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Yesterday's performance of "Rusalka" at the Bolshoi Theatre attracted attention primarily due to the appearance at the conductor's stand of the new conductor, Mr. Rachmaninoff, who enjoys a well-deserved reputation as a talented composer both here and abroad. True, as a debut opera, "Rusalka" is extremely unfavourable for a conductor: its instrumentation is so formulaic, ponderous, and inelegant that the conductor has no chance of showing himself as a subtle interpreter of the given music; nevertheless, Mr. Rachmaninoff managed to highlight something here that had previously been completely lost. In any case, we heard an artistic, not a crafty, performance. If there were any shortcomings, they should be attributed to the extremely unfavourable cast. Just as in "Ruslan" the female chorus was carried off, so in "Rusalka" this fate fell to the men. Mr. Petrov's handsome bass rang out superbly. The duet between the prince and the miller was beautiful. Mr. Rachmaninoff, who did not overshadow the orchestra and followed the singers beautifully, contributed in no small part to its success. The female chorus was quite weak.

[Translation: Google]

Вчерашній спектакль - «Русалка» - въ Большомъ театрѣ привлекалъ, главнымъ образомъ, вниманіе появленіемъ за дирижерскіиъ пультонъ новаго капельмейстера г. Рахманинова, пользующагося какъ у насъ, такъ и за границей заслуженной славой талантливаго композитора. Правда, что, какъ дебютная опера, для дирижера «Русалка» въ высшей степени не благопріятна: инструментована она такъ шаблонно, тяжело, неизящно, что дирижеру показать себя, какъ тонкаго толкователя данной музыки, не на чешь; но, тѣмъ не менѣе, г. Рахманиновъ сумѣлъ и здѣсь оттъннить иное, что прежде со-всѣмъ пропадало. Во всякомъ случаѣ, Мы слышали художественное, а не ремесленное исполненіе. Если и были какіе недочеты, то ихъ слѣдуетъ отнести къ крайне неблагопріятному составу исполнителей. Какъ въ «Русланѣ» вывезъ женскій персоналъ, такъ въ «Русалкѣ» эта доля выпала на мужчинъ. Красивый басъ г. Петрова отлично зву-чалъ. Дуэтъ князя съ мельникомъ про-шелъ прекрасно. Успѣху его немале со-дѣйствовалъ г. Рахманиновъ, не сагау-шая оркестромъ и прекрасно слѣда за пѣвцами. Женскій персоналъ былъ совсѣмъ слабъ.