

the mouth or throat should be avoided. One should open the mouth enough to avoid obstruction of the tone by the lips or teeth.

4. The voice should be natural and unpretentious. The ideals of popular, art, concert, and opera singing do not apply to the *Sacred Harp*. In particular, few traditional *Sacred Harp* singers produce a conscious vibrato, or pulsation of the voice. In group singing, vibrato can create undesired harmonic effects.

5. Every word should be pronounced correctly and distinctly. Words are divided into syllables as they are vocalized naturally, not necessarily as the dictionary may divide them. Thus, one sings "mu-sic" (not "mus-ic") and "sto-ry" (not "stor-y").

6. "The" is pronounced "thee" when it precedes a word beginning with a vowel (a, e, i, o, u, sometimes w or y) or vowel sound. Otherwise, especially if unaccented, it can be pronounced "thuh."

THEE angel of the the Lord came down.

THEE iron fetters yield.

THEE honor of thy name.

Were THEE whole realm of nature mine?

THEE yearning of the heart.

CHAPTER VII  
METER

1. Poetic meter is the pattern of accented (symbol /) and unaccented (symbol —) syllables. The fundamental unit is the foot. The common feet are the iamb, trochee, anapest, and dactyl.

iamb = — /    trochee = / —    anapest = — — /    dactyl = / — —

2. The titles in the *Sacred Harp* are for tunes or pieces of music. Each tune is suited to a particular poetic meter. A metrical designation, printed next to the title, gives the meter of the appropriate poetry. Any poetry with this meter can be sung as a tune is not restricted to the poetry printed with it.

3. One type of metrical designation gives the number of syllables in each line and number of lines in a stanza (verse). Thus, 9898 denotes a four-line stanza with nine and eight syllables per line, alternating. In addition, some standard meters are named.

common meter, C.M.:            iambic 8,6,8,6

common meter double, C.M.D.:    iambic 8,6,8,6,8,6,8,6

long meter, L.M.:                iambic 8,8,8,8

long meter double, L.M.D.:        iambic 8,8,8,8,8,8,8,8

short meter, S.M.:                iambic 6,6,8,6

short meter double, S.M.D.:        iambic 6,6,8,6,6,8,6

common particular meter, C.P.M.:    iambic 8,8,6,8,8,6

long particular meter, L.P.M.:        iambic 8,8,8,8,8,8

meter hallelujah, H.M.:            iambic 6,6,6,6,8,8

common meter hallelujah, C.H.M.:    iambic 8,8,6,8,8,6

meter 12s, M.T. or 12,12,12,12:    anapestic 12,12,12,12

meter 8s and 7s:                    trochaic 8,7,8,7

meter 11s:                            anapestic 11,11,11,11

meter 7s:                              trochaic 7,7,7,7

4. Particular meter, P.M., denotes poetry with its own peculiar meter, that is, not one of the standard meters. A hymn in a particular meter requires a special tune for that meter.

CHAPTER VIII  
HARMONY AND COMPOSITION

1. Harmony consists of tones sounded simultaneously. Composition involves the art of binding tones together in a pleasing and interesting way.

2. Harmony is the most distinctive feature of *Sacred Harp* music. It sets it apart from most other music.

3. Late 18th-century New England composers (represented in the *Sacred Harp* by Billings, Read, Swan, Morgan, and others) used harmony that is basically tertian, that is, based on intervals of thirds. In contrast, the harmony used by the early 19th-century compilers of singing-school manuals (such as the *Sacred Harp*) is basically quartal, that is, based on intervals of fourths and their close relatives, fifths. In the early 20th century, alto parts were added to the three-part pieces in the *Sacred Harp*, resulting in a hybrid harmony, part quartal and part tertian.

4. *Sacred Harp* harmony does not follow the rules of conventional harmony, which were well established by the late 18th century. Billings fiercely declared his independence ("I don't think myself confined to any rules of composition laid down by any who went before me") and he practiced what he preached. Later compilers of singing-school manuals copied their rudiments from one another and, ultimately, from works describing conventional harmony, but they paid little attention to these rudiments when composing or arranging.

5. In polyphony, no one part stands out. *Sacred Harp* music is polyphonic. The tune (melody, air) is carried by the tenor part, but the other parts, ideally, are good melodies on their own, making all parts interesting.

Conventional harmony is homophonic. The tune is assigned to high voices, usually