

GENERAL

The Basque Children's Choir

Very soon after their arrival in Britain, a choir of *niños* was invited to make a gramophone record of eight national folksongs. In the National Joint Committee for Spanish Relief's Bulletin No 8 which appeared in July 1937, there was a short item entitled: "Basque Children's Gramophone Record". It stated that the Parlophone Record Company had made two gramophone records of the Basque Children's Choir. They were 10" double-sided records and could be bought for 3/- each at the NJCSR headquarters at 53 Markham Street, London, or from any gramophone dealer. "Neither Artists nor Manufacturers (were) retaining any fees or profits" – the recordings were specially intended to boost the NJCSR's fund. All of the "delightful Basque folk-songs" on the recording are in Basque. Another feature which no doubt helped sell these records at the time was Paul Robeson's participation in the venture with the song: *Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child*.

At the beginning of December 1937, Wilfred Roberts, the Hon Secretary of the NJCSR, wrote to the members, drawing their attention to the need to continue fundraising for the Basque children. In a section of this letter under the heading "Gramophone Records", he states that the demand for the records is steady but relatively slow. To try and increase sales, the letter contained a sample leaflet advertising the records, and members were encouraged to insert a copy in all their correspondence.

The present recording is a copy of the original 1937 recording by Parlophone Records and has a piano accompaniment.

List of Songs:

Zeuretzat Cixitza, Ene Ama, Lenago II, Ene Aberi, Txeru, Itxasoan, Ator Ator Mutil, Gabou Gabian

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