

USHER HALL, EDINBURGH

THE
REID SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

(Twenty-sixth Season)

FOURTH CONCERT

Saturday, 6th December 1941, at 2.30 p.m.

Conductor—SIDNEY NEWMAN

Leader—Dr JOHN FAIRBAIRN

Solo Violoncello—ANTONIA BUTLER

PROGRAMME

PRICE THREEPENCE

A.R.P. NOTICE

There is complete Air Raid accommodation in the basement of the Hall and the corridors. Shelters are also available at the West End (St John's Church) and in Rutland Square. In the event of an air raid an announcement will be made from the platform.

PROGRAMME

1. TRAGIC OVERTURE (Op. 81) - - - - *Brahms*

*Allegro non troppo, leading to
Molto piu moderato, leading to
Tempo primo.*

We find the truth of tragedy where the sublime holds truck with the common stuff of the world. The formal conventions of life are merged with the technically formal elements of dramatic art. So it is with this great overture. Both during the course of the work and at its conclusion themes of purely formal significance tie us to earth. But within this formal structure we are made to feel the force of cosmic events in the opening theme, the promise of some mysterious harmony of the universe in the passage that succeeds, and the consolation of the individual heart that the aspiring second theme reveals. We see also in the formal development section tragedy writ small, as though some gentle wretch were made the pathetic parody of the great, as the poor beggar fool in Boris Godounov.

2. VIOLONCELLO CONCERTO in E minor (Op. 85) - - - - *Elgar*

*Adagio, leading to
Moderato, leading to
Allegro molto.
Adagio.
Allegro.*

It is not altogether surprising that an audience which went to the first performance of this concerto in 1919 absorbed in memories of the "luscious profusion" of the violin concerto, were somewhat disconcerted. For here is a concerto of exceptional intimacy, concentrated and with a thematic economy unusual in Elgar; and a full orchestra as ready to lend a graceful finger-tip as a helping hand, as able to contain its heart until opportunity affords as it is to bark with delight when humour provokes.

For the most part the first movement is permeated by a wistful theme of supple ease, which, despite outbursts of more poignant emotion, is retained to the last. The second movement, which follows without a break, toys for a while with the nimble figure that is soon permitted to flicker and flutter, chasing its way through a fantasy of lightest humour. The slow movement is a single broad melody of exquisite beauty and tenderness that hangs upon many a turn of phrase as though lost in treasured memories.

The Finale reminds us that Humour, for all his subtleties and fancies, is a gay dog indeed. Who could have guessed that by strutting in his company we should be led to such passionate searchings of the heart before the day is done?

3. "SYMPHONIC POEM, " Vltava" - - - - *Smetana*

From the cycle of six symphonic poems entitled "Ma vlast" (My country), composed 1874-79; this unforgettable masterpiece of nationalist art pictures the river (known better maybe to some as the Moldau), from its slender sparkling streams at the source, united in the main stream, which evokes a melody that will linger long in every ear, past scenes of the woodland hunt and meadows where peasants tread out their dances at a wedding feast, and by quiet waters where nymphs disport under the radiant moon; till once again the stream flows onward in the light of day to reach the thundering rapids of St John, whence the broad street of the river stretches through Prague, whose royal splendour is emblazoned in the Vysehrad motive.

INTERVAL

4. SYMPHONY No. 7, in A major (Op. 92) - - - - *Beethoven*

*Poco sostenuto, leading to
Vivace.
Allegretto.
Presto.
Allegro con brio.*

Wellnigh the broadest of all broad places of human and heroic delight, this outsize all endeavours to define. Was ever blaze of A major like to this? Truly it might be called "a symphony on E," for that resilient note streams across all its brightest peaks, and haunts the quiet and darker path of the Allegretto no less. What Triton would not yield up his wreathed horn for the horn in A? What giant would not rejoice to run his course with a bass that plunges through three octaves, and from the deep stirs up something more wondrous far than sight of Proteus rising from the sea?

REID ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS

(Second half series)

Fortnightly, on Saturdays, at 2.30 p.m.

Fifth Concert, 31st January—

Solo Pianoforte - CLIFFORD CURZON

Sixth Concert, 14th February—

Singer - NOEL EADIE

Seventh Concert, 28th February—

Solo Pianoforte - SOLOMON

Eighth Concert, 14th March—

Solo Violin - ADILA FACHIRI

(Note.—The above arrangements are provisional)