SYMPOPSIUM RECORDS CD 1353

SIMON BARERE was born in 1896 at Odessa, in an area which has been the source of many great musicians. After his father's sudden death he played in clubs and public houses to help support his large family. Glazunov facilitated his entry to the St. Petersburg Conservatory where he studied first with Annette Essipoff (1851-1914), a student of Leschetizky and his second wife, and then with Felix Blumenfeld (1863-1931), teacher also of Horowitz. On his graduation in 1919 he was awarded the Rubinstein Prize. He was immediately made a professor of piano at the Kiev Conservatory and began to tour Russia. Only in 1929 was he able to leave Russia. He made Berlin his home and began to make a European name for himself. His début in London in 1934 resulted immediately in a recording contract with EMI. These records brought him much wider publicity than an earlier German series and show him unquestionably in the Hofmann-Lhevinne league in matters of technique. He played the Tchaikovsky concerto with Beecham in Queen's Hall and made a very successful tour of the United Kingdom. With the changing political situation in Germany he decided to move to the United States. His début there in 1936 added to the galaxy of pianistic talent which had preceded him. He prospered until 1951 when, playing in top form, he collapsed and died during a concert. He was extremely modest and often, discussing a piece, would remark that so-and-so played it better, but for the public and the critics he was technically and musically in the top echelon. His wife was also a fine pianist and he claimed that frequently he learnt new pieces by listening to her.

REGINALD PAUL was born in North London in 1894 and brought up in South Wales. He studied at the Royal Academy of Music with Percy Walker and Tobias Matthay. He was recognised rapidly as a pianist of distinction at all musical centres of the British Isles and his many broadcasts brought him to musical homes throughout the country. In 1923 he met Harold Fairhurst, a pupil of Ševcík and Ysaÿe; in 1924 they toured South Africa together. Reginald Paul played in The Hague, Amsterdam, Yugoslavia, Norway and other parts of Europe. He formed several chamber groups, most notably the London Pianoforte Quartet in 1932, with George Stratton (later Alfred Cave), violin, Watson Forbes, viola, and John Moore, cello. Later Harold Fairhurst, Reginald Paul and John Moore formed the Fairhurst Trio. Reginald Paul frequently included British works in his recitals and concerts, but also he particularly admired the works of Schumann and his contemporaries. He was a professor at the R.A.M. from 1927-1960; his wife was a professor of piano there. In retirement he continued to teach privately. He was quiet and modest to a degree which perhaps held back his career. He was a great railway enthusiast and was renowned for his remarkable memory, not just musical. He died in 1974.

The Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra was formed by Broadcast for its recording activities; most of the players being probably from the London orchestras. Its conductor was Stanley Chapple; though he is not named on the

labels of this set. Chapple was associated with the former London Academy of Music and later became a successful conductor in St. Louis. Broadcast used the Stoll Theatre, Kingsway for all its orchestral recordings.

This recording was reviewed in *The Gramophone* for September 1930. It was presumably recorded earlier that year; Broadcast got its records out quickly for cash flow. *The Gramophone* tended to be condescending towards the smaller companies, whether because their products were less good or because it feared pressure from the large organisations must be a matter of opinion. Thus in September 1930 W.R. Robertson's review of began, "Another of Broadcast's cheerful achievements, which give pleasure to thousands. All that is to be expected for less than the price of one H.M.V. record from the piano, an excellent percentage of string-like tone, orchestral balance not so even... but a warm tone.... I have not the score by me, but I imagine there are cuts." The attitude to the work is also rather dismissive. In fact the pianist doesn't shirk any of the technical difficulties, there are no cuts and there is a full orchestra. [Also reviewed that month: Weingartner conducting his transcription of the "Hammerklavier" Sonata, Elman playing Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto, the Academic Festival Overture under Klemperer and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who had just died, speaking about Sherlock Holmes and spiritualism.]

JESÚS MARIÁ SANROMÁ was born at Carolina, Puerto Rica in 1902. His father had come from Catalonia, Spain, as a priest, but earned a living as a piano tuner and organist. Sanroma's early promise, seasoned by considerable concert experience, led the Puerto Rican government to send him to the New England Conservatory, Boston. After graduating with honours he moved to Europe to study with Antoinette Szumowska, Alfred Cortot and Arthur Schnabel. As pianist to the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the first to hold the position, his career prospered. He got on well with Koussevitzky, the orchestra's conductor, and during his 19 years with the orchestra he played under Hindemith, Piston, Prokofiev and Stravinsky. He also had a very good relationship with Arthur Fiedler which continued when Fiedler became conductor of the Boston Promenade Orchestra. Sanroma also taught at the New England Conservatory. In 1952 he returned to Puerto Rica where he played, taught and promoted music. Sanroma died in 1984.

Paderewski started on his piano concerto in 1888 in Vienna and scored it the next year in Paris. He took it to Saint-Saëns, whose opinion was wholly favourable, and played it to Richter, who at once wanted to perform it. Annette Essipoff demanded to give the first performance, somewhat to Paderewski's relief as he felt himself insufficiently prepared for a concert performance. George Bernard Shaw strongly disliked the concerto when Paderewski played it in London, but his dislike was largely based on his loathing for the modern concert grand on which Paderewski played. The work is in the conventional three-movement structure. The first movement could, perhaps, be a little pruned. The haunting and beautiful second movement is possibly the finest of the three. The high spirits of

the third movement, in which there is a strange, and surely fortuitous, resemblance to a moment in the *Napoleon* score of Carl Davis, suits its position in the work.

Acknowledgements: Symposium Records is grateful to Douglas MacDonald for making available the recording of Barere and thanks are due to Paul Lewis and Adrian Tuddenham for assistance with the production.