

## HISTORICAL REISSUES

A "collectors' series" of historical recordings, wherever it is issued and under whatever auspices, is in effect an extension of the record club concept. Generally speaking record collectors are not misers. Even those whose chief interest is in labels know that a record was made to sound, and most of us like to share our treasures. This is a case where you can eat your cake and have it. The Rubini label thus takes us into some of the great British collections, which is to say some of the finest in the world. Checking the source credits against the labels and jackets it is not too difficult to guess that the code letters SJG and GV stand for Syd J. Gray and the joint collection of George Stuart and Vivian Liff. Other compilers are represented in the CC ("Collectors' Choice") series. If the overall quality of these transfers is unusually good considering the rarity of the originals, one may safely give credit to these collectors, first in their selection of choice materials in the best copies to be found, then in maintaining a high standard of copying. Of course there is some unevenness. The list has been growing for several years and some lessons have obviously been learned. Pitching old records involves a certain amount of guesswork; for the most part I think the correct answers have been found. Where they are definitely wrong - notably in the Chaliapin program - I believe the dubbing was done early in the game. Certain of the reproductions emerge with a hum and in the batch of 18 releases sent to me there were a couple of stylus jumps.

More serious complaints are in order regarding documentation; though full and informative notes are issued with some, several discs arrived with no notes at all. Some give minimal identification of the music and none of the composers' names. Such omissions in the standard repertoire may be justified on grounds of space, but there are many operas and songs represented here that only the specialist will recognize. Missing information, insofar as possible, has been supplied in the listings below.

Each of the programs inevitably reflects the interests and tastes of its compiler. No one could be expected to match his enthusiasm for each and every selection, but usually the reasons for his choice are

apparent enough, whether aesthetic or historical. Among the discs under consideration are 10 "recitals" by one or two singers, 3 "national anthologies" (planned as parts of continuing series), 4 "Collectors' Choice" programs, representing a cross-section of the compilers' favorites, and one abridged opera.

On this evidence our English counterparts have a predelection for the bass voice. Juste Nivette, Paul Payan, Francesco Navarini, Vanni-Marcoux, Vladimir Kastorsky and Feodor Chaliapin are represented in solo or shared "recitals." Among these are several interesting duplications of repertoire. Both Nivette and Navarini give us Pro peccatis, the former sounding somewhat strange with his French pronunciation of the Latin text, the latter remarkably free with his held notes and ritards. Both deliver the trill Rossini expected, Navarini to slightly better effect. Both of these singers also do the two bass arias from La Juive, each in his own language. Nivette is assisted by a rather primitive chorus. Il lacerato spirito is splendidly delivered by the rich-voiced Navarini, and it may be heard again in the Dick Alexander memorial selection sung by the excellent Giovanni Gravina. The Don Giovanni serenade is two different things in Vanni-Marcoux's expansive yet controlled performance and in the Russian version of Kastorsky.

MASSENET: Hérodiade. Vision fugitive; ROSSINI: Stabat Mater. Pro peccatis; HALEVY: La Juive. Si la rigueur; Vous qui du Dieu vivant; HENRION: Le Muletier de Tarragon; MEYERBEER: Le Pardon de Ploermel. Air du chasseur; NIEDERMEYER: Le Lac. Juste Nivette, basso. MASSENET: Cendrillon. Nous quitterons cette ville (with Suzanne Brohly); VERDI: Jérusalem. Grace mon Dieu; THOMAS: Le Caïd. Le Tambour major; AUBER: Haydée. À la voix séduisante; REYER: Sigurd. Odin Dieu farouche et sévère; THOMAS: Le Caïd. La Diane. Paul Payan, basso. GV 11. (Sheet with biographical notes; no composers given.)

These two fine singers had their careers in France, though Nivette was in this country in 1909 for the opening night of Henry Russell's Boston Opera Company. His is the finer of two impressive voices, but, among other unusual items, Payan copes successfully with the florid Tambour-major aria, if without quite the easy grace of

Plançon. Nivette opens with the baritone aria from Hérodiade, which loses something in being put down a minor third. No information is given about the music of this program. Surely it is of some interest to know that Le Muletier de Tarragon is a song by Paul Henrion (once recorded by Herbert Witherspoon), Le Lac an historically important one by Louis Niedermeyer, teacher of Fauré, that Massenet wrote Cendrillon (the duet with Brohly is beautifully sung), that Jérusalem is the French version of I Lombardi, that Sigurd is by Reyer and Haydée by Auber. The Chant du chasseur, from the opera better known to us as Dinorah, is listed on the label but omitted from the jacket.

ROSSINI: Stabat Mater. Pro peccatis; VERDI: Simon Boccanegra. Il lacerato spirito; DONIZETTI: Lucrezia Borgia. Vieni la mia vendetta... Qualunque già l'evate; HALÉVY: La Juive. Se oppresso ognor; Voi che del dio; BELLINI: Sonnambula. Vi ravviso; MEYERBEER: Robert le Diable. Suor che riposate; THOMAS: Mignon. Del suo cor; FLOTOW: Martha. Chi mi dirà; ROSSINI: Barbiere di Siviglia. La calunnia; VERDI: Don Carlos. Dormirò sol. Francesco Navarini, basso. MONPOU: Les Deux reines. Adieu mon beau navire; MASSENET: Don Quichotte. Sérénade (with Suzanne Brohly). Paul Payan, basso. GV 14. (Biographical notes on Navarini only by Leo Riemens.)

According to Riemens, Navarini was 51 in 1906 when he recorded 14 sides for Fonotipia. Only two numbers from Faust are missing here; for some reason their place is given over to Payan. Obviously of the royal line of Italian bassos, Navarini combined a superb voice with considerable versatility and admirable art. His bel canto style is splendidly demonstrated in Vi ravviso and in the aria and cabaletta from Lucrezia Borgia, in which he is assisted by an unnamed baritone (identified by Riemens as Coradetti). His unctious La calunnia, almost as much spoken as sung, is transposed down a tone. Payan's selections are again unusual - which of us knows Les Deux reines? It is an opera by Hippolyte Monpou (1804-1841), best remembered as an ancestor of modern French song. This simple air with chorus comes as a real novelty at this late date. Brohly's rich contralto again is a real asset in the Massenet.

FEVRIER: Monna Vanna. Ce n'est pas un viellard;  
PUCCINI: Bòhème. Vecchia zimmarra; MOZART: Don Giovanni. Deh! vieni alla finestra; MASSENET: Panurge. Chanson de la Touraine; MUSORGSKI: Boris Godounow. J'ai le pouvoir suprême; Scène du carillon; Sous les murs de Kazan; MARTINI: Plaisir d'amour; SEVERAC: Ma poupée chérie; GOUNOD: Envoi de fleurs; Prière; FAURÉ: Le Secret; TOSTI: Chanson de l'adieu; WECKERLIN: Le Beau séjour; FOLKSONG: Dans notre village. Vanni-Marcoux, bass-baritone. GVS 19. (Biographical notes by Eric Rees, with additional details by S. J. Gray; no composers.)

Once a favorite in Chicago, Vanni-Marcoux was by all accounts a great singing-actor. It is my misfortune never to have heard him. He seems to have had some difficulties in recording; I have often noted a kind of cloud over his records, and I note it again in parts of this program. This may, indeed, account for what Eric Rees laments as "the slowness of the recording companies to take him up." In any case, to my ears the voice itself was not an outstandingly beautiful one, though I agree it is "instantly recognizable," and I do not need to be convinced that he was a fine artist. He was at home in many styles, more versatile than his great rival Chaliapin. We have here two samples of his famous impersonation of Boris, along with Varlaam's song about the siege of Kazan (the last sung a half-tone down) in French. The Monna Vanna piece is a souvenir of a successful vehicle he shared with Mary Garden and Lucien Muratore; the Panurge is an old personal favorite of mine (it was recorded long ago by both de Gogorza and Clarence Whitehill). I am not quite so enthusiastic as Mr. Rees about Plaisir d'amour, of which I have numerous recordings, several easily as fine. Ma poupée chérie seems an odd business for a basso, especially if one knows the Croiza recording. The two Gounod songs please me more than the Fauré in this slow and cool interpretation. Le Beau séjour (charmingly sung) will be recognized as the bergerette known as Aminte, but done in the arrangement found in Weckerlin's Échos du temps passé. Dans notre village, with a simpler accompaniment, is in Bantock's 100 Folksongs of all nations.

GOUNOD: Faust. Mephistopheles' serenade; RUBINSTEIN: Before the aggressor (Ballade); KALINNIKOV: On the

burial mound; TCHAIKOVSKI: Pique Dame. Tomski's aria;  
Eugene Onegin. Gremin's aria; WAGNER: Tannhauser. O  
du mein holder Abendstern; Walkure. Wotan's farewell;  
GLINKA: Russlan and Ludmila. Farlaf's rondo; MOZART:  
Don Giovanni. Deh vieni alla finestra; SEROV:  
Judith. Hollofern's battle cry; TCHAIKOVSKI: I bless  
you, forests; At the ball; GLINKA: Midnight review;  
DARGOMIZHSKI: In the wild north (with Michailowa  
and Davidov); The Evening's golden clouds (with  
Zbrujeva and Davidov). Vladimir Kastorsky, basso.  
SJM 102. (All from Amour originals; biographical  
notes with program list.)

Kastorsky's was one of those big bass voices that come only from Russia. This varied program indicates an extensive international repertoire, all sung in Russian. The Faust serenade inevitably recalls Chaliapin; here is a strong argument in favor of translation as against Chaliapin's distorted French. But of course the most valuable parts of the program are the genuine Russian songs and arias, though unfortunately the mimeographed sheet with notes about the singer sheds no light on the unfamiliar selections. The Tchaikovsky songs are well known (the so-called Pilgrim's song is particularly effective) and the Rubinstein has been recorded by such artists as Piragov and Skobtsov under the title Ballade. Kastorsky's Midnight review is effective, though less of a drama than Chaliapin's. The Dargomizhski trios are a real and pleasant novelty, enlisting the lively voices of Michailowa, Davidov and Zbrujeva.

RIMSKI-KORSAKOV: Sadko. Song of the Viking guest;  
RACHMANINOFF: When yesterday we met; FOLKSONGS:  
A Mother-in-law had seven sons-in-law; The Green oak  
has fallen; The Gnat; RUBINSTEIN: The Prisoner;  
RIMSKI-KORSAKOV: On the hills of Georgia; LISHIN:  
She laughed; RUBINSTEIN: The Prisoner; SLONOV: A  
Farewell (Prisoner's song); TCHAIKOVSKI: The  
Nightingale; LIAPUNOV: Tale of Ivan the Terrible.  
Feodor Chaliapin, basso. GV 10. (No information  
except titles.)

This completely undocumented and haphazardly labeled program would offer more than its share of identification problems had not the job been done in Boris Semeonoff's discography (The Record Collector, Vol. XX, nos. 8-10,

August 1972). Matrix numbers and dates (1913-14) may be found there. I have corrected the titles - with one exception - to conform to Semeonoff's list. Four of them are starred in the discography to indicate previously unpublished material - the Rachmaninoff and Rimski-Korsakov songs, one take of the Rubinstein and what the label here calls Prisoner's song (Semeonoff identifies it as The Sun rises and sets). More recently EMI has issued a two-disc set of largely unpublished recordings, excluding only the Rubinstein (RLS 710). According to Semeonoff there are two songs labeled Siberian prisoner's song, one arranged by Karatygin and listed as Farewell to thee, the other (arranger unasccribed) as The Sun rises and sets. Actually there was a third in the Chaliapin repertoire, and that is the one included here. EMI has apparently followed Semeonoff in its titling. (The question arises, how many of the six listings in Semeonoff are actually The Sun rises and sets?) Problems of pitching have apparently not concerned the producers of this disc; a comparison with RLS 710 confirms the evidence of my ears that some care should have been taken. The Rachmaninoff and Rimski songs, as well as the Sadko and The Prisoner's song are a half-tone down, while the Tchaikovski is down a whole tone.

GLUCK: Orfeo ed Euridice. Che faró (B 9162/3); RIMSKI-KORSAKOV: May night. Levko's aria (B 9176/7); VERDI: Traviata. Parigi, o cara (with Neshdanova) (B 8950/1); PUCCINI: Bohème. Che gelida manina (B 9178/9); VERDI: Rigoletto. La donna è mobile (B 3882); Questa o quella (B 3881); WAGNER: Lohengrin. In fernem Land (B 6981/2); NAPRAVNIK: Dubrovskii. Dubrovskii's aria (B 9081/2); KASHEROVA: Tishina (Tranquility) (B 9184); GOUNOD: Barcarolle (Où voulez-vous aller?) (B 9185). Ivan S. Kozlovsky, tenor. GV 8. (From Russian shellac 78's, 1932-50; biographical and technical notes with program list and numbers.)

Kozlovsky was born in 1900 and was singing in Russia until quite recently. His name and voice must be familiar to all collectors interested in Slavonic music. The writer of the notes accounts for his longevity by the fact that he was a lyric tenor and never aspired to be anything else. And if there is one striking point about this "recital" it is the ease of his production. He does go so far as Lohengrin (sung a half-tone down) but mostly

brings us lighter repertory. Some of the translated numbers may seem a bit strange - Che faró, the two Rigoletto songs, above all Parigi, o cara, a half-tone down with unpredictable stops and starts - but the voice itself is always pleasing and the dubbings, from rare and difficult originals, are amazingly successful.

ADAM: Le Chalet. Il faut me ceder... Dans ce bois (with Pierre d'Assy); GOUNOD: Faust. Salut, demeure; ROSSINI: Barbieri di Siviglia. Sérénade; Audran: Gillette de Narbonne. Couplets de Parrain; BAZIN: Le Voyage en Chine--La Chine est un pauvre amoureux; OFFENBACH: La Fille du tambour major. Couplets du tailleur amoureux; C'est un billet (with Edmond Tirmont and Paul Payan); ROSSINI: Guillaume Tell. Barcarolle; THOMAS; Mignon. Elle ne croyait pas; HALEVY: L'Éclair. Quand dans la nuit; MASSENET: Sérénade du passant; RUPES: Rappelle-toi; HALEVY: La Juive. Sérénade; VERDI: Jérusalem. Je veux encore. Georges Régis, tenor. GV 13. (No notes; no composers)

But for a brief season at the Met (1909-10) Régis has been known in this country only by his numerous records, some of which were once listed by Victor. His voice was pleasant and typically French, somewhat suggestive of Clement but less distinctive and less subtly used. His program is divided between operetta and opera, with a couple of songs thrown in (Massenet's attractive Sérénade du passant is the better of them). He sings the familiar Faust aria, apparently, a half-tone up. To show his facility there is a French performance of Ecco ridente. The total impression is excellent though perhaps a little much; a single side might have sufficed.

HANDEL: Semele. Where'er you walk (Odeon 84232); Jeptha. Deeper and deeper still; Waft her, angels (Odeon 84235/238); BISHOP: My pretty Jane (When the bloom is on the rye) (Odeon 84241); CLUTSAM: I know of two bright eyes (Odeon 57585); LIDDLE: My lute (Odeon 57596); BIZET: Carmen. Flower song (Odeon ?); WALLACE: Maritana. Oh Maritana (with Rosina Buckman) (HMV 04217; 1918); MENDELSSOHN: Elijah. If with all your hearts (HMV 02816; 1918); MARTIN: The philosopher and the lady. Your eyes the stars (HMV 02838; Ho 3933 af; 1919); SULLIVAN: Once again (HMV 02626; Ho 1436ac; 1916); COLERIDGE-TAYLOR:

Sweet evenings come and go, my love (HMV 4-2745; Ho 2367-1/2ab); ELGAR: Pleading (HMV 4-2119; 12622e; 1911). Walter Hyde, tenor. SJG 104 or GV 4 (Jacket and label disagree.) (Biographical notes, program, record numbers and dates.)

Crossing the channel we find Walter Hyde, who after a start in light opera won real fame in Wagner (1908, in Richter's English Ring) and later in Italian parts. Coincidentally, he too sang at the Met in the 1909-10 season. As a good English tenor he knew his Handel, but this Were'er you walk is cut and there is a curious jump between sections. Deeper and deeper still shows that he could deliver recitative, but Waft her angels (surely one of Handel's finest arias) is delivered with rather too much strength and passion. And it is trimmed around the orchestral edges. The recorded sound is not too good, and I must note here some of the "mouthiness" mentioned in the accompanying notes. Not too much is added by the Victorian ballads and the English Flower song that complete the first side. The second is technically better. In the duet from Maritana he blends his admired mezza voce nicely with the sweet tones of Rosina Buckman. His Elijah is free and open, perhaps a little over-generous with portamento. Easthope Martin's piece, from a four-voice song cycle, is decidedly lightweight, but the three piano-accompanied songs that follow are progressively more interesting musically. The Sullivan, very much of the Victorian era, calls for more mezza voce, the Coleridge-Taylor for some good straight singing. After this the Elgar may seem even better than the haunting thing it is.

SCHUMANN: Frühlingsnacht (G&T 43191; mt. 2804b);  
BRAHMS: Der Schmied; GRIEG: Jägerlied (G&T 43322);  
RUBINSTEIN: Neue Liebe (G&T 43192); SCHUBERT: Die Allmacht  
(Pre-dog 043146/7; mt. 453-54s); WAGNER: Rheingold.  
Erda's Warning (Pre-dog 043093, mt. 394s); Tannhäuser.  
Elisabeth's Gebet (Pre-dog 043094; mt. 355s); MOLLOY:  
Love's old sweet song (G&T 3437; mt. 1113x); WAGNER:  
Lohengrin. Entweihte Götter (Pre-dog 2-43050; mt. 3958r);  
Walküre. Walkürenruf (G&T 43999; mt. 3957r). Edyth Walker,  
contralto-soprano. BIZET: Carmen. Habanera (HMV V 197);  
MEYERBEER: Prophète. Ah, mon fils (HMV V 109);  
DONIZETTI: Favorita. O mon Fernand (HMV V 109); SIBELIUS:  
Sav, sav, susa (Odeon 162337); GRIEG: En Svane (Odeon  
162337); MAHLER: Urlicht; Ich bin der Welt abhanden  
gekommen (Ultraphon E 288). Mme. Charles Cahier,  
contralto. GV 12. (Biographical notes and discographies.)



Two American contraltos share this disc (with the Tannhäuser prayer and Brünnhilde's battle cry to remind us that Edyth Walker became a soprano). Mme. Charles Cahier (whose maiden name was also Walker) was a favorite singer in Mahler's Viennese opera - Walker had preceded her there - and was the first to sing Das Lied von der Erde. Walker's early records are unfortunately somewhat woolly in quality; Cahier, when she recorded, was drawing near the end of her active singing days (aside from two made in 1907 and listed in Bauer - not included here - her records are all electric) and as I remember her they do her scant justice. Walker begins with Frühlingsnacht, singing it twice, first to an unfamiliar text of which I can catch only an occasional word, then repeating it distinctly enough with the familiar poem. She makes a bit of an embellishment toward the second performance; and she adds emphasis by singing ja before the final sie ist dein'. The songs of Brahms, Grieg and Rubinstein are well sung, but Erdas Warnung, delivered with real tonal beauty and authority, seems to me the best thing on the program. Die Allmacht is free and rather operatic; since it was recorded on two ten-inch sides there is a break which the dubbers have made no attempt to join. Love's old sweet song fits in oddly here, sung very straight and with the piano interludes unmercifully rushed. Entweihte Gotter offered problems for the early recording; Ho-jo-to-ho! fared rather better, though the singer took her time with it.

Mme. Cahier sings the Habanera first, but I suspect Carmen was not her best role - nor French her best language. Ah, mon fils and O mon Fernand (sung in the original French) have their moments, but to me the songs of Sibelius and Grieg are finer, despite the trumped-up orchestrations. The two Mahler songs (the first an excerpt from the second symphony) are from a famous record conducted by Selmar Meyrowitz, suppressed in Germany when the Nazis took over; the masters, I understand, were destroyed. Ich bin der Welt is somewhat hurried to fit onto a twelve-inch side, but Urlicht is fine, if not quite what she would have made of it a decade or so earlier.

ZELLER: Der Obersteiger. Ja, dort in den Bergen;  
Der Vogelhandler. Ich bin die Christel von der Post;  
SCHUMANN: Der Nussbaum. Mondnacht; BENEDICT:

Carneval von Venedig; WOLF: Mein Liebster singt;  
O wär dein Haus; Gesegnet sei das Grün; Mir ward  
gesagt; Mein Liebster ist so klein; Ich hab' in  
Penna; Ein Stündlein wohl vor Tag; Elfenlied; Trau  
nicht der Liebe; Sie blasen zum Abmarsch; BRAHMS:  
Wie Melodien zieht es mir; Das Mädchen spricht;  
 STRAUSS: An den schonen blauen Donau; RUBINSTEIN:  
Valse caprice; STRAUSS (Josef): Mein Lebenslauf  
ist Lieb und Lust; STRAUSS (Johann 2): Annenpolka;  
 REGER: Mariä Wiegenlied (Maria auf dem Berge);  
 FOLKSONG: Auf dem Berge; MOZART: Don Giovanni. Wenn  
du fein fromm bist; Nozze di Figaro. Ihr, die ihr  
Triebe; PUCCINI: Bohème. Walzer der Musette;  
 MEYERBEER: Huguenots. Ihr edlen Herren; STRAUSS:  
Wein, Weib und Gesang; FOLKSONG: 2 Xmas songs (Ihr  
Kinderlein kommet; Süsser die Glocken nie klingen);  
Xmas song (Ihr Kinderlein kommet); THOMAS: Mignon.  
Titania ist herabgestiegen; VERDI: Ballo in maschera.  
Lasst ab die Fragen. Lotte Schoene, soprano (80th  
 Birthday album). GV 16, 2 discs. (By way of notes  
 the Lotte Schoene issue of The Record collector with  
 complete discography is included, Vol. XX, no. 4)

The day was 15 December 1971; the souvenir album  
 (with the singer pictured on the cover in four roles)  
 was designed to represent various aspects of her art -  
 opera, operetta, lieder, folksong and frank display  
 pieces. Since the labeling is in German I take it it  
 was planned primarily for distribution in the singer's  
 native land. Technically it is the poorest of the Rubini  
 releases I have heard, no doubt at least partly due to  
 defective (but unique) originals. But it is also marred  
 by untidy starts and abrupt cutoffs. The arias are all  
 sung in German with the artist's fabled charm, those  
 from Huguenots, Mignon and Ballo a half-tone down. The  
 two Zeller numbers are of curiosity interest, as they are  
 not Sei nicht böse and the Nightingale song by which the  
 operettas are chiefly remembered. A couple of lieder by  
 Schumann and Brahms have been available (and admired)  
 before, but the generous group of Wolf were previously  
 unpublished. They are beautifully sung, but were  
 probably withheld because of poor balance. The  
 mysteriously labeled Xmas songs are identified above.  
 I cannot account for the altered text of the Reger song.

FAMOUS RUSSIAN SINGERS, Vol. 1: SEROV: Judith. Aria.  
 N. E. Jushina, soprano. RUBINSTEIN: Nero. Ah! mon  
 sort. L. M. Klementyeff, tenor. NAPRAVNIK:  
Dubrovskii. French duet. M. Michailowa, soprano;  
 N. A. Bolshakov, tenor. VRANGEL: What a glorious  
 night. A. D. Vialtzeva, contralto. GOUNOD: Roméo  
 et Juliette. Ah, leve-toi, soleil. N. N. Fignoer,  
 tenor. RUBINSTEIN: Demon. I am he whom you called.  
 N. A. Shevlev, baritone. TCHAIKOVSKI: Eugene  
 Onegin. Alas, there is no doubt. A. Kamionsky,  
 baritone. MEYERBEER: Prophète. Sopra Berta; Brindisi  
 (Corriam, volliam). I. V. Erschov, tenor.  
 TCHAIKOVSKI: Eugene Onegin. Gremin's aria. V. I.  
 Kastorsky, basso. TCHERNIAVSKI: Melodia Tzigane.  
 Maria Kouznetzoff, soprano. DARGOMIZHSKI: The  
 Kiss; The Fair haired maiden. A. I. Mozjouhin,  
 basso. SEROV: Rogneda. Have pity on my beloved.  
 E. I. Zbrujeva, contralto. RIMSKI-KORSAKOV:  
Snegourotchka. So full of wonders. Alexander M.  
 Labinski, tenor. TRAD.: Haida troika. Alexander M.  
 Davidov, tenor. GB 15. (Leaflet with background  
 and biographical notes.)

RUSSIAN SINGERS, Vol. 2: FLOTOW: Martha. M'appari.  
 Leonid Sobinoff, tenor (G&T 2-22650). MASSENET:  
Werther. Air des larmes. Medea Mei-Figner, soprano  
 (G&T 23124). ?: La Diabliesse. I have come to your  
 shaded garden. Nicolai G. Svetlanoff, tenor  
 (G&T 22070). BIZET: Carmen. Final duet. Eugenia I.  
 Zbrujeva, contralto; Eugene E. Vitting, tenor  
 (Amour 024052/3). GRECHANINOV: Dobrinia Nikititch.  
 Aria. Gabriel A. Morskoi, tenor (?). DELL'ACQUA:  
Villanelle. Nadine Van Brandt, soprano (Amour  
 mtx. 6727). RIMSKI-KORSAKOV: Le Coq d'or. Hymne  
 au soleil. Antonida V. Neshdanova, soprano  
 (G&T 2-23483). SEROV: Judith. Cease your grumbling.  
 Lev M. Sibiriakov, basso (Amour 022319). NAPRAVNIK:  
Don Juan's serenade. Polikarp D. Orloff, baritone  
 (Pathé 27406). TCHAIKOVSKI: Pique Dame. Pauline's  
 aria. Eugenia I. Zbrujeva, contralto (Amour 2-23174).  
 LEONCAVALLO: Pagliacci. Herlequin's serenade.  
 A. M. Karenzin, tenor (Zonophone 2-62485).  
 SAINT-SAËNS: Samson et Dailila. Vengeance at last.  
 Elizabeth F. Petrenko, contralto; Amexander M. Bragin,  
 baritone (G&T 2-24134). PROCH: Variations. (Ital).  
 Vera V. Lutse, soprano (Zonophone X-63954). GV 20.

(Sheet with biographical notes and record numbers.)

These two discs inaugurate a series intended "through the medium of the gramophone record to build up a sound picture of opera in Russia at the end of the nineteenth, and the commencement of the twentieth centuries..." Surely it was no accident that Chaliapin, Baklanoff, Smirnov, Sobinoff and Kouznetzoff became international celebrities, yet there were other artists who might have matched them had they chosen to leave home.

The very first singer here, Jushina, impresses with a lovely soprano voice; later on there is some brilliant coloratura singing not only by the well known Neshdanova, but by Van Brandt and Lutse. The tenor Ershov produces some exciting, almost Tamagno like high notes in the two selections from Prophète. Russian tenors have a way of sounding "typical," but there are some excellent ones here - Figner and Davidov are outstanding. Bolshakov blends nicely with Michailowa in the Dubrovskii duet. Anyone who does not know the contralto Zbrujeva is in for a treat, in the effective display piece from Rogneda, the legato ballad from Pique Dame and in the dramatic Carmen duet with Vitting. One double mystery is included: the note-writer confesses ignorance as to the composer of La Diabliesse and the tenor Svetlanoff who sings the aria. Much more could be said of these two discs; suffice it to recommend them. The dubbings must have posed unusual problems, but no apologies are needed for the results.

SINGERS IN SWEDEN: Vol. 1: RANDEL: Värmlanningarna.  
I villande skogen jag. Anna Hellstrom-Oscar,  
soprano. OFFENBACH: Les Bavards. C'est l'Espagne.  
Rosa Grunberg, soprano. SJÖBERG: Tonerna; ALFVEN:  
Jag längtar dig; VERDI: Rigoletto. La donna è  
mobile. Samuel Hybinette, tenor. OFFENBACH: Orfée  
aux Enfers. Quand j'étais roi de Boetie. Oscar  
Bergstrom, baritone. HENNEBERG: Värvisa. Davida  
Hesse-Lillienberg, soprano. VERDI: Trovatore.  
Stride la vampa! Julia Claussen, contralto. MOZART:  
Don Giovanni. Finch' han dal vino. John Forsell,  
baritone. Don Giovanni. La ci darem la mano;  
ROSSINI: Barbiere di Siviglia. Dunque io son.  
Hellstrom-Oscar and Forsell. ADAM: Si j'étais  
roi. J'ignore son nom; GOUNOD: Roméo et Juliette.  
Ah! lève-toi, soleil. Arvid Odman, tenor.

WENNEBERG: Gluntarne. Impromptubalen. Oscar Bergstrom, baritone; August Svensson, basso.  
WAGNER: Lohengrin. Mein lieber Schwann. Modest Menzinsky, tenor. DONIZETTI: Favorita. Una vergine, un angio di dio. David Stockman, tenor. GV 17.  
(Sheet with biographical notes.)

This is the beginning of a survey of vocal art in Sweden; as planned Vol. 5 will carry us into what we may call the Jussi Bjoerling period. We should remember that these singers are a part of a history, whatever our personal reactions may be - it is not necessary to like everything to find it interesting. For example, it would be difficult for me to be enthused over the first soprano, Hellstrom-Oscar, whose voice strikes me as cold and stiff, though the accompanying notes establish her pre-eminence. Some information might have been given about the aria she sings, from Andreas Randel's incidental music for a play by F. A. Dahlgren. Rosa Grunberg who follows must have been a superior operetta singer; Samuel Hybinette was a surgeon as well as a fine concert tenor. I found his voice particularly appealing in the Swedish songs, though the Rigoletto (in Italian) is not without charm. The very Swedish Varvisa (Spring song) attractively sung by Hesse-Lilienberg is by Richard Henneberg (1853-1925). Julia Claussen, for fifteen seasons at the Metropolitan, gives us Stride la vampa! in Swedish with Verdi's trills (which most contraltos disregard). Her voice is rich and vibrant, her style rather free. This performance tells us considerably more than her undistinguished American Columbias. John Forsell, internationally famous Don who sang one season at the Met, goes twice through Finch'han dal vino, very fast in Swedish and even faster in Italian. The most impressive of the others is Modest Menzinsky, who gives us a fine account of Lohengrin's farewell, in German.

IN MEMORIAM, DR. DICK ALEXANDER (1924-1968): GOUNOD: Roméo et Juliette. Ah, lève-toi, soleil (Ital.). Fernando de Lucia, tenor (Pre-dog 2-25660).  
DELIBES: Lakmé. Pourquoi dans les grands bois. Catherine Mastio, soprano (Zonophone 1295). GOUNOD: Faust. Laisse-moi contempler. Georgette Bréjean-Silver, soprano; Emile Scarmberg, tenor (Fonotipia 86001). GODARD: Jocelyn. Berceuse. Victor Capoul, tenor (Fonotipia 39089). GODARD: Chanson de Florian.

Angelica Pandolfini, soprano (G&T 53333). VERDI: Simon Boccanegra. Il lacerato spirito. Giovanni Gravina, basso (G&T 52367). HALÉVY: La Juive. Il va venir (Ital). Amelia Pinto, soprano (Fonotipia 69194). TOSTI: Ideale. Prof. Alessandro Moreschi, castrato (G&T 54758). BELLINI: Sonnambula. Come per me sereno. Olimpia Boronat, soprano (G&T 053188). TRAD.: My love Nell. David Bispham, baritone (G&T 2-2689). VERDI: Trovatore. D'amor sull'ali rosee (Ger). Luise Perard-Petzl, soprano (Gram 65540). NICOLAI: Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor. Buffo duet. Leopold Demuth, baritone; Wilhelm Hesch, basso (G&T 044008). WAGNER: Rienzi. Gerechter Gott. Edyth Walker, contralto (Gram 043144/5). STRADELLA?: Pieta, Signore. Fernando de Lucia, tenor (Phonotype M 1879). DJA 100. (Biographical notes with numbers on sleeve.)

In a warmly appreciative introductory note Vivian Liff blames Dr. Alexander's early death on the burdens of his medical practice. In such time as he could spare he collected for quality rather than quantity. This selection, assembled by Liff and Mrs. Alexander, may be taken as representative. Since the program begins and ends with de Lucia we may assume this tenor was his favorite. Romeo's aria was selected as probably the rarest of the G&T's; Pietà Signore, attributed to Stradella, a late recording, has personal interest because de Lucia sang this aria di chiesa at Caruso's funeral. Characteristically the performances are very distended, with endless embellishments and holds. The top rarity of the program, however, is the one known surviving record of the legendary nineteenth-century Capoul, singing the famous lullaby he "created" in the opera Jocelyn (1888). Capoul was 66 in 1905, his voice well worn, the recording primitive; yet flashes come through. The same Godard's Chanson de Florian is charmingly, if expansively, sung by the Italian Pandolfini. A prime curio is Prof. Moreschi's familiar Tosti song, very freely performed and much appreciated by an applauding studio audience. Admirers of Boronat, Bréjean-Silver, Scaremberg and Pinto will find them well represented, and some like myself will be happy to make the acquaintance of Catherine Mastio. Perard-Petzl's beautiful, if Germanic, Trovatore deserves special mention, and the earlier, piano-accompanied, version of

the famous buffo duet of Demuth and Hesch. But what pleases me most of all is Bispham's delightful Irish song, a model of easy delivery.

FROM THE COLLECTION OF RICHARD BEBB: ROSSINI: Stabat Mater. Inflammatus. Elena Ruszkowska, soprano, with chorus (HMV 043250). BRUNEAU: L'Attaque du moulin. Adieu à la foret. Charles Friant, tenor (HMV W 516). MASCAGNI: Cavalleria rusticana. Voi lo sapete. Guiseppina Cobelli, soprano (VDRP R 5183). MASSENET: Les Enfants. François Vianec, baritone (HMV 3-32918). DONIZETTI: Linda di Chamounix. Al bel destin. Eliza Tromben, soprano; Carolina Pietracewska, contralto (HMV 054212). FLOTOW: Alessandro Stradella. Jungfrau Maria. Arthur Preuss, tenor (HMV 3-42538). ALYABIEV-ORGENI: Die Nachtigall. Anni Christiansen, soprano (Vox 02120). TOSTI: Ideale; GIORDANI: Caro mio ben. Mattia Battistini, baritone (Tonotecnica C 5002, C 5008). BARBIROLLI: Si je pouvais mourir. Robert Couzinou, baritone (Apex 18000). VERDI: Aida. O Vaterland. Luise Perard-Petzl, soprano (HMV 043263). NEVIN: The Rosary. Albert Garcia, baritone (Pathé 77260). CC 3. (Sheet of biographical notes, program with record numbers.)

Mr. Bebb tells us his aim has been to offer unusual material, generally avoiding the singers best known to collectors. He opens with a stunning Inflammatus which I am surprised to note was once available in this country. Ruszkowska was one of Victor's "Famous Artists of Europe," well represented by duets and ensembles from Aida, Tosca and Gioconda. There is some confusion over her name: I understand she is not the Elena Rakowska who was married to Tullio Serafin and sang three seasons at the Met, the introductory notes notwithstanding. Cobelli, a specialist in Wagner and Verismo, surprises by the unusual soft quality of her tone, Preuss by his untypical lyric voice and his trill. Tromben and Pietracewska, about whom Bebb has little information, despite their names sing well together in the genuine La Scala style. Both, incidentally, were once represented in the Victor catalog. Robert Couzinou (at the Met 1918-20?, a fine singer with a distinctive voice, sings a salon song of which he must have been fond, since he recorded it also for French Polydor. Offenberg displays an attractive tone in a

much abbreviated Freischütz prayer, and Perard-Petzl turns in an excellent German O patria mia. The two Battistini songs are extremely rare late examples of his singing, representing his one brief defection from the HMV studios. Other notable items include the Alyabiev Nightingale sung with spectacular high notes by the mysterious Anni Christiansen and a Massenet song by another good French baritone. The interest in Albert Garcia's Rosary is rather personal than musical. His grandfather was Manual Garcia, the centenarian teacher of so many notables.

COLLECTORS CHOICE FROM THE COLLECTION OF SYD GRAY: BUZZI-PECCIA: Columbetta. Claudia Muzio, soprano. FOLK SONG: Okuljoo (Monotonously rings the little bell) (in Danish). Stefan Islandi, tenor, with chorus. BREWER: The Fairy pipers. Sigrid Onegin, contralto. WOODFORDE-FINDEN: Kashmiri love song. Alfred Piccaver, tenor. COATES: The Fairy tales of Ireland. Florence Austral, soprano. KASCHEROVA: Tranquility (Tishina). Ivan Kozlovsky, tenor. SCHUBERT: Die Liebe hat gelogen. Kirsten Flagstad, soprano. SHARP, arr.: Poor old horse. Harry Plunket Greene, baritone. KILPINEN: Ruusupiieni. Hanna Granfelt, soprano. GUERRERO: Martierra. Ancha vela marina. Juan Garcia, tenor. FOLK Song: Oi deti idesh. Salomea Kruszelnicka, soprano. PETERSEN-BERGER: Afton-stamning. Hugo Hasslo, tenor. PONCE: Estrellita. Nina Koshetz, soprano. KNAPP: Open the gates of the temple. Dan Beddoe, tenor. CC 1. (Mineographed sheet with biographical notes.)

There is lovely singing by Muzio in the Buzzi-Peccia trifle; though this is one of her late electrical records it seems to have been generally overlooked. To hear the fine Icelandic tenor and chorus sing a Russian folk song in Danish is something of a novelty and an attractive one. Plunket Greene, aged 69, is inimitable in a delightful folk song, and Hanna Granfelt's voice is lovely in her Kilpinen song. An evening mood of Petersen-Berger is illumined by the fine singing of Hugo Hasslo and Florence Austral makes a beautiful thing of Eric Coates' slight Fairy tales of Ireland.



Interest of another kind attaches to one of the Ukranian folksongs recorded for American Columbia in 1928 by the legendary Salomea Kruszelnicka (otherwise Kruscheniski) and the rare Estrellita of Nina Koshetz is much sought after. I care less for Ohegin's bumptious performance of The Fairy pipers (sacred to the memory of Dame Clara Butt), Piccaver's somnolent Kashmiri song, and even the unpublished Flagstad, in which the balance is poorer than in the published take, and more surprisingly she sings a wrong note. It is always good to hear Dan Beddoe, the great oratorio tenor of my young days and still unsurpassed. He sang gloriously into his sixties and this recording belongs to that period. But for all the eloquence of his performance this song adds up to little: I would have preferred one of the Elijah arias recorded at the same time. Kozlovsky's virtuoso performance of Tranquility is duplicated in his recital considered above but the dubbing is somewhat noisier here. As to labeling, this is the most confused issue of the lot: sides 1 and 2 are reversed between jacket and labels, and in turn the labels are reversed on the disc.

EARLY GRAMOPHONE ARTISTS: ?: An April morning;  
 RONALD: Friend and lover. Joseph O'Mara, tenor (1901). THOMAS: Le Baiser. Luisa Sobrina, soprano (1903). JORDAN: Love abiding. Evan Williams, tenor (1906). HAWLEY: The Sweetest flower that blows; NEVIN: Mighty lak' a rose. Esther Palliser, soprano (1902). HANDEL: Samson. Honor and arms. Robert Watkin-Mills, baritone. LEHMANN: Fairy lullabye. Louise Dale, soprano (1904). WHITE: A Devout lover. Richard Green, baritone (1900). GOETZ: Melisande in the woods. Alice Gomez, contralto (1902). SULLIVAN: Mikado. My object all sublime. Richard Temple, baritone (1903). WEBER: Oberon. Ocean, thou mighty monster. Agnes Nicholls, soprano (Jan 1911). SULLIVAN: The Sorcerer. The Curate's song. Andrew Black, baritone (1902). TCHAIKOVSKI: Joan of Arc. Farewell, forests. Mrs. Henry Wood, soprano (1908). WALLACE: Lurline. Sweet spirit, hear my prayer. Eleanor Jones-Hudson, soprano (1908). GV 7 (No notes.)

Apparently one is expected to know all about the recordings dubbed into this program; not only are there

no composers credited but even the artists' first names are missing, both from the labels and the jacket. Fortunately I have been able to supply most of the missing information. "Joseph O'Mara," says P. G. Hurst, "was with hardly a doubt the finest English-speaking operatic tenor of our period. He had a voice of true Italian quality which he delivered with power and sweetness and he was a first-rate actor. In the roles in which I heard him - Tannhäuser, Florestan, Canio, Don Jose, and Hoffmann - he was comparable with the best..." He sings two slight songs, only one of which I have been able to identify. This is hardly enough to help us imagine him in the roles listed above, but the impression is pleasant. I found Sobrino a pleasing British-type soprano, singing the Goring Thomas song in what seems to be English. Evan Williams puts splendid favor into another old-fashioned song and there is no doubt about the language. Palliser, about whom Hurst again waxes enthusiastic, has been only a name to me. Her singing is very agreeable, but Hawley's setting of the text more familiar in the Rogers song (At parting) is to say the least no improvement, and the Nevin tidbit is altogether too familiar. Watkin-Mills is obviously at home in the Samson aria, articulating with care. I doubt, however, that he actually transposed it up a half-tone. Louise Dale is attractive enough in Liza Lehmann's not very slumbrous lullaby. Better known songs are the White and the Goetz, the latter here sung by the excellent contralto who made it famous. Temple, an original Savoyard, delivers the Mikado's song with relish, and Andrew Black does as much for the Curate. Two recordings of greater value are a shortened version of the great Oberon aria in the original English by Agnes Nicholls (Mrs. Hamilton Harty) and Joan of Arc's farewell by Mrs. Henry Wood (we are not told that Mrs. Wood is accompanied by her husband). Clearly these were two fine singers. Finally Eleanor Jones-Hudson, a popular recording artist in her day, sings the Lurline prayer with proper sentiment.

ROSSINI: Il Barbiere di Siviglia--Abridged.  
Fernando de Lucia, tenor (Count Almaviva);  
Francesco Novelli, baritone (Figaro); Maria  
Resemba, soprano (Rosina); Giorgio Schottler,  
basso (Dr. Bartolo): Stefano Valentino, basso  
(Don Basilio); Angelo di Tommaso, basso (Fiorello);

Nina Sabatana, soprano (Berta); Chorus and orchestra of Teatro San Carlo, Naples; Salvatore Sassano, conductor. SJJ 121, 2 discs. (Full and extensive notes.)

It took the collaboration of several collectors to produce an abridged Barber from the fabled Phono-type set featuring de Lucia. It was decided that since the supporting cast was no better than it had to be only the sides in which the tenor sings would be included. And so here we have not the complete opera but de Lucia's complete role. As everyone knows these records were made in the later stages of his career, but aside from some shortness in the upper range he was very much his old self. His coloratura was still a matter for wonder and the quality of his voice was in many spots exceptionally beautiful. We know his very personal approach to the music he sang; he belonged to the school that believed in taking liberties (and this was always expected in Rossini). No question he identified with his role. And since as noted the rest of the cast is at best negligible they need not detain us. What matters is that the transfers have been made with great care and aside from some unevenness between the original record sides the whole stands up well, preserving for us a celebrated singer in one of his great roles.

Rubini's home address is 15 Drybridge Hill, Woodbridge, Suffolk, U. K. The records are available in many stores here, especially those specializing in importations. The price is \$7.50 per disc.

By Philip L. Miller