

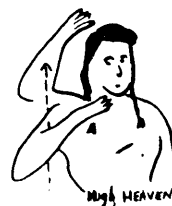
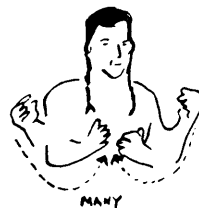
To Indians, including the seven Dakota tribes, a supernatural force permeated all nature and controlled the destiny of man. The Dakotas called the force, *Wakan* – the Algonquins called it *Manito* – the Shoshoni, *Pokunt*, and *Orenda* by the Iroquois. Because most of the Indians were constantly on the move, they felt this force manifested itself in the things of nature surrounding them rather than attempting to hold this force to one place and build a shrine to it!

The Dakota hymn, “Many and Great, O God, Are Thy Things,” names some of the things in which white man’s name for this force, *GOD*, was to be found. Name some of these things:

The text of “Many and Great, O God, Are Thy Things” was paraphrased by Philip Frazier, a Presbyterian missionary to the Indians. The tune, “Lacquiparle,” was harmonized for the Dakota Hymnal in 1877, the third of three editions published by Stephen R. Riggs. Riggs named the tune after the first mission to the Dakota tribe at Lacqui-parle, Minnesota, which he and his wife started in 1837.

The frequent use of open fifths and eights in the music is another clue to the Indian origin of the tune. Circle every fifth you can find and the intervals of an octave (eights) in another color. Why is the **MINOR MODE** appropriate for the tune? Your choir may wish to experiment with making their own percussion and wind instruments and using them with the hymn or its anthem setting.

The hymn may also be simply and dramatically interpreted in sign language or movement. Use small groups of choristers in the background to interpret the recurring rhythmic patterns while another group interprets the text. Here are a few authentic Indian signs to get you started:



These signs seem **PRIMITIVE** but compare the meaning of the words of the hymn with the writing of one of our most noted contemporary theologians, Paul Tillich:

“Absolute faith is not a place where one can live, it is without a name, a church, a cult, a theology. It is being grasped by the God beyond God . . . moving in the depth of all of them.”

“The Courage To Be”

“Grant unto us communion with Thee . . . Come unto us and dwell with us. With Thee are found the gifts of life. Bless us with life that has no end, Eternal life with Thee.”

“Many and Great, O God”

Do you find much difference in the ideas expressed? Could this be because people today, like the Indians, are once again “On the Move” and feel the need to take God with them everywhere rather than limiting His Presence to institutional walls and rituals? Or is it that we, as choristers, find that the texts and tunes of music help us merge the **SACRED** and the **SECULAR**, the **PRIMITIVE** and the **CONTEMPORARY**, in our worship of a living God?