

ALKAN SOCIETY

(Reg. Charity No. 276199)

BULLETIN - APRIL 1982

REPORT OF MEETING held at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama on Tuesday February 2nd 1982 at 7.30 p.m.

The Lecture/Recital Room was well filled for this special event. Beside a good number of Society Members there were many visitors - a few of whom were hearing Alkan's music for the first time. The enthusiastic audience included members of the Liszt Society, students from the Guildhall School and our Members' friends. We were particularly pleased to have with us again Vice-President Robert Collet.

Dr. White introduced Ronald Smith and spoke about Alkan's 'Concerto for Solo Piano'. He informed the audience that three days later Ronald was to start a five-week tour - Detroit, Toronto, New York. In the last two cities he was scheduled to play the complete Concerto to be heard there live for the first time.

Ronald Smith spent the first half-hour giving helpful and instructive guidelines, mainly concerned with the lengthy first movement and the shorter second one. The last - Allegro alla barbaresca - was allowed to speak for itself.

After a short interval, Ronald Smith returned to give a vigorous and exhilarating performance of the complete work.

The audience's enthusiastic response was warmly expressed by the Reverend Geoffrey Rowland who had specially arranged his week's holiday so that he could be present to hear this very special recital.

REPORT OF MEETING held in the Lecture Hall at the Trinity College of Music on Friday March 26th 1982 at 7.00 p.m.

At 6.45 p.m. Trinity College served a plentiful supply of coffee and biscuits. At 7.00 p.m. Charles Hailstone introduced a varied and interesting programme as under:-

LEWENTHAL: A talk about Alkan and his music (repeated by request)  
BTS 24 1974

MIRECOURT TRIO: Alkan's Trio in G minor Op.30. GS 1058-A 1975

PIERRE REACH: Menuet Op.51 No.3; Barcarolle Op.65 No.6; Trois Petites  
Fantaisies Op.41 No.2 RCA RL 37243 1979

RONALD SMITH: Minuetto alla Tedesca Op.46; Marche Funebre Op.26a;  
 Marche Triomphale Op.26b HQS 1247 1971

HABERMANN: Toccata by SORABJI MM20015 1981

(The record-playing apparatus was expertly handled by Mark Bearcroft of Trinity College)

Patrick Lee thanked Charles very warmly for the effort he had made in preparing and presenting such an attractive programme.

The Meeting ended about 8.40 p.m.

The attendance at this Meeting was very disappointing. The greatly increased fares on London Transport may have had some effect on the numbers.

#### ALKAN REFERENCE LIBRARY

Our good friend, Knut Franke, from W. Germany, was recently in England with his son for a week-end visit. He left behind a very generous cheque for our Library Fund. This has enabled us to finish the purchase of the first edition of Alkan's Op.4 and to order photostat copies of six items which the British Library possesses and we do not. They include Op. 2 "Les omnibus" variations; Op. 3 "Il etait un p'tit homme"; "Petits Preludes sur les 8 gammes du Plain-Chant"; Op. 32 "3 airs a cinq temps et 1 a sept temps"; "Saltarelle" arrangement for 4 hands of the last movement of the 'cello sonata' Op. 47.

I was surprised to find that the B.L. Music Catalogue has 'Henri' as one of Alkan's fore-names. I raised the matter with the Library and had a courteous and detailed letter from Malcolm Turner, the deputy music librarian. He agrees that there should be a correction and explains that the Music Catalogue of compositions up to 1980 is now under revision. It will run to about 60 volumes and take about 5 years to complete. Unfortunately, volume 1 was published in November 1980 and the Alkan mistake will be perpetuated! Malcolm Turner has kindly promised to alter the copy that is used in the Music Reading area, but it seems that it may be twenty to thirty years before the ghostly 'Henri' is finally exorcised!

#### DISCOGRAPHY

News has come in of the first ever recording of Alkan's "Cello Sonata" Op. 47. It is an American recording, performed by Hanani and Auer on the Finnadar label No. 9030. Ronald Smith's recording of the Chopin Etudes Op. 10 and 25, has just been released on the Nimbus label No. 2133.

Charles Hailstone is considering producing a fourth edition of the discography in the near future. Charles recently had a minor operation, which was successful and he has made a complete recovery.

OUR SOCIETY

The Alkan Society has now been in existence for five years and good progress has been made. Fourteen new Members have joined since last April and our total Membership is over 100 for the first time. I am very grateful for the enthusiasm and support shown and given by so many. Some overseas Members, allowing for the high cost of postage, have made generous contributions; Hartmut Schock and his wife (W. Germany), Dr. Christopher Moore (Sydney, Australia), Wallace Lafferty (USA).

The last named writes in his letter:-

"I would appreciate hearing from other members of the Society who may care to share their experiences and problems encountered with Alkan's music and how various pianistic difficulties have been overcome. I am pleased to discuss Alkan at any time."

Mr. Lafferty's address is:-

1925-P Hopkins Road, Richmond VA.23224.

Another new Member is the well-known bassoon player - William Waterhouse. He possesses a number of Alkan's works, some in rare 1st editions.

This summer I shall cease to be Hon. Secretary of the Society but I am very pleased to record that Jean Bartholomew has offered to take on the work. She is a professional linguist and an accomplished musician and has all the qualities necessary to further the interests and success of our Society. It may be that I shall be able to continue for one more year as Assistant Hon. Secretary - but all this must be sorted out at the A.G.M. Brian Doyle has been doing splendid work as Hon. Treasurer and Christine has been extremely helpful with typing and duplicating.

NEWS ITEMS

All Members will be glad to hear that our President returned safely from North America in good health after a very successful tour.

They will be sorry to hear that Jack Gibbons had a bad fall, a few months ago, and seriously injured his back. He had to lie still for weeks but I am glad to say that the lengthy treatment has now come to an end and he should now soon be himself again.

Stephanie McCallum gave a splendid Recital at the Wigmore Hall on February 24th, and I am glad to say that she was well supported by fellow Members of our Society. Besides the Alkan Op.70 she played exacting works by Ravel, Beethoven, Liszt and Saint-Saens.

My article on the shorter works of Alkan, which appeared in the February issue of "Piano Journal" has, so far, produced little reaction - though a few seeds may have been sown. I comfort myself with the thought