

LETTER

TO THE EDITOR, *TEMPO*,

SIR,

While a discussion of the problems of England's oldest provincial Opera Company is welcomed, the implication created by Mr. Cecil Smith's article in the Summer issue of your periodical, that the Carl Rosa Opera has fallen on difficult days, calls for correction.

The Carl Rosa Trust is supported by grants from the Arts Council and is able to face the future with some confidence. It is true that the standards by which its productions should be judged are limited by the funds available. The quality of its singers and orchestra players is probably higher to-day than it has been for many years.

The Carl Rosa has always maintained, and seeks to preserve, a traditional method of stage presentation, and this is contrary perhaps to the more sophisticated policy of metropolitan opera companies. As regards the text that is sung and played, we attach overriding importance to the composer's score and to his intentions so far as they can be ascertained. In this respect, there is no divergence between my own views and those of the Company's Musical Director, Mr. Arthur Hammond.

The Company was the first to produce *Tannhäuser* in English, and the recent revival was produced with resources comparable to those which we have had available in the past. Though it was not well received by the London Press, it has been acclaimed both by audiences and critics in the Provinces.

The Company's policy is to train its own singers, and it has to-day, as it has always had, older singers to set an example and help mould the style of the younger ones. Our methods of selection and casting are vindicated by the approval of the public that pays to hear them and by the number of singers who are offered contracts at Covent Garden.

The Carl Rosa's principal object is to satisfy the needs of the provincial public for opera. Its recent appearance at Sadlers Wells was an innovation which was justified by the enthusiastic reception by the London public, and it is significant but not altogether surprising, that the views of a section of London critics should differ from those of leading provincial critics.

Yours etc.,

ANNETTE PHILLIPS,
(MRS. H. B. PHILLIPS)

BOOKS RECEIVED

"INTRODUCTION A UNE SOCIOLOGIE DE LA MUSIQUE," par Alphonse Silbermann. *Presses Universitaires de France.*

"MOZART IN RETROSPECT", by A. Hyatt King. *Oxford University Press* 30/-

"THE SYMPHONIES OF JOSEPH HAYDN", by H. C. Robins. *Universal Edition and Rockliff, London* £6

"THE SYMPHONIES OF ANTON BRUCKNER", by Gabriel Engel. *The Bruckner Society of America, Inc.*

"THE RECORD GUIDE", by E. Sackville-West and D. Shawe-Taylor. *Collins* 35/-

"THE COMPOSER AND HIS ART", by Gordon Jacob. *Oxford University Press* 8/6

"WEGBEREITER GROSSER MUSIKER", by Edith Stargardt-Wolff. *Ed. Bote & G. Bock, Berlin-Wiesbaden.*

"A MOZART PILGRIMAGE" by Nerina Medici and Rosemary Hughes. *Novello* 30/-

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