



Smithsonian Institution

National Museum of African American History and Culture

The Crisis, Vol. 14, No. 4

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any railroad. Event he nearest mail box was about three miles away. My wife and I decided to accept this invitation and planned a fifteen days' outing. Before leaving, I gave instructions to my secretary to take care of my mail till I returned as I did not want even a letter to disturb us. Some time in early August, we took the train for Boston, Ga., where we were met by Mr. Perkins with his team and jogged along the road in good old country style for twenty miles to be dumped into the very midst of primitive life.

We were almost worshipfully welcomed by father, mother, children and a host of kinsfolks, as well as their friends. Our coming must have been heralded for the whole community had turned out to meet Dennis Perkins' teachers.

Besides fishing tackle and hunting accouterments, we carried along a graphophone and a kodak. We found great pleasure in entertaining the simple people with the Edison product, many of whom had not seen or heard one before. Every day, including Sundays, I was called upon to give a concert with that box "wid al' dem foks an' dem music ban's in it." My wife and I got nearly back to primitive man in dress, and places to sleep, as we could without attracting any special attention from the country folks. Every day was back to nature. We studied the strange plants and animals that we saw and took notes in our minds as we avoided note books and pencils. We fished from boats on the lakes. We pulled fodder, picked peanuts, and indulged in most frequently in the most luscious of summer time southern fruit, the watermelon. We breakfasted, supped and dine with the different folks of the community; were without restraint of dress, received no mail, sent none, had no kind of drinks, no ice—simply pure cool spring water—but a varied daily program of such enjoyment as can be found only a long ways from the railroad in the "sticks." Not dry sticks, but sticks bristling with shaking green leaves everywhere. Like two playful children, my wife and I roamed the cultivated fields, rambled through the woods, drank the healthful turpentine water that collected in the boxes of the pine trees, picked blackberries, waded streams, till we found our cheeks glowing with the hot blood of youth—

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ful of vigor and our limbs full of childish activity. Of course, an occasional snake would intrude itself upon us to remind us of the famous three horse head picture: "When shall we three meet again?" My wife, by taking to her heels, always answered the question in pantomimic style, "Never." The kodak has preserved to us some pleasant reminder of this holiday which I consider the "Best Summer I Ever Spent."

THREE POEMS

By LUCIAN B. WATKINS

FREDERICK DOUGLASS-ORATOR

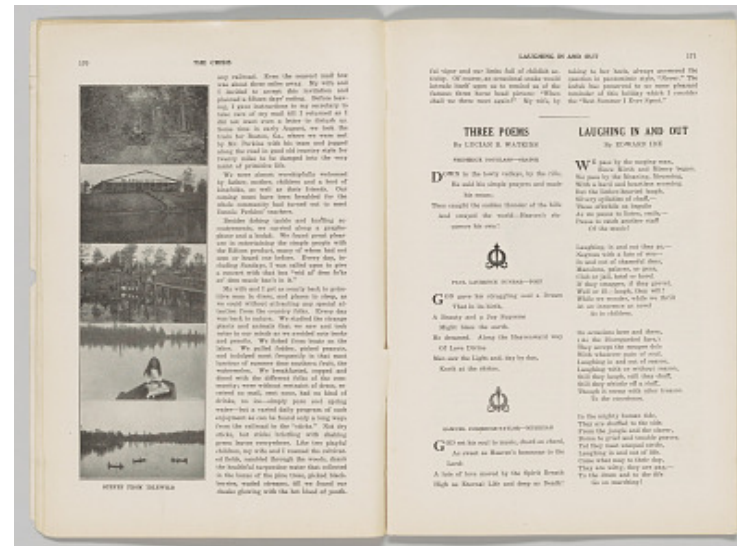
DOWN in the lowly valleys, by the rills, He said his simple prayers and made his moan;

Then caught the sudden thunder of the hills

And swayed the world—Heaven's eloquence his own!

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR-POET

GOD gave his struggling soul a Dream



That in its birth,
A Beauty and a Joy Supreme
Might bless the earth.
He dreamed. Along the Heavenward way
Of Love Divine
Men saw the Light and, day by day,
Knelt at the shrine.

SAMUEL COLERIDGE-TAYLOR-MUSICIAN

GOD set his soul to music, chord on chord,
As sweet as Heaven's hosannas to the Lord:
A lute of love moved by the Spirit Breath High as Eternal Life and deep
as Death!

LAUGHING IN AND OUT

By EDWARD IDE

WE pass by the moping man,
Since Mirth and Misery began.
We pass by the Moaning, Mourning,
With a hard and heartless scorning.
But the limber-hearted laugh,
Silvery syllables of chaff,-
These oftwhile us beguile
As we pause to listen, smile,-
Pause to catch another staff
Of the music!

Laughing, in and out they go,-
Negroes with a fate of woe-
In and out of shameful dens,
Mansions, palaces, or pens,
Club or jail, hotel or hovel.
If they swagger, if they grovel,
Well or ill-laugh they will!
While we wonder, while we thrill
At an innocence as novel
As in children

On occasions here and there,
(As the Disregarded fare,)
They accept the meagre dole
With whatever pain of soul.
Laughing in and out of season,
Laughing with or without reason,
Still they laugh, still they chaff,
Still they whistle off a staff,
Though it seems with utter treason
To the conscience.

In the mighty human tide,
They are shuffled to the side.
From the jungle and the slaver,
Borne to grief and trouble graver,
Yet they meet unequal strife,
Laughing in and out of life.
Come what may to their day,
They are witty, they are gay,-
To the drum and to the fife
Go on marching!

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