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FOLK-SONG AND FOLK-POETRY AS FOUND IN THE SECULAR SONGS OF THE SOUTHERN NEGROES

BY HOWARD W. ODUM

An examination of the first twenty volumes of the Journal of American Folk-Lore, and a study of the published folk-songs of the Southern negroes, reveal a large amount of valuable material for the student of folk-songs and ballads. Investigation of the field indicates a still larger supply of songs as yet not collected or published. Unfortunately the collection of these songs has been permitted to lapse within recent years, although there is no indication that even a majority have been collected. In fact, the supply seems almost inexhaustible, and the present-day negro folk-songs appear to be no less distinctive than formerly. It is hoped that special efforts will be made by as many persons as possible to contribute to the negro department of American folk-lore as many of the songs of the Southern negroes as can be obtained. That they are most valuable to the student of sociology and anthropology, as well as to the student of literature and the ballad, will scarcely be doubted.

Two distinct classes of folk-songs have been, and are, current among the Southern negroes, — the religious songs, or "spirituals;" and the social or secular songs. An examination of the principal collections of negro songs, a list of which is appended at the end of this paper, shows that emphasis has been placed heretofore upon the religious songs, although the secular songs appear to be equally as interesting and valuable. My study of negro folk-songs included originally the religious and secular songs of the Southern negroes; analysis of their content; a discussion of the mental imagery, style and habit, reflected in them; and the word-vocabulary of the collection of songs. The religious songs have already been published in the American Journal of Religious Psychology and Education (vol. iii, pp. 265–365). In order to bring this paper within the scope and limits of the Journal of American Folk-Lore, it has been necessary to omit the introductory discussion of the songs, for the most part, and to omit entirely the...
vocabulary and discussion of the mental imagery, style and habits, of the negro singers. In this paper, therefore, only the secular songs are given, which in turn are divided into two classes, -- the general social songs, and work songs and phrases.

To understand to the best advantage the songs which follow, it is necessary to define the usage of the word "folk-song" as applied in this paper, to show how current negro songs arise and become common property, to note their variations, and to observe some of the occasions upon which they are sung. Each of these aspects of the Southern negro's songs is interdependent upon the others; the meaning of the folk-songs is emphasized by the explanations of their origin and variations; the singing of the songs by many individuals on many occasions emphasizes the difficulty of confining any song to a given locality or to a single form; and the value of the song is increased as it passes through the several stages.

The songs in this collection are "negro folk-songs," in that they have had their origin and growth among the negroes, or have been adapted so completely that they have become the common songs of the negroes. They are "folk-poetry which, from whatever source and for whatever reason, has passed into the possession of the folk, the common people, so completely that each singer or reciter feels the piece to be his own."¹ Each singer alters or sings the song according to his own thoughts and feelings. How exactly this applies to the negro songs may be seen from the explanations which follow, and from the study and comparison of the different songs. It is not necessary, therefore, in order to classify the songs as negro songs, to attempt to trace each song to its origin or to attempt to determine how much is original and how much borrowed. Clearly many of the songs are adapted forms of well-known songs or ballads; others, which in all probability had their origin among the negroes, resemble very strongly the songs of other people; while still others combine in a striking way original features with the borrowed. In any case, the song, when it has become the common distinctive property of the negroes, must be classed with negro folk-songs. Variations of negro folk-songs among themselves may be cited as an illustration of this fact. Likewise there is abundant material for comparing with well-known folk-songs or ballads of other origins. One may note, for instance, the striking similarity between the mountain-song —

"She broke the heart of many poor fellows,
But she won't break this of mine" —

and the negro song "Kelly's Love," the chorus of which is,

"You broke de heart o' many a girl,
But you never will break dis heart o' mine."

¹Dr. John Meier, quoted by Professor H. M. Belden, Journal of American Folk-Lore, vol. xxiv, p. 3.
Or, again, compare the version of the Western ballad, "Casey Jones,"—which begins,

"Come, all you rounders, for I want you to hear
The story told of an engineer.
Casey Jones was the rounder's name,
A heavy right-wheeler of mighty fame,"—

with the negro song, "Casey Jones," which begins,

"Casey Jones was an engineer,
Told his fireman not to fear,
All he wanted was boiler hot,
Run into Canton 'bout four 'clock,"

and, having recited in a single stanza the story of his death, passes on to love affairs, and ends,

"Wimmins in Kansas all dressed in red,
Got de news dat Casey was dead;
De wimmins in Jackson all dressed in black,
Said, in fact, he was a cracker-jack."

Thus Canton and Jackson, Mississippi, are localized; in "Joseph Mica" similar versions are found, and localized in Atlanta and other cities,—

"All he want is water 'n coal,
Poke his head out, see drivers roll;"

and the entire story of the engineer's death is told in the verse,

"Good ole engineer, but daid an' gone."

In the same way comparisons may be made with "Jesse James," "Eddy Jones," "Joe Turner," "Brady," "Stagolee," of the hero-songs; "Won't you marry me?" "Miss Lizzie, won't you marry me?" "The Angel Band," and others similar to some of the short Scottish ballads and song-games of American children; and "I got mine," "When she roll dem Two White Eyes," "Ain't goin' be no Rine," and many others adapted from the popular "coon-songs;" together with scores of rhymes, riddles, and conundrums. In any case, the songs with the accompanying music have become the property of the negroes, in their present rendition, regardless of their sources or usage elsewhere.

In the same way that it is not possible to learn the exact origin of the folk-songs, or to determine how much is original and how much traditional, it is not possible to classify negro songs according to the exact locality or localities from which they come. The extent to which they become common property, and the scope of their circulation, will be explained in subsequent discussions of the songs. The best that can be done, therefore, is to classify the songs according to the locality from which they were collected, and to give the different

1 Such a classification, by numbers, is given at the conclusion of this article.
versions of the same song as they are found in different localities. The majority of the songs collected from Lafayette County, Mississippi, were also heard in Newton County, Georgia; and a large number of the songs heard in Mississippi and Georgia were also heard in Tennessee (Sumner County). From many inquiries the conclusion seems warranted that the majority of the one hundred and ten songs or fragments here reported are current in southern Georgia, southern Mississippi, parts of Tennessee, and the Carolinas and Virginia. It may well be hoped that other collections of negro songs will be made, and that similarities and differences in these songs may be pointed out in other localities, as well as new songs collected. The large number of "one-verse songs" and "heave-a-hora's" were collected with the other songs, and are representative of the negro song in the making.

In studying the negro's songs, three important aids to their interpretation should be kept in mind,—first, facts relating to the manner of singing, and the occasions upon which they are sung; second, the general classes of negro songs, and the kinds of songs within each class; and, third, the subject-matter, methods of composition, and the processes through which the songs commonly pass in their growth and development. The majority of songs current among the negroes are often sung without the accompaniment of an instrument. The usual songs of the day, songs of laborers, of children, and many general care-free songs, together with some of the songs of the evening, are not accompanied. In general, the majority of the songs of the evening are accompanied by the "box" or fiddle when large or small groups are gathered together for gayety; when a lonely negro sits on his doorstep or by the fireside, playing and singing; when couples stay late at night with their love-songs and jollity; when groups gather after church to sing the lighter melodies; when the "musicianers," "music physicianers," and "songsters" gather to render music for special occasions, such as church and private "socials," dances, and other forms of social gatherings. Special instances in which a few negroes play and sing for the whites serve to bring out the combined features of restrained song and the music of the instrument. The old-time negro with his "box" (a fiddle or guitar), ever ready to entertain the "white folks" and thus be entertained himself, is less often observed than formerly. The majority of younger negroes must be well paid for their music. In the smaller towns, such negroes not infrequently organize a small "orchestra," and learn to play and sing the new songs. They often render acceptable music, and are engaged by the whites for serenades or for occasions of minor importance. They do not, however, sing the negro folk-songs.

Of special importance as makers and mediums for negro folk-songs
are the "music physicians," "musicianers," and "songsters." These terms may be synonymous, or they may denote persons of different habits. In general, "songster" is used to denote any negro who regularly sings or makes songs; "musicianer" applies often to the individual who claims to be expert with the banjo or fiddle; while "music physicianer" is used to denote more nearly a person who is accustomed to travel from place to place, and who possesses a combination of these qualities; or each or all of the terms may be applied loosely to any person who sings or plays an instrument. A group of small boys or young men, when gathered together and wrought up to a high degree of abandon, appear to be able to sing an unlimited number of common songs. Perhaps the "music physicianer" knows the "moest songs." With a prized "box," perhaps his only property, such a negro may wander from town to town, from section to section, loafing in general, and working only when compelled to do so, gathering new songs and singing the old ones. Negroes of this type may be called professionals, since their life of wandering is facilitated by the practice of singing. Through their influence, songs are easily carried from place to place. There are other "musicianers" whose fields of activity are only local. In almost every community such individuals may be found, and from them many songs can be obtained. From them and from promiscuous individuals, a "musicianer" may be influenced to obtain songs new to himself, which he, in turn, will render to the collector. Finally, a group of young negroes, treated to a "bait" of watermelons or to a hearty meal, make excellent "songsters" in the rendering of the folk-songs. In addition to these special cases, it is a constant source of surprise to the observer to learn how many songs the average negro knows; and they may be heard during work hours, or, in some cases, by request.

The great mass of negro songs may be divided into three general classes, the last of which constitutes the folk-songs as commonly used, —first, the modern "coon-songs" and the newest popular songs of the day; second, such songs greatly modified and adapted partially by the negroes; and, third, songs originating with the negroes or adapted so completely as to become common folk-songs. The first class of songs is heard more frequently by the whites. All manner of "rag-times," "coon-songs," and the latest "hits," replace the simpler negro melodies. Young negroes pride themselves on the number of such songs they can sing, at the same time that they resent a request to sing the older melodies. Very small boys and girls sing the difficult airs of the new songs with surprising skill, until one wonders when and how they learned so many words and tunes. The second class of songs easily arises from the singing of popular songs, varied through constant singing or through misunderstanding of the original versions.
These songs appear to be typical of the process of song-making, and indicate the facility of the negroes in producing their own songs from material of any sort. The third class of negro songs is made up of the "folk-songs" proper; and while the variations of the songs of the first and second classes would constitute an interesting study, they are in reality not negro songs. Accordingly, only those that have become completely adapted are given in this collection. In all of these the characteristic music and manner prevail, and the principal characteristics may be enumerated simply. The music may be reduced to a few combinations. The harmonies are made up mostly of minor keys, without reference to studied combinations or movement toward related keys. There is much repetition in both words and music. The song and chorus are adapted to an apparent mood or feeling. Verses are sung in the order in which they occur to the singer, or as they please the fancy. The great majority of the songs are made up of repetitions, but they do not tire the singers or the hearers. The negro song often begins with one conception of a theme, and ends with another entirely foreign to the first, after passing through various other themes. This may be explained by the fact that when the negro begins to sing, he loves to continue, and often passes from one song to another without pausing. In time he mingles the two or more songs. Most of the groups and "socials," and especially the dance, require continuous music for a longer period of time than the average song will last. It thus happens that the negro could sing the great majority of his songs to a single tune, if the necessity called for it; although it is likely that the last part of his melody would scarcely be recognizable as that with which he began. In words, as in music, variation seems unlimited. As is pointed out subsequently, and as was true in the case of the religious songs, there is no consistency in the use of dialect. Perhaps there is less consistency in the social songs than elsewhere. It is common for the negro to mingle every kind of song into one, or to transpose the one from its usual place or origin to any other position. Thus "coon-songs," "rag-times," "knife-songs," "devil-songs," "corn-songs," "work-songs," — all alike may become love-songs or dancing "breakdowns." The original names given to such songs serve to distinguish them in the mind of the negro, rather than to indicate their separateness. However, the distinctions are often made clearly enough for a definition of what the negro means to be made.

The "musicianer" will play many "rag-times," which he carefully names, and calls off with pride. Usually they are not accompanied by words, but are represented on the fiddle or guitar. When he is through with these, he will offer to play and sing "some song." This he does to precisely the same music as the "rag-time." With the words, it is a song; without the words, it is a "rag-time," in which
case the negro puts more life into the music. Likewise the "knife-song" is by origin instrumental only, but it is regularly associated with several songs of many verses. Its name is derived from the act of running the back of a knife along the strings of the instrument, thus making it "sing" and "talk" with skill. Instead of the knife, negroes often carry a piece of bone, polished and smooth, which they slip over a finger, and alternate between picking the strings and rubbing them. This gives a combination of fiddle and guitar. The bone may also serve as a good-luck omen. The knife, however, is more commonly used. The "musicianer" places his knife by the side of the instrument while he picks the strings and sings. He can easily take it up and use it at the proper time without interrupting the harmony. In this way the instrument can be made to "sing," "talk," "cuss," and supplement in general the voice and the ringing of the fiddle or the tinkling of the guitar. It is undoubtedly one of the negro's best productions, and defies musical notation to give it full expression.

The "train-song" derives its name from its imitation of the running train. The most popular name for it is "The Fast Train." The negro's fondness for trains and railroad life has been observed. In the railroad-songs that follow, the extent to which the train appeals to the negro may be seen. In no way is this spirit better portrayed than in the train-songs, which picture to the vivid imagination the rapidly-moving train. This imitation is done by the rapid running of the fingers along the strings, and by the playing of successive chords with a regularity that makes a sound similar to that of the moving train. The train is made to whistle by a prolonged and consecutive striking of the strings, while the bell rings with the striking of a single string. As the negroes imagine themselves observing the train, or riding, the fervor of the occasion is increased; and when "she blows for the station," the exclamations may be heard, "Lawd, God, she's a-runnin' now!" or, "Sho' God railroadin'!" with others of a similar nature. The train "pulls out" from the station, passes the road-crossings, goes up grade, down grade, blows for the crossing, blows for smaller stations, blows for the operators at the stations, rings the bell for crossings and for stopping the train; this train meets the "express" and the mail-train, blows for the side-track, rings the bell; the mail-train in turn whistles, rings the bell, passes; both bells ring, and they continue on their run; the wheels are heard rolling on the track and crossing the joints in the rails. If the song is instrumental only, the man at the guitar announces the several stages of the run. If the song is one of words, such as the railroad-songs cited subsequently, the words are made to heighten the imagination, and between the stanzas there is ample time to picture the train and its occupants.
A study of the social songs current among the Southern negroes shows that they have arisen from every-day life, and that they portray many of the common traits and social tendencies. The majority may be said to have sprung up within comparatively recent years. For the subject-matter of his songs, the negro has drawn freely upon his favorite themes; and the growth and development of his songs have been spontaneous and natural. The singers are often conscious that they are singing folk-songs, and they attempt to pose as the authors; others give interesting stories to show how they learned the songs; while many negroes are averse to singing or collecting such songs for those desiring them. The accounts given by negroes concerning the origin and authorship of their songs, while most interesting, are quite misleading, for the most part. One negro affirmed that he had heard a song "played by a white lady in New York," and that, from hearing it there, he had learned to reproduce the music on his guitar and sing the song to accompany it. Another affirmed that he got the same song from a neighboring town, and that he had been forced to pay dearly for it (therefore he should be rewarded accordingly). The song was one of the widest known of the negro songs. So, too, negro singers may often purposely mislead the investigator by misquoting the song, or by giving verses which they have got from books or papers, or heard from "coon-songs." Many negroes maintain that they are the original authors of the songs they sing, and they are able to give apparent good evidence to substantiate the statement. Even if one were inclined to accept such testimony, it would be a difficult matter to select the author from a number who thus claim to have composed the song. This is well illustrated by the young negro who wished to call out his name before each song which he was singing into the graphophone. "Song composed by Will Smith of Chattanooga, Tennessee," he would cry out, then begin his song; for, he maintained, these songs would be sung all over the world, and he deserved the credit for them. His varied song furnished excellent material for getting the characteristic notation of the music. Once or twice he hesitated before giving his name as the author, and several times said he guessed that the song was composed by some other person whose name he wished to give. This person was a "partner rounder" of his acquaintance; and when told that the origin of a song which he was singing was not that which he gave, but was well known, he begged to have his name taken away, adding that he only meant to say, "Song sung by Will Smith." This may be cited as an illustration of the difficulty of getting at the origin of a song through the negroes. In no case could the general testimony be accepted for any purpose other than to give an insight into the negro's own conception of the possible origin of songs.
The negroes have many songs which they call "one-verse songs." By this they mean a single line, repeated again and again, constituting the entire song. Usually the line is repeated with regularity, so that it makes a stanza of two, four, or six lines, sometimes three and five. In such cases the last repetition adds some word or exclamation, as "oh," "my," "yes," "well," "and," "so," and others. The great majority of negro songs which are current now are "one-verse songs," and almost all have arisen and developed along the one-verse method. A close examination of the songs that follow in subsequent pages will show the processes. In this way the origin of song is simple and natural. Any word may lead to a phrase which itself becomes a one-verse song, and naturally calls for a rhyme and additional verses. A negro is driving a delivery-wagon; the weather is cold, and the wind is blowing with a drizzling rain. He pulls his coat around him, and says, "The wind sho' do blow." Not having any special song which he wishes to sing at the moment, he sings these words and others: "Sho' God is cold dis mornin'," "Ain't goin' to rain no mo'," "Goin' where chilly win' don't blow." In the same way he sings whatever happens to be foremost in his mind. Perhaps it is, "I bin workin' so long — hungry as I kin be;" "Where in de worl' you bin?" "I'm goin' way some day;" "Jus' keep a knockin' at yo' do;" "Had a mighty good time las' night;" or as many others as there are common scenes in the negro's life. The examples given in the list of one-verse songs will serve to illustrate further this common origin of many of the negro songs. In the same general way the prose or monotone songs have arisen. The negro often talks to himself; his singing is simply a musical "thinking out loud." His monologues uttered in a monotone manner lead to song. Perhaps he will talk to himself a while, then sing the same words that he has been uttering. Pleased with this effect, he may then introduce his chant into a group. Such a song is given farther on.

I. DONY GOT A HOLE IN DE WALL

"A girl was luvin' a coon," so the story goes, "an' she thought he did not go to see any other girl; she found out he did, an' she made a hole in the wall of her house so she could watch an' see did her lover go to see any other coon. Her luvin' man found this out an' it made him laugh; an' he wus sorry, too." Thus is given the origin of a bit of song. The lover makes a song, and says, —

"Dony got a hole in de wall,
Dony got a hole in de wall,
Dony got a hole in de wall,
Oh, my Dony got a hole in de wall.
"Baby weahs a number fo' shoe,
Baby weahs a number fo' shoe,
Baby weahs a number fo' shoe,
Oh, my baby weahs a number fo' shoe."

In this way the negro makes a story back of the song. If it is a lover's song, he tells of a particular man and his woman. If it is Railroad Bill, he tells when and where he lived and what he did, then sings the song. If it is another "bully boy," the same is true. If the song be that of the wanderer, he tells of the adventures; if it is of a murder, he narrates the story of arrest and trial. A study of the songs reveals the immense possibilities for stories back of the song. No song is enjoyed so much as when the singer has told his story before singing it. In theory at least, then, the negro song is based on incident; in practice it develops through the common events of negro life. Indeed, one may accept the statement that many of their songs are actually derived from story; but there may be as many variations to the song and story as there are negroes who sing it.

Individuals among the negroes take pride in making secular songs, as they do in claiming the composition of religious songs. Enough has been said to indicate this habit. But undoubtedly the negro has a consciousness of power or ability to create new songs when he wishes to do so. This very feeling enables him to make his boasts true. Most negroes are bright in composing songs of some kind. Besides being led to it by their own assertions, they enjoy it. It matters little what the theme is, the song will be forthcoming and the tune applied. Nor would one suspect that the song was a new one, were it not for its unfinished lines and the lack of characteristic folk-song qualities. In the examples here given it will be seen that the lines do not have the finished form of the older songs. In time they too may become good folk-songs.

2. MULE-SONG

The negroes have much to say about the mule in their work, and have much to do with him in actual life. Their songs also contain references to him. A mixture of parts of song added to experience and imagination produced the following "mule-song:"

"I went up Zion Hill this mornin' on a wagon,
I went on a wagon up Zion's Hill this mornin',
The durn ole mule stop right still this mornin', this mornin', so soon.

"I got out an' went 'round to his head this mornin',
I got out an' went 'round to his head this mornin',
The durn ole mule was standin' there dead, this mornin', so soon.

"Yes, I hollow at the mule, an' the mule would not gee, this mornin',
Yes, I hollow at the mule, an' the mule would not gee,
An' I hit him across the head with the single-tree, so soon."
The negro expected that his song would be a humorous one, as indeed it is. Such songs lack the rhyme and more regular measures, and employ words at random to fill out the lines.

3. THE NEGRO AND HIS MULE

In the following song the same characteristics may be observed:

"Say, look here, Jane!
Don't you want to take a ride?"—
"Well, I doan care if I do."
So he hitch up his mule an' started out.

Well, it's whoa, mule, git up an' down,
Till I say whoa-er, mule.

Well it's git up an' down
Jus' fas' as you can,
Fer I goin' to buy you
All of de oats an' bran.

An' it's whoa-er mule, git up an' down,
Till I say whoa-er mule:
Ain't he a mule, Miss Jane — 'm — huh.

4. POOR JOHN

In the next song may be observed a peculiarly mixed imagery. Quite a number of phrases are borrowed from other songs, but the arrangement is new. "Poor John" is a common character with the negro; stabbing and running are common accomplishments with the criminal. The other scenes, losing his hat, falling down the steps, the cry of murder, and the policemen, all appeal to the imagery of the negro. He sings, with a combination of vaudeville rhyme,—

"Yes, he caught poor John with his hawk-tail coat,
An' he stab him to the fat;
He ran the race an' he run so fas',
Till he bust his beaver hat.

"Poor John fell down them winding steps,
Till he could not fall no further;
An' the girls all holler murder;
Go tell all policemen on this beat to see,
Can't they catch that coon.

"'What coon am you talkin' about?'
'The coon that stab po' John;
I'm goin', I'm goin', to the shuckin' o' de corn,
I'm goin' jus' sho's you born.'"

5. AT THE BALL

An adopted form of an old song, "Won't you marry me," but equally as true in its representative features, is the song "At the Ball." Here
the rhyming effort is clearly felt, and the picture is definitely portrayed. The negro's idea of courtship may here be hinted at, as it has been in many of the songs that follow.

Yes, there's going to be a ball,
At the negro hall;
Ain't you goin'?
Lizzie will be there,
Yes, with all her airs;
Don't you want to see the strolling?

*Ha, ha, Miss Lizzie, don't you want to marry me — marry me?
I will be as good to you as anybody — anybod-e-e,
If you'll only marry me.*

Yes, I goin' to the negro hall,
Have a good time, that's all,
For they tell me Miss Lizzie will be there;
An' you bet yo' life,
I goin' win her for my wife,
An' take her home to-night.

Well, Miss Lizzie could not consent,
She didn't know what he meant,
By askin' her to marry him;
Well, Miss Lizzie couldn't consent,
She didn't know what he meant,
By askin' her to marry him.

So he got down on his knees,
"O Miss Lizzie, if you please,
Say that you will marry me;
An' I'll give you every cent,
If I git you to consent,
If you'll only marry me."

6. **WHEN HE GITS OLD — OLD AN' GRAY**

There are apparently a good many sayings current among the negroes about the whites. Few of these, however, are heard by any save the negroes themselves. Likewise the songs of this nature would scarcely be sung where the whites could hear them. Two of these are here given. The first is a reply to the accusation that the negroes are nothing more than apes or monkeys. As the story goes, it is likely that the song originated with a bright negro's retort behind the back of a white who had called him an ape. "That's all right," said the negro in the proverbial phrase; but

When he gits old,
old and gray,
When he gits old,
old and gray,
Then white folks looks like monkeys,
When dey gits old, old an' gray.
It is needless to say that the song struck a responsive note as well as appealed to the negro as a very bright song for the occasion. In fact, it must be admitted to be a good rejoinder. The subtle and sulky manner in which it is sung is a powerful comment on the negro's growing sense of race feeling. Whether there are other verses to this comment on the aged whites has not been ascertained.

7. **AIN'T IT HARD TO BE A NIGGER**

The second song which is now well known is composed of two popular rhymes about the negro and the white man, together with other verses composed to make an agreeable song and to make suitable rhymes and combinations. The effort to make a complete song is easily felt as one reads the words. The tune may be one that the singer happens to think of; it matters little which he chooses. The theme "Ain't it Hard?" is one that is common in negro life and song. He sings, —

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"Ain't it hard, ain't it hard,
Ain't it hard to be a nigger, nigger, nigger?
Ain't it hard, ain't it hard,
For you can't git yo' money when it's due.

"Well, it make no difference,
How you make out yo' time;
White man sho' bring a
Nigger out behin'.

"Nigger an' white man
Playin' seven-ups;
Nigger win de money—
Skeered to pick 'em up.

"If a nigger git 'rested,
An' can't pay his fine,
They sho' send him out
To the county gang.

"A nigger went to a white man,
An' asked him for work;
White man told nigger,
'Yes, git out o' yo' shirt.'

"Nigger got out o' his shirt
An' went to work;
When pay-day come,
White man say he ain't work 'nuf.

"If you work all the week,
An' work all the time,
White man sho' to bring
Nigger out behin'.'
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The above song illustrates the method of making song out of rhymes, fragments, sayings, and improvised rhymes. The song as heard in its present form was collected in Newton County, Georgia. In a negro school in Mississippi, at a Friday afternoon "speaking," one of the children recited for a "speech" the stanza "Nigger an' white man playin' seven-ups," etc., exactly as it occurs in the song. The stanza ending "white man sho' bring nigger out behin'" incorporates the exact sentiment of an old ex-slave who maintained that in slavery and out of slavery the white man always brought the nigger out behind. So also it is a most common saying among the negroes that "if nigger git 'rested, he sho' be sent to gang." The other two stanzas are clearly made to order in the effort to make song and rhyme. However, this mixed assortment of verses and sentiments made a most attractive song when sung to a common tune.

Just as in the religious songs many verses are composed with the avowed intention of contributing a song, so in the secular songs original "poems" are turned into songs. One thrifty teacher wrote verses on the sinking of the "Maine," to be sung to the tune of "John Brown's Body," etc.; another, called "Hog-killin' Time," to be sung to the tune of "The Old Oaken Bucket." While such songs do not ordinarly become standard folk-songs, they illustrate the ease with which any sort of song may arise and become current. Thus the "songster" closes his description of a day's ploughing in the hot month of June:

"Dem skeeters dey callin' me cousin,
   Dem gnats dey calls me frien',
   Dem stingin' flies is buzzin',
   Dis nigger done gone in."

Enough has been pointed out to show something of the environment of the negro songs. Further explanations and analysis must be made in connection with the songs themselves. It was pointed out that the negro's religious songs did not lend themselves to exact classification. The social songs can be classified with no more exactness than can the spirituals. The best that can be done is to arrange the songs according to a partial analysis of the subject-matter; but any such classification must be considered entirely flexible, just as, for instance, work-songs may be sung on occasions where no work is done, and just as any popular song may be adapted to become a work-song. Themes are freely mingled; verses, disjointed and inconsequent, are sung to many tunes and variations. Repetition of words and thought is thus most common. Each song may consist of a number of themes, which in turn are sung to other songs of other subject-matter. Thus it happens that it matters little what the song is called, provided it is given its proper setting. In the songs that follow, not infrequently a song is reported as having only three or
four stanzas, whereas stanzas already reported are included by the
singer until his song is as long as desired. The effort is made to
avoid as much repetition as possible, and at the same time to report
the songs in such a way as to do justice to the characteristic qualities
of the song. Hence stanzas that have been given in one song will
generally be omitted in others in which they are found. The dialect
is that of the average singing; for the negro, in his social and secular
songs, even more than in his religious songs, uses no consistent speech.
The language is neither that of the whites nor that of the blacks, but
a freely mingled and varied usage of dialect and common speech.
Colloquialisms are frequent. The omission of pronouns and con-
nectives, assyndeton in its freest usage, mark many negro verses, while
the insertion of interjections and senseless phrases go to the other
extreme. Such peculiarities may be best noted when the songs are
studied. In the songs that follow, the words of the chorus are itali-
cized. It should be remembered that in addition to beginning and
ending the song with the regular chorus, each stanza is followed by
the same chorus, thus doubling the length of the song.

Perhaps no person is sung more among the negroes than the home-
less and friendless wanderer, with his disappointments in love and
adventure; but here the negro sings of woman, and the desire for pity
and love, as the accompanying feelings of the wanderer. These refer-
ces must be added to those songs of the next division which tell of
woman, sweetheart, and love. In no phases of negro life do the
negro's self-feeling and self-pity manifest themselves more than in the
plaintive appeals of the wandering negro. With his characteristic
manner, he appeals to both whites and blacks for pity and assistance.
As the tramp invents many ingenious stories in order to arouse the
pity of those whom he meets; as the cook tells of many misfor-
tunes in the family, thinking thus to secure more provisions,—so
these songs portray the feelings of the negro vagrant. He especially
appeals to his women friends, and thus moves them to pity him. His
appeals to their sympathy are usually effective; and the negro thus
gets shelter, food, and attention. The wandering "songster" takes
great pride in thus singing with skill some of his favorite songs; then
he can boast of his achievements as "a bad man" with his "box."

As he wanders from negro community to community, he finds lodging
and solace. So the negroes at home take up the songs, and sing them
to their companions, this constituting perhaps the most effective
method of courtship. In these songs the roving, rambling thoughts of
the negro are well brought out by the quick shifting of scenes; so his
rambling and unsteady habits are depicted with unerring though un-
conscious skill.
8. PO' BOY LONG WAY FROM HOME

In the following song, which is sometimes sung with the knife instrumental music described elsewhere, each stanza consists of a single line repeated three times.

| : I'm po' boy 'long way from home, : |
| Oh, I'm po' boy 'long way from home. |
| : I wish a 'scushion train would run, : |
| Carry me back where I cum frum. |
| : Come here, babe, an' sit on yo' papa's knee. : |
| : You brought me here an' let 'em throw me down. : |
| : I ain't got a frien' in dis town. : |
| : I'm out in de wide worl' alone. : |
| : If you mistreat me, you sho' will see it again. : |

My mother daid an' my father gone astray,
You never miss yo' mother till she done gone away.

| : Come 'way to Georgia, babe, to git in a home. : |
| No need, O babe! try to throw me down,
A po' little boy jus' come to town. |
| I wish that ole engeneer wus dead,
Brought me 'way from my home. |
| Central gi' me long-distance phone,
Talk to my babe all night long. |
| If I die in State of Alabam',
Send my papa great long telegram. |

In the same way the following "one-verse" songs are added:

| : Shake hands an' tell yo' babe good-by. : |
| Bad luck in de family sho' God fell on me.
Have you got lucky, babe, an' then got broke? |
| I'm goin' 'way, comin' back some day. |
| Good ole boy, jus' ain't treated right. |
| I'm Tennessee raise, Georgia bohn. |
| I'm Georgia bohn, Alabama rais'. |

9. ON A HOG

Very much like the above song is "On a Hog," which means the condition of a "broke ho-bo" or tramp. By "broke" he means the usual state of being without money, or place to sleep, or food to eat. The song, like the above one, consists of lines repeated, without a chorus. There is little sense or connection in the words and verses. It represents the characteristic blending of all kinds of words to make
some sort of song. At the same time its verses are classics in negro song.

| : Come 'way to Georgia to git on a hog. : | (three times)  
| Lord, come 'way to Georgia to git on a hog. |

| : If you will go, babe, please don't go now, : |  
| : But heave-a-hora, heave-a-hora, babe, heave! : |  
| : I didn't come here to be nobody's dog. : |  
| : I jest come here to stay a little while. : |  
| : Well, I ain't goin' in Georgia long. : |  

And with characteristic rhyme-making, a negro, after he had finished the few verses that he knew, began adding others. Said he,

“I didn’t come here to be nobody’s dog,
Jes’ come here to git off’n dat hog.”

10. FRISCO RAG-TIME

Even more disjointed and senseless is the song called, for convenience at the moment, “Frisco Rag-Time,” “K. C.,” or any other railroad name that happens to be desired. The song may be sung by man or woman or by both. It is expected that the viewpoint of man be indicated in the use of woman as the object, and woman’s viewpoint be indicated in the reference to man. Such is sometimes the case; but usually the negro sings the song through, shifting from time to time from man to woman without so much as noticing the incongruity of meaning. In the verses which follow the scenes will be portrayed with clear vision by the negro singer.

| : Got up in the mornin’, couldn’t keep from cryin’, : | (three times)  
| Thinkin’ ’bout that brown-skin man o’ mine. |

| : Yonder comes that lovin’ man o’ mine, : | (three times)  
| Comin’ to pay his baby’s fine. |

| : Well, I begged the jedge to low’ my baby’s fine, : | (three times)  
| Said de jedge done fine her, clerk done wrote it down. |

| : Couldn’t pay dat fine, so taken her to de jail. : | (three times) |

| : So she laid in jail back to de wall, : | (three times)  
| Dis brown-skin man cause of it all. |

| : No need babe tryin’ to throw me down, : | (three times)  
| Cause I’m po’ boy jus’ come to town. |

| : But if you don’t want me, please don’t dog me ’round, : | (three times)  
| Give me this money, sho’ will leave this town. |

| : Ain’t no use tryin’ to send me ’roun’, : | (three times)  
| I got plenty money to pay my fine. |

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It will be observed that the last-named verses are practically the same as those given in other songs, and have no connection with the theme with which the song was begun; yet they formed an integral part of the song. In the same way single lines repeated four times are sung at length, although one would need to search diligently for the connection of meaning.

If you don't find me here, come to Larkey's dance.
If you don't find me there, come to ole Birmingham.
Ain't goin' to be in jungles long.
Yonder comes that easy-goin' man o' mine.
Ain't Jedge Briles a hard ole man!

"Jedge Briles" is only a local name given to Judge Broyles of Atlanta. His reputation is widely known among the negroes of Georgia. Instead of this name are often inserted the names of local characters, which serve to add concreteness to the song. So instead of Birmingham, the negro may sing Atlanta, Chattanooga, or any other city that ranks as a favorite among the negroes. Besides the feeling of the wayward wanderer, the scenes of court and jail are here pictured. Another division of song will group these scenes together. The difficulty of any sort of accurate classification of such a song is apparent. In addition to the words of the wandering man, this song gives also an insight into the reckless traits of the negro woman, which are clearly pictured in many of the negro love-songs.

II. LOOK'D DOWN DE ROAD

Mixed in just the same way, and covering a number of themes, utterly without sense-connection, the following song might well be a continuation of those just given. It is sung, however, to a different tune, and should be ranked as a separate song. Its form is not unlike that already cited,—repetition of a single line twice, or, in rare instances, a rhymed couplet.

Look'd down de road jes' far as I could see,
Well, the band did play "'Nearer, my God, to Thee."

| : I got the blues, but too damn mean to cry. : |

Now when you git a dollar, you got a frien'
Will stick to you through thick an' thin.

I didn't come here fer to steal nobody's find.
I didn't jes' come here to serve my time.

I ask jailer, "Captain, how can I sleep?"
All 'round my bedside Police S. creeps.

The jailer said, "Let me tell you what's best:
Go 'way back in yo' dark cell an' take yo' rest."
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If my kind man quit me, my main man throw me down;
I goin' run to de river, jump overboard 'n' drown.

Here, again, the local policeman is always spoken of as creeping around the bedside. It makes an interesting comparison to note the contrast between the police and the angels of the old wish-rhyme. Various versions of the above stanzas are given, some of which are far from elegant. So in the last stanza the negroes sing, "If my good man quit me, my main man throw me down." Profanity is inserted in the songs in proportion as the singer is accustomed to use it, or as the occasion demands or permits its use.

12. IF I DIE IN ARKANSAS

Ridiculous and amusing in its pathos, "If I die in Arkansas" is typical and representative. It is quite impressive when sung with feeling. The negro gets a kind of satisfaction in believing that he is utterly forlorn, yet begs to be delivered from such a condition. He sings, —

"If I die in Arkansa',
Oh, if I die in Arkansa',
If I die in Arkansa',
Des ship my body to my mother-in-law.

| : "If my mother refuse me, ship it to my pa. : |
| : "If my papa refuse me, ship it to my girl. : |

"If my girl refuse me, shove me into de sea,
Where de fishes an' de whales make a fuss over me."

And then, after this wonderful rhyme and sentiment, the singer merges into plaintive appeal, and sings further, —

| : "Pore ole boy, long ways from home,:
Out in dis wide worl' alone."

Suppose he should die! Suppose he has no friends! How he pitys himself! Indeed, he is a forlorn being, and his emotions might well be wrought up.

13. GOT NO WHERE TO LAY MY WEARY HEAD

Another song, also called "Po' Boy 'way from Home," repeats much the same sentiment; and besides many verses of other songs, the singer adds, —

| : "I want to see do my baby know right from wrong, O babe! : |
| : "Well, I got no where to lay my weary head, O babe! : |
| : "Well, a rock was my pillar las' night, O girl!" : |

Thus repetition makes a long song of a short one.
14. BABY, YOU SHO' LOOKIN' WARM

So in the next song, "Baby, You sho' lookin' Warm," three lines are alike, while the fourth varies only by an exclamation. This, too, is an appeal to the "baby" or sweetheart for pity and admission into the house.

| : Baby, you sho' lookin' warm, : | (three times)  
| O my babe! you sho' lookin' warm. |
| : Baby, I'm feelin' so tired, : | (three times)  
| O my babe! I'm feelin' so tired. |
| : Got no whar' to lay my weary head, : | (three times)  
| O my babe! got no whar' to lay my weary head. |
| : Sometimes I'm fallin' to my face, : | (three times)  
| O my babe! sometimes I'm fallin' to my face.  
I'm goin' whar' de water drinks like wine. (as before)  
Gwine whar' I never been befo'. (as before)  
Baby, I love the clothes you wear. (as before)  
Whar' in de worl' my baby gone? (as before)  
Gone away never come back no more. (as before) |

15. TAKE YOUR TIME

"Take your Time" represents the negro in a more tranquil and independent state of mind. It matters little what the circumstances may be, he does not care: there's no hurry, so "take your time." And these circumstances are varied enough: from the home to the court he is rambling aimlessly about.

Baby, baby, didn't you say,  
You'd work for me both night and day?  
*Take your time, take your time.*  
Baby, baby, don't you know  
I can git a girl anywhere I go?  
*Take yo' time, take yo' time.*  
Baby, baby, can't you see  
How my girl git away from me?  
*Take yo' time, take yo' time.*  
Went down country see my frien',  
In come yaller dog burnin' the win',  
*Take yo' time, take yo' time.*  
'Tain't but the one thing grieve my mind:  
Goin' 'way, babe, an' leave you behin',  
*Take yo' time, take yo' time.*  
Carried me 'roun' to de court-house do',  
Place wher' I never had been befo',  
*Take yo' time, take yo' time.*
Jedge an' jury all in de stan',
Great big law-books in dere han',
Take yo' time, take yo' time.

Went up town 'bout four o'clock,
Rapt on door, an' door was locked,
Take yo' time, take yo' time.

I'm goin' back to de sunny South,
Where sun shines on my honey's house,
Take yo' time, take yo' time.

16. 'TAIN'T NOBODY'S BIZNESS BUT MY OWN

Jingling rhymes are sought at the sacrifice of meaning and the sense of the song. Rhymes are thus more easily remembered. If the sentiment of the subject of the song appeals to a negro, he may take it and make his own rhymes, departing from the original version. The frequent omission of words, and the mixing of dialect and modern slang, usually result. "'Tain't Nobody's Bizness but my Own" represents the more reckless temperament of the wanderer.

Baby, you ought-a tole me,
Six months before you roll me,
I'd had some other place to go,
'Tain't nobody's bizness but my own.

Sometimes my baby gets boozy,
An' foolish 'bout her head,
An' I can't rule her,
'Tain't nobody's bizness but my own.

I'm goin' to happy Hollow,
Where I can make a dollar,
'Tain't nobody's bizness but my own.

I want to see my Hanner
Turn tricks in my manner,
'Tain't nobody's bizness but my own.

Don't care if I don't make a dollar,
So I wear my shirt an' collar,
'Tain't nobody's bizness but my own.

17. I'M GOING 'WAY

The swaggering tramp decides to leave the town, as indeed he is often doing; but he expects to come back again. He looks forward to the adventures of the trip with pleasure, not with fear, although he knows he must ride the rods, go without victuals, and sleep where he may. He sings,—

"I'm goin' 'way, comin' back some day,
I'm goin' 'way, comin' back some day,
I'm just from the country, come to town—
A Zoo-loo-shaker from my head on down.
If I git drunk, who's goin' ter carry me home?
Brown-skin woman, she's chocolate to de bone."

18. O BABE!

Thus he visualizes and grows boisterous. He begins again the life of the "rounder," whose adventures are sung in other songs. In anticipation of his future adventures, the negro continues,—

"Late every evenin' 'bout half pas' three,
I hire smart coon to read the news to me.
O babe, O my babe, O my babe!

"O babe, O babe, O my babe! take a one on me,
An' my padhna', too, that's the way sports do,
O babe, O my babe, O my babe!

"Well you talk 'bout one thing, you talk 'bout another,
But 'f you talk 'bout me, gwine talk 'bout yo' mother.
O babe, O my babe, O my babe!"

19. SWEET TENNESSEE

But this is not all the easy times he is going to have. To be sure, he will not work: he will have his own way, where the "water drinks like wine," and where the "wimmins" are "stuck" on him. He bids farewell.

"Come an' go to sweet Tennessee,
Where de money grows on trees,
Where the rounders do as they please, babe!
Come an' go to sweet Tennessee.

"Come an' go to sweet Tennessee,
Where the wimmins all live at ease,
Where the rounders do as they please, babe!
Come an' go to sweet Tennessee.

"Come an' go to sweet Tennessee,
Where the wimmins do as they please,
Where the money grows on trees, babe!
Come an' go to sweet Tennessee."

As woman occupies a prominent place in the songs of the wanderer, so woman and sweetheart occupy the most prominent part in the majority of negro social songs. The negro's conception of woman as seen in his songs has been observed. There are few exalted opinions of woman, little permanent love for sweetheart, or strong and pure love emotions. Woman and sensual love, physical characteristics and actions and jealousy, are predominant. The singer is not different
from the wanderer who figured as the hero in the class of songs just given. Woman here is not unlike woman there. The negro sings,—

20. I AIN'T BOTHER YET

I got a woman an' sweetheart, too,
If woman don't love me, sweetheart do,
Yet, I ain't bother yet, I ain't bother yet.

Honey babe, I can't see
How my money got away from me,
Yet I ain't bother yet, ain't bother yet.

Or the woman sings in retort to the husband who thus sings, and who does not support her properly, or has failed to please her in some trifle,

I got a husband, a sweetheart, too,
Ain't goin' to rain no mo',
Husband don't love me, sweetheart do,
Ain't goin' to rain no mo'.

21. I'M ON MY LAST GO-ROUND

But the negro lover sometimes gets more or less despondent, after which he assures himself that he does not care. The theme of rejected love is strong, but the sorrow lasts only a short time. While this feeling lasts, however, the lover, in his jealousy, will do many things for his sweetheart, and often is unwilling to be out of her presence. Sometimes he is determined.

| : It's no use you sendin' no word, : |
| It's no use you sendin' or writin' no letter,
I'm comin' home pay-day. |
| : I'm on my last go-round, : | (three times) |
| God knows Albirdie won't write to me. |
| : There's mo' pretty girls 'an one, : |
| Swing an' clang an' don't git lost,
There's mo' pretty girls 'an one. |

22. LEARN ME TO LET ALL WOMEN ALONE

The negro is constantly singing that woman will get him into trouble; and such is the case. In a large per cent. of his quarrels and fights the cause of the trouble is the "woman in the case." It is she who gets his money and makes him do all manner of trifling things to please her fancy. He then claims that she will turn from him as soon as she has got all he has. Such is, in fact, true. It is not surprising to hear the song "Learn me to let all Women alone" as the expression of a disgruntled laborer.

One was a boy, an' one was a girl;
If I ever specs to see 'em again,
I'll see 'em in de other worl':
Learn me to let all women alone.
All I hope in this bright worl',
If I love anybody, don't let it be a girl:
*Learn me to let all women alone.*

Firs' girl I love, she gi' me her right han',
She's quit me in de wrong fer anoder man:
*Learn me to let all women alone.*

Woman is a good thing, an' a bad thing too,
They quit in the wrong an' start out bran'-new:
*Learn me to let all women alone.*

I got up early nex' mornin', to meet fo' day train,
Goin' up the railroad to find me a man:
*Learn me to let all women alone.*

23. O MY BABE! WON'T YOU COME HOME

The negro sings, "I don't know what I'll do! Oh, I don't know what I'll do!" "Oh, I'll take time to bundle up my clothes! Oh, I'll take time to bundle up my clothes," and he is off; but he is soon involved again, and sings his promiscuous allegiance.

"I love my babe and wouldn't put her out of doors,
I'd love to see her kill a kid wid fofty-dollar suit o' clothes,
*O my babe! won't you come home?*

"Some people give you nickel, some give you dime;
I ain't goin' give you frazzlin' thing, you ain't no girl o' mine.
*O my babe! won't you come home?*

"Remember, babe, remember givin' me yo' han';
When you come to marry, I may be yo' man.
*O my babe! won't you come home?*

"Went to the sea, sea look so wide,
Thought about my babe, hung my head an' cried.
*O my babe! won't you come home?*

24. MAKE ME A PALAT ON DE FLO'

Perhaps the lover is again turned out of doors, and pines around the house. He studies up various means to regain the affections of his lady-love, but finds it difficult. "That's all right, treat me mean, treat me wrong, babe. Fare you well forever mo', how would you like to have a luvin' girl turn you out o' doors?" he sings, and pretends to leave. But true to the negro proverb, "Nigger ain't gone ever time he say good-by:" he returns again to sing,—

"Make me a palat on de flo',
Make it in de kitchen behin' de do'.

"Oh, don't turn good man from yo' do',
May be a frien', babe, you don't know.
"Oh, look down dat lonesome lan',
Made me a palat on de flo'.

"Oh, de reason I love Sarah Jane,
Made me a palat on de flo'.'"

In another strain the lover sings promiscuously,—

"O Jane! love me lak you useter,
O Jane! chew me lak you useter,
Ev'ry time I figger, my heart gits bigger,
Sorry, sorry, can't be yo' piper any mo'.'"

So, too, he sings "Ev'y time I dodge her, my heart gits larger.'"

25. CAN'T BE YOUR TURTLE ANY MO'

Somewhat like it is the song "Can't be your Turtle any mo'," localized to apply to Atlanta, Memphis, or other specific places.

Goin' to Atlanta, goin' to ride de rod,
Goin' to leave my babe in de hands o' God,
_Sorry, sorry, can't be your turtle any mo'._

Goin' up town, goin' hurry right back,
Honey got sumpin' I certainly lak',
_Sorry, sorry, can't be yo' warbler any mo'._

26. NO MORE GOOD TIME

While there is much repetition in thought in the songs of woman and sweetheart, they are very true to actual life, and depict with accuracy the common scenes and speeches of the negroes. The morals of the negro are also reflected. Some of his ideals of love and "a good time" are indicated. "No More Good Time" tells of a common scene.

No more good time, woman, like we used to have,
Police knockin' woman at my back do'.

Meet me at the depot, bring my dirty clothes,
Meet me at depot, woman, when the train comes down;
For I goin' back to leave you, ain't comin' back no mo';
You treated me so dirty, ain't comin' back no mo'.

I got a little black woman, honey, an' her name's Mary Lou,
She treat me better, baby, heap better than you.

The negro adds much zest and fun to his song when he introduces local characters. In the above line it is "Police Johnson, woman, knockin' at de do'," or in other localities it is the name of the most dreaded officer. The negroes sing these and laugh heartily, boasting now and then of fortunate escapes.
27. DIAMON' JOE

Very much like the above in general tone, but sung by a woman, "Diamon' Joe" typifies the usual custom common in every negro community. It is a love-song.

Diamon' Joe, you better come an' git me:
Don't you see my man done quit?
Diamon' Joe com'n git me.

Diamon' Joe he had a wife, they parted every night;
When the weather it got cool,
Ole Joe he come back to that black gal.

But time come to pass,
When old Joe quit his last,
An' he never went to see her any mo'.

28. BABY, WHAT HAVE I DONE?

"Baby, what have I done?" introduces the various scenes of negro love-life. The same wail of "knockin' at de do'" is heard again and again, — a hint at infidelity, which is so often sung in the next few songs. The simple life and simple thought appear primitive. What if this poetry means as much to him as any other? No other ideals would satisfy him, or even appeal to him.

Late las' night an' night befo',
Heard such a knockin' at my do',
Jumped up in stockin' feet, skipped across the flo',
Baby, don't never knock at my do' no mo'.

| : Oh me, oh my! baby, what have I done? : |

Where were you las' Saturday night,
When I lay sick in my bed?
You down town wid some other ole girl,
Wasn't here to hold my head.

| : Ain't it hard to love an' not be loved? : | (four times)

Other verses of one long line are divided into two short lines or repeated each four times to make the stanza. The art of negro singing is brought out best in his repetition.

It's ninety-six miles from Birmingham
I tramped it day by day.

It's fifteen cents' wuth o' morphine,
A dollar's all I crave.

I didn't bring nuthin' in this bright worl',
Nuthin' I'll carry away.

I laid my head in bar-room do',
Ain't goin' to get drunk no mo'.
Han' me down my grip-sack,
An' all my ole dirty clothes.
If my baby ask for me,
Tell her I boun' to go.

29. THINGS AIN'T SAME, BABE, SINCE I WENT 'WAY

Both men and women appear changeable in their affections. A husband and wife may quarrel the first of the week, separate, vow that they will never speak again; the latter part of the week may find them as loving as ever. This does not happen one week, but many times. A negro man will often give his entire week's or month's wages in order to pacify his wife who has threatened to go live with some other man. She in turn spends the money, and begins to quarrel again. In the same way the wife may often beg to be received back after she has left him; she is often received, sometimes with a beating, sometimes not at all. A typical appeal of these characters is sung:

Things ain't same, babe, since I went 'way,
Now I return, please let me stay;
I'm sorry I lef' you in this worl' alone,
I'm on my way, babe, I'm comin' home.

30. BABY, LET ME BRING MY CLOTHES BACK HOME

Another appeal of the husband to his wife is a little more forceful. It is the present moment that counts with the average negro: he will easily promise to do anything to get out of an emergency or to get into favor. So the negro often makes promises of fidelity, if only he will be given another chance. The picture of the big, brawny negro thus whining before his "woman's" door is an amusing one. It is, however, characteristic in its adaptation of the "coon" song into a negro song:

The burly coon, you know,
He packed his clothes to go,
Well, he come back las' night,
His wife said, "Honey, I'm tired o' coon,
I goin' to pass for white."

But the coon got mad,
He's 'bliged to play bad,
Because his color was black;
O my lovin' baby! don't you make me go;
I git a job, if you let me, sho'.

I'll wuk both night an' day,
An' let you draw my pay;
Baby, let me bring my clothes back home!
When you kill chicken, save me the bone;
When you bag beer, give me the foam.
I'll work both night an' day,  
An' let you draw the pay;  
Baby, let me bring my clothes back home;  
When she make them strange remarks,  
He look surprise — goin' roll them white eyes,  
Goin' cry, baby, don't make me go!

31. LONG AND TALL AN' CHOCOLATE TO THE BONE

One of the most common descriptions, and one of the most complimentary to the negro woman, as found in negro songs, is "chocolate to the bone." The negro often makes trouble for the meddler in his home. Here arises many of the capital crimes of the negroes. Jealousy runs riot among both men and women. In the following song a hint is given of the boasting spirit of the negro:

Well, I'm goin' to buy me a little railroad of my own,  
Ain't goin' to let nobody ride but the chocolate to the bone.

Well, I goin' to buy me a hotel of my own,  
Ain't goin' to let nobody eat but the chocolate to the bone.

| : She's long an' tall an' chocolate to the bone, : |

Well, I goin' to start a little graveyard of my own,  
If you don't, ole nigger, let my woman alone.

She's long an' tall an' chocolate to the bone,  
She make you married man, then leave yo' home.

32. GOIN' BACK TO SWEET MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

In much the same way, now the woman, now the man, sings back at each other. In the first stanza of the song "Yo' Man," the woman is supposed to be talking; the man often sings the song, however, as he does all of them. It is also interpreted to be the words of one man to his wife, and also of one woman to another. The song is well mixed.

Well, if that's yo' man, you'd better buy a lock an' key, O babe! : |  
An' stop yo' man from runnin' after me-e-e.

| : Well, I goin' back to sweet Memphis, Tennessee, O babe! : |

Where de good-lookin' wimmins take on over me — make a fuss over me.

Now, a good-lookin' man can git a home anywher' he go,  
The reason why is, the wimmins tell me so.

She change a dollar an' give me a lovin' dime,  
I'll see her when her trouble like mine.

33. STARTED TO LEAVE

The sense of humor is very marked in many of the verses sung by the negroes. The commonplace, matter-of-fact statement in the
following song is noticeable. Says the negro, "Yes,

"I'm goin' 'way, goin' 'way,
Goin' sleep under the trees till weather gits warmer,
Well, me an' my baby can't agree,
Oh, that's the reason I'm goin' to leave."

But, as in other cases, the negro does not stay long. Perhaps it is too cold under the trees for him; perhaps the song has it all wrong, any-

way. But the negro again sings, —

"Well, I started to leave, an' got 'way down the track,
Got to thinkin' 'bout my woman, come runnin' back, O babe!

"She have got a bad man, an' he's as bad as hell, I know,
For ev'body, sho' God, tell me so.

"I thought I'd tell you what yo' nigger woman'll do,
She have another man an' play sick on you."

34. I COULDN'T GIT IN

Thus, although the singer begins, as he often does, with the better thoughts of the woman, he ends with the usual abuse and distrust. This spirit of infidelity is unfortunately common among the negroes. With some it is a matter of no concern, for what does it matter to them? with others it is a matter of anger and revenge; while still others are jealously troubled about it. What has already been touched upon in the songs given may be shown further in "I couldn't git in."

Lawd, I went to my woman's do',
Jus' lak I bin goin' befo':
"I got my all-night trick, baby,
An' you can't git in."

"Come back 'bout half pas' fo',
If I'm done, I'll open de do', (or let you know)
Got my all-night trick, baby,
An' you can't git in."

I keep a rappin' on my woman's do',
Lak I never had been dere befo';
She got a midnight creeper dere,
An' I couldn't git in.

"Buddy, you oughter to do lak me,
Git a good woman, let the cheap ones be,
Fur dey always got a midnight creeper,
An' you can't come in.

"Buddy, stop an' let me tell you
What yo' woman'll do;
She have 'nuther man in, play sick on you,
She got all-night creeper, Buddy,
An' you can't git in.
"You go home; well, she layin' in bed,
With red rag tied all 'round her head;
She done had fo'-day creeper in here,
Dat's de reason you couldn't git in."

In the same way other verses are sung: "Keep a knockin', can't come in, I got company an' you can't come in," or "You can't come in dis do'."

35. WHAT, STIRRIN', BABE

The singer uses the common slang "fallin' den" for his bed. As he has sung of his love and jealousies, so he sings of varied affection and infidelity, but with little serious regret.

"Went up town 'bout four o'clock,
What, stirrin' babe, stirrin' babe?
When I got there, door was locked:
What stir'd babe, what stir'd babe?
"Went to de window an' den peeped in:
What, stirrin' babe, stirrin' babe?
Somebody in my fallin' den —
What, stirrin' babe, stirrin' babe?"

The woman tells the "creeper" that he had best be watchful while he is about her house. At the same time, besides his general rowdyism, he is perhaps eating all the provisions in the house. She sings, —

| : Don't you let my honey catch you here — : | (three times)
He'll kill you dead jus' sho's you born.

36. HOP RIGHT

It will thus be seen that the songs of the most characteristic type are far from elegant. Nor are they dignified in theme or expression. They will appear to the cultured reader a bit repulsive, to say the least. They go beyond the interesting point to the trite and repulsive themes. Nor can a great many of the common songs that are too inelegant to include be given at all. But these are folk-songs current among the negroes, and as such are powerful comment upon the special characteristics of the group. A few of the shorter themes thus sung will illustrate further.

| ! : Hop right, goin' to see my baby Lou, : |
Goin' to walk an' talk wid my honey,
Goin' to hug an' kiss my honey,
Hop right, my baby!

The negro does not mind that his comment may not be undignified, or that it may be injurious to personal feelings or race opinion. Sings he, —

"I wouldn't have yellow gal,
Tell you de reason why:
Her neck so long, 'fraid she never die.
"I wouldn't have a black gal,
Tell you de reason why:
Her hair so kinky, she break every comb I buy."

37. IF YOU WANT TO GO A COURTIN'
More original and satisfying in sentiment and rhyme and sensuous pictures is the following:

If you want to go a courtin', I sho' you where to go,
Right down yonder in de house below.
Clothes all dirty an' ain't got no broom,
Ole dirty clothes all hangin' in de room.
Ask'd me to table, thought I'd take a seat,
First thing I saw was big chunk o' meat.
Big as my head, hard as a maul,
Ash-cake, corn-bread, bran an' all.

38. IF YOU WANT TO MARRY
Another that sounds like some of the songs used in children's games in the Colonial days is "Marry Me." The song has come to be thought a negro song, but is apparently a form of the old rhymes, "If you will marry, marry, marry; If you will marry me," or "For I want to marry, marry, marry, you;" "Soldier, will you marry me?"
The negro sings,—

"If you want to marry, come an' marry me-e-e,
Silk an' satin you shall wear, but trouble you shall see-e-e.

"If you want to marry, marry the sailor's daughter,
Put her in a coffee-pot and sen' her 'cross the water.

"I marry black gal, she was black, you know,
For when I went to see her, she look like a crow-ow,
She look like a crow-ow-ow."

39. HONEY, TAKE A ONE ON ME
A variation of the well-known little song, "Honey, take a One on Me," has a great number of verses that have become popular, and are undoubtedly negro verses. Most of these, however, are not suitable for publication. An idea may be given of the song.

Comin' down State Street, comin' down Main,
Lookin' for de woman dat use cocaine,
_Honey, take a one on me!

Goin' down Peter Street, comin' down Main,
Lookin' for de woman ain't got no man,
_Honey, take a one on me!
40. DON'T HIT THAT WOMAN

One other illustration may be given, to show this mental attitude toward a woman:

Don't hit that woman, I tell you why:
Well, she got heart-trouble an' I scared she die.
That shot got her, how do you know?
For my woman she told me so.
Now, if you hit that woman, I tell you fine,
She will give you trouble all the time.

41. I LOVE THAT MAN

More serious and of much better sentiment is the lover's song, ordinarily sung as the appeal of a woman.

| : I love that man, O God! I do, I love him till the day he die: : |
| : If I thought that he didn't love me, I'd eat morphine an' die. : |
| : If I had listened to what mamma said, I wouldn't a been here to-day; : |
| : But bein' so young, I threwed That young body o' mine away. : |
| : Look down po' lonesome road, Hacks all dead in line. : |
| : Some give nickel, some give dime, To bury dis po' body o' mine. : |

42. KELLY'S LOVE

In 'Kelly's Love' the note of disappointed love is sounded:

| : Love, Kelly's love, : | (three times) You broke de heart o' many a girl, You never break dis heart o' mine. |
| : When I wo' my aprons low, : | (three times) Couldn't keep you from my do'. |
| : Now I weahs my aprons high, : | (three times) Sca'cely ever see you passin' by. |
| : Now I weahs my aprons to my chin, : | (three times) You pass my do', but can't come in. |
| : See what Kelly's love have done. : | (three times) See what Kelly's love have done. |
| : If I had listened to what my mamma said, : | (three times) I would a been at home in mamma's bed. |

43. MY LOVE FOR YOU IS ALL I KNEW

Nearer the simple longing of a sincere affection is the chorus "Farewell." This conception has been found in the common mixed song that is current:
| : My love for you is all I knew, : | (three times)  
Hope I will see you again.  
| : Farewell, my darling, farewell! : | (three times)  
Hope I will see you again.  

44. Thought I heard that K. C.

The negro grows imaginative when he thinks of things absent. In his religious song it is Heaven and the angels that bring forth his best expressions. He is an idealist, and utopianism is perhaps only the childlike imagery of fairy fancies. So in his social songs he tells of the good times he has had and is going to have. He does not sing so much of the present: he sings of dangers he has escaped. In the same way he longs to see his sweetheart while he is away from her. Says he, "My honey might be far from home; ask central to gi' me long-distance phone."

Thought I heard that K. C. whistle blow,  
Blow lak she never blow befo'.  
How long has Frisco train been gone?  
Dat's train carried my baby home.  
Look down de Southern road an' cry,  
Babe, look down de Southern road an' cry.

45. Sweet, forget me not

The negro looks longingly for the train and the time when he will have money enough to go back "home." Pay-day will come, and for a time he will be happy. Sometimes he thinks of all good times in the future. Sometimes, however, he sings plaintively that they are gone.

| : O girl, O girl! what have I done?  
Sweet, forget me not. : | (three times)  
I've got a girl dat's on de way,  
Sweet, forget me not.  
Times ain't like dey use ter be,  
Sweet, forget me not.  
Times have been, won't be no more,  
Sweet, forget me not.

Nowhere is the negro more characteristic than in his wanton and reckless moods. Nothing pleases this type of negro fancy more than deeds of bravado and notoriety. He loves to tell of them and hear them recited. He is apparently at his best on such occasions. His self-feeling in its positive state is given gratification, and his vivid imagination easily makes him the hero of the hour. The feeling of rowdysim is thus encouraged. The notorious character is thus sung as the hero of the race: his deeds are marvelled at. Perhaps he is
the most interesting figure within the whole field of activities. Certainly he is a distinct character, and has a tremendous influence upon the conduct of his people. He is admired by young and old; and those who do not approve of his deeds or example marvel at his powers.

46. STAGOLEE

"Stagolee" must have been a wonderful fellow! though not so much dreaded as "Railroad Bill" and some others. Here the négro sings in his best vein.

Stagolee, Stagolee, what's dat in yo' grip?
Nothin' but my Sunday clothes, I'm goin' to take a trip,
O dat man, bad man, Stagolee done come.

Stagolee, Stagolee, where you been so long?
I been out on de battle fiel' shootin' an' havin' fun,
O dat man, bad man, Stagolee done come.

Stagolee was a bully man, an' ev'ry body knowed,
When dey seed Stagolee comin', to give Stagolee de road,
O dat man, bad man, Stagolee done come.

The refrain "O dat man, bad man, Stagolee done come" is sung at the end of each stanza, and adds much to the charm of the song, giving characteristic thought to the words, and rhythmical swing to the music. The singer continues his narration, adding the refrain to each stanza,—

Stagolee started out, he give his wife his han',
"Good-by, darlin', I'm goin' to kill a man."

Stagolee killed a man an' laid him on de flo',
What's dat he kill him wid? Dat same ole fohty-fo'.

Stagolee killed a man an' laid him on his side,
What's dat he kill him wid? Dat same ole fohty-five.

Out of house an' down de street Stagolee did run,
In his hand he held a great big smokin' gun.

Stagolee, Stagolee, I'll tell you what I'll do,
If you'll git me out'n dis trouble I'll do as much for you.

Ain't it a pity, ain't it a shame?
Stagolee was shot, but he don't want no name.

Stagolee, Stagolee, look what you done done,
Killed de best ole citerzen; now you'll hav' to be hung.

Stagolee cried to de jury an' to de judge: Please don't take my life,
I have only three little children an' one little lovin' wife,
O dat man, bad man, Stagolee done come.

47. STAGOLEE

The above version is more usually sung in Mississippi, Louisiana, and Tennessee, though it is known in Alabama and Georgia, besides
being sung by the negro vagrants all over the country. Another
version more common in Georgia celebrates Stagolee as a somewhat
different character, and the song is sung to different music. The
negro sings,—

I got up one mornin' jes' 'bout four o'clock;
Stagolee an' big bully done have one finish' fight:
What 'bout? All 'bout dat raw-hide Stetson hat.
Stagolee shot Bully; Bully fell down on de flo',
Bully cry out: "Dat fohty-fo' hurts me so."
Stagolee done killed dat Bully now.

Sent for de wagon, wagon didn't come,
Loaded down wid pistols an' all dat gatlin' gun,
Stagolee done kill dat Bully now.

Some giv' a nickel, some giv' a dime,
I didn't give a red copper cent, 'cause he's no friend o' mine,
Stagolee done killed dat Bully now.

Carried po' Bully to cemetary, people standin' 'round,
When preacher say Amen, lay po' body down,
Stagolee done kill dat Bully now.

Fohty dollah coffin, eighty dollah hack,
Carried po' man to cemetary but failed to bring him back,
Ev'y body been dodgin' Stagolee.

The scenes of Stagolee's activities are representative of this type of
negro life. From the home to the cemetery he has gone the road of
many a negro. Sometimes the man killed is at a picnic or public
gathering, sometimes elsewhere. The scenes of the burial, with its
customs, are but a part of the life: hence they are portrayed with
equal diligence.

48. RAILROAD BILL

But Stagolee has his equal, if not his superior, in the admiration of
the negro. "Railroad Bill" has had a wonderful career in song and
story. The negro adds his part, and surpasses any other in his por-
trayal of this hero of the track. One must take all the versions
of the song in order to appreciate fully the ideal of such a character.
In the first song that follows, the reader will note that after the theme
is once in the mouth of the singer, it matters little what the song is.
The effort is to sing something about "Bill," and to make this conform
to the general idea; and at the same time it must rhyme. Here is
the song, and a wonderful picture it is:

Some one went home an' tole my wife
All about — well, my pas' life,
It was that bad Railroad Bill.

Railroad Bill, Railroad Bill,
He never work, an' he never will,
Well, it's that bad Railroad Bill.
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Railroad Bill so mean an' so bad,
Till he tuk ev'rything that farmer had,
It's that bad Railroad Bill.

I'm goin' home an' tell my wife,
Railroad Bill try to take my life,
It's that bad Railroad Bill.

Railroad Bill so desp'rate an' so bad,
He take ev'rything po' womens had,
An' it's that bad Railroad Bill.

49. IT'S THAT BAD RAILROAD BILL

With all these crimes to his credit, it is high time that some one was going after Railroad Bill. The singer starts on his journey as quickly as he can, but has to make many trips.

I went down on Number One,
Railroad Bill had jus' begun.
It's lookin' for Railroad Bill.

I come up on Number Two,
Railroad Bill had jus' got through,
It's that bad Railroad Bill.

I caught Number Three and went back down the road,
Railroad Bill was marchin' to an' fro.
It's that bad Railroad Bill.

An' jus' as I caught that Number Fo',
Somebody shot at me wid a fohty-fo'.
It's that bad Railroad Bill.

I went back on Number Five,
Goin' to bring him back, dead or alive.
Lookin' for Railroad Bill.

When I come up on Number Six,
All the peoples had done got sick,
Lookin' for Railroad Bill.

When I went down on Number Seven,
All the peoples wish'd they's in heaven,
A-lookin' for Railroad Bill.

I come back on Number Eight,
The folks say I was a minit too late,
It's lookin' for Railroad Bill.

When I come back on Number Nine,
Folks say, "You're just in time
To catch that Railroad Bill."

When I got my men, they amounted to ten,
An' that's when I run po' Railroad Bill in,
An' that was last of po' Railroad Bill.
50. IT'S LOOKIN' FOR RAILROAD BILL

But that was not the last of Railroad Bill; for the singer had only imagined that he was the hero to "down him." Railroad Bill soon appears again, and now he is worse than before. The next version differs only slightly from the foregoing one. One must remember that the chorus line follows each couplet, and the contrast in meaning makes a most interesting song.

Railroad Bill mighty bad man,
Shoot dem lights out o' de brakeman's han',
  It's lookin' fer Railroad Bill.

Railroad Bill mighty bad man,
Shoot the lamps all off the stan',
  An' it's lookin' for Railroad Bill.

First on table, nex' on wall,
Ole corn whiskey cause of it all,
  It's lookin' fer Railroad Bill.

Ole McMillan had a special train,
When he got there wus a shower of rain,
  Wus lookin' fer Railroad Bill.

Ev'ybody tole him he better turn back,
Railroad Bill wus goin' down track,
  An' it's lookin' fer Railroad Bill.

Well, the policemen all dressed in blue,
Comin' down sidewalk two by two,
  Wus lookin' fer Railroad Bill.

Railroad Bill had no wife,
Always lookin' fer somebody's life,
  An' it's lookin' fer Railroad Bill.

Railroad Bill was the worst ole coon,
Killed McMillan by de light o' de moon,
  It's lookin' fer Railroad Bill.

Ole Culpepper went up on Number Five,
Goin' bring him back, dead or alive,
  Wus lookin' fer Railroad Bill.

Standin' on corner didn't mean no harm,
Policeman grab me by my arm,
  Wus lookin' fer Railroad Bill.

The negroes sing different forms of these verses, as they are suggested at the moment; so they add others or omit parts. Also are sung:

MacMillan had a special train,
When he got there, it was spring.
Two policemen all dressed in blue
Come down street in two an' two.
Railroad Bill led a mighty bad life,
Always after some other man's wife.
Railroad Bill went out Wes',
    Thought he had dem cowboys bes'.
Railroad Bill mighty bad man,
    Kill McGruder by de light o' the moon.

51. Right on Desperado Bill

It is not surprising that a song so popular as "Railroad Bill" should find its way into others of similar type. Another version of the same song has a separate chorus, to be sung after each stanza. This chorus, of which there are two forms, adds recklessness to the theme. Another achievement is given the desperado; and he combines gambling, criminal tendencies, and his general immorality, in one. The following version is somewhat mixed, but is known as "Railroad Bill:"

Railroad Bill was mighty sport,
    Shot all buttons off high sheriff's coat,
Den hollered, "Right on desperado Bill!"
  Lose, lose — I don't keer,
If I win, let me win lak' a man,
If I lose all my money,
    I'll be gamblin' for my honey,
Ev'y man ought to know when he lose.
  Lose, lose, I don't keer,
If I win, let me win lak' a man,
Lost fohty-one dollars tryin' to win a dime,
Ev'y man plays in tough luck some time.

Honey babe, honey babe, where have you been so long?
    I ain't been happy since you been gone,
Dat's all right, dat's all right, honey babe.

Honey babe, honey babe, bring me de broom,
    De lices an' chinches 'bout to take my room,
O my baby, baby, honey, chile!

Honey babe, honey babe, what in de worl' is dat?
Got on tan shoes an' black silk hat,
    Honey babe, give it all to me.
Talk 'bout yo' five an' ten dollar bill,
    Ain't no Bill like ole desperado Bill,
Says, Right on desperado Bill.

Railroad Bill went out west,
    Met ole Jesse James, thought he had him best,
But Jesse laid ole Railroad Bill.

Honey babe, honey babe, can't you never hear?
I wants a nuther nickel to git a glass o' beer,
    Dat's all right, honey babe, dat's all right.

Some of the verses just given are far from elegant; others still less elegant must be omitted. Some conception of popular standards
of conduct and dress, social life and the home, may be gained from the song, in addition to the now familiar character of "Railroad Bill."

52. LOOKIN’ FOR THAT BULLY OF THIS TOWN

In most communities there is one or more notorious characters among the negroes. Often these are widely known throughout the State, and they are familiar names to the police. Sometimes they are known for the most part to the negroes. Such characters, noted for their rowdyism and recklessness, sometimes with a criminal record, are usually called "bullies." To be sure, "Stagolee," "Railroad Bill," "Eddy Jones," and the others, were "bullies," but they were special cases. The song "I'm lookin' for the Bully of this Town" represents a more general condition. It is rich in portrayals of negro life and thought.

Monday I was 'rested, Tuesday I was fined,
Sent to chain gang, done serve my time,
*Still I'm lookin' for that bully of this town.*

The bully, the bully, the bully can't be found,
If I fin' that bully, goin' to lay his body down,
*I'm lookin' for that bully of this town.*

The police up town they're all scared,
But if I fin' that bully, I goin' to lay his body 'way,
*For I'm lookin' for that bully of this town.*

I'm goin' down on Peter Street;
If I fin' that bully, will be bloody meet,
*For I'm lookin' for that bully of this town.*

I went down town the other day,
I ask ev'rybody did that bully come this way,
*I was lookin' fer that bully of this town.*

Oh, the gov'ner of this State offer'd one hundred dollars reward,
To any body's arrested that bully boy,
*I sho' lookin' for dat bully of this town.*

Well, I found that bully on a Friday night,
I told that bully I's gwine to take his life,
*I found dat bully of this town.*

I pull out my gun an' begin to fire,
I shot that bully right through the eye,
*An' I kill that bully of this town.*

Now all the wimmins come to town all dressed in red,
When they heard that bully boy was dead,
*An' it was the last of that bully of this town.*

What a picture the song gives of the bully and his pursuer! The boasting braggart sees himself the hero of the whole community,
but chiefly among the women. He is better than the police: they will even thank him for his valor. The governor will give him his reward. Everybody he meets he asks about the bully boy, and takes on a new swagger. What satisfaction he gets from it! Perhaps he too will be a bully. The scene of the shooting, the reaching for the pistol, and the "laying-down" of the bully’s body,—these offer unalloyed satisfaction to the singer. Every word becomes pregnant with new meaning and feeling; and invariably he must remember that his deeds are lauded, and he is the hero among the "wimmins" from the country round about. His picture would never be complete without this. Altogether it is a great song, and defies a superior picture.

53. EDDY JONES

Other notorious characters are sung with the same satisfaction. The characteristic pleasure and oblivion of time accompany the singing. While at work, one may sing the words, whistle the tunes, and visualize the picture, thus getting a richer field of vision. When alone, the negro gets much satisfaction out of songs like those here given. Likewise such songs are sung in groups, at which times the singers talk and laugh, jeer one another, and retort, thus varying the song. "Eddy Jones" seems very similar in character to "Stagolee."

Slow train run thru' Arkansas,
   Carryin' Eddy Jones.
Eddy died with a special in his hand,
   Eddy Jones, Eddy Jones.
Eddy Jones call for the coolin'-board,
   Lawdy, lawdy, lawd!
Eddy Jones look’d 'round an' said,
   "Man that kill'd me won't have no luck."
Ain’t it sad 'bout po' Eddy bein' dead?
Eddy Jones was let down in his grave.
What did Eddy say before he died?
He said, "Nearer, my God, to Thee."
Eddy's mother she weeped a day,
Lawdy, Eddy Jones, Eddy Jones!

The singer turns to the "ladies," if they be present, and sings,—

You want me to do like Eddy Jones?
You mus' want me to lay down an' die for you.

(To be continued.)