

MUSIC

By J. O. L.

The Rachmaninoff Recital.

The penultimate recital of the Philharmonic course took place last evening at the Lyric, the artist of the occasion being Sergei Rachmaninoff, the famous Russian, who, after his superb performances in this country with orchestra, was immediately hailed as the legitimate successor in the pianistic field to Paderewski. While undoubtedly an artist of very great distinction, a player possessed of undisputable prowess, the most facile technical equipment, deep introspective appreciation and poetic understanding, yet it cannot truthfully be said that, in recital, he ever touches those profound interpretative depths he so richly plumbed when playing his own nationalistic and appealing *concerti* with the great orchestras. Last evening, for instance, he gave astonishingly little variety to his readings of a recital program, the real feature of which was a long and very beautiful Chopin group that struck the keynote of his performance.

Chopin he plays exquisitely, with a sensitive delicacy, a rich, languorous, poetic charm, a deep tenderness and a kind of ineffable sweetness that is very appealing, but this same quality when introduced into his reading of the Beethoven "Sonata Pathetique" made that great work (because of its lack of breadth, the absence of intellectual vision and the omission of tonal color) seem absurdly trivial and tinkling. He played, of course, the Handel theme and variations superbly, for it is in the performance of these arabesques, the *fiorituri* that embellish mere themes and musical episodes, that this pianist exhibits his most amazing facility, his suavity of tone and his remarkable brilliance.

But Mr. Rachmaninoff's performance last evening was more notable for its fine beauty than for dynamic variety. It was only in the spectacular Liszt Second Rhapsody that he introduced any fire or warmth into his playing. One rarely hears, however, anything more fluent or brilliant than his reading of the Tausig embellishments of the Weber "Invitation to the Dance," or anything more delicate and charming than the way in which he played the transcription of his own song, "Daisies."

The program, naturally, with its beautiful Chopin group that displayed the pianist's art to such fine advantage, was inherently a "popular" one, and Mr. Rachmaninoff was received with unbounded enthusiasm by an audience that largely occupied the upper portions of the music hall.