

## RACHMANINOFF IN EIGHTH RECITAL AT MUSIC HALL HERE

By MARY M. HOWARD.

Sergei Rachmaninoff gave last evening in Elmwood Music hall his eighth consecutive yearly recital here, and showed no diminution of his titanic powers in the realm of piano playing. On the contrary, the great Russian has never shone with more dazzling brilliancy than in his performance of Chopin's B minor sonata, which was an artistic pinnacle of the evening. He gave out the opening chords of the Allegro maestoso with massive splendor, he sang the fresh and haunting melody in D with exquisite sweetness. The scherzo he made as "light as a harebell in the soft breeze," as delicate as fairy feet tripping in the moonlight, and the song phrases of the largo he set forth with ineffable loveliness. The writer can recall no other artist whose playing of this sonata has ever made such impression. Judged by the laws of pure pianism, it was a marvelous piece of work. But it was also a vital expression of the musical thought of the composition and was constantly beautified by kaleidoscopic coloring that produced extraordinarily fascinating effects.

Mr. Rachmaninoff opened his programme with a rarely heard overture, sarabande and gigue from a Bach suite in D major. A second group comprised Schubert's Impromptu in A flat, the longer one, in that key, and a transcription of his song, The Brook, by Rachmaninoff. None of the Russian master's creative work has been of more interest than this amazingly clever and charming transcription of the Schubert melody, in which the theme is overlaid with an embroidery of filigree runs and embellishments through which it glimmers and sparkles as bewitchingly as a purling stream under the sunlight. Its appeal to the listeners was evident from the applause which lasted many minutes at the close of the piece.

A Liszt group contained Consolation, Dance of the Gnomes, and Heroica, three tone sketches which, from their contrasted character, offered wide scope to the versatility of the performer. A Fairy Tale in E minor by N. Medtner, a present day Russian new in this country and for whose compositions Mr. Rachmaninoff has before made propaganda, and three Rachmaninoff compositions completed the programme. The trio comprised Etude Tableau, a study, apparently, of colossal difficulty; one of the preludes and a transcription of Kreisler's Liebesfreud, very taking, very charming, and played here for the first time, as was the Schubert transcription.

All the essentials and graces of great piano playing which have made the Russian master world famous were present in his performance last night. The keyboard mastery which knows no obstacles, the combination of intellect, musicianship and poetry with the wonderful instinct for color, all were there. The artist was brought back to receive the tribute of public favor many times, but granted only two encores at the end of his programme, the final one, the Beethoven-Rubinstein Turkish March, being an exposition of perfect dynamic gradation.