

Audio Bookshelf

By R. D. DARRELL

ONE of the very few sounds you won't hear at the Audio Fair is the stuttering chatter of a battery of typewriters. But that sub-sonic obbligato is an indispensable voice in the pandemonium you do hear. Without it the Fair itself—or indeed the whole high-fidelity movement of which the Fair is not more than a blatantly over-explicit symbol—never could have won its present public, or rejoice as it does in its present lusty vitality. For audio, like opera, is born of the union of music with words: its life and growth depend as surely on its writers (spokesmen, teachers, and critics) as on its sound-smiths, manufacturers, and listeners.

Yet, just as it is unfair to judge the latter solely on the basis of the confusing and often frantic Fair demonstrations and audiences, you scarcely can evaluate the real worth and extent of the audio literature by the samples you will find in exhibitors' booths or the Audio Engineering Society's Sixth Annual Convention sessions. These floods of advertising leaflets, component catalogues, and technical papers, plus a few magazines and books, are representative enough, certainly, but they fall far short of telling the whole story.

About this time last fall, when I surveyed "The Audio Bookshelf" in these pages [SR Oct. 10, 1953], I felt obliged to emphasize—and to explain, as best I could—its "painfully obvious deficiencies in extent, substance, and accessibility." These deficiencies have not been entirely remedied, of course, within the short space of a year. Nevertheless, I now feel that a brighter picture is justified, partly by the actual publication accomplishments of the past twelve months, but to an even greater extent by those in prospect for the near future. For what earlier was little more than a pious hope now is coming to be backed by evidence: the literature of sound recording and reproduction—no less than the singular art-science of audio itself—at last is emerging from its long adolescence into a true maturity. And if a single, impressive monument still is lacking to mark that significant change in status, it won't be long: the first—Roland Gelatt's—extensive "History of the Phonograph" now is near completion and is scheduled for 1955 publication by Lippincott.

Below the special place reserved for that unique work comes the familiar shelf long since established as the domain of "record books." Already its earlier bulk of mostly out-

of-print volumes has had to be pushed well over to make room for newcomers. Of those predicted last year, the ponderous Hall-Levin entry has been further delayed and the Ishlon-Townsend work expected from Ballantine has been dropped, although it may appear later under some other imprint. But Taubman's "How to Build a Record Library" (Hanover House) came out in time to be reviewed simultaneously with its "bookshelf" announcement, and my own "Good Listening" (Knopf; SR Oct. 31) was issued soon after. (It is to reappear in a revised edition this December,

both in Knopf hardcover and New American Library [Mentor] formats.) And these were followed by two more specialized studies: the Library of Congress's useful "List of American Folk Songs Currently Available on Records" (Government Printing Office; SR May 29) and Ramsey's invaluable "Guide to Longplay Jazz Records" (Long Player Publications; SR July 31).

To these should be added three important importations: a Second Supplement (1951-1952) to the mighty Clough and Cuming "World Encyclopedia" (Continued on page 65)



THE PHONOGRAPH NEEDLE IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF THE PHONOGRAPH!

IT'S A FACT THAT:

- IF THE SPEAKER IS BAD — THE SOUND WILL BE POOR ...
- IF THE AMPLIFIER IS INFERIOR — THE SOUND WILL BE DEFECTIVE ...
- IF THE NEEDLE IS WORN — NOT ONLY WILL THE SOUND BE DISTORTED ...

— BUT EVERY RECORD PLAYED WILL BE PERMANENTLY DAMAGED!

PLAY SAFE... PLAY DIAMOND



**WORN NEEDLE
SHOWS CHISEL EDGE**



**DIAMOND
MAINTAINS BALL TIP**

HIGH FIDELITY EXPERTS AND INDEPENDENT CONSUMER TESTING LABORATORIES AGREE THAT DIAMOND IS THE SAFEST AND MOST ECONOMICAL PHONOGRAPH NEEDLE!

REPRINTS OF ARTICLES ON RECORD AND STYLUS WEAR AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST.

Diamond Phonograph Needles by...

TETRAD

Dept. 17-C, 62 ST. MARY STREET, YONKERS, N. Y.
World's Largest Manufacturers of Diamond Styli

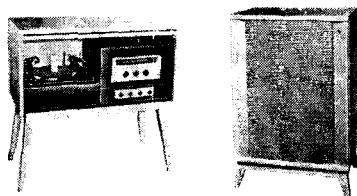
No long hair,
but long
on enjoyment!



You may know a little or a lot about music . . . you may prefer Teagarden or Toscanini. But one thing you're sure of . . . you like your music rich, full, *complete* . . . as it's actually played for broadcast or recording. For you, RCA has designed "New Orthophonic" High Fidelity . . . precision-engineered for precise, full-range sound reproduction.

The music you like to hear . . . that's all you need to know about RCA High Fidelity. Fine RCA components simply plug together—without tools—fitting easily into smart, tasteful cabinets. RCA record changer, stylus, amplifier and speaker—ready to assemble in your own cabinet or bookcase—for as little as \$143.22.* Hear them at your RCA dealer's now.

*Suggested retail price



RCA record changers, radio tuners, amplifiers, pre-amplifiers, speakers, tape recorders, cabinets and speaker enclosures can be assembled into any one of 32 combinations to give the customized music system of your choice.

RCA
Customized
HIGH FIDELITY



RADIO CORPORATION of AMERICA

Audio Fair Forecast

THE New York Audio Fair, precursor and parent of similar events elsewhere in the country, begins its second half-decade in the customary Hotel New Yorker surroundings with more exhibitors, more floors of space (5, 6, 7, and 8), more hours of activity—from Thursday, October 14 through Sunday, October 17—and it is cheerfully hoped, more visitors than ever before. For the first time the public will be accommodated on Saturday night as well as Sunday, a gratifying convenience.

In this sixth year of exhibition tape and tape-recorders, for home as well as professional use, will be in greater prominence than ever before. However, as the adjoined preview-listing discloses, all the components of fine reproduction will be audible in improved designs, with several manufacturers who have hitherto been identified largely with laboratory or professional products offering their wares for the first time in the consumer market. Corner speakers, speaker enclosures (both in compact designs and those more ample—where space is not a factor), and various adaptations of the folded-horn principle will be in more profusion than previously, in many instances at more advantageous prices. Makers of pickups and cartridges, turntables and changers, pre-amps and amplifiers, equalizers and radio tuners, not to mention speakers of American and English design, all promise revelations of interest. **KEY:** An "*" denotes first-time exhibitor. "()" indicates the number of years exhibitor has been represented. "R." indicates room-number of exhibit.

***ACOUSTIC RESEARCH, INC.**—Introduces a new loudspeaker emphasizing reduction of low frequency distortion (R. 714).

ACRO PRODUCTS CO. (4)—100-watt high-fidelity amplifier circuit, providing for home user power reserve suffi-

cient to keep performance far from distortion level (R. 515).

***ALLEGRO ELECTRONICS CORP.**—New models in complete price range of hi-fi phonographs and of AM-FM phono consoles (R. 504).

AMERICAN ELITE, INC. (3)—Hi-fi table radios with three speakers and phono, second speaker, and tape jacks; also pencil-type and recording microphones of Telefunken origin (R. 639).

AMPEX CORP. (6)—Portable magnetic tape recorders and portable speaker-amplifier with flat frequency response from 60 to 10,000 cycles. New models in consumer price range (R. 622).

AMPRO CORP. (2)—A complete line of hi-fi tape recorders and tape recorder-radio combinations (R. 833).

ASCO SOUND CORP. (4)—Hi-fi miniatures for table-top use (R. 606).

AUDIO DEVICES, INC. (6)—Audiotape in color and on colored reels; audiotape for instrumentation use; audiotape on "Mylar" Polyester film (R. 651).

***AUDIOGERSH CORP.**—Miracord XA-100 three-speed changer with selective pause time between records; Miracord XM-100 manual unit (R. 732).

BEAM INSTRUMENTS CORP. (5)—Acoustical QUAD amplifiers and W/B Stentorian Loudspeakers with new enclosures (R. 752-3).

BELL SOUND SYSTEMS, INC. (6)—New hi-fi twelve-inch speakers, hi-fi amplifiers and radio tuners; also new tape recorder (R. 524).

BERLANT ASSO. (4)—Concertone Tape Recorder, in new models for home and professional use, also binaural recorders and sound-on-sound adapter (R. 533).

DAVID BOGEN CO., INC. (4)—Matching tuner and amplifier for open-shelf mounting; new amplifiers (DB20DF and D030A) permitting precise coupling of amplifier to speaker (R. 632).

R. T. BOZAK CO. (4)—High quality co-ax speaker systems (R. 647).

BRITISH INDUSTRIES CORP. (6)—TL/10 Amplifier and pre-amplifier combina-

