

Handley returns for 'Gloria'

VERNON Handley, president and former conductor of Guildford Philharmonic Choir, returns to take the baton again when the choir performs William Walton's *Gloria* in the Civic Hall tomorrow (Saturday).

Composed by the man who wrote *Belshazzar's Feast*, it contains all the glamorous, brilliant and exciting style of the better-known work. It is notoriously difficult to sing, but the Guildford choir has shown tremendous determination to master it.

Rehearsals have been in full swing at the Methodist Hall on Monday nights, and when "Tod" Handley tested the choir's progress with a run-through at full speed, he afterwards congratulated chorus master Neville Creed on the excellent state of preparation.

From beginning to end the work is a paean of praise, appropriate to the title with tremendous sweeps of brass and some splendid parts for percussion. In the middle there is a most sensitive and moving section based around the *Miserere*.

The choir is given an immensely vivacious and rhythmic piece, which only lasts for 20 minutes but leaves the singers quite breathless after such a vigorous workout.

The choir has already started work on its next piece — *Morning Heroes*, by Arthur Bliss, which will be performed on April 29, under the baton of Sir Charles Groves with Guildford Philharmonic Orchestra.