

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 27, 1935

MUSIC IN NEWPORT.

The enthusiastic welcome given Sergej Rachmaninoff, one of the great living musicians, by the people of Newport demonstrated that in this city there are hundreds who appreciate the opportunity of hearing the music of one so gifted and talented. Those of the Art Association who conceived the idea of bringing the pianist here, to thrill us with his art, deserve our thanks and appreciation.

This pianist and composer played to one of the largest audiences ever to gather in the high school hall for a concert. He has gone, but his presence among us long will be remembered by those who heard him, especially by those who do not have opportunity to go away from home to hear outstanding artists.

The splendid response that this Newport audience gave to Rachmaninoff's offerings belied the traditional notion that we of New England are unenthusiastic. Were this musician one to seek applause, instead of being the modest man he is, certainly he would have no complaint over any lack of enthusiasm from those who heard him here.

He was liberal, too, in the sense that his program was one for the multitude and not for the few. That is, it was easily understood and appreciated by those who love music but who have not achieved the understanding necessary for the more abstruse classics that some artists are disposed to select for their programs. The many not skilled in musical appreciation are apt to veer away from the heavier programs. Rachmaninoff's choice was one the average listener could understand, and for that, this group here is grateful.

The response to this opportunity to hear a great artist in Newport would seem to offer encouragement to those whose constant aim is to provide the city with good music for its people. The large audience might be taken as a manifestation that Newport would aid this endeavor, but the limited support given the Civic Music Association, for instance, in its efforts to furnish satisfactory concert series each year does not confirm such a supposition.

It may be that the fine programs that Newporters may hear at home, coming over the air waves, are so satisfying that only the personal appearance of a truly great artist will bring out an attendance like that which heard Rachmaninoff.