

## Music of the Day

### *Rachmaninoff at the Academy of Music—The Roth Quartet—A Woman Conductor*

It was not a very exciting recital that Sergei Rachmaninoff gave at the Academy of Music last night under Institute auspices. Perhaps the fault was in the listener, perhaps it was in Mr. Rachmaninoff, perhaps it was in neither primarily, but in the program, which unimaginatively combined Chopin, Beethoven and a miscellaneous group of transcriptions. I am not inclined to commit myself to more than the admission that I, for one, did not greatly enjoy the evening.

Mr. Rachmaninoff played much of the time in a masterly fashion. It was perfectly clear, that is, that he knew what he was about, that he was in full technical and intellectual command of his instrument and his music. His fingers, drilled

to admirable accuracy in the execution of his behest, disposed the notes of four Chopin pieces and a Beethoven sonata into orderly and lucid patterns, in accord with the letter and in an effort to convey the spirit of these texts. For some who listened it may be that they succeeded in both respects; for others—for one, at least—their success was unquestionable only in one.

The Chopin played by Mr. Rachmaninoff consisted of the Barcarolle, the A-flat waltz, the nocturne in F sharp and the A flat ballade; the Beethoven was the "Appassionata." The transcriptions included the Schumann-Liszt "Dedication," the Schumann-Tausig "Smugglers," the Chopin-Liszt "Maiden's Prayer" and "Return Home," the Schubert-Liszt Serenade, the Schubert-Rachmaninoff "Brooklet," the pianist's arrangement of his own "Daisies" and the Wagner-Liszt Spinning Song.

Mr. Rachmaninoff was at his best in the Chopin nocturne and ballade and in the slow movement of the Beethoven sonata. In these inspiration replied to his summons, and the music received that spontaneous illumination in which it seemed to me was wanting at other times during the course of the recital. The middle section of the nocturne especially was charming, rippling and glistening beneath the pianist's hands—it was this sort of playing, with its touch of the impromptu, such as we find in all great art, that I had anticipated enjoying throughout the recital.

E. C.

**ROTH QUARTET**

introduction opens, and even Ernest Newman in one of his essays has asserted that, admitting the logic of the unusual progression, Mozart's experimenting does not come off successfully. Schenker, the Austrian analyst, too, has turned his penetrating gaze on these measures and disclosed a reasonable explanation for the procedure, entirely justifying the puzzling notes and emphasizing the composer's genius. In our opinion these twenty-odd measures, the music rising from a mysterious piano to an intense intertwining of the parts, constitute one of the most inspired passages Mozart wrote. The allegro which follows and the graceful and intimate Andante cantabile, too, represent the composer at his most skillful and ingratiating. Last evening's performance was smooth and in the style, played with more finish than the music which followed, though it lacked sufficient energy and pointing of phrase in the concluding movements.

Professor Mason's Serenade is in three movements, put together with adroitness in thematic and rhythmic development, and some of the themes, particularly in the Andantino semplice, suggestive of Scotch folk tunes, are pleasant to hear, but it is distinctly music of the last century in idiom, and not greatly inspired as such. Brahms' Quartet in A minor, Opus 51, No. 2, received unfortunate and weak treatment last evening, marred by frequent inaccuracies of tone. There have been two alterations in the personnel of the quartet, the second violin now being played by Jenő Antal, the 'cello by Janos Scholz. As a group, the present quartet has good