mild chauvinism. Leonard (U.S.A.), Bernstein's ballet music *Fancy Free*, is bold, brash and brassy, being the musical adventures of three sailors and two girls with another blonde too late for her date. The Ballet Theatre Orchestra conducted by Joseph Levine (Capitol CCL 7517) present the music without any inhibitions. The same company have also recorded Aaron Copland's ballet music, *Rodeo* (Capitol CCL 7516). Copland to Bernstein is as master to pupil, and the music sounds that way, with Copland's subtleties asking a little more of your listening.

Shostakovich's 100,000 roubles Piano Quintet—it won a Stalin Prize in 1941—is a different kettle of fish. The titles of the movements—Prelude, Fugue, Scherzo, Intermezzo, Allegretto—suggest a classical background. The texture of the music has something of the flavour of Mendelssohn and a little of the 18th Century seen through a distorting mirror. How Russian this may be only Shostakovich and his critics may know. The music has the clarity of an etching, and despite the sprinkling of clichés is made very exciting by the Quintetto Chigiano (Decca LXT 2749).

Down in South America they do things a little differently, although the shadow of the 19th Century still seems to hang about. That prolific Brazilian, Heitor Villa-Lobos, is represented this month by some piano pieces played by Ellen Ballon (Decca LX 3075). The playing is most competent and the music is not at all as exotic as you might expect. It varies from something resembling a more virile Rachmaninoff to what sounds like Europeanised Brazilian folk idioms.

Coda

Finally, two discs a little off the beaten track. The first is a recital of *Old Netherlands Music* played on the organ of St. Jans Church, Gouda, by Flors Peeters (Nixa PLP 239). The bril-

(continued in next column)

liant clear tone of the baroque organ—this one dates from 1736—seems to record more faithfully than that of the modern organ—or is it that the playing on this disc is so much better! The music from the great Netherlands School of the 16th Century is timelessly beautiful. It may be an acquired taste, but there is pleasure in its cultivation.

Then there is *Merveilles du Chant Choral (Espagne)*, which sounds much better than "Gems of Spanish Choral Music," and sounds even more attractive sung by the Agrupacion Coral de Camara de Pamplona (Ducretet-Thomson LPG 8325). In this old Spanish music and Spanish folksongs there is nothing of the gypsy, but you may find something of El Greco or Goya which, you will admit, is worth inquiring into.

September Choice

VERDI: His opera *Aida* recorded by the Chorus and Orchestra of the Accademia di Santa Cecilia, Rome, with soloists. Music to revel in, to wallow in, or, if you sing, to study. . . A first-rate performance. (Decca LXT 2735-37.)

OLD NETHERLANDS MUSIC: Played on the organ of St. Jans, Gouda, by Flors Peeters. Music for the connoisseur—but maybe after hearing it you will wish to become a connoisseur. (Nixa PLP 239.)

MERVEILLES DU CHANT CHORAL (ESPAGNE): As sung by the *Agrupacion Coral de Camara de Pamplona*, you can hardly miss placing this among your most satisfying pleasures of music. (Ducretet-Thomson LPG 8325.)

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