



FURTHER AHEAD!

THE GREATEST
HIGH FIDELITY RECORDS
OF 1954

1. HANDEL'S IMMORTAL "MESSIAH"

Complete on 3 records—total cost £5/19/3—NLP 9074.

As performed at the original Dublin performance in 1742.

Margaret Ritchie, soprano; Constance Shacklock, contralto; William Herbert, tenor; Richard Standen, bass; London Philharmonic Choir, London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Hermann Scherchen.

What the critics say:—"Hermann Scherchen cares not a rap for English tradition, for in his recording he combines modern virtuosity with intense dramatic force. His singers make every number distinctive in its different way, and the way is always decided by dramatic content. The slow, deliberate plod of 'The People that walked in Darkness' is unconventional but challenging; his treatment of 'He was despised' is soul-searing; the vicious whiplash of the harpsichord on the barlines when 'He gave His back to the smiters' may well be truly Handelian. . . ."—*Gramophone Record Review*, May, 1954. "I have found Scherchen's reading the more invigorating and in general the more imaginative . . . that touch of wonder and rapture which can be felt in every phrase uttered by Margaret Ritchie. . . ."—Desmond Shawe-Taylor, *The Observer*, Sunday, May 9, 1954.

"Margaret Ritchie is outstanding among the soloists. She sings most exquisitely the three recitatives leading to 'Glory to God' and so to 'Rejoice greatly.' Scherchen takes a dramatic view of this episode, which is very vividly realised. Miss Ritchie's eager tone on 'And suddenly,' the crescendo which fills the skies with angels, the confidential reprise—so reminiscent of Elisabeth Schumann—of 'Rejoice,' all these are utterly enchanting."—*The Gramophone*, May, 1954.

2. HOLST'S PLANET SUITE

Members of London Philharmonic Choir, Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra, conductor Adrian Boult. NLP 903

"No one will be disappointed with this startlingly brilliant recording of one of the most brilliantly effective scores in British music . . . the recording engineers achieved. . . . The playing has a degree of virtuosity and will be found quite dazzling."—*E.M.G. Monthly Letter*, May, 1954.

3. WALTON'S BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST

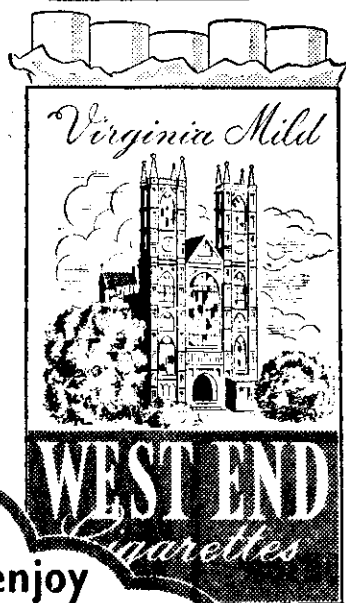
Denis Noble, baritone; London Philharmonic Choir, Philharmonic Promenade Orchestra, conductor Adrian Boult. NLP 904

"This is an excellent account of a brilliantly coloured work, and we urge everyone to hear it."—*E.M.G. Monthly Letter*, March, 1954.

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Stage for All Purposes

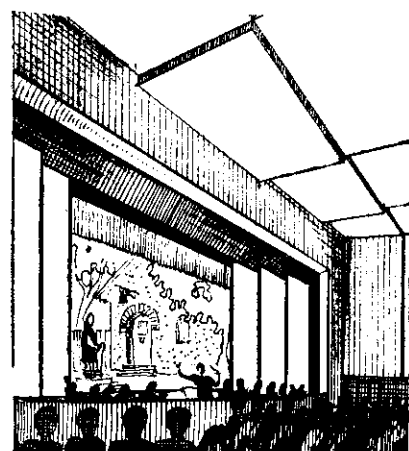
THE Lower Hutt City Council is building a Town Hall and it looks as though certain innovations in its planning may go some way towards overcoming one of the biggest disadvantages affecting the performance of music. A Town Hall has to serve all interests in the community. It is a place for drama, music, dancing, wrestling, boxing, and all sorts of meetings. What usually happens is that it turns out to be a place fulfilling all these functions but none of them wholly satisfactorily. And music nearly always comes off worst.

One of the musicians' chief complaints is that the stage or platform is never large enough to accommodate choirs or orchestras whose end men find themselves uncomfortably pushing against the inflexible pillars of the drama's proscenium. Alternatively, there is a vast oasis of space which dissipates the sound before it has a chance to become music. Whatever the result to the audience, the performer who has to make music under these conditions very soon has the shine taken out of his enthusiasm.

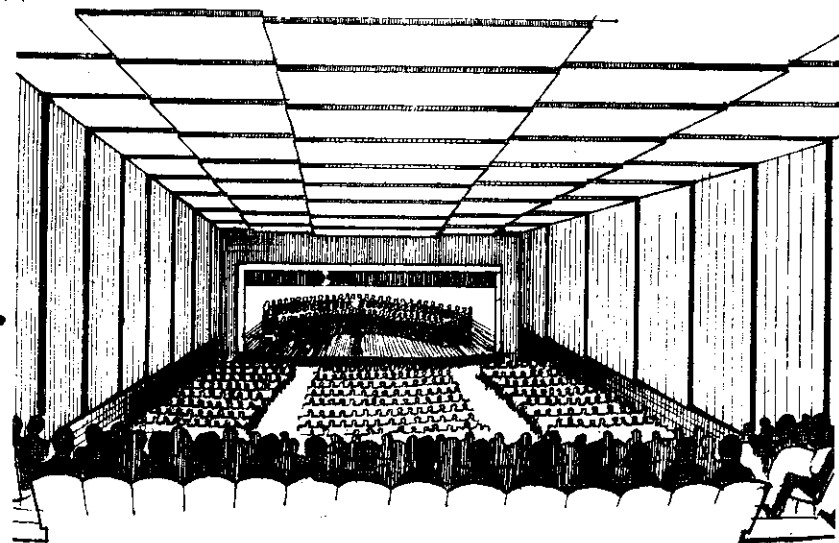
The new Lower Hutt hall will still have to serve all purposes and will, no doubt, still have to be something of a compromise; but certain modifications in stage design will make the singer or the player much happier. At first sight, the proscenium may appear little different from any other. The opening is 27 feet across, adequate enough for drama, and the depth of just on 26 feet should leave enough room for even the most

extravagant histrionics. Take off your actors, however, and put on the choir, and the stage immediately presents a spacious front of 45 feet. The accomplishment of this is a very simple matter. All that happens is that the proscenium sides which turn out to be each three staggered panels, slide back easily and neatly into a nest, leaving the whole stage open, if this still does not leave enough room for the choir, the orchestral well (28 feet by six feet) can be raised to stage level to form an apron.

As for the sound, it is proposed to have a sort of movable canopy which will make a ceiling and a solid backdrop. This should have the effect of projecting all the music into the auditorium. While this will reduce the stage space, it will still leave enough room for about 120 singers. There will be ample dressing-room accommodation and an orchestral room. The hall itself will seat about 1200.



ARCHITECT'S sketches of the projected Lower Hutt town hall showing (at right) the stage set for drama, with side-panels out; and (below) the full stage width available for choral concerts



—Delt. M.H.T.

SELF TO SELF

|| ILL the poet speak for the lover?

The word is not yet coined
That will buy her heart and mind.

How shall we get to know her?

As the sailor the shifting sea—
By the guess of hand and eye.

What will he wear, the suitor?

Purpose is heart's dress,
But the mind must come in nakedness.

Can we be sure of ever-after?

The poet may not vow
What the lover may undo.

—Colin Newbury