

WHEN RACHMANINOFF LAUGHED LAST

Living down success is sometimes as difficult as living down failure. Living down the C sharp Minor Prelude has been one of the problems of Rachmaninoff's career. A good story is told of how Rachmaninoff and Paderewski once entered together a café on the Riviera. Immediately upon arrival of the two great pianists, the orchestra ceased playing. The leader rapped brightly and swung his men into the chords of the Rachmaninoff C sharp Minor Prelude. Paderewski grinned with delight at his partner's discomfiture, and at the close applauded the embarrassed composer across the table long and loudly, so that anyone who had not noticed his presence before became aware of it. When the applause died down, the enterprising leader obliged with an encore—an encore which automatically removed the glee from Paderewski's face and transferred it magically to Rachmaninoff's. They had struck up Paderewski's minuet, and Rachmaninoff led the applause. Rachmaninoff will, incidentally, be making an appearance in Bristol on Saturday next in the International Celebrity Concerts at the Colston Hall.