

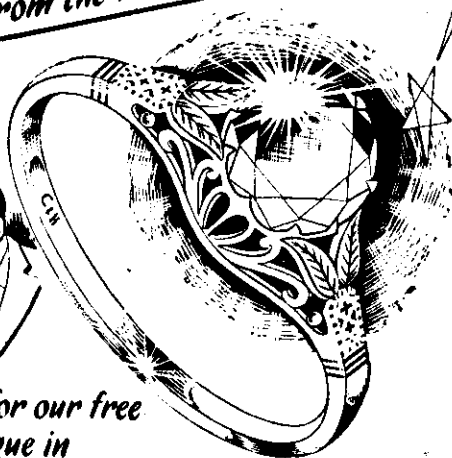
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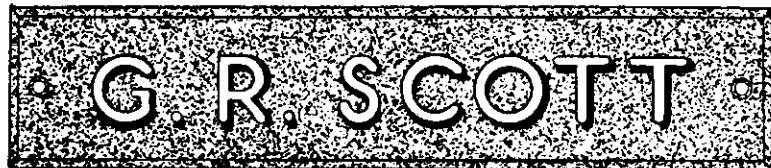
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A.P.S. photograph

MEMBERS of the Griller Quartet at rehearsal with Hephzibah Menuhin. From left: Philip Burton, Colin Hampton, Jack O'Brien and Sidney Griller

PIANO AND STRINGS

THE performances together in New Zealand of the Griller Quartet and the pianist Hephzibah Menuhin have been something of an event in the musical world. It is the first time they have played together, and as they will not be continuing their collaboration in Australia, or in any other country for that matter, New Zealanders have had an experience that audiences in Europe or America are not likely to enjoy, at least for some time to come.

Miss Menuhin flew over from Sydney on July 29, and the five players started immediately to rehearse for their concert on the following Saturday night—that now celebrated concert at which they played Beethoven, Haydn and Bloch in a manner unequalled in the

memory of most listeners in this country. It was the more remarkable because they had rehearsed for only three days together. The Bloch quintet in particular was a work which audiences were expected to be critical of, as the Grillers have played it in England under the supervision of the composer himself, with such pianists as Louis Kentner and Colin Horsley; and it was also played out here a year or two ago by the Musica Viva Players.

When *The Listener* met the five players, and the photograph which appears on this page was taken, they had only known each other for a few hours, but there was evidence in the spirit with which they were rehearsing a sec-

(continued on next page)

West African Music

FELA SOWANDE, the Nigerian organist, once had a conversation with an English organist, who insisted that there was no such thing as African music. "African noise would be more correct," the Englishman said. "After all, all the Africans ever do is to beat tom-toms and kick up an unholy row." Just how far that critic was off the track Fela Sowande demonstrates in a BBC programme called *African Melodies*, which will be broadcast by 4YA on Sunday, August 23, at 8.5 p.m. The programme is made up mainly of the sacred music of Sowande's own tribe, the Yoruba of Southern Nigeria.

This African musician holds the view that African music should be a wedding of European technique to purely African themes, and as many of the traditional Yoruba melodies—secular as well as sacred—are tuneful to Western ears, his work has done much for the understanding and appreciation of African music by Western listeners. Four Yoruba singers, including his brother Tunji, sing the melodies on which he has based the three compositions which he himself plays on the organ. Fela Sowande, who was born and spent his

boyhood in Abeokuta, has lived in England since 1935, though he still keeps in close touch with Nigeria. He has been able to give full expression to his work for African music not only as composer and player, but also as Director of Music to the Colonial Film Unit.



FELA SOWANDE BBC photo

N.Z. LISTENER, AUGUST 14, 1953.