

## Rachmaninoff Acclaimed At Recital

Record Crowd Fills

Constitution Hall

By GLENN DILLARD GUNN

Rachmaninoff has attracted the two largest audiences of the season. The first assembled when he assisted the Philadelphia Orchestra in its October concert. The second, fully as large, gathered last night when he had the stage of Constitution Hall to himself.

The music lovers of America have learned since the last German war that Rachmaninoff is a great personality who has a message for the world of profound spiritual significance. That he delivers this message, most often, through the medium of the piano-forte is incidental, as it was in the case of Paderewski.

### Holds Public Affection

There have been and are today greater masters of the instrument. There are greater composers, though not of Rachmaninoff's generation. But among them all there is no personality to capture and retain the admiration and affection of the American public in similar measure.

Rachmaninoff accepts this regard of the multitude as a trust which he holds for the art. He conceives that he has a duty toward the thousands who honor him, an obligation that may be absolved only as he elects to bring them the most important masterpieces of the literature. So he included the last of the Beethoven sonatas, so often discussed, but so seldom heard, in the program played last night.

He is not the greatest of Beethoven interpreters, being too much the romanticist. The opus III is an heroic page. The first movement rises to the spiritual level of the "Eroica" Symphony. It is more concise and equally powerful. If Rachmaninoff made it seem a bit dry, if it lacked a fraction of his wonted technical perfection, neither shortcoming was important, and he compensated for them in the tonal lusciousness and imaginative warmth that marked his delivery of the theme and variations which are the second movement.

### Preface From Mozart

Mozart playing of unrivaled delicacy and charm prefaced the Beethoven, which was followed by a sympathetic account of an exceedingly amateurish Nocturne, by Schumann, and by his own setting of the Bach Partita in E major for solo violin.

This proved, in fact, another fine Rachmaninoff work, with old master Bach pushed back into the wings while the composer-pianist took the spotlight with his brilliant, witty, sentimental, and often charming comment on the superb ideas first set down by the Leipzig cantor. The Bach student would not regard it as an authentic treatment of the great contrapuntalist's idiom, however, as no one knows better than Rachmaninoff himself.

After the intermission he turned to a type of musical expression which he always has found congenial—the transcribed song. His setting of his own song, "Lilacs," Liszt's versions of two Schubert and two Chopin songs, Tausig's arrangement of one of Schumann's best, and his own transcriptions of Tchaikowsky's "Lullaby," and Kreisler's "Liebesfreud" completed the printed program.