BALLAD OF BOOKER T.

Old Booker T.
Was a practical man.
He said, Till the soil,
Learn from the land.
Let down your buckets
Where you are;
In your own backyard
Could be there could
Might be a star.
Train you heart,
Your heart, and your hand.
To help yourself
And your fellowmen.

Then Booker T.
Built a school,
With book-learning there
And the workman's tool.
He started out
In a simple way---

For (Yesterday
Was not today.)
Sometimes he had
Compromise in his talk--
For a man must crawl
Before he can walk.
And in Alabama in '85
A joker was lucky
To stay alive.
But old Booker T.
Was nobody's fool:
You may carve a dream
From an humble tool---
And the tallest tower
Can tumble down
If it is not rooted
In solid ground.
He said, Train your heart,
Your head, and your hand--
For Booker T.
Was a practical man.
BALLAD OF BOOKER T.
by
Langston Hughes

Old Booker T.
Was a practical man.
He said, Till the soil
And learn from the land.
Let down your buckets
Where you are:
In your own backyard
There could be a star.
Train your head,
Your heart, and your hand,
To help yourself
And your fellow man,
For smartness alone
Is surely not meet—
If you haven't got
Something to eat.

Booker T. went and
Built a school;
Book-learning there
And the workman's tool.
He started out
In a simple way—
For yesterday
Was not today,
Sometimes he had to
Promise in his talk,
For a man must crawl
Before he can walk—
And in Alabama in 185
A negro was lucky
To be alive.

But Booker T.
Was nobody's fool;
You may carve a dream
With an humble tool.
You may tumble down
If it be not rooted
In solid ground,
He said, Train your head,
Your heart, and your hand—
For Booker T.
Was a practical man.
Let down your buckets
Where you are:
In your own backyard
There could be a star.
He said, Let down your buckets
Where you are.
BALLAD OF BOOKER T.

3rd draft
June 1, 1941.

Booker T.
Was a practical man.
He said, Till the soil
And learn from the land.
Let down your bucket
Where you are.
Your fate is here
And not afar.
To help yourself
And your fellow man;
Train your head,
Your heart, and your hand.
For smartness alone's
Surely not meet—
If you haven't mixm at the same time
Got something to eat.
Thus at Tuskegee
He built a school
With booklearning there
And the workman's tool.
He started out
In a simple way—
For yesterday
Was not today.
Sometimes he had
Compromise in his talk—
For a man must crawl
Before he can walk—
And in Alabama in '65
A joker was lucky
To be alive.
But Booker T.
Was nobody's fool:
You may carve a dream
With a humble tool.
The tallest tower
Can tumble down
If it be not rooted
In solid ground.

So, being a far-seeing practical man,
Be said, Train your head,
Your heart, and your hand;
Your fate is here
And not afar,
Let down your bucket
Where you are.
BALLAD OF BOOKER T.
by
Langston Hughes

Booker T.,
Was a practical man,
He said, Till the soil
And learn from the land.
Let down your bucket
where you are,
Your fate is here
And not afar.
To help yourself
And your fellow man,
Train your head,
Your heart, and your hand.
For smartness alone's
Surely not meet—
If you haven't at the same time
Got something to eat.
Thus at Tuskegee
He built a school
With book-learning there
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Practical man,
He said, Train your head,
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Practical man,
He said, Train your head,
Your heart, and your hand.
Your fate is here
And not afar,
So let down your bucket
Where you are.

Langston Hughes

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