

sweating in the daytime, getting hungry when there is only water to drink, thirsty where there is only food to eat, and having thirst and hunger often when neither water nor food can be got? . . . ."

thus does Dr. Laszlo start his book and in continuing he gives an understandable answer. Among the peoples of Portuguese East Africa Dr. Laszlo finds customs, practices, doctors, drums and dances which he tells about in a series of almost unrelated chapters. To those who know other parts of Africa the tales he tells will be an amplification of tribal rites which have been found elsewhere. It is perhaps the first word in the title which gives the reader an insight to this book for Dr. Laszlo naturally has a medical approach to most things, particularly to such rites as circumcision and puberty. Very few have been privileged to see many of the tribal festivals described in this book, but it is disappointing to find medical details given prominence over things which would, I feel, have intellectual significance and I would like Dr. Laszlo to add more details of those moving emotional sights he must have seen leading up to and away from the nucleus of the investigation he has reported. The photographs are poorly reproduced and are disappointing but this is not a book which a serious student should consider as part of his library.

Michael Lane.

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## RECORD REVIEWS

*Extract from "Nights at the Round Table" by W. A. Chislett (The Gramophone).*

In September, 1954, I reviewed a group of Decca records in the *Music of Africa* series during which I drew attention to awards to be made each year by the Dr. Tom Osborn Memorial for the best recordings of native African music. Among the records I then reviewed was one containing eight of the prize winners for 1952. Twenty prize winners for 1953 are now offered on LF 1224 and 1225, but so far I have only received the second of the two discs. As might be anticipated, of the ten items on this record, six have been recorded by the indefatigable and apparently inexhaustible Hugh Tracey, the Director of the International Library of African Music. These include dances and songs from Kenya, Tanganyika, Mocambique, and Basutoland. The Central African Broadcasting Corporation are responsible for the other four, three of which come from Northern and one from Southern Rhodesia.

Some instruments that I do not remember to have heard before are introduced, including the Lalumbu bow, a one string bow resonated by a calabash which is held against the body to vary the sound, the Orotu lute and the Mlanzi flute. It would be idle to pretend that this is a record for everybody but those interested at all are likely to be fascinated. My own favourites are "Awu mungoya" (Gogo tribe) which as the excellent sleeve note points out, has a vague affinity with Gregorian chant, "Muka Nakayongo" (Tonga tribe) a drinking song, and "Monene Kobo" (Southern Sotho tribe), a work song sung during the operation of softening hides, the singers pulling and twisting the skins in time with the music. The quality of the recording varies a little as is inevitable when the tapes were made under varying conditions, but is extraordinarily good.

Another record in the same series will have a wider appeal, for it contains five traditional stories from the Fort Victoria district of Southern Rhodesia, told and sung by Hugh Tracey (LF 1174). So far as it is possible Mr. Tracey has translated these into English, but occasionally, particularly in the songs, the original defies translation and when this is so the original words are used and they are followed by a brief translation or explanation. This is a thoroughly enjoyable record and will appeal to children as well as adults. The stories are "The Great Baboon" who saves a girl from cattle thieves; "The Snake who bit a Girl", thereby making a lot of trouble for himself; "The Lion on the Path", from whose jaws a man and his wife were saved by music and the timely intervention of a rabbit; "The Bird of the Valley", who turned himself into a young man; and "Tsimbarumi the hardened Bachelor", who ultimately found himself so many wives that in gratitude he shared his good fortune with his friends!