



## BAND RECORDS

The Columbia Company has a remarkable flair for novelties and it is perhaps unkind to say that the latest record in this category has little other merit. The recording is excellent as is the playing, but to listen to a **Fanfare of Trumpets** (5139) for three minutes on end, even when stiffened with a bass line and some drums, is a dull business. The two marches played are called respectively *Le Vieux Grenadier* and *Marche des Bouglers* and are both written by M. A. Courtade, who directs these performances.

After hearing the last-mentioned record, it was a real pleasure to put on a selection from Sir Edward German's *Merrie England* played by the **Grenadier Guards Band** (Col. 9607). This, as I have said before, is England's best band and one has only to hear a record like this to realise this fact either for the first time or afresh.

An interesting contrast in style and methods is provided by the **Royal Air Force Band** who have two records to their credit in the Columbia list. This band adopt a style which is, I think, foreign to the nature of a military band, though I am bound to confess that it has attractions. Flight-Lieut. Amers deliberately attempts to make the band sound as much like an orchestra as possible, and is astonishingly successful. This being so the best of the four sides is that containing the *Naila Intermezzo* by Delibes which is partnered by *Our Director March* (5166). No. 5138 contains *Invercargill* and *Repsz* marches. Although promoted to "Columbia" rank this band is still making "Regal" records, the latest example of which contains Schubert's popular *Marche Militaire* and *Colonel Bogey March* (G.9241). This is not a good record, for the band is very badly out of tune in the former of these, and still out of tune, though not so badly, in the latter.

Another Regal record contains *Military Manoeuvres March* and *The March of the Plumed Helmets*, both of which are played by the **Orchestre Militaire Français** under the direction of M. Gabriel Pares. These marches are only of very ordinary quality and interest in themselves, but are magnificently played and recorded. This band is evidently an organisation merely got together for recording purposes, but the quality of the playing coupled with the fact that the conductor is M. Pares suggest that the majority of the instrumentalists are or have been members of the **Garde Républicaine Band**, of which M. Pares was so long and so successfully the director until his retirement a few years ago. Whether this be so or not, it is interesting to compare this record with H.M.V. B.2907 made by the **Garde Républicaine Band** under the baton of M. G. Balay, their present director. The pieces chosen are *La Marseillaise*, which is played as only this band can play it, and *March Lorraine*. The latter is one of my favourite marches and is splendidly played though the recording is by no means as good as in some of the imported French H.M.V. records I have reviewed in these columns recently.

It is good to find the **Scots Guards Band** on a 12in. record again for though I have a great admiration for this band, and for Captain Wood, their conductor, their records have not done them full justice in recent months. Finck's *Melodious Memories* (Electron X.541) is one of the very best of the memory-teasing pot-pourris that have had such a vogue of popularity during the last few years, and the ease and cleverness with which this band lead from one well-known air to another

will give a lot of pleasure to all who can appreciate the finer points.

The last of the military band records is another of those super-records made by the Parlophone Company's **Massed Military Bands** (E.6112). The playing is, as usual, excellent, and the recording, particularly of the "rortling" of the basses and euphoniums and the dry crispness of the side drums, is sheer joy. *Our Marines* is a good march, but *Nibelungen March* by J. F. Wagner (who composed that fine march *Under the Double Eagle*) is enough to make Richard of that ilk turn in his grave and its name is almost libellous.

The only brass band record (Regal G.9227) is made by the **Harton Colliery Band**, who play *Right Away March* in their usual deft light-handed style and provide an excellent accompaniment for **Jack Mackintosh**, who plays *Alpine Echoes*. I urge all cornet players whether budding or whether they consider themselves proficient to buy this record. If they do, I fancy that many of them will give up in disgust.

W. A. C.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### The King's Record.

Foremost this month I must place the record of His Majesty's speech at the opening of the Tyne bridge last October. It is quite short and is backed by an address of welcome from the Town Clerk of Gateshead; and considering the recording conditions it is a highly satisfying achievement. It would have been a pity if the record had remained simply as a souvenir presented by Columbia to the councillors of the Gateshead and Newcastle Corporations; but now that the King has consented to its publication in the cause of charity we can all have copies of this unique record, one delightful feature of which is the engraving of the Tyne Bridge on the blank space round the label. Columbia is much to be commended for good taste and public spirit.

Since it is also a record of occasion, containing a variety of mob-noises and the playing of *God Save the King* and *Auld Lang Syne*, I may bracket with the Royal Record, another which was made outside St. Paul's Cathedral at midnight on New Year's Eve (Col. 5197, 3s.). It is nothing but what it professes to be, *New Year's Eve at St. Paul's—Seeing the Old Year Out and Seeing the New Year in*—and should be widely treasured.

*Instrumental*. It is just as well to have Rosse's *Merchant of Venice* incidental music, so familiar to film goers, *Prelude I*, *Intermezzo*, *Oriental March*, *Prelude II* and *Doge's March*, on two records (Col. 9585-6, 12in., 4s. 6d. each) recorded at the Shepherd's Bush Pavilion by the always reliable **Quentin MacLean**. Of the other organists **Edward O'Henry** at Madame Tussaud's plays Gounod's *Faust Waltz* and Beethoven's *Minuet in G* (H.M.V. B.2873, 3s.) with shameless skill and the others, **Reginald Foort** at the New Empire, dainty and rhythmical as ever (H.M.V. B.2919, 3s.), **Leslie James** at the New Gallery H.M.V. B.2902, 3s.), **F. Rowland-Tims** at the Capitol (H.M.V.) B.2905, 3s.), **Leo le Sieur** (Imperial 2001, 1s. 6d.), and **Emil Velazco** (Col. 5188 and Parlo. R.264, 3s. each), cater for their evening audiences.

But the record, which most people will have heard by this time, since it has great carrying power, is of *In a Monastery Garden* and *The Lost Chord*, played by **Paul Mania** on a "silver tone" organ with a Trumpet Chorus (Parlo. E.10786, 12in., 4s. 6d.). First imagine it; then stimulate your imagination to the fifth power, if necessary with drugs: then, if that is what you want to console your heart or confound your enemies, buy the record.

**Emilio Colombo** has made his best record up to date, and it contains two tunes that are in every normal collection—Kreisler's arrangement of the *Chant Hindou* or *Song of India* from Rimsky-Korsakov's *Sadko* and Drdla's *Serenade* (Electron 0267, 3s.); and the former appears coupled with the *Intermezzo* from *Cavalleria Rusticana* pleasantly by **Jeanne Gautier**



(Parlo. R.270, 3s.) and in a blurred version, with the *Berceuse* from Godard's *Jocelyn*, played on the saw by the **Hernandez Brothers** (Zono. 5244, 2s. 6d.), a curious record that has much to commend it to lovers of novelty. **Manuello**, violin, with organ accompaniment, plays *Hermite's Evening in the Desert* and *Sanders's Once very well* on Regal G.9243 (2s. 6d.); **Lani's Hawaiians** are orthodox in *Angela mia* and *Naomi of Alohaland* (Imp. 2002, 1s. 6d.), and a capital performance of *When day is done* by **Frank Ferera's Trio** is ill-paired with *Ramona* by the **Melody Trio** with a dreadful singer (Dominion A.49, 1s. 3d.).

Turning to the pianists, one must add the *Funny Face Medley* played by **Jacques Fray and Mario Braggiotti** on H.M.V. B.2910 (3s.) to the Columbia records of the original artists in the play. It is charmingly done. **Billy Mayerl** is coming to the fore again with his views on syncopation, and with a *Lucky Girl Selection* (Col. 5176, 3s.) and *Show Boat Selection* and *That's a good girl Selection* (Col. 9594, 12in., 4s. 6d.) is heard in excellent illustration of them.

*Plays and Monologues.* **Clapham and Dwyer** in *At the Races*, with *Cissie the Cow* in a star part, should certainly be heard (Col. 5201, 3s.); **Joe Hayman** in *Cohen forms a new Company* and *Cohen at a Prize Fight* (Zono. 5239, 2s. 6d.) continues the telephone series in the usual style; **Leonard Henry** (in his first record?) does his *General Post* and *The Tale of the Talkies* adroitly, but I doubt if they are worth preserving (H.M.V. B.2916, 3s.); and **Mabel Constanduros** is more than ever happy in her well-known *Grandma's Birthday Party* (Electron 0271, 3s.). This is, I think, her best record so far.

**Basil Maine** has tackled the difficult *Queen Mab Speech* from *Romeo and Juliet* with great skill and humour, and his treatment of *Dobinet's Speech* from *Ralph Roister Doister* (Parlo. E.6122, 2s. 6d.) is a model for the student of dramatic elocution.

Of potted plays including talk and songs there are two: **Dick Whittington** in four scenes (Regal G.9239, 9240, 2s. 6d. each), which maintains a provincial pantomime standard unflinchingly; and *The Gypsy Girl* (Col. 9591, 12in., 4s. 6d.) the second of the "Miniature Musical Comedies" issued by Columbia. It is by **Harold Simpson and Stanley Holt**, and is performed with great spirit by **Raymond Newell, Emmie Joyce, Billy Leonard, Norman Williams and chorus**. This seems to me a definitely successful experiment both in construction and performance: and the music is just right.

**Cicely Courtneidge and Jack Hulbert** have followed up the triumphant *Love's Awakening* from "Clowns in Clover" with the scene of *The Schoolmaster and the Boy* (Col. 9593, 12in., 4s. 6d.), by **Ronald Jeans**. They convey the comedy of the boy being kept in during a school cricket match to translate some amazing Xenophon, in spite of bad recording of mysterious tripping and coughing noises; but it is not likely to become a classic sketch.

*Vocal Gems.* Under this heading I draw attention to the group of 12in. records issued by Columbia last month—*Bohemian Girl* (9579), *Faust* (9555), *Lilac Time* (9580), *Yeomen of the Guard* (9554), *Gondoliers* (9566) and *Mikado* (9581). In the two first the names of the singers are given—**Miriam Licette, Francis Russell, Dennis Noble, Clara Serena, Harold Williams and Harry Brindle**, a strong cast; the rest are by the **Columbia Light Opera Company** which also contains some fine voices. All these records are commended.

Another *Lilac Time Selection* without any singing is from a German source and though it has all the characteristics of the **Dajos Bela Orchestra**, it has a tinge which is not associated with the performance at Daly's (Parlo. E.10798, 12in., 4s. 6d.).

A ten-inch *Chu Chin Chow* record by the **Dominion Light Opera Co.** (Dominion A.48, 1s. 3d.) is worth noting, since there is no other record of the songs in the catalogues, so far as I know. Otherwise—I wish it were better.

*Aida* lovers have of course got the old Parlophone record of the *Triumphal March*, but the new one by the **Milan Symphony Orchestra and Chorus** under **Cav. L. Molajoli** (Col. 9606, 12in.,

4s. 6d.) is a very serious rival, and costs 2s. less. It is nobly conceived and performed with powerful clarity—an outstanding record. The *Vocal Gems of Aida* are sung in English on an H.M.V. record (C.1605) at the same price by a **Grand Opera Company**, and I should be sorry to have to choose between the two records. The tenor is inclined to scoop, but otherwise it is really extraordinarily well done.

*Orchestral.* To guide through nearly thirty records in a paragraph is difficult. Let me dismiss a very fine *Faust Selection* by the **Classic Symphony Orchestra** (Regal G.1057, 12in., 4s.), the **New Symphony Orchestra** under **Dr. Malcolm Sargent** in *Bach's Air on G string* and *Grainger's arrangement of the Londonderry Air* (H.M.V. B.2913, 3s.), a useful record to bear in mind; **Järnefelt** briskly conducting the Berlin State Opera Orchestra in his own *Praeludium* and *Sinding's Rustle of Spring* (Parlo. R.269, 3s.); a charming little record of *Le Cygne* and *Moment Musical* (which has somehow slipped into the wrong heap) by the **Scala Trio** (Radio, Sin., 1s. 3d.); that blest pair, *In a Monastery Garden* and *In a Persian Market*, quite well done by **Fred Kitchen and his Astoria Cinema Orchestra** (Dominion A.47, 1s. 3d.), good value for money: good arrangements of *Weber's Invitation to the Valse* and *Tchaikovsky's Chant Sans Paroles* (Col. 9608, 12in., 4s. 6d.) well played by the **J. H. Squire Celeste Octet** whose records never disappoint; and a rough but spirited version of some of the *Casse-Noisette Suite* by **Horace Sheldon and his Orchestra** (Electron 6268, 3s.).

Less hackneyed—indeed very rare and often asked for—is a *Fantasy on Planquette's Les Cloches des Corneville* played very well by the **Peerless Orchestra** (Radio 904, Sin., 1s. 3d.); and another of these little records should be noted by lovers of Roumanian music, played by **Marcu's Band** (907), a tango and a waltz. Another novelty is *Herman Finck's Minuet and A la Gavotte* sympathetically played by the **Plaza Theatre Orchestra** (Col. 5193, 3s.), which I like slightly better than the record of *Bendix's Busy Bee* and *Hesse's Graceful Dance from My Lady Dainty* (5192). **Jean Lensen and his Orchestra** (Col. 5203, 3s.), the **Scala Salon Orchestra** (Electron 0272, 3s.), **Albert Sandler and his Orchestra** (Col. 5189 and 5202, 3s. each) and **De Groot and his Orchestra**—in *Jeanine* and *Laughing Marionette*—(H.M.V. B.2922, 3s.) do not need comment. The standard of this kind of record is high enough; but can it still claim the 3s. ticket? I should grudge the price least to **Reginald King and his Orchestra** in *The Song I love and Garden in the Rain* (H.M.V. B.2903, 3s.).

The **London Orchestra**, reinforced by that lively cinema organ, gives us a *Good News Selection* (Zono. 5238, 2s. 6d.) and a *Song of the Sea Selection* (5237). Of the 12in. (4s. 6d.) records of musical plays the **London Theatre Orchestra** is humdrum in *Virginia* (Col. 9596) but **Jack Payne and the B.B.C. Dance Orchestra**, with a quite excellent vocal trio, are vividly good in *Lucky Girl* (Col. 9595), and **Raie da Costa** is well supported by a Concert Orchestra in *Funny Face* (Parlo. E.10785).

**Jack Hylton and his Orchestra** have re-entered the field with versions of *Doelle's When the white elder-tree blooms again*, and that good tune *I kiss your hand, Madam* (H.M.V. C.1616, 12in., 4s. 6d.). Arrangement, playing and recording are all up to the standard one expects.

**Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra** have made an interesting record of a spiritual, *High Water* and *Malneck's Caprice Futuristic* (H.M.V. C.1607), and a moderate one of *I can't give you anything but love and Sweet Sue* (Col. 9572). Both records are nearly spoilt, to my taste, by the American singers; and I was just meditating an attack on this sort of singing when I came to *Sonny Boy*, sung and played by the **Salon Group Orchestra** on the reverse (H.M.V. C.1613). Unless I'm all wrong, this is the best record in my orchestral pile this month; but admittedly **Al Jolson's** performance in the "Singing Fool" film has robbed me of all power of resistance to the frightful mawkishness of *Sonny Boy*.

PEPPERING.