

Beautiful Bach —can we hope for St. Matthew?

NANTWICH Choral Society gave a moving pre-Easter performance of Bach's St. John Passion at Nantwich Parish Church.

They were supported by a group of soloists who all entered into the spirit of the work, which brings several highly dramatic moments, notably Bach's vivid delineation of the text in the part for the Evangelist.

Brian Greensill, who sang the part, deserves a special word of praise. Bach makes great demands on the skill and sensitivity of the narrator, and Mr. Greensill was more than equal to those demands.

The assemblage of instrumentalists was also more than competent. Apart from some sourness of intonation at the beginning of the work and a temporary lapse in one of the arias the players gave adequate support. An obli-

gato 'cello part performed by a young player was outstandingly good. Michael Bridger played the continuo parts with his usual skill and artistry.

The chorus was commendably confident throughout the long work, sufficiently dynamic in the crowd-choruses and at other times sensitively conveying the reflective mood of the music.

The chorales, so essential a feature of the German Passion, were sung with vigour and conviction.

We can thank Mr. E. Hewison for his careful preparation, his insight and splendid rhythmic control of choir and players throughout the performance.

His choir is really quite small, but very competent. Will they sing the St. Matthew Passion for us on some future occasion?

H.G.K.