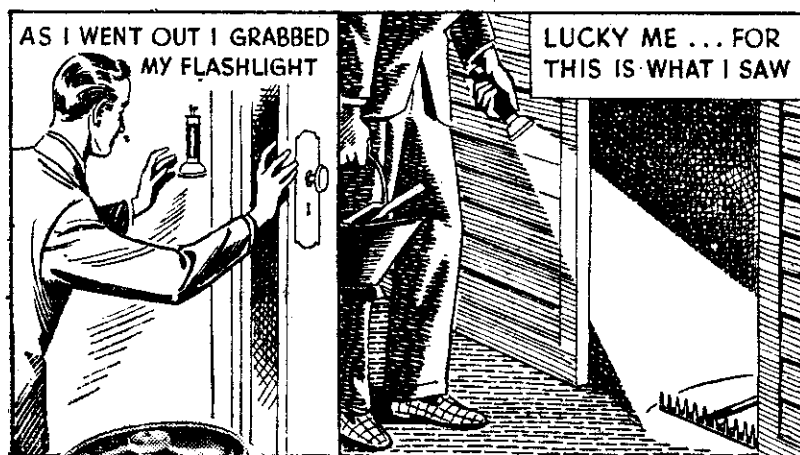


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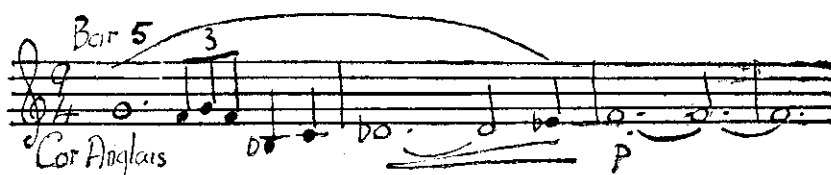
KNOW YOUR CLASSICS

THIS is one of a further series of articles written for "The Listener" by BESSIE POLLARD. As with the preceding series, published some time ago, the aim is to help the student and the interested listener towards a more complete appreciation of good music.

(18) "The Swan of Tuonela" — Legend for Orchestra (Sibelius)

SIBELIUS'S *The Swan of Tuonela*, the loveliest of his tone-poems, comes from his Opus 22, which consists of four "Legends" woven round the exploits of Lemminkainen, a legendary hero. They are (1) *Lemminkainen and the Maidens* (1895); (2) *His Sojourn in Tuonela* (1895); (3) *The Swan of Tuonela* (1893); and (4) *Lemminkainen's Homeward Journey* (1895). The music of all four was inspired by the Finnish epic poem, the *Kalevala*. The third episode tells how those souls finding their way to Tuonela (the Finnish Hades) were required to negotiate nine seas and one river, upon which floated and sang the sacred Swan " . . . the long-necked, graceful swimmer, Swimming in the black death-river, In the sacred stream and whirlpool."

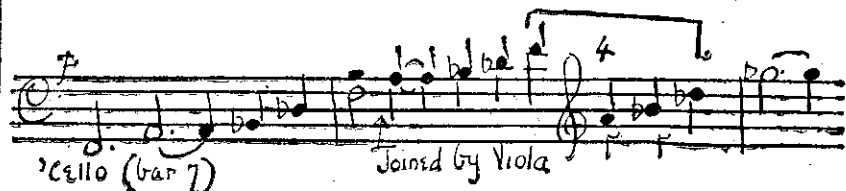
The work begins—*Andante Molto Sostenuto*—with muted strings. In bar 5 the cor anglais gives out the stately and intensely moving main Swan motif, against a background of strings and a soft drum roll—



In bar 9 the upper strings answer with an undulating phrase (below) to which the cor anglais responds with its original idea, one tone higher—



Another important phrase is announced by 'cello in bar 7, joined by viola in the following bar, and carried upwards by that instrument—



The brass doesn't enter until bar 32, when muted horns outline a few notes of the Swan theme, with telling effect. In bar 75, the strings are given a cantabile melody of great beauty—



A few bars later they (the strings) are directed to play *Col Legno* (with the back of the bow)—a curious effect suggesting the faint whirring of the Swan's wings, then, following a return to normal bowing, we hear the final 'cello phrase, beginning in bar 98, sighing its way into space.



The Swan of Tuonela, by Sibelius, will be heard in the *Classical Hour* at 2.15 p.m. on Wednesday, May 11, from Station 4YZ Invercargill.

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