

Belles lettres and bell ringers

Folk-Say

Folk-Say IV. The Land is Ours. 1932. Edited by B. A. Botkin. Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1932. \$3.00.

IT is significant that the editor of the Fourth *Folk-Say* does not announce it any more as a "Regional Miscellany," but proclaims: "The land is ours."

Not that regionalism and folklore are altogether forgotten. We have here beautiful poems reproducing impressions from the Southwest; the very spirit of a fiesta in Santa Fe captured in a fleeting moment of romantic enchantment; a tenderly moving narrative poem of naïve mysticism ("A Miracle of Santuario"); Sterling Brown's humorous, yet disturbing Negro poems; portrayal of the different local brands of religious hysteria, quasi-religious hypocrisy, and misapplication of democracy. We also find in this volume some stories of frontier lawlessness; a vivid and beautiful description of a desert wedding, in the form of a letter; many exquisite lyric poems, and the majestic Bunyan saga.

But, with very few exceptions, the contributors to this volume are not concentrating upon the capturing of regional differences or upon the recording of spontaneous creations of "common folks" which may perhaps be "folklore in the making." The contents of this volume is deeper, more serious than that. It is tremulous with pent-up human grief, tense with human suffering, attentive to social conditions, to the uncertainty and despair which are spreading all over the country, irrespective of localities and regions, oblivious of geographical, climatic and racial differences. The writers have, in this volume, a tendency to regard their characters as parts of society as a whole, and the different localities as parts of the country as a whole. Moe Bragin's farmhand thinks not only of himself, but of others: "Sure, there's many a poor feller won't find a hole to winter in soon." And his farmer, too, instead of talking about his personal plight, talks about his group: "Yah, it ain't us that gits it all... It's the wholesaler sitting on a soft tail." When the old man in the Virginia hills (John C. Rogers, "Heart of My Grandfather") complains about his hardships and his son's unemployment, he asks: "Are they doing anything about it"—clearly taking his own

case as a sample of a national calamity; in the same sketch the mailman asks, "how is it elsewhere," and the day laborer back home on a visit tells of the nation-wide depression, starvation and hysteria; he is not without hope—"some day there will be more than that," but the road to this goal is not at all clear in his mind; yet, he vaguely envisages the culmination of this general unrest: "marching again all of us over the land our land smelling of loam of pine of cosmetics of oil tryen-stopus." The vagueness of his hopes, the dimness of his vision mingle with the mellowness of his memories, with the warmth of his tribute to his grandfather, with the mist-filled longing for "the good old time," and this general lack of clearness and of analysis is outwardly expressed by lack of punctuation and by idiosyncrasies of spelling, which makes the sketch difficult to read. But the attempt to peer through the partition of his individual stall is here seen clearly.

Neither does Daniel Garrison's "White Nigger" consider poverty his own personal calamity. "Christ! ain't poor folks ever going to get nothing... nothing but hard work and misery. Ain't it right to be poor? Ain't this here world meant for poor folks?" He classifies himself with other "poor folks" and wants better treatment, but he does not even dream of any possibility of abolishing poverty altogether; all he wants is some alleviation for himself and his kind.

H. H. Lewis portrays his Mac, Joe, Hine, Stockhead as individual figures, in his admirable short character sketches; but in Humpty he reaches out into wider circles and complains:

"The West"—it's all in the mind now;
Go west—to the slums;
Follow the echoes and find now—
Bums, bums, bums...

The volume represents a remarkably vivid and reliable cross-section of American life in 1932, with the exception of the strictly industrial centers. The hardships, the unrest, the chaos, the bewilderment are all here.

But also the more permanent features of American small-town and farm life are portrayed. Paul Horgan in "The Burden of Summer" makes us see the pitiful attempt at courage and dignity of an old farmer who braves a sunstroke to prove to himself and others that he is still strong and able-bodied. The ne'er-do-well Oscar Davis in Webb's

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"Slough Country" is not fit for farming—he likes hunting too well. Virgil Geddes offers us a powerful drama of farm life in his "Mud on the Hoof." E. P. Conkle, in his subtle dialogue "Lace" etches for us the romantic Reba whom the atmosphere of the farm is smothering, and her matter-of-fact sister. Jean Thomas has created a unique and arresting personality in her Doctor Jeremiah Withero. George Milburn, in little gems of his note-book entries, gives valuable touches of character study and topsyturvy social values. E. M. Berry analyzes small-town mass psychology in "Booger Red."

It is impossible even to mention all that is valuable and enjoyable in the Fourth *Folk-Say*. The appearance of the book is up to the high standard of the University of Oklahoma Press.

SOPHIE R. A. COURT.

Production control

Leonard Logan, "Production Control in the Petroleum Industry" in the Brookings Lectures on *Mineral Economics*, McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc. New York, 1932.

After giving the petroleum production control problem in its historical perspective, Professor Logan, '14as, of the University of Oklahoma, economic department faculty, analyzes the various factors at stake. The institution of property rights, the migratory tendency of the oil, the romantic and speculative nature of the industry all receive careful attention. The industry has passed the laissez faire stage. Voluntary control has been attempted but has not proved adequate. Involuntary control has raised problems concerning federal or state

jurisdiction but because of precedent and inertia the federal government is not expected to participate except in the case of an extreme emergency. Proration is regarded as an important emergency action, but unit control, with the pool as the unit, the most scientific. Doctor Logan does not attempt to prophesy concerning future control methods but does emphasize the necessity of such action because of economic waste involved under free competition. The very fact that Doctor Logan was invited to give one of the Brookings Lectures for the *Mineral Economics* indicates that he is regarded as an authoritative writer on petroleum economics.—JOHN B. EWING.

Tristan and Iseult

Dr. Maurice Halperin, assistant professor of French, writing *Le Roman de Tristan et Iseult dans la Literature Anglo-Americaine* as his thesis for the degree of Docteur de l'Universite de Paris, France, has gained recognition in America, England and on the continent.

Reviews have appeared in *Le Revue Anglo-Americaine* published in France; *The Modern Language Review* published in England; *The Modern Language Journal* and *Books Abroad* published at Norman.

The Modern Language Journal says of Doctor Halperin: "He has done an excellent and very useful piece of work in bringing together and discussing the various versions, translations and adaptations of the famous old story. His work is to be commended to all those interested in the poem."

Traumatic surgery

Abstractive Lectures in Traumatic Surgery, a book of recent lectures given by a member of the faculty in traumatic surgery will be issued soon to physicians throughout the state. The book is valuable to physicians because it contains the most recent research, while textbook material is often about four years old. Authorities in the field represented are Dr. W. C. Campbell, Memphis, Tennessee; Dr. H. Winnett Orr, Lincoln, Nebraska; Dr. F. D. Dickson, Kansas City, Missouri; Dr. William R. Cubbins, Chicago, Illinois; Dr. Charles L. Scudder, Boston, Massachusetts; Dr. W. B. Carrell, Dallas, Texas; Dr. T. J. Ganslen, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Dr. A. E. Bence, Wichita, Kansas; Dr. L. E. Evens, Hartford, Connecticut; and Dr. R. D. Schrock, Omaha, Nebraska.

The work of compiling the book is under the supervision of L. W. Kibler, of the extension division.

A new book of interest to medical students is *Practical Anatomy* edited by Edward Philip Stibbe, published at \$7 by Longmans Green in New York.

PRAISE



NEW YORK TIMES — "One thinks of Miss Cather's Archbishop, although her book had more conscious literary quality and less intimate acquaintance with the subject."

PHILADELPHIA LEDGER — "*Wah'Kon-Tah* is an album of Indian types, written with love and devotion and with keen appreciation of the beauty and the poetry of landscape and of character."

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