

and grouped by the free aesthetic taste alone, acting without let or hindrance, except what is imposed by the thing to be expressed. For hundreds of years, man has been testing and comparing, accepting and rejecting, the elements of the tonal series, with the result that we have today the ladder of ninety odd definitely fixed tones, out of which all music is composed. Though the final selection of music's raw material has been built up so slowly and tentatively, it has been done with so sure and delicate a sense of its natural structure, that it is an unsurpassed basis for complex and yet perfectly harmonious tone-combinations, admirably capable of reflecting and arousing every form of human emotion.

But though the musician's art-material is preordained to beauty, yet he is by no means exempted from the difficulties of his brother artists. If they work in a less plastic material, he has to govern subtler and more wayward forces. He can attain a wonderful perfection, but only through genius that is inspired, and labor that is unremitting. His task is to embody the turbulent, irrational human feelings in serene and beautiful forms. He must master the dominating, reconcile the warring, impose unity on the diverse and repellant. He looks into the stormy and tortured heart of man, and seeks to recreate, through tones, the spirit in a travail titanic and interminable. The music of Wagner and Beethoven and Tschaikowsky is the triumphant answer as to music's power to deal

with the portentous verities. Music expresses our deepest passional nature with unrivalled fullness, and yet so reconciles it with itself as to symbolize our highest spiritual peace!

From the welter and jungle of experience in which it is our lot to pass our mortal days—days which philosophy cannot make wholly rational, nor love wholly happy, nor religion wholly serene—we are thus privileged to emerge, from time to time, into fairer realms. Tantalized with an unattainable vision of order, homesick for a rightness never quite realized, we turn to Art, and especially to Music, for assurance that our hope and faith are not wholly chimerical. Then

"Music pours on mortals
Its beautiful disdain."

Disdainful it is, truly, for it reminds us of the discord and the rhythmless on-march of our days. It voices the passions that have torn and mutilated, and stung and blinded us: it makes us meditate the foolishness, the fatuity, the fatality, the aimlessness of our chaotic lives. But beautiful it is, also; it moves us to thoughts "too deep for tears," it breaks up the fountains of the great deeps that exist, sometimes almost unsuspected, within us all. It stirs us to noble aspiration, it helps us respond to beauty. But whether disdainful or beautiful, music shows us our deepest feelings, so wayward or tragic in experience, merged into ineffable perfection and peace. To my mind, this is what constitutes at once its mission and its meaning.