

Edinburgh University Orchestral Concerts

SEASON 1952-53

USHER HALL

Wednesday, 4th March 1953, at 7.30 p.m.

EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY
MUSICAL SOCIETY CHOIR
REID CONCERTS ORCHESTRA

Leader—Dr JOHN FAIRBAIRN

Conductor—SIDNEY NEWMAN

Tenor Soloist—JOHN TAINSH

PROGRAMME

“PSALMUS HUNGARICUS” - - *Kodaly*
(First Edinburgh Performance)

SYMPHONY in B Minor (Unfinished) - *Schubert*

INTERVAL

“IN WINDSOR FOREST” - *Vaughan Williams*

“PSALMUS HUNGARICUS” - - *Kodaly*

Introductory Note

“PSALMUS HUNGARICUS,” Op. 13.

Zoltán Kodály (b. 1882)

(For Tenor Solo, Chorus and Orchestra)

THIS work was written for the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Hungarian capital in 1923, and its appearance immediately brought Kodály a European reputation as a composer.

The text is a Hungarian translation of the 55th Psalm belonging to the sixteenth century. Following the practice of his time, the translator elaborated the original text by interweaving commentary verses whether original or borrowed from other psalms. He has thus painted a much more vivid picture of the bitterness of oppression and internal strife than that given by the psalmist. For a people with so turbulent a history as the Hungarians, this psalm has a peculiarly national, if not to say a personal significance. There can be few nations who would choose to celebrate a national anniversary with the singing of such a poem. Here is no pomp and circumstance, no facile compliment budding from a bough of laurels, but a naked confession of bitter experience, a vivid picture of that fire in which they have been tried like silver.

For the most part, the chorus serves only as a background to the solo voice, its most conspicuous phrases being those of the introductory verse which is several times repeated, but it is through the mass of the choral tone that the final vision unfolds, in which the personal utterance is lost as the voice of complaint finds consolation there.

S. T. M. N.

The English text is by EDWARD J. DENT, and is here printed by permission of Universal Edition (ALFRED A. KALMUS, London).

Programme

WHEN as King David sore was afflicted,
By those he trusted basely deserted,
In his great anger bitterly grieving,
Thus to Jehovah pray'd he within his heart.

God of my fathers, bow Thine ear to me,
Turn not away the light of Thy countenance,
Leave me not lonely in my misery,
Sore is my heart and sorrow o'erwhelmeth me.

O hear the voice of my complaining!
Terrors of death are fallen upon me,
Hide not Thyself from my supplication,
Hatred and wrath of wicked men oppress me.

O that I had but wings like a dove!
I would fly away far into the wilderness;
If to my prayer, Lord, Thou hadst attended,
Long, long ago far hence I would have wander'd.

Better it were to dwell in the desert,
Better to hide me deep in the forest,
Than live with wicked liars and traitors
Who will not suffer that I should speak the truth.

Nightly and daily go they about me,
Seeking how they may take me in the snare,
And by false witness seek to destroy me,
Make me a prisoner; then would they shout with joy!

Violence and strife rage fierce in the city,
Mischief and malice, envy and sorrow,
Boasting of riches, pride of possession;
N'er in all the world saw I such deceivers!

They take their evil counsel in secret,
Fatherless children slay they and murder,
God's high commandment they have despised,
Swollen with substance, drunken with lust and pride.

I could have borne so sore an affliction,
Were it an enemy that had reproach'd me,
Yea, in truth I could then have endur'd it,
For then I could have hidden myself from him.

But it was thou, my friend whom I trusted,
(Did we not take sweet counsel together?)
Thou whom I reckon'd true friend and faithful,
Thou art the man whose hand would have struck me down!

Smite them with destruction, O Lord, and slay them,
And let Thy judgment fall heaven on them,
Cut down this people, Lord, in Thine anger,
Send out Thy truth, let unbelievers perish!

I give Thee honour, Lord, and worship Thee,
Evening and morning and at the noon-day,
Thou that abidest, Thou art my helper
When those that hate Thee sorely do oppress me.

So in Jehovah I will put my trust,
God is my stronghold and my comforter;
I cast my burden alway on the Lord,
He will not suffer the righteous to be mov'd.

Thou art our One God, righteous in judgment,
Vengeance is Thine for those that do evil,
Thou shalt not bless them, trusting in vain things,
Thou shalt take them away as with a whirlwind.

As for the righteous, Thou dost preserve them,
They that shew mercy shelter find in Thee.
Those that are humble Thou dost raise on high,
Those that are mighty scatter'st and destroyest.

Whom for a space Thy wrath has chastised,
And has like silver tried in the furnace,
Forth from the fire Thou suddenly tak'st him,
Once more in honour Thou wilt raise him on high!

These words King David wrote in his Psalter,
Fifty and fifth of prayers and of praises,
And for the faithful, bitterly grieving,
As consolation, I from it made this song.

Symphony in B minor (Unfinished), 1822 *Schubert*

1. Allegro Moderato.
2. Andante con moto.

INTERVAL

"In Windsor Forest" *Vaughan Williams*

(A choral cantata derived from the opera "Sir John in Love.")

1. The Conspiracy : "Sigh no more, ladies."
2. Drinking Song : "Back and side go bare, go bare,
Both foot and hand go cold."
3. Falstaff and the fairies.
4. Wedding Chorus : "See the chariot at hand here
of love wherein my lady rideth."
5. Epilogue : "Whether men do laugh or weep."

At the end of the programme, there will be a repeat
performance of "Psalmus Hungaricus" *Kodaly*