MORE LIGHT WITH SAME AMOUNT OF POWER!

This unretouched comparison photograph demonstrates dramatically the N.Z. representative's remarks that efficient and good lighting does not necessarily use more power than poor lighting — on the left are shown conventional metal shades — on the right modern dense opal "Perspex" shades. Without affecting the degree of wanted downward concentration of light "Perspex" gives added overhead light and less shadow strain.

Poor Lighting in factories in Dominion

"... the standard of lighting in many New Zealand buildings and factories is unsatisfactory: and steps should be taken as soon as possible to enforce proper standards by regulation..." If power board authorities asked where the extra power was to come from to improve factory lighting, it should be pointed out that the efficient use of lighting power did not necessarily mean that more power would be used. The same amount of power was used whether or not the light was put in the right place.

Extracts from Press Association reports of remarks made by the New Zealand representative at the International Conference of Ophthalmologists in London.
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THE FLOORING SPECIALISTS
WELLINGTON AUCKLAND CHRISTCHURCH
HASTINGS WAIROA GISBORNE PALMERSTON NTH.
DESIGNED FOR A SLOPING SITE

Architect: M. B. Patience

This house was designed for a family of three, with accommodation for a guest.
The site was a sloping one and to reduce the heights of foundation walls, as well as to express the slope of the ground, the floor was arranged on two levels.
Standard wood frame construction was chosen as being the most economical structure, sheathed with weatherboarding and a bitumen fabric roof.
MODERN EXTERIOR PROTECTION
HOW TO OVERCOME MOULD GROWTH

The fungus mould growth on exterior weatherboarding can be a costly business for it means the walls need repainting far earlier than they would under normal wear. Much can be done to check the growth of this fungus from the start and so eliminate early repainting.

B.A.L.M. have issued a specification showing the correct methods for exterior paint application and with it they emphasise that both 87 Line Undercoat and Dulux House paint have been formulated to provide surfaces highly resistant to infestation with mould growths.

That surely is the answer to the trouble: to avoid it from the beginning. However, the specifications given here show the treatment they advise if the walls already show discolouration from mould growths.

Exterior Painting Specifications

DULUX HI-GLOSS HOUSE
PAINT—87 LINE

A. NEW WOODWORK—EXCLUDING TOTARA

Operation 1: Prime with one brush coat of B.A.L.M. Primer for Dulux Hi-Gloss Paint on B.A.L.M. Pink Primer P.T.1. Allow 24 hours to dry.

Operation 2: Brush one coat of B.A.L.M. Undercoat for Dulux Hi-Gloss Paint. Allow 24 hours to dry.

Operation 3: Repeat Operation 2.

Operation 4: Brush one coat of Dulux Hi-Gloss Paint 87 Line as received in the container.

B. FINISHING OF TOTARA

Operation 1: Prime with B.A.L.M. Totara Primer, Reference Number 126.8752, and allow to dry at least 24 hours before recoating.

Operation 2: Brush one coat Dulux Undercoat for Dulux Hi-Gloss House Paint. Allow to dry 24 hours before recoating.

Operation 3: Brush one coat Dulux Hi-Gloss House Paint 87 Line as received in the container.

D. REPAINTING OVER OLD PAINT SURFACES IN BADLY WEATHER-ED CONDITION

Operation 1: Clean down thoroughly by sanding, wire brushing and burning off where necessary.

Operations 2, 3, and 4: As for Operations 1, 2, and 3 for New Woodwork.

E. REPAINTING OVER OLD PAINT SURFACES DISCOLOURED BY MOULD GROWTHS

Operation 1: Kill all mould growths by brushing on the surface a liberal coating of one of the following solutions:
(a) "Santabrite" solution (1 lb to 5 gallons of water).
(b) Shirlan W.S. solution (1 lb to 5 gallons of water).

Allow to dry out thoroughly, and prepare job by brushing down and sanding where necessary.

Operation 2: Brush one coat B.A.L.M. Undercoat for Dulux Hi-Gloss Paint and allow 24 hours before recoating.

Operation 3: If surface is badly discoloured, repeat Operation 2.

Operation 4: Brush Dulux Hi-Gloss Paint as received in the container.

Any additional information on this subject, or any other paint problem will be gladly supplied if enquiries are sent to: The Technical Service Dept., The British Australian Lead Manufacturers (N.Z.) Ltd., Lower Hutt.

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HERE AND THERE

Sharawagi

No one, I imagine, would deny the beauty and even nobility which trees can bring to an otherwise undistinguished street. And no one would question the convenience and utility of electric power. But when is the awful conflict of the leaves and the wires to be settled in the streets of our towns and cities? It has become completely obvious that the trees and the poles won't mix, and we must either bury the cables and give the trees a chance to throw out their branches, or stick to our wires and forget about any form of planting.

The pathetic results of trying to mix the two can be seen almost anywhere in our towns. Generally the trees are planted immediately beneath the overhead wires, so that it is only a matter of time before the topmost branches must be ruthlessly and expensively cut back.

The main street of one of our provincial towns is lined with mature London Plane whose hideously deformed limbs give evidence of years of brutal hacking, until I'm sure that the most insensitive passer-by would rather see them put out of their misery and removed altogether.

And the planting of smaller varieties of trees does not solve the problem. To give the necessary scale and dignity to our suburban streets the trees must be tall, but roof-high planting merely accentuates the dull uniformity of the skyline.

So it seems that we must wipe the wires or the trees. But for the sake of leafy avenues yet unborn, let's have some action — one way or the other.

OFF PARADE

But from the point of view of people interested in the future of New Zealand films it is questionable whether the Weekly Review really was such a good thing. Certainly it was a good newsreel, competently photographed, and, apart from too-frequent items showing dull politicians speaking at dull ceremonies, entertaining. That is as far as it went.

After nine years the National Film Unit, with its large staff and its expensive equipment, was still using the greater part of its resources in the production of a nine-minute newscast. Where were the documentary films showing our social experiments — the films that, according to the arch-priest Grierson, would command international attention? They just did not show up.

It is true that on a number of occasions the Weekly Review was given over to one subject, a short documentary. Several striking ones come to mind immediately — Holmes' Coaster, Thompson's Railway Worker and Faulkner's Backblocks Medical Service, to name three of the best. Forlong's experimental Rhythm and Movement, too, with background music by Douglas Lilburn, showed great promise of weightier work — a promise hardly fulfilled by the incept casting and amateurish directing of Journey for Three.

But with a few notable exceptions, the Weekly Reviews, whether dealing with one subject or with several, rarely showed any imaginative treatment worth the name. The use of the camera was prosaic; the scripts mediocre and poorly integrated with the film; the background music remarkably ill-chosen; and in spite of elaborate sound recording equipment natural sound was hardly ever used except in set pieces — speeches, orchestras and the like. (An outstanding exception was one of the last made — a pleasantly conceived, well-recorded item about the Wellington Carillon.) In short — little imagination anywhere. Oddly enough, the directors and cameramen who seemed likely to pull the National Film Unit out of the rut have all gone elsewhere. It would be interesting to know why.

No doubt the foregoing remarks are harsh. They are meant to be. The Film Unit, which had a unique chance to record 'democracy in action', gave the public a lollipop.

To an outside observer, political pressure seemed in large measure to blame. It was notorious that films reflecting in even the most remote way on the
Government were taboo. New Zealand and New Zealanders appears always, to use Grierson’s phrase, “in the spit and polish of perfection”. “If you appear always”, he said, “in the spit and polish of perfection we shall know very quickly that you are either inhuman or you are liars.”

The scenes left out, not the propaganda put in – there was little of that – were the tell-tale of political interference. No honest film maker can make honest documentaries unless he is left alone. No honest newsreel reporter can give honest reports unless he is free from outside influence. The politically innocuous, the glib skirting around accurate comment, the “human interest” triviality – by all means! But the waterfront strike, the plight of the homeless and destitute, the problems of the Maoris – never, never, never.

To sum up – the Weekly Review neglected important aspects of New Zealand life and, instead, clung to the politically safe. It became merely an entertaining pot-pourri, with no clear purpose other than the assembling of heterogeneous bits and pieces into a nine-minute programme. Considering the heavy expense involved, and the lack of any sign that the National Film Unit would adopt a new direction and a more vigorous policy, perhaps we can say without many qualms “Better dead.”

CLAUDICATUS.

**DESIGN FOR WALLS**

George Irving

We should not have to waste many words in proving that wallpaper is the most universal, as it is the most democratic of the applied arts. When properly used and of good design, wallpaper can create space, proportion, colour and background in the most humble room. The walls, as William Morris said, make your house and home, and if you do not make some sacrifices in your favour you will find your rooms have a kind of makeshift lodging-house look about them, however rich and handsome your movables may be.” We could add to Morris’s remarks and say that even the inexpensive, not very well-designed furniture that most of us have to put up with is enhanced by setting it against a good wallpaper.

For a long time most people have been prejudiced against any but ‘cream’ and plain drab-coloured walls; for the reason, of course, that cream is safe – it does at any rate prevent comment. So it is heartening to notice in the shop windows papers of good quality, colour, and pleasing, if somewhat conventional, design.

The manufacturers, at all events, are doing their part. They are making wall-papers of excellent design and employing artists of the first rank to create them. Edward Bawden, Henry Moore, Graham Sutherland, Vanessa Bell, Duncan Grant are some of the names that come to mind. Besides contemporary

An impression of a trellis paper designed by Edward Bawden. Clear yellow background with reddish brown design. The paper has been used on one wall only, the other walls are papered in plain yellow.
GUTHRIE BOWRON & CO. LTD.
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WALLPAPERS
AND ALL INTERIOR DECORATING REQUIREMENTS
Open Friday nights

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Modern venetian blinds—perfectly suited to contemporary or period furnishing. Decorative beauty combined with simple operation. Adjustment eliminates direct sunlight—controls light and ventilation.

WHOLESALE DISTRIBUTORS
MODERN VENETIAN BLINDS LTD.

BOX 45 NEW MARKET AUCKLAND
A contemporary wallpaper in vertical stripes which was chosen to balance the horizontal lines of the furniture and give height to the room.

"The Daisy", 1862, the first Morris paper sold. The colours are yellow, scarlet, green and white on a pale buff ground.

designs, manufacturers are selecting and reproducing fine eighteenth and nineteenth century papers. William Morris's 'Daisies', 'Pomegranates and Birds', for example, are as fresh and graceful as the day they were first printed.

Manufacturers, of course, cater for every level of taste, and importers have to do the same. If we want good wallpapers we have to ask for them, since it is impossible for any merchant to do more than make a tentative guess at what the capricious demands of his customers will be. So far importers have been in advance of the public, which, it seems, can be separated into three classes: the few who know exactly what they want; the larger group which merely knows what it doesn't like; and the majority which has no opinions and no ideas about the matter at all. It would be an interesting experiment to subject a couple of dozen first-rate wallpaper designs to the casual inspection of the ordinary buying public. The comments would not be difficult to predict.

To create a demand for everyday things of high artistic merit is a ticklish business. The merchant is faced with the dilemma either of showing his cus-
tomers good design which, because it is unusual, will most likely frighten them off, or of displaying unexceptionable goods which he knows will at least not offend them. A glance at the paper at the shop windows will show that a very adequate compromise has been reached. But let us hope that someone will sometimes order, just for luck, a few exciting and handsome designs by Bawden or Sutherland or even Morris. Manufacturers have not always been in this dilemma. The long and (for the most part) honourable record of wallpaper demonstrates that fine design and craftsmanship were, until about 1840, the rule and not the exception.

The history of wallpaper makes a fascinating social study, for it provides a remarkably clear and continuous picture of the way people have lived, of their pretensions, their taste and their manners. The earliest English wallpaper that has been found dates from about 1500. These early papers were hand painted; they were nailed—not pasted—to the wall, and they were given to the paperhanger in very small pieces. Later on the small pieces were joined together and delivered in rolls; joins were made less noticeable by over-printing. By 1700 printing from wood blocks was general, but paper was still scarce—old deeds, letterpress, parchments were all pressed into service. As paper supplies improved and printing technique developed, wallpaper became cheaper. By the second half of the eighteenth century there were great demands for English wallpaper from America and France. English wallpaper was superior then, as it is again today, to all others in design and technique.

Machine printing revolutionized the wallpaper trade, and from 1840 until well into the twentieth century the story of wallpaper declines into the dreary recital we are all so familiar with. Cheap and tawdry papers began to flood the market. They were designed without any idea of the true purpose and object of wall decoration. It was William Morris who showed the way to better things, and to him goes much of the credit for the better work of the nineteenth century.

Today papers are comparatively cheap to buy, and they are, without doubt, the best of all wall coverings. They are produced with the highest technical skill, and many of them, as we have seen, are designed by first-rate artists. Supplies are there. It is for us to demand them.

Detail from a Chinese wallpaper, much reduced. The drawing is lively and accurate and typical of the ‘bird, insect and tree’ design. The colours are soft and delicate.

An early floral English design, about 1760. The outline is engraved in black, the colours applied by brush.

A design for the Houses of Parliament by Pugin. It is severe and Gothic in character. This and Pugin's other papers are the foundation of modern development in wallpaper design. The colours are blue on a gold ground.
ADDITIONS TO A HOUSE
ARCHITECTS: PLISHKE AND FIRTH

Strangers are always unprepared for our courtyard and the rooms that enclose it. This surprises us because we are now so used to living there that the whole thing seems effortless, even artless. But looking back it seems to me that we asked a good deal of our architect.

We asked him to build us a flat, on a section already encumbered with a three-bedroom house, a four-man army hut, a small detached room, and a garage. For a few months I had been juggling with these buildings and outhouses myself, trying to turn them into a place for us to live.

"What do you know about plumbing?" someone said. "You need an architect."

I certainly did, and when I found him I discovered that I knew nothing whatever about plumbing, and, architecturally speaking, very little about anything else. But I did know that we wanted to live in a self-contained flat with a living room that could double sometimes as a photographic studio; a bedroom for at least two children; a darkroom for the photographer; and a small room where I could write and he could work undisturbed.

We have all this and a great deal more. It is very seldom that we think of it as a flat at all, and the casual flow-through from room to room creates the illusion of far greater size and space than we have on paper. The bedroom was stolen from the old house; the old washhouse became the new bathroom; the small detached room was jockeyed along to fit at right angles to the living room. Only the living
room and part of the kitchen are new from the foundations up. Most people find it very difficult to discover just where the graft took place, though from the flat slightly pitched roof of the new living room you can see very easily the dovetailing of the new and the old.

Some of our very fixed ideas were thrown overboard. I wanted the living room to look down the valley towards the Orongorongas. In the old house all the living rooms face the view and all the utility rooms face the sunshine. But the very first sketches showed our living room turned to the sun and my kitchen sink set firmly facing the mountains. We moved into the flat in April and at once shook off that foolish insistence on a view. Sunlight poured in all winter, and whenever the sun shone we managed without a heater. What is more, the courtyard that we both secretly regarded as a concession to art and architecture, suddenly became the most pleasant place in our lives. We hadn't expected it to create so much privacy, and we hadn't expected the extraordinary sense of space where the windows are large enough to bring the outdoors right inside. The garden flourishes in the sheltered courtyard and softens the rather severe lines of the living room.

The City Council shattered a cheerful hangover from years of pouring over American architectural magazines. I wanted the kitchen to flow into the living room and, blithely waving my untidiness aside, demanded a half-wall between them. The by-law that prohibits cooking in living rooms did us a good turn. The fat that accumulates on the plate glass in the partition would have made a sorry mess of the curtains. Besides, to be comfortable in a southerly you need central heating flowing through open partitions.

A word or two about my kitchen.

After trying for three years to stack my pots and pans and keep my shelves in the manner so dear to American interior decorators, I set up housekeeping in the flat with a gay return to the clutter of my upbringing. To keep down costs I had kept down my demands for labour-saving niches and hidey-holes. Some day though I'd like a shallow cupboard six feet high and eight inches deep, with rows and rows of shelves for foodstuffs, with an all-embracing door to shut them out of sight, and another to take all my pots and pans in similar fashion. These dreams belong in the same compartment as the refrigerator, the electric ironer and the dish-washing attachment on my Thor.

On paper then my kitchen didn't altogether impress me, conditioned as I was to stainless steel and the general efficiency of a laboratory. But to work in it is a pleasure. Instead of being tucked away diligently in a gloomy back room, I can keep one ear on the pressure cooker and the other on the conversation in the living room. And in spite of the clear view through from the living room the confusion on the sink bench is not at all obtrusive.

Every kitchen is the nerve centre of family life, but ours is more than that. Guests drift through it, children dash across it madly, the photographer emerges into it with dripping prints—it's the centre of the household. And if you are alone in it, as housewives must often be, there is the view just where you need it most, stretching away beyond the kitchen sink.

PHOTOGRAPHY

JOHN ASHTON
This flat of ours was built over our heads. We expanded into it gradually as one corner after another was finished. The builders obviously wished us elsewhere, but they continued on with quiet unconcern, and when they left after six months we felt the whole upheaval was over at last.

But it wasn’t and it isn’t yet. It is fun still to have some decorating to do, still to have some fabrics to choose and some colours to match. The furniture was designed to fit the living room, and the colours were planned round the pottery and the fabrics we already had. If you have exposed rafters painted grey against a clear yellow ceiling, rough-textured grey curtains the full length of the room, and a bold blue and white pattern on your divans, it takes a while before you know just what else you would like to live with. We had been living there a long time before I began to see just where I must take over from where the architect and the builder left off.

Some things are missing in the flat. There’s no bath because we prefer a shower; there’s no laundry because we have an omnipotent washing machine; instead of lending character to the living room the books and records are fitted into the workroom to give the photographer as much clear wall-space as possible.

Anyone else taking over our flat would almost certainly use both the workroom and the bedroom for sleeping and keeping their living in stricter compartments. But with us every room except the darkroom leads a double life. The workroom is often used for a guest, and it opens into the living room whenever we have a party. We sleep in the living room and we eat there, and every now and then it is given over to spotlights, coils of flex and photography. The kitchen doubles as a laundry, the bathroom as a dressing room and the storage wall of the bedroom where we pack away all our clothes insulates the two flats against noise.

This is the way we wanted it. This happy combination of work and leisure would hardly be possible in a conventional house cluttered with chesterfield suites, occasional tables and dressing tables with cheval-mirrors. All the paraphernalia of our domestic and working lives can be packed away simply and easily into cupboards and closets. This reduces the clutter and confusion and keeps my homework down to a satisfactory minimum.

A tremendous amount has been crammed into a small area, but we never feel cramped. The light, the colour, the simplicity create the illusion of spaciousness.

Beatrice Ashton
The illustrations to this article are chiefly examples of better-known architectural and topographical prints. The author will complete the series in later issues with notes on rarer botanical prints and prints depicting 'social occasions.' The more technical aspects of print-making and collecting will also be discussed.

The left-hand picture is by Charles Heaphy showing sawyers at work in a kauri forest near Kaipara.

Below: An engraving by S. L. Paydon of the Nelson Provincial Government Building in 1861. The present state of this building will be the subject of an article in a future issue.

On page 97: The Wesleyan chapel and mission house at Wellington in the 1840s, a steel engraving by S. C. Brees.

Photographs by courtesy of
THE TURNBULL LIBRARY
EARLY NEW ZEALAND PRINTS

Doris Mcintosh

In Victorian England it was desirable for the politely educated lady or gentleman to have command of the brush—to master the arts of water-colouring or drawing. To this accomplishment, then, all New Zealanders owe a debt of gratitude, for it has left us with a rich legacy of pictures, of varying excellence perhaps, but of much value in reconstructing a bygone age. It is a fact that many of the early visitors to these shores, explorers, sailors, scientists and missionaries, were amateurs who had achieved some skill in the pursuit of a congenial hobby. The astonishing thing is that the standard of craftsmanship was so high. Most of these efforts were never reproduced or published, but many of them were, with the happy result that it is possible to build up a collection of New Zealand prints and engravings dating from the late eighteenth century.

For the purpose of this short article it is convenient to divide the subject into three parts—prints topographical, botanical and social. This account must serve merely as an introduction, and a sketchy one at that, to a subject almost inexhaustible in its possibilities and interest. Granted it is difficult to find in New Zealand examples for sale of these early printings, nevertheless libraries all over the country are rich in their collections. Here the prints can be studied at leisure, taste for them developed, and eventually, perhaps, acquisition of a few be achieved through catalogue buying from London.

The first pictorial account of New Zealand was published as early as 1726 with Valentyn's engravings, followed much later by the literature and illustrations surrounding Cook's three voyages—Parkinson's engravings of Hawkesworth's 'Account', 1773, being among the best known. Then come Hodges and Webber, artists more in the romantic vein. French explorers followed the English and left a profusion of records both pictorial and written.

With the coming of the missionaries, inevitably other Englishmen followed. Most notable among these early recorders of the New Zealand scene was Augustus Earle, who in 1832 published his Narrative of a Nine Months' Residence. Earle was a fine painter and, like French artists before him, saw the Maoris as beings of an earlier heroic age—a conception that is beautifully
conveyed in his painting".¹

The New Zealand Company played an important part in the cultural history of the country. The Company brought the artists and writers here in the first place, either as settlers or employees—"for more than a decade, and particularly in its early prosperous years, the Company acted as a generous patron of the arts, organizing expeditions into the interior, encouraging its servants to record what they saw, publishing the results in handsome books and lavish folios".² Charles Heaphy, appointed as draughtsman to the Company, was an artist of great merit and distinction. It was his duty to depict the Company’s settlements to give intending emigrants some idea of the kind of life they were coming to. His paintings were reproduced in England and used as a form of poster or advertisement. The first printings are now rare and have become much sought for by collectors. Heaphy was a great artist, possessed of imagination and sensitivity, deeply aware of the magnificence of the scene about him, and his painting reflects his depth of


2. Ibid.

Top: C. D. Barraud’s lithograph of the Maori Church at Otaki, until lately the most beautiful public building in New Zealand. Unhappily, recent restoration has brought changes, among them the substitution of reeded glass for the fine old lead-light windows. Lower left: A lithograph of Lyttelton from the early colonists’ collection at the Canterbury Museum. Lower right: Another of Brees’ engravings. It shows Tinakori Road, Wellington, in the forties.
feeling. Many of his colleagues in the Company's employ, surveyors or draughtsmen, were also artists—men such as Bees, Mein Smith and Barnicot have left many delightful sketches by which to judge them. There are many distinguished names in the art annals of the day among the early arrivals in the colony: Swainson, a collection of whose beautiful little drawings are to be seen in the National Art Galley, Wellington; Gilfilan and Angus were two other painters of great merit whose work was reproduced in England. Later came Gully, Barrard, Chevalier, Hoyte, Kinder, Naism and Buchanan, to name only the best known. These men were eloquent—their painting was executed with particular honesty and thoroughness, they described with the brush the wild landscape about them. If there was nothing bold or impressionistic about their work, their methods were nevertheless founded upon a sound technique—a technique which enabled them to express the scene with unambiguous clarity and accuracy. For this reason their pictures are historically valuable, and to us this is all important. When we look at Swainson's drawings of the Hutt Valley in the early forties we know we are looking at the country as it actually was, presented to us in a charming and realistic manner. If we peer closely into Heaphy's prints of Wellington in 1840, or, better still, visit the originals in the Turnbull Library, then we find ourselves transported into that raw little village of weatherboard cottages clinging timidly to the edge of beach—we see the bullock cart, the canoe being hauled up not far from the Bank of New Zealand corner. There are the Maoris, the gentlemen settlers in the costume of the time, the goats, all weaving into the panorama a perfect representation of the capital a hundred and ten years ago.

As the early written accounts and records provide us with the detail of life then, so these prints put it into graphic form. We ourselves, and the generations after, may thank the accomplished Englishmen who left in their paintings a legacy to any New Zealander interested enough in his country to wish to learn something of its origins.
GRAMOPHONE NOTES

John Gray

SOME RECORDS OF 1950

The editors have suggested that I might make a list of the most outstanding and musically valuable recordings released for sale in New Zealand during the past year. The task is a fascinating but unenviable one, as fully fifty per cent of the year’s many issues have proved to be in the ‘outstanding’ class, and long lists are wearisome.

Omitting mention of any sets previously reviewed in these articles, I therefore submit the following list of records which I believe to be, in each and every case (a) interesting and worthwhile as music, (b) first-class performances, and (c) superlative recordings.

Some may feature comparatively unfamiliar music – but I trust the majority of our readers will be willing to give such music a trial rather than to buy exclusively the better known works of Beethoven and Tchaikovsky.

(a) Sets

Mozart: Divertimento in D major, K.131. HMV DB 9354-6.

Dvořák: The Golden Spinning Wheel, op. 109. HMV DB 9284-6, both by Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (Beecham).


Brahms: Variations on a theme by Paganini. HMV DB 6009-10. Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli (piano).

Bach: Concerto in F Major. HMV DB 9370-2. Gioconda de Vito (violin), London Chamber Orchestra (A. Bernardi).

Vaughan Williams: Symphony No. 6 in E minor. HMV C7755-8. London Symphony Orchestra (Sir Adrian Boult).


(b) Single Issues


Mozart: Marriage of Figaro-Forgi amor.

Massenet: Manon – Adieu, ma petite table. HMV DB 6994. Victoria de los Angeles, soprano, and Orchestra under Suskind.


DINU LIPATTI

The news of the death of this brilliant young Romanian pianist will come as a shock to gramophone collectors who are seriously interested in pianoforte music. Lipatti was in his early thirties and had become an international figure only since the war, though in pre-war days he was known in France and made one or two records of diet music with Nadia Boulanger. I was privileged to hear him as soloist at one of the memorable concerts given at the reopening of the Milan Scala Theatre in 1946, when he played a Chopin concerto in faultless style. His Columbia records subsequently released do full justice to his art and it is comforting to know that some are still to be released.

Prominent among Dinu Lipatti’s recordings are two concertos – the Grieg and the Schumann, made for Columbia with the Philharmonic Orchestra. It is generally agreed that no finer recording of the Grieg has ever been made (and purchasers of these four records will find the spare side occupied by a magnificently played Chopin waltz). Concerning the Schumann, however, opinion is far less unanimous. Lipatti has treated the concerto as a virtuoso work – and who can say dogmatically that he is wrong? His full-blooded performance carries everything before it, and Herbert von Karajan’s vigorous treatment of the orchestra part does nothing to lessen the excitement. You may not agree with such galvanising of a hallowed classic – but for me there is now no other version.

Heading the small group of solo recordings is a grand performance of Chopin’s B minor sonata, opus 58. Here again the playing is quite perfect, the recording excellent. Of the slighter pieces I should recommend Liszt’s haunting and passionate Sonatina del Petrarcha, No. 104.
ANIMAL PRINTS
(IN SEVERAL COLOURS)

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Two potentially valuable sets just released in England are of Bach’s Partita No. 1 in B flat (LX 8744-5) and a complete series of Chopin waltzes (LX 1341-6). There is room on our shelves for both these recordings—may their arrival here not be long delayed.

Records already available:

**Schumann:** *Concerto* (conductor, von Karajan). Col LX 8624-7.

**Grieg:** *Concerto* (conductor, Alceo Gallieri). Col LX 8579-82.

(With Chopin’s Waltz in A flat, op. 34 No.1.)

**Chopin:** *Sonata No. 3 in B minor*, op. 58. Col LX 8560-2.

*Nocturne in D flat*, op. 27 No. 2. Col LB 63.

**Ravel:** *Alborada del Graciasso*. Col LB 70.

**Liszt:** *Sonnetto del Petrarcha*, No. 104. Col LB 68.

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**R. STRAUSS**

‘*Der Rosenkavalier*’ Act 2, *Presentation of the Silver Rose* and Finale (3 sides each).

Irmgard Seefried (Oktavian), Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (Sophie), Dagmar Hermann (Annina), Ludwig Weber (Baron Ochs), with the Vienna Philharmonic orchestra cond. Otto Ackerman. Columbia LX 8693-5. (24s). ‘The Presentation of the Silver Rose’ is not particularly satisfactory as a self-contained recording. It has two main faults. The first is that at the end of the allotted space—three sides—the music comes to a dead stop with no sense of finality at all and if we pass straight to side 4 we have arrived at a scene about half an hour further on in the opera. The second fault is a plain matter of casting, which seems to have been dictated by ‘box office’ considerations rather than from a desire for artistic completeness. Schwarzkopf and Seefried were a success in the Hansel and Gretel records—let’s use them in the Rosenkavalier Presentation score. The result is some ravishing singing, but from a dramatic point of view the feeling is wholly wrong. Seefried is by no means the first soprano to essay the part of Oktavian, but nothing will convince me that Strauss did not intend the role to be sung by at least a mezzo-soprano. Without the score in front of one, or else a detailed knowledge of the action, it is at times impossible to tell which character is singing, and, although the recording is incomparably better, this version does not displace the singing of soprano Elisabeth Schumann and contralto Marie Oliwańska in the old HMV set. But turn to the remaining three sides of the new set and you will find enough satisfaction to warrant purchasing the discs immediately. The amusing scene wherein the Baron Ochs, who has been slightly wounded in a quarrel with Oktavian, is propped up in a chair to recuperate, and is visited by the scheming Annina, is sung and played for all it is worth by Ludwig Weber and Dagmar Hermann. Here again a knowledge of what is going on is essential to complete enjoyment, and I have not the space to elaborate details here (see Ernest Newman’s Opera nights for a first-rate account). I attended several Rosenkavalier performances at the Vienna Opera in 1946 in which Ludwig Weber was starred as Ochs, and can assure readers that the whole of his wonderful characterization seems to have been caught on these discs. For fine singing and real ‘atmosphere,’ then, these records are highly recommended, and of course the use of two similar types of voice in the beautiful Presentation scene will very likely disturb some of you less than others.

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