

THE YORKSHIRE EVENING POST—

The playing of the Virtuoso Quartet was excellent indeed. In accuracy and ensemble they are supremely well drilled, but their playing is made especially enjoyable by an elasticity of rhythm that is not often achieved in concerted music, and they realise fully the value of carefully graded variety of tone.

BRADFORD DAILY TELEGRAPH—

The Virtuoso Quartet gave us Beethoven in the prime of his extraordinary career, through the first of the three quartets. The combination treated the famous work broadly, and with a skill that emphasized the great wealth of ideas that go towards the development of the principal themes.

The two works with which the session opened were the important new ones by the British composers, Elgar and Delius. Elgar who has not studied as has the newly famous native of Bradford, retains something of the Teutonic influence, which British music has now successfully shaken off. His climaxes in the A minor quintet for piano and strings played to-day, have more than the suggestion of this influence in their massive grandeur. For all that the Virtuoso Quartet built up these orchestral effects with a glorious richness of tone, and read the very full and beautiful scoring of the work with a delightful attention to nuance and phrasing that came to the fore again in the great Quartet of Debussy. The Debussy, with its characteristic progressions and quivering of the strings, brought out the finest artistry of the versatile quartet. While translating the très décidé of the first movement into an exhilarating impulsive force, they maintained a commendable control, and reproduced the dissolving mists of harmony in the andantino exquisitely. The Virtuoso String Quartet were in fine form for a masterly interpretation of the Franck quintet for piano and strings. The finale was outstanding for the adequate way in which the extraordinary demands of strength and sonority were met.

YORKSHIRE EVENING ARGUS—

The second day of the Bradford Festival of Chamber Music opened with a magnificent performance of Elgar's A minor Pianoforte Quintet. The performance was a notable triumph for the Virtuoso String Quartet. Their reading was thoroughly sound as to the letter, and undeniably effective as to the spirit—in short, the product of finely disciplined team work. Morning music-making concluded with the Debussy Quartet, that extraordinary compound of austere and melancholy moods with a scherzo of demonic liveliness disporting itself in their midst. Here again the Virtuoso players gave of their best. Rhythmic intricacies were deftly expounded; searching Debussy harmonies were invested with warm, well-blended and bravely resonant tone, and the plucked-string episodes of the Scherzo with a special delight.

Remarkable Success

of the

Virtuoso String Quartet

at the

Bradford Festival of Chamber Music

October, 1926



Press Opinions



THE DAILY TELEGRAPH—

Naturally enough, it is a string quartet that forms the backbone of the whole theme, and the chief burden falls on the shoulders of the Virtuoso String Quartet, and their performances to-day showed that these excellent players derive their inspiration from ideals far beyond the limits of virtuosity. In any case after the festival they will most likely be known to their admirers under other names. The "Herculexus" or the "Undaunted" will fit equally well a quartet which can play in a couple of days no fewer than seventeen works in classical form. They began this morning with a wholly admirable performance of Brahms's Sextet in G. The leader, Miss Hayward, seemed to find this noble work much to her liking, and led the performance all through with the greatest spirit, phrasing every sentence with penetration and sympathy.

The Virtuoso Quartet is a well-disciplined body of players, and well matched. The second violin, Mr. Edwin Virgo, acquitted himself creditably as the one and only violin in Mozart's quartet. Mr. Jeremy and Mr. Sharpe are not only amongst the most reliable but also the most sympathetic players of chamber music we have. But in a quartet it is leading that counts, and Miss Hayward was quite equal to the exceptionally heavy task imposed by festival conditions. The Bax had a very favourable reception, which is no less than could be expected when the rare beauty of its first and the energy of the last movement are revealed as well as they were by the Virtuoso String Quartet.

THE TIMES—

The main work of the festival devolves on the Virtuoso String Quartet. The chief interest of the first concert was the hearing side by side of two string sextets—Brahms's No. 2 in G and Schönberg's "Verklärte Nacht." Both works had been carefully studied and rehearsed, and were extremely well played. The tone was silky and sweet, and the ensemble perfect. Mr. Virgo's tone gave a wonderful starlight effect to his swaying *arpeggi*. Mr. Jeremy and Mr. Sharpe play with admirable restraint and depth of tone.

The Virtuoso Quartet has discharged its heavy responsibilities most commendably throughout. It must be affirmed that the playing as a whole has been of a very high standard, scholarly, sensitive and imaginative.

THE DAILY MAIL—

The principal performers are the London Virtuoso String Quartet. To-day's works were played as faithfully and charmingly as we have ever heard them, several moments being lit with a rare impassioned beauty approaching genius. The most compelling work of the day was the Schönberg sextet, music of strange emotions and a certain mordant beauty.

The piece is difficult, particularly in the 'cello part, and to-day's audience should be grateful for the fine and lucid manner in which the player handled it.

MUSICAL STANDARD—

It is no mean testimony to the Virtuoso Quartet that the last work on the long and exacting programme was as confidently and alertly played as the first.

THE YORKSHIRE OBSERVER—

The musicians engaged were the Virtuoso Quartet (Marjorie Hayward, Edwin Virgo, Raymond Jeremy, and Cedric Sharpe), and the works ranged from Mozart to Schönberg. The playing throughout was of a high standard, and was as brisk in the vivacious finale of the Fauré quartet, which brought the first concert to a close, as at the beginning. Only those who have taken part in a chamber concert can realize what a strain is involved, mentally and physically, in the playing of five complete works. In this sextet for strings Schönberg made a daring raid into the realm of programme music. It is not free from passages that simply leave a sextet baffled, but generally speaking it is a remarkable piece of "atmospheric" writing, and the playing was superb. Schönberg does not spare any member of the sextet, and under the inspiring lead of Miss Hayward yesterday, the dramatic note was never lost. If one were to single out any particular section for commendation it would be the last, in which a truly inspired melody from the first violin is heard over a background of violas and 'celli (*pizzicato*). What an infinitely delicate picture this passage conjures up!

The evening commenced with a superb performance of Brahms's clarinet quintet. There have been many performances of this splendid work in Bradford but one cannot call to mind a finer rendering than this. There was complete understanding between the players, and, for once in a way, a balance was obtained in the finale, the beauty of which repeatedly eludes the best of chamber music players.

DAILY CHRONICLE

One of the finest existing chamber music organizations. With each player a finished artist, the Quartet has established a virtuosity of interpretation as well as a perfect technical achievement. No one could doubt this after listening to the beautiful and subtle performance of César Franck's great quartet in D. Equally fine was the playing in the rest of the programme.

DAILY MAIL

They played with fine feeling and aroused enthusiasm by their renderings.

THE STAR

The Virtuoso String Quartet contradicted their name by playing like artists. Marjorie Hayward proved herself to be one of the finest of leaders; the playing throughout was well coloured and accurate enough to satisfy the most exacting ear. They gave a very fine performance of the Franck Quartet—a performance that was something to be grateful for.

THE REFEREE

An accomplished party which gave beautifully finished interpretations.

DAILY EXPRESS

Music at white heat! Incandescent Virtuoso String Quartet! I do not remember hearing them play with such entire success as they did in the Franck Quartet on Tuesday. As if to emphasise their versatility they next played Goossens' two sketches, and gave a refreshingly finished performance of them.

OBSERVER

The performance of the Beethoven Quartet in E flat, Opus 127, was so good that its difficulties and complexities seemed to be trifles. Miss Hayward is an excellent leader and all the part writing in this highly organised texture came out with singular clearness, while the ensemble was admirable.

WESTMINSTER GAZETTE

Both the Debussy and the Beethoven Op. 127 were admirably done. It made one really proud indeed of British musicianship to hear the Debussy so finely played.

THE VIRTUOSO STRING QUARTET

1st Violin - MARJORIE HAYWARD
2nd Violin - EDWIN VIRGO
Viola - RAYMOND JEREMY
Violoncello - CEDRIC SHARPE



Photo by Langfier

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Press Opinions

All communications to be addressed:

AGENCIA INTERNACIONAL
DE CONCIERTOS

San Francisco, 21.-SAN SEBASTIAN

MARJORIE HAYWARD (1st Violin)

Born in London; commenced the violin at the age of five; studied at the Royal Academy of Music, London, under Emile Sauret; afterwards spent two years in Prague under Professor Sevcik; has made frequent appearances as soloist at all the important concerts in London and the Provinces; engagements have included the Royal Philharmonic Society's Concerts and the Promenade Concerts, under Sir Henry J. Wood. Is professor of violin at the Royal Academy of Music, London. Has been under contract as soloist with "His Master's Voice" Gramophone Company for the last ten years.

The Daily Telegraph says "It is not easy to imagine a better performance than that of Miss Marjorie Hayward, whose tone is admirably full, whose intonation is invariably accurate, and whose style has the special quality known as distinction. Both her artistic and her public success was complete."

The Morning Post says "Miss Marjorie Hayward's playing is distinguished by its liquid tone, its intense feeling, and individuality."

The Times says "Quite the best."

Plays on a J. B. Guadagnini.

EDWIN VIRGO (2nd Violin)

Born in London; studied the violin at the Guildhall School of Music under Alfred Slocombe; held a scholarship there for many years, and was also a prize-winner. Was a member of the London String Quartet for three years, and afterwards became a member of The English String Quartet, in which he played for five years. Plays on a Nicolaus Gagliano.

RAYMOND JEREMY (Viola)

Born in Wales; studied at the Royal Academy of Music; held a scholarship there for four years; whilst there won the Charles Rube Prize for Quartet playing in two successive years. Has played Principal Viola in the Beecham Orchestra, The Queen's Hall Orchestra, The Royal Albert Hall Orchestra, and the Royal Opera Orchestra, Covent Garden. Has toured with the Henkel Piano Quartet in Spain, and with the Meredyll Piano Quartet in Holland, Germany, Switzerland, Norway, Denmark, and Sweden. Was a member of The Philharmonic String Quartet in London for nine years. Plays on a fine old Italian Viola.

CEDRIC SHARPE (Violoncello)

Born in London; son of the late Herbert Sharpe, the pianist, and professor at The Royal College of Music; studied at Royal College of Music under W. H. Squire, where he gained the Rajel Tagore Gold Medal, and Dove Prize for the most distinguished scholar for two successive years. Has played Principal 'Cello in the Queen's Hall Orchestra, Royal Albert Hall Orchestra, Beecham Symphony Orchestra, British Symphony Orchestra, and Goossens' Symphony Orchestra; was a member of the Philharmonic String Quartet, London, for nine years; also of the Chamber Music Players. Has played in France and Belgium. Records as Solo 'Cellist for "His Master's Voice" Gramophone Company. Plays on a David Techler Violoncello.



Press Opinions

DAILY TELEGRAPH, 1924

Only a few months have passed since the Virtuoso String Quartet made their début amongst us, and already they have acquired that efficiency of technique and unanimity of mind that to other folk come only after years of practice. But there is no mystery here, for the quartet of artists are no novices in the playing of chamber music, and were already held in high esteem before this new and important association was formed. They quite definitely established their right to a front place in the company of chamber music players. These practised players gave us nothing but pleasure. Altogether a most admirable second appearance.

THE TIMES

Their most conspicuous asset is their full, cleaving, and sympathetic tone. Having settled oneself down to listen in the dark—they preferred having the lights down—one looked up for a moment to be sure that they were not two players to each desk, not really thinking so, but wondering where all that tone came from. As one looked back on it all one thought there are not many evenings when vigorous playing is combined with such consistently good taste.

They gave fine performances of the Debussy Quartet and the late Beethoven Quartet in E flat (Opus 127).

MORNING POST

César Franck's Quartet received, for once, justly heroic treatment at the hands of the Virtuoso String Quartet. The whole showed the organization captained by Miss Marjorie Hayward to be second to none in unanimity and capable of every refinement of expression. Within the first five minutes they had played themselves in, and one settled oneself down to listen with rising enthusiasm, exquisitely stimulated by the appeal to the intellect and the senses.

TOUR IN SPAIN AND PORTUGAL
MARCH, 1928

The
Virtuoso String Quartet

MARJORIE HAYWARD - 1st Violin
EDWIN VIRGO - 2nd Violin
RAYMOND JEREMY - Viola
CEDRIC SHARPE - 'Cello

Programme—No. 1 Concert

Quartet in G minor, Op. 10 *Debussy*

Animé et très décidé
Assez vif et bien rythmé
Andantino doucement, expressif
Très modéré

Quartet in E flat, K.428 . *Mozart*

Allegro ma non troppo
Andante con moto
Menuetto—Trio, Allegretto
Allegro vivace

Quartet in E minor, Op. 59 *Beethoven*

Allegro
Molto adagio
Allegretto
Finale—Presto

Programme—No. 2 Concert

Quartet in E flat, Op. 64, No. 6 *Haydn*

Allegro
Andante
Menuetto—Allegretto
Finale—Presto

Quartet in D flat, Op. 15 . *Dohnanyi*

Andante—Allegro
Presto acciaccato
Molto adagio—Poco piu mosso—Allegro

Quartet in D minor, Op. Posth. *Schubert*

Allegro
Andante
Menuetto—Allegretto
Finale—Presto

CORRESPONSAL

EN

ESPAÑA



(Secretary)

BEETHOVEN . . . All the Quartets

HAYDN . . . Quartet in D major

MOZART . . . " D minor

" B flat

" D major

" C major

SCHUBERT . . . " A minor

SCHUMANN . . . " A major

BRAHMS . . . " A minor

" C minor

" B flat

FRANCK . . . " D major

DVORÁK . . . " F major

" E flat

" G major

SMETANA . . . " E minor

GLAZOUNOV . . Three Novellettes

TSCHAIKOWSKY . Quartet in D major

GLIÈRE . . . Quartet

GRIEG . . . "

RAVEL . . . Quartet in F major

ELGAR . . . Quartet

CYRIL SCOTT . . . "

McEWEN . . . "

FRANK BRIDGE . Three Idylls

Three Novellettes

Londonderry Air :

(a) Sally in our Alley

(b) Cherry Ripe

EUGÈNE GOOSSENS, Two Sketches :

(a) By the Tarn

(b) Jack o' Lantern

Phantasy Quartet

PERCY GRAINGER, An Irish Reel :

Molly on the Shore

Arnold Bax - Quartet.