

MUSIC NOT SELF

Rachmaninoff's Rare Quality

PAVILION CONCERT

How unfortunate, but true, is it that his famous Prelude is the only thing many can associate with the name of Rachmaninoff. It is to be hoped that a good proportion of those who include the work in their repertoire were present at the Pavilion yesterday to have their conceptions of it adjusted. The composer played it as he—a great pianist—would be expected to play it, revealing a strength and beauty that had perhaps dimmed through hackneyed repetition.

Too few people appreciated the importance of a visit by such a giant in the musical world to Torquay. True, the attendance was good, but it must have consisted almost wholly of those who understood the significance of the occasion.

Rachmaninoff's power as a composer has eclipsed his ability as a pianist; he is known more by his works than as an executant, yet had he not written a bar of music, his playing yesterday showed that he would have reached the peak of fame as an interpreter alone.

Compared with others, Rachmaninoff's playing reveals a wonderfully new, limpid clearness, and this remarkable man possesses a rare, almost unique quality—of exploiting his marvellous technique to display the music, not himself, as is so often the case. He is the sincere musician, infusing into everything he plays the profundity of his knowledge.

The thoroughly intellectual phase of the programme was provided by Schumann's "Davidsbündlertanze," a suite of dances. Chopin was represented by two scherzi—B minor and B flat minor—done as richly as one could desire to hear Chopin played. Liszt occupied a prominent position; there were the Etude in D flat major, the Valse-Impromptu in A flat major, and the ninth Hungarian Rhapsody. The Andantino and Variations in B. minor (Schubert-Tausig) opened a memorable programme that closed with the Prelude already mentioned.