

MUSIC IN THE STUDY

BY ROLFE HUMPHRIES

THIS room has too little space to contain the music
 Even with so few people. Desk, table, chairs.
 Too big for the room, the sound needs every inch.
 The sound must enter the people.

Here see a tall young girl, laid in the long chair,
 The head thrown back, the eyes shut, the mouth loose,
 The tight bright lines of animation gone,
 Body and face dissolving under a spell
 Like that of wine, or sleep, or love; the music's weight
 Heavy upon her as a physical force,
 The very body of the ravishing god,
 Strange and palpable. The Swan. The Bull.

And sound, sound, sound, terrible in the room.



POPLARS

BY GEORGE ABBE

There is a smell of burning
 In the crisp days,
 The asters hide their smoky blue
 Under the long wall.
 The crying colors are turning
 Earthward; the poplar sways
 With shudders of warm memory:
 Still summer light upon its silver
 leaves,
 Wood thrush's call,
 Dark grasses, and the slow wind's
 yearning.

DOWN TO EARTH

BY ALAN DEVOE

Termites

When the moon shall have faded from the sky and the sun shall shine at noonday a dull cherry red, and the seas shall be frozen over, and the ice-cap shall have crept downward to the Equator from either pole, and no keel shall cut the waters, nor wheels turn in mills, when all cities shall have long been dead and crumbled into dust, and all life shall be on the very last verge of extinction on this globe, then, on a bit of lichen, growing on the bald rocks beside the eternal snows of Panama, shall be seated a tiny insect, preening its antennae in the glow of the worn-out sun, representing the sole survival of animal life on this, our earth — a melancholy “bug”.

— W. J. HOLLAND: *The Moth Book*.

WHEN old Dr. Holland, that eloquent and erudite entomologist, wrote down some years ago these far-looking words of prophecy, he was engaging in no flimsy and tenuous flight of fancy. He was but making the acknowledgment, which daily forces itself upon all naturalists, that the human species, which we are proud to think so strong and sure and permanent, has in truth but a transient foothold upon this unstable star. Man has been in existence (to the contemplative eye of, for example, a geologist) only since this morning. There is an excellent chance that he will disappear again — along

with all his fellow mammals, and all the familiar furnishings of his accustomed earth—before the evening comes.

He is equipped to stand neither great heat nor great cold. His internal economy allows him to extract nourishment from only a limited range of undependable foods. He cannot withdraw, in time of catastrophe, into a state of suspended animation, and live motionless and foodless for years, like a tick. He can contrive to prosper and make his little day on earth a happy one, a glad fulfillment, before he goes. But let the planetary ice come sheathing the earth again,