

Coming At Br
Exhibitor

Glyndebourne in pictures

BOOKS

Ifan Payne

"THIS book is primarily a picture book," writes the author in the introduction to *Fifty Years of Glyndebourne: an illustrated history* by John Julius Norwich (Jonathan Cape).

That is certainly the case since this volume contains 289 illustrations, a number of which are in colour.

The pictures include many of the Christie family, which founded and runs the Glyndebourne Festival Opera, and of the other personalities who have been intimately connected with the opera house.

More importantly, there is lavish illustration of the sets and casts of the majority of Glyndebourne's productions.

Indeed the strength of the book is its comprehensive pictorial and textual record of every production since its opening in 1934. The excellent

appendices contain complete cast lists of both the main theatre and of the touring company; an alphabetical listing of the operas; of the artists, conductors, producers, designers and so on as well as a list of television transmissions and recordings (including commercially available video tapes) and gramophone recordings.

The text comprises a skim through the development of the opera company. But while this is fairly exhaustive, in Norwich's superficially bland text great names stride the stage with Lilliputian personalities.

Thus we learn that "for John Christie it was love at first sight — even perhaps *First love* at first sight since although he was nearly 49 he seems until that time to have taken little interest in women."

But before the reader can observe "Oh really? There must be some insight here regarding the founder of so important an institution in British cultural life," Norwich has skipped blithely onto his next pre-packed and cellophane wrapped item of cultural history (guaranteed, no doubt, to be untouched by human hand).

Gold with

GOLD SURGED into the limelight in the City yesterday as reports that the Arabs were piling out of the dollar and into the precious metal sent its price roaring upward some 34 dollars at one stage — its highest in almost two years.

The Arabs were rumoured to be selling off their dollar-based assets in preparation for the American embargo against Libya and the markets were also unsettled by reports that the European Central Bank had cut its interest rate on the basis of the previous meeting of the World Bank's industrial nations — Britain, West Germany, France and Japan.

There were wild fluctuations in the price of the precious metal, with prices up to 376 dollars a ounce at one stage but it early fell