

MUSIC

Rachmaninoff Draws Big Crowd

The people of Montreal love Rachmaninoff so well that they will travel all the way to Lafontaine Park to hear him play. A great crowd did this on Monday and, since it was a very slippery evening, many of them took a long time to get there, but this did nothing to diminish their enthusiasm.

There is always a kind of magnificence about Rachmaninoff's playing, whatever he does or however he does it. There seems to be intention and meaning in all of it, and nothing is accidental. He began on Monday rather sedately with a brilliant performance of Bach's Italian Concerto, with all the sureness and clearness which hardly any other pianist can achieve. Then came great breadth and strength in the playing of Beethoven's last sonata, which was at its best in the long Arietta. This was followed by four of Schumann's "Fantasietuecke," and in the first of these, "Aufschwung", the playing seemed to express Mr. Rachmininoff's dislike of his audience, with some crashing chords and some rather conspicuous wrong notes, which sounded as if they had been put in on purpose. In the others, "Grillen," "In the Night," and the "Fable," he returned to Schumann.

The second part of the program was made up of Etudes. There were two of his own "Etudes-Tableaux", of which the first, in C minor, was more pleasing as music, and the other, in A minor, more brilliant as playing. Four of Chopin's Etudes were admirably played and specially the one in C sharp minor. Very fine playing in three of Liszt's Etudes ended the program, but of course there had to be more after that, leading up inevitably to the Rachmaninoff Prelude in C sharp minor. It is the general custom to take this as the "signing off" of the recital, but Monday's audience had no regard for the conventions, and insisted on having still more.

H.P.B.