

GRAVE AND GAY.

"WHEN DE CO'N PONE'S HOT."

[MR. W. D. HOWELLS, writing of the author of these verses, Paul Lawrence Dunbar, who is a young, full-blooded negro, a son of former slaves, describes him as "the only man of pure African blood and American civilization to feel the negro life esthetically and to express it lyrically."]

DEY is times in life when Nature
 Seems to slip a cog an' go,
 Jes' a-rattlin' down creation,
 Lak an ocean's overflow ;
 When the worl' jes' stahts a-spinnin'
 Lak a picaninny's top,
 An' you' cup o' joy is brimmin'
 'Twel it seems about to slop,
 An' you feel jes' like a racah
 Dat is trainin' fu' to trot --
 When you' mammy ses de blessin'
 An' de co'n pone's hot.

When you set down at de table,
 Kin' o' weary lak an' sad,
 An, you'se jes, a little tiahed,
 An' purhaps a little mad ;
 How yo' gloom tu'ns into gladness,
 How yo' joy drives out de doubt,
 When de oven do' is opened
 An de smell comes po'in out ;
 Why, de 'lectric light o' Heaven
 Seems to settle on de spot,
 When yo' mammy ses de blessin',
 An' de co'n pone's hot.

When de cabbage pot is steamin'
 An' de bacon's good an' fat,
 When de chittlin's is a-sputter'n'
 So's to show yo' whah dey's at ;
 Take away yo' sody biscuit,
 Take away yo' cake an' pie,
 Fo' de glory time is comin',
 An' it's 'proachin' very ntgh,
 An' yo, want to jump an' hollah,
 Do' you know you'd bettah not,
 When you' mammy ses de blessin',
 And de co'n pone's hot.

I have heerd o' lots o' sermons,
 An' I've heerd o' lots o' prayers;
 An' I've listened to some singin'
 'Dat has tuck me up de stairs
 Of de Glory Lan', an' set me
 Jes' below de Mastes's th'one,
 An' have lef' my haht a-singin'
 In a happy aftah tone ;
 But dem wu's so sweetly murmured
 Seem to tech de softes' spout,
 When my mammy ses de blessin',
 An' de co'n pone's hot.

THE BOY TO THE SCHOOLMASTER.

[By E. J. Wheeler, in "Stories in Rhyme for Holiday Time."]

"You have quizzed me often and puzzled
 me long ;
 You have asked me to cipher and spell ;
 You have called me a dolt if I answered
 wrong,
 Or a dunce if I failed to tell
 just when to say lie and when to say lay,
 Or what nine sevens may make,
 Or the longitude of Kamschatka Bay,
 Or the I-forget-whats-its-name lake.
 So I think it's about my turn, I do,
 To ask a question or so of you."

The schoolmaster grim he opened his
 eyes,
 But he said not a word for sheer surprise.

"Can you tell what 'phen-dnbs' means ?
 I can.

Can you say all off by heart

The 'onery, twoery, hickory ann ?
 Or tell 'commons' and 'alleys' apart ?
 Can you fling a top, I would like to know,
 Till it hums like a humble-bee ?
 Can you make a kite yourself that will go
 Most as high as the eye can see,
 Till it sails and soars like a hawk on the
 wing,
 And the little birds come and light on the
 string ?"

The schoolmaster looked, oh, very demure,
 But his mouth was twitching, I'm almost
 sure.

"Can you tell where the nest of the oriole
 swings,
 Or the color its eggs may be ?
 Do you know the time when the squirrel
 brings