

AMERICAN INDIAN MELODIES

EDITED AND ARRANGED FOR THE PIANO

WITH INTRODUCTION

BY

ARTHUR FARWELL

Op. 11



Price, \$1.50, net

G. SCHIRMER
NEW YORK : 3 EAST 43d ST.
BOSTON : THE BOSTON MUSIC CO.

INTRODUCTION

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