

## RACHMANINOFF IN LIVERPOOL

An audience, which in any other hall in Liverpool would have appeared immense, assembled in the Paramount Theatre last night for the pianoforte recital by Rachmaninoff.

In these days, when good pianists are as common as bad singers, the popularity of this eminent Russian artist still remains unchallenged; it is a tribute to his mastery over the instrument he represents.

Rachmaninoff's recitals are really quite simple affairs; his programmes generally conform to the traditional plan adopted by pianists for the last half century; his whole attitude is placid and impassive, and yet he has one of the strongest personalities of any artist on the present-day concert platform.

His playing is at once arresting and exhilarating; his interpretations genuine products of the mind which have not been modified to lie within the possibilities of his technical accomplishment.

There were times, however, when Rachmaninoff's impassivity made one regard him as a travelling exhibition of pianism, playing the same programme so many times that, in the end, it becomes a sort of business.

The recital commenced with the Liszt arrangement of the Organ Fantasia and Fugue in G minor (Bach), the "Ebenezer Prout" Fugue affording the pianist great opportunity for clearly articulated finger work.

Perfection of detail was a telling feature of the Beethoven Sonata in D minor, Op. 31, of which Rachmaninoff's account was graceful and dignified.

For the rest there were groups of Chopin, Rachmaninoff and Liszt, the tenderness of the F major Nocturne of the former, and the fiery virtuosity of Liszt's "La Caccia" made one realise that last night's recitalist does not have to specialise.

Rachmaninoff was given an enthusiastic reception, in consequence of which he played two encores, Tchaikowsky's "Troika" and his own immortal Prelude in C sharp minor. The Prelude naturally terminated the recital, for after that anything would have been an anti-climax. **R. C. S.**