

The birdes that had left their song

George A. Macfarren (1813-1887)

Sir George Alexander Macfarren (1813-1887) was born in London. From early youth, he suffered from poor health and weak eyesight. His eyesight continually deteriorated until he became totally blind in 1860. However, his blindness had little effect on his productivity. Macfarren began to study music when he was fourteen and, at sixteen, entered the Royal Academy of Music. Because of his eyesight, he abandoned performance and concentrated on composition. He later taught at the Academy, eventually becoming a principal. He was also appointed professor of music at Cambridge University in 1875. He was conductor at Covent Garden, London; founder the Handel Society; program note writer for the Philharmonic Society; and editor of *Handel and Purcell*. He wrote 18 operas, 13 oratorios and cantatas, 9 symphonies, and 162 songs. He was active as writer of part-songs, literature for the many amateur choirs appearing throughout the country. He was knighted in 1883 on the same day as Arthur Sullivan and George Grove. His brother Walter Macfarren (1826-1905) was a pianist, composer and professor of the Royal Academy.

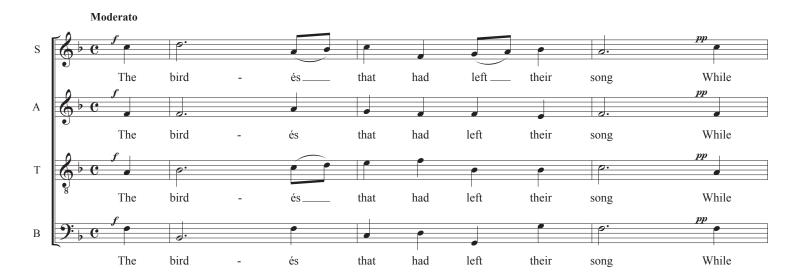
The birdés that had left their song
While they had suffer'd cold full strong
In weathers grill and derk to sight,
Ben in May for the sunné bright,
So glad that they showe in singing
That in their heart is such liking,
That they mote singen and ben light;
Then doth the nightingale her might
To maken noise and singen blithe;
Then is blissful, many a sithe,
The chelaundre (chelauner) and the popinjay;
Then youngé folk intenden, aye,
For to ben gay and amorous,
The time is then so savorous.

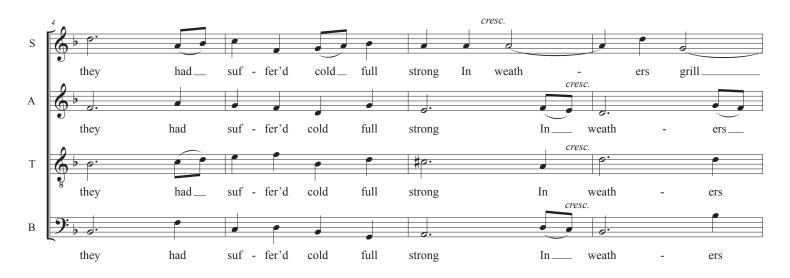
Geoffrey Chaucer (c. 1340–1400) from "Romaunt of the Rose"

grill and derk = grim and dark sithe = time chelaundre = goldfinch or lark popinjay = parrot

The birdes that had left their song

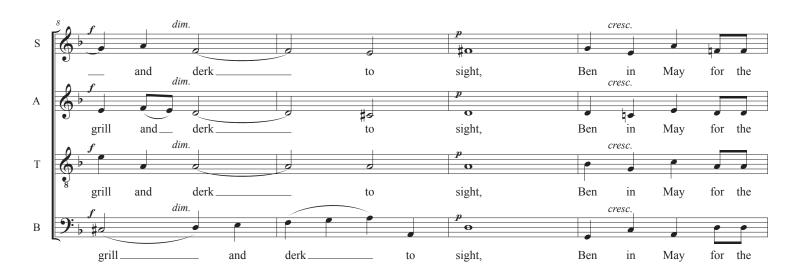
G. A. Macfarren

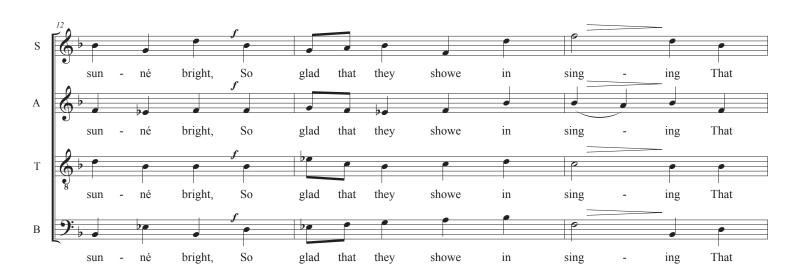


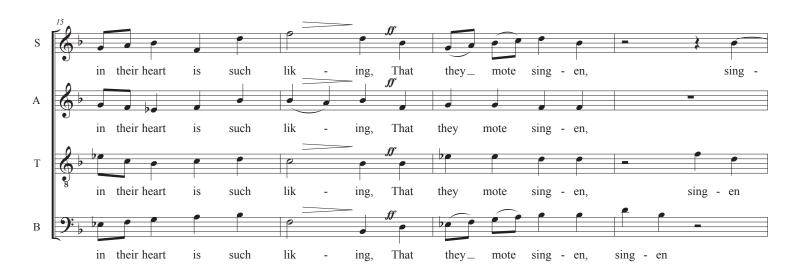




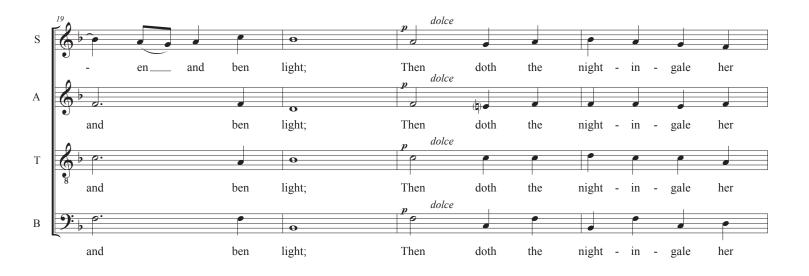
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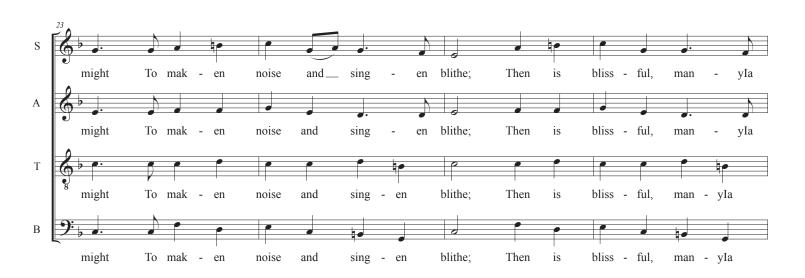


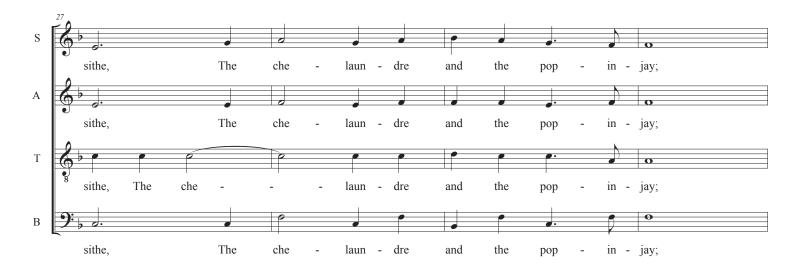


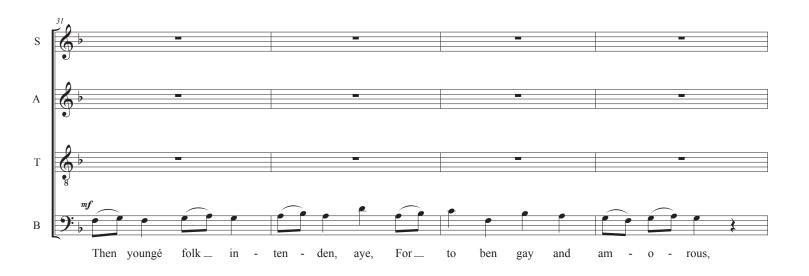


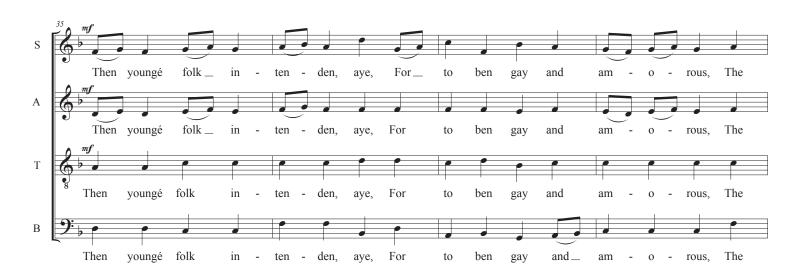
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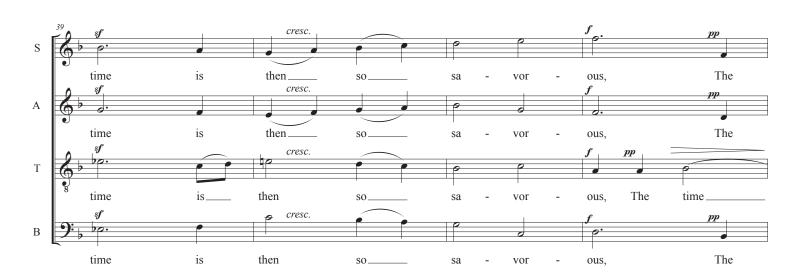


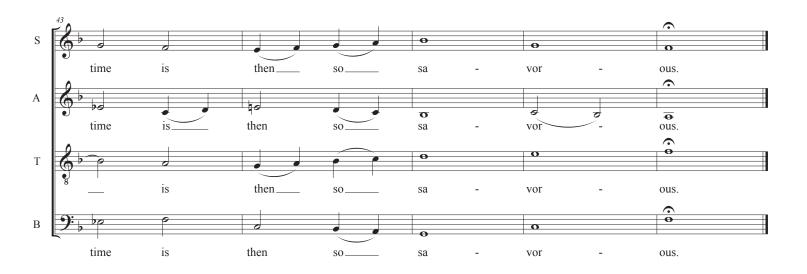












S. Brainard's Sons (1876)

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