

lessons which Dr. Huskisson has prepared for broadcast over a period of years and of her long association with many of the composers. Her aim, she says, is to enrich the Bantu School music lesson.

In its way, this book reflects the type of interest in African music of the educated African. Perhaps only one of the composers listed can be considered as composing traditional African music, the famous Princess Constance Magogo; the majority are composers of church, choral, light-vocal, instrumental, jazz styles, etc., that is, the more or less non-African types of music that are predominant on African radio stations, and in school music syllabuses.

The composers occupy most of the book, but perhaps more interesting to readers of "African Music" will be the sections at the beginning and the end. In the preface Dr. Huskisson gives a useful review of the development of the various types of European-affected musics in South Africa, paying particular attention to the part of the missionaries in turning African musicality away from tradition: "The pattern the missionaries set the Bantu for achievement paid no heed to the merits of Bantu indigenous culture. The advancement of the "indigenous" was arrested and the ball of acculturation set in motion. Bantu individuality became unidentifiable, immersed in the inculcation of the essentials of Western civilisation." That something is wrong with the present state of African music-making in South Africa is acknowledged in the words of a Xhosa composer — I have often heard the same sentiments myself — "MUSIC is derived from the word MUSA — 'inspiration'. It is never too late to mend . . . go back to our forefathers and find out where we went wrong".

The last 35 pages contain a list of the African instruments found in "South Africa, S.W. A. and neighbouring territories". Its value lies in the extensive comparative lists of vernacular names for the various types of instruments. However, I feel that the whole section should either have been briefer, making less attempt to be comprehensive, or expanded into a full-length book in its own right with the inaccuracies corrected. To call the mbira family of instruments "finger-piano", to call their reeds "pens" (a word taken from Afrikaans), to say that the Karanga of Rhodesia play a xylophone called "ambira/bela", that the African xylophone is "undoubtedly of Malay origin, brought to Mozambique by early traders", and to identify a Tswa marimba xylophone as a "Chopi mbila", are surprising in this day and age.

Dr. Huskisson mentions that among her composers is a school of thought that would turn to folk music for inspiration, but that the main obstacle to this remains ignorance of the music itself. Is this not true, in varying degrees, of the whole of Africa? The encouraging feature is that at least some African musicians of South Africa, where African culture has been the most heavily overlaid by the west, are at last starting to catch up with their fellows in other parts of Africa where African culture is accepted in theory if not everywhere in practice as the basis for modern African living. The clue to the solution seems to be knowledge, coupled with "the almost magical propensities" of the printed word. South African traditional music has still barely been studied and analysed to a point where it can be put to full use in schools, which in the meantime continue to base their syllabuses on "elements of choral singing", i.e. "Fair Phyllis", the "Messiah", etc. If Radio Bantu is indeed encouraging this kind of musical development it is to be congratulated. The aims would be identical in many respects with those of the programme of research advocated for years by the International Library of African Music in its "Codification Project", which is gaining increasing support in all parts of Africa and America.

ANDREW TRACEY.

AN INTRODUCTION TO EAST AFRICAN MUSIC FOR SCHOOLS by S. MBABI-KATANA. Milton Obote Foundation. Kampala, Uganda.

Mr. Mbabi-Katana needs no introduction to East African readers. His reputation as teacher, composer and collector of traditional songs is already established, and he is highly respected by many educationalists for his wide knowledge of African music. Any new publication by him is, therefore, of importance, not only for its direct impact on his students but for its wider influence on musical policy in the educational field.

Following his three volumes of "Songs of East Africa" (Macmillan, 1965, 1966 and with the publishers), each containing the words and music, as transcribed by the author, of some fifty songs from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, Mr. Mbabi-Katana has now produced a companion volume, "An Introduction to East African Music for Schools." His twofold aim is stated in the Preface — (1) (to provide) "East African teachers and students with background knowledge of musical elements based upon examples drawn from their national songs", and (2) to produce a "music text book" that "will be widely used throughout the East African countries." The work must, therefore, be judged in both capacities.

The writer's concern with "musical elements" removes any misconceptions that may arise from the title. While others may consider that an introduction to any African music should contain at least some account of the different types of music performed, the instruments used or the settings and occasions of performance, Mr. Mbabi-Katana has restricted himself to the reading and writing of vocal music. Beginning at the most elementary level with the signs used to represent notes of different length and their corresponding rests, he proceeds to explain pitch names as they appear on the staff, the meaning of tones and semi-tones, the idea of a key signature and the working of tonic sol-fa notation. Chapter 3, devoted to "Time", explains the use of a time signature and distinguishes simple, compound and other types of musical time, including syncopation. Chapter 4 deals with intervals in greater detail, while Chapter 5 explains musical scales and modes. A short Chapter 6 gives some examples of drum rhythms

and Chapter 7 the most commonly used signs and abbreviations. Each chapter is plentifully supplied with exercises based on Parts 1, 2 and 3 of the writer's "Songs of East Africa." While this policy thus demonstrates the fundamental unity of the conception, it presents obvious snags for the school music teacher. If full value is to be obtained from the present volume it is necessary to purchase not only the requisite 30-40 copies for class use, but the same number of each of the three song volumes, a prospect outside the financial resources of all schools except the richest.

From the material included one can assume that the book is intended for use at all school levels. The opening explanations of notes and rests are appropriate to junior forms, the more advanced accounts of enharmonic notes, the grouping of rests or the inversion of intervals for students approaching a public examination. While a series of progressive textbooks would doubtless appeal to some music teachers, the inclusion of such diverse material in one volume means that the keen and intelligent student can leap ahead to an advanced stage while his less able fellow plods along learning his tonic.

The theoretical basis of the whole work is the assumption that, so far as schools are concerned, the ability to read and write music "will enhance growth of musical knowledge and facilitate learning of East African songs" (page 57). It would be a strange irony if, while Mr. Mbabi-Katana and others are transcribing songs and attempting to formulate in simple terms their musical components, the wheel came full circle and songs originally transmitted orally from person to person were to be learned in schools, not from the reading of musical notation, but with the aid of that accurate and infallibly repetitive instructor — the tape recorder, or even, in Uganda at least, through the medium of Schools' Television.

So far as content is concerned, there is little with which anyone who has had a musical education is not familiar. Children of European expatriates serving in East Africa will find the opening four chapters applicable to the study of European music in the musical concepts and terms used. Chapter 5 on "Musical Scales", however, is specifically Africa-orientated. Taking "scale" in the broad sense of "stepwise relationship", the writer uses the term "mode" to refer to the "different organisations" of the five-, six- or seven-note scale. Thus the Five-note scale has five modes according to the initial note, e.g. ecdage, cagedc, agedca, etc. Examples demonstrate clearly the working of this principle, though opinions will differ on the validity of mode being determined by the first (conveniently) high tone of a song.

Basically the success or failure of this theoretical exposition depends on the authenticity of Mr. Mbabi-Katana's recordings and the accuracy of his transcriptions. To comment in detail on these would require considerable research and an extensive review. One can, however, note the principles underlying his work. In the first place, in his transcriptions the author has worked to the nearest semi-tone, thus enabling him to give tonic sol-fah equivalents. While this makes for simplicity in reading and ease in reproduction suitable for schools, one may doubt whether the results produced by a class of singers will resemble in all respects the original version. As an example we may consider the Karimojong "Folksong" (Vol. 1, No. 44) of which I have myself made three recordings. The words are as constant as may be expected, though it is unfortunate that the opening "*Akone* — Girl-friend" of the song is transformed by typographical error into "*Akine* — Goat!" For some undiscernible reason Mr. Mbabi-Katana transcribes this in what, on European assessment, appears as the key of E Flat Major, though only one A Flat occurs during the course of the song. Two examples will indicate some of the difficulties involved. Children singing the last two syllables of "*nyeketan*" as transcribed by Mr. Mbabi-Katana will make the interval a falling minor third; in actual recordings as sung by Karimojong themselves it is 333, 274 and 288 cents. Similarly with the final syllable of "*ngakile*" which is given as a two-stage descent — major second and perfect fourth (i.e. 700 cents in total). In my recordings this appears as a one-stage slide over 675, 676 and 631 cents. Children unfamiliar with the music of this people attempting to sight read will produce a thoroughly un-Karimojong sound; children familiar with the music will sing the right tones irrespective of what is written. The question is whether or not to introduce those additional signs used by musicologists to indicate "approximately a quarter tone up" (or down). Mr. Mbabi-Katana has presumably decided that this would make matters too complicated for schoolchildren and opted for simplicity.

Similarly with time signatures. The same song is given a  $3/4$  signature, thereby conveying the impression that this is a species of "Karimojong waltz". While each of the opening four phrases comprises three regular beats, the first of each being further stressed by a handclap, the long chorus phrase that follows has twelve beats that cannot be divided in this way without damage to the phrasing. More detailed study would have shown that this song follows a common 12-beat pattern, though its division on first occurrence into four groups of three, allocated Solo-Chorus-Solo-Chorus, suggests a possible three-beat phrasing. One can only assume that, with school children in mind, Mr. Mbabi-Katana has decided that the perpetuation of the  $3/4$  time throughout would be less disturbing than the sudden change to a lengthy phrase.

How far this applies to other transcriptions it is impossible to say without detailed knowledge. From Mr. Mbabi-Katana's acknowledgement in his Preface to Volume 1 to help received from "Principals and Headmasters of various East African Teacher Training Colleges and Schools", further doubts may arise as to the authenticity of some recordings. Schoolchildren are not normally the finest repositories of tradition, especially when it is a tradition from which formal schooling is a decisive break. Adoption of European-style clothing, manners and language is often accompanied by attempts at adopting

European tonal structure in singing with a resultant hybrid that makes the worst of both worlds. While school-recordings are easy to obtain, they should, except where the children are too young to be "contaminated", be regarded with suspicion.

To produce collections of songs and a theory of music for schools based on their own interpretation (or misinterpretation) of traditional works, is to move within a circle of doubtful validity. The process may be justified by educationalists on the grounds that the complex structure of much African music is beyond the ability of modern schoolchildren (though illiterate herdboys sing it). "Simplified readers", restricted to a pupil's vocabulary range are common educational practice, though children are warned that they are not the "real thing". There is a possible case for "simplified music", i.e. in which "ornamentation" of which only a professional musician is capable is omitted. One cannot, however, construct a "Theory and Practice of the English Language" from the 2,000 root words of the General Service List, and a similar task in music using comparable material cannot be contrived without distortion. What Mr. Mbabi-Katana has in fact produced is not an "Introduction to East African Music" but an introduction to African Music that has been simplified to fit into a European mould.

KEN A. GOURLAY.

'MUSIQUE DE L'AFRIQUE' by FRANÇOIS BEBEY. Edition HORIZONS DE FRANCE — 19 × 22 cm., 208 pp., 97 illustrations and four line drawings, with a 17 cm. L.P. record. No price, no address of editor given.

This is obviously an unusual book, by a Cameroonesse novelist-essayist-poet-linguist-composer whose peer it would be difficult to find for, being an African, this makes all the difference. Given such assets on the author's side, this beautifully produced and presented folk work falls short of what could — and should — have been expected from him; it becomes barely more than an 'introduction' to African Music, a kind of musical *apéritif*. If this was the sole purpose the author had in mind in writing it, one must concede he has done exceedingly well in whetting one's appetite for much more, for a full course, for a copious repast.

The author aims at the general reader, and thus much of the subject matter will be familiar to the student of African music. However there is considerably more, for even the familiar is replete with insights that only a gifted African scholar could divulge with such an undeniable authority; insights which lend the key to a number of questions that often baffle an outsider — especially when the author deals with music as the expression of African life; the African musician; the African human voice; African music at large — and he does it with a mastery of the language that will appeal to both the casual reader and the hard-to-please musician. These same insights will be precious also to the ethnologist, the more so that the author takes advantage of the cultures — French and English — he has acquired not to look down on his own people but to bring them up, without fuss but no less forcibly, where they rightly belong in the large family of our complex human race; and by the same process, African music is brilliantly vindicated.

But more was expected because, paradoxically, we are already given so much in the short compass of text offered. In a book of 208 pages, there are 97 illustrations — 40 of them full-page, 20 two-third, 37 half-page — the majority of them artistically flawless, all relevant to the text; but 51 of them, including the kodachrome front cover and the attractive back cover, are introduced with only a romantic caption and without any geographical or topical data, making it a frequent cause of frustration to be at a loss among the immense variety of musical instruments, costumes of dancers, or performing ethnic groups in Africa above the equator. Then, if to over 75 pages of illustrations we add some 40 pages devoted to a 'selective discography' — an analytic, comprehensive and well-balanced repertory of L.P. records chosen for their documentary and artistic values — we are left with less than one hundred pages of text proper. This text, running along with the illustrations, is divided into three short chapters: music as an expression of life, the musician, music at large; and a longer chapter on musical instruments, rich in precise and topical information but limited to short descriptions only. Dance is frequently referred to all along the work, but only as a matter of course. Only two musical examples — seven notes in all — are given, lost in the text.

In sum, one feels that the author had the tools and the credentials to produce a major work badly needed if one is to stop turning around, or often groping in the dark, inside the temple; one feels that only an accredited African mentor of Mr. Bebey's calibre could do this. But we have been denied such a work, and we shall feel frustrated so long as we are not able to share with him the still vast amount of knowledge that, almost teasingly, he has kept in store.

DR. THE REVEREND BROTHER BASIL, S.C.

FOLK SONG STYLE AND CULTURE, by ALAN LOMAX, with contributions by the Cantometrics staff and with the editorial assistance of EDWIN E. ERICKSON, Washington, D.C., American Association for the Advancement of Science "Publication No. 88", 1969. Pp. xx, 363, with 76 tables, 75 charts and graphs, 3 appendices, bibliography, list of sources, index.

Alan Lomax has managed to analyse the singing styles of the world, and to find reflected in them the cultural patterns of mankind. It is a breathtaking effort backed by a prestigious wing of the intellectual community, and in time it may lead to a great contribution to the humanities.