

Music.

The Rachmaninoff Recital.

Sergei Rachmaninoff, noted Russian composer who, of late years, has communicated personally with his public through the medium of the piano-forte, gave his annual local recital last evening in Elmwood Music hall. Rachmaninoff is an established favorite here, and the opportunity to hear him again was embraced by a great throng of music lovers who, by absorbed attention during his playing and by enthusiastic applause at its close, freely expressed keen enjoyment and appreciation.

It is not strange that a man of such gigantic musical stature should concern himself chiefly with the content of the music he plays rather than with vainglorious show; though his program of last night was not entirely free from music of the display order. The Russian is a master of detail, discovering and polishing innumerable fine points, always with artistic effect and often to the advantage of music which has earned the contempt familiarity is known to breed. His technical equipment is not lacking, however, but the better side of technic which transcends the purely mechanical, is his principal care.

Depth, beauty and variety of color distinguish his tone, and he secures lovely pedal effects. There is no hint of disorder in his playing, in fact, no perceptible flaw. At the same time it cannot be pronounced the most inspiring pianistic art to be heard or imagined.

Last night's program did not antedate the romantic school of composition. The Liszt, "Ballade," opus two, opened the program and was followed by the one of Grieg which could wear the title "Theme and Variations" more becomingly. Lovely color effects were revealed in the performance of the latter.

Individual touches added to the interest of a well-worn Chopin group, which included the A flat ballade, the D flat nocturne of opus 27, the hackneyed D flat waltz and the familiar scherzo in C sharp minor. The ballade was given with big sweep; the nocturne was poetically conceived and performed, and the waltz, which was repeated after the group, was dazzling in its break-neck speed. Perhaps sometime some pianist will include in his program the fine F minor ballade which is never heard in public hereabouts.

Rachmaninoff, himself, was represented in two of his less familiar works, the one "Elegie," opus three, unfolding sombre melodies and holding considerable charm; the other, a polka, rhythmically attractive if not startlingly original. He played also his piano arrangement of the Kreisler "Liebeslied," in which his elaborate embroideries have almost obliterated the original figures. Refreshingly brilliant and brilliantly executed was the "Etude," opus 28, of Dohnanyi.

The Liszt "Tarantella" (Venezie e Napoli) provided a showy finale and the artist, repeatedly recalled, gave his popular "Prelude," in C sharp minor. Earlier encores included the last movement (Turkish march) of the Mozart A major sonata, and a Chopin waltz.

The concert was the second in the Ellis series under the local management of Musical Arts. E. D.