

TRIBUTE IS PAID TO MUSICAL GIANT

By Augustus O. Palm
Post Music Critic.

Musical Cincinnati always turns out en masse as a tribute to the genius of one of the few musical giants of today—Sergei Rachmaninoff. On Tuesday night, at Emery Auditorium, we heard him as pianist and composer. We can but hope for the pleasure of some day again hearing him with our Symphony Orchestra, performing one of his colossal concerti, or directing one of his orchestral compositions.

The program on Tuesday night consisted of old favorites and new works.

In the first group there was great diversity. The playing of the Haendel "Aria con Variazioni" displayed a simplicity which only the great attain. This was followed by the "Sonata Pathetique" of Beethoven. Rachmaninoff is one of the few artists who can make the earlier sonatas of Beethoven musically interesting. Over this one, especially, students labor hard, with monotonous results. This man takes it, and thru his force of declamation issues a new message. Then came the Tausig arrangement of Weber's "Invitation to the Dance," a stunning piece of bravura playing. As encore, he played the "Turkish March" of Mozart.

The second group was wholly

Chopin; the A-flat major ballade, the D-flat major nocturne, the D-flat major valse and the C-sharp minor scherzo, with the G-flat major valse as encore. These were all brilliantly played, the scherzo adding to this brilliance a depth of musical feeling which made it a thing apart.

In the last group, two of the newer Rachmaninoff compositions were included. "Daisies" is a song transcription, beautifully done, with a wealth of tender meaning. It was artistically one of the treats of the evening. The "Polka de W. R." is well known. A new arrangement by Rachmaninoff of a minuet from Bizet's "L'Arlesienne Suite" was fascinating in the wealth of color which the transcriber achieved.

The Liszt second Hungarian Rhapsody concluded the program. This interpretation Rachmaninoff has made his own. No one else plays it with such furious speed and so much Slav color. The cadenza which he has written for it improves the original work, which is the only excuse for one musician adding to the work of another.

The final encores were Tschai-kowsky's "Troika," an arrangement of a Kreisler composition and the inevitable C-sharp minor prelude.

Discussion of Rachmaninoff as an artist is superfluous. He towers so far above most of those in the musical world that statements of his attributes become platitudes.