

STRAVINSKY'S APOLOGIA

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THERE has always been something peculiarly challenging about Stravinsky's utterances on music. His Charles Eliot Norton Lectures, just published by Harvard University under the title *Poétique Musicale*, are a



Sketch by B. F. Dolbin

vigorous and brilliant, but not a perfectly balanced statement of a neo-classicist's position in music today. Warning that his tone will be dogmatic, he says in the first lecture: "Je sais bien que les mots *dogme, dogmatique*, ne manquent jamais . . . de heurter – de choquer – certains esprits plus riches de sincérité que fort de certitude." But dogmas are necessary for the clarification of values: "Si nous voulons jouir pleinement des conquêtes de l'audace, nous devons exiger qu'elle règne dans une lumière sans ombre." Though he is sometimes led by his dogmatic attitude into speculative extremes, it goes without saying that he is never pedantic. Nor does he try to systematize music. He makes no exclusive

claims for his own methods of composition, even conceding that Schönberg, though working along entirely different lines from himself, is indubitably a composer who knows exactly what he is doing and aims at deceiving no one.

Generally speaking, however, he is at his dogmatic best when treating of fundamentally human values, ethical and spiritual, rather than of music itself. Of our own day he remarks: "Ces temps ont fait place à un nouvel âge qui veut tout uniformiser dans l'ordre de la matière, cependant qu'il