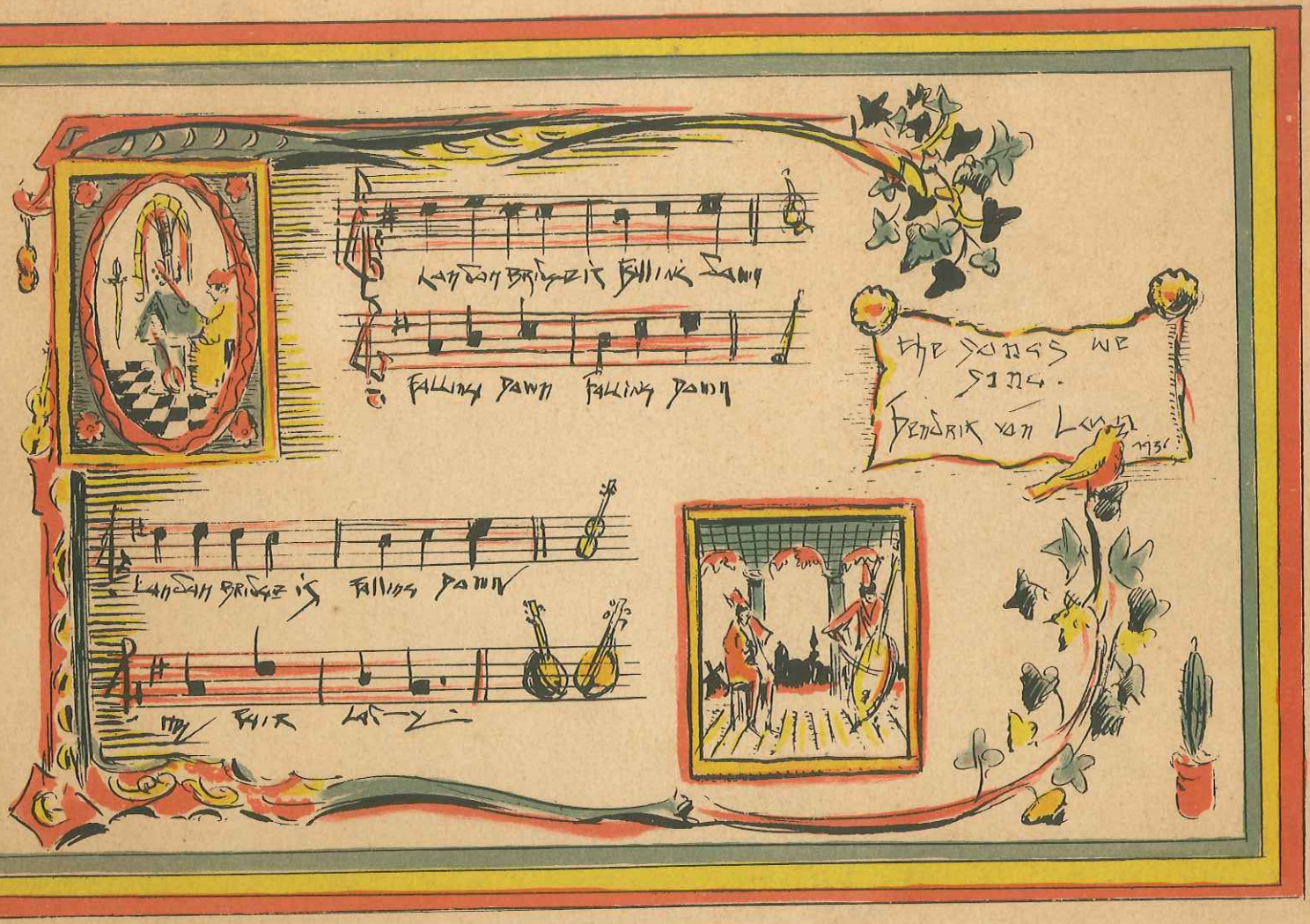
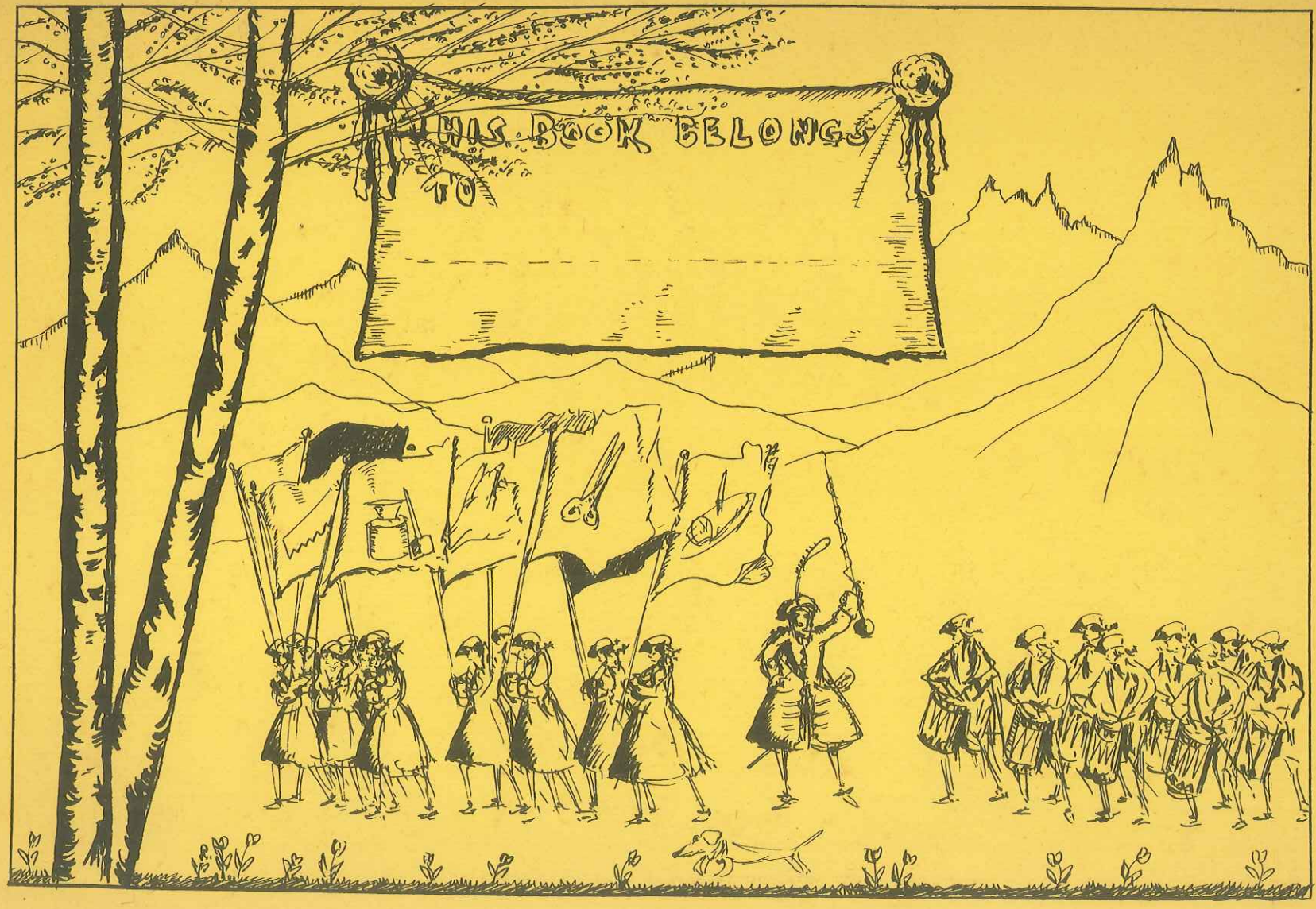
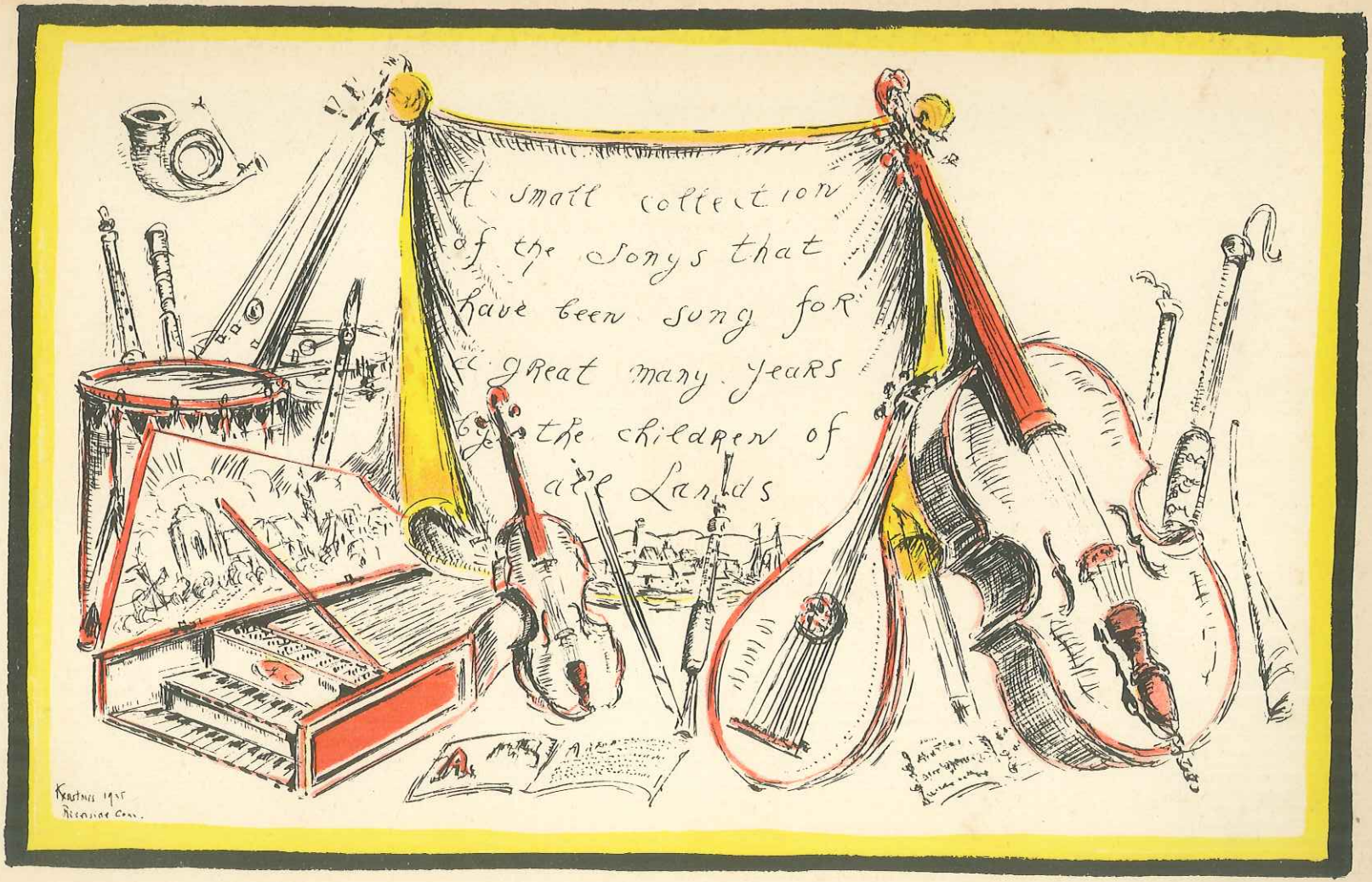

London Bridge is falling down
Falling down falling down
The songs we sing.
Hendrik van Loon
London Bridge is falling down
My fair lady


THIS BOOK BELONGS
TO


A small collection
of the Songs that
have been sung for
a Great many Years
by the children of
all Lands

The Pictures were written by me and I also drew the Text but the Musick for the Songs was arranged by

Grace Castagnetta

who plays the Harpsichord so well that I quite often suspect her of having learned her wondrous Craft from Johann Sebastian Bach himself but she says "No".

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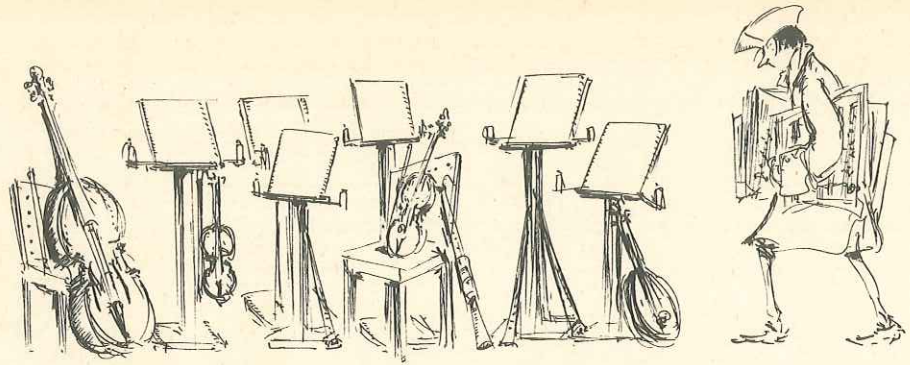
Published by Simon and Schuster, Inc.
Rockefeller Center, 1230 Sixth Avenue
New York, N. Y.

Manufactured in the United States of America

Allegro
Ped.
to Harold Bauer
these little pictures and tunes
are dedicated
con Amore and con Fuoco



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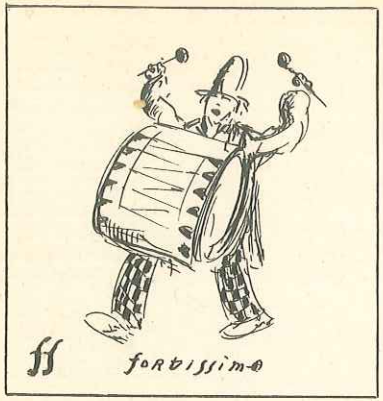
THE piano is a delightful piece of furniture and it is of course lots of fun to climb on the piano-stool and hammer away with both hands at all the keys at the same time, making a most agreeable noise until some one in the next room yells, "Stop it! For Heaven's sake, stop it!" Whereupon you feel very sad, for you are an artist, but nobody else seems to appreciate the fact, and what makes it so terribly unfair is this: less than five minutes after you yourself have been so unceremoniously removed from your high perch, one of the grown-ups (but they are all of them that way—these grown-ups!) will begin to play. And then everybody suddenly seems to be quite happy about it and even Aunt Emily (who is a pretty critical sort of person) will occasionally remark, "Now that was perfectly lovely!" with the accent on the "that."

Evidently therefore there must be something more to this piano-playing business than mere noise—than just banging away at all the keys with all your ten fingers at the same time. Evidently there must be a trick connected with it—a trick which you have not yet discovered.

Yes, to tell you the truth, there is a trick. Or perhaps not exactly a trick, for the word "trick" presupposes something easy. But even were you to grow as old as Paderewski (who is now quite a venerable old gentleman) you would still find that there are a lot of new "tricks" which you had never even suspected.

Now the people of the year 1936 happen to live in a world that has gone mad about "short-cuts." But unfortunately there are not any short-cuts in Nature, and it never pays to try to be brighter than Mother Nature herself. I say this on purpose so that you won't get the idea that this little book is some sort of a short-cut to piano-playing or to singing or to any other form of music.

It is nothing of the sort. The serious business of learning the piano or the violin will come later and it will take a great many years before you will be able to make those obstinate and clumsy fingers of yours do exactly what you want them to do. And this volume makes no serious pretence at all. It is the glass of tomato-juice you get before the regular meal.



It is what we grown-ups call an "appetizer"—something of no great importance in itself but which is meant to give you more of an appetite for the soup and the substantial roast beef and potatoes and vegetables that come afterwards.

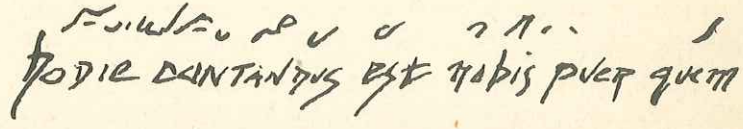
Most of these tunes therefore will have to be played for you by your mother or your older sister. But I am sure that you will derive lots more fun out of singing these songs if you have some idea about what you are actually doing.

You sing your songs according to the notes printed in this book. Now, what are notes? Notes are the letters by means of which we write down our music and preserve the tunes of today for the people of tomorrow.

They are a very recent invention. The people of the East had learned how to preserve ideas by means of "letters" about 5000 years ago. But mankind struggled along with all sorts of clumsy systems of notation—notes indicated by means of the letters of the alphabet and notes indicated by means of funny little pothooks, that looked for all the world like a page of shorthand. Mankind struggled painfully along with all these unsatisfactory make-shifts until the very end of the tenth century.

Then a bright Italian by the name of Guido, who hailed from the village of Arezzo and therefore became known as Guido of Arezzo, came upon the scene. Guido was a monk, a Benedictine monk, and he was born during the latter part of the tenth century and he died probably in or near the year 1050.

In his monastery he taught singing, but being a practical sort of person, he soon grew tired of trying to make his pupils understand the complicated system of notation (of note-writing, as we would say) that was then in existence. And so he devised one of his own which was intended to do away with the old musical shorthand which had looked very much like this



As you can well understand, the teachers of the older school, who were making a comfortable living out of giving instruction in the intricate and confused old method—they did not in the least like the idea of losing their livelihood just because somebody else had invented something a little more practical. And they combined against Guido, who thereupon suffered the fate of most great inventors and innovators and was forced to give up his position and leave his monastery.

But meanwhile news of his invention had spread far and

wide, for with Guido's system it took only five or six months to teach what it had taken nine or ten years to do under the older system. And so the Pope (Pope John XIX who occupied the Holy See from 1024 until 1033) sent for him and thereafter Guido worked quietly in Rome and he was left in peace, but how or when he died, we do not know. It must have been, as I said a moment ago, somewhere during the middle of the eleventh century, for after the year 1050 we no longer find his name in any of the contemporary chronicles.

What Guido did for us was this. He recognized, as you will do too as soon as you have started humming your first tune, that your voice is forever moving either upward or downward. You may hold the same note for a few seconds, but then your voice will move either upward or downward, for otherwise the tune would become hopelessly monotonous, like the buzzing of a fly.

Now in order to follow your voice on its upward and downward voyage, Guido gave us a little ladder—a "scale," for the word *scala* is Italian for "ladder." In the beginning that scale or ladder consisted of only two rungs and up and down those two rungs, Guido placed eight notes—those which were within the singing range of the average voice. There are of course many more notes in nature than those eight. On your piano you will find at least fifty-four of them. On the harp, almost as many. The violin uses only two-thirds of that number. And the man who blows the trumpet, only one-third while most voices have to content themselves with fifteen or twenty.

But all this is really more than you need know for the present. A single octave—a single row of eight notes—will probably be quite sufficient for all your needs.

The ladder or scale was afterwards made a little more complicated by the addition of three more rungs. Thereupon our eight notes had five rungs on which to play their little game of tag.

Now, as you will surely find out for yourself just as soon as you have sung a few tunes, there is just as much difference between notes as there is between people. Some people are tall and thin and others are short and stout. In the same way, some of those notes are much bigger than others and they will be held much longer than the small and short ones. Some of them take a whole mouthful of breath: Taaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa, while others are short and crisp: ta ta ta ta ta ta ta, like the rattling of a riveting machine.

For the general convenience of our musicians, we have therefore divided the notes into eight different sorts, but you will rarely need more than the first four members of the family. These are the 𝅝 or whole notes, the 𝅗𝅥 or half notes, the ♩ or quarter, and the ♪ or eighth notes.

Upon our little ladder—on our scale—the full notes will move upward and downward with slow and ceremonious

dignity. The half notes will of course go a little faster, while the eighth notes rush down the stairs like children hastening home from school.

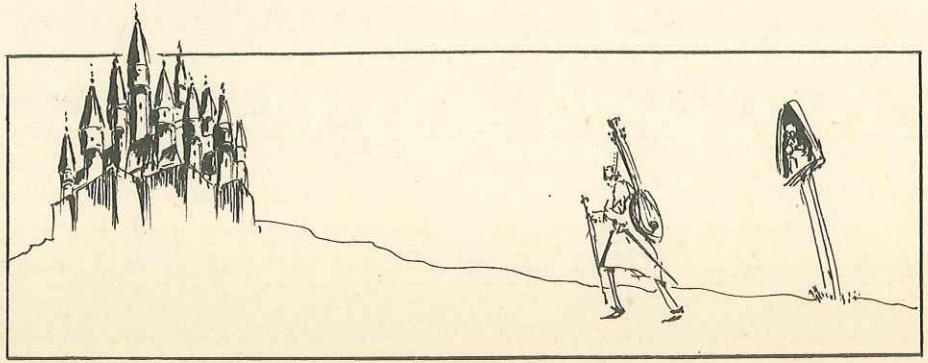
As a rule a ladder of five steps is quite sufficient for all the running up and down of these notes, both big and small, but when the music gets a little more intricate, that five-rung ladder is no longer enough for their needs. We then give each of the notes a little individual rung of its own to which to stand. But that is really not very important right here and now, as you will rarely meet those higher or lower notes, at least in the present volume.

And that, my dear children, seems to be about all you will need to learn to be able to sing these songs, except for a few warning signs which tell you when to sing loudly or "forte" and very loud or "fortissimo" (we have never yet got away from the original Italian names for such things) and when to sing softly or "piano" or very softly or "pianissimo."

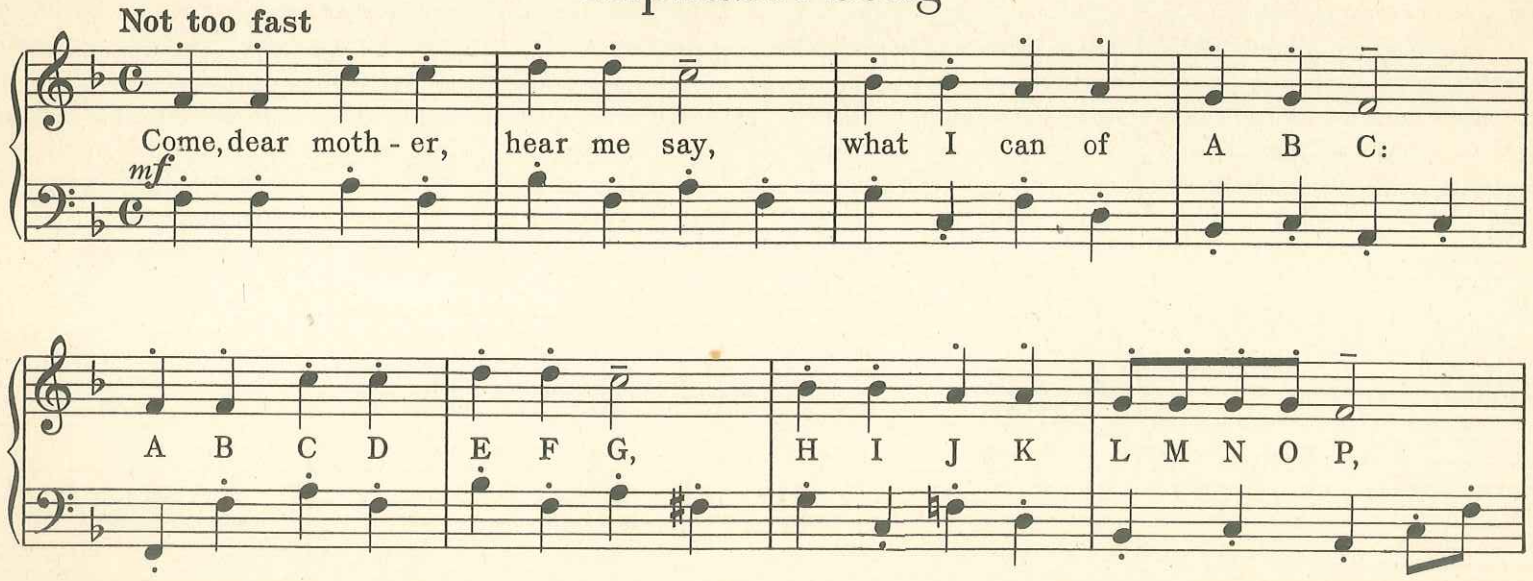
By the way, that is why that nice big piece of furniture in the parlor is called a "*piano e forte*" or pianoforte. It was the first instrument of its kind that could produce both soft (or *piano*) and loud (or *forte*) notes. People soon found that pianoforte was much too long a word for comfort and so they simply called it "the piano."

That is all I am going to tell you. I am afraid that it has been quite a long story and you may have to read it twice or even three times. But if some one will explain it to you with one hand on the piano, and then show you with the other hand how the little notes are playing tag on the five-rung scale, you will find that it is really quite simple.

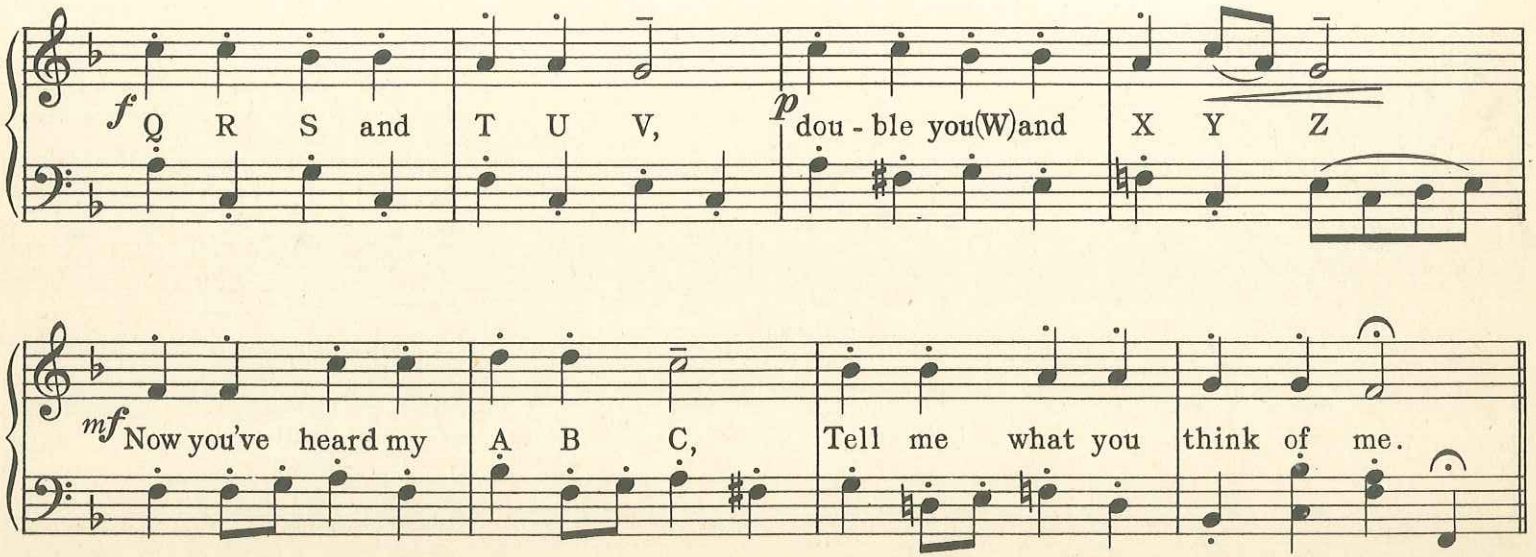
And anyway in music, as in all the other arts, one hour of practice is of greater value than a hundred hours of "talking about it." And so, not a word more from me and I shall now turn you over to Grace Castagnetta and if she will be just kind enough, we start right out with the first tune . . .

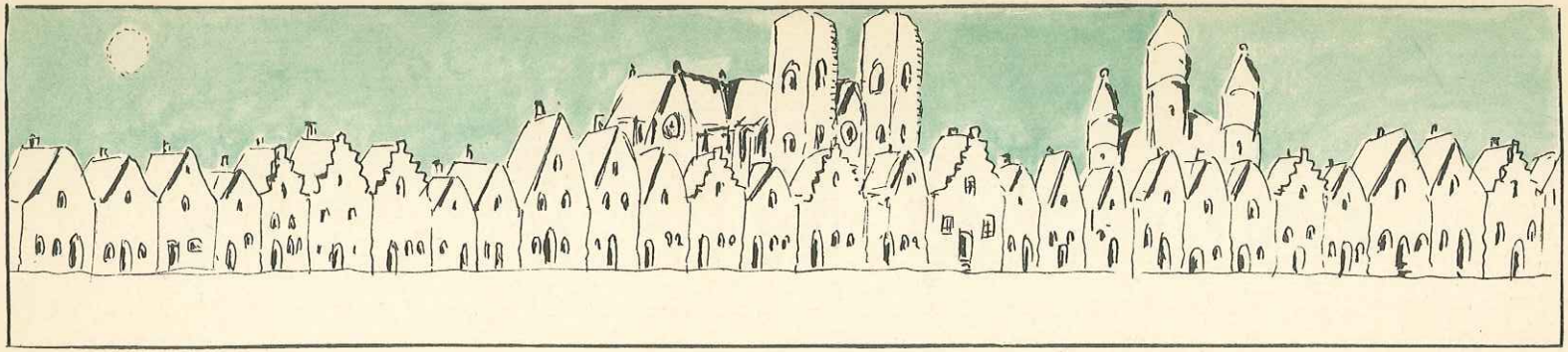


Alphabet Song



H I J K L M N P


f Q R S and T U V,
p dou - ble you(W)and X Y Z
mf Now you've heard my A B C,
Tell me what you think of me.



Au Clair de la Lune

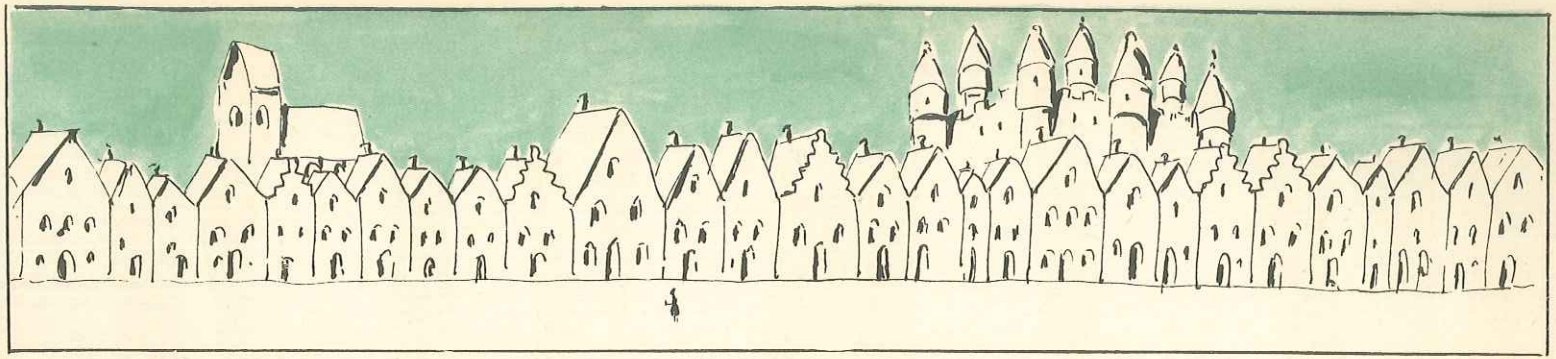
Slowly, with expression

p Good pier - rot I beg you, In the moon - light bright,
Au clair de la lu - ne, mon a - mi Pier - rot,

sfz *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

Your quill pen to lend me, For I long to write.
prê - te moi ta plu - me pour é - crire un mot.

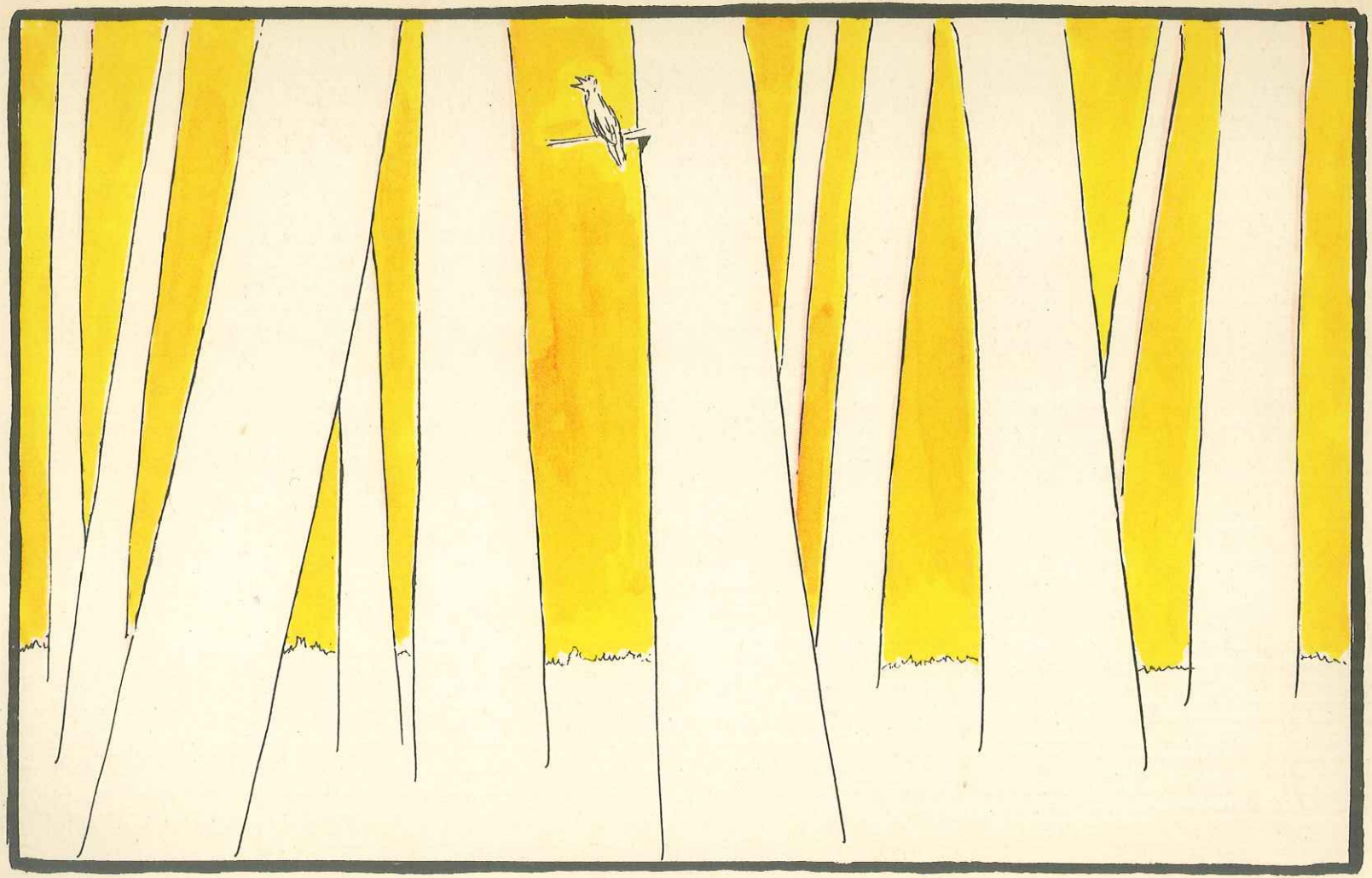
sfz *sf* *sfz* *sfz*



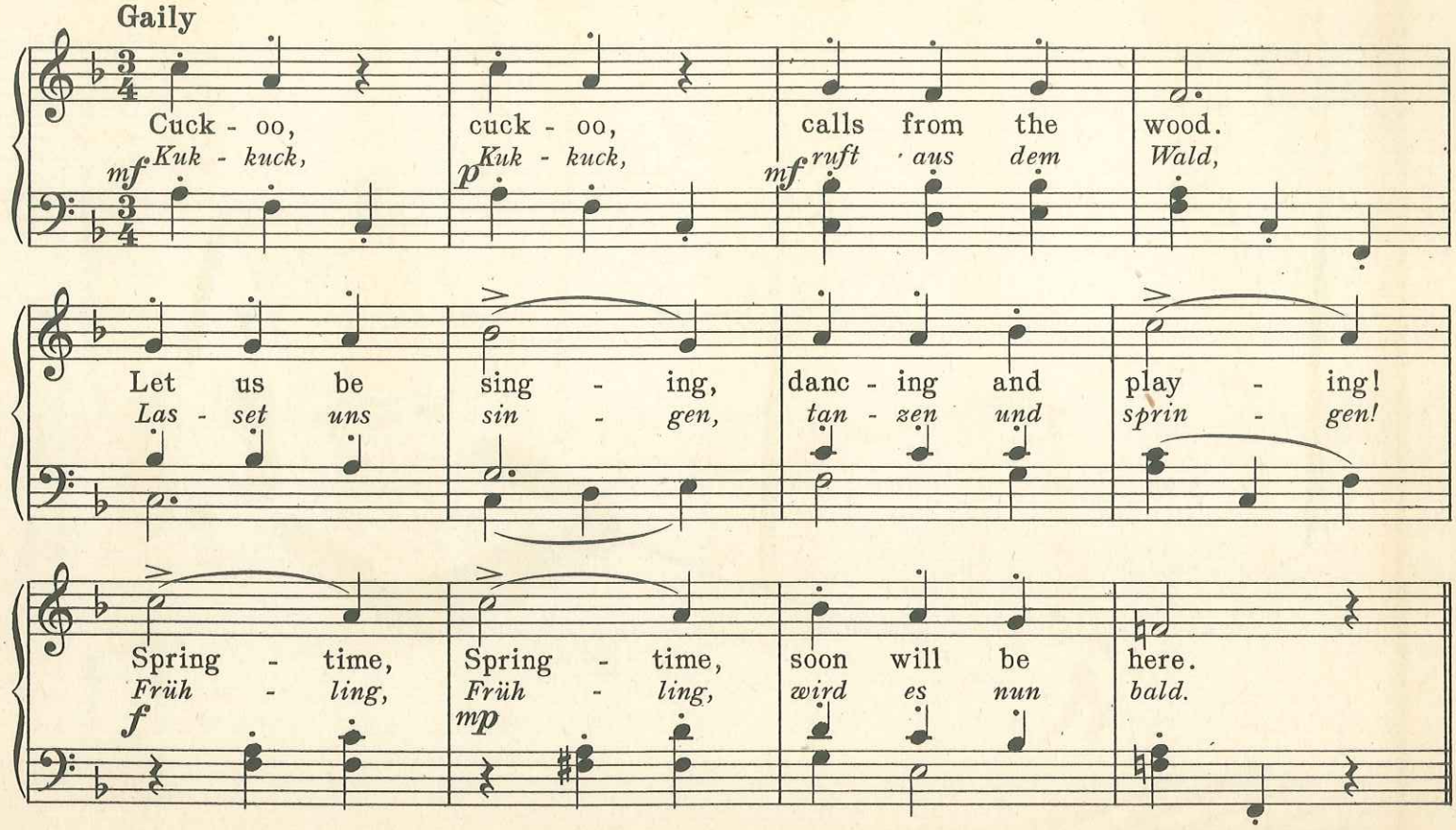
mf Burned out is my can - dle, And my fire's out too.
Ma chan - delle est mor - te, Je n'ai plus de feu.

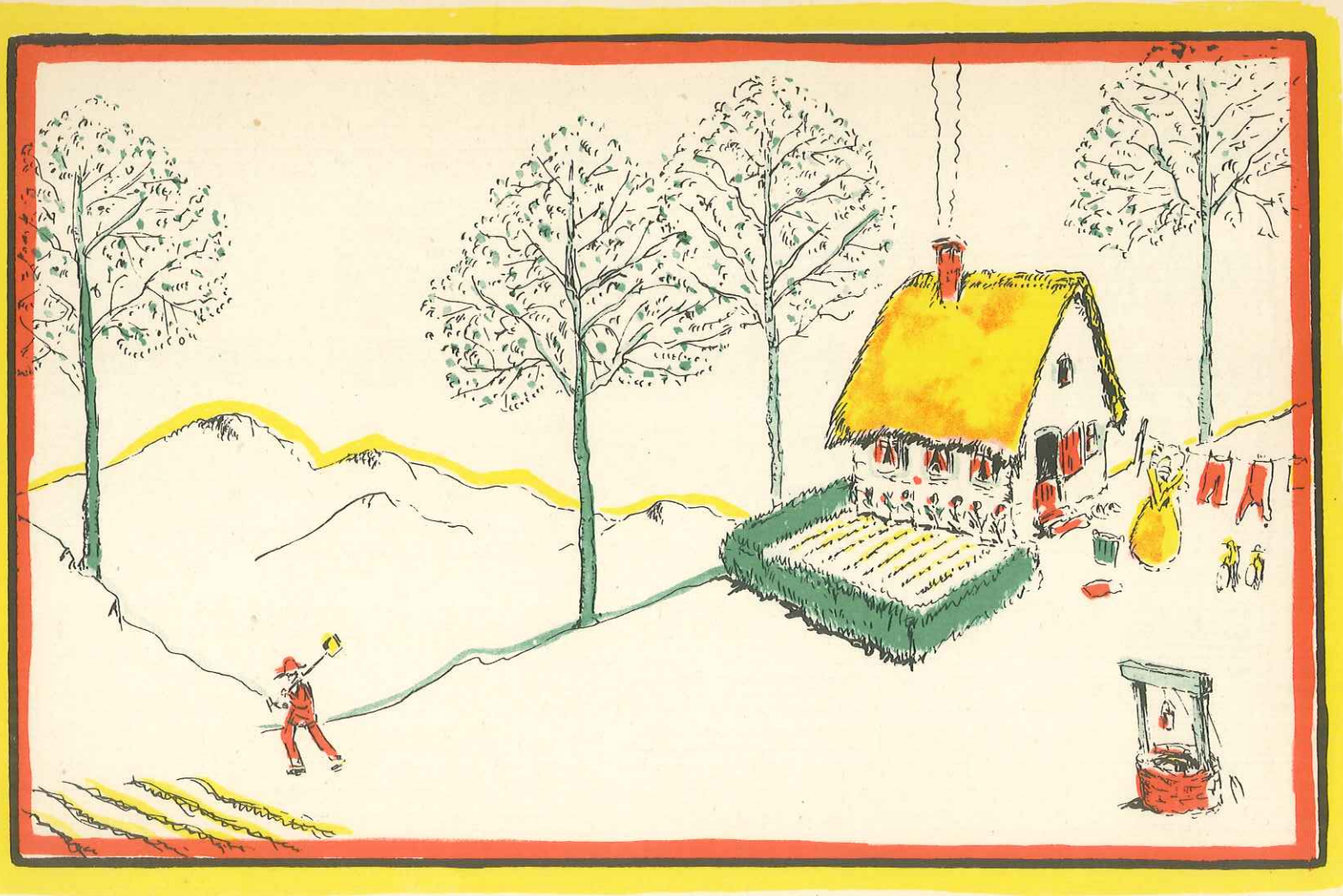
p Come, the door please o - pen, Let me in, pray do!
Ouv - re moi ta por - te Pour l'a - mour de Dieu.

sfz *sfz* *sfz*

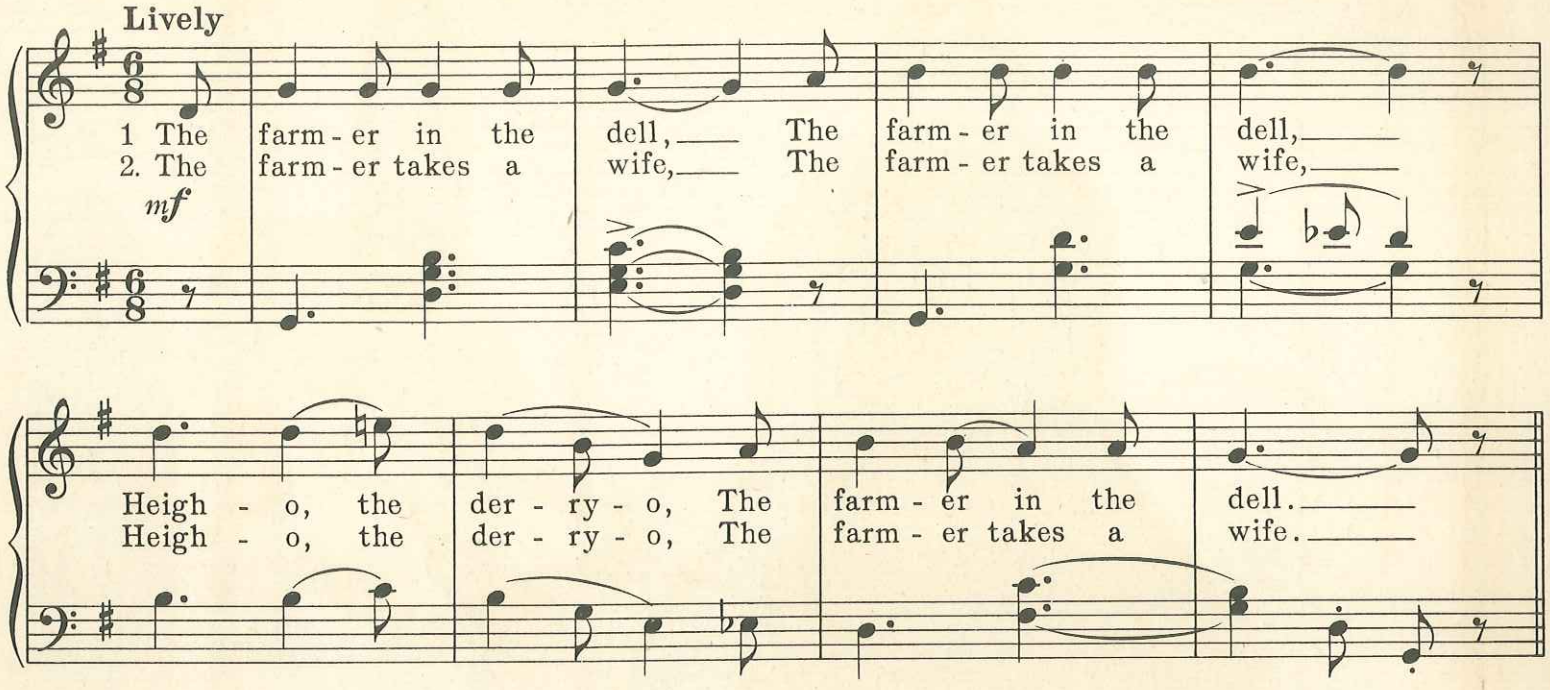


Cuckoo Calls from the Wood

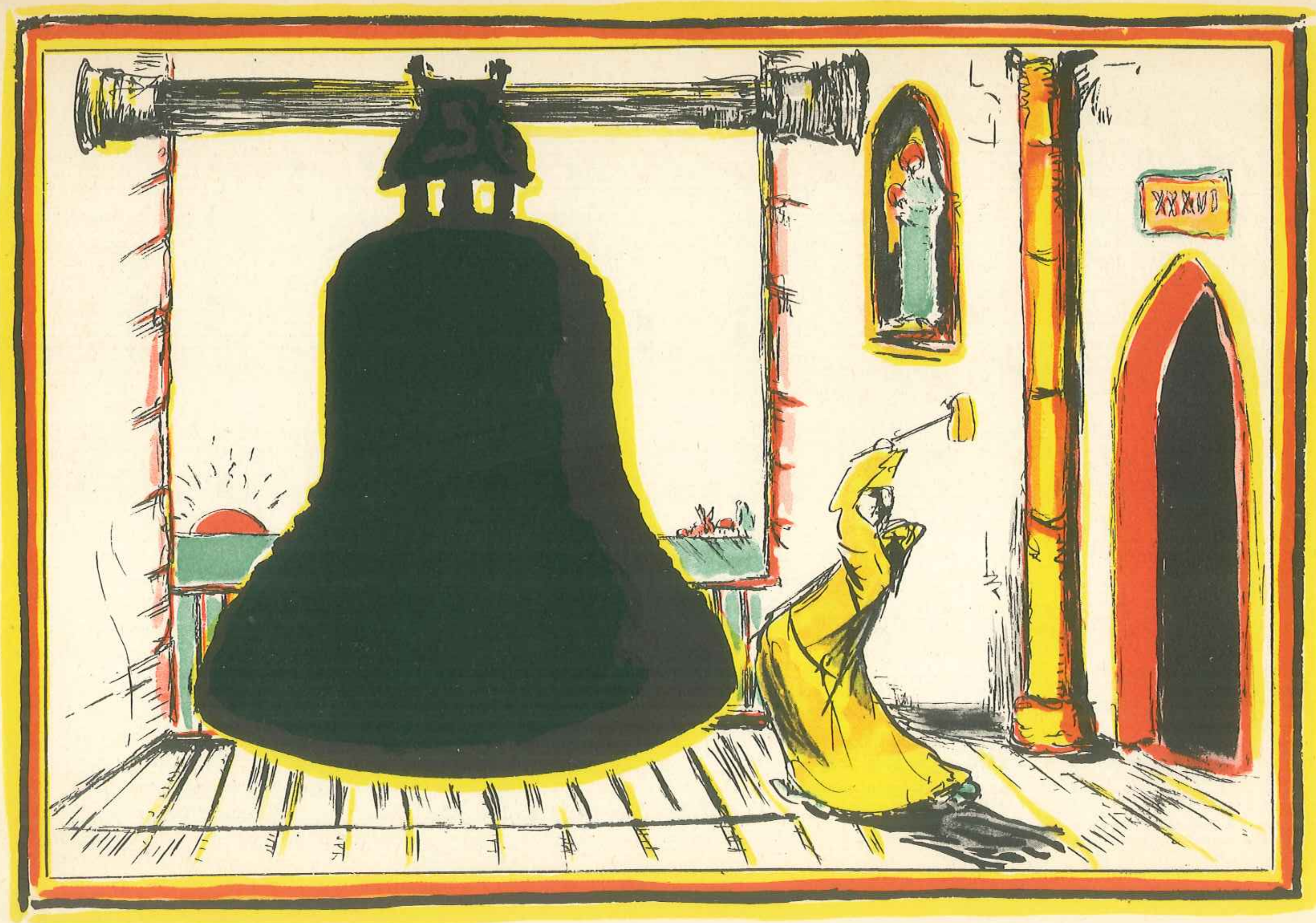




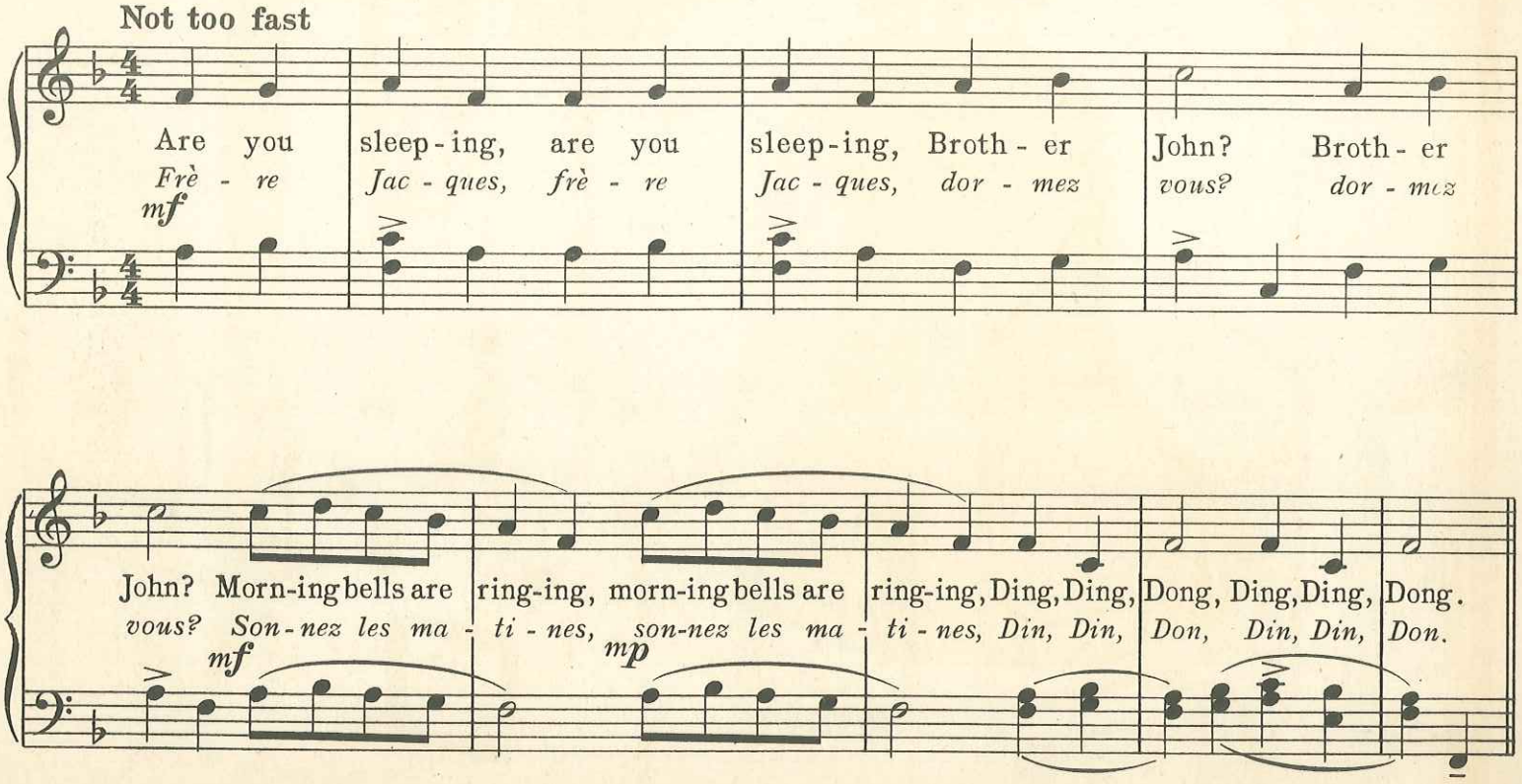
Farmer in the Dell

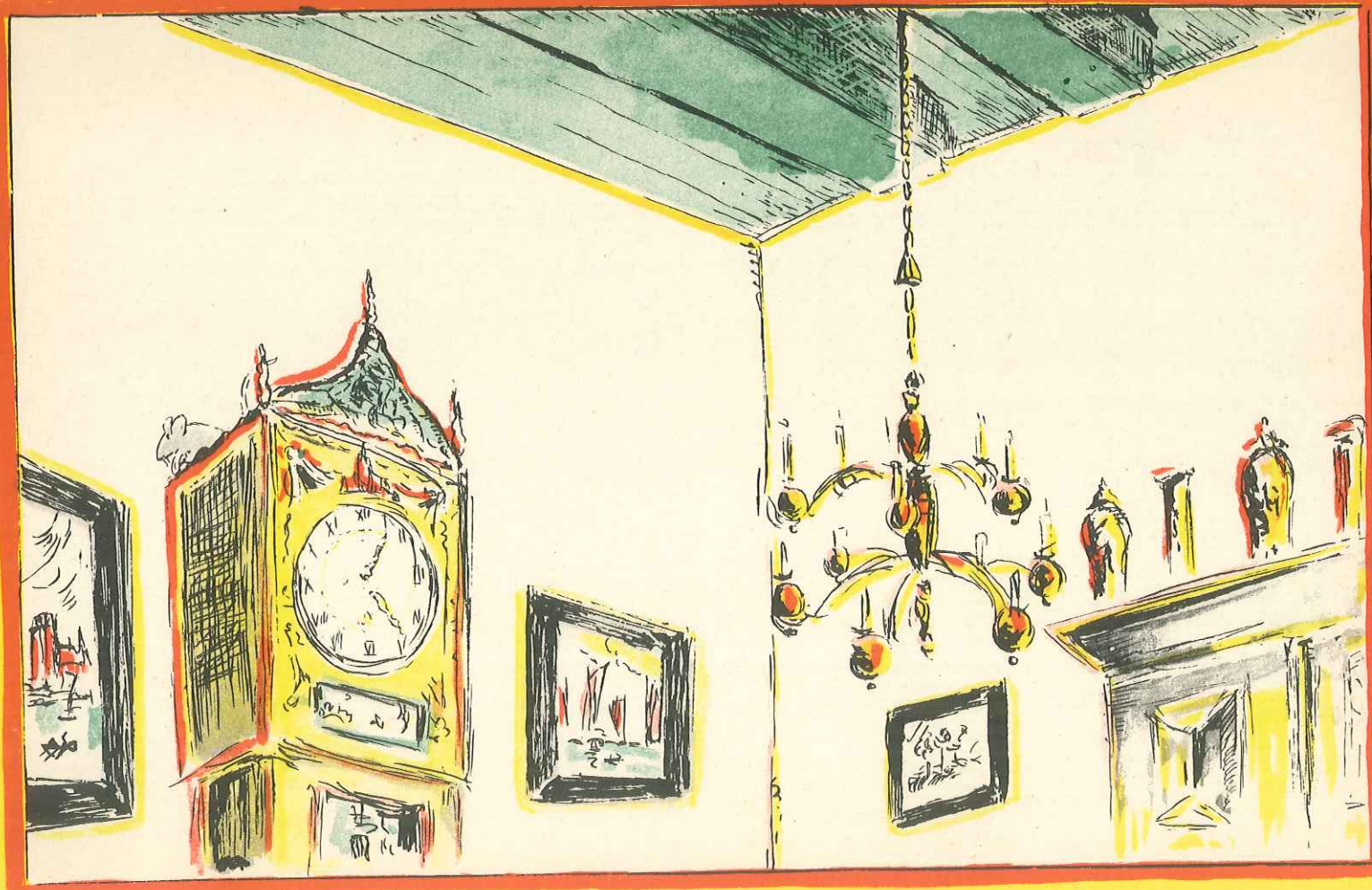


3. The wife takes a child etc.
4. The child takes a nurse etc.
5. The nurse takes a dog etc.
6. The dog takes the cat etc.
7. The cat takes a rat etc.
8. The rat takes a cheese etc.
9. The cheese stands alone etc.

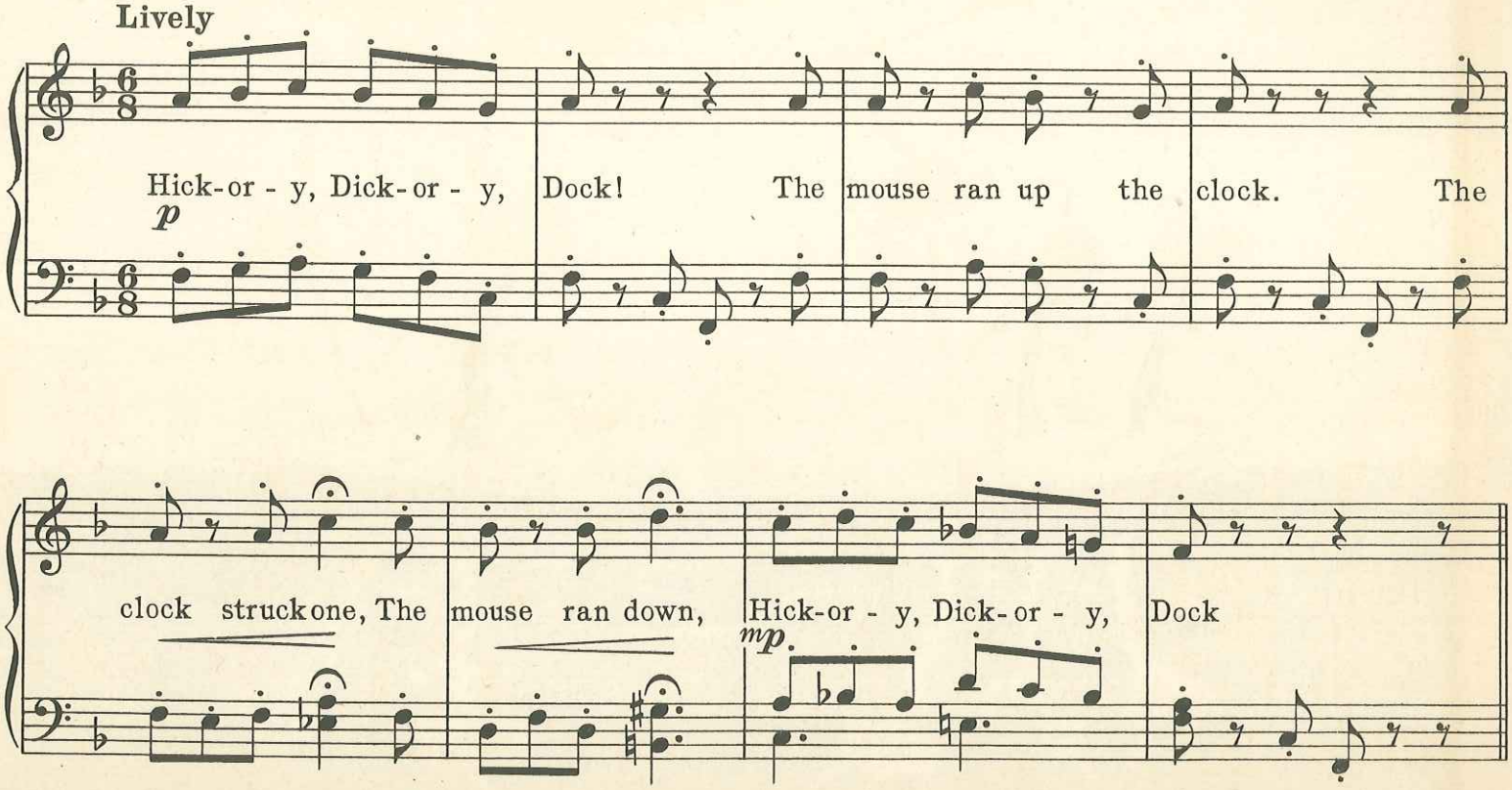

XXXVI

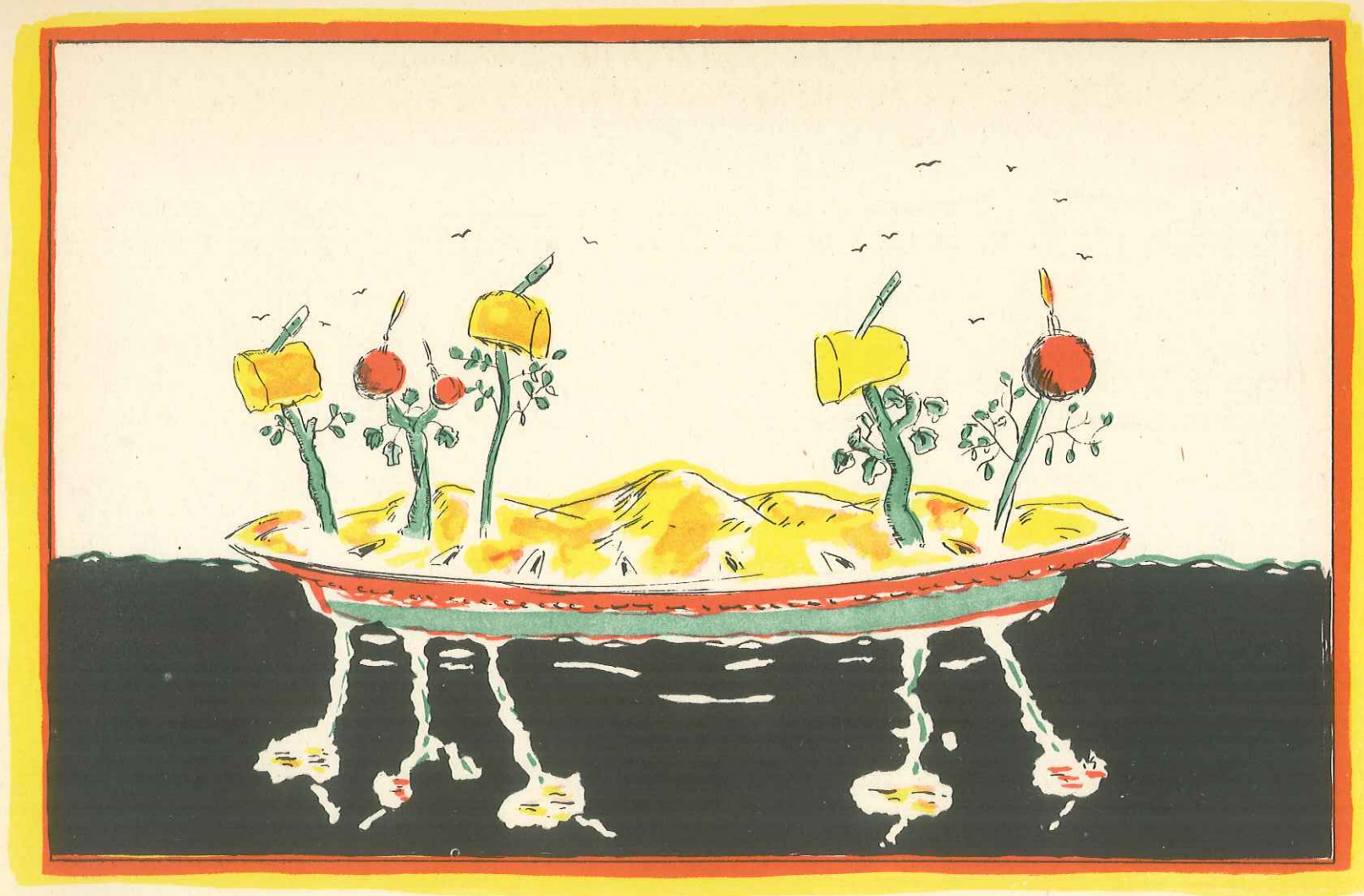
Frère Jacques



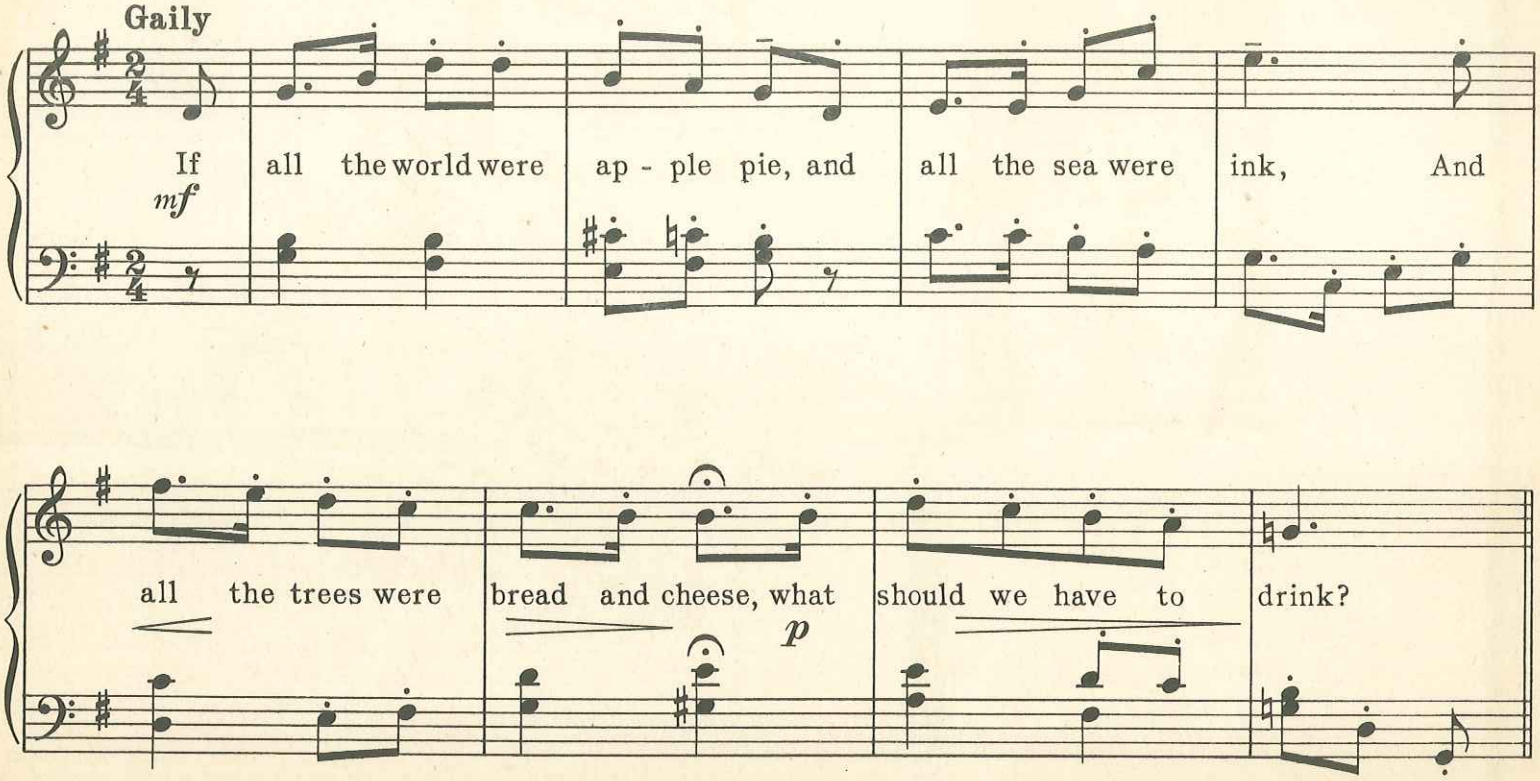


Hickory, Dickory, Dock

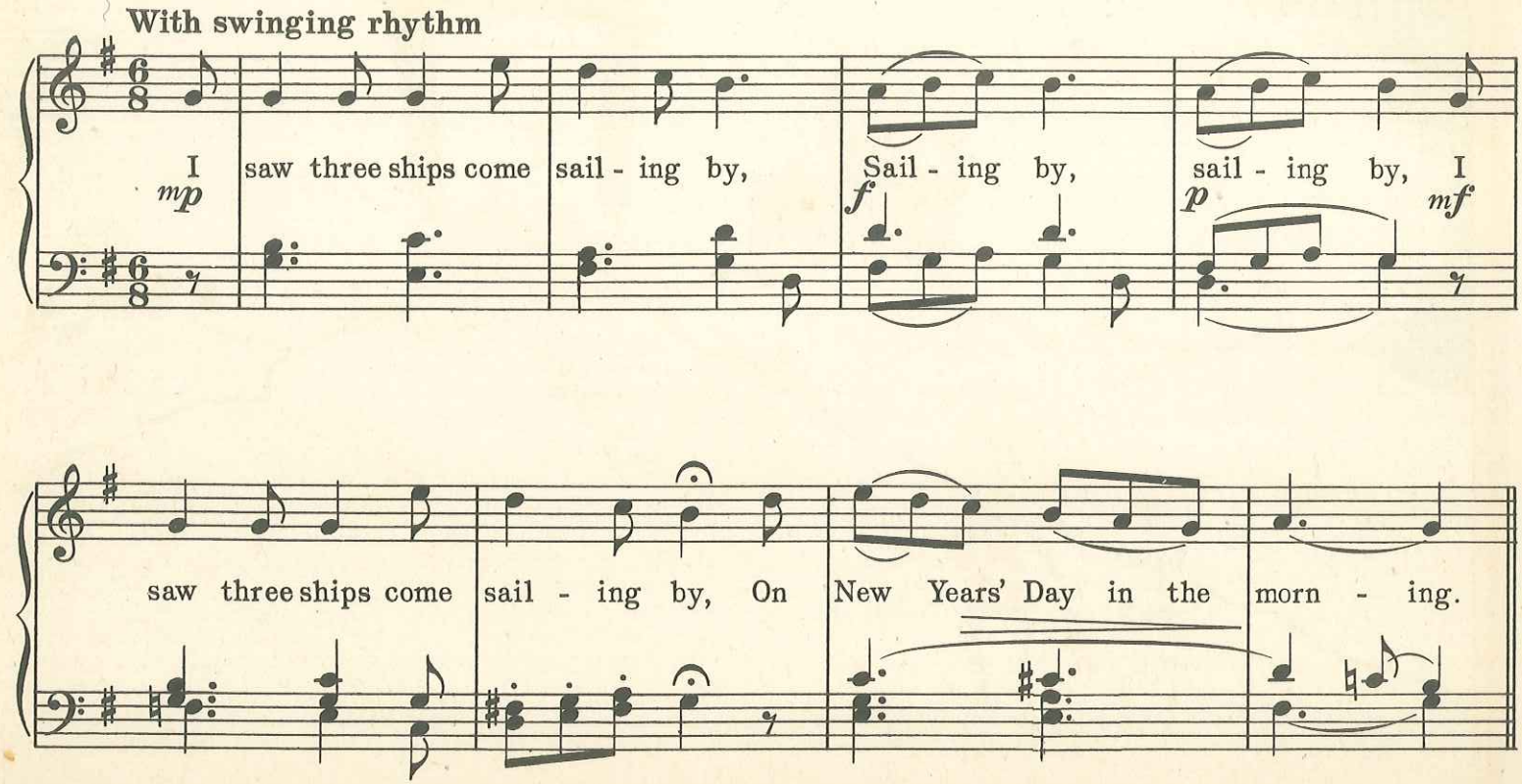


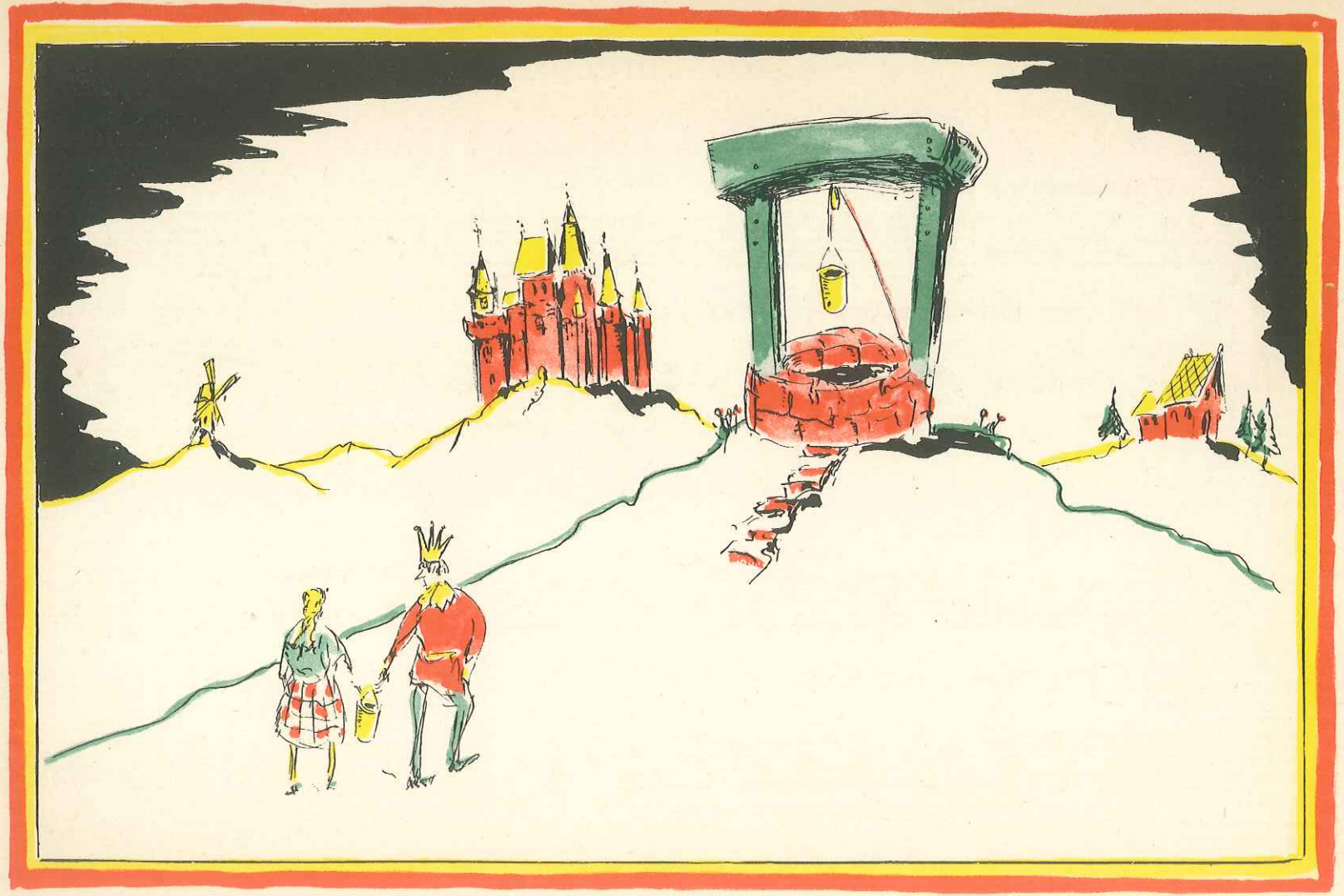


If all the World . . .

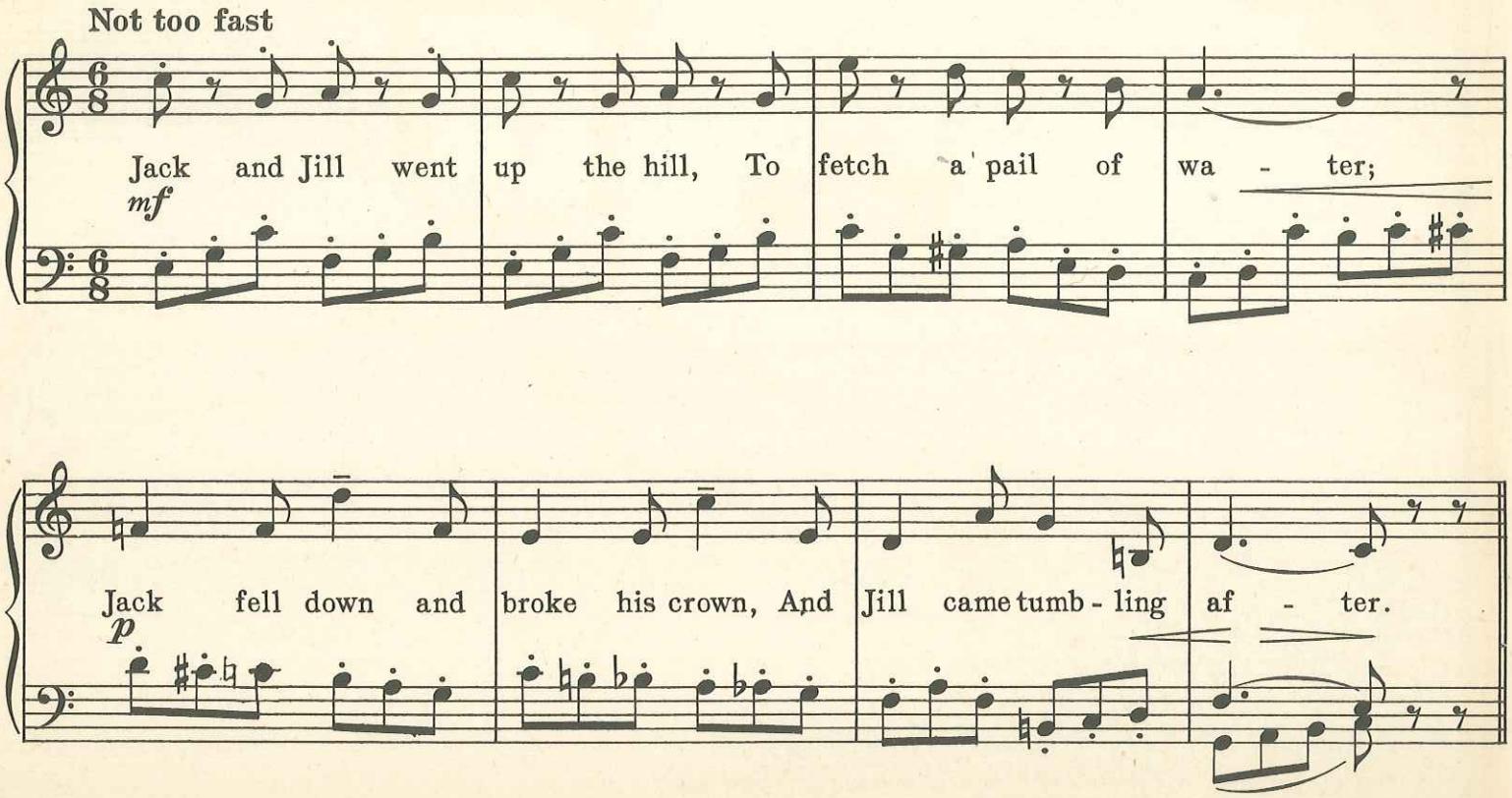


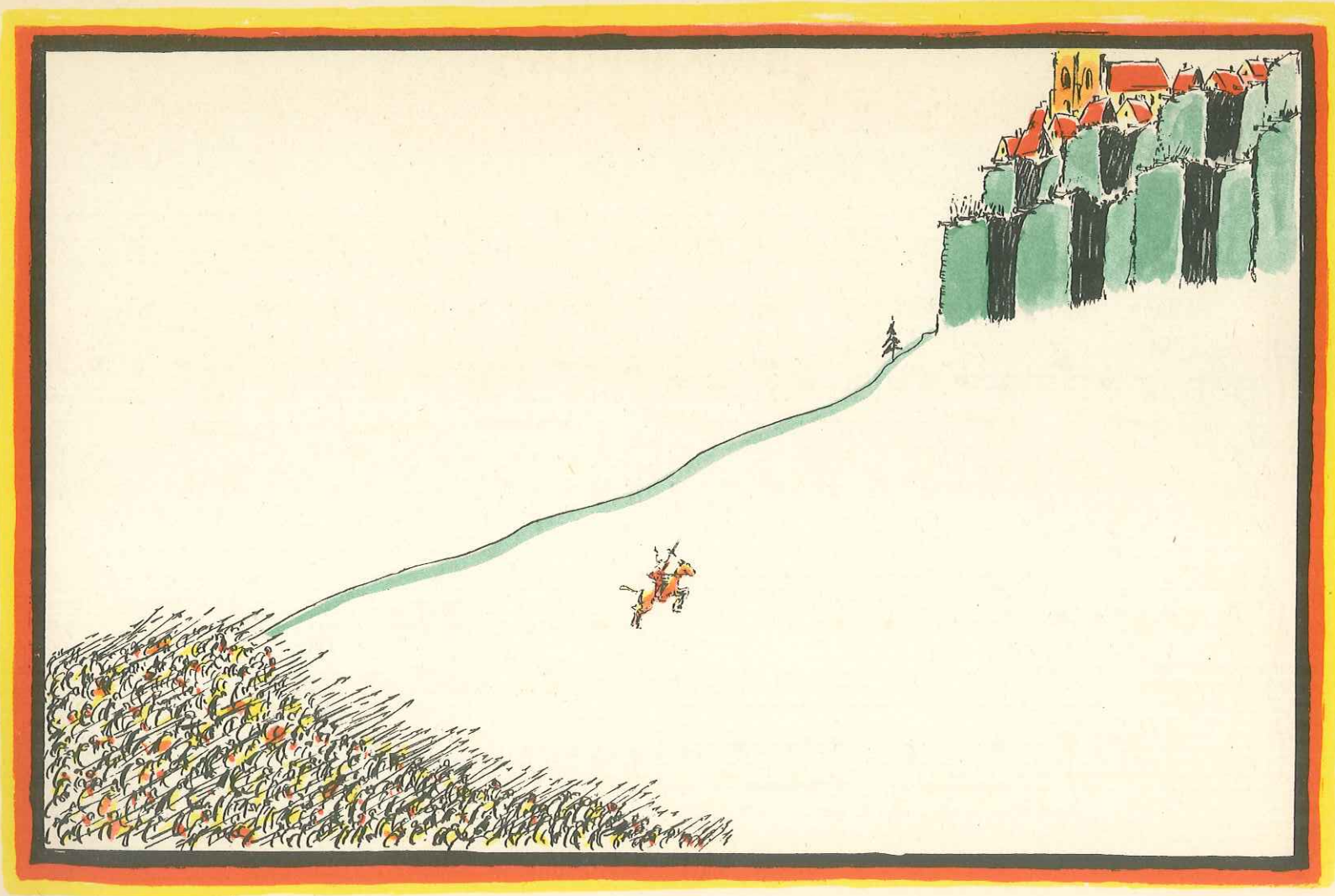
I Saw Three Ships



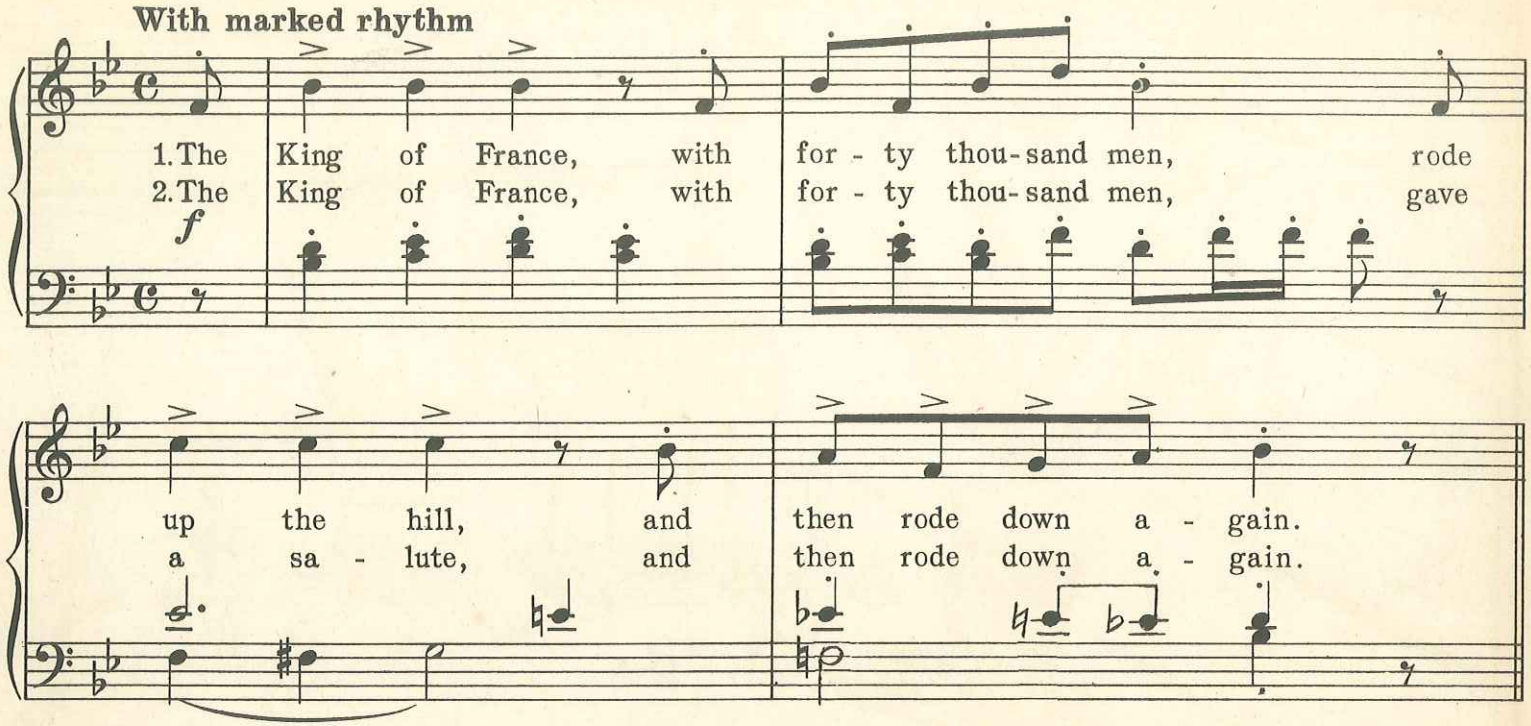


Jack and Jill

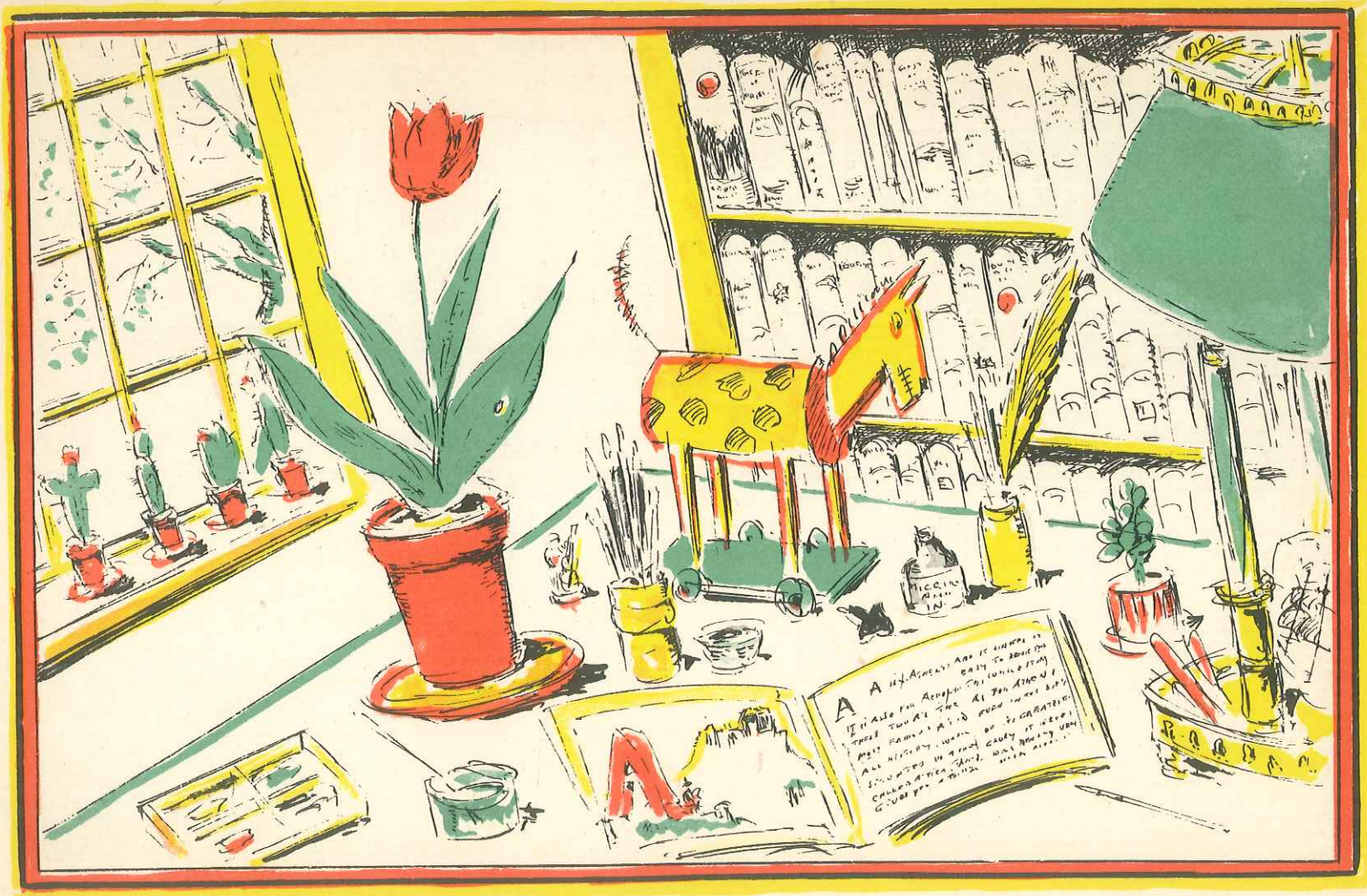




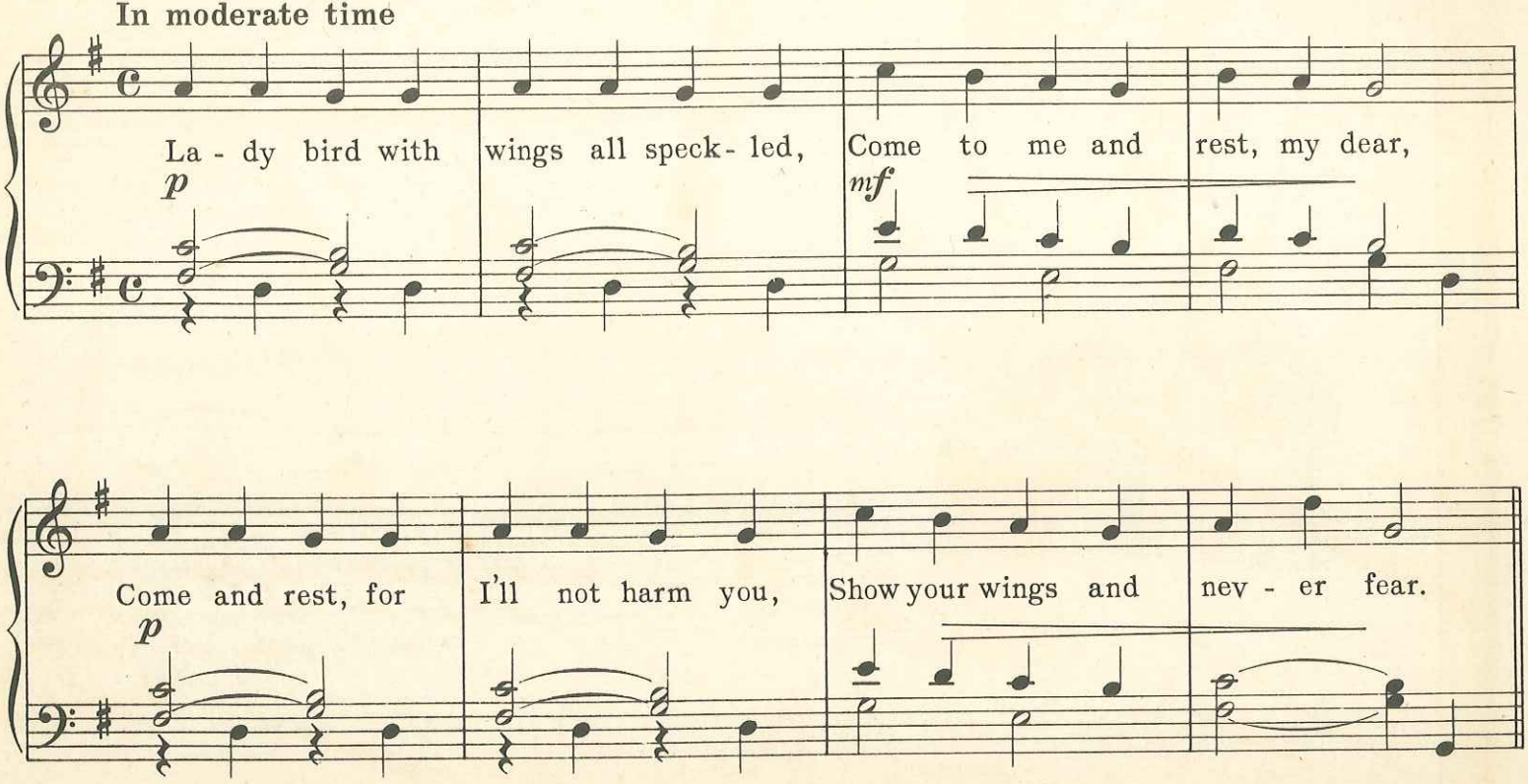
King of France

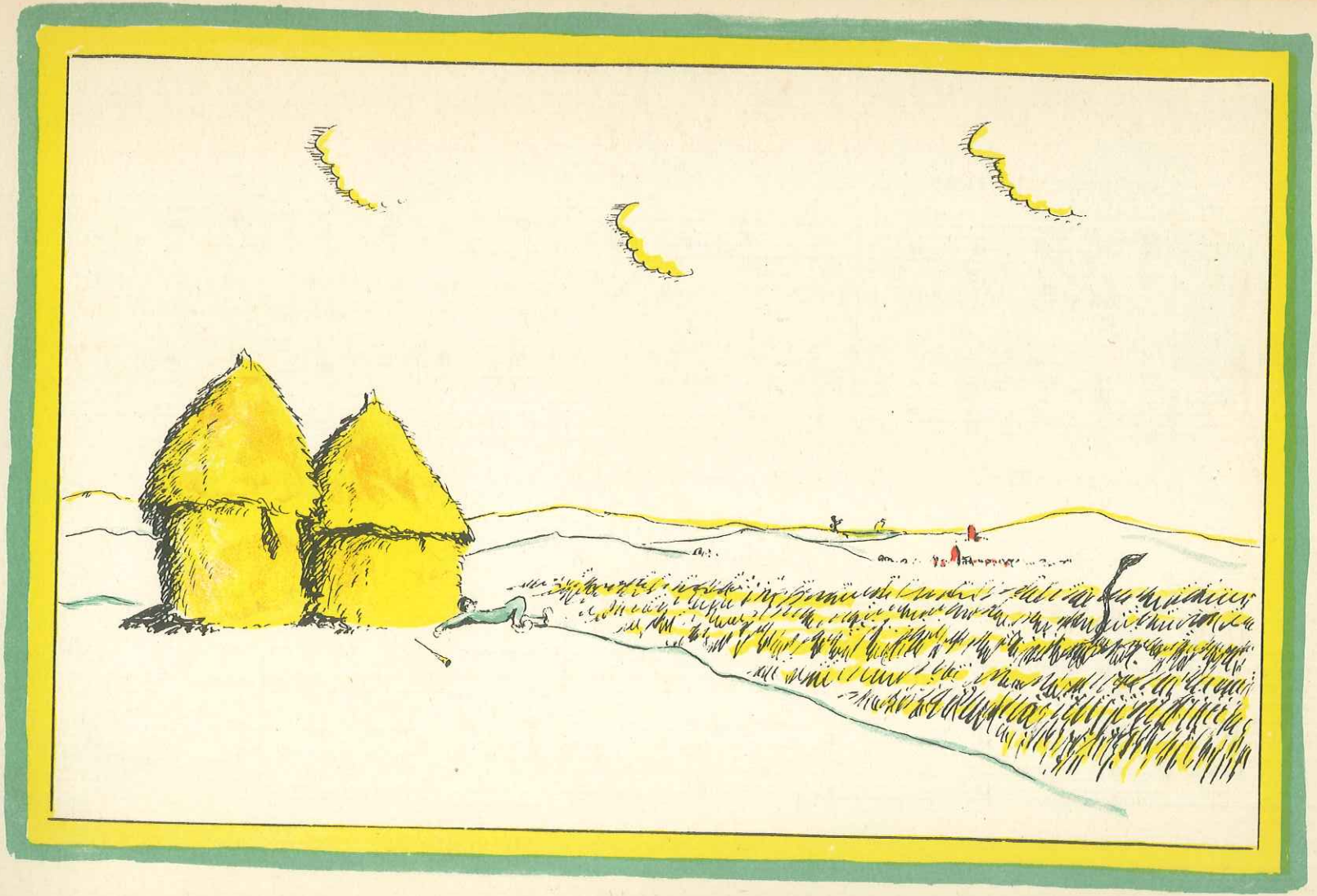


3. waved his flag etc.
4. beat his drum etc.
5. blew his horn etc.
6. aimed his gun etc.

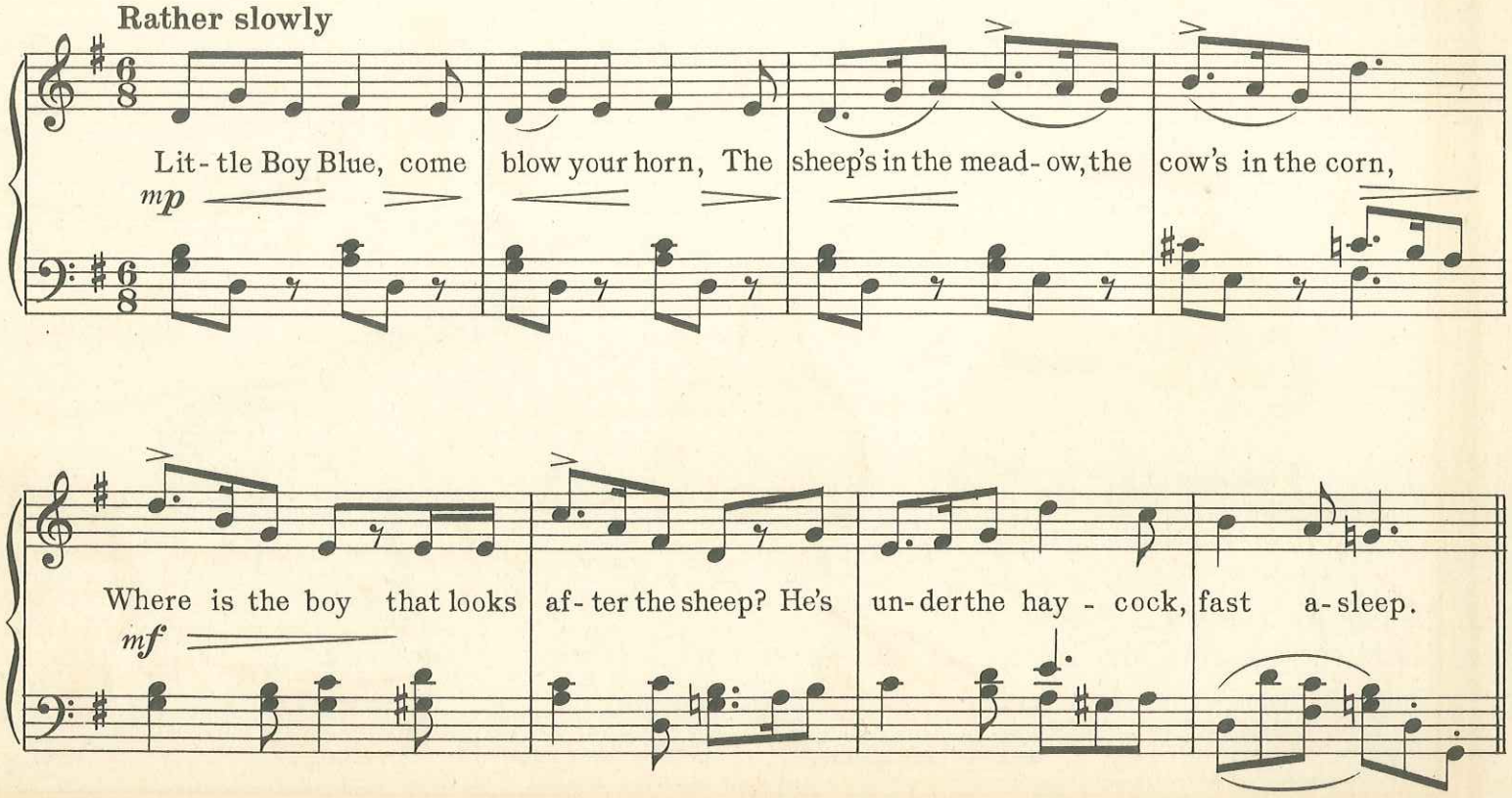

A A is for Apple and it is simple to say
It is also for Acrobat, Caterpillar and Hay
These two A's are the A's for Athens
Most famous minds ever in the days
All history, known as its greatest
Situated in a land called Attica, where Apollo
Called Athena home, was Apollo very
Good pen and ink

Lady Bird

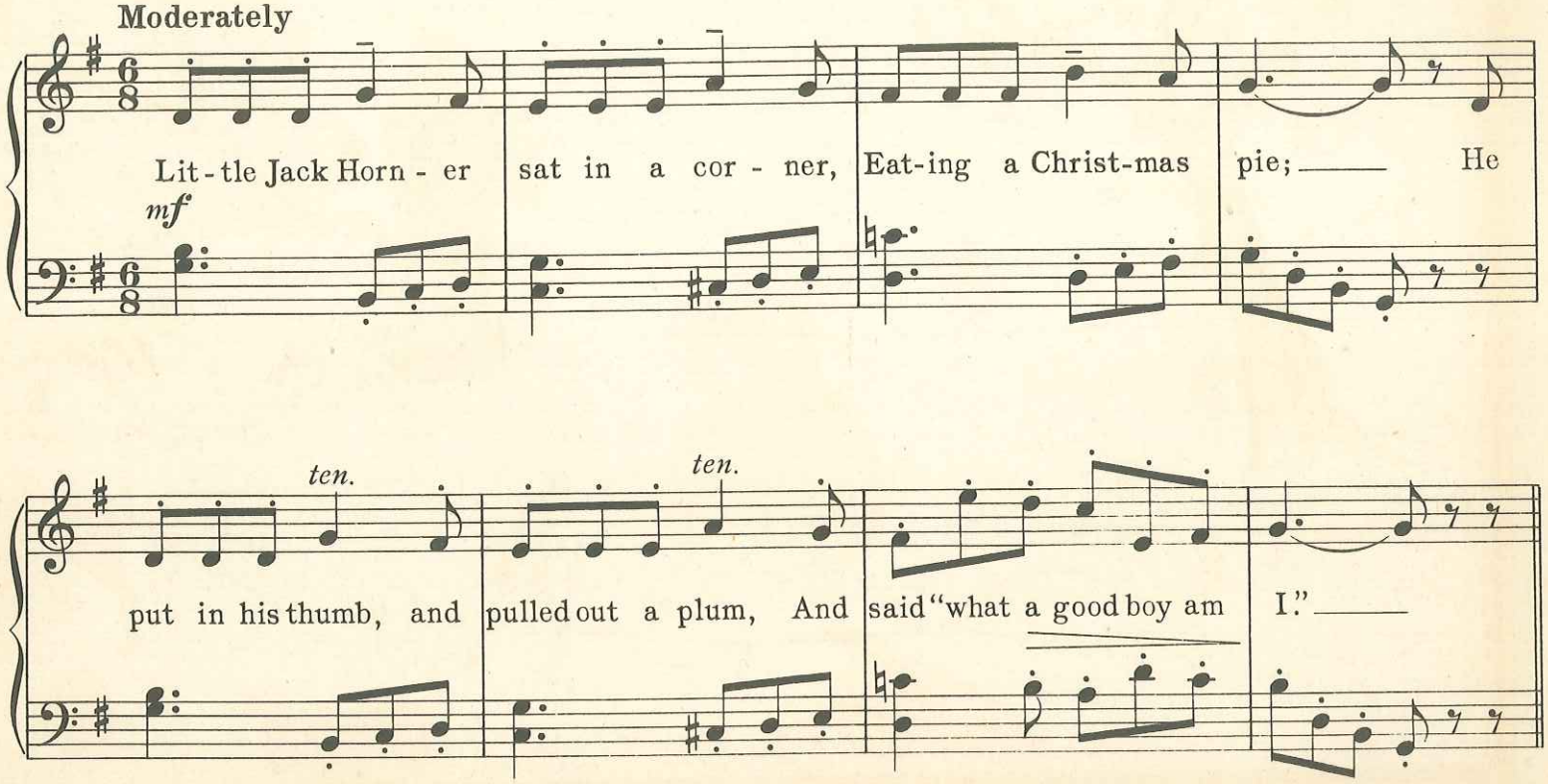

In moderate time
La - dy bird with wings all speck - led, Come to me and rest, my dear,
p
mf
Come and rest, for I'll not harm you, Show your wings and nev - er fear.
p



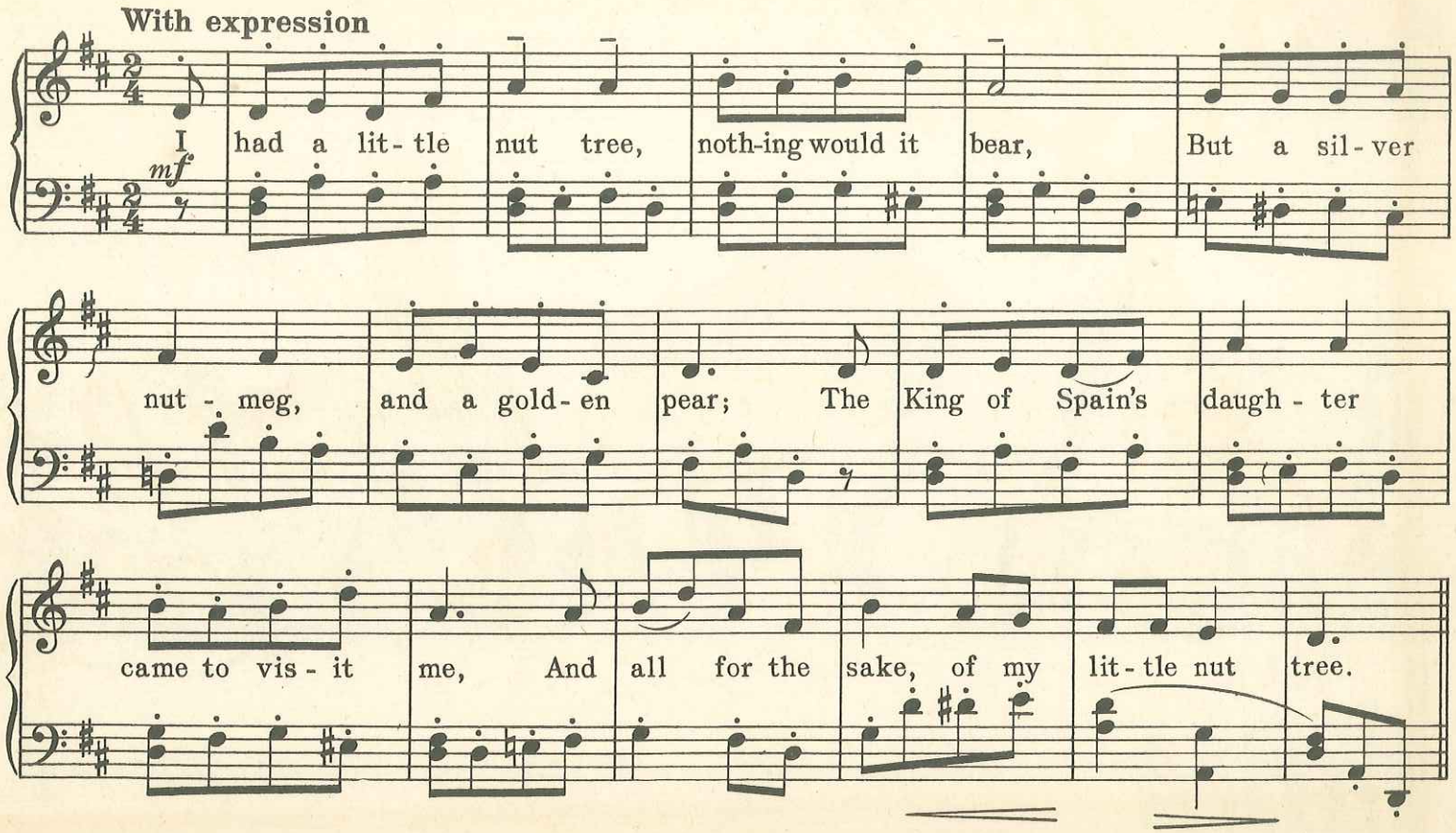
Little Boy Blue

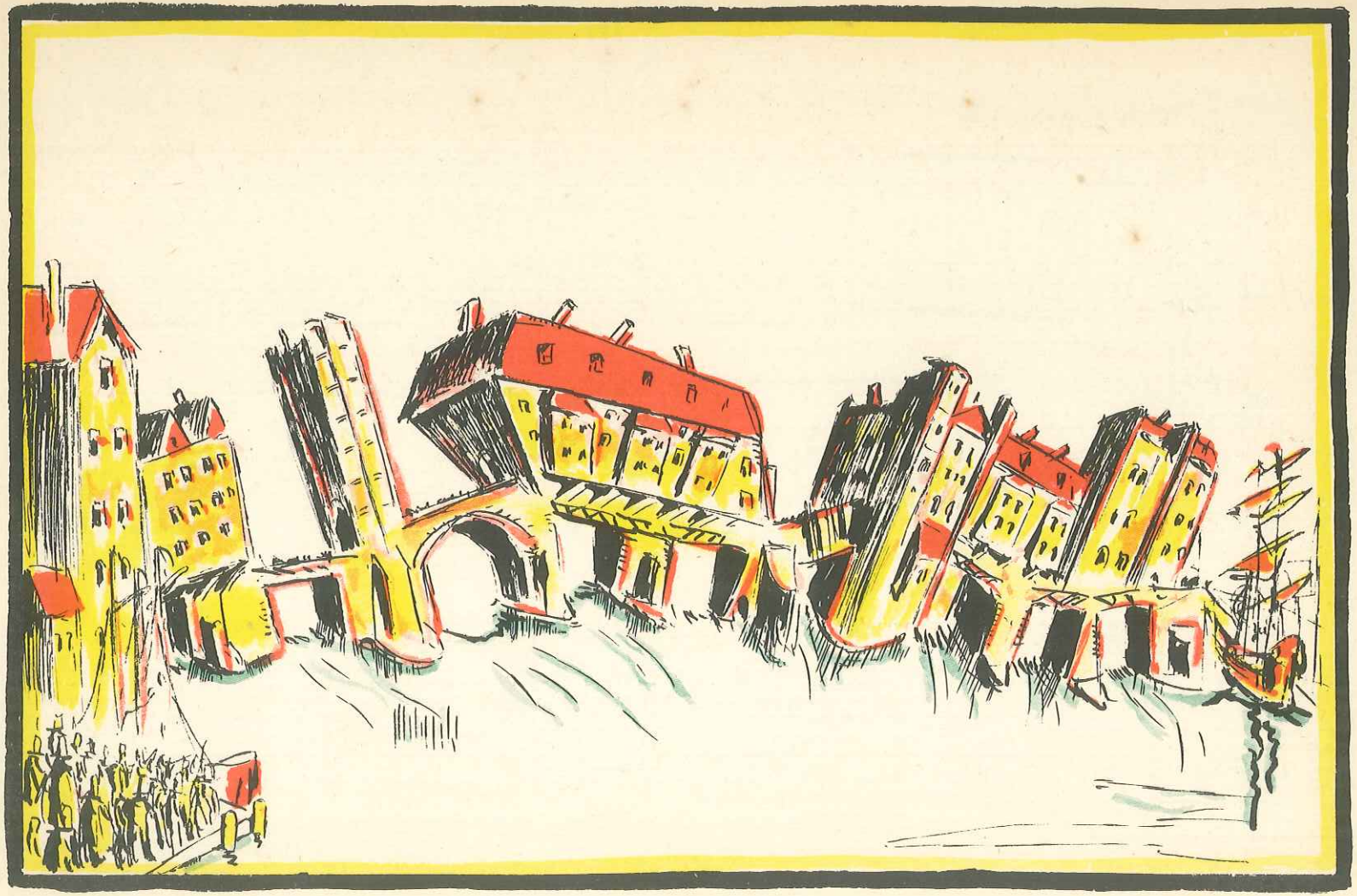


Little Jack Horner

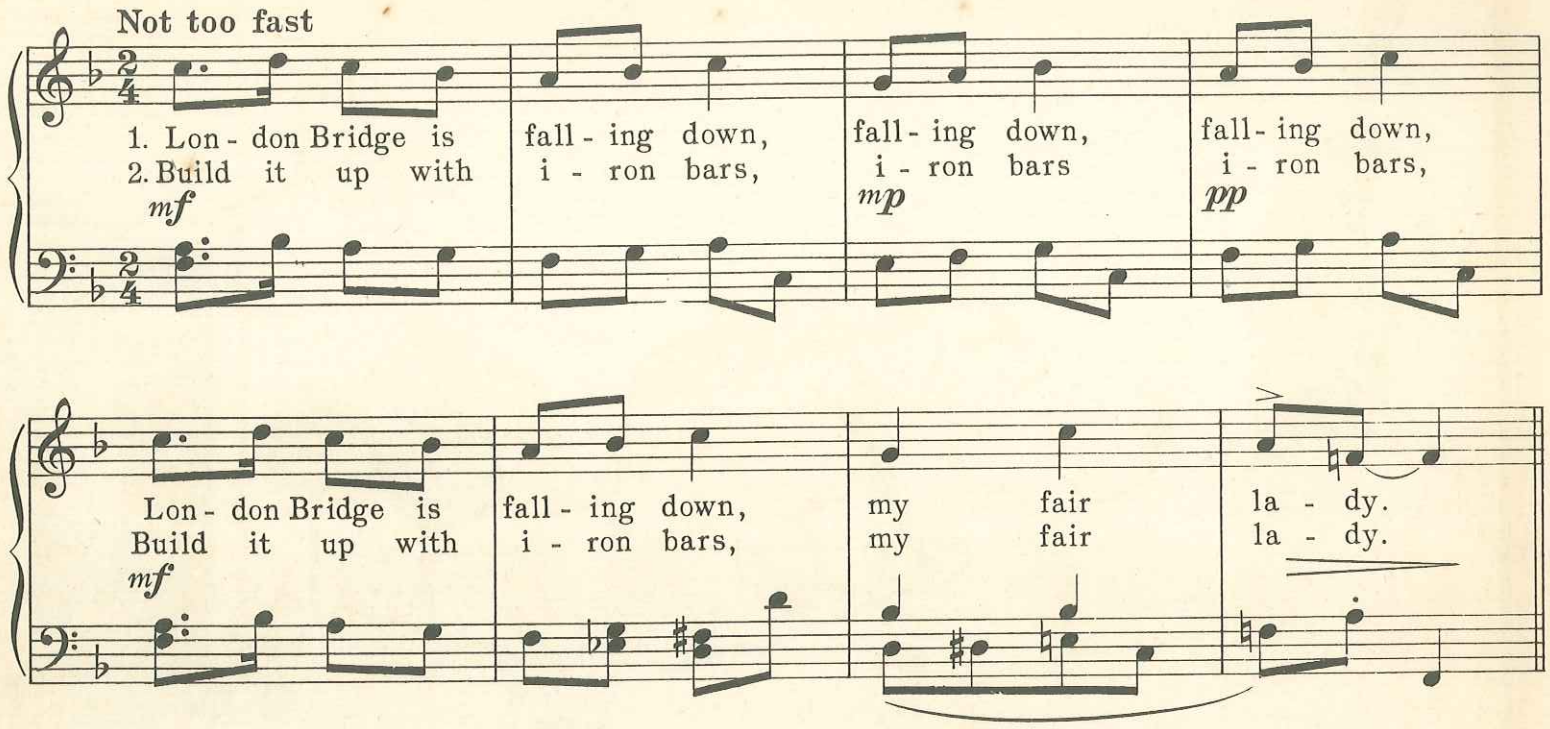


Little Nut Tree

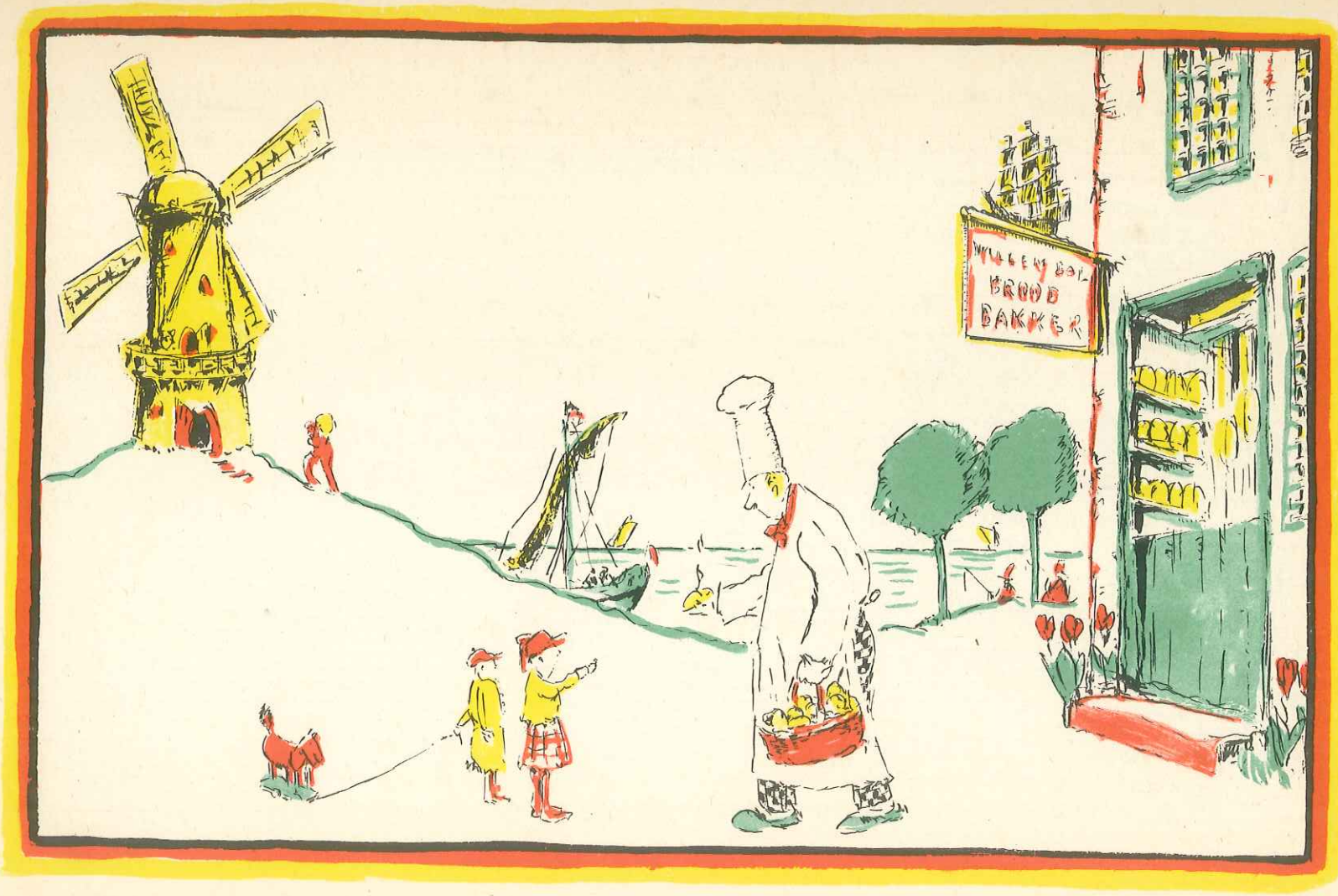




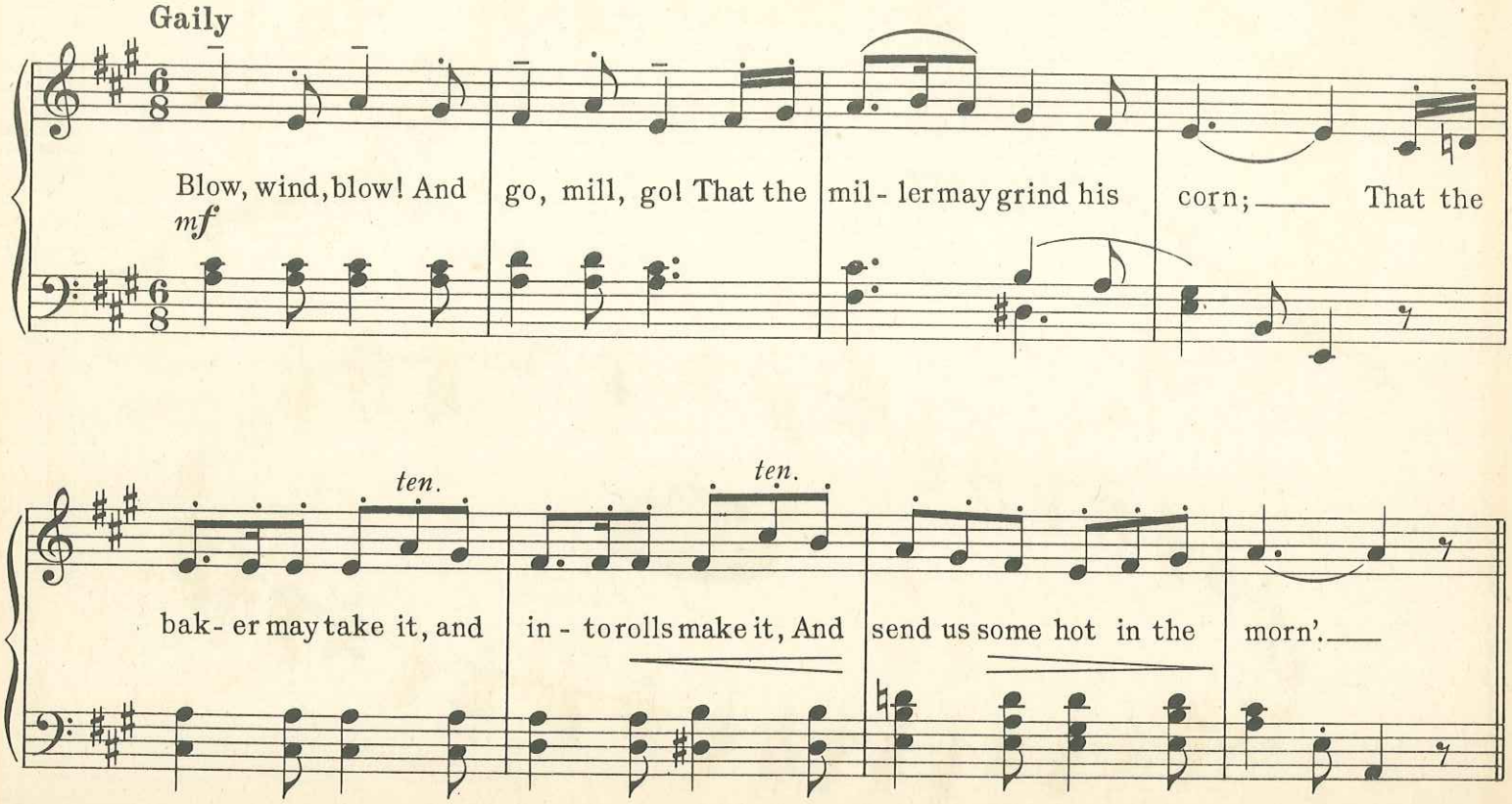
London Bridge



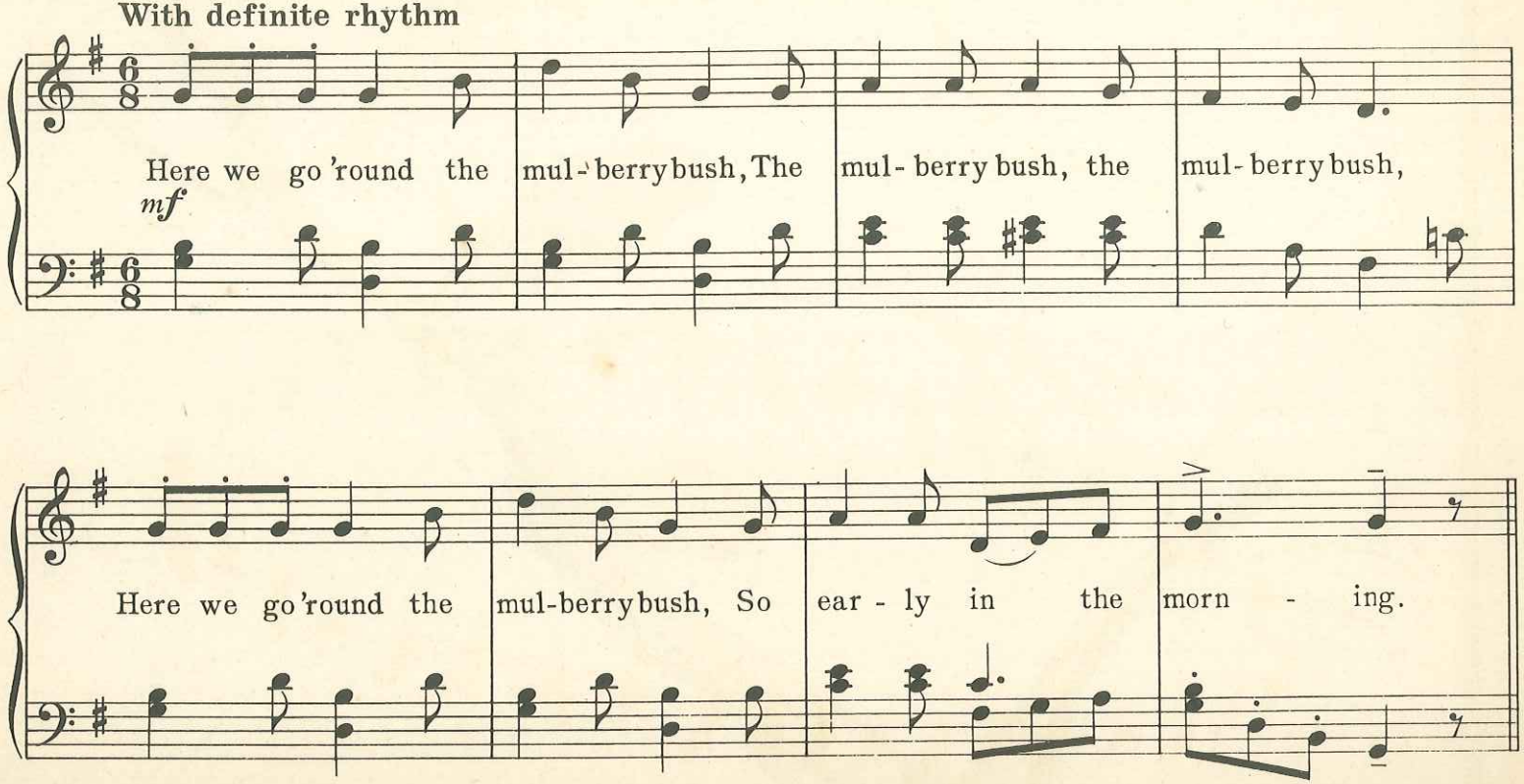
3. Iron bars will rust away, etc.
4. Build it up with pins and needles, etc.
5. Pins and needles rust and bend, etc.
6. Build it up with penny loaves, etc.
7. Penny loaves will tumble down, etc.

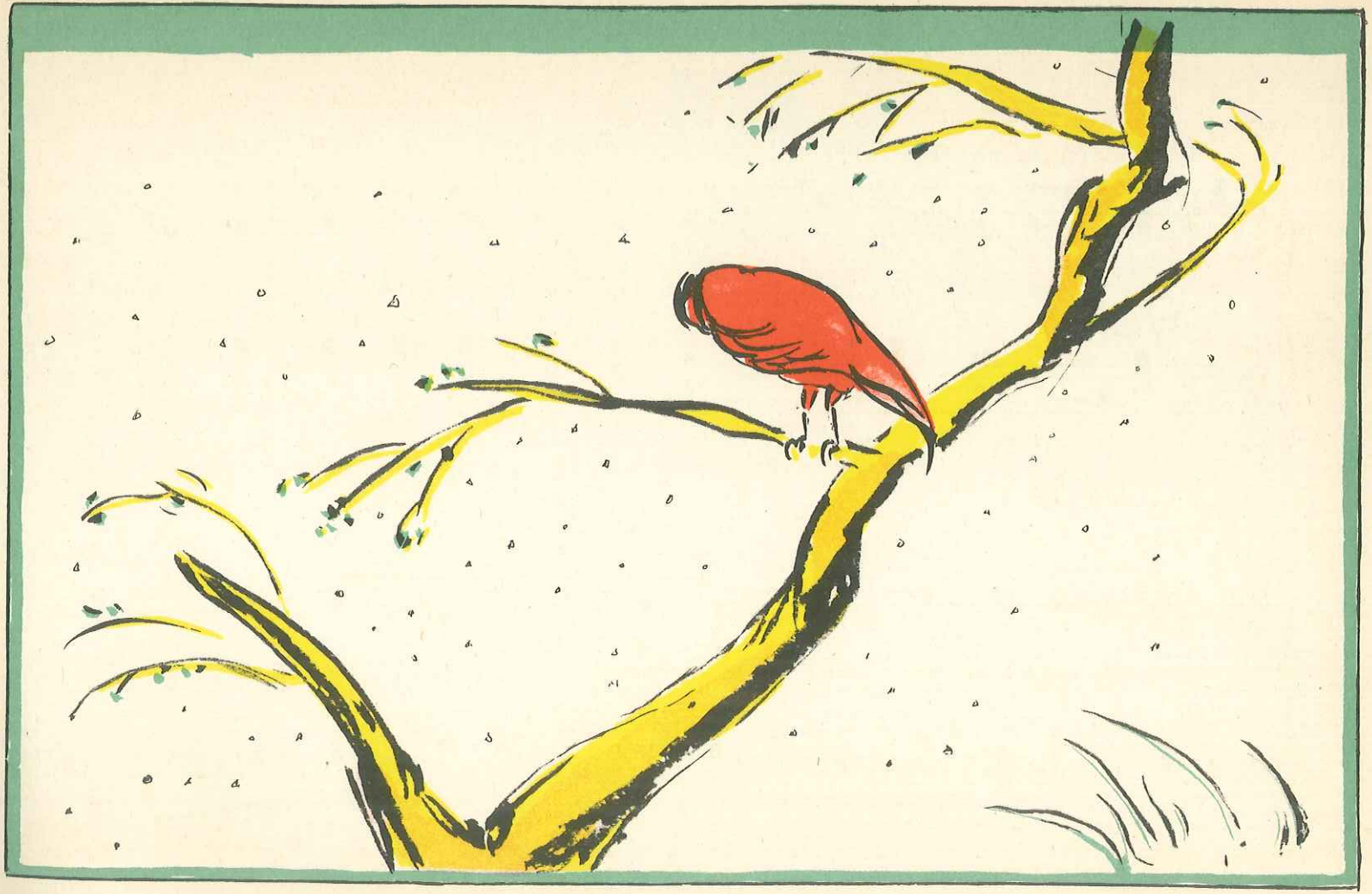

BROOD
BAKKER

Miller and the Baker

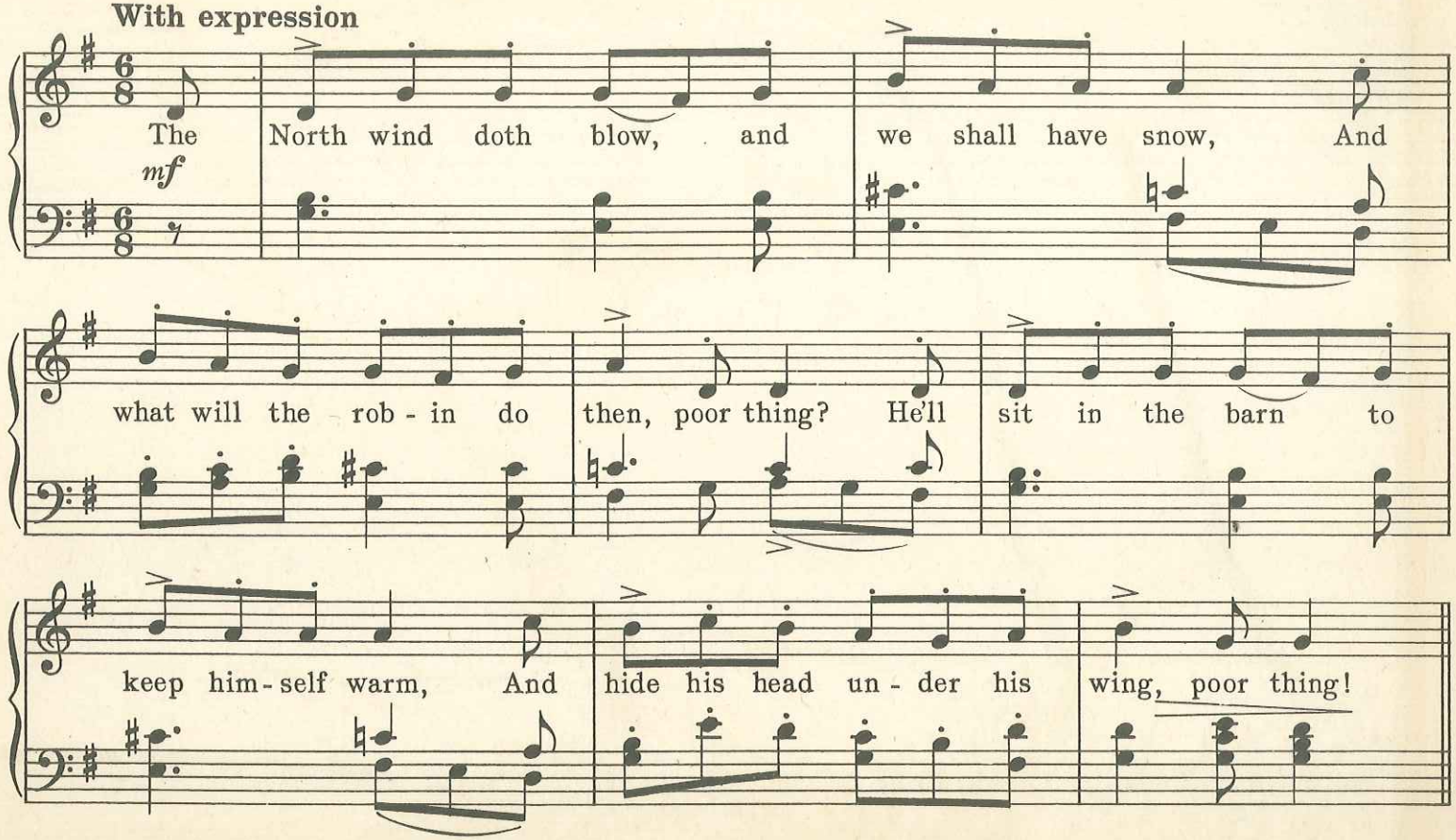


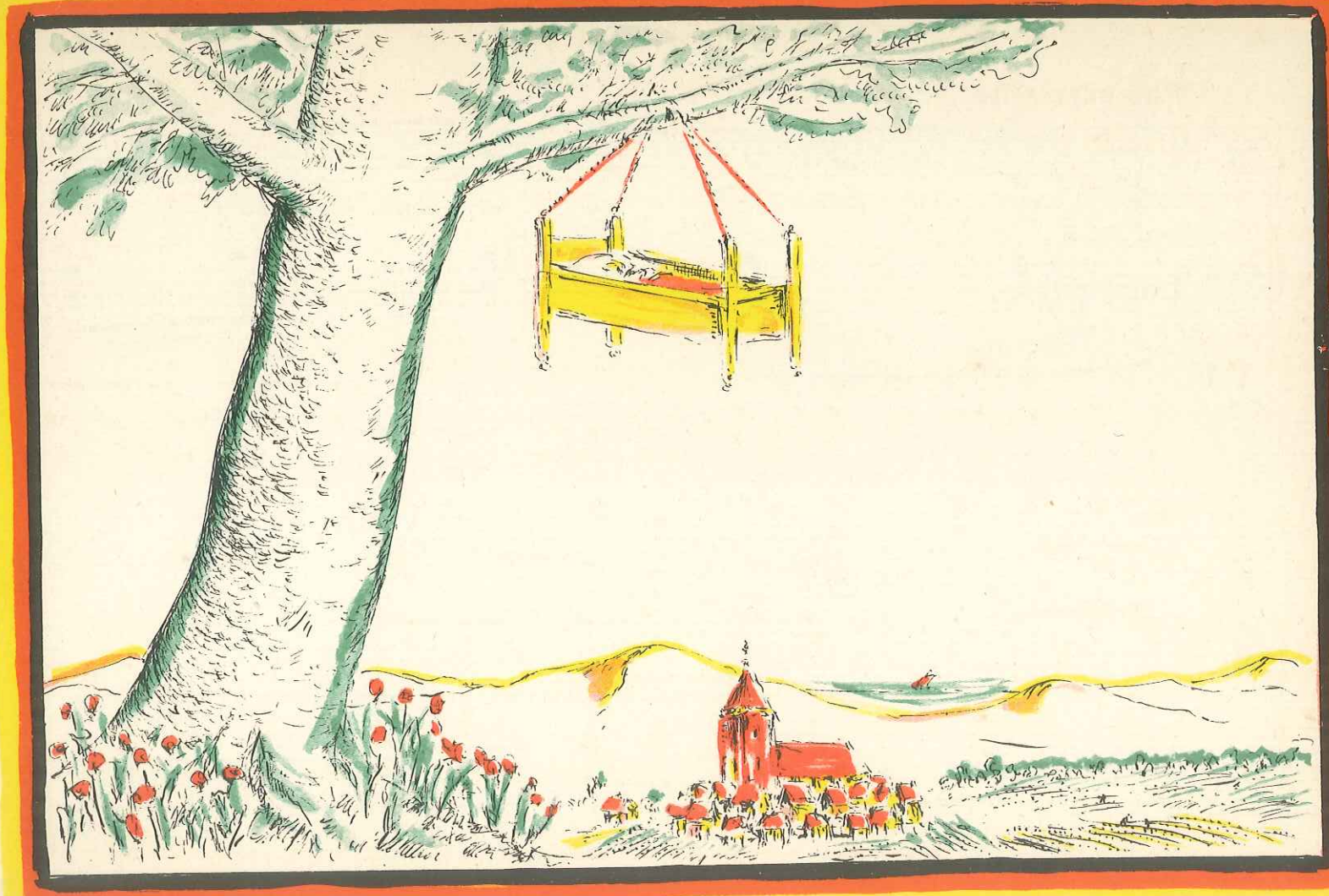
Mulberry Bush



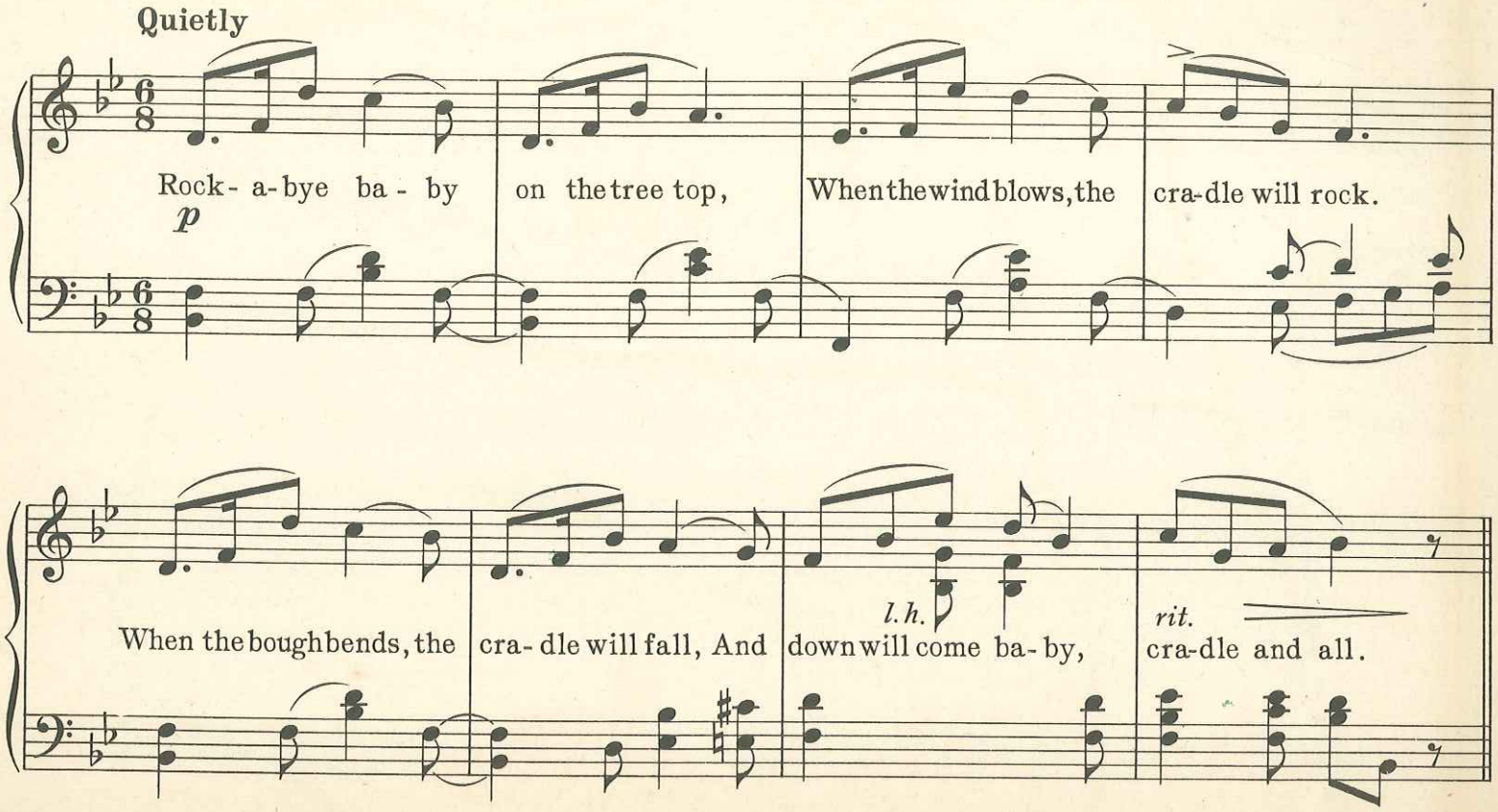


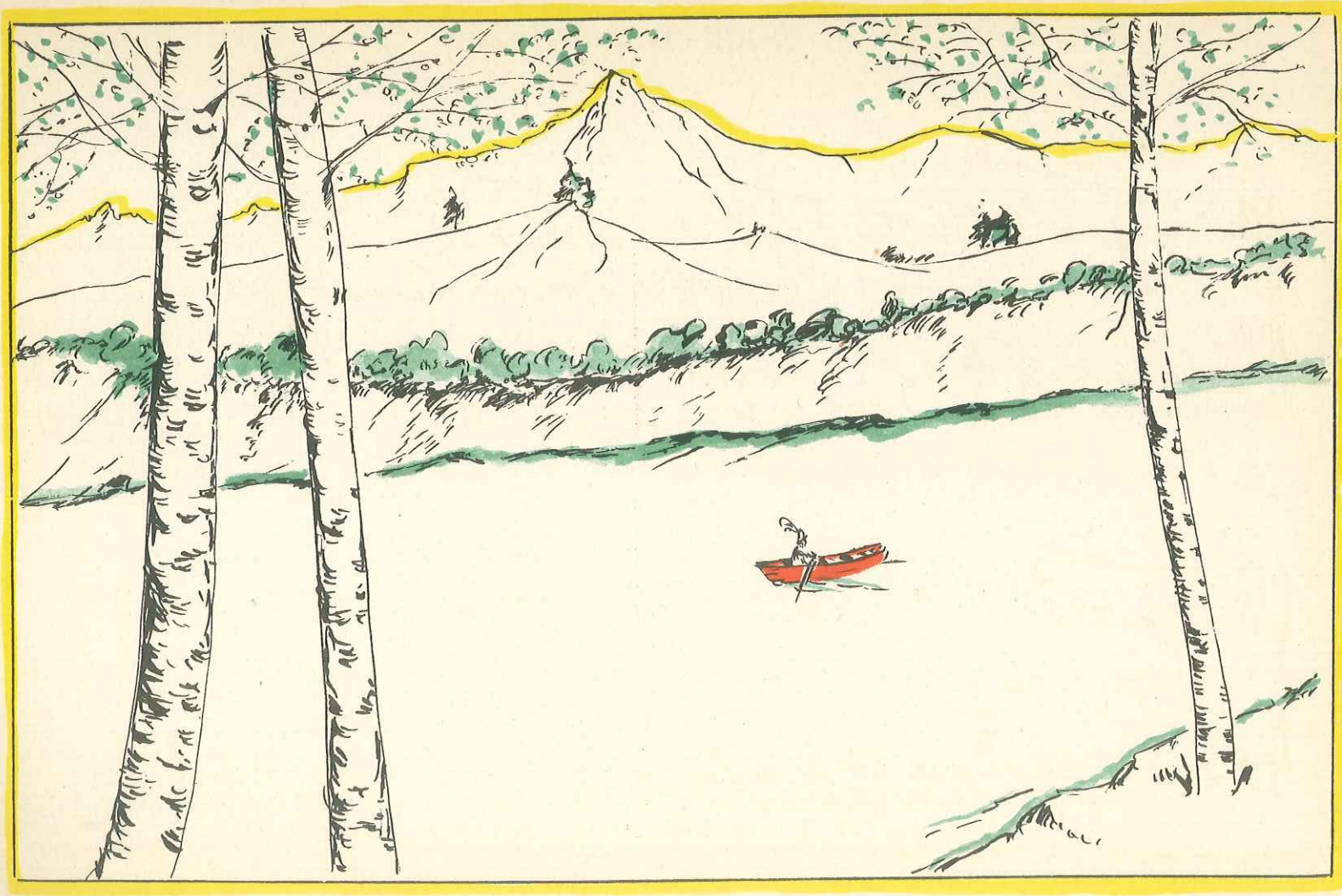
North Wind Doth Blow



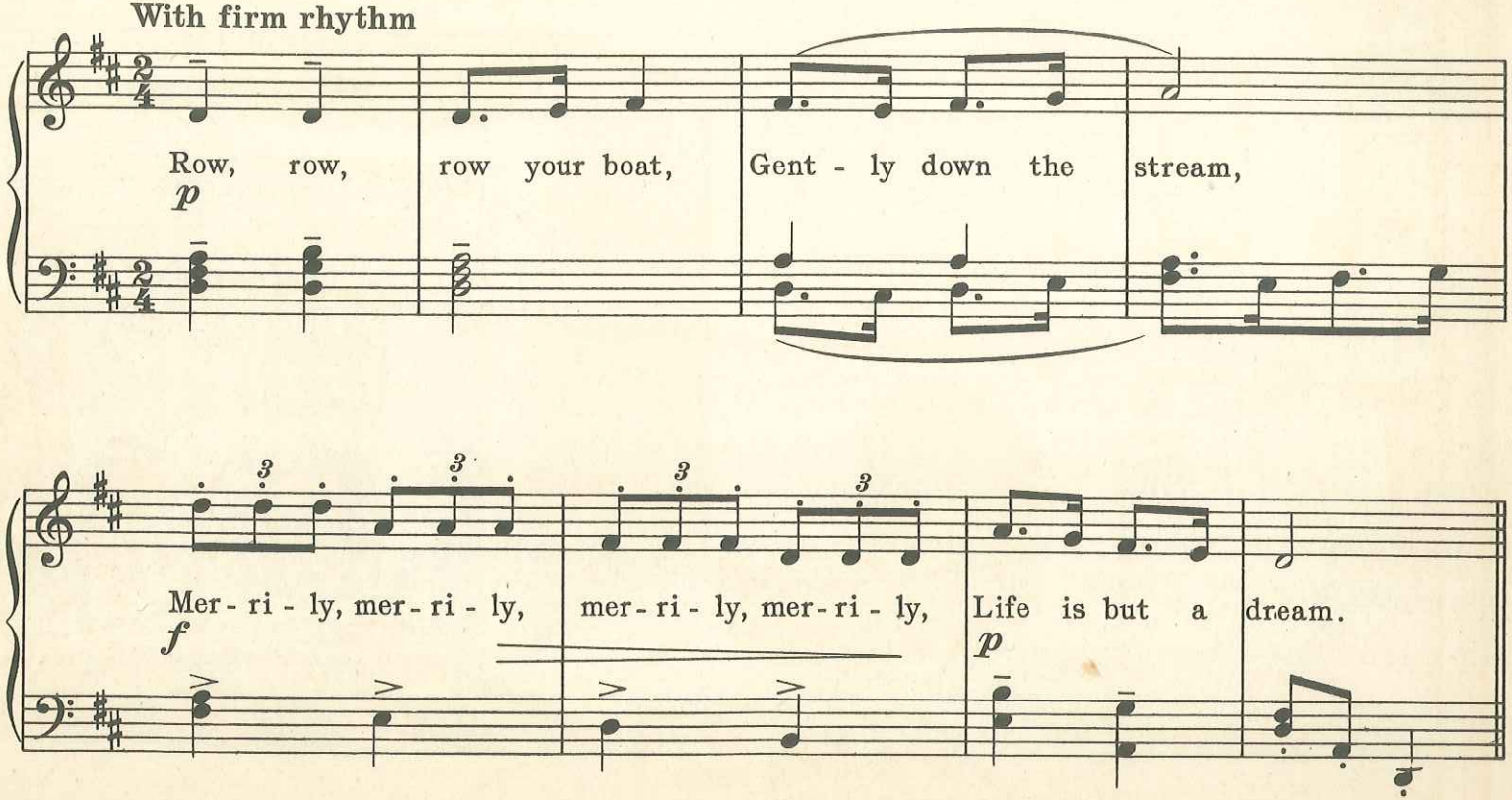


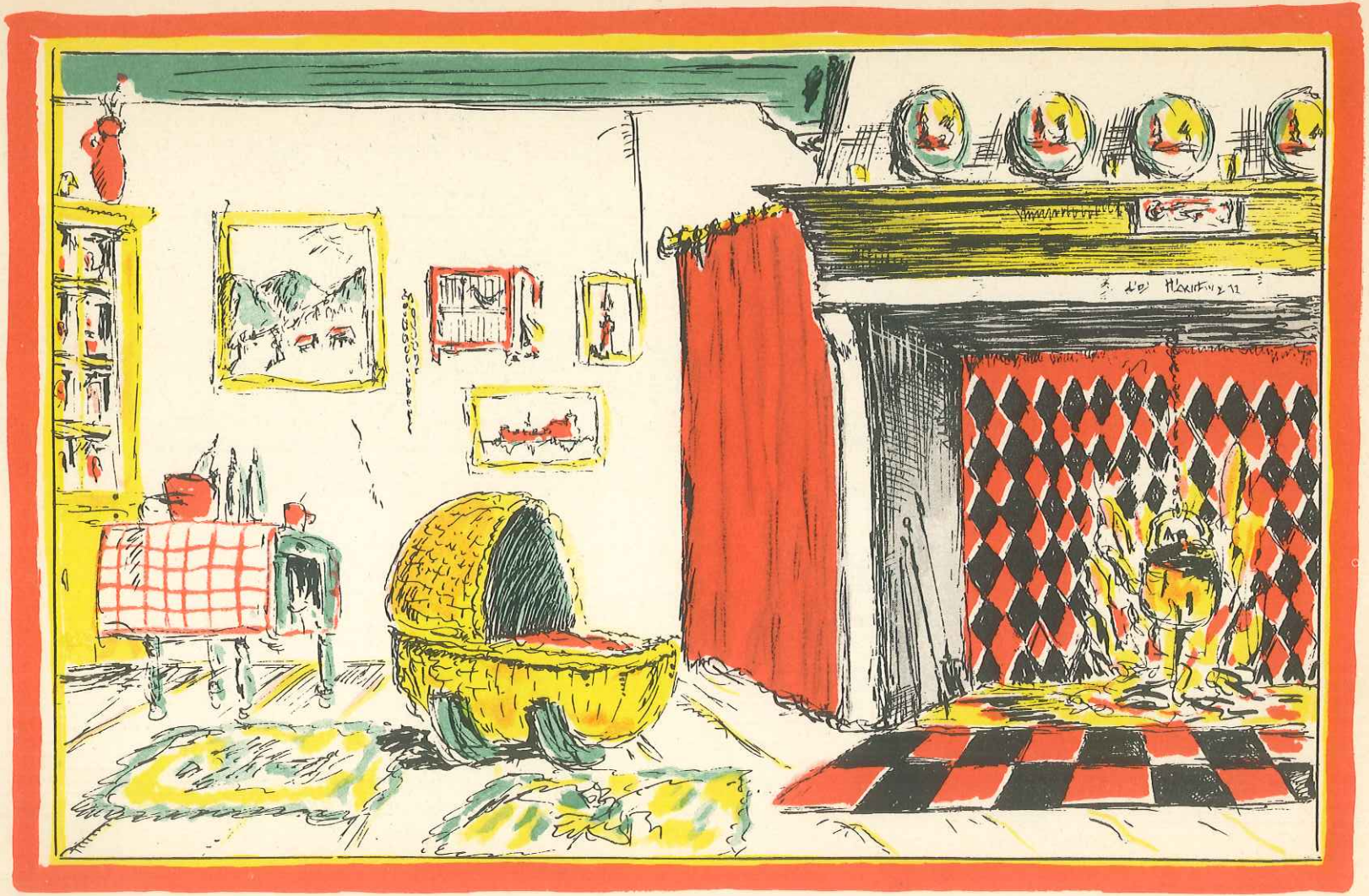
Rock-a-bye Baby



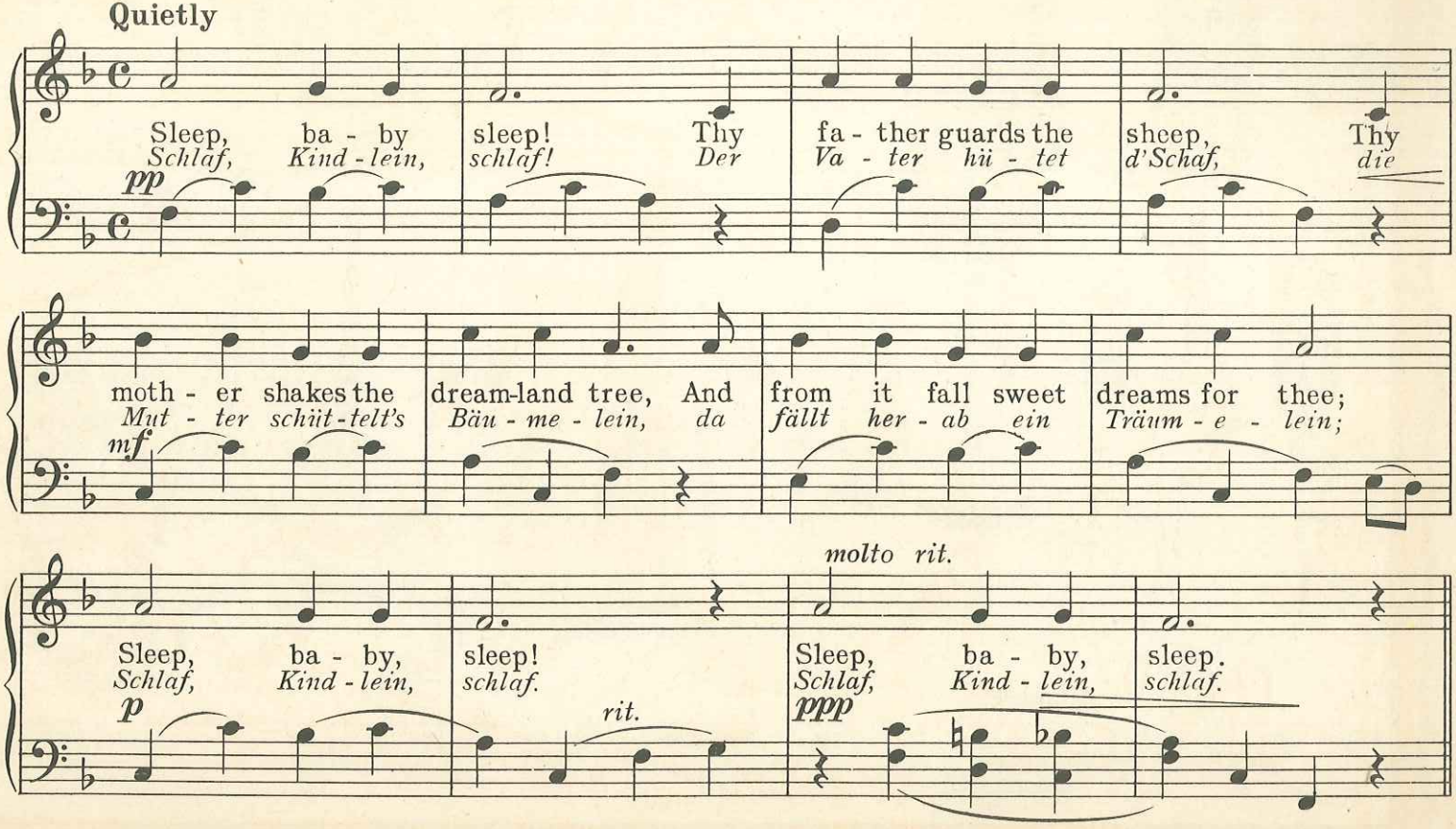


Row, Row, Row your Boat

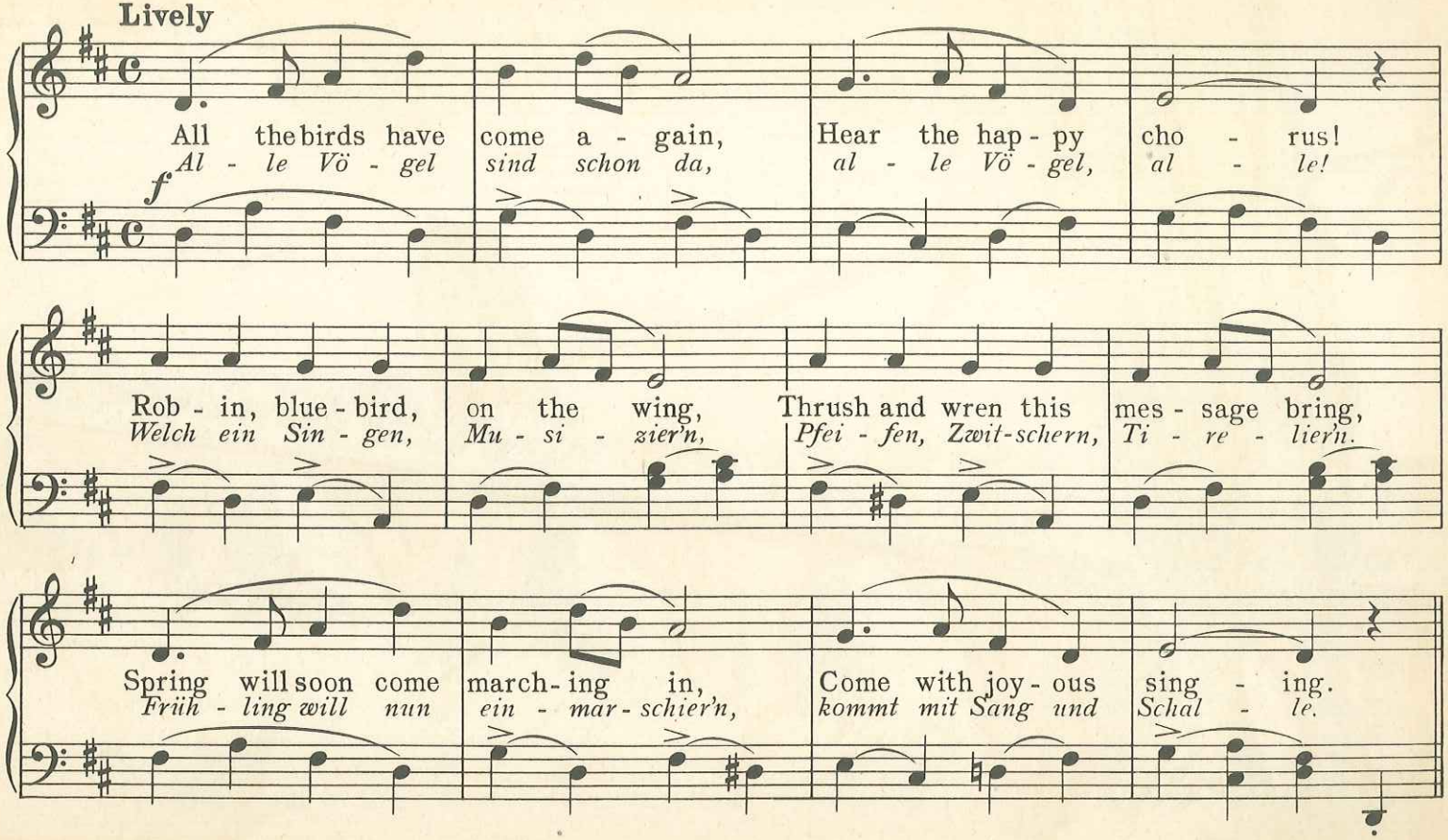


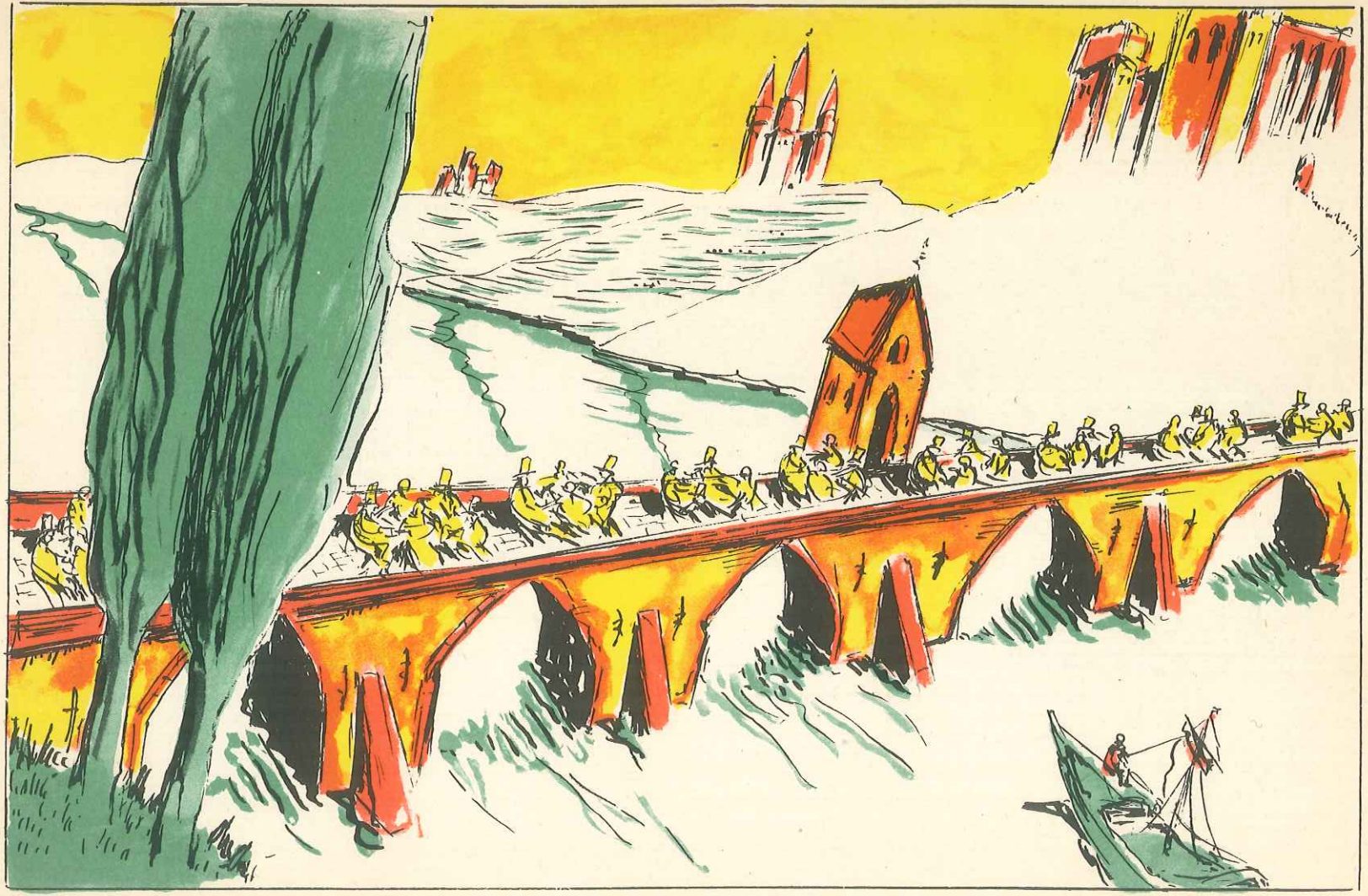


Sleep, Baby, Sleep

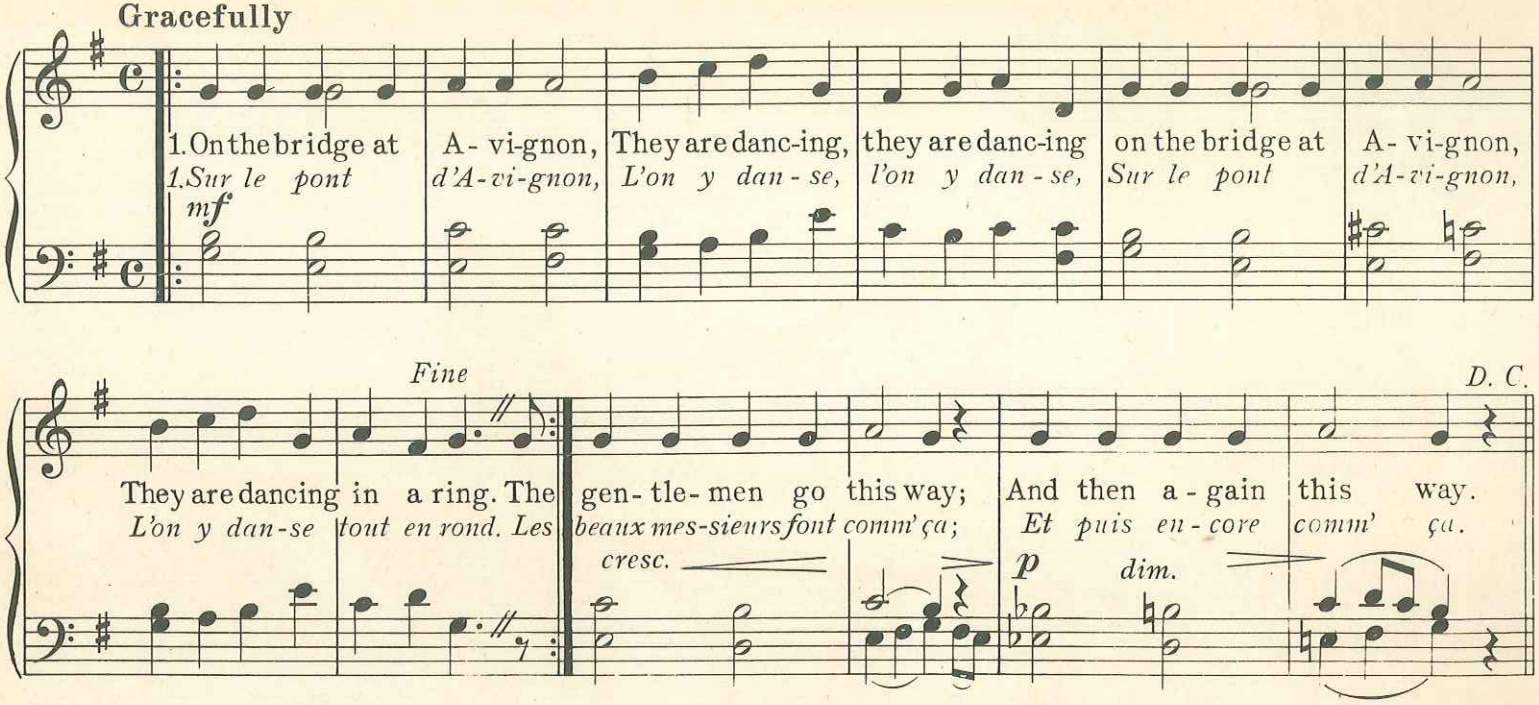


Spring's Arrival





Sur le Pont d'Avignon

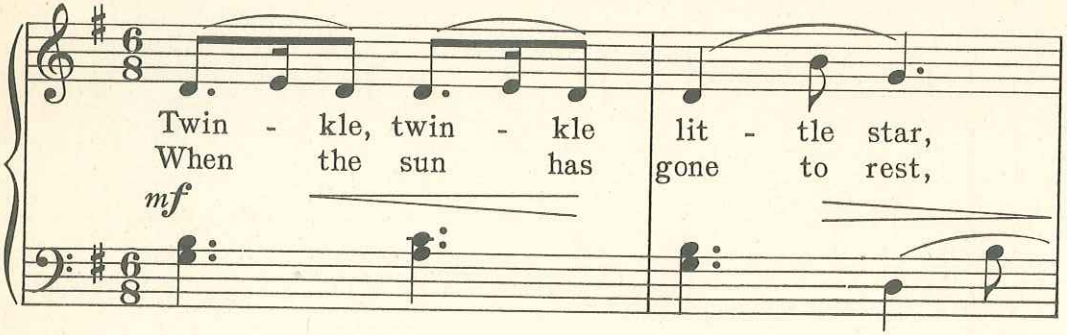


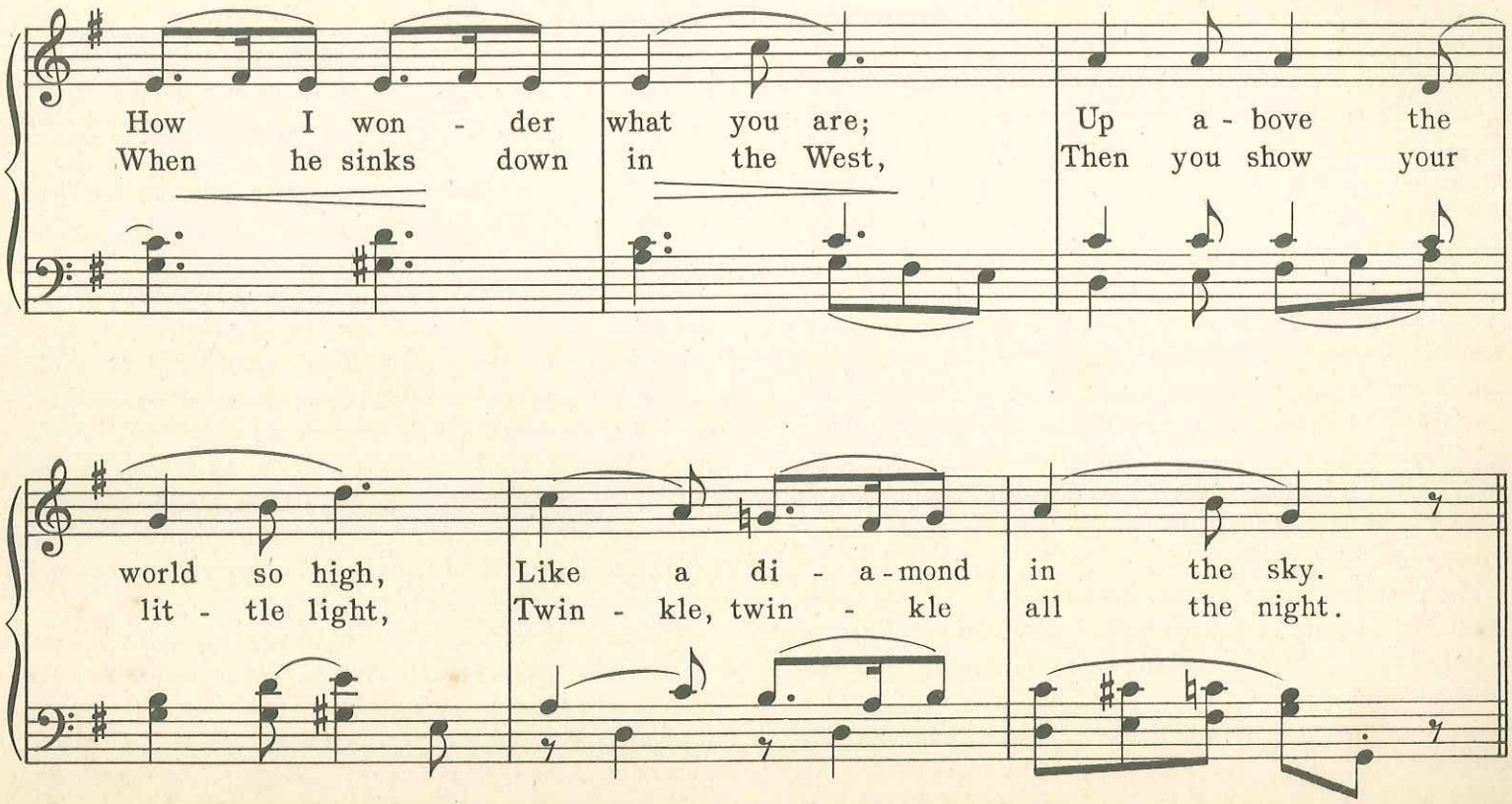
2. The ladies fair go this way *(curtsey)*
3. The soldiers brave go this way *(salute)*
4. The organ man goes this way *(turn handle)*
5. The boys and girls go this way *(dance in circle)*

2. *Les belles dames font comm' ça*
3. *Les braves soldats font comm' ça*
4. *Le joueurs d'orgue font comm' ça*
5. *Les garçons et filles font comm' ça*

Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star

With a lilt




How I won - der what you are;
When he sinks down in the West,
Up a - bove the
Then you show your
world so high,
lit - tle light,
Like a di - a - mond in the sky.
Twin - kle, twin - kle all the night.

POSTSCRIPT

It was a peaceful morning in Riverside. The Musical Department was practising something by Mr. Johann Sebastian Bach. Noodle, who does not care for the music of this Mr. Bach, and Jimmie, who shares his prejudice, had retired to Jimmie's workroom. Miss Castagnetta (the poodle, not the pianist) and Mr. Sedgewick, the cat, were playing tag underneath the piano, adding greatly to the general effect of Mr. Johann Sebastian Bach's music by occasionally getting themselves mixed up with the pedals and with the feet of Miss Castagnetta (the pianist, not the poodle).

At that moment Fritz returned from the post office and brought the mail. There was a large package and I knew at once that it must be proof. This was Miss Castagnetta's first book and so I suggested that she open it. She did so, and Miss Castagnetta (the poodle) stole the string and tried to interest Mr. Sedgewick in a tug-of-war, but Mr. Sedgewick, being faithful to the traditions of the feline tribe, preferred to devote all his attention to a close personal inspection of the newly arrived bundle.

The proof consisted of one enormous sheet, about twice the size of the Musical Department herself. I asked the Musical Department how she liked it? She answered that she thought it very beautiful. She especially loved her little notes, "their coats were so warm," but suddenly she showed signs of great perturbation. "Look!" she said, "something must have gone wrong with this picture. It is supposed to be Little Boy Blue, but in the picture he has become Little Boy Green."

I had known all along that that was coming. I shall probably hear the same thing from 134,756 other readers during the next six months (why not be optimistic about it?) and so I hasten to state in the most emphatic terms that I know that the Little Boy Blue should really be a Little Boy Blue and not a Little Boy Green, but I really could not help myself. You see, all books are subject to a dreadful affliction which is a sort of literary measles and which in publishing circles is known as "costs." In case the attack of "costs" is very severe, books quite often die in infancy and even when the attack is mild, they have to be nursed with great care.

Therefore in order to protect this small infant as much as possible, we decided to raise it on a diet of very simple color and at no time was the little creature to have more than three colors. That of course did not include the black, for black plays about the same role in the artist's kitchen the potato does in the kitchen of an everyday household. It is so much one of the essentials of life that it is completely taken for granted.

Now with three colors we could only get 1 x 2 x 3 or 6 different color arrangements. And we had to use "flat colors," which means the colors as they are when they come pouring out of the tubes, for mixing them might bring on a serious attack of costs, and then of course nobody could foretell what would happen. To be perfectly honest, it was great fun to

have so restricted a palette, for it put the matter squarely up to the artist and he had to do as good a job as he could possibly do under the most unfavorable of circumstances. But alas! occasionally, as with Little Boy Blue, the child suffered from color-malnutrition and became a Little Boy Green. I am sorry this was the case, but there it was and nothing could really be done about it.

Meanwhile, the Musical Department had troubles of its own, and they too were quite considerable. For to a great many people, our old nursery rhymes are like the laws of the Medes and the Persians or the American Constitution. No matter what happens, not an iota in them must ever be changed and they must always be exactly the way they were when Mrs. Noah used to sing them to her unruly little darlings during those long rainy days on board the Ark, when it was difficult enough to keep the children happy and contented.

But meanwhile an entirely new generation has grown up, an entirely new generation which since its cradle has been accustomed to the modern tonal combinations that come pouring into its helpless ears from both the radio and the gramaphone. That modern generation therefore will insist upon certain musical color effects that would have completely horrified its grandpapa and grandmamma who felt the same way about Monsieur Debussy's "Afternoon of a Faun" as they did about the pictures of that dreadful man, Vincent van Gogh, whose outbursts in orange and blue and yellow and green are now a commonplace of every drawing room.

The Musical Department belonging strictly to the younger generation (how old are you anyway, Grace?) was therefore intent upon giving the old nursery rhymes a slightly modern tilt, without which they would have been hardly understandable to the children of the present vintage.

And so, having filled the extra page that suddenly bobbed up at the end of the book with a few extra explanations and elucidations, on behalf of both Miss Castagnetta (the pianist) and myself I shall once more bid you a fond farewell.

The Musical Department can now continue to practise that piece of Mr. Johann Sebastian Bach. Miss Castagnetta (the poodle) and Mr. Sedgewick (the cat) can continue their playful antics with that lovely piece of cardboard which the Packing Department of Messrs. Simon and Schuster had so carefully wrapped around the proofs. Noodle can continue to sleep peacefully on Jimmie's lap and I shall go and write me another book. I am not yet quite certain what it will be, but I think that it will be a "History of the Theater." Then you can be your own stage manager and pretend that you are Master William Shakespeare or Monsieur de Molière.

But I had better let that wait till next fall. For the moment you are supposed to sing.

So go ahead and sing!

H. W.

THE END.