

Only one in seven Irish years produces a harvest of IRISH LINEN



IRELAND IS THE best country in the world in which to grow blue-flower flax, preferred by spinners and weavers because of the fineness of its fibres. Yet even in Ireland's moist, gentle climate, flax can only be harvested once in seven years. The other six years must be spent in nourishing and preparing the soil. Because of this, the flax fibres obtained from the harvest reach an extremely high standard.

Flax is Irish Linen. Every harvest of blue-flower flax means a harvest of lasting, beautiful Irish Linen to grace the homes of people the world over. For centuries, the Irish people have been cultivating flax and making linen goods. Even in earliest times, Linen was recognised as the ultimate in fabrics. The early Romans used linen to clothe the upper classes, and the Egyptians used nothing but linen to embalm their deceased royalty. All over the world to this day people realise the importance of linen in their lives. You may be using genuine Irish Linen at this moment. You can be sure that it embodies the centuries-old skill of the Irish flax-growers and weavers—artists in linen.

Irish Linen
IT'S LOVELY IT LASTS

1067

MUSIC ON RECORD



The Real Handel

by "DISCOBOLUS"

I HOPE a better recording of the Beethoven 5th Symphony than that by André Cluytens and the Berlin Philharmonic doesn't come out because I'm so satisfied with it, and I don't want to change. This is exactly the way I want this masterpiece among symphonies to sound, and stereo-recording on ASDM 267 lets the glorious tone of the Berlin Philharmonic be fully heard. I hadn't expected Cluytens to be so convincing. An excellent performance of the Leonora No. 3 is thrown in as a makeweight.

As this is the Handel bicentenary year we may (I hope) expect more of what is to my mind our most neglected composer. A welcome Decca 10-inch is LWM 5342 of eight of the greatest choruses of *Messiah* by the London Philharmonic Choir and Orchestra under Boult. It is interesting in view of the controversy about the recent Wellington performance under Hopkins which was given in the Victorian tradition of large choir (34 tenors, 111 sopranos—I counted them) and extra orchestra, to see that this record has a small choir and an orchestra in which the voice of the harpsichord is heard in the land. The result is that Handel's polyphonic lines can be clearly heard. This is to my mind real Handel, and I am glad to see the sleeve note draw attention to the fact that several of the choruses are adapted by Handel from his Italian duets.

Cherubini is a man who was almost lost between two eras of music, bridging the gap between classical and romantic. More attention has been paid to him recently with the spectacular success of his opera *Medea* in America and Europe. Philips have issued on A 00428L a magnificent recording of his Requiem Mass by the chorus of the Verdi Theatre in Trieste under Luigi Toffolo which I found superb. The Dies Irae is simply overwhelming. The recording is satisfactory.

Two recent vocal records could hardly be more of a contrast, though both are by sopranos. Renata Tebaldi has for long been a notable operatic soprano, but on LXTM 5410 she sings with piano 14 Italian songs by Scarlatti, Handel, Mozart, Bellini, Rossini, Mascagni among others. These are by no means old chestnuts and the record is welcome for the music, but the great voice of Tebaldi is almost too great, especially as the accompanist is by no means a Gerald

Moore. Some of these songs ask to be tossed off as delightful trifles, and not taken seriously. The three most interesting I found to be Rossini's three Venetian gondolier songs. The other record (33 CX1570) is Elisabeth Schwarzkopf singing schmalzy Viennese operetta songs as only she and Elisabeth Schumann can sing them. Not coy and not making sentimental rubatos, but just plain captivating. The operettas are *The Count of Luxembourg*, *Boccaccio*, *Dubarry*, *Giuditta*, *Casanova* (Nun's Chorus), *Bird-Seller* and so on, and if the names sound strange you can be sure you will recognise the charming melodies.

I have always thought Australian conductor Charles Mackerras to be one of the coming men and his records are almost invariably first-class, but on HMV MDLP 1168 he outdoes himself with the magnificent Philharmonia Orchestra in a superb record of Berlioz—the Hungarian March, Ballet of Sylphs and Minuet of the Will-o'-the-Wisps, from the *Damnation of Faust*, the march from *The Trojans*, and the Roman Carnival Overture. The Philharmonia woodwind are incredible; listen to the end—presto pianissimo—of the Minuet. The whole record is one I can warmly recommend—and it's a ten-inch!

(continued on next page)



RENATA TEBALDI
Too great for trifles?

DELAYED ACTION

THE justice of any secret organisation is often based on a stricter code than that of normal society, and one more rigidly enforced; and so it was in Ireland during the Troubles. *This Day in Fear*, the play to be broadcast from YAs and 4YZ on Monday, November 2, shows the justice of the I.R.A. at work; it is not enough for a man to be killed, but he must also be told of the plans for his death, so that he will spend a day in the shadows of that knowledge.

The play begins with James Coogan informing the police of the whereabouts of Seamus O'Connor, an I.R.A. leader escaped from prison. O'Connor dies, and

his comrades swear to avenge his death. Five years later James Coogan is in England, and celebrating with his wife the news that he has passed the examinations that will give him a new career. He has broken completely with his past. Then a visitor shows him the morning's paper, in which is an In Memoriam notice for Seamus O'Connor and beneath it one for James Coogan. *This Day in Fear* was produced by Bernard Beeby for the NZBS and James Coogan is played by Antony Groser.



Antony Groser