

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS

SEASON 1965-66

Fourth Concert

REID ORCHESTRA

Leader: DR. JOHN FAIRBAIRN

Conductor:

SIDNEY NEWMAN

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY
CHOIR

Soloists:

ELIZABETH SIMON

JOHN MITCHINSON

MARGARET DUCKWORTH

JOHN HOLMES

USHER HALL, EDINBURGH
WEDNESDAY, 1ST DECEMBER, 1965

AT 7.30 P.M.

PROGRAMME ONE SHILLING

FIFTIETH SEASON
of the
REID ORCHESTRA

THIS concert is presented in tribute to the memory of Sir DONALD FRANCIS TOVEY, Reid Professor of Music 1914-1940, Founder and Conductor of the Reid Symphony Orchestra 1916-1940.

Historical Note

In 1890-91 three important developments for the advancement of music in Scotland occurred almost simultaneously, largely it would seem as a result of the patient behind-the-scene negotiations of the Scottish Musical Society — first the establishment of the Athenaeum School of Music that has become the R.S.A.M. of today, secondly the inauguration of the Scottish Orchestra concerts to serve Glasgow and Edinburgh with regular winter seasons of orchestral concerts, which led eventually to the foundation of the permanent Scottish National Orchestra in 1949, and thirdly on the appointment of Professor Niecks to the Reid Chair at Edinburgh University, the institution of a Faculty of Music and of systematic teaching for degrees in music. Now the one and only assurance that Edinburgh seems to have possessed prior to 1891 of regular periodic symphony concerts of any stature was that provided by General Reid in his will (of 1806) directing the occupant of the Chair he instituted 'to cause a concert of music to be performed on the 13th of February, being my birthday'. Thus began the Reid Memorial Concert first given in 1841. For a satisfying musical diet a year is a long time to wait between meals, but thanks to Professor Sir Herbert Oakeley who after three concerts with an ad hoc orchestra (Clara Schumann was the soloist at one of these) invited Charles Halle and his orchestra from Manchester in 1869, the occasion developed into a two or three day festival given annually by the Halle Orchestra until 1891. Oakeley had reason to be proud of the list of works performed at these seventy-two orchestral festival concerts at which so many of the great classics and romantic works received their first performance in Scotland. But with the Scottish Orchestra concerts established Niecks rightly conceived that his primary responsibility lay in the provision of a series of some six concerts of a special character spread over the winter semester, and after 1893 he discontinued the annual Reid orchestral concert to concentrate his financial resources on these distinguished Historical Concerts of chamber music, solo recitals, cantatas, smaller orchestral forms, etc. This series continued by Tovey with changed emphasis has now become the annual series of eight or more University Chamber Music Concerts.

PROGRAMME

1. SYMPHONY IN C MAJOR (K.551)

Mozart
(1756-1791)

Allegro vivace
Andante cantabile
Menuetto: Allegro
Molto Allegro

The title 'Jupiter' was first applied sometime after Mozart's death. It is of no intrinsic significance, except perhaps that it reflects early popular feeling that a bare label of key and number was inadequate to stand for an experience of such splendour and power. The festive splendour of the first movement alone might justify the dignity of this title if we consider that an innocently naughty little opera tune might escape the lips of the Thunderer as easily as Athene sprang from his head — the more so since that little tune prompts the strong and solid stuff of intricate contrapuntal development that lies at the heart of this great movement. But it is more probable that it was the sublime strength and the masterly ordered contrapuntal complexity of the finale that prompted the name — a finale displayed in sonata form but more resplendent with fugal devices than almost any symphonic fugue one could name. It might equally well have been appropriate to dub this the 'Credo' symphony—for the four-note motto theme of this finale is in fact that ancient 'credo' formula which is to be found in the finale of Haydn's Symphony in D, No. 13 (of 1763), and which Mozart himself employed throughout the creed of the F major Mass (K.192) of 1774, in the Sanctus of the so-styled 'Credo Mass' in C (K.258) of 1776, and yet again in his B flat Symphony of 1778. It is a cruciform figure, but it would be wrong in this symphony to see in it any particularised article of faith — for it is simply a musical declaration of and expansion of the strength and the will and the joy of confident faith and optimism, as contrasted with the inescapable pathos of the contemporary G minor symphony. And if one exults in the great coda where all happens at once in a synthesis (in quintuple counterpoint) of its five definitive themes, as earlier in the great succession of explosive strettis (the four-fold collisional overlay of themes by themselves) one must wonder no less at the mystical effect of the main theme stealing beyond and above these like the sweet influence of the Pleiades.

Whilst the F major Andante is basically a movement of reposeful beauty adorned with florid lines, yet it wells with a warmth of emotional feeling and with moments of pathetic stress that are continually flooding to the surface. The Minuet is of so positively optimistic a nature that one cannot help a feeling of surprise that this should be achieved by one of Mozart's most characteristically chromatic conceptions, which embraces no less a quite exceptional poignancy in the woodwind ensemble; and whilst the trio entrancingly makes a formal cadence the recurrent *point d'appui* for its polite phrases it should not be overlooked that the sterner declaration of its second phase does in fact already acclaim the main theme of the finale.

INTERVAL

2. SYMPHONY IN D MINOR No. 9 (Op. 125)
("The Choral Symphony")

Beethoven
(1770-1827)

1. Allegro ma non troppo, un poco maestoso.
2. Scherzo: Molto vivace, alternating with presto.
3. Adagio molto e cantabile, alternating with Andante moderato.
4. Finale: Presto alternating with quotations from previous movements leading to Allegro assai. Resumption of Presto and intervention of Baritone Solo followed by Chorale Finale (setting of Schiller's "Ode to Joy").

The main work of the composition of this supremely great symphony occupied the year 1823, but many ideas for its various movements (and indeed for another symphony) had occurred to Beethoven from as early as 1812, and quite clearly it was much in his mind in the years 1817-23. The idea of setting Schiller's "Ode to Joy" had occurred to him as a young man of twenty-three. Even in the summer of 1823 the setting of that Ode was a separate project, for at that time he sketched a theme for a D minor symphonic finale, which he used with some modification to an entirely different purpose in the A minor Quartet (Op. 132). Once he was convinced that the Ode could be associated with the fundamental experience of the three great symphonic movements he had composed, he had to wrestle with the problem as to how to bring about an effective and compelling transition into this song of ecstasy. It was all nonsense of Wagner to claim (for his own satisfaction) that Beethoven hereby proclaimed the ultimate inadequacy of purely instrumental music *per se* and the necessity of giving it the articulate freedom of the human voice. The moment at which Beethoven sets the whole train of events in motion with an inevitable outcome is the moment that he hurls a cataclysm of cacophony at us following the reposeful ending of the sublimely beautiful Adagio, and answers this intrusion by instrumental recitative.

Beethoven does not set the whole of Schiller's Ode. He uses the first eight lines of each of the first three stanzas in continuity, and uses the final quatrains of three stanzas in the order of his own selection to make those great contrasting movements, the tenor's heroic song of victory, and the choral song of adoration.

In the first phase of these great variations, the ecstasy of this joy is caught in turn by soli and chorus.

Then follows the heroic march, with Tenor Solo and Male Chorus:

"Glad as Suns his will sent flying
through the vast abyss of space,"

which culminates in a gigantic double fugue, which having run its race yields to the triumphant re-entry of the first song.

Now a new theme proclaims Man's faith in a loving Father and the instinct of adoration.

The two themes are then combined in a classical double fugue of overwhelming energy. Thereafter the mood alternates between the childlike joy of singing in simple roundelay, moments when the spirit of reverence and adoration sweep across the mind, and a frenzy of joy that can only blaze its way to the peaks of exhaustion.

S.T.M.N.

Early in his second year at Edinburgh (November 1915) Tovey was invited to conduct the Eleventh Annual Orchestral Concert of the Edinburgh Musicians Benevolent Society, given that year in the Empire Palace Theatre in aid of the Fund for British Prisoners of War. He was astonished to find that for this occasion a local orchestra of ninety-four players could be mustered, and that despite the war-time conditions. In those days several theatres maintained large bands of over twenty players, cinemas employed a considerable number of musicians, and the Edinburgh teaching studios could boast a considerable body of independent professionals. Tovey saw the interests of the University, the community, and the professional musicians to be one — a live environment of music-making where music was to be studied, and an expanding opportunity for rewarding experience through collaborative indigenous enterprise for musicians and music-lovers alike. In 1916 he formed and began rehearsing the Reid Orchestra which gave its first series of four concerts in the Music Hall in May 1917. Thus began what for many, despite the vicissitudes of an orchestra growing into being, was a treasured golden quarter-of-a-century of profound illumination under a great and inspiring musician — enriched yet the more by the many great artist-friends invited here as soloists and guest conductors. His 'programme notes' were quarto booklets, veritable goldmines of wisdom and wit; that produced for his first performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony in March 1922 (with the Edinburgh Royal Choral Union and the English Singers as soloists) ran to 54 pages — price 1s.! They are known to the world now as republished in the thirties by the Oxford University Press in the six volumes of "Essays in Musical Analysis".

In 1924 the Reid Orchestra was constituted as a Friendly Society, supported by a body of subscribing Hon. Members and by the patronage of the Corporation and the University, and in a few years a considerable Endowment Trust Fund was publicly and privately subscribed. When war came in 1939 and Tovey was already incapacitated through illness, Dr. Mary Grierson (assistant-conductor) became responsible in collaboration with several guest conductors for the first two series of Saturday afternoon concerts. Wartime conditions and the then cosmopolitan character and responsibilities of Edinburgh brought new interest and much increased audiences, ultimately anything from 1200 to a sold-out Usher Hall, but national service, removals and deaths made the problem of finding the orchestral personnel increasingly difficult. When I succeeded as conductor in 1941 six players had to be brought to Edinburgh on whole time contract for the concert season; by 1945-6 this had risen to thirty-two, there being only thirty-six resident 'Reid members' left. The orchestra and its concerts had come through the war years with flying colours but this season was to prove the finale of the Reid Symphony Orchestra — albeit a glorious finale and a season of great activity with sixteen weekly popular concerts in addition to ten fortnightly symphony concerts, and others in Galashiels, Stirling and St. Andrews. And the public response was commensurate with the events — the soloists at the first four concerts were Jacques Thibaud, Casals, Solomon and Ginette Neveu. There followed a concert conducted by Sir Arthur Bliss, and then Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. But the funds of the organisation were not geared to this altogether different post-war economic position, and with only thirty-six resident members remaining, most theatre bands reduced to negligible size, and a sudden end to the musical decentralisation that Britain had enjoyed in the war years, the Reid Orchestra Society had to suspend activities, and a few years later was formally wound up.

For thirty years however the University music teaching had been framed around the Reid Orchestra and the chamber music which its personnel made possible. The University Court accordingly authorised and financed the continuance of rehearsals and concerts directed by the Reid Professor with such orchestral forces as remained available to him. Thus for some years these concerts (styled the University Orchestral Concerts) were given by the 'phoenix' chamber orchestra (or small symphonic orchestra) which preserved the Reid continuity but distinguishedly bore the distinction of 'no name'. Only when the terms of the Trust Deed of the Reid Orchestra Endowment Trust had been varied by the Court of Session permitting the application of that fund to the establishment of the Edinburgh Quartet in 1953 did the orchestra resume its rightful name of 'the Reid'.

The last twenty years have inevitably differed from the first thirty in many ways but there has been preserved a continuity of experienced players and the same fundamental ideals. Basically of the strength of a Haydn-Mozart Symphony Orchestra with a string section of twenty-six, it is varied considerably in size according to the programme, from a string orchestra to a total strength of about fifty-four for such events as Sibelius symphonies for example. Such forces are just adequate for the normal venue of these concerts today — the Reid School of Music; but one concert (and sometimes two) has for many years been given in the Usher Hall along with the University Musical Society Choir, and occasional special orchestral concerts in the Music Hall, and for these the orchestra is augmented as today to somewhere about seventy. Quite apart from a widening of the repertory in the field of twentieth century music, it has proved possible to do much that Tovey especially wished to see done, notably in the performance of well over three dozen of Haydn's finest symphonies. But what would perhaps have given Tovey even greater satisfaction would be the fact that the orchestra has been the means of bringing to and settling in Edinburgh a number of young professional artists distinguished in their enterprising work as soloists, ensemble players and teachers; and whatever the immediate advantages that may flow from the activities of the Reid Orchestra as promoted by the University (which includes the first introduction to Edinburgh as concerto-soloists of many now famous artists, such as Ralph Holmes and John Ogdon, for example) it is hoped and believed that the Reid continues to provide a stimulus and an opportunity for the musical profession in Edinburgh, and if it indirectly helps to make possible an increasing amount of stimulating and varied musical enterprise by others in this city it would be a reward that Tovey would have prized and a satisfaction to the promoters and the conductor of this orchestra.

S.T.M.N.

OTHER SPECIAL CONCERTS THIS SEASON

7th Concert, 17th February, MUSIC HALL, GEORGE STREET

REID MEMORIAL CONCERT

Violin: DAPHNE GODSON

Violoncello: JOAN DICKSON

OVERTURE: THE MAGIC FLUTE	- - - -	<i>Mozart</i>
CONCERTO FOR VIOLIN AND VIOLONCELLO Op. 102	- - - -	<i>Brahms</i>
SYMPHONY in C major	- - - -	<i>Schubert</i>

8th Concert, WEDNESDAY, 2nd March, USHER HALL.

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY CHOIR

Soloists:

Tenor: GERALD ENGLISH

Horn: IFOR JAMES

Pianoforte: COLIN KINGSLEY

Conductors:

SIDNEY NEWMAN

EDWARD HARPER

SYMPHONY No. 5 in D	- - - -	<i>Vaughan Williams</i>
"PSALMUS HUNGARICUS" for Tenor, Chorus and Orchestra	- - - -	<i>Kodaly</i>
SERENADE for Solo Tenor, Horn and Strings	- - - -	<i>Britten</i>
"THE RIO GRANDE" for Chorus and Orchestra	- - - -	<i>Constant Lambert</i>

*Tickets for both events from Messrs. Rae, Macintosh Ltd., 39 George Street,
Edinburgh.*