

MUSIC

MR. RACHMANINOFF'S CONCERTO.

The largest audience that has assembled for a symphony concert this season crowded its way into the Washington Auditorium yesterday afternoon to hear the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra play Beethoven numbers under the leadership of Leopold Stokowski, and, with even keener interest, to listen to the new piano concerto by Sergei Rachmaninoff, eminent Russian composer and pianist, who himself played the solo part. Mr. Rachmaninoff received a real ovation upon his appearance, and at the conclusion of his concerto he was recalled several times by an audience which did not rush home to dinner, as is so frequently the case at the end of an afternoon program, but stood and applauded for several minutes before leaving the Auditorium.

Mr. Rachmaninoff's work deserved this hearty commendation. It is typical of the composer, yet, even at a first hearing, impresses with original melodies in distinct phrasing that haunt the memory afterward. The first movement, written *allegro vivace (alla breve)*, was very lovely, and the last movement, also in *allegro vivace tempo*, was built to the finale with crystalline brilliance, but it seems probable that it is the second movement, the *largo*, which will achieve real popularity for the work. In this movement the minor moods are stressed; there is syncopation with a theme that might be a regular "blues" dressed up in dignified classical robes. The strings announce this theme very softly, with a rather spiritual quality, and then the piano develops it, the strings take up the chorus and it is given shimmering mystery, which is further emphasized when the drums begin an ominous, soft muttering, kindling and blazing into a barbaric, revolutionary theme. Then a return is made to the first motive and it subsides in echoes in strings and piano. The piano part of the entire concerto is always of virtuoso quality. It is hard to imagine a less gifted pianist than Mr. Rachmaninoff being able to cope with all the difficulties of this piano part and bring out its many-faceted beauties.

There were arpeggios that were as rounded, as impetuous and as tinkling in quality as brigades of raindrops; there were chords of massive strength that would lose much if "pounded out"; there was, throughout, the type of piano work which requires sure, firm technique and that roundness of touch that only a born pianist brings to the keyboard in his fingers. As a perfectly balanced background the strings and wind instruments all contributed their share to the pattern and there was intelligently handled dissonance to offset any suggestion of sugar in the limpid sweetness and simplicity of melody. It is a fascinating work and one that it is hoped will

be given often on symphonic programs here. It was given from manuscript yesterday and Mr. Stokowski's obvious co-operation with the composer in bringing out every theme to its best advantage made the performance a doubly successful event.

The opening number of the program was a fine rendition of the overture to Goethe's "Egmont," one of the most-used Beethoven works for the centenary commemoration. The symphony was Beethoven's "Eighth," played in an enjoyable fashion, with the strings especially lovely in the second movement and the famous minuet and trio full of poetry and charm in interpretation. H. F.

THE RUBINSTEIN CLUB CONCERT.

The members of the women's choral organization of Washington, the Rubinstein Club, Claude Robeson, director, presented the second in the series of three concerts to be given this season last night at the Willard Hotel. The guest soloist was Katherine Wade-Smith, a young violinist. She was accompanied on the piano by William Bellar and the club had as accompanist Mrs. Howard Blandy, who substituted for Miss Pauline Knoeller, the regular accompanist, who is ill.

As an honor to the memory of Beethoven, whose centenary is being universally celebrated, the club's first group of songs was made up of arrangements of three of his works, of which the first, "God in Nature," seemed most successful, winning hearty applause. In the last of the group, "New Love, New Life," the soprano solo was sung by Mrs. Frank E. Lord. The club seemed at its best in the light little "First Smile of May" by Franck, in which their diction was especially distinct and admirable. A Washington composer, Karl Holer, was represented by "Tri-

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