No. 6726

HAMPTON SERIES

NEGRO FOLK-SONGS

RECORDED BY

NATALIE CURTIS-BURLIN

IN FOUR BOOKS

BOOK II

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G. SCHIRMER, INC., NEW YORK

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Spirituals

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FOREWORD

It has been the object of the author to make this little foreword as non-technical as possible, couching it in language that may easily be comprehended by the layman.

IN music there can be scarcely a task more reverent than that of scribe to the unlettered song of a people. A folk-song, expressing as it does the soul of a race, is in that sense a holy thing, for through it sings the voice of humanity—humanity, as much greater than the individual as the universe is greater than a star. To touch the People's song and not artificialize, change or cheapen it in the written expression—here is a work that calls for humility, for selfless dedication, and for warm human sympathy as well as artistic training. One must love the People as well as their music, and one must feel *with them* in order first to understand and then to write what has risen from the depths of racial experience. For the folk-song, of all music, is insistent in its demand for truth.

Truth!—Truth in art as in life, the revulsion against artificiality and the longing for simplicity, the emphasis on the thing said rather than on elaborations in the manner of saying it;—may we not hope that this will be one of the by-products of the war which has drawn together men of different races and creeds in the sharing of common, elemental emotions? For the ever-widening interest in folk-music *as such*, and the need for popular singing, are prophetic.

This work of collecting and recording Negro folk-songs was begun some years ago at the request of a group of earnest colored men, one of whom was Robert R. Moton, now principal of Tuskegee, who asked me to do for the music of their race what I had tried to do for that of the Indian: to present it with entire genuineness and in a form of publication that could readily be grasped by all people. I therefore set myself the same uncompromising ideal that I had striven to follow in all my previous notations of unrecorded folk-music—I endeavored to put in written form, without addition or change of any kind, the true folk-song, spirit and sound, just as it springs from the hearts and the lips of the folk-singers. In other words, I tried to reflect on paper completely, but only, *what the people sang*. As most of the Negro songs are in essence group-songs, and as Negro group-singing, which is spontaneous and almost inevitable where two or three colored people are gathered together, is usually part-singing, I determined to record every part as sung, and also to seize, as nearly as notation would permit, each nuance, rhythmic and dynamic.

To this end the little Edison phonograph that had accompanied me to many an Indian reservation, was now set up in Virginia. I lack entire faith in the study of wax records afar from the live voice of the singer; perfect cylinders can be made only under perfect mechanical and acoustical conditions, carefully prepared. Besides, it has always seemed to me of the highest importance that the transcriber of folk-music should live for the time being in the midst of the folk-singers, where he can drink in the atmosphere and spirit of the instinctive song of un-selfconscious people—a type of music which is by its very nature furthermost removed from all idea of mechanism. Thus the folk-

song (no longer a musical specimen like a butterfly on a pin) becomes a part of the recorder's own being, so that he thinks and feels musically in the same rhythms and accents with the singers, till at last there grows up within him an almost intuitive conception of an adequate written form. Then it is that the phonograph with its wealth of recorded detail takes its true place as an invaluable adjunct to the higher spiritual task of assimilating the folk-idiom and translating it mentally into terms of notation.

Though I had previously travelled widely in the South, I now made protracted stays each year and heard the most primitive Negroes sing in crude log churches, in open-air "meet'n's" and in the fields; yet before I attempted to notate this music, I wanted to reach back if possible to the very well-springs of Negro song, and so I devoted a year to the study of native African music which I carefully recorded from the singing of two Africans: Madikane Cele, a Zulu from Natal, and Kamba Simango, from the Ndau tribe of Portuguese East Africa. Both these young men had come directly from the Dark Continent to the United States to seek industrial training at Hampton Institute in order that they might carry back to their people the sorely needed knowledge of trades and developed agriculture. It was my original intention to include the African songs in this Negro collection, so that students might trace the links between the music of black Africa and that evolved by the Negro in our Southern States. But I found the native songs—like those of the North American Indian—so interwoven with the religion and customs, the legends, and indeed the whole life of the people, as to be hardly comprehensible without a description of the ceremony of which they are a part, or of the racial idea that called them into life. So as I studied a book grew under my hands, demanding separate publication as "African Songs from the Dark Continent."[1]

Strangely enough, I had begun this research before the appearance of Mr. H. E. Krehbiel's valuable volume: "Afro-American Folksongs"[2]; so that the few conclusions independently reached by me as to the relation of Negro music to the parent stem, now form, in a sense, an unconscious confirmatory sequel.

That Negro folk-song is indeed an offshoot from an African root, nobody who has heard Africans sing or even beat the drum can deny. The American Negroes are sprung, of course, from many tribes; but whereas the native traffic in slaves and captives brought individuals from widely separated parts of the continent to the coasts and thus to the European slavers, the great mass of Negroes that filled the slave ships destined for America probably belonged —according to some authorities—to the big linguistic stock called Bantu, comprising some fifty million people south of the equator. The Zulu and Ndau tribes, [whose songs I studied, are of this stock] Yet, as there are over a hundred million Negroes on the Dark Continent, whose different traits are probably represented in some form in this country, all statements as to musical derivations could be made with final authority only by one who had studied comprehensively the music of many different tribes *in Africa*. This much, however, one may most emphatically affirm: though the Negro, transplanted to other lands, absorbed much musically from a surrounding civiliza-

[1] In press with Doubleday, Page & Co., New York.

[2] *Afro-American Folksongs*, H E. Krehbiel. Published by G. Schirmer, N. Y.

tion, yet the characteristics which give to his music an interest worthy of particular study are precisely those which differentiate Negro songs from the songs of the neighboring white man; they are racial traits, and the black man brought them from the Dark Continent.

The most obvious point of demarcation between Negro music and European is found, of course, in the rhythm. The simpler rhythms natural to the white man (I speak of folk-music, the people's song, not of the elaborate creations of trained musicians) are usually even and symmetrical. Throughout Western Europe and in English and Latin countries, the accents fall as a rule on the stressed syllables of the spoken tongue and on the regular beats of the music. The opposite is the case in Negro songs: here the rhythms are uneven, jagged, and, at a first hearing, eccentric, for the accents fall most frequently on the short notes and on the naturally *unstressed* beats, producing what we call "syncopation"[1] of a very intricate and highly developed order. The peculiarity of this syncopation is best explained to the layman by drawing attention to the way in which the natural rhythms of the English language are distorted to fit the rhythm of Negro music: where the white man would sing, "*Go* down, *Mos*es," the Negro chants, "Go *down*, Mo*ses*," while a phrase like "See my Mother" becomes in the mouth of the colored singer "See *my* Mo*ther*." These identical accents are found in even the wordless vowel refrains of native African songs. Rhythmically the Negro folk-song has far more variety of accent than the European; it captivates the ear and the imagination with its exciting vitality and with its sense of alertness and movement. For this reason Negro rhythms and white man imitations of them popularized as "rag-time" have spread far and wide and have conquered the world to-day. The black man has by nature a highly organized rhythmic sense. A totally uneducated Negro, dancing or playing the bones, is often a consummate artist in rhythm, performing with utter abandon and yet with flawless accuracy. My African informant, Kamba Simango, thought nothing of singing one rhythm, beating another with his hands and dancing a third—and all at once!

Melodically as well as rhythmically, American Negro songs possess distinct characteristics. One of these is a very prevalent use of the pentatonic or five-tone scale, corresponding to the black keys of the piano.[2] In my recordings of Negro songs the melodies of six out of the eight Spirituals published in this collection are in the pentatonic scale, as are all three of the Cotton-Songs. Whereas, of the "Work- and Play-Songs,"[3] the Peanut-Picking Song, The Corn-Shucking Song, the Lullaby, the Hammering-Song and the Dance-Song ("Stealin'-Partners") are also all five-tone. Though I am publishing only songs typically Negro, discarding those that seem more obviously white-man-influenced, yet I was myself surprised to find the pentatonic scale so prominent. If one comes upon a group of colored men unconsciously humming or whistling at work, most often it is the five-tone scale that utters their musical thoughts. This scale—along with other scales—is heard in

[1] The Century Dictionary gives the following definition of syncopation: "Act, process or result of inverting the rhythmic accent by beginning a tone or tones on an unaccented beat or pulse and sustaining them into an accented one so that the proper emphasis on the latter is more or less transferred back or anticipated. Syncopation may occur wholly within a measure, or may extend from measure to measure."

[2] See H. E. Krehbiel's analysis of the scales used in American Negro Songs, Chapters VI and VII, "*Afro-American Folksongs*" (G. Schirmer, N. Y.).

[3] See Books III and IV of this series.

black Africa also, and in the music of many simple peoples in different parts of the world. Indeed, just as totally unrelated races at certain stages of culture seem to trace many of the same rudimentary symbols and designs on pottery and in textiles, so in music, the archaic simplicity of the five-tone scale would seem almost a basic human art-instinct. Yet the highly developed civilization and the carefully defined musical systems of China and other nations of the farthest East retain the pentatonic scale in wide use, the Chinese, in their philosophical and mystical theories of music, linking the five tones symbolically with the heavenly bodies. It is surprising how much variety can be achieved with these five tones. One of the most graceful melodies that I know in all music is the popular Chinese "Lily Song" which I recorded from a Chinese actor and which possesses the sheer beauty of outline and the firm delicacy of a Chinese drawing. Indeed, the melodic possibilities of the five-tone scale, containing a charm absolutely peculiar to that scale, instead of being limited, seem almost endless.

American Negro music is, however, by no means restricted to this tonality, for we find a broad indulgence in the major and minor modes of modern art, and also there are many songs in which occur tones foreign to those scales, most common of which is perhaps the minor, or flat, seventh. In the song "Listen to de Lambs" in this collection, the opening phrase is typically pentatonic in character (the semitones in the second phrase are undoubtedly modern); then later, the voice of the "Lead" or leader rises on the words "want t' go t' Hebb'n when I die" to the flat seventh so often heard in the old slave-songs —an interval which conveys a singular richness of beauty to the melody. Then, too, there are songs framed in the scale with a sharp fourth; and we also find, though more rarely in Negro music, the augmented interval of three semitones. Those of us who have noted Arabic folk-songs are accustomed to associate this latter interval with Semitic music; occurring as it does in African music also, it reminds us of the contact between the black population of Africa and the Semitic peoples in the white North of the continent whose caravan trade brought them into communication with the more savage interior, while their ships touched at ports along the coasts and even landed colonists on the Eastern shores, where Arab trade across the Red Sea must have existed since early Bible times. As the age-old slave traffic brought captives from African tribes out from the heart of black Africa to the North, we can readily see how, since the very dawn of history, Negro and Semitic cultures must have touched. One of the Bantu legends in my collection from Portuguese East Africa is probably of Semitic origin, and the song which it embodies seems also tinged with foreign color. Without doubt, Semitic tunes and musical intervals found their way to African ears, while, on the other side, African Negro drum-beats and syncopations must have influenced Berber, Moorish and thus perhaps even Spanish rhythms.[1]

[1]The following theory is advanced by Dr. W. E. B. DuBois, author of "The Souls of Black Folk," "The Negro," etc.:

"The Semites and black Africans are from one parent Asiatic stem, and ever since their prehistoric differentiation and separation there has been in historic times continual contact and intermingling in the North of Africa, around the Red Sea and down the coasts of the Indian Ocean. This was not merely the comparatively modern contact of Arab master and Negro slave, but an earlier and much more important contact of two systems of culture, Arabian and African. In the Sudan, in the mountains of Abyssinia, and in Mosambique, not only did Arabian culture penetrate Central Africa, but Negro culture changed and modified the African culture of the Semites, and especially in art and music and industry the African influence can be traced far into Spain and Arabia." (Cf. Frobenius, "Und Afrika Sprach.")

Another characteristic of the Negro, musically, is a harmonic sense indicating musical intuition of a high order. This instinct for natural polyphony is made clear in the recording of the Negro songs in this collection, wherein I have noted the four-part harmony as sung extemporaneously by colored boys who had had no musical training whatever. Some of the most beautiful improvisational part-singing that I ever heard arose from the throats of utterly illiterate black laborers in a tobacco factory. One has but to attend a colored church, whether North or South, to hear men and women break naturally into alto, tenor or bass parts (and even subdivisions of these), to realize how instinctively the Negro musical mind thinks harmonies. I have heard players in colored bands perform one part on an instrument and sing another while all those around him were playing and singing still different parts. Yet it has been asserted by some people that the harmonic sense of the Negro is a product of white environment and that the black man owes his intuitive gift to the slave-holders who sang hymns, ballads and popular songs in his hearing! With all due allowance for white influence, which has been great, of course, the fact remains that in savage Africa, remote from European culture, many of the most primitive pagan songs are sung in parts with elaborate interludes on drums tuned to different pitches. Indeed, the music of the Dark Continent is rich in polyphonic as well as rhythmic suggestions for the European. Perhaps the war may help to prick some of the vanity of the white race, which, looking down with self-assumed superiority upon other races, is quick to condemn delinquencies as native characteristics, and to ascribe to its own influences anything worthy; whereas the reverse is, alas, all too often the case. Certainly the art of Africa, of India, of the Orient and of North America owes to the Anglo-Saxon only corruption and commercialization. As for American Negro music, those songs that are most like the music of the white people—and they are not few—are the least interesting: they are sentimental, tame, and uneventful both in melody and rhythm. On the other hand, such melodies as "Go down, Moses," "Four and Twenty Elders on Their Knees," "Run, Mary, Run," these speak from the very soul of the black race, and no white man could have conceived them. They have a dignity barbaric, aloof and wholly individual which lifts them cloud-high above any "white" hymns that the Negro might have overheard. Austere as Egyptian bas-relief, simple as Congo sculpture, they are mighty melodies, and they are Negro.

So much, very briefly, for rhythmic, melodic and harmonic comparisons between American Negro and native African music. Now as to the form of the songs: The Negro Spirituals (prayer-songs) open with a choral refrain or burthen, followed by a freely declaimed extemporaneous verse or even just a few words of solo sung by a single voice. Then comes the chorus or burthen again; another verse or solo; again the chorus; more verses, and so on, indefinitely, until the song ends with the chorus—a rounded whole. Ballads and songs consisting of verses and choral refrains are of course common to Europeans and Americans. Yet the form of some of the African ceremonial and pagan religious songs (some of which I recorded) is in essence like that of the Spiritual, particularly in the declamatory and improvisational quality of its solo, sung by a priest or shaman while the chorus is chanted by a great

circle of people. Whatever part white influence may have played in the development of the Spiritual in this country, it is certain that the choral form regularly alternating with the extemporaneous or sometimes traditional solo (or solo followed by a chorus) is an ancient art-expression of the black race in Africa.

As to the manner in which Negro folk-songs spring into being, in a little essay entitled "Negro Music at Birth"[1] I have tried to picture what I myself have witnessed of the spontaneous creation of Negro choral chants when a group of colored people, catching up a musical phrase sung by one person, improvised corresponding phrases till, carried away by the emotion of the moment and welded into one impulse by a common ecstasy, they shaped a song through unity of group sentiment in the same way that an individual composer, in improvising, builds up a composition on a given theme. Sometimes Negro chants grow from one another instead of from an original source, even as some plants bud from slips instead of from seeds. Often some singer has remembered a line or phrase from a previously heard religious song, and has flung this out in "meet'n'" to be seized by the rest of the congregation and moulded into a new song. Thus we often see the root-idea of one song flowering into different form in another; or sometimes we find whole borrowed phrases cropping out in songs otherwise unrelated. This is true of words as well as of musical ideas. And the words of Negro songs are often folk-poems of great intrinsic interest.

In any consideration of these poems, we should remember that part of their child-like and in a sense almost inarticulate quality is due not only to the child-spirit of the race, but also to the fact that, to the deported African in this country, English was a foreign tongue only the rudiments of which (and these often distorted) were mastered by the unlettered slave. Sometimes a sublime flash of imagery shines through a few poor words, crude and misshapen. Whereas in the songs of Africa, simple and child-like though many of them are, the idea suffers none of that lameness of expression that so often lends a note of unconscious and touching comedy to American Negro verse. Humor the Negro has in plenty—healthy and boisterous fun; but the humor of some of the texts is far from intentional. It is only owing to limited opportunity that so often the highest reaches of poetic imagination (common to the Negro, as to most simple people who live close to nature) had to be expressed in the very few every-day English words—and these in dialect—that formed the whole vocabulary of the slave-poet. However, this very poverty of means gave birth to a unique poetic quality, poignant with character, quaint and ingenuous; also it throws the imagery forth with striking simplicity and directness in verses like the following, breathing the exaltation of the mountains:

Did yo' ever
Stan' on mountun,
Wash yo' han's
In a cloud?

And this, born perhaps of a hidden religious meeting in the woods:

Ma head got wet wid de midnight dew:
Come along home to Jesus;
De mo'nin' star was a witness, too:
Come along home to Jesus.

[1]See Foreword, Book IV, this series.

With what few words, and yet how clear-drawn is the oft-recurring picture of Jesus riding as a conquering king[1] and even appearing intimately as a personal liberator:

Massa Jesus, He come a-ridin' by
An' bought my liberty.

Touchingly naïve is the imagery of the "Gospel-Train" speeding so fast to salvation when joyful voices eagerly call us to "git on board!" To the simple black man, as to the American Indian, railroads must have been not prosaic realities, but things of real wonder.[2] And then, with what simplicity is the glory of the saved soul expressed in many a Negro verse by the thought of radiance, as in the song "Ev'ry time I feel de Spirit," and:

Oh, den ma little soul gwine t' shine—shine—
Den ma little soul gwine t' shine along!

And again:

I's got a mudder in de Hebb'n,
Out*shine* de sun,
Out*shine* de sun,
Out*shine* de sun!
I's got a mudder in de Hebb'n
'Way beyon' de moon!

As Negro song-poems are usually conceived in the minds of their creators simultaneously with the music, the words bear the rhythmic values of the musical phrases, giving us a characteristic Negro accentuation different from anything else in the English language. Therefore it has seemed to me appropriate here to draw attention to a possible wealth of inspiration in the rich variety of rhythmic effects offered by Negro verse, *scanned as sung*—a variety that might be adapted by poets even without the African's inversion of the natural rhythms of our tongue. So, in my transcription of the song-poems, I have reproduced the accents given by the singing in this collection, reaffirming that in Negro song *it is the music* which determines the rhythms of the phrase, rather than the words. Yet it must always be borne in mind that as no two singers will sing the music alike in all details, so probably no two song-poets will stress the verse in exactly the same way. For, as I have said elsewhere, "Freedom of complete individualism is the inalienable right of every Negro bard."

All who are familiar with Negro folk-songs know how the vowel "a" (pronounced "ah") often precedes a word or sometimes is added at the end, filling out a melodic phrase, intensifying a bit of rhythmic emphasis, or softening and binding together in that fluency demanded by the Negro ear the sterner syllables of the English tongue. The verses here recorded are offered in dialect in the belief that thus is best preserved the full individuality, the color and the unique racial charm of the old plantation folk-songs.

Though I have striven to set upon paper the characteristics of Negro singing, there are always sounds both in words and music that defy the pen. The mellow softness of pronunciation added to vocal peculiarities—the subtle embellishment of grace-notes, turns and quavers, and the delightful little upward break in the voice—these can be but crudely indicated or described in the hope of awakening true memory in those who know Negro song, or of appealing with some vividness to the imagination of others

[1] See "*O Ride on, Jesus*," Book I of this series. [2] See page 35, this Book.

who must rely for their picture solely upon the printed page. A recorder realizes, perhaps better than can another, how approximate only is any notation of music that was never conceived by the singers as a written thing. When one rereads the fixed transcription it seems to bear the same relation to the fluent original that the peep of a caged canary does to the free caroling of a bird on open wing. Would that some genius would add to our system of notation a gamut of more delicate symbols that would enable us better to express the unconscious voices of true folk-singers.

Those of us who are now recording the old Negro melodies keenly realize that we come late to the harvesting, and that a generation and more have lived since the originators of the slave-songs passed from the plantations. Yet free Negroes still work in the fields of the Southland, singing the old songs, and the racial quality of Negro singing has not died. Changes may have occurred. But so strong is the individuality of Negro song that even in this latter day it yet presents unique characteristics wholly worthy of study and record.

We of the white race are at last awakening to the fact that the Negro in our midst stands at the gates of human culture with full hands, laden with gifts. Too long in this country have we barred the door. The war has driven home to us this truth: we no longer merely tolerate the presence of the black race, and with anxiety at that—we need the Negro, and he is here to stay. So hard would it be for our Southern States to progress industrially without their colored population that the country has witnessed the spectacle of State legislation enacted to keep the Negro from migrating to Northern fields of labor. Even as we now learn that the black man's contribution to the industrial development of our land is an essential economic factor, so we have but to unlock the gate to see that he can be equally important to cultural evolution in the "melting pot" of the United States, and that his presence among us may be a powerful stimulus to the art, music, letters and drama of the American Continent.

NOTE.—This collection of Negro Folk-Songs consists of four booklets, each containing four songs for male quartet. As the books will appear separately in serial publication, the descriptive notes accompanying each song are arranged in such a way as to make each volume independent of the others. Any slight repetition of facts with regard to Negro singing will, therefore, be understood.

NATALIE CURTIS BURLIN.

CONTENTS

These four songs are arranged in the above sequence for practical use on concert programs, and have been selected because of their contrasting character, sentiment and tonality.

'TIS ME, O LORD

The recording of this song is dedicated to the memory of the late

ROBERT CURTIS OGDEN

WHOSE NAME BELONGS INSEPARABLY TO THE QUICKENED CAUSE OF EDUCATION IN THE SOUTH. THOUGH WEIGHTED WITH THE CARES OF A LARGE BUSINESS, ROBERT OGDEN'S VISION SOUGHT THE NATION'S GOOD BY THE UPLIFT OF THE INDIVIDUAL THROUGH EDUCATION. FREELY HE GAVE OF TIME AND FORTUNE TO THE AWAKENING OF INTEREST IN THE PROBLEMS OF THE SOUTHLAND WHICH, STRICKEN BY THE CIVIL WAR, STILL STRUGGLES IN ITS ADVANCE AGAINST THE BACKWARD PULL OF ILLITERACY AMONG THE RURAL WHITE POPULATION AS AMONG THE BLACK. THE CONFERENCES FOR EDUCATION IN THE SOUTH TO WHICH MR. OGDEN YEARLY BROUGHT BY SPECIAL TRAIN GROUPS OF FAMOUS EDUCATORS AS HIS INVITED GUESTS, BECAME THROUGH HIS PERSONAL INFLUENCE A MEETING GROUND FOR THE GROWTH OF BETTER UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN SOUTH AND NORTH. INDEED, THE SOUTHERN EDUCATION BOARD AND THE GENERAL EDUCATION BOARD—BRANCHES OF A SOUNDLY ORGANIZED PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT FOR THE BETTERMENT OF THE MASSES OF OUR PEOPLE—OWE AN INCALCULABLE DEBT IN THEIR INCEPTION AND SCOPE TO THE UNSELFISH DEDICATION OF THE GREAT-HEARTED MAN WHO IN EARLY LIFE HAD BEEN FIRED BY THE FRIENDSHIP AND THE IDEALS OF GENERAL ARMSTRONG, THE FOUNDER OF HAMPTON INSTITUTE. TO THE SUPPORT OF HAMPTON AND THE FURTHERING OF ITS AIMS MR. OGDEN GAVE HIMSELF WITH TIRELESS ENTHUSIASM. NOW, ON THE SCHOOL GROUNDS, THE OGDEN MEMORIAL BUILDING ENSHRINES THE THOUGHT OF A LIFELONG FRIEND. THOUSANDS OF BLACK BOYS AND GIRLS REMEMBER WITH GRATITUDE THE PRESIDENT OF HAMPTON'S BOARD OF TRUSTEES WHO PRESENTED TO THEM THEIR DIPLOMAS ON GRADUATION FROM THE INSTITUTE. AND AS THESE STREAMS OF YOUNG PEOPLE WENT FORTH FROM HAMPTON TO BRING LIGHT TO THEIR RACE, THEY CARRIED WITH THEM AS POSSESSIONS NOT LESS PRECIOUS THAN THEIR WRITTEN CERTIFICATES THOSE WORDS OF COUNSEL AND CHEER WHICH MADE THE VOICE OF ROBERT OGDEN A PERSONAL APPEAL TO THE HEARTS OF HUMBLE WORKERS, AS IT WAS A GUIDING INSPIRATION TO THE MINDS OF MANY OF THE GREATEST EDUCATORS IN THE UNITED STATES.

'TIS ME, O LORD

Recorded from the singing of

Ira Godwin	("Lead")	Agriculture;	Virginia
Joseph Barnes	(Tenor)	Tinsmith;	"
William Cooper	(Baritone)	Schoolteacher;	"
Timothy Carper	(Bass)	Bricklayer;	"

The problem of inter-racial adjustment, involving the need of a cordial mutual understanding between the widely differing races of the United States, is admittedly one of the greatest issues of American life. No one man has perhaps done more to help solve that problem than General Samuel Chapman Armstrong, founder of Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute at Hampton, Virginia. The pioneer industrial school for Negroes and Indians in this country, Hampton now numbers about nine hundred students annually, most famous of whom was Booker T. Washington, the founder of Tuskegee Institute in Alabama.[1]

"Learning by doing"—this is one of the precepts of Hampton Institute. Not only have most of the buildings on the school grounds been reared by student labor, but some of them have been "sung up," as they say at Hampton, through the proceeds of folk-song concerts given for the benefit of the school. Every phase of the life at Hampton has the vital coöperation of the black boys and girls who are formed by it and who in turn help to shape it. Not only does folk-song throb in the very arteries of the institution, but it has gone out from Hampton as a race expression to make friends for the Negro and to raise money for his education. Meetings in behalf of the school are held all over the country, in halls, theatres, drawing-rooms and in the open air, where race questions are discussed and the purpose of the industrial training school explained. Always at these gatherings a quartet of colored boys sings the old melodies. These slave-songs, speaking as they do of the patience, loyalty and long endurance of the race which the white man first brought here for gainful ends, make their own unconscious appeal for justice and help in the upward struggle of the freedman.

There are several self-organized and self-trained quartets at Hampton. Each year the best voices are chosen by the school to sing Hampton's message far abroad during the vacation months. The boys meet and practice together during off hours in the school term preparatory to going forth in what they call the "Hampton campaign." It is the singing of the quartet for the summer of 1915 that is here recorded. Each afternoon during the month of May I used to attend the practice meetings of these four boys, who improvised the harmonies of the songs, some of which were partly traditional at the school, while others were individual to this particular group. All four voices were peculiarly beautiful and absolutely untrained. Sensuously musical they were in timbre—mellow, full and reed-like, touched by that elemental emotional quality that makes the slave-songs, when sung by Negroes, so full of simple pathos. Yet a sunny happiness and infectious good-humor pervaded the

[1]See Pages 3, 7, 17, Book I of this series.

personality of these boys, and I cannot say enough for the patience and the enthusiastic coöperation with which they helped me to note accurately their singing of the songs of their race. This old spiritual, "'Tis me, O Lord," was first heard in Alabama by Robert Moton,[1] formerly the colored commandant at Hampton, and now principal at Tuskegee Institute. He caught the melody at once by ear and brought it back to Hampton, where it was extemporaneously harmonized by the students and speedily absorbed into the life of the school. Its devout, simple humility, expressing a depth of religious feeling, makes one see, through music, a soul on its knees.

'TIS ME, O LORD

'Tis me, 'tis me, O Lord,
Standin' in de need of prayer—
O Lord!
'Tis me, 'tis me, O Lord,
Standin' in de need of prayer.

'Tis not my Mudder but it's me, O Lord,
Standin' in de need of prayer—
O Lord!
'Tis not my Mudder but it's me, O Lord,
Standin' in de need of prayer.

'Tis me, 'tis me, O Lord,
Standin' in de need of prayer—
O Lord!
'Tis me, 'tis me, O Lord,
Standin' in de need of prayer.

'Tis not my Sister but it's me, O Lord,
Standin' in de need of prayer—
O Lord!
'Tis not my Sister but it's me, O Lord,
Standin' in de need of prayer.

'Tis me, 'tis me, O Lord,
Standin' in de need of prayer—
O Lord!
'Tis me, 'tis me, O Lord,
Standin' in de need of prayer.

[1]See Page 36, Book I of this series.

G.S. 8vo Choruses
No. 6726

I
'Tis me, O Lord

Price
50 cents net

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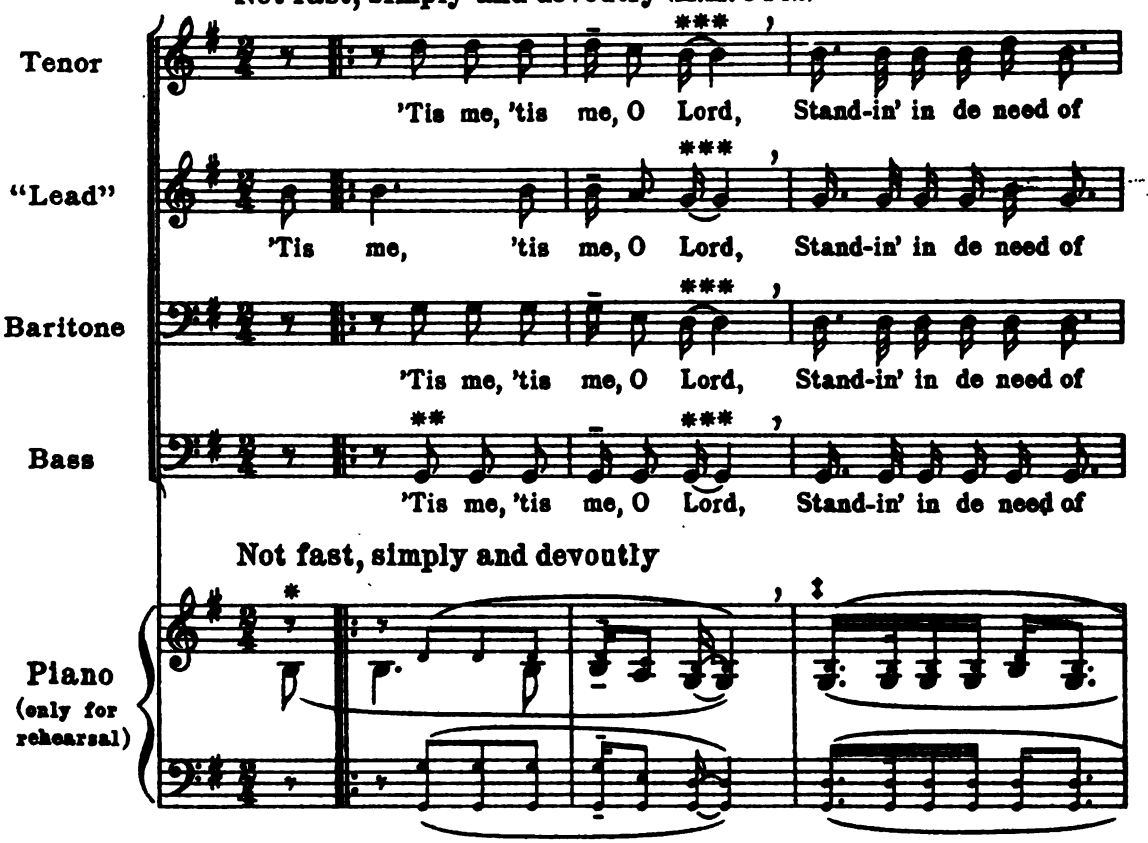
and transcribed by
Natalie Curtis-Burlin

Chorus

Not fast; simply and devoutly (M.M. ♩= 72)

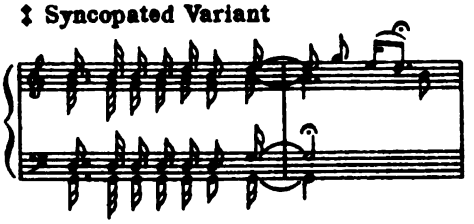


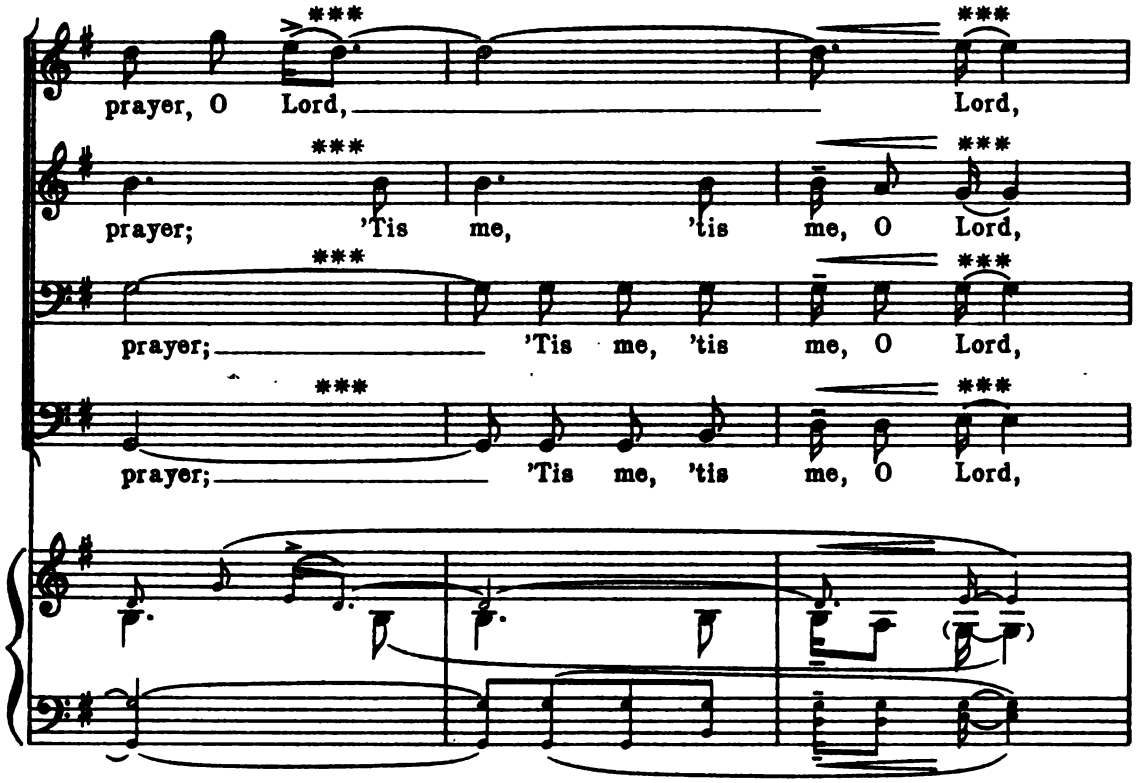
* The melody is carried in the voice of the "Lead" or Leader printed in the piano-part in large type. It must sound above the other voices.

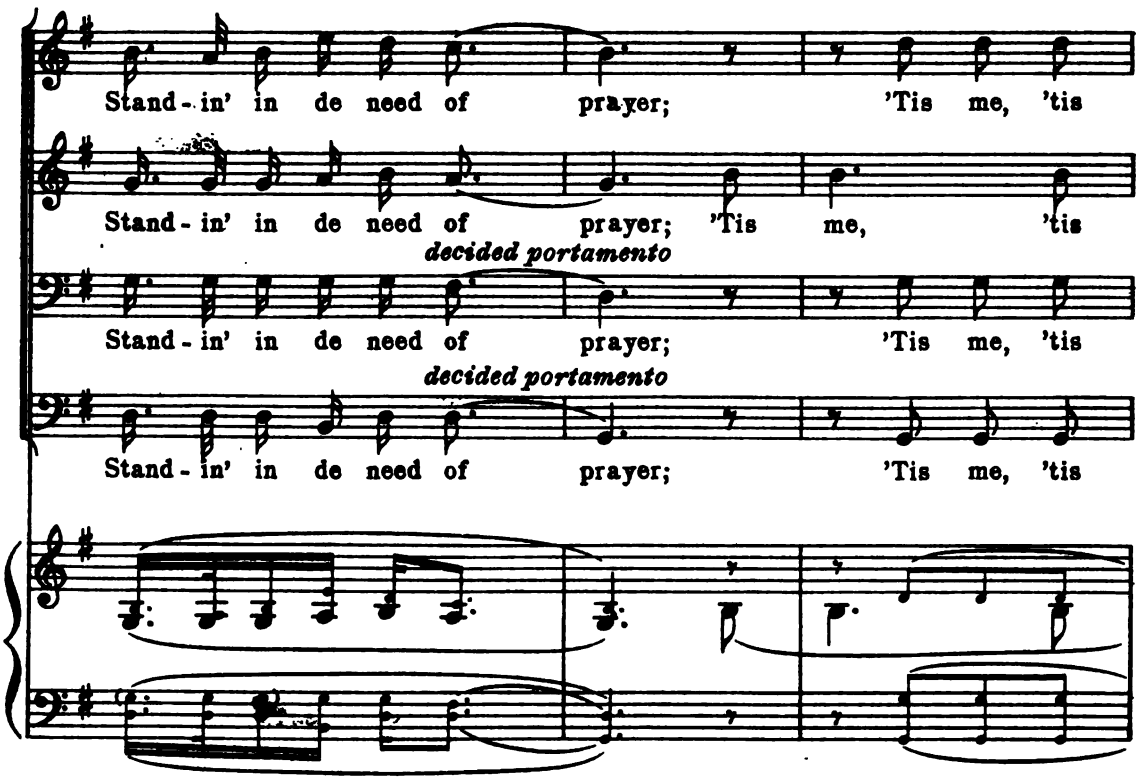
** Sometimes this variant of the Bass part is sung

*** On all notes marked with *** there is a slight drawing out of the rhythm, though not sufficient to warrant a fermata sign (𝄐). It is so natural and appropriate to prolong these notes (and chords) in a prayer-song that the listener is hardly conscious of a pause, though it is very apparent with the metronome. The slight holding back of these notes must not be so marked as to interrupt the steady rhythmic onward beat of the song.

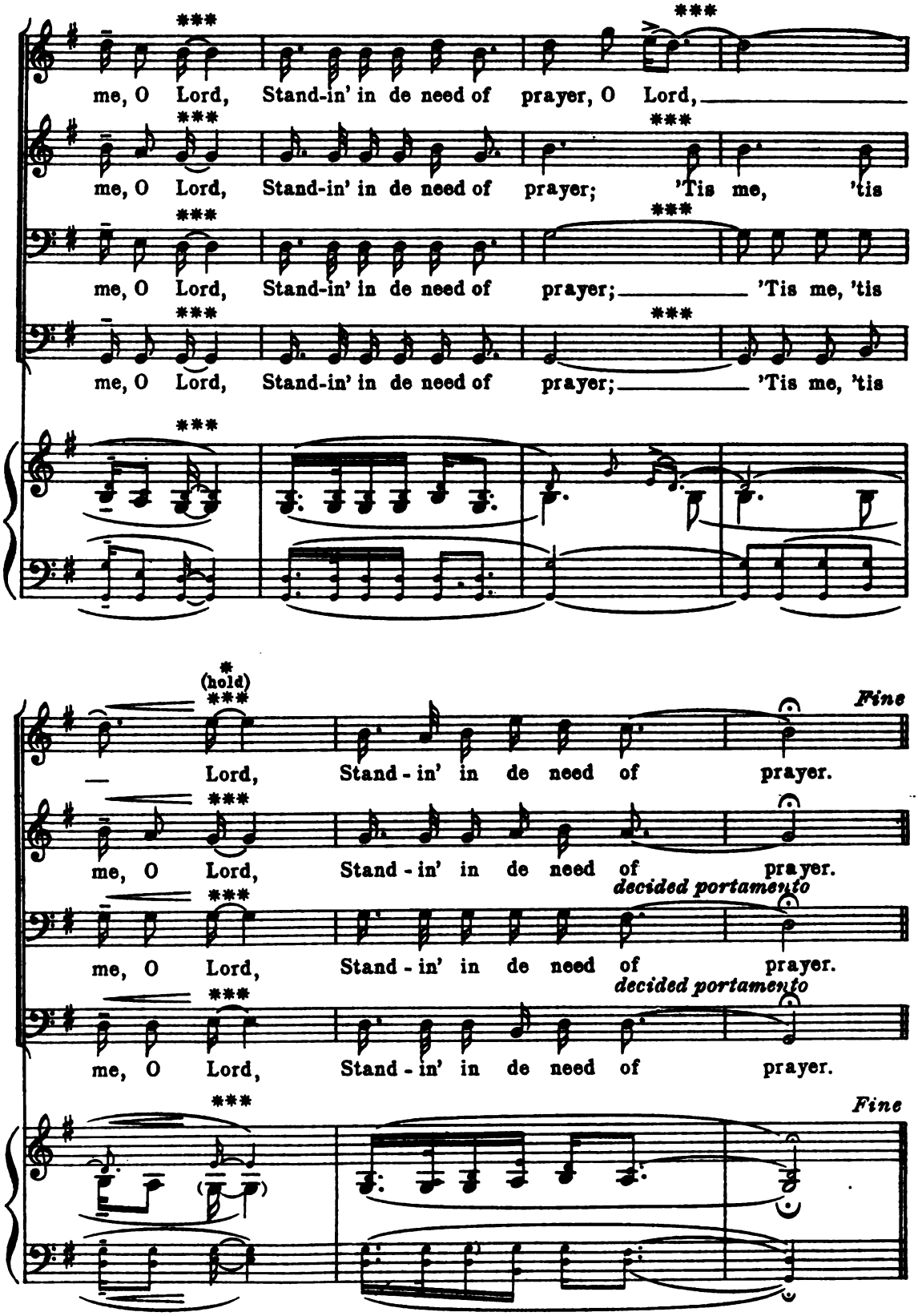
‡ Syncopated Variant







See three ***, previous page.



* This note, marking the climax of the phrase, is held the longest of all.

Verse 1

very legato

'Tis not ma Mud-der, but it's me, O Lord, Stand-in' in de need of

Stand-in' in de need of

Stand-in' in de need of

Stand-in' in de need of

prayer; 'Tis not ma Mud-der, but it's me, O Lord, Stand-in' in de need of

prayer; 'Tis not ma Mud-der, but it's me, O Lord, Stand-in' in de need of

decided portamento

prayer; 'Tis not ma Mud-der, but it's me, O Lord, Stand-in' in de need of

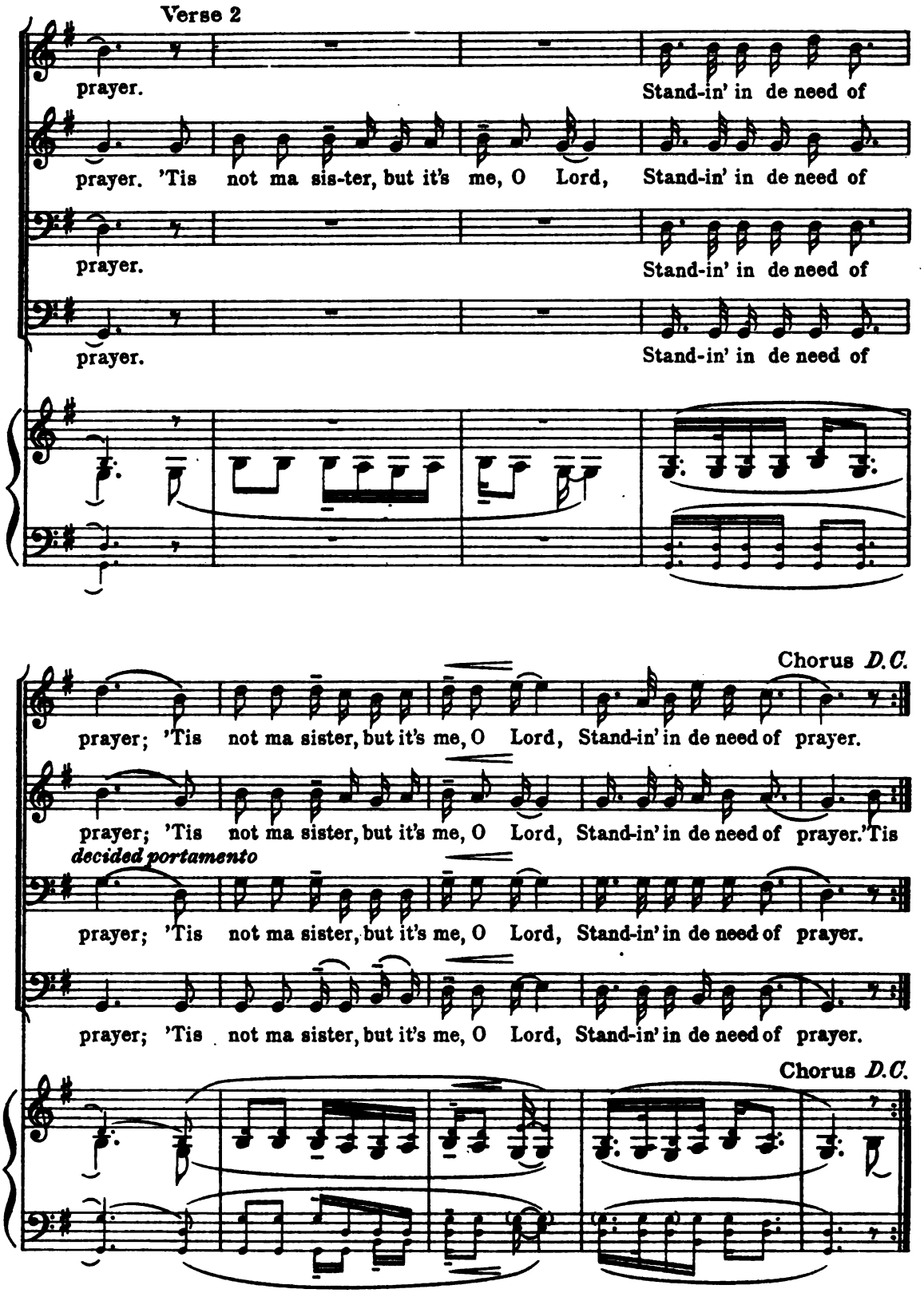
prayer; 'Tis not ma Mud-der, but it's me, O Lord, Stand-in' in de need of

Variant

Lead

Bass

Sometimes the Bass singer performs this characteristic bit of anticipative syncopation.



This song may be continued indefinitely by adding new verses in which the words Fader, Brudder, Deacon, Preacher, or any other term of human relationship may be substituted for the words Mudder and Sister.

28321

LISTEN TO DE LAMBS

To my friend

GEORGE FOSTER PEABODY

humanitarian and true Christian, the recording of this song is dedicated.

AS TRUSTEE OF HAMPTON INSTITUTE SINCE 1884 AND ALSO OF ITS INVESTMENT COMMITTEE, MR. PEABODY HAS CONSTANTLY LABORED TO WIDEN THE INFLUENCE OF HAMPTON, AND AT THE SAME TIME, AS A NATIVE OF GEORGIA, HE HAS EMPHASIZED THE SOUTHERN SYMPATHY WITH THE CAUSE OF NEGRO EDUCATION WHICH THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY HAS LONG KNOWN HIS SUBSTANTIAL HELP. IN THE SOUTH AS WELL AS IN THE NORTH HE IS CONSEQUENTLY BOTH HONORED AND LOVED. TOGETHER WITH MR. OGDEN HE HELPED TO FOUND BOTH THE SOUTHERN CONFERENCES FOR EDUCATION AND THE SOUTHERN EDUCATION BOARD; AND AS TREASURER, FOR A TIME, OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION BOARD AND OF THE JEANES FOUNDATION FOR THE BENEFIT OF RURAL SCHOOLS, HIS BUSINESS TRAINING AND COUNSEL MATERIALLY ADVANCED THE GROWTH OF THESE ORGANIZATIONS. A CHAMPION OF RADICAL POLITICAL DEMOCRACY AND OF THAT DEMOCRACY OF THE SPIRIT THAT CANNOT REST AT EASE WHILE THOSE LESS FORTUNATE MUST SUFFER FOR LACK OF OPPORTUNITY, MR. PEABODY FELT OBLIGATED TO DEVOTE TO THE PUBLIC GOOD THE BULK OF HIS ACCUMULATIONS AND THEREFORE HE RETIRED FROM BUSINESS IN ORDER THAT HE MIGHT GIVE ALL HIS ENERGIES TO THE WIDE PROMOTION OF HUMAN WELFARE, BOTH IN LARGE ORGANIZED MOVEMENTS AND IN THAT DISCERNING AND THOUGHTFUL INTEREST IN INDIVIDUALS WHICH HAS MADE HIS WORK FOR OTHERS A NOBLY PERSONAL GIFT. MANY BLACK MEN, AS WELL AS WHITE, PROUDLY COUNT HIM AS THEIR FRIEND, AND ALL ARE AS GRATEFUL FOR HIS UNFAILING ADVICE AND ENCOURAGEMENT AS FOR HIS MATERIAL AID.

LISTEN TO DE LAMBS

Recorded from the singing of

Ira Godwin	("Lead")	Agriculture;	Virginia
Joseph Barnes	(Tenor)	Tinsmith;	"
William Cooper	(Baritone)	Schoolteacher;	"
Timothy Carper	(Bass)	Bricklayer;	"

This Spiritual is filled with rare imaginative quality in word and music. A previous notation places it in D minor and in regular $\frac{4}{4}$ rhythm.[1] It is possible that through long usage the wide emotional latitude of the free rhythm which I have recorded has grown traditional; yet it is hard now to

[1] "Religious Folk-Songs of the Negro" (Hampton Institute Press).

tell whether the D minor version noted many years ago adhered more or less to a Negro rendering, or is something of an adaptation. In writing down Negro songs most white people have caught the melody by ear and then added harmonies of their own. Yet often even the melody has not closely followed the characteristic details of Negro rhythm, nor the free extemporaneous quality of Negro singing. The song has consciously been reduced to what the recording musician thinks *should* be its correct form, so that the transcription does not really represent a song as the Negroes sing it, but a musical translation. It is noted, not as it is, but as the recorder thinks it should be, or else it is simply used as a theme for the creation of a new composition—which is quite another, though wholly legitimate field.

In "Listen to de Lambs" it seems to me that the pentatonic character of most Negro melodies would point to F major as well as D minor as a natural harmonization of the opening phrase; and I am inclined to think that both harmonizations must always have been in general use among Negroes. But, in the version which I have recorded, the chromatics in the next phrase "*all a-cryin'*" are undoubtedly comparatively modern, although they possess keen emotional quality and were invented years ago by the Negroes themselves, who have made this harmonization traditional at Hampton. Perhaps some older version sustained the tonic chord throughout the first bars until the striking diatonic major progression upward, in consecutive fifths and octaves, lifted the first part of the song to its climax. Further study in the South may bring forth many other versions differing both melodically and harmonically, for the Negroes say: "We don't know just how we sing till you ask us. We just sing the way we *feel!*" Where music is "felt" in intuitive harmonies, where its very nature is spontaneous and creative, who shall say whether or not a given rendering of a traditional song is "*correct*"! All I have tried to do is to record with entire accuracy this single beautiful version —to put on paper at least one faithful reproduction of the fluent loveliness of Negro singing. If another group of Southern Negroes from another state should sing the same song quite differently, no doubt it might be just as authoritative and quite as interesting.

Though I have tried to write these songs in truth to the sound and sense of the Negroes' own singing, it is to be hoped that the colored people in the large towns, who have forgotten the old songs, will seek to cherish their own innate gift for improvisational singing rather than slavishly to follow this or any other notation. For the living inspirational faculty, so rare indeed, should be to them of greater value than any crystallization; although for the world of music at large, careful records of the old traditional singing must be made and preserved. In this recording, I have sought to indicate through expression marks the ingenuous depth of feeling with which the Negroes sing this song. It would be unfortunate, however, if these efforts to express Negro sentiment should be misread into over-elaborate self-consciousness or sentimentality. To avoid any such danger, a brief description of the effect produced by the Negro singers may not be amiss.

The song opens slowly and softly, with a certain weirdness of atmosphere, suggesting a mental picture of the "Lambs," the weak and poor of the earth, craving the Good Shepherd, huddling gently together, "all a-cryin',"—crying

for the promised release: *"I want t' go t' Hebb'n when I die."* Then comes a jubilant summons full of hope—"Come on, sister, wid yo' ups and downs"; and the cry "Want t' go t' Hebb'n when I die" takes on quick courage and appeal.

Yet more tenderly sounds the promise, "Angels wait'n' fo' t' give you crown," and this is followed by a touching confidence when the refrain is again firmly repeated: "Want t' go t' Hebb'n when I die." Like many of the Spirituals of slave times, this song dwells on the imminence of the next world. Of course, the effect described is not thought out or consciously achieved by the singer—it is entirely emotional. For the Negroes always explain: "We sing the way we *feel*."

Mention should here be made of a Negro choral work by R. Nathaniel Dett, a colored musician whose composition, based on this Spiritual, is designed as a somewhat elaborate development of the original Negro theme and is intended primarily for use as a church anthem. It is to be hoped that Mr. Dett's effort may help to lead the educated members of the Negro race back to the old songs from which they have turned away. For the Spirituals, *just as they stand in all their primitive simplicity*, are of monumental beauty and have their rightful place in musical art.—See "Listen to de Lambs," by R. Nathaniel Dett (G. Schirmer, publisher).

LISTEN TO DE LAMBS

O Listen to de Lambs
All a-cryin',
Listen to de Lambs
All a-cryin',
Listen to de Lambs
All a-cryin',
I want t' go t' Hebb'n[1] *when I die!*

Come on,[2] Sister, wid' yo' ups an' downs,
Want t' go t' Hebb'n when I die;
Angels wait'n' fo' t' give you crown,
Want t' go t' Hebb'n when I die.

O Listen to de Lambs
All a-cryin',
Listen to de Lambs
All a-cryin',
Listen to de Lambs
All a-cryin',
I want t' go t' Hebb'n when I die!

[1]The word "Hebb'n" in Negro dialect has a soft sound made by closing the lips on the "b" and sounding the "n" with the mouth shut. This gives to the consonant "b" an intermediary sound between "b" and "v."

[2]The "o" in the word "on" is pronounced with a long o in Negro dialect, thus: "ōn" (or "ohn").

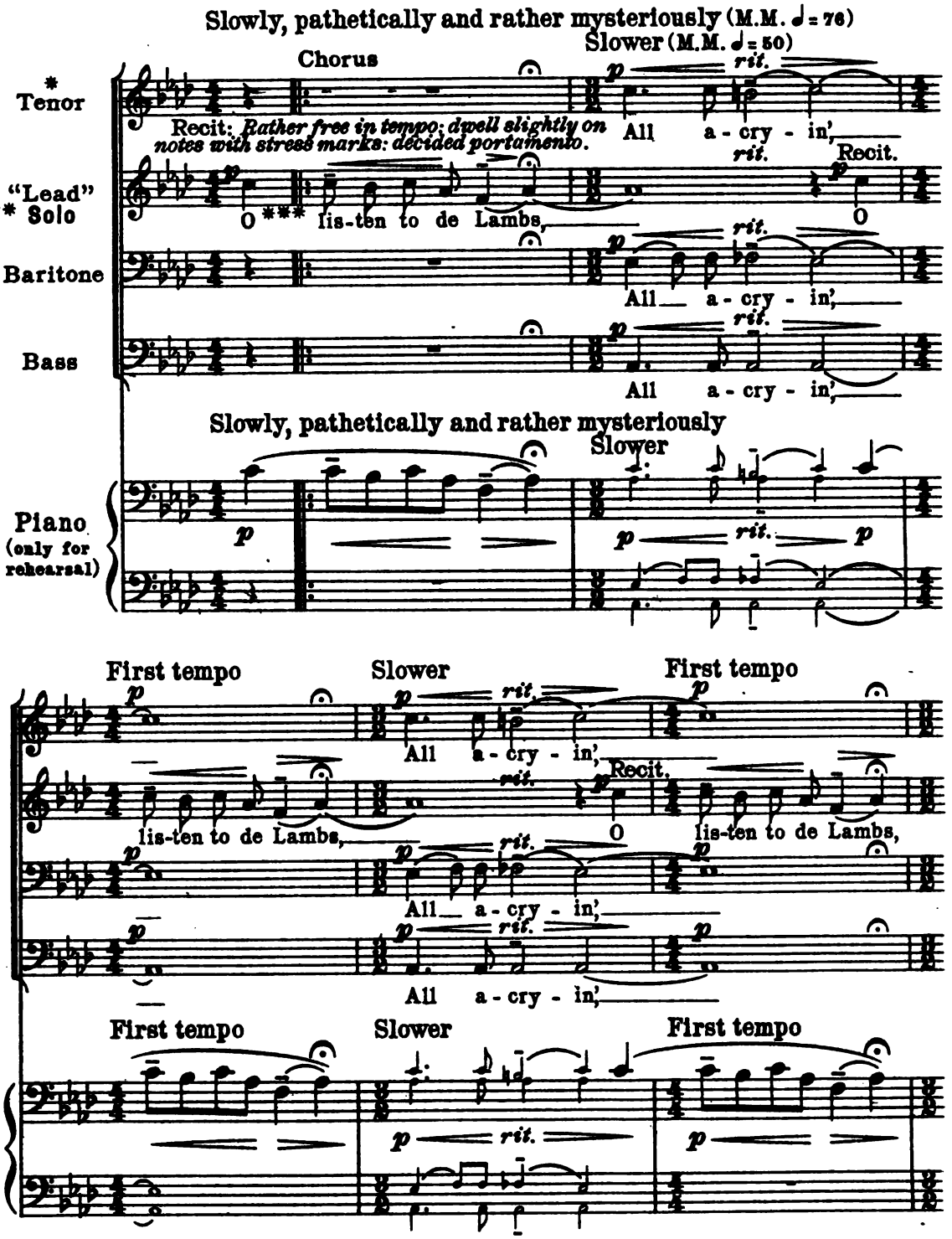
Come on, Sister, an' a-don't be 'shame',
Want t' go t' Hebb'n when I die;
Angels wait'n' fo' t' write yo' name.
Want t' go t' Hebb'n when I die.

O Listen to de Lambs
All a-cryin',
Listen to de Lambs
All a-cryin',
Listen to de Lambs
All a-cryin';
I want t' go t' Hebb'n when I die!

This song may be continued indefinitely by adding new verses in which the words "Fader," "Brudder," "Deacon," "Preacher" or any other term of relationship may be substituted for "Mudder" and "Sister."—See Page 8, Book I, of this series.

II

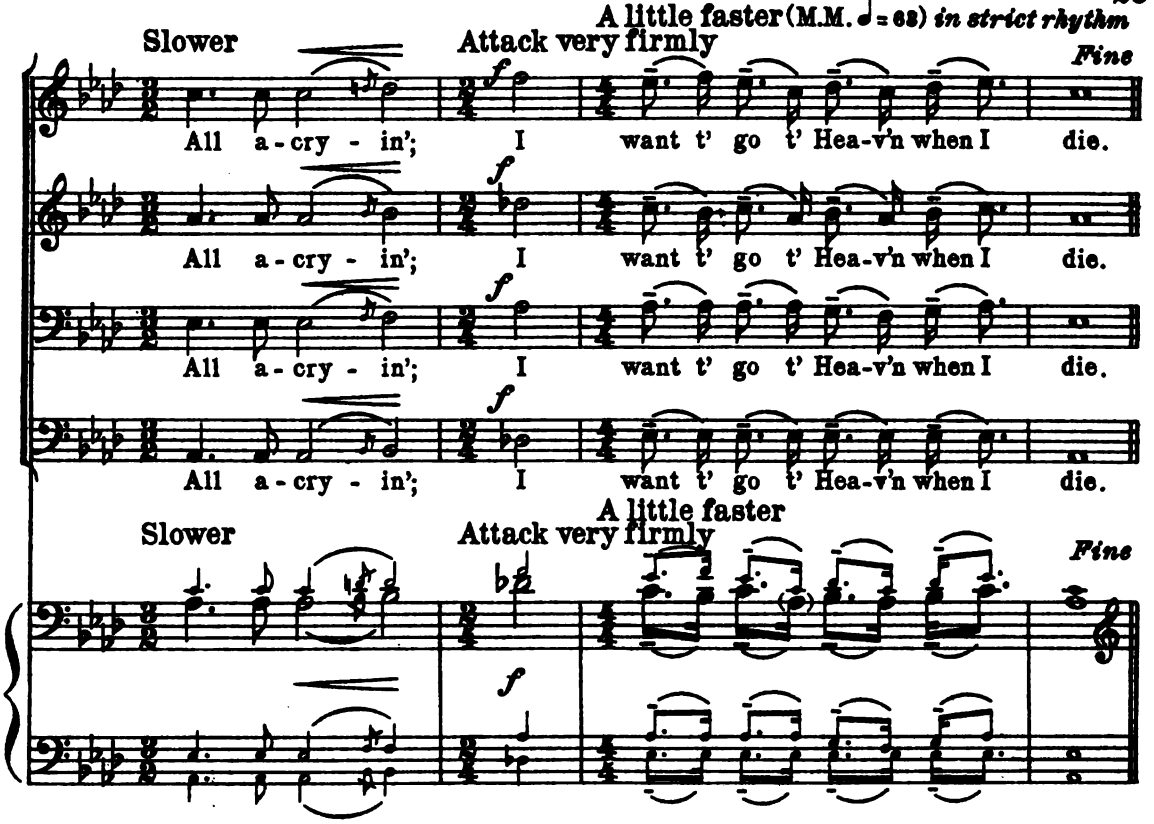
Listen to de Lambs



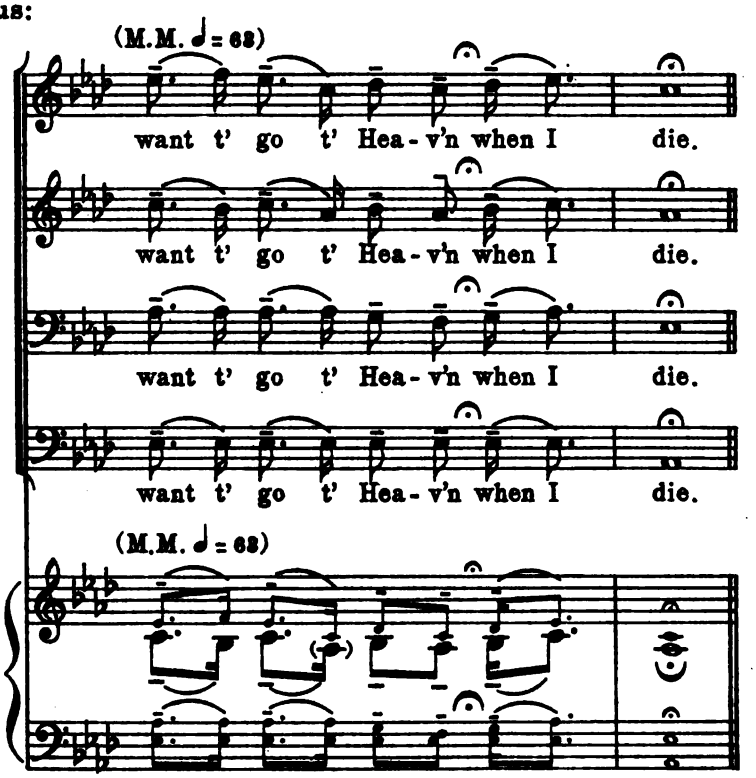
* The students at Hampton often sing this song a whole tone higher than it is here recorded, the Negro Tenor attacking high B flat with ease and beauty. It has been thought wiser, however, to place the song more fully within the range of average voices.

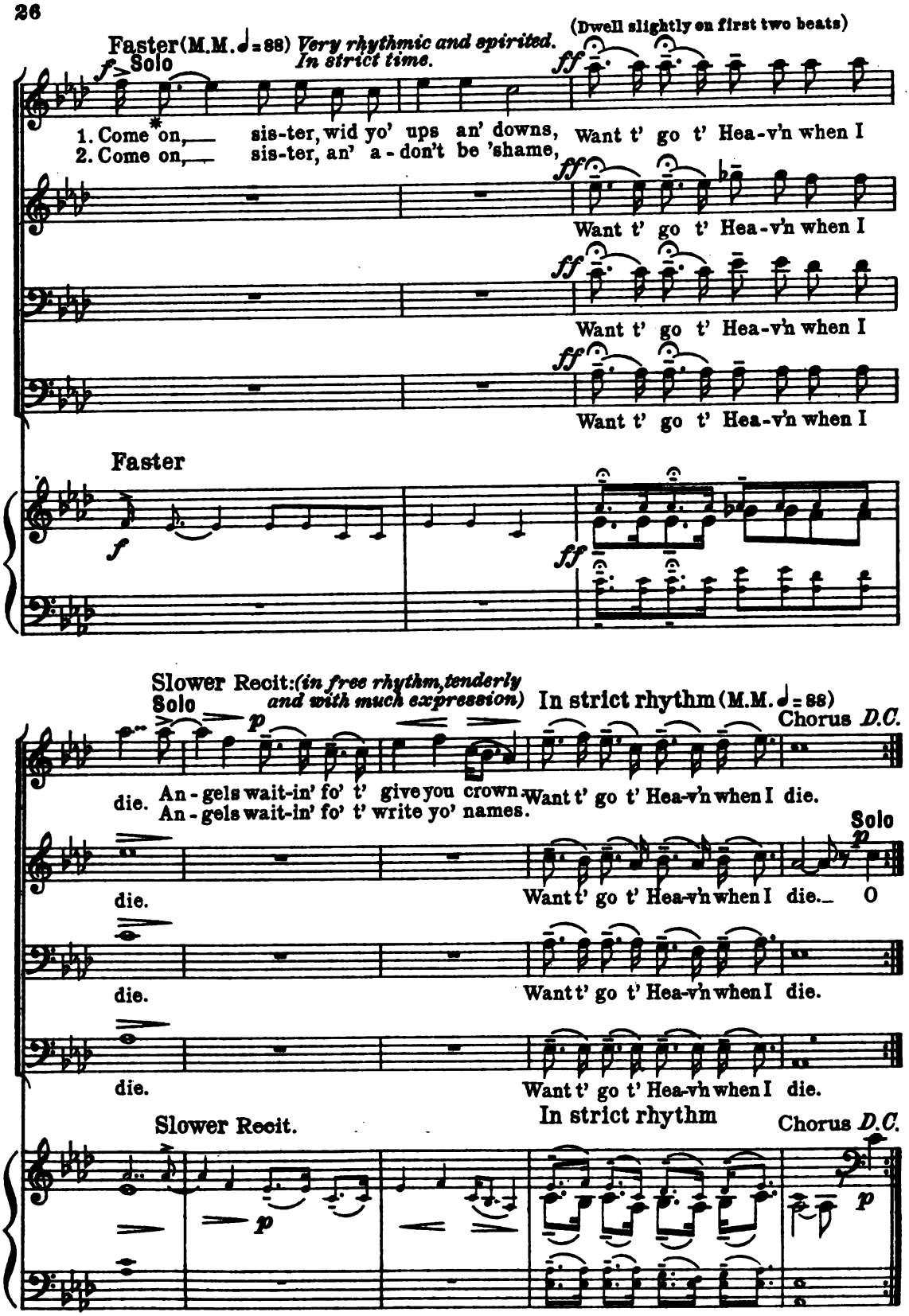
** The voice of the "Lead" (or Leader) carries the melody and is printed in the piano-part in large type. It must sound above the other voices.

*** This phrase is really sung throughout thus:



When the chorus is sung for the last time a slight pause is made after the word "Heav'n," thus:





* The "o" in the word on is pronounced very long in Negro dialect, thus: "ōn" or "ohn."
A third verse, seldom, if ever, sung at Hampton, bears the following words: "Mind out, brudder, how you walk de cross, want t' go t' Heav'n when I die, foot might slip an' yo' soul get lost, want t', etc."

O EV'RY TIME I FEEL DE SPIRIT

The record of this song is affectionately dedicated to

DAVID MANNES

ARTIST AND TEACHER

WHOSE WHOLE CAREER HAS BEEN CONSECRATED TO THE LINKING OF ART WITH LIFE.

ON a May evening in Virginia, at the Commencement Exercises of Hampton Institute, when the graduating class of colored students was seated on the platform and tier upon tier of eager black faces rose almost to the very ceiling, someone told this story:

"There was once a Negro musician named Douglas who, during the days of slavery, had somehow made his way to Europe, where he met with no race-prejudice and became an excellent violinist. After the civil war and the emancipation of the slaves, Douglas returned to the United States, the home of all his relatives, believing that now the Negroes were indeed free. But because of his color he found every door still barred; no orchestra would admit him; in the field of serious music there was then no place for the Negro.

"Passing through the streets of New York one day the broken-hearted artist heard the tones of a violin floating out from a basement window; he listened: evidently it was a child's hand that drew the bow. Irresistibly impelled, he entered the basement dwelling, and there found a little white boy playing on a crude, cheap violin. On questioning the mother the Negro found that she had no means to gratify the child's passion for music. 'Then let me teach him!' Douglas said. And so into the soul of this little white boy, denied all opportunity, the colored musician, equally denied, poured all that he had learned. 'For he is white,' thought Douglas, 'and will do what I can never do because I am black.'

"And now," continued the Hampton narrator, "comes the sequel of that story which happened a long time ago, for that little white boy, whose first lessons were from a Negro, is now one of America's best-known artists, who has come to Hampton and will play for us to-night."

Then onto the platform, violin in hand, stepped David Mannes. Forgetful of the audience he turned and faced the colored students, playing only to them; and in this instinctive act it seemed as though the violinist strove to give to the Negro race what the black musician had given him. And it was in direct outcome of that memorable evening in Virginia that a year later, in New York, with Hampton's help, the Music School Settlement for Colored People was founded, with David Mannes as associate director and inspiring friend to the faculty of colored teachers.

May the spirit of human reciprocity, the linking sense of inter-racial indebtedness that prompted the founding of that school, spread to other fields of mutual recognition between white men and black.

O EV'RY TIME I FEEL DE SPIRIT

Recorded from the singing of

Ira Godwin	("Lead")	Agriculture;	Virginia
Joseph Barnes	(Tenor)	Tinsmith;	"
William Cooper	(Baritone)	Schoolteacher;	"
Timothy Carper	(Bass)	Bricklayer;	"

Of all the Spirituals, this is one of the most touching in its prayerful suggestion and quiet reverence, and in the poetic imagery of its verse, couched in a few crude words, elemental in their simplicity, yet somehow conveying the grandeur of the vision of God on the mountain-top and the dazed soul beholding heaven in wonder.

O ev'ry time I feel[1] *de Spirit*
Movin' in ma heart—I pray,
O ev'ry time I feel de Spirit
Movin' in ma heart—I pray.

Upon de mountun ma Lord spoke,
Out of his mouth came fi-er an' smoke.

O ev'ry time I feel de Spirit
Movin' in ma heart—I pray,
O ev'ry time I feel de Spirit
Movin' in ma heart—I pray.

Jordan[2] Ribber chilly an' col',
Chill de body, but not de soul.

O ev'ry time I feel de Spirit
Movin' in ma heart—I pray,
O ev'ry time I feel de Spirit
Movin' in ma heart—I pray.

All aroun' me looks so shine.
Ask ma Lord if all was mine.

O ev'ry time I feel de Spirit
Movin' in ma heart—I pray,
O ev'ry time I feel de Spirit
Movin' in ma heart—I pray.

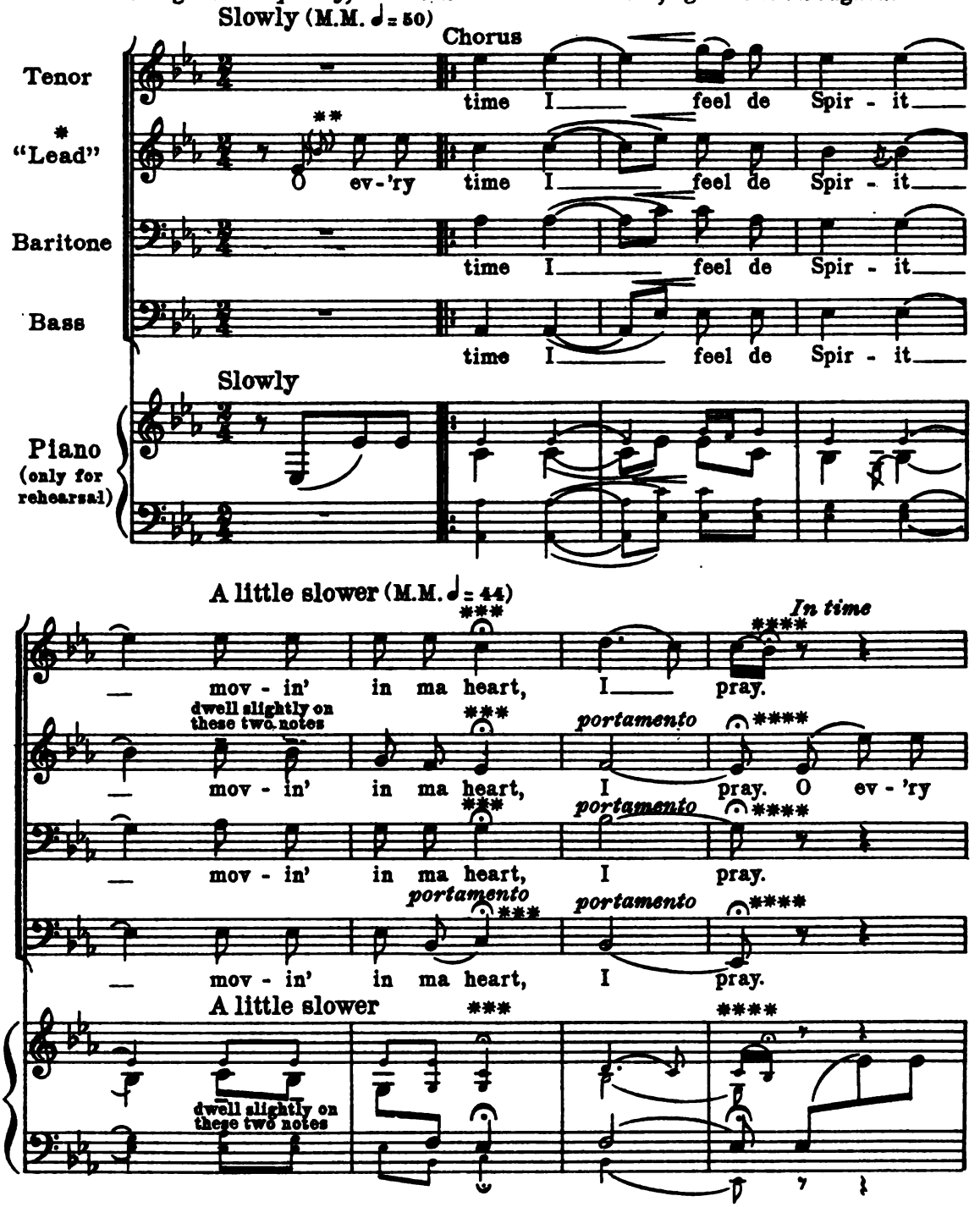
[1]The more primitive Negroes of St. Helena Island sing "feels."

[2]Pronounced "*Jordn.*"

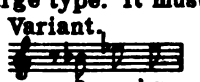
III

O ev'ry time I feel de Spirit

Sung with simplicity, breadth and reverence. An even, legato tone throughout

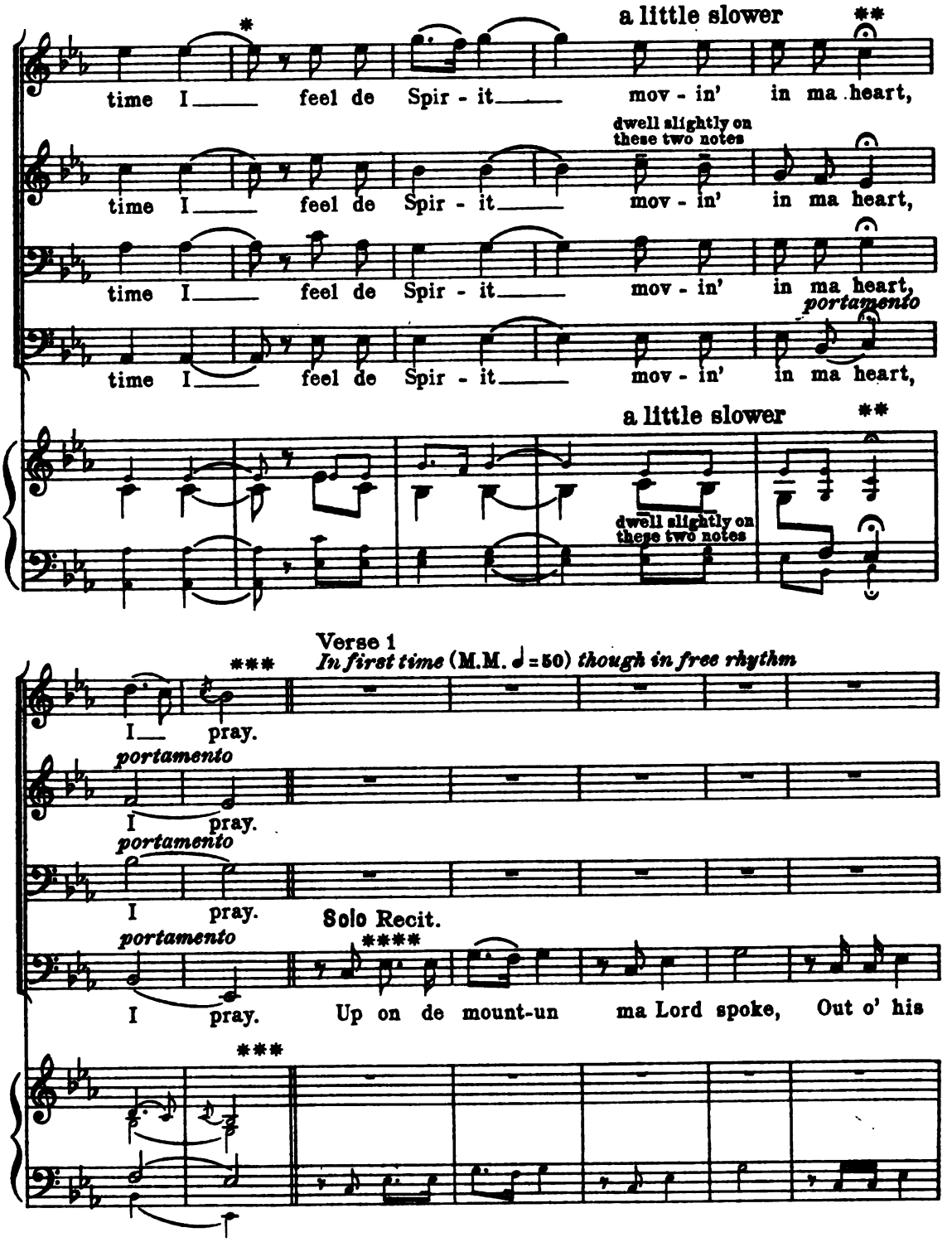


* The voice of the "Lead" (or leader) carries the melody of the song and is printed in the piano accompaniment in large type. It must sound above the other voices.

** Sung sometimes 

*** The pause here equals a half-note, thus: 

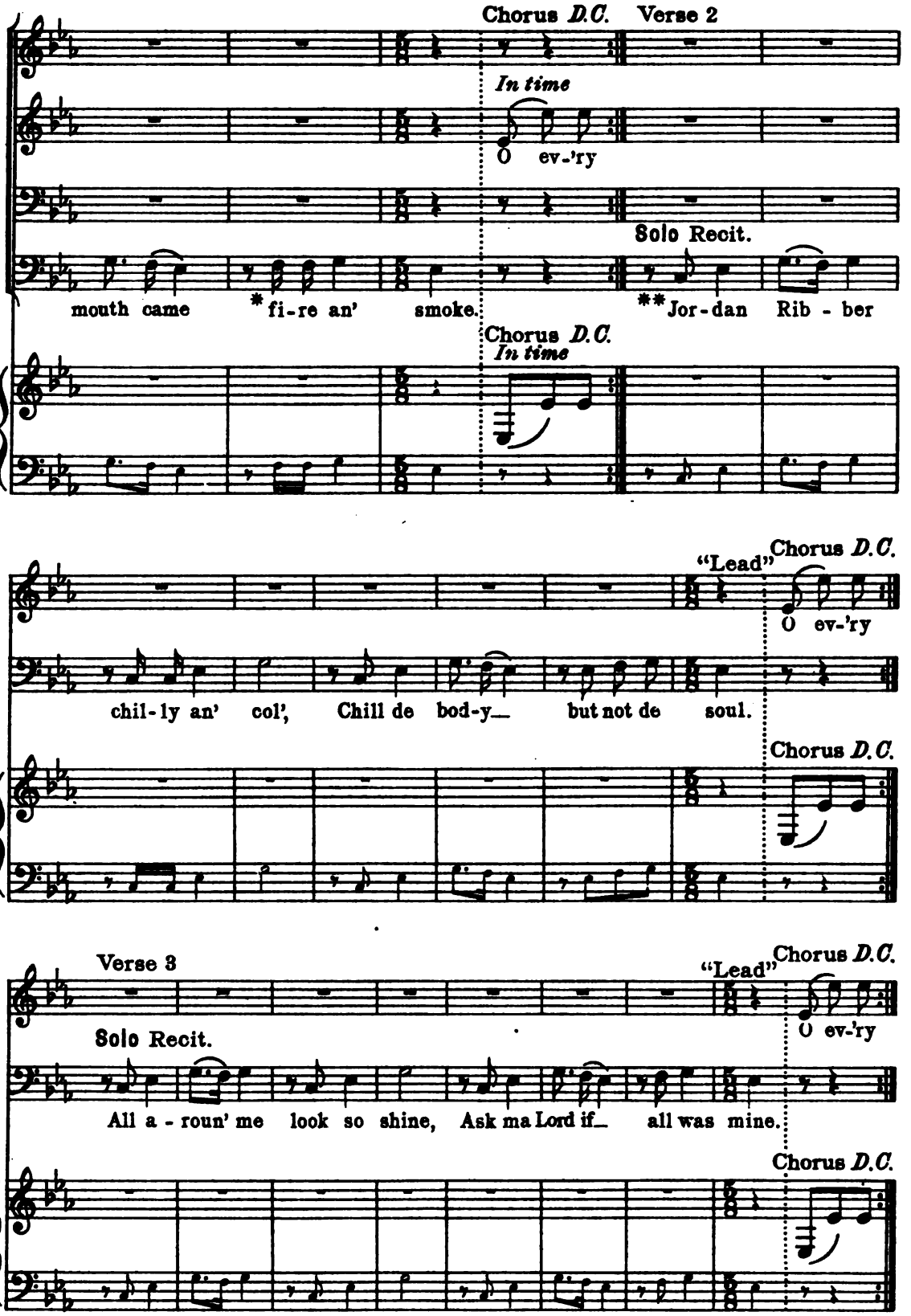
**** The pause here usually equals a quarter-note, thus: 



* Whenever this phrase occurs in the many repetitions of the "Chorus," it may be sung as here recorded, or as recorded on first page, the two versions being interchangeable at will. Or, one voice may sing the phrase broken by a rest, as above, while the other voices sing legato, or vice-versa. The singing is extemporaneous, and the individual singers breathe when they like, breaking a phrase whenever they choose.

** Pause as before. *** When the "chorus" is sung for the last time there is a long pause on the final word "pray."

**** The "o" in the word on is pronounced very long in Negro dialect, thus: "ōn" or "ohn."



* Pronounced "fi-er," two syllables. ** Pronounced "Jerdan."
Note: Among the primitive Negroes of South Carolina the choral refrain is sung "feels de Spirit."

28821

GOD'S A-GWINE TER MOVE ALL DE TROUBLES AWAY

TO PERCY GRAINGER

(who loves this song)

COMPOSER, PIANIST, FOLK-LORIST

THIS RECORD IS DEDICATED WITH WARM APPRECIATION OF THOSE QUALITIES OF ARTISTIC INSIGHT AND HUMAN SYMPATHY THAT MAKE HIM A FIRM FRIEND OF THE NEGRO AND OF NEGRO MUSIC; FOR THE UNCONSCIOUS ART OF SIMPLE MEN FINDS REVERENT RECOGNITION AND BUOYANT RESPONSE FROM THE GENIUS WHOSE OWN SUNNY NATURE MAKES ALL WHO KNOW HIM BELIEVE THAT

"GOD'S A-GWINE TER MOVE ALL DE TROUBLES AWAY."

ONE night in New York, under the auspices of the Musical School Settlement for Colored People, a concert of Negro music performed by colored musicians was given in Carnegie Hall. Among the listeners, spellbound with interest, sat Percy Grainger. A talented young colored pianist was playing for the first time before a great audience. Trembling with nervousness, her fingers missed the notes, her mind grew blank, and suddenly she dropped her face in her hands. Then pulling herself together, she somehow finished her piece and left the piano. Meanwhile Percy Grainger had disappeared. Hurrying behind the scenes he met the dejected little pianist as she came from the stage. "Don't mind," he said comfortingly, "we have all done the same thing; every artist has. That's part of a public career. Go back and play again. Don't you hear them applauding? This time you'll play better than ever!" Thus encouraged, the girl reappeared before her audience and now came off with flying colors. She had never met the great pianist before, but he marked a turning-point in her life, for he had helped her to change failure to victory. And this little incident seemed a symbol of Grainger's influence in all his generous contact with the "disadvantaged people" and with the struggling artists of the Negro race.

GOD'S A-GWINE TER MOVE ALL DE TROUBLES AWAY

Recorded from the singing of

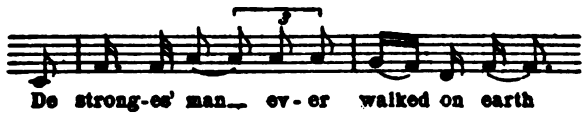
Charles H. Tynes	("Lead")
Freeman W. Crawley	(Tenor)
Samuel E. Phillips	(Baritone)
John H. Wainwright	(Bass)

The above group of singers is the oldest quartet at Hampton, some of the members having graduated from the school over thirty years ago. Though

none of them have had technical musical training, all are musicians by the grace of God and have sung together for so long that the blending interplay of their voices has attained rare artistic perfection. At the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, where they sang all summer at the Educational Exhibit, they were awarded a medal.[1]

In this song the "lead" is, of course, free to sing the narrative verses as he pleases, although retaining the same general melodic outline which conforms to the thematic pattern of the song.

It is of peculiar interest to see how the singer here recorded (Tynes) has adapted, with unerring dramatic sense, his musical declamation to the natural flow of the words—an ideal consciously sought by great composers and here unconsciously attained without any sacrifice of the charming folk-song melody, and with a naïveté and simplicity altogether delightful. The emphasis of the triplets in the description of Samson as "de stronges' man ever walked on earth":



and the awesome age of Methusaleh depicted with such an expressive *portamento:*

these are flashes of real descriptive talent, not less great because intuitive merely.

The humming accompaniment of the other singers forms a swinging background to the melody. "We jes' foller the 'lead'," the singers explain. "When he goes up, we go up too. No, of course, we don't know jes' what he's goin' t' do—we jes' *feel* it, an' we sing like he sings—that's all." However, in noting this "following," I find that although the "feel" was that all voices moved together, the "lead" was naturally sometimes a little ahead. I have therefore sought to retain this inspirational quality by writing down in detail what the singers actually did—not the theory of the thing, but the practice—although of course they do not always do the same thing, and another "lead" presenting a different musical interpretation of the narrative phrases will have to be followed according to his own version. Such individual changes apply chiefly to the rhythm, although the "lead" may always make alterations in the less important notes of the melody.

As regards white singers: If in the narrative the syncopation (the slight lagging behind of the accompanying voices) might present rhythmic difficulties too subtle for average amateurs, it can be simplified by allowing the voices to follow the rhythm of the "lead" more closely. The singing must sound *"nat'cherl";* if the syncopations are laboriously learned they may be "jerky"; whereas the song as sung by Negroes has a lilt, a rolling swing that seems a part of the unconscious and pervading rhythms of nature. Besides

[1]See Page 9, Book I of this series.

its humor, the refrain of the song is filled with a joyousness of faith and a devotional buoyancy that ought to put sun and courage into the heaviest heart and lift the most despairing spirit.

"God's a-gwine ter move all de troubles away," though native to Virginia, came to me from St. Helena Island,[1] off the coast of South Carolina, where the Negro population far outnumbers the white, and life in the cotton-fields is still primitive and full of song. To the unlettered black man the Bible was an oral book and thé familiar figures of Scripture were made to live through the eloquence of the colored preacher. Even as all Christian nations have lovingly absorbed the Bible personages and pictured them as belonging to their own people and time, so the same naïve race-appropriation that painted Italian, German and Flemish Virgins, now gives us, in this Negro song, a black Samson whose tight-curling hair must be "shaved as clean as yo' han'." Indeed, the reality of the Bible-heroes to the untutored slave can scarcely be more vividly and dramatically exemplified than in this old "Spiritual."

So far as I can find out, this song has never before been written down in any form; though to a totally different tune and another refrain, verses parallel in meaning are contained in a song from Miss Emily Halowell's able collection for Calhoun School: "Wasn't thet a witness fo' ma Lord."[2]

GOD'S A-GWINE TER MOVE ALL DE TROUBLES AWAY

God's[3] *a-gwine ter move all de troubles away,*
God's a-gwine ter move all de troubles away,
God's a-gwine ter move all de troubles away,
See 'm no more till de comin' day!

Genesis, you understan',
Methusaleh was de oldes' man,
His age was nine hundred an' sixty-nine,
He died and went to Heaven in due time.

For God's a-gwine ter move all de troubles away,
God's a-gwine ter move all de troubles away,
God's a-gwine ter move all de troubles away,
See 'm no more till de comin' day!

Dere was a man of de Pharisee,
His name was Nicodemus an' he wouldn't believe.
De same he came to Christ by night,
Want-a be taught out o' human sight.
Nicodemus was a man who wanted to know,
"Can a man be born-a when-a he is ol'?"
Christ tol' Nicodemus as a frien',
"A-man, you must be born again!"

[1] On this island is situated the Penn Industrial School, an outgrowth of Hampton Institute. (See Page 8, Book I, of this series).

[2] See "Calhoun Plantation Songs," by Emily Halowell (C. W. Thompson & Co., Boston, Mass.).

[3] Pronounced "Gawd."

For God's a-gwine ter move all de troubles away,
God's a-gwine ter move all de troubles away,
God's a-gwine ter move all de troubles away,
See 'm no more till de comin' day!

a-Read about Samson from his birth,
De stronges' man ever walked on earth.
a-Read way back in de ancient time
He slew ten thousan' Philistine.
a-Samson he went a-walkin' about,
a-Samson's strength-a was never found out
Twell[1] his wife sat down upon his knee,
An'-a "Tell me whar yo' strength-a lies, ef you please."

a-Samson's wife she done talk so fair,
a-Samson tol' her "Cut off-a ma hair,
Ef you shave ma head jes' as clean as yo' han',
Ma strength-a will become-a like a natcherl man!"

For God's a-gwine ter move all de troubles away,
God's a-gwine ter move all de troubles away,
God's a-gwine ter move all de troubles away,
See 'm no more till de comin' day!

The following additional verses were given to me by J. E. Blanton of Penn School, St. Helena Island.

There is a road to heaven laid,
By heavenly Truth the rails are made;
God's word the power, Truth the steam
That drives the engine of the train;
The Bible is the engineer
That points out the way to Heaven clear.

Now, poor sinner, is your time,
The Gospel[2] train is on the line;
. . . . . .
Get yo' ticket 'fore yo' lef' behin'!

[1]Until, or till.

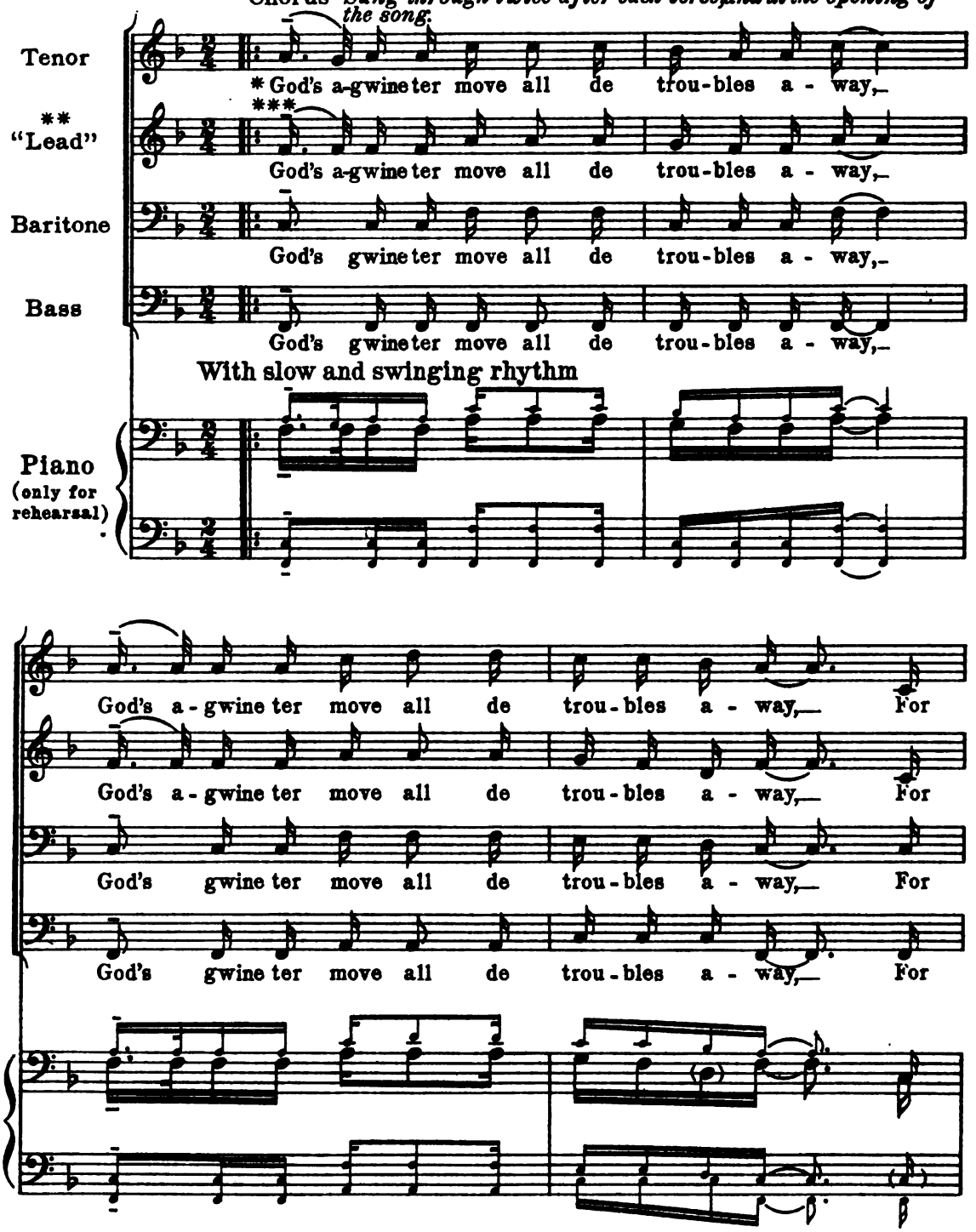
[2]Pronounced "Gawspel."

IV

*God's a-gwine ter move all de troubles away

With slow and swinging rhythm (M.M. ♩ = 80)

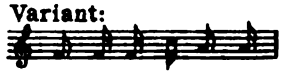
Chorus *Sung through twice after each verse, and at the opening of the song.*

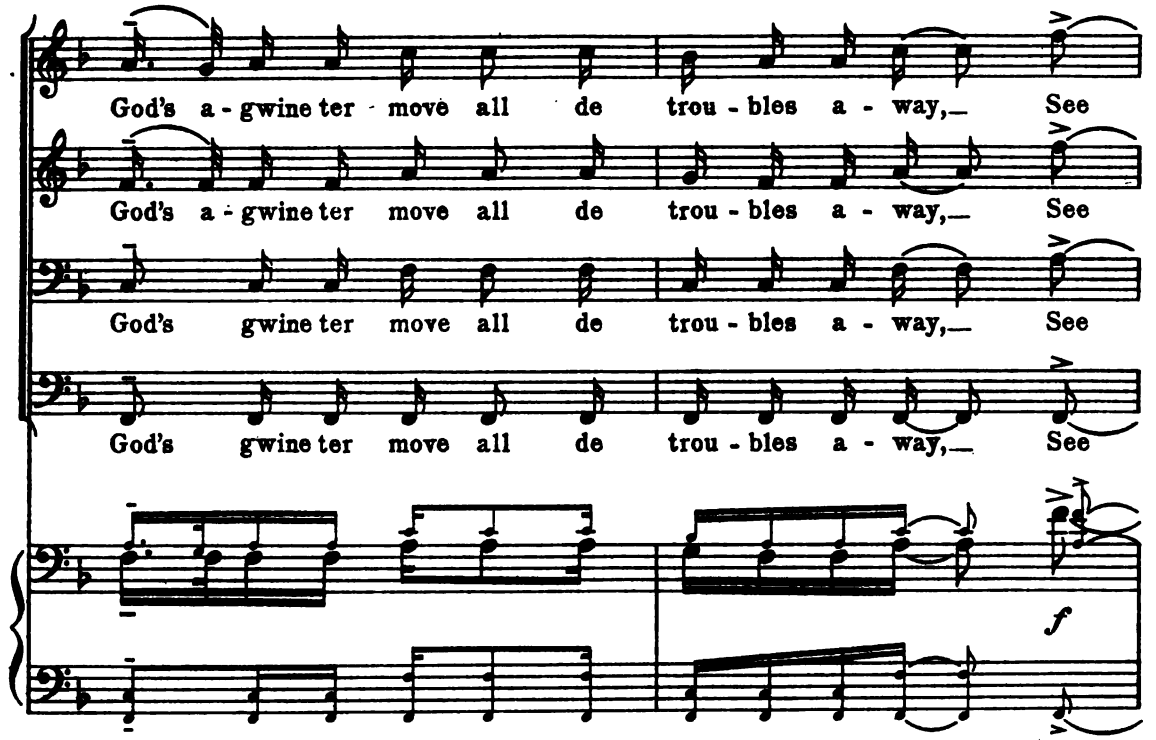


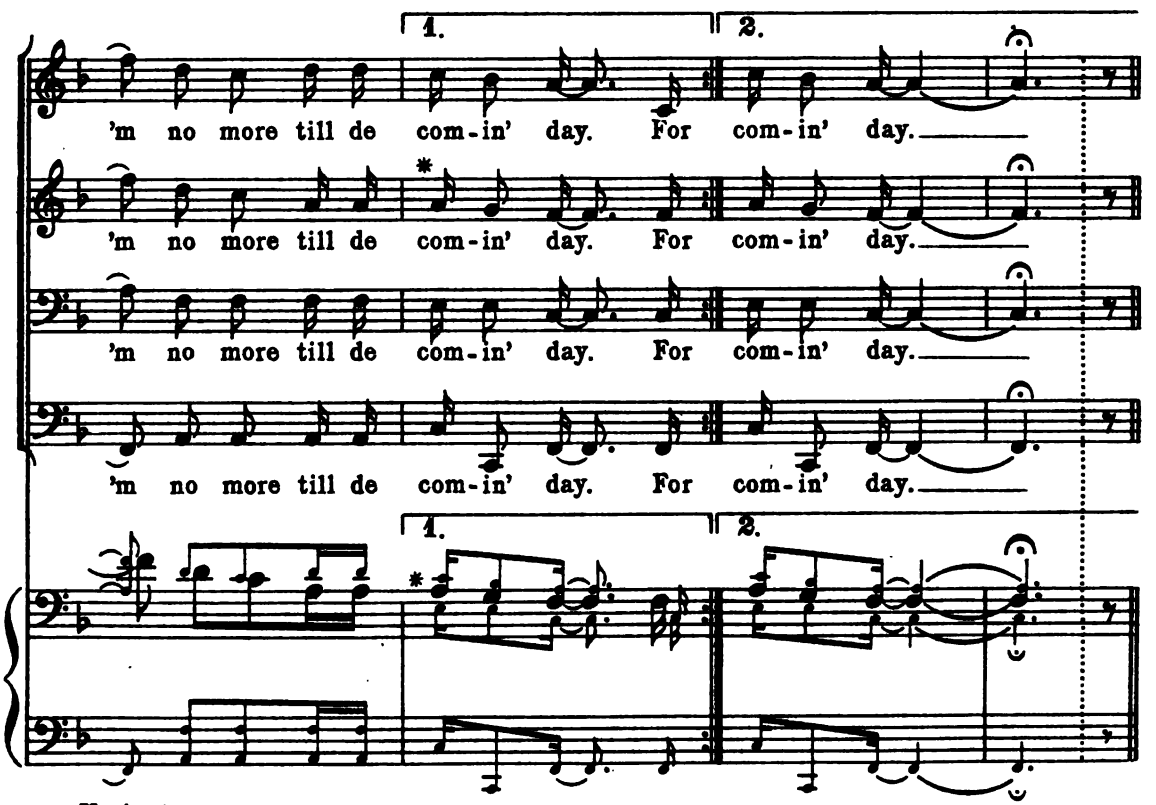
* Pronounced "Gawd."

** The voice of the "Lead" (or Leader) carries the melody and is printed in the piano-part in large type. It must sound above the other voices.

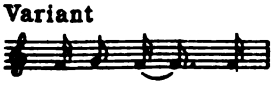
*** Variant:







Variant



Verse 1

portamento

(hummed throughout)

declaimed, in free narrative style

portamento

Gen-e-sis you un-der-stan', Me-thu-sa-leh was de old-es' man; His

portamento

(hummed throughout)

(hummed throughout)

Ped. * Ped. *

Chorus *D.C.*

For

age was nine hundred an' six-ty nine, He died an went to Hea-v'n in due time. For

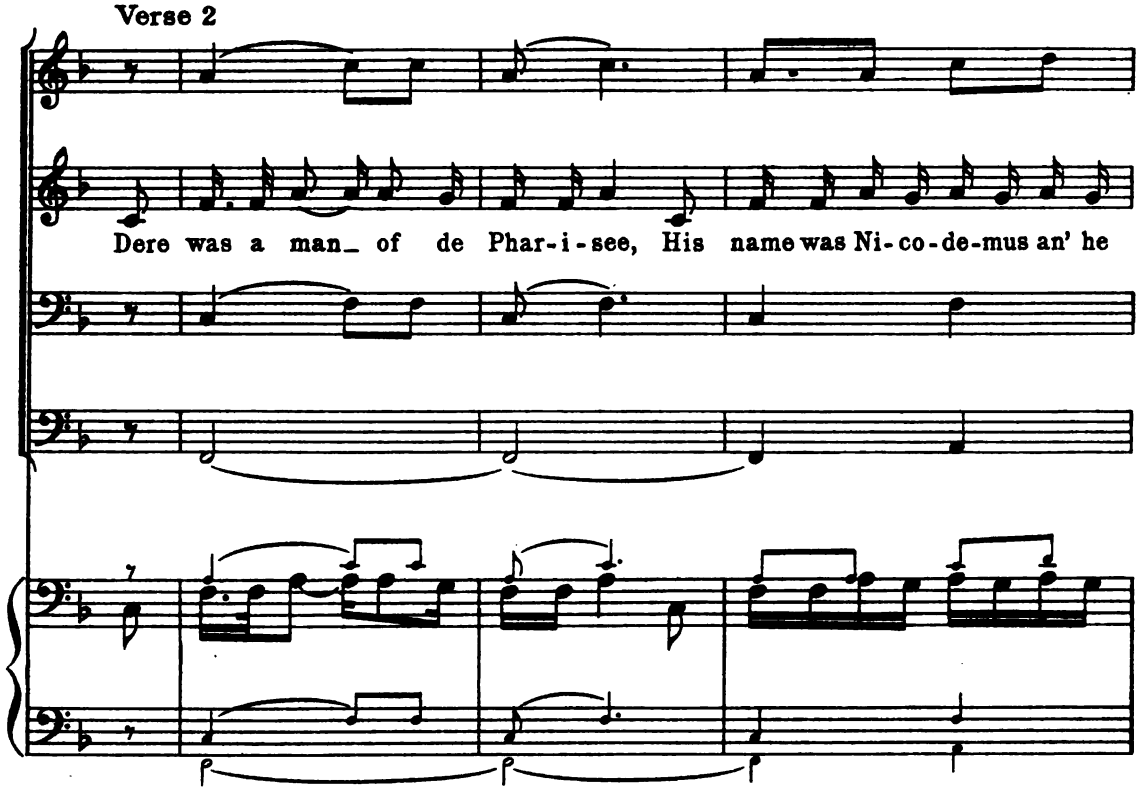
For

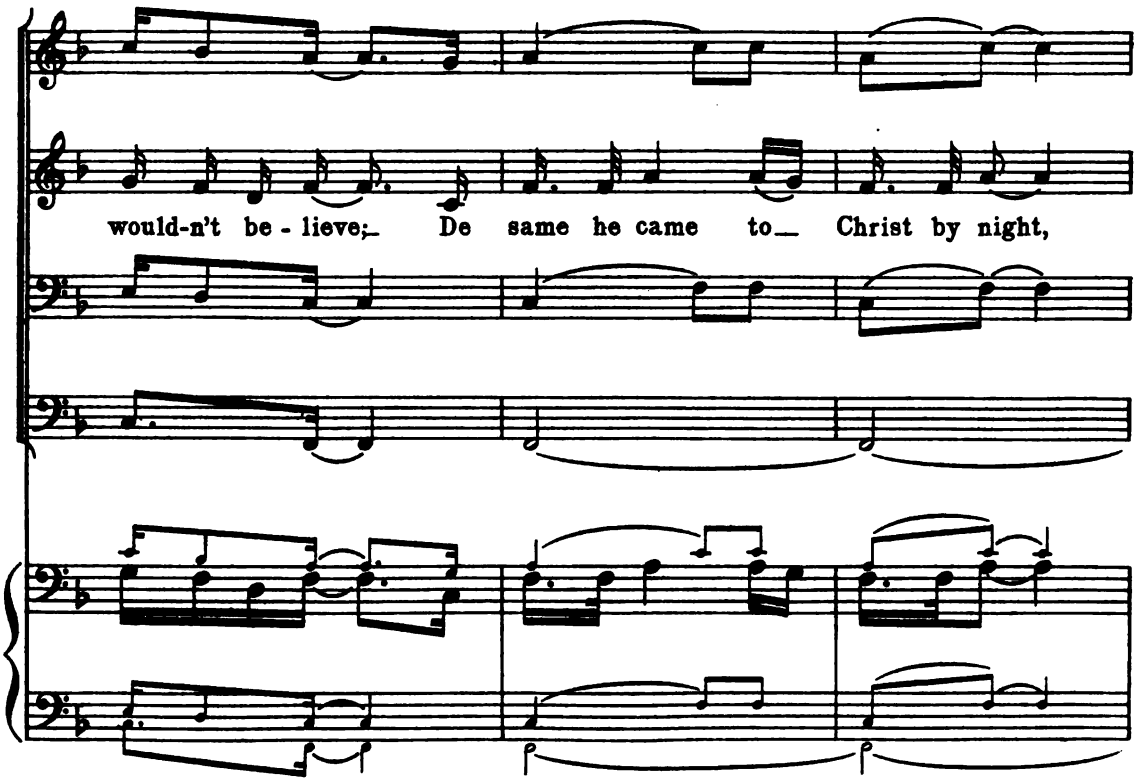
For

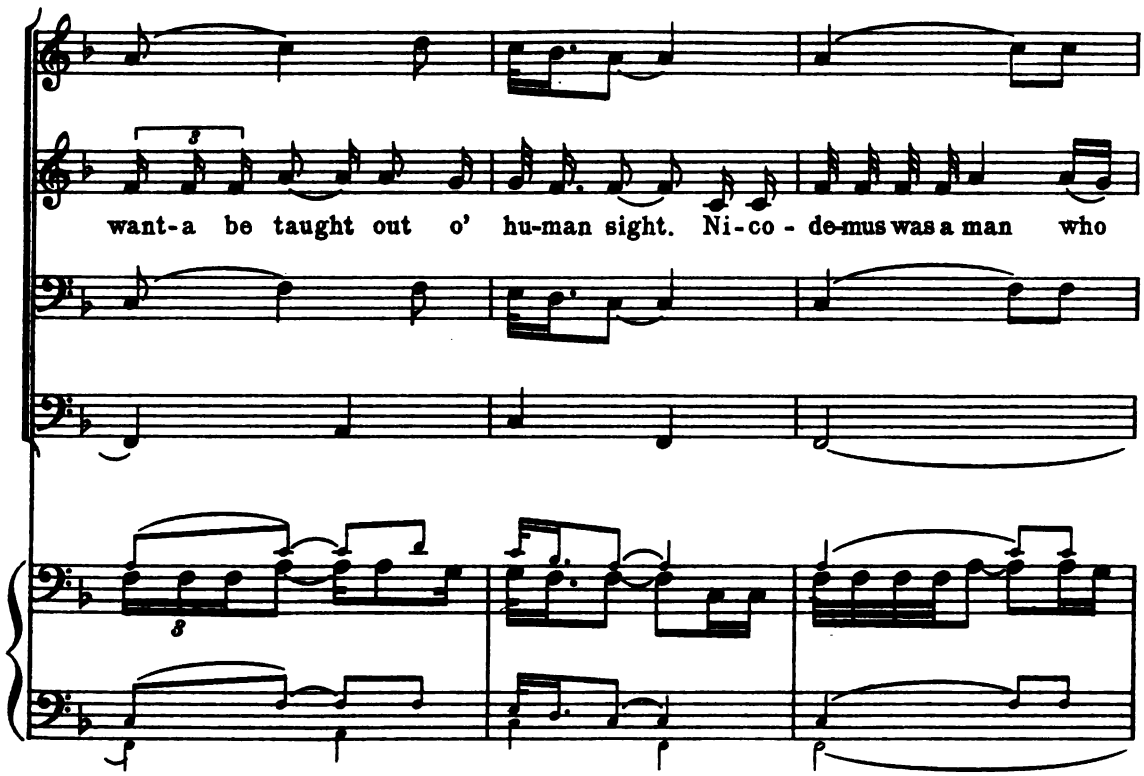
Chorus *D.C.*

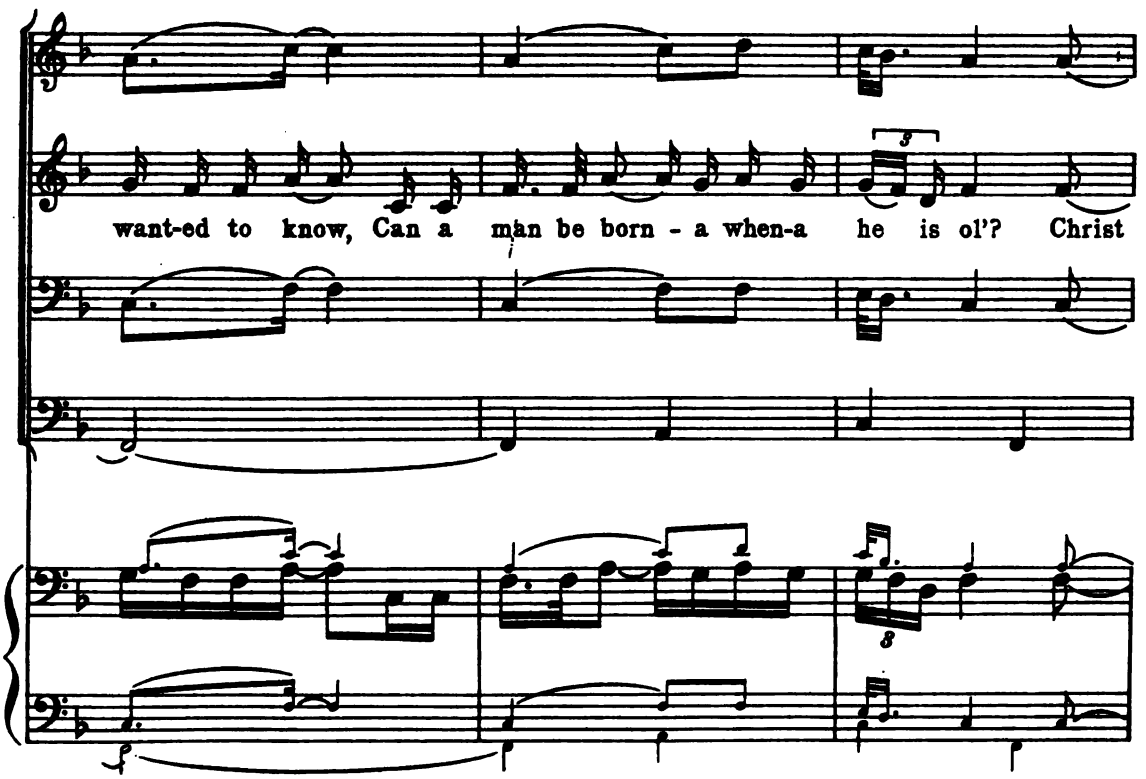
Ped. * Ped. *

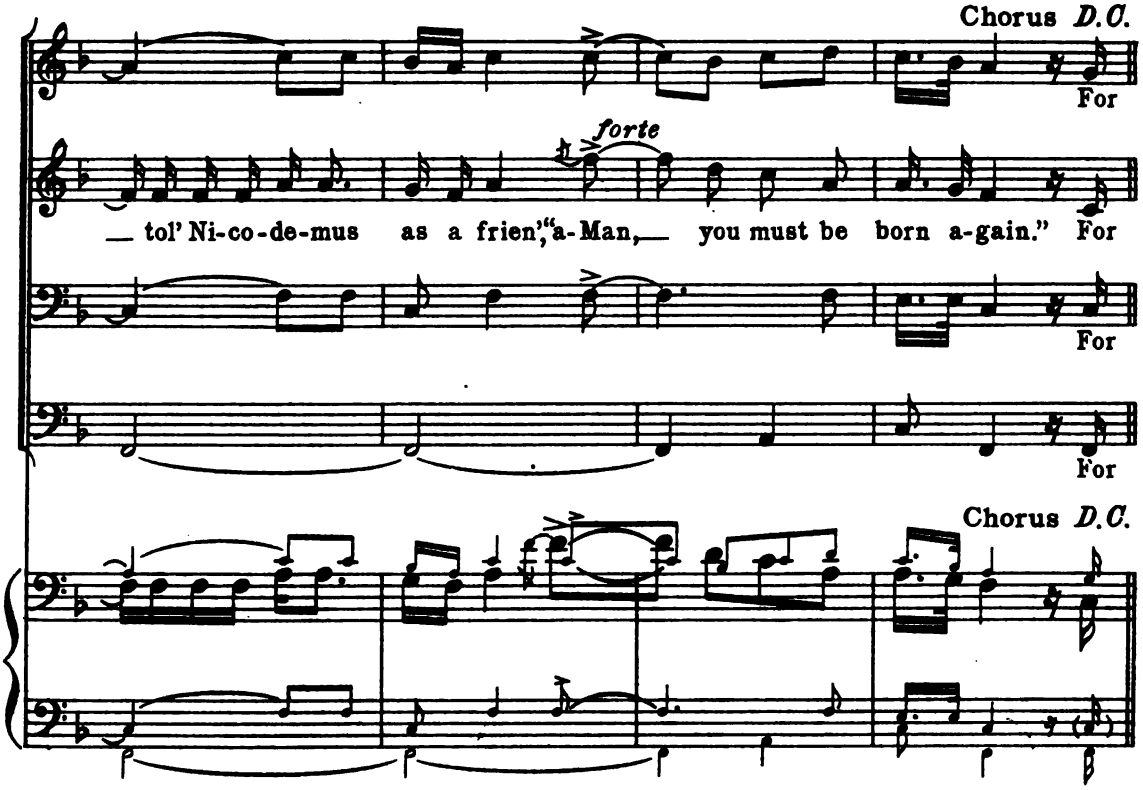
Verse 2

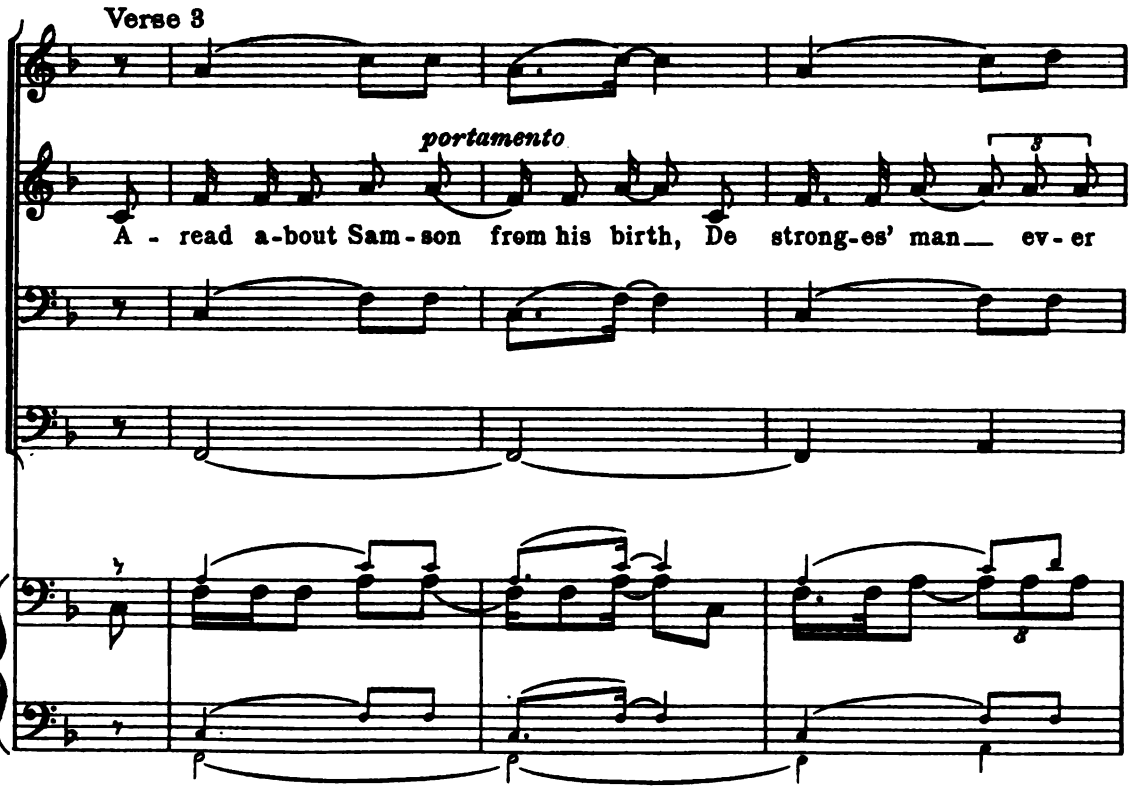


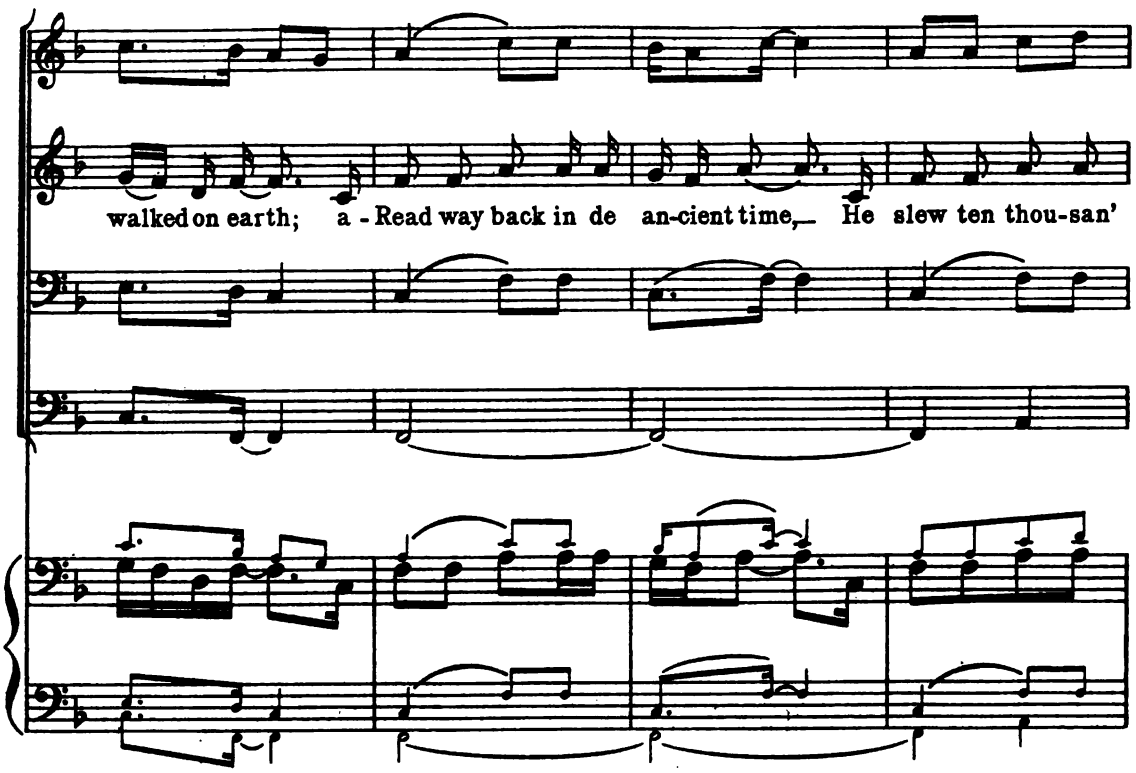


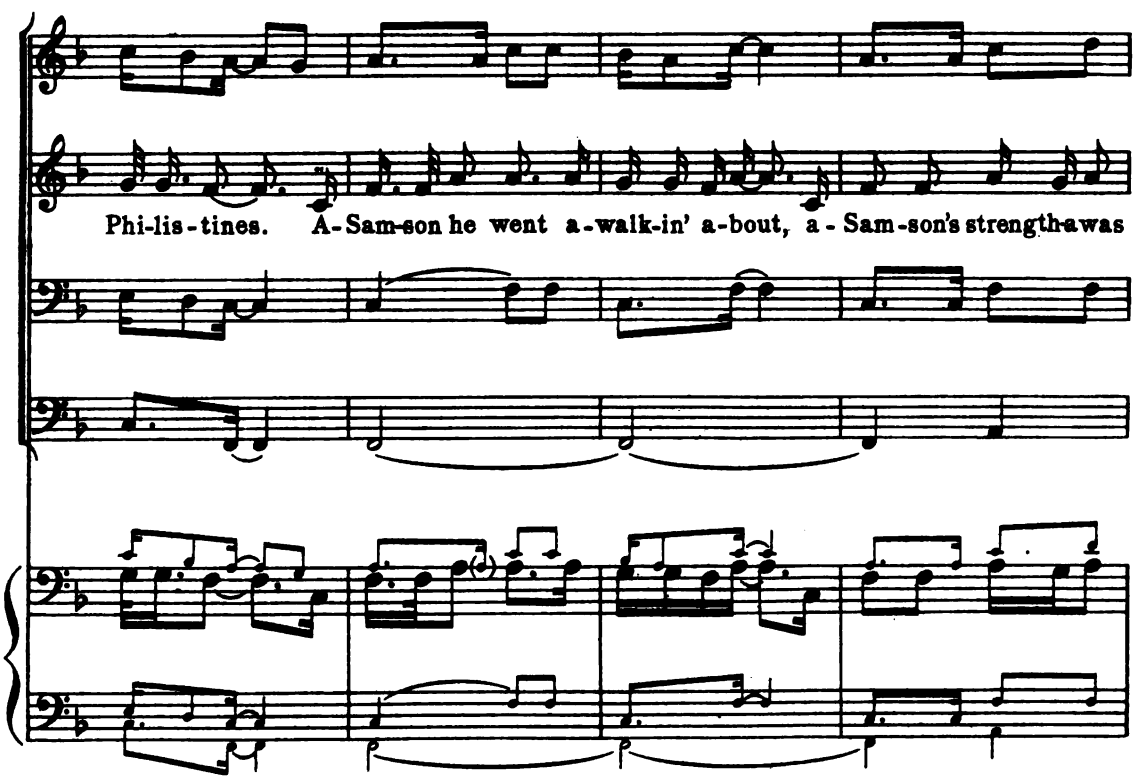


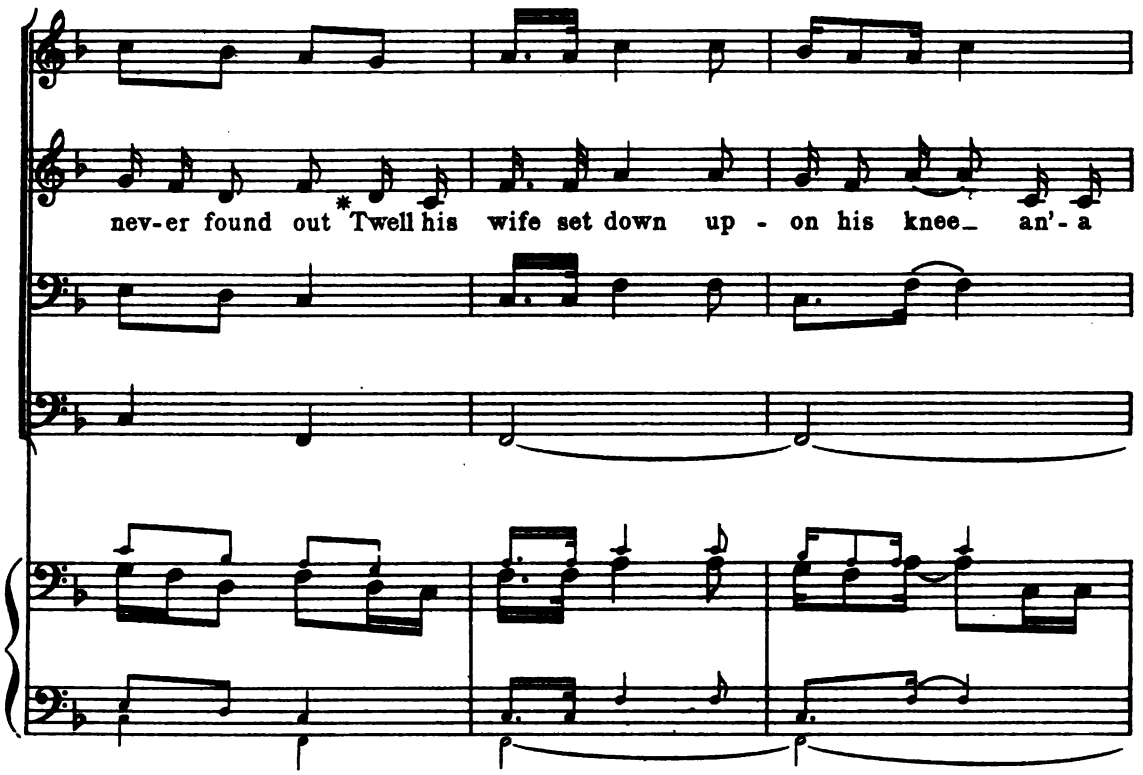


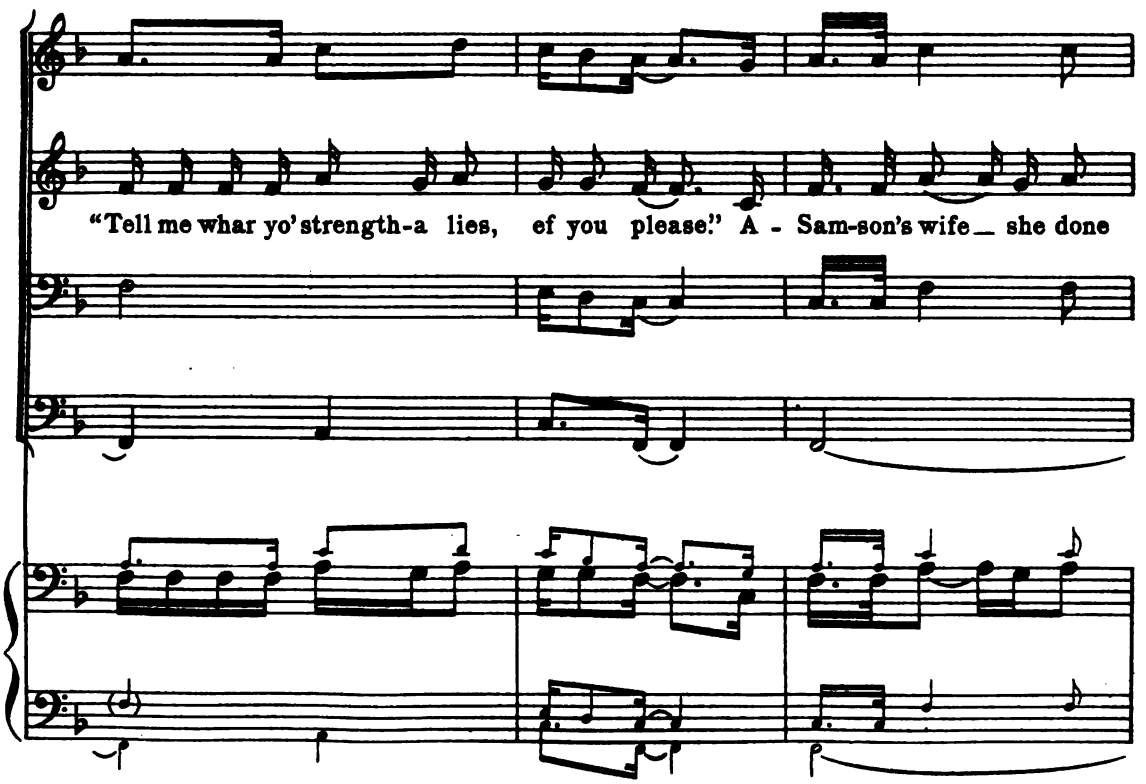




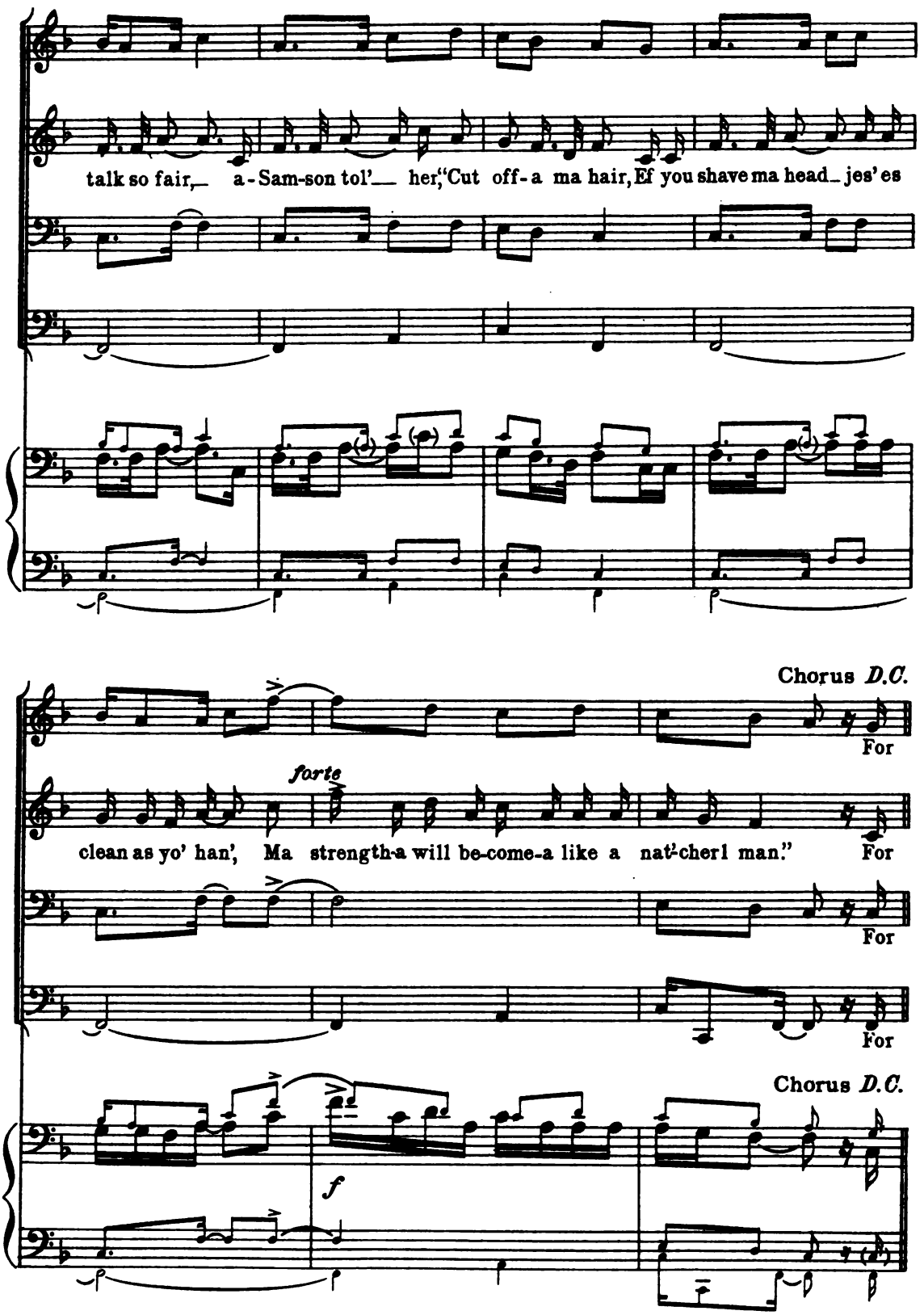








* "Twell"_ until or till.



At the last repetition, the chorus is sung *pp*, with a long pause at the end.