

Choristers meet Dvorak's challenge

THE Tyndale Choral Society's summer concert took place in St Mary's Parish Church in Wotton-under-Edge.

Beginning with Elgar's short but technically demanding setting of Psalm 29, the choir, under the direction of conductor Michael Power, gave a well-articulated performance characterised by excellent diction and good dynamic control.

The original orchestral score was replaced with organ accompaniment which, in the exposed tenor entries, could have given more support to the voices.

Toward the Unknown

Region by Vaughan Williams is understandably a firm favourite with choirs and in this performance Christopher Boodle's sensitive organ accompaniment ideally complemented Walt Whitman's words. The choir were particularly persuasive in the final section beginning with the words "Then we burst forth".

Between the choral items the Cotswold Flute Choir, conducted by Suzanne Blewett, played a variety of pieces from Pachelbel to Sousa, and it was gratifying to see and hear young performers giving stylish performances with a real sense of enjoyment. Jirín Feld's "Cassation" particularly

appealed to the appreciative audience with its unusual harmonic effects.

The main work of the concert was Dvorak's *Mass in D* opus 86. The composer himself at one time held a church organist's appointment in order to support his family while he began his composing career and it is curious that this is the only setting of the mass to flow from his prolific pen. The music itself is full of unmistakable Dvorak turns of phrase: bright rhythms and facile often simple tunes developing into demanding contrapuntal passages. Small wonder that this work is not often performed!

However the choir gave a confident performance marred only by some intonation problems in the crucifixus section of the Credo. The use of quartets within the choir contributed to the textural interest of the music and again the organ accompaniment was sensitively played. Michael Power is to be congratulated in skillfully guiding the choir through a potentially hazardous work.

The choir's next concert will be on Saturday, November 13 in Dursley Parish Church when the works to be performed will include Haydn's *Nelson Mass* and Salieri's *Kronungs Te Deum*.

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