

Rachmaninoff And A Large Audience Followed Custom

A recital by Rachmaninoff is an event which offers very few surprises; everything proceeds according to rule or custom, almost as exactly as a railway service or a military parade. The pianist changes hardly at all, and there are always splendid playing, a big audience, tremendous applause and the C sharp minor Prelude to finish up with. The only thing that changes is the program and the one that was given at the Princess Theatre on Sunday afternoon was distinctly less interesting than the one that Rachmaninoff gave here last season. It was an odd mixture and, while no doubt everything in it was of interest to pianists, there were parts that had not very much to attract other people.

The middle of the recital was, on the whole, the best part of it. Medtner's Fairy Tale Sonata does not show him at his best all through, but is very delightful all the same. Chopin's beautiful Fantasia is all the more worth hearing since it is too difficult to be played to death by incompetent pianists. Rachmaninoff's own Etudes, of which he played two, are always tuneful and original in a serious way. Everything in the recital was wonderfully played, and nothing was more delightful than the playing of two of Busoni's arrangements of Bach Preludes, with which, also according to custom, the program began. Liszt's Fantasia, "After a reading of Dante," which came second, only lasts about twelve minutes, though it seemed much longer to many people, but most other pianists would make it seem very much longer still. The Strauss-

who played at the Mount Royal Arena on Saturday evening, but he conceded the honor to the visiting mayor. The two mayors occupied the official box with a few friends. A personal representative of Mayor Walker of New York City was also at the game due to the enforced absence of Mr. Walker.

Mayor Newman with James J. Rose, one of Patterson City's attorneys, Charles H. Albonica, police commissioner, Harry Smith and J. Leo Slater, also of Patterson braved the wintry air and went on a tour around the city, and the mountain. He was impressed with the winter sports on Mount Royal, and said that he envied the citizens' opportunity here for such sport.

Tausig Valse-Caprice, which came at the end, is a case of a good valse sacrificed in honor of the piano.

The last scene of the afternoon was strictly according to tradition;—the audience applauding, with an arm in one overcoat sleeve, and getting more music till at last the C sharp minor prelude was played and Rachmaninoff was let off. This C sharp minor prelude habit is a strange thing. No doubt there are many people in every audience who still want to hear it again, but it seems clear that the business is partly a sort of sporting competition between Rachmaninoff and his audience. They try to see how soon they can wear him out and make him play it, and he is too good a sportsman to cut things short by having the curtain let down, though he must be thoroughly tired of playing it. If he were not so good a sportsman he might easily beat his audience by playing the prelude at the beginning of each recital and getting it over. This device would have the further advantage of making those that wanted to hear it come in time.

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