

RACHMANINOFF GIVEN OVATION

World-famous Russian Pianist and Composer in Engrossing Recital.

REMARKABLE ARTIST

By R. J.

It is quite evident that Vancouver still retains an abiding affection for Sergei Rachmaninoff, world famous Russian pianist and composer, judging from the brilliant gathering of music lovers who enthusiastically heard him in the New Auditorium, Tuesday evening in one of his remarkably interesting programmes.

And why not? For the secret of Rachmaninoff's spell is favorably and readily analyzed exactly as one can set out the good and the bad, the useful and the mischievous, what makes for valuable conditions of pianism or for unvaluable ones, under the circumstances that quite often attend other recitals. When as part of that secret all things are set aside (which it is no special pleasure to recognize), the secret, the charm, still has richly bright in it the gold of pure and extraordinary musicianship.

SECRET OF HIS ART.

Rachmaninoff is a pianist with a sense of beauty second to none today known as well. The full degree of amazing virtuosity appears. After all, in his case, a second consideration, the more one balances matters. He has the temperament which touches hearts, old or young; even the inconclusives are obliged to capitulate before his interpretative intentions. The secret of Rachmaninoff, after all deductions, resolves itself into a temperament that is instant in its understanding of whatever is beautiful in a phase of aesthetics, and into a dominion over every detail that can publish them to the just or unjust. As I pointed out on the occasion of the Russian pianist's previous visit in this city, one is bound to respect his thoughts for the reason that these come from one having authority.

Even were Rachmaninoff less a musician than he is, he would be welcome. It is possible that not all serious-hearted musical people realize how valuable is the work of the superior pianist. The purer and more absolute expressions of music are not a little endangered with us. The ear of the public inclines to the sundry less independent and severe forms and vehicles of art. It is true that this state of affairs is variable, according to one community and race or another.

Such virtuosity as Rachmaninoff can call to his aid, is a concomitant that sets up standards and keeps them up. It rebukes by clear comparisons the imperfect and mediocre pretendants at the piano always with us. The performance of the great Russian on this occasion demonstrated this convincingly.

THE PROGRAMME.

Throughout his programme Rachmaninoff led his listeners by gradual steps to successive heights of pleasure. His introductory group included the Beethoven "Sonata Opus 109," the Schumann "Papillons, Opus 3" and the Chopin "Sonata in B Flat Minor Op. 35."

The Beethoven music he invested with inimitable fancy and imagination, the Schumann sketches he drew with kaleidoscopic tints, rhythmic beauties, subtleties in rubato and descriptive touches while the Chopin work he elucidated with emotional depth, and utter absence of that sentimentality with which some players insist on investing the Polish master's compositions. The unforgettable melody in the Funeral March he projected with superfluous singing tone while the march he gave with calculating significance and brilliancy of chording.

Grace, refinement of style, and keen sense of artistic proportions were in evidence in the Rubinstein "Barcarolle No. 5," Medtner's "Fairy Tales Opus 31" (Manuscript) a work of decided originality and fancy, was given with bold thematic differentiation and color contrast while his (Rachmaninoff) own "Fables" and a Bartok "Toccata" were rendered with equal success the latter particularly creating a surprisingly favorable impression on the hearers and for obvious reasons. Two charmingly impressionistic pieces by Debussy, namely, the "Prelude 'La Petite Fille aux Cheveux de Lin'" and "Jardins sous la Pluie," were later given with shimmering tonal beauties and artistic distinction while to close the programme the pianist gave three Scriabine pieces in a manner which could only have resulted from intense communing with this master's music.

The reception accorded the distinguished visitor was of a flattering nature and it was only with reluctance that his listeners allowed him to go.