

LONDON REVIEWS

Andrew Benson-Wilson

RAMEAU I. FRENCH RIPIENO

I was alerted to the concert by the 30-strong Esher-based Ripieno Choir by the Monteverdi String Band, who were providing the accompaniment to their 'La Chapelle Royale' concert (15 November, All Saints' Church, Weston Green). It was only a few hours before the concert that I realised that it was conducted by fellow *EMR* reviewer, David Hansell, here conducting to his strength in the French repertoire. The impressive programme notes set the scene of the music of the Sun King, only Leclair and Mondonville falling outside the 72 year reign of Louis XIV. The Rameau anniversary was the initial spark for this programme, with his powerful *Deus noster refugium* and the contrasting (and more academic) *Laboravi clamans*, the former featuring a fine soprano soloist, particularly in the tricky flourishes of the third section. This was a testing programme for any choir to sing and interpret, but the Ripieno Choir, although not entirely without the usual amateur choir issues coped well both musically and technically.
