

Rachmaninoff Soloist With Boston Symphony

Probably because the soloist at last evening's concert by the Boston Symphony in the Academy was no less a personage than Sergei Rachmaninoff, the audience was of the old-time variety. It filled every seat and overflowed into much of the standing room in the back of the hall. If, however, it came primarily to hear the famous Russian composer play his own Second Concerto, it must have departed with the conviction that the orchestra is once again the premier band and that in Henri Rabaud it has a conductor worthy and capable of carrying on its great traditions.

The program, which included in addition to the concerto, the Brahms Symphony in D and the Berlioz' Overture, "Carnival Romain," went without a hitch, except for Mr. Rachmaninoff's objection to a flowery screen. When the pianist seated himself at his instrument he discovered that a part of the floral decorations hid him from the view of the audience. Apparently he voiced his objections in no uncertain terms to the conductor and band, for before he would begin one of the first violinists had to carry the offending plant into the wings. The audience liked the episode.

Rachmaninoff had played this concerto earlier in the season with the New York Symphony at one of the Sunday concerts in Aeolian Hall. Last evening, however, his playing was in comparison a sublimated thing. In it was greater expression of the poetic spirit and less of the exposition of the so-called "grand" style of playing. The work has many beauties to commend it, is indeed one of the finest piano concertos of recent composition, and in the more than capable hands of Rachmaninoff and the orchestra sounded nobly effective last evening.

The French conductor's reading of the most delightful of Brahms symphonies was inspired. It was a reading surcharged with delicacy of nuance, of fine distinctions of light and shade, of evanescent and luminous color. The genius of Rabaud discovered the romantic, the ethereal

Brahms. Under his guidance the orchestra ran the wide gamut of dynamics and color variety, of which it is so capable. The third movement was in reality an "Allegretto grazioso" and Rabaud will make his orchestra whisper sweetly, if necessary, but he can also make it thunder in majestic rhythm. Between the two extremes is the widest field for expression.

Consideration of the program revealed the fact that the orchestra is once again fully constituted. The eight horns of last year's band are returned. In addition Laurent, former flautist of the Paris Conservatoire Orchestra, has been added to the personnel. The months of Rabaud's consulship have welded the band once again into the instrument of other days, so far as mere virtuosity is concerned, and, so far as color and richness, into a better band, than ever played under the direction of De Muck.

No definite decision has been arrived at with regard to a conductor next year. The management gave out that Rabaud would return to Paris as soon as the present season was past. It is to be hoped that he will see his way clear to return in the fall.

Amelita Galli-Curci sang the title role in "Lucia" last evening at the Lexington Theater. It is one of her best roles, and the singer was more certain of herself and the pitch. The result was a display of very beautiful singing indeed and singing worthy of all the praise the audience lavishly bestowed upon her. The tenor was a newcomer, Alessandro Dolet. His is an excellent natural organ with a particularly effective top-voice. He is not a master of style and his methods are frequently those of the typical Italian tenor. Discretion would be the better part of his valor.

The double bill, "L'Oracolo" and "Pagliacci," the latter with Caruso drew a "capacity" house to the Metropolitan. The performances followed well-trodden paths.