



University Music Class Room.

SIX HISTORICAL CONCERTS

Five of String Quartet Music,

One of Choral Music.

CONCERT VI.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27, 1895

PART I.

QUARTET for two Violins, Viola, and Violoncello, in B flat major, Op. 67, by Johannes Brahms (born in 1833).

- (a) Vivace.
- (b) Andante.
- (c) Agitato (Allegretto non troppo).
- (d) Poco Allegretto con Variazioni.

Op. 67 is the third of Brahms's string quartets, the first two being contained in Op. 51. We may hold that they cannot be numbered with his greatest achievements, but we must admit that they are in no way unworthy of him. How indeed could anything be unworthy that is full of beauties, thoroughly original, and always extremely interesting?

Although cherishing classical traditions, Brahms has a distinct individuality, and puts his stamp on all he produces. His artist nature embraces a duality: capable of the simplicity and straightforwardness of folk-music, he has a strong inclination to subtle thoughtfulness that not unfrequently degenerates into abstruse and sombre brooding.

In the first movement of Op. 67—especially remarkable for the contention of three rhythms, $\frac{6}{8}$, $\frac{3}{4}$, and $\frac{2}{4}$, which oppose each other successively and simultaneously—the composer displays both sides of his character: natural vigour and speculative subtleness. The *Adagio* is pervaded by deep feeling and serene beauty. The third movement, which occupies the place of the scherzo, bewitches with its quaint fancifulness and originality in combination and tone-colour. In the last movement, a theme with variations, all the qualities of the preceding movements come in turn to the front. Here the melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic resources of the art are heavily laid under contribution in the series of marvellous transformations of and evolutions from the simple opening melody.

PART II.

QUARTET for two violins, viola, and violoncello, in E flat major, Op. 27, No. 1, by Luigi Boccherini (1743-1805).

- (a) Allegro moderato.
- (b) Adagio non tanto.
- (c) Menuetto.

The Italian Boccherini was one of the earliest cultivators of the string quartet. The suave beauty of this work shows that the present neglect of the master's compositions is not deserved. There are only three movements, the usual fourth movement being wanting. The first movement has in the main all the features of the first-movement sonata form.

The Boccherini quartet has been here introduced as a supplement to the first concert, and as a rest between the exacting and exciting Brahms and Smetana quartets.

PART III.

QUARTET for two violins, viola, and violoncello, in E minor, by B. Smetana (1824-1884).

- (a) Allegro vivo appassionato.
- (b) Allegro moderato à la Polka.
- (c) Largo sostenuto.
- (d) Vivace.

Smetana's works did not find during his lifetime the attention to which they had an undoubted claim, at least they did not find it outside his own country. Only in recent years has his name begun to be more frequently mentioned. Smetana was a musician who had something to say, and at the same time had the ability and courage to say it in his own way, in spite of the classics and the critics. He did not hide his nationality (he was a Czech, born at Leitomischl, in Bohemia), but neither did he aggressively flaunt it about. We may not be able to admire everything, and to be pleased with everything in the quartet; but on the whole we shall have to recognise it as a remarkable and powerful composition, full of life, variety, and colour. The work is entitled "*Aus meinem Leben*" (From my life), which is a significant fact.

PERFORMERS:—

Professor NIECKS,	-	-	-	<i>First Violin.</i>
Mr J. F. GUYER,	-	-	-	<i>Second Violin.</i>
Mr COLIN M'KENZIE,	-	-	-	<i>Viola.</i>
Mr GRANT T. M'NEILL,	-	-	-	<i>Violoncello.</i>

DATES AND PROGRAMMES OF THE CONCERTS :—

November 14.—Quartet for two violins, viola, and violoncello, in B flat major, Op. 1, No. 1, by Joseph Haydn. Quartet in C major, Op. 33, No. 3, by Joseph Haydn. Quartet in C major, by W. A. Mozart. Quartet in D minor, Op. 76, No. 2, by Joseph Haydn.

December 12.—Quartet in C major, Op. 76, No. 3 (The Emperor), by Joseph Haydn. Quartet in F major, by Mozart. Quartet in C minor, Op. 18, No. 4, by Beethoven.

January 16, 1895.—Quartet in E minor, Op. 59, No. 2, by Beethoven. Quartet in A minor, Op. 29, by Schubert. Quartet in E flat major, by Cherubini.

February 13.—Quartet in A minor, Op. 132, by Beethoven. Quartet in D major, Op. 44, No. 1, by Mendelssohn. Quartet in A minor, Op. 41, by Schumann.

February 27 (Choral and Organ Concert).—The motet "Dies sanctificatus," and parts of the mass "Iste Confessor," by Palestrina. "Magnificat," by Durante. The motet, "I wrestle and pray," and the chorus, "Glory to God," from the *Christmas Oratorio*, by J. S. Bach. Organ Solos by Andrea Gabrieli, Frescobaldi, and Dietrich Buxtehude.

March 27.—Quartets by Brahms (Op. 67, in B flat major), Boccherini (Op. 27, No. 1, in E flat major), and Smetana (in E minor).

FREDERICK NIECKS,

Reid Professor of Music.