

# RACHMANINOFF HEARD HERE FOR FIRST TIME

Russian Composer, Conductor  
and Soloist Charms Art  
Society Guests.

By CHARLES N. BOYD.

The Rachmaninoff prelude in C-sharp minor is one of those pieces which hosts of composers must regard with impatience. Though lacking any distinctly novel features in form or content, it possesses those elements which make for popularity, and its acceptance was so general and so rapid that the composer was well known in the musical world before he had passed his 25th year. Last night a large audience gathered at Carnegie Music hall to greet the composer and hear him play a program of his piano music. It was the 35th reception of the Art society of Pittsburgh and will be remembered as one of the most enjoyable.

Sergei Rachmaninoff was born in Novgorod, Russia, 36 years ago. At the age of 9, having shown a pronounced musical talent, he was sent to the St. Petersburg conservatory, but after four years migrated to the conservatory at Moscow. He studied the piano with various teachers, finally with Siloti; in composition his teachers were Arensky and Tanejew. In 1892 he won the great gold medal of the Moscow conservatory for his one act opera "Aleko." After a period of travel as pianist he returned to Moscow to conduct, at first at the "Private Opera," and later at the Imperial theater, where he conducted only operas by Russian composers. For the past three years he has made his home in Dresden, devoting his time mainly to composition. The list of his piano music includes two concertos, two suites for two pianos, the sonata played last night, and many smaller pieces. Two symphonies, a symphonic poem and a Capriccio constitute a formidable group for orchestra, to which may be added three operas, choral works, and perhaps a hundred songs. His pronounced success as a pianist, conductor and composer makes him one of the foremost figures in modern Russian music, and many are disposed to regard him as the direct successor of Tschaiakowsky.

When Rachmaninoff—the second syllable has the accent—walked on the stage last evening his appearance was a surprise to those who looked for the mannerisms of genius. Tall, athletic, close-

cropped and smooth-shaven, he bears few of the outward signs of piano playing. The first number on the program was his sonata in D-minor, opus 28, a long and elaborate work. The first movement is perhaps the most interesting on account of its clever workmanship; the second presents attractive melodic features, but it remained for the galloping rhythm of the finale to arouse real enthusiasm. A group of four numbers began with the melody in E, which in popularity is a close rival of the famous prelude. Then came a capricious humoresque, a dainty barcarolle, and the polichinelle, for which the composer is said to have special affection. Four preludes, ending with that in C-sharp minor, ended the well-chosen program.

For the benefit of those who did not hear Rachmaninoff's interpretation, it may be remarked that the first section of the last prelude was played gently and with deliberation; the second part began slowly and was worked up to a whirlwind tempo, and the last part was somewhat faster than the first tempo, with no retarding of the final chords.

Rachmaninoff's playing is straightforward, free from affectation, and without any show of virtuosity, though he is not lacking when there is a call for technical facility. His command of tone coloring is complete, and constantly in evidence. To give such a program, entirely of his own compositions, to play it as well, and to hold the attention of the audience as he did last night is a real achievement, and it is to be hoped that this introduction will be followed by better acquaintance with this striking personality.

## Oakland Board of Trade Meeting.

The Oakland board of trade will hold its regular meeting this evening at its rooms in Carnegie library. Officers and directors to serve for the ensuing year will be elected.

## A DAILY MENU.

### BREAKFAST.

Oranges.  
Cereal.  
Salt Mackerel. Hashed Browned Potatoes.  
Rolls. Jelly.  
Coffee.

### LUNCHEON.

Clam Bouillon.  
Veal Croquettes. Peas.  
Brown Bread. Apple Butter.  
Cream Cheese with Bar le Duo.  
Toasted Crackers.  
Tea.

### DINNER.

Cream of Cauliflower Soup.  
Baked White Fish. Parsley Sauce.  
Escalloped Potatoes. String Beans.  
Asparagus and Pimento Salad.  
French Dressing.  
Baked Apple Dumplings.  
Coffee.

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