

M. Bonnet*Throngs Weep Over the
Music of the Russian
Master.*

Sergei Rachmaninoff, called the greatest Russian musician of our day, gave a brilliant piano recital yesterday to an audience that filled every available space in the Columbia Theater, the house having been disposed of five days after tickets were put on sale. His playing justified his reputation, although the program was an appeal to our appreciation of the lighter things in classical musical literature.

From the brilliant Slav, of whose compositions it has been said, "They are the spirit of the Russian land, of its vast and melancholy aspect," one expected that he would show us vistas of his troubled country and make our hearts beat in sympathy for its sorrowful exiles blown hither and thither about the world, "like homeless clouds in the sky." But yesterday the master was not in heroic mood, and his offerings were mainly of romantic character, executed with great brilliance and utmost tenderness of sentiment. As if with a purpose, he seemed to avoid works of emotional depth, but everything he played was listened to with devout attention and sincerest admiration.

The only approach to the tragedy of life was Chopin's funeral march in the B flat minor sonata. As he played it, many eyes filled with tears, there was awe in many hearts and memory persisted to paying tribute to the majesty of death by recalling the ominous words of a Russian song:

"When death shall knock at thy door, what hast thou to offer him?"

When his hearers applauded, Rachmaninoff turned their saddened mood aside by an exquisite rendering of Chopin's dainty A flat waltz. Other Chopin numbers that were miracles of charm were the D flat major "Nocturne," suggestive of moonlight and lovers' vows, and the F sharp major waltz "Brilliant," all exultant joy and power.

Two works presented with fine appreciation of contrast were the thoughtful "Improvisation" of Nikolai Medtner and Weber's scintillating "Rondo Brilliant," with its vibrant theme and lyric fascination.

Of his own compositions, Rachmaninoff played the favorite prelude in C sharp minor and the beautiful serenade which his sympathetic touch made a song of romance.