

tives of the nation's outstanding serious poets as well as popular versifiers. And because so many poems that read well don't sing well—a separate consideration—there should be an equal number of lyricists who write for the opera and the musical comedy stage. Machinery then would be prepared for the final voting procedure in such a way that citizens could vote for first and second choices, so that a run-off could be held if there were a close vote.

Let's assume that eventually the American people have chosen by democratic consensus the poem they would best like to see used as the words of a new national anthem. The call would now go out for a musical setting of that poem. A different screening committee would now be appointed—this time to consist of composers who write for singing, whether for stage or screen musicals, the concert stage, or the pop tune market. It should include also school music teachers from both the elementary and secondary school levels.

Now professional composers of all kinds, music conservatories and college music departments, and the hitherto unpublished would-be amateur song writers would be encouraged to submit entries, from which a top ten would be winnowed. Leading singers would be prevailed upon to record the various musical settings and to perform them "live" as well whenever possible. These should be "plugged" on disc jockey

shows and classical-music FM stations alike, in the concert hall, on television, and in the juke box. With this kind of saturation it should not take many months for the public to recognize and to know the various versions, and to be ready to choose one above the others. A voting process similar to that outlined above for the choice of the poem would determine the winning song. Congress could then vote the change of national anthem into law.

It is not my intention to ignore those people who, when the final ballot is prepared, still feel that "The Star Spangled Banner" (or perhaps "America the Beautiful") is better than the new choices they are offered. By all means, let a write-in addition of those or any other existing songs be possible. If one of those should win, I will accept the will of the expressed majority, however benighted I may consider it, just as any good citizen in a democracy abides by its laws, however palatable he finds them.

Whatever the outcome, the effort at replacement of our national anthem will not have been wasted. The very act of weighing the possibilities will have afforded unique opportunity for citizen education and enlightened self-examination. And the arts will have been stimulated beyond measure. Either of these results would make the project worthwhile; together, I believe they make it invaluable. And only then will we have a truly national anthem.

LETTERS TO THE RECORDINGS EDITOR

Three Cheers for Coon-Sanders

HERB SHULTZ's fine article "The Dancing World of Coon-Sanders" [SR, May 14] is a tribute which is long overdue. An ardent fan of theirs when I was younger (and guileless?), I have been continually frustrated over the years to find reference to this fine orchestra omitted by the encyclopedias of jazz compiled by devotees of world-weary music. The news that there is a revival of interest in Coon-Sanders is refreshing indeed.

Several decades later it is interesting to recall that Coon-Sanders, while authentically Midwestern, also reflected the zest for life found in a down south camp meeting. With the band singing a choral background, Joe or Coonie popularized such titles as "Bless You, Sister!," "On Revival Day," and "I'm One Of God's Children Who Hasn't Got Wings." Sometimes Joe Sanders felt it necessary to clarify the band's characteristics for radio listeners by remarking: "Coon-Sanders—two men, both white (more or less around the edges)!"

ROBERT P. HOPKINS.

West Hartford, Conn.

Service for Components

I READ WITH INTEREST the article by Ivan Berger "Testing, Testing" [SR, Mar. 26] concerning faulty components and their repair by authorized service stations. My experience has been somewhat different from that described. I bought my system from a mail order dealer (Allied) in December. It worked for about 30 seconds, then the right channel stopped completely. I took the amplifier to my authorized repair station thinking that it would be a simple matter to repair. Not so. From December to April I took it there no less than three times for a total of two months' time. Every time I brought it home the same thing was wrong. After two letters to the company (and finally getting some action from the president) they allowed me to return the unit to them for repair. I thought, "finally it will be repaired properly." Again not so, at least not yet. It has been three weeks and I haven't heard a word from them. So for the six months that I have had my \$400 stereo system it has been working about half-way for all the time and not working at all for half the time, while the amplifier was missing. So much for factory service. The best advice I can give anyone buying a new system is to buy it in person, then you can return it if (when) it turns out to be defective.

WAYNE D. KRYSZAK.

Cottage City, Md.

The Case for Korjus

I WOULD LIKE to re-herald Hilary Fish's request [LETTERS TO THE RECORDINGS EDITOR, SR, Mar. 26] concerning a classical re-issue of the recordings of Miliza Korjus.

Accompanying Hilary Fish's requests should be the long-sought-after recording of "The Maiden's Wish" (Chopin) and Chopin's E-flat Nocturne (EH 887 and EH 948 respectively). I have heard these re-

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cordings and can still remember the truly superb musicality and excitement she generated. Is it possible to get a re-issue of her works? What can one do?

WILLIAM L. THOMAS.

Los Angeles, Calif.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Hope and wait are about all that can be done.*

Heliodor Reissues

I HAVE NOTED with great interest that the new, low-priced Heliodor label is re-releasing some of MGM Records' deleted classical issues [RECORDINGS REPORTS II, SR, Mar. 26]. From Heliodor's first advertised release, I purchased with delight D'Indy's "Suite in Olden Style," performed very stylishly by the Guilet String Quartet and soloists, and a well played collection of Mozart organ pieces by Richard Ellsasser.

Unfortunately, in my opinion, Heliodor's first release did not include any of the recordings of modern music and "off-beat" classical and romantic music which made the issues of the old MGM classical catalogue so stimulating.

I have heard that many unreleased recordings of both modern and older music exist in MGM's libraries. It would be interesting to know whether Heliodor will make these available.

PAUL LAVALLEE.

Bogota, N.J.

Credits for Webern

WE ARE DELIGHTED with the presentation of the Webern articles [SR, May 28]. However, it is unfortunate that neither the compiler of the book, Hans Moldenhauer (first president of the International Webern Society) nor its editor, Demar Irvine (professor of music at the University of Washington) was mentioned. Also, the photograph of the bust of Webern should have been credited to the Webern Archive.

HERMINE BASNIGHT.

Seattle, Wash.

Music to My Ears

Continued from page 20

and the tourist personnel of the state of Puebla have made their share of effort to attract them—might find an additional interest in some intermingling of unfamiliar, local goods with the more familiar, imported articles.

MISSING the Metropolitan National Company's *Susannah* in Puebla (the date of appearance was misstated months ago in the official bulletin and no correction was ever circulated) did not, fortunately, mean missing the National Company's *Susannah* altogether in Mexico. It was included in a repertory of *Butterfly* and *Carmen* which the company presented in the local Palacio de Bellas Artes on the way to its final roundup of the season in Guadalajara—a far cry from Indianapolis, where it all began last September.

Hearing Floyd's freshly felt, deeply motivated work for the first time in a foreign country, one could not suppress a warm feeling of appreciation for the surge of life that coursed through the music, in a strange kinship to such a work of international *verismo* as *Cavalleria*. But if the Spanish-speaking audience was baffled by the sound of the English text, it may take heart in the disclosure that I was, too. Perhaps what was needed was Manolo Fabergas, Mexico's great 'Enry 'Iggin, to intone the locally intelligible version of "Why Do the English," from *Mi Bella Doña*, with an appropriate alteration. It was another affirmation of the all too shocking fact that whatever tongue an American-born singer specializes in, English is always his "second language."

—IRVING KOLODIN.

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Books and Experience

By ALICE DALGLIESH

A FEW weeks ago my interest was caught by a description in *The New Milford Times* of a visitor to an elementary school. The visitor was a live lamb, and the children were delighted "to see their picture books come to life."

New Milford is not a city. It is a pleasant Connecticut town that has what was once a lovely village green. Now much of the green's identity is lost because stores were allowed to encroach. The once-flourishing supermarket, however, turns blind, empty-windowed eyes to the green; its spirit, if a supermarket has one, is across the river, where there is space for a larger store and a much more extensive parking lot.

And the lamb? The children can walk across the street from one of the elementary schools and see a full-sized dairy farm. But there are no lambs, so this one had to be imported. Perhaps city children are more fortunate in having children's zoos, where farm animals may be seen.

Connecticut children can still see horses, and so, evidently, can many Swedish children. *The Long Pony Race*, by Rolf L. Lengstrand and Pierre L. Ro-

din (Knopf, \$3.50), has beautiful photographs that will satisfy all who think that "the warm heavy odor of horses and hay" is heaven itself. The Ponies' Day Race has become a family holiday in Sweden, and Fia, who had helped to raise Tiny from a foal, is shown racing him in a fine series of pictures. The most charming photographs, however, are at the beginning of the book, when Tiny is born and we see him as he grows. There is all the sentiment that seems to be essential to animal books—a good supply of it. The story will make warm feeling between the young pony-lovers of Sweden and the U.S.

Among the spring books animal stories are numerous; one would suppose that almost every American child either lives in the country or can go there in the spring. I wonder how many children can, like the heroine of *Elisabeth and the Marsh Mystery*, go to a wild marsh. In any case, Elisabeth's experiences make interesting reading. This book, by Felice Holman (Macmillan, \$2.95), is dedicated to two children "who believe in birds and people and know that marshes, woods, and greensward must be preserved for living things."

In her brief preface the author deplores the fact that "marshes are being

destroyed all around us to create land for building or filled just to get rid of refuse." *Elisabeth and the Marsh Mystery* follows *Elisabeth the Treasure Hunter* and *Elisabeth the Bird Watcher*. Eric Blegvad's drawings have done much for these books, which are a mixture of story and science, liked by some, condemned by others.

Nowadays experiences for children tend to be bounded by the covers of a book, the screen of television, and by educational films. All of these are secondhand experience, and perhaps one actual encounter with a lamb means more than a dozen lambs in books. Some teachers work hard to plan experiences for their students; yet I read recently that there were children in New York, living in that limited space between the rivers, who had never seen a river. Marjorie Flack's *Boats Sail on the River* is a fine book, but no substitute for a real river. To see an actual boat on a river, on a lake, on the sea is of inestimable value to a child. Instead of spending a good deal of time discussing "sociological implications" (a necessary part of today's life) in children's books, isn't it important to be more energetic about planning whatever experiences are vital for children? Do teachers think enough about this? Do parents? In our haste to get a mirror of every kind of experience into books, do we sometimes forget reality? And—still worse—are there school boards today who think the small child's learning experience should be bounded by a desk and a reader? I'm afraid so.



—From "Elisabeth and the Marsh Mystery."

The Little Red Train. By Guy Weelen. Illustrated by Mamoru Funai. Lothrop. 24 pp. \$2.95. Written by a Frenchman, illustrated by a Japanese artist living in New Jersey, and printed in the U.S., this book is truly international. The little train, which carries French children through the countryside to school, is ignorant: it does not know the days of the week, the seasons, or the months of the year. It learns, however, and so do the children who look at the book—painlessly. Ages 4-8.

John John Twilliger. Written and illustrated by William Wondriska. Holt, Rinehart & Winston. 36 pp. \$3.50. William Wondriska's stories and pictures are outside of the ordinary and this book is no exception. It is printed in umber with touches of red, and a light tint of the umber to simulate the color of paper, creating an unusual general effect. The story, which tells how John John found out the secret of the terrifying machine-gun man, and so reformed him, will please small boys. It is all part of the steadily growing trend towards vanquished monsters, though the machine-gun man is a mild creature who has puffed himself up into a dictator. Ages 4-8.

Alonzo and the Army of Ants. By Murray Goodwin. Pictures by Kiyo Komoda. Harper