

**UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY**

F. W. KELSEY, President    A. A. STANLEY, Director

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**1902 — CHORAL UNION SERIES — 1903**

**FOURTEENTH SEASON**

**FIRST CONCERT**

(No. CXI. Complete Series)

**University Hall, Tuesday Evening, November 18, 1902**

**At Eight O'clock**

**PITTSBURGH ORCHESTRA**

**VICTOR HERBERT, Conductor**

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**PROGRAM**

1. Overture, "Cockaigne" (In London Town) - - - Elgar
  2. Symphony No. 5, E Minor, Op. 64 - - - Tschaikowsky  
Andante—Allegro con anima  
Andante cantabile (con alcuna licenza)  
Valse  
Finale
  3. The Forge Songs, from "Siegfried" - - - Wagner
  4. Malaguena, from "Boabdil" - - - Moszkowski
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The next Concert in the Choral Union Series will be a Song Recital by Miss Sara Anderson, Soprano, and Mr. Joseph Baernstein, Basso, Dec. 1, 1902

## ANALYSES OF PROGRAM

Overture, "Cockaigne" (In London Town), Op. 40 - Edward William Elgar

Born, June 2, 1857; still living.

Among contemporaneous composers none are attracting more notice than Richard Strauss and Edward Elgar. The position Richard Strauss occupies is more assured than that of the composer whose work opens this evening's program, for, though we may deplore the tendencies displayed in many of his works, none can deny his commanding power—and, again, he possesses this advantage, that we have come to look upon the musical output of Germany as a constant factor in art, while we are not accustomed to look for orchestral works of real distinction from English composers. Both of these composers are daring in their use of harmony; in their control over the resources of the orchestra both exhibit seemingly inexhaustible power; while, in their hands, counterpoint is carried still farther along the lines of development exhibited by Wagner in such works as "Die Meistersinger" and "Tristan". All this would be of little consequence, however, were it not for the fact, that, however much one may question the pure artistic quality of some of their attempts at specific delineation, there can be no doubt that both are men of high ideals. At the coming May Festival one of Elgar's greatest choral works is to receive its first performance in this country, and this overture is therefore of special interest at this time. On the occasion of its first performance in London the composer offered the following description:

"Although the present work is in sonata form, it does not present the subject from a general point of view. In other words, we have not to consider an extensive *coup de' œuil*, but rather a succession of scenes, in the manner of a panorama. To link these together, not only by sequence in a common argument, but also by personal interest, the composer imagines a pair of lovers setting out for a stroll through London streets. It is a fine afternoon; the thoroughfares are animated, and the current of the great city's vitality runs strongly through every avenue. This picture is first suggested, and followed by a section expressive of the sincere and ardent spirit underlying the Cockaigner's frivolity and luxury. The lovers turn into one of the parks and, yielding to the quieter influences of the scene, concern themselves with their own personal romance. We are to recognize the spirit of their conversation, and follow the fluctuations of their passionate feeling. They are somewhat rudely interrupted by the pranks of Young London, pert and nimble as the Apprentices in "Die Meistersinger". In the streets again, our pair presently catch the distant strains of an approaching military band. The music becomes louder and louder, till the band passes with strenuous blare and clang, presently dying away. The lovers next enter a church. The organ is playing, but the noise of the tumultuous life without penetrates within, and the result is a polyphonic blend of the secular and religious. Passing once more into the streets, our lovers find all their former experience repeated and intensified."

## Symphony, E minor, Op. 64

Tschaikowsky

Born December 25, 1840; died November 6, 1893

*Andante-Allegro con anima; Andante cantabile con alcuna licenza; Valse; Finale*

No composer of recent years has attained greater prominence than Tschaikowsky and his fame appears to be steadily increasing. Not only musicians—but the general public as well—feel and acknowledge his power. There are several reasons for this. While there can be no doubt that most of this success may be attributed to the fact that in the music he wrote we seem to hear the voice of a nation, and come near to the heart of the Folk (which, as Wagner says, "is true"), still there is reason to feel that we do appreciate more quickly, and feel more keenly, because we are part of a social organism, run at high pressure, and because we are peculiarly susceptible to the influence exerted by a man whose genius is intense and who speaks with authority. Such a man was Tschaikowsky, one of whose symphonies is the most important number of the evening.

This symphony, as a whole, illustrates the plasticity of the sonata form, and while in the first movement we may find departures from the accepted classic interpretation of the form, we discover, when we penetrate beneath the surface, that the great artistic ends to be achieved through form are most truly served.

The first movement (E minor) opens with a somewhat somber theme (Common time, *Andante*), which is not only one of the most important motives from a formal point of view, but also full of the mystery and gloom which hover about Russian art, because they are in Russian life. This in the course of a few measures gives way to the principal theme of the first movement proper (6-8 time, *Allegro con anima*). This theme is full of rhythmic elasticity, and well adapted to such a process of development as leads up to the fine climax just before the entrance of the second subject. This is in happy contrast to the first subject, in its harmonic and melodic characteristics. Combining and contrasting, these themes form the material out of which, by the individuality of his genius, and the daring use of formal devices we have come to associate with Tschaikowsky, he constructs a unified movement which, beginning in gloom, after many contrasting moments, lyric, polyphonic, dramatic, ends in such a manner as to suggest the mood of the opening measures.

The second movement now follows (D major, 12-8 time, *Andante cantabile*). It is made up of a wonderfully beautiful melody first given out by the French horn, a melody so simple as to need no explanation, and yet so full of suggestion as to compel the attention, and two other contrasting subjects, the second of which leads up to successive climaxes for full orchestra, and forceful statements of the opening theme of the introduction to the first movement. The importance of this theme is still further made manifest by the fact that it is again stated in the closing measures of the most unique and attractive third movement.

No composer has given us more perfect examples of beautiful dance rhythms than Tschaikowsky, and in this third movement (A major, 3-4 time, *Allegro moderato*) instead of the usual scherzo we have an idealized waltz. Full of the compelling witchery of the rhythm and stripped of the vulgar and common-place melody and harmony which too often

characterize the form, such a waltz is worthy of a place in a symphony which is so evidently a picture of important moments in the life of the Folk—for when did not men dance?

The last movement opens with a statement of the first theme of the symphony, now in the major (E major, 4-4 time, *Andante maestoso*), leading into the Finale proper, which begins with a motive whose relation to the first theme is evident. The original key—E minor—is again employed. The rhythms are stirring, and even in the second subject there is little abatement of the spirit of impetuosity and fury. In this movement we get a glimpse of the Cossack, and vividly portrayed are the themes surcharged with the elemental energy of a race seething with the consciousness of power.

A most powerful effect is produced towards the end of the movement, when the basses, moving in a surging figure against a sustained tone, lead up to an intensified statement of the initial theme of the work. Then on to the closing measures of a work, which, if not as intense as the Symphony, No. 6, "The Pathetic", is worthy of Russia and her greatest symphonist, Tschaikowsky.

**The Forge Songs, from "Siegfried" - - - - - Wagner**

Born May 22, 1813; died February 13, 1883.

"Siegfried" stands by itself, in the uniqueness of its structure and the daring displayed in carrying out a dramatic plan that would seem to make failure inevitable. There is no female character on the stage till the end of the last act, the first act contains but one great action, the second act revolves about an event that can very easily be made ridiculous, and over all is extended in most generous measure the soporific mantle of Wotan's presence. Still where is there a drama more surcharged with real vitality, where is there a character who in his person unites more that wins the heart and commands the reason than Siegfried? From the first entrance of the "fearless youth", from his naive reflections on his origin up to the moment of the forging of the sword, is there a moment when he does not compel our attention? The excerpts given this evening vividly portray that wonderful scene, the successful welding of the sword, through which Siegfried shall win the Nibelung Hoard, and pressing onward through the wall of fire shall find Brunhilde, who, sleeping, awaits the hero in whose veins runs the Volsung blood. This scene is one of the dramatic pivots of the series of dramas included in the "Nibelung Ring", and from this time events move on rapidly to the consummation in the final drama, the "Goetterdaemmerung". The tremendous rhythmic force of this whole scene—which by the way contains some interesting rhythmical problems—is one reason for its great effect. Another is the broadly conceived melody in which we meet with a certain elemental power quite in consonance with our concept of the young hero. Siegfried typifies the elastic energy of youth, and to all those who have acquainted themselves with the events leading up to this act, and who realize the ever active power of the curse under which he, though innocent, has fallen, the effect of this stirring scene is heightened, though saddened, by the knowledge that, though he may win in the contest with the Dragon, he will certainly fall a victim to Alberich's Curse.