

LONESOME ROAD

The lyric of a desperate heart swings into a cry of self-pity and a hymn of personal hate. Waldron P. Webb of the Texas Folk Lore Society sang an early negro version of this for me one evening in a dormitory of the University of Chicago. The verse ran—

Look down, look down, dat lonesome road,
 Hang down yo' haid and sigh,
 You cause me to weep, you cause me to moan,
 You cause me to leave mah home.
 You cause me to leave mah home.

Webb sang it in imitation of an old negro woman he had heard as a boy. The glides and twists, the snarls and moans, cannot be compassed in musical notation; the devices for measuring sound and indicating pitch are not yet available for writing scores for the more subtle negro vocal performances. The white man, or the mulatto, takes such pieces and shades them to his own ways and likings. We have Lonesome Road here as it came to Pendleton, Indiana, to people who passed it on to Lloyd Lewis. . . . "Your" is "yo'." "God" is "Gawd." The "r" is silent in "fore" and "heard." "Head" is "haid." . . . It goes lugubriously, interthreaded with a snarl. As a theme it is slow, grave, "moanish."

Arr. R. C.

The musical score is arranged in two systems. Each system consists of a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (grand staff). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo/mood is marked 'PIANO p'. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

Look down, look down that lone-some road, Hang down your head an' sigh; The
 best of friends must part some day, An' why not you an' I, An'

Partial musical notation on the right page, showing a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp and a 4/4 time signature. The word "why" is written below the staff.

1 Look
 Hang
 The l
 An' w
 An' w

Some
 Kentucky
 have thes

1 The v
 The s
 I'll ju
 To ro

LONESOME ROAD

why not you an' I. I tongue.

1 Look down, look down that lonesome road,
 Hang down your head an' sigh;
 The best of friends must part some day,
 An' why not you an' I,
 An' why not you an' I?

2 I wish to God that I had died,
 Had died 'fore I was born,
 Before I seen your smilin' face
 An' heard your lyin' tongue,
 An' heard your lyin' tongue.

FOND AFFECTION

Sometimes it happens that lovely people write verses, lyrics, with inadequate melodies. The Kentucky mountain song, "Fond Affection," has a tune hardly worth record here but it does have these striking stanzas.

1 The world's so wide I cannot cross it,
 The sea's so deep I cannot wade,
 I'll just go hire me a little boatman,
 To row me across the stormy tide.

2 I give you back your ring and letters,
 And the picture I have loved so well,
 And henceforth we will meet as strangers,
 But I can never say farewell.

3 There's only three things that I could wish for,
 That is my coffin, shroud, and grave,
 And when I'm dead please don't weep o'er me,
 Or kiss the lips you once betrayed.