

# New Recordings Promise Well for 1935

## Gramophone Recordings of the Finest of the World's Talent

ON the basis of attractive new gramophone recordings the outlook promised for 1935 appears comparatively rosy, both for those who buy and those who sell records. Last year was a wonderful year for lovers of fine music, and no radio listener in this class has solid ground for complaint against the variety of the classical music broadcast in its appropriate sessions.

AS if to confirm the bold forward movement in this liberal broadcasting of major works of the greatest masters, the gramophone companies have poured forth a stream of works gloriously played by orchestras, instrumental combinations and soloists. And by all indications the year 1935 will see a further development of this enlightened policy. May their efforts be crowned with success, is the wish of all who have the interests of good music at heart.

The year begins well with an H.M.V. Mozartian Sonata played by Yehudi and Hephzibah Menuhin. The A major sonata is the last of the forty-two Mozart works in this form, and belongs to his latest years. In essence, however, there is a great deal of the youthful spirit of the youthful Mozarts (brother and sister) in the playing of the Menuhins. Hephzibah is not much more than thirteen and appeared for the first time in public last winter in Paris, playing the present sonata with her brother. Naturally one cannot judge her stature in musicianship from one work, but at the very least her playing here indicates that she is not only a gifted, but an already poised and wholesome spirit, who well may equal her brother's rapid rise to the heights—the heights of artistry—not merely popularity.

The sonata played here may not be one of Mozart's greatest, but it is delightful from first note to last. The performance is absolutely free from the affectation, the stilted "taught" quality, and the barren virtuosity that marks the playing of most of the wonder children of music. It has the same quality of complete naturalness and informality. Add excellent recording, and one has here a recorded violin sonata that will give as deep and constant pleasure as any the gramophone repertory has to offer us. To the accompaniment of Hubert Griesen, young Yehudi plays "Perpetuum Mobile" (Ottakar Novacek) and "Rigaudon" (Monsigny, arr. Franks), on a delightful ten-inch disc issued this month. It is hardly necessary to add it "comes off" as well as ever.

The policy of issuing four or more piano masterpieces is becoming a habit with His Master's Voice, and for the connoisseur this is most welcome. This time it is the turn of the Impromptus, four of which, at the hands of Alfred Cortot, the French master of the keyboard, are made gems any gramophone would be proud to possess. Whether an Impromptu is suggested by memory or anticipation matters little. The No. 1 in A flat major, Op. 29, No. 2 in F sharp major, Op. 36, No. 3 in G flat major, and the beloved Fantasia Impromptu in C sharp minor, Op. 66, find a brilliant exponent in Cortot. Each of them is a lesson to the student

and a romantic experience to the average listener.

In the orchestral section pride of place must be given to two Percy Grainger selections, "Country Gardens" and "Shepherd's Hey," played by the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra, under Eugene Ormandy. These are lively reminders that our modern composers are at home in the brightest old folk rhythms. Auber's "Fra Dia-



YEHUDI MENUHIN.

volo" Overture, played by the London Philharmonic Orchestra, will play its full eight or more minutes, and make the period seem only half as much. The infectious gaiety of Auber's music cannot be resisted. By the way, don't miss the latest New Mayfair Orchestra disc of "Love Tales," which introduces nearly a dozen dear old songs from "Love, Here is My Heart" to "If You Were the Only Girl in the World"; a chorus helps out very materially.

Vocally, the January-February supplement is far from strong; my vote for the best disc would go without hesitation to Lawrence Tibbett, who is wonderful (in the best sense of that over-worked word) in Tchaikovsky's "None but the Lonely Heart" and "Myself when Young," from Liza Lehmann's "In a Persian Garden." He has caught old Omar's somewhat bleak pessimism in the second of these songs. Opinions may differ, but I think Tibbett's dramatic sense reaches almost to that of Chaliapine. His sombre tones in the Tchaikovsky song plumb the depths of longing expressed in Goethe's epic poem. This is a most appropriate coupling and a record to buy, to keep, to play, to study, to study and demonstrate to one's friends as an example of modern vocalisation. The remaining vocals include Peter Dawson (in better voice than ever) in Gleeson's "The Tramp Song" and

Mande Valerie White's lovely ballad, "The Devout Lover." Enrico Caruso speaks from the past in "Because," Guy d'Hardelot's biggest song hit, and Testi's "La Mia Canzone." Last, but not least, comes the fifty-year-old, but vocally perennially young, Stuart Robertson in Murray's "The Fiddler" and "Come to the Fair" (Easthope Martin). Harp solos are a novelty, and a master player in the person of Mario Lorenzi gives us Lincke's "Glow-worm Idyll" and a "Medley of National Airs."

Let me conclude this brief review with a statement about Yehudi Menuhin, who with his young sister Hephzibah made the records mentioned above. This boy has really wise parents—people who know how to treat a child of genius. This year he is to do a world tour, which includes New Zealand. And then throughout 1936 he rests entirely. At present he earns £20,000 a year—he can afford to take things steadily, and is in better hands than some prodigies.

## Melba's Gift

### Scholarship for Promising Singers

THIS month the first competition for the Dame Nellie Melba Bequest Scholarship for woman singers over the age of 17 years was held at the Albert Street Conservatorium, Melbourne. The scholarship, derived from an income of £8000, is to be awarded annually, and will be tenable for a period of 12 months, with the possibility of an extension for a further two years at the discretion of the director, Mr. Fritz Hart, F.R.C.M.

In addition to the nominal value of the scholarship of £109 for tuition, emoluments may be granted the successful candidate towards reasonable travelling expenses, board, residence and maintenance and the purchase of books and music for study. The competition is open to women only, not necessarily of Australian birth.

There is no particular work set for applicants. Voice and general musical promise are looked for, but choice of song or songs is left to the candidates. A most intensive course of study has been planned, including four lessons a week in singing, two lessons a week in second study, also languages, physical training, lectures on musical form and analysis, the history and aesthetics of music and other subjects likely to be of assistance to scholarship holders. Singing will be under the personal tuition of Miss Mary Campbell, the chief study teacher of the Melba School of Singing.

The scholarship was made available in the hope that another Melba may arise. Dame Nellie Melba once wrote: "I leave all my pupils at the Albert Street Conservatorium in the hands of my lieutenants in whom I have absolute confidence, and I wish it to be recognised that the vocal tuition they receive is completely in accordance with my own methods."

So this greatest Australian singer of all time has left behind her the chance of distinction, perhaps fame, for somebody of the hundreds whose voices are a little better than ordinarily "promising."