

**LAST NIGHT'S MUSIC.****RACHMANINOFF.**

Those who went to M. Rachmaninoff's recital at the Town Hall last night, expecting to enjoy the "fireworks" of a master pianist must have been disappointed. There is no trace of the brilliant virtuoso about this grave Russian, whose ascetic appearance is matched by the austerity of his style.

For Rachmaninoff was composer first and public performer afterwards—which means that his attitude to music is introspective; he is concerned rather with what music means than with how it sounds.

This being so, his choice of programme was a little disappointing; Chopin is his obvious destiny, and it is true that we were given a Nocturne, a Scherzo (beautifully played) and the usual E Flat Major Waltz, but these did not compensate for some dull moments while Schumann and Medtner were being expounded.

Technical skill there was in plenty, but it was only when the soft tone in which this pianist excels was allied to a quality of wistfulness in the music that we felt that he was really at home, really expressing his own attitude to life.

For that reason his Beethoven, as well as his Chopin, was of peculiar interest, for though the mood of the F Sharp Minor Sonata which he chose is serene and even cheerful, one felt that here, too, there was in essence a brooding spirit with which the pianist was in touch.

A "Celebrity" concert, but one which unexpectedly revealed not a celebrated pianist, nor a celebrated composer, but a thoughtful, gravely meditative human being. D. M. F.