

resonating gourds, he shouted with delight, and immediately dug into his pocket and produced a little bottle full of spare membrane, *tela* he called it, that he said he carried round with him everywhere he went. Well, I thought, you can always tell a true *timbila* player! Chopi players whom I have met always have a spare roll of *mokosi* membrane tucked away somewhere for emergency, usually in just such a little bottle.

We compared our first aid bottles together, and sure enough, it was the same stuff, the peritoneum or fine skin that covers a cow's small intestine, dried and rubbed to give a fine sharp sound when you crinkle it near your ear. A good membrane makes a Guatemalan marimba buzz to life just as it does a Chopi *timbila*. The Chopi make them relatively larger, thus more "vocal", while the Guatemalan smaller buzzer gives a more "nasal" tone. Jose said that he had long since ceased to use membranes on his marimba, because the buzz was annoying to American ears. But he still carried his little bottle with him from long habit, just in case!

Andrew Tracey.

#### NEW DEVELOPMENT IN THE TRINIDADIAN STEEL DRUM

The "Steel drum", or "Pan" of Trinidad, made from 44-gallon oil drums, has become well known since its invention about 20 years ago. Following a continuous series of improvements and refinements there has been a remarkable development in the last few years — they have discovered that it is possible to tune the first overtone.

Each note, or panel, on the pan is normally tuned to the note required by tapping, up or down, on or around its centre. Having tuned the fundamental, the new method is, roughly, to tap around the edges and in the corners of each panel, which is apparently where the overtone is sounded. This natural, discordant, overtone sounds somewhat over an octave, so it has to be brought down to exactly one octave. What a difference when you get it there! The pan starts to "sing" like the early ones never did.

Their preponderance of discordant overtones, which Pete Seeger reckoned to be as much as 40% unwanted noise, gave the early steel bands much of their "noisy" sound, and also, I think, limited their repertoire to numbers with relatively simple harmony. The state of refinement in tuning is now such that the pan can hold its own with any orchestral instrument in the world. While in Trinidad recently I heard some of the top bands, and the range of dynamics, tone colour and rhythmic intensity really impressed me, not to speak of the virtuosity and the unanimity of the players and their wide repertoire. A truly remarkable invention to be made from a waste product.

Andrew Tracey.

#### EFIK NAMES OF SOME MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

by M. D. W. JEFFREYS

Calabar is a river port on the Cross river of south eastern Nigeria. It was once the administrative centre of the Calabar province. While there in 1919 I obtained the following names for some of their musical instruments.

*Akang-kang*. This name is clearly onomatopoeic. It is a musical instrument made locally of iron and consists of two metal funnel-shaped bells joined together. (See Fig. I.) Each is about 15 inches long. It is also known as the double mouthed gong and is a characteristic of peoples with tone languages. By means of the *Akang-kang* messages can be intoned. The open ends are struck with a stick. This instrument is part of the equipment of local diviners known as *abia idiong*. It gives two different tones.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

*Ebua ekpri akata* = The dog of the little *akata*. *Akata* is the generic name for the bull-roarer which is regarded as sacred by these peoples. As a consequence, beyond the name, no information about it was obtainable. (See *Enang ekpri akata*.)

*Ekene*. A musical instrument made of iron and similar in shape to one of the funnels of the *Akang-kang* but broader and shorter. (Refer to *Nkong*, see Fig. II.)

*Ekperekpe*. The war gong. It is one of the wooden slit-gongs with two lips carved from the trunk of a tree. It has a deep tone. (See *Nkong*.)

*Ekomo*. A short wooden gong used for sending messages.

*Enang ekpri akata* = The cow of the little *akata*. It, like the *ebua ekpri akata*, is regarded as sacred. It is a much larger bull roarer than the *ebua* and may be used only by members of the *Ekpo* secret society. *Ekpo* = ghost and this society holds its revels at night and the wailing of the *enang ekpri akata* is regarded as a ghostly voice. The officiants are usually maskers.

*Ibit*. A long drum consisting of a hollowed out tree trunk open at both ends. One end is covered with a skin and is struck with the hands. Often two *ibit* are placed side by side and played with both hands. Also used for summoning the people to assemble, e.g. if a fire breaks out.