

## FROM THEE ALL SKILL AND SCIENCE FLOW

This great hymn was written by a dedicated Anglican minister who was also a poet, a novelist, a lover of nature, an historian and above all, a humanitarian. That last word may be quite unknown to you but it means an individual who is deeply concerned with *persons*. Such a man cares for human beings of all descriptions and helps all he can with their problems, no matter how poor, sick, tired or dirty they are.

Charles Kingsley felt that the Christian Church of his day did little to help all the needy persons. He felt that too many church people “busied” themselves with little church activities and did not face up to the needs and concerns of all the poor, sick and homeless beings who lived in the slums of London.

In addition to working hard himself to make life easier for these many people he spent many hours writing. He became well-known as a novelist and as a poet. His books often expressed his deep concern for the social problems of his day through the characters of the stories and the many things they said about the tragic problems of so many poor people. We find these same problems today in so many of our cities, both large and small—not enough food to eat nor clothes to wear; sickness and little hope for life to improve—all of us must work toward finding solutions for these problems.

Charles Kingsley also wrote many poems, however, the one from which our hymn is taken was written especially for the laying of the cornerstone of Queen’s Hospital in Birmingham, England. The entire hymn was sung by a choir of 1,000 voices at the ceremony. The first line began “Accept this building, gracious Lord.” The first two original stanzas are omitted from hymnals now for they refer to the first use of the hymn back in 1871.

The stanzas we find in use today show: (there are two stanzas made up of 2 *quatrains* each. A *quatrain* is a four-line poetic stanza).

1st Quatrain – God is the source of the human skills, emotions, ideals and services that help to raise mankind to higher and nobler efforts.

2nd Quatrain – God wants us to share in giving as well as *receiving* – not the rich and talented only, but the humblest of us. To relieve suffering should be a universal task.

3rd Quatrain – We should strive for our leaders, all of us, to rule justly through God’s guidance.

4th Quatrain – That it is not God who has spoiled our earthly paradise that He created for man. It was our own crude destructiveness. We should do all we can to restore the green grass and trees, and the blue of the sky blackened by smoke.

The tune called *Massachusetts* was written especially for this hymn by a wonderful present-day musician Katherine K. Davis. Miss Davis has written many lovely anthems sung in our churches all across the land. She lives in the state from which the name of our hymn-tune comes. She also wrote one of our Choristers Guild anthems titled *Who Was The Man* (A-110). Perhaps you have sung it.

What is the form of this tune called *Massachusetts*? (Circle the correct form pattern.)

A B C D    A A B A    A B A C    A A B C