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**A Talk with
Arthur Rubinstein**

"Jews are not merely Interpreters of Music"

"It can no longer be said that we have merely interpretative musical genius. Lately Jewish composers have arrived. The works of Milhaud in France and Schonberg and Mahler in Austria are indications of creative Jewish contributions to the art of musical composition."



Portrait by Jane Plotz.

THE above opinion was expressed to a representative of the *Zionist Record* by Arthur Rubinstein, the distinguished and brilliant piano virtuoso, whose performances during his present short stay in this country are giving so much pleasure to discriminating music-lovers.

"It is strange," added Mr. Rubinstein, "that we have always been regarded as interpreters rather than creators when it came to music, in spite of having produced masters like Mendelssohn, Meyerbeer, Bizet and others whose works might be termed immortal.

"This conception has lately changed, however, because Jews in all the arts are now contributing in a creative manner. In America, besides great sculptors and painters, there are also composers like Ernest Bloch, whose work is being recognised in the highest musical circles. Even the late Gershwin composed some very fine operatic music.

"The greatest advancement, however, is being made in Palestine, where a distinct Jewish music is gradually arising. After all, Milhaud expressed the ideals of France in his works, as did Schonberg and Mahler express, in a way, the atmosphere of pre-war Austria. In Palestine, there are specific signs of a new Hebrew music arising, inspired by the old Hebrew melodies and by the new national life arising in the Homeland."

Mr. Rubinstein is proud of the fact that he has been three times to Palestine. He was the second of world-renowned pianists to perform there, the first having been the late Leopold Godowsky.

"I have not yet had an opportunity of playing with the Palestine Symphony Orchestra, but I know Huberman intimately and at the earliest opportunity, I hope to be able to perform in Jerusalem."

AS is well known, Arthur Rubinstein is beloved in Poland, where he was born. The land is proud of him and in his travels to many parts of the world, whenever he comes to a country in which there is a Polish Embassy, he is invited to stay there. He travels with a diplomatic passport, and has all the privileges of a specially honoured citizen of Poland.

"There is, of course, considerable anti-Jewish prejudice throughout Poland," he said, "but it must be remembered that whereas in Germany, anti-Semitism has been engineered by the Government, for there was no real Jewish problem in that country, you have in Poland some three million Jews. There is a poor peasantry of millions and generally the economic situation is bad. As a result there is anti-Jewish agitation.

"We are fortunate," added Mr. Rubinstein, "in that the Government itself in Poland has never pandered to the hooligan element. The late General Pilsudski was a real friend of the Jews and of liberal ideas and his influence still prevails in Governmental circles in Poland.

"I may add that the splendid manner in which Jews rallied to the help of Poland during the recent crisis, has made a deep impression. Jews offered contributions in money, men and aircraft and demonstrated to the Poles the absolute reliability of Jewish support. Not only Jews in Poland itself, but those outside of the country, of Polish origin, showed their readiness to be of service."

UNFORTUNATELY Mr. Rubinstein can only stay in this country a short period, as he is due to give concerts in Paris at the end of the month.

"I was delighted with the audience on Sunday evening at the

Colosseum Theatre," he told me. "I gave a severe programme of music, as I would at a first concert in London or Paris, and I felt that the audience understood the work and keenly enjoyed it."

The gifted artist is due to give his final performance in Johannesburg on Sunday evening at the Colosseum Theatre. It was Joseph Joachim, the famous musician of a previous generation, who took an interest in young Arthur Rubinstein and acted as his patron until he achieved world-fame. His actual teacher was Professor Heinrich Bach, the famous professor of the Berlin Music Academy.

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