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B.M.G.

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GUITAR

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Vol. LI. No. 584

DECEMBER 1953

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ADELE KRAMER

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The Editor
and staff of

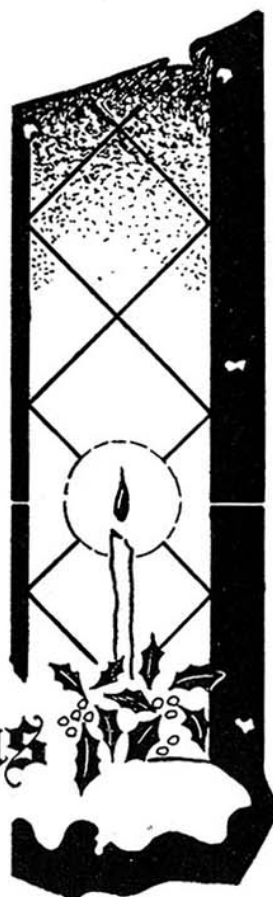
"B. M. G."

—and every
contributor to the
magazine—

Wish Every Reader

a

Merry Christmas



MAY YOU HAVE MANY OPPORTUNITIES OF PLAYING
YOUR INSTRUMENT DURING THE FESTIVE SEASON—
AND MAY YOU BE THE MEANS OF INTERESTING MANY
OTHERS IN THE MUSIC OF THE FRETS—Editor.

ADELE KRAMER

By NICHOLAS CARROLL

ADELE KRAMER arrived in London so unobtrusively that many of us who interest ourselves in the comings and goings of eminent guitarists are only gradually realising that London has lately acquired a welcomed and notable addition to its somewhat thin ranks of resident players and teachers.

England's gain has been Austria's loss. Madame Kramer may not yet be well known here, but she comes from the Continent with a considerable reputation as a recitalist and teacher, developed quietly over the past quarter of a century.

She was born in Braunau, in Upper Austria. This is a part of the world where, she tells me, "one person in every three can more or less play the guitar"; and though she did not begin to study it seriously until she was in her teens, the guitar was the first musical instrument she ever handled as a very young girl.

She started with the violin at the age of six and by the time she was 14 she was a competent performer. Then she turned to the guitar and about the same time she started to learn the piano and the harp; she persisted with these instruments for the next five years and resolved at last to concentrate her musical energies on the guitar, which had always been her favourite.

MUSICAL FOUNDATION

She was unusually fortunate in the chances she had for acquiring a sound musical foundation. For two years she was able to study under Professor Johann Nepomuk David, who is now teaching at Stuttgart and who has a world-wide reputation as an authority on J. S. Bach. During Madame Kramer's childhood Professor David was teaching at Wels, near Linz, in Upper Austria; he started a Bach choir in that town and on many occasions he invited the youthful Adela Kramer to play guitar solos between the choral items of his programmes.

Her advanced musical education was acquired at the famous Music Academy in Vienna, where she gained a diploma. It is in this Academy, incidentally, that Professor Luise Walker holds the chair for guitar.

Professor Jacob Ortner, who is still one of Vienna's most distinguished musicians of the older generation, was her first teacher of the guitar. Later she had the good luck to receive lessons in technique and interpretation from the late Miguel

Llobet, who always stayed with her family during his visits to Austria. It was Llobet who sent her, in 1930, the magnificent Simplicio guitar which she still uses. Shortly before the start of the Spanish Civil War she travelled to Barcelona to undertake further development of her technique under Llobet's supervision.

By the early thirties her professional career was well under way. She started by playing with the chamber section of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra; she continued to play with them until 1937, though she undertook many independent engagements during this period.

In 1937 she left Austria and went to Berlin to widen her reputation. For the next two years she travelled extensively in Germany, giving recitals and lessons. She occasionally toured in the Scandinavian countries.

RECITAL TOUR

In the latter part of 1939 her agent arranged a recital tour for her in the United States. Her passage was booked—for September 4, 1939. Hitler's decision to march into Poland frustrated her plans by a matter of a day or two and perhaps changed the whole course of her career. Had she left Germany a week earlier, when it was still possible, she would probably have spent the war years in North America, where she would undoubtedly have come in due course under the direct influence and technical guidance of

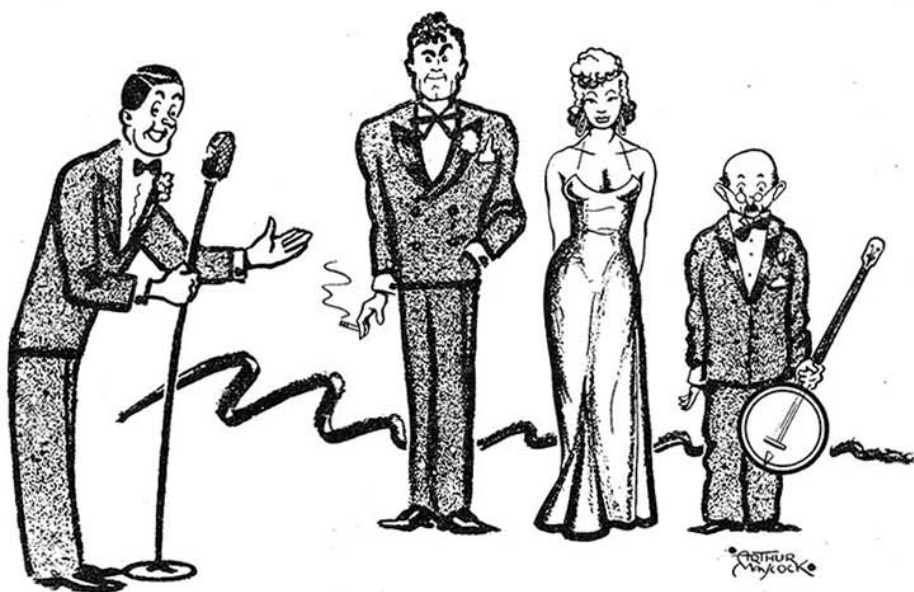
Andres Segovia, who himself spent the war years in the United States and South America and whom she admires immensely.

But fate had decreed otherwise; she spent the greater part of the war years in and about Berlin, where concert life went on much as it did in London. From time to time she was able to make a concert tour in Sweden; one of these trips lasted six weeks—a wonderful escape from the austerities of wartime Germany.

FURTHER RECITALS

The war over, Madame Kramer made for her homeland as quickly as possible, though she did not go back to Vienna. Instead she settled in Bregenz, on Lake Constance, at the extreme western end of Austria. From that shrewdly chosen position she was able to give recitals in three countries—Switzerland, Germany and Austria—with a minimum of travelling time and expense.

Three years ago she came to England, staying here quietly with friends. Later she married a retired English barrister; but she is using her maiden name for her musical work. She has now started giving lessons. She gives her first London recital at the Cowdray Hall on Wednesday, December 9, at 7.30 p.m. She has already met a number of London guitarists and her genial personality, warm smile and sincerity of purpose, have made her many friends and helped her to settle down in her new home.



"... Mr. Gregory Grant, by permission of Kolossal Motion Pictures; Miss Ava Munro, by permission of Super Century Films; and Mr. John Brown, by permission of Mrs. Brown."

THOSE OF JUSTICE (2)

By R. TARRANT BAILEY

(Continued from last month's issue)

MY pupil reappeared upon the morrow eager for the fray and with a hearty "Now for the coal face" picked up his banjo.

"Not yet," I say. "We want the notebook and pencil for some time before we demonstrate."

"Lummy, what a life," greets this statement. "Class! Prepare for dictation."

In view of yesterday's experience I light my pipe at once—selecting one with a very thick stem in case of accidents.

"Minor scales," I begin, "are one-and-a-half notes—three frets—below major scales."

Giving this a moment to sink in, I suggest he try it. "What is the relative minor to G major?"

He looks at the third string of his banjo and, for a moment, wonders how he can get three frets below an open string. Almost immediately, however, he awakes and stopping the fourth string at the seventh fret, slides down one, two, three, via F#, F \sharp to "E."

Appearing to doubt this, he tries it from the fifth fret of the first string. Having thus confirmed the truth of his first experiment, he announces that the relative minor of G major *must* be "E."

Much to his gratification, I agree.

"Well, if that's all," he pouts, "why bother me to come again today? I could easily have done that yesterday."

Alas, this is by no means "all"; and

to his marked distress I continue: "The sixth and seventh notes of minor scales become *sharps* ascending, but resume their natural pitch coming down."

"What does *what!*" he yells. "Why the devil do any of them want to go up black and come down white—or whatever it is?"

"Never mind 'why' just now," I gently respond. "Just take my word for it that in minor scales the sixth and seventh notes positively *do* have to be raised a semitone when you are ascending the fingerboard and that these six and seventh notes go back to normal on the way down."

For nearly a minute he breaks a world's record by pondering in silence, after which he says, most soberly for him: "I *think* I see—but I must try it."

He picks up his banjo, puts it in playing position—then hesitates.

"The sixth and seventh notes," he murmurs softly to himself. Then louder: "the quickest way to make sure what those are would be to think of the two that come before the eighth note—not to count up 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. And as the eighth is the same as the first in name, it should be easy."

UNUSUAL INTEREST

I endeavour to hide my gratification at the unusual display of genuine interest, at the same time regarding it as a fine opportunity to mention what might otherwise have caused unpleasantness.

"That is a splendid idea of yours," I say, trying to avoid any inflection that might disclose the fact that it is invariably done in that way. "And will you please remember also that every minor scale carries the same signature as its relative major; so that, occasionally, this raising the sixth and seventh business cancels its own signature on the way up."

He puts down his banjo and, with a determined air, rises and picks up its case. "I like beer," he snarls. "Very much I like beer—but if this is what I have to do to win one miserable pint I'm from this date onwards not only a teetotaler but an anti-banjoist!"

By sheer brute force I remove the banjo case from his feverish clutch and push him, none too gently, backwards into the pupil's chair.

"It is as easy as the rest," I say soothingly, "if only you will have patience and think for a moment. In an hour you shall have beer as well as knowledge, if only you will *think*."

This moves him deeply and he throws in the clutch of his banjo-reasoning mechanism at once.

I sit smoking as he mumbles to himself.



PRIZE-WINNING PHOTOGRAPH

This photograph of Mrs. Elsie Poulter, of the Croydon Club, was taken by her husband who is a member of the City of London and Cripplegate Photographic Club. Entered in an exhibition of prints, it gained for the photographer a high honour. Mrs. Poulter joined the Croydon Club 21 years ago and is the Club's librarian as well as serving on the committee.

"I'll try. A Minor. Blast A minor! Top note of A minor *must* be 'A.' So sixth and seventh *must* be 'F' and 'G' going up. 'A' *must* be the relative of 'C' because it's three frets lower, so that really there are no sharps or flats except the blasted 6th and 7th going up. And none at all coming down. I wonder when I can have a tooth out for a treat!"

Still I sit silently smoking. It is better that way.

Unaided he successfully climbs and comes down the A minor ladder, scratches his head and does it again—all the way, two complete octaves!

The corners of his mouth turn up.

"G," he mutters. "Slide down three frets, 'E,' sixth and seventh and its own F#. That's three going up and one coming down. Nobody loves me, I think I'm going mad. E. F#. G. A. B. sixth C#. seventh D#. E. damn it! Thought I couldn't do it, did he. I'll show him!"

Grim and determined, lost to the world and entirely oblivious of my presence, he grunts, fumbles, and works away until he has tried and proved them all from 'A' to 'G.'

INTELLIGENT UNDERSTANDING

Suddenly he stops. Putting his banjo down he leans forward and glares at me. "Why," he hisses between his teeth, "couldn't you have the decency to tell me that they're all absolutely alike, instead of trying to confuse me?"

I digest this and then gently remind him that I *did* tell him that major scales were made up of two whole tones, then a half tone; three whole tones, then a half tone. That minor scales were one-and-a-half notes below their relative majors, and that the sixth and seventh notes of minor scales became sharp ascending, but resumed their natural pitch coming down—at the same time submitting for his consideration the fact that if I had merely remarked that scales were all alike he might not, after all, be playing them with an intelligent understanding at the moment.

Apparently without thinking, he concedes: "Perhaps you're right," whilst I, with some warmth, offer him the assurance that I jolly well *know* I am!

Dare I mention the sharp and flat keys?

I risk it—hastening to explain that, as he has so kindly pointed out, "They are all the same."

He appears to consider this a dirty trick since he had, so far, entirely overlooked the fact that there *were* any sharp or flat keys in the scale department!

My assurance that careful rehearsal of all these, employing absolutely correct fingering to avoid unnecessary disturbance of the left hand, was the finest banjo practice in the world, did not appear to comfort him.

So I say: "Let us play a duet."

He brightens up, as he likes this sort of thing and regards it as a grand opportunity to take advantage of my weakness and so avoid any further reference to scales.

"What shall we play?" he smilingly enquires.

"Scales!" I reply. "You give your perfect rendition of C major and I will accompany you as second banjoist by performing A minor."

This suggestion is most unpopular—but I insist.

HARMONIOUS RESULT

His face changes at the first rendition as the harmonious result takes him quite by surprise. He is so delighted that at his own request we try G. and E; F. and D; and several others for the best part of an hour.

Much of the time, however, is devoted to correcting his tendency to remove fingers from the fingerboard that are better still pressing it, especially the last three top notes of the major scales where the same ones are wanted on the way down.

For a time it is difficult to get him to realise that every fraction of a second saved is another step towards making him a real banjoist—and that the slightest unnecessary movement of the left hand or its fingers not only spoils touch and tone but does, more than anything else, slow up the player's performance.

Even his weakness for lifting his fingers higher than is necessary to allow the strings to vibrate has to be corrected. Although he has some difficulty in overcoming his tendency to demonstrate a "spider's walk," he is now so much in earnest that he tries to do *everything* I ask.

* * *

That is all, excepting that he practised hard on those lines for a fortnight before the Diploma examination and, as a result, passed comfortably and mystified Mr. Essex over the scales.

I am not recommending the method to other teachers or advising the use of it to pupils. I have only told you what actually happened and how it came about that a student, weak on many points, was able to play *any* scale—major or minor—absolutely correctly without, perhaps,

even knowing what notes he was using at the time.

It would be nice to tell you his real name—but you would not recognise it. If, however, I dared mention the one under which he directs his present orchestra you would have the shock of a lifetime.

LABORATORY REPORT

By HARRY GARMONT

(Readers of "B.M.G." will surely remember the long series of articles in which the revolutionary mandolin, conceived and built by Mr. Garmont, was described in detail. In this article, the further improvements to this instrument are given.—EDITOR.)

AFTER three years of practical and continual research to improve my mandolin, I have been able to accomplish some improvements by the application of projected speculation. After 12 long years of struggle I can now announce that I have produced a mandolin possessing such new mechanical and acoustical perfection that I can safely say that the ideal mandolin is finally completed.

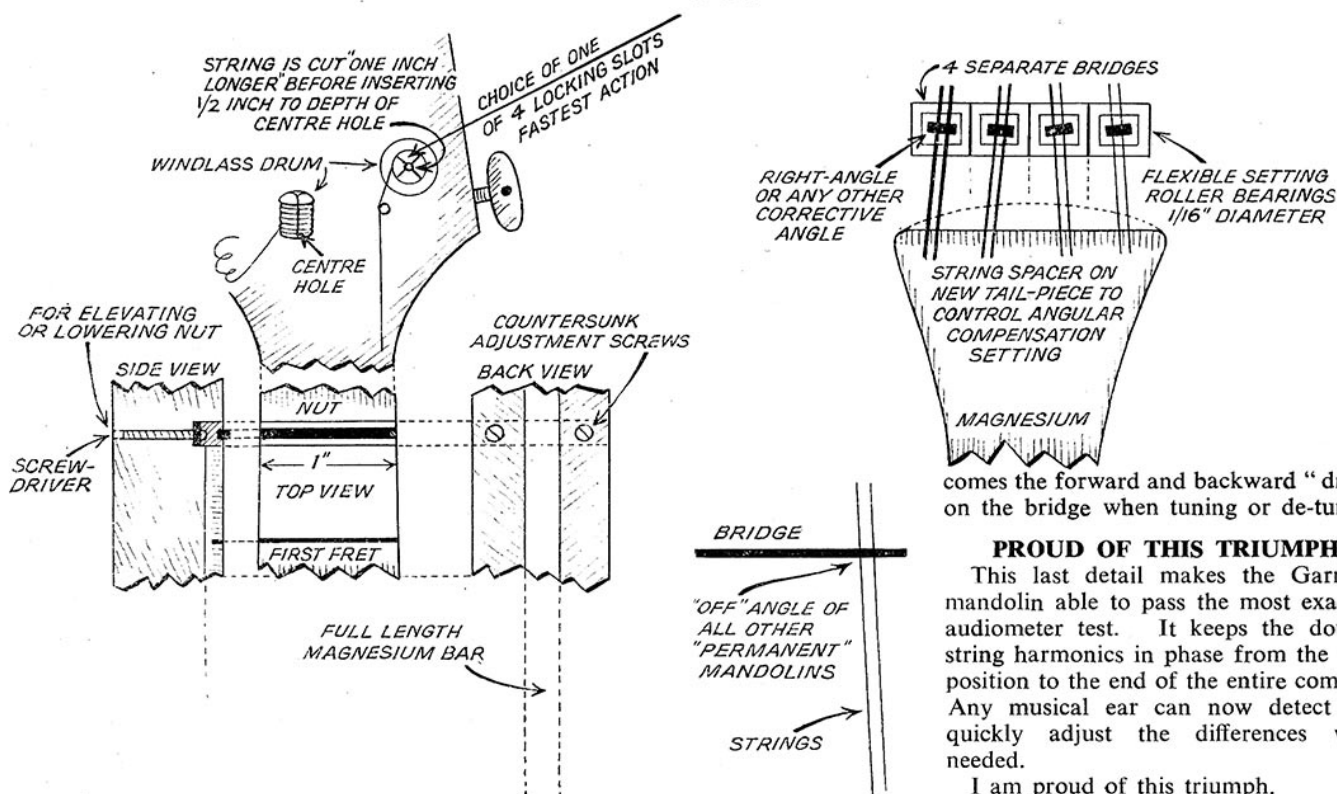
Examination of the drawing of the headpiece reproduced on the opposite page will show the windlass drum-post to have a "cross" instead of the former single slot. In the centre of this "cross cut" is a drilled hole of the appropriate size needed for each string to enable the "pricking end" to be safely tucked away.

The useful locking-action is quickly achieved by bending the string end at right angles into one of the slots. It is a genuine pleasure to watch the *fast* locking-action operate. By virtue of the centre hole and the "cross," a choice of four possible slots is offered. Also it pre-locks the string before the windlass functions. This, of course, reduces the number of turns necessary to bring the string up to pitch.

For this reason the drum posts, which are made of the best magnesium alloy, are shortened and consequently are materially lighter, hence acoustically desirable.

The use of the latest magnesium alloy (which is one-third lighter than aluminium, yet stronger) to replace the wood down the centre of the neck, greatly increases resistance to flexion and produces remarkable rigidity. By the use of a special adhesive, the wood is bonded to the metal and heat-cured while under great clamp pressure.

In addition, by closer spacing, the



comes the forward and backward "drag" on the bridge when tuning or de-tuning.

PROUD OF THIS TRIUMPH

This last detail makes the Garmont mandolin able to pass the most exacting audiometer test. It keeps the double-string harmonics in phase from the third position to the end of the entire compass. Any musical ear can now detect and quickly adjust the differences when needed.

I am proud of this triumph.

The new and smaller tailpiece is made (again!) of magnesium alloy and is contour-shaped to the front of the instrument. It is considerably lighter than the former model and is covered with black bakelite, satin polished.

Its great mechanical improvement is due to the universal floating joint action used where it is fastened to the body of the instrument—which means it can be "pushed" left or right, up or down, in relation to its axis fastening.

It permits a settling of a balanced condition to take place with the 119-lb string tension. The semi-universal joint action of the violin tailpiece is fundamentally correct—but in my tailpiece the problem was difficult of achievement because of the need for the desirable string-tension release mechanism controlling eight strings simultaneously.

Incidentally, a beautiful vibrato effect can easily be produced by the right hand, simply by pressing the balanced tailpiece downwards. Whole chords can be played vibrato, with a most pleasing effect!

All surfaces of the interior of the mandolin are now pore-sealed with a filling mixture consisting of half lamp-black carbon and pulverised graphite mixed with sufficient egg-white tempera to make a thin paste. Into each ounce of this combination, $\frac{1}{4}$ -ounce of natural brown sugar is added as a binder.

The resultant paste is brush-applied to all interior raw wood and thoroughly

number of dowels has been increased from 24 to 32. Here the application of the same wood-to-wood adhesive ensures the overall 300 years "expected stability" that defies improvement, at the same time maintaining the acoustic "sound" construction essentially required in a stringed-instrument neck.

The particular brittleness and consequential stiffness of this magnesium alloy (under audiometer test of this neck as a vibration transmitter of sound) showed less than one decibel drop in audio response over the former all-wooden construction. Since the average human ear can distinguish detected differences of not less than $1\frac{1}{2}$ decibel variance in sound output, this comparison of neck construction shows that the slight loss is infinitesimal when the advantages are considered.

ANOTHER ADVANTAGE

A neck so constructed as this allows the inbuilt installation of a nut-adjusting device (as shown in the second drawing) without impairing its rigidity. With wood alone, this would be dangerous.

With the left- and right-hand screw elevation adjustment system the resulting close tolerance setting of the nut in relation to the fret makes 1-100 of an inch (one hundredth) or less a simple matter, as it is quickly achieved after the instrument is tuned.

By virtue of its double adjustment, the G and D string diameter compensation is settled in a matter of seconds. Hitherto, I have never seen a properly adjusted nut on any instrument.

Examination of the new bridge shows the use of a stainless steel single-roller bearing for each pair of strings—placed in a small individual component, where it is allowed to move forward or backwards $\frac{3}{32}$ in. for proper setting in conjunction with the tailpiece tension-releasing mechanism.

The new dowels (not shown in the sketch) are magnesium alloy $\frac{3}{16}$ in. in diameter, seamless, hollow and lighter than the wood they replace. This proportionately compensates for the extra wood weight required in the slightly broadened (but greatly improved) bridge transmitter of vibration.

The rolling action of these bearings should appeal to the mandolinist because the last barrier to improved intonation (harmonic overtones between two strings of even tension) is now overcome.

Strings will sometimes vary in their characteristics and are known to stretch in course of time (reducing diameter)—thereby changing vibration under equal tension. The flexibility allowed for with each setting per pair of strings now eliminates the last vestige of out-of-tuneness encountered in all fretted instruments.

In addition, this rolling action over-

rubbed into the pores with the fingers. When, after about four hours, the surfaces are dry they are given a cleaning with fine steel wool to remove surplus paste. This treatment protects the wood against moisture.

This detail of protection is far more important than usually realised, especially where greatly increased sensitivity vibration is encountered, as in the Garmont mandolin.

SUMMARY STATEMENT

The latest and final Garmont mandolin is of the "duo" character, so chosen (after prolonged practical and psychological testing) as the goal of my long endeavour. The proportionately increased volume (with equal activation) of the G and D strings is *correct* because of the needed compensation demanded by the more penetrating A and E strings.

Furthermore, in duo-style playing a better tonal balance is produced between the usually single-struck "accompaniment bass" notes and the tremolo of the higher notes.

With my expensive and prolonged research on the mandolin now completed, I am happy and satisfied with the results. I would like to extend my best wishes to the many international correspondents I have gained through the pages of "B.M.G.", whose continued enquiries for

details of our mutually-beloved mandolin have been a constant source of encouragement to me.

In general the fretted instruments have been sadly neglected; their development and potential goodness being kept in a stunted state. I am willing to enter into correspondence to assist any luthier who sees in my mandolin a furthering of advancement in fretted instruments.

Plectrum Guitar Forum

Conducted by JACK WHITFIELD



TWO contrasting songs — one from the land of yellow sands and the other from the county of yellow bellies — remain to be analysed in our John Gavall series.

The oft-repeated principles continue to apply. Learn the chords thoroughly, with changes, before

tackling the accompaniment.

"Go Down Moses" first.

This fine rhythmic spiritual is one of the most popular pieces of its type and offers good scope for the dramatic singer. The accompaniment is slightly more difficult than the average of the Gavall series because of the minor key but the general quality of the number is worth hard practice.

I would suggest that in the preliminary chord practice you concentrate on the "thickest" chords possible because, as a plectrum player, you will have to adapt the accompaniment in a number of instances. This could be done by playing three-note chords but the value of the bass strings as an enrichment to the musical background makes the five- or six-string chord almost a "must" in most cases.

Practise chords, then, as follows:—

G minor: 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 6th strings, full barré with 1st finger, 3rd fret; 4th string, 4th finger, 5th fret; 5th string, 3rd finger, 5th fret. (Additional note—B♭—on 6th string, 6th fret, with 4th finger.)

E♭7: 1st string, 4th finger, 3rd fret; 2nd string, 2nd finger, 2nd fret; 3rd string, 3rd finger, 3rd fret; 4th and 5th strings, 1st finger barré 1st fret.

D7: 1st string, 4th finger, 2nd fret; 2nd string, 2nd finger, 1st fret; 3rd string, 3rd finger, 2nd fret; 4th string open; 5th string open. (The reason for this slightly unorthodox fingering will be clear when you tackle the accompaniment. D7 follows E♭7 with the same shape on the top three strings, so it is pointless to rearrange the fingers for the new chord.)

Cm: 1st and 5th strings, 1st finger barré, 3rd fret; 2nd string, 2nd finger, 4th fret; 3rd string, 4th finger, 5th fret; 4th string, 3rd finger, 5th fret.

G7: 1st, 2nd, 4th and 6th strings, 1st finger barré, 3rd fret; 3rd string, 2nd finger, 4th fret; 5th string, 3rd finger, 5th fret.

SMOOTH CHANGES

Practise the following sequences and master smooth changes before going on to the accompaniment:

Gm. Gm. E♭7. D7. Gm. *ad lib.*

Gm. E♭7. Gm. *ad lib.*

Gm. Cm. Gm. Cm. *ad lib.*

Gm. G7. Cm. Gm. *ad lib.*

With these sequences well and truly at your command the accompaniment should hold no left-hand terrors, although one or two passages will need special attention.

In the first bar of the introduction (in which, incidentally, the note E in the first chord should, I think, read D) the



In the musical show "Here's to the Years," ROY BURNHAM played the tenor-banjo in the 1920's scene featuring dancers Sheila King and David Dimmick. Presented to mark the centenary of the foundation of Gordon & Gotch Ltd., "Here's to the Years" was written and devised by David Dimmick and Roy Burnham.

additional note of B♭ is added to the G minor chord.

There is no need, of course, to finger the full G minor chord. All that is needed is the barré across the first three and the 6th string for the first two beats—and this is held while the second half of the bar is played, with the 4th finger on the 6th string at the 6th fret for B♭.

You could, of course, play B♭ at the 1st fret on the 5th string with the 1st finger, making a new barré at the 3rd fret with the 3rd finger on the top three strings, but this involves a change in fingering which, to my mind, is unnecessary.

I think enough has been said about alternative right-hand stroking for this kind of accompaniment to make it unnecessary to go into the details again. Your choice is between all down-strokes and down-up-down strokes. The latter is more difficult but its advantages justify extra practice.

"All down strokes" is, however, the order for the first line of the chorus, when you will have to adapt the chords. I would play a six-string G7; five-string Cm; five-string Gm; five-string D7; six-string Gm; and five-string E♭7—in that order.

BETTER EFFECT

You will get a better effect here by playing broken chords than single strokes. Glide the plectrum over the strings on each chord rather than striking across—but the glide must be done quickly and the left hand released sharply immediately the last note has sounded in order to leave the rest periods quite clear.

For those still shaky on timing, the first beat of the first and second bars are rests; and so are the first and third beats of the next two bars.

Finally, look at the last bar on the second, third and final lines of the music. These are perhaps the most difficult.

It is best to hold a first-finger barré across all six strings throughout the sequence.

Finger the barré and place the fourth finger on B (3rd string, 4th fret). Play G (6th string) with a down stroke and B with an up stroke. Now slide the fourth finger up one fret to C, at the same time fingering the remainder of the five-string Cm. chord (as given above). Play this chord with a down stroke, followed by single-note C with an up stroke.

Still holding the barré, finger the six-

string Gm. chord and play it with a down stroke, followed by an up stroke for B♭; a down stroke for bottom G; and another up stroke for the final B♭.

All this looks a little complicated in print but I assure you that it works out in practice.

PROVING USEFUL

That leaves us with little space left for Gavall's "Lincolnshire Poacher," which we will have to deal with next month.

We are spending rather a lot of time on this accompaniment business but all the evidence available is that it is proving useful. Meantime, if any reader has other views, I would like to have them.

Just room, I think, to answer a reader's query. He is a plectrum guitar player trying his hand at finger-style for the purpose of voice accompaniment and is not too happy about the results. He has a flat-top plectrum guitar with round soundhole and wants to know if he could fit it with gut or nylon strings as heavy-gauge steel strings do not seem to respond to his fingers satisfactorily.

I would not advise him to fit gut or nylon strings. A plectrum guitar is just not built for them and the results would be disappointing. The answer to his problem lies, I think, in the special "light gauge" steel strings now available from the Clifford Essex Co. These have been produced specially for plectrum guitar players who want to use the fingers.

(To be continued.)

The Balalaika

By R. A. BIRSE

IT is well known that Andreeff encountered a lot of difficulties when he started to popularise the balalaika.

With his object of spreading the knowledge of the balalaika among all classes of the community, one of his ideas was to teach soldiers of as many regiments as possible. He thought thus: When these soldiers end their term of military service, they will return to their villages and could show and teach the lads of their community how to play.

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.

The idea was good, but, at first, it met with objections from several quarters.

The military "authorities" were dubious about balalaika playing being good for the troops and many commanding officers considered it quite superfluous. However, Andreeff won his point and a permit was granted.

Andreeff and some of his collaborators started teaching in the Regiments. The soldiers were not asked if they wished to learn—they were simply ordered to.

In some regiments there was no support or enthusiasm forthcoming from the officers. On the other hand, there were some regiments where the commanding officers were proud of their men having "mastered" this "novelty." In the latter, progress was rapid and after five or six months they were ready to appear before an audience.

ANNUAL CONCERT

There was an annual concert, given in the grand Marinsky Opera House in St. Petersburg, at which orchestras of many regiments took part. A mixed band of balalaikas was also to perform.

The brilliantly-lit Opera House was filled to capacity. High ranking officers, Generals and Ministers, Court Ladies, and sometimes even the Czar, would be present. There was a large number of soldiers to play balalaikas and they had to stand to attention, sometimes for as long as an hour, until their item was announced. This proved most tiring and Andreeff tried to have this regulation abolished.

"What! Have you lost your senses? Soldiers to loll about in chairs in front of their superior officers—waiting their turn to perform! Are they to be allowed to sit only because they have a balalaika in their hands? Unheard of!"

General Kniazhevitch, organiser of this important annual concert, wiped the perspiration from his brow. "No, sir! They are to stand to attention, and that's that!"

After one concert he asked Andreeff: "Could you not perfect or alter your balalaika?"

"What fault do you find," countered Andreeff.

"Well," replied the General. "It is irregular for soldiers to remain seated before so distinguished an assembly. It is unseemly. Could not they play standing? Think it over, old chap."

It did not take Andreeff long to "think it over." The soldiers continued to play sitting!

STAGE PRESENTATION

By LES PORTER

ANY public performer on the banjo knows how necessary it is to "present" his act. Today, playing is just *not* enough.

An idea my partner and I have found effective, when used on a darkened stage, is as follows:

Three coloured electric bulbs are used (red, white and blue are effective) which change colour automatically as the fingers change position on the fingerboard. The bulbs can be mounted on the perch-pole or in the resonator.

The attached diagram gives all details. A small hole, made with a needle, is

all that is needed to insert the end of the wires under the fret. The main thing is for the wire to touch the fret. Any number of frets may be used with more bulbs if desired and different positions to those shown.

The whole job can be done within an hour, for about five shillings cost, with nothing visible on the banjo except the Sellotape on the side of the arm—which is hardly noticeable.

Playing is not affected in any way, neither have we noticed any detrimental effect on the strings or frets. If desired, a small switch can be incorporated in the circuit but this is not really necessary as all bulbs are unlit whilst the strings are clear of the fingerboard.

Playing the Hawaiian Guitar

By BASIL KING



SPECIAL effects on the E13th (high 5th) tuning, are the first subject for discussion this month. For those who do not know, the notes of the tuning (from 6th string to 1st) are: D, E, G#, B, C#, E.

To make it easy, I am going to introduce the effects into an arrangement of "Where Is Your Heart?"—the song from the film "Moulin Rouge." I shall refer to the popular song copy. There is also a piano solo copy; this is *not* the one you want.

Bar 1 of the chorus starts with an E♭ melody note and an E♭ chord. To bring the piece within the range of the tuning, play it an octave higher than written. This gives you the E♭ melody note and chord at the 11th fret.

Play the B♭ lead-in note on the 3rd string, then, with a (gentle) sweep of the thumb, play an E♭ 6th chord on the first four strings. You have added a 6th harmony which you will find is pleasant and which enables you to play the thumb-sweep chord—also pleasant.

To complete bar 1 *without moving the steel* play the last two melody notes in the bar as palm harmonics. To do this, touch the string twelve frets away from the steel with the palm of your right hand. Pick the string with the thumb, lifting the hand away in the same movement to let the harmonic sing out.

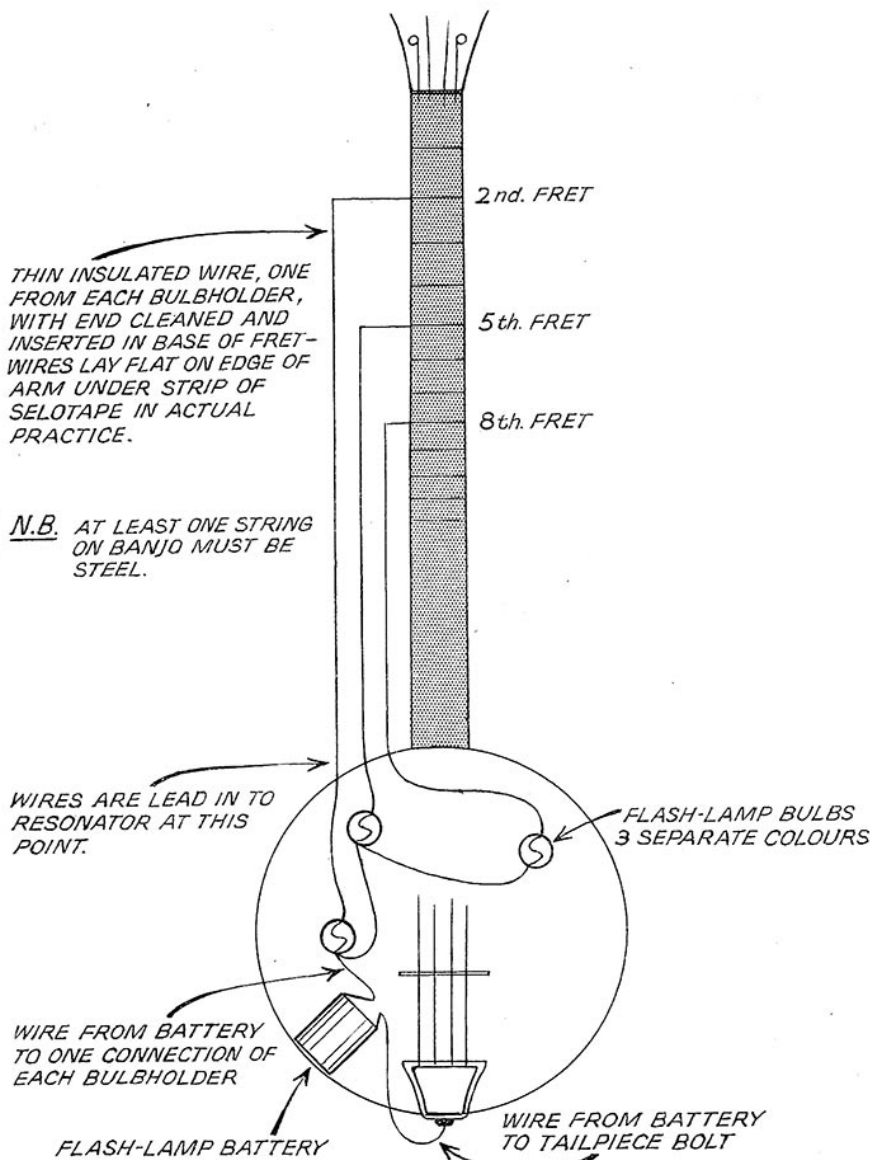
EXPERIMENT

You cannot see through the palm of your hand, so find out, by experiment, which fret your thumb picks at. Remember it, practise, and you will be able to play sure, clean, palm harmonics.

Play the first melody note in bar 2 also as a palm harmonic. Keep a nice *vibrato* going while you produce these harmonics and take care your left hand does not drift, putting the notes off pitch.

The lead note to bar 3, and the first melody note in the bar, are dealt with as in bar 1. Notice that the thumb-sweep chord which we used for E♭ 6 is equally satisfactory for Cm7. Hold the chord, although the harmony changes on the second beat of the bar in the piano part.

For the last two melody notes (F, D) in



on a minor chord in the middle eight of "Rosetta" (Melodisc 1008) in the "Jazz at the Philharmonic" series and even Reinhardt, in "Found a New Baby" (Decca F. 5943) when ad libbing on the minor chords, uses rather more arpeggios than usual.

SCALIC IMPROVISATION

Here, again, on minor chords we can employ scalic improvisation in exactly the same manner as on major chords but, of course, a thorough knowledge of the fingering of minor scales—plus hard practice—is necessary.

The other useful "break" I mentioned is simple and embraces the diminished chord.

Starting, say, on bottom G—3rd fret, 6th string—an effective run on the chord of Gdim. can be played by using a fingering of 1. 4. and playing two notes on each string; moving up one fret each time you change to another string. Like this:—

Ex. 8



Note that when you get to the second string you must move up *two* frets.

Diminished runs are quite simple on a guitar and should be constantly practised in all positions and tried with different fingerings. They are extremely useful in ad libbing as they always seem, somehow, to add a touch of "weirdness" to a solo.

A diminished run can sometimes be played against a basic 7th chord. Reinhardt does this with great effect at the beginning of his second chorus in "Honeysuckle Rose" (Decca F. 6639), where, against a backing of C7, he plays a run on Cdim.:—

Ex. 9



The record of "Subconscious-Lee" by the Lennie Tristano Quintet (Melodisc 1110) is based on the chords of "What is This Thing Called Love." They have,

as their first chord, superimposed a Gdim. on to a basic C7. Against this chord, Billy Bauer's guitar solo sounds perfect—but with that touch of weirdness that comes from the use of the diminished chord.

On this record, too, is some very good scalic improvisation by the alto player Lee Konitz which is certainly worth listening to.

COMPELLING URGE

Having thus built myself a store of "breaks" to fall back on when inspiration failed, and having developed within myself a "feeling" for jazz by constantly listening to so much of it, I began to experience a compelling urge to play ad lib. solos with a discernment and knowledge of what was good and bad that far outstripped my own first hesitant efforts.

I was thus in a position to be my own critic—and I was horribly severe, too!

The next stage in my development was when I started playing the chords of "evergreens" like "The Sheik of Araby" and singing or whistling choruses as I went along.

I got quite good at this sort of "scat singing." It can be a highly developed musical accomplishment if constantly practised. Just listen to Ella Fitzgerald on Brunswick O4351 singing choruses of "How High the Moon" and you will see what I mean.

An old jazz player once said to me: "If you've got it in you, the feeling and the ideas, it will find its way out somehow in your playing." I knew by now I had "it" in me to play choruses.

Next month I will tell you of some of the frustrations and disappointments experienced by almost every would-be jazz man in his early stages.

(To be continued)

DO YOU POSSESS A TAPE RECORDER?

THE advent of the tape recorder and other methods of "home" recording has set serious problems for musicians. No longer are they secure in the knowledge that their performances will not be recorded without their consent.

During the past two or three years there have been many instances where professional performances by musicians have been recorded without their consent; such recordings even being sold or offered for sale.

Musicians have the right, in common with all other workers, to decide whether they will sell their services and to whom they shall be sold, whilst under an Act of Parliament known as the Dramatic and Musical Performers' Protection Act, 1925, they have the right to decide whether their performance shall be recorded.

The 1925 Act made it unlawful to record directly or indirectly any dramatic or musical performance without the consent in writing of the performers. The Act also prohibits the distribution, sale, hire or public performance of such recordings. Fines that may be imposed by a Court of Summary Jurisdiction for offences under the Act are laid down and provision is made for the destruction of records made in contravention of its provisions.

Although, until comparatively recently, complaints about unlawful recordings have reached the Musicians' Union infrequently, progress in the technical development of tape recorders has altered the position considerably. The Union wishes it to be known that prompt and vigorous action will be taken in future when infringements of the 1925 Act become known to them.

SERIOUS THREAT

Because the misuse of recording has become perhaps the most serious threat to the welfare of musicians, members of the Union have been instructed not to give the necessary written consent for the recording of their performance except where the approval of the Union has been given.

It should also be remembered that composers are given a copyright under the earlier Copyright Acts. Therefore a composer whose work is recorded without his consent, can also take legal action against the recordist.

If a musician's performance is, for example, broadcast by the B.B.C., this performance has been given for the purpose required by the B.B.C. and with the approval of the Union. It is not intended that other persons, who wish to take advantage of the musician's performance without paying for it, shall record it. These are the kind of recordists who will fall foul of the 1925 Act. Most recordists, however, have probably no intention of operating so dishonourably and it is as well for them to understand the existing legislation which does give partial protection to performers.

The Banjo in Britain

By W. M. BREWER

(This series commenced in the May, 1953, issue)



THE work of the Palladium Minstrels in popularising the banjo was perpetuated by the Kentucky Minstrels. The latter first broadcast in the early 1930's and the banjo team originally consisted of Joe Morley, Tarrant Bailey, Jr., and Dick Pepper. Edward Fairs replaced Tarrant Bailey, Jr., in 1936, and Bernard Sheaff went into the team on the death of Joe Morley in 1937.

The Kentucky Banjo Team played Morley numbers—"Dig Dag," "Mountaineers March," "Egyptian Princess," "Corn Cob," "Zarana," "Jacko on Parade," "Monkitrix," "Sports Parade," etc., as well as some of Edward Fairs' and Bernard Sheaff's compositions. In addition to their feature item, the Team provided banjorial background to many of the Kentucky Minstrels choral items.

The Club movement, which had started in a small way as far back as 1888, became increasingly popular in British fretted instrument circles shortly after World War I, and it was given a fillip in the 1930's when the then editor of "B.M.G." (Bert Bassett) and his colleague, A. P. Sharpe, paid visits to many of the Clubs in the Metropolis and reported fully upon their work in this magazine.

During this period, the London Club invited other Clubs to send representatives to play at their meetings and thus the idea of inter-club visits took root. At such events, there would be from 70 to 100 instrumentalists playing community items as a massed band.

Programmes were arranged to present the best talent in the "home" and "visiting" Clubs and *esprit de corps* was maintained at a high level.

The second World War inevitably caused the disbandment of many B.M. & G. Clubs, but since 1945 they have been resuscitated as will be seen from the "Directory of B.M. & G. Clubs" in "B.M.G." Some of the organ-

isations, e.g. Hackney (London), Watford (Herts) and Gloucester, have a large membership.

WEEKLY MEETINGS

The Clubs in Britain usually hold weekly meetings and the agenda includes popular community numbers of such kind to enable all to participate. Advanced players often give short recitals or play request items for instructional purposes and members are encouraged to play solos or form small ensembles to gain experience in playing before an audience.

The "Aston" and "London" Clubs are perhaps the oldest established in London. The London Club (formerly called the "Keynotes" B.M. & G. Club) had its headquarters at the Y.M.C.A. in Tottenham Court Road, London. It was run on efficient lines with membership cards on which the rules were published.



DR. L. HUSSEY, O.B.E.,
President of the London Banjo Club.

It had, as successive Presidents or Vice-Presidents, A. D. Cammeyer, Joe Morley, Bernard Sheaff, Clifford Essex, Emile Grimshaw and J. P. Cunningham. Famous personalities, many now deceased, attended the monthly meetings. Among them were Viscount Canterbury, Mario de Pietro, Major Ackerman, Major Shuter, G. A. Keeler, Claude Day, etc.

Clifford Essex gave a handsome solid silver cup for annual competition among the members and at each meeting a 15-minute recital was always given by a prominent artist.

The present London Club runs primarily as a banjo band and has as President Dr. L. Hussey, O.B.E., the famous explorer who had his banjo with him while serving with Sir Ernest Shackleton's Antarctic expedition of 1914-1916. Tom Downing is the Musical Director.

PUBLIC APPEARANCES

On June 30, 1951, the London Banjo Club won the Championship Competition

for bands held at the Conway Hall, London, under the auspices of the Fretted Instrument Guild.

Although the club then had in its ranks two of Britain's finest players of the plectrum-banjo—Tom Edwards and Billy Horne—its personnel is mainly finger-style. F. C. Musselbrook, who is a front-rank player of the zither-banjo, plays *contra-bass* banjo in the team. The club has appeared many times in B.B.C. programmes and on television. It has also appeared at several important public functions.

The Aston Banjo Club (originally of Kensington, London) was famous in its early days under the baton of Harry Marsh—a revered name in British fretted instrument history. This Club's annual concerts at the Kensington Town Hall were always looked-forward-to events.

A provincial Club that reached a high standard of proficiency in the 1930's was the Leeds & District B.M. & G. Orchestra, under the conductorship of Sam Ambler.

It is relevant, at this stage, to mention the formation of the British Federation of Banjoists, Mandolinists and Guitarists. In 1929, J. Webber (of the Birmingham Club) was elected Secretary and Treasurer and he organised its first Rally at Blackpool, Lancs, on September 15 of that year. Seven orchestras competed in the contest for bands.

Mr. Webber was also responsible for organising a Rally at King George's Hall, Tottenham Court Road, London, on June 28, 1930.

A preliminary meeting to discuss the formation of a Southern Section of the Federation was held in London on November 29, 1930, and at a further meeting on December 6, the Southern Section was established with Emile Grimshaw as Chairman; Morris Dolby as Treasurer; and B. W. Dykes (an expert player of the mandolin, tenor-banjo and plectrum-banjo) as Secretary.

FIRST SOUTHERN RALLY

On March 22, 1931, a "Rally, Dinner and Concert" was held at the Lysbeth Hall, Soho Square, London. This was the first function organised by the Southern Section of the Federation.

The areas of Britain to be "served" by the Northern and Southern Sections respectively were subsequently clearly defined and delegates were appointed to watch the interests of members not belonging to clubs.

The annual Rallies of both Sections became major events, trophies being given

by Clifford Essex, John Alvey Turner Ltd., Emile Grimshaw and other prominent personages for annual competition—covering each class of fretted instrument playing.

The original idea of matching the winners of the Northern and Southern Sections to decide "all-Britain" championships had to be abandoned after an initial trial because of travelling difficulties and expenses.

A feature of the pre-war Rallies held in London was a Trade Show at which all the prominent trade houses took display stands to show their wares.

During the second World War the Federation's activities were suspended.

In 1943, the late Byron Davies started his National Society of Banjoists, Mandolinists and Guitarists which had some successful seasons and was closed down only because of the serious illness of the founder. Byron Davies made membership of his organisation worth while: he staged many enjoyable concerts (free of charge to members) at the Alliance Hall, St. James's Park, London, at which individual star artists and clubs gave recitals.

When Byron Davies' organisation lapsed, the Federation was re-formed and its annual Rallies (now called "Festivals") in London and various northern towns are again premier events in the British fretted instrument world.

(To be continued)

Mandolin Technique

By V. J. PARSLER

THE exercises we are studying (Kayser's Elementary Studies for the Violin) are now reaching a more difficult stage. After this book, however, I have another of advanced mandolin studies I want to write about, so the enthusiastic student can look forward to some more interesting work when the present book is finished.

Competent mandolin playing is the result of some years of hard work and should not be rushed. There is no need to advance month by month at the same rate as I am writing. If you are not satisfied with your progress, go back and perfect the easier studies.

Build a good foundation of scales alongside these exercises and your difficulties will disappear. I know scales are a bore and tedious to play, but, after all, they constitute the skeleton upon which all our music is built.

Now for a little double-stopping in Ex. 20.

The first two bars are in the first position. The chords are all struck with a down stroke and the intervening single notes with an up stroke. Use the same fingers on the same notes as in single-note playing: 1st and 3rd on B and G; 2nd and 4th on C and A; and so on.

The third bar is in the third position, returning via an open A to the first position.

The open strings are used much more in chord playing, but care should be taken to keep the tone balanced. Do not let the open note(s) ring out and the stopped note(s) sound muffled in comparison. Plectrum control has a lot to do with good tone and bad habits with the left hand as well as the right will soon make themselves heard.

The pressure of two fingers on the frets at the same time will come as a strain at first, especially when it is the 2nd and 4th. This is where those finger exercises I have previously suggested will come in useful.

I should be inclined to play almost all of Ex. 20 *staccato* so that every note of every chord is heard clearly.

INTERESTING FINISH

There is an interesting finish to this exercise. In the last line, play the first four bars all down strokes and then lightly take the plectrum across the open G and continue to tremolo the open D and stopped B. This is really an introduction to one form of duo-style playing.

Pick the lower notes cleanly and lightly, at the same time keeping up an unbroken tremolo on the other two notes.

If this exercise is played properly it will be a big step forward technically, so it should not be rushed. The value of keeping the fingers down on the frets will now be manifest as, of course, the spacing of the notes in the chords should be felt for and not looked at.

Ex. 21 will come as a welcome change and, although far from easy, is a good study in E♭.

Play through the relevant scale first so that the fingers are used to the flattened notes. If you cannot play this scale properly, the study will sound even worse! It is marked *allegro*, but I should not take it too fast as we are not after speed at this stage. Accuracy and good tone come first.

CARE OF THE INSTRUMENT

These hints on the care of the mandolin are what are needed by a number of players, judging from the letters I am

receiving. Last month I promised to write about strings, always an interesting subject.

The gauge of strings one uses—thin, thick or medium—will depend on the type of mandolin. Flat-back instruments often give better results with the heavier strings. For example, the heaviest strings I have ever used were (pre-war) Gibson strings specially made for their carved-top mandolins. They gave a beautiful tone on the right type of instrument.

I tried them on my Emburger, which is a very lightly made instrument and responsive to the slightest touch. They did not sound nearly as well as a lighter-gauged set.

So you see, no hard-and-fast rule can be laid down. It is well worth while experimenting with strings of different makes and thicknesses until you find the gauge that suits your particular mandolin.

If no rigid rule can be laid down for the thickness of the strings, we can be more definite about their length of life. Generally speaking, the thirds will be the first to lose their tone as the thin wire covering becomes flattened where it comes into contact with the frets. If left on the instrument too long, the covering is cut through and the string sets up a rattle as well as catching in the tips of the fingers.

CHANGING STRINGS

The time to change covered strings is when shiny places show where the strings touch the frets. This can best be found by slackening the string and twisting it over. The first and second strings will last longer, but they, too, should be changed as soon as indented by the frets.

Always change a pair of strings, as nothing sounds worse than a brilliant new string coupled with a tubby old one.

One more point. Keep your mandolin clean. Dirt is no asset and it does not help tone. A good furniture cream will help in maintaining the original gloss. Grubby patches can often be removed with a slightly damp cloth and a good toilet soap. If the top of the instrument is bare wood (i.e., unpolished), keep all moisture away and let the professional repairer do the job for you.

Next month I will conclude these notes on the care of the instrument. They are by no means complete, as different instruments require their own particular treatment, but they will, I hope, act as an incentive to the better care of the mandolin.

(To be continued)

The ELECTRIC Plectrum Guitar

By JACK DUARTE



I HAD intended to devote this article to the more serious side of my experiences with the Ivor Mairants Guitar Group but perhaps the New Year would be a better time for moralising.

Since I wrote those three articles in tribute to Django Reinhardt, a number of readers

have written to ask for details of the "pitiful handful" of his records still left in the lists. In view of this interest, I shall deal with the subject in this article.

Time was, before the late war, when there were so many Reinhardt discs on the market that we became almost sated and blasé. With the war, came eclipse. Although Reinhardt continued to work in occupied France, in his old haunts, the steady stream of releases dried up abruptly.

In the years which followed, the existing records slowly disappeared from the catalogues almost unnoticed and there was nothing to take their place. When the war ceased, Reinhardt (now playing electric plectrum guitar) re-emerged and visited England. He also went, for the first time, to the U.S.A., where he played with Duke Ellington as guest star—but somehow the time was not right.

Possibly it was that Jazz was nearing the crest of the first post-war development ("bop") and there was less interest than usual in yesterday's giants. Maybe he walked into a country that had a rich crop of new guitar stars who were technically brilliant and musically more in line with the times; maybe his peculiarly wayward temperament played him false—whatever it was, he did not register as had been hoped and the tour did not last long.

There were some post-war records issued but they never quite recaptured the magic of those earlier sides—and this emphasised the tragedy of the deletions. Now we are left to survey the shambles time has wrought.

VALUABLE SOURCE

Before the first English issue of "Hot Club" records on Decca, most of us had heard some of the Quintet's sides on the Oriole label. Although the first Decca

releases have now been deleted, the Oriole sides are still freely available and thus constitute the most valuable source of early Reinhardt sides. Collectively they afford a measure of the extent to which Reinhardt developed as a technician and a musician over the years.

On these Orioles he repeats himself often; uses clichés; and throws off technical tricks for their own sake—to a much greater degree than in later years. His phrasing is also much more obviously determined by fingerboard patterns.

The titles in this set are as follows—and I have attempted to give them some comparative rating by starring them. (The more stars the better.) If you can afford it, buy the lot. If not, go by the stars.

- "Dinah" ** and "Lady Be Good" *** (LB.1000).
- "I Saw Stars" ** and "Tiger Rag" *** (LB.1001).
- "Confessin'" *** and "The Continental" * (LB.1002).
- "Swanee River" * and "Blue Drag" **** (LB.1003).
- "Sunshine of Your Smile" *** and "Sweet Sue" * (LB.1004).

All of these are on 10-inch records, ordinary playing, of course.

The two single-star sides lose status because of the time given to vocal choruses which now sound very seedy. The quality of the recordings is good.

Nothing now remains of the pre-war H.M.V. recordings of the Hot Club and E.M.I. inform me that there is little likelihood of their re-issue unless there is a much bigger public demand than they anticipate. This is tragic when one thinks of the music they embrace—the solo "Improvisation" and "Parfum"; "Mystery Pacific" (fabulous r.h. technique), "Sweet Chorus" and "Nagasaki"—but let us not dwell on these depressing thoughts, rather let us be grateful to the Decca Co. with whom the position is far better.

A few pre-war Deccas can still be obtained and these (once again "rated") are:—

- "I've Found a New Baby" **** and "It Was so Beautiful" **** (F.5943).
- "Souvenirs" **** and "Honeysuckle Rose" *** (F.6639).
- "Appel Direct" *** and "Three Little Words" ** (F.6875).
- "It Had to Be You" ** and "Nocturne" *** (F.7009).
- "Please Be Kind" *** and "Louise" *** (F.6828).

DUETS

The last four of the above titles are duets between Reinhardt and Grappelly (on piano and violin) and it is at the slower tempi of the three-star numbers that we find Django at his best. Again, all are 10-inch records.

The first-named coupling was one of the earliest to be issued and still one of the best.

Shortly after Reinhardt's death the Decca Co. rose to the occasion and answered our call for re-issue with a 10-inch L.P. record carrying a selection of the pre-war offerings. It is due to them that every one of us with a slow-speed desk should respond to the gesture by buying this well-chosen collection (which, unlike so many L.P.'s, is composed almost entirely of A1 material). Details are: "Swing from Paris," "My Sweet," "Improvisation," "Sweet Georgia Brown," "Three Little Words," "Nocturne," "Daphne" and "H.C.Q. Strut"—on London LB.810 (33 r.p.m.).***

The "Improvisation" is not the same one which has been lost from the H.M.V. list—this one he plays with his r.h. fingers. "H.C.Q. Strut" is one of the best quick-tempo numbers the group ever made. Even Reinhardt's voice (amongst others) is thrown in for good measure in "My Sweet," when a little chaff and banter goes on.

POST-WAR ISSUES

Post-war issues have been few but they include some treasure trove. (By "post-war" I refer to numbers recorded after the war). Here is the tally:—

- "Love's Melody" **** and "Nuages" **** (F.8604).
- "Belleville" *** and "Liza" *** (F.8876).
- "Songe D'Automne" *** and "Duke and Duke" ** (C.16092).
- "Just One of Those Things" **** and "Delsalle" *** (C.16177).

All these are on Decca, ordinary playing 10-inch.

There is also:

- "Blues Primitif" * and "Topsy" *** (Esquire 10.015).

The first four titles are on acoustic guitar; the last six on electric. The first two represent, to me, the acme of Reinhardt's art of lyrical improvisation whilst "Blues Primitif" represents about the lowest level to which he sank in latter years. The numbers he made on el. p.g. were not made with Grappelly but with a rather fluent clarinetist.

Before the war, Reinhardt recorded also with groups led by Dickie Wells, Benny Carter and others but was never at his best in strange company. Amongst post-war issues were some Esquires in which he was a member of Glenn Miller's Uptown Gang. Once again, his contributions were well below par and it is of little interest whether any are still available or not—for what Reinhardt played in them.

That is the lot, as far as I know. Maybe

there are Continental recordings available through indirect channels but I have confined myself to those records that can be bought in ordinary record shops over here. I hope this little account has been of some help to those readers who wish to preserve what they can of Reinhardt's art whilst there is still time.

(To be continued)

Banjo & Zither-Banjo Causerie

By J. McNAUGHTON



A VERY Happy Christmas to all who read—or write for—"B.M.G."; a wish now being expressed for the fourth time since I took over the "Causerie." Coupled with my greetings are my thanks to those readers whose letters have provided so much interest for us during the past year.

During the Festive Season, players should have some opportunity to bring their instruments into prominence and I hope they will make the most of their chances. Among the average Christmas "audience" there will be some to whom our five strings are new and, in the traditional atmosphere imbued with the Yuletide spirit, they become enthusiastic listeners if the player chooses his programme with care.

It should be easy to make a selection of solos appropriate to the occasion, for the emphasis is usually on "song"—and this is where old copies of "B.M.G." will prove useful. With a few well-balanced medleys to augment the material from "B.M.G.," the needs of the majority can be reasonably well met.

I recall two outstanding arrangements by Bert Bassett that are ideal: The Stephen Foster medley from "Harmony Lane" and the "Savoy American Medley." In early issues, Emile Grimshaw arranged such carols as "Silent Night" and "God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen." Though arranged for the plectrum-banjo, these carols can be played finger style. The "Medley of Carols" from the December, 1949, "B.M.G." will also prove useful if the player cannot arrange his own music.

Here is a list of some published solos covering a good deal of ground. With a few pieces of this kind, the way will be paved for a close interest in whatever characteristic music the finger-stylist may have prepared for his circle.

"Georgia Medley"—Nelly Gray, Marchin' thro' Georgia, Tavern in the Town, Swanee.

"Nigger Minstrels"—De Ol' Banjo, Camptown Races, Swanee, Golden Slippers, Kentucky Home.

"Snatches of Song"—Wearin' the Green, Marguerite, Star of Eve, Mocking Bird, Sally, Georgia, Yankee Doodle, Dear Little Shamrock, Aloha Oe, Tavern in the Town, Massa's in the Cold Ground.

"Swanee Sing Song"—Susanna, Ol' Virginny, Ring the Banjo, Sister Mary, Who's dat a-Callin', Razors in the Air, Early in the Morning.

"Overture Medley"—Poet and Peasant, Maritana, Bohemian Girl.

"Wales"—Ash Grove, Bells of Aberdovey, Ap Shenkin, Fair Cambria, Jenny Jones, Men of Harlech.

"Scotland"—Bonnie Dundee, Campbells are Comin', John Anderson my Jo, Highland Laddie, Scots Wha Ha'e, Auld Lang Syne.

"Ireland"—Thady O'Rourke, Harp that Once, St. Patrick, Believe Me if All, Irish Washerwoman, Minstrel Boy.

"Musical Memories"—Song of Songs, Rose in the Bud, Where My Caravan, Sergeant Major's on Parade, Un Peu d'Amour, Soldiers in the Park.

"Martial Moments"—Colonel Bogey, Dawn of Freedom, Sons of the Brave, Old Comrades, Great Little Army, Light of Foot.

"Everlasting Waltz"—Vienna, Dreaming, Love, Here is My Heart, Dolores, Whisper and I Shall Hear, Speak to Me of Love.

"Community Medley"—Camptown Races, Tavern in the Town, John Brown's Body, Cock Robin, The Orchestra, Good Night, Ladies.

"Evergreen Waltzes"—Invitation to the Waltz, Die Fledermaus, One, Two,

Three, Four, Morgenblatter, Le Papillon, Haere Ra, Blue Danube, Faust.

OTHER MEDLEYS

In addition to these there are such solos as "Sullivan Selection," "Classical Snackbar," "International Medley," "Gems from the Classics," "Jovial Medley" and the two selections of "Old Plantation Melodies." This by no means exhausts the solos containing well-known tunes.

Having aroused interest by apt choice, there should be unlimited scope for the presentation of favourite compositions for banjo or zither-banjo. Played with confidence, your music will receive attention befitting the unique charm of the finger-style idiom and proportional to the care with which it is produced.

Writhing in the inexorable grip of Festive Custom, I am compelled to relax my iron features for the annual smile, thus: Tarrant Bailey, to whom we often refer irreverently by his famous initials, had been in correspondence with the banjo stalwart of Ceylon, W. T. Loos.

"T.B.'s" letter had expressed a desire to visit Colombo and Mr. Loos suitably replied. His envelope arrived at Bath, franked in the manner of these propaganda-laden days with the current official exhortation: KEEP T.B. OUT OF CEYLON.

Instead of our usual counting "chore" for the month, I offer, with my seasonal wishes, a little study in rapid fingering written for a friend by Alfred Kirby.

Next year we hope to attempt some experiments in right-hand technique. In the meantime, an overhaul of the instrument will ensure maximum responsiveness in good time for what I sincerely hope will prove to be a really Happy Christmas for all!

(To be continued)



GUITAR VIRTUOSO

LUIS MARAVILLA was born in Seville on June 1, 1914, and began to study the guitar in Madrid at the age of 12. In 1928 he won the Ramon Montoya Gold Cup in a flamenco competition held at the Zarzuela Theatre.

After appearing as soloist at the most important theatres in Spain, in 1932 he started a tour which took him to the Argentine, Brazil, Uruguay, etc.

Returning to Spain he studied the classical style of playing with Daniel Fortea, Miguel Angel and Quintin Esquembre and then undertook a concert tour of South America and the U.S.A.

On his return to his native land he settled in Barcelona, where he finished his studies of classical playing under Miguel Llobet, of whom he was the last pupil until the maestro's death.

Luis Maravilla has recorded for Spanish H.M.V., Columbia, Regal, and Odeon labels and he was awarded the Grand Prix of 1952 for his long-playing record with the French company "Ducretet."

In 1946 he joined the world-famous "Ballet Español de Pilar Lopez," which has toured most countries of the world. Two years ago this company appeared at London's Cambridge Theatre, and in October of this year appeared for a season at the Stoll Theatre. During the latter a feature of the show was Maravilla's playing of the "Concerto de Aranjuez," by Joaquin Rodrigo, especially written for guitar and orchestra.

Luis Maravilla has also recorded the entire background music for the film "Flamenco," which was awarded a Grand Prix at the Cannes Film Festival this year.

MUSIC IN THE HOME

MUMMY coughs on middle C,
Daddy snores in F.
Uncle blows his nose in B;
Nearly makes you deaf.
Grandma sneezes hard in G,
Baby cries in A;
Auntie always yawns in D,
I just go away.
Grandma, uncle and my dad
Make a tuneful seventh,
But the thing that drives me mad
Is everyone's eleventh!

A. V. M.

NAPOLEON'S GUITAR

EARLY in October a Sydney, N.S.W. (Australia), firm offered for sale a guitar claimed to have been used by Napoleon Bonaparte during his exile on St. Helena.

It was claimed that when Napoleon died he left the guitar to his sister Pauline, who subsequently gave it to the daughter of one of the British officials on St. Helena, Mr. Balcombe. The girl subsequently went to Australia as a music teacher. The guitar passed through several hands until, in 1927, it was presented to the late Dr. John Cappie Shand, Senr., of North Sydney.



LUIS MARAVILLA

At the auction there was an initial bid of £100 which was increased by another bid to 100 guineas. The guitar was sold at the latter figure.

H. Phillip Skinner made an appointment to see the guitar before it was sold, and he reports that, in company with Don Andrews and Tom Heyes, they were able to examine the instrument. The documents with the guitar were old and appeared to be authentic; tracing the history of the guitar in detail.

Mr. Skinner says the guitar appeared to be of the vintage claimed for it. In lines and ornamentation it resembled a Lacote. The soundboard, from the neck-joint to the soundhole, had warped badly, making it impossible for a string to be stopped above the 7th fret. The fingerboard had frets of ivory; those above the 10th being stuck on the table (not inserted).

The arm had remained reasonably

straight, despite the rusty steel strings that had been the instrument's burden for obviously a long time. The machines were inscribed "V.R." The original glued-on bridge had been replaced by what appeared to be a metal plate attached by means of metal thread screws!

In the wooden "coffin shape" case was found a piece of card bearing these notes: "Tuning of guitar, E, A, E, A, C#, E." This seems to bear out the truism that "age brings its suffering."

TENOR TOPICS

By SAM WARWICK

A LARGE proportion of that written about the banjo, and about plectrum and finger-style playing, applies also to the tenor-banjo. This partly accounts for the lack of special tenor-banjo items in "B.M.G." When my copy of the magazine arrives each month I take a quick look through to see if there is a special or juicy bit about the tenor-banjo. There rarely is—but all I read about tone, care of instrument, vellums, plectra, wrist action, and such like, is of value to me; though in all probability the tenor-banjo is not in the writer's mind, even remotely.

What one would really like to read about the tenor-banjo is—who plays it, where, and how and what is being played.

The tenor-banjo is still popular in America and news from there would make interesting reading. Is there not a reader of "B.M.G." in the U.S.A. who could keep the Editor supplied with news?

I shall try to make this article 100 per cent tenor-banjo.

For the benefit of my juvenile and beginner friends, let us take stock of those things the tenor-banjo has and which the others do not possess—and vice versa. It will not take long, as there is little to pin-point.

The tenor-banjo has no octave string and it is not played with the fingers. The arm is shorter, with its 21 to 23-inch scale. The scale, by the way, is the distance between nut and bridge. The stringing is in fifths (like the violin family of instruments) and the natural harmony is "open" instead of "close." C. E. G. ascending is close harmony; C. G. E. ascending is open harmony. The harmony is, of course, the same—C major. The first sounds solid and sweet; the second strident and brilliant.

The barré position, such a strong feature of the banjo (whose top three strings, sounded open, produce a close harmony major chord) does not come into tenor-banjo playing. For this reason, the tenor-banjoist's hand takes on a different "set" altogether from that of the banjoist.

LITTLE MUSIC

Comparatively speaking, there is little music specially written for the tenor-banjo to be had in this country. If there are any advantages, however slight, let us exploit them. So let us draw on the music written for the violin, viola, cello, mandolin and mandola—all tuned in fifths like the tenor-banjo, although I know there will be some clef trouble in some instances.

I agree one cannot run about a 23-inch scale tenor-banjo as one could on a mandolin but one will not have all the chords to re-organise as is the case in playing from music written for the banjo. It must be said, however, that the latter operation is not all that difficult if one takes the trouble to study how chords are built and how they are related.

Way back, when I had to play the tenor-banjo from banjo parts, I had to train myself to play the tenor-banjo open harmony chords at sight from the written close harmony chords. One soon learns to recognise a printed chord as one recognises a printed word—all of a lump.

Anyway, there is one permanent exercise for your homework—practise playing banjo music on the tenor-banjo in full chords at sight.

You will have to think up something different, though, as an alternative to those potty little arpeggios frequently used for filling in. They are as difficult on the tenor-banjo as they are easy on the instrument for which they are written.

There is one aspect of the tenor-banjo worth remembering. It is the only member of the banjo family with the same interval between any two adjacent strings, which means that any three-note chord played on the top three strings can be played on the bottom three strings with the fingers in the same shape!

For example, a triangle (shaped like a musical one) with its apex pointing to the nut, fingered anywhere on the tenor-banjo arm, produces a dominant seventh chord. This means that if you were on a desert island and could not get first strings, you could play away happily on the three bottom strings for the rest of your life without altering your technique.

I know it would sound rather "clouty" as two of the three strings would be cov-

ered ones. The tenor-banjo without its first string is obviously in a bad way. We players of the tenor-banjo should make as much of this as possible. As an exercise, mentally dismiss the first string and "manage" on the other three. You will be amazed how this improves your playing all round. The first thing you will notice is that your tuning was not good enough, which means you should check your tuning in the upper register of the three lower strings.

INSIDE CHORDS

You will also find, after playing a lot on the three lower strings, that it is better to play inside chords in the region of the 7th fret at times rather than manoeuvre those awkward B♭ and E♭ chords at the first fret with the nut in the way!

If you can achieve on the lower three strings what banjoists cannot do on account of the stringing of their instrument, why not make the most of it and thus offset some of those disadvantages I mentioned earlier?

By the way, I played a guitar for years strung with the lower three strings of the tenor-banjo, with a lower string tuned to F. I thought it a clever idea, although Len Fillis thought I was a fool not to learn the plectrum guitar properly. Of course, he was right, but for me it was enough (after I had earned my living) to cope with one type of instrument and technique.

The Modern Hawaiian Guitar

By FRANK BAKER

A FEW months ago I wrote an article devoted entirely to tunings for the Hawaiian guitar and covered many aspects of this subject, such as twin-necked instruments and eight (and even ten) string tunings, besides the more usual six-string.

I had decided to leave the tuning question alone for a while, but I have received so many letters on this subject pointing to one aspect of the matter on which I did not devote enough space, that I had better clear this up.

My correspondents say, in effect, (1) They possess a normal six-string guitar and have a fair repertoire of numbers in the usual High Bass tuning but would like to play a wider variety of chords; especially minor chords; (2) They are not in a position to get a new guitar, such as a twin-neck; (3) Is a six-string tuning possible that would enable them to retain the majority of their existing repertoire "in the same keys and positions" yet

enable the more general use of minor chords, as in the C♯-minor tuning?

This may seem a rather tall order at first but there is a tuning that allows 90 per cent. of the normal High Bass tuning arrangements to be played, with little loss of harmony or change of positions, yet allows three inversions of the minor chord with a straight barré—to say nothing of various chords obtainable with slant steeling, etc.

The tuning in question is the A6th and is given here:—

| 6. | 5. | 4. | 3. | 2. | 1. |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| A. | C♯. | F♯. | A. | C♯. | E. |
| B♭. | D. | G. | B♭. | D. | F. |
| B. | E♭. | G♯. | B. | E♭. | F♯. |
| C. | E. | A. | C. | E. | G. |
| C♯. | F. | B♭. | C♯. | F. | G♯. |
| D. | F♯. | B. | D. | F♯. | A. |
| E♭. | G. | C. | E♭. | G. | B♭. |
| E. | G♯. | C♯. | E. | G♯. | B. |
| F. | A. | D. | F. | A. | C. |
| F♯. | B♭. | E♭. | F♯. | B♭. | C♯. |
| G. | B. | E. | G. | B. | D. |
| G♯. | C. | F. | G♯. | C. | E♭. |
| A. | C♯. | F♯. | A. | C♯. | E. |

A quick glance will show those players with a fair knowledge of chords the possibilities of this tuning.

SLIGHT ALTERATION

It is easy to see that as only one string is altered from the original High Bass tuning (i.e. the 4th string) the existing knowledge of the fingerboard and the positions used for solos will vary very little, with just a minimum of sacrifice in one inversion of the major chord, i.e. strings 3. 4. 5. in the normal tuning will probably be the 3-note chord most players (using the High Bass tuning) will miss.

However, a forward-slant on strings 1. 3. 5. in the A6th tuning will give a major chord with the root as the highest note.

With a bullet-nose steel and careful playing, chords such as minor-sixths, ninths, augmented-sevenths, can be played with a forward or reverse slant. These chords can be very effective, especially in small combinations. Even if used only occasionally, they help to break the monotony of constant major chords or double-stopping that has become common-place with straight major tunings.

The lower four strings of this A6th tuning have the same intervals as the C♯-minor tuning's first four strings, plus the addition of another inversion above.

The main drawback is that the minor chords occur in rather a higher position than would be normal in tunings such as C♯-minor. However, this can be partly offset in two ways: (1) By using slightly

lighter gauge strings than normal for the covered strings and substituting a *plain* third string; (2) Minor chords that are found rather high on the fingerboard on the lower four strings may be played on the top four strings if a round bullet-nose steel is used.

The steel is slanted in the usual manner so that the nose stops the notes on the first two strings and the note on the third string one fret lower. (This way of playing minor chords in the High Bass tuning is probably well known to most players.) It will be found that in this tuning the top note on the first string can be doubled an octave lower on the fourth string two frets lower, giving the two minor chord inversions at the same position.

This is not possible in the normal tuning. It allows many of the effects associated with the C#-minor tuning to be played smoothly without long jumps.

SUMMING UP

I think it can be said that this A6th tuning is probably the best for those players proficient in the High Bass tuning who have become interested and desire to delve a little into producing more chords. It has the great advantage that only one string is altered and that the normal solos, etc., can be played in the usual positions with the addition of the extra chords now obtainable.

One word of warning. As in all tunings, other than simple majors, extra care should be given to the right-hand picking. It is imperative to avoid sounding unwanted strings.

(To be continued)

"SILENT NIGHT"

WITH the issue of the famous Christmas hymn "Silent Night" in the John Gavall series of songs with guitar accompaniment, it might be of interest to recall that the immortal hymn was composed on the guitar.

"Silent Night" was first heard on the morning of Christmas Day, 1818, in the ancient church in Hallein in the Austrian Tyrol—music that was soon to span the world.

The story of its birth opens on Christmas Eve, 1818. Father Joseph Mohr, 27-year-old priest of the mountain parish of Hallein, sat at his oak desk, busy with his sermon for the next day. It was late and, outside, the light of hundreds of torches flickered along the mountain paths

as the men and women of the farms wended their way to Midnight Mass.

A voice called to Father Mohr, asking him to come and bless a child just born to the wife of a charcoal burner.

The flicker of torches; the bells ringing; the voices of the men and women going to worship; the greetings; the carols; the sight of a mother with her new-born child—all had a strange effect on the young man and, after taking the Mass, he sat at his desk and transcribed his feelings into verse.

The valley was quiet again; men's



A fretted instrument enthusiast's Christmas nightmare

thoughts were at rest; Christmas had come.

*Silent night, Holy night,
All is calm, all is bright.
Round yon Virgin, Mother and
Child,
Holy infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in Heavenly peace. . .*

In the morning, Franz Gruber, organist at Hallein, knocked at Father Mohr's door. "Mice have damaged the organ," he said. "We will have to rely on your guitar for music over Christmas."

Father Mohr suggested they should compose some simple music and he handed Gruber the verse he had written in the early hours.

Franz set the words to a simple tune—and "Silent Night" was born.

GAVALL ON THE AIR

ON November 19th, John Gavall gave the first of a series of six talks in the B.B.C. Third Programme, in



which he presents a survey of Spanish folk music. In these programmes, the famous singer-guitarist uses recordings of authentic Spanish music.

In addition to these programmes, John Gavall will be appearing with the Southern Serenade orchestra on Dec. 2nd, 9th and 16th in the Light Pro-

gramme; presenting his usual songs with guitar accompaniment.

Spanish Guitarists' Scrapbook

Each month under this heading we print an item of particular interest to players of the Spanish guitar. Cut out and pasted in a scrapbook, these articles will make an interesting reference library.

Items from "B.M.C." readers for inclusion in "Scrapbook" will always be welcomed.

MONEY spent with a good teacher in learning to play the Spanish guitar is really an investment, not an expense. Moreover, it is an investment which shows a splendid return; one which can hardly be measured in terms of pounds, shillings and pence, providing the student applies himself correctly and diligently to the studies set for him.

The good teacher imparts to the student something more valuable than anything concrete, such as a piece of merchandise. He implants within the student one of the most valuable gifts of humanity; the ability to create worthwhile music.

Once acquired the ability to play the guitar stays with the student for the rest of his life. With constant playing, his skill must increase.

How can one consider money spent on such lessons an expense? The ability to play the Spanish guitar, once acquired, is a permanent possession which lasts as long as life itself!

MODERN PLAYING FOR Plectrum Banjoists

By ROY BURNHAM



A HAPPY Christmas to all readers. At the Festive Season this column has not the heart to set fresh exercises for study but hopes that in many homes, at many parties, and on the stage the banjo will play its part in bringing joy and pleasure to many people.

If, as far as studies are concerned, we allow ourselves a brief Christmas holiday, it does no harm to remember that end of term is report time. It is a good thing to think seriously on the question of progress and to cast one's mind back to younger days and wonder what comment one can honestly make on one's own report sheet. Would it be "Has made excellent progress"? Or "Inclined to be lazy. Could do better if he put his mind to it"? Or "Does not take his work seriously"?

The difficulty, of course, is how can one measure one's progress? It is such a slow and continuous process that the banjoist is almost unconscious of it. And even one's friends (the honest, critical sort) who are constant listeners are equally unconscious of the progress made.

That is a pity. Because there is no greater encouragement, no better boost to morale, no greater incentive to further effort, than the knowledge that one has done well and shown an improvement in one's playing.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

I have had personal experience of that on more than one occasion. From time to time I have heard various young, keen players perform on their instruments for the first time for six months or so, or even a year. I have been struck by the great advances they have made and I have told them so.

At first the players themselves disbelieved me. They thought I was being nice to them. But when they realised I was deadly serious they were not only happy in the knowledge, they were inspired to achieve greater heights.

To be able to judge progress one must have some basic standard of the past against which to measure the present. One of the best methods is the use of a tape recorder. A number of varying types of solos can be recorded and stored away for a period of months to compare with new recordings. And it need not be expensive, for there are now short reels of tape available.

If a tape recorder is out of the question, then one can perhaps manage to make a private recording in a studio at periodical intervals. Apart from its value in measuring progress, any form of recording is of great value in pinpointing



PETER SENSIER & DOROTHY DRIES
Having met while working in a West-end night club, Peter Sensier (guitarist) and Dorothy Dries (singer) decided to "team up" after trying some Elizabethan lute songs. During the past few months they have worked steadily to increase their repertoire to include material ranging from Granados to Gershwin; flamenco to folk music. They are now preparing for a cabaret presentation and were recently enthusiastically received at a meeting of the P.S.G.

flaws in technique and interpretation.

There are other ways of judging progress. Have you at any time in the past bought a new solo, found it too difficult and pushed it away in a cupboard? If

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so, get it out now. You may well find that you can play it quite easily. Again, are there solos you now play quite comfortably and yet, not so long ago, they caused you trouble? If so, take heart, you are progressing.

Perhaps you find it much easier to play in front of other people without becoming nervous or flustered. Perhaps you can find your way around the fingerboard more easily. Perhaps you can recognise chords, even high up in the ledger lines, at sight.

SOUND REASONS

All these things give sound reasons for satisfaction.

In this series, I am attempting to suggest to various grades of players studies which will progressively help them along the road of proficiency. It is a gradual movement. In each article I suggest a solo which will help technique and also make a worthwhile addition to one's repertoire.

In most solos players find odd passages which are stumbling blocks. If you have bought any solos recently, and are having difficulty, let me know. We will tackle them in future articles and suggest exercises which will help.

This column exists to help the reader; let us march forward into the New Year together.

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Maestoso *f* *Ex* 1 2 *Grazioso* *mp*

Cadenza ad lib. *rall*

Moderato *mf* *a tempo* 1 2 8 *loco* ④ ④ *dim.* *dim* *mf* ③ ④ *Ex* ④ *Har* *Har*

7 PB *to Coda* *dim* *dim* *f* ④ ④ *dim* ③ ④

Andante *mp* *Ex*

Vivo *ff* *dim e rall.* *D.S. al Coda (with repeat)*

CODA *Vivo* *Ex* *f* ③ ④ *sf* ① ② ④

Holly Hill March

(Polka March)
Banjo Solo

ZARH M. BICKFORD

The musical score is written for a Banjo Solo in 2/4 time. It consists of 12 staves of music. The notation includes various musical symbols such as treble clefs, key signatures (one sharp, F#), and dynamic markings like *f*, *mf*, *p-f*, and *ff*. The score is divided into sections labeled with letters and numbers: 7B, 12B, 10B, 7B, 10B, 11P, 10B, 5B, 10B, 11P, 10B, and 7B. There are also measures labeled 'Har 12' and 'FINE p-f'. The score ends with a double bar line and the instruction 'D.C. al Fine'. The notation includes many triplets, sixteenth notes, and eighth notes, with fingerings indicated by numbers 1-4. There are also plus signs (+) and dots (.) indicating specific rhythmic patterns.

Second Banjo arranged by
ALAN V. MIDDLETON

Berceuse

Zither-Banjo Duet

JAN WIEN

4th to D

Andante con moto

I

II

2PB

4PB

6PB

8P

6PB

to Coda

poco rit.

rall. e dim.

Più mosso

sempre vibrato

rall.

2PB 3P 2PB..... 3P

rall.

2PB 3P 2PB 7PB 7B 5PB

D.C. al Coda

CODA

Har 12

rall. e dim. con forza

pp

Austrian Folk Song No. 2.

Arranged by
ERNEST SPERLING

Andante

Spanish Guitar Solo or Duet

3P.....

p

pp

f

mf

rit.

p dolce

pp

Fine

Sarie Marais

Arranged by
GEOFF. SISLEY

Plectrum Guitar Solo

TRAD.

G Em C Am D7 G G G+ Em

C Am D7 Gdim D7 G C G6 G+ G

Em Am9 D7 G D7 G Bm C E7 Am D D7 G D7

G D7 G Bm C E7 Am D D7 G G7 G

3P

1 2

Beautiful Hilo

Hawaiian Guitar Solo
(High Bass Tuning)

KEN UFTON

Moderato

5B.....

C / / C7 / / F / / D7 / /

C / / C7 / / F / / D7 / /

G7 / / C / C7 / F / C /

C / D7 / G7 / C / C7 /

F / D7 / G7 / C / C /

1 2 Har 8va

* Do not pick

Kalapana

Hawaiian Guitar Solo

GEO. H. WEBSTER

Moderato

3

3

3

3

Har 12

9B

3

3

Etude

(from Op. 10. No. 3.)

Arranged by
ALONSO MEDIO

Spanish Guitar Solo

CHOPIN

Lento (ma non troppo)

p

retard a tempo

cresc - e - accel.

a tempo

dim. *p*

pp

dim.

rall. e dim. *pp*

The Art of Flamenco

By PETER SENSIER

FLAMENCO, that intriguing and elusive art, has risen so rapidly in popularity during recent years (both here and in other countries outside Spain) that information about it, never easily available to a wide public, is now completely inadequate for the large number of "fans" and would-be performers amongst whom there exists only the haziest of notions of what it is all about.

It is only natural—the guitar playing such an important role in flamenco—that many guitarists find themselves drawn towards this fascinating idiom. However, as with all music (and, in particular, folk music), more than just an ability to play the notes is required if the result is to be at all convincing.

These articles will not attempt to draw a family tree of flamenco forms or give instructions in the particular technique they demand. All this will be dealt with in a later series of articles by one more competent to do so than myself. What I hope to do is to draw a fair picture of the evolution of our subject: to establish the "atmosphere" surrounding it; to set, as the title of this series of articles suggests, the "art" against which we may see and appreciate flamenco in something like its true perspective.

In so doing I have been particularly assisted by reference to Gilbert Chase's "Music of Spain" and "Don Gypsy" by Prof. Walter Starkie; articles by Manuel de Falla, Emilio Pujol, D. Ricardo Munoz and Raoul Laparra; and the kind assistance and suggestions of Miguel Abloniz, Jurie Ryss, Freddie Phillips, John Gavall, Angelo Andes and others.

Flamenco is folk music—the music of simple and often uneducated people expressing themselves in a way most natural to them—and, as such, it will not be found in the curriculum of any Academy or Conservatoire. However, that makes it no less worthy of study and appreciation, as witness the works of Falla, Dvorak, Villa-Lobos, Vaughan Williams or noted musicologist-composer Nicolas Slonimsky who calls folk music

"the most perfect musical expression of the nation's collective soul."

Folk music is not bounded by academic rules but it is, nevertheless, governed by a tradition equally strict.

LIVING FOLK MUSIC

Flamenco is a living folk music; one of the few such remaining in Western Europe. It is part of the folklore of the Spanish Gypsies indigenous to the province of Andalusia—that part of southwestern Spain (roughly one hundred by two hundred miles in extent) bounded on the west by the Atlantic; the south by the Mediterranean; and to the north by a mountain range, the Sierra Moreno, within whose borders are the eight administrative provinces of Almeria, Cadiz, Cordova, Granada, Huelva, Jaen, Malaga and Seville.

Now, while remaining on the same geographical location, let us travel backwards through the centuries to 1500 B.C.



PERICO DEL LUNAR,

who has been recognised as one of Spain's most distinguished flamenco guitarists for over 20 years. His accompaniments are greatly in demand by the most famous exponents of the canto flamenco, and Señor Lunar is justly proud of having performed with the greatest of all flamenco singers, "Don" Antonio Chacon. He has made many gramophone records and can be heard weekly from Radio Madrid.

The scene is set for the beginning of our story.

We find the local population transacting business with those able merchant adventurers the Phoenicians, who have established themselves in some two hundred trading posts throughout the area.

Among the goods bartered for local produce by the Phoenicians were musical instruments which, according to D. Ricardo Munoz, included guitars—admittedly with only three strings and small but, nevertheless, guitars. What is more, the instruments seem to have

quickly gained popularity with the natives, probably on account of their simplicity and sturdiness.

The Phoenicians were not the inventors of the guitar. It had come to them, some 500 years before, from Egypt where it had arrived considerably earlier from Mesopotamia. It was familiar to an early civilisation in that country, built of laurel wood, as long ago as 6000 B.C.

Here we leave the guitar for the time being as it plays no active part in our story until much later.

Following the Phoenicians into Spain came the Greeks and their musical system based on Modes; one of which, the Dorian (Phrygian—"ecclesiastical") seems to have caught on with the people of Andalusia to such an extent that it is still much in evidence in their folk music today.

Carthaginians followed Greeks into the Iberian Peninsula, to be ousted in their turn by the power of Rome. In 476 A.D. Rome (now Christian) suffered ignominy of defeat and expulsion by her own auxiliaries, the barbarous Visigoths, who established a monarchy.

BYZANTINE CHANT

The primitive Christian church in Spain, after being torn between different creeds, eventually became more or less stable and adopted the Byzantine Chant, which appears to have deeply affected the folk music of Andalusia.

That the manner of singing the Christian liturgy should affect "popular" music may, at first, appear odd to present-day readers but two things must be borne in mind if we are to appreciate the fact in full.

First, we must realise that in early Christian times the church was much more a part of the every-day life of the people. Secondly, momentous events were about to take place in Spain, which eventually isolated Andalusia from the rest of Christianity and caused the Shepherds of the Church to gather their flocks even closer about them, thus increasing their familiarity with Church ritual.

By the year 711 A.D. the Visigothic rule of Spain was riddled with dissension. The Moors, led by the Arabs of Damascus (who had long coveted Spain) despatched a small attacking force which, thanks in part to the treachery of the Governor of Cueta, took Tarifa with little trouble.

Encouraged by this easy victory, they

launched a full-scale attack. King Roderic was defeated and, before long, "Al Andalus", (the land of the Vandals) as the Moors called Spain, was theirs; from Gibraltar to the Pyrenees—and even beyond, to Perpignan in France.

During the ensuing years, however, they gradually retreated to the borders of what we now call Andalusia and there they remained for over 700 years.

The followers of Mohammed were no barbarians, like the Visigoths, and the Caliphate of Cordova soon became the cultural centre of Europe.

No matter how fiercely the native population clung to their own traditions and ideals, Arabic influences were bound to penetrate deep into the soul of Andalusia; and music was affected as deeply as anything else.

During the early days of the Moslem Empire its leaders, following the teachings of the Koran, eschewed both music and wine but, as their power and wealth increased, they found great pleasure in both and the Moorish palaces boasted large numbers of singers, dancers and musicians in their retinues. Not all these entertainers were Arabs; many were native Andalusians.

FAMOUS TEACHER

Outstanding among many fine Moorish musicians was Ziryab, a famous teacher, who is said to have possessed a repertoire of 10,000 songs. "The Blackbird of Sweet Song," as he was called, was attached to the court of Abd-Ar-Rahman II (822-852 A.D.). He is credited with having added a fifth string to the lute (already a highly developed instrument which must have made the Andalusian's guitar appear crude) and is generally considered to be the founder of the Hispano-Arabic school of music.

His method of testing the vocal abilities of his pupils, some of whom were Andalusians, is (for us) most significant. He would send them "to a high place" to sing out the words "Jâ Haggâm"—prolonging the "ah" throughout the whole Arabic scale.

No prize is offered to the reader who draws the obvious comparison between this and an all-too-well-known flamenco effect. The conclusion is so obvious that I even fear it may be an over-simplification.

(To be continued)

TELL YOUR PLAYING FRIENDS ABOUT "B.M.G."

B.M.G. OSSMAN DISCOGRAPHY

By BRIAN RUST

THE following listing of the records made by Vess L. Ossman is not intended to be absolutely complete (it is known that other titles by the Banjo Orchestra exist of 1917 vintage), but all the known solo discs and cylinders are given.

Berliner.

Pf. acc. by Fred Gaisberg. New York.
Oct. 9, 1897.
Gayest Manhattan ... Ber. 472.
Marriage Bells ... Ber. 473.
Pf. acc. by Landon Ronald. London.
May 18, 1900.

| | |
|--------------------------|------------|
| 4473. Man Behind the Gun | Ber. 6309. |
| 4475. Darkies' Patrol | Ber. 6304. |
| Darky Volunteer | Ber. 6302. |
| Old Folks at Home | Ber. 6303. |
| Patrol Comique | Ber. 6305. |
| Whistling Rufus | Ber. 6306. |
| Ragtime Skeddadle | Ber. 6307. |
| Hands Across the Sea | Ber. 6308. |
| Yankee Doodle | Ber. 6310. |
| Smoky Mokes | Ber. 6311. |
| Soldiers in the Park | Ber. 6312. |
| Stars and Stripes | Ber. 6313. |
| Reception Medley | Ber. 6314. |
| El Capitan | Ber. 6318. |
| Cotton Blossoms | Ber. 6319. |
| Piccaninny Dance | Ber. 6320. |
| Union Jack Medley | Ber. 6321. |

(Note: The above were all issued as 7-inch Gramophone and Typewriter records later. They may not all have been made on Mafeking Day, but the only specimens so far to hand bear the date and matrix numbers given.)

Columbia.

(Also issued under the same numbers on Climax. The second number is of the cylinder equivalent.)

Pf. acc. unknown. New York. c. June 1901.
254. Mosquito's Parade ... Col. 254. 31589.
255. Tell Me, Pretty Maiden ... Col. 255.
288. Berkeley March ... Col. 288.
289. Valse Bleue ... Col. 289.
290. Hunkey Dory ... Col. 290.
291. San Toy Selection ... Col. 291.
292. Coon Songs ... Col. 292.
293. Senegambian Revels ... Col. 293.
294. Salome Intermezzo ... Col. 294.
295. Honor Bright ... Col. 295.
Pf. acc. unknown. New York. c. early Nov. 1901.

| | |
|-----------------------------------------|------------------|
| 460. Coloured Major | Col. 460. |
| 461. Coon Band Contest | Col. 461. 31412. |
| 462. Invincible Eagle | Col. 462. |
| 463. When Mr. Shakespeare Comes to Town | Col. 463. |
| 464. Hot Corn | Col. 464. |
| 465. Creole Belles | Col. 465. |
| 468. Wedding of Reuben and the Maid | Col. 468. |
| 469. Rusty Rags Medley | Col. 469. |

Pf. acc. unknown. New York. c. May 1902.
676. El Capitan ... Col. 676.
Pf. acc. unknown. New York. c. June 1902.
717. Old Folks at Home ... Col. 717.
718. Darkies' Patrol ... Col. 718. 3817.
719. Patrol Comique ... Col. 719. 3815.
723. Whistling Rufus ... Col. 723. 3859.
724-3. Soldiers in the Park ... Col. 724. 31835.
Pf. acc. unknown. New York. late 1902.
1059. Pearl of the Harem ... Col. 1059. 31999.
1061. Just Like That ... Col. 1061. 32001.
Pf. acc. unknown. New York. c. Aug. 1903.
1540. Hiawatha ... Col. 1540. 32256.
1561. Banjo Evangelist ... Col. 1561.
Pf. acc. unknown. New York. Oct. 1903.
1618. Jack Tar March ... Col. 1618. 32329.
1619. Anona ... Col. 1619. 32330.
Pf. acc. unknown. New York. end 1903-early 1904.

1704. Darkies' Awakening ... Col. 1704. A-233.
Pf. acc. unknown. New York. c. late 1904.
3047. San Toy Selection ... Col. 3047.

Orch. acc. New York. c. 1905-1906.
3360. Buffalo Rag ... Col. 3360. A-218.
Orch. acc. New York. May 1906.
3447. On the Rocky Road to Dublin ... Col. 3447. A-226.
Ossman-Dudley Trio: Vess Ossman (bjo.),-Dudley (m.), William B. Farmer (harp-grt.).
New York. July 1906.
3476-5. Koontown Koffee-Klatsch ... Col. 3476. A-218. 32984.
3477. Mouse and the Clock (Ossman only) ... Col. 3477.
New York. Aug. 1906.
3491. Mayor of Tokio ... Col. 3491. 32985.
Ossman only. Orch. acc. New York. Sept. 1906.
3507. Sunflower Dance ... Col. 3507. A-877. 1366. RZ. G6199. (Cyl. 33016).

New York. Oct. 1906.
3529. Popularity ... Col. 3529. A-892.
Ossman-Dudley Trio: As above. New York. Jan. 1907.
3591. Chicken Chowder ... Col. 3591. A-220.
Ossman only. Orch. acc. New York. Feb. 1907.
3605. Policy King March ... Col. 3605. A-220.
New York. Mar. 1907.
3626-1. Maple Leaf Rag ... Col. 3626. A-228.

The following three sides are probably from this period:—

| | |
|---------------|--------------------|
| Coconut Dance | Col. A-877. |
| Florida Rag | Col. A-224. |
| Motor March | Col. A-227. 33084. |

New York. Aug. 1907.
3941. Drowsy Dempsey ... Col. 3941. A-601. D-272. 1155.

New York. Oct. 1907.
4025. Invincible Eagle ... Col. 4025. A-587. A-806. 1155.

New York. Apl. 1908.
4268-4. Moose March ... Col. A-787. 1366. RZ. G6199.

New York. Aug. 1908.
4395. Whip and Spur ... Col. A-825.

New York. Sept. 1909.
4919. St. Louis Tickle ... Col. A-937. RZ. G6200.

New York. Dec. 1910.
19149. Smiler Rag ... Col. A-972.

New York. c. Oct. 1911.
19664. Ahoy, My Lads ... Col. A- RZ. G6076.

Vess Ossman's Banjo Orchestra: Two banjos, piano, drums. New York. Sept. 6, 1916.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| 46998. Beneath a Balcony | Col. A-2113. |
| 46999. Uncle Tom | Col. A-5928. |
| My Hawaiian Sunshine | Col. A-5928. |
| You'll Always be the Same Sweet Baby | Col. A-2321. |
| He's Just Like That | Col. A-2321. |

Columbia Cylinders.

(Note: These were listed in the 1904 Columbia main catalogue as being available in cylinder form only. They were accompanied by piano and the dates are impossible to determine. They may quite easily date from the mid-1890's.)

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------|--|
| 3809. Narcissus. | |
| 3816. Darkey's Dream. | |
| 3825. El Capitan. | |
| 3830. Ragtime Medley. | |
| 3856. Eli Green's Cake Walk. | |
| 3858. Smoky Mokes. | |
| 3860. Old Folks at Home. | |
| 3861. Bunch of Rags. | |
| 3862. Honolulu Cake Walk. | |
| 3863. Runaway Girl Selection. | |
| 31328. Racecourse March. | |
| 32324. Jack Tar March (Duet with unknown banjoist). | |

Orch. acc.
32442. Coconut Dance.
32443. Darkey's Awakening.

Do YOU Read "B.M.G." EVERY MONTH?

Edison Cylinders.

(Note: These are all listed in the main catalogue covering issues up to July 1907. The dates in brackets are that of issue in England. All have orchestral accompaniment unless otherwise stated.)

- 2604. Coconut Dance.
- 2607. Darkies' Awakening.
- 2608. Darkey Tickle.
- 2616. Hot Stuff Patrol.
- 2635. Yankee Doodle.
- 7340. Old Folks at Home (pf. acc.).
- 7666. San Toy Selection.
- 7955. Bay State Quickstep.
- 8143. William Tell Overture.
- 8576. Keep off the Grass.
- 8618. Razzle Dazzle.
- 8654. Colored Major.
- 8692. Down South.
- 8726. St. Louis Rag (Jan. 1907).
- 8780. Karama.
- 8999. Yankeeland.
- 9189. Gay Gossoon.
- 9317. St. Louis Tickle.
- 9521. Popularity March (April 1907).
- 9557. Pretzel Pete (June 1907).
- 7881. Sunflower Dance.

Subsequent Edison cylinders are as follows:—

- 9765. Smiler Rag (Jan. 1908).
- 10112. Moon Winks (March 1909).

Edison Amberol Cylinders.

(Disc numbers at right.)

Orch. acc. throughout. Orange, N.J., c. Mar. 1916.

- 2829. Universal Foxtrot (Bjo. orch) ... Ed. ?
- Orange, N.J., c. April 1916.
- 2858. Merry Whirl (bjo. orch) ... Ed. ?
- Orange, N.J., c. late 1916.
- 2944. Keep off the Grass ... Ed. 50377.
- 2968. Gay Gossoon ...
- Orange, N.J., c. Feb. 1917.
- 3058. Hilda ... Ed. 50427.
- 3067. Beneath a Balcony ...

Imperial/Nassau.

(Note: These were recorded in New York, mostly with piano accompaniment, between 1904 and 1908. The exact dates are not traceable now, but the month and year of issue in England are shown after the title where this information is known. The matrix numbers were shown in reverse on the wax. Some of the titles were also issued on Sun.)

- D-2928. Sunflower Dance ... Imp. 45282.
- 7070-D. Smoky Mokes ... Imp. 45221.
- 7071-D. Whistling Rufus ... Imp. 45222.
- 7073-D. Narcissus ... Imp. 45224.
- 7074-D. Down South ... Imp. 45225.
- 7075-D. Anona ... Imp. 45226.
- 7079-D. Bill Simmons (Jan. 1908) Imp. 45227.
- 8264-D. Creole Belles (Feb. 1907) Imp. 44826.
- 8329-D. Arabia ... Imp. 45603.
- 8974-D. Smiler Rag ... N. B-76.
- 8975-D. Dixie Medley ... Imp. 45484.
- 8982-D. Medley ... Imp. 45485.
- 9236-D. Cotton ... N. D-126.
- Hickory Bill (v. Len Spencer) (Feb. 1907) Imp. 44821.
- Colored Major (Feb. 1907) ... Imp. 44827.
- La Petite Tonkinoise (Oct. 1907) ... Imp. 45476.
- Popularity (Oct. 1907) ... Imp. 45477.
- Maple Leaf Rag (Apr. 1908) ... Imp. 45600.
- Much Obligated to You (Apr. 1908) ... Imp. 45601.
- N. B-56.

Odeon.

(Note: These are 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch records, made of blue wax, announced and usually with piano accompaniment. They were made in New York between 1904 and 1907, as near as can be ascertained.)

- 5371. Sunflower Dance ... Leader 203.
- 5372. St. Louis Tickle ... Leader 200.
- Hurrah Boys ... Pelican P-18.
- 030809 Bit o' Blarney ... Leader 203.
- Odeon 030809. Phoenix 122.

- 030810. St. Louis Ragtime ... Pioneer 122. *
- 030813. Gondolier ... Odeon 030810.
- 030814. Any Rags ... Leader 201.
- 031254. Bright Eyes and Molly-O ... Odeon 030813.
- 031277. Gay Gossoon ... Odeon 030814.
- 031301. Yankee Girl ... Leader 201.
- Odeon 031254. Leader 202.
- Odeon 031277. Leader 202.
- Odeon 031301. Phoenix 122.
- Pioneer 122. *

(* On this record the player's name is given as "F. Ferreres.")

- 031434. Bill Simmons ... Odeon 031434.
- 031815. Dixie Girl ... Leader 200.
- Britannia 1434.
- Pelican P-18.
- Odeon 031815.

Victor/H.M.V.

(Note: The term "H.M.V." covers those issues under the label of the Gramophone & Typewriter and Sister Companies, denoted by the prefix GC. It is known that such discs did not appear with the familiar dog trade mark as they were all deleted before it was adopted in 1909.)

Pf. acc. unknown. New York. c. Feb. 1900.

- 145. Hands Across the Sea ... Vic. 145.
- 146. L. A. W. March ... Vic. 146.
- H.M.V. GC-6316.
- 148. Marriage Bells ... Vic. 148.
- 149. Whistling Rufus ... Vic. 149.
- 150. Ethiopian Mardi Gras ... Vic. 150.
- 151. Stars and Stripes ... Vic. 151.
- 152. Man Behind the Gun ... Vic. 152.
- 153. Bunch of Rags ... Vic. 153.
- 154. Coon Band Contest ... Vic. 154.
- 155. Yankee Doodle ... Vic. 155.

(Note: Victor 16667 was recorded on May 11, 1902. Many of the others from this session were almost certainly re-made at various later dates also. All the above titles were originally issued as Eldridge R. Johnson Improved Records; the name Victor being adopted as from Oct. 1901.)

New York. Oct. 1900.

- 487. San Toy Medley ... Vic. 487.

New York. Jan. 21, 1901.

- 623. Salome ... Vic. 623.
- 624. Tell Me, Pretty Maiden ... Vic. 624.

New York. May 1901.

- 807. Colored Major ... Vic. 807.
- 808. Hunkey Dory ... Vic. 808.
- 810. Sa-Yo March ... Vic. 810.
- 811. Rusty Rags ... Vic. 811.
- 812. Zamona ... Vic. 812.
- 813. Pretty Queen ... Vic. 813.
- 814. Peace Forever ... Vic. 814.
- 817. Coon, Coon, Coon * ... Vic. 817.
- 819. Little Old Log Cabin in the Lane * ... Vic. 819.

(*Len Spencer, vocal, added.)

Camden, N.J., c. May 1901.

- 3365. Ma Blushin' Rosie ... Vic. 3365.
- 3371. Old Folks at Home ... Vic. 3371.

New York. Feb. 1902.

- 1291. Creole Belles ... Vic. 1291.
- 1293. William Tell—Finale ... Vic. 1293.

New York, April 1902.

- 1358. Medley of Old-Timers ... Vic. 1358.

New York. Oct. 8, 1902.

- 1659. Pearl of the Harem ... Vic. 1659.
- 1660. Harmony Moze ... Vic. 1660.
- 1661. On Emancipation Day ... Vic. 1661.
- 1662. In a Cozy Corner ... Vic. 1662.
- 1663. Just Like That ... Vic. 1663.
- 1664. Old Plunk's New Coon Medley ... Vic. 1664.
- 1665. Whoa, Bill! ... Vic. 1665.

New York. March 1903.

- 1973. Mississippi Bubble ... Vic. 1973.

Pf. acc. Landon Ronald. London, late April 1903.

- 130-R. Down South ... H.M.V. GC-06256.
- Stars and Stripes ... H.M.V. GC-06252.
- Persiflage ... H.M.V. GC-06253.
- Smoky Mokes ... H.M.V. GC-06257.
- 3661-R. Whirl of the Harem (sic) ... H.M.V. GC-6383.
- 3663-R. Hiawatha ... H.M.V. GC-6387.
- 3666-R. Smoky Mokes ... H.M.V. GC-6399.
- 3667-R. Yankee Doodle ... H.M.V. GC-6393.
- 3709-R. Harmony Moze ... H.M.V. GC-6388.
- Dixie Medley ... H.M.V. GC-6389.
- Twirly, Twirly ... H.M.V. GC-6390.

- Halima ... H.M.V. GC-6395.
- 5370-R. Mississippi Bubble ... H.M.V. GC-6416.
- 5271-R. Down South ... H.M.V. GC-6424.
- 5372-R. Dreamy Eyes ... H.M.V. GC-6419.

(Note: These were not necessarily all recorded at the same session.)

Pf. acc. unknown. New York. Oct. 1903.

- B-579. Jack Tar March ... Vic. 2577.
- Anona ... Vic. 2553.
- Marriage Bells ... Vic. 2520.
- 31156.
- 16754.

New York, Nov. 1903.

- B-632. Keep off the Grass ... Vic. 2616.
- 16266.

- Down South ... Vic. 2562.
- 31183.
- 16755.

- Old Folks at Home ... Vic. 4013.
- 17417.

Duets with Parke Hunter (B.) with pf. acc.

New York. Apr. 1904.

- B-1193. Navajo ... Vic. 2801.
- H.M.V. VM-6453.

- B-1194. Babes in Toyland ... Vic. 2829.

- B-1195. Sycamore Tree ... Vic. 2784.

- B-1196. Gondolier Medley ... Vic. 2919.
- H.M.V. GC-6457.

- Uncle Sammy ... Vic. 2919.

Pf. acc. Landon Ronald. London, c. late 1904.

- 6654. Creole Belles ... H.M.V. GC-6426.

New York. June 1905.

- B-2562. Down South ... Vic. 16755.
- B-2592. Yankeeland ... Vic. 4461. 16935.
- B-2593. Turkey in the Straw ... Vic. 4424. 16390.

- B-2595. Little Johnny Jones ... Vic. 4382.

- Medley ... Vic. 4382.

Orch. acc. New York. Nov. 1905.

- B-2853. Gay Gossoon ... Vic. 4589. 16092.
- B-2855. Peter Piper ... Vic. 4541. 16935.

- My Irish Molly-O ... Vic. 4533.

Ossman-Dudley Trio: Vess Ossman (bjo.).-

Dudley (m.), William B. Farmer (harp-gtr.).

New York, Jan. 1906.

- B-3033. Dixie Girl ... Vic. 4679. 16667.
- B-3037. St. Louis Tickle ... Vic. 4624. 16092.
- Al Fresco ... Vic. 4625.

- Koontown Koffee-Klatsch ... Vic. 4659.

Ossman only, with orch. acc. New York, Jan. 1906.

- B-3049. Buffalo Rag ... Vic. 4628.
- Zono. 3931.

- B-3052. Silver Heels ... Vic. 4948. 16266.

New York, prob. 1906.

- Persian Lamb Rag ... Vic. 16127.
- Darkey's Romance ... Vic. 16471.
- Four Little Blackberries ... Vic. 16488.
- Motor March ... Vic. 5073.

- Parade of the Scouts ... Vic. 5077. 16816.

New York, Oct. 1908.

- B-6503. Drowsy Dempsey ... Vic. 5597. 16767.
- H.M.V. GC-6475.

- B-6505. Fun in a Barber's Shop ... Vic. 5622.
- H.M.V. GC-6476.

New York, March 1909.

- B-6848. Buffalo Rag ... Vic. 16779.
- H.M.V. GC-2-6251.

Arthur Collins (vcl.) with Ossman and orch.

acc. New York, June 3, 1912.

- B-12066. When Uncle Joe Plays a rag on his Old Banjo ... Vic. 17118.
- H.M.V. 4-2233.

- In Ragtime Land ... Vic. 17126.

Ossman only, orch. acc. New York, July 1912.

- B-12149. A Little bit of Everything ... Vic. 17265.
- H.M.V. 6479.

Prob. Camden, N.J., Feb. 4, 1916.

- Good Scout ... Vic. 17952.
- Universal Foxtrot

Vess Ossman's Banjo Orchestra: Ossman

(bjo.) with other banjos and piano. Camden, N.J., Feb. 4, 1916.

- C-17112. Merry Whirl ... Vic. 35536.
- H.M.V. C-876.

- Kangaroo Hop ... Vic. 35536.

Any additions, corrections and alterations to the above listing would be warmly appreciated.

FAMED COMPOSER VISITS SCOTLAND

By J. G. CATHRO

R. ALEX ANDERSON, famed composer of "Lovely Hula Hands," "Malihini Mele" and many other well-known Hawaiian songs, recently paid a short visit to Scotland accompanied by his charming wife Peggy. During a quick sight-seeing tour, Mr. and Mrs. Anderson called twice at my home and for the second visit I was able to arrange a small gathering of local Hawaiian-music enthusiasts.

One of Hawaii's foremost composers of "hapa haole" songs, Robert Alexander Anderson was born in Honolulu on June 6th, 1894. His father, Dr. R. W. Anderson, was one of the first dentists in the Islands, going there from

New York. His mother, born in Hawaii of Scots and English descent, was the well-known Susan Young, daughter of Alexander Young. Great-grandfather Anderson and grandfather Young were both from Scotland.

Educated at Punahou School and, later, on the mainland at Cornell University, R. Alex. Anderson (more familiarly known as "Andy") early showed an aptitude for song writing. At Punahou he wrote a popular football song and at Cornell he wrote "Aloha-land," the first of his songs to become widely known.

Graduating from Cornell in 1916 as a mechanical engineer, Andy took up a business career but with the entry of America into the war he joined the Air Force and was sent to Europe. In 1918 he trained with the R.F.C. at Turnberry Aerodrome in Scotland, subsequently flying in France on combat duty. While on patrol he became the hero of a dog-fight with a formation of German planes. Out-numbered five to one, he made a deliberate attack but his hopes of a prolonged fight were dispelled when he was shot down with a German bullet in his knee.

Forced to crash-land behind the German lines, he was taken prisoner but, after a spell in hospital and a prisoner-of-war camp, he escaped to Holland, finally arriving in England eleven days before the armistice.

Home again in February 1919, his story came to the attention of a Hollywood writer who was inspired to write a film scenario. The result was "The Dawn Patrol." It is interesting to note that history repeated itself when Bob Anderson, one of Andy's sons, also fought as a pilot in the "Battle of the Bulge" during World War II.

In November 1919, Andy married Maui-born Peggy Center, star pupil of Madame Nellie Melba, the world-famous opera singer. Peggy had studied piano and violin but her real interest was singing. When the opportunity came to study under Melba, she eagerly accompanied her to Australia where she



R. ALEX. ANDERSON (centre), with Danny Murphy (left) and J. G. Cathro, two members of the Glasgow Hawaiian Club.

remained for three years studying voice. On her return to Hawaii in 1919 she sang at concerts and planned to come to Europe for further study.

ABANDONED PLANS

A determined Andy persuaded her to abandon these plans. They married in Chicago and remained for four years on the mainland—Andy pursuing a business career and Peggy continuing with her singing.

In 1923 the Andersons returned to Hawaii where Andy began the career which has made him today one of the most prominent businessmen in the Islands. Three sons and a daughter have inherited the talents of Andy and Peggy. All are musical and the Andersons spend many happy and musical hours together.

Song writing has always been Andy's favourite hobby—a hobby that has made his name famous all round the world. Wherever Hawaiian music is played and sung, the name of Andy is known.

Although he studied piano at an early age and later entertained his Cornell classmates on the Hawaiian guitar, it is the ukulele which he plays most today and which serves as the ideal therapy for his "chronic complaint" which he humorously describes as "chronic melody in the head."

Most of his songs are first worked out on the ukulele and Peggy says it is always a thrill to hear him creating a new melody and the harmonies to go with it. After Andy gets it to his liking, then Peggy and he work out their parts and sing it to friends. "We used to live by the ocean near Diamond Head," recalls Mrs. Anderson. "Andy wrote a lot of his songs sitting under a koa tree



"Lovely Hula Hands"

on the terrace, with the surf crashing below."

Andy told me that his love for Hawaiian music was acquired in childhood. He remembers lying awake at night listening to groups of Hawaiian musicians who came to serenade outside his home on the eve of holidays.

Unlike other song writers who have to compose for a living, Andy does not turn out a dozen songs in the hope that one will be a hit. He writes only when he has an inspiration and says he likes to live with a song for a while to see what changes should be made before releasing it for publication. This careful and unhurried preparation of each song, coupled with his gift for lovely melodies and beautiful lyrics, places his songs in a class apart. Writing both melody and lyric, each song bears the distinctive stamp of his own personality.

"OCCASIONAL" SONGS

Although he has written about a hundred songs, Andy has only released little more than thirty for publication. Some of these he regards only as "occasional" songs—to be sung on a special occasion and then forgotten. One such, which was eventually published, was the well-known "Cockeyed Mayor of Kaunakakai." Written at the request of a friend and later taken up by Clara Inter ("Hilo Hattie") the song became one of his greatest hits. In the Hawaiian Room of the Hotel Lexington in New York, the number has been featured more than seven thousand times!

There are many fascinating stories of the events leading up to the writing of Andy's songs. "Lovely Hula Hands" was inspired by the chance remark of a friend who said, while watching a hula maid dance: "Aren't her hula hands lovely!" Andy later wrote the song while on a cruise across the Pacific to Australia. Watching gulls gliding over the ship gave him the line about "birds in motion, gliding like the gulls o'er the ocean." "That described the hula hands perfectly," said Andy. "After, it came easy."

Similarly, the chance remark "Why don't the Hawaiians sing about white ginger blossoms?" inspired the lovely song "White Ginger Blossoms."

"Malimini Mele" was written after hearing a newcomer to the Islands making many amusing mistakes trying to express himself in Hawaiian.

Dissatisfied with the usual Christmas

songs, a friend of Andy's asked him to write a Hawaiian Christmas song. Andy complied with the gay and catchy "Mele Kalikimaka."

Andy and Peggy love to sing together and we had the great pleasure of hearing them sing several recent compositions. First of all, though, they insisted we entertain them with our own versions of Hawaiian music! As can be imagined, it was not without some trepidation that we started playing for such a distinguished audience but our efforts were so graciously received that we soon lost our fears and, with Andy joining in on ukulele, we had a wonderful time.

The songs we heard included the beautiful "Lei of Stars" which, with "White Ginger Blossoms," is one of Andy's own favourites. Also included was the humorous "Muumuu Momma," recently written for the occasion of the Muumuu Parade organised to raise funds for the Honolulu Symphony Orchestra. The Muumuu, or flowing Hawaiian gown worn by the women of the Islands, inspired Andy to write this amusing song.

IN SERIOUS VEIN

In more serious vein we heard "They Couldn't Take Niihau Nahow" which commemorates the first hand-to-hand fighting by an American in World War II. During the attack on Pearl Harbour a Japanese aircraft crash-landed on the remote Hawaiian island of Niihau. The pilot emerged from his aircraft waving a revolver and was met by an unarmed Hawaiian, Bill Kanahele. Not having heard that war had broken out, Bill was prepared to be friendly but such inclinations were soon dispelled when the Japanese started shooting.

Although unarmed and wounded three times in quick succession, Kanahele succeeded in overpowering and killing the invader. Brought to Honolulu, Bill received a high award for bravery and his courage was commemorated in song by Andy.

When the dark days of the war were

over, it was again Andy who set Honolulu singing with "It's Time to Play Again in Honolulu."

All too soon it was time for a song of parting and the Andersons gave us the beautiful and affecting "Remember, I Gave my Aloha."

The mood of Andy's songs varies from the nostalgic and romantic numbers, such as "Two Shadows on the Sand," to the comedy songs such as "Red Opu," in which he shows a lively sense of humour. He uses many Hawaiian words and phrases, thus bringing them into the category referred to in the Islands as "Hapa Haole." This is usually taken to mean "half white" but is more correctly translated as "part foreign." Incidentally, one of the first authentic hulas with English words was Andy's "Haole Hula," which came as a boon to teachers and students of the hula.

A man of wide interests and varied talents, R. Alex. Anderson has, through his music brought the magic and the gaiety of Hawaii to people in many lands. Here in Scotland we shall always remember with affection the visit of this great Island personality and his most gracious lady.

HAPPY RE-UNION

IN October, Jack MacGarvey, well-known Irish banjoist, met his brother who, "came back from the dead."

There had been no contact between Jack MacGarvey and his brother for almost 30 years. When trying to trace him many years ago, Mr. MacGarvey had been informed by the consulate in Brazil (where he had gone years before) that "he had been killed in a civil war."

Then "out of the blue," to use Mr. MacGarvey's own words, "came a telegram from a Dublin hotel," from the supposedly dead man. Jack was sceptical at first, thinking that someone, with a queer sense of humour, was trying to play a hoax, but on making inquiries he found the telegram was genuine and that his brother was "very much alive."

After the lapse of a lifetime the brothers had a lot to talk about. Charles J. MacGarvey, B.Sc., is now president of a large firm of food distributors in Baltimore. He used to play the banjo and his brother Jack has reawakened his interest in the instrument. We should imagine that Baltimore will hear more of the banjo when Jack MacGarvey's long-lost brother gets back to the States.

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The Spanish Guitar

By TERRY USHER.



WITHOUT wishing to overlap anything to appear in the new series of articles "The Art of Flamenco" (which, I understand, start in this issue) I know that many players of the Spanish guitar are interested in flamenco playing and are naturally impatient to begin exploring this style. Although I would never pretend to know anything about the flamenco idiom, I can play a number of flamenco dances sufficiently well to deceive anyone who has not had too intimate an acquaintance with Spain—and the technical problems of flamenco playing are no mystery to me.

So, with those reservations, I propose to fill the gap, until the actual playing articles appear in "B.M.G.," by giving readers something to be going on with.

To begin, the question arises: must we have a special guitar on which to play flamenco?

In answering this question I can, at the same time, specifically answer the query sent in by A. Crone, of Monk-seaton. It is possible to learn flamenco playing on the same instrument one uses to play "classical" or Spanish music; there is no technical bar to the use of a normal guitar but one will not produce the same results as one would obtain from a guitar specifically made for flamenco playing—or from a guitar not necessarily made for flamenco playing but specially chosen for its type of tone and responsiveness as being suitable for it.

VARIETY OF TONE

The variety of tone of guitars is so infinite that it is rash to attempt to divide them into distinct classes. Nevertheless, whilst remembering that every guitar is different from the next, one can make a broad division into two types of instrument:—

(1) The instrument whose construction is such that the tone is deep, rich, full and thick in character; suitable primarily for classical and Spanish romantic music or for modern works.

(2) The guitar whose design makes it produce a hard, clear, distinct tone with long *sostenuto*—a tone in which the higher partials are predominant. This

instrument is particularly suitable for playing lute music and flamenco.

BEST POSSIBLE INSTRUMENT

As well as these, of course, there is the specially made flamenco guitar which, naturally, is the best possible instrument upon which to play this music. Its tone is hard, brilliant and clear. The strings are thinner and set lower to the fingerboard than a normal guitar, so that dexterity of playing is facilitated.

The characteristics of the flamenco guitar are that thicknesses of belly and back and sides are fairly uniform and that it is firmly struttled below the belly. If one can afford to pay the cost of a built-in-Spain flamenco guitar, the problem of choice of instrument is automatically solved but, if not, there is quite an inexpensive guitar on the market suitable for flamenco playing (and for playing lute music) because of its type of tone.

The characteristics of the concert guitar are that the belly is fairly thin and of softer quality wood than the flamenco guitar, while the back and sides are of hard wood of a greater mass density or thickness than those of a flamenco guitar.

Instruments available in this country today—the one make suitable for flamenco and the other for classical playing—are acceptable substitutes for the higher-priced instruments made in Spain and Italy. At least they are accurately fretted, well made and of correct body size, which disposes of the major bogies British guitarists have had to battle against for so long.

I would be pleased to give details of the instruments referred to on receipt of the usual s.a.e.

Strings are available in a number of gauges. Thin gauge strings are better for flamenco playing. Certain makes are of a certain gauge but few offer an alternative gauge. Watch, when you are offered thin gauge strings that they are not "soft quality" nylon. For flamenco playing, hard quality nylon (which gives a tone nearer to that of steel strings) is preferable to soft quality nylon, which is better suited to classical style playing.

THIN STRINGS NECESSARY

The thin strings are necessary to allow the freedom and flexibility of touch which the flamenco player needs in both hands (the music abounds in slurs, snaps, *tremolo* and other special effects) and the hard tone is necessary to carry against the background of shuffling feet, clinking glasses, singing and enjoyment which, in

theory at least, is the natural setting for flamenco music.

The question of choice of guitar and stringing having been settled, it is necessary to see that the slots in the nut are cut as low as possible without the strings actually rattling on the first fret—and the bridge saddle lowered as much as possible without causing general rattles all over the fingerboard.

In flamenco playing an occasional "buzz" is permissible since unless one uses thin gauge strings and a low action it is almost impossible to play the music!

It is absolutely essential for flamenco playing to use the fingernails of the right hand—and to let them grow rather longer than is desirable for classical playing. (I use "classical," although I hate the word in this particular sense, because no one has yet found a better word to indicate what is meant when one talks of "serious music.")

The principal need of the flamenco player is for a powerful, strong tone, very biting and penetrating in character, and this is best achieved by playing with as much "top-stroke" (or *apoyando*) as possible. This is easier of achievement with long fingernails.

Beauty of tone and delicacy of expression are secondary to strongly rhythmic playing, although in the best "native flamenco," as played by Ramon Montoya, there is grace, beauty and elegance as well as pleasing tone.

RIGHT HAND THUMB

The flamenco player should play *sul ponticello* most of the time—that is, he should strike the strings with the right hand about three or four inches from the bridge—and even nearer at times. The thumb nail should be allowed to grow and is used for the bass strings, striking not with the end joint of the thumb, as in classical style, but with the whole thumb—and even the whole hand from the wrist: the thumb being held stiffly as if the thumb-nail were a plectrum.

The basses should be struck towards the guitar belly; the thumb being held much more at "vertical" right angles to the strings than in classical style, where it extends "sideways" as it might be described. Forgive me if I fail to make it clear in an article. One look at a flamenco player makes the distinction clear beyond doubt.

In my next article I intend to take a number of typical flamenco sequences, give them to readers in musical examples and explain how they are played.

(To be continued)

MANDOLIN MASTER

By JOHN ANSON

AT the end of March we Manchester folk were celebrating the centenary of our city. The papers were full of the event. One of the articles spoke about the city's theatres and music halls and it reminded me that as a lad I was taken to see many grand musical acts. Our favourite Music Hall was the old Manchester Hippodrome, which was on the site now occupied by a famous cinema.

My greatest musical thrill at any theatre was when I listened to the mandolin playing of Leopoldo Francia at the Tivoli in 1908.

The Tivoli was known to attract critical audiences. If they did not like a turn, the performer soon knew about it in no uncertain manner—and that was just what was happening at this particular Saturday performance. The galleryites were leading the way noisily, protesting and shouting down anything that caused them displeasure.

Just before Francia was due to appear they were actually throwing pennies onto the stage!

My father and I were upset for we never thought that such an audience would listen to "The Boccaccio Troupe" and, in particular, Francia's mandolin. However, Francia and his two companions (with mandolin, guitar and song) worked a miracle. The Francia magic began to take effect and before long he was teaching that hard-boiled audience a tuneful little French chorus! Soon we were all singing.

After a little more Francia showmanship, we had more magic as only the mandolin maestro could accomplish. That previously noisy audience was as quiet as a mouse listening to a masterly version of "Zampa." Shouts of "encore, encore" filled the theatre.

I was later to learn that "The Boccaccio Troupe" (which consisted of three musicians dressed in gaily coloured Italian costumes) consisted of Francia and his wife, and a Signor Palieri, a singer.

Another Francia memory of mine still makes my face red when I think of it—although it has its amusing side now. My parents were taking me to the Isle of Man for our summer holidays. It had been arranged that my chum Edgar should spend the holiday with us. Edgar, who was studying the piano, was the son of my music master Robert Davis.

We travelled from Manchester to Liverpool on the Saturday morning.

Passing St. George's Hall in Liverpool we exclaimed: "Look! Leopoldo Francia, Saturday, June 10. Why! That's tonight."

Edgar and I got permission to go to what promised to be a wonderful concert. We stayed overnight with friends in Bootle and, assuring our parents we knew our way, off we set full of excitement and anticipation.

We arrived at St. George's Hall without mishap—but what a disappointment. We were six months too late! It turned out that the date we had seen from a passing tramcar was JAN 10!

FRANCIA MUSIC

Leopoldo Francia composed and arranged a tremendous amount of splendid music for the mandolin. A lot was specially arranged to show off the highest development of the instrument and demands considerable skill and technique, but quite a lot of his pieces make lovely mandolin solos which can be performed by the average player.

The last Francia piece I bought ("Tarantella") is one in this class and I was very pleased with it. It is a grand solo and, like all good music, the better one can play it the more pleasure one gets out of it.

If I were asked to name my favourite mandolin solo I would choose a composition by Francia—"Lo Zingaro." My teacher, who studied under the maestro, once told me how Francia came to write this music. It was during a tour in Spain, when Francia came in contact with a tribe of nomadic Gypsies, that "Lo Zingaro" was conceived.

It is interesting to note that Francia also played the guitar and some of his music has a distinct "guitar" flavour to it. In particular, his mandolin solo "Chitarrata" has a most pleasing guitar-like accompaniment. One of my favourite unaccompanied solos is Francia's "La Fiesta" where the right-hand pizzicato also gives a guitar effect.

Francia wrote a large number of excellent unaccompanied solos for the mandolin which show off all styles of playing. Among these I would mention "Home, Sweet Home," "Alice, Where Art Thou?", "Cavatina," "Romanza in D" and "Passing of the Regiment." One of his best is called "Berceuse"; a charming little solo which pictures happy home life. It was composed by Francia after watching his wife lull their little child to sleep. The clock strikes. Andantino. Prayer. Lullaby. Finale, with the child falling asleep.

Francia wrote many fine studies on velocity and technique; études; sonatinas;

etc. I have had some grand times playing the latter as they are written in duet form. I studied these under Mr. Davis and they made grand training before tackling Munier's famous duet arrangements based on the world's great compositions.

VIOLIN MUSIC

Francia arranged many famous violin pieces for the mandolin but was also able to show us, by his methods, how a good mandolinist could tackle some really difficult violin music. This is a real test for the mandolinist—when one's right-hand technique has to be equal to that of the left hand. All those notes the violinist can play so smoothly with one sweep of his bow keeps the plectrum really busy!

Two of my most treasured possessions are a book of Chopin waltzes and De Beriot's Violin Concreto No. 9. They are of particular interest because Francia himself has marked them for the mandolin. Mr. Davis gave them to me when I had reached the stage when I could tackle them.

Francia was a striking personality. I remember he was a handsome man, in the old Italian Grand Opera manner, with a Caruso-like moustache.

Recently I was reading a letter he wrote (dated October 18, 1912) to a musical journal when he was in London. I should explain that in his work "The Virtuoso School for the Mandolin" he claimed to include 14 different styles of playing. He does not include pieces covering special tuning. When this was pointed out to him by a mandolin enthusiast, he replied:

"You express a wish that I had included examples of the 'altered tuning' of the mandolin and on this point I must make a few remarks to justify its omission. The primary object of the tutor was to show the pupil, and to instruct where possible, how to obtain the degree of virtuosity required for the 14 different styles upon which it treats. The style you mention has no characteristics of its own and presents no difficulties upon which instruction is necessary, consisting (as it does) of merely altering the tuning for certain pieces and playing the instrument in the way fingered or marked by the composer. . . .

"Last, and not least, I consider that particular style of playing a trick."

What a pity the radio had not been invented when Francia was in his prime. How listeners would have thrilled to his faultless playing.

I have just been reading a cutting from another 1912 musical monthly in which it is related how Francia returned to the Empire, London, after a successful tour. The head of that world-famous place of entertainment was away queer. He was a great admirer of Francia's art. The

telephone had only just been inaugurated in this country. The instrument tinkled whilst Francia was performing and a message came through to ask the maestro to play a few pieces through the 'phone for the "Head" in his home. The experiment was successful and Francia was kept playing into the new fangled instrument for nearly half an hour!

Leopoldo Francia certainly left his mark as a great artist and teacher and did as much for the mandolin in his day as Segovia is today doing for the Spanish guitar.

ORGAN IMITATION ON THE BANJO

By FRED SHEWRING

WHEN I was a young boy a travelling circus visited my home town and one of the turns was a stilt-walker who played the guitar. The lad sitting next to me ejaculated: "It sounds like a hurdy-gurdy!" but before I could acquiesce the performer made a comic pretence at tumbling and had the audience laughing.

It is improbable that I should ever have remembered this incident, but at the beginning of the autumn in the same year the stilt-walker visited "our" street.

The circus tenting season was over and he was "filling in" the resting period by busking.

There he was, dressed in the same long red-striped trousers, carrying his guitar.

He started his performance by imitating an Italian organ-grinder and the metallic staccato tone of his wire-strung guitar, played with a plectrum, produced that effect. He swayed his body as he played, which caused a variation in light and shade, helping him to obtain the effect he sought.

He had some quaint and amusing patter to exchange with the housewives who were popping their heads out of upstairs windows and from whom he collected coins.

This was my first introduction to organ imitation on a fretted instrument.

Years afterwards I discovered that the stilt-walker was one of the Sloans, a well-known circus family.

Mays & Hunter, American banjo duettists, who appeared at music halls at the end of the last century, were not only brilliant exponents but versatile, inasmuch as they introduced novelty items on their banjos. They evidently found it necessary to do so to give their "act" a wider public appeal. They also

brought originality to their advertisements, for here is a copy of one of their "bills" when they were appearing at the old Sadler's Wells:

"Mays & Hunter, the American anointed Kings of Mississippi Music, absolutely unchallenged champions of the banjo world. For 50 years the banjo has been a *bête noire* of pedantic professors and pianoforte publishers in every academical corner of Europe, but all fiddle scraping scorn and classic contumely have failed to bar the banjo's way to the homes, hands and hearts of harmonious, humble folk. It has been taught to soothe, to excite, to exhilarate, enliven and exalt mortal minds of all creeds and climes AND NOW IT HAS BEEN TAUGHT TO SPEAK! By whom? Mays & Hunter!

For a grand exposition of ecclesiastical eloquence you must live to listen to MAYS & HUNTER'S IMITATIONS, reverently producing the sweet sounds of Sabbath bells, the sonorous tones of the noble organ, and the short but solemn sermon of the saintly pastor. Concerts (a couple) commence 6.30 and 9.15 at the 'old oof.' 2d. to 1s."

SECOND IMPACT

It will be noticed that this advertisement mentions the "sonorous tones of the noble organ." This was my second impact to organ imitation on a fretted instrument.

Mays & Hunter were finger-style banjoists and used some gut strings.

The handicap with which early artists had to contend when appearing in halls with gas footlights can hardly be assessed by present-day performers!

Later, other finger-style banjoists adopted organ imitations, notably, Will C. Pepper, Bert Meredith, T. Francis O'Flynn and a few others. (O'Flynn changed to plectrum-style at a later date.)

A year or so before Mays & Hunter dissolved partnership, Harry Clark Jones, a talented American plectrum-banjoist, appeared on the English music halls with various changes in partnership.

Professionally known as "Clark," he set a new fashion in plectrum playing which considerably widened the scope of the banjo.

Other teams followed his example and Burt Earle (who was once a partner of Clark) took on other partners and secured music hall bookings.

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Edgar & Eugene, the Earles, and others included church organ imitation in their acts. All these teams were capable exponents on the banjo and they proved that by introducing imitations and variety into their acts they commanded a larger share of public support.

CHORD TREMOLO

Proficiency in playing chord tremolo is the first stage to organ imitation. Considerable practice is required to produce sustained chord tremolo of varied volume. The effort, however, is worth while and perseverance will bring its reward.

Finger-style players can use either the first or second finger of the right hand. The third finger can effectively be used but it is generally too weak to produce volume enough for the average hall without amplification.

The position of the right hand must be perpendicular over the strings so that whichever finger is being used can readily swing (or oscillate) at right-angles to the strings. The thumb may rest on the vellum to steady the hand.

Another method is to place the thumb on the upper side of the banjo arm, near where it joins the hoop of the instrument, and swing the second finger rapidly across the strings; the tip of the second finger would point towards the bridge and would lie parallel to the strings.

Both methods are equally effective and a change over is helpful and restful in sustaining the required volume.

May I suggest the reader turns to page 17 of "Ellis's Studies for Banjo and Zither-Banjo" and practise the tremolo movement on three strings. It is a melodious study and is especially suitable for the object in view.

When some degree of progress has been attained, play the same movement in four-string chords. These can be built by perusing No. 16, Study in C Major, on the previous page.

It is inadvisable to tackle exercises that put a strain on left-hand positioning as this would detract from continuity, smoothness or evenness of finish.

There are other exercises in chord playing in this book which can be undertaken in due course.

At this stage encouragement is fostered by sandwiching a few plantation songs, or other old favourites, in chord tremolo practice. The fact that the melody is familiar enables one to discern discrepancies. David Milner, Jr., arranged several plantation songs many years ago, and these, published by Clifford Essex,

were played by him at concerts and recitals with great success.

"Massa's in the Cold, Cold Ground," "Poor Old Joe," "Sweet Genevieve," etc., each contain a four-note chord melody which not only affords practice in this style but assists to supplement one's knowledge of four-note harmony.

PLECTRUM PLAYING

A player can never attain the highest degree of proficiency in chord tremolo if he fails to get, first, the position of the right hand correct, and second, the proper angle and method of holding the plectrum.

Skill can be acquired by doing it "the other way," but experience has taught me that the same player would have been infinitely more expert had he adopted the method the majority of professional players use today.

In an article in the March, 1947, "*B.M.G.*," the late B. W. Dykes said: "The right arm should be in line with the strings and not at an angle as so many players are used to playing." He also said: "Do not bend the thumb joint, always strike the strings at right angles."

This article is worth studying by plectrum players. Dykes was an experienced plectrum exponent and musician and his advice can be followed with confidence.

I once checked up the right hand position photographs in a number of published tutors, and, although some of the English editions differed, most of the American publications practically bore out Mr. Dykes's contention.

The tendency is to deflect the arm or wrist from the parallel position to the strings. If this is not exaggerated and the plectrum held so that it touches the strings at a parallel line to the bridge, Mr. Dykes's advocacy is conformed to.

Theoretically this seems to me to be correct, for in all involved mechanical appliances designers strive to keep moving parts in parallel or at right angles.

Having started correctly and developed more or less into a chord tremolo player, let us consider the next step.

We are working up to reproduce the hymn-like sounds of a church organ. If you are not familiar with such sacred music, then the obvious thing is to hear hymn tunes played on the organ before proceeding further.

VARY THE VOLUME

It is essential to be able to vary the volume of tone without effort on the banjo, from *pianissimo* to *fortissimo*, and to do it naturally and musically.

Religioso



Play on the inside strings only, occasionally, and at appropriate places use slides and a few single bass-string notes. This will give some colour and will imitate the sonorous tones of the church organ.

On this page I give an example showing the use of inside strings between four-note chords. Use a gut or nylon third string and a silk-covered or nylon-covered fourth.

Introduce *crescendo* and *diminuendo* effects. This may be compared visually with a slight ripple developing into a stronger sea-wave. Above all, remember that you are rendering a hymn, so impart a sincerity of feeling into the music.

Earlier I mentioned practising David Milner's chord solos. Sooner or later you will produce a tone—it may only be for a bar—which you immediately recognise as being better than anything you have yet produced.

Seize it immediately. Keep it in mind and strive to capture the same quality

each time you play. You have progressed and assiduous practice will ensure that you develop into a successful chord tremolo exponent.

All hymn tunes are not suitable for the banjo: "Shall We Gather at the River," "Abide With Me" and "Lead Kindly Light" are all good. The last-named was introduced by "The Earles" in their music hall turn.

Franco Piper was another artist who could produce a real imitation of church organ music. Piper was an accomplished musician before he took up the banjo. His specialised plectrum playing possessed a mellowness so infrequently heard today.

It is a great help if one can listen to an expert player in this style. If you ever get the chance of hearing Phil Barker play chord tremolo you will recognise its beauty. At his engagements, Mr. Barker sometimes plays his arrangements of "Holy City," "Lost Chord," or similar-type compositions, in his inimitable duo-style, with the final portion in chord tremolo.

This never fails to please his audience, including real musicians who are apt to look askance at the banjo.

THE LEFT HAND

I have not referred to the left-hand fingering but firmness in stopping all the strings close to the frets is absolutely necessary.

Not long ago I heard an excellent banjo team on the Halls. In the act one of the players announced that he would imitate two banjos on his instrument. My wife remarked that she could not recognise the result as two banjos—neither could I! As a banjo item it passed muster, but single-note melody with chord accompaniment does not always sound like two instruments.

A single-note melody with single-note accompaniment can, however, effectively imitate a banjo duet.

Finally, let me say that until some degree of perfection is achieved in imitating the church organ, a little modesty should be exercised. I suggest the announcement be simply: "A hymn tune"—and if the audience then associates the effort to a likeness of a church organ the player will indeed feel that his study has not been in vain.

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"New Concepts of Artistry in Rhythm"—Stan Kenton & his Orch. Capitol C.6595 (33 r.p.m.) 10 in.

A fine album in which the guitarist's high-spot is the "Invention for Guitar and Trumpet" written by tenor-saxist Bill Holman and played by Sal Salvador and Maynard Ferguson. There is little more than some simple canon to justify the term "Invention" which musicians will always associate with Bach. Nevertheless it is novel and interesting and Salvador emerges as a player of top-flight ability in this his best showcase to date. He also does to perfection the Bauer-esque chordal backings to Lee Konitz in "My Lady" and "Improvisation."

"Oh Lizzie" & "Clarinet Wobble"—Johnny Dodds Trio. Vocalion V. 1025 (78 r.p.m.) 10 in.

Historical interest just about justifies this disc. Lil Armstrong's piano and Dodd's clarinet are as good, for their kind and era, as Bud Scott's forced, uninspired and wooden guitar is bad.

"Melody Maker" and "Musical Express"—Mary Lou Williams Quartet. Esquire 10.312 (78 r.p.m.) 10 in.

Two agreeable tributes to periodicals for which this is the most amicable conjunction to date—interesting but not exciting. English guitarist Ray Dempsey follows coloured American pianist M.L.W. (now an old-timer as jazz musicians go) without disaster through some awkward passages but he sounds too hard-pressed to be convincing in his solos.

GOOD TASTE

"Dangerous Curves" and "Johnny's the Boy For Me"; "Deep in the Blues" and "Vaya Con Dios"—Les Paul and Mary Ford. Capitol CL.13934 and CL.13943 (10 in. 78 r.p.m.).

Four of the best sides from this team for a long while, especially the first two. Mary Ford sings in the second-named side of each coupling and is particularly good in "Johnny's."

The purely instrumental sides show good taste and demonstrate that Les Paul has not yet emptied his bag of tricks.

If we admit that this multi-recording is a good thing in any way then we must also admit that Les Paul is the unques-

tioned master in the field—and it is little wonder that his imitators (referred to in these columns in the past) have called it a day.

Nat "King" Cole and his Trio—Capitol LC. 6587 (Vol. 1). LC. 6594 (Vol. 2) (33 r.p.m.) 10 in.

Each album contains eight titles (mostly of the old favourite class) stemming from the period when Nat Cole did not mind his guitarist being heard. There is plenty of lovely easy guitar in practically every number by Irving Ashby who supplies pleasant solos; clean ensemble with the piano; and rich chord accompaniments.

The second album is slightly the better for the guitarist who cannot afford both.

"Estrado" and "Sophisticated Lady"—Swedish All Stars. Esquire 10.313 (78 r.p.m.) 10 in.

Remember "Cream of the Crop"? If so, you know what to expect here; if not, make up for what you missed by getting this, another record proving that the best does not always come from west of Eire.

Guitarist this time is Stan Carlberg (not Rolf Berg) but the standard is just as high.

"Anadina," "Ballot Box 1 and 2" and "Coronation Jump 1 and 2"—1953 Melody Maker All Stars, directed by Jack Parnell, Musician of the Year. Esquire 20.008 (33 r.p.m.) 10 in.

A L.P. album from the same session as the 10 in. record recently reviewed. Most of the soloists waste this extended opportunity to show their paces—none more than Ivor Mairants. Routine-ing fair; intonation below par; solos variable—only Ronnie Scott really scores.

The cream of 1952's crop was much richer.

"A Frog he Would A-wooing go" and "Oh the Cuckoo She's a Pretty Bird." "All Round my Hat" and "The Unquiet Grave." "Joe the Carrier Lad" "Greensleeves"—Elton Hayes. H.M.V. B.10503 and 10502. Parlo. R.3749. (78 r.p.m.) 10 in.

The first four of these sides were recorded under the auspices of the English Folk Dance and Song Society and the titles were chosen by Hayes. Like the other two sides they are wholly delightful and underline the singer as a true artist with a wide range of expression, plus the necessary discrimination where choice of material is concerned.

It is high time E.M.I. paid him the compliment of issuing an album (at least) of his folk song settings—this has already been done for less worthy artists.

GOOD BUY

"Poop Deck" and "Pennies From Heaven"—Stan Getz with the Al. Haig Quintet. Esquire 10-295 (10 in. 78 r.p.m.).

In the first of these sides, Jimmy Rainey takes a half chorus but plays rather below the standard set on the recent Buddy DeFranco L.P. Like Getz himself, Rainey tends to be ejaculatory and hesitant but, unlike Getz, he has not the flashes of lyrical melody to compensate. As a whole the record kicks nicely and is a good buy.

Ballads and Folk Songs—Burl Ives (Vol. 2). Brunswick L.A. 8522. (33 r.p.m.) 10 in.

Vol. 1 was reviewed here some months ago and this further selection offers proof that Ives is an artist of very narrow range. His voice has little variety of expression and his guitar accompaniments are limited. If you like him, however, you will find this album up to his usual standard.

"Sheik of Araby" and "New Guitar Boogie Shuffle"—The Supersonics. London L. 1197 (78 r.p.m.) 10 in.

Super-corn à la Arthur Smith but with a trifle more musical feeling. Repeat—trifle.

Guitarists (and others) with a love for Spanish music will find interest in two works which are, in spite of the fact that the former composer was half Spanish, Frenchman's impressions of the Spanish idiom:

"Symphonie Espagnole (Lalo) for violin and orch."—Campoli with the London Philharmonic Orch. conducted by Eduard van Beinum. Decca LXT. 2801. (33 r.p.m.) 12 in. Heifetz with the RCA Victor Symphony Orch. conducted by William Steinberg. HMV. BLP. 1629 (33 r.p.m.) 10 in. "España—Rhapsody" (Chabrier) — L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. Decca LW. 5033 (33 r.p.m.) 10 in.

All are fine recordings but, in the first case, the Heifetz version is superior; Campoli lacking flexibility and feeling by comparison. By omitting one of the five movements of the work, HMV compress it to a 10 in. disc—and this, in terms of £ s. d., counts.

COELHO RECITAL

The Wigmore Hall might well have had better box-office receipts for the only London appearance this season of the celebrated Brazilian soprano-guitarist, had the recital received something like adequate publicity. Fortunately for the soloist, what the audience lacked in size it made up for in enthusiasm and an obvious knowledge of both her and her repertoire. It was, in fact, a large group of "aficionados" rather than a conventional concert-going assembly.

The musical high-spot was "Bachiana No. 5—Aria" by Villa-Lobos; the eight-cello backing having been reduced to a guitar accompaniment for Olga Coelho by the composer himself.

One of the most popular items (for which the audience demanded an immediate encore) was an arrangement of "Elvito," a popular Andalusian folk dance by Andres Segovia.

Apart from being a most able and polished singer, Olga Coelho possesses a guitar technique that is truly enviable. Were I to venture any criticism, I would say that "If My Complaints Could Passions Move" (*Dowland*) was hardly this artist's cup of tea. Otherwise, this was a delightful programme for the enthusiast of Spanish and Latin-American folk music in the concert manner.

PETER SENSIER.

OBITUARY

It is with sincere regret that we record the death of Carlo D'Amato at the age of 90. Father of bandleader Chappie D'Amato, he passed away on Sunday, November 1.

Mr. D'Amato arrived in London in 1890 and did much to popularise the mandolin in Great Britain. He taught in London, Richmond and Brighton.

He conducted at the Lyric and Shaftesbury Theatres and appeared at the Earls Court, White City and Olympia Exhibitions. At a Boer War charity concert he conducted a mandolin orchestra of over 200 players.

During the early days of the dancing craze, Carlo D'Amato played the banjolin at fashionable West End clubs, hotels and restaurants. He worked professionally up to 1939 and was active until two years ago. Many readers of "B.M.G." will remember him being introduced at the Fretted Instrument Guild's "Hands Across the Sea" concert.

Federation News

(Southern Section)

The Annual General Meeting was held on October 31 and in his report the Chairman reviewed the events of the past year and spoke of his hopes for future progress. Some of his comments are particularly worthy of mention. "The Federation is financially and structurally sound. The honorary officers give their time and ability to help in what they believe to be the best interests of fretted instrumentalists. The Hon. Officers are not 'the Federation'; the Federation is the members making up the rank and file. The more interest each and every member takes in the Federation, the stronger it will inevitably grow."

The executive committee elected for the ensuing year is: Chairman, W. T. Hill, Vice-Chairman, C. Broad, Sec./Treasurer, Miss K. Marsh and L. Mann. H. H. Lambert and Miss R. Chorley form a sub-committee to further the interests of the unattached member. This sub-committee will meet independently to discuss the problems that beset the lone player and

will then report its findings to the main committee and, where possible, the necessary action will be taken.

Neither Mr. Hill nor myself sought re-election this year. We both tried hard to hand over to others, but were persuaded that it was in the best interests of the Federation to continue in office for yet another year.

We were pleased to be able to present at the A.G.M., Mr. McNaughton, whose record recital was carefully chosen and exceeded our expectations of enjoyment. It was a real delight to listen to the experts of yesteryear, but it was a great pity that more people did not avail themselves of the opportunity of hearing the collection of records presented to us that evening.

On Saturday, December 5, we present our first "Get-Together" of the winter season. The North London Club is making all the arrangements and is acting as the host club of the evening. The Hackney Club and a new group of players from Portsmouth are the guests of honour. In addition, there will be solos, ensembles and, by special request, community playing. This is the first venture in North London and we want your support to make it a good evening. The "Get-Together" is being held at the Raglan School, Bush Hill Park, Edmonton, and it will be appreciated if you notify the North London Club secretary of your intended attendance to help in the catering.

K. MARSH.

(Northern Section)

We held our meeting on November 1—and then I went down with phlebitis! I do not suppose I shall be off-duty very long; in any case, I hope not for I have a lot to do for the Federation.

Members present at the meeting were pleased with my report on this year's contests, which showed a satisfactory balance. Incidentally, some club secretaries still have not settled up their ticket accounts. May I appeal to them to do so as soon as possible, then I will be able to straighten out my books.

It was decided that the 1954 Rally shall take place on September 12 at Holyoke Hall, Liverpool, the same as this year. Members were delighted with the Hall—for it offers what is required at a reasonable price.

I had hoped to be able to report that the Hall was booked, but illness has prevented the matter being attended to.

In the Rally Report last month, one item was omitted—on purpose—with the hope that I should be able to complete the item this month. The item was the Jack Duarte Trophy for the most outstanding musician of the day. This was won by Brenda Auden, of the Orrell Mandoliers. I still have not heard the prize the winner would like, but I hope to have the

matter all squared up in time for the presentation to take place at our A.G.M. in January.

The next meeting will be a Delegate Meeting at Mapledale Road, Liverpool, on December 6.

I am now open to accept nominations for officers for the next year. The positions are: Chairman, Secretary, Committee member and two auditors. For the information of all, I am quite prepared to carry on as secretary, if requested.

G. WOOD.

BY the WAY

Alexis Chesnakov, well-known guitarist/teacher, arranged and conducted the music for the Russian play "A Poor Gentleman," broadcast in the B.B.C. Third Programme on November 8 and 10.

Mr. and Mrs. R. E. McCaughey (Liverpool players of the zither-banjo) received an enthusiastic reception from a large audience for their duets at a concert at the Everton Road Methodist Church Hall on October 10.

Clem Wakeman's "Paradise Islanders" appeared in the variety show at the Walsall and District branch of British Road Services concert held at Walsall on October 31. In addition, the outfit played for dancing.

On November 7 the "Paradise Islanders" also played at a dinner for the area conference of the R.A.O.B. at Wolverhampton and, five days later, travelled to Birmingham to give an audition for a Variety Artists' club meeting.

Players sending MSS. to the Editor should always enclose a stamped addressed envelope and should note that such MSS. cannot always be dealt with "by return." All MSS. submitted for inclusion in "B.M.G." supplements are eventually examined, but time does not always permit a prompt reply.

George Cameron (of Manchester) writes, anent our paragraph in the October issue on "The Bandurrias": "This was a high-class music hall act with Neopolitan mandolins and guitars, under the leadership of Louis Bramley. The act toured the music halls some fifty years ago and they appeared at the Palace of Varieties, Manchester, several times."

John Gavall appeared in the New Watergate Theatre Club production of "Three's Company," which was given from November 4 to the 14th.

The Watford B. M. & G. Club appeared in a variety show given at London's Nuffield Centre on October 30.

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Australian Guild News

September 4 marked the opening of the Guild's third year of activity and was celebrated in the presentation of the Third Grand Concert. All playing members participated in the opening items, "Down the Mall" and "Man the Guns." Harrison White and his son, Charles, played the banjo duet, "Overture Medley," and in "Bye Bye Blues" they each played the other's banjo. Bob Paddock and Bruce Lutherborrow played Rachmaninoff's

"Prelude" and "High Noon" as plectrum guitar duets, and the "Banjoys" (a team from Gosford, 50 miles north) entertained with two banjos and piano accordion in a popular medley.

Tom Heyes' "Mandoliers" (a fully-balanced mandolin orchestra) played "El Relicario," "L'Extase" and "Black and White Rag"; Roy Royston and Don Andrews presented some modern arrangements with the former on the "Kord King" console cl.H.G. and the latter on cl.pg. Variety was provided by vocals from the Pearce Duo, while Rosa Loader received a rousing reception for her novelty act.

Rene Stanfield and Arthur Bassett (banjos) played "Syncopated Hesitation" and "Beat as You Go," and the classical guitar was represented by a Trio: Sadie Bishop, Don Andrews and Joe Washington, their items including "Sarabande" (Bach), "Aragonesa" (Fallá) and "Sonata" (Scarlati). The retiring President, Roy Smedley, concluded a memorable concert with mandolin sections.

Cecil Sainy was welcomed to the Presidency after a vote of appreciation had been expressed by the retiring President.

At the October meeting it was agreed that community playing in future should include both popular and fretted instrument numbers. Some new numbers are being introduced at the November meeting, while the December gathering will be a Christmas Party night to be arranged by Mr. and Mrs. McKie and Johnny Vrolyks. It will include dancing, games, instrumental solos and ensembles, and the usual festive supper.

The remainder of the October meeting was devoted to listening to a replay of the tape-recorded transcriptions of the concert. It provided a good opportunity for criticism and self-analysis, but, despite all the faults, members considered the recordings were of sufficient interest to send, with their good wishes, to their fellow players abroad. The tapes are, therefore, on their way to the English F.I.G. and it is hoped this small gesture will foster the happy friendship enjoyed in our association with kindred spirits in distant places.

H. PHILLIP SKINNER.

Club Notes

Members of the Southwark Club have recently fulfilled engagements in the Tooting, Dulwich, Battersea and Croydon districts, while the orchestra is looking forward to paying its third visit to Brixton Prison to entertain the inmates.

The Beginners' Section of the club continues to flourish but the orchestra would welcome additional experienced players of the mandolin or banjo in readiness for the Christmas programmes.

Numbers featured include: "Moment Musical," "Cossack Memories," "June," "Demande

et Réponse," "Standchen," "Sullivan Selection," "Tarantella," "State Band Patrol" and "Neapolitan Serenade," as well as the popular selections for community singing in which this club specialises.

At last month's meetings of the Leigh-on-Sea Club the following individual items were played: L. Behar (B.) "Piece Characteristique" and "Espanola"; H. Ballard (B.) "Darkies' Romance" and "Andante and Waltz"; W. L. Keene (B.) "Woodland Nymphs"; A. C. Mansell (B.) "Black Coquette," "Mister Jollyboy," "Cute an' Catchy" and "Glitter of Steel"; W. Readman (B.) "Hunky Dory" and "Pierrot's Serenade"; Mrs. Day and A. C. Mansell (B.) "Valse Sympathie"; Mrs. Day and Messrs. Behar and Mansell (B.) "Zarana," "Grand National," "Jacko on Parade" and "Fernbank Quickstep"; Mrs. Wright (M.) "Piccaninnies' Bedtime" and "Irish Airs."

Following its inauguration in September, the Alhambra Orchestra has met regularly each Wednesday evening. It is still below its practical strength but, in spite of this, has made encouraging progress. It already has a varied repertoire and made its first public appearance at the Islington Town Hall on November 18. There are still vacancies for all players.

The North London Club has arranged a "Get-Together" on December 5 at the Raglan School, Bury St., Edmonton. Clubs or individuals wishing to take part should contact the secretary.

Activities last month included visits to Harperbury Hospital, St. Albans; the Haven Club, Southgate; and the Enfield Fellowship Club at Ponders End. Numbers played included "Man the Guns," "Glitter of Steel," "Skaters' Waltz," "Show Boat," "Sullivan Selection," "Gems from the Overtures," "Ben Hur Overture," "La Paloma," "Post Horn Gallop," "Cossack Memories," "State Band Patrol," etc. The Banjo Team played "Banjo Frolic," "Niggertown" and "Ad Astra."

Correspondence

READERS' LETTERS

Dear Sir,—I was sorry to see in the November issue that you have said the correspondence between Harry Edgar and John Wetton must cease, for I have enjoyed reading these exchanges of viewpoint. As there must be other players of the banjo like myself, could we not continue this discussion?—JACK AUSTIN.

(This is typical of a number of letters I have received, so these "Correspondence" columns are again open to players who wish to take part in this controversy. I still hope that Messrs. Edgar and Wetton can arrange a meeting (as tentatively suggested in last month's issue), for I am sure it would clear the air a lot.—EDITOR.)

Dear Sir,—In the September issue, Harry Edgar asked Mr. Wetton some Parke Hunter questions and, although Mr. Wetton did not answer, it certainly evoked a curious word-splitting reply from Frank Lawes.

May I add a little to J. McNaughton's article on this subject?

In Parke Hunter's Studies, the *sostenuto* studies are Ex. 81 to 84 and there are two solos

following. In Hunter's "Old Black Joe" (D.A.B. 305) you need to depress the first string in the first half of bar 1 of the first variation (and all similar bars). Also the last two bars of this variation are best played on the 2nd and 4th strings throughout.

The banjo is *not* a staccato instrument. Even the worst I have handled would sustain any note from one to three seconds; the zither-banjo from three to five seconds. Cammeyer claimed for his instrument a length of seven seconds. Therefore, when a note is rapidly repeated the sound must be continuous; the second note being struck before the first has faded to any appreciable extent.

A second reason why *sostenuto* is the correct term is the law of common usage. Parke Hunter used the word 50 years ago and it has been used ever since for that style of playing. And if Mr. Lawes says there is no law of common usage, then let him start calling the piano by its proper name. No; it is *not* a pianoforte, it is a soft and loud—what? (I bet he has to hunt up a reference book to find out this instrument's proper name.)

I am also sorry for Mr. Lawes' insensitiveness if he cannot hear any difference between the one-finger method and the double or triple-finger style. The reference to mains hum is unfortunate. There is no music in that. Music is noise in rhythm and the more the beat is divided, the more those tiny accents come in. A drum roll is a quick series of daddy-mummies, daddy-mummies and the double or triple fingering would produce a similar pulsation.

The one-finger method produces a different and distinct rhythm.

Both methods are valuable to the banjoist.—ALFRED W. LANE.

Dear Sir,—Frank Lawes takes exception to the use of the term *sostenuto* in the playing of any fretted instrument because true *sostenuto* simply cannot be produced on them. We agree with him, but the facts are that A. H. Nassau-Kennedy, Herbert J. Ellis and Sheldon Green applied this term to the technique of self-accompanied finger tremolo as distinct from tremolo alone. However incorrect this appellation may be, it has become accepted; is indicated in appropriate solos; and our modern composers use the term freely.

I quite believe that Fred van Eps' thumb-one-two method gives a wonderful tremolo effect—it conforms to Joe Morley's idea of tremolo, viz., the string being struck from each side—but I would like to know how this player treats the self-accompanied (*sostenuto*) style.

The snag with these wonderful effects is that they belong to one person only and do not become standard. Parke Hunter used an astounding chord tremolo effect (employing thumb and four fingers), but it died with him.

I thank J. McNaughton for his concise and

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detailed information on Parke Hunter's inner-string tremolo. Mr. Wetton misled me by referring to it as *sostenuto* which, of course, is incorrect—HARRY EDGAR.

Dear Sir,—In my letter published in the August issue I intimated that if Col. Collins would draw up, in *courteous terms*, a list of the "many hundreds of errors of omission and commission" attributed to me in the series "The Banjo in America," I would be pleased to deal with them. His reply, published in the October-November issue of his duplicated news-sheet, is as follows:

"Since I don't believe the writer in question has the slightest conception of the meaning of the word 'courtesy' and that the Editor (of 'B.M.G.') has not the slightest inclination to print *anything as written*, I have but two things to say—TO HELL WITH THEM BOTH."

Here, at least, we have an excellent example of the meaning of the word "courtesy" in the lexicon of Col. Collins who, by such bluster, evades the offer I made in a spirit of sportsmanship.

I think it should be made known that Col. Collins sent to you on February 21 and March 29, 1952, most offensive and libellous screeds attacking you, myself, one of the late Temlett family, and A. D. Cammeyer. A book written by Temlett was alleged to be "unquestionably a steal on one of S. S. Stewart's own works." The expression "you stole our music" occurs in one of the offensive screeds; and regarding A. D. Cammeyer's zither-banjo, Col. Collins made the comment: "God alone knows why Cammeyer called it a zither-banjo since it's neither a zither nor a banjo and sounds like neither!"

I know you sent a reasoned reply to Col. Collins and suggested he should have it duplicated and sent to all members of the Fraternity who had been supplied by him with copies of the letters he sent to you. Col. Collins conveniently forgot to face up to that suggestion for obvious reasons, one of which was that, on his own admission to me *in writing* he had never seen or heard a zither-banjo. He even went as far as to ask me to send him front and side views of a zither-banjo, which I did.

Within the past two years, Col. Collins was soliciting information from readers of his news-sheet about many of the old-time minstrel banjoists, such as E. M. Hall, William A. Huntley, John H. Lee and A. A. Babb. Most of the data he was seeking could have been found in the American book "Monarchs of Minstrelsy"—a work he had never heard of.

On June 25, 1951, Col. Collins informed me that:

(1) "We don't have much on (Joel) Sweeney except that he did go to England in 1840 or 1850."

(2) "His brother, Richard Sweeney, served in the Confederate Army as banjoist to JEB Stuart."

Statement (1) is valueless. Joel Sweeney's first appearance in England as a banjoist in public was on January 23, 1843, and he returned to America some five years before 1850. Richard Sweeney died before the American Civil War began.

So much for the "vast store of knowledge accumulated over a period of many years," about which Col. Collins has boasted and to which I "obviously have not had access."

Since June, 1951, when Col. Collins admittedly knew little of Joel Walker Sweeney, he has become exceedingly wise, as he now refers to him as "our Patron Saint."

Another point the colonel flogs *ad nauseam* is the identity of S. S. Stewart; quoting the Copyright Office as the authority that "S.S.S.'s full name was Samuel Swain Stewart." Whether the Copyright Office is an authority superior to John B. McCann, Registrar of Vital Statistics, City Hall Annex, Philadelphia, seems to be a moot point. Mr. McCann informed me that:

"We have checked our death files and found that S. Swain Stewart died in Philadelphia on April 6, 1898. No mention is made as to what the first letter 'S' stands for."

A niece of S. S. Stewart stated that her uncle's second Christian name was "Swayne." Fred Stewart ignored several inquiries I made of him to establish his Father's full identity.

I have been advised by my many friends on both sides of the Atlantic to ignore the vitriolic campaign of scurrilous abuse originated by Col. Collins, but a conscientious historian, as I have endeavoured to be, is honour bound to protect his own integrity and his writings on such an important matter.—W. M. BREWER.

Dear Sir,—Regarding the correspondence concerning the "Boston Ideals," at the moment this appears to be a somewhat one-sided affair. We read a lot of what Mr. Brewer has to say about the "Ideals" but nothing of what Col. Collins says, except snippets and extracts. Such extracts, divorced from the full context, can be misleading and, as far as I am concerned, I view them with grave suspicion.

As far as I can judge, this dispute seems to centre round the number of players that made up the "Ideals" combination. The number of players was four, Babb, Grover, Lansing and Shattuck. Up to the latter end of 1906, these four had played together for over 20 years as "The Boston Ideals."

Changes no doubt took place after that date—maybe different players, maybe more players—but the original "Ideals," for a long number of years, was made up of four players.

I also see mentioned the "Boston Ideals Club." This, apparently, had many more players than four. Nobody seems to have given any thought to the question whether "The Boston Ideals" and "The Boston Ideals Club" were entirely separate organisations. If this was so, then Col. Collins and W. M. Brewer are right—and this rather rancorous correspondence need never have been.

As far as I am concerned, as a reader of your magazine, I derive no pleasure reading this kind of thing and think the space taken up by it could be used to better advantage. As a man in the public eye, Mr. Brewer should exercise a little more restraint, even though the provocation may be great.—J. ELMER DEXULL.

Dear Sir,—In the October issue, Basil King's comments on the automatic tuning question greatly interested me, although I feel he is much too pessimistic in his views on the so-called "shortage" of Hawaiian guitar music. I say "so-called" because this state of affairs has always been in existence (particularly in this country), so that, practically speaking, the "shortage" is really nothing new. In any case, the player who has made sufficient progress in his study of the Hawaiian guitar to want to experiment with other tunings has also made sufficient progress to be able to understand the piano copy, no matter what tuning he may wish to use.

Regarding Mr. King's remarks on the "drift from tuning to tuning": again I cannot help

feeling that he is too pessimistic in his outlook. For the past six years or so I have had an eight-string guitar incorporating the "tuning change attachment"—not on one string but on all eight; put into effect by the manipulation of four foot pedals. "Instead of 'drifting from tuning to tuning' I worked out two different 'basic' tunings; the simpler of which I have used *constantly*, a procedure I am sure nine players out of ten would follow."

The other tuning I shelved as, although far superior *musically*, it involved a much greater amount of footwork.

From my simple basic tuning I can get no less than fifteen tunings on one neck, although of these only eight are practical. This compares quite favourably with the "new instrument" mentioned in Mr. King's article. On the other hand, were I using the more-complicated basic tuning already mentioned, I could *again* get fifteen tunings at will; this time the usable ones numbering no less than *thirteen*!

As a point of interest, the tuning can be changed while actually passing from one chord to another in the middle of a solo, and although I have played at quite a number of dances, averaging four hours each, I have had no trouble at all as regards string breakages or tuning trouble.—R. MARTIN.

Dear Sir,—When facing a statement with which he disagrees, my old friend Jack Duarte's methods are as well known to "B.M.G." readers as to me. He seizes upon some isolated fact and, by proving it only 90 per cent. true, tries to show that the fact drawn from the conclusion is itself untrue.

I am quite satisfied to be 90 per cent. correct; that the majority of composers, since the piano was perfected, wrote for the piano justifies my theories. For every composer Jack has found who did not write specifically for the piano, I can produce a dozen of equal status who thought the piano well worth writing for. Those whom Jack quotes, moreover, wrote for that other "universal instrument," the orchestra, which in my letter I drew into my argument.

This side-issue obscures the main argument: that in public performance guitarists should play the types of music which best suits the guitar's characteristics; leaving to the piano or orchestra those types of music in which the guitar, though pleasant, is not wholly convincing—except to guitar-lovers!

Jack Duarte asks whether it is my opinion that only Spaniards can write for the guitar and quotes Villa-Lobos, Ponce, Tansman and Castelnuovo-Tedesco as present-day composers of worthy works for guitar.

One of the principal reasons why composers do not write for the guitar is that if one does not one's self play the instrument it is extremely difficult to write technically playable works for it. One may, of course, consult a guitarist of concert stature but, until quite recently, concert guitarists have been confined to Spain, Latin-America and, perhaps, Italy. The difficulties of co-opting Segovia as consultant are those of geography and language but, even so, most of the successful compositions have been written in consultation with Segovia.

Probably it is the Latin countries' virtual monopoly of concert technique which so far has tended to confine successful composition for guitar to those areas. Villa-Lobos and Ponce are of Hispanic racial origin and their best works are of Spanish derivation. When Ponce, for example, steps outside the Spanish field (as in his Sonatas Classica and Romantica) he ceases to convince on the guitar, although his non-Hispanic works for other media are doubtless satisfactory.

I believe it is the guitar itself, not the composers, which leans towards Hispanic music—or, without stretching credulity too far, it might be said that the very nature of Spanish music itself has been moulded by the guitar and its rhythms.

Castelnuovo-Tedesco (an Italian) and Tansman (a Frenchman of Polish birth) have successfully broken through the restrictions the guitar tries to impose. We must hope other composers will be equally successful in the future.

It should be remembered that we are not arguing about what guitarists shall play for their own pleasure. If they play no other instrument, how else can they cover the whole musical field than by playing all kinds of music? We argue here about public performance. In the future, we hope, audiences will consist not of a majority of guitarists (or even of a majority of musicians) but of the comparatively uninformed music-loving public who "know what they like" and will only pay to hear what they like, having no preconceived bias in favour of the guitar.

Guitar recitals now draw good audiences because of their comparative rarity and novelty. When guitar recitals become as numerous and familiar as piano recitals, the public will attend in sufficient numbers only if they like what they hear.

My recent experiences, in giving, with Ben Beckton, a series of recitals to music societies in the North, has been most revealing. To the lutanist composers, audiences have listened with respect and pleasure; the transcriptions of piano works of the classical and romantic period have been mildly approved, with subsequently expressed reservations. But to the Spanish or Spanish-derived music and to the flamenco music (which, if not good music, is good fun) they have given vociferous applause and called for encores. Surely that is the final answer?

Recitalists, when they become numerous, will have to live and must play what will earn them a living. Until the top-rank composers of today have studied and understood the guitar and evolved and produced a wide repertoire in a modern, non-Hispanic guitar idiom, recitalists should concentrate (not necessarily exclusively

—I have never said that!) on lute and contrapuntal works and the Spanish type of music. TERRY USHER.

Dear Sir,—W. M. Brewer's series of articles on the "Banjo in America" laid proper emphasis on the instrument's development towards solo status. In that process, however, certain things were lost which had contributed greatly to the banjo's original popularity and which a new group of players here in America are trying to recapture, while themselves overlooking or disregarding most of the gains in solo technique since the Civil War.

Who are these players? Most of them are still young enough to be called boys and girls, who have been caught up in the current rage for folk music but they are as likely to be found in our great cities as in the country.

What do these youngsters do with the banjo? Well, they have gone down to the Southern Appalachians, a section until recently by-passed by much of the trappings of civilisation, where the hill folk have held to the use of the banjo

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to accompany their songs and provide a background for their dances, often with the aid of a fiddle.

Some of this music has been recorded through the Library of Congress.

The banjo so played, fitted the rôle desired. So, through visits to the locale and recordings, and largely by ear, a folk-type evolution of the original banjo style was picked up, without recourse to the old professionals, most of whom were in retirement. When I have played for their groups it was, for them, like hearing a new language—until I hit up an old fiddle tune at tempo, when their interest seemed to ripen into appreciation.

Not only have these players revived the accompaniment use of the banjo, they have revived the old authority of the fifth string; the open octave that had fallen into disuse in the U.S.A. It is moot, I know, but before the Brewer-Collins *hassel* was known to me, I had concluded from my studies of the earliest banjo playing style that the fifth string was the heart of it and since the earliest use of the banjo by whites on blacking up and doing just as the negro did, and since Sweeney and Whitlock had learned direct from the negroes and no white man claimed the style, which was strikingly unique and dependent upon the octave string—for all these reasons I was prepared for evidence that Sweeney's "fifth" string would be other than the octave one; possibly the bass as the least essential to the style. While a bass would be of great use to an accompaniment played guitar style, the banjo style of accompaniment was totally different, being a combination of counter-melody and obbligato; weaving over and under the air with frequent recourse to the open fifth.

To be orthodox with reference to the octave string, yet accompany in different keys and modes, these players (or some of them) do some novel and "unorthodox" things. I know at least three players who have lengthened the banjo at the nut end by two or three frets, splicing them on a regulation neck. Remember, that over here the banjo was originally tuned a fifth lower. This stunt regains some of the depth for accompanying lower keys without sacrifice in the upper register. For higher keys they do not blush to use the *capo*, and for the very high keys, some sink screws on the fingerboard under the fifth string (not quite flush

with the neck) under the edge of which the string can be tucked in a jiffy.

Modern wire strings can be tuned up to the degree of three frets without danger of breaking, so the first screw is sunk behind the fourth fret on the fifth-string keyboard (what we would call the ninth on an unspliced regulation fingerboard).

The main re-tuning is that of the fifth string, to maintain it as an octave above the third; but there are many other re-tunings of the other strings (also wire) to create ingenious accompaniment effects easy of execution at high speed. Peter Seeger mentions 18 different tunings employed by one old Kentucky farmer, from whom he learned.

In general, I may say that these players have revived the original purpose of the banjo—to accompany the voice and to make background for a lively dance. They have revived the characteristic recurring and clarion open fifth, once the true signature of the banjo. They have freed the right hand from the hobbles of the original banjo style, which used only the index finger and the thumb, and of the late style, which uses only two fingers and the thumb. And they have re-introduced an intriguing accompaniment style independent of chords.

On the other hand, too many of them are handicapped by the inability to read music. They tend to know little about chords and runs; they seemed rather limited to 2/4 tempo; dependent as they are on tunings, they would be hard pressed in selections with frequent key changes. But possibly they are most handicapped by self-satisfaction. What they are doing is jolly and popular, and not too hard. The limitations do not yet seem monotonous; the songs they know are numerous and varied in content; there are many keys and tunings. What if there are other fields to conquer?

I look to an increase of these folk banjoists as long as the vogue persists, without many of them being eager to become soloists. But just as when the minstrel craze tapered off, solo banjoists appeared—to play for people who had learned to like the sound of the banjo at a minstrel show, so may some of these new players apply their skills for the instrument's worth before audiences who learned to like the sound of the banjo at a square dance or folk-song group.—PAUL CADWELL.

Dear Sir,—Having noted nothing in your excellent magazine on the subject of heaters for banjos, and having recently built one (at negligible cost with remarkable results), it may be helpful to some of your readers to tell them about heaters and how to make one.

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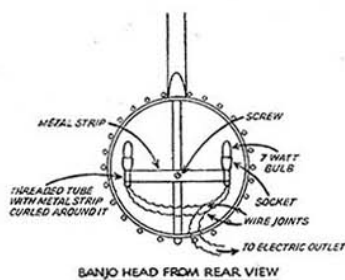
The simplest heater requires only two 5-watt electric light bulbs; two small sockets to hold them; two short (1 in. or 1½ in.) lengths of threaded brass or bronze tubing (as used in making table lamps) on which the sockets are screwed and firmly fixed; a strip of sheet metal (aluminium, copper or even galvanised iron) say about ½ in. wide and about 15 in. long; a length of ordinary insulated electric wire and the necessary pronged plugs and sockets for connection to the mains supply.

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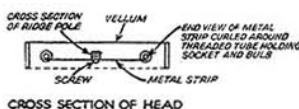
Each end of the metal strip is rolled round one of the threaded tubes to hold it firmly (solder can be used), and, in turn, to hold the socket and bulb. The two sockets and bulbs are then wired in "parallel" (not in "series") and the pronged plug attached to the end of the wire.

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Perhaps this is "old stuff" to some of your readers, but there may be others who will derive some satisfaction, as I did, in ensuring the maximum brilliance of one's banjo, regardless of the weather and the humidity.—ERNEST W. CROWE.

(Mr. Crowe is one of our Canadian readers, and we pass his hints on to banjoists with the greatest of pleasure.—EDITOR).

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