430 NEGRO RIDDLES FROM SURINAM

27. The Fruit of the Soursop (*Anona muricata*) is green with a pure white flesh and black seeds.
28. This alludes to the resemblance of the sections of sugar cane to the native "matta", or mortar, in which the green plantains are mashed to make "tomtom".
34. The famous riddle of the Sphinx which was first solved by the unfortunate Oedipus.
36. The European version quoted, in part, in the introduction, is taken from "The Fashionable Puzzler or Book of Riddles", New York, 1835, p. 140. An American version, reported from North Carolina by Miss Parsons, is as follows:

God never did see,
George Washington scarcely ever did,
And we see every day.

Ans. — Our equals.

37. "Sokko" is the name of a West African tribe, represented in the negro population of Surinam.
39. The ever present white teeth and red tongue are always a reminder to one at loss for a subject. An African version, reported by Merwyn W. M. Beech, *The Suk, Their Language and Folk-lore*, 1911, p. 44, refers to the teeth as white cows, and the tongue as a red bull. E. G. Parsons records the following from the Bahamas:

"My fader had thirty white horses an' a red one."

Ans. — Teeth and tongue.

The same author gives a version from South Carolina as follows:

"Twenty-five white steer
Standin' in a stall,
Up run a red bull
An' outlicked all."

Ans. — "Teeth an' yer tongue".

47. The old negress who contributed this riddle said, apologetically, "Dis na wan lau-lau wan datti", i. e., "This one is a foolish one". Nevertheless, it is one of the few of which we find counterparts in Africa. Merwyn W. H. Beech (*loc. cit.*, p. 45) records one very similar to this, namely:

"I am long, there is not (another longer)"

Ans. — A road.

48. E. C. Parsons reports the following riddle from the Bahamas:

"De black man settin' on de red man head"

Ans. — "Pot settin' on fire."

54. The fish net as a garment appears also in a West African riddle.

"Dey sew dress fo' one girl: he no deh, but w'en he reach, de dress jus' fit um."