



Reproduction of a drawing by E.W. Kemble, included in an article by George Cable, "The Dance in Place Congo," *Century Magazine* 31 (1885-86). African-type

The Bamboula

instruments were generally used in the slaves' own jubilees.

the 1830's. Lambert was a violinist of note, and a music teacher. He fathered four sons and two daughters. The four sons became professional musicians; both daughters played the piano, and one became a music teacher.

Lucien Lambert, the eldest son, early indicated the seriousness with which he viewed music, for he would practice on the piano for six or more hours daily. This dedication enabled him to achieve laudatory recognition as a pianist by the cognoscenti of New Orleans; and he soon out-paced local instructors. The decision was made that he should pursue further study in Paris. Upon completion of his studies in Europe, he returned to his native city, only to find the color bar intolerable. He then settled in Brazil where he became involved with piano manufacture.

As a composer, he was quite prolific; *Etude Mazurka, La Juive, and Au Clair de la Lune* (with variations) being three of the more familiar.

Sidney Lambert, the second son, also composed for and played the piano. His major contribution was a manual for piano instruction which achieved for him an award of merit from the King of Portugal. He, too, went to Paris where he remained as an instructor of music.

The younger Lambert

Orleans and became associated with the St. Bernard's Brass Band.

Edmund De'edé (1829-1903) studied the clarinet as a child under Debarque. He switched to the violin under Gavici, the white director of the St. Charles Theater Orchestra. As he matured, De'edé supported himself as a cigar maker and lived frugally until he could go to Paris in 1857 on his savings to continue his studies. He remained in France, married a Frenchwoman, and became the director of the orchestra of *L'Alcozar* in Bordeaux. Several of his more notable compositions are: *Le Sement de L'Arabe, Vaillant Bele Rose Quadrille* and *Le Palmier Overture*.

Samuel Snaer (1883-?) was most noted as a pianist, but performed as well on the cello and violin. He taught both violin and piano and was the organist for St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church. Snaer was a productive composer of both secular and religious music, with an overture for full orchestra, *Graziella*, and a solemn Mass to his credit. In addition, the musician/composer wrote instrumental pieces, vocal and instrumental compositions, polkas, mazurkas, quadrilles, and waltzes.

E.V. McCarty (1821-?) received his first piano

Norres in New Orleans. An unnamed patron felt that McCarty's skills merited further study in Paris where he became friendly with the Hon. Pierre Soule who intervened to get him admitted to the Imperial Conservatoire, even though he was over age. He studied harmony, composition and achieved some distinction in vocal music. He also became a dramatist and was awarded the lead in the play *Antony* by Alexander Dumas. McCarty remained in Paris.

In addition to individual achievement in musicianship, the fascination for parades and brass bands was shared by all of the citizens of New Orleans. Blacks had their own brass bands and a high degree of proficiency was achieved by the instrumentalists, for private study was often pursued by the band members.

Other areas of the South found entertainer/musicians often working in obscure anonymity. Most documentation of the time indicates that free blacks performed or listened to recreational music within the confines of their own homes. The churches were a bastion for gatherings, as has been noted, and often provided a focus for social gatherings. Taverns and street corners in urban areas gave the itinerant musician a place to per-

In the rural area, the slave fiddler or banjoist, would provide instrumental music in his Jubilees.

Solomon Northrup, in his book *Twelve Years As A Slave*, clearly articulated how slaves had a determination to make some sense of an insensate degradation through music.

Born free in Saratoga

Springs, New York, he became well-known in the area for his expertise in fiddling. Working during the summer at the United States Hotel, a resort in his home town, he became an itinerant fiddler during the winter months, playing with "pick-up" dance bands and earning as much as \$3 a night. Lured to Washington,

D.C., by a promise of a well-paying engagement plus expenses, Northrup was kidnapped and taken to a plantation in Louisiana where he became the property of Edwin Epps and acquired the new name of Platt Epps.

During this period, his mistress encouraged Epps to buy "Platt" a violin so that he could entertain the family. When it was discovered that he really did possess considerable skill, Epps hired out his slave to play at other plantations.

Playing his violin was the only balm that Northrup had during his bondage. Poetically, he wrote: It was my companion the friend of my bosom, triumphing loudly when I was joyful, and uttering its soft, melodious consolation when I was sad.

it would sing me a song of peace.

Freedom was gained by the reverse process of having friendly help to return North.

If Northrup's repertoire included "Negro" songs of the era, he may well have played music that had been disseminated by a unique group of slave workers/entertainers: the black watermen.

Worksongs were important to maintain a rhythm for the task being performed as well as to maintain spirits. Blacks were

firemen and food handlers on the boats, and stevedores on land. They moved along the Eastern seaboard and all of the major rivers: Mississippi, Ohio and Missouri. They moved as far west as Omaha, Nebraska, south to the Gulf Coast, and all along the east coast. When their work day was over, the boatmen were often called upon to entertain the passengers with a show during dinner, and dance music afterwards. Because these workers/slaves "enjoyed" the greatest mobility, it is entirely possible that they may have been responsible for disparate segments of the black population throughout the states having knowledge of the same songs. The handicap of slavery, then, produced a universal language in song.

Thomas Greene Bethune (1849-1908), known as "Blind Tom" suffered a double handicap, for he was born sightless to a slave named Charity Wiggins in Columbus, Georgia. When his mother was sold to a Colonel Bethune, Tom as "thrown in" the purchase.

Before long, it was discovered that Tom could duplicate on the piano any music to which he had listened. As is common in individuals who must compensate for a missing

sense, he early developed his very sensitive ear and memory for music performed in his presence. The discovery of this "gift" by Bethune was capitalized on by the owner and his family.

Tom's career began when he was but eight years old and presented in a recital in Savannah by his master. In the first year of the Civil War, he was required to perform several concerts for the aid of veterans of the Confederate Army.

He performed at the White House, throughout the United States, and, in the European capitals. His extensive repertoire included selections from the music of the masters: Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Mendelssohn, Rossini; from Heller Liszt, Gottschalk, Hoggman, Thalbert; operatic arias from Verdi, Bellini, Gounod - popular ballads of the day; in short anything that had been written and he had heard, he duplicated precisely. It was recorded that he could duplicate over 7,000 musical compositions.

At times, his recitals assumed a somewhat carnival air. Three pianos would be placed on stage. While two pianists were "banging away" discordantly, twenty notes were struck in rapid isolation on the third piano. Tom correctly produced the



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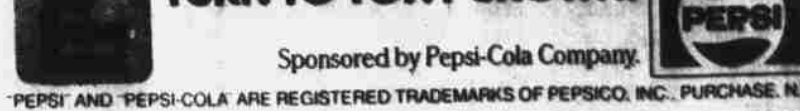
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