

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 ekpři 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 ekpři 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 ekpři akata = The cow of the little *akata*. It, like the *ebua ekpři 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 ekpři 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.

Ifoafoa a wind instrument. A hole is bored into a globular fruit and is blown into or across; a type of whistle.

Ifium a whistle or flute, sometimes made of a crab's claw.

Ikpok Ikut. The dried carapace of a large tortoise. The base end is struck with a stick and is used to set the rhythm of the music.

Ikesu. The xylophone. It is made by placing two banana or plantain stems on the ground with one set of ends converging. Laths of hard wood are laid across and beaten by the player with a drum stick in each hand.

Iokodok. A wooden gong carried in canoes to control by its beat the rhythm of the paddlers. (See *Ntokrok*.)

Manina the Ibibio name for the *Nkong*.

Mbumbu. An onomatopoeic name. A short wooden hollow drum having only one opening over which is stretched a skin. Used in local plays and dances.

Mbutu. A musical instrument made of a small shallow wooden box on which slips of bamboo are fixed with their ends projecting over a wooden cross-piece. These bamboo slips are of different lengths and so, when struck with the thumbs, give out different notes. This instrument is known elsewhere as the *marimba*.

Nádo is a musical bow. A thin stick is used to strike the string while one presses lightly or heavily with the palm of one's hand on the string to alter its note.

Nkong. A musical instrument made of iron. It is funnel-shaped, about 18 inches long, with a handle at the end. The open end of the funnel is struck with a stick. This instrument is used in the dances of the Egbo society. (Fig. III.)



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

Nsak. Rattles, made by placing pebbles in dried empty calabashes.

Nsing, a short, small wooden split-gong.

Nting. A long barrelled wooden drum beaten at a war dance and at an *ikepo* or wake of a man who has slain an enemy in battle.

Ntokrok. A small wooden gong used by the town crier to announce messages for communal work. It is struck with a stick. (Fig. IV.)

Obudum. The large wooden split-gong made from a trunk of a tree. The name is onomatopoeic as this gong gives out deep booming notes. It is beaten in cases of alarm, for instance if houses are on fire, to summon the townspeople. It is played with a heavy stick in each hand, and is used to send toned messages.

Obukpong, the horn or oliphant. A hole is cut in the side of a horn or an elephant's tusk and it is then blown.

Oti. A funnel-shaped iron musical instrument with a stick inside to act as the tongue of a bell.

RECORDING IN THE OLD DAYS

by A. M. JONES

I came home on leave from Northern Rhodesia in 1934, determined to further the interests of African music. This led to my meeting for the first time Dr. (now Professor) A. N. Tucker, the linguist. I found that he had already been recording in the Sudan on a very simple apparatus made for amateur home-recording called a Fay Tone. He lost no time: he took me to a radio junk shop in a small street off Leicester Square and made me buy a Fay Tone; I also bought another red-coloured record-cutting head which had a diamond cutting point. The whole bill was, I think, around ten shillings.

I went home and experimented. The Fay Tone had a small vertical metal horn about nine inches high sticking out of the cutting head, down which one spoke: the records were six inch aluminium discs. The tracking device was unsatisfactory. The result was a small rather distant fairy tone, promising indeed, but I was not satisfied.

I then discovered Cairns and Morrison, a private recording firm in Old Compton Street off Charing Cross Road, who had put on the market a much better tracking gadget for clipping on to the spindle of a gramophone turn-table. This could deal with their 10-inch aluminium discs. I also bought a double-power Garrard gramophone motor. These were the days before tape recorders and anyway, up-country, there was no possibility of using electrical devices. The recording had to be straight from voice to disc.

Cairns and Morrison's tracker had a metal arm (screw-threaded) which extended over the record: the cutting head had a hook which engaged in this and was drawn across the record when the arm revolved. But the hook did not work well. So, having seen a commercial model made by the Marguerite Sound System (used by the B.B.C. at one time for outdoor recording), I took an idea from it, and cut a nut in