

RACHMANINOFF AT SYMPHONY HALL

As Pianist and Composer He Stirs Audience

A very large audience listened to the playing of Sergei Rachmaninoff, distinguished composer and pianist, in Symphony Hall yesterday afternoon.

Himself a composer of typically romantic proclivity, he had chosen a program, if two of the Bach-Busoni Choral Preludes and the Paganini-Liszt A minor study be excepted, predominantly and strongly romantic in spirit. Besides the work above named, it contained a Prelude and Fugue, op. 29, by Taneieff; a Fairy Tale Sonata, op. 25, No. 1, by Medtner; Scriabin's popular 4th sonata, op. 30; Chopin's Etudes in E major and C minor, and the B flat minor Scherzo; three of his own Etudes Tableaux, and Liszt's D flat Etude.

Rachmaninoff belongs to that older school of great pianists which believes in the cultivation of individuality and its projection into the music it plays, rather than in discreet interpretation of the apparent intentions of the composer. Such a doctrine often results in excruciatingly bombastic and inartistic performance, but in such rare instances as that of Rachmaninoff when to an imperious and stormy temperament is joined a musician's insight, imagination and sense of structure and climax, the result is well worth hearing.

To get the fullest enjoyment out of Rachmaninoff's playing, it is well not

to set too much store by perfection of surface polish and invariable beauty of tone. When it suits his purpose he can achieve both, as in the somber choral prelude "Now Comes the Gentle's Saviour," in the suavely melodic D flat study of Liszt and at many another moment during the concert—and even then he rarely woos beauty caressingly. Imperiously he commands it, with firm, strong fingers.

But in general the more virile and imaginative aspects of piano playing stimulate him most. Explosive and exciting rhythms, and stormy conflicts, the painting of barbaric and colorful tone-pictures—in all this and the like, he excels. Under his hands a Chopin Scherzo becomes a Scherzo indeed—loses its innocuity, tempers its elegance. For a Scriabin sonata, he has all the domoniac urgency that, somewhere amid its decadent grace, it demands.

The applause which Rachmaninoff's playing inspired brought the usual series of encores, culminating as usual with the inevitable, but beautifully played C sharp minor Prelude.

SHOOTS OFF FINGER THEN IS ARRESTED

Examining a loaded automatic pistol at his home yesterday proved a costly experiment for Adolph Fiore, 43, of 5 Cooper st, North End. The pistol was accidentally discharged and the bullet took off the top of Adolph's left index finger. He was treated at the Haymarket Relief Hospital. Then—to top it off—he was placed under arrest by police of the Hanover-st station on a charge of violating the alien anti-firearms law.