

CORRESPONDENCE

THE TIERCE DE PICARDIE.

To the Editor of BLACKFRIARS.

SIR,

First of all, thanks to Sir Richard Terry for taking so much trouble over an insignificant review like mine. As to the letter itself, I would answer that it *was* upon a matter of opinion that I was challenging Sir Richard, as will be seen in a moment. No one would dare to doubt his knowledge of musical facts.

The letter will have been useful to the ordinary reader, to explain technicalities for which the reviewer had no space. The latter must review music for musical people, and presume that the uninstructed will seek instruction if they are really interested.

Sir Richard lays down the strict rules for writing vocal parts as they used to be written in earlier times. Is he sure that the whole of his counterpoint is so consistently modal that it would stand so rigid a test of modality as he would apply to it?

The following sentence really contains the heart of the matter. 'The final chord must either contain the major third *or the bare fifth.*' Precisely, that is all I am asking for. The introduction of the major third is not absolutely necessary, and might at least have been put in brackets. And to my ear, and to that of many other musical people I know, it is most irritating to hear it repeated at the end of every verse of a carol containing six or eight verses, though really beautiful when used as the final conclusion of a piece of music. (Perhaps that is why later musicians, *e.g.* Bach, modified the earlier rule.) And finally I quite humbly submit that it may be only a matter of taste.

With apologies for provoking the wrath of Palestrina's ghost or of my eminent correspondent,

Yours faithfully,

FRANCIS MONCRIEFF, O.P.