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No. 116—Silent Wishes
—H. LICHNER

Columbian Conservatory of Music

SILENT WISHES.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH—HEINRICH LICHNER (lĭkh'-nĕr).

Born at Harpersdorf, Silesia, March 6, 1829.

Died at Breslau, Germany, January 8, 1898.



N excellent practical musician, organist and Cantor of the "Church of 11,000 Virgins," at Breslau, for many years. Was also Conductor of the Saengerbund. Educated in Berlin and Breslau, he made himself a prolific composer of church music, psalms, and songs, as well as an immense number of compositions for piano, mostly designed for players of moderate ability. Nevertheless he was really a very capable composer, if not inspired; and even his simplest works are musicianly in a way and gracefully done. He belonged to the grade of composers known in Germany as "Kapellmeister," that is, a composer of a good, industrious and competent character, but not sufficiently inspired to secure world-wide attention and lasting admiration. His easy piano-pieces, however, have already had a world-wide popularity. The present composition is a very favorable example of a fine musical idea carried out in a variety of ways, adapted to raise fine points in the playing.

THE POETIC IDEA—This piece is composed very largely of two short ideas or themes. The first, which has been explained as saying, "How I wish," is accompanied by another short theme, the five notes which the soprano sings in measures 1 and 2, in response to the little alto "How I wish." What this second theme stands for, is not told; therefore every player may voice the wish as she pleases. All the piece is made from this material, and enough added to it to close the sentences. This matter is similar, but varied in each case. The holding of the tone for "wish" indicates the persistence of the wish. If you study carefully as you play, you will hear that the wish takes on all sorts of colors, as one desire after another comes to mind. It is your task to color the melody in each case, according to what you imagine the wish means in that instance.

FORM AND STRUCTURE—The "Silent Wishes" numbered eight, here marked A, B, C, and so on to H. Wish A is in the Major mode of G. Wish B is in G Minor, all the B's being changed to B \flat , and all the E's to E \flat . This puts it in Minor. Notice what a charming effect it is. Wish B comes to a close in the Major key of B \flat , as you will see by the harmonies. Wish C is rather more intense; it begins in G Minor (measure 18) and repeats in D Minor (measures 19, 20); then it begins again in A Minor (measures 21, 22) and closes in A Major, measure 24. Wish E begins in D Minor, (measures 25, 26), goes on in A Minor, (measures 27, 28), again in B Minor, (measures 29, 30), closing in D Major, (measure 32). Wish F is like Wish A, except that from measure 41 to 44 it is like Wish B, only in G Major in place of G Minor. Wish G is like Wish B, only this time in G Major. Wish H is in general summing up and a satisfactory close of the whole imaginary poem. All these wishes are for pure and poetic things, which it would be very nice to have; things which one might perhaps acquire by being sufficiently good and sticking to it.

HOW TO STUDY—First let us get the meter. Notice that every idea in the piece begins with the 4th count, and closes upon the 3d. The measure form is therefore 4, 1, 2, 3 over and over. So when we refer to measure 1 we begin the measure just where Lichner began it, namely, upon 4 of the measure previous. The bar stands before the second beat of the idea, always through this piece. Thus melody A closes upon count 3 of measure 8. Melody B closes upon count 3 of measure 16, and so on.

Study first the "wish" motive, that is, the first three notes, being careful to hold out the long D until the close of count 1, in measure 2. In like manner the next time the "wish" motive occurs, it lasts quite through count 3 of measure 4. Be very careful to hold out these notes. In measure 5 the wish D holds out until the close of 3, in measure 6. So again when the "wish" motive appears in soprano, as in measures 9, 11, etc., it holds out its full value as written. Be very particular about this.

Now for other part of the "wish" motive, namely, that which the soprano sings measures 1 and 2, consisting of five tones; or the same motive in measures 3, 4; here it consists of four tones, ending with the long B in measure 4. And so on, study out the proper duration of each remark either of the voices make; for this is like a duet between an alto and soprano. Each always answers the other and completes the idea.

The proper speed of this movement of 8th notes is at about the rate of 86 by metronome; or the beats of a pendulum about 8 inches long. A common tape measure automatically rolling itself up in a cylinder by means of a spring, will show you; drawing it out the number of inches, then pinching the upper end, let the cylinder swing. Each swing is about the time of a beat in this measure.

In measures 13, 14, you will have to look out for the flats, and the F natural. Play the scale of B flat and you will see what key the composer is getting you into. In measure 17 the composer begins a new motive, with a dotted note emphasis on the first accent, the motive being exactly two measures long, starting with four of measure 16. The notes with the vertical angle have to be held out; they are also accented because they stand in the accent place. The motion of 16ths in the bass should be rather quiet. What we wish to feel is the chord effect each four notes make; not the melody effect of the figure, as it alternates between a lower notes and an upper note. This bass pattern of four chord notes is known to musicians as "Alberti" bass, from the name of a musician who is reputed to have used it first. In this melody the pedal could be used for a count and a half, upon each of the notes marked with the vertical angle. Also the pedal could be used for one beat upon the chords in measures 56, 57.

In measures 2, 6, 14, 34, 38, 42, 46, notice that the melody does not close with the accent, but with a following note sounded at "three." This note is always a kind of vanishing effect, like the second syllable of the accented note, as in light-ly, sweet-ly, etc. Be sure to get it.

These are the main points to look after, aside from the accurate playing of every note in the piece in its proper time.

In a piece of this kind mistakes spoil it.

SILENT WISHES.

Revised, Fingered and Annotated
by W. S. B. Mathews.

H. Lichner, Op. 84, No. 6.

Moderato. $\text{♩} = 86(\text{or } 87)$

p tenderly.

A.

B.

mf

C.

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17 *p dolce.* 18 19 20 *mf*

21 22 23 *ritard.* 24 *p* *E, a tempo.*

25 26 *mf* 27 28

29 30 31 *ritard.* 32 *p a tempo.* *F, a tempo.*

33 34 35 36 37



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RECITATION QUESTIONS ON "SILENT WISHES."

1. What kind of Measure is this piece, and what kind of note has one beat?

Ans.

2. What is the Key of Melody A?

Ans.

3. What is the Key of Melody B?

Ans.

4. In what Key does Melody B end, in measure 14?

Ans.

5. In what Key does Melody C close, in measure 24?

Ans.

6. Does the piece pass through any other Keys anywhere? If so, into what Keys and in what Measure?

Ans.

7. How many singers are supposed to take part in this piece?

Ans.

8. Does this include all the tones of the piece, or is there an accompaniment to what the singers sing?

Ans.

9. Which of these "wishes" seems to you the most charming?

Ans.

10. Did you find any especial difficulties in learning it?

Ans.

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