

AND TENOR AND BARITONE SOLI WITH
PIANO AND ORGAN ACCOMPANIMENT

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL



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The Vision of Sir Launfal

(JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL)

PROLOGUE

TENOR SOLO
Over his keys the musing organist,
Beginning doubtfully and far away,
First lets his fingers wander as they list,
And builds a bridge from Dreamland for
his lay;

Then, as the touch of his loved instrument Gives hope and fervor, nearer draws his theme,

First guessed by faint auroral flushes sent Along the wavering vista of his dream.

PART I

SUMMER

CHORUS

"My golden spurs now bring to me,
And bring to me my richest mail,
For to-morrow I go over land and sea
In search of the Holy Grail;
Shall never a bed for me be spread,
Nor shall a pillow be under my head,
Till I begin my vow to keep;
Here on the rushes will I sleep,
And perchance there may come a vision true
Ere day create the world anew."
Slowly Sir Launfal's eyes grew dim,
Slumber fell like a cloud on him,
And into his soul the vision flew.
The crows flapped over by two and threes

The crows flapped over by twos and threes, In the pool drowsed the cattle up to their knees,

The little birds sang as if it were
The one day of summer in all the year,
And the very leaves seemed to sing on the
trees:

The castle alone in the landscape lay Like an outpost of winter, dull and gray;

BARITONE SOLO

'Twas the proudest hall in the North Countree, And never its gates might opened be, Save to lord or lady of high degree.

CHORUS

'Twas the proudest hall in the North Countree,

And never its gates might opened be Save to lord or lady of high degree; Summer besieged it on every side, But the churlish stone her assaults defied; She could not scale the chilly wall, Though around it for leagues her pavilions tall

Stretched left and right,
Over the hills and out of sight;
Green and broad was every tent,
And out of each a murmur went
Till the breeze fell off at night.

The drawbridge dropped with a surly clang, And through the dark arch a charger sprang,

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Bearing Sir Launfal, the maiden knight, In his gilded mail, that flamed so bright It seemed the dark castle had gathered all Those shafts the fierce sun had shot over its wall

In his siege of three hundred summers long, And, binding them all in one blazing sheaf

Had cast them forth; so, young and strong, And lightsome as a locust-leaf,

3ir Launfal flashed forth in his unscarred mail.

To seek in all climes for the Holy Grail.

TENOR SOLO

As Sir Launfal made morn through the darksome gate.

He was 'ware of a leper, crouched by the same.

Who begged with his hand and moaned as he sate:

And a loathing over Sir Launfal came; The sunshine went out of his soul with a thrill.

The flesh 'neath his armor 'gan shrink and crawl,

And midway its leap his heart stood still Like a frozen waterfall:

For this man, so foul and bent of stature, Rasped harshly against his dainty nature, And seemed the one blot on the summer morn—

So he tossed him a piece of gold in scorn.

BARITONE SOLO

The leper raised not the gold from the dust:
"Better to me the poor man's crust,
Better the blessing of the poor,
Though I turn me empty from his door;
That is no true alms which the hand can hold:

He gives nothing but worthless gold Who gives from a sense of duty;

CHORUS

But he who gives but a slender mite, And gives to that which is out of sight, That thread of the all-sustaining Beauty Which runs through all and doth all unite—

The hand cannot clasp the whole of his alms,

The heart outstretches its eager palms, For a god goes with it and makes it store For the soul that was starving in darkness before."

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PART II

WINTER

CHORUS

There was never a leaf on bush or tree,
The bare boughs rattled shudderingly;
The river was dumb and could not speak,
For the weaver Winter its shroud had
spun;

A single crow on the tree-top bleak

From his shining feathers shed off the

cold sun:

Again it was morning, but shrunk and cold, As if her veins were sapless and old, And she rose up decrepitly For a last dim look at earth and sea.

TENOR SOLO

Sir Launfal turned from his own hard gate, For another heir in his earldom sate; An old, bent man, worn out and frail, He came back from seeking the Holy Grail. Little he recked of his earldom's loss, No more on his surcoat was blazoned the cross,

But deep in his soul the sign he wore, The badge of the suffering and the poor.

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CHORUS

Then nearer and nearer, till, one by one, He can count the camels in the sun, As over the red, hot sands they pass To where, in its slender necklace of grass, The little spring laughed and leapt in the

And with its own self like an infant played, And waved its signal of palms.

BARITONE SOLO

"For Christ's sweet sake, I beg an alms."

Chorus

The happy camels may reach the spring, But Sir Launfal sees only the grewsome thing,

The leper, lank as the rain-blanched bone, That cowers beside him, a thing as lone And white as the ice-isles of Northern seas In the desolate horror of his disease. And Sir Launfal said:

TENOR SOLO

"I behold in thee
An image of Him who died on the tree;
Thou also hast had thy crown of thorns—
Thou also hast had the world's buffets and
scorns—

And to thy life were not denied The wounds in the hands and feet and side: Mild Mary's Son, acknowledge me; Behold, through him, I give to Thee!"

CHORUS

Then the soul of the leper stood up in his eyes

And looked at Sir Launfal, and straightway he

Remembered in what a haughtier guise

He had flung an alms to leprosie,

When he girt his young life up in gilded
mail,

And set forth in search of the Holy Grail.
The heart within him was ashes and dust;
He parted in twain his single crust,
He broke the ice on the streamlet's brink,
And gave the leper to eat and drink,
'Twas a mouldy crust of coarse brown
bread

'Twas water out of a wooden bowl— Yet with fine wheaten bread was the leper

And 'twas red wine he drank with his thirsty soul.

TENOR SOLO

As Sir Launfal mused with a downcast face, A light shone round about the place; The leper no longer crouched at his side, But stood before him glorified, Shining and tall and fair and straight As the pillar that stood by the Beautiful Gate—

Himself the Gate whereby men can Enter the temple of God in Man.

CHORUS

His words were shed softer than leaves from the pine,

And they fell on Sir Launfal as snows on the brine.

That mingle their softness and quiet in one With the shaggy unrest they float down upon;

And the voice that was calmer than silence said:

BARITONE SOLO

"Lo, it is I, be not afraid! In many climes, without avail, Thou hast spent thy life for the Holy Grail; Behold!

CHORUS

Behold, it is here!-

(v)

BARITONE SOLO

this cup which thou Didst fill at the streamlet for me but now; This crust is my body, broken for thee, This water His blood that died on the tree; The Holy Supper is kept, indeed, In whatso we share with another's need.

CHORUS

Not what we give, but what we share— For the gift without the giver is bare; Who gives himself with his alms feeds three—

Himself, his hungering neighbor, and me."
Sir Launfal awoke as from a swound:—
"The Grail in my castle here is found!
Hang my idle armor up on the wall,
Let it be the spider's banquet-hall;
He must be fenced with stronger mail,
Who would seek and find the Holy Grail."

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The Vision of Sir Launfal

(James Russell Lowell)

Prepare:

Prologue*

Gt. I & II: Op. Diap., Flutes, Oct., Super-Oct. Sw.: St. Diap., Vox Humana (coup. to Gt.) Ch.: Vox Angelica & Dolce (coup. to Gt.)
(Dolce alone, if preferred)

Solo: Op. Diap., Orch. Fl., Tuba Major, Tuba Mirab.

Pedal: 16' & 8'

Charles Wakefield Cadman



^{*} An impressive silence is almost imperative before striking the first note of the Prologue, and, when performed, a "program note" to this effect should be inserted in the program. Composer.

^{**} The Organ, up to the 17th measure, must be facile princeps, thus making the Tenor Solo rather an "Obbligato Recitative." Copyright, 1910, by G. Schirmer



Part I

(Summer)

Sw. Foundation stops. Coup. to Ped. Gt. (as before) Coup. to Ped.

Ped. Add 32'& 8'



































































Part II
(Winter)













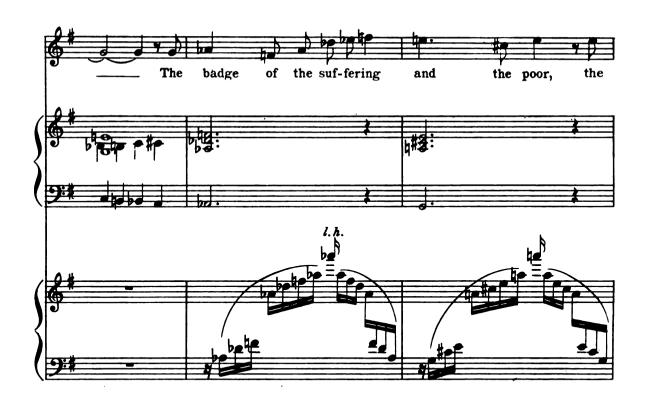








































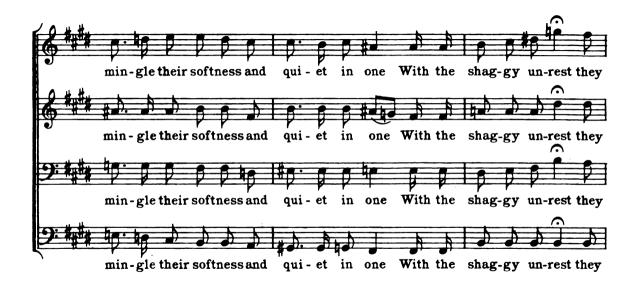


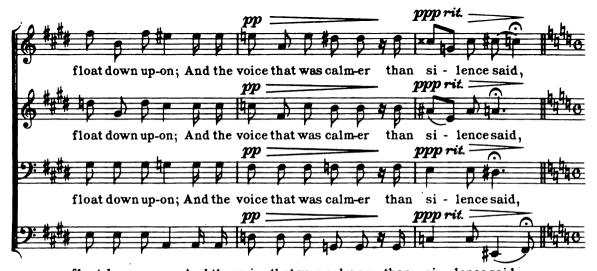






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float down up-on; And the voice that was calmer than si - lence said,___







