

RACHMANINOFF AT ALBERT HALL.

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MUSICIANSHIP.

A GREAT OVATION.

Mr. Serge Rachmaninoff played a long and exacting programme at the Albert Hall yesterday afternoon which included music as familiar as Chopin's Valse in E flat major and Scherzo in C sharp minor, and also music known only to the few—Medtner's three Hymns and the player's own Etude Tableaux No. 5, Op. 39.

Mr. Rachmaninoff, like Liszt and Scriabine, before him, excels equally as composer and pianist. But while there was something sensational in Liszt's playing and in the later compositions of Scriabine, the modern Russian master keeps the least taint of sensationalism at a distance both in his writing and in his playing.

There are other wise pianists who avoid whatever may smack of emphasis and passion. Mr. Rachmaninoff is wiser still, for he does not ignore, but controls them. His readings of Chopin or Tchaikovsky lack none of the urgency, the emphatic protest, the sentiment that are the life and soul of their music. But they are so finely measured and controlled that their romanticism acquires some of the dignity and the pellucid clearness of classicism. Perhaps there are one or two pianists whose technical powers are even greater than Mr. Rachmaninoff's; but no living player is his equal in musicianship.

At the close of the concert there were the same scenes of enthusiasm that marked his recital at the same hall three weeks ago, people crowding to the platform and clamouring for encores.

F. B.