

Festivals and are beautifully sung here by the 140-strong Pendyruis Choir.

The Treorchy Choir is also a large body (100 or more strong). For their two 45s they go to many countries for the music and are equally at home in all. As is so often the case with Welsh Choirs there is a wonderful body in even the softest of tone. QEP4000 lacks dividing bands which is a pity. There is a slight tendency to rattle at climaxes if the pickup is not of good quality and well tracked.

The best known of these choirs on records is that of Morrison which I have praised several times in this column. Here they are as good as ever, particularly in Protheroe's *The Crusader*, which is finely laid out. The words of *Cymru'n Un*, by the way, are by David Lloyd George.

A NIGHT IN VIENNA. *Vienna, City of My Dreams; Prizicato Polka; Sweets for my Sweet; Vienna Blood; Perpetual Motion; Blue Danube; Artist's Life; Tales of the Vienna Woods; Kaffee Kaffee und Hesse Jazz; Merry Widow Waltz.* 101 Strings. Pye Mono GGL0018; ★Stereo GSG10018.

THE SOUL OF SPAIN. *Malaguena; Domingo en Seville; Espana; La Violetera; Macarenas; Espana Cani.* 101 Strings. Pye Mono GGL0017; ★Stereo GSG10017.

A HI-FI BAND CONCERT. *Anchors Aweigh; Corcoran Cadets; Handicap March; American Patrol; Under the Double Eagle; Billboard March; Marine's Hymn; There'll be a Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight; March of the Toys; National Emblem March; Grand Old Flag. Pride of the '48.* Pye Mono GGL0081; ★Stereo GSG10081. All Mono records 12 in., 15s. 10d. plus 6s. 2d. P.T. All Stereo records (12 in., 20s. 9d. plus 6s. 9d. P.T.).

There are ten tracks on "A Night in Vienna" and they range from the waltzes etcetera of Johann Strauss, through Lehár's *Merry Widow Waltz* to more recent trifles such as *Cold Coffee and Hot Jazz*. So far as the older pieces are concerned there are recordings that are more desirable both in arrangement and recording, which tends to be rather hard and lacking in warmth in the strings. In "The Soul of Spain" Chabrier's *Espana* is both the best and best-known item. Of the rest I like best Padilla's lively *La Violetera*. *Malaguena* by Ramirez is the most extended composition; it is indeed extended beyond the worth of its musical content. The brilliance of the recording is better suited to this music. Voices, by the way, are introduced into *Sunday in Seville*. "A Hi-Fi Band Concert" includes eleven marches, most of them familiar. Here the recording sounds a little top-heavy. My criticisms of the recording in these records are based on hearing them on first-class equipment. The deficiencies are comparatively less pronounced when they are played on a smaller and less expensive set. I have only heard them in stereo and should not be surprised to find that in the mono versions the hardness at the top and lack of solidity at the bottom is less pronounced.

FIESTA EN MEXICO. Miguel Dias and his Mariachi Players. Audio Fidelity Mono AFLP1816 (12 in., 33s. 2½d. plus 10s. 9½d. P.T.).

For quality and realism of sound this is one of the best records that I have heard for some time. It is clean and clear, well separated and with a good incisive bite but no hardness or harshness at the top and rich firmness at the bottom. Mariacha derives from the French, not Spanish as might be imagined and denotes a popular band which may be of three or four instrumentalists or may be quite large but in either case is based on strings, plucked and bowed. In the Miguel Dias band trumpets are used a good deal and with excellent effect. The twelve pieces are spirited and lively for the most part and all but three or four are traditional airs arranged by Dias himself. The others are of more recent date but similar in style. They are allied to Spanish traditional music and the zapateado is one of the most popular rhythms. Included is *Jarabe Tapatio*, better known here as the Mexican Hat Dance, which is supposed to suggest the courting dance of a pair of doves. A thoroughly enjoyable

record for all who like this high-spirited and exotically-inclined music played in authentic style and, as I have said, extremely well recorded.

STUDENT AND HEURIGEN SONGS. *Aennchen von Tharau; Der Lindenbaum; Treue Liebe; Sehnsucht; Die Lorelei.* Erich Kunz (baritone) with Male Chorus and Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Anton Paulik. Top Rank Mono 15/006 (7 in., 11s. 3½d. plus 3s. 8½d. P.T.). *Wien, Wien, nur du allein; Wieder in Wien; I bin a Weaner Kind; I bin a echter Weaner.* Julius Patzak (tenor) with the Grinzing Schrammeln Orchestra conducted by Hans Totzauer. Top Rank Mono 15/002 (7 in., 11s. 3½d. plus 3s. 8½d. P.T.).

Pride of place among this month's EPs undoubtedly goes to these records made by two of the world's really great artists, each of whom is notable, among other things, for his versatility. Erich Kunz is equally at home as Figaro, Leporello and Beckmesser, as in simple songs such as these which he sings with rare beauty and distinction and is splendidly supported by both chorus and orchestra. I have criticised some of Top Rank's sleeves in the past for their paucity of information, but this is a welcome exception.

Correspondingly, Patzak is famous for his Mozart roles and that of Florestan in Beethoven's *Fidelio*, and also as a Lieder singer, but he, too, is able to expend a wealth of care and affection on these simple but attractive Heurigen songs beloved of Vienna. He is admirably accompanied by an authentic schrammeln band of flute, clarinet, guitar, accordion, piano and string sextet. At 61, Herr Patzak still retains a remarkable freshness of voice, a tribute to his production. Two very delightful records.

It is unfortunate that "The Orange Flute" by Sam Wilson and the Loyalists (Top Rank Mono RX3012) should arrive for review hard on the heels of the vintage recording of a similar selection of Ulster songs (including several that are duplicated) by Richard Hayward and the Loyal Sons of William, reviewed last month. Mr. Wilson has neither the style nor the personality of Mr. Hayward, though the recording and presentation do their best for him. Four of the titles on this 12-inch LP are also issued in EP form (JKR8025).

In August and September last I reviewed the first two EPs of the very promising young Polish soprano, Bogna Sokorska, who started learning to be a ballerina, but after six years changed her mind and began to train as a singer. These two operatic arias and four songs from films and musicals are now released on LP (Top Rank Mono 35/020) along with "They call me Mimi" from *La Bohème*, "O my beloved father" from *Gianni Schicchi*, and a vocal version of Strauss's *Voices of Spring*. In the new songs, as in the earlier ones, Mme Sokorska deserves a better accompaniment than those provided by the Pinewood Studio Orchestra.

The well-known and well-loved voice of Edmund Hockridge is heard to very good advantage in "Show Stoppers from the Twenties" and the orchestral accompaniments directed by Alyn Ainsworth and Peter Knight are also first class. Here are a dozen of the great songs from *The Vagabond King, The New Moon, The Land of Smiles, A Connecticut Yankee, Bitter Sweet, Rose Marie, Rio Rita, This Year of Grace and Show Boat* in as good a form as could be desired (Pye Mono NPL18040).

Extended selections of music for pipes and drums are not everybody's choice. Top Rank offer two to choose from and as a mere Sassenach I am ungallant enough to prefer "Scotland's Pride" by the Royal Scots Greys on 35/030 (mono) to "Tartan and Velvet" by the Dagenham Girl Pipers on 35/033 (mono), although not by a large margin.

From Top Rank also comes the first record by the La Salle Boys Band, which plays a selection of Irish and Scottish airs and dances.

This band of eleven (with an average age of fifteen) was only formed recently, but has already been acclaimed in England and America as well as at home. The De La Salle Brothers (a widespread order) founded the band in connection with their College on the south side of the River Liffey in Dublin. The band consists chiefly of accordions, with two drummers and a double bass. A very enjoyable record in its field (35/029, mono).

"In a Monastery Garden", which gives the title to a selection of the music of A. W. Ketelby, was a war-time composition. It dates from 1915, when the expression of sentiment was what the public wanted and needed. Ketelby was already 40. He followed it with other similar and semi-descriptive pieces and for the next fifteen or twenty years they had a tremendous vogue. In more recent times they have been comparatively neglected. The sentiment may be facile, but the craftsmanship is first rate for Ketelby was a sensitive musician and a keen critic of his own work. Nine of his best-known works are here collected together in excellent performances by the New Symphony Orchestra of London conducted by Robert Sharples, and it is very good to have them played as intended and not by the two men and a boy type of combination by which they have been murdered so often. The mono version (Decca LK4329) is very good and that in stereo (SKL4077) is brilliantly successful. *In a Monastery Garden* and *In a Persian Market* are also released on EP (mono-DFE6613; stereo-STO126).

"Paris Dances", played by the Lamoureux Orchestra under Marcel Cariven, includes an abbreviated version of the Barcarolle from *The Tales of Hoffman*, a Quadrille from *Orpheus in the Underworld*, Debussy's *Golliwog's Cakewalk* and a fragment from *Coppelia*. Both playing and recording are a bit rough, but the sound is very forward and clear. The harp is somewhat over-conspicuous in the first named (Top Rank Mono JKP2004).

"Scottish Country Dance No. 12", by the Jimmy Blair Scottish Dance Orchestra on Fontana Mono TFE17193, is as good as its predecessors, which means that it is ideal for its avowed purpose.

Nelson Eddy is featured in three mono selections from evergreen musicals, each of which contains four numbers, and all of which are strongly recommended as mementos of the respective shows. He has excellent partners and orchestral and choral support. He partners Dorothy Kirsten in *Rose Marie* (Philips NBE11100), Eleanor Steber in *New Moon* (NBE11101) and Nadine Connor in *Naughty Marietta* (NBE11116).

Harry Mortimer's "All Stars" Brass Band is probably the best brass band heard on records today. In three new and excellently recorded EPs are four tracks that have been previously released in the form of singles. To these are added eight titles, all of which are, I think, new releases. It is in delicacy that a really first class band reveals its superiority and on these records it is in such items as MacDowell's *To a Wild Rose*, Rimsky-Korsakov's *Hindoo Song*, Eric Ball's *Indian Summer Suite* and Beethoven's *Egmont Overture* that the band is heard to the best advantage. No brass band enthusiast should miss hearing these discs (Paxton Mono PEP108-110).

The four tracks which were transferred from the Soviet Army Ensemble's fine LP (Col. 33C1049, reviewed in December 1956) and issued in mono EP form in January 1959 are now released in stereo (Col. ESL6266). I said recently that I was not sure that stereo does not do more for choral singing than for anything else. It certainly does much for this recording. The mono reveals the good tone and excellent discipline of this famous choir, but in stereo we

have a greater s adds a lot to the items are *Kalink the Soldiers' (Decembrists, the Bandura*, in whi friendship of hi away from his t

My only chi "Poems and Son Jupiter Mono J short poems an children and o read and sung b is considerable v they are well pr the standard whi The best I thin Clare's *The Red the airy mountain a Ditty and Osian Willie Boy*.

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