



**We'll sing a
merry roundelay**

**H. Ernest Nichol
(1862-1926)**

Henry Ernest Nichol (1862-1926) was born in Hull, Yorkshire, England. He originally planned to be a civil engineer but abandoned an apprenticeship to study music privately, then graduated from Oxford University. He settled back in Hull as performer and teacher. He was music master at Hull Grammar School, organist at St. Andrew's, conductor of the North Cave Choral Society, and conductor of the Newport Harmonic Society. He was also musical editor for The Sunday School Union and wrote books on choir training and a primer on transposition at sight. He died in Yorkshire, England. His compositions include cantatas, services, anthems, carols, hymns, songs, piano pieces, and part-songs. His best known hymn is "We've a Story to Tell to the Nations." He often wrote under the pseudonym Colin Sterne, an anagram of his name.

We'll sing a merry roundelay,
With a fa la la la la la!
There's nought so good to sing or say
As fa la la la la la!
It falls so tripping from the tongue
That nothing comes amiss,
Staccato runs, legato slides,
Or awkward time like this:—

Fa la la la, fa la la la, fa la la la la, la la,
Fa la la la la, fa la la la la, fa la la la la, la la!

You always get good vocal tone
With fa la la la la la!
The open vowel is the one;
Sing fa la la la la la!
The words may not convey much sense,
Their meaning is not clear,
But still they never give offence,
Or shock the purest ear.

There's many a song that means no more
Than fa la la la la la!
They're published daily by the score:
Sing fa la la la la la!
And when they're sung you do not hear
A word the singers say;
So why not leave the words alone,
And sing them all this way?

"Colin Sterne"

We'll sing a merry roundelay

H. Ernest Nichol

Merrily ♩ = 138

S We'll sing a mer - ry roun - de - lay, With a fa la la la la la la! There's

A We'll sing a mer - ry roun - de - lay, With a fa la la la la la la! There's

T We'll sing a mer - ry roun - de - lay, With a fa la la la la la la! There's

B We'll sing a mer - ry roun - de - lay, With a fa la la la la la la! There's

6
S nought so good to sing or say As fa la la la la la la! It

A nought so good to sing or say As fa la la la la la la! It

T nought so good to sing or say As fa la la la la la la! It

B nought so good to sing or say As fa la la la la la la! It

We'll sing a merry roundelay

10

S falls so trip - ping from the tongue That noth - ing comes a - miss, Stac -

A falls so trip - ping from the tongue That noth - ing comes a - miss, Stac -

T falls so trip - ping from the tongue That noth - ing comes a - miss, Stac -

B falls so trip - ping from the tongue That noth - ing comes a - miss, Stac -

14

S ca - to runs, le - ga - to slides, Or awk - ward time like this:—

A ca - to runs, le - ga - to slides, Or awk - ward time like this:—

T ca - to runs, le - ga - to slides, Or awk - ward time like this:—

B ca - to runs, le - ga - to slides, Or awk - ward time like this:—

S Fa la la la, fa la la la, fa la la la la, la la, Fa

A Fa la la la, fa la la la, fa la la la la, la la, Fa

T Fa la la la, fa la la la, fa la la la la, la la, Fa

B Fa la la la, fa la la la, fa la la la la, la la, Fa

We'll sing a merry roundelay

22

S — la la la la, fa — la la la la, fa la la la la, la la!

A — la la la la, fa — la la la la, fa la la la la, la la!

T — la la la la, fa — la la la la, fa la la la la, la la!

B — la la la la, fa — la la la la, fa la la la la, la la!

Merrily ♩ = 138

26

S You al - ways get good vo - cal__ tone With fa la la la la la la! The

A You al - ways get good vo - cal tone With fa la la la la la la! The

T You al - ways get good vo - cal tone With fa la la la la la la! The

B You al - ways get good vo - cal__ tone With fa la la la la la la! The

31

S o - pen__ vow - ell__ is the__ one; Sing fa la la la la la la! The

A o - pen vow - ell is the one; Sing fa la la la la la la! The

T o - pen vow - ell is the one; Sing fa la la la la la la! The

B o - pen__ vow - ell__ is the__ one; Sing fa la la la la la la! The

We'll sing a merry roundelay

35

S words may not con - vey__ much sense, Their mean - ing__ is not clear, But

A words may not con - vey much sense, Their mean - ing is not clear, But

T words may not con - vey much sense, Their mean - ing is not clear, But

B words may not con - vey__ much sense, Their mean - ing is not clear, But

39

S still__ they__ nev - er give of - fence, Or shock the__ pur - est ear.

A still__ they__ nev - er give of - fence, Or shock the__ pur - est ear.

T still__ they__ nev - er give of - fence, Or shock the pur - est ear.

B still__ they__ nev - er give of - fence, Or shock the pur - est ear.

Merrily ♩ = 138

43

S There's man - y!a__ song that__ means no__ more Than fa la la la la la la! They're

A There's man - y!a song that means no more Than fa la la la la la la! They're

T There's man - y!a song that means no more Than fa la la la la la! They're

B There's man - y!a__ song that__ means no__ more Than fa la la la la la! They're

We'll sing a merry roundelay

48

S
pub - lished dai - ly by the score: Sing fa la la la la la la! And

A
pub - lished dai - ly by the score: Sing fa la la la la la la! And

T
pub - lished dai - ly by the score: Sing fa la la la la la la! And

B
pub - lished dai - ly by the score: Sing fa la la la la la la! And

52

S
when they're sung you do not hear A word the sing - ers say; So

A
when they're sung you do not hear A word the sing - ers say; So

T
when they're sung you do not hear A word the sing - ers say; So

B
when they're sung you do not hear A word the sing - ers say; So

56

S
why not leave the words a - lone, And sing them all this way?

A
why not leave the words a - lone, And sing them all this way?

T
why not leave the words a - lone, And sing them all this way?

B
why not leave the words a - lone, And sing them all this way?

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