

RACHMANINOFF IN PLEASING RECITAL

'Brings Down House' When He Plays 'Liebesfreud' as Finale.

BY JAMES H. ROGERS.

Sergei Rachmaninoff, Russian pianist extraordinary, sensitive musician, who interprets the masters with fidelity, but always with a touch of his own individuality, was heard in one of his inimitable recitals last night in Masonic Auditorium.

Inimitable they are, because the Slavic virtuoso contrives, somehow, beyond any of his fellows, in infusing his own personality into the music in hand, while at the same time preserving due regard to both letter and spirit. I doubt much whether he has any set formula for the delivery of the music of the works of either ancient or more recent composers. (The really modern school he passes sternly by.)

My notion is that Mr. Rachmaninoff is governed by the mood of the moment, or of the evening. And in letting his own fancy color his performance he reveals scope and the subtlety of his artistic perception. Last night his mood was all for brilliancy, vigor, aplomb. Well, not all, exactly. For there were many charmingly voiced cantilenas. But in the main the statement holds true. And particularly of the Schumann "Carnaval," the most important item of the program. This picturesque and imaginative piece was unfolded to us with the splendor of an army with banners.

In last Sunday's announcement of the concert it was said, following the program received, that only half of the "Carnaval" would be played. Error. Mr. Rachmaninoff gave the work in its entirety, and even included the cryptic episode called "Sphinxes," which is, I supposed, always omitted. At least, I had never heard it, in public or private. I could not make much out of it. However, it is as short as it is mysterious.

Unfamiliar Sonata.

The program began with an unfamiliar sonata by Mozart, whose music Mr. Rachmaninoff plays con amore, and with the most meticulous care. The adagio was a marvel of artful phrasing and cunningly modulated tone. To the Mozart sonata succeeded two Scarlatti sonatas. Rather brittle music, but the pianist dashed them off at a great pace and made them effective. It was the Chopin group that most delighted the listeners, as it seemed to me. It comprised the D flat nocturne, the rarely heard F major waltz, and the G minor ballade. The last named, especially, called forth a veritable tempest of applause.

Mr. Rachmaninoff goes his own way in his Chopin playing even more noticeably, perhaps, than in his other presentments. And is all the more interesting for that. There was only one of the recital giver's many con-

tributions to piano literature, a "Moment Musical." Pleasing, but not one of his best works. The concert closed with Kreisler's "Liebesfreud" transcribed by Mr. Rachmaninoff. A whirling cascade of notes, played with immense bravura. And, of course, it brought down the house.

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