

## BAND RECORDS

(May and June issues.)

- ACO.—G.15666 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Welsh Guards: *Hiawatha Suite: The Marriage Feast, Conjuror's Dance, and The Departure and Reunion* (Coleridge-Taylor).
- ACO.—G.15667 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Welsh Guards: *Sanctuary of the Heart* (Ketelbey) and *The Bells of Hazelmere* (Baden).
- BELTONA.—748 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—The Beltona Military Band: *Turkish Patrol* (Michaelis) and *King Cotton March* (Sousa).
- BELTONA.—749 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—The Beltona Military Band: *Cinderella's Bridal Procession* (Dieker) and *The Sutherland Orchestra: Pique Dame Overture* (Suppé).
- BELTONA.—750 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—The Beltona Military Band: *Cavalry of the Clouds* and *The Mad Major Marches* (Alford).
- IMPERIAL.—1389 (10in., 2s.).—Australian Newcastle Steelworks Band: *MacGregor's Wedding* (Campbell) and *The Laughing Trombone* (Walling).
- IMPERIAL.—1422 (10in., 2s.).—St. Hilda Colliery Band: *Overture to Faust* (Gounod) and *Le Retour March* (Thornton).
- IMPERIAL.—1423 (10in., 2s.).—St. Hilda Colliery Band: *Narcissus* (Nevin) and *King Peg March* (Giovanni).
- PARLOPHONE.—E.5359 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Parlophone Military Band: *Old Comrades March* (Teike) and *The Imperial Guards March* (Foss).
- H.M.V.—C.1195 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Coldstream Guards: *Carnival Suite—Cavalcade, Pierrette, Harlequin, Columbine and Frolic* (M. Ring).
- VOCALION.—K.05159 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Life Guards: *La Boutique Fantasque* (Rossini-Respighi).
- VOCALION.—K.05169 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Life Guards: *The Emerald Isle Selection* (Sullivan-German).
- ZONOPHONE.—2550 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Horwich R.M.I. Band: *Libella Overture* (Reissiger) and *Slavonic Rhapsody* (Friedmann).

Coleridge-Taylor's *Hiawatha Suite* is not very attractive music, and all my efforts to find any magic in the theme or *leger de main* in the treatment of *The Conjuror's Dance* have failed dismally. The three numbers are played and recorded adequately, except that the cornets are apt to shriek if a full tone needle is used. The other Aco record contains a couple of pieces which I can only liken to some of the verse of Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

The Beltona record of Cinderella's *Bridal Procession* is so like the recent Aco record that I suspect that "Beltona Military Band" in this instance is merely a pseudonym (or in the case of a military band should it be *nom de guerre*?) for the Welsh Guards Band. That being so one's choice will be decided by the reverse side, which, on this record, is a very much cut but pleasant version of *Pique Dame Overture*, competently played by a small orchestra. The three marches played by the Beltona Military Band are all excellently recorded. The *Mad Major* and *King Cotton*, deservedly old favourites, are played with great verve. *Cavalry of the Clouds*, equally well played, is new to me, and I was at once struck by the aptness of the title, the piccolo having an important part in the instrumentation!

*MacGregor's Wedding* is an old acquaintance (I regret I cannot say friend) of mine. The re-labelling removes the libel on Mr. Edward German, but I still think that the "Bandmaster's Wedding" would be a better title! The two St. Hilda Colliery Band records are wonderful value at 2s. each. The only fault I find with the recording is that the trombones must have been badly placed as they sound miles away and the only flaw in the playing is that in the *Faust Overture* the penultimate note in many phrases in "Even bravest heart" is not given its full value, but played almost like an acciaccatura.

The *Imperial Guards* and *Old Comrades* marches combine to make an amazing record, if only for sheer weight of tone attained without a trace of harshness or blast even with a Trumpeter needle. I have never heard a less "gramophony" reproduction of a military band.

*Carnival Suite* is a very graceful and tuneful suite of five short sketches. I do not remember having heard it before,

though *Columbine* is reminiscent—of what I am unable to say. *Cavalcade* is a little monotonous, but the other numbers are very pleasant, while the playing and recording are what one expects from the Coldstream Guards and the Gramophone Company respectively.

I was delighted to see last month that the Editor had placed *La Boutique Fantasque* as the best band record of the quarter, as I had already earmarked it for further consideration in due course as the best in the first half of the year. I hope there will be a large sale for this record; the music is delightful, the recording could hardly be improved upon, while Lieutenant Eldridge's sense of rhythm is superb. Having exhausted my superlatives, I can only say that I am very glad to add the selection from the Emerald Isle to my own collection. It is an intriguing speculation as to how much of the music is Sullivan's and how much German's. I have not had time to find out definitely yet, but I will do so for the benefit of those interested.

Both *Libella Overture* and the *Slavonic Rhapsody* are bright tuneful music, and the playing is brilliant even if a little on the "light" side. I believe the *Slavonic Rhapsody* was specially arranged for this band by Mr. Greenwood, though other bands now include it in their repertoire. A rhapsody bears severe cutting better than most forms of music, but I cannot help feeling that two sides might have been devoted to it. I commend this record to all who want to know what a first-class brass band really can do.

W. A. C.

(June issues.)

- ACO.—F.33075 (12in., 4s.).—Band of H.M. Welsh Guards: *Aida Selection* (Verdi) and *Mignon Selection* (Thomas).
- ACO.—G.15684 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Welsh Guards: *Turkish Patrol* (Michaelis) and *The Mad Major March* (Alford).
- COLUMBIA.—9041 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Grenadier Guards: *Reminiscences of Tosti* (arr. Pougher), Parts 1 and 2.
- H.M.V.—C.1199 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Coldstream Guards: *Lustspiel Overture* (Kéler-Béla) and *La Voix des Cloches* (Luigini).
- VOCALION.—K.05175 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Life Guards: *Capriccio Italien* (Tchaikovsky), Parts 1 and 2.

The selection from *Aida* is very well "strung" together, and, containing as it does part of the well-known *Triumphal March*, forms an admirable selection for a military band. It is both well played and recorded. The *Mignon* selection, however, is not so good an arrangement, being very scrappy. The airs contained in this selection are the best known ones, but only parts of them are played. Surely it would have been better to omit one altogether and play the others more fully. Even the famous *Polonaise* is badly truncated. The playing is rather nerveless, and lacking in attack. The *Turkish Patrol* and the *Mad Major March* are, I think, identical with the Beltona records previously mentioned, further comment, therefore, being unnecessary.

The selection of Tosti's songs makes a very enjoyable record. I have been particularly interested as it contains more than one air which I know quite well, but which, frankly, I had no idea previously were by Tosti. As the Columbia supplement says, the selection is representative of both his Italian and English songs. The brisk, firm playing, coupled with careful choice of the songs, makes the record singularly free from that trace of sentimentality which one might almost expect to find. I said a few months ago that this band had made a record of music more suited to Marek Weber's Orchestra. In this case the position is reversed; I do not think I should like this selection as I imagine Weber would play it.

*Lustspiel Overture*—a piece one never hears except in a military band programme—has some rather commonplace moments, though it is tuneful. The playing leaves nothing to be desired, while the recording is one of the best band recordings the Gramophone Company have ever done. The tone is very full and forward, and has a most realistic ring. I like Luigini much better in his ballet suites than in *La Voix des Cloches*, which I find very boring and characterless. Playing and recording are good.

The Life Guards have given us the best band rendering of *Capriccio Italien*, with its melodies and rhythms reminiscent of Italian folk-songs and dances, that I have heard. It is a desirable record in every way.

W. A. C.