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*** indicate an outstanding performance, ** a competent performance, * an acceptable performance. ††† denote exceptional recording, †† efficient recording, † poor recording.

ORCHESTRAL

***††† *Symphony in F Minor (No. 4), Tchaikowsky*: (RCA-Victor, five 12-inch records, \$10). A singularly energetic and forceful reading of what it is not unreasonable to regard as Tchaikowsky's most successful symphony. The performers are Serge Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and the recording is as realistic as anything science has yet accomplished. *Warning*: A modern machine is virtually imperative for representative reproduction of the sound contained on these disks. The Waltz from the *String Serenade* is brilliantly played on the tenth side.

***†† *Dichter und Bauer, Von Suppe*: (RCA-Victor, 12-inch record, \$1.50). This melodon-and-carousel masterpiece is ennobled by an animated, precise interpretation by Arthur Fiedler and the Boston "Pops" Orchestra (99 44/100 Boston Symphony). Good fun, and excellent recording, though somewhat over-detailed.

**†† *Symphony in B Minor (No. 6), Tchaikowsky*: (Columbia, five 12-inch records, \$7.50). A new *Pathetique*, from Philippe Gaubert and the Paris Conservatory Orchestra. It has been M. Gaubert's laudable intention to minimize the elements of hysteria in this work, but the thought recurs: Does this not also rob the score of its major distinction? The playing is straightforward, somewhat over-agitated in the march movement. Gaubert's orchestra is hardly comparable to the best of ours, but the performance is accurate and the recording excellently sonorous.

††† *Overture in D Minor, Handel-Stokowski*: (RCA-Victor, 10-inch record, \$1.50). The ineffable Leopold has here recorded his "free transcription" of one of Handel's great masterworks. What emerges is first-rank Stokowski, but rather poor Handel, what with swollen sonorities, rampant brass, and theatrical "effects". The re-



RECORDED MUSIC

cording, however, is magnificent, and Stokowski's capacity for inflaming an orchestra remains unimpaired.

VOCAL

***††† *Ich Liebe Dich* and *Ein Traum* (Grieg): (RCA-Victor, 10-inch record, \$1.50). The most successful recording to date of Kirsten Flagstad's voice. Unfortunately not one of the Wagner scenes for which she is celebrated. Both songs, however, are representative Grieg, and suitable for Flagstad's excellent ability. Edwin MacArthur is the piano accompanist.

OPERA

***††† *La Bohème* (Fourth Act only), (Puccini): (Columbia, four 12-inch records, \$6). The element of distinction in this performance is the superb direction by Sir Thomas Beecham, which gives more vitality and character to the music than the performances commonly — or uncommonly — heard in the opera house. An English cast is used, meritorious through the ability of its members to do the conductor's bidding. The orchestral score is beautifully played by the London Philharmonic, and the recording has fine body and distinctness. On the eighth side is *Donde Lieta* from the third act of *Bohème*.

DANCE

Limehouse Blues and *After You've Gone*: (Victor, 10-inch, \$.75). Further evidence of the mighty talents of Stephane Grappelly's *Hot Four*, the French swingsters noted here several months ago. Lots of imagination and fine skill in these.

Somebody Loves Me and *Jam Session*: (Victor, 10-inch, \$.75). The old Gershwin tune in a vigorous new arrangement by Fletcher Henderson, excellently treated by Benny Goodman and Band. Only recommended if you cherish this tune, for the reverse is ordinary stuff.

Un Violon dans La Nuit and *Vieni, Vieni*: (Columbia, 10-inch, \$.75). The first of these is the French original of the currently popular *Serenade in the Night*. However, none of the domestic versions compare with Tino Rossi's skillful vocalization on this disk. It is coupled with a tune from the *Casino de Paris* revue which is not without its own charm.

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