

Newsletter Editor:  
John White,  
19, Maple Avenue,  
Maidstone, Kent.

Hon. Treasurer:  
Miss Ann Todd,  
9, Woodstock Road,  
Alperton, Middlesex.

THE GREAT NOONTIDE

The Requiem, which appropriately enough was given in the fall of the year, ends with an invocation to Spring and the renewal of life. With the onset of Spring it was therefore equally appropriate to perform "A Mass of Life", and it was good to see so many members present at the Royal Albert Hall on the 22nd March to hear it. The relationship of the two works brings to mind that portion of "Appalachia" where the funeral march variation ("Marcia - Molto lento maestoso") is followed by the unaccompanied chorus singing "After night has gone comes the day"; indeed, the words of this 'old slave song' appear to suggest certain Nietzschean significances if interpreted symbolically and one becomes aware on increasing acquaintance with Delius's mature work how consistent it is in thought as well as inspiration.

As the "Times" said: "Delius.....chose for his text.....pages from 'Also Sprach Zarathustra'.....the poetical embodiment of a musical conception which must already have been lying dormant in the composer's mind. The resulting work is an overpowering record of Delius's intimacy with transience, and the determined exultation with which he contrasts its debilitating effects".

The "Financial Times" (Diana McVeagh) made a number of important practical points and these are set out below:-

1. "Does copyright still compel the use of this English text? It's hard to keep one's mind on higher things when lines like 'Sits he not drinking e'en now a well-seasoned brown drop of golden bliss' crop up all too often. For the most part it was the Bernhoff translation.....but the programme, which laudably printed the words in full, though with no credit to Nietzsche or the translator, deviated slightly from this, and the singers occasionally deviated again. The words could have been much more helpfully laid out, with indications of the orchestral interludes."

(For the whole ridiculous story regarding this English translation - see Sir Thomas Beecham's "Frederick Delius" - foot of page 160, to page 163. Since Boosey & Hawkes have now taken over the copyright of the score there is no excuse for the retention of so much sub-Wagnerian English. The programme should be divided as suggested by Miss McVeagh and both German and English texts printed in parallel columns. The German should always be sung in preference).

2. "There is no score, vocal or miniature, currently to be bought".

(This, astonishingly, is but too true. As far as can be ascertained, the full score has never been printed - only engraved from a hand-written score - and the parts are full of errors which have to be painstakingly corrected in rehearsal. Nor has a miniature score ever been issued. The vocal score is out of print - it was the old Universal score overprinted with Boosey & Hawkes' name. Since Delius's most monumental conception is unobtainable it is astonishing that it ever gets performed, and this inexplicable state of affairs can only be adequately rectified by the publication of a properly edited score, with a new translation, as speedily as possible).

3. "Why did Sargent choose to make the interval after the first number of Part 2, not between the two parts? No doubt he had good reason, but it would have been interesting to be told it."

(This practice may have been instituted to relieve the strain on the choir, who have to have sufficient strength in reserve to meet the demands of the closing pages of the score. However, no one would think of dividing Mahler's 8th Symphony in the wrong place, and this similarly has a comparatively short Part I and extended Part II. Undoubtedly we would wish to see Delius's division observed, and interval refreshments would surely give added zest to the chorus's "Arise, now arise, thou glorious Noontide". Dionysius was, after all, the God of intoxication).

There is a connection between another of Mahler's symphonies - the Third - and Delius's "Mass". Deryck Cooke describes how "during blazing summers in the Austrian Alps, Mahler was intoxicated (N.B!) with a Dionysian vision of a great chain of being, extending from elemental nature to the Christian God of Love. The programme was.... withdrawn..... various original titles were 'Pan, My Joyful Knowledge' (after Nietzsche'), and 'A Midsummer Noontday Dream'." The Fourth movement is a setting of Zarathustra's 'Midnight Song' which forms the climax to Delius's 'Mass of Life'.

Without wishing to compare the value of these two works - the kind of pointless occupation that some writers on music seem to find enlightening - there is a considerable gulf between the attitudes to life exemplified in them. Mahler follows the 'Midnight Song' with a setting of a Wunderhorn poem "Three angels were singing a sweet song" - one can imagine what Nietzsche would have thought of this, and of having his poem brought into juxtaposition with praise of the 'Christian God of Love'.

Although of great beauty, and both artistically and psychologically logical in its context, Mahler's setting hardly suggests the 'Joy deeper than heart's agony', but sinks at the close into the gloom with which it began. Donald Mitchell, who achieved the seemingly impossible by writing a dull book about Mahler ('Mahler, the Early Years' - Heaven defend us from the remainder) referred to Delius's "Mass" as being 'only intermittently inspired' and inferred that the inspired passages were only the nihilistic ones. This is all manifestly untrue. Nietzsche's life was a single-handed and single-minded crusade against the nihilism of his age and if Delius's "Mass" is not a hymn to Joy, then what on earth is it. 'Nihilist' is a word used indiscriminately by writers when they want to be abusive, but certainly in this instance, and with this composer, the label will not stick.

#### THE QUESTIONNAIRE - I.

51 completed questionnaires have been received from members so far, and part of the results are summarised below. So much material has been sent in that space prevents a complete examination of the answers in one newsletter; we hope however that many more members will send in their views and all your remarks will be carefully considered and commented on where appropriate.

#### Questions

Do you consider the subscription should remain at one guinea or should be changed?

#### Answers

- A. Keep at one guinea (37)
- B. Reduce it (1)
- C. Increase it (12 - these members were generally agreeable to an increase if by this means the Society could become more active - particularly in giving recitals).

One member suggested we should reduce the subscription to £1 ('the last guinea was minted in 1813'!) and this practice does seem an anachronism. However, it is also a comparatively painless way of extracting much needed extra shillings. Another suggestion was that members should be invited to add a donation - we should be very grateful, of course, to any member able to do this, and several have done so already.

Should the newsletter be issued four times a year?

- A. Four times a year (37)
- B. More frequently (11)
- C. Less frequently (2)

Assuming that the subscription remains at one guinea, should we concentrate on

- A. Trying to arrange more recitals? (28)
- B. Arrange more frequent meetings at Holborn Library? (10).

Four members asked for both! The spirit is of course willing, but the flesh has its limitations (and so has the exchequer). Nine members did not answer these questions - they were, in the main, unable to attend London events, and all, on the Committee, would like to say that we are very concerned as to our responsibilities towards out-of-town members. We are constantly discussing ways of doing more for these members, but the question is a difficult one.

Do you attend the meetings at Holborn?

- A. Regularly (15)
- B. Occasionally (17)
- C. Never (19)

One member asked that meetings should preferably be arranged at weekends.

Would you prefer meetings at a different place?

- A. Yes (8)
- B. No (27)

The room at the Royal College of Organists where the 1963 AGM was held, and Westminster City Hall (Charing Cross Road) have been suggested. Two members found the Holborn Library room too large; another thought we might alternate between St. James's Square (Arts Council) and Holborn. For a number of members the question was again an academic one, as they lived too far away to attend.

It may seem tantalising to break off at this point, but a great many interesting ideas have been expressed by members in the remainder of the Questionnaire and as these should be given the space and consideration they deserve, later newsletters will examine them in proper detail.

#### MIDLANDS BRANCH NEWSLETTER

To correct the statement in the last newsletter, the report on the lecture, given by the distinguished conductor and Vice-President of the Delius Society, Mr. Stanford Robinson, to our Midlands Branch, is by Mr. Rodney Meadows, not by Mr. Kitching. To begin with, however, we quote from the account given by David Newbold in the Derby Evening Telegraph:-

"The extraordinary debt that the composer Delius owed to the interpretive genius of Sir Thomas Beecham was the theme of an excellent talk given to the Midlands branch of the Delius Society by Mr. Stanford Robinson, in Derby School, last night.

"During Sir Thomas's lifetime hardly any other conductor dared approach the music of this most elusive of composers, for fear of unfavourable comparison.

"The result was that when Beecham died, Delius's music almost died, too.

"What was Beecham's secret? Partly it was his flair for unpremeditated strokes of genius - sudden flashes of inspiration not even hinted at in rehearsal. Mostly, however (and especially in the case of Delius), it lay in his painstaking marking of orchestral parts.

"Delius, Mr. Robinson explained, was especially adept at not putting down what he meant. His dynamics and phrasing, for instance, are implied rather than stated; and it took the imaginative perception of Beecham to realise fully what was intended.

"But so long as musicians of the calibre and sincerity of Mr. Robinson are around to preach to the uninitiated, and occasionally even to play his music, he is never likely to be forgotten."

/ A Postscript

A Postscript

Rodney Meadows travelled from London to hear the talk, and comments as follows:-

"Little need be added to Mr. Newbold's perceptive account.

"Stanford Robinson drew on his experience in conducting "Koanga" and "Fennimore and Gerda" for the B.B.C. Beecham kept coming up throughout the hour and a half of fascinating reminiscence, but the lecture was on conducting Delius, of which Mr. Robinson is a notable exponent in his own right. There were also some delightful insights into conducting technique.

"The discussion continued afterwards when the out-of-town members were entertained to coffee at the home of Dick Kitching, who is to be congratulated on organising a most successful meeting."

RECENT BROADCASTS

As our Vice-Chairman, Dr. Roland Gibson reminds me, Delius has been "This Week's Composer" - February 28th/March 4th - and I understand he is to be so again in the not too distant future. It is notable that he was not expected to share this honour with another composer - as was the case with Walton recently - but had the whole half-hour or so daily to himself.

Performances in the Music Programme and on Saturdays in "Music of the Masters", and Sundays in "Your Concert Choice" have been frequent. In the past few weeks I have heard the Violin Concerto, Brigg Fair, Songs of Sunset, North Country Sketches and In a Summer Garden. Where one misses Delius is in the Third Programme and Home Service during evening hours and this inevitably means that many of us are not able to hear the broadcasts.

THE DOUBLE CONCIERTO

The long awaited recording has now been issued (Pye: Golden Guinea Collectors Series: Mono GGC 4073 21/-; Stereo GSGC 44073 25/-). The artists are Raymond Cohen (violin); Gerald Warburg (cello); with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Norman del Mar. The reverse has the Variations, Nocturne and Finale on an Old English Sea Song by Alan Bush and in this the solo piano is played by David Wilde.

Beyond giving these details, and referring members to Edward Greenfield's review in the May 'Gramophone', I do not intend to comment on this important first recording until a future newsletter: there it will be discussed in greater detail.

But it is of particular interest that Mr. Warburg is a member of our Society, and that the Alan Bush work is dedicated to Sir Thomas Armstrong, whose article "Delius Today" in the Delius Festival Brochure for 1962 is a perceptive and finely written account of Sir Thomas's personal reaction to our composer.

NEW MEMBERS

The following members have joined the Society since the list given in our November newsletter, and we are pleased to say that we have already had the pleasure of meeting some of them, and hope to meet others in the near future.

J. Harold Douglas, Esq.  
18, Wexford Street,  
Dublin, 2. Eire.

From our advert. in the Gramophone, and  
our first member in Eire.

R. J. Fredericks, Esq.,  
Pipits Penn,  
Fairmile, Park Copse,  
Cobham, Surrey

Introduced to the Society by Mr. Philip  
Emanuel of the Delius Trust.

Roger Bennett, Esq.,  
c/o, 98 Hampton Road,  
London, E.7.

From our advert. in the Gramophone.

Robert Page, Esq., 130, Brunswick Street, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire.	From our advert. in the Gramophone.
A. G. Lovgreen, Esq., 4, Rosemont Road, Aigburth, Liverpool, 17.	From our advert. in the Requiem programme.
Mrs. Alice Jones, 10, Victoria Avenue, Halesowen, Birmingham	From our advert. in the Gramophone.
Terence I. H. Lowe, Esq., 49, Marlborough Park North, Belfast 9, Ireland.	From our advert. in the Gramophone, and our first member in Northern Ireland.
Christopher Palmer, Esq., Trinity Hall, Cambridge.	From our advert. in the Gramophone.
Stuart Upton, Esq., 30, Foxley Gardens, Furley, Surrey.	From our advert. in the Gramophone.
E. R. Mitchell, Esq., 33, Westhill Drive, Kettering, Northants.	Introduced to the Society by our member, Mr. O'Brien.
P. Storey, Esq., Gembleford, Quarryside Road, Mirfield, W. Yorks.	From our advert. in the Gramophone.
Mrs. Norah Kirby, 106 High Street, Steyning, Sussex.	Introduced to the Society by our member, Mr. Ernest Chapman.
Miss Anne Pinder, 24a, Prince of Wales Mansions, Prince of Wales Drive, London, S. W. 11.	Introduced to the Society by our member, Mr. Robert Rockcliffe, at the performance of "Mass of Life"
Basil Hemming, Esq., 38, Nicoll Road, London, N. W. 10.	From the performance of "Mass of Life", Founder & Director of Orpheus Opera described as "A Trust, not for Profit".
Mr. & Mrs. Norman Jones, 12, Somerfield Road, Finsbury Park, London, N. 4.	Put in touch with us by the Arts Council, and joined the Society after attending the AGM there.
Norman Stewart, Esq., 23, Ormiston Grove, London, W. 12.	From the performance of "Mass of Life", and our advert. in the programme.
Lyall M. Laurent, Esq., 144-A Browns Road, Manurewa, Auckland, New Zealand.	From our advert. in the Gramophone. and our first member in New Zealand.

Mr. Laurent writes: "I feel that our Broadcasting Corporation treats Delians quite generously with not infrequent playings of recordings, both commercial and B.B.C. transcriptions. I was delighted recently to hear for the first time the recent recording of the 'cello concerto by Jacqueline du Pre."

### THE YORKSHIRE OPERA

Recently "The Yorkshire Opera Appeal" was launched, our own President being among the sponsors, which include some of the most eminent men in the country, and in the leaflet issued by the Appeal is the statement "We shall not neglect operas by Yorkshire's own great composer, Frederick Delius, and one of his works will be included in the opening season". It should be realised that the Yorkshire Opera's intention is "to aim for the highest standards in presentation, complete professionalism in our own ensemble, our own orchestra, and our own Yorkshire Opera Chorus. The whole country will be searched for the best possible artistes and musicians."

Now this is truly sensational news and a project which should be given the utmost support by all who care for English music and music making. How much more should we welcome the possibility of once again seeing a Delius opera on the stage. As one of our members says in his Questionnaire: "I still think it utterly deplorable that except for the Closing Scene of 'Koanga' there is no Delius opera on record" and recordings are not likely to materialise without the impetus of stage presentation.

At the beginning of this year we received a letter from the Artistic Director, Mr. Ivor Hughes of which, because of its great interest, I attach a copy. We have of course assured Mr. Hughes of the Society's interest in this project and asked to be kept informed of any further developments.

### FORTHCOMING EVENTS

There are a number of items under this head which space precludes me from including in this issue, but another newsletter will be circulated early next month, giving fuller details.

In the meantime, please note that there is to be a performance of "A Mass of Life" in the Promenade Concerts, on **THURSDAY, 8TH SEPTEMBER.**

Misgivings have been expressed about this; in spite of my own comments at the beginning of this newsletter, it is to my mind, splendid news. How the Prom audience will react to this novelty is uncertain, of course, but I don't think we need be so despondent as to imagine they will stay away in large numbers. Apart from this, it is surely up to the Society to press every available friend and relation to come (and even resort to bribery, if necessary). We want to see the hall packed, and give Mr. Glock the shock of his life!!

We are also informed that the ever vocal cuckoo will make an appearance on the opening night of the Proms, and again this is good news.

Another outstanding event, of which we shall say more in the next newsletter, is of course the reissue of Mr. Fenby's book "Delius as I know him", latest publication date for which we understand is now 22nd July, and can be ordered through any local bookseller. Publishers Icon Books Ltd., 9 Down Street, London, W.1. Prices paperback 9/6d. and hardcover 35/-.

We have already had postal orders from Dr. Findlay and Mr. Scorgie of South Africa, asking for hardcover copies as soon as available, and our Hon. Secretary will be delighted to help anyone, particularly overseas, who has any difficulty in obtaining copies, and any such requests can be addressed to her at 45 Redhill Drive, Edgware, Middlesex.

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This took place at the Arts Council on Saturday, 30th April, and is generally agreed to have been the most successful of such occasions so far. A statement is attached for the financial year, but our Treasurer, Miss Ann Todd, has asked me to point out that although we had a favourable balance at the end of March, several bills have had to be met since then, so that all subscriptions, due and overdue, will be welcomed!

John White  
Newsletter Editor.

Copy

(Enclosure to Delius Society newsletter No. 12 - May 1966)

24, Woodstock Road,  
Chiswick,  
London, W. 4.

31st December, 1965.

The Hon. Secretary,  
Delius Society.

Dear Sir,

Yorkshire Opera

Purely by chance, looking through this month's edition of "The Gramophone" did I discover the fact of your Society. As the cherished aim of our project is to open with an opera by Delius, I thought I would write to you and enclose details of the Yorkshire Opera project, which may interest you and your readers. The enclosed Appeal literature gives many aims, but there are others that could not be included in a confined space. No artistic venture could possibly be sincere if it ignored the composers or artistes within it's own County, and although we are well aware that there is much lack of interest in Delius, we shall do all in our power to honour him, and perform his works. It is hoped that we shall begin our first season with "Fennimore and Gerda".

When we shall open relies on one simple factor - money. You are well aware that obtaining large sums for such projects is not the easiest thing in the world. However, we are making progress, slow but steady. After all, we are endeavouring to establish a revolutionary project: the first Regional Opera in this country. Remember that it took over 60 years to establish the National Theatre in London, and our project will, we hope, be established in less than as many months. The Appeal launched at the same time as the General Election, unfortunately, netted less than £800. Realising that a fresh attempt was necessary to get us off the ground a new Fund has been established. "The First Season Fund", opened with our biggest single donation to date, £1,000 from Keighley born, Sir Bracowell Smith, a former Lord Mayor of London.

However large a sum is obtained to launch the Yorkshire Opera, it can only be sustained by grants and subsidies from Local Authorities and the Arts Council, etc. A conference of 27 interested Local Authorities throughout Yorkshire was held in Halifax on November 29th, and another is to take place early in the New Year. A Reception was held for us at the House of Commons last July, which the Prime Minister, Miss Jennie Lee and other Ministers attended, as well as members of the three political parties from both Houses of Parliament.

Plans are ready to put into operation for the first season, which is likely to be staged in the West Riding of Yorkshire, once the necessary financial guarantors have been secured. We aim for the best in opera; and for the highest artistic standards.

I am afraid that this letter is written in haste, so I apologise for spelling and other errors. If you should wish to know more about the Yorkshire Opera project, I will be delighted to supply you with such. I hope that your Society will take an interest in us. Whilst one cannot commit ourselves to stating when we are going to perform the operas of Frederick Delius, it is our cherished hope that we can do our best to rescue them from unjust neglect.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) Ivor Hughes  
Artistic Director.

DELIUS SOCIETY - FINANCIAL STATEMENT 1965 - 66

Year ending 31/3/66

<u>Income</u>		<u>Expenditure</u>	
Balance B/Forward from 31/3/65	£213. 0. 2.	Newsletters	17. 12. 8.
Donations (members)	7. 4. 6.	Stationery	8. 15. 0.
Members' Subscriptions	142.18. 6.	Postage & Duplicating	15. 11. 10.
		Advertising	13. 11. 0.
		Affiliation Fees	4. 2. 0.
		Hire of Holborn Library Hall & equipment	19. 13. 6.
		Chairman's Expenses 1962 - 65	12. 14. 6.
		Committee Expenses	10. 0. 0.
		Lecturers' Expenses	21. 0. 0.
		Dinner Guest 29. 1. 66	<u>1. 7. 9.</u>
			124. 8. 3.
		Balance in hand at 31/3/66	<u>238. 14. 11.</u>
	<u>£363. 3. 2.</u>		<u>£363. 3. 2.</u>

Audited and found correct  
G. H. Parfitt,  
31, Lynwood Grove,  
Orpington, Kent. 17/4/66.