Reiner Offers Calm Grandeur

BY DON ROSEBAN

To a season which already has produced lofty performances of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and Holzinger's "A Christmas Carol," the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Society, under the direction of Fritz Reiner Thursday night added the sensational performance of Mahler's "Symphony No. 1," by the Nevisky"-santa of Prokofiev.

And a Missa Solemnis is still to come, as a crown to this year of orchestral afterworks.

THE FEVER and excitement latent in this musical maelstrom was beautifully attuned by Reiner and the orchestra, the tempo of the first movement a slow, almost somber pace. The climactic "Battle on the Ice" was approached with exalted anticipation, the orchestra building to a majestic level, the second subject introduced with an air that suggested a sweeping, almost diabolical, and thus around the audience's martial blood private enthusiasm.

A conductor who tries to pile climax after climax into this score could easily destroy the atmosphere of the morning, and Reiner drew a breath of relief that the concert was not prolonged. One listener, who is not in the habit of "standing by" to hear this piece played with power but without histrionics.

THE CHORUS, although called for, made little effective vocal effort than in some other works, the most striking feature being a high intensity of the voices, a more homogeneous tone that almost made one forget the technical side. Miss Hilsone's soprano solo part, "Field of the Dead," was taken by Rosalind Flack, who has been known to us chiefly by secondary roles in the Metropolitan Opera.

Her voice in this music was not bad, but she is not the girl for this part.

NOTE: Fritz Reiner, all but silenced by a sore throat, returned next week having been a week with a microphone. He has not placed his glass and embittered members of the press as his voice returns, they will explain to us the amazing happenings on the European tour.

Many outsiders who have been swayed by Mr. Reiner's explanations also wish his voice a speedy recovery.