

## Music

### RACHMANINOFF RECITAL

Sergei Rachmaninoff played at Convention Hall last night. The audience was not by any means as large as others that have greeted him there, but it came at once under his spell. At the close of the program he began playing extra numbers; if the crowd had its way with him, he may be playing yet, for aught the writer knows.

Rachmaninoff is one of the most dramatic, moving and entertaining pianists of modern times. His mechanical powers are prodigious and he dares all sorts of things that most pianists do not; his tempos are whirlwinds when he chooses; the piano is hard taxed to give him all the tone he demands of it in passages of storm and stress. But he can be the gentlest of giants; he has as keen feeling for and love of the beauty spots in Liszt and Chopin as needs be. Some comment bothers with the fact that he hits wrong notes at times; but who cares? The wrong ones are as elements of the atom in the mass to the right ones he hits. And out of the playing comes straight to the hearer something that holds his attention from first to last, something that carries him in varied ways to a complete interpretation that is deeply and definitely impressive. It is in this way, if one may judge by report that Liszt and Rubinstein played; it is in this way that Paderewski often plays and Moriz Rosenthal and Leopold Godowski, when the spirit moves him.

Howard Hanson says that it is the emotional appeal of music that counts most and longest. Rachmaninoff plays music as he feels it and you, his listener, feel it as he does. He started last night with Bach, the Liszt transcription of the A minor prelude and Fugue, and a little Prelude in D minor. Why do not more pianists program stuff from the "Well Tempered Clavichord;" this is Bach music that people would really love to hear, played as it was last night. Then came the Liszt B minor Sonata. This is to all intents and purposes Liszt in full revelation; it is stormy and grim; passionate almost to incoherence, and all interlarded with beautiful melodies, framed in cascades of notes. It was as full of color as an icicle held against glass at night. An the extra number given after was in exquisite taste—calm after storm.

Then came a Chopin group. Traditional tempos were shattered; a ballade that is as hackneyed as a Marie Corelli novel, was made into a dramatic and exciting piece of music all dotted with beautiful things, deliberately and daintily expressed. Two etudes were delightfully played. Rachmaninoff considers Chopin's text and then he plays what he feels from his survey and his pondering of it. It is not Chopin as many pianists play the music, but it is vivid, and enlivening, and altogether good to hear.

Three Rachmaninoff pieces, each short and two of them Preludes were next played; the preludes were charming, and the C sharp minor was not programmed or played, unless in the aftermath of the program. Then came Godowski's transcription of Strauss's gorgeous "Artists' Life" waltz. It seems probable that Godowski intended to make a piece of music that very few pianists but himself can play, but Rachmaninoff is one of the few; he made the thing a glorious bravura performance. And Strauss waltzes are music of the future, even if they were written awhile ago.