

RACHMANINOFF APPLAUDED BY PACKED HOUSE

Auditorium Is Sold Out
For Concert Here

By WILLIAM NEWMAN

The usual triumph of personality marked the piano recital of Rachmaninoff last night in Constitution Hall. It was marked by the customary tokens. The auditorium was sold out and the applause might easily have developed into a demonstration more than once during the program had not the dour and saturnine Russian giant scowled at his listeners and played on.

The public long since has penetrated the sham of Rachmaninoff's aloof and unfriendly manner. They know him for a man of sentiment and a virtuoso of superb mastery. He rebuffs the tributes of the multitude because he is at heart a shy and modest man and they are convinced that no one who is loved as is Rachmaninoff could fail to return the regard.

PUBLIC IS RIGHT

The public, of course, is right, and it is Rachmaninoff's music coupled with his performance that unmasks him. There is nothing sardonic about either, except in some of his Lisztian moments. It was Liszt in other moods that he represented last night, to begin this review with the program's end; Liszt, the creator and master of glittering virtuosity, as in the Tarantella, and Liszt the ardent romanticist, as in the Petrica Sonata, which, musically, was the climax of the evening.

It was prefaced by 12 of the Chopin Preludes, some presented with a beauty quite magical, some, like the Tarantella, at such breathless speed that they became acoustically impossible. Before these stood that simplest and loveliest of his own preludes, which should be called romance.

Then there were the two Schubert fragments, the forgotten Rondo which curiously mixes Viennese humor and sentiment with pianistic platitudes, and the G sharp minor—or is it A flat minor—Impromptu, which he played without pedal in the principal division and with a fluttering pulsation of harmonies below the melody of the trio.

PARTING PICTURED

The Beethoven sonata was "The Farewell," opus 81, in which Rachmaninoff pictured parting as a sweet sorrow, if sorrow at all, and reunion as a matter to be conducted with the utmost expedition. It was here that for once he missed the poetic implications; for once, or replaced them with others. The Bach was sonorous and noble and the Rameau tinkled authentically.

As encores there were Tschalkowsky's "Troika," Moussorgsky's "Hopak," and his own C sharp minor Prelude.