

PHILHARMONIC GOLD MEDAL

PRESENTATION TO RACHMANINOFF

M. Rachmaninoff was presented last night by the Duchess of Atholl, during the Royal Philharmonic Society's concert at the Queen's Hall, with the society's gold medal—an honoured distinction in the musical world.

There can be no question of the title of M. Rachmaninoff to this distinction as pianist and composer, and the applause which greeted his appearance on the platform last night showed eloquently how heartily the whole audience endorsed the tribute paid to him.

The pianoforte concerto—his own No. 3 in D minor—which he played last night, is not perhaps amongst his most characteristic works. But his performance—so eminently sober, alive, and musicianly—aroused the audience to enthusiasm. It was only with difficulty that the applause could be made to subside when, after bowing his acknowledgments again and again, M. Rachmaninoff appeared in company with the Duchess of Atholl to receive the society's medal.

In a short but graceful address the Duchess said how happy she was to confer upon the Russian composer a token of the high honour in which he was held by music-lovers in this country, many of whom found in his music a stimulus which made them anxious to know more about the land from which it came.

The presentation was the signal for another outburst of applause, which was stilled for a moment when it was hoped that M. Rachmaninoff would reply. The composer, however, shook his head smilingly and gallantly raised the hand of the Duchess to his lips.

The concert, which had opened with the Ballet Suite and Overture from "Alcina," concluded with Tchaikovsky's "Pathetic" Symphony. It should be said that the orchestra accompanied the piano concerto with perfect aplomb, to the obvious delight of the composer.

F. B.