

THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS

B.M.G.

BANJO
MANDOLIN
GUITAR

OF THE BANJO, MANDOLIN, GUITAR AND KINDRED INSTRUMENTS

The Oldest Established and Most Widely-read Fretted Instrument Magazine in the World

Vol. XLIX. No. 567

JULY 1952

Price One Shilling and Threepence

IN THIS ISSUE

HARRY H. GARMONT

OF SAINT AUGUSTINE,
FLORIDA, U.S.A.

(Seen here with the Revolutionary
New Mandolin he has evolved)

SUMMARISES

THE SERIES OF ARTICLES
BY ERNEST J. TYRRELL
THAT HAVE DESCRIBED
IN DETAIL THE INSTRU-
MENT NOW CALLED

MANDOLIN MASTERPIECE



Music in this issue

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MANDOLIN SOLO: "Gavotte"
SPANISH GUITAR SOLO: "Juanita"
HAWAIIAN GUITAR SOLO: "Malu"
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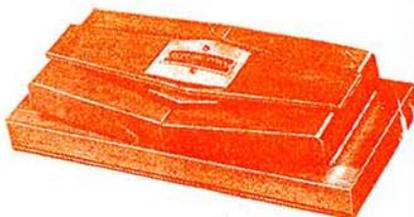
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B.M.G.

The Monthly Magazine devoted to the interests of the Banjo, Mandolin, Guitar and Kindred Instruments

Published on the 1st of each month at

8 NEW COMPTON STREET,
LONDON, W.C.2, ENGLAND

Telephone—Temple Bar 2810

Telegrams—"Triomphe, Westcent, London."

Edited by

A. P. SHARPE

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The Editor does not necessarily agree with the opinions expressed by his contributors.

Subscription rate:
12 months .. 15/- (U.S.A. \$2.10)

All news items submitted for the next issue must arrive at this office before the 10th of the month.

ADVERTISING RATES
ON REQUEST

Vol. XLIX. No. 567]

JULY 1952

[Price One Shilling and Threepence

MANDOLIN MASTERPIECE

By HARRY H. GARMONT

(During the past twelve months, Ernest J. Tyrrell has written at length about the Garmont mandolin—giving details of this revolutionary instrument. In his final article, he promised that photographs and Mr. Garmont's own summing up would appear in "B.M.G."—and I am proud to present them herewith.—Editor.)

IN presenting to "B.M.G." readers the culminating results of my 11 years of mandolin research, I wish to acknowledge the skilful manner in which Ernest J. Tyrrell has presented the details of the Garmont mandolin. I am particularly grateful to him for his scientific comments and his verification of certain of my statements via his quotations of William Hill and Sons.

Thirty-two years ago my study of the piano came to an almost abrupt ending when I listened to Samuel Siegel's mandolin recital in the Wurlitzer Auditorium in New York City. I was then 19. I had heard many other renowned mandolin virtuosos before (and a good many since) but none have been able to produce the fine—though weak—tone of Siegel who, in my opinion, came closer to revealing the "ghost soul" of the mandolin than any other public performer on the mandolin.

Some of the others were "sensational," however.

Siegel's recording of his own "Come Ye Disconsolate," for example, is superior in this most important phase of mandolinistic technique when compared with a long list of other artists' recordings I possess. My opinion is not emotionally isolated. Electronic equipment further supports my contention.

Like most other mandolin artists, Mr. Siegel used a carved instrument. I purchased a similar mandolin and, in a few

years (like most other players), I realised its many faults and weak tone and became disillusioned.

About 12 years ago, after trying several makes of carved mandolins and discovering that the cheapest model was the best, I decided there was something basically wrong with mandolin construction and set about investigating, through hobby research, possibilities of improvement.

I took full advantage of my vocation—antique furniture restoration—where wood carving and varnishing is most needed.

Applying this schooling, together with a scientific background (but unable to find any books on mandolin construction) it was natural to turn to the wealth of scientific knowledge available from books on violin making from all over the world.

Working with a choice definition of physical science as "the methodology of the determination of the next most probable," this rigid meaning, when exploited to the limit of my ability during nine years, proved that all mandolins of the three types in general use (flat-backed, Neapolitan and carved) were mechanically faulty from machine-head to tail-piece; from fingerboard to soundhole; from inside to outside. Every part was wrong, including the most important wood-finishing aspect.

A more tragic inanimate laboratory experiment depicting such prolonged neglect of this potentially great musical instrument I could hardly visualise.

I learned a great deal.

MANDOLIN ANALYSIS

A mandolin is a mechanical sound generator having the ability to release potential kinetic energy when extraneous energy is applied to activate it functionally.

It is also an acoustic amplifying device dependent upon a fixed quantity of air in a resonating enclosure; its generating production made governable by its combined, supposedly balanced (but most unbalanced), forces of string tension versus bridge string pressure.

It is, furthermore, a potentially sensitive sound-producing device which can be modified by (parasitically) loading its vibrating surfaces with a variety of effective sound-producing devices which can be generally referred to as "varnish."

The mandolin of today is not a musical instrument of universally acceptable identity, like the violin. All present instruments differ in size, weight, shape and finish and present a confusing conglomeration of questionable recognition to the disillusioned player-owner as well as the general public.

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My prolonged study indicates that the mandolin should be:

- (1) Enlarged, using wood at least a hundred years old.
- (2) Possessive of a dual air chamber for highest energy transfer.
- (3) Able to produce at least three times more (audiometer test) volume than any other type mandolin.
- (4) Able to deliver a high frequency harmonic tone.
- (5) Varnished to defy the ages and permit ever increasing mellowness to develop. *To improve its tone with the passing of time.*
- (6) Standardised in shape, permitting only minor changes (as in the violin) for acoustical and personal requirements only.

In addition to fulfilling the above exacting requirements, the Garmont masterpiece has remedied, I believe, the complaints of mandolinists throughout the world.

Step by step I have relentlessly endeavoured to improve the mandolin; an instrument noticeably neglected for some 350 years. In the making of mass-production instruments—where the kilowatt-hour is substituted for the man-hour; where research work is carried on preferably in the "sales department" and the designers never aspire musically beyond the one-finger polka type of melody—it is no wonder the mandolin was (and still is!) invariably made with eye-value as the dominating sales factor.

A truly scientifically constructed mandolin must disregard production time and all material costs, as in the making of a fine violin. Throughout the many years of my research work I encountered many failures and experienced much vexation before final success in solving the many perplexing problems of acoustical phenomena.

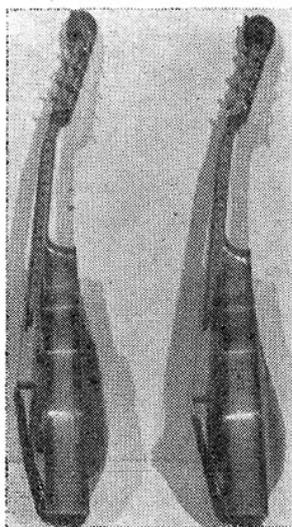
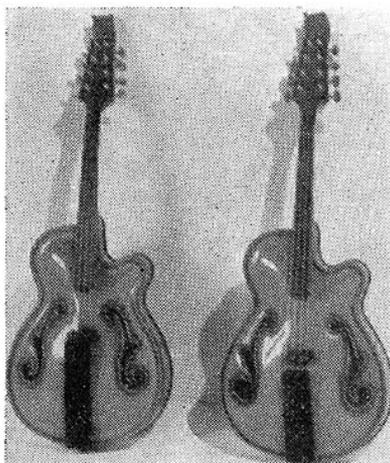
A TENSE MOMENT

After making many preliminary carvings (as seen in the picture of my workshop in the August 1951 "B.M.G.") only three of this group of 11 passed the preliminary tests—enough for one instrument. After final assembly, stringing, adjusting, tuning, etc., I was astonished by the results. Its (expected) harsh powerful voice, easy response and dual-sound output made me so excited that I did not answer any telephone calls that evening.

Almost with reverence I began the long varnishing task, soon hearing the harshness take on a mellowing tone, even after the first coat.

Each month I would receive another thrill as coat after coat of finest varnish was applied and *plectrum scratch level* became increasingly diminished. At last, after nine long months, there emerged my dual-voiced duo masterpiece that is my pride and joy. It produces a powerful soulful liquid pulsating tone of decidedly soprano frequency with a ventriloquistic quality attributable to its bi-aural response. It has the clarity of a flageolet.

Front and side views of the Garmont masterpiece. Left: the duo instrument. Right: the orchestral.



The duo instrument, with a scale length of 13 in., has a comparatively strong G and D for duo playing at its best; these strings having a rich guitar-like quality of long vibrational endurance and cello-like quality when played tremolo.

The orchestral instrument, with a scale length of 13 $\frac{7}{8}$ in., is a powerful section leader; its E and A strings being comparatively louder than the lower strings. Its tone is, note for note, more soprano-like and more powerful than a genuine Guarnerius violin.

Mandolin making has been a happy experience and I shall "carry on" because there is much more to the Garmont mandolin than what the eye sees. Thirty-two years of observation creates a peculiar instinctive ability, difficult to define. This "instinct" factor can best be summed up by admitting that one has to be just a little "crazy" at the outset and that being the case, only then can one proclaim the new versatile duo dual-voiced mandolin masterpiece may, after proper introduction, become the possible Queen of all musical instruments.

At the moment, I alone cannot satisfy the demand for fine mandolins—other luthiers must be encouraged to improve their instruments. My own efforts are producing results; a lengthy letter from L. C. Dowling (of London) is proof, as the following extract shows: "Your theories impressed me so much that I immediately set to work to adjust my mandolins to your specifications insofar as my ability would allow (viz., the nut and bridge, etc.) and the results were most astonishing. The tone has improved in loudness, clearness and sweetness and the fingering, specially for harmony playing, has become unbelievably easy. Now I want to have an instrument with all the refinements."

From Ernest J. Tyrrell comes further information that Roger Dewey (of the Pizzitola orchestra) has made a similar improvement in his mandolin.

I am glad!

(Such great interest has been aroused the world over by Mr. Tyrrell's description of the Garmont mandolin, that its creator is prepared to consider a few orders from genuine enthusiasts. However, Mr. Garmont asks me to emphasise that there can be no question of mass production. Only a few Garmont mandolins can ever be made, owing to the lengthy process of manufacture, and each instrument would be manufactured against individual orders. In any case, it would be necessary to book an instrument a year or so ahead of requirements. Players wishing to investigate further should write direct to Harry H. Garmont. His address is: Star Route, North Dixie Highway, Saint Augustine, Florida, U.S.A.—Editor.)

MAY WE REMIND YOU?

B.M.G.

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Teachers, Music Shops,
Bookstalls and Newsagents
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GUITAR RECITAL

ON May 25th, at the Riccardo Recital Hall, Chicago, Richard Pick gave an informal concert in which he played classical guitar pieces by Frescobaldi, Bach, Torroba, Granados, Albeniz and Gomez. He also included six preludes of his own composition.

Richard Pick's technique, phrasing and tone were superb and insistent demands for encores by the large audience had to be complied with before he was allowed to leave the platform.

Perhaps the high-spot of the whole recital was Mr. Pick's outstanding interpretation of "Leyenda" by Albeniz.

The ELECTRIC Spectrum Guitar

By JACK DUARTE



THE mastery of general scale patterns, such as those I gave in last month's issue, is a vital part of any study leading to sight-reading ability (and to improvisation, for that matter) and these fingerings should be practised until they can be played without hesitation (and *blindfold*) at any position within reach.

It is not difficult to remember these fingerings if you notice the similarities among them, as some are identical over parts of their ranges. Compare Fingering 1 (strings 6. 5. 4.) with Fingering 4 (strings 5. 4. 3.) and Fingering 5 (strings 4. 3.). Also compare Fingering 2 (strings 6. 5. 4.) with Fingering 3 (strings 5. 4. 3.).

The intervals between the open strings of the guitar are: perfect 4ths between strings 6/5, 5/4, 4/3 and 2/1 (E/A, A/D, D/C, B/E) with a major 3rd (G/B) between second and 3rd strings. With a moment's thought you will see that if every pair of strings was separated by a perfect 4th, the similarities between the fingerings would be even greater; Fingering 1 would be *exactly* like Fingering 4 and 5, each starting (from the tonic) one string further inwards.

In short, the difference between Fingerings 1, 4 and 5 and between 2 and 3, are caused entirely by the major 3rd between the second and third strings.

There is, incidentally, an omission from Fingering 4 as printed in my last month's article (no doubt you spotted it)—the note to be played on the third string with the third finger: the leading-note of the scale.

You will find it interesting to compare the above two groups of scales, taking the above point into account. Imagine the notes on the two top strings to be played one fret lower (that is, as though the strings were a perfect 4th apart) and the similarities will become obvious.

These fingerings should become second nature and, as you practise them, you should *listen* intently so that you come to associate each change of fingering with actual changes of sound (intervals). Follow the second finger with the fourth, on the same strings, and *hear* the rise of a whole tone. Follow the fourth finger on one string with the first finger



on the next and again *hear* the same rise in pitch—and so on.

THE FIRST STEP

Now, to link this vital study with written music our first step must be to pass from these general scales to specific ones.

Where must we place, say, Fingering 1 to play the scale of C?

It is here we need the fingerboard chart I asked you to make in my April article.

Let us take the example I have just mentioned—Fingering 1 in C major:

- (1) The tonic of the scale is C.
- (2) The lowest appearance of the tonic (with a ring round it) is on the sixth string in Fingering 1 (see the diagrams in last month's issue).
- (3) Therefore, where is C on the sixth string?
- (4) The fingerboard chart tells us it is at the eighth fret.
- (5) The fingering diagram tells us it is to be played with the second finger.
- (6) Following this to its simple conclusion: place your second finger on the eighth fret on the sixth string and play

Fingering 1, just as you would at any other fret. In this position it is C major.

(7) Now write down these notes on MS. paper—from B below the staff to D above and play them repeatedly whilst looking at the music itself. Now take your hand away from the guitar and try to replace it in the right position *without* looking. Check to see you have it right (7th position) before carrying on.

You should repeat this for the other scales, picking one or two keys for each, and going through the same routine: locate the fingering (what position); write down the notes (MS. paper); practise whilst looking at the *music*; then try to place the hand in the correct position *without* looking.

That should keep you busy for a month, at least.

CHORD SYMBOLS

Briefly, then, we return to chord symbols.

We have so far built up chords of the seventh on different degrees of the scale and have reviewed the ways in which these are described in chord symbol usage. When we extend these chords further, the system becomes more arbitrary than ever, so let us first look at the triads and sevenths of the minor scale and see if they give us any fresh material.

Forming triads on each degree of the harmonic minor scale is our first step. Using the method described in my April article (Fig. 4) construct these triads for yourself on MS. paper. Choose C harmonic minor for your example—C. D. E♭. F. G. A♭. B. C.

On the 1st, 4th, 5th and 6th degrees of the scale are common chords—the remainder are not. On the 2nd and 7th degrees are diminished triads like the one on the 7th degree of the major scale (see preceding articles) which we have seen are not a complete chord.

On the 3rd degree of the scale is a new chord—E♭. G. B.—which is bounded by an *augmented* 5th (E♭ to B).

This triad *is* a complete chord in its own right and is symbolised in one of two ways—the one in our example would be shown as E♭ aug. or E♭+ (the word "fifth" being understood).

A SUMMARY

Before saying more about the augmented 5th triad, let us summarise the chords found within the harmonic minor scale (with C minor as example) and see if they agree with those you have worked out for yourself:

Degree of scale: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Chord (symbol): Cm. Dim. E♭ aug. Fm. G. A♭. Dim. Triad. Triad.

If you count the semitones in the augmented fifth chord you will find that every interval within this chord is four semitones in size: in other words, no one note stands out as an unmistakable root to the chord when it is played on its own, in no musical context.

It is thus frequently written with any of its notes as the root.

The above may be written as E♭ aug., Gaug., or Baug. and, with false notation (as is often used), as D♯ aug.

Our space is filled for this time so we must leave matters until next month. I will be glad to answer any queries addressed to me c/o "B.M.G.," with a s.a.e. for reply.

(To be continued)

DO YOU TEACH?

IF you are a teacher, is the room in which you give lessons attractive to the eye? Does it reflect a spirit of cheerfulness?

Your studio is your place of business and should make a good impression upon prospective students who call to see you, as well as those already taking lessons. It is really a part of the teacher's stock in trade.

When a man or woman calls and finds your studio dark and dingy, with perhaps antiquated furniture and untidy cabinets, the reaction is certain to be a bad one.

On the other hand, when a prospective customer finds a light, airy studio, neatly and artistically furnished—although not necessarily expensively—he or she is more likely to have more confidence in you as a teacher.

In these days of applied psychology, cheerful surroundings are an aid to teaching—as anyone who has visited a modern school will have realised—for lessons in a congenial atmosphere must have a favourable reaction on the minds of the students.

The teacher, too, will find the task of teaching much more pleasant when his studio is a place of which he can be proud.

STOP THIS!

FESTIVAL and concert programmes (and even Club note-headings) show an increasing use of the suffix "Esq." after the names of officials. This shows a lamentable lack of good taste—if not ignorance of usage.

The word "Esquire" is not a title or "polite" address. The right to affix Esquire to a name is clearly defined and neither common usage (often in a loose

Mandolin Miscellany

By ERNEST J. TYRRELL



IT is hardly surprising that the aftermath of the recent visit of Kurt Jensen runs like a thread through the diverse topics of this *olla podrida*; proving that the benefits of such visits are far from being restricted

to the recital at which such noteworthy artists appear.

Understandably enough, certain readers have been endeavouring vainly to reproduce the "harmonic tremolo" demonstrated by Kurt, to which I referred in last month's issue. It is a device admittedly beyond the technique of beginners, while even experienced players will need an hour or two's practice to get the hang of it.

Let us consider the opening note "D" of the harmonic passage in Monti's "Czardas." This note is stopped in normal fashion on the A string (5th fret). The plectrum grip is transferred to the second finger and thumb and the first finger is extended stiffly, touching the string lightly but firmly at the 17th fret; synchronising rigidly with the clean downward stroke of the plectrum.

All this is straightforward enough, but as soon as the tremolo starts, the index finger, being farthest away from the initial movement at the elbow, endeavours to sweep through a greater arc than the plectrum. *This must be resisted sternly*, for whilst a certain



LES PARKINSON.

Featured player of the plectrum guitar for two years with the Tommy Allan Quartet at the Locarno Ballroom, Leeds, this well-known Northern player is now with the Dave Egerton Quartet at the Plaza Ballroom, Manchester.

way) nor custom, use or abuse, can alter the legal right to this description.

People entitled to use the description Esquire include sons of peers, baronets and knights; officers of the Sovereign's Court and Household "if holding notable employment"; naval officers (Lieutenant upwards); army (Captain upwards); R.A.F. (Flt-Lieutenant upwards); etc.

Few people in the fretted instrument world qualify for the suffix Esquire and it creates a bad impression to knowledgeable people to see such ignorant use of "Esq." on programmes, etc.

SOME NEW SOLOS WILL GIVE YOU ADDED INTEREST!

enough, but as soon as the tremolo starts, the index finger, being farthest away from the initial movement at the elbow, endeavours to sweep through a greater arc than the plectrum. *This must be resisted sternly*, for whilst a certain

HOW MANY PLAYERS DO YOU KNOW WHO HAVE YET TO LEARN ABOUT "B.M.G."?

The Editor will be pleased to send a free specimen copy of "B.M.G." to any player you know who does not read the magazine. Send us his name and address and state the instrument he plays.

amount of movement is unavoidable and, indeed, no particular drawback, the fingertip must ride easily and never leave the saddle, as it were. To do so ruins the effect.

By the way, note that I refer to the movement "from the elbow." This implies a stiff wrist; *the only occasion upon which this can be tolerated.* The reason is simple, as for the tiny peck of a normal harmonic stroke and the equally circumscribed movement of the tremoloed harmonic, a ramrod forearm limits movement and adds precision.

I conclude by repeating that even an accomplished player will need a fair amount of practice to master this tricky effect, but those who heard its demonstration by Kurt Jensen will admit the effort is worth while.

MRS. BICKFORD REPLIES

A reply from Mrs. Bickford, of Los Angeles, thanking everyone who, at the Jensen recital, signed the message of goodwill for her speedy recovery, says: "This thoughtfulness and kindness is so much appreciated. The signatures of Britain's celebrated mandolinists and others on the letter will always be treasured as one of our dearest souvenirs. It was also of great interest and we have read these autographs several times, noting the brief details you gave us of the various signatories. We are, indeed, glad that our greetings from afar to Kurt Jensen arrived in the nick of time."

By the way, Zarh M. Bickford, her equally famous husband, who is Sergeant-at-Arms and Examiner for the great Musicians' Union of America, is depicted in the latest issue of the Union's finely-produced magazine "Overture" with a group of the instruments of which he is such a master—including the Theorbo, Lute, Mandola, Chinese Moon Guitar, Bandurria and Mandolin.

MANDOLIN LECTURE-RECITAL

Miss Joan Prior, the well-known Cheltenham teacher, is following up her recent successful guitar lecture-recital to the Townswomen's Guild by a similar mandolin recital.

As stressed at a recent meeting of F.I.G., the demonstration of the capabilities of our instruments to audiences unfamiliar with them, if only undertaken on a sufficient scale, has a value all its own in popularising their unique qualities and increasing, consequently, the number of players.

HANDS ACROSS THE SEA

Thanks to the interesting account given by Miss Adams, of her visit and

that of Miss Dawson to Denmark, coupled with the announcement by Kurt Jensen that far more ambitious plans are afoot for next year's Festival at Copenhagen (including famous British players as guest artists), interest is growing apace in Overseas fretted instrument vacations.

Contact has recently been made (thanks to the courtesy of M. Menichetti of Epinay (Seine) who has just returned from a triumphal tour of North Africa) with the Presidents of the three most famous mandolin orchestras in Algeria—all of whose careers will be narrated later



JACOB TOMAS
(of Sao Paulo, Brazil)

in the year—at Constantine, Bône and Hussein-Dey with a view to a brief visit by chartered plane in the Autumn of 1953.

When, in due course, plans begin to take shape, a tentative list of those interested in this truly historic venture (obviously limited to comparatively few players) will be compiled.

INTERNATIONAL CONTEST

On June 8th was held the International Mandolin Contest under the auspices of the Union Grand-Duc Adolphe at Ettelbruck, in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, where the scenic beauty of this celebrated tourist centre formed a fitting setting for such an event.

The adjudicators were: Joh. B. Kok (so well known in Britain) and Rudolph Wassenaar, founder and conductor of the "Entre Nous" Orchestra, both of Holland; the equally well-known Fran-

çois Menichetti, Editor of "Le Médiator"; and Pierre Clemens, the celebrated conductor, of France.

SOUTH AMERICAN VIRTUOSO

Jacob Tomas, the South American mandolin virtuoso and Member of Honour of the Fretted Instrument Guild, is expected to visit Britain early in September *en route* for the Continent, where he opens a tour at Stuttgart.

It is hoped that Guild members and others will have an opportunity of hearing this fine artist, an idea of whose repertoire can be given by enumerating a few items from his recent concert at the Teatro Municipal at Sao Paulo. Opening with the Symphony, Opus 182, by Mozart and the Concerto in C Major by Vivaldi, he included in his recital the "Passacaglia" by Bach - Respighi; "Crepusculo Sertanejo" by Casabona, and "Masquerade" by Khachaturian.

This virtuoso studied at the Dresden Conservatoire under the great Greek maestro J. Cartofilax, whose own orchestra, now in Berlin, competed in the Championship Class at the recent International Contest at Como.

Jacob Tomas has given numerous recitals—many including the playing of mandolin concertos with symphony orchestras—in Brazil and, indeed, throughout South America, and he is one of the most profound students of 18th century mandolin music of the present day.

(To be continued)

Playing the Hawaiian Guitar

By BASIL KING



THE Hawaiian guitar is usually played flat across the lap, with the body of the instrument on the right thigh and the neck of the guitar forward a little on the left thigh. You need a low seat to be really comfortable.

An acoustic Hawaiian guitar can be played standing by slinging it flat in front of your body, about waist high, with a cord passing round the back of the neck

and over the shoulders down to the two ends of the instrument. An electric Hawaiian guitar is usually too narrow for this: it is too near the body for comfortable playing.

An electric Hawaiian guitar can be played standing by mounting it on a console of some sort.

However, if you are a beginner on the instrument it is probably best to play sitting down. Avoid spreading the legs too widely because this will look bad to an audience.

If you have written out the open-string exercises described last month, then you are ready to learn to use your right hand. (If you encountered trouble with the exercises, let me know the difficulty and the tuning you are using, and I will help you if you enclose the usual s.a.e.)

Settle down comfortably with Ex. 1 in front of you. Hold your right hand over the strings so that your thumb and first and second fingers come about half-way between the 12th and 24th frets. This is a position that will help you produce a good tone.

Your right arm should be relaxed, neither stuck out nor held in tightly. The right forearm may rest on the top edge of the guitar if this makes for comfort. Relax the right hand; fingers slightly curled and thumb fairly straight. See there is no awkward bend of any sort at the wrist.

There is a chord in each bar of the exercise. The bottom note is picked by the thumb; the middle note with the first finger; and the top note with the second finger. Press the fourth string away from you a little with the thumb pick and, at the same time, pull the 3rd and 2nd strings towards you a little with the finger picks.

Now lift the hand away from the strings, keeping up the pressure, so that the fingers close in a little towards the palm of the hand; the thumb closing over to the first finger. The chord sounds.

PICKING ACTION

This is the picking action. You do not flap the hand about wildly; you simply use the thumb and fingers calmly.

Try again and check that the thumb does not go *under* the fingers; it should stay *outside* them. Check also that each string sounds clearly and with equal loudness. Try to listen to each string in turn.

To play the exercise through, count "One, two, three, four" (not too fast) during each bar. Play the chord on each count of "one" and let it sound for the

remaining counts in the bar. Keep counting regularly, like the slow beat of a clock, from one bar to the next.

Exs. 2 and 3 will have to wait for next time.

The solo included in this month's music supplement uses some high positions on the High Bass tuning. Some acoustic guitars are inclined to be "dead" in these positions so if your guitar is like this, I suggest you take the first three-and-a-half bars in the 3rd and 8th positions on the treble strings instead of those marked on the music.

This means keeping to the melody and omitting the chords but it is worth it because the guitar will sing out much better in these lower positions.

Now let us continue with our playing from the piano arrangement of "Sing Me a Song of the Islands."

It will be seen that the middle eight bars are already harmonised in 3rds, with two exceptions: the E♭ melody notes at the ends of bars 16 and 20. Play single notes here.

The high fill-ins in bars 20 and 24 can be played without picking: by sliding up from bars 19 and 23. Pause for one beat on the F♯ and A of the fill-in, then slide on up to the G and B♭.

The middle eight bars can be simplified and given pleasant variety (by playing single notes in bars 17 and 21 and for the last beats of bars 18 and 22.

Bars 25 to 34 are the same as bars 1 to 10 and can be treated the same. Bars 35 to 39 can be played in single notes—an octave *glissando* is nice from the E♭ in bar 35: or, if you use a 6th or 13th tuning, play an *arpeggio* chord with the notes G and C under the E♭ and then execute the octave *gliss.* from this chord.

The Cm7 chord symbol should be under the E♭ melody note in bar 35 and there should be an F9 symbol at the beginning of bar 36. (There are several other chord symbol faults or simplifications in the piece.)

The D to E♭ chords (bars 39 to 40) can be played as written on the High Bass or E tunings, or as 6th chords on an E6th tuning. The same applies to the D and E♭ chords, bars 41 to 42, and along to the end of the piece.

The top three notes of the last chord can be played as written on a High Bass or E tuning but this last chord is best replaced with an octave *glissando* from the first chord in bar 44 on an E6th tuning.

(To be continued)

The Banjo in America

By W. M. BREWER

(This interesting series of articles commenced in the July, 1951, issue and an instalment has appeared in each month's "B.M.G." since.)



IN the course of my researches I have found some interesting jottings concerning some of the many American banjoists not already mentioned in these articles. In the ranks of present-day women banjoists (additional to Shirley Spaulding)

are: Charlotte Robillard, Frances Stieber and Fanny Heinline. I am told that the latter has featured, at concert engagements, Paul Eno's difficult composition "Marche Impromptu" and an arrangement of the popular song "Just a Love Nest" with great success.

Members of the fair sex prominent in American banjo circles in days of yore were: Jessie Delane (1894), Winifred Johnson (1894), Marie Cobb (1898), Anna Damiens (1867), and Lotta Crabtree (1847-1924). The two last-named were pupils of George C. Dobson. Lotta Crabtree became "one of the greatest and most famous soubrettes of the American stage."

INFORMATIVE ARTICLE

The April, 1901, issue of Stewart's Journal contains an informative article about "Old Time Banjo Books" in which the titles of 37 tutors published between 1865 and 1890 are given. Prominent among the authors are A. Bauer, Frank B. Converse, George C. Dobson, Louis Dewhurst, A. A. Farland, E. M. Hall, Elias Howe, G. L. Lansing, John H. Lee, C. Morrell, Phil Rice and S. Swain Stewart.

John H. Lee is named as the author of "William Huntley's Complete School of Harmony" (1897). One of the books—"Stewart's Minstrel Banjoist" (1881)—is stated to have been written at a time when Stewart favoured "smooth or inlaid neck banjos"!

A tutor by Septimus Winner, published in 1864, gave instruction on the thimble method of playing, originated by Tom Briggs, whose tutor published in 1855 was

the first American publication of the kind. Winner was a prolific composer of songs and a teacher of the banjo. He was born in Philadelphia on May 11th, 1827, and died there on November 22nd, 1902. Paul Cadwell tells me that Winner's tutor provides for *bass* tuning to G and "suggests tuning the banjo up or down a note to play in different keys."

A NOTATION

According to an article published in the May 1925 "B.M.G.", Phil Rice inaugurated the now virtually obsolete A notation:



Banjo music solely printed in the A notation was discontinued in the States early in the 1900's. One large firm of American music publishers (with branches in New York, Chicago and San Francisco) issued banjo solos in 1902 with the American A notation and English C notation shown together.

It is only fair to mention that Alex Magee, whose biography will appear later in this series, remains a firm believer in the A notation.

Phil Rice's fine tutor appears to have been published posthumously, for he died at Grand Lake, Arkansas, on December 4th, 1857.

Other teachers of the banjo mentioned in early American archives are: (1) R. G. Allen, who gave lessons in Chicago in 1882 and became a member of Emerson's Minstrels; (2) Lew Brimmer, who is accredited in some quarters as having originated the tremolo style of playing; (3) J. Rickett who, with George C. Dobson, taught S. Swain Stewart; (4) John Brogan.

Among prominent banjoists in Chicago were J. E. Henning, who was much to the fore between 1880 and 1900 and published a banjo magazine called "The Chicago Trio"; E. H. Winchell (1898); R. J. Hamilton, who was probably the author of "Hamilton's Collection of Banjo Music" (1887) which is claimed to be the first American banjo book to be issued complete with second banjo and piano accompaniments.

I should like to mention the following snippets concerning stalwarts of the past:

A. Bauer wrote many informative articles about the banjo and entered into partnership with S. Swain Stewart in 1896.

C. C. Bertholt was the composer of the difficult solo "Amaryllis Waltz" (Valse

de Concert). He played the banjeaurine as well as the banjo.

W. S. Baxter, in his time, was frequently mentioned in the columns of "B.M.G." Clifford Essex made an arrangement of "Baxter's Patrol" in 1900.

George H. Coes was born in Providence, R.I., about the year 1828 and died in Cambridge, Mass., on March 16th, 1897. He composed jigs and reels. One report describes him as having been "the champion of the Pacific Coast."

M. Rudy Heller was the composer of "Dreams of Darkieland," "Bohemian Galop," published in 1897, and "Brother Josh," published in 1900.

PLECTRUM PLAYING

Dan Polk, who lived in Kansas City, originated the plectrum style of playing the banjo in 1882, but it was not until many years later that plectrum playing became the vogue in America.

Frank A. Kilber was a noted figure in the commercial field of fretted instruments. He is mentioned as a player of the bass banjo in 1894.

Harry H. Fiske was born in 1867 and came to England in 1890 where he appeared at concerts organized by A. D. Cammeyer. He was a talented banjoist who featured many Cammeyer compositions as well as his own "Marche Militaire," "Rena May" and "Song Without Words." He died in the States on November 18th, 1928.

Herbert Forrest Odell was a noted figure in American fretted instrument circles for many years and was, at one time, Editor of the "Cadenza."

Charles Morrell maintained an establishment on Fulton Street, New York, at which all the noted banjoists of the 1850's gathered. Later, he went to San Francisco where he opened a studio for teaching. Morrell, who died on April 26th, 1890, was the author of tutors and a designer of banjos.

The Doré Brothers were prominent in 1894. W. B. Farmer, already mentioned as an associate of Parke Hunter and Vess Ossman, joined the Doré Brothers team in 1895.

Edwin French was born in Cleveland, Ohio, on January 3rd, 1853, and died at Saranac Lake, N.Y., on September 16th, 1903. He is described in "Minstrel Memories" as "a fine banjoist and smart American humorist." He was with the Moore and Burgess Minstrels in England in 1884 and 1885. I am told his real name was Adam Kunz.

Samuel Devere, known as "The Butterfly Dude," was born about the year 1842

and died in Brooklyn, N.Y., on March 1st, 1907. He played lively marches on an unfretted banjo. He came to England with J. H. Haverly's Mastoden Minstrels, who appeared at Her Majesty's Theatre, Haymarket, London, on July 30th, 1880.

William A. Huntley was born in Providence, R.I., on November 2nd, 1843. His real name was Penno and he made his stage debut about 1860. He was leader of the "Twelve Banjo Act" in which 12 banjoists appeared at Her Majesty's Theatre in London in 1880. A special feature of his playing was "an imitation of the old Trinity Church chimes by swinging two banjos at arm's length." One of his finest solos was "Pride of the Ridgemoor" and he was a remarkably successful composer of banjo songs between 1875 and 1883. He died some time after 1912.

John H. Lee was a partner of William A. Huntley but himself directed a team of 14 banjoists with Haverly's Minstrels in the States, featuring, *inter alia*, a popular number called "Norton's Clog." One of his own compositions was "Winifred Waltz" and he was the author of several banjo duets. He died at San Diego, Calif., on September 7th, 1890.

Tom Vaughn was born in New York on September 5th, 1823, and died in Zanesville, Ohio, on September 3rd, 1875. He was banjoist in the original Christy Minstrels. William B. Donaldson (b. October 13th, 1822, d. April 16th, 1873) created "quite a sensation" in 1836 by playing a banjo left-handed. In 1847 he was one of the five original members of the first Campbell's Minstrels. About three years before his death he became proprietor of the Lockwood House, Poughkeepsie, N.Y.

(To be continued)

Plectrum Guitar Forum

Conducted by JACK WHITFIELD

THIS month's main topic is the struggle for independence. No, the Forum is not going political, although in the politics of guitar playing, independence is no less vital for a happy existence than in everyday life.

I expect you had among your school-mates a bright lad who amazed the rest of you by his uncanny ability to curl his little finger towards the palm while keeping the others at attention; or by "grouping" the first and second fingers and the third and fourth, and doing :

double-fingered cub's salute; or by bending the third finger fully while keeping the others straight up in the air.

I was lucky. I could do all these things and was smugly disdainful of the fumbling efforts of others to imitate them. However, it was really only a matter of practice—and so it is in successful manipulation of the left-hand fingers in guitar playing. (Finger-style players, of course, must also develop independence in their right-hand fingers.)

The guitar beginner's first obstacle is usually the exasperating tendency of his fingers (especially in forming chords) to tangle themselves, as one follows the other and refuses to be guided to its own fret and string.

Eventually, with solid work on chords, he finds the fingers adopting the correct form before they are brought down on the fingerboard and, rather than independence, they appear to acquire a kind of interdependence in the formation of different shapes.

This is as it should be. In chord playing, the fingers must descend together and, in changing the chord shape, the change must take place in one movement, between the time when the fingers leave the fingerboard and descend again.

At first, the tendency is to change finger by finger—as each seeks its new position—but, obviously (even to the beginner) this cannot go on.

Paradoxically, the interdependence and independence of fingers in chord playing are built up together. The position of each finger as it moves to the given chord shape is related to the movement of each other finger (this operation is performed subconsciously by the more experienced player), but the necessity for each finger to seek out its own position means that each finger must also operate as a confident and independent unit.

MUCH MORE GAIN

Because most beginners make chord playing their first objective (and because every chord change requires so much digital manipulation) the player gains much more in obvious progress than in an equal period of single-string practice.

In other words, development of the left hand (and independence of fingers) comes more quickly and with less conscious effort than in single-string playing.

It is in single-string fingering that the beginner comes up against real trouble, which appears even more harsh because, having made reasonably satisfactory progress as a chord player, he cannot under-

stand why the musically simpler stuff should give so much difficulty.

Use of the first and second fingers creates few problems. They are naturally the strongest because they are used more in everyday life and, for the same reason, it is easy to operate them independently.

It is the third and fourth fingers that cause the bother—and I have seen many a player of some experience whose technique is faulty as a result of inadequate development of third and fourth fingers.

They should operate as strongly and as independently as the first two fingers, in relation to each other, and they should also function similarly in relation to first and second fingers.

Fingering 3, 4, 3, 4, or 4, 3, 4, 3, should come as easily as 1, 2, 1, 2, or 2, 1, 2, 1, but so should 2, 3, 2, 3, and 1, 3, 1, 3, or 2, 4, 2, 4—and every other order.

Try these sequences. If you are able to finger every note, no matter what the sequence, with the same strength, speed and accuracy, and without any extra concentration or effort when third and fourth fingers are used, then you are on the right lines.

If not, then you may take it that you need some intense practice in the use of these two fingers.

A ROUTINE

The two-bar example given on this page is intended only as a guide to the type of routine you should practice. It is played on the second string.

Place the first finger on the first fret; the second finger on the second fret; third finger on the third fret; and fourth finger on the fourth fret.

The exercise is played with alternate down and up strokes. Each finger must remain in position on the fret unless it has to be raised to allow the next note to be played. While playing 4, 3, in the first bar, only the fourth finger leaves the fret; the first, second and third remaining in position.

In fingering 2, 3, the first finger must remain on the first fret and the second finger on the second fret. The second finger is not raised until C \sharp is played.



IT WILL HELP US

Keep down increasing overhead expenses if subscribers to "B.M.G." will send their renewals promptly. You are always advised the month before your subscription expires.

I suggest you concentrate on the first bar at the outset, playing it several times as a continuous sequence. Then treat the second bar separately, in similar fashion. After that, play the two bars as written, repeating them without a break.

In changing from the last note (C \sharp) back to the first (E \flat), both third and fourth fingers must descend together to the appropriate frets; the second and first remaining in position.

Another important point: in raising the fingers from the frets, they should not be drawn away from the fingerboard but should remain poised above the fret, ready to descend again.

(To be continued)

Zither-Banjo Causerie

By J. McNAUGHTON



ONE of my regular correspondents raises the subject of Festivals and the instruments one sees at such functions. His comments are amusing, if rather caustic. "Why not write an article on some of the awful 'frying-pans' that appear perennially at the annual Festival?" he writes. "Surely players should know better than to expect to get anywhere in a contest with such museum pieces!"

Although there may be something in what he says there is, as usual, another side to the picture.

Economic reasons may prevent many a keen player from investing in the better instrument he wants—and, no doubt, deserves. There may be other reasons, too; sentimental attachment to an old and battered banjo, which its owner does not care to explain, despite its lack of volume, carrying power, and so on.

Of course, everyone knows the sound axiom for all players is: BUY THE BEST INSTRUMENT YOU CAN AFFORD—and we all know, well enough, just how good an investment a high-class banjo or zither-banjo can be.

For many enthusiasts these days a good reconditioned instrument seems to be the best answer. Such instruments can be found and tried before purchase, just like any new instrument. It only requires the would-be purchaser to know his own mind in the matter of precise requirements. He can also watch the "For Sale" columns in "B.M.G.," where

secondhand bargains are almost always in evidence. Sooner or later the model sought will turn up—even from the most unexpected source.

Most players realise that a cheap, makeshift instrument is invariably difficult to play, for one cannot produce the various effects on which artistic playing depends if one is hampered by an unresponsive hotch-potch of wood and metal, with inadequate volume and lack of tone and carrying power, however resplendent its appearance may be.

Some beginners, bewildered by the variety of choice in pre-war days, soon found themselves saddled with models ranging from "plain fingerboard" to the most gorgeous technicolor—and many of these white elephants are still extant, ready to be adopted by a new generation of learners.

GOOD-NATURED ASSISTANCE

The best thing for the tyro to do is to contact his local Club, where he will find all the good-natured assistance in the world; although it is possible he will hear many conflicting claims, at least all will agree in urging him to buy the best he can afford, whatever make he selects.

If there is no B.M. & G. club within easy reach, then the nearest teacher or lone player will, no doubt, be happy to assist the newcomer into the five-string fold.

One advantage in visiting the local Club, however, lies in the much wider range of comparison its several players can offer—and it will be found that the average banjoist is only too happy to expound his own reasons for his choice and to allow the visitor to "Try it for yourself, old man—you'll see what I'm getting at!"

With such genial possibilities almost on his own doorstep, it should not be hard for the beginner to arrive at a decision. How he achieves his desire will depend largely on the depth of his enthusiasm for the most friendly instrument known to man.

Care of the banjo—or zither-banjo—so often stressed in this magazine, is equally often overlooked, even by the most well-meaning of enthusiasts. One might almost think the few simple rules (by which maintenance is made easy) were extremely difficult to follow, so often does one encounter evidence of sheer neglect on the part of owners of once-high-grade instruments.

All the necessary information was given by the N.S.B. in A. P. Sharpe's invaluable booklet "The Banjo and You"—now, unfortunately, out of print

—but a condensed version of the essentials—"The Care of Your Banjo"—is still obtainable for only threepence!

Although every player ought to know these things as a matter of course, it is obvious there are many who are abysmally ignorant of these simple but vital requirements, astounding though it may seem.

Spring cleaning is just as necessary for musical instruments as for any other items among the player's household gods, or goods, and the daily routine of "inspection and maintenance" is well worthwhile.

Just as a glance at the first fret of any banjo will tell the observer *how much* the instrument has been played, so a glance at the cogs of the machine-head of any zither-banjo will tell you how much it has been neglected!

Apparently it never dawns on some that cogs need assistance in their work; some form of lubricant to ease the constant strain under which gears operate (whether it be oil, vaseline, or even graphite) is necessary but too often lacking.

THE STRINGS

Run a finger beneath the first string of any instrument strung in the zither-banjo manner and you will, more often than not, find grit or rust—or both. Sad but so often true! Yet it takes about five seconds to run an oiled rag—or even a handkerchief—under the string after each playing session.

Hardly a minute would be required to check the tightness of the screws in the exterior of the average zither-banjo—thus eliminating one source of extraneous sound—yet some instruments go without this minor attention for years.

Flabby vellums, devoid of tone, have often been mentioned before, but they will always be with us, I fear; like grimy fingerboards with frets heavily crusted with grit, which can be cleaned out in a few minutes with a pointed matchstick. Naturally, you do not let *your* zither-banjo get into such a deplorable condition!

As I promised last month, Morley's "Tarantella" is the subject of our attention in the space remaining; a solo I strongly recommend, despite its seeming simplicity. It is a first-class concert solo.

Written in 12/8 time and intended to be played at a lively pace, this piece has both rhythmic and melodic appeal, without any insurmountable difficulties in fingering—although there are one or two bars in the A♭ movement which may seem awkward. For these, however, I shall suggest an alternative method of

fingering—if the Morley devotees will forgive the liberty—and I will deal with it now. The rest of the piece should be plain sailing, after a little practice.

Beginning with the latter half of the second bar of the A♭ movement—C, B♭, A, B♭, first string, amend the left-hand fingering to read 4-1, 2, 1. (Note the snap from C to B♭). This left-hand figure is regular for all similar bars in higher or lower positions.

There is only one change for the right-hand: the third quaver of each of these groups, i.e., the last quaver of the third beat, is to be played on the second string in this and all similar figures.

Once this section has been "polished up" it will become automatic.

Apart from such bars as these, the solo is within the reach of the "moderate" player.

When playing the "interlude" to the A♭ movement, the effect of the dotted crotchets in the 12th bar—F, followed by a crotchet rest and a 2.1.3. chord on B (8P.)—can be heightened by the discreet use of vibrato, which is quite appropriate to the trend of the theme at this point.

Those who find the rapid alternation of the finger rasps in the Coda too much for them may, of course, substitute chord tremolo, provided the definition of accent, essential to the piece, is not lost.

I shall be pleased to hear from anyone who wishes to propose any other solo for the attention of readers of the "Causerie"—your Editor makes only one stipulation (a sound one): the solo must still be in print.

(To be continued)

The Spanish Guitar

By TERRY USHER



LET us assume you have followed the advice given in my last article and have now let your nails grow. What is the best way of getting them into proper condition and shape?

First, your nails must never be cut—always *filed*. For a "file" I find the best thing is a small, hard piece of card such as one gets from weighing machines. You will also need some sandpaper, fine grade (but not flour grade) and some "wet or dry" emery paper, flour grade.

On one side of the card mount a piece

of the fine sandpaper and, on the other, the flour-grade emery paper. Simply stick it on with glue and let the ends turn over the edges of the card.

Rub down the nails to the correct length with the medium grade and finish off to a glass-finish with the "wet or dry" emery.

The correct length of the nails varies from person to person, according to the various factors such as where the nails join the fingers, but normally the length is about right when the nails are just barely visible when the hand is held at eye-level with the palm facing you.

Shape the nails to a smooth, round curve (following the shape of the fingertip) and polish the *inside* of the nail edge, because that is where it touches the string, i.e. between nail and fingertip.

Remember, it is the *fingertip* that sets the string in motion. When the tip has moved the string so far that the increased tension of the string is greater than the friction of the fingertip, the string slips off the fingertip and, as it does so, it is caught a glancing blow by the edge of the fingernail which is just the right length to get slightly "in the way" as the string slides rapidly back to its normal position.

You can see that if the nail is too long it will actually *stop* the string from returning to its original position, while it would make it necessary for the finger to do double work, since it then has to exert additional force to get the string past the fingernail.

Just long enough barely to touch is the correct length.

Assuming your nails are as they should be, what is the next step? It is to adjust your playing style to the guitar you are playing.

AMAZING RESEMBLANCE

I always think there is an amazing resemblance between guitars and women. I can hear the protests of any women readers of this column and, though I flinch, I must insist that there is a good deal in the theory! Both have a head, neck, waist, bust, hips, a soundhole (as we married guitarists sometimes know to our cost!) but the principle difference is that our guitar only speaks when we want it to!

The most remarkable similarity, however, is that guitars and women are temperamental and have to be humoured.

To get the best out of your guitar you have to study its temperament and its characteristics and fashion your playing style accordingly.

First, study its tone. 'Is it hard, metallic and clear, with a long-sustained

note? If so, you will have to hold your right hand to produce notes of as "thick" a character as possible—and you will have to position your hand over the strings so that the "normal" playing position (in which you do most of your playing) is near the end of the fingerboard, where the tone is softer and sweeter than nearer the bridge.

If, on the other hand, your guitar has a thick, chunky, Spanish-type of tone, without a great length of *sostenuto*, you will produce the best from it by holding your right hand to produce notes of a clear, sharp character—and by positioning its "normal" playing position below the soundhole and nearer the bridge.

I speak of "holding your right hand to produce notes of a *thick* or *clear, sharp* character." This has nothing to do with the position of the hand in relation to soundhole or bridge. It relates to the *angle of the fingers* in relation to the strings and to the *angle of the fingernails* in relation to the line of the strings.

There are three well-defined hand and nail positions, each producing a particular type of tone, and in my next article I will describe these and try to explain how they are used to produce the best from your guitar or to vary its tone.

(To be continued)

BRIGHT SHINES THE MOON

By R. TARRANT BAILEY.

(Continued from the June issue)

DIRECTLY I saw the first of the primas I recognised it, and when I tried the instrument, the tone removed the slightest doubt. It was Addie Robino's prima balalaika—and when I examined the case I found her card in the string pocket.

What tragedy could have brought this much beloved instrument to the stalls of the Caledonian Market I cannot surmise, but there it was.

Robert A. Birse, whose "Balalaika Players" so recently played before H.R.H. Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone, and H.H. the Princess Marie-Louise, has that balalaika now, as his enthusiasm for the instrument so deserved the best that I sold him the prima, knowing my concert days to be past and his about to begin.

Of course, I lectured my daughter with regard to the purchase of the contra-bass that, in its case, occupied about the same space as a baby grand piano. I complained because of the difficulty in trans-

porting it from the railway station. Her response was forceful and concluded with a recital of how she, single handed, lugged all three of the wretched things (her words!) from the Caledonian Market; adding, for full measure, that one of the stallholders had, in a playful mood only a true Londoner can appreciate, called her back quite a long way to kindly enquire if she was fond of music!

Although she probably did not say so at the time, she is fond of music and of the balalaika. J. P. Cuninghame gave her the solo instrument he played in the Clifford Essex Orchestra and it is her constant companion to this day.

Some of my pet band instruments were purchased by Younkman for his Czardas Band and I sometimes went to hear them when his orchestra visited Bath.

My love for the balalaika has never waned, and I still own the instrument my dear old pupil, Mrs. Sarah Watling, left me in her will. This grand old lady was a real balalaika enthusiast and travelled a distance of ninety miles twice a week to take lessons from me. She wrote of the balalaika for "B.M.G." in 1914, shortly before her death. She lived for the balalaika and died playing it. The music ceased so suddenly that her maid went to ascertain the cause—to find her mistress past balalaika playing or anything else on this side.

UNDERSTANDING AND SYMPATHY

It has often been my wish to thank Gregori Tcherniak and Geoff. Sisley for the pleasure their fine playing on the radio has given me. Their work is duet playing as it should be. Perfect understanding and sympathy between the performers with every note rehearsed to perfection. Geoff. Sisley's accompaniments are an example to the world and should do the guitar cause more good than all the rapid technique displays.

In the old broadcasting days of the Bath Guitar Octet, Ray Andrews and I used to slip in a bit of balalaika now and then to vary the programme and much enjoyed the enquiries received as to how this particular effect was obtained on the guitar! I often listen to recordings of this old outfit and am still of the opinion that the best toned "guitars" in it are the bass and contra-bass balalaikas.

Thanks be I can still play the solo balalaika well enough to avoid feeling sorry about it and have three Russian albums of Russian tunes that enable me to recall the old days and the moonlight that was so much brighter then.

Moskwa

Arranged by
ROY PLUMMER

Plectrum Guitar Solo

J. DECKER-SCHENK

Andantino

The Andantino section consists of five staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a common time signature (C). It starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic, followed by a mezzo-forte (*mf*) section, and ends with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The second staff begins with a double bar line and a repeat sign. The third staff contains several passages marked with '10P', '12P', '8P', '6P', and '10P', indicating specific plectrum techniques. The fourth staff is marked with '8P'. The fifth staff concludes the section with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a *cresc* (crescendo) marking.

Allegretto

The Allegretto section consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a 2/4 time signature. It starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic and is marked with '2P'. The second and third staves feature various plectrum techniques indicated by 'V' and 'rit' (ritardando) markings. The fourth staff concludes the section with a *D.S.* (Da Capo) instruction and a *Fine* ending.

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The published accompaniment parts may be used with this arrangement: Piano, 1/6; Guitar, 9d; Obtainable from the publishers

Juanita

Spanish Guitar Solo

Arranged by
HANK KARCH

Andante

Musical score for 'Juanita' Spanish Guitar Solo. The score is written in 3/4 time and consists of six staves of music. The tempo is marked 'Andante'. The dynamics range from *p* (piano) to *mf* (mezzo-forte). The piece features various rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth notes. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The score concludes with a *rit.* (ritardando) and a *p* (piano) dynamic.

Gavotte

Mandolin Solo

J. B. DACRE

Musical score for 'Gavotte' Mandolin Solo. The score is written in 2/4 time and consists of three staves of music. The tempo is marked *mp* (mezzo-piano). The key signature is one sharp (F#). The piece features a variety of chords, including G, D7, Am, E7, A7, B7, and Em. The score concludes with a *Fine* marking and a *p* (piano) dynamic. The final section is marked *cresc.* (crescendo) and *D.C. al Fine* (Da Capo al Fine).

Mixing the Green

Polka March

Banjo Solo

ZARH M. BICKFORD

The musical score is written for a Banjo Solo in 2/4 time. It consists of 15 measures of music, organized into several systems. The first system contains the first two measures. The second system contains measures 3 through 6, with measure 3 marked with a '1' and measure 6 with a circled '1'. The third system contains measures 7 through 10, with measure 7 marked 'p-f' and measure 10 marked with a circled '2'. The fourth system contains measures 11 through 14, with measure 11 marked 'mf' and measure 14 marked 'Fine'. The fifth system contains measures 15 through 18, with measure 15 marked 'A' and measure 18 marked with circled '1' and '2'. The sixth system contains measures 19 through 22, with measure 19 marked '10B' and measure 22 marked with a circled '2'. The seventh system contains measures 23 through 26, with measure 23 marked '10B' and measure 26 marked with a circled '2'. The eighth system contains measures 27 through 30, with measure 27 marked '10B' and measure 30 marked with a circled '2'. The score includes various musical notations such as treble clefs, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a time signature of 2/4. It also features dynamic markings like *p-f* and *mf*, and performance instructions like *Ist time only*, *Last time only*, and *D.S. al Fine*. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4, and there are several triplets and slurs throughout the piece.

To Malu, of the Royal Blue Hawaiians

Malu

Arranged by
BASIL KING

Hawaiian Guitar Solo
(High Bass and E7th tunings)

FRED HATCHER

Moderato

Ma - lu, I long to

Hold down steel

see you, When you dance a graceful hula, And croon a Hawaiian melody. Ma - lu,

Could I be near you, When you play your u-ku-le-le, And bring dreams of Hawaii to me.

I can vi-sual-ise Those waving palms, Blue tropic skies will blend with your wonderful charms, Ma - lu,

I long to see you, When you dance a graceful hula, And sing a Hawaiian song for me.

Copyright reserved by the Composer

* Do not pick
† A singer should ignore the small notes and other H.G. fill-ins

CHORD SYMBOL CHART

1	3	5	6	7	9
C	E	G	A	B \flat	D
C \sharp (D \flat)	F	G \sharp (A \flat)	A \sharp (B \flat)	B	D \sharp (E \flat)
D	F \sharp	A	B	C	E
D \sharp (E \flat)	G	A \sharp (B \flat)	C	C \sharp (D \flat)	F
E	G \sharp	B	C \sharp	D	F \sharp
F	A	C	D	E \flat	G
F \sharp (G \flat)	A \sharp (B \flat)	C \sharp (D \flat)	D \sharp (E \flat)	E	G \sharp (A \flat)
G	B	D	E	F	A
G \sharp (A \flat)	C	D \sharp (E \flat)	F	F \sharp (G \flat)	A \sharp (B \flat)
A	C \sharp	E	F \sharp	G	B
A \sharp (B \flat)	D	F	G	G \sharp (A \flat)	C
B	D \sharp	F \sharp	G \sharp	A	C \sharp
Root or name of chord	Third	Fifth	Sixth	Dom. Seventh	Ninth

KEY TO CHORD CHART

Major chord : 1, 3, 5.
 Sixth chord : 1, 3, 5 & 6.
 Seventh chord : 1, 3, 5 & 7.
 Ninth chord : 1, 3, 5, 7 & 9.
 Minor chord : 1, 3 (\flat), 5.
 Minor sixth chord : 1, 3 (\flat), 5 & 6.
 Minor seventh chord : 1, 3 (\flat), 5 & 7.
 Augmented chord : 1, 3, 5 (\sharp).
 Diminished chord : 1 (\sharp), 3, 5 & 7. (Any note can be name.)
 The numbers above the columns indicate position in the scale, i.e., note in the first column gives chord name, scale name and guide to key signature for duration of chord symbol.

want a quick reference to notes indicated by any particular chord symbol, the chart included with this article may be of some help; enabling a chord to be built up note by note.

Next month I will deal with this chart at some length but, in the meantime I must emphasise that this chart is not a complete guide to harmony and musical theory; it is merely intended as a quick reference for those with only a scant knowledge of chord symbols.

(To be continued)

THE EDITOR

always welcomes any item of news of fretted instrument interest. Be sure to give full details—Place, Date, Time, etc.—and post to reach him early in the month. "B.M.G." goes to press on the 10th of the month but late news may be crowded out.

For Tenor-Banjoists

By ARTHUR STANLEY

A TIME in common use in tenor-banjo music is 6/8—six quavers (or eight notes) in a bar. This comes under the heading of compound common time and is the only kind of compound time we players of the tenor-banjo need worry about.

All compound times are formed from simple times by merely dotting the measure notes; the accents occurring in the same places as in the simple times from which they are derived.

The measure note in 2/4 time is a crotchet, so that by placing a dot after each crotchet, 6/8 time is formed. The measure note is now a dotted crotchet; the principal accent is on the first beat of the bar and the secondary accent on the beginning of the second half.

Study tunes like "Blaze Away" and "Teddy Bears' Picnic" bar by bar—or

write some examples out for study. Always count two-in-a-bar unless the movement is a slow one, when you can count six.

The advantages of ensemble or orchestral training are of great value to students of the tenor-banjo—in fact, to students of any fretted instrument. In the orchestra they can acquire the necessary experience for team work and learn to master time and expression; essential factors in music that those who never play with others find so difficult.

The social side of a club or orchestra has its advantages also. Many friends are made and one meets other players from whom can be learned (directly and indirectly) many good points in playing.

An hour or more spent at regular intervals with an orchestra under a good conductor is worth much to the student. He cannot help but make headway in his playing if he makes a little effort; even if his talent and time is limited.

He should practise his part at home, not at rehearsals, for you cannot rehearse with an orchestra if you are unfamiliar with the music being played.

PLECTRUM STROKES

At the first sight of a solo with varied value notes, the student is often at a loss to know when to use a down or up stroke, or when to tremolo. There are certain rules in plectrum playing every tenor-banjoist should learn. Let me enumerate some staple rules :

- (1) Always commence a bar with a down stroke when the note is on the first beat of the bar.
- (2) Finish a bar with an up stroke so that the following bar can commence with the usual down stroke.
- (3) Always commence the tremolo with a down stroke and finish with an up stroke.



(4) When two notes of lesser value follow one of great value (such as two semiquavers following a quaver) the rule is down, down, up strokes. (See Ex. 1 on this page.) This is a stumbling block to many but, if the player would stop to think, if there were four semiquavers in each group it would be played with alter-

nate down and up strokes, and as one is "missing" (its value being given to the previous note) one of the up strokes has to be omitted.

This rule is an important part of one's training as this particular combination of notes is encountered in almost every piece one plays.

(5) When a run (or group of notes) commences on an unaccented part of the bar, one should start with an up stroke. For example: if a bar commences with a quaver rest and is followed by three or more quavers (see Ex. 2), or if the first note of a group is tied over from a previous note. (See Ex. 3.)

Practise these examples until you have mastered them. The time spent on these exercises alone will greatly aid the proficient manipulation of the plectrum.

There are, of course, exceptions to these rules. One would be when changing strings. I will deal with the exceptions in a later article.

When a solo is written with many notes all of the same time value (say, crotchets) these would be played with down strokes throughout to produce the same weight of plectring.

(To be continued)

MODERN PLAYING FOR Plectrum Banjoists

By ROY BURNHAM

WHEN arranging one's own solos a useful rhythm which can often be introduced (both to fill up sustained notes and to vary the effect in repeat choruses) is the rumba rhythm. To many, this is often quite difficult to learn because the regular beats of a rumba rhythm do not all fall on the beats of the bar.

However, those who have studied the syncopated rhythm fill-ins I have given in the last two articles in this series should find no real difficulty, for by now it will have become second nature to use an up-stroke easily and without thinking between beats and to accent this as required.

The basic rumba rhythm is: dotted crotchet; quaver tied to a crotchet; crotchet. The stroking is down, up, down. It is counted, 1-(2), &-(3), 4. The beats in brackets, as explained previously, are silent and each note or chord struck is accented.

Play this bar over and over again until you are completely familiar with the rhythm. Just as it stands with no elaboration, it makes a "punchy" rhythm to use, for example, in the last two bars

of an intro. to a quickstep. This is particularly so if the melody and chords of these two bars are changing with each rhythm beat.

A simple elaboration of the rumba rhythm is quaver, quaver, quaver, quaver tied to a quaver; quaver, quaver, quaver. The stroking is down, up, down, up; up, down, up. The rhythm is counted, 1 & 2 &-(3), & 4 &.

Be careful to get the same accent as in the preceding example; in other words, emphasise the quavers counted 1, the & after the two, and the 4. As you can appreciate when you write these examples out in musical form, using any chord sequences you like, this example is merely the first example filled out.

The rumba rhythm gives excellent scope for use of the split stroke. These days I find few plectrum banjoists making use of this stroke—yet the many variations of it were used to great effect in the twenties. It is of interest, too, to those who may not have realised it, that George Formby uses one variation of the split stroke almost exclusively when playing his ukulele-banjo.

THE SPLIT STROKE

The split stroke is so named because it is based on the fundamental principle of splitting the down stroke into two parts. In other words, the down stroke becomes two consecutive down strokes; the first striking the bass strings and the second striking the treble strings.

These double down strokes are followed by a single up stroke and then the double down strokes are repeated.

Variety and changing accent is introduced into the split stroke by blending the double-down-up basic formula with normal down-up or merely down strokes—and it is surprising the wide range of effects which can be obtained with intelligent thought and practice.

Practice is the operative word. One needs a free wrist and the ability to accent individual strokes just when required.

If you have never attempted the split stroke before, then do not be disheartened if your first efforts are terrible and your hand appears to have no inclination to do what it ought. It will take many weeks of hard practice to obtain a satisfactory rhythm and several more before you can play a split stroke variant without thinking about your right hand at all. But it is worth it.

Here is the rumba rhythm. Each bar contains eight consecutive quavers, and you can imagine how monotonous and less like a rumba such a bar would sound if played with a normal down-up down-up

stroking. It comes to life by the use of the split stroke, and the actual stroking is down-down-up, down-down-up, down-up.

Thus you see that the split stroke combination is used twice to cover the first three beats of the bar and the ordinary down-up is used on the last beat. The stroking as you will also see divides the bar up into the same combination of three sections; the first two of a dotted crotchet duration, the third of a crotchet duration, which was the basis of the first two examples.

This is quite enough to keep you busy for a month—if you are going to study it as seriously as you should.

(To be continued)

THE Guitar on Wax

By "DISCUS"

MANCHESTER makes history with the Decibel record (P.1) of Jack Duarte (el. p.g.) and Terry Usher (p.g.), playing "Danzon," by Dick McDonough and Carl Kress and Eddie Lang's "Feeling my Way." This is believed to be the first issued disc by amateur guitarists in the world: it is certainly the first post-war plectrum guitar record made and issued in Britain. On these counts alone it merits special attention.

On the score of playing, there is nothing extraordinary about the record—and that is a compliment. One could put it in a library of the best p.g. records ever made in England or America—those regarded by guitarists themselves as models—and in general standard of execution it would be indistinguishable from the rest.

I derived no less pleasure from the Manchester "Danzon" than from the original American recording of this difficult but striking composition by the composers. In "Feeling My Way" the English amateurs make available to the dollar-gap generation a measure of Eddie Lang's warm genius for tune and rhythm which, in a pre-war era, we could obtain (in record or music) almost for the asking.

There is a point of technical interest that may be raised without detracting from the success of the record. Do the electric and acoustic plectrum guitars "marry" ideally in pieces that are much more duets than accompanied solos? Are two acoustic guitars (or two electric guitars) preferable for duet playing?

The questions add interest to this new record which thereby qualifies not only

as first-rate entertainment but as a good subject for academic discussion!

Having said that, let us now give pride of place to records in which the guitar and voice are heard.

The third record by Olga Coelho to be released here is, on all counts, her best. On one side the miraculously articulated Brazilian comic folk song "The Frog" contrasts effectively with a negro slave melody from Baia, whilst the backing—a Brazilian Choro—achieves a perfect blend of sensitive singing and flawless guitar accompaniment based on a beautiful falling chromatic progression. The number of this "must" is Parlo. RO.20599.

GREET THIS ISSUE

Those who were wise (or wealthy) enough to buy some or all of the issue of Spanish folk songs by Victoria de los Angeles, guitar accompanied, will greet the issue of Manuel de Falla's "Seven Spanish Popular Songs" by the same artist on H.M.V. DB.9731-2. What I wrote then of the singing still holds good for this recording. The accompaniment this time is by pianist Gerald Moore, and this means a double loss—in effect (by the absence of the guitar) and in feeling (by the failure of the usually irreproachable Gerald Moore to create the true atmosphere).

With a sigh of relief we welcome the return of Josh White on London L.1161 to his original state. No tinkling celestes or organised sabotage (for which read "accompaniment") mark his double-sided "Free and Equal Blues." Fine recording and equal artistry make this gentle racial satire one of his best to date and a striking contrast to the entertaining but affected style of Burl Ives who (on Columbia DB.2997) gives us "Pig, Pig" and "Last Night the Nightingale Woke Me." If you like Burl Ives this will make a good addition to your shelves.

One of the finest records to be reviewed in this column last year was of the Hot-Gospelling of Sister Rosetta Tharpe and Marie Knight. These two, with their powerful and sincere singing and robust guitar-playing, re-appear on Brunswick 04851 with "Didn't it Rain" and, by Sister Tharpe alone, "Two Little Fishes and Five Loaves of Bread."

If these sides do not quite measure up to the high standard of the previous ones (Brun. 04632) it is because that was a very high standard indeed.

Perhaps we can make a sort of "middle class" of records in which the main artist is a vocalist, but there is also some guitar playing not intended as accompaniment.

There is the usual selection of electric guitars on "Rock City Boogie" and "Streamlined Cannon Ball" by Tennessee Ernie on Capitol CL.13682, and they provide a striking interlude on the first side. The bite and clean execution of the electric Hawaiian guitarist is remarkable.

"Trixie Blues," by Trixie Smith and a supporting band including Sidney Bechet, brings a backward glimpse of the finger-played artistry of Teddy Bunn—lately reported to have "gone electric" and "on a bop kick." Vocalion V.1006.

Decca C.16182 with the Kilima Hawaiians playing "Tahiti" and "Mijn Iona" is a colourless and unnecessary recording by this Dutch outfit.

PLEASING AND POPULAR

With the fretted support of Perry Botkin and the Rhythmaires, Evelyn Knight sings "Life is a Beautiful Thing" and "A House is a House." Pleasing and potentially popular. (Brun. L.4872.)

On MGM.464, Billy Eckstine and the George Shearing Quintet give us "Taking a Chance on Love" and "You're Driving Me Crazy." On the second side there is a guitar solo from newcomer D. Evans, a pupil of Chuck Wayne. This solo is imaginative and well-played, but the roles of pupil and master are still well-defined.

And so to the strictly instrumental.

The Les Paul school of mechanism has been studied (not without profit) by our own George Elliott who, with Ronald Chesney (harmonica), bursts forth on H.M.V. B.10189 with "Down Yonder" and "Blues in the Night." All the familiar tricks have been assimilated faithfully and there is, on the whole, more musical resource and inventiveness than the Les Paul displays, but the attendant danger has not been avoided. Too often the score is overcrowded with fussy effects which are all but jumbled.

The second side is by far the better and this is accentuated by some awful disasters of intonation on "Down Yonder."

One misses the complete clarity and decisiveness of Les Paul on Capitol, whatever one may think of the music itself. To all concerned (including the able H.M.V. sound engineers) we say—very

clever, but you still have lessons to learn from your teachers.

The man who started all this appears on Capitol CL.13681 with "Hip-Billy Boogie" and "La Rosita" with the mixture much as before except that if Mary Ford *does* appear on the second side as advertised, we do not hear her.

A Continental bop group, The Atlantic Quintet, is on Decca C.16175 with "Cheers" and "How High the Moon" (played only in its disguised form as "Ornithology"). The guitarist is probably the best soloist on these sides but, as a whole, they do not reflect the high standard of such playing now reached in Europe.

Pianist-vocalist Johnny Davis provides two pleasing sides on MGM.463—"Your Loving Belongs to Me" and "Magic Carpet." The latter is wholly instrumental and liberally features a good e.p.g. player. Your best buy among the instrumentals for this time.

Finally: three discs from the "traditional" department. "New Orleans Stomp" and "Weary Blues" by Johnny Dodds Black Bottom Stompers (Vocalion V.1008) contain a banjo solo. The spirited chord solos of Danny Barker can be heard on "Clarinet Marmalade," Esquire 10-191 and "As Long as I Live," Esquire 10-201 by Wild Bill's Stompers—both 4½-minute playing 10in. records.

(To be continued)

By the way

Yet another user of an electric guitar receives a shock from his instrument! While playing in a dance band at Redcliffe Community Centre, Bristol, on May 24, Mr. Iles received an electric shock and had to be taken to Bristol Royal Infirmary.

Patrick St. Clair, the "Singing Guitarist," appeared at the Queens Theatre, Rhyd, on June 1; his programme consisting of English, Irish, Italian and American ballads to his own Spanish guitar accompaniments. He was enthusiastically received by a large audience.

The Hawaiian Knights, with W. H. Day playing electric Hawaiian guitar, were featured in a "Top Town" broadcast on May 27. They played "On the Beach at Waikiki."

R. Allen (of Cardiff) is anxious to discover the date of "B.M.G." in which an article appeared on "16 feet tone." Can any reader help him?

Mildred Clary, player of the Spanish guitar, provided background music and took part in the production of "As You Like It" at the Regent's Park Open Air Theatre during the whole of June.

Background music for the film "Decameron Nights" has been provided by a quartet of

YOUR QUERIES ARE WELCOME, BUT . . .

★ Whilst the Editor is only too pleased to give information on any matters connected with the fretted instruments he regrets that letters unaccompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope cannot be answered.

fretted instruments. The players were: Andy Wolkowsky (mandolin and domra), Cyril Gaida (mandolin), Freddie Phillips and Archie Slavin (guitars).

On Sunday, May 25, Kurt Jensen broadcast mandolin and harp duets from Copenhagen. His programme included Stauffer's "Bandurria" and Francia's "Meditazione."

The Cultural Association of Guitarists of Brazil gave a concert in Sao Paulo on April 19. Manoel Hernandez played "Danza No. 5" (*Granados*) and "Euterpe" (*Scupinari*); Jane Ferraz Campos played "Cancao Mexicana" (*Ponce*), "Valse" (*Durand*) and "Valsa Scherzo" (*Savio*); Milton Rodrigues Nunes played "Alegria de Amor" (*Kreisler*), "Gavotte and Rondo" (*Bach*) and "Valse Brillante" (*Scupinari*). Senors Nunes and Heinze played "Yone" (*Scupinari*) as a duet and Messrs. Lanzac, Sobrinho and Guerra played guitar trios by Henrique and Viana.

The concert ended with concerted items (one of 10 guitars and another of 20 guitars) conducted by Prof. Alfredo Scupinari.

Tenor Tino Cristido can be heard on Nixa records accompanied by a mandolin and guitar ensemble which includes Andy Wolkowsky (mandolin), Cyril Gaida (mandola), Roy Webb and Denny Wright (guitars), and Jack Fallon (bass).

After Ida Presti's appearance in this country, the Clifford Essex Co. was inundated with requests for copy of the Coste "Study" she featured at all her recitals. This solo—"Etude in A"—is now published (together with another brilliant solo by the same composer) and will be found advertised elsewhere in this issue.

NORTHERN RALLY RESULTS

Below we give the results (with marks in brackets) of the various contests at the Federation (Northern Section) Rally, held at Leeds on May 25. The adjudicators were Messrs. Terry Usher, Jack Duarte and Tom Harker.

Beginners' Solo Contest:

Helena Dunkerley (Bolton) (80)
Adrienne Stathers (Leeds) (71½)
Audrey Castle (Bolton) (65)

Hawaiian Guitar Solo Contest:

Norman Postles (Sale) (75)
Edward Postles (Sale) (67)

Electric Hawaiian Guitar Solo Contest:

Ken Ufton (Rochdale) (93)
Richard B. Kenyon (Cleveleys) (85)
Peter Gilmore (Bolton) (83½)

Plectrum Guitar Solo Contest:

Ronald Waite (Orrell) (90½)
William Sullivan (Orrell) (77½)
George Hughes (Orrell) (71½)

Mandolin or Banjolin Solo Contest:

Ada Brook (Leeds) (92)
Stanley Rome (Orrell) (85)
Elizabeth Welburn (Leeds) (81½)

Banjo Solo Contest:

Brenda Auden (Orrell) (80½)
Frederick Auden (Orrell) (78½)
Joseph Merryweather (Ellesmere Port) (77½)

Spanish Guitar Solo Contest:

Edward Postles (Sale) (76)
James Hulley (Stretford) (65)
Peter Mooney (Liverpool) (64)

Juvenile Solo Contest:

Jean Stockwell (Leeds) (86½)
Bernard J. Norris (Bolton) (78½)

Plectrum- or Tenor-Banjo Solo Contest:

William Sullivan (Orrell) (93)
Thomas Smith (Stretford) (78½)
Robert Rummens (Liverpool) (77½)

Veterans' Contest:

George Beech (Crewe) (71½)
Albert E. Hutton (Rugby) (71)
Robert Roberts (Middlesbrough) (66½)

"Swing" Contest:

Ken Ufton (Rochdale) (87)
William Sullivan (Orrell) (77)
Peter Gilmore (Bolton) (64)

Duet Contest:

J. Hulley and D. S. Pettinger (Stretford) (88½)
Brenda and F. Auden (Orrell) (78½)
S. Cash and P. Maddison (Wirral) (77)

Duet Contest:

K. Ufton and H. Greenwood (Rochdale) (89)
L. A. Waugh and S. Dawson (Leeds) (78½)
N. Postles and J. Prince (Sale) (77)

Quartet and Quintet Contest:

White House Quintet (Wirral) (92)
Ennerdale Quartet (Orrell) (89)
Drayton Banjo Quintet (Wallasey) (71)

Quartet and Quintet Contest:

Harmony Hawaiian (Rochdale) (81½)
Merham Quintet (Liverpool) (70½)
New Hawaiian Islanders (Sale) (67)

Orchestral Contest (Class B):

Birkenhead B.M. & G. Club (89)
Stretford B.M. & G. Club (79)
Bolton B.M. & G. Club (67)

Orchestral Contest (Class A):

Leeds B.M. & G. Club (89)
Orrell Mandoliers (88)
Liverpool Premier B.M. & G. Club (75)

Award to the best pianist (Class B) went to Birkenhead, while the award for the best drummer (Class B) went to Stretford.

The best pianist (Class A) was adjudged Liverpool Premier and the drummer award (Class A) going to Leeds.

Federation News

(Northern Section)

In one way, this year's Rally was a huge success. Things went smoothly from one item to another without the M.C. having to draw too deeply on his fund of funny stories. In another way, it was a financial failure, partly due to an appreciable fall in the number of entrants; a small hall that was not filled; and

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a fine, warm day—the wrong sort of weather for any one to look for indoor entertainment.

However, I think that all present enjoyed themselves—and one of the most popular items was a series of orchestral items by different club orchestras at intervals throughout the day.

Our Chairman, D. S. Pettinger, collapsed owing to nervous strain just before our June meeting which necessitated cancelling that event. Cards were sent out notifying members of the cancellation. Will all Club delegates note that the next meeting will now be held on July 6 at the Independent Methodist School, Barton Road, Stretford, Manchester, at 3 p.m.

I shall not be sending out any more cards so please do not forget the date, time and place.

G. WOOD.

B.M.G. Diplomas

A COPY OF THE TESTS NECESSARY TO SECURE "B.M.G." DIPLOMAS can be obtained free of charge by applying to the Editor, "B.M.G.," 8 New Compton Street, London, W.C.2.

The following candidates have been awarded Diplomas:—

Arthur William Cope, of Nottingham, "A" Grade (Plectrum guitar).

Teacher: Sanders Papworth.

Examiner: Elsie Dawson.

T. van Heerden, of Johannesburg, "A" Grade (Hawaiian guitar).

Rodney Cooper, of Johannesburg, "A" Grade (Plectrum guitar).

Dickie Odendaal, of Johannesburg, "A" Grade (Hawaiian Guitar).

Teacher: Chas. Macrow.

Examiner: Eric Vincent.

Florence Timpson, of Sanderstead, "B" Grade (Plectrum guitar).

Teacher: Vince Miller.

Examiner: Arthur Stanley.

THE Fretted Instrument Guild

The recital by Kurt Jensen has produced a crop of enquiries from enthusiasts who missed that musical treat. It convinced them that to miss a Guild show is to miss something worth listening to, because F.I.G. will only put on a first-class musical entertainment that invites comparison with anything of a similar nature on any other instrument.

Make certain you book the next Guild concert as soon as it is announced. If it is sponsored by F.I.G. it is bound to be good!

The Annual Report is being prepared for circulation to members, and the Annual General Meeting will take place early in July, probably at the Caxton Hall. Precise details will be sent to members with the report, and they are urged to attend and give their views and criticisms.

V. J. PARSLER.

Club Notes

At one of the infrequent "Go As You Please" evenings, recently arranged by the Croydon Club the following items were played in addition to the more familiar orchestral numbers: Miss D. Taylor (M.) "Serenata"

(Braga); Mrs. M. Lawford (B.) "Romance in C Minor," and "Banjo Oddity"; Mrs. K. Dickson and E. A. Presland (M. and Dola) "Frine" and "La Golondrina"; Mrs. A. Stevens and S. Englefield (M.), "Moonlight and Roses" and "Song of Songs"; Mrs. E. Poulter, Mrs. M. Lawford and D. Staples (B.) "Minstrel Man" and "Banjo Vamp."

The Edinburgh Club gave performances at the Juter-worth Billiards League presentation of prizes and Concert at the Masonic Hall and at St. Brides Church Hall, last month. The usual numbers were much appreciated by both audiences.

During last month the Bournemouth Club has given concerts at the Parkstone Conservative Club, Belmonth Court Blind Home, St. Francis' Church Hall and the Bournemouth Y.M.C.A. Items included "Call o' Erin," "Celtic Morn" and "Whistling Rufus." Other items were: Mrs. Bland and Miss M. Burgess (M.) "Andantino" and "Chanson D'Ete"; The Southern Banjoliars, "Circus Parade," "Jamboree" and "Banjo Oddity"; Mrs. Noyce, Miss M. Burgess, Mrs. Gillett and Mrs. Gracey (M.) "Havana Moon" and "Gypsy Love."

At last month's meetings of the Leigh-on-Sea Club the following items were played: L. Behar (B.) "Pompador"; H. Ballard (B.) "Hunky Dory"; F. F. Carter (B.) "Carolina Capers"; A. C. Mansell (B.) "Mr. Shufflebottom," "Mixed Grill" and "Plantation Melodies"; W. Readman (B.) "Dusky Belle"; Mrs. Day and Messrs. Behar and Mansell (B.) "Jacko on Parade" and "Mr. Punch"; Mr. and Mrs. H. Wright (M. and Dola) "Melodie d'Amour," "Strauss Waltzes" and "Standchen."

On May 28 a successful concert was given at Little Thurrock Methodist Church Hall, Grays.

A new attendance record was made at the May meeting of the Philharmonic Society of Guitarists, when over 100 members and friends enjoyed the second of this season's lively concert-socials. Two much-appreciated new features were the Peter Sensier Trio (G. V. and Bass) and a flamenco item with Charles Atkinson playing the guitar to the dancing of Senorita Elenita Sierra, complete with castanets and appropriate dress. Julian Bream and Deric Kennard made a welcome re-appearance with solos and duets; and 11-year-old John Williams once again delighted the audience with his accomplished playing.

The programme was: Peter Sensier Trio, "Three 16th Century French Dances"; Nicholas Carroll, Studies by Carcassi, Sor and Coste; John Williams, "Gavotte" (Bach), "Adelita" (Tarrega) and "Study No. 7, Op. 60" (Carcassi); Alan Middleton, Three Pieces by Francisco and Medio; Julian Bream and Deric Kennard, "Unnamed Piece" (Dowland), "No. 9 of the Little Preludes" (Bach); "Cantabile" (Sor) and "Therezinha de Jesus" (Villa-Lobos); Elenita Sierra and Charles Atkinson, "Soleares"; Leonard Williams, "Allemande" (Bach) and "Study No. 13, Op. 25" (Carcassi); Deric Kennard, "Two Pieces in E. Major" (Sor); Julian Bream, "Bouree and Double" (Bach), "Andante" (Torroba), "Soleares" (Turina) and "Fandaguillo" (Turina).

The Southwark Club provided the highspot at a recent Clapham concert with two 15-minute selections from its repertoire.

Individual items played during the month included: John Grey (P.B.) and Kay Timpson (P.G.) "Curly Headed Baby"; W. Harper (Bn.) "Popular Selection"; A. Goodwin and Vic. Thomas (B.) "Camptown Carnival," "Bonnie Scotland" and "Niggertown"; The Southwark Duo (Bn. and P.G.) "Whistling Rufus" and "La Cumparsita."

Mrs. E. M. Weeks, a member of the mandolin section, was chosen to play the incidental lute music to the First Folio Company's production of "Julius Caesar" at the Old George Inn, near the site of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre.

The London Banjo Club presented a special programme in May for the visit of Mr. and Mrs. T. J. W. Dorward (of Newcastle-on-Tyne), to which Mr. Dorward contributed two of his own banjo solos.

The Jubilee Concert, which was postponed from last year, has now been arranged for Saturday, December 20, and will be held in the Wigmore Hall. Fuller details will be given later.

The Ilford Club took part in a concert at St. Andrews Hall, Leytonstone, on May 2, and played "Classical Snackbar," "Gems from the Overtures" and "Blaze Away." Also the Banjo Section appeared at St. Margarets, Barking, on May 1 in a Minstrel Show for Church Repair Funds; a repeat of which will be given this month.

The Plymouth Club continues to have good attendances and new pieces are being practised and prepared for the winter season. Players in the district should look for the photographic display set of the Club in local music shop windows—designed to enrol more members.

Last month a hearty welcome was extended to Miss Dawson on her return from Denmark and a vote of thanks given to her from members after hearing the recordings she played of the Danish mandolin orchestra under its conductor Kurt Jensen.

Correspondence

Dear Sir,—It was nice to see myself mentioned in Mr. McNaughton's article, but I would like to remind your readers that the points in my previous letters are not "contentions," they are facts subject only to a few special reservations. They are the conclusions drawn from 50 years' continuous teaching.

Motion study is now an important part of industry, and no matter whether it be packing chocolates, touch-typing or playing a musical instrument, there can be found a fundamental position that will eliminate all unnecessary movements and greatly reduce fatigue. This fundamental position must be mastered and become second nature before any serious deviations are made.

It must be remembered that Joe Morley had many years' playing before he introduced thumb and first finger to the 1st string; that he was known as the "Triplet King" and his brilliant speed in such numbers as his "Dora Break-downs," "Hailstorm Jig," "Festival," etc., proved that the normal right-hand position was indeed second nature to him and, henceforth, he could do no wrong. Any who try to skip this fundamental practice, beware!

The most awful thing in Morley's tutor, to my mind, is the cover illustration where Joe has the second left-hand finger firmly planted on E

(first string). This pushes the third and fourth fingers right off the fingerboard and completely kills any *legato* between the C and F chords. I know the banjo is supposed to be a *staccato* instrument, but so would any other instrument be if badly fingered. Let a player put his third left-hand finger on E; the first on C; and second on A; and the little finger on the first string at F. Then no finger need move more than a bare half-inch—every finger has its own note, and the work is equally divided. Some of your readers may think it difficult to retain complete control (as, for instance, when lifting and replacing second and fourth fingers while keeping first and third firmly down) but this is only what a pianist has to do when playing *legato* thirds.

Every Spanish guitar tutor introduces double fingering on the upper strings at an early stage, and this seemed to upset my claims for a fundamental right-hand position. To test this thoroughly, I taught some pupils strictly by the book while others were being taught to keep their first finger over the third string; the second over the second; the third finger taking the first string and the thumb playing the three covered strings. All consecutive notes on the same string being played with the same finger.

The benefits of my insistence of this fundamental position were soon apparent. Those pupils were playing with more confidence than the others; there was less tendency to turn the guitar over on its back to see what the fingers were doing; and the pupils seemed to be much more comfortable.

This early settling down is of the utmost value to the pupil and to the teacher, and a steady progress was maintained—a distinct contrast to the insecurity the other pupils were still feeling.

I do not now advise any of my pupils to deviate from any of the fundamental positions until they have been properly mastered and, like the touch typist, every finger is trained to recover its position after any such deviation.—ALFRED W. LANE.

Dear Sir,—"Busker" is a noun which is, no doubt, a corruption of the Spanish verb "buscar"—to seek.

The itinerant guitarists who went "to seek" (a living) in Spain played by ear; and according to your correspondent, England has now evolved a new verb "to busk," meaning to play by ear. It is this oblique treatment of foreign words and their inclusion into English which makes the language so rich.

I agree with Janette Matthews that not only the sound of the word "busk," but the association of ideas of strumming outside cinemas is nauseating to a serious musician.

James Douglas Bohee is described with touching dignity as a "travelling minstrel," and the high standard of the gifts and work of the Bohee Brothers was, and is, appreciated, but the lovely Elizabethan word "minstrel" is inevitably associated with coloured coons; and it appears there is a danger of fretted instruments becoming linked in the minds of the public with "buskers."

All honour, therefore, to your correspondent for taking a firm but gentle hand against this trend of thought.—E. TURNBULL.

Dear Sir,—The Universal English Dictionary gives two separate connotations of the word "busk," both of ancient and respectable origin—but neither corresponds to the use of the word in musical circles.

The long-established use of "busker" in connection with street entertainers is not restricted to musical performance; it simply means "one

who gives an impromptu performance," and I seem to remember reading once that its use in this sense was of Romany origin, but I am not certain of that point.

The man who juggles to entertain a theatre queue or demonstrates escapology on a blitzed site is just as much a busker as any street musician.

In music the use of the word is not clearly defined, except by common sense. When one reads an advertisement for a musician that says "read or busk" it is understood that the player should read music or play without music (not necessarily in the snobbishly despised sense of "by ear"). Busking in this sense means, at its narrowest, that the player is capable of translating what he knows by sound into the speech of his instrument. Many musicians have never seen the music of the National Anthem, but they busk it accurately.

The boundary line between merely reproducing what one has seen or learned in the past as a piece of written music and producing something which one knows only by sound (whether once or many times heard) is not clear. In practical musical circles, if one claims to be able to busk, it is assumed that one cannot only reproduce the simple tune (and/or harmony) but can also embellish or improvise upon it with some degree of skill and inventiveness.

If an accomplished "straight" pianist heard a simple theme from, say, a Mozart sonata which he had not studied, he would probably be able to place his hands on the piano and reproduce it more or less accurately from the sound only. He would then be busking in the narrow sense of the word. If, however, he tried to remember a piece he had not seen or played for a long time, it would not really be busking as we now understand it.

Busking calls into play a measure of practical musicianship and even imagination which often lies beyond the grasp of those who are restricted to the reading and memorising of a written copy.

I cannot agree that the word "busk" is crude-sounding. It is of ancient derivation in all its senses and has not been neglected by poets. Neither can I suggest another word to use in its place to denote this particular form of musical ability. Let us simply treat the word for what it is—a good old English word meaning "to give an impromptu performance."—**JACK DUARTE.**

* * *

Dear Sir,—I am quite ready to accept Ivor Mairants' statement that the accomplished lady Spanish guitarists have small and dainty hands. It is only when a girl joins the plectrum squad that she needs to become a ham-fisted Hannah.

I know! I get headaches, heartaches, "tramp-lines" on my fingers, and ladders in my nylons. All for what? A pitying smile from male colleagues and the privilege of being called "a debased variant."

Who says (lady) plectrum-guitarists are not plumb crazy?—**KAY TIMPSON.**

* * *

Dear Sir,—In the April issue J. McNaughton refers to my remark regarding the decline of the banjo, and I hasten to explain that the words "over here" were used carelessly. I should have said "in Canada."

Although I am not familiar with the "Fraternity of Five-String Banjoists," as an organisation I have, acting as M.C. at various American Guild Conventions, had the pleasure of introducing many fine performers, including Frank Bradbury and "Bill" Bowen.

A membership of 200, out of a population of 150,000,000, is a small proportion, and I would

be interested to learn the average age; hazarding a guess that the membership consists mostly of "old timers." Good luck to them, I am an "old timer" myself.

When fulfilling the duties of Contest Director for the American Guild (and my statement was mostly based on this circumstance), I found it necessary to drop the Banjo (five-string) class through lack of entries.

In conclusion, let me say that after hearing Jose Silva at the Cincinnati Convention in 1950, I came away converted to the belief that the plectrum-banjo is the most musical of ALL the banjo family.—**PERCY WADDINGTON.**

* * *

Dear Sir,—I wonder how many readers have thought how useful a tape recorder would be as an aid to better playing?

I got the idea when my Hawaiian band was engaged by a radio firm to make the first demonstration "live" recording on a machine they had just completed. Since then, I have bought a ready-made "tape deck" (or, in other words, the mechanical part of the apparatus), and have built an amplifier for it.

Readers who have seen advertised the £60-plus models may be interested to know that with the ready-made tape deck included, the all-in cost of my own apparatus was only in the £20 region; less, in fact, than a radiogram.

The tape may be used over and over again or the recording may be kept permanently, and will not deteriorate, as would gramophone records, however often it is played.

It is possible to record a full 30-minute programme, and for this reason it is particularly instructive to those whose ambition it is to make a broadcast.

Since using my apparatus at all band rehearsals there has been a marked improvement all round.

I would be interested to read other players' views on this.—**JEFFREY POCKOCK.**

(I know that Geo. R. Spindler, of the York Club, has a tape recorder. Perhaps he (and any other reader who uses a similar apparatus) will give us his views on the subject.—*Editor.*)

* * *

Dear Sir,—An enjoyable Rally, sponsored by Dr. Hallam Koons, was held at the Moose Club, Allentown, Penna., on behalf of the members of the Fraternity of Five-string Banjoists of America, on May 17. Among the star players present were Fred van Eps, "Bill" Bowen,

Alex Magee and Paul Cadwell, ably supported in ensemble numbers by Messrs. G. S. Gerhart, Mason Lilly, J. E. Copland, Col. G. H. Collins and myself. Mr. Longacre provided accompaniments on the guitar.

All joined in with the items, "L'Infanta March," "Banjo Rag," "College Rag," "Smiler Rag," "Maple Leaf Rag," "Tyro Mazurka," "Jolly Darkies" and several other popular numbers. "Bill" Bowen's "Ye Olde Stone House Dance" was a prime favourite.

Bill, in collaboration with Fred van Eps, rendered "Nola" and "Wild Cherries."

British compositions had a worthy place in the ensembles, including "Shuffle Along," "Syncopatin' Shuffle," "Coconut Dance," "Pearl of the Harem," "Mister Jollyboy" and "Ragtime Episode."

One of the most interesting features of the programme was the dual work of Paul Cadwell and Fred van Eps in medleys of Square Dance music which is the former's special forte. Alex Magee made a hit with his own compositions, "Goblin's Dance" and "Moonlight o'er the Heather."

It is perhaps indicative of *esprit de corps* and the appeal of the banjo when it is borne in mind that practically all the instrumentalists who attended the Rally had to travel upwards of 400 miles to reach the rendezvous. In fact, it was only the barrier of distance that prevented many well-wishers from States in the Middle East from attending.

It is hoped to foster interest in the banjo by arranging many more similar Rallies in the future.—**H. G. SHIELDS.**

* * *

Dear Sir,—I would like to congratulate Sanders Papworth on his clever tango, "Noches de Fiesta" (March "B.M.G."). It recalls a lovely evening when I first heard a tango played, more years ago than I care to remember, at a wedding. The orchestra was placed on a balcony and people were dancing in the streets. I was on my way to the "Concha" (the splendid beach) in San Sebastian and I will never forget the lilt of the music. "Tango rhythm" has fascinated me ever since, and although I have arranged quite a number of these dances, none (in my opinion) has ever captured the native spirit like Sanders Papworth's piece; with its minor and relative major movements. The latter is delightful, and when played very *staccato*, like the Continental bands play their tangos (when and where it is suitable), is the real thing.

I cannot recall anything approaching it for fretted instruments. Being a zither-banjoist, I played it direct from the guitar copy and, in my opinion, it really makes a fine banjo solo. There is no tango in *banjo music* to compare with it and, recalling the correspondence some time ago (about tangos), when Bernard Sheaff's was said to be the only one published, I would strongly recommend banjoists who like the rhythm of that dance to play "Noche de Fiesta" direct from the guitar copy; it only needs a few modifications that suggest themselves.—**J. W. WHITTAKER.**

* * *

Dear Sir,—In the article, "The Tarrega Method" (June issue) is a statement needing correction. Referring to the method of striking the strings, the writer says: "Whether they (guitarists) use the right-hand finger nails like Pujol or Fortea. . . ." In actual fact, Emilio Pujol is probably the world's foremost advocate of FINGERTIP (as opposed to NAIL) playing. His preference for this style is made abundantly clear in both his admirable (but incomplete) Method "Escuela Razonada de la Guitarra"

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and his interesting but controversial booklet, "The Dilemma of Timbre on the Guitar."

To quote from the latter, Pujol states: "Each style . . . embodies a distinct mentality; the one (with nails) spectacular and tending to exteriorise one's personality, and the other (with fingertips) intimate and sincere, deeply penetrated by the art."

This is certainly an over-simplification of the problem facing all finger-style guitarists.

Nail-playing undoubtedly does tend towards greater facility of right-hand mechanics, and

this may tempt certain guitarists to display empty technique. However, shows of tasteless virtuosity are not confined to nail-players alone.

Pujol himself gives the best summing-up of this problem when he concludes by saying: "Let us be glad, then, that the guitar should offer this duality of aspects which will allow each artist to realise his own work with sincerity and gather through it the first reward of his merits."—PETER SENSIER.



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