

## ∴ Music ∴

### Rachmaninoff Recital.

By HARVEY B. GAUL.

Other pianists come and go and we care not a tittle nor tittle but when Sergei Rachmaninoff comes to our town it is an event to anticipate. There is something imaginative about that man; something that stirs an erstwhile sluggish interest, something provocative in his spicy little phrases that sets us wondering if his peculiar technique is not the only one that is vital.

He can caress the clavier as well as the next man but it is not his legato that counts; his cantilena is as songful and suave as a Mendelssohn addict's and yet this quality is as naught compared to his phrase etchings, as to wit, the Bach and the Chopin. He has the sharpest, neatest episodes and figurations on the concert stage today. His scales are no better than the next virtuoso who will come to town (it is a degree of perfection, a hall-mark of finish they have all achieved,) and yet there will be an individual quality in his scales and arpeggi that no one can gainsay. Is it in his pedals or the much-advertised pressure? Some day we'll ask a Virgil student and find out.

It is seldom that Bach receives breathless attention and yet that is what happened when that partita was played. The overture with its delicate fughetta was beautifully limned, and the gigue a la fugue, was a happy piece of subject-enunciation.

He gave his Chopin, as he always does, virility and masculinity. Whatever else that largo may be, it is no cantique d'amour, but rather a glorious song. The allegro was heavy-wristed after the manner of the Russian school. The scherzo was a frenzied flight and the whole wound with a truly noble finale.

His Liszt was treated along somewhat similar lines. The familiar E-major "Consolation" was given without recitalist languors. The "Gnomes Dance" was touched off with iridescent sparkles and the "Heroica" was void of mock-heroics.

Medtner's "Fairy Tale" proved to be a Russian folk-song finishing with a cadenza. In his own compositions there was a suggestion of drama and solemnity. The "Etude Tableau" was a rather massive structure and the prelude interesting for its dignity.

Rachmaninoff came to us in a new light last night and a most surprising one. He is a master transcriber, as witness the Schubert "Brooklet" and the Kreisler "Liebesfreud." He re-scaled Schubert's pleasant lied and he re-burbled it. The "Liebesfreud" became a fantasy in free-form, a theme with modernistic variations, and strange as it may seem it was Viennese throughout. His embroideries and embellishments were brilliant and were refreshingly different.

When we left Carnegie Hall people were still clamoring for encores. For aught we know he is playing his "Prelude in C Sharp Minor" for homeless people this morning.