

# MUSIC

## SERGEI RACHMANINOFF.

Sergei Rachmaninoff, the great Russian pianist and composer, and a program of Mozart, Mendelssohn, Chopin, Liszt and Rachmaninoff!

That statement tells the story of one of the most thrilling evenings musically that Rochester ever has had. Just a short time ago Fritz Kreisler held thousands spell-bound by his art; last night Rachmaninoff did the same thing. Perhaps no other artist who has appeared this year has been able to do quite the same thing, and this is proof that both men are supreme in their particular fields.

It is almost futile to say anything about Rachmaninoff. He is without doubt one of the few very great pianists of the day; the program called him "the Russian master pianist," and the title is deservedly his. The piano to him is an instrument that is just as easily handled as the violin is by Heifetz; passages that abound in technical pitfalls are played by Rachmaninoff with a smoothness and ease and grace that is astounding. He plays with a ravishing beauty of tone and with infinite variety. He produces a beautiful singing tone and in passages of the Mozart Sonata he played with a delicacy that was in marked contrast to the sonorous beauty of some of his Chopin, or in his own Prelude in G Major, upon which, of course, the audience insisted.

The program given last evening by Mr. Rachmaninoff was skillfully arranged and was one that was cumulative in effect. He started with Mozart's Sonata No. 9, then went to Mendelssohn in five of the "Songs without Words;" four Chopin selections; two of his own compositions; and finally the startling "Rhapsodie Espagnole" of Liszt. It was one well calculated to show the artist's pianistic abilities and was fine music all the way through, though one would have enjoyed hearing Rachmaninoff play some Beethoven.

The Mozart sonata is one full of melody, grace and charm and Mr. Rachmaninoff played it superbly. Especially fine was the Menuetto which offers the player more opportunities for the grand gesture of which Mr. Rachmaninoff is so fond. The Mendelssohn songs were welcomed and Mr. Rachmaninoff played them with spirit and full appreciation of their poetic beauty. In the song No. 47, especially, he was particularly happy.

Mr. Rachmaninoff revealed new beauty in Chopin. In fact, he seems to exhaust the beauty, and one could not imagine the four selections of last night ever having been played more gloriously. The first was a ballad which Mr. Rachmaninoff performed in such a manner that the audience had to catch its breath, literally. The other selections were a Barcarolle and two waltzes, one in E-flat Major and the other in G-flat Major.

Mr. Rachmaninoff played his famous prelude immediately after the Chopin pause and then followed it, without pause, and then followed it, without leaving the piano bench, with two of his

other companions, "Polichinelle" and "Barcarolle." The Prelude, of course, is now extremely well known, and in spite of the way it has been handled by ambitious pianists and at the hands of the composers of syncopation it is music of great breadth, dignity and impressiveness. The "Polichinelle" is in lighter vein, though one does not think of Mr. Rachmaninoff as composing anything that could ever be called light. Its ending is especially delightful and last night the composer was forced himself to smile at the unexpected final twist.

Mr. Rachmaninoff, looking like an ascetic, has an unusual way of playing his program. He went from the Mozart into the Mendelssohn without leaving the piano, and he went from an encore into the next group in the same way. The audience was most enthusiastic and the conclusion of the Liszt Rhapsodie recalled him again and again until he had added several extra numbers.

The concert last night was under the management of Arthur M. See.