

SATB A CAPPELLA

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# DIEU! QU'IL LA FAIT BON REGARDER!

Correlated with SUCCESSFUL SIGHT ♦ SINGING, Milestone 8

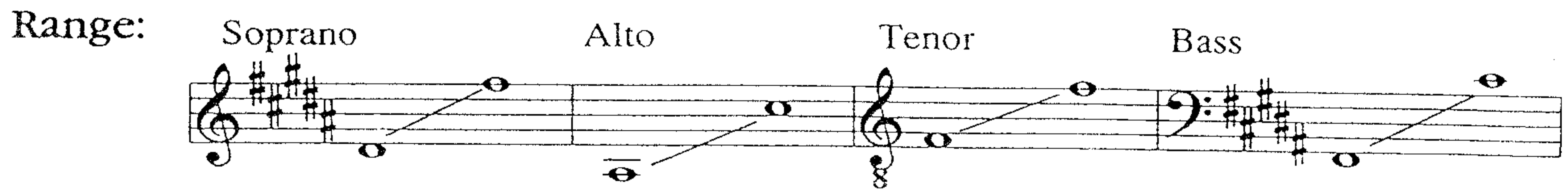
CLAUDE DEBUSSY ♦ ♦ ♦ ed. NANCY TELFER

SUCCESSFUL SIGHT ♦ SINGING PERFORMANCE SELECTIONS



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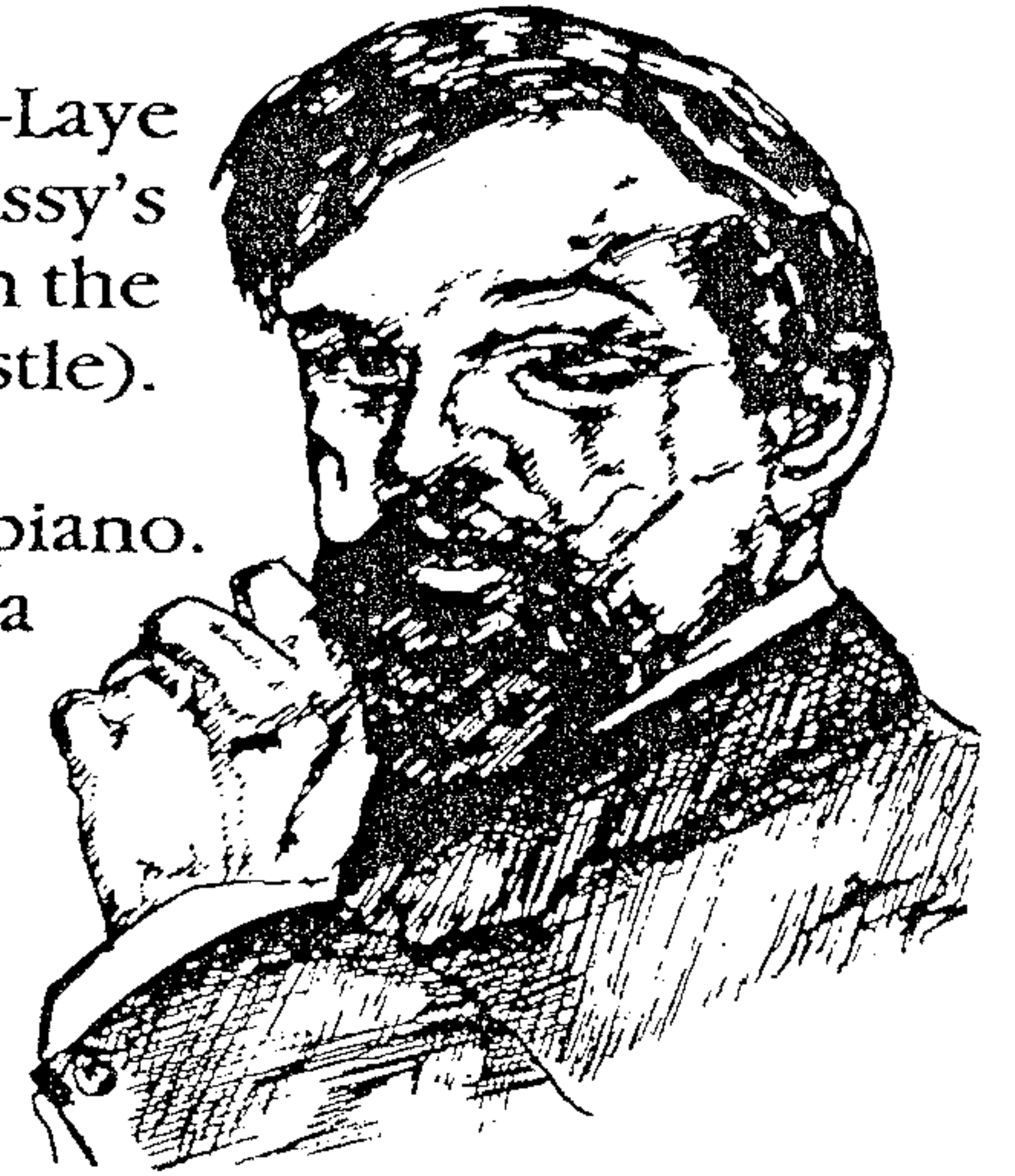
# ◆ DIEU! QU'IL LA FAIT BON REGARDER



## COMPOSERS ARE REAL PEOPLE

**Claude Debussy** (1862-1917) was born in St. Germain-en-Laye in France. The Franco-Prussian war began in 1870 but Debussy's early life was filled with the sounds of outdoor concerts in the gardens, in the park and on the terrace of the chateau (castle).

In 1872, Debussy went to the Paris Conservatoire to study piano. He quickly gained a reputation for composing music with a completely new sound that broke all the theory rules of the time. In 1884, Debussy was awarded the Premier Grand Prix de Rome for his cantata *L'Enfant Prodigue*. During his lifetime he composed beautiful music for chamber ensembles, orchestra, piano, solo voice and choir as well as music for dramatic works.



Debussy's response to a questionnaire in 1889:

Idea of happiness? .....	<i>To love</i>
Idea of misery? .....	<i>To be too hot</i>
Favorite color? .....	<i>Violet</i>
If not yourself, who would you be? .....	<i>A sailor</i>
Favorite composers? .....	<i>Palestrina, Bach, Wagner</i>
Favorite heroes in fiction? .....	<i>Hamlet</i>

## A SIGN OF THE TIMES

At the end of the nineteenth century, France was the cultural center of Europe. Audiences had been listening to a torrent of sound from the large-scale music of Richard Wagner and Johann Strauss but, in 1879, the world was introduced to an entirely different kind of music from the pen of Debussy.

The music created an impression of vibration by blurring the outlines just as the French impressionistic artists (Monet, Degas, Pissarro) did in their paintings. Musical color was supreme over form. The characteristics of the impressionistic period include:

- 1) A continuous flow of sound instead of an organized form (i.e. ABA) with definite stopping points:

Beethoven = repetitious music

Debussy = music "which nothing interrupts and which never turns back on itself"; sounds improvised

- 2) Subtle changes in timbre: slight texture changes, small range for each phrase, blended timbres (usually the sound is quite dense because of the seventh chords);
- 3) Soft dynamics most of the time with brief moments of louder sounds. The music usually fades out at the end.
- 4) Scales that were less definite than major or minor: ancient modes, whole-tone and pentatonic scales brought from the orient;
- 5) Non-functional harmonies: (harmonies to create color rather than to establish a sense of a "home" tone): seventh chords, chords that would move in a parallel motion creating a chord melody, a short visit into another key or mode, weak plagal cadences;

The image shows a musical score for a piano piece. The top system is labeled '17' and features a treble and bass clef. A bracket above the first two measures is labeled 'parallel chords'. The dynamics are marked as *pp*, *pp*, *p*, and *p cresc.*. A circled area in the first measure is connected by an arrow to a detailed view of a plagal cadence (IV - I) using seventh chords. This detailed view shows the bass line with notes 7, 5, 3, and 1, and the treble line with notes 4 and 1. The chords are labeled IV and I.

## THE LYRICS

Debussy knew many fine poets of his own time but found the intensity of his feelings expressed in a poem by Charles d'Orléans (1391-1465), a court poet from the Middle Ages. In this age of chivalry, lyric poetry was emerging as an independent art-form (instead of being accompanied on the lyre).

lyric poetry = expresses thoughts and sentiments of the poet rather than telling a story

Think of **Dieu! qu'il la fait bon regarder** as a very personal love note as you sing. The sound should be intimate; taste each consonant with your tongue and lips as if you were tasting a mouthful of fine French food.

â = a very bright short "a"  
 e = a neutral sound  
 ě = sounds like "e" in "bed"  
 o = sounds like "aw" in "jaw"  
 ô = shape the lips for "oh" and pronounce "eh"

u = sounds like "oo" in "moon"  
 ã = "ah" + nasal sound  
 ě = "eh" + nasal sound  
 õ = "oh" + nasal sound  
 ù = "uh" + nasal sound

Join the words together as one where marked: c'est un = c'est un

DIEU! QU'IL LA FAIT BON REGARDER  
(dyô keel lâ fê bô re-gâr-deh)

LA GRACIEUSE BONNE ET BELLE  
(lâ grâ-see-yô-ze bon eh bē - le)

POUR LES GRANDS BIENS QUE SONT EN ELLE  
(pur leh grā byē ke sō tā nē - le)

CHACUN EST PREST DE LA LOUER.  
(shâ-kū e pre de lâ lu-eh)

QUI SE POURRAIT D'ELLE LASSER?  
(kee se pu-rē dē-le lah-seh)

TOUJOURS SA BEAUTÉ RENOUVELLE.  
(tu - jur sâ boh-teh re-nu-ye-le)

PAR DE ÇA, NE DE LÀ, LA MER  
(pâr de sâ ne de lâ lâ mēr)

NE SAIT DAME NE DAMOISELLE  
(ne sē dâ-me ne dâ-mwâ-zē-le)

QUI SOIT EN TOUS BIEN PARFAIS TELLE.  
(kee swâ tā tu byē pâr-fē tē-le)

C'EST UN SONGE QUE D'Y PENSER:  
(sē tū sō-je ke dee pā-seh)

DIEU! QU'IL LA FAIT BON REGARDER  
(dyô keel lâ fê bô re-gâr-deh)

## THE MUSIC BETWEEN THE NOTES

As you come to know the music better, listen carefully to the color of each chord and "sink into the sound." You may notice the pulse speeding up for a moment and then slowing down. Debussy said: "Either the music is out of breath after pursuing a character, or else the character settles down on a note to enable the music to catch up with it."

rubato = alternating slight *accelerandos* and *ritardandos*

For every increase in tempo there must be an equal decrease afterwards: an even "give and take" of time. The conductor will shape the rubato a bit differently each time you sing this piece. Watch carefully!

## INTRODUCTION FOR THE AUDIENCE

"Listen for the subtle blend of color in this quiet piece composed by the French composer Claude Debussy in the late nineteenth century: **Dieu! qu'il la fait bon regarder** (God has made her beautiful to see)."

*A love song sounds like a love song whether or not you can understand the language of the lyrics. It is an intimate gift from the performers to the audience. I hope you enjoy this music by one of the great composers of all time.*

*Nancy Telfer*  
Nancy Telfer

# Dieu! Qu'il La Fait Bon Regarder!

SATB, a cappella

Charles d'Orleans (1391-1465)  
English text by N. T.

Claude Debussy (1862-1917)  
ed. Nancy Telfer

Très modéré soutenu et expressif (♩ = ca. 66)

*mf* *p*

Soprano  
Dieu! qu'il la fait bon re - gar - der La  
Yes! clear - ly has one seen to - day How

Alto  
Dieu! qu'il la fait bon re - gar - der La  
Yes! clear - ly has one seen to - day How

Tenor  
Dieu! qu'il la fait bon re - gar - der La  
Yes! clear - ly has one seen to - day How

Bass  
Dieu! qu'il la fait bon re - gar - der La  
Yes! clear - ly has one seen to - day How

Très modéré soutenu et expressif (♩ = ca. 66)

Keyboard  
(for rehearsal only)

*mf* *p*

Duration: ca. 1:35

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gra - ci - eu - se bonne et bel - le;  
 gra - cious is the love - ly maid - en;

gra - ci - eu - se bonne et bel - le;  
 gra - cious is the love - ly maid - en;

gra - ci - eu - se bonne et bel - le;  
 gra - cious is the love - ly maid - en;

gra - ci - eu - se bonne et bel - le;  
 gra - cious is the love - ly maid - en;

**6** *p*  
 Pour les grands biens que sont en elle;  
 To each great thing that's found within her;

*p*  
 Pour les grands biens que sont en elle;  
 To each great thing that's found within her;

*p*  
 Pour les grands biens que sont en elle;  
 To each great thing that's found within her;

*p*  
 Pour les grands biens que sont en elle;  
 To each great thing that's found within her;

**6** *p*

Cha - cun est prest de la lou - er. Qui  
Then can a grate - ful man give - praise. Can

le her Cha - cun est prest de la lou - er. Qui  
Then can a grate - ful man give - praise. Can

le her Cha - cun est prest de la lou - er. Qui  
Then can a grate - ful man give - praise. Can

10

se pour - rait d'el - le las - ser? Tou - jours sa beau - té re - nou -  
such a love my heart be - tray? To her has beau - ty been re -

se pour - rait d'el - le las - ser? Tou - jours sa beau - té re - nou - vel -  
such a love my heart be - tray? To her has beau - ty been re - plen -

se pour - rait d'el - le las - ser? Tou - jours sa beau - té re - nou -  
such a love my heart be - tray? To her has beau - ty been re -

10

vel - le. Dieu qu'il la fait bon re - gar -  
 plen - ished. Yes, clear - ly has one seen to -

- le. Dieu qu'il la fait bon re - gar -  
 - ished. Yes, clear - ly has one seen to -

vel - le. re -  
 plen - ished. seen

vel - le.  
 plen - ished.

14

der, La gra - ci - eu - se bonne et bel - le!  
 day How gra - cious is the love - ly maid - en!

der, La gra - ci - eu - se bonne et bel - le!  
 day How gra - cious is the love - ly maid - en!

gar - der, La gra - ci - eu - se bonne et bel - le!  
 to - day How gra - cious is the love - ly maid - en!

La gra - ci - eu - se bonne et bel - le!  
 How gra - cious is the love - ly maid - en!

14



18 *pp* *pp* *p* *p cresc.*

Par de ça, ne de là, la mer Ne sait da-me ne da-moi-  
 Not from sea, not from land, oh, there is no dam-sel nor da-moi-

*pp* *pp* *p* *p cresc.*

Par de ça, ne de là, la mer Ne sait da-me ne da-moi-  
 Not from sea, not from land, oh, there is no dam-sel nor da-moi-

*pp* *pp* *p* *p cresc.*

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 Not from sea, not from land, oh, there is no dam-sel nor da-moi-

18 *pp* *pp* *p* *p cresc.*

Par de ça, ne de là, la mer Ne sait da-me ne da-moi-  
 Not from sea, not from land, oh, there is no dam-sel nor da-moi-

22 *mf* *p en dehors*

sel - le Qui soit en tous bien par - fais tel - le. C'est un  
 sel - le Who shows such pure, gra - cious vir - tue bet - ter. Let my

*mf* *p en dehors*

sel - le Qui soit en tous bien par - fais tel - le. C'est un  
 sel - le Who shows such pure, gra - cious vir - tue bet - ter. Let my

*mf* *p en dehors*

sel - le Qui soit en tous bien par - fais tel - le. C'est un  
 sel - le Who shows such pure, gra - cious vir - tue bet - ter. Let my

*mf* *p en dehors*

sel - le Qui soit en tous bien par - fais tel - le. C'est un  
 sel - le Who shows such pure, gra - cious vir - tue bet - ter. Let my

22 *mf* *p*

Plus lent

26

son - ge que d'y pen - ser: Dieu! qu'il la fait bon re - gar -  
 thoughts be a dream to - stay: Yes! clear - ly has one seen to -

son - ge que d'y pen - ser: Dieu! qu'il la fait bon re - gar -  
 thoughts be a dream to stay: Yes! clear - ly has one seen to -

son - ge que d'y pen - ser: Dieu! qu'il la fait bon re - gar -  
 thoughts be a dream to stay: Yes! clear - ly has one seen to -

son - ge que d'y pen - ser: Dieu! qu'il la fait bon re - gar -  
 thoughts be a dream to stay: Yes! clear - ly has one seen to -

Plus lent 26

der! Dieu! qu'il la fait bon re - gar - der!  
 day! Yes! clear - ly has one seen to - day!

der! Dieu! qu'il la fait bon re - gar - der!  
 day! Yes! clear - ly has one seen to - day!

der! Dieu! qu'il la fait bon re - gar - der!  
 day! Yes! clear - ly has one seen to - day!

der! bon re - gar - der!  
 day! one seen to - day!

più p pp