

RACHMANINOFF TRIUMPHS AGAIN

Happiness as Profound as
Sorrow in Interpre-
tions of Master

SERGEI RACHMANINOFF: Piano recital, His Majesty's Theatre, program: Thirty-two Variations, Beethoven, Caprice, Dandrieu - Godowsky, Gigue, Lully - Godowsky, Pastoral, Chopin, Scarlatti-Tausig, Two waltzes, Voices of the Forest, One Lives Only Once, Strauss-Tausig, Encore, Waltz, A flat, Chopin, Polonchelle, Melodie, Humoresque, Three preludes: G sharp minor, D minor, C sharp minor, Rachmaninoff, Rhapsody No. 2, Last; Czajkovski, by Rachmaninoff, Encore, Trolka, Schalkowsky, Management, Louis H. Bourdon.

The concert spelled another triumph for the master. If the adjective "super" were not so loosely applied to moving picture stars, it could fittingly be used in writing about Mr. Rachmaninoff, for super-pianist is what he really is. On the previous Sunday, after Mr. Hofmann's recital, musicians inevitably drew comparisons between Rachmaninoff and Hofmann; and some found Mr. Hofmann more absolutely and purely a pianist, while still standing with uncovered head before Rachmaninoff, the composer. Those who had been a little awed by the height, depth and breadth of Mr. Rachmaninoff's playing, responded gratefully to the greater emotional warmth of Mr. Hofmann's; abashed a little at what they called the "austerity" of Rachmaninoff, they thrilled to the "humanity" of Hofmann. The explanation probably is that Mr. Hofmann is a born pianist and that Mr. Rachmaninoff is a pianist only incidentally. Mr. Hofmann thinks in piano terms, he makes the piano as intimately his instrument as a violinist possesses his violin; while to Mr. Rachmaninoff the piano is a transparency, as is the orchestra, something through which his ideas may clearly be seen. If all the pianos in the world were to be smashed, Mr. Hofmann would doubtless make one for himself, for Hofmann without a piano is not to be thought of; while Mr. Rachmaninoff might fashion an instrument of quite different pattern, but one which would serve his ends exactly as well as a concert grand.

PROFOUND HAPPINESS.

Montreal concert-goers have reason to thank Mr. Rachmaninoff for many things, but for none more truly than his lesson that happiness in music can be as profound as sorrow. We have taken it too much for granted, many times, that only gloomy sentiments can be deep, and that brightness can be realized only in frivolity or excitement. But gladness in Mr. Rachmaninoff's art is substantial, as moving as tragedy, as real as himself. As to warmth and "the human touch," could any feeling have been warmer, more human, than that expressed in portions of the Beethoven Variations or in the Melodie? Could any gaiety have been more care-free than that which animated the Gigue or the Caprice? The difference between the brilliance of Mr. Rachmaninoff and the brilliance of other pianists is that everything in his case is bigger. What other pianists have here and there, he has altogether. When they have reached their limitations, he still is within a margin of largeness. When their vision fails, his remains undimmed. When they can say no more, and fall into repetitions, he is saying new things. Where they must be careful to avoid confusion, he can marshal clearly a host of thoughts. Where many of them stop, he begins.—P. K.