

## Choir, soprano — and Cliff

By IFAN PAYNE

**THE concert given in St Davids Hall, Cardiff, on Friday evening was in aid of the Tenovus Institute at the University Hospital of Wales, which specialises in research into cancer in men and women and has established a worldwide reputation.**

During the concert the non-musician Cliff Morgan, who compered the show, enhanced his reputation.

Mr Morgan is as skilful in working a crowd as he once was in weaving through opposing forwards on the rugby field. His naturalness and charm pervaded the auditorium and was an object lesson in how to communicate with an audience.

The most interesting musical aspect of the evening was provided by Eirian Davies, the young soprano who has recently launched upon her operatic career.

Miss Davies made her debut at the 1983 Buxton Festival so we were hearing a singer whose career lies before her. On the strength of this concert she clearly has a great deal going for her — an attractive voice, purity of tone and personal beauty.

If Miss Davies receives the right coaching in terms of dramatic interpretation and understanding and enunciation, she clearly will have an exciting career before her.

The brunt of the evening's music was borne by the London Welsh Male Choir conducted by Haydn James and accompanied by Marilyn Phillips (piano), and Carys Hughes (organ).

The choir sang their way with a will through many an old favourite. Their most interesting contribution came in Haydn James's arrangement from Sibelius's *Finlandia* which was most impressive.

Throughout, however, one felt a lack of projection and communication with the audience by the musicians which was in contrast to that achieved by Cliff Morgan.

It was perhaps the reticence of the piano accompaniment which failed to set a firm foundation for the singing. This was most noticeable during Eirian Davies's solos, partly brought about by the half-a-stage width between piano and soloist, a distance too great for any electrical spark (musically speaking) to span.

Cliff Morgan's closing speech summed up the warmth and humanity of the evening.