



### Three Jamaican Folk-Stories

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## NOTES AND QUERIES.

THREE JAMAICAN FOLK-STORIES. — The following Anansi stories and the songs which go with them were collected incidentally by the writer in Jamaica during the winter of 1920-21, while making a study of Jamaican folk-song as part of the Vassar College study of Jamaican folk-lore, which is conducted by Miss Martha W. Beckwith. They were accidentally omitted from the larger collection to be published as Memoir XVII of the American Folk-Lore Society.

1. *King's Daughters an' Anansi.* — Once de king had t'ree daughter; an' him said, if any one know de name ob his daughter, he will gib dem one to marry to. Anansi heah. One day de t'ree daughter were passing, an' dey saw a tree wid some cherries; an' den Anansi said, if dey wanted a cherry, he would pull dem; an' de lady tell him to go an' pull dey; an' when he pull dem, he t'row dem. When he was comin' down, he t'row himself off a tree, an' de king's daughter begun to cry; an' one said, "Po' me William Daniel!" an' de odder said, "Po' me Corning, po' me walk lak a tum be shem shem!" So one day de king were looking out, an' him heah Anansi coming playing, "Me Corny mek me get me William Daniel." An' Anansi marry to him.

When Anansi fall down off a tree, him form die, but he didn' dead at all, an' de king daughter get a carriage an' tek him home.

[The tune that Anansi was playing is given below. It was obtained from Winifred Leach of Brown's Town.]

♩ = 96.

An' me Corn - y mek me get ma Wil - liam Dan - iel him

walk lak a tum - be shem, shem, him walk lak a tum - be shem, shem.

[This story is of European derivation, and is also given by Jekyll ("Jamaican Song and Story," No. II), as "Yung-Kyum-Pyung;" but the story is not quite the same, and the songs are very different.]

2. *Anansi an' Tumble-Tud.* — Once Anansi an' Tumble-Tud went to Kingston. De two ob dem brought a barrel each ob cheese. When dey were coming back, Anansi an' Tumble-Tud ate up one barrel; an' when he ketch part ob de way, Tumble-Tud tol' Anansi to eat his; but Anansi tol' him to roll it home, an' he will gib him some ob his. But when dey come home, Anansi kep' his barrel. Dey call de barrel "timbal."

[The song which is sung is what Anansi sang to his barrel on the way home, when he was struggling with it, before he inveigled Tumble-Tud into doing the work. It was obtained from the same source as No. 1.]

♩ = 96.

Roll, me tim-bal, roll, me Beck-y Tim - bal, fol - low me, me Beck-y  
 Tim - bal, fol - low me 'long road, me Beck-y Tim - bal fol - low me,  
 Roll, me Tim-bal roll, me Beck - y Tim - bal, fol - low me.

3. *Bra Yebel.* — H'Anansi walk him groun', an' him plant it, an' him plant plantain, an' he had two plantain, bear two bunches, an' ebry day him gwine a' him groun' an' da watch dose plantain. Had groun' nex' to a fiel' belong to Bra Yebel, an' Bra Yebel hab two daughter, an' Bra H'Anansi ben want de two daughter to co't, an' he ax Bra Yebel fe gib him daughter fe marry to. Bra Yebel tell him, "No." Well, Bra H'Anansi bex wid Bra Yebel. One day Bra H'Anansi went bahk to de fiel' an' cut off half ob de plantain an' went away wid it; an' de nex' day Bra H'Anansi go bahk a de fiel', miss de plantain, an' say Bra Yebel tief it. But him didn' call out Bra Yebel name yet.

[Calling out the name means actually to accuse a person of guilt. Evidently, however, Anansi soon decided to make up a song in which he could hint about what Bra Yebel was supposed to have done: for this is the song he sang, which I obtained from Alfred Williams of Maroon Town, — ]

♩ = 192.

Bra Ye - bel, oh, me ruin, oh, Bra Ye - bel,  
 (roon)  
 oh, me ruin, oh, Bra Ye - bel, oh, me  
 ruin, oh, Bra Ye - bel, ah, me plan - tain ah.

HELEN H. ROBERTS.