

The English College in Prague May 2010 **Graduation and Prize Giving**

This spring, we had a very special visit from our Patron, HRH The Prince of Wales and HRH The Duchess of Cornwall.

They toured the whole school; HRH delivered a moving speech before unveiling the new plaque in front of the college.

The sun shone for the first time it seemed this year and as he drew open the curtain a red rose was resting on the ledge which he lovingly presented to his Duchess.

There were smiles everywhere and warm applause.

At the time of the State visit I was talking to the famous Czech conductor Jiří Bělohlávek.

I told him about this evening and my thought of opening the ceremony with a piece by Dvorak and ending with a piece by Elgar.

He then told me this story;

That Elgar had been consistently enthusiastic about Dvorak's music, and in 1884, he had played in the orchestra under the direction of the composer himself.

Elgar was particularly captivated by Dvorak's orchestration, which influenced his own composing.

Through Elgar, Dvorak indirectly played a part in the twentieth century regeneration of English music.

So when you exit to the celebratory music by the **English** Elgar, you will know that much of his inspiration came from the **Czech** Dvorak.

Much as at this college there is the fusion of both countries.