

of this nature, one needs to know the means in order to make an informed appraisal of the ends. However, let me hasten to add that I, for one, do not doubt King's accuracy, and this opinion was formed as a result of comparison with other West African material, and from the detailed and obviously knowledgeable manner in which the body of the text of the book is written.

The other, perhaps greater, criticism concerns the production and printing of the transcriptions themselves. While the book was obviously not intended to be an expensive volume (the price in Nigeria being 8/6d) the usefulness of the transcriptions suffers considerably as a result of their small size (twelve staves of music in 5½ inches), the fact that they are handwritten, and the very faint printing, which combines to make them rather hard to take in. A. M. Jones in "Studies in African Music" has set the standard of reproduction, admittedly a high one, for this type of African music, and it is disappointing to see this valuable material hidden in illegibility. One hopes that the Ibadan University Press, when they publish more of King's work, will do it the justice it deserves.

Having said this, and having perhaps suggested that the bars which are referred to in the text should be numbered in the transcriptions, one must confess a great admiration for this work, which is presented so unassumingly and straight-forwardly. The musical value and interest of the transcriptions and accompanying commentary is high, and should be appreciated by all who have anything to do with Nigerian music, or indeed with African music in general.

In the notation itself, it is interesting to note a new technique. It is presumably based on A. M. Jones' notation technique, but King is not satisfied merely with placing simultaneous notes or beats beneath each other on the score, but uses a series of thin vertical "pulse-lines" up and down the score which mark off every quaver. The lines are drawn not to the left of the written note, as a barline, but through the note itself. This was perhaps one of the weaknesses of A. M. Jones' notation, that it was not absolutely and immediately clear on his score which notes coincided. King also uses barlines, placed in the usual position, to the left of the "pulse-line" concerned. One can perhaps foresee the use in the future of "African music" manuscript paper, with vertical lines incorporated with the horizontal staves at convenient, and regular, intervals, say of a quarter of an inch.

King gives eleven songs representative of the Sango, Ogun and Ifa styles, each with the standard pattern of their drum accompaniment, and two all too brief examples of *ija ilu* (the leading drum) variations in *Ogun* drumming after the standard patterns have been set up. Referring to Shango drumming, he says "... this *ija ilu* pattern is only the starting point for the true master drummer, and, in the hands of such a performer, would undoubtedly lead to many much more complicated phrases setting up those cross-rhythms which are the hallmark of African music." This whets our appetite considerably; we look forward keenly to more chapters on King's explorations into Yoruba music.

Andrew Tracey.

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THE STEEL DRUMS OF KIM LOY WONG. An instruction book by PETE SEEGER. Oak Publications, Inc., 121 W. 47th. St., New York, N.Y., U.S.A. 1961, pp. 40, \$2.95. To accompany Folkways records FI-8367 and FS-3834, and the film, "Music from Oil Drums".

Does anyone want an exciting, new and rich-toned musical instrument? After such an introduction to this new West Indian instrument as that contained in this lively and detailed instruction book, one finds it very hard not to take up sledge hammer, nail punch and blow lamp, and start away on a whole orchestra of steel drums on the spot. This latest descendant of Africa's musical heritage, developed in multiracial Trinidad, may yet prove to be one of the first good stepping stones between the music of Europe and Africa. It still remains interestingly African in many ways, such as the division of the "steel band" into different pitches in the manner of a Chopi xylophone orchestra, ping pong (treble), 2nd. pan, guitar pan, cello pan and bass pan, all made from standard 44 gallon steel oil drums, and in the way the music is organised in the typical African theme-and-variations pattern, with each instrument continuing its own figure throughout the piece. Although the music made by West Indians with a steel band is perhaps neither as rhythmically or polyphonically complex as comparable African music, nor as thematically and harmonically varied as European music, it certainly has that vitality which fascinates all who hear it.

The potential of the steel drum is unlimited, or limited at present only by the musical capabilities of West Indians. But there is no reason why its full African potential should not be realised in Africa, as the Americans for instance are already taking it over for playing American, and all kinds of western music. There are in fact several good reasons for its adoption in Africa. The main reason, it seems to me, is that as a new instrument it has for Africans none of the "tribal-primitive" connotations of indigenous instruments, in fact, coming as it does from America, just the reverse. Yet it is capable of doing justice to innate African musical ability, which I think many of us will agree is not being fully exercised in Africa's jazz bands.

The second, cogent, reason is its extraordinarily cheap price, and another is that, being a band instrument, it is ideal for groups such as youth clubs, institutions and schools, where it can provide a worthwhile musical and craftwork activity for every member of any group, a band that can play out of doors for marching, or for special occasions, and a useful new field of musical competition.

Why not use the musical instruments and techniques that we already have in Africa, the xylophone, the mbira, the drum? The answer is that these should and must be used, but how far have our schools gone in encouraging them? Perhaps the steel drum can lead the way back to a little more Africanness in our institutional music, giving plenty of fun as it goes. If, however, you doubt the fun of spending a week of arm-breaking hammering at an old oil drum, try taking a breath of Pete Seeger's enthusiasm, which has already done so much for American folk music in the United States.

There remains one thing, I think, which must be improved upon in the steel drum before its final acceptance as a fully-grown musical instrument, that is the preponderance of discordant overtones. 40 per cent overtone to 60 percent note, while giving the steel drum its mellow tone, does not permit enough harmonic clarity completely to satisfy the western musician. Perhaps Africa could add one of its old techniques to the making of the steel drum, that of weighting different parts of the note with wax?

The Folkways record (I have only heard the first) which accompanies the instruction book is as clear a recording of steel drums as I have heard, steel drums being notoriously difficult to record because of their overtones. Each instrument is brought into prominence in turn, which should be of great help to those who want to learn basic West Indian styles of steel band playing.

Andrew Tracey.

POESIA SUDANESE. *Museum Combonianum*, No. 12, by LIVIO TESCAROLI. Editrice Nigrizia, Bologna, 1961. pp. 117.

This small volume written in Italian is an anthology of 101 indigenous Sudanese poems drawn from the Shilluk, Dinka, Zande, Balanda Bor, Feroge, Ndogo and other tribes. A short but useful introduction is followed by the poems grouped under Religion, Funerals, War, Love, Satire and Miscellaneous subjects. The vernacular text is followed by translations and notes. The poems should of course be sung, and a good many of them are provided with their music; there are 30 pages of music transcriptions which are well done and provide some valuable information about tribal "harmony" in this region. We find singing in parallel 3rds., 4ths. and 5ths: moreover 2nds., 6ths., and even 7ths. also occur, mostly in combination with a third voice, which suggests that they arise from a simultaneous singing, for example, of a 4th and a 5th, which would produce parallel 2nds. On page 97 contrary motion occurs in the penultimate bar. The most interesting entry is the 4-part song on page 106, where the women's and men's voices are mostly in canon, the two women also being in canon with each other, which is quite remarkable. The bass clef printed on the second women's line ought presumably to be a treble clef.

It is a pity that the author, while acknowledging his sources in general, does not indicate them specifically; it is thus not possible to know who is responsible for what, an omission which certainly needs correction in future editions.

A. M. Jones.

AFRICAN MUSIC AND THE CHURCH IN AFRICA by HENRY WEMAN, trans. Eric J. Sharpe, Swedish Institute of Missionary Research, Domkyrkoplan 2, Uppsala, Sweden, 1960. pp. 296 (31 pp. musical transcriptions) Sw. Kr. 32.50.

It is probably unique for a European cathedral organist to apply himself to the musical needs of the African mission field: but in so doing, Dr. Weman has given us an important and a charming book. Hitherto the available literature, consisting of articles in journals and passing references in books, has been inaccessible to many. Dr. Weman has not only read very widely, but has, in two recent visits to Africa, both experienced the problems and also attempted some solutions himself. The result is the first book to be devoted wholly to the subject of African Church music. In it the author, in his lucid, flowing, and compelling style, and aided by a very good English translation, while discussing his own theories, experiments and conclusions, distils the essence of practically all that has been written, and finally gives an inclusive bibliography. Without any doubt, this book must be read by everyone who is concerned with hymns and music in the mission field in Africa: and not only by the musicians, for—perhaps skipping the musically technical pages—there is so much that is stimulating and inspiring even for the unmusical; one is taken right into the musical consciousness of the African.

To lay the foundation, Dr. Weman describes the principles underlying ordinary African village music, with an excellent summary of the ethos of African music (pp. 17-21), and the place of folk-music in African social life and in the Shembe sect—the Church of the Nazarites. All students of African music will find this first section of the book very useful. He passes on to music in African schools, the singing of European part-songs and the effort—or lack of effort—shown by educational policy to give African music its due place. He next deals with the present state of Church music in Africa with special, but not exclusive, reference to the Lutheran Church, and from this he proceeds to his experiences and musical experiments made in the field, and gives an account of experiments made elsewhere in Africa. Lastly, two chapters discuss the future, with constructive proposals for introducing into worship African music both vocal and instrumental: the synthesis of the two elements claiming a place, the Christian heritage of liturgical music on the one hand, and the African's contribution on the other; the evangelistic scope