

RACHMANINOFF IN MEMORABLE PIANO RECITAL

Treatment of Cantilene by
Master Provides Decided
Departure From Custom

By DR. KURT HETZEL

Sergei Rachmaninoff, one of the few great pianists and the greatest living musician on that instrument, played a memorable recital, yesterday afternoon, at Constitution Hall.

If all the music that is offered from this stage would be as inspired and true as his, the critic's task would be a happy one.

Rachmaninoff's treatment of cantilene is a decided and willful departure from custom. On account of this, his style is so different from other pianists that he could be singled out by a blindfolded connoisseur.

WORK STUPENDOUS

If we mention that his octaves are not as brilliant as his finger technique, we do this only to prove the sincerity with which we acclaim the master's performance in every other aspect as stupendous.

Rachmaninoff's musicianship is overpowering. We have not heard in a long time such beautiful phrasing, such perfect interpretation. The piano sings under his caressing touch.

In the opening group of Chopin we enjoyed most the Impromptu, two Mazurkas and the deliberately slow tempo of the "scherzando" in the Ballade A flat. The Nocturno in E flat, one of the loveliest samples of melodious cantilene, should reflect a soul at peace with the universe.

DEEPLY ENGROSSED

When Rachmaninoff plays an opus of the immortal grandeur of Beethoven's "Appassionata" he is deeply engrossed in retracing all the visions of genius. Many new and some even startling versions distinguish his reading.

After closing his program with the "Invitation to the Dance" by Weber, in the effective setting by Taussig, the master had to play many encores, among these, of course, his own Prelude in C sharp minor.

A word of praise is due the Steinway Grand. It was evenly and nobly voiced in all registers, well tuned and held the tuning.