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Cuyler, Theo L. Rev.

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Fisk University Jubilee Singers.

By Rev. Theo. L. Cuyler, D. D., Brooklyn.

From the **NEW YORK EVANGELIST**,
March 11th, 1880.

"My venerable friend, the late Rembrandt Peale, once said to me, after hearing Jullien's skilful orchestra, 'Now I can die contented, for at last I have heard perfect music.' I suspect that my enthusiastic old friend would have been still more 'contented' if he had lived to hear the Fisk University Jubilee Singers since their return from Europe. Before they went abroad for their second triumphal tour, we thought that they were the best living representatives of our only native school of purely American music. But since they have come back to us—after delighting emperors and court dignitaries by the score—it appears that even the best may be bettered. Theirs is the genuine heart-music, whose rich, wild melodies go to the very fount of tears. When they sang (in one of our churches this week) their unique hymn 'Bright sparkles in the churchyard,' with its plaintive refrain 'O mother, rock me in the cradle all the day,' a great many eyes grew moist all over the house.

"After they had sung before the Imperial family at Berlin, the Crown Prince begged a copy of their songs, and said 'I want to sing these songs with my own family. They go through and through me.' The Crown Princess told our negro friends that she was prepared to enjoy them because her mother, Queen Victoria, had written to her a long and glowing account of their performances at Windsor Palace. Verily, wonders will never cease, when European royalty will welcome to their palaces the plantation slave-girls who could sing 'no more auction-block, no more lash for me.' And all these ovations have not spoiled the simplicity of these children of nature—and grace. We owe them a kindness for the help which they rendered to brother Moody in London. We owe them a debt of gratitude for showing to the world that from the bondmen's huts and praise-meetings in negro cabins could issue some of the richest melodies that ever swept the chords of the human heart. Long enough has the negro been caricatured by clowns in corked faces. Before the memories of slavery and the war die out, the whole nation ought to listen once more to the echoes of those days of struggle in the magnificent voices of the original troupe of 'Jubilee Singers.'"