

HOME SERVICE: FRIDAY MAY 10th 1946
12.0-12.30 pm.

LUCKY DIP

This is the B.B.C. Home Service

RECORD: Sig. Tune 0.26 [unknown]

ANNOUNCER: (over music) “lucky Dip” a record miscellany edited by Anna Instone and chosen this week by Helen Henschel.

HELEN HENSCHEL In my first Lucky Dip programme on Wednesday I asserted my extreme catholicism – “catholicism” in its sense of “all-embracing” and “broad-minded” – regarding choice of gramophone records. My selection for today is certainly “all-embracing” and again to me they are all perfect of their kind, including one frivolous one which will mark the half-way point in the programme.

I have records by three great women artists today, and I am starting off with the youngest of these: Ginette Neveu, in the first movement of Sibelius’ Violin Concerto. I am sorry that she has not yet recorded the Brahms, for I will never forget her superb performance of that great work at a recent Philharmonic concert. Neveu has, more than any other artist I can think of, the quality of being inside the music, in fact, she seems to be the music itself, so that it does what it likes with her and she with it. Those of you who have heard this astonishing artist in the flesh will know what I mean.

RECORD: [Violin concerto, last movement](#)

[Ginette Neveu, Philharmonia Orchestra, cond. Walter Susskind. Set: HMV DB 6244/7. This track joins: DB 6247 matrices 2EA10769-1 and 2EA10770-1]

Now I would like you to hear another exciting performance: my father singing Schubert’s “Gruppe aus dem Tartarus”. This is a tremendous song. The way, from the very first pianissimo bar, it begins to work up to the climax of that inexorable “Ewigkeit”, always makes my hair stand on end – so cleverly does the music (and my father’s singing and playing) evoke the grim vision of the tormented souls longing for deliverance, but only hearing – in answer to their agonized whisperings – that terrific “Ewigkeit” (Eternity).

RECORD: [Gruppe aus dem Tartarus](#)

[Sir George Henschel accompanying himself upon the pianoforte. Columbia L 2302, matrix WAX4332]

I once knew a little boy, who, aged three, was taken by his rather Spartan father, through the lion-house at the zoo at feeding time. The noise and all frightened him very much, but he was a brave little boy and determined not to let anyone see. When the ordeal was over, the child said: “That was very nice, Daddy; now I think I should like to see a bee”. So – by the same token – after our promenade through a couple of lion-houses

let us take a breather with Maurice Ravel's "Empress of the Pagodas" from his "Mother Goose" Suite.

RECORD: [Empress of the Pagodas](#)

[Columbia Broadcasting Symphony Orchestra, cond. Howard Barlow. Columbia DX 994, mat. XCO25342]

We have now reached the half-way mark, so here comes my frivolous record. Strictly for non-highbrows. But I think a perfect performance of its kind: Bob Hope with Shirley Ross singing "Thanks for the memory". I don't think this nostalgic moonshine froth could be more delightfully presented. Light-hearted, frivolous, but sometimes quite near to tears.

RECORD: Thanks for the memory

[We have no copy of Brunswick 02697, but can offer Reginald Dixon playing [an arrangement for theatre organ](#)]

[Rex 9319, mat. R2742-1, extract]

Well, now to leave frivolity behind: here comes Mozart in his most melting mood – the slow movement of his clarinet concerto, played by Reginald Kell. I never can make up my mind which is the lovelier, this, or its cousin from the clarinet quintet; both movements are so – really – appealing.

RECORD: [Clarinet concerto](#)

[Kell, London Philharmonic Orchestra, cond. Malcolm Sargent. Set: HMV C 3167/70. This track joins: C 3168, mat. 2EA8496-1 and C 3169, mat. 2EA8497-1]

Melba once told me that when she was a student in Paris she often cried herself to sleep because she thought she would never learn to sing. Well, she did learn to sing! For sheer crystalline beauty of tone (not warmth, I know) I do not suppose her voice could be surpassed. And certainly on the technical side she was pretty well flawless. The next record in my lucky dip is of Melba singing the Willow Song from Verdi's "Otello". It was recorded during Melba's farewell performance at Covent Garden in 1926, when she was 66 years old. May I ask any young singers who may be listening to note her attack? Bang in the middle of the note, and so apparently effortless.

RECORD: [Willow Song](#)

[Melba, Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, cond. Vincenzo Bellezza Canzone del Calc. HMV DB 1500, mat. CR417-1]

I would like to finish with the opening of Schubert's great C major symphony. This superb work – composed only eight months before Schubert's death – always comes to my mind along with Browning's "The C major of this life". So, in that simple and optimistic key, I take my leave of you – hoping you have enjoyed my lucky dip as much as I have.

RECORD: 1st movement 9th Symphony

[London Symphony Orchestra, cond. Malcolm Sargent. Set: Decca AK 1459/64. This track joins: AK 1459, mat. AR10044-2; AK 1460, mat. AR10045-2; and AK 1461, mat. AR10046-2]

(ANNOUNCER: Please trail Harry Welchman's "lucky Dip" next week)