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IMPORTED RECORDS DEPARTMENT

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THE YOUNGER SET



A PROJECT that might well be emulated in other parts of the country has come to our attention by way of the Glen Ridge Library, in New Jersey, where the College Women's Club of Montclair has established a children's loan library of records. There are classics and similar material for the upper graders, correlated with their school studies; for the younger public, a diversified list of material both educational and entertaining. Those who are interested in building collections of this sort are advised that the catalogue of the collection has been published, and may be obtained by writing to the Community Child Study Group, 49 Melrose Place, Montclair, N. J. Marjorie Crumden was the able compiler, and the charge is 35¢ plus postage (5¢).

To the numerous manufacturers of records for the younger set we welcome this month the Lincoln Record Company, which offers two series in the "budget" category, ages two to eight. The Teddy Bear Series is priced at 35¢, the Bobolink records at 25¢, and both are unbreakable. The material is uniformly good, treated with humor and imagination, neatly packaged. Marion Rosette is responsible for the arrangements, with John Jacob Loeb directing the Teddy Bear singers. To simplify matters, I have starred, in the following list, those issues which are most interesting.

Teddy Bear Series

Old MacDonald Had a Farm
Hickory Dickory Dock 201*

Row Row Row Your Boat
Little Boy Blue 202*

Red River Valley
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Pop Goes the Weasel
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Elves and the Shoemaker 352

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Fisherman and the Flounder
Pussy Cat, Pussy Cat 359

Lion and the Mouse
Fiddle-de-da 357

Frère Jacques
Humpty Dumpty 360*

Ride a Cock Horse
Over in the Meadow 361*

Pat a Cake
A Trip to New York 362*

From other sources, for the same age groups, Cub records have some interesting material. "Traditional Children's Songs" (Cub 7, 79¢, unbreakable) has "Bow Belina" and "Shoo Fly," a good activity record with dance tunes children will like. It is sung and played by Fred Hellerman, who accompanies himself on the guitar and banjo. Woody Guthrie is the performer in "Wake Up" and "Cleano" (Cub 8, 79¢, unbreakable) for ages two to five, of which the music is rather doleful for this age group. More refreshing is the humor in another Guthrie record (Cub 9, 79¢) of which the titles are "Put Your Finger in the Air" and "Don't Push Me Down." This is particularly recommended for its rhythmic patterns. Finally Cub offers "Nursery Rhymes" (Cub 11, 79¢) sung and played by Cisco Houston, who accompanies himself on the guitar. Note the amusing jackets by Kriesberg.

In the music appreciation department, there is a Young People's Record (No. 1009, \$1.39) of a "Rondo" by Von Weber, in which the bassoon is the soloist. Eli Carman is the instrumentalist, playing well against the orchestral background directed by Max Goberman. Parents may note the incidental appearance of the Mozart "Bassoon Concerto" on RCA Victor if the youngster shows an interest in the instrument. As well as being instructive, the music is highly enjoyable, especially in this kind of spirited performance. For the Margaret O'Brien public we note an issue of "Favorite Fairy Tales," covering such items as "Sleeping Beauty" and "The Princess Who Couldn't Laugh" (Capitol Vol. 1, DAS 138, \$1.31) and "The Frog Prince" and "Little Red Riding Hood" (Capitol Vol. 2, DAS 143, \$1.31). Next in order might be "All's Well That Ends Well," in tribute to young Miss O'Brien's recent experiences. —MARIE L. MUTCH.

an idea. "You know, I believe I might record some Chopin."

It was the piano, strangely enough, which gave original impetus to the recording of Bach's "Well-Tempered Clavier" now in progress. When the Nazis invaded France in 1940, Landowska had to flee from her home in Saint-Leu-La-Forêt, a small village near Paris which had over the years become an international mecca for musicians. Along with millions of others, Landowska headed south and eventually found herself in Banyuls-sur-Mer, where her friend Aristide Maillol, the sculptor, lived. For a few days Mme. Wanda was lost in dejection. Her precious instruments and library had fallen to the mercy of the German invaders, and there seemed nothing to live for. Then she noticed an old upright piano in the lobby of the *pension* where she had located a room. It was distressingly out of tune, but it made music. Moreover, the landlady had no objection to Landowska's playing at night. Quite the contrary. "It makes me sleep so well," she said. So the famous harpsichordist began to take heart, and soon she was

re-studying the "Forty-Eight." The entire harpsichord registration was completed using only the battered upright, and when—two years later—Mme. Wanda arrived in New York and could play the harpsichord once again, she found that nothing had to be changed.

Another incident of the war is apposite to Landowska's new recording of the "Well-Tempered Clavier." Among truckloads of loot which the Nazis carried away from St.-Leu was Landowska's favorite Pleyel harpsichord. Just after the German surrender this instrument was found in Bavaria through the offices of Lt. Doda Conrad, the Polish-French basso and a friend of Mme. Wanda. It was shipped to the rightful owner at once, and it is on her "Doda harpsichord" that RCA Victor's recording of the "Forty-Eight" is being played.

We heard some test pressings of the recording, and they effectually removed any objections we once had to the interpretation of this music on the harpsichord. Many authorities from Forkel and Spitta to Fuller-Maitland and Schweitzer have maintained that

Collegiate Competition

Those undergraduates whose interest was aroused by the contest announced last month are reminded that the final deadline is August 1. A prize of \$100 is being offered for the best article (of approximately 1,500 words) dealing with any subject related to recordings. Contributions should be accompanied by data certifying the collegiate status of the writer and addressed to "Collegiate Competition," RECORDINGS Editor, Saturday Review of Literature, 25 West 45th Street, New York 19, N. Y.

the "Forty-Eight" were better suited to the clavichord than the harpsichord. Were they to hear Landowska's interpretation, we wager their opinions would be revised.

The famous harpsichordist makes no secret of her satisfaction with the new recording. "I have been studying Bach for half a century," she explained, "and my records of the 'Forty-Eight' represent the very best I can offer." The first eight preludes and fugues of the "Well-Tempered Clavier" will be released this winter. We suggest that collectors begin laying aside funds for treasures to come.

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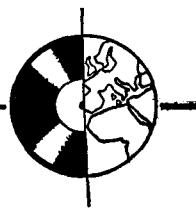
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Album Set DGS-4 List Price \$8.50	DIVERTIMENTO IN D MAJOR FOR OBOE, TWO HORNS & STRING QUARTET (Mozart) (K. 251) Hans Von Benda conducting the Berlin Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra	JM-35081 List Price \$2.50	LOHENGRIN —Euch Luften Die Mein Klagen (Richard Wagner) LOHENGRIN —Einsam In Truben Tagen (Richard Wagner) Tiana Lemnitz (Soprano) with the Berlin State Opera Orchestra
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Album Set DGS-6 List Price \$21.00	DER FREISCHÜTZ —Abridged Opera (Carl Maria Von Weber) Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Berlin State Opera under Robt. Heger	LM-68126 List Price \$2.50	SALOME—DANCE OF THE SEVEN VEILS (Richard Strauss) Herbert Von Karajan conducting the Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam

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THE OTHER SIDE

(IMPORTED RECORDINGS)



LONDON. HMV's special birthday tribute to the recent festivities on behalf of Sir Thomas Beecham is entitled "Eighteenth Century Music" and contains the Overture and "Pastoral Symphony" from Handel's "Messiah" (presumably from the complete set, released in the U. S. by RCA Victor, but not yet available over here), a charming and unpretentious little Symphony by Haydn, No. 40 in F major, and a magnificent early work by Mozart, the Divertimento in D major, K.131. Beecham, who gives us subtle and beautifully molded performances of these works, has come in for a good deal of criticism because he includes a Minuet from a later Divertimento in place of one of the two Minuets of K.131. I should like to hear his reasons for this substitution which, on the face of it, seems difficult to justify.

No such doubts assail the reviewer of the really splendid performance by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra of Strauss's "Don Quixote." In contrast to his earlier version with the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra, which was disappointing, I feel this to be one of the greatest recordings Beecham has ever given us. For the important solo cello part, the fine French cellist Paul Tortelier was imported, with the rather less exacting viola solo most competently handled by Leonard Rubens, the Royal Philharmonic's leading violist. The recording is technically superb and marks a truly notable achievement on the part of all concerned.

Another Strauss tone-poem to be successfully re-recorded is "Death and Transfiguration." Clemens Krauss conducts the London Philharmonic Orchestra on Decca, and proves once again how well he interprets this composer's music. The LPO plays very competently, but the strings lack the kind of opulence the Philadelphia Orchestra used to give us, and without which this composition sounds somewhat faded.

The current visit to this country of the Philadelphia Orchestra under Ormandy has caused Columbia to release a sudden spate of Philadelphia records including the Sibelius Second Symphony and a "Rosenkavalier Suite." While these show an undoubted advance in recording technique over some we have had from the USA during the last few years, there is

still, on our best instruments, a noticeable gap between these and the better European recordings. I imagine that contract commitments will make it impossible for the Philadelphians to make records over here; it would have been most interesting to hear what British studios could have done with such an orchestra. In the case, too, of the splendid performance of Brahms's D minor Concerto by Serkin and the Pittsburgh Orchestra, I fear that the rather hard and shallow tone of the recording will prevent it from achieving the popularity merited by the playing.

There are two symphonies that deserve mention, Schubert's "Little" C major, No. 6, which has been charmingly recorded by Decca, and Dvorak's No. 4 in G, which HMV is offering this month. Josef Krips is at his best in the Viennese idiom and he has secured playing of delightful and delicate quality from the London Symphony Orchestra. Dvorak, too, has been entrusted to a fellow countryman of the composer, Rafael Kubelik, who has recently made Britain his domicile. His performance, with the Philharmonia, has great distinction; it is passionate and lyrical in turn and I particularly liked his handling of the Adagio, which is taken a trifle more slowly than by most other conductors. On the debit side it must be said that the orchestral playing is at times somewhat rough, and the strings of the Philharmonia do not produce as lovely a sound as their Czech colleagues. The recording is very full-bodied, though apt to become a little coarse in the loudest passages.

PROKOFIEFF'S full-length ballet "Cinderella" has been packing the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, ever since its first performance last autumn. Now the ROH Orchestra, under Warwick Braithwaite, has given us the first recorded excerpts from this outstanding success, on three Columbia discs. Though the music obviously must lose a good deal out of context, it is still immensely skilful and highly entertaining—full of characteristic touches. This is ballet writing in the grand tradition, and it is well served by a competent performance and excellent recording.

Victor de Sabata conducting the Augusteo Orchestra in the "William Tell" Overture sounds, on paper at least, a sure winner. In fact it has

turned out to be, with the exception of some lovely cello playing, a crude performance, poorly recorded.

Berlioz's "Roméo et Juliette" excerpts by Toscanini and the NBC Orchestra have at last been released. Our delight at the glorious performance has been tempered by sadness over the absence of the "Queen Mab Scherzo" (was it not promised for the near future when the set was issued in the U. S. about eighteen months ago?) and by regret at the harsh quality of the sound in the "Ball Scene." It may be said without fear of exaggeration that, for a large number of gramophiles in this country, Studio 8-H has acted as a kind of "iron curtain" between them and any real appreciation of this greatest of conductors. For the last ten years, with the exception of three broadcasts relayed by the BBC from Italy (via bad land-lines) we have had to rely solely on these NBC recordings. Naturally there has been much improvement of late, and some of the "Roméo" music sounds lovely. Yet, surely, is it too much to hope that records will yet be made by Toscanini which will give us something of the glorious tone quality he secures from his players, even in a fortissimo passage?

Another orchestral disc meriting space in this report contains the Overture to Cherubini's opera "Les Deux Journées" ("The Water Carrier"). This infrequently heard piece, which could be taken for some minor Beethoven, is played by the Bournemouth Municipal Orchestra which has, within the last two or three seasons, risen from the depths to become one of our best provincial orchestras. The man responsible for this transformation is Rudolf Schwarz, an Austrian musician, whose enterprise and intelligent, progressive leadership have deservedly won much praise. This should be the first of an interesting series of HMV records by this orchestra.

The vocal field is headed by four sides from Kipnis's "Boris Godunov" set, which—in spite of the inevitable comparisons with Chaliapin's great records—have made a deep impression. The excerpts so far available comprise the "Monologue," the Boris-Shuisky Duet, and the "Clock Scene," all from Act II. Like *Oliver Twist*, we are asking for more. Of the home product, easily the best is Mozart's youthful Motet "Exsultate Jubilate," K.165. While most people will no doubt acquire it for the sake of the famous "Alleluia," the real centerpiece of this composition is the heavenly aria "Tu virginum corona" which occupies just over half of the four sides of Columbia's recording. The singer is Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, perhaps the most sensitive and gifted soprano Europe has produced during the