

'Vespers' was good choice for society

AT their recent concert in Nantwich Parish Church, Nantwich and District Choral Society sang Vespers of the Blessed Virgin, by Claudio Monteverdi. Monteverdi was one of the great pioneers in music and composed this massive work in 1610. In the Vespers he made effective use of all the resplendent resources of the day.

He quotes the timeless Plainsong which the Church has cherished through the centuries; the Chorus, true to the Baroque tradition, revels in the most exuberant polyphony; and orchestra, organ and harpsichord lend their colourful support.

We are told that the composer always had highly-skilled singers and instrumentalists at his disposal, so he made no concessions to his performers.

The Nantwich singers are to be congratulated upon the choice of work and its performance. The choir, though suffering at moment from a paucity of tenors, was just big enough to put over the parts for double-chorus.

Michael Bridger, their conductor, had trained his choir to sing with a quiet ecstasy which so befits much of the music. He was very restrained in calling for full climaxes, but when he did such moments were beautifully timed and fully effective.

The solo parts are very demanding. It is fortunate for the Society that so many accomplished soloists are to be found within its ranks.

On this occasion visiting soloists augmented the 'concertino' group. This ensemble, evidently well-rehearsed and revelling in its work, contributed greatly to a successful performance.

Despite a few minor mishaps the orchestra played well. The instruments included a recorder group and cornetti.

The concert opened with a Canzona by Giovanni Gabrielle.

Nantwich and District Choral Society is now really contributing to the cultural enrichment of S.W. Cheshire. If present standards are maintained, and enterprising programmes presented, the Society will undoubtedly enhance its present reputation and, eventually, become known to a wider public.
H.G.K.