

Peggy Cochrane's performance of the *Saltarelle* has a cheerful, unpretentious quality that I like, and *Little Fire Fly*, if not quite so good, is still agreeable. The recording is adequate without being impeccable.

Sandler.—I have already remarked on the excellence of *Sandler's* playing and this record does nothing to change my opinion, though perhaps some of his brilliant passage-work in the *Czardas* is a little hard. But I wish the reproduction of the middle and low registers of his violin could be improved and that the piano introductions to both pieces sounded less "tinny."

Harold Macpherson adds two more discs to his pleasant series of Scotch records. To my shame, I must confess that I don't know what a *Gaberlunzie* is, but his wallet is certainly full of good things. I find I like *Macpherson* best in his quick rhythmic movements, but some of the slow melodies are very lovely.

Fradkin.—There is something wrong with my pressing of this record; the violin tone has an "edge" that is most unpleasant. Under the circumstances it would be unfair to criticise, though if the shade of *Beethoven* were evoked by his lovely *Minuet* he would have lots to say, I fancy, about *Mighty lak' a Rose*.

The two naively coquettish little Francoeur pieces are altogether delightful, especially the first; but *Hubay's Zephyr* comes to very little musically, however interesting from the technical standpoint. In their struggle to make the new process reproduce the violin solo as well as it does the orchestra the experts are still gaining ground, but *Zephyr* is a severe test for any method of recording. The *Milhaud* item on *Szigeti's* other disc is full of invention and its harmonic novelties are less disturbing than in most of the work of the advanced French school. It makes an excellent foil to *Beethoven's Minuet*. The violin in this record has a very noticeable "edge" in loud sustained passages, especially if these lie at all high, but otherwise the effect is pleasant. The renderings are all discreet and intelligent.

Daisy Kennedy plays the *Londonderry Air* with good tone and I like nearly (but not quite) everything she does with it. Has *Cyril Scott* written two *Danses Nègres*? The one given here bears hardly any resemblance to the piano piece I know. It is none the worse for this, however, and on the whole this is a record well worth hearing, though the surface is inclined to be noisy.

Kreisl's record will probably sound all right in a really big room; in one of moderate (I do not say small) proportions it is not free from the harshness noticeable in so many of the new process violin discs. The playing is as perfect as ever, but the *Andantino* is deplorably commonplace music.

Vasa Prihoda.—This *Caprice* is the flashy thing that one would expect from an executant who allows the words "Le célèbre Violiniste" to appear before his name on the label. He plays it in the only way such music can be played, but even the most celebrated violinist cannot make an entirely pianistic composition like *Chopin's Berceuse* effective or beautiful on the violin. The recording is inclined to be "gritty."

Kutcher.—*Polichinelle Serenade* is a pleasant example of light, playful music, though I don't think much of the piece that goes with it. The performance of both items is excellent and the violin is reproduced with a mellow sweetness that is very refreshing.

'CELLO.

ACO.

G.16067 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—*Peter Muscant*: *Poëm* (*Fibich-Kubelik*) and *None but the weary heart* (*Tchaikovsky*).

PARLOPHONE.

E.10505 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—*Emanuel Feuermann*: *Hungarian Rhapsody* (*Popper*). Two sides.

Muscant.—These are two doleful ditties dolefully (but by no means badly) played. The *Tchaikovsky* comes off the better of the two, though it seems a pity to confine the 'cello so exclusively to its upper register. Possibly the reason is a practical one; anyhow, the lower notes used in the *Fibich* piece are not entirely satisfactory.

Feuermann's record increases my respect for his ability and my desire to hear him in more worthy music. The title "Hungarian Rhapsody" inevitably reminds one of *Liszt*, and *Popper* uses at least one tune with which lovers of *Liszt* are well acquainted. But if *Liszt's* constructive ability was not great, *Popper's* is far smaller, and at least *Liszt* could orchestrate. The recording of the effectively-played 'cello part is admirable; as for the orchestra, one can't make much out of nothing.

PIANO.

ACO.

G.16065 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—*Maurice Cole*: *Rigaudon* (*Dalhousie Young*) and *River Gardens* (*Maurice Besly*).

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

D.B.928 (12in., 8s. 6d.).—*Wilhelm Backhaus*: (a) *Prelude in C*, Op. 28, No. 1, (b) *Etude in C*, Op. 10, No. 1, (c) *Etude in A minor*, Op. 10, No. 2 and (a) *Revolutionary Study*, Op. 10, No. 12, (b) *Etude in F*, Op. 25, No. 3 (*Chopin*).

VOCALION.

K.05261 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—*York Bowen*: *Polonaise in C sharp minor*, Op. 26, No. 1 and *Waltz in A flat*, Op. 34, No. 1 (*Chopin*).

VELVET FACE.

690 (12in., 4s.).—*Anderson Tyrer*: *Vascongada*, *Basque Air* (*Granados*) *Ecos de la Parranda* (*Granados*).

Cole.—Here, in my opinion, is the best of this month's cheap instrumental records. *Cole's* playing possesses the rhythmic quality essential for one of his pieces and the sensitiveness that is required for the other. Both pieces are good music and neither is portentous. A distinctly good reproduction completes the catalogue of the record's virtues.

Backhaus.—In this liberal *Chopin* selection each piece is given complete, and in the case of the *Prelude in C* and the end of the *Etude in A minor*, rather more than complete. The *Etudes in C* and *A minor* are played brilliantly if a little unyieldingly, but I seem to detect some rhythmic shortcoming in the *Prelude*. I prefer the two *Etudes* on the other side. A "medium" needle gave me satisfactory results in the matter of recording, although there is a danger with the new H.M.V. instruments that a pianist's left hand may sometimes overpower his right.

York Bowen.—A special interest attaches to this record as it is the first attempt by *Vocalion* to use their new electrical process in the reproduction of the piano. I tried it first with a loud steel needle and found the waltz a little percussive, though the *Polonaise* was distinctly better. I do not mean that it "blasted," but I was unduly-conscious of the stroke of the hammer on the strings and the sounds were not always as sustained as I should have liked. I think the pianist must bear some of the blame for this; his touch, judged by this record, is by no means silky in most of the waltz and some of the glamour seems to have evaporated from *Chopin's* ideas as they passed through his hands. Next I tried the effect of fibre and this was a distinct improvement. Good balance, clarity, and a sonorous bass are three excellent qualities in a piano record which are to be found here, and the various registers of the instrument are much more evenly reproduced than usual—except for a few notes right at the bottom. If *Vocalion* can only get rid of that percussive quality and secure the true singing tone that has so far eluded everyone they will have little to fear from criticism. At present they have not quite reached the standard of the best records by companies who have used an electric process for more than a year, but they are not far short of it, and have made a very good beginning. The pieces played are, of course, first-rate examples of *Chopin's* art, and I hope everyone will take an opportunity of judging the record for himself.

Anderson Tyrer.—These tunes may be of interest to those who approach music from an ethnological standpoint, but in themselves they strike me as dull. This is a pity, for the performance is quite adequate and the recording, apart from a trace of "blast" near the end of *Vascongada*, exceptionally good.

ORGAN.

COLUMBIA.

9133 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—*W. G. Webber*: *Fantasia in G minor* and *Toccata in C* (*Bach*).

9134 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—*W. G. Webber*: *Duetto from Songs without Words* (*Mendelssohn*) and *J. Edgar Humphreys*: *Litany* (*Schubert*).

9135 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—*G. T. Pattman*: *In a Monastery Garden* (*Ketelbey*) and *Andantino* (*Lemare*).

9136 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—*G. T. Pattman*: *Toccata and Fugue in D minor* (*Bach*). Two sides.

4103 (10in., 3s.).—*W. G. Webber*: *St. Anne Fugue* (*Bach*) and *J. Edgar Humphreys*: *Andante* and *Allegro* (*F. E. Bache*).

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

E.438 (10in., 4s. 6d.).—*Marcel Dupré*: *Allegretto* and *Finale* from *Organ Sonata No. 4 in B flat* (*Mendelssohn*).

C.1282 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Stanley Roper: Allegro from Organ Concerto in F major (Handel) and Epilogue on the Old Hundredth (Ernest Farrar).

B.2353 (10in., 3s.).—Arthur Meale: Marche Militaire (Schubert) and Andantino (Lemare).

B.2347 (10in., 3s.).—Arthur Meale: Storm (Arthur Meale). Two sides.

VOCALION.

K.05258 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—William Wolstenholme: Carillon in B flat and Prelude in F (Wolstenholme).

WINNER.

4486 (10in., 2s. 6d.).—Kendal Grimston: Solvejg's Lied (Grieg) and Largo (Handel).

We shall all be grateful to Columbia for giving us such a fine selection of the best of Bach's organ music among their first set of new process records for the instrument. Speaking generally, their full organ effects do not sound quite so loud as those of H.M.V., but they are just as massive and the pedal passages in particular come rolling out with splendid sonority. Among these five discs is to be found a great variety of organ effects, and as none of these seems to come amiss to Columbia experts, the future is full of promising vistas. Dare we hope they will undertake the task of getting together a representative collection of the grand works of J. S. B.? This is one of the very few fields of really noble music which has not yet been reaped by the gramophone, and it provides a great opportunity for an enterprising company. Meanwhile I trust Columbia will not take it amiss if I refer to two details in which their work might be improved. Their *fortissimo* passages show a tendency to "blast" slightly, and they are also not quite so clear as they might be. The experts will quickly overcome the "blast" difficulty, no doubt—it is not serious in any case; as regards the other matter, they might pass the word on to their organists to exercise peculiar care that the music should come out with perfect distinctness. The Bach *Fantasia in G minor* (misprinted C minor on the label), Peters' edition, vol. 2, No. 4, performed by Webber, suffers seriously all through from being too loud for clarity, and the same thing applies to this organist's rendering of the twelve-eight section (which is all that he gives us) from the *St. Anne Fugue* (vol. 3, No. 1). His *Tocatta in C* (vol. 3, No. 8) is better, though I deplore that the limitations of the record should have compelled him to omit bars 3-11 and 16-19 of the great pedal solo, besides forcing him to cut out five bars close to the end. The most successful of the Bach items is Pattman's *Tocatta and Fugue in D minor* (vol. 4, No. 4). The registration of this is more varied and makes the work thoroughly interesting; my only criticism relates to a heavy reed stop on the pedals that is used too frequently. Here again a cut has proved necessary; thirteen bars are omitted between the sides, and after five bars of side 2 there is another hiatus of four bars. The best of the pieces not by Bach is, I think, the dignified *Andante and Allegro* by F. E. Bache, played by Humphreys on the back of Webber's *St. Anne Fugue*, but I find Webber's *Duetto* (Mendelssohn) also quite satisfactory and superior to its *dos-à-dos*, Humphreys' rather dull version of a Schubert song. Pattman makes *In a Monastery Garden* fairly convincing, but here again the playing is rather too loud. In the *Andantino* he avails himself fully of the opportunity to indulge in sugary effects. The alternative title to this piece is *Song of the Soul*: I should prefer "Song of the Sole" (especially if fried in butter)—as a piece of spiritual music it is distinctly fishy.

Dupré has again given us a very fine piece of organ playing and again H.M.V. have done him justice. The *Allegretto* of this sonata has always seemed to me a dull piece of writing and not even Dupré can convince me that it is anything else; but the *Finale*, with its broad march-like opening and the splendid fugue that follows, is in the composer's best vein. By the way, might we not have had rather more pedal in the *Allegretto*? No doubt the registration adopted sounded all right at the actual performance, but for the gramophone, even for the new machines, the bass requires just a little more emphasis in such passages as this.

Roper.—Here is another record well worth hearing. There is a certain combination of soft stops which is rather run to death in the Handel, but apart from this we are given a sound rendering of a piece of really fine organ music. The *Epilogue on the Old Hundredth*, however, seems to have been written chiefly to give organists a chance to "blaze away." It is a very loud movement

and it fails, I think, to catch the spirit of the tune. But its undeniable effectiveness will appeal to many and the recording is superb.

Arthur Meale's *Storm* has no musical value whatever and the introduction of *O God our help* and the hymn *For those in peril on the sea* into such a piece seems to me in questionable taste. But if the organ is to be exhibited as a mountebank, a purveyor of "stunt" effects, this is the way to do it. In the *Andantino*, on his other record, the organist has elected to play the solo on an unpleasantly piercing combination of stops; and the *Marche Militaire* suffers from a feeling of hurry, inevitable, perhaps, when this kind of music is attempted on the organ. Neither of the pieces on this disc is, in fact, at all suited to the character of the instrument, and I feel bound to say of both Meale's records that the really excellent reproduction is worthy of better things.

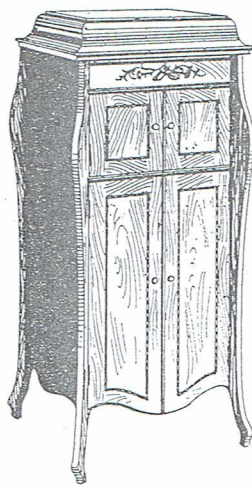
Wolstenholme.—This is another of the new Vocalion electric recordings (I have already discussed a piano record) and I am glad to be able to praise it without any qualifications. The music comes out quite clearly, balance is admirable, and there is a mellow roundness about the tone which pleases me much. There are no very loud passages in these two pieces (which, if not very exciting in themselves, are most artistically played) and I shall look forward with much interest to a Vocalion organ record in which the full power of a big organ is displayed. How the process will stand such a test, of course I cannot say, but if the present disc is a fair sample of what the company means to give us, then we gramophiles are going to enjoy ourselves.

Grimston.—Here is yet another company entering the field with an organ record! I fear, however, that this version of the *Largo* is not likely to replace the H.M.V. disc. Unfortunately, Grimston's performance lacks firmness and character and his instrument appears to have a rather unequal wind pressure. But at the same time the tone is very much better than that of any but new process records, the bass is firmly sonorous, and if the company will give us good music, good playing and a good organ, then—we shall see! P. L.

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