

Therefore, embrace, study, improve and utilize its values. Teach it's source, history and influence, but point to its limitations and instruct of its harm as alone medium of expression."

Mr. William Ludwig of the Ludwig Drum Co., the author of the earlier quoted article again talks about the evolution of American popular music and the progress of it: "should be credited to the dance drummer." He explains that "Jazz, as applied to music, is a form of improvising and added syncopation, a development of ragtime and syncopation." He continues with an account of the influence of the "rag-drummer" and pianist:

"Mr. Ludwig states that he found the sort of jazz which was so frequently and bitterly condemned had been extinct for the last two or three years and that a new and commendable style of jazz music is now filling its place. He also believes that if the drum business was to be affected by the passing of jazz, it would have felt the depression during the last two years. Yet, instead of a decrease in demand during that period, the drum dealers all reported an increase in business and stated that such increase still continues. To the interviewer of *Music Trades*, relative to jazz itself, Mr. Ludwig further said:

"While prominent men, trained in other lines than music seem to be more or less alarmed, musicians believe that 'jazz' is simply a step in the progress of music and that the present development is a step forward and upward.

"At the very beginning a brief review of the origin of 'jazz' may not be amiss. The word itself means to 'step lively,' and was first used in this country by Negroes working on the docks and levees in the South.

"Jazz, as applied to music is a form of improvising and added syncopation, a development of ragtime and syncopation. Radical 'jazz' is already gone, never to return.

"We cannot jump to perfection with one leap. There must be the intermediate, and there must be the start. Some credit the saxophone as having started this new form of musical interpretation, but that is not the case. There were rag-jazz orchestras before saxophones were used in orchestras.

"It was the trap drummer who first broke loose from the old-time practice of holding strictly and religiously to the printed music sheet. He began syncopating on the snare drum, instead of holding to the after-beats as written. This syncopating was called 'rag drumming.' The beats were an imitation of clog dancing. Thus the drummers started playing rag time and for this innovation were called fakers by the more pious. Nevertheless, it was a decided step forward in the progress of music interpretation.

The pianist was next to 'rag it' on the piano, and at one time in the earliest stage of the 'rag time' orchestra the pianist and drummer were the most important. They had to work together in their individual form of syncopation.

"The trombone and cornet soon followed the piano and drum, and they, by the aid of slide and mute, were able to produce new harmony effects. From this developed the 'jazz' orchestra, with clarinets and violins improvising and syncopating. The clarinetist resorted to other instruments of the family to produce the desired effects, first by using C

clarinet and then by the saxophone. Finally, the violinist, a little weak on syncopation, took up the banjo."

In our next article, "Jazz a Musical Discussion" (Atlantic Monthly, August, 1922) we read that "15 years ago we had progressed to the insipid "Waltz Me Around Again, Willie" to the coon and song and rag-time factories in the back parlors of the W. 20th streets of New York." In our last few articles we are reading that what is now called "Jazz" is under discussion and ragtime is now seen as a predecessor of the new popular music called Jazz. The article has a good description of the changing and refined style of the evolving popular music scene. From the time frame of 15 years ago the critics and writers will now begin to write of the evils and vices of the new popular music culture as we slide into the jazz age from the ragtime era. This article seems to be saying this quite well. It is summed up in its last sentence: "Jazz is ragtime, plus 'Blues,' plus orchestral polyphony."

"Between the earlier 'rag' and the 'blues' there was this distinction: the rag had been mainly a thing of rhythm, of syncopation; the blues were syncopation relished with spicier harmonics.

In addition to these two elements of music, rhythm and harmony, the people - who in the beginning had known but one thing, melody, fastened upon a primitive and weak harmonic structure of 'barbershop' chords - the people, I say, who had stepwise advanced from melody and rhythm to harmony, lastly discovered counterpoint. And the result of this last discovery is jazz. In other words, jazz is ragtime, plus 'Blues,' plus orchestral polyphony. it is the combination, in the popular music current, of melody, rhythm, harmony, and counterpoint."

"A Defense of Jazz and Ragtime" (Sept., 1922, "Melody Magazine") is our next publication. There is now the controversy about jazz's value and worth in music and public appeal. The author gives credit to the ability of the ragtime pianist who is both "a composer as well as performer.:

"Numerous articles have appeared in various American newspapers and magazines during the past few months, all of them deprecating the growing tendency of jazz and deploring its consequent results - neglecting the classics and creating musical taste of a low order. As one speaking from an unprejudiced standpoint and based only upon that which has come under actual observance and experience, I would like to air my impressions as to this state of affairs.

We are living today in the most wonderful era of invention and progress known to the world since time began, and our watchwords are economy and practicability. Everything is now done in such manner that no lost motions are made. Results at once must be forthcoming, else the task is put aside as impractical, and no further consideration given it. Yet any thing that meets the taste of the public and warrants its constant approval must have some good qualities and be worthy of a little consideration, and such is true of jazz and ragtime. They always have met with public approval because they are the only forms of real American music so far evolved with which the masses are

broadly acquainted. Our contemporaneous composers of classic forms are doing a noble work, of course, but the chances of their efforts reaching the populace are so slim that we do not have to be concerned with them for some time to come - at least not until some genius, some American Mozart or Beethoven, appears among us.

The works of many of the old masters seem to have had their day as the only worthy music. Americans prefer something fresh and modern, something more in accord with the spirit of the age, and jazz is fast supplying this preference. There are still many among us, however, who claim to abhor jazz and any reference to popular music, this for no other apparent reason (though we will not all admit it) than that we are unable to master its intricacies and so fail to appreciate the efforts of the more fortunate.

It has been demonstrated time and time again that strictly classical pianists are not practical performers. They cannot on the spur of the moment improvise an accompaniment for a singer - something which almost every vaudeville, cabaret and movie pianist can do and do well. Even with the notes before them, classical players often make a dismal failure, especially when their sight-reading ability has to be brought into play. Their accompaniments coincide so badly with the singer or the instrumentalist that their efforts at accompanying are ludicrous even to the unlearned. These classical pianists are well aware of their failing, yet point to it with pride rather than admit it as failure and make no effort to improve.

Most classical players adhere too strictly to traditions and so fail to meet innovations in playing that have been introduced in the present age, but if they would devote more time to ear-training and observe the playing of good motion picture players their own playing might come more into public favor. Our new type of American music and musicians is no some thing for which to be apologetic. Rather is to an accomplishment of which to be proud as being typical of our swift, alert race that is unequaled by any other nationality.

Then again we have those who claim that ragtime playing is injurious to one's ability to ply classic-music. But where of do they speak and what reasons have they for making such absurd claims? If they answered the question frankly they would say "no reasons." It is simply a false idea they have gained from others, the fallacy of which they never have taken time to investigate. I maintain that real ragtime is rhythmical, harmonious and full of "Pep," the last named quality having become so imperative in all other lines of endeavor that there is no reason why we should not include it in our music.

The real ragtime pianist is a composer as well as performer. That is, he can take a tune and reharmonize it if necessary, judiciously introduce innovations, alter the rhythm, and devise a bass that will make the composition alive and pulsating, and so obtain the public approval. After all, our efforts must be directed towards pleasing the public at large, and even at its best classical music becomes dull, slow-moving and monotonous if heard too frequently, its appeal is only to the minority, and with it only an exceptionally brilliant performer can make an impression."

Henry Gilbert was a well-known classical American composer and a defender of American music (including ragtime). He defends both jazz and ragtime and states "Formerly it was "ragtime" that was blamed for being both morally and musically pernicious.": He writes in the Dec., 1922, The New Music Review:

"At present jazz is being honored and given credit for far more diabolic influence than almost anything else. But it is merely the "scapegoat" of the present time. Formerly it was "ragtime" that was blamed for being both morally and musically pernicious. I myself remember (not so very long ago, either) solemn resolutions being passed by Musicians' Unions disapproving of, and forbidding the playing of "ragtime."

The next article ("Putting the Music Into Jazz" - Dec. 29, 1922) appears in the "New York Times Book Review and Magazine. It states that : "It was just about twelve years ago that the ragtime began to make itself felt (Sic: that would be 1909) through the strains of the darky cakewalk." (Sic: The cakewalk, an ancestor of ragtime, reached its popularity as early as 1899). The article first uses ragtime evolution to eventually progress to the use of the technique of jazz and its lack of musical refinement:

"It was just about twelve years ago that the ragtime began to make itself felt - that first inspiring influence on staid American dance music - through the strains of the darky cakewalk. To rag a tune meant that you destroyed its rhythm and substituted a two-four or a four-four time. You could rag any tune - from "Greenland's Icy Mountains" to the "Lament" from "Pagliacci." Indeed, three-fourths of the popular songs of the last decade consist of a theme stolen from the realms of good music and then "ragged" but a composer who usually played entirely by ear - as the records of the copyright infringement suits will indicate. And yet the ragtime tune had life, where the dance music that proceeded it lacked life.

Hum them over as you recall them - that first batch of rag tunes - "Camp Meeting Time," "Down in Alabama," "Alexander's Rag-Time Band" a few years later - that the turkey trot should follow on them was as inevitable as that summer should follow on spring. The cakewalk demanded that you raise you feet in the air. "Everybody's Doing It Now" left your shoulders no choice but to be "tossed in the air." Somehow there was something in that first bunch of rags and of turkey trots alike that kept the movement up and down.

Syncopation was still confined to its native haunts - to the demi-monde of New Orleans, to the tango of the Argentine, to the enticing music of old Spain, with its haunting Moorish strain, and - why not be frank? - to Brahms and to Wagner. Not yet had the American ragtime kings learned to let the accent fall on a beat other than the given place for that accent - which, by the way, is about as near as untechnical language can come to saying what syncopation is, just as untechnical language must be content to describe "The Blues" as "slurred syncopation."

Early we have read of Satie's use of ragtime in his music. Roger Ducasse's use of ragtime in his new tone poem is discussed in an article found in the March, 1923 issue of "Musical America."

"DUCASSE USES RAGTIME IN NEW TONE POEM, Paris, March 3.

Among the dozens of new orchestral compositions which have had first performances here in the last three months, none has aroused greater interest than "Epithalame," a new tone poem by Roger-Ducasse, who had been silent for some time. It is the work of a composer who has a sound academic background and who has fearlessly taken ragtime rhythms and put them to his own uses with a sure hand. Not once does a fox-trot or a cakewalk escape from Ducasse and divert the tone of the composition from that of serious music to the jiggy banalities of a music hall. It is evidence of the valuable use to which the European craze for jazz may be put and it leads one to believe that after all jazz may go down in the history of music as a real and lasting phase.

The tone poem opens with a short Adagio indicating a marriage fete, and passes quickly into a stirring cakewalk. Successively the poem includes a fox trot, a tango and then more conventional movements indicating nightfall and the departure of the bridal couple. The composition is dedicated to Mrs. Margaret Damrosch Finletter, daughter of Walter Damrosch. It was conducted in admirable style by Gabriel Pierne."

Gilbert Seldes, one of the most influential music critics and a champion of ragtime and jazz is our author that has written, in the July/Dec. Dial of 1923, an article entitled "Toujours Jazz." He states that: "Jazz is a type of music grown out of ragtime and still ragtime in essence." He states that jazz is a new development of the last two years (Sic: 1919-1920), arriving long after jazz had begun to be played. I mean that ragtime is no so specifically written for the jazz band that it is acquiring new characteristics."

"The word jazz is already so complicated that it ought not to be subjected to any new definitions, and the thing itself so familiar that it is useless to read new meanings into it. Jazz is a type of music grown out of ragtime and still ragtime in essence; it is also a method of production and as such an orchestral development, and finally it is the symbol, or the byword, for a great many elements in the spirit of the time-as far as America is concerned it is actually our characteristic expression. This is recognized by Europeans; with a shudder by the English and with real joy by the French, who cannot however play it.

Strictly speaking jazz music is a new development-something of the last two years, arriving long after jazz had begun to be played. I mean that ragtime is now so specifically written for the jazz band that it is acquiring new characteristics. Zez Confrey, Irving Berlin, Fred Fisher, and Walter Donaldson among others are creating their work as jazz; the accent in each bar, for example is marked in the text-the classic idea of the slight accent on the first note of each bar went out when ragtime came in; then ragtime created its own classic notion-the propulsion of the accent from the first (strong) note to the second (weak). In jazz-ragtime the accent can occur anywhere in the bar and is attractively unpredictable. Rhythmically-essentially-jazz is ragtime since it is based on syncopation and even with jazz orchestration we should have had the full employment of precise and continuous syncopation which we find in jazz now, in *Pack Up Your Songs*, for example. It is syncopation, too, which has so liberated jazz from normal polyphony, from perfect chords, that M. Darius Milhaud is led to expect from jazz a full use of polyphonic and atonic harmonies; he notes that in *Kitten on the Keys* there exists already

a chord of the perfect major and the perfect minor. The reason why syncopation lies behind all this is that it is fundamentally an anticipation or a suspension in one instrument (or in the bass) of what is going to happen in another (the treble); and the moment in which a note occurs prematurely or in retard is, frequently, a moment of discord on the strong beat. A dissonance sets in which may or may not be resolved later. The regular use of syncopation therefore destroyed the fallacy (as I hold It) of the perfect ear; and this is one reason why Americans are often readier to listen to modern music than peoples who haven't got used to dissonance in their folk and popular music.

It is not only syncopation that makes us indebted to negro music. Another element is the typical chord structure found there, the characteristic variations from the accustomed. Technically described one of the most familiar is the subdominant seventh chord with the interval of a minor instead of a major seventh—a method of lowering the leading tone which affects so distant a piece as *A Stairway to Paradise* where the accented syllable of "Par'-adise is skillfully lowered. (By extension ragtime also uses the minor third). The succession of dominant sevenths and of ninths is another characteristic, and the intrusion of tones which lie outside of our normal piano scale is common. (1-My indebtedness, and, I suppose, the indebtedness of everyone who cares at all for negro music, is apparent to Afro-American Folk songs, by Henry Edward Krehbiel (Schirmer). Still another attack on the perfect chord comes from the use of the instruments of the jazz band, one for which ragtime had well prepared us. The notorious slide of the trombone, now repeated in the slide of the voice, means inevitably than in its progress to the note which will make a harmonious chord, the instrument passes through discords. "Smears," as they are refreshingly called, are the deadliest enemy of the classic tradition, for the ear becomes so accustomed to discords in transition that it ceases to mind the cacophony. (We hear them, of course, the pedants are wrong to say that we will cease to appreciate the "real value" of a discord if we aren't pained by it and don't leave the hall when one is played without resolution). In contemporary ragtime, it should be noted, the syncopation of the tonality—playing your B-flat in the bass just before it occurs in the voice, let us say—is often purely a method of warning, an indication of the direction the melody is to take.

In Krehbiel's book the whole question of rhythm is comparatively taken for granted, as it should be. Syncopation discovered in classic music, is the Scot's snap of the Strathspey reel, in Hungarian folk music, is characteristic of three-fifths of the negro songs which Krehbiel analyzed (exactly the same that I have never found a composer to be interested in it. Krehbiel, to be sure, does refer to the "degenerate form" of syncopation which is the basis of our ragtime, and that is hopeful because it indicates that ragtime is a development-intensification, sophistication-of something normal in musical expression. The free use of syncopation has led our good composers of ragtime and jazz to discoveries in rhythm and to a mastery of complications which one finds only in the great masters of serious music.

We are now into the 'jazz age' and critics are trying to explain the difference between ragtime and jazz. The criticism of ragtime now is shifting to jazz - sort of like jumping from the frying pan into the fire. But the explanation of the difference between ragtime and jazz gives validity to ragtime: We read this in the Feb. 21, 1924, of the Musical Courier in an article entitled "Jazz and Syncopated Music.":

"But there is a distinct difference between jazz music and syncopated music, better known as ragtime music. Jazz music is young in comparison with syncopated music, and syncopated music is as old as, or older than, our negro melodies. This is proof that jazz and syncopated are not the same. Syncopated music is almost explained in its name. In this kind of music the accent is shifted from a regular strong beat to a weak or unaccented beat making the time seem ragged. But jazz music is syncopated music that has become demoralized by harsh and superfluous embellishments. The more complex the embellishments and the greater the variety of brutish noises, the more perfect the music approaches jazz as a limit. All sustained tones are repugnantly colored. All pauses and rests are substituted for sharp and repulsive additions. Jazz music is saturated and concentrated to its ultimate capacity. When made by an orchestra the inharmonious, simultaneous jazzing of the cornet, violin, trombone, saxophone, drums and xylophone converges into a tuneless medley; not rhythm, only remains.

We find another interview (printed in the New York Times and reprinted in the Sept., 1924 Etude) with Fred Stone described as the "famous comedian-dancer-President of National Vaudeville Artists. In this interview Stone restates and augments some of his views on the origins of jazz and traces its origins to a ragtime piece known as *The Pasmala*:

"I can't remember where I first heard *The Pasmala*. The name is a corruption of the French, 'pas a mele,' which means 'a mixed step.' That is exactly what it was - a step generally done backward, the dancer, with his knees bent, dragging one foot back to the other to broken time, a short, unaccented beat before a long accented one, the same principle now used in jazz and known as syncopation.

"I first heard ragtime in New Orleans about 1895. It was in a cafe, and there was a little negro at the piano. He would play one of the standard songs of the day, such as 'Mary and John,' and then he would announce: "Here's the new music, the way us plays it," and he would break into ragtime. I'll never forget the way that negro chased himself up and down the keyboard of that piano. He was doing, or trying to do, everything that the eccentric jazz orchestra did three or four years ago.

"Ben Harney, a white man who had a fine negro shouting voice, probably did more to popularize ragtime than any other person. Harney, who was playing in Louisville, heard the new music, and he grew so adept at it that he came to New York and appeared in the Weber & Fields Music Hall. Of course, ragtime may have started here before Harney, there were numbers of wandering musicians playing in saloons and cafes in those days, but credit is due him because he played in a first-class theatre before any other ragtime exponent.

"Always the dances were done in the new jiggity time, and they influenced clog, straight jig, Irish reel, Irish jig, soft shoe and the George M. Cohan styles of footwork. Every one was dancing ragtime, and the motif was to be found in the original buck dancing. The dancers worked close to the ground, and few of them would lift a foot the height of the knee from the floor unless they were doing an acrobatic step - a kinker dance, we called it.

"Whenever the talk turns to American music and American dancing, I always wonder if there is any music or dancing more thoroughly American than syncopation and what we at first called ragtime. I do not pretend to say that this music originally was anything but what it was - the creation of illiterates. But it was spontaneous, and as thoroughly original, though in another mood, as the so-called songs of the South which might have been inspired by negro chants.

"If jazz develops into a form accepted as music, there will be interest a century hence as to its origin. That means if it is generally accepted that *The Pasmala* was the first ragtime song, that Ernest Hogan, an almost forgotten minstrel, will be hailed as the founder of the new American music."

We find another article pointing out the difference between ragtime and jazz in the January 14, 1925 Outlook magazine:

"Ragtime and jazz are not, as many seem to think, synonymous. Ragtime is purely a case of syncopation. The time (or, a better name, rhythm) is made to sound ragged or distorted by shifting the accent of a strong beat to a weaker one, whereas jazz is a form of humorous ragtime which calls upon the various instruments to do as much clowning as is consistent with the composition. Sometimes more! here enter the laughing trombone, muted horns that are made to squawk, the soprano saxophone that tries to outdo a prima donna, horns singing through megaphones that closely resemble the human voice, and the unusual combination of instruments having a tonal color all its own."

Still another writer speaks on the difference between ragtime and jazz in the Feb. 1925 issue of Scribner's Magazine in an article entitled "Ragtime, Jazz and High Art, by W. J. Henderson.

"What is ragtime? What is jazz? And whence and whither? Ragtime is no longer mentioned. "Jazz" has lost its original meaning. Paul Whiteman, artist in popular music, protests against calling the prevailing species of dance-songs jazz. But no matter what we choose to call our popular music, is *sui generis*.

"But what lexicographer can catch and imprison within two lines of agate type the meaning of the word jazz? For the term has become involved in inextricable linguistic confusion. Ragtime was the syncopated music that rested on the basis of the old-time negro jig. The double-shuffle and the clarion call of the floor manager for everybody to "sift sand" suggested new conjuring tricks to composers. Hardly anything of all that remains. How much ragtime can be found in Irving Berlin's latest gems?"

There are also many articles fostering the theory that jazz evolved from ragtime. In the Feb. 1925 issue of the Christian Science Monitor we read of an example of this evolution:

"Most of us already know by heart everything said for or against jazz by musical critics. What have these cynical syncopators to say for themselves? Apparently it all began with ragtime, which, we are told, "ripped to shreds the sentimentality of the song

which preceded it." Next, in order of evolution, came jazz proper, - if that is the right adjective? "Jazz - sheer joy and its expression in music; music which can hardly be whistled and never sung, music which carries you up and gives voice to that love of life which is in everyone, but is so constantly unexpressed. Jazz lets no one stand still. it's melody and its rhythm are infallibly compelling."

There follows another description of the evolution of jazz from ragtime in the March 1, 1925 issue of "The Survey" which states: "The direct predecessor of jazz is ragtime." In the July, 1925 issue of "Music & Letters" still another author states that:

"The history of its (Jazz) evolution is as remarkable as its masterpieces are unique. Jazz, which is slowly losing itself in the halo of its glorified designation "symphonized-syncopation," was the outcome of ragtime, which began in its crudest form some thirty or forty years ago, but it is only thirteen or fourteen years since ragtime became the rage of America and Europe, the lofty strains of "Hitchy-Koo," "Alexander's Ragtime Band," "Ragtime Cowboy Joe," and other pieces, together with the strange bodily contortions necessary to correct interpretations, which endear themselves to the hearts of all.

The music halls were delighted with the innovation, for the songs about mothers-in-law and lasses from Yorkshire and Lancashire had been worn threadbare. What was most important, however, was that the novelty became a craze in the dance halls. A languishing interest in the dying pastime of dancing was immediately revived. Large and sumptuous dance-palaces began to rise side by side with the cinemas. The Lancers and the Quadrilles, the Waltze and the Schottische were promptly cast aside in favour of the Bunny-hug, the Turkey-Trot, The Tango, The Fox-trot, and a host of other strange movements. With the war came a craving among people for unconventional excitement, for novelty and childish entertainment. In ragtime they found an ideal means of forgetting cares and worries. The simplicity and the absurdity of it no doubt formed a very helpful antidote to the horrors of the battlefield.

To trace the early growth of ragtime, one must go back to the slavery days and follow its evolution from burlesque performances of negro spirituals. The spirituals themselves were negro conceptions of Christian hymns, and usually sprang into life, ready-made, from the host of religious fervour during some meeting in church or in camp sometimes the inspiration would be picked up by a slave whilst waiting outside the "white" church for his master during service time, at other times they would result from concerted effort. All the authentic specimens have the fourth and seventh tones of the scale omitted, and the most striking peculiarity about them is the rhythm. With a mockery of the actions which accompanied the spirituals, these burlesque imitations were in great demand at negro "rags" or festivities. Moreover, "orchestras" composed of an assortment of banjos, violins, Jews-harpe, tambourines, tin-whistles, saucepan lid, bones and accordions, soon became very popular among the Negroes and then found favour at lower-class white entertainments, being known as "Crackerjack" bands. The term "jazz" in its relation to music dates from about this time. "This band is certainly some jazz," was a fairly common expression at the time, and two dollars a night and unlimited quantities of beer always proved a strong attraction to the musicians.

In a short space of time an entirely new form of entertainment was evolved. The performers, naturally, had no knowledge of music, and played from ear, improvising where their memories failed them. The spirituals were soon distorted out of all recognition, and no doubt popular ballads and comic songs were "ragged" in a similar manner."

With the acceptance of jazz and ragtime as legitimate, American jazz music and its use in classical music continued to present itself as a style that was an important step in American music's progress. There are still some that feel the weight of opinion was that "jazz had not yet stormed the citadel." In the "Concerto in F" we see jazz elements have been used in a most artistic way. This use by Gershwin and others pointed the way. Ragtime is now accepted as the ancestor of jazz. We read of this in the Dec. 23, 1925 issue of the New Republic:

"But the weight of opinion was that jazz had not yet stormed the citadel. Rather than combat that conclusion, let us consider in the light of these performances just what chance what citadel stands of being stormed, by what.

Stormed by what? Not only by jazz, which is merely (1) a way of playing any music, or (2) music written to be played that way (viz: with weird figures or raucous sounds, see parts of Richard Strauss's Till Eulenspiegel and compare parts of Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue), but by ragtime, a species of ballroom dance-music which excludes the waltz and exhibits a syncopated melody, usually over a steady beat in the bass. Stormed by ragtime, then, jazzed or not.

What Citadel? That of good music, would seem to be the supposition. But this would render all talk of "storming" absurd: if any popular song is musically good it is good music, and a stone of the citadel. No, read between the lines, and remember where you are. When we, as Americans, fight about Good Music, we naturally refer to the larger forms. They are the citadel: What chance have ragtime and jazz to storm them?

There are loud complaints of Mr. Gershwin's episodic treatment of his material. He jumps, it is said, from theme to theme and back to theme again, without pause for development. Mr. Chiaffarelli reproduces (with honorable acknowledgments), entire, W. C. Handy's strange and delightful blues, Saint Louis Blues and Beale Street, and Philip Brahms's justly famous (though not "blue") Limehouse Blues; these themes are imperfectly assimilated; they float about, substantially intact, in the soupy liquid of transitional passage-work, among the vermicelli of old-time "variations."

This may be due, less to any supposed deficiencies of the composers, than to the nature of the material. Suggestion: Ragtime particularly benefits by a simple, well-rounded and *brief* form - eight or sixteen bars to the strain (in the case of the blues, twelve), two or three strains, and then *finis* - or change of subject. Any figure so striking as syncopation, or on the other hand, so regular as the beat in the bass which throws it into relief, is likely to become monotonous with long repetition if there be not frequent introductions of new themes. The Floradora Sextette music was popular only in spite of its length, and because of its countervailing merits. Most composers have not taken such a chance, so that concise form has become part of what we think of when we think of ragtime. If the composer presses on into "development," does he not risk taking his

subject out of the category of ragtime as well as robbing it of one of the very virtues which made it popular, and so started all this talk of storming citadels? Take another tack: may it be said that a deft piece of ragtime or of jazz is to music as wit is to literature? If so, what was that remark about wit and brevity? What would be the reaction to a proposal that the Great American Novel should be built up from the 100 Best Jokes (or, at least, should be as continuously witty as possible - like Michael Arlen?) Would Arthur (Bugs) Bear, when he had done the things, be reproached for having strung his anecdotes loosely? Symphonic development of the wheeze has been counted a characteristic riot of Americans, but of stage Englishmen. Isn't it just possible that Messrs. Gershwin and Chiaffarelli knew what they were up against, and that the grumbling would have been louder had they done as they were told? It has, indeed, been noted in some quarters that neither composition stuck to ragtime throughout. The passages calling forth this outcry were those in which the conscientious composers tried a little development. It's a hard life.

You'll always know where it is; you're young and times are improving, meanwhile here's floating opportunity if you' just - be - reasonable. 'Lady Jazz was right, she wasn't herself without her tools; she passed for her mother, plain Ragtime since another definition of good music is music played by the symphony orchestra, then if those orchestras won't equip themselves, or the composer won't equip them, what chance has Lady Jazz of storming the citadel? If Harry Yerkes as well is going to desert her when he thinks it's a case of Good Music, then is she indeed forlorn.

Worse, the playing of ragtime unjazzed takes a certain amount of boning up, be the performers never so eminent in respectable circles. Imagine the predicament of almost any virtuoso from the citadel, attempting in public the alien and terrific piano score through which Gershwin swept with such consummate grace and ease. The orchestra was in a less difficult, but similar predicament. It did nobly, for a novice, but it was the piano only that crackled and pulsed with life and color. The score furnished it may well have been partly to blame, but where will it find *time* to learn what Whiteman's knows? Or vice-versa? One wonders whether, when the great work is written that shall combine and fuse ragtime, jazz and Good Music, it will not be found necessary (if its full greatness is to be made manifest) to let Messrs. Damrosch and Whiteman, side by side, conduct their combined organizations. Abbe Miles."

Syncopation plays an important part in ragtime and jazz. Other cultures have use syncopation and in "The Anatomy of Jazz" (March, 1926 Harper's Magazine) Don Knowlton. We have read the words of musicologist Krehbiel and his thoughts on syncopation. They are used with added material by Knowlton:

"Krehbiel, to be sure - does refer to the "degenerate form" of syncopation which is the basis of our ragtime, and that is hopeful because it indicates that ragtime is a development-intensification, sophistication - of something normal in musical expression. The free use of syncopation has led our good composers of ragtime and jazz to discoveries in rhythm and to a mastery of complications which one finds elsewhere only in the great composers of serious music.

Krehbiel caught the thing - a simple superimposition of one rhythm upon another. Yet it is doubtful whether Seldes realized the significance of the very paragraph he quoted. Seldes' chapter, "Tojourns Jazz," (Sic: quoted earlier in this essay) is delightful in comment, criticism, reference, and deference to the jazzicists of the higher order, but he does not analyze generic jazz structure, nor does he recognize that it is the rhythmic principle (of savage origin) referred to by Krehbiel which has built jazz, much more than the ingenuity, dexterity, or even genius of the individual composer.

The principle I am inclined to regard as rather new to civilized musical thought. Brahms and others have superimposed 1,2,3,4,5,6, upon 1,2,3,4 it is true, and pianists with classical educations, who have slipped back into the more profitable lap of jazz, use to-day that device with considerable effect. But never, outside of American ragtime, have I heard the particular 1,2,3,1,2,3,1,2, upon 1,2,3,4 in dotted eighths and sixteenths, which is so characteristic of jazz.

The piano player at the sheet-music counter never plays song as written. She add (as do all good jazz pianists) "anticipation" and "secondary rag" - she inserts "breaks" and dissonances - she plays three times as many notes as appear upon the printed copy from which she purports to read.

But it is in the dance orchestra that the most complete transformation of a popular song is effected. Have you ever heard a rousing good "rag" at a dance, bought the number at a music counter the next day, taken it home and played it - and wondered why your interest had been caught by such an empty and meaningless succession of Noises? The fact is, that the thing you bought at the counter and the thing you heard at the dance were alike in name and skeleton only. The sheet-music edition of the piece bore the same relationship to the orchestration as the framework of a house bears to the completed dwelling.

The arranger, while adhering to the formal limitations of jazz, employs in its decoration all of the devices which he can steal from classical music. he opposes progressions with the dexterity of Bach; he snatches a frenzy from Liszt; he borrows a bit of the lyrical purity of Mozart, and inserts Wagnerian crashes in the brass. i recall one orchestration of "Spain," in which the saxophones carry a pure lead, the piano pounds through the old Spanish rhythm of "L'Amour" in Bizet's "Carmen," the drum maintains the fundamental one, two, three, four of all ragtime, and the banjo superimposes the "secondary Rag." The ingenuity of the arranger is amazing. For the orchestra the simplest piece is built up with the utmost care, and jazz orchestrations are as correctly done, as well balanced and as effective in rendition as are those produced for our symphony orchestras."

Finally we find an article in the Nov./Dec., 1926 issue of Modern Music entitled "Jazz Structure and Influence." The article speaks of the origin of jazz is ragtime:

"It began, I suppose, on some Negro's dull tomtom in Africa, it descended through the spirituals, some of which are as much jazz as Gershwin's newest song. Its nearer ancestor is, of course, ragtime. The rhythmic foundation of ragtime is an unchanging 1-2-3-4 bass in quick tempo (stressing the most obvious beats the first and third - just as 1-2-3

is the rhythmic foundation of the waltz. Over the ragtime bass is carried invariably one of two rhythms, sometimes both, either the dotted eighth followed by a sixteenth oooo or this most ordinary syncopation oooooo. The former of these produced the characteristic ragtime jerk which is perhaps remembered from *Everybody's Doin' it*. Ragtime is much inferior to jazz and musically uninteresting; it consists of old formulas familiar in the classics which were rediscovered one day and overworked."

Finally I include an article I wrote for the New Orleans Jazz club's magazine "The Second Line." Important in the popular scene of the latter 19th century, Sousa, by programming cakewalks, rags and jazz gave it the legitimacy needed for acceptance by the public.

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA'S IMPACT ON JAZZ. New Orleans and John Philip Sousa have more in common than just the popularity of their band music. Both bands played marches, cakewalks, ragtime and jazz. Sousa is thought of as one of the most famous American musicians, especially in the field of band music and for the large number of original marches he wrote. But, often times, either overlooked or not known, was Sousa's impact on the history of ragtime and jazz:

"Sousa introduced the cakewalk to Europe in 1900 at the Paris exposition."

"It was Sousa who brought ragtime to Europe and this caused no small stir in music circles."

Sousa's contribution then was not because of his use of jazz/ragtime styles in his original compositions but in his willingness to program the cakewalks/ragtime and jazz tunes of his era to the audiences of the United States and the world. His use of these in concerts made them acceptable to the music audiences that came to his concerts.

"This innovation (performance of ragtime/jazz) in the programming of a highly respected concert band caused quite a bit of comment among music reviewers and critics. The public reacted as Sousa had expected; they thought that if the highly regarded Sousa Band was playing jazz, jazz must be acceptable."

Therein lies Sousa's contribution to jazz! When it was an undecided art and it couldn't be decided whether ragtime should be music from Tin Pan Alley or the classical concert stage. Sousa's performance of jazz added prestige to it and contributed much to its acceptance.

More than 25 years before Paul Whiteman introduced Jazz to the concert audiences in the Famous Gershwin New York Concert. Sousa played jazz/ragtime to audiences throughout the world. Reading the public acceptance of jazz, Sousa incorporated jazz tunes into some of his Fantasies, most notably in "Jazz America" in 1925, and "Dwellers of the Western World" in 1910. He included syncopation movements in a number of his Suite for Band. One selection "Showing Off Before Company," written in 1919 became a trademark of the Sousa Band. Sousa, in the mind 1920's was presenting nearly a half hour of jazz on his programs. In this composition certain of his players with jazz experience were instructed by Sousa to perform in the jazz style for the audiences.

When Sousa introduced ragtime/cakewalks to Europe, Claude Debussy, while criticizing Sousa's conducting of ragtime, was influenced by ragtime's rhythm and

proceeded to compose, "Golliwog's Cake Walk." Also composers such as Copland, Stravinsky and Ravel used jazz within their compositions. No less a prominent composer than Brahms was interested in this ragtime rhythm:

"A year before Brahms died he said, I met an American girl who played ragtime for me. (He hummed - If you refuse me, Honey, you'll lose me) I thought I would use, not the stupid tune, but the interesting rhythm of this ragtime."

Sousa was forever trying to please his audience and play what they wanted. He capitalized on the increased popularity of jazz. Whatever his public liked was performed for them. His program when on tour consisted usually of about 9 or 10 selections (not including encores) and were always updated, incorporating the newest trends in music. Although personally Sousa was not fond of ragtime, he programmed it and did acknowledge its strong rhythmic nature. He also was cautious about endorsing jazz and divided jazz into "what was good was good, what was bad was very bad." He usually dealt with jazz in his Humoresques, featuring those musicians who had experience in that type of music.

Sousa's interest in jazz began, of course, with his interest in the Negro style of rhythm as exemplified in the cakewalk and ragtime. The cakewalk began as a monothematic song on the plantations by Negroes, characterized by the rhythmic figure o o, Using the form of the march, composers began to write a number of cakewalks into one composition using transitions between each melody and thus was born the ragtime form - almost exact in form to the Sousa March. Ragtime pianists knew and played Sousa marches:

"Ragtime pianist Louis Chauvin - When he would first sit down he always played the same Sousa March to limber up his fingers, but it was his own arrangement with double-time contrary motion in octaves, like trombones and trumpets all up and down the keyboard."

Percy Wenrich the "Joplin Kid" of the 1890's said:

"Oh, I thought I was a hot shot playing Sousa's Liberty Bell March."

It was Sousa who was mostly responsible for the popularity of what is called the first published cakewalk "At A Georgia Camp Meeting" and of its composer Kerry Mills.

"Sousa was among the first of the band leaders to feature cakewalk syncopation. He made a huge success with the cakewalks of two New York composers. Abe Holzmann and Kerry Mills, particularly the former's "Smokey Mokes" and "Junky Dory," and the latter's "At A Georgia Camp Meeting." J. Bodewalt Maple's "Creole Belles" was another cakewalk that received a big response. The Kerry Mills number owed its vogue, following its publication in 1897 in no small measure to Sousa, and its popularity has lasted through the years. The bearded, bespectacled bandmaster was responsible through his sensationally successful tours, for the spread of cakewalk syncopation to Europe."

Sousa's audiences acceptance of his ragtime program was both in the United States and overseas.

"Sousa's cakewalk playing nevertheless scored another sensation at St. Louis in 1904 at the World's Fair."

"An enthusiastic reception was experienced in France, where outdoor audiences sometimes danced to the ragtime tunes."

There is no audience that ragtime publisher John Stark and Sousa ever met they didn't like ragtime. Sousa did advertise for new cakewalks and Stark was one of the largest publishers of ragtime music in America.

"There is no record of John Stark approaching Sousa to play any of his publications at this or any other time, and there is cause for wonder in this, for the band leader was advertising for new cakewalks and Swipsy or Sunflower Slow Rag would have been ideal for this purpose."

Sousa's impact on what was bought (sheet music) by the American music public can be seen in the music of Abe Holzmann:

"When J. P. Sousa raised his baton to the opening measures of composer Holzmann's "Smokey Mokes" last season the noted bandmaster's audience was coniferous applause. Persons in the audience consulting their programs discovered a new genius in their midst. From that tour the name of Holzmann was a byword for American cakewalks and "Smokey Mokes" re-echoed the pianos of a million music lovers."

While Sousa programmed ragtime sparingly in the 1890's he found the audiences loved it. He did record some ragtime at this time but it was sheet music sales that was the popular media for music participation and there is no doubt as to Sousa's influence in their sales.

While he did accept jazz he firsts viewed it with disgust. This can be seen in the articles he wrote about jazz: "Jazz will never replace great American Marches." (Wire Service article, April 27-28, 1928), "What Ragtime Means" (New York World, April 7, 1909) and "Where is Jazz leading America?" (Etude, August, 1924)

Sousa expected jazz to die a quick death, believing that the public would not stand to see its youth corrupted by what he erringly construed as lack of talent. Sousa, would, if alive today, retract some of his early statements on jazz. One criticism of his was the borrowing of classical melodies by jazz bands, considering it blasphemous.

It was a young trombonist from Missouri, Arthur Pryor, who was responsible for most of the Sousa band arrangements of cakewalk/ragtime played by the band. The Sousa Band lacked the truly Negroid phrasing and use of syncopation and suspended beats needed to perform in the "jazz" style. This failure of Sousa's Band is explained by Arthur Pryor:

"The regulation bands" he said, "Never got over being a little embarrassed at syncopating. This stiff-backed old fellows felt it was beneath their dignity and they couldn't or wouldn't give in to it."

Arthur Pryor, Sousa's great trombone soloist mentioned above, after leaving Sousa, formed his own band and became an important figure in the general folk picture that was the background of ragtime. Soon most every town band in America was playing ragtime. The importance of ragtime lies in the fact that it became accepted in the main stream of American popular music thereby opening the road for acceptance of other Negro music such as jazz. Thereby also lies the importance of men like Sousa and Pryor. Perhaps, their contribution to American jazz can be seen in the poem by Paul L. Dunbar, the great Negro poet:

"Oh, de white ban' hits music, an' hit's mighty good to hyeah,
An' it sometimes leaves a ticklin' in yo' feet;

But de hea't goes into bus'ness fu' to he'p erlong de eah,
 W'en de colo'ed ban' goes marchin' down de street
 But hit's Sousa played in rag'time an' hit's Rastus on Parade,
 W'en de colo'ed ban' comes ma'chin' down de street."

(From the Complete Poems of Paul Lawrence Dunbar, Copyright, 1896-1913 by Dodd, Mead and company.)

(Winter, 1983, "The Second Line" New Orleans Jazz Club's publication by Karl Koenig)

CONCLUSION

Ragtime

We have read many accounts of the origins and the substance of the music called ragtime. The ragtime era was a very valuable and important era in American popular music, in the future it would become American's 'Classic' music.

There was Negro minstrel music that the American public heard. It emphasized rhythm and built up a caricature and stereotype of the American Negro. Ragtime exposed the general American public to Negro rhythm and above all the rhythm of syncopation. It used the musical form of the march but was the first music to use syncopation throughout a complete composition. Once the American public was exposed to ragtime it became the most popular music of the land. The compiling of the melodies of the Negro Cakewalk into a full sectioned ragtime composition was similar to the compiling of Ricercar into the Fugue.

Ragtime was both a piano music and music for the most popular ensemble of the era the brass band. It has been written that there were more arrangements of ragtime for the brass band than the piano. But the commercial success of the era was piano sheet music. Once the commercial aspects of ragtime were discovered it was well on its way to being the music of the land, much as jazz would become America's music a decade later.

Ragtime is called the ancestor of jazz. Indeed it was related and pianist did "rag" a Sousa March and other composition such as Foster's Swanee River, but while both jazz and ragtime had steady rhythms jazz gradually developed a freer form and allowed musicians to add more of themselves into their performance. Both were used as dance music. Both had a steady beat and syncopation. While jazz didn't invent improvising, the art of adding notes beyond embellishing did, gradually became one of its outstanding elements. Ragtime was played by excellent and usually well trained musicians. Jazz while not played by bad, untalented musicians. It was executed from a weaker musical background. The early jazz musicians, many who could not read music but could 'spell' (Sic: 'spell': having a knowledge of the techniques of written melody but not capable of sight writing with any speed. They could pick out the notes on a page and translate them slowly to their instrument. The rest, passages too difficult to understand were 'faked.') Thus the beginning of the self expression in early jazz which developed into one of the most important elements in jazz. One that has been stressed since the Chicago era with Armstrong. Early jazz did not contain solos but it gradually became collective improvising and each instrument had its role and style to play. The musicians worked

together in this new developing technique of collective improvising. Jazz since its evolution from ragtime, was more of a performers art than a composers art. Once jazz became the popular way to play dance music, ragtime was pushed into a dormant state, lying still for years until it was recognized as an art form. Many early jazzmen in their oral interviews, remarked that "We were playing jazz but we called it ragtime." It was shortly after jazz became popular in Chicago that we find the name jazz used in connection with the music the bands were playing during that era. It was used in vaudeville as a way to describe putting life and excitement into a situation as used in an adv. in Variety on Feb. 27, 1915

"Little bits of HOKUM
Little grains of JAZZ,
Sometimes cause a Gallery
To give an act the RAZZ."
Walter Weems

Progress and History of Blues as Covered by Magazines and Newspapers of the Era.

As with most 'folk' songs, their origin is seldom discovered. No one can really put a date on the origin and beginning of 'Blues.' In our first article W. C. Handy, often called the 'father of the blues,' discusses the blues. He states that: "Every one of my blues is based on some old Negro song of the South. Blues are not new musical inventions, but they have been publicity developed and exploited in the last few years. Blues are a state of mind."

1916 - FOLK LORE SOCIETY OF TEXAS

THE "BLUES" AS FOLK-SONGS by Dorothy Scarborough - There are fashions in music as in anything else, and folk-song presents no exception to the rule. For the last several years the most popular type of Negro song has been that peculiar, barbaric sort of melody called "blues," with its irregular rhythm, its lagging briskness, its mournful liveliness of tone. It has a jerky tempo, as of a cripple dancing because of some irresistible impulse. A "blues" (or does one say a "blue?"-What is the grammar of the thing?) likes to end its stanza abruptly, leaving the listener expectant for more, though, of course, there is no fixed law about it. One could scarcely imagine a convention of any kind in connection with the Negroid free music. It is partial to the three line stanza instead of the customary one of four or more, and it ends with a high note that has the effect of incompleteness. The close of a stanza comes with a shock like the whip-crack surprise at the end of an O. Henry story, for instance-a cheap trick, but effective as a novelty. Blues sing of themes remote from those of the old spirituals, and their incompleteness of stanza makes the listener gasp, and perhaps fancy that the censor has deleted the other line.

Blues, being widely published as sheet music in the North as well as the South, and sung in vaudeville everywhere, would seem to have little relation to authentic folk-music of the Negroes. But in studying the question, I had a feeling that it was more or less connected with Negro folk-song, and I tried to trace it back to its origin.

Negroes and White people in the South referred me to W. C. Handy as the man who had put the bluing in the blues. But how to locate him was a problem. He had started this indigo music in Memphis, it appeared, but was there no longer. I heard of him as having been in Chicago, and in Philadelphia, and at last as being in New York. Inquiries from musicians brought out the fact that Handy is now manager of a music publishing company, of which he is part owner, Page and Handy, and so my collaborator, Al Gullidge, and I went to see him at his place.

To my question, "Have blues any relation to Negro folk-song?" Handy replied instantly, "Yes, they are folk-music."

"Do you mean in the sense that a song is taken up by many singers who change and adapt it and add to it in accordance with their own mood?" I asked. "That constitutes communal singing in part, at least."

"I mean that and more," he responded. "That is true, of course, of the blues, as I'll illustrate a little later. But blues are folk-songs in more ways than that. They are essentially racial-the ones that are genuine (though since they became the fashion many blues have been written that are not Negro in character), and they have a basis in older folk-song."

"A general or a specific basis?" I wished to know.

"Specific," he answered. "Each one of my blues is based on some old Negro song of the South, some folk-song that I heard from my mammy when I was a child. Something that sticks in my mind, that I hum to myself when I'm thinking about it. Some old song that is a part of the memories of my childhood and of my race. I can tell you the exact song I used as a basis for any one of my blues. Yes, the blues that are genuine are really folk-songs."

I expressed an interest to know of some definite instance of what he meant, and for answer he picked up a sheaf of music from his desk.

"Here's a thing called Joe Turner Blues," he said. "That is written around an old Negro song I used to hear and play thirty or more years ago. In some sections it was called Going Down the River for Long, but in Tennessee it was always Joe Turner. Joe Turner, the inspiration of the song, was a brother of Pete Turner, once governor of Tennessee. He was an officer and he used to come to Memphis and get prisoners to carry them to Nashville after a kangaroo court. When the Negroes said of any one, 'Joe Turner's been to town', they meant that the person in question had been carried off hand-cuffed to be gone no telling how long."

I recalled a fragment of folk-song from the South which I had never before understood, but the meaning of which was now clear enough:

"Dey tell me Joe Turner's come to town.
He's brought along one thousand links of chain,
He's gwine to have one nigger for each link.
He's gwine to have dis nigger for one link!"

Handy said that in writing the Joe Turner Blues he did away with the prison theme and played up a love element, for in the song Joe Turner became not the dreaded sheriff but the absent lover.

Loveless Love, a blues which Handy calls a blues ballad, was, he said, based on an old song called *Careless Love*, which narrated the death of the son of a governor of Kentucky. It had the mythical "hundred stanzas" and was widely current in the South, especially in Kentucky, a number of years ago. Handy in his composition gives a general philosophy of love instead of telling a tragic story as the old song did.

Long Gone has its foundation in another old Kentucky song, which tells of the efforts a certain Negro made to escape a Joe Turner who was pursuing him. Bloodhounds were on his trail and were coming perilously close, while he was dodging and doubling on his tracks in a desperate effort to elude them. At last he ran into an empty barrel that chanced to be lying on its side in his path. He sprang out and away again. When the blood-hounds a few seconds later trailed him into the barrel, they were nonplused for a while, and by the time they had picked up the scent again, the darkey had escaped.

The song was printed as broadside. I reproduce by permission the words. It is interesting to note that the chorus varies with some verses, while it remains the same for others.

"LONG GONE"

Another "Casey Jones" or "Steamboat Bill"

Everybody is singing

"Long Gone"

With These Seven Years

Eventually you will sing "Long Gone" with a hundred verses First Verse:

Did you ever hear the story of Long John Dean,

A bold bank robber from Bowling Green,

Sent to the jailhouse yesterday,

Late last night he made his getaway.

CHORUS

He's long gone from Kentucky,

Long gone, ain't he lucky,

Long gone and what I mean,

He's long gone from bowling Green.

etc.

Handy said that his blues were folk-songs also in that they are based on folk-sayings and express the racial life of the Negroes. "For example," he said, "the Yellow Dog Blues takes its name from the term the Negroes give the Yazoo Delta Railroad. Clarksville colored people speak of the Yellow Dog because one day when some one asked a darkey what the initials Y. D. on a freight train stood for, he scratched his head reflectively and answered: 'I dunno, less'n it's for Yellow Dog.'" Another one of his blues came from an old mammy's mournful complaint, "I wonder whar my good ole used to be is!"

He says that presently he will write a blues on the idea contained in a monologue he overheard a negro address to his mule on a Southern street not long ago. The animal was balky, and the driver expostulated with him after this fashion:

"G'wan dere, you mule! You ack lack you ain' want to wuck. Wel, you is a mule, an' you got to wuck. Dat's whut you git fo' bein' a mule. Ef you was a 'ooman, now, I'd be wuckin' fo' you!"

The St. Louis Blues, according to its author, is a composite, made up of racial sayings in dialect. For instance, the second stanza has its origin in a Negro's saying, "I've got to go to see Aunt Ca'line Dye," meaning to get his fortune told, for at Newport there was a well-known fortune teller by that name. "Got to go to Newport to see aunt Ca'line Dye" means to consult the colored oracle.

Been to de Gypsy to get mah fortune tole,

To de Gypsy done got mah fortune tole,
 "Cause I'se wile about mah Jelly Roll.
 Gypsy done tole me, 'Don't you wear no black'
 Yas, she done tole me, 'Don't you wear no black.'
 Go to St. Louis, you can win him back.'

I asked Handy if the blues were a new musical invention, and he said, "No. They are essentially of our race and our people have been singing like that for many years. But they have been publicly developed and exploited in the last few years. I was the first to publish any of them or to develop this special type by name," He brought out his *Memphis Blues*, his first "blues" song, in 1910, he said.

The fact that the blues were a form of folk-singing before Handy published his, is corroborated by various persons who have discussed the matter with me, and in Texas the Negroes have been fond of them for a long time. Early Busby, now a musician in New York, says that the shifts of Negroes working at his father's brickyard in East Texas years ago, used to sing constantly at their tasks and were particularly fond of the blues.

Handy commented on several points in connection with the blues—for instance, the fact that they are, he says, all in one tone, but with different movements according to the time in which they are written. The theme of this modern folk-music is, according to Handy, the Negro's emotional feeling apart from the religious. As is well recognized, the negro normally is a person of strong religious moods,—but they do not reveal all his nature. The Negro has longings, regrets, despondencies and hopes that affect him strongly, but are not connected with religion. The blues, therefore, may be said to voice his secular interests and emotions as sincerely as the spirituals do the religious. Handy said that the blues express the Negro's two-fold nature, the grave and the gay, reveal his ability to appear the opposite of what he is.

"Most White people think that the Negro is always cheerful and lively, he explained. "But he isn't, though he can be that way sometimes when he is most troubled in mind. The Negro knows the blues as a state of mind, and that's why this music has that name,"

Handy said that the blues were unlike conventional, composed music, but like primitive folk-music in that they have only five tones, like the folk-songs of slavery times, using the pentatonic scale, omitting the fourth and seventh tones. He added that while most blues are racial expressions of negro life, the form has been imitated nowadays in songs that are not racial.

The blues, Handy pointed out, represent a certain stage in Negro music. "About forty years ago such songs as *Golden Slippers* were sung. That was written by a colored man but is not a real folk-song. At about that time all the songs of the Negro liked to speak of golden streets and give bright pictures of heaven. Then about twenty years ago the desire was all for coon songs. Now the tendency is toward blues. They are not, as I have said, a new thing among the Negroes, for they were sung in the south before the piano was accessible to the Negroes, though they were not so well known as now."

It is not often that a student of folk-songs can have such authentic information given as to the music in the making, for most of the songs are studied and their value and interest realized only long after the ones who started them have died or been forgotten.

Rarely can one trace a movement in folk-song so clearly, and so I am grateful for the chance of talking with the man most responsible for the blues.

Even though specific blues may start indeed as sheet music, composed by identifiable authors, they are quickly caught up by popular fancy and so changed by oral transmission that one would scarcely recognize the relation between the originals and the final results-if any results ever could be considered final. Each singer adds something of his own mood or emotion or philosophy, till the composite is truly a communal composition. It will be noted in this connection that the song called "Long Gone" announces of itself that while it is first published in seven verses, people will soon be sing it "with one hundred verses." (Negroes ordinarily speak of a stanza as a verse.) The colored man appropriates his music as the White person rarely does.

Blues also may spring up spontaneously, with no known origin in print, so far as an investigator can tell. They are found everywhere in the South, expressing Negro reactions to every concept of elemental life. Each town has its local blues, no aspect of life being without its expression in song. Here, as in much of the Negro's folk-song, there is sometimes little connection between the stanzas. The colored mind is not essentially logical, and the folk-song shows considerable lack of coherence in thought. Unrelated ideas are likely to be brought together, and stanzas from one song or from several may be put in with what the singer starts with, if they chance to have approximately the same number of syllables to the line. Even that requirement isn't held to, for a Negro in his singing can crowd several syllables into one note, or expand one syllable to cover half a dozen notes. The exigencies of scansion worry him but slightly.

The Texas Negroes are especially fond of blues, and, as I have said, were singing them for years before handy made them popular in print. W. P. Webb published, in an article in the *Journal of American Folk-Lore*, some years ago what he called a sort of epic of the Negro, which the singer called *Railroad Blues*, which didn't stick to one subject, even so popular a one as a railroad, but left the track to discuss many phases of life. Fragments of blues float in from every side, expressive of all conceivable aspects of the Negro's existence, economic, social, domestic, romantic, and so forth.

Morton Adams Marshall sends an admirable specimen from Little Rock, Arkansas, which, however, was taken down in southern Louisiana, reflecting one black man's bewilderment over the problems of love.

DON'CHER LOOK AT ME, CA'LINE!

Don'cher look at me, Ca'line, Don 'cher look at me.

You done busted up many a po' niggah's heart,

But you ain't a-goin' to bust up mine!

Oh, it's hahd to love, an' it's might hahd to leave,

But it's hahder to make up yo' mind!

A fragment sent by Mrs. Cammilla Breazeale, of Louisiana, expresses an extreme case of

depression, without assigning any cause for it.

Ah got de blues, Ah got de blues,

Ah got de blues so doggoned bad,
But Ah'm too damn mean-I can't cry!

A good many of these fugitive songs have to do with love, always excuse enough for metrical melancholy when it is unrequited or misplaced. Mrs. Tom K. Bartlett, of Marlin, Texas, sends two specimens having to do with romance of a perilous nature. The first one is brief, expressing the unhappiness felt by a "creeper," as the colored man who intrudes into another's home is called.

Baby, I can't sleep, neither can I eat.
Round your bedside I'm goin to creep.
Four o'clock, baby, four o'clock.
I'll make it in about four o'clock.

Mrs. Bartlett says of the next: "You will brand me as a shameless woman when you read this. I wrote it without a blush, however, and say that I have read as bad or worse is classic verse and fiction."

Late last night when the moon shone bright,
Felt dizzy about my head, Rapped on my door
Heard my baby roar, "Honey, I'se gone to bed!"
"Get up and let me in, 'case you know it is a sin.
Honey, you haven't treated me right.
I paid your big house-rent
When you didn't have a cent."
"Got to hunt a new home tonight!"

CHORUS

"Baby, if you 'low me one more chance!
I've always treated you right. Baby, if you 'low me
One more change! I goin' to stay with you tonight!
Baby, if you 'low me one more chance
I'll take you to a ball in France. One kind favor I ask of you,
'Low me one more chance!" Then this coon begin to grin,
hand in his pocket, pulls out a ten
The her eyes begin to dance, "Baby, I'll 'low you one more chance!"

The central character in a ditty sent by Louise Garwood, of Houston, advocates adoption of more bellicose methods in dealing with the fair dark sex. No wheedling or bribing on his part!

Ef yore gal gits mad an' tries to bully you-u-u,
Ef yore gal gits mad an' tries to bully you,
Jes' take yore automatic an' shoot her through an' through, Jes' take yore automatic
an' shoot her through an' through!

A similar situation of a domestic nature is expressed in a song given by Gladys Torregano, of Straight College, New Orleans, through the courtesy of Worth Tuttle Hedden.

A burly coon you know who took his clothes an' go,
Come back las' night But his wife said, "Honey,
I's done wid coon. I'se gwine to pass for white."
This coon he look sad, He was afraid to look mad,
but his wife said, "Honey, I can't take you back.
You wouldn't work, so now you lost your home."

CHORUS

Oh, my little baby, Do you make me go!
I'll try an' get me a job, ef you'll 'low me a show.
All crap-shooters I will shun. When you buy chicken,
all I want is the bone; When you buy beer
I'll be satisfy with the foam. I work both night and day,
I'll be careful of what I say, Oh,
Baby, let me bring my clothes back home!
"Oh, Baby, 'low me a chance! You can even wear my pants.
Don't you give me the sack. I'll be quiet as a mouse.
All round the house. If you'll take me back,
Tell the world I ain't shook, I'll even be the cook
I won't refuse to go out in the snow," "Don't you tell, my little ink-stand,
Life's dreaming is over. So there's the door, and don't you come back no more!"

Mrs. Bartlett contributes another that describes the woes of unrequited love, which she says was sung by a colored maid she had some years ago.

Ships in de oceans, Rocks in de sea,- Blond-headed woman made a fool out of me!

Oh, tell me how long I'll have to wait! Oh, tell me, honey, Don't hesitate!
I ain't no doctor, nor no doctor's son, but I can cool your fever till the doctor comes.
Oh, tell me how long I'll have to wait! Oh, tell me, honey, Don't hesitate!
I got a woman, She's long and tall, sits in her kitchen with her feet in the hall!
Oh, tell me how long I'll have to wait! Oh, tell me honey, don't hesitate!

A brief song from Texas uses rather vigorous metaphors in addressing some one.

You keep a-talkin' till you make me think. Your daddy was a bull-dog,
your mammy was amink. Oh, ho, Baby, take a one on me!

You keep a-talkin' till you make me mad, I talk about yore mammy mighty scandalous bad.
Oh, ho, Baby, take a one on me!

A Negro lover does not sonnet his sweetheart's eyebrows, but he addresses other hymns to her charms, as in the blues reported by Professor W. H. Thomas, of College Station.

A brown-skinned woman and she's chocolate to the bone
 A brown-skinned woman and she smells like a toilet soap.
 A black-skinned woman and she smells like a billy-goat.
 A brown-skinned woman makes a freight train slip and slide.
 A brown-skinned woman makes an engine stop and blow.
 A brown-skinned woman makes a bull-dog break his chain.
 A brown-skinned woman makes a preacher lay his Bible down.
 I married a woman; she was even tailor-made.

The colored man in a song sent by Mrs. Buie, of Marlin, obviously had reason for his lowness of spirits. *Po' Lil'l Ella* is a favorite in East Texas saw-mill districts.

I'll tell you something that bothers my mind,
 Po' Li'l Ella laid down and died. (twice)
 I wouldn't 'a' minded little Ella dyin'
 but she left three chillun.(twice)
 Judge, you done me wrong,-
 ninety-nine years is sho' too long!(twice)

Howard Snyder heard one of the workers on his plantation in Mississippi singing the following song, which could not be called entirely a paean of praise for life.

I WISH I HAD SOME ONE TO CALL MY OWN

I'm tired of workin', but I can't fly. I wish I had some one to take my care
 I wish I had someone to call my own, I'm tired of livin' an' I don't want to die;
 I'm tired of coffee and I'm tired of tea, I'm tired of you, an' you're tired of me.
 I'm so tired of livin, I don't know what to do;
 You're tired of me an' I'm tired of you.
 I'm tired of eatin' an' I'm tired of sleepin'"]; I,
 tired of yore beatin' an' I'm tired of yore creepin'.
 I'm so tired of livin' I don't know what to do;
 I'm sotired of givin' an' I've done done my do.
 I done done my do, an' I can't do no mo';
 I've got no money an' I've got no hoe.
 I'm so tired of livin' I don't know what to do;
 You're tired of mean' I'm tired of you.

Other interests of the colored man's life beside love are shown in another song from Professor

Thomas' monograph. Note the naive confusion of figures in the first stanza, "a hard card to roll."

JACK O' DIAMONDS

Jack o' Diamonds, Jack o' Diamonds, Jack o' Diamonds is a hard card to roll.
Says, whenever I get in jail, Jack o' Diamonds goes my bail;
And I never, Lord, I never, Lord, I never was so hard up before. (Three additional verses)

The music for "A Brown-skinned Woman," "Baby, I Can't Sleep," and "Jack o' Diamonds" is here reproduced.

And so the blues go on, singing of all conceivable interests of the Negro, apart from his religion, which is adequately taken care of in his spirituals and other religious songs. These fleeting informal stanzas, rhymed or in free verse that might fit in with the most liberate of verse-libertine schools of poetry, these tunes that are haunting and yet elusive within bars, have a robust vitality lacking in more sophisticated metrical movements. One specimen of blues speaks of its own tune, saying "the devil brought it but the Lord sent it." At least, it is here and has its own interest, both as music and as a sociological manifestation. Politicians and statesmen and students of political economy who discuss the Negro problems in perplexed, authoritative fashion, would do well to study the folk-music of the colored race as expressing its feelings and desires, not revealed in direct message to the whites. Folk-poetry and folk-song express the heart of any people, and the friends of the Negro see in his various types of racial song both the best and the worst of his life."

The first recorded jazz number was a blues - "The Livery Stable Blues," recorded by the Original Dixieland Jazz Band. There was doubt as to the real composer of the song. In answer to the question: "What are Blues?" the answer was:

"Blues are blues."

1917 - VARIETY - OCT. 19

"BLUES ARE BLUES, THEY ARE" SAYS EXPERT IN "BLUES" CASE - Chicago Judge Dismisses Feist's Application for Injunction Against Roger Graham, Music Publisher. "Livery Stable Blues" under discussion. Testimony Causes Merriment. Graham's Victory Complete. Chicago, Oct. 17. Roger Graham, Chicago music publisher, and Leo Feist, New York ditto, went to the judicial mat here last week. Graham won. The decision and the case itself, while of considerable importance in the profession, occasioned a lot of horse-play during the proceedings, and was made much of by the daily papers as a comic feature story.

Feist attempted to get a permanent injunction to restrain Graham from publishing "Livery Stable Blues," by Ray Lopez and Alcide Nunez. The temporary injunction was issued against Graham.

The supplementary suit, fought out in Judge Carpenter's courtroom in the Federal building, brought large crowds. The testimony of a number of "experts," who admitted on the stand they could not read notes, was utilized. After a full hearing of the facts the bill of complaint was dismissed for want of equity and the injunction automatically dismissed.

Unless Leo Feist, Inc., remove from the front cover of their "Barnyard Blues" the reference to Graham's number, which states that the Feist blues are identical with the "Livery Stable Blues," as played on phonographs under the latter title, Graham will institute a counter action to compel Feist to do this.

Aside from the legal victory the case is in the nature of amoral triumph for Graham's number over the Feist blues. "Livery Stable Blues" has been the better seller of the two. This was demonstrated when, after the case had been dismissed, Harry Munns, Graham's lawyer, was approached by Feist's attorney with a proposition to publish "Livery Stable Blues."

A most colorful trial it was from the point of view of the lay audience. Among the experts called was one Professor "Slaps" White. Professor White, a black man, testified, in backing up his claim as an expert, that he had written blues for Brown's band, which played in a red cafe. It was Professor White who established the origin of the "blues" melody. Judge Carpenter, a musician himself went into the spirit of the trial, and interpolated dry rejoinders and permitted the various witnesses to tell their stories in their own way.

The most interesting testimony was the story of how the various cries and calls, imitative of various fowls and animals, came to be used in the number. It appeared that at the Schiller cafe, where the Dixieland band was playing (ed. the ODJB), a young woman who had imbibed generously began to cut indiscreet capers on the dance floor. One of the

members of the band ripped out the shrill neigh of a horse on his clarinet. It encouraged the young woman, and the cornet came through with the call of a rooster.

All the instruments followed with various animal cries. It had such an effect on the people in the cafe that Nunez suggested their use in the "blues" number.

Professor White accomplished during his testimony what numberless others have failed to do. He defined "blues." The answer came when White told the judge he was the author of several hundred compositions, including several "blues."

"Just what are blues?" Asked Judge Carpenter

"Blues are blues, that's what blues are," replied the professor. The answer was written into the records and will stand as the statement of an expert."

The Blues reached Broadway in the talents of Gilda Gray. This began an interest in the blues and their origin. In the following article we read some information as to the lyrics of blues and their beginnings:

1919 - CURRENT OPINION -Sept.

ENIGMATIC FOLKSONGS OF THE SOUTHERN UNDERWORLD. Young woman appeared for no more than five minutes in a Broadway revue and crooned a ditty in a minor key. Few of the words of the text were comprehensible. The singer made no effort to point their meaning, but mechanically kept on staring ahead of her. A reference to the graveyard, writes the critic of the N. Y. *Sun*, added to the decadent, *macabre* impression of as much of the song as the audience could hear. "High cheek-bones, short, rather kinky hair of an ashy blond, and her unaccustomed rich attire gave her the look of a Nubian page in a Veronese drawing. Then she suggested a Beardsley drawing for Salome's head. She drawled out her song. looking straight into the audience without the least expression in her odd face." The young woman was Gilda Gray, the song was "The Beale Street Blues." Her sensational triumph in the "Gaieties of 1919" led to a lawsuit between claimants for her services, and aroused widespread discussion of the origin of the "blues," a type of folksong of the underworld, upon which Miss Gray bases her singing and dancing. The archeology of these communal chants is worthy of as serious study as Cecil Sharp and others have given to the ballads of the Appalachians. The N. Y. *Herald* declares:

"It is a form of art new to Broadway, that which Miss Gray has introduced, for as the carvings of Dahomey and the totem poles of Alaska are art, crude, even repulsive tho it is at times, so the 'blues' are a form of art, an expression of the moods of a certain class of individuals. Indigenous to sections of Southern cities which men frequent only after night has cast her pall over their doings-ask any one who knows Memphis what Beal Street is-they have been transplanted on the stage in New York. And Miss Gray's art is that she treats the illegitimate so deftly that her success is legitimate."

In an interview in the *Herald*, Miss Gray, who might be described as a sort of Yvette Guilbert of the "blues" confessed familiarity with no less than 200 of these anonymous, nameless and yet often strangely expressive songs:

"There's 'The Yellow Dog Rag,' 'The Dirty Dozen,' 'The Regretful Blues,' 'The Memphis Blues,' 'The Beal Street,' which I am now doing: 'The St. Louis,' 'The Doggone.'

"The Dirty Dozen' has a wayward sound. I don't suppose there'd be room enough to give all twelve verses.

"The chorus runs like this: "Oh, the old dirty dozen, The old dirty dozen; Brothers and cousins, Livin' like a hive of bees. They keep a buzzin', fussin' and muzzin'. There wasn't a good one in the bunch. (Believe me, boy, that ain't no bluff.) Ah-h, daddy, that's enough. Git over dirty!"

"The lyrics were incomprehensible enough, yet the singer fairly froze in atmosphere of red lights. While her minor notes tore at the auditory nerves she had a peculiar quality of impassiveness which showed her complete control over the swaying muscles in what now is called 'the shimmy.'"

It would require no less a person than Nicholas Vachel Lindsay to explain the composition of the song which has created such widespread discussion. As reprinted by the dramatic editor of the *Sun*, it runs as follows:

I have seen all the lights of gay Broadway,
Of Market Street down to 'Frisco Bay.
I have strolled the Prado, I have gambled on the Bourse.
I have seen pretty browns, beautiful gowns, tailor-made and hand me downs.
I have seen honest men, pickpockets skilled,
The place never closes until somebody gets killed.
I'd rather be here than any place I know,
For it's going to take a sergeant to make me go.
I have been in jail with my face to the wall,
And a great big tall man is the cause of it all.
The graveyard is a nasty old place.
They lay you on your back and throw dirt in you face,
(Get over, dirty)
Ashes to ashes and dust to dust,
If my singing don't get you, my shimmy must.
(Step on it, boys.)

The writer on the *Sun* offers this explanation of the origin of the "blues":

MISS GILDA GRAY'S "BLUES" AROUSE A DISCUSSION CONCERNING THEIR QUESTIONABLE ORIGIN. "Listeners have sometimes thought that a blue must be founded on a negro spiritual. It has the musical character as well as the reflective nature of some of the negro hymns. Walter Kingsley says the missionaries did sing these hymns to the inhabitants of Beale and similar streets in the South in their efforts to change the ways of life that maintained there. Perhaps this was not accomplished so often

as the good men and women hoped. But the hymn made its effect. It remained in the knowledge of the Negroes who had heard it shot at their ears in the attempt to make them better.

"So the 'blue' is the song of their aspirations and desires, good or evil, and it assumes the form and sometimes the tune of the hymn, since that appears to Beale Street the only spiritual form of expression that ever came into its knowledge. The blue may be about an altogether unmentionable aspiration. It may on the other hand be expressive of a temporary piety. Sometimes the words of the missionaries and the desires of the singer become most incongruously blended, as in Miss Gray's song. As the 'blue,' which must inevitably be syncopated in tune and more or less affected by the rubato of jazz, comes to the public now, it mingles the voice of the dweller in the depths of Beale Street with the hoarse calls of the missionary to higher things."

Mr. Walter Kingsley, who has taken the time to investigate the origins of most of our distinctly popular American forms and methods in music, writes with some authority to the *Sun* on the origin of the songs of the underworld:

" 'Blues' are not for the expression of religious aspiration or the normalities of home and wife and mother. 'Blues' are not written to relieve the soul of church wardens, commuters, disciples of Dr. Crane, and the pure in heart of the theater. They are the little songs of the wayward, the impenitent sinners, of the men and women who have lost their way in the world. 'Blues' are for the outlaws of society; they are little plaintive or humorous stanzas of irregular rhythm set to music not of the conservatories. When one laments a season in prison one sings 'The Jail House Blues.' For the girl whose 'sweetheart' of the dark alleys has gone elsewhere there are many blues, such as 'He Left Me Flat Blues,' 'Kidded Again Blues,' and 'A Rat at Heart Blues.' The forsaken male has his own repertoire, which includes 'Lying Skirt Blues,' 'She Done Him Dirt Blues,' and 'He's Sore on the Dames Blues.' The loser at craps, the luckless sport ruined by slow horses and fast women, the mourner for rum, the profiteer in things forbidden whom the law has evicted, the sick and lonely woman—all these have their appropriate blues. On the other side there are blues for luck at cards and women and horses, for big nights in the restricted districts, for pungent pleasures in the sectors of society that have no thought of the morrow; and again there are blues with just a laugh for their object—low comedy fun in subterranean experiences. Just as Henley and Farmer's seven volumes of slang and naughty words covers the outlaw vocabulary of the English language, so do the blues embrace the outlaw emotions. They are right down on the ground in the matter of expression and packed with human nature and always interesting. As Wellington said, "There's no damned talk about merit' in them. They are gruff and sincere and as authentic as a ballad by Francois Villon."

We begin to find articles in the leading magazines as to the history and origin of "blues." To me the following account is rather 'bizarre,' but I give it for your information:

JANUARY 6, 1922 - VARIETY

ORIGIN OF "BLUES" (OR JAZZ) - By the Leightons (Frank and Burt). In Butte, Montana, when life was harsh, spectacular, percussive, uncertain, two boys climbed to the cinders from the rods beneath a freight car. They were explorers. The equipment they packed consisted of a guitar and a banjo. They were pushing deep into the forbidden regions of the underworld, then flourishing in every American city and, while making a flighty living as troubadours from bar to bar, from dive to dive, were collecting material which gives the clue to the original sources of the jazz wave now rippling over the world.

Butte received the wanders well. The silver pieces that flew into the caps of the strollers between numbers were of generous proportions. For the songs the boys gave were songs native to the surroundings; songs of the Mississippi river traffic, of the railroad, of the mines and the cattle ranges. Not one could have been printed. Their most pungent verses were marred, according to accepted standards, by phrases of medieval frankness. What our old ballads have lost in passing into print, these songs retained.

In a stuffy room, reeking and rattling with crude revelry, the singers found an accompanist on the piano, a mulatto girl, hollow-eyed, who turned her back on the throng at intervals to manipulate a hypodermic syringe that flashed against the brown of her lean arm. With her, the two singers hushed the racket with such choice outpouring of sentiment as"

Listen now, white folks, while I tell to you,
 Coons without a habit are mighty few;
 Some have a habit of dressing neat,
 But my bad habit is to sleep and eat.
 I'll tell all you coons you'll soon be dead
 If you don't stop sniffin' coke in your head.
 There's two bad habits that I have barred,
 That's fightin' 'bout the gals an' workin' hard.

Chorus

Oh, that is a habit I never had,
 That kind of a habit is mighty bad.
 I'm tellin' you, white folks, I'm mighty glad,
 That is a habit I've never had.

"Dell's got a song of her own," said the white proprietor, "Let 'em have it, Dell."

The mulatto struck a minor chord and, in a husky soprano, wistful and pain-fought, she voiced the lament of the forsaken woman -

"I never loved but one woman's son, Far thee, honey, fare thee well.
 And I hope and trust I never love another one, Far thee, honey, fare thee well.
 I worked out in the rain, I worked out in the snow
 What all I done for that man nobody will ever know.
 He woke up one mornin' and skipped with all my dough.
 an' just said - Fare thee honey, fare thee well."

Chorus

I done all that a poor ol' gal could do.
 I fed him pork chops, cooked him kidney stew;
 I even knelt down on my knees and blacked his shoe.
 All for that man, that measly man."

That was the first time, or one of the first times, that the Leighton Brothers conceived the idea of commercializing the pathetic lamentation of the unfortunates of the underworld.

That was an origin of the blues, and the blending of the blues and ragtime created the jazz now prevalent, although the authentic composition, springing from the deeps of negro woe in haunts of urban vice, is seldom found in music shops.

The explorers, Frank and Burt Leighton, now standard variety artists, belonged to a group of American minstrels, most of whom died young after going down into strange places to bring up the songs of negro outcasts, of cowboy, miner and gambler. The negro was the true singer of that feverish section of America. Before the Civil War, the negro population was rural. The black man had his sorrows and his 'spirituals' and jubilee songs were chants of barbaric sombreness. These are preserved intact. Some of the motives have been ambitiously elaborated, but only a chorus of negro voices can capture the primitive swing and appeal of them.

After the war, the negro quarters of industrial cities began to grow. Black folks and yellow huddled in slums and the child nature of many succumbed to vice. It is only fair to say that many went up into respectability while the few descended, but it is also only fair to state that the rag-time melody, which negro leaders are glad to have credited to their race, grew in lawless haunts. The negro lives at his worst with an abandon utterly lacking in white debaucherie. He never acquired the hard cynicism of the white sinner. He laughs, loves, fights, gambles with an ardor, the colder race cannot imitate. When the outburst of hot animalism dies down, and the dicer has lost his last dime, the gunman or the razor wielder is in a cool cell, the lover and his mistress are torn apart by jealousy or death, then the black man's soul is overwhelmed with grief which translates itself into song.

In Memphis, a colored gambler lost his "high-yellow" girl to a rival. He lured the lady back into his clutches and returned her to the new love, dismembered and packed in a trunk. The lover, who beheld the handiwork of outraged passion, ran screaming into the street, stark mad. The vengeful one was caught, and while the gallows were being prepared for him, composed "The Death House Blues," which he played on the piano in the sheriff's home, and sang with all his heart a few hours before the trap fell from beneath his feet. The song consisted of numerous verses on the order of the following:

"I'm sittin' in the jail house behind the stone wall
 And a brown-skinned gal was the cause of it all;
 In the morning at half-past nine, hacks and hearses will form in line,
 Friends and relations will gather 'roud to carry my body to the buryin' ground."

To one who has glimpsed the sources of jazz music, there is always a shock to be received when some sweet, young thing, tinkling the piano in the sancity of a good American Methodist home, sings:

Won't you come home, dear daddy, please, dear, come home
 She cries the whole day long.
 I'll do the cookin' honey, I'll pay the rent,
 I knows I'se done you wrong.
 Remember that rainy evein' I drove you out
 With nothin' but a fine tooth comb,
 I knows I'se to blame, now ain't that a shame,
 Dear daddy, won't you please come home!"
 (Ed: We know this lyric as "Bill Bailey.")

Whosoever name is on the folio, the song came to being in the soul of some dusky light o' love, dwelling so far beyond the world of the sweet young thing that its existence is unsuspected by her. Nor does she, or her mother, or her brother, or her chums, know the real meaning of the words they carol.

Billy Considine, famous in the sport world, sat in Hammerstein's Victoria Theatre, New York, and heard, for the first time, the Leightons sing their sterilized version of "Frankie and Johnnie."

"I held my breath," he said afterward; "I thought you boys had gone balmy, and I knew if you sang the real verses there would be a riot. I laid 'Betsy' (his revolver) on my lap and figured I'd do my best to save you from being mobbed."

But Mr. Considine had no cause for alarm. The minstrel men who discovered the coon song placed it on the market in strongly censored form. "Frankie and Johnnie," a standard ballad of dance halls and "joints" from coast to coast, remained obscure to the polite world until published by the Leightons. They have recorded more than 100 original stanzas of the ballad. Versions and tunes are varied. How barren and how empty are the words in print when once they have been heard to the mob and twang of guitar, with a mixed company of harmonists to join the refrain:

"He was my man, an' he done me wrong."
 Frankie she was a good girl, most everybody here knows,
 Went out and spent most a hundred dollars for Johnnie's new suit of clothes.
 'Cause he was her man, but he done her wrong.

Some of the conclusions of "Frankie and Johnnie" are as follows:

Frankie she dashed around the corner, peeped through a window so high,
 There she saw her lovin' Johnnie makin' love to Nellie Bly
 Oh, Lord, my man he's doin' me wrong.

Frankie came back around the corner, this time it wasn't for fun,
 Underneath her silk kimono, she had a great big 44-gun

Lookin' for her man, 'cause he done her wrong.

Johnnie he ran down the hallway, cryin' oh, Frankie, don't shoot!
But Frankie she fired her forty-four gun five times with a rooti-toot toot.
She killed her man 'cause he done her wrong.

The Judge he said unto Frankie, there ain't no use to cry to me,
The jury done brought in the verdict of murder in the first degree.
You killed your man, 'cause he done you wrong.
Send for the rubber-tired hearses, go get the rubber-tired hacks,
Take my lovin' Johnnie to the graveyard and never, never, bring him back.
He was my man, but he done me wrong.

The ballad in its reconstructed shape is popular in Y. W. C. A. parlors. "Frankie and Johnnie" is a specimen of the authentic coon song, and was taken from a true happening. The story of this song's ascent into respectability is the story of the authentic coon song, not the counterfeit produced in tin-pan alley by the commercial exploiters. The first line informs the experienced ear whether the jazz composition is real or faked. Few white men have been able to create the rag-time of the true quality, although many have been skillful in adaptation of the tunes created by nameless Negroes.

The Leightons, young men yet, represent the only active survivors of the pioneers in the discovery of jazz. With them, two decades or less ago, were Hughie Cannon, Gutter Wilson, Johnny Queen and Ben Harney.

By what miracle of self-respect and good sense they avoided the pitfalls which swallowed up many of their comrades, they cannot explain. Hughie Cannon, who wrote, "Won't You Come Home, Bill Bailey," as a sequel to the Leighton's "Bill Bailey, Ain't Dat a Shame," died in the charity ward of a hospital in Toledo before he was forty. Hughie's songs, which netted publishers tens of thousands, were sold by him in barrooms where he played the piano for a living. A round of drinks for the house and a suit of clothes was the price he received for "Goo-Goo Eyes," the favorite of a season, and is still remembered as the forerunner of the deluge of coon songs.

"Casey Jones" was given out by the Leightons. They frankly admit that their work in connection with this classic consisted of selecting a series of clean verses and standardizing a tune. Many of the negro ballads require a variation of the melody with each stanzas, and change the refrain to fit the unfolding of the story. They sold this song outright for \$5,000. No one ever identified the author of "Casey Jones." He was undoubtedly a negro engine wiper in the railway yards of a Southern city in the United States. A haunting tune and a verse or two start such a song in circulation. Gifted ones add to it; it grows from town to town; it produces off-shoots; it would die in a few years if it were not preserved, expurgated, by a publisher. Two-thirds of its character is lost, of course, when it becomes conventionalized.

Following are some of the songs the Leightons wrote which became popular:

"Ain't Dat a Shame."
"Fare Thee, Honey, Fare Thee Well.'

"Casey Jones."
"Steamboat Bill."

"I Got Mine."

"There's a Dark Man Comin' With a Bundle."

"Bill, You Done Me Wrong."

"Frankie and Johnnie."

"Lonesome Blues."

And numerous other songs which did not obtain such wide popularity.

(Frank and Burt Leighton are the earliest singers of "blues" known in vaudeville. That type of song was their dependence almost as an act. They have grown to be so strongly identified with "blues," it is expected of them, especially "Frankie and Johnnie," mentioned by them in the above article. But comparatively in recent vaudeville times were the "blues" a strange song style to an audience. A minute percentage of the audience knew what it was all about. The Leightons had to work harder in those days to get across the "blues" than, now, when almost all popular song-singing turns, even to sister acts, are using one or more. The sister acts found the "blues" songs were easy to harmonize).

The popularity of using the terminology 'blues' becomes the fad of the Jazz Age. When using the term 'blues' it is not as we think of blues but it is used almost as another word for 'jazz.' The majority of songs with the word blues in their title are indeed not the traditional 12 bar blues as we know it today; not in form or feeling but merely songs that might use blue notes and the slurring of pitches (often called 'scooping' the pitch). The term blues was this altering the pitch of a note written. So a blues is not a blues but merely uses some blues technique-just as Alexander's Ragtime Band is not a rag but a popular song.

In the May 11, 1922 Music Courier article "Jazz, Our National Anthem" the following is written:

"These queer harmonies, mostly used in the 'blues,' are either invented by the composer or imitated from the accidental inventions of 'ad lib,' players of 'jazz.' They are often refined by the arrangers, but not entirely abandoned because of their characteristic nature. These 'blues' came direct from the Negro field hand, and were originally long-drawn out wails, not, however, expressive of grief or discouragement, but, generally, of uplift and joy-often religious. But to the white borrowers of the idiom they seemed blue, hence the name. Hence also, in imitation of the strange slurring and gliding of the Negro singer at work (when he is unconscious of any listening ears), toe so-called 'blue note' in the arrangement (a diminished interval or minor note not belonging to the key) and the sliding harmonies with their frequent consecutive fifths, etc. Thus is American music made. The Negro borrows from the whites, puts his own interpretations on things, and then the whites borrow it back again and adapt it to their own uses."

Using a blue note in a popular song seemed to have been instigated by Jerome Kern in his song "The Magic Melody." We read of this evolution of style in the August 10, 1922 article "Jazz A Form of Art.":

He makes a plea for good jazz which he dates from 1915 when Jerome Kern introduced into "The Magic Melody" a modulation which has, in popular parlance, become known as "blue" and on this are based the "blues" with which we have been deluged. So far as known the first "blue" chord was used by Wagner in "Tristan and Isolde."

The "blues" were a step in advance of "rag," declares Mr. Engel, for, whereas rag was mainly melody and rhythm, the blues were melody plus rhythm plus harmony, but jazz has gone a step farther and to melody, rhythm and harmony, has added counterpoint."

This use of blue notes and the "Magic Melody" is again discussed in the August, 1922 Atlantic Monthly. The article ("Jazz, A Musical Discussion") discusses the evolution and influence of blues into the main stream of American popular music and the history and role of the 'blue chord.'

"I have not given the subject sufficient study to say definitely at what point the course of popular American music took a new turn, but, unless I am very much mistaken, "The Magic Melody," by Mr. Jerome Kern, was the opening chorus of an epoch. It is not a composition of genius, but it is very ingenious. While it is almost more tuneless than was 'Everybody's Doing It,' - if that be possible, ' and largely adheres to the short, insistent phrase, it stands on a much higher musical plane. Its principal claim to immortality is that it introduces a modulation which, at the time it was first heard by the masses, seized their ears with the power of magic. And the masses, for once, showed excellent judgment.

Mr. Kern subsequently proved to be one of the most fertile, tasteful, and characteristic composers of light music. When he tries to be purely melodic, he is apt to fall back upon cheap sentimentalism, tinged with spurious folksong color. But his little harmonic device had a hue all its own, and popular parlance decided that it was 'blue.'

A veil of mystery covers the first dark deed that went by the name of 'Blue.' Forever hidden, perhaps, is the identity of the melancholic culprit who perpetrated it, although stout hearts are ready to cite the man, the place, and the tune. They are not apt, however, to tell you of an ancestral and *bona-fide* 'blue chord,' which Richard Wagner deliberately chose in order to make more graphic the word *blau* when Tristan, in the beginning of *Tristan and Isolde*, refers to the green, but distant, shore as shimmering still in a blue haze. That is the sublime instance. The ridiculous one is the madudlin *glissando* on ukulele and steel guitar, the tear-duct of popular music. What stainless ears considered a rather weird turn of the melody, a morbid shifting of harmonies, entered the dictionary of professional jargon as 'blue note,' of 'blue chord.'

I am under the impression that these terms were contemporary with, if they did not precede and foreshadow, the period of our innumerable musical 'blues.' What the uninitiated tried to define by that homely appellation was, perhaps, an indistinct association of the minor mode and dyspeptic intonation with poor digestion, in reality, it is the advent in popular music of something which the textbooks call ambiguous chords, altered notes, extraneous modulation, and deceptive cadence.

The trick had irresistible charm, everybody tried it. It was in the preludes and interludes of the popular songs that the radicals began to break down the old order - that is, in those measures where the voice did not interfere with their freedom. The black-eyed

'Till ready' was mercifully dispatched to limbo, and superseded by some dexterous harmonic tricks that not only stood, but demanded and deserved, rehearing. Instead of the traditional sequence of dominant diminished-seventh, and dominant seventh harmonies - which formed the timeworn tradition into the refrain and accompanied the chanted announcement.. "When he to her did say," - there sprang up a diversity of the freshest, most unexpected modulations, which fell upon the ear like drops of evening rain upon a parched and sunbaked soil. The various shades of blue, in which untutored harmonists indulged, ranged all the way from faint cerulean to deep indigo. The last could often be more fittingly compared to mud.

Between the earlier 'rag' and the 'blues,' there was this distinction: the rag had been mainly a thing of rhythm, of syncopation: the blues were syncopation relished with spicier harmonies.

In addition to these two elements of music, rhythm and harmony, the people - who in the beginning had known but one thing: melody, fastened upon a primitive and weak harmonic structure of 'barbershop' chords - the people, I say, who had stepwise advanced from melody and rhythm to harmony, lastly discovered counterpoint. And the result of this last discovery is jazz. In other words, jazz is ragtime, plays 'Blues,' *plus* orchestral polyphony; it is the combination, in the popular music current, of melody, rhythm, harmony, and counterpoint."

The use of the genre of the blues is discussed in the next article and earlier statements about the redoing of the blues is affirmed in the article entitled "Quality in Blues."

SEPT. 1923 - METRONOME

QUALITY IN "BLUES" - "Blues" are distinctly the creation of the colored people. They live them, they breathe them, and they write them. A white man has about as much right to compose a "blues" as a man without any knowledge of music would have to write a symphony.

The craze for "blues" is now at its height. The end is not yet. Mechanical companies are tumbling over each other in their eagerness to discover "real blues." There are bushels of inferior compositions on the market labeled "blues," but the genuine article by born writers of "blues" is as scarce as the proverbial "hen's tooth." A "real blues" has a certain "struttin'" rhythm that is irresistible. It sways the hearer almost with every note and underneath it all there is the wail of the aborigine.

Perhaps no other publishing house has taken as much trouble to unearth genuine "blues" as "The House of Hits" (E. B. Marks Music Company). They were pioneers at the game. In the days before "blues" were universally popular, they collected such marvelous type of this style of composition as *Tishomingo Blues*, *Shim-me-Sha-Wabble*, *Corinne Blues*, *Graveyard Blues*, every one a giant in its class, a standard "blues" and a household word in musical and stage circles. No mechanical company can boast of a complete "blues" catalog without these famous leaders. And now that the call is more acute than ever, those record companies who have not as yet listed these numbers, or who are not satisfied with their former recordings made some years ago, have not only re-made them

but are reporting most astounding demand and sales for every one of them. It has been no easy task for "The House of Hits" to find "blues" that will measure up to the standard of *Tishomingo*, *Corinne*, *Shim-Me-Sha-Wabble* and *Graveyard*, but they have at last succeeded in doing so through a special tour of the south arranged for the purpose.

There they found among others, the African Opera Series of Blues, very popular in Memphis, and the adjacent cities. although this series consisted of nine numbers, the E. B. Marks Company analyzed the situation thoroughly and accepted but two of them, *Strut 'Long Papa* and *Uncle Bud* (Bugle Blues). The fame of these numbers (composed by Bob Miller) has already reached the North and they are both being recorded by practically every company of standing. Daisy Martin, well known in recording circles, and other recording artists now have these numbers in their permanent repertoire. In this connection, it has become an established fact that the millions of colored folks who are the principal buyers of "blues" prefer them not only by colored artists, mostly girls whose training and natural sympathies enable them to give an interpretation to "blues" with such natural and telling effect that white singers cannot hope to in anywise equal.

While on the trail for "blues" material, the E. B. Marks Company unearthed another bonanza when they discovered four or five unmatchable "blues." They negotiated for these numbers and finally secured them, thus rounding out what is undoubtedly the best catalog of "Strut Blues" winners in the world with such catchy material as *Brown Baby*, *There'll Be Some Changes Made*, *Memphis Man*, *2 A. M. Blues*, *Log Cabin Blues* and *Georgia Blues*. In such a wealth of "African Blues" material, the one trouble lies in the fact that it is difficult to choose the best. There is no best! Each has in its own way distinctive and novel features, so much so that the large record companies have given up the task of choosing, and list the lot as a whole."

The blues was a 'sorrowful spiritual' at a personal level of one individual. How the use of blue shadings developed, using a faster tempo, is mentioned in the next article. In the article appearing in the April 19, 1923 Melody Magazine: "Jazzing Jazz to Death," The author remarked "American popular music is essentially humorous even the 'blues' are often so funny that everybody laughs." The article continues:

"From the "laughing trombone" to the "moaning saxophone" everything is performed with an eye for sprightly humor. Negroid tunes and manner of interpretation, featured in many current musical styles, often yield a humorous way of rendering a basically sad subject. The Negroid melody and words coupled with it may emphasize a troubled heart over some unfaithful lady love, but the heaviness of heart is usually interpreted in as funny a way as a negro camp meeting song.."

We read of the use of the vocal techniques of the blues in using its characteristic intonation variations as singing different pitched notes as a blues third or seventh and of the sliding of the voice from below a pitch to the pitch itself. This technique is taken over by the jazz instrumentalist, especially the violin and trombone, instruments most capable of slides between notes, but also reed and brass instruments. (Example: the slur of the clarinet in the beginning of Rhapsody in

Blue.) This subject is discussed in "The Jazz Fiddler" from the June, 1923 issue of Etude:

"The present vogue of jazz will surely do a great deal of injury to the musical taste of the rising generation, and to the development of our young violinists. In addition to the outlandish noises produced by the jazzers, the style of compositions produced by the composers of 'jazz' of the present day is banal and demoralizing to the last degree. How can a young violinist or other music student listen to this stuff constantly, without having his taste corrupted: We have this 'blues' and the blues,' and all sorts of demoralizing rubbish, written in the worst possible taste and examples of the lowest type of music."

In "A Brief History of Jazz" in the June, 1923, Vanity Fair, the contributions of the blues is given credit for being 'the musical speech of this country (America):

"That large body of songs known as "The Blues," of infinite variety, is an interesting by-product: they reflect the various reactions of the unsophisticated Negro soul to a not altogether perfect Universe. They have here an emotional, as well as the rhythmic, kinship with the old Negro spiritual. The rhythm is distinct, though languid; the 'blue' state is indicated by an appropriate monotony of melody.

The Negro genius has been chiefly responsible for whatever musical development American can boast. It is that genius which has produced the American jazz, the only distinct and original idiom we have. It, and not the music of MacDowell and Foster and a host of imitators of the German and French, is the musical speech of this country."

Clarence Williams was the other major figure in popularizing the blues and jazz music. While not getting the notoriety of Handy, he was an important figure in the popular music publishing scene.

SEPT. - METRONOME

CLARENCE WILLIAMS A SPECIALIST ON "BLUES" - Clarence Williams, recognized as one of the most famous "Blues" writers of the day, and head of the largest colored music publishing firm in this country, started out in life to be a tailor. He tells this little story of the cause of his changing his life's work.

"Twelve years ago, on the strength of the fact that I could play two songs fairly well. I took a job in a New Orleans wine room, playing a piano. When a patron would request any number except the two which I knew, Some of These Days and Lovey Joe, I always excused myself by saying I did not have the music with me, but that night I would purchase that number and have a girl play it over and over until I could play it by ear."

Each time the girl played a song it cost Mr. Williams \$1. He finally decided it would be much cheaper to take piano lessons at 25 cents per lesson. He started out, but at the end of his eighth lesson was satisfied he had learned all there was to be learned about piano playing. Those who have heard his phonograph recordings will realize that today he is a pianist par excellence.

Mr. Williams has written a number of Blues hits. Among them might be mentioned: *Brown skin*, *Who You For?*, *Ain't Giving Nobody None of This Jelly Roll*, *You're Some Pretty Doll* and *Royal Garden Blues*. He collaborated with A. J. Piron on all these numbers. Since entering the publishing business, he has sponsored such hits as *Got To Cool My Doggies Now*, *Sister Kate*, *If You Don't Believe I Love You*, *Look What a Fool I've Been* and *Sugar blues*. The latest and what looks like one of the biggest hits to come out of this "hit" factory is *Gulf Coast Blues*. "If you know what the people want, and what they like and you give it to them when they want it, they are going to be satisfied, and the satisfied public spells success to any publisher," said Clarence, and I guess he is right.

When the articles begin to discuss blues it is not necessarily the 12 bar 'sad' blues we think of. The name blues was used in titles because it would help sell sheet music. While the melody did use blue notes these songs were actually just regular popular songs given a blues name for sales. They were related more closely to ragtime and popular jazz songs than the traditional blues. The article discusses the origin of the blues and is a good account of past blues that really had not much to do with the current blues song.

OCTOBER - SHEET MUSIC NEWS

ORIGIN OF "BLUES" NUMBERS - Some Interesting Facts concerning the History of Their Origin and Growth. Reports from dealers, publishers and recording companies in various parts of the country indicate that there is to-day a great demand for "blues" numbers, which is likely to continue unabated during the coming winter season at least. Such numbers are by no means new-for several of them have been among the big sellers of quite a few years ago-but during the past year or so they have achieved popularity greater than ever before.

So important are "blues" numbers regarded to-day that there are several publishes who are specializing in them, and such well known popular publishers as Irving Berlin, Inc., Jack Mills, Inc., and the Edward B. Marks Music Co., have special departments devoted to "blues" numbers. The recording companies are also giving special attention to "blues" songs, and such firms as the General Phonograph Corporation (Okeh Records), Columbia, Victor, Vocalion, etc., have special colored "blues" artists for this type of songs.

In view of these facts, it is interesting to trace back the history or origin of "blues" songs, and their growth in popularity. Everybody, of course, knows that "blues" numbers originated with the colored folks in the South. If we trace back into the music of the colored race we find that there are two general types of music popular among them, viz., spiritual (as sung or chanted at revival meetings) and plantation songs. Roughly speaking, these might be considered as corresponding to the white man's sacred and secular music.

Old Darkey melodies

It was from this old music-practically all of which was never written on paper, but like Topsy "jes' grew"-that the modern "blues" numbers really originated. Back in the days before the Civil War these tunes originated, and it is peculiarly interesting how they really did "jes' grow," without apparently having either lyricist or composer.

Here is now many of them originated: A colored person, presiding at a camp meeting or revival meeting, would begin a spirited prayer, in which he would start a sort of chant, repeating over and over again various religious thoughts. The colored person, presiding at a camp meeting or revival meeting, would begin a spirited prayer, in which he would start a sort of chant, repeating over and over again various religious thoughts. The colored folks present would join in with a vim, and together they would chant the words over and over again, creating a wild sort of combination between discord and harmony. From this chanting originated some of the spiritual music among the colored race.

These tunes would be carried to the colored boys working in the fields, who, not so much interested in matters spiritual, would proceed to change the tempo somewhat and use words of their own, describing perhaps some event that took place. For example, if a colored acquaintance was whipped by his master for some reason or other, they would evolve an extemporaneous set of words around the incident and sing them in the fields. Not infrequently they would compose their own tunes as they worked. Although they knew absolutely nothing about music, they had a native instinct for harmony, which gave some of these melodies some tributes of music.

The Coming of "Blues."

These old melodies with their quaint words kept increasing in number as the years rolled on, but still only here and there did one find its way on paper. However, with the coming of the cabaret and the dance craze ten or so years ago, some of these melodies were taken in hand by colored composers, arranged to meet more modern demands and sung widely in the cabarets of the South catering exclusively to colored people. Their popularity continued to spread until it reached all parts of the country but still it was confined to colored people. It was only a comparatively few years ago that white people became interested in these numbers too.

The first popular publisher of the modern school to actually appreciate the latest possibilities of these old strains was W. C. Handy, of the firm of Handy Bros., New York, formerly known as Pace & Handy. Mr. Handy was born in the vicinity of Muscles Shoals and was brought up in an atmosphere that made him capable of appreciating this type of music. Possessing a musical education, he began composing music based on these old strains and writing suitable lyrics to go with them. Music dealers all over will remember the "Memphis Blues," written and published by W. C. Handy. This is generally conceded to have been the first big hit among "blues" numbers, and it has since been followed by numerous others, both from the pen of Mr. Handy and others.

Care in Lyric and Melody

To the unthinking person who labors under the impression that "blues" numbers are just dashed off in a haphazard sort of way, without thought as to melody or lyric, it is a revelation to get the views of the people who write and publish such numbers. Charles Handy, brother of William C. Handy, and his partner in the publishing business, in recently discussing this subject, said:

"There is as much thought and care given to the writing of 'blues' numbers as to any other kind of music. In the lyric an attempt is always made to actually tell a story or convey a message, while harmony and the various other musical attributes are invariably taken into consideration by the high class 'blues' composer.

"It might interest you to know that a good blues number could very easily be arranged for a symphony orchestra. As a matter of fact, my brother is right now making symphonic arrangements of some of his most popular blues numbers."

Theme of a "Blues" Number

An interesting example of the type of old southern folk-lore that eventually found its way as the theme of a popular 'blues' number, is the following story of John Henry, a southern character:

"John Henry, so the legend runs, was the king of the riveters and rillers. Black but comely, he possessed a physical contour that would bring joy to the heart of a sculptor. He could do more work than any four ordinary men, consume prodigious quantities of grog and was the center of a myriad of maidenly sighs from the hearts of dusky belles. He was Grand Mentor of the lodge, official umpire at the baseball games and the supreme court and last word in all community disputes. It was thus he reigned for many years with due dignity and decorum, seemingly unconscious of his power, yet with his royalty unquestioned and unsullied.

"Like other dynasties whose tenure is not zealously guarded. John Henry's throne of physical prowess tottered when one morning a usurper appeared in the form of a pneumatic punch and riveter. The new invention was installed with the guarantee to perform the work of ten men. John's heart became heavy beneath the dense clouds of gloomy foreboding. He felt his throne sinking beneath him and foresaw the passing of his fame.

"Then, as falling monarchs usually do, he evinced the human side and resolved to make one last stand against the mechanical pretender for his dynasty. His powerful, elastic muscles, potent in all previous emergencies, would serve him in this crisis and he would vet show his subjects that he was supreme. He issued a ukase that he, John Henry, King of All Drolleries and riveters and Defender of the Faith in Physical Strength, would drive more rivets than any machine made by the hand of man. Over a brimming glass of sparkling beverage, long since extinct by the ruthless hand of Volstead, he placed a generous wager as an earnest of his confidence.

"All the world loves a fighter and his votaries rallied to him and bets were freely made upon the result of this peculiar contest.

"In the finale of this tragedy, tradition comes to the parting of the ways. One version, the one which Mr. Handy has epitomized and painted in "blue" has it that on the day of the vital test. John Henry's hammer fell in tripper blows to the song he sang: while

the mechanical riveter hit a tap-tap-tap, from the compressed air behind it, and it was truly Taps, the funeral dirge of the dethroned John Henry that our hero, feeling all was lost and his fame departing, gathered his energies for a last stand, strained his muscles for one supreme effort, with his hammer suspended, he then fell dead beneath it.

"Another and more romantic version is still given in the legends and songs of the quarries and among the section hands is that John Henry met and acknowledged defeat at the hands of the new mechanism, and with bowed head faded away-passed out from the haunts of his erstwhile glory and was never seen nor heard of again."

Definition of Term "Blues."

Two interesting questions have often been raised regarding "blues" numbers. The first of these is, whence comes the term "blues"-and why? The other is, what is the definition of a "blues" number. Mr. Haynes of the Clarence Williams Publishing Co., New York another well known publisher of "blues" songs- offered the following thoughts:

"In my opinion they are called "blues" because of the fact that there are certain strains in them which are really "blue"-that is, they have a 'blue' reaction.

"Regarding the definition, the following one from a prominent orchestra leader may or may not be worth something. A blues number, he said, is one that has a tendency toward discord, but just before it became discord, it recovers."

Reflects Sadness of Slavery Days

The people who manufacture records also have some interesting information to offer on the subject of "blues." A. Glander, publicity representative of the General Phonograph Co., New York, the first recording company to appreciate the commercial possibilities of "blues" numbers, and whose "blues" catalogue is famous, had the following to say:

"The first real big 'blues' number was "Memphis Blues," by W.C. Handy. This was followed shortly afterward by 'St. Louis Blues,' another hit by the same writer. Both of these numbers are still selling on the records. We went into the 'race' or 'blues' field about three years ago, and they are now a very important branch of our business. Our first artist to sing 'blues' numbers exclusively was Mamie Smith.

"Blues' numbers invariably contain a sad strain, reflecting, in all probability the condition of the colored race before the Civil War days. A peculiar characteristic of blues numbers is that some of the lines and strains are repeated over and over again. This is explained, in all probability, by the fact that they were originally written for poor colored laborers, who lacked education and consequently required this repetition in order that they could comprehend.

"There are two distinct kinds of 'blues' numbers-'white blues' and 'low down blues.' The former are popular numbers with a ballad strain and jazz tempo, while 'low down blues' are the typical numbers of the southern colored folks. No white man can write 'low down blues'-nor can a colored man, for that matter, unless he was born and

brought up in the South. For this reason, 'blues' numbers are frequently purchased from uneducated, untrained colored writers down South.

"Blues" singers.

W. G. Monroe, manager of the record department of the Columbia Phonograph Co., emphasized the fact that colored singers from the South only can properly render 'blues' numbers. concerning this he said:

"One of our most popular 'blues' singers is Bessie Smith, who was unknown and practically broke when our Mr. Walker discovered her. She was brought up north and given a tryout. Her first few recordings were terrible, for her voice was absolutely uncultured. However, she had a deep, powerful voice, particularly suitable for 'blues' songs, and Mr. Walker, realizing that she possessed latent talent, put her through a course of training. She finally came through in splendid style and her rendition of 'Gulf Coast Blues,' 'Downhearted Blues' and several other numbers helped to make them big sellers on the Columbia records."

Just how long "blues" numbers will be in vogue is purely a matter of speculation, but there is little doubt but that they will prove good sellers over the counter for the current season, at least, and dealers will find it to their interest to keep a supply of such sheet music in stock during the coming months.

In defending jazz as an important American music we read that the blues use in jazz is one of the elements denoting character of jazz music:

"But there is good reason to suppose that jazz, although it had its birth in the most popular of popular music, and although the tunes which it accompanied were of the most nauseating triviality, is not inherently wedded to these elements but is, in fact, nothing more or less than a particular orchestra color and treatment, used in conjunction with peculiar altered chords, a simultaneous use of minor and major modes (known as 'blues')."

The use of blues harmony and melodic characteristics is talked about spoken of in "Jazz" in the August, 1924 issue of Mercury:

"In the current jazz one hears piano figures that are ingenious, counter-melodies that are far from timid, and experiments in instrumental balance that are of interest to any composer. The harmony itself is at times varied and delicate. The blues formula - subdominant modulation with alternations of tonic major and minor - is simple and effective. The chromatic (or diatonic) succession of dominant ninths so dear to Franck and Chabrier has become popular, and the mediant or sub-mediant tonality offers a pleasing relief from the more obvious dominant. The Neapolitan sixth is quite common

and even the "barbershop" chord, the augmented six-five three, or German sixth, is sometimes used in a manner that is not at all crude."

An interesting statement is given in the next article in the March 1, 1925 Survey: "Jazz was the Negro's explosive attempt to cast off the blues and be happy." It states the true spirit of jazz:

"The true spirit of jazz is a joyous revolt from convention, custom, authority, boredom, even sorrow - from everything that would confine the soul of man and hinder its riding free on the air. The Negroes who invented it called their songs the "blues," and they weren't capable of satire or deception. Jazz was their explosive attempt to cast off the blues and be happy, carefree happy even in the midst of sordidness and sorrow. And that is why it has been such a balm for modern ennui, and has become a safety valve for modern machine-ridden and convention-bound society. It is the revolt of the emotions against repression."

The technique of sliding becomes one of the main elements in jazz. We read of the 'scooping' in the article "Jazz and the Dance" in August, 1925 Pictorial Review"

"The blues is, to our idea of thinking, a *truly* melancholy form of jazz; it is a result of the scooping on trombone and wail of the saxophone that drag out the comic tragedy of the unmelodious-syncopated-tempoed delirium.....Do you realize that the scooping of the strings in our jazz and in the blues, the pulling out of the roaring trombone, and the droning of the saxophone are distinct holdovers from our savage brethren and the Oriental race?"

Carl Van Vechten was one of the most authentic and accurate writers and the following article is an excellent essay on the 'Black Blues.'

AUGUST - VANITY FAIR

THE BLACK BLUES - NEGRO SONGS OF DISAPPOINTMENT IN LOVE: - THEIR PATHOS HARDENED WITH LAUGHTER by Carl Van Vechten

The Negro, always prone to express his deepest feeling in song, naturally experiences other more secular emotions than those sensations of religion published in the Spirituals. Perhaps the most poignant of all his feelings are those related to his disappointments in love, out of which have sprung the songs known as the blues. These mournful plaints occasioned by the premature departure of "papa," these nostalgic longings to join the loved one in a climate of sunlight and colour - although in at least one instance the singer indicates a desire to go back to Michigan - are more tragic to me than the Spirituals, for the Spirituals are often informed with resignation, or even a joyous evangelism, while the Blues are consistently imbued with a passionate despair.

Like the Spirituals, the Blues are folksongs and are conceived in the same pentatonic scale, omitting the fourth and seventh tones - although those that have

achieved publication or performance under sophisticated auspices have generally passed through a process of transmutation - and at present they are looked down upon, as the Spirituals once were, especially by the Negroes themselves. The humbleness of their origin and occasionally the frank obscenity of their sentiment are probably responsible for this condition. In this connection it may be recalled that it has taken over fifty years for the Negroes to recover from their repugnance to the Spirituals, because of the fact that they were born during slave days. Now, however, the Negroes are proud of the Spirituals, regarding them as one of the race's greatest gifts to the musical pleasure of mankind. I predict that it will not be long before the blues will enjoy a similar resurrection which will make them as respectable, at least in the artistic sense, as the religious songs.

The music of the Blues has a peculiar language of its own, wreathed in melancholy ornament. It wails, this music, and limps languidly; the rhythm is angular, like the sporadic skidding of an automobile on a wet asphalt pavement. The conclusion is abrupt, as if the singer suddenly had become too choked for further utterance. Part of this effect is indubitably achieved through the fact that the typical Blues is created in three-line stanzas. As W. C. Handy, the artistic father of the blues, has pointed out to me, the melodic strain can thereby be set down in twelve bars instead of the regulation sixteen. Not only are the breaks between verses and stanzas frequent, but also there are tantalizing and fascinatingly unaccountable - to any one familiar with other types of music - gaps between words, even between syllables. These effects are more or less characteristic of other negro music, but in the case of the blues they are carried several degrees further. When these songs are performed with accompaniment, the players fill in these waits by improvising the weirdest and most heart-rending groans and sobs, whimpers and sighs, emphasizing, at the same time, the stumbling rhythm. Extraordinary combinations of instruments serve to provide these accompaniments; organ and cornet, mouth organ and guitar, saxophone and piano; sometimes a typical Negro jazz-band - and by this I do not mean the Negro Jazz-band of the white cabaret - is utilized by a phonograph company to make a record. Many of these men do not read music at all. Many of these songs have never been written down.

Notwithstanding the fact that the musical interest, the melodic content of these songs is often of an extremely high quality, I would say that in this respect the Blues seldom quite equal the Spirituals. The words, however, in beauty and imaginative significance, far transcend in their crude poetic importance the words of the religious songs. They are eloquent with rich idioms, metaphoric phrases, and striking word combinations. The Blues, for the most part, are the disconsolate wails of deceived lovers and cast-off mistresses, whose desertion arouses the desolate one to tell his sad story in flowery language. Another cause has contributed to the inspiration of symbolic poetry in these numbers. Negroes, especially in the south, indulge in a great deal of what they themselves call "window-dressing," in order to mislead their white employers. This is the reason for the prevalent belief in the South that Negroes are always happy, for they usually make it a point to meet a white man with a smile and often with a joke. It is through this habit of window-dressing that the Negroes have grown accustomed to expressing their most commonplace thoughts in a special tongue of their own. For example, a negro boy who intends to quit his job surreptitiously sing to his colored

companions: "If you don't believe I'm leavin', count the days I'm gone." A favorite phrase to express complete freedom has it: "I've got the world in a jug, the stopper's in my hand."

The Blues bulge with such happy phrases; "The blacker the berry, the sweeter the juice," referring to the preference yellow-girls frequently bestow on extremely black men, or the contrasting refrain, which recurs in a score of these songs, "I don't want no high yella." Other picturesque locutions are; "I've put ashes in my papa's bed so that he can't slip out." "Hurry sundown, ets tomorrow come," "Blacker than midnight, teeth like flags o' truce,"

Certain refrains, for a perfectly logical reason, recur again and again in these songs. for instance, "I went down to the river":

I went down to the river, underneath the willow tree.
A dew dropped from the willow leaf, and rolled right down on me.
An' that's the reason I got those weepin' willow blues.

or:

Goin' to the river, take my rockin' chair. goin' to the river, take my rockin' chair.
If the blues overcome me, I'll rock on away from here.

or:

Goin' to the river, I mean to sit down.(twice)
If the blue-blues push me, I'll jump over and drown.

So many of the papas and mamas depart on trains that the railroad figures frequently in the blues:

Got the railroad blues; ain't got no railroad fare, (twice)
I'm gonna pack mah grip an' beat mah way away from here.

or:

Goin' to the railroad, put mah head on the track, (twice)
If I see the train a-comin', I'll jerk it back.

or:

I went up on the mountain, high as a gal can stan',
An' looked down on the engine that took away mah lovin' man.
An' that's the reason I got those weepin' willow blues.

There are many blues which are interesting throughout as specimens of naive poetry, related in a way it would be difficult to define, but which it is not hard to sense, with oriental imagery of the type of *The Song of Songs*. Such a one is that which begins:

A brown-skinned woman an' she's chocolate to the bone.
 A brown-skinned woman an' she smells like toilet soap, etc.

A typical example of this class of song is *The Gulf Coast Blues*, which also happens to possess a high degree of musical interest which, unfortunately, I cannot reproduce here. However, as sung by Bessie Smith and played by Clarence Williams, it is perfectly possible to try it on your phonograph.

I been blue all day. My man 's gone away. He went an' left his mama cold
 For another girl, I'm told.

I tried to treat him fine, I thought he would be mine, that man I hate to lose,
 That's why mama's got the blues.

The man I love he has done lef' this town, (twice)
 An' if he keeps on goin', I will be Gulf coast boun'.

The mailman passed but he didn't leave no news, (twice)
 I'll tell the world he lef' me with those Gulf Coast blues.

Som o' yo' men sure do make me tired. (twice)
 You got a handful o' gimme an' a mouthful o' much oblige.

In connection with this depressing lament, Langton Hughes, the young Negro poet, has written me; "The blues always impressed me as being very sad, sadder even than the Spirituals, because their sadness is not softened with tears, but hardened with laughter, the absurd, incongruous laughter of a sadness without even a God to appeal to. In *The Gulf Coast Blues* one can feel the cold northern snows, the memory of the melancholy mists of the Louisiana lowlands, the shack that is home, the worthless lovers with hands full o' gimme, mouths full o' much oblige, the eternal unsatisfied longings.

"There seems to be a monotonous melancholy, an animal sadness, running through all Negro jazz that is almost terrible at times. I remember hearing a native jazz-band playing in the Kameroun in Africa while two black youths stamped and circled about a dance hall floor, their feet doing exactly the same figures over and over to the monotonous rhythm, their bodies turning and swaying like puppets on strings. While two black boys, half-grinning mouths never closed, went round the room, the horns cried and moaned in monotonous weariness - like the weariness of the world - moving always in the same circle, while the drums kept up a deep-voiced laughter for the dancing feet. The performance put a damper on the evening's fun. It just wasn't enjoyable. The sailors left.

"Did you ever hear this verse of the blues?

I went to the Gipsy's to get mah fortune tol' (twice)
 Gipsy done tol' me goddam yore unhard-lucky soul.

"I first heard it from George, a Kentucky colored boy who shipped out to Africa with me - a real vagabond if there ever was one. He came on board five minutes before sailing with no clothes - nothing except the shirt and pants he had on and a pair of silk socks carefully wrapped up in his shirt pocket. He didn't even know where the ship was going. He used to make up his own blues - verses as absurd as Krazy Kat and as funny. But sometimes when he had to do more work than he thought necessary for a happy living, or, when broke, he couldn't make the damsels of the West Coast believe love worth more than money, he used to sing about the Gypsy who couldn't find words strong enough to tell about the troubles in his hard-luck soul."

The first blues to achieve wide popularity was *The Memphis Blues*, by W. C. Handy, who lived at that time in Memphis, and was well-acquainted with life on the celebrated Beale Street. For this song - published in 1912, a year after *Alexander's Ragtime Band* - Mr. Handy received a total of one hundred dollars. Since then he has issued so many of these songs, *The St. Louis Blues*, *Hesitation Blues*, *John Henry Blues*, *Basement Blues*, *Harlem Blues*, *Sundown Blues*, *Atlanta Blues*, *Beale Street Blues*, *Yellow Dog Blues*, etc., that, taking also into account that he was the first to publish a song of this character, he is generally known as the father of the Blues. Nevertheless, Mr. Handy himself has informed me categorically that the blues are folksongs, a statement I have more than fully proved through personal experience. To a greater degree than other folksongs, however, they have gone through several stages of development. Originally, many of these songs are made up by Negroes in the country to suitably commemorate some catastrophe. As one of these improvised songs drifts from cabin to cabin, verses are added, so that not infrequently as many as a hundred different stanzas exist of one song alone. Presently, these ditties are carried into the Negro dives and cabarets of the Southern cities, where they are served up with improvised accompaniments and where a certain obscene piquancy is added to the words. Many of The Blues, as a matter of fact, are causal inventions, never committed to paper, of pianist and singer in some house of pleasure. This does not mean that composers and lyric writers have not occasionally created Blues of their own. For the most part, however, the Blues that are sung by Negro artists in cabarets and for the phonograph are transcribed versions of folksongs. Even with such blues as are definitely composed by recognized writers, it will be found that their success depends upon a careful following of the folk formula both in regard to words and music.

So far as Mr. Handy's own Blues are concerned, he admits frankly that they are based almost without exception on folksongs which he has picked up in the south. Occasionally he has followed the idea of an old blues, more frequently he has retained a title or a melody and altered the words to suit Broadway or Harlem's Lenox Avenue. For example, the tune of *Aunt Hagar's blues* - *Aunt Hagar's Children* is the name the Negroes gave themselves during slave days, - is founded on a melody he once heard a Negro woman sing in the South to the words, "I wonder whar's mah good ol' used to be." The *Joe Turner Blues* are based on the melody of an old Memphis song, "Joe Turner come an' got mah man an' gone." Pete Turney at the time was governor of Tennessee. His brother, Joe, was delegated to take prisoners from Memphis to the penitentiary at Nashville, and the Negroes pronounced his name Turner. Mr. Handy has utilized the old melody and the

title, but he has invented the harmonies and substituted words which would have more meaning to casual hearers.

Another of Handy's songs, *Loveless Love*, is based on an old Blues called *Careless Love*, invented by the Negroes to tell the story of the son of a governor of Kentucky, shot in a love affair. Handy's *Long Gone* is based on an old Negro song called *Long John, Long Gone*. The story runs that with the arrival of some new bold-hounds on a plantation it was decided to experiment with them on Long John. Getting wind of this unpleasant prospect, the negro supplied himself with a trap which he dragged behind him in a barrel. Inveigling the bloodhounds into the trap, Long John escaped into the woods and was never caught. hence the song, *Long John, Long Gone*, which soon spread from shack to shack.

Long familiar with the words and tunes of such songs, the possibility of harmonizing them and treating them instrumentally came to Mr. Handy early in the present century. On tour with his band, he was playing for a white dance at Cleveland, Mississippi, when, during, an intermission, three local Negroes appeared, and asked if they might perform a number. Permission was granted and the men, mandolin, guitar, and viola, began to play a mournful, wailing strain, the strain of the Blues. Nowadays such accompaniments to Blues are improvised in dimly lit cellars while you wait.

So far as I know there has been as yet no effort made - such as has been made with the Spirituals - to set down these songs, verses and music, as they are sung under primitive conditions. To me this is a source of the greatest amazement. Any negro recently from the south knows at least half a dozen of them. I myself have heard as many as fifty in Lenox Avenue dives and elsewhere that have never been put down in any form. They are not only an essential part of Negro folklore but also they contain a wealth of eerie melody, borne along by a savage, recalcitrant rhythm. They deserve, therefore, from every point of view, the same serious attention that has traditionally been awarded to the Spirituals."

We find another article that discusses the blues, again using W. C. Handy as a source. Handy is given credit for writing the first blues. (There is a blues published in New Orleans entitled "I Got The Blues" in 1908.) Handy did use the blues feeling and incorporated this feeling into songs that were not 'real' blues. Thereby lies his importance as others followed this lead and we have the 'jazz' blues, not a traditional blues but using blues elements.

FEBRUARY 3, - NEW REPUBLIC

BLUE NOTES (The author wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness to Mr. W. C. Handy for much historical information included in this article.)

The blues are one of the most interesting and significant examples of Negro folksong, but they wouldn't stay put. They broke through into American popular music; became confused with almost every related type; their origin forgotten, they have generally been passed over by collectors and students.

Say that A was conducting a kitchen courtship of Miss B, who was cool, unsympathetic, and sparing of family eatables. As he sat, disconsolate, on the back of his

neck, self-pity might call a thought into his head which would forthwith emerge, *thrice* repeated as a quavering and diffident bit of song:

"Got no more home than a dawg."

Attention being obtained, and warming to his idea, there would come a second stanza:

"Ain't got a frien' in this worl'".

He might expect desirable results if he could keep this up indefinitely - and he could. It might, therefore, seem well to try it again elsewhere, with improvements; the song might be adopted and further elaborated by others.

In their developed condition the blues would still retain an intensely personal flavor, and the three-line stanza. But the first line, now, would probably voice some grief, longing, or unhopeful "if"; the second either repeat or reinforce the first; while the third would state a *causa doloris*, some collateral conclusion, or the course which would be taken should the "if" come true:

Goin' to lay my head right on the railroad track, (repeat)
'Cause my baby, she won't take me back.

Goin' to lay my head right on the railroad track, (repeat)
If the train come 'long, I'm goin' to pull it back.

If the river was whisky, and I was a mallard (I said a mallard - I mean a duck)
If the river was whisky, and I was a mallard duck -
I'd dive right down, and I'd never come up.

Improvisations in this form and spirit with the peculiar melodies associated with them, had lacked a distinguishing name, but shortly before 1910 they had acquired the title "blues" from persons unknown, and the term was in use from Kentucky down by that date. The essence of most is found in the traditional common-property line:

Got the blues, but too dam' mean to cry

No one sentence can sum up more completely than this, the philosophy between the lines of most of these little verses. Yet in them the forgotten singers did not always amuse themselves with their troubles: nearer universal was the element of pure self: one sang of one's own feelings, thoughts and interests, and if the subject was generally painful, that was the result, not of convention, but of racial history. This personal and philosophical tinge distinguishes the blues from such three-line ballads as Frankie and Johnny, leaving them a secular counterpart of the spirituals.

The structural peculiarities of the music parallel those of the stanza. As the latter had one less than the four lines normal to simple verse, so the voice would sing (in two-

four or common time) four less than the normal sixteen bars to the strain - each line of the stanza being confined to four bars of music. As each line was more or less of a complete thought, so the air with the last syllable of each line would return to and rest on the keynote or another element of the tonic triad, so that the whole presented a period of three almost independent phrases, with successive bizarre effects of internal finality and of final incompleteness. The line, relatively, was very short, its last syllable usually falling on the first beat of the third bar of its musical phrase, thus leaving a long interim to be filled in somehow; perhaps with a hummed echo; perhaps with vocal or instrumental vagaries which later came to be called "the jazz." Meanwhile, in the mind of the improviser, the next line could be going through its period of gestation.

Unwritten, unharmonized melodies, yet if the singer wished to accompany himself, he could do so with just three chords: The common chords of the dominant and subdominant and the chord of the dominant seventh. The melody would be a four-bar phrase favoring a syncopated jugglery of a very few notes; the second phrase would vary somewhat the first, suggesting to the musical ear an excursion into the subdominant; the third would give a final version. Play between the keynote and its third was particularly frequent, and the tonic third characteristically coincided with the antepenultimate syllable of the line. And in these as in other Negro songs, the singer was apt, in dealing with this particular note, to slur from flat to natural or vice versa in such a way as to furrow the brow of anyone who might attempt to set the tune down on paper. In singing to the banjo - a cheerful instrument - the slur might be expected; if the guitar was in use, the minor would be even more prominent; the melody therefore might seem, like Krazy Kat, uncertain as to its own sex.

The trickle of the blues into the national consciousness was started by W. C. Handy (an Alabama Negro then living in Memphis and now his own publisher), the first of his race not only familiar with these weirds, but able and willing (racial reticence is peculiarly involved here) to set them down and write more in the tradition. Although, the title "blues" being commercially valuable, even with him it is not always an index to what follows, he has preserved some of the original examples in a very pure form, while some entirely his own, such as Beale Street, Saint Louis, Aunt Hagar's Children, meet every test of the folk-product except anonymity of authorship.

In writing down this music he chose to represent the primitive treatment of the tonic third, in some cases by the minor, simple, sometimes by introducing the minor third as a grace-note to the major, or vice versa. The grin of the singers had been sardonic; the songs were as melancholy as their name would imply, but sadness in negro music is no more dependent upon the minor than is the color of the sea upon pigment, and the blue airs demanded the prevailing major. Handy's minor third, therefore, appeared as signifying a temporary change of mode, and it caught attention as none of the structural features (more important because indispensable) did. It acquired a name of its own: "the blue note." The more blue notes, the "meaner" the blues. And its occasional use, especially when immediately preceding a cadence, furnishes most white writers with their only excuse (from the historical standpoint) for having ever used the title "theBlues." There are not enough pedants, however, to preserve the integrity of the word at this late date.

To Handy is also to be credited the introduction, in the accompanying bass of some blues, of the habanera or tango rhythm (a dotted quarter, an eighth and two quarter-notes), with a success explainable on the well supported theory that this rhythm - the native word is tangana - is of African origin. He also wrote in strange figures for the long line-end holds (lineal descendants of the echoing wails in the originals), which soon came to emerge through the mouths of saxophones or the crowns of derby hats as the jazz we know. The relative shortness of a line of the blues had much to do with the birth and development of the most-discussed phenomenon of our present regime.

The blues are at their best as dance-music, but the orchestral treatment usually accorded them is a jazzing so continuous and indiscriminate that the melody is buried beneath the cowbells, rattlers and miscellaneous screeching machines. This is unfortunate because in many blues there is not only strangeness, but beauty, dependent only on a competent rendition. It may be a softly wistful beauty, or it may be the beauty of a savage and bitter power; this where it is jazzed, but properly, and without obliteration of its line. Some music (to be dogmatic) can be "properly" jazzed; some should be; many blues should be. Between those slow beats of the tympani, in those long holds, is room for such a syncopated gnashing of teeth, such cries of pain and passion, as might attend the ceremonial mock-marriage of two fiends - and while this brutal and aphrodisiac orchestral development of the simple tunes is recent, the germ was latent in the originals. The contempt rightly visited upon a ham conductor's gratuitous jazzing of some anemic steal from the Narcissus of Ethelbert Nevin, is not a sign of intelligence when applied to a jungle treatment of laments of the jungle's grandchildren. The latter may merely be liked or disliked, and the writer peaceably begs leave to like it. Abbe Niles

Whiteman discusses jazz in a series of articles in the Saturday Evening Post. He discusses the difference between ragtime, blues and jazz:

"The best way I have found to differentiate between ragtime, blues and jazz is to indicate each one of them by a line. The ragtime line is jerky. Blues has a long easy line and the jazz line rises to a point. The maple Leaf was the first rag, Memphis Blues was the first blues, so far as I have been able to find....At first both ragtime and blues were a sort of piano trick passed on from one performer to another. Up to the time that Handy organized an orchestra in Memphis, it is doubtful whether a single blue measure had ever been put on paper. Handy wrote out the blue notes for the first time.

At the House-Rent Stomps

According to John Stark, publisher of ragtime in St. Louis, ragtime originally meant a Negro syncopated dance, and the real Negro blues were never intended as a dance at all, but were a sort of negro opera, more like a wail or a lament than anything else. Big sessions of blues were held in the south among the colored people, the biggest of all occurring at "house-rent stomps" when a Negro found himself unable to pay his rent. The entertainment consisted of a barbecue with music afterward, during and before. The guests raised a purse to save their host's home and also composed a new blues for the occasion.

Jazz, which is ragtime and blues combined with a certain orchestral polyphony which neither had, was still another way of letting off steam."

In the same article we read a discussion as to who is capable of playing blues. I don't mean the traditional slow blues but as the term is used by the era's jazzmen, including white jazz musicians. Gus Mueller, a white clarinet player is mentioned remarking about playing blues with a new band:

"The real blues player is more hidebound in his way than the symphony men. Blues are a religion with him and he doesn't think a man who is able to read music can really play blues. He "suffers the blues," as one Southern player told me when I complimented him.

"Yassah, I suffah' em" he said.

I (Sic: Whiteman) had a New Orleans boy, Gus Miller, Mueller) who was wonderful on the clarinet and saxophone, but he couldn't read a line of music. I wanted to teach him how, but he wouldn't try to learn, so I had to play everything over for him and let him get it by ear. I couldn't understand why he wouldn't make an effort to take the instruction I wanted to give him. Finally, I got it out of him.

"Well, it's like this," he confided seriously. "I knew a boy once down in N' Awleens that was a hot player, but he learned to read music and then he couldn't play jazz any more. I don't want to be like that."

A few days later Gus came to me and said he was quitting. I was sorry and asked if it was money. he said no, but stalled as to his real reason. Finally, though, he came out with it.

"No, suh, I jes can't play that pretty music that you all play!" Then in a wild burst of words, "And, anyway, you fellers can't play blues worth a damn!"

Handy was a major influence in American popular music for his early use of the blues. The "Memphis Blues" is usually thought of as one of the earliest and most popular blues. We read why and how Handy began his work in the background of Negro blues. We read in the 1926 issue of Popular Mechanics:

"But the effects by which modern jazz is identified originated in our own southland and its Negroes. We first came to recognize them in the negro blues. W. C. Handy an Alabama Negro, put the blues on our musical map. Handy was proprietor and manager of a dance orchestra. One night, more than thirty years ago, he was filling an engagement at the little town of Cleveland, Miss. Three local Negroes applied for permission to interpolate a selection. This permission granted, the trio, equipped with mandolin, guitar and bass viol, played, over and over again, a mournful primitive strain of twelve instead of the orthodox sixteen measures.

There were just three changes of harmony in this unfinished symphony, but it made a bit, partly because the guitar and mandolin players slid their fingers along the frets and produced the effect we now hear in the Hawaiian steel-stringed guitar and ukulele and partly because the bass viol played "wolfed" his tones. White folks present showered money upon the local Negroes.

Handy sat up and took notice. He studied the new type of music, which had a melody something like the Negro spirituals, but encouraged encores because it left the

impression that there was something "Blues." It was a song without words at first, but it went big. Then Handy wrote some verses for it, referring to a Memphis election campaign. They were not so good. George Norton, a white man, contributed a new set of verses, which became permanently attached to the Handy melody praising the hospitality of Memphis and the skill of Handy's orchestra.

"The Memphis Blues" traveled from coast to coast. There was an outbreak of blues in every musical quarter."

Our next article also is an excellent discussion of the blues. It states that: "Next to the spirituals, the blues are probably the Negro's most distinctive contribution to American art. They have not been taken seriously because they have never been thoroughly understood. Behind the popular blues songs of today lie the more spontaneous and naive songs of the uncultured Negro.

OCTOBER 16, - MUSICAL AMERICA

NEGRO WORK-SONGS PROVE TREASURE HOUSE OF RACE CHARACTER. On the illuminated page of song the Negro has written the story of his life among us. His is by no means a completed history, nor have the last stanzas of his songful chronicle been flung into the unimpressionable air. The Negro is still singing, and the style of his musical speech is changing with the times-just as he changes. He is spreading his lore all over America, wherever he wanders to take up work in factory, furnace, construction gang, field, or levee.

It is the workaday songs that make up the diary of the Negro's everyday experiences, and they constitute a chain that binds the present with a past as old as that of the spirituals. They are the alluvial deposit of all the emotions that have possessed generations of laborers; and they range from religion to romance.

In the workaday songs, the complete Negro character is adumbrated, for every facet of his volatile spirit is reflected in one or another. Sociologically, then, they are of more value than the spirituals, and many of them are as rich musically.

The University of North Carolina, through Howard W. Odum and Guy B. Johnson, has made an attempt to compile a representative collection of this secular music. The gleanings are published by the University of North Carolina Press in one volume, entitled, "Negro Workaday Songs."

All the songs in the book were collected by the authors at first hand from the Negroes themselves. Concerning their task, they say:

"Perhaps the most striking observation that comes from the whole experience is the seemingly inexhaustible supply of songs among workaday Negroes in the South. We have yet to find a 'bottom' or a limit in the work songs among the crowds of working men in one community. . . Likewise we have yet to find an individual, whose efforts have been freely set forth in the offering of a song, whose supply of songs has been exhausted. Time and time again the approach has been made, with the response, 'Naw, sir, cap'n, I don't know no songs much,' with an ultimate result of song after song, seemingly with no limit. Partly the singer is honest; he does not at the time think of many songs, nor does he

consider himself a good singer; but when he turns himself 'loose' his capacity for memory and singing is astonishing."

"Careless Rapture"

Into these everyday songs, wanderer, ditch digger, chain gang worker, have all thrown their unconscious, unguarded feelings; thus are they perfect artists; so are these songs the true ghosts of the race.

The Negro with the pick is no less poetic than the Negro at camp meetin' for he can sing:

Ev'ywhere I look this, Ev'ywhere I look this mo'nin', Looks like rain.

I got rainbow tied 'round my shoulder, Ain't gonna rain, Lawd, ain't gonna rain.

For humor,, the wanderer has tossed off this bit from the roadside:

I done walk till, Lawd, I done walk till Feet's gone to rollin',
Jes' lak a wheel, Lawd, jes' lak a wheel.

"No story of the workaday song life of the Negro can proceed far without taking into account the kind of song known as the blues," say the authors, "for next to the spirituals, the blues are probably the Negro's most distinctive contribution to American art. They have not been taken seriously, because they have never been thoroughly understood. Behind the popular blues songs of today lie the more spontaneous and naive songs of the uncultured Negro. Long before the blues were formally introduced to the public, the Negro was creating them by expressing his gloomy moods in song. To be sure, the present use of the term 'blues' to designate a particular kind of popular song is of recent origin, but the use of the term in Negro songs goes much further back, and the blue or melancholy type of Negro secular song is as old as the spirituals themselves."

Lonesome

The blues cover any kind of loneliness or sadness. Many tell of "po' boy long way from home" yearning for his "babe" and a place to lay his weary head. In such sentimentalities a heart-felt "damn" or stronger expletive often finds a place.

Other blues are those songs which the authors describe as "Songs of the Lonesome Road." The following lonesome note comes from a present-day wanderer's song:

Freezin' ground wus my foldin' bed las' night
Got up in the mo'nin', couldn't keep from cryin'
Shoes all wore out my clothes done tore to pieces
Trouble gonna follow me to my grave.

Vivid self-pity is expressed in the tramp's reflections on his hard life. He sees himself at his own funeral, the most important figure, of course, receiving the elaborate last rites of a crowd of friends and mourners:

Look down po' lonesome road, Hacks all dead in line;
Some give nickel, some give a dime, to bury dis po' body o' mine.

Bad Man Ballads

In the bad-man ballads we find some folk portraits as picturesque as *Paul Bunyan* on this side of the Atlantic or *Ilya Mourometz* on the other. For delicious exaggeration, we place the narrative of *Travelin' Man* alongside the story of how *Paul Bunyan* got the ox team out of the frozen soil. *Travelin' Man* "Made a livin' stealin' chickens an' anything he could see," and the police could not kill him. He even disappeared from his coffin. "Ran so fast that fire came from his heels, and he scorched the cotton and burnt the corn and cut a road through the farmer's fields." Then

The coon went to spring one day to get a pail of water;
The distance he had to go was two miles and a quarter.

He got there an' started back, but he stumbled an' fell down;
He went tot he house and got another pail, an' caught the water 'fore it hit the ground.

There are others just as miraculous: *Bad Man Lazarus*, *Billy Bob Russell*, *Dupree*, *Bolin*, *Jones*, *Roscoe Bill*, *Slim Jim from Dark-Town Alley*, etc.

Referring to the Bad man Lazarus ballad, the authors say:

"It would be difficult to find a scene and setting more appealing than this ballad being sung by a group of Negro workingmen, in unison, with remarkable harmony, fine voices, inimitable manner. Doesn't this singing hinder you and your work?" We asked one of the pick-and-shovel men, just to see what type of reply he would make. With first a slow look of surprise, then a sort of pity for the man who would ask such a question, then a 'Lawdy-Lawd-Cap'n outburst of laughter, 'Cap'n, da's whut makes us work so much better, an' it nothin' else but."

The subject comes far enough up to late to indicate that the creation of songs among the Negroes is still in motion. Perhaps the Negroes possess the most extensive active folk-lore that is to be found in this country. A cursory dance through the specimens given in the chapter, "Just Song to Help with Work," will show this clearly. The poetic imagery, the humor, the abandon, the plaintiveness are just as rich as in the older creations.

Man and Woman

"There is probably no theme which comes nearer being common to all types of Negro songs than the theme of the relation of man and woman," we are told. "It is the

heart and soul of the blues. The Negro bad man is often pictured as being bad because of a woman. The jail and chain gang songs abound in plaintive references to woman and sweetheart, and the worker in railroad gang and construction camp often sings to his 'Cap'n' about his woman. Likewise, in the songs of woman, man plays the leading role.....

"Conflicts, disagreements, jealousies, and disappointments in the love relation have ever been productive of song. They are the chief source of 'hard luck' songs or blues, and the Negro's naive way of singing of his failure and disappointments in love is what has made the blues famous. Sometimes his songs portray vividly, often with a sort of martyr-like satisfaction, his difficulties with women. At times his song is defiant. At other times it is merely a complaint. Again it is despondent, in which case he is going 'to jump in the rivuh an' drown' or 'drink some pizen down' or do something else calculated to make the woman sorry that she mistreated him....."

"Woman's song of man is in most respects parallel to man's song of woman. Her themes are about the same. She sings of her 'man' or 'daddy,' of her disappointments and failures in love, of her unfaithful lover, and of her own secret amours.'

Here is a man's song of woman"

De women don't love me no mo'
I's a broke man from po' man's town.
De women don't love me no mo',
Cause I can't buy her stockin's an' a gown.

I don't keere, don't matter wid me,
I don't love to work no mo'.
Got to have money, got to have clo'es,
Don't a feller can't make no show.

De gal love de money
An' de man love de gal;
If dey bofe don't git what dey wants,
It's livin' in hell.

The pain is experienced by both sexes, though, and the woman sings of hers thus:

When de man dat I love says he didn't want me no mo',
I thought it was the hardest word I ever heard befo'.

I give myself to de sick an' my soul to de God above.
If you quit me, daddy, it won't worry me now,
Because when we are together I am worried anynow.

There's a note of victory along with a lament in this song of a woman:

Leavin' here, I sho' don't wanta go
Goin' up de country, Brown-skin, i can't carry youl

Don't write me no letters, don't send me no word,
I got another daddy to take your place.

The influence of the ordinary popular song of the whites is noticeable in several of the folk minstrel types given by Messrs. Odum and Johnson

Religious Element

Religious emotion, today as well as yesteryear, is still giving birth to song. The authors have this to say about this phase of modern Negro folk-song:

"There seems to be an impression abroad to the effect that the making of Negro spirituals stopped long ago. On the contrary, it is quite probable that more spirituals are being made today than during the days of slavery. As a matter of fact, the old spirituals have never been static.

"Among the lowly Negro folk of the South the making of spirituals is still a reality. Every community has its 'composers.

Often they are supposed to possess some special gift of the 'spirit.' From sermon, prayer, and crude folk wisdom they draw ideas and inspiration for their compositions. Sometimes the results are pathetic, but not infrequently there springs up a song which would compare favorably with the old spirituals."

Left Wing Gordon

These two folk-lorists have been fortunate in having been able to find a flesh-and-blood representative of the wanderer on the "lonesome road." His name is John Wesley Gordon, and he has worked and sung all over the country, practically. Negroes know him as Left Wing Gordon, or Wing, for short. Wing epitomized his history to Messrs. Odum and Johnson in these words:

"You see, boss, I started travelin' when I was 'leven years ol' an' now I'll be thirty this comin' August 26th. I didn't have no father an' mother', so I jes' started somewheres. I'd work fer folks, an' they wouldn't treat me right, so I moved on. An', lawd, Cap'n, I ain't stopped yet."

"And so he hadn't," the authors add. "for when on the morrow we came to put the finishing touches on his story, a fellow laborer said, 'Law,' boss, Wing done gone to Philadelphia."

We are told that Wing is really a great songster. "When de "Wing Blues' come out, dat's me," he would say. His chief refrain was always:

O my babe, you don't know my min',
When you see me laughin' laughin' to keep from cryin'.

He has many versions of this, we are told.

The mythological *John Henry* is given a chapter after the very real Wing. *John Henry* would hold his own beside *Paul Bunyan* any day.

The authors give thirteen of the actual tunes. There are some wonderful ones among them. Your preference will naturally be dictated by your taste, but we offer the *John Henry* tune to the American composer who is looking for good material for his next symphonic work." Stuart Mims.

The next write-up gives a good account of the work of W. C. Handy as he discusses the "Memphis Blues."

AN ANTHOLOGY CONCERNING "BLUES" - MORE SPIRITUALS - edited by
W. C. Handy

Vastly entertaining is the volume of "Blues" edited by W. C. Handy which comes from the press of Albert and Charles Booni, New York. An anthology of the native creations which go by its title, "Blues" presents an absorbing survey of the birth, adolescence and apotheosis of a "form" which was first appreciated by Mr. Handy, according to the foreword by Abbe Niles which is one of the ornaments of the book.

Mr. Niles tells the story of the blues thus: "They began as a sort of Afro-American folk-song-a 'form,' since they were distinguished primarily by their peculiar structure. The form became popular among Southern Negroes (not of the highest class), as a vehicle for expressing the individual's mood of the moment." In regard to Mr. Handy, of whom Mr. Niles speaks as "a colored musician with creative as well as analytical powers," it is recorded that his first published blues began "a revolution in the popular tunes of this land comparable only to that brought about by the introduction of ragtime."

A spiritual, Mr. Niles observes, is matter for choral treatment; a blues- the word "blues" seems to be perfectly good for either singular or plural usage-was a one-man affair, which had its origin as the natural outpouring of the singer's feelings, reaching its glorious, inglorious, or vainglorious finale in a single verse. A blues might start as a phrase, an ejaculation, sung because singing was as natural-more natural, probably-a means of expression as speech.

There continue notes on the folk-blues as verse, and as music; their harmony, tunes, the origin of their names. Mr. Handy and the history of his creations are discussed in vivid style.

"The Memphis Blues"

The story of the "Memphis Blues" is of particular interest:

"In 1909 the fight for the Memphis mayoralty was three-cornered, the corners being Messrs. Williams, Talbert and E. H. Crump. There were also three leading Negro bands: Eckford's, Bynum's and Handy's. As a matter of course the services of these three were engaged for the duration to demonstrate to the public the executive ability of their respective employers; through Jim Mulcahy, a ward leader before whose saloon the Handy forces had often serenaded, his candidate turned out to be Mr. Crump. This was a matter of moment, involving the organization of sub-bands in order to cover all possible territory, and Handy was spurred to creative effort, which he happened to exercise through the aid, not of remembered tunes, but of that blues form which had, without

analysis, somehow imbedded itself in his thoughts. His band opened fire at the corner of Main and Madison with a piece (named, of course, 'Mr. Crump'), of such vivacity that it caused dancing in the streets and an outbreak of public whistling. With such a song, and none like it forthcoming from Eckford's or Bynum's, the popular choice (Crump and Handy) was a foregone conclusion; the one became mayor, the other locally famous, the sought-after for all celebrations, the writer of manuscripts of his one lion-child for the belles between numbers at the dances, the magnificently tipped accordingly by their beaux; the proprietor of a whole chain of bands, sending out nearly ninety men to this quarter and that of a single night." Thus did a new form win immediate recognition for itself and its instigator and a political conflict at the same time.

With an introduction of such attractiveness, added to the printed script of over forty-five blues or near relatives of blues, including excerpts from Gershwin's "Rhapsody" and his Piano Concerto, and Carpenter's delicious "Krazy Kat," "Blues," which is illustrated with some of the most perfectly priceless examples of Miguel Covarrubias art, is a book to have and to hold!

Second Folk-Book

"The Second Book of Negro Spirituals," edited and with an introduction by James Weldon Johnson, with musical arrangements of J. Rosamond Johnson, continues the work of putting this music, characteristically treated, in a permanent form. The new volume contains many of the favorites that were omitted from the first because of the exigencies of space.

It would almost seem, as Mr. Weldon Johnson remarks, that the number of beautiful spirituals is inexhaustible. And this is true with regard not only to the number, but also to the variety of moods and thoughts which are expressed in them.

The numbers contained in the Second Book are as thrillingly sincere and moving as those which caused general rejoicing when the preceding volume was issued by the Viking Press. Mr. Rosamond Johnson has done his customary artistic arrangements-arrangements which consist largely of lightly suggested harmonization which in no case mars the naiveté, the simplicity, or the power of the original utterance.

Included are "Nobody Knows De Trouble I See," "Sometimes I Feel Like A Motherless Child," "I Want To Die Easy When I Die," "Members, Don't Get Weary," "Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?" "Same Train," "Walk in Jerusalem Just Like God," and many others, all of tenderness, rejoicing, reverence, wistfulness, indignation, of humanity that is remarkable-and a little terrifying." William Spier

The blues were new to most of the American public and Handy's book "The Blues" is a welcome addition to the field. Abbe Niles writes an introduction to the book that contains a few mis-information but the article is an interesting one. Especially pointing the fact out that "Harlem Blues" breaks tradition of the 12 bar phrase of the blues and also does not use the 'blue' notes of a traditional blues.

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER - MODERN MUSIC

THE BLUES. - There have been folk songs ever since there have been folk to sing them; but until a generation or so ago, these folk songs were left to the folk. About that period they first began to be taken up in a serious way by our best people-musically speaking. Some composers took well-known ones and treated them honestly, enhancing their simple beauties; others maltreated them until they were almost ugly and unrecognizable caricatures of themselves. It became the fad to employ them copiously as thematic material for works in large form. Some of the masters had done this long ago, of course, but without making so much fuss about it. Richard Strauss himself mistook *Funiculi, Funicula* for a genuine Italian folk song and built a whole movement on it.

When the known supply of folk tunes had been more or less exhausted through exploitation, musical entomologists got out their butterfly nets and began to chase through forest and jungle, seeking rare specimens. Before many years every country in the Western world had its collections of folk songs. There were British, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, German, Grecian, Austrian, and Scandinavian folk songs; the numerous countries ending in "ia" proved exceptionally prolific in tunes, generally mournful.

Every country, it seemed, seemed to have its inner consciousness-except ours. In nearly three centuries we had not been moved to enduring song. This, of course, would never do, and, as a matter of fact, it wasn't so. As far back as 1867, three Massachusetts citizens working among the North Carolina Negroes, out of pure love for music made a collection of their songs and published it under the title *Slave Songs of America*, printing merely the vocal line and the words. This little volume has become the Bible of American folk song.

Back in those days few people in America knew and still fewer people (here or elsewhere) cared what a folk song was, even if they chanced to know; but when, if we would not blush with shame for our delinquency, it became necessary to have American folk songs, some ingenious person or persons took out these *Sperichils*, as the Negroes called them, and nominated them for the basis of American folk song. In the absence of anything better, let them stand as such, with their secular cousins, the various varieties of "work" songs, also of Negroid origin. Add to these the few Foster songs which have become genuine folk music, the minstrel song *Dixie*, a few country tunes of unknown origin, such as *Turkey in the Straw* and the *Arkansas Traveler*, perhaps half-a-dozen universally known tunes, (so called "college songs," *Aunt Dinah's Quilting Party*, for instance), a handful of Creole patois songs from Louisiana, and the tale of American folk song is pretty nearly complete.

It is in one of these secular cousins of the spirituals that we are particularly interested just now because of the recent appearance of W. C. Handy's book, *The Blues*, with its introduction by Abbe Niles.

Probably no musician has ever so genuinely and entirely fathered any single form in music as Handy the Blues. Traveling all through the South for many years as leader of the band of a large minstrel show, his acute ear caught the artless, simple tunes that came from the mouths of the common people of his race, and whenever he heard a new one, he noted it down, from a collector's love of collecting and without a thought of putting it to definite use. One evening he saw a hall full of white people dancing, with vast enjoyment, to the monotonous repetition of one of these tunes as played by an extraordinary orchestra

of three Negroes, not one of whom could read a note of music, performing upon a mandolin, a guitar, and a bass viol. Before long, there came a city election in Memphis where Handy was living and conducting his own orchestra and band at the time (1910). Three rival candidates hired each a Negro band. Handy's championed the cause of a certain Mr. Crump. He bethought himself of one of those primitive tunes that he had jotted down, and elaborated it into a campaign song, "Mr. Crump." It had ribald words, but a catchy tune; and on the back of this tune Mr. Crump rode into the mayoralty.

Handy had learned his lesson. He renamed that tune, which became the *Memphis Blues*. Nobody would print it. It had only a twelve measure refrain instead of the conventional sixteen. So he printed it himself. It went. It is still going. So are a lot of the others that he began to arrange and publish from then on.

Though complications in copyright ownership have prevented Mr. Handy from including a number of well-known blues, the fifty-odd pieces in the book give a good view of the available material and its development. Particularly interesting are the examples of primitive blue themes in the introduction and the first part of the music section of the book. This introduction, by Abbe Niles, covers the subject with considerable thoroughness, especially when he writes of the texts of the blues. In treating their musical characteristics he is less exact. He invents the complicated and misleading term, "tonic third," by which he means merely the third note of the scale, and writes "diminished seventh" for "dominant seventh," though these are minor inaccuracies which would amount to nothing did they not give on the impression that the author is writing about something with the technique of which he is more or less unfamiliar. The illustrations by Miguel Covarrubias are superb. The artist has an uncanny power of suggesting motion. His black and white band plays so that one hears it from the page; his jammed hall full of dancers wriggles and surges before the eye; and there is a portrait cartoon of Mr. Handy more like him than a photograph.

Blues is a book worth doing, necessary to the library of anyone interested in American music, and one that will be wanted also just for personal enjoyment. But there will be no need of a second volume. The blues are indeed folk songs, but most of them, to speak frankly, are pretty poor stuff. As a rule they are improvisations out of the mouths of musical illiterates-and they sound like it. When Handy had a good theme he knew what to do with it-witness the *St. Louis Blues*, *The Beale Street Blues*, *The Florida Blues*, and a few others.

The blue *clichés*- the "blue note" (flatted third of the scale,) the twelve measure refrain, certain oft-appearing melodic phrases-soon pall on the ear; the harmonic pattern is restricted and monotonous; few of the texts have more than transitory interest or value, Handy himself, in the refrain of one of his newer songs, *The Harlem Blues*, (an original composition, not founded on a folk theme) has written a sixteen measure refrain and dropped the "blue note" entirely. Also it is a comment on the whole material that, from the aesthetic standpoint, by far the best song in the book is the artificial *The Half of It, Dearie, Blues*, manufactured by George Gershwin.

As a document the book was necessary and is valuable. It is the only anthology of a distinct branch of genuine folk music, part of the very little produced in our country; but it hardly seems material of sufficient strength or value perceptibly to influence in any way the development of music as an art, here or elsewhere. Henry O. Osgood

The blues are being analyzed to insure an understanding of what they were and how they were constructed melodically. The 'blue' notes are discussed and the fact is pointed out that the blues were being used for dance music.

MAY - THE ETUDE

MORE "HOT AND DIRTY" BREAKS - Some time ago we good-naturedly reprinted an advertisement from one of the theatrical trade papers, in which some of the jargon of the modern jazz music was introduced. We confessed that we did not know the meaning of such words as "hot," "Dirt," "gliss," "blue," "break," "weird," and so on, as applied to music; and we know that in none of the musical dictionaries of the world could these words be found. They are the patois of the newly rich in the apparently highly lucrative field of dance music.

With the beginning of the jazz era, people with uncontrollable tootsies have created a demand for dance rhythms the like of which the world has never hitherto known. There was the demoralizing epoch of the waltz, the polka and the saucy French can-can, which seem like kindergarten processions compared with the modern dance and all that goes with it. Some are blaming the dance on the intoxicating rhythm of jazz. We shall not attempt to adjudicate this question. However, it will be interesting to readers of *The Etude* to know the angle of the jazz musician's mind, as he views his own music. A recent work entitled, "Sure System of Improvising for All Lead Instruments, Especially Adapted to the Saxophone, Clarinet, Violin, Trumpet and Trombone," by Samuel T. Daley, published at \$3.00 is a most illuminating book. It should be of immense value to anyone whose chief concern in life is how to make "hot breaks," play "dirt" choruses, create "weird" blasts, "chromatic runs," "blue" notes, and so on indefinitely. Incidentally, it shows in an unusual manner how a great deal of piquancy and stimulating rhythm, almost to the point of *tremens agitans* and outright epilepsy, has been added to modern dance music under the broad caption of "jazz."

Who has been able to resist the exciting, irritating, intoxicating, nerve-flaying influence of modern jazz? In fact, the music has been made to act like a million whips upon human emotions. If it does not lash our nervous systems into new thrills, it does not succeed as jazz. Just how is this done? Mr. Daley tells us that it is done by virtue of "breaks." The "break" comes at any place in a "chorus" (usually a half cadence or whole cadence) of a popular song, where the performer may improvise upon the chord employed in harmonizing the measure where the "break" is introduced. In a thirty-two measure piece, the "break" would come in the seventh and eighth, in the fifteenth and sixteenth, in the twenty-third and twenty-fourth, and in the thirty-first and thirty-second measures. It might be introduced in other places as the nature of the chorus permitted. The author of this book provides several hundred rhythmical forms which the player of the particular instrument can introduce, employing the notes of the chord needed where the "break" comes. This is known as "hot" playing.

If he introduces certain kinds of chromatically altered notes, instead of playing the straight notes of the chord, itself, this is called "blues." Under other conditions, these

notes are known as "gliss" notes. "Gliss" evidently indicates a note sliding one half tone up into the principal note.

"Dirt Playing" is the result of embroidering a rhythmical pattern around the harmony of each measure throughout the entire composition. This "dirt" (sometimes known as "sock") pattern bears little resemblance to the original theme, except for the fact that it employs the same harmony in each measure.

There are "chromatic" runs and "weird" notes, in which the harmonies are varied. In fact, the author goes so far as to say "a very weird break is the whole tone scale." At the beginning, he admits that his system differs from the strict rules of harmony, but explains he is dealing with improvising and not harmony, although harmony plays a great part. Many of our teachers of harmony will read the book with surprise, but at the same time they will realize that out of this enormous amount of experimentation (the author says he has provided four thousand "breaks" in the book, which are only a limited number when the possibilities are considered) there has come a certain kind of spontaneity, akin only to the old Italian "improvisatore," those itinerant Mediterranean minstrels who would improvise both words and music for any event from a funeral to a wedding, or from a christening to a coronation, for a few pieces of copper.

After reading this book, we understand the origin of some of the terrible and destructive cacophony that sometimes comes from a jazz band. On the other hand, it explains how some of the very interesting effects are achieved through an accidental improvisation upon the part of ingenious wind instrument players, after the manner of the improvisations of gypsy performers in Hungarian bands.

The next article, while a short one, lists and explains the characteristics of the blues: 1) a tone of plaintiveness, 2) the relationship between man and woman, and 3) the expression of self pity.

JUNE - ETUDE

BLUES! - This from "Negro Workaday Songs," by Odum and Johnson, both of the University of Carolina where they have made an exhaustive study of Negro songs. (The passage is slightly condensed):

"What are the characteristics of the native blues, in so far as they can be spoken of as a type of song apart from other Negro songs?"

"In the first place, blues are characterized by a tone of plaintiveness. Both words and music give the impression of loneliness and melancholy. In fact, it was this quality, combined with the Negro's peculiar use of the word 'blues,' which gave the songs their name.

"In the second place, the theme of most blues is that of the love relation between man and woman. There are many blues built around homesickness and hard luck in general, but the love theme is the principal one. Sometimes it is a note of longing. At other times the dominant note is one of disappointment.

"A third characteristic of the blues is the expression of self-pity. Often this is the outstanding feature of the song. There seems to be a tendency for the despondent or blue singer to use the technic of the martyr to draw from others a reaction of sympathy.

(Psychologically speaking, the technic consists of rationalization, by which process the singer not only excuses his short-comings, but also attracts the attention and sympathy of others-in imagination at least-to his hard lot.)"

Referring to the popularization of blues by the phonograph records, these authors observe: "It is doubtful whether the history of song affords a parallel to the American situation with regard to blues. Here we have the phenomenon of a type of folk song becoming a great fad and being exploited in every conceivable form."

The blues are now a major influence in the jazz era. The elements are still present but are being presented in a new package, the jazz song. Again W. C. Handy is quoted.

AUGUST - THE MUSICIAN

STRIKING THE BLUE NOTE IN MUSIC - A new formula, sponsored by W. C. Handy, noted colored musician, affords inspiration for contemporary composers.

What are the blues? Or, shall one ask, what *is* the blues? This term, blues, holds a conspicuous position in modern-day musical development. It denotes a distinctive type of musical composition, originated and developed in the United States and now recognized throughout the world as a fascinating formula capable of unlimited evolutionary excursions.

While definitely associated with current "popular" or dance music, the "blue" idea contains so much of real musical importance that it is not to be passed up by students as something unworthy of serious attention. Indeed, some of our most progressive and significant composers have seized upon it as a really characteristic and indigenous thing in American music—a tonal formula which could come from no nation other than our own. Carpenter, Gershwin, Kern, and a long line of other contemporary composers have given us exalted and highly perfected versions of the blue spirit in music; while one may not predict to what lengths such experiments will unfold themselves, the type itself is assuredly deserving of the student's consideration.

The word "blues" as applied in the jargon of the day to one's state of mind, is not unrelated to the outstanding characteristics of the blues as a pattern of musical expression. There is the thought of sadness, melancholy or complaint in the music, though frequently one finds in it an admixture of good humored resignation.

W. C. Handy, a veteran colored musician, known as "the father of the blues," is the one man who is responsible for the development of the blue form from its original, primitive estate. It is he who first recognized the possibilities of the blues; and through his efforts the whole face of American music was changed. For it is quite evident that the form has exerted a very definite influence on all our musical expression—even the moderns of the classical school.

Mr. Handy gives us this version of the characteristics of the blues:

"The blues is written for the purpose of bolstering up the hope of its author. He may be tired, weary, his family without enough to eat, no money to pay the rent. But tonight he will go out and have a good time in an attempt, not only to throw aside his won

gloomy reactions to hardship, but to present an appearance to the world of unconcern, nay even of prosperity. So he sings the blues, adapting the words to the tune.

"The chief difference, then, between the blues and the spiritual is that the blues sings of the material sufferings of life, while in the spiritual the singer turns his appeal to heaven. The 'Memphis Blues, 'St. Louis Blues' and the authentic blues of all kinds are really a mixture of ragtime, spiritual and 'coon song,' the environmental music of Stephen C. Foster, and all the other Negro tunes and chants. The spirit is all jumbled together in one single form. My own compositions are all original so far as musical material and words are concerned, but for spirit I have called upon the traditional chants of my race."

W. C. Handy came from an unmusical family. He was born near Muscle Shoals, in Florence, Alabama, November 16, 1873. While very young he displayed a bent for music and in the face of opposition from his father, who was disinclined to have a musician in the family, he managed to pick up all the information available. He purchased a badly mutilated cornet for \$2.50 and stealthily learned to play it. He soon became a member of the Florence Quartet which had in its repertory such gems as "Little Annie Rooney" and "Little Fisher Maiden.":

He was an apt musician and the quartet he organized soon found its way to the World's Fair in Chicago. After that he pursued a varying career, organizing bands and playing all sorts of music. But he was attracted more and more to the essential value of Negro music and at length began to compose original melodies. The first blues was the famed "Memphis Blues," so called after the city of its birth. Then followed a long line of other blues all named for the particular southern cities in which they had their inception. Then came blues on other subjects-everything from alcohol to homesickness. In 1920 Jerome Kern copyrighted the "Left-All-Alone-Again-Blues." This started the fashion for blues songs with titles in which the detailed account was given of the exact nature of the melancholia.

A full account of the blues and its relationship to the popular music of today may be had in "Blues-An Anthology," edited by W. C. Handy himself. This book is probably the only authoritative work on the subject.

It was in 1910 that the word "blues" was first applied to the musical form. It had its origin among the "lower class" Negroes of the South. There were several variations on the use of the word; "Weary Blues" and "Worried Blues" being the most common. But the word itself as it now stands is very likely a shortened form of these.

One of the chief characteristics of the "blues" song is the peculiar treatment of the tonic third in the melody. It is a minor third and is introduced into melodies which (no matter how melancholy in feeling) would ordinarily exhibit the major third instead. This is generally considered to be a distinguishing feature and the device appears nearly as often as the melody reaches the third at all. It is called the "blue note."

The old-time Negro spiritual has long since made a dignified entrance into the realm of formal, concert auditorium music. Essentially a matter for choral treatment and reflecting the deeply religious nature of the colored race, it differs in conception and manner of expression from the blues. The latter form is a one-man affair, in which the singer gives vent to his feelings and emotions in a single verse. These emotions have little to do with religion; they are the ejaculations of a more or less despised class of Southern Negroes, classified in Mr. Handy's book as barroom pianists, careless nomadic laborers,

watchers of incoming trains and steam-boats, street corner guitar players, strumpets and outcasts.

The whole idea in a blues song might have been contained in a single interjection, a single line, and might have been complete in a single verse. It generally favored repetition and was sung to the point of its author's emotional saturation. It was very simple indeed and subject to any amount of improvisation. It is not necessary that the blues express, as its name might imply, depression; humor may enter in-a shrewd generalizing-kind of humor. But it is probably that the general run of blues is melancholy in tone." Paul Kempf, Jr.

CONCLUSION

We have read of the many different opinions as to the origin and beginning of the blues. It is usually impossible to really accurately trace the origin of any folk songs. Thus it is with the origins of the music called blues. The 'blues' is usually believed to be of southern origin and an outgrowth of the Negro music of the 19th century. I believe that the sorrowful feelings of the slaves and his religious music is the ancestor of the blues. Becca Lawton dated 1867 is the earliest example of a 'quasi' blues. (Sic: This spiritual is presented in the musical show "The Evolution of the Blues," and surely the feeling of the blues is present. The first published blues I have found was "I Got the Blues," written in 1908. W. C. Handy's "Memphis Blues," was probably the most popular blues that gained national attention.

During the twenties the word blues was used in a way to describe a 'jazzy' melodic application and many songs with the word 'blues' in the title denoted a jazzy song and not a true traditional 12 bar blues formula.

The blues seemed to be the secular neighbor of the Negro spiritual and its evolution should be placed as an outgrowth of the sorrowful Negro spiritual. It later became a vehicle for faster tempos and happier connotations.

The Evolution of Pre-jazz From the Quadrille/March to Ragtime and Blues in Music.

The following programs are those of the Musicum Jazz Antiqua, a group playing the music from the evolution of pre-jazz music to jazz.

Show I

The Evolution from the Quadrille/March to Ragtime

Narrator: Early jazz was dance music. Jazz musicians, or as we should label them, **dance musicians** (musically well schooled - as the Creoles of New Orleans- and less formally trained, both black and white musicians of the city of New Orleans), played the music for the contemporary balls and dances. The French Opera Orchestra also played for balls (usually right after the opera performance). We will examine the various dances of the era - music that was present during the evolutionary style of playing music that evolved into jazz.

THE BLACK QUEEN QUADRILLE -- 1886

Perhaps the most popular social dance in the city of New Orleans, a French and Spanish City, was the Quadrille - a dance best described to those living in the Americas as a type of square dance but with more 'polite' movements, more grace, and more formal calls. It is a series of settings that alternate between the meters of 2/4 and 6/8, although never in any set rhythmic pattern for each movement. This form can be seen in the Quadrille the "Black Queen" as played by the MJA.

The Quadrille was a French dance of the early 19th century, performed by two or four couples moving in a square. It consisted of 5 figures (Le Pantelon, L'Ete, la Poule, La Trenise and La Pastourelle, Finale), the music for which, alternating between 6/8 and 2/4 meters, was chosen from popular tunes, operatic airs, and even sacred music. The dance was very popular during the Napoleonic era and remained fashionable until it was replaced by the polka.

Of the many published early quadrilles I have chosen the "Black Queen," an excellent example for discussion and performance. Its section meters are: 2/4, 2/4, 6/8, 2/4, and 2/4.

At once one can tell that the level of musical ability was of a very high musical ability and the city had to have musicians well accomplished in the art of playing classically characteristic music such as found in the published quadrille. So it is not surprising to read that it was the tradition to schedule a ball after the opera performance using the opera orchestra as the musical dance ensemble. They played not only the latest

popular dance compositions but performed various excerpts from opera that lent themselves as capable of being used as dance material.

Closely akin to the quadrille were the jigs and reels of earlier times and the closely related Lancers, a quadrille influenced by the formation made on the parade field by mounted horse soldiers.

The quadrille could be thought of as the ancestor of the cakewalk and ragtime. The quadrille had two characteristics shared by ragtime: 1) the adaptation of widely miscellaneous popular folk song material and, 2) a great range of rhythmic and melodic flexibility. The Quadrille was a style and form that had an influence and evolved into the cakewalk.

COMUS WALTZ - 1856

One of the earliest pieces of music in the Robichaux music library is the Comus Waltz. It is a great example of the genre, with beautiful but simple melodic lines and stable basic harmonic structure, never going far from its D major center of the first section. It does modulate to the closely related key of G major for the remaining two sections. In playing these early band arrangements, one must be aware of some rather trivial mistakes in the editing and printing. One such mistake was found in the piano part of the first section: counting after the introduction, bars 11 and 12 should be repeated as two measures are left out. The piece also has a D.C. but no Fine. The Fine probably is at the second ending of the first D major section. The performance does not take the D.C. and ends at the second ending of the third section. On the scale of difficulty from 1 to 10, I would think this is a three. The music could be played well by a good Junior High School group.

UNDER THE BALCONY POLKA - 1893

Not until 1825-1830 does the absolute supremacy of the waltz in the field of couple dancing begin to wane. One of the most serious challengers was the polka. The polka's rhythm characteristic o o o / o o o - was played at a tempo of a half note - o = m.m. 88. The Polka, first called the Schottische, began in Central Europe. It appeared in Germany in 1830 and Paris in 1840.

The polka, next to the waltz, was one of the most popular dances of the 19th Century's last few decades. There have been attempts at linking the polka to early ragtime but the possibility seems somewhat futile. The tempo of a polka is much faster and this attempted link might be to the quickstep march that, of course, would give us that link to the regular march and ragtime.

Under the Balcony Polka was published in 1893 in Philadelphia, Pa. It begins with a brief introduction of four measures. The first section establishes a rhythm associated with polkas. It settles down after four bars to a regular 'up poh' rhythm, typical of a march, or any duple meter piece. The polka is in basically two sections with a transition and a D. C., ending in a 12 bar coda. One does not expect to find syncopation, and we do not. There are some ties to the 2nd beat, but the remaining notes act as a 'pick-up' to the next phrase.

DANCING TOPSY - SCHOTTISCHE - 1903

The Schottische *Dancing Topsy* (a dance still danced today) is a couple dance in duple meter and could be described as a slow polka. It was present in America in the Early 1840's, arriving later than the polka.

Dancing Topsy, while not the typical Schottische, was chosen to show the attempt at combining Negro styles to the established dance style of the era. Described as a 'darky shuffle' the tempo is given as 'Temp di Schottische.' It was published in 1903, in Troy, New York. Of interest to jazz evolution is the uncharacteristic cakewalk rhythm presented in the first measure of the first section o o o . The point of interest is that the rhythm that has been associated with the cakewalk is also the main rhythmic characteristic of Scottish folk music, known as the 'Scotch Snap.' One wonders what, if any, the relationship is between the two.

There is an introduction of eight bars leading into section A. This section is repeated and leads to a bass melodic line for 2 measures that alternates with a triplet melodic figure in the high parts for 8 bars.

A recapitulation of section A now occurs leading to a trio and change of key from C to F. The trio, beginning with a phrase, if standing alone, would deem this piece a cakewalk, but these 4 bars, repeated a few bars later, leads into a typical Schottische rhythmic pattern, showing contrast between the well-known rhythm of the Negro cakewalk rhythm and the Schottische.

MOON WINKS - Mazurka - 1904

One of the most interesting of the dances of the 19th Century was the mazurka, written in triple meter but often called a polka/mazurka. It is related to the waltz through its 3/4 meter. According to one early 19th Century dance master the mazurka was "played but not in high request in fashionable society, the dance being rather slow." It is not found in the many dance cards examined but is listed in an early newspaper account in the St. Tammany Farmer of Covington, La., located on the North Shore of Lake Pontchartrain. Not to be confused with the instrumental piano music of Chopin, the mazurka was a dance style popularized by Chopin and found in the folk music of Poland.

Moonwinks was published in 1904 and is subtitled a "three step" to distinguish it from a waltz. The tempo is on the slow side when compared to a waltz but would be in the andante tempo of music. There are only a few mazurkas found in the Robichaux collection. Surely there was not as much of a demand for it as for the waltz and other dances.

The first section uses an abundance of grace notes giving it a classical feeling in 16 bars. This first section is simple in harmonic structure and interesting in its rhythmic structure. One gets a feeling that it is attempting to establish its own 3/4 structure and attempting, successfully, to get away from a waltz-type rhythmic pattern.

The second section begins with a dotted rhythm and the tendency is to stress the 2nd beat of each measure, again getting away from a flowing waltz feeling and creating a feeling of syncopation. While this is an average technique piece (probably a four on a

scale of ten), the most difficult problem is deciding how to play the various D.C., Fine and Coda endings. There are two Fines given. The final section, marked FF, is a short development on the first section, more of an extension for 4 bars and a recapitulation for the remaining 8 bars.

CRESCUS GALOP - 1902

The Galop (in 2/4) was a couple dance and usually found its function as a finale to the first part of a ball just before an intermission. This is a young people's dance and their reaction upon the introduction was like going to the starting line for a 10K mile run. Couples, at the beginning of the dance would move in sliding steps across the ballroom floor, competing with other couples in daring, speedy steps as the music became faster. The final bars of the dance would find the couples speeding across the floor with reckless abandon.

The Crescus Galop was published in 1902, using an ascending figure in the first 4 bars announcing the exciting opening strain - almost like the old "one for the money, two for the show, three to get ready and four to go." The dance steps to this stimulating music were almost like those of a very fast polka. The music instills excitement, with stirring figures that reaching a high tension level, then releasing the tension, only to once again build tension. The last written section leads to a coda-like part, presenting a very feasible ending but, to the delight or dismay of the dancers, it doesn't end. We are presented with a D.S. and the dancers must continue, with a repeat of section C, at a gradual accelerando (Sic: increase in speed), ending with the dancers almost running full speed to collapse in their chairs at the walls of the dance hall, all couples grasping for breath but laughing and shouting, having had an enjoyable but fatiguing time on the dance floor.

SHOW 2

THE EVOLUTION: FROM THE MARCH TO RAGTIME

The word 'rag' is used both as a noun and a verb. It is generic to a large group of musical works that might be identified as a cakewalk, coon song, jubilee; or even a march or two-step; and finally, a rag or anything 'ragged.' The term ragtime can be used to describe the peculiar, broken rhythmic feature o o o (a pattern called united syncopation), and while the various, once popular, songs faded from appeal, the characteristic rhythm continued and is found in songs by other names and descriptions. Two types of syncopation (united and tied) were added to many popular songs. This included marches that were delivered with the performer raggin' a chorus, which was only a step away from what is now called early jazz. It has been written by early jazz musicians that they called early jazz 'ragtime' before adopting the name jazz to describe the newly involving musical style.

The ambiguous nature of popular music in the early 20th Century lent itself so naturally to various styles that most songs would be entitled one way and then stated that

it could be adapted to many other styles. Even the famous Washington Post March of Sousa was first written and thought of as a two-step. (Example: "A Warm Up In Dixie" is marked "used as a cakewalk, march and two-step).

Ragtime, the most popular style of music during the turn of the 20th Century was performed by the traditional instrumental ensemble of the day, the brass band and the theater orchestra. Many original rags were not written as vocal or piano numbers but as instrumental orchestra music (Mississippi Rag - first published as a rag is notated as "the first ragtime two-step ever written" and first played by Krell's Orchestra. Arthur Pryor's "Coon Band Contest" (1899) is identified as a trombone solo.

Instrumental rags and ragtime-styled music (an ancestor and influence of jazz), were important in jazz's evolution because they 1) brought Negro rhythmic music to the usually sophisticated American White Society, 2) non-reading bands listened to and imitated the more learned orchestras heard performing ragtime songs, 3) the large demand for dance orchestras during an era when dancing was the most popular form of social activity, and 4) they provided the style for the 'ragging' of marches by adding syncopation and blue notes by the piano players of the era. When a ragtime piece was played the dancers determined the choice of dance steps, although the music might call it a two-step, one-step, ragtime or a number of other dance styles. Example: The above mentioned "A Warm Up in Dixie." Ragtime's ancestry is also in the French Quadrille and the military march. Ragtime used the strict form of the march and two characteristics of the quadrille - the adaptation of widely miscellaneous popular folk song material, and a great range of rhythmic and melodic flexibility. Its evolution is similar to the evolution of the classic Ricercar to the Fugue.

This program traces the evolution of the rag from its early ancestors to jazz songs. We must remember that: there was really no difference between early cakewalks, early rags and the two-step. Ragtime was associated with dancing.

We must state that we realize that early ragtime text was in exceedingly poor taste and decidedly vulgar. It used racial bigotry, using caricatures and stereotypes with brutally coarse language. We also do state that, however vulgar the words, they fit the music like a glove.

WALKING FOR DAT CAKE - 1877

Written by Dave Braham and Edward Harrigan, this piece was published in 1877. The cakewalk was originally a plantation dance accompanied by banjo music, generally on Sunday when slaves would dress up in fancy clothes and prance around to the music. The custom developed of the master giving a cake to the couple that presented the proudest movements. It first appeared in the minstrel shows and passed into the variety acts of early vaudeville.

The team of Harrigan and Hart presented, in 1877, a musical selection called "Walking for Dat Cake." It was billed as an "exquisite picture of Negro life and customs."

The rhythms are laced with dotted figures with some use of syncopation. However, it is the words that seem to be of more importance than the rhythms. The lyrics give a good explanation to the cakewalk style and the social affair that it was.

The song is divided into four sections with the 4th section an instrumental one before it repeats to a D. C. This piece does not use the traditional cakewalk rhythm and perhaps should not be called an early "cakewalk" but the title indicates the use of the activity of cakewalking as a viable article.

The lyrics describe individual participating in the cakewalk. There is no evidence of the traditional cakewalk rhythm (o o o), but the song contains dotted rhythms (o o), and if we put two in a row (o o o o) we see a quasi cakewalk rhythm. The lyrics do state: "Den all forward four, just in de gay quadrille - O Lord how we perspire. No use, we can't keep still; Oh, please to stop dat music...a walking for dat cake."

PHILO SENATE MARCH - 1894

The Philo Senate March is a typical late 19th Century march as played by the bands of this era for either a street march or as a two-step in the dance hall. This march style composition is one step away from added syncopated rhythm to the march and of the march's evolution into the newly adopted Negro rhythm that, when added to a march, became what was to be called ragtime. It is this evolution between the march to ragtime that leads to the evolution of jazz music.

The Philo Senate March, written in 1894, is structured as a three section march - A, B and C (trio). Section A is interesting as it is a group of phrases that begin as a dynamic level of piano (p), a crescendo to forte (f) within four measures that is repeated four times, ending in a normal cadential formula.

Section two uses a similar melodic ascending scheme using half note values instead of quarter notes of section A. Interesting, like the 13th measure of the various cakewalks, this measure is of unison character. The trio also has an ascending scale-like melodic character. Without the use of syncopation, it is a workable, easily playable march, playable (unlike the harder Sousa marches) by most brass bands that existed in the city of New Orleans.

UNCLE EPH'S BIRTHDAY - 1896

The cover of the sheet music reads "March" but in reality 'Uncle Eph' is a cakewalk. The introduction uses the cakewalk rhythm. This composition appears to be a bridge between the earlier march (Philo Senate and Gartland) and the cakewalk style that was becoming popular. We find a frequent use of united syncopation and the characteristic cakewalk use of unison in bar 13. The 3rd strain contains the most frequent use of united syncopation. The 3rd strain (not marked trio but in reality one) also contains the march's characteristic of alternating dynamic's levels of soft and loud (soft two bars, loud two bars). This piece stands as an interesting one and combines the march and the cakewalk into one composition, a technique that we will see is shared by many others as one style evolves into other styles, characteristic of the evolution of the march to the various Negro rhythms, becoming what were called cakewalks, jubilees and coon songs.

TENNESSEE JUBILEE - 1898

A good example of an early cakewalk, the Tennessee Jubilee, is more demanding technique wise and more interesting in its harmonic structure than ordinary cakewalks, shifting between major and minor and modulating from C major to momentary feelings of A minor before returning to C major in section one. Section 2 begins with an A major sound, passing the relative minor of C (A minor) to A major, an unusual modulation or chord progression for a cakewalk but semi-frequently throughout the classical period of music, notably in Mozart's music. The 2nd section sees shifts from A major to C to A then back to C, this leading to a middle section in the key of F, remaining in F for 16 (there is a bar left out - bar 8 that should be a beat of F major and a beat of C major).

The trio modulates to Bb major and is in two sections, repeated and ends this typical and highly entertaining cakewalk, which remains as one of the most musical and characteristic cakewalks of the genre.

ECHOES OF THE SNOW BALL CLUB - 1898

This piece is described as a ragtime waltz, and is the fore-runner of the jazz waltzes of modern jazz. The waltz was one of the most refined styles of ballroom dancing and akin to today's arrangers using a rock beat to a symphonic melody. We hear a re-occurring rhythm and theme that possesses use of syncopation. Much as early rags retain sections that were march-like, we find sections that are more waltz-like rhythms than ragtime. During this ragtime era we find arrangers using themes from the classic repertoire and "jazzing" the melody to be played by jazz bands, and pianists "raggin" a march, and it is not surprising to find a ragtime waltz.

Harry P. Guy, the composers of "Echoes" was from Zanesville, Ohio, once sang with the Fisk Jubilee Singers, was a co-hart of Fred Stone and helped unionize the Detroit musicians who had built a fine headquarters and club for union musicians that may still be in use. Guy was considered a scholar in the ragtime field and looked back with pride on the "brilliant old days that are now gone."

SHUFFLING JASPER - 1899

One of the earliest cakewalk pieces that were sub-titled "ragtime," 'Jasper' is also notated as a two-step. It contains all the characteristics of the early cakewalk in this collection and its inclusion is due, not only to its excellent cakewalk music, but to its statement in the sub-title describing it as ragtime, coming out in print the same year as the Mississippi Rag, usually thought of as the first rag published.

BOS'N RAG - 1899

Possibly one of the first true classic rags, it was published in 1899, about the same time as the Maple Leaf Rag of Scott Joplin. It uses tied syncopation, a trait of classic rags incorporated later in 1906. Usually these early cakewalks and /or rags would use united syncopation, making this particular rag not only very interesting but important in its own right. It also shows the progress made in the evolutionary process where there is less

evidence of the march and traditional cakewalk rhythm, into the rhythms and character of a very early rag, much more than the characteristic cakewalk rhythms used in the Mississippi Rag., which is considered, historically, a very important piece.

The composer, Fred Stone, and his orchestra, monopolized the Detroit entertainment and social world to almost complete exclusion of white performers up until the 1920's. The black musicians of Detroit were organized first and the white musicians of the city petitioned the black musician's union for admission, a position that was a reverse of the national trend. Stone died in the middle 30's. His hold on music jobs continued well into the 20's when the "name" bands began to overtake the Stone empire.

GARTLAND MARCH - 1906

Written in 1906, the Gartland March is another typical march of the early 20th Century, that is found in the music library of John Robichaux. This march is mentioned by some of the early jazz men in their early interviews housed at the Tulane Jazz Archives making it a curiosity if not an artistic composition worthwhile of performance. We find in bar 10 the use of typical march style's application of untied syncopation, a rhythmic element that is beginning to appear more frequently in popular music. The 2nd beat of the measure is carried over by a half note into the 3rd best (again in bar 12). This rhythm also occurs in the 2nd section in bars: 2, 4 and 6, and bars 10 and 12.

JUNK MAN RAG - 1913

A well-developed rag, the Junk Man rag is a mature example of ragtime during its most popular period by one of its most accomplished musicians, C. Roberts. This was dance music as it is described as a one or two-step. An interesting item is the tempo. Most ragtime was marked "not too fast." If the dancers wanted to dance a one-step, the same music would be played faster. This was the dilemma that the musicians of this era were up against. (More about this later.)

This rag is also interesting with its use of the cakewalk rhythm and the use of both untied and tied syncopation. There is no use of "blue" notes, as the jazz sound was not in vogue at the time of publication.

SHOW 3

TYPES OF NEGRO MUSICAL STYLE

Negro popular music evolved from the Southern Plantation's work songs, early shouts and other Negro types. When mixed with European harmonic structure they developed into musical types called jubilees, cakewalks, coon songs and ragtime. Many times these songs are hard to put into categories. On the cover of sheet music we can read that the inside song is referred to as either a cakewalk, jubilee, two-step or march. So, the musical style may not differ because of the title or description on the music. It is difficult

to define many of the styles when given names in the titles such as a "stomp," "drag," or "shuffle." Many sound alike and seldom can we really distinguish between them. We will play pieces labeled a certain style and attempt to define each style as to its characteristic rhythm, form or style.

SWAMPTOWN SHUFFLE - 1902

Subtitled two-step, polka or march this piece contains syncopation as used in the early cakewalks and could be played at a slower or faster tempo, depending on the type of dance that was required. Perhaps this variance in tempo was part of the evolution from the two-step/march into the use by Tin Pan Alley of the early rhythms of the popular music of the era, that we will call the "jazz song." "Shuffle" contains cakewalk rhythms and seems to be an attempt of the publishing companies to sell a song that can please many different buyers. The trio of SwampTown Shuffle is very polka-like with no syncopation until the 9th bar. We find a D. C. which returns to state the 1st theme. There does not appear to be any characteristic that could be deemed as part of a style called a "shuffle."

A shuffle is defined as: a dance step of indefinite southern black American origin, perhaps dating from the 18th Century, in which the feet are moved rhythmically across the floor without being lifted and the coming together of beats smoothly without accents.

PEACEFUL HENRY - 1902

Written in 1902 by E. H. Kelly, it was a "hit" instrumental piece and is called a slow drag. It was named after an old colored janitor in the basement of a building who was called "Peaceful Henry." The piece does use tied syncopation to great effect.

A slow drag is defined as: a deliberately or unintentionally attempts to sing or play slightly behind the beat, as articulated by the rhythm section or implied by the playing of the rest of the ensemble. Its' style is difficult to interpret by an ensemble. It was published by a Detroit Press and has a picture of a Negro youth on the cover.

COONTOWN CAPERS - 1897

Marked a two-step/cakewalk, "Capers" is march-like but with a syncopated introduction. The cover list 15 different instrumental combinations that could be used. It is one of the earliest cakewalks using united syncopation throughout, with the traditional use of unison and cakewalk rhythms in bar 13. One interesting part is the vocal in section D (the piece is in four sections), with the melody of the vocal repeated instrumentally to the end of the song. The words are given below and are "tame" in comparison with other coon song lyrics.

The lyrics to the first section are: "Coons will be dancing, Gals will be prancing, Until the morning bright; Folks will be singing, shouting and winging, capers in Coontown tonight."

Eb BLUES - 1923

Eb Blues is a modified version of the 12 bar blues form. Repeated notes (8ths), a characteristic of early instrumental blues are used in part two. Published by the Clarence Williams Publishing Company it is more akin to a true Negro style of instrumental playing than other published blues and shows the important contribution made to popular music by the Clarence Williams Publishing Co. and why it held an important position in authentic Negro music in the era's popular music culture and industry. The Eb Blues is the culmination of the early 'guitar' blues style to jazz band 'blues.'

SHUFFLE AND TAPS -1910

Written by Ribe Denmark (real name - J. B. Lamp), 'Shuffle' is marked a 'stop dance.' There is no regular rhythmic shuffle pattern nor any hint at the familiar taps. The first section uses cakewalk rhythms that vary in section 2 or 3, these sections being march-like with only an occasion appearance of the cakewalk rhythm. Interesting imitation effect is present in bars 13-16, with bar 14 dropped if accompanying a dancer.

GAZABO - 1902

Written as a buck and wing dance, "Gazabo" uses the cakewalk rhythm and tied syncopation with the use of a staccato style. There is an interesting counter-melody in the trio that is reminiscent of a baritone horn playing a counter-melody in a standard march. It is rag-like in the classical sense and with no stereo type rhythm that would characterize a "buck and wing" dance. It could and probably should be classified as a rag, cakewalk or two-step.

TROMBONE JOHNSON - no date

Written in cut-time (2/2), the cakewalk rhythm appears as o o o , with the use of syncopation part of the style. Part four, the last strain, is noted on the violin part and reads:

"To the leader: Don't let the irregularities of the 4th strain disturb you. 'Trombone John' didn't like to wait long on the rest of the orchestra and frequently cut them off without ceremony."

DOWN HOME RAG - 1911

Titled a "rag" it is also notated a Buck Dance. There is no definition of what a buck dance is. Some say it is a dance done by a Negro man (called a buck by slave owners). Others say it is a stylistic dance more like a hard stomping version of the vaudeville "soft shoe " dance.

The piece contains syncopation, dotted rhythms and a rather boring repeated melodic pattern in sections A, B, and D. The reason this is being played is that it did become very popular - so popular that the Tuxedo Orchestra of New Orleans, in 1925, re-organized the piece and added space for improvised solos, showing the evolution from the early dance pieces of early rags and evolving them into the jazz songs of the 20's. They entitled it "Black Rag."

THE STOMP - 1923

Grove's Dictionary of Jazz defines a stomp as: "The final chorus of a rag, march, or other lively piece, when played in a loud, spirited manner is called a stomp chorus. An 'all-in,' 'out chorus', 'ride-out', or 'sock chorus' is a collectively improvised final statement of the theme in a lively style." In early jazz (being dance music), the stomp was characterized by stamping feet.

The form or style of a stomp has never been really defined except that the rhythm is usually a heavy 2 or 4 beats. This piece is interesting as we see these heavy four beats in the lower parts with a syncopated melody in the upper parts. It is also marked with accents that could be characterized as stylistic rhythm in stomps. The piece is in two sections - like a verse/chorus structure. A is 12 bar long. B is 16 plus 16 in which the theme is presented in the 1st 8 of each 15 bar section , the last 16 ending in coda - like material.

Interesting , it is also called "House - Rent Blues" and is another use of a Negro style by Tin Pan Alley composers.

Another definition of a stomp is given as: "A heavy, strongly marked beat associated with early ragtime and early blues form, characterized by stamping steps. A 'stomp chorus' is the final chorus of a lively piece, played in a loud, spirited manner." The term is used mostly in early jazz.

Deep River

The Negro Spiritual holds a place of importance in the development of early American popular music. The art of singing a spiritual demanded a style and talent to embellish a melody. This technique of improvising was one of the main influences in the development and evolution of the jazz style and was to be one of the most exciting elements of the jazz style. Preserving these early spirituals - an oral music - was long neglected, either from a lack of foresight, and or the difficulty of notating an oral musical technique, a style that usually presented a different performance each time. Through the dedication and foresight of a few some of these early spirituals were preserved. Such a man was Robert Emmett Kennedy, an Algiers, Louisiana native, who wrote down both the lyrics and music of the spirituals he heard around the New Orleans area. These may be found in his book "Mellow", the Negro dialect being given in the lyrics. ("Mellows" is reprinted and is available from the Basin Street Press.)

An emphasis and the realization of the importance of national musical heritage was created by the visit of the world renown composer Anton Dvorak in 1897. Through the influence of Dvorak, a number of American composers began using Negro and Indian

melodies as compositional material. H. T. Burleigh, a pupil of Dvorak (Burleigh was a Negro), published a number of spirituals in his rich harmonic style of composition, one of which is 'Deep River.'

SHOW IV

THE EVOLUTION OF THE BLUES

THE STORY OF THE BLUES

The blues are a one-man affair, the expression of one's inner feelings. They began as a vocal treatment that sprung up among illiterate Negroes of the South's Delta, using the prominent chords of harmonic music - I, IV and V.

While primarily a vocal music, the Blues' influence was technical and melodic - the blues scale and characteristic style became a major influence in spreading an authentic early 'jazz sound' to legit dance musicians and arrangers. This can be seen in the numerous songs labeled 'blues' but which did not contain the authentic blues progression given above, but the melodic/harmonic style of the blues, although the title might be labeled 'blues.'

RAIN FALL & WET BECCA LAWTON

The earliest example of a blues is found in "Slave Songs of the United States, published in 1867. We probably will never be able to identify when the first 12 bar blues was played. Some scholars have stated that they have found traces in tribal Africa. Many believe the blues, having various chordal progressions (the 12 bar being the most popular) evolved in the Delta area of the Mississippi River. In 'Slave Songs' we find the song 'Rain Fall & Wet Becca Lawton.'

It is not known who Becca Lawton was and there is no concrete knowledge of the meaning of the song. It has been said that there was some tradition of grass not growing over the grave of a sinner. It has also been said that if the Lord was pleased with those who had been 'in the wilderness' he would send rain. It was also said that the song always ended with a laugh. The song was also used as a rowing song and when used as such, at the words 'rack back holy!' one rower reaches over back and slaps the man behind him, who in turn does the same, and so on.

ONE O' THEM THINGS (1904)

Published in 1904 and written by James Chapman and Leroy Smith, the song is labeled 'Rag Time - Two-Step.' 'One O' Them Things' begins with an introduction in the

cakewalk rhythm (o o o) then a 12 bar blues section is presented. The middle two sections, not in the blues form, is followed by a D. S. that repeats the first section in blues progression. There is use of syncopation in the blues section. Most blues (either authentic or so titled) were considered to be rags during the early 20th Century, thus the labeling as a ragtime piece. The cakewalk rhythm is used sparingly in section two. These sections sound like a cakewalk. Thus we have the mixing again of styles and form. Within this piece we find the cakewalk, the blues, the march form (or three sections with a D. S.) and the dancers dancing the two-step to the rhythm presented.

I GOT THE BLUES (1908)

While the origins of the blues is clouded, its popularity is not. Many of the early jazz bands such as Chris Kelly's and Buddy Bolden's had blues repertoire. Kelly was known in New Orleans as the 'King of the Blues.'

As the blues gained popularity, Tin Pan Alley began publishing blues arrangements, many of which were not in the traditional 12 bar blues form. One of the earliest published blues was 'I Got The Blues' published in 1908. Written by A. Maggio this blues is part of the John Robichaux Dance Band Library.

The first section is in 12 bar blues form, with part of the 2nd section not in blues form but does end with a 12 bar blues form in minor. This piece shows the use of the traditional blues form but with sections not in the 12 bar blues form.

MEMPHIS BLUES (1912)

The "Memphis Blues" is usually considered one of the earliest of blues that was published. Perhaps it should be said that it was not the earliest blues published but one of the first with words to it. The story of this blues is very interesting.

In 1909 the fight for the Memphis mayoralty was three-cornered - the corners being Messrs. Williams, Talbert and E. H. Crump. There were also three leading Negro bands in Memphis: Eckford's, Bynum's and Handy's. As a matter of course the services of these three were engaged for the duration to demonstrate to the public the executive ability of their respective employers; through Jim Mulcahy, a ward leader before whose saloon the Handy forces had often serenaded, his candidate turned out to be Mr. Crump. This was a matter of moment, involving the organization of sub-bands in order to cover all possible territory, and Handy was spurred to creative effort, which he happened to exercise through the aid, not of remembered tunes, but of that blues form which had, without analysis, somehow imbedded itself in his thoughts. His band opened fire at the corner of Main and Madison with a piece (named, of course, "Mr. Crump"), of such vivacity that it caused dancing in the streets and an outbreak of public whistling. With such a song, and none like it forthcoming from Eckford's or Bynum's, the popular choice (Crump and Handy) was a foregone conclusion; the one became mayor, the other locally famous, the sought-after for all celebrations.

Thus did a new form win immediate recognition for itself and its instigator and a political conflict at the same time.

It was without words at first, but it went big. Then George Norton, a white man, contributed a new set of verses, which became permanently attached to the Handy melody praising the hospitality of Memphis. The "Memphis Blues" traveled from coast to coast. There was an outbreak of blues in every musical quarter.

MAGNETIC RAG (1914)

Magnetic Rag is the last rag from Scott Joplin's pen. It was posthumously published in 1914, three years after the publishing of Berlin's 'Alexander's Ragtime Band.' These Tin Pan Alley 'rags' hastened the fate of classical ragtime, as most were easily played. Magnetic Rag interestingly possesses a quasi blues form in the third section. In this section we find an extension of the harmony after the first four, but can be called a use of the blues 12 bar form as it continues after this inserted two bars. If played excluding the two bars you will hear a 12 bar blues progression. Probably because of prestige, Joplin didn't want to use the traditional form as he felt it would degrade (musically) from his reputation and the song itself. A description is found in the preface to Joplin's collected piano works:

"Magnetic Rag covers a range of moods unusual even in Joplin's work, one that almost strains the capacity of the short form. Magnetic as pure music is an impressive, although sadly premature, close to Joplin's piano works. It hints at future directions and demonstrates ragtime's potential capability of expressing profounder musical thought."

Magnetic Rag tragically was to be the zenith in classical ragtime and indicates the potential musical detachment that was to end soon after its publication. It seems to have been foretold with Joplin's choice of theme moods: the G minor theme is somewhat presented in a pathetic vein, and the die is cast in the B-flat minor theme, a truly grave casting. Joplin's also shows the use of ragtime syncopation in his most profound musical statement which became his last artistic musical composition.

While the mixture of blues and rags enriched the ragtime vernacular, it also detracted from its distinctiveness. Thus evolved a growing group of hybrids that included elements of bluesy rags and raggy blues.

ORIGINAL JELLY ROLL BLUES (1915)

Published in Chicago by Will Rossiter in 1915, J. P. Johnson had heard Morton play the song in New York in 1911. Jelly built his pianist reputation playing this piece on his travels. As with all of Morton's piano pieces the piece was written with orchestration in mind (to have the piano sound like an orchestra). The piece is very versatile and diversified in using many creative ideas. From a bluesy introduction, it is next followed by a characteristic trumpet fanfare. Morton uses the 12 bar blues progression very creatively. Starting at 'A', each 12 bar blues statement (there are 9) begins with a typical blues theme, many sounding like a known cliché. There are 3 choruses of blues followed by a transition at 'D' for 4 bars. Beginning at 'E' there is a modified blues 12 bar progression. At 'F' there is another 12 bar blues followed by another 12 bar blues

statement. At 'H' another blues variation followed at 'I' with another but each different from the other. 'J' is the same modified blues progression. This piece remains one of the best examples of the blues style of jazz musicians in the early part of the 20th Century, showing their use of the blues progression, and how truly creative they were.

BROADWAY BLUES (1915)

The first section is in 16 bar song form, but sounds like an expanded blues progression. The second strain is also in 8 bar phrases with use of the blues third in the melody. This type of music was typical of the songs that were sung on the vaudeville circuit by stars such as Sophie Tucker, who used a jazz band in her portion of the show. The second strain melody is reminiscent of the St. Louis Blues published a year earlier.

JOGO BLUES/ST. LOUIS BLUES (1916)

Some of the early music published and played by dance bands consisted of old riffs and melodies that had been played for years by older musicians. As an example, 'Tar Baby Stomp' became 'In the Mood,' 'Rusty Nail Blues' became 'Tin Roof Blues,' 'Praline' became 'Tiger Rag.' An old blues riff 'Jogo Blues' theme eventually became 'St. Louis Blues.'

A year before the publication of 'St. Louis Blues,' Handy published a song called 'Jogo Blues' that used the main theme of 'St. Louis Blues.' Further theoretical evidence is found in the title 'Jogo' meaning 'colored' or the slang word used for a Negro.

LIVERY STABLE BLUES / BARNYARD BLUES (1917)

The Original Dixieland Jazz Band (ODJB) recorded their historic session on Feb. 26, 1917, using the Livery Stable Blues on one side and on the reserve side, 'Dixieland Jass Band One Step.' The Sheet music was published in 1917 by Robert Graham Music Publishers at 143 N. Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill. The music gives credit to Ray Lopez and Alcide Nunez as the composers and Marvin Lee as lyricist. There was a second recording made in London, on April 16, 1919. There was a legal battle in court as to the authorship of the song - thus the two names.

There are many unanswered questions about the technique of performance of early jazz polyphony: Did the improvising instruments think of a chord progression when they improvised? Did they think of scales? Were they conscious of the flatted 3rd and 7th when they played the blues? Did they have some passages worked out in the polyphonic parts? Polyphonic ensemble playing was the main characteristic in early jazz, not lengthy solos as in later jazz. How would this collective improvising compare (interval wise) to the classical rules of counterpoint? How creative were the early jazz men throughout the entire song?

By analyzing the individual performances from the first jazz recording can we form a hypothesis on the style, the creativity, and the musical ability of these early performers? Did they work out their parts ahead of time? Not being schooled in the rules

of Bachian counterpoint, how did their counterpoint compare when analyzed using the rules of classical counterpoint?

YELPING HOUND BLUES (1919)

This piece is a true 12 bar blues, the first strain also using syncopation. The Louisiana Five arrangements seem to present all the current clichés of early jazz. From various jazz associated rhythms, harmonies and jazz breaks. The 2nd strain however, is in 16 bar song form. This change from the opening presentation of 12 bar blues to 16 bar song form is common during this era of published jazz compositions. The Louisiana Five formed in 1918 and were together until 1920. The personal included: Anton Lada, Yellow Nunez, Charles Panelli, Joe Crawley and Karl Berger.

MEDLEY OF BLUES BY: KERN, PORTER & GERSHWIN

1920 - LEFT ALL ALONE AGAIN BLUES -

KERN

1922 - BLUE BOY BLUES- PORTER

1922 - YANKEE DOODLE BLUES -

GERSHWIN

Most of the famous popular composers of the era wrote blues. We have made a medley of three composers: Kern, Porter and Gershwin. Kern's 'Left All Alone Again Blues' is not in the 12 bar blues progression but in popular song form (AABA). The Cole Porter song, 'Blue Boy Blues,' uses a theme reminiscent of the 1924 riff used in the Rhapsody in Blue by Gershwin. The third section is close to a 12 bar blues the only exception in the first 2 bars. The third, Gershwin's 'Yankee Doodle Blues' begins with a bass ostinato pattern of descending quarter notes (G, F#, F, and D). A 12 bar blues chordal progress (with a limited use of blue notes-notably in the 10th bar) is found.

JAZZ BABY BLUES (TIN ROOF BLUES) (1923)

Said to have been used as a blues riff by the famous New Orleans cornetist Buddy Petit, most New Orleans musicians knew it as 'Rusty Nail Blues.' In 1923 it was published by the Clarence Williams Publishing CO., and compositional credit is given to Richard Jones. Its first notoriety came from the New Orleans Rhythm Kings (NORK) and was called 'Tin Roof Blues.' It was recorded in the 50's by Kay Starr with new words and called 'Make love to Me.'

The Jones version used a boogie bass in the introduction with some variation throughout.

SNAG IT (1926)

Written by legendary Joe 'King' Oliver in 1926, 'Snag It' became a very popular song on its release in 1926. 'Snag It' is a true blues with the use of the minor key version within its structure. Many times recorded, the tempo on the early records are faster than the usual dance tempo.

BIG BAND

BOOGIE BLUES (1946)

The Blues is found in many tempos, both slow and fast, and is arranged for various sized groups, from small ensemble to the big bands of the swing era. One of the swiftest examples of big band blues was recorded by the Gene Krupa Orchestra in 1946. The arrangement contains room for solos and is ended by a very swinging tutti section.

JUMPIN' WITH SYMPHONY SID (1949)

A blues riff used by Lester 'Prez' Young became the widely popular 'Symphony Sid.' The Granz concerts of jazz entitled 'Jazz at the Philharmonic' and the disk jockey Sid Freidman, both had an input into the naming of this blues riff. It has been one of the main themes/riffs used in jam sessions and the present arrangement leaves plenty of room for solos.

ST. LOUIS BLUES MARCH (1958)

First heard as a Negro riff, we now find the uniting of the blues form and the march, a form that was an influence on the ragtime musical form in 'St. Louis Blues March.' It is fitting we end the concert with the combining of the blues progression and the march, both ancestors and influences on early jazz. The W. C. Handy 'St. Louis Blues' is arranged by Jerry Gray and a hit recording was made by Tex Bencke.

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Evolution of Ragtime & Blues To Jazz

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