

# The Sphere of Music

Special to S.A. Jewish Chronicle

By JOSEPH KALUSKY.

## THE GRAMOPHONE.

Until quite recently the epithet "canned music" was, not without justification, hurled at all recorded music, and to the sensitive and cultured ear, the gramophone was indeed a beast of a particularly obnoxious kind. In fact, like most "canned" products it was devoid of that very essence which should have given it life. By serious musicians it was not treated as a musical instrument and was looked upon with amused tolerance as a nice toy for the uninitiated. To-day, however, such remarkable strides have been made in the scientific and mechanical reproduction of sound, that the gramophone has come into its own, and compels serious consideration as a musical instrument. The discovery of the microphone process and the startling invention of telescopic reproductions, together with duo-responsive-zone sound boxes and tone-arms of peculiar twists and turns, have resulted in the gramophone filling a role in the sphere of music, the importance of which opens up bewildering possibilities. The effects upon musical culture are bound to be extraordinary and its potentialities as a force for the dissemination of the best in musical literature are enormous.

The gramophone of to-day has the power to spread the divine gospel of music about the world. It is bringing more recruits to the army of music lovers than any other medium has succeeded in doing up to the present, and the unassuming gentleman who starts his modest collection with a Jazz number, finds before very long that he developed a hankering for string quartets and symphonies.

Apart from its influence musically, the gramophone also has infinite possibilities in the world of education. As Sir Henry Wood puts it "Children should hear our own beautiful English as spoken by such a great artist as Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson; surely all the great Shakespearean speeches should be recorded by such an artist and used in our schools. This indeed would be language culture of tremendous value." It has tremendous educative value also the music student who can hear the greatest and finest artists in the world doing the works he is studying as often as he likes, and what is more in the secluded privacy of his own home.

In conclusion the following remarks of Sir Henry Wood summarise the influence of the gramophone in a nut-shell: "The gramophone is the greatest popularising musical instrument of the world. It is the home instrument of the untaught lover of music who listens to it with simple enjoyment, and of the musical expert who finds it a marvellous aid to the study of his art. We hardly realise the boon the gramophone is to people in isolated places, how it carries beautiful music to the middle of the widest ocean, to the veldt and to the bush, nor how it gives a new interest in life to the bedridden and those who are too infirm to attend concerts. The world-wide influence of the gramophone on musical culture is an influence of the very highest benefit to music."

## COLUMBIA RECORDS.

Amongst the best records issued by

this company must be included the recent one of "L'Affrienti Sorcier," conducted by Philippe Gauhert and played by the orchestra of the Paris Conversatoire Concerts (L.1974/75). There is a vitality and brilliance in the performance of this work that leaves little to be desired. The beautiful colourful orchestration is reproduced with wonderful fidelity and the interpretation sparkles with originality. The odd side is given over a performance of the "Figaro" Overture that is most satisfying.

Clara Butt singing Drovak's "Four Biblical Songs" (X.335/6). Though the inevitable organ accompanies the singing of these songs by this famous artist, I cannot say that it makes her booming voice any more appealing to me. I can think of at least half-a-dozen singers who could do them better. Perhaps you may like them.

Bratza, the famous young fiddler, plays a Mendelssohn "Song without words" and the "Nocturne" by Lili Baulanger very sweetly and appealingly (D.1754). They are sure to be popular numbers.

A. M. Henderson playing old keyboard music (4361). Mr. Henderson is an artist of no mean order, and his playing of Arnes (Gavotte in B. Flat and Gigue in G. and Purcell's beautiful "Graund" in E. Minor, are performances to cherish, not only for their artistic but also for their historical interest.

Records 9201 and 4361 are of Community Singing. The crowd is supposed to contain 92,000 people, and the choruses sung were "Abide with me," "Land of my fathers," "All through the night," "John Brown's body," and "Loch Lomand." Musically, of course, they are absolutely of no interest, but as a record of the combined noises of a football cup final they will prove useful to archaeologists two thousand years hence in order to give them a good idea of our barbarity—and they will certainly make many a Londoner home-sick.

## ADOLPE HALLIS.

That famous South African artist Mr. Adolphe Hallis, who by the way is also a Jew, will be giving a series of historical recitals in the Selborne Hall under the auspices of the Johannesburg Musical Society. Mr. Hallis is a pianist with a very big reputation, particularly on the continent, and he is one of those rare birds who can even fill a hall in London, and there are not many who can do that to-day. We are very fortunate in having an opportunity of again hearing this gentleman, for he has a very brilliant technique and is an artist both literally and metaphorically to his finger tips.

The article in the Censorship Ordinance which requires the submission of an English translation of Hebrew plays will be deleted, the Attorney-General, Mr. Norman Bentwich, told a delegation of the "Protectors of the Hebrew Language" who called upon him and asked him to remove this article from the Ordinance.

The hills in the vicinity of the Dead Sea were badly damaged by the earthquake. Photographs taken by the Royal Air Force show that there has been a veritable upheaval in the immediate region of the Dead Sea.

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