

### Rachmaninoff.

In all except his tireless wrists and fingers, Rachmaninoff seemed a tired, despondent man at the recital he gave to-day at Queen's Hall. The fatigue is not physical. He has the strength of a giant. It cannot even be attributed to aversion for the dreaded prelude, for he has all but reached the nirvana of indifference towards that early effort, nor to grief at his publishers not having protected the copyright, for he is to-day a rich man. It is simply—or so one guesses from his occasional utterances—that he is constantly taken off his "job." He regards himself as a composer who is incidentally also a pianist.

Except for that prelude, his public regards him as a pianist who incidentally composes. He cannot persuade even the most faithful of his followers to think of him first and foremost as a writer of symphonies and other important works. It is a curious position, for, again ignoring the prelude, many of his earlier compositions were very attractive. Meanwhile, he seems to have grown more austere. It is as if he suspected himself of sentimental leanings and deliberately set himself on guard against what his less sophisticated admirers might call his better nature. He has even attempted to withdraw some of those early works, and it is a pleasant surprise that he has included one of them, a serenade, in the programme of his second recital.

There is even something of this in his playing. He is one of the foremost pianists of the day, in the sense that he has a big and powerful conception of the music he plays, but he is seldom attractive in the actual interpretation of its amenities.