



The Acts of S. Richard

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SCENE 1

Enter a procession of farm-labourers, ploughmen, reapers and harvesters, with sickles, scythes and farm implements, bringing in the harvest. With them Richard of Droitwich and his brother.

Harvest Carol

(Melody of " Summer is icumen in ")

Here we come a-harvesting
To reap the summer's joy,
Here we come a-revelling,
Man and maid and boy,
Sing ut hoy !
Now nor frost nor drought nor storm
Our treasure may destroy,
Now let mirth and merriment
Be every heart's employ !
Harvest, harvest,
Sing the homing harvest,
Merry sing ut hoy !

Far be fears and doubts and griefs,
Let no regret annoy,
He who ploughs the fields of God
Hath toil that cannot cloy,
Sing ut hoy !
Blessed be the King of Heaven,
And blessed by Saint Foy,
Faith hath clothed the naked fields
Again with golden joy !
Harvest, harvest,
Sing the homing harvest,
Merry sing ut hoy !

BROTHER—Men of Droitwich, and you women also who have laboured in these fields, attend what I have to say. This farm came to me, barren and neglected, so poor in yield that it was hard for a man to win bread enough for his need. I had not the knowledge, nor the patience to cleanse the ground and make it rich. Under my care it failed. Starvation stalked the fields. But now, look around you! To-day we rejoice as for a miracle. All of you know the man whose faith and courage turned this desert into a fruitful land.

BYSTANDERS—Aye! Aye! We know him!

BROTHER—Richard! My brother! You are a better man than I—braver, more patient, wiser. I am grateful, and that men may know my love for you I give you the best reward in my power. The farm is yours. I give it to you!

RICHARD—Brother, you are generous. It was a joy to me to win the love of the unloved soil, so that she brought forth the good gifts of God. I ask for no reward.

BROTHER—Accept a gift! The farm is rich in profit by your labours. Here you may live in comfort. I will find you a young wife, fair, and worthy of your love.

RICHARD—No, brother, I know the joy men find in wife and children, but I do not seek it. Some are called to set their hearts in one small circle, as children set a rose in a ring of daisies, making a lovely posy. But I thirst for knowledge! I hunger for the unseen! I thank you for your goodness—for your love, but my work here is done.

BROTHER—You will not leave us? Where would you go?

Very softly a distant bell begins to ring

RICHARD—Listen! It is the vesper bell. As I followed the long furrows, seeing them sweep to the edge of Heaven, ever the hidden bells rang out beyond! Daily I offered the strength of my body to the earth, and the desire of my spirit to God, labouring and praying with all my might, and God has called me to wider fields!

BROTHER—I do not understand.

RICHARD—I am ignorant. In Oxford there are books—great books, and men of learning.

BROTHER—You will go to Oxford?

RICHARD—Yes. Let me go! Do not think me hard of heart. A man has one life in which to labour here, one harvest to reap—hereafter.

BROTHER—Here is a day of joy clouded with sorrow. I will not strive to keep you. You are free. I will give you what you need for your journey.

They all go out

SCENE 2

*Enter Edmund of Pontigny, Dawn Jemlae,
Dawn Edsy and Oxford students.*

Song in praise of Philosophy and the Seven Liberal Arts.
(*Melody of the Boar's Head Carol*)

*A stout student
with a bass
voice* Now hold your peace, *par charitee*
And lithe and listen unto me !
I sing of Dame Philosophy,
The mother of all learning.

*All students
in unison* Seven seemly daughters share
Their mother's beauty past compare,
No man can tell which is most rare,
Though good be his discerning.

*Three students
with a scroll
(Trio)* Grammar's candle is a star.
Dialectic's eyes shine far.
Rhetoric is armed for war,
Famous warrior maiden !

*An older
student who has
a goat's beard
(Solo)* Geometry in shadowed robe
Doth bear the compass and the globe ;
In jade-green dust her fingers probe
With mystic meaning laden.

*Two students
sharing a book
(Duet)* Arithmetic with horn of flame
Doth put the unicorn to shame ;
And winged Astronomy's bright name
Hath set the stars a-burning.

*The student who sings the following verse carried a small
wooden instrument with metal notes which he strikes with
a hammer.*

*A boy
(Treble solo)* Lovely, lonely, last of all,
Music hears her lover's call,
On men's hearts her accents fall
Like spring flowers returning.

*All
(Harmony)* Lovers of the radiant Seven,
Books, like Jacob's Stair, reach Heaven !
Unto God be glory given,
For his gifts of learning.

DAUN EDSY—Master Edmund, tradition holds that the father of Blessed Frideswide was the King of Oxford.

DAUN JEMLAE—Master! Hear this! From the acts of Saint Frideswide grew our great university. Before her time where was Oxford? And if there was no Oxford, where was the King?

EDSY—But the books say . . .

JEMLAE—The books do not agree . . .

EDMUND—Pax! Pax! The purport of our work is the honour of our patroness. Rehearse the play, and I will judge.

He sits

JEMLAE—Didan!

The goat's-bearded student comes forward

Frideswide!

A boy student, wearing a cassock and white rochet comes forward. Jemlae gives him a yellow cloth.

This is the golden hair. Cover your head.

Algar, King of Leicester!

Swineherd! Tuck up your gown.

Other students come forward as they are called.

Where is the Great Swine?

SWINEHERD—He is doing penance with the Danemen, for disturbing the town.

JEMLAE—All the Danemen?

SWINEHERD—All but Richard de la Wych, and he is going to France.

JEMLAE—Cut the Danes. I will play the Great Swine myself.

Where are my brothers?

Several students come forward

Put up your hoods, and make play with the pokes. Didan, begin.

THE LEGEND OF S. FRIDESWIDE

DIDAN—It is of Frideswide that I do speak.
She is my daughter, whom a king doth seek
To take in marriage.

Enter Frideswide

Out! Harrow! Alack!

I am too old to carry such a pack
Of mortal worries and immortal fear!

FRIDESWIDE—What is the matter now, my father dear?

DIDAN—What is the matter? What the matter, eh?
 Matter to turn my last black hair to grey!
 You are the matter! You, I say, you—you!

FRIDESWIDE—God pity us! What would you have me do?

DIDAN—God pity us indeed! I cannot tell!
 Are you still set upon a convent cell?
 The King of Leicester is a man of dread.

FRIDESWIDE—The King of Heaven can restore the dead!

DIDAN—I know, I know!

FRIDESWIDE—You must not be afraid.

DIDAN—That I should live to take that from a maid!

FRIDESWIDE—God says that I must go to convent cell
 To pray for all in need of prayer.

DIDAN— Well, well!
 Are deeds not prayers? Sure God can understand
 That were you queen of Leicester's gold and land
 You could endow a dozen convents round.
 Crowned heads are mightier than heads uncrowned.
 Have you no love—no pity for your sire,
 Set as I am between such ice and fire?

FRIDESWIDE—I love all men, yet would I rather be
 Praying for them than of their company,
 For men do always fill a woman's head
 With thoughts of meat and drink, and baking bread.

DIDAN—A woman's glory is to do the will
 Of him she weds, her mission to fulfil!

FRIDESWIDE—Good lack, my father! Does not great Saint Paul
 Praise the unwed, who serve God first of all?
 My heart is set on Heaven.

DIDAN— What heart have you?
 Why is your hair of such a shining hue
 To draw men's eyes? You stone! You naughty thing!
 Proud girl! Obstinate!—Fly! Here comes the King!
She leaves him. Enter the King of Leicester
 O sire, my liege, how fares your Grace to-day?

ALGAR—Where is your daughter?

DIDAN—She has run away.

ALGAR—What!

DIDAN—The foolish virgin is in holy case . . .

ALGAR—What!

DIDAN—She will not let a man look on her face!

ALGAR—Ha, ha! Her face is not less fair for that.
 Where is she?

DIDAN—Sire I cannot tell you, pat.
 She seeks to found a convent.

ALGAR— So she shall,
 By the ox ford, and most magnificent,
 Where growing sons of noble men to be
 Shall learn good manners and their A.B.C.

DIDAN—I told her what a splendid king you were!

ALGAR—Away! To horse! Let us go hunt for her!
The whitest does that ever ran the wood!

DIDAN—And if we catch her—what will be the good?

They go out—Enter Swineherd with his swine

SWINEHERD—Lo, here, my gentle pigges, is plenty
Of acorns, and good nuts of hazel-tree,
As well as beech-fruit, scattered all about
Amid the bracken fern, go rout them out.
Upon this mossy mound now will I sit
To watch your sport, and make a song of it.
Was never herd of hogges half so fine
So burly, nor so sweet of flesh as mine!

GREAT SWINE—Off . . .

OTHER SWINE— Off . . .

LITTLE SWINE— Be . . . eee . . . off!

SWINEGERD—How tenderly the sunlight falls on ye,
Showing how plump and pink and fair ye be.

GREAT SWINE—M'ph . . .

OTHER SWINE— M'ph, m'ph!

LITTLE SWINE— Ee . . . eeeee um'ph!

SWINEHERD—Yet rosier as the sun descends ye show,
My royal swine, fit for a monarch,—O!
What light is that comes moving through the trees?
Nor sun—nor moon—nor candle—none of these!
O Blessed Prodigal, protect me now!
The earliest piglet here to thee I vow!
It is a fairy woman with bright hair!
Pardon!—Protect my swine!—and take thy share!

He runs away

GREAT SWINE—Off!

OTHER SWINE— Off, off!

LITTLE SWINE— Hee . . . eees off!

Enter Frideswide

FRIDESWIDE—Innocent hogges, be more kind than men,
Grant me protection in your forest pen.
I am pursued by one without pity,
Hide me, good creatures of your charity!

GREAT SWINE—umph?

OTHER SWINE— Umph?

LITTLE SWINE— Eee . . . ee umph?

They gather round her. Enter Algar and Didan

ALGAR—Surely she passed this way, these beasts look
As though disturbed their fodder have forsook.
Only some interest, or sudden fright,
Can move a feeding swine from his delight.

GREAT SWINE—Off! Off!

OTHER SWINE— Off! Off! Off!

LITTLE SWINE— Be . . . eeee off!

ALGAR—Foul hogs, away! Out of my path—gbeone!

He strikes the Great Swine, who moves, leaving Algar face to face with Frideswide. Algar is struck blind.

Where is the path? Where lies the setting sun?

Merciful Heaven, what is done to me?

Mine eyes are smitten and I cannot see!

DIDAN—O pray for us, kind saints!

ALGAR— Pray for my sight!

Give me your hand.

FRIDESWIDE— O Father of all light,

Let not this poor king suffer for my sake,
Show him that I am not his world is make.

Now in Thy mercy be all sin forgiven,

Thy will be done in earth, as in high Heaven!

RESTORE HIS SIGHT!

Algar's sight is restored

ALGAR— I see you, Frideswide!

I see you as you are, God's maid indeed:

Fear me no more, most holy Saint of God,

Bright star of night, white flower of the sward,

O sweet in bitter, pearl of all the sea,

Forgive my sin, ask what you will of me!

FRIDESWIDE—Build me a tower, where, like Aaron's Rod

Wisdom may flower to the praise of God.

ALGAR—Stones, stones and mortar! Come now, let us go!

DIDAN MY DAUGHTER!

GREAT SWINE—Off!

OTHER SWINE— Beeee—off!

LITTLE SWINE— Weee . . . know! Wee . . . know!

In the absence of the Danemen, the players wait directions from Daun Jemlae.

JEMPLAE—So was the Shrine built, as you now shall see.

Behold, Saint Frideswide, by chastity

Founded fair Oxford's University.

EDSY—(*determined to make trouble*)—But there was a fire!

JEMPLAE—Yes, yes! The Danemen are not here. But we have a very pretty device for showing how the flames danced about the grey walls. To it, boys!

The students dance round Frideswide with flame coloured rags on sticks. During this dance, Richard comes in and stands by Edmunds chair.

JEMPLAE—See how the spirit of Blessed Frideswide to this day guards the true spirit of learning, which shall not be destroyed in Oxford for ever. Amen.

EDSY—(*outraged*)—But I tell you . . . this is altogether unorthodox! Tradition says . . .

JEMPLAE—(*raising his voice, magnificently*)—That is the end of the play. (*To Master Edmund*)—Master, we await your judgment.

There is no answer, and they discover that Edmund is apparently asleep.

JEMPLAE—(*Tragically*)—He has not been listening!

RICHARD—(*Tenderly*)—Master! . . . Master!

EDSY—(*Complacently*)—He is asleep.

EDMUND—Non dormio, sed recumbo. Qui tacet consentire videtur. You have done well. You shall perform the play to the honour of our Foundress, on her festival. You may go.

Everyone goes away except Edmund and Richard.

Why do you not go with them?

RICHARD—Your fees, Master? I leave Oxford at dawn. What money do I owe you?

EDMUND—What you can spare. Leave it on my windowsill to-night. And what have you learned under my charge? Let me hear.

RICHARD (*reciting*)—Deus est pater omnipotens. Omnia opera Dei sunt bona. Vita nostra est brevis, veritas Domini manebit in aeternum. Animae fidelium sunt in pace.

EDMUND—And can you expound in simple English the spirit of those words?

RICHARD—God is our Almighty Father, and all His works are good. Our life is brief but the Truth of God abideth in Eternity, and the souls of the faithful are in peace.

EDMUND—Well spoken. Now the world lies before you. Let nothing turn your heart from God. Remember, what you have learned from me is but the beginning of wisdom. Study as one who will live for ever, live as one who may die to-morrow. When you come to die all the long scroll of life will lie unrolled. Take heed the script be fair, God's eyes must read it.

RICHARD—God reward you, Master, for all that you have given me. Rough and unlettered I came from the farm, and you filled my mind with riches out of your wisdom. To you, by God's mercy, I owe everything. Give me your blessing.

EDMUND—I commit you unto the Love of Christ, unto the Faith of His Church, and unto the Hope of the Future.

They go out together

SCENE 3

A number of Dominican friars come in. They form a semi-circle round the back of the rostrum. The Prior comes last, and goes to a seat at one side of the rostrum.

PRIOR—Sons of S. Dominic, remember in your prayers Richard of Droitwich, who this day dedicates his life to the priesthood. He laboured with his hands among the humblest, but the learned have not put him to shame. He has made himself a master of booklore, and his countrymen called him to honour, but he turns his back on worldly greatness, setting his face to serve God. Blessed by the power of the Holy Trinity.

Richard enters accompanied by four friars carrying lighted tapers, which symbolise the four elements, or mortal nature of man.

RICHARD—O Lord of all life, who hast taken our mortal nature into union with the Threefold Majesty of thy Godhead, and in Christ dost reconcile the world unto thyself, be merciful to me, a sinner.

O God my Redeemer, by thine Incarnation, by thy Cross and Passion, by thy bursting of the bonds of death and ascent into glory, thou hast set me in the way of salvation, I beseech thee, Lord, write thy Law of Love in my heart.

O Wisdom of the Eternal Trinity, thou Fire of Heaven, destroy the corruption of my ignorance, and enlighten the darkness of my soul! Breathe upon me the Breath of Life, guide me into all Truth, and lead me in the Way of Peace.

Richard kneels

The Bishop of Orleans comes in, with his deacon and subdeacon.

BISHOP—(*Vesting Richard in stole and chasuble*)—Take upon thee the yoke of Christ, and be thou a labourer in the vineyard of God.

FRIARS—Veni Creator Spiritus,
Mentes Tuorum visita,
Imple superna gratia,
Quae tu creasti pectora.

(etc.)

During the hymn, the three lights symbolic of the Trinity are carried in and presented to the Bishop, deacon and subdeacon.

BISHOP—The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened by his Spirit in the inner man. Christ dwell in your heart by faith, that you being rooted and grounded in love may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fulness of God.

As he speaks the last words the Bishop, deacon and sub-deacon and the four friars bring their tapers into an aureole of seven lights round the head of the new-made priest, symbolising thereby the in-dwelling of the Spirit, and his sevenfold gifts. Richard stands.

The Prior leads out the Bishop and the bearers of the six other lights. The friars sing Psalm 15 (Domine quis habitabit?) Vox Ecclesiae (The Voice of the Church) enters.

VOX ECCLESIAE—Richard of Droitwich, you are called by God to the care of his children in the South Country. From the City of Chichester in the west as far as Rye and Winchelsea in the east you shall carry his Word among the people, and have care of the souls of men from the north downs unto the sea coast. Are you ready, with all diligence, to take upon you this work?

RICHARD—I am ready, the Lord being my helpers.

VOX ECCLESIAE—Go then, and when you have been made bishop present yourself before the King of England. And hearken! On either side of the King's throne, his chief advisors, you shall see the King's Folly and the King's Greed. Upon the throne sits the grandson of Henry Curtmantle, the slayer of Thomas the Saint. Speak boldly before him, as becometh your high office, yet peacably, as becometh a servant of Christ. In the name of the Church I bid you God speed.

Vox Ecclesiae, Richard, and the friars go out.

SCENE 4

A sound of folly bells

Enter King Henry III with his court. On one side of the King walks the Kings Folly, a jester, on the other side the King's Greed.

FOLLY—Ride-a-cock-horse
Thames River to cross,
To see a gay monarch
Ride England's White Horse!
Rings on his fingers
And bells on his toes,
Riches and Folly
Wherever he goes!

GREED—Offer him playthings
And pleasures untold,
Harry of England
Will never grow old!
Ring the coins, Folly,
Gold, silver and brown,
All the wide kingdom
Is wealth for the Crown!

The King sits, and Folly and Greed take fantastic poses on either side of him, like figures in a medieval manuscript. A nobleman presents a parchment to the King.

NOBLEMAN—Richard of Droitwich, Bishop of Chichester, presents his petition, sire.

HENRY—(*pushing it aside*)—I have said. I will not give my consent to the appointment.

NOBLEMAN—It will give great offence, my lord King, if you continue to withhold lands and gold which are by right the property of the Church.

FOLLY—What need has the Church of lands and gold? She is greedy!

NOBLEMAN—Will you give audience to the bishop, sire, and let him speak for himself?

GREED—No, no! Let him wait! The longer he waits the richer we shall be!

HENRY—Tell him to present his petition next year . . .

Enter Richard

He now has in his hand a very simple form of pastoral staff, more like a shepherd's crook than a bishop's crozier.

RICHARD—My lord King!

HENRY—How dare you thrust yourself into our presence! Who are you?

RICHARD—Richard, sire—sometime of Droitwich, now appointed Bishop of Chichester. I am not come to plead my own rights, sire, I am here to plead the cause of the Church, and the cause of God's poor.

HENRY—You are not a bishop! We have refused our consent to your appointment!

RICHARD—Your Grace, you know well I am made bishop by the Church of Christ. I have received that which you can neither give nor take away.

FOLLY—A very haughty claim! I think I hear the voice of Archbishop Thomas!

GREED—No, no! Never dispute the spiritual gift. Let him do the work to which he is appointed, but do not let him be paid for his labour! We can put the gold to a better use!

RICHARD—I pray you heed her not, sire. My suit is for that wealth that shall aid my labour, not repay it. In many a hostel of holy brethren there is enough barley bread and water to supply my wants. My own need is of little account. The need of my diocese is pressing. The lands and wealth that you withhold from me were given by the faithful to God . . .

GREED—Believe me, sir, the king can judge as well as you how God would have the gold spent! Have you not heard of the work done at Westminster? We have aided the cause of learning, at Oxford, and elsewhere. Have no fear, the revenue of your diocese will be put to good use.

RICHARD—Yet am I called to be God's steward, and because I hold that office I am bound to plead with the King.

HENRY—You lie, Richard de la Wych! You grasp at power! You need wealth to increase your authority. By the Light of Heaven! I understand you! You who are ordained by the Church, you who are above the King's majesty, go back to your hostel of holy brethren! A diet of bread and water may do somewhat to humble your spirit!

RICHARD—My lord King, I have not merited your displeasure. I am innocent of that of which you accuse me!

FOLLY—The King is concerned for your soul, Bishop! He would guard you from temptation! Is it not said, how hardly shall a man that hath riches enter the Kingdom of Heaven?

There is a little scornful laughter in the Court

RICHARD—Master Folly, those are the words of our Lord Christ. And I say unto you, when men heed that saying then shall they see the Kingdom of God on earth. My lord King, I take my leave of you, remembering that humble duty that I owe you. I go now to take up the charge which is entrusted to me. My diocese is no larger than my Master's Holy Land. I will preach the word from place to place as he did.

HENRY—So you defy me! You shall not gain from others what I have denied you. Hear, all present! Whosoever shall give or lend monies jto this fellow incurs the King's displeasure! Look to it! You shall not befriend him! Let him beg his bread if he can! Drive him away!

Richard goes out

GREED—Who is the fellow?

FOLLY—A Farmer's son!

GREED—No friends? No wealthy patrons, I suppose?

FOLLY—None. Those who were his friends are dead. (*To the King*)—You spoke most nobly, sire! Such dignity, such royalty was in your manner the whole court trembled at your words!

Enter Vox Ecclesiae

VOX ECCLESIAE—Henry, King of England, I am sent to warn you of the error of your ways. Richard of Chichester is a faithful servant of God. You have raised your hand against him to persecute him. Remember the sin of Henry Curtmantle, and his bitter remorse. Remember the sins of King John, your father, and the hatred of his people. Beward. Consider how greatly you offend against God and his Church, and repent you of your sin!

He goes out

HENRY—I am afraid!

FOLLY—Vain threats! Vain threats! They cannot reach the King's majesty!

GREED—Take no action now. At a more convenient season let your Grace consider the matter . . .

But the King rises abruptly from his chair and signs Folly and Greed to move further from him. He looks ill at ease and taking the nobleman's arm he leads the way out.

The court follows

SCENE 5

A voice, or voices, off, sing—(Melody O.C.B. 10)

THE VOICE—Behold, a sower went forth to sow,
And far and wide he scattered seed ;
The warrior poppies' pagan glow
Follows the track of feet that bleed ;
But with Faith's softly springing corn
The Very Bread,
The Very Bread of Life is born.

Enter Farmer Piers, with men, women, and children from the fields. Also Pier's son, and the Spinner-wife with her small son, who carries a bunch of bluebells.

THE VOICE—The fisher folk went forth to fish ;
They toiled all night, yet nothing caught,
The winds were contra to their wish,
Their empty nets no largesse brought,
Yet Hope upon the Sussex sea
Walks in the light,
Walks in the light from Galilee.

Enter Fisherman Zebedee, folk from the boats, and cockle-gatherers.

THE VOICE—A shepherd roamed the hills of God,
Where the sweet grass is fresh and cool,
Warding his sheep with pastoral rod
He led them to the dew-fed pool.
Upon a hill-top in Judea
Fathomless Love,
Fathomless Love wells crystal clear.

Enter Shepherd Wat with his flock. The sheep are represented by a number of small children wearing white woolly medieval caped hoods and tunics. One of them is black. Several of them carry sheep-bells, whose ringing may be heard before the flock appears.

WAT—Young lambs for sale ! Young lambs for sale ! New year's wool for the weaving ! New year's wool !

PIERS—Grass is cheap upon the downs, and lambs grow by nature. Shepherd, you are a happy man !

WAT—You in trouble, Piers !

PIERS—Trouble ! When is a farmer not in trouble ? Last year's crops were rotted with the rains, this year's drought lets nothing grow but the weeds, and they spread like the plague ! Poppies and corn-cockles, stone-crop and ragwort—oh, pretty as a picture in the lord bishop's missal-book ! But looking at pictures can't feed folk.

ZEBEDEE—Bishop says it can. I have known some such thing happen out with the boats. You will be watching the water, seeing nothing but the lift and fall of it under the sky, dark and light coming and going, until all you know is the shifting colour and the shine of it. Then on a sudden comes a great wave of glistening silver, changing like a rainbow, and flashing along—'tis the colour tells of a shoal in the shallows! 'Tis like that with pictures. You may look and see nothing but paint and gold-work, but suddenly the Holy Spirit shines through, and God is there. So Bishop says.

PIERS—Bishop is a holy man. He sees God everywhere. Wish I could. At my work a man can throw his strength away, and suddenly—he's old. After that he dies, like an old fox, in his earth. If I were young again I'd choose the sort of life that gives you something for nothing, like fishing and sheep-herding. What have ye brought to market to-day, Zebedee?

ZEBEDEE—Nothing.

PIERS—What? Nothing?

ZEBEDEE—Sea has her moods, same as the shore.

WAT—Now you two, I'll tell you something for your comfort. Ye don't have to face the wolves. Last winter against the lambing time I digged a dyke round the fold, with the lad to help me. And then, through the nights we took it by turns to keep awake. Your old wolf is a cunning beast—he knows he gets on better by himself, without the yowling of the pack. You may be watching half the night and see nothing. At first you start, and turn sharp whenever the wind whisks over the rurf wall. Then it comes so that you grow lazy about turning—and that is what your wolf is waiting for! But a good shepherd can feel when the wolf is near, he's an evil thing, and often fear runs before him and warns you, long before you see his little green eyes flash in the dark. And there's nothing on earth so pitiful as the cry of a lamb that a wolf has taken.

Enter a young milkmaid, and a young cowherd, walking hand in hand, singing— (Melody O.C.B. 46).

COWHERD— All under the leaves and the leaves of life,
 I met with virgins seven,
 And one of them was Mary mild
 Our Lord's Mother of Heaven.

MILKMAID— O she was come of King David's line,
Sweet Jesu was her son,
And it is happy to be a maid
Though I be a sinful one.

COWHERD— And if that you will love me,
For his sake that died on Tree
I'll love you as he would have me do,
Remembering our Ladye.

MILKMAID— O the Rose, the gentle Rose,
And the Love of God so strong !

COWHERD— Amen, Good Lord, your charity
Is the ending of our song.

THE SPINNER-WIFE—The Lord Bishop ! Look, look ! The Lord
Bishop !

Enter Richard with several children

THE BOY—Father bishop, will you teach us a legend ?

THE LITTLE GIRL—Lord Father, will ye show us the pictures ?

Everybody throngs round Richard

PIER'S SON—Father ! The tongue of my song bird is healed !
He sings again !

RICHARD—God made him to sing !

THE BOY—Father ! Father ! Tell us a story !

THE LITTLE GIRL (*with great anxiety*)—Pictures, Father ! Pictures !

RICHARD—Patience, my lamb, patience ! All in good time. When
I was a lad at school, I had a friend. But we had only one
warm coat between us, therefore but one of us could go
out on a winter day. Now here be many coats, and but
one bishop !

Laughter

The Bluebell Boy is pushed forward by his mother.

SPINNER-WIFE—O my lord, see what you have done for us ! I never
thought to see him walk again.

RICHARD—Now may Heaven be praised !

He shows the child to the people

Behold this child ! He was lame, and now he is made
whole. This is the power of God working through the
faith of many. Because of your belief the child is healed !

SPINNER-WIFE—He ran up the lane all of himself to pick those
flowers for you !

RICHARD—The little bells of God.

BOY—Tell us a story! PLEASE tell us a story!

RICHARD—(*holding the bluebells*)—In the beginning God created the lilies of the field, and he saw that they were good, therefore he bade men to consider them. When the first men of Christ went abroad throughout the world, obediently they considered the little bells of God, and from their meditations sprang the great bells that call the world to worship the beauty of holiness. There are bells in Heaven and bells on the earth, and bells under the sea . . .

CHILDREN—Selsey! The drowned bells! And Bosham bell!

RICHARD— . . . When the great bells ring in God's tower the bells that are hidden by the deep waters make their response and say Alleluia, Alleluia, under the waves. Even so it is when the faith of man rings out a peal of love for one whom God hath called away the waters of eternity are stirred, and an unseen bell makes answer from that which ye call the past. With God there is no past, for in Him there is no death, but beauty, joy and love eternal.

PIERS—Father, forgive me. I have been grumbling all the morning. You make me sorry. You never grumble. Not even about your enemies.

RICHARD—What enemies have I, Piers? I know of none!

PIERS—I meant King Henry and his favourites. Those that are keeping you out of your rightful place.

RICHARD—God wishes me to be the King's friend. But King Henry does not like me. If I were to speak against him he would have cause to hate me, but now he is wrong, and God will someday show him the truth. To-night I must sleep at your farm, Piers. It may be I can help you. I know your trouble well enough, and I have not forgotten the ways of Mother Earth.

PIERS—You will come yourself? Ye will rest with me, my lord?

RICHARD—If you will take pity on a homeless old shepherd.

PIERS—Glory be to God! Now all will be well. I must go and bid the wife make ready!

RICHARD—No, no! No need for a feast for me.

A FARM HAND—We'll snare some birds for ye!

Piers, the farm hand, and Piers' son go out

RICHARD—Poor innocents, what have they done worthy of death?
Yet man must live.

ZEBEDEE—I can offer nothing. My nets are empty.

Richard prays for a moment, then looks at Zebedee's forlorn face.

RICHARD—Son, return to your nets. Do not tarry. Go now.

ZEBEDEE—My lord, we have toiled all night.

RICHARD—Yet I say unto you—for the sake of your Patron Saint Peter—let down the nets. There will be a blessing on your obedience.

ZEBEDEE—If you bid me, bishop.

He turns to go

Enter two young fisher lads, running

FISHER LAD—Come down to the boats, quickly, father! There's mackerel in the bay!

ZEBEDEE—This is your doing, my lord!

RICHARD—Not mine. Your Heavenly Father knoweth of your need. Be off! Follow your sons of Thunder!

Zebedee and his sons run out

They that go down to the sea in ships, that have their business in great waters, these men see the works of the Lord.

Piers returns

PIERS—There's a messenger coming for you, father! I heard him ask where to find you. He is on the road now! Do you think he is the King's man?

WAT—Don't ye wait for him! Come with me! I know where you can hide, where such as he will not think to look.

RICHARD—No Shepherd. If he comes from the King I must hear what he says.

SPINNER-WIFE—O my lord, they'll put you in prison—don't ye wait here!

PIERS—Do ye come away now with Shepherd and me, father.

BISHOP—O ye of little faith!

WAT—If he lay a finger on our bishop I'll clout his head for him!

PIERS—And so will I!

VOICES—And I! And I!

RICHARD—Children! Children! This long time I have lived among you, teaching you the love of God, and still in a moment you are ready to fall into the sin of fear—and violence! Remember what I have said so often, there is no blessing on violence! See, here he comes.

Vox Ecclesiae enters, and Richard moves to meet him

O sir, you are not come to take me from my flock ?

VOX ECCLESIAE—Shepherd of God, I bring good tidings. The King has been admonished, and brought to a better mind. He has restored the Church lands of your diocese. Your people may rejoice with you ! The gates of the City of Chichester are set wide to welcome you this day, and in the House of God his Saints await you.

Vox Ecclesiae goes out

There is an excited murmur among the peasantry

VOICES—News ! News ! Great glad and glorious news ! JUSTICE ! JUSTICE is done at last ! Our Bishop is VICTORIOUS ! His enemies are CONQUERED !

RICHARD—O my people, whom I have loved, let us praise God together that he has made peace between our Lord the King and Holy Church. Yet rejoice not in justice, nor in victory. These be the glories of Pagan gods, who ruled the world before the coming of the Friend of sinners. Let us abide in him, for the kingdom is his, and the power, and the glory. Come, let us do his lovely will.

He leads them out

SCENE 6

The Cathedral is prepared for the enthronement of the Bishop. Enter the Dean and Canons, followed by a nobleman, the King's delegate, attended by pages.

Meanwhile, some peasants gather outside the Cathedral, and some young people join in a song and dance round trees, represented by girls with branches in their hands.

The Carol of the King's Honesty

(Melody O.C.B. 71)

As it befel in midsummer time,
When birds sing sweetly on every tree,
Our noble King, King Harry the Third
Bethought him of humility !

Sing O the King, O the King, the King, the King ;
This has he done for Chichester !

Our Bishop Richard, up and down
 He walked the road of poverty,
 Like John and Peter, lacking gold,
 He healed his folk in Charity !

Sing O the King, O the King, the King, the King ;
 This has he done for Chichester !

King Harry was stout, he turned him about
 And followed after Hontesty,
 And all the See of Chichester
 Into our Bishop's hand gave he !

Sing O the King, O the King, the King, the King ;
 This has he done for Chichester !

Come sing a ring of roses, sing
 Our Bishop's King that is good to see !
 O sing a ring of angels' wings
 That worship round the Trinity !

Sing O the King, O the King, the Heavenly King ;
 This has he done for Chichester !

*When all is ready in the Cathedral, and the doors closed,
 Richard enters, accompanied by more peasants, and the
 dancers and children run to meet him, and escort him to the
 Cathedral.*

RICHARD—Open me the Gates of Righteousness, that I may go in
 unto them, and give thanks unto the Lord !

The doors are opened

DEAN—(*Standing between the doors*)—This is the Gate of the Lord,
 the righteous shall enter.

*Two Canons go down and stand on either hand of Richard
 and two stand on either side of the Dean.*

DEAN—Most reverend Father in God, I, Thomas de Lichfield, Dean,
 and the Chapter of this Cathedral Church, welcome your
 coming among us.

(*To the Canons beside him*)—Make haste, bring forth the
 Royal Apparel, that we may array the man whom the
 King of Kings delighteth to honour !

The two Canons go within

Come, thou blessed of the Lord, inherit the dominion
 which our God hath given thee !

The two Canons with Richard take him by the hand, and lead him up the steps, through the doors. (The doors are now removed altogether). Richard's coarse mantle is removed and he is robed by the Canons, three of them bringing the cope, one the mitre, one the crozier, and one the ring.

DEAN—(during the robing)—The Lord exalt thee, and adorn thee
(Cope) with power. Be thou robed with honour, having in thy heart humility.

(Mitre) The Lord enlighten thee, and give thee a good understanding. Be thou crowned with wisdom, having in thy heart innocence.

(Crozier) The Lord strengthn thee, and put in thine hand
(left hand) a staff of judgment. Be thou a ruler among thy people, having in thy heart love.

(Ring) (third) The Lord establish a covenant of peace with
finger of thee, and bind thee unto the service of his Church
right hand) for ever and ever.

RICHARD—O Righteous Lord, thy statutes be my guide in the House of my Pilgrimage.

An acolyte comes forward, bearing an open book, which he holds before the Dean, who reads.

DEAN—"When thou art bidden to a feast, go and sit down in the last place, that when he shall come that bade thee, he say to thee 'Friend sit thee higher'. Then glory shall be to thee before men. For each that enhanceth himself shall be made low, and he that meeketh himself shall be set on high."

At the words 'Friend, sit thee higher' Richard is led to his throne and sits.

NOBLEMAN—(coming before the Bishop's Chair)—Lord Bishop, in the name of the King's Majesty I bring you goodwill, and greeting (*he kisses the Bishop's ring*).

RICHARD—My lord, I thank you. In all things—saving the honour of God and his Church—I am the King's most humble servant.

The nobleman and his attendants go out. Richard rises, and the ecclesiastics proceed out of the Cathedral, to the ringing of the bells.

VOICES—(among the crowd)—He is coming out now! Stand back! Move up nearer! I can't see! Who is that? Here comes the Dean! They are coming out! Where is the Bishop? The Bishop! Bishop Richard! Here he comes! God bless him! Glory be to God! Richard! Richard!

Richard of Chichester! Move up nearer! Don't let him pass! Come this way! Give us your blessing, Father! The Lord Bishop of Chichester now! Look at his staff! Richard of Chichester! RICHARD OF CHICHESTER.

On the steps Richard, at the end of the procession, is intercepted by the peasants. The Dean and Canons proceed a little way, and then wait for him.

The people gather round Richard, some of them kneeling to kiss his robe.

RICHARD—My children, I thank God from my heart that he has granted to me peacefully to enter my own city, and I pray that I may live many years to serve in his Church among you.

He passes through the people and rejoins the procession. A small child, leaving the group of peasants, runs after the procession, and Richard turns to give him a blessing.

A SOLDIER—(among the crowd)—There goes a Bishop after your own hearts!

PIERS—Ay! God bless him! Now we shall live happily ever after!

The procession goes out of sight

SCENE 7

The voice of a prisoner, speaking behind bars, is heard.

PRISONER—Do not forget me! For the love of God have mercy on me! I am afraid to die! Have pity on me for God's sake!

SOLDIER—Oho, my beauty! Are you there still!

PIERS—Who is it?

SOLDIER—A thief we clapped into prison a while ago! A treacherous painted Jezebel.

PRISONER—Mercy! Have mercy on me! I am hungry!

SOLDIER—Fasting is good for a sinner!

Laughter

PRISONER—What harm have I done you? Pity—have pity!
The crowd gathers round the window

VOICES IN THE CROWD—Don't you look to see any honest folk pity you! Where did she come from? I can't see! Give me room! Let me see her! It's dark in there! Don't push me! Look at her white face!

A WOMAN—(to her husband)—Come away! Don't you go near her!

PRISONER—(stretching her hands through the window)—Have mercy! Mercy in the Name of God!

VOICES—Shame on you! Shame! Shame!

A MAN—Come out, you witch! (he catches hold of her wrist).

A SECOND WOMAN—Come on!

FIRST WOMAN—Leave her alone! Don't you touch her!

PRISONER—Let me go!

SECOND WOMAN—Go on! Teach her to hold her tongue!

VOICES—Go on! Punish her well! Thief! Thief! Shame on her! Jezebel! JEZEBEL! JEZEBEL!

PRISONER—Let me go! You are hurting me!

SECOND WOMAN—And well you deserve it!

PRISONER—You are breaking my arm! Oh!

During this scene Richard has entered, and is now near enough to the crowd to speak to them.

RICHARD—(in a terrible voice)—What are you doing there?

The crowd scatters from the window. One or two try to slip away.

RICHARD—Wait! All of you! Answer me! What clamour is this that I have heard?

No one dares to speak

What were you doing by that window? Answer me!

SOLDIER—She was calling out. Is it right that she should disturb the peace?

VOICES—She brought it on herself!
She's a disgrace to the town!

FIRST WOMAN—(with personal bitterness)—If you knew what she'd done you wouldn't pity her!

RICHARD—Was her sin greater than your cruelty? Do not think to deceive me—I heard. I saw. Have ye no knowledge of him who is kind to the unthankful and to the evil? How shall ye be forgiven if ye will not forgive?

He hides his face in his hands

FIRST WOMAN—He is weeping!

PIERS—Father! We did not mean to hurt you!

RICHARD—Go to your Heavenly Father! Kneel to him. Blessed are the merciful—for the merciful alone shall find mercy! I bid you—go.

The people go out

Richard releases the prisoner

RICHARD—Come! Do not be afraid. I will set you free. (*She covers his hand with kisses. He withdraws it*)—Hush! There is no time for thanks. You must go quickly. This is your way.

He leads her forward and points

Go through the gate. Claim sanctuary, and the Church of God will protect you.

As she is leaving him he takes her by the arm

This is your way of escape. Will you go back to your prison house?

She is puzzled.

Remember, it is a new life to which I send you. Do not return to the darkness of sin! (*She suddenly kneels for a blessing*)—Benedicite, my child. Our Blessed Lord preserve your soul.

The prisoner goes out

RICHARD O gracious Lord, O Harrower of Hell, give freedom to all souls that are in darkness!

Enter the Steward. He comes from the same entrance through which Richard brought the prisoner. He is agitated, looks to right and left, then sees Richard, and comes to him.

STEWARD—My lord, I am an unworthy steward, an unprofitable servant, a miserable, abject man!

RICHARD—What have you done?

STEWARD—Not I, but some fool, some madman has let the King's prisoner escape!

RICHARD—Oh. I understand. M'm.

STEWARD—Addle pate! What was he dreaming of? The door is all unbarred. What shall I do? Hanging is too good for such a fellow!

RICHARD—You do not suspect anyone?

STEWARD—The Saints alone know who could be such a simpleton! We shall be ruined—RUINED!

RICHARD—Well, it was not your fault.

STEWARD—She was the King's prisoner, my lord! He will extort a fine of a hundred crowns for this! The waste! The sinful waste of good money! O why is the world so full of fools?

RICHARD—I do not know, but since it is so we must have patience with each other.

STEWARD—A hundred *crowns*. A HUNDRED crowns! A hundred crowns for the King's Folly! Wasted! Thrown away!

RICHARD—My friend, my friend—what are they in comparison with the freedom of a captive soul?

STEWARD—(*a fearful thought dawning on his mind*)—What—what did you say, my lord?

RICHARD—What are a hundred crowns in comparison with the freedom of a soul?

STEWARD—My lord—Lord Bishop—you—you did not . . . It was not YOU?

RICHARD—And if I did free her, what then?

STEWARD—(*horried*)—What have I said? O!—what *have* I said?

RICHARD—Nothing that I shall write in a Book against you.

STEWARD—But . . . but . . . YOU let that woman go?

RICHARD—Do not fret yourself. Neither her actions nor mine will be charged to your account.

STEWARD—But the money—how shall that be paid?

Three attendants carry trenchers across the rostrum towards the Palace. One of the trenchers is silver, and is covered with white flowers, dog-daisies, etc., two are golden, with coloured flowers, in place of food.

RICHARD—Who dines to-day off gold and silver?

STEWARD—You, my lord, it is your right!

RICHARD—I have seen Christ among his poor, ragged and famished. Bring me the trenchers.

The food is brought before him, he raises his hands in blessing over it

May God help us, as he knows our need. My father's earthen bowl still serves me well, and bread and wine are blessed food. Take these dainty meats to the sick. Let the gold and silver be sold, that the ransom may be paid to the King, and help given to the poor.

STEWARD—(*anxiously*)—You are so reckless. What will become of us?

RICHARD—Fear not to-morrow. God has blessed to-day.

The trenchers are carried away, and the flowers may be given to the audience, either now, or at the Shrine.

SCENE 8

Vox Ecclesiae comes to Richard

VOX ECCLESIAE—Richard of Chichester, God calls you to a new work. The hosts of the Infidel lay waste the Realm of God. The enemies of the Faith are bitter, and their strength increases. Go forth among the folk of Sussex preaching the Cross, and call men to the service of Christ in his Holy War.

RICHARD—Am I bidden to preach a new Crusade?

VOX ECCLESIAE—With each new day, light strives with darkness. The Church's warfare is unending. Your life on earth draws to a close. This work shall be the crown of your labours. Go forth, call men to the standard of the Cross.
During this speech a hymn is heard in the distance.

RICHARD—I am old, but if God be with me I shall not fail of obedience to his command.

The words of "Pange Lingua" can now be heard, and Crusaders, Knights Templars and Dominican Friars enter, following the banner of the Cross. (It is not a crucifix, but a processional banner blazoned argent, a Cross gules). Richard moves to meet them.

RICHARD—Hail, Banner of Love!

Standard-bearer, set up your banner here, that I may speak to the people.

S. Richard's Prayer

RICHARD—Thanks be to thee, my Lord Jesus Christ
For all the benefits that thou hast given me,
For all the pains and insults thou hast borne for me.
O most merciful Redeemer, Friend, and Brother,
May I know thee more clearly,
Love thee more dearly,
And follow thee more nearly.

He raises his hand towards the banner

Behold! We set up before you the symbol of your Salvation! God's arms stretched wide, embracing the whole earth, spanning Eternity!

Look well. Upon the Cross, Love Incarnate died for your redemption—that you might have life, new life, glorious life, eternal life! Do ye believe this?

CROWD—(at first diffidently, but with increasing confidence)—Yes, father. Yes Bishop! That is our Faith!

RICHARD—By the Cross ye are set in the way of salvation. But this power, this life, how shall ye receive it, that your souls may live?

The High Mystery of Calvary may not be bound by words. Beware how ye deem your redemption a price paid for you, a bargain by which ye profit!

Each one of you must do your part. Ye must enter into the fellowship of Christ's suffering, and be made one with him. He is the Vine, ye are the branches.

My children, listen.

Hear ye the words of our Master, it is not I, but the Lord Christ who speaks.

"He that doth not take up the Cross and follow me is *not worthy* of me."

Ye are called to bear the Cross yourselves!

In a great Cathedral in Normandy, among the relics of the saints, lies the heart of a King of England. Some of you, who are older than I, can remember the days when he was called to the service of God. He left all, crown, country, ambition, power, and obeyed the summons. To the glory of God he would have burned all his inheritance as a candle.

CROWD—(with excitement) COEUR-DE-LION! Our Crusader King! King Richard!

RICHARD—He is not forgotten yet! The men of his own day understood him. When he left his country, they followed him. When he needed gold they gave it, giving heed *only* to the necessity of the Faith. In your *hearts* ye know that he did well! Ye know the spirit of the men that were before him. Shall we forget their great war-cry? "DEUS VULT!"

I beseech you, let nothing . . . NOTHING weigh in the balance against the command of God!

Behold Christ crucified for *you*.

Christ calls *you* to the Cross.

God needs your aid!

DEUS VULT!

CROWD—Deus vult ! Deus vult ! DEUS VULT !

Vexilla Regis ("The Royal banners forward go") is sung Richard moves down the steps, followed by the standard-bearers, and the whole procession goes round the pageant ground.

On the rostrum, a gateway is set up, wherein appears the Angel of Death. He carried a great golden sickle, the curved blade encircling his head and shoulders like a halo.

An unseen choir can be heard, singing the Russian Contakion of the departed.

UNSEEN CHOIR—Give rest, O Christ, to thy servant with thy saints.

RICHARD—(in a loud voice)—See ! Death stands in the Gateway ! He beckons me away.

The Angel disappears

Richard, with Simon of Tarring and a few of those who have been in the procession, mounts the rostrum.

RICHARD—My strength fails. I must leave this tabernacle of the body, that my spirit may return to him who gave it.

A litter is carried in

The standard-bearer with the banner, the Crusaders and Knights Templars, some Dominicans and some of the peasantry go out with another verse of the "Vexilla Regis". Zebedee the women, and some of the peasantry are left.

(Watching the Crusaders)—O that I could go with them. They give their lives, their all, and go singing on the road to Calvary.

SIMON—Rest, master.

Richard lies down. Four Dominicans, two at the head and two at the feet, kneel by the litter. Simon kneels.

My father, the time of the Lord's Passion is at hand. You have shared his sorrow, so shall you share his joy !

RICHARD—I was glad when they said unto me, we will go unto the house of the Lord.

(Dreamily)—There is a library in New Jerusalem, unnumbered books, lettered in red, and black, and gold, by the recording angels, lovely and terrible.

SIMON—The book of your dear life is beautiful.

RICHARD—There are many sentences ill wrought, and some I wish had not been written. Give me the Holy Cross.

A crucifix is put into his hand

O lovely life, and death most lovely, make thou my mind
 a mirror, that thy love only may be reflected there. Thou
 knowest, Lord, I would bear insult and torment and death
 for thee, therefore have mercy upon me, for to thee do I
 commend my soul. (*He dies*).

The litter is carried out

*Those who are below the rostrum remain, those on the rostrum
 follow the litter.*

ZEBEDEE—God rest his soul! The world will be dark without
 AND BY- him. God grant he remembers us poor folk some-
 STANDERS times. I reckon he will never be forgotten in Sussex!
 Listen!

A muffled peal of bells

SPINNER-WIFE—The Bells of Selsey!

ZEBEDEE—The Bells of Paradise.

EPILOGUE

The solemn mood is broken by a pastoral melody ("Summer is icumen in") played upon a shepherd's pipe, and Wat comes in with his flock. He is met by the first pilgrim, who is followed at a distance by some others. They wear cloaks and wide hats, and carry staves.

PILGRIM— Gentle Herdsman, tell to me,
Of courtesy I do thee pray,
Unto the Town of Chichester
Which is the right and ready way ?

WAT— Unto the Town of Chichester
The way is hard for to be gone,
And very crooked are those paths
For you to find out all alone !

PILGRIM— Yet were the long miles doubled thrice
And the way never so ill.
Such honour haunteth Chichester
That I should seek her still.
A candle lit by God's own hand
In Chichester was made to shine,
Therefore Saint Richard do I seek
To light my taper at his shrine.

WAT— Now go thy ways, and God before,
For he must ever guide thee still,
Turn down that dale, the right hand path,
And so, good pilgrim, fare thee well.

PILGRIM— *(To the bystanders and the congregation)*
Good folk, come, follow your own hearts !
Take staff and scrip and make a stir !

PEASANTS— Gloria tibi, Domine !
For Richard, Saint of Chichester !

The Pilgrims lead the way to the Shrine, followed by all the players and the congregation, singing, "Jerusalem, my happy home".

THE END