



**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 síthe,
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
síthe = time
chelaundre = goldfinch or lark
popinjay = parrot

The birds that had left their song

G. A. Macfarren

Moderato

S *f* The bird - és that had left their song *pp* While

A *f* The bird - és that had left their song *pp* While

T *f* The bird - és that had left their song *pp* While

B *f* The bird - és that had left their song *pp* While

S ⁴ *cresc.* they had suf - fer'd cold full strong In weath - ers grill

A *cresc.* they had suf - fer'd cold full strong In weath - ers

T *cresc.* they had suf - fer'd cold full strong In weath - ers

B *cresc.* they had suf - fer'd cold full strong In weath - ers

The birds that had left their song

8

f *dim.* *p* *cresc.*

S and derk to sight, Ben in May for the

A grill and derk to sight, Ben in May for the

T grill and derk to sight, Ben in May for the

B grill and derk to sight, Ben in May for the

12

f

S sun - né bright, So glad that they showe in sing - ing That

A sun - né bright, So glad that they showe in sing - ing That

T sun - né bright, So glad that they showe in sing - ing That

B sun - né bright, So glad that they showe in sing - ing That

15

ff

S in their heart is such lik - ing, That they mote sing - en, sing -

A in their heart is such lik - ing, That they mote sing - en,

T in their heart is such lik - ing, That they mote sing - en, sing - en

B in their heart is such lik - ing, That they mote sing - en, sing - en

The birds that had left their song

19

S *p dolce*
- en — and ben light; Then doth the night - in - gale her

A *p dolce*
and ben light; Then doth the night - in - gale her

T *p dolce*
and ben light; Then doth the night - in - gale her

B *p dolce*
and ben light; Then doth the night - in - gale her

23

S
might To mak - en noise and — sing - en blithe; Then is bliss - ful, man - yla

A
might To mak - en noise and sing - en blithe; Then is bliss - ful, man - yla

T
might To mak - en noise and sing - en blithe; Then is bliss - ful, man - yla

B
might To mak - en noise and sing - en blithe; Then is bliss - ful, man - yla

27

S
sithe, The che - laun - dre and the pop - in - jay;

A
sithe, The che - laun - dre and the pop - in - jay;

T
sithe, The che - - - laun - dre and the pop - in - jay;

B
sithe, The che - laun - dre and the pop - in - jay;

The birds that had left their song

31

S

A

T

B *mf*

Then youngé folk _ in - ten - den, aye, For _ to ben gay and am - o - rous,

35

S *mf*

A *mf*

T *mf*

B *mf*

Then youngé folk _ in - ten - den, aye, For _ to ben gay and am - o - rous, The

Then youngé folk _ in - ten - den, aye, For to ben gay and am - o - rous, The

Then youngé folk in - ten - den, aye, For to ben gay and am - o - rous, The

Then youngé folk in - ten - den, aye, For to ben gay and _ am - o - rous, The

39

S *sf* *cresc.* *f* *pp*

A *sf* *cresc.* *f* *pp*

T *sf* *cresc.* *f* *pp*

B *sf* *cresc.* *f* *pp*

time is then _____ so _____ sa - vor - ous, The

time is then _____ so _____ sa - vor - ous, The

time is _____ then so _____ sa - vor - ous, The time _____

time is then so _____ sa - vor - ous, The

The birds that had left their song

43

S
time is then so sa - vor - ous.

A
time is then so sa - vor - ous.

T
8
is then so sa - vor - ous.

B
time is then so sa - vor - ous.

Detailed description: This is a musical score for four voices: Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). The music is in a key with one flat (B-flat major or D minor) and a common time signature. The score consists of six measures. The lyrics are: 'time is then so sa - vor - ous.' The Soprano part starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The Alto part starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The Tenor part starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat, with an octave sign '8' below the first note. The Bass part starts with a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across notes. The final note of each line is a half note with a fermata.

S. Brainard's Sons
(1876)

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