

RACHMANINOFF ENTHRALLS HIS BIG AUDIENCE

By J. CHELTENHAM

Two hours of pianism, every moment of which was brilliant to the point of dazzling, rewarded the capacity audience at Sergei Rachmaninoff's 5 o'clock recital in the Orpheum on Friday.

From first entrance to final exit, the Russian composer-virtuoso, his face seamed with rhapsody and his great height stooped in thought, held all in the thrall of his authority; and what he played, and how he played it, caused vehement outbursts of appreciation to follow on seasons of breath-caught interest.

For the program which he gave might well demand and achieve a rapt concentration in both performer and listener. Almost all the music was of that "tour-de-force" quality which calls for an enveloping keyboard domination and a tremendous exercise of technical genius, and every call was answered with an astounding facility and power.

TECHNIQUE STANDS BETWEEN

Perfect technically—save for an occasional loss of symphonic balance caused by a too-masterful left hand—Rachmaninoff's playing has limitations in interpretation. Despite his sincere and brooding style, despite the wistful, fervent, remote beauties of thought one finds in his writings, he rarely contrives that the auditor "lose himself" in the performer's mood. The mood may be there, and strongly; but always the scintillating technique stands between.

At least, this was the case during the more subjective parts of the entrance item, Beethoven's Sonata, (opus 26). The "Theme and Variations," although an immediate and arresting exhibition of the pianist's rhythmic and phrasal eloquence, exquisite tone and touch and extraordinary physical resourcefulness, did not present the series of mood-contrasts of which it is possible.

Again, in the "Scherzo" and the "Funeral March" the breadth and compassion of Beethoven were lacking—the laughter in one was too bitter, the doom in the other too harsh; but the fluent and immaculate limning of the music's contours was a constant delight—especially so in the murmuring intricacies of the "Scherzo" and in the glowing abandon of the "Allegro" that ends the Sonata.

WITH FLASHING GRACE

Two Etudes by Mendelssohn were done with flashing grace; and then came the master-effect of the recital: Schumann's "Etudes Symphoniques." Here Rachmaninoff presented a succession of technical feats with an abiding endurance and versatility that won loud acclaim; here, too, a splendid interpretative power was revealed, for, seeming akin in temperament to Schumann, the pianist gave vivid pictures of all the weird and wonderful contrasts of the work.

Thrilling moments there were in

Liszt's "Funerailles," which followed, and throughout the dynamic extent of which was maintained a keyboard command rare to behold. Medtner's "Fairy Tale" was flowing delicacy, but the complete enchantment of fairyland was absent. And then, with "Two Etudes Tableaux" (of shimmering subtleties and fascinating rhythms) and THE "Prelude," the performer displayed his genius as composer to a hugely demonstrative house.

A brilliant rendition of the enormous Tausig transcription of a Strauss Valse brought the recital to a fitting climax; but the pianist was not allowed to leave until he had added several recall items, amongst these being a Chopin valse and a glittering transcription (his own?) of the "Minuetto" from Bizet's "L'Arlesienne."

This Rachmaninoff recital serves to make felt once more the welcome presence of Lily Laverock.

Three Drowned When On Errand of Mercy

PARIS, March 12.—Although some of the overflowing rivers had subsided today, the flood situation in southwestern France continued grave. The Garonne river is still rising.

Villagers along its banks are camped in the upper parts of their homes or have abandoned them altogether.

The ancient city of Cahors, on the river Lot, is a pitiable sight. Many buildings collapsed.

Three persons were drowned while taking food to citizens marooned in the Lisac region. Their boat overturned.

Chinese Seamen Threaten Strike

HONG KONG, March 12.—A general strike among seamen was threatened here today following the seizure of alleged seditious posters aboard the steamer Fatshan by police.

The crew of the Fatshan, about to clear for Canton, refused to sail until the posters had been restored. Police reinforcements were called and the incident ended without bloodshed.

FRENCH GOVT. SUSTAINED

PARIS, March 12.—The Poincare government obtained another vote of confidence yesterday when the chamber of deputies, ending interpellations on the high cost of living, voted confidence in the ministry 393 votes to 130.

Her Little Boy Caught Cold While Out Playing

Mrs. F. Cade, Elmwood, Man., writes:—"My little boy caught cold while out playing in the snow. He coughed incessantly all that night and the next day, and nothing I gave him seemed to relieve him. When my husband came home he brought a bottle of

Dr. Wood's
Norway
Fine
Syrup

