



The Phonographic Record

The Journal of The Vintage Phonograph Society of New Zealand

A Society formed for the preservation of Recorded Sound

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and Pamela G. Rogers.

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New Zealand.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

A WORD FROM THE SECRETARY.

I would like to say thank you, as your Secretary, to Walter Norris for his co-operation and hard work during his term as President. We were both inexperienced in so many aspects of running the Society and it has required much patience (and a sense of humour) to reach the successful conclusion of this second year. And in turn, both Walter and I would like to thank most sincerely, Mr. W.E. Webb who, this year, did not stand for re-election to the Committee. Without his gentle prodding, the Society may never have been founded; we shall miss his wise counsel at Committee Meetings.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Those of you who intend ordering a stroboscope from James Heath, (see the previous issue of the Magazine) please note his change of address. He is now at 45 Bletsoe Ave., Christchurch, 2.

CHANGE OF POSTAGE RATE.

Frank James who can supply the Edison cylinder box labels (also see previous issue) advises a slight rise in postage rates. Postage on 25 labels, now 5 cents on 50 labels, 9 cents; on 75 labels, 9 cents; on 100 labels, 13 cents. New Zealand collectors who would like a sample of these excellent labels, please send a stamped addressed envelope to the Secretary.

BINDERS FOR "THE PHONOGRAPHIC RECORD".

We are pleased to announce that these binders have now arrived from England and we are delighted at their quality. Unfortunately, we overlooked that rather necessary evil, Customs Duty and this has made the price (including packing and postage) \$N.Z. 1.35 (13/6.) On receipt of payment we'll forward one (or more) to you. We are now also able to supply a complete set of ALL issues of The Phonographic Record at \$N.Z.2 (or \$N.Z.1 per volume). Individual copies are available at 10 cents each.

SUBSCRIPTIONS.

Some subscriptions remain unpaid. Please note that this is the last issue of this Magazine which will be posted until a renewal is received.

A CHANCE OF A LIFETIME.

"The Phonographic Record" Volume 2, Issue 5, shows illustrations of both versions of the painting. "The Phonograph" Members are advised that a large (approx. 24" x 18") coloured print of the top one is for sale. It is in a wide and elaborate gilt frame. This is a rare item and we are calling for offers. Further information from the Secretary.

NO LONGER INCOGNITO.

You will note that we print, in this issue, the names of your two editors. This is at the request of the Committee and not a sudden sprouting of ego. Walter looks after the technical side and takes most of the photographs for our illustrations: Pam puts things together and does the setting out. And this seems as good a place as any to say thank you for the help received from members. The use of one address only is for practical reasons - it doubles as the secretarial one. But for those who want to cross technical or photographic swords with Walter please note his address - "Waipapa" Swannanoa, Rangiora R.D., New Zealand.

FAREWELL WORDS FROM ONE PRESIDENT.....

As my last words to you, as President and Co-founder of the Society, I would like to take this opportunity of thanking all who have assisted me during my two years in office. I am sure that you will give my successor the same solid support you have given me. I have thoroughly enjoyed the many contacts I have had with you all and shall be happy to hear from any member who cares to write to me or call on me. I shall not be losing touch with you altogether as I shall remain as photographic and technical editor of "The Phonographic Record."

I would like to welcome Mr. W.S. Dini, our incoming President and know that under his leadership, the Society will continue to flourish and grow.

Walter T. Norris.

.....AND A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO ANOTHER

Bill Dini's interest in things historical is not limited to phonographs. He is also President for New Zealand of the Aviation Historical Society of N.Z. His interest in phonographs began in his childhood days when he listened to cylinders played on his father's Edison Standard, and later Edison Concert which still provokes comment at the Antigua Boatsheds. His collecting interest tends mainly towards mechanical musical instruments. He has recently been experimenting with the setting of styli in phonograph reproducers and the making of the bell of an Edison Concert horn (a remarkable achievement); he has also done much fine work in the restoration of machines.

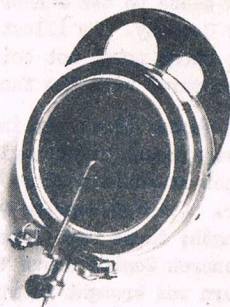
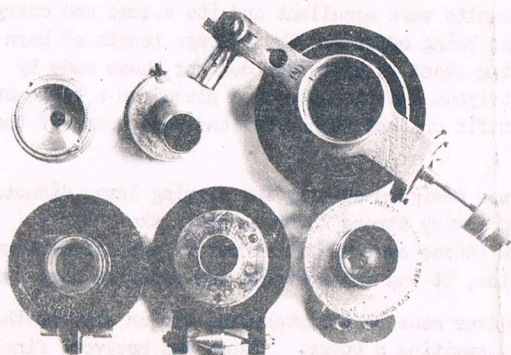
In the previous issue of "The Phonographic Record" we promised to prove to you that it is possible to play a 34" record. We now print a photograph of Mr. C.E. Woledge as a young man and have asked him to tell us about the gramophone pictured with him.

MAKING A GRAMOPHONE

by C.E. Woledge.

The illustration, from a photograph taken before the outfit was completely finished,

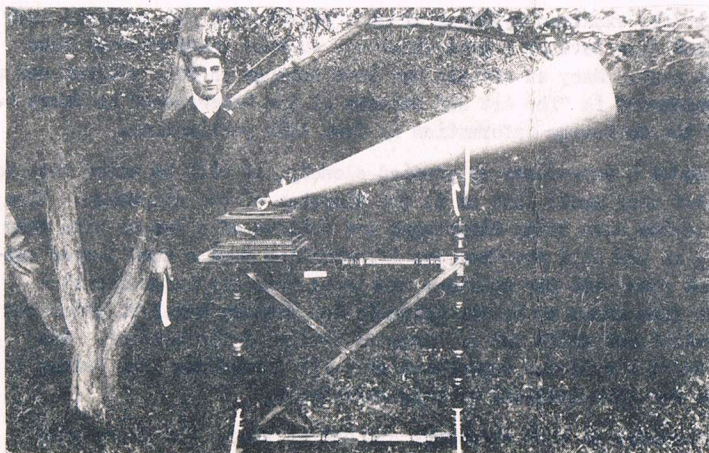
MORE ABOUT REPRODUCERS



TOP:- EDISON, DOG MODEL, BETTINI

BOTTOM:- H.M.V.4, PATHÉ MAX WURCKER

ABOVE:- TWO VIEWS
OF THE EDISON BELL



LEFT:-
C.E. WOLEDGE
AND HIS
GRAMOPHONE

necessitates a brief description of some of the details. The horn was made of heavy tinned plate to the measurements and taper of the large horn put on the market by the Victor Company. As illustrated it was a few inches shorter than the Victor model owing to the sheet metal not being quite long enough. The unspun bell was of a crude nature when compared with the factory product, but the overall measurement was about the same.

A wooden block was inserted in the small end, with a hole through its centre to receive a metal right angled tube to take the reproducer. The reproducer shown was the then standard pattern "Concert" of all Victor machines with the exception of the Baby Victor. A triple spring motor was the driving power, the springs each being 1" x 15 feet in length; these were later enlarged to 1½" and a 12" turntable replaced the 10" shown as the Monarch Senior about 1900. The result from the outfit was unsatisfactory, but when the horn was brought to its taper length, results were excellent and its volume and carrying power was much greater than machines then being offered. The average length of horn of these was about 18 inches. The supporting stand is of my own design; those made by the gramophone companies were merely strong tripods and the motor was placed on a table or record cabinet. For several reasons this outfit was not successful and soon went off the market.

Firstly it was expensive, secondly it was designed chiefly for playing large diameter records which were costly and which required a very strong motor to drive them at the correct speed. Also, the very large records (those over 12" in diameter) were discontinued and considering the bulkiness of the apparatus, it was not suitable for ordinary home use.

One model, probably the only one which ever came to Christchurch, was on show in the window of the Elmwood Cycle Works for years, awaiting a buyer. There was however, finally no need for such a cumbersome outfit, because the greater volume problem had, to a great extent, been solved and concentration was more in the direction of eliminating surface noise on records.

MORE ABOUT REPRODUCERS

The "hole" story.

by W.T. Norris.

I wonder how many of you have examined cylinder or disc reproducers and wondered what effect the diaphragm and outlet size have on reproduction and whether manufacturers have experimented with this in the past. Many an article has been written on this subject and a very good book which I can recommend is "The Art and Science of the Gramophone" by Harry A. Gaydon A.M.I.A.E. Some of the following information is from this publication.

If the Edison cylinder Model C reproducer is studied closely, it will be noted that not only is the actual sound outlet very small, but so is the diameter of the diaphragm. Disc machine reproducers of this period were using diaphragms and outlets of a larger size than Edison reproducers. Bettini, as you will see from our illustration used a much larger outlet and was by far the largest ever made for cylinder machines; this was matched with a large diaphragm. The next in size seems to be the Columbia New Century Model BC which has a very large diaphragm and outlet but still not as large an outlet as the Bettini. Max Wurcker, an Australian also built a cylinder reproducer of large dimensions (See Volume 1 Issue 8 as well as this issue for illustrations of this reproducer.)

Most disc machines standardised on both diaphragm and outlet size. But there were exceptions to this. The Edison Bell Company in England made a reproducer on which the outlet

hole could be adjusted. I have one of these and thus was able to test the results it gave. The reproducer has a disc with five sizes of hole ranging from the size of one sixteenth of an inch up to the full outlet size which is five eighths of an inch. With the smallest hole, the sound is somewhat restricted and this causes the diaphragm to vibrate with resultant less volume. On the medium to largest hole, very little difference could be noted other than volume increase.

Bettini and Max Wurcker reproducers give somewhat more bass with less volume than the usual reproducer. According to theory, a small outlet should give more treble and less bass. Gaydon, in his book, points out that a microphone works better if the sound is concentrated through a small hole on to the centre of the diaphragm. If an H.M.V. Model 4 reproducer is examined, it will be noticed this has a small outlet matched with a rather large diaphragm (see our illustration.) The distance the diaphragm is placed from the metal frame has also been experimented with.

(To be continued)

THE EDISON NEEDLE CUT RECORDINGS

Towards the end of its days, the Edison Company went over to Electrical Recording methods. Many claim they made both discs and cylinders by this method, but there is certainly no indication by label appearance that this is so. However, the improvement lies in the quality of the sound.

The discs in the 52000 series from about 52090 onwards have a much wider range; surface noise is less and the volume is greater. Cylinders from 5100 onwards also have a better frequency range. In the latter part of 1928 Edison produced a needle cut record and on the paper covers (as can be seen in our illustrations) it was clearly stated that these were made by the Electrical Recording method. These discs are of very good quality; the sound is very forward. But they were fragile and as the Company produced them for only a few months they are in the rarity class. The label is of simple design, black with gold lettering. Several of these recordings complete with paper envelopes have been found in Christchurch.

THE SECOND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

It was a happy suggestion that, this year, we hold the Society's Annual Meeting at the home of Walter and Kathleen Norris "Waipapa" Swannanon. Before we settled down to a business meeting we managed to have a look through their beautiful new house. The old house has been divided into two pieces and Walter has converted the four rooms of one piece into a most interesting phonograph and record museum. We appreciate the work he and fellow member Bob Bennett had put into organising the display for us.

There was an attendance of nineteen. The President welcomed members to the meeting and later elaborated on the Annual Report which had already been circulated. He stressed the last paragraph which stated the necessity for some effort to be made by us "as a Society." Discussion followed and this resulted in the decision to form a Society library. The sum of forty dollars was set aside for this purpose. The Secretary-Treasurer then presented the Annual financial report which showed a balance of income over expenditure of \$123.28. Under the Constitution Rules, no President may hold office for more than two consecutive years and this meant the retirement of Walter Norris from that position.

Officers elected for the coming year were:-

Patron: Mr. C.E. Woledge

President: Mr. W.S. Dini

Vice-President: Mr. W.T. Norris

Secretary Treasurer: Miss P.G. Rogers

Committee: Messrs. W. Anderson, J.L. Marshall and A.M. Otley

Honorary Auditor: Mr. A.J. Robb B. Comm.

A tribute to the work of the retiring President was paid by members. Bill Dini then took the chair as incoming President and after addressing the members, declared the meeting closed.

NINETY YEARS AGO

It is exactly ninety years since Thomas Alva Edison proved to the world that sound could be recorded. His tinfoil machine was heavy and not easy to use, but nevertheless with the aid of tinfoil he made the world's first record - "Mary Had A Little Lamb". Our illustration in this issue is taken from a very early periodical.

We were interested to note an article in the Junior Student Magazine, for school children. As is often the case, most of the credit for early improvements is given to Alexander Graham Bell.

"READING MAKETH A FULL MAN" (Francis Bacon)

A famous person was once asked, if she could grant a precious gift to a favourite Godchild, what she would choose. She didn't choose beauty or wealth or even happiness - she chose an "enquiring mind." This is indeed a precious gift, but such a state of mind can also be acquired.

We know, as book collectors ourselves the pleasure and knowledge such a collection gives, we particularly were delighted when it was decided at the Annual General Meeting to form a Society library. Initially the sum of forty dollars has been set aside for the purchase of books and already plans are underway for the raising of further funds for this purpose. Our hobby, by its very nature has many facets - we can become involved in every subject from the repolishing of wood to the study of bel canto singing; from the origins of traditional jazz to the making of gramophone horns. And it is because of this that you as a member can become involved. We want to know what type of books you would like to see in your library.

Preferably the title if you know it - failing that, the subject matter. The other way in which you can help is in providing information of the whereabouts of suitable books; if you see a book review or an advertisement, please draw our attention to the publication. Many of the most valuable books are out of print and will be unearthed only in second-hand bookshops, church fairs etc. We shall be delighted to receive any donations of books, catalogues, descriptive leaflets and similar publications. Practical details of the scheme have yet to be finalised. Strict rules, to protect the books will be enforced. Such a library can, with your co-operation, be one of the Society's most valuable assets. Success or failure rests with the members. - let us hear from you. You will be notified later the name and address of the librarian. In the meantime please contact the Secretary, who will pass on the information.

TALKING OF CYLINDERSThe Blue Danube

Ask any person to name a famous waltz tune and the chances are that almost invariably the answer will be "The Blue Danube". This beautiful melody has been delighting listeners ever since it was first heard in Paris in the World Fair in 1867.

Johann Strauss Jnr. was commissioned to write a waltz by Princess Pauline Metternich, who was the wife of the Austrian Ambassador to France - and the Blue Danube is the result. Naturally, such a wonderful melody enjoyed instant acclaim and was soon heard throughout the land despite the fact that none of today's mass communication media such as records or radio existed. And speaking of records - a performance in Boston in 1872 must surely take first prize. Involved in the "perpetration" of the performance was an orchestra of almost 2,000 players, a chorus of 20,000 aided and abetted by sundry percussion instruments such as anvils, firebells and lengths of metals for chimes. Although Johann Strauss was not the brains behind this unique event, he was present to conduct the performance (at a fee of £36,200) assisted by 100 other conductors who were supposed to act as relays between Strauss and the orchestra. It was intended that a cannon would be fired to signal the start, but owing to an error, the cannon went off at the wrong moment and the result was described by Strauss as "an unholy row such as I shall never forget".

Fortunately, the records of The Blue Danube on Blue Amberols are more conventional and consequently more enjoyable to listen to. I shall not do more than mention No.1750 by the American Standard Orchestra, but would like to draw your attention to No.1513 "Just That You Are" by Walter Van Brunt on which part of the melody has been extracted from The Blue Danube. Also of interest is the 4 min Wax Amberol on which the Blue Danube is sung by the Edison Quartette. To most people it is very unusual to hear this tune sung. Being one of the very early wax Amberols, it is announced - another interesting distinction.

I have no information as to the author of the words and would be pleased to hear from anyone who can throw light on this matter.

TALKING MACHINE MEMORIESTHE PATHE PHONOGRAPH IN NEW ZEALAND

by C.E. Wolledge

In the early years of the century 1902-1903, the name Pathe was chiefly associated with the Moving Picture and this French product was very popular in the country. It was not generally known that at that time the Pathe Company was becoming very active in the Talking Machine line and was manufacturing a product of considerable merit. The first I saw and heard of the machine was in 1902 and at a first glance it looked like a copy of the cheap Columbia model then on the market.

Unlike the Columbia, however, it was not fitted with a feed screw but relied on the groove in the record to carry the reproducer across - similar to the Puck. Other slight differences were of a minor importance. It was key wound and could not be wound when playing. The reproducer was fitted into a straight aluminium horn, the diaphragm of which was of glass. The horn was supported by a bracket attached to the baseboard and a universal joint provided.

I was greatly impressed with the result and it was the best reproduction I had so far

heard from any talking machine. In particular, a record by Madame Adelina Patti was magnificent and was claimed by Pathe to be the first recording ever made by this artist. Incidentally H.M.V. also claim to have made the first recording of Patti's voice. One listener remarked that it was like listening to the voice of an angel. All records in this demonstration were of old type soft wax. A little later, a few other improved models made their appearance here. I am referring to Christchurch but probably conditions were somewhat similar in other parts of New Zealand. By this time, the moulded wax record had been introduced and these combined with the added improvements to the machine brought about a decided change in its performance. Some of these changes were not always to the good.

For instance, the reproducer was enlarged and the diaphragm, still made of glass, was not always able to withstand the loud notes from the new moulded records. Extra diaphragms with mounted stylus were supplied with each reproducer Numbered 5, 6 and 7. These diaphragms were each of a different thickness and could be immediately fitted into the reproducer case. They were secured in a miniature cycle tyre of thin rubber which required no gaskets or adjustments. The idea was to enable choice of diaphragm most suited for certain recordings. The idea was good but the thinner diaphragms would not stand up to the loud notes and were continually cracking; this meant resort to the thick one. The trouble here was a drop in volume and the tone was thin. The term used in those days was too tight or a tight tone. Evidently other companies had the same trouble because glass was discarded and carbon tried but it failed in a manner similar to that of the glass. Finally mica was introduced and this was universally used for many years.

The Pathe machine with a large aluminium horn supported by its Orpheus attachment gave excellent results with its Concert Reproducer although its volume was up to that of other makes and at this period there was a craze for greater volume. Invariably a prospect's first words, when inspecting a machine were "Is it nice and loud?" Pathe rose to the occasion here and found that the loss of volume was in their reproducer. The cases of all Pathe reproducers were then made of vulcanite and by test it was found that a percentage of volume was absorbed in this material owing to its relative softness when compared with metal. The change to metal for the reproducer case brought up the volume and all future Pathe reproducers were made of this substance.

It would appear that Pathe was on the road to a prosperous future but there was still a defect which went greatly against its performance; it would not take a loud note or a high note, particularly soprano, without blasting. To counteract the blast the note was subdued, probably by withdrawing the performer further away from the recording horn. In the very early days of recording this was the method used and most solo artists were standing on a platform on wheels which was controlled by someone who was familiar with the item to be recorded and who advanced or reversed the platform according to the passages of volume.

Judging from the few Pathe machines which I had seen or heard, I decided against them and did not handle them; as they were very rarely heard of here, I presume the same position would apply to other parts of New Zealand. Until some years later, no effort was made to market the machine in Christchurch; even then the machines concerned were disc ones.

FRANZ LEHAR (1870-1948)

by Cymbal

Franz Lehar grew up in a thoroughly musical household and when sixteen years of age, won a Scholarship to the Prague Conservatory where he did extremely well, in fact excelling with the violin.

Lehar turned to composition after being encouraged to do so by Anton Dvorak, who had studied some of this young man's work. In 1888 Lehar left the Conservatory full of high hopes, but had to settle for a career as a bandmaster. It was during this period of his life that many of the lighter pieces for which he was known, were written. He wrote for both brass bands, of which he conducted several; and orchestra. At the same time he produced a great number of serious compositions - sonatas, violin concertos and symphonic poems.

In 1896, he completed his first opera, Kukulsha while conducting the Marine band of Pola on the Adriatic seafront. Unfortunately the opera was not approved by the Vienna Opera Company and so faded out. In the following years, many beautiful compositions flowed from Lehar's pen. The Gold and Silver Waltz belongs to this period. By 1902 Lehar had accepted a conductor's post at the Theatre an der Wein in Vienna and in the same year he brought out two successful operettas, Wiener Frauen and Der Rastelbinder. Soon after came the most well-known of Franz Lehar's works, The Merry Widow; sixty years later it is still drawing in the crowds. This work made the composer famous overnight. In 1909 The Count of Luxembourg appeared and although this operetta in some ways duplicated the Merry Widow it is not as popular. 1929 brought us The Land of Smiles. In 1943 Franz Lehar conducted his last performance with the Budapest Opera. He died on October 24th 1948. Collectors, should their interest be cylinder or disc, will not find it difficult to acquire examples of this beautiful music.

MORE ABOUT BETTINI

by D.H. Cameron

A recent issue of "The Record Collector" (a well known English Journal for vocal-record collectors), is a reproduction of a unique and hitherto unreported French catalogue of Bettini discs, dated January and February 1904, also a brochure on two recordings of Pope Leon XIII made by Bettini on February 5, 1903 at the Vatican. This was obviously issued some months before the disc catalogue as it mentions the intention to manufacture 'Gramophone' records.

This unique publication belongs to Madame Rolo of London; she is Bettini's daughter. She also possesses a disc recording of Ave Maria recited by Pope Leon XIII. This record is 9 1/2 inches in diameter even though it has only about one minute's playing duration. This record is announced by Bettini himself and furthermore Madame Rolo now possesses a copy of the famous "Primo" P1001 45r.p.m. reissue of our president Walter Norris's "Voci di Primavera" by Marcella Sembrich and confirms our previously held suspicion that it is in fact her father's voice announcing this recording.

From this evidence, the Editor of "The Record Collector" James Dennis has presumed that Gianni Bettini personally announced all the recordings he made. I do not agree, as two other Bettini cylinders belonging to a well known Wellington collector are definitely announced by a different person one with an American accent; in fact one sounds as though it could be a woman.

However, these records are of lesser status, (military bands) so we could form the conclusion that Bettini personally announced all his legendary records of artists of international status, the Sembrich and Pope Leon being the sole known surviving examples.

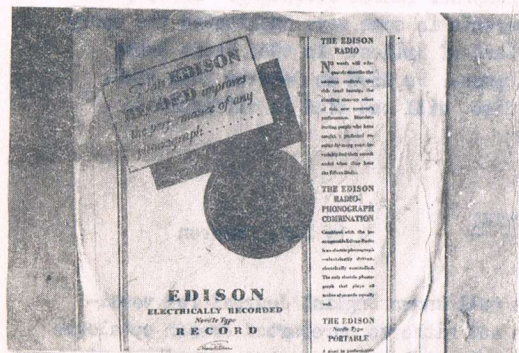


LEFT:- OUR NEW PRESIDENT -

BILL DINI



ABOVE:- AN EARLY MAGAZINE
ILLUSTRATION OF THE TIN FOIL



ABOVE:- BOTH VIEWS OF THE
EDISON NEEDLE CUT RECORD & PACKET



PATHE'S DISCS - THE SMALLEST
AND THE GIANT TWENTY INCH

Bettini's own collection was completely destroyed by bombs in Paris during the last war.

SINGER

CAPTAIN SCOTT AND DAME CLARA BUTT

The Film "Scott of the Antarctic" has been shown on recent Sunday afternoons by the television division of the New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation. We wonder how many members recognized the voice of Clara Butt singing Liddle's wonderful arrangement of Abide With Me. Captain Scott's party took a Gramophone Co's. machine with them on their expedition to the Pole and obviously amongst the recordings was this Butt disc.

Clara Butt whose voice was described as potentially "the voice of the century" attracted much criticism because of her choice of song and also for the deep booming mannish notes which developed in the latter years of her singing career. But the recording of Abide With Me is a credit to the artist and it, together with her recording of Land of Hope and Glory constitutes perhaps her finest contribution to the history of recorded sound.

.....AND ACCOMPANIST

THAT UNASHAMED ACCOMPANIST - GERALD MOORE

As we listened to the tapes recorded at Gerald Moore's final concert, we felt the regret that will be shared by many at the retirement from the concert platform of this wonderful pianist. Fortunately for record collectors he will still be making recordings.

There cannot be many interested in operatic and classical singing who do not have records with the legend Piano Accompaniment by Gerald Moore, for this man has accompanied many of the greatest singers of recording era including Elisabeth Schumann, Kathleen Ferrier, Isobel Baillie, Maggie Teyte, Victoria de Los Angeles, John McCormack etc. We would suggest that you buy or borrow Gerald Moore's two books "The Unashamed Accompanist" if you are interested in an entertaining analysis of songs and "Am I Too Loud" if you are interested in a penetrating analysis of singers.

RECORDS FOR THE FUNERAL PARLOUR

By J.H.

As a follow-up to the series of articles in this magazine on the development of the long-playing record, it is interesting to note that in a 1939 catalogue, H.M.V. offered canned background music for use in, of all things, Funeral Parlours. Three records Nos EC52, EC53 and ED46, of hymn tunes and such melodies as 'The Lost Chord', 'Traumerei' and 'A Perfect Day' were provided, "Specially Recorded on the Organ", and all out at 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ r.p.m. No mention is made of the groove profile or the type of gramophone to be used.

A RECORD OF RECORDS

G.B.E.

"Jenny's Bawbee Medley March" a bagpipe
solo Columbia 2 minute black wax No.201039.

This two minute wax cylinder was, judging by its number, one of the last of its kind made by this Company. The tune is very well recorded and although my copy is nearly white with mildew (it has nearly reached the stage at which I can pick mushrooms off it) the piece is quite clear. "Jenny's Bawbee" is a well-known old Scottish air and will probably be found in any large collection of Scottish music. The record has the name, number etc on both the rim and the end of the playing surface.
