

THE TOWN TRAIL QUIZ;*Philomena Kennedy (002) writes:*

Many thanks to all who took part. I apologise for not realising that there are only two and a half versions of the Metropole Hotel monogram on the Cannon Street balconies. (Maybe one half fell off after I had counted them?)

Apologies also for marking as 'wrong' in the haste of the moment, the name 'Hermes' for the classical character with the winged helmet over Gala Bingo in Biggin Street. He is, of course, often identified with the Roman 'Mercury'. These slips made no difference to the result, I'm glad to say

The Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines, the Royal School of Music

under the direction of

Lt-Colonel J. M. Ware, O.B.E., B.A., A.R.A.M., Royal Marines

To anyone expecting music reminiscent of Sunday afternoons in the park, this concert would have been a shock. It was performed by a symphonic wind band with about fifty young instrumentalists able to create harmonies so powerful that one's ears sang. The result was neither soothing nor familiar. Instead, the rhythms were demanding and so were many of the sound combinations emitted by such unusual instruments as bombardon and euphonium. All the composers are British and, apart from Gustav Holst, still living. Assisted by excellent programme notes the listener could keep up with the pace of the music and comprehend the forms involved. The term "folk" used to describe several themes meant tuneful rather than hey nonny.

The most memorable items were 'Concerto for Trombone and Band' by Derek Bourgeois (soloist Christopher Mowat) and 'The Sword and the Crown' by Edward Gregson. This last work was almost visual in its depiction of battles and courtly life of the Plantagenets. The musicians' range and versatility was revealed by including voices, electronic keyboard and, most dramatic of all, two sets of triple kettle drums "speaking" to each other from either side of the stage. I have no special liking for military bands but this concert was a novel and enjoyable experience.

The Nye Hall at the Duke of York's Royal Military School was used for this and for several other recent concerts, by courtesy of the Headmaster. It was opened last year and replaces the former hall which was destroyed by fire. Dover people are impressed by its size, comfortable seating and excellent acoustics. There is safe, well-directed car parking. Public transport would be inadequate but use of taxis might be considered. Since provision of Dover's own theatre or concert hall seems unlikely, the availability of Nye Hall for suitable events is most welcome.

SHEILA R. COPE (009)