Rubinstein Is Romanticist Among His Fellow Pianists

BY C. J. BULLIET.

WHETHER playing Chopin or Stravinsky, Artur Rubinstein, Polish pianist, is the incurable romantic—and who wants him cured?

Rubinstein in recital at the Civic Opera House yesterday afternoon (Beethoven, Brahms, Chopin, Ravel, Stravinsky) was not unmindful of bravura and virtuosity, but for all the brilliance he gave the spectacular passages of his various composers, he never lost sight of melody, of sensuousness.

Stravinsky would send up a skyrocket and so would Debussy (a Prelude from whom Rubinstein played among his generous encores). But, as the rocket ascended, somewhere in the piano there continued a melodious rumble as an aftermath of what was happening musically when the match was applied.

Rubinstein, in other words, never let the skyrocket, the bravura, the virtuosity become an isolated phenomenon—as do Horowitz and most of the comparative youngsters at the keys.

Due to this technique, Ravel's "Valses Nobles at Sentimentales" seemed almost of the period of Chopin, who was contemporary, as you know, with the Romantics in literature—George Sand, the young Victor Hugo and the rest.

Mr. Rubinstein's Stravinsky number was "Petrouchka," composed for Rubinstein, and in three movements, "Russian Dance," "In Petrouchka's Room" and "Russian Fair"—mostly on old melody motifs, but with the characteristic Stravinsky flourishes.

The only acrobatics (as such) Rubinstein permitted himself was Scriabine's "Nocturne for the Left Hand," and even here, with his right hand on his knee, the pianist played a nocturne and not a tour de force.