

In this respect the American Negro has done wonders to the English language. This is true, but it is equally true that he has made over a great part of the tongue to his liking and has his revision accepted by the ruling class. No one listening to a Southern white man talk could deny this. Not only has he softened and toned down strongly consonanted words like "aren't" to "ain't" and the like, he has made new force words out of old feeble elements. Examples, of this are "ham-shanked," "battle-hammed," "double-teen," "bodaciously," "muffle-jawed."

But the Negro's greatest contribution to the language is: (1) the use of metaphor and simile; (2) the use of the double descriptive; (3) the use of verbal nouns.

### 1. Metaphor and Simile

One at a time, like lawyers going  
to heaven.

You sho is propaganda.

Sobbing hearted.

I'll beat you till: (a) rope like okra,  
(b) slack like lime, (c) smell like  
onions.

Fatal for naked.

Kyting along.

That's a rope.

Cloakers—deceivers.

Regular as pig-tracks.

Mule blood—black molasses.

Syndicating—gossiping.

Flambeaux—cheap cafe (lighted by flambeaux).

To put yo'self on de ladder.

### 2. The Double Descriptive

High-tall.

Little-tee-ninchy (tiny).

Low-down.

Top-superior.

Sham-polish.

Lady-people.

Kill-dead.  
 Hot-boiling.  
 Chop-axe.  
 Sitting-chairs.  
 De watch wall.  
 Speedy-hurry.  
 More great and more better.

### 3. Verbal Nouns

She features somebody I know.  
 Funeralize.  
 Sense me into it.  
 Puts the shamery on him.  
 'Taint everybody you kin confidence.  
 I wouldn't friend with her.  
 Jooking—playing piano or guitar as  
 it is done in Jook-houses (houses of  
 ill-fame).  
 Uglying away.  
 I wouldn't scorn my name all up on you.  
 Bookooing (beaucoup) around—showing off.  
 Won't stand a broke.  
 She won't take a listen.  
 He won't stand straightening.  
 That is such a compliment.  
 That's a lynch.

The stark, trimmed phrases of the Occident seem too bare for the voluptuous child of the sun, hence the adornment. It arises out of the same impulse as the wearing of jewelry and the making of sculpture—the urge to adorn.

On the walls of the homes of the average Negro one always finds a glut of gaudy calendars, wall pockets and advertising lithographs. The sophisticated white man or Negro would tolerate none of these, even if they bore a likeness to the Mona Lisa. No commercial art for decoration. Neither the calendar nor the advertisement spoils the picture for this lowly man. He sees the beauty in spite of the declaration of the Portland Ce-