

AMUSEMENTS

Rachmaninoff Gives Convincing Demonstration of His Art

Sergei Rachmaninoff is generally acknowledged to be one of the world's greatest pianists. Certainly no appreciator of music who heard his superb playing last evening could deny that he justly merits all the praise which has been bestowed upon him. The remarkable way in which he held his audience was an unconscious tribute to a master musician.

The artist opened his memorable program with a Beethoven Sonata opus 90, and followed this with the Schumann "Papillons," a Chopin group, his own C sharp minor prelude and polka, Dohnany's Etude, opus 28, his difficult piano arrangement of the popular Kreisler "Liebeslied" and Liszt's "Tarantella." And he played, as always, with perfect craftsmanship. His power, his beauty and resonance of tone, his mastery of color—all praise him.

Mr. Rachmaninoff is a player of such formidable technical powers that it would seem but natural if he were sometimes carried away by the joy of revelling in this prowess of his, but he never errs. He never forgets that his mission is to reveal the inner message of a composer's work, not to obscure it. The perfect adjustment of the means to the end makes his hearers marvel. Subtle control of tone color and mastery of expressive detail are ever-present virtues of his work. Both in his playing and in his compositions Rachmaninoff's is intellectual musicianship of the type that by no means neglects the heart. He tells beautiful things in a beautiful way.

Many recalls followed his interpretations, and the illustrious pianist was as generous with encores as if his printed program had not been such a taxing one. The "Spinning Song" of Mendelssohn was played with amazing dexterity and clarity at a dizzy pace. Chopin's Valse in E

Flat Major further strengthened the impression Rachmaninoff had already made as an ideal interpreter of the music-poetry of Chopin. The "Troika en Traineaux" by Tschai-kowsky and his own arrangement of Bizet's "Minuet" were made impressive by his remarkable vitality and finesse of style and his unerring instinct for tonal beauty.

No one who heard Rachmaninoff could fail to be thrilled and stimulated. He is a supreme artist.

"The Bells"

The St. Michael's Dramatic club successfully presented last evening, to a crowded and appreciative audience, "The Bells," a drama in three acts. This is the second time that the play has been staged at the college, and judging from the manner in which it was received, it proved to be just as popular as it did seven weeks ago.

Mathias' remorse of conscience, aroused by the recitation of the murder of the Polish Jew committed fifteen years before, and caused also by the noise of bells which he constantly hears ringing in his ears; the rapidity with which he orders the contract of marriage to be signed between his daughter, Annette, and Christian, the gendarme; Mathias' dream in which he is mesmerized and, on his own confession, condemned to be hanged, form the main features of the play.

Leon E. Gosselin took the part of Mathias, the burgomaster in a very able manner, and he deserves great praise for his rendition of a man whose character is played upon by his insatiable desire for riches and power. Gosselin's most tragic scene is during his dream. Imagining himself to be accused of the murder of the Polish Jew in a court of justice, he refuses to be mesmerized, protesting that such an act is illegal and calling for Christian, his future son-in-law, to come to his aid. His pleas are of no avail. The mesmerist is summoned and while Mathias is under his influence, he relates, how, in order to gain the coveted gold of the Polish Jew, he plotted and carried out the murder; how he possessed himself of gold; how, finally, he disposed of the body by burning it in his lime kiln. Much strong acting was required for this scene and to Mr. Gosselin's credit it must be said that he succeeded admirably.

Leo J. Papineau in his role of Christian, a young officer, played his part