

PHILHARMONIC CONCERT.

**Percy Grainger, Soloist, Plays
Delius's Piano Concerto.**

The Philharmonic Society gave the patrons of its afternoon series at the concert yesterday the exciting experience of Mr. Percy Grainger appearing to play a pianoforte concerto hitherto unknown in New York. The concerto is by Frederick Delius, in C minor. A few orchestral pieces by Delius have been played here; Mr. Damrosch brought out his "Brigg Fair" in 1910 and Mr. Stransky his "In a Summer Garden" the next season. His connection with the United States has often been mentioned; and, for those who seek, it is not difficult to find traces of his American sojourn in his music. His sojourn was in Florida, and consequently its influences take something of the cast of negro music in rhythms and intervals. There may be something of the sort felt in this concerto, though it is not a very potent reminder of the negro influence.

The concerto is a singularly uneven piece of work. It stands in one movement, but there is little difficulty in discerning the outlines of an opening allegro, an intermediate slow movement, and a quick finale. The themes are vigorous and expressive; one that appears in the slow section has real beauty and individuality of character. The composer has gone about his development of them in a manner that is sometimes flamboyant, sometimes in the most aggressive virtuoso style; he has done better things, however, in the treatment of his slow section, which has a truly poetic atmosphere.

Delius works in a rich and original field of harmony, "modern" in a way that has little of the abhorrent offense to the ear lately brought into prominence, and that gives peculiarly the right, the inevitable substratum of his musical thought of which it is an essential part. The orchestration is one of the features of the work in which unevenness is conspicuously shown. To effects of quite remarkable beauty and originality of color he has joined others that seem of an almost crass unskillfulness and ugliness; and to both of these kinds his writing for the solo instruments contributes at one time or another. There are passages in which the pianoforte is made laboriously and uselessly to fight the orchestra; there are others that show an unusual deftness in bringing about its harmonious union with the orchestra.

Mr. Grainger let nothing of this composition, in many respects remarkable, escape him. He played it with ardent enthusiasm and conviction, and with a tremendous energy that sometimes made more demands upon the pianoforte than any pianoforte can respond to properly. His performance was brilliant in meeting the very exacting demands of the composer and the executant's technique, and certain of the peculiar effects, as the harmonic glissandos in the last section, were done with a peculiarly sensitive feeling for their value in color.

The program of orchestral pieces comprised Mendelssohn's overture, "Fingal's Cave," Schumann's second symphony in C, Strauss's tone poem, "Don Juan," and Dargomizsky's cosatchoque, a fantasia on a Russian dance.