

ADELAIDE: A SPOHR MYSTERY

On the programme of the Philharmonic Society of London's concert for Thursday, June 7, 1894 appears the following item:

ARIA ... .. "Adelaide" ... .. ..Beethoven  
(Orchestration by SPOHR)  
Mr BEN DAVIES

The remainder of the programme was Wagner's Faust Overture, Saint-Saëns' Third Symphony and Third Violin Concerto (both conducted by the composer), an aria from Der Freischütz (also sung by Ben Davies) and Sullivan's overture Di Ballo. The conductor was Dr A. C. Mackenzie.

Attempts to find out more about the circumstances in which Spohr came to orchestrate this Beethoven song have so far been fruitless. The Royal Philharmonic Society has nothing in its correspondence which might show that the orchestration was specially done for one of its concerts, and there is nothing in the Spohr literature to throw light on the matter.

Neither has it yet proved possible to locate the orchestral material; various likely libraries have nothing under "Spohr" which might offer a lead. If the orchestration survives anywhere, it is more likely to be filed under "Beethoven" but so, of course, are hundreds of other arrangements.

If any members of the Spohr Society are able to offer more information on this affair, Keith Warsop or Chris Tutt would be only too pleased to hear from them. In the meantime, the search goes on...