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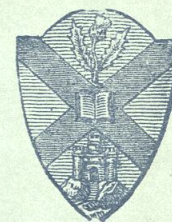
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CONCERTS
FOURTH SEASON



FOURTH CONCERT
(AFTERNOON SERIES)

SATURDAY, 20th MARCH 1920

P R O G R A M M E
WITH NOTES BY D. F. T.
PRICE ONE SHILLING

University of Edinburgh.



REID ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS

FOURTH SEASON

FOURTH CONCERT

(AFTERNOON SERIES)

IN

THE MEWAN HALL,

ON

SATURDAY, 20TH MARCH 1920

at 2.30 p.m.

Conductor

PROFESSOR DONALD FRANCIS TOVEY

Solo Violinist

MISS JELLY D'ARANYI

Solo Violoncellist

MR ARTHUR WILLIAMS

Singer

MADAME LUCY ROMAIN.

Concert under the direction of
PATERSON, SONS & CO. LTD., 27 George Street, Edinburgh

PROGRAMME

1. SYMPHONIC VARIATIONS on an Original Theme, for Full
Orchestra, Op. 78 - - - - - *Dvořák*

2. VIOLIN CONCERTO in D major, Op. 61, - - - - - *Beethoven*
(*By request.*)

Violin—Miss JELLY D'ARANYI.

Interval of ten minutes.

3. RECITATIVE and ARIA for Soprano, with Violin Obligato and
Orchestra, from *Idomeneo* - - - - - *Mozart*

Madame LUCY ROMAIN.

Violin—Miss JELLY D'ARANYI.

4. CONCERTO for Violin and Violoncello with Orchestra, Op. 102 *Brahms*

Violin—Miss JELLY D'ARANYI.

Violoncello—Mr ARTHUR WILLIAMS.

NOTES BY D. F. T.

- I. SYMPHONIC VARIATIONS on an Original Theme, for
Full Orchestra, Op. 78 - - - - - *Dvořák*

There is evidence in the fine arts for a paradoxical law by which persons notoriously slack and irrelevant in their treatment of matters and forms that are popularly supposed to be "free" become remarkably shrewd in their handling of forms which are obviously more strict and of specially intellectual interest. There are in music few things more obviously intellectual than the variation form. This does not prevent variations from being, next to the concerto form, the most universally misunderstood and grossly mishandled form in the history of art, and it does not mean that there are very many sets of great variations in existence. If great groups of variations were as numerous as great sonata movements, of course the form would be better understood. As it is, the position of variations, like that of concertos, is that there are very few masterpieces, so that current ideas of the nature of the form have been derived from the enormous majority of outwardly successful cases that are on radically false lines. But it is wonderful to see how the superb instinct of a naïve genius, such as Schubert or Dvořák, grasps the essentials of this eminently scholarly problem in music, though the patience is lacking which can bring the same concentration of mind to bear upon the apparently more free, but really more complex, problems of other instrumental forms. Neither Schubert nor Dvořák have left many sets of variations; but those which they have produced are, with perhaps two trivial exceptions, perfect. They are also of types peculiar to their composers. In discussing variation-works elsewhere, I have ventured to lay down a basis for a strictly scientific classification of the form. This basis is very much needed, for the majority of revolts against classical tradition are made by artists who have really not the slightest idea of what the classical tradition is, but who are very rightly in revolt against a set of text-book dogmas which, while professing to be based upon the classics, are evidence of a far more profound and unpractical ignorance than that of the revolutionaries. The basis of my classification, which I venture to substitute for that of the text-books, is the teaching of Sir Hubert Parry, which I had from him in private. (It is true that he wrote the article on variations in Grove's Dictionary, but I do not call his articles text-books.) My classification, then, is this—variations may be classified into (a) those which show that the composer knows his theme, and (b) those which show that he does not. Dvořák certainly knows his themes, and indeed he invented a rather peculiar

type of theme for variations. At all events, his three outstanding variation-movements, the wonderfully clever finale of the Terzett for violin and viola, the brilliant and poetic finale of the otherwise unsatisfactory Sextet for strings, and the present orchestral work, are all on themes of this peculiar type, which has since been made more familiar to the public in Elgar's *Orchestral Variations*. Instead of relying upon any solid rhythmic or harmonic structure, the composer takes two strains as full of different melodic figures as possible, and states them in the order A, B, A. It will be seen from my quotation—



that every pair of bars of this whimsically severe theme contains a very recognisable melodic figure (as (a), (b), (c), (d)); and that the second strain B groups its new figure (d) on steps of a rising scale reaching to a climax. These melodic facts are solid enough to allow Dvořák in some of his later variations to break away from the original rhythmic size of the theme, and to indulge in considerable passages of development without seeming to break the backbone of his variation.

The theme having been stated in harmony of portentous bareness, the first three variations simply clothe it in all sorts of bright counterpoints.

The 4th Variation disguises the first strain of the melody, although retaining its harmonic outline; but the second strain, with its rising scale, is easily enough recognised.

The 5th Variation has brilliant running figures.

In the 6th Variation there are symptoms that the theme is able to stretch itself, for the first strain begins by taking two bars for one of the original theme. The second strain, however, moves at the old pace.

In Variation 7 the freedom of rhythm grows as the colouring becomes more dramatic, and in Variation 8 it is possible for the strings to add a little introduction on a diminished version of figure (b) before the winds enter mysteriously with the theme.

Variation 9 again spreads out the first strain, and, *à propos* of the F sharp in its second bar, enriches the harmony throughout more boldly than hitherto.

Variation 10 is *vivace* in a springing rhythm.

Variation 11 returns to a meditative tempo, in dialogue with the lower strings and the wood-wind, the modulations becoming richer as it proceeds; and

it expands into a dreamy cadenza for the violins, which leads to Variation 12 *poco andante*, a highly expressive violin solo.

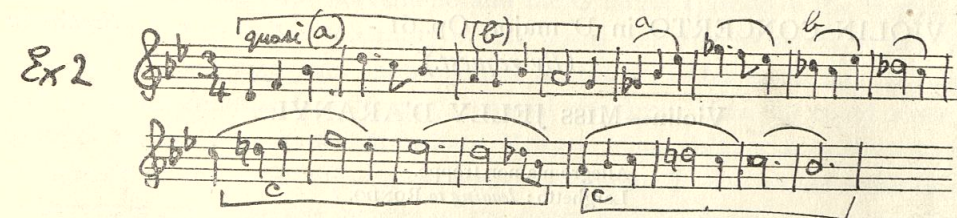
Variation 13 is again lively, and almost the same length as the original theme.

Variation 14 (*Lento*) is wrapt in mystery, which is not revealed until the third strain, where the bassoon shows that the palpitating harmonies are a beautiful and natural accompaniment to the first strain.

Variation 15, *maestoso* at the same pace, arises in its wrath, and, after an attempt to expostulate gently in the second strain, broadens out into an interlude in which the pace accelerates, until in Variation 16 the orchestra storms through the theme at double quick time.

So far the Variations have remained in the original duple time. Now a new epoch begins with the Scherzo (Variation 17). This is a somewhat expanded statement in the tempo of a triple-time scherzo. Beginning quietly enough, it flutters away mysteriously into Variation 18, a *larghetto*, in which we have the original melody in a very unexpected harmonic position. Imagine the theme as quoted above, with no alteration but the presence of two sharps in the signature, the notes remaining the same, and imagine the bass of the whole to be A. Thus this whole variation is in D major, a key very contradictory to that of C. It leads straight to the other contradictory key on the other side, B flat.

In this key Variation 19 appears in *tempo di valse*, with a transformation of the theme so ingenious that I must quote it—



Variations 20 and 21 continue in B flat minor, with livelier transformations. In Variation 22 a horn climbs up from the depths by way of throwing the first strain to the higher wind instruments. The second strain is of the nature of a hilarious pillow-fight between the basses and the full orchestra.

In Variation 23, still in B flat minor with the same type of rhythm, the original melody is much more easily recognised, and in Variation 24 the orchestra settles solemnly down to a broad and gloomy treatment of the figures in a 12/8 *andante*. This brings the B flat section to a close.

In Variation 25 we find ourselves in the extremely distant key of G flat minor. The outlook is serene, with the peculiar naïve, almost Italian, sentiment which Dvořák commands in his romantic vein.

From G flat (or F sharp) to D major is a natural step, and Variation 26

begins in D major with the melody of Variation 25 in the bass. It turns plaintively into the minor, and so moves round to C major, where with some wistful questionings it leads to Variation 27.

Here, in the original key and in a tempo near to that of the original theme, the figures of the first strain are repeated drily one at a time by the strings and wind alternating. There is a *decrecendo* and a *ritardando* until the violins break away dramatically and bring down the whole string orchestra with a solemn cadential shake, closing into a fugue. This fugue is the finale, *allegro maestoso*. Dvořák simply takes strain A as his fugue subject, with a shake on the last note but one, and he amuses himself and us by storming along at it with the greatest vigour and any amount of resource. There are quieter passages, and passages which are no more in strict fugue than similar things in Beethoven, but the whole is thoroughly solid and quite easy to follow, until at the end it culminates in what would be a unison statement of its subject if the trumpets and drums did not insist on playing only one note. The tempo is considerably quickened by the time this unison is reached, and after one of Dvořák's *grandioso* climaxes the work ends *piu animato* in 2/2 time. Why it is not better known passes the comprehension of anyone who can recognise good music. Sir Charles Stanford places it "*non longo intervallo*" after the *Etudes Symphoniques* of Schumann; and it is so far unlike all other variation-works in existence that it cannot suffer by comparisons.

II. VIOLIN CONCERTO in D major, Op. 61 - - - Beethoven (By request.)

Violin—MISS JELLY D'ARANYI.

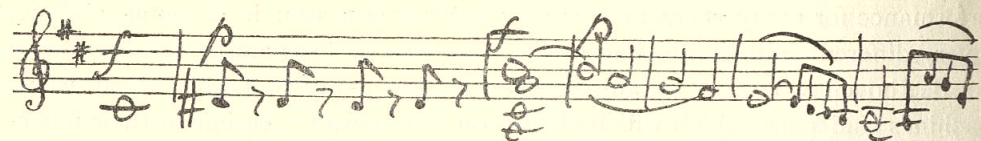
Allegro ma non troppo.
Larghetto: leading to RONDO.

The autograph of Beethoven's Violin Concerto is a lesson in the true attitude of a composer towards a player. It was written for a virtuoso of the name of Clement, and is inscribed to him with a vile pun on his "clemency" towards the poor composer. The score assigns four staves to the violin solo, in order to leave room for alterations, and in many places all the four staves have been filled. The violinist whose criticism Beethoven took so much pains to meet, produced (or, as he perhaps called it, "created") the Concerto under conditions of his own making that were not considered unusual in those days. The first movement was played in the first part of the programme, the slow movement and the Finale in the second part. Among the items which took place between these divisions was a sonata of Clement's own composing, to be played on one string with the violin upside down. Clement survived this

performance for many years, and as an old man was seen by a young violinist of very different calibre who has become perhaps as inseparably identified with the Beethoven Concerto as any player can be identified with a great work. Joachim's Cadenzas (which will be heard on the present occasion in their fullest form, as he played them when at the height of his physical powers) succeed as no other cadenzas on record in establishing themselves as integral parts of the composition, instead of as necessary evils. I heard them from him only in an abbreviated form; but he included the full version in one of his last publications, the volume of concertos in his Violin School; and it is interesting to note that in this form the cadenza to the first movement still contains a certain famous chromatic scale in octaves which made a tremendous impression when he played the Concerto in London as a boy of twelve, though the cadenza as a whole is very much more important than the already extraordinarily ripe achievement of his boyhood. I believe that in its full form, as played on the present occasion, it dates from the same period as his great Hungarian Concerto where, by the way, the same chromatic scale occurs.

Beethoven's Violin Concerto is gigantic, one of the most spacious concertos ever written, but so quiet that when it was a novelty most people complained quite as much of its insignificance as of its length. And indeed it is worth while noting that all its most famous strokes of genius are not only mysteriously quiet, but mysterious in radiantly happy surroundings. The whole gigantic scheme is serene. The only two definitely pathetic passages, the G minor episode in the development of the First Movement, and the G minor episode in the Finale, are (in spite of the immense solemnity of the horns and the trumpets in the first instance) in a childlike vein, showing how Beethoven in his ripest middle period had far more command of Mozart's special resources than he could show in those of his early works which imitate Mozart. One might be inclined to say off-hand that the most mysterious stroke of genius in the whole work is the famous opening of the five strokes of the drum which introduces the peculiarly radiant First Subject on the wood-wind; but in truth there is still more mystery in the astounding D sharp which follows the second strain, for which reason I quote the whole first paragraph—

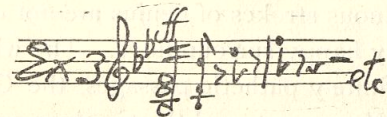




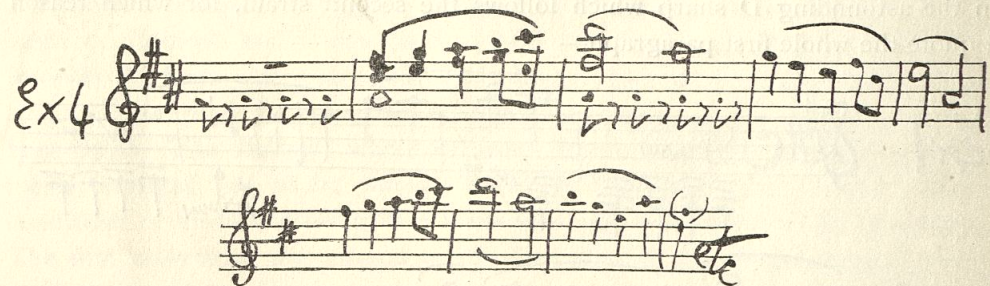
In Beethoven's first sketches he thought of the D sharp as E flat, a distinction which, unnoticed on tempered instruments, is really important here. E flat means something harmonically clearer, but the point about the D sharp is that it indeed is D sharp, though Beethoven leaves it unharmonised and carefully avoids letting it move in the direction which would explain it away. We shall see the explanation in one of the later phrases. The remaining themes I quote as they occur in the opening tutti. First there is the characteristic scale theme—



which the solo violin is eventually to work out as a transition theme. The orchestra, however, does not as yet think of it in that light, but makes it lead quietly to an unexpected crash in a foreign key—

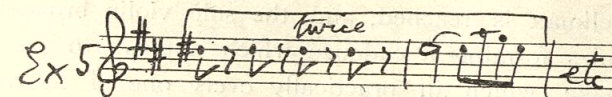


This energetic outburst leads more or less in the manner of a symphonic transition to the Second Subject, but, as is usual in classical concertos, leads to it in the tonic, so that there has been no radical change of key. The Second Subject, given in the characteristically radiant colouring Beethoven extracts from the wood-wind throughout this work, is, as the orchestra has it, accompanied by that all-pervading rhythmic figure which the drums announced at the outset—

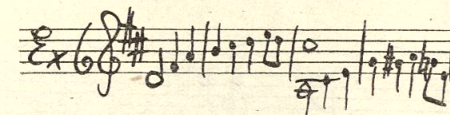


Broad as this melody is, it becomes still broader as the strings take it up softly with a flowing triplet accompaniment in the minor. This leads eventually to a

smiling phrase in the major in which the mysterious D sharp of Example 1 is now explained away—



Out of this arises a crescendo which brings the full orchestra to the last and in some ways the grandest of this great procession of themes—



Suddenly the orchestra dies away in the basses, as if warned of the advent of its master, and the solo violin arises in one of the most spacious introductory passages to be found in any concerto. This entry is quite unforgettable; which is well, because it recurs in a very subtly dramatic way. The solo violin, with the aid of the orchestra, now proceeds to work out the whole procession of themes *seriatim*. No. 2 becomes the symphonic passage of transition, leading with great breadth to the dominant of A major, and there preparing for the Second Subject. (No. 3 is held over for another purpose.) The Second Subject enters in the clarinets, while the violin does a shake until it is ready to take up its second phrase. One of the most important subtleties in the structure of the whole work is that under the guidance of the solo violin the Second Subject is no longer accompanied by the rhythmic figure of the drums. Mr Forsyth, in his book on Orchestration, remarking on the difference between the tone-colour of a number of orchestral violins in unison and that of a solo violin, says very truly that

"in a violin concerto it undoubtedly gives the soloist a somewhat greater chance of 'standing out' from the string ensemble, though, on occasion, the repetition of a simple solo phrase by the orchestral violins has had an almost comic effect, as if they were saying 'this is how it ought really to sound.'"

The Beethoven Concerto is a sublime object-lesson on this point, inasmuch as that contingency never happens. Here, for instance, the solo violin takes up the theme from the clarinets, and gives it in a region to which the orchestral violins do not happen to mount. (In the recapitulation Beethoven gives it an extreme height and brings it down to normal regions with such a *portamento* as only a solo player can do.) Now comes the expanded counter-statement in the minor. This is, indeed, entrusted to the orchestral violins, and a wonderful background they make with their melody to the ornamental figures of the solo violin, which does not take up the melody until we reach No. 5, where it has the A sharps (as they now have become) and some ornamentations of its own. After this has been expanded to a brilliant conclusion, the orchestral strings have No. 6 very quietly, and here again the solo violin, instead of competing with them in

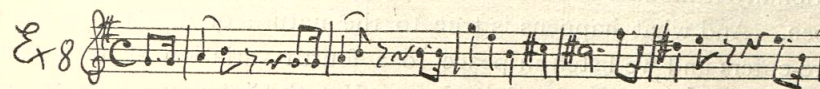
sustained melody, soars aloft in vast ramifications of ornament, while the great melody which was originally so short and terse expands in rising sequences. A climax is reached, and the solo violin broadens out on the basis of harmonies forming a cadence which appears to be ending in the conventional shake, which in practically every one of Mozart's Concertos ushers in the re-entry of the orchestra. But below this shake the rhythmic drum figure appears with the most mysterious modulations that have yet occurred.

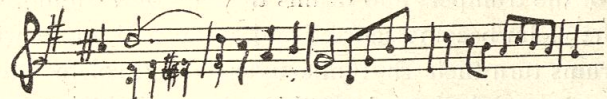


Above this profound harmonic cloud the shake rises and eventually gathers itself into a rush downwards and upwards over a long penultimate chord, leading to the re-entry of the orchestra. And now the orchestra bursts in with the crashing theme (Ex. 3) which, it will be remembered, began in a foreign key, and which accordingly now begins in F. With a boldness and simplicity which was probably mistaken by earlier critics for mere stupidity, the orchestra calmly proceeds with the whole of the original *tutti* from this point onwards. Hence we have once more the whole Second Subject, this time with its drum taps in the violins, followed by its expanded counter-statement in the minor. As if to emphasise the spaciousness of all this repetition, this counter-statement is given *fortissimo*, and continues unabridged through the appearance of Example 5, still *fortissimo*. Here, however, there is a sudden twist in the harmony which produces one of those dramatic consequences that can happen only when the ground has been thus thoroughly prepared. The rest of the *tutti* finds itself diverted into the key of C major, than which there is no key more contradictory to that of D major in which the Concerto is written. Accordingly, in C major the last theme (Ex. 6) enters, still *fortissimo*, until, as at the end of the opening *tutti*, there is a sudden hush; and in this profoundly paradoxical key of C major the solo violin mounts upwards with its immense introductory passage. Just as one would expect it to be closing into the first theme it pauses on a solitary expectant note. A vast distance below the basses enter, and suddenly we are in B minor beginning a development of the First Subject. The fourth bar of the theme is passed through several keys, always accompanied by the drum figure, until at last both it and the drum figure diminish to quavers, bringing us to a very deliberate settling down in G minor. And here, accompanied by no theme except the drum figure (given in succession by the horns and the bassoons, and lastly by the trumpets and drums), the violin has an entirely new *cantabile* which, as I said at the outset, is in a vein of the tenderest pathos.

With the entry of the trumpets and drums the key of D minor is reached, and the phrases of the violin become shorter and more and more wistful, while the trumpets and drums turn their rhythmic figure into a solemn steady tread. At last even this ceases, and there is nothing but a holding note of breathless anticipation as the solo violin mounts upwards in chromatic arpeggios, until the rhythmic figure re-asserts itself in different parts of the orchestra, which suddenly bursts out in full and gives the whole first sentence in the tonic *fortissimo*. It continues triumphantly with the transition theme (Ex. 2) which the violin takes up and carries now through some new harmonic regions in such a way as finally to settle down upon its preparations for the Second Subject. From this point the recapitulation is quite regular, until the re-entry of the orchestra with its crashing theme in a foreign key (Ex. 3). This last orchestral *tutti* leads to the cadenza. Many a clever cadenza occupying the place of a symphonic coda has ruined the work in which its virtuoso composer has introduced it; but Joachim's cadenzas are the work of a classical composer, and they combine the extempore quality which the cadenza ought to have *ex hypothesi* with the structural features which its position in a symphonic design demands. Joachim begins his cadenza with the rhythmic drum figure, continues with the transition theme (Ex. 3), and contrives to make a very effective development of the Second Subject in the triplet rhythm of the accompaniment which the solo violin had given to it while the orchestra was playing it in the minor, a treatment which secures it against any effect of forestalling its quiet appearance at the end of the cadenza on the second lowest strings of the instrument when the orchestra re-enters. The sublime calm of the First Movement of the Concerto reaches its serenest height when the last theme (Ex. 6) is given out quietly by the bassoon and answered in its highest regions by the solo violin, bringing the gigantic movement to an end in five bars of a terse crescendo.

In the slow movement we have one of the three cases achieved by Beethoven (and by no one else except in some of the sublime masterpieces of pure choral music) where throughout the design there is no change of key beyond the local modulations of a single melody. The other two cases are the slow movements of the *Sonata Appassionata* and the trio in B flat, Opus 97. The form is that of a theme with variations; and in the present instance the theme, in spite of the rich modulations between its third and sixth bars, is practically a single strain, with a characteristic expansion produced by echoing its last two bars—





There are other differences between this movement and the two other examples I have mentioned, but the point in all three cases is that a strict set of variations, confined to a melody with none but its own local modulations and with no change from major to minor and no change of time, constitutes a scheme in which there is no action, or, at all events, which is in so dreamlike a state of repose that it is impossible to bring the movement to any conclusion except by means of a dramatic interruption. I have referred to the expression of this kind of dreamlike ecstasy in choral music, where indeed with the aid of some mystic religious text the vision can come to a natural conclusion; and Beethoven in his later instrumental works, notably the last quartets, was able to design gigantic slow movements in this mood with certain devices which are equivalent to just enough action to allow the design to complete itself. In other words, he found that a set of variations on a slow and solemn theme could, without radically or too dramatically changing its rhythm, develop the kind of energy that would enable him to construct a coda. At present this was not his intention, and the whole point of this slow movement is that it cannot end. The theme with its touching broken rhythms and its rich local modulations is given out by the muted strings. Then the solo violin enters with a dreamlike accompaniment to the theme in the wind instruments. This constitutes a complete variation. In a second variation the solo violin continues the accompaniment with an increasingly florid movement, while the theme is heard in a lower octave. Then the full orchestra (as reduced and muted throughout the slow movement) restates the theme very simply but with the fullest possible tone and harmony. This constitutes the third variation. And now occurs something unique in the history of musical form. The violin re-enters on the last chord with some dreamy arabesques, and without the slightest change of key settles down to an entirely new melody, a single broad phrase beginning as follows—

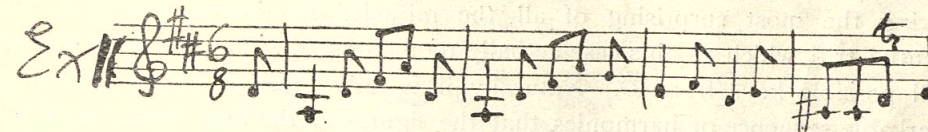


which slowly comes to the final trill of a long drawn cadence. This trill behaves like all the cadential trills in this Concerto:—that is to say, instead of ending conventionally it mounts aloft and leaves us awhile in doubt as to what is going to happen. And what happens is true to the nature of dreams, for the main theme re-enters and we listen in peace to a fourth variation as if nothing had interrupted the normal course of the form. Yet the interruption is not without

its results, for with the last bar of this variation another and still calmer new theme appears, connected with the main theme by the rhythmic figure in the horns—



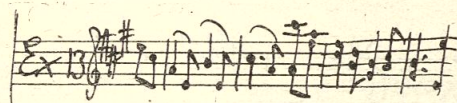
and this new theme leads back to the other one (Ex. 9) with still more serene colouring. Then again Example 10 sets the rhythm swinging in its own impressively final way, until at last, as the violin slowly mounts aloft, fragments of the main theme (Ex. 8) are heard in the muted horns and strings, while the violin in extreme heights dreams of the figure of the first variation. Nothing can be really final in a movement so ethereal and so static as this *larghetto* has been from the outset: there is only one way to prove that the vision is true, and that is to awaken in the light of common day and enjoy that light with the utmost vigour and zest. Accordingly the orchestra breaks in with a purposely conventional modulation to the dominant of D. The violin extemporises a cadenza and plunges into a finale, beginning with one of those drastic rondo themes with which Beethoven loves to shock the Superior Person (or would if he had time to think of him)—



With all its light-heartedness and comparative simplicity of form the Finale is the truthful outcome of its sublime antecedents. To complain that it is not the finest movement in the Concerto is to make the mistake exposed a considerable time ago by Plato when he derided the argument that "since purple is the most beautiful colour, and the eyes the most beautiful feature, therefore in every statue the eyes ought to be painted purple." In no art-form is it so constantly a mistake to expect the last part to be the "finest" as in the concerto form. To find the *right* finale to a scheme so subtle and delicate as that of a classical concerto is of itself a crowning stroke of genius. And there is no finale which more boldly and accurately gives the range, so to speak, of the whole as this most naïvely humorous of rondos. Besides its first theme, we must quote the transition-theme with the pendulous introductory notes from which witticisms are to arise on its later occurrences—



the main theme of the First Episode or Second Subject in dialogue between the violin and the orchestra—



and the pathetic child-like Second Episode with its fully formed melody in two parts, each of which is repeated by the bassoon.



As in many of Beethoven's finales, the main form of the movement is carried through with a rather noticeable economy of development, in order to throw into relief the full proportions of his coda, which in some cases is as long as the whole of the rest of the movement. In the present case the main form, though simple, takes up a good deal of room; but the coda, even if we did not allow for the cadenza which Beethoven has left to the player to extemporise, is considerably larger than any other section of the movement, and begins by working the most surprising of all the miracles Beethoven works on the cadential trill, which in this case actually modulates to A flat, the most remote of all possible keys from D. Naturally it is only through a very wide and remarkable sequence of harmonies that the figures of the first theme can work their way back from this key to the tonic. This done, there is a delightful dialogue on the first theme between the oboe and the violin, and a glorious final climax in which the violin shows its command of the whole orchestra by being able to silence the fullest and most irrepressible outbursts again and again with its light arpeggios and scales.

Interval of ten minutes.

III. RECITATIVE AND ARIA for Soprano, with Violin Obligato and Orchestra, from *Idomeneo* - - - - - Mozart

MADAME LUCY ROMAIN.

Violin—MISS JELLY D'ARANYI.

Recitative.

Ch'io me scordi di te?
Che a lui mi doni puoi consigliarmi?
E puoi voler che in vita . . . Ah no.
Sarebbe il viver mio di morte assai peggior.
Venga la morte, intrepida l'attendo.
Ma, ch'io possa struggermi ad altra face,
Ad altr'oggetto donar g'affetti miei,
Come tentarlo? Ah! di dolar morei.

Rondo.

Non temer, amato bene,
Per te sempre il cuor sara.
Piu non reggo a tante pene.
L'alma mia mancando va.
Tu sospiri? o duol funesto!
Pensa almen, che istante e questo!
Non mi posso, oh Dio! spiegar.
Stelle barbare, stelle spietate!
Perche mai tanto rigor?
Alme belle, che vedete.
Le mie pene in tal momento,
Dite voi, s'egual tormento
Puo soffrir un fido cuor?

Idomeneus, King of Crete, in peril of death through shipwreck vowed to Poseidon to offer up in sacrifice the first human being that met him if he came safely to land. His prayer was granted, but the first man that met him was his own son Idamantes. With a desperate hope of evading his vow Idomeneus is sending Idamantes away to Argos with Electra, the daughter of Agamemnon; and the present scene is the parting of Idamantes and Ilia, a princess of the conquered city of Troy. Mozart inserted this scene in a later version of his great *opera seria*; and still later, in 1786, he wrote an equally beautiful new setting of the scene with pianoforte obligato instead of the violin. In the later version the speaker is Idamantes throughout, but in the recitative of this earlier version I have had to make a slight cut, corresponding to what Mozart did himself in the later version, instead of following the modern vocal scores which give the singer an inextricable mixture of the parts of Ilia and Idamantes. In

both versions a notable point is Mozart's treatment of the passage "tu sospiri," in which the obligato instrument speaks for Ilia who is herself beyond speech.

I give a rough prose translation.

Recitative.

And shall I forget thee? Canst ask me to give myself to her, and shall I still wish to live? Ah no, my life would be far worse than death. Let death come. I await it without fear. But if I could long for another flame and give my love to another object, how should I attempt this? Ah, I shall die of grief.

Rondo.

Fear not, beloved, my heart will ever be thine. No longer could I withstand such torments; my soul faints. Thou sighest? Oh, fatal grief! Think what this moment means! Alas! I cannot explain myself. Tyrannical, merciless stars, why so harsh? Generous souls who see my sufferings in this moment, say, can a faithful heart endure such torments?

IV. CONCERTO for Violin and Violoncello with Orchestra, Op. 102 *Brahms*

Violin—MISS JELLY D'ARANYI.

Violoncello—MR ARTHUR WILLIAMS.

Allegro.

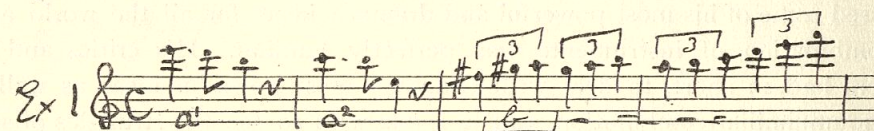
Andante.

Allegro non troppo.

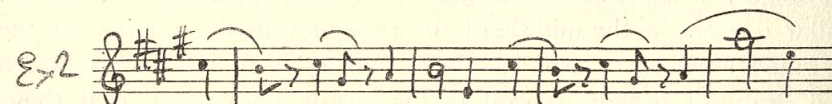
An important work for an unfamiliar combination of instruments is always at a disadvantage; mainly for the reasons which make the combination unfamiliar. There are no important duets for violin and violoncello in existence, and there is an inherent strangeness in the sound of this combination of extreme members of the same family with no middle part to bridge the gap. But the strangeness is not an absurdity, such as the combination of a violin and a double-bass would be. It is, when properly handled, a powerful stimulus to the musical imagination alike of listeners, players and composers. When Brahms brought the whole of the ripeness of his experience to the handling of this combination together with an orchestra in the last of his orchestral works, the novelty for many years completely puzzled even those critics who took an official attitude of apostleship towards his works. The

explanation of the difficulty is simple enough. Brahms did not make the new work a systematic display of the charms of the new combination, but simply expressed some of his most powerful and dramatic ideas, for all the world as if the combination of instruments was perfectly familiar. His critics and his admirers had, in short, to deal with Brahms's most powerful ideas as well as with the unfamiliar combination, and it is pathetic to see the struggles of such a critic as Hanslick with this excursion beyond the lines laid down by him in his apostleship. The most familiar features of Brahms's way of developing themes, as for instance in the middle of the finale where the phrases of the heroic middle episode are in their restatement dramatically interrupted by echoes through which the solo instruments are heard with their own ornamentation, similar devices in the middle of the slow movement, and the terseness of the slow movement as a whole,—these and other equally normal features impressed Brahms's friends as well as his hostile critics just as if they were technical immaturities. There is no other explanation for this than the fact that everybody expected in a modern double concerto to hear as much of the violoncello as if there were no violin and as much of both as if there were no orchestra. In the meantime Brahms did as Mozart and Beethoven always did—he treated his orchestra symphonically. Accordingly the orthodox complaint became, firstly, that the solo parts were enormously difficult; secondly, that it was impossible to hear them; and thirdly, that there was not nearly enough of them. As for the pathos and the poetry of the work, all this general disappointment made it out of the question to speculate whether such qualities existed at all. It is to be hoped that at this distance of time there may be less difficulty in taking the work as it really comes. Anyone who has made a study of musical first impressions in general and of concertos in particular knows at once that the complaints typified above are illusions. If the work is of a loosely-knit texture, the composer can thicken his score almost with impunity. For instance, the Dvořák violoncello concerto (about which I was able a short time ago to tell such a pretty story of Brahms's generous admiration) is, on a moderate computation, twice as heavily orchestrated as this, the most difficult of Brahms's concertos; and the truth is that Brahms's thickest accompaniments in this double concerto are written with scrupulous economy, whereas Dvořák's are absolutely reckless. But with a loosely-knit work many points may escape the listener without being missed in the sequel. In works such as that of Brahms, every theme and every inner part has its results in later chapters of the story. Therefore it is as well for us to have a good number of quotations for our present analysis. The dominance of the solo violin, the still greater dominance of the violoncello, and finally, the wonderful solidity of harmony and wide compass of the united couple, is demonstrated in the Introduction. First the orchestra throws out a

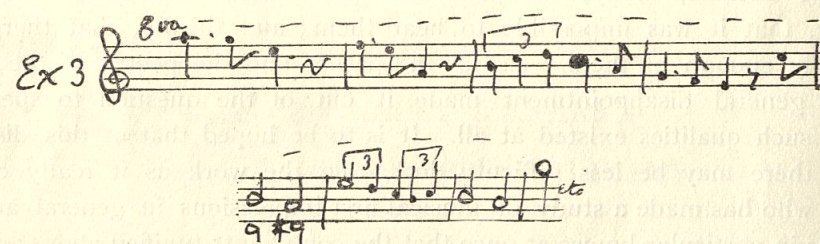
challenge in the shape of the figures of the First Subject on the dominant (that is to say, the threshold of the key)—



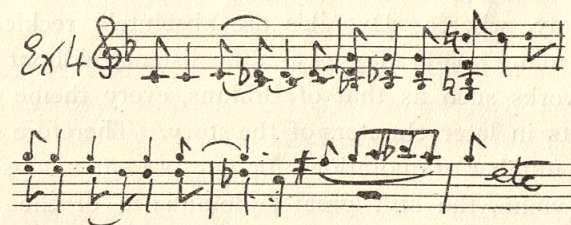
The last three notes of the orchestral phrase are instantly taken up by the violoncello, entirely unaccompanied, in a most impassioned kind of recitative. Then the wood-wind enter gently in the major with the first phrase of the Second Subject, one of Brahms's tenderest themes—



This time the solo violin takes up the last three notes, at first meditatively. It is soon joined by the violoncello and works up to a climax of extraordinary fulness of harmony, ending in an uprush of scales and chords leading to the entry of the whole orchestra with the First Subject launched full on the tonic into the course of a mighty concerto *ritornello*—

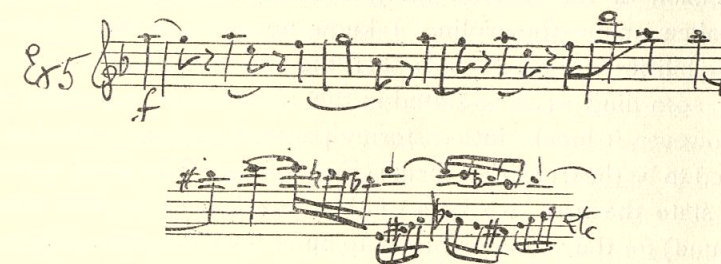


Brahms proceeds simply and broadly, but in a style which does not make any confusion between the lines of a concerto and those of a symphony, though he boldly strikes out into a foreign key in preparation for his Second Subject. The passage of preparation with its fierce syncopations is the most impassioned theme in the whole work—



And when the theme of the Second Subject bursts out in F major (another

key from that for which it is destined in the solo), it continues in a storm of passion. No worse mistake in interpretation could be made than for this orchestral version to be treated on the lines of the solo. I must quote the theme again as it occurs here, on account of its continuation—



Very soon it has passed back to A minor with abrupt questionings, and a new theme bursts out which will be heard again in the Coda—



With this the orchestra comes to its conclusion, and the violoncello impetuously enters with a new development of the first theme—

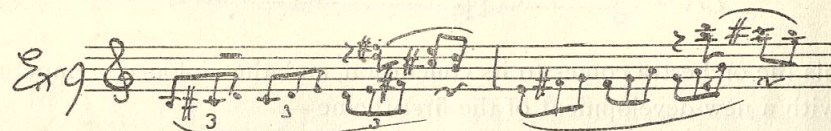


answered after four bars by the violin. (Always it will be found that the original first bar of Example 1 (a^1) is answered sooner or later by the second bar (a^2) whatever new developments have happened in between). The two instruments develop this rapidly and passionately to a climax in which they discuss the second phrase of Example 3 (those very striking minims in its fifth bar), and after this they settle down to a spacious and entirely new transition theme in dialogue—



Starting with the utmost energy and drifting towards the orthodox key of the Second Subject (C major), this yields to a melting mood; and the preparation

for the Second Subject, with the figures of the first theme tenderly reiterated in the oboe and flute through the interlacing arpeggios of the solo instruments, broken by an impressive silence in the middle, would be the most pathetic passage in the concerto but for the fact it leads to the still more pathetic expanded version of the Second Subject announced by the violoncello and eventually taken up by the violin. I know no more powerful instance of the dramatic possibilities of concerto form than the way in which this melody changes its character according as it is stated in the *ritornello* or expanded in the solo. Suddenly, however, it breaks into a stormy passage leading to what in the *ritornello* appeared to be the transition theme (Example 4). The violin and violoncello have but to state the first two bars of this (which they do with extraordinary fulness of sound) for the whole orchestra to burst in at the same height of passion as it had done in the *ritornello*, and it comes to an even greater climax, being under the stress of plunging into a somewhat distant key for the development. In the midst of the storm the two solo instruments enter together with the first theme and proceed to work out the figure of triplet crochets which characterises its third bar. This leads to a mysterious figure at twice the pace with a characteristic change of accent in the wood-wind—

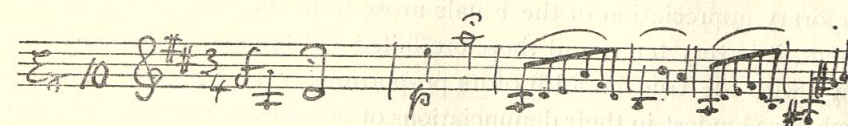


(I may mention, as a sample of the intelligence which is sometimes brought to bear upon the interpretation of Brahms, that at a performance in Budapest I and my colleagues found that someone had corrected this "discrepancy" of rhythm in the band parts!) Soon the syncopated theme reappears in a pathetic calm in the orchestra, while the solo instruments weave round it a network of trills. Before long the calm becomes a stiff breeze, and the breeze a storm, through which the first theme cries out angrily in the wood-wind. Suddenly the storm ceases, and the syncopations of Example 4 soar upwards in the violoncello and violin through remote modulations in a pathetic passage which the most disappointed detractors of this work on its first appearance admitted to be sublime. We are on the threshold of the tonic, and the violin and violoncello come back to the uprush of scales and chords (the chords now alternating with the orchestra) with which they ended the Introduction.

And so the Recapitulation now begins in the tonic in the orchestra, just as the big *ritornello* did. Its second sentence, however, is delivered by the solo players, and leads straight to the solo transition theme of Example 8. Slight changes in the course of the harmonies keep the music in the key of A. There is the same pathetic passage of preparation with its impressive bar of silence.

Then the expanded version of the Second Subject is given out high up by the violin, the violoncello having a new flowing accompaniment. In due course the fatal syncopated theme evokes the stormy orchestra which now carries the latter part of the *ritornello* to its greatest climax, which owes much of its power to the fact that its last theme (Ex. 6, which has not been heard since its first appearance) is now combined with the figures of the First Subject (Ex. 1). This brings the violin and violoncello back upon the scene in tragic passion with the same statement as that of their first entry after the *ritornello*. There is something extraordinarily sonorous in their appearance here in octaves, and still more in their boldly coalescing in unison as the passion yields to a tragic calm with a *ritardando*. From this they rouse themselves with the syncopated figure (Ex. 4), and this powerful tragedy is consummated by the transformation of the Second Subject itself into a final outburst of indignation, the theme being given in *pizzicato* chords in the minor, while the solo instruments emphasise the bass of the harmony by a stormy figure of their own. With a final allusion to their transition theme (Ex. 8) the solo instruments bring down the full orchestra upon the last chords.

The Slow Movement begins with a signal of two notes on the horns answered in the upper part of the scale and in a high octave by the wood-wind. On the four notes thus delivered, the solo violin and violoncello immediately build one of the broadest and most swinging melodies ever written—



This is worked out as a complete tune in two parts with repeats. The second part is peculiarly gorgeous in its deep harmonies, and its climax is heightened on repetition. Then without further development or pause the Middle Episode enters in the somewhat remote key of F. It begins with a very quiet melody for the wood-wind with a strongly characteristic reedy tone—



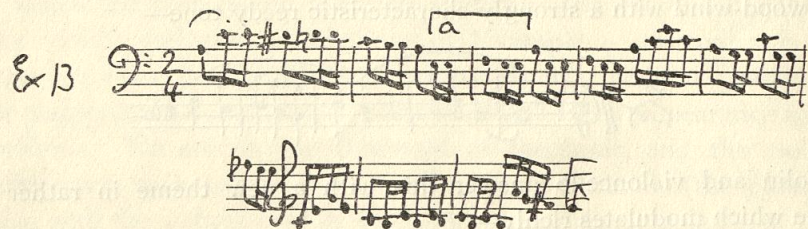
The violin and violoncello answer this with a new theme in rather wistful dialogue which modulates richly—



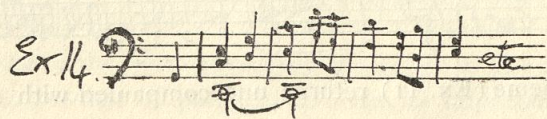
Then the reedy theme (Ex. 11) returns unaccompanied with semiquaver move-

ment by the solo instruments and expanded by very characteristic echoes of the last two notes of each phrase in *pizzicato* chords. A very short but far-reaching passage moves in a few steps through remote keys, when suddenly the first two notes of the introductory signal are heard in the trumpets. The solo instruments respond to them, and in a notoriously difficult but very majestic passage float down again to the whole first melody, which on repetition they expand in a simple but surprising way which will not escape notice. When the great melody has come to an end there is a short and peaceful coda in which the two middle themes (Examples 11 and 12) are heard simultaneously. As this reaches an exquisite dying fall, the figures of the first theme come surging back again until the solo instruments rise up on to the answer to the opening signal (that is to say, the second bar of Example 10), to which the trumpets reply quietly with the first bar; and so, with the majestic and difficult returning passage on the tonic chord, the Slow Movement ends in a golden glow.

From the point of view of first impressions, the Finale of this double concerto commits the most deadly crime possible to a great work—it shows a sense of humour. Let us admit the fact, and let us accept the still more serious fact that the first theme is playful, which is not always the same thing as humorous. This does not prevent it from giving rise at the end of the movement to one of the most pathetic passages in the whole work. Apart from the humour and the unusual combination of instruments, the chief difficulty in contemporary appreciation of the Finale arose from the fact that, like the Slow Movement, it is very terse, and therefore failed to impress the listeners of thirty years ago with the true breadth of its proportions. (It is an odd thing that the critics who are loudest in their denunciations of unnecessary length are always the first to grumble that a terse statement is inadequate.) The form of this broadly designed but short Finale is the clearest of rondo-types. In Example 13 I give the first phrase, calling attention to the figure I have marked (*a*), for the sake of its extraordinary consequences in the coda—



The First Episode or Second Subject is a full-toned aspiring melody—



the rhythm of which expands in a very remarkable way as it proceeds, compelling Brahms temporarily to change his time to 3/4 and 4/4, until he abruptly breaks it off and leads back to the first theme. This now gets no further than its first phrase, after which it is playfully laughed into disappearance until nothing is left but rhythmic fragments amid a silence. Suddenly out of these rhythmic fragments arises a fiercely triumphant new theme in a key compounded of F major and D minor with a preponderance of D minor—



With the aid of an angry alternating second part, which I do not quote, this leads to a counter-statement by the orchestra, interrupted by characteristic echoes of the last two notes of its phrases. (These echoes form the only discoverable ground for the allegation that the structure of this very spacious middle episode is disjointed. As a matter of fact, the device is one of those bold simplicities which give the scale of design and secure that it shall continue to surprise by its breadth and flow long after we have known the whole work by heart.) Then follows a calm swinging tune in F major given by the woodwind, with a delicate accompaniment of rising arpeggios in the solo instruments (derived from those echoes)—



They work it up vigorously on their own account, and it leads to a gorgeously bright and soft version of Example 16 in D major with the syncopations smoothed away. Then Example 15 bursts in again. Its angry sequel is now used to lead us back to the tonic, and the rondo theme (Ex. 13) re-enters in due course, followed by all its accessories. This now goes through a wide range of key before alighting upon the Second Subject (Ex. 14) triumphant in the tonic major. The Second Subject now leads immediately to the Coda, which is in the major throughout, and begins in a slower tempo with a calm version of the first theme (Ex. 13), from the third bar of which arises a most touching stream of melody in dialogue between voices of different octaves outlined in arpeggios by the solo instruments—



It is the privilege of works in sonata form that they can, without weakening or falsifying tragic issues, bring their finales to a happy ending. The tragedy of the first movement has been told without flinching, but told within the quarter of an hour which contains symphonic movements on a large scale. Within that quarter of an hour we have not time to see enough of the world in which such tragedies take place; and we are allowed to see its glorious melodies, its humours, and its capacities for happiness, in the other movements. And so the whole concerto leads up to the wonderful tenderness of this last page which finally breaks into joyful triumph, and brings the great work to an end.

The Concerts of the Reid Orchestra will continue in their next season (1920-1921) to develop further along the lines of illustrating important tendencies in musical thought, classical and modern. With increasing public support it should be possible to increase the number of masterpieces by living composers in our programmes, and this without diminishing the number or proportion of classicals, familiar and neglected. Eminent solo artists will, as hitherto, be engaged with special regard to special compositions: it is hoped, for example, to arrange for a performance of Sir Edward Elgar's Violin Concerto by Mr Albert Sammons, and of Granville Bantock's *Sappho* (the entire work, from which the Prelude was given this year) by Miss Denne Parker.