

ANTIPOV
Konstantin Afanas'evich
(1859 -?)

Russian composer and engineer in the Russian Navy¹ Antipov came of a musical family. His mother was the sister of Anatol Lyadov's mother, so that he and Lyadov were first cousins². His brother, A. Antipov was the brilliant artist of several of the finest decorative title pages in the Belaieff catalogue³. Lyadov dedicated his Suite of piano pieces, Op.2 ('Biryulki') to Antipov's sister, Ol'ga (later Korsakevich).

Rimsky-Korsakov gives a brief insight into Antipov's progress towards graduation in the season of 1885/86. Writing in his Memoirs, he remarks⁴, 'Of my pupils at the Conservatoire, I.I. Vitol, A.A. Petrov⁵ and Antipov finished the course. Notwithstanding an undoubted talent, the last-named, due to sloth and his characteristic indiscipline, would not have succeeded in finishing his examination task, an 'Allegro', if Glazunov had not given him surreptitious assistance, completing the orchestration of the composition for him. Antipov remained convinced that he would have completed the orchestration had he not run out of time. Glazunov who orchestrated this for practice, kept it a secret. The composition sounded beautiful and was later published by Belaieff to whom, however, the secret was well known.'

The work received its première at the third Russian Symphonic Concert of the 1887 winter season on 7th. November, and it, together with works of other composers, performed at this and the next two concerts was the subject of poor reviews by Cesar Cui. Stasov counter attacked in an article titled 'Pechelnaya Katastrofa/A grievous catastrophe'⁶. This was followed by Cui's celebrated polemic, 'Ottsy i deti/Fathers and Children' which was published on 21st. January, 1888⁷. Apart from generalised issues, Cui made specific reference to the fact that Antipov's work consisted of only one movement of what Cui assumed should be a complete symphony; consequently it was difficult to judge it in such a fragmentary state. Nevertheless, Cui acknowledged Antipov's gifts.

On 23rd. July, 1888, Glazunov wrote to Rimsky-Korsakov about Lyapunov's piano pieces, Op.1 which were published that year by Belaieff. He compared their qualities with those of Antipov, 'A great contrast with the manuscripts of Antipov, of whom Belaieff is printing six pieces. The music in them is not the best, but done badly, although for all that, thanks to routine form, they are not so disconnected as the previous work by the maestro'⁸.

Besides the Symphonic Allegro⁹ and the songs, Op.4. there are nearly thirty piano pieces, all published by Belaieff and running consecutively from Op.1 to Op.13. Mostly attractively written for the instrument, many of them call for an advanced technique. Not all are of equal merit. Perhaps one of the best of Antipov's many short pieces is the Romance, Op.5, no.1. With all the charm which one associates with Lyadov, it leaves one with a feeling of disappointment that this miniaturist of undoubted gifts, ceased so abruptly after a promising start. Like some others of Cui's 'children', Antipov disappears from the Belaieff catalogue within only a short time of making his first appearance. He presumably continued with his career in the Russian Navy where he received a technical education and served as an engineer.

