

STAGELAND GOSSIP.

Seldom has an audience been asked to assemble for a concert on so atrocious a night as last night. Seldom has an audience of such size as attended the Rachmaninoff recital in Music Hall last night gathered on such a night, and seldom has an audience been awarded with such a superlative concert as the great Russian pianist and composer gave.

Rachmaninoff stands to-day as the greatest creative artist of our time. That he plays the piano is secondary. He plays the instrument in superb style, to be sure, with a technical assurance and finesse which compares with the best. But, after all, the piano is only the means for the unfolding of a musical nature, a musical power and a musical soul the like of which has not been heard here in a generation.

It matters little what Rachmaninoff played. He gave a marvelously poetic

performance of the seldom-heard B minor sonata of Chopin, the first movement—especially the middle section—and the third being the most delicate example of tonal painting. He played a number of Chopin etudes with a thrill which made the audience gasp. He played some of his own compositions, of course, including his inevitable C sharp minor prelude, to the huge delight of the crowd. He played an interesting study of his compatriot, Scriabin, who became as revolutionary in his music as the Soviet idea of government. He played the Gnomesreigen in a manner to make one gasp, and the lovely D flat major study of Liszt and the "Campanella" in a style to prove to what heights of musicianship virtuosity may be lifted. He played a generous allotment of encores. That is merely cataloguing what things he used to give expression to the finest, noblest, most impressive musical mind it has been our good fortune to meet in these troubled days.

There is nothing more to add, except that the audience was stirred as it rarely had occasion to be. At the conclusion of the regular program there were demands for more, insistent demands, for the audience would not leave. Such enthusiasm on the part of a Cincinnati crowd is in itself an event. Last night it was the spontaneous expression of a public which could not do otherwise.

J. H. T.