

Great Russian Pianist Enthuses Large Audience.

One of the largest audiences of the season heard Sergei Rachmaninoff in recital at the Auditorium last night, and he stirred his hearers to an enthusiasm scarcely less than that which greeted his former visit two years ago, although his program on the former occasion was more interesting. During that two years he has proven that the artificial sensationalism surrounding the refugee artist from chaotic Russia had little to do with the great hold he took immediately upon the people of America, for after being three years a resident of this country he still holds his own against many sensational newcomers.

The bulk of his performance last night made it easy to see why, although one wondered at first his reason for playing the Weber-Tausig "Invitation to the Dance," outworn as it is by custom and style, while the Sonata Pathetique of Beethoven, which opened his program, somehow did not strike fire.

When he reached the Weber "Invitation," however, with its elaborate furbishing up at the hands of Tausig, he so imbued it with new life and brilliance that some of his hearers were almost reconciled to his not playing something else instead, while others gave it a rousing reception that brought the first encore.

In fact, Rachmaninoff's program ran to "exploits" last night, a rather

unusual thing in this artist, who can couch his appeal in nobler terms, and still draw his response.

His Chopin group was an instance, the ballad graduating from poignancy into a concentrated intensity of power that was in truth a tour de force, while the nocturnal was colored by a lofty and lovely sentiment worthy of Rachmaninoff.

His own prelude in C minor, which he has had to play so many times that he must sometimes wish he had never written it, with a polka of his own, an etude by Ernest Dohnanye, which was a fiery episode in a program featured by brilliance and a tarantella on Italian themes by Liszt completed his program, barring the many encores his hearers demanded from the house, and then went some of them behind the scenes to persuade him to come once again and to play the prelude which was on his program here two years ago.

A great pianist, one whose technique measures with that of the most celebrated "wizards of the keyboard"—and a great artist, broad in his conceptions, sane, but not too sane, he has that rare combination—the appeal to the erudite with his erudition and a lofty congeniality with the spirit of the masters in music—and to the popular fancy with an undisputed magnetism.

—LOUISE DOOLY.