

## THE SYMPHONY CONCERT.

**M**R. STOCK devoted the first part of his programme at the Chicago Symphony Orchestra concert yesterday to those works which are rather invidiously called "the classics." At least one of these—the overture to Méchul's long-forgotten opera, "Le Jeune Henry," has been so seldom represented in the artistic schemes of modern conductors that it was more or less a novelty. The other old-time offerings were Mozart's E flat major symphony and the G major concerto by Beethoven.

The last-named work was interpreted by Leopold Godowsky—a pianist who has many claims upon the respect of local music lovers. In the days of his residence in this city—they are far-off days—Mr. Godowsky had already gained fame as a pianist whose remarkable powers of execution were the principal feature of his art. He would seem to be desirous of living down that reputation. Twice he has appeared in recent seasons in Chicago, and on each occasion he has presented his hearers with compositions whose brilliancy has been of negative descriptions.

This is not astonishing. The fruits of virtuosity are sweet only to the young. As a player ripens to maturity his sense of the finer things of art ripens with him. He sees but little that is of lasting satisfaction in mere executive display, and if he carries music in his soul—not all performers carry it—he turns to such a product as Mr. Godowsky set forth, and in it finds content.

Beethoven's fourth concerto is an inspiration which is evidently after Mr. Godowsky's heart. Never at any time a passionate interpreter, the pianist is possessed of qualities of admirable musicianship and of intellect. Beethoven's work asks less for rigid emotions than for brains. It is not the performer who wears long hair and gazes yearningly at the ceiling when he interprets Chopin's Nocturnes. Mr. Godowsky is not of that band of soulful players. His feelings are under excellent control, and even in moments wherein feeling would be liberated to the advantage of the music the pianist puts them firmly in their place.

Now the Russian artist's restraint, his musicianship, his subordination of self, his fine tone, made the playing of the concerto a delight to the listening ear. Only Mr. Godowsky's cadenzas were somewhat jarring notes. Not that they were lacking in skill, but that their style was not suited to the work to which they were attached. The pianist had poured new wine into old bottles, and the result was not altogether to be admired. There was much applause when the concerto was brought to an end, but Mr. Godowsky declined to play again.

Of Mr. Stock's reading and of the orchestral playing of Mozart's E flat symphony and of Strauss' "Thus Spake Zarathustra" it is difficult to speak in terms of praise that will not seem exaggerated. Mozart's work is a stream of living beauty, and the loveliness of the piece at this concert was not alone the loveliness of the master's inspiration. The delicacy of performance, the charm of tone, the spirit and enthusiasm of the whole were ravishing indeed.

A taste for Strauss' tone-poem, we presume, may be acquired. We admit that we have not yet acquired it, and find the music, in spite of the brilliance of its scoring, empty and often meaninglessly noisy. The orchestra performed the work with astonishing virtuosity, and Mr. Stock accomplished the feat of conducting it from memory.