

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