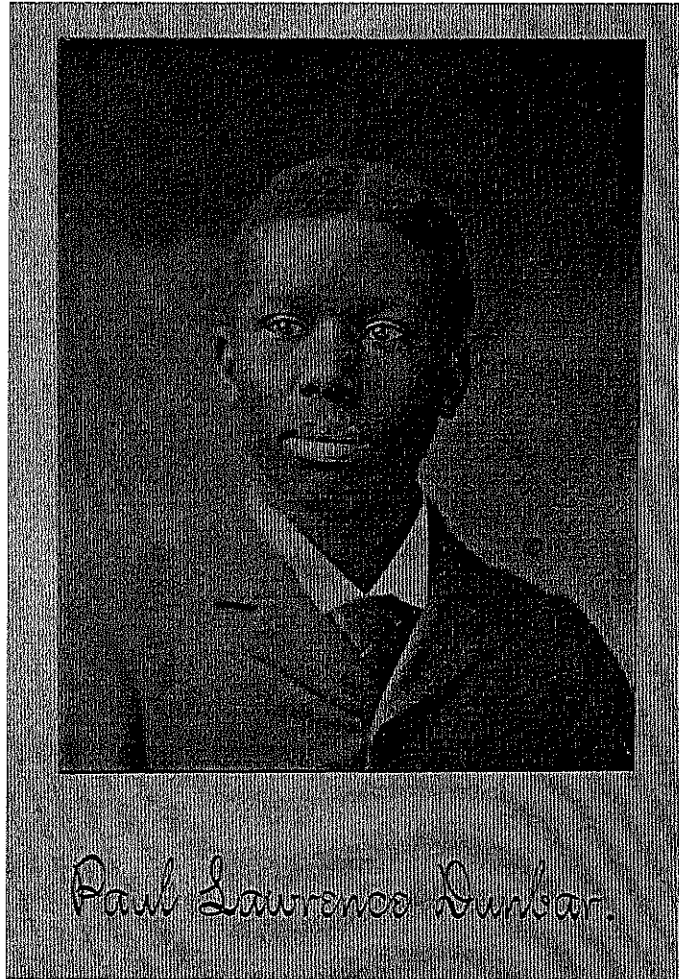


# “Sunshine and Shadow”: Paul Laurence Dunbar and African American Literature



*Frontispiece portrait of Paul Laurence Dunbar, from Majors and Minors: Poems (Toledo, OH: Hadley & Hadley, 1895). Free Library Call No. AF811 D9115.*

Hands-on History Program at the Free Library of Philadelphia  
(Parkway Central)

Presented by Alex L. Ames, February 16, 2019

I think that though the clouds be dark,  
That though the waves dash o'er the bark,  
Yet after while the light will come,  
And in calm waters safe at home  
The bark will anchor.

—Paul Laurence Dunbar, “After  
While. A Poem of Faith.”

# Packet Contents

## List of Books Seen Today

A Local Connection: Alice Dunbar-Nelson, Author and Activist  
(Documents from the University of Delaware Library)

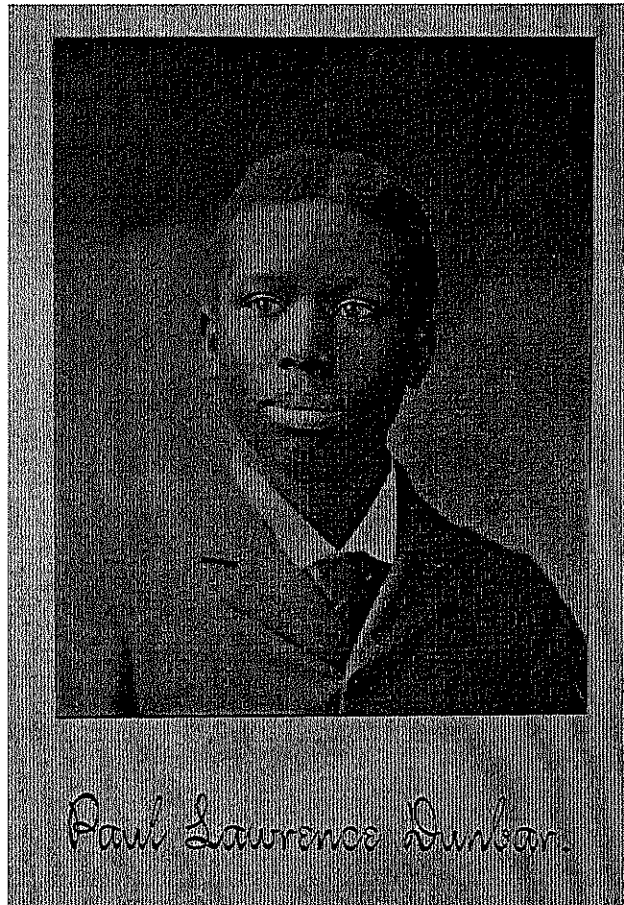
## Selections from a Few of Dunbar's Books

- *Oak and Ivy*
- *Majors and Minors*
- *Lyrics of the Hearthside*
- *Candle-Lightin' Time*
- *Lyrics of Lowly Life*

## List of Other Books, Articles, and Websites to Explore

# “Sunshine and Shadow”: Paul Laurence Dunbar and African American Literature

## Hands-on History Program Bibliography



*Frontispiece portrait of Paul Laurence Dunbar, from Majors and Minors: Poems (Toledo, OH: Hadley & Hadley, 1895).*

Object 1. Dunbar, Paul Laurence. *Oak and Ivy*. Dayton, OH: United Brethren Press, 1893. Rosenbach Call No. A 893o. [Seen today in photos only.]

Object 2. Dunbar, Paul Laurence. *Majors and Minors: Poems*. Toledo, OH: Hadley & Hadley, 1895. Free Library Call No. AF811 D9115.

Object 3. Dunbar, Paul Laurence. *Candle-Lightin' Time. Illustrated with Photographs by the Hampton Institute Camera Club and Decorations by Margaret Armstrong.* New York: Dodd Mead & Co., 1902. Free Library Call No. RBD AML D911c 1902.

Object 4. Dunbar, Paul Laurence. *Poems of Cabin and Field. Illustrated with Photographs by the Hampton Institute Camera Club and Decorations by Alice Morse.* New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1902. Free Library Call No. RBD AML D911P 1902.

Object 5. Dunbar, Paul Laurence. *Lyrics of the Hearthside.* New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1904. Free Library Call No. AF811 D9114.

Object 6. Dunbar, Paul Laurence. *Li'l Gal. Illustrated with Photographs by Leigh Richmond Miner of the Hampton Institute Camera Club. Decorations by Margaret Armstrong.* New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1904. Free Library Call No. RBD AML D911L 1904.

Object 7. Dunbar, Paul Laurence. *Lyrics of Lowly Life.* With an Introduction by W.D. Howells. Numerous Illustrations. New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1908. Free Library Call No. AF811 D9112.

Object 8. Dunbar, Paul Laurence. *Speakin' O' Christmas and Other Christmas and Special Poems.* With Numerous Illustrations. New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1914. Free Library Call No. 811 D91s2.

*Are you interested in learning more about collections at The Rosenbach and the Free Library of Philadelphia? If so, visit <https://rosenbach.org/research/make-an-inquiry/> and <https://libwww.freelibrary.org/programs/rarebooks/> for more information. Also, feel free to send questions and comments to [alames@rosenbach.org](mailto:alames@rosenbach.org).*

March 10, 1906.

I am sending you a simple statement of his life until the time of his death with a list of his books on the back. The news paper clipping--minus what has been marked out in red ink-- is in the main true about his early life and his inspiration to write. He told me once when he was a little fellow that for a long while at times he would be filled with an inexpressible sadness and longing for something he know not what-- and that this at length found its way in fugitive rhymes, some of them senseless, and some mere imitations, but the idea grew that he could help this miserable feeling by writing. When he was in the High School at Dayton, he was made editor of the High School paper, which was the highest honor that could be conferred upon a pupil.

He was passionately fond of Stevenson, especially his letters. After his long illness seven years ago, he would read Stevenson's letters greedily, over and over. He seemed to feel a comfort and a fellow feeling with the older author, and would often say to me, "I shall have to stand just what he stood, I shall have to suffer all that. I hope I shall be as brave and cheerful as he was."

He was naturally fonder of the lyric poets than of the others. He loved Shelley and Keats and Fitzgerald he knew by heart. Herrick was a great favorite, and he often amused himself by imitations of him--which he did not publish. One of the prettiest things he ever did, for our own amusement in an idle day-- was a little play founded on an imaginary episode in Herrick's life. Such a thing was, of course, unpublishable, and it lay idle among his papers. I suppose it is with them now, wherever they are. But Burns was his favorite poet. He found some likeness between himself and the Scotch poet. There were one or two of us in Washington who used to tell him that he was the re-incarnation of Burns, and I think from jesting he half jestingly believed it. The expression "The Burns of America" does not seem to me to be inapt, as applied to him.

From Alice Dunbar Nelson  
Papers, MSS 113, Box 21, II. 4

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When it came to more serious work, he was a close student of American history. I remember one winter in particular when he ground away at the hardest and driest of facts of American history. He was especially well versed in the history of the state of Ohio. When he was writing "The Fanatics" we---I say we for I always studied what he did and as hard as he did---would frequently read chapter after chapter, and author after author to search down some little bit of a fact, in order that there might be no historical inaccuracy. He was very particular that there should be no place for the critic to slip in a wedge of complaint of carelessness. In matters of English he studied carefully those authors whom we study for style. He was very careful that every word should have its exact meaning, and when the right word did not come in poetry or prose, he would hunt for it, and failing to find it then, throw down his pen and would not touch the composition until that word was found, if it were days.

I cannot tell you just what his religious ideals were for I do not understand just what you mean. Mr. Dunbar was deeply religious, although he did not show that side of himself to his casual acquaintances. I rather think had we staid together that he would have eventually entered the Episcopal Church, for he was leaning strongly that way when my influence went out of his life. The ritual and the music of the service appealed very strongly to his artistic and aesthetic emotions. We had many a long and serious talk about life after death---but of that I do not care to tell. I am told that at the last he seemed to have joined the faith of his mother's church, and to be reconciled to his going.

I do not like to deny flatly the paragraph going the rounds of the papers about "When Malindy Sings", but it is all new to me. We often read that poem together, talked about it and laughed over it, but although he often spoke of the inspiration of his poems he never told me that his mother was the inspiration of this one, nor did she ever

say it to me, although we lived together for four years. Her name, by the way, always was Matilda until lately. She told me her name was Matilda; all her relatives call her so, and until lately she signed her letters Matilda.

"The Uncalled" is partly an autobiography, at least, that part which is psychological is a picture of himself. It was written while he was in England. We were engaged then and he often wrote me letters telling how the story was getting on; sometimes in despair because it did not move quickly enough; some times in glee because it was going well. I saw the MS. when he returned, but he kept the last chapter a secret until it was published because he did not wish me to know about "Alice".

"The Love of Landry" was written while we were in Denver. It was frankly a desire to use the western material which was so close at hand. The description of the cattle round-up was not taken from life. It was his intention to spend some time on a ranch so as to be able to see the life for himself, but his health did not permit it. A friend in Denver, Mr. Daniels, a wealthy merchant, and himself something of a writer, helped with that description to the extent of visualizing the whole scene in a wonderfully spirited oral description as they spent one afternoon together. He came home in a glow and a fever, eager to write it out, so clear had Mr. Daniels made it all to him. He always called it "A Conventional Little Story."

The germ of "The Fanatics" had lain smoldering in his brain for many years. Dayton was the very center of the whirlwind of Copperheadism during the Civil War and some of the sentiment of the town still rankled and smoldered when he was a boy, so it was always in his mind to give it expression. Vallandigham in the novel, is, of course, Vallandigham in real life, the leader of the Copperhead movement in the Middle West. The "Nigger Ed" was a worthless character around Dayton in Mr. Dunbar's boyhood, whose real end, I think was not justified by



his glorified end in the book. Norbury is Dayton, and the girls abstractions of sweetness, although Nannie Woods is named after a real Nannie Woods somewhere in New Jersey. "The Love of Landry" was written while "The Fanatics" was on the way as a rest from the harder labor.

"The Sport of the Gods" is the outcome of a rather lurid fortnight in New York at the time when he was robbed and drugged. Coming back to Washington disgusted, cross and with a bad taste for everything in New York, he wrote "The Sport of the Gods" in an incredibly short space of time, three weeks or thereabouts. The scenes and characters are drawn from real life and real people. He always told me that Gideon was the sort of man he would like to be, but felt that he could not.

Some of the poems which have been going the rounds of the press as being written in his last days and typifying his state of mind, such as "The Warrior's Prayer", "The Last Chapter," and "Lead Kindly Lord" were written a number of years ago. "The Last Chapter," or rather "The End of the Chapter," was written when he was eighteen years old.

"Two Little Boots" which you doubtless have read with moistened eyes was written in a peculiar way. A number of us were talking and some one made the remark, "How pitiful must a mother feel over her dead child's shoes,"--we were discussing all phases of grief. He went to his desk and wrote the poem, while we talked softly. He had a pair of such boots when he was a little boy. When it was finished he read it to us, and we all wept over it--until we brightened up at the suggestion of one of the party that there were no boots and no dead baby and no mother.

My little niece one day asked him what the boogah man said, and he wrote the little poem "The Boogah Man" to tell her, and while writing it she bothered him by pulling at him to play with her,

so he wrote "The Poet and the Baby", finishing them at the same time.

"Dat Ol' Mare o' Mine" was written to a capious horse we owned in Denver, who, nevertheless brought him home safely one dark stormy night when he was not able to drive himself.

"The Party" written he was a boy was taken from his mother's description of the parties of her young days.

But I could go on and give you the inspiration of scores of his poems, I hardly think you want any more.

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## AS IN A LOOKING GLASS

Alice Dunbar-Nelson

1929 faces us, with all kinds of possibilities and probabilities. There is a thrill in the contemplation of a New Year, even to the most case-hardened pessimist. Nothing may happen beyond the ordinary dull routine of twelve months in a year; and 365 days to them. But then again, life is full of surprises and potential thrills. And so anything might happen. The 365 days may be packed full of things, pleasant or unpleasant. Just so they are packed full; on the principle of "Better fifty years in Europe than a cycle in Carthay."

\* \* \* \* \*

WE "race" people must always think in terms of our own individual selves and needs. Will 1929 bring us all those political plums for which we have so devoutly hoped, prayed, and worked? Or will it be "just another year?" Will the New Year bring a step toward the cessation of those gad-fly irritations which make racial life such an undercurrent of repressed unhappiness, or will it mark a definite advance toward the pure humanity of decent, wholesome relations? Will it start a movement toward sanity of thinking on the part of Negroes themselves; largeness of view, tolerance, clarity of vision, ability to differentiate between propaganda imposed upon the race by other races for self-interest, and real thought? Let us hope. We know no one year can bring about any definite change in the attitude of an individual, community, nation or race, but we can and do devoutly pray for a trend in the right direction. It is time for the Negro to attain to "the tall stature of a man." Time for him to "put away childish things" with the passing of his adolescence.

\* \* \* \* \*

QUITE the most fascinating book which has come from the busy press of the Associated Publishers, at 1538 Ninth Street, N. W., Washington, is "African Myths, Together with Proverbs," compiled by Dr. Carter G. Woodson. It is a supplementary reader composed of folk tales from various parts of Africa, adapted to the use of children in the public schools.

The stories are just a few legends from different sources. But they are so charming, and so delightfully told, that one would wish to be a child in school coming upon them for the first time. In the preface Dr. Woodson tells us, "The folk tales of a people are a guide to the understanding of their past. If you want to understand people of today you must find out what they have been." If the wealth of beautiful African legends is indicative of the early civilization of that continent the natives must have reached a high level of culture. To appreciate the African, then, we must hear him speak for himself in the charming stories handed down from sire to son."



From the Alice Dunbar Nelson Papers, MSS 113 Box 13  
Part II Series II.2 FA39

**T**HERE are thirty-nine legends, beginning with the "Creation," which has a strangely familiar sound—quite like all legends of creation, whether Hebrew, Scandinavian, Greek, Roman, Egyptian or Babylonian. Then there are the usual animal stories, for which African lore is justly famed, and myths of origins and customs, the latter with a subtle humor and quaint philosophy that is sophistication itself. Following the stories are collections of African proverbs, truly Oriental in their pungent wit and crisp sententiousness.

"A man with wisdom is better off than a stupid man with any amount of charm and superstition."  
 "The laborer is always in the sun; the landowner is always in the shade."

"He who marries a beauty marries trouble."  
 "Know thyself better than he who speaks of thee."  
 Not to know is bad, not to wish to know is worse."

And scores more of pithy sayings which resemble so closely the "Book of Proverbs" that one is fain to know which is the precursor of the other.  
 It is unfortunate that the name of the illustrator or the source of the illustrations is not given. There are about one hundred most delightful little pictures, which add materially to the attractiveness of the book.

\* \* \* \* \*  
**F**REDERICK WILLIAM WILE, the well-known Washington newspaper man, has an article in the current issue of the Outlook and Independent on "Government by Propaganda" which is well worth reading by newspaper men, heads of institutions, secretaries of organizations, teachers, preachers, leaders everywhere, politicians, organizers, and Souls with a Mission. Says Mr. Wilé, who knows his newspaper lore, "Propaganda came to stay when Europe brought it to us fourteen years ago. When Uncle Sam himself became a belligerent in 1917, one of the first leaves he took from the notebook of war-experienced Europe was that which dealt with publicity as a fine art. We mobilized the Committee on Public Information almost as soon as we mobilized the Army and Navy."

This is an article to give one much grave thought—that is, always presupposing that one has an interest in affairs national.

\* \* \* \* \*  
**W**OULD it be idle curiosity to wish to know just what is the underlying truth in the story of the seventeen year old Chicago youth who wounded nine policemen of the two hundred who attempted to arrest him for breaking a plate glass window? The truth will probably never be known, but what a story it would make, had the youth been a Russian, and the scene of action Moscow or Leningrad! A Negro in Chicago does not so thrill the seeker after the bizarre.

\* \* \* \* \*  
**A**ND now we are looking to the 1930 census. Hope we will all be counted, for certainly there were about two million of us who were not included in the 1920 enumeration.

\* \* \* \* \*  
**O**F all the involved movie thrillers that ever were ruled out of consideration because of their improbability, this tale of the Omaha axe-killer-suspect is the wildest and weirdest imaginable. For her is a mixture of secret love, Jew police-chief, millionaire hobo, railroad law-suit, paid witnesses, conspiracy between police-officers, and representatives of the railroad, murdered youths, attempts at getting rid of witnesses, and a few other horrific details jumbled together so that a Conan Doyle or a J. S. Fletcher would have material for three or more thrillers. And some folks would have us believe that life is uninteresting, commonplace.

\* \* \* \* \*  
**W**ELL, here's hoping that the new year will bring you all the things for which you have longed and wished and hoped.  
 Vale 1928, Ave. 1929!

THE WASHINGTON EAGLE, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 28, 1928

Alice Dunbar-Nelson

IF DuBose Heyward meant to write an allegory in "Mamba's Daughters"—which was chosen as the outstanding book for February by the Literary Guild—he succeeded. If he did not mean to be allegorical, he succeeded just the same. For "Mamba's Daughters," whether the author intended or not, is a pageant of the progress of a race, from emancipation to the present, or even the future.

Mamba, the protagonist, is a fine, shrewd character, magnificent in her very unmoral attitude toward "her white folks" whom she adopted and used for her own ends and purposes. Mamba's daughter, Hagar, who adopts the alias of Baxter, "for business purposes," is like crude oil, heavy, clumsy, strong, but the necessary lubricant of the world's machinery. Lisa, Hagar's daughter, and Mamba's granddaughter, the third generation, the refined product of the previous two, is slim, lithe, educated, refined, delicate; the exotic lily rising on the bosom of the swamp. And therein is the allegory of the story; the "slow-moving pageant of a climbing race." For Mamba is the generation immediately following emancipation; the people who earned their living as domestics; whose pride expressed itself in having standing with "white folks"; who looked forward to the second and third generation for the full expression of their own ambition and pride of race.

By the same token, so is Hagar, her daughter, the next generation; the generation of laborers, tilers of the soil, workers in mines and mills. Emancipated from domestic service, because of its very strength, crudity and lack of adaptability to the delicate involutions of house service; yet a strong generation, laying the foundation of economic independence by toilsome work, and a certain dumb yet potent notion of thrift. Hard fighting, hard drinking, independent, powerful; taking its pleasures where it found them, untutored, unlettered; yet with respect for those who would come after it, with refinements and culture. And helping that very next generation by its hard won wealth. Such was Hagar; such the second generation.

And then comes Lissa, the daughter of Hagar, the third generation since emancipation. Lissa is beautiful, refined, delicate, with a wonderful gift of song—the Negro's gift to America. Mamba keeps her away from Hagar, as a thing too delicate and radiant to be soiled by contact with the huge strength of the free living, hard drinking, labor loving, unconscious mother. The infrequent and hurried Sunday afternoon interviews between Hagar, who had walked the long hot dusty miles between the phosphate camp and the trysting place, and Mamba, guarding the flower-like perfection of Lissa, were more pathetic than satisfying. Hagar felt this; but she went on piling up the savings that eventually spelled freedom for the girl.

And so the third generation of the race flowers into perfection; is educated, cultured, refined, beautiful, with its bronze and magnolia perfection, and flies away northward—to Harlem—where opportunity awaits it. And for all the coarseness of the second generation; for all its fighting, drinking, laboring, hulking, unconsciouness, for all its murderous, vengeful instinct; its ugliness, its ignorance, yet it finds and points the way for the



freedom of the third generation; makes possible its burgeoning into the full bloom of opportunity. For Hagar was able to give Lissa not only money but the prayer-book with the name and address of the Episcopal clergyman in New York, where the girl could stay and have protection as she studied. That same unfortunate clergyman who had vainly set his mission up in the phosphate village against the church of superstition and ignorance and debasing practices.

\* \* \* \* \*

WHETHER allegory or merely a detailed history of events, "Mamba's Daughters" is the finest presentment of the modern Negro in all phases of his life, lowly and upward striving, ugly and beautiful, south and north, educated and ignorant, that has yet been done. The canvas of the novel is broad, even though the action is almost confined to Charleston, South Carolina, and its vicinity. The New York scenes are slight, though arresting. From "Porgy" the race has progressed—even though Porgy and his goat cart flit across the scene, an evanescent reminder of Catfish Row—where after all, Mamba and Hagar had their origin. But the author has not hesitated when a situation presented itself, to carry that situation to its logical conclusion. His white people, whose lives run coterminously with the Negroes in the book seem not so much like characters in a story, as real beings dropped into our lives. You delight in the quiet satire at the northern whites and their hastily assumed southern veneer—the women folks, at least. And you enjoy the way Atkinson "puts it over" his wife in the social situation. Saint Wentworth, the ne'er-do-well of the family, is really the hero of the book. How strange to find a novel with one white man for a hero, and three Negro women for the heroines! Their lives only touch here and there, but when they touch, with a strong, vital grip that changes the course of many lives. And Saint Wentworth is one of the most lovable characters you may meet anywhere.

\* \* \* \* \*

FOR years the Negro has complained that the novels written about us have not stressed the cultured, refined, educated Negro, he who has been through college, rides in automobiles, paints pictures, writes books, sings classic songs, lives in beautiful homes, attends cultured churches of his own, does not go to cabarets, and is not a decadent replica of the white man's worst. For years we have deplored that we are constantly being shown in cross sections that do us no credit. And yet too often when we ourselves write of our so-called best society, we are so anxious to exhibit that best that we "point with pride" in a manner uncomfortably like a child showing off its doll-house to a skeptical grown-up. And when, sometimes our friends on the other side have attempted the same kind of description, their attitude is patronizing, superior, as if one were admiring that same child because it knows how to pour tea at a doll's tea party.

DuBose Heyward now solves the Gordian knot of this strange puzzle—how to treat the best of the Negro without showing off or patronizing. He does it by the very simple expedient of telling the story, describing the scenes in a easy, natural manner. We see the church service in the fashionable Episcopal colored church in Charleston; we attend a musical at the home of one of the leaders of the "blue vein" group; we go in the automobile of the wealthy banker; we discuss Negro artists at the club meeting. All quite natural—and yet Lissa, the climber, the third generation striving to be, sums it all up wearily when she tells Mamba of her first social evening—"They seem to spend all their time saying how glad they are to be Negroes, and all the time they're trying their damndest to be white."

Has not the author put his finger unerringly on the sore spot in the social fabric of the Negro?

\* \* \* \* \*

THERE are so many high points in the book that a mere catalogue of them would take many pages. Hagar bidding the baby Lissa, farewell, while the policeman waits, after she had

triumph on the stage of the Metropolitan Opera House—and finally, Mamba's peaceful old age, surrounded by rolagavure pictures of the famous and beautiful opera singer, called Lissa, her dreams all come true, as she watches the New York steamer sailing up the bay.

A rarely beautiful book. You will read it once, then twice, and then go back and dip into it again and again, and be glad for the understanding heart of DuBose Heyward.

THE WASHINGTON EAGLE, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1929

collected her laundry wages in blood from the sailor; Mamba and the judge's teeth, of course, will take its place among the classics; Raymond talking to Saint Wentworth—"The rank and file of the poor-white, small farmers, workmen, who fear the Negro, in the mass worse than they do the devil." "We love the individual Negro, while we hate, or at least, fear him as a race." "Gold Star Mothers," explained by the enterprising dentist as "Gold Tooth Mothers"; "In the Monday Night Musical Club ladies were ladies, those who were pale enough blushed; a leg was still a limb, and gentlemen asked permission to smoke cigarettes." A tribute to the higher moral standard of our best social circles. The origin of the dance called Charleston; Mamba and Lissa and Hagar and Gilly Bluton; Hagar alone in the swamp with the obscene lump of flesh that had been Bluton;—Victor Hugo never did a better bit—Lissa and Saint Wentworth on Lenox Avenue; Hagar's suicide; a beautiful bit, calm, peaceful, restrained. Lissa's



# Wilmington

Dear Peggy:—The holidays are over, the Wilmingtonians who went away are back, the collegiates have returned to their colleges, and the only way we can be sure that Xmas really happened is by noticing we won't say paying, the inevitable after-Xmas sheaf of bills. \* \* On New Years day Mrs. Alice Dunbar-Nelson, Mrs. Helen Anderson, Mrs. Emma Spies, Miss Arleon Bowser, and Miss Pauline Young returned from New York City, and since most of them have been going to bed very early ever since I imagine they had rather a nice time. Mrs. Dunbar-Nelson said that she was invited to fourteen parties New Years eve, but in spite of her best efforts she was able to attend only eight of them. \* \* John O. Hopkins, Jr., better known as Buster, who was home from Bowdoin College for the holidays, was one of the busier persons of Wilmington. Between keeping engagements in Wilmington, Philadelphia, and Baltimore I really don't see how he managed to have time for basketball, but he found time to play with the alumni team and with the New England All-Stars, and played very well. \* \* Albert Anderson, who graduated from Lincoln last year and is now teaching in the High School at Winston-Salem, came home for the holidays looking splendid. He said he liked Winston-Salem, the people there, his work, and most particularly the fact that there are one hundred and twenty women and twenty men teachers in that city. \* \* Two of our local new Fords, one belonging to Miss Pauline Young the other to Dr. J. E. Stubbs, were in accidents last week but fortunately no one was injured. Miss Young struck a Pontiac, the property of Dr. F. N. Herrick of Philadelphia, and broke a number of things, radius rods, fenders and what-not. Dr. Stubbs was struck by C. E. Shephard of 60 West 10th street, in such a way that his rear axle was broken. It was remarkable that no one was hurt in either case because the cars really needed a bit of repairing afterward.

**BEG YOUR PARDON**  
 Through an error two weeks ago the review of "Mamba's Daughters," by DuBose Heyward, was credited to Georgia Douglas Johnson. The review was written by Alice Dunbar Nelson for the Associated Negro Press.

FROM THIS WEEK'S CHICAGO WHIP.

MRS. NARKA LEE-RAYFORD gave a dinner in honor of Mr. Roscoe Bruce, who attended the National Interracial Conference, at Annozean's charming tea-room last Wednesday evening. Among the guests were Mr. and Mrs. Robert Nelson, Mrs. Theresa Lee Connolly, and Mrs. Estelle Mayer. Mrs. Robert Nelson is none other than Alice Dunbar Nelson, the secretary of the American Interracial Peace Commission, and a delegate to the Interracial Conference. Bachelor-Benedicts

## EAGLE COLUMNIST QUOTED BY CHI. PAPER

Chicago, Ill.—The Christian Century, Chicago weekly, in the January 24 issue has an article by Alice Dunbar-Nelson entitled "Quakers Experiment in Racial Understanding." It is the story of an experiment made by the American Friends' Service Committee in interracial work with Japanese and whites and Negroes and whites. The problem was one of interpreting the races to each other so as to break down suspicion, misunderstanding, and to build up understanding, respect and consideration.

The address of Mrs. Nelson marked the first anniversary of the lyceum group at Bethel A. M. E. Church, headed by Samuel Westerfield. The organization now has fifteen units of related activities.

Taking part on the Sunday program were: Mrs. Jennie Heyward, Mrs. Rosa H. Lampkin, who introduced the speaker; Misses Josephine Nesbitt, Mabel Van Rensselaer, Beryl De Silva, Addie L. Yeiser, program chairman; the Golden-State Four, a quartet under direction of John H. Lindsay, and Josiah Albright. Dr. Julia P. H. Coleman also made a brief talk.

# Alice Dunbar Nelson Makes Peace Address

Head of Interracial Commission Declares World is Trying to do What Christ Started. Praises Kellogg Treaty.

(Amsterdam News, New York.)  
 The "new Negro" was pictured as an American racial unit that is beginning to reach its stature and take an active interest in international affairs in an address Sunday before the Bethel Young People's Lyceum, 52 West 132d street, by Alice Dunbar-Nelson, executive secretary of the American Interracial Peace Commission. The former wife of the late Paul Lawrence Dunbar, who is herself a poet and newspaper columnist, made a simple plea for the Negro's aid in creating popular opinion for world peace.  
 The Briand-Kellogg peace pact, subject of much controversy in Congress, was seen by the speaker as an attempt to do the same work Christ came to do 1,928 years ago. The treaty is simply an effort to make warring nations unpopular, she said.

Mrs. Nelson described the horrors of war, which she contended never settled anything. Always, the speaker contended, the poorer classes and minor groups must pay the full penalties in lives, suffering of women and children, and the aftermaths of broken bodies and further discrimination.

Naval appropriations before Congress should interest Negroes as much as any legislation directly affecting the group, was the view of the peace advocate. Once war is declared at the command of the commercial imperialists, every humble citizen is called upon to shed his blood, while the statesmen and wealthy remain at home, she said.

The American Interracial Peace Commission has maintained offices in Philadelphia for the past two years. It is sponsored by the American Friends' Service Committee, an organization of Quakers credited by Mrs. Nelson with spending \$24,000,000 in relief work in Europe during the late war.

White and colored workers enlisted in the organization promote public opinion for racial and international good-will.

# OAK AND IVY



BY  
PAUL DUNBAR



DAYTON OHIO  
PRESS OF UNITED BRETHREN PUBLISHING HOUSE  
1893



TO HER  
WHO HAS EVER BEEN  
MY GUIDE, TEACHER, AND INSPIRATION,

*My Mother,*

THIS LITTLE VOLUME IS

*Affectionately inscribed.*

# OAK AND IVY.

---

## Ode to Ethiopia.

O Mother Race! to thee I bring  
This pledge of faith unwavering,  
This tribute to thy glory.  
I know the pangs which thou didst feel,  
When Slavery crushed thee with its heel,  
With thy dear blood all gory.

Sad days were those,—ah, sad indeed!  
But through the land the fruitful seed  
Of better times was growing.  
The plant of freedom upward sprung,  
And spread its leaves so fresh and young,—  
Its blossoms now are blowing.

On every hand in this fair land  
Proud Ethiopians' swarthy children stand  
Beside their fairer neighbor;  
The forests flee before their stroke,  
Their hammers ring, their forges smoke,—  
They stir in honest labor.

## OAK AND IVY.

They tread the fields where honor calls;  
Their voices sound through senate halls  
    In majesty and power.  
To right they cling; the hymns they sing  
Up to the skies in beauty ring,  
    And bolder grow each hour.

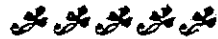
Be proud, my Race, in mind and soul;  
Thy name is writ on Glory's scroll  
    In characters of fire.  
High 'mid the clouds of Fame's bright sky  
Thy banner's blazoned folds now fly,  
    And truth shall lift them higher.

Thou hast the right to noble pride,  
Whose spotless robes were purified  
    By blood's severe baptism.  
Upon thy brow the cross was laid,  
And labor's painful sweat-beads made  
    A consecrating chrism.

No other race, or white or black,  
When bound, as thou wert, to the rack,  
    So seldom stooped to grieving;  
No other race, when free again,  
Forgot the past and proved them men  
    So noble in forgiving.

Go on and up! Our souls and eyes  
Shall follow thy continuous rise;  
    Our ears shall list thy story  
From bards which from thy root shall spring,  
And proudly tune their lyres to sing  
    Of Ethiopia's glory.

# Majors and Minors :



∴ ∴ ∴ POEMS ∴ ∴ ∴

BY

PAUL LAWRENCE DUNBAR.

### The Colored Soldiers.

If the muse were mine to tempt it  
And my feeble voice were strong,  
If my tongue were trained to measures,  
I would sing a stirring song.  
I would sing a song heroic  
Of those noble sons of Ham,  
Of the gallant colored soldiers  
Who fought for Uncle Sam!

In the early days you scorned them,  
And with many a flip and flout,  
Said "these battles are the white man's  
And the whites will fight them out."  
Up the hills you fought and faltered,  
In the vales you strove and bled,  
While your ears still heard the thunder  
Of the foes' increasing tread.

Then distress fell on the nation  
And the flag was drooping low ;  
Should the dust pollute your banner ?  
No ! the nation shouted, No !  
So when war, in savage triumph,  
Spread abroad his funeral pall—  
Then you called the colored soldiers,  
And they answered to your call.

And like hounds unleashed and eager  
For the life blood of the prey,  
Sprung they forth and bore them bravely  
In the thickest of the fray  
And where'er the fight was hottest—  
Where the bullets fastest fell,  
There they pressed unblanched and fearless  
At the very mouth of hell.

Ah, they rallied to the standard  
To uphold it by their might,  
None were stronger in the labors,  
None were braver in the fight.  
At Forts Donelson and Henry  
On the plains of Olustee,  
They were foremost in the fight  
Of the battles of the free.

And at Pillow! God have mercy  
On the deeds committed there,  
And the souls of those poor victims  
Sent to Thee without a prayer.  
Let the fullness of thy pity  
O'er the hot wrought spirits sway,  
Of the gallant colored soldier  
Who fell fighting on that day!

Yes, the Blacks enjoy their freedom  
And they won it dearly, too;  
For the life blood of their thousands  
Did the southern fields bedew.

In the darkness of their bondage,  
In their depths of slavery's night ;  
Their muskets flashed the dawning  
And they fought their way to light.

They were comrades then and brothers,  
Are they more or less to-day ?  
They were good to stop a bullet  
And to front the fearful fray.  
They were citizens and soldiers,  
When rebellion raised its head ;  
And the traits that made them worthy—  
Ah ! those virtues are not dead.

They have shared your nightly vigils,  
They have shared your daily toil ;  
And their blood with yours commingling  
Has made rich the Southern soil.  
They have slept and marched and suffered  
'Neath the same dark skies as you,  
They have met as fierce a foeman  
And have been as brave and true.

And their deeds shall find a record,  
In the registry of Fame ;  
For their blood has cleansed completely  
Every blot of Slavery's shame.  
So all honor and all glory  
To those noble Sons of Ham—  
The gallant colored soldiers,  
Who fought for Uncle Sam !

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# Lyrics of the Hearthside

By

Paul Laurence Dunbar



260025  
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New York  
Dodd, Mead and Company  
1899



## Lyrics of the Hearthside.

### SYMPATHY.

I KNOW what the caged bird feels, alas !  
When the sun is bright on the upland  
slopes ;  
When the wind stirs soft through the springing  
grass,  
And the river flows like a stream of glass ;  
When the first bird sings and the first bud  
opes,  
And the faint perfume from its chalice steals —  
I know what the caged bird feels !

I know why the caged bird beats his wing  
Till its blood is red on the cruel bars ;  
For he must fly back to his perch and cling  
When he fain would be on the bough a-swing ;  
And a pain still throbs in the old, old scars  
And they pulse again with a keener sting —  
I know why he beats his wing !

## Sympathy.

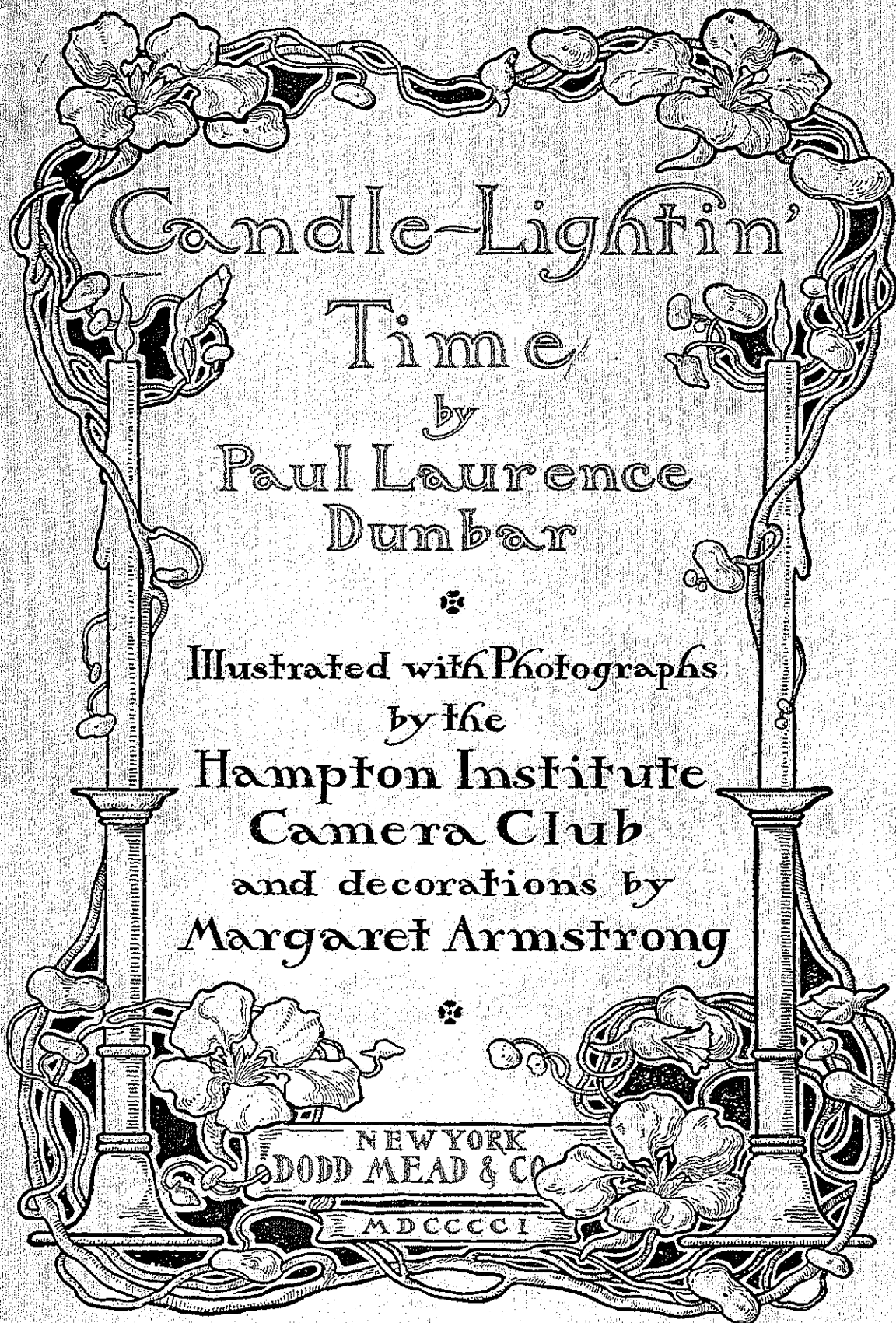
I know why the caged bird sings, ah me,  
When his wing is bruised and his bosom  
sore, —  
When he beats his bars and he would be free ;  
It is not a carol of joy or glee,  
But a prayer that he sends from his heart's  
deep core,  
But a plea, that upward to Heaven he flings —  
I know why the caged bird sings !



Harriet Beecher Stowe.

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE.

SHE told the story, and the whole world wept  
At wrongs and cruelties it had not known  
But for this fearless woman's voice alone.  
She spoke to consciences that long had slept:  
Her message, Freedom's clear reveille, swept  
From heedless hovel to complacent throne.  
Command and prophecy were in the tone  
And from its sheath the sword of justice leapt.  
Around two peoples swelled a fiery wave,  
But both came forth transfigured from the  
flame.  
Blest be the hand that dared be strong to save,  
And blest be she who in our weakness came —  
Prophet and priestess! At one stroke she gave  
A race to freedom and herself to fame.



# Candle-Lightin'

Time

by

Paul Laurence  
Dunbar



Illustrated with Photographs  
by the  
Hampton Institute  
Camera Club  
and decorations by  
Margaret Armstrong



NEW YORK  
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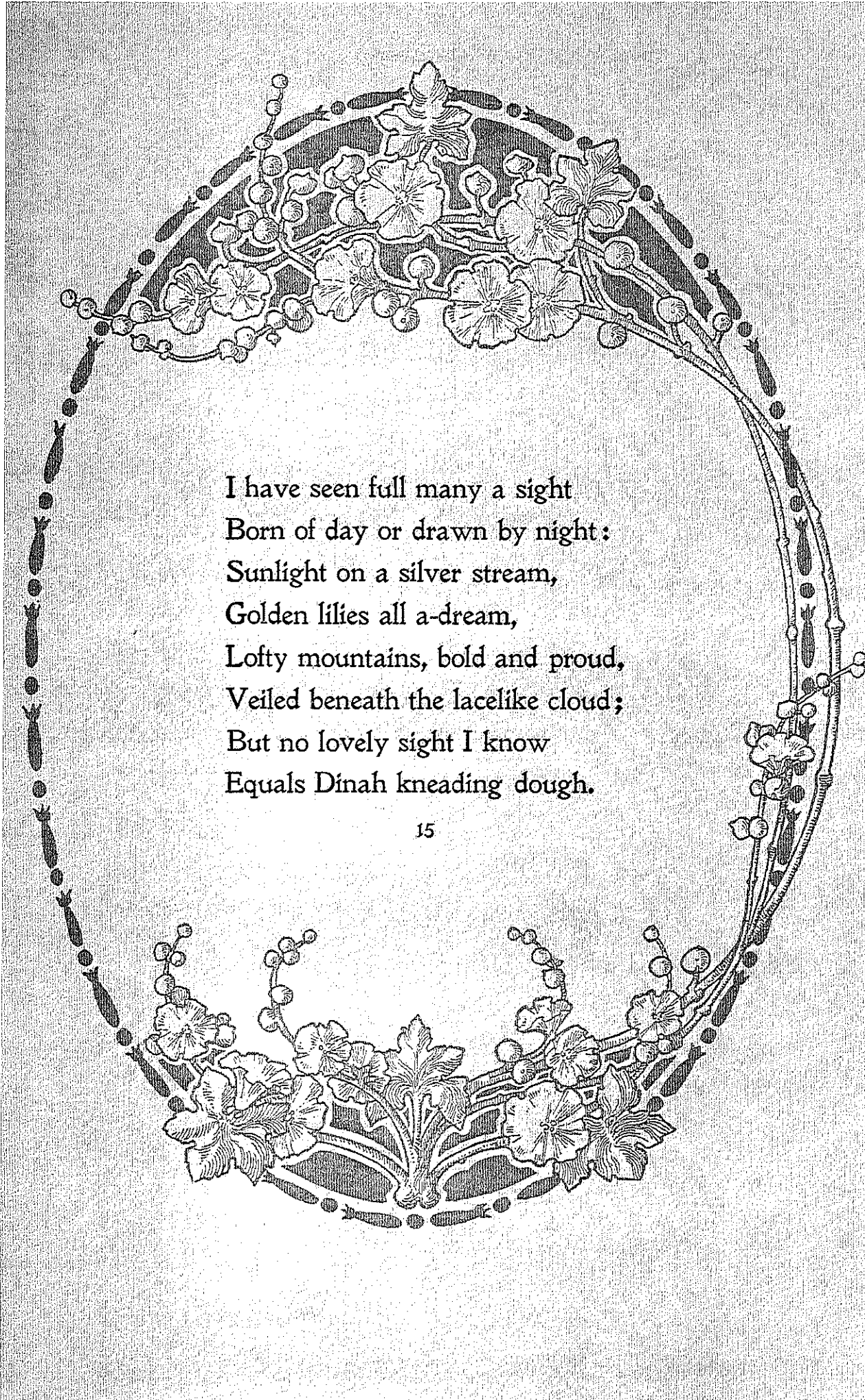
Dinah  
kneading  
Dough





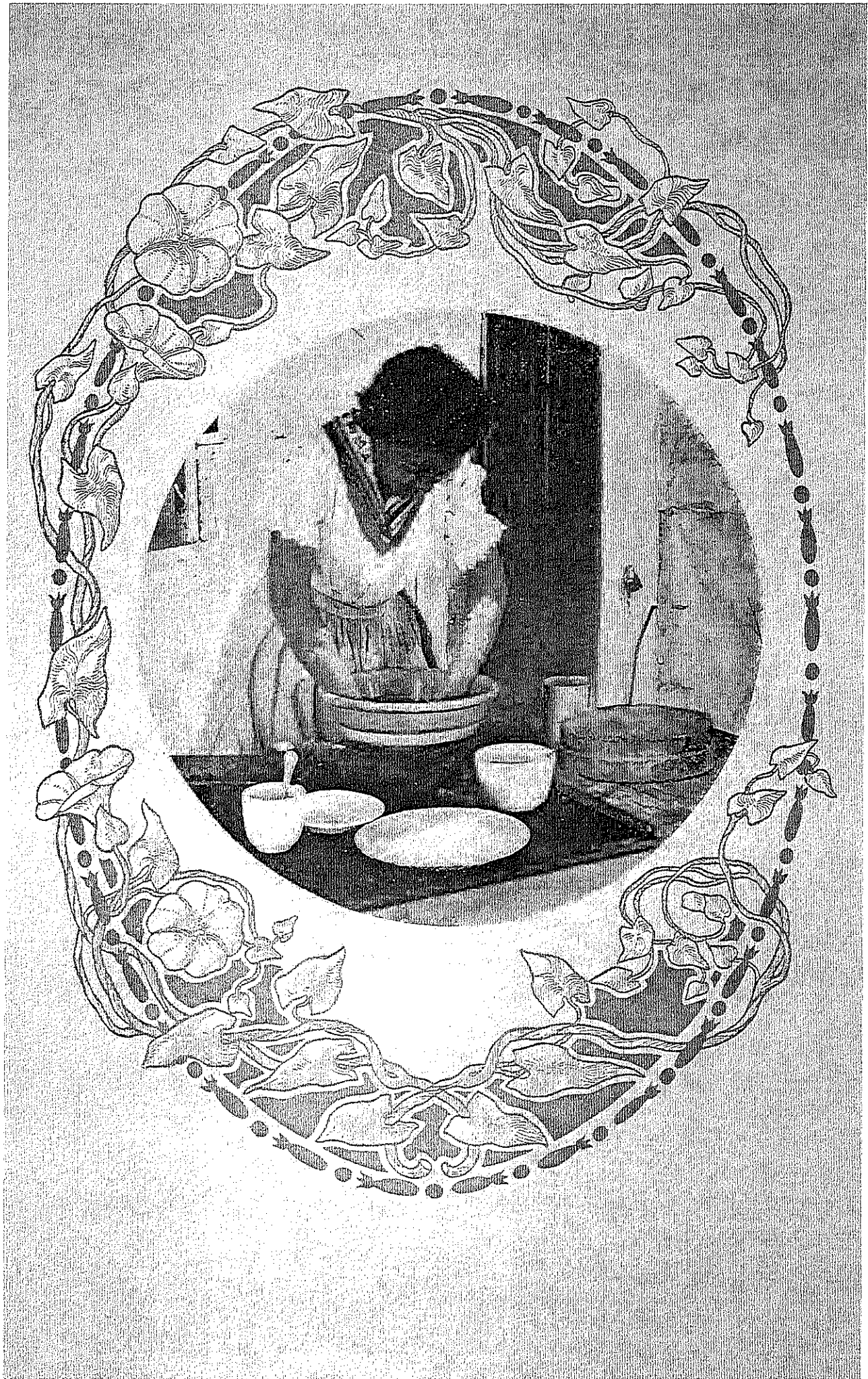


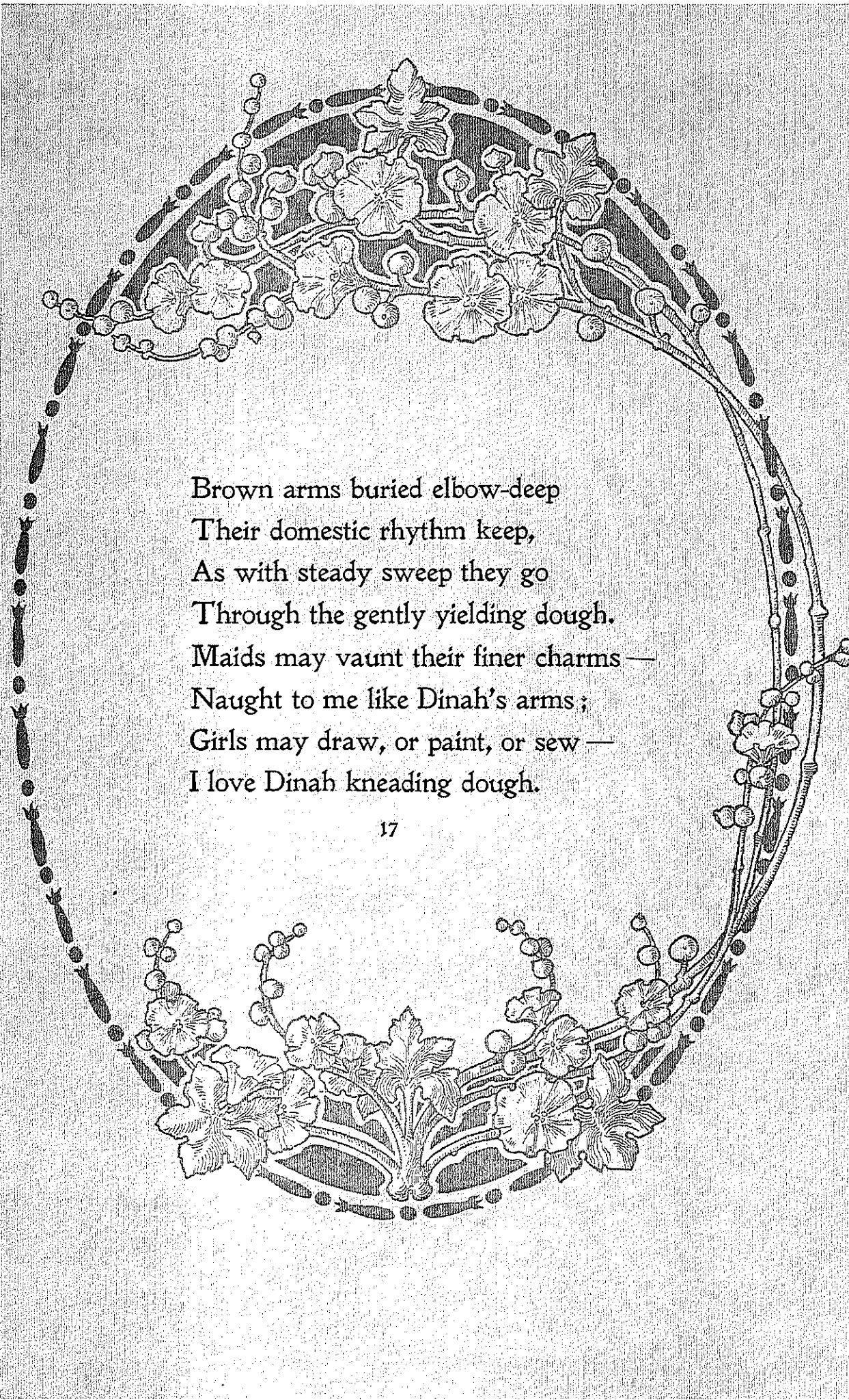




I have seen full many a sight  
Born of day or drawn by night:  
Sunlight on a silver stream,  
Golden lilies all a-dream,  
Lofty mountains, bold and proud,  
Veiled beneath the lacelike cloud;  
But no lovely sight I know  
Equals Dinah kneading dough.



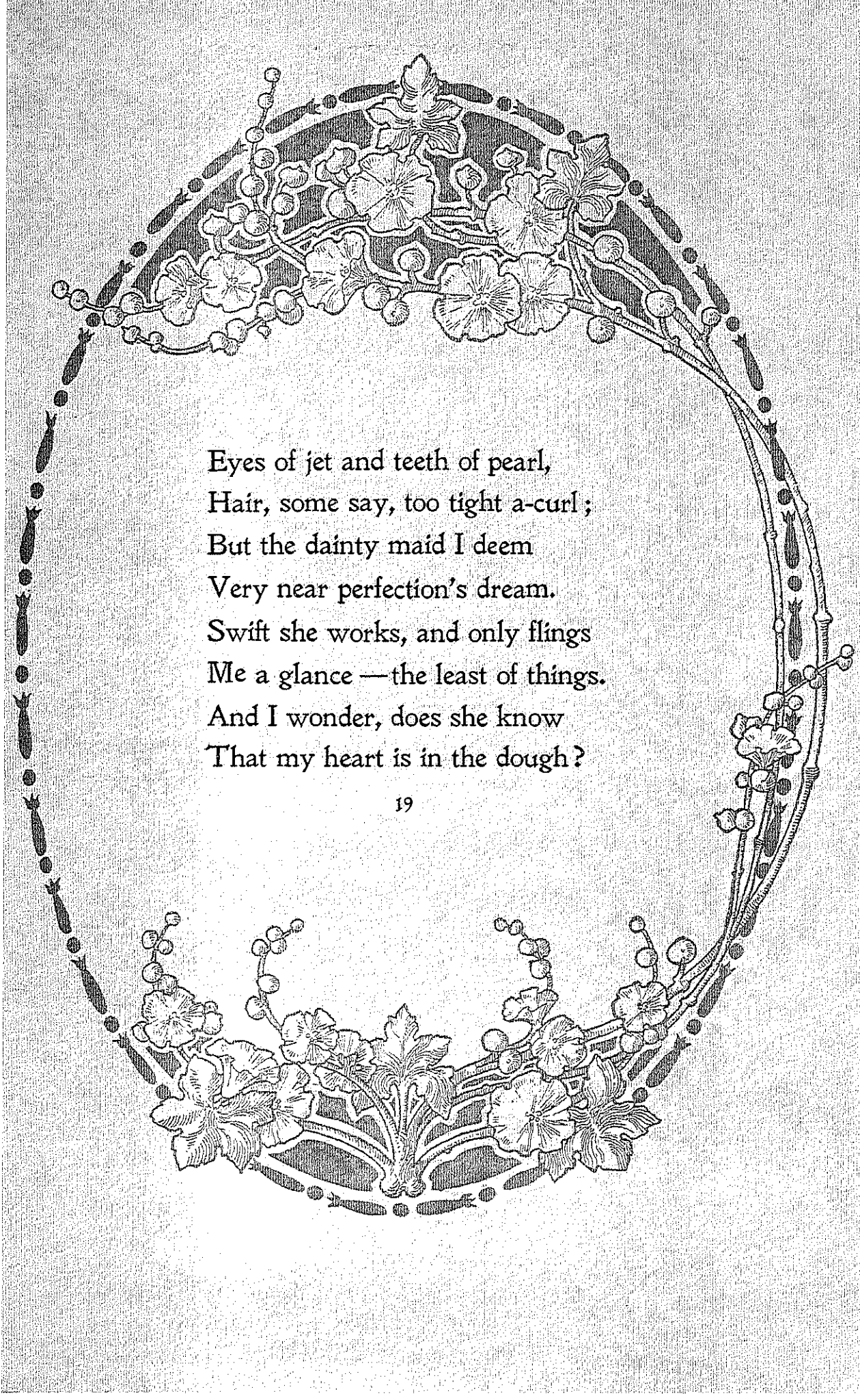




Brown arms buried elbow-deep  
Their domestic rhythm keep,  
As with steady sweep they go  
Through the gently yielding dough.  
Maids may vaunt their finer charms —  
Naught to me like Dinah's arms ;  
Girls may draw, or paint, or sew —  
I love Dinah kneading dough.







Eyes of jet and teeth of pearl,  
Hair, some say, too tight a-curl;  
But the dainty maid I deem  
Very near perfection's dream.  
Swift she works, and only flings  
Me a glance — the least of things.  
And I wonder, does she know  
That my heart is in the dough?

# Lyrics of Lowly Life

By

Paul Laurence Dunbar

With *man*

An Introduction by W. D. Howells

London : Chapman & Hall, Ltd.

1897

## Lyrics of Lowly Life.

And from his lips these words flowed forth like  
wine :

“ O queen, I want no gift but thee,” he said.  
She heard and looked on him with love-lit  
eyes,

Gave him her hand, low murmuring, “ I am  
thine,”

And at the morrow's dawning they were wed.

## AFTER WHILE.

A POEM OF FAITH.

**I** THINK that though the clouds be dark,  
That though the waves dash o'er the bark.  
Yet after while the light will come,  
And in calm waters safe at home  
The bark will anchor.  
Weep not, my sad-eyed, gray-robed maid,  
Because your fairest blossoms fade,  
That sorrow still o'erruns your cup,  
And even though you root them up,  
The weeds grow ranker.

## Lyrics of Lowly Life.

For after while your tears shall cease,  
And sorrow shall give way to peace ;  
The flowers shall bloom, the weeds shall die,  
And in that faith seen, by and by  
    Thy woes shall perish.

Smile at old Fortune's adverse tide,  
Smile when the scoffers sneer and chide.  
Oh, not for you the gems that pale,  
And not for you the flowers that fail ;  
    Let this thought cherish :

That after while the clouds will part,  
And then with joy the waiting heart  
Shall feel the light come stealing in,  
That drives away the cloud of sin  
    And breaks its power.  
And you shall burst your chrysalis,  
And wing away to realms of bliss,  
Untrammelled, pure, divinely free,  
Above all earth's anxiety  
    From that same hour.

## List of Other Books, Articles, and Websites to Explore

You can see many of the books by Paul Laurence Dunbar we have studied today on the Internet Archive (<https://archive.org/>). Just visit the website and type in the name of the book you would like to see.

To learn more about Alice Dunbar-Nelson and historical materials relating to her life and work, visit a finding aid created by the University of Delaware Library (<http://www.lib.udel.edu/ud/spec/findaids/dunbarne.html>). Also, visit this website: <https://sites.udel.edu/alicereads/>.

Paul Laurence Dunbar's house in Dayton, Ohio is now a museum. Learn more about it here: <https://www.ohiohistory.org/visit/museum-and-site-locator/paul-laurence-dunbar-house>, <https://www.daytonhistory.org/visit/dayton-history-sites/paul-laurence-dunbar-house-historic-site/>.

The Free Library owns a number of other books by Dunbar, as well as biographies and collections of his work. Here are just a few:

Dunbar, Paul Laurence. *The Complete Poems of Paul Laurence Dunbar*. Champaign, IL: Book Jungle, 2008. Free Library Call No. 811 D91A2.

Gentry, Tony. *Paul Laurence Dunbar*. New York: Chelsea House, 1989. FLP Call No. 811 D91ZGE.

Metcalf, E.W. *Paul Laurence Dunbar: A Bibliography*. Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1975. FLP Call No. 811 D91ZZM.

Revell, Peter. *Paul Laurence Dunbar*. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1979. FLP Call No. 811 D91ZR