
Rachmaninoff Plays

Why is it that when mother decides that it is time for the children to take music lessons, nine times out of ten she chooses the piano as the medium of their musical education, and then when an artist of the calibre of Rachmaninoff comes to Brooklyn he plays to a conspicuous number of empty seats? It places the piano in the anomalous position of being at the same time the most popular and the most unpopular medium of musical expression. Yet in New York Rachmaninoff fills Carnegie Hall. One is almost forced to the conclusion that Brooklyn takes her music socially.

The program of Tuesday evening, December 11th, was a conventional one as to composers, the great Russian being unduly modest, not only with his own works, but those of his fellow-countrymen. He opened his program with the *English Suite, No. 2* by Bach, and followed it up with Mendelssohn, Chopin and Liszt. He played but three short compositions of his own, two *Etudes Tableau*, and an arrangement of Moussorgsky's cossack song, *Hopak*. Of course the famous *Prelude* was included among the encores. One wonders if he does not sometimes regret writing so popular a thing! The skill and beauty of his playing is too well known to need further comment. He conveys strength and power without resorting to dynamics, and weaves melody and sweetness without ever becoming insipid.
