

THE PIANO AT ITS BEST

RACHMANINOFF DELIGHTS AUDIENCE AT IVANHOE.

Much Enthusiasm for the Grave Russian, Who Played Some Old and Some New Music—"The Prelude" Included.

Already almost a legendary character, in spite of being very much alive, Sergei Rachmaninoff played last night in Ivanhoe auditorium. It was a pianist's audience that the grave Russian faced, that is, a house peopled most heavily on the keyboard side, and made up largely of musicians.

And being a pianist's audience, it was the better able to appreciate the magnificent playing this aloof pianist gave it. The audience, which applauded enthusiastically at the rare times Rachmaninoff gave it an opportunity, undoubtedly felt the presence of a master. It recognized, even in the Liszt music, which certainly was as barren as Rachmaninoff's own steppes, the pianism of the player.

Altogether, the recital was an exemplification of the great effect to be made by a pianist who does not start out to make any at all. In the Chopin sonata, for instance, no one could have observed the composer's will more implicitly. The departures from score were minute and always in the way of a subtler nuance or a more pointed phrase. The sonata (the B-minor) was literally played by command of Chopin—and yet its variety and "spring" were almost boundless. The lovely *sostenuto* melody of the first movement, the silky runs of the scherzo and finale, and the breathless moments in the slow movement are surely permanent possessions of all who heard them.

The program was played in two "sittings," as Mr. Paderewski's programs are played. For that reason there was little opportunity for encores until the end, and then the audience secured three before the homeward march began. The first two of them, the "Troika" of Tschai-kowsky, and the march from Beethoven's "Ruins of Athens," were particularly charming.

Needless to say, "the" prelude in C sharp minor was played. It was programmed, possibly because Rachmaninoff knew he would be forced to play it sooner or later, and decided to capitulate gracefully. Some who heard it may have reflected on the manner in which a certain piece becomes the personification of a certain man, as for example, Paderewski's minuet and Kreisler's "Caprice Viennois."

As all good programs should, Rachmaninoff's closed with a piece to startle and make dizzy all comers. Last night it was the pianist's own transcription

of Kreisler's "Liebesfreud," in which all his technical wizardry was summed up, and the player's freedom from pianistic fads and his simplicity of style more emphatically demonstrated. The audience, which was large, was properly astounded.

The A. J. Bundschus Wed 40 Years.

Friends of Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Bundschu of Independence gathered at their home Wednesday night in celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the Bundschu marriage. Mr. and Mrs. Bundschu were married in Independence.

Catholic Women to Milwaukee.

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