

Editorial

FROM 1987 *Proceedings* is to be superseded by a new publication, the *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*. Despite various changes over the years, *Proceedings* has remained essentially what its name implies, a record of the activities of the Association. Time was when this included not only the papers read at meetings and the discussion following them, but the Articles of Association, Accounts, Minutes of the Annual General Meeting, and other items of business. In the course of time the amount of space given over to business matters has decreased as more has been devoted to the papers, which have often been printed in a form substantially different from the original spoken lecture.

In recent years, however, the fact that the contents are almost entirely given over to papers read at the Association's own meetings has come in for criticism. The feeling has been that this gives an impression of inwardness and insularity inappropriate to a modern learned society, and that if our leading publication is to be respected as an important forum for musicological research it should publish the best material it can get, from whatever source. And so, it is our declared intention that the *Journal* will be completely 'open', and to signal this decisive change of direction we feel that the new title is necessary. But we hope that the healthy diversity of subject-matter that has always been a feature of *Proceedings* will continue in the new publication, and we are interested in important new research in all aspects of musical scholarship – historical musicology and ethnomusicology, theory and analysis, textual criticism, archival research, organology and performing practice. Other changes will accompany the new publication: it will appear not once but twice a year; it will contain reviews and brief abstracts of papers given at meetings (not only R.M.A. meetings) in Britain; and most importantly, it will be published for the Association by the Oxford University Press. Hitherto, *Proceedings* has been published by the Association itself, with all that entails in production and distribution. Under the new arrangement we look forward to benefiting from the expertise of OUP's large journals department, and to reaching a far wider readership. But ultimately the success of the *Journal* will depend on the quality of its contents. There has already been a good response to our first Call for Papers and we hope that the typescripts will continue to flow in. (Notes for Contributors will be found at the end of this volume.)

'Change and decay in all around I see' sing the football fans on Cup Final day, and in our darker moods we are inclined to agree with them. But this change is, we hope, just another instance of that adaptability which has ensured the survival of the Association for the past 112 years and which will guarantee its prosperity for as many more to come. Not an end, then, but a new beginning, or as Machaut would say, 'Ma fin est mon commencement'.