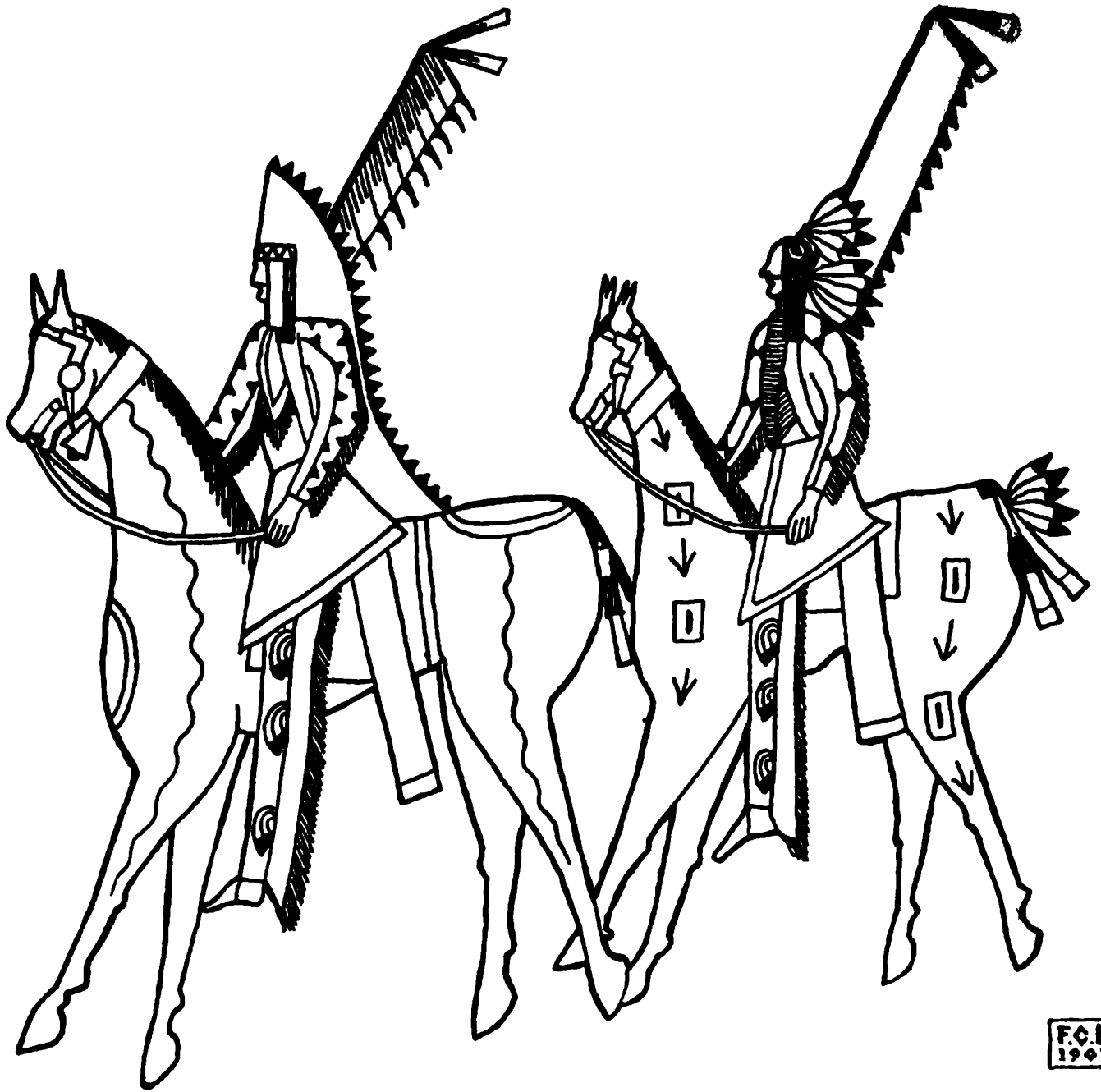


# AMERICAN INDIAN MELODIES



harmonized by  
**ARTHUR FARWELL**

\$1.50. net

**G. SCHIRMER**  
NEW YORK BOSTON

# AMERICAN INDIAN MELODIES

EDITED AND ARRANGED FOR THE PIANO

WITH INTRODUCTION

BY

ARTHUR FARWELL

Op. 11



Price, \$1.50, net

**G. SCHIRMER**

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# INTRODUCTION

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Our idea of an art is gained, in large measure, from the examples of that art with which we are already familiar, and the standpoint from which we regard it is an inheritance from past art history and from long established social conditions. According to our training or circumstance, or to the temper of our minds, an art presents itself to us as a mere amusement, a conventional accomplishment, a serious vocation, or a mystical revelation, — a mode of expression of the infinite human soul. If, however, we are suddenly confronted with an art which does not fall within our definition, or which, within that definition, fails of a vital reaction upon us, either we pass it by as meaningless, or we are carried by its innate force into a world of new meanings. Unfortunately this latter cannot happen in music unless the musical art-work is produced before us in all the fulness of expression that its spirit demands. When we ourselves must be at the same time interpreter and auditor, the problem becomes doubly difficult. That these vital differences in the art-spirit, as regards the intensity of its seriousness, are no mere chimeras, will perhaps be better understood when we realize clearly that the following Indian melodies fall, in our civilization, not in the realm of what is commonly regarded as Art, but only in that which we understand by the term Religion. Song, an invisible agent, is to the Indian the direct means of communicating with his invisible god. Thus "Inketunga's Thunder Song" would sound ridiculous interpreted after the style of a nocturne, moment musical, impromptu, or any purely musical form with which we are familiar, but gains an exalted and beautiful significance the moment we bring to its interpretation the knowledge that it stands for the direct communication of a human soul with its god, and a deeply-felt assurance, to its fellow man, of that communication. Under those conditions, the song carries with it absolute conviction. And likewise the "Approach of the Thunder God" could readily be rendered in a manner to make it appear trivial, (as, for that matter, could Beethoven), did we not infuse into its rendition the weightiness, the dignity, the awe, the steady and irresistible on-coming of the Thunder God wrapped in the ominous black cloud. Thus it will be seen that a seriousness no less than that which we accord the works of the masters, must be brought to the interpretation of

these songs, the spontaneous utterance of a people whose every word, action or tone invariably bears a deeply vital significance. It is necessary for us only to understand, to feel that significance, when the true mode of interpretation will follow in turn.

For these melodies, the writer is indebted to Miss Alice C. Fletcher, holder of the Thaw Fellowship, Peabody Museum, Harvard University, who for twenty years has labored, against the greatest obstacles, and almost unaided, to preserve the folk-lore and folk-song of a fast disappearing people. Her intimacy with important members of the Omaha tribe has enabled her to gather material, the mere existence of which the casual traveller would never discover, and which even the equipped ethnic investigator would be absolutely unable to obtain. Some of the results of her labors are embodied in a book called "Indian Story and Song from North America" (Small, Maynard & Co., Boston, 1900), which any one should procure, who seeks a further knowledge of the matter. Most of the melodies which follow can be found in Miss Fletcher's book, and many which are not present here, set to elementary harmonies by the late Professor John Comfort Fillmore. These harmonies, however, have been determined partly by the Indian's preference, but more particularly by the tonal structure of the melodies themselves, of which Professor Fillmore made a deep and scientific study. It struck the writer, however, that a heightened art-value could be imparted to them, if the composer should consult, not merely this melodic structure, but the poetic nature of the particular legend or incident of which each song was the outcome. For it must be understood that these songs are entirely dependent upon mythical or legendary occurrences, which they qualify or interpret, or upon religious ceremonies of which they form a part. The writer realized that if the musical imagination could be fired by a consideration of the particular legend pertaining to a song, it would give rise to a combination of harmonies far more vitally connected with the song's essence, its spiritual significance, than any which should be the outcome of a mere consideration of the melodies' tonal structure. Miss Fletcher herself was also aware of this, as she afterwards told the writer, but the opposition to the mere introduction of these melodies was so great that it was thought better to offer them at first with only such simple harmonies as would naturally support them. Miss Fletcher has also met with a question with which the present writer is often confronted, — namely, is not the musical value of these results due entirely to the harmonic treatment, and not at all to the melodies themselves? An unqualified, almost an impatient "No," is the only response to this question. The harmonic color-scheme is purely the outcome of the

melody and its specific religious significance, and is merely an aid to its more complete expression. Without this significance, the melody would never have been born; without the melody, the harmonic combination (the joint result of the significance and the melody) would never have been born; and this significance and melody is the Indian's. The final result is the consequence of a trained intellect seizing upon, and expressing in a mode comprehensible to its kind, a feeling already fully developed in a race whose mode of expression is more primitive, or perhaps merely different. (We do not know that a god would show any preference for a piano or an organ, over the human voice accompanied by drums, although the former might afford more amusement to the performers!) It is simply a translation; it is impossible to raise any question of altered values.

Even as it is, it is quite possible, in fact dangerously easy, to render these melodies in such a way as to make them appear quite meaningless; and, on the other hand, it is possible, and dangerously difficult, to so render them that they shall carry certain conviction. Each is a problem, to be worked out by itself, and the surest method of procedure is to study the spirit and temper of the American Indian. Miss Fletcher's book gives detailed versions of the several legends here merely hinted at, a consideration of which will materially assist in revealing the proper mode of expression.

Upon the expression of the first song, the writer has already touched. It is sung by the leader as he blackens his face and awaits the command of the God of War. It should proceed not too rapidly, in deliberate rhythm, and should carry with it the feeling of a dark and terrible, but thoroughly controlled force. It is not a thunder storm in progress, but the ominous and muttering promise of one. Its climaxes are suppressed and given no opportunity to break. A marked accentuation should be given to the first note of each of the bars containing a group of reiterated low B's.

"The Old Man's Love Song" gives expression to a mellowed love of life, born of years of benign and ennobling existence, voiced at dawn in the presence of peaceful nature. It is a tribute, in song, to the spirit of Love and Beauty in the world. The dreamy and idyllic prelude is but a floating breath. This song, with its phrases like the notes of birds, and its pastoral musings, is singularly self-explanatory. It wafts like the breath of a zephyr over the grasses of gentle hilltops, and is not inferior, in its idyllic quality, to the music which Wagner conceived for the "Flower-maidens" in *Parsifal*.

"The Song of the Deathless Voice" may be more readily misinter-

preted. A war party traces down a voice calling in the night, only to discover that it is the disembodied spirit of a warrior singing over the spot where he fearlessly met death. It is strikingly subjective in feeling. The first call, with its long attendant pause, is sufficiently objective, but the phrase which follows is legato and dreamy, the expression of a spirit patiently and eternally waiting until some brave, still in mortal life, should come to claim its latent courage for his own, to use again in mortal deeds of valor. The third phrase is a mere echo reverberating over the hills. The following phrase in F# minor is again a bolder note, but still fraught with the patience of a vigil that may endure forever. This dies away, and dissolves in darkness and night. What follows is, in spirit, and almost in note, a repetition of all that has preceded. The call is different in form, but still pauses, like the first, as if waiting for the long desired but never returned answer, and is followed by the same subjective expression of a spirit eternally waiting the movements of a mysterious destiny that shall bring it again into earth life. A casual reading through of the notes of this song will reveal nothing whatsoever of its possibilities. It is a concentration of related, but utterly different emotions, in an extremely short space. An understanding of the meaning of each pregnant phrase must be gained, before the song will yield forth its spirit in the playing. It belongs to a dream-world which he must enter, who would truly voice the mystery of its haunting and echoing cadences.

The war dance before the tent of Ichibuzzhi is of a different temper. It is the vivacious call to action to a leader whose war-record leaves no room for doubt as to the issue of the combat which shall follow. There is much humor in this song, reflected from the genial nature of the beloved and quaint, but valorous hero, Ichibuzzhi, himself. It is totally devoid of savagery, despite its aboriginal method of accompaniment, beating upon drums, or with sticks. There is an irresistible drollery in the soft repetition of the last half of each phrase. The middle section is wanting in this feature, but succeeds in offsetting the effect in the other portions. The song is characterized by vivacity and energy, and its element of humor is enhanced by its abrupt termination.

The song of "The Mother's Vow" is a record of deep personal sorrow, and breathes a haunting pathos worthy of Tschaikowsky. The leap of an octave upon E is a blended wail and sigh, and should be dwelt upon; in the song it has, in part, no words, but only sighing vocables. The melody proper begins at the double bar, and should be sufficiently detached at the beginning to make this fact evident. It should be played *rubato*: only the human voice or the violin can do justice to its expression, which involves

shades within shades. It is the passionate throwing of a soul, without morbidness or self-pity, into the abyss of its own grief. It is the song of a mother whose child has been demanded and claimed by Thunder, in fulfilment of a vow made long before. A climax should be developed at the fifth bar of the melody, which, with the remainder of the phrase, should be rendered with despair mingled with pleading, that dies in the immensity of its own gloom. The remainder of the song is but a repetition of the throbbing sorrow of the part that precedes. There is somewhat of the feeling of Tennyson's line, "And thinking of the days that are no more," in certain of the ineffably sad phrases of this song. The mother may be pictured standing out on the wind-swept plains, addressing her plaint to the approaching Thunder Bird, Wa-gi-un, and the pathos of the song may be heightened, if at certain moments the hearer is made to feel that the wind carries away portions of the melody, making them suddenly more faint and distant. This is notably possible in the sixth and eighth bars from the beginning of the melody proper, where the bass moves from D $\sharp$  to E, and from A to G, but requires the most delicate treatment, free from all exaggeration. Despite the rubato quality, the melody should proceed flowingly, without halting, the harmonies dissolving one into the other in an unbroken flow. A deep feeling for the underlying idea will contribute more than anything to the effective expression of the song, and lead the interpreter to throw a definite value into its every note. One may profitably spend much time seeking out the true interpretation of this elusive song.

"Inketunga's Thunder Song" is not to be found in Miss Fletcher's book, but was taken by the writer directly from a phonograph cylinder in Miss Fletcher's possession. It is one of a class known as "Songs of Personal Expression," and records the spiritual experience of a man who goes to a secluded spot to fast and commune with Wakonda, the Great Spirit. The "weeping ones," the powers that send down the rain, speak to him, and he frames his song accordingly, first in a deep ominous note typifying forth the thunder, and then in an impassioned and tremulous call, born of his impression of the lightning. This is followed again by a repetition of the ominous note, and again the lightning. Then, on a single held note the mood changes, and he feelingly proclaims that the gods have spoken to him. This strain finally sinks again to the deep mysterious note, when again we have the lightning motive repeated, and again the feeling proclamation of divine communication. We must enter fully into the spirit of this lonely vigil in the wilderness, with its deep import to the Indian, who shall ever after-



wards hold sacred to his particular individual life the signs there revealed to him,—we must realize deeply the significance of this, if we would find the key to this strange song, echoing forth amidst the loneliness of the trackless plains, the desire of a human soul to find its god. The elemental, and the infinite out-reaching human here find voice, and in perceiving the song's true spirit, we behold, momentarily, a flash of the great mystery.

"The Song of the Ghost Dance" is the most deeply and broadly pathetic of any of the following songs. Deep, for it cuts at the very heart of the Indian's life, his love of his hereditary surroundings and his racial traditions; broad, for it pertains to the entire Indian race. This song reveals the pitiful consciousness of a lost cause and a doomed race. In the extremely gradual extinction of Indian life and rights, is something more deeply tragic than in the sudden annihilation of a nation as in the case of Poland. The song, steeped in tragic gloom from first to last, tells the story plainly. Just once, when it passes to F major, is struck a more tender human note, but so plaintive that it but adds to the pathos of the whole. There is something objectively stoical in the syncopation of the first phrase, and its repetition. The following group of two antiphonal phrases, is subjective in its expression,—a species of dream-sadness, echoing from afar. The third group, beginning in F major, expresses pure human yearning, direct and unequivocal. The final return of the second group leaves one at last in a dream-world of sadness, from which there is no egress. A vast chorus, or the profound tones of the orchestra, would better suffice to give expression to this song, which stands for no single individual, but for the entire Indian race.

"The Song to the Spirit" is, despite its absolute freedom from pathetic or tragic feeling, a funeral song. The departing spirit must hear no sound of lamentation, and so this gentle song is sung, to no words, but only sighing vocables, that shall be softly wafted to the invisible spirit as it departs. Its airy quality subtly defies description; its purpose would seem to be merely to render the spirit aware that friends were gathered together to wish it a happy journey into the unknown. The song is paradoxically out of keeping with other demonstrations occurring in the same ceremony, whose character Miss Fletcher interestingly describes in her book. The song is ethereal, tenuous,—it seems to hover in the air, ready to waft in whatsoever direction the parting spirit may take. Its rendering requires a light airy touch, full of feeling, but feeling rarified, until it becomes as ethereal as the medium in which the song floats. The Indians accompany the song by beating together two willow sticks.

"The Song of the Leader" is typical of the Indian's faith and courage. At a critical moment, where a craven spirit would have retreated, the leader advances boldly, remembering that "Wakonda alone decides the destinies of men!" The song is martial, and requires only boldness of treatment in the rendering. In two places, however, marked "with solemnity," and "solemn and very broad," there should be a feeling of allargando, an increased breadth and dignity in the delivery, and a weightier touch. The song presents none of the difficulties of subjective expression that occur in other of the songs.

The meaning of the "Choral" is self-evident. It is a broad expression of religious faith, a belief in the permanency of peace and prosperity. It is unusual in that it ends in a different key from that in which it is begun, and in its continuous onward flow, without mathematical divisions of phrase. It is needless to point out that the organ would be a better medium for its expression.

Much must, of necessity, be left unexplained here, concerning the music of the Indians. Those who may be interested to study the matter further, will find Miss Fletcher's book, from which the writer first derived his knowledge of the matter, extremely interesting. In general, regarding the interpretations of the melodies, it is necessary to remember that they are songs, and that as the notes of a song blend one into the other, so must their supporting harmonies. Once the internal relations of the different parts of the songs are determined, and a deep feeling for the underlying idea brought to bear upon them, the natural and convincing interpretation will develop with a little study. It is hoped that eventually these melodies will form the basis of longer and more highly developed forms, but in the meanwhile it is thought that they will be found interesting in their original forms, with fully developed harmonies. The mottoes opposite the songs are interpretations, in Miss Fletcher's words, of the texts of the songs. The design upon the cover was exactly reproduced by Frank Chouteau Brown, from one of a number of drawings by Ohetowit, a Kiowa Indian, who, with others, was captured in the far west, and imprisoned by Captain Pratt in the old fort at St. Augustine, Florida.

The pedaling indicated is that employed by the writer, but need not necessarily be strictly followed. It is very important, however, that the pedal, held down during the sound of any given chord, should not be lifted with the striking of the next chord, but immediately after it, and then depressed again instantly. This overlapping harmonic effect is necessary to a proper flow of sound, which must necessarily be broken, should the pedal be raised before or with the striking of each new chord. The pedal

should be raised before the taking of a new chord, only where specially indicated.

The writer wishes to make grateful acknowledgment to Miss Fletcher, without whose previous labors, and whose present assistance and suggestion, this work could not have been undertaken.

Gratitude is due as well to Mr. Francis La Flesche, whose name must permanently be connected with the history of Indian music, and whose unfailing aid and influence among the members of his race made possible the accomplishment of Miss Fletcher's task.

ARTHUR FARWELL,  
Newton Center, Mass.

1901.

## **AMERICAN INDIAN MELODIES**

*Impatiently I await the commands  
of the god of war.*



***"With the dawn I seek thee."***

## II.

## The Old Man's Love Song.

Harmonized by  
ARTHUR FARWELL.

Flowingly. ♩ = 104 to 96.

*p* *dim.* *p*

*p* *poco rit.*

*a little slower.* *mf* *pp* *p a tempo.*

*poco rit.* *p*

25068



# III. Song of the Deathless Voice.

*"This was a warrior, who died the death of a warrior;  
there was joy in his voice"*

Harmonized by  
ARTHUR FARWELL.

Majestic and martial. ♩ = 72

*ffz* (like a call) *more softly*

*pp* like an echo *p*

*cresc.*

a little slower. ♩ = 63

*cresc.* *mf* *p*

25068

*a tempo.*

*p* *ffz*

Ped. Ped. Ped. \*

*p* *pp*

Ped. Ped. Ped.

*f*

Ped.

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. \*

*a little slower.* *morendo.*

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

Ped. Ped. \* Ped. Ped. Ped. \*

25068

***“The enemy comes and calls for you, Ichibuzzhi.”***

# IV. Ichibuzzhi.

17

Harmonized by  
ARTHUR FARWELL.

Presto. Light and spirited.  $\text{♩} = 144$ .

The musical score is arranged in five systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature has two flats (B-flat major). The time signature is 4/8. The tempo is Presto, and the character is light and spirited, with a quarter note equal to 144 beats per minute. The score includes various dynamics: *f* (forte), *p* (piano), and *mf* (mezzo-forte). It also features crescendo and decrescendo markings. The score is marked with 'Ped.' (pedal) and '\*' (accents) throughout. The piece concludes with a final chord in the fifth system.

25068 Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. \*

\* Ped. \* Ped. \*

\* Ped. \* Ped. \*

\* Ped. \*

*“Behold! On their mighty pinions flying,  
They come, the gods come once more  
Sweeping o’er the land,  
Sounding their call to me, to me their own.  
Wa-gi-un! Ye on mighty pinions flying,  
Look on me here, me your own,  
Thinking on my row  
As ye return once more, Wa-gi-un.*

## V.

## The Mother's Vow.

Harmonized by  
ARTHUR FARWELL.

With deep feeling and flowing rhythm. ♩ = 54.

*mf* *cresc.* *f* *appassion.* *dim.*

*ato.* *poco rit.* *p* *pp*

*pp* *f* *a tempo.* *mf* *f* *appas.* *dim.*

*poco rit.* *p* *pp*

25068

*“Wakonda! They speak to me, my friend;—  
the weeping ones they speak to me!”*

## VI.

## Inketunga's Thunder Song.

Harmonized by  
ARTHUR FARWELL.

With deep religious earnestness. ♩ = 92.

(ominously, like thunder.) *pp*

(swiftly, like a *ffz* blinding flash.) *ffz* *mp*

*ffz* *molto dim.*

with warm, but suppressed feeling flowingly. *p*

*mf* *impressively.* *a tempo* *molto dim.*

*ritard. molto dim.* *pp* *ffz* *ffz*

*p* *mf* *impressively.* *ritard. molto dim.* *pp*

25068



*“Father, have pity upon me!  
I am weeping . . . . .  
There is nothing here to satisfy me!”*

# VII.

## Song of the Ghost Dance.

Harmonized by  
ARTHUR FARWELL.

With solemnity and breadth. ♩ = 52.

*mf*

*even and sustained.* *more softly.*

*cresc.* *f*

*mf* *p* *poco rit.*

25068

The Indian has no words,  
but merely vocables, for  
this song.

VIII.  
Song to the Spirit.

Harmonized by  
**ARTHUR FARWELL.**

**Smoothly, with feeling.** ♩ = 88.

Smoothly, with feeling. ♩ = 88.

The musical score is written for piano and features a continuous accompaniment of eighth-note chords in the left hand. The right hand contains the melody, which includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings. The tempo is marked as 88 beats per minute. The score is divided into four systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The first system includes the instruction 'In light, flowing rhythm.' and a piano (p) dynamic. The second system includes a piano (p) dynamic and a diminuendo (dim.) marking. The third system includes a piano (p) dynamic. The fourth system includes a piano (p) dynamic, a diminuendo and ritardando (dim. e rit.) marking, and a final piano (p) dynamic. The score concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

*p* In light, flowing rhythm.

*p* *dim.*

*p*

*p* *dim. e rit.* *p*

## IX.

## Song of the Leader.

*"I am advancing, I am moving toward you.  
Behold me, young men, warriors of the Sioux!  
Here I stand. Wa-kon'-da alone decides the  
destinies of men."*

Harmonized by  
ARTHUR FARWELL.

Martial and broad. ♩. = 63.

*mf*

*Red. \** *Red. \** *Red. \** *Red. \** *simili.*

*with spirit*

*f* *ff* *with*

25063

Musical score for "The Rose Tree" in G major, 2/4 time. The score is for a piano accompaniment. The right hand (treble clef) features a melody with eighth and sixteenth notes, and a final measure with a whole note. The left hand (bass clef) provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords. The tempo/mood is marked "solemnity." Below the staves, the lyrics "The Rose Tree" are written, with the word "The" repeated seven times, each followed by a dashed line for a vocal line. The final three "The"s are followed by an asterisk (\*).

Red. ----- Red. ----- Red. \* Red. \* Red. \* simili.

A musical score for the song 'The Rose Tree'. The score is written for a piano and voice. The piano part is in the left hand, and the voice part is in the right hand. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The piano part features a series of chords in the left hand, with a forte (ff) dynamic marking. The voice part consists of a single line of music with a melodic line and a bass line. The lyrics are written below the voice part.

*solemn and very broad.*

*ff* *ff*

25068 —

Rea — — — — — Rea — — — — — Rea — — — — — Rea — — — — — Rea — — — — —

\*

*“Down through the ages vast,  
On wings strong and true,  
From great Wa-kon-da comes  
Good will unto you,—  
Peace, that shall here remain.”*

## X.

## Choral.

Harmonized by  
ARTHUR FARWELL.

With religious feeling. ♩ = 112.

The first system of musical notation consists of a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The time signature is common time (C). The melody is written in the treble clef, and the accompaniment is in the bass clef. The melody features a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some rests. The accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note pattern in the bass. There are eight measures in this system.

The second system of musical notation continues the piece. It features a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The key signature remains two flats. The melody in the treble clef includes a half note and a quarter note. The bass clef accompaniment continues with eighth notes. There are eight measures in this system.

The third system of musical notation is the final system on the page. It features a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The key signature remains two flats. The melody in the treble clef includes a half note and a quarter note. The bass clef accompaniment continues with eighth notes. There are eight measures in this system. The number 25062 is printed at the beginning of the system.



