

RACHMANINOFF IN CONCERT

Noted Russian Pianist Again Plays Brilliantly

Sergei Rachmaninoff, one of really authoritative Russian pianists of these times, gave a program of exceeding interest last night chiefly because of the standing of the man as a musician. There are those who find in piano-recitals more of wrangle and a greater eloquence but in no recital could there be a finer technical display, or cleaner-cut phrasing, or memory that was more accurate as to smallest details.

The famous Russian played with the confidence of a teacher who has thoroughly prepared himself, and who knows rather than with the imagination of a poet who truly feels. His playing has the brilliant tonal accuracy of Gatti-Curci; but there was a lack somewhere; something which the distinguished artist had evidently not brought with him on this his third trip to Springfield. As a complete, symmetrical musical offering, the program last night was by no means equal to that in the same Auditorium a year ago.

The program began with one of the most lovely features of the evening, the Mozart "sonata number nine," played with exceptional dignity; the haunting echoed phrases of the "Menuetto" and the marching measures of the "Rondo alla Turca" emphasized in really masterly fashion. The extraordinary delicacy, accurate as the design in a piece of point-lace, of the third of the five Mendelssohn "Songs Without Words," glorified it above its companions. Then followed an all-Chopin group of which the "Valse" was most brilliant, the Chopin "Barcarolle" with its recurrent minor strains, now and again blossoming into airy fancies for the left hand was played with mechanical perfection. The form of the flowers was there, but the other qualities of charm to be expected in flowers, and with which Harold Bauer has been known to invest this same number, was strangely lacking.

The announced program ended with the Liszt "Rhapsodie Espagnole" played with massive brilliancy. Mr. Rachmaninoff included two of his own compositions; and at the end of his program added two more, as encores, one of which, the famous "Prelude" was received with that very complimentary but sometimes ill-advised advance applause, which shows the pleasure of an audience in greeting a familiar friend.

The next concert in the Steiner "Special" series will be on Thursday evening, Dec. 3, when one of the world's greatest violinists, Fritz Kreisler, will play.

ERNEST NEWTON BAGG.