

## Fall Harvest of Telemann

THE almost full page Telemann now occupies in the Schwann Catalog is surprisingly rich in variety, since only about a half-dozen of the sixty-odd titles represented have been recorded more than once. This low incidence of duplication (in contrast to the high one that plagues Vivaldi collectors) is one of the gratifying aspects of the Telemann renaissance noted in these pages last winter (SR, Jan. 27). Of nine Telemann items on four recent discs, the only repeats are the familiar A minor Suite for Flute and Strings and one other title now added for the first time to the short list of those duplicated. The latter not only surpasses its predecessor on all counts, but also brings with it on the same disc no fewer than three other engaging works new to Schwann.

Telemann's "Water Music," a ten-movement orchestral suite (or "Overture") in C which the composer called "Hamburger Ebb und Fluth," was not meant to be sounded over water like Handel's, but was styled a "Wasser-Ouverture" because of the nautical context of its nine dances. They bear such descriptive titles as "Neptune in Love," "The Playful Triton," "The Storming Aeolus," and "The Merry Sailors." The scoring is also much lighter than Handel's, omitting brass and percussion altogether and using only a piccolo, two flutes, two recorders, two oboes, and a bassoon with the strings and continuo. In its second appearance on discs, the Suite gets a marvelous performance from the Concert Group of the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis under August Wenzinger, handsomely recorded by Deutsche Grammophon as the first stereophonic Telemann in its Archive series (ARC 73198, \$6.98; mono, ARC 3198, \$5.98). This is not only a worthy companion to the same label's four monophonic Telemann collections, but could well prove to be the most popular item in the composer's entire discography, outdistancing even the A minor Suite for Flute and Strings.

Newell Jenkins and the Milan Chamber Orchestra introduced this music phonographically five years ago, sandwiched between the "Don Quichotte" Suite and the B major Suite from the "Tafelmusik" on a still current Washington disc. Unfortunately, the "Water Music" on Washington is not only interrupted for turnover but recorded with a rather hard sound (Jenkins's

notes assert that "these were the first stereophonic recordings made in Italy," but only the mono version was issued). The performance has little of the subtlety of Wenzinger's, though both were prepared from the same edition. Wenzinger not only has the advantages of stereo and of fitting sensibly on one side, but also gives the impression that he and his twenty-four excellent players have had opportunities to enjoy Telemann together more frequently than Jenkins and his Milanese. The sound of recorders, which I failed to detect on the Washington disc, adds substantially to the charm of the Archive presentation, as does Wenzinger's use of the "*alt Kammerton*" pitch (A:435, slightly lower than today's "*Normalton*" of A:440). What is most notable, though, is that Wenzinger's tempi give the music space to breathe; there is enough contrast between sections to let each display its own character, and the flawless balance allows all of Telemann's piquant instrumental effects to be heard to full advantage. The "Harlequinade" ("The Happy Triton"), for example, with its juicy recorders and limpid plucked accompaniment to the melody carried by *viola da gamba*, is sufficient justification for investing in the record.

There is, of course, another side to the disc, and it is a full half-hour of additional "justification" in the form of three uncommonly attractive and typically tuneful chamber pieces, the most elaborate being the seven-movement Suite No. 6 in D minor for oboe, violin, and continuo. The continuo is made up of *viola da gamba* and harpsichord, as it is in the succeeding Concerto No. 3 in A for flute, harpsichord concertante and continuo. Although the data card with the record lists Willy Spilling as harpsichord concertante and Elza van der Ven as harpsichord continuo in the concluding Trio Sonata in E flat for oboe, harpsichord concertante and continuo, Fritz Bose's liner notes state, "One could, as in the Concerto in A major, score it for a continuo harpsichord plus *viola da gamba*, but this has not been done here, in order to maintain the number three of instruments in the Trio." Well, trio sonatas very often call for two or more instruments in the continuo, and in this case the listener may judge for himself whether the data card or the liner notes are correct. In any event, all three works are well played, Spilling providing the continuo in the



August Wenzinger — "an opportunity to enjoy Telemann."

other two and Miss van der Ven the concertante in the Concerto. The other members of the Nuremberg Chamber Music Circle on this side of the disc (using normal pitch) are Otto Büchner, violin; Werner Berndsen, flute; Kurt Hausmann, oboe, and Josef Ulsamer, *viola da gamba*.

While other composers were dealing more grandly with the seasons of the year, Telemann (whose enormous catalogue may yet yield a "Seasons" or two of his own, for that matter) offered his worshipful Hamburg audiences a musical description of the times of day. His secular cantata "Die Tageszeiten" covers both sides of another new Deutsche Grammophon disc (SLPM-138785, \$6.98; mono, LPM-18785, \$5.98), which is, incidentally, the first Telemann issued by DGG outside its Archive series. Actually, "Die Tageszeiten" is made up of four little solo cantatas, each following the pattern aria-recitative-aria-chorus, the whole prefaced by a robust overture in the Italian style. "Morning" is assigned to the soprano (Ingrid Czerny in this recording) with two oboes and strings, "Noon" to the contralto (Gertraud Prenzlöw) with *viola da gamba* obbligato, "Evening" to the tenor (Gerhard Unger) with two flutes and strings, and "Night" to the bass (Günther Leib) with an appropriately nocturnal-sounding bassoon. Although this definitely does not qualify as sacred music, the final section is a splendid chorus in praise of God. Though the vocal soloists are rather lackluster, they are certainly competent, and Helmut Koch conducts the Berlin Chamber Orchestra and chorus with both vigor and style.

Some of Telemann's trio sonatas and a "Sonata Polonese" were on a Westminster record no longer current, but those on Washington WLP 9463 (stereo, \$5.98; mono, WLP-463, \$4.98)

are not the same ones. The liner notes are frustratingly reticent on such matters as scoring, sources, dates, etc., but the playing of the Societas Musica Chamber Orchestra of Copenhagen under Jorgen Ernst Hansen more than makes up for that. Obviously, Mr. Hansen and his men do not regard baroque music as an old lady to be helped gingerly across the street, and the lusty vigor of their performances is a splendid antidote for the dull approach that so often hides the charm of such material. The "Sonata Polonese" No. 1, in A minor, thrives on the energetic treatment it receives from the two Danish violinists and the continuo of cello and harpsichord. The Trio Sonata in F minor, an even happier piece, substitutes an alto recorder for one of the violins, and the side concludes with a rhythmically assertive orchestral suite in A.

Further happy additions to the baroque discography are offered on the other side of the Washington disc, on which Hansen's group plays two partitas (Nos. 1 in F and 2 in C minor) and a Canon and Gigue by Pachelbel. Except for the Canon, which has been recorded by Karl Münchinger (and, on 78s, by Arthur Fiedler), the only Pachelbel on records heretofore seems to have been keyboard music; these partitas qualify as worthwhile "new" material, then, and add to one's enthusiasm for the record, despite the misspellings and omissions in the notes.

To bring this little Telemann festival to a familiar conclusion, Bach Guild has just released a new version of the now ubiquitous Suite in A minor for Flute and Strings (BGS-5048, \$5.95; mono, BG-636, \$4.98), the first stereo recording of the work, incidentally, using a flute (the other two stereo versions use an alto recorder). Since the soloist is the able Julius Baker and his colleagues are Janigro and the Solisti di Zagreb, the pleasure of the performance may be safely anticipated. Thus one's choice between recordings of the Suite might depend on the respective disc-mates. In this case, it is the Mozart Concerto in C for Flute, Harp and Orchestra (K. 229), adding Hubert Jelinek to the personnel already mentioned. This, too, is played with an expected elegance, but Jean-Pierre Rampal, on Westminster, is equal to Baker, and Lily Laskine is superior to Jelinek; moreover, conductor Jean-François Paillard achieves a better balance between oboes, horns, and strings than Janigro manages. Should you prefer a recorder in the Telemann, Bernard Krainis's Kapp record, with Vivaldi pieces as backing, may be warmly recommended; if you want a flute, but a different coupling, try Hubert Barwahser's monophonic Epic, with the Haydn Flute Concerto overide.

—RICHARD FREED.

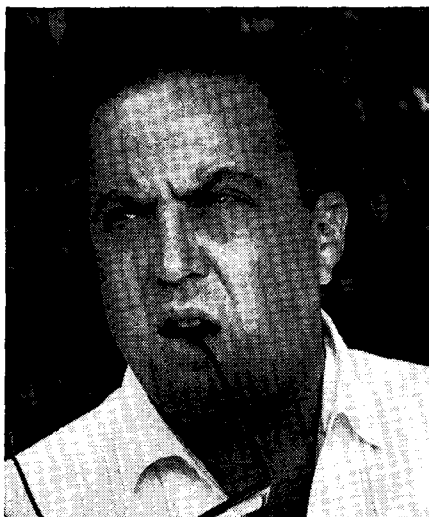
## Sherman's Mighty Lyre

**P**ERIODICALLY a bard arises in the land whose hitherto uncelebrated talents seem a convulsive expression of a long-suppressed general emotion. Abe Burrows and his travesties of popular songs was one, Tom Lehrer and his spoofing of other conventions another. An honored third to their ranks is the previously unsung Allen Sherman, whose target is folk song and whose aim is almost unerring.

Though previously unsung (except at housewarmings, confirmations, and rent parties), Sherman's talents have not been wholly unknown. A television producer and writer by trade (he is credited with the creation of "I've Got a Secret"), Sherman has been entertaining his West Coast friends with such success that Warner Brothers decided there was money in those laughs, and sure enough the record (Warner Brothers W 1475, \$3.98) has been doing so well on both coasts that he has become a night club entertainer.

Sherman's lyre is, of course, the guitar which he plays well enough for his purposes of parody. These may be gathered from such titles as "The Ballad of Harry Lewis" (whose refrain is "Glory, glory Harry Lewis") and "Shake Hands with Your Uncle Max" (which is "MacNamara's Band" with a Hebraic twist). Rather than merely making fun with (rather than of) folk singers, Sherman adds a good deal of incongruous humor to the verses he has contrived, as for example "My Zelda" (a relative, obviously, of Harry Belafonte's "Matilda").

Satire being the delicately drawn thing it is, not all of the ten items match the quality of the three specimens cited above, but this does not lessen respect for Sherman's talents. Why, they even inspire Steve Allen to a citation of Stendhal, in a jacket blurb. What could be more convincing?—I.K.



Allen Sherman—unerring aim.



## crunch

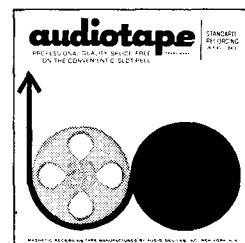
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