
THE CONCERT

strange insects had been flitting enigmatically about the room for even a couple of minutes they seemed to have chosen a special victim in the person of an old man with a small, thin face and a short white beard who sat near to me. He shrugged his shoulders; he emitted inarticulate scorn through his nose. His resentment then forced itself into words. He muttered:

“Morbid!”

And later, in a loud tone that attracted attention:

“Ridiculous! What next, I wonder!”

And as the night moths fluttered to rest amidst timid applause, he rose as if in a paroxysm of holy anger, snatched his hat from under the gilt chair, and strode out, snorting protests. People turned to gaze at him an instant, mildly and politely shocked that a human being should exhibit so much feeling about naught. But I liked that old man, and sympathized with him, because he had wandered with brave curiosity into the wrong generation. Moreover, he had made me sure that Ravel was saying something powerful and beautiful in its originality. Only real power and beauty could have so quickly flung that honest, obstinate old man into the street. He would have laughed easily at pretenses and held his ground.

“Mournful Birds,” “A Bark on the Ocean,”