

ply a timid warning that "Miss Innocence" as it was submitted last evening is no place for a debutante, and we could prove it by concrete testimony were our evidence not to appear in a Home Paper.

The details which we are permitted to disclose include the fact that Miss Anna Held appears as the model pupil of a model school for girls on the Isle of Innocence, situate somewhere in the mediterranean. She is guileless, one of the other pupils explains, because she has never had a vacation. It is the purpose of the school, the preceptress says, to teach its pupils how to be happy, though innocent. Into Miss Held's life comes Mr. Charles Bigelow, with funny whiskers and a funny wig, who teaches her to take her first faltering step into experience with men. By some subtlety or other of Mr. Smith, the librettist, Miss Held enters upon a scene of gayety in the Abbaye in Paris, an idealized resort. An absinth fiend enters, all in disheveled evening dress, and makes a scene. And there are daring dances and much champagne, and the rich Americans present have a regular night of it.

Then there is a very pretty scene indicating a ballet school in Vienna wherein all the young ladies of the chorus appear in ballet dress and dance gracefully with only a few vulgar interpolations to spoil the beauty of it. Miss Alice Hegeman is seen occasionally in a successful attempt to vie with Mr. Bigelow in hideousness, and both inspire much laughter. One of Mr. Bigelow's most favored scenes is that wherein he drinks from a hot water bottle. All of the play last evening, in fact, was received with favor by the audience.

It remains only to be said that in the end Miss Held finds an affinity in Mr. Lawrence D'Orsay as a captain of some British regiment or other. She sings several songs in her attractive and familiar way, and Miss Gene Luneska becomes visible now and then as Helen Legarde, a Gay Parisienne. The Misses Innocence of the chorus are fairly fair save in the show girl section, and most of them are undressed within an inch of their lives.

PERCY HAMMOND.

#### Recital by Sergei Rachmaninoff.

An audience which filled less than half of Orchestra hall assembled in that auditorium yesterday afternoon to hear the only piano recital to be given here by Sergei Rachmaninoff, the Russian composer. The smallness of the audience did not necessarily argue any lack of interest in Mr. Rachmaninoff and his music. He made an exceptionally favorable impression when he played here with the Thomas orchestra some four weeks ago, and under normal conditions he doubtless would have been greeted by a large company of listeners for this recital. But the day after Christmas is a distinctly unfortunate one for the giving of any musical entertainment of serious nature, and it was anything but managerial wisdom to present such an artist on such a date.

Mr. Rachmaninoff was presented, however, and the admirers who did defy engagements, post-prandial heaviness, and Yuletide jollity in order to give him welcome and appreciation were so sincere, spontaneous, and gen-

erous in their approval that there was nothing about the concert that hinted of neglect or indifference.

It was my first hearing of the Russian, and the chief surprise produced by his recital yesterday was the admirable skill of the man as a pianist. He plays with mastery. His technic is ample for all the demands his compositions make and some of them which he gave yesterday demand much in the way of fleetness and surety of finger and in the management of the finer mechanics and dynamics of piano playing. He renders his playing ever beautiful through the employment of delicate and fine nuance, which he obtains with a certainty and ease which belong only to the person who has solved the mysteries of the keyboard and made them his own. It is playing ever sensuously appealing, ever clear, ever clean and exact. That the best of musicianship was present yesterday may be taken for granted, for the program contained only works of the pianist's own creating, and the message he delivered was a message authoritative and emotionally correct. Pianistically and Interpretatively the recital was an unqualified joy.

As for Mr. Rachmaninoff's music, much of it is as lonely music as has been heard in a long, long time. I know nothing of the Russian master's private history or trend of character, but his musical utterances are in large measure the utterances of a man who is lonely, and who feels the weight of that loneliness. It does not seem to make bitter, although it frequently makes restless and rebellious to the point of endeavoring to battle against it. But it is ever there—the melancholy, the pensiveness, the yearning which loneliness brings to a sensitive nature. The quality is not merely the minor strain of sadness that sounds out in nearly all Russian music. It is something more intense, more personal. A voice sings in all the works, for they are melodious, but the voice sings alone. It seems never to have a comrade. It calls constantly, but there is never an answer.

It is easy to believe after hearing yesterday's program that Rachmaninoff could translate into tones the spirit of that wondrously silent and removed painting of Böcklin—"The Island of Death"—and do it in as masterly manner as all who heard the work at the Thomas concert say he has.

The program opened with the D minor Sonata—a work of length and constructed on large lines. Its thematic elements, like those of all the Russian writes, consist chiefly of short, clear cut phrases, which are used over and over with compelling insistency and undeniable effectiveness. Thematically the music does not impress as showing exceptional creative powers, but in the treatment and employment of the material the master is constantly in evidence. The Sonata is a work diffuse in parts—at least it so impressed yesterday—but it is commanding, and it interested the hearers as few new works interest. A Melodie was beautiful and beautifully played, a Barcarolle was a true water picture skillfully conceived and skillfully executed, and the Humoresque and "Polichinell" were brilliant and restlessly impassioned. Four Preludes, among which was the all prevalent and maltreated C sharp minor, were compositions of beauty and of worth, and they, like all else the program contained, were played in manner truly masterly.

W. L. HUBBARD.