

Saturday Review

OF RECORDINGS

for MARCH, 1948

IMPRESSIONS

TWO LETTERS to the editor are interesting enough to merit display herein, for the contents are of specific interest to the record-buying readers of RECORDINGS.

One, from Tyler Turner of Columbia Records, states simply, but with a phrasing many readers will welcome:

You will be glad to know that your campaign for restoration of the Madeleine Gray records in the catalogue has borne fruit and that we will reinstate them shortly.

Since it was the willing demonstration of interest by the numerous readers which achieved the results, rather than any eloquence mustered by the editor, he thanks the many whose letters have already been printed, and the writers of those which have arrived since.

The other, from James W. Murray, vice president of RCA record division, bears on the Toscanini survey initiated last month. Considerable response is already at hand, with a predominance of enthusiasm for issuing the broadcast versions even with imperfections, and some resistance to the prospect of a higher cost. In reference thereto, the letter of Mr. Murray is illuminating:

First and foremost is artistic and technical quality. As regards the former, the sole arbiter is Maestro Toscanini himself. . . . Should the air checks meet Toscanini's standards of artistic excellence, it would remain for our engineers to determine whether the dubbing . . . would not involve the lowering of technical standards to the point where the public might not find them acceptable.

Secondly, there is the question of union approval. . . . Should the union fix a rate that is prohibitive as regards payments to musicians, we would be forced to abandon consideration of the project on these grounds alone.

Finally, there is the question of public demand for what would probably be a rather expensive series of albums. . . . While this company has frequently invested large sums of money in the recording of repertoire that has had a limited sale, the costs involved in this ven-

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ture are so extraordinary that some assurance would be required that the initial investment could be partially offset within a reasonable period before it could be undertaken.

Mr. Murray indicated an interest in the poll initiated last month by RECORDINGS, and an analysis is being prepared for forwarding to him. Since the project is one that should be of interest to a large segment of the record-buying public, RECORDINGS is

anxious to have as large and representative a sampling of opinion as can be acquired. Consequently, the coupon is reprinted in this issue on page 55.

A final suggestion occurs: If the hazards involved seem too considerable for general release, that Victor consider a subscription series idea, such as brought the Hugo Wolf Society into existence.

IRVING KOLODIN, EDITOR,
SRL RECORDINGS.