

# Music

## RACHMANINOFF RECITAL.

Great musicianship never varies from its fixed standard and invariably asserts itself without excessive effort on the part of the possessor. Artists like Rachmaninoff represent something definite, something dependable in the pianistic world. Small wonder then that musical folk are deeply interested and fill a hall like Emery Auditorium whenever such outstanding talent is to be heard.

Sergei Rachmaninoff, after an absence of several seasons, returned to Cincinnati to play a memorable concert. Reaffirmation of great virtuosity was expected. Rachmaninoff had given too many demonstrations of his superior artistry to doubt that his performance would be exceptional. It always had been.

But last evening, whether due to the fact that he had remained away from the Cincinnati concert platform for quite some time or because, meanwhile, his art had grown in power and his musical perception had broadened in its scope, the performance of Rachmaninoff seemed more impressive musically than ever before, which is an emphatic assertion considering the altitudinous height of pianistic accomplishment that he had scaled previously.

It would be quite improper, of course, to intimate that Rachmaninoff had reached the point of maturity in the development of his particular gift. That point was reached years ago. It is the ripened art of a great musician that confronts the concert patron today when Rachmaninoff plays. Without fear of contradiction the statement is ventured that Rachmaninoff is the foremost authoritative interpreter of the pianoforte classics in his generation.

Through the years this leonine figure of the concert platform has made steady progress, and he took the straight line to his goal. His art was based upon the solid foundation that has supported all true art of our age, the recognized classics. Rachmaninoff is as progressive as any musician need be, but rightly he shuns all semblance of the spectacular. As pianist he sticks to his last. He plays programs that are essentially pianistic. Too many of the younger pianists seek quick fame through dramatization of their talents. There's an art in program building, and no pianist before the public today realizes it better than Rachmaninoff, no artist manifests such fine discrimination in choosing numbers.

Chopin and Liszt! The very names suggest the pianoforte. The one the great poet, the other—the dramatist of pianoforte literature, might it not be said? To what other sources could the accomplished pianist go for such inspiring material; where could be found such noble music conceived essentially in terms of the instrument itself.

Pianistic attainments are best displayed through the medium of such compositions. All the refinement, the sparkling technique, the digital

of reasoning and observation. Proficiency in a contract game, which under favorable surroundings could be attained in a few weeks, becomes a slow and painful process stretching over a period of years. Many, while enjoying the game acquire in bridge 'the avoidance complex,' which definitely puts the lid on their improvement. They begin to segregate themselves. They play in the games of their own or inferior level and avoid contact with stronger players.

Too sportsmanlike to indulge in petty quarrels and plots, with the sole object of eliminating the stronger competition, they pay, nevertheless, the tribute of fear which does not become a panic only because of the protective shadow of luck.

"The tragedy of a timid player who solves competition by running from it is due to the fact that his 'avoidance complex' when applied to bridge is based upon a fatal error. The more he avoids the game the less he learns until he finally becomes fair game even to a dub. If he used up but one-tenth of this wasted energy to rebuild the pattern of his inferiority complex and to strike out boldly for deeper waters he would easily attain the same place as others hold now."

Members of the Westwood Contract Bridge Club will entertain with a dinner and bridge party tonight at the Cincinnati Club in honor of Robert L. Martin, bridge authority. The dinner will close the series of contract lessons and lectures which the club has sponsored throughout the last several months.

Members who will be present will include Robert L. Martin, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Nagel, Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur Witt, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Bausch, Mr. and Mrs. William Mitchell, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Wente, Mr. and Mrs. Walter McFadden, and Mr. and Mrs. C. W. Broeman.

nimbleness, the poetic shaping of phrases, the subtle inflections of the purely lyrical Rachmaninoff puts into his Chopin, and it is a joy to listen to the brilliant Fantasie Impromptu, the sparkling and fascinating Sherzo in B minor, the lovely Nocturne, the superb Ballade in F minor and others that were on last night's program.

And then for the nobler, more impassioned Liszt—to the interpretation of that composer's works—the Rachmaninoff mood changes swiftly and adapts itself to the dynamic elements involved, fashioning for the sympathetic listener piano performance that is unrivaled in its brilliance, and seldom approached in its emotional manifestations. The B-minor Ballade, Valse Impromptu, Sonnetto Del Petrarca and E-major Polonaise round out a program of incomparable beauty—but only when a great artist like Rachmaninoff plays.

One pauses not to criticize Rachmaninoff performance. His effort is so spontaneous, so sincere, so nearly flawless that it is a spell of utter charm that the sensitive listener must feel. It was a spell experienced by everybody who attended the recital of last evening.

Rachmaninoff's playing reasserts the unassailable supremacy of the king of instruments—the pianoforte. His remarkable attainments should be the goal of every earnest exponent of the instrument—and doubtless are.

WILLIAM SMITH GOLDENBURG.