No. 6716

HAMPTON SERIES

NEGRO FOLK-SONGS

RECORDED BY

NATALIE CURTIS BURLIN

IN FOUR BOOKS

BOOK I

Price, each, 50 cents, net

New York · G. SCHIRMER · Boston

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FOREWORD

HAMPTON NORMAL AND AGRICULTURAL INSTITUTE, the pioneer industrial school for Negroes and Indians in America, was founded in 1868 by General Samuel Chapman Armstrong, who first conceived the idea that training in "labor for the sake of character" as well as for economic necessity, should be the initial step in the development of backward races. The school numbers about nine hundred students, drawn from all over the United States, while thousands of graduates have spread the Hampton spirit of service throughout the country and even far across the seas; for a few West Indians, Filipinos, Chinese, Japanese and Africans have also profited by Hampton's training and have gone back to their people to teach and lead them. Hampton believes in the good in every race; worthy traits are studied and developed; the folk-lore of Negroes and Indians is preserved and encouraged; and the singing of racial music is a part of the life of the school.

These notations of Negro folk-songs are faithful efforts to place on paper an exact record of the old traditional plantation songs *as sung by Negroes*. The harmonies are the Negroes' own. I have added nothing and I have striven to omit nothing. Every note in every voice was written down as sung by groups of Negroes, utterly untaught musically, who harmonized the old melodies as they sang, simply because it was natural for them to do so. The Negroes possess an intuitive gift for part-singing, which is an African inheritance. The music of most primitive or savage peoples usually consists in rhythm and melody only. But the native of Africa has a rudimentary harmonic sense, distinctly manifested in some of the African folk-songs that I have studied and recorded.[1] This instinct, transplanted to America and influenced by European music, has flowered into the truly extraordinary harmonic talent found in the singing of even the most ignorant Negroes of our Southern States. It seemed to me an obvious artistic duty to set down these intuitive harmonies and to note, in so far as possible, the emotional and dynamic qualities of Negro singing, as well as the forceful, yet subtle rhythmic peculiarities of the music.

No two groups of Negroes harmonize a song in the same way. These records are therefore musical photographs of particular groups, not composite pictures. The singing of plantation songs at Hampton is spontaneous and natural. No one teaches Negro songs. In one group of boys that sang for me, the tenor was learning to be a bricklayer and came to our meetings still grimed with toil; another was studying to teach school in a rural district; a third had learned the tinsmith's trade, and a fourth was ploughing the fields. These young men simply met and sang, each making up his own part and combining with the others till all together they produced a harmony that pleased them. In a general way, certain rudimentary harmonies for the old

[1] For a fuller exposition of the whole subject of Negro Song, see Foreword to Book II of this Series.

melodies have been more or less traditional at Hampton throughout the fifty years of the life of the school; yet the voice-progressions and even the versions of the melodies are strikingly individual with different singers. All around the grounds at Hampton the visitor comes across little groups of students singing together under the trees, or humming harmonies to one anothers' songs as they go to their work at the shops or in the fields. Music is literally "in the air." When I asked a newcomer from a remote district what part he sang in the "Spirituals" chanted by the whole school in Chapel on Sunday evenings, he answered naïvely: "O, sometimes I sings sopranner, an' sometimes I sings bay-uss; all depen's on de lay o' de song an' on how I feels." The enormous chorus of nine hundred Negro voices singing by nature, not by training; by ear and heart, and not by note; in perfect pitch, without accompaniment; each singer, no matter where he sits, taking any part he chooses in the harmonies of the whole—this chorus of folk-singers is among the most wonderful products of the United States!

Through leaving unspoiled this fresh, intuitive song-impulse in the Negro, and through cherishing the old music in its original purity and simplicity, Hampton has glorified the song of the slave as it has dignified the manual labor of the freedman, and is preserving in living form that spontaneous musical utterance which is the Negro's priceless contribution to the art of America.

Negro dialect is used in these notations, for to sing these typical Negro songs in words from which have been expunged the racial and picturesque quality seems as colorless, inartistic and unnatural as to sing Scotch or Irish ballads in anything but the vernacular, or German and French folk-songs in other than their own quaint and simple verse.

In trying to sing Negro dialect, white people should bear in mind that it is primarily a *legato* form of speech. The African languages of Bantu stock (from which great linguistic family came, probably, most of our American Negroes) are soft and musical in spite of the "clicks" in some of them; so that the transplanted Negro instinctively modified harsher sounds in English, sliding words together and leaving out whole syllables. "*Th*" being a difficult sound for most people not born to it, becomes "*D*" to the black man, but the *vowels* that follow should be pronounced as the white man pronounces them. For instance, "*the*," commonly spoken "*thuh*," is called by the Negro "*duh*" or "*d'*," not "*dee*." This should especially be borne in mind by white singers. For the sake of clarity I have adhered to the customary methods of dialect spelling except in a few cases where this seemed inadequate. To give to the verses the rhythm as sung, I have stressed the syllables accented by the music.

In singing four-part harmonies for male voices, the Hampton singers divide as follows: tenor (usually a very high voice); "lead" (or leader—who carries the melody); baritone, and bass. The Negroes say that in form their old songs usually consist in what they call "Chorus and Verses." The "Chorus," a melodic refrain sung by all, opens the song; then follows a verse sung as a solo, in free recitative; the chorus is repeated; then another verse; chorus again;—and so on until the chorus, sung for the last time, ends the song.

These songs, now traditional, were originally extemporaneous. They sprang into life as the expression of an emotion, of an experience, of a hope. The verses were made up as the occasion called for them—and a song was

born.[1] As the songs passed from singer to singer and from one locality to another, they took on variants in words and melody; even to-day, two singers rarely sing a song in exactly the same way.

Like his African ancestors and in common with most simple people who live close to nature, the Negro sings at all times—at work, at play and at prayer. Into the "Spirituals," the prayer-songs of the days of slavery, was poured the aspiration of a race in bondage whose religion, primitive and intense, was their whole hope, sustenance and comfort, and the realm wherein the soul, at least, soared free. At stolen meetings in woods or in valleys, at secret gatherings on the plantations, the Negroes found outlet for their sorrows, their longings and their religious ecstasies. No one can hear these songs unmoved. The childlike simplicity of the verse in "Couldn't hear nobody pray"[2] and "Ev'ry time I feel de Spirit," but throws into sharper relief the touching, poignant poetry—a poetry born of hearts that sang beneath heavy burdens, and of a faith as radiant and certain as the sunrise. The Negro "Spirituals" rank with the great folk-music of the world, and are among the loveliest of chanted prayers.

Only after long familiarity with this music and innumerable hearings of the songs have I dared, with the additional aid of a phonograph, to set my notations on paper. This work of record—a reverent and dedicated love-labor—is pursued under the auspices of Hampton Institute. May it become part of Hampton's mission of friendship between the different races of the earth. For music is a common tongue which speaks directly to the heart of all mankind.

NOTE:—This collection of Negro Folk-Songs consists of four books, 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 other. Any slight repetition of facts with regard to Negro singing will, therefore, be understood.

NATALIE CURTIS BURLIN.

[1] The origin of the best-known old songs has been lovingly traced by John Wesley Work, A. M., President of Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee. His book, "Folk-Songs of the American Negro," is a fitting climax to the lifework of Fisk, which long ago sent out the "Jubilee Singers" with their offering of Negro songs. See alse "*Afro-American Folksongs*," by H. E. Krehbiel (G. Schirmer : New York).

[2] See Book II, this Series

ALL ROYALTIES FROM THE SALE OF THIS BOOK GO TO HAMPTON FOR THE BENEFIT OF NEGRO EDUCATION.

CONTENTS

O RIDE ON, JESUS

"O Ride on, Jesus,
Ride on, conquerin' King!"

The recording of this song is dedicated to the memory of
GENERAL SAMUEL CHAPMAN ARMSTRONG,
Founder of Hampton Institute

SHORTLY after the Civil War, when the South was flooded with the pitiful and penniless freedmen, and when the increasing Westward migration of white settlers had meant the clash of troops with the red men and the bringing of Indian prisoners to Florida, it was General Armstrong who took the first practical steps toward answering the question of what was to be done with the two dark-skinned races, both of them ignorant and helpless—ex-slaves, and Government "wards." With prophetic insight, Armstrong saw that Negroes and Indians must first of all be taught to stand on their own feet, and to do this they must learn how to work, and how to support themselves by work. To him the thing to be done was plain: so to train selected youth of the two races that they could become leaders of their people.

To-day, when manual and industrial training as a part of general education is no longer an experiment, it is difficult to realize that at the time General Armstrong advocated it, the idea was without successful precedent in the United States. Armstrong's principles, the inter-training of "hand, head and heart," the teaching of "respect for labor," the correlation of study in the classrooms with farming, home-making and trades—these were wholly new theories of education, and they were greeted with skepticism and with wide predictions of failure. That Armstrong succeeded in holding high the torch of this illuminative idea in the early dark days of opposition was due not alone to the intense conviction that burned in his own soul; that idea was bound to triumph because of its truth and expediency and because it was based on the sound principle of what Armstrong called "sanctified common-sense." The real victory of Hampton is the fitting of men and women for life, mentally and morally as well as industrially. And as the visitor to the school watches the noontide daily drill of the students on the wide lawns that slope to the water's edge, as he listens to the band played by boys black and copper-colored, and sees the stars and stripes flutter in the breeze upborne by loyal black hands, he is moved with a sense of reverence for the heroic genius of Armstrong; for these stalwart ranks of dark-skinned, self-respecting American manhood and womanhood that march past with ringing step and steady eyes are those who have "come up out of deep darkness and wrong," the children of slaves and so-called savages, transformed in a generation.

O RIDE ON, JESUS

Recorded from the singing of

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

The version here recorded of this old song was brought to Hampton from St. Helena's Island, South Carolina, where an offshoot of the "Hampton Spirit" is practically demonstrated in the Penn Industrial School, situated in the heart of a black rural population and conducted by two devoted Hampton workers, Miss Rossa B. Cooley, principal, and Miss Grace Bigelow House, vice-principal. The Negroes on this Island are still primitive and their songs are very old. This one has a triumphant stride, and the climax of the verse "Ride on, conquerin' King!" when fairly shouted by a great Negro chorus, is as stirring as any "Hosanna in the highest." The whole song rings with the joy of certain salvation. The sinner on the "mourners' bench" has "come through": he has "bin baptize," and to-morrow he will be in "Gali*lee*," whither he is already bound in spirit, shouting messages as he goes, to tell mother, father, sister, brother, preacher, deacon and all others, to meet him there. Each verse ends with the refrain that closes so many of the old songs—"Want t' go t' Hebb'n in de mo'nin'."

In "Old Plantation Hymns"[1] Rev. W. E. Barton says that "conspicuous among the religious songs of the colored people, as of the white people of the Cumberland Mountains, is the large group of 'Family Songs' in which the chief or only variation in the successive stanzas is the substitution of 'father,' 'mother,' or other relative in order." These songs, he tells us, are usually sung at the opening of religious services, and one can well see how, through their personal allusions, they would "warm" a "meet'n'." In the dignity of its melody this simple spiritual is a superb bit of music, while the last verse contains the sudden gleam of imagery that so often proclaims the ingenuous Negro folk-singer a true poet.

That many people in the North have had the opportunity to know the Negroes through their songs is due to the fact that, like Fisk University, which gave to the world the original Jubilee Singers, Hampton, too, sends her students during vacation far over the country to sing the old songs wherever meetings are held in behalf of the school; for regular campaigns to raise money for Negro education are organized and participated in by the faculty and the students of Hampton.[2] The recording of this song is taken from the singing of a self-organized quartet of Hampton boys, who had formed for Hampton meetings in the North during the summer of 1915. Each afternoon at dod hours taken from their work in shop, field or class, they came to

NOTE:—I printed the *verses* of this song with those of "God's a-gwine to move all de troubles away" (see Book II, this Series), in *Poetry*, December, 1917, accompanied by a little description.

[1] "Old Plantation Hymns." William E. Barton, D. D. Lamson Wolffe & Co., 1899.

[2] See "Negro Folk songs," Book II, this Series.

practice in a vacant room. The bricklayer was flecked with lime and mortar, the overalls of the tinsmith were covered with machine oil, but the boys flung themselves into their chairs and began to sing as unconcernedly as though they were simply resting from labor. They hummed over the song to be practiced, improvised their own harmonies, tried them out and fitted their parts together while I sat with pencil and paper astounded at the untaught facility and the unfaltering harmonic instinct of these natural singers, only one of whom had even a rudimentary knowledge of musical notation. They delighted in my task of trying to record their voices and they were always willing to repeat a phrase, often with much jolly laughter. It was curiously difficult, however, for tenor, baritone or bass to sing his part alone, because each was conscious of his own voice only as a bit of the whole. A "*part*" was not conceived as a separate thing, and whenever I tried to get one voice by itself, the "Lead," who carried the melody, was usually asked to make things easy by humming at the same time.

The making of phonographic records was a source of great amusement and interest to us all, and here too, in order to get one part separately recorded, the other three of the quartet would stand near the boy who was singing into the horn and hum their parts along with him. It is perhaps this inherent losing of self in a song that gives to primitive Negro part-singing such amazing unity—emotional, as well as musical.

For comparison, I have recorded a slightly different harmonic version as sung by the quartet known at Hampton as the "Big Quartet"— a group of four older men (Tynes, Crawley, Phillips and Wainwright), graduates of the school, who have been "singing for Hampton" for many years. I give the two versions as an interesting proof of the spontaneity of Negro song; for to the Negro, singing is a kind of melodious musing aloud, so that unconsciously it is a form of direct and individual expression. The Big Quartet was awarded a gold medal when the men sang at the Educational Department of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco. On hearing them, Percy Grainger exclaimed: "To think that, having toured all Europe, I should find the most perfect four-part singing of the world among these American Negroes!"

O RIDE ON,[1] JESUS

O Ride on, Jesus,
Ride on, Jesus,
Ride on, conquerin' King!
I want t' go t' Hebb'n in de mo'n'in'.

Ef yo' see my Mother'
O yes!
Jes' tell her fo' me,
O yes!
For t' meet me t'-morrow in Galilee':
Want t' go t' Hebb'n in de mo'n'in'.

[1] The O on the word "on" is pronounced very long in Negro dialect, thus, "ōn" ("ohn").

O Ride on, Jesus,
Ride on, Jesus,
Ride on, conquerin' King!
I want t' go t' Hebb'n in de mo'n'in'.

Ef you see my Father',[1]
O yes!
Jes' tell him fo' me
O yes!
For t' meet me t'-morrow in Galilee':
Want t' go t' Hebb'n in de mo'n'in'.

O Ride on, Jesus,
Ride on, Jesus,
Ride on, conquerin' King!
I want t' go t' Hebb'n in de mo'n'in'.

Ef yo' see John de Baptis",
O yes!
Jes' tell him fo' me,
O yes!
Dat I's been to de ribber and I's been baptize":
Want t' go t' Hebb'n in de mo'n'in'.

O Ride on, Jesus,
Ride on, Jesus,
Ride on, conquerin' King!
I want t' go t' Hebb'n in de mo'n'in'.

Ef yo' want t' go t' Hebb'n',
O yes!
I'll-a tell yo' how,
O yes!
Jes' keep yo' han's on de gospel plow:
Want t' go t' Hebb'n in de mo'n'in'.

O Ride on, Jesus,
Ride on, Jesus,
Ride on, conquerin' King!
I want t' go t' Hebb'n in de mo'n'in'.

[1] Other verses follow identical with these first two except for the substitution of the words "Sister" and "Brother" for "Mother" and "Father." This song may also be sung in broad dialect: "Ma Mudder," "Fader," "Brudder," etc.

G. S. 8vo Choruses
No 6716

I

O, ride on,* Jesus!

Price
50 cents, net

Recorded
and transcribed by
Natalie Curtis Burlin

Very rhythmically; slow and measured
With sweep and majesty

Chorus

Tenor
"Lead"
Baritone
Bass

p
mf With natural, full voice
Ride on, Je - sus,
O, ride on, Je - sus, ride on, Je - sus,
Ride on, Je - sus,
Ride on, Je - sus,

Very rhythmically; slow and measured (♩ = 72)
With sweep and majesty

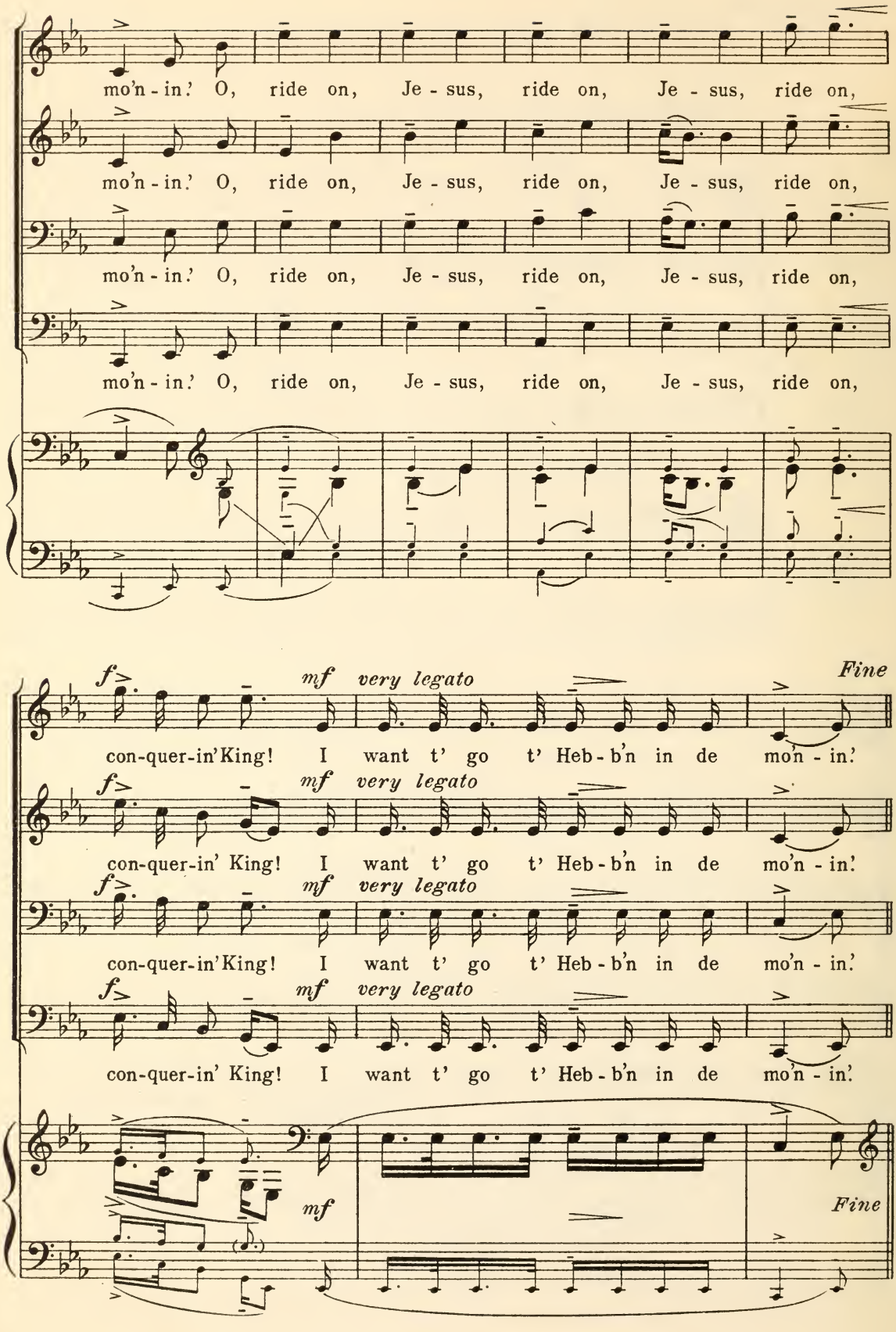
Piano
(only for rehearsal)

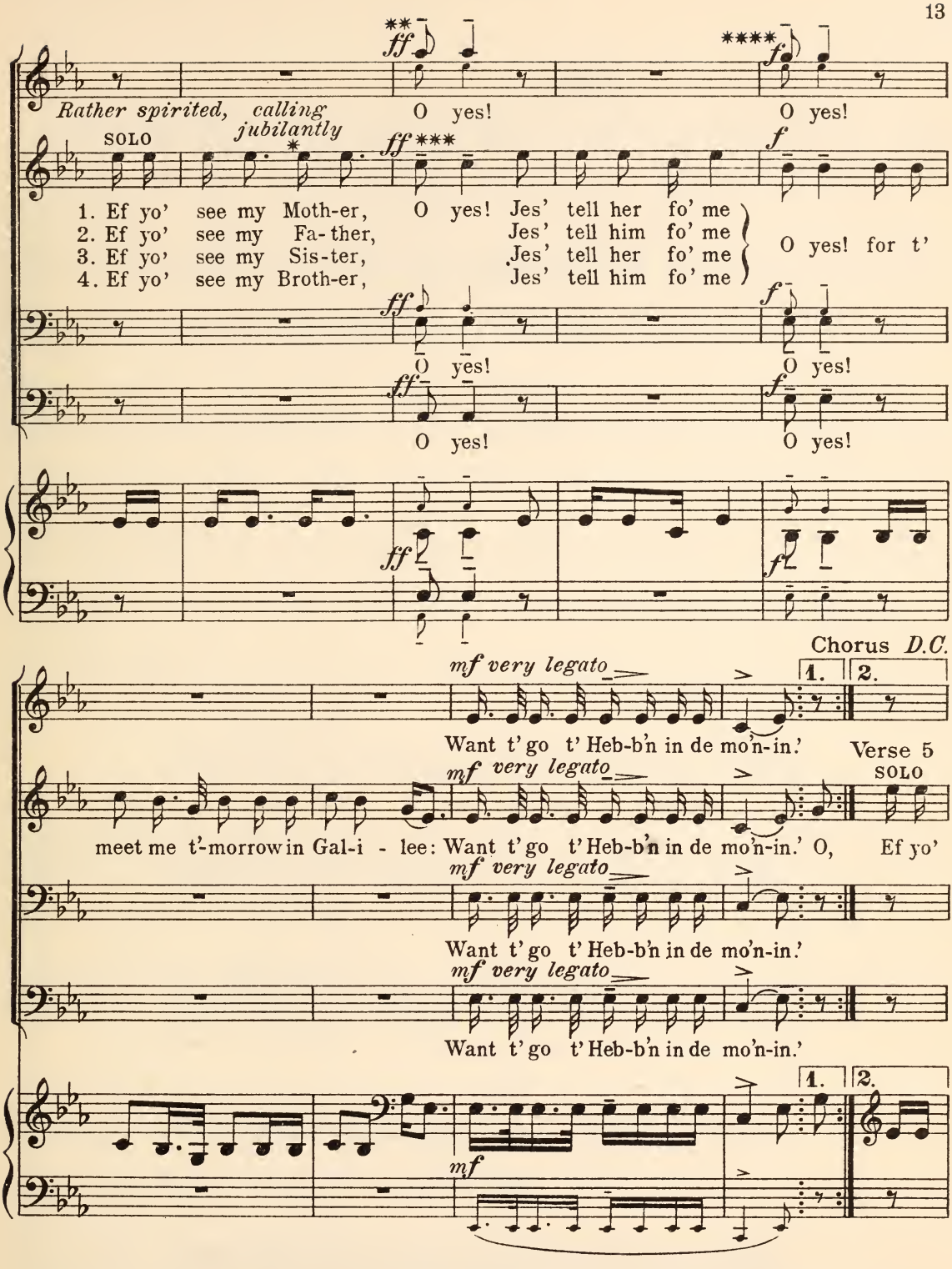
p

f *mf* *very legato*
ride on, con-quer-in' King! I want t' go t' Heb - b'n in de
ride on, con-quer-in' King! I want t' go t' Heb - b'n in de
ride on, con-quer-in' King! I want t' go t' Heb - b'n in de
ride on, con-quer-in' King! I want t' go t' Heb - b'n in de

f *mf*

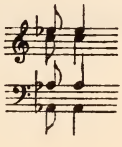
* The *o* in the word "on" is pronounced very long in Negro dialect, *"ohn."*
** The melody is carried in the voice of the "Lead" (or "Leader"), printed in the piano-part in large type.
*** Very deep Negro voices take the low octave; this part may also be sung above with the baritone.


mo'n - in.' O, ride on, Je - sus, ride on, Je - sus, ride on,
mo'n - in.' O, ride on, Je - sus, ride on, Je - sus, ride on,
mo'n - in.' O, ride on, Je - sus, ride on, Je - sus, ride on,
mo'n - in.' O, ride on, Je - sus, ride on, Je - sus, ride on,
f
mf very legato
Fine
con-quer-in'King! I want t' go t' Heb - b'n in de mo'n - in.'
con-quer-in' King! I want t' go t' Heb - b'n in de mo'n - in.'
con-quer-in'King! I want t' go t' Heb - b'n in de mo'n - in.'
con-quer-in' King! I want t' go t' Heb - b'n in de mo'n - in.'
mf
Fine



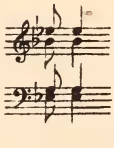
* May also be sung in broad dialect: "Mudder, Fader, Brudder."

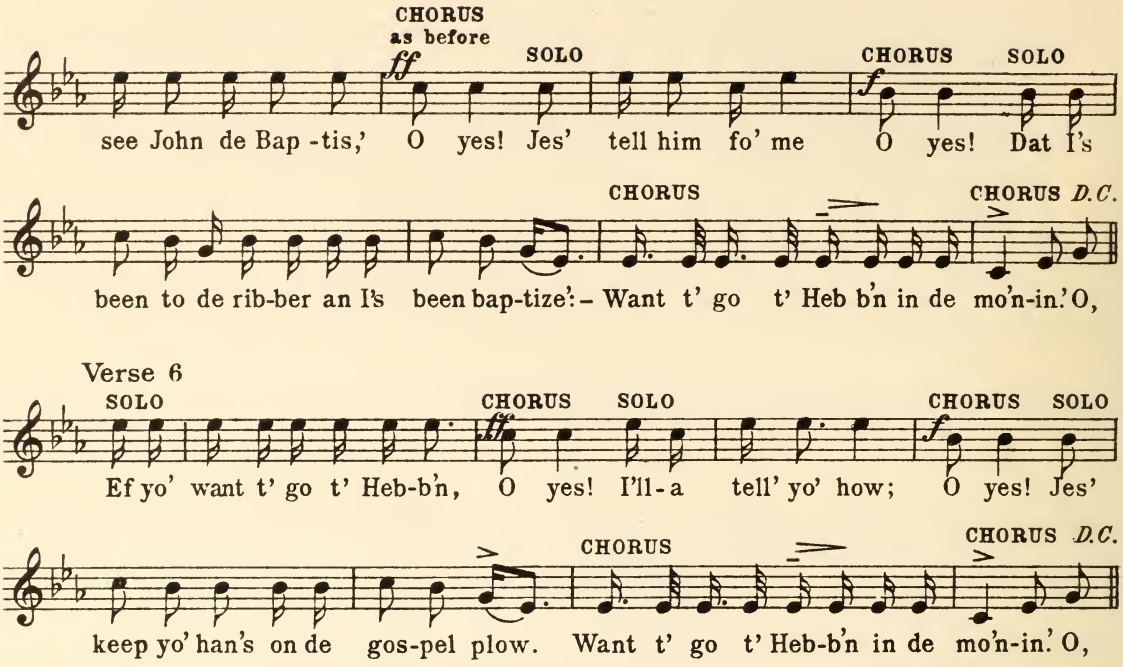
** May also be harmonized thus:



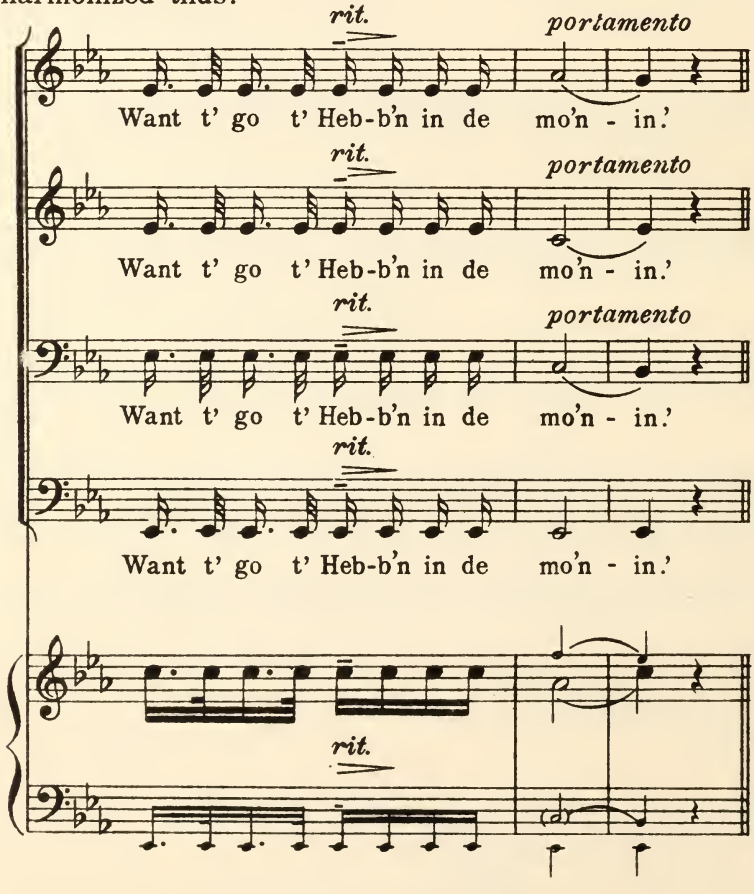
*** If sung by chorus, instead of quartet, the solo voice does *not* sing: "O yes!"

**** May also be harmonized thus:

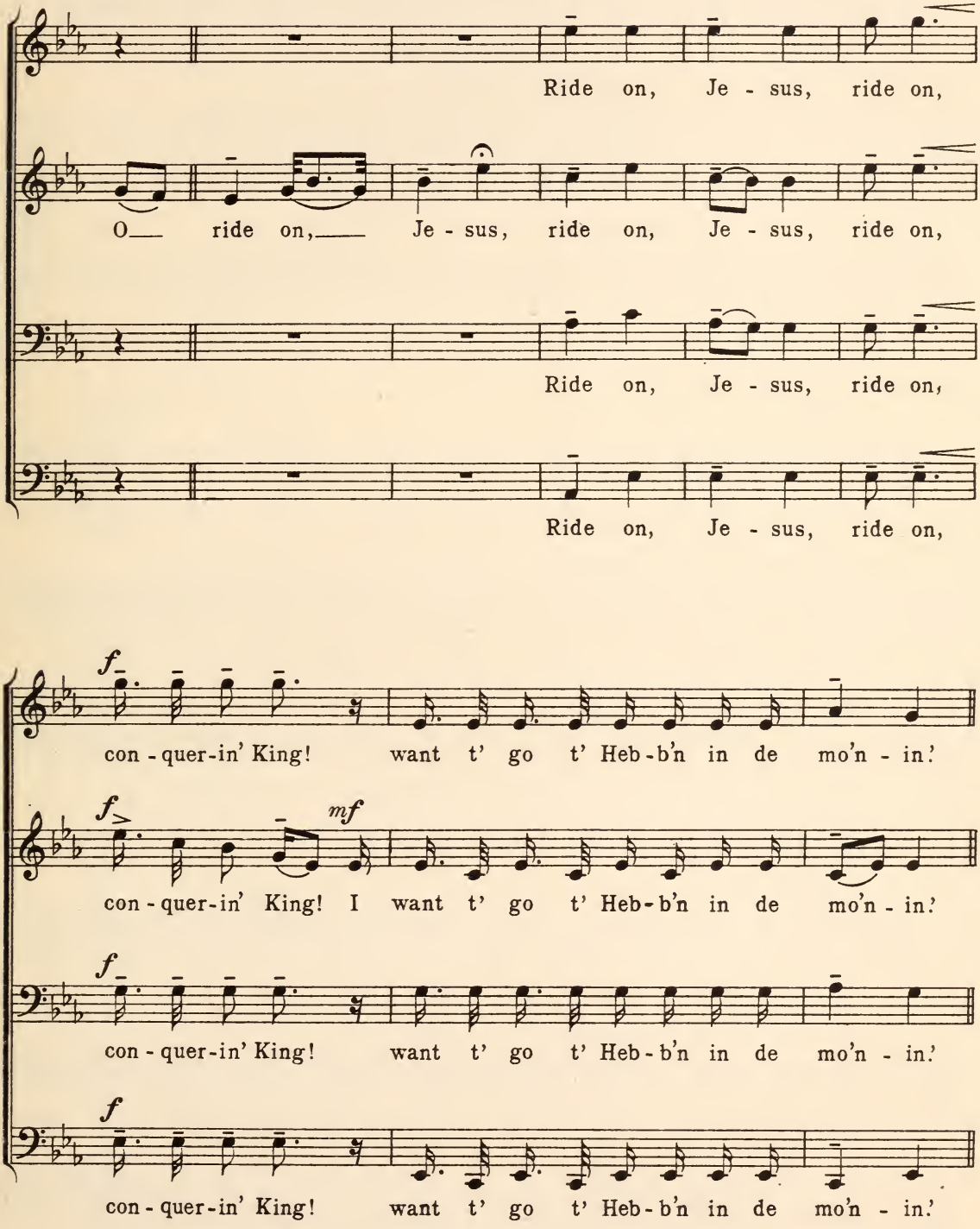




Sometimes, after the last chorus, at the very end of the song, the final notes may be suddenly harmonized thus:

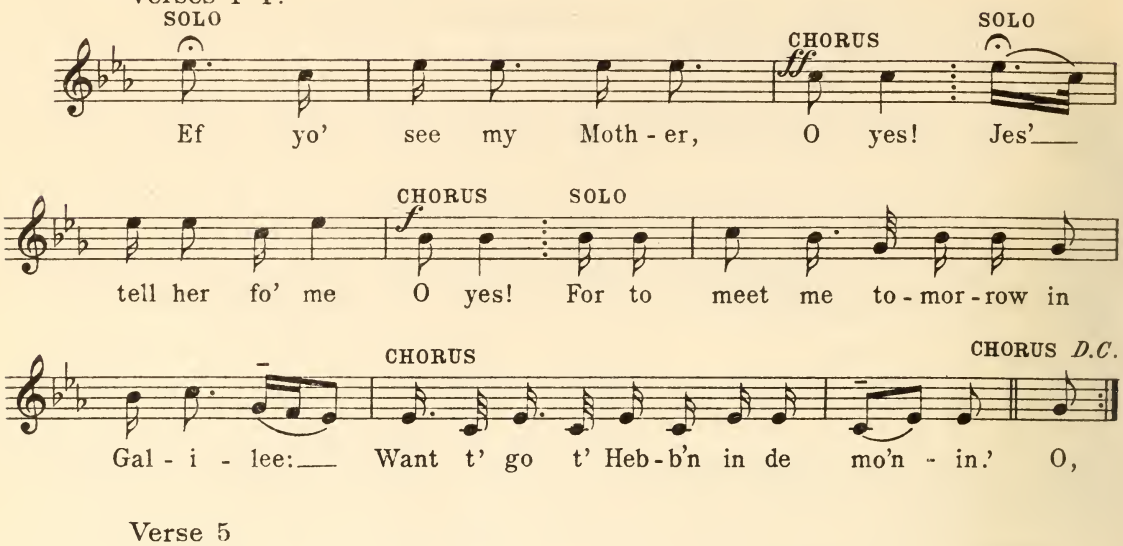


The refrain is sung as follows by the Hampton "Big Quartet" (Messrs. Tynes, Crawley, Avery and Wainwright):

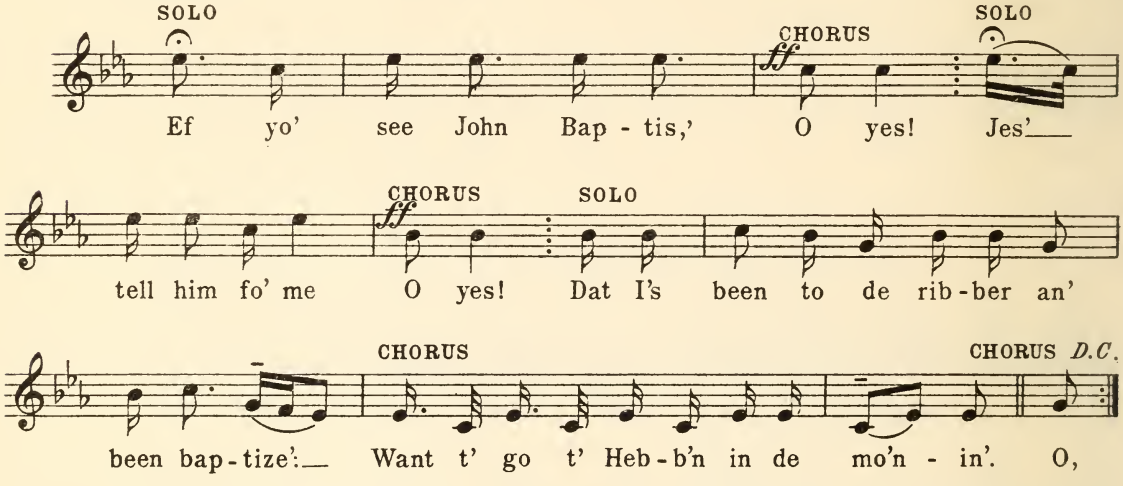


The verses are sung as follows by Tynes, who usually sings Tenor instead of "lead," but whose fluent melodic talent makes his versions worthy of record.

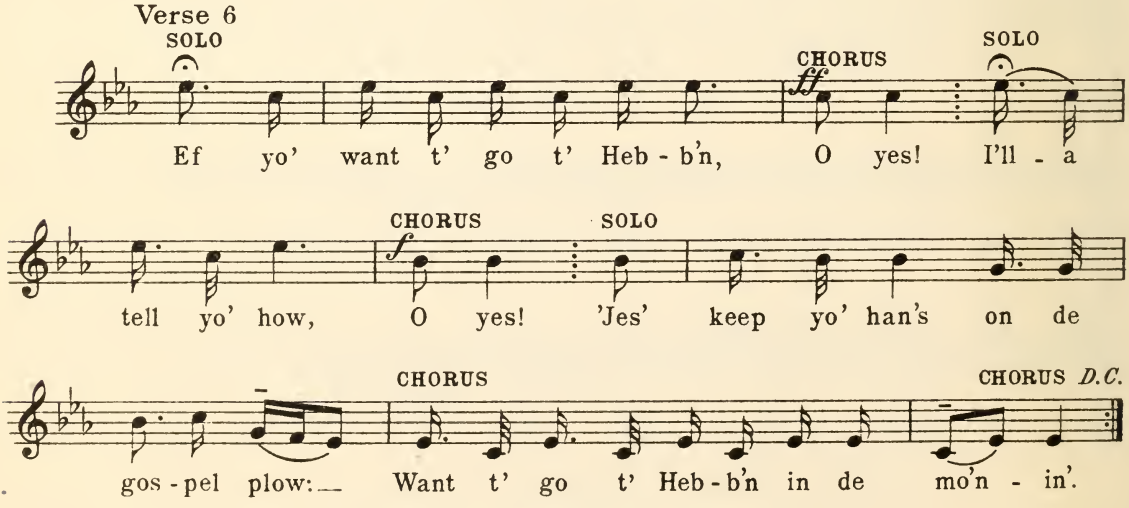
Verses 1-4.



Verse 5



Verse 6



GO DOWN, MOSES

"Go down, Moses,
Tell old Pharaoh
Let my people go!"

The recording of this song is dedicated to the memory of

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON

FOUNDER OF TUSKEGEE INSTITUTE, ALABAMA, WHERE COLORED STUDENTS ARE TAUGHT BY THE MORE ADVANCED OF THEIR OWN RACE AND WHERE LOVE OF THE LAND AND PRIDE IN ITS DEVELOPMENT LINK THE NEGRO WITH THE PROGRESS OF THE SOUTH.

MANY years ago a colored lad, ragged and worn, arrived at Hampton, having struggled thither on foot five hundred miles, sleeping in the open, begging rides from passing wagons and earning his food by labor on the way. He had no money nor could he meet all the qualifications for admission to the institute, but so earnest was his plea for an education and so convincing his eagerness to work, that the teacher, leaving the room, bade the waiting boy dust and put it in order. Immaculate cleanliness awaited the master when he returned. Into the simple task the boy had thrown his whole determination. His character had been tested, and Booker Washington was admitted.

His life became an embodiment of Armstrong's ringing motto: "Dare to do the impossible!" Who, indeed, could have foreseen that a dilapidated little church, which some thirty years ago barely housed thirty Negro students, could become through the consecrated effort and executive ability of one colored man the great Tuskegee Institute, comprising to-day over a hundred fine buildings covering many acres of ground, where a thousand and more pupils are annually taught.

Among the trustees of Tuskegee are some of the most important white men in the United States. Throughout the world Booker Washington became known as one of the greatest exponents of industrial education; high tributes here and abroad were awarded him and honorary degrees were conferred upon him by Harvard and Dartmouth colleges.

The sixteen thousand colored men and women who have been directly benefited by Tuskegee, and also the many members of the National Negro Business League founded by Washington—these bear vital testimony to the practical, constructive and adaptive genius of the author of "Up from Slavery."

Teacher in the highest sense, orator and patriot, Booker Washington was a prophet among his own people and one of the great leaders of mankind.

GO DOWN, MOSES

First Version

Recorded from the singing of

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

Second Version

From the singing of the "Big Quartet"
Messrs. Tynes, Crawley, Avery and Wainwright

THIS song is full of that quality of elemental drama that underlies primitive music born of profound emotion. It is one of the best known of the Spirituals and deserves to rank with the great songs of the world. The melody may be very old[1]: it sounds as though it might have sprung from the heart of ancient Africa; and so indelibly does it carve its outline on the memory that it could well outlive generations of men and be carried from land to land. Like that Negroid influence that had its part in the shaping of the culture of the Egyptians, the Semites and the earliest Greeks, this melody will live on, moving from race to race—one of the immortals in art.

The American-Negro verses, "Go Down, Moses," were born, of course, of slavery in this country. In the sorrows of Israel in Egypt, oppressed and in bondage, the Negro drew a natural poetic analogy to his own fate, and this song is not the only one that refers to the story of Moses.[2] Rarely does the slave dare to sing openly of slavery or of the hope for any other freedom than that promised by the release of death: through the allegory of the Bible, he tells of his firm faith for a like deliverance from the hand of the white Pharaoh.

The chorus at Hampton sings this spiritual with an immense body of sustained tone. All in unison, without accompaniment of any kind, nine hundred voices chant the command "Go Down, Moses," like a single voice, overwhelming in dignity and power. Perhaps because of the great weight of sound, the chorus has formed the tradition of dwelling on the last note in each of the first two bars with an almost awesome solemnity. At the end of the phrase, the sudden bursting into a triumphant major chord stirs the imagination. It comes like a rift of light, like a vision of the splendor and

[1] Though its origin is as yet untraced, John Wesley Work of Fisk University says that Hebrews have recognized in this Negro song a resemblance to an old Jewish Chant, "Cain and Abel," while Negroes, on their side, have identified the Hebrew song with their own "Go Down, Moses." This may be but a musical coincidence, or more probably, one of the many instances of how different peoples, influenced by analogous conditions (climatic or cultural), react artistically in similar ways to the stimulus of nature. Or, on the other hand, the incident described by Mr. Work may add emphasis to the statement in the Foreword to Book II of this series concerning the relation between Negro and Semitic cultures on the Dark Continent.

[2] See refrain: "I never intend to die in Egypt Land"; also the songs "Hammering Judgment" and "Bye and Bye" (Calhoun Plantation Songs: Emily Halowell) and "Turn back Pharaoh's Army," Fisk Collection, Jubilee Singers, etc., etc.

See also "Antebellum Sermon." Collected poems by Paul Lawrence Dunbar (Dodd, Mead & Co., N. Y.).

authority of Jehovah, and it heightens the emphasis of the final words, "Let my people go!" This chord effect is not used everywhere, and I have yet to ascertain whether it is peculiar to Hampton or if it may also be heard in other parts of the South. The free declamation of the verses is, of course, variously rendered. Among Southern Negroes—true folk-singers—*I have never heard it in anything but syncopated form.*

The "Big Quartet" gives the opening bars in strict time, as I have indicated in the second recording, and this is, of course, the more common rendering everywhere. But some of the Hampton Quartets, taking their inspiration from the great chorus, sing the refrain with the same long-drawn, almost ritualistic cadences, and I have written this version in detail because in its dramatic breadth it exemplifies the unconscious way in which musical phrases grow and expand among folk-singers. As the song is well known, the comparison of different versions, indigenously Negro, can but enrich the study of Negro primitive art.

GO DOWN, MOSES[1]

Go down, Moses',
'Way down Egyp''[1] *Lan',*
Tell ol' Pharaoh'[1]
Le' ma people' go!

When Isr'el was in Egyp' Lan'
Le' ma people' go!
Oppress' so hard dey could not stan'
Le' ma people' go!

Go down, Moses',
'Way down Egyp'' Lan',
Tell ol' Pharaoh'
Le' ma people' go!

When dey had reached de odder shore
Le' ma people' go!
Dey sang a song of triumph o'er
Le' ma people' go!

Go down, Moses',
'Way down Egyp'' Lan',
Tell ol' Pharaoh'
Le' ma people' go.

[1] Pronounced "Mosis," "Ejup," and sometimes "Pharioh."

A fuller version of the words of this song is given in an older Hampton collection by Thomas P. Fenner, as follows:[1]

When Israel was in Egypt's land,
Let my people go;
Oppressed so hard they could not stand,
Let my people go.

Chorus

Go down, Moses,
'Way down in Egypt's land;
Tell ole Pharaoh,
Let my people go.

Thus saith the Lord, bold Moses said,
Let my people go;
If not I'll smite your first-born dead,
Let my people go.
(*Chorus*)

No more shall they in bondage toil,
Let my people go;
Let them come out with Egypt's spoil,
Let my people go.
(*Chorus*)

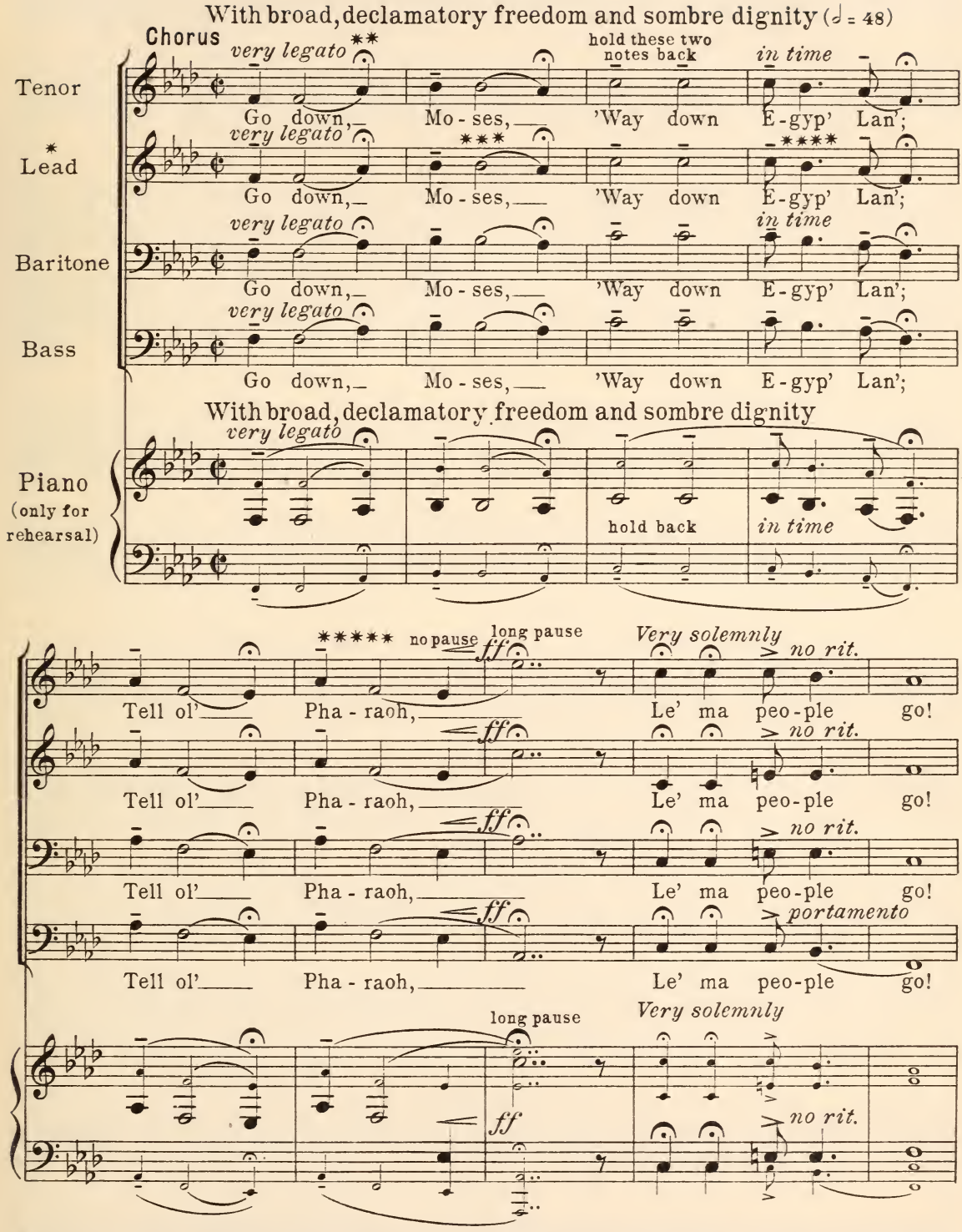
The Lord told Moses what to do,
Let my people go;
To lead the children of Israel thro',
Let my people go.
(*Chorus*)

When they had reached the other shore,
Let my people go;
They sang a song of triumph o'er,
Let my people go.
(*Chorus*)

[1] See "Religious Folk-songs of the Negro" (The Hampton Institute Press, Hampton, Virginia).

A book of "Jubilee and Plantation Songs" published by Oliver Ditson in 1887, and "Jubilee Songs" published by Biglow & Main, N. Y., offer as many as twenty-five verses, while some versions contain upwards of thirty.

II
Go Down, Moses

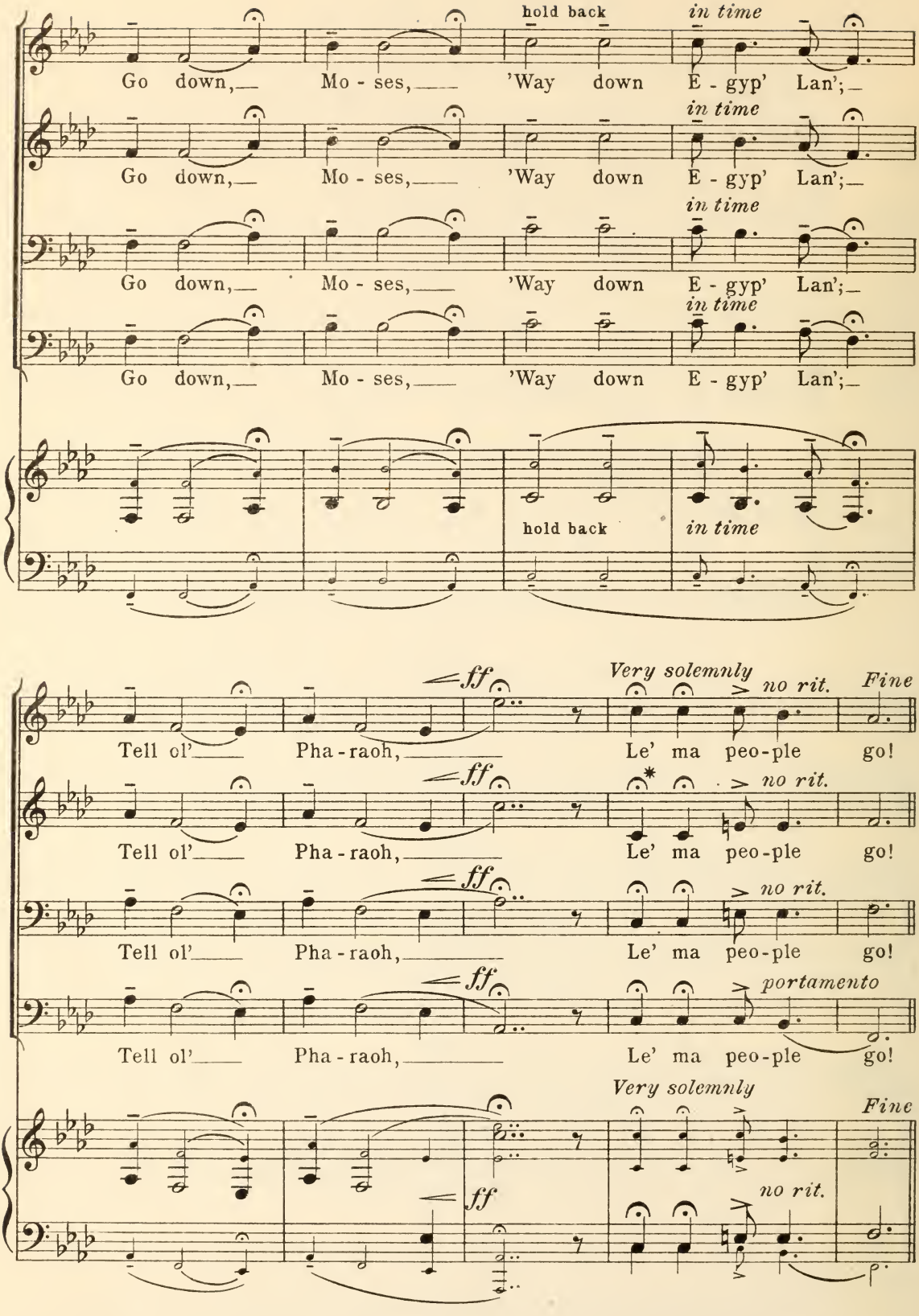


* The voice of the "Lead" (or Leader) carries the melody of the song and is printed in the piano part in large type.

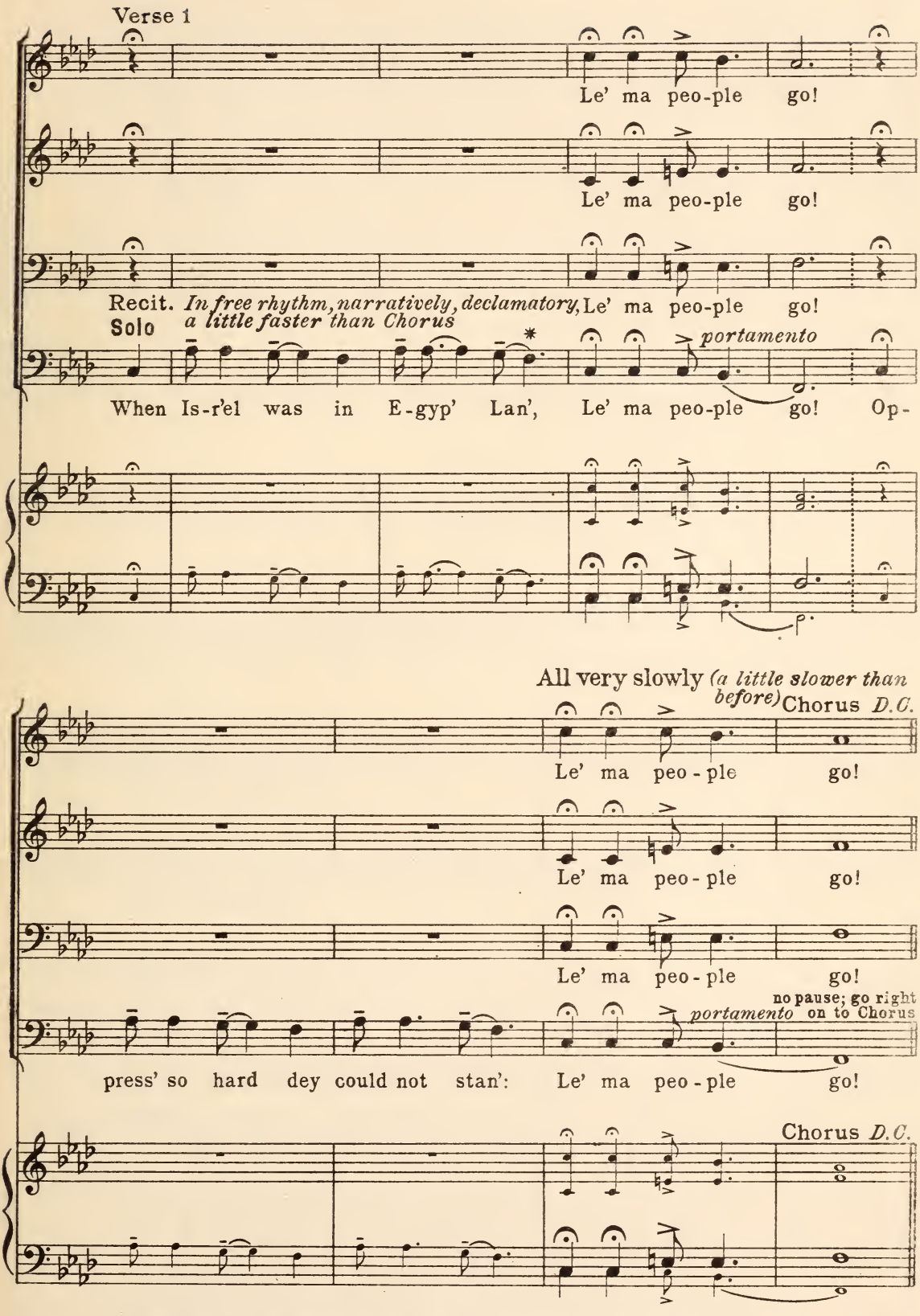
** Notes marked with fermate 𝄐 are almost equal to half-notes (𝅗𝅥 = 𝅗𝅥) Yet this traditional manner of declaiming these opening phrases is not universal. Many of the Hampton singers give out the words "Go down, Moses" more nearly in strict time. However, the half-notes on the words "'Way down" are always drawn out.

*** Pronounced "Mosis". **** Pronounced "Ejup".

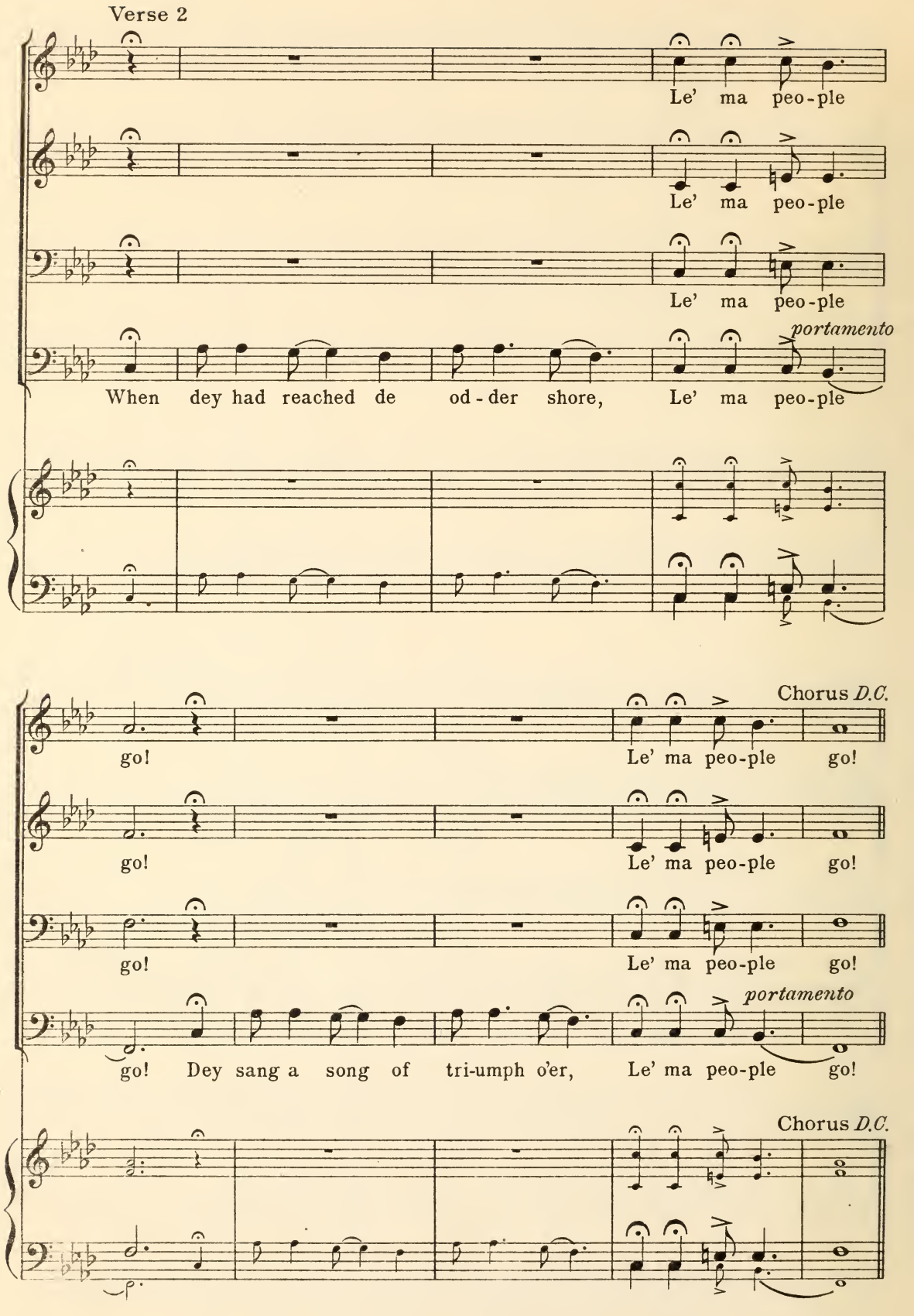
***** Often pronounced "Parioh", and sometimes sung with a little melodic from:



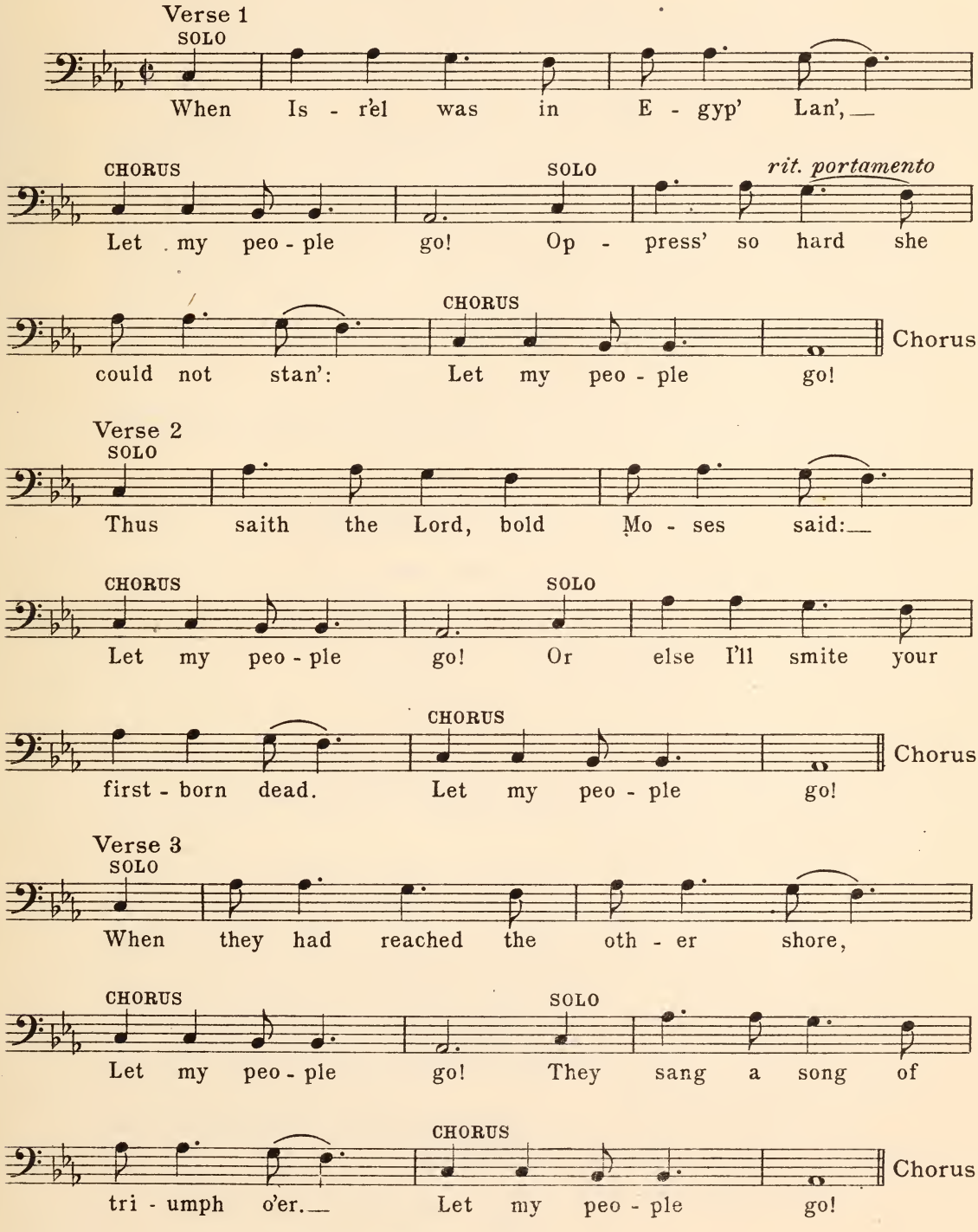
* Long pause, longer than first time, giving an emphatic finality to this closing refrain of the Chorus. Each time the Chorus is sung, it ends in this impressive manner.



* When this song is sung by full Chorus, the solo voice takes the melody with the "Lead" in the refrain "Le' ma people go!" In the male quartet, the solo voice, being bass, takes the bass part in the refrain, the melody being carried in the two inner voices.


Verse 2
Le' ma peo-ple
Le' ma peo-ple
Le' ma peo-ple
portamento
When dey had reached de od-der shore, Le' ma peo-ple
Chorus D.C.
go! Le' ma peo-ple go!
go! Le' ma peo-ple go!
go! Le' ma peo-ple go!
portamento
go! Dey sang a song of tri-umph o'er, Le' ma peo-ple go!
Chorus D.C.

The Hampton "Big Quartet", consisting of Messrs. Tynes, Crawley, Avery and Wainwright, sings the opening phrases "Go down, Moses", without the pauses on the last notes of the bars. The command is sung loud, and the A♭ chord is sung *decrescendo*. The solo voice in this Quartet declaims the narrative verses as follows, without dialect.



COULDN'T HEAR NOBODY PRAY

"Hallelulah, troubles over,
Crossing over into Canaan."

The recording of this song is dedicated to the memory of
HOLLIS BURKE FRISSELL*, Principal of Hampton Institute

UNDER WHOSE PATIENT, WISE AND DEVOTED GUIDANCE THE "HAMPTON IDEA" HAS COME TO FULL FRUITION AND HAS TAKEN DEEP ROOT IN MANY SCHOOLS FOR WHITES AS WELL AS BLACKS, ALL OVER THIS CONTINENT. SCATTERING ITS SEEDS TO DISTANT LANDS, IT IS NOW AN INFLUENCE IN THE TRAINING-SCHOOLS OF CHINA, INDIA, AFRICA AND WHEREVER THE PROBLEMS OF INTER-RACIAL ADJUSTMENT PRESS FOR FAR-SEEING AND JUST SOLUTION. IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF HAMPTON BEYOND EVEN ITS FOUNDERS' DREAM; IN THE STEADY AND SOUND ADVANCE OF THE NEGRO AND INDIAN RACES IN AGRICULTURE AND SELF-SUPPORT; IN THE GROWTH OF UNDERSTANDING AND FRIENDLY FEELING BETWEEN WHITES AND NEGROES AND INDIANS AND WHITES, WE TRACE THE GENTLE THOUGH FORCEFUL SPIRIT OF ARMSTRONG'S GREAT SUCCESSOR, WHO HAS WELL BEEN CALLED "DOCTOR OF HUMAN KINDNESS."

*Since the writing of the above, the United States has lost one of its greatest educators and the Negro and Indian races their ablest white leader in the death of Dr. Frissell on August 5, 1917.

COULDN'T HEAR NOBODY PRAY

Recorded from the singing of the "Big Quartet"

Freeman W. Crawley	("Lead")
Charles H. Tynes	(Tenor)
William A. Avery	(Baritone)
John A. Wainwright	(Bass)

The lyric beauty of this music is equalled by the poetic suggestion of the words, which bring before the hearer the emotions of the lonely soul, afar in the valley with "his burden and his Saviour"—praying, and being at last received into the promised land.

Sometimes such a song as this reflects a genuine experience, a real prayer in the valley; sometimes an inner event is expressed in allegory. Indeed, the "valley," in many a Negro song, is the symbolic place of prayer and of sadness and struggle, as the mountain-top is that of exaltation. These are wholly natural symbols that might be seized upon by any member of the human family, regardless of race. Yet some of the spirituals reveal that "John de Bunyan"[1] was not unknown to black singers, and we can well imagine how the figurative outline of Pilgrim's Progress would impress the eager mind of some listening slave.

This spiritual is, however, sheer poetry, and should find a place in the literature as well as in the music of our land.

[1] See "Calhoun Plantation Songs," Emily Hallowell.

An' I couldn't hear nobod'y pray,
O Lord!
Couldn't hear nobod'y pray.
O—way down yonder
By myself,
I couldn't hear nobod'y pray.

In the valley,
Couldn't hear nobod'y pray,
On my knees,
Couldn't hear nobod'y pray,
With my burden,*
Couldn't hear nobod'y pray,
An' my Saviour,
Couldn't hear nobod'y pray.

O Lord!

I couldn't hear nobod'y pray,
O Lord!
Couldn't hear nobod'y pray.
O—way down yonder
By myself,
I couldn't hear nobod'y pray.

Chilly waters,
Couldn't hear nobod'y pray,
In the Jerdan,†
Couldn't hear nobod'y pray,
Crossing over,
Couldn't hear nobod'y pray,
Into Canaan,
Couldn't hear nobod'y pray.

O Lord!

I couldn't hear nobod'y pray,
O Lord!
Couldn't hear nobod'y pray.
O—way down yonder
By myself,
I couldn't hear nobod'y pray.

*Another version gives the text of this first verse thus:
In the valley
On my knees,
With my burden
So lonesome!

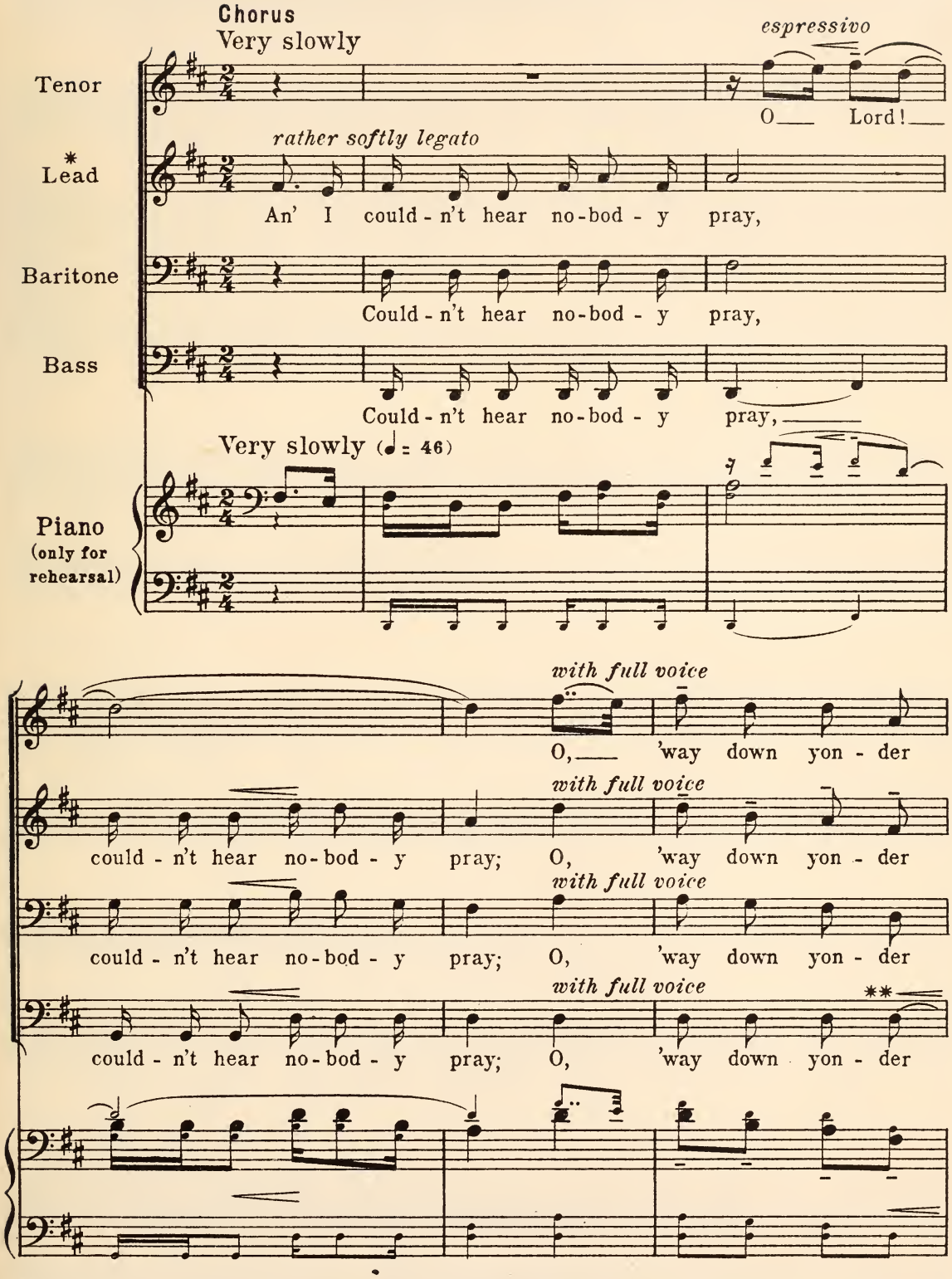
†*Jordan*, pronounced by the Negroes "*Jerdan*."

Hallejuh!
Couldn't hear nobod'y pray,
Troubles over,
Couldn't hear nobod'y pray,
In the Kingdom,
Couldn't hear nobod'y pray,
With my Jesus,
Couldn't hear nobod'y pray.

O Lord!

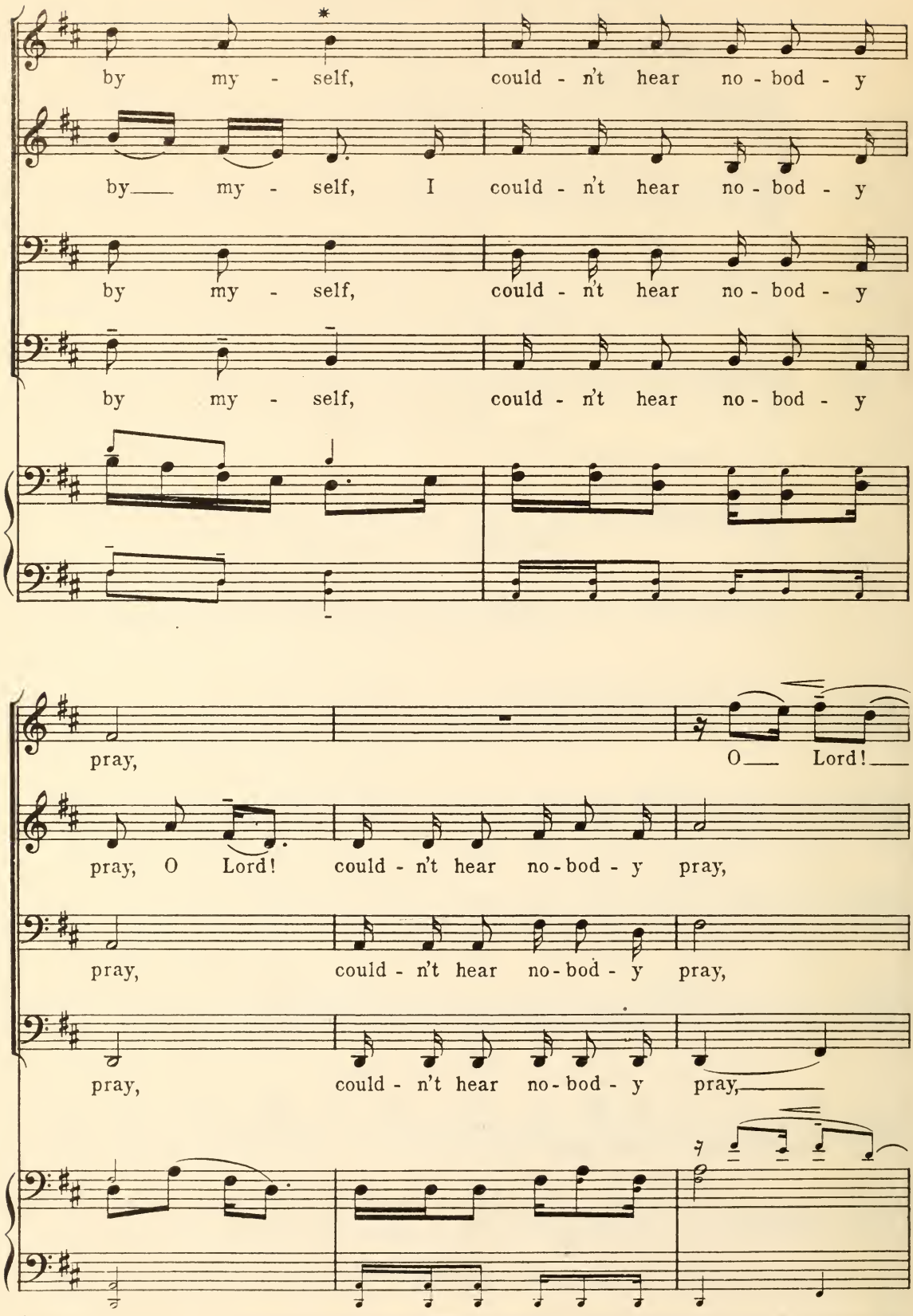
I couldn't hear nobod'y pray,
O Lord!
Couldn't hear nobod'y pray.
O—way down yonder
By myself,
I couldn't hear nobod'y pray.

III
Couldn't hear nobody pray

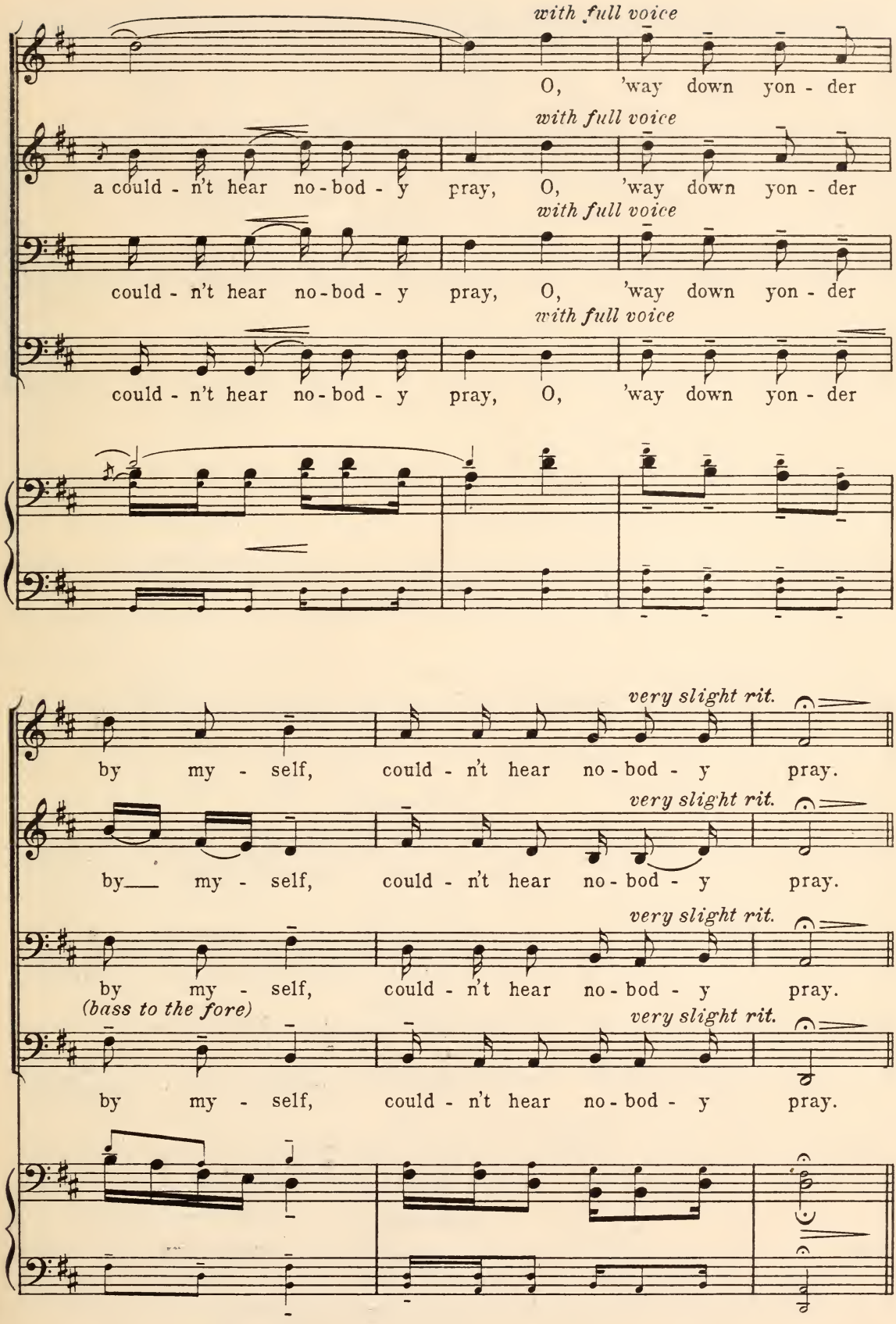


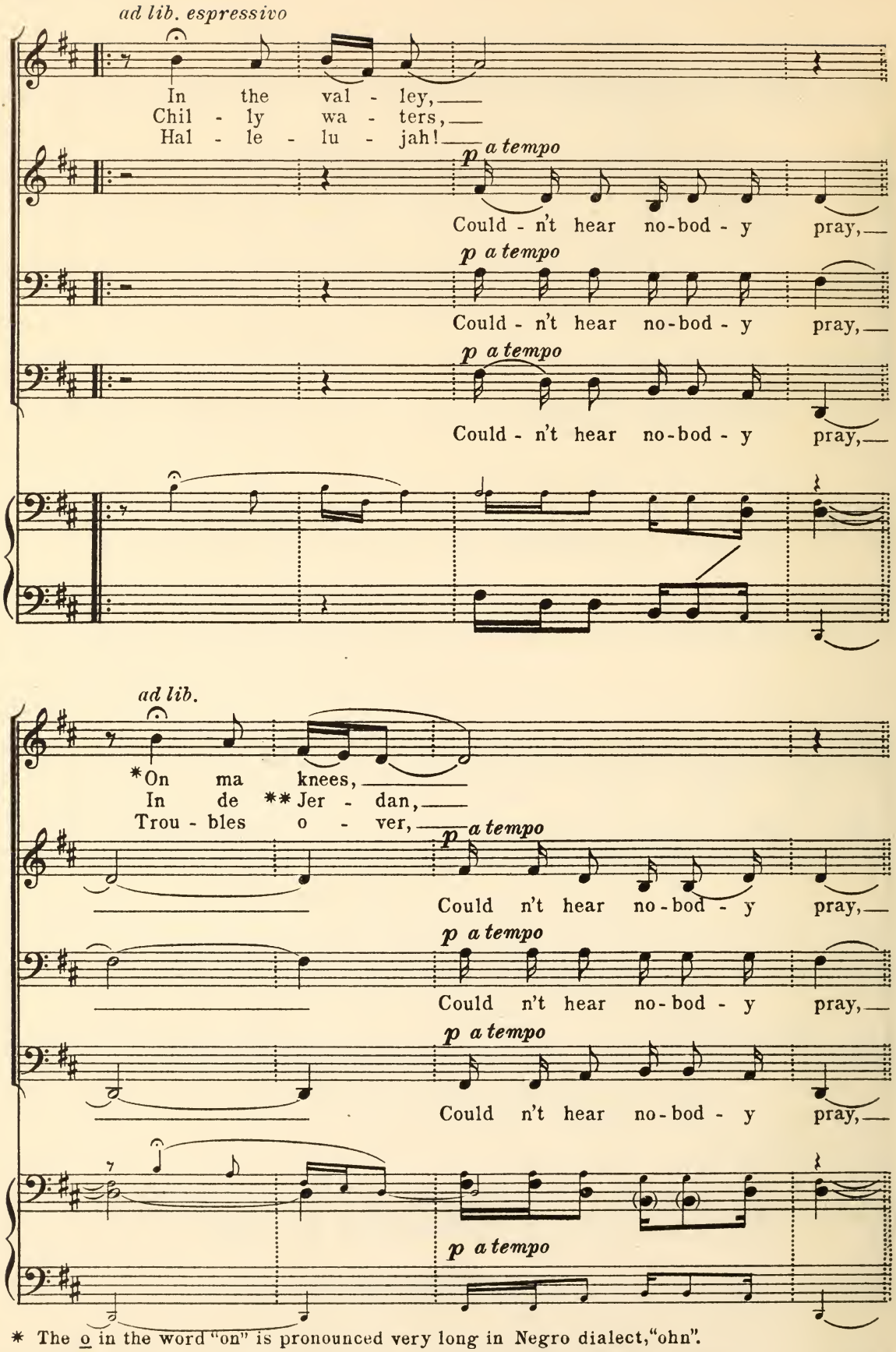
* The melody is carried in the voice of the "Lead" (or Leader) printed in the piano-part in large type.

** The bass in this phrase, whenever repeated, comes well to the fore.



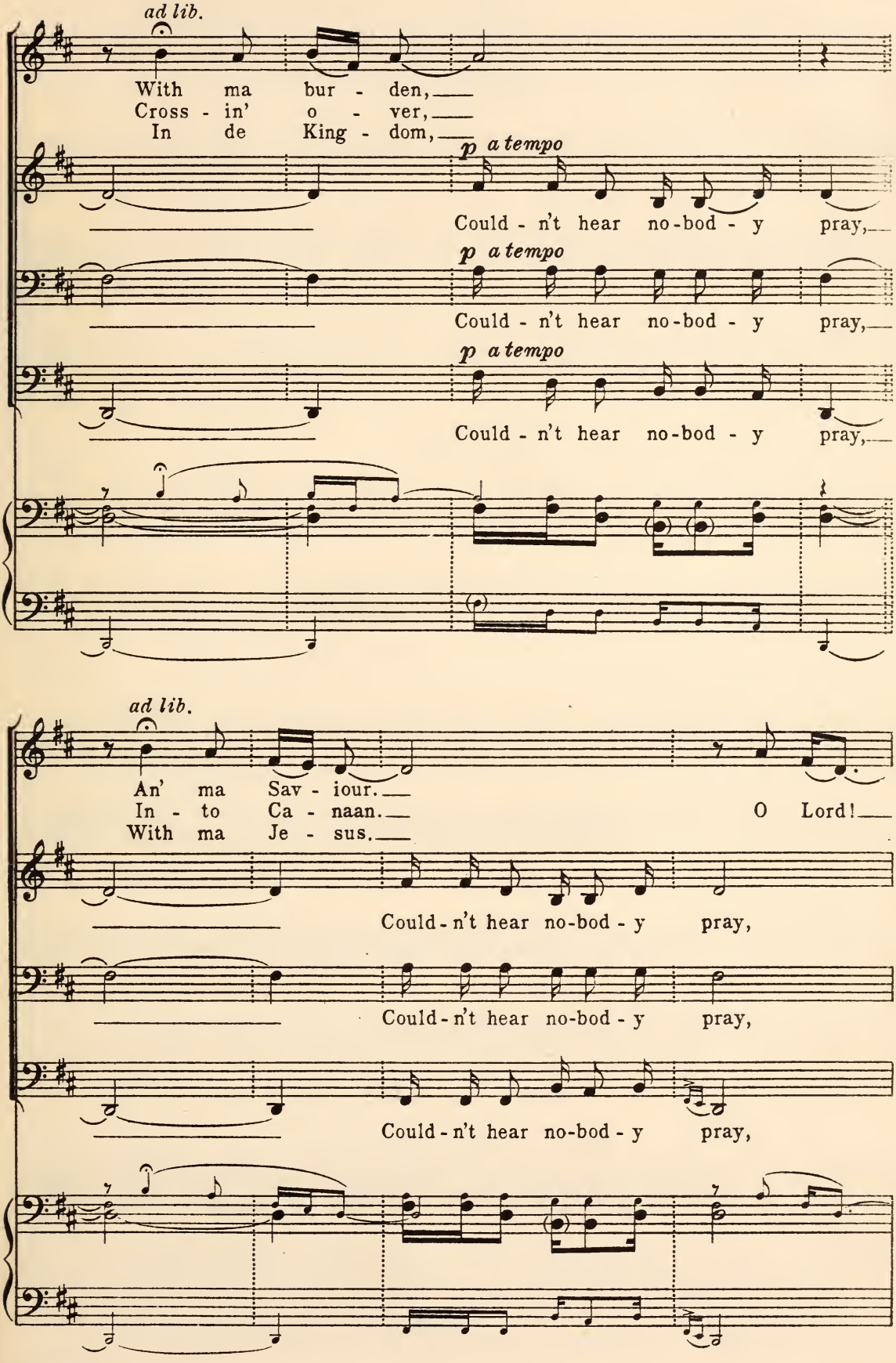
* Throughout the song, whenever this bar is sung, there is a slight pause on this note. The pause is not long enough to be actually felt as such, but it is distinctly apparent with the metronome.

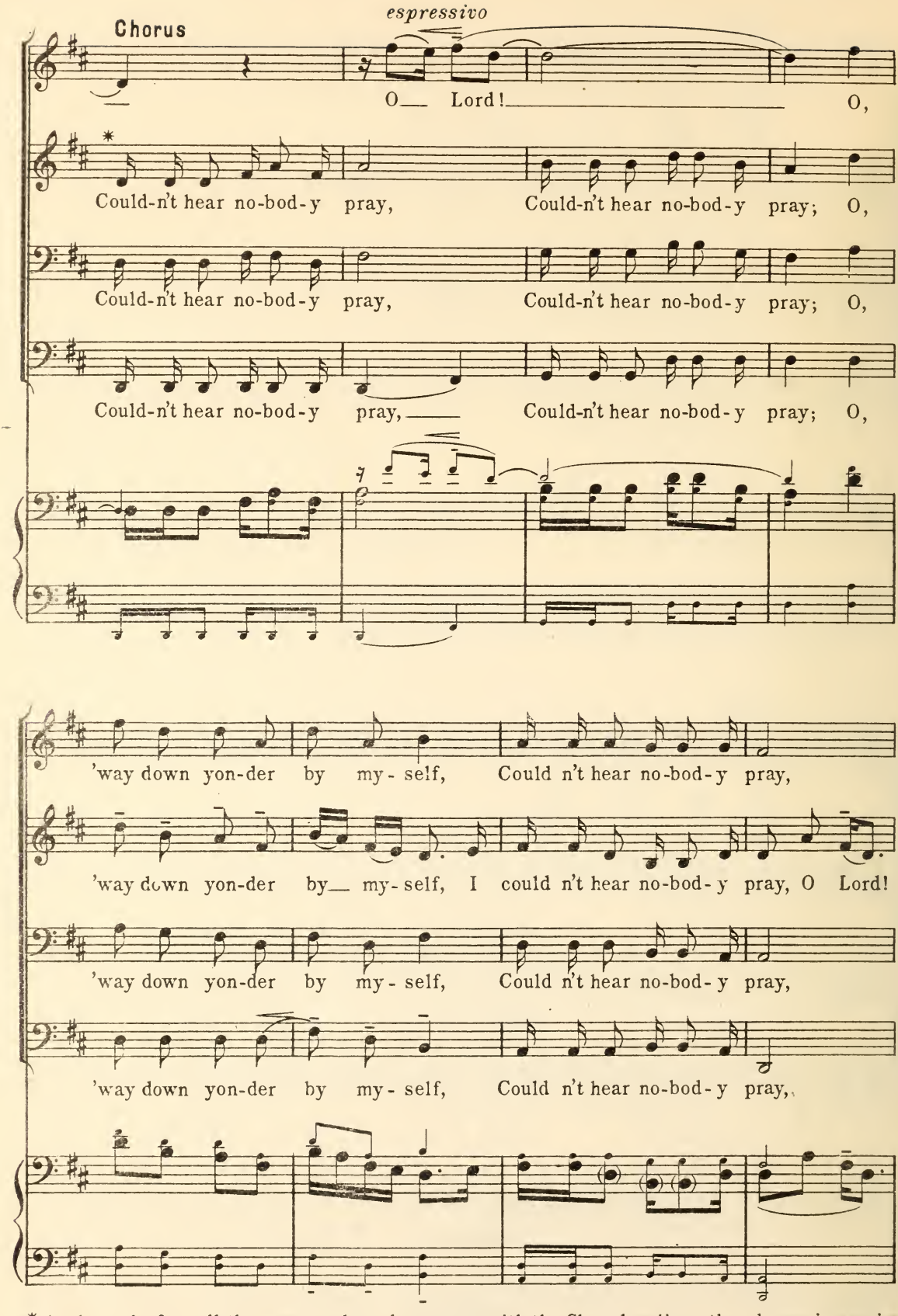

with full voice
O, 'way down yon - der
with full voice
a could - n't hear no - bod - y pray, O, 'way down yon - der
with full voice
could - n't hear no - bod - y pray, O, 'way down yon - der
with full voice
could - n't hear no - bod - y pray, O, 'way down yon - der
very slight rit.
by my - self, could - n't hear no - bod - y pray.
very slight rit.
by my - self, could - n't hear no - bod - y pray.
very slight rit.
by my - self, could - n't hear no - bod - y pray.
(bass to the fore)
very slight rit.
by my - self, could - n't hear no - bod - y pray.



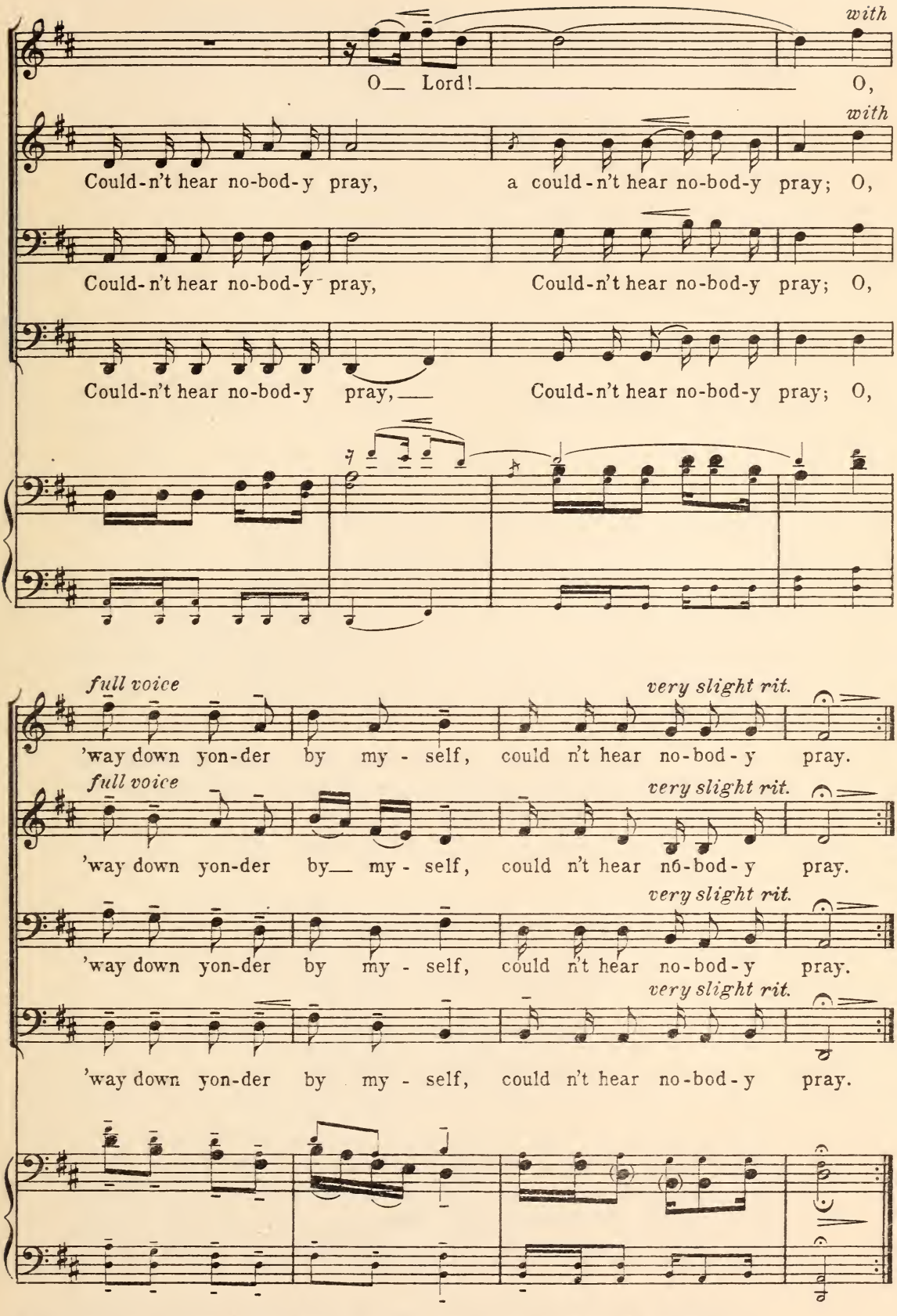
* The o in the word "on" is pronounced very long in Negro dialect, "ohn".

** Jordan River is usually called "Jerdan" by Negroes of the Southern States.


ad lib.
With ma bur - den,
Cross - in' o - ver,
In de King - dom,
p a tempo
Could - n't hear no-bod - y pray,
p a tempo
Could - n't hear no-bod - y pray,
p a tempo
Could - n't hear no-bod - y pray,
ad lib.
An' ma Sav - iour.
In - to Ca - naan.
With ma Je - sus.
O Lord!
Could - n't hear no-bod - y pray,
Could - n't hear no-bod - y pray,
Could - n't hear no-bod - y pray,



* At the end, after all three verses have been sung with the Choral ending, the chorus is again sung through pianissimo from this bar on, finishing on a long note, which dies away.



At the end, the chorus is again sung through, pianissimo from the * on page 18.

GOOD NEWS, CHARIOT'S COMIN'!

"Good news, Chariot's comin'!
An' I don't want her leave-a me behin'."

This song-record is dedicated to

ROBERT RUSSA MOTON

AN AMERICAN NEGRO OF DIRECT AFRICAN DESCENT, GRADUATE OF HAMPTON, LIFELONG FRIEND OF BOOKER WASHINGTON AND PRESENT PRINCIPAL OF TUSKEGEE INSTITUTE. AS FORMER COMMANDANT AT HAMPTON, AS SECRETARY OF THE NEGRO RURAL SCHOOL FUND BOARD OF THE JEANES FOUNDATION, AS TRUSTEE OF SEVERAL NEGRO INSTITUTIONS AND AS PRESIDENT OF THE NEGRO ORGANIZATION SOCIETY (WHICH TOUCHES THE LIVES OF OVER 350,000 BLACKS IN VIRGINIA ALONE), ROBERT MOTON HAS LONG BEEN A POWER IN THE ADVANCE OF HIS PEOPLE. FEW MEN GRASP WITH SUCH CALM, SOUND JUDGMENT THE PROBLEMS RELATING TO MASSES OF NEGROES LIVING AND STRUGGLING SIDE BY SIDE WITH THE DOMINANT WHITE RACE. HE HAS CONSTANTLY URGED COLORED MEN TO CULTIVATE RACE PRIDE; TO UNITE IN ALL QUESTIONS OF RACE-UPLIFT; TO LEAD WHOLESOME AND MORAL LIVES; TO SEEK DEVELOPMENT THROUGH HONEST WORK OF ALL KINDS; TO BUILD FOR THEMSELVES BETTER HOMES AND SCHOOLS, AND ABOVE ALL TO STRIVE ONWARD IN WILLING COÖPERATION WITH THEIR WHITE FRIENDS. HIS POISE, HIS SIMPLICITY, FRANKNESS AND BREADTH OF VIEW HAVE WON HIM THE CONFIDENCE OF BOTH RACES.

No visitor to Hampton in past years can forget the tall, inspiring man who sang in the great chorus with uplifted hand, nor the power and sweetness of the voice of the "Lead"—Robert Moton.

GOOD NEWS, CHARIOT'S COMIN'!

Recorded from the singing of the "Big Quartet"

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

This song, with its glad heralding and repetition of "Good News!" is sung with quick enthusiasm and exuberant spontaneity, and with an echoing sound of acclamation. It is one of those Negro songs in which childlike joy reaches religious ecstasy, when eager voices, full of promise, describe the "starry crown," "long white robe" and "silver slippers" in that heaven which

was the dream of the slave. The musical picture of the chariot drawing near in swift descent while hailed and welcomed, is vivid and dramatic in its directness; yet it has that rudimentary simplicity of thought, feeling and expression which is at once the charm and the virtue of the true folk-song.

Like the basso of the Russian choir, the Negro bass is singularly powerful and wide-ranged. Sometimes the voice plunges into almost incredible depths, so that the vibrations seem to move in long waves like the low notes of an organ. Yet always the higher tones are unforced, full and sweet-timbred. In this song the bass part is prominent; full of dynamic emphasis, it solidly sustains the freshness and vigor of the upper voices.

Good news, Char'iot's comin'!
Good news, Char'iot's comin'!
Good news, Char'iot's comin'!
An' I don't want her leave-a me behin'.

Dar's a long white robe in de Hebb'n, I know.
Dar's a long white robe in de Hebb'n, I know,
Dar's a long white robe in de Hebb'n, I know,
An' I don't want her leave-a me behin'.

Dar's a starry crown in de Hebb'n, I know.
Dar's a starry crown in de Hebb'n, I know,
Dar's a starry crown in de Hebb'n, I know,
An' I don't want her leave-a me behin'.

Good news, Char'iot's comin'!
Good news, Char'iot's comin'!
Good news, Char'iot's comin'!
An' I don't want her leave-a me behin'.

Dar's a golden harp in de Hebb'n, I know.
Dar's a golden harp in de Hebb'n, I know,
Dar's a golden harp in de Hebb'n, I know,
An' I don't want her leave-a me behin'.

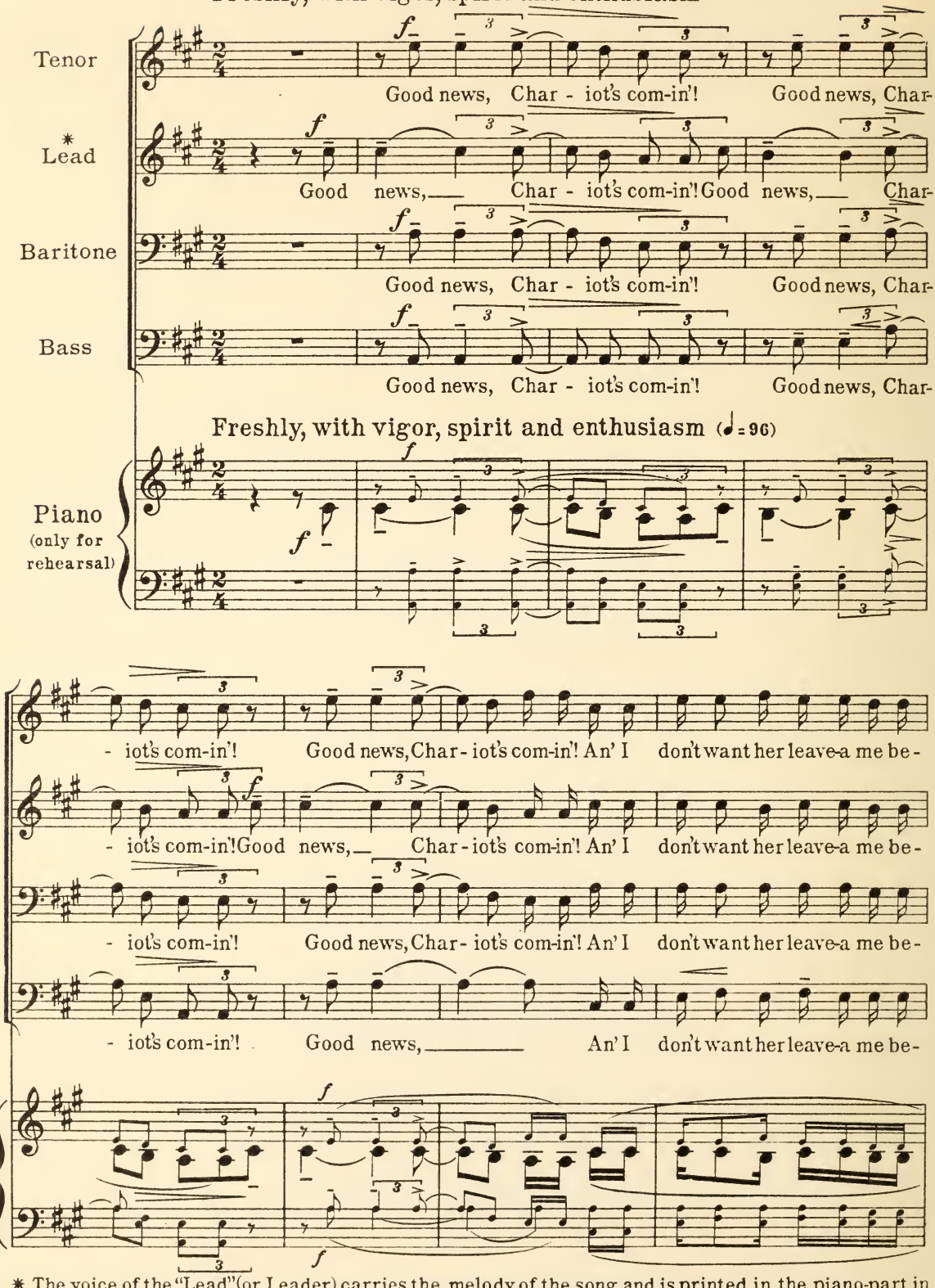
Dar's silver slippers in de Hebb'n, I know.
Dar's silver slippers in de Hebb'n, I know,
Dar's silver slippers in de Hebb'n, I know,
An' I don't want her leave-a me behin'.

Good news, Char'iot's comin'!
Good news, Char'iot's comin'!
Good news, Char'iot's comin'!
An' I don't want her leave-a me behin'.

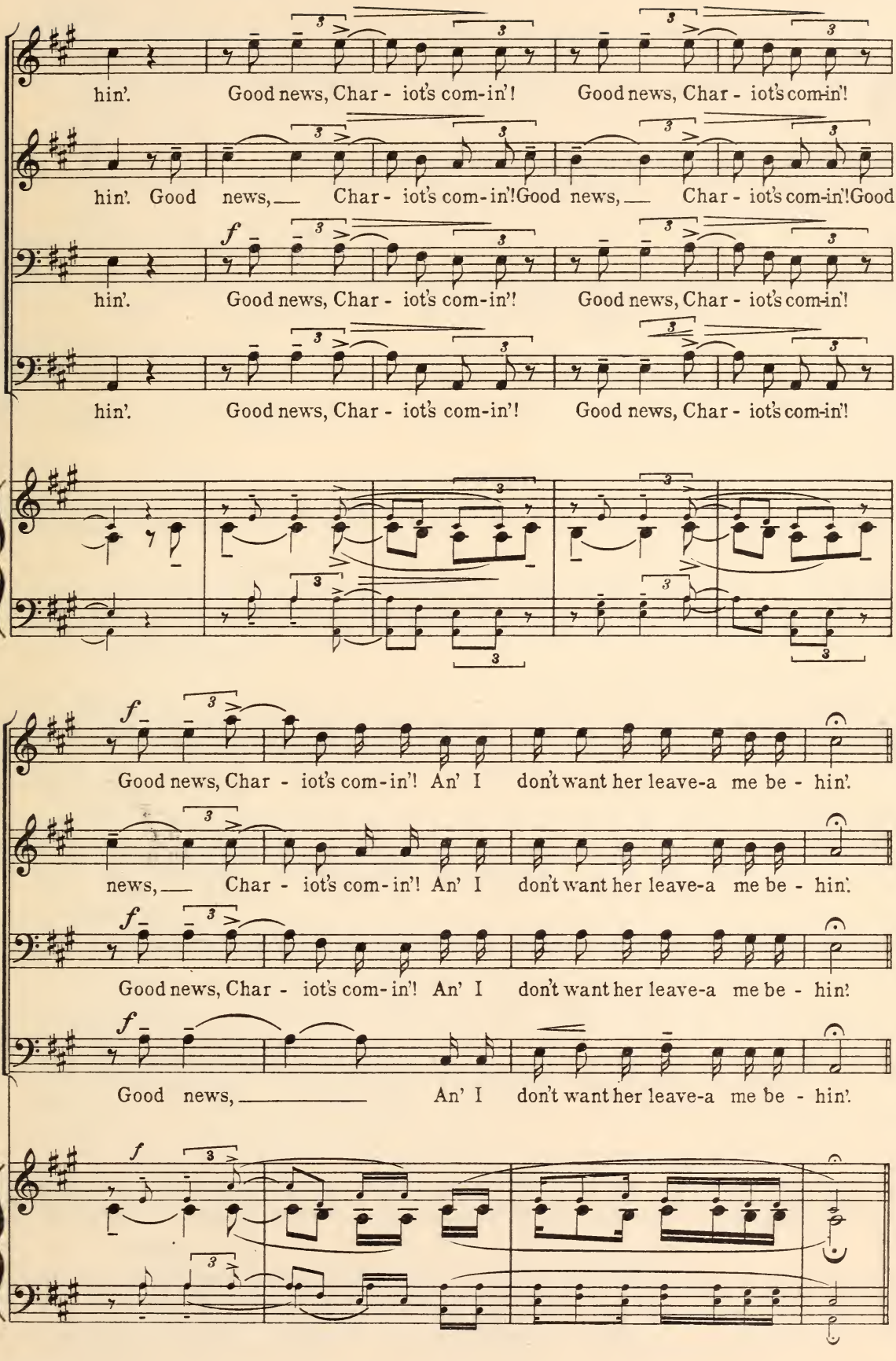
IV
Good News, Chariot's Comin'!

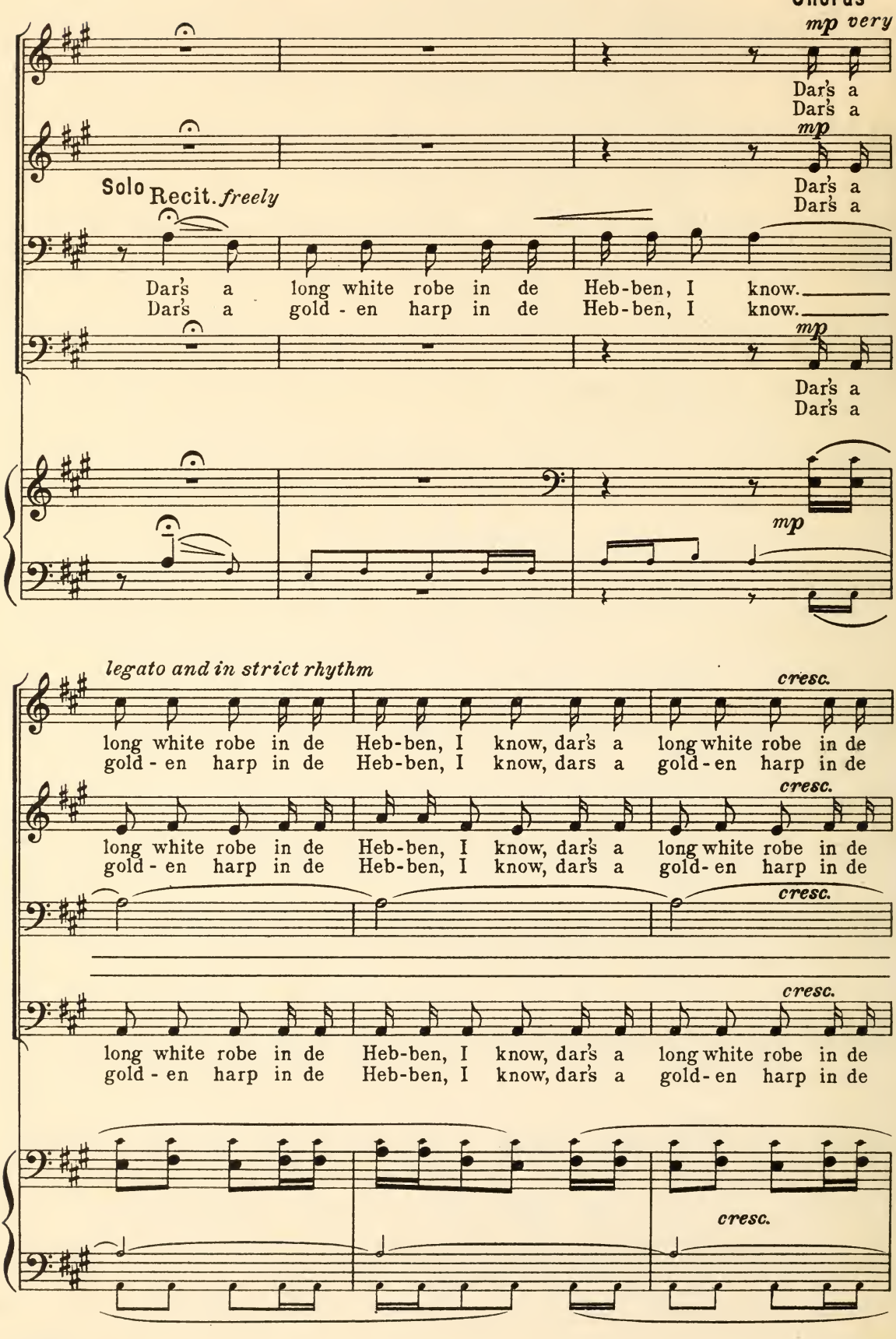
Chorus

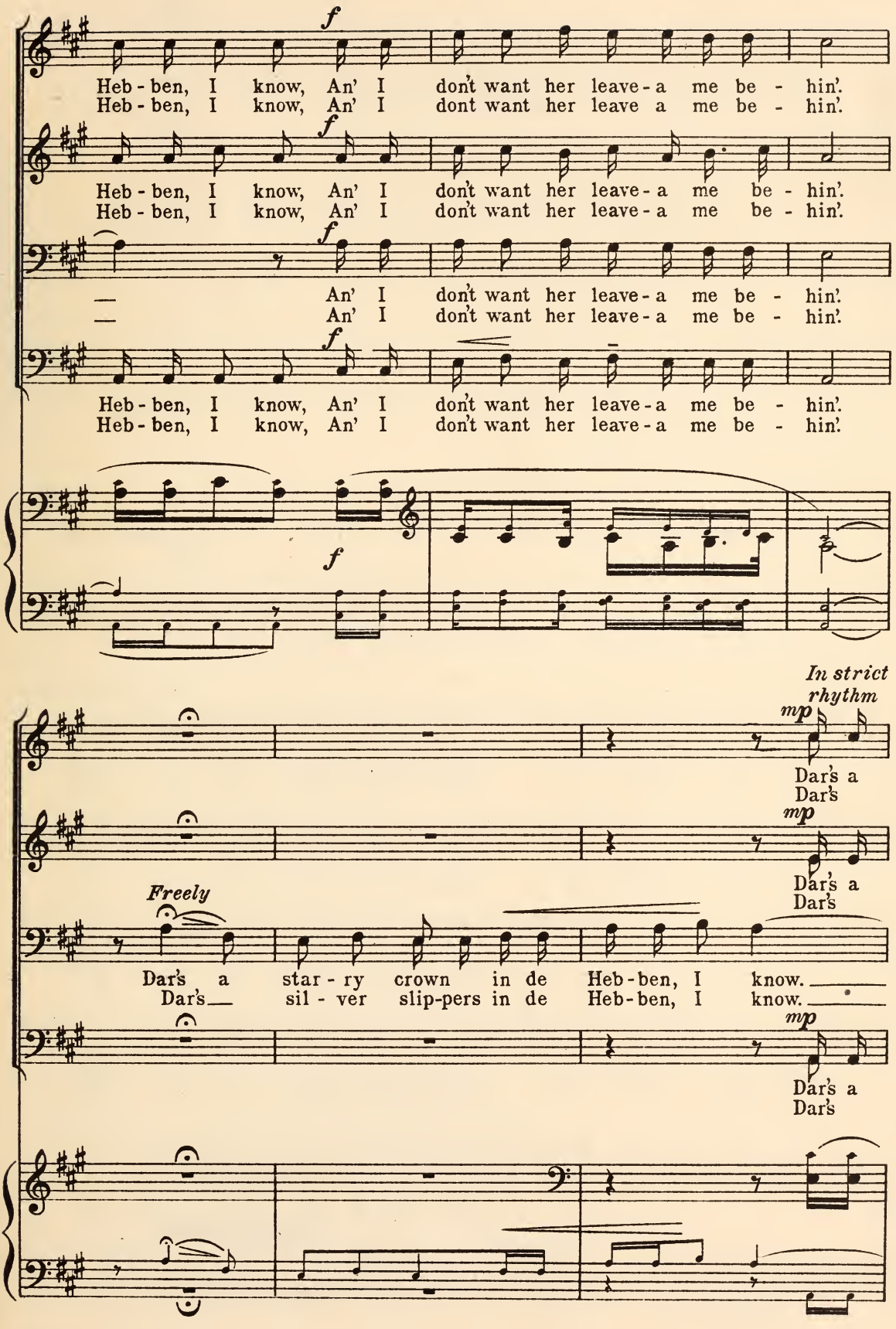
Freshly, with vigor, spirit and enthusiasm

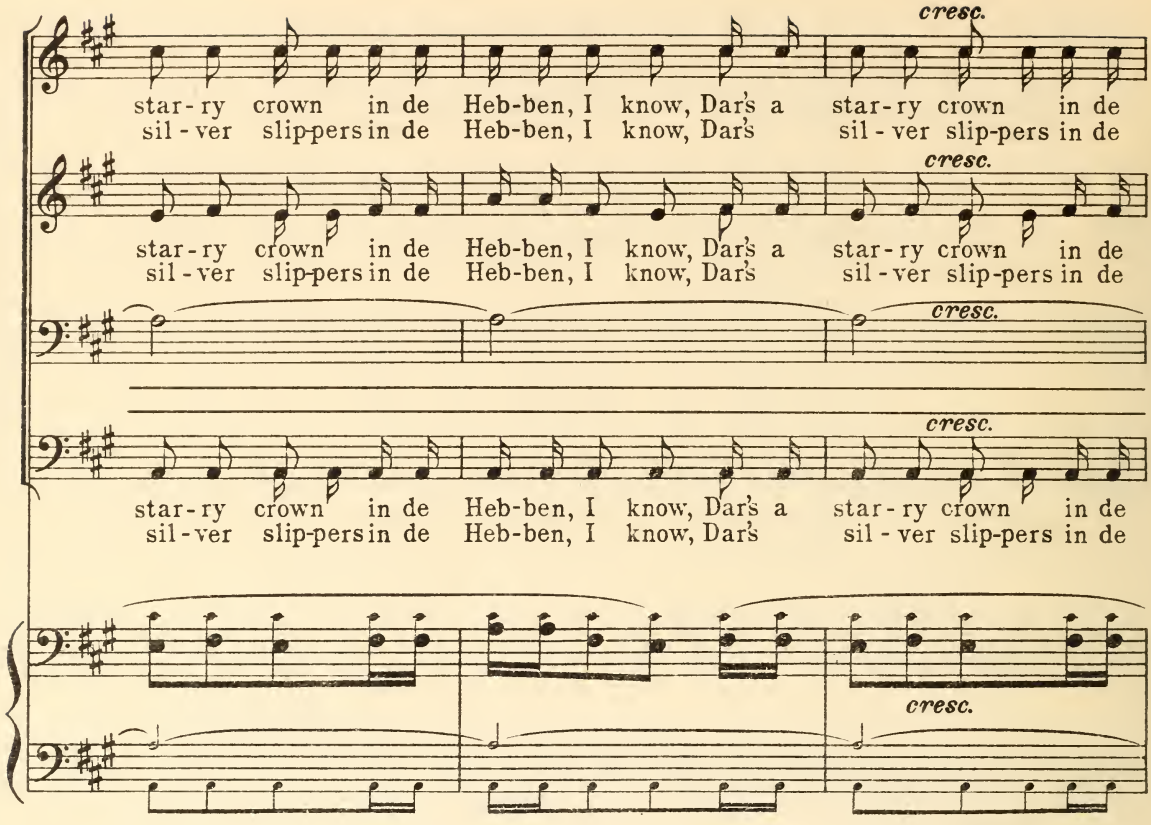


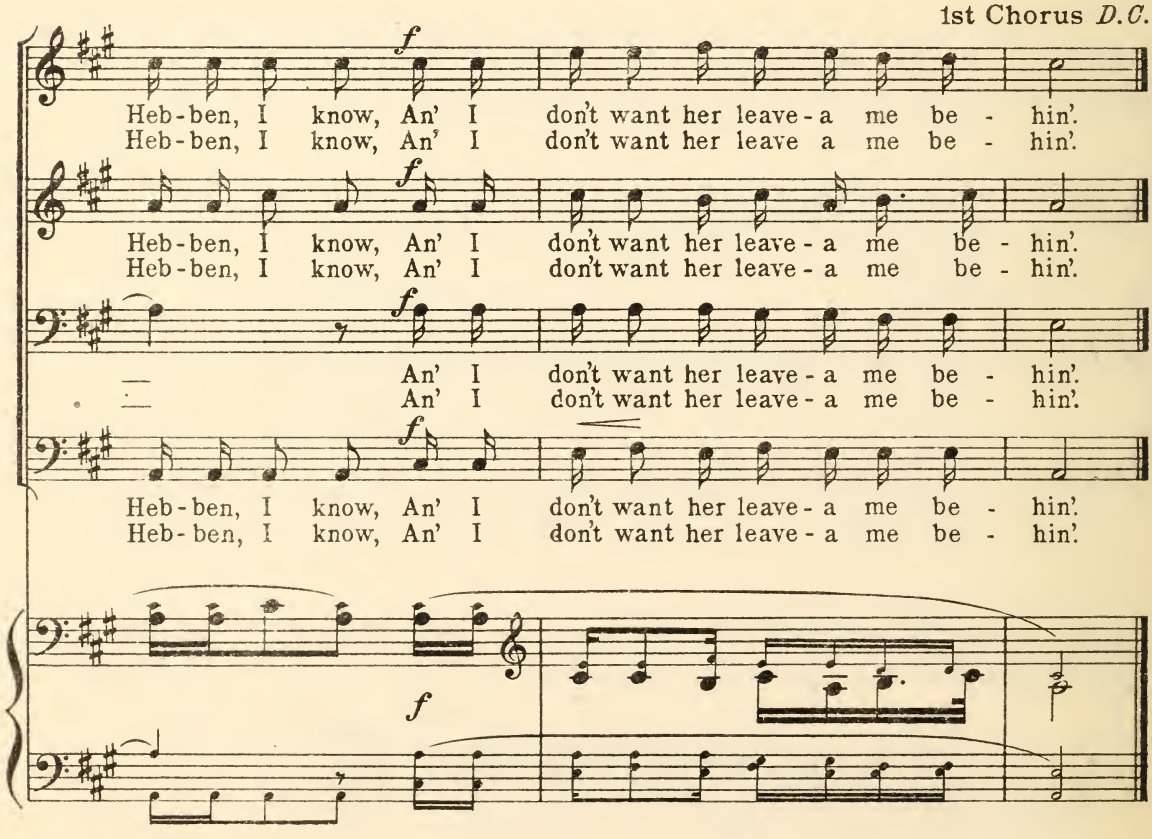
* The voice of the "Lead" (or Leader) carries the melody of the song and is printed in the piano-part in large type.


hin'. Good news, Char - iot's com-in'! Good news, Char - iot's com-in'!
hin'. Good news, Char - iot's com-in'! Good news, Char - iot's com-in'! Good
hin'. Good news, Char - iot's com-in'! Good news, Char - iot's com-in'!
hin'. Good news, Char - iot's com-in'! Good news, Char - iot's com-in'!
Good news, Char - iot's com-in'! An' I don't want her leave-a me be - hin'.
news, Char - iot's com-in'! An' I don't want her leave-a me be - hin'.
Good news, Char - iot's com-in'! An' I don't want her leave-a me be - hin'.
Good news, An' I don't want her leave-a me be - hin'.


Chorus
mp very
Dar's a
Dar's a
mp
Dar's a
Dar's a
Solo
Recit. freely
Dar's a long white robe in de Heb-ben, I know.
Dar's a gold - en harp in de Heb-ben, I know.
mp
Dar's a
Dar's a
mp
legato and in strict rhythm
cresc.
long white robe in de Heb-ben, I know, dar's a long white robe in de
gold - en harp in de Heb-ben, I know, dars a gold - en harp in de
cresc.
long white robe in de Heb-ben, I know, dar's a long white robe in de
gold - en harp in de Heb-ben, I know, dar's a gold - en harp in de
cresc.
cresc.
long white robe in de Heb-ben, I know, dar's a long white robe in de
gold - en harp in de Heb-ben, I know, dar's a gold - en harp in de
cresc.


f
Heb - ben, I know, An' I don't want her leave - a me be - hin'.
Heb - ben, I know, An' I dont want her leave a me be - hin'.
Heb - ben, I know, An' I don't want her leave - a me be - hin'.
Heb - ben, I know, An' I don't want her leave - a me be - hin'.
An' I don't want her leave - a me be - hin'.
An' I don't want her leave - a me be - hin'.
Heb - ben, I know, An' I don't want her leave - a me be - hin'.
Heb - ben, I know, An' I don't want her leave - a me be - hin'.
In strict rhythm
mp
Dar's a
Dar's
Freely
Dar's a star - ry crown in de Heb - ben, I know.
Dar's sil - ver slip - pers in de Heb - ben, I know.


cresc.
star-ry crown in de Heb-ben, I know, Dar's a star-ry crown in de
sil-ver slip-pers in de Heb-ben, I know, Dar's sil-ver slip-pers in de
cresc.
star-ry crown in de Heb-ben, I know, Dar's a star-ry crown in de
sil-ver slip-pers in de Heb-ben, I know, Dar's sil-ver slip-pers in de
cresc.
cresc.
star-ry crown in de Heb-ben, I know, Dar's a star-ry crown in de
sil-ver slip-pers in de Heb-ben, I know, Dar's sil-ver slip-pers in de
cresc.


1st Chorus D.C.
f
Heb-ben, I know, An' I don't want her leave-a me be - hin'.
Heb-ben, I know, An' I don't want her leave a me be - hin'.
f
Heb-ben, I know, An' I don't want her leave-a me be - hin'.
Heb-ben, I know, An' I don't want her leave-a me be - hin'.
f
An' I don't want her leave-a me be - hin'.
An' I don't want her leave-a me be - hin'.
f
Heb-ben, I know, An' I don't want her leave-a me be - hin'.
Heb-ben, I know, An' I don't want her leave-a me be - hin'.
f