

Encouragement

Who dat knockin' at de do'?

Why, Ike Johnson, — yes, fu' sho!

Come in, Ike. I's mighty glad

You come down. I t'ought you's mad

At me 'bout de othah night,

An' was stayin' 'way fu' spite.

Say, now, was you mad fu' true

W'en I kin' o' laughed at you?

Speak up, Ike, an' 'spress yo'se'f.

'T ain't no use a-lookin' sad,

An' a-mekin' out you's mad;

Ef you's gwine to be so glum,

Wondah why you evah come.

I don't lak nobody 'roun'

Dat jes' shet dey mouf an' frown, —

Oh, now, man, don't act a dunce!

Cain't you talk? I tol' you once,
Speak up, Ike, an' 'spress yo'se'f.

Wha'd you come hyeah fu' to-night?

Body'd t'ink yo' haid ain't right.

I's done all dat I kin do, —

Dressed perticler, jes' fu' you;

Reckon I'd 'a' bettah wo'

My ol' ragged calico.

Aftah all de pains I's took,

Cain't you tell me how I look?

Speak up, Ike, an' 'spress yo'se'f.

Bless my soul! I 'mos' fu'got

Tellin' you 'bout Tildy Scott.

Don't you know, come Thu'sday night,

She gwine ma'y Lucius White?

Miss Lize say I allus wuh

Heap sight laklier 'n huh;

An' she'll git me somep'n new,
Ef I wants to ma'y too.
Speak up, Ike, an' 'spress yo'se'f.

I could ma'y in a week,
Ef de man I wants 'ud speak.
Tildy's presents'll be fine,
But dey would n't ekal mine.
Him whut gits me fu' a wife
'Ll be proud, you bet yo' life.
I's had offers; some ain't quit;
But I has n't ma'ied yit!
Speak up, Ike, an' 'spress yo'se'f.

Ike, I loves you,—yes, I does;
You's my choice, and allus was.
Laffin' at you ain't no harm.—
Go 'way, dahky, whah's yo' arm?
Hug me closer--dah, dat's right!

Was n't you a awful sight,

Havin' me to baig you so?

Now ax whut you want to know, —

Speak up, Ike, an' 'spress yo'se'f!