



Music
by F.W.S.

Philadelphia Orchestra Makes Its Farewell — New Rachmaninoff Concerto First Heard, Stokowski Dispels Mystery Of Rigid Arm.

THE Philadelphia Orchestra made its farewell for the season last night at the Lyric before a sold-out house, with many persons standing.

The renowned Leopold Stokowski, its regular conductor, wielded the baton, incidentally, the mystery of that right arm held rigid or great circumscribed in the motions was dispelled by Mr. Stokowski himself, who let it be known that the disability was the result of an automobile accident suffered about two years ago and that the newspaper writers, who represented the trouble as neuritis, never had asked him about it at all.

The program was dedicated in larger part to Beethoven, including the great Ludwig's "Egmont" overture and the Eighth Symphony, the latter perhaps the most joyous, exuberant and ebulliently humorous of all of his works. Though it was written at a time when the composer might have been supposed to show the influence of various disturbing circumstances the work breathes a serenity and a jocosity, a rough and ready humor which refuses to be repressed and crops out at every point. Even the customary slow movement is displaced with a minuet and trio which are anything but softly sentimental, the entire work reflecting the irrepressible wit and the bounding effervescence of the man.

NEEDLESS to say, the overture as well as the Symphony got a most masterful reading, the contagious and good-natured playfulness of the one being reflected not less accurately than the somberness, the tragedy, the dramatic force and the exultation of the other. There was a fine balancing of tone values, and a poetic insight into the two numbers, with the orchestra as sensitive as ever. Its perfect understanding and thorough knowledge of the two works was strikingly indicated by the inclination of the conductor to let the organization go along for many bars at a time without more than a look or a hint, Mr. Stokowski saving his disabled arm and using the left one almost entirely when he desired to give special emphasis and direction.

MUCH interest naturally attached to the only novelty on the program, the Rachmaninoff Concerto, the fourth he has written and which thus far exists in manuscript only, this being the first performance of the opus in Baltimore and the fourth anywhere. It cannot be said that the concerto equals the second in C minor, opus 18, the most popular and best-known of all, in spontaneity, in readiness of flow or in continuity of ideas. There is expertness in writing, to be sure, and in a way the development of the various themes is much more elaborate and intricate. But the singing themes are distinctly less lyrical, and the alternation of vigorous, even savage, rhythms, brilliant and exacting as they are, does not compensate fully for the loss of the charm present in the second.

THE work is neither conservative to the point of a binding of the creative faculty, nor can it be called modernistic in the sense of making concessions in the matter of harmony and sequence. Much in the score can be regarded as fresh or even distinguished, with characteristic touches of Rachmaninoff's musical utterance. There is poetic contrast between piano and orchestra, with bold and dramatic climaxes and with a cake-walk ending, but the effect of the work in its entirety is rather less satisfying than that of some of the other creations.

From a pianistic standpoint the opus offers splendid opportunities, which were fully realized by the artist-composer, who is perhaps at his best when playing with an orchestral background. Nevertheless, one had a sense of artificiality and of studied effect which earlier compositions do not produce, though the presentation was masterful throughout and brought the Russian rapturous applause.