

in so far as it bears on a composer and his work. But the kind of musical history required to describe our musical life involves a tale of performers, organizations, buildings, festivals and finance and much besides. Mr. Mason appropriately begins with the building of the Royal Festival Hall. He has included for the first time a whole section devoted to finance, which previously had been treated incidentally to other subjects. Other short sections he assigns to radio and television and to the British Council's own work for English music abroad. For the rest he has continued the story of our concert life, our operatic developments, our proliferation of festivals, and the state of our education and scholarship.

All this is presented clearly and with that critical semi-detachment that is called for by the circumstances of publication. But when the reader comes to the final section in which the compositions of the past ten years have to be chosen for mention, to be placed, to be described, to be evaluated by implication, and to be commended for attention, all in a couple of lines and a couple of epithets, he will admire the brilliance with which it is done—on Tippett, for instance. The restraint of judgment does not wholly conceal the writer's latent enthusiasm for modern music. Yet geese are not proffered as swans. Here indeed the personality of the historian enlivens the writing without imperilling the truth of the record. And that, surely, is a good way in which to write contemporary history.

FRANK HOWES

To the Editor of TEMPO.

Sir,

I should like to answer Dr. Harrison's question when he asks, in reviewing my *Interpretation of Early Music* in your last issue, "from what standpoint or for what readers Mr. Donington has written this book?"

My standpoint is one which, with all respect, would seem from Dr. Harrison's review to be not very much within his personal experience. My standpoint is that of a practising musician. Music has to be practised both with love and with understanding; my readers are musicians practical enough and humble enough (as I hope I am myself) to know that the love is not sufficient without the understanding. I might call in evidence of this Anthony Milner, who wrote in the *Musical Times* of my book that "it is much more than merely sound and brilliant scholarship; it reveals a passionate love for the music it discusses and communicates it to the

reader." No disrespect, then, to Dr. Harrison, who after all has done extremely valuable work in his own field; but further to his questions.

Why did I take my readers on what he nicely calls my "Cook's Tour of quotations" from the authorities contemporary with the music? Because, of course, the interpretation of Bach, Handel, Couperin, Purcell, Vivaldi or Monteverdi raises literally hundreds of practical problems in rehearsal, which cannot be solved by intuitive musicianship alone, though equally they cannot be solved without intuitive musicianship. Either we can guess at them, and that was the normal thing fifteen years ago, but no longer satisfies at least some of our best musicians (this is the "change in our attitude" to my mention of which Dr. Harrison somewhat obscurely objects). Or we can find out what was originally done, which is often difficult but seldom impossible provided that we go back to the contemporary treatises and other sources. My colleagues, such as Professor Thurston Dart and others, have been doing this for years, and so have I (not to mention Arnold Dolmetsch fifty years ago); there is nothing very novel here about my book excepting for its unprecedented scale. I have assembled more evidence; that is why it took me fifteen years.

Next, why do my "comments and glosses" occupy only about half of my 600-page book? (Only?). Because I see no advantage in repeating in my own words what has just been plainly stated by Caccini or Simpson or Couperin or C.P.E. Bach in theirs. And if that sounds an easy way of writing a book, let the reader remember that I had first to find those plain statements from very many hundreds of such contemporary authorities good and bad, familiar and unfamiliar, and then to arrange them in such an order that they tell their own story as concisely and comprehensibly as possible. When the original authorities are not plain or consistent (which is very often) my comments become lengthy and my glosses pointed. I never willingly leave the reader doubtful of how I personally think the problem ought to be solved, except in those cases where there is not and never was any single right solution, and where it would be both unscholarly and unmusical to pretend otherwise. What I did, however, achieve—and this really is a novelty—is to find *some* original evidence bearing on every one of the hundreds of practical prob-

lems considered. That is important, because unless we can prove the original method, we have no arguments for persuading modern performers that so it was and so it ought to be.

Next, "as a contribution to musical history Mr. Donington's book suffers greatly from ill-defined context". It never occurred to me that I was making a contribution to musical history, though no doubt I was; but are my contexts so ill defined?

First as to time and place; my reasons for using the loose term "early" are explained in Chapter One, and my application of it described; the reader is fully warned in Chapter Two of the need to take even slight differences of date and locality into account; quotations on any one subject are chronologically arranged and individually dated and located (hence the inevitably numerous individual references of which Dr. Harrison a little inconsistently complains as spoiling the look of the page); most subjects are broken down into stated periods.

Second as to the "social and professional context" and the individual status and reliability of the authors cited: I had no space for much of this, but evaluations of individual authors are made quite frequently in my text, as well as in my annotated Bibliography, which Dr. Harrison possibly did not consult.

Above all, as to purpose: my primary context is and is stated to be rehearsal, and after rehearsal, performance. But, writes Dr. Harrison, "as a contribution to performance, the book tells a good executant little that he does not know from his general experience in any musical sphere". I only wish this were true. It is precisely what a good executant cannot be expected to know from his general experience which constitutes the lengthy content of my book. It is precisely in not realising this that Dr. Harrison betrays his innocence of the practical problems of making Monteverdi, Bach and the rest sound as on both scholarly and musical grounds they ought to sound.

I must not end without thanking Dr. Harrison for some criticisms which I think are valid, and to which I shall pay careful attention when preparing any future edition. There are many faults in my book, and there is a lot left out; but then, look what went in. It is hardly more than an introduction to this immense subject, but it is as long as Faber and Faber could have afforded to print or I to prepare. I feel most genuinely sorry that Dr. Harrison so missed the point of it.

Yours very sincerely,
ROBERT DONINGTON

A Select List of Articles on Contemporary Music in Foreign Periodicals

MELOS. Strobel's 'Vier Jahrzehnte deutsches Musiktheater' (October 1963) is a retrospective survey which includes comments on the tutorial and creative work of Franz Schreker, today no more than a name in a few music histories; on Krenek who, in Strobel's view did not fulfil the great hopes of his initial career; on Weill, who turned to Broadway and its hollow glamour during his last years; and some more extensive remarks on Orff and Egk. Hans Curjel contributes some notes on 'Oskar Schlemmer und die abstrakte Bühne', a Bauhaus artist whose pioneering work as producer and designer (he staged Hindemith's first essays for the theatre) in the musical theatre of the 20's is almost forgotten. In the November issue Heinz Liepmann's '195 Sekunden alle 15 Minuten 6 Monate lang' refers to the genesis of Rolf Liebermann's 'Les Echanges' for bureau-machines, composed for the Lausanne Exhibition, and Hansjörg Pauli contributes a descriptive advance survey of the work. Mario Bortolotto gives a survey of the work of Aldo Clementi, who has made a name for himself among the advance guard at Palermo. Strobel's 'Die Wiener Schule' (apparently a further chapter from his contribution to a history of music) assesses the work of the famous triumvirate.

MUSICA (Kassel). Udo Dammert's 'Moderne Malerei und Musik' (Sept.-Oct. 1963) is a long piece on aesthetic parallels. The reports section includes a note on the first performance of Klebe's *Figaro* at Hamburg. The Nov.-Dec. issue is dedicated to the inauguration of the Neue Philharmonie in Berlin, and also surveys other recent buildings in which music is practised (concert halls, theatres, conservatoires), with a rich photographic supplement.

MUSICAL QUARTERLY. Alan L. Kagan's 'Music and the Hundred Flowers Movement,' (Oct.-1963) discusses musical conditions in modern China. The 'Current Chronicle' section includes the Editor's review of Britten's War Requiem which he apostrophizes as his greatest achievement to date. Alfred Frankenstein comments on a Milhaud Festival in California, and includes a reproduction of the composer's early 'aleatoric' piece dating from 1921.