

**HIS MASTER'S VOICE.**

C.1244 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Royal Air Force: In a Chinese Temple Garden (Ketèlbey) and The Gondolier and Nightingale, Op. 49 (Langey).

B.2239 (10in., 3s.).—Band of H.M. Royal Air Force: Wien bleibt Wien (Schranel) and Father of Victory March (Ganne).

**VOCALION.**

K.05220 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Life Guards: Martial Moments, Parts 1 and 2 (arr. A. Winter).

K.05224 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Band of H.M. Life Guards: Nell Gwynne Dances, Parts 1 and 2 (German).

A complete (so far as I can judge without a score) and competent rendering of the famous *William Tell Overture* for five shillings is good value. The music lends itself admirably to division into four more or less equal parts. The flute, in the obbligato to the oboe solo on side two, is rather incoherent in the lower register, but otherwise the recording is good.

*Lake of Shadows* and *Dreamland Bells* will appeal to those who like sweet nothings. Both are unadulterated saccharine. The former is both more tuneful and better recorded.

The Actuelle records of the Garde Républicaine Band are at times rather monotonous in their lack of variety of tone colour. In *Marche Slav* the tubophone gives welcome relief in this direction and is very well recorded. *Le Bienheureux* is very commonplace and played stodgily. *Danza Exotica* is quite new to me and in parts is strongly reminiscent of Luigini. The music is, on the whole, disappointing, and my copy of the record makes some very unpleasant noises. It may be that the instrument playing the air at the beginning is one with which I am unacquainted, but if it is the flute, as I imagine, it sounds as if some mischievous boy had put a pea in it! The recording throughout is not very successful, the tone being rather harsh.

Jules Massenet not infrequently descended to pot-boilers, and *Neapolitan Scenes* is of this class. *The Dance* might have been all right as the accompaniment to a ballet, but is almost worthless intrinsically, while *The Fête* is a mere swirl of noise—as, of course, fêtes usually are! Both these are played with singularly little gradation of tone, and, in fact, the best part about this record is the actual recording.

The duplication and triplication of the same things by different companies does not make a reviewer's task any easier, but I am going to take the plunge by declaring the Grenadier Guards' version of *Wembley Tattoo* to be the best issued yet. True the "battle" is puerile and feeble and the bellowing of words of command overdone and tiring, but the tone is free from stridency throughout (even when the fifes are doing their damndest) and the "dying away in the distance" effect is nothing short of marvellous. The general programme of the records is much the same as those previously issued by other companies, but they differ in details. Perhaps the best feature of all is that the choruses sound as if the singers are really enjoying themselves. Two sides of Hope, Glory, Pomp, and Circumstance is rather a lot at once. The chorus from *Land of Hope and Glory*, when it occurs in the march, is sung by a soloist and chorus, while on the other side two verses of the song are sung by Harold Williams, accompanied by the band with a chorus joining in the refrains. The solo voice throughout has rather a hollow effect—as is not infrequent in vocal records made by the new process—but the volume of sound when the chorus add their weight to Mr. Williams and the band is enough to make the Associated Glee Clubs of America turn green with envy.

The more I hear the records made by Lieut.-Colonel Mackenzie-Rogan's band the more I marvel that other bands do not follow their example and use tympani when recording. Even when they are not as loud as they might be depth is added to the tone and the Duophone Company now manage them so well that the roundness of tone is very realistic and the pitch can be distinguished. *Morning, Noon and Night* is typically Suppésque. Gay tunes strung together with rather obvious packing. The inner parts are particularly well played and recorded. In a *Persian Market* is both well played and chattered! The two marches are played in real march time; a band of this calibre having no need to show off its virtuosity. The selection from H.M.S. *Pinafore* is so good that my only regret is that it does not occupy a twelve-inch disc, so that more of these good healthy tunes might have been played in full.

The new record by the Royal Air Force Band is rather disappointing. On one side the bells, brazen gongs, and other gadgets that go to make up this pseudo Chinese music, are magnificently

recorded, but the music itself is so banal; while on the other, in addition to the banality of the music, we have to suffer from some really piercing noises. The tone of the piccolo sounds as if the record has been made in a huge cathedral, or some similar building, with the piccolo player standing right on top of the recording apparatus. All this goes to prove that the new process of recording is still in a state of extreme infancy, and that the placing of the instrumentalists demands as much care as ever it did. The two marches played by this band are very pedestrian. Of the two *Wien bleibt Wien* is the better. Recording is good.

Good though the latest version of *Martial Moments* is, I prefer the more virile playing in that by the Grenadier Guards. The balance in the former is almost perfect, but the cymbals sound rather tame when compared with a record made by the new process. My copy of this record has the labels on the wrong sides, and as it is a properly labelled and not an advance copy, presumably some will have been put on the market in the same condition! In the first of the three *Nell Gwynne Dances* the tempo is rather fast and the rhythm slightly distorted, with the result that the rocking lilt it should have is lost. Otherwise these dances are daintily played with a nice subdued tone.

W. A. C.

**MISCELLANEOUS RECORDS**

The raciest record this month is *London and Daventry calling*, by the **Savoy Orpheans**, on H.M.V., C.1251 (4s. 6d.). It is an excellent skit on wireless, and so briskly carried out that a certain crudeness of attack is probably desirable.

There are people that I know who cannot keep their seats when the band strikes up *Valencia*. It is one of the three or four irresistible tunes of the moment, but **Moschetto** has not been well supported by his orchestra in his record of it on Vocalion X.9749 (3s.) with a dullish Tchaikovsky song, *Why are the roses so pale?* on the back. It is a pity that **Moschetto** just misses the really first-class record so often. **De Groot** hardly ever does, and the suavity of his *In Shadowland* and *All Alone* (H.M.V., B.2261, 3s.) disarms criticism. Wonderful recording marks the **Salon Orchestra** as usual (H.M.V., B.2277, 3s.), but why inflict *Marcheta* and *June brought the roses on us* again?

A "novelty" piano solo, *Syncopated Moonbeams*, by **Tony Fones**, on Aco G.15917 (2s. 6d.), is extremely attractive and **Mario de Pietro** performs prodigies of activity on the mandoline in a *Bolero* and *Danza e cantabile* of Calace on Aco G.15918 (2s. 6d.). **Max Darewski** has a charming waltz, *Rylda*, of his own composition and Tchaikovsky's *Chanson Triste* on Zono. 2704 (2s. 6d.).

Last month's correspondents were asking for spoken records; and here comes one, on Vocalion K.05216 (4s. 6d.), with the *Seven Ages* and *Poor Yorick*, and a hotch-potch called *Shakespeare's War Cry*, declaimed by **Henry Baynton**. Mr. Baynton's admirers may treasure it, and it may prove useful for educational purposes, though I think there are some textual slips. My chief wonder is what Mr. Baynton thought of his own voice and manner of delivery when he first heard the record. Wasn't it rather a shock to him?

The songsters are in great voice this month, and I am bewildered by all the versions of *Ukulele Lady*, *Ukulele Baby*, and *Ukulele Lullaby*. (Ukulele, I understand, means Dancing Flea!) **George Berry** gets the prize for the two stupidest songs on one record, *Twenty-five and six* and *The more I see of Mary Seymour* (Imperial 1560, 2s.), but the latter has a good tune. The admirers of **Dick Henderson**—and they are very many—will be glad to have excellent records of his "Ha! Ha! Joke's over!" in *Yorkshire* and *Pal of my cradle days* (Imperial 1567, 2s.) and *Lancashire* and *Had I but known* (Imperial 1559, 2s.). **Billy Williams** and his genial laugh rattle through a couple of "Father" songs on Aco G.15763 (3s.) and **Harry Fay** contributes four music hall ditties of the moment on Parlo. 5556 and 5557 (2s. 6d. each). **Frederick Bishop** is robust and clear in *Hugo* and *Sleepy Time Gal* (Parlo. 5555, 2s. 6d.), but for the latter song—which is better than most—I prefer **Norman Clark**, who sings it to a guitar accompaniment, with *Paddlin' Madelin' Home* (Voc. X.9753, 3s.) very charmingly. This is worth getting. **Charles Bonheur** and **Guy Victor** are reliable on their Imperial records, and the ease of **Bruce Wallace's** sometimes strident tenor voice (on Parlophones) does not fail to attract; but I feel that I cannot do justice every month to these regular performers. They sing poor stuff, but they do it most competently; and every now and then they are moved to excellence. Of **Billy Desmond** this is especially true. He knows (none better) that his