

attendance that he moved to Carnegie Hall. There, with only his piano, Paderewski repeated the Liszt miracle. And year after year. And this year, perhaps next. Never in America has a public proved so insatiable in its desire to hear a virtuoso. It is the same from New Orleans to Seattle. Everywhere crowded halls, immense enthusiasms. Now to set all this down to an exotic personality, to occult magnetism, to sensationalism, would be unfair to Paderewski and to the critical discrimination of his audiences. Many have gone to gaze upon him, but they remained to listen. His solid attainments as a musician, his clear, elevated style, his voluptuous, caressing touch, his sometimes exaggerated sentiment, his brilliancy, endurance, and dreamy poetry—these qualities are real, not imaginary.

No more luscious touch has been heard since Rubinstein's. Paderewski often lets his singing fingers linger on a phrase; but as few pianists alive, he can spin his tone, and so his yielding to the temptation is a natural one. He is intellectual and his readings of the classics are sober and sane. Of a poetic temperament, he is at his best in Chopin, not Beethoven. Eclectic is the best word to apply to his interpretations. He plays programmes from Bach to Liszt with commendable fidelity and versatility. He has the power of rousing his audience from a state of calm indifference to wildest frenzy. How does he accomplish this? He has not the technique of Rosenthal, nor that pianist's brilliancy and power; he is not as subtle as Joseffy, nor yet so plastic in his play; the morbid witchery of de Pachmann is not his; yet no one since Rubinstein in America at least—can create such climaxes of enthusiasm. Deny this or that quality to Paderewski; go and with your own ears and eyes hear and witness what we have all heard and witnessed.

I once wrote a story in which a pianist figured as a mesmerizer. He sat at his instrument in a crowded, silent hall and worked his magic upon the multitude. The scene modulates into madness. People are transported. And in all the rancour and storm, the master sits at the keyboard, but does not play. I assure you I have been at

Paderewski recitals where my judgments were in abeyance, where my individuality was merged in that of the mob, where I sat and wondered if I really heard; or was Paderewski only going through the motions and not actually touching the keys? His is a static as well as a dramatic art. The tone wells up from the instrument, is not struck. It floats languorously in the air, it seems to pause, transfixed in the air. The Saratitan melancholy of Paderewski, his deep sensibility, are translated into the music. Then with a smashing chord he sets us, the prisoners of his tonal circle, free. Is this the art of a hypnotizer? No one has so mastered the trick, if trick it be.



IGNACE PADEREWSKI.

But he is not all moonshine. Of late years he has taken up a method of piano attack that is positively murderous to the ears. The truth is Paderewski has a tone not so large, as mellow. His fortissimo chorals have hitherto lacked the foundation power and splendour of d'Albort's, Busoni's, and Rosenthal's. His transition from piano to forte is his best range, not the extremes at either end of

the ryanamic scale. A healthy, sunny tone it is at its best, very warm in colour. In certain things of Chopin he is unapproachable. He plays the F minor Concerto and the E-flat minor Scherzo—from the second Sonata—beautifully, and so if he is not so convincing in the Beethoven sonatas, his interpretation of the E-flat Emperor Concerto is surprisingly free from morbidezza; it is direct, manly, and musical. His technique has gained since his advent in New York. This he proved by the way he juggled with the Brahms—Paganini variations; though they are still the exclusive property of Moritz Rosenthal. To sum up—the Paderewski case is a puzzle for musical psychologists. He is not the greatest pianist who ever visited America, he is not the greatest living pianist. A half-dozen others excel him in specialties. But he is more interesting; he has more personal charm; there is the feeling when you hear him that he is a complete man, a harmonious artist, and this feeling is very compelling. Paderewski is a "phenomenon"—using the word in its popular acceptance.

The tricky elf that rocked the cradle of Vladimir de Pachmann—a Russian virtuoso, born in Olessa (1848), of a Jewish father and a Turkish mother (he said to me once, "My father is a Cantor, my mother a Turkey")—must have enjoyed—not without a certain malicious peep at the future—the idea of how much worryment and sorrow it would cause the plump little black-haired baby when he grew up and played the pianoforte like the imp of genius he is. It is nearly seventeen years since he paid his first visit to us. His success, as in London, was achieved after one recital. Such an exquisite touch, subtlety of phrasing, and a technique that failed only in broad, dynamic effects, had never before been noted. Yet de Pachmann is in reality the product of an old-fashioned school. He belongs to the Hummel-Cramer group, which developed a pure finger technique and a charming euphony, but neglected the dramatic side of delivery. Tone for tone's sake; absolute finesse in every figure; scales that are as hot pearls on velvet; a perfect trill; a cantilena like the voice; these, and repose of style, are the shibboleth of

a tradition that was best embodied in Thalberg—plus more tonal power in Thalberg's case. Subjectivity enters largely in this combination, for de Pachmann is "modern," neurotic. His presentation of some Chopin is positively morbid. He is, despite his marked restrictions of physique and mentality, a Chopin player par excellence. His fingers strike the keys like tiny sweet mallets. His scale passages are liquid, his octave playing marvellous, but on miniature—like everything he attempts. To hear him in a Chopin Polonaise is to realise his limitations. But in the Larghetto of the F minor Concerto, in the Nocturnes and Preludes—not of course the big one in D minor—Etudes, Valses, ah! there is then but one de Pachmann. He can be poetic and capricious and elish in the Mazurkas; indeed, it has been conceded that he is the master-interpreter of these dances. The volume of the tone that he draws from his instrument is not large, but it is of a distinguished quality and very musical. He has paws of velvet, and no matter what the difficulty, he overcomes it without an effort. He has been called "the pianissimo" because of his special gift for filing tones to a whisper. His pianissimo begins where other pianists end theirs. Enchanting is the effect when he murmurs in such studies as the F minor of Chopin and the Concert Study of Liszt of the same tonality; or in mounting unisons as he breathlessly weaves the wind through the last movement of Chopin's B-flat minor Sonata. Less edifying are de Pachmann's mannerisms. They are only tolerated because of his exotic, disquieting, and lovely music.

Of a different and gigantic mold is the playing of Moritz Rosenthal. He is a native of Lemberg, in Galician Poland, a city that has given us, among other artists, Marcella Sembrich and Fannie Bloomfield-Zeisler—herself a cousin of Rosenthal. When a mere child, twelve years or so, Moritz walked from Lemberg to Vienna to study with Joseffy. Even at that age he had the iron will of a great man. He played for Joseffy the E minor Concerto of Chopin, the same work with which the youthful Joseffy years before had won the heart of Tausig. Setting


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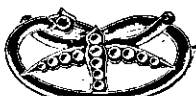
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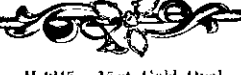
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