

# 14. THE RUSHBEARING.

(TWO-PART SONG.)

D. P. BLOMFIELD.

A. M. WAKEFIELD.  
from "North Country Songs."

Andante. M. ♩ = 108. *very smoothly.*

VOICE.

Key Eb. *pp*

1. Where the stream and riv - er Through the  
 2. So of old our fa - thers Came from  
 3. Fa - ther, we Thy chil - dren In these

*pp*

|| d :d | d .t, :l, .t, | d .t, :l, .s, | m :- | d :d }

Adagio.

PIANO.

*rall.* *tempo*

|| m .r :d .r | d :- | r .f :m .r | m :m | m .r :d .r | m :-  
 mead - ows wind, Pull we green - est rush -  
 dale and moor, Strew - ing new - mown rush -  
 la - ter days, Pray that thou wouldst keep

*rall.* *tempo*

|| d .t, :l, .s, | d :- | t, .r :d .t, | d :d | d .t, :l, .t, | d .t, :l, .s, }

*rall.* *tempo*

|| s :- | d :d | r :- .r | m :- | - :  
 es, Flowers of ev - 'ry kind;  
 es On the sa - cred floor;  
 us Pure in thoughts and ways;

|| E :- | l, :l, | r .l, :f, .l, | se, :- | l, : }

*mf* *mf*

s :s f :f r :r m :- d :r  
 And these simple offerings bring To the  
 Thus in reverence to maintain God's own  
 So our hearts may ever be, Ho-ly

m :m r :s, t, .s, :l, .t, d :- l, :l,

*mf* *mf*

m :m d :- r :- d :- :- :-  
 house of God our King.  
 tem-ple free from stain.  
 dwell-ings, meet for Thee.

se, :se, l, :- r .t, :l, .s, m, :- :- :-

*p* *pp* *rall.* *pp* *ppp*

Last verse.

Rushbearings have been kept up for centuries in the North. They were the feature of the annual holiday in Lancashire villages. Thomas Newton in "The Herbal of the Bible," 1589, says:—"With sedges and rushes many in the country do use in summer time to strew their parlours and churches as well for coolness as for pleasant smell." Brand adds:—"As our ancestors rarely washed their floors, disguise of uncleanness became very necessary!" Later on, the earthen floors of the churches were flagged or boarded, and rushes ceased to be used. The custom became an unmeaning pageant practised for the purpose of levying contributions. The rush cart, preceded by a silk banner, and decorated with flowers, ribbons, &c. was drawn round to the houses of the principal inhabitants preceded by morris dancers. The rushes kept warm the feet of the worshippers during the winter especially after walking over snow-covered moors. The late Miss Wakefield got her friend Miss Blomfield to write a hymn for the rush-bearing, and she set it as above. She says the rushes used are the small ones called "sieves" really cut on the top of the fells, hence these verses take a poetical license in their locality. Rushbearing is still kept up at Grasmere, and a few other places. Canon Rawnsley has taken great interest in perpetuating it; he has restored the original purpose of making it a commemoration of the feast of the dedication of the church, where a festal service is held. He also wrote a hymn for the service, to be sung by the children, who bring their entwined "wild flowers and rushes green," and receive on departing their time-honoured fairing of gingerbread. J. G.