

## MISCELLANEOUS

This month there are some particularly fine twelve-inch records in my pile. The *Blue Danube* and *Tales from the Vienna Woods* have probably never been recorded with more impressive resonance than by the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra under Stokowski (H.M.V. D.1218, 4s. 6d.); and in contrast I doubt if a combination of the size of the J. H. Squire Celeste Octet has ever before recorded parts of the Piano Concerto and of the "1812" Overture on one side of *Memories of Tchaikovsky* (Columbia 9198, 4s. 6d.). You would hardly believe it could be more than a brave effort, but it is: the Octet has pulled it off without blinking, and the *Danse des Mirlitons* and *Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt* provide the dainty other side. One of their best records.

*Estudiantina* and *The Skaters* are well done by the International Concert Orchestra (H.M.V. C.1325, 4s. 6d.) and another Waldteufel waltz, *Song of Autumn*, is coupled with the charming *Flower's Dream* by the Edith Lorand Orchestra (Parlo. E.10570, 4s. 6d.), which also provides on E.10569 (4s. 6d.) a first class *Cavalleria Rusticana* Fantasia. Add to these two waltzes, the popular *Mignonette* and a most attractive *Sulamith* played as beautifully as possible by the Dajos Bela Orchestra (Parlo. E.10571, 4s. 6d.), which has apparently been increased in size; a good recording of *De Groot and the Piccadilly Orchestra* in their famous *Carmen* Selection (H.M.V. C.1325, 4s. 6d.); and a *Musical Switch—Humoresque* in four parts, arranged with great ingenuity by K. J. Alford and played with faultless gusto by the Plaza Theatre Orchestra (Col. 9196 9197, 9s.)—undoubtedly a pair of records to possess for entertaining purposes.

All these records I recommend without reservation; nor must I forget a very welcome recording of the *Prelude* and *Call* from Norman O'Neill's incidental music to *Mary Rose*, played by the Court Symphony Orchestra under the composer (Col. 4360, 10in., 3s.), and a pleasant Brunswick record (3017, 3s.) of *Only a Rose* and *Someone to love*, while for those who have room for another record of Suppé's *Poet and Peasant Overture* there is a remarkable one at the price by the National Symphony Orchestra (Zono. A.319, 12in., 4s.). The Dajos Bela Trio (piano, cello and violin) makes its debut with Tchaikovsky's *Chant d'Automne* and Schumann's *Träumerei* (Parlo. E.10573, 12in., 4s. 6d.). If this had been a 10 inch record at 2s. 6d., I should have recommended it very strongly.

Those who, like myself, have a weakness for Pipe Organ Records will be embarrassed by the wealth of four records by Jack Courtnay on a Christie Unit organ (Col. 4371 3s., and Winner 4610, 4611, 4612, 2s. 6d. each), two by Reginald Foot, at the New Gallery cinema (H.M.V. B.2444, 3s. and C.1330, 12in., 4s. 6d.) and a seventh by Edmund Cromwell, on Imperial 1743 (2s.). The last is not improved by the nameless singer who intervenes; but if it is Mr. Cromwell himself bursting into song, I can quite understand the impulse and forgive him; for there is really something very exhilarating as well as soothing about all these shimmering melodies on the pipe organ.

There is a Savoy Orpheans 12in. Selection of Romberg's *Desert Song* tunes (H.M.V. C.1328, 4s. 6d.) and another of Friml's more attractive *Vagabond King* tunes (H.M.V. C.1333, 4s. 6d.), but to this I prefer the record by Percival Mackey's Band (Col. 9195, 4s. 6d.), chiefly because of the piano solo passages. People who remember the Elisabeth Pechy—Gladys Moncrieff dust up when the *Blue Mazurka* came to Daly's will be interested by the Pechy's record of *Life is a beautiful garden* and *Shine bright moon* (H.M.V. B.2457, 3s.), two songs from the play. She sounds to me perfectly fit for the Princess's part, and sings charmingly. But the Moncrieff in two songs from *Princess Charming* (Voc. K.05301, 12in., 4s. 6d.) proves once again her fine voice for these simple tunes. It is a question of temperament.

The batch of records of *Lady Luck* which Columbia made with a land line from the Prince of Wales's theatre may not be technically perfect—I seemed to detect a curious buzzing now and then in the three-pianos accompaniments—but they are a startlingly satisfactory souvenir of the play. Phyllis Monkman, Madge Elliott, Cyril Ritchard, John Kirby, Laddie Cliff and Leslie Henson are all heard at their best; and even people who do not care for this type of record will, I fancy, be delighted with *Boadicea* sung by the three last-mentioned, and *Sex Appeal*, a typical Hensonism, on Col. 4341 (3s.).

One of the tunes, *Sing*, is done by Laddie Cliff on 4340 (3s.), and more effectively by the Singing Sophomores on 4346 (3s.) with *Take in the Sun*, *Hang out the Moon* on the reverse. This makes a good record to get, and the same quintet sing *Lay me down* and *Why do ya roll those eyes* on Col. 4272 (3s.). They are always good; and as an almost perfect example of straight quartet singing, try the Shannon Four in *Carry me back to old Virginny* and *The Old Oaken Bucket* on Regal 8812 (2s. 6d.).

Layton and Johnstone continue their series with three more records (Col. 4328, 4329, 4330, 3s. each); the Radio Franks on Brunswick 3428 (3s.), the Radio Imps on Imperial 1747 (2s.), Deslys and Clark on Aco G.16196 (2s. 6d.), Billy Mayerl and Gwen Farrar on Voc. X.9998 (3s.), Florence Oldham and Tommy Handley, wireless favourites, on Zono. 2912 (2s. 6d.), the Cabaret Singers on Regal G.8843 (2s. 6d.) and Jim Miller and Charlie Farrell on H.M.V. B.2456 (3s.), all make pleasant sympathetic noises in a popular blend; perhaps the best are the first and last. For a change I look forward to a record of Mack and Moran, who I hear have been recording in America for Columbia. They should prove even more attractive than Sam 'n Henry.

Now I come to the vocal soloists. Vaughn de Leath, the Radio Girl, is now in four catalogues: Columbia and Aco, Parlophone and Brunswick. The two last are May records, and her admirers will have already bought Parlo. R.3316 (3s.) and Brunswick 3443 (3s.). I have not heard R.3324, the June Parlophone, on which she sings *Muddy Water* and *Some of these days*. Anyhow she is one of the American importations who are enormously popular over here. Of the others, Nick Lucas (Brunswick 3433 and 3439, 3s. each), Cliff Edwards (Actuelle 11341, 3s.), Annette Hanshaw (Act. E.11338, 2s. 6d.), Willard Robison (E.11339, 2s. 6d.), Gene Austin and Johnny Marvin (H.M.V. B.2455, 3s.) need no further recommendation from me, though I should like to deal with them in detail. Art Gillham and Wendell Hall are neither seen nor heard this month, while Jack Smith and Lee Morse are both in the country at the moment of writing, clinching their popularity with the gramophone and wireless public. Melville Gideon (H.M.V. B.2449, 3s.) and Albert Whelan (Voc. X.9997, 3s.) are good enough to hold their own in any company; and of other unaffected singers of rubbish I would commend especially this month Whispering Ed and Charles Keene (Imperial 1745, 2s.) and Fred Douglas on Regals. The great virtue of the latter is that one hears every word without effort.

I have kept to the end the new comers. Firstly Brunswick has given us (3435, 3s.) the record of *Ain't she sweet?* and *Muddy Water* which the great Harry Richman puts on a Panatropé in his club on Broadway when he is tired of singing himself. He stands beside it, mouthing and gesticulating like any Johnny Hudgins—and it is a great stunt, they say. Anyhow, this is the record of the month to buy. Then there is Russell Douglas, in the very latest American style, singing *In a little Spanish town* and *I've grown so lonesome* on Parlo. R.3317 (3s.). He is certainly extremely good, with piano and guitar accompaniments. Thirdly Art Fowler on Actuelle 11363 (2s. 6d.), who is now singing at the Pavilion in London. He is said to be a wizard, but there is not all his magic in this first record. The clearness of the words is beyond belief, and the skill is there, but the charm somehow eludes me. I want to hear more records of his before I put him in the highest class, when deprived of facial expression. And fourthly Columbia has produced a new and delightful star in Dick Robertson (and a piano) on two records (4327 and 4331, 3s. each). I strongly advise everyone to try the latter, *Ain't she sweet?* (the tune of the moment), and a very clever version of *Bridget O'Flynn*. Finally a welcome to the irresistible Florence Oldham, who sings English, a great relief after some of the Americans, and has a first-class accompanist, noticeable too in the duets with Tommy Handley mentioned above. She will give us even better records with more recording experience—I hope this isn't a *bêtise* on my part—but this one (Zono. 2915, 2s. 6d.) is a good start.

I was told the other day that no one reads my review, indeed that no one could make any sense of such a jumble, and I was asked whether I realised that some of these singers whom I dismissed with a phrase were paid as much as £300 for making a record. I wish I could mend my ways; but I can't. I could write pages and pages, which might please the record makers as much as myself; but all that I am allowed to do is to indicate which out of a hundred records I should put aside to play again to my home-circle. It would be rather a kindness if anyone would write to me, care of THE GRAMOPHONE, and say whether my tastes are the same as his (or hers) and whether I ever miss a really outstanding record: and how, in fact, I can be more useful.

PEPPERING.

## Nightingales

Wireless listeners heard Miss Beatrice Harrison playing the *London-derry Air* and the *Chant Hindou* to the nightingales in her Oxted garden, and the response of the singers to her 'cello. The idyll is now embalmed in wax, and the new H.M.V. records, B 2469 and 2470 (the former including also the chorus of bird song at dawn), will supersede the wonderful old nightingale record which has for years provided Mr. H. C. Rink and others with one of the outstandingly beautiful stunts of which the gramophone is capable.