

# VERDI'S REQUIEM

## Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society

**T**HIS is the second time I have heard Royal Tunbridge Wells Choral Society perform Verdi's Requiem and I hope it will not be the last, I was so enchanted with last Sunday's concert in the Assembly Hall.

Very talented singers delighted a full house with an almost perfect rendering of this work which never fails to thrill me with its awe inspiring music and tremendously potent words.

This time the choir was augmented by well versed reinforcements from Hastings Philharmonic Choir whose midnight blue dresses and puritan collars added a splash of colour to the dignity of this occasion.

They were superbly led through the terrors of purgatory by four magnificent soloists, not unknown to Tunbridge Wells audiences.

Jean Allister, a Daily Mail Kathleen Ferrier award winner who sang last season here in the Dream of Gerontius, was a dream of a Mezzo-Soprano with a wonderful stage presence.

Roger Stalman, a magnificent bass who appeared last in the Missa Solennis, was majestic.

Delightful Doreen Price, the

soprano who earned the acclaim of critics when she sang the "Libera Me" at 19 was a powerful member of the team and coped easily with the lion's share of the work.

Standing in at the last moment in place of Ronald Dowd was Robert Thomas who proved a very valuable acquisition. These four gave faultless renderings in this most difficult and unusual of Requiems so that the audiences cheered lustily for over five minutes as a token of their appreciation.

On a very slight note of criticism the sopranos seemed weak at times, but the altos made up for any shortcomings. The tenors and basses I could find no fault with. The orchestra led by Peter Mountain gave very able support in one of the best concerts heard in Tunbridge Wells for many a day.

The performance was conducted with a sure touch and great sympathy by Trevor Harvey, and we are fortunate to have such an experienced handler of large choral and orchestral forces as the principal conductor of the Tunbridge Wells Choral Society.

E.M.