

## MUSIC

*A New Concerto by Rachmaninoff.*

The fourth Sunday afternoon concert of the Symphony Society, which took place at The New Theatre yesterday, invited attention to several things, each one of which might have furnished forth material for wide reaching discussion. There was a new phase of the experimentation which is in progress to determine the question whether or not the acoustical properties of the playhouse are such as make it a desirable concert room; a Russian composer who fills a large place in the public eye, if not in the public ear, brought forward a new composition in the largest form adaptable to the pianoforte, and himself played the solo part. On the programme also was an unfamiliar work for orchestra by a French composer of established reputation. A large capacity for musical enjoyment, a great patience and much physical, intellectual and emotional endurance are required of a wide observer of New York's musical doings if he is to enter with zest upon the work of a new week which has such a beginning without the rest of a single day. Yet the audience yesterday was prompt in appreciating the delights of the concert and unusually enthusiastic in its expression of gratitude and approval. For the subscribers there was peculiar ground for gratification in the advance which the concert marked over that of a week before. The orchestra played better, the solo feature was infinitely superior, and the music was heard to greater advantage. A "property" scene inclosed the stage, and did so more completely than the pretentious set prepared especially for the purpose, and the voice of the band came out fuller and with more homogeneity than before. It still wanted something of the volume and brilliancy of tone of which the fine organization is capable, but the improvement over the preceding concerts showed that those qualities are now within reach.

The programme consisted of Mozart's Symphony in C (called the "Jupiter"), a concerto in D minor, No. 3, for pianoforte and orchestra, of which the solo part was played by the composer, Sergei Rachmaninoff, and two short orchestral pieces, "Arléquin," by Lalo, and "Marche Joyeuse," by Chabrier, of which the former was new to the local public. A spirited performance of the symphony put the audience in a mood which something less moving than the concerto proved to be would have raised to enthusiasm. As it was, the Russian, who is likely soon to be hailed as the finest representative of his country's music, enjoyed a triumph so emphatic and spontaneous that he did not hesitate to show his own surprise as well as deep satisfaction. His playing, like his music, was ingratiating in manner and matter. A frank, manly, unaffected bearing put him in pleasant communion with his listeners, and his obviously unconscious indifference to the customary devices of the virtuoso or composer on exhibition held him there and developed the feeling into a sweet and sane intimacy. His concerto is overlong, not only in the movement which discloses most labor and reflection (the first), but also in the second (which, treated as an intermezzo, passes from reverie to playfulness, and were it not for its structural character might serve as much more than an introduction to the finale) and the last, which when it reaches a dashing march rhythm is spirited and has so much in it that sounds like a spontaneous outpouring that it is a pity the general impression is marred by unquestionable overelaboration. The incessant employment of the solo instrument militates against the notion which once prevailed that a concerto should in a way represent a contest between the solo instrument and the band, but Mr. Rachmaninoff has not slighted the accompanying factor, but given it many proclamations of pity and moment. Mr. Damrosch directed the performance as if his heart was in the work, and his rejoicing in the triumphant outcome was obviously sincere. The concert will be repeated next Tuesday evening in Carnegie Hall.

H. E. K.