

# Tricky For Amateurs

By JOHN HORNER

At the Burnside Symphony Orchestra's concert in Burnside Town Hall last night, under Robert Cooper, the first seven bars were the worst.

When the double basses reached the first checking point they found everybody else there already, having arrived by no means simultaneously themselves.

However, this was no disgrace for an amateur orchestra, for the opening unison "prestissimo pianissimo scamperoso" of Mozart's "Figaro" is notoriously one of the most difficult starts in music.

Only the Vienna Symphony Orchestra is expected to do it unanimously.

Mozart in general is very tricky for amateurs, and both his overture and his D major symphony, No. 31, gave the players very little opportunity for carefree confidence.

On the other hand Bizet's "Carmen" Suite No. 1, which closed the concert, was a perfect choice for them, giving many of the wind soloists opportunities of demonstrating their considerable shrewdness, reliability and taste.

For the strings and brass, too, the scoring is 100 p.c. effective to the listener and, apparently, grateful to the performers.

Rossini's "Barber" overture was full of amusement, sometimes unintentional, and Tess McGair, in operatic arias by Mozart, Rossini and Donizetti, took a firm grip of her audience from the start.

Her coloratura work, though not always dead in tune and at times rather hard-edged, had just the natural spontaneity of meaning that the genre must have to captivate the listener.