



**UNCONSCIOUS  
COMPOSERS.**

The Characteristic Music of Street Cries.

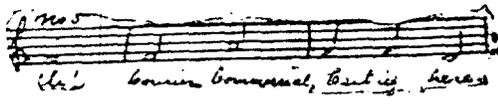
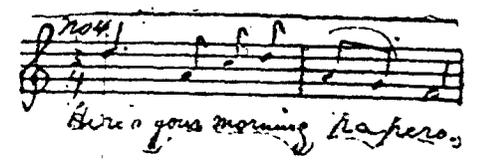
**DR. DVORAK'S OPINION.**

No Music Too Low To Be Listened To.

MELODY OF "CHARCO-O-O-AL"

Buffalo, brought to light the interesting fact that the calls of the white newsboys in those cities and of our own are much the same.

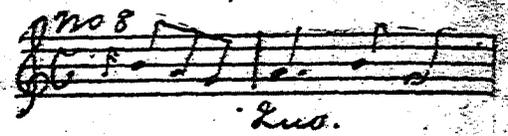
The two following are the only white newsboy calls which are of sufficient interest to mention:



All of the above examples are given with musical energy and in a business-like tone, but are in a measure commonplace and show the influence of so-called popular music.

Evade it as we may, the fact remains that the genuine negro music is the most characteristic we have in this country. Dvorak pertinently asks: "What melody could stop an American on the street in a strange land and make the home feeling well up within him?" Any of our ordinary popular songs would attract his attention, but it would be the real negro melody that would bring the tears and the homesickness. This would assuredly be true of a Southerner. We must always make

lips closed, and the word "quo" sung instead of "coal.")

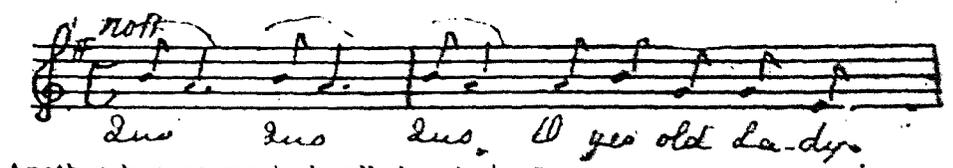
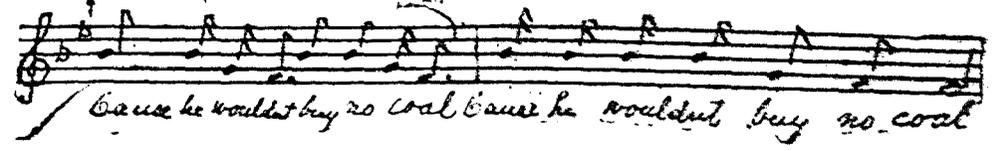
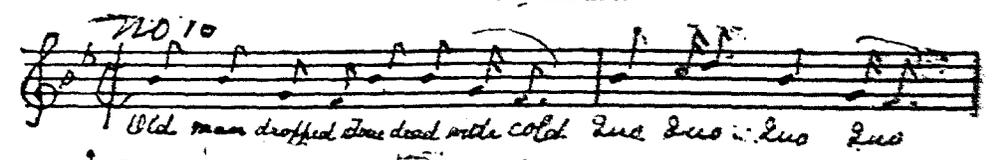


I at once thought of the heart-broken negro of the day before, and had a mental picture of his grief manifesting itself in these sorrowful tones. When I finally saw the singer, what was my amusement to find him dancing a breakdown in his wagon. As he passed on the cry changed to



and was a trifle more cheerful. However, his music may have told the story of a sad heart, after all, for the negro is like a child, in that his tears and mirth follow each other so closely that it is difficult to keep pace with his moods. The story is told of Gluck's opera, "Iphigenia in Tauris," that after Orestes has killed his mother he placidly sings "My Heart is at Rest." The accompaniment tells a different story—giving every evidence of restlessness. On being asked why he had not made the aria and accompaniment more suited to each other, Gluck answered, "Because Orestes lied, but the music told the truth."

The negro often gives expression to a sense of humor in his calls—as, for instance:



Another has no musical call, but in stentorian tones sings out: "Old Man," and has the same printed on his wagon. They sometimes sing a short melody without words.

seemed never to tire of it. Most of the street calls given contain only five tones, many only three. One covers an octave and one a tenth. The last is unusual.

The white calls are wordy and pay less attention to the music than to the wording, while to a negro the music is everything. If Dr. Dvorak finds the street cries of the East suggestive he would surely be fascinated with those of the Southern negro, particularly as he is so interested in negro music. The same characteristics which mark the street cries are also found in the hymns.

In these hymns they use intervals of which most musicians stand in awe. Commencing on the major seventh for instance, or using consecutive fifths. The words of their hymns are exceedingly realistic. There are always the golden streets, long white robes, starry crowns and golden slippers. An artist could easily give a faithful representation of the negro's idea of heaven. The inhabitants of the golden city would, however, have to be painted black, for in only one instance have I been able to find any one but the immediate family mentioned as being there. It is only the fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers and preachers. The one exception was the mistress.

There is no joyousness in negro music. Even banjo music, while it is full of abandon, has the usual tinge of sadness. The words of the hymns are often happy, but the music is always sorrowful. As a race, they luxuriate in sorrow, that being their highest pleasure.

It does seem a pity that so much of this negro music is being lost to the world. In a decade more it will be too late to collect them. The old type is rapidly dying off, and the younger



call in the brutal voice, as Mr. Tommas calls it, with the addition of the stretched tin horn. Except in the case of the Italians, these street calls are always given with a view to saving the throat and voice. It is easier on the vocal chords to sing the tone than to use the harsh speaking voice, and the singing tone carries farther, and thus attracts more attention.

Our ordinary white street vender has a good idea of time and tune. His calls are full of both, and are vigorous and to the point as the following examples will show:

1

Straw-berries, Straw-berries

Behold fine right off the skins

No. 2

Straw-berries, Straw-berries, Ripe cherries, Ripe cherries

These were heard in the spring, and the following in the fall:

No. 3

Apples, Apples, Apples, Apples

An article in the Music Review several years ago by Juliette Graves Adams, on the street calls of Chicago and

The next illustration was sung by a boy of about ten years of age, and showed a musical ability which few untrained white singers possess. The first time he sung it thus:

Here's your money - ha - per

The next time a semi-tone higher, and so on, until he went up several whole tones. How many untrained singers can do this? It would be interesting to make the test.

Any feeling in the negro expresses itself in pathos. Joy and sadness are expressed alike, and it is hard to distinguish between them. I remember one old negro woman who, whenever she was particularly happy, manifested it by singing "Hark, from the tombs a doleful cry" and "I would not live away." It is the dealer in coal in small quantities, however, who gives us the most pathetic calls we have. If there is anything a negro loves better than a water-

melon in summer, it is a fire in winter. The thought of the warmth and comfort their coal can give seems to bring out all the music in the coal vender's soul. If you want to hear these calls given in the most pathetic and characteristic way, go to the streets where noon about dusk, and you will have your heart wrung. A friend told me of seeing a negro funeral, at which the chief mourner was the most broken-hearted looking man she ever saw. The next day, in the same locality, I heard the following call given in heartrending tones:  
(The triplet to be given with the

Contrast the old white man, who says "Glass put in," in a harsh, gruff tone, with the following melody whistled by a negro in the same business:

No. 10

This melody is his advertising medium, and is understood by every one on the streets which he frequents. I asked him where he got his tune. His answer was: "I made it out of my own head, I reckon. I jes' whistles it to let folks know I am passing by, but I never knowed no white folks was a noticing it." His variations on it are interesting, but the original then always stands out clear and strong, so that his customers can not mistake it.

There are several beautiful charcoal calls, but it is impossible to reduce them to tones. They are made by letting the voice break from one tone to another, and the touching of the tone is of such short duration that the ear can not place it. The only one I have is the same as number 2.

It is said that the roustabouts on the old Mississippi steamboats had beautiful songs and calls, but the time is passed when they could have been collected. The negro often uses rhythm without melody to help him in his work. The following sentence was used by negro workmen in laying the rails of the street car track. The rails were moved in three movements, for instance—take hold, lift, move over, put down. We perhaps would say—Ready: one, two, three. The negroes said: "Another good man (ready), gone (one), gone (two), gone (three)." The rhythm was perfect, and it was very interesting to hear and watch them, for they

is there. Such national music, I repeat, is not created out of nothing. It is discovered and clothed

in new beauty, just as the myths and the legends of a people are brought to light and crystallized in undying verse by the master poets. All that is needed is a delicate ear, a retentive memory and the power to weld the fragments of former ages together in one harmonious whole." The day is not far distant when all American composers will feel that they owe Dr. Dvorak a great debt of gratitude for calling their attention to so rich a field.  
M. J. H.

### Classical Music.

The question "What is classical music?" is so often asked that these words from the well-known authority William Mason in music are valuable: "Music which through prolonged usage has proved its possession of those qualities which entitle it to be taken as a standard of excellence, and which has come to be acknowledged, first by competent judges and subsequently by the public generally as representing the highest expression of musical taste and hence authoritative as a model. The reason why classical music does not always please at the first hearing is because all have not the faculties of perception and reception in an adequate degree. Those who have fine and penetrating discernment and the ability of making nice distinctions perceive at once. With others it requires time, study and close acquaintanceship in order to duly appreciate."