

STAGE CROWDED TOO FOR RACHMANINOFF

Hundreds Unable To Secure Admission To Recital at His Majesty's

A VERY MODEST GENIUS

Played Few of His Own Compositions—Russian Omitted His Two Famous Preludes

Montreal's need of a modern concert hall was demonstrated yesterday afternoon, at the recital given by Sergel Rachmaninoff, the famous Russian composer and pianist at His Majesty's Theatre. The theatre was crowded to the doors, two hundred people had seats on the stage, just leaving room for the piano, and it was stated that over 1,100 people had to be refused tickets, owing to the impossibility of finding seats for them. It was further stated at His Majesty's that all the seats had been sold, with all the possible standing room, two days before, and that had there been accommodation at least 2,500 more seats could have been sold.

The occasion proved worthy of the enthusiasm of Montreal's musical public. Probably a majority of the people had gone to hear the most famous of modern Russian composers interpreting his own music. Instead they heard an artist of genius, who modestly played very few of his own compositions, but gave such masterly interpretations of other composers that the audience insisted upon as many encores as they could get. It was a notable feature of the programme that Rachmaninoff left out his own two most famous preludes, the G and C sharp minor, which have made him a household name here. The audience applauded time and again in the hope that he would play these, but he did not, much to the disappointment of many students of modern music.

Although a leader of the modern school of Russian impressionistic composers, Rachmaninoff gave a programme, outside his own compositions, along the strictest canons of musical classics, while his own compositions were so chosen as to perfectly harmonize with the rest, most of them being strongly marked by the influence of the Liszt school of tone-coloring and orchestral effects.

POWERS BEYOND CRITICISM.

Rachmaninoff showed himself a master of such extraordinary and wide genius that it would be hard to classify his playing. He revelled in singing tones and brief snatches of melody, with a capacity for lingering effects at the close of a beautiful phrase that held the audience spell-bound. As to his technique, it would be absurd to discuss it, since his powers were beyond criticism. It was his interpretations, as a master and a composer, that were of most interest, and they proved most interesting.

He opened with the Mozart Theme with variations in A Major, which proved one of his most remarkable readings. Written originally for the spinet, Rachmaninoff played the whole composition with a staccato effect exactly such as Mozart had idealized, with occasional introduction of charming melodic phrases that made it a composition of living beauty.

This he followed by a Beethoven Sonata, the familiar Op. 10, and again showed his breadth of interpretation by a powerful reading. His playing of the Largo movement was full of the depth of Beethoven spirit, while he gave the concluding Menuet and Rondo with compelling charm.

This was followed by a Chopin suite, in which Rachmaninoff showed another side to his genius, bringing

out the underlying tragedy and gayety of the Chopin music with an effect that evoked continued applause, especially in the Nocturne, and concluding Polonaise, to which he had to give a reluctant encore.

Then came the most interesting series of the afternoon, when Rachmaninoff gave a suite of his own compositions, including those least known. They were all marked by the tragic minor and occasional gayety of the modern Russians, while there was throughout a strong evidence of the Liszt influence, explained later when he played a Liszt Rhapsody. He played a series of preludes, of striking beauty, but two of his transcriptions were the most ethereally charming of all his compositions. A concluding polka was a brilliant rhythmic effort, which gave full effect to his left hand mastery.

Rachmaninoff concluded his programme with the 12th Liszt Rhapsody, which he played with extraordinary brilliance, emphasizing the quick transitions from grave to gay with great force. In response to insistent applause he had to give an encore. Few pianists have appeared here with such pianistic skill coupled with so great a magnetic power.

FIGURES FROM CORN HUSK

Exhibition at Ritz To Aid Red Cross Lodge

An exhibition of "The Little People of the Cornfield"—diminutive figures fashioned out of the corn husk by Mrs. J. H. Coburn, will be held, under the patronage of the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire, in the Blue Room of the Ritz-Carlton, on Wednesday afternoon and evening next. Following are the patronesses of the exhibition, which is being held in aid of Red Cross Lodge, St. Anne de Bellevue: Lady Shaughnessy, Lady Atholston, Lady Van Horne, Lady Tait, Lady Clouston, Lady Ames, Lady Thomas Tait, Lady Meredith, Lady Bury, Mrs. Ernest Stuart, Mrs. Jeffrey Burland, Mrs. W. R. Miller, Mrs. G. F. Benson, Mrs. Huntly Drummond, Mrs. Arthur Drummond, Mrs. Freble Macintosh, Mrs. H. B. Yates, Mrs. Henry Joseph, Mrs. Warde, Miss Van Horne, Mrs. Lash and Mrs. Charles Holt.

Those who will act as ushers are Miss Emily Yates, Miss Sybil Kennedy, Miss Rita Mackenzie, Miss Grace MacDougall, and Miss Dorothy Cook. Mrs. Coburn is having a private rehearsal this afternoon at the residence of Mrs. Norwood Lash for the committee. On Wednesday morning the pupils of Miss Edgar's school will have the pleasure of seeing the "Little People" and Trafalgar School on Friday. Next week they will be shown at Macdonald College.

ENTERTAINED SOLDIERS

Ladies of Erskine Church Hosts at Supper

The members of Erskine Presbyterian Church entertained 420 returned soldiers to a special supper at the Red Triangle Hut last night, and afterwards at service in the church. The ladies' committee of the hut and various members of the church congregation waited on the men at table, and the canteen orchestra rendered selections during the meal. Private automobiles and motor trucks fitted with seats were used to convey the men to church.

During the meal, Rev. Dr. Hanson addressed the men, and spoke of the great welcome that the people of Canada were ready to give them.

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