

A GREAT PIANIST.

M. Sergei Rachmaninoff's playing at his recital at the Queen's Hall on Saturday afternoon was that of a masterly pianist and a great musician, a combination which is by no means always to be found even in those who have made big names for themselves. You had only to listen to a few bars of his Chopin to realise how big a man he is. There was none of the soulful sentimentality to which some treat us; he did not rattle off difficult studies, as others do, as if chiefly to show the nimbleness of their fingers. In his performances of the C minor Polonaise, the D flat Nocturne, and the A flat Ballade there was the poetry of a highly sensitive, but well-balanced, mind, a touch exquisitely tender and delicate, and a tone of singularly limpid purity. But to examine his playing in detail seems rather like dissecting a flower to find out what makes it beautiful. Let us rather be content with saying that in these, in Debussy's "Children's Corner," in Grieg's Ballade, and in some little pieces of his own it was a lesson in technique and a sheer artistic joy. These last, two Etudes Tableaux and a song transcription, "Daisies," were new, and, while they are not to be reckoned among the most individual of his compositions, they are attractive and, of course, admirably written. The audience was very large and most appreciative.