (v).

Any time's the time to fall in love (fox-trot) (from the film "Paramount on Parade") (v).

(Decca F1898)

I gotta have you (fox-trot) (from the film "The Forward Pass") (v).

H'llo Baby (Fox-trot) (from the film "The Forward Pass") (v).

(Decca F1781)

When you're smiling (v).

Watching my dreams go by (from the film "She Couldn't Say No") (v).

(Decca F1780)

The reproduction continues to improve slowly, but it still has a slightly mushy effect which doesn't allow the band to appear at its best.

Nevertheless, it is easily recognisable that these are all well-played, bright, commercial dance records, by no means without style. The solid steady rhythm from the fine section formed by drums, string-bars and guitar, which keeps going all the while without those annoying empty patches,

gives the rest of the band an excellent foundation on which to work.

Jack Harris and His Orchestra.

You brought a new kind of love to me (from the film "The Big Pond") (v).

You will come back to me (v).

(Decca F1868)

Jack Harris, of Grosvenor House, repeats the same well-played straightforward commercial type of rhythmically solid performance which marked his debut on Decca last month.

In the opening of "You brought a new kind of love" the solo is taken by trumpet, who attempts to be hot, but only succeeds in being very "jazzily" old-fashioned. This rather belies my impression given last month that the band could be stylish if it wanted to.

One thing which is puzzling me is why the band sounds so much better on records than it does over the radio. There are one or two different musicians recruited for recording, but that shouldn't make all the difference. The records are of their kind quite good, taken all round: on the radio the band sounds, to put it mildly, only very ordinary.

IMPERIAL 1/6.

Two good waltzes by Adrian Schubert's and Dixie Marimba American Bands.

Dixie Marimba Players.

My heart belongs to the girl who belongs to somebody else (Waltz) (v) (Amer.).

(Imperial 2324)

Adrian Schubert's Salon Orchestra.

Kiss waltz (Waltz) (from the film "Dancing Sweeties") (v) (Amer.).

(Imperial 2324)

Two decidedly well played waltzes.

The Dixie Marimba Players, with their tuneful marimba, xylophone and vibraphone effects, are well up to their usual form. Adrian Schubert, however, gives, I think, the better performance. The Hawaiian guitar is featured in both records.

There is a tendency to excessive surface in all this month's Imperials, but it must be remembered that this is an inexpensive record and the quality of the base material probably accounts for it. On the other hand, the reproduction is clear and happily free from any of the mush so often caused by surface hiss.

Lou Gold and His Orchestra.

Swingin' in a Hammock (v) (Amer.).

(Imperial 2322)

Cheer up, good times are coming (v) (Amer.).

(Imperial 2320)

Dark eyes (Waltz) (Amer.).

(Imperial 2323)

Sam Lanin's Dance Orchestra.

Sing a little theme song (from the film "Hold Everything") (v) (Amer.).

When the little red roses (from the film "Hold Everything") (v) (Amer.).

(Imperial 2321)

Great day (from the film "Great Day") (v) (Amer.).

Without a song (from the film "Great Day") (v) (Amer.).

(Imperial 2325)

Karl Radlach and His Orchestra.

Telling it to the daisies (v) (Amer.).

(Imperial 2322)

Cliequot Club Eskimos.

Where the golden daffodils grow (v) (Amer.).

(Imperial 2320)

Ro-ro-rolin' along (Fox-trot) (from the film "Near the Rainbow's End") (v) (Amer.).

(Imperial 2323)

To those who like a well-played record on orthodox lines, with simple rhythm, the original straight melody very much in evidence, and but an occasional mildly rhythmic solo here and there, these inexpensive American commercial style performances with their tuneful, well sung vocal refrains will have a strong appeal.

EDISON BELL RADIO (1/3)

Fine value for money.

Radio Melody Boys.

Exactly like you (from the "International Revue") (v).

Here in my heart (Tango).

(Radio 1382)

The Blue Jays.

Sing, you sinners (from the film "Honey") (v).

Why? (from the musical comedy "Sons o' Guns") (v).

(Radio 1387)

Harry Hudson's Melody Men.

The woman in the shoe (from the film "What Price Melody").

The Harlequinade (novelty Fox-trot) (v).

(Radio 1379)

The little 'uns are in good form this month and offer exceptionally good value for comparatively small money. The reproduction puts some of the more expensive records to shame and there are many worse performances at more than double the money.

All these bands are house recording combinations and it is obvious that some of the best London musicians are employed on the dates. While a concern which has to have a huge sale to make these less expensive records pay must cater for the majority and so can't go in for anything but straightforward performances, the records show much more pretension to style than many I have reviewed this month from other concerns.

Sam Brown sings on 1379.

HOT DANCE BANDS

Another "Rhythm-Style" Masterpiece.

Eddie Lang's Orchestra.

Walkin' the dog (Amer.).

(Parlo. R740—New Rhythm-Style Series No. 41.)

Ed Lang, in whose orchestra for this session I recognise Joe Venuti (violin), "Izzy" Friedman (clarinet), Strickfadden (saxophone), A. Secrest (trumpet), Bill Rank (trombone), Stanley King (drums), Hoagy Carmichael (piano) and, I think, Joe Tarto (bass)—all star American artists—has a greater variety of styles and ideas in "Walkin' the dog" than I have ever heard in any one record. I hope the pamphlet issued with all records of this series will tell us the name of the arranger. Quite possibly it is the pianist, Hoagy Carmichael.

Saxophone, violin, trumpet, trombone, piano and clarinet are all featured in hot solos, which are the real things. In one passage string-bass has some very effective breaks. There is also a delightful movement where Ed Lang himself takes one of his cleverly devised solos on guitar, single-string style, supported by hot celeste and sustained counter-melody by string bass. The whole record, which is of a tune with an unusually good, bright melody, is exhilarating from

beginning to end and throughout a perfect example of style in dance music.

On the reverse is:—

* * *

Luis Russell and His Orchestra.

Jersey lightning (Amer.).
(Parlo. R740—New Rhythm-Style Series No. 42.)

Luis Russell's is a negro band. Luis is the pianist and conductor. The record is another example of style and irresistible rhythm in hot dance music, but if anyone thinks that negro musicians have nothing but rhythm they had better hear some of the solo performances in this disc. The musicianship of the clarinet, string-bass, trumpet and trombone is not so far short of amazing—it is as good as the cleverly devised choruses it has been called upon to give voice to.

Luis Russell is featured in a short piano solo. What an artist!

To the listener who has not yet acquired a taste for these kinds of performances I would say listen to as many of them as possible. Whether or not you like it at first you will find that it will grow on you as you become familiar with its purport and subtleties, and, instead of deprecating those who to-day like it, you will find yourself in the other camp and not understanding how anyone can not find it a source of interest and entertainment. You see, there is so much in it that one never sees until one has learnt how to look for it.

Both these "Rhythm Styles" are Quick-steps.

Spike Hughes and His Dance Orchestra.

Cinderella Brown (from "Lew Leslie's International Revue").

Bessie couldn't help it.
(Decca F1880)

Everything is peaches down in Georgia.
Sure as you're born.

(Decca F1910)

That's where the South begins.

Funny, dear, what love can do.
(Decca F1906)

There are two pitics. The first is that the tendency to mushy reproduction, which still appears in most Decca records, has marred both the tonal quality and the definition of most of these records; the second is that I have not the space to review each of them in detail, for they are, as a batch, the best the band has done and well worthy of it.

In modern hot performances of this kind it becomes, broadly speaking, purely a matter of rhythmic style, presuming, of course, that the musicians first have the ability to put their ideas into execution. Without a lengthy analysis and practical demonstration it is difficult if not impossible to explain why one phrase or effect has style and another has not, but it may be taken that these records show a very commendable understanding of this, the most advanced side of the art of dance music.

The combination consists of **Philip Buchel**, **Harry Hines** and **Buddy Featherstonehaugh** (saxophones—Harry Hines doubles clarinet), **Norman Payne** (trumpet), **Jock Flemming** (trombone), **George Hurley** (violin), **Eddie Carroll** (piano), **Alan Ferguson** (guitar), **Bill Harty** (drums) and **Spike Hughes** himself (string bass)—all of whom have been mentioned in previous issues, and all fine instrumentalists possessing not only a

strong sense of rhythm but originality—at least originality as far as the skill of adapting to their own ends the creations of American artists as heard in American records of this type is concerned. For it has to be confessed that no one in this country has, to my knowledge, actually originated anything that has been worth while in dance music. On the other hand, of the many who pretend they can "play hot" and get away with it through the public's lack of understanding, there are only a few who possess sufficient inherent instinct to be able to grasp the meaning and feature of this kind of rhythm music and so make good use even of what they hear from others. It therefore says much for those who can put up performances such as these, which if not the acme of perfection throughout are at least not so much behind the latest American records of this type.

VOCAL

Here are the best of the vocal records of popular dance tunes:—

Helen Morgan (with orchestral accompaniment).
More than you know (from the film "Great Day") (Amer.).
(H.M.V. B3534.)

Helen Morgan sings this very lovely melody in straight ballad style, steeped in sentiment and sex appeal. But she does it well.

On the reverse is:—

* * *

Grace Hayes (with orchestral accompaniment).
Exactly like you (Amer.).
(H.M.V. B3534)
—which is rather the same kind of thing.

And the same remarks to great extent apply to the fascinating

Ruth Etting (with orchestral accompaniment).
Dancing with tears in my eyes (Waltz) (Amer.).
(Col. DB218)

A place to call home (Amer.).
More than you know (from the film "Great Days") (Amer.).
(Col. DB217)

though Miss Etting is rather more rhythmical and less ultra sentimental.

Sid Garry (with orchestral accompaniment).
Let me sing and I'm happy (from the film "Mammy") (Amer.).
To my Mammy (from the film "Mammy") (Amer.).
(Col. DB222)

Sid Garry models his singing absolutely on the robust style of Harry Richman, and is a good second to this famous artist as he was in his palmiest days.

The Mariners' Trio.
Down the river of golden dreams (Waltz).
Happy feet (from the film "King of Jazz").
(Parlo. R730)

A very efficient tuneful male trio featuring in popular melody style. Accompaniments are by piano and guitar.

An unexpected novelty effect is an excellent "blue-blowing" chorus in "Happy feet." This is almost certainly "Red" McKenzie, of the Mound City Blue Blowers. "Red" is well known for his understanding of modern rhythmic style. Rhythm fans will find the record worth buying, if only for this chorus.

Sam Browne (with orchestral accompaniment).
A cottage for sale.
Goodbye to all that.
(Radio 1376)
Delightfully sung in sentimental-rhythmic-ballad style.

Irving Kaufmann (with orchestra).
Little white lies (Amer.).
(Imperial 2328)

Chick Bullock (with orchestra).
If I had a girl like you.
(Imperial 2328)
Both sentimental rhythmic-ballad style. Irving Kaufmann is the more pleasing. He has better voice and is more robust.

Melville Gideon (with piano and orchestra).
What have I done (Waltz).
To be forgotten (Waltz).
(Parlo. R731)
Light smooth melody records.

RHYTHMIC INSTRUMENTAL

Jimmy Dorsey (Saxophone and Clarinet) with **Spike Hughes and His Three Blind Mice.**

St. Louis blues.
Tiger rag (Fox-trot).
(Decca F1878)

As far as performance is concerned these hot saxophone and clarinet solos by the renowned **Jimmy Dorsey** and the accompaniments are wonderful, but there is so much surface and the reproduction is so rough and mushy that only with difficulty can one catch the finer points and the tone quality is ruined.

King Nawahi's Hawaiians (Guitar Orchestra).
Tickling the strings (Amer.).
Hawaiian Capers (Amer.).
(Col. DB285)

The combination consists of guitars and if the performances are inclined to be on the "jazzy" and old-fashioned side, they are played well, with good technique and confidence and exude an atmosphere of rhythmic variety and brightness.

"Tickling the strings" has the better style.

Styx Farrel (Xylophone solos with piano and Saxophone acc.)
The King's horses.
Telling it to the daisies.
(Decca F1888)

Effective xylophone solos displaying technique, but in rhythmic style rather jazzy.

EDGAR JACKSON.

THE GRAMOPHONIST'S GUIDE TO FILMS

THEME SONG RECORDS

[The following films are those which are generally released this month or else have been recently shown in London. Where the original artists have made records of their songs these are shown in heavy type: otherwise the classification of new and old records into stages of desirability is done by treble, double and single asterisks.]

THE BIG POND *Paramount.*

Comedy with songs. Directed by Hobart Henley. Release date, May 11th, 1931.

Reviewed in "Film Notes" in the last issue, this latest Chevalier success continues to run at the Carlton, London. The tunes are proving popular and all admirers of the inimitable Chevalier should not hesitate to see this film.

Songs: (Chappell and Co.).

Livin' in the sunlight.

Maurice Chevalier, H.M.V. B3517, 3s. vocal.***

Ambrose's Orch., H.M.V. B5857, 3s.**

Whiteman's Orch., Col. CB117, 3s.***

Loyd's Orch., Parlo. R718, 3s.*

Rhythm Maniacs, Decca F1898, 2s.***

Manhattan Melodymakers, Broadcast 2585, 2s.**

Mia Cara.

Lanin's Famous Players and Singers, Parlo. R726, 3s.**

You brought a new kind of love to me.

Maurice Chevalier, H.M.V. B3517, 3s. vocal.***

Ambrose's Orch., H.M.V. B5857, 3s.**

Whiteman's Orch., Col. CB117, 3s.***

Loyd's Orch., Parlo. R718, 3s.*

Leslie Hutchinson, Parlo. R738, 3s. vocal.**

Harris' Orch., Decca F1868, 2s.*

Manhattan Melodymakers, Broadcast 2585, 2s.*

DYNAMITE *J-M-G.*

Drama. Directed by Cecil B. de Mille. Release date, October 6th.

A film packed with interest for the average filmgoer. Varied, exciting, sentimental, the film covers a wide field and is guaranteed to entertain. Kay Johnson makes her film debut and will not easily be forgotten. She is supported by Charles Bickford and Conrad Nagel. The theme song is relatively unimportant, having practically no bearing upon the story.

Song: (Francis, Day and Hunter).

How am I to know?

Arden-Ohman's Orch., H.M.V. B5743, 3s.**

Austin, H.M.V. B3255, 3s. vocal.*

Crawford, H.M.V. B3200, 3s. organ.**

Selvin's Orch., Col. 5727, 3s.**

Layton and Johnstone, Col. DB114, 3s. vocal.***

Trumbauer's Orch., Parlo. R618, 3s.***

Grand Cinema Organ, Parlo. E6242, 2s. 6d.*

Rhythmic Troubadours, Regal MR46, 2s. 6d.**

Ambrose's Orch., Decca M113, 2s.*

Wilbur, Imperial 2273, 1s. 6d. vocal.*

GLORIFYING THE SHOW GIRL *Paramount.*

Stage drama. Directed by Flo Ziegfeld. Release date, October 20th.

Conventional back-stage story redeemed by beautiful ballet scenes in which the heroine takes part. Mary Eaton plays the lead and makes the most of her opportunities in a film for which she is particularly suited.

Song: (Campbell, Connelly and Co.).

What wouldn't I do for that man?

Helen Morgan, H.M.V. B3258, 3s. vocal.***

Charleston Chasers, Col. CB16, 3s.*

Ruth Etting, Col. DB19, 3s. vocal.***

Trumbauer's Orch., Parlo. R583, 3s.***

Spike Hughes' Decca Dents, Decca F1710, 2s.*

Betty Brown, Dominion C305, 1s. 3d. vocal.*

THE GRAND PARADE *P.D.C.*

Musical drama. Directed by Edmund Goulding. Release date, October 13th.

The background and photography of a nigger minstrel show which includes two of the most popular tunes of recent months are the best part of this back-stage melodrama in which a drunken singer (Fred Scott) is re-claimed by the girl he marries (Helen Twelvetrees). These two put up an altogether better performance than the plot deserves. The recording throughout is extremely good. A selection only of records is given below.



MAURICE
CHEVALIER

IN "THE
LOVE PARADE"

Songs: (Lawrence Wright Music Co.).

Alone in the rain.

Macpherson, H.M.V. B3379, 3s. organ.**

Ipana Troubadours, Col. CB13, 3s.*

Midnight Minstrels, Regal MR49, 2s. 6d.**

Rhythm Maniacs, Decca F1678, 2s.*

Moanin' for you.

Ambrose's Orch., H.M.V. B5813, 3s.***

Four Bright Sparks, Col. CB77, 3s.***

Barrie Oliver, Decca F1722, 2s. vocal.**

Molly.

Hylton's Orch., H.M.V. B5798, 3s.***

Macpherson, H.M.V. B3379, 3s. organ.**

Ipana Troubadours, Col. CB13, 3s.**

Layton and Johnstone, Col. DB114, 3s. vocal.**

Bert and Bob, Decca F1796, 2s. vocal.*

Buddy Blue's Texans, Imperial 2265, 1s. 6d.*

KING OF JAZZ *Universal.*

Reviewed in the July issue.

After much delay the London public will at last see this super-revue at the Regal and Alhambra on October 4th. The latest records only are given, supplementary to the lists given in August and September issues. Songs: (Francis, Day and Hunter, Lawrence Wright Music Co. and Chappell).

A bench in the park.

Foort, H.M.V. B3552, 3s. organ.***

Blair, Zono. 5664, 2s. 6d. vocal.*

Sir Robert Peel's Band, Sterno 433, 1s. 6d.*

Happy Feet.

Mariner's Trio, Parlo. R730, 3s. vocal.**

Sir Robert Peel's Band, Sterno 433, 1s. 6d.*

I like to do things for you.

Rhythmic Eight, Zono. 5673, 2s. 6d.**

It happened in Monterey.

The Million-airs, Decca F1895, 2s.**

Smeck's Hawaiian Trio, Imperial 2326, 1s. 6d.*

Mason, Solex 8, 1s. 3d. vocal.*

Ragamuffin Romeo.

Mason, Solex 8, 1s. 3d. vocal.*

Song of the dawn.

Layton and Johnstone, Col. DB220, 3s. vocal.*

Blair, Zono. 5664, 2s. 6d. vocal.*

Selection.

Vocal Gems, Light Opera Co., H.M.V. C1990, 4s. 6d.*

Raie da Costa, H.M.V. B3538, 3s. piano.***

The Million-airs, Decca F1895, 2s.**

Broadcast Talkie Boys, Broadcast 598, 1s. 3d.*

THE LOVE PARADE *Paramount.*

Romantic musical comedy. Directed by Ernest Lubitsch. Release date, October 6th.

A sparkling, brilliant and charming performance from beginning to end. Maurice Chevalier as irresistible as ever and Jeannette MacDonald as splendid partner. The Chevalier and MacDonald records, good as they are, give only a skeleton of what they represent and anyone who misses this film will be making a serious mistake. Every company has made records, and only a selection is given below.

Songs: (Campbell, Connelly and Co.).

Dream Lover.

Jeannette MacDonald, H.M.V. B3289, 3s. vocal.***

Hylton's Orch., H.M.V. B5769, 3s.***

O'Henry, H.M.V. B3428, 3s. organ.**

Columbia Photo Players, Col. 5725, 3s.**

Layton and Johnstone, Col. DB43, 3s. vocal.**

Sandler's Orch., Col. DB92, 3s.***

Maclean, Col. DB125, 3s.**

Rhythm Maniacs, Decca F1631, 2s.**

Shubert's Salon Orch., Imperial 2250, 1s. 6d.**

March of the Grenadiers.

Jeannette MacDonald, H.M.V. B3289, 3s. vocal.***

Debroy Somers' Band, Col. CB40, 3s.**
 Rhythmic Troubadours, Regal MR65
 2s. 6d.**
My Love Parade.
 Maurice Chevalier, H.M.V. B3332, 3s.
 vocal.**
 High Hatters, H.M.V. B5790, 3s.**
 Columbia Photo Players, Col. 5725, 3s.**
 Layton and Johnstone, Col. DB43, vocal.**
 Rhythmic Troubadours, Regal MR65,
 2s. 6d.**
Nobody's using it now.
 Maurice Chevalier, H.M.V. B3332, 3s.
 vocal.**
 Hylton's Orch., H.M.V. B5769, 3s.**
 Debroy Somers' Band, Col. CB40, 3s.**
Paris, stay the same.
 Maurice Chevalier, H.M.V. B3364, 3s.
 vocal.**
Selection.
 Vocal Gems, Light Opera Co., H.M.V. C1895,
 4s. 6d.**
 Payne's B.B.C. Orch., Col. DX29, 4s. 6d.**
 Raie da Costa, Parlo. R611, 3s. piano.**

MAMMY Warner.

Romantic musical drama. Directed by Michael Curtiz. Release date not fixed. Due for presentation in London this month. Al Jolson and Irving Berlin, the composer of the songs, have combined to make a picture to please the masses and have succeeded to a very large extent. There is little plot, simply the story of a minstrel troupe and the eternal triangle. But Jolson has ample scope to display his talents, both comic and tragic, and his songs have already become popular. There are some scenes in colour and the novelty of the background is exploited to the full. A film for Jolson's own public.

SONGS: (Francis, Day and Hunter).

Let me sing and I'm happy.
 Waring's Pennsylvanians, H.M.V. B5870,
 3s.**
 Austin, H.M.V. B3502, 3s. vocal.*
 Selvin's Orch., Col. CB105, 3s.**
 Garry, Col. DB222, 3s. vocal.*
 Roof Garden Orch., Parlo. R729, 3s.*
 Kaufman, Parlo. E6314, 2s. 6d. vocal.*
 Rhythm Maniacs, Decca F.1858, 2s.**
 Rudy's Talkie Boys, Broadcast 2575, 2s.*
 Broadway Merry-makers, Goodson 218, 1s. 9d.
 Kauffman, Imperial 2317, 1s. 6d. vocal.*
 Lewis' Band, Broadcast 610, 1s. 3d.*
Looking at you.
 Waring's Pennsylvanians, H.M.V. B5870, 3s.*
 Selvin's Orch., Col. CB105, 3s.**
 Roof Garden Orch., Parlo R729, 3s.*
To my Mammy.
 Austin, H.M.V. B3502, 3s. vocal.*
 Garry, Col. DB222, 3s. vocal.*
 Rhythm Maniacs, Decca F1858, 2s.**
 Rudy's Talkie Boys, Broadcast 2575, 2s.*
Selection.
 Bidgood's Symphonic Dance Band, Broad-
 cast 5181, 2s.**

MONTANA MOON J-M-G.

Western romance. Directed by Malcolm St. Clair. Release date, October 27th.

An unsophisticated Western story, but Joan Crawford is as attractive as ever as the rich young woman who marries a cowboy on one of her father's ranches and introduces him to smart society with all the usual complications. The theme songs are sensibly introduced and there is some fine choral singing round camp fires. (Good entertainment.)

SONGS: (Francis, Day and Hunter).

Montana call.
 Ellis, Parlo. R703, 3s. vocal.**
 Schutt's Orch., Parlo. R713, 3s.*
The moon is low.
 Olsen's Music, H.M.V. B5861, 3s.**
 Blaney and Farrar, Col. DB241, 3s. vocal.**
 Schutt's Orch., Parlo. R713, 3s.*
 Ellis, Parlo. R703, 3s. vocal.**
 Harris' Orch., Decca F1871, 2s.**
 High Hat Revellers, Goodson 201, 1s. 9d.

MOVIETONE FOLLIES OF 1930 For.

Musical comedy. Directed by Benjamin Stollf. Release date October 13th.

Reviewed in the August number.

SONGS: (Campbell, Connelly and Co.).

Cheer up and smile.
 Hylton's Orch., H.M.V. B5844, 3s.**
 Payne's B.B.C. Orch., Col. CB98, 3s.**
 Versatile Four, Parlo. R711, 3s.**
 Rhythm Maniacs, Decca F1843, 2s.**
 Bert and Bob, Decca F1811, 2s. vocal.
 Sumner's Dance Devils, Broadcast 2579, 2s.*
 Browne's Brownies, Sterno 434, 1s. 6d.
 Heath, Sterno 440, 1s. 6d. vocal.
Doing the Derby.
 Hylton's Orch., H.M.V. B5851, 3s.**
Here comes Emily Brown.
 Hylton's Orch., H.M.V. B5850, 3s.**
 Payne's B.B.C. Orch., Col. CB98, 3s.**
 Layton and Johnstone, Col. DB244, 3s.
 vocal.*
 Rhythm Maniacs, Decca F1843, 2s.**
 Bert and Bob, Decca 1811, 2s. vocal.
 Heath, Sterno 440, 1s. 6d. vocal.

NO, NO, NANETTE F-N-P.

Musical comedy. Directed by Clarence Badger. Release date, October 20th.

The film has very little to do with the stage play of the same name and most of the musical numbers are new. Bernice Claire plays the title role, supported by Alexander Gray, but Lucien Littlefield and Louise Fazenda steal the honours. There are some fine scenic and choral effects and the excellence of the production will undoubtedly make it a box-office attraction.

SONGS: (Feldman and Co., and Chappell).

As long as I'm with you.
 Solemn and Gay, Zono. 5621, 2s. 6d., vocal.**
 Rhythm Maniacs, Decca F1696, 2s.*
Dance of the wooden shoes.
 Cotton's Band, Regal MR156, 2s. 6d.**
 Teddy Brown and Manhattan Melodymakers,
 Broadcast 2551, 2s.*

Browne's Brownies, Sterno 434, 1s. 6d.**
 Rhythm Maniacs, Decca F1696, 2s.*

I want to be happy.

Waring's Pennsylvanians, H.M.V. B5803,
 3s.**

Lanin's Famous Players and Singers, Parlo.
 R605, 3s.**

Lewis' Band, Broadcast 542.*

Tea for two.

Waring's Pennsylvanians, H.M.V. B5803,
 3s.**

Lanin's Famous Players and Singers, Parlo.
 R605, 3s.**

Were you just pretending?

Melton, Regal MR100, 2s. 6d., vocal.**
 Manhattan Melodymakers, Broadcast 2551,
 2s.*

Selection.

Vocal Gems, Light Opera Co., H.M.V. C1205,
 4s. 6d.

New Mayfair Orch., H.M.V. C1887, 4s. 6d.**
 Raie da Costa, H.M.V. B3441, 3s. piano.**

POINTED HEELS Paramount.

Stage romance. Directed by A. Edward Sutherland. Release date, October 13th.

This is a stupid story but William Powell has an enormous following and he is well supported by Phillips Holmes and Fay Wray. The film is as competently produced as we have come to expect from Paramount, and no point in entertainment value is missed.

SONG: (Campbell, Connelly and Co.).

I have to have you.

Helen Kane, H.M.V. B3296, 3s. vocal.**
 The Sunshine Boys, Col. DB89, 3s.**
 Annette Hanshaw, Parlo. R642, 3s. vocal.**
 Sweet and Low, Regal MR45, 2s. 6d. vocal.*
 Oliver, Decca F1722, 2s. vocal.

SWING HIGH P.D.C.

Musical melodrama. Directed by Joseph Santley. Release date not fixed. Due for presentation in London this month.

A story of circus life featuring Helen Twelvetrees and Fred Scott, the stars of "The Grand Parade." There are all the ingredients of popularity and little that makes for greatness. Lavishly produced with one or two unexpected twists of plot. A spectacular piece of negro chorus work and good singing by Fred Scott. But all too obviously box-office.

SONG: (Keith Prowse and Co.).

Shoo the Hoodoo away.

Ambrose's Orch., H.M.V. B5877, 3s.**
 Payne's B.B.C. Orch., Col. CB107, 3s.**
 Benny's Broadway Boys, Broadcast 2581,
 2s.**

There's happiness over the hill.

Ambrose's Orch., H.M.V. B5865, 3s.**
 Hotel Pennsylvania Music, Parlo R719, 3s.*

With my guitar and you.

Ambrose's Orch., H.M.V. B5877, 3s.**
 Payne's B.B.C. Orch., Col. CB107, 3s.*
 Hotel Pennsylvania Music, Parlo. R719, 3s.*
 Benny's Broadway Boys, Broadcast 2581,
 2s.**

QUEEN'S HALL. Grand Gramophone Concert.

An attractive programme of orchestral, vocal, and instrumental music, re-created by the latest Automatic, Electrical, Radio and Acoustic Gramophones, will be given on
OCTOBER 9th at 8.30 p.m. Admission by ticket only obtainable without charge from

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EARLY APPLICATION ESSENTIAL

FILM NOTES

FOR several months our readers have endured the inclusion of Film Notes and of a Gramophonist's Guide to Films in the pages of THE GRAMOPHONE; and some, who take no interest in films, are likely to grudge the space. One humorist went so far as to write that it would be equally reasonable to include Kennel Notes on the pretext that some readers owned dogs; and among the correspondence that the Editor has received on the present health of our Magazine there have been two or three indications that references to films are not regarded as relevant to the gramophone.

Yet the relevance is surely obvious. Ever since the coming of the sound film the theme song record has been with us, and the department of each recording company which decides the theme songs that are likely to be in demand and the date on which each may most profitably be released to the public, has had a strenuous and anxious time. The anxiety and the labour have been felt too by the dealer, and the ordinary film-goer who possesses a gramophone has from week to week been bewildered by the difficulty of finding the best records of the songs that have been amiably forced upon him and his family in the local cinema.

It was only after some experiment and much thought that the present "Guide to Films" was adopted to help our readers and incidentally to form a practical reference list for dealers. It gives the information and advice needed in the most economical way; and the argument that film-goers are lavishly supplied with film publications falls to the ground. Lists such as THE GRAMOPHONE gives are not to be obtained at present anywhere else.

Is there no way in which the standard of reproduction and the standard of taste which have been upheld in THE GRAMOPHONE can be applied to the films that are shown all over the country? The average film-goer, who also has a gramophone, is often unconscious that the sounds he hears in the cinema are in nearly every case just gramophone records played on electric apparatus; and yet if he knows this he will surely realize that the cinema engineers have many problems still to solve. It is pretty safe to predict that the audience in the gallery of the Queen's Hall when the Imhof recital takes place on October 9th will hear a much better reproduction of music than is possible in the corresponding seats of most cinemas.

Wear of the 16-inch records that are used is another problem. If good needles are used—such as the new Golden Pyramids—and if a new set of records is sent with the film, it is possible to play them four times a day from Monday to Saturday; but that is at present about the whole life of the records; and if fibres or the Electrocolor or some such non-wearing needle could be found adequate for the reproduction, this would at once save an immense sum of money.

The Silent Film

Hollywood, and the film world in general, are marking time till Charlie Chaplin's "City of Lights" is produced and tested on the public. It is fairly obvious that the number of plots in which Continental stars can be accommodated with broken-English parts—such as "The Blue Angel" and "The Love Waltz"—are limited; and unless some reasonable development is found we shall soon have to lose many of the most famous stars altogether or be content with ghost voices to fit their acting. So far as English and American voices are concerned, the difficulties have already been almost overcome, though Anglo-American plots in which English is spoken by the English players and American by the Americans are not nearly so common as one might have expected.

One day last month I saw two interesting experiments in solving the silent film problem. The first was the "dramatic dialogue" of a Mr. Graham McNamee added to the "White

Hell of Pitz Palu." Mr. McNamee's rich American voice broke at intervals into the synchronised musical accompaniment in grandiose but not wholly unsuitable orations. Certainly the problem might have been more happily tackled on similar lines, just as the compère in a newsreel seldom achieves the standard of right inflexion that was set by the "Secrets of Nature" series. And yet I hardly think that the photography and drama of "Pitz Palu" were enhanced by Mr. McNamee's monologues.

When I went to the trade show of "The White Devil" on the same evening I was totally unprepared to hear Ivan Mosjoukine, Lil Dagover, Betty Amann and Fritz Alberti speak my mother tongue. But they did, one and all, with an uncomfortably pure accent and so much deliberation as to make one think of village schoolchildren in theatricals. The dialogue quite definitely detracted from the power and appeal of the film, which has passages of sublime photography and crowd action that are unforgettable.

No: neither a running commentary nor talking dialogue will help the great silent films. We must wait for the "City of Lights" to blaze the trail onwards.

Meanwhile, the Mickey Mouse and similar cartoons and the M.G.M. Barkies (in which dogs speak with human voices) serve to allay the dismay of children and childish grown-ups who whole-heartedly dislike wise-cracks and the American theme songs and feel that it is less strain to provide their own words to silent lips than to hear what the speakers are trying to say.

B.B.C. Film Critic

Mr. G. A. Atkinson, the famous film critic of the *Express*, and for over six years the B.B.C. film critic till he was relieved of that important post last year, has so far burned his boats that he can hardly be recalled to the B.B.C. however much listeners in general would like to hear him again; and a letter of his that was published in *The Cinema* on September 8th was so unfortunately worded that it must have shaken many of Mr. Atkinson's admirers besides myself. "The B.B.C. parted with me for no other reason than that my outlook is English and democratic" is an unlikely statement; and "One of the reasons why the B.B.C. soft pedal on the English outlook in relation to American films is that one of its high officials is understood to be anxious to secure a reversionary interest in the British Ambassadorship in America," is even on a generous view a childish accusation that "places" Mr. Atkinson pretty finally for most of us.

But much more shocking than any of these wild statements is the apparently uncontroverted remark, "I parted with the B.B.C. because the average fee which they paid me for a talk of 1,600 words was less than £4." If this is true the B.B.C. was asking for trouble just as surely as when it declined to pay dance bands for broadcasting; but since Mr. Atkinson's time things have improved, as I can testify personally.

My own view is that the B.B.C. ought to be able to afford its own critics, instead of borrowing experts from the Press; and in appointing its present film critic, Mr. Francis Birrell, it has at least sought someone of the intellectual calibre of Mr. Desmond MacCarthy and Mr. James Agate. That is something to the good; but more is wanted—not merely well-prepared talks on matters of interest to film-goers, but up-to-date criticisms of current films. When the daily Press contains a notice of last night's première or trade show the B.B.C. film critic ought to be telling listeners his own first impressions of it; and for all the work that this would involve he ought to look to the B.B.C. for his livelihood rather than be obliged to look elsewhere to supplement his salary.

CHRISTOPHER STONE.

THE OLYMPIADS

I CAME away from the Radio-Exhibition on September 20th with two main impressions, a number of more or less vivid recollections and a headache. The crush had been tremendous, the din even worse. Both in a sense were evidence of the ever-growing popularity of radio and of the soundness of the trade. I know of no exhibition where the talk is so eager, or the service so full of humour, good nature and knowledge.

The first main impression I can best describe by saying that whereas the past few years have been years of experiment, this year shows the beginning of a period of fulfilment. In the past the wireless set has been merely a collection of components put together in a box. This year's sets and radio-gramophones are clearly designed as a whole so as to function in a certain way, fit into a definite space and produce a prescribed result. There are still survivals of the old style, of course. I remember, overhearing one youngster (he would be about 15) remark to his companion: "Oh! That's not a firm. They make their stuff out of soap-boxes." But the general impression still remains. All the firms of substance have gone about the construction of their receivers in a sound engineering fashion. Splendid chassis-work is very much in evidence; the Americans began the method some years ago but my impression is that our people are already beginning to beat them. I could quote scores of examples if I were pressed but the following, which leap to my mind immediately, will serve as illustrations: Marconiphone, models 56, 47, 39, and the radiogram No. 560; Columbia, models 307, 309, 331 and the radiogram No. 302; the McMichael Mains Three—a particularly good example of mechanical as well as electrical ingenuity; the Ediswan Pentode sets; the Varley two and three valve sets with the conversion units for AC or DC mains operation; the new R1 Madrigal sets; the new Ferranti sets in their Rexine-covered metal cases, and the extensive Pye range. In all these cases the construction is such as to inspire confidence and the choice between them could be based on performance. In no other year, I feel sure, would it have been possible to bring together such a list without reservations. It is abundantly clear, indeed, that manufacturers have now realised to the full that the radio public no longer consists solely of the fans who wish to throw a few chosen components together for themselves. That public will always exist in this country; it always has been, and please God, always will be, one of our racial characteristics to wish to do things for ourselves. But we are not all made in the same mould with the same interests and the folk who now wish to have a radio set which will give them as little trouble as the clock on the mantelpiece or the piano in the drawing-room are comparatively new and certainly the more important adherents to the broadcasting fraternity, outnumbering the fans by thousands, if not millions. It is to these that the present exhibition sends the greatest ray of hope. Hitherto, when such folk have asked my advice I have always been tempted to say, wait until so and so. Now I can say with confidence that if you buy this or that or that (including any of the receivers I have mentioned in the above list) you will not be disappointed. It is this new public which provides the real opportunity for the radio trade. That I am not mistaken as to its size, or its importance, or its willingness to buy, I am as certain as I have been of anything since I became interested in gramophones. On one single morning last week I had technical correspondence asking for advice which meant the definite sale of over £200 worth of radio goods; and this is not an isolated instance: it is merely the peak (so far) of a new demand. Every post brings in requests of a similar kind, and no one has been more surprised than I myself. Clearly, the opportunity is there, and the radio trade have not been slow to seize it.

So much for the first impression. The second is in the nature of a corollary; that prices have now been brought down to the limit of what will be possible, consistently with good products, for a long time to come; that is, until standardisation of electricity supplies permits of concentration on fewer types of receiver. I hope I am breaking no confidences when I say that several of the manufacturers with whom I am more or less intimate confessed to me that they had cut prices down to the bone this year in the belief that thereby they could attract a wide market. I think their policy is right, but this only the public themselves can prove. The big thing that counts in its favour is that at last we have all the signs of stability. Receivers bought this year will not be obsolete next year. Minor improvements there may be, of course, even as there are in the motor trade, but there is now every prospect that a receiver of merit (and in this phrase, please note, I exclude all portables) bought this year will be good for several years to come.

Apart from these major impressions, however, certain other things stand out in my memory of this day of peregrination. One is the 60 watt, 120 watt, and 1,000 watt amplifiers for cinema work on the Parmeko stand, each amplifier duplicated so that a fault in one could be corrected while the other was in use. I have always admired this firm's work, large or small, and here one got an indication both of foresight and of real appreciation of the magnitude of a problem: all cinema outfits I had hitherto seen seemed to me to be much too puny for their job. Another is the universality of the mains set and the radio gramophone: they were the centres of attraction at almost every stand. Then there is the virtual suppression of every other kind of speaker by the moving-coil. Only the best of the moving-iron speakers are left, notably the Bel Canto, the Graham Farish, the Farrand Inductor, the Ultra Air-chrome, and, of course, the Amplion Lion. Generally speaking, as far as one could judge in the general din, the exceptionally good and very bad moving-coil speakers were few; there were many that reached a very fair standard.

Another point of interest was the first appearance of home recorders, of which there were three: one was sponsored by Cairns Morrison, and using a Truvox pick-up; another goes under the name of "Sound-Service Home Recorder," and uses a Phonovox pick-up, and the last is the Recordavox.

My biggest surprise was in the Perfectavox demonstration room. Mr. Leman had apparently been lying in wait for me, for he at once proceeded to demonstrate a particular model without giving me any details or letting me see it. The results were definitely as good as I have yet heard from any electrical gramophone reproduction; Elisabeth Schumann, Gigli, and the rest to the life. Here, too, was good, clean, wholesome bass. After drawing me out like this he gently informed me that that particular radio-gramophone had a pentode in the output stage. It was the new Mazda AC/Pen, it is true, but even that had not previously removed my mistrust of pentodes. However it was done, I took off my hat to it and "Piccolo," who was with me at the time, felt himself slipping away down the pentode slope. At 47 guineas this "Perfectavox Minor" radio-gramophone is a seductive young lady. (All radio-gramophones by the way, are of the feminine gender).

Finally, the headache. How I longed for a return to the old rules when no music was permitted in the hall itself. All the speakers were blaring the same tune from the B.B.C.'s transmission; to have the same stuff and nonsense hurled at one from all points of the compass was surely more than the hardest head could stand, and that is certainly not mine. What use it was I have yet to learn. I would challenge the archangels to judge the quality of a speaker in such conditions.

And so to bed, but with two aspirins, which Mr. Pepys knew not.

P. WILSON.

TECHNICAL TALK

·By OUR TECHNICAL ADVISER

Parlophone Sound-Test Records

Two new double-sided sound-test records are published by Parlophone this month and as in the case of those previously issued they meet a definite want. The first one (P9797) gives tones in octaves from 32 cycles to 4,096 cycles—i.e., eight tones and seven octaves. The other (P9798) gives the 7 octaves from 50 cycles to 6,400 cycles. For each tone the velocity-amplitude of the recording is given, so that it is possible to correct for variations in recording strength. The measurement of this velocity-amplitude has presumably been made by the Buchmann—Meyer optical method about which I spoke last month. In fact, I should not be surprised to learn that these records are those actually illustrated in the E.N.T. article of April, 1930; the ratios seem to correspond with those shown in the photographs.

In view of the argument I put forward last month about the measurement of response from constant-note records, it is interesting to find that in their leaflet accompanying the records the Parlophone Company issue a special warning on this very point. Here is what they say:

"Attention is called to the fact that, at the present time, the ordinary pick-ups or mechanical sound-boxes do not transfer the correct movement of the needle to the anchor of the magneto-electric pick-up, or the diaphragm of acoustic sound-boxes as the motion is partly transferred to the complete instrument, and in consequence the sound emission will appear weaker than the actual recording." The word "anchor" in this note is presumably a mistranslation of the German word for "armature." The explanation of the reduced output, namely, that the motion is partly transferred to the pick-up as a whole, is on the same lines as the one I put forward though the suggestion is that a lateral motion of the pick-up is involved. It is difficult to see, however, in what way this occasions a relatively greater reduction in high notes, whereas that is a direct corollary from my explanation of the needle riding up on the walls of the groove. All this, however, is by the way. The important point to notice is that at last we have a series of octaves all on one record with the velocity-amplitude accurately measured. For experimental work where quick tests are often important, they should be of great service.

The Importance of Velocity-Amplitude

Since the data given by the Parlophone Company in their leaflet are in the form of numbers unrelated to any specified units, it will perhaps be useful if I explain as briefly as I can why it is that the ratios of the velocity-amplitudes at different frequencies are important. Modern recording between about 200 cycles and 4,500 cycles is based on what is known as the constant-velocity system. Under this system the displacement of the point of the recording stylus for any given input power varies inversely as the frequency of the note recorded. That is why the amplitude of the lateral depth of cut for low notes on the record increases as we go down the scale. Thus at any instant the lateral displacement x for a pure tone of frequency f is $x = A \sin pt$ where A is the maximum amplitude and the "speed" p is equal to $2\pi f$.

The radial velocity of the stylus in the groove is obtained by differentiating this expression with regard to the time giving

$$v = pA \cos pt$$

The velocity-amplitude is thus pA which is proportional to the frequency multiplied by the geometrical amplitude of displacement. Under the constant-velocity system of recording this is constant and thus the amplitude A varies as $1/p$ or as $1/f$.

In recording constant-note records the object is to have a series of tones for which this product pA is constant. For such a record, if we had a pick-up with a uniform frequency response and if the reproducing stylus tracked perfectly in the groove, without constraint, then the voltage output of the pick-up would be constant for all frequencies. If the recording on the constant-note record, however is not such that the product pA is constant the voltage output of such a pick-up would vary for different frequencies, but these variations should be proportional to the variations in the product pA . By having data of the variations in this velocity—amplitude, therefore, we can correct the measured output for errors in recording. There are two assumptions implicit in this argument, however, which should not be lost sight of. The first is that the reproducing stylus tracks perfectly in the recorded groove. On this point sufficient has already been said. The second is that the pick-up response is directly proportional to the velocity-amplitude for variations in the amplitude A as well as for variations in the "speed" p or frequency f . The frequency response curve only shows the behaviour in regard to the frequency variation; it gives no information whatever about amplitude variation. I have no hesitation in asserting, with all the emphasis I can summon to my aid, that in practice the amplitude response curve of a moving-iron pick-up is more important than the frequency response curve, and this because of the conditions which apply to the magnetic flux-displacement. Indeed, it is clear that until some reliable method has been found of taking account of amplitude variation, all the current methods of measuring frequency response curves are open to grave suspicion. Apart from anything else, the amplitudes on constant-note records are of a different order of magnitude from those usually found in actual recording.

One means of checking the existence of amplitude distortion is the use of an oscillograph to show the output wave-form. An oscillograph is an expensive instrument and I do not happen to possess one. Several of my friends, however, who are more fortunately situated in this respect have carried out tests on this point independently of (and unknown to) each other. Their reports to me are in striking agreement. Certain pick-ups which showed very good frequency response characteristics, judged on ordinary standards, gave a very poor showing on the oscillograph, while all the pick-ups tested were guilty of amplitude distortion for frequencies below about 200 cycles. Another interesting point which emerged was that in some cases a better output wave-form was obtained when the pick-up was shunted with a resistance of relatively low value. In these circumstances, as I have remarked on previous occasions, the high note response is reduced.

One conclusion I have come to by comparison of my own experiments and the various results reported to me is that amplitude distortion is likely to be more pronounced when the armature is undamped at the end remote from the needle point. But the whole question needs much more careful examination and experiment before one can feel upon safe ground.

Sound-Box Diaphragms

I notice that the Editor still confesses to a preference for mica diaphragm sound-boxes, and refers to metal diaphragms in disparaging terms such as "saucepan lids." It is not so very long ago that I should have agreed heartily with him, and I still have a sneaking liking for a good mica sound-box. It is, at any rate, consistent for a fairly long time, which is more than one can say about most sound-boxes with metal diaphragms, which seem to tire more surely and not so slowly either. This is especially the case with those sound-boxes in which the diaphragm is fixed to the stylus-bar by a small screw at its centre so that the oscillating stresses and strains are concentrated over a small area. In such circumstances aluminium and its alloys seem to soften very readily. In view of this it is somewhat surprising that more manufacturers have not followed the H.M.V. lead and distributed the strain by means of a spider or some such device. It is equally puzzling to find that plain pivoting of the stylus-bar has become almost universal. There is little doubt that the rate of deterioration of a sound-box is less when the stylus-bar is suitably mounted with springs. It may only be a personal prejudice of my own, but I have always thought that with a spring-controlled stylus-bar one gets more delicacy, better definition, an ease of response to climaxes, and a general lack of coarseness which one never finds in a sound-box with free pivoting.

In these notes a few months ago, I remarked that the physical properties required of a sound-box diaphragm are now well known and that it is very unlikely any amateur, experimenting by a trial and error method with odd materials, would produce a diaphragm which has any chance of real success. Indeed, the probability is that the ordinary experimenter would merely produce something which has been tried and found wanting many times in the past. I do not stress this point, however, since the very fact that we now have a fairly clear understanding of the functions of the various parts of a gramophone may itself lead to a new combination of old ideas which will be a distinct advance. Thus, to take an extreme case, it has always been found in the past that a horn of some sort, whether external or internal, is essential for good results in a gramophone. The reason is now sufficiently clear: when a diaphragm operates into open space we have a fairly large impedance working into the small impedance of air and this means considerable transmission loss which also varies with frequency. The lighter the diaphragm and the moving parts of the sound-box unit the smaller the loss. When, however, the unit works into a horn there is a tapering impedance and the efficiency of transmission is much increased. This is one view of the function of the horn; there are other and sometimes more serviceable ways of putting it, but ultimately they all amount to the same thing. My point is that once the precise function of the horn is understood someone may happily think of another and less cumbersome way of fulfilling the same function, whereas in the days of hit and miss such a thing would be extremely improbable, to say the least. I confess I have not any idea how it could be done; in this connection I always remember I. B. Crandall's remark in his book on "Vibrating Systems and Sound," where, after a long theoretical argument, he says: We have now reached a stage when if horns did not already exist it would be our plain duty to invent them. Anyone who feels it his plain duty to invent a substitute for horns has my blessing and my good wishes!

An American Set

On several occasions during the past year I have made comparisons between the methods of American and British radio manufacturers. I had no prolonged experience of American sets to guide me, only casual hearings and reports from friends and deductions from paper details. I determined

therefore to buy a representative American set for myself and have now had it installed for several months. It is the Rothermel "Peerless" SG8 Receiver Chassis, and I see it is now listed in the recent 1931 catalogue at £30 plus £2 Marconi Royalty. This includes all valves (there are eight of them) but not the speaker, which sells separately for £6. The set has three screened-grid stages, anode-bend detector, L.F. and push-pull output stage. There are only three controls: On and off switch, tuner (the condensers are ganged) and radio frequency volume control which also, at its minimum setting operates a radio to gramophone switch. The output transformer is not incorporated in the set but goes with the speaker. There is a five pin plug on the back of the set, three prongs going to the output transformer and two to the field winding of the speaker which acts as a choke in the H.T. smoothing circuit. In my experiments I have used my own Electrogram speaker with an Allison 1,000 ohm field so that I could form a more reliable judgment of the quality of the set itself.

I have been very agreeably surprised. The quality is much better than I expected, while the station-getting propensities are all that any sensible person could desire. On a good evening foreigners tumble in all over the dial, though here in Putney the London Regional still blankets a substantial area on each side of its wave-length. If I had not been able to make a direct comparison with my own "local station" set I very much doubt whether I should have had anything but high praise for the quality of the radio reproduction. Now my own set tells me that it is a little bass-heavy and lacking in some of the finer details which long experiment had enabled me to secure. But make no mistake about it, it is really good. The record reproduction, on the other hand, rather disappointed me by comparison. Only the L.F. and output stages are used and the amplification of these is hardly great enough for my liking. With Mr. F. E. Godfrey's aid, however, I have now made a simple and inexpensive alteration so as to use the detector valve also for gramophone reproduction and incorporating a L.F. volume control in the form of a Carter 500,000 ohm potentiometer as the grid-leak in the resistance-capacity coupling between the detector and the L.F. stage. Now I like it much better.

At Last!

The new Solex records made by the British Homophone Company have a stroboscope printed on the outside edge of the label. It is completely successful. Enterprise is not always with the big battalions of Hayes and Wandsworth.

P. WILSON.



*If you are thinking
of buying a Radio
Gramophone*

Write to E.M.G. or better still call and hear what *can* be done. Let us give you the benefit of our experience and unbiased advice upon the equipment best suited to your individual requirements. It will pay you to

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E.M.G. HAND MADE GRAMOPHONES LTD.,
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Most people know

There can be no argument about the best Radio-Gramophone. The Columbia instrument has been awarded that position by every critic of importance and the discerning public.

The beautiful model 302 has found an honoured place in many homes. Now comes a new Pedestal Model possessing the same beauty of tone, yet occupying less space and costing less. Still a wider circle may now enjoy the Columbia Radio-Graphophone.



Model 302 in Walnut.

MODEL 302 80 gns. Oak
90 gns. Mahogany
95 gns. Walnut.

The famous Columbia Radio-Graphophone, praised by every critic. Three Screen-grid valves for immense range. Single control dial marked in wavelengths for simple tuning. Operates from A.C. or D.C. Mains. Columbia Moving Coil Speaker.



Model 308 in Oak.

MODEL 308.

62 gns. . . . Oak.
65 gns. . . . Mahogany.
69 gns. . . . Walnut.

The latest Columbia All-Electric Radio-Graphophone, giving perfect reproduction through a new Columbia Moving Coil Speaker. 3-valve circuit, extra L.F. amplification. Variable aerial condenser. For A.C. mains.

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**Columbia
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wonderful new
models!

The New & Wonderful

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RADIO-GRAPHOPHONES

LEND US YOUR EARS

* I should like to hear Columbia Radio-Graphophone Model No. playing in my home. Please arrange this without cost or obligation to myself.

* I should like a catalogue of Columbia Radio-Graphophone Models.

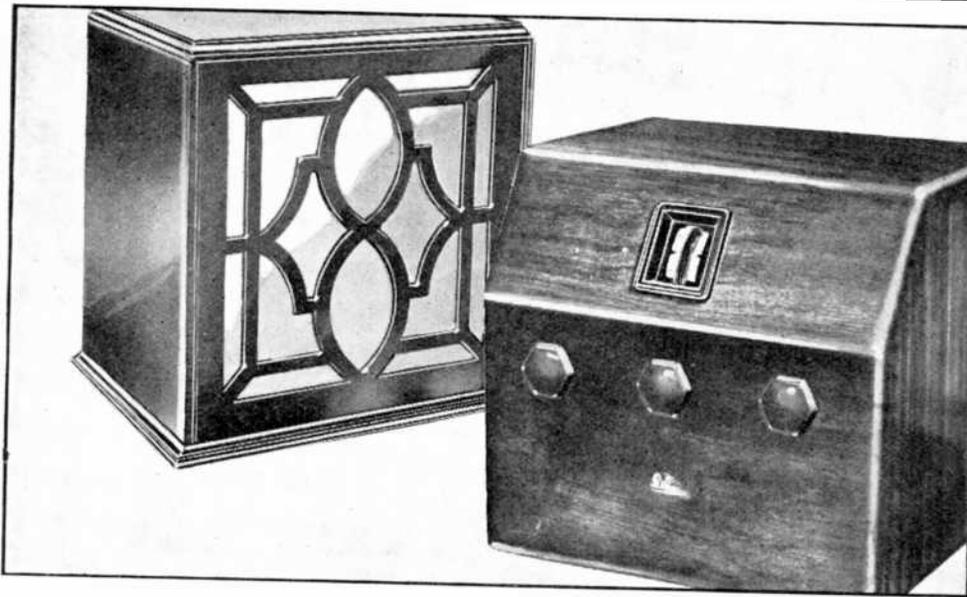
* Cross out if not required.

NAME

ADDRESS

Cut this out and post it in an unsealed envelope bearing a 1d. stamp to Columbia, 92, Clerkenwell Road, London, E.C.1.

GRAM. 187.



**WHEN BUYING RADIO
LOOK FOR THIS SIGN**



The Marconiphone Moving Coil Speaker. For use from A.C. mains, £12.12.0, or £1.3.0 down and 12 monthly payments of £1.0.4. From D.C. mains, £7.10.0, or £1.3.0 down, 10 monthly payments of 12/6 and 1 of 11/6. From 6-volt accumulator, £7.0.0, or £1.3.0 down, 9 monthly payments of 12/6 and 1 of 13/6.

The Model 56 5-valve receiver. To work from A.C. mains, £35, or £3.15.0 down and 12 monthly payments of £2.15.2. From D.C. mains, H.T. only, £32.7.0, or £3.9.9 down and 12 monthly payments of £2.10.11. From batteries, £30.7.0, or £3.5.9 down and 12 monthly payments of £2.7.10.

HEAR THE *FULL* BEAUTY OF YOUR RECORDS

through electrical reproduction by Marconiphone
Radio with the Marconiphone Pick-up

The splendour of a famous singer's voice ... the master touch on a violin. Only electrical reproduction of your records can reveal their full beauty — electrical reproduction by Marconiphone Radio and the Marconiphone Pick-up.

Your records will last far longer with this Pick-up — for it is specially designed to reduce needle scratch to the *absolute minimum*.

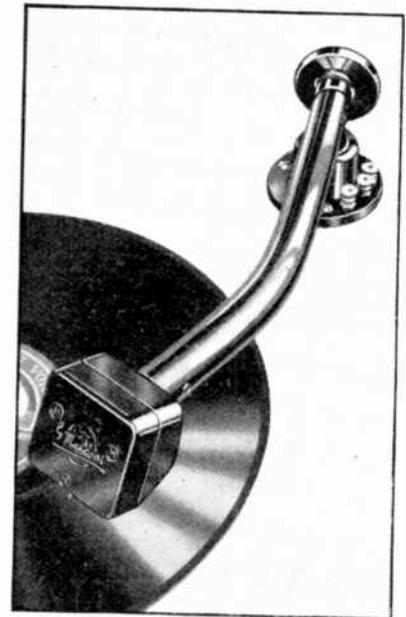
There are 3, 4, and 5-valve Marconiphone receiving sets — to work from your electric mains or from batteries; and the superb

Marconiphone Moving Coil Speaker brings in every note in the musical scale with flawless accuracy.

Any Marconiphone dealer will be pleased to demonstrate the Marconiphone sets, speakers and the pick-up to you.

The genius of Marconi has made Marconiphone Radio pre-eminent.

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The Marconiphone Pick-up, £3.3.0

MARCONIPHONE

BEST OF ALL-ELECTRIC RADIO

TECHNICAL REPORTS

Three Ekco Eliminators

Model C2A. Price £10 17s. 6d.

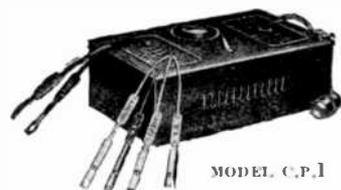
This eliminator is an A.C. model which supplies high tension up to 20 milliamperes, low tension from .2 to .5 amperes and grid bias up to 12 volts. There are three separate H.T.appings, one marked S.G. which gives from 60 to 80 volts for the screen voltage in screened-grid valves, another tapping which gives 60 volts at approximately three milliamperes and the last tapping gives from 120 volts at 16 milliamperes up to a maximum of 150 volts at approximately 10 milliamperes. The L.T. side is suitable for 2, 4, or 6 volt valves; a small voltmeter and a variable resistance are provided to enable the user to adjust the unit to give the correct filament voltage. This, of course, does not mean that the eliminator will operate a receiver which has, say, two 2 volt valves in the H.F. and detector stages, and a 4 or a 6 volt valve in the final stage. The valves must be of uniform voltage. The G.B.appings are 1.5, 3, 6, 9, and 12 volts. The eliminator is enclosed in a crystalline metal case measuring approximately 11 x 9 x 5½ inches. The tapping sockets, meter, resistance control, and L.T. terminals are mounted on a small ebonite panel on the front of the case, and the mains switch is situated on the right hand side of the case.



This model is suitable for use on mains supplies between 200 and 250 volts; a separate model being available for 100-110 volt mains.

Models C.P.1 (£6) and I.V.20 (£4 12s. 6d.)

These models are primarily designed to take the place of the H.T. battery in portable receivers. Both are enclosed in metal cases and are identical in size; 12 x 5 x 3 inches. The principal difference between the two is that model C.P.1 is fitted with an L.T. trickle charger. Both have H.T.appings labelled S.G. 0-120 V. and 100-150 V. The S.G. tapping gives a screen voltage from 60-80 volts at about 1½ milliamperes, the variable 0-120 tapping supplies up to 120 volts at between 4-6 milliamperes and the remaining tapping gives 120 volts at 16 milliamperes up to 150 volts at 11 milliamperes approximately. The trickle charger incorporated in model C.P.1 is designed to charge 2, 4, or 6 volt accumulators at .3 amperes, and a switch is provided for switching the charger on and off.



MODEL C.P.1

In practice all three instruments proved satisfactory. The performances of two receivers, an ordinary three valve set and a portable which normally derives H.T. from a dry battery, were greatly enhanced. More volume was obtained, and the reproduction was cleaner and not marred by any of the distressing signs of "motor boating." The makers figures of voltage and current output given above agree closely with those we found on test.

Buying an Eliminator

In conclusion, just a word of advice to readers who are non-technical. Before buying an eliminator of any description ascertain how much current your set consumes. If, for

example, you are contemplating the purchase of an all-power eliminator like the Ekco C.2.A, your first step should be to find out with the aid of the valve makers' curves supplied with each valve, how much filament current your valves consume. If two volt valves are used the screened-grid valve will probably take .15 amps, the detector valve will take approximately .1 amp. and, assuming your last valve is a pentode, this will consume about .3 amps. The total L.T. consumption therefore will be .45 amps. Similarly find the total H.T. current consumed by your valves (this will vary according to the amount of grid bias used) and if the total does not exceed 20 milliamperes then the C.2.A. will be quite satisfactory. But do not forget that it is always better to have a little reserve of power. Thus if your set takes, say, 20 milliamperes then it would be wiser to purchase an eliminator capable of giving at least 25 milliamperes.

If by any chance you cannot understand the valve maker's figures and curves, consult your dealer, giving him full particulars of the number and types of valves in your set, and also the voltage of your mains.



The New Electrocolor Needles

The question as to which are the best kind of needles to use, Steel, Fibres or Burmese colour needles will always be a highly controversial one. Some gramophiles swear by steel, others by fibres and an ever increasing number prefer B.C.N's. There is much to be said in favour of each. What the general verdict will be regarding the New Electrocolor needle, it is difficult to say, but here is our opinion.

We tried samples of needles on various representative makes of instrument first without the special needle adaptor which the makers supply. The results were definitely good. The piano lost the metallic clang, so noticeable with most steel needles, soprano voices were much more round and the instruments of the orchestra were well defined. String tone, particularly in chamber music, was excellent, perhaps better than we found it with B.C.N's. A point of special interest was that the decrease in volume, as compared with other non-metallic needles, was not so marked. But to obtain these results particular care was taken to keep the needles well pointed. This does not mean that we had any difficulty in getting the points to stand up. With one particular needle as many as half a dozen sides were played without re-sharpening. On the other hand, another needle had to be re-sharpened after playing two sides only; but on no occasion did we find any difficulty in playing through one side of a record. Record wear was negligible.

Using the Special Adaptor

The needles were next tested with the adaptor in use. With this, reproduction was not nearly so good. We must admit, however, that the volume was increased to about the same level as that produced by an ordinary medium steel needle. It is perhaps well to explain here why the adaptor is necessary.

Like B.C.N's, the Electrocolor needles are not uniform in diameter, most of them being larger than an ordinary steel needle, and thus it was desirable that the makers should produce some device to enable Electrocolors to be used in sound-boxes and pick-ups which are only cut for steel needles. The adaptor is gripped in the needle socket and the needle is then placed into the adaptor and held by the screw provided. To

us, this seems a very unsatisfactory method, though we realise that the problem is a difficult one. The adaptor adds extra mass which, no doubt, introduces unwanted resonances and consequently the tuning of the sound-box will be destroyed. Another disadvantage is that no matter which way the adaptor is placed in the sound-box or pick-up the alignment will be altered; in one position the alignment error is increased 100 per cent. This will result in the points breaking down more often. Perhaps the best solution is to have the needle socket enlarged. This could easily be carried out by anyone who possesses a small hand-drill. The hole in the sound-box needle socket will need very little enlarging and if care is taken the drill should follow the direction of the original hole without running out of truth.

Coming now to the actual results, the orchestra lost its definition and vocal and piano records were nasal in tone. Furthermore, the points broke down much more frequently. Fibre needle users will, no doubt, be content to continue in their own sweet way. For steel needle users and others who have hitherto been content to "Plough the grooves and chatter," Electrocolor are well worth a thorough trial. But don't expect the points to stand up on records that have already been badly scored with steel needles.

It may interest readers to know that the finest reproduction we obtained was when using a specially tuned sound-box and without the adaptor. Then, reproduction was really first-class.

The Electrocolor Needle Sharpener. Price 2s. 6d.

This is a very simple yet effective device produced by makers of Electrocolor needles. Briefly it consists of a small brass spindle to which, at one end, is fitted a rotating erinoid handle. The other end is fitted with a small chuck which, of course, grips the needle. At an appropriate distance from the chuck end of the spindle a rubber disc, $\frac{3}{8}$ of an inch in diameter and $\frac{1}{8}$ of an inch thick, is fitted. The point is produced by a backwards and forwards motion of the hand with the rubber disc resting on a table, and the needle resting on the small carborundum stone supplied with the sharpener. In practice the device is reasonably efficient providing too much pressure is not applied on the needle; otherwise, the point produced, instead of being conical, will be very irregular in shape. It is probably a much better plan to make a practice of re-sharpening the needle after every disc has been played whether it is necessary or not; then users will find that one or two light strokes across the carborundum stone will suffice to keep a good point. This will ensure good quality reproduction, and minimise any risk of producing an irregular point which prolonged sharpening would entail.

★ ★ ★

The Continuous Automatic Radio Gramophone

Price 150 guineas

A report of the Continuous Automatic Electric Gramophone was published in our November, 1929, issue. Since then all models have been greatly modified, so that now, the mechanism is much more simple, and, it is claimed, efficient. The general principle, however, remains the same and for a description of the instrument's capabilities readers must refer back to the previous report. Perhaps the outstanding modification is that a model is now available which incorporates an all-mains radio set. The circuit of this consists of one screened-grid H.F. stage and a detector stage which can be connected to the gramophone amplifier by means of a switch. The radio tuning controls are fitted to a panel situated at the back of the cabinet, and in a convenient position on the front of the cabinet an auxiliary panel is fitted.

Automatic Radio Too

On this, are the gramophone controls and a switch which enables the user to switch in any of three stations previously selected by means of the main tuning controls, and any other station within the limits of the receiver can be pre-selected and switched in at will. The set operates off a self-contained frame aerial, and sockets are provided for the connection of an external aerial and earth system. On the early models the pick-up used was a Woodroffe, but now all are fitted with modified B.T.H. pick-ups.

The reproduction of both radio programmes and records is of good quality; the treble is clean, with perhaps a tendency to be keen in the upper regions, but the bass is reproduced at just about the right strength and without being boomy.

The price given at the head of this note is for a standard model finished in oak; but walnut and mahogany cabinets are available at extra cost.

★ ★ ★

A New Radio Gramophone by Columbia

(Model 308, Price 62 guineas)

There seems to be no end to the electrical activities of Columbia. Since they entered the field of radio and electrical reproduction, about 15 months ago, no less than a dozen instruments have been produced, all of which are pre-eminent in their own class.



The latest models include an all-electric three-valve set which is available either as a table model, or mounted in a pedestal cabinet complete with loud-speaker, and an all-mains radio-gramophone (model 308) available in oak, mahogany or walnut cabinets and for either AC or DC operation. Naturally, one does not expect the 308 to be as powerful as the larger 302 but there is ample power for all home requirements. There is no doubt, whatsoever, that the reproduction of records is of very good quality. Even with the volume control set to its maximum position it is difficult to detect any distortion, but for comfortable listening the volume has to be considerably reduced. At this setting there is a cleanness and crispness about the reproduction that makes instant appeal. The reproduction on the radio side is not quite as

clean, though there is not the same disparity between radio and records as our Expert Committee found with model 302. On the model heard, hum was inaudible at a distance of six feet.

The Circuit

The circuit consists of one screened-grid H.F. stage, a Detector with reaction, one L.F. stage and a power stage utilising a Mazda PP3/425 valve. Both the audio frequency stages are transformer coupled. Full wave valve rectification is used in the mains unit which supplies H.T., L.T., grid-bias and current for the speaker field. A voltage of about

400 is applied to the plate of the PP3/425. The pick-up and speaker are both Columbia products; the speaker being a modified form of the R.K. Senior. All the necessary controls are mounted on the front of the cabinet. The new type of escutcheon plate is fitted with a pilot lamp to illuminate the dials which are calibrated in wavelengths. Another new feature is, that where separate aerial tappings are provided on models 302 and 304, a variable aerial coupling, mounted on the side panel, is incorporated in the 308.

The cabinet work, is as usual, of very high quality.

After weighing up the pros and cons of this excellent instrument one can only say "Well done, Columbia."

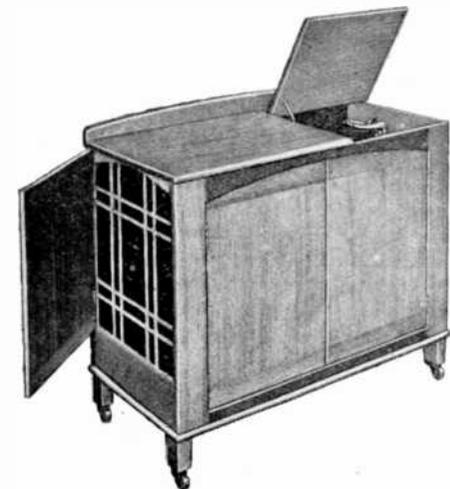


The Cascade Gramophone.

Price £25.

This rather unusual type of instrument should be of special interest to those who desire the advantages of an external horn instrument, but who have hitherto shrunk from the unwieldily appearance of such a machine. The cabinet is in the form of a sideboard, with the motor and tone-arm at one end and the mouth of the horn at the other end. The horn, which extends the full length of the cabinet, is of exponential taper and is joined to the tone-arm by a substantial brass elbow.

The rate of taper and the size of the mouth opening suggests to us that the bass cut-off is somewhere between 120-130 cycles. The tone-arm is a standard component which is so constructed that the rise and fall hinge is nearly parallel to the bore of the sound-box. Thus, when the sound-box is lowered, the needle enters the groove vertically and this minimises side pressure. On the standard instru-



ments a Meltrope 1930 No. 3 sound-box is fitted, and for fibre enthusiasts a specially made sound-box is obtainable, but this is an extra refinement which, of course, must be paid for. With the sound-box fitted to the tone-arm so that the needle angle is about 60 degs., the alignment error is quite small. The motor—a Collaro—is of the unit plate type with automatic brake, and throughout our tests it pulled steadily and strongly.

The sideboard part of the cabinet is divided up into various sections, one of which is arranged for the storing of records in a vertical position. It should be possible to fit, at least, a three-valve wireless set into one of the remaining compartments, and by attaching a loud-speaker unit, like the Brown U/GA, to the tone-arm the horn could be converted into a very satisfactory loud-speaker.

Good Reproduction.

We played all kinds of records with both steel and fibre needles. With the Meltrope sound-box and steel needles the quality was remarkably good: there was, perhaps, a little keenness displayed in the very high band of frequencies, but the middle and lower bands were well reproduced. The tone was forward, and we found that by setting the door at

the end of the cabinet to one particular angle the sound-waves could be reflected even more into the room. We now tried the instrument with fibre needles using the specially made sound-box. With this, reproduction was excellent, and the whole tone assumed rounder and fuller proportions. It was unanimously agreed that now the horn was practically reproducing the full value of the highest and lowest notes within its limits.

The general design of this instrument both in its acoustical components and in the restrained lines of the cabinet work, the excellent workmanship, and the neat and dignified appearance generally, pleased us greatly. In short, this instrument appears to us to be the most remarkable value we have yet come across in the gramophone world. The makers are W. J. Bond & Sons, Milton Avenue, Harlesden, London, N.W.10.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Being Extracts from Technical Correspondence

IMPORTANT NOTICE.—All correspondence that requires an answer must be accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope, and also the coupon which will be found on the Exchange and Mart page of THE GRAMOPHONE every month. In future the coupon will only be valid up to and including the date printed on it. Overseas readers excepted.

133. Q.—I have two Meltrope sound boxes: a Meltrope No. 1 and a Meltrope 1930 No. 3., both of which weigh 5 ozs. Are these too heavy for fibre needles?
 A.—No. As previously stated in these pages, the weight can be increased to 6 or 7 ozs., possibly with advantage.
134. Q.—Do you consider the 1930 Meltrope No. 3 sound-box suitable for use with fibres?
 A.—We have only tested this sound-box with steel needles, for which it was primarily intended. But providing it is specially tuned, it should give good results, though not as good as the tuned Meltrope No. 2.
135. Q.—I am attempting to modernise my gramophone and am working on the horn at present. I intend to use the H.M.V. Re-Entrant tone-arm, the large end bore being 1½ inches. The largest permissible opening at the large end of the horn is 13 inches by 11½ inches. Could you tell me the length of horn I require to give the best results, taking into account that the size of the cabinet will permit up to 13ft. in length?
 A.—We do not understand what you mean by "the cabinet will take up to 13ft. in length." In any case the opening at the large end is far too small to permit anything but a poor compromise. There would probably be no advantage in making the horn more than three or four feet long. (See also answer to Number 132).
136. Q.—I have recently been conducting some experiments on making my own gramophone records. I have got as far as making a kind of inverted pick-up which converts sound vibrations into vibrations in a needle. I am now stuck, however, because I need blank gramophone discs. I realise that a record of this type would be both short lived and poor in quality, but it would enable me to make a number of interesting experiments. Can you give me the name of a firm who will supply me with these blanks?
 A.—We do not know of any manufacturer who will supply you with the necessary blanks, but you might make enquiries from Record Utilities Ltd., 114, City Road, E.C.1.

TRADE WINDS

Erratum

Collaro.—On page xxvi. of the September GRAMOPHONE Messrs. Collaro Ltd. advertised a Unitplate gramophone motor Type A 30. The retail price given was 55s. This was an error, the correct price is 23s.

Varley.—This is the second attempt we have made to correct an error which appeared in the Varley advertisement for August. It was stated that the *Direct Resistance* of the Varley Pick-up was 200 ohms, this should have been 2,000 ohms.

Colour Coding and Radio

The Gramophone Company announce a new development in the solving of service problems for those engaged in the wireless and allied trades. Some of you may know that the Colour Coding system has been used in the telephone industry for years, and it is claimed that the Colour Code System evolved by the H.M.V. Technical Publications Department and those in charge of the H.M.V. Dealers Training School at Hayes is a definite advance on any which has hitherto been used. The colours adopted will be standard in all instruments, thus the dealer seeing a brown wire associated with a certain circuit in a 1930 model, will know that a brown wire will identify the same circuit in a 1940 instrument. The code is being released to the wireless and music trades and will be introduced into all H.M.V. and Marconiphone Service Manuals from now on.

We regard the colour code system as a very sensible and efficient scheme which might well have been adopted long ago. It has been in use in America for some considerable time. Dealers will, no doubt, welcome it with open arms as a very great saver of time.

A New Long-playing Steel Needle

Some time ago the British Needle Company, of Redditch, the makers of the well-known "Pyramid" needles, sent us some samples of a new steel needle for test by the Expert Committee. The results of that test were entirely satisfactory. Every needle examined had a well-formed spherical point of such a size as to fit the ordinary record groove without riding on the walls. Playing tests confirmed the conclusions arrived at from visual inspection and from the optical projections. After one or two revolutions the needle had adapted itself fully to the groove and surface noise was reduced to almost negligible proportions. Moreover, the needle was found to be good for 4 or 5 records, i.e., about 15 minutes playing time. This suggested to the Committee that it would be eminently suitable for Talkie records, but even for ordinary use they came to the conclusion that it was the most satisfactory steel needle they had tested. We now learn that the needle has been placed on sale as a special Talkie needle at the price of 3s. per box of 200 with substantial discounts for quantities.

The Philips Aerial Discharger

We are constantly hearing good reports about this safety device. A Hampshire dealer had the temerity to listen in while the recent heavy thunderstorm was at its height. He evidently had faith in the Philips Aerial Discharger which he was using at the time. Even the most violent lightning flashes only caused a mild form of atmospheric. We understand that the Discharger, which costs 9s. 6d., operates on a sort of "safety valve principle." Perhaps we shall have an opportunity of testing it for ourselves later.

A New B.T.H. Electric Gramophone Motor

The B.T.H. Company announce a new electric motor retailing at the popular price of three guineas. It is of the "universal" type and will operate either on D.C. or A.C. up to 60 cycles—a special model is available for higher frequencies. The governor is mounted on the driving shaft of the electric motor which runs at a speed of 1,200 r.p.m. Hitherto, we have not found this type of drive particularly successful in maintaining constant speed though it undoubtedly leads to a simplification in design. Another point which arouses our special interest is the fact that the brushes are of the gauze and not the carbon type: these are often successful in reducing audio-frequency interference ("hum") but in several cases that have come within our experience radio-frequency interference has been rather pronounced. We have not yet had an opportunity of testing this new motor, so we cannot say whether these problems have been satisfactorily solved. We mention them here as an indication of the first things we should look for in a motor of this type.

Edison Bell

Whilst there are a number of deletions in the Edison Bell 1930-31 catalogue as compared with the previous issue, there are also a number of new instruments included. One notes, for example, that there is now an Edison Bell Electric Gramophone. This costs £50. At the other end of the scale, and in the acoustic class, there is the Bijou Consolette at £6. In all, there are twenty-four beautifully illustrated pages dealing with all the requirements for the reproduction of records, from the Sympathic Chromic and other needles up to the large all-electric radio-gramophone.

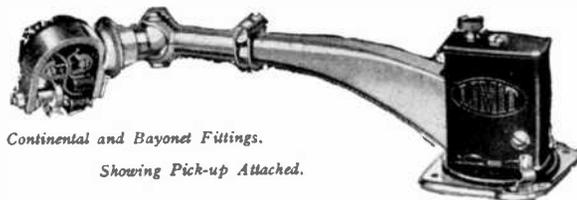
Finally, we offer our congratulations for the clear and concise details given about every instrument in the catalogue, and especially those details accompanying the electric models. There is no "Hush, hush" principle here.

Rothermels

Not only does the new Rothermel Catalogue give you the various prices and values of hundreds of radio and electric gramophone components, it tells you how to use them to the best advantage, and backs this up with circuit and wiring diagrams. Apart from radio components, quite a number of pages are devoted entirely to auditorium, public address, and talking picture equipment.

To bona-fide dealers the catalogue is gratis, and to the layman a charge of 9d. is made to cover cost of postage.

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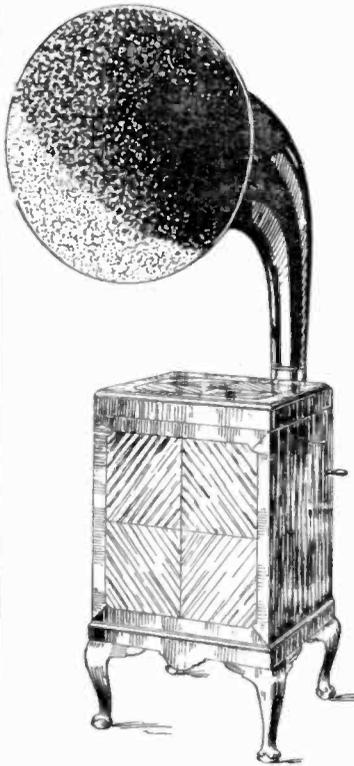
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ON STARTING A GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY

By T. MacFARLANE

(Hon. Secretary, Glasgow and District Gramophone Society)

THESE appears to be a good deal of ignorance and apathy and not a little scepticism, with regard to the functions of a Gramophone Society, even amongst gramophone owners, if one is to judge from the blank expressions and enquiring looks of those to whom an appeal is made to join a Gramophone Society. This being so perhaps a few remarks on the objects of a Gramophone Society may not be out of place as a prelude to what I have to say with reference to the inauguration of such a society.

The reason for the formation of a Gramophone Society, as of any other social or technical group, is to be traced to a desire, on the part of those comprising the membership, to get together with the object of exploiting their collective knowledge and experience of that which interests them with a view to acquiring further knowledge and to diffusing such knowledge amongst their contemporaries. Thus, a Gramophone Society is primarily a body of people interested in the gramophone and its music, banded together to study its mechanism and development for the purpose of increasing their knowledge of the instrument and its music and thereby, if possible, enlarging their appreciation of good music and, may I add? endeavouring to "assist in helping mechanical music to aim high," to quote an exhortation of the London Editor to a recent conference of musicians.

The methods to be adopted for successfully founding a Gramophone Society must necessarily depend upon the nature of the locality wherein it is proposed to start.

It is, I think, futile to think of starting a Gramophone Society in a small community as, though the instrument has a very cosmopolitan appeal, it will usually be found that the number of gramophone users sufficiently interested in its musical development is comparatively small. Much will depend upon the initial steps and subsequent management whether or not the venture meets with success.

Assuming a group of people interested in such a venture, several methods are open to them to accomplish their object. One method may take the form of a small advertisement in the Press inviting all interested to communicate, or a letter to the Editor in the correspondence columns will serve, or the two may be combined. Another, and probably more direct method, with some immediate prospect of success, is to get in touch with the local music sellers and gramophone dealers. The trade will usually be found willing to assist with the names and addresses of their customers, if properly approached. These should be written to and invited to attend a preliminary meeting, such invitation to contain an outline of the objects of the proposed society and the purpose of the meeting. The advantages of a Gramophone Society to gramophone owners and prospective owners should receive due emphasis. The two methods, Press and Circular Letter, may also be combined or, and this may be found to be the better plan, a preliminary meeting of customers may be called in the dealer's premises and a small provisional committee formed to carry out the initial steps in the formation of the society. The chief objection to the latter course is the fact that it is open to the criticism that the proposed venture is an advertising stunt on behalf of the trade.

It will be an advantage to create interest in the project amongst local musical people of standing and to encourage them to take active part in an inaugural meeting: such influence will be of inestimable value in attracting likely people to the society. Contact with local musical societies, clubs,

etc., will also prove to be advantageous as many of their members will be gramophone users and interested in its music—the day for musicians to look askance upon the gramophone as a musical instrument is fortunately past.

Having arranged a public meeting plan to have the objects of the Society briefly and concisely expounded by someone competent to do so; a friendly disposed musical critic or musician of local repute would be an admirable exponent. Should the response be such as to encourage the formation of a society, proceed with the formation of a provisional committee for the purpose of preparing a draft constitution and arranging a syllabus of meetings, etc. Should, as the result of the adoption of some of the above suggestions, a committee have been formed prior to the public meeting, it will be a great advantage if it come prepared with a sketch syllabus of meetings suggestive of the lines upon which the society may be run, for presentation to the meeting. This will have the effect of influencing quite a large number to join up who might otherwise sit on the fence and await developments.

The first duty of the management committee is to draft a constitution for the good government of the society, also a syllabus of meetings. Avoid overloading the constitution with superfluous rules, a few well drawn up rules will be of greater value than a prolix document which nobody will take time to read.

A comprehensive syllabus will include monthly recitals of the latest recordings; these can be furnished by the local dealers most of whom will be found willing to co-operate with the society in staging these recitals and also supplying records and machines for the purpose.

The educational side of the work should be kept well to the forefront, prominent local musicians and others invited to lecture to the society, preferably on musical subjects or subjects with a musical background; these should, as far as possible be accompanied by gramophone illustrations.

Other evenings may be devoted to competitions confined to members at which they should be invited to enter records for competition, a prize of records to be given for the best record, to be decided by the popular vote of the members present. These will usually be found to be popular evenings. Members should be invited to take up special evenings, either singly or in pairs. Other special nights can be arranged, *e.g.*, operatic, orchestral, symphonic, etc. By this means a very interesting and educative series of meetings can be sustained. Avoid the hackneyed but sustain the interest by variation whilst seeking to preserve the tone of the meetings at a high level free from stunts.

Arrange demonstrations of machines and accessories at every opportunity; members welcome such opportunities for acquiring fresh knowledge. Seek the co-operation of the trade, manufacturers and dealers, for this purpose; both will be found willing to assist well-managed societies for the opportunities for publicity which such demonstrations afford, particularly as they have a ready-made, partially "converted" audience, a publicity asset in these days of keen competition.

Encourage the "Novice" in gramophone matters to join the society. The society is of peculiar advantage to the beginner in helping him or her to avoid the cheap-jack and the charlatan, of whom the gramophone trade has its share as in other trades.

Keep in touch with the trade Press, this is essential if the

Society is to keep abreast of trade developments, and so be of real service to the members in all matters appertaining to the progress of recorded music.

One word on "Housing." This is important. The writer is strongly of the opinion that this question has had not a little to do with the failure of several societies lately; if there is one thing that is essential for the proper appreciation of music it is that the environment should be in harmony with the high spiritual attributes of this form of art. This is impossible if the recording room is cold and comfortless, with faulty acoustics, bad seating, etc. Music has a high spiritual and emotional appeal, it is worth while seeing to it that the atmosphere is *right* for its proper reception.



Novice Corner

Some Musical Terms

By ALEC ROBERTSON

Canon

Exact imitation of a given melody in another part at the same or different pitch and beginning a few beats later. A (very) modern example occurs in the last movement of the good Franck *Violin Sonata*. Another well-known example is Tallis' *Canon* (treble and tenor parts in canon), sung in Hymns Ancient and Modern: "Glory to Thee, my God, this Night."

Imitation

A freely applied principle of the above. Almost any prelude of the "48" will show Bach imitating, with a large measure of fidelity, the melody of another part. Later composers use the device not so continuously, but very frequently. Indeed a composer can hardly help doing so, for imitation, especially in works for many instruments, binds the music together and creates the feeling of intelligent conversation between the various parts.

Sequence

Another form of imitation which occurs in the same part. This is an easy way to make your music grow: just go on repeating a melodic idea at a higher and then a higher pitch! Used carelessly constant sequences become intolerable. The ear always, more or less, expects a sequence; but one also in conversation expects, and fears, platitudes ("how small the world is!"). Equally the unfailing provision of sequences creates the effect of platitudes. Gounod fell into this trap; Beethoven kept out of it!

Tempo Rubato

"Robbed time." This means quickening or slackening the time within a bar according to the impulse of the performer. It is not, however, a case of robbing Peter to pay Paul as the license taken must be made good within the same bar. This is where *tempo rubato* differs from a definite direction to slacken or quicken. Needless to say the inexpert and conscienceless do horrible things—particularly to poor Chopin and other romantics—in the name of *rubato* destroying utterly the shape of the music and falsifying its emotional content. One cannot be taught to apply *rubato*; it proceeds from an inner conviction which is part of a true artist's "make-up."

The writer's enthusiasm for the Gramophone Society movement is founded on a belief that there is a niche for the gramophone in the scheme of things musical and that the Gramophone Society fulfils a useful function in catering for those who, but for the advent of mechanical music, would have been still wandering in the wilderness.

The gramophone has long since outlived the "Canned Music" stage in its development. To-day there is no better medium for enlarging the field of musical knowledge, either of the layman or the musician. Because it is simple in action, well-nigh limited in its scope and universal in its appeal, it is the greatest musical invention of this or any other age.

Pianistic

If one makes a transcription of an orchestral work there will be in it many passages that are not "pianistic," that is, not suitable to the medium of the piano because conceived in another medium. For instance, string writing and piano writing are totally different things. Most of Berlioz, to take a notable example, sounds very dull and even ugly on the piano, whereas his music comes off splendidly on the orchestra, for which it was written. Pianistic writing always lies well under the fingers.

Passacaglia

One of the old dance forms in three-four time and constructed on a ground bass. A ground bass is a short melodic phrase for the bass repeated over and over again, but with new harmonies and melodies above it. Good examples occur in Arensky's *Basso ostinato* or Purcell's *When I am laid in earth*, the great soprano aria from *Dido and Aeneas*. This piece shows just how beautiful an academic device may become in the hands of a genius. Bach's great *Passacaglia* for the organ has lately been recorded. Brahms used this form for the last movement of his *Fourth Symphony in E minor*, also recorded.

Coloratura

This word is usually applied to a high soprano voice of a very flexible nature which is called upon, in coloratura music, to indulge in vocal pyrotechnics of all kinds. Strictly speaking florid music for any voice comes under the definition of coloratura. Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti, early Verdi used this device for mere display. Rimsky-Korsakov shows that coloratura can fulfil an artistic purpose in such pieces as the *Hindu Song* (for tenor, by the way) from *Sadko*, or the high soprano aria *Hymn to the Sun* from the *Golden Cockerel*.

An interesting letter

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[All letters and manuscripts should be written on one side only of the paper and should be addressed to the Editor, THE GRAMOPHONE, 10a, Soho Square, London, W.1. The writer's full name and address must be given. A stamped envelope must be enclosed if an answer or the return of the manuscript is desired. The Editor wishes to emphasise the obvious fact that the publication of letters does not imply his agreement with the views expressed by correspondents.]

CABINET WORK.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE).

DEAR SIR,—Why is the cabinet-making in most gramophones and wireless sets so dreadful in design? Those illustrated in your September issue nearly all have bastardised Chippendale or Jacobean legs and imitation Gothic fretwork fronts. Don't the gramophone makers realize how fast many industries are moving in the direction of better taste? (Witness the revolution in the past few years in electric light fittings in hotels and cinemas, and in domestic furnishing generally.) The modern motor car is a thing of beauty; its fine lines and shapes are expressive because the dead hand of the "period" designer has been kept off the job. (Though I did see once a terrible car, panelled and grained in imitation of oak.)

And what about the modern taste for colour? Is there any just cause or impediment why I shouldn't be able to choose a simply designed grey, black, white, jade green, or blue gramophone if I want one to suit a decently designed room? Must one always be limited to highly varnished mahogany, oak, or walnut?

If I buy a motor car I have the choice of several colours, in the best makes. Wouldn't H.M.V. and Columbia do a fine thing if they decided to offer a choice of colour to prospective purchasers?

The answer is in the affirmative, but they would first of all have to scrap the impossible Chippendale and Jacobean trimmings and get down to the job of designing cabinet work expressive of the gramophone, and not a mere imitation of a suburban sideboard.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN ADAMS.

Broadstone.

ELGAR.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE).

DEAR SIR,—The August number of THE GRAMOPHONE has just reached me here.

In this district of the Wartburg, where everyone is securely enmeshed in the Wagner net, and where even the villas are named "Tannhäuser" and "Lohengrin," it is refreshing to hear from England that there is still someone who has the courage to write publicly in favour of Elgar.

Mr. W. R. Anderson's enthusiastic article has filled me with great solace. He is concerned, and rightly concerned, about the non-appreciation of Elgar's music abroad. In my travels in France and Germany, I always make a point of asking music-lovers I meet if they like Elgar. Then I wait with baited breath for the answer, feeling rather like a small boy pestering his elders with childish and impertinent questions. The result is always the same. I am asked to repeat the name. Then comes a look of complete blankness, and the inevitable question: "Who is Elgar?" Baffled but unbeaten, I say proudly that he is "a great English composer." Which produces a polite "Ah?" and just the faintest suspicion of an incredulous smile. And the matter is usually left at that,

because I feel alone and unsupported, and have not the courage to go on.

It is perfectly obvious that to the average European modern England is still "a nation of shop-keepers." That is our métier, and he is quite willing to admit that we do it well; but as for producing great art—no, that is unthinkable: dismissed with a gesture.

The French indifference to Elgar is probably permanent—the temperamental gulf gapes too wide between the two races. It is impossible to imagine a public that has been nourished on Massenet and Debussy ever being able to appreciate either the mystic Elgar or the martial Elgar. Even the purely lyrical Elgar has something too sturdily British for French ears. But the great symphonic masterpieces—the Symphonies and the Violin Concerto—should appeal if only for the greatness of their construction. And yet we English do not help our French neighbours in the matter. I remember a concert being given by the London Symphony Orchestra in the Casino at Dieppe a few years ago. Elgar himself conducted half the programme, but I think I am right in saying that the only Elgar that was played was *Cockaigne*. How could this intensely British impression of the London of the early years of the century be expected to make any real appeal to Latin hearers?

With the Germans the ignorance and indifference is harder to understand. Granted that the average German music-lover is constitutionally unable to see beyond Beethoven and Wagner, yet one would have thought that the work of Richter and Richard Strauss for Elgar would have lasted longer than it has. Why has Strauss deserted his former protégé? And why should these two eminent Germans have become so enthusiastic over Elgar if there were not something in his music which made a definite appeal to German mentality? The *First Symphony* is full of that deep brooding over the problems of life which is so dear to the German mind; yet it is unknown here in Germany, as is all the rest of Elgar's work. In vain I search the wireless programmes—there is nothing: not even *Salut d'Amour* on a guitar.

Coming to our own country, I wish I could agree with Mr. Anderson that "British dispraisers of Elgar are probably fewer now than ever before—" and that "Elgar has outlived the odium of not belonging to the right musical social circle at the start." I may have been unfortunate, but my own personal impression in England has been that Elgar is regarded as a back-number by many who profess to "know" his music, and that those who do not know it apparently prefer to remain in ignorance. I am speaking of intelligent, music-loving amateurs. Among all my friends who possess gramophones and love good music, there is only one who has any Elgar records, and then only one set.

And I have definitely found that with a certain type of professional musician, what Stanford, in his *History of Music*, icily described as Elgar's "want of regular academic training," will always be a bar to warm-hearted appreciation of his work. I do not think this is an exaggeration. It is a very dreadful thing to become a great musician without the aid of the Royal College of Music.

One need not be provincial, or narrowly patriotic, or intensely religious, to feel the spirit of greatness that hovers in the cathedral during a performance of *The Apostles* or *The Kingdom* at a Three Choirs Festival. We shall not much longer see the grave, slow-moving figure of the composer on these occasions. When he is gone, there will, perhaps, be a greater realisation of the genius that has been in our midst. And when the works of the bright young moderns who so despise him have slipped from our memories, together with all those other things that have given us temporary entertainment in this life, Elgar's name will be with the immortals.

Yours faithfully,

Winterstein,
Thuringia.

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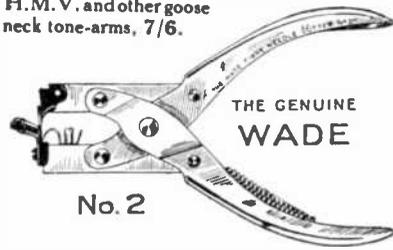


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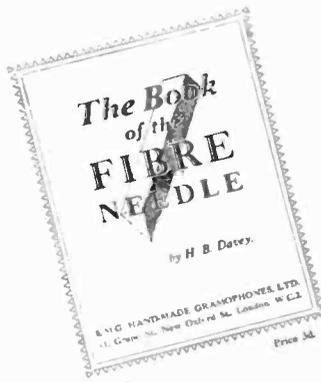
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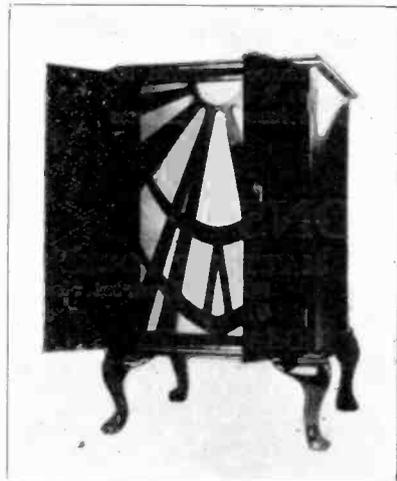
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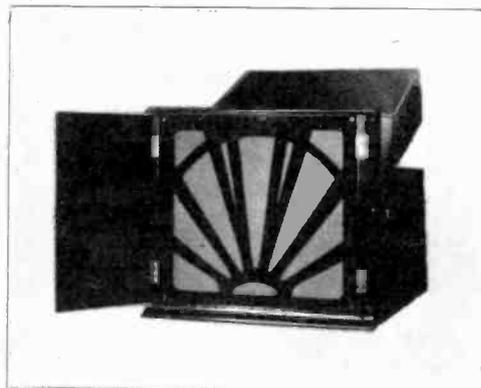
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STERNO OCTOBER



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 - *Exactly Like You (Fox-Trot) " S. Coslow
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 - *Any time's the time to fall in love (Fox-Trot) (Both from Film "Paramount on Parade")
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- 475 *I like to do thlogs for you (Fox-Trot) (From Film "King of Jazz") Ager-Yellen
 - *Have a little faith in me (Fox-Trot) (From Film "Spring is Here") H. Warren
- 476 *Sing, you Sinners (Fox-Trot) Coslow-Hartling
 - *In my little Hope Chest (Both from Film "Honey") " "
- 498 Dancing with Tears in my Eyes (Waltz) Dublin-Burke
Cuban Love Song (Fox-Trot) Keith-Guest
- FRANK BROWNE (America's Premier Xylophonist) AND HIS BROWNIES**
- 477 *Handsome Gigolo Bramer-Casucci-Keyes
 - *Here comes Emily Brown Conrad-Meskill
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- 478 *Selection from Film "King of Jazz" (Part 1) Ager-Yellen
 - *Selection from Film "King of Jazz" (Part 2) " "
 - 479 *Falling in Love again (Waltz) Hollander-Connelly-Winstrom
 - *Blonde Women (Fox-Trot) (Both from Film "The Blue Angel") " "
- BERNIE BLAKE AND HIS ORCHESTRA**
- 480 *Sing a little Theme Song (Fox-Trot) Dublin-Burke
 - *When the Little Red Roses (get the blues for you) (Fox-Trot) (Both from Film "Hold Everything") Dublin-Burke

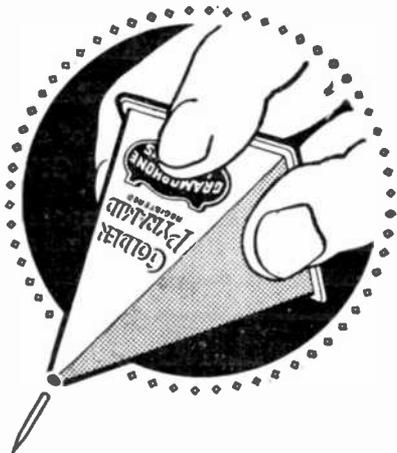
- EDGAR ADELER'S HAWAIIAN PLAYERS with V. M. GASTON (Marimba)**
- 481 Manila Moon (Waltz) V. M. Gaston
 - Hawaiian Love (Waltz) " "
- TOM E. LEE (Light Baritone)**
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- 482 The Minstrel Boy (a) Arr. H. S.
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- STANLFY KENNEDY (Tenor)**
- 483 Into my Heart (From Film "Gay Madrid") Ahlert-Turk
 - The One Girl (From Film "Song of the West") Youmans-Hammerstein II.
- RONNIE RHODES (Tenor)**
- 484 Song of the Dawn (From Film "King of Jazz") Ager-Yellen
 - Give me back my Heart (You'll not be wanting it again) (From Film "Symphony in Two Flats") Ivor Novello
- JEFFREY GREENHALGH (Tenor)**
- 485 If I'm Dreaming (Here's the Boy, Here's the Girl) Burke-Dubin
 - Look for the Silver Lining Kern-De Sylva
 - (Both from Film "Sally")
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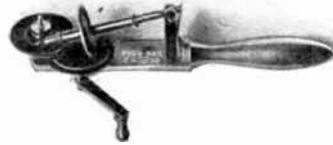
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