



Mr. Delius's Pianoforte Concerto

The Musical Times, Vol. 48, No. 777. (Nov. 1, 1907), p. 739.

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subsequently personated Marcello in 'La Bohème' on October 8, and Scarpia in 'La Tosca' on October 10. Mr. Luppi has shown himself a good artist in several important parts. An interesting event was the début on the operatic stage on October 15 of the young Irish tenor Mr. John McCormack, as Turiddu. Other artists who should be mentioned are Mr. Zoffoli, Miss Ada Davies, and Madame Edna Thornton.

The conductors have been Mr. Panizza and Mr. Serafin, the latter a newcomer who has amply justified his engagement. The ensembles and stage mounting have been excellent.

MR. DELIUS'S PIANOFORTE CONCERTO.

Mr. Fritz Delius is a Yorkshireman—he was born at Bradford in 1863—and a composer whose creations are widely esteemed on the Continent, but who is well-nigh unknown in the land of his birth. His compositions include an opera, 'Koanga,' produced at Elberfeld in 1904; a symphonic poem, 'The dance of life,' played for the first time at Düsseldorf in the same year; 'Paris, Impressions de Nuit,' 'Sea-drift,' for baritone, solo, chorus and orchestra, Essen, 1906; symphonic poem 'Appalachia,' 1905, opera 'The village Romeo and Juliet,' 1907; and 'The Mass of Life,' for soli, chorus and orchestra, after Nietzsche.

Particular interest therefore attached to the first performance in this country, on October 22, at the Promenade Concerts, Queen's Hall, of Mr. Delius's Pianoforte concerto in C sharp minor. This work dates from 1897, but it has been revised recently. Constructed on the Liszt model, it is essentially modern in conception and expression. Its three separated movements are closely connected thematically, and no break is made between them in performance. On a first hearing the work conveys the impression that intimate acquaintance would be required fully to appreciate the significance of the music, albeit the style is sufficiently direct to at once stir the imagination of the listener and excite his admiration. The chief characteristics of the concerto are virility and strenuousness. Passionate passages deepen into poignancy, but a tranquil spirit ultimately prevails, and in the last movement the glorified treatment of the principal theme of the work seems to suggest triumph over adverse influences. The solo part was most brilliantly played by Mr. Theodor Szánto, a newcomer of whom we should hear more. The concerto received an enthusiastic reception.

London Concerts.

Several interesting orchestral concerts have recently taken place at Queen's Hall. Amongst them was that given by the New Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Mr. Thomas Beecham, on October 14, at which the soloist was the clever young violinist Jóska Szigeti. The most important of the orchestral works performed was Edouard Lalo's practically unknown Symphony in G minor, which, although not a great composition, is so clear in form, melodious in character, and musicianly, as to give much pleasure to the listener. At the same concert was heard Vincent d'Indy's symphonic legend 'The enchanted forest.' The music is imaginative and picturesque, but the thematic material is not very strong and is over developed. The concluding section, however, has poetic charm, and the finish is impressive and beautiful. Both these works, as well as Smetana's symphonic poem 'Sarka,' were admirably interpreted.

The most memorable concerts of the last month were those *In Memoriam* Edvard Grieg, which were conducted by Mr. Wood at Queen's Hall respectively on October 16 and 23. The former was opened by the first performance in England of the late composer's funeral march, written in 1866 in memory of his greatly esteemed friend Rikard Nordraak. This solemn music, played at the composer's own funeral, is a most dignified and characteristic composition, the opening section being particularly impressive and the *Trio* having a melody thoroughly Griegian in style. Subsequently there was brought to a first hearing in England an orchestral arrangement of Grieg's 'Old Norwegian Romance,' originally written for two pianofortes. This is not so attractive as

other works by the deceased musician, but it contains some pleasing passages and the scoring is picturesque. The other instrumental works were the early overture 'In Autumn,' the first 'Peer Gynt' suite, and the Pianoforte concerto, the solo part of the last-named being superbly rendered by Miss Johanne Stockmarr. A number of Grieg's songs were sympathetically sung by Mr. Anton Sistermans. The concert on October 23 was devoted to chamber music, the concerted works being the String Quartet in G minor and the Sonata (No. 2) in G for violin and pianoforte. The first-named was played by the Brodsky Quartet, and the latter by Dr. Adolph Brodsky and Mr. Percy Grainger. Pianoforte solos were contributed by Mr. Percy Grainger, while Miss Ellen Beck, chamber singer to the King of Denmark, sang an excellent selection of Grieg's songs.

Previous to his departure on an American tour, Mr. Richard Buhlig, with the co-operation of the Queen's Hall Orchestra, conducted by Mr. Henry J. Wood, gave a concert on October 17, at which he had the courage to play in practically four concertos, including those by Liszt in A major and by Schumann in A minor. The other two works were less known, being César Franck's 'Variations symphonique' and Liszt's 'Spanish Rhapsody' as 'improved' by Busoni. Mr. Buhlig's fine technique enabled him to make light of the difficulties of these compositions, his playing throughout the afternoon being characterized by dignity and artistic restraint.

Considerable interest was evinced in a concert given by Mischa Elman at Queen's Hall on October 19, when he was supported by the London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Mr. Emil Mlynarski, a Polish musician born in Warsaw in 1870. Mr. Mlynarski is not unknown in England, for here as a youth he was heard as a violinist, but of late years he has acquired great celebrity as director of the Philharmonic Societies at Warsaw and Moscow. His interpretations of Beethoven's 'Egmont' overture and Tchaikovsky's fourth Symphony, and the support he gave Mischa Elman in Spohr's 'Scena Cantata' No. 8, proved that his reputation has been well-earned. His readings were distinguished by remarkable clearness of phrasing, almost microscopic attention to detail, and keen perception of effect. He brought with him a new symphonic poem entitled 'Die Steppe,' by a Mr. Sigismund Noskowski. This work, inspired by the scenery of the Russian steppes, contains several impressive passages, and is very cleverly scored, but it is over-long. Mention should also be made of an *Adagio* from a Violin concerto in D minor by Mr. Mlynarski, and also of a piquant 'Musette' for violin and pianoforte, both works attesting to a lively fancy, refined taste, and musicianly skill.

Another enjoyable concert was that given by Mr. Fritz Kreisler, prior to his departure for America. He was content with two concertos, that by Mozart in D, No. 4, and Brahms in the same key, in both of which he played very finely. A less known work was a 'Rhapsodie Piemontese' by Mr. Sinigaglia, a Professor at the Milan Conservatoire. This proved a very bright and characteristic work with themes partaking of a folk-song character. Mr. Kreisler was also supported by the Queen's Hall Orchestra, under the direction of Mr. Henry J. Wood.

PROMENADE CONCERTS.

The interest evinced at the Queen's Hall promenade concerts, and the excellence of the performances, under the direction of Mr. Henry J. Wood, have been fully maintained. On September 26 was given the first performance of a new overture entitled 'Shylock,' by Mr. Felix H. White, which is dedicated to Mr. Henry J. Wood and the Queen's Hall Orchestra. Mr. White's overture was written two years ago; it is his first orchestral work and the first he has had performed in public. This being so he must be credited with very special talent, for his overture is a significant and cleverly-scored production that so appealed to the audience that he was recalled to the platform three times. The composer's aim has been 'To depict the soul-state of Shylock the man, and to contrast the ideas embodied in the well-known "Mercy" speech.' Although the design is entirely modern