

MUSIC

RACHMANINOFF'S CONCERT.

Every great artist, who is also a composer, has his own composition that is a favorite with the public and which that public is disappointed if it does not hear some time during every concert appearance of the artist in question. Paderewski has his "Minute," Kreisler has his "Caprice Viennois," Rachmaninoff has his "C Sharp Minor Prelude." Yesterday afternoon when Mr. Rachmaninoff gave his annual Washington concert before his usual standing-room-only audience, the entire program was but a prolonged prelude for most of the audience to that moment when, as the very last of his three encores, the great Russian struck the three majestic chords that announce and form the basis of the "Prelude in C Sharp Minor." Then the house rang with an applause as different in quality from all applause which had greeted previous numbers as a sudden Spring flood of sunshine is after gray March days. It is a remarkably satisfying composition, this prelude, beautiful with a majesty that is not pompous, melodious in a dignified vein, and never quite so understandingly played as under the fingers of its composer. It was quite evident that this was the opinion of the audience at large yesterday afternoon.

The great Beethoven, who is so constantly honored this centenary of his death year, was given first place on the program. The "Sonata, Opus 26," was the work presented. With its funeral motive presented in a manner which seemed to have a wistful, philosophical atmosphere, it was an arresting selection. Always the scholar, Mr. Rachmaninoff gave those who delight most in the technical excellence of his genius rare satisfaction in his interpretation of the Schumann "Etudes Symphonique." He put much color into the difficult work, yet the elusive lyricism of Schumann was not the dominating quality in his reading.

The real climax of beauty was the Brahms. Mr. Rachmaninoff played both the "Intermezzo, Opus 118," and "Ballade." The shading of tonal qualities, the roundness in the pianissimo effects, the soaring lightness of the themes, all were emphasized under this master pianist's hands.

Of the Chopin group the gay, frivolous "Rondo," for all its artificialities, was an unusually pleasing number with crystal cascades of notes that invite superlatives for description. In the encores the first was Chopin's "Waltz in E Minor," also unusually played.

The quaintness and pictorial qualities of Medtner's "Fairy Tales" (F minor, opus 26, and B minor, opus 20) delighted many. In these and in his own "Prelude," which followed, Mr. Rachmaninoff seemed to desert the scholarly and become delightfully human in his playing. The brilliant intricacies of the Liszt "Rakoczy March" were dashed off with surety as the final scheduled number. The Chopin waltz, Mr. Rachmaninoff's own arrangement of the Russian folk melody, "Hopak," written as a song by Moussorgsky, and the famous prelude, were the encores.