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# Black Smiles



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yours for Smiles,  
Franklin Henry Bryant



**Black Smiles**  
or the  
**Sunny Side of Sable Life**  
by  
**Franklin Henry Bryant**



Published by  
**Southern Missionary  
Society**

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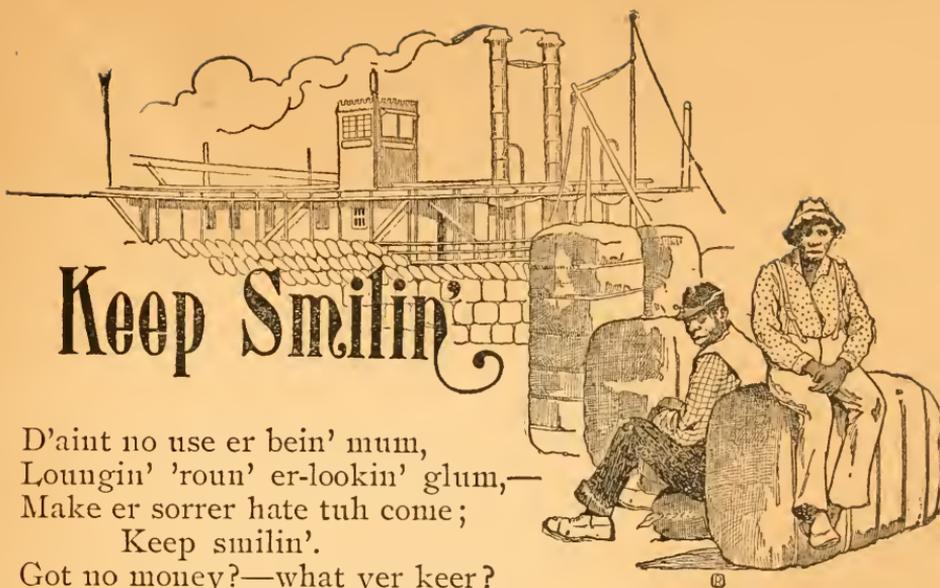
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*By J. E. WHITE.*

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# Keep Smilin'

D'aint no use er bein' mum,  
 Loungin' 'roun' er-lookin' glum,—  
 Make er sorrer hate tuh come;  
     Keep smilin'.

Got no money?—what yer keer?  
 Smile er smile fum ear to ear;  
 Heaben's happy, don't yer fear;  
     Keep smilin', keep smilin'.

Possums clamin' 'simmon trees;  
 White fokes gruntus fat iz cheese;  
 Tu'keys roostin' in duh breeze;  
     Keep smilin'.

Nigguh, you can't coin er trillion;  
 Can't you lib on watuhmillion  
 Big iz Gools n Vanduhbillion?  
     Keep smilin', keep smilin'.

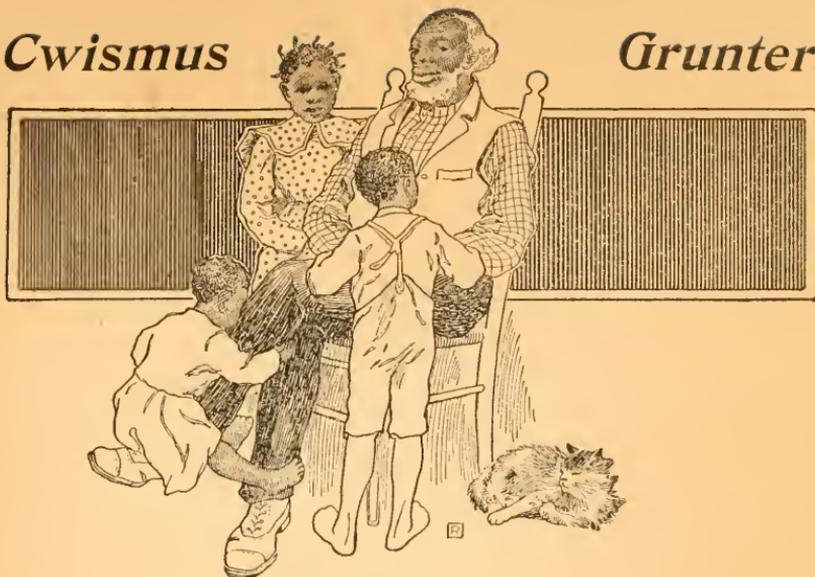
Rudduh be er smiler, min,  
 Right widout n right widin,  
 Wif duh tickles 'roun' muh chin,—  
     Keep smilin',—

Dan to dribe an automo'  
 Wid er million tons er woe  
 Hangin' on muh heaft, you know;  
     Keep smilin', keep smilin'!

Grandpa's  
Fireside Stories  
of Slavery Days  
In Six Poems  
Being a  
Recital of Humorous  
Incidents  
Characteristic  
of  
Negro Life  
"Befo' duh War"

*Cwismus*

*Grunter.*



Well, hit's neahly Cwismus, younguns, n I s'pose you  
want tuh hear

Gramper 'late a Cwismus story; so each feller git his  
cheer.

An' of co'se now, Sal Malindy wants tuh ride ou gram-  
per's shoe,

N if she'll be quite an' pooty, she'll be gramper's sugar-  
doo!

Now it come about one Cwismus, Mandy says 'twas  
fifty-fo',

Dat ole massa's crew er niggus axshilly tried dem-  
selves, yer know.

Jeems hid stole er poun' er backker, n ole A'nt Mer-  
liney Wess

Toted off er ham n bacon fum ole massa's in huh dress.

Well, I can't begin to tell yuh what dem darkies didn't stole;

But ole massa couldn't kotch 'em dough dey wuz audacious bol'.

Mas' thought, dough, dit he'd git even; so he simply helt his bref,

'Termined whin he kotch er nigguh,  
he would beat him ha'f tuh def.



Now ole Pete wuz "hoodoo doctur"  
on ole massa's place, you see,  
N he claimed dit he could cunger  
white n black n bon' n free.

Graveya'd dirt, n rooster spurs, n,—  
shucks, I don't know what all  
Pete

Didn't fix up fur us niggus,—hands,  
n jacks, n rabbit feet!

Howsomeber, all dim darkies what  
had one er Peter's things,  
Would outrun duh dogs n massa lak  
iz if dey went ou wings.

Stealin' now wuz nachly timplin, iz  
der craps wuz out n froo,

No mo' work twill Febberwary, hin  
hit neahly Cwismus, too!

Now hit happened Cwismus Eve night wuz er drizzliu',  
freezin' cole,

Hin yuh know, I knowed ole massa would be curled up  
 in his hole.  
 Hince hit fell out so dit Peter, who wuz awllus mighty  
 hunter,  
 Wokes me up twixt twelb n 'leben' axed me how'd I lak  
 some grunter!

Whin dat nigguh mentioned grunter, Mandy riz up dare  
 in bed,  
 'Sistes me in boots and briches. "Ready dreckly,  
 Petes," I said.  
 Mandy fixed duh pots n vessels; all duh chilluns wuz  
 awoke  
 An' wuz 'joicin' to see daddy gwine tuh git some Cwis-  
 mus poke.

Got my rabbit foot, an Peter s'plied me wif a special  
 hand,  
 Made to fit dis axshil 'casion,—piece er flannel full er  
 sand.  
 Peter had er flint n pine tawch,—Petes wuz 'fesshuul in  
 dis sin;  
 See, he knowed we need dat tawch tuh blind duh  
 grunTERS in duh pen.

Now, ole massa wuz er 'spectin' sumppun nudder to  
 come 'bout,  
 N whin we got to his pen, suh, ever grunter wuz turned  
 out!

But ole Peter says, "By gummy! Squeeze yuh rabbit foot," says he,  
 "N jis spit upon dat flannel, n come on n foller me."

'In a minit we wuz stan'in' 'fo ole massa's front-yard gate;

Dare ole Peter works his jack, n whistle low,  
 n din we wait

Jis er secon', n ole Rovuh, massa's big ole  
 nigger-hound,

Walks up jis iz nice n gintly, n he stood dare  
 friskin' round!

Din ole Peter led right on in to ole massa's  
 garden, where

D' wuz er box off in one cawnur, n er fine  
 young grunter dare,

Which ole massa wuz er 'zervin' 'tickly  
 fer his New Year's Day,

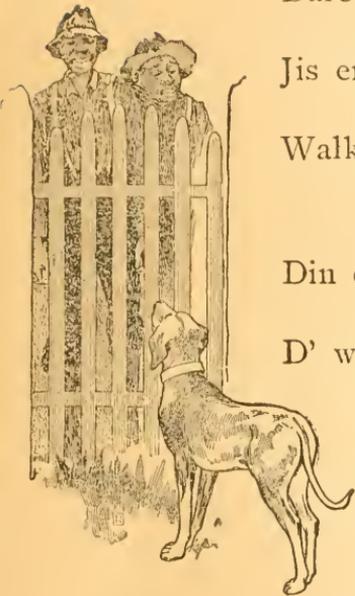
Whin dey wuz er 'spectin' cumpny,  
 some big folks fun fur away.

"Hit him centur!" says ole Peter, iz he blinds him wid  
 duh light;

N I raised ole massa's ax up, n I nailed him wid my  
 might.

But he squeal once, spite er hebens! Chile, I stabbed  
 him in duh th'oat,

Picked him up, n law, sich runnin',— me n Peter n dat  
 shoat!







I wuz leadin' wif duh grunter, pintly flyin' 'cross duh  
yard,  
Follered by ole cunger Peter,—man, I wuz er runnin'  
hard,—  
Whin ole missus' blamed ole clothes-line cot me right  
beneaf duh chin,  
N hit lak tuh jurked muh head off; folks' hit snatched  
me out er win'.

Hin hit flung me, hebens honey! Slap ergainst  
ole Peter, too!  
Dare us niggus n dat grunter had er mash n  
smash for true.  
N ole mas' n miss' come runnin', wif duh  
cow-hide, light, n gun,  
'Fo' we riz;—n what you reckon dat dare  
pleggone Peter done?

He jis grabbed me in duh collar, n he  
helt me to duh groun',  
N he holluhed, "Run quick, massa! I  
done got duh skawnul down!"  
Mas' n miss', bofe in deyr night-clothes,  
comes er runnin', n dey say,  
"Hole 'im, Peter! Blame duh debil! 'Turn him ovuh  
right away."

Folks, ole Peter bent me ovuh dat dare carcus of er hog,  
While ole massa wif dat cow-hide evuhlastin' walked  
my log!



Yas suh; dat ole white man stood dare, n he beat n  
 beat, by gum;  
 Plum furgot dit he wuz freezin' twil duh fros' hid  
 made him numb!

Well, he had to quit ur freeze one; so he left ole Pete  
 duh light;  
 Tole him dat duh tail n intruls wuz his 'ward fur actin'  
 right!  
 N tuh see I skint n gutted, cut n hung dat grunter up;  
 N ole missus stept n brought him pint er wine out in er  
 cup!

Well, I skint n clean duh hog, n din I cuts him up also;  
 N I begs while I'm er cuttin', Pete tuh hang it up, you  
 know,  
 In duh smoke-house,—n ole Peter couldn't stan' tuh  
 heah me beg,  
 N I beat him out dim intruls! Pored um down my  
 briches-leg!

I jis laid it all on Rovuh, stanin' lickin' in duh pan!  
 N I left ole Petes a-cussin', wif er jack out in his han'.  
 I went home! Duh chaps n Mandy, heah dey all come,  
 gethern me;  
 Says she, "Sam, you smells lak grunter, but no sign  
 er poke I see!"

"Johnny," says I, "pull diss boot off. You pull disun,  
 Sally Ann.

Jules Mariar, come 'ere quick, gal; bring yuh poppy  
dat dare pan."

Jules Mariar fotch duh pan dare; John n Sal bofe made  
er pull;

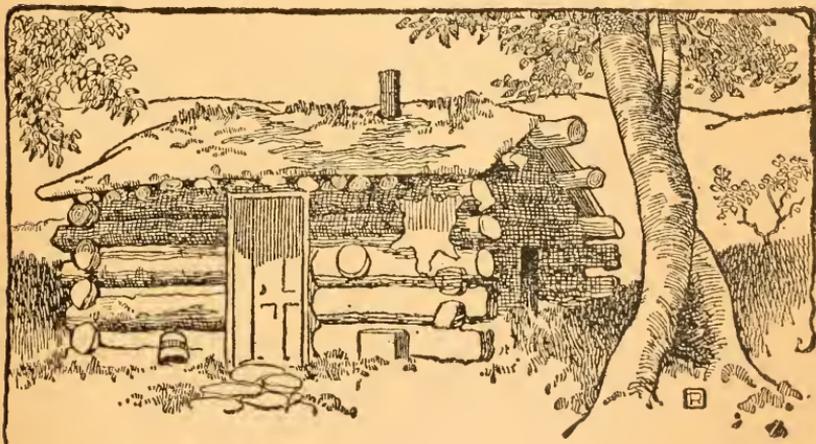
Off dem boots come, n dem chittlins haxshilly filled  
dat dish-pan full!

Mandy fell right in dare on um, n duh chilluns couldn't  
speak.

Bless duh Lamb! duh dad done brought um Cwismus  
nuff tuh last er week!

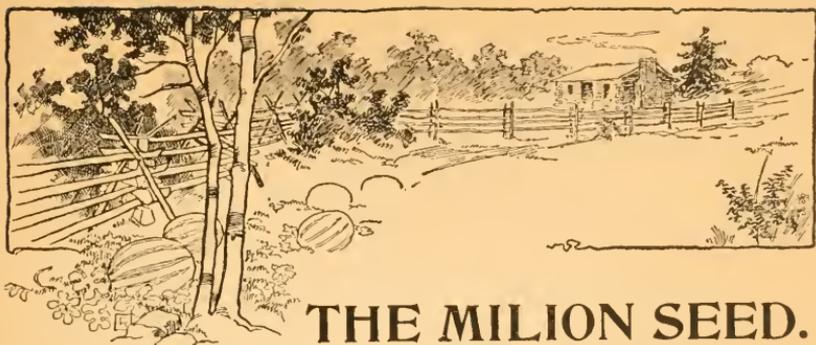
Law, dim hashlits n dim chittlins. Dough I did hab to  
be beat.

I hid rudduh had dim chittlins dan tuh been ole hoodoo  
Pete!





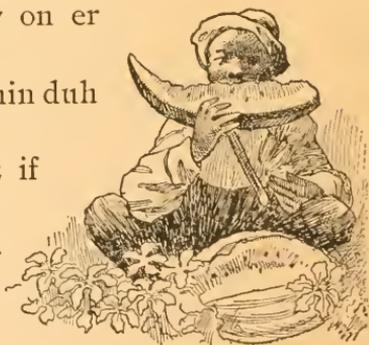
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## THE MILION SEED.

Well now, little Sal Malindy, you can sit on granper's  
 knee ;  
 N duh res' er all you younguns, you jis lis'n heah to me ;  
 N I'll tell you all a story, showin' how it awllus pays  
 To be hones' n be trufeful, by a tale fum slav'ry days.

Now dis 'curred way down in Jawgy on er  
 sunmuh night in June,  
 Whin duh milions wuz er-ripenin', whin duh  
 nights wuz dahk er moon.  
 Yes, duh time I riccomembers well iz if  
 'twuz yistuhday ;  
 But it happened long befo' yuh gram-  
 per's wool hid gotten gray.



Well, iz we hid worked lak good  
 folks, all duh craps wuz done laid by,  
 Massa lets us hab er 'vival, niggus come fum fur n  
 nigh.

Dare it chu'ch we'd hab our preachin', settin' souls fum  
Satan free,  
N we'd stay twill neahly midnight, n jis hab er juberlee.

Now, not fur off fum duh big house, n right clost berside  
duh road,

Wuz ole massa's watuhmilions,—n dey  
wuz duh bis dit growed!

N, of co'se, 'twuz hewmun na-  
chur,—well, it mout er been  
ole Scratch,

Dat one dahk night aftuh meet-  
in' brought me to dat milion  
patch.

Now it seems some udduh sin-  
nuh had been monkeyin'  
roun' dem vines,

N ole massa, he done seed it by  
duh seeds n impty rines;

N so, on dis ticklur evenin' he  
done gone dar wid his gun,  
'Termined dat if any nigguh

come dat night, he'd hab some fun!



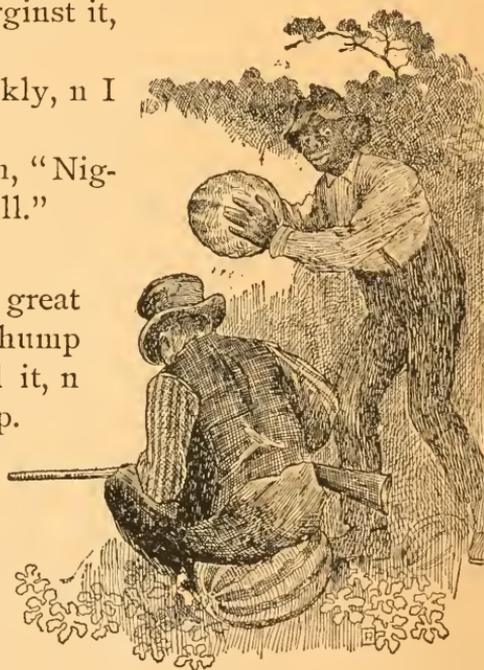
Of dis fac' I wuz in ignunce! But duh Lawd am good  
a heap,

Faw He knowed I sho wuz hongry, n He put ole mas'  
a sleep.

N my moufe wuz jis er watern, slobbuhs runnin' down  
 my chin,  
 Iz I felt about, er-thumpin', fer a good one to begin.

Well I run upon er small one,—jis erbout so big, you  
 know;  
 Brought muh hammuh up erginst it,  
 n right inter hit I go.  
 N hit all hid vanished dreckly, n I  
 wuz is hongry still;  
 But says I unto muhse'f din, "Nig-  
 guh, stay n eat yo' fill."

So I hunted 'bout n foun' er great  
 big feller which did thump  
 Nachly right, n off I jurked it, n  
 begin to hunt er stump.  
 Well, right off er little dis-  
 tuncce, de ole debil  
 he'p me foun' it,  
 Up I walks n raise muh mil-  
 ion, n upon duh stump  
 I poun' it.



Lawd er mussy! Up dat stump riz, whin dat milion  
 fell, n whoo!  
 Y' orter seed me straighten out, boys; bless yer soul, I  
 nachly flew!  
 Faw dat "stump" wuz my ole maasa! Lef' his gun, n  
 he to' out

One way home n me ernudduh. What you reckon  
come erbout?

Me n him met up tergedduh jis er few feet fum duh gate,  
N he knowed me, kaze he holluhed, "Hay dare, Sambo,  
blame you, wait!"

"'Stat you, massa?" says I p'litley.

"Yas, hit's me." His flint he  
scrach,

Lit er candle right dare on me: "You  
been in my milion patch."

"Lawzee, massa!" sclaims I loudly.

"Hush!" he raise his han' n  
said;

Hooked me in duh neck n spenders n  
straight in duh big house led;

Stuck me right befo' his bureau, hel'  
duh candle up, n law!

Dare I wuz er stan'in' lookin' hat er  
seed heah on muh jaw!



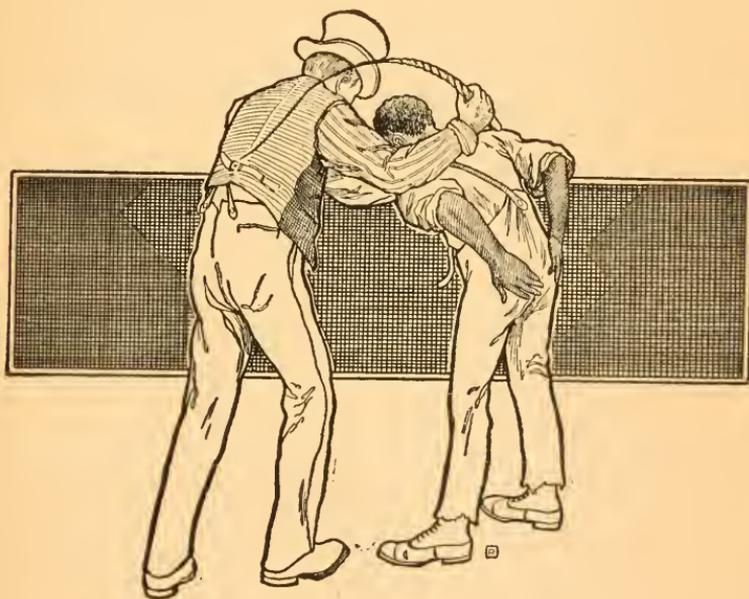
'Twa'n't no use to do no lyin'; I jis had to shet my  
moufe.

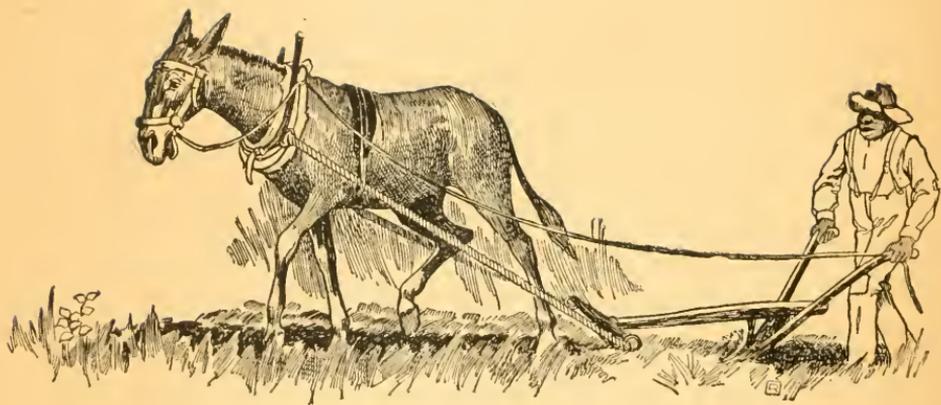
Massa reached up fer his cowhide, n 'twuz wahn fuh  
me down Soufe

'Fo' he tuhned me loose, I tell yer; n he nachly fixed  
me so

Dat I had no inclernations tawdz dat milion patch no  
mo'.

But furevuh aftuh, chilluns, whin duh cowhide wuz  
furgot,  
Dare wuz one thing I remembu'd,—deep down in my  
soul it's sot ;  
Faw whinevuh Satan timps me, wid er mean, dishones'  
deed,  
I kin look right in dat bureau, n behol' dat milion seed!



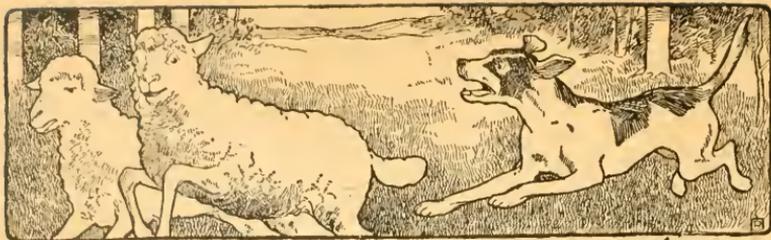




## The Secret of it

What keep duh guberment er-gwine?  
What keeps dim enguns puffin' ?  
What keeps duh white folks all fum dyin' ?  
What s'plies um wid deyr stuffin' ?  
What keeps duh wurl up in deys fis ?  
How come dey ride n rule?  
Duh secret of it all am dis :  
Duh nigguh n duh mule !

Semehow duh nigguh n duh mule  
Inclines tuh hang tuhgedduh ;  
You can't tell which duh bigges' fool.—  
But, bud, I'm doubtin' whedduh  
Ole Dixon Lan' whar I wuz bawn  
Would 'mount tuh ha'f er chigguh,  
If all duh mules wuz dead n gawn  
To heaben wid duh nigguh.



## “SHAGGY.”

All right, chilluns; git 'roun' gramper; Lindy, clam  
up in my lap.  
All git quite, n den I'll tell yuh how I had a sad  
mishap  
In duh days of antebellum, which yuh know means  
slav'ry time,  
'Fo' duh niggers had dey freedom;—y'all are ignunt  
of duh crime.

Massa had a lot er sheep now, n some dog wuz awllus  
roun',  
N would be er-killin muttuns;—mas', dough could'nt  
kill duh houn'.  
So one day whin he was 'turnin', habin' made er wild-  
goose-chase,  
He sends word down to muh cabin to come up dare to  
his place.

Co'se I went, n says he, “Sambo, I's done run, n run,  
n run,

Tryin' to git dat pledged cur dog in duh reach er dis  
here gun.

Now, I'm gwine tuh simply trus' you wid dis weepo  
dit you see;—

Git each dog, n yo's duh mutton, all 'cep'  
one good piece fer me.”

Well suh, chilluns, you kin 'majun,  
maybe, how big gramper felt

Wid dat muskit,—shot n powder hawns  
er-hangin' fum muh belt.

“Yas, suh, massa!” Y' orter hurd me,—  
O, I'd riz up in duh sky!

So I watched n so I waited fer dat dog  
dit wisht tuh die.

Seemed like dough dit somehow 'nudduh  
dat ole dog jis wouldn't come

Back n kill ernudduh mutton,—Lawd, I  
wuz er-wantin some!

But dat skawnul stayed erway, suh;—  
well, I most wuz in despair,

Whin er thought popped froo muh noggin, n hit  
he'ped me, I declare.

Now, I had er dog name “Shaggy,” n he wa'n't no  
count at all,—

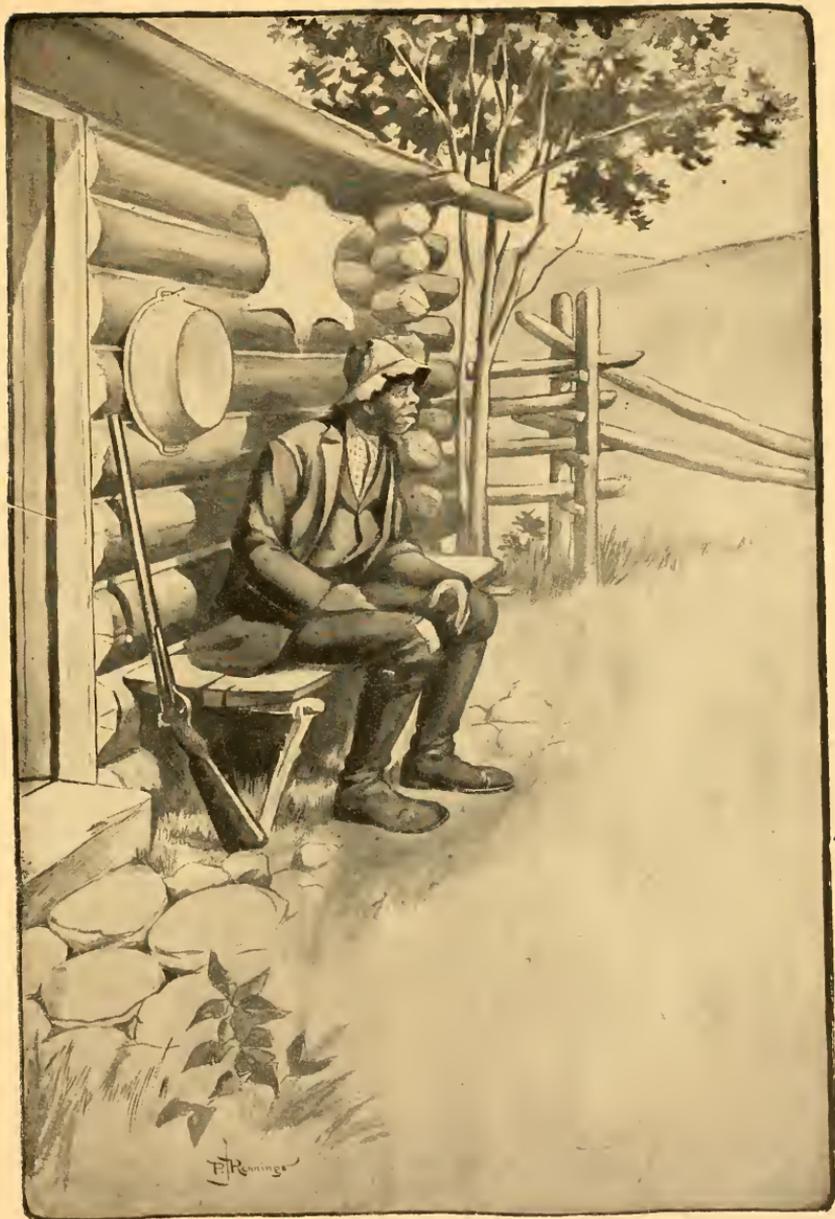


Kep' him tied up roun duh house dare, so he'd 'scape  
     ole massa's ball,  
 Kaze he'd nachly nail er mutton evuh day if he wuz  
     loose,—  
 D'wa'n't no houn' erbout could beat him, faw he  
     axshilly beat duh doose.

So upon er Sundy mawnin', whin I'd waited fer a  
     week,  
 I gits up n turns ole Shaggy loose to go an' mutton  
     seek;  
 Off he go, his tail er-danglin', down eroun' der hill he  
     creep;—  
 "Go on, dog," says I unto him, "You go out n slew er  
     sheep."

Ha'f er hour, ur little later,—co'se I wuz der paster  
     eyein',—  
 N what seed I but duh muttons, n ole Shaggy, jis er  
     flyin'!  
 "Put duh kittle on dare, Mandy," says I untuh gram-  
     mer whin  
 Me n massa's big ole muskit hit duh road n split duh  
     win'.

Whin I got down in duh hollow, dare ole Shaggy stood,  
     yuh know,  
 Pantin' 'bove er big fine mutton dat duh skawnuul done  
     laid low.—





“G’way fum dare’ you grand ole rascal,”—bless yuh,  
 Shaggy’s tushes bloom,  
 N he bristles up dare to me,—but I raised dat gun,  
 “Cur-boom!”

Well, dat settled it wid Shag-  
 gy; I jis hauled him  
 by duh sash  
 Little piece off fum duh mut-  
 ton, lef’ him dare fuh  
 buzzard hash.



’Gainst er tree I lent duh muskit  
 Whilst I cut me down er pole  
 So’s to tote muh mutton handy, down I  
 retched tuh take erhol’,—

Whin, I ’clare tuh goodness gwacious, up dat blamec  
 ole mutton rose,  
 Froo duh briars hit went er-flyin’! but right aftuh hit  
 I goes.  
 Hebens, chilluns! y’orter seed us sail froo stumps n  
 briars n ditches,—  
 Los’ muh hat n to’ muh coat off, n suh, outrunned  
 boots n briches!

Heah dat mutton went, n me too, up in down all n dat  
 holler,—  
 Hit seemed ’termined to be leader,—I wuz ’termined I  
 would foller!

Well, I kotch it;—got duh booger;—drewd muh  
knife ercross hits thoat.

Went on back n foun' muh briches n some pieces of  
muh coat.

I fulgot erbout duh muskit,—hit had done no good  
tuh me,—

Shouldered up muh big ole nutton;—muskit settin'  
side er tree.

Well, ole massa watched n waited, wondern why I did'nt  
come

Right on up dare to duh big house n gib him n missus  
some!

Finely, he got tired er-waitin', so he walks on down to  
where

He had seed me stan' n shoot at;—foun' his gun n  
Shaggy dare!

Picked it up n pulled his knife out, n cut off ole  
Shaggy's tail,

Car'ed it on back tu duh big house,—waitin' dare iz  
mad iz hail!

Dreckly, up I comes er-steppin', wif er quarter dat wuz  
prime!

Walked right on up in duh big house,—proudes' nig-  
ger of duh time!

“Mawnin', massa!” Y'orter seed me bow n do duh  
curtsey hop,—

“Thought berhaps dit you n missus mought enjoy  
some mutton chop!”

Dar ole massa sot iz stunly,—diden’t eben crack er  
grin!

“Come ’ere, nigguh,” said he huffly; missus took duh  
mutton din,



N went on out to duh kitchen n lef’ me in dare wid  
him,—

Up he retched behind duh bureau fer his cowhide, keen  
n slim.

“Whar my gun, suh?” “Hit’s at home, mas’!”

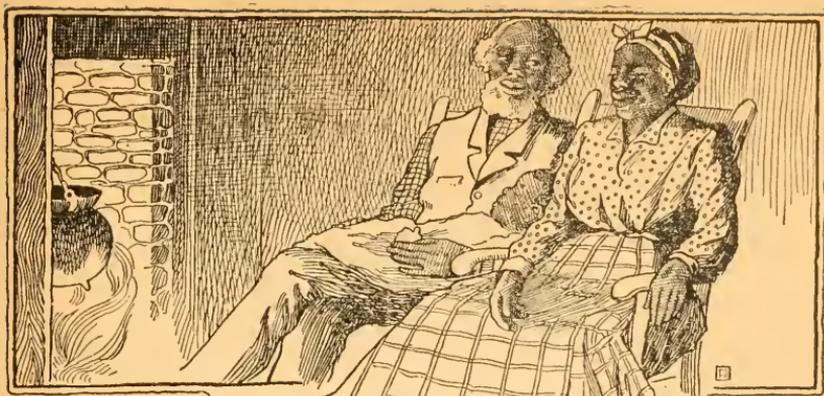
“Yes hit is, fer dat’s hit dare!”

Hin he wahmed me, laws er mussy! wahmed me up  
fum heels to hair!

But I would'nt er mount duh wahmin',—dough 'twuz  
hot iz brimstone hail,  
If he hadn't to my briches sewed ole Shaggy's bushy  
tail!

Wif dat thing er-hangin' 'hind me, all dat whole long  
sumnuh froo;—  
Evuhbody called me, "Shaggy"! n I had to take it,  
too.  
Well, I knows you chaps is weary; so now, off to roost  
n sleep;—  
Don't you nevu' dough furgit duh two-legged dog dat  
kilt duh sheep.





# In days gon' by

Well, the younguns all er-snorin', so's deyr dad n  
mammie too ;  
Ebry livin' soul am sleepin', Mandy, 'cepin' me n you.  
An' you hand me Sal Malindy, she kin sleep in gram-  
per's arms ;  
N jis draw yer cheer up closter, so I kin review your  
charms.

Lub, duh frosts er time am white ou ebry stran' n lock  
er hair,  
N duh years have penned deyr 'pistles in dat face once  
young n fair ;  
N duh light no mo' am sparklin' lak duh sunshine in  
yer eyes,  
Which by faif am camly lookin' tawdz duh mansions in  
duh skies.

An' yo' cheeks hab lost duh roses which in young days  
use to bloom:

N my head lak yours is blossomed fer duh crown beyan'  
duh tomb.

Mandy, little Sal Malindy is duh very spit of you  
When we met n loved n married, way back dare in fifty-  
two.

N duh dogwood tree am standin' down duh hill dare by  
duh spring,

Where we use to do our courtin', where we use to lub n  
sing,

N dat May-night when we married, missus spread a  
bankit dare,—

N if happy makes er angel, on dat night we wuz a pair.

I's been settin' here er-spellin' in duh Gospul writ by  
John,

In duh place where our ole missus use to lub to dwell  
upon:

“In my Father's house are many, many mansions, n  
I go

To prepare a place dare fer you,—” dat's duh most she  
read, you know.

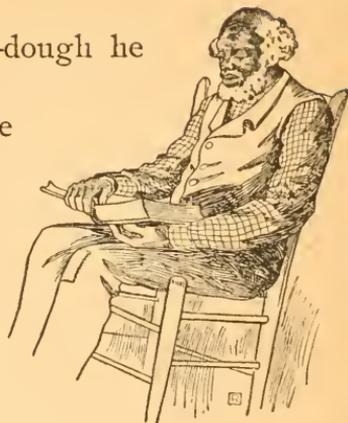
N while thinkin' on dat Scripsheer, mas' n mis' comes  
back to me,

N I sees um jis iz nachul iz in life day use to be.

Our ole massa,—wa'n't he 'culiar? Yit he wuz er good  
ole man,

N I bleaves iz you do, Mandy, dat he'll reach duh better lan'.

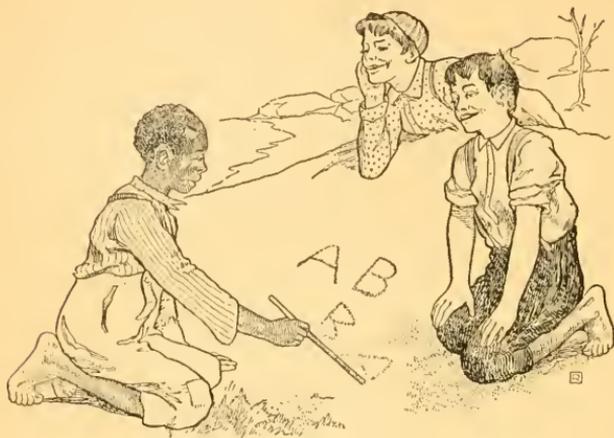
One thing makes me lub ole massa,—dough he  
 used to put me froom,—  
 He was kind to all our younguns, n he  
 wuz so good to you.  
 Nebber in my life, n' I knowed him  
 clean down twill he taken sick,  
 Did he eber on er olman lay er single  
 angry lick.



N he neber sol' er nigguh; n whin one  
 would run erway,  
 He would git no dogs to ketch him;—down unto his  
 dyin' day  
 Our ole massa thought it sinful thus to treat er helpless  
 slave;—  
 N I have to love him fer it, dough to-night he's in his  
 grave.

An' you know I larned to read n write er ha'f-way  
 decent han':—  
 Co'se I'se told you how I larut it: John n Henry in  
 duh san'  
 When we'd go er swimmin' Sundays, dey would make  
 duh alphabit,  
 N I'd try tuh make duh letters, n dey'd laf twill fit to  
 split.

Well, dey kep' er-foolin' wid me, n I tried wid all my  
 might,  
 Twill it happened Mr. Sambo got duh gif' to read n  
 write.



Whin at last ole massa kotched me, Lawd, it spoilt his  
 earthly joys ;  
 Co'se I had to name my teachers, n I tole him,—'twuz  
 his boys !

Chile, you know I thought duh cowhide would in wraf  
 on me descen' ;  
 But ole massa tuk my han', n spoke to me iz friin' to  
 frin' ;  
 Splained to me how 'twould be dang'us fer duh fac' to  
 become knoón,  
 Axed fer his sake n muh own sake dat I'd leab duh ink  
 alone.

Co'se dat wuz in time er slav'ry, n I wuzn't awllus  
good;—

Well, I don't spoze dat er darkey in dim days jis reely  
could

Be iz good iz Christians orter; faw his youngsturs  
bound tuh eat,—

Which accounts fer stolen muttuns, n  
my scrapes wid Hoodoo Pete.

When er feller gits er wife n chilluns  
nuff to number nine,—

Wif dey'r stomachs awllus heavy,  
awllus heavy ou dey'r min',—

Hit's no easy job to feed um! Hów-  
somever, you n Sam

Stood in wid ole massa's bacons;—us  
wuz def upon his ham!

But der Lawd is up in heaven, n ole  
mas' is in der ground,

N I ax muh Lawd n Sabeiour, if er-  
gains' duh dead be found

Any sin ur wrong by Sambo,—mut-  
ton, grunter, ur what not,—

Dat He'll please duh sin forgive me,  
n fum out duh Record blot.



You remimber well iz I do, dat po' ohman, Sindy May  
Wid her pooty little baby,—how she tried to git erway

Fum duh State er Alerbamer, way back dare in fifty-  
three,—  
Tried ter reach duh Queen's Dominions, where der peo-  
ple all wuz free.



N you 'mimbur, lub, you  
lint her dat dare bran'  
new wusted skirt,  
Which I bought you fer yo'  
birfdays, n my flannel  
Sunday shirt,  
You cut up n made her baby,  
—little helpless, hongry  
thing,—  
Made duh little chump er wrapper,  
which we fixed on wid er  
string.

N I helped her out er Jawgy on  
her way to Nawf Ca'line;  
Run all night, n got back home,  
suh, broad daylight, 'bout  
eight ur nine;

N I 'scaped, faw hit wuz rainin';  
but had hardly made it back  
When we heard duh bloodhounds yelpin', hard n fas'  
upon her track!

I kin see her iz dey brought her, right befo' our cabin  
do',

Wif her little, bloody baby, which duh hounds had kilt,  
 you know;  
 N I still kin hear her screamin', iz dey driv her 'long  
 duh road,  
 Bleedin' lak er beef, n naked, faw duh hounds no murcy  
 showed.

Say, she wuz a pooty critter, wid dat long, black wavin'  
 hair  
 Floatin' all eroun' her body, in dat col' Novimber air!  
 N it seems dat God in pity stretched duh clouds ercross  
 duh sky,  
 So dim beas'ly, cruel humans moutn't see His angels  
 cry.



Iz dey driv her by duh big house, mas'  
 wuz stan'in' at duh gate,—  
 I wuz follerin' 'hind duh drivers, hince I  
 heard him tell um, "Wait!"  
 Run his right han' down his pocket, n  
 pulls up er sack er gol',—  
 Counted out two hundred dollars. Missus  
 took dat bleedin' soul,

Turned duh kiver on her bed, suh;—n her face wuz  
 wet wid tears,  
 Iz she stood by dyin' Sindy, in whose life n tender  
 years  
 Dare wuz only shame n sorrer, wid no one to take her  
 part

Twill 'twuz too late;—n ole missus,—chile, we thought  
'twould break her heart!

Well, I guess we'll change duh subjics; see yo' cheeks  
n mine is wet;  
Our ole mas' n mis' n Sindy, all done paid duh final  
debt;  
N it soon will be our time to pass away n be at rest,—  
“Peaceful rest,” so runs duh poet, n “its waking  
s'premely blest.”

Din dare come duh great Rebellion, hin hit's awllus  
seemed to me  
Dat dat war wuz sent perposely fer to set duh niggahs  
free.  
Seems duh Lawd got tired er waitin', hearin' argermints  
er men,  
N jis raised up grand ole Lincoln fer to wipe erway duh  
sin.

N you know dit John n Henry, all dim chilluns massa  
had,—  
John wuz eberything to missus, Henry, all unto his  
dad,—  
Went n jine duh 'Fedrit forces, spite er all deyr folks  
could do;—  
N poor John wuz kilt at Shiloh, sixdth of Apurl, sixty-  
two.



J. Renning



Henry fell at Chickermawger, tawdz duh close of sixty-three;

N whin it wuz told to massa, "Now I longs tuh die," says he.—

Well, ole missus died dat Cwisnus; you wuz stan'in' by her side,

Kaze I mimbur how you tole me dat she lak some angel died.

Din ole massa left duh big house,—said 'twuz lonesome ober dare;

Said he'd rudder share our cabin, if we had er room ter spare.

So we squeez ourse'ves up closter,—n hit wuz dis very room

Where he lived fum dat time onwuds, twill we cared him to duh tomb.

You remimber whin duh Yankees come along in sixty-fo'

Dat ole mas' wuz on his def-bed,—hit set right dare by dat do'.

Whin dat 'bellion first wuz started, he wuz rich iz any man;

Whin he died he didn't own er single thing excep' his lan'.



Whin duh Yankees come, dey stripped him; burnt duh big house to duh groun':

Took duh hogs n cows n hosses ;—eberything he had  
dey foun'.

Co'se hit went to scrush duh 'bellion ;—hin duh darkies  
up n lef'

Wid duh army, all excep'in' Pete n Mandy n myse'f.

I wuz glad dey scrushed duh 'bellion ;—to duh victor  
b'longed duh spoil ;

But it hurt me, chile, to see um 'stroy so many years  
er toil,

N to see um burn duh big house : dar wuz nuffin else  
so dear

Unto us, excep' dis cabin,—dear ole cabin ! hit's still  
here.

Whin dey lef', ole massa called me, n I went n tuk his  
han' ;

Says he, " Sam, I see dey lef' you ;—wonder if dey lef'  
duh lan' ? "

" Yas, suh, massa, " says I sadly ; de ole man wuz layin'  
low ;

N he says, " Now, Sam, I'm dyin', n dare's one thing  
'fo' I go

" Dat I 'zires to leab here wid you. " N he pulled dis  
Bible out

Fum his piller, wid dis paper, which of co'se you knows  
about.—

" Dis my will fer you n Mandy, "—(you wuz somewhere  
out-er-do's)—

“Lay me side yo’ good ole missus,—all duh Yankees  
lef’ is yo’s;—

“Good bye, Sambo!” Dim duh las’ words dat on earfe  
he eber said;

Closed his eyes, n ’fo’ I knowed it, our ole massa,—he  
wuz dead.

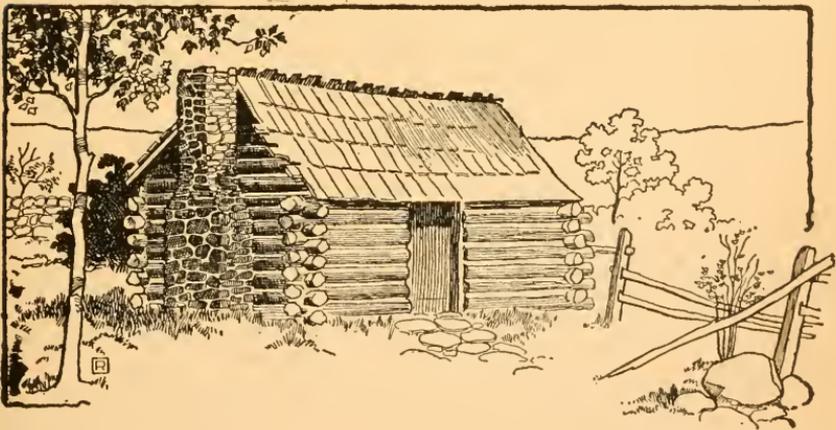
N I kinnot keep fum thinkin’, if in heaben bright n fair  
Chris’ has ’pared a single mansion, mas’ n mis’ am got  
one dare.

An’ duh years am fastly flyin’; hain’t none lef’ but me  
n you;

N we soon mus’ leave our cabin, n accep’ er mánshion  
too.—

Lis’n here at Sal Malindy,—hain’t she mo’ din mawtul,  
say?

Well, I bleave I’s read er Scripsher; so den, Mandy,  
s’pose we pray.







## “PASS DAT BISKIT.”

Now, befo' we leave duh table, all you youngsters git  
plum quite,  
Faw I see I'll hab to show you what is wrong n what is  
right.  
Co'se we kin excuse Malindy; she is gramper's baby  
yit;  
But hit's time you udder younguns wuz er larnin' little  
bit.

I remember whin er youngster, lak you youngsters is  
terday,  
How my mammie taught me manners in a 'culiar kind  
er way.  
One er mammie's ole time 'quaintance,—Missus Dooney  
wuz her name,—  
Wuz one night our mammie's cumpny,—mammie, co'se,  
prepared fer same.

Mammie fixed her cookin' vessels; me n Son n little  
Sis,

We wuz heppin' 'roun' er-doin' little dat n little dis,  
Faw our mammie had duh sifter, n wuz makin' up some  
dough,

Which would soon turn inter biskits,—Law  
—we all wuz smart, you know.



Faw hit wuzn't custymary whin I wuz er-  
comin' up,—er

'Cep' hit wuz whin we had cumpny,—to hab  
biskits hot fer supper.

N of co'se, on sich ercasions, mammie'd only  
bake er few,

N she nachly 'spec' us younguns to put up  
wid one er two.

Now, hit happened whin dim biskits reached  
duh table on dat night,

Dat my exercise had s'plied me wif er whalein' appur-  
tite!

'Zerves n biskits on duh table! Honey, I could skasely  
wait

Fer my mammie to adminstur,—I jis had to pass muh  
plate.

N Mis' Dooney,—good ole lady,—fawked er biskit off  
fer me;

N she had to keep er-fawkin' twill she'd fawked off one,  
two, free:—

Hin hit wuzn't many minutes 'fo' I 'plies fer number fo';—

Mammie frowns n han' me cold one,—drapped dat blame thing on duh flo'!

“Hab er biskit' Sister Dooney,” mammie said, n I turned blue,

Iz she shoved der plate up to her, dare wuz only 'main-in' two.

“Not quite ready, Sister Mandy,”—n she pass duh plate tuh son;

“In er minit,” 'splains Mis' Dooney, “I will try ernudder one.”

I had bit dat ole cold biskit,—tough ernuff to choke er goat,—

N I don't know how I swallud, but I swallud, cleared muh th'oat,

N I looks it Missus Dooney, faw I see duh biskit she's

Workin' on am gettin' scacer: says I, “Pass duh biskits, please.”

Missus Dooney kep' er tawkin', n er munchin' on her bread;

She n mammie kep' er tawkin', jis iz if I'd nuthin' said.

“*Pass* der biskits, please ma'am,” says I, little louder din befo';—



Law, you orter seed how mammie frowned up dare,—  
jis sorter so.

MISSUS Dooney nebber heard me,—dat's duh way dat  
she let on,—  
N her little piece er biskit in er minute would be gone;



N dare wa'n't but one mo' lef', suh ;—man, I stretched  
up in muh cheer,—  
Says I wif muh fawk uplifted, "*Pass dat biskit, don't yer  
hear ?!*"

Yas suh, chilluns, bet yer money, dat dare biskit come  
to me!

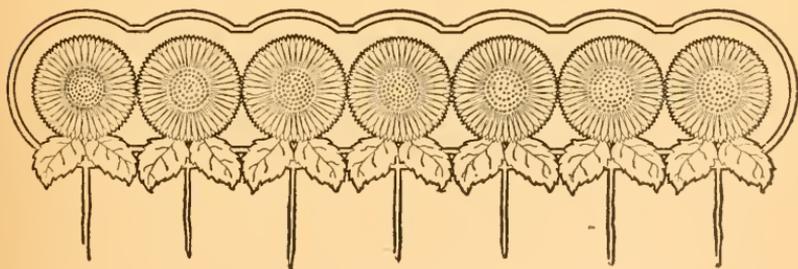
"Hab some mo'," says mammie to her. "No, I thank  
yer, Sis," says she.

Mammie says, "Jis come in front, din; dain't no use  
fer you to wait."

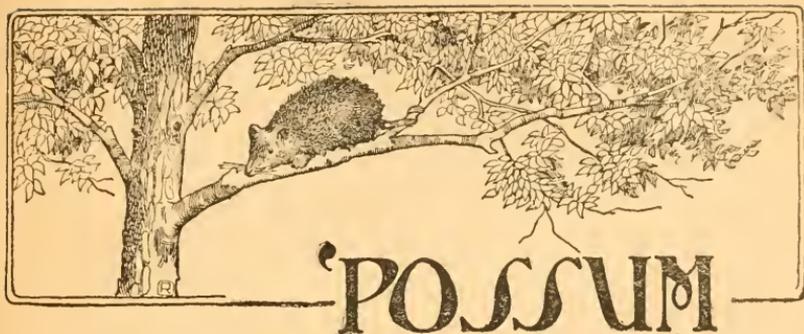
N iz soon iz dey had gone out, 'zerve-dish sot right in  
muh plate!

Mammie come on back dare dreckly,—jis iz hot iz bees  
 n ants;—  
 Up she hists me fum dat table, n she rolls me out muh  
 pants,—  
 Hitched my head up 'twixt her knees, suh, great big  
 luther strop assisted,  
 N whin she had 'formed her duty, all dem biskits done  
 dijisted.

Bet yo' life, I sho' remimbud, youngsturs, evuh aftuh  
 dat,  
 Dit whin 'zerves wuz on duh table, dey wuz dare to be  
 looked at!  
 N 'bout takin' las' er victuals,—mammie sho' did me  
 convince  
 'Fo' I got back in dim briches!—I'se had *manners*  
 evuh since.







Make ace, younguns; me n grammer wants you to be  
still n quite,  
N to listen to duh story dat I'm gwine tuh 'late tuh-  
night.  
Sal Malindy, whar you, honey? Dat's er sweet gal,  
come to gramp;—  
Well din, go on to yo' grammer, you audacious little  
scamp.

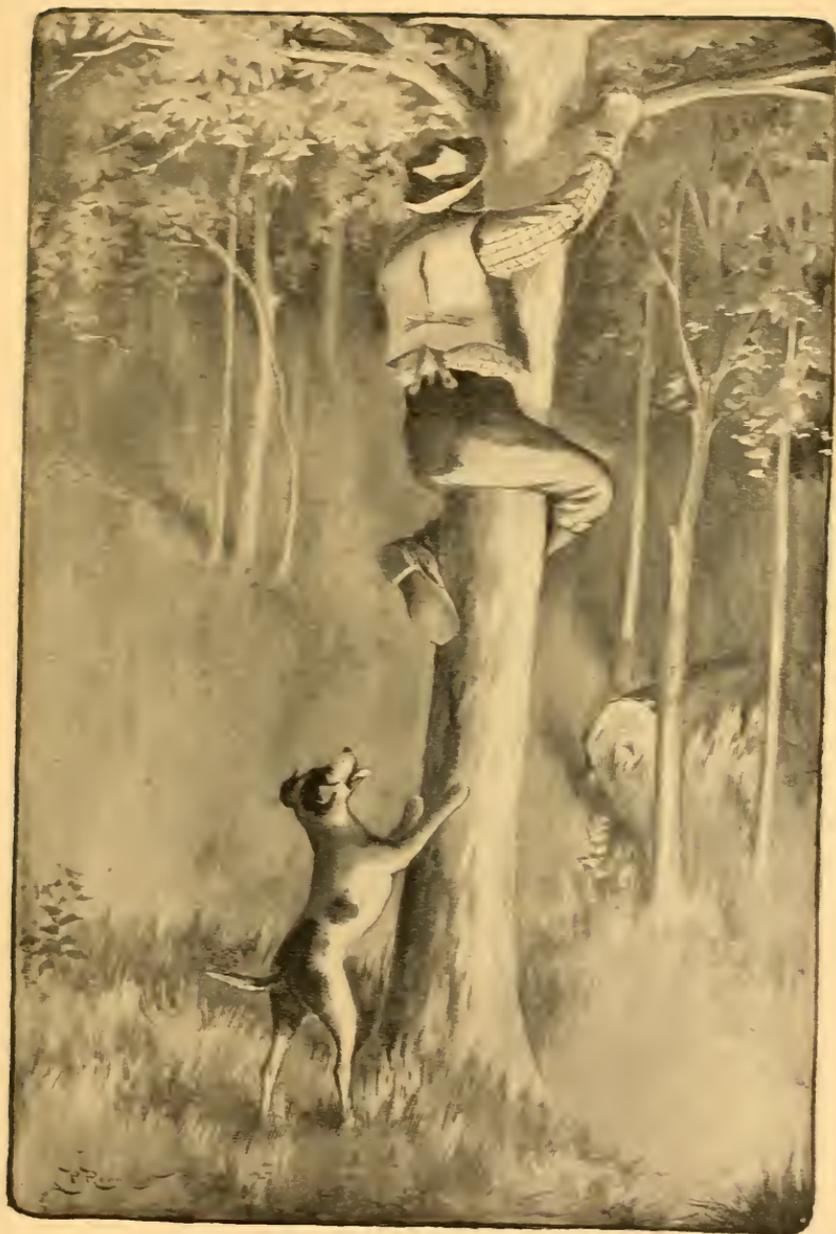
Dis wuz in duh days of actions, iz we used to call un  
den,  
Whin we all b'longed to duh white folks, n wuz slaves  
instid er men.  
N it wuz 'long in Novimbuh, 'simmön season wuz on  
han',  
N sweet taters baked wid 'possum wuz duh go in Dixie  
Lan'.

N of co'se, you all know 'possum, whin hit's baked  
 right good n brown,  
 Wid duh stuffins n duh taters floatin' in duh grease  
 eroun',  
 Wif er few red pods er pappah, so's tuh make hit sorter  
 hot,  
 Is duh bes' stuff dat er ohman evuh put in pan ur pot.

Now ouh dog, his name wuz Bulljuh,—smartuh dog  
 hain't wo' er hide,  
 Faw dat houn' would sho' kotch 'possums,—n I'm sorry  
 yit he died.  
 Well, on dis Novimbuh evening, long befo' duh clock  
 struck eight,  
 Bulljuh treed, n I goes to him,—great big 'possum,  
 sho' iz fate!

Up I clamed up 'mungst duh 'simmons, vygrusly I  
 shook der lim',  
 Down he come, n good ole Bulljuh butters biskets dare  
 wid him!  
 I gets down you know n feel him, hin he wuz jis rollin'  
 fat;  
 'Way we went back to duh cabin, skint him 'fo' 'yo'  
 mought say, Scat!

Mandy had duh pots er bilein' time I got duh 'possum  
 clean,





N I turned him ovuh to huh, dumped him in duh grub-machine.

N I'll tell yuh, dat dare grammer 'zackly done huh dooty, too;

Whin she fixed er 'possum, sonny, hit wuz cooked now, hin lit's troo.

She wuz on duh whole plantation, bes'  
 cook on ole massa's place,  
 N whin she got froo er cookin', done  
 me good to ax duh grace;  
 N whin 'possum decked duh table,—  
 well I'll jis be took n lung  
 If I wuzn't skeert whin swallun dat I'd  
 swaller teefs n tongue.



But to 'turn to dis heah 'possum. Sizely  
 iz duh clock struck nine,  
 Dat dare booger wuz er-lookin' axshilly,  
 nachully, 'zackully fine!

"Yas, he done now," grammer says, n  
 slices off his hams, you know,  
 Kase we 'greed to treat duh white folks; done it mos'ly  
 fer a show.

Well, yer grammer got her bonnet, put dim hams upon  
 er plate,

N went on up to duh big house.—Lawd, I poss'bly  
 couldn't wait

Twill she come back, so I slip in to duh kitchen,—n  
 I sware!  
 Bendin' right above dat 'possum, wuz some feller,  
 smackin' dare!

Folks, I jis slip right up on him,—jis muh socks on,  
 co'se you know,—  
 N I kicked duh skawnul so hard dat I sprained muh lef'  
 big toe;  
 Knocked him slap across duh oven settin' dare upon duh  
 coals,—  
 Law, I riz him fum dat 'possum! 'Way out in duh flo'  
 he rolls.

But you mought er seed me lookin', iz ole massa riz up  
 dare,  
 N snatched off er piece er scantlin', n begin tuh cuss n  
 sware!  
 "Mussey, massa," I 'gin pleadin', "Law, I didn't spoze  
 'twuz you!"  
 "Well, you'll spoze 'twuz me, ber golly, by duh time  
 dit I gits froo."

Oh, he wool me 'roun' dare scan'lous, wif dat piece er  
 timbuh, chile;  
 All duh darkies heard me hollern n come runnin' fer er  
 mile,  
 But duh lickin didn't hurt me ha'f is much iz I pre-  
 tended;—

I wuz sholy mort'ly skeert, dough, my probation days  
wuz ended.

Well when he got froo er-beatin', off he go upon his  
hoss.

Mandy come, n us n Bulljuh made up fer duh time we  
loss

Foolin' 'roun' bein' good to white fokes;—evuh 'possum  
Bulljuh kotched

Aftuh dat, you bet yer dolluh, white fokes' tushes never  
to'ched.

Mandy says, "Sam, ax duh blessin'," iz down to duh  
dish we sot,

Kaze dare wuz er plenty 'possum still remainin' in duh  
pot.

Says I, "Massa Jesus, please suh, bless dis 'possum fer  
ouh sake,

N may dat which mas' n miss' got give um bofe duh  
stumuck-ache!"



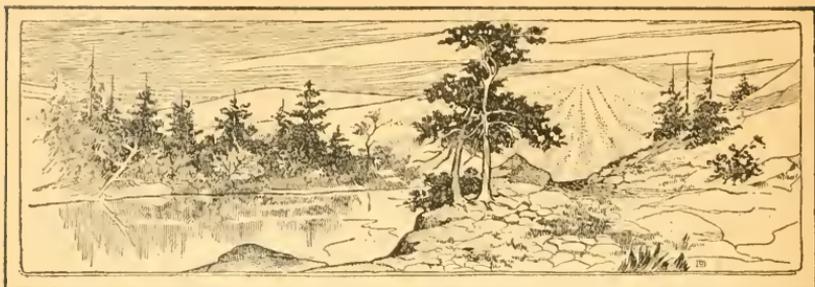


## MOTHER.

Cover's turned and bed is ready, and I'm in my  
"nighty" dressed;  
"Napper" sends the "gapers" for me, and they lull  
me off to rest;  
But before I leave for "Dreamland," just before I reach  
the bed,  
I am kneeling, and my mother's soft, warm hands are  
on my head.

“Now I lay me down to sleep,” I hear that mother  
gently say,  
And repeating what she'd tell me, learned my infant  
lips to pray.  
Often as I say, “Our Father,” still that mother's face  
I see,  
Just as when I was her “tootsy,” with my head upon  
her knee.

And when down to sleep I lay me, when my lips in  
death be dumb,—  
When I sleep that sleep she's sleeping, till the Prince  
of Life shall come;  
If I wake to life immortal, and with her bright glory  
share,  
It will be because that mother's love is living in that  
prayer.



## AN ODE TO MOTHER EARTH.

[The inscription of this ode is made to the fairest flower of the GREAT MOTHER  
of whom I sing, Daisy.]

Sweet Muse, bequeath my pen thy lasting charm,  
    Soon shall my lips be dumb, my heart be still.  
While life bestows its strength unto my arm,  
    Grant thou my ink thy living charm to thrill  
    The souls of men. These words with beauty fill,  
That men may pause amidst life's fevered, ruinous rush  
    And see in Mother Earth thy pictured will.  
What blossoms here, forbid that Time should crush  
When sleeps my lonely soul in Death's eternal hush.

O Earth, enduring Mother of us all!  
    How fair, how lovely still thy wondrous face!  
Who knows thy years, save God? Who can recall  
    Time when thy mundane bounds were born to space?  
    Thou wast thy Maker's bride and formed to grace

His Universe ; Jehovah chose thee for His own ;  
Thou left His love, forsook thy Lord's embrace  
For Man, thy most unworthy son ; to groan  
For him,—vain, wretched worm,—thou queen of heaven's  
throne !

For him thy tender, loving bosom bleeds ;  
Thy form, once wrapped in Glory's robes, I see  
Clad now in rags of woe for Man's misdeeds :  
Still down the ages rings thy whispered plea,  
"Father, forgive!" What mother's love can be  
Like thine, O Dolor Mater! Millenniums of tears  
Have washed thy cheeks; the scourge of sin on thee  
Hath left its scars, and on thy face appears  
The furrowed field which Death hath ploughed through  
all thy years.

And yet how beautiful thou art, O earth !  
How generous in thy grief! How great!  
What beauties to thy bosom owe their birth!  
What charms are thine, thou miracle of Fate!  
Thy husband is thy God, and on thee wait  
Angelic hosts, all armed with bright, celestial steel ;  
These guard thy first and glorious estate  
Until thy travail end, until thou feel  
Our Father's kiss upon thy cheek and wear His seal.

And I have loved thee, Mother Earth; I'm thine.

Thy soul, thy lot, thy likeness, all I claim;  
Thy fate, thy griefs, thy hopes, thy prayers are mine;  
I love, and own, thy nature and thy name.

May God forbid that e'er a blush of shame  
Should kiss the crimson in thy grief-stained cheek

For deed of mine. Be mine the noble aim,  
The purpose lofty, pure; be mine to seek  
The secrets of thy joy, and not a sorrow wreak.

Enchanting is thy loveliness in life!

Thy beauteous form in Ocean's ruffled blue  
Bespeaks thy royalty, proclaims thee wife  
Unto Jehovah, and in all thy sorrows true.

Oft have I thought, as gently to my view  
Thou wouldst unfold as unto one beloved thy breast,—

Oft have I thought, and with the thought I grew,  
That on thy brow Creation's crown should rest,  
Since thou of all the countless worlds art loveliest.

And what is Man, that thou shouldst him regard?

A wanderer from thy love; his chosen lot  
So often cast in sin; a heart as hard,  
Unfeeling as the stone; his day a blot  
Upon the calendar of Time; forgot  
As soon as sinks his sun; his friends rejoice to weep

For him in death,—in life they love him not.  
Thy love endures: back to thy arms we creep,  
Sad wrecks of sin, and rest in thy beloved sleep.

The guiltiest thy heart forgives and spreads,  
The lovely mantle of forgetfulness  
Above the deeds of shame that crown our heads,  
Above our sins, too dark to e'en to God confess.  
Such monumental love no words express,  
No bosom save thy own couldst bear. Without a dream  
To tincture guilt with well-deserved distress;  
Devoid of hope, if Justice be supreme;  
We sleep, whilst pleads thy living love, "O God, re-  
deem!"

And soon shall dawn thy morn of restoration.  
For thee the tender heart of God doth yearn;  
Thou'lt share with Him, the Sovereign of creation,  
The gifts which love for Man didst make thee spurn.  
Thy God shall come to thee; and thy return  
To favor with thy Lord will wake to ecstasy  
The dwellers of the universe; they shall discern  
When thou shalt mount thy pristine throne to be  
Queen with thy God, what love was thine, and envy  
thee.

Expectant Earth, when folded in thy breast,—  
When I shall sleep with all thy children dead,—

When Death, thy silent messenger of rest,  
Shall raise thy flag of truce above my head ;  
I hope to wake enraptured from my bed  
To see thee crowned, to see thee robed in golden flame,  
To hear from angels' lips the summons read  
That welcomes thee to God. I hope to claim  
A sweeter tongue to sing the love that crowns thy  
name.



## The Ninety and Nine.

BY PAUL, DUNBAR.

Po' lil' brack sheep that strayed away,  
Done los' in de win' an' de rain,  
An' de Shepherd He say, "O hirelin',  
Go fin' My sheep again."  
An' de hirelin' say, "O Shepherd,  
Dat sheep am brack and bad."  
But de Shepherd He smile, like dat lil' brack sheep  
Wuz de onliest lamb He had.

An' He say, "O hirelin', hasten,  
For de win' an' the rain am col',  
An' dat lil' brack sheep am lonesome  
Out dere, so far f'um de fol'."  
But de hirelin' frown, "O Shepherd,  
Dat sheep am ol' an' gray;"  
But de Shepherd He smile, like dat lil' brack sheep  
Wuz fair as de break o' day.

An' He say, "O hirelin', hasten,  
Lo, here is de ninety an' nine,  
But dere way off f'um de sheepfol',  
Is dat lil' brack sheep o' Mine!"  
And de hirelin' frown, "O Shepherd,  
De res' o' de sheep am here!"  
But de Shepherd He smile, like dat lil' brack sheep  
He hol' it de mostes' dear.

An' de Shepherd go out in de darkness  
Where de night was col' and bleak,  
An' dat lil' brack sheep He fin' it,  
An' lay it agains' His cheek.  
An' de hirelin' frown, "O Shepherd,  
Don' bring dat sheep to me!"  
But de Shepherd He smile, an' He hol' it close,  
An' dat lil' brack sheep—wuz—me!



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