



Mentmore  
Prices:  
Supreme 15/3  
Diploma 17/6  
Auto-Flow 24/6

# MENTMORE

English

## FOUNTAIN PENS

WITH THE OSMI IRIIDIUM  
14 CARAT GOLD NIB

## HELICOPTER TOY



Pull cord as shown and propeller will rise over 50ft in the air. Adjustable fast or slow climb. With two propellers and cord 4/6, post 3d. A Scientific Toy.

SKEATES & WHITE LTD.  
48 Fort Street, Auckland

## Play PIANO by EAR

Amazingly EASY  
"short-cut" method.

Almost before you know it, if you take the Niagara Play-by-Ear course you'll be playing popular songs, new and old-time dances, marches, jazz, or, if preferred, semi-classical music, hymns, etc. Average students proficient in 3 months without previous teaching. Niagara teaches you to transpose to improvise, to convert to lively rag-time or swing—ALL WITHOUT NOTES.

Free 'After Sale' Help from our Service Dept. to ensure thoroughly satisfied students.

Send 2d stamp to-day (to cover postage) for FREE book, "The Niagara Secret," to Niagara School of Music, 53 Robertson Street, Invercargill. 5.5

CONSTANT LAMBERT, the well-known English conductor, composer and writer on music, has made his first appearance this year as a conductor of promenade concerts in London; recordings of some of his concerts are now being heard from the BBC on shortwave. On the occasion of this new debut, Mr. Lambert wrote an article "My Promenading Life" for the "Radio Times," about his three "periods" of going to the Proms—as a schoolboy, a student, and then a critic—and looked forward to his fourth period in a new role. We print that article here for our own readers, but to forestall renewals of an old inquiry we repeat that Lambert is not a Frenchman (and not Constong Lombear), but the son of George Lambert, an Australian painter.

## A Promenading Life

### CONSTANT LAMBERT TELLS HIS OWN STORY



WE are apt to take a number of things for granted: trains, for example, and the Proms. Occasionally in remote country pubs the Oldest Inhabitant will score a cheap success by saying (quite untruthfully): "When I were a boy there weren't no trains"; and I could equally surprise most of my readers by saying (and in this case quite truthfully): "When I were a boy there weren't no Proms." For I started to take music seriously during the period of the last war when the Proms for the first time were not functioning, and there must have been many older than myself who shared my wild excitement when their reopening was announced. I had been told all about them of course, and had read that classic *The Promenade Ticket*, but even so the reality was more than I had expected, and my first Prom stands out as one of the unforgettable evenings of my life (except that I have forgotten the programme—but then I was only a child at the time.)

#### Saved From Musical Starvation

I don't expect I realised that it was the beginning of my serious musical education. Just as Sir Osbert Sitwell once described himself as "educated at Eton—mainly self-educated," so I have often wanted to describe myself as "self-educated at the Proms." We are so spoon-fed now by the gramophone and the wireless that we forget what the Proms meant in those days, particularly to someone like myself who was at school. Gramophone recording was bad and the catalogues scanty, wireless was in its infancy and had not set any musical standards, and the main symphony concerts took place in term-time. Had it not been for the Proms I would have been musically starved. I am sure that every musician of my generation will agree that he owes a greater debt to Sir Henry Wood than to any other individual.

In my first Prom period I was still at school and could not, of course, afford to go to as many as I should have liked. The moment the precious programmes arrived I would feverishly count up my pocket money and then weigh the respective attractions of, say, "Prince Igor Dances" and "Night on the Bare Mountain." In those days the programmes were less segregated than they are now, otherwise I suppose I should have spent all my money on Russian nights. Fortunately the programmes were very mixed and as a result my education could not have been more liberal. Everything to me was a first performance, and hearing the moderns cheek by jowl with the classics it never struck me that there was anything queer or difficult about them.

I took to Bartok and Stravinsky as easily as I did to Mozart and Beethoven.

#### Lambert the Student

At that time (like Sir Thomas à Malory) I always went to the gallery and thus had not savoured the full flavour of the Proms. This I did later as a student, when to go anywhere but to the actual promenade would have been out of the question. Those were my pleasantest days as a promenader. The audiences then were not so large and one could breathe and move comparatively freely. One could even make a rapid exit to avoid some work or artist one did not favour. Music by now being my daily life and not an occasional treat, I was already beginning to take it less earnestly. Instead of staying grimly on through the ballads in order to hear every note of the orchestra, I started the habit of coming for a particular work or works and concentrating on these alone. There was a friendly informal atmosphere, and one was bound to run into a fellow student or an older composer, such as Peter Warlock, with whom one would stroll down Regent Street to discuss the whole thing over a drink.

My third period as a promenader was less happy. It is true that I didn't have to queue for the gallery or stand in the promenade. I sat in comfort, morosely, in the circle. I was a critic. I suppose that as a child I would willingly have sold my soul for a seat in the circle every night, but then in those days music was to me a recreation—I fortunately had no idea of what it could be like when it became a hack job. It says a lot for my genuine love of music that after four years as a critic I still go to concerts voluntarily. I can even enjoy most of the "repertoire," a thing for which, when a critic, I began to harbour feelings ranging from indifference to disgust. (When you hear the "repertoire" year in and year out you begin to long for anything, from eleventh century music to Schonberg, which would constitute a change.)

#### "Another Red Letter Day"

My fourth period at the Proms will, though arduous, be more genial. When I went to my first Proms as a child I

had the ambition proper to my years. Even so I never envisaged myself as actually conducting any of them. So my first concert at the Proms this year will be another red-letter day in my life, except that on this occasion my excitement and pleasurable anticipation will be tempered by a certain amount of genuine fear. Fear, mainly, that I may not do justice to my favourite composers whose works, to my great good fortune, I have been entrusted with—a splendid selection, ranging from Haydn, my favourite classic, through Borodin and the lesser known Liszt, to Debussy, Sibelius and the concertos of my contemporaries Walton and Rawsthorne.

Let us all hope that my fourth period at the Proms will prove the most enjoyable. After that, who knows? There are still other points of the compass to be boxed (if that is the correct nautical term); I may end up playing the bass drum (an instrument for which I have a natural talent), selling programmes, acting as librarian or even as "chucker-out." To know the future would dull one's pleasures without mitigating one's misfortunes.

#### Gastronomic Music

BIBLIOTHERAPY is a science which combines selected literature with medical treatment in curing various ills. It is used largely in America, we are told. That being so, there is apparently no reason why music should not be used to aid digestion. One cannot predict how the tones of the novachord will react on the soup, fish, meat, veg. and a sweet, but listeners will be able to make their own tests on Monday, October 15, if they tune in to 12B at 6 p.m. Eric Bell and guest artists will present the first of a series called "The Music of the Novachord," playing light classical and popular tuneful music of the day. Among guest artists will be Hazel Peal, Valerie Isbister, Irene Brooks, Clarence Lane, Vere Soljak and Ada Lynn.