

"Your what?"

"Didn't you-all know you was going to have a maze? Just like the one at Mount Vernon. I got it all here—" He pointed a bony finger to his forehead. "It'll be 'bout twenty years before I gets it out there." He chuckled. "Box-wood grows awful slow."

"I'll have to have some more coffee," said Ellen. She scattered her plate and felt faint.

"Yes'm," said Bones.

"In some ways, he's a great comfort," said Lou. She did not look up, and both shuddered as the door on the kitchen closed. They knew Bones was there to stay.

They knew the prowling nights that were before them, the bolts that would slide, the pantings up and down the dark corridor. The nights would be worse, but the days, too, would be afraid. They would live in terror, but in the tradition.

"I can't dismiss him," said Ellen. And Bones could not be confined. He had been their intimate so long, they could not reasonably place him in a lunatic cell. They would feel themselves mad. Above all, they could not have him mad in West Virginia. As Ellen said: "A nice

Virginia prison, I shouldn't mind. But, as it is, it's impossible." He would stay.

"I almost think I'm glad," said Lou.

"Yes," said Ellen, but she trembled.

Their nerves were frayed, their digestions destroyed, but something was saved. They were like that valley in which they had been born, and which they loved, and which as it lies between two ridges of intensely blue hills is a country to be loved. The soil owes its richness to a slow disintegration; water has worn the rocks, noiselessly as time, and underneath all the dark is hollow. The Sabines were slowly discomposed—like the limestone which, arched and caverned, underlies the long valley and, worried by water, minutely decays. With Bones there, they could forget the hollowness underground. He intimidated them less than time.

They would soon be old. But with Bones there, they could stand it. They at least would not be simply two old maids like any others in the town. He would keep them in pride. He came, bringing the coffee, and they nodded gratefully. He would stay, they knew now, to the end. They would hold him, as it were a dear obsession, until they were dead. Ellen smiled.



Slowly

By CHARLES HANSON TOWNE

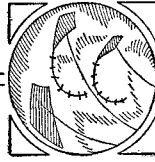
THERE was no sudden moment when we said,
"Come! light the tapers, for our love is dead."

But gradually, through the slow and blundering years,
Ungessed of us, save for our casual tears,

Love wasted, like an invalid in a room,
Half hidden in the hushed and curtained gloom.

Prolonged that fluttering life, that ebbing breath.
And then, one day, we looked dry-eyed on death;

And since it came at last so unawares,
Frightened, we tiptoed down the darkened stairs.



European Music in Decay

By PAUL ROSENFELD

*With especial reference to
Mr. Strawinsky and his leadership
in the world of music*

WE are confronted with a decadence in European music. It is no longer possible to disregard the drought in the ancient well-head, disagreeable as the event may prove to us who have taken unspeakable refreshment at its source! But the music of the great donors was not cerebral, and superior carpentry. Whatever the origin of its elements, whether natural or acquired, these crystallized below the level of consciousness, in the region of the mind uncontrolled by personal interests. When they appeared in consciousness, they appeared there integrally, in the shape of a theme, a musical idea or melodic fragment implying its own development and form, and immediately infective with some feeling of the whole of life. The old music refreshed us by communicating a living impulse, bringing the unknown into consciousness and creating a relation between the unknown and the known. By and large, however, the music of present Europe is cut off from the unconscious. Learned and brittle, it seems excessively calculated. In any case, it no longer offers us great cordial draughts of life.

A decade and a half ago, the spring that poured forth the music of Bach and Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms, was still full. Post-Wagnerian music, it is true,

was strongly dramatic and descriptive. Purists found it compromised with literature, dependent for effect on the concrete ideas and images with which composers such as Debussy and Strauss, Bloch and Mahler, associated their sonorous conceptions. This stricture must be allowed regarding the works of Strauss and Mahler. Much of the brilliant and vigorous if common music of the former composer illustrates the programmes and stories with which it is allied, and is almost uninteresting when divorced from them. The symphonic music of Mahler is equally dependent on extra-musical conceptions. In short, the work of these two composers is somewhat brain-spun, and unspontaneous; and its origin is betrayed by the hybridity of its style. The music of Debussy, Bloch, and the early Ravel, however, has the integrity which the work of their German contemporaries lacks. If, like Wagner's, it is frequently dramatic and descriptive, it is none the less genuinely creative. That is, it is spontaneous, instinctive, projected as under the stress of necessity, from the quick of life. Strong or weak, racy or dreamy, its mysterious source persists in it as wetness, freshness, an indefinable glamour and grace. The nature of these late-French productions is dualistic, that is