

# With GRAMOPHONE and RADIO

BY "B NATURAL"

## THE MUSIC OF THE WEEK

IN view of the forthcoming Maori night from 2YA it is of interest to review the new Maori recordings of the Rotorua Maori Choir produced by Columbia in Sydney.

D.O.53, "Haere, haere, ra e hine" (Hinemoa Poi Song).—This is one of the well-known Maori melodies sung by the full choir. The fullness and roundness that characterises Maori melodies is fully evident. On the reverse, "Hoea Ra Te Waka" (Canoe Poi Song), another swinging melody with plenty of colour.

D.O.62, "Hine E Hine," soprano solo by Te Mauri Mahaoe.—The soloist has a rare voice, full, clear and round. The air is one of pathos and is admirably suited to the voice of the soloist. She is accompanied only by a piano. The selection abounds in quiet pathetic passages. On the reverse the same soloist sings "Wairangi" ("May I Not Love"). This is a different air, less plaintive and brighter.

D.O.63, "He Moke Moke" ("My Lover is Far Away"), by the Choir.—A slow plaintive air full of melody—a soprano accompanied with a choir. On the reverse is "Po Atarau" ("Song of Farewell").

D.O. 64, "Au E Ihu" ("Jesu, Lover of My Soul"), another colourful chorus. "Wairangi" on the reverse has a bright swinging air.

D.O.54, "Pokarekare" (Maori love ditty) needs little introduction. It is one of the best loved ditties, and this performance by the choir with soprano soloist is one of the best. The enunciation of the soloist is beautifully clear.

"Te Taniwa." Introduced by the full tones of the soprano, the choir joins in and the melody builds up to full strength. Throughout, the delicate notes of the soloist soar in contrast to the rousing choir.

D.O.51, "E Para Ra" ("Warrior's Departure").—This is one of the Maori songs that are very well known. A soprano leads, and her rich voice rises above the choir as though exhorting them to great efforts. This is the composition of Sir Apirana Ngata. "Haere Tonu"—bass and choir. The bass has an unusual voice, but typical of the Maori. He puts real vim into his song.

D.O.65, "Take Turangi Ake" (Maori Chant).—Here the choir in full strength introduces the chant, which is taken up in a higher strain by a solo soprano. Another chant follows. In low strong tones a contralto introduces the theme and this is caught up by the choir singing low to preserve the atmosphere of the chant.

"Te Arawa" ("Arise the Arawas"). An inspiring melody by choir with a soprano soloist. Starting off in soft tones, the air works up to a strong finale.

### "Il Trovatore"

THIS well-known Verdi opera will be presented from 4YA next week. In another section of this issue will be found the story of the opera, but the story of the airs reviewed here are told briefly for the sake of continuity.

"Tacea la notte placida" (How Peaceful was the Night). Leonora tells her companion, Inez, of the gallant troubadour who attracted her attention during the tourney. This unknown lover every night sings sweet songs beneath her window, and she confesses that his tender serenading

has opened her heart to him, and that she knows she loves him.

Recorded on Columbia 04085 by Arangi-Lombardi (soprano) with orchestra. The air is one of delight and ecstasy, and is well-rendered by this powerful soprano.

On H.M.V. DB813 Galli-Curci interprets the same air as differently from Lombardi. The pitch and tenderness of this soloist's voice faithfully interpret the lightness and sheer delight of Leonora.

The next well-known excerpt is the "Anvil Chorus," descriptive of the Gypsies in their native mountains singing while they forge their weapons.

On Columbia 01032, it is recorded by the la Scala chorus of Milan. This swinging chorus, sung in Italian, com-

tion a great amount of colour and contrast.

WE now come to one of the most touching airs of the opera and one that is widely known—the "Miserere" (I Have Sighed to Rest Me). Manrico lies on his prison floor, hoping to sleep and forget his sad plight. The prison bell tolls and the priests are heard praying for the soul of the condemned man. Leonora, horrified at the preparations for the execution of her lover, cries to him words of hope and love.

It is sung in English by Gertrude Johnson and William Heseltine, on Columbia 9168. The supporting chorus depicts the priests chanting; they are interrogated by Leonora and Manrico,

## "Il Trovatore" from 4YA

*The Next Grand Opera which is to be produced at 4YA under the direction of Mr. A. Walmsley (late of the Carl Rosa Opera Company, England) will be "Il Trovatore" (Verdi). The story of the Opera will be told by Mr. Walmsley.*

### The Cast:

Leonora.....Mrs. Eric Ewart, L.A.B.  
Inez.....Miss Betty Hamilton  
Azucena.....Miss M. Vickers, L.A.B.  
Manrico.....Mr. A. Walmsley  
Count de Luna Ferrando....Mr. W. Ruffell

mences quietly and gradually works up to a pitch and bursts into the familiar air. At intervals the cymbals clang, conveying the sound of the irons on the anvil.

It is sung in English by the Grand Opera Company on H.M.V. E103—a good recording.

WE now rejoin the opera in the dramatic act five. Manrico has been defeated and taken captive, and is now closely guarded in a prison tower. Leonora finds her way to him, and, standing under the walls, sings the melodious air, "Love, Fly on Rosy Pinions." She begs love to fly with rosy wings and comfort her lover in his prison cell.

On H.M.V. DB813 (the reverse of "How Peaceful is the Night") it is sung by Galli-Curci. The wide range of this artist's voice is heard to advantage in this melody.

On Columbia 04085 it is recorded by Lombardi. The very powerful voice of Lombardi gives to this interpreta-

tion a great amount of colour and contrast. The record opens with the hopeless tolling of the prison bell and the imitation of the priests chanting. Then the air changes and the silvery notes of the cornet triumph. It is Leonora crying words of love and hope.

Caruso and Alda make a splendid record on H.M.V. D.K. 119. They are accompanied by chorus and orchestra. This is a great combination, and there can be no mistaking the atmosphere created.

THE reverse of this record leads up to the well-known "Home to Our Mountains." Mother and son sing this beautiful duet. The fierce and revengeful old gypsy in her hour of death thinks of the mountains where she has brought up Manrico. She would fain fly back to that peaceful retreat. In this record Schumann-Helms, contralto, joins with Caruso as Azucena. The entreating tones of the gypsy mother are well translated, as is the impossibility of the project. The air

ends in utter resignation to the fate of Manrico.

Columbia presents it on the reverse of 9168 with Mary Ogden, contralto, and Heseltine. As before, this is in English. Both artists have delightful voices; the contralto is particularly pleasing.

Another H.M.V. version of the "Miserere" is found on C 1692 by Mavis Bennett and John Turner. In English with orchestra and chorus the record, although popularly priced, is one of the newer recordings, and is really fine. The orchestration is good, and being electrically recorded preserves much of the colour that was impossible in the other recordings. On the reverse the Grand Opera Company provide vocal selections. They open with the rousing Soldiers' Chorus, and follow with the better-known excerpts. These are well chosen, and are arranged to provide plenty of contrast. It is a pleasing record, and can be recommended for those who do not desire the full airs provided on the separate records. The record closes with the Anvil Chorus splendidly rendered.

Selections by Creators' Band are recorded on H.M.V. E.B.17. This is altogether a vigorous record splendidly recorded. It is bright and colourful with contrast from full orchestral effects to instrumental solos. The final passages from "Home to our Mountains" is so vigorous that only a good pick-up will stay on the track.

Columbia records two selections. On 3925 by the Grenadier Guards Band and on 9185 by the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra.

The former is a bright record in which the best-known airs are found. The recording of the B.B.C. orchestra is of particular interest to radio enthusiasts, for the orchestra which broadcasts regularly is recognised as one of the best of the day, and recently it has made several records for Columbia. The second part, opening with the Anvil chorus, is very rich in bass, though it is well balanced with the cornets, one of which plays the Miserere solo. The record ends in a series of vigorous passages from the Home to Our Mountains.

SEVERAL of the recordings have music other than that of "Il Trovatore" on their reverses. These are: Columbia 264, "Flight of Ages" (Bevan). A pleasing cornet solo well played. H.M.V. E.103, the Petrograd Quartet singing the Volga Boat Song in Russian. This well-known air has been presented in many ways, but this is one that is sure to please. The quartet provide an excellent rendering. The rousing Soldiers' Chorus from "Faust," sung by the La Scala Chorus of Milan on Columbia 01032 is a well-presented air. It goes with a swing from the first note. This is a particularly fine combination of vocalists, and the supporting orchestra is particularly fine.

### Old Musical Comedy Gems

THIS is a record that will appeal to the older generation, containing as it does some of the airs that have not been heard for many years. "Keep off the Grass," "Come to the Ball," "Try Again, Jonny," "Dear Little Ginglees," "A Quaker Girl," and "My Own Little Girl," are included. The record, made by Jack Hylton and his orchestra with vocal refrain, is H.M.V. C.1773. It is strong and bright and goes with a swing.