

RACHMANINOFF RECITAL BEST THING OF YEAR

Great Russian Pianist Evidences Great Power and Imaginative Artistry.

Rachmaninoff's program Thursday night at Memorial hall was more than a mere piano recital. In him a marvelous brain and a big personality go toward the creation of an interpretive which approaches very near perfection. Memorial hall could have accommodated a much larger audience and one could not refrain from a feeling of regret at the empty seats.

The program was an interesting one commencing with the Chopin F-minor Fantasy, magnificently played. The opening measures so rich in possibilities overlooked by the casual pianist received their full weight of meaning. The long sweeping theme with its triplet accompaniment, the major episode in double notes followed by the climax in climbing octaves and smashing chords, the crisp staccato march rhythm and the adagio in B-minor—space forbids more minute detail; suffice it to say that nothing is overlooked by Rachmaninoff. He is one of the greatest of great artists. No two-note slur is too small to be slighted. The balance of tone, the rhythmic values all go to prove his intellectual genius, to say nothing of the emotional springs without which no music creative or interpretive can be lasting. To the critic who complains of Chopin being mawkishly sentimental, sickly morbid, one would say, "Hear Rachmaninoff play the Fantasy." No over-emotionalized invalid there, but a superb dignity and depth of musical utterance which bespeaks a great work.

The fanciful Schumann carnival was followed through its ever-changing moods and pictures with an artist's true imaginative skill. The complicated rhythms and the irregular phrase forms were presented with a clarity and distinctiveness of articulation which revealed mental conceptions perfectly translated through the fingers.

The musical genius and the stupendous mental powers of the man are most compelling, his technic delightful to listen to. One can almost imagine him grinning up his sleeve as he plays with the piano in the Chopin D-flat major waltz, the Blue Danube waltzes and the little Moszkowski encore, they are so "pretty of the prettiest" in their tonal beauty. Rachmaninoff playing the Blue Danube is as Kreisler playing Viennese waltzes and they both play them charmingly. One scarcely recognized the pianist's own Serenade in its newly embellished condition. Embellishments in other numbers were also present and they were musical joys.

The ever-popular C-sharp minor Prelude was greeted with the usual enthusiasm. It is to be hoped that Rachmaninoff's greater orchestral works, his concerti and songs will be as well known some day.—M. B. M.

Duchess de Langassis