Caruso pours out his voice lavishly as ever in 'A Granada'—in fact he pours out so much of it that in a small room one instinctively looks round to the excellent orchestral part, in which some stout work is done by the castanets. That fine baritone, Titto Rufo, is heard to advantage in 'Nemico della patria?' ('Andrea Chénier'). New H.M.V. instrumental records are a varied lot. The popular Adagietto from 'L'Arlesienne' is played with delightful effect by Kreisler and string quartet; Cortot is first-rate in Chopin's 'Tarantelle' without quite making us forget that the piece shows the composer a long way below his best (10-in.). A pleasant old fiddle work in Tartini's Quartet (Io-in.). Corté is brilliant in Chopin's pianoforte by Mrs. Kennedy-Fraser, and beautifully arranged by Frank St. Leger in the first movement of Beethoven's 'Pathétique' Sonata in D minor. The second movement is the more successful of the two, owing to some of the soft passages in the first being too soft. The playing throughout is notable for delicacy and finish.

Some capital string records come from the Vocalion Co. Sammons plays brilliantly in a couple of pieces by Kreisler, 'Tambourin Chinois' and 'Caprice Viennois' (12-in., d.-s.). The same player joins Frank St. Leger in the first movement of Grieg's C minor Sonata for violin and pianoforte, a fine bit of playing, with the instruments well-balanced.

Save when treated as a purely melodic instrument, the violoncello offers a problem which composers frequently fail to solve. Here for example is a record of the slow movement of Rachmaninoff's Sonata in E flat for violoncello and pianoforte, played by Felix Salmond and Frank St. Leger. The violoncello part as a whole lies rather low, and the pianoforte part consists largely of big-chord passages rather high on the keyboard. The result is that the violoncello part comes badly off, and the expressive movement suffers from this displacement of the centre of interest.

Mr. Frederick Runolfson, arranged a couple of Somerset Folk-songs, 'Bingo' and 'Admiral Benbow,' arranged by Cecil Sharp, is recorded on a 10-in., d.-s. 'E.-V.' 'Bingo' is particularly jolly.

E. B. & T. E. G—I have not heard the records you mention, but will look out for them. If they lead me to modify my opinion as to the reproduction of brass tone, so much the better.

RHYTHM IN HYMN-TUNES

By C. F. ABBY WILLIAMS

Old customs die hard. Naturally, for man is instinctively conservative. We have lately discovered flourishing in country districts an interesting survival of the idea that in hymn-tunes the printed notation is sacred and inviolable: that it is to be adhered to with metronomic precision at all costs; that if the choir and congregation find it difficult to cope (for example) with Long Measure tunes, so much the worse for choir and congregation. The tune is all right, for it is printed so. Each musical phrase ends with a minim; each verse begins with a minim; no pause or rest is printed; therefore, with breathless haste, we must proceed to the next verse. Only at the end of a verse may we pause and recover something of our breath; but the pace having been once set, it is sometimes a little difficult to check it even here.

So the choir is trained to sing the Long Measure tune without a break, getting its breath as best it can, and the congregation, whose aesthetic sense rebels, pants after choir and organ, like a dog chained to a gig behind a fast-trotting horse; but, more fortunate than the dog, it can retire from the contest when it will.

Musical rhythm certainly consists, as some define it, in an orderly array of equal time-divisions. On the whole this definition is as good as any other. But there is a thing called human nature which is always upsetting our theoretical calculations; and human nature, while it accepts a well-regulated arrangement of time-divisions, rejects, both on physical and aesthetic grounds, an unbroken succession of thirty-two equal notes. In the first place, such a succession has no breathing places; in the second, the mind has no resting places. This
necessity for the mind can be shown in other than musical matters. For instance, let anyone place thirty-two pins in a row at a small but equal space from one another, and let him retire to a little distance and count them with the eye alone. He will find that the eye requires ‘resting-places for the mind’ in order to carry out even so simple an operation as this.

No doubt it will be said that the harmonic construction of such a tune affords ‘resting-places for the mind’ in its closes. But this is not enough. To satisfy human nature there must be some kind of break in so long a succession of equal sounds, apart from the physical necessity for providing breathing-places.

When did this tendency to observe the letter of the print to the detriment of the spirit of the music arise? It must have been comparatively recently, we think. We are a new organist of the middle of the 15th century trust to a traditional rendering of Long Measure tune, with its free rhythm. The Mensural writer did not be marked by a vertical line across the stave. These, in course of time, became the double bar as used for breathing spaces.

Alterations of the written notes in Handel's music. Some of us can remember old organists who still carried on the 'tradition' of inserting unwritten ornaments in the compositions of Handel and Bach. Did the hymn-tune compilers of the middle of the 19th century trust to a traditional rendering of Long Measure tunes undoubtedly contributes very largely to their great popularity, for strongly-marked rhythm is always capable of arousing strong excitement.

Rhythm is a definite succession of easily understood 'times.' The pause is an interruption, for some special purpose, of the definite succession by an indefinite break in the 'times.' If so many beats are allotted to the pause it loses its whole character, becomes the mere measure, be ultra mensuram (outside the measure), as the old writers express it. Probably the organist, having lost the keen edge of his natural rhythmical sense in acquiring the command of his very complicated and non-rhythmical instrument, thinks that the choir and congregation cannot come in with him at the right moment after the pause. If, however, he will trust the pause as a means of expressing something that requires special expression; if he will trust his instinctive musical feeling apart from theory; and, most important of all, if he will trust the innate rhythmical sense of his church and congregation, he will find them respond quickly enough, and, what is more, he will be in artistic sympathy with them, one of the most delightful of human experiences.

A new form of hymn-tune has arisen during, say, the last fifty years or so, which has a marching lilt. Here the organist can most effectively and properly indulge his desire to play the notes exactly as written, that is to say, in strict time. We allude to such tunes as Sullivan's 'Onward, Christian Soldiers,' Woodbury's 'For ever with the Lord,' Dykes' 'Ten thousand times ten thousand,' and a few others which may occur to the reader. The march-like rhythm of such tunes undoubtedly contributes very largely to their great popularity, for strongly-marked rhythm is always capable of arousing strong excitement.

Tunes such as the above are in keeping with what is now known as the 'chorale.' It was introduced into the churches by Luther and his musical friend Walther, and its popularity soon caused it to spread rapidly through the other reformed churches. Now the German is nothing if not thorough. He takes nothing for granted, even the artistic powers of others, and will not do things by halves. He invariably printed the fermata sign over the last note of every phrase in every chorale. Bach even retains this sign in his organ arrangements of chorales, though he makes it impossible to observe it.

This seems a hint that the great Bach himself was no worshipper of the printed text to the detriment of the musical spirit. It is possible that English editors were fearful lest fermata signs should be overdone and become a nuisance; they undoubtedly considerably lengthen the Lutheran service. And some of our organists, looking to the text, the whole text, and nothing but the text, ride roughshod over aesthetic considerations, in spite of the shoals of books and articles and lectures that are constantly being published dealing with the proper rendering of Church music.

When the type of organist we have in mind sees a printed fermata he is puzzled as to its exact 'value' in terms of the notes that are being sung. We have heard it suggested that the choir should count many beats on the pause, in order to 'come in' together when it is over. This astonishing method seems to be rather widespread. How surprised would an audience be at Queen's Hall if they saw Sir Henry Wood striking the empty air with his baton during the pauses in the second and fifth bars of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony! Yet the orchestra has an infinitely more difficult entrée than a choir has in any conceivable hymn-tune.

The singing of hymns in the vulgar tongues of the several northern nations that accepted the Reformation seems to have commenced with what is now known as the ‘chorale.’ It was introduced into the churches by Luther and his musical friend Walther, and its popularity soon caused it to spread rapidly through the other reformed churches. Now the German is nothing if not thorough. He takes nothing for granted, even the artistic powers of others, and will not do things by halves. He invariably printed the fermata sign over the last note of every phrase in every chorale. Bach even
tune depends for most of its effect. The result was a performance sentimental and to a high degree, in which the congregation eagerly seized the opportunity for indulging in the semi-hysterical expression of religious emotion that one so often hears.

There seems no doubt that the organ, taken as the only instrument of study, with its impossibility of accent and its complicated mechanism, is somewhat apt to rob the keenness off the edge of the natural rhythmical sense of the student, unless this is maintained by other means. Perhaps some day all young organists with any aspirations will see the advantage of learning some orchestral instrument sufficiently to take a place in the ranks of a decent orchestra, or will get opportunities for singing in choral works of high calibre. This would enlarge their outlook, not only on rhythmic, but other musical developments, would make them far more useful musicians than the 'one-instrument man', and would lay a solid foundation for the artistic training both of their church choir and of their possible choral society.

EXETER CHORISTERS' SCHOOL

We shall be doing a service to our readers if we remind them that in these days of inflated school fees the advantages offered by some of our Cathedral Choir Schools are worth consideration. We have just received, for example, an excellent report of the Choristers' School at Exeter, where the educational successes recently achieved proved that the charge frequently brought against choir schools, of surrendering the claims of general education to those of music, is in this case without foundation. The education and training provided at this school are evidently first-class, and yet, after the brief period of probation (which seldom exceeds three terms, and is frequently less) during which the fee is at the rate of £3 15 a year, board and education cost no more than £15 a year! The school consists of sixteen choristers and four probationers. The latter succeed to vacant places in the choir if their progress (both in music and in class) and conduct are satisfactory, the order of succession being determined by such progress. Examinations are usually held twice or thrice in the year, according to the number of vacancies, &c. Traveling expenses are allowed in the case of unsuccessful candidates. The principal is the Rev. R. W. B. Langhorne, one of the Priest-Vicars of the Cathedral, to whom all communications should be addressed.

LEINSTER SOCIETY OF ORGANISTS AND CHOIRMASTERS

The February meeting of the above Society was held on Monday, February 7, by kind permission of the Governors, in the Organ Room of the Royal Irish Academy of Music. There was a large attendance of members, and a paper was read by Mr. C. L. Murray on 'Reminiscences of the late Sir R. P. Stewart.' After the reading of the paper and a discussion, the members of the Society were invited to give performances on the organ, and Mr. Weaver responded most happily by selecting Sir R. P. Stewart's Organ Fantasia, and Reubke's Fugue.

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ORGAN RECITALS

Mr. J. Matthews, St. Stephen's, Guernsey-Toccata and Fugue in D minor, Bach; 'The Curfew,' Horsem.

Mr. C. E. Blyton Dobson, High Pavement Church, Nottingham-Concert Overture in C minor, Hollins; Main Theme of Handel, Gounod.

Mr. Herbert Hodge, St. Nicholas Cole Abbey (three recitals)—Toccata, de la Tombelle; Fugue on Bach;

Dr. Thomas Keighley, Albion Church, Ashton-under-Lyne—Fugue in D minor, Bach; 'The Curfew,' Ha-rds;

Mr. W. J. Comley, All Saints', Hertford—Sonata in C minor, Bach; 'A Song of Sunshine,' Hollins.

Mr. Stanley E. Lucas, Trinity Presbyterian Church, Margate-Prelude and Fugue in B minor, Bach; 'Finlandia'; Prelude and Fugue in D minor, utendelssohn.

Mr. W. J. Lancaster, Bolton Parish Church—Sonata, Mendelssohn; Symphony No. 1, Fteu-ret; Meditation-Elegie, Hav-y Gruace; Symphony No. 4, Beethoven; Toccata and Fugue in C, Bach.

Mr. J. G. Bamborough, South Parade Wesleyan Church, Brighton—Organ Appointments.

Mr. Fred Gostelow, St. Paul's, Hove—Prelude and Fugue in E flat, Saint-Saëns; 'Les Heures Bourguignonnes,' Jacob; Fugue in C minor, Bach; Symphony No. 1, Beethoven; Petite Pastorale, Ravel.

Mr. W. J. Comley, All Saints', Hertford—Toccata in F, Bach; Larghetto with Variations, S. S. Wesley; Sonata No. 4, Mendelssohn; Prelude on 'Urbs Beata,' Fauk/es; Prelude on 'Melcombe,' Widor.

Mr. J. A. Meale, Central Hall, Westminster (five recitals)—'Finlandia'; Prelude and Fugue in E minor, Bach; 'Ad nos, Lest!'; Choral No. 3, Franck.

Mr. Harry Wall, St. Paul's, Covent Garden (four recitals)—Adagio (Sonata No. 3), Bach; Agitato and Thema variato, Rabiner-burg; Lament, Saworblatts; Prelude on 'Melcombe,' Parry; Meditation and Final, Skippen-Barnes; Prelude on 'Martyrs,' Harvey Graace.

Dr. R. Walker Robson, Christ Church, Crouch End (three recitals)—Carillon, Vierne; Adagio and Final from 'New World' Symphony; Prelude in D minor, Mendelssohn; Rhapsody No. 2, Howells.

Mr. J. A. Meale, Central Hall, Westminster (five recitals)—Now thank we all!, Karg-Elert; Concerto, Stanley; Sonata No. 1, Mendelssohn; Sonata in Dflat, Rheinberger; Chorale Prelude, Meale.

Mr. Allan Brown, Wesleyan Church, Dartford—Symphony in E minor, Holbenley; Ave, Bernard Johnson; Fugue, Reubke; 'Finlandia.'

Mr. John Pollic, St. Mary's Cathedral, Glasgow—Fantasia on 'Forty days and forty nights,' Wallace; Prelude 'O Lamb of God,' Bach; Chorale No. 2, Franck; Scherzo, Gipil; Prelude on 113th Psalm, C. Wood.

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Mr. H. S. Middleton, Turo Cathedral—Prelude and Fugue in B minor and Pastoral Symphony, Bach; Fugue; Ad nos, Lest!; Choral No. 3, Franck.

Mr. F. G. M. Ophourne, St. Andrew's, Holborn (three recitals)—Toccata in F and Fugue in D, Bach; Sonatas Nos. 1 and 6, Mendelssohn.

Mr. H. C. J. Churchill, Maze Hill Congregational Church, Greenwich—Toccata and Fugue in D minor, Bach; Toccata, Duets; Question and Answer, Wenezlhalme; Imperial March, Elgar.

Mr. Allan Brown, Wesleyan Church, Dartford—Symphony in E minor, Holbenley; Ave, Bernard Johnson; Fugue, Reubke; 'Finlandia.'

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