

RACHMANINOFF'S CONCERT

Dignity, mature judgment and deliberate execution were points of interest during the performance of this great musician last evening. His uncanny simplicity of manner, combined with a dignified, courteous attitude toward his audience are mild introductions to this tall Russian man, who is both creator and interpreter of masterpieces.

He played the Handel variations practically without using the pedal. In the Schumann C sharp (minor) Novelette that followed he displayed unusual capacity for lightning color changes. As he interpreted this number it acquires new characteristics, some of which I have heard or thought.

The Weber-Taussig Invitation to the Dance is a well known number, largely overworked by would-be pianists and amateur orchestras. This particular setting, however, is fortunately too difficult for the abuse of what I like to call instrumental marauders and Rachmaninoff renewed the love of the audience for this poetic, altogether pianistic gem.

Next on the program came the Chopin group. The A flat Ballade which he played is the most generally known and best understood by the public. With true poetic conception of the composer's meaning Rachmaninoff brought out the voluptuous dancing movements of the maiden in her endeavor to enslave her admirer, who in glowing style promises faithfulness forever, only to be found inconstant and unfaithful afterward, as the story goes.

Rachmaninoff brought out authoritatively the contrasting effects. The D flat major Nocturne was played perhaps a little too heavily for the small auditorium. The Polonaise Opus 53 was played in quicker tempo than is customary but with the enormous technique the performer commands he appeared to be toying with this colossal piece of music. His own C sharp minor Prelude revealed little that is new in the manner of rendition. He plays that a little faster than it is usually interpreted.

The climax of his performance was reached in his Liszt numbers. The Sonnetto gave him an opportunity to portray Liszt's power of creating orchestral effects on the piano without spoiling pianistic effects. The Galop Chromatique was wonderful. The rhythmic effects were so powerful that I noticed many rather conservative listeners moving their heads and shoulders in a manner which portrayed the fact that they were being compelled to by irresistible power wielded by unquestioned authority.

For encores he played Chopin's Minute Waltz and his own arrangement of Kreisler's Liebeslied, which was fascinatingly beautiful.

What impressed me the most in all Rachmaninoff's playing from a mechanical point of view was the artistic way in which he pedals. He does it sparingly and with definite purpose. In fact I have never seen anyone pedal those pieces the way he does.

All summed up the concert was of inestimable value to all of us, not only because it was food to our souls but it focuses a new light on our way. It brings us new inspiration, teaches us to hold higher our aim and strive more diligently to attain our ultimate goal—which is to become more than infants alongside of such a giant.

Once more Mr. Holland deserves great credit for his choice. He gave us what we could not have had in any other way—a great concert by a great artist, who is also a great man.

DANIEL MULLER.