

PIANO GEMS PLAYED BY RACHMANINOFF

Alda and Hackett Sing in
Concert at Opera House

People's Symphony Orchestra Gives
a Familiar Program

Rachmaninoff had a capacity audience at his piano recital yesterday afternoon at Symphony Hall, which applauded vehemently at every break in the program and obstinately refused at the end to go home without hearing the Prelude in C sharp minor, though the composer, who must be frightfully tired of that particular piece, tried to stave it off by giving Liszt and Chopin numbers instead.

He finally gave in, after four other encores and repeated bows and smiles had failed to still the tumult, and played the hackneyed favorite with a speed and dynamics that convinced one listener that no amateur ought ever to attempt it, under pain of instant death.

The program was the finest Rachmaninoff has ever chosen for a Boston concert, with Beethoven's seldom heard E minor sonata, opus 90, Schumann's "Papillons," Debussy's "Children's Corner," Chopin's C minor Polonaise and the pianist's own B flat major Prelude as its high lights.

Rachmaninoff takes many liberties with tempi and dynamics in everything he plays, much as Toscanini does in conducting an orchestra. There are always two voices audible in his interpretations, the composer's and the performer's. Many of the admirable things in the E minor Sonata yesterday were not Beethoven.

It is risky to introduce modern improvements into the musical structures left by the great composers. Rachmaninoff at all events improves with more discretion than Busoni showed in his pianization of the Chaconne Bach wrote for violin alone, played yesterday.

He is a great composer and a great pianist, entitled, if anyone is, to take liberties.

BOTH ALDA AND HACKETT