

## *Sergei Rachmaninoff*

Piano recitals, like other forms of musical entertainment, are undergoing development and change. It is no longer imperative for a pianist to begin with Bach and end with a group of moderns. Monday night Mr. Rachmaninoff opened his programme with Grieg and followed with Brahms, Liszt and Chopin. He is an artist who is exceptional among his colleagues for the authority and intellectual power of his playing. He is a great musician and a splendidly equipped pianist. He is stern and impersonal toward his audience, but very intimate with his music. His interpretations do not depend entirely on tone color, but the melodic thought of the composer is revealed through broad, simple lines that his listeners grasp immediately. Passages with long legato melodies move luxuriantly, but always with a serene and aristocratic dignity, a luscious and caressing tone. But his coruscating brilliance in bravura passages proves that in point of virtuosity he has few rivals. In all his music he was the perfect interpreter.

The programme opened with the poetic and grave "Ballade in G Minor" of Grieg. Certain musicians have a habit of considering Grieg as a composer "graceful without strength, romantic without a sense of tragedy." As one who is lacking in breadth of vision, heroic force and passionate climaxes, but he is very much more than graceful, piquant and delicately lovely. According to Lawrence Gilman, "Grieg is a poet of the tragic, if not the largely passionate and elemental." As played by Mr. Rachmaninoff Monday night, Grieg's place may not be on the "mountain top," but certainly upon the hills. The two "Mazurkas" of Chopin with their archness, simplicity and caprice were exquisitely played. There was every opportunity for legato beauty of tone in Chopin's "Nocturne in G Major." And for super-brilliance of tone and technique, nothing could have been more perfect than Chopin's "Polonaise in A Major" and the Liszt numbers, for musical wizardry held sway in the "B Minor Ballade" and the "Rhapsodie Espagnole." No encores were given during the programme in spite of the wild applause of the audience, but at the end of the evening Mr. Rachmaninoff played his "Prelude" and "Troika" by Tschaikowsky.

Next to the Kreisler concert, it was the largest and most enthusiastic audience of the season. Louisville will turn out to hear a real artist. We are indebted to Mr. J. H. Thuman for last evening's pleasure. The next artist of the series will be Lawrence Tibbett on November 27.

F. E. C.