

REVIEWS

GRAMOPHONE

Three recent recordings of major works mark, as it were, the three Aristotelean moments in movement, the movement from the Classical to the Romantic, terms that are perhaps more historical than musical. First, Mozart's *Symphony in E Flat Major*. Some writers have seen in this work anticipations of the coming romanticism; but from the point of view of the biographer the non-musical preoccupation of the summer of 1788 was financial, and it would take a very imaginative psychologist to find traces of this in the three great symphonies (including the *Jupiter*) which were written then. Bruno Walter, with the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra, has been content to give the *E Flat Major* without affectation, and the result is a sound and satisfying performance (DB 2258-60). Second, Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony*. This, with Schubert's *Unfinished* the most popular of symphonies, has been hailed as the glorious opening of the Romantic Movement. 'Here,' says Berlioz, who was a musician with a powerful pictorial imagination, 'here are his most private griefs, his fiercest wrath, his most lonely and desolate meditations, his midnight visions, his bursts of enthusiasm.' But the listener may neglect the 'fate knocking at the door' business in this grand monument of musical logic, and he will applaud the reading of it by Serge Koussevitsky and the London Philharmonic (DB 2338-42). The passage for 'cellos and basses in the Trio, likened by Berlioz to the gambolling of elephants (comment that is extravagant in degree, yet really not different in kind from most literary criticism of Beethoven), comes through with unusual clarity and precision, indeed the entire recording of this symphony and the Mozart is first-rate. Third, Schumann's *Sonata No. 2 in D Minor* for pianoforte and violin. It abounds in typical lyrical subjects; Hephzibah and Yehudi Menuhin are the invigorators (DB 2264-67).

The record of Jascha Heifetz playing Wieniawski's *Scherzo Tarantelle* and the *Largo on the G String* from Clerambault (DB 2219) forms almost as effective a contrast as one of some years back with an air from Couperin on one side and the *Gollywog's Cakewalk* on the other. A tender and a jealous scene between Gertrude Lawrence and Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., from *Moonlight is Silver* (C 2710), is an attractive character piece. Then there is a new Gigli (DA 1373); two Silly Symphony noises and voices, *The Wise Little Hen* and *The Grasshopper and the Ants* (B 6555); a musical condensation by Stokowski of the last Act of *Parsifal* (DB 2272-3); and the overture to *Ruy Blas* brilliantly rescued from the brass bands by Dr. Adrian Boult (DB 2365).

(Key.—H.M.V. DB series, 6/- each; DA series, 4/- each; C series, 4/- each; B series, 2/6 each.)

T.L.