

On hearing child voices

By IFAN PAYNE

REVIEW

THE Llandaff Cathedral Choral Society and Orchestra presented Bach's *Magnificat* and Britten's *St Nicholas* at Llandaff Cathedral on Monday evening.

The performances were rather unkempt but Britten's glorious music and brilliant orchestration shone as brightly as ever.

Britten composed *St Nicholas* to words by Eric Crozier in 1948 for the centenary of Lancing College and during Monday's performance it was the children — boy trebles and the Howell's School girls — singing angelically from high above the west door, who caught the ear.

So did Brian Burrows, the tenor soloist in both works who sang intelligently and with a fine sense of the characterisation of the words. His

sensitive singing and commitment to words and music overcame the constraint of his basically small voice.

The Llandaff Cathedral Choral Society must be complimented and supported for providing an evening of such fine music.

But one must record that the insensitive performance of Bach's *Magnificat* was generally ragged, and at one point featured a miserably lost oboe, even though the rough and ready-sounding orchestra under the disguising label was in fact the BBC Welsh Symphony Orchestra.

Mr Burrows again impressed as the pick of the soloists during the performance of the *Magnificat*.