

BULLETIN - OCTOBER, 1982

REPORT OF MEETING held at the Thomas Coram Foundation, 40, Brunswick Square, at 7 p.m. on Monday, May 24th, 1982.

Unfortunately, Dr. Eddie the expected lecturer became ill and was unable to be present. However, with very little notice, Richard Shaw gave the Society a very interesting evening. He dealt with three matters:-

(i) the Schenker method of analysis; (ii) Alkan's visits to England; (iii) Alkan's letters to various people when he was hoping to follow Zimmerman in the appointment at the Conservatoire.

(i) Richard distributed photostat copies of the Schenker method applied to a Bach Chorale and after a brief explanation applied similar reasoning to a simple analysis of "La Vision" (Op. 63 No.1)

(ii) He marshalled a large amount of evidence concerning Alkan's visit to Bath in 1833. An interesting feature of this was the three separate variations (labelled Op. 16) each dedicated to an identifiable lady of Bath. Alkan was believed to have given at least one pianoforte recital in London in 1835 - but there was less evidence for this.

(iii) We then heard the rather pathetic sequence of letters written to friends such as George Sand and to Ministers and Directors at the Department of Fine Arts. Alkan was very rude about the other chief candidate, Marmontel, and severely criticized the methods by which a candidate was selected for the post. As time went on, the letters became more urgent - and more despairing.

The Meeting finished about 9.30 p.m. after the Honorary Secretary had paid a heartfelt tribute to Richard for saving what could have been a most disappointing situation. Thirteen Members attended and two guests. Apologies for absence were received from Ronald Smith, Audrey King and Alan Davidson.

REPORT OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING held at the Abbey Community Centre, 29 Marsham Street, S.W.1. on Wednesday, July 14th, 1982 at 7.00 p.m.

Apologies for absence were received from:- Martin Ball, Alan Cowie, Alan Davidson, Charles Hailstone, Audrey King and Willian Waterhouse. Only seven members (including five members of the Executive Committee) were present. As the necessary quorum was not attained, no decisions could be taken.

The Hon. Treasurer presented the Audited Accounts which showed that compared with last year the financial position has slightly improved: there is now £29 (£24) in the Current Account and £103 (£94) in the Deposit Account. A vote of thanks to the auditor, Keith Craft, was passed and it was agreed

that an honorarium of £20 should be sent to him.

As already announced in the Bulletin of April, 1982, Jean Bartholomew is to take over as Secretary from John White, who will remain on the Committee for a further year as Assistant Hon. Secretary. Otherwise there is no change this year in the Executive Committee. Membership is now well over 100 and we have our first member from Ireland.

The members present expressed their sadness at the death of Humphrey Searle, and their gratitude for the interest which he had shown as Vice-President of the Society and for the generous gifts he had made to the Alkan library.

Subsequent discussion covered the desirability of obtaining more photocopies of rare Alkan works from the British Library (see note under Alkan Reference Library) and the question previously raised by a member, of circulating the texts of lectures given to the Society, with accompanying documentation. Various possible disadvantages were raised at the meeting: postal costs might be considerably increased, not all lecturers might wish for the wholesale distribution of their material, and in view of the steep rises in fares, easy access to texts or synopses might regrettably diminish attendance at meetings. The Executive Committee was to consider ways in which it might be possible to circulate extra material to members in addition to the Bulletins.

Arrangements for the new session were then discussed, and the meeting ended at about 8.20 p.m.

ALKAN REFERENCE LIBRARY

Six photocopies of rarer Alkan pieces have now been obtained from the British Library (see Bulletin of April, 1982), and it has been decided to allocate £20 to the acquisition of further photocopies from this source.

Brian Doyle has generously presented to the library 'Une Fusee' (Op. 55) and the transcription of the last movement of a Haydn quartet (no. 38)

NEWS ITEMS

OBITUARY

The death in May of Humphrey Searle came as sad news to our Society, of which he had been a Vice-President since 1978. It was he who had contributed the entry on Alkan to the 1954 edition of Groves Dictionary preceding the entry in the new edition by Hugh Macdonald, and the Society would wish to record its gratitude for his interest and generous contributions to the Library.

RONALD SMITH

The great success of our President's North American tour earlier this year, combined with the release of the Alkan Project on U.S. Arabesque label, has

resulted in the demand for an all-Alkan recital in New York on January 8th 1983, to co-incide with further exciting record plans. A 'preview' of this recital will be given by Ronald Smith at the Ripley Art Centre, Bromley, Kent on Wednesday, December 15th, 1982 at 7.30 p.m. The programme will be as follows:-

La Chanson de la Folle au Bord de la Mer (Op. 31 no.8)

Allegretto in A minor (Fa) - no 2 of Trente Chants, Book II (Op. 38b)

2 Capriccii (Op. 50)

Nocturne (Op. 22)

Le Festin d'Esopé (no. 12 of Douze Etudes dans les Tons Mineurs, op. 39)

INTERVAL (refreshments available)

Concerto (nos. 8,9 and 10 of Douze Etudes dans les Tons Mineurs, op. 39)

Accommodation in this small hall is limited, and anyone interested should book as soon as possible. Tickets at £1.75, may be obtained from:-

Mr. Stephen Hope,
9, Cloister Gardens,
Woodside SE25 (Tel: 654-2302)

Ronald Smith is also including the solo concerto in a miscellaneous programme he is to give at Brighton College on December 3rd at 7.30 p.m. He is playing the Tchaikovsky Concerto at the Royal Festival Hall on December 20th at 7.30 p.m. and is giving an Alkan lecture-recital at Folkestone Arts Centre at 3.00 p.m. on Sunday, January 2nd, just before leaving for America.

Several members will no doubt have seen that Professor Hugh Macdonald is giving a talk on Berlioz at the Barbican on November 7th as a prelude to the Berlioz Festival season. A propos of the Finnadar recording of the 'cello sonata' mentioned in the last Bulletin, Richard Shaw reminds us of Hugh Macdonald's edition of this work for Barenreiter Ltd., who generously presented a complimentary copy to our Reference Library a few years ago.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

NOVEMBER MEETING

This will be held on Thursday, November 18th, 1982 at 7 p.m. at the Thomas Coram Foundation, 40, Brunswick Square. Thomas Wakefield and Peter Hick will be presenting a joint programme on Alkan, to include performances, both 'live' and on record, of the 1st movement of the Solo Concerto and the 2 Concerti da Camera, Op. 10.

JANUARY MEETING

Tuesday, January 25th, 1983 at 7 p.m. in the Lecture/Recital Room at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Silk Street, Barbican. Stephanie and Peter McCallum will be presenting a joint programme.

MARCH MEETING

Friday, March 18th, 1983 at 7 p.m. at the Trinity College of Music, 11/13 Mandeville Place, W.1. when Martin Ball will be giving an illustrated talk on Alkan's pieces for 'pedalier' and organ.

MAY MEETING

Date as yet to be fixed. It is hoped to arrange a visit to the Musical Museum at Brentford.

JULY MEETING

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Wednesday 13th July, 1983 at 7 p.m. at the Abbey Community Association, 29 Marsham Street.

NOVEMBER 1983

Our joint meeting with the Chopin Society has been arranged for the afternoon of Sunday, November 20th, 1983 at the Polish Institute. Details to be announced.

SUBSCRIPTIONS are now due, and should be given or sent to the Hon. Treasurer, Brian Doyle, 27 Fawcett Street, London S.W.10. It would be most helpful if members paying more than £3 subscription would be kind enough to indicate whether the surplus is intended as (a) a general donation (b) a donation to the Library or (c) an advance subscription. The current subscription will almost certainly have to be increased next year to meet the various rising costs.

SECRETARY'S NOTE

As announced in the last Bulletin, I have now taken over as Secretary from John White who, I am thankful to say, is staying on most kindly as Assistant Hon. Secretary for another year. Enquiries, comments and items of information and interest will be welcome to:-

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West Acton,
London W3 0LJ.

Jean Bartholomew
HON. SECRETARY