

Excelsior

Price 3d.

The Voice of the Treorchy & District Male Choir

Address by the Conductor

"THE King is dead, Long live the King!"

Over a year has passed since the present Male Choir sprang from the ashes of the "old" Treorchy Male Choir, disbanded in 1943.

The present combination possesses enthusiasm, intelligence and musical potential. With growing experience these qualities will assure high artistic achievement.

The late Sir Percy Watkins once said, "The art of music is not something sustained by the community for the benefit of musicians. It is, or should be, an art sustained by musicians for the benefit of the community." We aim to help our fellow men to live by a higher standard than the material and, putting aside avarice and jealousy, to enrich our communal life through our corporate musical effort.

So much for our immediate aim. Our immediate musical plan is to build up a large, catholic repertoire of the best music for Male Voices, making new friends but not forgetting worthy old favourites. Welsh music will be given rightful prominence. Competition, rightly used, shall stimulate us on the road to technical and artistic excellence.

We thank many friends for encouragement and help. Local churches have shown their interest and goodwill in inviting the Choir to give recitals of sacred music on Sunday evenings. We plan to co-operate with other choirs, local organists, orchestras and brass bands for mutual benefit.

"Music cannot hurt. Sunshine can burn, food can poison, words can condemn, pictures can insult: music cannot punish—only bless." (Artur Schnabel.)

JOHN HAYDN DAVIES.

Address by the President

AS President of the Treorchy Male Voice Party, I welcome this opportunity given me to write a few lines in the first edition of the Party Magazine, EXCELSIOR. I shall not write about music—I leave this to the experts. My purpose is to focus your attention on the effort now being made by members of the Treorchy and District Male Voice Party, to carry on their comparatively young shoulders the old tradition of choral work in this locality. Many of them are young ex-service men who have recently returned from the four corners of the world.

To-night's CELEBRITY CONCERT, the first one undertaken by the present Party, has necessitated a great deal of hard work, long rehearsals and ceaseless effort on the conductor's part to transmute the crude metals into polished works of art. These men find joy in this work. What is their goal? Is it merely to enjoy the thrill of an occasional Eisteddfod success, transient in character and sometimes accidental? No, it is their desire to walk along the broad highways under the guidance of their inspiring conductor, seeking and assimilating all the noble qualities that their rich musical experience can provide. They want to believe that YOU are interested in their future. They want YOU to believe that they are YOUR Party. They hope to become an integral part of the social and cultural life of Treorchy and District.

Join with me in wishing them all success in their venture.

IORWERTH RHYD THOMAS.

Overheard at Rehearsals.

"What's all this fuss about wearing bows for the concert? I always sing better with a cravat on."

Editorial Notes

ONE of the greatest mistakes of our time, and, indeed of preceding ages, is taking for granted the fellowship of a society or social group.

Like a plant without water, an animal without exercise, faith without hope, a golden age without its literary and cultural flashes and gleams, a society or social group which is not based upon tolerance, understanding and genuine unity, is apt to disintegrate and become ineffective as a social unit.

It is the sincerity with which society members face up to their obligations and responsibilities that determines the well-being and solidarity of the society in question. The old maxim,—that in genuine unity lies true strength, has especial significance to-day.

In the light of the above, what of the constitution, prospects, aims and hopes of the present Treorchy and District Male Voice Party?

Thanks to the dynamic qualities of our conductor, who has imbued all Party members with his boundless enthusiasm; the ready willingness of all choristers to learn; the moral and practical support so generously afforded by the public; the genuine camaraderie existing in rehearsals,—we justifiably feel we can face the future with cheerful confidence and optimism.

In an age when apathy, distrust and indifference are, alas, far too predominant, the present Party's aim is to achieve a degree of efficiency which will enable it to renew and maintain the glorious traditions of the old Treorchy Male Voice Party.

"Experience is by industry achieved,
And perfected by the swift course of time."

The spirit of the old Party,—like that of Drake's, sleeps only to spring to life should danger call. The danger to-day is very real, namely, the inertia and indifference which sap the life roots of social life and cultural pursuits generally.

Here, then, lies the responsibility of the present Party, namely, to sincerely contribute to the social life and cultural pursuits of the Rhondda Valley, and elsewhere, whenever the opportunity presents itself.

It is hence clearly desirable that religious organisations revert to their original role as one of the foremost patrons of the arts, and

cultural life generally. Here, we offer our sincerest thanks for the privilege of using Bethlehem Chapel, and to all who have responded so splendidly in endeavouring to make our first celebrity concert a success.

"Be not merely good: be good for something."

We have selected the title EXCELSIOR for our monthly journal, because we feel the essence of an ideal is something which is almost impossible to attain.

"Virtue stands like the sun, and all which rolls around,

Drinks light, and life, and glory, from her aspect."

With this Olympian goal in view, we sincerely trust our hopes and our efforts along the aforementioned lines will evoke the inspiration of the Muses.

"A cheerful life is what the Muses love,

A soaring spirit is their prime delight".

Musical Dictionary

An exclusive article concocted for # minds.

Forte: Loud, strong; usually written *f*. Similar vocal qualities are essential requirements of town criers and Welsh Rugby supporters. Confucius says, "He that roars like a lion can boast his powers to the world." The chorister who can trumpet at *forte* without bursting a blood-vessel is an asset.

Piano: Soft, softly; usually written *p*. Like the cat-like tread of the returning prodigal, who wishes to conceal his late return from a recalcitrant wife. If discovered his wife's remonstrances about his nocturnal carousals would be marked by an absence of "piano", and an emphasis of *ff*.

Pizzicato: Plucked with the finger. Does not allude to bird-dressing, nor the manipulative straightening of tortuous eyebrows, but the finger plucking of the strings of the fiddle. (For "fiddle", all "fiddlers" read "violin".)

Pitch: The position of a tone in the musical scale. Pitch is not related neither by propinquity nor consanguinity to the game of "Pitch and Toss". Neither does it refer to the gyrations of a baseball thrower, nor to R.U.D.C. tar.

Topical Brevities

"Practice makes perfect."

That Party members appreciate this is shown by the consistently good attendances at practices.

The membership of the Party is 154, while the effective strength is near 140. The bi-weekly attendances vary, averaging around 95, a creditable number in view of the difficulties of shift work.

While this is encouraging to both the conductor and officials an appeal is made for even better efforts. "In unity is strength."

Mr. Tom Jenkins, Stuart Street, made a welcome visit to one of our recent practices. Mr. Jenkins is well-known throughout Wales, since he was, for many years, the popular and efficient Secretary of the Treorchy Male Choir. Indifferent health has forced him to resign from secretarial duties, but his genial personality and wealth of experience are still inspiring to the Party.

Mr. John Davies, our conductor, was recently honoured by the Urdd Gobaith Cymru when he was invited to adjudicate at the eliminating Eisteddfod at Porth. Excellent reports are heard of the way in which he performed his duties.

We offer our congratulations to Mr. Tudor Davies, B.Sc., A.R.C.O., L.R.A.M., on his appointment as Organist and Choirmaster at Noddfa, W.B. Church. Mr. Davies' keen interest in the Party and his readiness to act as a deputy conductor at a recent rehearsal are also greatly appreciated.

We are pleased to welcome back Mr. Dd. Davies after his illness. Good progress is reported concerning two other Party members, Mr. J. R. Hughes and Mr. Trevor Protheroe. We hope to have their services and companionship again very soon.

Question Time

A Musical Quiz for all ages, from 9 to 90.

1. What is the title of a great orchestral work commemorating a great event in Russian history?
2. Which of the Psalms is devoted entirely to Music?
3. Name the different musical performers who use their feet when playing.
4. What musical form would you be most likely to recall in the furniture store?
5. Give the opposites of the following:—
(a) *Forte*, (b) *Concord*, (c) *Accelerando*,
(d) *Staccato*, (e) *Solo*.
6. Which county in Scotland has the same name as a flute in a military band?
7. What is the musical equivalent of the word "ditto"?
8. To which of the four Gospels of the New Testament did Bach write Passion Music?
9. Name three great composers who lost their sight.
10. Name the best Male Voice Party in Wales.

Allow yourselves ten marks for each question. Those with 90 or over—would you join the Party? Those Party members with 30 or under—"Come, come! Don't dilly-dally!" Those with full marks will do well at the Royal Academy of Music.



P R O G R A M

A Young Chorister Speaks

WHEN I first joined the Party I survived an experience I shall never forget. I entered the choral arena more like a martyred Christian than a Roman gladiator. My feelings were ones of trepidation and fear.

Imagine the scene. Arriving punctually for my first rehearsal I was confronted with a scrimmage of bodies, yet a disciplined and trained scrimmage, which pincered one central, dominating personality, armed with a white and pointed stick. Obviously, this weapon was a formidable one. I was soon to discover it possessed atomic powers.

With stoical fortitude, I joined the sardined mass. I did not expect applause, nor even passing recognition, but was heartened by the number of friendly smiles which greeted my appearance. I took my place as nonchalantly as possible. Despite the fact that I felt my blood pounding and surging through my veins.

The hum of whispered innuendos was silenced by the persistent tattoo of baton on music-stand. Zero hour had arrived. Throats were cleared with professional aplomb. Chests were raised and diaphragms lowered. Our army was marshalled. An expectant hush—then, with the suddenness of a V2 Rocket, the baton flashed through the air. Explosively, the first choral chord blasted the still air. The first shot fired, our general flung our eager voices into battle against the giants of the God of Music.

Alas! my lance splintered in the fiery fray. My epiglottis remained as immobile as the Rock of Ages, sticking in my throat like an unripe plum. My jugular vein was surcharged with blood, standing out like whipcord in my neck. I felt nausea overcome me. My head swam. I felt that defeat was imminent.

Through bloodshot eyes I gazed around at my comrades. All eyes were transfixed upon the baton. Mouths, of all shapes and sizes, opened and closed with punctilious regularity, reminiscent of lions at feeding-time or goldfish in their shining glass bowls. I shuddered. To my fanciful mind all ears seemed to flap in my direction, like so many wireless receivers tuning in to the Light Programme. A final inspiring onslaught, a soul-rending fortissimo—then a deathly

Linda Parker, Soprano

		PA
1.	Chorus " O Praise th HE	
2.	Solo (Selec	
3.	Solo (Selec	
4.	(a) " O Isis and Osiris " (<i>Magic Flute</i>) (b) " Non Nobis Domine "	TH
5.	Solo (Selec	
6.	Songs of the Sea : (a) "Drake's Drum", (b) O Devon", (d) "Homewar	WILLIAM PAE
		PA
1.	(a) " Huntsmen's Chorus " (<i>Blodu</i>) (b) " Cymru'n Un " (Solo : IDRIS HIG	
2.	Solo (Selec	
3.	Solo <i>Bird Song</i> (Selec	
4.	Songs (a) " Salt (b) " Clos	THE
5.	Duet <i>The Shepherd</i> .. (Selected) ..	
6.	Song " Nid THE	

William Parsons, *Baritone*

PART I.
 "The Lord" (6th Chandos Anthem) *Handel*
 CHOIR *arr. Woodgate*
 LINDA PARKER
 WILLIAM PARSONS
 *Mozart*
 *Wm. Bird*

CHOIR
 LINDA PARKER
 "Outward Bound", (c) "Devon,
 and Bound", (e) "The Old Superb" *Stamford*

SONS AND CHOIR.

PART II.
 *Joseph Parry*
 (SON) *arr. Idris Lewis*
 (H) WILLIAM PARSONS
 (S) LINDA PARKER
 "Beef" *Thos. Wood*
 "The thine eyes" *Ieuan Rees Davies*

CHOIR
 LINDA PARKER AND WILLIAM PARSONS

"ros" *Daniel Protheroe*
 CHOIR

A Young Chorister Speaks—continued

hush. A voice silver-toned, confident and powerful, soared to the heavens. My voice had broken into captivity and been thrown into battle. It was a gallant if a late effort. All eyes turned towards me. I felt like the man who coughed! From my rear, a voice murmured, "A beautiful note, boy bach; but no solo work yet."

Our demi-god, the baton, hung listlessly at the side of General Conductor. Was this an armistice? All eyes turned to the conductor. What was that he was saying, about being glad to see a new member and wishing him happiness in the ranks? Yes—it was true. I had been accepted as a private in this great choral army. My cup was filled to overflowing. I would help to swell the ranks in their fight against old warriors like "Nidaros." Our watchword would be "Concerted Attack," our aspirations would be boundless. EXCELSIOR!!

Answers

1. The "1812 Overture," by Tchaikovsky (1840-93), commemorating Napoleon's retreat from Moscow.
2. Psalm 150—the last in the book.
3. Organists, Pianists, Harpists and, sometime, Tympanists.
4. The Suite—the forerunner of the Sonata.
5. (a) Piano, (b) Discord, (c) *Rallentando*, (d) *Tenuto* or *Legato*, (e) Chorus (in vocal works; *Tutti* (in orchestral works).
6. Fife.
7. *Dal Segno* (D.S.), or *Da Capo* (D.C.).
8. To all; but only the "St. Mathew" and "St. John" are complete and in use.
9. Handel, Bach and Delius.
10. This question is advertently left unanswered. The Editor, using his veto, declared that a Celebrity Concert was not the occasion to raise controversial issues, and that this Party did not wish to break off diplomatic relations with Penderus, Morriston and others. However, if your answer begins with "T", ends with "y" or "i", and refers to a place in the Rhondda Fawr, add ten marks to your score.

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