

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
ORCHESTRAL CONCERTS

SEASON 1954-55

Second Concert

REID
CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Leader : DR. JOHN FAIRBAIRN

Conductor : SIDNEY NEWMAN

ANNE CROWDEN

CHRISTOPHER MARTIN

REID SCHOOL OF MUSIC

THURSDAY, 4TH NOVEMBER, 1954

AT 7.30 P.M.

PROGRAMME : ONE SHILLING

PROGRAMME

I. SYMPHONY NO. 71 IN B FLAT

Haydn
(1732-1809)

Adagio—Allegro con brio
Adagio con Variazioni
Menuetto
Finale : Vivace

During recent years in this series of concerts, we have from time to time explored and revived a number of Haydn's earlier and little known (if not indeed entirely neglected) Symphonies. Besides selecting examples from among the first forty, we have devoted more particular attention to the especially fine works of the early 1770s which include those known as the Mercury, the Tragic, the Farewell and La Passione. Of the symphonies composed between 1769 and the end of 1773 (Nos. 40-53), we have in fact performed no less than nine. Those of the succeeding period of a dozen years or so (Nos. 54-81) with a few exceptions remain for the present somewhat inaccessible until the publication of the Complete Works, now in progress, closes this tantalising gap in our knowledge of Haydn. But, relying upon an early French edition (Le Duc) acquired by the Reid Library a year or two ago, we are able to offer our audience some examples from this period which deserve a place in the sun.

Of the two to be performed on this occasion, the earlier Symphony in A is undoubtedly the finer work. It has all the largeness of spirit of the mature composer of the Salomon Symphonies of the 1790s, though not the largeness of means or structure which he there employed. That work was given in Edinburgh last year by Dr. Gal with the Edinburgh Chamber Orchestra. The B flat No. 71 (scored for Flute, Oboe, Horns and Strings) inclines more to the manner of the *style galant*, though in its first movement there is enough of rugged strength to evoke subtle harmonic questionings which give thought for pause. The slow movement (theme, five variations and coda, with strings muted) does not carry the art of variation much beyond that of sensitive ornamental device, but yields some unusual colouring as in the second variation where flute and solo viola are in octaves against a pizzicato accompaniment and a single florid line of fiddle tone. The succeeding variation (soli viola and 'cello in a basso ostinato) and the trio of the Minuet (so adroit at buying an eightpenny phrase for sevenpence at every

double bar) afford other examples. The brilliant finale on second thoughts would have us believe it a rondo and on further thoughts anything but that. Those who catch the look behind its first smiling melody will be less surprised when later impish good humour gives way suddenly to a vein of gentle romance in "far-off flatted keys."

2. SINFONIA CONCERTANTE IN E FLAT, K 364 FOR VIOLIN AND VIOLA

Mozart
(1756-1791)

Allegro maestoso
Andante
Presto

The concerto for two or more solo instruments with orchestra was a genre of art more widely cultivated in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries than the modern concert repertoire would suggest. With this glorious and perfect example of Mozart's before us we can but deplore that two other comparable projects he made in this sphere at about the same date were never brought to fruition. The beautiful Concertante for four wind instruments (preserved to us in a rearranged version) written at Paris in 1778 was inspired by Mozart's experience of the Mannheim wind players and the horn virtuoso Punto. The Concerto for Flute and Harp was an elegant concession to Parisian tastes and to the Duc de Guines and his harping daughter. On his homeward journey whilst at Munich, Mozart began to compose a concerto for violin and pianoforte for Fränzl and himself. This was prompted by plans for inaugurating an "Academie des Amateurs" there like the one at Paris, but nothing came of the plan and Mozart abandoned the composition. We have no evidence that Mozart had any special occasion or particular artists in mind when he composed the Violin-Viola Concertante at Salzburg in 1779, but the experience prompted him to begin the composition of a Concertante in A for Violin, Viola and Violoncello which, alas! he abandoned after 130 bars or so. In both works the Viola is written in a lower key (in the present instance in D) and the instrument is intended to be tuned up the necessary interval. Modern players, however, generally prefer not to disturb the tuning and tension of their instrument for the slight advantage of gaining open string resonance and some easier fingerings.

Of the music itself, I propose on this occasion to write only with a conductor's baton.

INTERVAL

3. ADAGIO IN E FLAT FOR STRINGS

Mozart

(FROM THE DIVERTIMENTO IN B FLAT, K 287)

This Divertimento for Strings and two Horns was completed in February, 1777, immediately after the composition of the E flat Pinaoforte Concerto (K 271) performed at one of last year's concerts. It is, strictly speaking, chamber and not orchestral music, though we are left guessing as to whether the composer intended "Bass" to comprise Contrabass beside Violoncello. There is record of Mozart himself playing the work at his little "Haus-Academie" at Munich later the same year. Presumably he himself led, for he says "I played as though I were the finest fiddler in Europe."

4. SYMPHONY No. 64 IN A

Haydn

Allegro con spirito

Largo

Menuetto : Allegretto

Finale : Presto

Despite all the alternatives of *piano* and *forte*, the strongly ejaculated chords and the vivacious contrapuntal motif employed, the opening Allegro impresses one as being amongst the most florid of all Haydn's sonata-form movements. The tender freshness of its first little phrase gives the key to the spirit of the symphony as a whole. It may be doubted whether Haydn ever achieved a deeper intimacy than in this D major Largo where the thought so often hangs upon the point between speech and silence, yet both are embraced within the large span of the melody. Technical analysis may point to unusual phrase lengths here as in the Rondo Finale, but these are not "purposeful surprises" as they often are in Haydn's teasing moments, but symptomatic of the ease and freshness of his invention in this most lyrical symphony. The nearest approach to the spirit and form of this Finale that I can think of is that of the G Major No. 47 which we performed last year. But this is altogether the greater and more subtle achievement.

S. T. M. N.