



Six Four-part Songs

Poetry by William Duthie

No. 3.

The light of life

J. Lemmens

(1823-1881)

Jaak-Nicolaas (Jacques-Nicolas) Lemmens (1823-1881) was born in Zoerle-Parwijs, Waterloo, Belgium. He was first a pupil of his father and later studied organ at the Royal Brussels Conservatoire then in Breslau, Bohemia with a government stipend. In 1849 he was appointed organ professor at the Royal Brussels Conservatoire. In 1857 he married the English soprano Helen Sherrington, who became a leading English concert and operatic singer. From his marriage on, he lived in England and at their castle Linter Ports Zemst, Belgium. He focused on the study of Catholic church music, especially on a method for accompanying Gregorian chant. Lemmens gained international fame as an organ virtuoso, particularly through his performances of Bach. He established a seminary for Catholic organists and choirmasters in Malines (Mechelen), Belgium. He wrote many works for organ, works for piano, two symphonies, a Te Deum, motets, songs, and part-songs.

REVIEW

The Musical Times
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Six Four-part Songs (SATB)
By J. Lemmens
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1. Drops of Rain
2. The Fairy Ring
3. The Light of Life
4. Oh, welcome him
5. Sunshine through the clouds
6. The Corn Field

There is much character in the first of these part-songs, the pattering of the rain-drops being admirably represented by staccato notes for the voices; and the cantabile melody for the upper three voices, whilst the bass obstinately maintains the "pit, pat," may be made very effective with a good choir. No. 2, "The Fairy Ring," commences with an agreeable, but peculiar melody, halting on the second beat of the bar in 3/4 rhythm. The voice parts throughout this Fairy song are uniformly well written; and there is a light and graceful character about the treatment of the words which will always please an audience. No. 3, "The Light of Life," is, in our opinion, the best of the set. The animated subject at the commencement peaks the words with remarkable fidelity; and throughout the composition there are several effective points of imitation, the concluding phrase of the verse being especially worthy of note. No. 4, "Oh, welcome him," is somewhat common-place, but effective in parts, especially where the bass takes the solo, in G minor, to the words, "The night was dark," and afterwards holds on the D as a dominant pedal. No. 5, "Sunshine through the clouds," has an appropriately tranquil theme, which is harmonized with care and judgment. The change to 2/4 rhythm has a good effect. No. 6, "The Corn Field," is a flowing melody, in 6/8 rhythm, in the treatment of which some happy contrapuntal effects occur. There is much interest in this song; and it will amply repay careful study. The whole of the compositions in this book are highly favourable specimens of the author's power to write effective and healthy part-music.

The light of life

J. Lemmens

Animated, with energy ♩ = 100

S O, light of life! thou vi - vid spark,

A O, light of life! thou vi - vid spark,

T O, light of life! thou vi - vid spark, Which dart - est

B O, light of life! thou vi - vid spark, Which dart - est

S Which dart - est forth thy fit - ful ray,

A Which dart - est forth thy fit - ful ray, When round a -

T forth thy fit - ful ray, thy fit - ful ray, When round a -

B forth thy fit - ful ray, thy fit - ful ray,

S When round a - bout us, close and dark,

A bout us, close and dark, Our world - ly

T bout us, close and dark, Our world - ly

B When round a - bout us, close and dark,

The light of life

7 *cresc.*

S Our world - ly trou - bles stand at bay, stand at bay.

A *sf* trou - - - bles stand at bay, stand at bay.

T *sf* trou - - - bles stand at bay, stand at bay.

B Our world - ly trou - bles stand at bay.

9 *pp* *sf*

S Thou com'st, per-chance, as ti - ny flow - er,

A *pp* *sf* Thou com'st, per-chance, as ti - ny flow - er,

T *pp* *sf* Thou com'st, per-chance, as ti - ny flow - er,

B *pp* *sf* Thou com'st, per-chance, as ti - ny flow - er,

11 *f*

S Or bird, or note, or snow - y flake, Or cheer - ful

A Or bird, or note, or snow - y flake, Or cheer - ful

T Or bird, or note, or snow - y flake,

B Or bird, or note, or snow - y flake,

13

S word— in dull - est hour, in dull - est hour— *ff* And dost a

A word— in dull - est hour, in dull - est hour— *ff* And dost a

T Or cheer - ful word— in dull - est hour—

B Or cheer - ful word— in dull - est hour—

15

S ve - - - ry glo - ry make, And dost a

A ve - - - ry glo - ry make, And dost a

T *ff* And dost a ve - - - ry glo - ry make,

B *ff* And dost a ve - - - ry glo - ry make,

17

S ve - ry glo - ry make, a ve - ry glo - ry make.

A ve - ry glo - ry make, a ve - ry glo - ry make.

T And dost a ve - ry glo - ry, glo - ry make.

B And dost a ve - ry glo - ry, glo - ry make.

The light of life

Animated, with energy ♩ = 100

19

S *p* O, hap - py heart! *sf* that can re - jice

A *p* O, hap - py heart! *sf* that can re - jice

T *p* O, hap - py heart! *sf* that can re - jice In sim - ple

B *p* O, hap - py heart! *sf* that can re - jice In sim - ple

21

S *f* In sim - ple ef - - - - - forts to be glad;

A *f* In sim - ple ef - - - - - forts to be glad; *p* And hear sweet

T *f* ef - - - - - forts to be glad, *p* to be glad; And hear sweet

B *f* ef - - - - - forts to be glad, *p* to be glad;

23

S *f* And hear sweet sounds — *cresc.* in ev - 'ry voice,

A *f* sounds — *cresc.* in ev - 'ry voice, As if it

T *f* sounds — *cresc.* in ev - 'ry voice, As if it

B *f* And hear sweet sounds — *cresc.* in ev - 'ry voice,

25 *cresc.*

S As if it si - lent mu - sic had, mu - sic had.

A *sf* si - - - lent mu - sic had, mu - sic had.

T *sf* si - - - lent mu - sic had, mu - sic had.

B As if it si - lent mu - sic had.

27 *pp* *sf*

S Laugh - ter, a sigh, a snatch of song, —

A *pp* *sf* Laugh - ter, a sigh, a snatch of song, —

T *pp* *sf* Laugh - ter, a sigh, a snatch of song,

B *pp* *sf* Laugh - ter, a sigh, a snatch of song, —

29 *f*

S Light - ning a cloud in dap - pled heav'n, A hun - dred

A Light - ning a cloud in dap - pled heav'n, A hun - dred

T Light - ning a cloud in dap - pled heav'n,

B Light - ning a cloud in dap - pled heav'n,

The light of life

31

S things _____ the live - day long, the live - day long, *ff* As chords of

A things _____ the live - day long, the live - day long, *ff* As chords of

T *f* A hun - dred things _____ the live - day long,

B *f* A hun - dred things _____ the live - day long,

33

S joy _____ to thee are giv'n, _____ As chords of

A joy _____ to thee are giv'n, _____ As chords of

T *ff* As chords of joy _____ to thee are giv'n,

B *ff* As chords of joy _____ to thee are giv'n,

35

S joy to thee are giv'n, to thee, to thee _____ are giv'n.

A joy to thee are giv'n, to thee, to thee _____ are giv'n.

T As chords of joy to thee, to thee _____ are giv'n.

B As chords of joy to thee, to thee _____ are giv'n.

The light of life

Animated, with energy ♩ = 100

37

S O light of life! 'tis ours to warm

A O light of life! 'tis ours to warm

T O light of life! 'tis ours to warm Thy lit - tle

B O light of life! 'tis ours to warm Thy lit - tle

39

S Thy lit - tle spark _____ in - to a blaze;

A Thy lit - tle spark _____ in - to a blaze; That from our

T spark _____ in - to a blaze, a blaze; That from our

B spark _____ in - to a blaze, a blaze;

41

S That from our hearts _____ the dark - ling storm

A hearts _____ the dark - ling storm _____ May red - den

T hearts _____ the dark - ling storm _____ May red - den

B That from our hearts _____ the dark - ling storm

The light of life

43 *cresc.*

S May red - den in the joy - ful rays, joy - ful rays.

A *sf* in the joy - ful rays, joy - ful rays.

T *sf* in the joy - ful rays, joy - ful rays.

B May red - den in the joy - ful rays,

45 *pp* *sf*

S From glo - rious sky to mur - ky ground, —

A *pp* *sf* From glo - rious sky to mur - ky ground, —

T *pp* *sf* From glo - rious sky to mur - ky ground,

B *pp* *sf* From glo - rious sky to mur - ky ground, —

47 *f*

S In ev - 'ry hue, and shade, and line, Un - num - ber'd

A In ev - 'ry hue, and shade, and line, Un - num - ber'd

T In ev - 'ry hue, and shade, and line,

B In ev - 'ry hue, and shade, and line,

49

S flash - - - - es gleam a - round, — gleam a - round, *ff* If our dull

A flash - - - - es gleam a - round, — gleam a - round, *ff* If our dull

T Un-num - ber'd flash - - - - es gleam a - round,

B Un-num - ber'd flash - - - - es gleam a - round,

51

S eyes ————— would see them shine, ————— If our dull

A eyes ————— would see them shine, ————— If our dull

T *ff* If our dull eyes ————— would see them shine,

B *ff* If our dull eyes ————— would see them shine,

53

S eyes would see them shine, would see, would see ————— them shine.

A eyes would see them shine, would see, would see ————— them shine.

T If our dull eyes would see them, see ————— them shine.

B If our dull eyes would see them, see ————— them shine.

O, light of life! thou vivid spark,
Which dartest forth thy fitful ray,
When round about us, close and dark,
Our worldly troubles stand at bay.
Thou com'st, perchance, as tiny flower,
Or bird, or note, or snowy flake,
Or cheerful word— in dullest hour—
And dost a very glory make.

O, happy heart! that can rejoice
In simple efforts to be glad;
And hear sweet sounds in ev'ry voice,
As if it silent music had, music had.
Laughter, a sigh, a snatch of song,
Lightning a cloud in dappled heav'n,
A hundred things the live-day long,
As chords of joy to thee are giv'n.

O light of life! 'tis ours to warm
Thy little spark into a blaze;
That from our hearts the darkling storm
May redden in the joyful rays.
From glorious sky to murky ground,
In ev'ry hue, and shade, and line,
Unnumber'd flashes gleam around,
If our dull eyes would see them shine.

William Duthie

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