

USHER HALL, EDINBURGH

THE REID ORCHESTRA

(Twenty-ninth Season)

SECOND CONCERT

Friday, 17th November 1944, at 6.45 p.m.

Conductor—SIDNEY NEWMAN

Leader—Dr JOHN FAIRBAIRN

Solo Pianoforte—KENDALL TAYLOR

PROGRAMME

PRICE SIXPENCE

PROGRAMME

1. INTRODUCTION and ALLEGRO for Strings (Op. 47)

Elgar

THE string orchestra is here deployed in such a manner as to ensure the maximum scope for rich, full orchestration and the widest range of diversity in subtle gradations of tone. Every section of the strings is divided (bar the double bass), whilst a solo quartet is employed both as a contrasting and as a supplementary section of the orchestra itself, rather than as the personæ dramaticæ of a concerto. Thus Elgar has thirteen distinct strands with which to weave the variable complexity of his instrumental design.

The G minor introduction, despite the overpowering assurance of its first assertion, is fragmentary and tentative in character—but fragmentary only in respect of the rapid alternation of thematic material, for this concentration of diverse reactionary moods is achieved with masterly continuity and flow of thought. Herein all but two of the most important themes are made known to us. The grand assertive gesture of the opening (which is to assume the full nobility of its stature as the “second subject” of the Allegro) yields immediately to a tentative (and “minor”) foreshadowing of the free and airy Allegro that is to be. But the sudden welling bass which twice swallows up these tentative adventures is to prove itself a redoubtable partner in the triple counterpoint of the fugal development. More readily appraised, however, is the lyrical melody introduced by the solo viola which brings not only repose, but, as the blood stirs, some sense of the large-hearted and generous warmth which is to envelop the last phase of the work.

Although not new in matter, the Allegro at once brings a newness of life so fresh and airy that the transformation seems magical, but how much of brilliance and power will follow could never be suspected until the subtle interchange of engaging chatter between soli and tutti stiffens to an argument of weight and challenge. The subject of the spritely and wayward fugue is entirely new and apparently unrelated to anything yet heard, but it is not long before the quartet as a body evoke that florid theme (first heard in the bass) as a counter subject, and then provoke an emphatic third partner to bear a hand in the rough and tumble of the contrapuntal fray. As the tempest subsides the lightest whisperings coax the mood back to the first fresh dawn of the Allegro, and thereafter our course is by ways familiar, until we reach that rich fulfilment of which I have already spoken.

2. CLAVIER CONCERTO in D minor

J. S. Bach

Allegro.
Adagio.
Allegro.

CLAVIER signifies only a keyboard instrument. For Bach it was the harpsichord. But not even the proudest of proud harpsichords could yield the pride of utterance here called for. Seldom if ever did Bach

in all the exuberant strength of his forthright assertions proclaim a theme of such formidable determination with such unassailable strength. It is true, as was pointed out in the programme note to the A major concerto at our first concert of this season, that there is every reason for believing that in its original form this concerto was written for a solo violin—much of the close double-handed writing about a reiterated pedal note provides such evidence. But although reconstructions to the supposed original form have been effected with some success, I do not think it is likely to be maintained by anyone that in this clavier version we have only a “second best.” I have spoken of one mood only—there are many; but of these I am content that the work should speak for itself.

3. “CAPRIOL” (Suite for String Orchestra)

Peter Warlock

Basse-Danse.
Pavane.
Tordion.
Bransles.
Pieds-en-l'air.
Mattachins.

PHILIP HESELTINE (who took the nom de plume of Peter Warlock as a composer) did a good deal of research amongst (and transcription of) the music of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and it was no doubt in this way that he became familiar with the French dance tunes contained in a remarkable and now famous book entitled *Orchésographie*, published in 1588 by a priest of Langres named Jehan Tabourot, who adopted the anagram name Thoinot Arbeau. The book was written in the form of a dialogue between Arbeau and a lawyer Capriol who, we are told, “finds that the art of dancing is a necessary accomplishment in his profession.” (Scottish Bar please note!) Peter Warlock has taken some of the dance tunes printed therein and expanded them into a series of very effective movements. The only title which requires any comment is the last—Mattachins. This was danced by four men in armour, who in the course of the dance indulged in mimic combat. This is portrayed in the conflicting caco-phony with which the movement ends.

INTERVAL

4. “RAKASTAVA” (The Lover): Suite for Strings, Op. 14

Sibelius

1. The Lover.
2. The Way of the Beloved.
3. Good Evening, Beloved! . . . Farewell!

I HAVE not been able to find any account of the story or legend which I assume there must be to account for the titles and the general character of this early work of Sibelius. The string orchestra is supplemented by soft drum rolls in the first and last movements, and by the triangle towards the close of the second movement; but whether the tender sigh and sudden vanishing of the Beloved is

attributable to the fact that the triangle strikes precisely six I cannot tell.

5. PIANOFORTE SOLOS.

6. OVERTURE No. 3, in D major - - - - - *J. S. Bach*

Overture: Grave—Allegro—Grave.

Air.

Gavotte.

Bourrée.

Gigue.

SCORED for two oboes, three trumpets, drums and strings. This is in truth a suite, but is named after the massive French Overture with which it opens, a movement on an altogether bigger scale than the "Galanterien" which succeeds it, and one which Bach's repetition signs would double in size. But as the proverb goes, "Enough's a feast." S. T. M. N.

REID ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS

Fortnightly, on Fridays, at 6.45 p.m.

Third Concert, 1st December—

MARGARET MORHAM, Flute

JOHN FAIRBAIRN, Violin

WIGHT HENDERSON, Pianoforte

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| 1. Chaconne - - - - - | <i>Purcell</i> |
| 2. Suite in B minor (Flute and Strings) - - - | <i>Bach</i> |
| 3. Brandenburg Concerto No. 5 in D (Flute,
Violin and Pianoforte) - - - - - | <i>Bach</i> |
| 4. Fantasia on a Theme of Tallis - - - | <i>Vaughan Williams</i> |
| 5. Romance in C - - - - - | <i>Sibelius</i> |
| 6. Concertino Pastorale - - - - - | <i>John Ireland</i> |

Fourth Concert, 15th December—

REGINALD KELL—Clarinet

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| 1. Symphony in E flat - - - - - | <i>Abel</i> |
| 2. Adagio and Fugue for Strings in C minor - - | <i>Mozart</i> |
| 3. Clarinet Concerto in A major (K. 622) - - - | <i>Mozart</i> |
| 4. Grosse Fuge (Op. 133) - - - - - | <i>Beethoven</i> |
| 5. Symphony No. 5 in B flat - - - - - | <i>Schubert</i> |