

Borodin à la Mode

"KISMET": Alfred Drake, Doretta Morrow, Richard Kinley, etc., with musical direction by Arthur Kay. (Columbia ML 4850, \$5.95.)

ONE is irresistibly reminded of one of the best lines in the late Eugene O'Neill's "Emperor Jones" by the appearance of this medley from the extravaganza called "Kismet," which came to New York during the newspaper strike. It was delivered by Brutus Jones, ex-Pullman porter and student of life, and went: "For de little stealin' dey gits you in jail; for de big stealin' dey makes you Emperor." When such composers as Sigmund Romberg "borrowed" a strain or two from Wagner or Puccini, they were considered reprobate; but when Messrs. Robert Wright and George Forrest ransack the whole literature of Borodin and come up with a shattering collection of odd-ends, they are somehow admired in some quarters as ingenious fellows and educators of the public taste. (They have a practised hand in autopsy, having operated previously on Grieg to produce "The Song of Norway.")

Of course, Borodin wrote as many lovely tunes as any Russian of his time, and the big melody of the "Polovtsian Dances" has its contour even when sung to the measure of "Strangers in Paradise." But as often as the ear is assuaged by such matter it is led astray by the turns and twists (not to say cuts and slices) imposed upon it to make it fit the Procrustean bed of Broadway. And once they have started "borrowing," they are in the usual position of the debtor—only what they go on borrowing from is Fletcher Henderson's "Christopher Columbus," Benny Goodman's "Sing, Sing, Sing," or anything else required to give the final fillip of slick "modernity" to something which will, fortunately, outlive all the sins against it.

For purposes of the "record," it should be mentioned that Columbia has done a first-class technical job of production, that Alfred Drake has rarely been in better form and Doretta Morrow has developed remarkably the promise she showed in "The King and I"—which Richard Rodgers was foolish enough to write out of his own head. When four voices get to climbing around each other in a vocal paraphrase of the slow movement from the D major Quartet, I can only wonder how long it will be till Messrs. Wright and Forrest get around to Bach, and a vocal version of the "Goldberg Variations."

—I. K.

A
CREDIT
TO YOUR
HIGH
FIDELITY
SYSTEM

Collaro

for 7, 10, and 12
INCH RECORDS

Fully Automatic

3-SPEED RECORD CHANGERS

Model 3/532
Intermixes 10 and
12 inch records.
List Price\$65.00

Model 3/531
Non-intermix.
List Price\$54.50

Model 3/534
Single record player.
List Price\$33.60

WOOD BASE
Mahogany Finish.
Specify Changer or
Player.
List Price\$9.50



Available at
Radio Parts Jobbers,
Distributors, and
Hi-Fi Dealers

Write for complete details to Dept. FM-3

ROCKBAR CORPORATION • 215 East 37th Street, New York 16, N. Y.

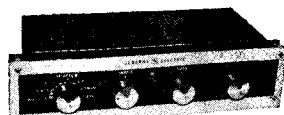
WELCOME GIFT FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

HIGH FIDELITY

GE Custom Music Ensemble

GIVE your family the gift that gives so much at Christmas and all year long. A G-E high-fidelity sound system brings the carolers into your home, faithfully interprets original voice and music. Ideally matched G-E units have been widely acclaimed both for performance and low cost!

Write today for literature and the name of your nearest distributor. General Electric Company, Section 41123-26, Electronics Park, Syracuse, N. Y.



Preamplifier Control Unit A1-200



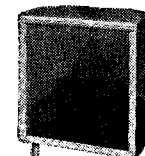
Power Amplifier A1-300



Dual Coaxial
Speaker A1-400



Deluxe Tone Arms:
A1-500 (12")
A1-501 (16")



Speaker
Enclosure (Blond,
Mahogany or
Unfinished Veneers)
A1-406

GENERAL ELECTRIC

HARVEY

The House of
High Fidelity



THE NEW **REL**
Precedent
FM TUNER

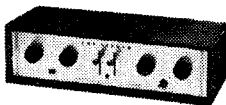
Unquestionably the finest FM tuner ever made. This successor to the famous 646B incorporates every important advance developed in the art of FM reception. Sensitivity is 2 microvolts for better than 40db quieting. Frequency response is 30 to 40,000 cycles ± 1 db. Waveform distortion is less than .5% for 100% modulation. Provides 2-volt output to high impedance, and .2 volts to 600 ohms. Front panel includes slide-rule dial, tuning meter, signal strength meter, tuning control, radio frequency and audio gain controls, and power switch. Power supply is self-contained. Supplied complete with tubes.

Chassis only for custom installations... **\$325.00**

Relay Rack Model... **\$335.00**

Cabinet Model
(Mahogany, Walnut or Blonde)... **\$360.00**

FISHER
AUDIO CONTROL
Model 50-CB
PREAMPLIFIER-
EQUALIZER



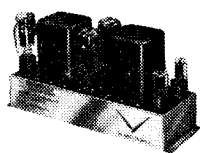
A high quality, all-triode circuit with virtually no distortion. Self-contained, shielded power supply furnishes DC to heaters thus eliminating audible hum. Circuit design permits long leads without loss.

There are eight controls: 1. Volume which operates either conventionally or as a loudness control. 2. Loudness Control Switch which selects the function of the volume control. 3. Selector Switch which permits selection of any one of five signal sources: microphone, tape recorder, phono, etc. 4 & 5. Low and High Frequency Switches which provide 16 different record compensations. 6 & 7. Bass and Treble Tone Controls which permit individual boost and attenuation. 8. Power Switch.

Complete with tubes... **\$97.50**

THE NEW **CORONATION**

30-WATT
SUPRA
LINEAR
AMPLIFIER



An advanced version of the Williamson with several important circuit modifications. Through the use of matched, high-quality components, and an output transformer, specially designed and wound for the unit, the Coronation has achieved unusually fine performance.

Frequency Response: 10 to 100,000 cycles ± 1 db. Power Response: 20 to 20,000 cycles ± 2.5 db. Intermodulation Distortion is less than .15%, and Harmonic Distortion less than .1%, at 15 watts. Class A-1 operation. Power supply is self-contained, with outlet for furnishing power to a pre-amp unit. Uses KT-66 output tubes.

May be operated from tuner, preamp, high-level pickup, tape recorder, or other sound source. Operates any speaker system, 8-16 ohms. Hum and noise level is 96db below full output. Dimensions: 15 x 4 3/4 x 7 1/2 inches.

Complete with tubes... **\$92.50**

NOTE: Prices Net, F.O.B., N.Y.C.
Subject to change without notice.



Harvey
RADIO COMPANY, INC.

103 W. 43rd St., N.Y. 36, N.Y. • LU 2-1500

Bellissima Bellini, Erratic Puccini

AS OFTEN as one comes upon the greatness of such a forgotten work as "I Puritani" (Angel 35035-6-7, \$17.85/14.85), one is prompted again to consider the selective process of history and how it operates. Whether "Puritani" would wear as well, over as long a time, as "Lucia di Lammermoor" I hope is never subjected to a test. But allowing for all the impact of its fresh melodic spurt, for the unfamiliar rise and fall of its line, the judgment has to be that it is far greater music than "Lucia."

Why, then, does one persist and the other languish? "Puritani" has no such eartickling matter as the "Sextet," to be sure. But the answer is, I think, that "Lucia" demands an easier kind of specialized vocal technique than "Puritani," that it has been kept alive by the Melbas, Tetrzzinis, Galli-Curcis, Pagliughis, and Ponses, one of whom seems always to be coming when another is going. (We don't have a very good Lucia today, but we have good enough ones to make a performance possible.)

"Puritani," however, is a purposeless venture unless you have a dramatic soprano with a florid top, capable of high D's and E flats; a tenor who can live on the high level of A's and B's constantly, and make a real effect with a top D in "Vieni, fra queste braccia"; a mezzo who can color her tones and sing a florid phrase now and then; an acting bass-baritone who can sing legato, not to mention a conductor with the command of a style generally forgotten today.

The odd, exciting thing about Angel's initial operatic venture is that it has all these things in almost dazzling abundance. I don't say that Maria Meneghini Callas is an all-time great soprano or Giuseppe di Stefano is another Bonci, but they do a thoroughly convincing work of making one see the light of Bellini's creative flame; and that cannot be accomplished by microphone tricks or echo chambers. The fact is that, between them, Callas and Di Stefano do some of finest singing Italy has offered us since the war—in large part, I would say, due to the authoritative direction of Serafin.

Substantially speaking, this is my introduction to the art of Callas, and a highly persuasive one it is. It is a voice of curiously impersonal timbre,

suggestive somewhat of Onegin's in her later years. But whatever she does, Callas does with style, with musicianly feeling, with a sense of line and dramatic purpose. Thus, one can listen to her as a fine instrumentalist performing with sure technique, whether or not one likes the exact quality of sound his instrument produces. I find her effective throughout in suggesting that dead, disembodied quality of madness that Markova brings to her "Giselle." The dancer does it by limp-appearing actions, unvital gestures: the singer does it with cool, white vocal tone and very little vibrato. A striking further parallel is that Bellini's kind of sadly mad music is a very powerful precursor of Adam's style in "Giselle" a dozen years later.

Of the others, Di Stefano has never sung so well in anything, operating in true vocal character and mostly with good vocal manners. It is evident, periodically, that he doesn't have the technique to get the most from his beautiful voice, but the sound is mostly suave, fresh, and expressive, with some exceptional high points. Nicola Rossi-Lemeni is a fine Sir Giorgio, commanding a real legato when he doesn't push for volume, Rolando Panerai is a baritone to mark for future attention, Carlo Forti (Lord Walton) is first class, and Aurora Cattalani fulfils the difficult assignment of being Callas's opposite number in the mezzo range with notable artistry.

Altogether Angel has here shown



Tullio Serafin—"authoritative direction."