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JUNE 9, 1891.

W. H. CUMMINGS, ESQ., VICE-PRESIDENT,
IN THE CHAIR.

**SOME DETAILS CONCERNING THE WORK DONE
IN CONNECTION WITH COMPLETING AND INSTRUMENTING
SCHUBERT'S SKETCH SYMPHONY IN E,
No. 7, AS PERFORMED AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE
CONCERT ON MAY 5th, 1883.**

By JOHN FRANCIS BARNETT.

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES, AND GENTLEMEN,—It lately occurred to me that it might be interesting to the members of this Association to give a short account of my work in connection with the remarkable sketch Symphony in E of Schubert.

Some years ago, I was walking with Sir George Grove, then Mr. Grove, after a Crystal Palace Concert, towards his residence in Sydenham, when in course of conversation he told me that he had in his possession a very curious sketch of a Symphony by Schubert that had never been completed.

He gave me many interesting particulars concerning it; he described how the Introduction and a portion of the *Allegro* of the first movement were quite complete and fully instrumented, but that as the second subject was reached, it broke off into a mere sketch, as though Schubert's ideas came too rapidly for him to instrument.

He likewise told me that the sketch, which bears the date of August, 1821, was given by Ferdinand Schubert to Felix Mendelssohn, who, it is said, intended to have completed it, an intention which, unfortunately, he was prevented from carrying out by his premature death. It then came into the possession of Paul Mendelssohn, who some years later gave it to its present owner.

That Schubert would have completed this Symphony if his life had been prolonged, there is little doubt, but the sketch in itself being so complete, he probably felt that there was no danger of his forgetting the ideas and their intended treatment; he, therefore, must have put it aside for more pressing work. But, alas! a sad fate prevented him completing this work or the still more important unfinished Symphony in B minor.

There are some who might regard the last-named work and the sketch *Symphony in E* as being left under similar conditions, and, that as it would be presumptuous to attempt to add a *Scherzo* and *Finale* to the unfinished *B minor*, so the one now under consideration should have been left untouched.

I think, however, that it will be at once perceived how different are the conditions under which these two works were left. The two movements of the *B minor* are quite complete in themselves, they can be performed whenever there is a desire to hear them; but the sketch *Symphony*, as left by Schubert, was only curious and interesting as a manuscript. It could never be performed; the public were probably ignorant even of its existence. To attempt to complete the unfinished *B minor*, would mean to add two absolutely new movements, the ideas of which would not be Schubert's, excepting a few notes that remain in sketch of the beginning of a *Scherzo*. The sketch *Symphony in E*, on the other hand, was left in one sense complete; every movement is finished in sketch, every subject is given, not a bar is omitted from beginning to end, there is nowhere an absence of the intentions of the composer, although there might be much difficulty in interpreting those intentions. The plan of the edifice was left, but the elevation was never completed.

It therefore seemed a pity to leave the work merely as a curious MS., and the thought consequently occurred to me, that it might be interesting to attempt the harmonising and instrumenting of the ideas Schubert had left in sketch. I did not then act upon these aspirations; in fact, although the conversation, above related, set me thinking, it was some considerable time before I began to seriously entertain the idea of carrying out what I had at heart.

At length I was favoured with a sight of the original MS. I there and then sat down at the piano and endeavoured to fill in some of the harmonies, but found to my disappointment that I could make very little of the sketch. With the owner's permission I took it home with me, promising to guard it as a treasure of great worth.

The next day, I made a somewhat serious attempt at unravelling the mystery as to the harmonies Schubert had intended for the sketched-out portions of the first movement. I found that the self-imposed task I had taken upon myself was far greater than I had anticipated. At the very outset I met with a difficulty in the second subject of the first movement. It is at this point that Schubert leaves off fully scoring the movement, and gives merely notes of melody without accompaniment. Fortunately, the sketch contains many indications of the character of the instrumentation

required; thus, with respect to the second subject, Schubert gives the melody notes to the clarinet, but there is no bass nor any indication of the harmonies to accompany it.

I will proceed to play this melody, first as left by Schubert, and then with the harmonies I have added. Before doing so, I may mention that the difficulty in this case consisted in presenting the melody in such a manner as to avoid any effect that might sound monotonous, as the melody is of such a nature that very little variety of harmony is possible:—

No. 1.* *Allegro.*

Cl. VI.

Cor.

VI.

legato.

Cl. VI. 3 VI. 3 &c.

Celli.

This melody is repeated in alternate phrases of two bars for flutes, oboes, and clarinet. To this I added a semi-contrapuntal accompaniment of staccato quavers, given to the cello, and afterwards dispersed among the other stringed instruments. The short figure for the violins which comes in between the sections of the melody I have, of course, worked in with the quaver passages. Such actual indications of Schubert's intentions I prized beyond measure; they were to me so many landmarks guiding me on my way, and lessening the chances of my going astray.

* The small notes in this and subsequent quotations are those added by Mr. Barnett.

Once having got into the feeling of this second subject, I proceeded with my task smoothly enough: suddenly, however, I was confronted with what seemed to me a species of musical puzzle. It was one of those puzzles that the more you endeavour to find a clue to it the more bewildered you become. The enigma, in this case, is rendered the more remarkable from the fact that Schubert has here filled in much more than one line of the score. We have the first and second violins, the violas, and the flutes represented. The first question to be solved was—did Schubert intend this point to be left as it stands, or was any instrument omitted which was necessary to complete the effect?

As the point only consists of a few bars, I will play it over as left by Schubert—

After trying several methods of fathoming the mystery, I found that adding a sustained B $\flat$ for the basses at once made the whole passage perfectly intelligible. I, therefore, adopted this note as a solution of the problem, the more readily, as throughout the sketch, with a few exceptions, it is the ground notes of the harmonies that are omitted, even when other notes besides the melody are given. I will now play this point with the addition of the B $\flat$ just mentioned—

A few bars after what I have just played, Schubert in his sketch gives us fragments of the second subject, alternating with a triplet passage for the violins. He marks it *fortissimo*. He likewise gives one bar and a quarter clue to the bass.

Here, then, we have two indications of Schubert's intentions; first and most important this fragment of bass, which at once settles what harmonies are to be adopted, and then the *fortissimo*.

I have so far gone somewhat minutely into the peculiarities of the sketch, and my method in treating it. To go through the entire Symphony in this manner would, I am afraid, be trying to your patience, and moreover occupy far more time than is placed at my disposal. I will therefore confine myself to the most striking features of the MS.

There is one very remarkable departure from the Binary form in the first movement of the sketch that we are discussing, and that is, that the first subject, instead of being again introduced in the tonic key after the development, is omitted altogether, and in its place occurs an episodic phrase on the tonic, which in the first part is heard on the dominant, just previous to the entry of the second subject. This condenses the form very considerably, as the second subject is heard in the recapitulation much sooner than if the usual form had been followed.

In the first part, the key of G, and not the dominant is chosen for introducing the second subject; in the recapitulation, however, the tonic E is employed.

I will play over this point, which is very interesting, from the fact that the figure for the violins above the theme of the second subject is fully given by Schubert in his sketch—

The first movement concludes with a *Coda* of considerable length. Unfortunately for me, Schubert left little more than the flute part of this *Coda*, so that all the work for the strings had to be thought out. However, the general character intended is sufficiently clear.

I now come to the *Andante*, which I consider to be the gem of the work.

In place of attempting an analysis of this movement I will play through the movement from the pianoforte transcription of the Symphony I made, and which is published by Breitkopf and Haertel.

Before commencing, I will show you how it is set forth in Schubert's sketch—

No. 5. *Andante.*

I may mention that the melody is given to the violins without any indication of what harmonies were intended; and also that, after the first subject is done with, the short episode, together with the second subject which follows (see No. 6), is entirely Schubert's, who has in this case evidently fully completed the instrumentation of this point. Thus, for nine bars, I had a rest from my labours, for which I was only too thankful.

No. 6. VI.

Fl. Ob.

Celli e Bassi.

I will now go on to the *Scherzo* [and here I pass over the incident of the temporary loss of the MS., which I recounted at length to the meeting].

I have brought with me a copy of the sketch in which all Schubert's notes are given in red, on which copy I filled in the additional instrumentation in black ink.

I will now play over some of the red notes that open the *Scherzo*, and afterwards the manner in which I have interpreted them—

No. 7. *Allegro scherzo.*

&c.

The Trio of this movement is very interesting, the more so, as Schubert has left very clear indications of his intentions; in fact, with the exception of a double pedal of a fifth for the celli, I have practically left Schubert untouched, merely carrying on instruments of which he has given the commencing notes. I will endeavour to give you an idea of this Trio—

I will not detain you with any analysis of this *Scherzo*, as it is really, more than any of the other movements, written in the usual form.

IV. The *Finale*, in many respects, resembles the *Allegro* of the first movement as regards form, inasmuch as the opening theme is not repeated after the development at the point the recapitulation begins; otherwise, to all intents, it is written in the form of a first movement, with a repeat of the first part.

It opens with a pretty subject of a rhythmical character, in $\frac{2}{4}$ time, started by the first violins, preceded by four bars of introductory repeated chords, which clearly establish the kind of accompaniment Schubert intended to be associated with the melody—

No. 9. *Allegro giusto.*
 Vl. 2. Vl. 1.

A musical score for the first violin part of No. 9, Allegro giusto. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a 2/4 time signature. It contains a melodic line. The bottom staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature, containing a bass line. The piece ends with a repeat sign and the notation "&c.".

This subject and the tributary phrases with which it is united, occupy some fifty bars, all given to the first violins. After the first three or four bars just mentioned, with which the movement opens, there is nowhere any indication of chords or bass to accompany the theme, with the exception of a triplet of quavers and a minim for the bassoon, which occurs between two of the phrases. These notes for the bassoon, as they appear in the original MS., have a very

odd appearance, standing as they do alone with apparently unnumbered bars of rest before and afterwards—

After this, we come to a *forte*, in which short ascending scale passages form a special feature. This is still given to the first violins. There are, however, in the middle of this matter a couple of bars for the bassi, which give a clue to the harmonies to be employed for some time afterwards.

This section of the movement, although simple in character as regards the first violin part given in the sketch, admits of considerable elaboration of a free contrapuntal character. Such a master of part writing as Schubert, would scarcely have accompanied these passages by simple subservient harmonies, and the probability is that he would have introduced into the other parts far more complicated writing than I have attempted.

So far, it presents the simple character to be met with in the final number of a Haydn Symphony; but at length we come to a point used as a bridge to the second subject, in which the genius of Schubert pre-eminently asserts itself.

It is fortunate, as the interest of this portion is for some bars centered in the bassi and celli, that Schubert has sketched out what these instruments have to perform. He has, moreover, indicated some repeated semiquavers for the second violins.

Here then we have a purely Schubertian point, and left in

such a manner that there is no doubt as to the intention of the composer:—

VI. 2.

No. 11.

pp

Celli e Bassi.

Fl.

&c.

Previous to the second subject being introduced, there is a refrain of the first subject, accompanied by a pizzicato scale passage for the cello. The second subject is given to the flute, and consists of short detached phrases, which, as they stand in the sketch, from their persistent reiteration sound almost meaningless. However, I found that by accompanying them with pizzicato quavers, the figure which Schubert had himself suggested in the scale passage I have just alluded to, these short phrases at once became intelligible—in fact, they give scope to some very interesting sequences—

No. 12.

Str.

Fl.

piss.

Viole. *piss.*

&c.

A few bars later, a phrase of four bars, which is first heard as the concluding notes of some chromatic harmonies given to the wind by Schubert, is repeated in various forms as many as seven times, and leads to a *fortissimo*, in four bars of which Schubert has added the bass to the melody notes. These four bars are interesting, as the only harmony that is possible for filling in the inner notes of the chord, is of a decidedly modern character. It is the chord of the $\frac{6}{3}$ with a ninth added for the upper note.

I will play over these four bars as Schubert has left them, and then give you the manner in which I have interpreted them—

That the harmony, which accompanies the first and third of these four bars, is decidedly more modern in character than would be expected of the period in which Schubert wrote, is undeniable.

At the conclusion of the first part there is a so-called bridge to introduce the repeat, and after the repeat, it similarly leads to the development.

This bridge, although simple, is very beautiful. That there was something in it that Schubert wished to preserve, is evident from the fact that he has fully scored for the wind the bars which lead up to the repeat.

The development, although not very extended, contains some very interesting matter. After a brief extract of the first theme, Schubert takes the first section of the phrase and treats it with great variety.

The working out of this theme begins in C with the basses, and after being taken up by other instruments is made the central feature of a prolonged point for the horns, with a kind of obbligato for the flute.

All that I have added to this point is an octave B for the first and second violins of reiterated notes, afterwards changing to a G sharp. This leads up to a climax marked *fortissimo* by Schubert, culminating with a detached passage for the violins, repeated three times, and which have a very extraordinary effect when played as left in the sketch.

As this will be the last example I purpose giving you, I will ask you to allow me to play over the whole of the

development I have been describing, first as Schubert left it, and then with the harmonies and counterparts I have added—

No. 14. VI. Ob.

Celli e Bassi.

Fag.

Viole.

³ Cor. &c.

I will not now enter into a minute analysis of the rest of the movement. Practically speaking, I have laid before you all the subject-matter of this interesting movement. What follows is the return of the scale figure in the original key, in place of the first subject, and the re-introduction of the second subject in the key of C, in place of the key of G, in which it is first heard.

After the recapitulation has been fully gone through, we come to a *Coda* of considerable length, in the early part of which the point for horns and obbligato flute referred to is again introduced.

Some bars after occurs a broad *rallentando*, when the short scale passages are again introduced for the violins.

As the remainder of the sketch furnishes very little clue as to the intentions of Schubert, with the exception of the scale passages just mentioned, I began to fear that I should have been unable to finish the work with sufficient breadth of effect.

I was unwilling to introduce anything important that was not Schubert's, yet something more than the scale passage for the violins was certainly wanted to furnish interesting materials for such prominent instruments as the trombones; for Schubert has indicated that trumpets, four horns, and three trombones are to be employed at all events. The score is laid out for these instruments, and the vacant lines are ready for them. At last, to my great joy, I found that the first subject would combine quite naturally with the violin part given by Schubert, and thus I discovered an effective part for the trombones and horns, furnished by Schubert himself, although not actually indicated by him at this point.

Having started this idea, I was able to work in portions of the opening theme throughout the remaining bars of the *Coda*.

I have endeavoured, whilst giving an outline of the principal features of this interesting sketch, to explain the manner in which I set about the task of completing the work.

How Schubert himself would have worked out his sketch, had his life been prolonged, it is impossible to say. As in the case of Beethoven, his style during his latter years underwent a marked change, and had he lived longer, it might even have been influenced by impressions received from such composers as Spohr and Mendelssohn, who at the time of his death were coming to the fore. He would thus have entered upon the completion of the Symphony in a different spirit to that which animated him when he wrote the sketch. This, however, is too speculative a subject to enter upon. I will, therefore, only say that I have been, to a larger extent than would appear by a superficial glance at the sketch, indebted to Schubert himself for the manner in which I have carried out a great part of the completion of his work. An instrument dotted down here and there in addition to thematic matter, an occasional note for the basses, and now and then, although rarely, bars fully or partially instrumented; these have helped me on my way, and enabled me to complete the sketch, and present it to the musical world in the form that it was played for the first

time by Mr. Manns's Orchestra at the Crystal Palace Concerts of May 5th, 1883.

Before concluding, I cannot refrain from thanking you for the kind manner in which you have listened to the various details it has been necessary to place before you, in order to explain to you clearly the nature and scope of the task I took upon myself.

I am happy to say, that I have with me the autograph of the sketch of Schubert, kindly lent by Sir George Grove, and likewise my own completed score, both of which I shall have the greatest pleasure in showing to you.

DISCUSSION.

THE CHAIRMAN.—I am sure that you will all agree that to-night we have had a more than usually interesting paper brought before us, and I cannot but express a strong feeling, in which, I doubt not, you will all concur, that Mr. Barnett has done for Schubert, in a loving way, a work which could not have better been done. You have had the opportunity of hearing his details and examples on the pianoforte; I, also, have had the advantage of following his beautiful score here, by which one can see at a glance which is Schubert's work and which Mr. Barnett's, two colours of ink having been used, and it is most interesting to observe in what a masterly way Mr. Barnett has accomplished the great task he had set himself. I think it a noble thing for a man to do to sacrifice himself for the preservation of a monument of a more ancient worthy. Mr. Barnett's name will go down to posterity in connection with a splendid achievement, and I only regret that in playing his illustrations he did not commence with the first note of the symphony and continue to the end. I hope you will look at this score presently, even before you look at Schubert's own autograph, so as to see what a splendid work has been completed and how admirably it has been done. It seems that every note wanting has been discovered, and not only that, but Mr. Barnett has very happily and aptly put each note in its right place. I do not think too high praise can be given him. We are deeply indebted to Sir George Grove for allowing the manuscript to be brought here. I saw Sir George this morning, when he told me that nothing but ill health and an attack of rheumatism would have prevented his coming here this evening to learn something of this bantling, of which he has been the foster-father and Mr. Barnett the foster-mother.

A cordial vote of thanks was then offered the lecturer.