

1 2 WHEN JESUS WEPT

Words and Music by William Billings

[ROUND*]

pp SLOWLY $\text{♩} = 60$

mf

Two & three

When Je - sus wept, the fall - ing tear

In mer - cy flow'd be - yond all bound;

When Je - - - sus groan'd, a trem - bling fear

Seiz'd all The guilt - - y world a - round.

ound is to be sung by four voices. The first singer starts alone; when he reaches the second line, the second singer starts at the beginning (the first continuing). When the second singer reaches the second line, the third singer starts, and so on. Each singer sings the complete round twice.

WHEN JESUS WEPT

WITH THIS eloquent setting in the form of a round of the sacred words, "When Jesus wept," there steps upon our scene one of the most rugged individualists in the history of American music—William Billings, of Boston. An artisan, self-taught in music, a flaming vortex of religious and patriotic feeling, he was as independent as they make 'em. One-eyed, with a game leg and arms of unequal length, his appearance was as exceptional as his personality. His stentorian voice could bellow his music with deafening ardor. He broke the peace of a Boston meeting house with his "fuguing tunes" which he roundly declared to be "more than twenty times as beautiful as the old slow tunes," and cited their effect upon "the audience, entertained and delighted, their minds surprisingly agitated and extremely fluctuated, sometimes declaring for one part and sometimes for another. . . . Oh ecstatic! Rush on, you sons of harmony!"

Billings was in the full sense of the word a man and artist of the people, whose music, after centuries of neglect, is coming back to public attention once more.