

America's Going to the Dickens!

music by
Christopher Coleman

poetry by
Peter Stambler

after
Charles Dickens

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(after Charles Dickens)

I. Congressmen

Wheels. Despicable tricksters at elections;
Underhanded tamperers of public officials;
Shameful trucksters to mercenary knaves;
Dishonest Faction, depraved and unblushing:
All stared out from every corner of the crowded hall.

II. Transcendentalists

Out of the rottenness of lectures and cant,
A Boston sect of philosophers has bloomed.
On inquiring what transcendental might signify,
I was given to understand
That whatever was unintelligible
Would certainly be transcendental.
If I were a Bostonian,
I do believe I would join.

III. Ingenuity

Ten-pins is a game of mingled chance and skill
Invented when the Legislature passed an act
Forbidding Nine-pins.

"Congressmen," "Transcendentalists" and "Ingenuity" from *Witnesses: A Guided Tour to 19th Century America* by Peter Stambler, are used with permission. Copyright (c) 1983 by Jump River Press, Inc.

America's Going to the Dickens!

Poem by Peter Stambler
(after Charles Dickens)

Music by Christopher Coleman

I. Congressmen

Darkly Jazzy

♩. = 92

Medium
Voice

Piano

p

come sopra

ff

p

p

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7 *f* *mp*

Wheels. Des - pi - ca - ble

10 *mf* *mf*

trick - sters at e - lec - tions;

13 *f*

un - der-hand - ed tam - per - ers of pub - lic of -

16

fi - cials;

sub. pp *f*

20

Shame-ful truck - sters to

f *ff* *mf*

23

mer - ce - nar - y knaves;

ff *f* *ff*

26

26

29

p

Dis - hon - est Fac - tion, de - praved and un -

29

fff *sub. p*

32

blush - ing: All stared out

32

ff

35 hard "t"

from ev - e - ry cor - ner

jubilantly! 8va

38 *mp*

of the crowd - ed

ff mf ff

41

hall.

mp poco

45

45

p

poco

49

49

pp

pp

53

53

ppp

fff

II. Transcendentalists

1 $\text{♩} = 88$ **Ruggedly Individualistic**

Medium Voice *ff*

Out of the rot - ten - ness of lec - tures and

Piano *pesante* *ff*

4

cant, A Bos - ton sect of phi -

7

los - o - phers has bloomed.

sfz *pp* *Slower* $\text{♩} = 66$

10 *p*
On in -

p
mf
pp

14
quir - ing what tran - scen - den - tal might sig - ni - fy,

mf
pp

17 *mf*
I was giv-en to un - der - stand

mp

20 *p*

That what - ev - er was un - in - tel - li - gi -

24 *Fast!*
sub. ff ♩ = 112

ble Would cer - tain - ly be tran - scen -

24 *Fast!*

sub. ff

27

den - tal.

27 *sffz* *rit. e dim.*

quasi recitative
smooth and easy

mf

30 If I were a Bos -

mf

mp molto rit.

33 *p* to - ni - an, *f* I do be - lieve *mp* I would *p*

pp

sfz

pp

37 join. _____

37 *ppp*

III. Ingenuity

Wry and strong

Medium Voice

f

♩ = 72

Ten-pins is a game of min-gled chance and skill

Piano

f

4

mp

In-vent-ed when the Leg - is - la - ture passed an

f

mp

8

act For - bid - ding Nine - pins.

f

mf

ff