

## Review of Concert 10<sup>th</sup> March 1948

### PICTURE IN MUSIC

#### THREE CHORAL SOCIETIES SING "THE CREATION"

The magnificent picture conjured up by the words "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," musically interpreted with moving naive grandeur by Haydn in his oratorio "The Creation," was given a fine showing at St. James's Church on Wednesday by members of the Tunbridge Wells, Mayfield and Crowborough Choral Societies under their conductor, Albert Croucher. The soloists were Kate Winter (soprano), Sidney Dolden (tenor) and Joseph Farrington (bass).

This was Albert Croucher's farewell concert in Tunbridge Wells, as he is now resigning his position as conductor of the Choral Society owing to lack of time. His place is being taken by R. B. Miller, of Tonbridge, who proved his musical abilities on Wednesday by his brilliant playing of the organ accompaniment to the oratorio.

In spite of the difficulties involved in the performance of a work with so many alternations and combinations of solo and chorus work, the singers and organist gave an inspiring interpretation of this oratorio, all too seldom performed, and those who were thereby introduced to "papa Haydn" for the first time could not but have been moved to desire a greater knowledge of his work.

#### FINE CO-ORDINATION.

The most inspiring moment of the evening was when soloists, chorus and organ all combined in the magnificent chorus, "The heavens are telling the glory of God." Here was a fine co-ordination and a full appreciation both of the music and of its meaning.

A lighter touch was given by Joseph Farrington when, as Raphael, he told the story of the creation of the living creatures of the earth. It has been said that the music of this period relied on purely musical qualities and not on the appeal of what is popularly called "programme music" or descriptive artifices. "The Creation," however, disproves this in its amazing picturesque musical descriptions of the beasts, birds and insects.

#### STRANGE MIXTURE.

Although the words are a strange mixture of Biblical narrative and somewhat artificial eighteenth century verse, the music makes them live, and the performers on Wednesday added still greater life to the music. This was the type of work in which a few strictly technical shortcomings could be happily overlooked in the sheer joy and beauty of the whole.

Kate Winter's interpretation of "With Verdure clad" was as beautiful as a breath of spring, and Sidney Dolden's recitatives and arias were equally refreshing.

The Choral Society is indeed to be congratulated on the choice of works performed at its last two concerts—"The Creation," and Handel's "Messiah." It is certainly doing its best to cultivate a love and appreciation of the works of the old masters among local audiences.