

Wide Variety of Recordings in the March Releases

Some New Discs of the Lighter Classics

(By Bolton Woods)

THERE can be but few pianists, however modest their attainments, who have not played some at least of Grieg's many lyric pieces for their chosen instrument. About forty years ago it occurred to the great conductor, Anton Seidl, that some of them were admirably adapted for orchestral arrangement; he accordingly arranged four, scoring them effectively for big orchestra. Grieg himself approved of the idea, and with certain alterations by the original composer the "Lyric Suite, Op. 54" stands to-day as among the most popular of the lighter classics. The four numbers, "Shepherd Boy," "Norwegian Rustic March," "Nocturne," and "March of the Dwarfs," convey admirably Scandinavian atmosphere at the hands of the London Philharmonic Orchestra, under Sir London Donald. The two discs (H.M.V. C2642-43) were, in reality, overdue. In the latest recording the "Suite" is eminently desirable.

Ravel is more nearly on his native heath than any other of the French composers who set out to compose so-called Spanish music. As a native of the lower Pyrenees he was as near a neighbour of the Spaniards as he could possibly be. Therefore, when he essayed his "Rhapsodie Espagnole" (Spanish Rhapsody) he knew what he was about. The work comprises four short sections, each of which is devoted to a scene of Spanish life. They are, briefly, as follows: "Prelude a la Nuit," is an impression of night; "Malaguena" is the national dance belonging to southern Malaga; the "Habanera" is the well-known dance with the languorous swaying movement; and the final piece is the "Feria" or "Fair," and is a richly varied musical picture of just such a scene as its name conjures up. Leopold Stokowski's Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra presents this alluring and vivid music in masterly manner, and the two discs (H.M.V. DB2367-68) afford a sample of the best work of France's greatest living composer.

Two records by the London Palladium Orchestra but add to the duplication, already rife, among such universal favourites as Gounod's "Faust" Selection (H.M.V. C2679), and a ten inch plum (H.M.V. B8189) which bears on its labels, "Kiss Me Again" (Herbert) and "Echoes from the Puszta" (Ferraris), the last-named not so familiar and appealing at the first hearing. Marek Weber's Orchestra is responsible for a very original rhythmic rendering of Woodforde-Finden's "Four Indian Love Lyrics" (H.M.V. B8205). The attempts at Oriental "atmosphere" are not devoid of interest, and to some hearers, humour.

We are being so much deluged with really fine piano recordings nowadays that one almost expects a surprise in every fresh monthly supplement. The fact that disappointments on this score are almost non-existent is accounted for by the steady and permanent improvement in the recording. On any good gramophone Simon Barer's new disc

should sound enchanting (H.M.V. DB2187). He has departed from the beaten track and given us some unfamiliar Liszt, viz., "Sonetto No. 104 del Petrarca" (being No. 5 of "Deuxieme Annee-L'Italie" from "Annees de Pelerinage"). There are three books of this comprehensive work, and the whole idea was the outcome of Liszt's visits to Italy and Switzerland, where inspired by the solemnity and beauty of those landscapes, he painted the impressions received in tones of thrilling spiritual beauty. To the all-too-scanty five recordings available has been added the Petrarch Sonnet which reveals Barer as a great pianist. The final portion of part 2 is occupied by a breath-taking performance of the same composer's "Gnomesreigen."

To the small stock of recorded Schumann piano works Vladimir Horowitz has made a contribution with his "Arabesque, Op. 18" disc (H.M.V. DA1381). The supplement features the "incredible delicacy" of his pianism—this is by no means an overstatement, although the "unco" particular will have something else to say. A warm welcome awaits the new Miliza Korjus recording of "Una Voce Poco Pa" from Rossini's "Barber of Seville" and Adams' "Variations on a Mozart Air—Ah! Vous Dirai-je Maman" (with flute obbligato), (H.M.V. C2688). Sung in German, these two numbers almost baffle description. The voice of the woman singer will undoubtedly make her fortune. Many may prefer the "Variations," which is the absolute "excelsis" of coloratura vocalism.

The male singers, apart from Crooks, Tibbett and Sir Harry Lauder, don't amount to much this month. Of course, we can't have it all ways. The gorgeous recording of Mozart's "Concerto in D Major" by Menuhin, violinist, and the famous Orchestre Symphonique de Paris, is worth a bushel of ordinary recordings—so let us be thankful.

The American tenor, Richard Crooks, gives us "Kathleen Mavourneen," and "I Love You So" (H.M.V. DB2336). Lawrence Tibbett, the American baritone, is responsible for an altogether quite unnecessary repeat recording of Wagner's "O Star of Eve" and Gounod's "Even Bravest Heart." No one will, however, deny their sincerity and artistry. Of Sir Harry Lauder's "Mr. John Mackay" and "I've Something in the Bottle for the Morning" (H.M.V. DB4027) the most that can be said is that here we have Harry to the life. It would be interesting to fathom the secret of the deep-seated unpopularity of Lauder amongst his own compatriots, and the universal favour in which he is held everywhere else. It is said that all and sundry, from Esquimaux to South Sea Islanders are among the Lauder fans. In this record we have the same time-wasting Lauder, who gives us the minimum of humour in the maximum of time—but it is absolutely Lauder, even to the chuckle, and the thoroughly good baritone voice, heard at its best in the real minstrelsy

of Scotland—the folk songs of pre-Lauder times.

Alec Templeton, the blind pianist, gives us a first recording in the shape of a popular song medley (H.M.V. B8221), and Gracie Fields, Danny Malone, Wendall Hall, and Jimmy Rodgers, all make characteristic contributions.

People, all the world over, have grown so accustomed to buying their monthly Tauber record, that by now Richard should be a millionaire. This month's Parlophone supplement (to which the remaining space will be devoted) contains its usual Tauber contribution. The two songs this time are typical, and typically sung—"Lady of Love" and "My Dearest One" (AR262). His films have finally set the seal on his popularity, and a delightful resume of past successes appears on Harry Ramsay's Granada Theatre Organ record (A6079). The seven numbers are universal favourites, and played by a clever organist, assisted, at one stage, by a Hawaiian guitarist. Harold has also a second organ record, "Love In Bloom" and "Two Cigarettes in the Dark" (A6062). Playing two little things of his own, the pianist-composer, Mischa Spoliansky, appears on a record (A6084) this month in two film successes, "I Wait For You" from "Evensong," and "My Song For You" and "With All My Heart" from the film "My Song For You." It must be conceded that the composer, at the piano lends fresh interest to any disc, be the music grave or gay, classical or light.

Next Week's Sporting Broadcasts

WEDNESDAY, MAY 1.

7.25 p.m., 4YA: Talk by Mr. R. McKenzie, "Prospects for Tomorrow's Trots."

THURSDAY, MAY 2.

11.45 a.m., 4YA: Commencing at 11.45 a.m. and at intervals during the day, running commentaries will be broadcast on the first day's racing at the Forbury Park Trotting Club's autumn meeting.

FRIDAY, MAY 3.

7.30 p.m., 1YA: Sports talk by Mr. Gordon Hutter.

7.30 p.m., 4YA: Talk by Mr. R. McKenzie, "Prospects for the Second Day's Trots at Forbury Park, and Races at Wingatui on Monday."

SATURDAY, MAY 4.

3 p.m., 1YA: Relay of Rugby football match from Eden Park.

3 p.m., 2YA: Rugby football commentary, relayed from Athletic Park.

2.45 p.m., 3YA: Relayed description of the Rugby football at Lancaster Park.

11.45 a.m., 4YA: Commencing at 11.45 a.m. and at intervals during the day, running commentaries will be broadcast on the second day's racing at the Forbury Park Trotting Club's autumn meeting.