

Simple Gifts

Shaker dance song by Elder Joseph Brackett, composed at Alfred, Maine in 1848

Complete words to the original song:

'Tis the gift to be simple, 'tis the gift to be free,

'Tis the gift to come down where we ought to be,

And when we find ourselves in the place just right,

'Twill be in the valley of love and delight.

When true simplicity is gain'd

To bow and to bend we shan't be asham'd,

To turn, turn will be our delight

'Till by turning, turning we come round right.

Elder Joseph Brackett Jr. was born on May 6, 1797 in Cumberland, Maine. He died on July 4, 1882 at New Gloucester, Maine. His portrait still hangs today in the music room at the last remaining Shaker community in Sabbathday Lake, Maine.

The first Shaker tunes were written during the 1780's. They composed over 12,000 Shaker tunes - more than any other religious communal society in America. Almost all of their music was composed between the late 18th and early 20th centuries by both brethren and sisters.

Simple Gifts

Shaker dance song: words and melody probably by Elder Joseph Brackett (1797-1882)

composed Alfred, Maine, USA, 1848. adapted and arr. by Houston Dunleavy. Duration c. 6 minutes

(Duration c. 6 minutes)
Conductor's score

$\text{♩} = 78$

Conductor's score for *Simple Gifts*, arranged by Houston Dunleavy. The score is in 4/4 time, with a tempo of $\text{♩} = 78$. The key signature is one sharp (F#).

The score includes parts for the following instruments and voices:

- Oboe
- C Trumpet
- Soprano
- Alto
- Tenor
- Bass
- Piano
- Violin
- Violin II
- Viola
- Solo Cello
- Cello
- Double Bass

Key performance instructions and dynamics include:

- Oboe:** *mf* (mezzo-forte) starting in the fourth measure.
- C Trumpet:** *mp* (mezzo-piano) with a *cup mute* instruction in the second measure. Dynamics change to *mf* in the third measure and back to *mp* in the fourth.
- Piano:** *mf* (mezzo-forte) throughout the piece.
- Violin I:** *pizz* (pizzicato) in the second measure (*f*), then *arco* (arco) in the fourth measure (*mf*).
- Violin II:** *pizz* (pizzicato) in the second measure (*f*), then *arco* (arco) in the fourth measure (*mf*).
- Viola:** *pizz* (pizzicato) in the second measure (*f*), then *arco* (arco) in the fourth measure (*fp*).

The score is divided into measures by vertical bar lines, with a repeat sign at the end of the first system.