

**PROGRAMME NOTES:** This is the third movement of my choral cantata “Spring’s Joy” (2010). It sets an unusually bittersweet poem of William Wordsworth, whose delight in the coming of nature’s spring is tempered this time by his bleak outlook on the world of mankind. He is disheartened by the sorrows of a war-ravished post-1789 Europe, where too many of its people languish in poverty. In order to represent the mood of the poem, I have tried to match the poem’s alternating expressions of happiness and sadness by frequent juxtaposition of major and minor harmonies.

### **POEM**

I heard a thousand blended notes,  
While in a grove I sate reclined,  
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts  
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did nature link  
The human soul that through me ran;  
And much it grieved my heart to think  
What man has done to man.

Through primrose tufts, in that green bower,  
The periwinkle trailed its wreaths;  
And ‘tis my faith that every flower  
Enjoys the air that it breaths.

The birds around me hopped and played,  
Their thoughts I cannot measure:-  
But the least motion that they made  
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan,  
To catch the breezy air;  
And I must think, do all I can,  
That there was pleasure there.

If this belief from heaven be sent,  
If such is Nature’s holy plan,  
Have I not reason to lament  
What man has made of man?

William Wordsworth