

WILLIAM GREEN, or "Reverend Bill", as he is call by the other Negroes, was brought to Texas from Mississippi in 1862. His master was Major John Montgomery. William is 87 years old. He has lived in San Antonio, Texas, for 50 years.

"I is Reverend Bill, all right, but I is 'fraid dat compli-ment don't belong to me no more, 'cause I quit preachin' in favor of de young men.

"I kin tell you my 'speriences in savin' - mis'ry dat was, is peace dat is. I tells you dis 'spite of bein' alone in de world with no chillun.

"I is raised a slave and 'mancipated in June, but I 'members de old plantation whar I is born. Massa John Montgomery, he owned me, and he went to de war and git kilt. I knowed 'bout de war, though us slaves wasn't sposed to know nothin' 'bout it. I was livin' in Texas then, 'cause Massa John moved over here from Mis'sippi. In dat place niggers was allus wrong, no matter what, but it was better in dis place. We used to think we was lucky to git over here to Texas, and we used to sing a song 'bout it:

"'Over yonder is de wild-goose nation,
Whar old missus has sugar plantation--
Sugar grows sweet but de plantation's sour,
'cause de nigger jump and run every hour.

"'I has you all to know, you all to know,
Dere's light on de shore,
Says little Bill to big Bill,
There's a lil' nigger to write and cipher.'

"I don't know what de song meant but we thought we'd git free

here in Texas, and we'd git eddicated, and dat's de meanin' of de talk about writin' and cipherin'.

"Well, when I is free I isn't free, 'cause de boss wants me and another boy to stay till we's 21 year old. But old Judge Longworth, he come down dere and dere was pretty near a fight, and he 'splains to us we was free.

"'bout five year after dat I takes up preashin' and I preaches fer a long time, and I works on a farm, half and half with de owner. I has a good life, but now I's too old to preach.
