Oficjalnego Towarzystwa
im F. Chopina.
19 Lipca 1957 r.
Arthur Hedley

F. CHOPIN

ETUDE IN F MINOR

(Trois Nouvelles Etudes)

AUTHENTIC TEXT

LONDON 1940

NOTES.

A hundred years ago (1840) Chopin published his "Trois Nouvelles Etudes" in the "Méthode des Méthodes des Pianistes" of Moscheles and Fétis, for which they had been expressly written. After the printer had finished with them, the three manuscripts were given to Moscheles, who carefully preserved them in his collection. For nearly a century no-one questioned the genuineness of the commonly accepted text of these works until, in 1932, the Oxford University Press brought out its *"Original Edition of Frédéric Chopin,"* with a truly remarkable preface by the editor, M. Edouard Ganche. In that preface a general accusation is made against previous editors of Chopin. They are stated to have inflicted on Chopin's works *"all sorts of alterations and additions,"* while it is claimed on the other hand that the new edition *"admits not the slightest modification of that which he (Chopin) himself had written."* Particular attention is drawn to the first of the "Trois Nouvelles Etudes," in F minor, concerning which the Oxford Editor declares, in fact, that either Moscheles or Fétis, or both, deliberately altered what Chopin had written, and gave to the world a text shorn of its *"magnificent particularities of writing,"* and that now, at last, he has *"exactly reproduced"* Chopin's manuscript of this study.

It is time that the musical public, and pianists in particular, should know the true facts about this *"exact reproduction."* It is not right that a slur should remain on the memory of Chopin's two distinguished friends, or that he himself should be thought to have been capable of writing the absurdities which disfigure the Oxford version of the F minor study.

Chopin's original manuscripts of numbers I and III of the "Trois Etudes" are in my possession. The Oxford Editor has never seen them. What he has published is nothing but a version based (as he admits) on a *lithograph* made in 1888. This lithograph is a wretched piece of work. Owing to the extraordinary minuteness of Chopin's writing, many notes were lost and had to be "touched up" by the lithographer. Thus came into existence the Oxford Editor's *"magnificent particulars, heralding and in every way equalling the accomplishments of the twentieth century."*

(Further details of this business may be found in my two letters to the "Musical Times" of June and September, 1939.)

The text of the present edition will be found to be "normal." Chopin's manuscript has, indeed, been "exactly reproduced" this time. Although it is impossible to enumerate here all the errors in the Oxford version, the following points should be noted :

(1) The study was originally marked *Agitato* and then altered to *Andantino*.

(2) Chopin carefully wrote in and corrected the pedal marks. (These too were altered in the Oxford "reproduction.")

(3) In the bars marked A. B. and C. Chopin omitted to write *flats* in front of the G's in treble and bass. There can be no doubt that the key of E flat minor is reached at this point, and the fact that at bar E Chopin wrote a natural sign before the G indicates that he had not previously been playing G natural. If he had, why write a natural at all? (The Oxford editor deliberately omits this natural and inserts one, instead, before the G of the previous bar D, although there is none in the manuscript.) It was easy for Chopin to make a slip of this kind as he only wrote out the key-signature in the *first* bar of the study.

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Etude (1)

F. Chopin

Andantino



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