

RACHMANINOFF IS IMPRESSIVE

Famous Russian Composer-
Pianist Delights Capacity
Orpheum Audience.

SCHOLARLY ARTIST

By R. J.

The reappearance in recital at the Orpheum Theatre late yesterday afternoon after two years' absence of Sergel Rachmaninoff, the distinguished Russian composer-pianist, attracted an audience which crowded that auditorium to its utmost. It was one of those unavoidable 5 o'clock affairs, due as usual to the fact that Vancouver is so far without a decent place to house large evening gatherings. There was, as anticipated, considerable enthusiasm and, to be quite candid, it was justified.

While there will naturally be conflicting opinions as to the pianistic merits of Rachmaninoff, it is important to remember the hold he has on music lovers in this city and, indeed, in music centres all over the world. This surely must be regarded as a testimony to the power of the man as well as to the responsiveness of his following.

CREATIVE INTERPRETER.

Rachmaninoff is not a "showy" person, but in appearance and performance is singularly unadorned. He is, in the first place, a creative interpreter and a technician of brilliant gifts, and while you may not agree with his views, the fact remains you are bound to respect his intentions. It may be said that he plays for the benefit of the keyboard student rather than for those who are not on "intimate" terms with the pianistic art. He is decidedly pedantic, and his programmes—if one is to judge from the present occasion—appear to be neither distinctive or novel, although they are unquestionably interesting because of the artist's sheer brilliancy.

As a matter of fact Rachmaninoff is practically independent of his programme. The artist has so much music in himself that he not only solves the aesthetic problems of the severest works in his repertoire, but can fill the empty cup of many a lesser opus from

the reservoirs of his own rich personality. Under the glamor of his playing seemingly insignificant passages are invested with new meanings. In music worthy of his gifts he is able to rise to transcendental heights. His playing is distinctly "personal" but not at the expense of the composer, whose music he visualizes.

THE PROGRAMME.

Rachmaninoff has his own way of expressing himself, and that he does so with artistic conviction must be admitted. His perfected technic does not altogether call attention to its own brilliance but contributes to a lucid, expressive performance.

The Russian master began his programme with the Beethoven "Sonata Op 26," which he gave with elegance of expression; the Theme and Variations he clothed with ravishing kaleidoscopic tints and rhythm charm, while the Funeral March and Finale were admirably done.

In the Schumann "Symphonic Etudes" Rachmaninoff later did some playing of extraordinary beauty, marked especially by fascinating gradations of color and dynamics. These qualities were in evidence also in a memorable performance of Liszt's "Funerailles Op 34 No. 7," "Two Etudes" (Mendelssohn) and Medtner's "Fairy Tale." The pianist moreover gave two etudes tableaux of his own, followed by his popular Prelude.

Completing the printed programme was the Strauss-Tausig "Valse," which Rachmaninoff played with superb rhythmic lilt, skill in phrasing and charm of expression. For this he was obliged to add several extras.

Altogether, here was a noteworthy occasion, proving beyond doubt that a scholarly musician can command wholehearted respect even if some of his listeners can not agree with him. For the visit of Rachmaninoff let Vancouver music lovers thank Miss Laverock.

Sidney Plans July First Celebration

SIDNEY, March 12.—At a meeting of the Board of Trade, the question of putting on a swimming gala and day of sports to commemorate the sixtieth anniversary of Confederation was discussed and a committee appointed to co-operate with the Athletic Association in making plans for the big day.

The board discussed the question of an automobile ferry between Sidney and White Rock or some other mainland point, and information is being sought as to the feasibility of this scheme.

The resignation of Mr. L. H. Davies as secretary of the board was accepted with regrets.