

*Added Poems*

The grave's a sacred place where none  
Of earth may touch the sleeping one;  
Where silence reigns, enthroned, sedate,  
An angel guarding heaven's gate.

The wind may blow, the hail may fall,  
But at the tomb is silence all;  
Man finds no nobler place to pray,  
Then o'er a martyr's lifeless clay.

Sleep on, ye soldiers, men of God,  
A nation's tears bedew the sod;  
'Tis but a short, short time till ye  
Shall through the shining portals flee.

And when this memory lost shall be,  
We turn, oh Father, God, to thee!  
Oh find in heaven some nobler thing  
Than martyrs of which men can sing.

Dayton, Ohio, *Herald*, June 8, 1888. Copy courtesy of Paul Laurence Dunbar Collection, MSS 659, series 1, box 1, OHS.

*Emancipation*

Fling out your banners, your honors be bringing,  
Raise to the ether your paeans of praise.  
Strike every chord and let music be ringing!  
Celebrate freely this day of all days.

Few are the years since that notable blessing,  
Raised you from slaves to the powers of men.  
Each year has seen you my brothers progressing,  
Never to sink to that level again.

Perched on your shoulders sits Liberty smiling,  
Perched where the eyes of the nations can see.  
Keep from her pinions all contact defiling;  
Show by your deeds what you're destined to be.

*Paul Laurence Dunbar*

Press boldly forward nor waver, nor falter.  
Blood has been freely poured out in your cause,  
Lives sacrificed upon Liberty's altar.  
Press to the front, it were craven to pause.

Look to the heights that are worth your attaining  
Keep your feet firm in the path to the goal.  
Toward noble deeds every effort be straining.  
Worthy ambition is food for the soul!

Up! Men and brothers, be noble, be earnest!  
Ripe is the time and success is assured;  
Know that your fate was the hardest and sternest  
When through those lash-ringing days you endured.

Never again shall the manacles gall you  
Never again shall the whip stroke defame!  
Nobles and Freemen, your destinies call you  
Onward to honor, to glory and fame.

Dayton, Ohio, *Herald*, 1890. Copy courtesy of Paul Laurence Dunbar Collection, series 4, box 10, OHS.

*Lager Beer*

I lafs und sings, und shumps aroundt.  
Und somedimes acd so gueer.  
You ask me vot der matter ish?  
I'm filled mit lager peer.

I hugs mine child, und giss mine vife.  
Oh, my dey was so dear;  
Bot dot ish ven, you know, mire friend,  
I'm filled mit lager peer.

Election gomes, I makes mire speech,  
Mine het it vas so glear:  
De beoples laf, und say ha, ha,  
He's filled mit lager peer.

*Added Poems*

De oder night I got me mad,  
 De beoples run mit fear.  
 De bleeceman gome und took me down  
 All filled mit lager peer.

Next day I gomes pefore de judge,  
 Says he, "Eh heh, you're here!"  
 I gifs you yust five-fifty-five  
 For trinking lager peer.

I took mine bocket book quick oud,  
 So poor I don't abbear;  
 Mine money all vas gone, mine friend  
 Vas gone in lager peer.

Und den dey dakes me off to shail,  
 To work mine sendence gear,  
 Und dere I shwears no more to be  
 Filled oup mit lager peer.

Und from dot day I drinks no more,  
 Yah, dat ish very gueer,  
 But den I found de tevil lifed  
 In dot same lager peer.

PFFENBERGER DEUTZELHEIM

Dayton, Ohio, *Tattler*, December 13, 1890. Copy courtesy of Paul Laurence Dunbar Collection, series 4, box 10, OHS.

*My Best Girl*

Her hair is a brilliant red, and her voice like a bumblebee's hum,  
 And this lovely young damsel is fed on the choicest of sweet chewing  
 gum.  
 I have met her at church and at fair. How I love her no person can  
 tell,  
 But the terrible hue of her hair has made me feel weary—ah, well,  
 But how can I justly complain? 'Tis the World with its sorrow and  
 care,

*Paul Laurence Dunbar*

And I'm not the first love-struck swain to be cursed with a girl with  
 red hair.  
 I called on her yesterday eve, and sweet were the words that I said.  
 I attempted when taking my leave to light my cigar on her head.  
 Poor damsel she stared and turned red till she looked like a full-  
 blown rose  
 But she murmured, "Don't worry, dear Ned. My hair corresponds to  
 your nose."  
 Then I swore in a still, silent way. That's the way those religious folk  
 swear,  
 For my nose, I am sorry to say, was as brilliantly red as her hair.  
 As I thought of her hair and my nose, and then of my nose and her  
 hair,  
 A stronger emotion arose, and I knelt on my knees then and there.  
 Dear hearers, I didn't propose, and to say what I said is a sin,  
 For I almost immediately rose. *Good heavens! I'd knelt on a pin!*

From *Tomfoolery*, Dayton, Ohio, 1890–91. Accompanied by hand-drawn cartoon.  
 Copy courtesy of Blumenschien Collection, Dayton Public Library.

*A Chappie*

But a chappie needs diverting,  
 So her husband got to flirting,  
 But the lady couldn't stand for that, you know;  
 So she made an application  
 And she got a separation,  
 And since then she's married half a score or so;  
 But her alimony's faded,  
 And the stage she has invaded  
 And she's spreading golden butter on her bread.  
 Though her art is sadly lacking,  
 Yet she's got the best of backing—  
 And "She did it all herself," her mother said.

Circa 1890–91. Paul Laurence Dunbar Collection, series 4, box 10, OHS. Quoted by  
 permission. (This poem also appears in Martin and Hudson's *Paul Laurence Dunbar  
 Reader*.)

## PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR

All time seems cold and void,  
And naught but tears remain;  
Life's music beats for me  
A melancholy strain.

I used at first to hope,  
But hope is past and gone;  
And now without a ray  
My cheerless life drags on.

Like to an ash-stained hearth  
When all its fires are spent;  
Like to an autumn wood  
By storm winds rudely shent,—

So sadly goes my heart,  
Unclothed of hope and peace;  
It asks not joy again,  
But only seeks release.

### JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

(From a Westerner's Point of  
View.)

No matter what you call it,  
Whether genius, or art,  
He sings the simple songs that  
come

The closest to your heart.  
Fur trim an' skillful phrases,  
I do not keer a jot;  
'Tain't the words alone, but feel-

in's,  
That tech the tender spot.  
An' that's jest why I love him,—  
Why, he's got sech human  
feelin',

An' in ev'ry song he gives us,  
You kin see it creepin', stealin',

Through the core the tears go  
tricklin',  
But the edge is bright an'  
smiley;

I never saw a poet  
Like that poet Whitcomb Riley.

His heart keeps beatin' time with  
our'n

In measures fast or slow;  
He tells us jest the same ol' things  
Our souls have learned to know.

He paints our joys an' sorrers  
In a way so stric'ly true,  
That a body can't help knowin'  
That he has felt them too.

If there's a lesson to be taught,  
He never fears to teach it,  
An' he puts the food so good an'  
low

That the humblest one kin reach  
it.

Now in our time, when poets  
rhyme

For money, fun, or fashion,  
'Tis good to hear one voice so clear  
That thrills with honest passion.

So let the others build their songs,  
An' strive to polish highly,—  
There's none of them kin tech the  
heart

Like our own Whitcomb Riley.

### A MADRIGAL

DREAM days of fond delight and  
hours

As rosy-hued as dawn, are mine.