

BOSTON SYMPHONY

Its First Concert of the Season at the Academy of Music

The Boston Symphony Orchestra, now under the direction of Mr. Pierre Monteux, gave its first concert of the present season at the Academy of Music last evening, when the programme included the "Prometheus" music of Beethoven and Stravinsky's "Fire Bird" ballet and had the B-flat or so-called "Spring" symphony of Schumann for its principal feature. This latter is a work with which all amateurs are agreeably familiar. Bright, buoyant and melodiously beautiful it is as fresh and sparkling as the morning dew and it aptly and eloquently expresses the spirit of the season with which it is identified. It was competently and enjoyably played, with a good quality of tone and considerable brilliancy of execution, and the appreciative tribute which the performance elicited from a critical audience was very well deserved.

That the orchestra is all that once it was is more than could truthfully be said, for in the processes of disintegration and reconstruction through which it has lately passed something and even much of its former unrivaled unity and homogeneity has unavoidably been lost. To recover the perfection to which through a continuity of management extended over a period of more than thirty years it had been brought, is much more than can be accomplished overnight. It must be the work of time. It is, however, gratifying to note that under Mr. Monteux's able and devoted guidance substantial progress is being made. Certainly the orchestra played better last night, with a greater precision, a more flexible mobility and a finer harmony of ensemble, than it has at any time since its disruption, and that the prestige it once enjoyed will eventually be regained may be regarded as assured.

Of the other orchestral numbers on the list the most notable was the Stravinsky ballet, which although it loses something by reason of its dissociation from the dance which it is intended to accompany, was impressive and interesting in its ultra-modern originality. Stravinsky deals too much in daring dissorances for his score to be pleasing to the ear in a tuneful way, but the effects which he produces are often extraordinary, and while one may not always approve of it his music is continuously interesting. The assisting artist of the occasion was that admirable Russian pianist, Mr. Sergie Rachmaninoff, whose great reputation as a virtuoso was fully sustained by his masterly reading of the E-flat concerto of Liszt. This is a more sympathetic and substantial composition than the one that was heard last week and Rachmaninoff played it for all it was worth.